



OATH OF THE FROZEN KING



COMPATIBLE

ADVENTURE KIT™

A Modular Toolkit to Build Endless RPG Adventures



OATH OF THE FROZEN KING

ADVENTURE KIT™

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Oath of the Frozen King is set in the following fonts: Aller, Diavlo, and Graveside.



This book was created with the help of 1,231 Kickstarter backers.

Inspiration at the Speed of Your Imagination

Somewhere between pre-written adventure modules and your own simple prep notes, there's an RPG sweet spot. Adventure Kits from Absolute Tabletop provide versatile, flexible frameworks for roleplaying game adventures. Much like a model kit, some assembly is required. We provide the pieces – all you need is some paint, a little glue, and a steady hand.

Build fun, limitless adventures quickly and easily with Adventure Kits from Absolute Tabletop!

FOREWORD

I love to think about the games I'm going to run, but I don't like sitting down to prep them. Distilling an interesting concept into a quantified encounter isn't something that comes naturally to me, so I usually avoid the work. I'm a "wing it after I've thought about it for a week" sort of GM, and to be honest, my games might improve if I had the discipline to spend more prep time on the most beneficial things. I think the eternal, paramount question for us as Game Masters is: "What do I prep?"

I often find myself turning to pre-written adventure modules – not to run them, but to flip through them, vicariously feeling someone else's hard work and painstaking preparation pass through my fingers, hoping to gain a measure of it by osmosis. I find myself pillaging pre-written adventures for seeds of ideas. That mayor's plot hook to find his son? I can hitch that to my paladin's wagon. That vile orcish tribe's motives of divine chaos? That's perfect for the faction hunting down my player characters. I find myself wishing I didn't have to dig through modules, scouring for the best NPCs, the coolest locations, and the basics of each encounter, stripping them of unnecessary elements and retrofitting them to my campaign. I find myself wishing that someone would make something that combines just the pieces, so I can use them however I want..

So we did.



TIMBO THE PREP TROLL

Adventure Kits from Absolute Tabletop are the pinnacle of our mantra "We make what we'd use." What you have in your possession is preparation at the speed of your imagination, with the linchpins we use to prepare – laid out in all of their simple, modular glory. NPCs, monsters, locations, encounters – all segmented, all ready to be mixed and matched to create the game you're imagining – quicker and easier than ever.

Providing all of the most concentrated pieces of an adventure module like a buffet carries the wonderful side effect of unmatched replayability. For the first time ever, an RPG adventure supplement can be used with the same group over and over, with vastly different setups and outcomes.

To create a true Game Master's dream, we included the Toolkit: a multi-page, thematic smorgasbord of roll table after roll table, generator after generator, to customize and create everything from traps and monsters to locations and NPCs. You can construct these things yourself, or let the dice fall where they may – creating new and interesting combinations with every toss of the dice.

What you're about to read is the prep book that we've always wanted – so much so, we had to make it ourselves. We hope you like this inaugural Adventure Kit, entitled *Oath of the Frozen King*, and we look forward to creating many more.

Now what are you waiting for? Get prepping.

From our tabletop to yours,

Tim (and Matt, and Barker, and James)

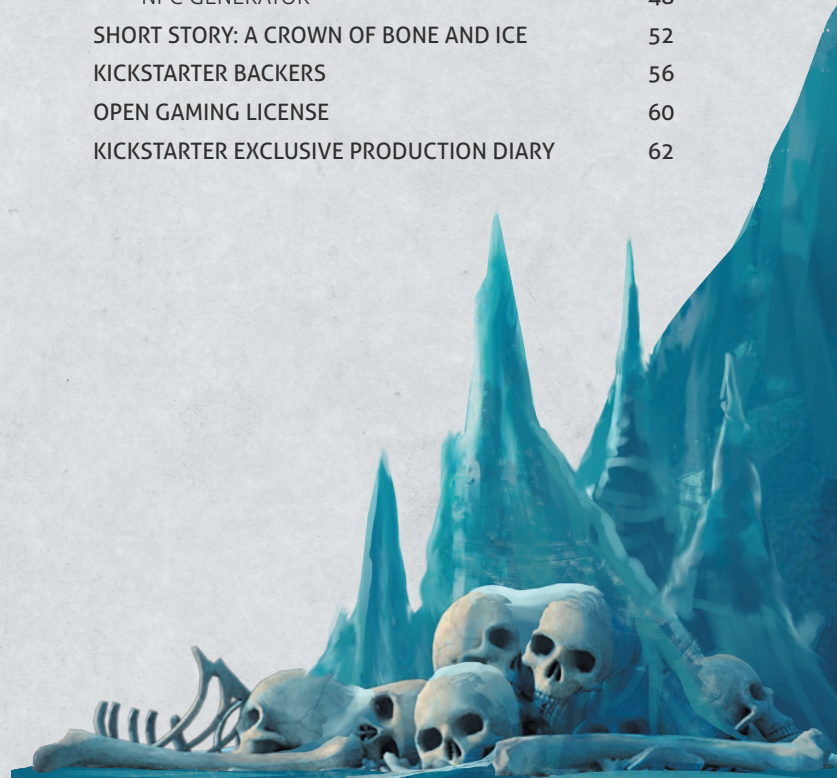
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OATH OF THE FROZEN KING

ADVENTURE KIT™

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USING THIS BOOK

Somewhere between pre-written adventure modules and your own simple prep notes, there's an RPG sweet spot. Adventure Kits from Absolute Tabletop provide versatile, flexible frameworks for roleplaying game adventures. Much like a model kit, some assembly is required. We provide the pieces – all you need is some paint, a little glue, and a steady hand.

The locations, maps, encounters, and other assets supplied in Adventure Kits are intended to give Game Masters some fast, fun, ready-made material with which to construct adventures of all varieties.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

In *Oath of the Frozen King*, you'll find inspiration, mechanics, and ready-made, modular parts and pieces for crafting an icy adventure. Use as little or as much as you need to create your unique experience.

Adventure Setting: Some basic info on the world of Dragongrin, plus some guidelines on how to set *Oath of the Frozen King* in your preferred campaign setting.

Adventure Overview: This top-down view includes high concept details of the lore, tone, and possible conflicts that can unfold during the adventure.

Locations: Each area of the adventure includes a flavorful description, complete with bulleted sensory details.

Maps: *Oath of the Frozen King* includes an isometric dungeon map, as well as a full-page battle map of the adventuring locations for easy reference. You can find full-size maps for use with miniatures available for purchase at www.HeroicMaps.com.

Encounters: This list of encounters includes roleplay encounters, combats, skill challenges, environmental hurdles, puzzles and traps, and a climactic "boss" encounter.

NPCs: A handful of unique non-player characters, complete with physical descriptions, personality traits, and even secrets for use in roleplay encounters.

Monsters: Pre-generated monsters complete with basic stats, and simple guidelines to scale them for any challenge level.

Resolution and Rewards: Suggested adventure resolutions and ideas for satisfying rewards and loot for the adventurers.

Toolbox: Modular add-ons and adventure enhancements, including mechanics, thematic phrases, set dressing, trinkets and loot, and simple generators for monsters, skill challenges, and traps.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- This Adventure Kit (and any other Adventure Kits you want to pull material from).
- A fistful of polyhedral dice to roll on the provided tables.
- A pencil and some paper (or index cards) to plot out your adventure.

A NOTE ON NUMBERS

Adventure Kits are designed to be compatible with the fifth edition of the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game, but we've left out a lot of the numbers to make it easy to run with your preferred system and with player characters of any level. For instance, an encounter might mention making a Dexterity saving throw, but leave the exact target number or DC to the GM's discretion. When you need a number, lean on your system of choice and the level of your adventurers. Guidelines for DCs, damage, and monster stats are included in the Toolbox at the back of this Adventure Kit.

WHERE TO BEGIN

If you want to dive right into your adventure, then we have a few easy suggestions for getting started!

QUICKSTART METHOD

Just start playing – use the locations and encounters as provided to run a fun, simple adventure. Follow the steps below to prep for your game.

1. Read over the adventure overview – this will give you a handle on the background lore, overall tone, and components of the adventure. You will also roll to create the framing quest of your adventure.
2. Take a look at the provided maps, and familiarize yourself with the locations and their descriptions.
3. Decide on which encounters you'd like to include. Use any or all of them!
4. Tweak the locations and encounters to your liking using the provided Toolbox.
5. Gather your friends and run your unique adventure!

MULTI-ROLL TABLES

Throughout this book, you will find roll tables with multiple columns, designed to be rolled on multiple times to yield varied results. When you see a die symbol like this (d12³), it means you should roll a d12 three times.

FOLLOW YOUR INSPIRATION

If you're stuck on where to begin, choose a starting point from the list below, and you'll soon find yourself elbow-deep in a finished adventure.

1. **Locations/Maps:** Begin with the locations first. This allows you to think of them as containers to fill with challenges, threats, and people, focusing on the sights, sounds, and locations of each area.
2. **Encounters:** Start by choosing what challenges you want your players to face, and what character resources you want to tax.
3. **NPCs:** Focus on the people involved, allowing their conflicts to take center stage.
4. **Monsters:** Start with a monstrous enemy, and construct your adventure around them.
5. **Resolution and Rewards:** Start at the end, and work your way back. What's the ultimate goal of the adventure, and what's at stake?
6. **Toolbox:** Begin by combing through the toolbox and randomly generating some unique challenges that suit your players' playstyles and characters' skill levels.

DICE DROP ADVENTURE GENERATOR™

For a fun, randomized start to your adventure, roll a set of dice on a piece of paper and watch your dungeon take shape using the provided roll tables.

1. Grab a blank sheet of paper and a fistful of polyhedral dice. You'll need a full set of 6 dice including a d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and a d20.
2. Roll the dice across the sheet of paper. These dice represent your adventure locations.
3. Slide the dice around to create your preferred layout, and then outline each of them.
4. Next to each dice outline, write down the die type, as well as the number rolled.
5. Remove the dice, and draw connecting lines between your outlines.
6. Now, use the tables on this page to see what each location contains. (If you get a duplicate, explain it narratively, or choose an adjacent option.)
7. Finally, place additional NPCs, monsters, hazards, etc. from the Toolbox to round out your adventure.

Die	Location
d4	Hall of Bone and Ice
d6	Gunther's Respite
d8	The Altar of Sorrow
d10	The Sword Shrine
d12	Grigor's Kennel
d20	The Frigid Tomb

d4 Hall of Bone and Ice Encounters	
1	The Freezing Soldier
2	The Mad Troll
3	Frigid Cannibals
4	Tax of the Frozen King

d6 Gunther's Respite Encounters	
1	The Chasm
2-3	On Thin Ice
4-5	Tax of the Frozen King
6	The Freezing Soldier

d8 Altar of Sorrow Encounters	
1-2	Tax of the Frozen King
3-4	Reward – Roll on an item table!
5-6	The Mad Troll
7-8	The Chasm

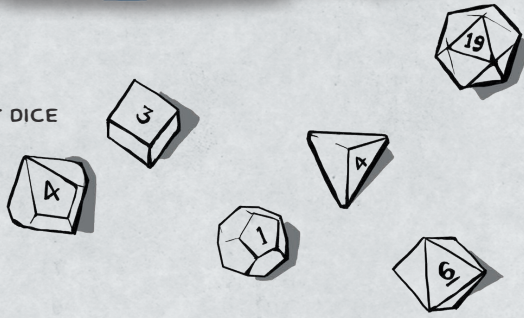
d10 Sword Shrine Encounters	
1-3	On Thin Ice
4-6	The Freezing Soldier
7-9	Reward – Roll on an item table!
10	Frigid Cannibals

d12 Grigor's Kennel Encounters	
1-3	The Chasm
4-6	Frigid Cannibals
7-9	On Thin Ice
10-12	The Mad Troll

d20 Frigid Tomb Encounters	
1-5	The adventurers surprise the Frozen King
6-10	The Hand of the King interferes
11-19	The Frozen King fights other creatures
20	The Frozen King wanders – swap the contents of the closest room with the climax encounter

THE DICE DROP DUNGEON GENERATOR™

STEP 1: ROLL A FISTFUL OF DICE



D20 THE FRIGID TOMB

19 THE FROZEN KING IS LOCKED IN COMBAT W/ OTHER MONSTERS OR NPCs

D4 HALL OF BONE AND ICE

4 TAX OF THE FROZEN KING

D6 GUNTHER'S RESPITE

3 ON THIN ICE

STEP 2: CONSULT THE TABLES. ASSIGN LOCATIONS AND ENCOUNTERS.

D10 SWORD SHRINE

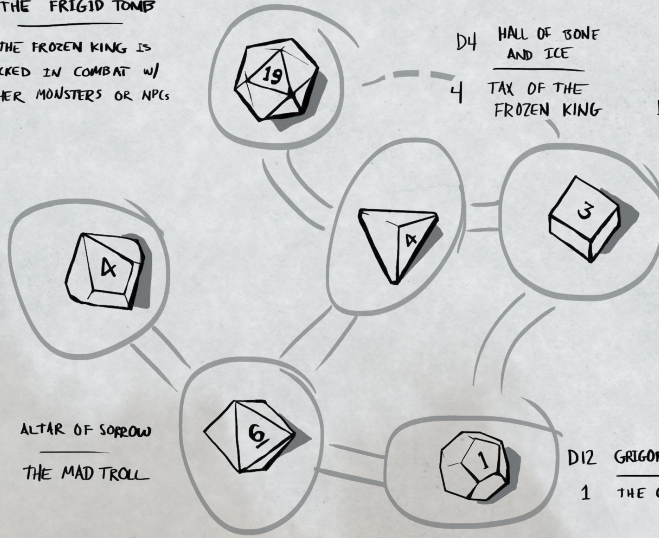
4 THE FREEZING SOLDIER

D8 ALTAR OF SORROW

6 THE MAD TROLL

D12 GRIGOR'S KENNEL

1 THE CHASM



STEP 3: FLESH OUT THE MAP, SPRINKLE WITH YOUR FAVORITE STUFF FROM THE TOOLBOX, AND GET PLAYING.

D20 THE FRIGID TOMB

19 THE FROZEN KING IS LOCKED IN COMBAT W/ OTHER MONSTERS OR NPCs

D4 HALL OF BONE AND ICE

4 TAX OF THE FROZEN KING

D6 GUNTHER'S RESPITE

3 ON THIN ICE

D10 SWORD SHRINE

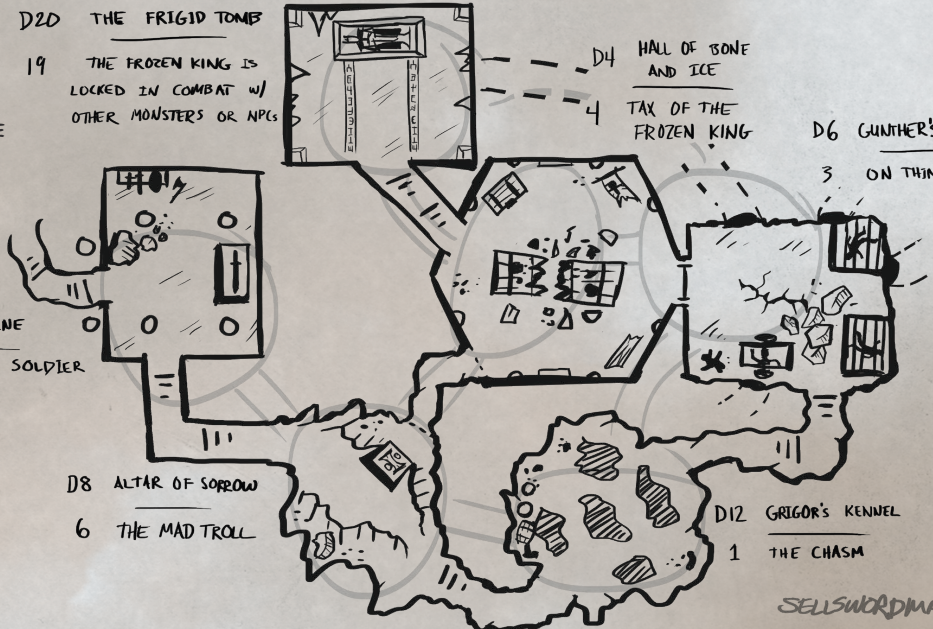
4 THE FREEZING SOLDIER

D8 ALTAR OF SORROW

6 THE MAD TROLL

D12 GRIGOR'S KENNEL

1 THE CHASM



SELLSWORDDMAPS.COM

ADVENTURE SETTING

This adventure takes place in **Arbitron**, the official shared-universe of **Absolute Tabletop**. Arbitron's known realms are **Dragongrin**, **Enchea**, and **Erenoth**, which are all orbited by three moons. These realms are separated by a volatile arcane maelstrom known as the **Bleak**, making travel between them perilous, and often deadly. There are limitless unexplored worlds in the cosmos of Arbitron – and boundless adventure to be found! To find out more about these worlds, visit AbsoluteTabletop.com.

DRAGONGRIN

Evil reigns in the realm of **Dragongrin**. Twenty years ago, the **Dismembered Lord** crushed the forces of good, and now he rules over the ashes. Heroes aren't welcome here in Dragongrin – but there are those who seek to do the impossible, and against all odds, take up arms against the shadow of the Dismembered Lord.

