



STRANGERS ON THE TRAIL

Designer's Notes: Thanks for downloading *Strangers on the Trail*. This product can be played in one of two ways: as a stand-alone romp or as the introductory scenario to the extensive *Shadow over Tiwidu* adventure (available separately).

The story takes place in and around the village of Tiwidu. This community is detailed in *Tiwidu: Village on the Verge*. Though it is not absolutely necessary to have this companion book to run these scenarios, you may wish to acquire this fully fleshed out village as a focal point for your campaign. Many of the NPCs and locales featured in the adventures are tied to their contextual roles within the prevailing social web of Tiwidu.

Introduction

Halopir woke up in the dark, his body bruised and his mood grim. The whole side of his left face still ached from the stone that was thrown at him while he was walking down the Emperor's Road. Halopir had no idea how long he was out, but he suspected he was now underground due the damp, stagnant air and the sharp acoustics of the stone walls. He also knew his captors were kobolds by the yipping language spoken just a few feet away. Halopir was able to derive from the primitive vernacular that the small canids were still deciding what to do with him. All the ideas that were verbalized did not sound promising.

"How did I find myself here?" Halopir wondered. He, a fabler by trade, was looking for work in Ka'utavidu and Nikido because he was nudged out of Tiwidu's one inn by rival bard Aga Senara. Halopir held the villagers of Tiwidu in contempt; the looks of the storyteller should have no bearing on the yarn told.

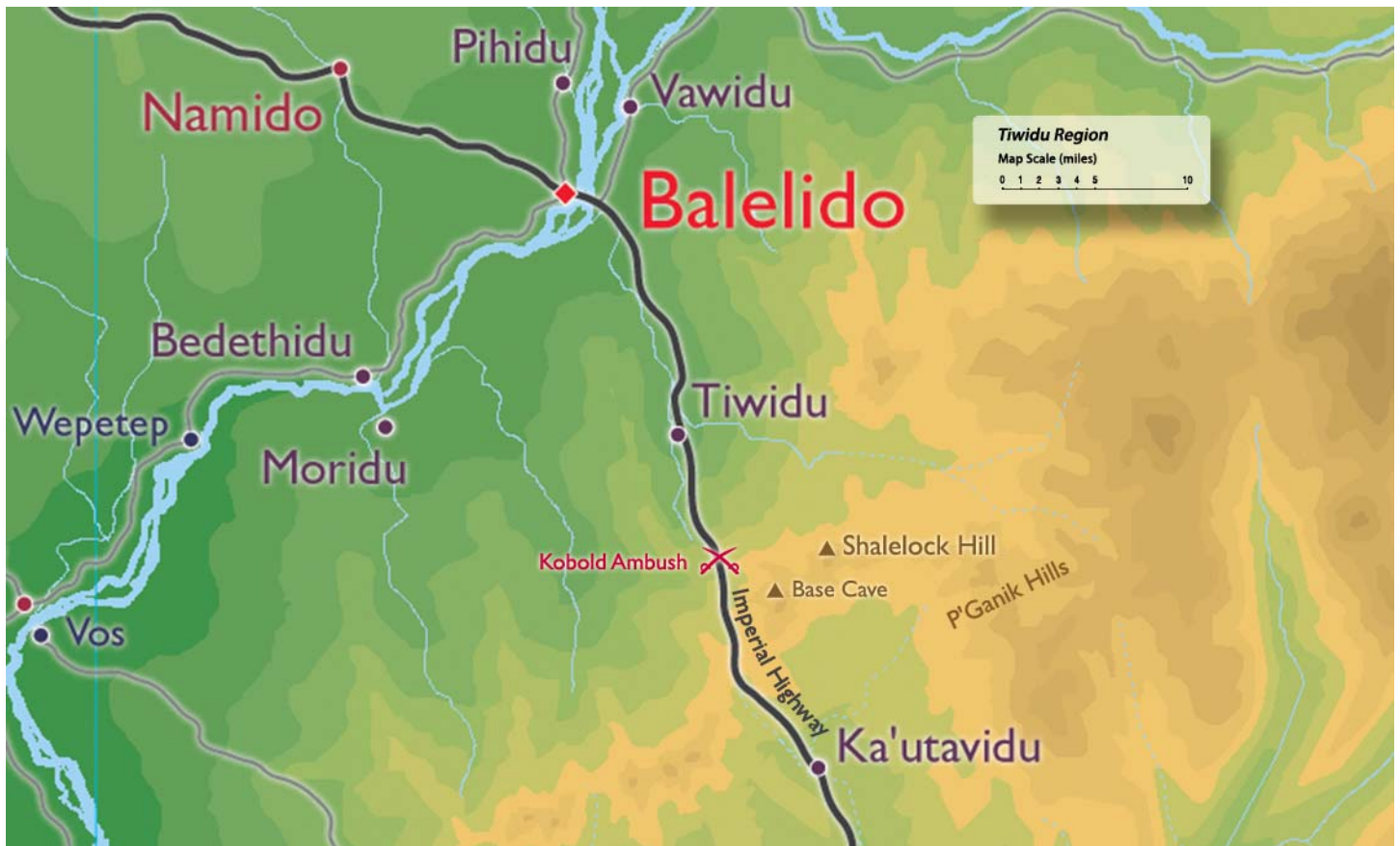
Aga just had to flash her perfect smile to get the crowd's attention. Halopir needed to get the uncultured rubes to sit still – usually the length of draining one tankard of ale – before the hooks of his ballads could be set. Talent was lost on all those who beheld the fine arts with only their eyes.

He struggled against his bindings and worked his jaw to loosen the gag over his mouth. His efforts did not go unnoticed. A large dog kept in the cave began to growl in his direction. The bard heard the canine pad forward, a snarl rippling out of its mouth. Halopir held still, trying to calm himself by reciting mentally the heroic tales he told on stage. The dog's hot breath wafted across the back of his neck. The tales often involved a band of brave warriors who would storm in and cut down the dark fiends, saving the innocent captive just in the nick of time. Though those stories were embellished beyond scope, Halopir mentally repeated the most poignant of passages to fight against the helplessness.

"This is when the heroes would arrive," Halopir thought as the dog gnashed at his face. "This is when the evil would be vanquished..."

This adventure is designed for four to six first level HackMaster characters. As always, a party featuring a mix of classes is likely best prepared for success on this sojourn, though any group that uses intelligent tactics can expect to triumph over the challenges presented. The adventure will likely take one or two sessions to complete. This product has been designed with the intent of being a party's first adventure, but it can be easily modified to fit a GameMaster's campaign needs.

The story takes place in and around the village of Tiwidu. Tiwidu is town located southwest of Balelido, a city that stands at the edge of the Lands of Tarisato,



a region found within the Kingdom of Kalamar campaign setting (see map above). Tarisato is a humid, lush region divided into small fiefs ruled by petty nobles who have sworn fealty to Emperor Kabori, the current ruler of the Kalamar Empire that lies to the northwest. To see what Tiwidu has to offer, you may wish to pick up the accompanying HackMaster product *Tiwidu: Village on the Verge*.

GameMaster's Note: To add background and a sense of place, currency may be referred to in its local denominations. In Kalamar and its surrounding regions, a copper piece is known as a Sesater (pl. Sesateri), the silver coin is a Denarus (pl. Denari), and the gold piece is called an Arus (pl. Ari).

Background

The dwarf Forgrum Ferdal arrived at a crossroads in life over fifteen years ago at the Battle of Kadir Ridge, Emperor Kabori's successful bid to seize the dwarf capital city of Karasta. Right at the tale-end of his bearding years, Ferdal found himself evading human and hobgoblin soldiers in the tunnels of his ancestral home. Only his knowledge of the extensive labyrinth, and a budding ability to hide in shadows, kept the young dwarf from finding himself at the end of an

invader's halberd. As the hours wore on in the underground complex, his wanderings drove him to an exit to the surface world located at a lower elevation from the main entrance. He looked up and wept as he saw the greed-driven humans - with their goblinoid and giant allies - slaying his kinsmen, who had only been trying to defend themselves. His anguish was so deep that he did not hear the trio of lurkers edging around a cluster of nearby boulders. One of the shadows brought out a sap and smacked it down hard on the unaware dwarf's crown, sending Ferdal into unmerciful blackness.

Sometime later, Ferdal woke up in the back of a wagon, manacled in chains and sporting a lump on the back of his head. One human male sat at the tail end of the wagon with a hobgoblin, while another hobgoblin sat in the drover's seat, urging the horse team to keep a steady pace. The dwarf could tell they were traveling next to the E'Korug River from the occasional glimpses he got of the waterway from over the lip of the cart. He turned his attention back to his captors. They were neither dressed nor armed like soldiers of the Kalamaran Empire. Neither did they hold themselves as warriors. After a few moments of uncomfortable silence and darting glances, Ferdal began to panic when the human ordered his hobgoblin companion



forward in a language the dwarf did not understand. Ferdal was soon relieved when the creature took the manacles off his wrists. Once the hobgoblin settled back down, the human spoke in the Kalamaran to the dwarf, introducing himself as Durmank. The man explained that Karasta was lost and that Kalamar was now in power. Ferdal's eyes lit with fire at the news. Durmank, wise to the look, informed the dwarf that easier paths than vengeance existed and that the demi-human should consider, at least, a detour before taking his desired route. Not having much choice in the matter, Ferdal heard Durmank out.

Durmank explained that he was a prominent thief in Balelido, the city the wagon was currently heading towards. The man needed someone gifted in mineralogy and metallurgy, since he expected to make some big scores in the future when the Empire started to lug its ill-gained goods out of the dwarves' capital. Durmank mentioned that Kalamaran soldiers would be killed during these forays; something he knew would appeal to Ferdal. After some negotiations, the dwarf found himself under the human's wing. Ferdal could imagine

more pleasing arrangements, and the treasures of his people would still be pried from the hands of their rightful owners, but at least some of the humans might pay for their greed in blood.

As the years passed, Durmank and Ferdal's relationship grew, but the latter would never consider the former as a friend. The dwarf may have learned useful skills from the guild, but because he was in Balelido - a city without a sizeable dwarven population, he was not allowed to participate in nightly raids. Durmank would explain time and time again that the local constables would be able to tie the nightly adventures of the guild to their hideout if one of the city's few dwarves was spotted somehow, even while cowed. Ferdal felt like a prisoner cloistered in a dank cellar, appraising lifted items to be sold on the black-market.

