

# TRAP-TRAP!

A kobold-engineered gladiator contest

a one-shot  
(3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> level)



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**About the cover.** A party of PC "contestants" are subjected to attacks from above by kobold gladiators

# CREDITS

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## INTRODUCTION

Trap-trap is a standalone challenge that can be run in a single session. The challenge is designed for a party of four, 3rd-4th level PCs (see *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*, Chapter 2, 'Encounter Building' for details). As written, the tone for Trap-trap is an over-the-top, fun-but-deadly spectacle, reminiscent of ancient Roman gladiatorial events.

## BACKGROUND

Trap-trap is an annual gathering of kobold tribes, the central event being a gladiatorial-style contest, pitting captured "contestants" against the cunning of a kobold trap-maker. The crowd watches (and sometimes interferes) as the contestants try to reason, dodge and battle their way through a room-sized puzzle that is filled with traps.

If the PCs make it to the end, they are rewarded with a trip to the treasury, as well as custom-built gadgets created by the trap-makers themselves.

## TRAP-TRAP AND KOBOLD CULTURE

For the kobolds, Trap-trap is a party, and a festive atmosphere pervades the gathering. It is also a form of worship of their god Kurtulmak, to whom cleverness and cunning are virtues.

Presiding over this gathering is the local kobold leader. Trap-trap is a symbol of their power, judged by the crowd based on the complexity of the puzzles and the spectacle of powerful adventurers brought low by kobold cleverness. That said, PCs who navigate the challenge with cunning, agility, and showmanship will be shown respect.

Because Trap-trap is also a test of the *trap-makers* skill, the challenge must contain a legitimate solution; an unfair puzzle wouldn't be nearly as satisfying to the crowd. Successful trap-makers are given prominent status in kobold society. Unsuccessful trap-makers...don't fare as well.

## THOSE ACCURSED GNOMES

Kobolds' ancient hatred for gnomes is worth mentioning here (see *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, Chapter 1, Monster Lore, Kobolds, Hatred for details). Any gnome PCs participating in Trap-trap will be the target of extra jeers from the crowd and possibly extra attacks from kobold gladiators. To balance this out, gnomes may achieve greater rewards (see Wagering below).

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

To insert this event into your adventure or campaign, consider the following hooks:

**Forced participation.** Your PCs are surrounded by a large band of kobolds, gathering contestants for the challenge. They begin chanting "Trap-trap, Trap-trap!" and hustle the party off to their arena in a nearby underground lair.

**Vital information.** The PCs learn that a crucial map, magic item or piece of information is stored in the kobold's treasure vault. The kobolds will part with the item, but only if the PCs defeat Trap-trap.

**Adrenaline junkies.** If your PCs are thrill-seekers, they might be lured by the challenge or the possibility of a big payoff. The PCs learn of Trap-trap from advertisements posted at an inn or a roaming, carnival barker-style NPC, hired by the kobolds. The barker would downplay the danger while overselling the potential rewards.

**Agents of jealousy.** A rival kobold trap-maker hires the PCs to beat Trap-trap, which will force Trap-trap designer into early retirement. If they are successful, the rival will give the PCs something vital to their main quest (a dungeon entrance location, a magic item, the captured Prince, etc.....).

Whatever their motivation, **this module assumes that the PCs attempt to complete the challenge.** While they could try to escape the arena, attack the spectators, etc., those scenarios are not covered here. If so desired, make it clear that a large number of kobold guards are posted at all exits, and that escape seems unlikely.



# PRELUDE TO THE CONTEST

## THE LONG WALK

To begin this encounter, your PCs are brought to the Trap-trap arena. Relate or paraphrase the following:

Your party has been escorted, somewhat roughly, into a mountain cave by a gang of kobold warriors. A long, sloping hallway ends in front of a stone portcullis.

On the other side is a cavern and a yammering chorus of yips and growls. One kobold guard croaks; “*You listen, apes! Go into room. Solve puzzle, live. Don’t? Die.*” A well-dressed halfling and kobold dignitaries step out of a side tunnel and seem to be sizing you up.

Twenty or more **kobold** guards (MM) surround the PCs. The halfling is Nils Leatherlegs (**noble**, MM), an arms dealer visiting the kobold chief. He’s eager for the upcoming spectacle. The kobolds don’t speak, but Nils can relate the following:

- The PCs will be in a room-sized puzzle, designed by a kobold trap-maker.
- The puzzle is solvable. Otherwise, it wouldn’t be an honorable test of the trap-makers skill.
- The use of animals seems to be integral to **solving** the puzzle.

The PCs can get on Nils’ good side if they exhibit a positive attitude. With some gallows humor and a successful DC 12 CHARISMA (Persuasion) check, a PC can extract a bit of help from Nils:

*“You seem like fine folk. I’ll give you hint: I hear he likes fruit.”* (see area 1e).

With that, Nils leaves for the spectator boxes, and the portcullis opens. The guards escort the PCs a few steps into the arena **but make it clear that the challenge has not yet begun**. Read or paraphrase the following:

The portcullis rises up, revealing a large, well-lit cavern. Several spectator galleries are carved into the walls, about 20 feet off the ground. Eager kobold faces peer out, excitedly talking to each other. Hawkers sell drinks and unidentifiable, grilled meat-on-a-stick. Drums and reedy wind instruments are playing, and an overall festive atmosphere pervades the cavern.

Inform your PCs of the **wagering** nearby and allow them to participate before the **Master of Ceremonies** begins the challenge.

### WAGERING

A cigar-chomping **kobold** “bookie” in the spectator box near the entrance is accepting bets on the contest, and the PCs can join in! Nils can help the PCs navigate the transactions if need be. Before the contest starts, they can place bets on themselves to win at the odds of 10:1 (maximum 50gp bet each). A gnome PC may bet on itself at odds of 20:1, as the bookie knows the gnome will likely be the subject of extra attacks. As a “receipt” for any bet, a PC receives a bracelet of petrified scorpion tails.

If the PCs collectively bet more than 200gp, then the bookie will attempt to subtly sabotage the challenge. Also, a kobold **ally** who bets **on** the PCs to win will attempt to help. Before the challenge, the ally makes herself known to the PCs. During the challenge, the ally warns the PCs about a hidden hazard; a successful DC 12 WISDOM (Insight) or CHARISMA (Performance) check is needed to communicate during the action. Suggested sabotages and aids that can **slightly** influence events are listed throughout the area descriptions.

### THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES

The kobolds’ leader is Offneetz the Quickthumb (**kobold scale sorcerer**, VGtM), who will officially begin and end the challenge. He addresses the PCs when they’ve had a chance to look around. Read or paraphrase the following:

A rotund kobold in the main gallery stands up, puts down his pet lizard and signals for silence: “*Guests!*” he says to you in a high and scratchy voice. “*I, Offneetz, welcome you to Trap-trap. All you got do is get out this room.*” The crowd chuckles. “*Big reward if you get out. There your exit*” (he points to a portcullis to the north). “*We watch you leave. Big fun! May Kurtulmak bless your fingertips.*” Offneetz gives the signal and the crowd roars. Trap-trap has begun!

Offneetz might converse further with the PCs, but he’s quite haughty and expects to be treated like the king he is. The kobold guards eventually leave, and the entrance portcullis closes. The guards will force the PCs further into the arena if they don’t comply.

# THE CONTEST

## SUMMARY

The PCs must activate a series of mechanisms in two caverns in order to open an exit portcullis (see the Arena Map for the sequence). Most mechanisms involve creatures that are either dangerous or possess features that can be utilized in some way. A few specialized kobold gladiators join the fray.

## THE CAVERN

The natural, underground chambers are 40 feet tall, with sandy ground and unworked stone walls. Climbing a wall requires a successful DC 15 DEXTERITY (Acrobatics) check.

**Lighting:** Numerous torches line the walls, but the ceiling is shrouded in shadows.

**Smells:** Grilled meat and ripe fruit.

**Sights:** Kobold spectators watching with anticipation.

**Sounds:** Excited barking, yipping and shouts of derision from kobold spectators.

## THE CROWD

The kobold crowd is here for a show! They mostly root against the PCs (especially gnomes), lustily cheering whenever someone is hurt. That said, a critical hit by a PC or showy role-playing after a cinematic move can win over some in the crowd. A successful DC 14 CHARISMA (Performance) check by a PC after such an event, could generate some support from the crowd (warnings or shouted advice for finishing the challenge--no guarantee they're right--).

At various points in the challenge, the crowd will have an opportunity to interact with the events or perform a bit of sabotage. The opportunities are described in the next section, but are also summarized below:

- Fling rotten meat at contestants to attract the carrion crawlers.
- Ring a bell to activate the girallon's attacks.
- Shoot the rock-cannon at the contestants.

Use the crowd judiciously to adjust the challenge's difficulty either up or down, depending on how your party is faring. PCs attacking the crowd will targeted by several crossbow-wielding **kobold** guards as well as by sabotage-minded audience members.

## BACKGROUND TRAPS

Given that this is a kobold-designed challenge, traps are omnipresent. In addition to those described at listed areas, the cavern is peppered with minor traps. But forcing PCs to test every step for pressure plates or pits would be tedious.

To keep the action moving, use minor traps whenever a player rolls a critical failure. Consult the table below to select a trap, whose effect is resolved immediately. Once triggered, that trap becomes inert, and the square is empty again. Supplement the table with simple traps listed in XGtE (Chapter 2, Traps Revisited), if you so choose.

**Inform your players of this mechanic** to prevent excessive, game-slowng use of the 10-foot pole! However, this mechanic is not essential to making Trap-trap a challenging contest, so feel free to disregard this if your PCs are struggling too much.

### Table of traps

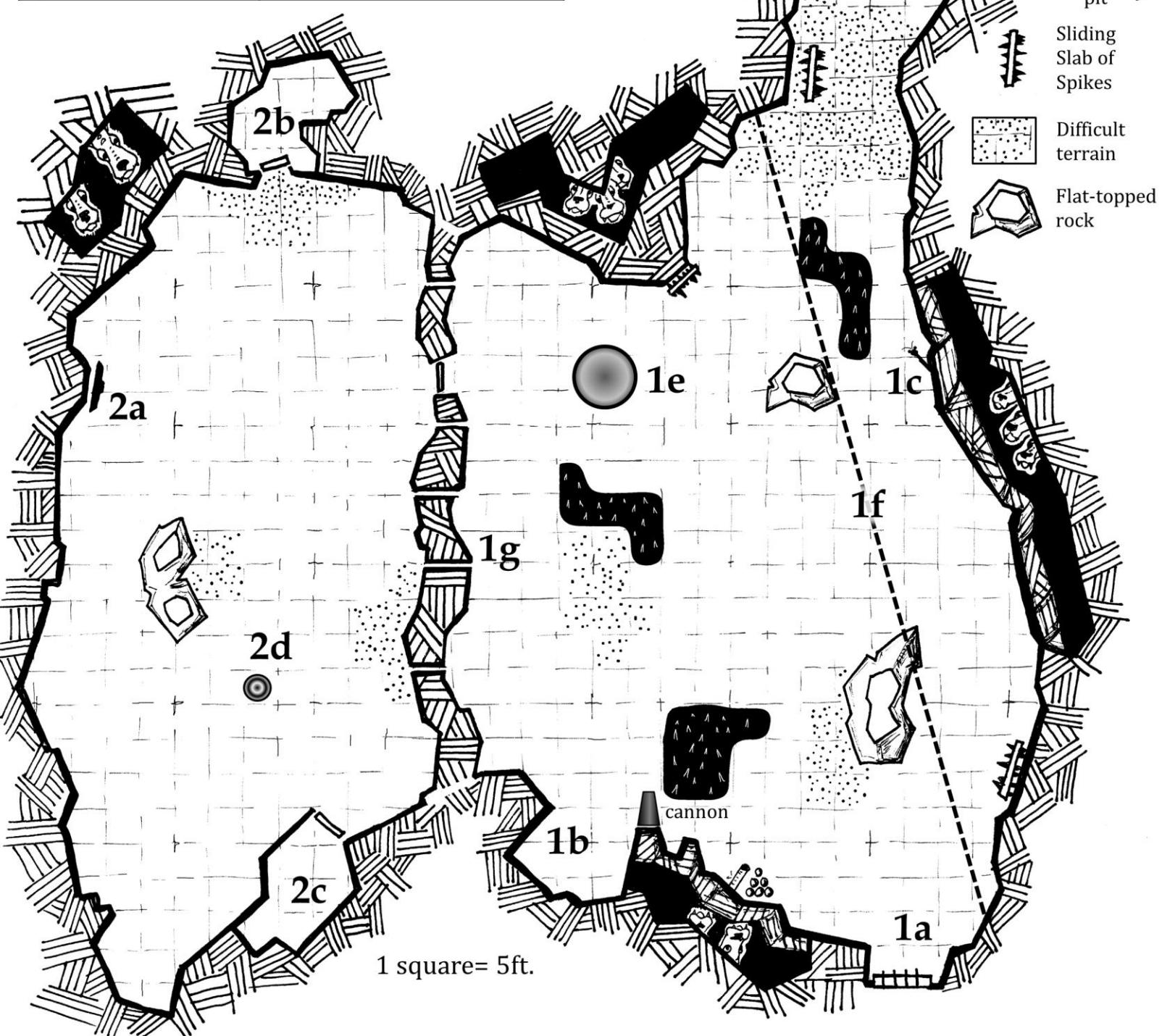
d4	Description
1	A pile of bricks falls from the ceiling. A DC 12 DEXTERITY saving throw is needed to avoid 7 bludgeoning damage & being Stunned for 1 round.
2	A bowl filled with flaming excrement flies out of the ground. A DC 10 CONSTITUTION saving throw is needed to avoid taking 5 fire damage. The damage continues until an Action is used to put it out.
3	A section of floor springs up. A DC 14 DEXTERITY saving throw is needed to avoid being launched 10 feet in the air, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage & being pushed 10 feet in a random direction.
4	Ask your player to describe a minor trap and how they resolve it. No check required!

