



# CASTLES<sup>®</sup> & CRUSADES

## The Crater of Umeshti

By Casey Christofferson



In the millennia since the destruction of Umeshti, the gaping sink-hole at the center of the crater has been the source of much controversy and speculation. The gapping hole that crater's center is infested with all manner of monstrous beast and twisted goblinoid. Few have returned from the deeps, but those who have bring tales of battle and carnage and of dangers beyond the pale.

The Crater of Umeshti is a good old fashioned dungeon crawl.



# Crater of Umeshti The Sink hole

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This module is designed for characters of 3rd - 5th level with a challenge rating of 3-4.

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# The Crater of Umeshti

## The Sinkhole

The sullen party entered the palisade of the strange roadhouse, covered with the grit and grime of the road. With their filth and stench, they seemed a far different sight than the spectacle of new harness and polished brass that had left the wilderness sanctuary all those weeks ago. It is true that their packs were now laden with the spoils of their many battles. Proof of their bounties to be collected from the scarred proprietor of the place was evident in the profusion of goblinoid heads and bandit masks that stuffed the baskets tied to their pack mules. Grim faced, they also brought with them a more grisly cargo, for two of their member it seemed were wrapped tightly in buckskin, packed full with fragrant herbs to keep the flies from their moldering corpses.

"Hail yah dour Bowbes"! I see ye have returned once again to fill your bellies with fresh cooked meat and bitter black ale. As promised your first draught is on the house and for a nominal fee we shall have a pyre built and a heroes funeral complete with a feast and games to honor your fallen comrades," a gruff booming voice called to them from the beer garden. Their eyes turned to see the scarred countenance of the speaker, his wild gaze piercing each in turn as he lifted his ale horn to them in form of salute."

"Rumor tells me that ye plan an expedition to the famed Crater of Umeshti. Ask ye not how I know these things, lest to say that a little frog whispered it in my ear. Know you that it is a place of great peril that has sapped the strength of even the doughtiest of adventurers. Kobolds, necromancers and unnamable things call that sinkhole their home. Before you leave, speak with Brother Frosk, if he is around. I last heard he had some use for a strange egg found only in that cursed black pit. Pay you well he will, should you accomplish the task. Quite possibly he may call the spirit of your friends from the nether realms to once again drink whiskey and fight at your side," The large man added before disappearing around the corner and out of sight.

### INTRODUCTION

The Crater of Umeshti: The Sinkhole is a Castles and Crusades adventure for 4-6 characters of levels 3-5. The difficulty and level needed to overcome new obstacles increases as the characters delve deeper into the sinkhole in the center of the crater. The adventure requires nothing more than the *Castles and Crusades Players Handbook*, however Castle Keepers or the Castle Keeper may find the *Castles and Crusade: Monsters and Treasure* book by Troll Lord Games to be helpful in running the adventure.

### ADVENTURE SUMMARY

During the course of exploring the bowl of the crater the characters discover the not so hidden entrance to the sinkhole. There they begin their exploration of the Crater of Umeshti and come face to face with some of its more unruly inhabitants. Here they are sure to face numerous enemies, including Scritch's mob of unruly kobolds, the lair of Malash the Necromancer, and a plethora of strange and unique enemies as they delve deeper into the sinkhole in search of fame and fortune.

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE DUNGEON CRAWL

Put simply the Crater of Umeshti may be used as a good old-fashioned dungeon crawl. Characters enter the Crater and delve into its depths. They find foes both great and small and face them in battles of blade or

wit in order to relieve them of their treasure. They face puzzles, traps, and uncover secrets and mysteries that inevitably lead the characters to greater power and fortune. The Crater of Umeshti may be incorporated with its other parts into a fantastic campaign, leading characters from levels 2-5 to greater and greater strength and prestige.

The crater is designed with the intent of repeated forays into its depths using a nearby settlement of the Castle Keeper's choice or the characters design to re-stock, refurbish and re-supply. This settlement may be found in pre-made adventure sourcebook of which there are many in both D20 and Castles and Crusades various product lines such as *Castles Zagyg: Yggsburgh*™ by Gary Gygax, or this authors own city settings such as Dro Madras or that incorrigible chain of cross dimensional taverns known by most as "The Roadhouse" and referred to by a knowledgeable few as "Dirty's". See *The Haunted Highlands*™ by Troll Lord Games™ for more details on Dirty Bowbe's Roadhouse and its environs.

As characters clear out areas of the Crater of Umeshti, they are sure to find places with which to set up bases of operations, or even comfortable sleeping quarters in the curious gnomish inn of Lamplight Station far beneath the surface of the earth.

### A NOTE ON DEITIES AND LOCATION NAMES

The Crater of Umeshti comes complete with its own background, including the names of locations, deities, demons and the like. These beings have are designed in an archetypal manner so that a Castle Keeper running adventures in say Troll Lord Games' "Rings of Brass" universe Castle Keeper's wishing to run a campaign in the Duchy of Karbosk may feel free to do so and simply rename things as necessary. Likewise those Castle Keeper's seeking a more "generic" campaign or adventure may simply disregard these names, substituting their own pantheon and legends from whichever campaign setting our source material that they prefer.

As the characters grow in power they may find easier pathways to their subterranean destinations. Higher level characters may eschew the dwarven lifts and simply fly to unexplored areas of the sink hole, using the shaft as their means of egress to more challenging foes.

### PC PARTY AND COMPOSITION

In order to fully enjoy the adventure that awaits players brave enough to unlock the secrets of the Crater of Umeshti, they should have a party consisting of the following character classes. The character party should have at least one cleric or character capable of casting divine spells, as well as a character capable of using arcane magic. The party should also include at least one rogue, and be filled out with a compliment of characters with fighting skills such as fighters, paladins, rangers, or bards.

### HISTORY OF THE CRATER OF UMESHTI

Thousands of years ago by the recollections of those elves still alive to recall the fable, a great time of tumult and chaos reigned across the universe. In that time the ancient citadel city of Umeshti was known as a bastion of civilization through the dark night of conflict and madness. Temples to the gods and towers of wizardry were erected, as were libraries and civic enterprises designed to preserve and protect the knowledge that the firstborn civilizations had worked so hard to gain. Art and science flourished, as did the first development of music and poetry. Travelers from far and wide, including those who traveled across the many planes considered Umeshti a home away from home, bringing esoteric relics and fantastic wealth with them.

As is often the case, this great civilization thrived and grew, until outside powers began to covet its success. Deities not worshipped within the city began to hurl curses upon its citizens, raining down deific plagues, or striking it divine storms and hordes of monstrous beasts. Despite this, the citizenry showed great inner strength and resolve, facing each new disaster with its own set of champions and brave protectors.

In the end, the sages are uncertain, but it is said that during a great war between the gods, a meteor was hurled at Umeshti, driving a shaft into the earth that stretched for hundreds of feet beneath the surface, completely obliterating all but the scantest trace of the powerful society that had once lived there.

All that remains now is a massive crater, high atop a mountain plateau, and the darkened shaft at the bottom of the crater, said to lead to treasures unimaginable and profound, if any survive to retrieve them.

In the millennia since the destruction of Umeshti, the gaping sinkhole at the center of the crater has been the source of much controversy and speculation. That the area surrounding the shaft left behind by the meteor is infested with all manner of monstrous beast and twisted goblinoid is well documented by those adventurers who have returned alive from expeditions to the crater.

It is held in the dwarven tradition, that the dwarves were the first to explore the crater since the star-fall. The dwarves did not arrive in search of survivors or to rebuild Umeshti, nor did they explore its depths from the surface above. Instead the dwarves cut a tunnel to the site of the cataclysm from the dwarven stronghold of Wulthor and gained great wealth by mixing the meteoric iron with their own metals to create rare Umeshti steel. It was through these dwarven entrepreneurs that knowledge of the ancient culture that once dwelt in the devastation of the crater was passed on to the surface world. Eventually it is believed that the mine went dry and the dwarves returned to the stony fortress of Wulthor. The tunnels and structures they left behind became the home to all manner of fell creature and ravaging beast, their ingenious lift system is considered by many to be a marvel of modern engineering.

The Crater of Umeshti is located some twenty-eight leagues (or 100 miles if you prefer) from Dro Mandras. This relative proximity makes Dro Mandras a popular home base for adventurers willing to test their mettle against the crater's many dangers. What treasures still remain within the stygian shaft are as yet unknown. Activity has increased around the area of the crater however, as the lone survivor of a heavily funded expedition came wandering into Dro Mandras, speaking of ruins at the bottom of the crater and uttering a single word over and over again. "Xamozog" No one knows for sure what this strange word means, but expeditions are forming now at every pub, inn, keep, and Tower of the Maji in every corner of the land.

### ADVENTURE HOOKS

It is quite possible that a bard, wizard or cleric in the party has heard rumors of the great riches and warrens of monsters hidden beneath the Crater of Umeshti and for various reasons have been sent to explore the area of the Crater and uncover its secrets. A cleric or paladin may have been sent by their order, a knight may have been commanded by his liege lord to find a weapon to assist in the southern campaigns against the Orc King Yorgach. Likewise the characters may have been hired to uncover some item by a mysterious patron. Whatever the reason the characters should be expected to have at least enough provisions to

make it to the Crater and back, as well as spend a week exploring the recesses of its famous sink-hole.

**The Infernal Egg** An invaluable egg of possibly unfathomable value is held guarded by the kobolds who call the inner slopes of the crater and the upper levels of the sinkhole home. This egg is said to bear the progeny of a powerful devil and the kobold king. When hatched it is believed that the abomination born therein will lead the kobolds on a crusade to vanquish the sun itself and bring about a millennium of darkness. Likewise it is believed that the egg merely bears the yolk of a mutated super kobold caste unlike any that the world has seen before. Likely the characters are ignorant to the importance of this information and are merely hired to collect the egg for Brother Frosk or some other strange entity that hangs about the roadhouse and are offered 200gp per individual partaking of the quest.

**Unholy Scrolls of Nartarus** This infernal text is scribed onto a continuous roll of human skin. Said to grant the possessor great powers over the walking dead. It is said that the text of the Unholy Scrolls was penned by the lich Moten upon the backs of his thousand slaves as Nartarus whispered his unholy secrets into the decaying wizard's ear. There are believed to be over a thousand pages in the complete manuscript, Ulrad sheared the entirety of which to pieces the Paladin when he finally cast Moten into the Abyss. Regardless, possessing even one piece of the *Unholy Scrolls* may grant a necromancer or cleric awesome power. Rumor has it that several pieces of the *Unholy Scrolls* lay within reach of the surface of the Crater of Umeshti. Meaning of course that a doughty paladin or unscrupulous necromancer would merely have to delve into the pit and retrieve them. Like all things this is easier said than done of course.

**The Fate of Borvya and Corpus Ipati** A pair of adventuring brothers, and sons of the powerful merchant Maksim Ipati of Dro Mandras have been missing since the last adventure excursion into the Crater of Umeshti. Maksim has offered a 1000gp reward for proof of life, or the return of their remains in the event that they are dead. The young men may be recognized by a hereditary heart shaped mole that each bears on their left cheek as well as signet rings bearing the family crest of Ipati.

**The Bounty of Malash the Necromancer** Malash Radko was known as a wicked grave robber and necromancer before he was driven from the Tower of Nesturon for being too perverse for even the darkest warlocks who study under the tutelage of the archmage. He was later chased from Dro Mandras on suspicion of crimes against nature, grave robbing, witchcraft, animation of the dead, suspicion of cannibalism, and medical malpractice. An open bounty of 500gp sits on his head in any civilized land that has heard his name. Double the bounty would be paid should he be brought to justice alive so that he could stand trial for his crimes and be executed publicly.

### TRAVELING

Characters should be expected to make a steady 16 miles per day towards their goal if traveling on foot or with a caravan of provisions and wagons, and approximately roughly 40 miles per day should they be traveling mounted on horse.

Wilderness encounter checks should be limited to one per day if the Castle Keeper finds it necessary so that the Character's provisions and stocks of supplies and equipment are not spoiled prior to their ascent to the slopes of the crater.



## PLACEMENT

Castle Keeper's placing the Crater of Umeshti in the Haunted Highlands of the Karboskian Marches should put the Crater within 14 leagues, or 50 miles of Dirty's Roadhouse and consult the random encounters tables found in that book.

Likewise Castle Keeper's placing the Crater of Umeshti somewhere in their own campaign world should place it within 50 miles of some wilderness outpost where the characters may return and re-supply as needed. Generic wilderness random encounter charts from other sources are equally usable for determining what sort of nasty beasts lay in wait for the characters as they start their journey.

## THE CRATER

The lip of the crater extends to an elevation of 3500 feet, rising from the surrounding lands like a large grey scar on the horizon. The climb to the top is fairly easy, requiring only a successful strength check to make the climb (CL 1). Characters with low strength scores may be assisted by use of ropes or other climbing gear and by those with greater strength scores.

### A. Feldspar's Cave

A solitary cavern on the north face of the crater is home to Feldspar, a Stone Giant who takes little interest in the Kobolds who dwell near the surface or adventurers foolish enough to explore its depths. Feldspar is an outcast from the Granite Fist clan from deep within the sinkhole and as such prefers mostly to be left alone. If the characters can manage to bribe or befriend Feldspar he may give them some small tidbits of knowledge as to the composition of forces and foes they may face within the Crater.

**Feldspar the Stone Giant** (*This neutral creature's vital stats are HD 10d8, HP 53, AC 25. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a huge club for 2d6+6 points of damage. His special attack is rock throwing for 3d10 points of damage.*)

### B. The Rim of the Crater

At this vantage point 3500 feet above base of the crater is a long ridge offering a majestic view of the surrounding lands. Here and there small caves and pockets may be seen along the edges of the bowl as it descends to the floor of the crater. Likewise a careful observer making a successful wisdom check may notice smoke and firelight rising from some of these pockets. This of course is a sure indication that some form of intelligent life may be found here. Even from this high vantage point a black smudge can be seen in the center of the crater.

