

# HackMaster



# LEGACY OF THE ELM KING

**An adventure for  
3rd-4th level characters**

**by George Fields**







# Legacy of the Elm King

*Legacy of the Elm King* is an adventure for 4-6 HackMaster characters of level 3-4. It is set in the Frandor's Keep setting and builds upon events that unfolded in the adventure *In the Realm of the Elm King* though it is not necessary that the PCs have explored that scenario.

This storyline should be able to be completed in one or two sessions. As with any RPG adventure, the GM should prepare by familiarizing himself with the content before play. The scenario, if desired, can easily be dropped into any setting with a minimum amount of effort.

## BACKGROUND

The recent spate of victories against local humanoids around Vew has given the area the novel reputation of safety and prosperity. These rumors have attracted a new wave of immigrant farmers to the town who quickly found the residency taxes for living within the walls to be too high for their liking. These enterprising newcomers instead began to use Vew as little more than a way station on the path towards the unsettled lands just outside the palisade. Clearing the forest and constructing cabins and cottages has cast these homesteaders as squatters in the eyes of local government, however, and Earl Reyifor is eager to take a census of the population in order to levy a tax on the new residents.

After the defeat of the Elm King (see the adventure *Into the Realm of the Elm King*), many kobolds were scattered and left leaderless after

their bugbear master was slain. They were left to wander the rugged territory between the Earldoms of Melatar and Reyifor engaging in very petty brigandry coupled with foraging in order to survive.

After a few weeks, an Alpha Male arose and began gathering any stray kobolds in the area. He planned to consolidate power and slowly dominate the immediate area. Success came when they encountered a few isolated squatter settlements on the outskirts of Vew. For weeks, the band of kobolds preyed on the farmers, rustling individual sheep and goats, killing shepherd dogs and stealing vegetables. The Vew constabulary made only token efforts to track down the perpetrators of these crimes as, after all, the only victims "were tax dodging criminals themselves."

Two months ago the raids abruptly stopped. The authorities of Vew were quick to claim credit for the return to normalcy, citing the success of "increased patrols" and the "diligent watchfulness" of the town guard. An attempt to conduct a census of the ever-expanding population of squatters has resumed, but faces challenges owing to the dearth of literate folk.

In reality, the raiding has stopped because the kobolds realized that they were playing a fool's game. Raiding for crops and livestock takes work and work is not the purview of koboldkind. Instead, the ingenious Kobolds have taken up residence at a human farmstead to the west of Vew belong to the Brovnar family. The Brovnar family feeds the kobolds with the crops they grow and the



animals they raise and, in return, the kobolds refrain from killing the child they have taken hostage.

Despite their inherent laziness, the tribe was deeply traumatized when human mercenaries dispatched their seemingly invincible bugbear protector. They vowed never again to inhabit a place as open as Red Spur Gorge. Building upon a dense network of tunnels already excavated by giant rats that had been plaguing the Brovna farm, they constructed a subterranean warren suitable to their diminutive size in which they would have every defensive advantage.

Now that they've settled in, they plan to stay a good long while and expand their numbers. The marginally productive Brovna farm has become

far more viable owing to the tons of virgin earth excavated by the kobolds and spread on the fields so as to hide any signs of mining. This excessive caution was unwarranted for the Brovna's have no local friends and visitors are infrequent at best.

The Brovna are virtual slaves forbidden from leaving the immediate vicinity of their farm and are growing more and more desperate for help.

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure shifts from a roleplay-focused census taking exercise into a dungeon crawl fairly quickly. Make sure to emphasize the juxtaposition of the open air backwoods homesteads with the claustrophobic battles through the kobold warrens.



## ADVENTURE HOOKS

Here are a few ways for the GM to involve the PCs in the adventure:

- ▶ The PCs happen to be in Vew while a representative from Frandor's keep is posting bulletins and publicly announcing the need for census takers and emphasizing the recent increase in pay for those willing to take on the job.
- ▶ Dela Brovnar hasn't been seen in the chapel of The Shining One for two months. Her husband, Brendol, and young son, Granden, have also missed the same services. Brother Defrin is concerned for their moral well-being and wonders if you could check in on them.
- ▶ Tavern patrons aren't sure whether the raids on the squatters are finished or if the troublemakers responsible are just lying low somewhere. Most don't care much either way.

## THE CHAPEL

Brother Defrin runs a small chapel in Vew dedicated to the Shining One. Noticing that the Party are "sturdy folk" he asks if they could look in on the Brovnars for him as they have been missing services for nearly two months. He knows that they must be busy with their farm, but it's no excuse to backslide so terribly. Several old crones repeat all of Brother Defrin's moral admonitions to each other as he speaks. "What's the point of a prosperous farm if one does not have a prosperous soul" "Yes, yes. A prosperous soul." He offers no reward save the "good feeling" from assisting the church.

## GREEN GRYFFIN INN


Patrons in the tavern are mostly ill-disposed or neutral towards the recent arrivals. Asking around reveals that lettered men are in demand for some kind of job for the Earl. Most only know it has something to do with taxing those squatters who are "too good to live in town like the rest of us." All except for the extraordinarily drunk are able to direct the party towards Volomar Vitisar near the town hall.

## THE CENSUS TAKER

Outside of the town hall, the Party can find Volomar Vitisar. He has traveled to Vew from Frandor's Keep at the behest of Earl Reyifor in order to hire new census takers. The man previously in charge of the job, Sulat Serel, hasn't been heard from in two months and Volomar believes that he most likely abandoned his post when the work became more trouble than it was worth. In reality, Sulat's corpse is rotting in the trash heap of the kobold warrens. Volomar will go on for a while about the importance of finishing what you start and how the younger generation has no work ethic until the PCs stop his tirade.

