

# SIDEQUEST DECKS:™

## ICEBREATH RIDGE

Adventure Outline & Map Cards

Furnier

Alchemist

Herbalist

Taxidermist

Butcher

Stables

Tanner

Cooper

Saddler

Leatherer

Mason

Barber

Shop

School

Baker

Tavern

Smith

Temple

Smith

Town Hall

Granary

Barracks

Brewery

Tavern

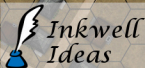
Shop

Temple

Baker

Inn

Shop



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## **SIDEQUEST DECKS:**

### **Icebreath Ridge**

#### **Mini-Adventure Outline & Map Cards**

Add dynamic plots to our NPC Portraits Deck: Frontier Townsfolk with this collection of mini-adventures set in the frontier town of Icebreath Ridge. Below is its history:

Many believe an Elder Wyrm was cast down by a cosmic being, fusing with the mountain's heart. Draconic creatures were drawn by instinct.

The first organized settlement was the Stoneglade, primal worshipers drawn to the site's natural power. When dwarves attempted to mine the area, the Stoneglade recruited an orc warband to drive them away, and the orc leader founded Icebreath Ridge.

Pilgrims to the Stoneglade opened the way for others. Unusual political stability helped push the frontier back.

Elder Wyrm bones were discovered 230 years ago. Scholars and cultists quietly developed infrastructure to dig to the corpse. They formed an uneasy truce with the Stoneglade, out of civilization's view.

A century ago, the nearby monarchy became expansionist. Recently, a fort was established to "protect" the town and assure no others claimed it.

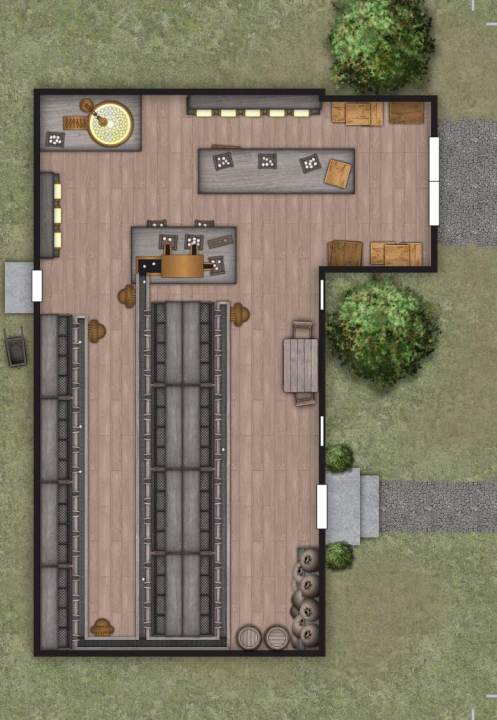
Use these cards with the NPC Portraits Deck or fit any of them into your own campaign. Use them to set up a hex crawl, plan out a campaign, or as one shots.

#### **Writing:**

Andrew Shields & Joe Wetzel

#### **Cartography:**

Keith Curtis & Joe Wetzel



## Race, Eggs, Credibility Gnomish Egg Business

A mix-up in shipping eggs needs to be corrected—fast.

### **Getting the PCs Involved:**

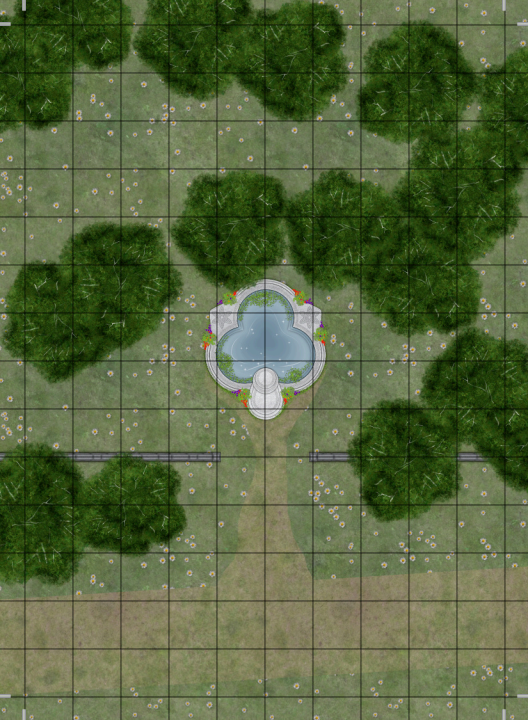
- A desperate farmer needs fast, effective agents.
- The PCs share a camp with purchasing agents who are surprised when their egg hatches ahead of schedule. They are angry because they are supposed to get a dangerous lizard, and instead get a pretty bird. That mix-up might mean trouble for those with the other egg! (And they still want their lizard.) Care to help?