### C. The Bowl

The bowl of the crater descends some 900 feet from its rim and is over three miles across, giving some indication to the size of the cataclysm that struck here all those thousands of years ago. Similarly to the climb up the side of the Crater, the descent is a simple affair, with a climb difficulty of (CL 1). The slopes are semi wooded, with sparse pine trees growing up here and there in various locations. It is evident from looking at the wooded knots that many of these trees are regularly harvested giving the bottom of the bowl a rather sparse and wide-open look. Here and there the bowl is dotted with the stumps of petrified trees, all that remains upon the surface to remind folk of the great tragedy which resulted in the destruction of the Umeshti capitol and the scattering of its proud folk.

### D. Kobold Caves

The bowl is dotted with a dozens of small caverns that serve now as lookout posts and dwellings for small bands of kobolds under Scritch's



command. The kobolds may harass the PCs with skirmishers until they lose roughly a dozen of their kind. At this time any survivors retreat at all haste to the crater, take the lift down to Level 1 and warn Skritch and his company of new arrivals, offering details to the strength and composition of the party.

Each cavern houses 2d6 kobolds. These kobolds are most active at night, as they dislike the sun and bright light. They keep one sentry posted as a lookout by the mouth of the cave during daylight hours. For this reason the caves are easy to avoid during daylight hours, but the bowl itself becomes a very dangerous place at night as the kobolds leave their caves to go scour the bowl for prey.

**Kobolds, 2d6** *(These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 points of damage and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They carry weapons and have 1d4gps each.)*

**Kobold Sub-Chieftain** *(This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries weapons and 2d6+4gp.)*

## THE SINKHOLE

Located in the very center of the craters bowl is this yawning pit known as the sinkhole. The sinkhole is roughly thirty feet across on all sides. A dark stench blows forth from it, being a mixture of some sulfurous gas and the pungent odor of rotting snakeskin. In the daytime, sunlight peers down as far as fifty feet into the yawning void before disappearing well like into a black eye of nothingness.

### E. Outer Sinkhole Lift

This lift is similar to all the other lifts within the sinkhole. During evening hours it is guarded by 6 kobolds. During the day it remains unguarded but not unwatched by kobolds on guard duty at the lift dock in Area 1-1 below.

**6 Kobold Guards** *(These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 points of damage and Spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They carry weapons and have 1d4gps each.)*

The kobolds do not immediately attack but waive their weapons about threateningly and demand the purpose of the characters intrusion into the kingdom of the Great Skritch. They of course do this in their own barking snapping reptilian tongue, which should sound for all intents and purposes like dire threats. If the characters do not speak the kobold tongue, they are attacked in 1d4 rounds after much chest beating and many threatening motions. If the characters do speak kobold, the kobolds demand to know what purpose the characters have in visiting the land of Skritch. If the characters speaking with them offers a good reason for why they seek entry into the sinkhole, a tribute of no less than 100gp per visitor. Should the characters be unable to pay they are asked to leave. If they refuse to leave, combat ensues. If the tribute is paid the characters are escorted directly to the lift located on level 2-16. Of course the kobolds demand a second tribute of 200gp per visitor on any return trip out of their domain.

## SKRITCH'S KINGDOM SINKHOLE LEVELS 1 AND 2

The first populated lairs within the great Umeshti sinkhole is the domain of "king" Skritch the kobold and his vicious kobold gang. Skritch rules the two top most dungeon levels and most of the crater's bowl as his own private kingdom for so long as he can keep intruders out of the lairs of far more powerful beings below. The success of Skritch as an entry level guardian of the dungeon may be measured in the fact that other beings who dwell deep within the earth are known to grant him some form of simple tribute in order to pass freely into the outside world. For this and many reasons Skritch's band is well outfitted with armor and gear and Skritch himself has become quite wealthy (as far as kobolds go).

## SINKHOLE LEVEL 1 KOBOLD NESTS

### Features

**Darkness:** The sinkhole is dark and thus requires the use of artificial light or night vision, in order to make one's way.

**Locked Doors:** Unless otherwise noted the doors in the upper chambers are locked and have a (CL 2) requiring a successful open locks check of 14 or better by a character with the suitable ability in order to open. The doors are heavy and made from petrified wood leftover from the dwarven rule of the sinkhole. Thus although they technically cannot be missed with any attack roll, the doors have 20 hit points and are virtually immune to any ranged attacks short of a bolder hurled by a giant.

**The Kobold Highway:** These passages cut into the natural rock by the kobolds are only wide enough for small or smaller figures to move through. Beings larger than small size may crawl on their belly through these holes at ½ their movement rate but may only do so in single file and are denied any dexterity bonuses to armor class. Medium sized creatures in heavy armor may not pass through the kobold highway without getting them tightly wedged in one of the tunnels, requiring the assistance of others to pull themselves free. All creatures larger than medium size suffer a -2 to all attack rolls in these tight quarters.

**Sinkhole:** Falling into the sinkhole pit from any height may have unthinkable consequences and usually results in instantaneous death for those not protected with magic or the ability to fly by other means. There is a cumulative 5% chance for every 80 feet fallen that the subject may hit a ledge on one of the levels below. In this event, the subject takes 1d6 for every ten feet fallen as they strike heavily upon the ledge below. An additional check is made for every 80 feet fallen. After a distance of about 880 feet the subject hits bottom and takes 88d6 points of falling damage and is likely quite dead.

**Dwarven Lifts:** These ancient mechanisms still function fluidly, a testament to the ingenuity of the dwarves who crafted them. The lifts are fashioned with browned steel baskets that look in the entire world like a large birds cage. Each basket is large enough to hold roughly six medium sized beings and support up to 10,000 lbs of weight.

The lifts are operated with a simple hand break mechanism on the inside of the cage, lowering the subjects peacefully down the sinkhole shaft until they come to rest at the side of one of the lift docks. The lifts have a magically hardened cable and pulley system that cannot be shattered, cut or broken by any means save that of something with truly titanic strength. Their enchanted nature resists the power of all magic save that of a *wish* spell. Each lift has roughly 100 feet of cable

and is just long enough to lower a basket to the lift dock below it or the lift dock above which it is attached to.

**Random Encounters:** Roll 1d6 for a Random Encounter once ever 15 minutes the characters explore Level 2. A roll of 1 indicates a random encounter takes place. Roll 1d6 on the following chart.

- |                       |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Fubar the Ogre     | 4. Lesser kobold shaman (2hd) |
| 2. 1d4 kobolds        | 5. 1d20 giant rats            |
| 3. 1d2 kobold snipers | 6. 1d2 young cavern raptors.  |

### 1-1.The First Lift Dock

The basket settles at the first lift dock. Hidden in the shadows of the landing are 2 kobolds that have been alerted by the descent of the basket. Likewise if kobolds have escaped from one of the kobold caverns, double this number is lying in wait. As soon as the basket is within ten feet of the landing, the kobolds open fire with shortbows. As the characters reach the landing, the kobolds retreat to area 1-2 and eventually through the Kobold Highway to their warrens. Unless dispatched quickly, one of the kobolds always attempts to flee towards **Area 1-2** and beyond to **Area 1-14** where further runners are sent throughout the warren to set traps and activate guard patrols. The second way that the kobolds may be alerted to the presence of the



CRATER MAP LEVEL 1

characters is by a successful wisdom check from the kobold lookouts in Area 1-15 who may assist the kobolds on the lift dock with missile fire across the wide sinkhole. characters thus engaged by the kobolds in Area 1-15 gain a +1 to their armor class due to the lift basket giving them some slight cover.

**Kobold Guards, 2 or 4** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or by weapon for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They have a shortsword or spear and shortbow with 20 arrows, 1d4 gps each.)

### 1-2.The First Ambush

This chamber once served the dwarves who built it as a guard shack. Time, erosion and the constant tunneling by the kobolds has made it

a chamber of death, designed to draw creatures up from the lift dock in **Area 1-1** into this ready made ambush. Small holes in the southern and western wall lead to the Kobolds Highway and hide Kobold snipers, should the warren be warned of intruders. This warning is achieved in two ways. Survivors from any fight at the lift dock run towards **Area 1-14** for reinforcements. The second way that the ambush is set, occurs if any of the lookouts from **Area 1-15** survive missile combat with the characters and move into the ambush position in the small hole in the southern edge of the wall after the characters have stepped from view. In this event one of the lookouts moves to **Area 1-14** and then through the rest of the warrens of the Kobold Highway to warn every subsequent tribe member they come across.

If the ambush is in effect and the kobolds have had at least 3 rounds to prepare they shatter flasks of oil on the floor of the chamber and wait for the characters to slip in the oil before igniting it. The subsequent flames deal 1d6 points of damage per round for 1d2+1 rounds to anyone standing or slipping in the oil. The oil is slippery like the effects of a *grease* spell (See Spell Appendix), with a (CL 5), requiring anyone stepping on it or moving across it to make a dexterity save to keep their footing. After 1d2+1 rounds have gone by the floor is passable again. Smoke from the fires is sucked down the eastern hallway and out through the sinkhole which acts as a natural chimney. Beings caught in the eastern hallway who are not directly effected by the fire must make a constitution save (CL5) or begin choking and gagging from smoke inhalation and may take no actions other than to drop to the floor helplessly until the fire has died out.

### 1-3. Sub-Chiefs Quarters

There are two kobold sub-chiefs named Frag and Sazuba are in this chamber 50% of the time. From this northerly position within the upper warrens they are able to move swiftly through the eastern and western tunnels and rally their charges and direct operations. The door in the eastern end of the chamber is locked with a standard lock but each possesses a key. The sub-chiefs were raised by Skritch himself and are considered to be princes amongst the kobold clan. Should either Frag or Sazuba be captured, the kobold king does anything in his power to gain their freedom. Anything that is, except sacrifice his own scaly hide.

**Kobold Elite Sub-Chieftains (Frag, Sazuba)** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, Hp 12, 14, AC 17. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or by weapon for 1d6+1 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They carry a +1 shortsword, +1 spear and +1 shortbow with 20 arrows, and 2d6+4 gp.)

**Treasure** (A locked chest (Challenge level 3) contains 133 gp, 3 agates worth 35 gp each and 2 potions of cure light wounds.)

### 1-4. Fubar's Den

Through bribery, flattery and a constant supply of provisions, the kobolds of the crater and the sinkhole have managed to hire the wicked ogre Fubar. Fubar acts as a sort of guardian for the tooled halls of the upper sinkhole, being too large to squeeze his girth into the Kobold Highway. Fubar patrols the hallway between the lift **Area 1-1**, **Area 1-6** and **Area 1-2** when alerted to do so by Frag or Sazuba. Otherwise he is found within his den.

**Fubar the Ogre** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 4d8, Hp 24, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a single fist slam for 1d10 points of damage or with a large club for 1d8+3 points of damage.)



Fubar is stupid enough to fight to the death.

Fubar has gotten quite rich by ogre standards for helping out the kobolds and has an iron bound chest that contains the spoils of several years of intimidation and strong-arm tactics.

**Treasure** *(The chest has no lock in it as none of the kobolds would dare attempt to steal from their guardian. Inside are 120gp, 200sp, 323cp, a silver dagger, a broken helmet, 2 potions of healing and a one-gallon jug of sour wine worth 5gp.)*

### 1-5. Eastern Nest

This cavern contains several kobold nests and is guarded by 10 kobold warriors, four kobold snipers, a kobold shaman and a kobold sub-chief. The snipers take turns watching the kobold highway as the warriors, and females busy themselves with procreation and the tending of the egg clutches and newly hatched kobold young.

**Kobolds, 10** *(These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They have weapons and 1d4gp each.)*

**Kobold Females, 6** *(These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 1, AC 15. Their primary attributes physical. They attack with a single bite for 1d2 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive.)*

**Kobold Hatchlings, 8** *(These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d4, HP 1, AC 12. They attack with a single bite for 1 hit point of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive.)*

**Kobold Snipers, 4** *(These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d8-4, HP 4, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or a bow for 1d6+1 or shortsword for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. Each sniper carries a shortsword, shortbow, 20 arrows, and 1d4gp.)*

**Lesser Shaman** *(This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP 3, AC 15. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a bite 1d2 points of damage and dagger for 1d4 points of damage or with magic spells. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries a dagger and 2d4gp. His spells are: command, magic missile.)*

**Kobold Sub-chief** *(This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries weapons and 2d6+4gp.)*

There are 36 kobold eggs in three small clutches.

### 1-6. Old Dwarven Stores

This chamber was once a storehouse for dwarves barracked here all those hundreds of years ago. Of course the kobolds have long since plundered what little remained when the dwarves left their mining operations behind and have booby-trapped the room with a half dozen trip wire sprung light crossbows. The crossbows are aimed so that three face one door and three face the other.

The crossbow trap has a (CL 2). The trip wires are rigged to the locked doors of the chamber. If the trip wires are not detected or

disarmed the trap fires 3 crossbow bolts at anyone standing behind the door when the door opens, determined at random. The bolts are +10 to hit and deal 1d6 points of damage each.

If the doors are opened and the trap is overcome without firing at the intruders, the kobolds from **Area 1-5** and **Area 1-8** are taken completely by surprise and lose their first round of attacks as they ponder why their clever trap did not work.

### 1-7. Sally Port

This small cavern serves as a lookout roost and a means of quick passage from **Areas 1-5, 1-6** and **1-16**. There are typically 4 kobolds in this area at any given time keeping an eye on comings and goings through **Area 1-16**.

**Kobolds, 4** *(These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They have weapons and 1d4gp each.)*

### 1-8. Ambush Cave

This cave is only accessed through the tiny passages known as the kobolds highway. Inside there are six kobold snipers, a kobold sub-chieftain and a lesser shaman. The kobolds spend the majority of their time bored out of their tiny dog like skulls, playing dice and cooking whatever they have caught or in most instances eating rats and large spiders or centipedes raw. In the event that intruders have entered the sinkhole, the kobolds lie in wait at the small tunnel leading to **Area 6** and **9**. If several of their number have fallen they move to the guard nest or lair offering the easiest escape from the PCs to regroup with other Kobolds and formulate a counter attack.