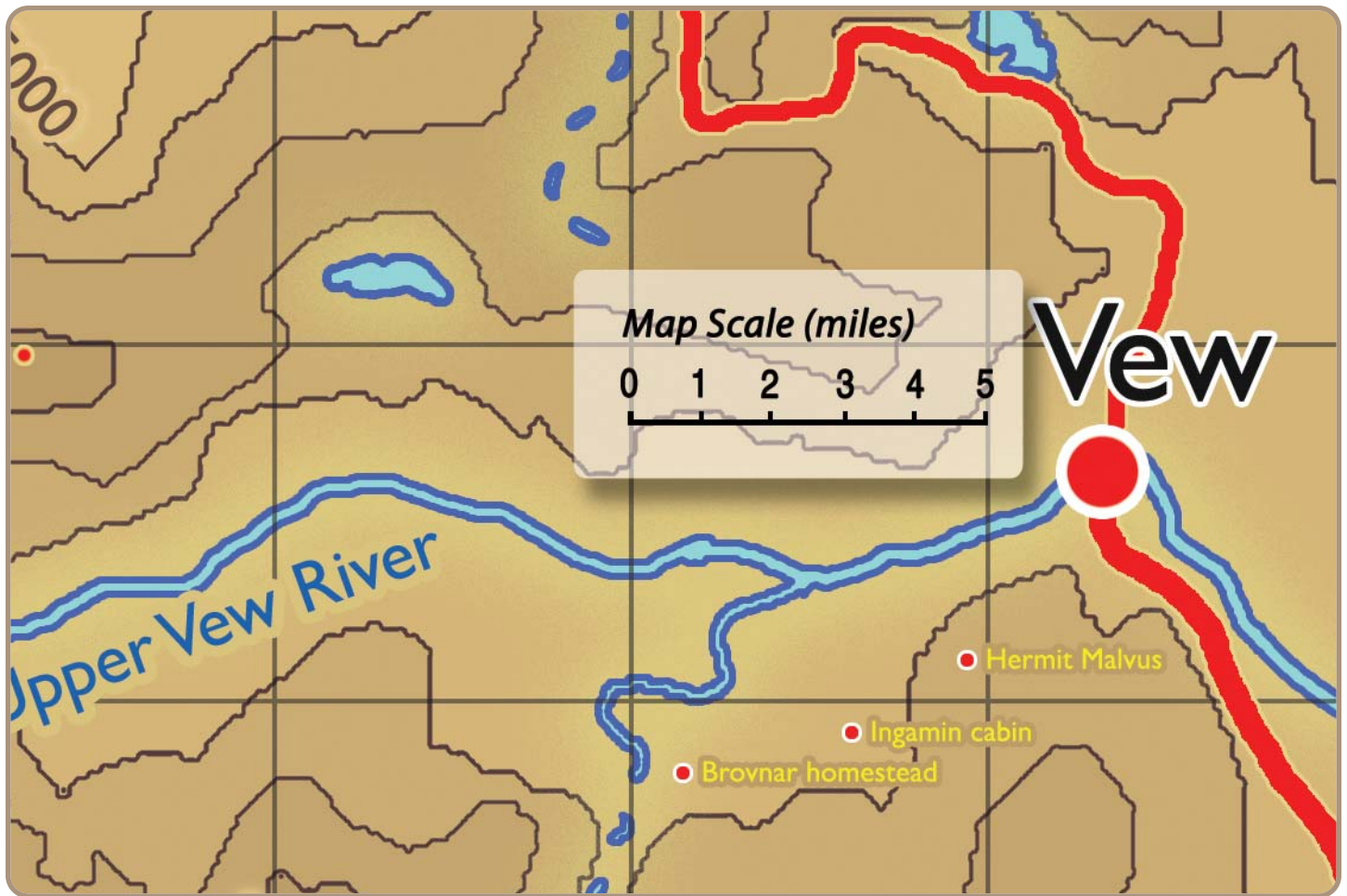
Volomar hasn't had much luck finding a replacement thus far, however, and has increased the initial pay of 3 copper per household surveyed to 1 silver. Volomar can be persuaded to increase the pay to 1½ silver per household by a (difficult) Persuasion check. Volomar is pot-bellied, middle aged, and has a minor case of the gout, so he's not keen to do any of this legwork himself. If the party accepts the task, Volomar tells them of three local households that Sulat Surel never finished investigating and can mark their locations on a map. The houses are relatively close to each other, but are several miles and half a day's march from Vew. He also insists that the PCs must visually confirm each person they record. If the PCs have spoken to Brother Defrin at the chapel then they will notice that one of the houses on the lists belongs to the Brovnar family.

## THE HERMIT MALVUS' SHACK

 The tumbledown shack before you looks like it might collapse at any moment. The porch is littered with old clay jugs and fat, black flies buzz over discarded foods and sticky patches of congealed hooch.

This ramshackle cabin is home to the cantankerous Hermit Malvus and his vicious hound Grinn.





Malvus will answer any calls or knocks on his door with a loaded crossbow and a frown. "All of you jes' be getting on your way. It's jes' me here and I aim to keep it that way." Malvus just wants to be left alone, but will allow the PCs to enter if they ply him with hooch. He minds his own business and has no information to share regarding the raids or the other families, save that he's happy he hasn't had to chase that "little bastard" Granden away from his still in "about a two months now."

### THE CROWDED INGAMIN CABIN

The din from this cottage can be heard even before you can catch a glimpse of the place. The sounds of children's laughter, babies' cries, dogs howling, and arguments from people of all ages ring through the brush.

When the cottage does finally come into view, you can see that a surprisingly numerous family are engaged in all sorts of chores and construction efforts adding a new wing onto what must be a very cramped household indeed.

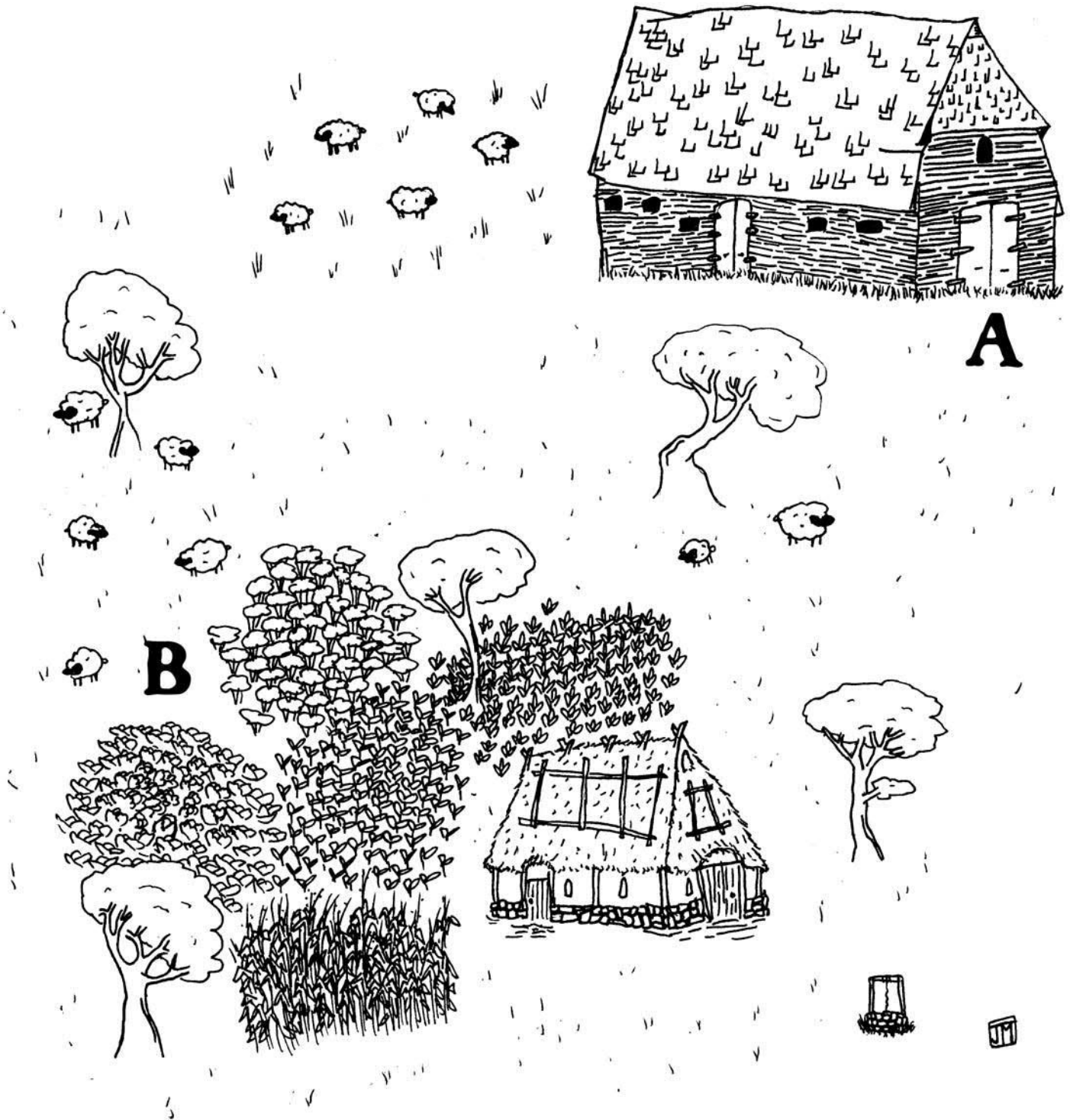
The extended Ingamin clan is busy at work on expanding their cottage in order to fit their newly arrived relatives all into the same building. Pandred Ingamin, a stout, hard mouthed woman speaks for her family and will freely divulge information regarding who all is living there. All in all, there are ten adults, three elders, and twelve children living on the small plot. In regards to recent goings on, she is very angry with the Brovnars as they had promised to help with construction efforts in exchange for the assistance that had already been given to them in removing stones from their fields by the Ingamins. They used to come over for visits, but now it seems like they barely even leave the house. Just plain rudeness, if you ask Pandred..