One day, while assessing ill-gotten loot from a north-bound caravan, he found an iron necklace with dwarven runes etched on the key-like pendant. The writing mentioned that a plague could be unleashed upon enemies from a hidden lair located at P'Shal Hill. Ferdal recalled that his people had a few camouflaged forts spread around the Ka'Asa Mountains and was certain this was one such location. He learned from one of the thieves that the raided caravan originated from Tiwidu. Ferdal wanted to keep the necklace, for he was certain that more clues could be garnered from it. However, Durmank had promised the trinket to his new apprentice, the comely Fenire Rumele. The dwarf could bear it no longer and lost his temper. He raged at Durmank until he was hoarse and only then did he re-collect himself. By then, however, the entire guild had heard his tirade. Insulting Durmank would have consequences. But now Ferdal had a new focus. He knew where the hill was and also knew there was a possible weapon at the location to use against the hateful humans and hobgoblins of this region. That was enough incentive for him to leave.

Two weeks later, Ferdal slipped away from the thieves' guild and made his way to Tiwidu. Not long after his arrival, he found the hidden complex... and discovered that it was occupied. A small tribe of goblins with kobold servants had moved into the underground fort. After observing them from the shadows for a few days, he learned that a goblin mage was in charge of the ragtag group. The dwarf also observed that the goblins were having trouble taking over the lower levels of the complex. One night, throwing caution to the wind, Ferdal stepped around a

corner while the goblin mage was walking, alone, down one of the dungeon's corridors, greeting Kelarz in his native tongue. After some shock and initial obscenities, the humanoid mage calmed down enough to listen to the dwarf. Soon after, a deal was struck. Ferdal would help the tribe expand their hold on the fort and the surrounding region - including Tiwidu - in exchange for letting him having the right to look at all the recovered dwarven artifacts. The goblin mage, Kelarz by name, was pleased to have a talented ally on his side but always made sure to keep a couple of guards at his back to prevent any knives being aimed at it.

The partnership worked well, and between the two of them, they learned that the two crypts in Tiwidu's cemetery had been constructed a short time after the fort. According to dwarven runes found etched on some copper discs discovered a few days before, somewhere in the boulder-clogged section of the seventh level was a room that would, somehow, open those crypts, 'Releasing a curse upon everything nearby.' As rubble was lifted and carted away from the old chambers, Ferdal found more writings indicating that the ceremonial 'Necklace of Kairnduk' was needed to activate the release mechanism. The dwarf read the description of the item, and it slowly dawned on him that this was the same relic he held in his very hands back at Balelido! The idea of going back to that city was daunting from Ferdal's point of view.

Mere days later, while making a supply run into Tiwidu (in disguise), Ferdal spotted a well-dressed human woman, accompanied by a couple of guards and a servant, talking with a local woodsman, asking him if there were any interesting ruins nearby. The dwarf did not like to linger in town any longer than he had to - but the woman and her retinue seemed quite odd for the region. He maneuvered to take a closer look and with a shock he realized that he recognized this woman. It was none other than Fenire Rumele wearing the Necklace of Kairnduk!

The dwarf could not believe his luck, but the information also left him unsettled. Why was Fenire here? Had Durmank tracked him down and sent his apprentice to bring him back? Worse yet, kill him? Fenire obviously had some knowledge that the dwarven fort was near Tiwidu. Ferdal wasted no time. He abandoned his shopping and rushed back to the base cave in order to recruit the help of the kobolds there in order to stage an ambush for his former guild-mates.

The next day Fenire, her two guards, and a conman named Birel Rilas set out to explore the region south of Tiwidu. Ferdal and his minions lay in wait among some thick foliage on one side of the road leading to Ka'utavidu, until their quarry drew close enough. Springing to the attack, the kobolds fired volleys of slingstones from the underbrush, but most of them landed harmlessly beside the four travelers. The group, now aware of the kobolds, decided to outrun them, but then found themselves bared down upon by two fierce goblins mounted on wolfback. Fenire's two bodyguards engaged the goblin riders to allow Fenire and Birel a chance to escape. As the two looked to be getting away, Ferdal could not contain his anger and burst forth from his hiding place, spouting obscenities as he lobbed an axe at Fenire's unprotected leg. Momentarily distracted by the sight of her onetime ally, Fenire was caught off guard and took a deep wound. She and Birel scrambled for the tall grass and hid beneath a bramble bush as their guards were quickly overwhelmed by swarming kobolds. Crawling through the underbrush, wounded and terrified, the two didn't notice when the Necklace of Kairnduk snagged on a branch, ripped off Fenire's neck, and was left hanging in the brambles as they made their way slowly to safety.

Meanwhile, Ferdal was infuriated that the wrong two humans had been killed by his flunkies. He rushed alongside the goblin wolf riders to track down the scent of Fenire's blood and, several minutes later, they arrived in the same bramble bush. The dwarf's anger quickly turned to elation as he spied the Necklace of Kairnduk hanging in the brush, ripe for the taking. Retrieving the necklace was victory enough for Ferdal and he ordered the wolf riders to carry him back to Shalelock Hill. That is to say, not before returning to the ambush site to order the kobolds there to leave behind a sizeable force to wait for their lost quarry. After all, the humans would inevitably return to the bramble bush where they lost the precious necklace.

The kobold alpha female, Tato, agreed to his orders, but after the dwarf left she decided to leave only five of her thirteen kobold warriors behind for the ambush. All eight of the others would be needed to drag back the two tasty human cadavers they had won for themselves.

The Long Con

Encounter: Birel Rilas and Fenire Rumele

Potential Yield: Payment of 1 c.p. per party member

Potential Story Awards:

❑ Escorting Birel and his liege back to Tiwidu (20 EP)

This encounter, which occurs south of the village, can start a number of ways. If the PCs are locals, they could be searching the region around Tiwidu for adventure just after they received their grub stakes and purchased provisions. They could be on an errand for someone or just coming in from the grazing fields after a long day of herding cattle. If the adventurers are not denizens of the village, simply tempt them with a [false] rumor of a large cache of weapons and armor being sold at a significant discount in the village of Ka'utavidu (a day's journey to the south of Tiwidu).

👁️ The countryside is bucolic as you stroll south from the village of Tiwidu. Only occasional bird calls can be heard as the road gradually climbs upwards approaching the small, northwestern spur of the P'Tikor Hills. Individual hillocks of this, the P'Resa Knolls, loom large in the vista ahead with shrubland displacing the trees of the river valley at your backs. Autumn is nearing bringing a welcoming cool afternoon breeze that takes the edge off the heat of the past few days.

Permit the players to take whatever actions they deem necessary such as setting up a marching order. When the table banter begins to drift off topic, read the following...

👁️ As you round a bend in the road, a man and woman unexpectedly stumble out from the underbrush some fifty feet ahead. Both are muddy and disheveled, their linen garments bloodied and torn. The woman steadies herself against the man, evidently requiring his assistance to walk as a result of the grievous laceration she bears on her thigh. The man has spotted you and attempts to wave you down, crying, "Help! Dearest gods, please help!"

When he draws near enough to be heard clearly, Birel Rilas will implore:

👁️ "Please, please I beseech thy help! My lady did'st suffer ambush by half-grown and villainous dog-men and fiendish allies thereof, green in hue were they but likewise of stature diminished... though these latter fiends did'st [shudder] atop wolves ride. The lady's guards did'st most honorably spend their lives for as to provide us opportunity the fatal noose to flee! Everything a haze doth be, woe is me! I needs't my lady forthwith to safety decamp... methinks to the tabernacle in yonder Tiwidu. W-will ye render aid most welcome in this our time of distress?"

Notes for the GM: These two individuals are not who they claim to be. Their cover is that of an inquisitive young noblewoman and her overly protective manservant. In truth they are a pair of criminals who believe that a hidden dwarven treasure is secreted somewhere within Shalerock Hill. Preliminary intelligence gathering led them to believe that the complex was unoccupied. Desirous of maintaining their cover and not expecting to meet a formidable adversary, they were unprepared for the ambush led by, of all people, the dastardly dwarf Ferdal.

Their chief concern now is to return to Tiwidu and evaluate their options. An armed escort would greatly facilitate this, as they are unsure as to the whereabouts of the wolf riders and fear being caught in the open. The last thing they want to do is tangle with another armed group given their debilitating wounds.

If the PCs opt to help the pair, Birel will wax poetically as to their honorable nature and upstanding character. Lay it on thick and flatter their egos – he is prepping them for future exploitation. Fenire is more aloof and coolly polite.

They will graciously accept medical aid despite practical knowledge that the wounds are too old to benefit from critical care. This will be readily apparent to any first aid provider.

Triage also reveals that Fenire is suffering from a slashing cut to the right thigh that barely missed a vital artery. She is obviously limping. Birel has both a puncture wound to his shoulder and a contusion on his arm. They are also both covered in scratches.

Fenire's wound is a critical hit to the thigh that imposes a 50% movement penalty for the next three hours (25% thereafter) as well as -1 to Attack and Defense until healed. Birel has both a slingstone

wound and was struck by a flail on his arm. The scratches were sustained by crawling through a briar while escaping Ferdal's ambush.

If the PCs insist that remuneration is required for their services, Birel will cut them off apologizing as he does so.

🗨 Forsooth my manners have I forgott'n. Surely we'd be honor'd to make hire of thine mercenary services. We requires't but two hours of thine time and in recompense would'st pay ye for a full day's service at the customary rate of a Sesater (1 c.p.).

Here he is attempting to cut off haggling by setting the apparently reasonable terms of the contract (e.g. daily pay as mercenary men-at-arms) and emphasizing the generous concessions he is already offering (e.g. a full day's pay for a couple hours work). These are elementary negotiating tactics meant to make any thought of a counter-offer seem extravagant and greedy. If accepted, he immediately doles out 1 c.p per party member.

Should your players reject these terms, choosing instead to "shake down" these apparently helpless travelers, Birel will react with feigned surprise (knowing full well he may be dealing with dumb thugs). Rather than negotiating, he will up the ante to its natural conclusion.

🗨 If highwaymen ye be, thou can'st our purse most readily take. Let us have no more trouble then. We desire'st only to depart forthwith and no more shall ye see of us.

He is attempting to shame greedy but redeemable characters by challenging them to admit that they are behaving like bandits. If this tactic works, he bears no enmity towards the avaricious mercenaries and will even use their greed as a lure to temp them with further employment.

If your players are both stupid and evil (*though perhaps not having openly admitted to being so*), they are in for a comeuppance. It's best to teach this lesson now while they're first level and haven't invested much in their characters. You can't simply rob or murder anyone you meet (and purposefully wreck an obvious plot hook) without expecting consequences...