**Kobold Snipers, 6** *(These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d8-4, HP 4, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or a bow for 1d6+1 or shortsword for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. Each sniper carries a shortsword, shortbow, 20 arrows, and 1d4gp.)*

**Lesser Shaman** *(This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP 3, AC 15. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a bite 1d2 points of damage and dagger for 1d4 points of damage or with magic spells. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries a dagger and 2d4gp. His spells are: command, magic missile.)*

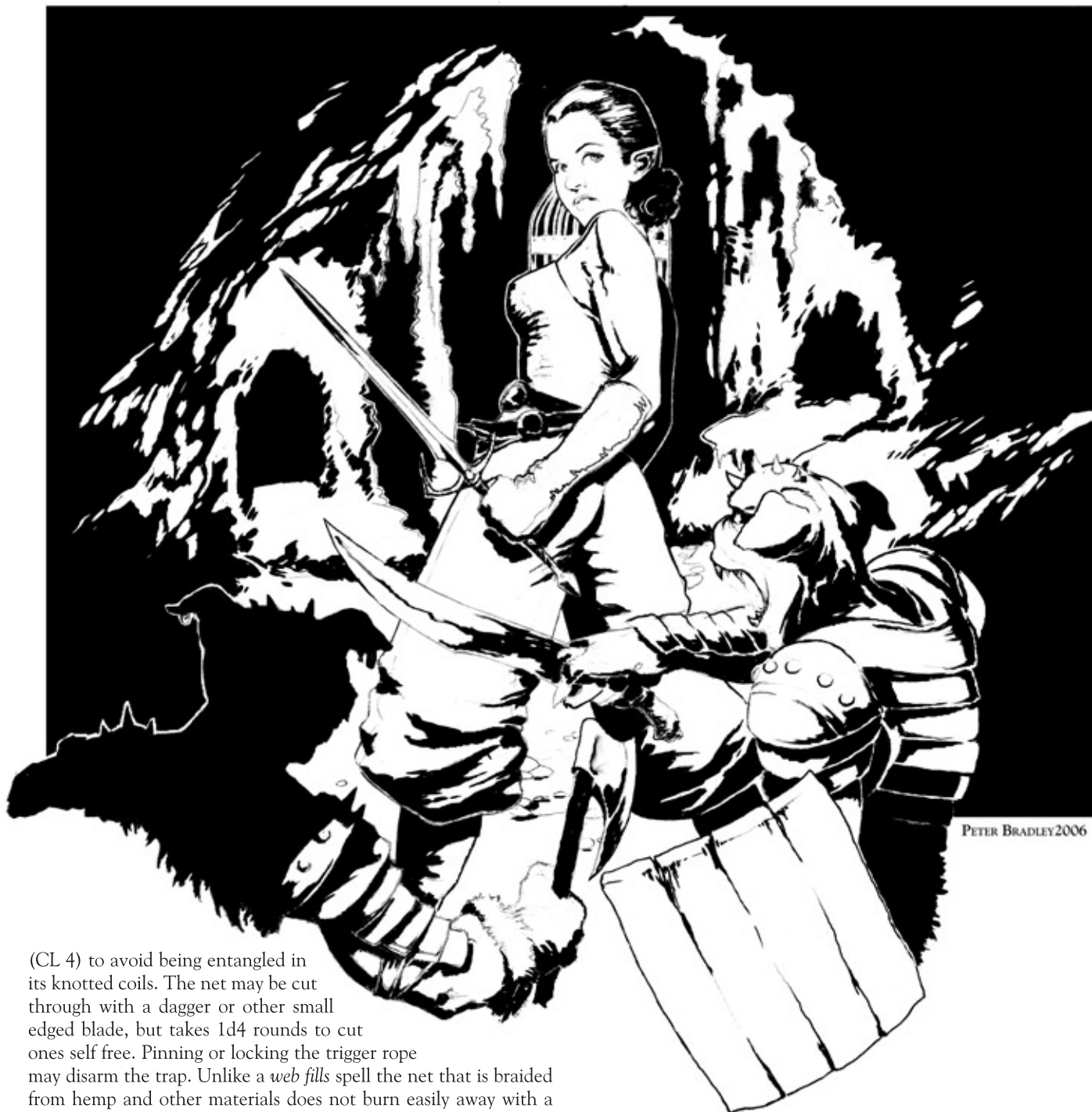
**Kobold Sub-chief** *(This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries weapons and 2d6+4gp.)*

### 1-9. Old Dwarven Guardroom

The dwarves once used this chamber when they were mining meteoric elements from the sinkhole. The chamber has long since been stripped of any valuable materials and instead is now set with a booby trap designed to capture any foolish enough to delve into the heart of Skritch's kingdom.

A large net is set along the ceiling of the chamber, disguised beneath thick spider webs. The net is set with a series of ropes which are controlled the kobolds sitting in the ambush trigger cave. The net is a (CL 4). The trap covers an area of 20x20 feet directly before the door leading from **Area 1-6**. The trap acts like a *web fills* spell with a





PETER BRADLEY 2006

(CL 4) to avoid being entangled in its knotted coils. The net may be cut through with a dagger or other small edged blade, but takes 1d4 rounds to cut ones self free. Pinning or locking the trigger rope may disarm the trap. Unlike a *web fills* spell the net that is braided from hemp and other materials does not burn easily away with a torch.

Trapped individuals are held to the spot where they became entangled in the net and lose any benefits offered by dexterity to their armor class. They are unable to make any movements except to attempt to cut them free from the net.

As soon as the net trap is sprung, kobolds begin firing arrows at intruders trapped in the net from the holes in the walls that lead to

**Areas 1-10, 1-11 and 1-8.** Only one kobold may attack from each hole at a time due to the small, narrow nature of the holes. This trap has the earmarks of a total party kill due to the fact that all party members may become entangled in the trap. Proceed with caution.

#### 1-10. Net Trigger Cave

The net trigger cave houses two kobold snipers and a lesser kobold shaman. The snipers wait to trigger the net trap upon anyone who enters the old dwarven guard post. The kobolds wait to spring the trap so that they may catch as many foes as possible in their trap. One kobold fires arrows on targets while others hands it arrows to reload. When the arrows are expelled, the shaman casts his spells and all retreat to **Area 1-11** to re-supply. In the event that they are flushed from their firing position the kobolds move to **Area 1-11** or **Area 1-8**.

**Kobold Snipers, 2** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d8-4, HP 4, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They

attack with a bite for 1d2 or a bow for 1d6+1 or shortsword for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. Each sniper carries a shortsword, shortbow, 20 arrows, and 1d4gp.)

**Lesser Shaman** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP 3, AC 15. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a bite 1d2 points of damage and dagger for 1d4 points of damage or with magic spells. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries a dagger and 2d4gp. His spells are: command, magic missile.)

#### 1-11. Lesser Guard Nest

This hollowed out kidney shaped cavern serves as the main guard nest for level 1 of the sinkhole. Only accessible through the kobold highway the nest houses a dozen kobolds, their arms and equipment, a sub-chieftain and a pair of lesser kobold shamans. Strangers entering the sinkhole are observed carefully by the guards posted in this nest. The kobolds posted here are not considered a "static" encounter. They may move to re-enforce other nests or harass enemies through the kobold highway.

There is a fire pit in the center of the cave filling the chamber with the stench of oily smoking offal.

**Kobold Guards, 12** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They have weapons and 1d4gp each.)

**Kobold Sub-chief** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries weapons and 2d6+4gp.)

**Lesser Shaman, 2** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP 3, AC 15. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a bite 1d2 points of damage and dagger for 1d4 points of damage or with magic spells. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They carry a dagger and 2d4gp. Their spells are: command, magic missile.)

**Treasure** (The half rotting body of an orc captured in the sinkhole has served the kobolds in this chamber for many meals. Aside from the orc corpse there are 30 spears, and a barrel filled with 100 shortbow arrows.)

There are no non-combatants in this chamber due to its proximity to the lifts.

#### 1-12. Southern Nest

This cavern is home to many non-combatant kobolds and numerous mud and wattle nests created by kobold females for the incubation and rearing of their young. There are 10 adult males who guard the chamber. There are 8 females, 16 hatchlings and 34 eggs, including 1 black egg, which will one day hatch into a kobold shaman. The females and hatchlings only attack if they themselves are attacked and instead flee to guarded areas for protection, snatching up the black egg and 1d2 eggs each.

**Kobolds, 10** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They have weapons and 1d4gp each.)

**Kobold Females, 8** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 1, AC 15. Their primary attributes physical. They attack with a single bite for 1d2 points of damage. They have dark vision 60ft. and are light sensitive.)

**Kobold Hatchlings, 16** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d4, HP 1, AC 12. They attack with a single bite for 1 hit point of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive.)

#### 1-13. Cavern Raptor Nest

This cavern serves as the nest of cavern raptors bred by the kobolds as guard and hunting dogs. There are 5 cavern raptor eggs that are tended day and night by four kobold females and a kobold sub-chieftain who acts as a trainer for the beasts from the time they hatch. Currently there is one cavern raptor hatchling in the process of being trained for guard duty. The eggs fetch 20 gps each on the open market, however the beasts are difficult to train and they do not acclimatize well to above ground conditions.

**Kobold Sub-chieftain** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries weapons and 2d6+4gp.)

**Kobold Females, 4** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 1, AC 15. Their primary attributes physical. They attack with a single bite for 1d2 points of damage. They have dark vision 60ft. and are light sensitive.)

**Cavern Raptor Hatchlings** (These neutral, creature's vital stats are HD 1/5 d8, Hp 2, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 and 2 claws for 1d2 points of damage. Their special abilities are scent and darkvision up to 60ft.)

#### 1-14. Cavern Raptor Kennel

This cavern serves as a kennel for several cavern raptors and their masters. The chamber stinks of rotting flesh and its floor is covered with broken bones and offal.

There are 4 young and 2 adult cavern raptors in this chamber as well as two kobold sub chiefs who act as handlers.

**Young Cavern Raptors, 4** (These neutral creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, Hp 3, 4, 5, 6, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d3 and 2 claws for 1d2 points of damage. Their special abilities are scent and darkvision up to 60ft.)

**Adult Cavern Raptors, 2** (These neutral creature's vital stats are HD 2d8+1, Hp 10, 12, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d4 and 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage. Their special abilities are scent and darkvision up to 60ft.)

**Kobold Sub-chieftain** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. And is light sensitive. He carries weapons and 2d6+4gp.)

#### 1-15. Lookout Point

This ledge juts out from the edge of the sinkhole and affords a good view of both landings, as well as any raising or descending lift baskets.



There are typically 2 kobolds keeping watch on this ledge at any given time.

**Kobold Guards, 2** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They have weapons and 1d4gp each.)

#### 1-16. Lift to Level 2

The doorway to the south side of the chamber is locked. The key is in the possession of Malash the Necromancer on the fourth level of the dungeon, who serves as sort of an unofficial gatekeeper. The kobolds have no need for the keys as they use the kobold highway to get pretty much anywhere they need to go in the top level of the dungeon. The door lock has a (CL 6).

A pair of small holes flank the locked door serve as entrances into the kobold highway and the numerous nests they have built on the upper floor. The holes have a (CL 2) and require a check of 14 or 20 to notice depending on the characters primes. It is into these passages that the kobold skirmishers flee to should the PCs survive the ambush. The holes are passages into the Kobold Highway and are observed by any surviving kobolds from **Area 1-11** and **1-7**.

A sub-chieftain and 4 kobold warriors guard the lift to Level 2 of the sinkhole as it is frequently used by the Kobolds to move between **Level 1** and **Level 2** of their lair. If the kobolds have not been alerted to dangers however, these kobolds are found elsewhere in one of the nests or caves.

**Kobold Guards, 4** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They have weapons and 1d4gp each.)

**Kobold Sub-chief** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries weapons and 2d6 + 4gp.)

The lift basket is identical to the one at the mouth of the cavern and descends roughly fifty feet to the landing platform at **Area 2-1**.

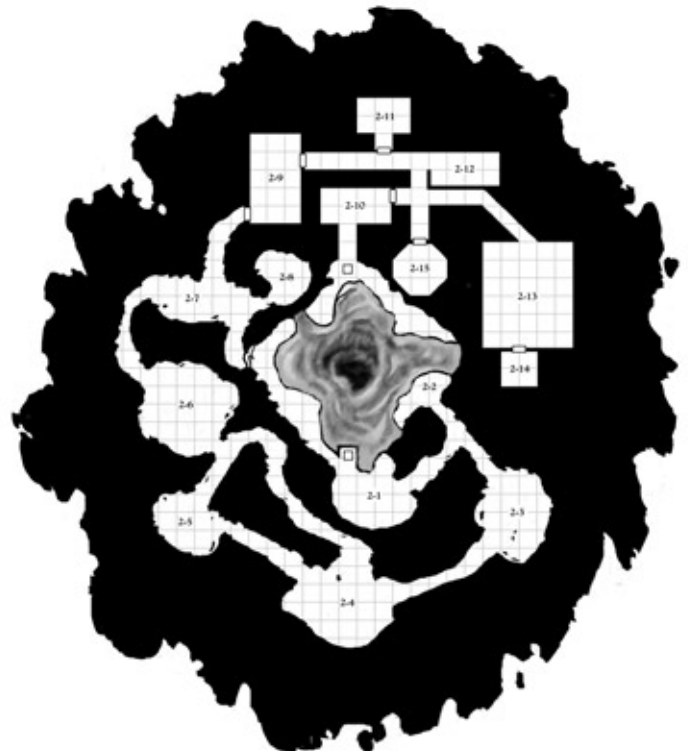
### SINKHOLE LEVEL 2 COURT OF THE KOBOLD KING

This level contains many secrets and the crème of the crop of the kobold nation. Skritch resides upon this level along with his chief shaman and their many progeny.

#### Features

**Darkness:** The sinkhole is dark and thus requires the use of artificial light or night vision, in order to make one's way.

**Locked Doors:** Unless otherwise noted the doors in the upper chambers are locked and have a (CL 2) requiring a successful open locks check of 14 or better by a character with the suitable ability in order to open. The doors are heavy and made from petrified wood leftover from the dwarven rule of the sinkhole. Thus although they technically cannot be missed with any attack roll, the doors have 20



CRATER MAP LEVEL 2

hit points and are virtually immune to any ranged attacks short of a bolder hurled by a giant.