## DESIGN NOTE: KEEP KOBOLDS COMING

Solving a puzzle with unlimited time and with no external hazards isn't much of a challenge. So Trap-trap is designed to keep a steady stream of traps, hazards and monsters pointed at the PCs throughout the contest.

That said, a party might deal with all the monsters in an area first before addressing the puzzle elements. Well done, players. But don't let them linger unmolested for too long (and certainly no short rests). Let your party know that the crowd grows restless without fighting. Soon enough, Offneetz makes a signal and a low-level ( $\leq CR1$ ) monster is flung into the arena to harass them—an **orc captive** (MM), a **giant toad** (MM), a **kobold inventor** (VGtM) or even d4 **kobold** spectators. Use your imagination!

Action	Effect
Pull lever in Area 1c	Opens cage in Area 2b
Put bronze mirror (1b) in front of door at Area 1g	Girallon breaks door, granting access to Area 2
Lure rust monster in 2b to lock at Area 2c	Door to Area 2c is unlocked
Pull lever in Area 2c	Mechanism at Area 2d is exposed
Lure piercer to fall into mechanism at Area 2d	Opens exit portcullis at Area 1h
Exit through northern portcullis in Area 1h	Contest concluded



ARENA MAP—DM VERSION

## AREAS OF THE CONTEST

The areas described below are keyed to the Arena Map-DM version. All chambers are carved out of rock and are 20 feet tall unless otherwise noted.

### EAST CAVERN

#### 1a. Entrance

The PCs enter the arena through this stone portcullis, which is locked from the far side and guarded by a multitude of **kobolds** (MM). Once Offneetz begins the challenge, read the following:

Your exit lies at the north end of this 200-foot-long cavern. Flat-topped rocks offer some cover, but the cavern is relatively open. There is a door on the western wall, as well as a line of large rings dangling overhead. The kobold crowd chants and whoops for you to do something!

Give your players the Arena Map-player version, point out the exit (area 1h), the door (area 1g) and the rings (area 1f). Answer their questions about features and encourage them to explore the cavern. Make it clear the crowd soon grows restless if no actions are taken.

#### SPIKED PITS

Several 10-foot-deep spiked pits are visible in this cavern. A creature falling into the pit takes 7 (2d6) piercing damage from the spikes, and 3 (1d6) damage from the fall.

#### FRUIT DISPENSER

To the west of the entrance, a small metal tube sticks out of the cavern wall next to a pile of grapefruit-sized stones. If a stone is put in the tube, then a **piece of fruit** is thrust out of a nearby slot. The fruit is meant for the girallon, as it delays the creature's attacks. If needed, the crowd could yell at the PCs to "...put in fruits...". A loaded stone can be heard rolling away behind the walls (see '*Cannon*' below).

#### CANNON

Any stone the PCs put into the tube rolls to a **rock cannon** (not targetable), manned by spectators in the nearby box. Once a few stones have been 'loaded' by the PCs, the cannon can be shot once per round. Kobolds will hold their fire if the PCs are behind a lot of cover. Make sure to inform the PCs of where the ammunition came from!

**Cannon.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +4 vs AC. Range 80 feet, 1 target. Hit: 5 bludgeoning damage and the target must make a DC 10 CONSTITUTION saving throw to avoid being Stunned for 1 round.

#### WEB-SWINGING SLASHERS

Hiding at the ceiling are 3 **kobold swingers** (see Appendix A), visible with a successful DC 18 WISDOM (Perception) check. Using a network of stretchy *bungee-ropes* (see 'Treasure', p12), the swingers swoop down to make hit-and-run attacks. The ropes (AC 14, HP 8) hang from the ceiling, 10 feet long but stretching up to 40 feet when weighted.

The swingers try to attack when the PCs are vulnerable, ideally when one is on the rings (area 1f) or near a spiked pit or the **Sliding Slabs of Spikes** (see page 9). They will also attempt to ring the bell in area 1g to activate the girallon attack. Mechanics for rope-swinging combat include:

- If swinging, a swinger must move its full distance each turn.
- Unless stopped, a swinger ends its turn 20 feet in the air.
- From round to round, a swinger can change their direction (e.g. by jumping to a new rope).
- Ranged attacks that target ropes or swinging kobolds have Disadvantage.
- If knocked down, a swinger will attempt to slingshot to the ceiling using a spare *bungee-rope*.

Kobold swingers are also total hot-dog showboats...

#### 1b. Mirror, mirror

This small chamber is open to the cavern, ending in a pile of rocks. Metal glints from under the rocks.

Under the rocks is a 5-foot-tall reflective **sheet of bronze** (for the girallon in area 1e). The chamber is also home to a **trap** (bait for monster in 1d).

#### Rotten meat slap trap

**Trigger.** The rock pile is disturbed.

**Effect.** Spiky, wooden arms laden with rotten meat spring forth. Any target in the chamber must succeed on a DC 12 DEXTERITY saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 3 piercing damage and stinks of carrion.