## THE BROVNRAR HOMESTEAD

**Encounter:** Brendol Brovnrar and Dela Brovnrar

**Potential Yield:** Information on the Kobold hideout and the promise of a reward.

☞ A soft breeze blows through tall stalks of corn and rustles the leaves of a large oak tree as you come upon a solidly built, homey cottage. A barn of middling size stands off a short distance to the west and the bleating of sheep can be heard all about this tranquil farmstead.



Knocking at the front of the Brovnr household or announcing yourselves outside will elicit a timid response from Brendol Brovnr, the man of the house. He will crack his door open only slightly, but will let the PCs enter if they make their mission known to him. Asking about the number of people in their household (or any extended conversation) will elicit a sob from Brovnr's wife, Dela, as she pours fresh sheep's milk into wooden tankards. A cursory glance at these poor farmers reveals the deep bags under their eyes and many small bruises on their exposed skin (from beatings by kobolds). The two are at the end of their rope and any questioning as to whether everything is alright or if there have been any strange happenings at their farm will send them both into convulsive weeping. As they gain control of themselves, Dela is the first to speak.

👂 They came two months ago, horrible little brutes. While we slept, they stole our little angel, Granden and have held us hostage as their slaves. We toil endlessly to provide them with food, but it's only the two of us, my husband Brendol and I, and the work is exhausting. They come check on us every morning and every night. If one of us isn't here, who knows what they'll do to my... my baby boy! Please, please free him! Free us! We don't have much, but we can give you whatever you want from our farm!

Brendol, the farmer speaks next, his bushy moustache soaking up his tears.

👂 The creatures' lair is under our barn. There's a tunnel into it, but the beasts brought six dogs with them when they came here. They keep 'em locked up in the barn. They bark at anything 'cepting me or one of the little creatures and even then they only leave me be because I feed 'em.

If queried about the dogs, Brendol will disparage them as savage curs without a lick of sense. He goes on to complain how he's sick of having to

chase them down after the fool boy leaves the doors open. After a harsh glare from his wife, he realizes his faux pas and changes the subject. Mighty overcast weather we've been having, eh?

If asked about the missing census taker Sulat Serel, the Brovnars will remark that they remember a nosy man from town coming by and asking all sorts of questions. Although they tried to dissuade his interest, he insisted on examining everything in detail even pacing off their house and barn. When he started poking around the barn, a pair of kobolds snatched him. They express their hope that he is all right, but he's been underground for a long time now...

As for the promised reward, the Brovnars are rich in produce only. They have an old mule that pulls their plow and about a dozen sheep out to pasture apart from their meager vegetable stores. They used to have a larder stocked with cured mutton, but the kobolds have taken it all. Their sheep are in need of shearing, though, and if everything works out, the two farmers could give the PCs about 150 pounds of raw wool (salable for 9 sp).

Note that many items found in the kobold caverns were pilfered from the Brovnars. They will not protest PCs taking anything but will dolefully look on if all their stuff is carted away. Hauling away all of the food though will ensure that the farmers starve to death during the upcoming winter.

## INSIDE THE BARN

### Area A1: The Dog Kennel in the Barn

**Encounter:** 6 wild dogs

**Potential Story Award:**

☐ Letting dogs loose & avoiding encounter (100 EP)

👂 The unmistakable odor of dog hangs around this dilapidated, two story barn like a cloud. The old boards of the structure do little to muffle the yelps, growls, and barks of the mangy curs inside. The closed barn doors hang crookedly on their rusted hinges.



The kobolds keep a pack of 6 wild dogs in the barn (they await training to become proper sentry dogs). Brendol feeds them twice a day.

Although untrained, the dogs are aggressive and will attack anyone that approaches them save for Brendol or any kobold. They will bark loudly whilst doing so creating sufficient noise to awaken the sleeping kobold sentry (see Area B).

▶ Should Brendol enter the barn alone and leave the door open, the undisciplined dogs will all run out of their kennel and scatter. This essentially removes them from play as combatants. He will not suggest this tactic as he dreads having to spend the better part of a day gathering up the loose dogs. However, *if the PCs suggest this plan*, he will affirm that it should work and will cooperate to make it happen.

If the PCs opt to retreat from the kobold caverns without having vanquished their foes, a subsequent foray will find the dogs leashed to the barn's support beams preventing their escape.

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**6 Wild Dogs:** (22 EP each): HP 21 each; Init -2; Spd 10; Rch 1'; Atk +2; Dmg 1d4p+1; Def +4; DR 2; ToP: 9/9; Jog 20 ft/sec; Tenacity: Nervous; Size M; Saves: P +2, M +2, D+3

*Notable Skill:* Listening 90%

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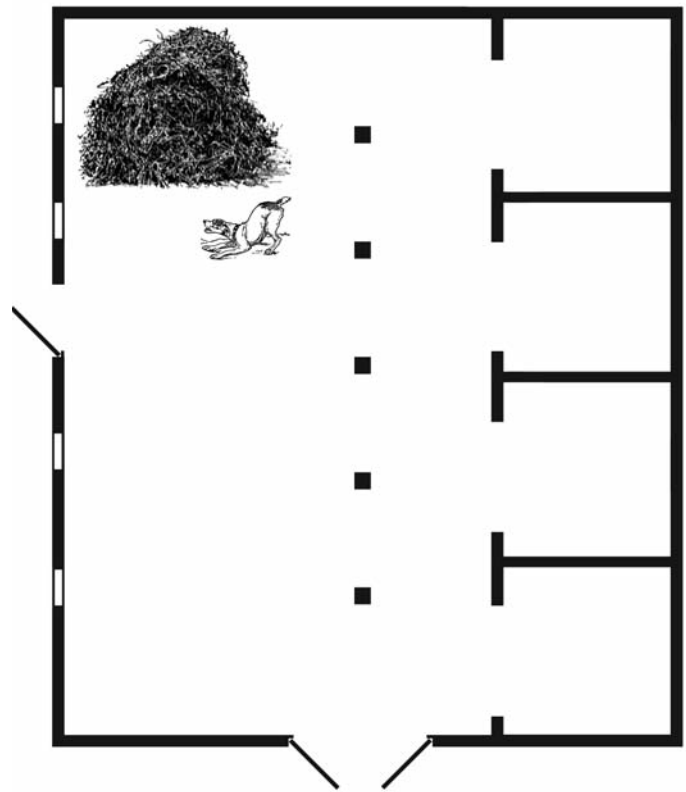
## Area A2: The cavern entrance.

