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GM'S MONTHLY MISCELLANY:

SEPTEMBER 2017





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GM'S MONTHLY MISCELLANY: SEPTEMBER 2017

Featuring material from some of Raging Swan Press's newest products as well as classic releases of yesteryear, advice articles and material from Creighton's own Borderland of Adventure campaign, the GM's Monthly Miscellany series is a terrific free resource for the busy, time-crunched GM.

Design: Creighton Broadhurst, David N. Ross and Josh Vogt

Development: Creighton Broadhurst

Art: William McAusland and Maciej Zagorski (The Forge Studios).

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SOURCES

As well as new, never seen before material from my own Borderland of Adventure campaign, this instalment of GM's Monthly Miscellany presents information from several Raging Swan Press products and advice articles including:

- **Places of Power: Soulspur Inn** Josh Vogt.
- **Village Backdrop: Dawnmarsh** David N. Ross.

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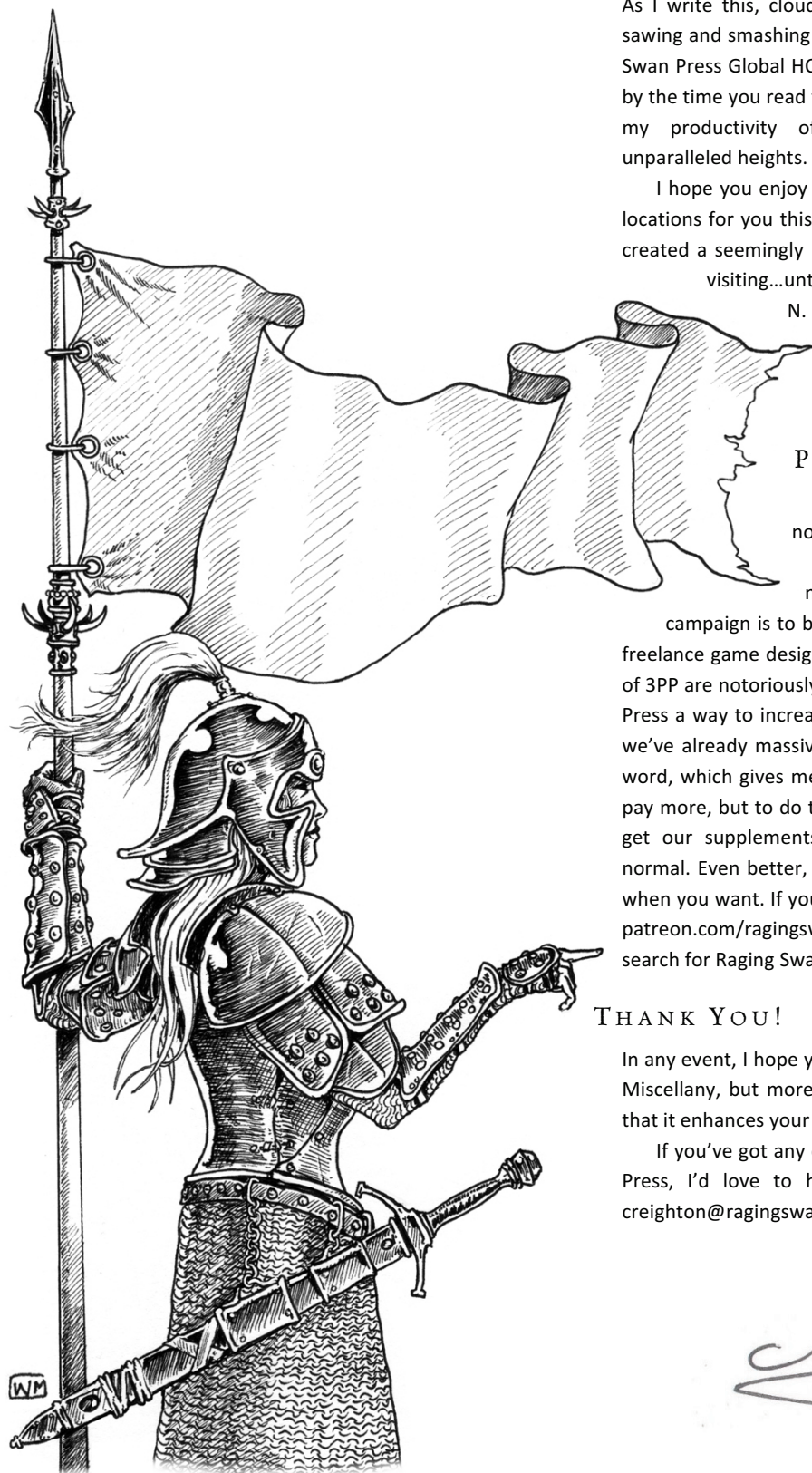
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As I write this, clouds of dust and the sounds of hammering, sawing and smashing fill the air! After months of waiting, Raging Swan Press Global HQ is undergoing “a bit” of a refit. Hopefully, by the time you read this, I’ll have moved into my new office and my productivity of design will have reached hitherto unparalleled heights. Well, that’s the plan anyway!

