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Introduction

The town of Tresce in the north of Albion has been recently having a few problems.

Once the town was the main administrative town at the centre of a rich agricultural area, with scores of small villages and farms providing a large amount of grain, wool, fruit and furs; all providing taxes back to the local Earl. Being a town close to the Thuland border it also had an impressive reputation for repelling raiders and not just rolling over like some of its neighbours.

This was life under Earl Bardulf, who managed the area with a steel fist; creating a standing army of strong reeves and thanes from the hardy farmers in the local area. Old age eventually overtook Bardulf and he was slain in his 65th year whilst attempting to repel invaders. Bardulf left the earldom to his three sons Garrick, Edward and Alfred.

Garrick was the most like his father and carried on ruling the province in much the same way, prosperity continued until he fell off his horse whilst hunting and broke his neck.

Succession then went to Edward. As the second son, Edward had initially taken vows at a nearby monastery, just outside the village of Boltby. Upon the death of Garrick, he was required to give up his holy lifestyle and take over the running of the Earldom.

Edward is currently the Earl of the area. Under his rule, he has concentrated more on spiritual matters than political, economic, or defence. He has little care for non-spiritual matters.

From his inception he made it his ambition to build the largest and richest minster in the centre of Tresce. This has been done to the detriment of everything else around the area. The standing army has fallen to a mere shadow of itself, barely comprising of 30 warriors. The levy has been abolished. Taxes are rarely collected and the local land owners do not care to hand in money to “be wasted in a bloody great big church”. Finally, Edward's concentration upon the one minster has meant that there has been no funding for the local village churches. These have fallen into disarray and caused many priests to abandon the area. Since the death of Garrick, Edward has been ruling the area for 5 years.

A few days ago, reports were sent out about an epidemic of undead, mainly zombies and skeletons being seen around the area. Though the army dealt with some of them, the number seem to be increasing and a message was sent out to the local Duke Athelric of Yorvik for some help.

The PCs are members of Duke Athelric's standing army and have been tasked to go to Tresce and sort out the undead problem.

Running the Adventure

This is a complex adventure with many encounters and a selection of intersecting, unrelated plots that will require a good amount of role play from the PCs.

Combat is relatively light and the PCs are given a free range of how they want to run the adventure.

It is important to keep the PCs on their toes; their characters will find themselves running from one problem to another trying to solve them as well as they can without invoking the ire of the locals or of the nobility.

Bear in mind that a horse can walk about 25 miles a day and stay relatively fresh for the next day. This should limit the PCs to only being able to visit 4 villages a day. (Of course they may travel a further distance, but this will wear out the horses and replacement horses will be sparse, they should only use this as an option if, say, running a vital message to Yorvik.)

Start the adventure with the “Coming to Tresce” section. Once the PCs have reached Tresce then the given timeline should be followed – irrelevant of what the PCs do.

Give the PCs leave to explore how they want, you may want to nudge the PCs if they're being a bit tardy by having a messenger being received at Tresce with news of the next outbreak.

The villages aren't expanded on, so a lot of it is up to the GM to describe. Most villages are between 5-20 houses and a pub. The larger villages will have a church with a formal graveyard, though, due to lack of funds, most

of these have been abandoned and most religious services are performed by priests from Tresce.

As most of the opponents are relatively weak, it is intended for the party to consist of low level adventurers around rank 2 – 4.

Major Plots

There are several major plots that will happen concurrently:

The Undead

Tresce's bishop, Leofric wants to get out of this dull, dreary town where he was stationed 10 years ago. After many years of pleading with his higher ups, Leofric took it upon himself to create a way for this to happen.

Leofric's old friend, Osric was studying at the sorcerer's tower, just outside the village of Tower, where there is a large and impressive array of magical books and artefacts. Amongst these was a orb of undead raising and an rod of undead detection and control.

Osric stole the orb and rod, replacing them with copies and left the tower. He is currently walking around the villages, by night, to raise appropriate undead from unconsecrated graves. As he travels, he gives instructions to the undead to shamle, at night time, to a circle around 3 miles outside Tresce, then wait until the 11th Heorfestmonath and attack the town walls, when Osric should be back to engineer Leofric's "holy power".

From the 9th Heorfestmonath, if the PCs ride between any of the closer villages to Tresce (i.e. Sorby, Norby, Wesby, Intake, Stanbridge, Midton) or ride out from Tresce, avoiding the roads, then they have a 40% chance of noticing a clump of the around 50 undead. Further investigation should reveal more undead inside this circle. (See the GM's map.)

In a fit of conscience, Osric has instructed the undead to not attack anybody – after all this

plot is set up to help Leofric escape the area – hurting people is not in this goal. To minimise detection he has also instructed them to avoid the roads running between the villages.

Osric is not very good at raising undead, though he is learning and this has had some side effects:

- A lot of the undead retain some of their recent memories.
- The undead are very fragile and there is a 25% chance of the bodies breaking up under stressful conditions.
- All of the undead are of low level (zombies and skeletons).
- The magic may leak and allow other undead to rise.

Raiders from Thuland

As will be seen later, Edward is not the best ruler of the land, he has no desire to be a lord over a land of, as he puts it, "sheep farmers and shit ploughers". What he truly desires is recognition by the church and to be closer to his god.

With the finishing of the (expensive) minster at Tresce, Edward had no goal nor plan for advancement. The descent into boredom has been biting at him, causing him to come up with a rather off the wall plan: if he can be martyred whilst defending the lands and church from the heathen barbarian raiders, this may inspire the troops of the Duke to gain revenge and slay and convert the Thulandic heathens. Thus his place in the after life is assured.