### **Encounters:**

- How can the characters travel faster than purchasing agents with a sense of urgency and mundane transportation? Weather doesn't cooperate.
- An egg-stealing predator in the wild, or enterprising thief in a village, may steal the sought-after egg.
- As the characters catch up, the egg is hatching, and it may imprint on a character. The imprint may be a two-way psychic bond, imprinting the character on the dangerous lizard.

### **Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- If the problem got sorted out, the farmer will be very grateful, offering them all the eggs they want (and incubator services if they find an egg to hatch.)
- If the group offended either of his customers or their agents, the irritated parties may inconvenience them. Or, if the PCs impressed, they have new opportunities.
- Maybe somebody has a new pet.



## SHOOT THE MESSENGER

### Standoff, Message, Secrets Forest Shrine

04

A messenger is cornered in a forest shrine.

#### **Getting the PCs Involved:**

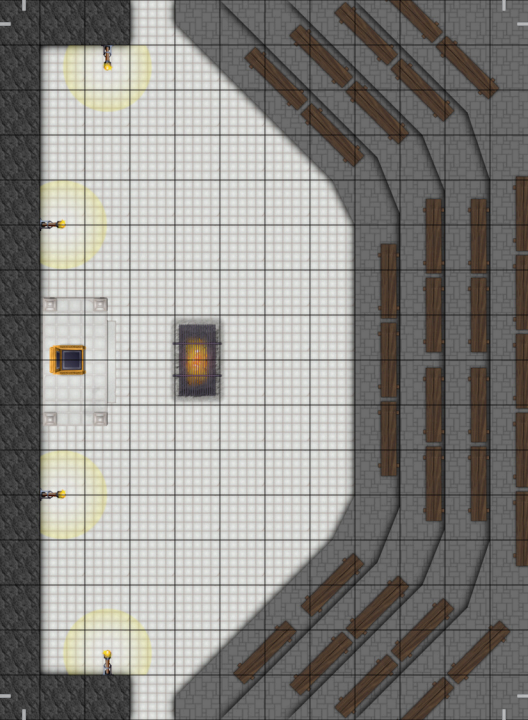
- While traveling on a road through the woods, hounds approach. They surge across the road with mercenary handlers who snarl at the group, "Mind your own business."
- While paying their respects at a local shrine, the PCs discover a bleeding woman passed out behind a defensive barricade. Baying hounds are approaching.
- Someone expecting a message is worried that it is late, and hires the party to look for the messenger.

#### **Encounters:**

- Highly trained hounds corner the PCs, but don't engage.
- Mercenaries follow. They want the messenger, and the characters can go if they submit to a search first.
- If they gain her trust, she may share that she's carrying a critical message. The mercenaries want to stop it from arriving, and discover its content. She doesn't open messages. It must be delivered by sundown.
- The mercenary spellcaster hit the messenger with a pellet that allows him to track her. PCs may notice it in a wound or by detecting magic.
- The mercenaries summon darkness, undead, and spectral thorns to keep their targets trapped.

#### **Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- The client discovers who assisted the messenger.
- The message may shake up the area.



## BLOODY SUCCESSION

### Politics, Ancestors, Duel Audience Hall/Arena

07

A rival challenges the mayor for rulership.

#### **Getting the PCs Involved:**

- Gossip in the tavern: an orc shaman is communing on the town's burial site, and that's going to annoy the half-orc mayor. The mayor's family (one side or another) has ruled the town since it was founded.
- A ghost appears in a PC's dream. A member from the other part of the mayor's family objects to the shaman recruiting ghosts to take over leadership, and wants them to help resist. The ghost will pay with secrets.
- Contacts "ask" the PCs to defend or oust the mayor.