Birel and Fenire are exactly the type of people to hold grudges and extract revenge. Though they are in no position to do so immediately, Fenire is a potentially

dangerous adversary once properly equipped for battle and Birel is hardly a pushover. More importantly, they have allies that they may summon back in Balelido. If blatantly robbed, they will not hire the PCs (you must skip the next section *though if you wish to press on with the adventure situate the Kobold Bravado encounter a couple of miles down the road and let your players stumble into it*). In two weeks time they will return fully healed with reinforcements and seek revenge. If merely robbed, they will confront the PCs on the road and demand *all* their worldly possessions leaving them to walk naked back to town. They will not instigate an attack unless necessary and will accept surrender if offered.

If the two are *attacked* during the initial encounter, Birel will immediately flee and employ as many luck points as necessary to make good his escape. Fenire, given her leg wound, knows she is doomed and will whip out her concealed knife to interdict any opponents so as to facilitate Birel's flight (attacking aggressively as she does so). Assuming Birel makes it to safety, he returns with his reinforcements and every intention of murdering the PCs. Given the capabilities of this group, a T.P.K. is virtually certain.

Details pertaining to a battle-ready Fenire and Birel as well as their reinforcements appear in the conclusion.

Meeting at 'The Shaky Salamander's Shack'

Encounter: Birel Rilas

Potential Yield: Promise of up to 20 sp per PC who completes Birel's assignment

Presumably the party rescued Birel Rilas and Fenire Rumele without incident after encountering them on the road. If not, this section should be skipped.

Upon reaching Tiwidu, Birel graciously thanks his escorts and bids adieu insisting he must shepherd Lady Rumele to the village's Merciful Fates (Area 101c-d in *Tiwidu: Village on the Verge*) for immediate care. As he leaves, he stops and turns back to the party.

🗨 Should'st thou be interested in more lucrative employment, please meet me for breakfast at the Shaky Salamander Shack. More I cannot say now.

Birel Rilas is playing the part of the beguiling “Lady” Fenire Rumele’s trusty manservant. Born in Balelido, Birel Rilas was sold by his parents at a young age to work in a merchant household as a body servant to their aging patriarch. Birel spent his early years fetching water, delivering meals, and refilling his master’s wine cup. Showing himself to be naturally bright, the patriarch taught the young Birel to read and write so that the boy could also take down any letters that may have needed writing. Alongside his master, Birel learned proper diction and manners fit for noble company-- and he learned other things as well. The patriarch Birel served made his fortune through lies, well placed bribes, and timely betrayals. Birel began to learn to read between the lines of the messages he transcribed for his now bed-ridden master and little by little; he learned the art of deceit.

Birel served in this capacity until he was fourteen years old. Not too long after Birel Rilas’ birthday, his elderly master succumbed to a sudden fever. The merchant family, seeing no need to further employ Birel, unceremoniously showed him the door. Afterward, the lad wandered the streets of Balelido for a time, his well-kept clothes growing slowly shabbier as his meager savings dwindled away. He posted notices advertising his services in every inn around town, but for the life of him the former servant could find no new employ. That is, until he was found by a man named Durmank.

Durmank, the leader of a well-established thieves guild in Balelido, saw potential in the former servant and took him in. The young man quickly showed aptitude as a conman during his early training. A lifetime spent serving the dishonest merchant patriarch had already taught Birel how to craft half-truths, spin boldfaced lies, and conduct shrewd negotiations. By the time he was twenty years old, he was already an accomplished conman in Durmank’s guild. Being a lettered man, and already possessing the mannerisms of a high-class servant, Birel Rilas was the obvious candidate to assign to Durmank’s protégé, Fenire Rumele. Together, the two set out in search of the rumored treasure that the Necklace of Kairnduk says must lie hidden near Tiwidu. Birel has adopted the persona of Fenire’s doting manservant, and will play his part to a “t.” He believes that by playing his part well and assisting Fenire during this escapade, he might secure a comfortable position in guild hierarchy and hopefully never have to play the servant ever again.

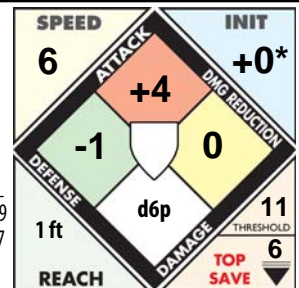
ADDITIONAL NOTES: Birel has 16 Luck Points remaining. He has two wounds (6 hp and 3 hp respectively) when initially encountered though these will heal as time passes. His knife is hidden and he’ll draw it only if absolutely necessary since doing so will likely blow his cover story. He can employ the apprentice spell *Aura of Innocence*.

Denizens of Tellene



Birel Rilas

Race: Human
Class: Rogue
Level: 4
Size: Medium
Movement: 10
Alignment: NE
Hit Points: 23 (32)
STR: 10/70 **INT:** 14/24 **WIS:** 10/79
DEX: 15/01 **CON:** 12/70 **LKS:** 15/07
CHA: 13/15



* one die type better

Possessions: knife, 6sp, 13 cp, and 13 tc

Proficiencies: Laborer, Etiquette/Manners (Kalamaran), short sword, dagger, knife, light armor

Talents: none

Quirks/Flaws: Needy, Anosmia

Stats represent One-handed Weapon only fighting style using knife

Skills

Acting 52
 Appraisal (Sundries) 28
 Art of Seduction 24
 Diplomacy 52
 Disguise 30
 Fast Talker 51
 Forgery 24
 Glean Information 21
 Hiding 19
 Intimidation 38
 Lang. (Hobgoblin) 16
 Literacy (Kalamaran) 39
 Listening 20
 Observation 23
 Persuasion 31
 Resist Persuasion 30
 Salesmanship 41
 Skilled Liar 49
 Sneaking 31

Fenire Rumele was born the only child of a minor noble family in Bet Kalamar. From a young age, she was encouraged by her well-to-do father to pursue any academic or athletic interests that caught her fancy. The young girl proved herself to be cut from a different cloth than her peers and spent her days studying fencing and ancient histories. This happy childhood was brought to an abrupt end, however, when a rival family poisoned her parents for the sake of the byzantine power struggles characteristic of Bet Kalamar. Fearing that she could be next, Fenire took to the streets, disappearing into the city's underworld. For the next few years, she wandered westward, barely scraping by, that is until one day. On the verge of starvation, she was discovered in the city of Balelido by a cutthroat named Durmark. At a glance, he could tell that this beggar girl had the arrogant bearing of a noblewoman even in her destitution—a difficult thing to imitate. Between that and her newly blossoming beauty, Durmark decided to take her in and nurse her back to health.

She was groomed by the master thief to use her comely features to take advantage of marks. Durmark also hired accomplished conmen to tutor Fenire in their less than reputable arts. After a few good scores off some traveling merchants, the young woman was able to slip into the persona of a minor noblewoman of Balelido and has used this guise for the last few months. Relieving merchants of traveling money, however, soon proved to be a poor use of Fenire's many talents.

Because of her knowledge of ancient cultures, their relics, and artifacts, Fenire already had the background to make a competent treasure hunter (or looter, as others might call her). She believes that by recovering ancient treasures she can quickly increase her standing in Durmark's guild and better her lot in life. She recently took time to research the Necklace of Kairnduk and discovered that some of the runes on the piece referred to a hidden lair south of Tiwidu. With Durmark's blessing, she left Balelido with some manservants in tow. The ambush upon her party was surprising enough, but when she spotted Forgrum Ferdal among the attackers, Fenire was so stunned that she could not defend herself from the dwarf's thrown axe until it was too late.

The appearance of Ferdal confirms to Fenire that something valuable is in the area. Unfortunately, she does not have the manpower to seize it for herself. Luckily for her, the PCs arrived when they did. Fenire plans to pay the party as long as they provide results. Only when she learns the enormity of the dungeon complex will her motives turn more selfish. Such a location would be an ideal hideout for her and her fellow guild-members. If Fenire somehow learns from the PCs what Ferdal plans to release upon the village (see the sections 'The Dwarven Crypts' and 'Bagen's Farewell Party' in 'Shadow Over Tiwidu for further details), Fenire will let the situation play itself out from a position of safety. If anything, this master of manipulation is adaptable.

One constant does remain in place though when it comes to Fenire: she wants Ferdal dead and she wants proof of his demise. Fenire will try to get a feel of each of the PCs' dispositions and try to talk alone with the character most suited to doing the dwarf in. If none of the candidates have a moral code similar to hers, she will remain silent on the matter and hope that Ferdal will simply fall in combat anyway. Fenire does not feel a need to advertise how bloodthirsty a 'noblewoman' can be.

ADDITIONAL NOTES: Luck Points remaining: 12. As encountered, Fenire is clad in fine and stylish garments – although these are recently blood soaked and torn. She has a knife though it is hidden from view. Fenire has a critical wound to her thigh that imposed a movement penalty as well as hampering her Attack and Defense (these penalties are incorporated into her combat rose).

Kingdoms of Kalamar

Denizens of Tellene



Fenire Rumele

Race: Human
Class: Fighter/Thief
Level: 5
Size: Medium
Movement: 5 (10)
Alignment: LE
Hit Points: 33 (47)

STR 13/04 INT 12/23 WIS 11/63
 DEX 14/80 CON 15/11 LKS 17/56
 CHA: 15/32

SPEED 6	ATTACK +4	INIT +2
DEFENSE -1	d6p+1	DMG REDUCTION 0
REACH 1 ft		THRESHOLD 17
		TOP SAVE 7

Possessions: Leather Boots, well-cut cotton trousers and tunic with linen undershirt, leather belt, knife

Proficiencies: Etiquette/Manners (Kalamaran), Knife, Dagger, Long Sword

Specializations: dagger all M 1, Longsword all M 1

Quirks/Flaws: Greedy, Nosy, Allergies (shellfish)

Stats represent One-handed Weapon only fighting style using (hidden) knife unarmored

Skills	
Appraisal	16
Arms/Armor	16
Art of Seduction	42
Disarm Trap	30
Hiding	17
History, Ancient	62
Identify Trap	32
Lock Picking	32
Pick Pocket	18
Riding	21
Scrutiny	22
Skilled Liar	46
Sneaking	21

The Inn is detailed under entry 37 in *Tiwidu: Village on the Verge*. It is not absolutely necessary to possess this book to run the encounter but you may wish to consider purchasing it as it adds quite a bit of depth to the adventure and the follow-on *Shadow Over Tiwidu*.

Read or paraphrase the following should the characters take Birel up on his offer.

