A GB ROAD GAME



THE Borter Brothers Rescue

A one-shot adventure compatible with Dungeons & Dragons.

INTRODUCTION

This book is written for the Game Master (GM). It contains a compatible adventure designed for use with *Dungeons & Dragons* fifth edition (5e), released in 2014 or the 2024 updated version, and assumes familiarity with the basic rules. It introduces an accessible, linear story set in outlying western villages on the continent of Motopia.

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RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The Borter Brothers Rescue is a one-shot fantasy adventure for three to four players, using characters at 3rd level. It is designed for roughly three to four hours of play. You will find four unique pre-made characters to use in this book!

This one-shot adventure is meant to have a linear structure. However, the story is designed with various branching paths, ensuring your players are not always crowded together in one narrative. The variety of choices still allows player agency, and every path leads to a range of conclusions based on those choices.

This module is divided into the following sections:

- **The Plot** section informs you, the GM, of the overarching story that will be told.
- **The Beginning** section jumps right into the game and contains the first scenarios.
- **The Break** section can be used for a time-out and allows you, the GM, to recap the current state of the story.
- **The Endings** section contains the final confrontation and its repercussions.
- **The Farewell** section provides the wrap-up for the possible choices made throughout the game.
- **The Maps** section contains visual aids and layouts for use on tabletops or virtual systems.
- **The Crew** section includes all pre-made character sheets and stat blocks.
- **The Huh?** section contains references to this book's functionality and other pertinent information.

As the GM, your role is to run the game. You will be narrating, refereeing, roleplaying the story's characters, and adjudicating or improvising when needed. Above all else, you are responsible for driving the story forward with your players. This is a collaborative process, after all.

Remember, this game has multiple pathways to explore, so let your players roam freely! The focus may switch between players at any time, but rest assured, the story brings everyone back together for the finale without letting them stray too far from each other. If the party is split across different areas, allow players to resolve scenarios in turns.

"The intended DC" — This phrase appears in many sections of the game and denotes the scenario's suggested DC for checks and interactions. Feel free to adjust it to suit your play style.

Before you begin your role as GM, it is important to read through this book. Chance plays a part in the storytelling, and having a clear idea of the narrative's progression will help you keep everything on track for your players.

Reviewing the accompanying maps and non-player character (NPC) stat blocks will likely be your most helpful tool in understanding the layout of the area and the characters in this game.

And if you dive right in before reading everything, don't worry: each numbered scenario follows a natural progression based on player choice, so this module will guide you along the way as the choices stack up.

THE PLOT

Below is a general summary of the plot, which, along with the rest of this book, will help you understand the flow of the game. Do not share this information with your players; the text below helps you, the GM, understand the story (and game) structure.

Charles Borter arrived sobbing, begging for help at whatever local tavern or inn happened to be open that night. He claimed his brother Larry had gone missing only one day prior.

These two brothers (Charles and Larry) ran Borter Farms on the west side of the continent, far outside the domain of the larger empires that stretch across the lands.

It's not uncommon for a local from this area to occasionally be taken by the wilds. Charles's cries for help were mostly left unanswered until he turned to you directly and promised a fair amount of gold in return. You could not turn down that offer.

He said his brother Larry never returned from the capital city of Bemopolis, where he was delivering a bag of lemons.

What no one knows is that Larry was taken by an orc named Fret Clubber and his gang of cannibal goblins who lurk along Port Bridge.

If he is not rescued soon, he may be Fret's dinner! Charles leads the party toward the last path his brother took. A crew of flesh-eating ruffians led by Fret has taken refuge in a small cave under Port Bridge.

Can the players make it in time to rescue Larry and ensure nothing happens to Charles, too, while taking down the cannibal Fret? Will they recover the lemon delivery, or will the adventure turn sour?

THE BEGINNING

The adventure begins halfway across Port Bridge, a common passage that runs toward the capital city of Bemopolis, used by the merchants and farmers who trade goods on this side of the world.

Your characters have all arrived, equally committed to rescuing Larry. His brother Charles has hired you for 100 GP and led you to this point, helping you trace the path Larry would have taken before his disappearance. If players ask about payment, Charles confirms the 100 GP fee. Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *The wooden planks of Port Bridge creak underfoot. Far below, rushing water crashes lightly against the shore.*
>
> *This far from any real city, the farms and hamlets of Motopia don't have the means to defend themselves against the wilds. That's why folks like you get paid to help some poor soul in need.*
>
> *Your poor soul is Charles Borter, a few steps behind you. His brother Larry was due home at Borter Farms a full day ago, back from a lemon delivery to the capital city of Bemopolis. This bridge is his halfway point.*
>
> *The end of the bridge is in sight. The sun is slowly setting.*
>
> *And there, strewn to one side of the planks, lies a lute.*

This is a great moment to have your players introduce their characters and describe their appearance, class, and species, or if they have any personality traits or background notes they wish to share. Do their characters have history with the other player characters?

1. EAST PORT BRIDGE

Have your players stand on the bridge, ready to approach the lute, and note that Charles will take up a stance further behind the party. **See map marker: 1. East Port Bridge**

Charles will immediately exclaim, in a worried tone, that the lute looks familiar and suggests that someone check it out. Players can then choose who checks out the musical instrument. The intended DC is 10 for this interaction.

✔ **Success:** Any player who inspects the instrument will notice the initials LB carved into the underside.

Players may also notice a pool of almost-dried human blood just a few feet away from where the lute was found, suggesting a struggle.

✘ **Failure:** If players do not find the initials, Charles will mention that this is his brother's lute. There is also no sign of the lemon delivery.

Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *It's obvious that this instrument belongs to Larry, and its presence suggests this may have been the last place he was in good health.*
>
> *The pool of blood seems to smear off toward the end of the bridge, directing you toward the well-trodden merchant path surrounded by forest beyond.*
>
> *However, there may be more to the remains of this struggle worth reviewing on the bridge.*

Charles will take a back seat and wait until the players investigate further for tracks or clues.

Players who search the area will note two particular events on either side of the bridge's exit and get an idea of the bridge's scale, but only after noticing the lute and blood.

At its center, the bridge is roughly 50 feet above the river's water level. The shore is approximately 30 feet above the river's water level, creating a cliff face where the water gently crashes below. *Anyone wishing to know the name of the river may recall it as the Ulen River.*

The players can also discover a goblin ambush silently climbing up on either side of the bridge from below. One goblin from each side and two other goblins from the exit will rush onto the bridge. The goblins that are climbing either side of the bridge can be dealt with before the other two rush onto the bridge. The intended DC is 12 for this interaction; one success is enough for the whole party. **See map marker: 2. Attached Rope 3. Green Fingers**

✔ **Success:** Players will get the drop on the goblins waiting in ambush.

✘ **Failure:** Players will be surprised when attacked.

If any of the players move toward the bridge's exit with no attempt at investigating the area after finding the lute and blood, all four goblins that are lying in wait will attack. *Players can choose to listen or observe the bridge's exit to see what they can find. Determine whether players or goblins are surprised. If the goblins are surprised, determine whether the players discover the ambush before it begins.*

Convey Choice—Did players discover/take Larry's lute, or notice the ambush?

2. ATTACHED ROPE

Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *Over the sound of gentle waves crashing against the shore below, you hear the slightest thud of something hitting the side of the bridge to the north.*
>
> *You notice a very narrow rope and a grappling hook attached to the side of the bridge. Climbing up the rope is an angry-looking goblin, knife clenched in its mouth. Its eyes first convey startled surprise, then rage.*

Players can cut the rope or simply unhook the grappling hook (no blade needed), removing one goblin from the fight as it crashes into the river and is swept away by the current.

Players can also try to interrogate this goblin, but once noticed, the others will attack. *If players can get the drop on the ambush coming from both sides of the bridge, then they will only fight the remaining two goblins who rush up from the ramp toward the bridge's exit.*

Players can take the grappling hook off the rope to use as climbing gear.

Convey Choice—Did players cut the rope or unhook the grapple, take the grappling hook, or interact with the goblin mid-climb?

3. GREEN FINGERS

Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *On the south side of the bridge's exit, you spy small green fingers gripping the structure's edge.*
>
> *They would have almost passed for small leaves or fallen foliage if you were less observant; however, a goblin is attempting to ambush you.*
>
> *It is seconds away from springing into action and attacking, but you've caught it in a precarious situation.*

This goblin's grip on the bridge's side can be broken, sending the creature crashing into the river below. *If players can get the drop on the ambush from both sides of the bridge, then they will only fight the remaining two goblins who rush up from the ramp toward the bridge's exit.*

Convey Choice—Did players break the grip, or interact with the goblin mid-hoist?

