

Potbellied Kobold's Guide to Villains & Lairs



Kerym
Abrus

Jeff Stevens Games

A VILLAINOUS NPC FOR YOUR FIFTH EDITION GAME

POTBELLIED KOBOLD'S GUIDE TO VILLAINS & LAIRS

KERYM ABRUS

CREDITS

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Greetings! This villainous NPC was written by the multi-talented **Ginny Di** for my 5E Kickstarter *Potbellied Kobold's Guide to Villains & Lairs*—a collection of unique NPCs dreamed up by some of the RPG industry's top talent. Each NPC comes with a backstory, motives, equipment, traits, a custom stat block, and multiple suggestions on how a GM can add this unique NPC to their game, which may not start out as a villain. The product also includes mapped and detailed lairs for several of the NPCs.

Other contributing writers for *Potbellied Kobold's Guide to Villains & Lairs* include Ed Greenwood, Anthony Joyce, H.H. Carlan, Justice Arman, John Four, Cat Evans, Richard Green, Maxine Henry, and many others.

We hope you enjoy this NPC. [Click here](#) to back the Kickstarter now!

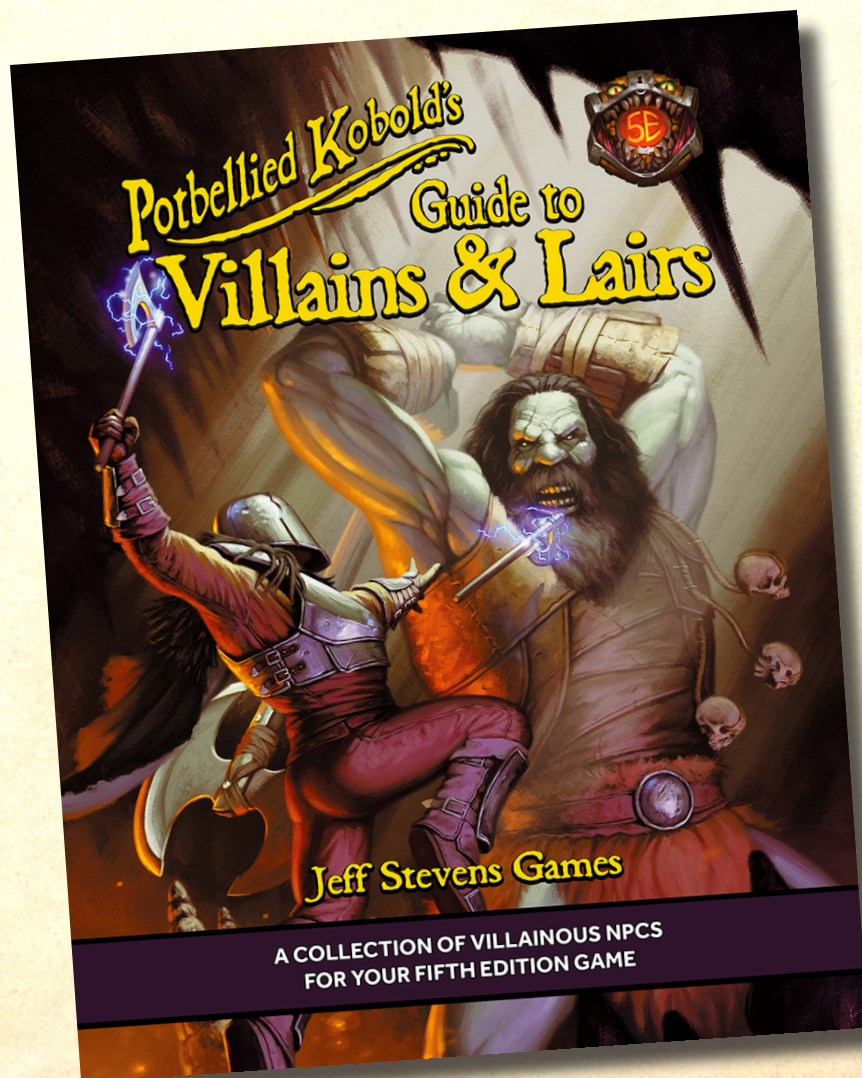
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ABOUT THIS SUPPLEMENT

I must admit, I've fallen in love with Potbellied Kobold and Krisalee Tingletoe. My next Kickstarter utilizes them to provide Game Masters with additional content to add to their games.

