

# Dread Tide Tower

Steve Williams

## Introduction

Dread Tide Tower is an adventure module for D&D BECM1 or other old-school RPGs. It is designed for parties of 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> level.

## Location Information

Dread Tide Tower is a weather-beaten granite tower built atop a floating mass of slick black rock. Enwreathed in an otherworldly mist, it appears to float upon a cloud. Constructed generations past by an order of wizards dedicated to maintaining harmony within the world, it was until recently the home of one of the order, **Saleem Bokhar**. It has been commandeered by a viscous tribe of Lizard men led by a hulking brute known as **Oka**. They have been using the tower to move up and down the coastline raiding settlements, seemingly intent only upon snatching the inhabitants, who they bear back to the tower in canoes.

## Adventure Hooks

- **Helpless Onlookers:** Whilst travelling the coastline towards the next village stop-over on their journey, the party witnesses from a cliff-top the conclusion of a Lizard man raid. Captives are battered and prodded into the canoes and borne back to the tower.
- **Taken:** Word reaches the party that an acquaintance of theirs has disappeared whilst investigating the tower.
- **Hushed Whispers:** In settlement after settlement, the party hear rumours of a wandering tower linked to the disappearance of entire populations. Even wilder rumours talk of the tower harbouring immense wealth.
- **Help Me PC Party, You're My Only Hope:** A traumatised survivor of a raid stumbles across the party and begs them for help.

## Encountering a Raiding Party

Lizard man raiding parties tend to leave the tower shortly before dusk or dawn. They will typically send an advance party further down the coast from their intended target to

reconnoitre their target a day before a raid. A typical raiding party consists of one or more (to a maximum of four) canoes, each containing: **4 Lizard men (AC 5, HD 2+1 (M), HP 12 each, #AT 1, D 1d6, Save F2, ML 12)**. Half of the raiding party are armed with 3 javelins each (D 1-6, 30/60/90), they will throw a javelin each the first round if they have initiative.

## Getting To The Tower

Most coastal settlements will possess small craft suitable for carrying the party to the tower. When raiding, the tower will approach within 500 yards of the coast.

The Lizard men dwelling in the tower set a single watch, changed every four hours, on the second-floor balcony that overlooks the main (now unused) door. Lizard men do not make attentive sentries and 50% of the time, the sentry will have their attention drawn inside the tower.

There is a yawning cave mouth to the rear of the rock mass through which the Lizard men gain access and egress in their canoes.

Adventurous (or foolhardy) PCs can try to climb from the boat and scale the 60' rock face. PCs wearing leather, or no armour, succeed on a 12 in 20 chance whereas PCs in heavier armour succeed on a 5 in 20 chance. PCs that fall from the rock face risk both drowning and alerting the sentry on the balcony.

There are a set of tall iron-bound aged oak doors at the base of the tower. The doors are firmly locked. PCs listening at the doors can hear something rhythmic thudding into the other side of the door. If the PCs linger, blood will creep from under the door.

PCs may climb to the second floor balcony. Whilst the granite blocks that form the tower are neatly dressed, enough mortar has been weathered away to provide some purchase. PCs wearing leather, or no armour, succeed on a 15 in 20 chance. PCs in heavier armour succeed on a 10 in 20 chance.

## 1. Cave Entrance

Waves lap gently against the slimy obsidian sides of the cavern maw. Daylight dwindles into darkness the deeper into the cavern you venture. The tunnel dog-legs to the right and there appears to be a faint yellow glow ahead.

The tunnel turns a bend and widens to a beach of black sand, lit by a solitary crude torch, wedged into a fissure, that hisses and spits fat embers. Four long canoes are drawn up on the beach.

Many three-clawed footprints have chewed up the sand and drag marks are evident. The jagged ceiling is low (10') and the sides of the cavern run with moisture.

At the rear of the cavern are crudely carved steps winding back and up into darkness, ending in an unlocked wooden door. There are no sounds from the other side.

## 2. Ransacked Storeroom

Four sturdy stone pillars support a vaulted stone ceiling shrouded in shadow. Wooden water barrels cluster around the base of one pillar. Splintered crates and slimy, rotting vegetables are strewn across the rough flagstone floor. There is the rancid smell of spoiled meat in the air. In the centre of the room, there is what appears to be a pile of bloody rags.

PCs approaching the pile of rags discover the corpse of a villager. The abdomen and chest cavity have been hollowed out. All of the soft fleshy parts have been gnawed to the bone. PCs listening carefully may hear a soft 'popping' noise from the darkened ceiling above.

**3 Geckos (AC 5, HD 3+1 (M), HP 18 each, #AT 1 bite, D 1d8, Save F2, ML 7).** Three Geckos, each 5' long and pale blue with orange spots, drop from the ceiling onto unwary PCs. If

forced to retreat, they will seek to escape to the corners of the ceiling.

**Ceiling:** 20' high.

**Light:** No natural light. Unlit.

A flight of stone steps leads up to area 3. There are no sounds from above.

