



How The **LICH** STOLE **CHRISTMAS!**



A Holiday Adventure for Characters of All Levels

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ON THE COVER

The lich grins mischievously in his holiday outfit with a creepily decorated tree in the background.
Cover art by Frank Wade.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Steve “Jaspor” Orr is a homebrewer, retired punk rock guitarist, and software developer. Steve has been playing and DMing D&D games for many years, and has been publishing on the Dungeon Masters Guild since February 2019. One day he might even learn how to draw more than just stick figures.

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INTRODUCTION

You're a foul one, Mr. Lich
Your flesh smells like decay
For the crimes you have committed
There will be hell to pay
When the heroes come to save Christmas Day

The holiday season is a time for peace, love, and joy. Families and friends exchange gifts and spend quality time together. Only the cruelest and most foul creatures would try to spoil such a cheerful occasion!

BACKGROUND

The village of Hoovale is quietly nestled away from the hectic commotion of big city life. The citizens of Hoovale enjoy their peace and quiet and their routine lives. The village especially looks forward to the holiday season, and the celebration of Christmas. The Hoovale decorations and festivities around the holiday have become well known throughout the region.

However, this year, the holiday season has been spoiled. In the middle of the night, creatures crept into the houses of the villagers and kidnapped all the children. The adults were shocked and saddened to wake up to find the empty beds. A group of citizens took up arms to search for the children, but they haven't returned.

With the children gone and their rescuers missing, Hoovale has slipped into a deep depression. The enthusiasm and joy surrounding Christmas has been stolen from the villagers. They solemnly go about their business, quickly losing hope that the children will be rescued.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The story begins with the characters arriving in Hoovale and realizing that something is amiss. They realize that the expected holiday spirit is nowhere to be found. Upon speaking to people at the local inn, they learn about the missing children.

As the group gathers information from somber inn patrons, a child bursts through the door. She claims to have escaped from imprisonment, and knows where the other children are being kept.

Following the directions provided by the escaped child, the party begins to ascend a nearby mountain in search of a cave. As they make the climb, they are assaulted by a group of angry snowmen who are not quite what they seem.

Upon reaching the top of the mountain, the party discovers the sought after cave. Inside they find the missing children chained to tables and being forced to work on strange tasks. They are guarded by several kobolds wearing Christmas hats.

Once the guards have been defeated and the children have been set free, the true threat behind the insidious plot must be dealt with. However, the door to its chamber is guarded by a puzzle consisting of colored lights. The heroes must solve the puzzle in order to unlock the door.

Within the final vault awaits the dastardly villain who developed the entire plan. The group must confront the fiend and put an end to his terror once and for all.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

While there may be several reasons for the party to visit Hoovale, here are a few ways the characters might become involved in the adventure:

THE GUIDING STAR

A bright star lights up the night sky as the party is traveling. The star seems to beckon to them, and one or more party members may recall a prophecy speaking about a special star in the winter sky. The group decides to follow the star, which leads them directly to Hoovale.

A FAMILY REUNION

The holiday season brings families together, no matter where they may be. One of the members of the party has a relative who lives in Hoovale, who has extended an invitation to that party member - and their friends - to join them for a family reunion and Christmas celebration.

SEEKING SHELTER

Heavy snow and strong winds force the party to seek shelter for the evening as the temperature continues to drop. The sight of smoke in the distance provides guidance to the nearest settlement. As the characters trudge through the snow, the party discovers Hoovale and the smoke rising from the chimney of its inn.

SCALING THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed in a way that it can be run for any party, regardless of their character levels. Each chapter will contain guidance for adjusting the encounters to be a suitable difficulty for each Tier of play. The underlying story doesn't change, but some of the encounters and creatures do. The Tiers are defined as follows:

- 1st Tier (Levels 1-4)
- 2nd Tier (Levels 5-10)
- 3rd Tier (Levels 11-16)
- 4th Tier (Levels 17+)

CHAPTER 1: THE TOWN WITHOUT JOY



As the adventurers approach Hoovale, read the following:

Approaching the village on a cold winter night,
Expecting the rapture of holiday delight.
The buildings were covered by a fresh blanket of snow,
But something was missing, the spirits seemed low.
No children were playing, no lights had been hung,
No trees decked with tinsel, no songs being sung.
The silence was eerie, the mood was quite dire.
The inn offered shelter, but no warmth by its fire.

The only building with any lights on is a large house that appears to be an inn. As the characters enter, they immediately notice that the mood in the inn is quite bleak. The flames in the fireplace have nearly gone out. A few candles and lanterns provide dim lighting. There are a dozen or so adults scattered around the main room, picking at cold food or drinking ale and wine. Few people seem to have noticed the party entering, and fewer seem to care. Once the setting has been described, read the following to the players:

Inside the feeling was in no way improved.
The patrons were quiet, barely anyone moved.
The group stepped up to the bar, asked, "What's going on?"
The bartender frowned, "Our joy is all gone.
The children have all been taken away
By a being most foul, who loathes Christmas day."
He looked 'round the room and lowered his voice,
"A lich has enslaved all our girls and our boys."

The patrons will speak to the party, but in hushed tones with very gloomy emotions. The citizens of Hoovale feel defeated and lost with their children missing, and they have nothing to hide. They freely answer any questions the party may have. Information they share includes the following:

- All the children in the village went missing four days ago, vanishing from their beds in the middle of the night.
- The next morning, several of the adults headed out and followed tracks through the snow - what looked like the footprints of several small humanoids and the wheels of a wagon. That group has not returned.
- A second group went out the following day, but a snow storm covered any remaining tracks and forced the searchers to return to the village.
- There had been rumors of a lich living in the hills surrounding the village. Most people believed them to just be old legends, but now the villagers are convinced it was the lich who kidnapped the children.

- While the villagers are desperate to find the children, they feel that the covered tracks and the loss of the first rescue party leaves them with no clues on where to look.
- Any character who inquires about the tracks found in the snow and makes a successful DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check can use the information gathered to deduce that the tracks were left by kobolds.
- Any character who makes a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check while talking to the villagers realizes that they do believe a lich is behind the kidnappings, and firmly believe that the tale they've thought was just a legend is indeed true.

