



# CHAPTER 1: TROUBLE IN KNOTSIDE

**S**omething's wrong with the people of Knotside. A few weeks ago, a popular new liquor called Red Claw showed up in the city's many taverns. Anyone that took even a sip of this spirit immediately wanted another taste. At first, these desires were nothing more than cravings. But soon, those cravings grew to obsession. Then obsession turned to violence. Now, the city of Knotside faces collapse as the red-eyed Red Claw addicts stalk the streets, desperate for more.

Unknown to the citizens of Knotside, Red Claw is the invention of a wicked red dragon that calls itself Tuckertrhanx the Agitator. Only through stopping the dragon and his kobold minions will the town of Knotside be free of this booze-fueled curse.

## RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

*Clash at Kobold Cauldron* is a challenging location-based adventure for four 10th-level adventurers. The adventure starts in the Royal City of Knotside and leads the characters to the Red Claw distillery where they will encounter Tuckertrhanx, an adult red dragon, and his wily horde of kobolds.

While many of the encounters in the adventure are built for four 10th-level adventurers, a few are significantly more difficult, especially Tuckertrhanx himself. Characters with resistance or immunity to fire damage will excel in the distillery, as will characters armed with area of effect spells. Small, light characters will also have little trouble in the Cauldron.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Knotside, for the most part, is a calm city filled with lawful citizens. Of course, being such a prosperous and thriving community, it is often the target for mischief, political subterfuge, and the occasional attack from rabble-rousers, firebrands, and evil-doers. One such evil-doer recently moved into Drakescale Peak, a mountain 25 miles to the north of Knotside—an adult red dragon named Tuckertrhanx the Agitator.

Tuckertrhanx (or just "Tucker" for short) stands apart from his other red-scaled brethren. Driven by an insatiable desire to grow his already-stout treasure hoard, Tucker often puts his mind and cleverness before his ego and arrogance. Knowing that attacking a city as large and well-guarded as Knotside would be pure folly, Tucker instead turned his machinations towards entrepreneurialism. With the help of

## THE NAVAL CITY OF KNOTSIDE

To learn more about Knotside, you can check out [Cze and Peku's City Maps Patreon](#) that details the city, its inhabitants, and important locations therein. If you choose not to run the adventure in or near Knotside, you can use any medium or larger lawful or lawful good city near a mountain range.

a plucky kobold sorcerer/brewer named Boeger, Tucker created a tasty, alcoholic beverage named, appropriately, Red Claw.

Boeger's Red Claw wasn't just a delicious, anise-flavored spirit. It also contained a special ingredient: *dark magic*. Any creature that drank the liquor immediately desired more. At first, the liquor's effect was subtle. Hardly anyone in Knotside noticed that they were becoming addicted to the stuff. But after a couple shots, drinkers would do anything to get another taste. Knotsiders were tossing gold, jewels, gems, anything they could to get more barrels from the dragon's delivery men.

Eventually, riots broke out as the town turned towards chaos. Half of Knotside's militia tried to temper the issue and control the ravenous population. The other half were just as affected, rendered useless by their own craving for the Claw.

## ADVENTURE HOOK

The characters' first introduction to Red Claw and its effects occurs while they are traveling just outside of Knotside, either returning from an adventure or headed to the city itself.

Just a mile or two outside of the city, read or paraphrase the following:

In the middle of the road stands a group of eight unarmored men and women. Each is holding a club in his or her hands and they're looking your way. But that's not the most troubling thing. They all have glowing red eyes and their stomachs appear unnaturally distended—almost like massive beer-guts hanging over their respective belts.

"Give us your booze money!" one of them shouts. The rest of the mob nods in agreement, then raises its clubs and approaches.

The group is made up of eight **commoners** and they are all heavily addicted to Red Claw. They've been attacking passersby, robbing them of their coins and jewelry so they can purchase more from Tucker's goons.

The commoners are easily broken, fleeing if even one of them is killed. Although possessed by their desire for more Red Claw liquor, they aren't totally suicidal.

Regardless if the characters kill the group or not, eventually the Knotside militia rides up to investigate. While the situation might look bad to a normal group of soldiers (especially if the characters killed the commoners), these militiamen already realize what's happened.

The militia is made of six **guards** riding on **war horses** led by a **veteran** named Kollias. Kollias hails the characters and asks if they need any assistance. He then explains what's happening in Knotside.

"It started about a month ago. This group of monks rode into the city offering up barrels and bottles of this liquor called Red Claw. Only a few taverns bought it and the monks left. Right away, the Red Claw was a huge hit. Anyone who had a taste immediately started speaking its praises, claiming it was the best spirit they'd ever tasted. Then the monks came back a few days later, bringing more. Soon, everyone started drinking the stuff. But the more they drank, the more of it they wanted. The third time the monks came, they were mobbed. When that supply ran out, riots started. People had to have more. The fourth time, the monks came armed. And their prices went up. Way up.

"It didn't matter, of course. The people of our city were obsessed with the liquor. They were throwing all their gold, jewels, whatever they could get their hands on onto the monk's wagons just for a few bottles of the stuff. Those who couldn't get a taste turned violent.

"We've been trying to find the source of the liquor itself, but unfortunately what few men I have left are tied up quelling the riots. If you're adventurers—and it looks like you are—then I hope you can assist us in finding the source of the Red Claw liquor, and, in turn, a way to return our citizens' sanity."

In the way of a reward, Kollias doesn't have much to offer the characters at the moment. However, he promises that the city of Knotside—the *remarkably wealthy* city of Knotside—will be in their debt. He does mention that the Red Claw monks have hauled off massive piles of coins and gems from the Knotsiders. Were the characters to find it, they are free to keep one-quarter of it. "The people of Knotside will see it as a 'fee' for your services, I'm sure," he will assure the characters.

## WHAT KOLLIAS KNOWS

At this point, the characters probably have a few questions for Kollias. Here is what he knows about Red Claw and its creators.

### "HOW DOES RED CLAW AFFECT THE DRINKERS?"

Kollias notes that the Red Claw itself doesn't act like a poison or a disease, but instead has more in common with a curse. The available clergy in Knotside have been working to cast *remove curse* on the infected, but they are terribly overwhelmed. Some of the sages in town theorize that if they had the original ingredients that went into creating the Red Claw, they could devise a bulk cure for everyone in town.

### "WHERE DID THE MONKS THAT DELIVERED THE RED CLAW GO?"

The last time the monks came into town, they were armed. What few commoners tried to go after them were picked off by flaming arrows shot by the caravan guards. Kollias sent a scout after the monks and believes they're hiding their distillery somewhere in the Basilisk's Spine mountain range.