4. BRIDGE EXIT

Once the goblins have been dealt with, players will exit the bridge down a slight decline and see a simple, worn path leading to the forest's edge and a slope to the south. **See map marker: 4. Bridge Exit**

Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *Leaving the bridge, you see a well-traveled dirt path with lovely pine trees dotted around its edges and a soft slope to the right leading to a patch of smaller bushes.*
>
> *The weather is cooler now that the sun has started to set.*
>
> *There appears to be no further trace of blood to go on; however, something in this area must contain a clue as to where Larry was taken or where the goblins came from.*
>
> *The only two obvious places to look right now are the raised land above the riverbank to the south and the path ahead that leads to the forest.*

If players want to investigate the path and the surrounding forest, they will find a few crudely made goblin arrows protruding from some trees, suggesting small ambushes may have also happened here recently. Someone has carved the name Fret Clubber into a tree. The intended DC is 12 for this interaction. Use one search roll for the whole area: 12 or higher finds the arrows and the carved name, and 20 or higher also finds the burrow described below.

- ✔ **Success:** Players will find the details about the forest below.
- ✘ **Failure:** They miss the arrows and the carved name.

Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *Your investigation of the surrounding forest has unearthed a few arrows wedged into the trees and a name carved into the bark, Fret Clubber.*
>
> *This suggests a local group of ill-doers is lurking nearby, perhaps preying on unsuspecting travelers.*

While searching the forest above ground, players will also stumble upon a small burrow. This appears to be a hole large enough for one Small or Medium creature to crawl through. If players spot this, they can proceed while Prone and crawl through one at a time to reach the cave. This is a separate find, checked against the same search roll; the intended DC is 20.

- ✔ **Success:** Players will find details about the burrow below.
- ✘ **Failure:** They will miss this entrance to the cavern.

Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *Almost impossible to spot, you find a small burrow that appears partially covered by loose rocks, large enough for a person to crawl through.*
>
> *It appears to lead underground, but it would be a tight squeeze to traverse.*

Charles will not wish to venture into this tunnel and insists on staying outside to keep watch. It is possible to convince Charles to come into the tunnel; however, he will be resistant and has no valuable skills. The intended DC is 15 for this interaction.

This entrance to the cave is a shortcut to the food cage; however, it is blocked at one end by loose stones. **See map marker: 13. Food Cage, 14. The Burrow.**

Upon any further inspection, the other area of note reveals goblin-sized tracks heading down the slope to the south. The slope gently declines for about 30 feet to the water's level, with a few small bushes covering the shore ridge.

The river, while not hazardous in its current state, is so wide that it would be foolish to swim and could result in drowning. Ultimately, it leads nowhere. The same applies to the dirt path and the surrounding forest. Besides the few goblin arrows, there is nothing else in this area to find above ground.

Convey Choice—Did players check out the forest, find the carved name, discover the burrow, and head toward the slope?

5. SLOPE

Players can head toward the slope, which declines about 30 feet down to the water's level. At the base, there are several smaller, thick bushes that appear to have a section slightly worn down, as if something has passed through here often. Just beyond this lies a patchy, boggy area where the water meets the land, and beyond this, a rock outline of a cave entrance can be seen. **See map marker: 6. Cave Entrance**

Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *You head down the grassy hill to the south, following tracks that likely belong to the goblins. It ends with a patch of shrubs, foliage, and other overgrown plants covering the area.*
>
> *There appears to be a small hole in the foliage where the leaves have been torn down that suggests something (or someone) has been moving through here, creating a broken path of sorts in the branches.*
>
> *Barely visible is a section of soil that meets the slowly moving river and what appears to be a rocky outline of a cave entrance.*

Players can move through this bush very easily; however, there is a 3-foot-by-3-foot section of ground that is camouflaged with sticks and twigs. This debris covers a small pitfall trap that, if stepped on, drops the first player who triggers it into a 6-foot-deep hole with sharpened sticks ready to impale them. The intended DC is 15 for this interaction.

- ✔ **Success:** Players can easily maneuver around the camouflaged trap.
- ✘ **Failure:** The first player to step on the trap falls in.

Any player that falls into this trap will take 2d6 Piercing damage. It is easy enough to crawl out of.

Charles will not wish to venture through the bush and insists on staying behind to keep watch. It is possible to convince Charles to go through the bush; however, he will be resistant and has no valuable skills. The intended DC is 15 for this interaction.

Beyond this, players will find sturdy but slightly mushy soil and rugged terrain as they stand in front of a dark cave entrance. **See map marker: 6. Cave Entrance**

Convey Choice—Did players miss the trap or fall into it, and did they ask Charles to go through the bush?

6. CAVE ENTRANCE

Usually obscured from sight while passing over the bridge is a small cave entrance, about 15 feet wide and 10 feet tall. The water level here suggests that the river is temporarily lower than usual, making this cave system, which is not always accessible, reachable. Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *You stand on muddy, wet ground, freshly revealed at this time of year, with the river's level temporarily reduced to allow access to this previously inaccessible cavern. Behind you as you look up at the bridge, you see the last gleam of light disappear off the water's surface.*
>
> *With the sun fully set, it is bleak and shadowy; the cave entrance holds no light and continues into darkness.*
>
> *Caught on a tiny twig among the mucky ground is a small patch of cloth blowing in the breeze.*

A quick check of the cloth reveals it is a piece of an overshirt with some blue embroidery. If shown to Charles, he will mention that this is his brother's style of clothing.

At this point, Charles insists on staying out by the bridge to see if anyone else passes by so he can warn them. He reminds the party that they were hired to find his brother and that he has done his part in tracing the path that led everyone here.

It is possible to convince Charles to come into the cave; however, he will be resistant and has no valuable skills. The intended DC is 15 for this interaction.

If, by chance, the players convince Charles to come along, he will likely fail any attempts at stealth and will always remain at the back of the party.

The cave entrance is dark and heavily obscured when entering, unless anyone has Darkvision or a light source. A goblin torch lies discarded in the mud just inside the entrance, with flint and steel in a pouch beside it. Once lit, it sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for a further 20 feet, and burns for 1 hour.

Without Darkvision or light, the cave is heavily obscured: characters are effectively Blinded, so attack rolls against them have Advantage, their own attack rolls have Disadvantage, and checks that rely on sight automatically fail. The goblins and Fret have Darkvision.

As the party steps inside, read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *The mushy, brown ground becomes sturdy, dark gray stone after venturing into the cave, the water level is low enough to have drained this area. Beyond the reach of your light, the darkness is total.*

When entering, players will have a choice in which direction to navigate, left or right. The left route leads to a path blocked by roots, and the right leads toward the camp. The ceilings here stretch up to 30 feet. **See map marker: 7. Roots 8. Loot & Storage 9. Makeshift Camp**

Convey Choice—Did your players discover Larry's torn cloth, did Charles stay on watch at the bridge, and did players go left or right in the cave?

7. ROOTS

If players head left, they will find a thick wall of underground roots blocking the way, roughly 10 feet deep, stretching up to the ceiling. Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *As you approach a junction, you head left to find knotted, thick roots making the way forward seem impossible.*
>
> *In the distance, a distinct chatter can be heard echoing, indicating the presence of at least two others, but no words can be discerned yet.*
>
> *Further north through the roots, you spot a faint light source around the corner.*

This level of the cave has dark gray stone with 30-foot ceilings, and the roots stretch across the 10-foot-wide passage.

The roots can be cut; however, it will take much more time to do so. It would also need to be done silently. The intended DC is 15 for this interaction. If players make a sound, it will attract the attention of the two goblins at the makeshift camp.

- ✔ **Success:** Players cut through this blockage quickly and silently.
- ✘ **Failure:** They take too much time and attract the attention of the goblins.

This will affect the ending as the time taken to remove this blockage will delay the rescue of Larry. If players make a sound, they will hear footsteps approaching from the other side.

Players who are more direct, hack their way through, and do not hide from the approaching goblins will be noticed. The goblins will take the quickest path toward the players to initiate combat.

The only thing the goblins will say is that they need to remove the intruders before the boss gets home, and that they may be rewarded for capturing more fresh meat. One of the goblins will have a key to the loot & storage chest on their person.

Convey Choice—Did your players silently cut down the roots, or did they attract the attention of the camp goblins?

