

The Kobold Coalition

by Peter Regan

The Great Forest is a hostile environment for all its inhabitants, but particularly so for Kobolds and Goblins. Mostly, they will only be found there as servants or slaves to tribes of larger goblinoids. However, several years ago, a maverick kobold called Kamrun, formed an alliance between his tribe, and a group of goblins. Together, they escaped from their ogre masters.

After months hiding in the forest, the kobolds and goblins found a hidden cave complex that they have now adapted and extended. From there, they launch scavenging raids, stealing what they can from neighbouring tribes of ogres, bugbears and orcs. The goblin leader, Clug, is a fierce warrior, and his goblins are surprisingly well trained and equipped for goblins. Kamrun is an expert trapmaker, and, with the help of several apprentices, has heavily rigged the hidden entrance to the caves to deal with any unwanted visitors. The kobolds and goblins live in separate areas of the caves, and whilst they are happy to work together for common goals, they do not otherwise socialize. Sometimes in-fighting breaks out between them over food, treasure, or other resources, but it rarely leads to bloodshed.

This adventure is ideal for dropping into any sandbox campaign. It may be played as a straight dungeon crawl, but it also has the potential for more, should the adventurers seek to interact with the kobolds and/or goblins - That is, assuming that the adventurers survive the extensive traps set at the entrance!

1 The thick trees and undergrowth suddenly stop here. A steep earth slope drops down about 20', and then the undergrowth resumes. Directly ahead, there is a cliff face about 80' tall. At its base, there is a narrow opening, no more than a couple of feet wide. A search of the area will reveal a concealed rope on the right side of the earth slope. It makes scrambling down the slope relatively easy. However, as soon as the first character treads on the ground at the bottom of the slope, the 6 archer bushes there will attack.

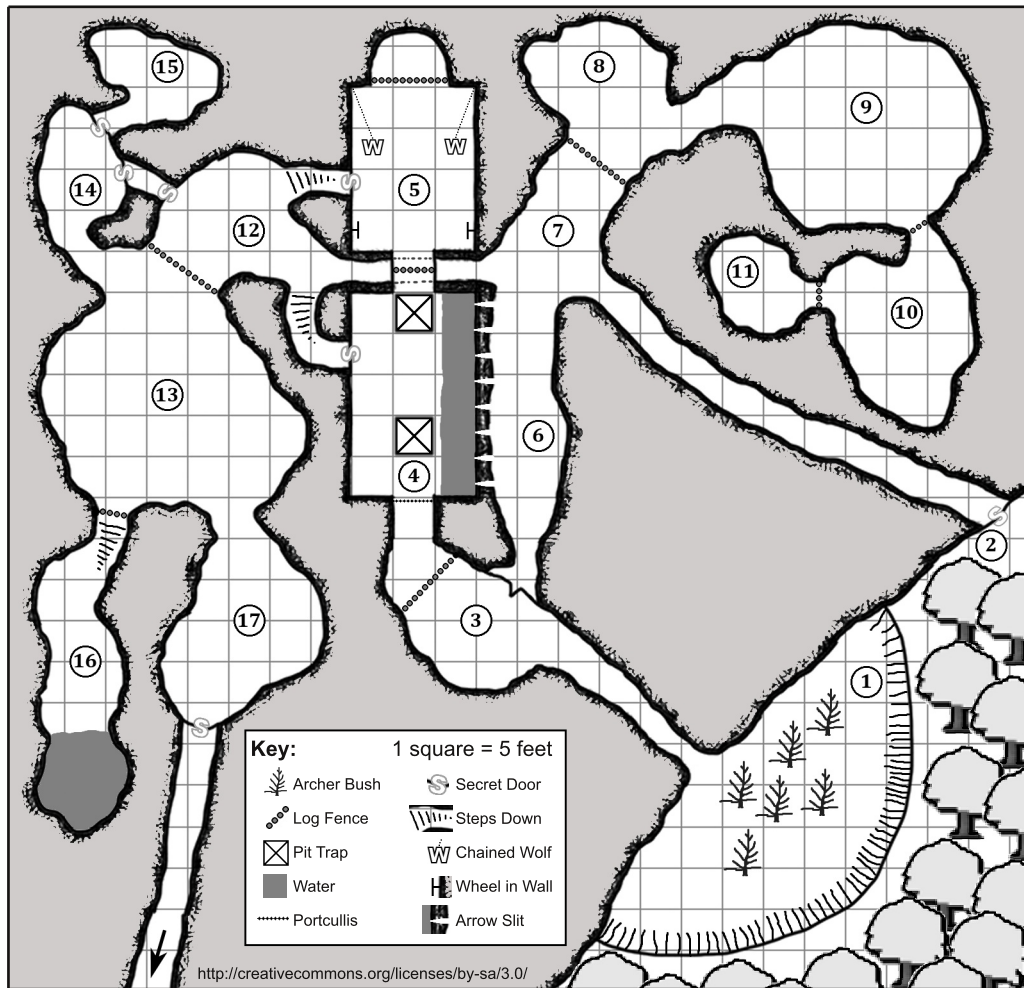
2 Well hidden, and about 12' up the cliff face, is a secret entrance to the caves.

