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ENCOUNTER AT BLACKWALL KEEP

by Sean K Reynolds

The wizard Allustan requests the party's company on a trip to Blackwall Keep, a militia outpost on the border of a treacherous swamp. But what of the green worms and unkillable zombies plaguing the region, and what fell secret is locked in the keep's forlorn basement? An Age of Worms Adventure Path scenario for 5th-level characters.



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Steve Prescott



RUNNING "ENCOUNTER AT BLACKWALL KEEP" IN THE FORGOTTEN REALMS

by Eric L. Boyd

n the Realms, the town of Daggerford (Diamond Lake) lies along the north bank of the River Delimbiyr, some thirty or so miles inland. Instead of flowing freely into the Sea of Swords, the River Delimbiyr dissolves into a morass of waterways threading beneath cold-weather cypress trees festooned with hanging moss, known as the Lizard Marsh (Mistmarsh). Possible encounters on the way to the Lizard Marsh (see "Encounters on the Road" in DUNGEON #126, page 19) include religious pilgrims of Lathander (St. Cuthbert), orcs or goblins from the High Moor, or lizardfolk of the Blue Feather Clan (notable for their ornamental belts and baldrics laced with distinctive blue feathers).

The Lizard Marsh is home to several tribes of lizardfolk, including the Blue Feather Clan and the Redeye Tribe (Twisted Branch Tribe), dinosaurs such as ceratosaurs and pternadons, detailed in *Serpent Kingdoms*, and several black dragons, including Ilthane. The presence of dinosaurs so far from their native Chult has led some sages to speculate about the presence of a portal in the marsh, while others believe the dinosaurs sprang from eggs lost during the wreck of the *Jungle Queen*, which was driven into the marsh and wrecked during a terrible storm over a century ago on its way back to Waterdeep from an expedition to the northern coast of the Jungles of Chult.

The region around the marsh is ruled by various human lordlings (most of whom claim the title of baron) who trace their lineage back to Delimibiyran, the Kingdom of Man. Traditionally, these lordlings have allied themselves with the Duchy of Daggerford, tithing some of their monthly income to the duke in exchange for assistance in keeping the lizardfolk of the marsh contained. Since the death of the duke, this traditional alliance has begun to break down, and the Lords of Waterdeep (Free City) have quietly taken an increased role in supplying supplemental troops to contain the lizardfolk tribes. One of the local lordlings is **Baroness Piann Cromm** (LN female Tethyrian human Aristocrat 2) of Cromm's Hold (Blackwall Keep). The redoubtable baroness lost her husband and only son to lizardfolk raiders of the Blue Feather tribe over a dozen years ago. Since then, she has ruled her husband's holdings with a firm but fair hand, grimly

holding on to this dangerous territory in memory of their loss.

When the PCs arrive at Cromm's Hold, the garrison commander Baroness Piann and thirteen soldiers (LN male and female Tethyrian and Illuskan human Warrior 1) are the remaining survivors holding out against the assault. (The Realms variant has one less soldier and the "garrison commander" has survived.) The assault is being led by lizardfolk of the Redeye Tribe, notable for their baldrics of red-brown pelts and red "eye" tattoos encircling their left eye. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check reveals that the Redeye tribe was once one of the more peaceful lizardfolk tribes, led by a shaman named Redeye, who was notable for his willingness to negotiate with humans. According to reports (which differ significantly from the truth), Redeve (Shukak) was slain a decade or so ago by a party of adventurers, only to return as a lich. Since that time, Redeve has reportedly transformed his followers into a brutal band of raiders bent on vengeance against humanity.

Conversion notes for the Fields of Pesh, *Rod of Seven Parts*, Queen of Chaos, and Wind Dukes of Aaqa are detailed in the Realms conversion notes for "The Whispering Cairn."

The Commander's Quarters (area **8** of Cromm's Hold) should have a slightly richer set of furnishings than described in the adventure.