## "WHAT DID THE MONKS LOOK LIKE?"

Kollias and his men swear that some of the monks were dragonborn. Others were short, possibly halflings. They all wore thick robes with bandages wrapped around their arms and face. Mangy-looking giant weasels pulled their carts. The guards who came with them were heavily armed and organized, but also robed, wearing red dragon masks similar to the logo on the liquor bottles.

## "WILL KOLLIAS HELP THE CHARACTERS FIND THE BREWERS?"

Currently, Kollias' men are tied up with the overwhelming unrest in Knotside. He doesn't have a single hand to spare. However, he does offer a map to the mountain range.

## "HAVE YOU HIRED ANYONE ELSE FOR THIS JOB?"

So far, Kollias hasn't come across any other adventurers. What few adventurers were already in Knotside were affected by the liquor. He's lucky to have caught the characters outside of the city.

## RESTING IN KNOTSIDE

If the characters opt to stay the night in Knotside despite the troubles, Kollias and his men escort them to the Venerable Swordsman, an inn on the south side of that city that remains mostly unaffected by the chaos. The majority of the shops, taverns, and other points of interest in Knotside are currently closed. Kollias, fearful for his city, urges the characters not to waste too much time. He can procure whatever they need in terms of arms, ammunition, and armor from the town's armory. He can also grant up to 4 *potions of healing* per character and any basic supplies they might require.

Should the characters dally too long, Kollias eventually grows impatient and seeks out another group to solve the issue.

## THE BASILISK'S SPINE

Kollias' scout followed the brewers for about 20 miles before arriving at the foothills of the Basilisk's Spine. The Spine is a jagged collection of peaks, bluffs, and sheer cliffs, boldly facing the ocean to the east. An active volcano sits at the heart of it.

## TUCKER'S REGIONAL EFFECTS

Tucker is a legendary **adult red dragon**. The region surrounding his volcanic lair in Drakescale Peak is warped by his innate magic. Within 6 miles, small earthquakes are common. Sulfur taints all water sources within 1 mile, and rocky fissures form portals to the Elemental Plane of Fire—it wouldn't be out of place for the characters to run into the odd **azer**, **fire elemental**, or **salamander** war party within the region.

**Minion Resistances.** Thanks to his magic, all of Tucker's kobolds and henchmen have resistance to fire damage.

## TRACKING THE RED CLAW CARAVAN

Once the characters discover the spot where the scout last saw the monks, they will need to track the caravan's route

through the mountains. It's been a couple days since the caravan left, so tracking it isn't easy. A character must succeed on a DC 25 Wisdom (Survival) check to follow the path in the dirt.

If the characters have trouble finding the path, they can search the mountains themselves for clues. Each hour that they spend searching in the mountains, have them make a Wisdom (Survival) check with a DC equal to 25 minus 1 for each hour they spend searching for clues. Clues can include things like discarded corks from the liquor bottles, tracks in the dirt, a broken crate, or anything else that you feel is appropriate.

In addition, once per hour while the characters are searching, roll a d20. On a roll of 18-20, the characters run into a brewer caravan. Instead of rolling, you can opt to have the encounter occur whenever you feel necessary, especially if the characters haven't found any solid leads after a few hours of searching.

## THE DELIVERY MEN

The characters come across the delivery men's caravan. They're set on returning to Knotside one last time to collect any remaining gold and merchandise they can. From there, they plan on targeting another city within a day's ride.

Knowing that Knotside is in dismay and the militia has caught on to their ploy, the brewers are even better prepared this time.

The caravan consists of three carts pulled by two **dire weasels** each (see the Appendix). Atop each cart is a massive hogshead barrel holding 79 gallons of Red Claw liquor. The barrels have an AC of 16 and 50 hit points, plus immunity to poison and psychic damage. Any hit on the barrel causes its contents to leak onto the dirt and rocks. The liquor is also flammable. If the cask takes fire damage, roll a d20. If the result on the d20 is less than the fire damage dealt, the cask erupts in a 20-foot radius explosion. Each creature in the area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. A flammable object in the area ignites if it isn't being worn or carried.

At the front of each cart is a **kobold** driver that's been instructed to stay seated even if they run into trouble. Should things turn bad, they are to return to base.

Leading the caravan are two cloaked **kobold wing sorcerers** each with two **ogre** bodyguards. It doesn't take long for the kobolds to figure out that the adventurers are there to stop their operation. They immediately attack. If they are reduced to half their numbers or fewer, the kobolds pile onto the carts and retreat. Fully loaded, the weasels have a movement speed of 20 feet, 40 feet if they Dash, so it should be easy to chase them. The kobolds aren't afraid to cut away the barrels to increase their speed. This gives the weasels their normal movement speed of 40 feet.

Once the characters defeat or drive off the brewers, the tracks they leave should be easy enough to follow to the Red Claw Distillery, requiring no further Wisdom (Survival) checks.



## CHAPTER 2: RED CLAW DISTILLERY

**T**he trail the brewers left behind leads to a blackened, dismal canyon littered with razor-sharp obsidian shards, dead trees, and lifeless ash. The temperature here is hot and dry, like standing in front of an oven, even during the winter.

When the characters get within 400 feet of the lair, read the following:

Thrusting from the earth like a colossal tooth stands a bleak, blackened volcano. A slow-moving, ropey lava flow surrounds the front of the volcano, blocking passage. The only way across the lava is lonely bridge flanked by a pair of obsidian gargoyles at the far side. Five twenty-foot high wooden towers manned by cloaked kobold guards protect a wide courtyard in front of the mountain. Just beyond those outposts, sticking out of the peak like a sore thumb is a ramshackle, wooden building built on stilts. From within you hear the bickering, laughing, cackling, wicked voices of kobolds.

A large, handpainted sign over the shack reads "KOBOLD KALDRUN". Judging by the primitive lettering and misspelling, it's likely the kobolds painted the sign themselves.

Getting close to the tavern is no easy task. The lava is particularly deadly. The entire flow is 30 feet across, making jumping over it difficult. A constant heat haze emanates from the constantly churning molten rock. Outside of teleporting directly into the courtyard, the only way for the characters to reach the other side of the lava flow is by flying or leaping over the lava... or by crossing the bridge.

### GENERAL FEATURES

Unless otherwise stated, here are the most common features of the distillery and dragon's lair.

**Extreme Heat.** The temperatures within the distillery and caldera reach temperatures as high as 125° F, and even higher the closer the characters get to Tucker's caldera. Review the extreme heat rules in the *DMG* for details.