☞ Your eyes can scarcely believe that this is the same man you saved just yesterday. Freshly bathed, smartly dressed, and with his brown hair properly brushed, Birel appears to be the perfect archetype of a noble's manservant. His chestnut eyes still look haunted from the events of the road, but he smiles easily when he spots you. He stands up and makes a gesture to the other chairs at his table.

Again, Birel thanks the PCs for rescuing him and his liege. He apologizes for Lady Rumele's absence as her wound is quite severe and recuperating may be a prolonged affair. After an exchange of pleasantries, Birel makes his pitch.

☞ The ambush into which we did'st stumble was guided by hands more vile than fate's fickle paws.

M'lady is scion to a minor noble family of Balelido blessed of late with burgeoning wealth that doth stem from mercantile interest in both textiles and spices. As fortune's beneficence is oft o'reseen by jealousy's emerald eye so have former boon associates been transmogrified into erstwhile enemies. A dwarf, Forgrum Ferdal by name, did'st work as mason for my lady's family. This wretch, whilst he labored to expand the family's trophy room, did'st attempt valued artifacts to pilfer. At this base connivance was he discovered and his arse ejected forthwith from the demesne.

We had'st believed this filthy business in toto concluded but verily such assurance false has proven.

M'lady doth fancy the study of artifacts rare acquired in trade or barter from explorers keen to plumb nether depths. Her fascination most recent was a necklace of iron upon which etched were runes in the dwarven script. Translate these the clever girl did and, in so doing, did'st learn of a hitherto unknown and abandoned settlement mere leagues distant from this village. Eager was she to discover this hideaway and prestige to gain in the eyes of the hoary old gentlemen whose interest in history most ancient she relished.

☞ It was not with foolhardy bravado this expedition undertook for trusted guardsmen did'st accompany us lest we encounter'd denizens foul.

Alas, unprepared were we for ambush by brigands that did'st number likely a score. The guardsmen, brave and true of heart, did'st fend off these wicked ruffians such that M'lady could'st flee the noose for unversed in combat mortal are she and I. I fear these men be slain but their courage vast did avail us of opportunity to make haste our departure though not a'fore the knave Forgrum did'st appear most unexpect'd and strike Lady Rumele from afar with francisca hurled.

Gravely injured though she be, betwixt the boughs of bushes thorny did'st we clumsily depart and ensconce our frail bodies in heather grasses most tall. Surely fortune did us favor in that our presence did'st remain undiscover'd.

Fate, ever a fickle harlot, hath us a parting blow delivered. M'lady had'st the dwarven necklace affixed about her nape. Only once she time had'st the befuddlement to clear did she make note of its loss. Surely its ancient clasp did'st give way as through the briar dense we dart'd.

The miscreant dwarf's incongruous presence at yon ambush and his craven assailment of M'lady doth render this a matter elevated to heights of personal affront. I hath of the constabulary inquir'd but they doth claim paucity of resources. Stymied so, I must seek assistance funded by my own coinpurse. Would'st thou consider fiscal engagement so as these matters to resolve?

Birel's initial offer is 15 Denari to EACH member of the party that completes this endeavor. He states that the reward is predicated on recovery of his Lady's necklace and the apprehension of the dwarven knave. Birel will offer precise verbal directions that lead right to where he believes the necklace was lost.

Scenario Note: If you do not intend to continue the adventure by acquiring Shadow Over Tiwidu, Birel will not include apprehension of the dwarf as a condition that must be met.

If queried as to the necessity of apprehending Ferdal the Dwarf without killing him, Birel will pause for a moment of contemplation and then say, "Should'st he offer resistance to this lawful measure, an escalation of force may perchance be warranted. I shan't look askance at your methods nor curtail thine remuneration if in cadaverous state returned he be."

Insightful players may pick up on the incongruity of Birel's categorization of this apprehension as a 'lawful measure' when clearly it is a privately funded vigilante mission. Let this be a clue that their employer is at the very least morally ambiguous.

Should the players seek to negotiate over terms, Birel will make note that the reward is a generous sum given their presumptive lack of experience as professional mercenaries. However, not wishing to lose the services of this band of free lancers, he will quickly acquiesce to raising the reward to 20 Denari. Further pressure will force him to consider the fact they he would really be stretching his limited funds to such an extent that covering room and board might become troublesome - Fenire has dispatched a messenger to Durmank in Balelido and is expecting aid in the form of money and henchmen but these will take a week to arrive. After some thought, he will simply state that he cannot afford to pay more and that, unfortunately, their business is concluded.

Kobold Bravado


[See map on following page]

Encounter: 5 kobolds (85 EP)


Potential Yield: small shield, short sword, tent

Potential Story Award:

Discovering route to the Base Cave (50 EP)

 You follow Birel's clear directions and are able to find your way to the easily identifiable bramble patch. Just as you are about to crawl in and search for the necklace, you hear a whistling sound as something flies by you and rustles the bushes.

The whistling sound is courtesy of a slingstone shot from beyond maximum range. You should now have the PCs roll for initiative utilizing a d12. Read the following to the first individual to become situationally aware:

 You look over your shoulders. Some 50 yards to the southwest, just at the edge of the tree line, stand five brownish-red humanoids of diminutive stature. Though they are too far away to make out any facial features, you do note that their foreheads are topped by small, pointed horns. Four of them are winding up slings apparently taking aim in your direction while another grabs at its shield and brandishes a small blade. Judging by their canine-sounding yips and yaps, the creatures are definitely spoiling for a fight.

The kobolds, bored and restless at waiting in ambush, are excited that they finally have someone to shoot at and are ready to rumble. As is their nature, they will employ their slings until their adversaries close with them only then drawing blades. One of the kobolds has no sling, but instead a small shield and a short sword. If there are any halflings in the party, the kobolds will preferentially target those PCs. Remember that kobolds are Small creatures should the PCs direct counter fire against them (1.5 modifier on the Effective Range chart) and during Knock-Backs.

Should they fail morale, they will attempt to flee back to the Base Cave (q.v.). Given their slow movement rate vis-à-vis humans, it is doubtful they will be able to elude pursuit. However, a crafty stalker may casually follow in their wake as they lead him directly to their lair...

4 Kobold Slings (17 EP each): HP 14 each; Init +2; RoF 9; Rng 40/80/120/160; Att +2; Dmg d4p+d6p; DR 1; ToP 6/4; Jog 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Nervous; Size Small

as melee combatants (One-handed weapon only fighting style): Init +2; Spd 5; Rch 0'; Att +2; Dmg d6-3 (knife); Def +0; DR 1 (no body armor); ToP 6/4

Relevant Skills: Listening 40, Observation 20

1 Kobold with short sword (17 EP): HP 16; Init +3; Spd 6; Rch 0'; Att +2; Dmg 2d6p-3; Def +8 (small shield); DR 2; ToP 7/4; Jog 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Nervous; Size Small

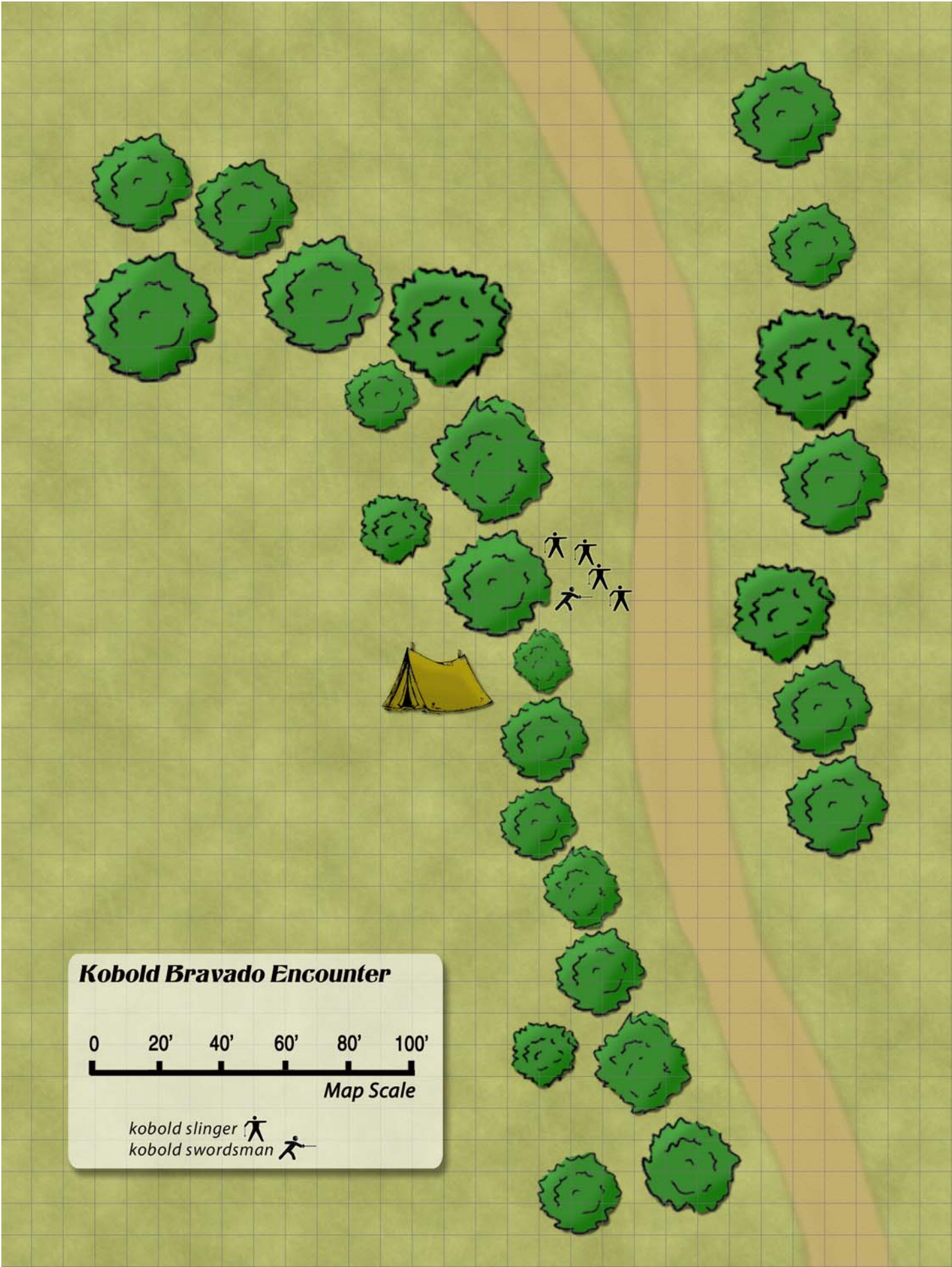
Relevant Skills: Listening 40, Observation 20

Note: This kobold is equipped with both a short sword and small shield recovered from the body of one of "Lady" Rumele's bodyguards. These are standard quality items and may be sold in Tiwidu for 25% of their book price.

