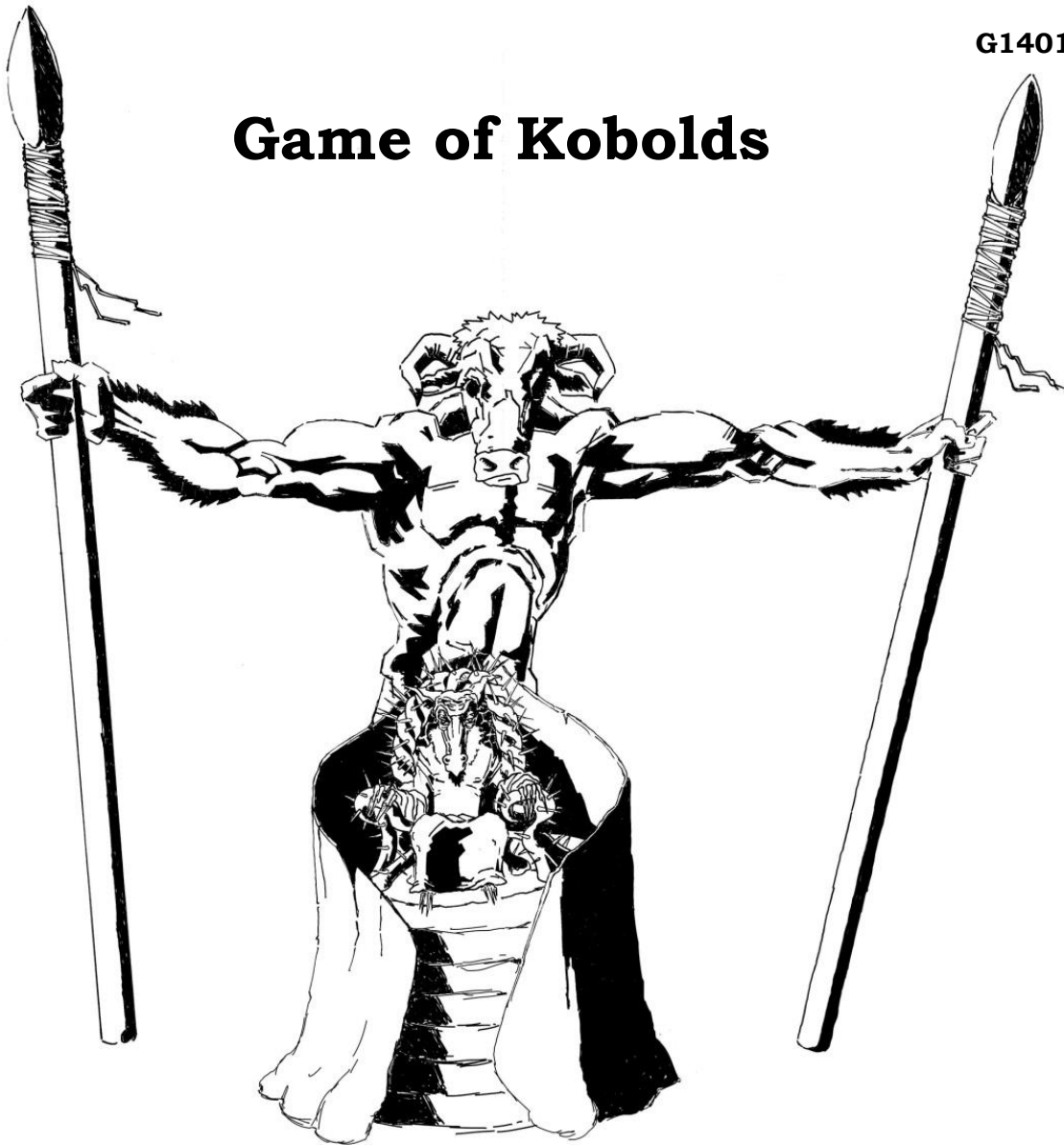


G1401.2

# Game of Kobolds



Dungeon Module B2.1

A Political Fantasy Option for  
“The Keep on the Borderlands” Adventure Module B2

Originally written by Gary Gygax

Additional Material by GagMen RPG Podcast

Cover Art by Seth Stephenson

Artwork by Corbett Kirkley, Tyler Davis, and public domain supplements

January 2014

# Contents

Acknowledgments.....	4
What Came Before.....	5
Recommended Materials for Play .....	5
Introduction to Political Fantasy .....	5
Through Eyes of Evil.....	6
Layers aren't just for Cakes (or Onions).....	6
Cut scenes .....	8
Hamartia (Fatal Flaws) .....	8
Random Hamartia Table .....	9
Creating Political Factions.....	9
Talking and Fighting (When to do which) .....	9
Proposed Sequence of Event .....	11
Reading along with "Keep on the Borderlands" .....	15
Starting at the Keep .....	16
1) Jim & Glen .....	16
Random Intelligence Table.....	17
15) Mike & Liz.....	17
17) Curate Huveran.....	18
26) Scribe .....	19
Advisor .....	20
27) Castellan.....	21
Wandering through the Swamp.....	22
1) Lizard Men .....	22
2) Spiders .....	23
3) The Raiders .....	23
Uric.....	23
4) The Mad Hermit.....	24
The Caves of Chaos .....	25
a) The Kobolds.....	25
5. KOBOLD CHIEFTAIN'S ROOM .....	25
Ak-ak .....	26

Dokeen .....	26
Keeble .....	27
Duke Mermee .....	27
Yarmsul .....	28
b and c) Orcs .....	29
Gajjab .....	29
Gorp .....	29
Umogra .....	30
Zorfu.....	30
d) Goblins .....	31
Krench .....	31
Nort .....	31
Ralnad .....	32
Skreeb .....	32
Wambly.....	33
e) Ogre .....	33
f) Hobgoblins.....	34
Kawkaw .....	34
Gudoch.....	34
Lenark.....	34
g) Owlbears .....	35
h) Bugbears .....	35
Lormf.....	35
Nannat.....	36
Sutram.....	36
i) The Minotaur .....	37
j) Gnolls .....	38
Garrrr .....	38
Ragar .....	39
Rraaw .....	40
k) Cultists.....	40
Hershal .....	40

Lionel..... 41

Quinn..... 41

## Acknowledgments

This is monster of a module that lies before you was originally written on a dare issued to us by the Save or Die Podcast (Wildgame Productions). A few months ago, Corbett Kirkley (of the Gagmen) wrote in to Save or Die with an insane question: how could someone run a classic Dungeons & Dragons adventure in the style of George R.R. Martins’ “Songs of Fire and Ice” series (more commonly known as “Game of Thrones” series on HBO). The intrepid hosts of Save or Die gave Corbett a couple suggestions, but they ultimately concluded that no one was crazy enough to try it before. It was then that they issued their “dare” (whether they realized it or not): If Corbett really wanted a political fantasy D&D campaign, he should write it himself.

After several weeks of trying to emulate Martin’s writing, Corbett became frustrated by just how large the game world would be. The natural solution was to make the story smaller, or to ‘sandbox’ the idea, to make it manageable as a campaign. While looking back at old game books, “B2 The Keep on the Borderlands” (originally written for Basic D&D, by Gary Gygax) seemed like the perfect solution to his ‘sandbox’ idea. There were several factions in close proximity of each another, and the module was originally written to allow the DM to add as much or as little extra story as needed.

What began as a small project soon blossomed into what would become the GagMen RPG Podcast, a show dedicated to writing crazy ideas into RPG adventures. Understandably, the task of founding a Podcast, creating associated web pages, assembling a cast, and writing episodes proved to be mildly distracting, and as such the original task of a Game of Thrones D&D adventure was delayed. As the GagMen are a group of writers putting out adventures every month, the natural solution was to include this adventure in the show itself; and “Game of Kobolds” was born. All our thanks go out to Gary Gygax, the Save or Die Podcast, and most importantly George R.R. Martin, for giving us something to rip-off and make ridiculous so that it can be ignored by all.

## What Came Before

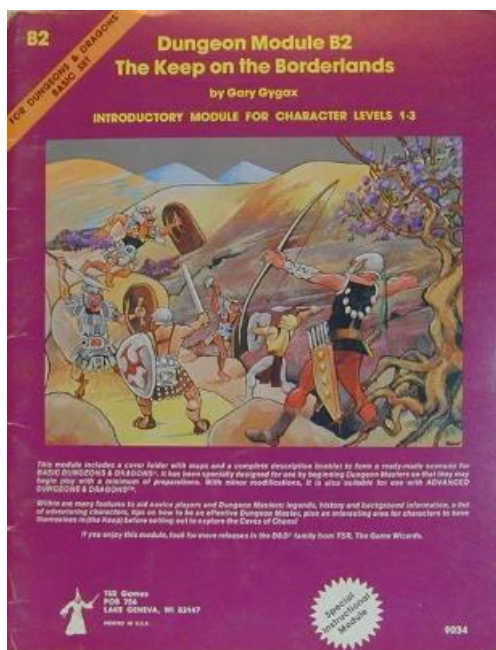
The Keep on the Borderlands was originally written in 1980 by Gary Gygax, and was commonly distributed with the original boxed Basic Dungeons & Dragons game set. The module was one of the most iconic adventures produced, thanks to both its distribution with the starter set and its deceptively simple design. Gary Gygax intended that the adventure be built upon and expanded to create an entire campaign world. This adaptation is not meant to take anything away from what the original writer intended, but rather add to the story aspects of the game while offering rules options that could be used in our readers in their home games.