**Lava and Magma.** Lava is extremely dangerous. The first time a creature enters lava or magma, it takes 6d10 fire damage, and then again if it ends its turn in the lava/magma. In addition, the heat haze rising from the lava/magma lightly obscures creatures and objects on the other side of it.

**Light.** Most of the distillery is lit by the ambient light of the magma that courses through it. Still, there are many dark tunnels and chambers. Use your own discretion to determine how much light is in a given area. The descriptions assume that the characters have darkvision or other methods of seeing.

**Spirit Barrels.** The kobolds store barrels of their infamous Red Claw liquor all throughout the complex. The liquor barrels are highly explosive. If a regular 1/8-tun barrel takes fire damage, roll a d20. If the result on the d20 is less than the fire damage dealt, the cask erupts in a 20-foot radius explosion. Each creature in the area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. A flammable object in the area ignites if it isn't being worn or carried.

**Drinking Red Claw.** Characters may get a wild hair and try the liquor. A character that takes a 2 oz single shot of liquor must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the character gets the Red Claw curse. While cursed, the character has a character flaw that lasts until cured: "I will do anything or give anything to drink more Red Claw liquor." Every 8 hours that passes that the character is unable to drink more Red Claw liquor, its hit point maximum is reduced by 1. If this reduces the character's hit point maximum to 0, the character explodes, dying instantly. If a character takes a second shot before an hour has passed, increase the DC for the Constitution of the saving throw by 1 (to a maximum of 20). If an hour passes and the character does not drink another shot, the DC returns to 10. Creatures immune or resistant to fire damage automatically pass their saving throws.

## 1A - MAIN ENTRANCE BRIDGE

The forty-foot long arched bridge that spans the lava flow is made of solid stone. At the northern end of the bridge are two 10-foot tall gargoyle statues carved from obsidian.

**Trap.** The gargoyles are traps. If a creature moves within 10 feet of the gargoyles without saying the password "Tuckerthranx", the gargoyles' arms and wings extend perpendicularly from their bodies and begin to spin. The first time a creature moves within 10 feet of the statues, it must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature takes 22 (4d10) slashing damage from the spinning gargoyle statues. A creature that ends its turn within 10 feet of the spinning gargoyles automatically takes this damage again.

The spinning gargoyles make it nearly impossible to cross the bridge. However, a character can attempt to tumble through the blades. Have the character make a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a successful check, the character tumbles past the gargoyles. On a failed check, the character takes 22 (4d10) slashing damage and is pushed back 5 feet into the nearest unoccupied space.

The gargoyles stop spinning after 1 minute so long as no creature remains within 20 feet of them.

One way to disable this trap and stop the gargoyles from spinning is to switch off the mechanisms which are on the north-facing side of their bases. Of course, a character would have to get close enough to the gargoyles to do so.

Fortunately, the gargoyles themselves can be destroyed. Each gargoyle statue has an AC of 19, 50 hit points, and immunity to fire, poison, and psychic damage. For every 25 hit points of damage a gargoyle statue takes, the Dexterity save or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check needed to avoid the statues is reduced by 1, and the damage they deal is reduced by 1d10.

## 1B - DISTELLERY COURTYARD

Just to the other side of the bridge, beyond the gargoyles, is a wide courtyard. The courtyard's defenses are described below. If the characters manage the impossible and remove the kobold guards without signaling the alarm, then there are 4d6 **kobolds** found working here at any given time.

## 1C - KOBOLD WATCHTOWERS

Five watchtowers fitted with **flamethrowers** manned by three **kobolds** each stand twenty feet over the courtyard. For a Small creature, getting up the kobold-sized ladders is simple. Medium creatures will have a slower-go than normal climbing, ascending at half their normal movement speed while using the small ladder.

### FLAME THROWER

*Large object*

**Armor Class:** 19

**Hit Points:** 50

**Damage Immunities:** fire, poison, psychic

A flame thrower spews fire. It is fueled by natural gas pumped into it by a tube in the ground; if the weapon is removed from its roost or its gas line is cut (AC 13, 5 hp, immunity to fire, poison, and psychic damage), it ceases to function. It takes one action to aim the weapon and one action to fire it.

The flame thrower is manned by two kobolds, with a third keeping watch, subbing in if necessary. If the flame thrower is reduced to 0 hit points, it explodes, launching fire and shrapnel in a 20-foot radius sphere centered on it. Each creature in the explosion's area must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 4d6 piercing damage plus 4d6 fire damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a success.

**Flame Jet (Recharge 5-6).** The flame thrower spews a jet of flame in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.



Each tower also keeps an alarm bell in it. The third kobold that mans each tower pulls the bell signaling danger. One round after the bell is pulled, eight **kobolds**, four **boozie server kobolds**, and two **cask hauler kobolds** arrive in area 1B from various locations within, ready to defend the distillery from intruders at all costs (the two new monsters appear in the Appendix).

## 1D - TAVERN DECK

A winding, wooden staircase leads up to a deck overlooking the courtyard. When the characters reach area 1A, four **boozie server kobolds** rush out to the deck and start throwing burning spirits at the intruders.

**Rickety Deck.** The deck itself was poorly built, meant to hold only a handful of kobolds at a time. If more than 200 pounds is placed on the deck, the deck collapses. Each creature on the deck when it collapses takes 7 (2d6) falling damage and lands prone within 5 feet of where the deck stood.

## 1E - ENTRANCE TO AREA 2

This area to the west of the courtyard holds a small cache of liquor barrels plus a parked **dire weasel**-drawn cart holding another four barrels.

## 2 - WEST ENTRANCE CORRIDOR

The west entrance rises at a near 45-degree angle and the smooth, obsidian stone is quite slick thanks to spilled liquor. A character that attempts to move up the passage without using a rope must succeed on a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check to climb up the tunnel. Failing the check sends them sliding back down to the entrance in area 1E.

**Trap Part 1. Rope and Barrels.** A hemp rope attached to steel loops at regular intervals along the western wall have been put into place to allow the kobolds easy access up. Any character that weighs more than 40 pounds that tries to use the rope to climb triggers a trap. A net hidden in a cubby on the ceiling over the alcove releases, sending 10 barrels rolling down the corridor. Any creature in the hallway when the barrels fall must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed saving throw, a creature takes 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage and is pushed back down the hallway to the entrance, landing prone in front of the barrels in area 1E.