8. LOOT & STORAGE

If players head right, they will find a passage that splits again; a path forward to the camp, or, before that, a very narrow crevice on the left heading north, only wide enough for one player at a time: Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *As you approach a junction, you head right to find a long stretch of cave that continues into the dark, but*

not before noticing a thin passage on your left, heading north.

Heading up this narrow path, you spot a makeshift ladder propped against the wall, leading up to a small ledge. Further north, you spot a fork in the path with a faint light source coming from the right and darkness to the left.

In the distance, a distinct chatter can be heard echoing, indicating the presence of at least two others, but no words can be discerned yet.

This level of the cave has dark gray stone with 30-foot ceilings.

The ladder extends up roughly 10 feet to a small platform formed from the rock; the ground surface is a lighter gray and less damp, and the ceiling is 20 feet tall. The only items here are a few tattered rugs and a chest that's almost overflowing. It is slightly propped open by an inch, but poorly locked by a bolt and chain.

There are a few useless items in the chest if lockpicked or broken. The intended DC is 10 for this interaction.

- ✔ **Success:** The chest is opened without issue.
- ✘ **Failure:** The lock permanently jams and cannot be opened, unless smashed, which will make a sound.

One of the goblins at the makeshift camp will have a small key labeled "storage" on him that opens the loot & storage chest, unless the lock has jammed.

In the chest, there are mostly worn fabrics, sewing equipment, and empty vials from previous muggings. However, there is one full potion of healing buried under it all. *This will affect the ending as the time taken to investigate this chest will delay the rescue of Larry. Players may skip this ladder entirely and continue to the camp.*

If players make a sound breaking the lock, they will hear footsteps approaching from below the ladder. This 10-foot ladder can be moved.

Players who are more direct and do not hide from the approaching goblins (if a loud sound is made) will be noticed. The goblins will take the quickest path toward the players to fight.

The only thing the goblins will say is that they need to remove the intruders before the boss gets home, and that they may be rewarded for capturing more fresh meat. One of the goblins will have a key to the loot & storage chest.

Convey Choice—Did your players go up the ladder, open the chest, and attract the attention of the camp goblins, or did they bypass it entirely?

9. MAKESHIFT CAMP

There are multiple paths to the camp after entering the cave: through the roots, north past loot & storage, along the main southern unblocked path, or through the burrow and down the rockslide. The campfire dimly lights this section, and there are a few rough, uncomfortable-looking beds and bones from various sources laid around.

This is clearly a hideout of sorts that has been quickly assembled: A place where goblins have been squatting.

If players stick to the main southern unblocked path, ignoring the roots and loot & storage, this affects the ending by saving time during the rescue of Larry.

Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

As you approach deeper into the cave system, you notice a light source filling the path in front of you, and in the distance, a distinct chatter can be heard echoing.

If you stay out of sight, you can see the light from a dim campfire illuminating a few makeshift camp beds, belongings, and bones in poor condition from old meals.

You know there are at least two other goblins conversing ahead of you. If you stay quiet, you can hear the squatters.

Each pathway here will have the faintest source of light from a small fire, casting light on any corner that is used to approach the camp.

As players get close to the camp from any of the entrances, they will hear a conversation between two goblins. Read the following text out loud to your players as the two goblins:

Goblin 1 - "The boss is gonna be back real soon, so just wait a bit longer and it's dinnertime; we were told to wait till sunset, and he'll be back."

Goblin 2 - "If Fret takes his sweet, precious time any more, I may go up to the cage and start chowing down. It's not fair that he gets the best parts."

> *Goblin 1 - "No, you won't mate, he finds out you get an early bite, you're gonna be dessert, besides it's locked, only he knows how to open it up anyway, ya idiot."*
>
> *Goblin 2 - "Fine, it's just boring here, and the bridge group hasn't even come back yet. I'm getting hungry."*

Players can attempt to make it past these goblins any way they choose, but the area is open, and the goblins are sitting by the fire, in full view of all entrances to the campsite. Any player moving into this area is likely to be seen, but a surprise attack is possible. The intended DC is 18 for this interaction.

- ✔ **Success:** Players effectively sneak past or surprise attack.
- ✘ **Failure:** Players will be spotted.

If, at any point, players have taken the goblins out prior to this, they will find the campsite empty with nothing of value there. One of the goblins will have a small key labeled "storage" on him; this opens the loot & storage chest.

Additionally, players who come through the tunnel from the surface burrow may find themselves looking down a rockslide into the camp, where they can also hear the goblins' conversation (if they are there). **See map marker: 14. The Burrow**

Players who fail to come through the burrow quietly will push rocks down the rockslide, alerting the goblins.

Convey Choice—Did your players find a way past the goblins either through distraction or violence?

THE BREAK

Feel free to schedule a break or keep playing depending on progression and pace. At this point in the adventure, players may have done the following across the cave system. Use this list to affirm what has/has not been done in the adventure so far and what potential consequences will exist moving forward.

- ☐ *Survived an ambush on the bridge.*
- ☐ *Taken the grappling hook from the bridge goblin.*
- ☐ *Found evidence of goblins nearby in the forest.*
- ☐ *Discovered the name Fret Clubber carved into a tree.*
- ☐ *Entered the burrow and tunneled to the cave.*
- ☐ *Avoided or fell into the pitfall trap.*
- ☐ *Left Charles on watch outside the cave.*
- ☐ *Brought Charles into the cave.*
- ☐ *Cut through the roots.*
- ☐ *Approached the narrow passage and the loot & storage chest.*
- ☐ *Took the path directly to the camp.*
- ☐ *Killed the two camp goblins.*
- ☐ *Found a key on the camp goblin for the loot & storage chest.*
- ☐ *Snuck around the camp goblins.*

The majority of beginning choices will all take place on the ground floor of the cave, although players may make it to Larry earlier if using the burrow entrance. If players have not explored everything, always allow the option to investigate in a different order. *An example would be to have some players enter the main cave entrance, while others use the burrow.*

The following scenarios will present options for reaching/exploring the upper level of the cave, and what can be accomplished there. **See map marker: 10. Main Ladder, 11. Rockslide, 12. Fret's Trove, 13. Food Cage**

10. MAIN LADDER

Any player who makes it through the roots or takes the main southern unblocked passage will see a 10-foot ladder leaning against a wall, providing an easy way to the upper level of the cave. Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *Ahead you spot a ladder, sturdy and secure. It appears to lead toward a raised section of the cave where you can see the flicker of candlelight.*
>
> *You hear no sounds or disturbances from this raised section of the cave.*

There are no traps on this ladder, just a simple entrance to the food cage and Fret's resting place.

Convey Choice—Did your players go up the ladder, or did they try to move it?

11. ROCKSLIDE

While at the makeshift camp (or at the food cage area), the players will spot a rockslide. It connects the food cage section on the upper level to the camp on the lower level, but it's a difficult, inclined climb. Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *One wall of the camp has many small rocks that seem to have fallen, creating a steep incline of loose earth leading toward the upper level of the cave. You see no light coming from above, just a dark, loose-stone-filled slant, breaking through the wall.*
>
> *It's hard to navigate but passable with some secure footwork or climbing gear. It appears to be easier to descend than climb.*

If players try to climb, this is considered Difficult Terrain to navigate. Without some sort of innovation by the players to secure themselves while climbing, the ground is very loose. The intended DC is 18 for this interaction.

- ✔ **Success:** Players will not dislodge any rocks, preventing noise, and climb swiftly.
- ✘ **Failure:** Players will repeatedly slide down and be unable to ascend.

If players have the grappling hook or consider moving any of the ladders to assist with climbing, the task will be easier. Unless the fissure is climbed quickly, this will affect the ending as the time taken to ascend will delay Larry's rescue.

Convey Choice—Did your players find a way to navigate the rocky incline path, or did they slide down instead?

12. FRET'S TROVE

If players have taken extra time to complete the following scenarios on the lower level, it is important that you introduce Fret's arrival once they have explored this area:

- cleared roots
- found the loot & storage
- climbed the rockslide
- fought the camp goblins

It is possible to avoid Fret entirely, but only if players leave through the burrow before he arrives. A party that rushes through the cave without delays meets Fret at the cave entrance as they leave. **See map marker: 14. The Burrow**

Fret is always destined to arrive; it just depends on how long the party spends in the cave. Any of the above delays Larry's rescue. Refer to "The Endings" chapter to continue.

This location can be accessed either directly by the main ladder or via the food cage area on the upper level.

