

WK1

Fantasy Renaissance Adventure Module

CAVES OF THE KOBOLD QUEEN

Written by "Weird Dave" Olson

An Adventure for Character Levels 1-3



WRATH OF THE KOBOLDS #1

For use with
the 5th Edition
of the First
Fantasy RPG



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The town of Ormkirk is in peril! Plagued by marauding kobolds that have been kidnapping townsfolk in the night, the town-master of Ormkirk needs brave adventurers to end the pint-sized menace and return the kidnapped men. But what evil awaits you in the ... **CAVES OF THE KOBOLD QUEEN?**

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Fantasy Renaissance Adventure Module WK1
CAVES OF THE KOBOLD QUEEN
WRATH OF THE KOBOLDS #1

For use with the 5th Edition of the First Fantasy RPG

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CAVES OF THE KOBOLD QUEEN

In the wild and rocky hills north of the town of Ormkirk, dangerous kobold raiding parties have been striking at travelers and townsfolk alike for several weeks, stealing them away under cover of night from out of their homes. Desperate for help in rescuing the missing people, Ormkirk's townmaster sent out a call for adventurers to hunt down the raiders and recover the kidnapped men.

WK1 Caves of the Kobold Queen is the first adventure in Cut to the Chase Games' Fantasy Renaissance Adventure Module trilogy, **WRATH OF THE KOBOLDS**. It is designed for a group of four to six 5th Edition characters levels 1 to 3 (optimized for 2nd-level). The GM should read the module thoroughly before playing to become familiar with the overall plot of the adventure.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: KOBOLDS!

KOBOLDS HAVE BEEN A PEST AND THREAT FOR LOW-LEVEL CHARACTERS IN FANTASY ROLEPLAYING GAMES SINCE THE BEGINNING. OVER THE YEARS, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE TRANSFORMED A MORE DRACONIC CREATURE, STILL LOWLY BUT PERHAPS A BIT MORE ON THE THREATENING SIDE. THIS SCENARIO PRESENTS THE NORTHERN KOBOLD, A GENETIC VARIANT THAT SPLIT FROM THE MAIN RACE LONG AGO. THEY'RE A MASH-UP BETWEEN DOG-LIKE CANIDS AND REPTILIAN DRACONIC DESCENDANTS, BUT HOW THEY APPEAR IN YOUR GAME IS ENTIRELY UP TO YOU—DESCRIBE THEM AS YOU SEE FIT, THOUGH REMEMBER THE YIPPING!

Appendix Contents

The combat statistics for monsters and NPCs listed in **bold** in the text can be found in the **Appendix** along with reprinted profiles of important NPCs.

Adventure Background

Ormkirk is a small town located along a minor trade route between much larger cities, just south of the Talon Hills. Its location ensures that visitors, though sporadic, are not unheard of, so the locals are accustomed to seeing strangers passing through or stopping for a night at the Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern. The mayor of Ormkirk, Thaddeus Travail, is a retired traveling merchant and maintains good relations with the major merchant companies around the area.

But, in the rocky hills to the north of Ormkirk, a darkness has been growing. Always known as a rough area and home to a large number of kobolds and bandits, the Talon Hills have become restless with activity. Rumors have trickled down into Ormkirk from hill men that the weak and pathetic kobolds have begun raiding the isolated farmsteads with alarming frequency and coordination.

Thaddeus Travail and the town council of Ormkirk gave the rumors little heed. Or at least publicly. Secretly, Travail saw an opportunity to make some troublesome locals disappear, people who were starting to speak openly against the townmaster's policies of increased taxation. Under the guise of visiting a local magistrate, Travail and a retinue of hired bodyguards set out into the Talon Hills to meet with the kobolds. Along the way they joined up with a minor bandit lord, an ogre named Grabbold, who was also on the payroll of Travail. After a week of traveling and searching, the townmaster and his entourage finally met up with the sneaky kobold residents.

They were taken before a particularly large and dominating female kobold who styled herself the Kobold Queen. Townmaster Travail outlined a plan in which half a dozen men from Ormkirk could be taken in the night and turned into slaves for the Kobold Queen. She agreed, and the plan was set into motion. But the greedy Kobold Queen wanted more, more to please her God of Destruction to whom she had pledged her service. A great sacrifice was to be made, or so the vision from the God of Destruction proclaimed. She needed men, and the men from Ormkirk were the perfect targets.

One week after Travail returned to the village, several witnesses claimed to have seen little devils scurrying about in the alleys and shadows of the town. The next morning, it was discovered that six men of Ormkirk had been kidnapped by the shadowy figures. Travail "determined" that the kidnappers were kobolds from the Talon Hills.

The townmaster called the town guards to double duty and pulled citizens from the ranks of the farmers as a token effort. But five days later Travail was in for a surprise when six more men disappeared in the night. In another four days, five more men disappeared.

Travail found himself stuck in a jam. Ormkirk is not a large township, and with harvest coming up there were suddenly far fewer residents than he expected to help bring in the crops. Without a successful harvest there would be nothing left over for himself when the tax collector came around. Caught in a bind of his own making, Travail decided to turn to that lowest form of worker to help solve the problem—adventurers.

Travail sent messengers north, east, south, and west with offers of 100 gold pieces to find and rescue the missing men. He also posted signs up at the Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern, where he hoped to find a group of adventurers willing to brave the Talon Hills to go kobold hunting, and hopefully not uncover his own part in the mess. Travail's simple map shows the location of the cave where he and his cohorts met

with the Kobold Queen, but he does not realize that this is just a front. The real cave complex is located elsewhere.

Travail doesn't have the coin to pay the adventurers the promised fee, but he does sincerely hope to bring back the men who have been taken by the kobolds. He works with the ogre bandit Grabbold to arrange the characters don't make it back to Ormkirk alive and to leave rescued men for Travail to recover in the wilderness. This would also mean Travail doesn't have to pay the hired characters their fee, which is an amount he doesn't have anyway.

Module Synopsis

The characters are hired by the townmaster of Ormkirk, Thaddeus Travail, to undertake what seems like a simple hunt of kobold raiders. Searching the caves requires time and tracking, but using the map provided by Travail, the characters eventually find the cave. Unfortunately, it is not the cave with the prisoners, and the cunning kobolds launch their traps.

By defeating the menaces the characters learn either through strong-armed diplomacy or skilled tracking that the kobolds have a second, larger cave. This is the true lair of the Kobold Queen and her Red Gnasher Tribe, where the men from Ormkirk are held prisoner. It's a tough fight in a dark labyrinth beneath the ground but using their wits, wisdom, and brawn the characters can defeat the evil Kobold Queen and stop her ritual to the God of Destruction.

But the troubles are not over, it seems, as the rescued men explain that they heard the townmaster was actually in league with the Kobold Queen.

Somewhere out in the rocky hills the characters are confronted by the ogre Grabbold and the bandits, who form the third piece of the wicked triangle. With the pieces of the puzzle laid out before them, confronting Thaddeus Travail forms the final part of the module. What happens to him is entirely up to the characters, however. The repercussions of their actions have an effect on how the town is presented in the third module, whether they know it or not!

Future Modules

This adventure can stand on its own without issue, but it also serves as the introduction to the WK module series. The next in the series is **WK2 Curse of the Kobold Eye**, wherein the events of the climactic showdown with the Kobold Queen have far reaching complications for the characters as they begin to suffer under a growing curse. What it is and how they

deal with it serves as the crutch for that module.

The final installment, **WK3 Revenge of the Over-Kobold**, puts the characters into the crosshairs of an imminent invasion from the kobolds. Under the leadership of the self-styled Over-Kobold, various tribes have been gathered into one force—which the characters witness first-hand when their town is laid siege to by a kobold army! More information on the layout and residents of Ormkirk is detailed in that module.

Involving the Characters

The party learns of Ormkirk's kobold kidnappers and decides to take a chance. Kobolds are pretty easy, and the pay is good (100 gold per adventurer) so there should be minimal risk. An in-and-out job. Fight the kobolds, rescue the townsfolk, and get paid. What could be simpler?

The adventure begins when the characters enter the town of Ormkirk. If they learned of the job offer before reaching the town, give them "Player Handout #1." Otherwise, let them get to the Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern before learning of the situation.

Adapting the Module

This module tries to use as many generic location names as possible to make it easy to port to nearly any fantasy campaign setting. Below are the elements of the module that would need to be mapped out to an existing setting along with notes of how they fit within the adventure.

Town of Ormkirk: A settlement of about 250 people located along a trade route.

Talon Hills: Wild and dangerous rocky badlands inhabited by kobolds, bandits, giant weasels, and all manner of other dangerous creatures.

God of Destruction: The Kobold Queen worships a generic evil deity referred to as the God of Destruction. This should be a chaotic evil deity dedicated to slaughter and destruction.

The Town of Ormkirk

Ormkirk is a small but growing town, located on a minor trade road. The town was started many years ago as a focal point for the surrounding farms, most of which lie far away from the dangerous and wild Talon Hills to the north. The Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern was the first permanent establishment, and within a few years' time, the entire town of Ormkirk had sprung up around it.

Thaddeus Travail was a traveling merchant with a prominent trading company, making the rounds at towns and villages between larger cities. Driven by insatiable greed, he would swindle towns out of their money by selling his products at thrice their worth, knowing he was the only merchant willing to stop in such places. But Thaddeus was no fool, and always put gold in the right hands to keep his own prospects from drying up. He came upon Ormkirk and discovered an opportunity to settle in and make some more gold, so he purchased the Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern from the local owner.

Using bribery, sly wit, and charm, Thaddeus managed to secure himself a position on the Ormkirk council, and with a taste for political maneuvering, he moved all the way up to townmaster. But there are some farmers in town who resent Thaddeus and his slick ways, farmers who wish to see a more local person sit in the position of townmaster.

Today, Ormkirk boasts a population of about 250 people—the streets are still dirt, most of the buildings are less than perfect, and the majority of people work as farmers in the fields to the south of the town. The Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern remains a popular stopping point for travelers, and the general store sees a bit of business as well.

Only one temple stands in the town, dedicated to the Goddess of Healing. Landers the Faithful (a 6th-level human cleric) is the high priest of the small temple.

The Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern

Francis is the bartender at the Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern. It is a simple structure, with a large common room wherein the bartender serves locals and travelers alike. Menu items are basic but hearty and include rabbit stew with onions, pork shank rubbed in herbs and spices, and a thick vegetable soup served hot. Ale is brown and plentiful, and for a higher price, a traveler can request wine.

Rooms are available to rent at the Splendid Shield for standard rates. At the time the characters visit, there are no other visitors—the merchant caravans are not scheduled to come through for another month or two.

PART ONE: ORMKIRK'S PROBLEMS

The scenario begins with the characters coming into Ormkirk as described in "Involving the Characters." Read the following as the characters are traveling along the Great Road towards Ormkirk:

The Great Road seems to have stretched on for countless miles, and you fear that perhaps you will go insane from the traveling when you spot a welcome sight up ahead. A small town stands not too far away, and with perfect timing too—the sun is just beginning to set in the west, creating long shadows and bringing a rosy tint to the rocky foothills to the north. An imposing mountain range stands high and proud in the descending sunlight along the eastern edge of the hills.

The town ahead is Ormkirk, where trouble awaits capable troubleshooters.

Welcome to the Splendid Shield

The town of Ormkirk is a quiet one, and as the heroes approach, the only signs of activity come from the Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern. The farmers have come in from their fields for the evening to enjoy a brew and a story around the hearth fire of the tavern.