This piece is for my upcoming Kickstarter – Potbellied Kobold's Guide to Villains & Lairs. To receive updates on my Kickstarter and Dungeon Masters Guild projects, and to receive free goodies, be sure to subscribe to my mailing list by [clicking here](#) or on the big **Jeff Stevens Games** logo on page 2.

USING THIS SUPPLEMENT

The Potbellied Kobold speaks with a lot of passersby and adventurers. From their talks, she's gathered information about villainous creatures and their lairs. She can provide this information to your characters if they need a side quest, or you can use these villains without referencing the Potbellied Kobold by simply dropping them into your game.

ABOUT THE POTBELLIED KOBOLD

Adventures from the Potbellied Kobold – a book of 15 adventures for Fifth Edition – introduced us to Krisalee Tingletoe, the Potbellied Kobold. In that book, she provides the adventurers with quests and short adventures, some of which may help remove her curse. Depending on how you utilized that book, she may now be reverted to her gnome self. That is perfectly fine. You can simply change all references of Potbellied Kobold to Krisalee Tingletoe.

Though a powerful mage, the Potbellied Kobold is kind and gentle. Her rival, the elven wizard Belisana Bane (CE elf **archmage**), cursed her during their last confrontation. Belisana is a power-hungry woman seeking the darkest of magical knowledge. From the safety of her lair, she rules a nearby land.

The Potbellied Kobold speaks with a deep, raspy voice, and her movement is twitchy, not flowing. She knows she is Krisalee Tingletoe but doesn't mind being called "the Potbellied Kobold" since visitors, merchants, and townsfolk seem to like that name. She realizes some may not find her appearance to be friendly, so she'd rather have a well-known name that people can quickly identify to her.

The exterior of Krisalee's covered wagon seems simple enough with its mud-covered wheels and dirty bonnet. The interior, however, is a small, magical pocket dimension, which she created to make her imprisonment more comfortable.

Krisalee loves color, which is obvious to anyone invited into the wagon. The soiled canvas bonnet of the exterior is replaced with a solid roof with round, stained glass-windows. Inviting large, cushioned chairs and couches decorated with bright, colorful throw pillows fill the space while long, pretty banners hang from the ceiling, flapping gently in a magical, cool breeze.

Books fill the shelves of a central pillar while Tort and Kiss (use **animated armor**, or Kobold Press's **clockwork hounds**), the Potbellied Kobold's constructs and friends, clean and maintain the interior. The two constructs are friendly and inquisitive, often invading visitors' personal spaces to smell them or even brush off a bit of dust. If Krisalee, Tort, or Kiss are attacked, the two constructs can merge their bodies, transforming into one creature (use **shield guardian**, with a stored 3rd-level *magic missile*, or Kobold Press's **clockwork abomination**).



KERYM ABRUS

By: Ginny Di

Obsessed with natural toxins and their effect on the body, Kerym is happy to poison for pay to fund his dark experiments.

HISTORY

Kerym grew up in the druidic tradition amongst fellow forest elves. He was interested in poisons and venoms from a very young age, experimenting with insects and small animals in a way that troubled his elders. When he grew older and his experiments turned toward his kin, he was banished from the grove—but the royal courts, with their intrigue and treachery, welcomed his twisted talents.

Kerym sees the animal kingdom reflected in the hierarchy of nobility. Just as in the wild, poison empowers the physically weak, evening the playing field between those who use their brutish strength to subjugate and those whose strengths are less visible.

Now, paid handsomely by the wealthy to subtly incapacitate or eliminate their enemies, Kerym enjoys the benefits of wealth and position. He has the freedom and funding to experiment with poisons in a laboratory of his own, and the status to obtain any kind of test subjects he desires.

PERSONALITY

Kerym is fascinated by poisons and their effects on living creatures. He is a meticulous and scientifically-minded man, taking detailed notes and always working to ensure his experiments are performed with precision and accuracy. However, there is also a part of him that takes cruel pleasure watching a creature's body transformed by some toxin. He has even experimented on himself, building up some immunity in the process.