To this end Edward has been sending secret

Major Plots

messages to the nearest Jarl on the other side of the Thuland border, Leif Slackbritches. These have been particularly insulting to the Jarl and his people, calling them impotent and passive to try and goad an invasion.

To try and avoid his plot's detection Edward stole his brother's seal and is using that to seal the letters. He is also using foreign messengers and is not beyond poisoning them to hide the evidence.

A Guilty Secret

In accordance with Edward's position he was required to take a bride, but Edward is not interested in providing an heir and believes strongly in celibacy and is vocal about it. In the second year of his rule he married Godiva, the young daughter of Cenhelm, the Earl of Malton. The marriage was never consummated.

Over the past few years Godiva and Alfred, Edward's brother, have grown close and have been engaging in adult pursuits. 9 months ago a child was conceived.

As the whole of the town knows about Edward's celibacy, having a child would have caused a massive scandal around the local area, which would have shamed Godiva and Alfred. So it was decided that Godiva would take to a small house in the village of Norby insisting that she was communing with god. Once the child was born, Alfred would take it to a pre-arranged foster parent.

An Old Earl's Revenge

As mentioned above, the Edward and Alfred's elder brother Garrick was killed in a hunting accident by falling from his horse. Though most of the area have accepted this as fact, Garrick's wife, Swanhild, still blames both Edward and Alfred for his death.

Swanhild is actively seeking revenge and has a

few plans to cause the death of both of the brothers, so that her son, Aiken will be able to take on the Earldom once he comes of age.

Aiken is a bastard from before Swanhild met Garrick and therefore, not a direct blood relative to the Earldom, but because of Swanhild's title, will be the next in line after Alfred.

The Warrior's Shame

Tostig is the head of the standing force of guards. He has served the Earldom well under Bardulf, Garrick and Edward, keeping the peace and policing the area.

Unfortunately, even Tostig has events from his past that he would rather remain hidden. Though Tostig has never married, he had a relationship with Bathild, the daughter of Cuthbert, a local farmer.

After a while, Bathild discovered herself with child and kept it hidden until the child came to term. Unfortunately both Bathild and the child died in childbirth.

To hide the shame of, Cuthbert and Tostig made a pact to bury Bathild and the child and keep the story hidden. So Bathild and the child were buried in an unconsecrated grave, which Osric will come across.

Don't Eat the Zombie

One of the farmers of Whitecliff, Cena. Woke up on the 8th to discover a selection of zombies working on his land.

Realising that this could cut the costs for the Harvest period, Cena is capitalising on this fortunate zombie placement.

But, zombies carry disease, which will pass to the grain and will be transmitted on, once the grain has been ground at the mill in Wesby, on the 10th.

Major Plots

On the 11th people around Wesby, Norby and Sorby will start falling ill from eating the infected grain.

The NPCs

There are a selection of NPCs whose interaction with each other and with the PCs are important to the flow of the plots.

The PCs should be guided to working out the characters and their back stories – without which the story will be rather dull and will end up as a zombie slashathon.

Earl Edward

6th rank Knight/Priest

Edward is the second son of Bardulf. As second son, he was groomed for the church from an early age. Upon coming of age he went to the monastery at Boltby for priest training.

8 years later, Garrick, the then Earl of Tresce, died in a hunting accident forcing Edward to return to Tresce and become Earl.

During the first years of his reign, he tried to escape the ruling and responsibility by taking on a project to build a great minster, dedicated to God. This was completed 6 months ago. He also took on a marriage to Godiva, the daughter of a local Earl as part of his duties. Edward cares nothing for Godiva and has never consummated the marriage.

Edward is a firm believer in God and cares nothing for material gains or wealth. He is very disparaging about his earldom and wants to return to the comfort of the monastery. He isn't stupid and realises that the easiest way to escape this life is death, which would take him into the sight of his God.

Edward has been goading the local Thulandic

Jarl, Leif into attacking the town and giving himself an opportunity to martyr himself. This communication has been sent in the name of his younger brother, Alfred.

To everybody else, Edward is a bad ruler – he drained resources from the land and lesser churches to build his minster, he doesn't defend his lands and barely cares enough to collect taxes. A change of ruler would make everybody happy.

Edward cares little what anybody but the church and his God thinks of him. He cares not for his lands and is often disparaging about “the bloody whining farmers”. He is often forthright in his speech.

Alfred

4th rank Knight

Alfred is the third son of Bardulf. As the “spare” son, nothing was required from him during his early life, leading to an apathetic disposition to all.

He learnt the very basics of combat, etiquette, courtly life etc. but never pushed himself to specialise or become an expert in anything. He has no real ambition to become the Earl.

Alfred's only joy and interest in life is Edward's wife, Godiva, who is expecting his child. In private he acts with caring and love towards her, but in public totally blanks her existence.

Alfred will generally stay out of people's way, unless he cannot avoid a confrontation. If he has to talk to people he'll speak quietly and

only say as much as he needs.

Bishop Leofric

8th rank Knight/Priest

Leofric was assigned to be the bishop of Tresce 10 years ago. The rumour going around is that he was caught in a nunnery, giving special instruction to the nuns. After that he was given a bishopric deep in the sticks to get him out of the way.

Leofric hates this place, he hates the cold weather, he hates the locals, he hates the land. He wants out, by fair means or foul. He has made a plan with his rather strange friend Osric to escape the place.

Over the past few months, Leofric has been leaving the minster once or twice a month to visit Osric in the village of Intake. This will have been noticed by other priests and the town guard – as Leofric *never* leaves the minster. The guards or priests do not know where he goes. If confronted Leofric will be indignant about being questioned over something so trivial and will explain that he doesn't have to explain his movements to the PCs. If pressed (e.g. if the name of the Duke or the Archbishop is introduced) then Leofric will explain that he covers the worship of all of his bishopric and that he was taking mass in some of the local villages that lack priests.