Townmaster Thaddeus Travail is sitting at the largest table with five of the town's most vocal farmers when the characters enter. The townmaster is engaged in a heated debate over what to do about the kidnappings, with the farmers demanding greater action for their missing friends. As the characters enter the tavern, Townmaster Travail stands up and heads over their way.

Read or paraphrase the following as the characters enter the tavern:

The door to the Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern opens easily, spilling soft light into the evening air. Inside a dozen or so people have gathered in the common room to drink and share camaraderie on this chilly autumn evening. Most of them are farmers, some with wives and children. A somber mood seems to have settled over the room. The crowd keeps conversations low, with furtive glances around, mainly to the windows. Five men sit at a large round table toward the back, and one of them seems to take an interest in you. He's a rotund man, definitely not a farmer, with fine clothes and a wry grin. He stands and approaches you in a friendly manner. "Welcome to the Splendid Shield!" he announces in a voice loud enough for the whole tavern to hear.

The man is Townmaster Thaddeus Travail, and he is very glad to see the characters (regardless of whether or not they know about the town's kidnapping problems). He greets them warmly with a smile, patting them on the back and thanking them for coming. He introduces himself grandiosely, full of pomp and pride, before steering them over to his table.



The four farmers at the table are salt-of-the-earth types with no knowledge of a wider conspiracy. They just know that good men have been taken from Ormkirk recently by kobolds and they need capable people to go out and rescue them. If the characters were not aware of the town's problems or the reward, Townmaster Travail takes the opportunity to actively recruit them for the job at this time.

The Job Offer

Townmaster Travail offers the characters 100 gold coins each for the recovery of the kidnapped 15 men, alive or dead (so that they can be buried properly). The heroes are not the first group to go into the hills to find the men—a week ago another group of adventurers was sent, and the only survivor came back to town and died of a poisoned wound from the kobolds. The man had a map that his group made, which the townmaster gives to the characters.

This is an important clue—kobolds don't use poison, but bandits do. It's an important slipup by the townmaster that doesn't mean anything right now to the characters.

Inquisitive or doubtful characters can make social interaction checks to notice that Townmaster Travail is

hiding something, but if pressed he simply explains that with harvest coming up soon, the town desperately needs its men returned.

What Townmaster Travail Knows

In the course of their conversation, Townmaster Travail lets the characters in on the following pieces of information relevant to their search.

- The Talon Hills are a wild and dangerous place. Packs of wild weasels, swarms of giant ants, and numerous other creatures are known to stalk the wilderness besides just kobolds.
- A kobold was captured a week ago skulking around Ormkirk. This kobold revealed that the prisoners are being held by the Kobold Queen, though Townmaster Travail doesn't know anything more about this (he's lying of course).
- The hills are rocky and honeycombed with caves.
- Though he knows the bandits are in the hills, Townmaster Travail does NOT mention them specifically to the characters at this point. He wants to keep that as a surprise.

If they accept, Townmaster Travail thanks them heartily and the farmers around the table seem to relax. The townmaster offers them free room and board at the Splendid Shield for as long as they need,

NPC Profile: Townmaster Thaddeus Travail

Thaddeus Travail grew up in a merchant family and was raised on the “golden rule” – he who has the gold makes the rules. The Travails were not an overly wealthy family but they made do, and managed to procure several lucrative trade contracts across the northlands, specializing in routes other merchants were afraid to take because of bandits or monsters. Thaddeus was a quick learner and took to the family business with practiced ease.

Over the years, however, he grew tired of the road and sought to settle down. His family's estate was simply out of the question for him, however – his overbearing father ruled the household with a disciplined fist, and Thaddeus had always secretly chafed under the strict guidelines. He wanted a position of power for his own to weave his own webs of intrigue and commerce. He found Ormkirk in a bad way and decided that the town could use his personal touch. Through bribery, guile, and brute force at times, he managed to install himself as the townmaster. But his dreams of power were not satiated, and so he sought to bargain with the rough elements of the Talon Hills to the north.

Thaddeus met with Grabbold rather by chance when the ogre and his bandits waylaid the townmaster while on a journey westward. Thaddeus immediately recognized the usefulness of an ogre and a bandit tribe and used all of his honeyed words to convince Grabbold that there was more profit in letting him live. Convinced by the townmaster's grandstanding, the ogre agreed and the two became partners.

though he urges them to leave in the morning. The cave marked on the map is two days' walk in the hills, which Townmaster Travail explains is a dangerous place even without the kobold menace. The hills are known for their population of giant weasels and packs of wild dogs that attack travelers, a key reason why the farmers avoid the whole region.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: SUSPICIOUS PLAYERS

SOME PLAYERS MAY BECOME IMMEDIATELY SUSPICIOUS OF TOWNMASTER TRAVAIL, SO PLAY UP HIS FLAMBOYANCE AND WILLINGNESS TO DEAL TO PUT THEIR TROUBLES AT EASE. HOWEVER, IF THE PLAYERS GET TOO NOSY, DON'T STOP THEM FROM PRYING AROUND—TAKE A LOOK AT PART THREE TO GET A SENSE OF WHAT THE CHARACTERS CAN UNCOVER AT THIS POINT AND PLAY IT BY EAR. AFTER ALL, THERE ARE STILL CAPTIVE MEN IN THE KOBOLD WARRENS THAT NEED RESCUING, REGARDLESS OF HOW OR WHY THEY GOT THERE!

The Townmaster's Plan

Townmaster Travail is in trouble, since it was his luring and dealing that brought the kobolds down upon Ormkirk in the first place. He genuinely wants them recovered at this point, but he doesn't want loose tongues wagging. After the characters agree to help, he excuses himself and sends a messenger bird north to Grabbold with instructions to follow the characters and ambush them after they've rescued the men of Ormkirk. Once the characters are killed, the bandits are to flee and let Thaddeus know by messenger bird so that he can send out a convenient “search” party to find the people. The characters will be mourned, of course, but hopefully Townmaster Travail's duplicitous dealings with the Kobold Queen can remain a secret.

Investigating the Town

The characters have an opportunity before heading out into the hills to ask around town. Each attempt of investigation requires a half hour's worth of asking around and costs 5 silver pieces to loosen tongues. For each success that the group accumulates, select or roll randomly from the table listed below. Most of the results point to the type of people that the kobolds took away in the night, which can lead credence to suspicions of Townmaster Travail.

d10	Investigation Result
1	At the inn, a recalcitrant farmer finally opens up. “Sure, I knew some of the people who disappeared. Good people. A bit loud at times, but good people.”
2	A young boy with a dirty face stops in the street looks around nervously. “I saw one of the devils that came in the night! They were ugly and short, with horns and tails. I saw them take away the old man who is always yelling at the townmaster!”
3	Sitting on a bench outside a nearby house, the wrinkled matron with a hooked nose snorts. “That townmaster is a piece of work! Saw him first a few years ago with one of the merchant caravans, and then decided to set himself as owner of the Splendid Shield! And then became townmaster! But things have been safe since he took over. Though taxes are higher, curse the tax man!”
4	A broad-shouldered farm hand sets down his mug of ale and thinks for a moment. “Yeah, I suppose I'm afraid now. Those things are dangerous. And dangerous things scare me. But the harvest is coming up and we needs everyone we can get.”

5 After tying up his horse, the fat merchant wrings his hands nervously. "I've heard of Ormkirk's problems, but I have nothing to offer! Word around the traveling caravans is that it's profitable to come through town, so I'm coming through town. I don't want no trouble!"

6 On the outskirts of town, a group of youths toss a woven ball between themselves. "His dad was taken, and the old guy on the other side of town too. Quiet people, both of them, never spoke no bad words about no one! Why would devils want them?"

7 The barkeep pours another round of drinks. "Townmaster Travail is a bit over the top, but he's alright as far as bosses go. And townmasters too. Last townmaster was a drunk who ran up a tab deeper than some of the valleys in the Talon Hills! Conducts business at all hours, though."

8 An old man leans on his cane and spits a wad of tobacco juice onto the ground. "Bah! Curses and devil talk, it's all nonsense! It's them damn kobolds, that's for sure, and the gods take them for the pests they are! If I were a man twenty years younger I'd be out there whipping 'em until they talked."

9 A pair of scruffy dwarf brothers just in from the field with shovels in their hands stop and look with dumbfounded looks. "We have a townmaster? Don't know nothing about that, but if you're heading into the Talon Hills watch out for bandits. Caravans have been hit hard lately by them."

0 An exhausted gnome mother tugs on a rope which connects her to her four gnome children. "Kobolds are dangerous business, but there's something else going on, I swear. The first people taken seem to all have been people who had problems with the townmaster, but the second group? And the third? No sense I can make of it, that's for sure."

The rosy fingers of dawn are just stretching out across the land as you gaze upon the Talon Hills north of Ormkirk. The hills are rough and rocky with barely a tree in sight. This kind of terrain can hide any number of dangerous encounters beyond just kobolds.

The map provided by Townmaster Travail shows a cave entrance, but the scale of the map is not accurate. Navigating the hills to the area around the cave takes three days.

Locations in the Talon Hills

There are four key locations in the Talon Hills detailed in this module. The first is the cave marked on the characters' map where the kobolds have laid traps for unsuspecting adventurers. This is the Ambush Cave and is keyed to the map of the same name.

The second is the home to a colony of giant ants that the characters can use as a safe enough rest area if the ants are dealt with. While no map is provided for this area, it has no distinguishing features beyond the giant ants. There is also the hideout of a gang of bandits that are working with Townmaster Travail. They dwell in a ruined tower in the hills, a map of which is also not provided.

The last cave is the lair of the Red Gnasher kobold tribe led by the Kobold Queen where the kidnapped men are kept awaiting sacrifice. This cave system consists of three "levels." The upper and lower levels have a map associated with them, but the middle level is a nest of tunnels that requires skill checks to make it through.

Searching the Hills

Following the map provided by the townmaster, the characters can estimate that it's going to take them three days of hiking through the hills to get there. On the first night the characters are followed by bandits (see **Bandit Stalkers** for details).

There isn't much more to discover with the map from the townmaster, though the characters are likely to travel back into the hills to find the real kobold lair.

Random Wilderness Encounters

For each six hours of travel in the Talon Hills there is a 40% chance of having a random encounter. Roll 1d6 and consult the following chart. This percentage increases to 60% at night.

What the characters do with the information learned during the investigation is up to them.

PART TWO: TROUBLE IN THE HILLS

The rocky hills north of Ormkirk are a wide, sprawling area with no roads crossing its terrain. The main travel road skirts south along its border, through Ormkirk and other small communities on the border. It is a wild land of danger, shunned by the locals and inhabited by kobolds, giant weasels, and no small amount of giant ants.

Read the following as the characters set out to leave (the text assumes they are leaving in the morning).



1d6	Encounter
1	Nest of giant wasps
2	Giant weasel attack
3	Kobold hunting party
4	Rock slide
5	Bad weather
6	Giant ant colony

Nest of giant wasps

Along the path the characters encounter a small swarm of giant wasps protecting a nearby nest. Characters can make a Wisdom (Perception) check to spot the nest before encountering the **8 giant wasps** and avoid the entire area. If they do so, award them full experience for defeating the vermin.

Tactics: The giant wasps are simply angry that the characters have come too close to their nest and want to scare them away, but being vermin they are not afraid to die. They will not relent until all the characters have been driven away at least 500 feet from their nest.

Giant weasel attack

Giant weasels hunt in the hills north of Ormkirk, preying on ants and wasps primarily. The characters have stumbled upon a small group of them that have become bolder—they see a chance to score some prime meat in the form of the characters! There are **4**

giant weasels that attack the party.

