



## BRIGAND'S CAVE

Although there are a few inclusions of hard, igneous rock, most of the local sandstone is soft enough to dig easily with simple tools and strong enough not to collapse without bracing or supports. This small cave began its life as a stash where a few part-time foot pads could hide their loot until it could be sold off in a nearby town. When the brigands were finally recognised, they fled into the woods and took up a life of permanent brigandage. After a few miserable nights huddled in the rain, the group's leader, **Raet**, had no trouble convincing his followers to expand the cave. The brigands and their cave can be located in any wilderness area near a well travelled road.

1. **Stream.** This creek is little more than a trickle in summer time, but it provides clean water for cooking and drinking. It is also large enough for the brigands to walk in to hide their tracks and scent. They use it as a path to avoid leading pursuers back to their lair.
2. **Outer Cave.** The first chamber dug, this room is used for cooking and relaxing. The entrance is low (3ft) and a person must crawl in, leaving them at the mercy of any defenders. Fresh, bushy branches are regularly collected and kept just outside the mouth of the cave. They can be quickly pulled in place to conceal the entrance to the hideout. A thin smoke hole has been bored through

the ceiling and comes out under a small bush. The brigands collect and carefully dry stacks of hardwood in the cave. They are careful to only build fires which produce the minimum amount of smoke and then, usually only at night. If they suspect they are being followed, they will not start a fire as the smell might attract trackers.

There is always one brigand on lookout. There is a tall oak tree on the hill above the cave. A worn and often repaired string leads down the smoke hole to a small wooden clapper. It makes a quiet tapping noise to warn the gang of approaching strangers. Evenings are spent in quiet conversation, making the clapper hard to hear. Too many pulls on the string will break it. If there is enough time, the brigands flee the cave, concealing the entrance and melt into the woods. They carry everything of real value with them at all times.

3. **New Recruits.** These two bedrolls belong to the newest and most junior members of the small band, **Yendin** and **Heris**. Their bed spaces consist of little more than a smelly sack of straw and a threadbare blanket. Yendin has buried a handful of silver coins under his straw tick. Heris has a small shrine to Peoni dug into the rock above the head of his bed.

4. **Leader and Veterans.** The three remaining bedrolls belong to the senior members of the gang, **Raet** (the leader), **Ja-Ans** and **Oldlin** (his henchmen). The final chamber is slightly cleaner than the rest and has more belongings. Looted blankets cover the straw tick beds and several extra pieces of clothing are hung on pegs hammered into the walls. A sturdy chest next to Raet's bed space has several candle stubs, the remains of a particularly successful robbery of three priests.

The criminals have begun to dig a new tunnel. The plan is to dig an escape route, because now if someone finds their hideout while they are all present, they are trapped. Oldlin broke their one pick and has taken it to a nearby village to be fixed.

## CREDITS

### WRITER

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# SMALL CAVES 2

## THE BRIGANDS



**Raet** – The gang's leader, Raet was a yeoman who supplemented his income poaching and relieving travellers of their portable wealth. Despite being a former farmer, he has no compunction about stealing from the poor and keeping it for himself, but what he truly loves is stealing from the rich and humiliating them while he does it. He has the skill and ability to do anything he chooses, but he is naturally lazy and prefers to live off the hard work of others. He is tough, fast and the undisputed leader of the band. In the last eighteen months, he has killed three members of the gang who challenged his leadership.

### RAET

#### Brigand Leader

Str	15	Eye	17	Int	13
Sta	12	Hrg	09	Aur	06
Dex	16	Sml	05	Wil	15
Agl	12	Voi	09	Mor	05
Cml	09	Sunsign – Tai/Skorus Cusp			

#### Combat Abilities:

End 14 Mov 12

**Skills:** Agriculture 56, Weatherlore 36, Animalcraft (Cows) 46, Foraging 44, Survival 60, Heraldry 34, Physician 32, Weaponcraft 30, Stealth 56, Fletching 32, Awareness 50

**Languages:** Harnic 73, **Scripts:** none

**Ritual:** Peoni 13, **Piety:** 02

**Combat Skills:** Initiative 70, Dodge 60, Unarmed 56, Short Bow 74, Short Sword 74, Dagger 74, Buckler 74

**Daily Armour / Weapons:** Coarse cloth tunic and leggings, cloak with hood (stolen); Leather shoes; Short bow, short sword, dagger.

**Ja-Ans** and **Oldlin** are both sons of villeins. They were brought in to help Raet with his part-time activities. They both liked the easy money and chance to strike back at their betters. Ja-Ans is lazy, but strong and stubborn. He always goes for the beer and wine first. Oldlin is a vicious old bastard. He frequently rapes women the gang catches, preferably in front of their fathers or husbands.