Lizard Marsh Encounters

The following table replaces the "Mistmarsh Encounters"
table found in DUNGEON #126, page 28.d%Encounter01-051 young black dragon (EL 5)06-151 ceratosaur (EL 7)16-252 pternadons (EL 5)26-405 lizardfolk (EL 5)41-501 gargantuan monstrous centipede (EL 6)51-604 dire toadsMM2 (EL 5)61-704 monitor lizardsMM (EL 5)71-100Roll once on Mistmarsh Table

In addition, there is a prominent portrait of the baroness with her late husband and son.

Redeye

Redeye is the king of the Redeye tribe and an ally of the black dragon Ilthane. This powerfully built lizardman stands nearly 7 feet tall, with the clawed hands, long tail, and toothy jaws typical of his race. Whereas most lizardfolk have a thin white membrane that grows hard scales ranging in color from onyx black to olive green to mud brown, Redeye's skin and scales are a putrescent, almost glowing, green hue.

Redeye (Shukak) was once a divine champion of Semuanya, tolerant of other races and willing to negotiate with humans. In the Year of the Wave (1364 DR), Redeye was leading a lizardfolk hunting party that crossed paths by chance with the Company of the Black Claw, a band of adventurers in the employ of Ilthane, whose territory lay near Redeye's tribal lands. The two groups quickly came to blows.

Unbeknownst to Redeye, Ilthane had recently agreed to enter into Dragotha's service. She had sent the Company of the Black Claw to Daggerford to meet with an agent of the undead dragon and bring back a set of potions. The potions contained alchemical additives with which the black dragon planned to begin her activities on behalf of Dragotha. At the end of the battle, Redeye lay dying amongst the corpses of his friends and

foes. In desperation, Redeye fed on the fallen body of a cleric of Talos and drank several of the tainted potions the cleric carried.

In the wake of the battle, Redeye returned to his people a changed creature and quickly seized control of the tribe from its aging king. Redeve credited his survival to Talos the Destroyer, hoisting aloft a shield bearing the Destroyer's symbol as proof of his conversion. Under Redeye's leadership, the Redeye tribe (as it came to be known) began an aggressive series of raids against the surrounding human communities. After several townsfolk witnessed Redeye's fanaticism, rumors spread among the human communities of the region that some sort of aspect of Talos was leading the lizardfolk.

Meanwhile, Ilthane had reestablished contact with Dragotha's agents and acquired a new set of Kyuss worms. Eventually, Ilthane realized that the reports of a lizardfolk aspect of Talos began shortly after the disappearance of the Black Claws and that the two events were probably related. After her initial attempt to infect the lizardfolk with masses of undead worms failed, Ilthane approached Redeye and forged her alliance with the tribe. Now, in addition to her plot to incubate a new crop of worms in the tribe's eggs, Ilthane keeps close watch over Redeye, observing how he unknowingly serves her needs.

REDEVE

[Talos]

CR 8 Male lizardfolk barbarian 6/divine champion 1

CE Medium humanoid (reptilian) Monster Manual 169

Init +6; Senses Spot +1, Listen +1

Languages Common, Draconic

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21; improved uncanny dodge hp 89 (9 HD) Fort +11, Refi +7, Will +3 Spd 40 ft. Melee +1 returning trident +14/+9 (1d8+5/19-20) and bite +10 (1d4+2) **Ranged** +1 returning trident +12 (1d8+5/19-20) Base Atk +8; Grp +12 Special Atk rage 2/day Abilities Str 18, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12 SQ hold breath, lay on hands 1 point/day, trap sense +2 Feats Improved Critical (trident), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (trident) Skills Balance +8, Intimidate +7, Jump +12, Knowledge (religion) +3, Sense Motive +4, Swim +8 **Possessions** shield of the destroyer (+1 heavy steel

- shield), +1 returning trident, bracers of armor +3, Redeye (single eye of the eagle made of a translucent ruby lens), pouch containing 31 cp, 35 sp, and 90 gp.
- Rage (Ex): While he is raging, Redeye's statistics change as follows:
- AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 19; improved uncanny dodge hp 107 (9 HD) Fort +13, Will +5
- Melee +1 returning trident +16/+11 (1d8+7/19-20) and
- bite +12 (1d4+3)
- **Ranged** +1 returning trident +12 (1d8+7/19-20) **Grp** +14