Kerym views people much as he views animals. He assigns no more moral judgment to harming or killing a fellow person than he would to a snake eating a mouse. Conflict and violence, Kerym believes, are a natural part of the world, and he has no qualms participating in them.

EQUIPMENT

Kerym carries a poisoner's kit, a *dagger of venom*, and one vial each of serpent venom, crawler mucus, and pale tincture. He also carries a key to his laboratory.



SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Beneath his clothes, Kerym wears an enchanted vial that grants him his own venomous defense.

BLOODVENOM VIAL

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

To attune to this vial, you must place a few drops of your blood into it.

You may use an action to activate this item. Once activated, your blood becomes venomous to others for one hour. You gain 5 temporary hit points for the duration. If a creature hits you with a melee attack while you have these hit points, the creature takes 5 poison damage. You must complete a long rest before using this item again.

TREASURE

In addition to his equipment, Kerym carries an elegant coin purse containing 35 gp, and a *spell scroll of enlarge/reduce*, which he typically uses to make transportation of his larger specimens easier.

KERYM ABRUS IN YOUR GAME

Below are a few suggestions on how you might add Kerym Abrus to your game.

- **A Quest Giver.** Kerym is interested in studying a carion crawler and is willing to pay for a specimen to be brought to him alive.
- **A Villain.** Kerym has been kidnapping local commoners to use as test subjects for his experimentation with a new poison.
- **A Minion.** A villain has hired Kerym to poison someone as part of their larger plan. The characters must stop him or trace the murder back to him.
- **An Ally.** Kerym can provide the characters with useful poisons for a price, or a favor.

KERYM ABRUS

Medium Humanoid (elf), Neutral Evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Medicine +4, Nature +4, Perception +6

Damage Resistance poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Druidic, Elvish

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Fey Ancestry. Kerym has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Poison Resistance. Kerym has advantage on saving throws against poison

Spellcasting. Kerym is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, poison spray, resistance*

1st level (4 slots): *detect poison and disease, entangle, fog cloud, thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *protection from poison, spike growth*

3rd level (2 slots): *plant growth*

ACTIONS

Dagger of Venom. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 11 (2d10) poison damage and become poisoned for 1 minute.

Dart. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60, one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. Kerym carries one dart poisoned with serpent venom. A creature subjected to this poison must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

DAGGER OF VENOM

Weapon (dagger), rare

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

You can use an action to cause thick, black poison to coat the blade. The poison remains for 1 minute or until an attack using this weapon hits a creature. That creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 2d10 poison damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. The dagger can't be used this way again until the next dawn.



KERYM'S LABORATORY

Kerym Abrus keeps a small, private laboratory where he conducts experiments on various natural toxins and their effects.

BASIC FEATURES

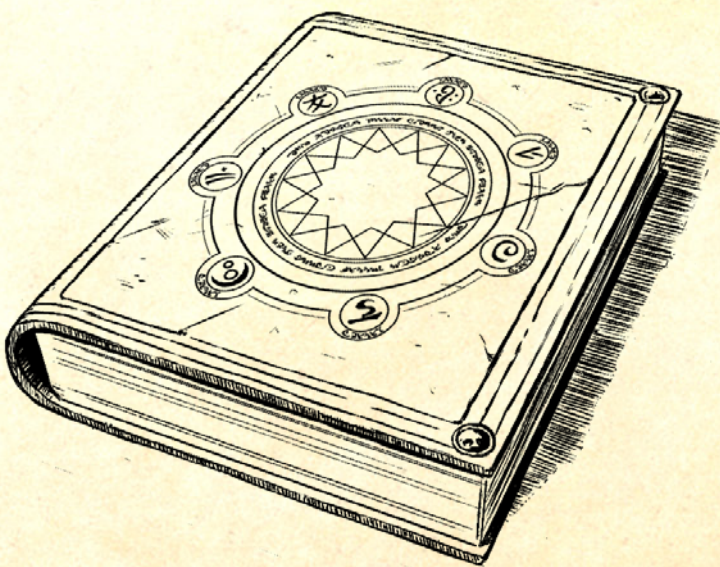
The laboratory is located in a tidy-looking, unassuming brick building in a wealthy area. There is one large window on the front face, but it is covered with a thick black curtain. If the characters do not have the key Kerym carries, a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** picks the lock.