Tactics: Giant weasels are simple carnivores and usually do not employ much in the way of tactical combat. They do tend to gang up on targets that seem obviously less armored, usually mages and thief-like characters. They flee if they are reduced to less than one quarter hit points.

Kobold hunting party

Under orders from the Kobold Queen this group of hunters is out gathering food and prey for the tribe. The **6 kobolds** are accompanied by **2 wild dogs**, with which they share an affinity (though not as mounts). If one of the kobolds is captured and forced to talk, he can relate in general terms the location of the Kobold Queen's lair, at least enough to convey that the characters' map does not point them in the same direction. The kobolds are all members of the Red Gnashers tribe (evident by their red-stained teeth that they gnash at opponents).

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: ROLEPLAYING KOBOLDS
HAVE FUN WHEN ROLEPLAYING KOBOLDS. THEY'RE COWARDLY, HANGING BACK AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO LET THEIR RANGED ATTACKS AND WILD DOGS DO MOST OF THE HEAVY LIFTING, BUT THEY CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS IF LEFT WITH NO OTHER OPTION. THROW OUT A YIP AND A SNARL ONCE IN A WHILE TO REALLY BRING THEM TO LIFE FOR YOUR PLAYERS!

Tactics: The kobolds keep back and use their ranged attacks to harass the party while the wild dogs charge up and try to occupy the melee-focused characters. The wild dogs have been bred for ferocity and fight until death, but the kobolds are much more cowardly. If they are reduced to one quarter their original number or lower, the rest flee in separate directions—they know the hills well enough to regroup later.

Refer to the “What the Kobolds Know” section after the Ambush Cave map key if the players capture and interrogate one or more of the kobold raiders.

Rock slide

The jagged Talon Hills hide many dangers, not all of which are monstrous in nature. The characters trigger a rock slide at this point while descending a steep hill. Each character must succeed at a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 7 (2d6) points of bludgeoning damage (half damage on a success). The rock slide attracts the attention of wandering monsters; the next random encounter chance increases by 30% (ignore the results of Bad Weather if a random encounter is chanced).

Bad weather

Autumn rain and wind for the rest of the day. Any checks to track or locate creatures are made with disadvantage due to the brutal weather.

Giant ant colony

The characters have stumbled upon the carcass of some large animal, a deer perhaps, which has become food for a colony of **6 giant ants**. The giant ants have no interest in the characters unless they present themselves as easy prey.

Bandit Stalkers

Grabbold has been alerted to the presence of the characters by Townmaster Travail and has decided to stalk the characters rather than wait for them to emerge from the kobold cave. A group of **6 bandits** pick up their trail the first night in the Talon Hills. The bandits travel light and try not to make noise as they know giant weasels, ants, and wasps are a common threat. The bandits have a normal chance of success at surprising the characters.

If the bandits notice the characters without being detected, they split up their group with half returning to Grabbold at the bandit hideout and the other half shadowing the party. If this happens and the characters fail to notice the bandits, they are treated to a nighttime visit by Grabbold and a strong force of his bandits (**10 bandits**) the next night. The ogre bandit demands an outrageous tribute for safe passage (50 gold per character), though he can be talked down with successful negotiation attempts. Grabbold is getting greedy at this point, as his orders from Townmaster Travail were to ambush the characters after they had recovered the men of Ormkirk. He still plans on doing that, but he wants to extort some gold first just in case they don't succeed.

Tactics: If confronted or forced into combat, the bandits do their best to keep the conflict a ranged one, which they are better at than straight melee. If any of them are reduced to half starting hit points, they flee and try to regroup later. None of these bandits are aware of Grabbold's involvement with Townmaster Travail or the Kobold Queen.

The poison used by the bandits is giant wasp venom.

What the Bandits Know

Any bandit that is captured knows next to nothing about the details of the plan between the Kobold Queen, Grabbold, and Townmaster Travail, but with successful Charisma (Intimidation) DC 12 checks can be made to spill one of the following items.

- The bandit leader is a ruthless ogre named Grabbold. He's spent some time in the kobold caves but only takes his most trusted lieutenants with him.

- Grabbold has a deal with the townmaster of Ormkirk. The townmaster tells them when caravans are passing on the road and what kind of armaments they have, and when the bandits raid the caravans they share some of the loot with the townmaster.
- The night the characters first met with Townmaster Travail the bandits report a messenger bird arriving at their hideout. Grabbold sent out patrols the next morning searching for the characters but with orders to only find them and report back to the ogre.
- The bandit lair is over there! (Can sketch out the location on a map.)

Ambush Cave

The location marked on the map from the townmaster of Ormkirk is an unassuming cave in the hills. Read the following after the characters have spent enough time searching:

The hills seem to go on forever and ever, and you're beginning to wonder if this map actually leads anywhere. But then you spot it—a small cave entrance at the base of a hill several hundred feet in front of you. In front of the cave stands a pair of kobolds accompanied by two wild dogs.

The **2 kobolds** and **2 wild dogs** are on alert, having been warned to prepare for the coming adventurers by a magical sending message from the Kobold Queen.

General Features

Light: The kobolds have no torches or campfires inside the cave, though evidence of fire pits can be found throughout.

Sound: Inside the kobolds keep quiet and make sure the dogs remain at the ready. Only the sound of dripping water can be heard from inside.

Smell: The cave reeks of dogs and kobolds, which have a distinct odor reminiscent of wet hair.

Ceiling: The ceiling is rough in this cave system but reaches eight feet high.

Refer to the map "Ambush Cave" for the following keyed locations.

1. Entrance

Set against several large stones, a cave entrance yawns before you. Though mostly natural, the marks on the walls indicate it may have been widened by picks and shovels at some point. The ground is rocky but well-worn, and in the coarse floor you see footprints, both kobold and dog.



The entrance to the Ambush Cave is carved out of the rocky landscape. As the characters enter the cave the tunnel slopes downward, deeper into the Talon Hills. The floor is rocky but a skilled tracker can pick out recent kobold and wild dog tracks.

2. Kobold Welcome Party

The tunnel widens and becomes a broad chamber, though the ceiling is only ten feet tall. Near the center of the cave stands a pair of floor-to-ceiling stalagmites, each ten feet across, and beyond them the cave extends into a wide, branching tunnel. The stink of wet dog is overwhelming.

This area is unlit as kobolds can see in the dark and have no need for torches. Inside **10 kobolds** and **6 wild dogs** lurk in the darkness, led by a **kobold subchief** appointed by the Kobold Queen. They are all members of the Red Gnasher Tribe (with red-stained teeth to prove it).

Traps: Kobolds love pit traps. The locations marked with an "X" on the map are spiked pit traps designed by the devious kobolds, who know to avoid them. Clever characters can watch the kobolds and step only where they have stepped, though this can be difficult in the midst of combat.

Noticing the pit traps requires a passive Perception of 13 or higher (or an active DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check). Characters that fail to notice the trap fall in when they step on the thin covering, landing 10 feet down and suffering 1d6 bludgeoning damage. The spikes at the bottom deal 1d6 piercing damage, which can be avoided with a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw.

Tactics: The kobolds work as a team to lure characters into the pit traps and take them out as quickly as possible. The kobolds generally hang back and use their slings to whittle the number of characters down while the wild dogs swarm to attack.

If the wild dogs are defeated and the characters start attacking the kobolds, the subchief decides to retreat deeper into the cave. In this case, the subchief and whatever kobolds are left head for **area 6**, without knowing that they are running into the lair of a cave bear which has recently moved in!

Treasure: As a reward for volunteering for this assignment, the kobolds were each given 2 gold pieces from the treasure cache of the Kobold Queen. The subchief keeps the gold (20 pieces total) in a small pouch for distribution later.

3. Gathering Location

Three tunnels split off from this main intersection. The floor is covered with crude beddings, rancid meat, chewed bones, and other accoutrements of kobold living.

This is where the kobolds in the Ambush Cave ate and slept while they way waited for the characters to arrive. They have nothing of note in their possessions.

4. Store Room

This cave is drier than the rest of the system and seems to be used for storage, though it is nearly empty now. Four barrels stand against the eastern wall.

This cave is only used by the kobolds when they are alerted by the Kobold Queen that a foolish band of adventurers needs dispatching. As such, it is poorly stocked. This room contains only a handful of barrels, most of which are empty.

Treasure: A careful search in this room (Intelligence (Investigate) DC 15) turns up a *potion of healing*.

5. Primary Storage

Piles of junk and debris litter the floor of this chamber. The refuse consists mainly of broken weapon parts, incomplete armor pieces, and unusually sized and colored rocks that you've seen around the Talon Hills.

Though used infrequently, the kobolds have still managed to squirrel away a small treasure pile in this room from the heroes and adventurers who have come before.

Treasure: Hidden amongst the boxes of this room is a chest with no lock. Inside are 150 silver pieces, 75 gold pieces, a set of two matching well-crafted daggers with ivory handles (each worth 45 gold pieces), and a leather pouch containing five small amethyst gems each worth 25 gold pieces.

6. Deeper Below Ground

The tunnel continues to slope downward into the darkness below the Talon Hills. A low growl of some large creature echoes up from somewhere further down.

The Ambush Cave setup by the kobolds leads into a twisting network of caves that are largely uninhabited now (they were once the home to a previous tribe of kobolds, the Dripping Cursers, but were wiped out by the Red Gnashers years ago). The Red Gnasher

kobolds don't go down there anymore, but recently a new occupant has taken up residence.

About 50 feet down the tunnel widens and opens up into a broad cave, roughly 30 feet wide by 30 feet long. This is the home of a dangerous **cave bear** that has moved up from deeper in the tunnels. The cave bear is hungry and incredibly territorial. If fleeing kobolds reach this area they are torn to shreds by the bear's claws and bite in a matter of moments.

Tactics: The cave bear is a fierce opponent but does not pursue anyone beyond its own cave. The creature fights until death to protect its lair.

Where to Now?

Hopefully the characters have survived the trap laid by the townmaster and the Kobold Queen, but that just leaves them with more questions. The characters should follow one of these courses of action:

- Go back to Ormkirk and find the townmaster, reporting failure.
- Keep searching the hills for the real kobold lair.
- Keep searching the hills for the bandit lair.

Searching the hills for the real kobold lair requires a Wisdom (Survival) DC 15 check and four hours of time. Roll to check for random encounters for each six hours of traveling (as described earlier).

What the Kobolds Know

A captured kobold from this area knows a lot of information. With each successful Charisma (Intimidation) DC 12 check, the characters can learn one of the following items.

- The Red Gnashers are the greatest of all the kobold tribes! (The kobold gnashes his teeth at this showing red stains near the gums.)
- The kobolds use this cave to kill nosy intruders who come looking for the kobold home.
- The bandits who live in the hills have recently been visiting the kobolds' home.
- The kobolds are led by the glorious Queen of the Kobolds, who will strike down all who oppose her!
- She needs men to conduct a ritual to appease the God of Destruction. There are many captured men in the kobold home.

Unfortunately, finding their "home" is a bit difficult. Getting one to spill the beans on the location doesn't get much useful information—the kobolds know this area well enough that their directions are worthless to those unfamiliar. A kobold who volunteers to lead the way will lure the adventurers to the Ant Cave in the hopes that the giant ants will take care of them.

The Ant Cave

If the characters get a kobold to lead them to their real lair, the kobold tricks them into the home of a giant ant colony. The cave does have an entrance, but no giant ants are seen near it as they use tunnels on the other side. Characters searching around can make a Wisdom (Survival) DC 15 check to spot ant tracks. A Wisdom (Survival) DC 10 check finds some old kobold tracks.