Leofric is the only person who supports Edward's rule – after all he has a magnificent minster out of it.

Osric

5th rank Sorcerer

Osric is an Sorcerer of intermediate power, until recently he was based at the school near Tower, acting as an archivist. During his training and later life, he showed an aptitude for casting summoning and control spells.

His duties as an archivist allowed him close

access to some of the special artifacts in the school.

About 3 months ago, he was contacted by his old friend Bishop Leofric, who he knew from his youth. Together they hatched out a risky plan to find a way for Leofric to leave the area.

Osric has a lack of ambition, but wants to do right by his friends, he often comes across as a bit naïve. He does not want to cause serious problems and doesn't really want to hurt anything and thus has commanded his army of undead to not attack anybody.

If challenged by force, he will respond using his magic, though he will try and use disabling spells, rather than slay the attackers. In desperation he will command his undead to attack whilst he escapes.

Tostig

7th rank Knight

Tostig is the head of the standing garrison of Tresce. He joined the army many years ago, when Bardulf was still Earl. He has worked his way through the ranks until he leads the forces.

Since seeing Edward become Earl, he's seen the atrophy of his troops – the levy was broken up, troops have deserted or hidden during police work. He now commands 30 troops – barely enough to police and defend the town, let alone the surrounding lands.

Tostig is a pragmatist and realises that he has to work with what he's given – he doesn't like Edward's rule, but realises that there's no better solution.

He has opinions about the other nobles in the town and will share them if asked, (or may volunteer, if the time is right):

- Edward is too stuck on the church, but has potential to be a great earl, if he could be persuaded that looking after

- his lands is important.
- Alfred is a lazy waste of space, who goes through life and takes no responsibility for anything, he doesn't even spend any time in the town, preferring to use his hunting lodge in Norby.
 - Leofric is part of the town now, but is a priest and should be respected.
 - Godiva is a very attractive woman (“If I were 10 years younger...”) who didn't show any great religious inklings. Tostig wouldn't be surprised if she was having an affair.
 - Ruarc and the sorcerers in the tower are not to be trusted, swords and religion may be believed in, magic is just too dangerous
 - Swanhild is a legacy of the previous earl and, though she deserves her place in the nobility, she causes complications to the smooth running of the town.

Tostig has one dark secret in his life of fastidious service: his young lover Bathild died whilst given birth to his illegitimate child and was buried in the woodlands in an unconsecrated grave. He is still in communication with Bathild's father, Cuthbert.

Tostig is quite open to the PCs and will be happy to act as a guide himself or detail one of his men to go with the PCs.

Countess Godiva

3rd rank Knight

Godiva was married at the age of 16 to Edward in an arranged marriage by her father Cenhelm, the Earl of Malton.

She was dragged to this town and left here as a figurehead, with no wifely duties, and due to Edward's celibacy, no children to look after.

At the time, Alfred caught her eye, she was attracted to his quiet demeanour and slowly

the two drew together and have been having an adulterous relationship for the past 2 years.

When Godiva found she was with child she made excuses that she was going to lock herself away and commune with God. She is currently living in a house in Norby, being visited by one trusted hand maiden (Annis) and Alfred.

Godiva should avoid the PCs at all times, unless they deliberately hunt her down – this will incite the ire of Alfred, Edward and Leofric.

Ruarc

13th level Sorcerer

Ruarc is the leader of the sorcerer training college at Tower, a position he has occupied for around 15 years. He is an old man, around 70 years old and is a bit eccentric, with a great liking for the home comforts: a fireplace, tea and biscuits.

He is friendly to all visitors and pays regular fees to the church and the lord, to keep in their good books.

Countess Swanhild

4th rank Knight

Swanhild is the widow of the old Earl, Garrick. Though Garrick died in an accident, she still blames her brothers-in-law for the death.

Her son, Aiken is currently 2nd in line to the Earlsip: he is a bastard that Swanhild had before marriage to Garrick.

Recently she has decided that as Aiken has reached his 14th year that he should be Earl and will do something about it directly. She has hired assassins who will strike at midnight on 7th Heorfestmonath. If these should fail, then she will directly poison the communion wine for the mass the next day. If this should fail

The NPCs

then she will aim to be more direct and attempt to get Edward and Alfred alone.

Swanhild has discovered the truth about Godiva and Alfred, though she will not reveal this (she doesn't want to hurt Godiva), she will use this knowledge to gain an advantage with Alfred.

Swanhild has no problem with ensuring Edward and Alfred are slain, though she will have a problem if Godiva has a male child – she will not be able to bring herself to slay him.

Coming to Tresce

The PCs have been working for Duke Athelric of Yorvik for a period and have earned a reputation of being efficient troubleshooters.

One fine evening in early Heorfestmonath the PCs are settling in one of Yorvik's many fine pubs, enjoying a pint of the best beer, swapping tall tales and getting ready for the celebrations that are due during next week's harvest festival.

A messenger enters the pub and summons the PCs to meet Duke Athelric "at once". The PCs respond and, making their way into the Duke's business room are given the below.

I've received a messenger with an interesting letter from the Tostig, the head of the standing garrison in the town of Tresce. It seems that they have a little problem with some of the dead walking around and coming back to life.

I'm not happy with this. The dead walking around tend to spoil the crops and kill animals, more importantly it pisses off the church. If the church is pissed off, I get strongly worded letters from the Archbishop. If that happens I get pissed off.

I'll tell you another thing that pisses me off: when my subordinates cannot defend themselves. This letter here states that they only have a standing force of 30 troops! This is from the old lands of Bardulf, who held off a marauding Thulandic army by himself.