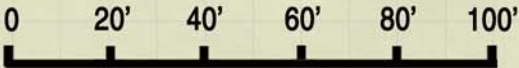
Once combat has concluded, the PCs may search the vicinity.

Even prolonged investigation of the brambles will not discover Fenire's necklace as Forgrum has already retrieved it.



Browsing the area from which the kobolds emerged to stage their ambush reveals a small dun colored pup tent. Designed to accommodate two humans, this shelter easily fit the five kobolds. It is empty save for a gruesome discovery - a human leg gnawed down to the bone!



Kobold Bravado Encounter



Map Scale

kobold slinger 
kobold swordsman 

When Tato ordered these kobolds to remain here to waylay anyone returning to search for the necklace, she hacked off the leg of one of the dead men-at-arms to serve as field rations for the detachment.

The tent may be reclaimed by the PCs for future use in outdoor exploration. It weighs 10 pounds. Selling this in Tiwidu may yield 9 copper pieces.

▶ A generalized search of the area requires an (easy) Observation, Scrutiny or Tracking skill check to notice a trail of blood leading off through a field. The grass has been matted down as if something heavy has been dragged through the area. There are also small tracks all around the drag marks.

The tracks lead up one of the P'Ganik Hills, the range of descending knolls that is intersected by the Imperial Highway. The journey to the base cave is approximately seven miles (two hours of walking at a casual pace), most of the trip taking place on the Imperial Highway.

This trail was left by eight kobolds dragging the bodyguards' corpses back to their cave. A trivial Tracking skill check is sufficient to follow the trail to the Base Cave.

The Base Cave

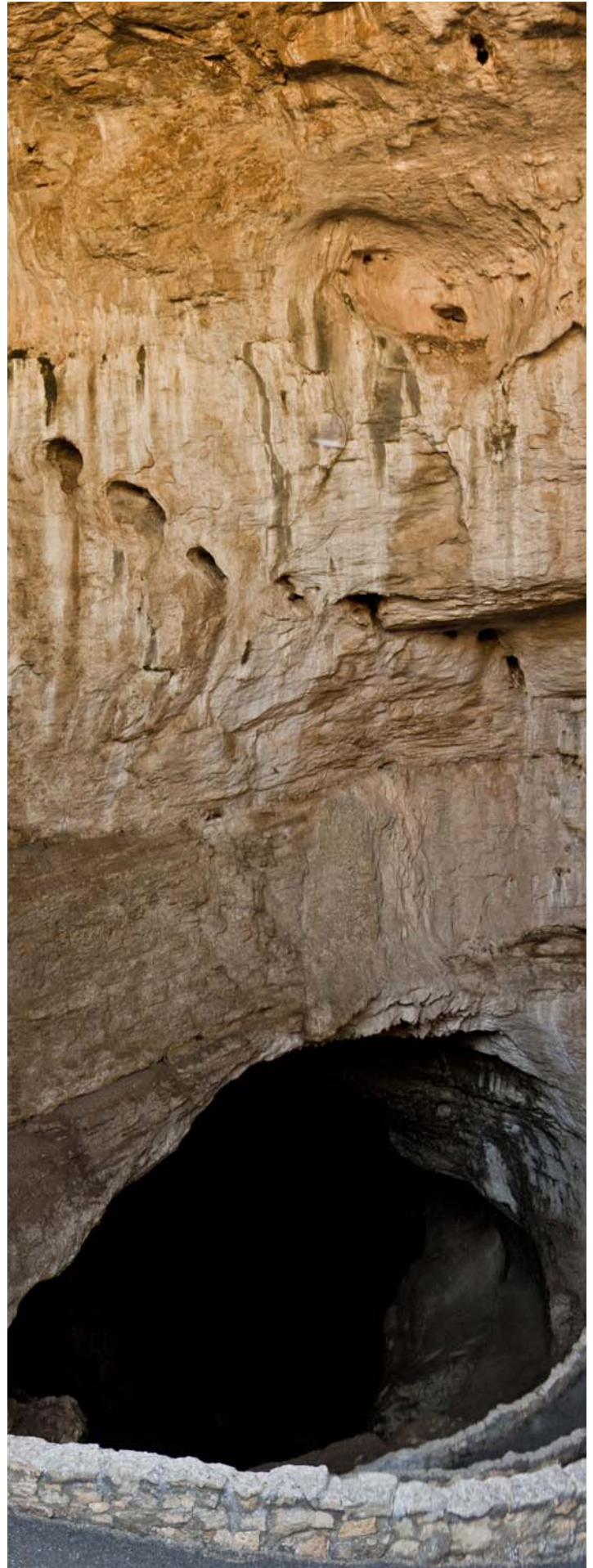
Once the PCs near the terminus of the bloody trail, they will find the site of the humanoid infestation without any problem.

When the PCs reach this point, read or paraphrase the following:

🌀 The cool winds coming off the fog-shrouded knolls ahead are a welcome relief as the sun had been a bit unmerciful during your trek today. The tracks of the raiders, once parallel to the road, now veer off to the west. One hillock that is set a little ahead of its fellows appears to be the destination of the tracks. This hill is less rounded than its neighbors, ending in a tapered peak. The foliage that clings to the lower elevations of other hills is nowhere to be found here, despite the numerous flat shelves that dot the sides of this tor. Many tracks can be seen, leading to a cluster of boulders that hug the west side of hill...

History of the Base Cave

Around eight decades ago this small series of chambers served as a base of sorts for the human



brigands in the area. Because of the cave's relative proximity to the road, the bandits would use it as a rest point and storehouse during visits with their dwarven compatriots at Shalelock Hill. Once the coalition of bandit and dwarf broke apart within Shalelock Hill, this cave was soon forgotten (except for village elder Mel'Banar of Tiwidu – See Area 106 of *Tiwidu: Village on the Verge* for details).

The goblin and kobold forces that recently moved into the dwarven complex in Shalelock Hill soon discovered the base cave during patrols near the road. A recent scandal had rocked the kobold side of the new residents with their chief Tuvtu taking a younger kobold female in addition to the two mates he already had. This action gravely insulted the alpha female, Tato, and she refused to keep her family group in Shalelock Hill as long as Tuvtu dishonored her name by taking on a unheard-of third female.


The goblin mage Kelarz, not keen on losing troops, mediated a compromise between the two groups: Tato and her family could live in the base cave with her supporters and take on full responsibility for the gathering of supplies from the wilderness and surrounding farmlands. Kelarz felt that Tato and her minions could serve as 'ground' sentries, able to alert the main force within the hill if anything suspicious might be happening near the road.

The kobolds of the base cave comb the countryside and wilderness gathering large amounts of food stuffs to supply the main force at Shalelock Hill. They steal from gardens, hunt rabbits, gather roots and berries, and also scavenge the kills of larger predators. To aid them in transporting all these goods back and forth, the kobolds have a cart pulled by two goats (currently out with a group of gatherers). The two corpses the kobolds managed to drag back to the cave (without the use of a cart) are an excellent source of nutrition and Tato plans for her pack to pick them clean before the next shipment to Shalelock Hill is due.

Tato, though chuffed at her family unit's newfound prestige, is still upset about being separated from the main pack. Tato feels if she and her followers take down a sizeable enemy, she will gain enough favor with her former packmates to return to the dwarven complex and force Tuvtu to give up his ridiculous "mate." If the PCs find their way into her lair, Tato will use all her might - as meager as it is - to bring them down.

Base Cave Entrance

When the party reaches the cluster of boulders, read or paraphrase the following:

 The cluster of rubble begins to thin. On the southwest side at the base of the tall hill is the entrance to a cave. In front of the entrance on a sandy field is the obvious trail you have been following surrounded by tiny tracks that lead right into the cave opening.

PCs who try to enter the cave without taking precautions (i.e. not Sneaking, etc.) will prompt two kobolds from BC1 to come out to investigate. If the PCs are discovered, these kobolds will yelp to their brethren in BC1 then retreat or flee back into the cave depending on the vigor of the PCs' reaction. At this point, all the base cave denizens (save BC4) will be alert in 1d12+20 seconds. The two kobolds from BC2 will join their fellows in BC1 to dispatch the invaders (i.e., the PCs). Tato and her entourage (BC5) will wake up from a light doze and join the fray at Count 60. Retreating kobolds from BC1 will head to BC5. Aside from Tato, all kobolds here are armed with daggers. The pack has not have time to fashion shields, so they employ the *One-handed Weapon only* fighting style (-1 Speed bonus) during combat unless otherwise noted. Halopir (BC3) will not be harmed during the defense of the base cave and his minder will stay in their chamber to guard him and the pups.

Post combat notes (for those planning to continue the adventure in *Shadow Over Tiwidu*): Any base cave kobold captured and successfully interrogated (probably using Halopir as an interpreter unless a PC inexplicably speaks Kobold) will reveal that more of their kind lives in a hill further east. The base cave kobolds here did not stay in the dwarven complex long enough to memorize any details of the dungeon other than it has more than four levels. These kobolds have no love for goblins and will state that 'tailless monkeys' live deep in the hill. If forced to lead the PCs to the entrance at the summit, the kobolds will seek the earliest opportunity to escape their captors or at least howl out a warning to the sentries at K1. If Tato herself is captured and is aware that the PCs intend to invade the dwarven complex, she will unexpectedly bark "Kill Tuvtu's bitch!" *in dwarven*. (Many of the higher ranking kobolds have been taught the rudiments of dwarven by Ferdal in order to ease

communication.) She will gladly reveal that Tuvtu was her mate, but she was thrown aside for a ‘youngling bitch.’ If the PCs tell Tato they will kill the new mate, she will happily volunteer to lead them to Shalelock Hill.

Keep in mind that Tato has no skill in Cartography (thus she cannot draw a map) and no knowledge of any traps within the complex.

BC1

Encounter: Four kobolds (68 EP)

Potential Yield: 2 merchant/traveller outfitting bundles

GameMaster’s Note: Illumination within all of the chambers is dim candlelight as the kobolds possess low light vision. Unless the PCs employ their own lighting, they will suffer combat penalties of -4 to Attack and -2 to Defense. Use of such lighting will, however, tip off Tato’s pack permitting them to roll no greater than a d6 for Initiative.