**Countermeasures.** The trap is visible with a successful DC 15 WISDOM (Perception) check. A successful DC 13 DEXTERITY (Sleight-of-hand) check allows a PC to disable the trap or slide the sheet out unmolested.

#### 1c. Door-opening lever

A **lever** juts out of the wall, carved to look like a rust monster. When pulled, the lever opens doors to the rust monster's cage (area 2b) and also the carrion crawler's cage (area 1d) -- inform the PCs they hear two doors open with a clang, along with the general location of the sounds.

## 1d. Crawler chamber

This chamber is hidden by a secret door and is home to a starving **carrion crawler** (MM). The door is opened by the lever in area 1c.

### **Carrion Crawler urge: gorge on rotten flesh**

"Taste" air with mouthparts

Secure prey using as many legs as possible

If the chamber door is opened, the carrion crawler rushes to the PCs immediately, ignoring all other beasts. It preferentially attacks any PC that has been hit with carrion, with Advantage on its first attack.

**Sabotage idea:** A kobold spectator attempts to hit a PC with a piece of carrion (DC 10 DEXTERITY saving throw).

## 1e. The door-keeper

If the PCs are within 30 feet of the platform's location, read or paraphrase the following:

Ahead of you, a low, circular platform rises up out of the cavern floor. On it stands a large, four-armed ape wearing pieces of ill-fitting plate armor. It does not look pleased with its present situation. It stares at you, making a rude hand gesture to the delight of the crowd, but does not move.

A **trained girallon** (see Appendix A) stands on the 10-foot-diameter platform, watching the PCs. A successful DC 10 INTELLIGENCE (Nature) check reveals that the girallon has been trained to respond to certain cues; it is tense and watchful, but not aggressive. Aside from the following cues, it will not attack unless provoked.

- At the sound of a **bell**, it will attack the PCs and fight to the death.
- At the sound of a **gong**, it will stop its attack. The gong is located at area 2a.
- If offered a **piece of fruit** (area 1a), it will spend its next Action to angrily eat the fruit. It will return to its previous activity (e.g., attacking) the next round. If attacked while eating, it uses its Reaction to make a Punch attack. It is unknown how many consecutive fruits the girallon can eat...
- If it sees its **reflection**, it will charge the image and try to destroy it. If the girallon charges the door at area 1g, it automatically rips the door off its hinges.



### **APE INTERACTIONS**

The girallon can't be effectively communicated with except via spell (the scroll in area 1f or the PCs own spells) and past mistreatment has left it wary of all humanoids. During magical communication, a successful DC 13 WISDOM (Animal Handling) check and calming role-playing are needed to convince the girallon to do anything on behalf of the PCs. On a failure, the girallon uses its Reaction to attack. On a success, it will provide the following aid:

- if asked, rip off the door at area 1g
- warn of kobolds "like birds" (the swingers)
- state that "twinkle sound make me angry but crash make me calm" (the bell and the gong)
- state that "me fight if see other ape" (the bronze mirror)

After rendering this aid, it will plop down tiredly and begin to spectate. It would still attack again, if provoked, and its cues are still active.

**Sabotage idea:** A kobold swinger goads the girallon into attacking the PCs while she herself is safe above

## 1f. Hanging rings

A row of 9 metal rings hangs from the ceiling, ending at a cavern wall to the north and a small alcove. The first ring can be accessed via a small ladder by the entrance gate. The rings are 15 feet above the ground. With a successful DC 8 DEXTERITY (Acrobatics) or STRENGTH (Athletics) check, a PC can swing on 3 rings every round. Failing a check results in falling to the arena floor. The rings are also connected to a mechanism: every third ring pulled will activate (or de-activate) the **Sliding Slabs of Spikes** (see below).

## ALCOVE

An alcove is visible at the northern end of the rings, 15 feet up. The alcove's contents are not visible from the ground. Inside the alcove is a *Scroll (speak with animals)*, decorated with a girallon-like image. The wall in front of the alcove has been greased, granting Disadvantage on any checks to climb it.

## SLIDING SLABS OF SPIKES

Three, 10-foot-wide wooden frames are studded with sharp, metal spikes and stand suspiciously still when the challenge begins. When activated by the rings as described above, the slabs lurch back and forth 20 feet. Any creature in or passing through their path must make a DC 13 DEXTERITY saving throw or take 7 piercing damage and be knocked prone at the end of the slab's path. The slabs stop once three more rings have been pulled.

## 1g. Chamber wall and door

The western wall of the cavern has several peep-holes cut into it, as well as a hefty metal door.

The door is sealed but with no visible lock; it must be torn off its hinges with 2 successful, simultaneous DC 18 STRENGTH (Athletics) checks. There are four hand-holds on the door, a clue to engage the girallon, if necessary.

Two small **bells** are camouflaged above the door, noticeable only with a successful DC 14 INTELLIGENCE (Investigation) check. Any attempt to open the door will cause the bells to ring, triggering the girallon. Each bell can be disabled with a successful DC 12 DEXTERITY (Sleight of Hand) check; failure causes a bell to ring.

The peep-holes in the wall allow anyone to see into the western cavern. The following features are visible: the gong (area 2a), the rust monster (area 2b) and the entrance door (area 2c).

**Sabotage/Aid ideas:** The kobold bookie rings a bell at an inopportune moment for the PCs, especially if the PCs bet over 200gp. To reveal the bell's counter-cue (the gong), a kobold ally might strike a gong after a round or two.

## 1h. Exit

Before the PCs get within 30 feet of the exit, read or paraphrase the following:

Crude arrows painted on the walls indicate that the exit is in front of you: a closed metal portcullis festooned with a multitude of locks. Scrawled on the wall nearby are the words, 'No knock-knock'

The words are a taunt about their countermeasures to the spell *knock*; the spell unlocks only one lock at a time and most locked doors here have multiple locks.

The floor within 30 feet of the exit contains pressure plates, which if triggered, activates the **PSB trap**:

You hear a click underfoot and the floor between you and the exit erupts in waves of spikes. Scythes release from the ceiling, swinging back and forth, and gouts of flame shoot from the walls. Reaching the exit would appear to be...difficult...at this time.