When the party has had sufficient time to speak with the villagers and learn what they can about what happened here, the DM can advance the story by introducing the next event. Read the following to the group:

The door flew wide open, in blew the cold.
A young girl stepped in, confident and bold.
"I escaped from the bad things, I know where they are!
Inside of the mountain, it isn't too far."
Her parents embraced her, she was hugged and was kissed,
But the rest of the children were still being missed.
"Hello, strangers," the girl said. "You look quite brave.
Would you please help rescue my friends held in the cave?"

The girl's hair and clothes are covered with snow. Her cheeks are red from the cold, but she appears unharmed. She looks at the party when addressing them and asks for their help rescuing the other children. The adults look at the adventurers expectantly as they await an answer.

As the innkeeper brings over a blanket to wrap around the girl and the bartender brings her a steaming cup of hot chocolate, she sits at a table and begins to describe what happened. She was aroused from her bed by small scaly creatures who quickly gagged her and bound her hands and feet. They carried her away from her house as her family slept. Outside, many more of these creatures rounded up the children from the other homes and placed them all inside a wagon.

The children were taken up a steep mountain path to the northeast of town. At the top of the mountain was a cave. Once inside the cave, the children were chained to tables and forced to craft all kinds of different contraptions. The girl cannot accurately describe what the items were, but explains that they were made of carved and painted pieces of wood.

Before the girl's parents whisk her away back to their home for her to recover, she provides directions for the party to find the mountain she came from: It's the one directly behind the blacksmith, that looks like a smiling face is carved into the rocks at its base.

CHAPTER 2: THE MOUNTAIN TRAIL



*o you want to fight a snowman?
It doesn't have to be a snowman.*

The party can easily follow the guidance provided by the girl to find the mountain she was referring to. They find a trail leading up the mountain without much trouble. As they get halfway up the mountain, it begins to snow and the trail becomes steeper. As the weather worsens, the trail becomes difficult terrain, and the characters must spend twice their usual movement to trek through the snow and wind.

As the party reaches this point in their ascent, read the following:

The trail up the mountain was cold, hard, and steep.
The snow from the storm was nearly knee deep.
A sharp wind blew fiercely as the group trudged along.
It seemed in the distance they could hear a song.
Something of snowmen and wanting to build them.
But the ones that appeared were trying to kill them.
These snowmen were not jolly, but appeared to be bad.
The look in their eyes showed they were indeed mad.

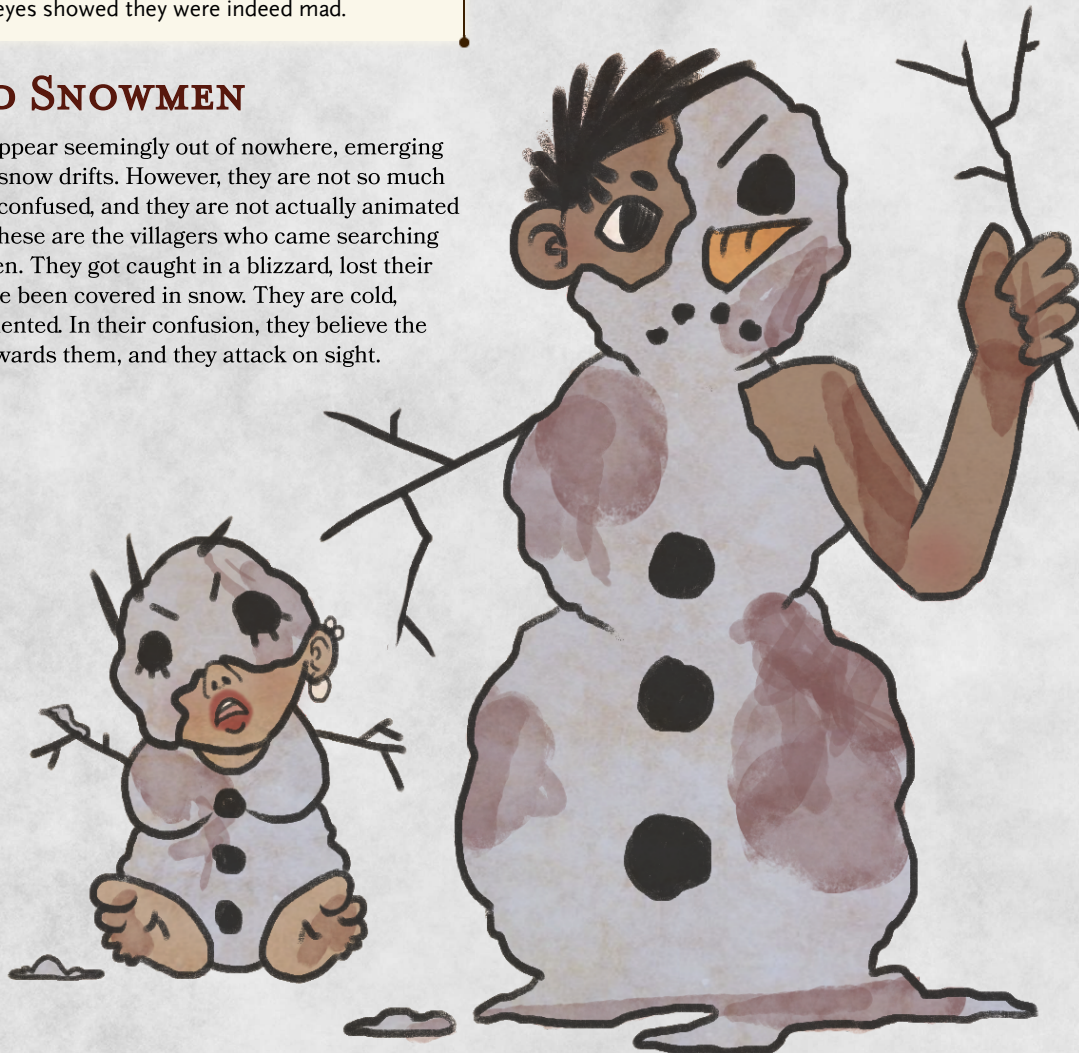
THE MAD SNOWMEN

The “snowmen” appear seemingly out of nowhere, emerging from the blowing snow drifts. However, they are not so much angry as they are confused, and they are not actually animated snowmen at all. These are the villagers who came searching for the lost children. They got caught in a blizzard, lost their direction, and have been covered in snow. They are cold, hungry, and disoriented. In their confusion, they believe the party is hostile towards them, and they attack on sight.

