

**Session/Game:** Eldritch Earth: 5 Hacks Deep

**Date:** April 25th, 2021

**Episode 25: Evil Eyes**

**Campaign Date:** October 12th, 1130 AD

## Characters

Reeve Tariq al-Khibaz, Moorish Venturer - 4 (Quinton)

Symeon, Byzantine Laborer - 3 (NPC)

Kahlid Mulino, Moorish Teamster - 1 (NPC)

Sean the Irish Bastard Irish, Templar - 5 (Bob)

Welshie (aka Tom Jones), Welsh Ranger - 4 (Jason)

Wulfric of Ascalon, English Knight - 4 (Dave N.)

Young Penda, English Squire - ½ (NPC)

Skule Runar, Norwegian, Runecaster - 2, (Marlon)

**Judge:** Andrew Smith

*October 10th, 1130*

As expected, the eggs taken from the nests of the giant lizards near Deatman's Town hatch. Skule has two sequestered away in a cave near his farm, while Father Calen has a man watching his eggs hatch in the catacombs beneath the old Shepherd's Hollow church. Without their mothers' heat vision, the eggs have trouble surviving that first night as a large, blind, grub-like jaw beast. One egg in Shepherd's Hollow hatches only to die immediately. Calen and Skule slowly begin to realize that these monsters only eat living flesh. Calen feeds his by trapping a live lamb in with the jaw-grub while Skule literally starts to feed his progeny by allowing it to drink his own lifeblood. Eventually, one of the lizards hatched in the cave near Skule's farm simply cannibalizes the other. After crunching down on the bones of lamb and lizard, these blind lizard creatures immediately go to sleep.



*October 12th, 1130*

One early afternoon Tariq went to the Beverly homestead to call on Isolde. Their relationship had been rocky since her father's surprise attempt at selling the farm and her kidnapping by the cannibals. While Tariq had planned to propose and ask Elder Beverly for his blessing, Isolde told Tariq that she could no longer see him. His life was too dangerous for her and her father

could not look past Tariq being a Moor. While being gracious while there, as soon as Tariq was out of ear shot he cursed loudly in Berber.

Looking for a way to forget the encounter Tariq road quickly to Jorviksburg. Not sure what he was looking for, Tariq made his way to Whizzo's Alehouse. After his fifth drink of disgusting beer, Tariq overheard a man telling others of his adventure to the west. He told stories of the Pigeon Hills (in our world so named because of the abundance of pig-iron also called pigeon iron) but in this world due to the massive flocks of carrier pigeons. He told stories of a mysterious spring in a forest grove (The Fountain of Youth?) , a massive cemetery, Atlantean ruins, an underwater city, a ruined keep. Tired of hearing all the nonsense, Tariq confronted the man and told him to stop lying. The man, Gebhard Glatfelter, stated that he was a descendant of the family that had built the keep and tried to conquer the land. Tariq told Gebhard to prove it. Gebhard produced a deed to the land. Tariq bought Gebhardt a drink and they talked for several hours.

Seeing that Tariq was in no condition to ride home, Gebhard invited him to stay at his cottage right outside the city gate. Tariq slept in the unused loft of the cottage. In the early morning, Tariq awakened to a skirmish. Two masked intruders had broken into the house and were demanding all of Gerhard's riches. They had apparently heard him the night before at Whizzo's. Tariq's presence frightened the intruders and they escaped, but Gerhard had been gravely injured during the ordeal. He told Tariq of the hiding place of the deed and some coins before succumbing to his wounds. Tariq found the deed and coins and notified the local authorities. He used the coins for a decent burial for Gebhard.

