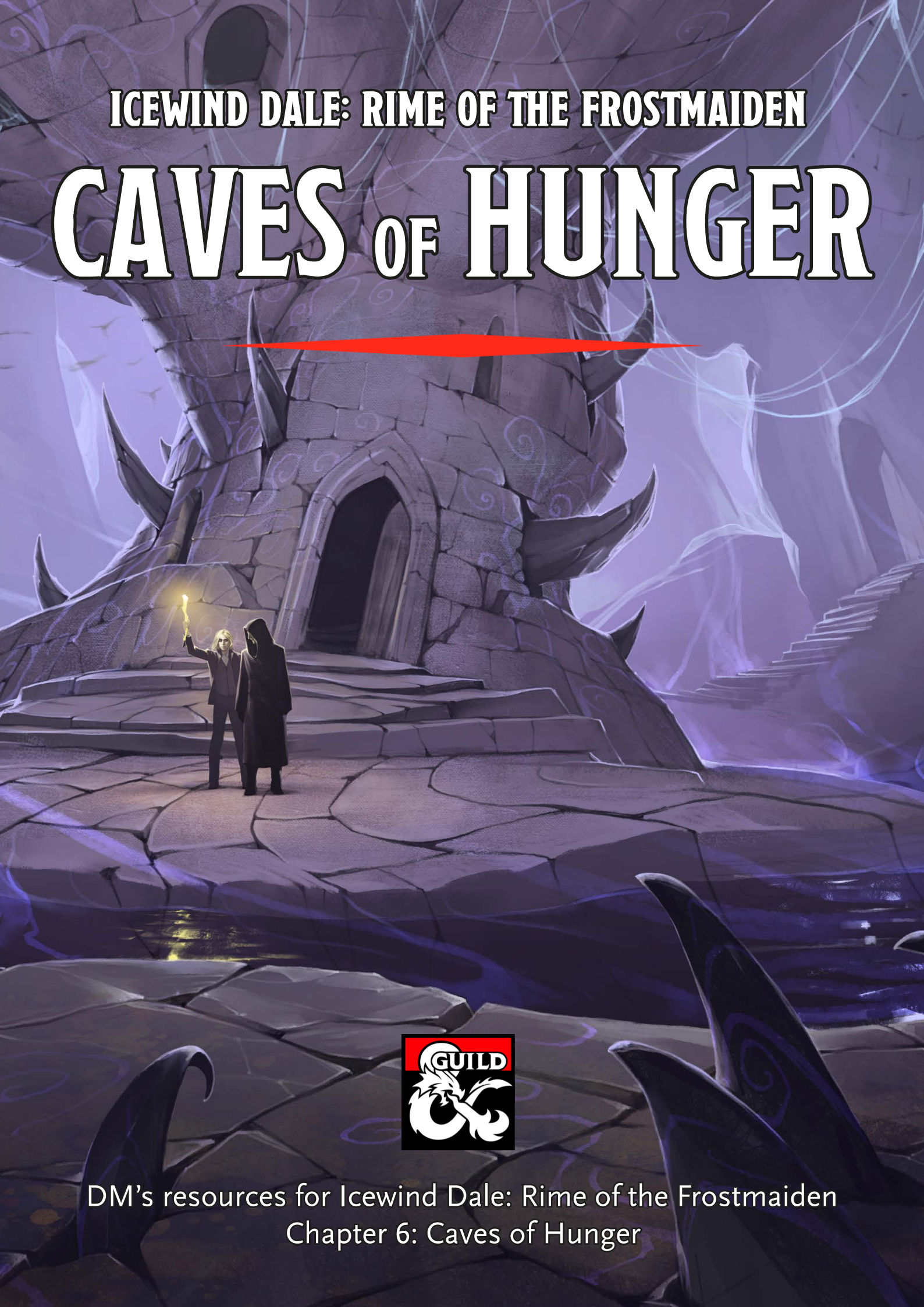


**ICEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN**

# **CAVES OF HUNGER**



DM's resources for Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden  
Chapter 6: Caves of Hunger

# ICEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN

# CAVES OF HUNGER



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## INTRODUCTION

**I**C EWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN IS A chilly campaign that will take your characters from 1st to beyond 10th level, as they face frosty foes, deeply buried dangers, and dark deities, while reshaping the fate of Icewind Dale – and perhaps the entire Sword Coast along with it!

This campaign has an evocative setting with a multitude of interesting locations and awesome quests that will have your players engaged – and maybe even a bit nervous – as they are haunted and harrowed by all the magnificent evils Icewind Dale has to offer.