There are four **mad snowmen** as described in appendix B. There are four different versions of the snowmen provided in the appendix, each for a different tier of difficulty. Pick the appropriate tier for your party. For a less challenging fight, choose a tier below the party's level.

When a mad snowman drops to zero hit points, they are not killed. Instead, the snow covering them breaks away, revealing the disoriented villager inside. A character within 15 feet of a snowman who is defeated can make a Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Nature) check. On a successful DC 11 check, they recognize that these snowmen are actually the lost villagers, and not evil creatures. The party may then choose to use other tactics for snapping them out of their confused state. Some examples include trying to reason with them or telling them that the party is trying to rescue the children. The DM may ask for skill checks as needed, but the snow covered villagers are easily susceptible to a logical explanation.

Once all the villagers have been freed from their strange snowy facades, the party can choose to point them in the direction of the village, or ask them to continue with the party up the mountain to save the children. As long as the freed villagers get an opportunity to warm up before continuing on, they agree with whatever the party suggests, though it is clear that they are in no condition to help in battle, should it occur.



CHAPTER 3: THE CAVE OF SLAVES

As the party ascends further, they come to the gaping mouth of a cave in the side of the mountain. Any character with a Passive Perception of 11 or higher notices the sound of voices and movement coming from within the cave. The cave entrance itself is left unguarded, as the residents believe its hard to reach location is enough of a deterrent to unwanted guests.

The cave itself is dimly lit by torches hanging on the walls. There are some assorted tools, food scraps, bedrolls, and a small campfire scattered around near the cave entrance. As the party ventures through the tunnel leading deeper into the cave, the sounds of activity grow louder. When the characters step deeper into the cave, read the following:

The tunnel led to a wide room in the cave.
This was the spot where the kids were enslaved.
Kobold guards stood on duty, cursing the "brats,"
Their heads all adorned with red Christmas hats.
The kobolds were wielding small swords and long whips.
And they barked out commands as loud yelps and shrill yips.
Chained to wood tables were the girls and the boys.
Forced to cobble together some hideous toys.

GUARD PASSIVE PERCEPTION

Guard Type	Passive Perception
kobold	8
kobold inventor	10
kobold dragonshield	11
kobold scale sorcerer	9

SAVING THE CHILDREN

The kobolds and children are focused on their tasks, and are unlikely to notice the party approaching. A higher Dexterity (Stealth) check against the passive Wisdom (Perception) of the guards results in the guards being surprised by that character. See the Guard Passive Perception table for the DC of each Stealth check depending upon the types of guards in the encounter. A surprised guard cannot move, take an action, or use a reaction during the first round of combat. The guards attack on sight, so any failed Stealth check results in the start of combat and initiative being rolled.

The type, number, and tactics used by the guards in this encounter change based upon the level of the party. This is a scalable encounter, meant to be adjusted by the DM based on the guidelines below. For a shorter encounter, the DM may choose a tier below the party's current level.



TIER 1

Six **kobolds** guard the room using standard tactics and weapons.

TIER 2

Two **kobold inventors** and four **kobold dragonshields** guard the room using standard tactics and weapons. See appendix B for more information on these creatures.

TIER 3

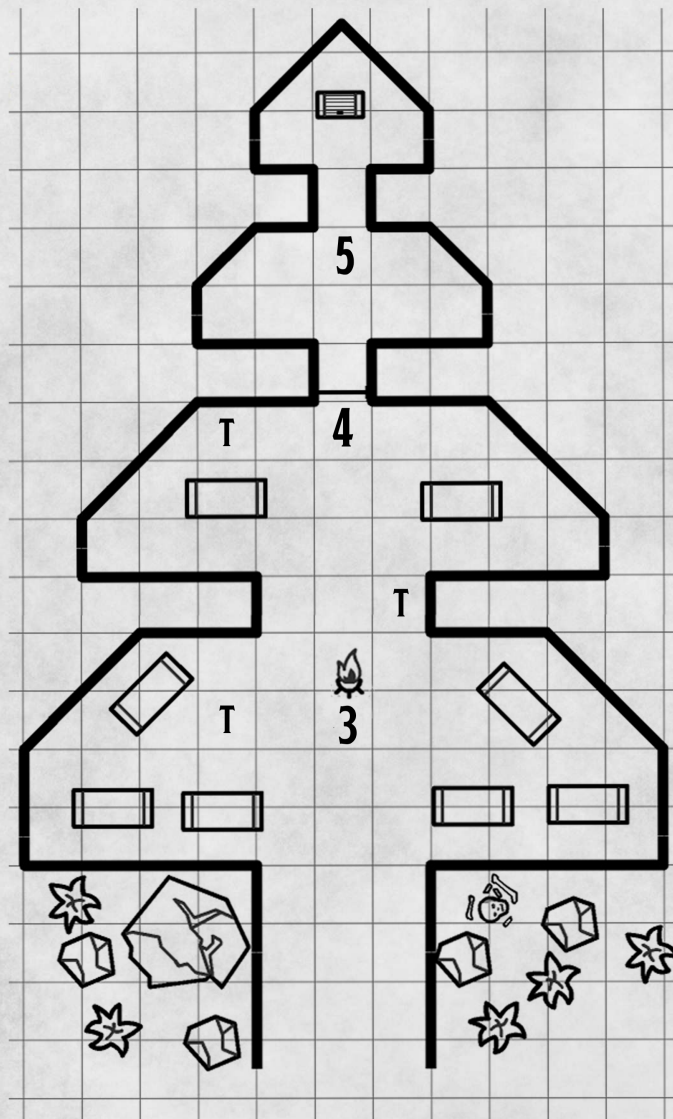
Three **kobold dragonshields** and three **kobold scale sorcerers** guard the room. See appendix B for more information on these creatures. Additionally, the sorcerers are each equipped with a *wand of web* and use it to keep their distance from the characters.