I hope you enjoy this month’s issue; we’ve got two cracking locations for you this month. In the Soulspur Inn, Josh Vogt has created a seemingly pleasant and welcoming inn the PCs enjoy visiting...until they discover its dark secret. And David

N. Ross has penned a unique lizardfolk settlement your PCs won’t forget visiting! I hope both locales can find a place in your campaign.

PATREON

You might be aware Raging Swan Press is now on Patreon. We signed up at the start of April 2015, and it’s going rather marvellously. The thrust of our Patreon campaign is to be able to afford better rates of pay for our freelance game designers. As I’m sure you know, the economics of 3PP are notoriously tight, but Patreon gives us at Raging Swan Press a way to increase our freelancer rates. At time of writing, we’ve already massively increased our word rate to 11 cents a word, which gives me a warm, fuzzy feeling inside. We want to pay more, but to do that we need your help! If you sign up, you get our supplements earlier than normal and cheaper than normal. Even better, you can pledge what you want and cancel when you want. If you are interested in supporting us, check out patreon.com/ragingswanpress or head over to patreon.com and search for Raging Swan!

THANK YOU!

In any event, I hope you enjoy the material in this GM’s Monthly Miscellany, but more importantly I hope you find it useful and that it enhances your campaign.

If you’ve got any comments or questions about Raging Swan Press, I’d love to hear from you. You can contact me at creighton@ragingswan.com.

4 REASONS TO ADVENTURE LATER IN LIFE

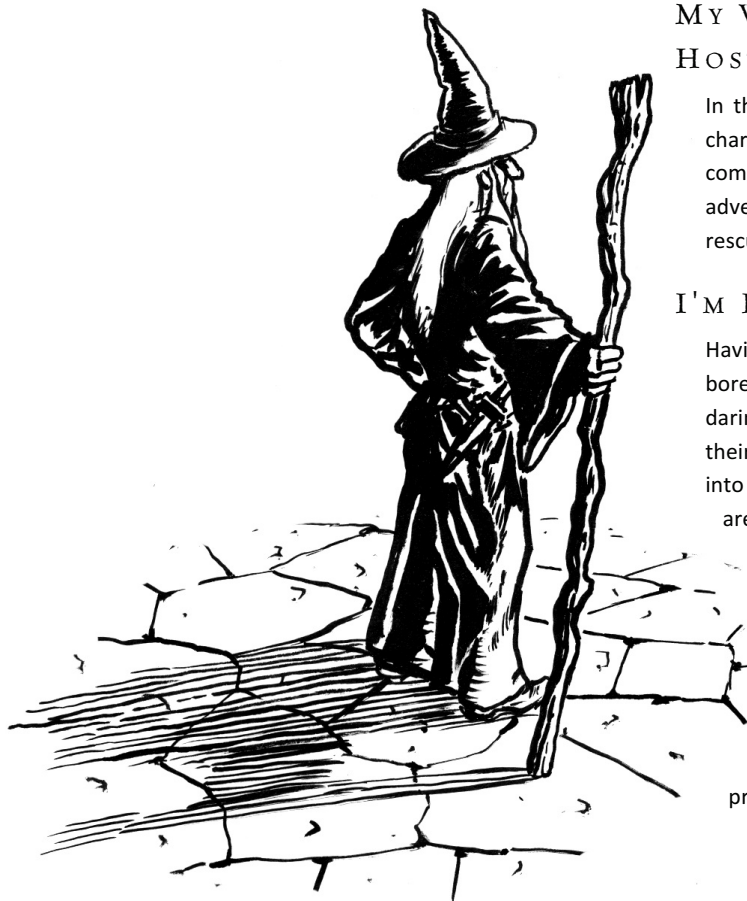
Most adventurers are young striplings, fresh out of adolescence. Hell, depending on your game system or edition, half-orcs can take up an adventurer's life at the tender age of fifteen!