**Random Encounters:** Roll 1d6 for a Random Encounter once ever 15 minutes the PCs explore Level 2. A roll of 1 indicates a random encounter takes place. Roll 1d6 on the chart below to determine the type of encounter.

- |                      |                               |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. 1d4 kobolds       | 4. 1d2 kobold elite           |
| 2. 1d4 small spiders | 5. Lesser Kobold Shaman (3hd) |
| 3. 1d20 giant rats   | 6. 1d2 Adult Cavern Raptors   |

#### 2-1. Second Level Landing

The basket from **Area 1-16** above descends roughly 50 feet into darkness until reaching the second landing for level 2 of the Umeshti Sinkhole. The landing opens immediately into a decent sized cave which is guarded by a 12 kobold sentries, this number is doubled in the event that the lower caverns have been warned by kobolds escaping from any assault in the kobold highway or against the upper nests. Typically the kobolds here busy themselves with sharpening weapons, drinking, playing games or hunting rats to eat.

If the PCs arrive in the company of Frag or Sazuba, and have somehow managed to make friendly terms with the kobolds, the guardians pay them no heed. Otherwise they attack immediately with 1-2 of their number rush off to **Area 1-3**, from 1-3 to **Area 1-4** and so on until the entire hive has been warned of the PCs approach.

**Kobold Guards, 12** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They have weapons and 1d4gp each.)

## 2-2. Lookout Point.

Like previous lookouts this ledge serves as a lookout to keep an eye on those coming up from or descending the baskets in **Areas 2-1** and **2-16**. There are 2 kobold snipers who keep an eye on descending baskets from this ledge. The fall from the ledge is deadly and kobolds maneuver to knock foes from the ledge if faced with melee combat.

**Kobold Snipers, 2** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d8-4, HP 4, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or a bow for 1d6+1 or shortsword for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. Each sniper carries a shortsword, shortbow, 20 arrows, and 1d4gp.)

## 2-3. Warrior Cavern

This cavern serves as a mess hall and general quarters for the kobold warriors who guard Skritch's domain. There are at least a dozen kobolds, a sub-chieftain and a kobold shaman in this chamber at any given time. The kobolds pass the time eating, practicing with their weapons or torturing prisoners whom they have captured from the crater above or the depths of the sinkhole below.

**Kobold Guards, 12** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 2, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They have weapons and 1d4gp each.)

**Kobold Sub-chief** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries weapons and 2d6+4gp.)

**Lesser Shaman** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP 3, AC 15. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a bite 1d2 points of damage and dagger for 1d4 points of damage or with magic spells. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries a dagger and 2d4gp. His spells are: command, magic missile.)

**Ynger Froog**, a gnome from lamplight station is currently tied from a hook in the ceiling as the kobolds take turns using the poor gnarled fellow like a piñata, beating him with spear staves until he passes out and starting again as soon as he recovers. If Ynger is rescued he offers to assist the party as a guide of sorts. If the party decides against taking Ynger along on their explorations, he suggests that if they manage to make it deeper into the sinkhole, they stop by Lamplight Station and have a pint or two on him, and offers to craft a very generalized map leading to the Station. Lamplight Station will be detailed in a later installment of the Crater of Umeshiti™ series of adventures.

If a map is offered make sure that Ynger manages to leave out some of the most important "surprises" along the way. Likewise it is important that if Ynger joins the party he not lead the PCs too far astray from trouble.

**Ynger Froog** (This 3<sup>rd</sup> level, neutral good gnome rogue's vital stats are HD 3d6, HP 12, AC 10 (current, this increases to AC 16 with dexterity and studded leather). His primary attributes are dexterity and intelligence. His significant attributes are dexterity 18, and intelligence 13. His special abilities include gnome racial traits and rogue abilities. He has no equipment.)

## 2-4. Cavern Raptor Cave

This chamber houses 4 cavern raptors that have been fully trained by the kobolds. These vicious beasts work in teams of 2 and are leashed by sub-chieftains who hiss basic commands to them in kobold. If the nest has been alerted to the presence of foes, these sub-chieftains roam out from the kennel and release the cavern raptors on foes as they stand back and give commands. The cavern raptors fight to the death and tend to swarm individual foes, ripping them to shreds before moving to attack the next victim. Their masters can only stay their assault if they fail a charisma check vs. their master.

**Adult Cavern Raptors, 4** (These neutral creature's vital stats are HD 2d8+1, Hp 10, 12, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d4 and 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage. Their special abilities are scent and darkvision up to 60ft.)

**Kobold Sub-chiefs, 2** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. They carry weapons and 2d6+4gp.)

## 2-5. Cavern Raptor Nest

This cavern raptor nest is similar to the one found in **Area 1-13**. It holds 6 eggs, 3 of which are close to hatching and 3 hatchlings that are tended by a kobold sub-chieftain and 3 females. Also there is always a pregnant cavern raptor here that is close to giving birth. If the eggs are threatened the female goes berserk and cannot be managed even by commands of the sub-chief. This female not only turns on those who threaten the nest, but any kobolds within reach of her razor sharp claws and needle like teeth.

**Adult Cavern Raptor** (This neutral creature's vital stats are HD 2d8+1, Hp 14, AC 12. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d4 and 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage. His special abilities are scent and darkvision 60ft.)

**Cavern Raptor Hatchlings** (These neutral, creature's vital stats are HD 1/5 d8, Hp 2, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 and 2 claws for 1d2 points of damage. Their special abilities are scent and darkvision 60ft.)

**Kobold Sub-chief** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries weapons and 2d6+4gp.)

**Kobold Females, 3** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 1, AC 15. Their primary attributes physical. They attack with a single bite for 1d2 points of damage. They have dark vision 60ft. and are light sensitive.)

## 2-6. Great Nest

This nest contains more eggs than any of the nests in the **1st Level** of the Sinkhole. Most of the eggs and young in this nest were fathered by King Skritch himself, and from their ranks come the vast majority of sub-chieftains and shamans. The entrances of the chambers are each guarded by 2 sub-chieftains and 1 lesser shaman tend to the eggs along with 6 females. The clutch of eggs in this chamber is quite impressive, numbering over 100, with 10 being black eggs, noted to be those from which spring the kobold shamans. When the hatchlings mature, they are trained and more often than not sent out into the



bowl of the crater to avoid overpopulation amongst those living within the sinkhole.

**Kobold Sub-chieftains, 2** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 points of damage, and spear, shortsword or shortbow for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. They carry weapons and 2d6+4gp.)

**Lesser Shaman** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP 3, AC 15. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a bite 1d2 points of damage and dagger for 1d4 points of damage or with magic spells. He has darkvision 60ft. and is light sensitive. He carries a dagger and 2d4gp. His spells are: command, magic missile.)

**Kobold Females, 6** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 1, AC 15. Their primary attributes physical. They attack with a single bite for 1d2 points of damage. They have dark vision 60ft. and are light sensitive.)

## 2-7. Fungus Garden

The length of this chamber is filled with screechers. These fungal masses serve as a sustainable food source for the kobolds that also use the chamber as a privy, keeping the fungus fertilized. The screechers have become accustomed to the presence of the kobolds and therefore do not let out their piercing shriek unless approached with a lit torch or other light source. To this end the fungus garden also serves as a warning blast of last defense for the kobolds in the event that invaders come within striking distance of the worked stone chambers which house Skritch's "royal" family. The proximity of the gardens to the sinkhole cause the shriek to the screechers to reverberate through the mouth of the pit and out for a quarter mile into the crater beyond. This clarion warning brings swarms of kobolds from the hills to the defense of their sinkhole kingdom. These reinforcements arrive within the hour. Their arrival is perhaps too late to save King Skritch, but certainly in enough time to make escape from the sinkhole difficult to say the least.

**Screechers, 20** (These neutral creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 13, AC 8. Their primary attributes are none. They have twilight vision and are able to shriek.)

## 2-8. Trainers Cave

This chamber serves as a training ground for immature cavern raptors and their masters. The hatchlings are brought small creatures to stalk and hunt and offered prizes for good behavior. They are of course beaten senseless for poor behavior, which teaches the young raptors to fear their master as if it were their "parent."

Currently there are 3 young cavern raptors and their trainers present in the chamber, unless of course a warning has been issued by kobolds from the sinkhole areas above, or other chambers on this level. In this instance the raptors and their trainers join with other groups of kobolds to harass the characters and offer opportunities for Skritch and his fellows to escape to Level 3 of the sinkhole.

**Young Cavern Raptors, 3** (These neutral creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, Hp 3, 4, 5, 6, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d3 and 2 claws for 1d2 points of damage. Their special abilities are scent and darkvision up to 60ft.)

**Kobold Trainers, 2** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 6, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or shortsword for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60ft. and are light sensitive. They each have 2d6+4gps.)

## 2-9. Elite Guard Barracks

This chamber houses 20 crack kobold guards who serve as the chief bodyguards for Skritch. There are 10 of these elite guards here at any time, and another twenty either serving in the throne room, or keeping an eye on the lift. If intruders have made it this far into the lair and are on the verge of threatening Skritch, the kobolds fight to the death. Otherwise they retreat to the throne room as great numbers of their force begin to dwindle. A kobold shaman is with the elite kobold guards at all times to help bolster their combat effectiveness and moral.

**Kobold Elite Warriors, 10** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d8, Hp 7, 9, 9, 6, 5, 5, 10, 12, 16, 7, AC 20. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or by weapon for 1d6+1 points of damage. They have darkvision 60 ft. and are light sensitive. They wear chain shirts, carry wooden shields, shortswords and shortbows with 20 arrows apiece. They each have 2d6+4gp.)

## 2-10. Lift Repair Room

This chamber once served as a repair center for the old dwarven lifts. The kobolds have little understanding of how complex the lift system is and have thus left the piles of stainless steel chain and replacement gears alone, as they are far too heavy for the kobolds to move. Instead they have laced the area with tripwires and placed several traps in the chamber consisting of bottles of oil attached to fine wires and flint and steel strikers. Likewise they have other wires that are strung throat high to garrote unsuspecting travelers. Malash is aware of the various traps and knows the secret route to circumvent most of them with ease on his few passages to the surface. Malash for the most part prefers to delve more deeply into the depths of the sinkhole attempting to uncover the secrets of the Umeshti and other underworld denizens he comes across.

**Oil Bottle and Striker Trap:** This trap is a (CL 3) and involves nearly invisible trip wires of a fine metal which cause bottles of highly flammable gear oil to drop from the ceiling and smash upon the head of foes, completely dousing them in the slippery oil. It can be assumed that a Save vs. Traps must be made for each 5 foot area explored in this chamber lest a trip wire be tripped and a bottle of oil come smashing into ones face dealing 1d2 points of physical damage, and forcing a second Save vs. Traps to avoid falling prone due to the slipperiness of the oil. This of course is only part of the diabolical trap. As each tripwire is triggered, it also pulls on a gear set upon a block of flint that causes a spark that ignites any oil spilled on the floor. Characters doused with the oil take an additional 1d6 points of fire damage during the first round and 1d4 points on the round afterwards before the oil consumes itself.

**Garrote Trap:** As insidious as the oil are the razor sharp pieces of wire which hang roughly at neck level for medium sized creatures (dwarves Excluded). The Garrote Trap (CL 3) requires a separate find traps check by assassins or rogues to locate from the Oil Bottle and Striker Trap. A separate save vs. traps must be made for each 5 foot area of the chamber explored. Characters not wearing helmets or armored throat garb take 1d2 points of constitution damage from severe bleeding and may not shout until healed due to damage to the larynx on a failed check, meaning the character cannot speak louder than a gurgled whisper until the wound is completely healed. This

damage is temporary and should heal in a few days time. Characters wearing helmets or specific neck protection take no damage. Beings under 4 feet tall are unaffected by the Garrote Trap.

If both sets of traps are detected, they may be disarmed, disabled or reset. Likewise a rogue or assassin making a successful find traps check is able to point out a complex pathway through the maze of wires that would allow his allies to easily pass through the chamber unhindered but at half their normal movement rate.

### 2-11. Qizzith's Chamber

This chamber serves as the private quarters of Qizzith, the chief shaman of Skritch's tribe. The door is locked with a Good Lock (CL 4), to which only Qizzith holds the key. There is a 20% chance that Qizzith is in his chamber at any given time. If he is not found in his private lair he is in the Throne Room of **Area 2-13**.

Qizzith's bed is a pile of moldy rags and uncured animal skins. There is a pile of kobold skin flakes in one corner of the chamber, as Qizzith has a taboo when it comes to the leavings of his flesh falling into the hands of his enemies. A small leaden chest holds the majority of Qizzith's personal effects that are not currently carried by the devious kobold.

**Treasure** (10pp, a 50gp holy symbol of Kyulashedrac, a 300gp ruby, and 2 tourmalines worth 50gp each.)

Stats for Qizzith are found in the room description for **Area 2-13**.

### 2-12. Sacred Burial Chamber

Hidden behind this secret door is the burial chamber of the Kobold Kings who ruled the upper sinkhole prior to Skritch. The skeletal remains of 20 kobolds, wrapped in rotten rags lie here with a shortsword across their breast and a clay urn filled with coins at their feet. The walls are carved with crude and somewhat fanciful depictions of the 10 kings and their "conquests." Being kobolds the veracity of their exploits is questionable at best.

PCs plundering so much as 1 coin from the burial chamber levels a curse upon the thief which causes the slow transformation of the tomb robber into a kobold unless a save versus spells (CL 6) is made. The transformation to kobold takes one month. During that time the PC begins to shrink in stature (unless already of small size), their skin becomes hairy, scaly, and flaky, causing them to itch as if they had a horrible skin condition or really bad dandruff. Their features become progressively more doglike and a tail begins to grow as they become more hunched and reptilian. Eventually small horns grow along their spine and sprout from their forehead and they lose the ability to fully communicate in their native tongue. A remove curse spell cast upon the victim may only avoid the transformation. See the *polymorph* spell in the Castles and Crusades Players Handbook for details on the effects of an unwanted shape change.