Tomorrow, at dawn, I want you to head

to Tresce, take care of the undead and find out what the hell is happening up there.

Take this letter of introduction to Tostig and the local Earl Edward. You have my full authority to take all necessary steps to sort out this area.

The Duke will give some very brief answers to basic questions and will dismiss the PCs, expecting them to travel the next day.

Tresce is only 25 miles from Yorvik, this equates to just under a day's travel. The journey is uneventful and they will be nearing the town as dusk starts to fall.

About a mile north of Sorfield, the PCs will see a crowd of shambling figures ahead of them. These are a group of zombies. Unusually, these zombies will not attack until they've been attacked first. If the PCs ignore them and carry on riding nothing will happen. If one zombie is attacked, they will all turn and attack.

Religious and noble PCs should not avoid fighting the undead and should be reminded of this fact if they attempt to avoid a combat.

There are 8 zombies armed with a variety of agricultural implements, all are:

ATTACK 10	Pitchfork (d8, 3)
DEFENCE 4	Armour Factor 0
MAGICAL DEF 1	Movement 6m
STEALTH 5	
PERCEPTION 4	
EVASION 1	
Health Points 19	Rank Equivalent: 1

Once they've finished these off they can

Coming to Tresce

continue and get to Tresce as night falls.

They will find Tresce a small town, surrounded by a wooden wall. The most obvious sight from outside is a conventional Mott and Bailey castle, though instead of a keep there appears to be an impressive minster.

Once at the walls, they'll be stopped by a couple of bored looking guards who will summon Tostig. Tostig will turn up a few minutes later and will check the party's credentials before opening the gate and letting them in.

Tostig will be happy to tell them what's happening, but will insist that they announce themselves to Earl Edward first. Edward will be found at the minster praying with Bishop Leofric.

Edward will request that the PCs pray before meeting them, any player not praying will lose influence with both Edward and Leofric.

Once finished, Edward will tell Tostig to take them out of the minster and arrange a meeting in the Earl's quarters. Edward will find out what the PCs have been asked to do and then will pass over to Tostig to describe the current situation while dismissing himself from the room.

Tostig will explain that he and his army went out to deal with 8 zombies at the village of Foxton, followed by a further report at the village of Ayton. Undead have never been seen around this area as far as he knows and he is quite concerned that there may be an ulterior motive for this epidemic.

He suggests that the PCs stay in the barracks overnight and have a look around the villages in the morning.

From here, the adventure is pretty much non-linear, a time line is described below, which will continue, no matter what the character's

do.

Some events may effect future events, e.g. capturing of Osric. In these cases, continue with all other events.

Timeline

Freyasdae 6th Heorfestmonath

Osric's route: Tower, Foxton, Ayton, Hackforth

This is *before* the PCs set off. During the day, Tostig and his men dealt with a zombie infestation at Foxton and Ayton. A message was sent to the Duke after dealing with the outbreak at Foxton.

Boldursdae 7th Heorfestmonath

Osric's route: Thirkelford, Osgoodby, Longflow, Whitecliff

The PCs arrive at Tresce after their meeting with the zombies at Sorfield. The PCs should spend the night at Tresce, either in the soldier's barracks or at the local Inn, "The Cold Beck".

If the PCs stay at the inn, they may get talking to a knight, Godwin staying there. Godwin is heading out in the morning to meet his betrothed, Hrodwyn, at Malton.

At midnight two assassins will enter Edward's quarters and make an attempt on his life. The assassins have been sent by Swanhild. They will take a route through the town passing the inn and the barracks and scale the wall of Edwards house. Perception checks can be made by the PCs, if they succeed, they will be awoken by a sound of movement outside the windows. From here they may be able to track the assassins.

If the PCs do not find the assassins, they will eventually be taken down by Edward's guards, killing two in the process.

Two 5th rank Assassins.

ATTACK 17	Sword (d8, 4)
DEFENCE 9	Bow (d6, 4)
MAGICAL DEF 7	Armour Factor 3
STEALTH 22	Movement 6m
PERCEPTION 12	
EVASION 6	
Health Points 13, 15	Rank Equivalent: 5

The assassins are carrying very little of interest: normal assassin gear, 10 Florins each. The first assassin will have a blank piece of paper.

The paper actually contains the contract details; holding it in front of a candle should highlight a short message:

Fees for successful assassination of Edward and Alfred: 30 Florins each. Edward retires to his quarters at 11:00 pm. If Alfred is not at his house in Tresce he may be found at the old hut in Norby.

Haligdae 8th Heorfestmonath

Osric's route: Sheepfold, Acre, Catton, Carlton

Bathild's corpse risen in Carlton.

If old George has not been dealt with, he'll start attacking people this night.

If the zombies in Whitecliff haven't been dealt with, grain will start shipping to Wesby.

As today is Haligdae, all of the nobility, the standing forces (except a few guards) and the PCs will be required to take mass in the minster in Tresce. The mass will start at noon.

Timeline

The PCs do not have to attend, though they'll earn disfavour with the nobility and miss out a vital plot element...

As this is one of the rare occasions which Alfred will be in a convenient location Swanhild will take this as an opportunity to remove both Edward and Alfred from the picture. Overnight, she crept into the minster's stores and poisoned the sacramental wine.

One of the altar boys, Egleif, who has taken the habit of "sampling" the wine has quaffed from the poisoned chalice and has been taken ill.

If the PCs attend mass then, just before they enter, Tostig will grab the PCs and explain about Egleif's poisoning, saying that one of the local priests has healed him, but Egleif is loathed to explain how he got poisoned. The PCs should be able to persuade Egleif to admit that he drank from the wine and be able to stop Edward and Alfred supping from it. This should be timed so that Edward is about to sip when the PCs come to the rescue. Of course, interrupting the mass will not earn the PCs any favours unless they make good with an explanation.