Normally, during character generation, a player rolls his character's age, notes it on his character sheet and then forgets all about it. Basically, a character's age has no real impact on the game at all. That's cool and all, but sometimes its fun to use a character's age as part of his background.

While many adventurers are no doubt young (and annoyingly healthy), there is a place in many parties for older adventurers. I don't mean by this, an elf or a dwarf. While they have lived decades or perhaps even centuries, they are still young.

Rather, sometimes a player might get a hankering to play an older character—a grizzled man-at-arms or aged wizard, for example. While such a character could have any of the typical reasons for adventuring he or she might have other reasons for taking up an adventurer's mantle later in life.

Here is a selection of such reasons.



I'M FIGHTING FOR MY FAMILY

The character's family is in terrible danger. This danger could come from rampaging orcs, a sinister local lord hell-bent on persecuting them or some other source. Alternatively, the family could be destitute for some reasons (perhaps the sinister local lord has raised taxes to intolerable levels or the local economy has collapsed) and adventuring is the best way the character has of providing for them.

YOU KILLED MY WIFE/HUSBAND/CHILD

Sometimes a young adventurer embraces the adventuring lifestyle because he seeks revenge against the person who slew his mother or father. An older character could also out for revenge after his family has been ripped apart, but in this instance, it might be a wife, husband or child that has been slain. Alternatively, the character's relative(s) could still be alive, but have been taken by slavers, imprisoned by a local lord as hostages and so on and the character works to free them.

MY WIFE/HUSBAND/CHILD IS A HOSTAGE

In this scenario, someone has imprisoned one or more of the character's family and is using them to force the character to complete some task. The character—left with no real choice—adventures to complete the task or perhaps to gain the means to rescue his family.

I'M HAVING A MID-LIFE CRISIS

Having reached middle-age, the character has realised he is bored of his safe, "normal" life and craves a life of adventure, daring and glory. The character has left his family—perhaps with their blessing or perhaps without their blessing—and sets out into the world to experience all it has to offer. Such characters are perhaps even more carefree and hedonistic than normal adventurers.

A FINAL (WARNING) NOTE

Using a character's age as a dynamic part of his background and personality is cool. Using a character's age to get bonuses to your prime requisite(s) is cheesy. GMs—keep an eye out for this practise!

DAWNMARSH AT A GLANCE

Ruler: Lightkeeper Kassarin the Wise

Government: Magical

Alignments: NG, N

Population: 144 (126 lizardfolk, 8 humans, 4 elves, 3 half-orcs, 2 halflings, 1 half-elf)

Notable Folk: Huntmaster Esskavril the Silent (location 3), Inskaraz (location 2), Second Lightkeeper Vassessar (location 6), Storyteller Ssimneer (location 8)

Languages: Common, Draconic

Qualities: Holy site, prosperous

Corruption: -5; **Crime:** -1; **Economy:** +0; **Law:** -1; **Lore:** +2; **Society:** -2