Alternately, you can use this cave if the characters seek out a spot to rest for the night. You can delay the arrival of the giant ants until the characters have made camp and settled down, likely without armor and unprepared.

General Features

Light: There is no light source of any kind in this cave.

Sound: The vague skittering sound of the ants can be heard from the cave entrance.

Ceiling: The cave ceiling averages about eight feet high. It is rough and uneven throughout, dotted by stalactites formed from rain water.

There are **20 giant ants** inside the colony that fight any intruders to the death.



Treasure: After the ants have been defeated the characters can find that the colony had buried some shiny treasure in the corner. The treasure comes to 100 gold pieces and a *potion of levitation*.

The Bandit Hideout

The bandits live in an abandoned tower rather than a cave. The tower is partially collapsed on one side. **Grabbold**, an ogre of some skill, leads the group, comprising **12 human bandits** at any given time. The remaining bandits are usually out scouting or hunting.

Depending on the sequence of events, the characters may never need to find the bandits' hideout. Grabbold and his men can serve as a side trek for the characters if they wish to pursue them from random encounters, or they may seek them out after learning about the ogre's involvement with the townmaster of Ormkirk.

General Features

Light: During the day the hideout has crumbled enough to allow natural light to fill it. At night the bandits keep fires in the main areas to warm themselves.

Sound: Bandits talk loudly amongst themselves about their recent kills, with Grabbold boasting loudest of all.

How the characters approach (or even find) the bandit hideout is up to them. It's nestled off their map, but if they capture one of the bandits, they can learn the location. Grabbold is one of the three primary villains of the scenario, so to be completely successful the characters must neutralize him as a threat.

Tactics: The bandits are confident in the secrecy of their hideout and have taken no special precaution towards detecting intruders. Life in the hills can be dangerous, however, so they are all armored and armed while awake. At night they light a campfire in the center of the ruined tower, which does a nice job of hiding the flames from view. Half of the bandits are asleep, and there is a 50% chance that Grabbold is sleeping as well.

No map is provided for the bandit hideout. The abandoned tower is in bad shape, but the bandits know how to use the crumbling walls for protection against ranged attackers.

Treasure: The bandits do keep a supply of wasp venom in their hideout, along with a treasure pile that consists of the following items: 100 gold pieces, 400 silver pieces, *oil of slipperiness*, *potion of greater healing*, and a *ring of swimming*. Grabbold, in typical ogre fashion, uses a greatclub and does not use the poison on it (though his javelins are tipped with it).

NPC Profile: Grabbold, Dimwitted Ogre

Grabbold, like most ogres, was raised to believe in the life philosophy of "might makes right." He has a powerfully mighty swing and is capable of killing almost any man with a single strike. However, since he came to the Talon Hills and gathered a group of bandits around him, Grabbold is starting to enjoy the role of enforcer to Townmaster Travail.

Unfortunately, like most of his kind, Grabbold is quite dimwitted and hasn't realized that he has the manpower and strength to take everything Ormkirk has to offer. He and his men have built a decent bandit life in the Talon Hills, and so far none of his gang have been willing to say anything about the "deal" with Townmaster Travail or how the ogre could simply crush the man outright. Grabbold is thoroughly enamored with his own self-image as stylized by Travail's honeyed words.

What Grabbold Knows

Grabbold has been on the payroll of Townmaster Thaddeus Travail for a few years. The pay is enough to keep the ogre and his men from attacking the town of Ormkirk, and when a merchant doesn't pay the right "taxes" the townmaster says are due, Travail sends a message to Grabbold detailing the merchant's schedule. It's a win-win situation for both of them.

Grabbold thought that the deal with the Kobold Queen was going to end badly—the ogre doesn't trust kobolds any more than he likes the taste of them (and he doesn't like the taste of them at all!). He thinks the whole deal is rotten, but since their meeting he hasn't had any contact with Travail. If told of the Kobold Queen's betrayal, Grabbold would snort and dismiss it—it's not his business.

He also tries his best to hide the fact that Townmaster Travail sent a messenger bird to him the night the characters arrived in Ormkirk. Grabbold isn't too cunning and likely spills this information by accident during any conversation.

While he can confirm that the townmaster made a deal with the Kobold Queen, Grabbold won't willingly give this information up. He's had a good deal with Travail for several years and he's hoping to continue—he wants to expand his bandit operation to encompass a wider area of the Talon Hills.



PART THREE: CAVES OF THE RED GNASHERS

The Kobold Queen is the leader of a large tribe of kobolds called the Red Gnashers. These kobolds have spent many generations digging out the tunnel complex that has become their home, creating a maze of rough-hewn passages, caves, and chambers. This cave complex is hidden about three miles from Townmaster Travail's map-led false cave.

Finding it should be the characters' ultimate goal, as deep inside is where the Kobold Queen has hidden away the prisoners for eventual sacrifice to the God of Destruction. How the characters get here is up to them, but it likely involves questioning captured kobolds or simply following tracks.

Read or paraphrase the following as the characters approach the cave entrance:

Cresting one of the many rocky hills, your gaze falls upon a small valley nestled and hidden from the surrounding area. At the base of a nearby outcropping you spot a cave entrance, only five feet tall and just as wide, black and yawning like some portal to another realm. As you watch a group of kobolds emerge from the cave, six in total, with a trio of wild dogs following close behind. They turn north from the cave entrance.

The patrol of **6 kobolds** and **3 wild dogs** are heading out of the cave to search around the area for intruders. If the characters do nothing the patrol moves wide around them and doesn't spot them, though unless they were careful the patrol does eventually find their tracks in 2d4x10 minutes. If the patrol finds the tracks they race back to the cave to try and alert the residents (see High Alert below in this case).

General Features

Light: Kobolds have darkvision and don't require a light source, but the caves are lit by campfires in most areas—the kobolds prefer the meat cooked.

Sound: The sounds of snapping wild dogs and kobolds laughing and talking can be heard from outside the cave entrance.

Smell: Kobolds are not sanitary creatures, and the stink of wild dogs and refuse is strong throughout the caves.

Ceiling: The kobolds carved out a lot of this cave. With the exception of **areas 3** and **9** the ceiling is only six feet high, which is plenty of space for a kobold. In the two larger areas the ceiling reaches twelve feet.

Layout of the Red Gnasher Caves

The caves that make up the lair of the Red Gnashers are divided into three sections. The first is the Upper Level, which consists of the entrance and areas 1 through 7.

The second area is the Middle Level and is not mapped, consisting of winding tunnels, narrow passages, incomplete mining operations, and sleeping chambers for the tribe. Navigating this section requires the characters to achieve four skill checks while avoiding patrols and traps in the rough-hewn maze.

The third section is the deepest of the Red Gnasher lair and is the home to the Kobold Queen herself along with the captured men of Ormkirk. A great battle is likely to take place here before the altar to the God of Destruction if the characters hope to save the ragged prisoners.

High Alert

There are hundreds of kobolds of the Red Gnashers that live in this tunnel complex, though until roused they have no suspicion that anyone could find or navigate their home. The kobolds that characters run into as part of random encounters are surprised to see them, but if any retreat from the combat and are not stopped within 3 rounds, the yipping cry of the escaped kobold carries throughout the entire area. If this happens, or if the patrol that left the cave finds the characters' tracks (as described at the beginning of **PART THREE**), the Red Gnashers go on high alert.

While on high alert, kobolds mobilize and try and find the characters. While in the Middle Level roll 1d6+1 twice for random encounters each half hour, which is likely to result in a trap and a band of kobolds. Ignore any penalties listed under the encounter description for detecting the characters.

The high alert lasts for a full day, until the characters are killed or captured, or until the Kobold Queen is defeated.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: CAPTURED

IT IS POSSIBLE THE CHARACTERS MAY WIND UP BEING DEFEATED BY THE KOBOLDS. IF THEY'RE NOT KILLED OUTRIGHT, THE KOBOLDS TAKE THEM PRISONER, STRIP THEM OF ALL EQUIPMENT, AND BRING THEM TO THE KOBOLD QUEEN'S CHAMBER (AREA 8) TO AWAIT SACRIFICE. THE GAME CAN SUDDENLY BECOME A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE WITH THEIR LIVES IF THIS HAPPENS!

Red Gnasher Cave – Upper Level

Refer to the map labeled "Red Gnasher Cave – Upper Level" for the following keyed locations.

1. Deeper Down

Beyond the entrance, the tunnel slopes downward deeper into the Talon Hills. Characters skilled in tracking can see kobold and wild dog tracks leading in and out of the cave system, though nothing too definite (beyond the patrol that left as they arrived).

2. Alarm Trap

At this point in the tunnel the kobolds setup a simple alarm trap to alert the forces in **area 3** of any potential intruders. The trap consists of two tripwires spaced 10 feet apart. Determine if the characters spot the tripwire based on their actions – if they are approaching cautiously, searching the area for traps, they find the tripwire with a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check made by the lead character.

If they are not moving cautiously the characters only discover the trap if they have a passive Perception of 14 or higher. Regardless of their method of detection each tripwire should be detected separately.

Triggering either tripwire alerts the kobolds in **area 3** by means of a rattling dog skull that intruders are coming into the tunnels. Two of the kobolds run deeper into the caves to alert the rest and the Red Gnasher tribe is considered on **High Alert**.

3. Preparation Chamber

The tunnel opens up into a large cave containing a smoldering fire pit filled with coals in the center. Great skewers of unidentifiable meat sit blackening amongst the embers with several buckets of dry wood standing nearby. A dog skull with painted red teeth hangs on the northeast wall. Three caves branch off from this main chamber and a tunnel on the east wall descends further into the ground.

There are **10 kobolds** and **4 wild dogs** in this chamber at any given time, playing games in the corner or roasting their meager meat on skewers in the fire.

Tactics: If the caves are on **High Alert** the kobolds have backed up to the eastern side of the chamber and let loose their dogs to confront the characters in melee. Two of the kobolds run into **area 5** to rouse more wild dogs, which appear 1d4 rounds later. The kobolds in **area 4** awaken and join in after 1d6 rounds.

Otherwise the kobolds are scattered about the cave, safe in their knowledge that the tripwires in their entrance tunnel (**area 2**) are cleverly situated enough to alert them to any trouble.

4. Patrol Guard Sleeping Cave

Straw mats are scattered about this small cave along with crude bowls and cups. A strong odor of kobold sweat fills the air and stings the nostrils.

The Red Gnashers try to keep a close eye on the goings on in the Talon Hills and always keep a patrol fresh and ready to head out. There are **6 kobolds** sleeping in this chamber at any given point, ready to relieve the arriving patrol and head out with a small pack of wild dogs from **area 5**.

Tactics: If the caves are on **High Alert** these kobolds awaken and get ready to join the combat in **area 3** after 1d6 rounds. However, they only have their slings with them and no leather armor – the armory in **area 6** holds their swords. Their AC is one worse than normal.

Treasure: Searching through the mats finds 25 sp in loose coins.

5. Wild Dog Pen

A rank odor of wet hair emanates from this passage, and the sound of barking and snarling from a half dozen wild dogs alerts you to their presence in this dead-end chamber.

At any given time this stinking area contains **6 wild dogs** and a single **kobold** keeper (treat as regular kobold). The wild dogs are well-behaved and trained to attack non-kobolds on command, though if they are in this cave they are resting.

Tactics: If the caves are on **High Alert** two of the kobolds from **area 3** rush in here and help to rouse the wild dogs to action (which takes 1d4 rounds).