This download, which covers Chapter 6 of the campaign book, provides you with tools and thoughts that will help you make *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* an exciting experience for your players – and much more manageable for you. It is strongly recommended that you read through the campaign book before using these resources. And always remember, the advice and ideas given here are options – you know best what works at your table.

This download contains:

**Race to the Glacier.** Have the characters encounter Auril and her forces on the way to the Caves of Hunger, emphasizing the terror that chases them – and the dangers ahead!

**Pacing Chapter 6.** An in-depth discussion of the chapter's pacing and a method for structuring the chapter so it remains tense and exciting.

**Running Chapter 6.** A closer look at Tekeli-li and the various locations in the Caves of Hunger, troubleshooting problematic areas and offering advice on how to enhance the location as a whole.

**1 Full-color, VTT-ready Encounter Map.** A 60x30 battlemap providing you with the scene for an epic encounter outside the entrance in the Reghed Glacier.

**Encounter Sheets.** Most of the creatures from the chapter arranged neatly together on sheets so you don't have to flip through multiple books at the table!

### FOLLOW ALONG FOR MORE

These DM's resources are part of a series of DM's resources for *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*. **Sign up to our mailing list here** to receive notifications and special discounts. Also **follow us on Twitter** for more D&D-related fun, give-aways, and free content.

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## CHAPTER 6: CAVES OF HUNGER

**I**N CHAPTER 6: CAVES OF HUNGER THE CHARACTERS must brave undead-infested caves as they find their way to the lost city of Ythryn. Within they will face exotic vampires, eldritch horrors, ravenous curses, and much more!

Chapter 6: Caves of Hunger is, in essence, a precursor to what is to come in Chapter 7: Doom of Ythryn. And, aside from an encounter on the way to the caves, it is just an adventure location. But – it’s a cool adventure location, where the horror that *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* has promised really comes to the forefront, as the DM can employ psychic hauntings and a gnoll vampire to strike fear into the hearts of the characters.

On the following pages, you will find advice on how to run the Caves of Hunger, including an example of how you can enhance the encounter on the road to the glacier, a discussion of how the chapter can be paced so it remains tense and exciting, and in-depth advice on some of the areas within the Caves of Hunger.

### OVERVIEW

Chapter 6: Caves of Hunger is fairly straightforward, which has the characters experiencing the following:

- **Encounter** servants of Auril on the way to the glacier.
- **Find the Passage to Ythryn** in the Caves of Hunger.
- **Foreshadow various locations** within Ythryn.

The biggest things you have to juggle while running the chapter is Tekeli-li – the gnoll vampire that harasses the party – and the psychic hauntings, neither of which should present great challenges. So, in essence – this is a good old dungeon crawl with some horror mixed in. Enjoy it!

### RACE TO THE GLACIER

The book includes a prelude to the Caves of Hunger, where a friendly tribe of Reghed barbarians show up to escort the characters and help fight off a tribe of hostile barbarians. Having some action happen on the way to the caves is a good idea, as it injects some excitement into the journey. That being said, there are things you can do to enhance the encounter presented here.

#### THE ENCOUNTER AS WRITTEN

As written, the characters are aided by the Elk Tribe:

- Mjenir (**druid**)
- Hengar (**gladiator**)
- 10 **tribal warriors**

And face off against the Tiger Tribe:

- **Bjornhild Solvigsdottir** or a **frost druid**
- A **saber-toothed tiger** or a **rhinoceros**
- 20 **tribal warriors**.

The Tiger Tribe ambushes the characters a half-mile from the entrance, which causes the Elk Tribe to urge the characters to run for it, while they take of the foes.

The main issue with this scenario is that the it is too easy – the Tiger Tribe is woefully outmatched. 20 tribal warriors amount to a few 3rd-level spell slots for the 8th-level characters, and the Tiger Tribe leader should go down in a round or two. Even without the Elk Tribe’s aid, this encounter is little more than an inconvenience to the party – and certainly no reason to start running away.

You can make the scenario more dangerous by taking this opportunity to introduce Auril, which is described in more detail on the next page.

## ENCOUNTER WITH AURIL

If the characters haven't dealt with Auril yet, this is a good time to introduce her and strike some fear into the characters' hearts and establish a sense of urgency.