*October 27th, 1130*

As the days shorten and the shadows lengthen on the brightly colored hills of Jorvikshire, With the Earl too busy, Tariq and a group of adventurers take an audience with High Reeve Morcar in order to take possession of the Pigeon Hills Hundred and take an oath of service. During the audience, Reeve Morcar asks for the adventurers' help in locating and returning a monk to Kingston. Brother Otto Stauffer who had arrived from the old world nearly a year ago. Morcar reveals that his two older brothers had managed to kill each other, leaving him as the sole heir to the dukedom of Mainz (Mogontiacum) in the old world. The Earl would look favorably upon any who could help return this prodigal son back to Europe before Lord Stauffer perishes and Mainz is left without an heir.

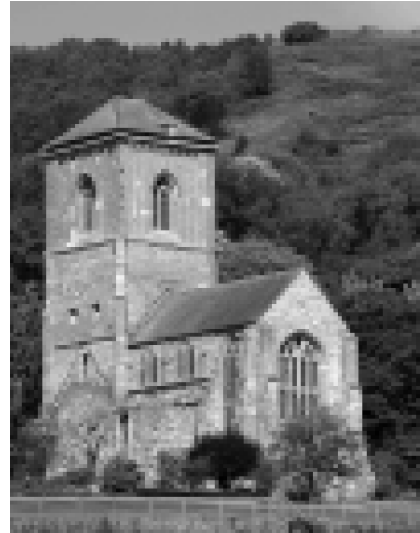
Otto was last seen leaving for the West Hundred to help the poorest of Jorvikshire. Tariq's hundred includes a village. New Shepford is located West of Grey's Abbey, the farthest settlement of the Earl's West Hundred. It includes a small order of monks who scrape out a living farming and herding goats. The next closest settlement is Thomas' Village which is over twelve miles to the East of New Shepford.

New Shepford is the site of a lot of open space, appropriate for herding sheep. There is a thick tributary of the Rapid Creek running along the Western border of the settlement good for watering livestock. Locals call this southern tributary just "South Creek." An ancient, overgrown

forest along this tributary is a source of concern, but the flat areas to the West along the tributary make for good pasture and farmland.

Over the past five years, there has been talk of the settlement being cursed and the population of this seed of a new hundred began to dwindle as the Gladfelter family rapidly lost wealth and fell into poverty.

The heroes of the Hill Camp Hundred travel West from Jorviksburg after meeting with Reeve Morcar. They are not able to make it all the way, so they rest at Grey's Abbey for the night before continuing on to New Shepford. This small abbey is home to about a score of monks.



*October 28th*

The next morning, the new Reeve Tariq leads his comrades through the forests that separate New Shepford from the Jorvikshire West Hundred. The path cuts through the thick, misty forest following a spring and running downhill toward the flat herding lands of New Shepford. Sean feels a powerful, sinister evil from these border forests.

Finally, the group emerges from the forest. They see a graveyard thick with markers of the dead. A dirt farmer with an eyepatch named Tancred confronts them, telling them to leave the cursed place. Wulfric berates the man, telling him that he should respect his new Reeve. The crazed farmer will have nothing to do with the group and ineffectually storms off back toward the village.

As the party approaches, they see that there is in fact a funeral service in progress. It is held at the main village hall which is little more than an open-air shelter with a stone and brick chimney at the center. The group learns that the service is for a woman called Young Mary. There is no mention nor asking what killed the woman. The service is presided over by none other than Brother Otto Stauffer, the monk High Reeve Morcar asked the party to bring back.

Following the service, Brother Otto answers all the party's questions. The village is represented by Elder Bolton who is proud of his long, luxurious but greying locks of hair. The village priest Father Alaric is blinded in both eyes in a freak accident, and is guided by a young woman who herself only has one eye named Brigid. Otto introduces the party to Widow Ludwig, a good-natured woman who is one of the few hospitable citizens of the village. Her blind daughter Sibyl is thoughtful and kind, while sighted son Gosse is angry and vindictive for having to do all the work.

The group takes some time to question Father Alaric. They learn that just about all the villagers except for Otto himself are "unclean" and have some sort of corruptor demon plaguing them.