VARNHOLME

Varnholme is a grassy, rainy region in the eastern portion of Dragongrin. The northern reaches of Varnholme, called **Winter's Tongue**, are home to frozen mountains and icy fjords, as well as the **Maw of Black Ice**, the keep where the **Frozen King** was entombed after his execution. The reach of the Dismembered Lord does not extend far into this region, but his shadow can still be felt, and his patrols pose a threat to outsiders – if the harsh elements don't claim them first.

RESKINNING THIS ADVENTURE

Need an adventure that isn't set in a frozen tundra? Easily reskin *Oath of the Frozen King* to suit any environment. Find some ideas on the following table.

SETTING THIS ADVENTURE ELSEWHERE

While this Adventure Kit is set in Dragongrin, it can easily be dropped into your favorite campaign setting, and is best suited for freezing regions prone to deep snow and howling blizzards. It could also work atop a snowy mountain range, or even a location that is cursed to a long, unnatural winter – perhaps due to the Frozen King's oath.



RESKINNING THIS ADVENTURE

d8	New Adventure	Reskin With...
1	Oath of the Buried Emperor	Stone and earth, the adventure occurs deep underground.
2	Oath of the Desert Prince	Sand and heat, the adventure occurs in the desert.
3	Oath of the Drowned Queen	Water and reef, the adventure occurs on the coast/under water.
4	Oath of the Forest King	Forest and groves, the adventure takes place in an enchanted wood.
5	Oath of the Mountain Lord	Mountains and hills, the adventure takes place atop a craggy peak.
6	Oath of the Rogue Czar	Brick and wood, the adventure occurs in a dilapidated thieves' den.
7	Oath of the Serpent King	Jungle and vines, the adventure occurs deep in a savage land.
8	Oath of the Burning Chieftain	Fire and stone, the adventure takes place near an active volcano.

11 GRISLY TRUTHS OF DRAGONGRIN

1. **Lightfall was the death of hope.** In Dragongrin, evil reigns. The forces of good were decimated by the forces of darkness, falling to the military might of the Dismembered Lord in a series of catastrophic events known as Lightfall. The hand of the Dismembered Lord extends over the realm even today, and the shadow of his empire spreads like a sickness from the region of Grinn, threatening to snuff out any light that remains.
2. **Being a hero will get you killed.** Heroes are not welcome, as they bring unwanted attention and retribution from the forces of darkness. They fight a battle most consider already lost. By and large, the common people of Grinn do not welcome heroes readily, for they have witnessed the draconian punishments of the Dismembered Lord firsthand. Those who choose to take action against the evils of the land often do so alone. Many are quick to meet their own deaths – or worse. Those resilient enough to persist may catch the attention of one of the few revolutionary organizations that operate in insubordination of the Dismembered Lord – the Copper Jackals, the Peacemakers, or the Undying Light, to name a few.
3. **Amidst the shadows, a Copper Sun rises.** Points of dim sanctuary persist in a land of long, gnarled shadows – the greatest of which is the Copper Sun, a city that floats high above the terrors of the land. It is the capital city of the region of Innes, and though ransacked and cast earthbound during Lightfall, it is being rebuilt in secret. Having achieved flight again, the Copper Sun has risen to become a beacon of hope – though its light in the surrounding regions grows dimmer by the day. If you wander beyond the Copper Sun, you're subject to either the feral law of the land, or the martial law of Grinn.
4. **Imminence is the most powerful force that exists, yet is nearly impossible to wield.** In Dragongrin, there are three primary sources of magic: arcane, divine, and Imminence. Imminence is a pre-creation energy source of endless potential and raw primeval power. It is a formless, shapeless force from which all creation was birthed eons ago. Its secrets were long lost to history until recently. Now unearthed, its volatile and untamable power holds limitless potential to those who can withstand it. From Imminence comes light, comes darkness, comes good, comes evil, comes everything in between. From Imminence comes all. Those who know of Imminence rightly fear it, and those rare few who command it can become unstoppable.
5. **The Bleak is a festering magical maelstrom, and the source of arcane power.** In many realms, the font from which arcane magic flows is ethereal and mysterious, but in Dragongrin, it is a physical force of nature that mars the land endlessly. Chaotic and volatile, it is an untamable, unforgiving maelstrom that transforms (or obliterates) everything it touches. The arcane energy that makes up the Bleak is believed to be the direct result of a laceration in Imminence itself, bleeding the Bleak onto the material plane from a great planar wound, eons old. The Bleak is more active and tangible in Dragongrin than most realms. Mostly prominent above the oceans of the realm, it commonly brings its unpredictable and destructive tempests to the landmasses of the realm in the form of Bleakstorms and Bleakrifts.
6. **Eons ago, the world was shaped by a bloody supernatural war.** The old stories speak of two godlike, opposing forces that shaped the world: the mighty, inspired Titans, and the potent, elemental Primordials. These immense and powerful beings are said to have emerged from Imminence itself, likely as manifestations of its strongest energies: creation and chaos. As polar opposites, the constructive Titans and the nihilistic Primordials clashed immediately and eternally – their brutal conflict resulting in the First War. No one knows exactly how this bloody "Godwar" ended, but neither race presently exists in the realms, though their advanced technologies and geological effects are evident, even today.
7. **Relics of the past shape the present.** Dragongrin is dotted with inexplicable wonders, traceable to a cryptic, ancient past. Be they geographic wonders such as the ancient caverns of Svir Below and the mechanical labyrinth known as Deepvault, or technological marvels such as the fusion of magic and technology called Archanics or the animated steel repositories of information known as the Tomehearts – in Dragongrin, the wondrous past can often exist alongside the mundane in the land.
8. **Dragongrin is a graveyard of dragons.** The word grin is Titanspeak for "graveyard," and the superstitious histories of the land have taken root, even in its name. The realm formerly known as Arthunvale is now more commonly called Dragongrin. Legends posit that the central landmass is the final resting place of the scattered and defeated ancient dragons, annihilated in the First War, with the northernmost region of Úldane made toxic and unlivable because of the concentration of long-buried dragon carcasses.
9. **Dragongrin is the birthplace of the mighty Typhons.** The dragons are said to have been formed by the Primordials to enact chaos in the First War. The Titans responded to this threat with perhaps their greatest creation: the mighty Typhons. The Typhons were cunning, powerful, and benevolent creatures, rivaling the wyrms and even the primordials in their abilities.

Besting the dragons in the final battle of the First War, no one knows exactly what happened to these powerful creatures, though they have been absent from the realms for centuries. The Typhons are now creatures of myth and legend – but the common folk of Dragongrin still watch the skies, praying for the day that they might return to save them.

10. **As the Bleak festers, the space between planes grows restless.** Like any untreated wound, there are ghastly consequences of the Bleak endlessly seeping into the material plane. Darker, more eternal evils that slumber between the fabric of the realms are beginning to stir, and forces that have not been reckoned with for millennia are slowly turning their immortal gazes to this fissure into the material planes.
11. **The existence of the gods is unproven.** No mortal knows if the gods truly exist, though many in Dragongrin wield power that they believe is divine. Many temples and churches existed and thrived before Lightfall, though they're now much fewer in number, presumably because of the high risk that comes with proclaiming one's self as a beacon of faith. Though there is no empirical evidence proving or disproving the existence of deities in Dragongrin, those who believe in the gods tend to do so vehemently, while naysayers posit that anything "divine" can easily be explained by the technology of the Titans, or even simple magic. One thing is certain, however: no matter what one may believe, there are holy warriors in the realm, and though they are few, they are irrefutably drawing their power from something.



ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

The Frozen King: Long ago, the **Frozen King** ruled the region of **Varnholme**, subjugating its people and leading them to ruin. The commonfolk of Varnholme ended the reign of the Frozen King in a great uprising, unseating the tyrannical king and putting him to death.

The Oath of Winter: The Frozen King was put to death with a **sacred runeblade** of Varnholme, but not before he could swear this **oath**: "*Varnholme is mine in life – it shall remain mine in death. I shall return and restore glory to my kingdom. Then you will know the coldest winter – then you will suffer the slowest, surest death.*"

The Keep: After his death, the Frozen King was entombed with his most loyal followers in the **Maw of Black Ice**, a mountain keep in **Winter's Tongue**, the far, frozen north region of Varnholme. Once an old border outpost, the keep has been overtaken by the ages and the curse of the Frozen King. He has remained, sealed away for centuries, guarded always for fear of his oath coming to fruition...

POSSIBLE CONFLICTS

Below are a few example conflicts you can leverage in your adventure.

The Zealots: A cannibalistic cult breaks into the Frozen King's tomb and attempts to resurrect him using an ancient blood ritual.

The Unguarded Tomb: The sentinels of Varnholme are caught in an ambush – and now the tomb stands unguarded until reinforcements can make the arduous journey north. Word travels quickly and cultists and tomb raiders alike seize the opportunity.

The Usurper's Sword: The ancient runeblade used to execute the Frozen King has awakened, glowing and humming on its sacred altar – what does it mean?

Dissonant Whispers: Men and women of Varnholme hear voices and receive visions in their dreams – a hulking, skeletal figure with a crowned skull, commanding them to come to the Maw of Black Ice...

ADVENTURE ELEMENTS

The NPCs, locations, and encounters of this Adventure Kit are outlined below for quick reference. Read on for more detailed sections for each!

LOCATIONS

1. **The Altar of Sorrow:** Locals pay tribute at this altar in the hopes of keeping the King entombed.
2. **The Sword Shrine:** Resting place of the runeblade used to defeat the Frozen King.
3. **Gunther's Respite:** Shadowy, frigid cells with echoes of the past.
4. **The Hall of Bone and Ice:** A royal banquet hall bedecked with creaking nooses.
5. **Grigor's Kennel:** A holding pen with sunken pits, piled with the bones of beasts.
6. **The Frigid Tomb:** The resting place of the Frozen King himself.

ENCOUNTERS

1. **The Freezing Soldier (Roleplay):** A freezing guard prone to taking bribes.
2. **The Mad Troll (Combat):** A vicious troll with an addled mind, carving runes on the walls.
3. **Frigid Cannibals (Combat):** Cultists who blend in with the ice and ambush their prey.
4. **On Thin Ice (Skill Challenge):** Sliding boulders across a brittle floor of ice.
5. **The Chasm (Environmental):** Frozen winds rush up from a treacherous icy chasm.
6. **Tax of the Frozen King (Trap):** A riddle with a frostburn trap that destroys equipment.

NPCS

1. **Siegfried:** A deserter of the Varnholme sentinels, fed up with his duty.
2. **Kurtz:** The cannibalistic cult's towering leader, powerful and unrelenting.
3. **Ruska:** A tomb robber here to retrieve a specific treasure said to reside in the tomb.
4. **Varniss:** An adventurer who got separated from the rest of her party.
5. **Grast:** The stout dwarven leader of three mercenaries sent to investigate the tomb.
6. **Haley:** A zealous paladin on a mission to vanquish the Frozen King and retrieve the sacred runeblade.

QUESTS

Use the Quests table to generate a framing device for your adventure. The patron can be an NPC in the book or one from your existing campaign. The quest gives you an idea of what goals and challenges to throw at the players and the complication is the twist that makes for a dynamic adventure.

TWISTS

Use the adventure twists found in the Twists table to add some depth to the story of the *Oath of the Frozen King*.

ADVENTURE OPENING

Traveling two days from **Varlith**, the seat of **Varnholme**, deep into **Winter's Tongue**, the adventurers see the **Maw of Black Ice** nestled in a break in an icy ridgeline. This dilapidated keep is the well-known resting place of the **Frozen King**. As the adventurers draw closer, it becomes clear that someone else has already entered this icy pass...

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

Blood stains the snow ahead of you, and the bodies of two Varnholme watchmen sprawl in the snow at the entrance of the Maw of Black Ice. The frozen blood seems fresh, and footprints lead upward into the seemingly abandoned keep.

QUESTS			
d12 ³	Patron	Quest	Complication
1	Divine Clergy	Assassination	Consequences of the party's past resurface.
2	Rival Adventurer	Conscription	Completing the quest would cause the party to break a vow.
3	Respected Scholar	Courier	The quest is considered blasphemous by locals.
4	Powerful Guild	Demolition	The quest is far more dangerous than expected.
5	Local Authorities	Elimination	The quest turns out to be a trap.
6	Influential Politician	Escort	Something about this isn't quite ... legal.
7	Old Friend	Insertion	The quest and its outcome must remain secret.
8	Ranking Soldier	Investigation	Someone else is racing to achieve the same goal.
9	Beloved Relative	Protection	The party is deceived by the patron.
10	Shady Contact	Reconnaissance	The patron's information is incorrect or incomplete.
11	Simple Townsfolk	Rescue	The quest brings retaliation or revenge upon the party.
12	Wealthy Merchant	Retrieval	Completion of the quest would reignite an old feud.

TWISTS	
d6	Twist
1	The Frozen King was actually a well-loved and benevolent ruler, and was demonized after his execution by the elite of Varnholme.
2	The cultists are the true descendants of the Frozen King, and the rightful heirs to his legacy.
3	The Varnholme guardsmen have been infiltrated by the cultists, and have been working for months to unseal the tomb and return the Frozen King to power.
4	Siegfried the guardsman has been driven mad by the Frozen King's call, and will betray the party if they attempt to stop the King's return.
5	Kurtz is the Frozen King reincarnated (or believes himself to be), and wishes to retrieve the enchanted maul of the Frozen King to ascend to power once more.
6	The runeblade used to kill the Frozen King is imbued with his vile essence – any who wield it will become a slave to his will.

ADVENTURER MOTIVATIONS

Use the Adventurer Motivations table if you'd like to tie the player characters directly into the background of Oath of the Frozen King. You can assign these to players or have them roll to randomly assign them.

ADVENTURER MOTIVATIONS		
d20	Motivation	Description
1	Acting on a dream or vision	The power of the Frozen King is great, and somehow he is haunting the dreams of many. You have received a specific bidding from the Frozen King himself.
2	Acting to restore honor	You are descended from servants of the Frozen King. This is your chance to redeem your name.
3	Arrested and conscripted	You are arrested for trespassing, and told that you must stop the Frozen King to earn your freedom.
4	Ambushed and robbed	You are ambushed, robbed, and coerced into delving into the tomb in search of more treasure for your captors.
5	Blackmailed into service	The patron has information about your past, and leverages it against you to help stop the Frozen King.
6	Following a map	A map has led you here, promising great treasure in the depths of the Maw of Black Ice.
7	Following rumors	In the ports and small towns, rumors persist of a great treasure within a tomb in the Maw of Black Ice that grants eternal life.
8	Coerced by authority	Your mentor pulls some strings to allow you access to the tomb.
9	Hired to do so	The locals have scraped together all of the fish and copper they can muster, hoping to hire you to stop the Frozen King.
10	Following instructions	You have heard tales of the Maw of Black Ice and the dangers it holds – as well as the untold riches.
11	Deceived into service	A local politician recruits you with blatant lies, telling you that a mad troll is behind the troubles, rather than the Frozen King.
12	Lost or stranded	On a journey elsewhere, you are shipwrecked on the icy shores of northern Varnholme, finding its people in need.
13	Winning a bet	You made a bet with someone that the Frozen King is a myth, with a handsome sum on the line to prove it.
14	Making good on a favor	An old friend of yours calls in a huge favor for saving your skin in a previous adventure.
15	Ordered by a superior	Your superior orders you to investigate this disturbance, and report back if possible.
16	Repaying a debt	You could easily repay your debts with the treasure entombed in the Maw of Black Ice.
17	Researching a prophecy	The stars are aligning – the signs are all there. You recognize the effects that the Frozen King has on the region as the possible inciting event of a major prophecy.
18	Stumbled into the situation	Happily traveling home after another adventure, you stumble upon the dead bodies in front of the Maw of Black Ice. Foul play is certain, and the way may not be safe.
19	Seeking revenge	The zealots of the Frozen King just sacked and slaughtered a local village. Surely this act cannot go unpunished.
20	Lifting a curse	You are psychically affected by the Oath of the Frozen King – a malady which has plagued your family for generations.