### Pokey, Slicey, Burny trap (PSB)

**Trigger:** Any pressure plate is activated

**Effects:** Any creature within 30 feet of the exit is subject to all three attacks below.

**Scythe.** +5 vs AC, any target within 30 feet of exit. Hit: 8 slashing damage and the target is pushed 10 feet.

**Spikes.** A DC 13 DEXTERITY saving throw, any target within range. Hit: 8 piercing damage.

**Flame.** A DC 12 CONSTITUTION saving throw, any target within range. Hit: 10 fire damage.

**Countermeasures:** The plates are noticeable with a successful DC 10 WISDOM (Perception) check. Pushing plates in area 2d deactivates the entire PSB. A successful, relevant check (DC19) combined with an explanatory action (plug flaming holes, jam spike mechanism) deactivates a single element of the PSB.

If this comically-complex trap is triggered, anyone within range is immediately targeted by 1 attack (DMs choice). In subsequent rounds, all 3 attacks occur. Once activated, the PSB is in perpetual motion. Hopefully, the PCs get the idea that the exit is best approached once the PSB is deactivated.

## PORTCULLIS

The metal portcullis is secured with multiple locks that are opened by the mechanism in area 2d.

Alternatively, it all could be disintegrated by the rust monster in area 2b; this latter option is quite difficult as a PC must navigate the rust monster through the traps here. **If the PCs make it through the northern portcullis, Trap-trap is over!!**

## WEST CAVERN

When the PCs enter this cavern, read or paraphrase the following:

A large gong hangs on the western wall of this smaller cavern. Two chambers are visible on either end of the cavern; the southern chamber is secured with two metal locks that almost glow in the dim light. A low rumbling sound is coming from within the walls...

The rumbling heralds the arrival of a new type of kobold gladiator. The southern chamber is area 2c.

### ROLLING LUNATICS

The rumbling builds and a couple of rounds later, 2 **kobold rollers** (see Appendix A) drop into the room from a secret door above area 2b. A third **kobold roller** waits to attack until the PCs are engaged with the creatures in area 2c. Each roller runs furiously inside a 5' diameter **crush-ball** (AC 15, HP 30, immune to piercing damage), a sphere of metal bands studded with rusty spikes. It resembles a hamster ball ... of death! The kobold roller tries to run over the smallest PC or any gnomes first.

Targeting a kobold inside a crush ball is possible. Destroying a crush-ball pops free the kobold inside, who then attacks on its own.

Any Small or Medium-sized creature may pilot a crush-ball. The entry hatch to a crush ball is locked, which can be opened with a successful DC 12 DEXTERITY check with thieves tools (if not in motion).

A crush-ball barely fits through the door to the eastern cavern, requiring a successful DC12 DEXTERITY (Acrobatics) check to squeeze through. Alternatively, if the driver treats the 2 squares adjacent to the door as difficult terrain, no ability check is needed to pass.

### 2a. Gong of calming

A 10-foot-diameter **gong** hangs on the wall, emblazoned with the image of a peaceful girallon. If struck with any object, the gong makes a satisfyingly-loud clatter and the girallon ceases any attack it's making.

In an alcove behind the gong is a bag of 10 gold pieces and a **swarm of bats** (MM), which attack the nearest PC in a panic if the gong is struck. The gold can serve as treats for the rust monster in area 2b.

### 2b. Rust monster chamber

A secured, stone portcullis prevents entry to this chamber unless it has been opened by the lever in area 1c. This room contains a placid **rust monster** (MM), which is half-heartedly chewing the dust of a copper piece. Breaking down the portcullis (AC 15, HP 15) agitates the rust monster and it attacks in a panic.

#### Rust monster urge: to disintegrate metal

Wave antennae madly to detect food

Consume the most precious metal first

Using expensive metal as bait, a PC can guide the rust monster straight to the locks at area 2c. PCs with metal armor or magic items within 30 feet of the rust monster attract undue attention, causing it to forget its treats. In this case, a successful DC 13 WISDOM (Animal Handling) check is needed to keep the rust monster focused, made with Advantage if electrum, gold or platinum pieces are used as treats.

If the rust monster is killed before it can fulfill its "function", the PCs could use residual magic in its antennae to disintegrate the locks at area 2c; a successful DC 10 INTELLIGENCE (Arcana) check is needed to do so. Each antenna can be successfully used only once.



## 2c. Multi-monster chamber

A 20 foot-tall, hollow dome of rock juts out into the cavern. A thick, wooden door blocks the entrance to this chamber, armed with two massive locks.

The locks are adamantine, requiring a successful DC 23 DEXTERITY check with thieves tools to pick. Touching either lock automatically triggers a **poison dart trap**. The rust monster can consume the locks in one round, which does not trigger the dart trap.

### Poison dart trap

**Trigger.** The adamantine lock is touched.

**Effect.** Poison darts shoot out of the nearby wall. +6 vs AC. Hit: 5 poison damage, and a DC 15 WISDOM saving throw. On a failure, the target feels the uncontrollable urge to dance, as per the spell *irresistible dance* (the crowd loves this).

**Countermeasures.** Plug the dart holes in the wall, identifiable with a successful DC 15 INTELLIGENCE (Investigation) check.

Opening the door frees 2 **stirges** and 2 **darkmantles** (MM), whilst quietly opening another door on the chamber's ceiling, releasing 4 **piercers** (MM). The open ceiling door is visible to anyone inspecting the chamber. The ceiling door cannot be pried open from above and attempting to do so triggers another **poison dart trap**.

#### Stirge urge: to drink warm blood

attack in a swarm

flap about in target's face

#### Piercer urge: to watch, creep, then drop

attack when the target is distracted

flail in a panic if the Drop attack misses

#### Darkmantle urge: to blind then envelop

confuse target using darkness

land on the target's head

Also inside the chamber is a **lever** painted in bands of red and white (evoking a bullseye). Pulling it flips up the hatch on the floor at area 2d, revealing that final mechanism.

The stirges and darkmantles attack immediately while the piercers covertly begin scaling the cavern wall, reaching "attack position" on the ceiling in several rounds. If a piercer lands on the ground, it continues to launch itself at PCs (use its Drop attack mechanics, but with Disadvantage and half damage).

## 2d. Bullseye mechanism

A circular, metal hatch is attached to the floor, colored in concentric circles of red and white.

The hatch cannot be opened, except by pulling the lever in area 2c. The hatch hides a 2-foot-diameter, conical **hole** in the ground—the last mechanism! There are numerous, small pressure plates inset along the hole's surface. If all plates are pushed at once, the **exit portcullis** in area 1h is opened.

