

# Little Rock

Our intrepid explorers come across a natural cave mouth in the wilderness.

*“It ain’t much but it’s a fresh start. What do we owe the villagers? Nothing. What do they owe us? Well, Old Pete owes us for that crate of whiskey and I think it’s time we talk to the innkeeper about those weapons we’ve been hiding for him. Safira, how do you feel about punching the man who pinched your backside?”*

Arnetta Greenfell, smuggler

Little Rock is a natural cave formation in the woods near a large river. The location offers easy access to the river — and those travelling upon it.

## The setup

Our intrepid explorers are travelling on or along the river when they come across a cave mouth partially obscured by a thorny thicket. They may notice footprints in the area or simply decide that this looks like a good campsite. It just so happens that the place is already occupied.

## The strategy

Presumably, our heroes look like the murderhobos they probably are; well-armed and capable of defending themselves. The Little Rock smugglers have a sentry posted above the cave mouth and they have been spotted arriving; the thicket has been made to hide the entrance to the cave.

On a succeeded **Alertness** check, the travellers may notice footprints in the dirt, revealing the cave mouth. If they decide to go in, the smugglers will defend themselves and their stash.

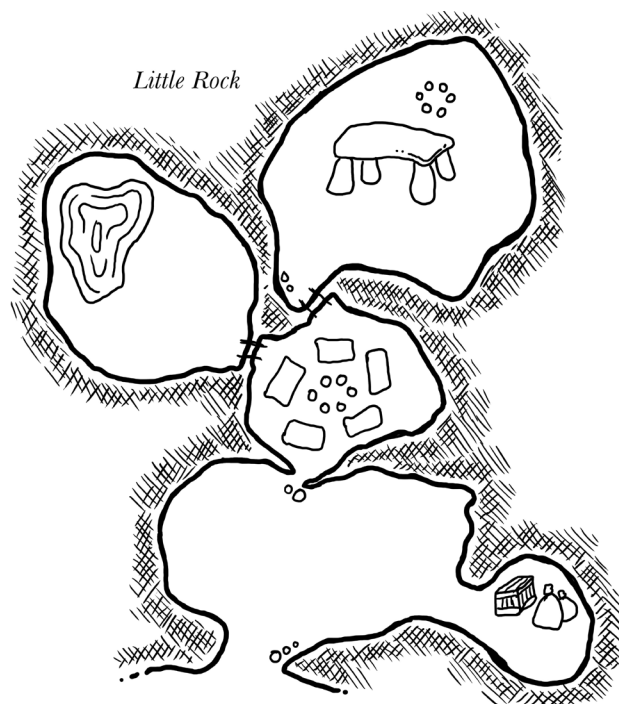
## Scene: The Great Chamber

The antechamber of the cave system is accessed through a partially concealed cave mouth covered in brambles and brushes. The cave is occupied on a semi-permanent basis; sconces in the wall hold a few torches and oil lamps can be made to provide light.

There may be a canoe or small boat stashed inside or a couple of horses stabled here. A small side chamber serves as a stash for supplies.

Ahead, the Great Chamber serves as a campsite; there is easy room for five bedrolls around a semi-permanent campfire under a natural vent in the cave roof, allowing smoke to escape. The Great Chamber is used by smugglers as a hide-out and a place to stash contraband. The smugglers are aware of the concealed chambers — they concealed the cave mouths. They will defend their goods with extreme prejudice.

From the Great Chamber, two secret passageways are hidden under cloth painted to look like cave wall; in the flickering firelight, it serves well as camouflage. Each requires a successful **Alertness** check to discover.



## Scene: The Pool Chamber

The Pool Chamber has no natural illumination. At the far end of the chamber is a small natural pool, supplied by a natural water source; water disappears into a small opening at the bottom, not large enough for a person to pass through. The water is clean and can be used for consumption.

The Pool Chamber provides fresh water and the smugglers stash provisions in here — the water keeps the chamber cooler than the rest of the cave and various perishables keep better in here than elsewhere.

### The valuables:

- A small box of letters that may be used to incriminate somebody in a position of not too much power, proving that they are having or have had an affair.
- A crate containing five plain-looking short swords of good quality but no enchantments.
- A gold brooch of beautiful design, worth a fair bit.
- A holy icon depicting a local deity; a beautiful piece of art with religious significance.
- Several crates of unlabelled glass bottles containing strong alcohol, probably moonshine.