6. Patrol Armory

Racks of crude armor and dented steel swords sit against the walls of this rough-hewn cave along with sacks of stones perfect for sling bullets. A single sleeping pad is nestled behind one of the racks in the southeast corner.

This room contains the weapons and armor for the patrols that head out into the Talon Hills to protect the lands of the Red Gnashers. The armory is kept by an ancient kobold warrior, **Jabocra**, and while his years serving the Red Gnashers have been filled with glorious battle against hated foes, age has reduced him to a shadow of his former self, though he still knows how to swing a sword (treat him as a kobold subchief).

Tactics: If the caves are on **High Alert**, Jabocra moves to keep the armory from falling into enemy hands by triggering the trap (see below).

Trap: Jabocra has the entire cave rigged to collapse in the case of an invasion, to keep the weapon and armor here from falling into the hands of the Red Gnasher's enemies. Nearby the sleeping pad in the southeast corner hangs a thick rope from the wall. It takes one round to pull the rope, which collapses the ceiling in the entire room! Everyone within this area suffers 3d6 bludgeoning damage from the rocks and become immobilized amongst the rubble (DC 13 Dexterity save for half damage and avoid being stuck). Jabocra knows that this is surely the death of him, but it is a death that serves a great purpose in his eyes.

Developments: Jabocra is a proud if aged kobold and is perhaps the oldest member of the Red Gnasher tribe at this point. He has seen many leaders come and

go, and while he doesn't share in the Kobold Queen's devotion to the God of Destruction he believes that she is the best leader the Red Gnashers have ever had. Under the Kobold Queen's command the Red Gnashers have raided many travelers and built out their cave system to a grander scale than ever before.

Jabocra doesn't respond to threats and is eager to die defending his home from invaders. He takes the first opportunity to trigger the trap in the room if the characters give him a chance and is not above lying to do it.

7. Shallow Pool

This small cave is dominated by a pool of dirty, muddy water, fed by small streams in the northwest wall. Numerous foot prints, dog and kobold, dot the edges of the pool, and a stack of crude buckets stand in the corner.

This pool is used by the kobolds and wild dogs of the patrol to wash up and to drink from. The pool is only 5 feet deep in the center.

Treasure: Some months ago a small fight broke out amongst two kobolds over a sack of gold in this room. The kobolds were subsequently sent out on patrol and didn't return so there was no one to claim the gold, which landed in the center of the pool. Careful searching of the pool finds the sack, which holds 30 gp.

Red Gnasher Cave – Middle Level

As the characters pass the Upper Level and descend deeper into the kobold cave, they make skill checks to see how far they progress. Each skill check represents a half hour of scouring, backtracking, mapping, and avoiding groups of kobolds. Ultimately, to find the Lower Level and the Kobold Queen, the characters must succeed at **four skill checks**.

The skill check used is up to the characters and depends on their method of navigation. One character makes the skill check, aided by the others as allowed, with a base DC of 15. Only one method can be used per half hour, but they can switch between checks (they would lose the bonus from previous skill checks, though). Suggestions include the following:

- Wisdom (Survival)
- Intelligence (Investigation)
- Wisdom (Insight)

If the players come up with a reasonable suggestion let them try it!

Situation	Modifier
Questioning a kobold within the tunnels (or the patrol/guards)	+1
Questioning a kobold subchief	+3
Captured kobold leading the way	-5
Each previous skill check	+1
Character that speaks Kobold	+1 per character
Character with ink and paper or other map-making gear	+1
Dwarf or gnome	+1 per qualifying character
Increasing speed (15 minutes for the check instead of 30 minutes)	-5
Decreasing speed (45 minutes per check instead of 30 minutes)	No bonus, but a +4 on checks to notice traps

A captured kobold can lead the characters, but deliberately leads them in the wrong direction!

Random Encounters

As they skulk around with or without a guide, the characters are going to run into traps and other obstacles, as the kobolds are a paranoid and devious group. Each half hour spent searching results in a random cave encounter from the chart below. Make sure to note if they are traveling single file or two-by-two.

1d6	Cave Encounter
1	Kobold miners
2	Kobold gang
3	Spiked pit trap
4	Ceiling block trap
5	Flaming oil surprise trap
6-7	Kobold subchief

Kobold miners

The sound of picks striking earth alerts the characters to a group of **8 kobold** miners working at a section of tunnel. They are armed with picks (1d6 damage) and are oblivious to the presence of the characters.

Kobold gang

The characters run into a gang of **6 kobolds** and their **3 wild dogs** out looking for a tussle. As the kobolds are in their home, they are not sneaking, so the characters have an opportunity to sneak by them if they are lucky. If a fight breaks out the kobolds try to keep the wild dogs to engage the characters in melee while they use their slings to harass them.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: KOBOLDS LOVE TRAPS
AT THIS POINT IN THE MODULE YOU KNOW YOU'VE ACHIEVED THE BEST RESULT IF THE PLAYERS ARE GROANING EACH TIME THEY RUN INTO A TRAP THROUGHOUT THE TUNNELS. FEEL FREE TO SWAP OUT ONE OF THE TRAPS WITH AN IDEA OF YOUR OWN TO KEEP THE PLAYERS ON THEIR TOES. SUGGESTIONS INCLUDE CLAY POTS HIDDEN JUST BELOW THE GROUND THAT RELEASE A PARALYZING GAS, DARTS THAT SHOOT OUT FROM THE WALLS, AND SWINGING SCYTHE BLADES FROM THE CEILING. GO NUTS AND HAVE FUN!

Spiked pit trap

Kobolds love pit traps!

Noticing the pit traps requires a passive Perception of 13 or higher (or an active DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check). Characters that fail to notice the trap fall in when they step on the thin covering, landing 10 feet down and suffering 1d6 bludgeoning damage. The spikes at the bottom deal 1d6 piercing damage, which can be avoided with a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw.

Ceiling block trap

This section of tunnel contains a false ceiling with a large block hidden in it. A pressure plate on the floor releases the block in a wide area. Once triggered, characters can squeeze over the top of the fallen block.

Noticing the trap requires a passive Perception of 11 or higher (or an active search and a DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check). The character that fails to notice the trap triggers the ceiling block to fall down. The block covers an area large enough for four characters if walking two-by-two or just two if they are walking single file. A successful DC 10 Dexterity saving throw avoids the block as it falls, while a failure results in 2d6 bludgeoning damage. The trap can be disabled with a DC 12 Dexterity check and thieves' tools.

Flaming oil surprise trap

This is a favorite trap among the kobolds of these tunnels. The trap is triggered by a trip wire, nearly invisible against the rocky ground, which opens a hidden panel in the ceiling. The panel contains a flint that strikes stone, igniting a small fire as several gallons of oil pour out. The oil is set ablaze by the fire and the unlucky person is doused in flaming death!

The trap can be spotted by characters in the lead with a passive Perception of 13 or higher (or an active search at a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check). The character who triggers the trap must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 1d6 points of fire damage. The oil persists for 1d4 rounds, dealing 1d6 points of fire damage each round unless put out. The

trap can be disabled with a DC 10 Dexterity check and thieves' tools.

Kobold subchief

Out running errands for the Kobold Queen, a **kobold subchief** and **3 kobolds** encounter the adventurers in the tunnels. They are not concerned with hiding and walk proudly, oblivious to their surroundings (they suffer a -4 to notice the characters). If captured, the subchief can provide the highest single bonus to the skill check to navigate the tunnels.

Red Gnasher Cave – Lower Level

Refer to the map labeled “Red Gnasher Cave – Lower Level” for the following keyed locations.

8. Entrance to the Lower Level

The twisting kobold caves beneath the Talon Hills seem to go on forever, turning and returning upon themselves in an awful maze filled with the smell of wet dog and the sound of yipping. The tunnel ahead of you digs deeper into the ground, but you spot two spears stuck into the ground on either side of the path. A crimson flag drapes from each spear depicting a snarling dog face with red fangs adorned with a crude crown – a symbol of some kind of royalty. You must be getting close to the Kobold Queen.

The entrance to the chambers of the Kobold Queen is guarded by these two flags showing the symbol of the Red Gnashers. This is the deepest and oldest part of the caves and holds the ancient altar the Kobold Queen became so fond of in her youth.

9. Cave of Destruction

The roughly hewn passage opens into a large cave where the ceiling stretches 20 feet high. Torches line the walls, illuminating the nearly 100 foot long cave in front of you, separated into three tiers by 5 foot tall rises in the floor. Crude wooden ladders sit at irregular intervals along each rise. On the top tier at the far end of the cave you can just make out the form of a large stone altar ringed by dog skull torches and a table to the left of it. The sound of humans pleading and begging from several branching caves echoes eerily.

This is the main chamber of the Kobold Queen, where business is conducted, meals are taken, and sacrifices are given to the God of Destruction. At any given time there are **10 kobolds** and **6 wild dogs** milling about the room in various states of preparedness. On the top tier, west of the altar, sits the **kobold alchemist** working on mixing potions and ointments.

Tactics: If a fight breaks out or if the horn was sounded from the wild dog pen, the **Kobold Queen** and her **2 kobold subchiefs** come from **area 12** to confront the intruders. The subchiefs begin barking orders in Kobold, telling the others to hold the characters back as long as possible while the sacrifices are prepared. The subchiefs run to **area 13** to retrieve a few slaves while the Kobold Queen makes her way to **area 9**. The remaining kobolds hang back and use their slings while the wild dogs rush forward.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: FORESHADOWING

IF YOU PLAN ON PLAYING THROUGH TO WK2, OR EVEN IF YOU DON'T BUT WANT TO PUT A BIT OF FEAR INTO YOUR PLAYERS, MAKE SURE TO PLAY UP THE KOBOLD QUEEN'S DEATH. AS LIFE FLOWS FROM HER SHE FIXES HER GAZE UPON THE CHARACTERS AND FOR THE BRIEFEST INSTANT THEY ALL SEE A HIDEOUS KOBOLD EYE OVER THEIR VISION! THE EXACT DETAILS OF THIS CURSE ARE EXPLAINED IN WK2.

9a. Altar of Destruction

A stone dais raises from the cavern floor at this point with a 5 foot high crudely hewn altar at its center. In the center of the altar a groove has been carved, just large enough to accommodate a humanoid head, and the channels on either side stained red speak volumes to the unspeakable rites that have been performed here. The symbol of the God of Destruction as seen by the kobolds, a leering dog skull, squats on the altar's front.

Unless the characters stop her (by killing her), the Kobold Queen brings male slaves to this spot to sacrifice them to the God of Destruction. The altar is a rock with a pool in the center, and it takes the Kobold Queen two rounds to sacrifice a man.

If a sacrifice is complete, a wave of red energy washes over the cave. All kobolds gain a +1 bonus to hit and damage for the next hour as a result of the sacrifice. These bonuses are cumulative.

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: SACRIFICES = DRAMA

IT'S OK TO FUDGE THE HUMAN SACRIFICE TIMING A BIT FOR DRAMATIC PURPOSES. MAYBE THE KOBOLD QUEEN ALREADY HAD ONE OF THE MEN READY TO GO, SO THAT WHEN THE HEROES BURST IN AND MELEE BREAKS OUT SHE IS READY WITH THE KNIFE AT HIS THROAT. THAT SHOULD BRING THE PLAYERS TO ATTENTION!



10. Weasel Grounds

The smell of wet fur and blood fills this cavernous chamber, and the floor is littered with hundreds of bones, most of them gnawed down to the marrow.

The Red Gnashers do not utilize the weasels that populate the Talon Hills as much as they could, instead relying on the wild dogs for their allies. However, the Kobold Queen has a special fondness for their blood-soaked frenzy and keeps a group of them in this cave to threaten slaves and kobolds alike.