Abilities Str 22, Con 22

Skills Jump +14, Swim +10

RUNNING "ENCOUNTER AT BLACKWALL KEEP" IN EBERRON

by Keith Baker

ncounter at Blackwall Keep" brings the heroes into conflict with a tribe of misguided lizardfolk, who have become tools of those who seek to usher in the Age of Worms. Only a few changes are required to adapt the adventure to EBERRON, but these create ideas that you may wish to explore in the future.

The Lizardfolk of the King's Forest

"Encounter at Blackwall Keep" is based around the idea that the people of the Free City have had a long-standing conflict with the local lizardfolk, and that the keep was built to hold these lizardfolk raiders in check. However, in EBERRON, we've set the Free City as Sharn, and there aren't any lizardfolk near Sharn.

Or are there?

In modern-day Khorvaire, the largest concentration of lizardfolk can be found in Q'barra. But the lizardfolk are reclusive by nature—and until humans settled Q'barra during the Last War, no one knew about the reptilian civilization hidden in the jungle.

Over the last century, lizardfolk have been found in other dark corners of Khorvaire. Explorers and soldiers seeking refuge have found lizardfolk in a variety of caves, swamps, and jungles, including the King's Forest of Breland.

The King's Forest is a a rain forest that covers thousands of square miles, stretching out north and east of Sharn. Although hunting is prohibited, the King's Forest has long been a haven for poachers and brigands, as well as monsters and magical beasts that were hunted

down and killed if they ventured into the open. The lizardfolk of this region fought the Dhakaani goblinoids and the minions of the Daelkyr thousands of years ago, and learned to fear outsiders. For centuries they have been living under the noses of the human invaders, hidden in the heart of the forest and avoiding all contact with the softskins. But then the plague of worms struck down their children. The dragon Ilthane came to their hidden villages and told them the humans and the other softskins were to blame for the catastrophe, and for the last decade she has nutured the flames of rage in the hearts of the lizardfolk. The lizardfolk have never attacked Blackwall Keep, until now.

Characters who make a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) or bardic knowledge check upon seeing the lizardfolk recall stories about hunters who claimed to have seen lizardfolk in the King's Forest. These stories depict the lizardfolk as shy and peaceful. While the lizardfolk have druids, they do not follow any of the Eldeen druidic traditions presented in the EBERRON Campaign Setting.

Blackwall Keep

This fortress is located 130 miles north of Sharn, where the King's Forest reaches out toward the banks of the Dagger River. It is part of a chain of small fortresses set along the trade road, which both watch the shores of the Dagger and combat poachers, bandits, and other threats that emerge from the King's Forest. The swampy jungle east of Blackwall Keep has an unusually high percentage of dangerous magical beasts, and the keep has always had a skilled battle mage on hand to handle these monsters. At present, that is Allustan's friend Marzena.

Encounters on the Road

Goblins and orcs are not inherently savage in Eberron, and this is too deep in Breland for raiders from Droaam or Darguul. Revise the following encounters:

Goblins: The goblins are poachers, who rely on the game they find on the edge of the forest to feed their families. While they are not evil or innately hostile, they are returning from the hunt with illegal venison and are on edge; aggressive PCs could provoke them to violence.

Lizardfolk: As lizardfolk are not common in the region, this party is from the same tribe that is attacking Blackwall, and they attack humans on sight.

Orcs: Instead of encountering orcs, a result of 86-90 results in an encounter with 3 Unhinged Soldiers (EL 4). The powers of Khyber and Xoriat are always lurking in the shadows of Eberron, and the horrors of war have driven these Brelish soldiers to the worship of the Dragon Below. They have become ravenous cannibals and only emerge from the King's Forest to prey on travelers on the road. They are filthy: their clothes are torn, their eyes are mad, and they are covered with dirt and dried blood. They have lost the ability to speak and are driven only by hunger and instinct. If any of the PCs served Breland in the war, perhaps they recognize one of these unfortunates as a former comrade-at-arms.

