

**Campaign/Game:** Return to the Keep on the Borderlands: D&D 5e

**Date:** August 5th, 2021

**Episode 1:** The Kobold Lair

**Campaign Date:** Hallow 10th 931 (Fall)

## Characters

**Azakai Brightwood**, Half-Elf Warlock - 1 (Ryan)

**Daspot**, Dwarf Rogue - 1 (Colin)

**Kieran Raelthorne**, Human Bard - 1 (Dennis)

**Micah**, Gnome Ranger - 1 (Tyler)

**Mira Greycastle**, Human Ranger - 1 (Regina)

**Rhogar**, Dwarf Fighter - 1 (Peter)

**DM:** Andrew

## Log:

In the mid-fall of 931, a group of six adventurers happen to build a party at Restwell Keep and agree to work together to explore the long-forgotten Caves of Chaos. Daspot, a charmingly shady dwarf, tells the party that one of “his ancestors” left him a treasure map that gives some sketchy advice about what is in the caves and which ones have the best treasures. Others like Azakai have their own motivations for exploring the caves, while some are simply in it to win treasure that monstrous humanoids like these caves attract tend to collect.



As the adventurers enter the ugly scar on the landscape that are the Caves of Chaos, they spot a kobold clumsily stumbling out of the fall mid-day sun into one of many cavern entrances that comprise the Caves of Chaos. They decide to investigate to learn more about what is in the caves.

The adventurers carefully enter. Azakai can understand the fragmented draconic language the little monsters use. They find a pit poorly covered in a sturdy paper-mache faux exterior. They proceed to the right. A giant boulder comes rolling down toward them! The party dodges away from what they believe to be a giant rock, but then it ends up stopping right on top of the covered pit. Confused, the party hits it and a whole nest of hornets erupts, stinging any who are close.

The party proceeds forward to a large room with barrels of paint, glitter, and half-rotten apples. A cistern to the left has a whole wet mess of paper-mache makings. On the far side of the room, six of the kobolds pretend to be asleep on the floor, still clutching their shields and weapons.

Kieran senses this is clearly a trap and sings a magical sleep lullaby accompanied by his lute. All six kobolds on the far side of the room pass out for real, and a kobold hidden in a secret

room right above the door falls at their feet. As Daspot enters, the two remaining kobolds in the secret room just inside the entrance dumps two casks of honey on the dwarf, slowing his reactions. The fight is on! Azakai blasts kobolds with energy from the sword hilt that he is very attached to. Kieran dances and sticks the horrible monsters with his rapier. Micah cuts them with his short swords just as Rhogar picks them off with his twin throwing axes. Mira targets stragglers with arrows, feathering them with flying death. Despite more kobolds swarming in from a tight kobold-sized tunnel on the left wall, the heroes quickly clear the room of threats and close the swarm of enemies with broken barrels.

The party searches the rooms and finds several more secret kobold-sized tunnels. Daspot washes the honey off with watery blue and grey paint. The party decides to double back the way they came. However, as the party passes a point in the tunnel, they are ambushed by more kobolds coming through a section of the wall made of paper-mache painted to match the tunnel itself.

Mira darts in and out of the melee, stabbing the monsters and then dancing out of the fight. Azakai summons a thick bundle of tentacles from the abyss known only as the Dark Hunger. Tendrils of dark energy erupt from him, battering the weak kobolds into submission. Rhogar's hammer and Daspot's knives find their mark. Perhaps feeling a bit too cocky, Kieran tries to move past the monsters but a lucky hit drives him unconscious. Luckily, Micah's blades keep the bard out of trouble until the heroes are able to drive the kobolds back again.

The party discovers a side room that features a pile of "treasure," actually gold and glitter painted copper coins and paste jewelry. A dragon egg is perched on top of this pile of faux wealth. Daspot carefully takes the egg for later. The heroes scoop up the sixty pounds or so of coins as they move farther up the kobold's tunnel.

They encounter some graffiti featuring the kobolds dancing around a giant troll as he grabs elven invaders and tears their guts from their bodies. These crude renderings feature the words "Kuplak will save us!" and promises death to any who face him. The heroes open the final door and see lines of kobolds arrayed before the biggest, scabbiest troll they have ever seen! However, an arrow from Micah reveals that the troll is little more than another paper ruse. The head falls apart and the monster topples. The kobolds freak out, slam the door, and disappear into the labyrinth below the Caves of Chaos magically sealing the trapdoor behind them.



The party returns to Restwell Keep where the gatekeeper Sabine identifies them as "The Lucky Ones," referring to the fact that they went to the Caves of Chaos and returned to tell the tale. The party decides that is as good a name as any for their band and adopts the moniker as their own.