If the PCs do not attend mass, then the poison will kill Egleif, thus warning Edward and Alfred.

If asked, the priesthood will not be able to understand how the wine could be poisoned – only the priesthood and the nobility have access to the Minster out of hours.

Swanhild has taken an antidote and has given it to Aiken. Her theory was that they could take mass and suspicion would not be placed on them. The bottle of antidote is hidden in her quarters and can be found if enough time is spent searching them.

Syfsdae 9th Heorfestmonath

Osric's route: Baxby, Welham, Welbury

Thulandic army seen at Thuby. The earl of Thuby, Cenhelm will send a message to Tostig explaining that a horde has been seen heading south towards Tresce.

At mid afternoon, Tostig will receive a message from Cuthbert telling him that Bathild has been raised. Cuthbert has managed to lock and chain Bathild up in his barn.

If the PCs are around, Tostig will take them into his confidence and ask for their help in dealing with this special problem, and will ride along with them to Carlton.

Once there, Tostig will greet Cuthbert and be taken to the barn. There a female zombie is chained up, with a bundle in her arms (containing Tostig and Bathild's unnamed child, now a zombie). Tostig will be unable to actually kill Bathild and will ask for the player's help to do the deed.

Note, the return from Carlton to Tresce would be an excellent time for the PCs to encounter the zombie bandits listed at 12, below.

If the PCs aren't around, when Tostig receives the message, then he will head off to Carlton without telling any of his staff. He will spend several hours agonising over the task, before summoning up his courage and slaying the zombie Bathild (and child). He will then return to Tresce and crawl into the bottom of a whisky bottle, a broken man.

Tyrtsdae 10th Heorfestmonath

Osric's route: Osthams, Ostby

Thulandic army camping outside Stanbridge

Alfred and Godiva's child starts being born. Alfred will receive a message from Annis and make his way directly to Norby to be with Godiva.

Timeline

If the grain going from Whitecliff hasn't been stopped, people in Wesby, Norby and Sorby will start falling ill, this will include Godiva.

Wotansdae 11th Heorfestmonath

If the PCs have not dealt with the subplots, then they all hit Tresce at the same time. See the Endgame section.

Encounters

Tower

The village of Tower may be an obvious starting point for the PCs – being the only tower on the map.

Osrice was boarding at the tower until he disappeared on the 6th Heorfestmonath. He took with him the rod of undead control and the orb of undead raising, replacing them with simple duplicates.

When the PCs get to the tower, they'll be greeted by a couple of the local sorcerers and should easily be let in to talk to Ruarc.

Ruarc will be friendly and helpful to the player's telling them that Osrice disappeared a couple of nights ago and offer them copious amounts of tea. He has no knowledge of why Osrice would disappear and will grant them access to Osrice's room if asked.

There's nothing much in Osrice's room – a few old clothes, some magic tat and 7 CPs. If they search the fireplace, they'll find a scrap of paper with a few remnants of some characters on. The paper is mostly unreadable; but they should be able to make out the characters “ombie” and the remnants of a wax seal, containing an embossed “A” - Alfred's seal.

If asked about creating undead, Ruarc will mention about the orb and rod and that they're safely in the archive. A few seconds investigating the archive will show up the duplicates.

If questioned enough about Osrice, Ruarc will

remember that he used to make semi-regular visits to the village of Intake.

If the PCs, for some reason, decide to attack Ruarc, it will be fatal. Ruarc, himself is a very competent sorcerer and there are twelve other sorcerers in the tower, all between rank 2 and 12 (i.e. 2D6). The fight will be short, messy and fatal for the PCs.

Foxton

Zombies were risen from the local graveyard on the 6th Heorfestmonath, most of the graves are unconsecrated due to a lack of a local priest. The locals will be reticent to talk to the PCs unless one is particularly charismatic, or they take along a member of the militia.

One of the locals saw a robed figure around the graveyard area at around 20:00 on the 6th.

Ayton

Like Foxton, zombies were risen from the local graveyard on the 6th Heorfestmonath, most of the graves are unconsecrated due to a lack of a local priest. The locals will be reticent to talk to the PCs unless one is particularly charismatic, or they take along a member of the militia.

Ayton has an extra problem with the zombies. One of the raised corpses is Old George, one of the local characters who died a week earlier. Due to Osrice's lack of experience with necromancy, Old George's zombie retains a lot of his previous life knowledge and will

Encounters

attempt to go about his business as if he hadn't died.

This will mainly be going to the pub, "The Earl's Heart" at 20:00 every night, taking his usual spot in the bar and "drinking" solidly until 23:00 when he will shamle back to his house.

Old George was a popular character and many of the locals rather like the fact that he has returned to them. They will be against the PCs trying to take down Old George, who will not defend himself (other than groaning). Any religious or noble characters should be warned that leaving a "living" zombie around is dangerous.

If Old George is not slain, for the second time, the zombie control will start to assert itself fully on the 8th and will result in him attacking the villagers before shambling off north, towards Tresce.

Osgoodby

Zombies were risen from the local graveyard on the 7th Heorfestmonath, most of the graves are unconsecrated due to a lack of a local priest. The locals will be reticent to talk to the PCs unless one is particularly charismatic, or they take along a member of the militia.

Just north west of the village, the PCs may notice a find looking horse wandering around the fields (this can be bought to their attention by one of the locals). Upon further investigation, they will find the chewed up corpse of Godwin the knight and 3 dead zombies. The corpse has normal knight's equipment and 12 Florins. If a messenger is sent to Malton to inform Hrodwyn about Godwin's death, a further reward of 10 Florins can be claimed.