**Treasure:** None.

## 3. Disused Kitchen

A fireplace as tall as a human, and topped with a granite mantelpiece dominates one wall of the room, the ashes in its hearth long cold. Pots and pans litter the floor and, in the centre of the room, stands a solid oak workbench. There is the tang of copper in the air. Hanging upside down from meat hooks at the back of the room are the corpses of three villagers.

Their throats have been slit and their blood has drained into wooden buckets placed underneath them. A pool of viscous blood seeps from one of the buckets and footprints have been tracked through it.

The workbench in the centre of the room has a bloody cleaver embedded in a chopping block, three fingers lying next to it. There are tatters of bloody clothing in a heap next to the bench.

In the far corner of the kitchen is a wooden hatch in the wall with a metal winding handle next to it. It's a dumb-waiter large enough to fit a small humanoid (no larger than a dwarf). Winding it is far as it will go will take any PC hiding inside it to **area 6 Dining Hall**.

**Ceiling:** 20' high.

**Light:** No natural light. Unlit.

Directly across from the stairs that led up from **area 2 Ransacked Storeroom** is a set of stone stairs that exit underneath the stairs in **area 4 Grand Hallway**. There are rhythmic

thumps and muffled cries of agony from above.

**Treasure:** One of the fingers on the chopping board is wearing a golden signet ring engraved with birds worth 50 gp. Hidden up the chimney behind the mantelpiece is a leather pouch containing 3 finely-cut rubies each worth 150 gp.

#### 4. Grand Hallway

A magnificent set of marble stairs sweep down into a floor of crimson and white chequered flagstones. Circling around the room, level with the top of the stairs, is a landing edged with a mahogany balustrade. Three Lizard men lean over the balustrade, their attention fixed on the entrance. Nailed to the front door by their wrists, is a villager whose head sags down, as if staring at the javelins that have transfixed his body. From somewhere just outside your field of vision, another javelin lances out and impales the forlorn figure with a meaty thud.

**4 Lizard men (AC 5, HD 2+1 (M), HP 12 each, #AT 1, D 1d6, Save F2, ML 12).** The three Lizard men on the landing are each armed with 2 javelins (D 1-6, 30/60/90) in addition to their hand weapons. They will throw a javelin each the first round if they have initiative. The Lizard man at the base of the stairs has thrown his javelins and is armed only with a nail-studded club.

Suspended above the centre of the hallway by a chain is a heavy metal chandelier, the winding handle and locking-arm are at the top of the stairs leading from **area 3 Disused Kitchen**. If the PCs release the locking handle, the chandelier will come crashing down. Anyone caught under the chandelier will take 2d20 damage from the impact.

**Ceiling:** 30' high.

**Light:** Large windows set the level of the landing provide natural light.

**Treasure:** None.

#### 5. Vestibule

Stairs open onto a wood-panelled thickly-carpeted landing. A pair statues flank a set of double-doors. One of the statues has fallen from its pedestal and lays in pieces on the floor. Opposite the double-doors, another set of double-doors lead onto an external balcony. A shadow moves across the doorway.

**1 Lizard man (AC 5, HD 2+1 (M), HP 12 each, #AT 1, D 1d6, Save F2, ML 12).** Standing lookout from the balcony. 50% of the time, the sentry will be looking out to sea, the other half of the time it will be walking up and down the landing. If not taken by surprise, it will strike the internal double-doors three times to alert nearby Lizard men.

The statues appear to have been a pair of human warriors standing at ease, sculpted from obsidian. Upon closer inspection, the one lying across the floor looks to have been in mid-stride when it shattered. These are obsidian golems which will animate only when **Saleem Bokhar** gives the command word.

**Ceiling:** 15' high.

**Light:** Open external double-doors provide natural light.

**Treasure:** None.

#### 6. Dining Room

A vast circular table squats in the centre of the room. Silver platters adorn the table, heaped with haunches of raw meat. Staring blankly into space, a severed head has been cracked open like a boiled egg and a long-handled spoon juts out of it.

If not alerted by the sentry on the landing, five reptilian heads swivel in unison as the doors open.

**5 Lizard men (AC 5, HD 2+1 (M), HP 12 each, #AT 1, D 1d6, Save F2, ML 12).** Caught

unawares, the Lizard men will be seated and enjoying some fine-dining. Should they be alerted, four Lizard men will join the fight on the landing whilst one rushes up the spiral stairs to **area 7 Library** where **Oka**, the Lizard man chief is ensconced.

The dumb-waiter from **area 3** terminates its journey in the corner of this room.

**Ceiling:** 15' high.

**Light:** Four windows provide natural light. At night, two free-standing candelabras dimly illuminate the room.

**Treasure:** A dozen silver platters are worth 50 sp each.

### 7. Library/study

An L-shaped work bench is strewn with fragments of glass and congealed liquids. Two walls are lined with haphazardly stacked books and scrolls.

The other set of spiral stairs lead up to **area 9 Glass-Domed Control Room**.