The cage door that leads into this cave is flimsy and made of close-knitted branches to keep the weasels inside. Beyond the cage door are **3 blood-crazed weasel swarms** that move in a churning, wild mass. The sight of blood drives them into a frenzy and they obey the words of the Kobold Queen when applicable.

Tactics: If a fight breaks out in the Cave of Destruction, the Kobold Queen sends one of the subchiefs to open

the cage and release the weasels (announcing it as loudly as possible in the cave so that everyone is aware of what's about to be released). The weasel swarms move towards any wounded non-kobold, non-dog first, but in their frenzy they can be tricked into attacking the kobolds. They never turn on the Kobold Queen.

11. Waters of Blood

A shallow pool of rust-colored water dominates the floor of this cave. The walls are decorated with hundreds of dog skulls of all shapes and sizes, leering down at you with empty sockets and red-stained teeth. Below the waters you can see a large number of coins resting on the bottom.

This chamber is where most of the tribe comes to venerate the God of Destruction. The pool is regular water fed by an underground stream turned red by some natural geological source. The Kobold Queen

took it as a holy sign and repurposed this area as a holy site, calling it the Waters of Blood.

Treasure: Much wealth has been given over to the God of Destruction via the Waters of Blood, which the Kobold Queen tells the tribe is a way to stave off annihilation themselves. There are a total of 250 silver pieces and 150 gold pieces to be found in the water.

12. Kobold Queen's Chamber

Contrary to the rest of the caves, this chamber seems well-appointed, a room fit for a queen. A large four post bed with satin sheets sits in the eastern corner, and in the southwestern area a series of benches are setup with alchemical equipment and ingredients scattered on top of them. The heavy scent of perfume hangs in the air, masking the smell of wet dog and kobold that permeates the rest of the cavernous system.

The **Kobold Queen**, chief of the Red Gnashers, keeps to herself in this chamber along with her **2 kobold subchief** bodyguards and the **kobold alchemist**, who uses the corner to make his bombs. The Queen's bed is a lavish affair, especially for a kobold, and once belonged to a noble woman in some carriage that was pillaged long ago. The bed posts still stand at the four corners but the mattress has long been soiled and stained. The subchiefs act as her primary consorts.

Treasure: The Kobold Queen keeps a chest hidden behind a false section of the wall behind her bed. The chest is locked (she keeps a key around her neck) and contains a smattering of minor treasures.

13. Auxiliary Slave Pens

This area contains a series of crude pens made of wood and stone. Within each are a handful of human men dressed in rags. They look at you with hope in their eyes and murmur words of desperation through cracked and parched lips.

The remaining human slaves are kept in this chamber. There are a total of 10 men (2 HP each) kept in the caves, huddled together.

14. Free Range Slave Pens

Just beyond the crude wooden bars in this chamber you see human men laying about the cave in various states of exhaustion and dehydration. A few of them struggle to your feet upon seeing that you are not more kobolds.

NPC Profile: The Kobold Queen

Her name has been stricken from memory so that the Red Gnashers and all that meet her simply address her as the Kobold Queen, or "your majesty." The Kobold Queen was born into a litter of kobold pups forty years ago without anything special going for her. She was one of a dozen, stronger than most, but she felt a deep connection to the ancient altar in the kobold warrens. Worship of the God of Destruction had all but died out in her tribe, where the leadership had long ago forsaken any such "mumbo jumbo" as worthless in helping them kill and pillage to survive.

The Kobold Queen took to maintaining the altar in her youth, and found that she heard whispers when she was around it. Whispers of power – power to take over the tribe, power to bend the people of the Talon Hills to her will, power to rule and become the greatest queen the kobolds had ever seen. When the time was right, she invoked the words of the God of Destruction and struck down the kobold chief. In that instant, the innately cowardly kobolds turned to the Kobold Queen as their leader out of fear and respect. None have looked back since that day.

As befitting one of her status, the Kobold Queen has birthed many litters of runts. Two have been of particular note, a pair of brothers named Rinklo and Rigaan. Rinklo became enamored with the teachings of the tribe alchemist and left the Talon Hills to wreak vengeance upon the gnomes of the world (Rinklo's story can be found in **WK0 Night of the Mad Kobold**). Rigaan drank in the stories of an ancient kobold warlord named Kra-Moth-Ka and vowed to return the leader's legacy to the living world (Rigaan's story continues in the remaining modules of the **WRATH OF THE KOBOLDS** series).

These two caves are where the most malnourished male captives from Ormkirk are kept in anticipation of their sacrifice to the God of Destruction. The Kobold Queen is waiting until the right time so that the effects of the sacrifices will be permanent. There are five human males in the pens (with 2 HP each) slumped on the floor or cowering in the corner.

Rescued Slaves

All of the slaves are men from Ormkirk or the surrounding farmsteads. They have all been beaten and malnourished by their captors and none are in any shape to fight. Several of the men are older and come from well-respected families in Ormkirk—these men (six of them) comprise the original group that Townmaster Travail wanted captured, and they

all have a very low opinion of the townmaster. The others were captured to be sacrificed eventually by the Kobold Queen's forces.

Some of the captured men claim to have heard the Kobold Queen talking to her subchiefs about the deal with the "fat pompous human man." The fact that the heroes were hired by the townmaster doesn't dissuade some of the captives from believing that Travail is behind the whole problem.

The men are weak and cannot fight for themselves, but they are capable of making it to Ormkirk with assistance.

PART FOUR: THE TRUTH REVEALED

The scenario ends with the confrontation of Townmaster Travail in Ormkirk regarding the triangle between him, the Kobold Queen, and Grabbold. The townmaster is corrupt and greedy but not strictly evil—he breaks down and cries if confronted with the truth of the scenario (though they are crocodile tears if anything!).

Confronting the Townmaster

How the characters approach the townmaster is up to them. Travail spends most of his days at the Splendid Shield, drinking or flirting with the staff and locals. His house is on a lane behind the tavern, which is conveniently close enough for stumbling in the dark when he's inevitably had too much to drink.

Townmaster Travail has hired a group of **5 bodyguards** (use bandit statistics) since the business with the Kobold Queen went sour. He keeps them around at all times, either undercover at the Splendid Shield as patrons or stationed around his house at night. Travail doesn't want to die and is willing to cut a deal with the characters for his life.

If he manages to keep his life, Thaddeus Travail can become a future adversary for the characters' lives. He has connections in major cities and with most of the trade companies that operate in the region. He is known to be unscrupulous and greedy in his dealings.

Treasure: Townmaster Travail does not have the gold coin to pay the characters. In fact, until the next merchant caravan comes through Ormkirk in a month or so he doesn't have much coin at all. Inside his house is a locked chest (he keeps the key on a ring in his pocket) that contains his personal wealth—300 silver pieces, 200 gold pieces, and a +1 dagger he doesn't like to use (he thinks it's cursed, but it is not).

WEIRD DAVE'S NOTEBOOK: ENDING SHOWDOWN
GAUGE YOUR PLAYERS' TOLERANCE LEVELS AT THIS POINT. IF THEY'VE BEEN NECK DEEP IN KOBOLD BLOOD AND FIGHTING FOR EVERY LAST HIT POINT, YOU CAN GIVE THEM A BREAK ON THIS ENCOUNTER AND TURN IT INTO A SIMPLE ROLEPLAYING EXERCISE. IF THEY'VE WALKED OVER THE KOBOLDS AND FEEL LIKE THEY OWN THE PLACE, HOWEVER, DON'T FEEL TOO BAD IN THROWING IN A FEW EXTRA BODYGUARDS TO MAKE FOR AN EXCITING SHOWDOWN.

EPILOGUE

The module ends with the characters returning the kidnapped townspeople to Ormkirk. Perhaps they also uncovered the townmaster's part in the problems as well, along with the bandits in the hills.

Rewards

You can use the following bullet points to award bonus experience points to the characters for actions completed. Use your best judgment.

- Returning townspeople to Ormkirk
- Uncovering Townmaster Travail's involvement
- Defeating the bandits
- Defeating the Kobold Queen

Next Steps

The characters have made a name for themselves in Ormkirk, which sees a fair amount of merchant traffic throughout the year. Word spreads of the characters' good deeds, and it shouldn't be long before some worried traveler has a problem that needs solving and finds the characters perfectly suited for it.

If you plan on using **WK2 Curse of the Kobold Eye**, the characters' next encounter happens as they are on the road when a strange thing occurs at night ...

Appendix A: Monster and NPC Information

Giant wasp: Small Beast; AC 12; HP 13; Spd 10 ft., fly 50 ft.; passive Perception 10; Str 10 (+1), Dex 14 (+2), Con 10 (+0), Int 1 (-5), Wis 10 (+0), Cha 3 (-4); AL unaligned; Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Melee Attack – Sting: +4 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage and the target must succeed at a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, suffering 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failure or half on a success. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hp, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour.

Giant blood-crazed weasel: Medium Beast; AC 13; HP 11; Spd 40 ft.; darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13; Str 13 (+1), Dex 16 (+3), Con 12 (+1), Int 4 (-3), Wis 12 (+1), Cha 5 (-3); AL CE; Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Blood Frenzy: The giant blood-crazed weasel has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Keen Hearing and Smell: The weasel has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Lockjaw: If a giant blood-crazed weasel bites a target it locks its jaws, holding on and dealing bite damage each round until killed or removed. Removing a giant blood-crazed weasel requires an opposed Strength check.

Melee Attack – Bite: +5 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Swarm of blood-crazed weasels: Medium Swarm of Tiny Beasts; AC 13; HP 28; Spd 30 ft.; passive Perception 13; DR bludgeoning, piercing, slashing; CI charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned; Str 13 (+1), Dex 16 (+3, Stealth +6), Con 8 (-1), Int 2 (-4), Wis 12 (+1, Perception +3), Cha 3 (-4); AL CE; Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Blood Frenzy: The swarm has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Keen Hearing and Smell: The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Swarm: The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny weasel. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Melee Attack – Bites: +5 to hit (reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space), 14 (4d6) piercing damage, or 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Human bandit: Medium Humanoid (Human); AC 12; HP 11; Spd 30 ft.; passive Perception 10; Str 12 (+1), Dex 12 (+1), Con 12 (+1), Int 10 (+0), Wis 9 (-1), Cha 10 (+0); AL CE; Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

NPC Profile: Townmaster Thaddeus Travail

Thaddeus Travail grew up in a merchant family and was raised on the "golden rule" – he who has the gold makes the rules. The Travails were not an overly wealthy family but they made do, and managed to procure several lucrative trade contracts across the northlands, specializing in routes other merchants were afraid to take because of bandits or monsters. Thaddeus was a quick learner and took to the family business with practiced ease.

Over the years, however, he grew tired of the road and sought to settle down. His family's estate was simply out of the question for him, however – his overbearing father ruled the household with a disciplined fist, and Thaddeus had always secretly chafed under the strict guidelines. He wanted a position of power for his own to weave his own webs of intrigue and commerce. He found Ormkirk in a bad way and decided that the town could use his personal touch. Through bribery, guile, and brute force at times, he managed to install himself as the townmaster. But his dreams of power were not satiated, and so he sought to bargain with the rough elements of the Talon Hills to the north.

Thaddeus met with Grabbold rather by chance when the ogre and his bandits waylaid the townmaster while on a journey westward. Thaddeus immediately recognized the usefulness of an ogre and a bandit tribe and used all of his honeyed words to convince Grabbold that there was more profit in letting him live. Convinced by the townmaster's grandstanding, the ogre agreed and the two became partners.