It contains many of Fret's treasures that he has been hoarding, lit by a few candles stuck on the wall, burnt down to about halfway. It is also obvious that this is a slightly nicer setup than the camp below. Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *The floor here is a light gray stone, and the ceiling is slightly lower, giving a cramped feel to the space. Small candles have been lit but burnt down to about halfway, suggesting someone was here recently and intends to be back soon.*
>
> *A table with different cuts of meat displays a horrible range of diverse animals, some you believe could be human.*
>
> *A bearskin rug lies under a ridiculous throne-like chair, adorned with horns of recent hunts, next to a somewhat comfortable-looking makeshift bed. The words "Fret is King" are carved into the armrest of the throne, and on the other side, the word "wine" is displayed.*
>
> *Next to the throne is a very ornate, metal, crimson-colored chest with a heavy-duty lock attached.*
>
> *There is a bag of lemons next to the table of meat, with the Borter Farms logo on it.*

This is the headquarters of Fret Clubber, the orc leader of this band of squatting cannibals that have taken up residency in the recently exposed cave. He appears to be away right now, but is due back very soon.

The chest is locked tight and cannot be smashed open, as it is made of metal, but it can be lockpicked. The intended DC is 25 for this interaction.

- ✔ **Success:** The lock is opened and the contents are accessible.
- ✘ **Failure:** The lock becomes impervious to further attempts to open, as the keyhole seals over with magic.

Fret has the key to this chest. Fret's key still opens a sealed chest (it takes his Action).

The chest, if opened, contains rare finds. A **Potion of Flying, Potion of Giant Strength (Hill Giant),** and a bottle of **Oil of Slipperiness**. *If Fret appears in the cave, then he may attempt to power up with these items.*

The lemons in the small bag are Larry's delivery. Anyone carrying the bag needs at least one spare hand; it's not very heavy, but it is cumbersome.

Successfully getting the lemons out of the cave will provide extra rewards at the end.

The makeshift throne stands out as both clumsy and imposing. It is impossible to miss the carved words on the armrest. *The word "wine" is a clue to the food cage lock combination:* ***burgundy***.

Convey Choice—Did your players lockpick or try to break open the chest without attracting attention, are the camp goblins still present, has Fret arrived, and did they find the clue to the food cage lock?

13. FOOD CAGE

If players have taken extra time to do the following scenarios on the lower level, it is important that you introduce Fret's arrival once they have explored this area:

- cleared roots
- found the loot & storage
- climbed the rockslide
- fought the camp goblins

It is possible to avoid Fret entirely, but only if players leave through the burrow before he arrives. A party that rushes through the cave without delays meets Fret at the cave entrance as they leave. **See map marker: 14. The Burrow**

Fret is always destined to arrive; it just depends on how long the party spends in the cave. Any of the above delays Larry's rescue. Refer to "The Endings" chapter to continue.

This location can be accessed by navigating the difficult rockslide, going up the main ladder, or using the burrow at the surface. There are no light sources here in this damp corner of the cave.

This area contains a sturdy, handmade cage containing none other than a beaten Larry Borter, clinging to life.

The cage lock appears to be made of an unusual crystal cased in metal with four buttons along its sides. Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *The floor here is a light gray, and the ceiling is slightly lower. There's a small amount of damp here, increasing the claustrophobic feeling.*
>
> *Several bones stripped clean of meat from various animals lie spread on the floor, which appear to have been chewed on by an animal. More noticeable, though, is the large cage holding a beaten-looking man dressed in slightly finer, although bloodied, blue-embroidered clothing, barely clinging to consciousness.*
>
> *The metal bars on the cage are far too close together to even squeeze a hand through, with patched-over latticed iron, making it hard to see into the cage itself.*
>
> *The lock on the cage door, an unusual contraption made of a central dull crystal wrapped in metal with four colored buttons along its sides (yellow, red, blue, clear), suggests a complex combination instead of a simple key.*

Surprisingly strong and intact, the lock itself cannot be broken by force, but the bars of the cage can be wrenched apart. The intended DC is 20 for this interaction; it is loud, and will alert any goblins still at the camp below.

Depending on which colored button is pressed, the crystal will turn that color, and then if a second button is pressed, it will add that color to the mix. Pressing more than three buttons will turn the central crystal black and result in a dead end, with the lock needing to be reset. Pressing the

same color again still counts as a press, even though the crystal does not change color.

The colored buttons are as follows:

Yellow, **Red**, **Blue**, **Clear**

The solution is to make a burgundy "wine" color by mixing colors in the clear crystal. Blue then red (or red then blue) to make violet, then red once more to make **Red-Violet** or (burgundy wine).

Clear will reset the device to clear crystal; any other color combination will produce the corresponding mix. Refer to a color wheel to find the mix results. For example, yellow and blue make green, and pressing blue again makes blue-green. Pressing a fourth button would then make it black, and the lock would need to be reset by pressing the clear button.

Larry, who will be so weak he can barely respond in complete sentences, will confirm he is, in fact, Larry. If players can get him out of the cage, he will only have 1 HP left and will need to be helped out of the cave, moving at half speed if unaided.

If players still have the lute with them, they can reveal this to Larry, who will then trust the party. If Charles is with the party, then Larry will also know you are here for his rescue.

Players can, of course, heal Larry to move faster. In the rare chance you have Charles with you, they will be relieved to find each other.

Players can also discover loose rocks on a northern wall, covering a small tunnel that leads to the surface burrow, but they will need to be careful not to send rocks down the rockslide, alerting any remaining goblins at camp. The intended DC is 20 for this interaction. **See map marker: 14. The Burrow**

- ✔ **Success:** Players will find the tunnel that leads from the cave to the surface and avoid a rockslide.
- ✘ **Failure:** Players fail to notice the tunnel.

Convey Choice—Did your players try and break open the cage without attracting attention, did they figure out the combination lock rescuing Larry, and did they spot the loose rocks covering the tunnel to the surface?

14. THE BURROW

If players head down the burrow and tunnel found at the start of the adventure in the Bridge Exit scenario, they can attempt to clear the rocks blocking the cave's exit. However, if they are not careful, they could dislodge loose rocks at the end of the crawl space, sending them tumbling down to the rockslide, alerting the goblins at the makeshift camp. The intended DC is 20 for this interaction.

- ✔ **Success:** Players do not reveal their presence to anyone in the cavern.
- ✘ **Failure:** They alert the goblins by causing a rockslide.

Players can also hear the conversation of the goblins at the makeshift camp here; refer to the Makeshift Camp scenario.

The tunnel that leads from the surface burrow to the food cage area in the cave is narrow, and players need to crawl through it one at a time. If the first player in the tunnel fails to go unnoticed, combat could start with some players in the tunnel.

This pathway affects the ending as it can provide a speedy entrance and escape, skipping most of the cave and bypassing Fret's arrival.

If players reach the food cage and rescue Larry, they can escape back up the same tunnel to the burrow entrance on the surface.

This choice allows players to avoid confrontation in or outside the cave with Fret at the end, as the party will have gone in and out before he returns. Charles, if left on lookout, is collected on the way out and is not captured.

The burrow can also serve as an exit if players discover it while in the cave when they reach the food cage area. However, if Charles was left on watch and the players took extra time to do any of the following, they will hear Fret capture Charles at the cave entrance as they exit:

- cleared roots
- found the loot & storage
- climbed the rockslide
- fought the camp goblins

Otherwise, a party leaving by the burrow collects Charles and leaves without combat.

Convey Choice—Did your players make it through the burrow at the surface, did they use it as an exit only, did they go back for Charles if he was captured, and did they rescue Larry?

When players have reached the upper level by any means, Fret may or may not have arrived, depending on how fast the players have moved through the cavern (or avoided Fret entirely by using the burrow passage).

Use this list to affirm what has/has not been completed in the adventure so far, and what potential consequences will exist moving forward.

The players may have:

- *Either killed or snuck past the camp goblins.*
- *Cut through the roots.*
- *Found the loot & storage.*
- *Unlocked Fret's chest in his trove.*
- *Found the bag of lemons.*
- *Made it through the burrow from above ground, avoiding the cave entirely, and reaching Larry.*
- *Made it through the cave, avoiding any scenarios, and made it to Larry.*
- *Triggered Fret's arrival by exploring the cave, then reaching the upper level.*
- *Skipped Fret's arrival by avoiding exploration and making it to the upper level quickly.*
- *Rescued Larry from the food cage.*

THE ENDINGS

The players' choices throughout the game will affect the ending. This section will outline what to do based on the possible choices made throughout the game. It is very possible that players will not explore every scenario made available.