AREA A: LIVING QUARTERS

Kerym's work for rich nobles has earned him a luxurious home, but he is often too engrossed in his research to relax there for long. On these nights, he stays at his lab.

This room contains a green velvet couch with a crumpled blanket and pillow strewn haphazardly over it, clearly recently slept on. A tray with the remains of a meal sits on an end table, along with a book titled *A Study on Phase Spiders*. There is a large window covered with a black curtain. Beneath the window is a magical box that keeps perishables fresh for seven days. It is not locked, and contains a loaf of wheat bread, four small chunks of cheese (*ettercap cheese*), a dozen ripe strawberries, and some sort of liquid-filled organ in a leather pouch. A successful **DC 17 Wisdom (Nature) check** identifies the organ as the venom gland of a giant spider.

There is one door leading out of this room and into the study.



ETTERCAP CHEESE

Wondrous item, uncommon

A pungent yellow cheese with a sharp but pleasant flavor. When consumed, the eater may either find themselves slightly hindered as sticky webbing begins oozing from their pores, or they may gain spider-like benefits.

A creature consuming this cheese must make a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw**. On a failed save, the creature can't use reactions, its speed is halved, and it can't make more than one attack on its turn. In addition, the creature can use either an action or a bonus action on its turn, but not both. These effects last for $2d10 + 4$ hours.

On a successful save, the creature ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing, and can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check. These effects last for $2d10 + 4$ hours.

A STUDY ON PHASE SPIDERS

Non-magical, common item

An illustrated, leatherbound book containing information about phase spiders.

If you spend 48 hours over a period of 6 days, you gain the following:

You have advantage on **Wisdom (Survival) checks** to track phase spiders, as well as on **Intelligence checks** to recall information about them.

AREA B: STUDY

The door leading out of the living quarters and into the study is locked and trapped. A **DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** opens the lock. A successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals a trap that will trigger when the door is opened, emitting a puff of noxious gas. The creature that opened the door must succeed a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw** or take $2d10$ poison damage and lose their voice for $1d10$ hours. The trap can be disarmed without a roll if noticed.