Melee Attack – Longsword: +4 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 5 (1d8+1) slashing damage.

Ranged Attack – Short bow: +3 to hit (range 80 ft./320 ft., one creature), 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage and the target must succeed at a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, suffering 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failure or half on a success. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hp, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour.

Kobold: Small Humanoid (Kobold); AC 12; HP 5; Spd 30 ft.; darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8; Str 7 (-2), Dex 15 (+2), Con 8 (-1), Int 8 (-1), Wis 7 (-2), Cha 8 (-1); AL LE; Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Light Sensitivity: When in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack Tactics: The kobold has advantage on

an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Melee Attack – Dagger: +4 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage

Ranged Attack – Sling: +4 to hit (range 30 ft./120 ft., one creature), 4 (1d4+2) bludgeoning damage.

d10	Random Kobold Coins
1-2	15 copper pieces
3-4	30 copper pieces
5-6	4 silver pieces
7-8	9 silver pieces
9	12 silver pieces
0	3 gold pieces

Kobold subchief: Small Humanoid (Kobold); AC 14; HP 21; Spd 30 ft.; darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11; Str 10 (+0), Dex 14 (+2), Con 11 (+0), Int 10 (+0), Wis 9 (-1), Cha 10 (+0); AL NE; Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action: On each of its turns, the kobold subchief can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Light Sensitivity: When in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Multiattack: The kobold subchief makes two melee attacks.

Pack Tactics: The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Sneak Attack (1/turn): The kobold subchief deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally.

Melee Attack – Short Sword: +4 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Giant Ant: Small Beast; AC 11; HP 4; Spd 30 ft; Str 8 (-1), Dex 10 (+0), Con 10 (+0), Int 3 (-4), Wis 8 (-1), Cha 7 (-2); AL unaligned; Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Hive Mind: Giant ants use their hyper sensitive antennae to coordinate their actions. They gain a cumulative +1 bonus to attacks for each giant ant that is within 5 feet of their target.

Melee Attack – Bite: +2 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Wild Dog: Medium Beast; AC 13; HP 11; Spd 40 ft.; passive Perception 13; Str 13 (+1), Dex 15 (+2), Con 13 (+1), Int 3 (-4), Wis 12 (+1), Cha 6 (-1); AL unaligned; Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Senses: Wild dogs have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

NPC Profile: Grabbold, Dimwitted Ogre

Grabbold, like most ogres, was said to believe in the life philosophy of "might makes right." He has a powerfully mighty swing and is capable of killing almost any man with a single strike. However, since he came to the Talon Hills and gathered a group of bandits around him, Grabbold is starting to enjoy the role of enforcer to Townmaster Travail.

Unfortunately, like most of his kind, Grabbold is quite dimwitted and hasn't realized that he has the manpower and strength to take everything Ormkirk has to offer. He and his men have built a decent bandit life in the Talon Hills, and so far none of his gang have been willing to say anything about the "deal" with Townmaster Travail or how the ogre could simply crush the man outright. Grabbold is thoroughly enamored with his own self-image as stylized by Travail's honeyed words.

Pack Tactics: The wild dog has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wild dog's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Melee Attack – Bite: +4 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 7 (2d4+2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Kobold alchemist: Small Humanoid (Kobold); AC 15; HP 11; Spd 30 ft.; darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9; Str 8 (-1), Dex 15 (+2), Con 11 (+0), Int 14 (+2), Wis 9 (-1), Cha 12 (+1); AL NE; Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Light Sensitivity: When in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Melee Attack – +1 Dagger: +5 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Alchemical Bombs: The kobold hurls a flask that creates a 20-foot-radius cloud in an area within 40 feet of it. The kobold chooses the effect from the options below, each of which can be used only once.

Fire Bomb: Each creature in the area must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, suffering 7 (2d6) fire damage on a failure or half on a success.

Glue Bomb: Each creature in the area must make a DC 11 Strength saving throw. On a failure, the target is restrained. The target or another creature within reach of it can use an action to make a DC 11 Strength check; if the check succeeds, the effect on the target ends. The glue dries immediately.

Frenzy Bomb: Friendly creatures in the area gain advantage on melee attack rolls until the kobold alchemist's next turn.

Possessions: +1 dagger

Grabbold, ogre: Large Giant; AC 11; HP 52; Spd 40 ft.; darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8; Str 18 (+4), Dex 8 (-1), Con 15 (+2), Int 10 (+0), Wis 7 (-2), Cha 10 (+0); AL CE; Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Melee Attack – Greatclub: +6 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 13 (2d8+4) bludgeoning damage.

Ranged Attack – Javelin: +6 to hit (range 30 ft./120 ft., one creature), 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage and the target must succeed at a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, suffering 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failure or half on a success. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hp, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour.

Mayor Thaddeus Travail: Medium Humanoid (Human); AC 12; HP 33; Spd 30 ft.; passive Perception 11; Str 10 (0), Dex 15 (+2, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4), Con 12 (+1), Int 14 (+2, Investigation +4), Wis 12 (+1, Insight +3), Cha 16 (+3, Deception +5, Persuasion +5); AL LE; Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action: On each of his turns, Mayor Thaddeus Travail can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack (1/turn): Mayor Thaddeus Travail deals an extra 2d6 damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of any ally of Mayor Thaddeus Travail that isn't incapacitated and Mayor Travail doesn't have disadvantage on the roll.

Multiattack: Mayor Thaddeus Travail makes two melee attacks.

Melee Attack – +1 Shortsword: +5 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Ranged Attack – Hand Crossbow: +4 to hit (range 30 ft./120 ft., one target), 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Possessions: +1 shortsword

Kobold Queen: Medium Humanoid (Kobold); AC 17; HP 32; Spd 30 ft.; darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13; Str 12 (+1), Dex 16 (+3, Stealth +6), Con 14 (+2), Int 10 (+0, Religion +3), Wis 16 (+3), Cha 14 (+2, Persuasion +5); AL CE; Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Divine Wrath: As a bonus action, the Kobold Queen can expend a spell slot to cause her melee weapon attacks to magically deal an extra 10 (3d6) necrotic damage to a target on a hit. This benefit lasts until the end of the turn. The extra damage increases by 1d6 for each spell slot level above 1st expended.

Light Sensitivity: When in sunlight, the Kobold Queen has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack Tactics: The Kobold Queen has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Kobold Queen's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Spellcasting: The Kobold Queen is an accomplished divine spellcaster, casting spells as a 5th-level caster. Wisdom is her spellcasting ability (DC 13). She has the following spells prepared:

NPC Profile: The Kobold Queen

Her name has been stricken from memory so that the Red Gnashers and all that meet her simply address her as the Kobold Queen, or "your majesty." The Kobold Queen was born into a litter of kobold pups forty years ago without anything special going for her. She was one of a dozen, stronger than most, but she felt a deep connection to the ancient altar in the kobold warrens. Worship of the God of Destruction had all but died out in her tribe, where the leadership had long ago forsaken any such "mumbo jumbo" as worthless in helping them kill and pillage to survive.

The Kobold Queen took to maintaining the altar in her youth, and found that she heard whispers when she was around it. Whispers of power – power to take over the tribe, power to bend the people of the Talon Hills to her will, power to rule and become the greatest queen the kobolds had ever seen. When the time was right, she invoked the words of the God of Destruction and struck down the kobold chief. In that instant, the innately cowardly kobolds turned to the Kobold Queen as their leader out of fear and respect. None have looked back since that day.

As befitting one of her status, the Kobold Queen has birthed many litters of runts. Two have been of particular note, a pair of brothers named Rinklo and Rigaan. Rinklo became enamored with the teachings of the tribe alchemist and left the Talon Hills to wreak vengeance upon the gnomes of the world (Rinklo's story can be found in WK0 Night of the Mad Kobold). Rigaan drank in the stories of an ancient kobold warlord named Kra-Moth-Ka and vowed to return the leader's legacy to the living world (Rigaan's story continues in the remaining modules of the WRATH OF THE KOBOLDS series).

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *cause fear, inflict wounds*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, aid*

3rd level (2 slots): *beacon of hope*

Melee Attack – Mace: +4 to hit (reach 5 ft., one creature), 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage.

Possessions: *mithral chain shirt, shield*

Appendix B: Random Kobold Tables

Random Kobold Name

Kobold names are typically short and end with a vowel to emphasize their yipping syllables. You can roll on the below table 1d3+1 times to randomly determine a kobold name. Kobolds do not differentiate between male and female names.

What do these kobold names mean? They can mean whatever you want them to mean! This random name generator is not meant as a primer for the kobold language, simply as a tool to create names that have a similar sound to them. If a kobold becomes exiled from their tribe for some reason (usually it's just easier to kill such offenders), the kobold wanderer may take on a last name similar to a tribe name.

Most kobolds identify themselves as a member of their tribe after their name. For example, Peesto of the Weasel Jumpers or Kradrogu of the Dirt Killers.

d100	Name
01-02	Aga
03-04	Aka
05-06	Aro
07-08	Bra
09-10	Bro
11-12	Ba
13-14	Cra
15-16	Curo
17-18	Ca
19-20	Dra
21-22	Dro
23-24	De
25-26	Epo
27-28	Eka
29-30	Erbo
31-32	Fa
33-34	Fo
35-36	Gra
37-38	Gu
39-40	Ha
41-42	Jo
43-44	Ja
45-46	Kra
47-48	Ko
49-50	Kuro
51-52	Lo

53-54	Laka
55-56	Me
57-58	Mora
59-60	Maka
61-62	Mu
63-64	No
65-66	Nuko
67-68	Pro
69-70	Pee
71-72	Roo
73-74	Ra
75-76	Rado
77-78	Sa
79-80	Sto
81-82	Sapo
83-84	See
85-86	Tro
87-88	Ta
89-90	Vo
91-92	Vee
93-94	Wa
95-96	Wado
97-98	Ya
99-00	Zo