### 2-13. Throne Room of King Skritch the Great

This large chamber once likely served as a mess hall for the dwarves who worked the old mines. It now serves as the stinking fest-hall of a kobold tyrant. At any given time there are 10 elite kobolds, 2 lesser kobold shamans, 4 kobold females, and Skritch's two personal cavern raptors. There is always of course an 80% chance that Qizzith is also present.

Unless otherwise forewarned the kobolds are found lounging about, eating roasted rat or other delicacies and sipping a sour mushroom wine that they fashion from screecher juice. If warned, the array of

forces is arranged so that Skritch may hide in shadows and observe the characters for 3 rounds before using his death attack on a likely target, or escape altogether if things are going poorly for his folk. There are several ways in which the characters may find themselves in the throne room of Skritch. These ways of approaching the throne room may have various impacts on how their journeys through the Crater of Umeshti proceed.

- **Traditional Hack and Slash Method**

Characters have fought their way through the crater, and down into the kobold highway where they have slaughtered every kobold they meet, with the battle in the throne room serving as a form of "finale." Characters slaughter the kobolds they "Win" and get to collect their shares of loot. If it is apparent that this is about to happen, Skritch and several of his bodyguards attempt to escape to **Area 2-14** and clamber down the rope ladder to **Area 3-7**.

- **Prisoners of the Kobold King**

Characters have been captured by the kobolds, which in the process of defeating the beleaguered characters wait until all characters have been reduced to 0 or negative hit points, bind them and haul them before King Skritch to receive their final judgment. This need not be the end for your fine adventurers. It is quite possible that Skritch may see value in using the characters as pawns or some cruel humor in plundering most of their best valuables and exchanging them with inferior kobold equipment. Magical items are of course taken as are any coins, jewelry and superior quality weapons. Skritch does speak a guttural form of common, as does his advisor Qizzith. After much fanfare with many times it looking as if the characters have met their final end, they are blindfolded and taken to the Eight Sided Cell in **Area 3-4** to await their fate for the entertainment of Skritch's Court.

- **Ambassadors**

In the event of a more "evilly" aligned party, the characters may come bearing some tribute to Skritch and see if the Kobold King has any "jobs" for them to do. Skritch in fact does have some work that he would like done. One of the special "hatchlings" has gotten loose and roams somewhere in the lower levels of the sinkhole. Skritch would very much like the "baby" brought back unharmed. The "baby" is called "J'nyuoor," and is found roaming somewhere in the third or fourth level of the sinkhole.

Regardless of any outcomes Skritch by no means allows himself to be killed easily. He is far too fond of his role as an important ruler of the upper crater and intends to hold this position for some time. Skritch makes any effort to flee and regroup his forces, even going so far as sneaking off to his shabby dung-heap of an apartment in the Undercity of Ulgakur until threats pass.

**Kobold Elite Warriors, 10** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d8, Hp 7, 9, 9, 6, 5, 5, 10, 12, 16, 7, AC 20. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or by weapon for 1d6+1 points of damage. They have darkvision 60 ft. and are light sensitive. They wear chain shirts, carry wooden shields, shortswords and shortbows with 20 arrows apiece. They each have 2d6+4gp.)

**Lesser Shaman** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d6, HP 6, AC 15. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 and dagger 1d4 points of damage. He is light sensitive. He has 2d4gps each. He has the following spells: magic missile, sanctuar, shocking grasp.)



**Adult Cavern Raptors, 2** (*These neutral creature's vital stats are HD 2d8+1, Hp 14, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d4 and 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage. Their special abilities are scent and darkvision up to 60ft.*)

**Kobold Female** (*These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8-4, HP 1, AC 15. Their primary attributes physical. They attack with a single bite for 1d2 hit points. They are light sensitive.*)

**King Skritch, Male Kobold** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 6d8, HP 30, AC 20. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2+1 or by weapon for 1d6+4 points of damage. He has 3<sup>rd</sup> level assassin abilities, darkvision 60 feet and light sensitivity. He carries a +1 spear, a +1 shortsword and wear +1 studded leather armor. He also has 2 potions of invisibility, 1 potion of haste, 2 potions of cure light wounds and a +1 ring of protection.*)

Skritch is intelligent and calculating, if not vain and egotistical. Born of a high caste of kobolds, Skritch spent several years abroad in the Undercity of Ulgakur where he learned the subtle skills of assassination from the Opaline Concord. During his sojourn, Skritch was exposed to the power and might of an underworld kingdom and began to formulate plans for creating his own empire.

Upon his return to the upper sinkhole he made quick work of the previous king and set himself atop the kobold food chain as its new king and overlord. He immediately set to work organizing his people into a serviceable fighting force, and saw them outfitted with the best weapons and equipment he could get his hands on. With his contacts amongst the Opaline Concord he began sending rumors forth from the Crater of Umeshti to the surface world, enticing foolish adventurers to their doom. In this way his folk were able to successfully plunder the remains of would be heroes for magical items and high quality gear. Likewise as his kobolds grew in experience they were able to begin charging a "tribute" tax to more powerful adventurers for safe passage through his kingdom, and thus fill his coffers with a sizeable fortune in loot.

Skritch has also managed to make alliances with various beings that dwell in the sinkhole galleries, not the least of which was Malash Radko the necromancer. Malash was in possession of the knowledge whereby he could assist King Skritch in breed more powerful kobolds that would serve the kobold overlord without question. Thus far several of their medical and magical experiments have proven to be less than adequate, but Skritch has the intelligence and patience to await the fruition of their efforts.

Skritch is a devious opponent who may seek to use the characters to his favor, should they prove to be more than a match for his progeny. Likewise Skritch is a survivor. He avoids confrontations that would result in his demise. Skritch instead retreats to the relative safety of Ulgakur, and returns after any threat has passed to rebuild what remains of his kingdom.

**Qizzith** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 5d6, HP 18, AC 14. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a bite for 1d2+1 or dagger for 1d4+1 points of damage. He has darkvision 60ft. and light sensitivity. He wears +1 bracers of armor and carries a wand of magic missiles (30 charges), wand of sleep (20 charges), potion of cure light wounds, potion of invisibility, potion of charm person, scroll of protection from good, scroll of spiritual weapon. He has seven Levels of spells/day): 1<sup>st</sup> - magic missile, shield, 2<sup>nd</sup> - see invisibility, 3<sup>rd</sup> - lightning bolt.*)

Qizzith is the chief shaman amongst Skritch's tribe and has learned much about the forces of magic through tenuous study with Malash. Although much of Malash Radko's magical power is derived from worship of Nartarus, Qizzith himself venerates the Dragon goddess Kyulashedrac. Qizzith is very much a part of Skritch's scheme to breed more powerful kobolds. Owing to the quick breeding time of the standard kobold, he sees a future within his own lifetime where the spawn of Kyulashedrac rule the world. Like Skritch, if Qizzith is faced with his own untimely demise, he joins the Kobold King in fleeing to the safety of Ulgakur until such threats pass.

#### 2-14. Skritch's Escape Route and Kobold Treasury

This small chamber has 4 locked iron boxes (CL 4) to which only Skritch holds the key. There are also several bundles of leather and mildewed rags lying in one corner of the chamber that are about kobold size. Underneath the largest iron box is a hole in the stone floor only large enough for creatures of small or smaller size to fit in. A rope ladder leads down the dank hole some 50 feet stopping just above ceiling level. If it is ever necessary for the kobolds to evacuate their lair, they toss the leather bags down the hole before them followed by the contents of the treasure chests, followed by the kobolds themselves. The leather bags serve as cushions for the kobolds to jump down upon, thus avoiding any falling damage.

**Treasure** (*The locked boxes have a (CL 3) and contain 1000gp, 2400sp, 3000cp, 1400gp in gems, a silver medallion featuring the holy symbol of Kyulashedrac worth 300gp. Note: If Skritch and any of his elite guard manage to escape, 50% of the treasure goes with them down the hole.*)

The shaft leads to **Area 3-7** where a secret passage extends deep into the earth, eventually joining with the great tunnel that winds its way to Ulgakur.

#### 2-15. Incubator of Kyulashedrac

This chamber serves as a sanctuary and shrine to the Dragon Queen Kyulashedrac. Crude carvings show her "blessing" the kobolds and "choosing them" as her servitor race amongst humanoids. A depression in the floor pulses eerily with an unholy light and within the depression is a very unique clutch of eggs, whose shells have a bloodstone like caste to them. One egg in particular seems much larger than the rest as it throbs atop the heap. This is the so-called "Infernal Egg," or rather one of them. The last infernal egg to hatch spawned the abomination that has come to be known as J'nyuoor, so Malash, Skritch and Qizzith are observing this new egg with great interest.

The other dozen eggs in the clutch are eggs that shall eventually hatch into elite kobolds that are a bit stronger and smarter and heartier than their lesser kin. The elite kobolds were sired by Skritch himself and are thus warmed here in the Incubator rather than elsewhere. Only Skritch, his old friend Malash, and Qizzith are allowed entry into the incubator, and at least one of the trio is present during the hatching of the eggs in order to "imprint" itself upon the newborn kobold.

The last infernal egg to hatch spawned the abomination that has come to be known as J'nyuoor.

#### 2-16. Lift Platform

This Lift Platform, like others in the compound and throughout the sinkhole is guarded by 4 elite kobolds. If the characters are prisoners or have been given leave to pass through the kobold lands they may use the lift at their leisure. Otherwise these guards have probably



CRATER MAP LEVEL 3

already joined in forcing the characters out of the kobold lair or have joined Skritch in the **Throne Room: Area 2-14** and prepare to guard their rulers escape.

**Kobold Elite Warriors, 4** (These lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d8, Hp 8, 9, 9, 6, AC 20. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 or by weapon for 1d6+1 points of damage. They have darkvision 60 ft. and are light sensitive. They wear chain shirts, carry wooden shields, shortswords and shortbows with 20 arrows apiece. They each have 2d6+4gp.)

There is a 50% chance that the lift basket is on Level 3 of the sinkhole, meaning the basket will take 5 rounds to reach the lift platform. Ample time for surviving kobolds to mount a counter attack against PCs acting as invaders and attempt to force them off of the platform and into the abyss beyond.

### SINKHOLE LEVEL 3: LABORATORIES OF MALASH AND EXPERIMENTS GONE AWRY

**Level 3** is the domain of Malash the Necromancer, a mad scientist and wizard who enjoys animating undead minions, exploring the lower reaches of the sinkhole, and helping Skritch breed new more powerful breeds of kobold. Malash is a powerful adversary and PCs may find that the difficulty of the sinkhole dungeons increases dramatically from this point onward. Malash possesses a piece of the Scrolls of Natarus

#### Features

**Darkness:** The sinkhole is dark and thus requires the use of artificial light or night vision, in order to make one's way.

**Locked Doors:** Unless otherwise noted the doors in the upper chambers are locked and have a (CL 2) requiring a successful open locks check of 14 or better by a character with the suitable ability in order to open. The doors are heavy and made from petrified wood leftover from the dwarven rule of the sinkhole. Thus although they

technically cannot be missed with any attack roll, the doors have 20 hit points and are virtually immune to any ranged attacks short of a bolder hurled by a giant.

**Random Encounters:** Roll 1d6 for a Random Encounter once ever 15 minutes the PCs explore Level 3. On a roll of 1 a Random Encounter occurs. Roll 1d12 on the following table to determine which encounter takes place.

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Malash             | 7. 1d2 gargoyles        |
| 2. 1d4 zombies        | 8. Gelatinous Cube      |
| 3. 1d4 skeletons      | 9. 1d2 ghouls           |
| 4. 1d6 kobolds        | 10. 1d2 spiders (small) |
| 5. 1d2 mutant kobolds | 11. 1d20 giant rats     |
| 6. 1d10 dark mantles  | 12. J'nyuoor            |

#### 3-1. Lift Platform

This lift platform is strangely unguarded by any kobolds or other foe. Castle Keeper's should play up the eeriness of the vacant platform, and a sublime yet ominous stench that wafts to their nostrils from the caverns beyond. Roughly 40 feet to the southwest, across the chasm of the sinkhole stands another lift platform that descends even deeper into the darkness of the sinkhole.

#### 3-2. Sentinel Chamber

A closed portcullis stands in the center of the northern wall, and locked doorways (CL 4) stand in the northeastern and northwestern corners of the room. two ornately carved statues of winged, horned men stand crouched back to back in the center of the chamber. The gargoyle statues are in fact gargoyles. The gargoyles wait until the best possible opportunity to spring a surprise attack, unless of course wary party members approach them with hammers.

**Gargoyles 2** (These chaotic evil creatures vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 20, 24, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d6, 2 claws for 1d3 each or a gore for 1d4 points of damage. Their extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft, freeze and fly 75 ft.)

The portcullis is operated by a winch mechanism which must be located elsewhere. It can only be lifted with a successful strength check of 23 or better.

#### 3-3. Mutant Kobold Lair

This dank smelly cavern is the home of 4 debased mutant kobolds. Unnatural experiments at the behest of King Skritch and with the help of Malash have created these abominations can live for months at a time without food are constantly hungry. The mutants have a keen sense of hearing and immediately move to the sound of the portcullis in **Area 3-2** being lifted. The gargoyles living in **Area 3-11** make sure to cling to ledges high on the walls lest they become food to these ravenous freaks.

**Mutant Kobold** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 17, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1d6 or 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft., scent, breath weapon and acidic blood. The breath weapon can be used four times a day and extends out 10ft. in a cone. It does 1d8 points of damage, save for half. The acidic blood destroys common weapons on contact unless a save vs. poison is made.)

**Mutant Kobold** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 17, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1d6 or 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft., scent.)

**Mutant Kobold** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 17, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1d6 or 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft., scent, immunity to blunt weapons and acidic blood. The acidic blood destroys common weapons on contact unless a save vs. poison is made.)

**Mutant Kobold** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 17, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1d6 or 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft., scent, chameleon which allows it to hid in shadows as a 3<sup>rd</sup> level rogue in any conditions.)