## Recommended Materials for Play

A copy of the Dungeons & Dragons Basic rules, a copy of B2 “The Keep on the Borderlands”, dice (or chits or any random number generator), pencils & paper, and a few good friends will be required to put this optional adventure

to proper use. Listening to GagMen Episode 7 - “Game of Kobolds”, may

also help to give insights into the thought process behind the game (copies can be found at gagmen.net, iTunes, and rpgpodcasts). This adventure is merely an addition, and will not have many monster or Non-Player Characters (NPC) stats, as these can be found in the



module rulebook, and so that the levels and stats can be changed as needed. In the interest of theatrical role-playing, the Dungeon Master (DM) would be well advised to prepare any props or costuming if desired.

## Introduction to Political Fantasy

A political fantasy is similar to a regular fantasy world, but with a focus on the interactions between the characters and their reactions to political situations and plot points. Commonly, this style of fantasy has the characters at odds over which faction (or family) should take, or win, a position of power.

George R.R. Martin’s “Song of Fire and Ice” series (more commonly known as the HBO television series “Game of Thrones”) illustrates this concept of factions vying for political control of their world.

A typical role-playing game focuses on the story of the players, and thus the game world revolves around the player’s current situation. In a political fantasy, players will find that world events continue to transpire around them regardless of whether they get involved. The players and DM would be well advised to create alternative characters in order to see different parts of the story that may not always be accessible to regular players’ characters.



spread through the world. Most sentient creatures spend the majority of their day hunting, farming, reading, playing games, living in their parents basement, eating cheese puffs, and in general carry on in ways that may (or may not) seem alien to player’s normal lives.

Past interactions with monsters in module B2 should be reconsidered, and the DM should emphasize that every creature the players meet is more than just a pile of experience and gold waiting to happen. A simple way to help the players would be to allow all monsters to speak in common, however this should be treated as a local phenomenon only (unless this

is conducive to your ongoing game world). With communication open, the DM can focus more on the political story and character interactions.

### **Through Eyes of Evil**

While the concept “Monsters are the bad guys” is a foundational principle of Dungeons & Dragons, this idea should be placed aside for this adventure. Not every orc will wake up each morning and plan out the evil that they intend to

### **Layers aren’t just for Cakes (or Onions)**

Political fantasy may start with a simple rivalry between two factions/families, but it will often expand quickly. While the Montagues

and Capulets and their conflict were a focal point of Romeo and Juliet, the Mayor and town guards were also key players, despite being in the background throughout most of the play. Likewise, a political fantasy should branch out from a single conflict and slowly begin to affect and change the world around it.

To better understand, it may help to imagine a small pond with several large rocks popping just over the surface of the water. When a pebble is dropped in the pond, ripples will begin to spread, eventually reaching all points in the pond including those large stones. Each of these stones can represent different factions in your world, while the pebble represents that initial conflict presented at the beginning of the story. At some point each faction should feel the effects of the initial conflict, even if only indirectly.



Each NPC should have a goal or a mode of operation; for example, we can expect Mrs. Millet to make a pie, while we can usually expect Timmy to try and sneak a taste. Timmy may be stopped by the PC's, or the players may decide to steal the pie first. Most characters follow certain patterns. However, the more complicated the NPC, the more involved they will be in the PC's adventures. Be careful, presuming that a character will always repeat the exact same actions can be an easy trap to fall into. Unlike a videogame, your characters can do much more than repeat the same mindless action forever.

## Cut scenes

Telling the entire story to the players will be difficult without ‘cut scenes’: scenes that the normal player characters would not normally see, but are important to the story. The simplest way to involve players in these cut scenes is to write the scene as an optional and playable mini-adventure in which the players portray the involved NPCs. This style of storytelling gives the players the opportunity to experience a part of the story that would normally be out of their reach, while giving insight into some of the non-player character’s motivation.

Each cut scene should add to the story and build the world for the players to enjoy; however a DM must be careful to not reveal too much information, as this could spoil the story. Pacing is an important aspect of the story and the game; the story must maintain a certain cadence to avoid boring the players. Likewise, if the story dwells too long on one element, or glosses over important points, the

players may become disinterested or even annoyed. By preparing an events list, the DM can better maintain a

constant and steady pace, better allowing player’s reactions and the DM’s quick responses to advance the story without wandering off topic.



## Hamartia (Fatal Flaws)

All well thought out characters should have a flaw; this brings humanity to the story while elevating it to a more emotional level. Characters without flaws are usually heroes, and a political fantasy thrives on the frailty of life and the folly of mortals. Each character (NPC or other) should have an imperfection, and the more basic the flaw, the more captivating the character





will seem. For example, a character with the flaw of pride should exhibit a level of arrogance that leads often the character into dangerous situations. If a character seeks revenge, he will ignore his own personal safety in order to secure it.

The table below randomly generates hamartia for characters in your own political fantasy campaigns, or for your own player characters, and was inspired by the NPC Personalities list, from the Non-Player Characters section of “Keep on the Borderlands.”

***Random Hamartia Table***

1	Ambition	11	Independence
2	Cowardice	12	Love
3	Cruelty	13	Lust
4	Delusional	14	No Flaw
5	Envy	15	Pettiness
6	Gluttony	16	Pride
7	Greed	17	Revenge
8	Hatred	18	Selfishness
9	Hypocrisy	19	Selflessness
10	Ignorance	20	Perfectionist

## **Creating Political Factions**

A story without conflict will not progress very far, however making every faction mortal enemies can limit interactions. Instead, start with an underlying mistrust between the factions, then slowly build tension between them as the story unfolds. Create a minimum of two faction/families in the beginning, then introduce new factions as the story unfolds. A political fantasy should progress much like an avalanche, starting with just a few small pebbles of trouble at first, but eventually growing in size and complexity as it rains down problem after problem onto the audience.

## **Talking and Fighting (When to do which)**

The most natural reaction from players in a role-playing game is to attack as soon as possible, and this can be frustrating to deal with in any long term story, luckily experienced campaign players are more likely to look before they stab. There are several methods that the DM can use to stop the killing: playing down your NPC’s, make NPC’s valuable, avoid NPC stereotypes, and/or simply catch the PC’s off guard.

*Playing down the NPC* is a preferred method, allowing the players to presume that the NPC is a victim or being



persecuted. This usually leads to the NPC being invited into the party, if only for a short time. Gollum from Tolkiens' "The Lord of the Rings" series achieved this, as did Scorpius from Sci-Fi Channels "Farscape", or Medea (from Greek Legends) who joined with Jason to help him steal the Golden Fleece. While these examples are villains, they demonstrate that villains are characters, and should have just as much depth as the PC's, thus helping the players to perceive them as equals instead of experience and loot waiting to happen.

*Making an NPC too valuable* can lead to trouble. A common mistake DM's make is to give the NPC items that make them very valuable to the party. But items can be stolen, destroyed, or cut off. The best practice here is to simply let the PC's know that the NPC

has information that they might be willing to share. Of course, don't give the information away immediately, but rather dole out useful tips and advice over

time. Underplaying the importance of a character gives the DM the freedom to demonstrate the NPC's personality and goals.

*Stereotypes* are difficult to avoid, and even the best DM's can't always evade this pitfall. In a normal adventure there are three to six characters that need to be portrayed, and a talented DM will use stereotypes to quickly convey the idea of a character. With several NPCs in play, a DM could accidentally mix up characters, thinking "is this old man the same as the last old man?" Keep in mind that a professional actor performing a one-man-play can portray over twenty characters, which is not far off from how many characters the DM could play in this adventure. The best strategy is to plan ahead, think through what the NPC would be like, and try

your best to avoid repeating yourself with a stereotype. Preparing personalized notes for reference may also help your performance.

*Catching the PCs off guard* or by surprise is an effective tactic, but it can be utterly humiliating to the players if used too many times. If the DM decides to use this tactic, the simplest method is to ambush the players, and very quickly establish that they are surrounded and outnumbered, forcing them to listen to whatever the NPC needs to tell them. But remember, such an event is forced, and a caged animal will lash out at its captors. A trapped PC is less apt to listen to, or sympathize with, the NPC. Another variation on this tactic is a show of power. Some whimsical examples include: a wizard appearing from nowhere, a warrior riding up on an impressive steed, or the ever popular “something explodes and that guy did it!” Impressing your PC’s could frighten them however, and a frightened party may start stabbing sooner. Imagine standing next to an elephant; while the beast is enormous and commands respect by its size alone, a normal person standing right beside such a behemoth may suddenly realize what

would happen to them if the animal made a sudden turn. Important DM Note: Fear can be effective to remind us not to mess with dangerous things, but it is also a trigger mechanism for survival.