**Encounter:** Kobold sentry

 Nothing about the barn's interior strikes you as unusual – other than the numerous piles of dog droppings you have to navigate around. Four empty stalls lie to your right while a large pile of hay fills the corner.

▶ Should a character possess average or better mastery in Animal Husbandry, you may inform him that it is unusual that the hay would be piled on the ground where it is subject to rotting rather than being placed in a loft.

The pile of hay covers a three-foot diameter circular shaft in which a ladder is placed leading twenty feet down to the kobold caverns.



▶ Brendol is aware of the shaft leading to the kobold's subterranean lair and will relate that it is hidden beneath the hay if he is present and is queried.

At the base of the ladder sleeps a kobold sentry. Lulled by months of inactivity, it has chosen to take a nap in the dark and secluded spot at the base of the stairs.

▶ If the PCs engage the dogs in combat, the barking will wake it up. It will climb up the ladder (taking 16 seconds) and emerge from the hay pile on second 20 of combat. At this point, roll a d8+3 to determine its Initiative (it's heard something though it is certainly not expecting a band of mercenaries!) Its first action will be to retreat to the shaft and climb down to sound the alarm. If permitted to do so – either implicitly or by failure to incapacitate it – it will go through the secret passage to 4b and bang the gong thus alerting the complex. Note that in its haste it will leave both doors of this secret passageway open.

▶ If the dogs do not bark – either because they were set loose or via some brilliant stratagem your players concocted – it will not initially awaken. A stealthy character may be able to sneak down and



dispatch it before it wakes up and runs to sound the alarm (as above). A successful (average difficulty) sneaking check is required. If this check fails, the kobold wakes up while the character is halfway down the ladder. It can act in d12 seconds. 4 seconds are required for a size medium character to descend the remaining 10 feet (or 8 seconds for a size small character).

A PC may opt to leap from the stairs directly onto the stirring kobold. No damage will be sustained from this planned fall. A successful Attack roll (made at -4 but against which the kobold rolls but a d8p) will inflict a d12p-1 point wound.


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**Kobold sentry:** (17 EP): HP 16; Init +3; Spd 6; Rch 0'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p-3; Def +4; DR 2 ToP: 7/4; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Nervous; Size S; Saves: P +2, M +1, D+2

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Continue to 'Kobold Caverns' when the players enter the complex.

## Area B: The Brovnar's Fields

 Corn, tomatoes, green beans, and watermelon take up a majority of these fields; but squash, turnips, and radishes are grown here as well. The Brovnar farm is becoming very prosperous.

The Brovnar's fields seem impractically large for such a small family. This is because the kobolds have forced the Brovnars to sow new fields in order to feed their growing clutch of newborns in the underground lair. The two farmers have to work day and night to maintain these overly cultivated tracts of land. If the dogs have been set loose, they'll be in the fields harassing the sheep, but will steer clear of the vegetable gardens.



## KOBOLD CAVERNS

Most of the rooms and passages (i.e. everything after the entry corridor Area 1) in the kobold lair are only 5' high. While this provides spacious headroom for the occupants (and, incidentally, any PC dwarves, halflings and gnomes), it will prove constricting for taller individuals.

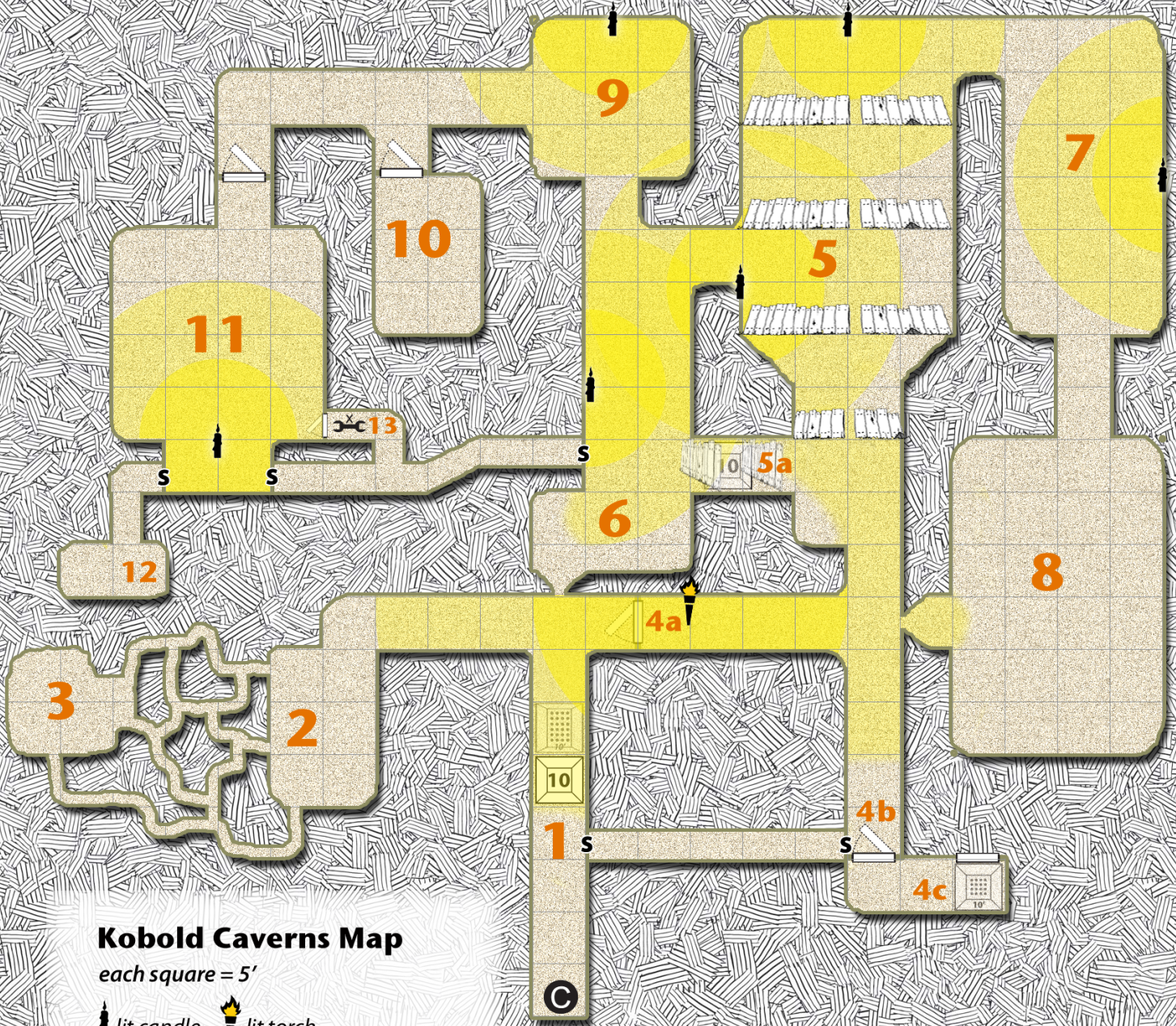
PCs over 5' tall (regardless of race) must crouch wherever they go.

- ▶ This imparts a -1 penalty to attack, defense and damage as well as a +1 penalty to speed with all weapons other than puncturing melee weapons (such as a spear or short sword).
- ▶ PCs using large non-puncturing weapons (i.e. a staff or great sword) accrue double these penalties.
- ▶ Longbows cannot be used effectively in these tight confines.