TIER 4

Four **kobold dragonshields** and four **kobold scale sorcerers** guard the room. See appendix B for more information on these creatures. Additionally, the sorcerers are each equipped with a *wand of web* and use it to keep their distance from the characters.

The room also contains several traps that have been put in place as defensive measures. Each of these traps are set as pressure plates marked with a “T” on the map. A character who enters one of these trapped squares must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d8 damage from a crossbow bolt fired from a spring-loaded slit in the wall. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the presence of a trap. A character with thieves’ tools can disarm the trap with a successful DC 13 Dexterity check.

Once all the guards have been defeated, the children cry out in joy and thank the party. Freeing the children from their shackles is trivial for any character with a Strength ability score of 10 or higher. If the party examines the tools and items the children were working with, they discover a wide range of assorted wooden toys. The children do not know the purpose of the toys they were crafting, or whom they were being delivered to.



CHAPTER 4: THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The children are eager to return home, but they don't want to leave by themselves. While they are happy to be free from their kobold captors, they fear that they will just be kidnapped again if the fiend behind the plot isn't dealt with. The children direct the players to a closed door at the back of the cave where they claim the lich resides. A glowing string of colorful lights shines near the door. Read the following to the players:

A string of bright lights hangs next to the door.
You must get inside and settle the score.
No handle or knob can be seen at all.
There must be something about those lights on the wall.
"Remove the wrong bulb," a young child yells.
"That's how you get in, and it's where the lich dwells."

The lights present a puzzle that the party must solve in order to open the door and enter the inner chamber where the lich resides.

THE PUZZLE

The party needs to gain access to a room that is behind a magically sealed door. The only way to unlock and open this door is to remove the incorrect colored light bulb from a string of multicolored lights that is hanging on the wall next to the door. See appendix C for a diagram of the lights that can be shared with the players.

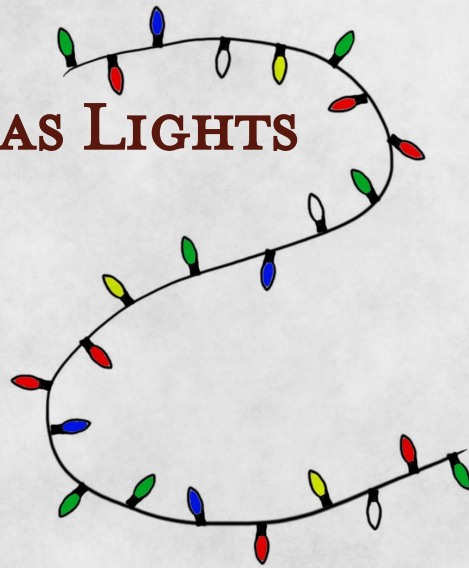
THE SOLUTION

The string of lights has 24 colored bulbs on it. The bulbs are laid out in two separate patterns of 12 bulbs each. Pattern 1 starts with bulb 1 and includes all odd numbered bulbs until it reaches the end of the string at bulb 23. Pattern 2 starts with bulb 2 and includes all even numbered bulbs until it reaches the end of the string at bulb 24.

Pattern 1 (the odd numbered bulbs) consists of a repeating pattern of colored bulbs in the following sequence: Green, Blue, Yellow, Red. From start to finish, the sequence is: Green, Blue, Yellow, Red, Green, Blue, Yellow, Red, Green, Blue, Yellow, Red, starting at bulb 1 and ending on bulb 23. This pattern is consistent and does not contain any incorrect bulbs.

Pattern 2 (the even numbered bulbs) consists of a repeating pattern of colored bulbs in the following sequence: Red, White, Green. From start to finish, the sequence is: Red, White, Green, Red, White, Green, Red, BLUE, Green, Red, White, Green, starting at bulb 2 and ending on bulb 24. This pattern is broken by the blue bulb 16. The removal of the incorrect blue bulb 16 unlocks the door.

The party needs to remove the 16th light on the string. The color of this bulb is blue and doesn't match the rest of the sequence in Pattern 2. No other bulbs on the string of lights can be removed. They are magically held in place.



Each time a party member touches a properly positioned light bulb they receive a shock and take damage as follows:

- Tier 1: 1d8 lightning damage.
- Tier 2: 2d8 lightning damage.
- Tier 3: 3d8 lightning damage.
- Tier 4: 4d8 lightning damage.

HINTS AND TIPS

- A character who succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check realizes which side of the string each bulb is on is irrelevant to the patterns.
- A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check allows the character to notice that there are two different patterns on the string of lights.
- A Natural 20 on an Intelligence (Investigation) check allows the character to notice that there are two different patterns on the string of lights. They also notice that Pattern 1 starts at bulb 1 and consists of all odd-numbered bulbs, while Pattern 2 starts at bulb 2 and consists of all even-numbered bulbs.
- A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check gives the character a strong sense that if they touch a correctly positioned bulb, they will be shocked.
- A successful DC 10 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check while touching a bulb allows the character to act fast enough that they are not shocked.

RAISING THE STAKES

This puzzle can be made a bit more dangerous by making one or more of the following changes to the encounter:

- The damage inflicted may be increased by 1d8 in each tier to add a bit more of a shock.
- If your party is really good at puzzles, you can make this puzzle harder by requiring them to remove two bulbs, one bulb from each pattern.
- Greatly increase the difficulty by drawing the string of lights in more of a knot than using our linear S-shaped layout. Presenting the lights in a knot makes finding the patterns much more challenging.

CHAPTER 5: THE LICH WHO STOLE CHRISTMAS



hen the party successfully solves the light puzzle, the door unlocks and slowly opens. Read the following:

The door slid wide open with a groan and a grind,
And unveiled a strange scene unexpected to find.
In one corner stood a tall Christmas tree
Decorated with horrors that would make most folks flee.
A stack of wrapped presents sat underneath.
On the wall hung some bones in the shape of a wreath.
A slim figure stood there in red Christmas clothes,
White fur on his collar and bells on his toes.

