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Marked in red are the locations of each part of the adventure.

Raiders of Ivywatch

Raiders of Ivywatch is an adventure set in Vasloria, a woody, humid, and vaguely Europe-like region of Orden. The adventure is designed for two to seven 1st-level heroes and grants between 8 and 18 Victories.

Deatheye Yslansh

The lizardfolk necromancer Deatheye Yslansh wants to summon the Avatar of Torment, Excrucior Interfectus to wipe out Tullow Vale and leave behind a wasteland of death for her to lord over.

Ajax's Hawklords bombard Ivywatch and steal the Statue of Redemption. The attack provided the perfect opportunity for Yslansh to use her forces to collect the materials she needs: bodies. Lives.

All the while, with the removal of the statue and the ancient seal it held, long-shut portals around the vale open wide, letting anything through...

Adventure Hook

Raiders of Ivywatch assumes the following adventure hook.

Guards for Hire: The heroes accompany a merchant who has hired them for protection along the wooded road to Ivywatch, promising coin and political connections as a reward.



Deatheye Yslansh summons Excrucior Interfectus

Guide to Tullow Vale

Tullow Vale is tucked in between the foothills of the Myr Mountains of Vasloria, with farmland to the east and elf-haunted wode to the west.

The Central Tension

Long ago, an ancient civilization in Tullow Vale was ruled centrally by a single dwarven king in the great city of Kalacles. In the wake of Ajax's campaign and the death of the more recent, local Vaslorian duke, the lords of Tullow Vale now question whether to retain the town-and-lord system, paying taxes to but not protected by a distant and apathetic baron, or to centralize power under the Old Ways and choose a new King of the Vale.

Movers and Shakers

Two characters representative of major factions in Tullow Vale appear in *Raiders of Ivywatch*. The first is Gwenyll Thorton, the lord of Ivywatch.

Gwenyll Thorton, Lord of Ivywatch

"We've survived worse, and we did it by looking out for ourselves. And nobody else."

Lord Thorton is skeptical of anything but a **decentralized Vale**.

Motivations:

- **Legacy** – The Thortons have prevented Ivywatch's destruction for generations and Gwenyll will sacrifice much, and many, to maintain that standard.
- **Peace** – As a trading town, Ivywatch only prospers in peace, and Gwenyll places huge value in that.

Pitfalls:

- **Protection** – Gwenyll knows that Ivywatch is only kept alive by its citizens, and her failing to prevent the Hawklords and lizardfolk raids on her watch is eating her up inside.
- **Vengeance** – Thortons are taught young that vengeance is a fool's errand and an easy path toward death and destruction.

The second is Squire Bleddyn, a scout for the Knights of Golden Ivy, specifically the Oak Shields Company.

Bleddyn, Squire to the Oak Shields Company of the Knights of Golden Ivy

"I was to spend today in prayer, but if the dogged churls insist on a fight, I must oblige."

Every Knight of Golden Ivy swears an oath to Tullow Vale. **Bleddyn wants a King** to represent the Vale, lest the oath they swear be hollow.

Motivations:

- **Higher Authority** – Bleddyn respects the chain of command and is honored to serve Knight Andreja. Bleddyn hugely admire Paladin Millicent and thinks she ought to be Commander.
- **Protection** – As goes the oath of the Oak Shields Company of the Knights of Golden Ivy, Bleddyn "shelters the Vale" and never wavers.

Bleddyn frequently wavers, or at least hesitates, in spite of their oath. If the heroes point this out, Bleddyn does not appreciate it and Protection becomes a Pitfall.

Pitfalls:

- **Revelry** – Bleddyn doesn't fight for the glory or for the fun of it, and is suspicious of those who do.
- **Freedom** – What point is there to endless options when you have a duty? When you swear an oath to do something to your best ability? They're distractions.

Other Nearby Faction Leaders

Here are some other faction leaders that are nearby Ivywatch, but do not appear in this adventure.

Wilim “the Idle” Griffies, Lord of St. Gaed

“You weren’t able to save the peasants from their fate? A pity.”

Lord Griffies wishes he was King Griffies.

Tybald MacGraw, Guildmaster of the Company of Cordwainers

“The company knows every boot in the Vale. Where it’s been and where it’s going.”

Guildmaster MacGraw foresees the greatest profit in the Capital of a centralized Vale.

The Mountain Reaching Downward in Still Water’s Mirror, Listener to the Apothechron

“Listen long enough and the Vale’s history echoes. A speech becomes a legend becomes a speech again.”

Listener Stillwater does not want to compete with a King for the hearts of her parishioners.

The Magnificent Merlu, Director of the Radenwights of Tull Wode

“The breadth of my character cannot be summarized in a single quote! I am the MAGNIFICENT MERLU!”

Merlu is writing his Magnum Opus based on the power struggle in Tullow Vale. In his professional opinion, the best version of that story is one where a King is crowned in the end.

Running the Adventure

Throughout the events of *Raiders of Ivywatch*, the heroes will naturally want to take Respite. If the heroes leave a location unfinished, upon their return, choose a battlemat from one of the formerly-combat Scenes they pass through and fit it with the following encounter.

Draw Steel! “Beyond Saving”

The heroes are confronted with the consequences of their hesitation.

Earn 1 Victory for killing all non-minion enemies.

Dir. Note: The zombies are recognizable as former Ivywatch citizens. When the heroes defeat all the non-minions, the zombies return to being inert corpses.

Encounter

The heroes begin in the box marked “START.” The positions of all enemies are immediately detectable.

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces: <i>Undead</i>
2	-	Squad A: 1 Ghoul (capn) + 6 Rotting Zombies (m) Squadless: 1 Umbral Stalker
4	-	Squad A: 1 Ghoul (capn) + 8 Rotting Zombies (m) Squad B: 2 Specters Squadless: 2 Umbral Stalkers

* for unlisted party sizes, add 2 Ghouls (Squadless) per extra member over a listed party size.

Tactics

The umbral stalkers’ Freezing Dark malice ability creates some interesting terrain, re-contextualizing a familiar battlemat. The rest of the enemies are just trying to make the heroes prone.

A Note on Encounter Balance

The encounters in this adventure are all balanced for a party with zero victories. Generally, encounters with objectives other than “kill everything” leave tactical flexibility and don’t need to be adjusted. The malice you start an encounter with will also do heavy lifting.

Information Map

Near the end of the adventure, there is a puzzle and a potential negotiation, both of which require, or are strongly influenced by information gathered throughout the adventure in earlier scenes.

The Oath of the Knights

Swearing the oath of the Knights of Golden Ivy in the Tomb (Scene 6) **grants the heroes one of two titles**, depending on how they formulate the oath.

The oath is composed of multiple named parts, which are recited in order to the statue of the Third Commander in order to become a squire.

As squires, the heroes can then prove their oath by challenging the guardian of the tomb, the statue of the Third Commander come to life. If they succeed, **they receive the treasure Skullbloom, Axe of Golden Ivy**.

The Prayer

The Forestal witness
You uplifted us
Orden shivered
Witness me

- The Prayer is never spoken aloud except when taking the oath.
- The Prayer is written in the Chapel in Scene 5 and on the Obelisk in Scene 4.

The Duty of Oak

As the oak gives shade and never wavers in a gale
So will I shelter the Vale and never waver in the storm of evil

The Duty of Thorns

As thorns draw blood from those who covet the rose
So will I draw blood from fiends who covet the Vale

- Only one of the Duties is sworn as part of the oath. You swear the Duty corresponding to the company you are joining.
- The Duties are written in the Gaol (Scene 3).
- Lord Thorton's sword is inscribed with a Duty.

The Offering

My blood belongs to the King
My heart belongs to my _____
My mind is focused on the mission

- Part of the Offering is personal to each member of the knights. When swearing the oath, a prospective squire fills in the blank with who or what their own heart belongs to.
- Statues throughout Fort Ranaghan commemorate fallen knights with their name and their heart's offering.
- The Offering in its entirety is written in the Tomb (Scene 6) and on the Obelisk (Scene 4).

The Ultimatum

Until the three-jawed usurper lay dead, or do I

- The Ultimatum is written on the cauldron in Scene 1 and on the Obelisk (Scene 4).

The order in which the stanzas of the oath must be recited is written in the Tomb (Scene 6) along with the prompt to swear the oath.

Other Knight Info

The ranks of the Knights of Golden Ivy are as follows:

Page (non-member) → Squire → Knight → Paladin

There is one paladin per company. The paladins relevant in this adventure are:

- Paladin Millicent
- Paladin Tomas and Jacca, Lord of the Hawks

The original four members were, in turn, the four Commanders of the knights, and they were all Derwic. They have since died, and are entombed in four different forts across Tullow Vale.

Some current members believe a 5th Commander should be chosen. Opinions differ on who should fill the role.