**Trap Part 2. Acid Barrels.** If the barrels themselves weren't enough, each is filled with caustic acid (a protective coating painted on the inside of the barrels kept them from dissolving). When the barrels hit the ground in area 1E, they break apart, spilling acid all over the floor in 1E. Any creature within 10 feet of the entrance to area 2 must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) acid damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one. Prone creatures take twice as much damage from the acid. Of course, that's not the end of it...

**Trap Part 3. Chain Reaction.** The acid leaking from the barrels eventually leaks over to the liquor barrels stored against the wall in area 1E. One round after the acid barrels break, the acid within eats away at the non-treated barrels. The acid mixes with the liquor and explodes. A creature standing within 20-feet of the exploding barrels must make a Dexterity saving throw with a DC of 13 plus 1 for every barrel that explodes beyond the first (there are five total barrels,



Diagram 1: Area 2's Traps

capable of a maximum DC of 17). On a failed saving throw, a creature takes 4d6 fire damage plus 1d6 fire damage for each barrel that explodes beyond the first. On a successful saving throw, a character takes half as much damage.

## 3 - STORAGE

Crates, barrels, boxes and more clutter this low-ceilinged cave. You immediately notice a strong smell of tar in this area.

The ceilings in this cave are only 4 feet high. Perfect for a kobold or other Small creature, but miserable for a creature of Medium size or larger to pass through. Any creature that stands more than 4 1/2 feet tall must squat or crawl to move through the area. All of the barrels in the area are filled with the Red Claw liquor.

**Tar-Covered Ceiling.** Those pesky kobolds coated the ceiling in sticky tar! The tar is easy to notice, but incredibly difficult to remove. Have a crawling character make a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (character's choice) each round that they crawl through this area. If the character is overloaded with gear, they make this check with disadvantage. On a failed check, the character is restrained by the tar on the ceiling until it breaks free. A creature restrained by the tar can use its action to make a DC 12 Strength check. If it succeeds, it is no longer restrained.



**Diagram 2:** Area 3's Traps

Lamp oil and even the Red Claw liquor can easily dissolve the tar, allowing the characters to move through the area unhindered.

**Skunks.** If the tar isn't enough, the kobolds keep six skunks in this area who stay hidden among the supplies. Any non-kobold creatures who try to crawl through the area disturb the skunks, especially if the creature is struggling to become unstuck from the ceiling. The skunks have **rat** stat blocks except they can spray musk at a creature within 5 feet of them. Sprayed, the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target wretches and can't take actions for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself with a success. A creature that doesn't need to breathe or is immune to poison automatically succeeds on the saving throw. Once the skunk sprays its musk, it can't do so again until it finishes a short or long rest.

Save or fail, the creature is coated in the skunk's musk. Until the creature uses a spell such as *prestidigitation*, takes a bath in vinegar, or 1 week passes, it reeks of skunk musk; it makes all Charisma ability checks when interacting with people at disadvantage.

**Kobolds with Pikes.** Sound travels far in the area. Characters that are stuck or sprayed by skunks are bound to alert the kobolds in area 13. Nine kobolds arrive and place a large wooden shield over the northern exit leading to area 13, barring it into place. The shield grants the kobolds 3/4 cover. From there, they attack with 15 foot long pikes. It takes three kobolds to use a pike. If the kobolds are reduced to two kobolds or less, they retreat, leaving the shield barred in place.

**Long-Pikes.** Melee Weapon Attack: +0 to hit (with advantage), reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d10 - 2) piercing damage.

**Moving the Shield Out of the Way.** The bar holding the kobold's shield in place is made of soft pine. It only takes a DC 5 Strength check to burst it. If a character succeeds the check by 5 or more, they push the shield out of the way and immediately step into area 15. When this happens, chicken feathers fall from the ceiling onto the character. If the character had any part of them stuck to the tar from the ceiling, the feathers automatically stick to them and remain stuck until the tar is dissolved. Any kobolds that are still alive in area 15 who witness this immediately stop what they're doing and cackle maliciously at the tarred-and-feathered character. One round later they realize the danger they're in and flee.

#### 4 - CORRIDOR TO THE TAVERN

This corridor rises, too, but not nearly as severely as the one in area 2. Plus, it's easier to climb thanks to wooden planks placed at regular intervals. However, the corridor is tight, only 3 feet high at its highest point. Medium-sized creatures will need to bend and crawl to make their way up the corridor.

**Poison Gas Trap.** The wooden planks aren't just there to help the kobolds climb up the hallway. They also act as pressure plates for a poison trap. Any creature weighing more than 40 pounds that steps onto one of the planks depresses a bladder hidden below the step. The bladder releases a poisonous spray that shoots out from the floor directly onto the creature that stepped on the plate. The



**Diagram 3:** Area 4's Traps



Diagram 4: 'Kobold Kaldrun'

target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. If the creature was crawling at the time, it caught the poison in its face; it makes this saving throw with disadvantage. On a failed saving throw, the creature is poisoned for 1 hour. Until the poison is removed, the creature is blinded.

Noticing the trap requires a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Each plank can be disabled with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check requiring proficiency in thieves' tools. If a check to disarm the trap fails by 3 or more, it automatically goes off, requiring the remover to make a saving throw against the trap.

Creatures short enough to walk through the corridor can easily avoid the planks by stepping over them. However, crawling creatures must make a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (target's choice) each round to avoid pressing the planks as they move through the area.

**Centipede Door.** At the end of the corridor leading into area 4 is a small, round, wooden door that resembles a barrel top (it once was). An iron handle is set into the center of the door. From the position of the hinges, it appears that the door opens with a pull. If a character pulls the handle without first twisting it clockwise, it unlatches a hidden compartment built into the actual door. This hidden compartment is filled with a **swarm of centipedes** that immediately attacks whoever opened the compartment.

A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the nature of the hidden compartment. Then, a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that simply turning the handle clockwise 90 degrees locks the hidden compartment, trapping the centipedes inside, then unlocks the door.

## 5 - KOBOLD KALDRUN'

This low-ceiling room looks like a bar—albeit a tiny bar. The bar itself stands no more than a foot-and-a-half, and the tables are even shorter. Child-sized chairs made of planks and barrel parts clutter the room.

From behind the bar, three creatures pop up holding burning bottles in their hand. "Deff tuda 'ven-churz!" they shout in broken Common.

Three **booze server kobolds** attack and fight to the death.

**Treasure.** The bar is made of wood with thin stone slabs set atop it. The middle slab can be removed easily. Within, is a small hollow filled with 580 cp, 120 sp, and 30 gp as well as *Talyard The Great's Wand of Power* (see the Appendix).