ENTRANCE

**ALTAR OF
SORROW**

**SWORD
SHRINE**

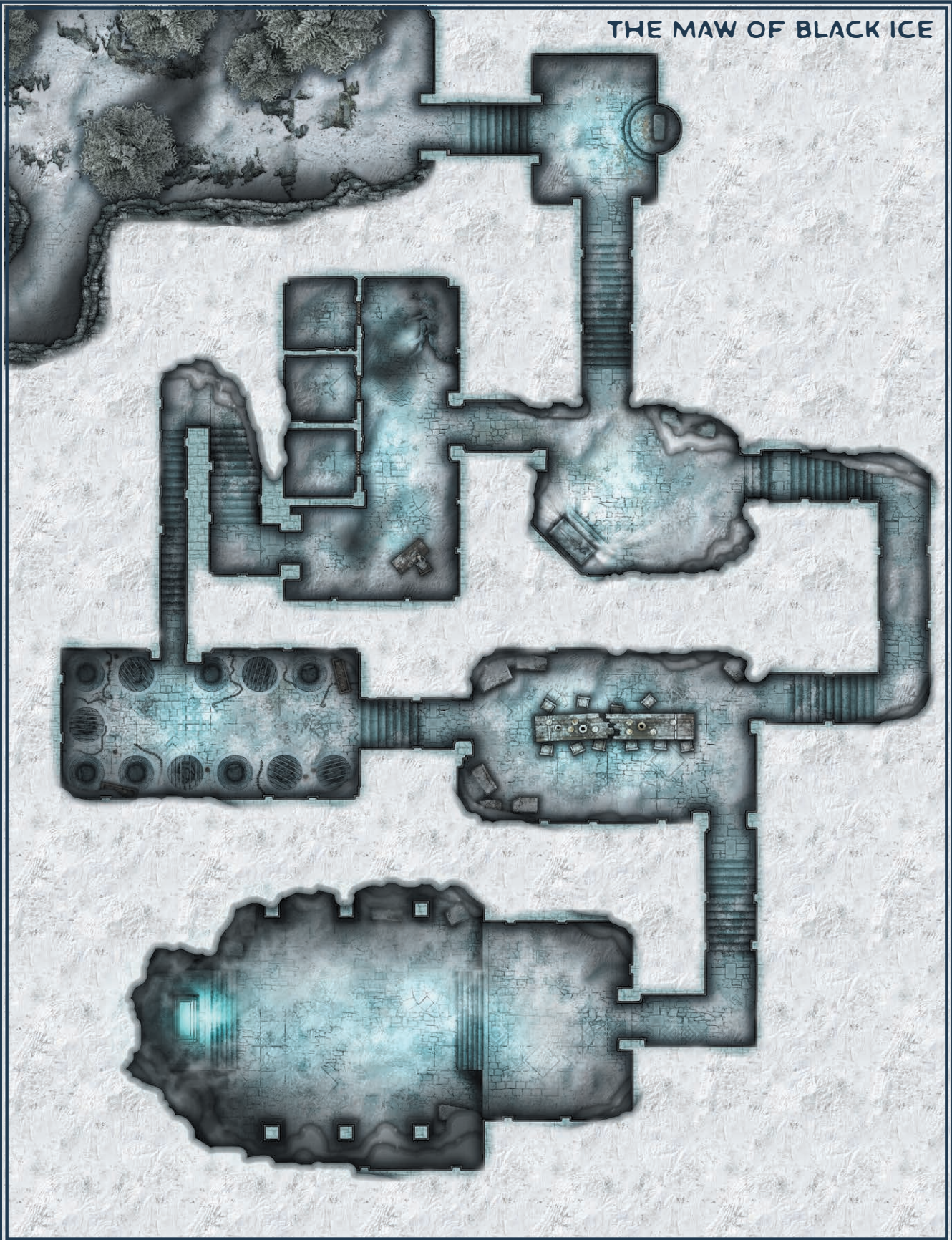
**GUNTHER'S
RESPITE**

**HALL OF
BONE AND ICE**

**GRIGOR'S
KENNEL**

THE FRIGID TOMB

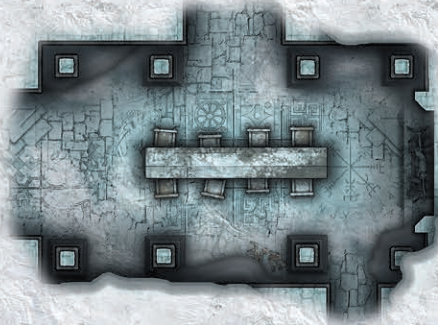
THE MAW OF BLACK ICE



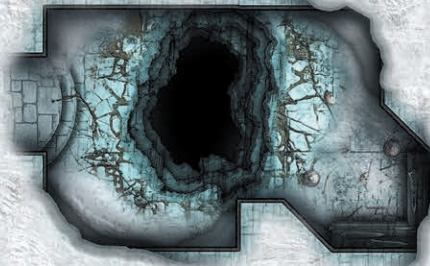
BATTLE MAPS BY HEROIC MAPS

EXPANSION ROOMS

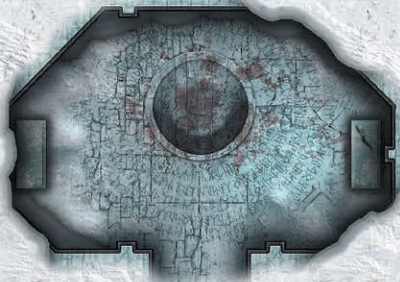
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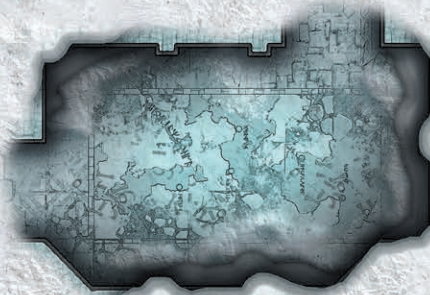
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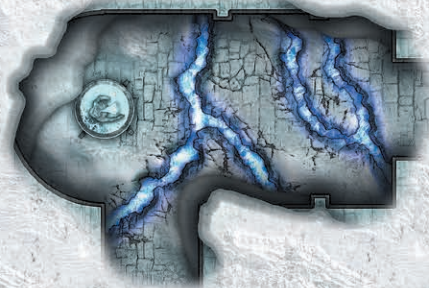
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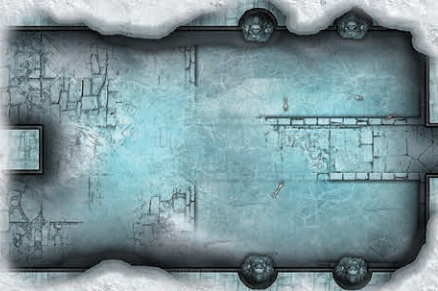
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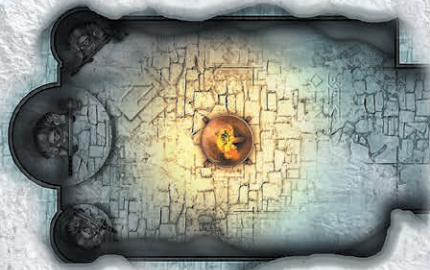
6



7



8



BATTLE MAPS BY HEROIC MAPS

LOCATIONS

1. THE ALTAR OF SORROW

A simple slab of rough-hewn stone dominates an alcove in this entrance chamber. A stone stairway leads deeper into the keep.

SIGHTS

- A simple stone dais, cluttered with worn copper coins.
- Yellowed bones of various shapes, sizes, and sources.
- Scraps of parchment with words denouncing the Frozen King and his reign.

SOUNDS

- The frigid wind whips through the chamber.
- Ice crunches underfoot.
- Whispers and weeping haunt this location.

SENSATIONS

- The cold air bites at you, stealing all warmth.
- The odd formations of ice make the actual shape of the room indiscernible.
- This place is devoid of all smell, save the twinge of icy steel in the air.

2. THE SWORD SHRINE

The frozen shrine at the center of the room glows a pale white. Somehow, the air in here is even colder.

SIGHTS

- An ancient broadsword with runic curses etched upon it.
- A freshly severed hand grips the hilt of the sword.
- A set of vaguely humanoid ice sculptures, their faces frozen in silent screams.

SOUNDS

- Incessant dripping echoes through the chamber.
- The faint, ghostly hiss of cold steel being honed.
- Something clamors below, howling in the night.

SENSATIONS

- A chilling blast of wind carries the sounds of ancient battle.
- The room seems to be slowly melting, and the walls and floor are slick.
- Your reflection in the ice appears gaunt and hollow – almost skeletal.

LOCATIONS AS ZONES

The sights, sounds, and sensations of each location can be used to describe the setting to your players, but also provide aspects for them to utilize in combats and other encounters. Allow the adventurers to engage with the environment during encounters or exploration, using these aspects as guidelines.

3. GUNTHER'S RESPITE

The shadows are deep within the stone cells of this large dungeon. The frigid cold seeps into each cell from circular chutes leading outside.

SIGHTS

- Cells barred with iron hold the frozen, mummified remains of prisoners.
- The corpse of a massive beast – its mangled form is difficult to identify beneath layers of ice.
- A skeletal guardsman slumps over a small table, holding a pewter tankard.

SOUNDS

- The wind howling through the chutes sounds uncannily like a pained scream.
- The rusted iron bars creak and groan.
- A scraping sound from the cells seems to grow louder and louder.

SENSATIONS

- A mysterious warmth emanates from the one of the cells.
- The oppressive stone walls seem to close in around you.
- Dust falls from the ceiling and the walls buckle inward.

5. GRIGOR'S KENNEL

A dozen sunken, circular pits dominate this sour-smelling room. The remains of wolves, giant rats, and other unidentifiable beasts lay in piles at the bottom of these pits, forgotten for centuries.

SIGHTS

- Barbed whips and chains hang from the walls.
- Yellowed bones of beasts, piled at the bottom of the pits.
- Feeding troughs containing what appear to be gnawed human bones.

SOUNDS

- A distant howl, emanating from the walls themselves.
- Muffled skittering, like claws on flagstone.
- Chains jingle softly in the chill breeze.

SENSATIONS

- The overpowering smell of rot, mildew, and wet fur.
- Something slouched and hulking moves in the shadows of the room.
- Brittle, gnawed bones crunch beneath your feet.

4. THE HALL OF BONE AND ICE

This enormous feasting hall is a frostbitten shadow of its former glory. A massive wooden table, split in twain, rests at its center, bound together by iron bands. A long-spoiled feast sits in piles upon the shattered table.

SIGHTS

- A massive feasting table wrought of dark iron and oak, split at its center.
- A series of faded tapestries displaying the reign of the Frozen King.
- Empty nooses longing for fresh necks hang from broad joists overhead.

SOUNDS

- The creaking of hanged men – though the nooses above hang empty.
- Two distant, spectral soundscapes: a merry feast, and the din of shrill screams.
- The sundered table creaks under the weight of a rotting, frost-covered feast.

SENSATIONS

- A strange, unnatural hunger stirs in your gut.
- The stench of the spoiled feast is almost overwhelming.
- The shadows on the wall resemble the silhouettes of hanged men, swinging lazily back and forth.

6. THE FRIGID TOMB

This dim, frozen tomb carries an overwhelming feeling of oppression and death. A pale white fog wafts in the air, originating from a massive stone sarcophagus.

SIGHTS

- A climbing, crawling fog of a pale white color.
- Walls of black ice, sinister and ancient – runic carvings ripple from behind the ice.
- An enormous stone sarcophagus, carved in the likeness of the Frozen King in life.

SOUNDS

- A faint, rhythmic breathing emanates from the tomb.
- A low, sickening hum drones at the edge of your senses.
- The creaking and cracking of ice rapidly thawing and freezing.

SENSATIONS

- The air is so cold that it hurts to breathe.
- As you blink, it feels as though your eyelids might freeze shut.
- The room itself rumbles with intermittent tremors.

ENCOUNTERS

1. THE FREEZING SOLDIER

Roleplay Encounter

Siegfried (or an NPC of your choice) is hiding in a portion of the keep, waiting for reinforcements or a chance to escape. He was assigned to guard the Frozen King's remains, but his cohorts have been killed, and now the cultists control the keep. He is newly married with a young one on the way. His years guarding the keep have weakened his mind, and he seems especially paranoid – though physically capable. If you can win his trust, he'll likely have information on the cult and the secrets of the Maw of Black Ice.

Suspicious Soldier: Siegfried is a wary, untrusting soul. Using Persuasion or Deception might prove difficult – but slipping him some silver coins will significantly up the chances of success.

Useful Intel: Siegfried has been hiding out for a while in the keep, and if the adventurers can win his trust, he might give them a hint as to what lies deeper within the frigid tunnels.

Stalwart Swordsman: Adventurers who win Siegfried's complete trust might find a valuable ally in the hapless warrior. Siegfried is a *minion* with a longsword, leather armor, and a pair of trusty throwing daggers. He holds his own in a fight if the adventurers can convince him to join their endeavor.

ENCOUNTER TERMS

Recharge: This denotes an effect that does not occur every round. GMs roll a d6 at the beginning of every round to determine if the effect triggers (for example: an effect with a 5–6 recharge would trigger on a roll of 5 or 6).

Monster: Oftentimes, a monster will be identified with a type (*vanguard*, *nemesis*, etc.) and some possible buffs (*attack*, *regeneration*, etc.). While traditional statblocks from your preferred bestiary can be used, more information on these monster types and buffs can be found in the Monster section and the Toolbox at the back of this Adventure Kit. You can also find simplified statblocks for these creatures in the Monster chapter.

2. THE MAD TROLL

Combat Encounter

Drawn by the whispers of the Frozen King, a **mad troll** (*vanguard* with *regeneration [1d6]*) dwells within the frozen keep, scratching eldritch wards in the ice with its scythe-like claws. Driven mad over many decades, the troll protects its territory with ferocity.

Frigid Wards (Recharge 5–6): The troll's wards come to life in a blue-white flash. Adventurers must succeed on a Constitution saving throw to avoid cold damage.

Slippery Floors: Creatures moving more than 15 feet on their turn must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.

Crumbling Stalactites: Spears of ice and stone hang from the ceiling. They can be targeted with ranged attacks to drop upon creatures below and deal piercing damage.

3. FRIGID CANNIBALS

Combat Encounter

The ice-skinned **zealots** (*minions* with *defense* wielding rusty daggers and clubs) are undeterred in their quest to wake the Frozen King – and they serve him without compromise. Protecting the tomb from outsiders and carrying out the Frozen King's twisted machinations, these savage but cunning cannibals will protect their new territory to the death.

Filth-Ridden Bites: The zealots favor their rusty daggers and clubs, but will not hesitate to use their rotting, jagged teeth in combat. Adventurers dealt damage by these bite attacks must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1d4 hours.

Icy Ambush: The Frozen King has rewarded his faithful servants with tough, ice-like skin. The zealots blend in perfectly with their frigid environment. They have advantage on Stealth checks made to hide in frozen environments.

Savage Frenzy: If a zealot successfully grapples an adventurer, it can immediately make a bite attack against that adventurer.

4. ON THIN ICE

Skill Challenge

The ice is beginning to melt in this area. Large, frosty boulders block the adventurer's path, and the floor creaks as they step forward. The adventurers must carefully shift the boulders across the ice, clearing a path without breaking the floor beneath them.

Rolling Rocks: The boulders are too heavy to lift, but the slick, icy floor makes them easier to push. The adventurers must make three successful Strength checks between all of them to carefully shove the boulders aside. A critical success counts as two successes.

Over Troubled Water: The floor is thin and brittle, and below rushes a frigid river. Each failed Strength check creates a crack in the floor (with a critical failure counting as two failures). If the adventurers fail three total checks, the floor gives way and dumps them into the freezing river 20 feet below.

Sub-Zero Waters: If the adventurers plummet into the water, they suffer cold damage and must also succeed on a Constitution saving throw or are stunned for 1d4 rounds. The river deposits them outside of the tomb or into a random room of the dungeon.

5. THE CHASM

Environmental Hazard

Frigid winds rush up from an enormous chasm in this area. As the adventurers progress across the room, the floor gives way, and the icy chasm grows larger and more treacherous. They must use the items in the room and their wits to find a way across a deep, ever-growing chasm.

Frigid Winds (Recharge 4–6): The winds rush up from the chasm. Strength saving throws are required to remain standing.

The Chasm Realized: A deep chasm begins to open beneath the players, caving in. The chasm advances 10 feet per round until the room is nothing but a gaping hole.

Fall of Doom: If the adventurers plummet into the chasm, they suffer bludgeoning damage. There are jutting cliffs below, difficult to spot in the hazy weather. If an adventurer falls, roll 1d6 and multiply the result by 10. That is the number of feet they fall before landing on a ledge.

6. TAX OF THE FROZEN KING

Puzzle/Trap

This area is guarded by a ward that detects heat. Even the slightest breath, torchlight, or body heat will set off the trap. If the trap is triggered, the frigid blast will leave the adventurers mostly unscathed, but the cursed chill is designed to destroy their weapons, armor, and gear. The only way to pass uncursed is to speak the password.

The Password: In a very old dialect of the common language, the phrase "Cry out! Water that turneth to bone!" is carved deep above the entryway. The adventurers might speak the word "ice," the seemingly obvious answer to the etchings. To disarm this arcane trap, the word "out" must literally be shouted (cry "out").

Frostburn Trap: If the trap is sprung, the area is filled with a noxious-smelling cloud of frigid smoke, and each weapon belonging to the adventurers is dropped a single die in damage (from d8 to d6, d6 to d4, etc.). If the weapon has a d4 damage die, it is destroyed. All armor takes a permanent negative 1 to its armor class. All small items are affected negatively at the GM's discretion (arrows may do half damage, healing potions may do half healing, etc.). The trap may also deal cold damage to the adventurers, at the GM's discretion.

Alternate Riddles: If you want to present the adventurers with a different riddle, you can use one of the questions below, or create your own!

- What runs around the keep, but never moves? (Wall/Moat)
- If you speak my name, you destroy me. What am I? (Silence)
- What can bite without teeth? (Cold/Frost)
- As I grow larger, I get closer to the ground. (Icicle)
- In my embrace, nothing decays. (Ice)
- I move mountains and carve valleys. (Glacier)

PLOT TWISTS

If you plan on using any of the plot twists provided in the Adventure Overview, now might be a good time to use a red herring to foreshadow an outcome different than one you're planning. Also remember that you want to surprise your players in a fulfilling way, not confuse them. A great plot twist is surprising, yet inevitable.