There are several secret passageways within the complex. Each secret door requires a successful [average difficulty] Scrutiny skill check to discover. The secret passages are a mere 2' wide and 3½' tall.

- ▶ Any medium-sized character (including dwarves) can squeeze through these passages though limited to crawling speed.
- ▶ Size M PCs may only attack with size small puncturing melee weapons, and all attack rolls are at a -4 to hit. Defense rolls are limited to a d8p with no modifiers allowed.
- ▶ Size small characters suffer no movement penalty. Should they employ a size small puncturing weapon, they likewise face no combat penalties. All other weapons impose a -1 penalty to attack, defense and damage as well as a +1 penalty to speed.
- ▶ **Alert Status:** It is not a given that the kobolds will be alerted to the presence of intruders. As such, certain areas may differ in the readiness posture of their occupants. Where applicable, alternative read-aloud text boxes are presented: green (for unaware) and red (for alerted).





### Kobold Caverns Map

each square = 5'

lit candle    lit torch

color density represents good & dim light  
covered pits are opaque

#### Area 1: Entrance and pit traps.

**Encounter:** Pit traps

**Potential Experience Award:**

- Locating and avoiding the trap (120 EP)

Assuming the PCs enter during the day, read the following:

Although no light sources exist in the 10' high entry hall, sufficient daylight spills in to barely show an open pit several feet away.

If the characters wisely light a torch, continue:

A few steps beyond the pit, a T-intersection with a lower 5' high ceiling is just visible.



🕒 Several wooden planks can be seen lying on the floor at the T-intersection. One can assume these can be used to safely cross the pit.

The open pit spans the full width of the corridor but is only 5' across. Glancing into it (assuming some artificial illumination is at hand) reveals that it is approximately 10 feet deep and that twigs and straw line its bottom. Anyone knowingly leaping in (or, for that matter, accidentally tumbling in) will not sustain damage.

This pit is, in fact, a decoy for a covered spiked pit that lies just one foot past it.

The cover of this pit is a loose mesh of twigs covered by a bedsheet (stolen from Mrs. Brovnar) upon which a thin cover of soil has been placed to make it appear similar to the rest of the dirt floor of the warren.

- ▶ A difficult Scrutiny or Observation skill check (specifically directed at the spot of ground) will, if successful, reveal a slight sag in the middle of the corridor.

Anyone electing to hop over the initial shaft (q.v. Jumping skill *Player's Handbook* p. 177) will automatically plunge into the secondary pit. The 10' fall to the dirt floor only inflicts a d6p-3 wound but the unfortunate character will also be impaled upon d4+3 wooden stakes embedded into the ground (alternatively d4+1 stakes for size small characters). Each stake inflicts a d6p wound – although this is mitigated by the DR capacity of any worn armor.

Upon reaching the T-junction, the planks placed there will be discovered to be seven feet long – sufficient to bridge both pits if used in series.

*Lighting Note:* Until the door at 4b is opened, the area on the other side of the pits is only dimly lit by torchlight bleeding through the crude door.

- ▶ If the lair is under **alert status**, archers in Area 6 will fire down the corridor to harass the PCs. This may goad them into charging down the corridor and plunging into the covered pit. See area 6 for details on the enemies therein.

## Area 2: Garbage Heap

**Encounter:** 10 Giant Rats

**Potential Story Award:**

- ☐ Learning Sulat's Fate (up to 100 EP - see conclusion)

As soon as the PCs start down this side of the corridor, they will notice a bad stench coming from this room. Once they reach the area, read the following:

🕒 This room appears to serve the dual purpose of garbage dump and latrine. The stench of offal is nauseating. A number of sizeable rodents are feeding on the detritus scattered herein.

- ▶ A successful (average difficulty) Observation skill check will note that a bloated human hand sticks up from the middle of the largest refuse heap.



The putrid odor within this room is comparable to a *Stink Bomb* spell (albeit far less pernicious) and potentially debilitating.

All non-habituated creatures must make a physical saving throw (vs. d20p-4) to resist becoming extremely nauseated. This affliction persists as long as they remain in the room and 20-50 seconds thereafter. It imparts a -4 attack and -2 defense penalty but still allows uncompromised movement. Worse yet, those saving must flee the area or they risk having to make an additional save every 10 seconds to resist the malodorous vapors. Those succeeding at a saving throw are unaffected as long as they continue to do so.

There are 10 giant rats in here feasting on the trash. They will only become aggressive if approached. Any that fail a Tenacity check or are actively confronted by a torch will flee through the scattered rat holes to Area 3.

The largest pile of filth covers a bloated corpse (that of Sulat Serel) . The rats have considerably gnawed away at the body and his possessions are missing.

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**10 Giant Rats:** (12EP each): HP 8 each; Init +0; Spd 10; Rch 0'; Atk +0; Dmg d4p+1; Def -1; DR 1; ToP: 3/7; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Cowardly; Size S; Saves: P +0, M +0, D+3


*Ancillary Danger:* Rat bite fever (communicability d20p-2, severity d20p+7; HoB p. 257)

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### Area 3: Giant rat warrens.

**Encounter:** Any rats fleeing from Area 2

**Potential Yield:** numerous coins, copper cup, census records

 The rat warrens are incredibly cramped, even for a small framed creature. The floor is littered with rat droppings.

The rat tunnels are only about a foot in diameter.

▶ Size small PCs can squirm through these tunnels at crawling speed. They may only attack with a knife or dagger, and all attack rolls are at a -4 to hit. Defense rolls are limited to a d8p with no modifiers allowed. Alternatively, they can push a torch in front of them to keep any rats at bay.


▶ If a rat comes up behind a crawling character, they are at the mercy of the giant rats and have only a d8p defense with no modifiers.

If a PC manages to reach the rats' lair (the ceiling here is 2½' high), they will have to confront any rats that withdrew from their initial encounter. Said rats will unhesitatingly attack any intruder.

▶ This is a cramped space even for a halfling or gnome. As such, they suffer a -1 penalty to attack, defense and damage as well as a +1 penalty to speed. Only a knife, dagger or short sword may be employed.

If the rats are defeated (or held off with a torch by one member of a pair of explorers while the other searches), their collection of shiny objects may be recovered. It consists of 13 silver pieces, 41 copper coins, 83 trade coins from the Earldom of Reyifor, a soiled feathered cap, a torn belt pouch, a copper cup (3 sp), a silver writing stylus (15 sp) and a scroll case containing Sulat Serel's highly detailed records of the homesteads and their occupants that the PCs were sent to find.


### Area 4a:

 The small, crude door before you is little more than a large board propped up against a slightly narrower entryway. Several torches are stacked against one side of the wall here as another illuminates the room from a dug out sconce.

Regardless of whether the area is under alert, a lit torch will be placed in a sconce about 5' on this side of the door to give any archers in area 8 more visibility to fire down the hallway.



## Area 4b: Bang a Gong


 A 'gong' (in actuality a cast iron pot) hangs from the wall. Next to it hangs a carpenter's hammer.

Directly across from the secret door, a cast iron pot and a carpenter's hammer are hanging from wooden stakes nailed into the earthen wall. Should the guard from Area 1 elude the PCs, he will bang the pot (an ersatz gong) and bring the complex to Alert status.

## Area 4c: Fool Me Once...

### Potential Experience Award:

Locating and avoiding the trap (67 EP)

 Your torchlight illuminates a crudely constructed wooden door set into the wall at the end of this short hallway.