A piercer (dead or alive) fits this conical-shaped hole perfectly, activating all the plates. A PC using themselves as bait over the hole causes a piercer to have Disadvantage on its Drop attack. PCs attempting to push all plates at once must succeed at two, simultaneous DC 14 DEXTERITY (Acrobatics) checks. If successful (via any method), inform your PCs that the PSB trap near the exit (area 1h) falls silent and the exit portcullis raises.

## CONCLUDING THE CHALLENGE

Once through the exit, you see a table in a quiet alcove. It's stacked with cold beverages, crisp fruit and a nice assortment of cheeses.

Offneetz stands up and addresses the gathering, who are split between applauding and grumbling discontentedly. "Well done, short-snouts. You beat challenge. You go to Hall of Champions. But first, you meet Teeko, he make trap." A small, purplish kobold nervously steps up onto a platform near Offneetz, who yells to the crowd: "What think, kobolds?! Good Trap-trap!?"

It's up to you how the crowd reacts. If the challenge was a crowd-thrilling spectacle with lots of PC injury or death, then the kobolds bark their approval. Otherwise, they hiss in disapproval. In this latter case, Offneetz shrugs and pushes a button which launches Teeko into the arena, jack-in-the-box-style, and he splats against the far wall.

The assembled crowd heads deeper into the caverns, where the festival continues. The PCs may collect any bets placed. Any complaints about cheating are dismissed with a smile from the bookie saying, "Hey, you still alive. What problem!?" They will get no further satisfaction. The PCs are shown to the Hall of Champions (see below) then back to the surface.

## HALL OF CHAMPIONS

This ironically-named room contains the remains of parties that failed to complete past Trap-traps. Part museum, part trophy room, it is reverently maintained; a kobold vault-keeper named Cheez is polishing one display when the PCs arrive.

Skeletons of past contestants in full gear are displayed around the room. Ask your players to describe one such display, or use the list below for inspiration:

- A group of dwarves wearing plate armor, who were crushed and compacted into a gruesome cube.
- Several rangers and druids, all of whom are missing feet.
- Three tieflings, each with a dark-robed halfling on their shoulders who appears to be choking them with a chain.

**Treasure.** Cheez tells the PCs that, as *true* victors, they each receive 300 gold pieces in various coin, as well as an item in the room. Even though Cheez is ordered to do so, he still grumbles about letting any items leave. Several possible items are listed below, but use whatever items might be fun for your party:

- *Belt of dwarvenkind.*
- *Hand Axe +1*
- *Chain mail, mithral*
- *Ring of the Ram*
- *Cloak of elvenkind.*
- *Scimitar +1.*
- *Arrows of slaying (monstrosity)*
- *Bracers of archery*
- *Figurine of Wondrous Power (silver raven)*

Cheez also gives them several kobold-made items, courtesy of Offneetz:

**Wicker-whippers (4).** A tightly-woven ball of wood strips that explodes into a flurry of spinning wood when thrown (range: 30 feet). One target and an adjacent creature must make a DC 12 DEXTERITY saving throw or else be Blinded until the end of the next round.

**Door-teeth (2).** A thin track of telescoping spikes, attached to a small pressure plate. The back of the track is coated with an adhesive, allowing it to be affixed to the inside perimeter of an open door or window. When the plate is pushed, all spikes shoot out to their full length of 18 inches. Any target in the door or window must make a DC 13 DEXTERITY saving throw, or else take 2d10 piercing damage and be Restrained for 1 round.

**Bungee-rope (2).** A 50-foot section of rope that has been cunningly woven and braided with giant spider webs (AC14, HP8); it can be stretched to four times its length. The rope can be anchored by simply mashing one end against a hard surface, but in this manner, it can only hold 1 Medium or smaller-sized creature. If anchored and used as a slingshot, it can propel a Medium creature twice the distance of its regular jump (triple the distance if the jumper is Small-sized).

**Bowing kobold figurine (1/PC).** This small golden statue is worth 50gp on the open market but is worth 200 gp to a collector or museum. If worn or otherwise displayed, the figurine grants Advantage on any CHARISMA-based checks when dealing with kobolds.



## APPENDIX A. NEW MONSTERS

### Kobold Swinger

*Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil*

**Armor Class 14 (leather armor)**

**Hit Points 21 (6d6)**

**Speed 30 ft., 40 ft. w hile swinging**

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	11 (+1)	12 (+1)

**Saving Throws** DEX +5

**Skills** Acrobatics +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)**

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the Kobold Swinger has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on WISDOM (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Power Slice.** If the Kobold Swinger is actively swinging, any melee attack it makes does an extra 4 (1d8) slashing damage and pushes the target 10 feet in a direction of the Kobold Swinger's choice.

**Swinging dodge.** If the Kobold Swinger is actively swinging, any ranged attack has disadvantage to hit it.

**Cunning Action.** On each of its turns, the Kobold Swinger can use a Bonus Action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

#### ACTIONS

**Short Sword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) slashing damage.

**Javelin.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

#### EQUIPMENT

Leather armor, gloves, short sword, javelin (3), bungee-rope

### Kobold Roller

*Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil*

**Armor Class 12 (17 in Crush-ball)**

**Hit Points 27 (6d6+6)**

**Speed 30 ft.**

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	11 (+1)	12 (+1)

**Saving Throws** STR +3, DEX +4

**Skills** Athletics +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Challenge 1 (200 XP)**

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the Kobold Swinger has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on WISDOM (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Crush-ball Charge.** In the crush-ball, the Kobold Roller moves 10ft. in a straight line and makes a **Crush** attack against the first target it encounters. If the **Crush** attack succeeds, the Kobold Roller may continue with its movement, repeating a **Crush** attack against a second target.

**Crush-ball Cover.** The Kobold Roller has 3/4 cover when inside the Crush-ball.

#### ACTIONS

**Dagger** : Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

**Crush**. Melee Weapon Attack. One target. The target must succeed on a DC 14 STRENGTH or DEXTERITY saving throw (DMs choice) or else be knocked Prone. In addition, the target takes 10 piercing and bludgeoning damage as it is run over by the Crush-ball.