Alaric himself worries that the evil spirits would sooner or later take the adventurers as well. Alaric describes the curse that has taken the village as a haunting that is never seen, just heard. Its whispers are awful and blasphemous - tearing at the victim's sanity. It makes those who hear it want to harm themselves, mostly by blinding themselves in one way or another. It is clear that in the past years, Alaric had done just that, clawing his own eyes from his face.

Just then, a great noise begins to approach. A huge flock of hideous, nightmarish birds swarm toward the village. Each one's regular beak is replaced with an abominable ripping orifice much like a cephalopod surrounded by finger-like grasping tentacles. As these Squidpigeons approach, everyone in the village takes cover, fleeing from the streets. The adventurers take cover in the small church as the villagers move their livestock into barns and hustle children and food off the streets for safety. Over the next ten minutes, ghastly scratching, flapping, and squawking of these monstrous birds can be heard against the shuttered windows and thatched roof. It is as though these monsters are trying to chew their way into the homes of these people. Soon, the black flock has passed and the villagers emerge. The Squidpigeons have moved on to roost in the woods just to the East.

That night, the adventures stay with Widow Ludwig. She tells the adventurers about the goblins in the area, and how their attacks are getting a bit more brazen and frequent. She believes that a warband of these globby blood-filled monstrosities have taken up a nest in the ruins of the old Shepford. Interestingly, Skule does not consume any food offered by the cursed village.

#### *October 29th*

Travel to Old Shepford. There the heroes locate an abandoned well that houses an outpost of monstrous demons made flesh. Many of the adventurers had fought these imps before, so the combat was not new. However, a unique type of imp was encountered during the raid that stood seven feet in height and had an extra set of bludgeoning arms.

The party descends into the abandoned well, and fight off most of the imps. A swarm of smaller ones tears up Sean pretty badly. With his faith shattered by the mind-numbing pain Sean is broken and cannot call upon the power of the almighty until he has made appropriate penance. Next, Wulfric is savaged by a swarm of tiny, winged imps and is gravely wounded. Welshie's deadly arrows manage to pierce the blood-swollen imps and slay the remaining abominations.



The adventurers find a treasury of sorts as well as a supply room the monsters used to store food and important items. In it, the heroes find a diary written by Godfrey Gladfelter indicating that his ancestors had made some sort of a deal with the Oracle of the Purloined Eye. It seems that in exchange for protection and wealth, the Gladfelters would do various favors for this mysterious entity. They would construct tall altars and dig deep pits in the wilderness. They would provide live captives who wouldn't be missed as they were orphans or travellers. They would secretly move artifacts to remote locations throughout the kingdom of Nessex. The diary mentions an ancient hall the Gladfelters excavated which the ancient Atlanteans would visit to consult an all-seeing oracle that was never seen, only heard from the bottom of a dark pit. The location of this pit is not clear. Sometimes the Gladfelters would visit the oracle near New Shepford. Other times, the oracle's lair was located far out into the Western wilderness.

As the adventurers wrap up their attack, the Squidpigeons begin to move again. A thick, cloud of hairy, tentacled birds with razor sharp cephalopod beaks moves in on the adventurer's horses. Young Penda manages to get most of the livestock to safety. Unfortunately, all the old nags are not able to sprint to safety and are picked clean to bone in minutes by the mass of cephalopoid avian monsters. The final share of the take was 275 gp.

*October 30th*

Following a night's rest at Widow Ludwig's once again under threat from the Squidpigeons, the Reeve's men decide to ride for the abbots' town to recuperate. As they return through the dark forest, the mist thickens. As one, the adventurers collapse and slump into unconsciousness.

*October 31st*

The heroes wake near the abbey on the morning of the 31st, still slumped on their horses or collapsed on the abbey grounds. They are found by two of the monks who have many questions. They are shocked to learn that it is the morning of the following day. Where have the past twenty-four hours gone?