Danger: 0

MARKETPLACE

Resources & Industry: Furs, guides, medicines, mounts

Base Value: 650 gp; **Purchase Limit:** 3,750 gp; **Spellcasting:** 6th (Askavirin at location 1, Kassarin the Wise at location 7, Sakaril at location 4, Storyteller Ssimneer at location 8, Vassessar at location 6); **Minor Items:** 2d4; **Medium Items:** 1d4; **Major Items** –

Built centuries ago where the Sunsilver River and Dragonhorn River meet, Dawnmarsh serves as a vital trade hub between lizardfolk of the Great Marsh and outsiders. Its famous Dawn Shrine was founded after a lizardfolk druid serving the sun deity freed the village by slaying the legendary spirit naga Lissendia. Since then, the shrine's Lightkeepers have gradually expanded Dawnmarsh's trade network. Ninety years ago, Lightkeeper Salkessk began seeking trade with non-lizardfolk outside the Great Marsh. Most lizardfolk distrust other humanoids, but Dawnmarshers mostly try to be welcoming. Some lizardfolk are only comfortable trading with outsiders in a glade just outside of Dawnmarsh. They see welcoming non-lizardfolk into Dawnmarsh as sacrilege against the Dawn Shrine. Trade has brought whispers of violent backlash from other lizardfolk, undead awoken by foreign burial rites and rising cultural tensions.

VILLAGE LORE

A PC making a Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check may know something about Dawnmarsh. A successful check gains all the information revealed by a lesser result.

DC 10: Dawnmarsh is an unusually open lizardfolk village at the edge of the Great Marsh. It's known for exclusive lizardfolk wares like regenerative tonics brewed at the sacred Dawn Shrine and trained riding lizards.

DC 15: Dawnmarshers depend on other lizardfolk's fear of mammalian humanoids for their large profit margins, since that leaves them the only intermediaries.

DC 20: Some lizardfolk believe Lightkeeper Kassarin the Wise has compromised religious tradition to satisfy traders. The traditionalists wish to violently expel foreigners.

VILLAGERS

Appearance: Dawnmarshers lizardfolk average of six to seven feet tall but are often wiry, weighing 190 to 225 pounds. The most common scale colours are deep green and dark brown.

Dress: Dawnmarsher males display culture and wealth with colourful scale-paint and bright fabrics. They wear light, airy fabrics in the day—normally a decorative scarf in summer—and heavily layered furs at night. Females wear similar clothing, but tend toward earthy colours. Dawnmarshers who deviate from tradition stand out, but don't cause fuss. Non-lizardfolk mostly wear voluminous clothing to ward off biting insects.

Nomenclature: Most lizardfolk names are not gender-specific. They do not use surnames but record lineage with recurring sounds within names. *examples* Amarress, Arrizkil, Kalriss, Makkil, Rizgar, Ssemkir, Ynnraz

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

A PC can use Diplomacy to gather information about Dawnmarsh and its surroundings. This takes 1d4 hours and requires a DC 10 check. A PC gains one additional rumour for each 5 points by which the check result exceeds DC 10. Use the table below, to determine which rumour(s) the PC learns.

D6	RUMOUR
1	Disaffected youth have been swayed by the speeches of Sesskar the Great, chief of the Dragon Fang tribe.
2	The Riverrunner Company has a campsite for the upcoming Solstice Festival despite lizardfolk who say it's unsafe outside the village at night. The Riverrunners say Dawnmarshers want to stop them trading with the other lizardfolk.
3*	The Dawnmarshers' sun goddess is secretly a black dragon demanding offerings of treasure stolen from visitors or sacrifices of "lost" humanoid traders.
4	A soggy humanoid has been seen watching the Dawn Shrine from a hiding-spot on the southern river bank.
5	No one wants to die in Dawnmarsh. Visitors fear their bodies will be eaten; lizardfolk fear theirs won't be.
6	Chief storyteller Simneer has been using technicalities to obstruct Inskaraz's and Aurelian's marriage because he's bitter at their happiness.