If the PCs are able to approach this location stealthfully, read or paraphrase the following:

👃 This cavern smells of dung, straw, and urine. Hugging the walls at various points of the chamber are four small mounds of dirt and rags. One tunnel in the north wall heads off to the northwest. Another passage is in the east wall. In the middle of the chamber are four small figures sitting in a circle. The creatures, appearing to be hairless dogs with small rounded horns on their heads, are weaving reeds into dinner-plate-sized saucers.

Alternatively, if the PCs blundered into the cave (or an inept scout alerted the guards), proceed as described in the **Base Cave Entrance** entry.

The Base Cave kobolds were ousted from the main pack rather abruptly, thus they had little time to grab their personal possessions. Tato has placed these canids in charge of making new shields for the group. None of the wicker items are yet completed and will be cast away at the first sign of trouble. If combat goes against the kobolds, or reinforcements do not show up fast enough, the curs will try to head for Tato’s chamber (BC5).

A search of the cave will discover two knapsacks filled with gear so as to each comprise a Merchant/Traveller Outfitting Bundle (see *Player’s*

Handbook). The knapsacks were recently liberated from a pair of human travelers who were bathing in the river that runs alongside the Imperial Highway. The bathers belatedly spotted the kobolds stealing their clothing but opted not to pursue the thieves owing to their nakedness.

4 Kobolds (17 EP each): HP 15 each; Init +3; Spd 5; Rch 0'; Att +2; Dmg 2d4p-3 (dagger); Def +0; DR 2; ToP 6/4; Jog 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Nervous
Relevant Skills (each): Language (Kobold 67), Listening 40, Observation 25

BC2

Encounter: Two kobolds (34 EP)

Potential Yield: Copper nose ring (5 cp), formal green cap (3 sp – Halopir’s)

As mentioned before, if the Base Cave is on alert, this pair of kobolds will have rushed to BC1 helping their fellows fight off the PCs.

If this didn’t occur and if a character is able to approach this location quietly, read or paraphrase the following:

👃 This chamber has a sandy floor. The smell of feces and urine is less prevalent here. Four small mounds of dirt and rags line the west wall. Two, small, dog-like humanoids standing near the back of the chamber yip at one another. One of the creatures points at the large green cap on the other’s head.

Tato gave Halopir’s cap to one of kobolds. The other canid (wearing the nose ring) wants a turn at wearing it. PCs who decide to wait will see a brief shoving match erupt between the two, but the conflict will not erupt beyond this. If left uninterrupted for a minute, the pair will hear the noise of Halopir’s performance from BC3 and go off to investigate. If one kobold is slain here, his buddy runs off to BC3.

2 Kobolds (17 EP each): HP 14, 15; Init +3; Spd 5; Rch 0'; Att +2; Dmg 2d4p-3 (dagger); Def +0; DR 2; ToP 6/4; Jog 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Nervous
Relevant Skills (each): Language (Kobold 67), Listening 40, Observation 25

BC3

Encounter: One kobold adult (17 EP), Six kobold pups, Halopir

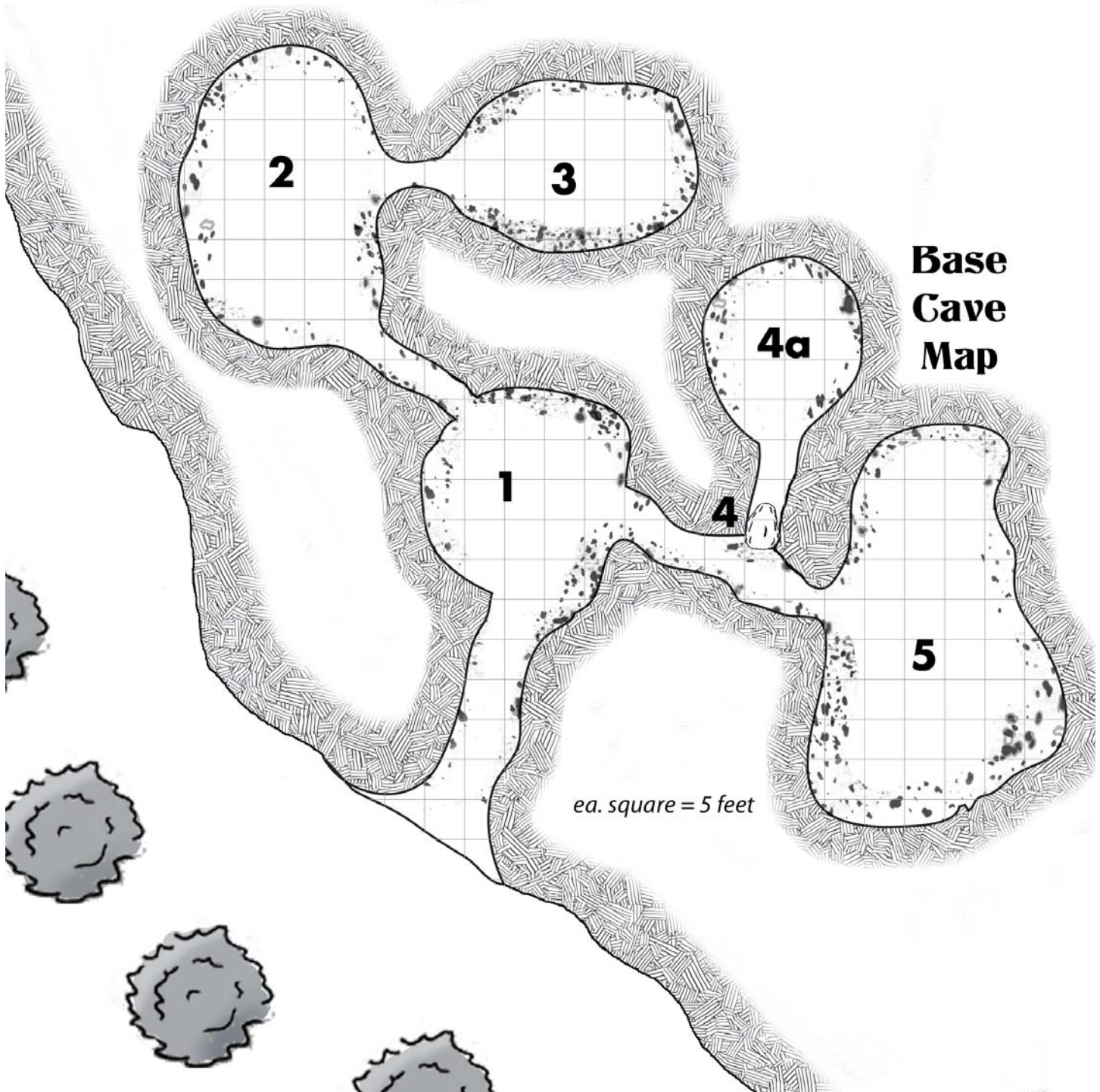
Potential Story Award:

- ☐ Rescuing Halopir (50 EP) - *full award contingent upon escorting him back to civilization, if simply 'released into the wild' reduce this to 20 EP*

In the likely event that the 'babysitter' has been alerted to the presence of intruders, read the following when the PCs enter this cave:

👁 This narrow chamber is cooler as compared to the rest of the caves. A bizarre sight meets your eyes. A kobold guard has interposed itself directly between you and a rotund, scruffy human standing with his back to the far wall. From his fingers dangles a marionette. Six kobold pups are clutching at his legs.

The man shouts to you, "Heroes, you have indeed arrived!"



In his youth, Halopir was a celebrated storyteller and puppeteer. His repertoire was varied enough so that he always seemed to have the just right performance for any crowd. He played all the best taverns throughout the Taristo Triangle: from Balelido, down to Kolido, east to Oloseta, then back to Balelido, hitting any little towns along the way. The young man decided to dedicate a few weeks to playing this circuit before moving on to bigger venues. But, before he knew it, weeks turned into months and months became years until his youth had been all spent up. Now a man of fifty-five, Halopir had long since been a fixture at the Shaky Salamander Shack (when he comes through town), playing shows to an audience growing ever more disinterested in his increasingly formulaic performances. Other acts had come and gone through the Shack—jugglers, acrobats, magicians—but Halopir had always kept top billing until about a month and a half ago. That was when Aga Senaras, a young and very beautiful minstrel, took over as the main attraction at the Shack. Halopir was furious. He sputtered and blustered, made demands of the Shack's owner, but all to no avail. Scorning any offer to stay on as a lowly "opener," Halopir slapped on his green cap, packed his bags, and set out to find new opportunities in Ka'utavidu that very night.

The aging story teller didn't make it very far on his own, however, before he was ambushed by one of the kobold Tato's foraging parties and struck in the head with a sling stone. Surrounded by the tiny creatures, brandishing their slings and knives, Halopir tried his best to explain that he was merely passing through and didn't want any trouble. His speech only further incensed the little beasts and Halopir, afraid, but well trained on how to deal with an unruly crowd, decided to change tactics. Instead of talking, he tried to use pantomime to explain his story. This puzzled the kobolds, but it also calmed them. The group decided that this bizarre human should be brought back to their leader, Tato. Inside the base cave, Halopir continued his story, now exaggerating his movements and attempting to remember the right hand gestures to create shadow puppets on the walls. Tato and her fellow kobolds found his unusual actions strangely mesmerizing, as they had never been regaled with stories before. Tato decided that they would keep the human to entertain them and their pups.

Over the next month and a half, Halopir (a natural polyglot, though he has never attempted to learn another language before) has been picking up the rudiments of the kobold language and incorporating it into his performances. He has also had time to craft an entire cast of stock character puppets out of discarded objects to entertain the kobolds with. His formerly comfortable life has become an exhausting nightmare. From sun up to sun down, Halopir is constantly performing his stories and puppet shows for both the kobold adults and (more often) for the kobold pups. He knows that if the creatures ever become bored with him, they will most likely eat him. What he doesn't know is that these kobolds are by far the most dedicated fans of his work he will ever have.