### **Proposed Sequence of Event**

1. The characters have been on the road for several days when suddenly, just half a day from the keep, they are attacked by a group of Lizard men. This will be the Character’s first conflict, so prepare a battle that they are likely to win. If the characters are still overwhelmed and close to defeat, a squad of patrolling guardsmen from the keep may rush in to rescue the party



and defeat the remaining Lizard men. Either way the squad will appear; once the battle has finished, the squad will escort the party to the keep.

2. It is important that the PC's are aware that they were ordered by the royal courts to discover why the Keep has stopped sending the regular shipments of Spider-Steel. Spider-Steel is an elusive metal that is very strong and when used in weapons can have extra hardened sharp edges. The PC's will have a note from the courts showing their authority in the matter, however on the walk back to the keep the guards should complain of confusions from the castellan and how anyone who butts in usually ends up missing. This may discourage them from revealing themselves too early. As the group approaches the keep, they should try to discover what has changed, by talking with the guards or even with other traveling NPC's. Gathering clues from the Lizard men attacks could also help move the party along. They will have a written document from the courts to prove they were sent, however the Party has been advised to disclose this only if no one is willing to talk or if they are refused entrance to the keep.

3. The Player should take this time to Talk with townsfolk and learn about the castellan's unreasonable and unrealistic demands on the people of the keep. Start with Jim & Glen, the



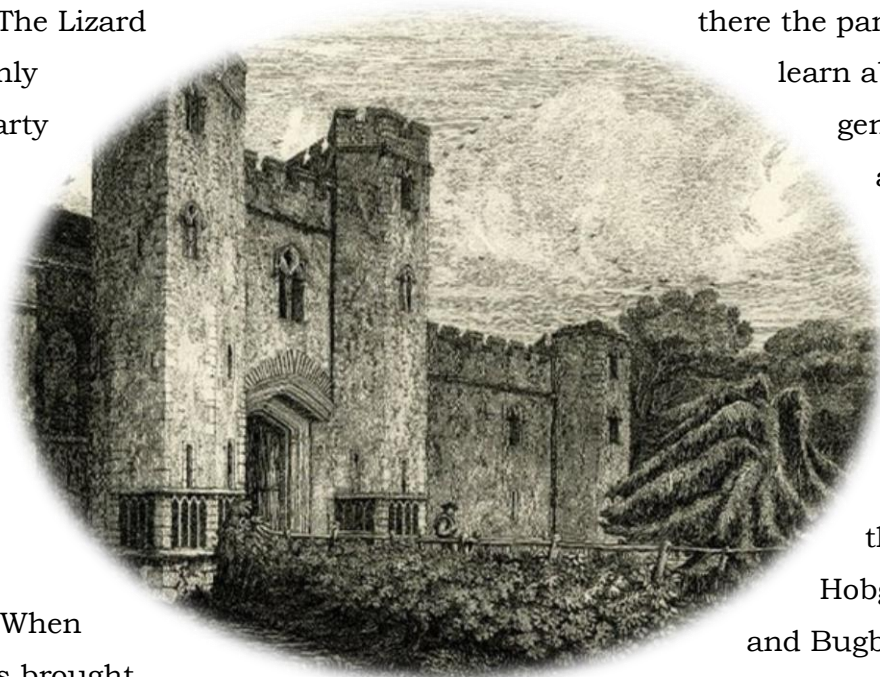
gatehouse keepers, who will have lots to say about the town and what they have seen. They should also give the party directions around the castle areas and give tips for dealing with the local creatures.

4. If the party makes known that they were sent as a royal inquest, the curate will contact the Player characters and order them to clear out the swamp. If not, he may still seek them out as swords for hire to clear out the swamps and surrounding forests, telling the party that the Lizard men attacks have been disrupting the keep's trade connections with the caves.

5. Once they are deep in the swamps, the characters should meet the mad hermit. If they should talk to him, they may learn that he was a priest of the chapel, or at least has priestly robes. The hermit will appear similar to the original write up in "Keep on the Borderlands."

6 After their encounter with the hermit, the Characters meet the Lizard men. If they attempt to communicate, the Lizard men will invite the Party back to the mound to meet Yarmsul. The Lizard men will only take the party to meet Yarmsul if they agree to surrender their weapons. When the Party is brought before Yarmsul, she will explain the problems of the cave and claim that the humans in the keep cannot be trusted, especially those with a symbol of the law.

7. When they have finished their visit to the lizard mound, the party will march to the Caves of Chaos, a short trip, to meet the new king of the



kobolds. At first the kobolds will be threatened by the player characters appearance, but the Minotaur will assist the guards to bring the party into the kobold chieftains' room. While there the party should learn about the general metals and spider-silk used to make Spider-Steel and the special materials needed from the Goblins, Hobgoblins, Orcs, and Bugbears for the process. These materials are then combined with the spider silk that is 'milked' by the kobolds. Mermee will not react well if the party talks down to him or ignores his sovereignty. Mermee should discourage the party from contacting any of the other cave faction's leaders, as he speaks for all.

8. At this point in the story, the players need to decide who to side with. Mermee will display his power over the Minotaur of the caves and his intentions. If the party doesn't show respect for Mermee, he will imprison the characters (shortly to be freed by Ak-ak, with hopes that they will fix the problems of the caves). Ak-ak will then be caught and executed for his disregard for Mermee's authority.

9. Kargle gets his curse removed, by Gajjab, and the orcs start the plan to attack the Minotaur.

10. The orcs will unveil the plan to side with the cultists, with the death of Mash and the rise of Gajjab. Panic and pressures should grip the community as different factions start joining sides and drawing lines.

11. Wamraze, after talking with Skreeb, will begin feeling the change in tide and strike against Mermee.

12. With the Minotaur siding with the Goblins, Skreeb and his forces join in the strike against the kobolds.



13. Lurking in the shadows the Gnolls and Bugbears join in the battle, followed shortly by the remaining racial factions in the caves.

14. With the insanity in the caves coming to an end, Yarmsul and her Lizard men will move in make the final blow against Mermee. Wamraze will see the return of Yarmsul as the answer to the Lizardmens prophecy. The war-torn Minotaur will bow before his true queen. Yarmsul will unify the remaining factions and plan her attack against the human cultists and the keep.

15. The cultist will make a deadly sneak attack on Yarmsul in for the final battle, this could possibly be foiled by the raiders (see Raiders). Uric will make the ultimate sacrifice and expose

the cultists sneak attack, only to be killed indirectly in the process.

Yarmsul is reminded that all humans are not creatures of deceit, creating a possible moment of diplomacy with the keep.

16. How it all ends. What would be a good resolution to the majority of these problems? Yarmsul gets her deserved crown, the castellan getting rid of the curate and discovering the scribes betrayal, and Ragar releasing his golem, but helping secure Yarmsuls' victory. All endings are possible and many, many more. Do not feel limited on what can happen, but focus on the message you would like to convey in your game.



17. Everyone dies, what matters is how they live. The death of Wamraze, should have a point, he is not just a

remorseless beast (at least, not anymore). Duke Mermee deserves a terrible end, but perhaps not at the hand of Yarmsul (possibly by Muzzy (see Mike and Liz)) or Wamraze. Rraaw should definitely die, hopefully leaving the leadership to Ragar. Gajjab should be assassinated by Umogra, over the death of Mash; possibly leaving Zorfu in charge of the orcs. Most of the cultists should be killed, sparing Lionel leaving a possible return villain and to show how much of a weasel he is.

## Reading along with “Keep on the Borderlands”

All of the following numbers and letters are referenced in “B2 Keep on the Boderlands”, starting on page 8 of the adventure. Most characters are grouped with their species or creature type and may not all be in the locations specified. Any missing areas will not change in any notable way from the original adventure. None of the material from the original adventure has been added, so you will need to get a copy to play along with this supplement. The majority of the

following sections is to add personalities and describe situations that exist in this version of the story, we have purposely left out stats so you can tailor fit the adventure to your own desires. As a word of warning, there are several characters in play with this story; this is a campaign and not an adventure that would happen in one night. Expect to unravel parts of the story as needed, try to plan ahead, but remember to keep the drama high and use action a tension release.

### ***Starting at the Keep***

#### ***1) Jim & Glen - The Gate Guards - Both***

guardsmen seem far too old and oppositely sized to be practical soldiers. The duo often argues and picks at one another as close friends do. These two were once performers in a widely acclaimed troupe that appeared before many heads of state, until an untimely performance of a satire about a tyrannical king put them at odds with the real king. Having the troupe put to death was melodramatic even for the king, so he forced them into military service. Jim and Glen wound up in service as guardsmen at



one of the most unlikely of outposts watching the main gate of the keep. This is the story they would tell people openly, but truthfully the troupe impressed the king and was put into service as intelligence operatives for the crown. Jim and Glen were strategically put in place at the gate to keep track of the coming and going of people in the keep. Should the players reveal they are sent by the king, the two guardsmen will tell the players at least two items from the Random Intelligence Table. Otherwise, they will tell the

party that the creatures in the Caves of Chaos were the main suppliers of spider-steel, but since the death of the kobold king relations with the caves has fallen apart. Also, since the death of the

kobold king the Lizard men of the swamps have been attacking anyone on the roads between the keep and the caves.