#### **Encounters:**

- The shaman strides towards the town hall while the mayor's weekly grievance hearings are in progress. A crowd follows to watch the confrontation.
- The shaman invokes an ancient code of challenge. Three out of five victories in a contest will earn leadership. The loser is banished. The shaman and mayor cannot participate, except through champions, so both need five. The shaman uses ghosts of angry ancestors. He gives them temporary physical form. (Can the mayor rely upon the group as champions?)
- The non-combat challenges test different parts of a champion's ability.

#### **Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- Why were so many ancestral spirits angry?
- Neither claimant will be a gracious loser.





**Travel, Storm, Pacification**  
**Icy Spring & Cave Lair with Wyrms Skeleton**

Rock and ice monsters block a trade route.

**Getting the PCs Involved:**

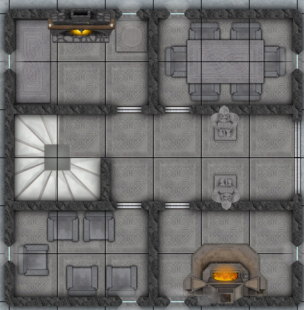
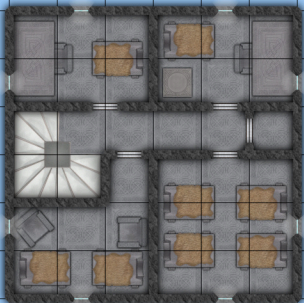
- If the party has a reputation for dangerous work, a merchant may hire them (and a guide) to scout the route and defeat the threats, proving it is safe again.
- If they are traveling on the road they may find a caravan, trapped by ice and rock monsters.
- An alchemist may hire them, plus a guide, to harvest samples at this "hot spot" of spontaneous construct activity.

**Encounters:**

- The ice and rock monsters are drawn to fire. They are tough and/or numerous.
- All of them have glimmering water at their core. The guide knows of a nearby spring with similar waters.
- The landscape on the way to the spring is coalescing into ice and rock constructs that are not yet active.
- At the spring, a draconic-shaped ice and rock monster with a cold gravel breath weapon defends a lair.
- The back of the lair has an exposed bone from the Elder Wyrms in the mountain.

**Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- Scholars and/or mystics want to commune with the undying Elder Wyrms at the site of power.
  - Caravan survivors want to thank the party for opening the way, offering a 50% discount on the next run.
- Anything they want the caravan to bring?



## Diplomacy, Scholarship, Honor Dwarf Watchtower with Caravan Wagons

Circumstances change, renegotiating a contract.

### Getting the PCs Involved:

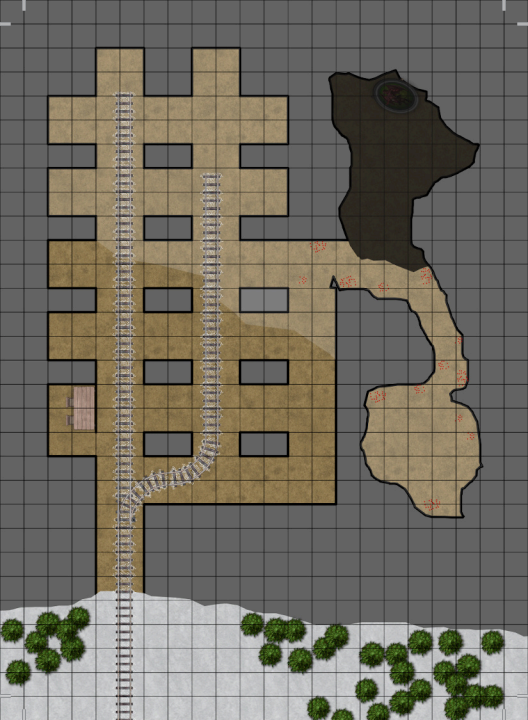
- A scholar ordered rare texts, and now the traveling merchant is demanding extra and unreasonable fees before delivering the books. "Acquire" the books.
- A caravan driver took heavy losses on the last trip and will lose his business if he doesn't get compensation for the unexpected dangers of his service. Defend the books until he's paid.