Later, at the Stumbling Giant tavern “The Luckies” share more information about their motivations and goings on in the area.

The Raven Queen whispers to Azakai in his dreams. Ideas and images of events past and present have washed in and out of his consciousness like the tide. Recently, these visions have become clear. A cult is taking root near Restwell Keep dedicated to raising death from the dead. Nerull tortured the Raven Queen for ages before she destroyed him and took his mantle. She calls Azakai, asking him to make sure the cult is scattered and that Nerull the god of death stays dead.

The guild-run city of Thumlin has trade interests that use the Northern road which Restwell Keep oversees. Director Ironyoke of the Teamsters’ Guild has asked Micah to make contact with the Restwell Keep Guild Hall and report back any findings on how the keep operates under the new regime of Salt Temple led by Lord Drysdale.



Daspot finds an empty hayloft in the disused stables tended by the gossipy teen Tella. After the first night, the two of them manage to watch a baby red dragon emerge from the shell. It locks eyes on the dwarven rogue and is instantly bonded as it is fed and cleaned. Daspot names the dragon newt “Bacon.”

The people of Restwell Keep have recently pledged their allegiance to the city-state of Salt Temple, located to the West. The Prelate of that state has sent a templar to assume the castillian’s duties. That templar, Lord Drysdale has seen Restwell Keep as an opportunity to bring order to these lawless lands. However, many of his policies are unpopular, such as increased taxation and religious oppression.

The former priestess of the chapel, the halfling Chendera offers healing potions for a discount if the Lucky Ones do their best to discredit the new castilian. She does this in response to his wishes that she and her acolytes leave the keep so that a new caplain of Erathis, the lawmaker may take her place.

## Plot:

These entries comprised the brief plot bits given to particular player characters before the game.

In the fantasy world of Kyor monstrous humanoids like kobolds, goblins, and bugbears are all demonic forces made flesh rather than races of their own.

For example, orcs may be created through a sinister ritual in which a large tusked boar is slaughtered and its corpse prepared hole in the ground to gestate and grow into an orc over a period of thirteen days.

During the settlement of the continent of Radavan centuries ago two wealthy adventurers, Rogahn the Fearless and Zelligar the Unknown, built a hidden complex known as Quasqueton. From this base, they conducted their affairs away from the prying eyes of civilization. While of questionable ethical standing, the two drove back an invasion and gained the support of locals. One day they left on adventure never to return.

Eighty years ago, the fascist alien warlord Corvax engineered a way to turn the dragonborn of Radavan into his personal army. He is widely considered the "Hitler of Kyor" as he was the cause of a titanic conflict that engulfed the continent of Radavan.

The builder of Restwell Keep was slain in this conflict to stop Corvax. Since then, the keep has survived only through the efforts of adventurers and the dedication of the keep's enterprising inhabitants.

The city of Bizancio to the south of Restwell Keep is on the coast of the inner sea which drains south toward the oceans of the Serene Expanse. It is famous for its politics which are little more than state-sponsored violence.

Restwell Keep was founded over a hundred years ago by Macsen Wledig, a successful adventurer who having reached the stage in his career when he had begun to attract followers, decided to retire and build his own stronghold with the proceeds of his exploits. He chose this defensible promontory for his keep, and then got to work clearing the area of preparing the region for settlers to create his very own barony far from any greedy city-state like Bizancio or Juntandria.

When the fascist dictator Corvax threatened the entire continent of Radavan eighty years ago, Macsen Wledig, the original founder of Restwell Keep, gathered all the troops and resources he could from his growing estate and marched away to fight. He was never seen again. Restwell Keep continued on under Macsen's castilian, but its growth was stunted.

"Bree-yark" means "I come in peace" in the goblin tongue. Your Uncle Henslow said so. He was an adventurer so he should know. Of course, he's dead now. Not from adventuring though. He was poisoned by his ex-wife.

There is some sort of hidden temple in the Caves of Chaos. There dark necromancers have shut themselves off from the regular world to immerse themselves in the evil and death that comes from reanimating corpses and dry bones. You have an overwhelming need to destroy these restless dead, and to make those who create these monstrosities pay with their lives.

You've learned from previous adventurers to stay toward the lower eastern portion of the Caves of Chaos until you and your comrades feel powerful enough to conquer the higher and western caves. The higher up, the tougher they become you've heard.

The Magic Council of Blackangel is composed of some of the most notable spellcasters in the city. It decides what uses of magical power are banned and punished within city limits. For example, there are punishments for charming or reading minds without consent as well as certain forms of base Necromancy. These punishments include being expelled from one of the many magical organizations to being banned from the city limits for a period of years to life.