Squires and Pages do not know who or what exactly the "Three-Jawed Usurper" is. Only that they must die.

Part 1: Ivywatch

You've spent the last few days following the Baron's Road south down to Ivywatch, walking alongside the wagon of your employer, a blond, spectacle-wearing, fidgety polder merchant named Lewin Coppertoe.

Should Mr. Coppertoe and all of his cargo make it safely to Ivywatch, you will be paid the rest of the agreed upon amount and he promises to put in a good word for you with his cousin, the steward to the lord of Ivywatch.

Bouncing around the wagon is a fellow guard: Baxter is Lewin's cousin's dog that he left with Lewin when he had to quickly return to Ivywatch and couldn't make other arrangements. Lewin and Baxter are both looking forward to Baxter's return to his owner.

Boxed, italicized text like this is meant to be read aloud to your players!

Dir. Note: Director notes like this contain information the players should **not** be told!

Scenes



Each part of the adventure has a scene graph like this one showing which scenes connect to which.



Lewin Coppertoe & Baxter

Take a moment to do the following:

- Encourage the players to introduce their heroes if they haven't already.
- Each of the heroes are each well-known in some region, if not this one. Ask each player what the title is of the most popular bard's song about their hero's exploits.
- Ask the players how their heroes each spend evenings in camp while on the road, and how exactly Baxter interrupts them.

The heroes and their employer approach the town of Ivywatch, but something feels off.

The party attempts a **Medium Intuition Group Test** to sense what's wrong.

- *Fewer than half succeed:* The party feels eyes watching them from somewhere, but they can't tell from where exactly. In the upcoming combat encounter, the heroes can start anywhere within the box marked "START."
- *Half or more succeed:* The party smells blood in the air and they see no guards on the battlements of the town. In the upcoming combat encounter, the heroes can start anywhere they choose on the map.

Scene 1: The Gate

Pools of blood paint the floor of the gatehouse, but there are no bodies in sight.

“Well, this isn’t safe at all! Clearly!”

Lewin is shaking like a leaf just looking at what has become of Ivywatch. His eyes widen as he spots a horde of lizardfolk rounding a corner and sprinting towards the gate. Towards your wagon.

Some of the lizardfolk carry people, struggling and screaming. They need help, now. Lewin cries out, his voice cracking.

“Ignore them! You must protect me! And my wares!”

He looks at you all expectantly.

“Don’t be heroes!”

Draw Steel! “The Horde”

Lizardfolk race past the heroes and their employer.

Earn 1 Victory for keeping Lewin (who stays on the “WAGON”) alive until all the enemies are dead or gone.¹

Earn 1 Victory for saving sufficient citizens from the lizardfolks’ clutches before they reach the box marked “ESCAPE.” The Director chooses what number of saved citizens is sufficient.

Movement

- While in a full square of water, use the “Underwater Combat” rules: fire immunity 5, lightning weakness 5, and if your speed doesn’t have the Swim keyword, all your power rolls take a bane.
- The bridge is **2 squares** above the river.
- Stairs and ladders allow heroes to surmount height differences as if they were half as tall.

¹ This adventure assumes the players know exactly what the conditions are to earn Victories in each encounter. Just read it aloud before they draw steel.

Encounter

Depending on the result of the previous Group Test, heroes begin either in the box marked “START” or anywhere else on the map. The positions of all enemies are immediately detectable.

Each lizardfolk grunt holds a citizen of Ivywatch (see “Tactics”).

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces: <i>Lizardfolk</i>
2	Gate	Squad A: 6 Tonguers (m) Squad B: 6 Grunts (m) Squadless: 1 Skyterror
	Wall	
4	Gate	Squad A: 8 Tonguers (m) Squad B: 5 Grunts (m) Squad C: 5 Grunts (m) Squadless: 2 Skyterrors + 1 Bloodeye
	Wall	

* for unlisted party sizes, add 5 Shellguard (m) in a new squad (Gate) per extra member over a listed party size.

Round 2: Deatheye Yslansh

At the end of the 1st round of combat, the heroes are interrupted by the clarion call of a warhorn from the forest behind them. From the trees appears an entire lizardfolk warband, **carrying even more citizens!**

A cloaked figure emerges further and throws back their hood. A pale face with one jet-black eye looks out at the heroes and points a crooked finger.

At your feet, the bodies of the slain arise again. Their minds are gone; all they know is KILL!

Nearby corpses arise as undead and attack the heroes! The warband and their cloaked leader disappear back into the forest with their hostages.

The following enemies appear amidst the combat. They do not attempt to escape; they fight to the death.

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces: <i>Undead</i>
-	Gate	Squad Y: 4 Rotting Zombies (m) Squad Z: 4 Rotting Zombies (m)

Tactics

Grunts & Citizens

The grunts in **Squad B** (and **Squad C**) each carry a citizen (grabbed). The citizens do not have turns in combat and cannot act, nor escape the grab themselves. The grunts will attempt to reach the box marked “ESCAPE” and exit the combat as quickly as possible.

Do not let the grunts use their action to move up to their speed again, unless the heroes begin the encounter in an extremely advantageous position.

A citizen, upon being freed, will manage to immediately slip through the enemies and escape back into the town through the gate, exiting the combat.

Lizardfolk Combat Strategies

The tonguers can pull the heroes into the water, where their power rolls have banes. The bloodeye can attack from high ground, where it has an edge. The skyterror can fly between the bridge and the battlements and has an edge on their Poison Blowdart from high ground. The shellguard give the heroes banes, which prevent them from using opportunity attacks.

Spending 10 Malice allows the lizardfolk to use Flood the Shores, which can hugely aid in their escape! Iron Jaws (3 Malice) is also useful for sealing off bottlenecks.

If the heroes are tanky (30+ Stamina) or the players are confident, assign the Skyterrors to captain the minion squads, especially the grunts (granting them Speed +2).²

Bring the Bodies!

The lizardfolk all would rather run away than fight to the death. And they will try to take corpses (not zombies) along with them!

The Hawklords Return!

When the combat ends, an iron orb the size of a horse falls from the sky onto the gate into town, destroying it. Heroes in the box marked “GATE” must make an Agility power roll:

11-	Barely escape the rubble, hurting yourself in the process. You have a bane on your next power roll as part of a montage test or in a combat encounter.
12-16	Escape the falling rubble without issue.
17+	Escape with ease and extra time: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first hero to get this result spots and grabs a silver locket in a pool of blood. It holds a tiny painting of a young adult human and is inscribed with “K+V” in a heart.• Other heroes to get this result can each help one hero who got a Tier 1 result, boosting them to Tier 2 (they will not be slowed).

Descending from the sky above Ivywatch is a flight of Hawklords. All but one carry huge iron orbs, and they fly toward Ivywatch Keep.

If the rest of the iron orbs have the same purpose as the one that fell on the gate, whomever remains in Ivywatch is in immediate danger.

Baxter intuitively understands this and leaps from the wagon toward the gate. He runs full tilt down the main road of Ivywatch toward the keep.

But! Every second, the lizardfolk warband marches further into the forest with the hostages. Their fate is uncertain, even if you found them quickly...

If the heroes choose to follow Baxter’s lead and save Ivywatch from the Hawklords, go to [Scene 2](#).

If the heroes choose to enter the forest and track down the lizardfolk warband, go to [Scene 5](#).

² The adventure assumes that the players clearly understand which enemies are minions (“these ones look particularly frail and untrained!”) and which are captains commanding minions (“they seem to listen to the orders of this one!”).

Scene 2: Bombardment!

Following Baxter's race against the Hawklords to the keep will be a montage test. The failure limit is 2 and the success limit is equal to the number of heroes (minimum 3, maximum 5).

The challenges of the montage test align with obstacles along the way to the keep.

Following Baxter

- *A multi-story tavern has collapsed, covering the road with a heap of splintered timbers and rubble that would be insurmountable for a normal person.*
- *The main road ends at the market square and splits into many alleys and narrow streets. It's not obvious which path is most direct to the keep.*
- *A raging fire's roar drowns out Baxter's barking, making it harder to tell which direction he's determined is quickest to the keep.*
- *As you pass some corpses, a lizardfolk you thought dead claws at you, gashing your leg. You can't run with the wound unattended.*
- *Bodies and mud clog up the street passing the collapsed chapel. Baxter nimbly navigates the mess, but you're too big to follow in the same way.*
 - *If a hero takes on this challenge with an intrigue or lore skill, whether they succeed or not, they find a lizardfolk corpse clutching a rosary that doesn't appear to be theirs.*

The first hero to roll a Tier 3 their test finds a sealed letter among the rubble addressed to "Jacqueline."

Deflect the Orbs!

The heroes arrive at the keep just as the Hawklords begin their second assault of Ivywatch, dropping iron orbs on the keep. The party attempts an Agility Group Test to deflect the bombardment.