This room is more dimly lit than the previous room, with only a single lit torch hanging from the walls. In the corner of the room rests a tree adorned with spiders, snakes, skulls, and other horrors. A solitary figure dressed in red and white holiday clothing stands with its back to the party. Before the characters have a chance to act, read the following:

The lich turned around with a glare and a grin,
"Foolish mortals," he growled. "There's no way you can win!"
His green grin grew wider as his yellow eyes glowed.
His fists filled with fire about to explode.
He cackled like crazy, he giggled with glee.
"Once I claim your souls, you will never be free!"
The tree tipped and knocked over the gifts that were stacked.
As the bells on him jingled, the lich then attacked.

THE FINAL BATTLE

The "lich" is uninterested in conversation and attacks as soon as the party enters the room. The players and final enemy roll initiative. This is a scalable encounter, meant to be adjusted by the DM based on the guidelines below. For a shorter (and potentially less dangerous) encounter, the DM may choose a tier below the party's current level.

The villagers and the characters believe that the creature behind the kidnappings is a lich. However, the reality of that changes to match the tier of the party. An actual lich would make short work of low level characters. The true enemy may be masquerading as a lich for a multitude of possible reasons. No matter the enemy's true nature, as determined by the tier of the encounter, they will maintain the facade that they are a lich for as long as possible. Only when the mechanism during each fight triggers is the truth revealed.

TIER 1

This encounter includes four **kobolds** and one **awakened tree**. The decorated tree in the corner comes to life and attacks the party as part of this battle. The kobolds form the "lich" by standing on each others' shoulders and draping the loose red clothing over them. This awkward position makes it difficult for the creature to move, and their movement speed cut in half to 15 feet. The "head" kobold is wearing a mask to make their face have a skeletal appearance. The "arms" kobold is wielding a wand of magic missiles they use as their main attack.

A character that succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices an extra arm poking out of the clothing and realizes there might be multiple creatures inside the suit. Otherwise, the party believes it is a single target. The "lich" acts as a single attacker in combat, though it inherits the stats and abilities of a single kobold.

When the "lich" suffers 6 or more total damage, the "feet" kobold is knocked unconscious, sending the other kobolds tumbling out of the costume and onto the floor prone. The remaining three kobolds now attack individually, each acting on the same initiative count as the "lich" previously was attacking. The DM adds two additional initiative slots at this position - one of the kobolds uses the existing slot, while the two additional kobolds receive new slots.

TIER 2

This encounter includes four **kobold scale sorcerers** and one **awakened tree**. The decorated tree in the corner comes to life and attacks the party as part of this battle. The kobolds form the "lich" by standing on each others' shoulders and draping the loose red clothing over them. This awkward position makes it difficult for the creature to move, and their movement speed cut in half to 15 feet. The "head" kobold is wearing a mask to make their face have a skeletal appearance. The "arms" kobold is wielding a wand of magic missiles they use as their main attack.

A character that succeeds on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check notices an extra arm poking out of the clothing and realizes there might be multiple creatures inside the suit. Otherwise, the party believes it is a single target. The "lich" acts as a single attacker in combat, though it inherits the stats and abilities of a single kobold.

When the "lich" suffers 12 or more total damage, the "feet" kobold is knocked unconscious, sending the other kobolds tumbling out of the costume and onto the floor prone. The remaining three kobolds now attack individually, each acting in the same initiative position as the previous "lich" was. The DM adds two additional initiative slots at this position - one of the kobolds uses the existing slot, while the two additional kobolds receive new slots.

TIER 3

This encounter features an **archmage** and a **treant**. The decorated tree in the corner comes to life as a treant and attacks the party as part of this battle. The archmage has disguised himself as a lich by wearing a skeletal mask. During the battle, the archmage rants and raves about immortality and draining the souls of the party members. A character that succeeds on a DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check recognizes that a true lich would not continuously speak about something they have already achieved.

When the archmage suffers 50 or more damage, the skeletal mask breaks and falls away, revealing his mortal face. The battle continues as normal from this point, though the archmage suffers disadvantage on saving throws now that their seemingly impervious disguise has been penetrated.

TIER 4

This encounter features an actual, real **lich**. The **lich** wants to kill the party, dead. To make this encounter more difficult, the lich can be given Lair Actions as described in the *Monster Manual*.

HOLIDAY LOOT

Upon defeating the final enemy, the party may recover loot from the corpses and from a single chest located within the inner chamber. The presents that are stacked under the tree contain the toys that were crafted by the captive children. For each party tier, additional rewards found after the final battle include the following:

- Tier 1: a *wand of magic missiles* and a *periapt of health*.
- Tier 2: a *wand of magic missiles* and a *chime of opening*.
- Tier 3: a *gem of seeing* and a *weapon +2* (of any kind, at the DM's discretion).
- Tier 4: a *robe of the archmagi* and an *ioun stone* (of any type, at the DM's discretion).