1d8	<b>Random Intelligence Table</b>	T or F
1	The castellan seems to make sporadic and emotional decisions. He seems calm in person and then excited or angry when he puts out a decree. It is like he is two different people.	T
2	“Bree-yark”, is not goblin for “we surrender!” It is goblin for, “Did you bring the sandwiches!”	F
3	The Lizard men are only attacking caravans, not groups of people.	T
4	There have been new art pieces appearing in the keep over the last few months and they are being made by someone inside the Caves of Chaos.	T
5	The Lizard men are being led by a kobold that cannot be killed.	T
6	Liz in the tavern is a witch and her cat is last husband.	F
7	A kobold named Ak-ak was buying pipe tobacco for the minotaur, every week, until he stopped about a month ago. We don't know why.	T
8	It looks like Elendil, the elven advisor, is misleading the castellan, because he has been caught in a lie by the curate and he has no reason to lie.	F



**15) Mike & Liz** - Owners of Ye' Olde Whistling Kobold Tavern - The couple use to run the Save or Die Inn on the road to the east far outside of town. Liz was one of the first humans to be contacted by Feeshe many years ago, long before he was king. Mike taught him of the cultures and histories outside of the area. Soon Feeshe would bring a special spider silk that the couple would discover when forged with the proper metals would make spider-steel, the strongest (non-magical) metal ever known. Feeshe united the different factions of the caves and with the help of Mike and Liz was able to open trade relations with the keep. Liz became such good friends with King Feeshe and his family that she became an adopted mother of Yarmsul (see Kobolds), upon the death of her mother. Her maternal connection grew



over the last few years until the sudden death of Feeshe and summary execution of Yarmsul by Duke Mermee. To further sever ties with the humans, Duke Mermee ordered Wamraze to demolish the couples Inn, which Wamraze did reluctantly and even apologized after the task was done. Despite Mike & Liz's valiant attempt to stand up to the Minotaur, the demonstrative act was done, and left Mike blinded in its wake. Recovering over the last year, Mike and Liz opened the Whistling Kobold Tavern inside the keep walls. Mike has found some enjoyment in running the bar, listening to travelers stories, and all the while writing a book about the events of the last few years. His blindness has only improved his hearing and can make out the sound of coin values by sound alone. Liz has felt the loss of Yarmsul, yet still feels that she may still be alive. The two took in a fat, stray cat, that Liz named Muzzy. Muzzy is actually a disguised four-thousand-year-old Sprite of good fortune, named Twisk, but he doesn't mind being called Muzzy. The cat gives off ambient magical energy, making all the drink and food at the tavern very filling and delightful to all who partake. Mike and

Liz distrust anyone wearing a robe, or symbol, of the temple of law, though they cannot tell you an exact reason why.

**17) Curate Huveran** - Chapel of Law Leader - An older, gaunt gentleman with

thoughtful eyes, with long, stringy, thinning, silvered hair accompanied with an unkempt collection of



facial hair resembling a beard. His kind eyes and quiet demeanor allows him to get people to open up to him as the personable and friendly leader that he appears to be. He is the second only to the castellan, and widely accepted as a friend of the people of the keep. Curate Huveran constantly reminding the castellan of the threat of outside countries and the creatures within the caves. Because of his long studies of law, he has learned the true power of the chaos, and exercised these powers by starting a cult inside the caves. He quickly realized that the unity of the creatures in the caves was disturbing the powers of chaos that he

was attempting to summon. After a meeting with King Feeshes' brother, he planted a seed of jealousy into Mermee, and suggested he seek the power of the briar throne. Since the collapse of the cooperation of the races, the cult of chaos has pushed further to cause friction between all sides and to help increase the paranoia of the castellan.

Hamartia - Deception – Huveran is a man of multiple lives, keeping the face of kindness, while the whole time ordering hundreds to their deaths. He has become very good at playing the kind old priest, so good it has become almost impossible for anyone to associate him with the pure evil that he performs behind closed doors. If Huveran suspects that anyone would betray him, they usually are found dead within the day.

**26) Scribe** - A corpulent priest, only second to the



curate in the chapel of Law, and sits by the side of the castellan keeping records and passing information to the curate. The scribe enjoys the extra money that comes with his position at the keep, mostly because of his love of food. A creature of habit, he can usually be found at the tavern devouring a fresh batch of treats in the evenings. The scribe has been caught in several awkward positions over the years due to his carelessness; most recently he was seen writing a letter using the castellans' seal. The curate assured the castellan that it was only for priority church business.

Hamartia - Careless - His lackadaisical nature has often left himself and the curate exposed; if it wasn't for the importance of his position the scribe might have been dispatched long ago. While he feels that he is making an effort to take his time and be careful, these mistakes keep happening. Usually, the scribe chooses to blame his troubles on his luck.



**Advisor** - The elven advisor, Elendil, was sent to help teach the inexperienced castellan the ways of running a keep and ruling people fairly. He tries to respect the castellan's decisions and reputation by disguising his ideas as interesting parables. More often than not the castellan will ignore Elendil's stories and choose poorly, often ending in failure. This has not discouraged Elendil, as he has seen the keep make significant progress in his time there. Elendil is very old for an elf, but has had little experience outside of a library. His enthusiasm and life

experiences show through, however, revealing his simple wisdom. He has suspected that the scribe may be up to no good, and has ordered trusted guards to follow the scribe when he leaves the keep. He has shared his concerns with the castellan and the curate, yet both seemed to consider the matter of little consequence and dismissed the allegation.

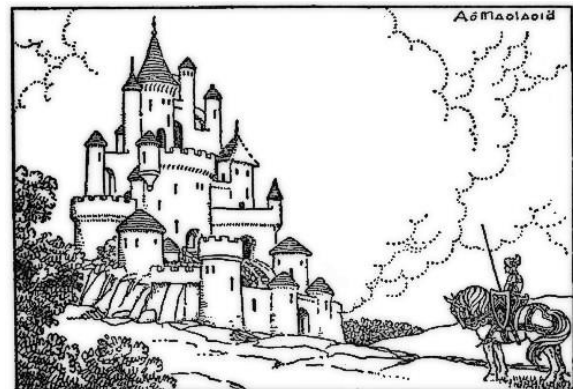
Hamartia - inexperience - Because of his age and race, most people presume he has an obscene amount of life experience, and to a certain level he does. He spent most of the first five-hundred years of his life in a library, reading, studying, and generally learning what life is all about. As such Elendil is filled with knowledge, but it has all been untried and untested. His appointment has been a true baptism by fire, and he tries to hide his lack of experience by speaking in short thoughts and placing his ideas in stories he remembers.



**27) Castellan** - As a commissioned field officer during the last war, Bertram proved his worth and in reward was granted full reign of the keep. His trustworthy nature convinced the courts that he would not pocket anything that the crown is owed, and his sense of honor indicated that he would treat his subjects with the respect due to citizens of the realm. The job, however, has proved a more trying task than originally suspected. His trust of others has shrunk considerably during his time as castellan, he has even begun to question if even his priest working on against him. He is convinced that the border must be protected, and that only he stands between his homeland and the chaos outside its borders. Bertram worries that he is simply being

paranoid and these worries cloud his judgment, stalling many of his decisions. With the death of the kobold king, the regular trade of minerals from the caves and spider silk webbing has stopped. Without those key elements, the keep is unable to create spider-steel, which makes some of the most powerful weapons and armor in all the realm. This also weighs on Bertams' thoughts and concerns of how he is perceived by the courts.

Hamartia - Indecision - On the field of battle, life was so much easier for Bertram, but now every decision will affect people under his protection. Though he would prefer to make these choices at the point of a sword, he is trapped behind his desk and makes tactical moves with decrees.



## ***Wandering through the Swamp***

### ***1) Lizard Men***

The Lizard Men are a small tribe of creatures that should appear savage and a definite threat to the Keep, as they constantly attack the supply caravans.

Many years before, Garr (see Gnolls), gave the Lizard men a prophecy of the coming of a leader, on who would give them purpose and make them equal with all other races.

Garr's Prophecy:

*"To the Swamps A spearhead will  
be reborn,  
Forsaken from her womb of  
thorns"*

*Her life protected by her  
mother's Love,  
by her father's diplomacy cast  
above"*

*Mistaken as food for all of you  
To then arise  
from a mire of Blood and Sinew"*

*With new ears, will she hear,  
with new hands will she feel,  
to walk anew on foot and heel"*

*Her blood will be tasted by tooth  
and blade  
but to take her life the  
Gods forbade"*

*She will Protect the scaly  
cruel;  
She, who once was food,  
As Queen of lizards will she  
rule."*



What regular player characters may not perceive is the leadership

of Yarmsul (see The Kobolds, The Caves of Chaos) directing the previously mentioned attacks. Before Yarmsul arrived, the Lizard Men were hunted as animals by the villagers and keep dwellers, and forced to scrounge out an existence by hiding in the Baleful Bogs. Yarmsul rose out of the hoard of foods that had been gathered earlier, with regrown limbs that her dead carcass had been missing when collected. Given new purpose by Yarmsul, the Lizard Men attack in packs using guerrilla tactics, making

them a much more dangerous threat than the humans originally thought.