The heroes' successes and failures in the montage test determine the difficulty of the Group Test and the consequences of success or failure.

Total Failure

The party attempts a **Hard Agility Group Test**.

- *Fewer than half succeed:* The keep's walls and bridge are destroyed. The citizens are far more vulnerable now. The heroes are exhausted from the chase and the bombardment. In Scene 3, all heroes begin the encounter slowed (EoT).
- *Half or more succeed:* The hawklords that descend cry out to the heroes "Are you the bastards that led the lizards to attack?!" The townsfolk glare at the hawklords with hate.

Partial Success

The party attempts a **Medium Agility Group Test**.

- *Fewer than half succeed:* The keep's walls and bridge are destroyed. The citizens are far more vulnerable now.
- *Half or more succeed:* The hawklords that descend cry out to the heroes "Are you the bastards that led the lizards to attack?!" The townsfolk glare at the hawklords with hate.

Total Success

The party attempts a **Medium Agility Group Test**.

- *Fewer than half succeed:* The keep's walls are destroyed. The keep is much less defensible now.
- *Half or more succeed:* The hawklords that descend cry out to the heroes "Are you the bastards that led the lizards to attack?!" but the townsfolk throw rocks at them. In Scene 3, all enemies begin the encounter slowed (EoT).

Scene 3: The Hawklords

The hawklords descend upon the keep, both against the heroes and among the townsfolk!

“We know the Jewel of Redemption is here, we know you have hidden it! Give it to us now and no one will get hurt!”

A stoic woman in leather armor walks forward and unsheathes a hand-and-a-half sword.

“Come and take it! Strike down a real lord and earn your jewel! If you can!”

Draw Steel! “The Hawklords”

The Hawklords attempt to kill Lord Thorton.

Earn 1 Victory for ending the immediate threat of the Hawklords and preventing them from killing the lord and any townsfolk.

Height

- Each ledge is **2 squares** tall.
- The upper floor and battlements are **4 squares** tall.

Encounter

If the gate was destroyed in the group test, use the “GATE FALLEN” map variant, otherwise use the “GATE STANDING” map variant. Likewise, if the bridge was destroyed, put the “BRIDGE FALLEN” prop on the map, otherwise put the “BRIDGE STANDING” prop on the map.

The heroes begin in the box marked “START.” The positions of all enemies are immediately detectable.

Lord Thorton is a **Human Warrior Level 1 Retainer** during this encounter.

Dir. Note: If Lord Thorton is close to death, her steward (an older polder) will throw himself in the way of the final blow, allowing Thorton a decisive strike on her attacker.

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces: <i>Humans</i>
2	Bridge Keep	Squad A: 4 Guards (m) Squad B: 4 Guards (m) Squad C: 1 Knave + 1 Giant Hawk (mt)
4	Bridge Keep	Squad A: 6 Guards (m) Squad B: 6 Guards (m) Squad C: 1 Knave + 1 Giant Hawk (mt) Squadless: 2 Brawlers

* for unlisted party sizes, add 1 Trickshot (Bridge – Squadless) per extra member over a listed party size.

End of Each Round: Loose!

At the end of each encounter, the hawklords drop another iron ball from the sky:

Round	Where & How to Drop
1	Drop on the heroes, avoid townsfolk.
2	Drop on heroes on the walls or bridge, destroying the structure and making them fall (and take falling damage).
3	Drop on townsfolk and heroes (ideally more heroes than townsfolk). Allow each hero to Assist the Test of one of the targeted townsfolk as a free triggered action.

Iron Ball Drop

KW: Area, Weapon

Distance: 3 cube anywhere on map

Target: Each enemy in the cube

Effect: Each target makes an **Agility Test:**

11-	7 damage; M<2 prone can’t stand (save ends)
12-16	5 damage; M<1 prone can’t stand (EoT)
17+	4 damage; M<0 prone

Tactics

The knave and its hawk in **Squad B** will spend their turn trying attacking Lord Thorton. The guards and brawlers will try to reach townsfolk, grab them, and then attack them and use them as meat shields. The trickshots can focus fire on the heroes (or the Lord if you want to be mean) from high ground.

Scene 4: Ivywatch Keep

The lord of Ivywatch approaches you.

“I appreciate your help fighting those damn so-called lords. We were prepared for them this time, but I’m glad you were here all the same.”

She wipes the blood from her blade. An inscription stands out red against the cold steel.

“Do you know what the jewel is they spoke of?”

- The inscription is in Kheltivari and reads “So will I shelter the Vale and never waver in the storm of evil.”
- Before the heroes can confirm or deny they know of the jewel, a young boy interrupts.

A Happy Accident

The boy reveals a stone wrapped in a rag. It’s dirty, but golden and shaped like a berry from a vine.

“I... I’m sorry.” He looks back over his shoulder to an older couple. The woman looks at him sternly.

“Me and Ellyn were just playing Hopsgammen in the village green and uh... this fell off the... the statue. And I was going to return it, but... and now Ellyn...”

He holds the Jewel of Redemption out like it’s a wild animal. His father joins him.

“Milord, we had no idea. Thought it was just an odd rock he found in the river.”

- An **Easy Reason Test** reveals the jewel to be a sliver of sunmetal lacquered in tree resin – a well-known relic of Thyll Hylacae.
- Lord Thorton hands the jewel to the heroes. “They said they *knew* we had this. They didn’t suspect, they knew. They can track this. And we can’t fight them off, but you can. Take it.”
- **Give the players the Rewards: “Hawklords’ Quarry” and the “Jewel of Redemption.”**



Gwenyll Thorton, Lord of Ivywatch

The Lord of Ivywatch

“Well, back to the battle in front of us.”

Gwenyll turns back to the camp of townsfolk within the walls of the keep. Dozens of families are anxiously waiting in the courtyard, stables, and animal pen. A few people tentatively move among the crowd, calling out names.

The keep is a temporary sanctuary. Safe enough, a respite would be possible here.

Gwenyll asks the party without turning back to them, “Did you happen to see a merchant cart on your way into town, driven by a polder? Might look like my steward here?”

The steward is Lewin Coppertoe’s cousin, Calvin Toppahill. He suspects the “heroes” are vagabonds, were Lewin’s bodyguards, and that they killed him and stole his goods at the first opportunity. He has no evidence, he’s just suspicious of outsiders.

Gwenyll Thorton is **the Lord of Ivywatch**. If the heroes did kill Lewin, she knows the truth will reveal itself in time. But she fights the battle in front of her, and right now, that’s accounting for the health and safety of the citizens of Ivywatch.

This is not necessarily a negotiation, but the heroes can, with proper arguments and successful tests, be rewarded:

- If the heroes can prove that Lewin Coppertoe escaped, alive, then they **earn 1 Renown**.
- If the heroes show the locket, the letter, or the rosary, and can persuade the Lord and the steward that they didn't steal or kill to possess it, then they are awarded one **Healing Potion** per item and told who to seek among the citizens to return the items.

locket	Vaughn Morris, the tailor
letter	Jacqueline Mills, the farrier
rosary	Father Edmund, the pastor

- If the heroes mention the lizardfolk necromancer at the gate and the kidnapped citizens being taken into the forest, Lord Thorton listens seriously, and considers their words.

She cares more about Ivywatch and the still-alive people therein than chasing down some lizardfolk to who-knows-where.

The Lord and the Luthier

While the heroes speak with Lord Thorton and her steward or before they can leave the conversation, a frantic man interrupts them.

“Strangers! Did you see a young girl among the lizards? A blue dress with a white ribbon? It might have been dirty! Brown, black! She has uhh... green eyes! She’s missing a tooth here!”

The man quickly points to his left front tooth. He turns to Lord Thorton.

“Milord, please, Ellyn is still out there. I’ll be quick and silent, just let me go! Please!”

The man is Alan Reese, a luthier. Alan’s wife died in childbirth, he lives alone with his daughter Ellyn. Alan and Ellyn were separated in the raid on Ivywatch. Alan wants nothing more than to leave the walls of the keep and search for his daughter.

Lord Thorton wants to account for all citizens, but won’t let a single one she knows is alive and in her grasp escape from her, including Alan.

Alan and Lord Thorton each make a plea to the heroes:

“You can leave these walls and you can handle yourselves! Please, find my daughter! Find Ellyn! Before it’s too late!”

*“Anyone not in these walls are likely already dead. But you are **alive**, Alan. We are **alive**, we are **here**, and we need **help**. From anyone who can give it! **All of you** will stay. At least until tomorrow.”*

As long as the heroes choose to help, whether they side with Alan or Lord Thorton, they **earn 1 Victory**.

- If the heroes side with Lord Thorton and decide to stay until tomorrow, they take one 12-hour **Respite** (go to “Respite in Ivywatch Keep”).
- If the heroes side with Alan and decide to leave immediately, the Lord acquiesces and tells the party where the citizens have likely been taken by the lizardfolk: Fort Ranaghan (go to [Part 2](#)). The heroes **earn the Marshal title**.