CLIMAX: THE FROZEN KING

Combat Encounter

The Frozen King awakens from his sealed tomb! A massive skeleton garbed in armored plates and wreathed in an aura of frigid air, the **Frozen King** (*nemesis with multiattack [2], deadly [1d6], immunity: cold, and magic [2]*) stands as the final obstacle here in the tomb. He wields a massive maul and glowers with blue-glowing eyes. The adventurers must work quickly to defeat this undead fiend and leave with their lives.

Freezing Aura: The Frozen King exudes a cloud of biting, frigid air. Adventurers who successfully damage the Frozen King with a melee attack while standing within 5 feet of him must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take cold damage and have their movement speed reduced.

Undead Servants (Recharge 5–6): The Frozen King exerts his influence over the icy corpses here in the tomb, and summons 1d4 **ice skeleton** *minions* wielding clubs, shortswords, and javelins. They move to the nearest adventurer and attack!

Relics of Power: Littered throughout the room are items that belonged to the Frozen King in life. Using an action to damage or destroy one of these relics stuns the Frozen King for 1 round.





NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

1. SIEGFRIED: LONE SOLDIER

"I'll do my duty, but I'm not dying for a frozen mummy."

- Personality:** Duty-driven, but paranoid and untrusting
- Appearance:** Young man with thick, dark hair and slate-gray eyes
- Equipment:** Worn leather armor, a keen-edged broadsword, and a pair of throwing daggers
- Strength:** Skilled swordsman with a long military record
- Drawback:** Prone to taking bribes and preoccupied with saving his own hide
- Secret/Motive:** Siegfried's wife is expecting their first child – Siegfried hopes it's a girl, so she won't have to go to war.

NPC STATS

As previously mentioned, Adventure Kits are designed to be compatible with the fifth edition of the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game. You can use any stat block (from 5E or your preferred system) of a creature that is a suitable challenge rating. We also suggest using the Toolbox in the back of this book to create any stats you need quickly and easily without needing any resources outside of the Adventure Kit.



2. KURTZ: SAVAGE CULT LEADER

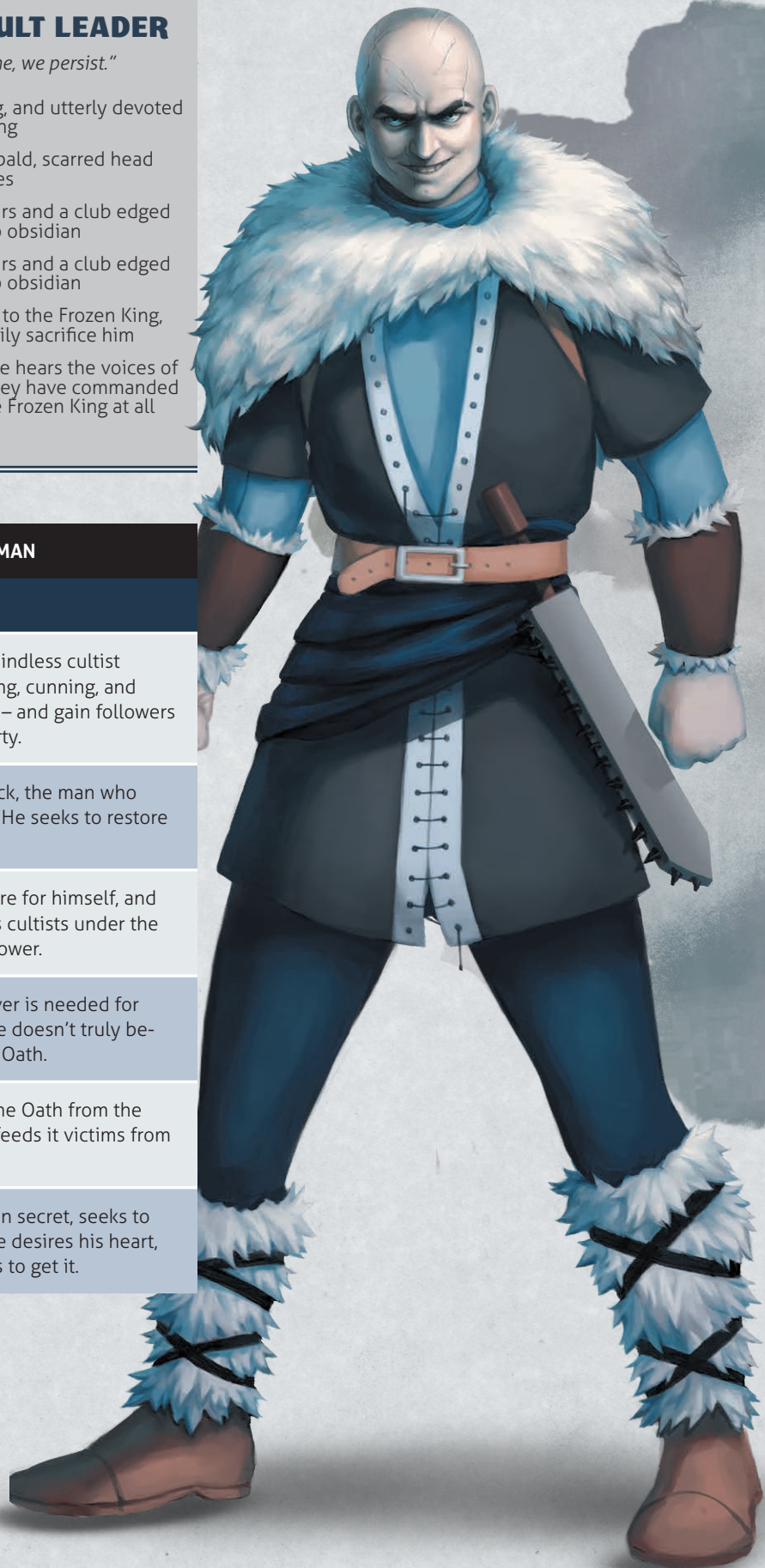
"By the Frozen King's flesh and bone, we persist."

- Personality:** Cold, calculating, and utterly devoted to the Frozen King
- Appearance:** Tall man with a bald, scarred head and ice-blue eyes
- Equipment:** Foul-smelling furs and a club edged with razor-sharp obsidian
- Strength:** Foul-smelling furs and a club edged with razor-sharp obsidian
- Drawback:** Blindly devoted to the Frozen King, who would readily sacrifice him
- Secret/Motive:** Kurtz believes he hears the voices of the gods, and they have commanded him to assist the Frozen King at all costs.

DEPTH OF A MADMAN

d6 Kurtz is...

- 1 A cult leader, but not a mindless cultist himself. He uses reasoning, cunning, and charisma to avoid a fight – and gain followers from the adventuring party.
- 2 A distant ancestor of Eirick, the man who became the Frozen King. He seeks to restore his kin's honor.
- 3 Dying. He is seeking a cure for himself, and is testing methods on his cultists under the guise of granting them power.
- 4 Doing and saying whatever is needed for people to follow him – he doesn't truly believe in the power of the Oath.
- 5 Learning the secrets of the Oath from the Mad Troll, and in return, feeds it victims from his among his followers.
- 6 Feigning reverence, and in secret, seeks to usurp the Frozen King. He desires his heart, and is using his followers to get it.



3. RUSKA: TOMB ROBBER

"If this frozen king exists, surely his riches do too..."

- Personality:** Daring, resourceful, and selfish
- Appearance:** Wiry man with jet black hair and a chipped tooth
- Equipment:** Winter clothes, a sturdy bow, and a satchel with hidden pockets
- Strength:** Resourceful and scrappy, with an affinity for survival
- Drawback:** Self-serving and terrified of death
- Secret/Motive:** Ruska has died once already, and is not keen to do so again. He sees this score as his chance for eternal life.

4. VARNISS: LOST ADVENTURER

"I may be alone here, but I'm far from helpless."

- Personality:** Curt, but honest and sincere
- Appearance:** A lithe halfling woman with close-cropped hair
- Equipment:** A notched shortsword and dented buckler
- Strength:** Values the truth over just about anything
- Drawback:** Owes favors to one too many unsavory folks
- Secret/Motive:** Varniss is responsible for the death of her sibling. She sees this as an opportunity for atonement.



5. GRAST: GRUFF MERCENARY

"I've been hired to do a job. I intend to finish it."

- Personality:** Money-driven, with an unshakable work ethic
- Appearance:** Stout dwarf with a messy topknot and braided beard
- Equipment:** Hide armor, a well-worn crossbow, and a stale-smelling pipe
- Strength:** Always sees the job through – no matter the cost
- Drawback:** Coin is everything, and the contract comes first
- Secret/Motive:** Grast left his fellow mercenaries to die deep in the keep – he hopes he won't encounter their undead forms.

6. HALEY: STALWART PALADIN

"If none shall stand against this Frozen King, then I shall."

- Personality:** Loyal and honorable, with a hidden mean streak
- Appearance:** Braided blonde hair, with a grisly scar across her nose
- Equipment:** Plate armor, a silver holy symbol, and a lucerne hammer
- Strength:** Fearless and skilled in combat
- Drawback:** Quick to anger and prone to violence
- Secret/Motive:** Haley has long doubted her own faith, and seeks to rekindle her connection with her deity by purging the keep of evil and retrieving the sacred runeblade.



MONSTERS



1. ICE SKELETON

Undead Minion

Appearance: Frozen flesh and rusted chainmail hang from the bones of this undead fiend. A cold, blue light burns from the hollows of its skull as it shambles towards you.

Behavior: *Berserk and frenzied.* Attacks any creatures nearby – friend or foe.

Bufs: None

STATS

Hit Points	Armor Class	Roll Bonus
5	10	+2

DAMAGE BY LEVEL

Level 1-4	Level 5-10	Level 11-16	Level 17-20
1 dmg	6 dmg	10 dmg	14 dmg

SIMPLIFIED STATBLOCKS

You will recognize a few terms in this section, such as monster type, hit points, appearance, and armor class. But you'll also find a few new terms in our stat blocks that are designed to provide flexibility.

Monster Threat Level: Monsters are broken into four different threat levels – minion, skirmisher, vanguard, and nemesis – which dictate base hit points, armor class, and roll bonus.

Behavior: Specific cues as to how the monster might act when the adventurers encounter it.

Bufs: Unique abilities that up the challenge of the monster. Find more bufes in the Toolbox!

Roll Bonus: In place of ability modifiers, skills, and attack rolls, our simplified monsters have a single "roll bonus," which is a flat number that is added to all of their rolls.

Damage: Damage is broken into different tiers corresponding to the level of your adventurers. This means the monsters can be used against a party of any power level.

2. ZEALOT

Humanoid Skirmisher

Appearance: Draped in foul-smelling furs, this scarred human wields a rusted dagger and sneers with pointed, rotting teeth.

Behavior: *Blindly loyal.* Ready to do whatever it takes for their cause.

Bufs: *Defense (1)* – Adds 1 to armor class

STATS		
Hit Points	Armor Class	Roll Bonus
15	13	+3

DAMAGE BY LEVEL			
Level 1-4	Level 5-10	Level 11-16	Level 17-20
1 dmg	6 dmg	10 dmg	14 dmg

3. KENNEL HOUND

Beast Skirmisher

Appearance: This black-furred hound has smoldering red eyes. Icy breath plumes from its flared nostrils as it sniffs you out.

Behavior: *Pack tactics.* Coordinating to hunt, kill, and survive.

Bufs: *Resistance: Cold*

STATS		
Hit Points	Armor Class	Roll Bonus
12	11	+2

DAMAGE BY LEVEL			
Level 1-4	Level 5-10	Level 11-16	Level 17-20
1 dmg	6 dmg	10 dmg	14 dmg

ENDLESS MONSTERS

You can find more ideas for thematic monsters, as well as a monster generator, in the Toolbox at the back of this book.



4. MAD TROLL

Giant Vanguard

Appearance: This gangled troll has mottled, rubbery blue skin, and wears the combined skins of a multitude of smaller creatures.

Behavior: *Violently territorial.* Obsessed with the words of the Frozen King's Oath.

Bufs: *Regeneration (1d6)* – Regains 1d6 HP at start of turn

STATS

Hit Points	Armor Class	Roll Bonus
33	15	+6

DAMAGE BY LEVEL

Level 1-4	Level 5-10	Level 11-16	Level 17-20
6 dmg	10 dmg	14 dmg	18 dmg

5. HAND OF THE FROZEN KING

Undead Vanguard

Appearance: This tall, lean figure is garbed in the armored robes of the Frozen King's augurs. A gaunt skeletal visage peers out from the flickering, blue flames that escape its pitted steel gorget. With hands of bone, it begins to conjure a vile spell.

Behavior: *Unshakable.* Will not retreat, no matter how dire the odds.

Bufs: *Multiattack (2)* – Can make two attacks each turn; *Magic (2)* – Knows two at-will spells

STATS

Hit Points	Armor Class	Roll Bonus
33	14	+6

DAMAGE BY LEVEL

Level 1-4	Level 5-10	Level 11-16	Level 17-20
6 dmg	10 dmg	14 dmg	18 dmg



6. THE FROZEN KING

Undead Nemesis

Appearance: An imposing armored figure, with flowing white hair and a skeletal visage. His chest is hollow, and within, a frozen heart pulsates with pale light. He clutches an enormous maul etched with runes, his eye sockets glowing a vibrant blue.

Behavior: *Revered by his peers.* Other creatures will follow orders, sacrificing themselves for their king.

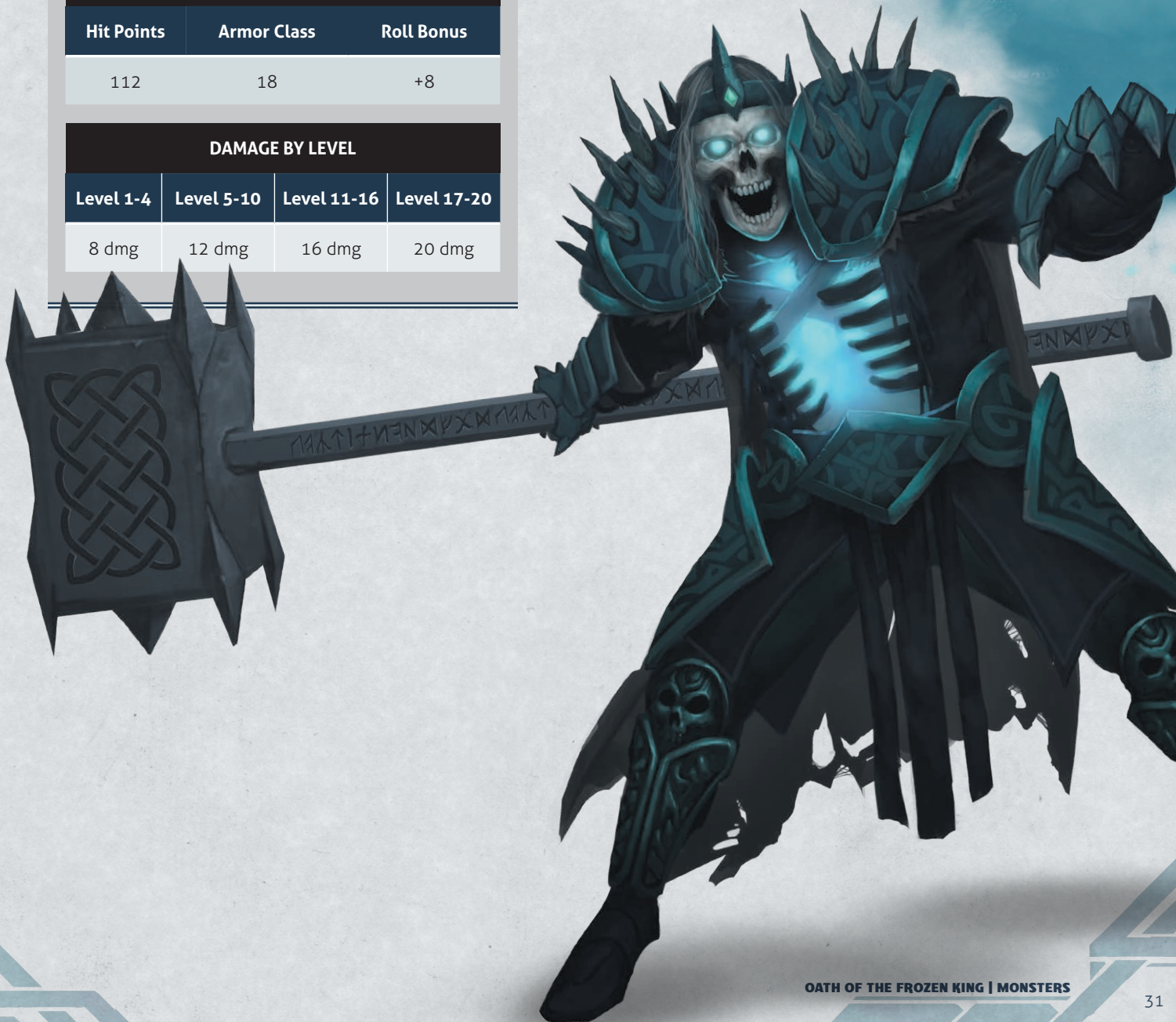
Bufs: *Multiattack (2)* – Can make two attacks each turn; *Deadly (1d6)* – Adds 1d6 damage to attacks; *Magic (2)* – Knows two at-will spells; *Immunity: Cold*

STATS

Hit Points	Armor Class	Roll Bonus
112	18	+8

DAMAGE BY LEVEL

Level 1-4	Level 5-10	Level 11-16	Level 17-20
8 dmg	12 dmg	16 dmg	20 dmg



RESOLUTIONS AND REWARDS

RESOLVING THE ADVENTURE

Answer the following questions to close out *Oath of the Frozen King*.