In addition, there is firewood and plain food; flour, dried meat, whatever passes for coffee in the setting, and salt.

## Scene: The Altar Chamber

This large chamber is dominated by a large, withered stone altar behind which a fireplace with a natural smoke vent can be used to provide lighting. The walls are covered in ancient symbols and paintings of hunters and prey.

The smugglers have left the Altar Chamber alone; ancient blood altars are better left be. On a successful **Alertness** check, the explorers notice that the floor of the Altar Chamber is covered in the dust of ages, unlike the other chambers where the smugglers come and go. This chamber has been left undisturbed.

The great altar is withered by time and the granite surface is discoloured and stained as if, a long time ago, animals (or, for that matter, people) have been sacrificed

here regularly. None of the stains are fresh; the altar has not seen use in a long, long time.

The paintings on the cave walls are drawn with fingers and primitive reed brushes, using natural paints — ochre, chalk, and charcoal. Many animals seem to move about, though this is an illusion created by the flickering light.

On a successful check of **History**, **Folklore**, or other relevant **knowledge skill**, the heroes may determine that at some point in time, this was a place of worship for a group or tribe of hunters; whatever deity or spirit was worshipped here was beseeched with blood sacrifices to provide ample prey and good fortune for the hunters.

### Action: The Great Chamber

While the smugglers are not above preying on lone travellers, they are not a fighting force; if faced with superior numbers and skill, they will reason that it's better to lose your contraband than your life. They will fight to defend their goods but once their leader, Arnetta Greenfell, has been killed or otherwise incapacitated, they are fighting a losing battle, each will look to escape to fight another day.

Stats are included for Arnetta, her right-hand man Ricbert, Ricbert's wife Safia. Depending on the strength of our intrepid heroes, there will be enough generic thugs to provide a challenge to the adventuring party. As a rule of thumb, insert two thugs per able-bodied, fighting player character.

No clever tactics will be used; Arnetta and her crew are not professionals and their idea of defence is pretty much jumping the intruders all at once.

### Arnetta Greenfell, smuggler leader

Presence	4	Appearance Charisma Authority	9 11 10	# MS	4 n/a
Physique	8	Agility Strength	15 12	AR DMG	n/a n/a
Psyche	5	Intelligence Memory Discipline	13 11 10	HP PP	32 n/a (150)
Potential	10	Power Control	13 17	DEF	(77) 77/77/77
Technology	8	Operation Construction	14 9	Luck ALT INTU	7 49% 36%

Vitals: Human female in her 30s. Strawberry blonde, green eyes, spindly of build.

Quirks: *Indebted.* The character is in debt to someone else. The debt is typically financial but could also be a matter of honour or guilt.  
*Well, Actually.* The hero needs to have the last word in discussions or debates, regardless of whether she knows what she's talking about.

Magic: *Detect Injury* as a Talent.

Weapons: Dagger (dmg d3, pen 2)

Skills of note: Coolness (35%), Health science (33%), Weapon, dagger (36%)

Other loot of note: d4 hair pins. You can never have too many hair pins. A sheath designed for concealing a small weapon on the wrist. An old love letter.

Poverty drove Arnetta Greenfell to crime. Once a midwife and village healer, she argued with the local lord and lost her cottage and land as a result. Wandering the woods she came upon the cave at Little Rock and, seeing an opportunity, approached her cousin Ricbert, making him her straight man going to town to sell goods smuggled in from neighbouring regions, avoiding taxes and customs on goods that everyone needs.

### Detect Injury

Sphere	Cost	Casting time	Maintenance	Range	Save
All	30	1 Action	n/a	Touch	1d Physique

*Detect Injury* diagnoses ailments, visible or invisible. No healing happens but the spellcaster has a clear overview of trauma or illness and what is required to restore health — surgery, rest, setting broken bones, or in some cases, nothing short of magic or miracles. An unwilling victim may resist diagnosis on 1d Physique.

### Ricbert Priest, right-hand man

Presence	4	Appearance Charisma Authority	8 9 9	# MS	4 n/a
Physique	8	Agility Strength	15 18	AR DMG	n/a +3
Psyche	8	Intelligence Memory Discipline	18 14 14	HP PP	32 n/a
Potential	3	Power Control	6 11	DEF	(77) 77/55/77
Technology	5	Operation Construction	11 9	Luck ALT INTU	8 47% 39%

Vitals: Human male in his 40s. Ginger, brown eyes, heavy-set yet unassuming of appearance.