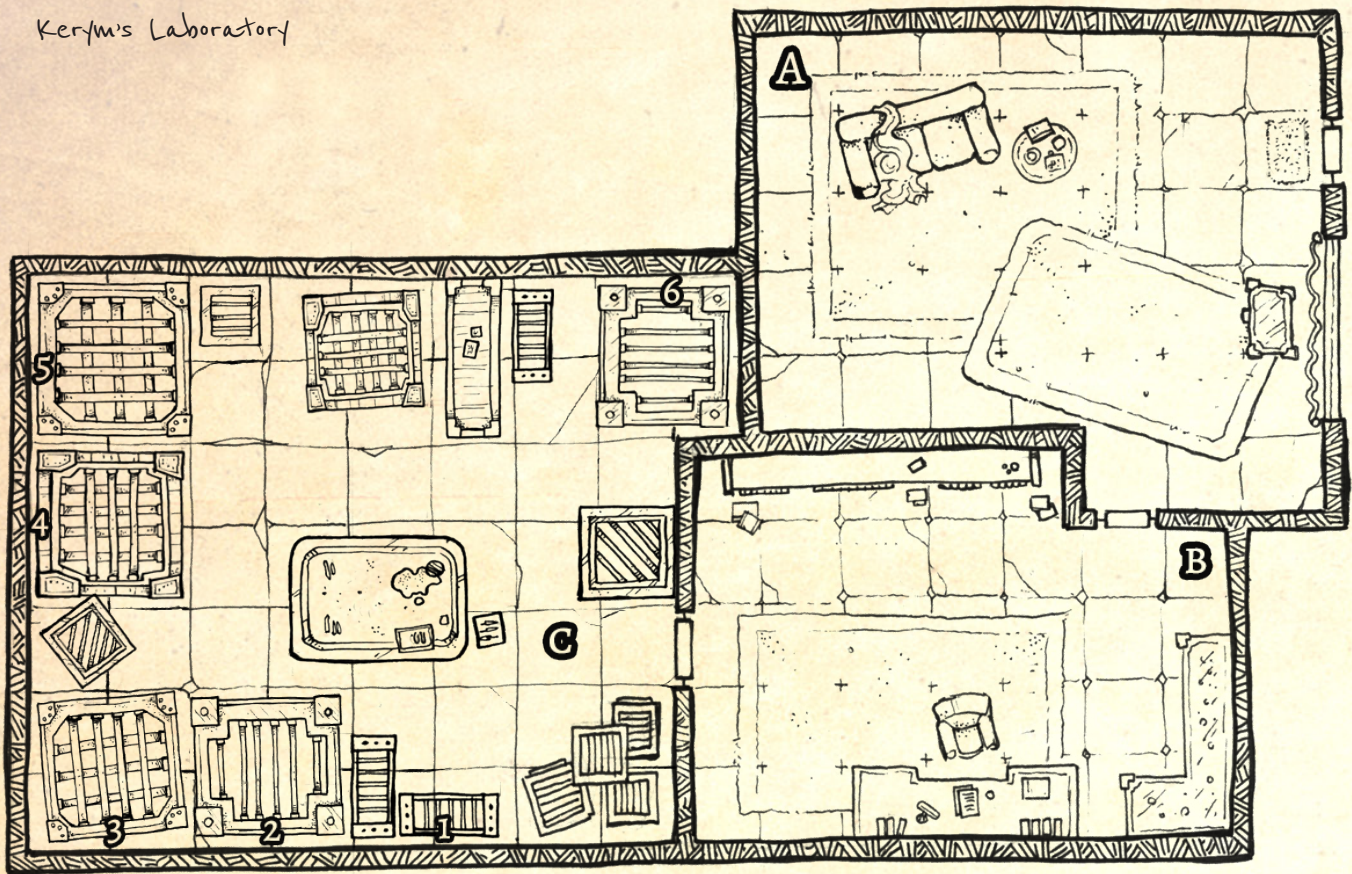
Inside the study, characters find Kerym's desk, an overstuffed bookshelf, and a glass-fronted case. Atop Kerym's immaculately clean desk is a stack of blank parchment and a black quill and inkpot. The quill is a *quill of illusory script*. In Kerym's desk are neatly filed records of hundreds of scientific tests. There is also a ledger of clients and payments. The names are written in illusory script.

QUILL OF ILLUSORY SCRIPT

Wondrous item, uncommon

This quill is fashioned from a peacock's feather.

The quill has one charge. You may expend the charge to cast the *illusory script* spell. An expended charge is regained at dawn after ten days.



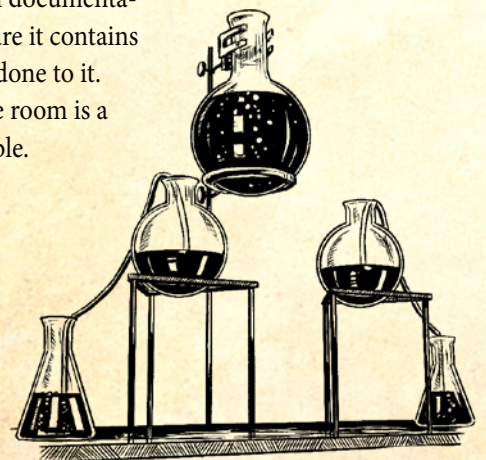
The bookshelf is full of books neatly sorted by topic: books about poisons, books about anatomy and medicine, and books about various types of beasts and monsters. The glass case contains rows of vials containing various liquids, each meticulously labeled. The case is magically warded, and can only be dispelled by a successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check**. If the dispel attempt fails or the case is breached without dispelling the ward, the case fills instantly with thick fog and all its contents are neutralized. If the ward is successfully dispelled, the case yields a jar of *restorative ointment* and one vial each of the following poisons:

- Drow poison
- Wyvern poison
- Midnight tears

There is a door leading from the study into the test chamber. It is not locked or trapped.