But What About the Jewel?

If the heroes argue to Lord Thorton that they should leave with the jewel to coax the Hawklords away from Ivywatch, she acquiesces and does not argue the point. Continue as if the heroes sided with Alan.

Respite in Ivywatch Keep

See “Citizens & Leads in Ivywatch” during the respite.

After the respite ends, Alan joins the heroes and explains to them rumors he’s heard of a strange ruin out in the forest that lizardfolk have been seen around in the past: Fort Ranaghan.

After the respite, you might choose to run the “Beyond Saving” encounter with either of Ivywatch’s battlemaps.

Continue the adventure with [Part 2: Fort Ranaghan](#).

Citizens & Leads in Ivywatch

In addition to their downtime activities, during their Respite in Ivywatch Keep, the heroes can speak with any number of the citizens of Ivywatch and chase down leads that can grant information and rewards.

The heroes can only do one group test as part of a citizen's request per respite.

Immediate Respite

If the heroes choose to take respite in Ivywatch right away after the Hawklords' second attack, Lord Thorton gives them a list of things she needs help with, to start:

- She needs a hero to help her with triage. Go around, determine who is hurt the worst and needs the most urgent medical attention (see "Citizens of Ivywatch – Gwenyll Thorton: Request").
- Gwenyll knows a handful of people who might have tasks the heroes could complete: her steward Calvan Toppahill and his cousin Lewin Coppertoe. And the pastor, Father Edmund was looking for able bodied helpers as well.
- If the heroes showed the locket, rosary, or letter, Gwenyll additionally points them in the direction of the owners.
- Finally, Gwenyll asks that the heroes see if they can find anything out about why the Hawklords' attacked the town and not just the chapel (she's heard of them destroying chapels lately, but not the towns surrounding them).

Back into Town

If the heroes follow a lead or do a citizen's request that takes them back into the town of Ivywatch, each hero does a **Hard Intuition Test**. The first to succeed finds the locket, if it hasn't been found already. The next finds the rosary. The third finds the letter. This is the second and final opportunity to find these items.

Leads in Ivywatch

The heroes might look into a number of leads on their own in Ivywatch during the respite. A few of them give clues that could be helpful later in the adventure.

Gwenyll Thorton's Sword

- The inscription in the sword is written in Kheltivari and reads "So will I shelter the Vale and never waver in the storm of evil."
- Gwenyll had no idea. The sword is an heirloom. She agrees with the sentiment, but doesn't recognize the phrase.
- Upon close examination, a successful **Hard Intuition Test** reveals that the sword has trace amounts of strange magic that resonates with something nearby (tracking this resonance leads to the village green).

The Village Green

- The village green is a large open space of grass in the center of town.
- In the center of the green is a small, fenced off area of dirt. In the middle of the area is a rectangular patch of flattened, hard earth, as if something heavy had been in that location for a long time, but is there no longer.
- The fence of the small fenced area is broken with the splinters spreading out, as if something was inside the fenced area and broke out.

Dir. Note: The heroes might eventually figure out that this was where the Statue of Redemption was placed. The Hawklords stole the statue in their first raid on the town, earlier today. This information is not secret, it's just not something the people of Ivywatch are worried about right now.

Citizens of Ivywatch

The heroes can only do one skill or group test as part of a citizen's request per respite.

General Townsfolk

What you can expect from a normal person in town:

- They know of each of the heroes. Maybe they've heard the songs, maybe they know someone who spoke about the hero, maybe their family or friends were directly saved by them.
- Having been saved from the Hawklords' attack, they're grateful for the help, but frustrated that such capable warriors are here with them and not out seeking the kidnapped citizens.
- They have an opinion on the Central Tension: should Tullow Vale centralize power in the Old Ways under a new king, or should they preserve the decentralized system of towns-and-lords?

Specific Townsfolk

The voices of a few people in Ivywatch happen echo the opinions of large swaths of the town. Players can get a sense of the major conflicting opinions in town through these characters.

Baxter, the Head Guard (and Good Boy)

Baxter doesn't really care whether there's a king or not, so long as he gets fed and can be with Calvin.

- **Rumor** – Baxter suspects the farrier has a stash of cured meat in her tent.
- **Request** – A prized heirloom of Baxter's (a bone he found) fell down a deep ditch along the keep wall and he needs help to retrieve it (**Medium Agility Test** – does not count toward the test limit per respite).
- **Reward** – A rat he caught.

Gwenyll Thorton, Lord of Ivywatch

Lord Thorton is skeptical of anything but a decentralized Vale, where each leader is a neighbor to the people they lead and sees them, their struggles and their triumphs, every day.

- **Rumor** – Lord Griffies will be sending a delegation soon to Ivywatch to ask for Gwenyll's alliance in his bid for kingship. She was preparing to deny him, but now she's going to need to ask for aid too.
- **Request** – Gwenyll will first ask one hero to assist with triage (**Hard Wisdom or Presence Test**).

Then, while citizens are unaccounted for, she will ask that the party seek out the lizardfolk, not for revenge, but to save as many townsfolk as can be saved.

- **Reward** – Triage: **1 Victory** (post-respite)

Rescue: **1 Renown, 1 Wealth**

Calvan Toppahill, Steward to the Lord

Calvan enjoys being near the top of the social ladder, short though it may be in only a small town. He does not want a centralized Vale, which would surely extend the ladder and put him near the bottom.

- **Rumor** – Calvin recently learned from Father Edmund that long ago, the royal family of the Vale wore a lot of jade jewelry imported from the east. Calvin swears he's seen green jewels at the town market from some local miner company, probably out of Frome or somewhere closer to the Glories.
- **Request** – Calvin's wife Nonna says her garden was ripe for harvest when the attack happened. She wants one of the heroes to go to their home, harvest the plants, and bring them back to the keep to share among the families with injured (**Easy Agility Test** – does not count toward the test limit per respite).
- **Reward** – Nonna treats the heroes to a hearty meal from the Lord's kitchen. Increase Recoveries by 1 until the end of the party's next respite.

Lewin Coppertoe, Merchant of Currans

Lewin hates travelling and wishes he could set up shop in a **single big city in a centralized Vale**.

- **Rumor** – Lewin isn't sure when the town will be put back together enough to hold market again. He wonders if today's event will result in the market moving out of Ivywatch and into another town of the Vale, like Eddun's Ferry.
- **Request** – Lewin is expecting mail from a supplier in Eddun's Ferry any day now, and he worries the post service will be scared off by the state of the entrance to the town. He asks that the heroes clean up the gate, patch the bridge, and ideally make it all somehow more inviting (**Medium Presence Group Test**).
- **Reward** – Monetary remuneration, including the payment the heroes are owed from their original escort mission. Each of the heroes' Wealth is increased to 2 if it's not already 2 or higher.

Vaughn Morris, the Tailor

Vaughn has heard rumor of the high fashion in Capital across the Bale Sea and **wishes the Vale was centralized with a big city** innovating in fashion and other fields.

- **Rumor** – Out in the forest, if you ever come upon a mass of broken trees propped up against each other, keep your eyes down to the ground and keep walking until you can hear birds and crickets.³
- **Request** – Vaughn just wants his partner Kane back home, safe.
- **Reward** – One Item Prerequisite for a 1st-Level Armor Enchantment where the Project Source Language is Khelt or Yllyric.

Vaughn is shocked to see the locket, but resolute. He wants to believe his partner, Kane, still lives. He puts the locket around his neck, and gives the heroes his own locket – identical, except the painting inside is of Kane.

³ Heroes who have lived in a wode know this is common practice for dealing with woody boogers (bigfoot).

Jacqueline Mills, the Farrier

Jacqueline believes the Vale is a pale echo of better times long ago in its history and **thinks crowning a King would be a step forward**.

- **Rumor** – The pastor had a bunch of books in the chapel written in a language no one knows anymore but was long ago spoken in the Vale.
- **Request** – Jacqueline needs to be escorted to her destroyed shop and home to retrieve her smithing tools (**Medium Might Group Test**).
- **Reward** – Jacqueline shows you a secret bait recipe for fish in the Wodewash. Give the players the reward **“Wodewash Baiter.”**

Jacqueline reads the letter. It's from her sister in Frome. Jacqueline laughs, she and her sister named the farrier business “The Thorned Gauntlet” after an old fairy tale about knights, but after the Hawklords... she doesn't like knights so much anymore.

Father Edmund, the Pastor

The father fears that a King would only make a convenient puppet for Ajax. He **prefers a decentralized Vale** to that alternative.