Quirks: *Animal Hater.* Animals don't like the character. They feel insecure and defensive around her and may turn aggressive.  
*Violent.* The character enjoys violence. When ending a fight she must succeed a Discipline check to not hit her enemy again 'just for good measure'. If an opponent surrenders she must succeed a similar check to not ignore it—"I didn't hear him say anything, sorry".  
*Dirt Poor.* The character grew up in poverty and starts her adventuring career with very little gear and money, and possibly even debts to be paid (or run away from).

Armour: Studded leather hauberk (D/A d4+1, penalty 2).

Weapons: Dagger (dmg d3, pen 2)

Skills of note: Coolness (40%), Brawling (27%), Weapon, dagger (41%)

Other loot of note: A sturdy and roomy backpack. A small pair of scales for weighing spices. A small number of coins. A child's beloved toy, well chewed on and missing an eye. A silver sewing or embroidery needle—but no thread, alas.

When Ricbert was approached by his cousin Arnetta about smuggling goods in from neighbouring regions, he was all over it. Born poor and unable to improve his situation by legal means, working for Arnetta has allowed him to pay his debts and even buy a few cows and a bit of land to till. He is fiercely loyal to Arnetta but his love of a good brawl has gotten him into trouble more than once. A sure-fire way to get Ricbert to throw punches is taunting him with his lack of ability to handle animals.

### Safia Priest, wife of Ricbert

Presence	9	Appearance Charisma Authority	16 17 19	# MS	4 7%
Physique	8	Agility Strength	18 18	AR DMG	-7 +3
Psyche	9	Intelligence Memory Discipline	17 17 13	HP PP	32 n/a
Potential	10	Power Control	15 19	DEF	(74) 74/74/74
Technology	2	Operation Construction	11 10	Luck ALT INTU	5 41% 47%

Vitals: Human female in her 30s. Chestnut-haired, blue-eyed, built like a tank.

Quirks:	<i>Dirt Poor.</i> The character grew up in poverty and starts her adventuring career with very little gear and money, and possibly even debts to be paid (or run away from).  <i>Heirloom.</i> The character's family owns a weapon or tool of exceptional quality, possibly even enchanted, which has now fallen to her. Use it well, for the honour of the clan!
Weapons:	<i>Dagger of the Silver</i> (dmg d3+2, pen 2)
Skills of note:	Brawling (20%), Coolness (23%), Weapon, dagger (28%)
Other loot of note:	A piece of cheap and shoddily made jewellery. A small bag of fishing tack—line, lures, and hooks. A lucky rabbit's foot. A trashy magazine or manuscript. Boy, those woodcuts!

Safira is the ace in the hole when it comes to percussive diplomacy; built like a tank and smart to boot, she is the obvious next in line when it comes to leading the group. She is still learning the trade from Arnetta. Ricbert is brain, Safira is brawn, and Arnetta holds it all together.

### Weapon of the Silver

A *Weapon of the Silver* is any edged melee weapon that has been imbued with a permanent *Silver Sabre* effect, applying that spell's magical effects to attacks made. Most such weapons are high quality, leading to a +2 damage bonus as well.

### Action: The Altar Chamber

The Altar Chamber is the true lost treasure — or curse, depending — of Little Rock. Created by a people long gone and forgotten, it was a site of worship of a deity

of the moon and the hunt. The tribe's hunters would gather here on holy dates to smear the blood of freshly killed forest animals on the holy altar — and for their sacrifice, they would be granted more of that particular forest animal.

When blood is smeared on the altar, a perfect copy of the creature the blood belonged to is created and appears next to the altar. If an animal wore tack when the blood was collected the copy will wear a copy of the tack; a person appears with what they were wearing when the blood was collected.

The ancient hunters used the altar to 'copy' animals that they held to be sacred — white stags, that sort of thing. Collecting the blood of a white stag without killing the animal, for example, would create a surplus white stag to be ritually hunted. All copies created by the altar dissolve into thin air once killed, including any equipment or tack.

Unlike our intrepid heroes, however, the tribe's holy people knew the proper words and dances. Hence, the altar will only work for them once each. Because the altar does not recognise them as friendlies, the copies will be hostile; they will attack the party instantly and fight to the death without acknowledging any attempts to communicate.

If the characters decide to try smearing a bit of squirrel blood on the altar, that just means getting attacked by a very angry squirrel. If one of them pricked their own finger, however...