1. **The Quest:** Did the adventurers complete their quest? To what degree? What repercussions might arise?
2. **The Patron:** How will the patron react to the adventure's outcome?
3. **The Complication:** Was the complication resolved? What happens next?

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

If you're looking to extend the adventure, consider answer the questions below, which tie directly into the conflicts laid out in the Adventure Overview.

- **The Cult and the King:** Was the cannibalistic cult able to break into the Frozen King's tomb? Did their ancient ritual succeed? If so, the Frozen King has awakened. What will his first evil act be?
- **The Frigid Tomb:** Does the keep remain unguarded? In addition to cultists and tomb raiders alike, what monstrous denizens would take residence there? What would their aims be?

- **The Sacred Sword:** Who holds the runeblade? What arcane secrets does it hold? Does it have a mind of its own?
- **The King's Call:** What happens to the locals who heard the whispers of the Frozen King? Have they gone mad? Do they long to hear his commands once more? Have they sworn to destroy him?

REPERCUSSIONS AND RETALIATION

You can't keep everyone happy. Often success for one faction or individual means a loss or setback for another. To make things interesting and continue the conflict, you can have the outcome of the adventure upset another individual or faction. Use the Repercussions and Retaliation table to generate the opposition who has been upset by the adventure's outcome, and their plan of retaliation.

REWARDS AND TREASURE

Use the Treasure and Social Rewards tables to reward the party for surviving the Maw of Black Ice. These can be loot or items of note the party recovers inside the Maw, or rewards from their patron. Roll one for each character, or as many times as you see fit.

REPERCUSSIONS AND RETALIATION		
d12 ²	Opposition	Plan of Retaliation
1	Divine Clergy	The adventurers' loved ones are now in danger.
2	Respected Scholar	They uncover the adventurers' weaknesses, and plan to exploit them.
3	Influential Faction	They capture or kill a trusted ally of the adventurers.
4	Powerful Guild	They put the word out – the adventurers are not to be trusted.
5	Local Authorities	They know a dark secret about one of the adventurers' past – and exploit it.
6	Influential Politician	The adventurers are framed for a crime they didn't commit.
7	Old Friend	They call in a favor from a powerful ally to interfere with the adventurers' progress.
8	Ranking Soldier	They dispatch assassins to deal with the adventurers.
9	Beloved Relative	They cut off a valuable source of income or information for the adventurers.
10	Shady Contact	Good, old-fashioned, violent revenge.
11	Townfolk	The adventurers are no longer welcome in a place they once called home – for fear of death.
12	Wealthy Merchant	They exploit the law to inhibit the adventurers' actions.

TREASURE

d10 Item

- 1 10 gold pieces per level
- 2 20 silver pieces per level
- 3 1d4 rare gems per adventurer
- 4 **Skald's Steel of Shrewdness:** This set of engraved steel plates is contained in a leather case trimmed with white fox fur. This tome provides +1 bonus to Intelligence (Arcana) checks.
- 5 **The Grimoire of Skava:** This eldritch tome is written in pitch and bound in carved wooden plates. It grants a +1 bonus to checks using a poisoner's kit.
- 6 **Crown of Bone and Ice:** Once per day, the wearer may give a simple command to an undead creature, who must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or follow the simple command.
- 7 **Boots of Frozen Resolve:** Worn boots. When standing, if an effect would move the wearer against their will, the distance is halved.
- 8 **Sacred Runeblade:** A rune-etched +1 greatsword with +1d8 damage versus undead.
- 9 **Frost Sigil:** A silver-blue amulet that grants resistance to cold damage.
- 10 **Oathkeeper:** The Frozen King's massive +1 maul with +1d6 cold damage.

SOCIAL REWARDS

d6 Reward

- 1 **New Allies:** The chieftain of the local city is indebted to you for your assistance.
- 2 **Silver Badges:** You are deputized and outfitted by the Varnholme royal guard.
- 3 **Quiet Minds Once More:** A handful of cultists, their minds awakened to the reality of the Frozen King, pledge themselves to you in thanks.
- 4 **History Remembers the Victors:** A plaque of brass is engraved with your names and placed at the entrance of the tomb.
- 5 **A Place Among Thieves:** The tomb robbers acknowledge your skills and offer you a place among them – there's coin and adventure to be had.
- 6 **A Fresh Start:** The local villagers honor you with a plot of fertile land and a few goats. Maybe it's time to settle down...

TIES THAT BIND

d6 Connection

- 1 **Choose an NPC.** They recognize the surname of one of the adventurers.
- 2 **Choose an encounter.** It reminds an adventurer of a tragic past event.
- 3 **Choose two monsters.** The party finds them fighting over an item or piece of treasure that they recognize.
- 4 **Choose a location.** The adventurers find a book within that answers a crucial question.
- 5 **Choose a trinket or mundane treasure.** It's an item from an adventurer's home town.
- 6 **Choose a monster and an NPC.** They are sworn enemies, each stopping at nothing, trying to kill one another.

TOOLBOX

Herein lies the final piece of the Adventure Kit puzzle – the Toolbox. The Toolbox provides a rules reference to some of the mechanics and terms used throughout this book, as well as a wealth of roll tables, inspiration, and generators designed to help you be a better game master. Roll up endless rooms, monsters, NPCs, traps, and skill challenges. The Toolbox can be used to enhance and expand your *Oath of the Frozen King* adventure – or any adventure you might be running!

ADVENTURE ODDITIES

The following tables are designed to add thematic elements and fun details without breaking the cohesion of the overall adventure. They highlight the looming, ever-present threat of the Frozen King and his oath. Use these tables when you need a quick burst of terror to remind the adventurers that they are not alone here in the tomb...

THEMATIC PHRASES			
d20	Phrase	d20	Phrase
1	Frozen Crypt	11	Trollchamber
2	Violent Zealots	12	Deserted Passages
3	Long-Dead Frost	13	Undead Rabble
4	Frigid Cannibals	14	Oathkeeper Ambush
5	Ice-Covered Relics	15	Lost Iceways
6	Windburn	16	Skeletal Scavengers
7	Runic Blade	17	Weary and Freezing
8	Vengeful King	18	Creeping Guardians
9	Archaic Ice Traps	19	Snowblind
10	Chilling Whispers	20	Deafening Silence

WHISPERS OF THE FROZEN KING	
d20	Description
1	You see a skull in the ice, briefly. When you look again, it's gone.
2	A distant, rasping whisper urges you forward.
3	A chill wind flows over you, carrying the stench of decay.
4	A shadow moves in your peripheral vision – but nothing is there.
5	A skeletal hand tugs at the back of your tunic, then vanishes.
6	You find fiendish runes, scrawled in blood across the floor.
7	A distant scream splits the silence, reverberating through the ice.
8	Bones crunch underfoot like brittle leaves.
9	The melting ice appears to drip blood.
10	A disembodied voice whispers your name, almost inaudibly.
11	Slow, heavy footfalls echo through the chamber, fading into the distance.
12	Your shadow appears to move on its own for a split-second.
13	A decaying, disembodied hand clutches a note reading "There's no way out."
14	Something breathes, heavy and rasping, deeper within the keep.
15	Hair stands up on the back of your neck – you are being watched.
16	Discordant music echoes from somewhere above you.
17	You hear the snarling of vicious beasts from the other side of the wall.
18	The room suddenly settles into its shoddy foundations, jolting you downward.
19	Bones clatter in the next room.
20	A hulking, armored silhouette stands before you, breathing steadily. It soon fades.



ITEMS AND LOOT

As the adventurers traverse the icy keep of the Frozen King, they'll certainly find items and loot in rooms and on their fallen enemies. Generate infinite loot with the following tables.

SET DRESSING

d10	Description
1	Barrels filled with long-spoiled meat. The frost keeps the stench at bay.
2	A weapon rack, still stocked with rusted blades, frozen in place.
3	A huddled skeleton in the corner, clutching a tarnished locket.
4	An arcane torch, sputtering with a blood-red flame that emits only light – no heat.
5	A rusted floor grate, leading to a deeper level of the keep.
6	A locked chest, frozen shut, and filled with fake gold coins.
7	A mummified corpse, frozen inside the wall.
8	Clusters of oddly shaped barrels and crates, providing ample cover from ranged attacks.
9	A dividing wall of ice, peppered with murder holes for bowmen.
10	Collapsed pillars and ruined walls.

INSTANT HAZARDS

d6	Description
1	An icy sinkhole – 1d4 undead minions ambush the adventurers.
2	A sudden snowstorm – Survival check to find shelter, or suffer 1 level of exhaustion.
3	A gust of brutal, icy wind – Dexterity saving throw or suffer cold damage.
4	The ceiling collapses – Dexterity saving throw to avoid bludgeoning damage.
5	A wandering frost troll – Stealth check to avoid its savage ire.
6	A territorial mountain goat – Animal Handling check to calm the beast.

COMMON LOOT

d20	Item
1	1d6 copper pieces per level
2	1d8 silver pieces per level
3	Leather bag of strong-smelling incense
4	Silver mirror with cracked glass
5	Talisman of fur and bone
6	Pewter chime
7	Rabbit fur gloves
8	Canteen full of clean water
9	Small potion of healing
10	Leather belt with pouches of dried herbs
11	Silk cloak lined with fur
12	Spell scroll of level 1d4
13	Fine fur and leather cap
14	A woodcutter's axe
15	1d10 gold pieces per level
16	Bolt of fine cloth
17	1d4 dried rations
18	2d10 gold pieces per level
19	Quiver of arrows
20	3d10 gold pieces per level

TRINKETS

d20	Item
1	A worn sword hilt, missing its blade
2	A set of four canopic jars, sculpted with skeletal visages
3	A conch shell carved from ice
4	A clay jug containing the half-frozen dregs of a rare port wine
5	A cracked stone coin, bearing the sigil of a lost noble house
6	A handaxe with a blade of ice that never melts
7	A wide leather belt etched with dwarven runes
8	A black, flat stone that glows brightly when tossed
9	An hourglass filled with drifting snow
10	A gnarled stave of white birch, topped with quartz
11	A palm-sized, crystalline wolf skull
12	A single-edged dagger marked with the initials: EVH
13	A pair of knife-sized claws on a leather string
14	Leather boots tipped with climbing spikes
15	An arrow topped with an ever-frozen icicle
16	A flask of fizzing blue liquid – it's sweet, but painfully cold to drink
17	A yellowed humanoid femur bone wrapped in silver twine
18	A white, fur-lined cloak, tattered and muddy at the hem
19	A silver medallion emblazoned with a sneering skull
20	A tarnished brass lantern that sheds silver moonlight



LOCATION GENERATOR

Create infinite locations complete with sensory details using the following tables. Roll for a location first, then utilize the tables for sights, sounds, and sensations to complete the picture.

MAJOR LOCATIONS		
d6	Location	Description
1	The Altar of Sorrow	A simple slab of rough-hewn stone dominates an alcove in this entrance chamber. A stone stairway leads deeper into the keep.
2	The Sword Shrine	The frozen shrine at the center of the room glows a pale white. Somehow, the air in here is even colder.
3	Gunther's Respite	The shadows are deep within the stone cells of this large dungeon. The frigid cold seeps into each cell from circular chutes leading outside.
4	The Hall of Bone and Ice	This enormous feasting hall is a frostbitten shadow of its former glory. A massive wooden table, split in twain, rests at its center, bound together by iron bands. A long-spoiled, frozen feast sits in piles upon the shattered table.
5	Grigor's Kennel	A dozen sunken, circular pits dominate this sour-smelling room. The remains of wolves, giant rats, and other unidentifiable beasts lay in piles at the bottom of these pits, forgotten for centuries.
6	The Frigid Tomb	This dim, frozen tomb carries an overwhelming feeling of oppression and death. A pale white fog wafts in the air, originating from a massive stone sarcophagus.

COMMON LOCATIONS		
d12	Location	Description
1	Armory/Barracks	The walls are lined with rusted spears, swords, and shields. A skeleton in tarnished chainmail leans against a rickety cot.
2	Banquet Hall	Spoiled food and dry goblets are piled upon a long, oaken table surrounded by high-backed chairs. A faded tapestry hangs above the hearth.
3	Divining Room	An octagonal altar, covered in melted wax, dominates this room of glassy, black stone. Runes are etched deep into the floor, spiraling outwards from the altar.
4	Great Hall	Pillars of stone rise to meet a soaring ceiling dripping with icicles.
5	Jail	Eight iron hatches mar the floor in this circular prison, each leading to a frozen, underground holding cell – some of which still contain their icy occupants.
6	Kennel	Canine skeletons lay in frost-covered heaps beyond rusted iron bars.
7	Living Quarters	Footlockers rest at the foot of each cot lining this room, their locks long ago rusted shut. Scrawled on the wall in blood is: "The oath will be fulfilled."
8	Sacrificial Chamber	A sunken basin at the center of the room is stained with ages-old blood. Runes circle the basin, and a blade of obsidian rests nearby on a raised altar.
9	Trophy Room	This room is full of mounted animal heads of all kinds, highlighted by the towering, stuffed, dire bear frozen in a roar.
10	Smithy	The forge sits cold and lifeless in one corner of this room, surrounded by various tools. In another corner, the water of a freezing spring spills out into a black basin before returning to the caverns below.
11	Throne Room	Ratty carpets line the approach to a massive throne, stained with old blood.
12	Torture Chamber	Bladed implements and chains line the walls. The floors are stained with blood.

MUNDANE LOCATIONS

d6	Location	Description
1	Hallway	A narrow stone passageway with a floor of cracked flagstone. Ice coats the walls.
2	Storage Room	Barrels and crates are stacked to the ceiling. Burlap sacks of rotten grain and vegetables spill their contents across the floor.
3	Garbage Pit	This deep pit brims with frozen refuse and detritus of all kinds.
4	Antechamber	Dusty furniture dominates this small chamber. Portraits of cruel-faced nobility line the walls.
5	Latrine	The smell of stale feces assaults your nostrils, emanating from the chamber pot in the corner.
6	Common Area	Frozen skeletons slump in the corners of this room, clutching each other in their final moments. The sconces lining the walls are cold.



SIGHTS

d10	Description
1	A severed, fleshy hand, attached to the handle of a sword.
2	A simple stone dais, cluttered with worn copper coins.
3	A set of vaguely humanoid ice sculptures, their faces frozen in silent screams.
4	An ancient broadsword with runic curses etched upon it.
5	An enormous frozen tomb, adorned with carvings and runes.
6	A climbing, crawling fog of a pale white color.
7	Scraps of parchment with words denouncing the Frozen King and his reign.
8	Walls of black ice, sinister and ancient.
9	Yellowed bones of various shapes and sizes.
10	Leather pouches of assorted colors and sizes, each containing a full set of human teeth.

SENSATIONS

d10	Description
1	A chilling blast of wind, seemingly from nowhere, blows powerfully and steadily.
2	The air is so cold it hurts to breathe.
3	The cold air bites constantly, stealing all warmth.
4	The room itself rumbles with intermittent tremors.
5	Something slouched and hulking moves in the shadows of the room.
6	The room seems to be slowly melting. The walls and floor are slick.
7	The odd formations of ice make the actual shape of the room indiscernible.
8	As you blink, it feels as though your eyelids might freeze shut.
9	This place is devoid of all smell, save the twinge of icy steel in the air.
10	Your reflection in the ice appears gaunt and hollow – almost skeletal.

SOUNDS

d10	Description
1	Ice crunches underfoot.
2	A sickening hum of low, droning white noise.
3	An incessant dripping echoes through the chamber.
4	A low, sickening hum drones at the edge of your senses.
5	A faint, rhythmic breathing emanates from deeper in the keep.
6	The creaking and cracking ice rapidly thawing and freezing.
7	The wind whips through the chamber.
8	Something clamors below, howling in the night.
9	Whispers and weeping haunt this location.
10	The rhythmic chime of a chisel against ice reverberates through the chambers ahead.



ENCOUNTER GENERATOR

Generate additional encounters quickly by selecting the encounter terrain, encounter features, and encounter events. You can make your encounter even more challenging by adding monsters from the monster generator table.