### Encounters:

- The scholar and the driver both approach the party, talking to different characters and asking for an alliance.
- Other contacts and allies in town may take sides, making the choice awkward.
- The caravan is camped at an old dwarven watchtower outside town, the battered guards recruiting allies.
- The scholar offers a bounty for the books equal to the bonus the driver demanded. The scholar's allies, and bounty hunters, compete for it.
- The driver offers a mostly legal "finder's fee" for anyone who collects book payment from the scholar.
- The mayor's ruling polarizes opinions in town further.
- If pressed, the furious driver will make good on his threat to burn the books rather than turn them over.

### Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Everyone in town gets more serious about contracts.
- There is room for competition in the caravan business.



**Mining, Mystery, Demon**  
**Mine Cracking the Seal of a Demon's Cave**

Fog in the mine possesses miners, who disappear.

**Getting the PCs Involved:**

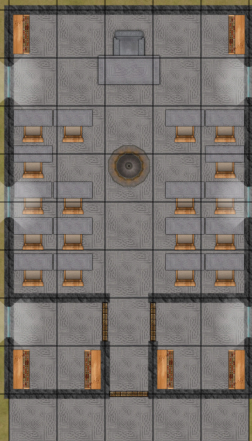
- A contact or ally loses a family member to the fog.
- A local religious group has cosmic hints that something is wrong in the mine, and want the PCs to investigate.

**Encounters:**

- Dispirited miners gather to drink and talk; about mid-day, fog breathes up from deeper passages, with strange knocking noises echoing through it. Those who breathe too much: eyes glow and they go slack, then walk into the darkness. A dozen miners have gone missing in a week.
- Infernal energies lace the tunnels, growing towards the surface, visible in little red mushroom shelves proliferating.
- A recently breached tunnel grants access to a still black pool—that's the problem.
- Diving in, they gain darksight and water breathing, and at the bottom of the pool they find all the miners silently worshipping a stone and iron cyst with druidic sigils. It contains a demon, reaching out through the binding. Worship strengthens it, weakening the binding.
- Trying to remove miners angers the half-awake demon, who concentrates power in a champion to fight back.

**Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- Keeping distance from the pool will help, walling it off is good. Or druids might be able to restore the binding.



## Hostages, Prophecy, Bounty Dwarven-Built School

A fugitive cult takes a school hostage.

### **Getting the PCs Involved:**

- The crowd runs towards the school as gossip spreads. What's up?
- Contacts or allies may have children in the school, or relations with bounty hunters.
- The mayor, fort captain, or other authority wants this nonsense stopped. Can you help?

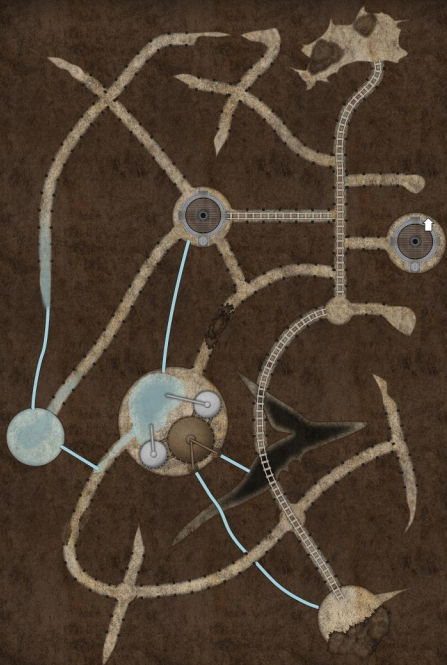
### **Encounters:**

- An offshoot of a local religious group believes they will take control of the region when their prophet rises. Irritated by their stubborn and noisy disrespect, their temple finally put a bounty on the leaders for heresy.
- The heretic leader had a new vision: a local child is destined to be their prophet. They went to the school to meet the child, but the child was out of school that day. The heretics were already upset when the bounty hunters attacked. Panicking, they took the school hostage and demanded their prophet.
- The dwarven teacher will steadily talk to the heretics, establishing a connection and eroding their confidence.
- The bounty hunter team(s) don't care about innocents dying and are only restrained by threats from the town guard, but they might sneak in anyway.