Longflow

Zombies were risen from the local graveyard

on the 7th Heorfestmonath. One of the locals saw a strange figure enter the village from across the river at around 01:00.

Between here and Whitecliff is an area known as "The Hound's Moor". According to the local villagers there is one of the devil's own hounds living on the moor, who comes out after night to hunt down any wayward travellers who'd brave the paths.

Whitecliff

Zombies were risen from the local graveyard on the 7th Heorfestmonath, most of the graves are unconsecrated due to a lack of a local priest. The locals will be reticent to talk to the player's unless one is particularly charismatic, or they take along a member of the militia.

Between here and Longflow is an area known as "The Hound's Moor". According to the local villagers there is one of the devil's own hounds living on the moor, who comes out after night to hunt down any wayward travellers who'd brave the paths.

Cena, one of the farmers from Whitecliff, woke up on the 8th to discover a selection of zombies working in his fields. After he'd checked them out and discovered that they wouldn't attack him, he thought that this, being harvest month after-all could use them as cheap labour: they don't need to eat or sleep. He then sacked all his farm hands and put the zombies to work in the field.

If the PCs don't find the farmer, then two events will come out of this:

1. Grain harvested by the zombies will be transported to the mill at Wesby on the 9th, this is tainted and will start causing illnesses in the local villages on the 10th and 11th.
2. On the 9th, the zombies will have their undeadness reasserted and will start to march to Tresce. Of course the farmer will try to stop them and will end up

being killed.

Sheepfold

Zombies were risen from the local area on the 8th Heorfestmonath.

Just south of Sheepfold is a dam, holding back the waters of the Cod Beck into a reservoir. Several of the risen zombies were diggers for the reservoir and will carry on the digging around the dam.

The zombies are digging under water, so won't initially be noticed, though the locals will complain about hearing banging noises from up by the reservoir. There will also be some illnesses from the water, though these will be weak as they have been watered down.

If the PCs do nothing, then the zombies will amble off on the night of the 9th after severely weakening the dam. This will eventually collapse a week later causing massive flooding in Stanbridge.

If the PCs are clever they may realise that they can use the mass of water to flood out the Thulandic army when they're staying in Stanbridge.

Acre

Acre is the major sheep and shepherding area of the region. There are large amount of sheep surrounding the village and up to the moors. Shepherds tend the area, only returning to the village once a week or so.

Zombies were risen from the local graveyard on the 8th Heorfestmonath.

On the 9th a messenger will be sent to Tresce, Thorgeir, a shepherd woke up to find his (dead) brother, Etri, now tending the flocks. He can be met in the village and will lead the PCs out to the herd, directly east and in the foothills around Sheepfold.

As the PCs get to the herd, they will be in the midst of being attacked by a herd of wolves. Etri's zombie will be trying to fight the wolves. The wolves are easily managing to dodge Etri's attacks and attack the sheep directly.

If the PCs attack the wolves, then Etri will be able to join in the attack, though the wolves will not fight him (after all, zombies taste vile).

TEN WOLVES

ATTACK 15	Fangs (d4, 5)
DEFENCE 3	Armour Factor 0
MAGICAL DEF 1	Movement 12m
STEALTH 16	
PERCEPTION 11	
EVASION 3	
Health Points 7 Rank Equivalent: 1	

Once the wolves are dealt with this leaves the PCs the conundrum of what to do with Etri. Thorgeir will not want Etri slain as "he does useful work, and can't be dangerous as he was protecting the sheep". If the PCs do not slay Etri now then his natural zombie instincts will return on the 10th.

Carlton

Like the other villages, zombies were risen by Osric on the 8th.

If the PCs pass to the south of the village at night time, they will see figures in the tree and bush lined road, in the centre of the road, they will see a lone figure who will talk to the PCs as they approach.

These are the raised corpses of a group of bandits that were slain by a party of adventurers. They have just enough sentience to repeat what they did before. They've set up a basic ambush technique which served them well when they were alive.

The leader will stop any travellers and order (or try to) them to hand over all valuables whilst the rest of the group will hide in the

Encounters

bushes and shower the travellers with arrows. A group of light skirmishers will rush out and attack.

The group consists of several different types of undead: the archers are skeletons, the skirmishers zombies and the leader a 3rd rank vampire knight:

FIVE SKELETON ARCHERS

ATTACK 15	Bow (d6, 4)
DEFENCE 5	Armour Factor 0
MAGICAL DEF 3	(2 for piercing)
STEALTH 13	Movement 10m
PERCEPTION 7	
EVASION 3	
Health Points 4	Rank Equivalent: 1

FOUR ZOMBIE SKIRMISHERS

ATTACK 10	Sword (d8, 4)
DEFENCE 4	Armour Factor 0
MAGICAL DEF 1	Movement 6m
STEALTH 5	
PERCEPTION 4	
EVASION 1	
Health Points 16	Rank Equivalent: 1

LEADER (VAMPIRE KNIGHT)

ATTACK 18	Sword (d8+3, 7)
DEFENCE 12	Armour Factor 5
MAGICAL DEF 6	Movement 6m
STEALTH 14	
PERCEPTION 5	
EVASION 4	
Health Points 23	Rank Equivalent: 3

If they search off the road, the PCs will come across the undead's stash. Here they will find 5 Crowns, 32 Florins, a +1 sword (on the leader), a +1 bow (on one of the skeletons), 2 healing potions and a love philtre.

Also amongst the stash, the PCs will find a letter, with writing on both sides.