ENCOUNTER TERRAIN			
d20	Description	d20	Description
1	Flagstones randomly fall away into an icy chasm below	11	Ankle-deep frigid water
2	Glyphs etched into the floor dispel magic	12	Stone flooring radiating extreme cold
3	Uneven, jagged flooring of icy stones.	13	Floor carved into a giant topographical map
4	Floor covered with thick ice	14	Thick, knee-high snow
5	Slime-covered icy flooring	15	Thick tree roots growing through the floor
6	Constantly shifting soft, powdery snow	16	Rickety rope bridges overhanging an icy chasm
7	Fresh, earthen flooring, devoid of ice	17	Platforms of varying heights
8	A burning gutter of fire rings the room	18	Nonsensical series of stairs and ladders
9	Floor littered with skulls and bones	19	Intermittent pressure plates activate gusts of icy wind
10	Intermittent pressure plates activate dart traps	20	Faded letters carved into the frozen floor spell out a clue

ENCOUNTER FEATURES			
d20	Description	d20	Description
1	Racks of spears and shields frozen in place	11	Swinging bladed pendulum edged with razor sharp icicles
2	Rickety wooden scaffolding, covered in icicles	12	Icy chains hanging from the ceiling
3	Large burning brazier, snow melting around it	13	Heavy mounted crossbow on a dais
4	Alchemist's table with bubbling liquids	14	Crates filled with partially frozen acid flasks
5	Ravenous, arctic dire-rats chained to a wall	15	Large pit full of deadly frozen stalagmites
6	Large stone statues wielding iron weapons	16	Dilapidated siege weaponry
7	Wall spout intermittently spewing shards of razor-sharp ice	17	Massive crumbling stone pillars
8	Glowing veins of magically potent minerals	18	Blood-red anti-magic crystals
9	Kegs filled with explosive fire powder	19	Large, hanging light fixture made of iron and wood
10	Overflowing water channel, now entirely frozen creating an odd walkway	20	Faded murals of history with hidden switches and levers

ENCOUNTER EVENTS

d100	Description	d100	Description
1-2	Room begins flooding with frigid water	51-52	Floor falls away in sections
3-4	Secret door appears when splashed with blood	53-54	Mutiny erupts within enemy ranks
5-6	Razor sharp icicles rise from floor/walls/ceiling	55-56	Room begins filling with noxious, frigid gas
7-8	Room begins revolving on an ancient swivel	57-58	Frozen spires jut up from the ground
9-10	Murder holes open in the walls and ceiling	59-60	A massive icy pit opens in the center of the room
11-12	Enemy reinforcements arrive	61-62	Enemies begin polymorphing
13-14	Something susceptible flash freezes	63-64	Doors seal themselves with magical ice
15-16	Enemies retreat and take cover behind barricade	65-66	Effects of the Frozen King's oath fill enemies with violent rage
17-18	Icy walls begin to crumble	67-68	Frozen, arcane obelisks appear and begin spewing spells
19-20	Room begins freezing over	69-70	Enemies surrender and call for parley
21-22	Enemies fire ranged weapons from the rafters	71-72	Wall of thick ice rises from the floor to divide the room in half
23-24	Wall of ice crumbles to reveal a monstrous creature	73-74	A rift appears from deep within the Maw of Black Ice and begins pulling things in
25-26	Platform of blades bursts from the floor	75-76	All nearby light sources go out
27-28	A formidable enemy appears	77-78	Strong freezing wind threatens to knock everyone prone
29-30	Fallen enemies rise as undead	79-80	Enemy pulls out a wand and starts slinging spells
31-32	Summoning circle activates and creatures appear	81-82	Fallen weapons float to attack
33-34	Statue begins pulling all metal towards itself	83-84	Icy debris begins falling from the ceiling
35-36	Enemy draws repeating crossbow and opens fire	85-86	Gravity doubles, weighing everything down
37-38	Empty suit of armor activates to attack	87-88	Weapons get brief elemental damage
39-40	Huge icy chasm opens up in the floor	89-90	Enemies start throwing alchemist's fire
41-42	Bigger monster appears to chase enemies away	91-92	You begin experiencing hallucinations.
43-44	Enemy downs a potion and doubles in size	93-94	Unknown force seizes control of enemies
45-46	Massive tree erupts from the ground	95-96	Room begins collapsing
47-48	Earthquake!	97-98	Deafening roar fills the your ears
49-50	A treasure chest is uncovered from ice	99-00	Gravity reverses

MONSTER GENERATOR

This section is designed to generate the flavor and mechanics for the monsters in your adventure. You can generate these things in any order, using as much or as little as needed for your taste to create as many tabletop terrors as you need.

MONSTER TYPE AND APPEARANCE

d100	Type	Appearance
1-5	Aberration	This putrid creature has a layer of oily, crystalline slime frozen upon its flesh.
6-15	Beast	This creature is covered in thick, mottled fur, to protect it from the cold.
16-20	Celestial	This creature seems unaffected by the cold, emanating an aura of heat and light.
21-25	Construct	The dark stone that this creature is hewn from was taken from the Maw of Black Ice itself.
26-27	Dragon	This frost-born dragon has pale white scales coated with fractal ice that appears as diamonds.
28-35	Elemental	This asymmetrical creature of pure ice and snow emits sleet and ice.
36-45	Fey	This beautiful creature appears to love the cold, and has manipulated ice to form beautifully detailed armor.
46-50	Fiend	Steam bathes this creature wherever it roams, as the sizzle of fiery flesh and melting snow follows it.
51-60	Giant	This ganged giant has blue-white skin and a crystalline beard of ice.
61-70	Humanoid	This creature is dressed in furs and leathers, prepared for the weather of this brutal tundra.
71-75	Monstrosity	This creature's anatomy speaks of its evolution to survive in this tundra. It has fur or a thick hide, and its colors range from the pale bluish of ice to the stark white of fresh snow.
76-78	Ooze	Appearing as a shimmering pool of slowly rippling ice crystals, this strangely beautiful creature glides about in a viscous mass.
79-80	Plant	This durable plant appears more lush and green than expected, though it is covered with an infinitesimal dusting of tiny ice crystals.
81-00	Undead	The tatters of flesh that hang from this shambling creature are frostbitten and worn, with portions of its exposed innards frozen in place.

GIVE MONSTERS MOTIVES

Why is this creature here? Who does it serve? What does it want? Answer one or all of those questions to inform your monsters' behavior. Take it a step further by making this monster's goals in direct opposition to what the adventurers want.

Another trick is to roll on the quest table at the beginning of this Adventure Kit, and assign a quest to the monster you're creating to give them a mission and purpose that matters. Alternatively, you can use the NPC generator in this toolbox to give them a unique secret or motive.



MONSTER BEHAVIOR

d10	Behavior	Effect
1	Cowardly: Surrenders at the first opportunity	This creature must succeed a Charisma saving throw or flee at the first sight of blood.
2	Overconfident: Overestimates its own abilities	This creature gravitates toward the most powerful perceived threat.
3	Zealous: Prepared to do whatever it takes	This creature will sacrifice itself and others without thought.
4	Unshakable: Will not retreat, no matter how dire the odds	This creature fights ferociously until its last breath.
5	Conscripted: Fights against its will	Unless it succeeds a Charisma saving throw at the beginning of combat, this creature attacks at disadvantage.
6	Revered: Commands lesser creatures, and they obey without question	Its peers listen to its commands, and attempt to assist this creature.
7	Greedy: Values treasure above all else	This creature takes any opportunity to steal treasure, and can be bribed easily.
8	Frenzied: Attacks any nearby creatures, friend and foe alike	This creature attacks the nearest creature, friendly or enemy.
9	Mocking: Throws an endless wave of taunts and insults during combat	This creature favors supporting its allies and disrupting its enemies.
10	Selfish: Will turn on its allies, if need be	This creature is loyal only to itself, and does whatever it takes to stay alive.

QUICK MONSTER STATS

d8	Monster Threat Level	Hit Points	Armor Class	Roll Bonus
1-2	Minion	1 to 5	10	+1 to +2
3-4	Skirmisher	11 to 33	10 to 11	+3 to +5
5-6	Vanguard	33 to 66	12 to 15	+6 to +8
7-8	Nemesis	66 to 132	16 to 20	+9 to +12

MONSTER DAMAGE BY ADVENTURER LEVEL

Adventurer Level	Minion	Skirmisher	Vanguard	Nemesis
1st to 4th	1 to 4	4 to 6	6 to 8	8 to 10
5th to 10th	6 to 8	8 to 10	10 to 12	12 to 14
11th to 16th	10 to 12	12 to 14	14 to 16	16 to 18
17th to 20th	14 to 16	16 to 18	18 to 20	20 to 22

MONSTER BUFFS

d10	Buff	Description
1	Multiattack (X)	Can make a number of attacks equal to X
2	Defense (X)	Adds X to armor class
3	Deadly (X)	Adds X damage to attacks
4	Brute	On a successful melee attack, may grapple target
5	Magic (X)	Knows a number of at-will spells equal to X
6	Focus	Has advantage on checks with one ability or skill
7	Regeneration (X)	Regains X HP at start of turn
8	Resistance	Has resistance to one type of damage
9	Immunity	Has immunity to one type of damage
10	Flight (X)	Has a fly speed equal to X

UNIQUE UNDEAD

d4	Description
1	These risen creatures have been preserved in ice, and still retain most of their frostbitten flesh.
2	These undead have lucid, human eyeballs set into their skulls – windows into tortured souls.
3	The undead have translucent ice covering their bones, akin to crystalline muscle and sinew.
4	These undead have bone of a stark black, and carry the stench of sulfur.
5	These skeletal beings have icicles protruding from their bodies like lethal spears, and from their hands like vicious claws.
6	These undead are patchwork abominations, created through vile magic and made up of many different creatures.

CALCULATING MONSTER DCs

When calculating a saving throw DC for a monster, such as when a monster casts a spell, simply halve that monster's roll bonus and round down, then add 10 to that number. So a spell save DC for a nemesis monster would be anywhere from 14 or 16.

THEMATIC MONSTERS

d8	Monster
1	Frost Orc – Skirmisher with multiattack (2) and resistance: cold
2	Goblin Stalker – Minion with focus: stealth
3	Ice Mephit – Minion with flight, magic (2), and resistance: cold
4	Half-Giant Raider – Vanguard with multiattack (2) and focus: strength
5	Skinchanger – Vanguard with magic (1) and brute
6	Yeti Howler – Vanguard with multiattack (2), defense, and resistance: cold
7	Frost Wurm – Nemesis with multiattack (3), magic (3), immunity: cold, and flight (80)
8	Glacial Titan – nemesis with multiattack (3), defense (3), regeneration, and immunity: cold

SKILL CHALLENGE GENERATOR

Skill challenges require multiple skill checks from the adventurers, typically three to five successful checks before an equal number of failed checks are accrued. Critical successes (i.e. a natural 20) count as two successes – likewise, critical failures (i.e. natural 1s) count as two failures.

Oftentimes, skill challenges require multiple skills. For example, adventurers escaping a crumbling dungeon might face a skill challenge requiring Strength to push aside a boulder, Dexterity to dodge falling rocks, Constitution to swim to safety, and Wisdom to find a safe path.

SKILL CHALLENGES BY ABILITY

d6	Ability	Related Skills
1	Strength	Athletics
2	Dexterity	Acrobatics, Sleight of Hand, Stealth
3	Constitution	None
4	Intelligence	Arcana, History, Investigation, Nature, Religion
5	Wisdom	Animal Handling, Insight, Medicine, Perception, Survival
6	Charisma	Deception, Intimidation, Performance, Persuasion

SKILL CHALLENGE DIFFICULTY

d6	Difficulty	DC
1	Easy	11 to 12
2-3	Moderate	13 to 14
4	Difficult	15 to 16
5	Extreme	17 to 18
6	Near Impossible	19 to 20+

THEMATIC SKILL CHALLENGES

d6	Thematic Skill Challenges
1	Strength – Pushing aside heavy, ice-slick stones to proceed
2	Dexterity – Dodging falling stalactites of razor-sharp ice
3	Constitution – Braving a frigid ice storm to gain entry through a collapsed wall or ceiling
4	Intelligence – Identifying items belonging to the Frozen King for clues to defeat him
5	Wisdom – Navigating the frozen landscape in the keep and surrounding area
6	Charisma – Negotiating with violent cultists of the Frozen King



TRAP GENERATOR

This section is designed to generate limitless, unique traps for your adventure. Generate the trap by selecting its style, the type of saving throw required, and the consequences the trap imposes. Then, decide how difficult you would like the trap to be to disarm, and how dangerous it will be if the party fails (setback, dangerous, or deadly).

SAVING THROW	
d6	Saving Throw Required
1	Charisma – Fool a sentient trigger, or overcome fear
2	Constitution – Physically withstand the consequences
3	Dexterity – Dodge deftly with speed and skill
4	Intelligence – Conjure knowledge, or resist magic
5	Strength – Stop with brute force
6	Wisdom – Perceive its threat, or use survival skills

TRAP CONSEQUENCES		
d12 ²	Damage Type	Conditions
1	Acid	Blinded
2	Bludgeoning	Charmed
3	Cold	Deafened
4	Fire	Exhaustion
5	Force	Frightened
6	Lightning	Grappled/Restrained
7	Necrotic	Incapacitated
8	Poison	Invisible
9	Psychic	Paralyzed/Petrified
10	Radiant	Prone
11	Slashing/Piercing	Stunned
12	Thunder	Unconscious

TRAP STYLE	
d10	Description
1	A creature's corpse, rigged up as a trap
2	A disguised object that appears normal at first glance
3	A false trap, used to deter would-be intruders
4	A leftover security measure from creatures dwelling in the area
5	An intricate arcane trap that is difficult to perceive
6	A rudimentary trap that is simple to spot
7	A naturally occurring trap
8	A trap built as part of the original structure
9	A particularly deadly trap created by a well-known trapsmith
10	A trap much larger and more intricate than it first appears. Roll two traps and combine them.



TRAP SAVE DIFFICULTY AND ROLL BONUSES

d6	Trap Danger	Save DC	Roll Bonus
1-2	Setback	10 to 11	+3 to +5
3-5	Dangerous	12 to 15	+6 to +8
6	Deadly	16 to 20+	+9 to +12

TRAP DAMAGE SEVERITY

Adventurer Level	Setback	Dangerous	Deadly
1st to 4th	1d10 (6)	2d10 (11)	4d10 (22)
5th to 10th	2d10 (11)	4d10 (22)	10d10 (55)
11th to 16th	4d10 (22)	10d10 (55)	18d10 (99)
17th to 20th	10d10 (55)	18d10 (99)	24d10 (132)

THEMATIC TRAPS

d6	Trap
1	Hunting Trap – Wisdom saving throw to avoid being grappled and piercing damage
2	Giant Falling Icicle – Dexterity saving throw to avoid piercing damage
3	Frostburn Trap – Constitution saving throw to avoid reduced movement speed and cold damage
4	Concealed Bone Flail – Dexterity saving throw to avoid being knocked prone and slashing damage
5	Arcane Claxon – Intelligence saving throw to avoid thunder damage and alerting nearby enemies
6	Bone Ward – Wisdom saving throw to avoid summoning 1d4 ice skeleton minions

NPC GENERATOR

Use the following tables to generate your own non-player characters by choosing their name, personality, appearance, equipment, strengths and drawbacks, and a secret.