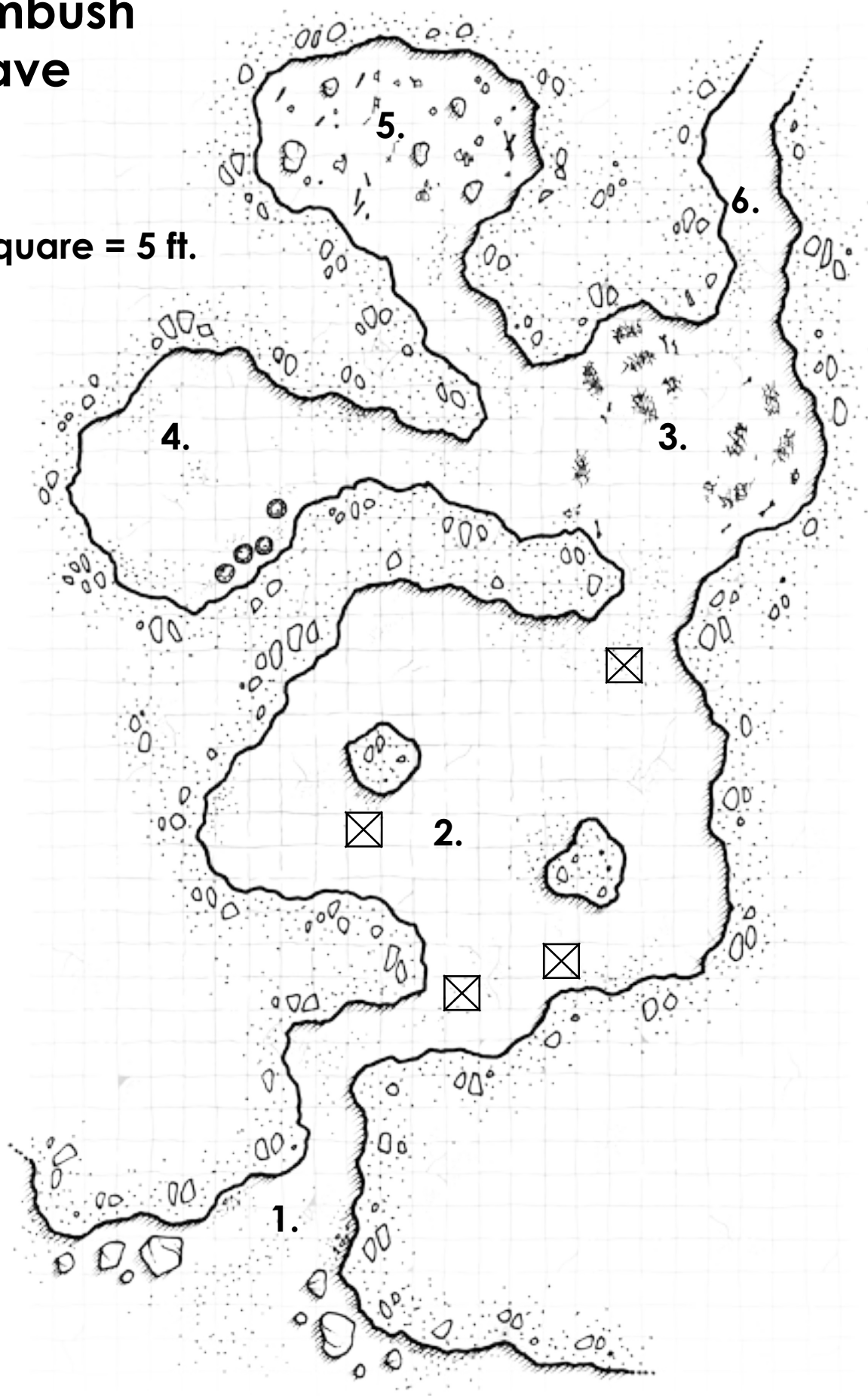
Random Kobold Physical Traits

Individual kobolds within a tribe, including leaders, often have one or more characteristics that cause them to stand out from their kin. It's up to you to decide if any of these features have any bearing on combat capabilities.

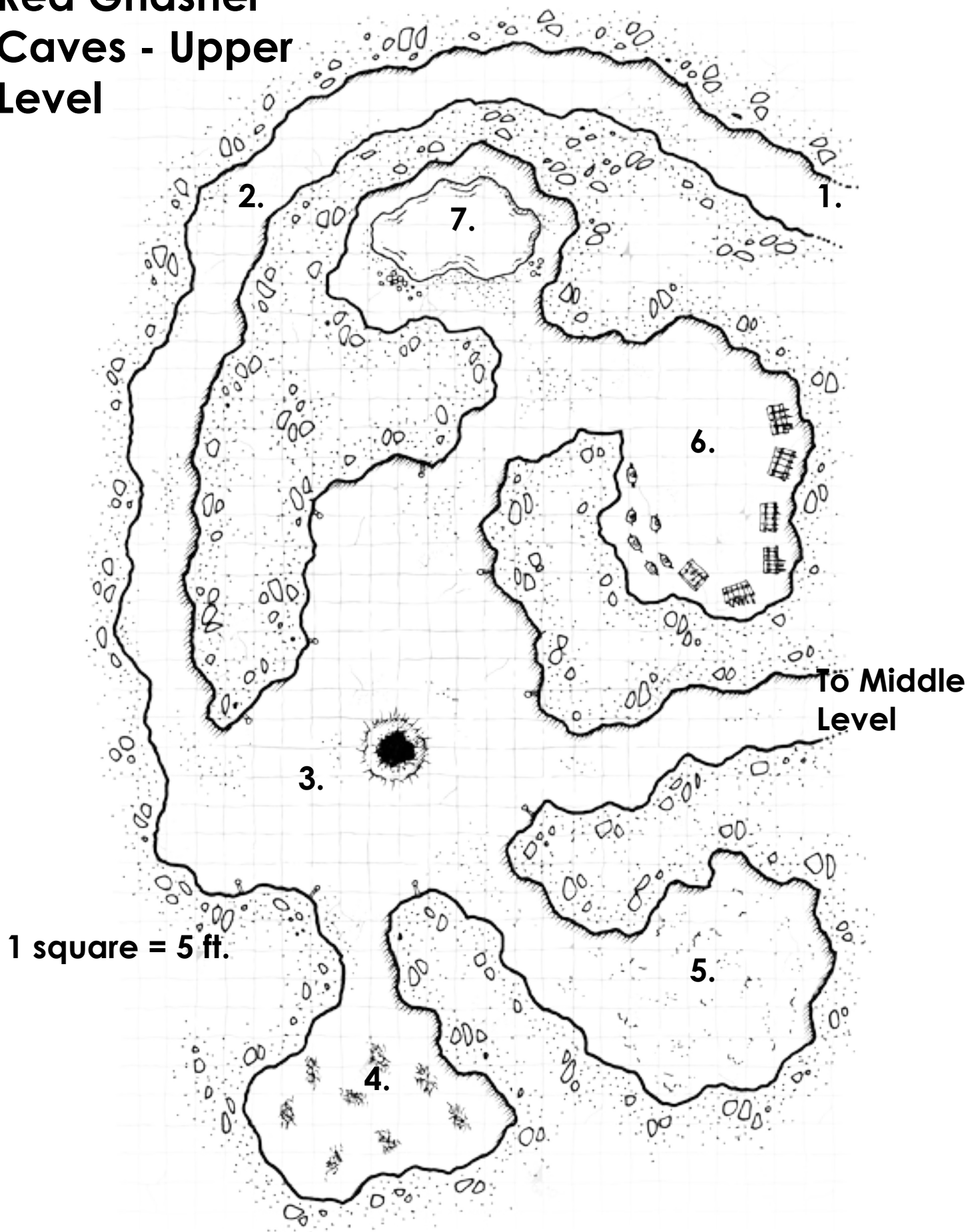
d100	Kobold Physical Trait
01-03	Barrel chested
04-06	Blind in both eyes
07-09	Blind in one eye
10-12	Crippled
13-15	Fat
16-18	Huge feet
19-21	Huge head
22-24	Large hands
25-27	Large teeth
28-30	Long arms
31-33	Long tail
34-36	Loud voice
37-39	Muscular
40-42	No lips
43-45	No tail
46-48	No teeth
49-51	Old
52-54	Rat-like whiskers
55-57	Sharp claws
58-60	Short
61-63	Skinny
64-66	Small head
67-69	Spinal ridges
70-72	Squeaky voice
73-75	Tall
76-78	Tattoos
79-81	Underdeveloped wings
82-84	Unusual eye color
85-87	Unusual facial scar
88-90	Unusual skin color
91-93	Unusual tongue
94-96	Whispering voice
97-99	Young
00	Roll twice

Ambush Cave

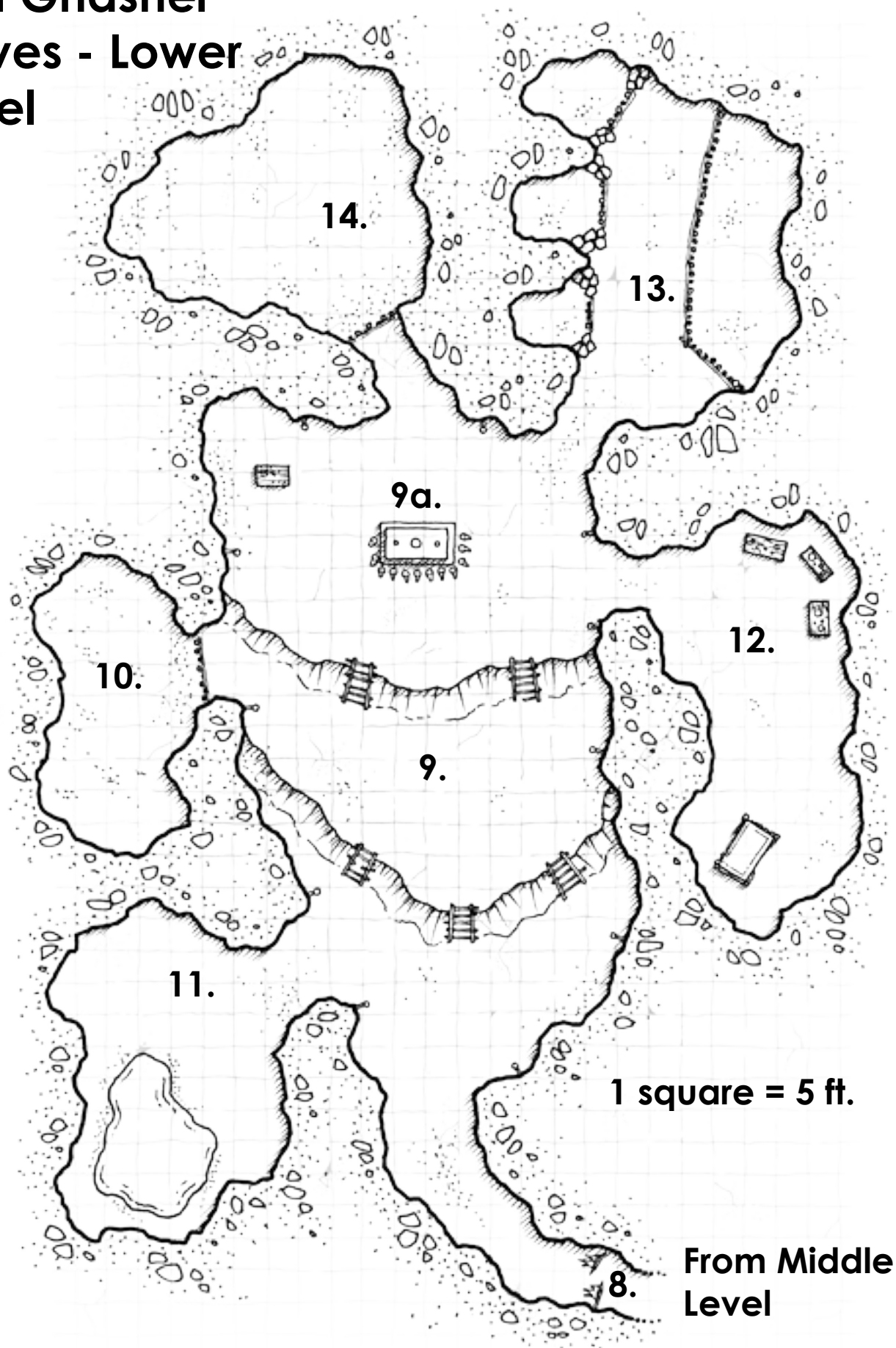
1 square = 5 ft.



Red Gnasher Caves - Upper Level



Red Gnasher Caves - Lower Level



ATTENTION ADVENTURER SEEKERS, MONSTER SLAYERS, AND TREASURE HUNTERS!

The town of Ormkirk is in dire peril. Kobolds from nearby hills have been kidnapping townsfolk in the night. Fifteen men have already disappeared. Hearty adventurers are needed to rescue the missing townsfolk and route the kobold menace.

Ormkirk is offering 100 gold pieces per adventurer plus reasonable expenses if successful in rescuing the men of Ormkirk. If interested, ask for Townmaster Thaddeus Travail at the Splendid Shield Inn and Tavern.

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