- **Rumor** – Listener Stillwater of the Temple of the Apothachron is going to Currans this year for the Forestal Days celebration and might pass through Ivywatch.
- **Request** – The father intends to perform rites for **all** the dead in Ivywatch. He needs the party to collect the lizardfolk bodies at night without getting caught (**Hard Agility or Presence Group Test**).
- **Reward** – Will act as a master for “Learn From A Master” downtime activities for conduits and censors.

The father explains that the rosary is his, despite the foreign symbology on it. The Ivywatch chapel was to St. Gryffyn, but the father's personal rosary counts the stanzas of an old legend of Tullow Vale: Millicent the Oak Shield. A folk hero, really. He doesn't even know the tale, the rosary was his mother's.

Scene 5: The Radenwights

The forest opens to a small clearing with a stone structure sinking in a pond in the center. Part of the lizardfolk warband is taking a short break and you've caught them unawares.

Allow the heroes to devise a plan of attack.

Dir. Note: Ask them leading critiques like “what if they have a scout you can’t see?” and “what’s plan B if you all roll poorly?” Finally, ask them “are you absolutely sure that you’re ready?”

When the heroes enact their plan (or otherwise break stealth), interrupt them before the first ability is used:

Suddenly, you hear a booming and nasally voice.

“The heroes have caught the warband unawares!”

And a guitar strums. The lizardfolk in mere seconds are packed and heading out of the clearing, fleeing the heroes and the voice.

“But they are a step too late! Will their mistake cost the townsfolk their VERY LIVES!? Perhaps a different party of heroes are better suited to the rescue mission... A party such as...”

A small group of armed radenwights (and one playing guitar) appear from among the ruins.

“THE GILDED DOOM OF HEAVEN’S FANG!”

“And now, it’s time to DRAW STEEL! As narrated by ME, your humble narrator!”

“THE MAGNIFICENT MERLU!”

Throughout the fight, Merlu taunts the heroes and feeds them clues about the lizardfolk’s lair’s location simultaneously. For example:

“The tactician hesitates in her strike as her thoughts wander to the fate of the poor citizens, whisked away to the evil, mossy lair of the scaly fiends!”

Merlu’s voice is coming from a magical, oddly angular stone in the pocket of one of the radenwights.

The clues Merlu feeds the heroes are:

- The fort sits atop a hill like a sentry and casts a portentous shadow in the direction of Ivywatch.
- The fort is surrounded by poisonous plants and mushrooms.
- The fort echoes with the rumble of a waterfall, which mimics the growl of the fort’s guard.

Draw Steel! “The Radenwights”

The Gilded Doom of Heaven’s Fang attempts to prove they are the superior heroic party, with steel and blood!

Earn 1 Victory for defeating the radenwights.

Movement

- Squares with any amount of tall grass count as difficult terrain and grant concealment.

Encounter

The heroes begin wherever they decided in their plan. The positions of all enemies are immediately detectable.

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces: Radenwights
#	Ruins	Squadless: 1 Piper + #+1 of Ratcroats
	-	Hazard: Pillars (DTO)

Tactics

Ratcroats are size 1S. If they use En Garde! against a hero larger than them, the power roll has an edge. Swarm a hero with the radenwights so that when one deals damage, the rest can make free strikes with Ready Rodent, and then the piper can refresh the use of Ready Rodent with their maneuver.

The piper can use its Piercing Trill to take down pillars from a distance and heal itself or the ratcroats!

If only the piper remains, it surrenders.

To Be Continued!

When the fight ends, the heroes notice the stone that Merlu communicates through (or are offered the stone by the piper). Merlu concludes the narration:

“The heroes prove their worth! But their ego has cost them precious time! Will they discover Fort Ranaghan and the terrible secrets within? Will they save the citizens before it’s too late!? Find out next time with ME, your humble narrator!”

“THE MAGNIFICENT MERLU!”

The party gains and immediately knows how to operate the treasure (**give the players the Reward “Merlu’s Speaking Stone”**).

Continue the adventure with Part 2: Fort Ranaghan.



Merlu's Speaking Stone

Summary of Part 1

The plot points of Part 1:

- The heroes know the lizardfolk have kidnapped citizens.
- The heroes saw the leader of the lizardfolk.
- The heroes saw the Hawklords attack Ivywatch.
- The heroes chose between following Baxter to save Ivywatch from the Hawklords or following the lizardfolk to save the citizens from their fate.
- If the heroes followed Baxter:
 - they met Lord Gwenyll Thorton.
 - they acquired the Jewel of Redemption.
- If the heroes followed the lizardfolk:
 - they met (kind of) The Magnificent Merlu!
 - they acquired Merlu's Speaking Stone.
- The heroes learned of Fort Ranaghan and where to find it.

The B-Plot

If the heroes save Ivywatch from the Hawklords' second assault, they acquire the Jewel of Redemption.

If the heroes follow the lizardfolk to save the hostages right away, they acquire Merlu's Speaking Stone.

The Hawklords can track the jewel and Merlu knows the location of his stone, and the heroes know it. The heroes also know how useful and powerful their treasure is (it helps them kill monsters better!), so ideally they want to keep it in spite of the danger.

Enter, the B-Plot. At any time, if the players linger or hesitate or just need a kick in the ass, you can deploy an encounter where the Hawklords find them and attack! Or Merlu sends more radenwights to create drama!

The conclusions of the B-Plots are not featured in this adventure.

Part 2: Fort Ranaghan

Whether hearing of Fort Ranaghan from Lord Thorton, Alan Reese, or The Magnificent Merlu, the heroes learn the general direction of the fort from Ivywatch and are easily able to find it, following the warband's tracks.

Approaching the busy and well-guarded fort, on the other hand, is another matter – and a montage test! The failure limit is 2 and the success limit is equal to the number of heroes (minimum 3, maximum 5).

Cracking the Fort

- *The fort is built in the interior of a hill and has no obvious entrances or exits. The watchtowers around the outskirts appear to be of elven design.*
- *A squad of lizardfolk are watering their horses and one of the horses spots the heroes as it drinks.*
- *Atop each of the various watchtowers is at least one lookout. They seem to get distracted easily and frequently, but make up for it with numbers.*
- *Patrols of lizardfolk guards walk their routes lazily, but a normal person wouldn't be able to slip through them without notice.*

Cracking the Fort cont.

- *The grounds around the fortress are covered in lizardfolk tracks going every which way. It would take a trained and discerning eye to tell which tracks were made by those carrying the hostages.*

After the montage test, the heroes arrive at one of two entrances to the fortress. Their successes and failures determine the circumstances of their arrival:

Total Failure

The heroes retreat to an abandoned ruin atop another hill nearby. The heroes are surprised in the encounter that follows. Go to [Scene 1](#).

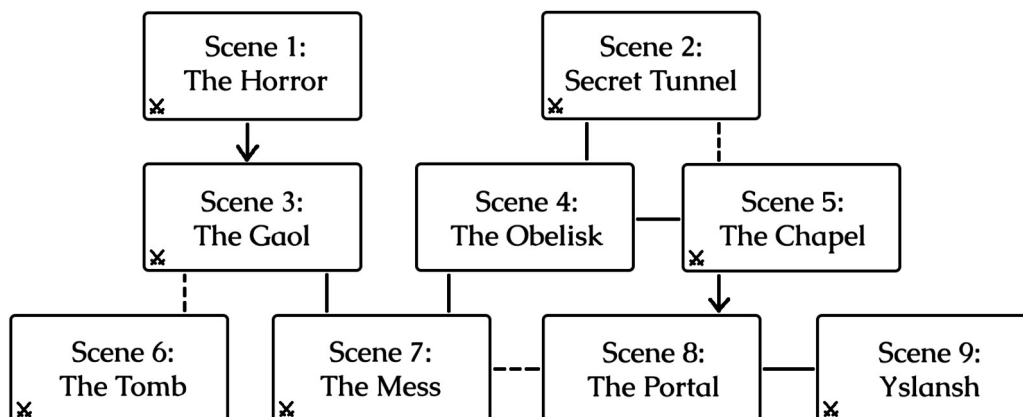
Partial Success

The heroes find a ruin that serves as an entrance to the fort, but its lack of guards is suspicious. The heroes approach carefully, ready for anything. Go to [Scene 1](#).

Total Success

The heroes find the secret entrance to the fort, and its guards are caught unawares. Go to [Scene 2](#).

Scenes



Scene 1: The Horror

Approach from Forest

The ruins of an ancient fort stick out of the hill, a lone tower punctuating its corner. The rumble of a nearby waterfall reverberates what remains standing of the fort's walls.

From Scene 3: The Gaol

The tunnel leads up outside to a courtyard in the ruins of an ancient fort, a lone tower punctuating its corner. Vines sprawl out of the hole in the floor, making the last part of the ascent easier.

Draw Steel! "The Horror"

The heroes find a monstrous horror guarding the fort.

Earn 1 Victory for destroying the horror.