NPC NAMES		
d10 ²	First Names	Surnames
1	Jeanna	Langheid
2	Isak	Östlund
3	Jolvar	Holmgren
4	Agnes	Ravel
5	Erick	Raghild
6	Fiona	Furstruhm
7	Ivar	Jakobsson
8	Tomas	Ekblad
9	Henrik	Leifsson
10	Fighurst	Tornquist

NPC PERSONALITY	
d12	Description
1	Duty-driven, but paranoid and untrusting
2	Exceedingly polite, with the hint of an uncommon accent
3	Quiet, yet capable
4	Unable to keep their mouth shut
5	Monotone and unexcitable
6	Aloof, but kind to those who show them respect
7	Road-weary, but friendly
8	Curt but honest and sincere
9	Lithe, strong and helpful
10	Stern and determined
11	Curious, yet cautious
12	Gruff and unshakable

NPC APPEARANCE		
d12 ²	Race	Physical Trait
1	Human	Thick, dark hair and slate-gray eyes
2	Gnome	A thick head of well groomed hair
3	Dwarf	A shaved head
4	Half-Orc	A narrow build, and deep scars
5	Elf	A bald, scarred head, and ice-blue eyes
6	Tiefling	A wiry frame, jet black hair, and a chipped tooth
7	Dragonborn	A pockmarked face and a slim figure
8	Halfling	Graying hair and a fetching face
9	Half-Elf	Short-cropped hair of platinum white
10	Giant-Blooded	Elaborate tattoos
11	Undead	A noose scar ringing their neck
12	Spectral	Blood-shot eyes

NPC GEAR

d12 ³	Weapon	Armor	Items of Note
1	Gnarled obsidian staff	Worn leather armor	Oddly-shaped grimoire
2	Powerful composite bow	Hides and skins	Standard honoring a deity
3	Long, thin warblade	Rare stone armor	Silky azure cloak
4	Golden-handled rapier	Armor of bone	Bounty hunter's net
5	Powerful Maul	Well-dulled plate armor	Note from a prominent priest
6	Whip of bone	Thick chainmail	Skeletal brooch
7	Hand crossbow	Colorful fitted armor	Set of nine fortune-telling runes
8	Gorgeous ivory longbow	Finely crafted elvish armor	Crystal ball made of ice
9	Mighty broadsword	Shimmering silver chainmail	Green journal, filled with various adventures
10	Dual shortswords	Plain clothes, though elegant in style	Pocket watch on a pewter chain
11	Needle-tipped dagger	Armor of magical ice	Halfling-sized spare shoes
12	Warhammer of dark steel	Plate armor with pauldrons of obsidian	Snow-white satchel

NPC STRENGTHS AND DRAWBACKS

d12 ²	NPC Strength	NPC Drawback
1	Skilled with a sword	Prone to taking bribes
2	Knows their way around a longbow	Frail and prone to sickness
3	Remarkably strong	Gambling problem
4	Exceedingly loyal and brave	Dim-witted
5	Has a fantastic memory	Owes favors to many
6	Excellent diplomat	Terrible with money
7	Insightful and wise	Short attention span
8	Values truth over everything	Brazen gloryhound
9	Will help anyone in need	Old fashioned and vocal about it
10	Friend to many, with favors due	Slightly racist
11	Well-read, and able to recall facts	Could get lost in their own hometown
12	Highly skilled at surviving in nature	Compulsive liar

NPC SECRETS AND MOTIVES

d20 Description

- 1 They are responsible for the death of a sibling and this is their opportunity for atonement.
- 2 They are famous for something they didn't do and something here may reveal that.
- 3 They are in love with someone they should not be and this may be their last shot.
- 4 They are in tremendous debt and always looking for their chance to finally get ahead.
- 5 They are painfully claustrophobic. They overtly avoid areas with too few doors and windows.
- 6 They are spying for other powers, and they have valuable information they must report.
- 7 They are bound to this land and cannot leave it, but they are looking for their chance to get away.
- 8 They are wanted for a terrible crime in another region and they fear that newcomers may bring attention to it.
- 9 They believe they hear the voices of the gods. The gods have commanded them to take action here.
- 10 They betrayed people they loved to get ahead. Their position of power is a painful reminder, but they yearn for an opportunity for redemption.
- 11 They failed someone they admired and seek redemption.
- 12 They have an addiction they try to suppress. Every day is another struggle to to beat it – or succumb to it indefinitely.
- 13 They have died once already, and are not keen to do so again. Could this be their chance at life eternal?
- 14 They have sociopathic tendencies. This is the perfect opportunity to act on them – or try to overcome them for good.
- 15 They have a hidden talent they're ashamed of. This seems like an opportunity to prove their talent's worth.
- 16 They know a secret about the local authorities that could get them killed. They have concrete proof of this but fear for their lives.
- 17 They regret selling a family heirloom, and seek to get it back. They constantly visit the location where it was last spotted.
- 18 They stole something from someone powerful. The bill has come due – it's fight, or run.
- 19 They were once a slave. Their past is catching up with them but they'll do anything to never lose their freedom again.
- 20 They're hiding a fugitive – or are a fugitive themselves. The law is on their heels. Now is the time to face the music, come what may.



A CROWN OF BONE AND ICE

THE FALL

Blood soaked the snow the day the man-king died.

From its tunnels, the troll watched, as it had for centuries. It had seen the first snowfall, the coming of the ebon-haired men, the battle with the fair-skins, the raising of the stone keep amidst the craggy ranges of Winter's Tongue. It had seen the birth of the man-king, and the width and breadth of his reign.

The troll watched now as the man-king – the one called Eirick – clutched at his belly, bleeding in the snow. His fetal squirming on the steps reminded the troll of a freshborn. The life of the man-king flowed from a dozen wounds, spilling across the ice and stone, pooling a vibrant crimson in the pristine snow. His crown – a mantle of elk bone and ice-blue sapphires – toppled from his brow and clattered down the steps.

The troll watched the blood, and listened.

The troll knew the power of blood – knew the secrets it held. Not secrets scrawled in tomes – but secrets it learned with its ears. With them, the troll could hear everything speaking. The tunnels it called home thrummed, speaking safety and solitude. The dull patter of endless snowflakes spoke of a coming blizzard. And the rasping scrape of the shifting ice deep within the Maw foretold a looming change – a shift in power.

But there was a new voice that day – the day the man-king died. The troll looked back to the king, whose face paled

and hands trembled as he reached for his maul. His blood betrayed his mortality as it froze, and told the man-king's secrets. The troll heard the whispers of the blood as it dripped and flowed and froze.

For years the man-king's followers – who now surrounded him with bloodied blades – obeyed his every order. They spoke proud tales and sang songs of Good King Eirick, while he banished men and women naked into the tundra to freeze or crushed their skulls with his terrible maul.

These men standing over him now – the men holding the bloody daggers – these were his closest allies. Their loyalty had withered when Eirick killed their kin or cast their pregnant wives into the cold. "No place for new mouths to feed," the king had said. "No kingdom for the weak."

As the food grew scarce, and the cold grew stronger, Eirick's leadership waned. He was uncertain, and though none would speak it, he was afraid. So he turned to the old ways – scrying and divination and portents and strange runes. Heeding his vizier without question or hesitation – the one who would be named Hand of the King in place of worthier men. And the Hand led the king further astray, and showed him things deeper in the ice, and in the Maw – and these things began to work their dark will.

It was always an odd thing, the troll thought, to watch a mortal die. They did not have the Gift, as trolls did. To watch wounds gape like laughing mouths, never closing. To watch skin turn white and brittle, like paper. To watch flesh become bone and bone become ash and ash become dust and dust become nothing.


The usurpers finished the man-king with a sword – a blade of pale, rippled steel, etched with strange runes that glimmered like ice in the midday sun. Through their jeers and curses, the king mustered the last remnant of his profane strength. He gritted his bloodied teeth, and between plumes of white breath, the king spoke. He made an Oath as they drove the blade into his heart. And a new voice spoke from the blood.

"Varnholme is mine in life – it shall remain mine in death. I shall return and restore glory to my kingdom. Then you will know the coldest winter – then you will suffer the slowest, surest death."

The words carried on the icy winds, and the new voice scraped the inside of the troll's ears, and nested in its mind. It trembled, its skin tingling. An Oath was made, and something old – far older than the even troll – listened. The troll turned to the tunnel's frozen walls, and began carving the Oath into the ice. It etched the strange runes again and again – and for the first time in its long life, the troll had something it feared it might forget.



KING EIRICK



"The Oath must be remembered," the troll said. "The Oath must be remembered."

THE OATH

A storm followed the betrayal of the man-king.

The merciless blizzard clawed at the Maw of Black Ice, and a deep cold gripped the mountains. The troll, for the first time in centuries, entered the keep. The bloodletting didn't stop with the murder of the man-king – no, it persisted as the loyalists clashed with the usurpers.

The troll's ears heard everything. The screams of the wounded and dying roared against the stone, twisting into echoes. The prayers of the hopeless skittered along the ground as whispers. And the venomous curses of fathers hung heavy in the air, swearing vengeance for their murdered sons. Even through the deafening secrets crying out from the freshly spilled blood – the Oath spoke louder. And the troll listened.

The troll skulked through the halls, eating its fill of the helpless and wounded, prowling far from the din of battle. It tasted the secrets of the blood, and they tasted empty – hollow. The troll yearned to hear the Oath, and grew hungrier.

Winding deeper into the keep, the troll came upon the kennel. The hounds whimpered in their cages, and a woman knelt beside the man-king's body. The king's corpse lay on a meager bed of burlap and straw, prepared by the loyalists. The woman clutched the king's cold hand within her own, and with the other cleaned his wounds. She did not stir as the troll approached. She was broken, and weeping.

The troll pulled her away from the man-king. The woman was weak, and did not have the Gift. The troll's claws dug into her flesh and she bled. She died quickly, and fell beside her king. Her blood spoke, but the troll ignored it, focusing instead on the broad, gaping wound where the runeblade had plunged into the man-king and ended his mortal life.

The Oath spoke, and the troll listened. It clawed at the wound that the runeblade had left. Peeling back muscle, and gouging fat and bone to ribbons. Carving out a hollow, leaving only the man-king's pierced heart in the pit that was once his chest. With a single, black talon, the troll set to work, carefully scraping the words of the Oath again and again into the frozen heart of the man-king.

The troll shuddered as the runes took on a dim, blue-violet glow.

The Oath of the Frozen King echoed through the keep, and penetrated its walls, sweeping through the mountains

and valleys of Varnholme. All fell subject to the Oath. Ice cracked, speaking the words into the frigid air. The hounds howled, and their baying spoke the Oath. The Oath was in the screams of the dying and the cheers of the victorious. The ringing of steel, the rending of flesh, the breaking of ice and the dripping of blood – they all spoke the Oath.

Varnholme is mine in life – it shall remain mine in death. I shall return and restore glory to my kingdom. Then you will know the coldest winter – then you will suffer the slowest, surest death.

But then, as quickly as they had flickered to life, the runes faded, and the man-king lay dead and frozen on the kennel floor. After some time, his loyalists returned to bury him, and the troll crept away, fleeing further into the keep.

The poor souls who couldn't reconcile the truth of the Oath fled to their freezing deaths in the tundra. And the king's loyal servants – old and new – rallied. They hung the Hand of the King by his neck in the great hall in his pristine ceremonial armor. The rope snapped under the weight, dropping his broken body from the joists, splitting the feasting table at its center. Those that remained carried the king's frozen, marred remains deep into the keep. There, they buried him with his maul, his crown, and the runeblade that ended him, before sealing their Frozen King – and themselves – inside the tomb forever.

From within the keep, the troll watched. And with blood, and the razor tips of its spindly fingers, the troll carved the words of the Oath again and again into the walls.

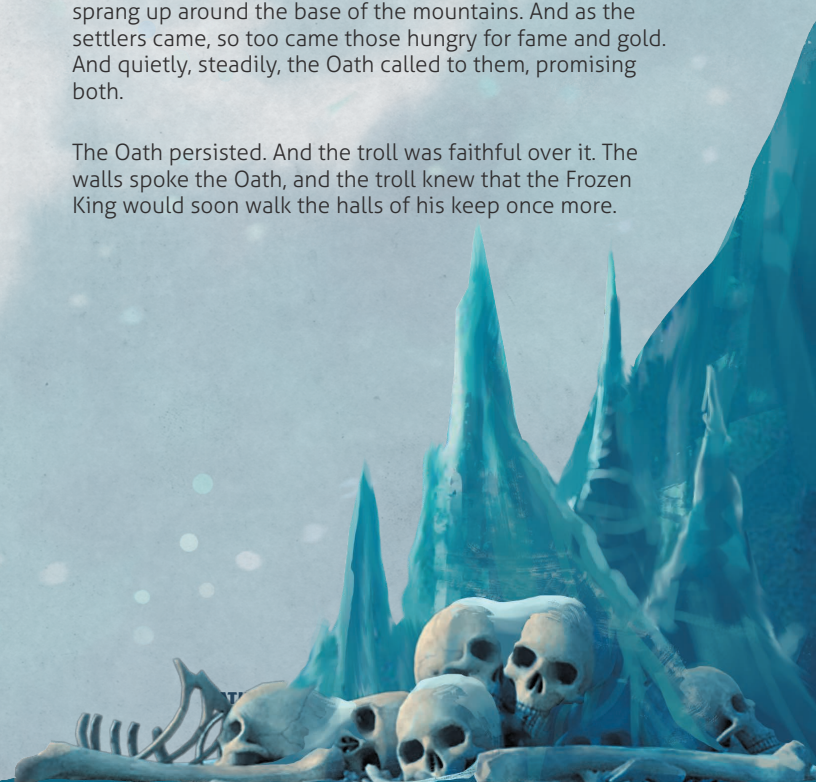
"The Oath must be fulfilled," the troll hissed. "The Oath must be fulfilled."

THE RISE

Blood soaked the snow the day the king returned.

An age had passed, but the troll was ever patient. It waited as the keep crumbled and decayed around it, as the tundra all but consumed the stone halls, as new settlements sprang up around the base of the mountains. And as the settlers came, so too came those hungry for fame and gold. And quietly, steadily, the Oath called to them, promising both.

The Oath persisted. And the troll was faithful over it. The walls spoke the Oath, and the troll knew that the Frozen King would soon walk the halls of his keep once more.



The long winter ended. As the keep emerged from the thawing ice, the troll watched as fresh blood arrived to be spilled anew – fortune hunters who climbed those same steps the king had died upon, and dared to enter his keep. These meddlers didn't know the words – didn't understand the Oath. But they needn't understand the Oath to serve it with their blood.

The four adventurers entered the Maw of Black Ice with sputtering torches and virgin steel. A small, lithe creature with daggers; a large man, wielding a woodcutter's axe; and two women, one an elfen archer, the other robed and meek. The troll waited in the shadows, and heard the warm blood pumping through their bodies. In their hushed whispers as they moved deeper into the keep, the troll sensed fear.

From the shadows, the troll lunged, clutching the smallest of them. With its claws, it removed the screaming man's arm and dropped his wriggling body to the ice. The large one, wielding his axe, swung the weapon wide overhead and brought it down upon the troll. Steel split ancient flesh, and the troll bled its black blood. The axe remained, stuck, and the troll took the man's eyes and left his face a ruin with a rake of its claws. An arrow found its mark, and the archer – the elfish woman – nocked a second. But the troll shattered the bow in its grip, and split her head against the frozen wall.

The last one – the robed woman – spoke old words.

The words of elves and dragons. Power swirled around her, red and bright and terrible. The troll sneered, and pulled her into a tight embrace against the blade of the axe, still protruding from its flesh. The steel did its work, and the words of power died on bloodied lips. The troll's Gift closed its seeping wounds, and its flesh encased itself around the axe and the arrow – trophies of the kills.

The troll drank the secrets of the adventurers' blood and scrawled the Oath into their dead flesh.

The keep shuddered. The king stirred. And the walls spoke the Oath.

"The Oath will be fulfilled," the troll muttered. "The Oath will be fulfilled."

The troll took the bones of the adventurers. And with its gangled, wicked claws, began creating a crown – one of bone and ice.

A crown fit for a king.





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THEY TOOK THE OATH

The names inscribed here belong to some of the 1,231 awesome gamers who backed this project on Kickstarter in May 2017. We are eternally grateful for your help in making this book happen, and wish you countless adventures to come.

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Jesse L Gregg
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Jim and Heidi Hill
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Nick Mather
Niklas Wandell
Njål Hellesfjord
Noah G
Noah Kunin
none please
Obed E. Pacheco
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Olivia Hugal
Omari Brooks
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Owned369
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Sylvia Payne
Ted Palmer
Terrell Scoggins
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Thierry Delpierre aka 'Zelli Gar'
Thomas Martin Eifried
Thomas Milazzo

Thomas N.
Thomas Talamini
Thomas Titanski
thunderw (Joe Brown)
Tiger
Tim Riley
TipfellOddityEmporium
TJ Vinny
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Tracy and Nicole Vierra
Travels, the Hunted

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Troy P ODeIl
Tudy
Tyler G
Tyler Mika
Uendilor Drakellis
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Vince McMahan
Vindexus
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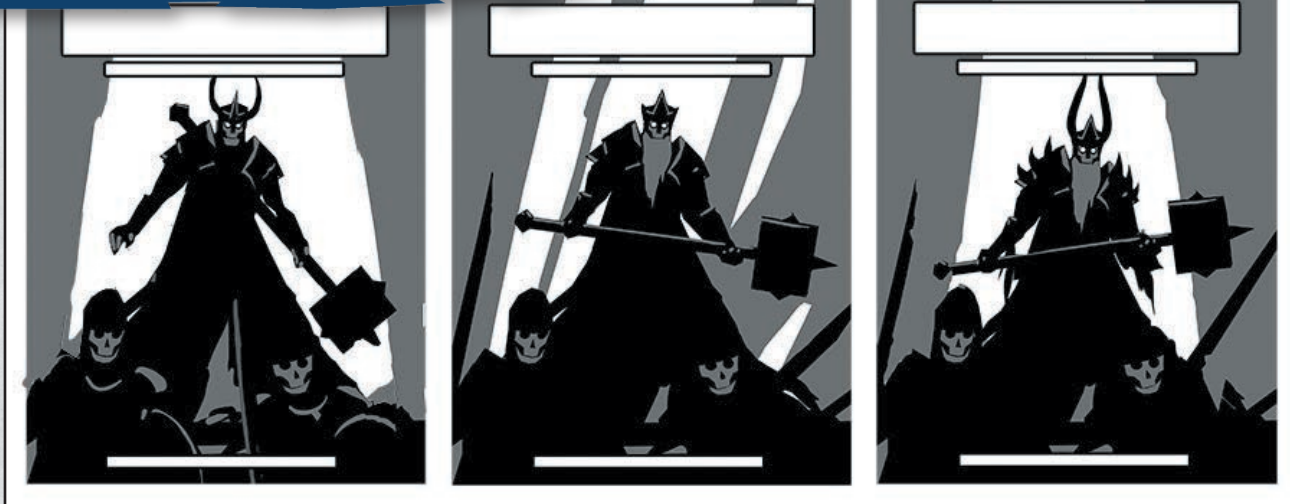
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THE COVER