**2) Spiders** – They make the primary ingredient of spider-steel: spider silk collected by the kobolds. The kobolds are small enough that they are able to milk the spiders of their tensile liquid. Because of their usefulness, the humans have placed several warning signs outside the lair, to scare off any would-be adventurers from slaughtering the stock.

Spider-Steel is created in a forging process made possible by kobolds milking the spiders of their precious, strong webbing. The different creatures of the caves then mine the four different metals it takes to process the steel. The entire forging process takes over a month per sword, and once the weapon or armor is made it cannot be reheated, or even hammered, except by magical means.

This process was originally perfected by King Feeshe as a young kobold aided Mike and Liz, the owners of the Save or Die Inn. Spider-Steel is cool to the touch, even after lying in an open flame. Any items made with Spider-Steel can resist all forms of natural damage and corrosion. The hardened edges are so fine that they

are treated as Vorpal Weapons (natural/unmodified 20 on a roll to hit decapitates or severs the limb of an opponent).

### **3) The Raiders**

The raiders are a scouting party, led by Uric, to ascertain the defenses of the keep and investigate the possibility of the keep planning an invasion to the north. They have set aside their tunics and banners that mark them as a northern army. Uric is a distant cousin to the castellan and has a familiarity with the keep, making it easy for him to slip in and commit small robberies. Uric has become more suspicious of the castellan as he has seen the keep's interactions with the Lizard Men of the bog, and the secret trading with the cultist in the Caves of Chaos. Typically, if the raiders attack anyone, they will spend less time rifling through people goods for money and more time looking for documents and disarming the victims. It has been several months and the unit is under constant threat and just tired of the assignment.

**Uric** – Raiders Leader - was a natural leader, until he fell in love with his commanders' mistress. Uric quickly found himself going on long

reconnaissance missions to any distant kingdom he could be sent to. His rugged looks will make heads turn, but his skill as a swordsman has gained the respect of his men. He tries to keep a positive outlook and focus on the end of his mission, so that he may return to his love.

Hamartia – Survival – Uric thinks of himself as a victim, cheated out of what should have been his. He intends to live, no matter the cost, in order to return home. This may lead to the fatal end of his own troop, though his strong drive to duty may conflict with this possibility. Do not underestimate him, he will survive to the end.

#### ***4) The Mad Hermit***



The mad hermit was an acolyte from the keep, but years ago he discovered the curate and scribe making plans to overthrow the castellan and eventually the king. The acolyte escaped with his life, but his mind did not fare as well. With years of hiding and seclusion he has slowly been driven quite mad, likewise he has turned his back on his clerical teaching and adapted to thievery as a way of life. The Mad Hermit still possesses his original vestments of the clergy, folded neatly and placed in a small trunk in the corner of his hovel. Otherwise, the mad hermit should appear and react similarly as he would from the original module.





### ***The Caves of Chaos***

King Feeshe opened up trade between the humans at the keep and the dwellers of the Caves. Long ago the caves were unfurnished holes in the ground; now they are all filled with furniture and well-crafted amenities. The trade of Spider-Steel has made most of the inhabitants of the caves very wealthy.

#### ***a) The Kobolds***

**5. KOBOLD CHIEFTAIN'S ROOM:** This room is the home to the Briar Throne. This mangled mass of briars, painfully woven into a large seated throne, sits atop a five-foot tree trunk. The trunk has stairs, roughly carved into the

sides, leading to the throne. Feeshe and Mermee were told by their father that the throne was created by his father to teach him that ruling others is pain, and to always remind him that others should always suffer more than the king. Though Feeshe did rule from the chieftain's room, he never sat on the throne. Though Feeshe also feared removing it; thinking that his father would return from the grave to haunt him. Mermee now sits proudly on the throne, with his five concubines lashed to the base of the trunk. Mermee enjoys looking down on his subjects and wielding his power.

**Ak-ak** - is a young open minded kobold who was deeply in love with Yarmsul. Upon her apparent death he fasted and prayed for several days to achieve insight into what he should do. He could see that Mermee was not the leader that the people needed, and felt that he had to be removed from power. To do this Ak-ak went to the first ally that King Feeshe talked with, Wamraze the Minotaur.

After a long discussion of the death about King Feeshe and his daughter, Wamraze agreed to sever ties with the current kobold ruler; but He is still uncertain with whom to align with as the new ruler of the caves. Ak-ak was disheartened that Wamraze did not lash out as Mermee, and so Ak-ak left the caves and met Uric (see the Raiders). Ak-ak joined the raiders, as a scout, with the hopes of toppling Mermee from power. He is a very passionate kobold and learned many of his philosophies of life from King Feeshe.

Hamartia - Love - Ak-ak loved Yarmsul, and perhaps is completely ruined by

such deep love. It has driven him to turn on his own people and leave his home. He is driven by his passions and hopes that he will find someone to fill the void left by Yarmsul, as he still feels utterly lost without her.

**Dokeen** - The scroll bearer for the king, and general historian to the legacy of

the crown. A chubby Kobold, known for his keen debate skills, Dokeen has been the loyal servant to the crown for over twelve years and three kings. He is one of the most intelligent Kobolds



both in written and spoken form. He holds his duty on a sacred level; though he may not agree with Duke Mermee seizing of the crown, Dokeen does not dispute Mermees' right to claim the crown. Dokeen is aware that Duke Mermee has been getting assistance from the cultists, but is uncertain how to approach the subject with Mermee. Usually, Dokeen can be found with a large tome containing the history of the Kobolds.

Hamartia - Pride - Spending so many years dedicated to his duty, Dokeen has

become deluded about the difference between what is right and what the king says. Duke Mermee has ordered terrible atrocities, and Dokeen has blindly been carrying them out, without question.

**Keeble** - Keeble, at the ripe old age of sixty-one, is one of the oldest of the Kobolds and still remembers what it was like under the rule of the older rulers. Keeble dislikes and distrusts most races, so when Feeshe reached an agreement with the orcs, Keeble was terribly dissatisfied. He struck a deal with Nort (see the Goblins) to have Feeshe killed; unfortunately, while Nort poisoned a glass that was supposed to go to the king, it was intercepted by Milliet, the king's wife. Keeble had hoped that this would shake up the king enough to fall apart, but it only strengthened the king's resolve. With the king working even harder to keep the union of races together, Keeble felt there was no end in sight. Worse still, after the failed assassination, Nort began blackmailing Keeble.

After the death of King Feeshe, Keeble blamed the Goblins, which led to friction between the goblins and kobolds. He further pressed for

Mermee to remove Yarmsul from any power because of her sympathies to the humans.

**Hamartia - Hatred** - Keeble generally dislikes all races and most people. Many kobolds attribute Keeble's attitude to his age but he is a generally hateful creature. His vocal hatred of the neighboring species has helped encourage the other kobolds to follow King Mermee blindly.

**Duke Mermee** - Mermee was always resentful of his older brother Feeshe. After his father was killed and eaten by the Minotaur of the caves, Feeshe was thrust into leadership of the Kobolds at the young age of four. Feeshe, never learning the ways of hatred that his father had known, opened negotiations with the neighboring tribes and even made peace with the Minotaur that killed his father. This path to peace began with his befriending of a human couple, Mike & Liz, at the Save or Die Inn along the road, not long after he was awarded the title of King by the various races residing in the Caves of Chaos. The humans were wary of the creatures allied in the caves to the west, but it wasn't until Mermee approached Curate Huveran of the keep

that he was able to undermine his brother's new kingdom. Mermee gave the curates' cultists information and placed the king in a vulnerable position, and the cultists did the rest. Mermee quickly seized the crown and is currently outraged that the other races haven't fallen in line. He still calls upon the reluctant Wamraze to carry out his vindictive plans and keep control through fear. He destroys anyone or anything that does not fit into his world. Now that he has caused the discord amongst the dwellers in the caves, the cultist have no further interest in helping Mermee. He is insistent that everyone refer to him as king, and will react violently if this doesn't happen, however most kobolds still call him duke behind his back.

Hamartia - Cruelty - Duke Mermee was only interested in claiming what he believes he is 'owed'. He is willing to hurt or destroy anyone or anything in his path to make this happen. He would often pick on Yarmsul, when she was a small child, and obviously acted out his sick desires by removing her hands, feet, and ears himself. He should be considered a socially disturbed individual with only malice in his heart.

**Yarmsul** – She is the beloved and beautiful daughter of King Feeshe, the previous and revered ruler of the Caves of Chaos. She is lean and wears a copper band around her neck, a choker that belonged to her mother, a gift created by Ragar (see Gnolls). After King Feeshe lost his wife, he spent most of his time settling disputes between the different inhabitants of the Caves of Chaos, leaving little time for his treasured Yarmsul. She spent most of her time with Liz, at the Save or Die Inn along the road to the keep. The death of King Feeshe was sudden and shocking to Yarmsul, but not to her uncle Mermee, who quickly seized the crown. Yarmsul challenged Duke Mermee, only to be betrayed by



Keeble. The Duke himself cut off her hands, feet, and ordered that she be thrown into the swamp; never to be spoken about again. Left for dead, Yarmsul awakened on a pile of dead animals, with her hands and feet regrown. The Lizard men of the swamps believed Yarmsul was a messenger from their god to guide them. Yarmsul had no idea that the choker, her mother gift to her, was an ogre's ring of regeneration. She now resides in the swamp and plots revenge for her father's death.