On the first side is written:

*Leif,
You are a despicable heathen barbarian.
Not only are you impotent in commanding
your Heathen hoards but, the popular*

*rumour is that you are also impotent. You
have the hygiene of a moose and the wit
and charm of a dead badger.*

*Don't make threats towards this fair town
that you cannot follow through. My
brother kicked the crap out of you and
your ancestors as did our father and our
ancestors before then.*

*I shall sit safe in Tresce's minster,
surrounded by more gold than you've
seen in your pathetic existence.*

At the bottom is the remnants of a wax seal, from which can be made out a stylised "A", this is Alfred's seal.

On the other side is a hastily scrawled response:

*I've had enough insulting from an Albion
pig, content to hide behind the walls of
your pathetic god.*

*I will march into your town and will burn
your stupid minster to the ground and
take all the gold for myself. I know that
your military is not a patch on what it
was in your brother's day.*

Prepare to die cowering.

The letter has Alfred's seal, but was written by Edward to antagonise the nearest Thulandic Jarl. If the letter is bought to Alfred, he will deny knowing anything about it. If a comparison of handwriting is made then it can be seen that the writing does not match Alfred's.

Any priestly characters should be able to recognise that the handwriting is of a style used within monasteries.

Welbury

Zombies were raised by Osrice on the 9th.

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Unfortunately (for the villagers) these zombies did not take accord of Osric's instructions and began acting like normal undead and attacking the village folk on the morning of the 10th.

When the PCs arrive, they'll find 8 skeletons and 6 zombies besieging the church. Another 4 skeletons and 2 zombies will be lurching around the village.

In the church the residents of the villages will be found, several already bitten. The local priest, Eldred, has been keeping the zombies at bay through his priestly abilities and the solidity of the stone church.

Midton

At the same time of the other zombies, the corpse of Bathild and Tostig's child were raised. As Bathild's zombie wanders through her fathers land, on the 9th, Bardulf will trap it in his barn and send a message to Tostig. When Tostig gets the message he will request for help from the PCs and ride out to Catton. Once there he will face the hidden Bathild, but will be unable to deal with her and will request that the PCs slay her once more.

If the PCs do not travel to Catton, Tostig will venture out by himself and deal with Bathild, once he has done this he will return to Tresce a broken man, resign his post and start drinking vast quantities.

Sorby

One of the farmers, Selwyn, of Sorby noticed strange figures moving through his land on the 7th onwards. Upon investigating and discovering them to be zombies, he went home, got out his old crossbow and quarrels and started shooting them.

Unfortunately for the local people, Selwyn is quite an old fellow and has started developing cataracts, meaning that he finds it hard to work out what is a zombie and what isn't. Hence he's

been taking pot shots at *anybody* travelling through his lands. This is especially unfortunate as the major road from Malton to Tresce is slap bang in the middle of them.

A messenger will reach Tresce on the 9th with a crossbow wound and mention about this "mad bloody farmer" that shot him.

If the PCs directly investigate Selwyn then he should be quite easy to deal with, though he will shoot at the PCs if they approach him (ATTACK 15). Once the PCs get into 10m then he will be able to see that they aren't zombies, or if they shout at Selwyn as they close.

If the PCs decide to attack him, as he is quite old and infirm, one sword blow should put him down for good. Of course, this will cause big problems for the PCs: killing a local farmer who was just defending his property.

Wesby

Wesby's most outstanding feature is the wind-powered mill for flour. All of the local villages send their grain here to be ground into flour before it is sent out to the surrounding area.

If the PCs haven't dealt with the zombie workers at Whitecliff then the recently harvested grain will arrive and be ground on the 10th. Then the flour will be distributed to the local villages on the 11th.

From the 11^h people in the villages will start using the flour and will fall ill. The illness is not fatal and is akin to a case of food poisoning, but this means that the stocks in Wesby have been contaminated and will have to be destroyed (unless the PCs know where the contamination came from).

The Beast of the Moor

The moor between Longflow and Whitecliff, known to the locals as "the Hound's Moor" is

Encounters

said to be haunted by a fairy hound that will attack travellers venturing out after night fall.

As common in these areas, the legend is quite true, a family of barghests roam the moors. If the PCs venture through at night, before midnight on the 8th, then they have a 40% chance of meeting a barghest.

If they venture through, at night, on the 9th, then they will hear a barking and growling. If they investigate, they will come across one of the barghest, in front of a cave, fighting six zombies.

The PCs may opt to join in the fight. If they help kill the zombies, without attacking the barghest, then it will retreat to the cave mouth and growl if any of the PCs come close. It will attack only if the PCs try to enter the cave.

Inside the cave is the barghest's mate and pup, these will attack immediately if any PCs enter the cave.

If the PCs don't meet the barghest, and travel across the moor after the 9th then they have a 40% chance of coming across the cave, with five dead zombies and a dead barghest outside and a dead zombie inside. The barghest's mate and pup are nowhere to be seen.

Endgame

Godiva gives birth

At 09:30 on the 11th; Godiva will give birth to a son. Unless the player's stop Alfred from going to Norby, he should be there and will plan to spend the rest of the day there, before taking their new son to his foster parents.

If Godiva has partaken of the infected grain, then both she and her new son will be gravely ill by this point and in danger of both dying. At this point either Alfred (if present) or Annis will ride to the town to find a priest to heal here. They should arrive at Tresce at around 10:00.

Zombie attack

At dawn the zombies start advancing on the walls of Tresce, when they get to half a mile of the town's walls then they will stop and stand there moaning, surrounding the town. There will be approximately 2000 zombies. Osric, if he is still alive will stay hidden in a small copse on the outside of the zombie army.

An alarm bell will be rung when they're first seen (about 07:00).

At about 08:00 Leofric will ride out to deal with the zombies. He will ride to about 5 metres in front of them and will proclaim:

Evil creatures of the devil; this town is under my protection. You will obey me and the word of God. I command you to die.