CONCLUSION

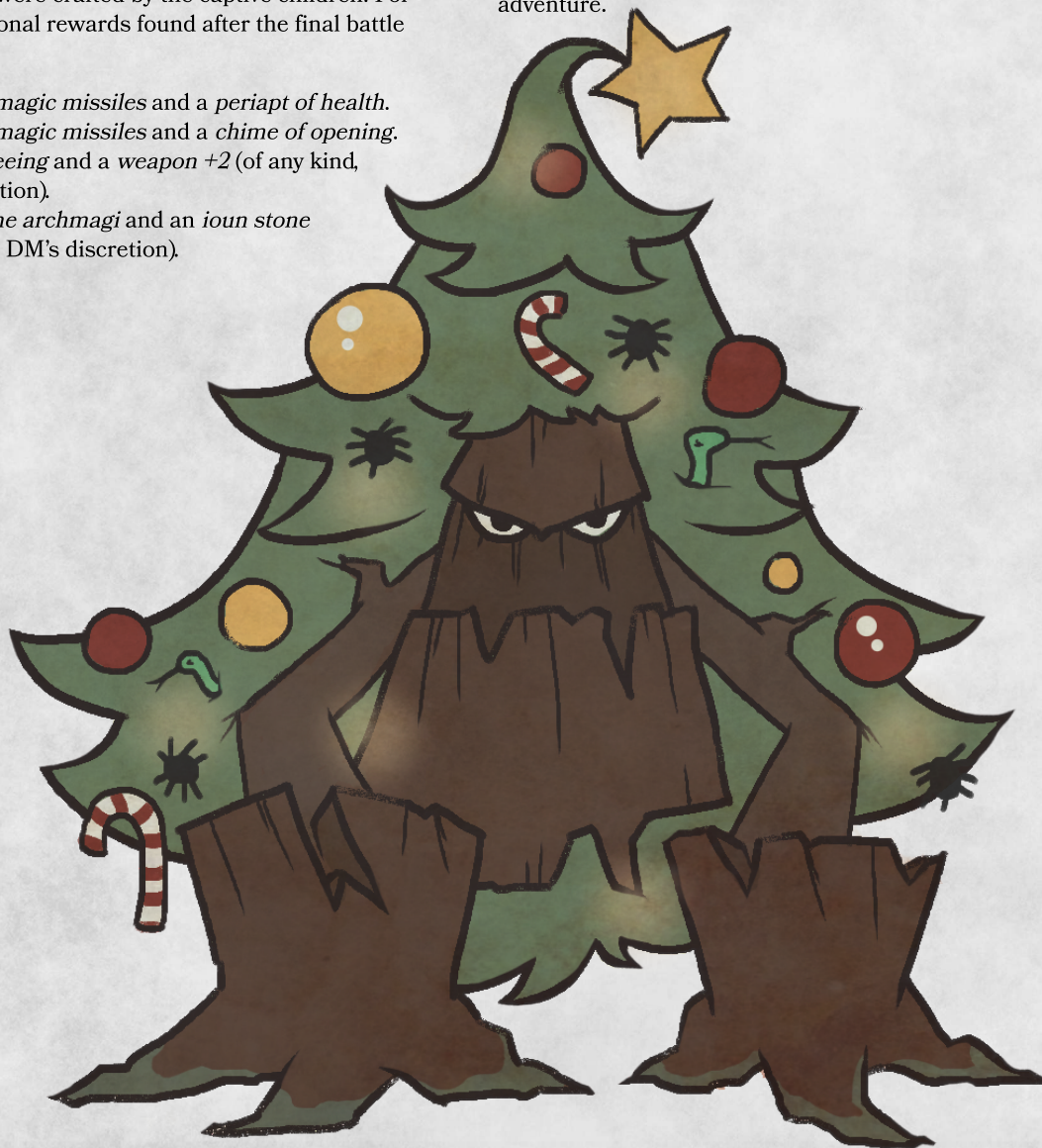
The party is greeted as heroes by the villagers as they return with the missing children. The parents embrace their children and cheer the party. A holiday celebration is set in motion, as Christmas has been saved! The villagers go about decorating the town, cooking delicious holiday treats, indulging in festive beverages, and singing seasonal songs. A grand feast is held in honor of the party. At the celebration, the group is presented with a thank you gift from the town - a magical *Hoovale Snow Globe* (see appendix A for details). The celebration lasts well into the night with everyone eating, drinking, and being merry.

AFTERMATH

For players and DMs who may want to continue with this story, some questions remain that could lead to additional adventures:

- What were the toys that the children were being forced to make? Who were they intended for?
- Was there ever a real lich, or just the imposters? Were the imposters working for someone else?
- What was the lich's ultimate goal? Who were they before becoming the lich?

Creative clues placed within the cave or rumors overheard from the villagers could help the party continue this adventure.



APPENDIX A: MAGIC ITEMS

HOOVALE SNOW GLOBE

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

The palm sized glass snow globe contains a small model of the town of Hoovale. The snow globe is full of water and fake snow. If you listen carefully, you can hear Christmas carols being sung from the little town inside.

Blizzard. As an action you may shake the snow globe and throw it at a location up to 60 feet away. A swirling winter storm appears in a 20 foot radius sphere centered on where the snow globe landed. All creatures in the storm must make a Constitution DC 14 saving throw. A creature takes 4d6 cold damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one. A creature must make this saving throw each time they begin their turn within the snow storm. If a creature fails three saving throws in a row they suffer one level of exhaustion. The storm last for 1 minute. The snow globe regains this ability each day at dawn.



APPENDIX B: CREATURES

MAD SNOWMAN (TIER 1)

Medium humanoid, unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 13 (3d8)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire
Damage Immunities Cold
Senses Passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

Snowball. Ranged Weapon Attack: +2, range 10/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning plus 2 (1d4) cold damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +2, range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) slashing damage.

MAD SNOWMAN (TIER 2)

Medium humanoid, unaligned

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire
Damage Immunities Cold
Senses Passive Perception 11
Languages Common
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Snowball. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5, range 10/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning plus 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +5, range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

MAD SNOWMAN (TIER 3)

Medium humanoid, unaligned

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire
Damage Immunities Cold
Senses Passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The snowman makes two attacks

Snowball. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6, range 10/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning plus 4 (1d8) cold damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +6, range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage.

MAD SNOWMAN (TIER 4)

Medium humanoid, unaligned

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 126 (12d12 + 48)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire
Damage Immunities Cold
Senses Passive Perception 13
Languages Common
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The snowman makes two attacks

Snowball. Ranged Weapon Attack: +8, range 10/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (4d8 + 6) bludgeoning plus 6 (1d12) cold damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +8, range 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (4d8 + 6) slashing damage.

KOBOLD DRAGONSHIELD

Small humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (leather, shield)

Hit Points 44 (8d6 + 16)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +1

Damage Resistances see Dragon's Resistance below

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Dragon's Resistance. The kobold has resistance to a type of damage based on the color of dragon that invested it with power (choose or roll a d10): 1-2, acid (black); 3-4, cold (white); 5-6, fire (red); 7-8, lightning (blue); 9-10, poison (green).