*False rumour

NOTABLE LOCATIONS AT A GLANCE

Most of Dawnmarsh comprises peasant homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Market Circle:** Here, people of all kinds trade at the encouragement of Askivirin, the apprentice Storyteller. It is the best place to find a deal on a wide variety of lizardfolk goods as well as whatever goods traders have brought in from beyond the Great Marsh.
2. **The Basking Butterfly:** Dawnmarsh's only tavern is a magnet for unconventional lizardfolk and traders. It is also the only inn with private rooms and beds in the human style. These amenities are arranged by its human proprietor Aurelian, who co-owns the inn with his lizardfolk husband-to-be Inskaraz.
3. **House of Hunters:** The House of Hunters is home to lizardfolk who hunt, trap or fish for a living. They offer their services as guides and sell trained lizard mounts to trusted clients (with Huntmaster Esskavril's approval).
4. **House of Snakes:** The home of Sakaril the Poisoner is popular with those interested in alchemy as well as hunters and warriors who understand the usefulness of poison. Many snakes also dwell therein.
5. **Greatmarsh Lodge:** Greatmarsh Lodge, is much older than the Basking Butterfly and offers traditional lizardfolk meals and lodgings. It is popular with visiting lizardfolk and with traders who can't afford the Basking Butterfly. Its matron is Ssarkisk.
6. **Sunrise House:** The Lightkeeper priests as well as the chief Storyteller and his apprentices share this house, along with their extended families. Second Lightkeeper Vassessar sell elixirs brewed using ancient recipes.
7. **Dawn Shrine:** The holiest place in Dawnmarsh, and for a great distance around, the Dawn Shrine is dedicated to the sun and to the lizardfolk sun deity. It is a place of rest, warmth and healing for the lizardfolk and for all respectful petitioners. It is also the effective seat of government and judgement for the small settlement. The priests sell divine scrolls, potions and blessings of the sun. The high priest is Lightkeeper Kassarin the Wise.
8. **Portage Glade:** The Portage Glade offers an isolated place for lizardfolk traders from the surrounding tribes who are uncomfortable trading directly with mammalian foreigners. Storyteller Ssimneer keeps an eye on Dawnmarsh youths who do much of the selling.



SOULSPUR INN AT A GLANCE

Ruler Erlgamm

Population 15 (4 humans, 1 dwarf, 3 half-elves, 3 halflings, 4 undead)

Alignments LE

Languages Common

Resources & Industry Lodgings, meat pies, spiced ales

The ever-present Erlgamm is the undeniable mistress of Soulspur Inn—a benevolent innkeeper, who welcomes the weary, injured and lonesome to her hearth and refreshes their spirits while listening to their tales of wonder and woe.

Soulspur Inn has been around for well over a century, and is marked on many a map passed between adventurers, merchants and other travellers. It is renowned for both the warm welcome found within and the safety its stout walls provide. What no-one knows, however is that its owner—Erlgamm—is a powerful necromancer and would-be lich. She uses her power to hide the handful of undead she keeps around, and uses the travellers who pass through her doors as sources of information, relics and—occasionally—fresh corpses.

While brightly lit, Soulspur Inn has its shadows and dark cellars. While the inn shows the regular wear-and-tear of an establishment that serves the common rabble, everything is kept neat and tidy by the staff.

LORE

A PC making a Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check may know some facts about Soulspur Inn. A successful check reveals all the information revealed by a lesser check.

DC 10: Soulspur Inn is a welcome respite on the trail. Its mistress is kind, the food plentiful and the spiced ale is a particular speciality!

DC 15: Soulspur Inn is considered neutral ground when it comes to legal or moral conflicts. Erlgamm welcomes all to her hearth, and does not brook conflicts or violence even between those of differing values or codes of conduct.

DC 20: A small cemetery is located not far off, providing a final resting place for the poor souls who perished along the road or succumbed to their wounds after they reached the inn.

MARKETPLACE

Erlgamm does not advertise her magical abilities, but has a few items for sale. If asked, she explains their previous owners couldn't afford to pay their bills and left them in exchange.

