

GM Note: This short encounter set is designed to act as a loose framework for you to tweak & toss into your current campaign and *everything* listed here is a suggestion for use only. Several details, especially those on this page, are deliberately vague in order to make integration easier.

Basic Encounter Set-Up

Who: A heavy-set merchant holding on for dear life to a lathered horse that shows signs of abuse or attack, with blood marking both animal and rider.

What: An orc ambush that overtook the merchant's wagon, killing the guards and dragging off the merchant's fair daughter.

Where: Between your location and the next way-station, about 10-15 miles.

When: The merchant arrives during the PC's evening meal, with the attack occurring shortly before.

Why: The orcs attack for their own reasons from the dark of the wood before sunset in order to maximize their time out at night.

How much: The merchant has little on him except 2d6p silver per PC and some jewelry worth 20 silver.

Credits:

Exterior Art: **Beatrice Everly** (Originally Published in *Heroes of the Dawn* by Violet Russell, 1914)

Interior Map: [Matt Jackson](#), 2014 (used with permission)

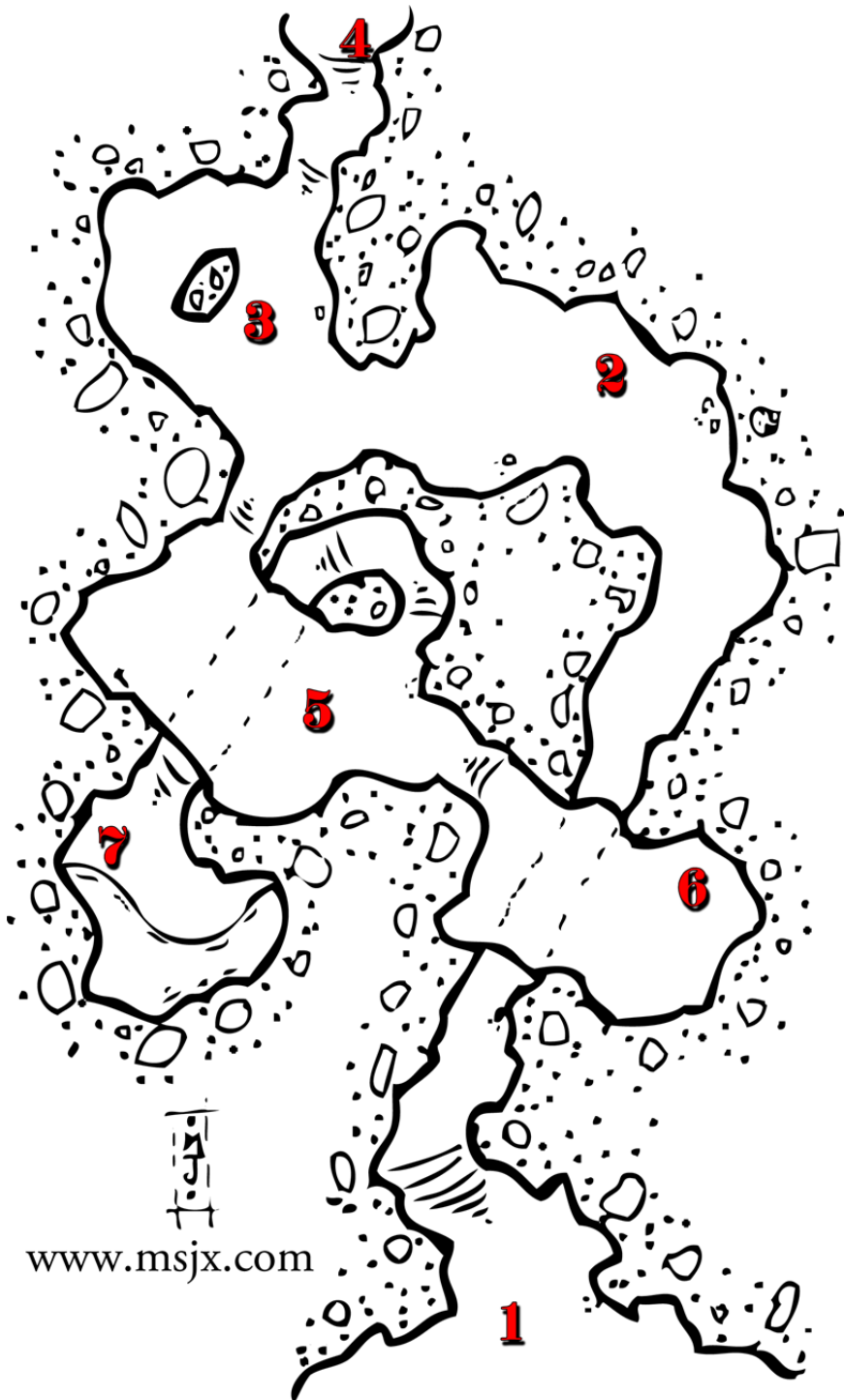
Everything else: [Christopher Stoddill](#) (www.frugalgm.com)



Trouble at Karst Cavern



**A HackMaster Encounter Set
Suitable for 3rd-ish Level PCs**



1) About two-hours (**Average** during the day and **Difficult** at night) tracking from the picked-clean scene of the attack the group finds the entrance to the cave. There are no guards posted, but the entrance is covered by fresh-cut bushes that have had some small bells inserted to alert the inhabitants. The bells don't make enough noise to carry far enough into the cave.

2) A group of four orcs (**HoB 234**) are lounging here, eating small pieces of dried meat out of a barrel by the handful. They are largely oblivious to anything but the presence of light until they've emptied the barrel. Around them are eight crude beds of moldy, flea-ridden furs.

3) A trio of Lesser Orkin Wardawgs (**HoB 239**) is crudely chained here, feasting on humanoid flesh. They can easily reach the tunnel leading to the back entrance, but they cannot reach the natural stairs leading deeper into the cave.

4) An unguarded back entrance to the cave. The ground is worn and shows many large canine footprints. A slight breeze wafts out from the cave and smells strongly of dog. The sound of something eating and snarling echo and reverberate from somewhere within.

5) Two large orcs (max HP) are here with an Orc Warband Leader (**HoB 372**), picking through a large pile of crates, barrels, and what appears to be a few dead orcs. A stack of these items appears to be acting as some sort of barricade over a tunnel leading below.

6) Behind a crude, heavy door at the top of some natural stairs is a series of five sleeping pallets of crude furs, topped with some relatively clean blankets. Tucked in the corner behind some crude pole bars is a small harem of four females: one human, two orc, and one half-orc. They are feasting on some unidentifiable "meat" (dead orc) and two women are pregnant.

7) Behind the barricade is a well-bloodied set of crudely carved steps leading down to the edge of a small underground stream. Here lies a badly wounded Half-Hobgoblin Barbarian armed with an orc scimitar. He is being tended to by the merchant's daughter. The Barbarian is missing a chunk of scalp & skull, already healed over, as well as massive scarring from wrist and ankle chains. He has no memory of life before orkin slavery. He is largely strong, docile, and compliant unless he perceives a threat to the woman, sends him into a form of Hackfrenzy (**PHB 138**).