The ultimate moment to trigger the ending will be when any players have reached the upper level of the cavern.

Fret (with his pet wolf) will arrive at the cavern, but what the players have accomplished will determine when and where he appears. Fret will also have captured Charles if he had been outside the cave, standing watch. *Charles will be tied and restrained in any scenario where he is left on watch when Fret arrives.*

Before any of the upper level can be explored, you must determine if players have taken extra time to do the following:

- cleared roots
- found the loot & storage
- climbed the rockslide
- fought the camp goblins

If players have not completed any of these scenarios, then they will have moved through the cavern quickly, and Fret will only appear as they exit the cave to fight, assuming they have released Larry. Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *You made it through with speed, and it appears nothing stands in your way. With Larry rescued, you make your way to the exit, almost sure that there are no more hurdles.*
>
> *As you make it out of the cave, you come face to face with a large orc and his pet wolf, caught completely off guard.*
>
> *The surprised look turns to anger as he notices you running off with his dinner.*

This allows players to quickly make it out of the cave with Larry and avoid being trapped in the narrow tunnel; Fret and his wolf are surprised when combat begins.

When the players run into Fret and his wolf, they will also notice that Charles is captured, bound to Fret's side. *This is only if Charles was left on watch outside the cave.*

If players have done any of these scenarios, they will have moved through the cavern at a slower pace, and Fret (with his pet wolf) will be entering the cavern while the players reach the upper level.

Players will now have to navigate the cavern with Fret and his wolf on the lookout for intruders. Any noise made while exploring at this moment will attract attention.

Roll a D12 every five in-game minutes (or once per scene) the party spends in further exploration of the upper level of the cavern. A six or higher will mean that Fret and his pet wolf have caught the scent of the party and will head toward their direction to attack.

The party will know they have been tracked if the wolf howls. Read the following text out loud to your players as narrator:

> *It's taken a little longer to navigate the cavern than expected. As you reach the upper level, suddenly a loud echo of a howl bounces off the walls of the cave.*
>
> *Now, what appears to be a hungry wolf and their owner have come home to hunt. You'll need to act fast to escape and complete this rescue.*

Determine whether the players are surprised if Fret and the wolf catch them in the cave. *This affects the ending, as fighting Fret and the Wolf in the cave favors Fret, as he and the wolf may surprise the party.*

When the players run into Fret and his wolf, they will notice that Charles is also with them, bound to Fret's side. *This is only if Charles was left on watch outside the cave.*

Regardless of where the players are positioned and what they have unearthed in the cave, the final scene of the story will play out, which revolves around either exiting the cave (with Larry), surprising Fret to a fight, OR confronting Fret while he hunts the party through the cave with his wolf. *Charles may or may not be a hostage, depending on whether he was left outside the cave.*

When this moment arrives, it is time to resolve the final confrontation.

All roads lead to combat against Fret; **however,** if the players entered and exited through the burrow, OR sped through the cave and used the burrow to exit, they can avoid having Fret appear at all.

The list below outlines some environmental factors and the general flow of combat:

- If the roots were cleared, this leaves a path open.
- If fighting outside, the terrain is mushy and difficult.
- The main ladder could be moved, making it harder to access the upper level; however, this also leaves just one route: the rockslide.
- The rockslide can be traversed downward with no issue.
- If the camp goblins are still alive, they will join the fight.
- Players could, for any reason, use the main ladder to climb over the rockslide.
- If Larry is with the party, he will be in low health and can be easily killed if not careful.
- Fret will try to get to his personal chest to power up. Potion of Giant Strength (Hill Giant): Str 21; Punch & Grab +7, 12 (2d6 + 5); Big Hammer +7, 19 (4d6 + 5).
- A party that leaves through the burrow before Fret arrives can leave with zero combat, collecting Charles on the way.
- Charles is only captured if he was left on watch outside and Fret arrives while he is still there.
- If Charles is with Fret at the end of the game (having been left on watch), it is possible he could be used as a hostage or killed easily if the party does not rescue him.
- The pitfall trap still exists if fighting happens outside the cave entrance area.
- The lemon delivery could be forgotten about at this point, or players could attempt to salvage it.
- You could try to have either brother make a run for it while holding off Fret.

Combat will end when Fret has been stopped or players try to outrun the fight. *Running may mean the brothers perish.*

At this point, however, the final combat occurs, and players can resolve the final social interactions.

For three players, reduce Fret to 55 HP.

THE FAREWELL

While there are no right or wrong endings to this story, the following will help guide you toward which set of circumstances you end up with at the end of the game to wrap up the adventure. The main goal is to rescue Larry Borter.

You may piece together fragments of several outcomes if your players made different choices.

If the party left the cave with Larry before Fret arrived, fought him at the entrance, and were victorious, saving both brothers:

You managed your way through the cavern with enough haste to make your rescue almost go unnoticed. That is, until you were met by the gang's leader, Fret, and his pet wolf at the cave entrance—but he proved no match for you.

With Larry and Charles reunited, you escort them back to their farm in the west. A job well done and gold well earned.

If the party remained in the cave after rescuing Larry, met Fret there, fought him, and were victorious, saving both brothers:

You managed your way through the cavern, not as quickly as you would have liked—your rescue almost going unnoticed. That is, until you were met by the gang's leader, Fret, and his pet wolf arriving back at their cave hideout to catch you mid-rescue—but he proved no match for you.

With Larry and Charles reunited, you escort them back to their farm in the west. A job well done and gold well earned.

If Larry were killed, Charles and players survive, but you removed Fret and his goblins:

Alas, Larry could not be escorted to safety. While you at least removed the threat for any future travelers that may take this path, you can't help but feel the sadness radiate from Charles at the loss of his brother. You still got paid, though.

If one or both brothers survive, but players perish:

Fret proved too powerful a foe to defeat. However, in a most heroic moment, you still managed to get both (or one brother) to safety.

It might be a hollow victory, considering you gave your life for this, and you'll never get to spend that gold, but maybe news of this adventure will spread and they'll write a song about you.

If Charles survived being caught by Fret:

Despite being captured by Fret while on watch, you were able to prevent this brother from becoming fodder during the fight, a heroic moment indeed.

It's possible Charles would be so grateful as to now offer a little more gold for the trouble.

If Charles died while caught by Fret:

Being captured by Fret while on watch, you could not prevent Charles from becoming collateral damage. It is unfortunate that one brother died trying to save another.

Charles can no longer pay you himself; however, he might have that coin on his person to take, as distasteful as the idea sounds.

If both brothers died, but players survive, defeating Fret:

Against all efforts, both brothers perished, the worst-case scenario when hired to rescue someone.

Hopefully, the story of this adventure doesn't spread too much and spoil your reputation as heroes for hire. There's nothing saying you can't rewrite the ending of this story, though. If people ask, at least you took down the cannibals.

If the party fails to defeat Fret, and the brothers don't escape:

Fret proved too powerful a foe to defeat. You've lost this attempt to rescue the missing brother, and what's worse, you may end up as dinner along with Charles and Larry.

Hopefully, if you're lucky, news of your disappearance may draw better heroes to come out to your aid or at least finish what you started.

If the party found the burrow and used it as their entrance and exit, or just as an exit while avoiding confrontation or getting sidetracked:

You were efficient and slick in this rescue operation.

Finding a way into the cave and going unnoticed before the captors could even know what happened is the hallmark of professionals.

This was almost too easy. Surely, with the brothers rescued in such a manner, they'll tell tales of this adventure for years.

If the party remembered to get the lemon delivery:

You successfully recovered the bag of lemons Larry was supposed to deliver. There's an extra 100 GP for such thorough work.

If the party forgot to get the lemon delivery:

You may have forgotten (or just plain missed) in the chaos the bag of lemons Larry was supposed to deliver.