## 6 - BARREL STORAGE

Empty barrels are stored just outside the tavern. There is nothing else of interest in this room.

## 7 - KOBOLD DENS

This room reeks of animal musk, sulfur, and rotting food. Piles of dry-rotting hay litter the floors in neat, little piles, perfect for a small creature to sleep on.

This is where most of the kobolds of the distillery rest. There are 12 piles of hay in all. A small altar dedicated to a dragon god rests against the southern wall of the den.

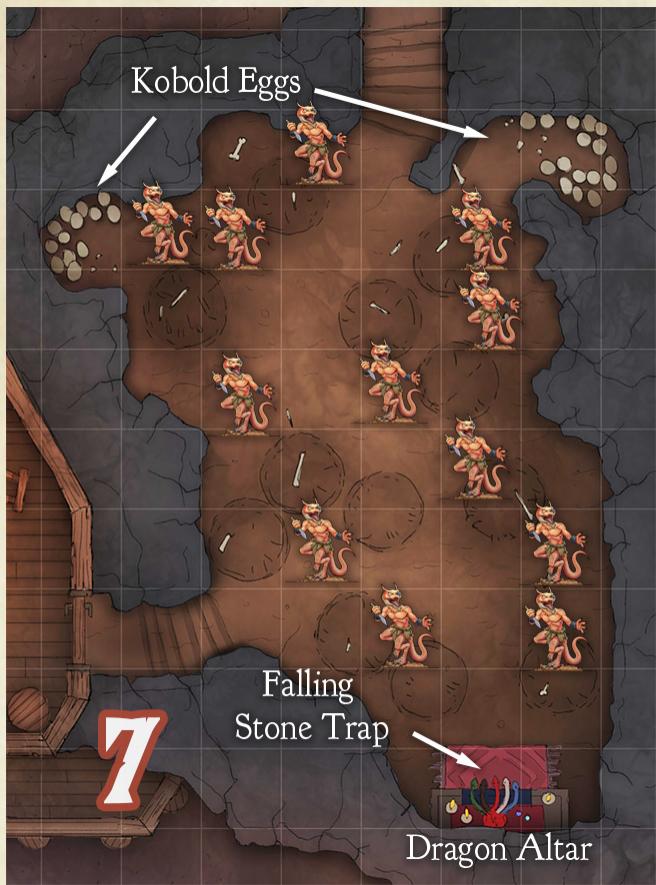


Diagram 5: Kobold Den

**Encounter.** There are 12 **kobolds** here. They aggressively defend their egg clusters (see Diagram 5).

**Bed Treasure.** If a character searches through a pile of hay, roll a d6. On a result of 6, they discover 1d6 copper pieces, and on a result of 5 they find a random trinket with no real value (GM's discretion).

**Altar Trap.** The rug directly in front of the altar hides a pressure plate underneath. The trap is triggered when any creature weighing more than 40 pounds steps or kneels on the rug—a 5-foot-cubed stone limestone block weighing 2.5 tons from the ceiling releases, falling on top of the creature that set off the trap. The creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the block falls on top of the creature; the creature takes 28 (8d6) bludgeoning damage, falls prone in its space, and is restrained by the block. A creature can use its action to make a DC 25 Strength check, lifting the block off the target with a success. The block can be destroyed, too. It has an AC of 19 and 100 hit points (damage threshold 5) and is immune to poison and psychic damage. On a successful saving throw, the creature takes only half the damage, isn't knocked prone, and is pushed 5 feet out of the block's space into an unoccupied space of the creature's choice. If no unoccupied space is within range, the creature suffers the consequences of a failed saving throw.

Noticing the trap requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot the block in the ceiling. A DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the trap is triggered by placing too much weight on the rug. The trap's pressure plate can be disarmed with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools.

**Altar Treasure.** The golden idol on top of the altar is made of solid gold, valued at 250 gp.

**Egg Clusters.** Dozens of scaly green and red eggs the size of a human's fist lay on piles of fresh hay tucked in hollows with ceilings measuring no more than 3-feet in height. One out of four of the eggs (a result of 1 on a d4) are actually large bird eggs decorated to look like kobold eggs. Whenever a creature picks up a fake egg, roll a d4 to and refer to the "What's in the Egg?" table to determine what happens.