- **Consumables:** *scroll of spider climb* (150 gp), *scroll of speak with animals* (25 gp), *wand of command* (4 chgs.; 60 gp)
- **Other:** *elixir of love* (150 gp), *bird feather token* (300 gp)

NOTABLE FOLK

Most of the folk at the inn are nothing more than ordinary travellers or locals.

- **Appearance:** A motley lot of all ages and races. Almost everyone has a road-weary look.
- **Dress:** Common clothing—travelling cloaks, mud-caked boots and heavy leather vestments. Most folks, except for the staff, are prepared for long days on muddy and dusty roads.

Erlgamm is the sole major NPC at Soulspur Inn:

- **Erlgamm** (LE female half-elf necromancer 10) The welcoming mistress of the inn has a dark secret.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

A PC can use Diplomacy to gather information about Soulspur Inn and its surroundings. This takes 1d4 hours and requires a DC 10 check. A PC exceeding this check gains one additional rumour for each 5 points by which he exceeded DC 10. Use the table below to determine which rumour(s) the PC learns.

D6	RUMOUR
1	No one knows how Erlgamm came to own the inn. She's just always been there. But who cares? Who'd want to replace her?
2	At least a dozen travellers have set out from the inn with the full intent to return—but never did. Most figure ill fortune befell them on the road, but some say they never left at all.
3*	"Erlgamm's a twin, tis true! That's why she's always a hustlin' and bustlin' with nary a wink of sleep. She and her sis just swap over soon as one gets too tired."
4	Erlgamm's got a soft spot for priests. Doesn't matter what faith they follow, a priest will always find a free meal and bed in Soulspur Inn.
5	No-one knows the inn's age; it's always been there.
6*	Every traveller leaves something behind by accident, sooner or later. The Soulspur Inn has a secret stash of such forgotten goods and relics.

*False rumour

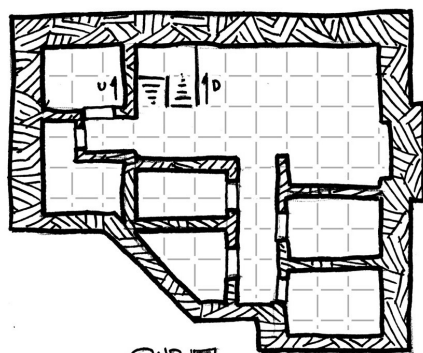
IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Inns are a mainstay of most campaigns, providing havens for the PCs to rest and gather news. As described, Soulspur Inn stands amid a scattering of peasant huts but could be set in almost any village, town or city. It can even stand elsewhere—perhaps at a lonely crossroads—far out in the wilds.

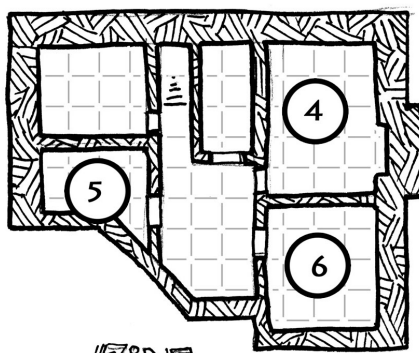
NOTABLE LOCATIONS AT A GLANCE

Most of Soulspur Inn comprises unremarkable locations. A few locations, however, are exceptional:

