

BLOOD FEUDS

For years the borderlands have been a place of strife and slavery. It is a barren wasteland, where the scant trees grow only from the blood spilled in countless battles. The lone symbol of order is the outpost of Caldwell Keep, where a small garrison of Men shelter, hone their fighting skills, heal their wounds, and ever yearn for an end to their duty so that they may go home to their families . . .

PREPARING TO PLAY: When you are all gathered to play, and every one of the Players is prepared, begin the adventure by following the steps given below.

Background: The Adventure will begin with your reading the following narrative, thus setting the stage for the adventure that is to follow.

It has been a long and weary road. Days have passed since you have seen a single sign, standing stone or other marker of civilization. Now the early morning light conjures up an entire keep, crowning a lonely hill beside a gloomy lake, an outpost on this hostile frontier.

The mists part reluctantly before you and close forbidding behind you as you make your way up the zigzagging road to the keep's portcullis gate. Passing inside the courtyard, you see several smoldering firepits and shoddy tents, where wounded men gather and walk aimlessly about as if already dead, taking what comfort they can before returning to the war-torn wastelands outside their crumbling walls.

There is no inn or hall, though the keep has heard news of your coming by way of the ravens that perch upon the battlements, and you find accommodation in one of the larger tents. Tomorrow, a guarded caravan will be heading back to civilization, the last chance to return, lest you remain here and fight against the raiders.

Rumors: At the keep many rumors abound concerning the raiders. Using the normal rules for rolling rumors, the party may learn 2 of the following stories. Every fighter Classed Character or one learned in monster lore will gain an additional rumor roll. If any roll duplicates what the party has already heard, it should be re-rolled.

Rumors

Value	Rumor about the raiders
7	Some of these raiders can speak, though only in their own crude Tongue (true)
6	The only thing stronger than the bloodlust of these raiders is a fear of magic (true)
4	Most of the raiders are Kobolds and Orcs, and they hate each other as much as they hate Men (true)
1	A Witch controls the Orcs with powerful magic, reaping human sacrifices (false)

THE SAVAGE FRONTIER: Every half day spent in the wilderness, roll D4 to determine what Encounter the party has. If an Encounter is duplicated, do not re-read it's narrative. However, in all of these Encounters, if the monsters see any signs that the party has slain their rivals (Kobolds or Orcs), such as someone wielding an Orc's sword or wearing a Kobold's helm, they will wait, allowing the party a Parleying Check. If they are 'indifferent' or 'helpful', they will leave the party alone and immediately seek their rivals, believing them to be weakened and thus vulnerable.

1) Kobold patrol

Following a wide, shallow riverbed, you suddenly come upon a group of small, dark-skinned humanoids. They clench their sharp teeth and growl, hands on their sword-hilts. They wait, muscles tense and eyes wide with bloodlust.

This is a group of 3-18 Kobolds. They all wield shortswords. If the party flees, these little monsters will be content to catch and butcher the two slowest Characters—if the party does not specifically state that they are keeping together, they will be assumed to move at their maximum Movement Rate and thus separate.

2) Kobold camp

The air is heavy with the rancid smell of filthy men and rotten meat. In the distance, you see a small patch of trees. Smoke rises from the withered treetops, as if from several campfires.

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In the trees camp 16 Kobolds. Cowardly and few in number, they will attack any intruders on sight, but suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to Morale Checks for every 3 that are felled. Apart from the weapons they wield and the armour they wear, all of their other treasure is buried under a cursed tree stump. Anyone who touches it will bleed, suffering 1-3 Health worth of wounds each Round, and it requires a Challenging Strength Check to move the stump enough to get at the Kobolds' cache. The stump will bleed black oil if struck.

3) Orc patrol

Running across the field is a group of beast-men clad in armour and carrying crude weapons. They spot your party and turn towards you, but slow, and soon stop altogether, about ten yards away. Anxious for battle, they grip their weapons while muttering amongst themselves.

This is a group of 3-12 Orcs. If anyone can understand the Territh Tongue, he will discern that these Orcs are trying to decide if the party is friends or foes of Kobolds. However, regardless of what the party says or does, these Orcs do not intend to let them live.

4) Orc camp

Coming to the crest of a hill, you look down into a shallow valley of tortured and twisted trees. There upon a dry lake bed of chalky mud there is a large camp. The campfires of large beast-men poison the air with the foul reek of butchered animals and even their own kind.

In the camp are 28 Orcs! If the party enters this valley, they must make a concerted effort to remain unnoticed, or else the Orcs will indeed see them and attack at once. These Orcs wield a variety of weapons, setting their Base Damage at a total of 7 but with a Damage Variable of D10. All their treasure is kept in a large chest set upon a cart, hauled by human slaves, and as none are currently alive, the Orcs will fight to capture rather than kill, pulling their final blow against anyone to leave him with exactly 1 Health—a perfect slave.

ENDING THE CONFLICT: The endless blood feuds of the borderlands may be ended with a few different scenarios, each detailed below.

5) Assault on Caldwell Keep

If the party fought both Kobolds and Orcs before returning to the keep, both tribes will follow them, assaulting the keep at nightfall.

Just after nightfall, the watchmen cry out in alarm! Hurrying to the battlements, you see the surrounding black hills aglow with hundreds of torches, carried by hordes of Orcs! Their war-chants and drumbeat makes your blood curdle.

All the Orcs of the borderlands are attacking! Caldwell Keep is garrisoned by a mere 30 men! But rather than do Mass Combat, simply have the success of the defense stand or fall by the victory of the party—they will fight 40 Orcs, and if they prevail, the other defenders will have won (while losing 1-30 of themselves)! During this battle, all the Kobolds of these lands seize the opportunity to attack, arriving when the party is down to 15 Orcs to personally do battle with, adding 10 Kobolds to fight while the others join the melee elsewhere.

6) Demonstration of power

If the party openly uses powerful magic (15 Spell Points or greater), make one Morale Check for all of that tribe. If they flee, they will all leave these lands and never return! However, if this roll is successful, this particular race of beast-men will go into a frenzy and attack their blood-enemies (the other tribe), eventually destroying all but one group of monsters, which will in fearless fury and madness seek out the party and fight to the bitter end! Roll the D20 and the D30. If the D20 is higher, that is the number of Kobolds that return for the final fight. If the D30 is higher, that is the number of Orcs that return for the final fight.

FINISHING THE ADVENTURE: If both the Kobolds and Orcs are destroyed, the party will each gain +1 to their Legend Scores and 1 Nobility Point for their valor.