### JA-ANS and OLDLIN – Brigand Veterans

Str	12	Dex	11	Agl	11
<b>Combat Abilities:</b>	End 12			Mov 11	
<b>Combat Skills:</b>	Initiative 66, Dodge 55				
<b>Ja-Ans:</b>	Spear 75, Dagger 60				
<b>Oldlin:</b>	Short Bow 55, Hand Axe 75, Knife 60				
<b>Daily Armour:</b>	Coarse cloth tunic and leggings; Leather shoes;				
<b>Weapons: Ja-Ans:</b>	Spear, Dagger				
<b>Oldlin:</b>	Short Bow, Hand Axe, Knife				

**Yendin** and **Heris** are runaways. Yendin is former serf in his mid-thirties and has no front teeth. They were smashed out by his lord for talking back. Heris is just a teenager. He works as a lookout and the cook. He is smelly and none too clean. A mason's apprentice, his master was a slavedriver so he slipped away from his house late one night.

### YENDIN and HERIS – Brigand Recruits

Str	10	Dex	10	Agl	10
<b>Combat Abilities:</b>	End 10			Mov 10	
<b>Combat Skills:</b>	Initiative 50, Dodge 50				
<b>Yendin:</b>	Cudgel 65, Dagger 55				
<b>Heris:</b>	Knife 55				
<b>Daily Armour:</b>	Coarse cloth tunic and leggings; No shoes				
<b>Weapons: Yendin:</b>	Cudgel, Dagger				
<b>Heris:</b>	Knife				

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

**Ambush** – The PCs are travelling along a track when they come upon an ambush in progress. Six farmers, on their way to market with three cart loads of goods, are under attack by the bandits. Two farmers are dead; four more are fighting for their lives. If the PCs intervene, the brigands will flee, making for their lair.

**Reward** – A wealthy merchant's wagon was stopped on the road, robbed and his daughter raped. The fat, lazy local Bailiff of the Hundred has done nothing except suggest the merchant hire his own men to deal with it. The merchant is angry and willing to pay a generous reward for those who bring him the heads of these brigands.

**Assault** – Young Heris was caught sneaking home to see his mother and has revealed the location of the hideout. The local lord has no men capable of dealing with the bandits and requires assistance. The PCs have been recruited to root out the thieves and end the menace.



## LOST SHEK P'VAR WORKSHOP

The local alchemist was actually a rather accomplished Shenava Peleahn Shek P'var (Master Fire Wizard) in disguise. He lived in the local town and made a moderate living distilling and selling various chemicals and compounds. The Pvaric Code demanded that he not draw attention to himself or his magic; therefore, he had a secret workshop built in the hills outside of town. Using a natural cave, he hired a pair of passing miners to dig out a few extra rooms, widen passageways and generally make the place more liveable. One of the two men also had some woodworking talent and constructed a couple of walls and installed the door for the old man. A generous payment in gold ensured their silence. The miners have not been seen since.

Twelve months ago, the old alchemist left town on one of his frequent "foraging" trips in search of herbs and raw materials. He never returned. After a couple of months, the bailiff opened his house, but it contained

nothing out of the ordinary. The man was given up for dead, but rumours of secret treasure and lead turned to gold persist. A pair of adventurers visited the town last fall asking about the old man. They also disappeared and were never heard from again.

The cave is located about two leagues from the town in a hilly, wooded area. There are no trails leading to the cave, but a skilled tracker may discover remnants of a small camp (miners) and the pile of rubble excavated from expanding the cave. The entrance to the cave is not concealed, but it is hard to see as it is on the side of a small cleft in the rocks.

1. **Wolf Cave.** Last winter a pack of wolves adopted the cave as their winter den. The alpha female gave birth to a litter of pups and is still in the area. Wolf sign is all over the cave and in the rock cleft. Animal bones and wolf scat are obvious even to the unskilled person.

2. **Charred Skeleton.** This large cave is damp and there is a thick layer of bat guano on the floor. Dozens of bats hang from the ceiling. A timber wall closes off the far corridor except for a small opening where a number of boards have been pried off. A skeleton lies on the floor in front of the opening. It is terribly charred. The face is blackened and frozen in the shape of a scream. A burnt shield and broken spear lie in the middle of the room as if they were thrown back by some force. There is no sign that the area has been disturbed by the wolves. In fact, they seem to have avoided this room entirely.

3. **Pool.** This room is the lowest point in the cave. Water drains here from other rooms and the entrance, collecting in the natural low spot. There is a distinct odour of bat guano and wolf scat to the water. A thick layer of (mundane) mould coats the floor making it very slippery.