The work bench appears to have been swept clear by something blunt and heavy. Most of the books and scrolls on the shelves relate to the flora and fauna of the region. **Saleem** appears to have been a keen ornithologist.

**Ceiling:** 10'.

**Light:** Two windows provide natural light. A small candelabra lies on the floor in the corner.

**Treasure:** Searching the shelves will reveal two spell scrolls, one with **Fly** (3<sup>rd</sup> level) and the other with **Water Breathing** (3<sup>rd</sup> level).

A draw with a false bottom contains a pale wooden box inlaid with intricately carved dragons. It contains two **healing potions**.

### 8. Bedchamber

A sparsely furnished room containing a bed, foot locker and body-length mirror set in the wall.

**Saleem's** trunk contains utilitarian plain robes. The mirror is a portal that leads directly into **area 9 Glass-Domed Control Room**. PCs that touch the glass will feel no resistance and their hand will disappear to the depth that they reach. There are no ill effects. Peeking through the mirror will reveal (if not already alerted by a guard) the recumbent form of **Oka**, the Lizard man chief.

**Ceiling:** 10'.

**Light:** A single window provides natural light.

**Treasure:** Thoroughly searching **Saleem's** trunk will reveal a tiny press-release draw embedded near the base. It contains the **Ring Obscura**. The wearer of the ring becomes more difficult to hit with missile fire (including spells that require a roll to hit). If targeted from greater than 50' with a missile attack, the shooter has to re-roll successful hits. The second result stands (hit or miss).

### 9. Glass-Domed Control Room

Levitating above a circular dais of obsidian is a fist-sized gem that burns with a searing emerald flame. A full-length mirror is set in the far wall and is flanked by two obsidian statues depicting human warriors wearing armour unlike that of any seen in the realm. Stretched out along couch is a gargantuan Lizard man who appears to be sleeping. Propped against the couch is a two-handed butterfly axe. The Lizard man is resting its outstretched feet on the curled form of a man whose robes are fouled by his own encrusted waste.

**Oka** is asleep but his eyes will flick open if a PC gets within 10' of him.

**Oka (AC 4, HD 4+1 (M), HP 33, #AT 2, D 1d6, Save F4, ML 12).** Oka is a merciless opponent who will feign weakness to seek advantage. He is the only of his tribe to speak common and can converse in halting conversation. His magical axe is called **Splitter** and on a damage roll of a 6, another D6 may be rolled and the damage added to the first roll (this can only happen once per attack roll).

Curled up on the opposite side of the dais is a **Horned Chameleon (AC 2, HD 5 (L), HP 40, #AT 2 1 bite/1 horn, D 2d4/1d6, Save F3, ML 7).** It's a 7' long lizard which can change colour to blend into its surroundings. It surprises on a roll of 1-5 (on a D6). It can shoot out its tongue up to 5' long. A successful hit means that the victim is pulled to the horned chameleon's mouth and bitten for 2d4 damage.

**Saleem** is gagged to prevent him using the command words needed to activate the **2 Obsidian Golems (AC 3, HD 6 (L), HP 48 each, #AT 1, D 2d4, Save F3, ML 12).** The Golems will only attack those that seek to harm **Saleem.**

**Saleem** is in a pitiful state. His long grey hair and beard are matted with filth, and appears gaunt and skeletal. **Magic User (AC 9, HD 6 (M), HP 10, #AT 1, D 1d4, Save MU 7, ML 8).** When freed from beneath **Oka's** legs, it will take him 6 rounds before he can move due to cramp. He has no memorised spells and his spell book is hidden in a concealed compartment on one of the Golem's pedestals. The once erudite and affable mage-scholar is mortally embarrassed by his current state. He will offer safe passage for the PCs to any destination within reason and welcomes house-guests. He will also offer a monetary reward to be collected from his order.

The **obsidian dais** is the control mechanism for the tower and has 8 emeralds inset at the 8 cardinal points. **Oka** had kept **Saleem** alive

only to guide the tower to his next target. When **Saleem's ruby-tipped staff** (found on the couch), is placed in the small hole in the floor next to the dais, the tower may be moved by rotating the staff to the right to increase speed and the opposite way to slow down. Direction of travel may be set by depressing the emerald appropriate to the cardinal point.

**Ceiling:** 20'.

**Light:** Natural light from the glass-dome and the panoramic window.

**Treasure:** The emeralds set in the dais are worth 200 gp each. Any PC touching the central emerald entwined in green flame must **save vs death ray** or take 3d10 damage. The flaming gem may be pushed safely out of alignment by anything wooden and it becomes inert. It is worth 3,000 gp however anyone taking it will be hunted down by **Saleem's** order. **Saleem's** spell book is concealed in the pedestal of one of the Golems. It is written in the secret language of his order and is undecipherable by the PCs.

#### **Adventure XP:**

- Geckos - 50 xp each
- Lizardmen – 25 xp each
- Horned Chameleon – 300 xp
- Oka – 500 xp
- Obsidian Golem – 500 xp each

Discretionary xp can be awarded for whatever whimsy takes your fancy.

