

Settlements

Keldrun (large town): Conventional; AL LN; 3,000 gp limit; Assets 386,100 gp; Population 2,574; Mixed.

Authority Figures: **Lord Urimore Fenway**, LN male aristocrat 6 (the Duke of Hokklin); **Hurig Stoner**, LN male warrior 8 (Captain of the Guard)

Important Characters: **Arithmer Farhawk**, CN male ranger 5 (bowyer); **Balauk Bellowfury**, LN male dwarf fighter 7 (blacksmith); **Fanciful Vance**, CG male bard 7/rogue 7; **Fortescue Amberglass**, N male wizard 6 (mysterious recluse); **Mother Gloria**, LG female cleric 7 (Bishop of Hokklin); **Tom Frothwhipple**, LN male commoner 13 (proprietor of the Jolly Knave Inn).

Notes: Keldrun perches on the western bank of the Cold Run River as it flows through the Hokklin Valley. The town is surrounded by fertile farmland on both sides of the river, and good wood comes from Spiderlurk Woods to the north. A well-traveled road runs south to the City of Greff and north through the forest.

Lord Urimore has ruled the Hokklin Valley for about 10 years. He lives in Keldrun Keep about a mile north of the town, on a hill, with his wife and only child, a young lad of 14. The Hokklin Valley trades with dwarven miners from the north and Vulg barbarians from the east, and they pay a tribute to Greff.

The roads have become dangerous recently. Bandits and barbarians have been waylaying travelers on the road south. The same barbarians have been attacking outlying farms east of the Cold Run River. Travelers from the north have reported that the woods are becoming more dangerous as well.

Rumors (d20):

1–4 “Lord Urimore’s son has caught a rare illness and is slowly dying. The lord has summoned an elven healer from a far-off land.”

5–8 “Them no-good Vulgs have been attacking farms east of the river. My brother-in-law down in Rethor lost a whole herd of cattle to them, and nearly his head too!”

9–12 “There’s kobolds and other nasty things in those woods. They don’t call it Spiderlurk for nothing.”

13–16 “I swear I saw a centaur in the woods the other day. There’s a legend that the centaurs guard some type of magic treasure.”

17–20 “West of here is a huge tower constantly surrounded by ice and snow as if it were the middle of winter. They say it was there

even before the Empire.”

Hooks:

—A reward of 100 gp is offered for the death or capture of Maron Slynt, wanted for banditry. He has robbed and murdered travelers on the road south of Keldrun.

—A reward of 500 gp is offered for the death or capture of Abysax the Red, wanted for attacks on farms east of the Cold Run River. Abysax is believed to live among the Blue Hawk Clan settlements.

—A woodsman tells the PCs about discovering a wounded centaur in the woods. He tried to care for the poor creature, but it died shortly after, muttering about a foul blight to the west.

Environments

Spiderlurk Woods: The woods are home to numerous dangerous creatures, including kobolds, monstrous spiders, and ettercaps. Peaceful centaurs dwell east of the road and often keep the more monstrous creatures in check.

Hengewarder Tribal Lair: The Hengewarders are the largest tribe of centaurs living in Keldrun Forest. Although reclusive, they have been known to trade with Keldrun woodsmen and wandering Vulg barbarians. Their chief is Tyrrox Tor (CG male centaur druid 4), who leads them in their sacred duty of guarding Earthwife’s Henge, a circle of stones dedicated to Théorah. Lately, the Hengewarders have been having trouble with the ettercaps, who have become more aggressive recently.

Fat One’s Lair: Deep in the forest to the west of the north road, a powerful ettercap has made his lair. Over many years, he has been visited and fed by Bu Lytha, a green hag living in the marshes to the east. He has grown strong and fat and now constantly seeks new sources of food to consume. He has bullied other ettercaps in the region to go hunting for human and centaur prey. He keeps three mates in his lair with him, and his treasure horde is guarded by eggs that are almost ready to hatch. See *Dragon* 343 for more on ettercaps.

Dungeons

Dymondeep Mines and Research Facility (1st/2nd/4th/6th): The remains of a small Gardenian mining facility. The third level holds a *portal* to the Elemental Plane of Earth. The *portal* has been closed since the Fall of

Gardenia, but when it was open, the Gardenians would trade with the dao of the Great Dismal Delve. A small colony of stonechildren living in Whurlagg to the north are survivors of the population at Dymondeep, and one of them may have a key to the portal.

Wexeldrake Manor (2nd/6th): Once the hunting lodge of a wealthy family, it has fallen into disuse. The grounds and upper floors are plagued by undead. The basement hides a cult dedicated to Kantok, called the Hollow Heart. They are led by a vilewight whose goals are unknown at this time.