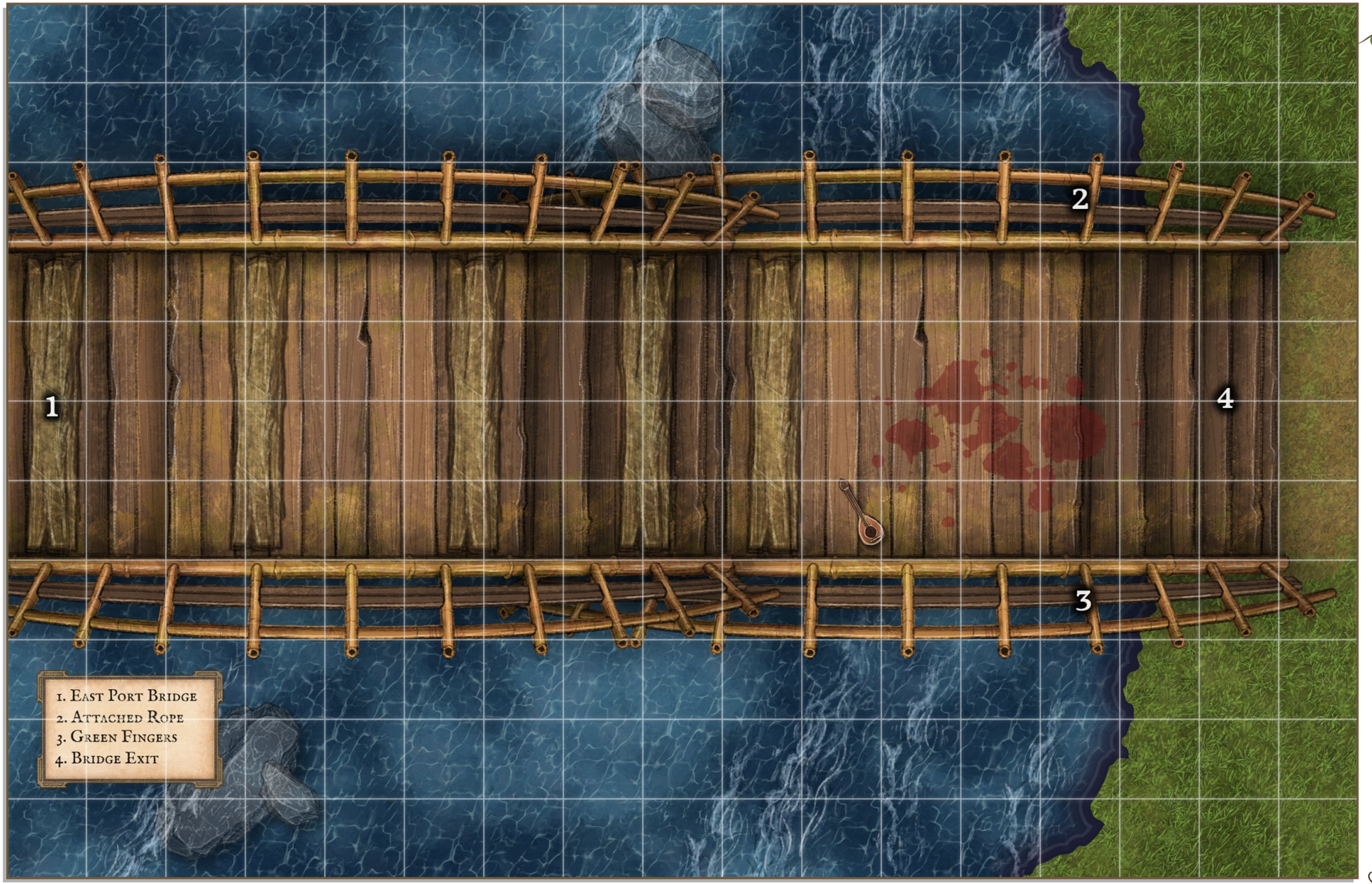
They will probably have gone rotten by the time anyone remembers they were missing.

Once you've resolved all outcomes, provide your players with congratulations, commiserations, or maybe something in between. Thank you for playing!

THE MAPS

PORT BRIDGE 11 X 17

Downloadable maps available at
www.gbroadgames.com/bbr



THE MAPS

THE CAVE 22 X 34

Downloadable maps available at
www.gbroadgames.com/bbr



THE CREW

TONI

LEVEL 3 ROGUE

Thief

You ran cons and cut purses in the back alleys of Bemopolis until the city watch learned your face. Now you work the western roads, where a quick hand and a quicker story still pay, and nobody asks where you learned either.

ACTION

Unarmed Strike **+3** to hit (5ft reach) **+2** Bludgeoning
Dagger **+5** to hit (5ft reach) **1d4+3** Piercing (Nick)
Shortbow **+5** to hit (range 80/320 ft) **1d6+3** Piercing (Vex)

BONUS ACTION

Cunning Action
Steady Aim
Fast Hands: Sleight of Hand / Use Magic Item / Utilize

REACTIONS

Opportunity Attack

OTHER

Sneak Attack **2d6**
Second-Story Work
Alert +2 to initiative rolls

RESOURCES

Resourceful: Heroic Inspiration after a Long Rest

Armor Light Armor
Weapons Crossbow, Hand, Rapier, Scimitar, Shortsword, Simple Weapons, Whip
Tools Thieves' Tools, Disguise Kit, Forgery Kit
Languages Common, Goblin, Halfling, Orc, Thieves' Cant
Species Human
Skillful Animal Handling
Versatile Skilled (Survival, Disguise Kit, Forgery Kit)
Passive Perception 12
Passive Investigation 12
Passive Insight 12
Defenses None
Size Medium
Background Criminal
Senses None



bold = proficient **green** = expert

DEX	**Acrobatics**	**+5**	WIS	Medicine	+2
WIS	**Animal Handling**	**+4**	INT	Nature	+0
INT	Arcana	+0	WIS	Perception	+2
STR	**Athletics**	**+3**	CHA	Performance	+1
CHA	**Deception**	**+3**	CHA	Persuasion	+1
INT	History	+0	INT	Religion	+0
WIS	Insight	+2	DEX	**Sleight of Hand**	**+7**
CHA	Intimidation	+1	DEX	**Stealth**	**+7**
INT	**Investigation**	**+2**	WIS	**Survival**	**+4**

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+3	-1	0	+2	+1
13	*16*	*9*	*10*	*14*	*13*
Saving Throw modifiers					
+1	+5	-1	+2	+2	+1

15	14
HIT POINTS	ARMOR CLASS

30ft	+2	+5
SPEED	PROF	INIT

GRYLDORA

PLAYABLE CHARACTER

LEVEL 3 SORCERER

Draconic Sorcery

An event in your past left an indelible mark on you, infusing you with simmering magic. You can tap into the wellspring within yourself, altering your spells to suit your needs.

ACTION

Unarmed Strike **+5** to hit (5ft reach) **+4** Bludgeoning
Handaxe **+5** to hit (5ft reach) **1d6+3** Slashing

BONUS ACTION

Innate Sorcery
Font of Magic: Create Spell Slot
Dragon's Breath (2nd)
Stonecunning (Tremorsense)

REACTIONS

Shield
Opportunity Attack

SPELLS

+3 Modifier · **+5** Spell Attack · **13** Save DC
Cantrips: True Strike **/** Light **/** Minor Illusion **/** Acid Splash **13 DEX** save **1d6** Acid
Level 1: Command **/** Mage Armor **/** Shield **/** Chromatic Orb **+5** to hit (range 90 ft) **3d8** Variety (+1d8 per slot level above 1) **/** Magic Missile: 3 darts, **1d4 + 1** Force each (range 120 ft; +1 dart per slot level above 1)
Level 2: Alter Self **/** Dragon's Breath **13 DEX** save (15-ft cone) **3d6** Variety **/** Knock **/** Scorching Ray **+5** to hit (range 120 ft) **2d6** Fire **/** Spider Climb
Magic Initiate (Wizard): Fire Bolt **+5** to hit (range 120 ft) **1d10** Fire **/** Prestidigitation **/** Detect Magic (1/Long Rest free)

RESOURCES

Slots 4 × 1st, 2 × 2nd **/ Sorcery Points** 3 **/ Innate Sorcery** 2 **/ Stonecunning** 2 *(per long rest)*

OTHER

Font of Magic: Sorcery Points
Metamagic: Seeking Spell
Metamagic: Subtle Spell

Armor None
Weapons Simple Weapons
Tools Calligrapher's Supplies
Languages Common, Draconic, Elvish
Species Dwarf
Passive Perception 11
Passive Investigation 10
Passive Insight 11
Defenses Poison
Size Medium
Background Sage
Senses Darkvision 120ft



bold = proficient **green** = expert

DEX	Acrobatics	-1
WIS	Animal Handling	+1
INT	**Arcana**	**+2**
STR	Athletics	+3
CHA	Deception	+3
INT	**History**	**+2**
WIS	Insight	+1
CHA	**Intimidation**	**+5**
INT	Investigation	+0
WIS	Medicine	+1
INT	Nature	+0
WIS	Perception	+1
CHA	Performance	+3
CHA	**Persuasion**	**+5**
INT	Religion	+0
DEX	Sleight of Hand	-1
DEX	Stealth	-1
WIS	Survival	+1

* Advantage to avoid or end the Poisoned condition

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+3	-1	+1	0	+1	+3
16	*8*	*13*	*10*	*12*	*16*
Saving Throw modifiers					
+3	-1	+3	0	+1	+5

23	12
HIT POINTS	ARMOR CLASS

30ft	+2	-1
SPEED	PROF	INIT

KORKY

PLAYABLE CHARACTER

LEVEL 3 FIGHTER

Champion

You marched with a mercenary company along Motopia's frontier, guarding caravans and river crossings for whoever paid best. When the company broke apart, you kept your blades and now sell your sword arm on your own terms.