AREA C: TEST CHAMBER

The test chamber is a pristine, whitewashed room. The walls are lined in locked cages of various sizes, requiring a successful **DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** to open. On a failed attempt, the creature inside the cage makes a melee attack against the character. Many of the cages contain living beasts and insects. Some of these creatures are poisonous or venomous and are being studied, while others have had poisons applied to them and are being observed. Each cage is paired with careful documentation of what creature it contains and what is being done to it. In the center of the room is a gleaming metal table.



Cage	Creature	Information
1	Poisonous Snake	Mixing antidote with its food to see if doing so negates the creature's poison.
2	Giant Wolf Spider	Removed the venom gland. Will add healing potion to the gland and reattach to see if the creature starts producing a healing venom.
3	Ettercap	Making cheese from the creature's milk has been very successful. Theory is that ingesting the cheese will pass along the creature's ability to walk on webs to the consumer.
4	Cockatrice	Attempting to decipher how the creature's bite turns creatures to stone. Very hostile. Stuck its head through the enclosure and bit its neighbor.
5	Hippogriff	See notes for cage 4.
6	Blight Toadling	Successful merger of a troglodyte and a giant toad!

EXPERIMENT OUTCOMES (NOT PLAYER INFORMATION)

- **Cage 1:** The experiment has had an adverse effect, increasing the snakes poison damage to 10 (3d6).
- **Cage 2:** The experiment is in progress. A large, stitched wound is seen on the creature.
- **Cage 3:** Somewhat successful. See *Ettercap Cheese* item.
- **Cage 4:** It's just a live cockatrice.
- **Cage 5:** The cockatrice bit the hippogriff.
- **Cage 6:** This cage contains the **blight toadling**: a halfling-sized creature with bright green skin and bulbous red eyes. A successful **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check**, or **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals that this particular cage is not locked. The blight toadling attempts to wait long enough for the characters to get comfortable, and then leaps out of the cage with a surprise attack.

BLIGHT TOADLING

Medium Monstrosity, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Stealth +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Amphibious. The blight toadling can breathe air and water.

Standing Leap. The blight toadling can long jump up to 20 feet and high jump up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

Slippery. Attempts to grapple or physically restrain the blight toadling are made with disadvantage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The blight toadling makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 5 (2d4) acid damage.