Height

- Each ledge is **2 squares** tall.
- The upper floor and battlements are **4 squares** tall.

Encounter

The positions of all enemies are immediately detectable. If the montage test was a partial success, the heroes begin in the box marked "START" and are surprised. If it was a total success, the heroes begin anywhere on the map and the enemies are surprised.

The horror stands on two mismatched legs. Its skin has brown matted hair in some spots, green scales in others. Where one of its eyes ought to be instead is a wicked grin of sharpened teeth, and it speaks:

"Foolish rats. You've found my favorite experiment! Now suffer and know that your lifeless bodies will be put to excellent use! Just as these ones here will!"

A human scream escapes the mouth and Deatheye Yslansh cackles.

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces
2	Tower Reinforce -	The Horror: 1 War Dog Amalgamite Squad A: 5 Crawling Claws (m) Hazard: Toxic Plants (DTO) + Pillars (DTO)
4	Tower Reinforce -	The Horror: 1 Ogre Goon Squad A: 8 Crawling Claws (m) Hazard: Toxic Plants (DTO) + Pillars (DTO)

* The Horror has Stam. = Party Size * 30 + Victories * 10.
It can take **two non-consecutive turns each round**.

Tactics

The horror is only affected by Toxic Plants when prone. The claws are not affected by Toxic Plants ever.

If the horror would be flanked, Deatheye Yslansh whispers commands to it and the flankers gain no edge.

At the end of each round while the horror lives, deploy a new copy of Squad A in the "REINFORCE" box.

Around the Fort

In the courtyard, a large metal cauldron sits atop a pedestal. Inscribed on the pedestal in Old Vaslorian:

The Ultimatum

Until the three-jawed usurper lay dead, or do I

The fort has some statues of knights. A few inscriptions are written are still legible, written in Old Vaslorian:

- Bertram, whose heart belonged to his family.
- Cecily, whose heart belonged to her home, St. Gaed.

Descent into Fort Ranaghan

The heroes can go down the hole in the courtyard. It is a 28 square drop into water. The distance of the fall can be reduced with clever skill tests (e.g. grabbing the vines). Continue to Scene 3.

Scene 2: Secret Tunnel

Approach from Forest

A camp is set up just outside a cave and a few lizardfolk guards patrol the grounds lazily. The vines surrounding the cave can't completely cover the ancient stones that mark it as an entrance to the fort.

A distant echo of a scream escapes the cave. A couple of the lizardfolk guards look at each other, bare their teeth and bark at the sky.

From Scene 4: The Obelisk

The passage ends in the back of a short cave that opens to the outside. Above the exit, words are inscribed in the stone: "Until the three-jawed usurper lay dead, or do I." Vines jut out and crawl along the walls. A camp is set up just outside and a few lizardfolk guards patrol the grounds lazily.

Draw Steel! "The Camp"

The heroes surprise the lizardfolk guards at their cave.

Earn 1 Victory for preventing any non-minion enemies from escaping via the box opposite the side of the map the heroes start on.

Movement

- Squares with a tree grant cover (whether on the ground or in the tree).
- Squares with any amount of tall grass count as difficult terrain and grant concealment.
- Standing trees and wooden platforms are **2 squares** high for the purposes of climbing and jumping from.

Miscellaneous

- Walls adjacent to toxic plants on the map only have 1 Stamina and crumble if a creature or object is force moved into them.
- Two windows provide cover to targets of ranged abilities shot through them, unless the attacker is adjacent to the window.

Encounter

The heroes begin in either the box marked "FOREST" or "OBELISK." The position of each enemy located Outside is immediately detectable; all other enemy forces start concealed.

The enemies have not yet noticed the heroes' approach. Remind the heroes they have the element of surprise!

During or after the combat, upon examination (or success on a secret, reactive **Medium Insight Test**), the walls near the toxic plants appear weakened and crumbling.

You spy one lizardfolk who looks more attentive and kitted-out than the others. They enter a small cave entrance off to the side...

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces
2	Outside	Squad A: 1 Scaletooth (capn) + 4 Tonguers (m)
	Inside	Squad B: 1 Bloodeye + 4 Grunts (m)
	-	Hazard: Toxic Plants (DTO)
4	Outside	Squad A: 1 Scaletooth (capn) + 8 Tonguers (m)
	Inside	Squadless: 1 Scaletooth Squad B: 1 Bloodeye (capn) + 8 Grunts (m)
	-	Hazard: Toxic Plants (DTO)

** for unlisted party sizes, add 1 Bloodeye (Outside – Squadless) per extra member over a listed party size.*

Tactics

The bloodeyes can attack from the windows, granting them full cover. The Flood the Shores malice ability cranks up the tension by a lot! Use it as soon as possible!

Delving Deeper

If the heroes gain access to the hidden passage, then they can go deeper following the toxic plants (go to [Scene 5](#)) or away from the plants (go to [Scene 4](#)).

Otherwise, they can go deeper into the cave along the river (go to [Scene 4](#)). Alternatively, they can leave the fort through the forest, back to [Ivywatch](#) or wherever.

Scene 3: The Gaol

From Scene 1: The Horror

The hole drops out into a small cavern with a pool, which is fed by a small stream leading up to a jail cell used as a storage room. Crates, barrels, and open sacks of grain are strewn about.

Quiet, steady breathing can be heard from a nearby cell. Suddenly, loud barking breaks the quiet from a distant room. The lizardfolk are distracted.

From Scene 7: The Mess

The hall turns up some stairs and ends in a once-ornate room, now dug up into a mining area. A guard watching hostages mine stands up and barks, having seen the heroes. The walls echo from other rooms with the sounds of steel being drawn!

From Scene 1: Infiltration

Heroes who enter from Scene 1 have the opportunity to infiltrate the gaol before the lizardfolk draw steel.

The heroes begin the infiltration hidden and in the box marked “START.” The jail cell door is locked shut.

Gaol Patrols

A single lizardfolk grunt (minion) each patrols the halls of the gaol along the paths labeled “PATROL.” The heroes see one pass perilously close in front of their cell. They hear it bark and spit further down the hall and someone respond very rudely back to the grunt in Khelivari.

Exploring the Gaol

- In the other jail cells (all locked) are a dead man chained to a wall, a still-wet bloody mess, a skeleton in some muck, and Squire Qoroth.
- In the northeast room, there remains half of a carved mural (the other half excavated for mining). The mural depicts two companies of knights charging into battle:

- At the front of the charge is a company of knights each with an ornate gauntlet and accompanying birds of prey charging with them. Beneath, inscribed in Old Vaslorian:

The Duty of Oak

*As the oak gives shade and never wavers in a gale
So will I shelter the Vale and never waver
in the storm of evil*

- Second in the charge is a company of knights each with a body-length shield. Beneath, inscribed in Old Vaslorian:

The Duty of Thorns

*As thorns draw blood from those who covet the rose
So will I draw blood from fiends who covet the Vale*

- Throughout the area are several statues of knights. A few inscriptions are written are still legible, written in Old Vaslorian:

- *Lowenna, whose heart belonged to her two boys.*
- *Samson, whose heart belonged to his home, Kalacles.*

Saving Squire Qoroth

Meditating in his cell is a stout, muscular man who could be mistaken for a dwarf if not for the fur covering his body and his pointed ears.

- Qoroth is a squire in the Thorned Gauntlet company of the Knights of Golden Ivy.
- His owl partner, Rama, was taken from him and killed (and possibly eaten, he expects) by the lizardfolk in an ambush. He won't forgive them.
- In the heroes, he recognizes opportunity, and offers sincerely to help them kill the lizardfolk in the gaol and rescue the hostages.
 - Qoroth's stat block is **Squire Qoroth Lv 1 Retainer** (in “Stat Blocks” document).
- Qoroth's immediate priority is the safety of the hostages, which he explains the lizardfolk are using as slaves for mining in a nearby room.

Draw Steel! “The Gaol”

The party infiltrates the gaol of Fort Ranaghan.

Earn 1 Victory for clearing the area of lizardfolk.

Encounter

The heroes begin in the box marked “START” or wherever they were detected during their infiltration. All other enemy forces start concealed unless they were discovered by the heroes during the infiltration.

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces: <i>Lizardfolk</i>
2	Mine	Squad A: 1 Skyterror (capn.) + 5 Shellguard (m)
	Table	Squadless: 1 Basilisk (32 stam.) Squad C: 1 Bloodeye (capn.) + 5 Grunts (m)
	Blood	Squad D: 5 Undead Crawling Claws (m)
4	Mine	Squad A: 1 Skyterror (capn.) + 5 Shellguard (m)
	Table	Squad B: 1 Bloodeye (capn.) + 5 Shellguard (m) Squadless: 1 Basilisk (64 stam.) Squad C: 1 Bloodeye (capn.) + 8 Grunts (m)
	Blood	Squad D: 5 Undead Crawling Claws (m)

* for unlisted party sizes, add 1 Bloodeye (Table – Squadless) per extra member over a listed party size.