#### EQUIPMENT

5' tall metal Crush-ball (AC 15, HP 30), gloves, goggles, dagger

## Trained Girallon

*Large natural beast, unaligned*

**Armor Class 16** (half-plate)

**Hit Points 68** (8d10+24)

**Speed 30 ft.**

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

**Saving Throws** STR +8, CON +6

**Skills** Athletics +8, Acrobatics +4

**Challenge 3** (700 XP)

**Training.** The girallon has been trained to respond to certain cues and ignore others:

- At the sound of a bell, it will attack the nearest creatures and fight to the death.
- At the sound of a gong, it will cease its attack.
- If offered a piece of fruit (area 1a), it will spend its next Action to angrily eat the fruit. It will return to its previous activity (e.g. attacking) the next round. If attacked while eating, it uses its Reaction to make a Punch attack.
- If it sees its reflection, it will charge the image and try to destroy it.

Otherwise, it will not attack unless provoked.

### ACTIONS

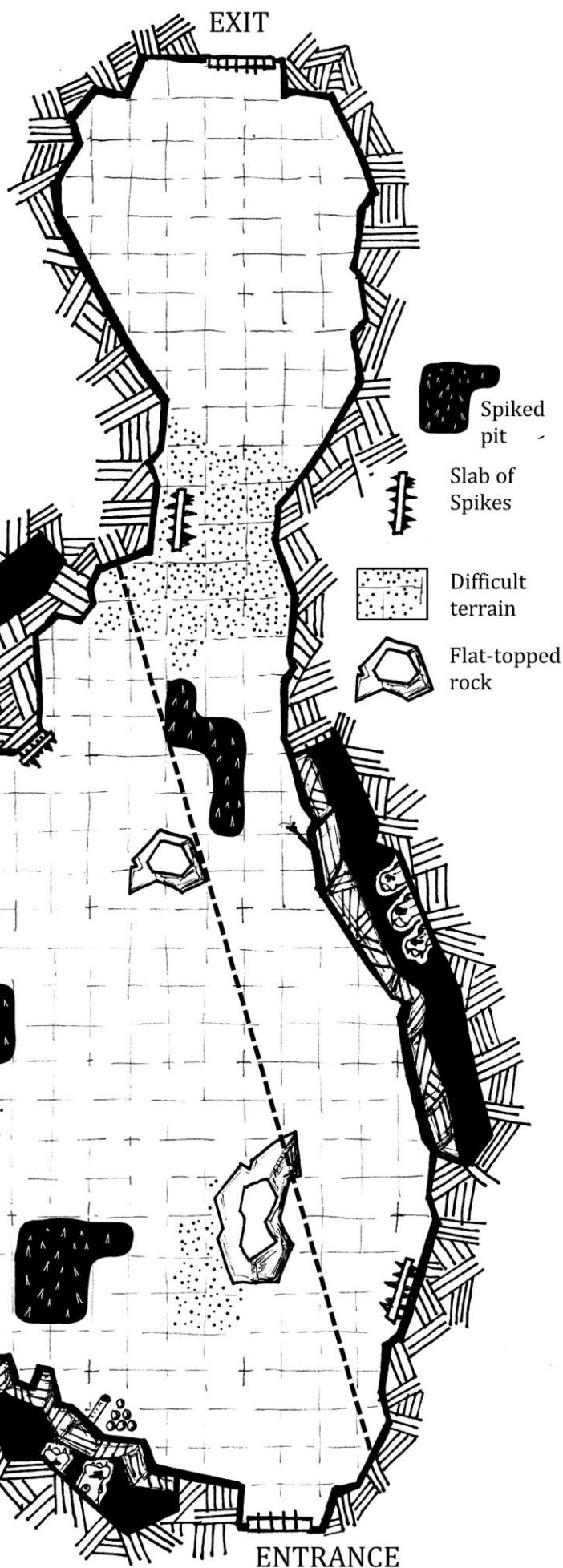
**Multiattack.** The girallon makes 4 Punch and Fling attacks, in any combination.

**Punch.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8+5) bludgeoning damage.

**Fling.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* reach 5ft., one target. The target must succeed on a DC 12 DEXTERITY saving throw or else be grabbed by the girallon and thrown 10 feet in a direction of the girallon's choice. In this case, the target takes 3 bludgeoning damage and is knocked Prone.

**Trap-trap progress****notes**

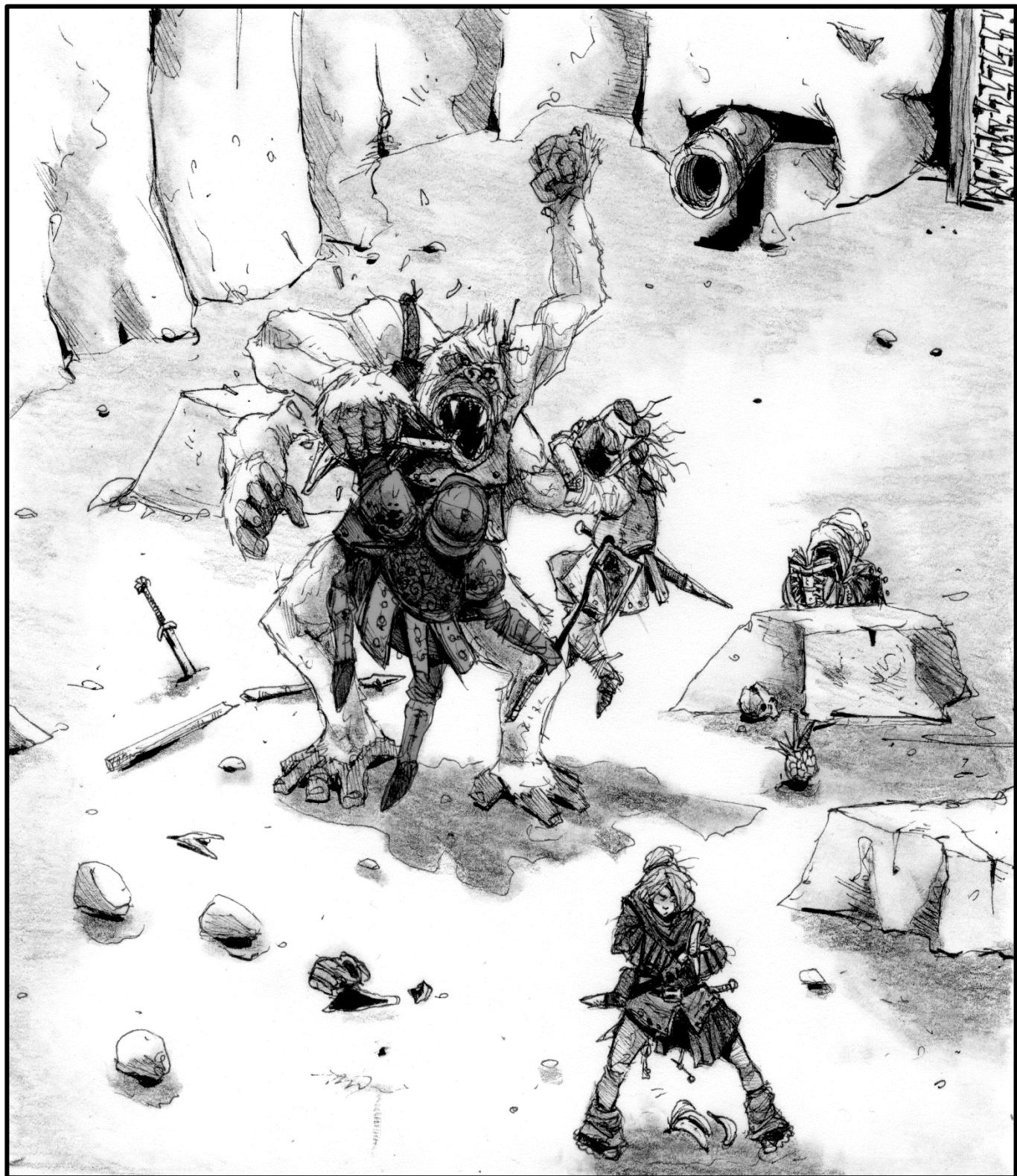
Offneetz say: "get through exit, you win"