3 A narrow passageway leads from the gap in the cliff for about 20', and then opens into a small cave. Ahead, there is a log fence with a crude wooden gate in the middle. Around 20' up, there is a concealed ledge that allows someone at **6** to discretely observe those below.

4 Beyond the fence, the stone walls have been roughly worked, and they open out into a small chamber. The floor has a gentle slope and a stagnant body of water about 4' wide has collected along the right (lower) side. There are two pit traps (both 1d6 damage) in the room. The first is not very well made and should be quite easy for an observant character to spot. The second has been expertly concealed. Once the characters pass or trigger the first trap, a portcullis drops at the entrance to the room, blocking any retreat. High above, 8 goblins with crossbows will start shooting at any characters below. If the characters stay in the water, the goblins cannot get line of sight to shoot them. However, the goblins will then pull a lever that releases 4 spitting cobras into the water. The only visible exit to the room, has another log fence and gate. The gate is fastened from the other side and may only be opened by cutting away some of the twine securing it (takes 2-4 rounds). On the left wall, there is a small secret door, beyond which is a narrow passageway with steps that lead up to area **12**.

5 At the rear of this chamber, covering most of the far wall, is a log fence with large double gates in the centre. On either side of these, is a ravenous wolf, secured by an iron collar and chain. In each corner, level with the entrance to the room, is a large wooden wheel, attached to a mechanism in the wall. These wheels retract the chains holding the wolves. The kobolds also have a release lever for the chains, that they will use at an opportune moment. If the double gates are opened, it is immediately clear that they are decoys, as there is no chamber beyond them, just a few feet of unworked cavern wall. However, opening the the gates will also cause 6 small buckets of oil to be tipped out, covering anyone within 5 feet of the gates. After this trap is triggered, the goblins and kobolds will prepare flaming arrows and crossbow bolts for their archers. On the left wall, there is a small secret door, beyond which is a narrow passageway with steps that lead up to area **12**.

6 This cave serves as the shooting gallery that looks onto area **4**. There are 8 arrow slits which allow about 75% of the floor below to be targeted. There is also a lever here for releasing the snakes into water. At the end of the cave, there is a ledge that looks down onto area **3**, some 20' below. The ledge has been cut to blend in with the cavern wall, making it almost impossible to spot from below. At all times, there will be 2 kobolds near the ledge, and they will alert the rest of the community as soon as they notice any intruders.



7 A large log fence has been built across this cave. There is a wooden gate that is held shut by a bar on the other side. The fence also has 2 small hatches (1 each on each side of the gate). The cave has two passageways leading from it. The first crosses over the top of areas **4** and **5**, and gives access to the kobold lair at **12**. The other leads to the secret entrance to the caves at **2**.

8 This cave is occupied by 2-4 goblins at all times. They guard the gate which opens into **7**. They will defend against intruders, and call for reinforcements from **9** as required.

9 The bulk of the goblins spend their time here. There will normally be 13-18 goblins here, of which 8 will be sent to area **6** in order to shoot any intruders if called upon to do so.