UNHINGED SOLDIER

Male human warrior 2/barbarian 1
N Medium humanoid
Init +1; Senses Spot -1, Listen +3
Languages Common
AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Dodge, Mobility
hp 18 (3 HD)
Fort +5, Refi +1, Will -1
Spd 40 ft.
Melee longsword +4 (1d8+1/19–20)
Base Atk +3; Grp +4
Special Atk rage 1/day
Abilities Str 12, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 10
Feats Dodge, Mobility, Toughness
Skills Climb +3, Intimidate +6, Jump +3, Listen +3,
Survival +4
Possessions longsword, studded leather armor,
heavy wooden shield
Rage (Ex): While he is raging, an unhinged
soldier's statistics change as follows:
AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 12
hp 24 (3 HD)
Fort +7, Will +1
Melee longsword +6 (1d8+3/19–20)
Grp +6

Abilities Str 16, Con 15 Skills Climb +5, Jump +5

The Mistmarsh

The Mistmarsh is an exceptionally swampy area of the jungle to the east of Blackwall Keep. The rough terrain has kept hunters from exploring it thoroughly, which made it a haven for the lizardfolk and dangerous beasts rarely found in the open woods. It can be used as a marshy region within a vast rain forest, and not a freestanding swamp.

The ghouls encountered in the Mistmarsh are the remnants of a band of soldiers of the Emerald Claw. The Claw sent this unit, composed of a priest and several soldiers, to Breland to perform acts of sabotage during the war. After some of the soldiers were killed by beasts in the forest, the priest animated their corpses as ghouls. After the priest fell to a Brelish patrol, the ghouls ran wild, killing and transforming the rest of the soldiers. People familiar with Karrnath may recognize the distinctive uniforms of the Emerald Claw (see page 226 of the EBERRON Campaign Setting).

The Lair

CR 2

The harpies found in area 4 served Breland as mercenary scouts during the Last War. After they were severely wounded in battle, the harpies were found and healed by the lizardfolk. The lizardfolk treat them well, and the harpies have chosen to remain with their new allies. Shukak, the Lizard King, was not raised as a slave, but he was captured by a hunting expedition and pressed into fighting in the Burning Ring of Sharn. This is against the Code of Galifar—but people liked watching the creature fight, and Hoas Junter paid the Watch to look the other way.

Ilthane

You may wonder how the dragon Ilthane fits into the grand scheme of things: aren't the dragons of Argonnessen the ancient enemies of the Lords of Dust? This fact makes the corruption of a dragon to the cause of darkness all the sweeter. More information about Ilthane, her master Dragotha, and their ties to the oldest evils of Eberron will be revealed in future installments of this appendix.



THE CLOCKWORK FORTRESS

by Wolfgang Baur

A mechanical man discovers his ancestral fortress has fallen to a lunatic derro, but something worse than mad derro haunts the Clockwork Fortress' gears. A D&D adventure for 8th-level characters.

Prince Oskari Lodestar





Kieran Yanner



Kieran Yanner



Kieran Yanneı



Robert Lazzaretti









Robert Lazzaretti



BLOOD OF MALAR

by Eric L. Boyd

Seductive vampires, hungry werewolves, sinister drug dealers, trouble in the sewers, and an undead beholder? Just another day in Waterdeep! The first adventure in the Vampires of Waterdeep Campaign Arc, "Blood of Malar" is a FORGOTTEN REALMS adventure for 13th-level characters.









Robert Lazzaretti



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THE MENAGERIE

by B. Matthew Conklin III

What happens when a vagabond finds a weird snake down by the river and gives it to the local curio shop? Find out in "The Menagerie," winner of the Origins/DUNGEON Side Trek Design Competition, a D&D adventure for 6th-level characters.

Tony Moseley







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