4. **Dismembered Skeleton.** The corridor ends in an open door. The wooden door appears completely ordinary with a simple wooden latch, but no form of lock. On the floor of the corridor are the remains of a person. The skeleton is blown apart with the head and torso some distance from the legs. There is almost nothing left of the body's belongings. Red, orange and yellow markings surround a vague shadow of a person on the cave wall.

# SMALL CAVES 4

5. **Workshop.** This was the secret workshop of the missing alchemist. It was here he conducted his secret experiments. The cavern is quite large with a high ceiling. The floor has been levelled, covered with clean fine sand and a drain installed making the room clean and dry. A natural sinkhole has been widened and straightened to create a chimney above a large bronze brazier. A stool stands next to the brazier and probably served as a seat for the workbench as well. It is covered with the remains of papers (now unreadable) and a number of strange metal implements. There are four chests around the room. Three are mundane, containing clothes, food (now rotten and inedible) and writing supplies. The fourth chest is by far the largest, made of oak and covered with thick iron plates and bands carefully riveted together. It is sealed with a fiendishly difficult lock. The contents of the chest are up to the GM.

## WHAT HAPPENED?

The alchemist cum wizard was not a young man. The trek up to his secret lair wore him out. He was bending over the food chest, about to get a flask of wine, when he died of a massive heart attack. Later the young adventurers discovered his secret cave. Their first attempt was to enter through the door. A massive fireball blew apart the unfortunate fool who opened the door. The survivor thought he would be smarter and pry off a few boards and sneak in. He suffered the same fate. However, they did manage to “use up” the traps protecting the workshop. However, they never reached the locked chest. Who knows what traps protect the chest itself? Once opened, who knows what treasures it contains?

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

**The Wolf Hunt** – The PCs know nothing about the missing alchemist. A pack of wolves have been raiding the local sheep herds. The PCs have been hired and/or sent to hunt them down and get rid of them. They track the wolves to the cave and discover the workshop by accident. Whether they tell their employer is up to them.

**Rumours of Gold** – The PCs hear about the missing alchemist. Later, a drunken miner tells them a story about how he and a friend were hired to expand a cave for a mysterious old man. He paid them in large gold nuggets. They put the ideas together and decide to investigate.

**Any Port in a Storm** – The PCs are fleeing barbarians in the woods. They happen upon the cave as a refuge and/or place for their last stand. The barbarians halt outside the cave and refuse to attack. Later they withdraw. The PCs explore the cave and discover the workshop.

## AFTERWARDS

No one knows of the cave. Once the wolves are cleared out, it would make a fine hideout for a band of adventurers, a place to hide their ill-gotten gains or lay low and avoid the law. Perhaps some additional renovations might be in order (i.e. replacing the wooden walls with stone and the simple wood door with something stouter), but it would certainly be more secure than a peasant's longhouse. A cruel GM might have the PCs treasure trove looted while they were away, as a way of relieving their PCs of excess cash.

## THE WOLVES

A pack of wolves has already staked their claim to the nice dry cave and may object to the PCs just walking in. Depending on when the PCs arrive, they may find the cave empty (if the wolves are out hunting) or the entire pack may be in residence. The wolves will generally try and avoid conflict with a large group unless the PCs trap them in the cave, leaving them no way out or the PCs get between the mother wolf and her cubs.

### ALPHA MALE/FEMALE WOLF

Str	14	Eye	20	Int	05
Sta	10	Hrg	16	Aur	10
Dex	n/a	Sml	26	Wil	16
Agl	14	Voi	n/a	Mor	n/a
Cml	n/a				

**Combat Abilities:** End 13 Mov 40

**Skills:** Bite 75/8p, Awareness 80, Stealth 60

**Combat Skills:** Initiative 75, Dodge 70

**Armour:** B4 E3 P1 F3

### NORMAL WOLVES (2d6 wolves or GM's Choice)

Str	12	Eye	18	Int	05
Sta	10	Hrg	16	Aur	09
Dex	n/a	Sml	26	Wil	16
Agl	14	Voi	n/a	Mor	n/a
Cml	n/a				

**Combat Abilities:** End 13 Mov 38

**Skills:** Bite 75/6p, Awareness 80, Stealth 60

**Combat Skills:** Initiative 75, Dodge 70

**Armour:** B4 E3 P1 F3

### PUPS (1d6 pups)

Str	04	Eye	06	Int	02
Sta	03	Hrg	05	Aur	09
Dex	n/a	Sml	09	Wil	05
Agl	05	Voi	n/a	Mor	n/a
Cml	n/a				

**Combat Abilities:** End 04 Mov 12

**Skills:** Bite 25/2p, Awareness 26, Stealth 60

**Combat Skills:** Initiative 25, Dodge 23

**Armour:** B2 E1 P0 F1