10 This is Clug's private cave and he keeps the log gate at the entrance closed at all times. In the years since he helped free the other goblins from the captivity of the ogres, he has changed from being a hero figure and freedom fighter, into a cruel tyrant. He does not trust his fellow goblins and has secretly grown to despise the kobolds. He is also obsessed with hoarding food, treasure, and just about anything else he can drag to his cave. Strewn around the floor are various useless items including empty sacks, crates, broken armour, weapons etc..

11 The log gate leading to this cave is protected by a poorly-made trap (+30% on any detection roll). If the gate is forced, it will open with a 50% chance that the loaded crossbow inside the cave will be triggered. The cave is used by Clug to store his treasure, and other items which he perceives as being of value. There are two badly-made wooden chests. (They will break if they are lifted without first being emptied). One contains 560gp, 867sp and a pouch with 20 gems worth 5gp each. The other is filled with 1,253cp. Hidden amongst the copper coins is a smaller box which holds 5 black iron keys that Clug stole from the ogres. The walls of the cave are covered with animal skins that, for the most part, are rotten - but there are a couple that might still be worth something. There is also a large leather pouch hanging from a spike that contains dozens of teeth, which Clug has removed from various creatures.

12 This area marks the beginning of the kobold-inhabited section of the cave complex. A log fence, with just a small kobold-sized gate, seals it off from the main kobold cave at **13**. The cave's ceiling is rigged to collapse (2d8 damage or half with a successful save), but the kobolds will only trigger it as a last-ditch defence. A secret door to the right of the fence opens into a short, secret passageway that ends at the rear workings of another secret door. There are also 2 passageways, with steep steps, which lead down to the back of the secret doors in areas **4** and **5**.

13 This cave is where most of the kobold tribe are to be found. There will be 19-24 of them, and of these, 4 will be actively guarding the log fence which separates this cave from area **12**. The rest of the kobolds are eating, tinkering, squabbling, and getting up to all manner of koboldy shenanigans. There are 3 exits leading from this cave into other areas. 2 of these exits are open, but the one at the rear of the cave is covered by a wooden gate, held in place by several wooden bars. To the side of the gate, leaning against the wall, are a dozen, 6-foot long, unlit torches.

14 This is Kamrun's private cave which, by kobold standards, he keeps relatively clean and tidy. Normally, he will be found here, sleeping on a straw cot, or working on a new trap design. He has various trap-making tools and materials tucked away around the place. On his person, he carries an ornately-decorated short sword, a *potion of speed* with 3 doses remaining, and 6 small, silver keys. In combat, he is far more powerful than a rank and file kobold, and this should be reflected in his stats. There are 2 secret doors in the cave. One leads to Kamrun's treasure cave, and the other opens into a secret passageway that connects with area **12** via another secret door.

15 Kamrun keeps the wealth of his tribe here in 3 identical, strongly-made, locked, wooden chests. The first contains 897gp, 362sp, 405cp and a pouch with 124pp in it. The second contains 2 spitting cobras in one compartment of the chest and a pouch with dozens of gems of many different types, worth in total about 3,000gp, in the other. Any of his 6 keys will open this chest, but 5 of them will also open the compartment containing the snakes. The third chest contains items which Kamrun has not been able to identify. There are several potions, a couple of maps, and a scroll case with several papers in it (these are left to the GMs choice, or roll randomly to determine what they are).

16 The kobolds collect water from this cave. There are steep steps leading down into the cave, and the floor continues to slope down until it becomes submerged by water from an underground spring. There is a 50% chance of encountering 2-8 giant water rats in this cave. The rats will wait until their prey nears the water's edge before attacking, and will flee under the water if badly wounded. The kobolds use long, wooden, flaming torches and food scraps to keep the rats at bay whenever they need to fetch water.

17 This cavern is used as a sleeping area by the kobolds. Their gear is strewn about the place, and the kobold's filth and mess foul the air. At the back of the cave, there is a secret door which opens to reveal a narrow passageway with a low ceiling, just tall enough for a kobold. The passageway is the kobolds' escape tunnel. It runs in a straight line for about 80' and then ends at a secret door which opens on to the forest floor.