ADDITIONAL NOTES: available Luck Points: 23,
Spell: *Repair*

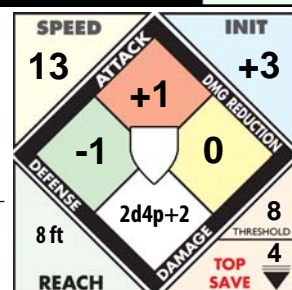
Denizens of Tellene



Halopir

Race: Human
Class: Rogue
Level: 3
Size: Medium
Movement: 10
Alignment: NG
Hit Points: 24

STR 8/91 **INT** 13/09 **WIS** 9/28
DEX 11/21 **CON** 8/38 **LKS** 9/34
CHA: 10/74



Possessions: none (stolen by Kobolds)

Proficiencies: Staff

Talents: Polyglot, No Accent, Illusion Resistant

Quirks/Flaws: Animal Phobia (Rodents), Glutton


Stats represent Two-handed Weapon only fighting style using staff

Skills	
Acting	28
Ancient History (Kalamar)	36
Climbing/Rappelling	29
Craft (marionettes)	27
Current Affairs	26
Diplomacy	21
Disguise	20
Distraction	29
Fast Talker	26
Glean Information	30
Hiding	29
Kalamaran (literate)	76
Kobold	33
Listening	21
Observation	20
Oration	51
Resist Persuasion	28
Scrutiny	20
Sneaking	27

The kobold guard will *Fight Defensively* and *Give Ground* as best it can with the intent of preventing access to the pups. Those voicing concern as to the scruffy man's fate will note that the pups are not attacking him. Rather, they are huddling around him in fear.

1 Kobold (17 EP): HP 14; Init +3; Spd 5; Rch 0'; Att +2; Dmg 2d4p-3 (dagger); Def +0; DR 2; ToP 6/ 4; Jog 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Nervous
Relevant Skills (each): Language (Kobold 67), Listening 40, Observation 25

If the PCs have managed to come upon this room without being noticed, read the following:

 This narrow chamber is cooler when compared to the rest of the caves. A bizarre sight meets your eyes. Six kobold pups and one adult sit in a semicircle, their eyes fixed on a middle-aged human man acting out some kind of puppet show with crudely fashioned marionettes. As the pups watch the show, they absentmindedly chew on human fingers.

The man is fairly short, in his mid-fifties, and though he is a bit rotund he looks as if he once may have been fairly overweight. His radiant green eyes hold the kobolds in rapt attention as he performs for them. He has a kind, somewhat owl-like face and expressive eyebrows that seem to dance across his forehead as he speaks to the creatures in a series of hoots, barks, and yips.

If released, Halopir will beg his rescuers to take him to the E'Heru River (a mile away) for a quick dunking. He will then ask to be escorted back to Tiwidu. He will inquire as to if the PCs found his cap, staff, and pouch. (The staff is on the south side of Tato's mound next to some candles.) Once the items are produced, Halopir will thank them and offer all the silver he has as a reward. Halopir needs at least a week's worth of bed rest to heal from his injuries (treat as four wounds of 3, 3, 3, and 2 hit points), and it will take him at least six hours to make his way back to Tiwidu unassisted due to exhaustion and dehydration. GMs should note the possible loss of Honor PCs might face if Halopir is forced to return to the village by himself. The storyteller will waste no time in telling the villagers of the PCs' lack of sympathy to his plight.

If questioned about how he was captured, Halopir will state he was "ambushed by these little beasts" while

he was walking towards Ka'utavidu but, "soothed their rage with the subtle art of storytelling." Having learned much of the Kobold language in his short time with the pack, Halopir has been privy to all the gossip around the cave.

The following is relevant only if you continue the adventure in Shadow over Tiwidu: He knows the reasons for this pack's banishment from some sort of "main hill" where there are apparently many other creatures garrisoned, but he has no idea where it may be. He knows that this pack in the base cave delivers supplies to the main cave and that the next shipment is due tomorrow. "If the supplies aren't delivered on time" says Halopir, "then the others come from the main base to scream and yell about lateness of delivery. I've never seen their faces, though."

As long as the PCs treat him well, Halopir could prove to be beneficial in spreading their good name. Halopir will hit taverns along the Taristo Triangle, relating how he was rescued by the PCs from the foul curs of the hill (enhancing the Fame of rescuing PCs by a point) and generally regaining his old popularity with this exciting new tale of "Survival Among the Savage Kobolds." Alternately, if you feel that the party could use an extra body in their ranks, Halopir will offer to accompany them during their adventures stating, "Someone has to chronicle your exploits." While not a front-line man, Halopir will use his skill set to the best of his ability to the party's benefit.

If the PCs perform an abundance of nefarious deeds in front of Halopir, he will kindly excuse himself from the group stating, "I have some matters at home that need addressing."

The following is relevant only if your players have already explored Tiwidu: Village on the Verge: If Aga Senaras is already with the PCs during the rescue, Halopir will not ask to join them. He will take advantage of Aga's absence from 'The Shaky Salamander Shack' though.

BC4

▶ An Average difficulty Mining or Geology check should be secretly made for any character possessing these skills as they pass through the corridor. If actively employing the skill, reduce the difficulty to Easy. Success reveals a human-sized stone on the north wall does not match the composition of the rest of the passage.

- ▶ A Scrutiny check (Easy) will reveal that there is a tunnel beyond the boulder.
- ▶ A Feat of Strength vs. d20+6 is required to move the stone.


Tato suspects there is something beyond the boulder but is more concerned with her pack making shields to trouble herself with it.

BC4A

Encounter: Animated Boar Skeleton (100 EP)

Potential Yield: small chest, six sticks of incense, one signal whistle, five sticks of chalk, and 30 cp

Once the PCs are at the edge of the chamber, read or paraphrase the following:

 This chamber's floor is covered with sand. In the center of the room, a skeleton of some type of animal stands on all fours, facing your direction. Behind the skeleton is a small wooden chest.

When the brigands were at the height of their power in the region, they had a cleric belonging to the Congregation of the Dead within their ranks. This cleric did not (rightly so) trust his fellows around his share of the spoils and so raised an untiring sentinel to protect his loot. Once the brigand-dwarven coalition sundered, the cleric left his 'pet' here with the full intention of collecting the skeleton and the few possessions it guarded some other time. A well-placed rock thrown by a hill giant months later ended the cleric's aspirations, and this chamber was forgotten.

The skeleton is enchanted to attack anyone who enters the chamber. The undead animal is also under orders to attack anyone who fires upon it with ranged weapons and/or magical attacks. If such attacks transpire, the skeleton will attack and follow the party all the way to BC4 before returning to its spot in front of the chest.

The chest requires a Lock Picking check (Average) to open. The key to the chest was lost long ago during the hill giant attack that left the cleric dead


Skeleton, Boar (100 EP): HP 20; Init +0; Spd 10; Rch short; Att +2; Dmg 3d4p; Def +1; DR 0 for crushing, 6 for hacking and 10 for piercing; ToP n/a; Will Factor 2; Jog 15 feet/second; Tenacity: Fearless

BC5

Encounter: Pack Leader Tato (30 EP), two kobolds (34 EP), Tato's dog (22 EP)


Potential Yield: short sword, small shield, studded leather armor, Potion of Orcish Steadfastness, silver earrings, moonstone, 4 sp, 11 cp, 18 trade coins

If the PCs were able to enter the cave system without alerting Tato and her minions, read or paraphrase the following:

 This large, irregular chamber has four small mounds of leaves and rags near its southern side. More of the dog-creatures you have been encountering can be seen sleeping on the mounds. From the top of one mound, a large dog lifts its head and begins to bark loudly.

The barking dog will rouse all of the kobolds in this cave. They will need 2d4p seconds to shake off the effects of sleep and grab their daggers. Tato needs an additional d4p+1 seconds to strap on her shield and draw her sword. The normal kobolds will try to form a front line while Tato and her dog concentrate on PCs trying to flank the line. If Tato is slain or incapacitated, the remaining kobolds will conduct a fighting withdrawal and try to escape if the opportunity presents itself. The dog will watch over Tato and bite anyone that approaches.

PCs who were not able to enter the cave system quietly will encounter a fully-awake Tato and her minions. In this case, read or paraphrase the following:

 This large, irregular chamber has four small mounds of dirt and rags near its southern side. Standing on one of the mounds is a dog-creature waving a short sword and holding a shield. To its side is a mongrel dog baring its fangs. In front of the pair stand more biped curs, daggers at ready.

GMs should note that any kobolds which retreated before the party in previous chambers will try to reorganize here. Tato, on top of trying to maintain a front line, will order her peons to flank the party's spell-casters, numbers willing. She, along with her dog, will try to plug any holes that open in the kobold line.

Kobold Pack Leader Tato (30 EP): HP 20; Init +3; Spd 7; Rch 1'; Att +2; Dmg 2d6p-1 (short sword); Def +7 (small shield); DR 4; ToP 8/5; Jog 5 feet/second;

Tenacity: Steady

Relevant Skills: Language (Kobold 73), Language (Dwarven 11), Listening 40, Observation 25, Resist Persuasion 25

Quirks/Flaws: Chatterbox, Picker

Tato's Dog (Wild Dog) (22 EP): HP 20; Init -2; Spd 10; Rch short; Att +2; Dmg 1d4p + 1; Def +4; DR 2; ToP 8/7, Jog 20 feet/second; Tenacity: Nervous

2 Kobolds (17 EP each): HP 14 ea; Init +3; Spd 5; Rch 0'; Att +2; Dmg 2d4p-3 (dagger); Def +0; DR 2; ToP 6/4; Jog 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Nervous

Relevant Skills (each): Language (Kobold 67), Listening 40, Observation 25

A subsequent search of the cave finds a pair of disarticulated human corpses lying along the southern wall. One is missing both hands and its tongue while the other is gutted and has had its legs cleaved off. These are the remains of the bodyguards that fell protecting "Lady" Rumele. Both are still clad in studded leather armor though the gutted corpse's armor is ruined as it has been torn to pieces by extraction of the organ meat and removal of the haunches. The second suit of armor is salvageable if the corpse is extracted...

There is nothing of value in the sleeping nests. Throughout the room are four wicker baskets (one containing 4 tallow candles and a noxious smelling flask of liquor – actually a **Potion of Orcish Steadfastness**), two lit candles affixed to protruding rocks and a human made staff (belonging to Halopir). Tato has all of the band's valuables on her person.

In addition to the human made short sword and small shield, she wears a pair of silver earrings (10 sp) and has two small pouches on her belts – one being notable for the fact that it is dyed green. The first pouch contains a small whetstone, a flawed moonstone (17 sp) and thirteen fishhooks. *Note that anyone that simply reaches in to grab these goodies without mentioning aloud that 'they are being careful', 'looking inside the pouch' or 'dumping out the contents' will suffer a 1 hp wound as they are jabbed by one or more fishhooks.* The green pouch (stolen from Halopir) contains 4 sp, 11 cp, 18 trade coins and an iron key to Area 73 of *Tiwidu: Village on the Verge*. Note that Halopir will gladly give the coins to his rescuers if the pouch is returned to him.