Hamartia - Independence - By losing her mother at an early age and her father to his work, Yarmsul found strength in doing things alone, and surviving on self-reliance. She will often push herself too hard or forget her own basic needs.

### ***b and c) Orcs***

**Gajjab** – He has designs to overthrow Mash and use Kargle to retake the Caves of Chaos as an orc stronghold. Gajjab knows that Kargle was cursed by the cultists and is using orcs loyal to him to launch attacks against the cultists in order to find a way to remove the curse. Once Kargle is freed Gajjab will unleash him on

Mash and make his move. If he is approached about his concerns over Kargle, he will simply say, “Kargle is the only strong defense the orcs have. We must protect ourselves.”

Hamartia - Envy - He sure that he should have been the one to take the position of Chieftain, and that Mash is wasting his power by bowing to the Kobolds. He will never openly speak of his feelings of Mash, and when talking to the chieftain he will often pander to the leader.

**Gorp** – Mash's head of the guard, a position he holds with pride. Gorp does love his gaming time with the other guards, and can be found in his off time gambling with his fellow guards or anyone who will play. Gorp is a fun loving orc but struggles with his debts which has forced him to sneak items out of the chieftains' treasury.

Hamartia - Risk - Gorp has risked all in order to get the thrill of success. The risk of losing his job, fealty, or even his life is a thrill. He still fears that he will get caught stealing from his chieftain, despite the fact that he takes his job very seriously. Gorp's dichotomy may

be puzzling, but he is resolved to his dangerous life by honorable means.

Mash - is the Chieftain of the Orcs, though other than the title, he has done very little to live up to the lifestyle. Mash was dazzled by King Feeshe and his plans to unite the creatures of the Caves of Chaos. Chieftain Mash, since handing over his leadership to Feeshe, has been simply lounging around ignoring his people's problems. He will often defer to the "Kobold King", with the expectation that others will take their problems to him. Over the years he has put on more and more weight and is now almost three times the size of a regular orc.

Hamartia - Selfishness - considers only his comforts and worries very little of others or their desires. His self-interest has led him to leave complicated decisions to the Kobolds; this has made many of his followers concerned. If Wamraze, the Minotaur, shows any sign of wavering from the protection of the Kobolds, Mash may fear for his own protection and turn to Gorp to double guards and ensure his safety.

**Umogra** - The first wife of Mash, she is quick to judge and temperamental on all things that matter to her. Umogra is not a violent person, but can be dangerous when she doesn't get her way or what she desires. She held a rivalry with King Feeshes' wife, which led to her ordering Gorp to slay her; by the morning she was poisoned. Gorp never knew why, but took the credit, no need to upset Umogra. She has been growing angry with the small demand of the Goblins. She has no desire to side with Gajjab, thinking he is pandering to get his way. Umogra will turn to more brutal avenues by calling on the bugbears.

Hamartia - Pettiness - She is fickle over many of her own choices, so it only makes sense that she would be pickier of others. She will fly off the handle with only the slightest indication of what her motivation may actually be. She is more likely to call for someone's head, before she even knows why they have come to her.

**Zorfu** - A powerful wizard for the orcs, in his own mind. Zorfu is known for having the most outlandish entrances, usually by throwing loud explosions when entering a room. Zorfu is not as

well versed in the arcane arts, but is quite versed in the art of performance. He has learned the art of sleight-of-hand to trick many observers into believing in his truly awesome powers. Over time he has become a believer in his own abilities, though he often only succeeds by sheer luck. He does carry a pocket full of half-used wands, lesser magic items, and potions to make his ruse complete.

Hamartia - Ignorance - Zorfu still has small magical aptitude and if called upon, he will usually flim-flam his way through the attempt. The real danger is, on occasion he has attempted to use scrolls beyond his ability or even outside of his school of study, resulting in catastrophe. Rather than reveal his secret he would risk his own life in a foolish attempt.

#### **d) Goblins**

**Krench** - The leader of the chieftains' guard for Chief Skreeb, Krench has earned his place of honor. He stands almost a head taller than most Goblins, and due to his size he is stronger as well. He is a fierce warrior, though he often refers to himself as the knight of the Caves of Chaos. He clearly follows the orders of Skreeb but will often take

a more malicious path if left to his own devices. He is aware that Skreeb is planning the assassination of the Kargle the Cursed, in order to weaken the Orc position.

Hamartia - Hypocrisy - Krench often describes himself as fair and honorable, but this is something he offers up to get his opponents to lower their guard. He took his position by dueling the previous leader of the guard, ending with Krench stabbing him in the back before the count started.



**Nort** - He is considered the lowest of the low by the other Goblins, so he worked as a guard for King Feeshe, but was quickly disillusioned by the union with the Orcs. Because of his close connection with the Kobolds and military training, Nort was soon approached by Keeble about the

benefits of the removal of the king. With Keebles' help he was able to plan the king's poisoning, unfortunately a miscalculation caused the poisoned cup to be drunk by Milliet, the king's wife. Nort put the blame squarely on Keeble and swore that he would betray him if Keeble did not pay his fees. Soon after King Feeshe's death, ties with the Goblins fell apart and Nort's blackmail became useless.

Hamartia - Perfectionist - As a guard Nort had a watchful eye, noticing even the smallest detail, saving the king's life on several occasions. However, during the planning of the poisoning he spent several weeks longer than normal to act, and the delay put the queen in the way of his target. Because of his detail-oriented mindset, he tends to take longer to act than others would.

**Ralnad** - Ralnad is one of the smaller goblins, with an abundance of moxie. He earned his right to be in an elite scouting party, against his uncle Skreeb's wishes. He has spent several weeks in deep cover and close proximity to the Lizard men camp. Ralnad is not the most observant person; his uncle has been trying to get him killed in

action so he doesn't have to worry about him anymore.

Hamartia - Delusional - He believes his uncle cares about him and wants to make him a hero in the eyes of the people. Ralnad is unable to see that his uncle plans for him to die in the near future. Not that his uncle hates him, but he has no interest in handing over his crown to someone that he has no respect for.

**Skreeb** - Chief of the Goblins that was one of the closest friends of King Feeshe. He was the first to side with the Kobolds under King Feeshe. Skreeb was extremely suspicious of his friend's sudden death, and feels entitled to take the crown from Duke Mermee. He has been in contact with the Castellan about arming his people so that they can do just that. With shipments being disrupted by the Lizard men, Skreeb has opened talks with Wamraze. Wamraze has become disillusioned by the change from King Feeshe and is willing to listen to new ways and ideas. Skreeb hopes to convince Wamraze to attack the Lizard men and remove another obstacle from his plans to overtake the kobolds. Anytime he deals with Duke



Mermee, he will always remind him that King Feeshe never did things that way, mostly just to spite Mermee.

Hamartia - Ambition - With the loss of King Feeshe, Skreeb has felt a void and begins to step up. He was never interested in trying to lead the entirety of the caves, but now that he has seen it done, he wants that power.

**Wambly** - A lonely dreamer, Wambly has found beauty in the eyes of Lenark (see Hobgoblins). He can be found following her around, and he knows much about her plans to attack human settlements. He has become less and less interested in the politics of the caves and spends more time gathering supplies and stealing for his beloved Lenark. She, however, has no idea of his interest in her, and it's probable that she would still treat him the same way even if she knew.

Hamartia - Love - Wambly has lost sight of all reason and rational, he has stolen from his own people and others. He will continue to try and prove his love to Lenark despite her general disinterest. He knows his love is wrong but cannot help himself.

**e) Ogre - Kargle the Cursed** - ally to orcs - Kargle has been used as a physical threat by the orcs for years. He is a towering behemoth, though has become quite gaunt over the last two years. Favoring his cave, he only comes out to hunt his prey at night. Sadly, Kargle was cursed by the scribe to the Castellan of the Keep, to always cower in fear from an attack. Now even the smallest creature making a motion will cause Kargle to flinch in fear. He will defend himself, but only while trying to escape. Kargle is one of the key powers in the Caves of Chaos, everyone knows and fears him. Should anyone approach his cave or try to enter it, they would be met with loud roaring and smashing noises.

Hamartia - Slave - realizing that Kargle was a threat to the cultists moving into the Caves of Chaos, the curate from the keep placed a curse on Kargle that he would not attack or harm a human. This curse was performed under duress, causing the curse to affect all races. Kargle has long since taken to a vegetarian diet and is slowly dwindling away. He stays in his cave, far back in the darkest of corners; he hopes that Gajjab will be able to help

him.



### **f) Hobgoblins**

**Kawkaw** - his brother, Yarik, was the only hobgoblin to stand up against Duke Mermee, when he took the Briar Throne, and was executed for it. The lanky hobgoblin has only grown in hate for the removal of Mermee since. He cares very little who will sit on the Throne, and he will risk all to destroy the current 'king'. Kawkaw has formed a friendship with Ak-ak against Mermee, but he feels that Ak-aks' plan to enlist Wamraze will become more dangerous. So Kawkaw turns to the Gnolls for support, after meeting with Garr he is certain they will wipe out the Kobolds.