### AURIL APPEARS

Instead of having Mjenir immediately urge the characters to flee when the Tiger Tribe appears, the Elk Tribe just fights alongside the party. Combat is likely proceeding smoothly, with the characters and the Elk Tribe handily defeating the Tiger Tribe. Just as the outcome of the combat seems all but certain, read or paraphrase the following:

You see the champion warrior Hengar wield his spear to devastating effect, delivering a killing blow to the enemy in front of him. As he turns around, eyes scouring the snow-blasted tundra for his next opponent, a dark form materializes out of the blizzard behind him. With the head of a snowy owl, black talons, and dark goat horns protruding from its brow, the hunched, 7-foot-tall biped strikes a grotesque figure. Its visage is a mask of cold fury as it buries its talons in Hengar's back and lifts the large warrior off the ground. Ice forms across the warrior's body and his face twists in a soundless scream as the life fades from his eyes. The figure discards the champion's lifeless corpse without much care or thought, and turns its cold gaze on you. Huge skeletal shapes start appearing from the snowy darkness behind the creature, lumbering toward you with uneven strides. Around the giants' legs, dead barbarians begin to rise from the snow, spectral light shining from their corpses. "Flee!" roars the druid Mjenir, an unmistakable note of awe and terror in his voice. "The Frostmaiden has come! You must go now! Find a way to save the Dale – we shall delay her as much as we can, but you need to flee. Now!"

Auril has arrived alongside three **frost giant skeletons** and quickly creates up to six **coldlight walkers** from the many corpses on the battlefield.

### MJENIR'S ESCAPE

Realizing that they are outmatched, Mjenir desperately urges the characters to escape into the caves and find a way to save Icewind Dale. Auril's forces are still a few hundred feet away from the characters, giving them enough time to escape if they make haste.

If the characters flee as instructed, the druid runs with them to the entrance, while the warriors of the Elk Tribe lay down their lives to delay the giants and coldlight walkers. At the entrance, Mjenir pulls forth a *hallowstone* and activates it. For as long as he remains here, concentrating on the stone, Auril and her undead minions won't be able to come closer, allowing the characters to read the Rime of the Frostmaiden and enter the glacier when they're ready. When the path opens, Mjenir urges: "Go! I will delay them, but I won't be able to hold the spell forever. You must make haste!"

#### Hallowstone

*Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)*

While holding this smooth, obsidian stone, you can use an action to cast the spell *hallow*, with no material components required. The spell lasts for as long as you are within the area of its effect and maintain concentration on it, or until it is dispelled. Once used, this feature can't be used again until seven days have passed.

## MAKING A STAND

Even for a party of 8th-level characters, Auril and her forces are likely to be an exceedingly difficult challenge – which every NPC within earshot should let the characters know. But, adventurers being adventurers, they may still decide to chance it.

If they do and things go poorly, make sure to have Mjenir continually urge them to flee, once more offering to cover their retreat. You can also have Vellynne instruct her zombies to hold off the attackers while she races ahead to read the Rime of the Frostmaiden and open the entrance, urging the characters to follow.

During this encounter, you can have Auril stay back, contend to watch as her forces test the characters' mettle. If the characters still manage to kill Auril's first form, her Divine Rejuvenation and appearance in a new form may be just what is needed to make the characters realize that they should flee.

### WINNING THE BATTLE

If the characters are somehow holding their own in the encounter with Auril and her forces, or just refuse to flee altogether, you can also have Auril disappear after the death of her first form, but have a cold laughter resound around the characters, letting them know that her defeat isn't final. You can also have Mjenir or Vellynne tell the party as much: "We may have won this day, but it takes more than this to kill a goddess. Auril will be back, stronger and with more allies. We should not tarry here!"

### AFTERMATH

If the characters flee and Mjenir employs the *hallowstone*, Auril and her forces disappear back into the snowy mist, biding their time. Mjenir maintains his concentration until Avarice shows up about 12 hours later and kills the druid and any remaining Elk Tribe warriors, which also opens the way for Auril and her minions to chase after the party. If the characters are victorious, the goddess waits until she has regained the use of her first form before picking up the chase.

In either case, Auril doesn't show up again before the characters have been in Ythryn for a day or so, as described in the book (pg. 260).



## PACING CHAPTER 6

Inside the Caves of Hunger, the characters must find ‘H39. Passage to Ythryn’ while braving a multitude of different encounters. Taking a look at the possible challenges in the Caves of Hunger, there’s probably more encounters in the caves than the characters can handle in a single day of adventuring (i.e. without taking a long rest). That is, however, assuming that the characters run headfirst into every challenge, which isn’t very likely.