**APPENDIX B. ARENA MAP—PLAYER VERSION**

## APPENDIX C. ILLUSTRATIONS FOR YOUR PLAYERS



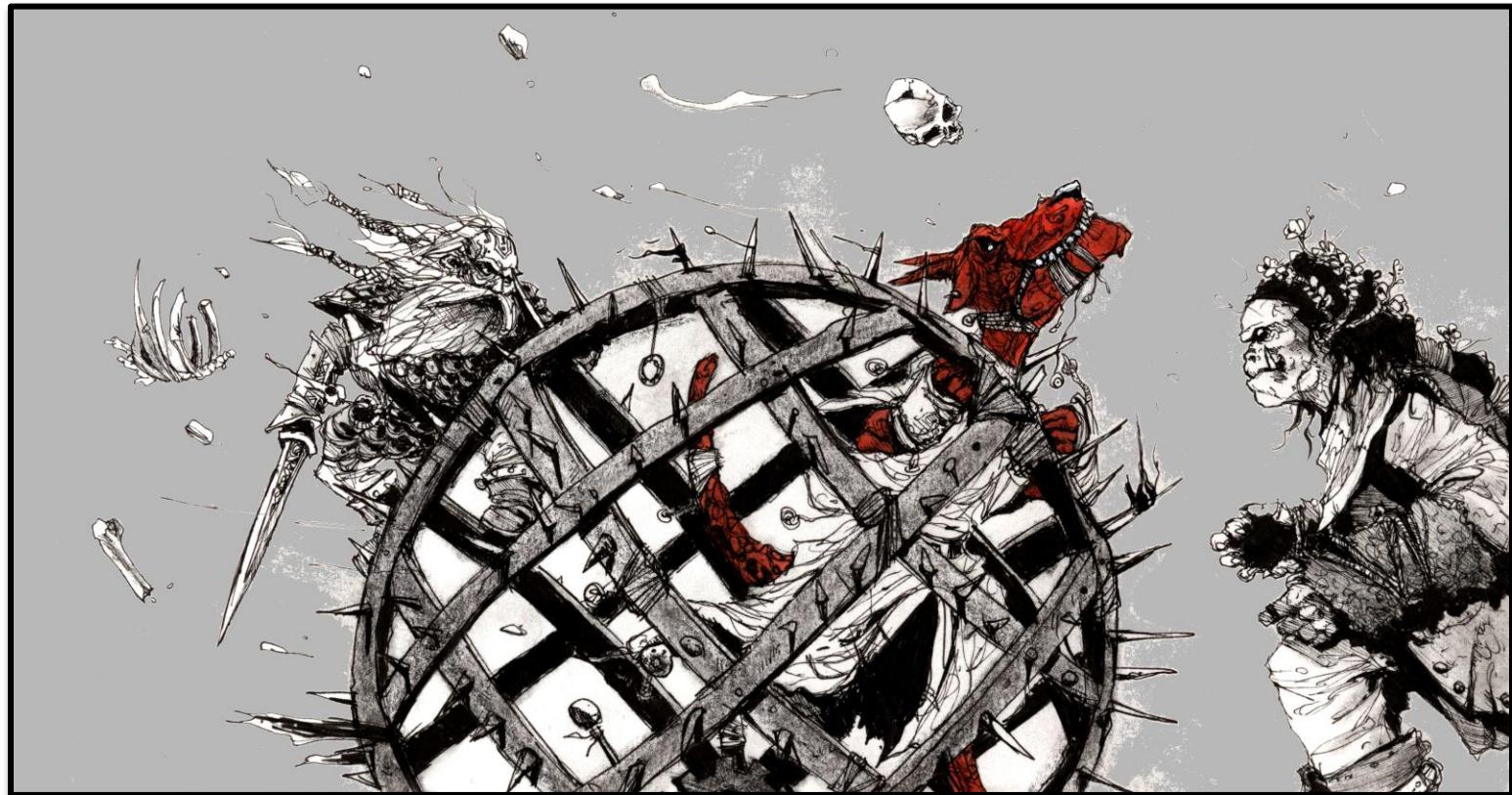
*The trained girallon has clearly heard a bell...*



*Kobold swingers swoop down to attack from above*



*A kobold roller is only happy when crushing adventurers*



## **FIGHT, DODGE AND PUZZLE YOUR WAY TO GLORY!**

At an annual festival of kobold tribes, your PCs are part of the main attraction! They'll face a cavern-sized gauntlet, complete with traps, puzzles, deadly beasts and vicious, kobold gladiators!

A raucous crowd will hoot and holler as your party goes down in defeat, up in flames, or out in style!

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A one-shot adventure for characters of levels 3-4