Hamartia - Revenge - Mermee was wrong in executing Kawkaws' brother, but Kawkaw has not thought through the damages he will cause upon succeeding. Kawkaw is blinding himself to what the future can be and will take any risk in order to end this immediately.

**Gudoch** - Shorter than the average hobgoblin, he finds himself seeing eye-to-eye with normal goblins. He is fed up with mining for metals only to hand them over to the kobolds. His mining skills have proved useful, as Gudoch has been digging a tunnel into the back of the Kobold treasure room to rob coffers and use the ill-gotten gains to purchase land from the Castellan, so that he can live in peace. He hates living in the caverns, like an animal, and wants the finer things in life for himself.

Hamartia - Selfish - He wants his own life, he's tired of following Lenark, and just wants to live a simple existence farming out in the countryside. To achieve this he is willing to betray his king, his people, and even his enemies.

**Lenark** - She has pushed and struggled to be the leader of the hobgoblins. They had always been an amorphous collection of misfits before King Feeshe organized the caves. Lenark is young and strong, with a strong logical mind to help her leadership. Through a chance encounter, she started a

dialogue with the curate and keeps a regular connection with the human cultists in the highest caves. The priests deliver weapons, with promises of more, if they act against the orcs in the caves. She intends to open negotiations with the orcs, for fear that Kargle will strike if they make an aggressive move. Lenark has been trying to contact the castellan, hoping that he will provide more support than his priest has. However, the cultists have been intercepting all communications to the keep. Lenark is alone and accepts it.

Hamartia - Ambition - Lenark saw the example that Feeshe made for the other races of the caves and knew that she must set a similar example for her own people. She can see that the goblins are starting to fall away and is hoping to take them under her wing. She thinks in logical patterns and has worked out many of the possible moves left. She has plans that lead all the way up to the Castelian, perhaps even further.

**g) Owlbears** - These poor creatures, as the original dwellers in the caves, have been forced into seclusion by the onset of the other species moving into the

caves. The Owlbears are savage creatures and stay in their cavern, except to hunt at night. Unless adventurers enter this cave, the Owlbears will not bother anyone, however the Gnolls have plans to smoke out these beasts and corral them to the kobolds as part of a plan between Kawkaw (see Hobgoblins) and Garr (see Gnolls).

#### **h) Bugbears**

**Lormf** - is a pudgy and wasteful creature. Often he is found sitting around the main chambers, or napping in the back of his own chamber. As the cook, he prepares many of the meal eaten by the bugbears, though he is often relieved when a raiding party brings back prepared food. He dislikes working, unless he absolutely has to. He is patient and will wait for most of his problems to solve themselves. He has suggested that the bugbears move to a different area to Nannat, but these suggestions were ignored. Lormf has grown frustrated with the continual attacks that Nannat has ordered, and has decided to slowly poison him. He has been slipping a metal, shaved from the cave walls, into his food. The

mineral is slowly killing Nannat, and eventually Lormf will be rid of him.

Hamartia - Sloth - Though Lormf is a slob, his has honed patience to a fine art. There is no need to fish if they jump into the boat. He will wager on the fish always jumping into the boat, his sloth knows no bounds.



**Nannat** - is a braggart and a brute. He is the largest of the bugbears, in both height and mass, and is the considered leader of the bugbears by default. As large and healthy as he may appear, he still has a persistent cough, often bringing up blood. Nannat will dismiss

any concerns about his health as a sign of weakness. He has spent considerable time attacking the humans, but lately the Lizard men have become the larger threat. The lizardmen do not carry anything of value and they usually attack in force. He did take several captives, and discovered from them that lizardmen are being led by some type of godlike kobold. He has presumed that this is just exaggeration, but over time and attack after attack, he has reconsidered his opinion. Recently, he has agreed to help Mermee crush the goblins into submission, and in exchange he will share in the goblin's wealth.

Hamartia - Cruelty - Nannat is just a mean person. He would hurt someone just because he could. He will not openly attack someone that he does not have an advantage over, but when he does have the advantage he will take it without hesitation.

**Sutram** - A puny bugbear, who is often forgotten about and left behind on many raids. During one of the lizardman interrogations, he was left in the room with the victim and the two struck up a friendship. He released the sad and beaten Lizardman and told

Nannat that he finished the job. Nannat spent the following hour performing the interrogation on Sutram, for stealing the thrill of the torture. It took several weeks to recover, but from then after Sutram would help the victims whenever possible. He spends most of his time making sure that he doesn't get noticed anymore, and never looks Nannat in the eye. He has snuck out to the swamp to meet with the Lizard men and has even met Yarmsul personally.

Hamartia - Guilt - Sutram lives with constant fear that Nannat will discover that he has had dealt with and befriended the Lizard men. His guilt pushes him to hide more and keep everything from any of his fellow bugbears.

**i) *The Minotaur - Wamraze*** - Standing over ten-foot tall, Wamraze is muscular and occasionally wears spectacles that the kobolds fashioned for him so he can read his books. Once a savage creature one would expect to find in a cave, one fateful day a young kobold found him and challenged him to a contest. Wamraze was intrigued and accepted. The young kobold turned out to be Feeshe, the child of the same kobold

king he had eaten only days before. The two spent the afternoon playing and talking, and soon Wamraze found himself agreeing with the little morsel. Seeing that Feeshe had a vision of what the caves could be like, he agreed to help the kobolds, and in exchange they would craft furniture and household items for him. Now Wamraze is a domesticated beast, sometimes thrown by fits of temper, but always searching for deeper meanings. Since his alliance he has become an avid reader, and will often discuss ideas and philosophy with an opponent. One of the last things Feeshe gave him in friendship was a stone, which he said contains a wish. Wamraze never told anyone about the stone, nor has he used it until recently.

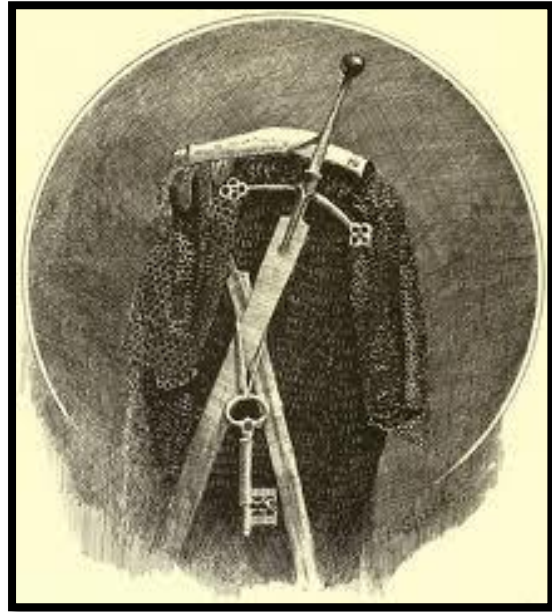
When Duke Mermee took over, he ordered Wamraze to destroy the Human's Inn and drive them away. Wamraze hated doing this, but felt he was honor bound to follow the wishes



of the king. In the process, Mike tried to defend the Inn and was thrown into the blaze, causing him to lose his sight. Wamraze has never forgiven himself, and used the wish stone to summon a spirit of good fortune to protect the couple for the rest of their lives. Wamraze has no idea if this “wish” really worked, and has not seen the couple since. Meanwhile, he acts as a threat and enforcer for the kobold way of life. When the players first meet Duke Mermee, Wamraze should be there. He is not always in the court of the kobolds, but this will reinforce the perception of the kobolds hold over him. Wamraze, as of late, has become impatient with Mermee. Wamraze finds Mermees’ declarations and decrees needless and wasteful. When King Feeshe came to him years before, he was impressed with his spirit and ambition, and felt that under Feeshe’s plan the caves could only prosper.

Hamartia - Admiration - Before Feeshe, Wamraze acted as a beast with no care or concern for others around him. Feeshe explained his ideas and changed his entire life. Wamraze has been a firm believer in Feeshes’ way of life and is willing to fight and die for it. He even tolerates Mermee, thinking that he is still on the right path. He is

zealous in his beliefs and will be very resistant to any thoughts otherwise.



#### ***j) Gnolls***

***Garrrr*** - A seer, a child, and a warlord. A young pup compared to the rest of the gnolls, Garr is the most prophetic of his people or any other in the area. He foretold the fall of Feeshes’ reign and the death of his daughter. He keeps close ties with the Lizard men, and told them of the rise of their goddess from the wastes. His powers of foretelling came from his mother, who told of the taming of the Minotaur long before anyone even knew. He mother was beheaded by his father, Rraaw, who leads the gnolls and has no time for silly thoughts of the future. Garr knows much of what has

happened and what will happen, though he holds back information in a vain attempt to prevent his own death. Kawkaw has approached Garr about convincing his father to overthrow the false kobold king, which his father is more than happy to do. But Garr has begged his father not to attack the kobold, as it will bring ruin to everyone. Garr suggests to Kawkaw to use the owlbears by smoking them out and herding them into the kobolds area.