Tactics

If the heroes entered via Scene 1, **there is an extra Squadless skyterror** in the Table location. If they entered via Scene 7, it’s in the Mine location.

The Squadless skyterror in the Mine will spend every turn doing everything they can (turning actions into move actions, losing their tail to end slows, etc) to reach the “SECRET EXIT,” where they will throw a switch that opens the wall, they will take a hostage, and escape down the ladder to [Scene 6](#).

Use the shellguard minions to screen for the escaping skyterror. Putting banes on the heroes’ attacks, etc.

Changing the Conditions of the Test

If the heroes arrive from Scene 7, they immediately see hostages in need of rescue.

If the heroes arrive from Scene 1, when the lizardfolk from “TABLE” reveal themselves, they’re holding onto hostages in need of rescue.

Either way, the Victory condition changes to:

Earn 1 Victory for clearing the area of lizardfolk *without any of the hostages dying*.

Escape & the Secret Passage

If the heroes don’t see the skyterror escaping through the secret passage, they find the evidence of its escape. The wall is opened, revealing the secret passage, dug out to a pit with a ladder leading down. A blood curdling human scream echoes up from the pit, but is cut short.

Continuing Deeper into the Fort

If the heroes follow the skyterror and its hostage down the secret passage, go to [Scene 6](#).

If the heroes take the stairs down from the mine, go to [Scene 7](#).

Alternatively, the heroes can potentially figure out a way to ascend the tunnel leading 28 squares straight up to the courtyard outside. Go to [Scene 1](#).



Squire Qoroth of the Thorned Gauntlets Company

Squire Qoroth

During the fight, Qoroth is focused and stoic. Professional. Once the fight is over, he is raucous and quick to make a joke. He's the type to laugh with you, smack your back, and accidentally hurt you.

Qoroth wants to join the heroes until he can get back to the portal and report back to his knight in Arcadia. If the heroes accept, **give the players the Reward: "Squire Qoroth."**

What Qoroth Knows

Info Willingly Offered

- Qoroth assumes the heroes are Caelians, since they speak Caelian. He wonders why they're in the Vale.
- Qoroth is a squire in the Thorned Gauntlets Company of the Knights of Golden Ivy.
- The knights have been fighting back evil in Arcadia for some time. How much time, he's not sure.
- Have you seen any other squires? Perhaps another Thorned Gauntlet, or someone from the Oak Shields?
- Qoroth, as a Thorned Gauntlet, was the first one sent into the portal to assess the situation, but after the ambush and his capture, he expects another squire will be sent after him.

Info Happily Answered When Asked

- How is he here? He came through a portal. A portal the knights themselves sealed behind them using the Statue of Redemption at Fort Ivywatch. Something must have happened to the statue.
- He knows the oath he swore to become a squire. He'll recite the entire oath, except The Prayer. He does not speak that part frivolously.
- Qoroth's name and build are both particularly dwarf-like because he was once a dwarf! Everyone who entered Arcadia eventually transformed into a wode elf. He doesn't mind, he appreciates how his new form helps him traverse Arcadia more easily.
- His battle partner Rama was an Arcadian three-horned owl and she took down twelve lizardfolk and two basilisks before she met her end. More than Qoroth managed himself before he was captured. He intends to make up the difference in spades.

The King is Dead

When the knights entered Arcadia, they were removed from the flow of time. Qoroth has no idea how long he's been away from the Vale (they left before the Caelian Empire conquered Vasloria). The conversation might go something like:

- 1492? 1492 years since what?⁴
 - The fall of the Caelian Empire
- The Caelian **Empire**, huh? Interesting. And disappointing. Who is the king of the Vale now?
 - There is no king, yet.
- None? Yet indeed! With no king, our oaths mean nothing. I wonder how the pages fare...

The Pages Left Behind

The pages, apprentices who were training under the knights and had not yet sworn oaths, were left behind when the knights entered Arcadia. The pages were split into companies and each assigned a task to attend to until the knights returned:

- The Thorned Gauntlets would seek out domestic evil and destroy it throughout the Vale.
- The Oak Shields would protect Fort Ivywatch and the Statue of Redemption therein.

Qoroth does not know the fate of the pages, though with the portals open, he suspects the Oak Shields did their jobs well enough until only recently.

- **Dir. Note:** The Oak Shields became the Thorton family and citizens of Ivywatch.
- **Dir. Note:** The Thorned Gauntlets bred larger and larger raptors as partners, eventually becoming the Hawklords (named after Paladin Tomas' partner, Jacca, Lord of the Hawks).

4 This is just an example. Maybe the heroes don't know the year in those terms! Maybe they only know how many years it's been since Good King Omund's death. Either way, since the heroes speak Caelian and King Omund is dead, Qoroth learns of the Caelian Empire and the lack of a king in the Vale.

Scene 4: The Obelisk

The hall opens to an underground rotunda. A spiraling pathway crosses a shallow pool that spans the room. In the center of the room, a massive, three-sided obsidian pillar hangs like a stalactite. Around the edge of the pool are alcoves built into the wall of the room, each housing a statue of a knight.

Strange vines have erupted from the walls and spread across the pool, climb up the obelisk, and completely cover some of the statues.

Inscriptions on the Obelisk

Each face of the obelisk has an inscription that is only legible by the light of a crystal placed into a pocket in the wall closest to the respective face. The pockets in the walls are all 5 squares off the ground. All inscriptions are written in Old Vaslorian.

Besides some damage, the obelisk has no marks. It has no evidence of being crafted, carved, or otherwise made. Upon close inspection, even the inscriptions seem like a natural formation of the obelisk itself.

- One crystal is in its pocket and shines a spotlight on one of the faces of the obelisk. That face's inscription is clearly legible and obvious upon entering the room:

The Ultimatum

Until the three-jawed usurper lay dead, or do I

- A second crystal is in another pocket, completely covered by vines. It is not visible from the ground at all, the pocket in the wall isn't even visible. If the vines are cleared, the crystal shines a light on another face of the obelisk, revealing another inscription:

The Offering

*My blood belongs to the King
My heart belongs to my _____
My mind is focused on the mission*

- The third crystal lies in the pool (immediately detectable upon close inspection of the pool), its pocket eroded from vines. The crystal placed in the pocket will not stay put on its own, it needs to be secured somehow. When it is secured, it shines light on the obelisk, revealing the third inscription, which is interrupted by damage to the obelisk.

The Prayer

The Forestal witness

You ----- --

Orden shivered

----- --

The Statues

The statues are larger and more ornate than other statues found throughout the fort. A few inscriptions on the statues are still legible, written in Old Vaslorian:

- *Varok, whose heart belonged to his home, Kalacles.*
- *Adrina, whose heart belonged to her partner.*

One knight statue has a uniquely big Khemharan owl perched on his gauntlet. The statue has two inscriptions:

- *Lliarion, whose heart belonged to their home, Tullow Wode.*
- *Souri the Sandstorm.*

Passages out of the Rotunda

Three halls leave the rotunda, mirroring the three faces of the obelisk.

- The first hall descends gradually. It is dirty, but there are very few vines. Go to [Scene 2](#).
- The second hall descends gradually in a similar direction to the first hall. A religious symbol of Thyll Hylacae marks the archway entrance. Go to [Scene 5](#).
- A third hall ascends with very few vines, but covered in loose rubble. Go to [Scene 7](#).

Scene 5: The Chapel

The hall ends at large room, lined with pews facing a stage and a plaque flanked by two statues. The plaque has writing. But between you and the stage are vines crawling from wounds in the floor, glowing, festering, and widening.

The ground shakes. Lizardfolk stop chanting and turn to face you with foul smiles. Their feet are slick with blood from the floor: blood flowing from rooms just out of view. A scream echoes off the walls and the lizardfolk draw steel!

Draw Steel! “The Chapel”

The heroes stumble upon the lizardfolk in the middle of a sacrificial ritual.

Earn 1 Victory for defeating all non-minion enemies.

Earn 1 Victory for freeing all the hostages before the floor collapses.

- Each hostage is tied up and requires succeeding on an **Easy Might or Agility Skill Test** to free.
- Dir. Note:** There are 4 hostages, each at the end of a blood trail. The fewer heroes in the party, the harder it will be to save all of them. That’s fine! It’s just one victory. And it raises the stakes when the heroes are unable to save everyone they want to.

Encounter

The heroes begin in the box marked “START.” The position of each enemy located in the CENTER and on the STAGE is immediately detectable; all other enemy forces start concealed.

Movement

- Any square with vines on it is difficult terrain and also a Toxic Plant dynamic terrain object.
- The crevasses in the ground lead to Scene 8 (everyone falls there at the end of Round 3). If a creature falls into a crevasse, they take 20 sq of falling damage and show up on Round 4 after the map transition.