This side corridor is a distraction meant to lure intruders into another pit trap. The cover of this pit is constructed identically to that in Area 1.

▶ A difficult Scrutiny or Observation skill check (specifically directed at the spot of ground) will reveal a telltale sag in the middle of the corridor. Alternatively, an (average) Locate Traps skill check [made *prior* to reaching the door!] reveals the trap's presence.


Anyone moving unawares to check out the false door will fall into a spiked pit.

The 10' fall to the dirt floor only inflicts a d6p-3 wound but the unfortunate character will also be impaled upon d4+1 wooden stakes embedded into the ground. Each stake inflicts a d6p wound – although this is mitigated by the DR capacity of any worn armor.


## Area 5: Fenced In

**Encounter:** 12 Kobolds

If the lair is under alert, read the following:

 In this wider, but still low-ceilinged chamber, there is a series of two foot high fences constructed at ten foot intervals. Beady eyes stare out from behind these Lilliputian barricades as spears are readied against you with a shrill war whoop from the grim band.

If the lair is not yet alerted to the PCs, read the following:

 In this wider, but still low-ceilinged chamber, there is a series of two-foot high fences standing at ten-foot intervals. Spear tips point out from behind these Lilliputian barricades, but it doesn't seem that the creatures have noticed you... yet.

From beyond the chamber you can just hear the sound of a lilting flute...

The kobolds, manifesting another symptom of their group PTSD after the encounter with savage mercenaries at Red Spur Gorge (see *In the Realm of the Elm King*), have bolstered their defenses by erecting barricades at this their principal line of defense. The fences were originally used to pen in the sheep belonging to the Brovnar's but the kobolds pulled all of them out and rebuilt them to accommodate their diminutive stature.

There are 4 lines of 24" high fencing staggered at 10-foot intervals. All have a small (1' wide) gap in the center meant to serve as an aperture through which kobolds can funnel through if compelled to retreat.

Four kobolds wielding short spears man the foremost fence while 6 additional kobolds armed with short bows wait behind the next two fences (4 behind the second fence and 2 more behind the third). If alerted (*or, at the very least, when observing intruders advancing towards their position*), the kobolds archers will shoot arrows at anyone approaching their defense works. This fusillade will come in volleys of 2 shots as the kobolds position themselves to fire down the corridor (i.e.

first rank fires then moves out of the way, second rank fires, first rank replacements fire).

This sustained fusillade is predicated on there being available time. Unforeseen circumstances (such as taking pot shots at characters peeking around corridors) are left for the GameMaster to adjudicate. A rapid and decisive move to confront the first rank of spearmen will halt further harassment as these kobolds will not risk fratricide by firing into melee. Note, however, that anyone standing before the first line of fencing is subject to enfilade fire from the kobolds at Area 6 (q.v.)

- ▶ Note: All kobolds receive 50% cover (catching missiles on an 11-20) if subject to return fire.

The first line of spear wielders will defend the fence until they fail a Tenacity check. While so engaged, the second rank will pick up spears (lying behind the fence) and ready themselves to defend the second line. The third line will retain their bows in order to potentially take a snapshot at a disengaged opponent but will trade these for spears once the second rank becomes engaged.

- ▶ Combat Note: The fence acts as an impediment to melee with size small individuals gaining a +4 Defense bonus and size medium creatures +2. The kobolds *initial* spear attack is not subject to this penalty as defenders will not have approached close enough for the fence to disrupt their thrust.

The fences are hardly sturdy or tall and can be smashed down or walked over should characters choose to do so.

- ▶ Kicking down a fence is a 5 second action requiring a Feat of Strength check (vs. d20p+5). Success indicates a 5' section of fencing is toppled over. Walking over a fence is considered a Tactical Move (q.v.) but results in triple penalties (i.e. -3 to attack and defense until the character's next attack). Only size medium characters may walk over a fence and then only if the square behind it is unoccupied by a kobold.

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**12 Kobolds:** (17 EP each): HP 16 each; Init +3; Atk +2; Def +4; DR 2; ToP 7/4; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Nervous; Size S; Saves: P +2, M +1, D+2


w/ Shortbow: RoF 11; short range 50'; Dmg 2d6p

w/ Short Spear: Spd 11; Rch 4'; Dmg d6p+d4p-3


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## Area 5a

If the lair is under alert, read the following:

 A fence blocks passage through this corridor. Small figures yelp with excitement as they nock arrows from the other side and let fly!

If the lair is not yet alerted to the PCs, read the following:

 A crudely built, two foot high fence blocks passage through this tunnel.

The fences (identical in all respects to those in Area 5) impede access down this corridor. However, set between them, is a 15' deep pit.

The pit is uncovered but screened from direct view by the little fences. Were someone near the fence to peer behind it, the pit is readily apparent. However, without good lighting, the nest of six giant centipedes at the bottom cannot be distinguished!

In the heat of battle, especially with the two archers in Area 6 providing flanking fire, PCs may be tempted to rapidly close with them without paying excessive heed to their surroundings as their focus is upon the pair of snipers. If a PC walks over the initial fence without specifically noting he is checking the ground or footing behind, he will assuredly tumble into the pit. The fall to the dirt floor only inflicts a d6p-1 wound but does trap him in a confined space with 4 giant centipedes (2 having been squished by the falling character. The survivors will readily attack...

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**4 Giant Centipedes:** (14 EP each): HP 3 each; Init -1; Spd 5; Rch 0'; Atk +0; Dmg 0; Def +1; DR 0; ToP: n/a; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Cowardly; Size T; Saves: P +0, M +0, D+0

*Ancillary Danger:* poison (save vs. VF 5 or suffer d6p damage)



▶ Note that due to the low ceiling, size medium characters cannot leap the pit — or rather cannot *successfully* leap the pit...

▶ Climbing out of the pit requires at least average mastery in climbing/rappelling in order to attempt a skill check. Said check is made at average difficulty.

## Area 6: Guard Enfilade

**Encounter:** 5 Kobolds

Two small canid humanoids stand shoulder to shoulder behind rows of small picket fences. They knock arrows and begin firing!

Normally empty of kobolds, 2 archers (otherwise bolstering their peers' numbers in Area 5) will occupy this room during times of alert.

If given sufficient advance notice (via the surface guard), one kobold will be peering down the entry corridor (Area 1) with a nocked arrow ready to shoot any intruders dawdling around the pit traps. Its intent is not only to injure an enemy but also to goad them into a precipitous action such as blindly leaping the dummy pit and thus falling into the far more lethal spiked pit.

▶ The hole burrowed into the south wall provides the archer with 75% cover (successful "hits" are caught on a 6-20). Should characters advance to the hole and stab at it, the kobold gains a +8 defense bonus after which it retreats.

If battle commences at Area 5, the archers will provide enfilade fire by staggering their shots (at 1, 6, 12, 17, 23...) to maintain a steady barrage. Here too their intent is to inflict injuries but also to provoke opponents into charging their position knowing that those foolish enough to do so will fall into the pit (detailed in 5b).

▶ Note: These kobolds receive 50% cover (catching missiles on an 11-20) if subject to return fire.

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**2 Kobold archers:** (17 EP each): HP 16 each; Init +3; Atk +2; Def +4; DR 2; ToP: 7/4; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Nervous; Size S; Saves: P +2, M +1, D+2  
w/ Shortbow: RoF 11; short range 50'; Dmg 2d6p  
w/ Dagger: Spd 6; Rch 0'; Dmg 2d4p-3

## Area 7: Male common room

**Encounter:** 12 Kobolds

**Potential Story Award:**

☐ Rescuing Granden (up to 400 EP - see conclusion)

As you enter the chamber you are met with a line of the dog-like creatures, spears in hand and ready for combat. Their growls reverberate throughout the squalid common room as they grind their clawed heels into the earthen floor.