Hamartia - Responsibility - Since he first saw the future and the death of his mother, he knew he was trapped in a web of history that has yet to take place. He has learned to curb what he knows and only give information that may help shape the future differently. He has been disappointed time and time again, as people come to him wanting to know and leave wishing they had never asked.

**Ragar** - The artist of the gnolls, and widely regarded throughout the caves as one of the most creative and passionate creatures

that dwell there. He has written several books of poetry that he had printed large especially for Wamraze. One of his paintings even adorns the kobold throne room, as well as the office of the Castilian of the keep. Rraaw dislikes Ragar's work and thinks that it gives people too many ideas. Rraaw destroyed a marble bust of himself, which Ragar made, declaring that, "Gnolls follow flesh, not stone!" He spends most of his time working on a new piece of art, fully expecting that it will be destroyed, but hoping that someone will see it. Ragar, secretly, uses magic in some of his works, making them even more dangerous and unaccepted by Rraaw. Learning these dark arts has been difficult; Ragar has been obtaining small insights into how to improve his art from the cultists, in exchange for information about the caves and their inhabitants. He was the crafter of Yarmsul's choker, which



cannot be removed without the permission of the wearer.

Hamartia - Revenge - He bites his tongue when around Rraaw, even when he is destroying a new piece of art, or a found piece of art from a raid. His hidden dislike of the gnoll leader has forced him to learn magic from the cultist, secretly betraying the dwellers in the caves. He has been teaching himself how to make a golem, to use against Rraaw.

**Rraaw** - A haggard old gnoll, long in the tooth, and grizzled like meat left to cooking too long. He carries several scars, from battles and marriages. He has had several wives leaving him over sixty pups, of which he has only eaten half. Rraaw has little patience for magic and all its ilk. He killed Garr's mother and would kill him too except for his wife's dying words, "Your son will save you." He since has kept Garr alive and nearby, but never speaks with him and often wonders if she was tricking him into keeping Garr alive. He despises all people, even his own, but because of his ferocity he is accepted as the leader. He is one of the few leaders that did not agree to all of King Feeshes ideas and even had plans

to attack him. But Feeshe died long before Rraaw could act and even if he could he knew that he would then have to fight every other species in the caves. There is little thought that goes into his battle strategies, hit hard, hit where it counts, and make sure they stay down. Because of the gnolls breeding, they regroup and rebuild their numbers quickly, Rraaw has used this to his advantage.

Hamartia - Hatred - Rraaw was born under a bad sign. He hates for the sake of hating. People are useless and in his way. In many cases he acts as a wild animal and attacks without warning, even in a polite conversation. His actions have left the gnolls isolated from the rest of the communities, and they suffer because of this.

#### ***k) Cultists***

**Hershal** - As young man, single, with no family ties, Hershal was a perfect recruit. His small stature makes him innocuous to most people; however he wears his heart on his sleeve, and usually displays the fear in his eyes up front. As an acolyte in the town chapel, Hershal was pressed to join the cult of chaos out of sheer fear of what they might do to him. Hershal secretly



performs the rituals of his original good god and asks for forgiveness in his prayers. He understood the powers involved with the cult and expects no good to come of any of the actions that the cult has taken. Still practicing the healing arts, he will often help wounded adventurers, and will try to help anyone that has been placed in the torture chamber.

Hamartia - Cowardice - His fears have trapped him in a terrible position, with no real way out. Everyone he could turn to hates him because of the robes he now wears, which he feels is the only thing still protecting him.

**Lionel** - The closest aide and advisor to the curate in the keep, his loyalty has kept the castellan in the dark about the curate's involvement with the cult. As far as the townsfolk, most will believe that Lionel is the leader of the cult of chaos. Because of his outward representation, he may appear in the keep from time to time, but surrounded by his cultists. Most people cower in fear at the appearance of anyone in the robes. The keep tolerates them, as the cult has made no direct action against the humans and helps fend off Lizard men attacks. Lionel has been training

Ragar in some the lesser magical powers that the cult uses in exchange for information about the other occupants of the caves. Once Ragar has no use, he will put him to death or offer him as a sacrifice, as he has no need for an artist.

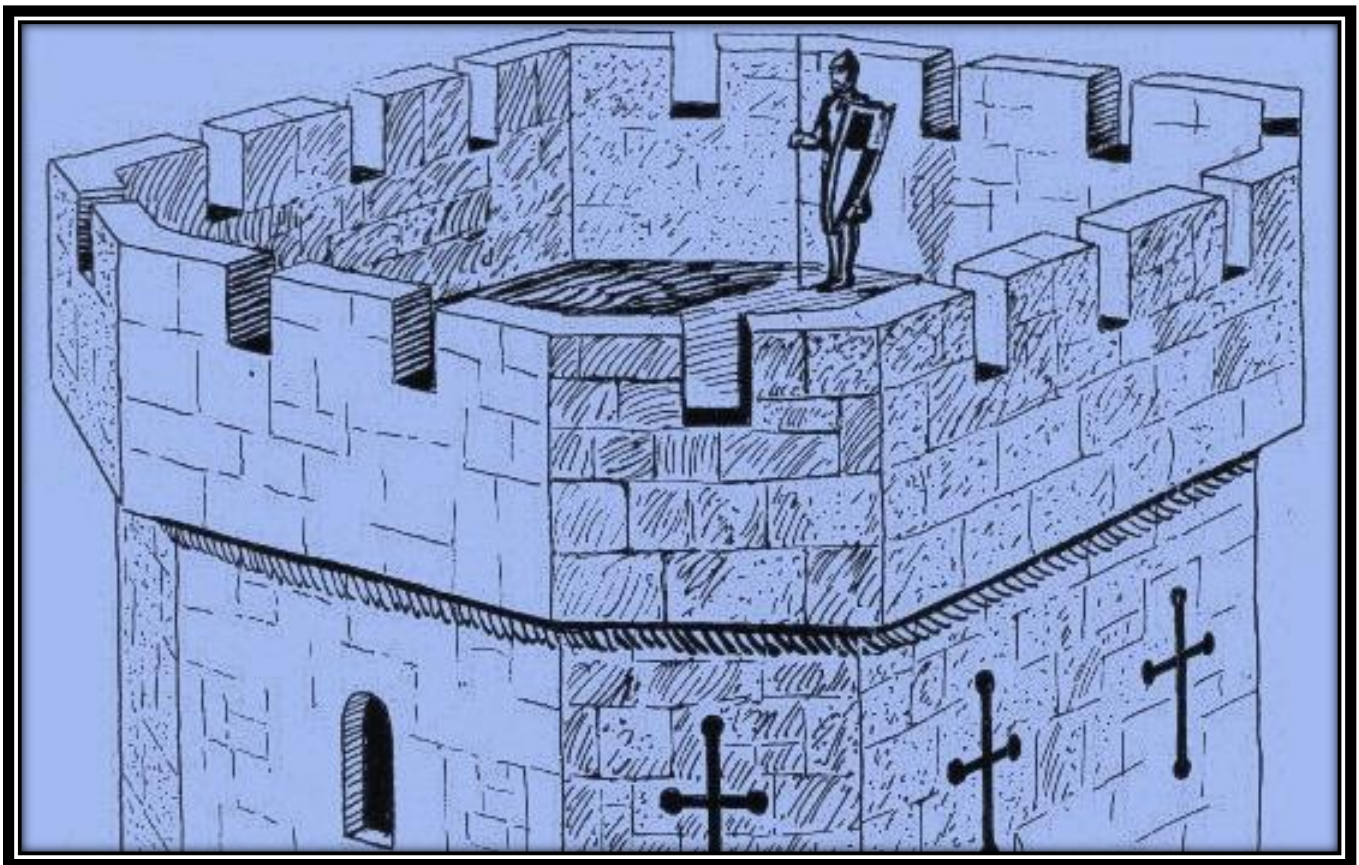
Hamartia - Zealot - Lionel blindly follows the teachings of the cult and accepts his role as a false leader in order to protect the curate and secure his position beside the castellan. He is far removed from reality and would accept anything in order to please the curate.

**Quinn** - An older woman, Quinn lost her farm and husband during a raid by the creatures in the swamp. She never had children, and the cult took her in, giving her a place and a purpose. Chaos is the way of all things in her eyes now. Now she sees that if the caves become politically unstable, then the different factions can be used against one another, possibly destroying everything. Quinn is in talks with Gajjab to arm the orcs and attack the kobolds, causing the power to shift back to the orcs, who the cult of evil chaos feels they can control more easily. After the destruction of the

kobolds power over the caves, Quinn has plans to get the orcs to follow her and attack the Lizard men, exacting revenge upon them.

Hamartia - Unstable - Quinn has never fully dealt with her emotions over what she has lost over the years. Because of this, she is completely unbalanced and

perhaps the most dangerous person in the caves of chaos.



“Keep on the Borderlands” and Dungeons & Dragons is copyright of Wizards of the Coast, a division of Hasbro. “The Game of Thrones” is the property of Home Box Office (HBO) and George R.R. Martin. Save or Die is a division of Wildgame Productions. We do not own these properties, and they are used here for entertainment purposes only, with no intention of profit. We promise we are broke, please don’t sue us. Thank you.