### THE CHARACTERS’ ROUTE

If the characters take the most direct route through the caves they will have to pass through these areas:

- H1 (no encounter)
- H2 (4 **flameskulls**)
- H5 (7 **ice mephits** & possibly **gnoll vampire**)
- H10 (no encounter)
- H24 (**remorhaz** & **young remorhaz**)
- H26 (no encounter)
- H36 (**gnoll vampire**)
- H39 (no encounter)

The biggest challenge on this route is the remorhaz in H24, but it shouldn’t be too big of an issue for a party of 8th-level adventurers. All told, the characters should be able to comfortably handle this route without a long rest.

However, the characters probably won’t pick the most direct route through the caves. More likely, they will meander a bit and end up facing at least one of these groups of encounters along the way:

- H11 (12 **shadows** & possibly **Tekeli-li**) & H15 (**wraith**)
- H23 (2 **young remorhazes** & possibly **Tekeli-li**)
- H27 (2 **drow elite warriors** & **drow mage**) & H29 (10 **piercers**)

### Caves of Hunger Roster

Area	Creatures	Notes
H3. Flameskulls	4 <b>flameskulls</b>	Flameskulls come to H2 if noise is made there.
H4. Kobold Vampire Spawn	1 <b>kobold vampire spawn</b>	The kobold tries to flee back to H17.
H5. Icicle Drop	7 <b>ice mephits</b> and possibly <b>gnoll vampire</b>	Passive Perception 13+ notices mephits between icicles. If Tekeli-li ( <b>gnoll vampire</b> ) is in H6, he attacks in large hyena form.
H7. Rubble-Strewn Cave	Possibly <b>gnoll vampire</b>	If Tekeli-li ( <b>gnoll vampire</b> ) is in H6, he attacks in large hyena form.
H11. Den of Shadows	12 <b>shadows</b>	The shadows attack on sight, but recoil from Mystryl’s symbol. If Tekeli-li is in H12, he attacks in hyena form when shadows are dead.
H15. Drakareth’s Doom	1 <b>wraith</b>	Drakareth talks in Loross and then attacks, retreating to his icy cyst if he is reduced to 20 hit points or less.
H17. Den of the Vampire Spawn	5 <b>kobold vampire spawn</b>	The vampire spawn cling to the walls and ambush the characters. When two are slain, the rest flees to H19.
H18. Snow Golems	6 <b>snow golems</b>	Attack on sight, but don’t pursue outside H18
H19. Den of Death	Possibly <b>gnoll vampire</b>	If Tekeli-li is here, he attacks in gnoll form
H23. Remorhaz Nest	2 <b>young remorhazes</b> and possibly <b>gnoll vampire</b>	Alerted to intruders by tremorsense and attack immediately. If Tekeli-li is here, he attacks in gnoll form during battle with remorhazes.
H24. Remorhaz Mother	1 <b>remorhaz</b> and 1 <b>young remorhaz</b>	Alerted to intruders by tremorsense and attack immediately.
H27. West Observation Platform	2 <b>drow elite warriors</b>	Hide behind statues and ambush characters using <i>faerie fire</i> and crossbows. Are joined by <b>drow mage</b> from H28 using <i>cloudkill</i> .
H28. Drow Outpost	1 <b>drow mage</b>	Joins battle in H27.
H29. East Observation Platform	10 <b>ice piercers</b>	Attack on sight
H32. Mirrored Cavern	Possibly <b>gnoll vampire</b>	If Tekeli-li is here, he uses Frightful Cackle, then Sickening Gaze, before engaging in melee in gnoll form
H33. Watcher in the Walls	1 <b>mummy</b>	If freed, mummy isn’t immediately hostile to the party.
H35. Mysterious Cube	1 <b>spitting mimic</b>	Attacks if touched, harmed or disturbed.
H36. Frozen Grove	1 <b>dryad</b> and possibly <b>gnoll vampire</b>	Dryad is friendly to the party, and doesn’t appear while Tekeli-li is present. If Tekeli-li is here, he attacks in hyena form.
H37. Weird Insights	4 <b>nothics</b>	Nothics don’t immediately attack, unless they can pick off lone target

## SETTING THE PACE

Even if the characters don’t take the most direct route through the caves, they should still be able to handle the challenges within without the need for a long rest. So how do you ensure that they don’t rest prematurely and mess up the pacing of the chapter?

### SENSE OF URGENCY

One of the advantages of having Auril show up right before the characters enter the caves (as described on the previous page), is that it creates a sense of urgency. The characters know that Auril is chasing them, which means that they should only take long rests when they absolutely need to – making it more likely that they will continue on even when they are running low on resources.

### DISTURBING RESTS

Another way to ensure that the characters don’t take a long rest prematurely is to have Tekeli-li, the gnoll vampire residing in the caves, disturb them during any attempts to do so. This doesn’t have to be by attacking them, as simply cackling loudly and maniacally near the characters should be enough to make a long rest impossible (if you haven’t practiced your creepy hyena laugh recently, there’s many soundbites to choose from online, such as [these on soundboard.com](#)).