### **Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- Is the kid really a prophet?
- Family of injured children or heretics will be vocal.





## Tunnels, Hunting, Persuasion Mine with Pumps and Flooded Area

An offended gnome mechanic disabled the mine pumps, the water is rising.

### Getting the PCs Involved:

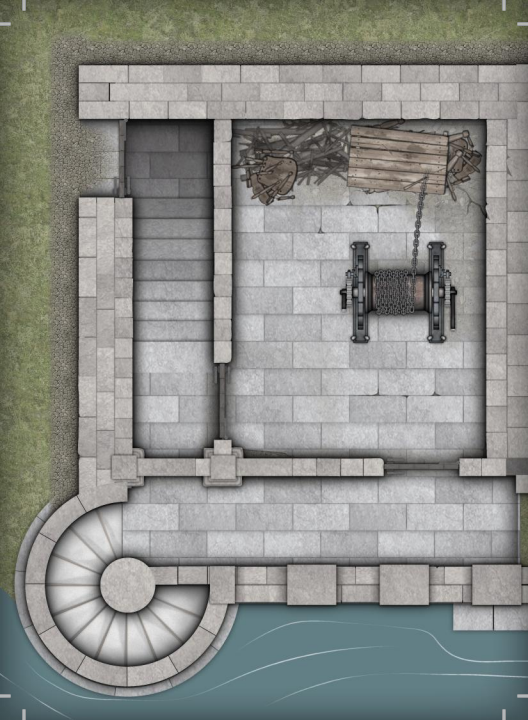
- The furious mine owner is hiring everyone available to go hunting for that damn gnome in the dark tunnels.
- The gnome mechanic's friends want the gnome found by friends first; people are angry, and this could go bad.
- The gnome hires the PCs before doing the sabotage, to deflect attention until the exchange is lost.

### Encounters:

- Without the pumps, in less than 20 hours the exchange will be underwater. The flooded exchange submerges the entire productive mine-works and puts the pump mechanism out of reach, beyond repair.
- Why did the gnome and the owner argue? Why such drastic action? Nobody wants to talk. (The owner wanted to mine Elder Wyrms bone to sell in illegal markets, and tried to blackmail the gnome to help.)
- The gnome retreated to new construction where some Elder Wyrms bone was unearthed, and she provokes it; rock constructs start rising and hunting in the tunnels.
- An "apprentice" gets a pump half working, buying time.
- The owner wants a side channel blasted to drain water.

### Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Who else knows about the underhanded effort to mine Elder Wyrms bone? Is that plot foiled, or profitable?
- The mine needs a new mechanic.



**Lair, Mechanics, Mystery  
Drawbridge Mechanism**

Vermin are nesting in the drawbridge machinery.

**Getting the PCs Involved:**

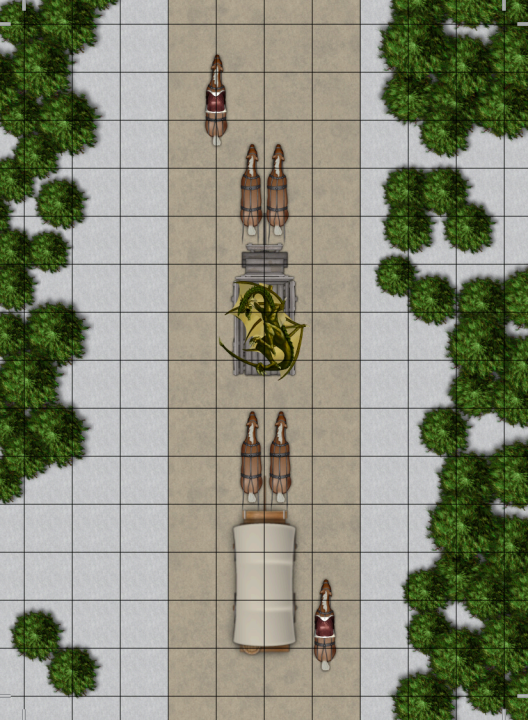
- The PCs wanted to stop for the night once they crossed the bridge, but the drawbridge is up and someone on the other side appears to be cornered and desperate.
- The mechanic has been out to the site and was chased off; he got the town to hire bodyguards so he can work.