### 3-4. The Eight-Sided Cell

The portcullis leading to this chamber from **Area 3-2** is open as the characters approach, but is trapped to slam shut by a pressure plate in the center of the chamber. The trap is a (CL 3) and does 3d6 points of damage to anyone caught in the doorway when the portcullis slams shut unless a successful Save vs. Traps is made. 3 rounds after the portcullis slams shut one of the other three portcullises in the room opens at random. The noise from the western gate slamming shut automatically draws the attention of the monsters laired in the surrounding areas as if it were a loud dinner bell. On a roll of 1-2 on a d6, the North Portcullis opens allowing access to the chamber to the mutant kobolds laired in **Areas 3-3** or **3-6**. On a roll of 3-4 the Eastern portcullis opens allowing access from mutant kobolds in area 3-6. On a roll of 5-6 the Southern portcullis opens allowing the ghouls imprisoned in Area 5 access to the cell.

The newly lifted portcullises only remain open for 4 rounds after the pressure plate is stepped on before slamming shut again. Stepping on the pressure plate again causes the gates to lift again randomly, and then slam down again dealing 3d6 damage to unfortunates caught in the doorway who fail to make their Save vs. Traps.

### 3-5. Imprisoned Ghouls

There are 4 ghouls in this cavern, placed here by Malash for amusement when watching intruders fumble through **Area 3-4**.

**Ghouls, 4** (These chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 8, AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d3 or a bite for 1d6 points of damage. Their special abilities include paralysis and ghoul fever.)

### 3-6. Mutant Kobolds

This cavern is similar to **Area 3-3**. There are 5 starving mutant kobolds that attack anything they see on sight except for normal kobolds. They have been known to eat the flesh off of Malash's zombies, forcing him to re-animate them again as skeletons.

**Mutant Kobold** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 17, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1d6 or 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft., scent, regeneration 2, venom. The victim of a claw attack must save vs. poison or take 1d2 points of strength damage.)

**Mutant Kobold** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 17, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1d6 or 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft., immunity to magic, scent, and venom use. The victim of a claw attack must save vs. poison or take 1d2 points of strength damage.)

**Mutant Kobold** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 17, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1d6, tail for poison or 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft., scent, flight 60ft. and venom use. The victim of a tail attack must save vs. poison or take 1d2 points of strength damage.)

**Mutant Kobold** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 17, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1d6 or 4 claws for 1d4 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft., scent, extra arms.)

**Mutant Kobold** (This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 17, AC 16. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1d6 or 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft., scent and its extra legs give it a 60ft. move rate.)

### 3-7. Cave of Secret Paths

This cavern has a hole in the ceiling large enough for small sized creatures to pass through. Within the hole is the rope ladder leading to Skritch's Treasure and secret escape route from the throne room. Likewise a secret door (CL 4) hidden in the northwestern corner of the chamber is used by Malash and occasionally Skritch. The secret door leads to a narrow passage that descends several miles into the earth, eventually leading to the Undercity of Ulgakur.

Castle Keeper's not wishing for their character party to travel to Ulgakur may decide that the doorway may only be opened by speaking a magical password known only to Skritch and Malash, and allow the characters to discover the password at another time. If the kobolds from the throne room have used this route to escape the characters, there are several rag stuffed leather bags piled about beneath the hole in the ceiling.

### 3-8. Parts Storage

This chamber reeks with the smell of formaldehyde, alcohol and decay. A dozen large clay urns over four feet high and stopped with wax and bung line the walls of this room and partially block the hallway in the southeastern corner of the chamber. Each jar is stuffed with a preserved humanoid corpse. An examination of each of the preserved corpses reveals that one bears a heart shaped birthmark upon his cheek and is indeed the body of Borvya Ipati. Borvya's formaldehyde soaked, dead weight corpse is nearly 300 lbs. and quite cumbersome.

The passage to the south leads to a ledge along the southwestern side of the sinkhole shaft and eventually to the skeletons patrolling **Area 3-14**.

### 3-9. Scrying Chamber

This half moon shaped chamber was once used by dwarven seers working with engineers to explore the depths of the sinkhole for deposits of meteoric iron. A small pool in the center of the chamber is a pool of mercury surrounded by a circle of dwarven and magical runes. Reading magic or reading dwarven explains that the pool is a scrying pool.



The pool emanates a magical aura if detect magic is cast and acts exactly like a *mirror of mental prowess*, which cannot be removed from the chamber and has limited effects. The mercury level of the pool and much of its residual runic magic has faded over time so that the scrying pool only allows viewings of levels 1, 2 and 3, and the bowl of the crater. Malash has uncovered several runes that allow him to access viewings of lower levels of the sinkhole but not areas that are protected from scrying magic. Malash uses the scrying chamber to spy on the characters, read their thoughts and prepare his personal defenses accordingly. He is only aware of the characters however if he has been warned via the screechers' cavern or a personal messenger sent by Skritch and the kobolds.

PCs may attempt to use the pool to "pre-map" or examine areas in **Level 3** and above. See the details on the *mirror of mental prowess* in *Monsters & Treasure™*.

### 3-10. Necromantic and Mutant Studies

This chamber is filled with parts of corpses nailed or tied to tables with extensive notes scrawled into books and parchments along the walls. The chamber is well lit with torches of continual flame hanging in sconces at the corners of the room. Several small cages hang from chains along the ceiling. Within them are mutated kobold hatchlings, skeletal cats, bats and birds and zombified rats that clack and clamor when strangers enter the chamber. If Malash has been alerted to the presence of the PCs he has likely scried their presence and waits to ambush them in the cavern between **Area 17** and **Area 18** with his force of undead minions. If he has not been alerted to their presence there is a 33% chance he is here working on some form of necromantic perversion or another.

The door in the western wall of the chamber is locked with a *lock* spell cast by Malash himself. Beyond the door is a short corridor leading to a second magically locked door. A staircase comes to a landing with additional stairs leading to the left and right just beyond the second door. Both staircases descend nearly 80 feet until reaching **Area 4-9**, which is detailed in **Crater of Umeshti 2: The Deeper Darkness™**. Castle Keeper's not wishing to continue adventures in the Crater of Umeshti or not yet owning a copy may feel free to insert any sort of adventure of their own home brew beyond this staircase. Likewise they may just explain to the characters that some doors cannot be opened until the characters have gained the power and experience required to open them. "Sorry Bowbe, ye just aint tough enough yet, maybe next time!"

**Mutant Rats, 3** (These neutral creature's vital stats are HD 1, HP 1, AC 10. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for ½ hp of damage. They can cause disease and breath fire up to 5ft. away for 1d4 points of damage, save for half.)

**Mutant Baby Kobold** (These neutral creature's vital are HD 1, HP 1, AC. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1 point of damage. Their special abilities are venom use. The victim of a claw attack must save vs. poison or take 1d2 points of strength damage.)

**Skeletal Cats, 2** (These neutral evil creature's vital are HD 1/5, HP 1, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 points of damage. Their special abilities are common undead.)

**Zombie Bats, 4** (These neutral evil creature's vital are HD 1/5, HP 1, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 points of damage. Their special abilities are common undead and flight 50ft.)

**Treasure** (A full set of necromantic tools worth 400gp can be scrounged from the equipment found here. The 10 cages are cumbersome, weighing about 15 lbs each, but have good locks (CL 4) and are worth about 10gp each.)

### 3-11. Gargoyle Ledge

The gargoyles in the service of Malash tend to hang along the ledges of the crater shaft observing the comings and goings of lift baskets and looking for fresh food. Malash often uses the gargoyles to capture intruders that may benefit his variety of experiments. It should be noted that Malash has little interest in the living, so the gargoyles kill their prey and deposit their bodies in **Area 3-8: Parts Storage**.

The gargoyles do their best to remain concealed amongst the rocks of the ledges and are so unmoving as to confuse even the occasional starving zombie who passes by.

**Gargoyles, 4** (These chaotic evil creatures vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 20, 24, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d6, 2 claws for 1d3 each or a gore for 1d4 points of damage. Their extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60ft, freeze and fly 75 ft.)

**Treasure** (The gargoyles have accumulated a small horde of 300gp, a 1000 gp black opal, 248gp nephrite, and a 488gp garnet.)

### 3-12. Zombie's Hall

This chamber crawls with 12 of Malash's zombie minions. The zombies stagger around the chamber aimlessly unless under direct control by Malash, or stand motionless clumped in one corner of the cavern. If approached by light or food the shamle forward to attack. Occasionally a zombie becomes the putrid snack of a deranged mutant kobold or falls down the chasm of the sinkhole only to be pulped upon striking bottom.

**Zombies, 12** (These neutral evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d12, HP 7 (avg), AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a slam for 1d8 points of damage. They have common undead traits.)

One of the Zombies has a heart shaped birthmark on its rotting cheek. Such is the fate of poor **Corpus Ipati**. If his body can be returned to his father in Dro Mandras, there is a share of a 1000gp reward.

### 3-13. Alchemical Laboratory

This large chamber is filled with alchemical supplies and equipment valuing 3000gp. Among the bubbling bottles and beakers filled with strange and unique substances including 10 vials of acid, 4 bottles of burning oil and the following potions; *protection from good*, *shocking grasp*, *darkness*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *scare*, and *ray of enfeeblement*. There are also material spell components here for use in casting any magical spell between 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> levels one time.

There is a 30% chance that Malash is within this chamber. Regardless of Malash's presence, Kweecuk the Imp is found here tending to the brewing potions unless he is called to aid Malash. If the characters take Malash by surprise he drinks the potion of invisibility beaker and seeks to escape to a chamber where he may better ambush the characters.

Kweecuk stays hidden from the characters as they pilfer the items found in the chamber, fleeing immediately to Malash's exact location and warning him of the presence of the PCs within his lair.

The prepared corpses of two victims of Malash's grave robbing sit within two large clay urns which are filled with flesh eating beetles. The beetles only attack if the jars are urns or their contents are disturbed.

**Kweecuk** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1, HP 6, AC 15. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d4 or stinger for 1+poison points of damage. His extraordinary abilities are darkvision 60ft., SR 3, invisibility, regenerate 1.*)

**Flesh Eating Beetle Swarms, 2** (*This neutral creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, Hp 12, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d2 points of damage. His special abilities include light sensitivity and smoke sensitivity.*)

### 3-14. Ledge and Passage

This "L" shaped corridor connects the ledge leading to **Area 8** and the interior chambers of Malash's lair. A dozen skeletons armed with scimitars patrol the passageway. The skeletons are programmed to attack any stranger who dare delve into Malash's secret subterranean stronghold.

**Skeletons, 12** (*These neutral evil creature's are HD 1d12, HP 6 (avg), AC 13. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by weapon for 1d6 points of damage. Their special abilities are common undead traits.*)

### 3-15. Malash's Private Chamber

The door to this chamber is locked with a *lock* spell. The interior of this chamber is dimly lit with a single torch of *continual flame*. A fine, large cherry-wood coffin sits in the center of the chamber and the walls, floors, desk, and bookshelves are blood scrawled with an insane script that is undecipherable to all save those who worship the darkest of evil entities.

Several weathered tomes stand in the bookshelf, their bindings too are written upon in the same rust brown blood. A parchment stands stretched across a wrought iron rack with fine writing emblazoned in fresh looking blood that seems to continually drip into an overflowing onyx bowl upon the floor.

The coffin is unlocked and is lined with the finest of silk and sable. If the coffin could be removed intact from the dungeon it would fetch over 400gp in value purely for the lining and hardwood alone. Unfortunately an emaciated cadaver, resplendent in a fine blue silk dress, occupies the coffin and a wig of golden blond hair held to its skull with a wreath of gold.

If Malash has not been alerted to the presence of the PCs there is a 30% chance that he is asleep in the coffin with the corpse and awakens at a start when the door to the chamber is unsealed.

**Hilde, Coffer Corpse, Bride of Malas** (*This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d12, HP 14, AC 12. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with 2 claws for 1d6 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include death grip, damage reduction 5/magic (+1), darkvision 60 ft., deceiving death, common undead traits.*)

Hilde was once a beautiful sorceress, constantly on the prowl for new magic and new adventures. It was her misfortune to cross paths with Malash when he recruited her band to help him explore the Crater of Umeshti and the sinkhole. When Malash murdered the rest of the party, Hilde served as his accomplice, not knowing that Malash had

something special in store for her. Following instructions found upon the Scroll of Nartarus, he sacrificed Hilde in the name of the god of the walking dead. She was returned to him a fortnight later as a coffer corpse, and his very own undead bride.

Should Malash be in the chamber when fighting ensues, he cries madly "What have you done to my poor beloved Hilde!" each time she takes a blow and falls to her illusory death.

For stats on Malash, see **Area 3-17**.

**Treasure** (*An iron chest locked with a lock spell contains ancient coins gathered by Malash during his explorations in the deep caverns of the Crater of Umeshti. The chest contains 100pp, 45gp, 50sp. His other valuables and magical items are typically carried on his person or found elsewhere in his lair. Hilde's crown is worth 40gp, and her wig is worth an additional 20gp.*)

### Malash's Spell book

0 - dancing lights, detect magic, endure elements, ghost sound, message, prestidigitation.

1<sup>st</sup> - cause fear, inflict light wounds, detect undead, shield, sleep (x2), charm person, comprehend languages.

2<sup>nd</sup> - blindness/deafness, ghoul touch\*, lock, spectral hand\*, mirror image, web fills.

3<sup>rd</sup> - gaseous form, hold person, haste, lightning bolt, stinking cloud.

4<sup>th</sup> - vampiric touch, charm monster, confusion, wall of fire\*)

**Scroll of Nartarus:** The scrap of human flesh stretched over the wrought iron rack is a piece of the Scroll of Nartarus. For more information on the Scroll of Nartarus see the New Magic Appendix at the end of this volume.

### 3-16. Observation Chamber

This octagonal chamber is faced with Malash's private chamber to the west, and portcullis gates to the north and east. A crank in the southern wall of the chamber allows the north and east grates to be opened and closed. Malash frequently uses this chamber to observe his zombie and skeleton creations, tossing unsuccessful laboratory specimens out into the Skeleton Cave, **Area 3-17**. If the portcullis gates are closed as they usually are, it requires a strength check of 20 or greater to lift the gates from outside the room.