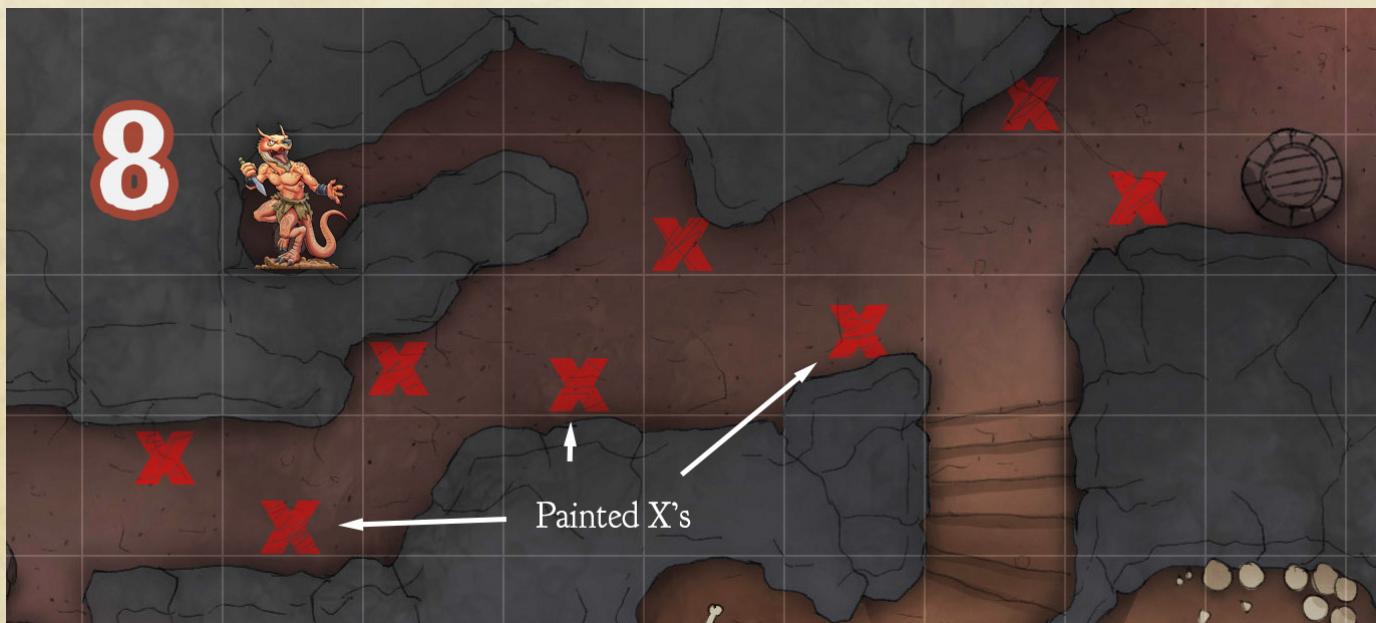


Diagram 6: Painted X's in Area 8

## "WHAT'S IN THE EGG?"

### d4 Result

- 1 **Spiders.** A **swarm of spiders** crawls out of the egg.
- 2 **Ooze.** Acidic, green ooze pours out of the egg. The creature holding the egg takes 1d4 acid damage.
- 3 **Glue.** The egg collapses, covering the creature's hand in glue. Until the glue is dissolved, the creature's hand is unusable. It makes Strength and Dexterity checks that rely on using its hands with disadvantage. Plus, it can't hold anything with two hands, and it can hold only a single object at a time.
- 4 **Stink Bomb.** The egg collapses, expelling a nasty stench cloud. The creature holding the egg plus any creature within 5 feet of that creature must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the target writhes and can't take actions for 1 minute. The creature can repeat its saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself with a success.

## 8 - MIDDLE CORRIDOR

This stone corridor has 6-foot high ceilings and is roughly 5-feet wide. Eight red "X's" painted on the stone floor appear at regular intervals, some to the left, others to the right.

The X's have no function, other than representing the position of the latches in area 13 (see Diagram 6 above). (Of course, that doesn't mean the players won't get psyched out thinking that they should/shouldn't step on them.)

**Encounter.** In the small branching hallway in the north face of the corridor, a single **kobold** hides. When the characters enter the corridor, it emerges, yelps, throws a smoke bomb their way, then runs off screaming in the opposite direction (whichever way seems appropriate) hopping on the red X's as it goes. The smoke bomb heavily obscures the corridor for 1 minute as a *fog cloud* spell.

## 9 - WEASEL PENS

The kobolds keep three **dire weasels** penned here. The weasels are well-fed and mostly trained. If released, they amble away, more confused than thankful for their newfound liberty. They won't attack unless frightened.

The barrels in this area are all loaded with Red Claw and are explosive.

**Encounter.** One of Tucker's lieutenants, Ankor (NE male **half-red dragon veteran**) watches over the weasels. Chances are Ankor heard the characters coming and has prepared himself for combat. He hides around the parked cart, using it as cover, trying to keep his distance as much as he can. If forced into melee combat, Ankor does his best to disengage and tactically retreat, hoping to section off the adventurers.

**Trap.** The staircase at the southwestern end of the weasel pens is trapped. The steps themselves are made from baked clay, molded to look like steps. Any creature that steps on one breaks the step and onto a bed of sharp nails hiding within. The creature takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage and until it takes a short or long rest or receives magical healing, its speed is reduced by 10 feet. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the nature of the fake steps.

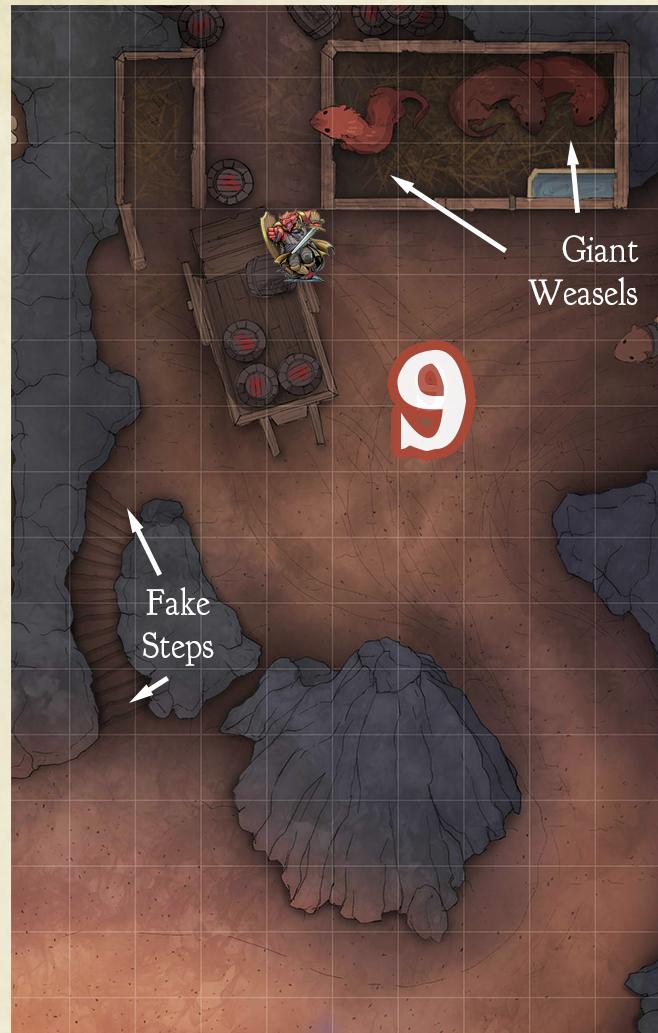


Diagram 7: Area 9's Traps and Encounters

## 10 - WEST DISTILLERY

At the center of this colossal cave is a huge distillery tank. Barrels bearing the Red Claw logo are everywhere. This must be one of the kobolds' production areas.

All of the barrels in this room are explosive.

**Encounter.** Ronk and Manx (NE male and female **half-red dragon veterans**) oversee production here. Joining them are 3 **boozie server kobolds** and 2 **cask hauler kobolds**.

## DISTILLERY TANKS

Areas 10, 12A, 13, and 14 hold huge distillery tanks. Like the liquor barrels themselves, the tanks are highly explosive. If a tank takes fire damage, roll a d20. If the result on the d20 is less than half the fire damage dealt, the distillery tank erupts. Each creature in area 10 must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. A flammable object in the area ignites if it isn't being worn or carried.



Diagram 7: The Fire Elemental Oven

## 11 – FIRE ELEMENTAL OVEN

If the characters enter the corridor from the southern end and haven't entered area 14 yet, read or paraphrase the following:

Intense heat radiates from this forty-foot long hallway. At the far end, you think you can see machinery and barrels—potentially a distillery. Long shadows made by kobolds move along the wall.

it sounds like they are whispering, shushing each other while they try to hide.