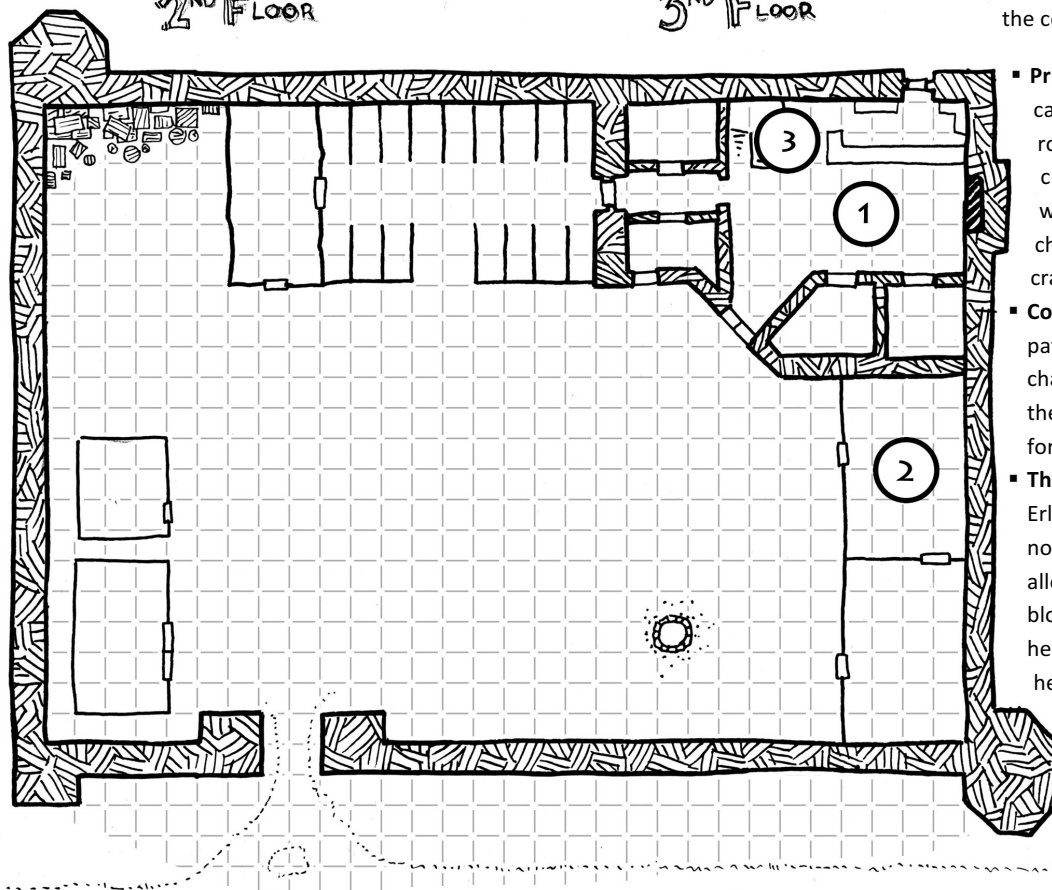
1. **The Commons:** Here guests and locals alike can rest, drink, eat and enjoy one another's company.
2. **The Spice Room:** This locked and warded room holds several vats and tubs.
3. **Bone Cellar:** Below the inn lies the Bone Cellar. Along with the inn's supplies, Erlgamm keeps several mindless undead minions here.
4. **Erlgamm's Laboratory:** In the rare hours where Erlgamm isn't tending to her guests, she's often here, brewing potions or tinctures to further her necromantic studies.
5. **Phylactery Den:** This small chamber is locked. The crystal vial intended to contain her soul on becoming a lich is contained within and is Erlgamm's most precious possession. A few undead servitors also lurk here.
6. **Arcane Study:** Erlgamm's office doubles as a study. Here she pores over the various tomes and scrolls she's acquired over the years.



2ND FLOOR



3RD FLOOR



UNKEYED AREAS

The map has several unkeyed areas.

Ground Floor: The inn's ground floor comprises various storerooms and a kitchen along with stables and so on.

Second Floor: The second floor is wholly given over to guests. Here guests can opt to rent their own room or sleep in the communal dormitory.

▪ **Private Room:** For 2 gp, a guest can hire a comfortable double room. Well-appointed with chest, table and chair along with two single beds the chamber is warm (if a little cramped).

▪ **Common Chamber:** 5 sp buys a patch of floor in the common chamber; guests must bring their own bedrolls and blankets for Erlgamm provides none.

▪ **Third Floor:** The third floor is Erlgamm's domain. No-one—not even her (living) staff—are allowed past the heavy curtain blocking the stairs leading to her personal quarters. Here is her ordered and tidy bedroom along with various work chambers. Magical wards on the curtain alert Erlgamm to intruders in her chambers.