ACTION

Unarmed Strike **+4** to hit (5ft reach) **+3** Bludgeoning
Club **+4** to hit (5ft reach) **1d4+2** Bludgeoning (Slow)
Mace **+4** to hit (5ft reach) **1d6+2** Bludgeoning (Sap)
Shortsword **+5** to hit (5ft reach) **1d6+3** Piercing (Vex)

BONUS ACTION

Second Wind **1d10+3** Restore
Adrenaline Rush

REACTIONS

Opportunity Attack

OTHER

Tactical Mind **1d10**
Action Surge
Relentless Endurance
Remarkable Athlete

RESOURCES

Second Wind 2 per long rest (regain 1 on a short rest) **/ Action Surge** 1 per short rest **/ Adrenaline Rush** 2 per short or long rest **/ Relentless Endurance** 1 per long rest

Armor Heavy Armor, Light Armor, Medium Armor, Shields
Weapons Martial Weapons, Simple Weapons
Tools Playing Cards
Languages Common, Common Sign Language, Giant
Species Orc
Passive Perception 11
Passive Investigation 10
Passive Insight 13
Defenses None
Size Medium
Two-Weapon Fighting Add your modifier to extra Light attacks
Savage Attacker Roll weapon's damage dice twice
Improved Critical Score a Critical Hit on a d20 roll of 19 or 20
Background Soldier
Senses Darkvision 120 ft



bold = proficient **green** = expert

DEX	**Acrobatics**	**+5**	WIS	Medicine	+1
WIS	Animal Handling	+1	INT	Nature	+0
INT	Arcana	+0	WIS	Perception	+1
STR	**Athletics**	**+4**	CHA	Performance	-1
CHA	Deception	-1	CHA	Persuasion	-1
INT	History	+0	INT	Religion	+0
WIS	**Insight**	**+3**	DEX	Sleight of Hand	+3
CHA	**Intimidation**	**+1**	DEX	Stealth	+3
INT	Investigation	+0	WIS	Survival	+1

* Advantage on Initiative and Strength (Athletics) checks.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	**+3**	**+2**	**0**	**+1**	**-1**
14	*16*	*15*	*10*	*12*	*8*
Saving Throw modifiers					
+4	**+3**	**+4**	**0**	**+1**	**-1**

28	15
HIT POINTS	ARMOR CLASS

30ft	+2	+3
SPEED	PROF	INIT

BERNK

PLAYABLE CHARACTER

LEVEL 3 PALADIN

Oath of Devotion

ACTION

Unarmed Strike **+5** to hit (5ft reach) **+4** Bludgeoning
Flail **+5** to hit (5ft reach) **1d8+3** Bludgeoning (Sap)

BONUS ACTION

Divine Favor **/** Divine Smite **/** Shield of Faith
Lay On Hands: Heal **15 HP**
Lay On Hands: Purify Poison
Channel Divinity: Divine Sense

REACTIONS

Opportunity Attack

SPELLS

+1 Modifier · **+3** Spell Attack · **11** Save DC
Cantrips: Guidance **/** Sacred Flame **11 DEX** to save **1d8** Radiant
Level 1: Bless **/** Command **/** Cure Wounds **2d8+1 HP** Restore **/** Divine Favor **1d4** Radiant **/** Divine Smite **2d8** Radiant **/** Protection from Evil and Good **/** Shield of Faith (range 60 ft)

OTHER

Channel Divinity:
Sacred Weapon: Imbue Weapon

RESOURCES

Slots 3 × 1st **/ Lay On Hands** 15 HP pool **/ Channel Divinity** 2 (regain 1 on a short rest) **/ Free Divine Smite** 1 *(per long rest)*

Armor Heavy Armor, Light Armor, Medium Armor, Shields
Weapons Martial Weapons, Simple Weapons
Tools Dice
Languages Common, Elvish, Halfling
Species Human (Resourceful, Skillful: Perception, Versatile: Alert)
Passive Perception 12
Passive Investigation 10
Passive Insight 12
Defenses None
Size Medium
Background Soldier
Alert +2 to initiative rolls
Savage Attacker Roll weapon's damage dice twice
Senses None

You stood watch with a village militia on the western frontier, holding the shield wall whenever raiders came down from the hills. Somewhere between the drills and the burials you swore an oath to protect those who cannot protect themselves, and you have kept it ever since.



bold = proficient **green** = expert

DEX	Acrobatics	+2	WIS	Medicine	+0
WIS	Animal Handling	+0	INT	Nature	+0
INT	Arcana	+0	WIS	**Perception**	**+2**
STR	**Athletics**	**+5**	CHA	Performance	+1
CHA	Deception	+1	CHA	**Persuasion**	**+3**
INT	History	+0	INT	Religion	+0
WIS	**Insight**	**+2**	DEX	Sleight of Hand	+2
CHA	**Intimidation**	**+3**	DEX	Stealth	+2
INT	Investigation	+0	WIS	Survival	+0

* Disadvantage with armor worn (Splint)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+3	+2	+1	0	0	+1
16	*14*	*13*	*10*	*10*	*12*
Saving Throw modifiers					
+3	+2	+1	0	+2	+3

25	19
HIT POINTS	ARMOR CLASS

30ft	+2	+4
SPEED	PROF	INIT

Senses None
Languages Common

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Attack Roll:* +3, reach 5ft *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) Bludgeoning damage.

BONUS ACTION

Flee. Take the Disengage action.

HP 4 **Speed** 30ft **Initiative** +0 **AC** 10 **CR** 0 (XP 10; PB +2)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	0	0	0	0	0
12	*10*	*10*	*10*	*10*	*10*
Saving Throw modifiers					
+1	0	0	0	0	0

NPC



CHARLES BORTER

The older of the two Borters, he is currently terrified about what may have happened to his lost brother, Larry. A devoted farmer, he takes care of his homestead with pride, so hiring some mercenaries is the best he can do in terms of trying to find Larry. He's got coin to spare for the job, though.

NPC



LARRY BORTER

The unfortunate brother who was kidnapped by Fret's gang and taken to their hideout in the cave. He works on Borter Farms but has always aspired to be an entertainer, mostly singing in his one-man band. Those dreams might not ever come true if he's not found soon, though.

Senses None
Languages Common

ACTIONS

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Attack Roll:* +2, reach 5ft *Hit:* 1 Bludgeoning damage.

BONUS ACTION

Entertaining Distraction (1/Day). *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 11, one creature Larry can see within 30 feet. *Failure:* Until the end of its next turn, the target must use its movement to move toward Larry and has Disadvantage on attack rolls against creatures other than Larry.

HP 4 **Speed** 30ft **Initiative** +0 **AC** 10 **CR** 0 (XP 10; PB +2)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
0	0	0	0	0	+1
10	*10*	*10*	*10*	*10*	*12*
Saving Throw modifiers					
0	0	0	0	0	+1

Skills Stealth +4, Survival +2
Gear Hide Armor, Big Hammer, chest key
Senses Darkvision 60 ft; Passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Goblin **CR** 4 (XP 1,100; PB +2)

TRAITS

Abduct. Fret needn't spend extra movement to move a creature it is grappling.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Fret makes one Big Hammer attack and one Punch & Grab attack. Fret can't use Multiattack on the round he drinks a potion.
Punch & Grab. *Melee Attack Roll:* +4, reach 5ft *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) Bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it has the Grappled condition (escape DC 12).
Big Hammer. *Melee or Ranged Attack Roll:* +4, reach 5ft or range 20/60 ft. *Hit:* 16 (4d6 + 2) Bludgeoning damage, and the target is pushed up to 10 feet away and has the Prone condition.

REACTIONS

Hammer Retort. Once per round, when a creature hits Fret with a melee attack, Fret makes one Big Hammer attack against that creature.