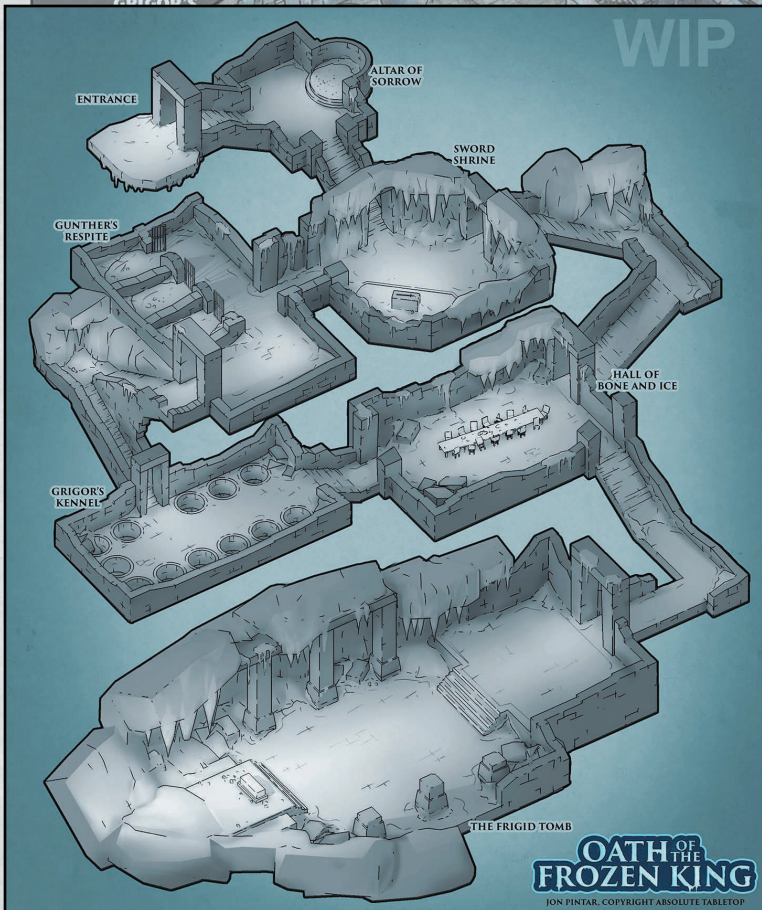
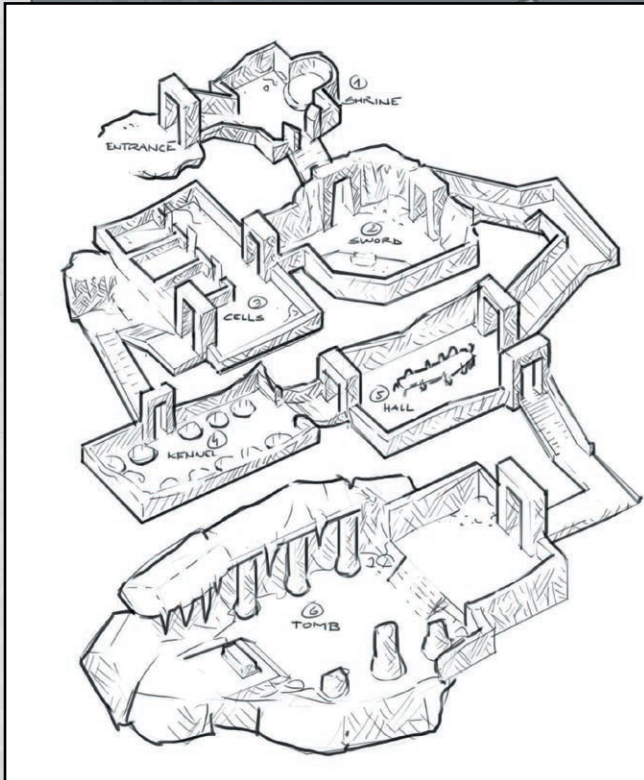
OATH OF THE FROZEN KING



ART BY JON PINTAR: ORIGINALLY, THE "F.K." HAD A MIGHTY BEARD. WE NIXED THAT IDEA AFTER WE REALIZED IT WOULD COVER UP HIS ORNATE BREASTPLATE. FROM THERE, WE DIDN'T FEEL HE LOOKED UNIQUE AND 'DRAGONGRIN' ENOUGH, SO WE HOLLOWED OUT HIS ARMOR AND ADDED A GLOWING, FROZEN HEART.



THE ISOMETRIC MAP



ART BY JON PINTAR: JON'S ISOMETRIC MAPS ARE ALWAYS STUNNING, AND WATCHING THIS PIECE GO FROM SKETCH TO FINISHED PIECE WAS ONE OF OUR FAVORITE PROCESSES DURING PRODUCTION. THE INITIAL MAP CONTAINED ONLY THE LOCATIONS FROM THE KIT, SO WE ADDED ERRANT HALLWAYS TO SHOW THAT THE KEEP WAS MORE EXPANSIVE.

OATH OF THE FROZEN KING
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MONSTERS



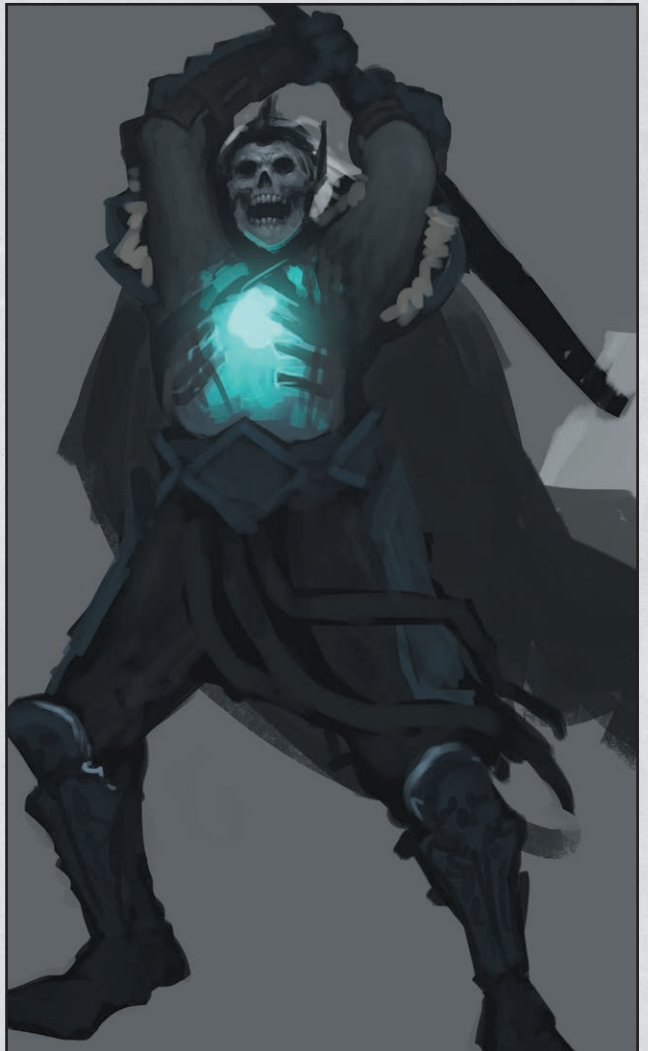
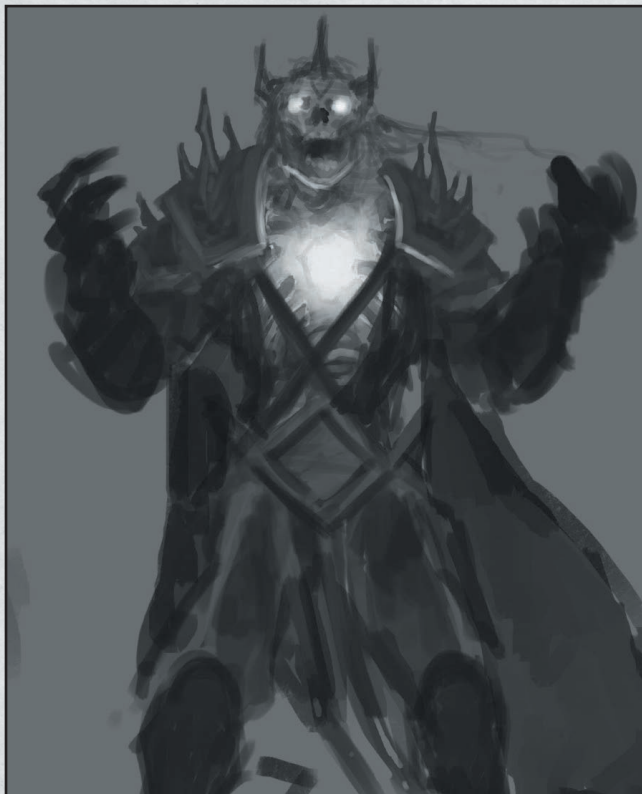
ART BY JAKE PEREZ: FOR THE MAD TROLL, INITIALLY, WE WENT FOR A BULBOUS-NOSED BRUTE INSPIRED BY TRADITIONAL TROLLS OF NORWEGIAN MYTHOLOGY. WHEN WE RECEIVED JAKE'S AMAZING EXECUTION, WE QUICKLY REALIZED IT DIDN'T QUITE FIT. WE NEEDED A MORE VISCERAL AND BEASTIAL TROLL, AND JAKE DELIVERED.

THE HAND OF THE FROZEN KING WAS ORIGINALLY AN ARMORED, MULTI-LIMBED, UNDEAD MONSTROSITY (SEE THE CONCEPT ART ON THE LEFT). WHILE WE LOVED THE ART, WE DECIDED TO MOVE AWAY FROM THIS DESIGN, AS THE BOOK WAS LACKING A "MAGE" TYPE ADVERSARY FOR THE ADVENTURERS TO CONTEND WITH. THE HAND WAS RE-DESIGNED TO HAVE A MORE WIZARD-LIKE SILHOUETTE WITH ROBES AND A GLOWING SKULL, BUT RETAINED HIS INTIMIDATING ARMORED LOOK. THE END RESULT WAS AN AWESOME, UNIQUE MONSTER STRAIGHT OFF OF A METAL ALBUM COVER.

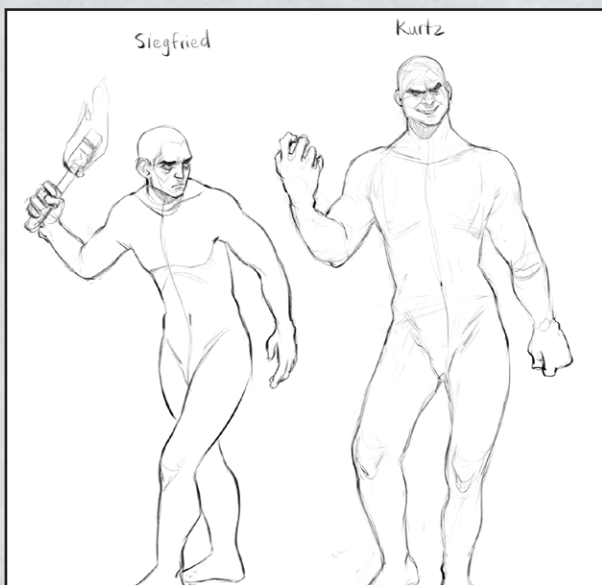
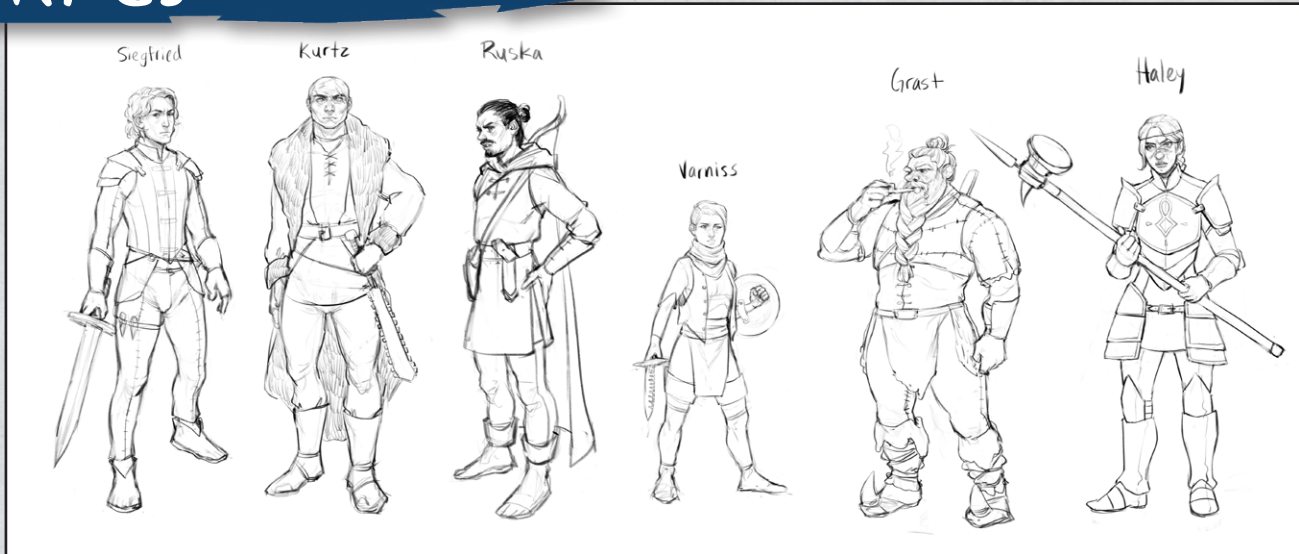
THE FROZEN KING

ART BY JAKE PEREZ: FOR THE TITULAR FROZEN KING, ONE OF OUR PRIMARY DESIGN GOALS WAS TO CREATE A PIECE OF TERRIFYING MONSTER ART THAT WASN'T JUST A REPEAT OF THE FIGURE WE SEE ON THE COVER. WE KNEW THAT ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS WAS TO CHOOSE A POSE THAT WOULD EVOKE ACTION, AND THE F.K.'S SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH AND POWER.

WE ASKED JAKE TO SKETCH SEVERAL POSES THAT CENTERED AROUND THE KING'S MAUL, HITTING THE GROUND, HEFTED ABOVE HIS HEAD MID-SWING. THE TROUBLE WAS, THAT THIS WAS A CENTRAL PIECE OF ART FEATURING THE TITULAR CHARACTER, AND IN EACH OF THOSE POSES, WE LOST TOO MUCH OF THE ICONIC DESIGN. WE WHITTLED DOWN OUR MUST-HAVES FOR THE POSE, AND DECIDED ON AN ACTION POSE WITH THE F.K. WIELDING HIS MASSIVE MAUL EFFORTLESSLY WITH ONE HAND, AND REACHING TOWARDS THE READER WITH THE OTHER.



NPCs



ART BY EMILY KRUGER: EMILY'S NPC ART WAS NEARLY PERFECT IN HER FIRST PASS. NOTE THAT NOT A WHOLE LOT CHANGED FROM THE INITIAL SKETCH TO THE FINISHED CHARACTERS. HER CHARACTERS' FACIAL EXPRESSIONS AND BODY LANGUAGE WERE SO EMOTIVE FROM THE START THAT WE ONLY HAD TO FINE-TUNE A COUPLE OF THINGS. NOTICE THE CHANGE OF SIEGFRIED'S POSE TO ONE OF MORE DYNAMIC ACTION, SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS HIM CAUTIOUSLY PEERING BY TORCHLIGHT. ALSO, KURTZ'S POSE BECAME MORE IMPOSING AND MENACING, AND HIS FACE BECAME MORE SINISTER.

ONE THING WE WANTED TO BE CLEAR WAS HOW COLD IT WAS IN THIS LOCATION. NOTICE IN THE UPPER SKETCH HOW THE GARB OF THE CHARACTERS SEEMS LIGHT AND COMFORTABLE, WHEREAS IN THE SECOND SKETCH MANY OF THEM ARE WEARING BULKIER CLOTHES, MORE LAYERS, AND PLENTY OF FUR.

AS OUR SECONDARY VILLAIN, WE WANTED KURTZ TO HAVE A CUNNING TO HIM. WHILE HIS CULTISTS MIGHT BE SAVAGE BRUTES, KURTZ NEEDED TO EXUDE AN AIR OF INTELLIGENCE AND CHARISMA, WITHOUT ESCHEWING STRENGTH. EMILY MANAGED TO EVOKE ALL OF THAT AND MORE WITH A SIMPLE FACIAL EXPRESSION AND A SLIGHTLY ALTERED POSE.

THE BATTLE



ART BY JON PINTAR: THIS IS THE SINGLE LARGEST PIECE OF ART THAT WE'VE EVER COMMISSIONED, AND IT HAD A MONUMENTAL TASK: DEPICT A BATTLE SCENE BETWEEN THE FROZEN KING AND A GROUP OF INTREPID ADVENTURERS. WE TOOK THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GEEK OUT, AND INJECT DRAGONGRIN LORE IN AS MANY PLACES AS WE COULD WITHOUT IT FEELING TOO HEAVY HANDED. THIS BATTLE SCENE MARKS THE FIRST-EVER ARTISTIC APPEARANCES OF DRAGONGRIN STAPLES, SUCH AS THE SENTIENT CONSTRUCTS THE TOMEHEARTS AND THE LIVING UNDEAD THE SARRICK. WE EVEN THREW IN A DEEP EASTER EGG: A PALADIN OF THE DISMEMBERED LORD, COMPLETE WITH HIS SIGIL AS A HOLY SYMBOL AND EMBLAZONED UPON A SHIELD.

YOU MIGHT EVEN NOTICE A FEW OF THESE ICONIC CHARACTERS IN OTHER LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE BOOK...



OATH OF THE FROZEN KING

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