Once the characters enter the tunnel and get mid-way towards area 14, the kobolds in area 14 hit a button dropping iron doors from the ceiling at both ends (see Diagram 7). Next, three **fire elementals** appear, one in each alcove, and attack, taking full advantage of their fire form in the tight quarters. Thanks to the trapped heat made by the fire elementals, the hallway quickly turns into an oven. The heat starts at 150° F during the first round of combat. Then, at initiative count 20 (losing ties) the temperature of the oven increases by 50° F for each fire elemental that is still in the oven to a maximum of 550° F.

As the heat increases, the oven becomes an environmental hazard for the characters. When a character ends their turn in the oven, refer to the Fire Elemental Oven table below to determine what happens.

### FIRE ELEMENTAL OVEN

Temperature	Save DC	Heated Metal?	Fire Damage
150° - 249°	5	No	—
250° - 349°	10	Yes	—
350° - 449°	15	Yes	2d8
450° - 550°	20	Yes	4d8

**Exhaustion DC.** Each round that a character ends its turn in the fire elemental oven, it must make a Constitution saving throw. The DC of the saving throw depends on the temperature of the oven as shown on the Fire Elemental Oven table. On a failed saving throw, a character takes one level of exhaustion. Creatures that are resistant or immune to fire damage automatically pass their saving throws.

**Heated Metal.** All manufactured metal objects, such as a metal weapon or suit of heavy or medium metal armor, begin to glow red hot. A creature holding or wearing a metal object must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the current temperature's DC. If it doesn't drop the object, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the start of its next turn. The items remain heated for as long as the temperature in the oven stays above 250° F and for 2 rounds afterward. Creatures that are resistant or immune to fire damage automatically pass their saving throws.

**Fire Damage.** A creature automatically takes the amount of fire damage listed on the Fire Elemental Oven table.

**Escaping the Oven.** A character on the other side of the northernmost iron door can hit the button in area 14 to raise the iron doors. Once the iron doors are up, the temperature in the corridor decreases by 100° F each round. An iron door can be lifted with a successful DC 20 Strength check. However, the doors are extremely hot. The moment a

character places their unprotected hands on one of the doors, they must succeed on a Constitution saving throw the current temperature's DC or make their Strength check with disadvantage. Each door has an AC of 20 with 50 hit points (damage threshold 5) and is immune to fire, poison, and psychic damage.

**Defeating the Fire Elementals.** Once all three fire elementals are destroyed, the temperature in the oven decreases by 25° F each round until it returns to normal room temperature (a "balmy" 100° F).

## 12A - CENTRAL DISTILLERY

The first time the characters enter the room, read or paraphrase the following:

A 20-foot high distillery tank dominates the center of this room. All around you are barrels with the infamous Red Claw logo stenciled on the side.

A voice calls from behind the tank. "You've gone far enough, adventurers."

Another one of Tuckerthranx's lieutenants, Yarm (NE **half-red dragon veteran**), guards this area. Hiding among the barrels are four **booze server kobolds**. Yarm is a CE male half-red dragon veteran. In place of a heavy crossbow, Yarm is armed with a *Fire! Fire!* crossbow (see the Appendix). Unlike the other lieutenants, Yarm has little regard for the tanks, barrels, and even the kobolds that surround him. He will fight to the death.

## 12B - EMPTY BARRELS

Barrels waiting to be filled fill this section of the central distillery. A set of huge, wrought iron double-doors decorated to look like the Red Claw logo pock the north wall of the cave.

**Spring-loaded Doors.** The doors are easy to open from this area. However, they're set with springs which cause them to automatically close after 1 round while they aren't being held open.

The opposite side of the door (the side facing the lava pit in area 15A) is smooth and lacks handles. The only way to open the door from the far side is with a successful DC 17 Strength check (made with advantage if a lever is placed into the door). Tuckerthranx also has a button he can press to make the doors open. The doors are heavy, with AC 20, 50 hp (damage threshold 5), and immunity to fire, poison, and psychic damage.

## 13A - WEST DISTILLERY

If the characters burst through the kobold shield placed over the south exit into area 3, the nine **kobolds** may still be here. Otherwise, this distillery is empty and not currently in use. See area 3 for details on the tar/feather trap that waits over the southern entrance.

## 13B - PUZZLE DOOR

The first time the characters come upon this door, read or paraphrase the following:

A large set of iron double-doors stand before you. At the center of the rightmost door, a six-inch deep and four-inch wide groove runs from the top of the door to its bottom. Within the groove are eight sliding toggles, each set to the rightmost position. A "W" has been etched into the interior of the groove just above the topmost lever.

To open the door, the levers must slide into the same position as the X's in area 8 (from top-to-bottom: right, left, right, left, right, left, right, left), with the topmost latch being the westernmost X and bottommost latch being the easternmost X. When the levers are set into the correct position, the door opens with no issue.

**Sliding the Wrong Latch.** If a lever is incorrectly slid into a left position, a pressurized mini-guillotine set into the door's groove slides down. The character who slid the lever must make a DC 15 Dexterity throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature takes 1d6 slashing damage and their hand is lopped off at the wrist. Until the creature's hand is returned via a *greater restoration* spell, they cannot hold any object with two hands and they can only hold one object at a time. The severed hand is deposited at the bottom of the door's groove and the lever returns to the rightmost position.

**Breaking Open the Door.** The doors are magically enchanted with an *arcane lock* spell. While affected, only a DC 27 Strength check can break down the doors. A creature can also attempt to pick the doors' locking mechanism but must make a DC 27 Dexterity check using proficiency with thieves' tools to do so. Dispelling the magic on the doors suppresses the effects for 10 minutes, reducing the DCs by 10 each. The doors themselves each have an AC of 25, 100 hp (threshold 10), and immunity to fire, poison, and psychic damage, as well as bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage made with nonmagical weapons.

## 14 - NORTHERN DISTILLERY

The first time the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

A group of kobolds armed with burning bottles and lit casks stand before a massive distillery tank. They hiss at you.

There are six **booze server kobolds** and three **cask hauler kobolds** here.

Set into the wall on the southern side of this cave is the button used to raise and lower the iron doors for the Fire Elemental Oven trap in area 11.

## 15 - TUCKERTHRANX'S LAIR

If this is the first time the characters have entered Tuckerthranx's lair, read or paraphrase the following:

A pool of magma bubbles at the center of this massive, 100-foot high-ceilinged chamber. The south side of the room is a smooth, stone platform. Two stone bridges cross the inferno at either side, connecting to a second, larger rock platform that rises 15-feet out of the magma. However, its the giant, red-scaled, winged creature standing at the center of that platform draws your immediate interest.