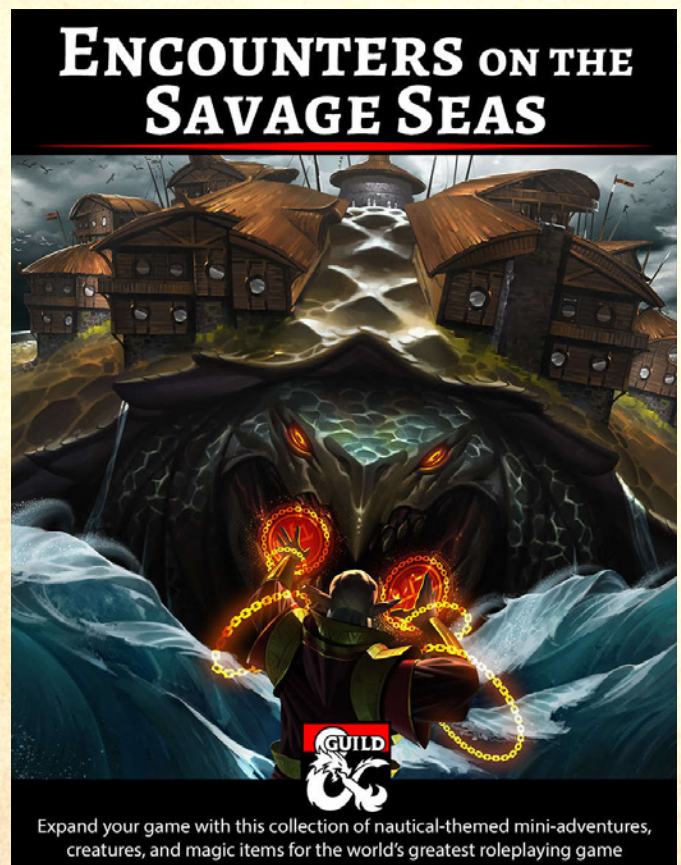
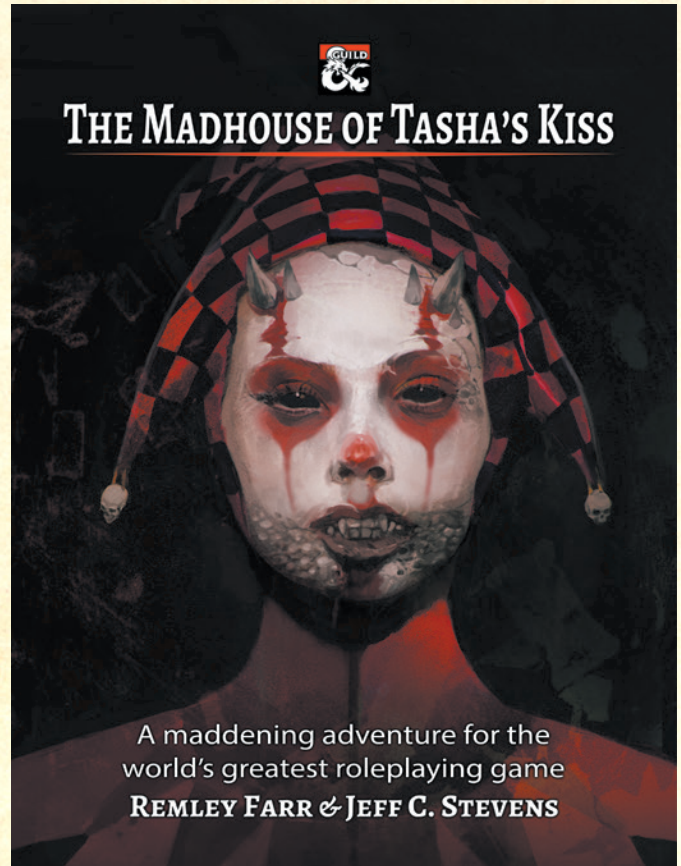
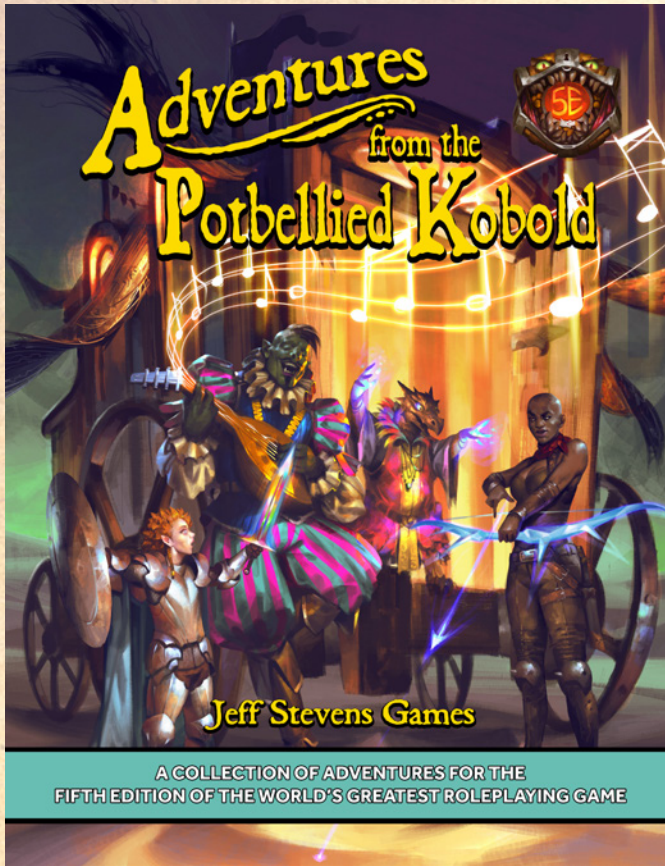
Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Noxious Cloud (Recharge 4-6). The blight toadling releases a 15-foot sphere of noxious gas that lasts until the end of the creature's next turn. Any creature other than a blight toadling that starts its turn within this sphere must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of the creature's next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the noxious cloud for 1 hour.

REACTIONS

Blight Mucus. In response to being hit with a melee attack, the blight toadling spits acidic mucus at its attacker if they are within 5 feet of it. The target must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 5 (1d10) acid damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

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