HP 75 (10d8 + 30) **Speed** 30ft **Initiative** +2 (12) **AC** 14

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+2	+3	-1	0	-1
15	*14*	*16*	*8*	*11*	*9*
Saving Throw modifiers					
+2	+2	+3	-1	0	-1

NPC



FRET CLUBBER

The leader of the band of cannibals currently squatting in the cave under Port Bridge. Ruthless and arrogant, he keeps those under him in line by providing just enough scraps and promises of a better life. So far, he has been successful in capturing the occasional lone merchant on this path for food.

NPC



WOLF

A loyal pet, Fret keeps her well-fed with whatever food sources happen to be available (mostly the poor souls who get captured). She can follow simple commands to protect her master and is very good at tracking individuals who invade their new cavernous lair.

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +4
Senses Darkvision 60ft; Passive Perception 15
Languages None

TRAITS

Pack Tactics. The wolf has Advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally doesn't have the Incapacitated condition.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Attack Roll:* +4, reach 5ft *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) Piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it has the Prone condition.

HP 11 **Speed** 40 ft. **Initiative** +2 (12) **AC** 12 **CR** 1/4 (XP 50; PB +2)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+2	+2	+1	-4	+1	-2
14	*15*	*12*	*3*	*12*	*6*
Saving Throw modifiers					
+2	+2	+1	-4	+1	-2

Skills Stealth +6
Gear Daggers (3)
Senses Darkvision 60 ft; Passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Goblin

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Attack Roll:* +4, reach 5ft or range 20/60 ft. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) Piercing damage.

Spellcasting. The goblin casts *Blindness/Deafness* (1/Day), using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 10).

BONUS ACTIONS

Nimble Escape. The goblin takes the Disengage or Hide action.

HP 7 **Speed** 30ft **Initiative** +2 **AC** 12 **CR** 1/4 (XP 50; PB +2)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
0	**+2**	**0**	**0**	**-1**	**-1**
10	*15*	*10*	*10*	*8*	*8*
Saving Throw modifiers					
0	**+2**	**0**	**0**	**-1**	**-1**

NPC



GOBLINS

Greedy members of the gang currently squatting in the cave, these goblins stick to the dark and survive on the scraps their boss, Fret, provides. It's better than being tossed into the wilds. Vicious and quick to act against anyone who comes onto their territory.

THE HUH?

Why make this module?
The objective of this game was to make something players can engage with quickly and Game Masters (GMs) can run with little prep. The aim was neither a massive campaign that takes weeks to prepare nor a bare-bones one-shot that requires too much homebrew or improvisation to work. This was to be a single adventure with every step of the story planned out from the start. Players have a confirmed hook, and the location is somewhat confined while providing enough choice to keep players engaged without them running loose. It functions as procedurally as possible; there are multiple player interactions that affect how the game plays and ends, but each choice leads to the next.

Ideal for three to four players?
That's right. While this game can be run for more players, the idea is to keep the party small so there is less back-and-forth and less waiting between turns.

One-shot?
A game made to be run in a single session, taking roughly three to four hours to complete. Once started, each scenario builds naturally on the others.

NPC?
A non-player character controlled by the GM.

Player character?
A character in the game who is controlled and acted by a real person. Four are included in this module.

Branching paths?
Yes. The idea for this game was born out of wanting players engaged with choices, but not so open-ended that the game falls apart.

But it's still linear?
Absolutely! While this module encourages exploration and party splitting, the main story still comes together at the very end. There is a clear beginning and ending, with plenty of room to breathe within the structure, so player choice is present — even if you could argue it's an illusion of choice.

Railroading?
Players will always find something to do that you could never have imagined. Come up with something fun and unique that everyone can enjoy (even you, GM) and run with it. That said, making sure your players know which choices and story beats they are interacting with will help keep everything on track. This game does have a linear design, after all.

Convey Choice?
Each numbered scenario has a Convey Choice line that recaps exactly what your players' focus should have been at that moment. This gives you, the GM, an opportunity to understand what your players could be responding to.

Party splitting?
This story provides many scenarios designed to be explored by one player or several. We wanted every player to feel there is ample exploration to get stuck into. This will likely involve players moving through the scenarios separately or in groups, giving everyone at the table a chance to influence the story.

Scenarios?
Yes, each story beat of the game is bite-sized, so if certain players are not involved in a given moment, it won't drag on long enough to leave anyone out.

Session 0?
Before you invite players to join you, it may be best to describe the type of game you intend to run using this module. You could also review any characters your players make if not using the included pre-made character sheets.

Variety?
The aim of this story was to cover exploration, roleplay, and combat, which we believe sets the foundation for a great session of tabletop roleplaying games (TTRPGs).

Intended DC?
The scenarios mention a standard DC (difficulty class) for certain interactions. Certain plot points and moments are based around a DC, and it's okay when players miss — that is the element of chance! While this is a default, the DC can be adjusted to your play style.

Multiple endings?
Indeed, there are many NPCs and story beats that can be affected or missed. This offers excellent replayability and makes the players' choices feel impactful despite the linear structure.

Go wild?
As with so many roleplaying games, chances are you'll go off script. That's never a bad option. If players come up with something fun and different, there will always be room for improvisation in this story. The story is designed with enough choice that you won't veer too far from the ultimate goal, but if a new path develops in the wild, follow it through to its end. The NPCs' objectives stay the same, so think about how they would react.

Digital map?
You will find digital versions of the maps here:
www.gbroadgames.com/bbr

GM QUICK REFERENCE

Print or copy this page and keep it beside your screen.

#	Scenario	Key checks	Outcome
1	**East Port Bridge**	DC 10 to inspect the lute (initials LB). DC 12 to spot the ambush; one success covers the party.	Failure: the four goblins surprise the party.
2–3	**Attached Rope, Green Fingers**	Goblins climbing either side of the bridge can be dealt with before the other two rush on.	A goblin can be interrogated; the rest then attack. Grappling hook.
4	**Bridge Exit**	One search roll: 12 finds goblin arrows and "Fret Clubber" carved in a tree; 20 also finds the burrow.	DC 15 to talk Charles into the burrow.
5	**Slope**	DC 15 to spot the pitfall at the base of the slope.	Failure: the first player falls in, 2d6 Piercing. DC 15 to talk Charles through the bush.
6	**Cave Entrance**	Without Darkvision or light the cave is heavily obscured. DC 15 to talk Charles into coming in.	Charles left on watch is captured if Fret arrives while he is still outside.
7	**Roots**	DC 15 to cut through quickly and silently.	Failure: the goblins hear and come to fight.
8	**Loot & Storage**	DC 10 to pick the chest (the camp goblin carries the key).	Failure: the lock jams; smashing it is loud.
9	**Makeshift Camp**	DC 18 to sneak past or surprise the two goblins.	Failure: the party is spotted.
10	**Main Ladder**	No trap: an easy way to the upper level.	—
11	**Rockslide**	DC 18 to climb the loose slope without help.	Failure: slides back down.
12	**Fret's Trove**	Metal chest: DC 25 to pick; it cannot be smashed open.	Failure: sealed by magic. Holds Flying, Giant Strength (Hill Giant) potions and Oil of Slipperiness.
13	**Food Cage**	The lock can't be forced; DC 20 to bend the bars (loud).	Larry has 1 HP and moves at half speed unless helped.
14	**The Burrow**	DC 20 to crawl through unnoticed. DC 20 to find the tunnel to the surface.	Failure: a rockslide alerts the camp.

THE CREW AT A GLANCE

Creature	HP	AC	Notes
Goblins	7	12	Melee +4, 4 (1d4 + 2) Piercing. Blindness/Deafness 1/Day (DC 10). Four at the bridge, two at the camp.
Fret Clubber	75	14	Multiattack: Big Hammer + Punch & Grab. Hammer Retort (once per round, after a melee hit). Goes for his trove to power up. For three players, 55 HP.
Wolf	11	12	Pack Tactics; Bite can knock Prone. Howls when it catches the party's scent.
Charles / Larry Borter	4	10	Non-combatants. Larry starts at 1 HP.

FRET ARRIVES

If the party cleared the roots, opened the loot & storage chest, climbed the rockslide or fought the camp goblins, Fret and his wolf enter the cave. Roll a d12 every 5 minutes (or scene) on the upper level: 6 or higher, they track the party.

AVOIDING FRET

All roads lead to Fret, unless the party leaves through the burrow before he arrives. Charles, if left on watch, is only captured if Fret arrives while he is still outside.

CHARLES

He resists coming along (DC 15 each time), fails stealth, and stays at the back.



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