**Encounters:**

- A big predator was drawn to the tower by the vermin; good stuff to eat.
- Dealing with the vermin, the PCs notice they have discoloration on their natural weapons. They transmit a disease, good luck if they nipped you.
- The mechanic says he needs an hour. Three hours later, he might admit that it's beyond his skill if he has a rapport with the group. He wants advice about how to handle the situation, he's reluctant to confess his limits.
- Even worse, there are more nests up in the chain room. If the corroded chain gives out, the whole bridge mechanism may be wrenched out to fall into the chasm.
- The weather gets much worse (fire, snows, mudslides) and they are trapped.

**Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- Someone planted those nests, sabotaging the bridge. Who? Why?
- Getting further education is humbling, but the mechanic could improve. It's expensive, he'd need a patron.



## Escort, Revenge, Superpredator Caravan with a Dead Wyvern

Bringing a monster corpse to town attracts more monsters.

### Getting the PCs Involved:

- The group took easy work as camp guards for a foppish noble hunter. Somehow he brought down a wyvern, and he wants the party to take it to the taxidermist for him.
- Several wyverns fly overhead, hooting a call the characters never heard before. That can't be good.
- The taxidermist hires the PCs to fetch the beast with the messenger who brought word the beast was ready.

### Encounters:

- Shortly after the caravan lurches away, wyverns descend on the noble's camp and decimate it.
- The wyverns fly in expansive circles over the wagons, hooting their grief and rage.
- The party might reach a cave or deep woods before the wyverns attack. One or more wagons breaks down on the trip; what to keep, what to leave?
- Why do the wyverns want the dead one? Someone with animals lore realizes the wyvern has viable eggs inside.
- A back exit from their hideout allows a messenger to go get military help. Can they fend off the wyverns until reinforcements arrive?

### Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If the eggs are recovered, they belong to the characters.
- If they wiped out a flight of wyverns they are town heroes, first in line when the next superpredator comes.



## Shroomfolk, Mystery, Caving Shroom Caves with Stream & Compost Piles

Local shroomfolk change from groovy to hateful.

### **Getting the PCs Involved:**

- A farmer reports shroomfolk are violent. Find out why.
- PCs who expect to meet with shroom vendors find them to be hostile, puffing nightmarish hallucination spores and poking with sharp sticks.

### **Encounters:**

- A farmer shows the group where shroomfolk built a "kill mound" and put dead animals (people?) in a pile mounded with dirt. They stand on it defiantly, "eating" the decomposition through their root-feet, when foes are out of bowshot.
- A dazed and lonely shroomin is found. If a PC will meld, the shroomin reveals that the melding circles got dark and mean, and it chose exile over joining.
- The shroomin have a new mottled coloration. The color scheme may remind locals of a corrupted boar that was unsuccessfully hunted months ago.
- The shroomfolk cave is downstream of a pond where the boar died of mortal wounds. The boar's blood and rage poisoned the water.
- The dead boar can't rest. It rises as undead if touched.

### **Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- Once detoxed, the horrified shroomfolk are deeply apologetic and shower allies with gifts of weird produce.
- The infection radicalizes one or more circles of shroomfolk to become wicked, seeking evil masters.





## Vigilante, Assassination, Mystery Town Festival Area

An ignored prisoner insists a bigger scheme is unfolding.

### **Getting the PCs Involved:**

- The prisoner convinced a guard she's telling the truth: she's innocent, and there is a threat to a VIP in town.
- The guard's superiors disagree, so the guard tries to recruit the party to act.
- An employee of the alleged target is unsettled by a conversation with a prisoner. Provide extra security.