### 3-17. Skeleton Cave and Malash Radko's Ambush

This dank dark cavern is home to several of Malash's skeletal creations. The skeletons alternately stand around in dark corners or march around in a variety of swirling circular arrangements dreamt up by Malash in one of his insane reveries. The whole spectacle seems to look like some well conceived dance routine, whose only music is the rattle of bones.

In the cavern area between this cavern and **Area 12**, Malash awaits to spring his trap in the event he has been forewarned of the PCs intrusions. Malash is in full command of all his creations found in **Area 12** and **Area 17** unless he has not been warned and they have been destroyed first.

**Skeletons, 13** (*These neutral evil creature's are HD 1d12, HP 6 (avg), AC 13. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by weapon for 1d6 points of damage. Their special abilities are common undead traits.*)

**Malash Radko the Necromancer** (*This 7<sup>th</sup> level, chaotic evil, human wizard's vital stats are HD 7d4, HP 25, AC 25. His primary*

attributes are intelligence, charisma and constitution. His significant attributes are intelligence 17, charisma 14 and constitution 14. He attacks with a +1 dagger for 1d4+1 or a sling for 1d4 points of damage. His special abilities include turn undead as a 7<sup>th</sup> level cleric, speak with dead and bonus spells. He carries a +1 amulet of armor, +2 bracers of armor, wand of ray of enfeeblement (20 charges), +1 dagger, potion of invisibility, potion of haste, potion of cure light wounds, unholy symbol of Nartarus. Spells: 0 - dancing lights, detect magic, endure elements, ghost sound, message, prestidigitation, 1<sup>st</sup> - cause fear, inflict light wounds, detect undead, shield, sleep (x2). 2<sup>nd</sup> - blindness/deafness, ghoul touch\*, lock, spectral hand\*. 3<sup>rd</sup> - gaseous form, hold person. 4<sup>th</sup> - vampiric touch\*.)

Malash is a twisted necromancer who once trained in the Tower of Nesturon itself. After being dismissed, he traveled south to Dro Mandras where he was eventually forced to leave. While there he crossed paths with Illjac on more than one occasion while both were traipsing from the graveyard, Malash with a bundle of bones or reams of human skin, Illjac with treasures buried with the dead.

In his flight from Dro Mandras, Malash came to the Dirty Bowbe's Roadhouse where he solicited an adventuring party to help him explore the Crater of Umeshti. Once inside, he successfully led his party past the dangers of the kobold highway, before murdering them in their sleep and transforming each and every member of his adventuring band into mindless zombies.

Malash discovered the secret passage to Ulgakur and there found many likeminded allies, including the fledgling Skritch. He agreed to help Skritch claim the kobold throne for himself and in return has been allowed to continue his necromantic studies in relative peace. Malash now maintains a strong force of undead minions to guard his

lair and works with King Skritch and Qizzith to help develop more powerful breeds of kobold. Malash is intelligent and dangerous and would sacrifice his own mother in order to save his life. That being said it is not unlikely that he would hire PCs who encounter him to go and collect more pieces of the Scroll of Nartarus from deeper levels of the Umeshti sinkhole. Likewise, evil-adventuring wizards may find the knowledge that Malash possesses in the necromantic arts a boon to their own studies and may be taken on as apprentices.

Malash is a devotee of the teachings of the dark deity Nartarus and as such has been given limited access to cleric spells and special powers dealing with the control and manufacture of the walking dead. It is possible for these powers to be taught to others, but the specific means by which the training may occur is left to the discretion of the Castle Keeper.

If Malash becomes aware of the characters presence in his lair he sets up an ambush with skeletons and zombies backing him up in the caverns between Areas 3-17 and 3-18. Should the characters attempt a parlay with Malash, he demands the return of any items stolen from his lair before any negotiations may begin. Otherwise he attacks until he is victorious or it appears that he would lose, at which time he drains his potion of invisibility and makes his way to the secret passage leading to Ulgakur. With the characters faces and fighting style burned into his memory, he vows to hunt them down and exact his punishing revenge.



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### 3-18. J'nyuoor's Lair

This cavern is filled with broken bones and a rotten stench of offal and dung. There is an 80% chance that J'nyuoor the Ginormous Mutant Kobold is here. Otherwise he is off in the lower levels of the sinkhole hunting for food, having become bored with the typical fare of zombie. J'nyuoor leaves Malash alone, recognizing him from early experiences. J'nyuoor is frightened of his "father" King Skritch, and hides from him at every opportunity, fleeing the cavern and climbing down the sinkhole if he smells kobolds coming. When referring to his father J'nyuoor says things like "Me no likey." Of course he says this in kobold so it comes out sounding a lot like "Arf Arf Arf."

Likewise J'nyuoor does not prey on normal kobolds or even the crazed mutants found in the northern caverns of this level of the dungeon. J'nyuoor attacks any other being he encounters in the dungeons on sight or stalks the prey throughout the dungeon looking for an opportunity at an easy meal. Should fighting rage too loudly outside the entrance to his cavern, he goes to investigate in 4 rounds. J'nyuoor is too stupid to realize that everything in the 3<sup>rd</sup> levels and above is frightened of him, save the zombies and skeletons who have no mind of their own.

**J'nyuoor, Ginormous Mutant Kobold** (*This chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 6d8, HP 33, AC 16. Its primary abilities are physical. It attacks with 2 claws for 1d8 each, a bite for 1d10 and a tail slap for 1d6 points of damage. Its extraordinary abilities include darkvision 60 ft., scent, rage, damage reduction 2.*)

**Treasure** (*J'nyuoor has a fondness for sparkling gems and has collected 5 that he keeps in a pile beneath bones of his various victims. Among the gems there is a tiger-eye worth 23gp, a large 98gp opal, a 498gp topaz, a 96gp moonstone, and a 46gp sapphire.*)

### 3-19. Lift Landing to Level 4.

A secret door (CL 5) leads opens to reveal an "L" shaped passage and the lift landing beyond. The lift leads to **Area 4-1** of the dungeon below. It should be noted that Castle Keeper's not yet owning **Crater of Umeshti 2: The Deeper Darkness™**, or not wishing their characters to delve any further into the Crater of Umeshti may ignore the secret door at this time and leave it for the characters to assume there is no possible way to descend any deeper into the sinkhole shaft. Possibly on a return visit they miraculously uncover a door that they did not notice before, or a key is found laying somewhere in the dungeon that opens the secret door and allows further passage into the sinkhole. Likewise characters of sufficient level attempting to fly down the chasm are set upon by a sufficient number of gargoyles to insure that they do not travel too deeply.

### Restocking the Dungeon

The Crater of Umeshti is a thriving dungeon environment and its inhabitants constantly war for the various levels of the sinkhole. It is quite possible that the characters may at some point need to retreat from the Crater of Umeshti to lick their wounds or spend their loot. As the sinkhole and crater serve as "prime real estate" for monsters of all sorts, the dungeon is never truly empty of likely foes with which to face the adventuring party.

It can be assumed that if the characters leave the area of the Crater of Umeshti for more than a few days, dungeon chambers that were previously cleared of foes have been restocked with new monsters and menaces. This is especially true in levels 1-2 of the sinkhole where it is likely that any surviving kobolds return or descend from their posts in

the bowl of the crater to refill and fortify positions left vacant by any of their kinsmen who were slain by the adventurers.

In the event that the characters are gone for 3 or more days, assume that an additional 1d4+2 kobolds may be encountered in each previously vacated chamber. This process continues until at least 200 kobolds have been slain, at which point any surviving members of Skritch's entourage decide to move to safer environs. If Skritch and Qizzith are slain, the tribe elects a new king from its ranks (this being an elite kobold or shaman of at least 4hd) and business continues as usual again until such time as over 200 of their number have been destroyed.

It is highly likely however that Skritch, Qizzith, or both manage to escape to Ulgakur. In this event they return in a few weeks or months time. Along with newly raised hatchlings and survivors from amongst their kin along the crater they work quickly to rebuild the kingdom very much as it was before.

If all of the kobold females are killed, the entire tribe dissolves and departs to safer environs somewhere within 50 miles of the Crater and new monsters move in to take over their holdings.

Kobolds moving from the bowl of the crater into the sinkhole itself reduce the number of random encounters with kobolds in the crater by half.

If the characters are only out of the dungeon for a day or less, the chambers previously cleared remain cleared, but the number of random encounters is increased to a 3 in 6 chance as other monsters and kobolds make their way through the dungeon to investigate the carnage left behind in the characters wake. Undead, beasts, and scavengers are attracted to the smell and taste of blood and rotting cadavers, thus the likely hood of encountering such creatures increases even after 1-2 days.

If the kobolds leave the crater their old holdings are taken over by a tribe of goblins who have long sought a new stronghold since the loss of Ulgakur as a homeland. Should the goblins be routed out of the caverns they are replaced with a band of gnolls and so on. The number and powers of these new denizens may be determined by the Castle Keeper using the maps provided in this adventure, and by first hand knowledge of the character party's needs using the appropriate challenge levels.

Likewise, clearing the foes found in Malash's lair allows the opportunity for other foes to take over his well laid out lair, and set it up as their own base. These new occupants may be trolls, ogres, or an evil adventuring party from Ulgakur (or perhaps somewhere above ground) has taken over residence in Malash's old digs. Possible suggested foes include Captain John Slaughter, Fenro and the remainders of the Slaughterer's Crewe from the Haunted Highlands™ by Troll Lord Games™. Likewise Illjac and Taernin would find Malash's hideout a decent base of operations for exploration of the mysteries of the Crater of Umeshti™, as Illjac and Malash share a certain bond in their proclivity for grave robbery and service to evil deities.

### Traps

If the old traps are destroyed, new traps are installed at different locations within the dungeon. The Castle Keeper should feel free to add additional traps to the dungeon that are compliant to the power level and abilities of the characters in their adventuring group as to

make them a decent challenge. Perhaps these traps do additional dice of damage or are more complicated to locate and disarm. The Castle Keeper may use the examples found in the text of the dungeon for the type and flavor of traps to use, or may throw in any number of their own nasty traps to fill the bill.

## New Magic Items

### The Scroll of Nartarus

This foul piece of human skin is a portion of the entire Scroll of Nartarus. Tattooed upon the flesh are several wicked incantations and rituals, including versions of evil clerical spells that may be cast by wizards venerating the God of the Walking Dead. Any good being actually touching the scroll with their bare flesh suffers one temporary negative level, which returns within 24 hours and has their hair turned instantly white as a reminder of the dread that the scroll contains.

The spells contained upon the scroll include the following.

- 1st: *Cause Fear, Inflict Light Wounds, Cause Fear*
- 2nd: *Blindness/Deafness, Ghoul Touch\*, Spectral Hand\**
- 3rd: *Vampiric Touch\**

A wizard may study the spells upon the scroll as if they were read from a captured spell book. The scroll is nearly indestructible, requiring the skin to be cut to ribbons with a holy sword and its parts steeped in holy water by a humble hermit of lawful good alignment. Otherwise the parts simply stitch themselves back together again. If other parts of the scroll of Nartarus are found they immediately crawl together, the crackling flesh growing tendrils that graft into a much larger scroll, revealing even darker secrets.

**GP Value:** 2400\*      **XP Value:** 2200\*

\* Greater value due to its value added with other pieces of the Scroll of Nartarus and unique abilities.

## New Spells

**GREASE** Level 1 Wizard

**CT** 1      **R** 25 ft.+5 ft./Lvl **D** 1 rd./lvl  
**SV:** Dexterity/Partial      **SR:** No      **Comp** V, S, M  
**AOE:** 10 ft. x 10 ft. area or 1 held object.

With the utterance of the arcane tongue, this spell fills an 10 ft. by 10 ft. area with a slimy slippery grease. The summoned grease makes keeping one's footing almost impossible and requires any beings on foot attempting to pass through the area to make a save vs. dexterity to avoid losing their footing or falling. Individuals making their saving throw may only move at half speed.

Alternately the spell may be cast on a single object, such as a sword, wand, staff or other such weapon, making the object impossible to hold onto unless a successful save vs. dexterity is made. A successful Save must be made each round in order to efficiently wield the greased weapon or held item.

The material spell component for this spell is a pinch of lard or a slice of fatty undercooked bacon.

**GHOUL TOUCH** Level 2 Wizard

**CT** 1      **Range:** Touch      **D** 1d6+2 rnds  
**SV:** strength Negates      **SR** Yes      **Comp** V, S, M  
 By calling upon the wretched spirits of the undead a wizard may fill himself with their power allowing her to paralyze any foe touched

on a subsequent attack for 1d6+2 rounds unless the victim makes a successful save vs. paralysis.

In addition to the unholy ability to paralyze their foe, the victim begins to reek with the charnel stench of a rotting corpse. This rotten odor fills the air in a 10 ft. radius of the victim, causing everyone save the spell-caster to make a save vs. constitution or become nauseated, suffering a -2 to all attack rolls and ability checks for the duration of the spell.

The material component for this spell is the clawed finger bone of a ghoul.

**SPECTRAL HAND** Level 2 Wizard

**CT** 1      **R** 50 ft. + 10 ft./lvl      **D** 1 minute per/lvl  
**SV** None      **SR** No      **Comp** V, S

By means of calling on the spirits of the dead, a wizard may sacrifice 1d4 of their own hit points to conjure forth a ghostly white hand from beyond the grave. The hand moves at the behest of the caster, delivering low-level touch ranged spells at a distance of up to 50 ft. +10 ft per level.

The spectral hand grants +2 to the BtB of the spell caster for purposes of making its attacks and ignores the armor of the caster's opponents. The spectral hand is incorporeal and has an armor class of 20+ the intelligence modifier of the caster. The hand has hit points equal to the number lost by the caster in initiating the spell. The hand is immune to area of effect spells and may only be struck by directly targeted spells such as acid arrow, or magic missiles.