**Diagram 10:** Tuckerthranx's Lair

"Don't worry, little ones," bellows the massive red dragon. "I'll make this quick."

Unless the characters cross the magma pool to attack him on his platform, Tuckerthranx, an **adult red dragon** keeps his distance, using only his fire breath and lair actions to attack the characters. Meanwhile, two **molten oozes** (see the Appendix) sludge their way out of the magma and attack.

After the molten oozes are destroyed, Tucker fights more aggressively, using hit-and-run tactics while flying over the area. Tucker is arrogant, but not stupid. If it looks like he's likely to lose the combat (he's reduced to half his hit points or less), he'll retreat upward into a magma tube and abandon the mountain and his minions.

**Southern platform.** Characters who arrive through the doors in area 12B stand on this audience platform. Unless the characters used something to prop the door open (see area 12B), it's likely the door closes shut behind them, preventing escape. This is Tucker's preferred fight zone as it makes it difficult for the characters to reach him.

**Tuckerthranx's Platform.** The dragon's platform stands 15 feet higher than the pool of magma and other platforms. Tuckerthranx isn't afraid to knock creatures off his platform into the magma, either; in fact, it's his favorite tactic. Each time Tucker uses his tail attack, instead of dealing damage, he can have the target make a DC 22 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (target's choice). On a failed saving throw, the target is pushed 15 feet in a direction of Tucker's choice. If this pushes the creature over the ledge, the creature falls into the magma below. Plop.

### VARIANT: TUCKER'S SORCERER SPELLS

If there are more than 5 characters in the group or they are particularly experienced, you might consider giving Tucker sorcerer spells to compliment his attacks. Using this variant, Tucker's CR increases to 18 (20,000 XP).

**Spellcasting.** Tucker is a 7th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 19). He can cast the following sorcerer spells:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, mage hand, mending, message, prestidigitation*

1st-level (4 slots): *charm person, fog cloud, shield*

2nd-level (3 slots): *darkness, detect thoughts*

3rd-level (3 slots): *counterspell, dispel magic*

4th-level (1 slot): *dimension door*

Tucker always reserves his 4th-level slot for *dimension door*.

**Treasure.** Thanks to the insane heat of Drakescale Peak, Tucker's hoard has turned to molten gold. If the characters can cool it down (with the use of a few well-placed cold damage spells) and carry it out, in all it's worth a total of 150,000 gp.

**Safe.** An iron safe weighing 600 lbs is bolted into the floor of a small alcove. Opening the safe requires a DC 18 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools. Inside the safe are Boeger's recipe ingredients to the Red Claw liquor. If the sages in Knotside get ahold of the ingredients, they can create a formula and rescue Knotside's inhabitants. Also in the safe is a set of *Red Claw regalia* (see the appendix).

## 17 - EAST GOLD FOUNTAIN BANK

A *glyph of warding* hides on the ceiling of the corridor leading into this chamber. The *glyph* is nearly invisible, requiring a DC 19 Intelligence (Investigation) to notice it. When triggered, each creature within 20-feet of the *glyph* must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (5d8) lightning damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Molten gold pours out of the mouths of stone dragon heads into a fountain. You've never seen anything quite like it!

**Treasure.** Similar to the fountain in the accountant's office, the intense heat of Drakescale Peak has turned Tucker's hoard to molten gold. If the characters can cool it down (with the use of a few well-placed cold damage spells) and carry it all out, in all it's worth a total of 150,000 gp.

## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Should the characters defeat Tuckertranz and his minions and return with the ingredients for the Red Claw liquor, the citizens of Knotside are cured in a manner of days and life slowly returns to normal.

If Tucker or Boeger escaped, they may rear their ugly heads again in future adventures, most likely as adversaries of the characters.

Since the amount of treasure Tucker kept in his lair is difficult to remove, the characters may request assistance from Kollias and his troops. As Kollias promised, he offers the characters 25% of the returned treasure (ideally as coins).

## 16 - ACCOUNTANT'S OFFICE

A *glyph of warding* hides on the ceiling of the corridor leading to the accountant's office. The *glyph* is nearly invisible, requiring a DC 19 Intelligence (Investigation) to notice it. When triggered, each creature within 20-feet of the *glyph* must succeed on a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (5d8) cold damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

This small chamber looks to be an office of sorts. Sitting atop a small, child-sized desk are piles of neatly stacked coins. At the center is what-must-be a fire-proof ledger with scrawling in draconic.

All that is certainly impressive. However, what's more impressive is the fountain of molten gold at the south end of the cavern.

**Encounter.** If the characters have just fought Tucker and won, Tucker's business partner and accountant, Boeger is waiting for the characters to enter.

Boeger is a lawful evil **kobold wing sorcerer**. He uses his wings and *misty step* spell to keep plenty of distance while lobbing spells at the adventurers. Like Tucker, he's arrogant but isn't interested in dying. If the characters appear too much of a threat, he'll escape through the same magma tube.



# APPENDIX

## PLAYER HANDOUT: AREA 8



## CONTRIBUTORS

This collaboration was a freely made project between DMDave, Cze & Peku, Paper Forge, It's A DnD Monster Now, and The Griffon's Saddlebag. If you haven't already, consider becoming a patron to help support the passion and effort that goes into this work. Quality D&D content gets better when it's supported by people like you!

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[DMDave](#) wrote this adventure and writes content just like it, including feats, classes, races, and more daily for 5th edition! He is also the writer for Broadsword Monthly, a monthly print magazine loaded with new 5th edition content.

## NEW RESOURCES

The adventure uses new assets created specifically for this adventure. You can find these assets below.

### HIGH-RESOLUTION MAPS

[The Red Claw Distillery Map](#) was created by Cze and Peku and can be [downloaded for free](#).

### NEW MONSTERS

Five new monsters appear in this adventure, each created by It'sADnDMonsterNow. Those monsters are the **booze server kobold**, **cask hauler kobold**, **dire weasel**, **kobold wing sorcerer**, and **molten ooze**. [The stat blocks can be downloaded for free](#).

In addition to the stat blocks, Paper Forge created miniatures for each of the monsters. [The miniatures can be downloaded for free](#).

### NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Three new magic items appear in the adventure, each created by The Griffon's Saddlebag. Those magic items are Fire! Fire!, the Red Claw Regalia, and Talyard the Great's Wand of Power. The details for each of these items plus artwork [can be downloaded for free](#).