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces <i>Lizardfolk</i>
2	Center Stage Northwest -	Squad A: 1 Bloodeye (capn) + 3 Tonguers (m) Squad B: 1 Scaletooth (capn) + 3 Shellguard (m) Squadless: 1 Skyterror Squad C: 5 Shellguard (m) Hazard: Toxic Plants (DTO)
4	Center Stage Northwest -	Squad A: 1 Bloodeye (capn) + 6 Tonguers (m) Squad B: 1 Scaletooth (capn) + 6 Shellguard (m) Squadless: 2 Skyterrors Squad C: 8 Shellguard (m) Hazard: Toxic Plants (DTO)

* for unlisted party sizes, add 1 Bloodeye (Northwest – Squadless) per extra member over a listed party size.

Tactics

The heroes want to reach the hostages, the enemies are mostly just in the way. Make use of force movement options, especially into difficult terrain, to prevent them from moving too quickly.

Make sure to use Reptilian Escape to let the non-minions shed conditions and allow them to escape danger.

Round 2: Minions of Torment

At the end of the 1st round of combat, the lizardfolk's ritual yields results and demons in service to Excrucior Interfectus invade the mortal plane!

The purple glow from the crevasses in the ground coalesce into smoke and swirl, opening a portal to a primordial realm of rot and blood. Wretched masses of flesh and hate fall out of the portal onto the ground. They shriek in chorus and attack!

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces: Torment Demons
#	Center Stage Northwest	Squad X: 4 Zombies (m) Squad Y: 4 Zombies (m) Squad Z: 4 Zombies (m)

Round 4: Falling into the Portal Room

If the heroes gain access to the hidden passage,

- Floor collapses into the Portal room (scene 8)! Finish the fight against the twilight beasts and undead who weren't defeated, but now in the new map! – But a retainer joins to help! (should be very easy cleanup)

Around the Chapel

The prayer is written here!

The Prayer

*The Forestal witness
You uplifted us
Orden shivered
Witness me*

Returning to the Chapel

If the heroes return to the chapel later in the adventure, they can safely slide down the rubble to [Scene 8](#), or return back down the hallway to [Scene 4](#). If the crumbling wall was opened up in [Scene 2](#), they can return directly there instead.

Scene 6: The Tomb

Greeting you at the bottom of the ladder is a pair of fresh corpses: a lizardfolk and an adult human. A whisper grows to a groan and then a scream as apparitions emerge from coffins desecrated around the stone room. Cauldrons on a raised center platform alight by themselves. The phantoms of the Knights of Golden Ivy draw their spectral blades to protect their resting place.

Draw Steel! “The Tomb”

The heroes disturb the eternal rest of fallen knights.

Earn 1 Victory for defeating all enemies.

Height

- The ceiling of the tomb is **8 squares** above the bottom floor and **6 squares** above the central platform.
- The ceiling of the cave is only **3 squares** up.

Encounter

The heroes begin in the box marked “START.” All enemies are immediately detectable.

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces <i>Undead</i>
2	Cave Coffins	Squad A: 4 Specters (m) Squadless: 1 Ghost
4	Cave Coffins	Squad A: 6 Specters (m) Squadless: 1 Ghost Squad B: 6 Specters (m)

** for unlisted party sizes, add one extra squad of 4 Specters (Cave) per extra member over a listed party size.*

Tactics

Invisible creatures (e.g. the specters) have concealment, and strikes against them take a bane. If the attacker is also weakened, that adds up to a double bane!

The ghost should absolutely keep off the ground using its fly/hover speed, hitting the heroes ideally from out of range, above them (especially making use of Haunt).

Leaving the Tomb

The hallway that once led to the tomb is completely collapsed and filled with rubble and vines (for probably 20 squares or further), making it completely impassable.

The only natural way out of the now-sealed tomb is back up the dugout passage from the Gaol (go to [Scene 3](#)).

Dir. Note: The heroes have probably already cleared out Scene 3, since they’re here in Scene 6. The only things left in Scene 3 are the clues to the oath in the northwest, the jailed Squire Qoroth (if he’s not yet been freed), and the exits to either [Scene 1](#) or [Scene 7](#).

The Commander and the Oath

In the center of the room is a large raised platform. Along the stairs leading up the platform is a marble plaque that reads in Old Vaslorian:

The Offering

*My blood belongs to the King
My heart belongs to my _____
My mind is focused on the mission*

Opposite the stairs is a huge statue of a knight.

- The statue has a texture like petrified wood, but it is jet black and almost translucent at spots.
- The knight’s hands are the only parts of their body not armored, and they appear like tree branches, with knots in place of knuckles.
- The visor of the knight’s helmet is adorned with four fist-sized knobs.
- The knight’s weapon is a great hammer that looks like a huge rose. It’s the same stone material as the knight and appears to be attached to him, as if it grew from their bare hands.

In the center of the platform, facing the knight is a dais and a plaque. If a hero stands at the dais, words shine out from the plaque in Old Vaslorian:

Page
Swear your Oath to the Third Commander:
The Prayer
The Duty
The Offering
The Ultimatum
and become a Squire.

- The four stanzas of the oath appear all throughout Fort Ranaghan. See the “Information Map” for a more holistic view.

As a hero speaks the oath, for each stanza they recite correctly and in the correct order:

- One knob on the knight’s helmet’s visor alights like fire.
- A distant choir singing in strange harmony grows louder. The sound only exists in the mind of the hero reciting the oath.
- When the hero recites the duty correctly, the choir changes harmony with respect to which duty the hero swore:
 - Oak Shield: the entire choral harmony drops an octave.
 - Thorned Gauntlet: the choral harmony gains a soprano one octave higher than the previous highest note.

If a hero incorrectly recites a stanza, or says it in the wrong order, all the knobs extinguish and the distant choral sounds immediately cease.

If the hero at the dais speaks the oath with each stanza in order correctly, they are made a squire. A golden ring appears and curls around their finger.

- Give the player the Reward: “Ring of Golden Ivy” and depending on which duty they swore, either “Oak Shield Company Squire” or “Thorned Gauntlet Company Squire.”**

Dir. Note: When the hero recites the oath, in The Offering, they have to fill in the blank in the line:

“My heart belongs to my _____”

Just as all the statues throughout the fort have their own examples of whom or what the knight offered their own heart to in their oath.

Proving Your Oath

If the hero stands at the dais wearing Rings of Golden Ivy, then different words shine out from the plaque, these written in Kheltivari:

Squire
Challenge the Third Commander to prove your oath.

Draw Steel! “The Proof”

The heroes who are sworn squires have chosen to prove their oaths and become knights, if they succeed.

Earn 1 Victory and the treasure Skullbloom, Axe of Golden Ivy for taking the statue of the Third Commander down to winded.

Dir. Note: There are three other forts (not featured in this adventure) of the Knights of Golden Ivy in Tullow Vale. If the heroes as squires can prove their oath to the statues of the commanders in all of the forts, they will be knighted and could join the fight against the Three-Jawed Usurper in Arcadia!

Encounter

The heroes participating in the trial begin in the box marked “START.” The enemy is immediately detectable.

Party Size	Location	Enemy Force
-	Arena	The Statue: 1 Statue of the Third Commander

* *The Statue has Stam. = Party Size * 80 + Victories * 25.*

Tactics

The statue of the commander will fight until the heroes forfeit the attempt (verbally or by leaving the platform), or until they succeed.

Scene 7: The Mess

- Read out for approaches from the gaol, the obelisk, and the portal (secret)

Scene 8: The Portal

- Transition from the chapel
- The tunnel leads all the way to The Mess, but right where it exits to the area, there is a trap door that leads down a vertical shaft (to Scene 9)

Scene 9: Yslansh

- Read out for approach from the portal

Epilogue A: Triumph!

If the heroes succeed in Scene 9: Yslansh... upon return to Ivywatch, Lord Gwennyl is talking with a delegation from the Temple of the Apothechron. It's Listener Stillwater, and a wode elf in an oddly outdated knight's outfit – another squire, from a different fort!

Epilogue B: Escape!

If the heroes fail in Scene 9: Yslansh... montage test to escape the fort!

- On success, make it back to Ivywatch, but the demons of torment are hot on your trail! Excrucior Interfectus comes, and what forces remain at Ivywatch will not be enough to defend against it!
- On failure, you can't get out of the fort in time, but you can dip into the ripped-open portal into Arcadia! What will happen to Tullow Vale in your absence? Who can say. There should be a way back to Tullow Vale now that the portals are opened, but in a plane outside of time, who knows when you will return to Vasloria? Will it be another two thousand years? Mere seconds? Or perhaps you will return in the past, with time enough to stop Ivywatch from ever being raided?