1,000 ABNORMAL KOBOLDS

Creatures of the dark and the underworld, while physically unassuming kobolds proclaim themselves scions of the mighty dragons and as such destined to rule the earth.

Tribal creatures, they hate gnomes and bright light. While they attack the former on sight, they shy away from the latter whenever possible. Kobolds are often derided by players as no threat and given little or no design time by GMs. However, they can be so much more!

A standard kobold appears thusly:

Short and scaly, this long-tailed humanoid has a teeth-filled snout.

APPEARANCE

To the basic description above, apply one of the entries below:

1. This kobold's scales are a deep rusty black, making it hard to spot when it lurks among the shadows.
2. While this kobold's scales are mainly a dark, rusty brown a swath of scales on its back have a deep, crimson hue.
3. A crude, dirty bandage encrusted with dried blood is wrapped around this kobold's right upper arm.
4. Both this kobold's ears have multiple piercings, with tiny bones—perhaps finger bones—threaded through them.
5. Scars criss-cross this kobold's chest. Around each scar, its scales are discoloured and sickly-looking.
6. This kobold wears an over-sized patchwork poncho made up of small pieces of many different garments. Red, orange and yellow colours predominate.
7. With baleful, pale yellow eyes this kobold has the faint whiff of the demonic about it.
8. While its fellow all have long tails, this kobold's has been hacked off in some previous battle. Only a ragged stump remains.
9. This warrior has previously suffered a head wound. A dirty, bloody bandage is wrapped around its head. Blood oozes down its forehead and onto its left cheek.
10. Carrying a comically oversized axe, this kobold grunts and strains under the weight of its weapon. The battle axe is of dwarven manufacture, and the kobold struggles to wield it effectively in battle.

BATTLE TACTICS

In battle, some kobolds fight differently to their brethren (although none of them fight fair):

1. Even more cowardly than its fellows, this kobold is terrified of the sight of blood. As soon as one of its fellows is injured, it flees.

2. This kobold knows how dangerous spellcasters can be; he targets them with missile weapons.
3. A bloodthirsty maniac, and a wanna-be hero, this kobold seeks out the largest enemy...and tries to stab him in the back.
4. Striking from hiding, this kobold is silent while he fights. Even when injured, he doesn't utter a sound—he has learnt that noise often brings death.
5. Initially, this warrior hangs back from battle. He waits for an enemy to fall before rushing in to administer a coup de grace.
6. A thief at heart, this kobold stops fighting to loot the bodies of the fallen, as soon as it is safe to do so.
7. Wearing a bandolier festooned with throwing daggers, this warrior hangs back from combat and hurls his weapons at isolated targets.
8. Confident of this own skills, this warrior attempts to goad enemies into making foolish attacks by yipping insults at them in his high-pitched voice.
9. Partly mad, this kobold can't stop laughing in battle—even when injured. He is fearless and fights to the death, even if the situation is hopeless.
10. This kobold bears a grudge against one of this fellows. If he gets the chance, he surreptitiously stabs his enemy in the back.

TRINKETS & TREASURES

Sometimes, kobolds carry small trinkets or treasures. Sadly, for the PCs, such "special treasures" are often nothing more than junk. Roll on the table below, if you determine the kobold has such treasures:

1. A few rat bones, pieces of fluff and three short lengths of frayed rope.
2. A small blunt knife, a set of partially carved bone dice and 3 cp.
3. A partially eaten, mouldering rat corpse and a thin, broken gold ring (worth 5 gp if repaired).
4. This bloodstained pouch contains a bent iron spike and a dirty steel mirror.
5. Several small mushrooms wrapped in fungus along with 6 cp.
6. Four sling bullets of dwarven craft, flint and steel and a shredded water flask.
7. The rusted hilt of a Medium-sized dagger, three sharp rock shards and the mouldering remains of a rat corpse.
8. A necklace of rat skulls decorated with flakes of rock.
9. A heavy iron key, the stub of a small candle and 1 sp.
10. Four pieces of chalk, three fishhooks and a length of sodden twine.

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