**VAMPIRIC TOUCH** Level 4 Wizard

**CT** 1      **R** Touch      **D** 1 hour  
**SV** None      **SR** Yes      **Comp** V, S

Through channeling the powers of the undead, the spell caster is able to create an aura of negative energy which drains the life force from any living opponent touched and temporarily transfer that life energy to the caster in the form of bonus hit points.

A spell caster imbued with the evil energy of the *vampiric touch* deal 1d6 points of damage per two caster levels to a maximum of 10d6 points of damage, gaining these additional hit points for one full hour. The recipient of these temporary hit points cannot gain more hit points than would be enough to slay their foe, i.e. a target with 14 hit points who takes 30 points of *vampiric touch* damage cannot grant the recipient more than 24 hit points, which is enough to kill the victim.

## MONSTER APPENDIX

### In Depth with Kobold Shamans

Many kobold shamans worship and draw their power from Kyulashedrac the grandmother of dragons. Through their mystic interpretations of her might they fancy themselves her clever and resourceful children, least of course in size but always greatest in number. Kobold shamans are a special caste, their eggs being a gleaming black color and quite hard like the eggshell of a bird, as opposed to the leathery shells of their ordinary kinfolk. Such eggs if captured from a kobold next may net 300-1200gp on the black market, or if sold to practitioners of arcane magic.

Kobold shamans may cast from both the cleric and wizard spell lists. However once the spells are selected, they may not substitute these spells for others as they are permanently etched in the kobold shaman's mind. The kobold shaman needs no spell book to prepare their spells for the mystic faith of Kyulashedrac provides these dark gifts to her chosen. The

hit dice of the shaman determines the number of spells that it may select and the spell level strength that they may wield. The most powerful of kobold shamans may cast 12 levels of spells per day with a maximum of 3<sup>rd</sup> level spells in their repertoire. The meekest of kobold shamans may cast two levels of spells per day and are limited to spells of 1<sup>st</sup> level.

Kobold shamans have a d6 HD and are not limited in their use of weapons or armor. Kobold shamans use the mental (M) suite of saving throws.

Kobold Shaman	Spell Levels	Maximum Spell Level	Experience Point Value
1d6 HD	2	1st	7+1
2d6 HD	3	2nd	15+2
3d6 HD	4	2nd	30+3
4d6 HD	5	2nd	60+4
5d6 HD	7	3rd	120+5
6d6 HD	9	3rd	180+6
7d6 HD	10	3rd	270+7
8d6 HD	12	3rd	375+8

## CAVERN RAPTOR

	Hatchling	Young	Adult
<b>No. Encountered:</b>	1d4	1d6	1d6
<b>Size:</b>	Small	Small	Medium
<b>HD:</b>	0.5d8 (2 hp)	1d8 (4 hp)	2d8+1 (10 hp)
<b>Move:</b>	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.
<b>AC:</b>	12	12	12
<b>Attacks:</b>	2 claws (1d2), bite (1d3)	2 claws (1d2), bite (1d3)	2 claws (1d3), bite (1d4)
<b>Special:</b>	Darkvision 60 ft., scent, twilight vision	Darkvision 60 ft., scent, twilight vision	Darkvision 60 ft., scent, twilight vision
<b>Saves:</b>	P	P	P
<b>Int:</b>	Animal (1-2)	Animal (1-2)	Animal (1-2)
<b>Alignment:</b>	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
<b>Type:</b>	Animal	Animal	Animal
<b>Treasure:</b>	None	None	None
<b>XP:</b>	7+1 (10 XP avg.)	7+1 (12 XP avg.)	15+2 (35 XP avg.)

Cavern raptors are a prehistoric, reptilian like creature bred and raised in the deep caverns below the earth. Homeothermic, the beings produce their own body heat and thrive in near total darkness, feeding off rats and smaller creatures.

Cavern Raptors have leathery grey skin covered with fine scales and large eyes as black as pitch. Their heads are large for the size of their body. They have short front claws used to hold prey, very powerful back legs, a long straight tail, and a gut hook claw protruding from each foot.

**Combat:** Cavern raptors frequently hunt in packs up to eight individuals with 1d4 +2 of this number being young who receive training in the hunt from mature members of the pack. Their preferred method is for one cavern raptor to attack from the front while the second angles behind prey attacking it from behind. Cavern raptors prefer to kill one opponent at a time, especially those that they can cull from a larger group of prey.

## COFFER CORPSE

**No. Encountered:** 1

**Size:** Medium

**HD:** 2d12 (13 hp)

**Move:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 14

**Attacks:** Slam (1d6)

**Special:** Death grip, damage reduction 5/magic (+1), Darkvision 60 ft., deceiving death, undead traits

**Saves:** M

**Int:** Low (6-8)

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Type:** Undead (Extraordinary)

**Treasure:** 2

**XP:** 32+2 (58 XP)

A coffer corpse is formed when a recently deceased humanoid is the victim of an incomplete death ritual. It is often found haunting stranded funeral barges or in other situations and places where a corpse has not been delivered to its final resting place. Coffer corpses despise all living creatures and attack them on sight. They seem to have a particular hatred for priests and often concentrate their attacks on such characters (if they are able to discern them from among their opponents).

A coffer corpse appears as a desiccated humanoid dressed in funerary rags. Its hair is wild and unkempt, and its skin drawn tight over its skeletal frame. A coffer corpse is often mistaken for a zombie at distances greater than 50 feet.

**Combat:** A coffer corpse charges into combat and attempts to wrap its powerful hands around the nearest opponent's throat. If it gets a hold it does not release it unless it is destroyed, the opponent dies, or it is struck for 6 or more points of damage in a single round (see deceiving death below). Occasionally (20% chance) a coffer corpse is encountered with a weapon (most usually a mace or long sword). It uses this weapon in lieu of its slam attack during combat.

A coffer corpse's natural weapons are treated as +1 magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

**Death Grip:** If a coffer corpse hits a foe with its slam attack, it attempts to wrap its vice-like hands around the opponent's throat. The victim can attempt a **strength** save to avoid the death grip. If the save fails, the coffer corpse deals 1d6 points of damage each round until the hold is broken, the coffer corpse is destroyed, or the opponent is dead. A trapped victim can attempt a **strength** save each round to break the hold. A trapped victim cannot speak or cast spells with verbal components while locked in the coffer corpse's death grip.

**Deceiving Death:** If a coffer corpse is struck for 6 or more points of damage in a single round (even if the damage doesn't bypass its damage reduction), it releases its death grip (if it was currently holding a foe) and slumps to the ground seemingly destroyed. On its next turn, the coffer corpse rises (as if reanimated) and resumes its attack. Creatures viewing this "reanimation" must succeed on a **charisma** save or be affected as by a *fear* spell (caster level 2<sup>nd</sup>).



## KOBOLD, MUTANT

No. Encountered: 1d8

Size: Medium

HD: 3d8

Move: 40

AC: 16

Attacks: 2 claws (1d4), bite (1d6), or by weapon type (+2 damage)

Special: Darkvision 60 ft., scent, See Text

Saves: P

Int: Low

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Type: Humanoid Abomination

Treasure: 1

XP: 45+3

Mutant kobolds are the aberration of magical experimentation and selective breeding on the hearty kobold stock, resulting in a heartier, larger kobold. These kobolds often hatch slightly deranged from the transformation and thus are often possessed of weird eldritch powers that manifest themselves as an arcane side effect. These odd manifestations may include but are not limited to breath weapons, venomous claws and fangs, immunity to magic, the ability to breath water, a stinger tail, wings, extra limbs or other such abnormality. The mutant kobolds coloration ranges the spectrum of colors from black thru grey and white to any shade of reds, blue or green.

The madness involved in their creation has its effect on the personality and disposition of the kobold stock as well, causing them to be more chaotically imbalanced than their brethren and far less tricky or intelligent. Most mutant kobolds are larger than a normal kobold, standing between 5 and 6 ft. tall and much stronger, so that on the rare occasion that one learns the skill required to wield weapons it deals an additional 2 points of damage. Mutant kobolds can go weeks without food, but are always ravenously hungry, often forcing their breeders to eject them from colonies where food is scarce, for fear they will go totally mad and eat their kin.

**Combat:** Although mutant kobolds are not as clever as their smaller brethren they do still tend to hunt in packs and lie in wait while stalking

prey before leaping forward with a cackling, barking roar and laying into their target with claws and teeth, most often fighting to the death.

Each mutant kobold possesses 1d2 of the following mutations.

Random Mutations: Roll 1d10 on the Table Below

1. Venomous Claws or Bite: Save vs. Poison or Suffer 1d2 points strength damage.
2. Envenomed Tail: Extra attack deals 1d2 points damage + 1d4 points poison damage unless a Save vs. Poison is made.
3. Breath Weapon: A 10 ft. cone which deals 1d8 points of acid, fire, or cold damage, this ability is usable up to 4 times per day.
4. Acidic Blood: Melee weapons that deal damage to the Mutant are destroyed. If magical they get a save vs. Poison at the level of the wielder + any bonuses.
5. Wings: Mutant has wings and flies at a speed of 60 ft.
6. Extra Legs: Mutant moves at a speed of 60 ft.
7. Chameleon: Mutant gains the ability to hide in any surroundings including bright light as if it were a rogue using the hide in shadows ability.
8. Extra Arms: Mutant gains an additional set of claw attacks or one additional melee attack when using melee weapons.
9. Regeneration: Mutant regenerates 2 hp per round.
10. Immunity: Roll 1d8 on the following table.

1. Fire	5. Magic
2. Cold	6. Edged Weapons
3. Poison	7. Blunt Weapons
4. Acid	8. Select 2 of the above

**Note:** Mutants that possess the ability to use a breath weapon or venom of any sort are also immune to attacks of the same type.



### KOBOLD, GINORMOUS MUTANT

No. Encountered: 1d2

Size: Large

HD: 6d8

Move: 60 ft.

AC: 16

Attacks: 2 claws (1d8), bite (1d10), Tail (1d6)

Special: Darkvision 60 ft., scent, Damage Reduction 2/--, Rage 1/day.  
Climb

Saves: P

Int: Low

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Type: Humanoid Abomination

Treasure: 4

XP: 210+6

These beasts are the product of a combination of selective breeding, arcane influence, and diabolical tampering through contact with evil deities warps the natural structure of kobold eggs resulting in a so called "Infernal Egg". This ritual is difficult and vary rare, and the workings of its incantations are all but lost in the modern age.

When the infernal egg hatches a mutated kobold so vicious and large is born as to only be described as ginormous! The ginormous kobold quickly matures, growing to a height of eight feet with unusually long arms and short squat legs, giving it the gait of a large ape as it lopes around on all fours. It has a huge kobold head fitted with a pair of pronged horns and hardened spines running down the length of its spine and slashing tail.

Ginormous mutant kobolds are hard to manage and control, but for the most part do not cause anything more than accidental death and misery to normal kobolds. For this reason they are often relegated to living on the fringes of a kobold lair where they guard against more fearsome foes to the kobold clan that dwell in the subterranean deeps.

**Combat:** Ginormous kobolds lash out in all directions with teeth, claws, and tail. They are too stupid to have any real fear and know only how to offer pain and suffering to any that cross their path.

**Damage Reduction:** The numbness of their nervous system, coupled with the thickness of their scales and horned back allow the Ginormous mutant kobold to shrug off the first 2 points of damage from any attack, be it physical, magical or otherwise. When a ginormous mutant kobold reaches 50% of its hit points from injury it flies into a berserk rage.

**Rage:** When injured to 50% of its hit points the ginormous mutant kobold enters a rage, gaining an additional +1 to hit and +2 to all of its damage rolls and gaining an additional 2 temporary hit points per hit die and a +2 to all wisdom saves. The ginormous mutant kobold suffers a -2 penalty to armor class This rage lasts for 7 rounds. At the end of this time the ginormous mutant kobold loses all of its bonus-hit points and becomes winded, earning a -2 to attack rolls, armor class. The ginormous mutant kobold is unable to run and suffers a -10 to its normal movement rate. The ginormous mutant kobold cannot willingly leave its rage in its attempt to slaughter everything in sight.

**Climb:** Ginormous Mutant Kobolds are proficient climbers, being able to scale walls as well as a Rogue of equivalent HD.

### KOBOLD, ELITE

No. Encountered: 1d10

Size: Small

HD: 2d8

Move: 30 ft.

AC: 16

Attacks: Bite (1d2) or by weapon type

Special: Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity

Saves: P

Int: Average

Alignment: Lawful Evil

Type: Humanoid Abomination

Treasure: 2

XP: 10+2

Elite kobolds are the fruition of lengthy kobold breeding programs resultant in a tougher more resilient kobold. They are often found in the retinue of kobold chieftains, as servitors to kobold shamans or as the bodyguards of kobold kings. They are otherwise exactly like normal kobolds in every way.

### FLESH EATING BEETLE SWARM

No. Encountered: 1d4 swarms

Size: Fine (the size of a small coin)

HD: 3d8 (Avg. 12 hp)

Move: 5 ft.

AC: 16

Attacks: Bite, 1d2 Con Damage.

Special: Con Damage, Light Sensitivity, Smoke Sensitivity

Saves: P

Int: NA

Alignment: Neutral

Type: Vermin (Insect)

Treasure: NA

XP: 45+3

A flesh eating beetle swarm is one of the most dangerous forms of swarm known to dungeon explorers and denizens. Flesh eating beetles devour living and dead flesh alike and are known to make their nests near graveyards, charnel houses and other places where there is a profusion of meat. The beetles do not live for very long, having a life cycle of only a few weeks, so this thankfully keeps their numbers down. Likewise they are frightened by bright light and tend to scurry into the shadows when such illumination presents itself.

**Combat:** Flesh eating beetles quickly swarm a target and burrow under the flesh with their razor like mandibles. Once a swarm of flesh eating beetles makes a successful attack they continue dealing 1d2 points of temporary constitution damage per round as they burrow into the targets flesh. They may only be slain while within a host by extreme heat or cold which deals an equal amount of damage to the host as it does to the beetles. Profusions of smoke such as is created by a *pyrotechnics* spell cause the beetles to drop off of a host immediately and become lethargic and easily scooped up into a suitable container.

They are frequently used by necromancers or other such physicians to clean rotting flesh from corpses.