### **Encounters:**

- The prisoner says a visiting assassin (known only by a title) can use a magic ring with four stones to briefly control another person's body. The assassin will kill a specific prominent citizen before the festival is over.
- A possessed guard kills the talkative captive (unless prevented). He has no memory of attacking.
- Annoyed, the VIP doesn't take the threat seriously.
- The festival starts. The target attends events as a sponsor or honored guest. The killer uses several unwitting assassins.
- Is the ring noticed? Is the assassin observed using it?
- The assassin controls a PC, ideally killing the target.

### **Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- Legal consequences are terrible for controlled attackers if the assassin was not caught.
- The assassin's guild takes interference personally.
- If saved and the threat proven, the target may grant land, licenses, or honors.



## Sabotage, Theft, Traps Mine that Broke Into Kobold Caves

Kobolds collapse access to part of the mine and loot it.

### Getting the PCs Involved:

- Banged-up miners sulk and complain about the mine kobolds as they drink in the tavern. Want a job?
- Friends or contacts were taken prisoner by kobolds in the first attack, or have relatives who were captured.
- A fortuneteller's divination reveals a frustrating and dangerous time is coming, centered on the mine, and their friend will die if they don't help.

### Encounters:

- The mine owner tries to inspire those who will re-open the tunnel and fight the kobolds, but it's depressing.
- The kobolds built portable fortifications and traps before attacking, so the tunnels are a nightmare. Hit-and-run with slings, portable barricades, smoke bombs, firebombs, and strategic traps.
- Kobolds release poorly trained vermin, adding to the chaos. They target the kobolds as often as the miners.
- Meanwhile the kobolds are snatching rails, mine-carts, prisoners, and equipment, piling it up at their camp.
- Once the salvage is done, kobolds retreat, collapsing tunnels behind themselves. The prisoners will be tortured and devoured at the victory feast.

### Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Characters may have new friends among the miners.
- The owner wants ideas for setting up a buffer between kobold caves and the mine.



**Parasites, Nature, Corruption**  
**Herbalist's Cottage**

A wicked predator is infecting wildlife with parasites.

**Getting the PCs Involved:**

- Herbivores are becoming carnivores. A character's horse or pet gets hostile, and munches on a rat.
- A local healer has pulled parasites off these converted carnivores, who all have boils and fever. She will pay the group to look for the source of the problem.

**Encounters:**

- Feral horses terrorize the town. Sleeping people are nibbled by rabbits.
- Inquiries point to the healer, who is checking into it as ordered by the mayor.
- The healer traced the origin of the problem to a nearby lake; maybe something washed down from the mountain. Start at the headwater.
- Commando squirrels bring down big prey (and assault characters). Deer use coordinated attacks.
- Parasites get the PCs, giving hallucinations and urges.
- A corrupted and cunning mound of animated vegetation is incubating the horrific tick-like parasites causing the problem. It lairs in shallow pools near a secret and forgotten holy site for local druids.

**Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- The incubator reproduced by fission, and the problem is spreading. The PCs are in demand as consultants.
- What created this horror, and how was it released? The Stoneglade is suspiciously silent.



**Druids, Curse, Secret  
Woodman's Cottage & Carpentry Workshop**

Persuade druids to release their captive, who will keep their secret.

**Getting the PCs Involved:**

- A carpenter needs help and dares not involve the law.
- Druids call in a favor a character owes; get a popular local carpenter to back off so they don't have to kill her.

**Encounters:**

- The carpenter's woodcutter husband discovered a Stoneglade secret. The druids abducted him. They trust her, but not him. She will not reveal their secret under any duress, but she really wants her husband back.
- A Stoneglade representative offers a solution. There's a valley bog with a unique root needed for a memory binding potion. The Stoneglade will erase several months of his memory and let him go if the characters bring them a supply of the root.
- Harpies rule the valley via deaf ogre enforcers. They have a feud with the druids and won't cooperate.
- If the harpies find out what the characters want, they will burn all the roots they can find.
- Upon the characters' successful return, the druids dose the dwarf and release him.

**Follow-up Adventure Ideas:**

- The druids got 100 times more root than they needed; who else is going to forget things?
- What is this secret the druids are protecting?
- Do the druids trust the PCs to keep their mouths shut?