Heart of the Dragon. If the kobold is frightened or paralyzed by an effect that allows a saving throw, it can repeat the save at the start of its turn to end the effect on itself and all kobolds within 30 feet of it. Any kobold that benefits from this trait (including the dragonshield) has advantage on its next attack roll.

Pack Tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. The kobold makes two melee attacks

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

KOBOLD SCALE SORCERER

Small humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d6 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)

Skills Arcana +2, Medicine +1

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spellcasting. The kobold is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): fire bolt, mage hand, mending, poison spray

1st level (4 slots): charm person, chromatic orb, expeditious retreat

2nd level (2 slots): scorching ray

Sorcery Points. The kobold has 3 sorcery points. It can spend 1 or more sorcery points as a bonus action to gain one of the following benefits:

Heightened Spell: When it casts a spell that forces a creature to make a saving throw to resist the spell's effects, the kobold can spend 3 sorcery points to give one target of the spell disadvantage on its first saving throw against the spell.

Subtle Spell: When the kobold casts a spell, it can spend 1 sorcery point to cast the spell without any somatic or verbal components.

Pack Tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

KOBOLD INVENTOR

Small humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 13 (3d6 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Weapon Invention. The kobold uses one of the following options (roll a d8 or choose one); the kobold can use each one no more than once per day:

1. **Acid.** The kobold hurls a flask of acid. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 5/20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) acid damage.

2. **Alchemist's Fire.** The kobold throws a flask of alchemist's fire. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 5/20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) fire damage at the start of each of the target's turns. A creature can end this damage by using its action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames.

3. **Basket of Centipedes.** The kobold throws a small basket into a 5-foot-square space within 20 feet of it. A **swarm of insects (centipedes)** with 11 hit points emerges from the basket and rolls initiative. At the end of each of the swarm's turns, there's a 40 percent chance that the swarm disperses.

4. **Green Slime Pot.** The kobold throws a clay pot full of green slime at the target, and it breaks open on impact. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 5/20 ft., one target. *Hit:* The target is covered in a patch of green slime (see chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). *Miss:* A patch of green slime covers a randomly determined 5-foot-square section of wall or floor within 5 feet of the target.

5. **Rot Grub Pot.** The kobold throws a clay pot into a 5-foot square space within 20 feet of it, and it breaks open on impact. A **swarm of rot grubs** emerges from the shattered pot and remains a hazard in that square.

6. **Scorpion on a Stick.** The kobold makes a melee attack with a scorpion tied to the end of a 5-foot-long pole. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 9 Constitution saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

7. **Skunk in a Cage.** The kobold releases a skunk into an unoccupied space within 5 feet of it. The skunk has a walking speed of 20 feet, AC 10, 1 hit point, and no effective attacks. It rolls initiative and, on its turn, uses its action to spray musk at a random creature within 5 feet of it. The target must make a DC 9 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target retches and can't take actions for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature that doesn't need to breathe or is immune to poison automatically succeeds on the saving throw. Once the skunk has sprayed its musk, it can't do so again until it finishes a short or long rest.

8. **Wasp Nest in a Bag.** The kobold throws a small bag into a 5-foot-square space within 20 feet of it. A **swarm of insects (wasps)** with 11 hit points emerges from the bag and rolls initiative. At the end of each of the swarm's turns, there's a 50 percent chance that the swarm disperses.

SWARM OF ROT GRUBS

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 5 ft., climb 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	2 (-4)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances piercing, slashing

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 6

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

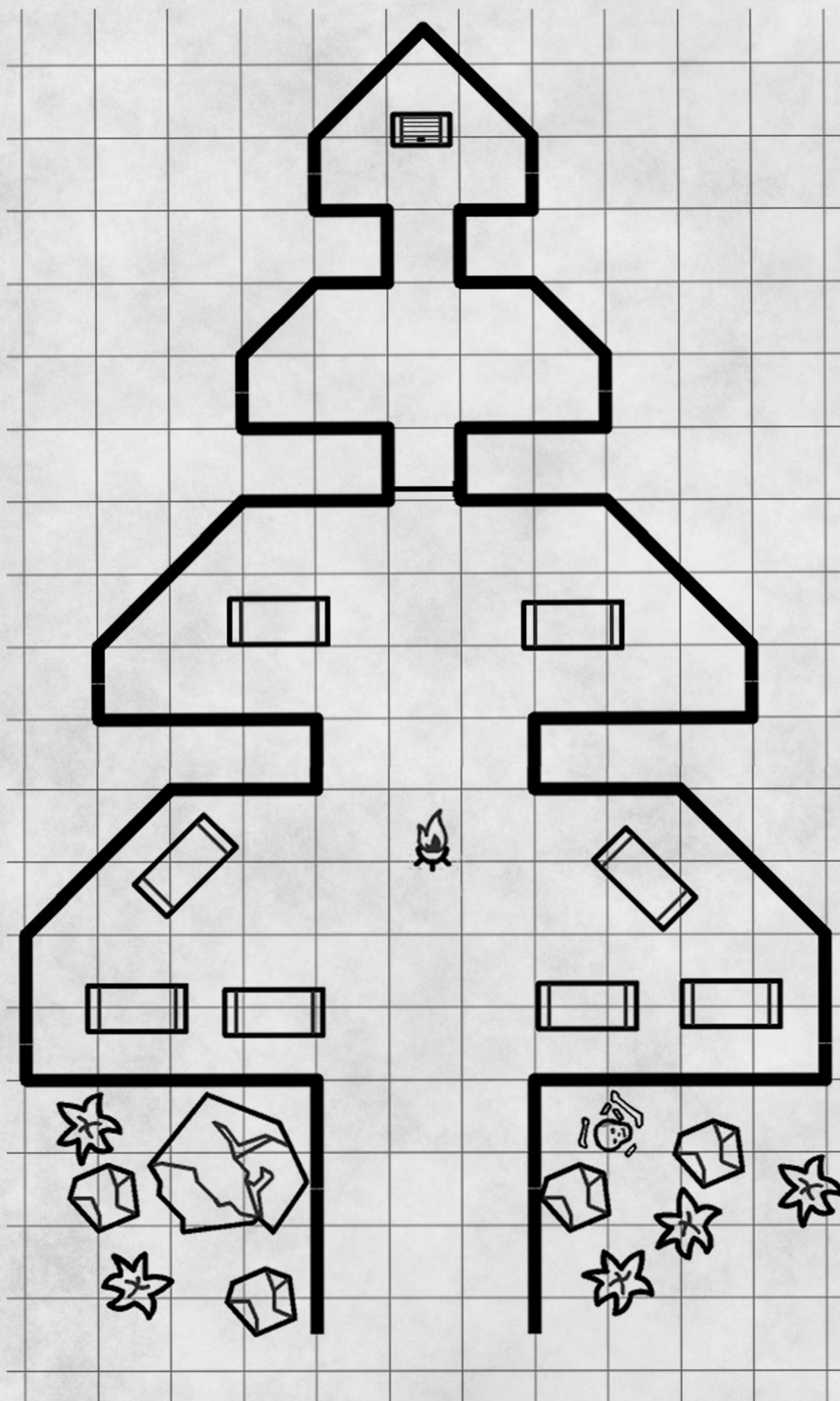
Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny maggot. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