Ordinarily, all males in this room will be engaging in good-natured kobold down time. Some might be wrestling; some might even be in Area 8 mating with one of the bitches. If the PCs avoided alerting the kobolds to their presence, they will be able to hear the sound of a lilting flute from this room when they encounter the barricades in Area 5.

Granden, the kidnapped child is playing his flute and sending the kobolds in attendance into a relaxed state. He is a boy of about nine years and is dirty beyond belief. What may have one time been blonde hair is caked brown with mud. Granden seems to be entirely unafraid of the creatures. In fact, the boy has earned himself free range of rooms 7, 5, 6, and 9 and knows the layout and purpose of each. Two months of living in the kobold warrens has also allowed him to achieve a 10% proficiency in their language. Being a confident child, however, he believes himself to be far better at the language than he actually is. The kobolds will not kill Granden as most have developed a sort of fondness for him, as a sort of pet. Granden is not ready to go back to the drudgery of his chores on the farm and will protest to being rescued, to the extent of having to be carried out of the lair. Contrary to his mother's description of him, Granden is a willful and rude child. GMs are encouraged to think back to any annoying kids they may have known and give Granden their worst qualities.

▶ If under alert, there will be 12 males present with short spears. They will be set for a charge and ready to hold PCs at bay. Granden will have been moved into room 8 with the kobold pups and bitches.


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**12 Kobolds:** (17 EP each): HP 16 each; Init +3; Spd 11; Rch 4'; Atk +2; Dmg d6p+d4p-3; Def +4; DR 2; ToP: 7/4; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Nervous; Size S; Saves: P +2, M +1, D+2

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### Area 8: Female common room / nursery

**Encounter:** 5 kobold males, sentry dog, 15 non-combatant kobold bitches with pups

 The plaintive mewling of stripling pups pierces the air in this pungent nursery. Their presumptive mothers shuffle back with their charges while a group of kobold warriors interpose themselves between you and the non-combatants. One lets loose the leash of a large hound and it stalks forward, frothing at the mouth...

Until the alarm is raised, only the tribe's females and young occupy this chamber. However, once alerted, 5 kobold warriors and a sentry dog will move from the male common area (Area 7) in order to defend the pups. These creatures are listed here as there is scant chance the complex is not on high alert once the PCs reach this area.

One of the warriors is an archer that has a secondary task of manning the arrow hole overlooking the corridor 4a. Unless a general alert has been sounded he will not be present — and if so only after a minute's delay (60 count).

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**5 Kobolds:** (17 EP each): HP 16 each; Init +3; Atk +2; Def +8 (small shields); DR 2; ToP: 7/4; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Nervous; Size S; Saves: P +2, M +1, D+2  
w/ Shortbow: RoF 11; short range 50'; Dmg 2d6p  
w/ Dagger: Spd 6; Rch 0'; Dmg 2d4p-3

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**Sentry Dog:** (84 EP each): HP 30; Init -2; Spd 10; Rch 1'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d4p+2; Def +3; DR 2; ToP: 12/9; Jog 15 ft/sec; Tenacity: Steady; Size M; Saves: P +4, M 2, D+2

*Notable Skill:* Listening 90%

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There are several 'pot holes' in the room and along the walls where a bitch has burrowed to nurse her young and keep them warm. The 15 females are non-combatants and pose no threat. Once their protectors are dead, they will huddle ever closer into the far corner (with a 'towering' human scamp in their midst — see Area 7 for details on Granden).

Extricating the boy from this panicky mass of kobolds may prove a challenge, as entirely rational exhortations such as "We want to take you home to your parents" will be met with petulant refusals to leave. Attempting to forcibly remove the boy (or any killings) will trigger a frenzied stampede as the terror-stricken bitches along with Granden bolt for the exit.





## Area 9: Guard Room #2 – Alpha Male’s Guards

**Encounter:** 5 kobold elite guards

🗨️ Heaps of old rags and piles of straw fill one corner of this room, but your eyes are first drawn to the five plump kobolds readied in an attack formation. They wear armor made from strips of goat leather and carry wicker shields. With a guttural baying, the beasts charge forward swinging short swords in their tiny, clenched fists.

This is the elite guards’ quarters and the final bulwark before the Alpha Male’s chamber. The guards’ customary duties involve screening the Alpha Male from the irksome demands of his subjects as well as preventing pilferage of the larder (by anyone but themselves!) Of course they also serve as his personal bodyguard — a function of more immediate concern to the PC intruders...

One will scamper off to provide a situation report the Alpha Male while his five fellows do their best to secure their position.

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**5 Kobold Elite Guards:** (30EP each): HP 18; Init +3; Spd 7; Rch 1'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d6p-1; Def +7; DR 4; ToP: 8/5; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Steady; Size S; Saves: P +3, M +2, D+2

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## Area 10: Larder

**Potential Yield:** six months worth of standard rations

🗨️ This door bears a padlock.

▶ A successful open locks skill check (average difficulty) will give the PCs access as will the key the Alpha Male keeps around his neck. Alternatively, a successful Feat of Strength (vs. 20p+8) will tear the not-exactly-sturdy door from its hinges.

🗨️ The savory aroma of cured mutton permeates this larder — evidently wafting from a pile of salted sheep ribs piled on a frilly bed sheet in the middle of the room. Throughout the room are numerous wicker baskets filled with root vegetables.

▶ An easy cooking/baking skill check will reveal that all of this food is fit for human consumption.

These kobolds have unquestionably been living high on the hog on the food they have purloined from the Brovna’s. In addition to the store of smoked mutton, there are baskets full of rutabagas, potatoes, carrots, radishes and onions courtesy of their captive farmers.

Sufficient stores exist to maintain the entire kobold lair through the next winter. PCs could, should they desire, squirrel away sufficient food for the next six months provided they have an individual with rudimentary proficiency in cooking/baking. Of course, this will result in the Brovnars starving to death as this constitutes their winter store. The kobolds are heartless monsters and don’t really care. Are your players?

## Area 11: Chamber of the Alpha Male

**Encounter:** Kobold alpha male, alpha female, a giant weasel, and 4 elite kobold guards.

**Potential Yield:** short sword +1, buckler +1, larder key (around alpha male’s neck)

🗨️ An open door bids you into this chamber. Inside four armored kobold guards await your advance. Some ten feet behind them a larger male and female couple jumps to the top of a large, exposed root and barks what could be orders at the guards. From inside a narrow burrow in the wall, a snarling weasel of surprisingly large dimensions surges forward with lithe movements, snapping its powerful jaws at you.

The Alpha couple shares this chamber along with their pet giant weasel.

Their bodyguards will wait five feet beyond the entry corridor waiting for the intruders to advance so as to engage the first brave soul to do so from both flanks as well as frontally. The alpha couple will initially stand back awaiting the expected smack down their elite guards will presumably deal to the impudent intruders.

Should their guards falter, the Alpha Male will advance to engage the foremost opponent in tandem with his trained weasel. He cannot abide the destruction of the kobold sanctuary and will fight to the death rather than accept responsibility for the final destruction of this kobold tribe.