Scenario Note: If you do not intend to continue the adventure in *Shadow Over Tiwidu*, Tato also wears the **Necklace of Kairnduk** (the necklace Birel tasked the party to recover).

This simple iron chain necklace seems poorly designed, considering it has been created by dwarven hands (Appraisal - Gems and Jewelry check (Average) to determine the latter). The chain is connected by a large barrel clasp. The pendant is key-shaped, three inches long and has the word 'Kairnduk' in Dwarven etched upon it. Two curved tines of iron flank the key, but the key hangs loosely between them, so it can be inserted into the lock it was made for in LC7 of the Shalelock Hill dungeon. Apart from the ability to turn that lock, the necklace also holds three charges of the *Unlock* spell.

Base Cave Conclusion

Potential Story Awards:

- Clearing the Base Cave of Occupants (150 EP)
- Learning of Shalelock Hill and its occupation by additional humanoid enemies (50 EP)
- Locating Shalelock Hill (75 EP)

Upon returning to Tiwidu, Birel will quickly learn of the party's return and proactively seeks them out to learn of their progress.

If you intend to continue the adventure in Shadow Over Tiwidu: Birel listens intently to the party's report asking probing questions all the while. Though seemingly disappointed to learn that Ferdal has proved to be a more elusive opponent than he had initially suspected, Birel congratulates you on the progress you've made so far. He encourages you to follow up on the leads you've found confident that "he made'st choice fortuitous for as to entrust yon mission in thine hands most capable". Although the PCs have not yet met his conditions, he nonetheless volunteers a 5 sp disbursement per person as a show of good faith.

If this concludes the adventure: Birel seeks out the characters soon after they return to Tiwidu asking if they were able to locate his Lady's necklace. Assuming the PCs did so and are willing to surrender the item to him, he will reward them as promised. He claims truthful ignorance if queried as to any special properties of the necklace.

Postscript

Once the base cave has been cleared of hostiles, the PCs may want to turn the location into a base of operations. In the short term, the cave is an ideal location, although, if the shipment of food to Shalelock Hill

never arrives, then a group of six goblins will come to the base cave to see what the hold up is.

Constant forays on Shalelock Hill will keep the goblin mage Kelarz and dwarf Forgrum Ferdal concerned about defensive measures, so these leaders will not dispatch anyone to harrass the PCs unless at least three days have passed. In case this happens, Ferdal will take whatever new recruits Kelarz (see *Shadow Over Tiwidu* for details) has gathered and send them after the party. GMs should only use enough of these flunkie to present a minor challenge to the PCs; Kelarz will be more concerned with restocking Shalelock Hill with fresh troops. Only in cases when Shalelock Hill is beginning to swell with humanoids would Ferdal and Kelarz consider retaking the base cave.

The local monstrous wildlife will also take an interest in the cave should it lie vacant. Three weeks after being cleared of kobolds, 1d3+1 giant worker ants led by a warrior ant will settle in the cave.

Giant Ant, Warrior (100 EP): HP 18; Init +0; Spd 8; Rch 0'; Att +5; Dmg 4d8p*; Sp Att poison sting – 3d4p or d4p if save (Virulence Factor 10); Def +0; DR 3; ToP n/a; Size Tiny; Move 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Brave

{* - If the warrior ant scores a direct hit with her mandibles, she receives a free secondary attack with her venomous stinger (Sp Att)}

Giant Ants, Worker (40 EP each): HP 13 each; Init +0; Spd 8; Rch 0'; Att +3; Dmg 2d6p; Def +0; DR 3; ToP n/a; Size Tiny; Move 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Brave

Two weeks after this incursion, two very large spiders move in. If left unmolested, they will nest in BC2.

2 Spiders, Very Large (100 EP each): HP 16,14; Init -4 (-1 die); Spd 10; Rch short; Att +1; Dmg 1d3p (+ virulence 7 poison that causes -2 to Attack, Defense, and Damage for 2d12 hours on failed save; a 'nat 1' indicates death); Def +2; DR 2; ToP n/a, Jog 5 feet/second; Size Small; Tenacity: Nervous

Payback

As mentioned in the initial encounter with Birel and Fenire, PCs opting to rob or attack them will be subject to a vengeful repartee after they have time to call upon reinforcements from their guild in Balelido. This will take a week from the time of the initial incident.

Hopefully you will not have to employ this nuclear option.

Fenire Rumele (242 EP): LE Kalamaran human fighter/thief lvl 5; HP 47; Init +3; Spd 9 (longsword); Rch 3½'; Att +6; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def +3 (*two weapon fighting style*); DR 2; ToP 12/ 7; Jog 10 feet/second; Luck Points 12; Tenacity: Brave

Birel Rilias (200 EP): NE Kalamaran human rogue lvl 4; HP 32; Init +1; Spd 8 (short sword); Rch 2'; Att +4; Dmg 2d6p; Def +1 (*two weapon fighting style*); DR 2; ToP 11/ 6; Jog 10 feet/second; Luck Points 16; Tenacity: Brave

Guild Enforcer Vanarin (200 EP): NE Kalamaran human fighter lvl 4; HP 42; Init +2; RoF 12 (short-bow); Spd 8 (longsword); Rch 3½'; Att +6; Dmg 2d6p (arrows) or 2d8p+4 (longsword); Def +7 (medium shield); DR 3; ToP 16/ 8; Jog 10 feet/second; Tenacity: Brave

Relevant Skills: Glean Information 31, Intimidation 45, Language (Kalamaran 74-literate), Listening 11, Observation 22, Resist Persuasion 26, Torture 33

Quirks/Flaws: Hacklust, Ornery

4 Hobgoblins (67 EP each): LE Hobgoblin; HP 27 each; Init +2; RoF 12 (short bow); Spd 10 (8 jab) longsword; Rch 3½'; Att +5; Dmg 2d6p (arrows) or 2d8p +1 (longsword); Def +5 (medium shield); DR 3; ToP 11/ 6; Jog 10 feet/second; Tenacity: Brave

Relevant Skills (each): Language (Kalamaran 34, Hobgoblin 70), Listening 11, Observation 11, Resist Persuasion 16



CREDITS

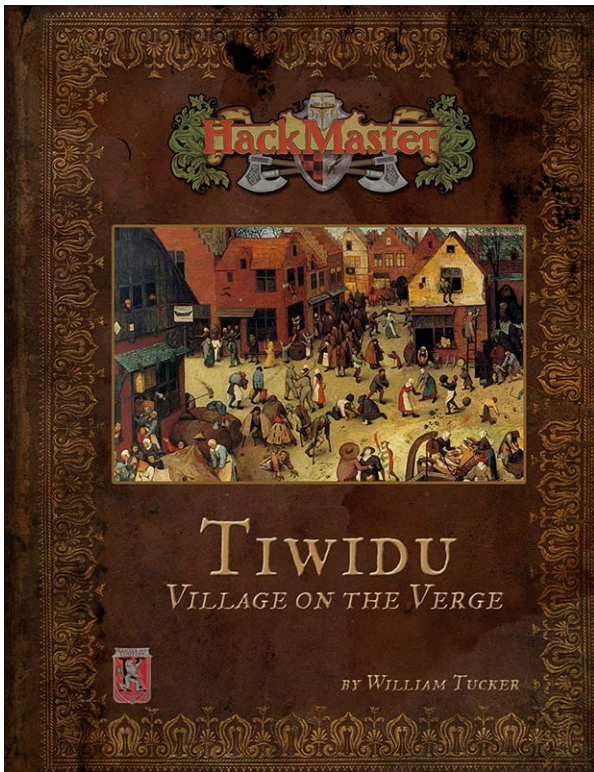
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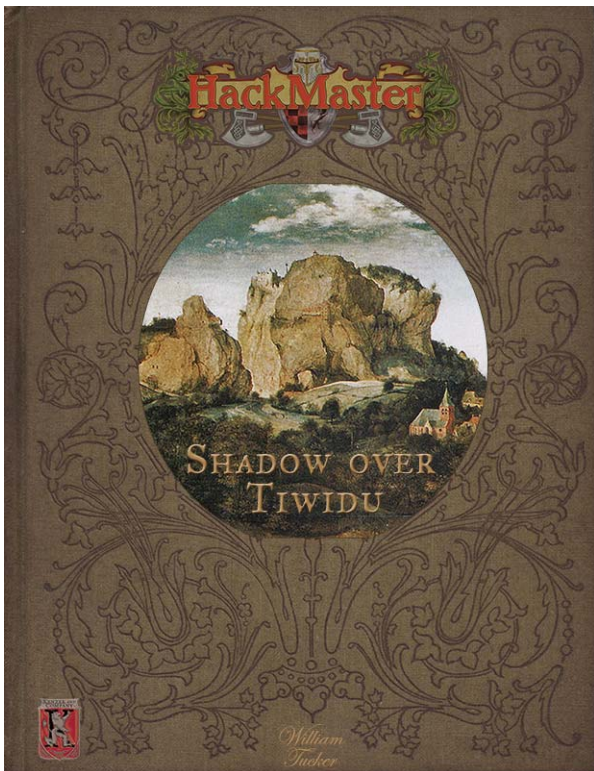
THERE'S MORE TO EXPLORE



Tiwidu: Village on the Verge

The village of Tiwidu comes to life! With over a hundred unique locations and the NPCs to populate them, Tiwidu is the perfect setting for a new game just starting up, but it can also be easily integrated into any campaign. Tiwidu is an incredibly detailed town, with everything plotted out from the earl's long-term economic goals to the bookbinder's designs on his attractive neighbor and everything in between. The town is already chock full of people to meet and secrets to learn, but *Tiwidu: Village On the Verge* is also the jumping off point for the adventures *Strangers on the Trail*, *Shadow Over Tiwidu* and *The Prodigal Sons* so there is even more to do in this strange little market town.

Any party can base themselves out of Tiwidu but the town is especially suited to novice characters just starting out.



Shadow Over Tiwidu

Strange things are stirring in the hills and jealous eyes have turned towards the village of Tiwidu. In *Shadow Over Tiwidu*, a chance meeting leads players down into a world of blood feuds, deceit, and the tireless pursuit of vengeance all set against the backdrop of a massive multi-story dungeon. The tough choices players make in this adventure not only mean the difference between life and death, but also directly impact the future of Tiwidu. Players will have to use cunning as well as brawn if they hope to lift the shadow from Tiwidu—but just what that shadow is remains to be seen...

This adventure is set in and around Tiwidu, as documented in *Tiwidu: Village on the Verge* and is designed for a group of 2nd & 3rd level characters.