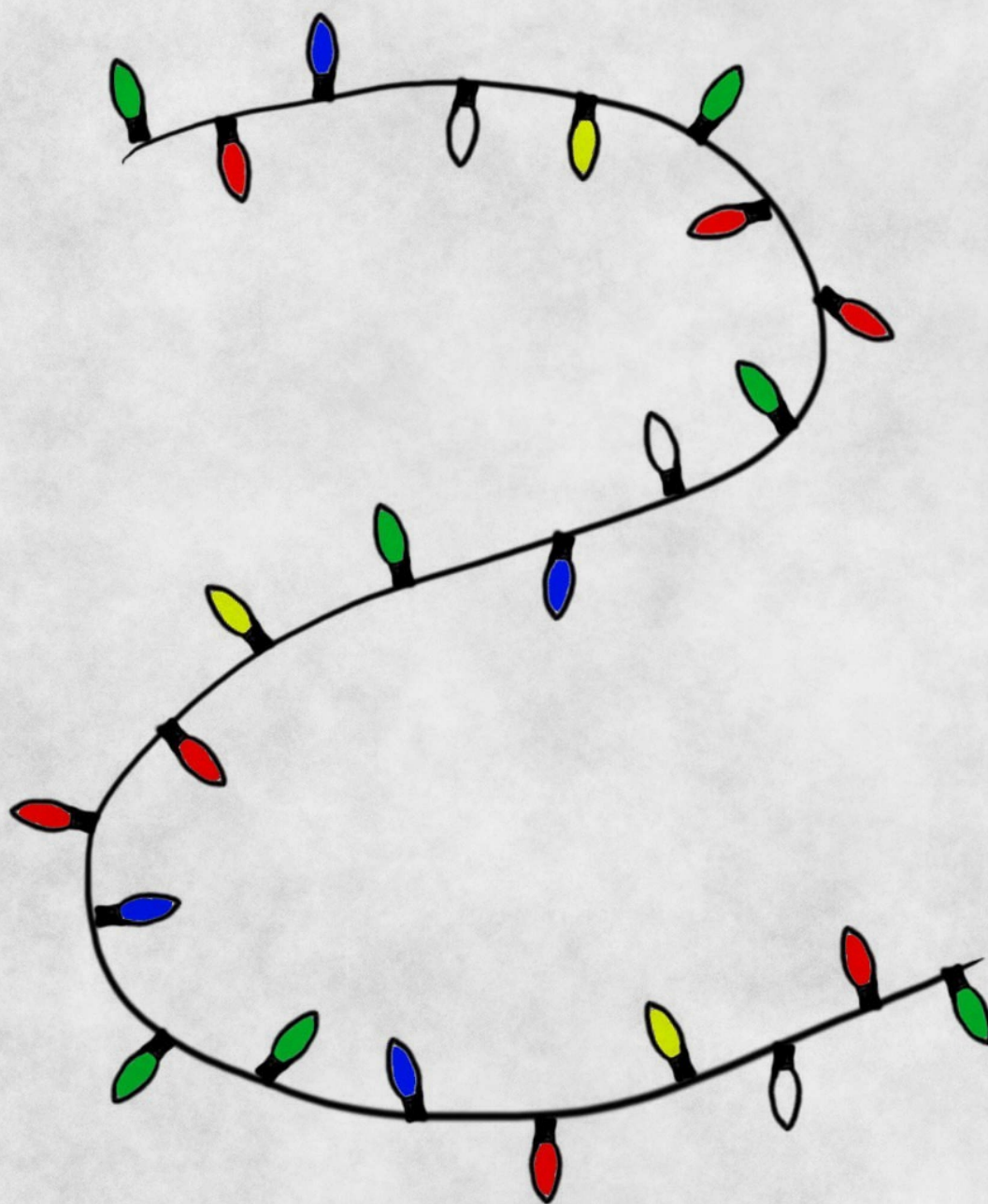
Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* The target is infested by 1d4 rot grubs. At the start of each of the target's turns, the target takes 1d6 piercing damage per rot grub infesting it. Applying fire to the bite wound before the end of the target's next turn deals 1 fire damage to the target and kills these rot grubs. After this time, these rot grubs are too far under the skin to be burned. If a target infested by rot grubs ends its turn with 0 hit points, it dies as the rot grubs burrow into its heart and kill it. Any effect that cures disease kills all rot grubs infesting the target.

APPENDIX C: PLAYER HANDOUTS

THE CAVE



THE LIGHTS



SAVE THE CHILDREN

*You're a foul one, Mr. Lich
Your flesh smells like decay
For the crimes you have committed
There will be hell to pay
When the heroes come to save Christmas Day*

The children have been kidnapped from the village of Hoovale right before Christmas. The villagers believe a lich long rumored to be living in the nearby hills is behind the dastardly deed. Their rescue attempts so far have failed, and they are desperate for someone to rescue the children and save Christmas.

How The Lich Stole Christmas is a short holiday adventure for parties of all tiers of play. The included encounters have variations for all level characters.

A Dungeons & Dragons adventure for characters
of levels 1-20