At this point, if Osric is still alive and still has the rod of undead control. Then he will

command the zombies to die. This will by 95% effective, unfortunately it will also release his control over the remaining 100 zombies who will attack whatever is near to them.

If Osric is dead, or hasn't got the rod of undead control; then the zombies have reached the end of their early orders and will now be independent. The zombies will make short work of Leofric and advance into the attack on Tresce.

If the PCs have obtained the rod of undead control, then they can try to use it to remove the zombies. To use the rod then a roll under Psychic Talent must be made. There is a penalty of -1 for each extra zombie being controlled.

Thulandic attack

The Thulanders (if not dealt with before) will turn up at about 09:00.

If the zombie army is still there, then they will wait outside; realising that it will be easier to take the town if the horde have kill all the defenders.

If there is no zombie army, they will ride to the gate and demand a tribute of Alfred's head and gold or they will burn the town to the ground.

At this point Edward will ride out to meet them by himself, will insult them and be slain by an amazed Leif.

The Thulanders will give the town until 10:00 before they get impatient and attack.

Swanhild's last chance

As Swanhild's previous attempts to assassinate Edward and Alfred have failed, she'll take the opportunity to attempt to kill Edward herself when everybody's busy with the zombies.

Edward is praying in the minster by himself at this time. Swanhild will approach with an unshielded dagger. Once she is within 5 metres. Edward will speak to her (whilst still kneeling):

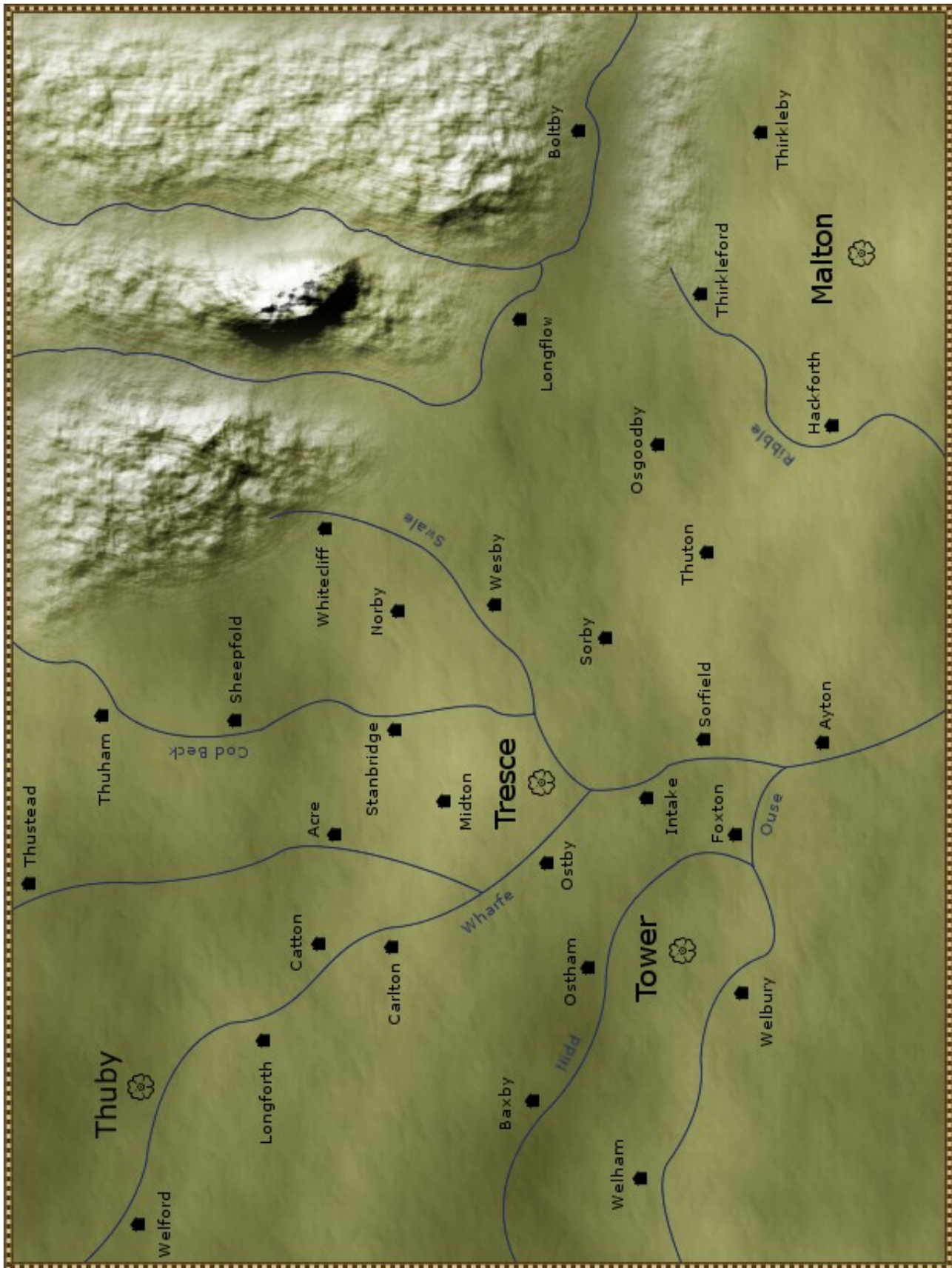
Don't be so bloody stupid woman, do you really think killing me will make the blindest bit of difference?

I won't be in your way for much longer and, with Alfred's infidelity, you can get him removed quite easily.

You look surprised? I'm not that stupid, I know about you and about Alfred. The important thing is that it doesn't make much difference to anything. Now go away and wait.

Swanhild will drop the knife and run out of the minster.

Appendix 1 – Area Map



Appendix 2 – Osric's Route