The Alpha Female is a bit more sanguine. She has no intention of “going down with the ship” and is confident that the tribe can survive despite this disaster. She is pregnant with a litter of pups and will cautiously gauge how the battle is going. If things look bleak, she will not hesitate to flee through the secret door in the southeast corridor and escape to Area 6. If forced to do so, she will gather survivors (if any) and abandon the lair.

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**4 Kobold Elite Guards:** (30EP each): HP 18; Init +3; Spd 7; Rch 1'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d6p-1; Def +7; DR 4; ToP: 8/5; Jog 5 ft/sec; Tenacity: Steady; Size S; Saves: P +3, M +2, D+2

*Notable Equipment:* each wields a short sword and bears a small shield - one of the swords is exceptionally valuable

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**Kobold: Alpha Male:** (50EP): HP 28; Init +3; Spd 7; Rch 2'; Atk +5; Dmg 2d6p+1; Def +5; DR 4; ToP: 12/6; Jog 7½ ft/sec; Tenacity: Brave; Size M; Saves: P +5, M +4, D+4

*Notable Equipment:* short sword +1, buckler +1, larder key, gold earring

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**Kobold: Alpha Female:** (17EP): HP 17; Init +3; Spd 6; Rch 0'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p-3; Def +4; DR 2; ToP: 7/4; Tenacity: Nervous; Size S; Jog 5 ft/sec; Saves: P +2, M +1, D+2

*Notable Equipment:* dagger, cracked porcelain doll head, acorn shell necklace, jade comb, Healing Salve

*Notable Skill:* First Aid (31)

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**Giant Weasel:** (84EP): HP 30; Init -2; Spd 7; Rch 1'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d4p+2; Def +3; DR 2; ToP: 12/7; Jog 15

ft/sec; Tenacity: Steady; Size M; Saves: P +3, M +3, D+5

*Notable skills:* Climbing 45%, Listening 80%

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Once the occupants are scattered, read:

 This appears to be an audience chamber or throne room. Two human-sized chairs in the south portion of the room sit astride a candlestick whose lit candle provides illumination to this chamber. Before the chairs is a sheepskin rug and the walls are decorated with patterned woolen blankets. A large brass mirror rests on the floor behind the chairs.

A small door on the east side of the room is the only other exit.

The kobolds have pretty thoroughly pillaged the farmstead and repurposed nearly everything they've looted. The 'thrones' are actually rocking chairs and the tapestries are simply woolen blankets with an eye-catching pattern. On the seat of the left-hand chair is a soup ladle festooned with colored yarn (the Alpha Male's 'scepter').

The three foot high brass mirror (full length to the alpha female) is worth 50 s.p.


If the bodies of the slain kobolds are searched, one of the bodyguards' short swords has a grip decorated with malachite (increasing its value to 45 sp). The alpha male wears a gold earring (28 sp) in addition to his superior quality equipment. The alpha female (provided she did not escape) bears a small belt pouch containing a jade comb (31 sp) and a tin container filled with **Healing Salve** sufficient for 4 applications.

## 12: Treasure Room

**Potential Yield:** 6 bolts +1, lots of low-value coins, 4 fine winter blankets with an attractive green tartan pattern, a wheel of excellent farm cheese with only one missing wedge, 3 porcelain doll's heads, a cast iron skillet, and a three pound jug of elderberries





 You push open the hidden door and find yourself in a small grotto. Scattered about are several interesting curios the kobolds have hoarded. Much it though appears to be junk.


A through search will uncover the following items: a human skull, a 20' ladder, 2 broken chairs, a splintered medium shield, a battered human-sized helmet, 4 fine winter blankets with an attractive green tartan pattern (belonging to the Brovnars), a wheel of goat cheese with only one missing wedge, 3 porcelain doll's heads, a cast iron skillet, a jug filled with three pounds of elderberries, a pair of brand new human-sized snakeskin boots (25 sp) filled with 348 cp and 652 trade coins, 7 silver tea spoons (15 sp each) and a quarrel case filled with 20 light bolts (6 of which are +1).

### 13: It's a Trap!

**Encounter:** crossbow trap

**Potential Experience Award:**

Locating and avoiding the trap (67 EP)

 A diminutive door only 3 feet high must lead elsewhere in the lair.

The door is unlocked.

A light crossbow has been mounted on a tripod five feet in back of this door. A string tied to the back of the door will pull the trigger. Anyone standing in front of the door when it is opened is liable to be shot (d20p+2 vs. d20 rolled by the target). If struck, the bolt inflicts a 2d6p wound.

Cautiously opening the door from the side (effectively employing the door as cover) will result in the quarrel embedding in the opposite wall – provided there wasn't someone in its path...

## Conclusion:

**Potential Yield:** The rewards promised by the Brovnars' for Granden's safe return; 3 sp for completing the census for Volomar

### Potential Story Awards:

#### Completing the census (up to 500 EP)

This was the party's primary objective. Award given when accurate census information is reported to Volomar Vitar. If Sulat Serel's documentation is handed in, a full award is granted. If PCs hand in their own work (provided that they possessed paper and a writing instrument!), poor literacy skills may impact the legibility and consequent utility of their report. The recorder should make an average difficulty literacy skill check - if he fails only 300 EP is awarded for the chickenscratch they turn in.

#### Rescuing the Brovna's boy Granden (400 EP)

This became the party's secondary mission once they encountered the Brovnars. Award full points if they personally deliver the boy to his mother. If the boy escaped their clutches when the kobold bitches stampeded and escaped the complex on his own, reduce the award to 200 EP.

#### Rooting out the Kobolds and emancipating the Brovnars (400 EP)

Rooting out this kobold lair frees the Brovnars' from their enslavement. They remark that they'll never be able to maintain these expanded fields on their own and may have to solicit help from the Ingamin family. Working together, the Brovnars and Ingamins will eventually be able to produce an impressive surplus crop to sell back in town.

If the kobold alpha female manages to escape the warrens (with or without any followers), she will attempt to regroup in the woods outside of the farm and will eventually attempt to find a new home in an abandoned homestead someplace nearby. From this new base of operations, the kobolds will lick their wounds and gradually replenish their numbers. This may take a few years.

PCs may want to attempt to track the remaining kobolds down to finish the job. The GM is encouraged to let them do so. An Average Tracking check is sufficient to follow the creatures' disorderly flight if attempted within a day. After that, however, the tiny tracks will become one order of difficulty harder to follow per day until becoming totally unreadable after three days. If both alphas are killed, any remaining kobolds will disperse into the surrounding countryside and trouble the area no more.

Reduce the award to 300 EP if the Alpha Female eludes capture.

#### Learning of Sulat's Demise (100 EP)

Completing the census will net Volomar's promised compensation and returning Sulat Serel's body to him will have a visible effect on the elder official. Besides rethinking his opinions on the younger generation, he will also pay for the extra homesteads' census information as detailed in Sulat's thorough reports.

#### Looter's Consequence (-3 Honor)

If the players' looted the Brovnars' food stores, the farmers may likely starve this winter. Deduct 3 Honor from any awarded to punish this churlish action.

## CREDITS

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The fertile lands around Vew are undergoing a major population surge! Folk flock to the woods and dales around the town to build homesteads and raise families in this land of opportunity. Far away from the safety of Vew and its town militia, these new arrivals eke out an existence near the edge of the wild... and the creatures that inhabit it. In *Legacy of the Elm King* players venture out into the half-wild lands to explore the new communities that have grown up in secret beyond the reach of the Earl and his laws.