If Tekeli-li is dead, or the characters find a way to silence him, you can also have the rumbling movements of the remorhazes disturb any attempts at long rest. Both these methods also work against characters resting using the spell *leomund’s tiny hut*.

Note that if the characters enter the caves after a pitched battle outside, you should probably allow them to take an undisturbed long rest right after entering, or somewhere along the way.

## RUNNING CHAPTER 6

Below is a advice on how to run the various encounters and locations inside the Caves of Hunger, including the caves' native inhabitant, the gnoll vampire Tekeli-li.

### TEKELI-LI

An important feature of the Caves of Hunger is Tekeli-li, the gnoll vampire that resides within. The book suggests that Tekeli-li shows up at several points during the characters exploration of the caves, each time draining resources and withdrawing. This helps build tension and frustrate both characters and players, making them look forward to finally catching and destroying the gnoll vampire.

#### WHEN AND WHERE

The book provides mentions of Tekeli-li in several areas also has a table where you can roll for his location. It seems to make sense that you have Tekeli-li appear in not just one, but all of these locations, at least until he is either destroyed, the party have shown that they can deal easily with him, or the characters are running so low on resources that you don't want to drain them further.

If you have the party encounter Tekeli-li in each of the locations mentioned in the book, they will encounter Tekeli-li at least once, but probably two times or more, before you can have them face off with him in a final showdown in 'H36. Frozen Grove'. Having the characters face off with Tekeli-li in the grove is a good idea, as the characters will have to pass through that area – and because the dryad there can help the characters pin down the elusive gnoll (see 'H36. Frozen Cave' later in this document).

#### TEKELI-LI'S TACTICS

As the book suggests, it seems like a good strategy to have Tekeli-li employ hit-and-run tactics, appearing often to deal some quick damage before he turns into mist and withdraws, waiting until he has regenerated before going again. This isn't entirely without issues, however.

**Mist Form.** Turning into mist takes an action, and while he is in mistform, Tekeli-li has only 20 ft. move speed. This means that Tekeli-li won't be able to get far on the round that he turns into mist. In addition, while Tekeli-li is more evasive in his mist form, he still takes damage from spells and magic weapons. To allow Tekeli-li to make his escape more easily during skirmishes with the characters, you can describe how he disappears into tiny cracks in the ice walls, making pursuit impossible. Note also that Tekeli-li can't turn into mist while he's in sunlight, so if any of the characters can cast *daylight* or similar magic, you should be very careful with when and how Tekeli-li attacks.

#### ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

While Tekeli-li is sure to be a nuisance to the party, he is nowhere near a match for 8th-level characters, as he has less than 100 hit points and deals only about 30 damage per round. This is probably fine if the characters are worn down by the time they have a final stand with him in 'H36. Frozen Grove'. If the adventurers are still pretty fresh, however, and you want Tekeli-li to be just a bit more intimidating, you can use the **Legendary Gnoll Vampire** statblock instead (included in the encounter sheets for Chapter 6). If that proves to be too big a challenge, you can have the dryad Hathowyn intervene (see 'H36. Frozen Cave' later in this document).

## CAVES OF HUNGER

The Caves of Hunger is an interesting location that presents several challenges of varying difficulty to the party. Below is a closer look at some of the locations in the caves, including advice on how to run them. Only locations where advice is offered are listed.

### H2. CRASHED SKYCOACH

The characters find an abandoned skycoach here.

**Flameskulls.** The text here says that the flameskulls in 'H3. Flameskulls' come to investigate 'loud disturbances', but doesn't mention what would create such a disturbance. To make the appearance of the flameskulls more likely, you can have them come if the characters aren't being stealthy, or fail a DC 12 group Dexterity (Stealth) check as they go through the room.

**Safe.** Inside the skycoach is a safe, which can be opened with a DC 20 Dexterity (thieves' tools) check. There's no consequence to failure, however, which makes the check a bit superfluous. To make things a bit more interesting, you can have failure result in the iron safe giving off a loud, electric shock, dealing 18 (4d8) lightning damage to any creature that is touching it directly or with metal tools – and alerting the nearby flameskulls!

### H4. KOBOLD VAMPIRE SPAWN

The characters find a kobold vampire spawn here.

**Kobold Vampire Spawn.** The book doesn't provide us with much context for why this kobold is here – or what its presence means to the party. You can enhance this encounter by giving the kobold a name – Ipzzikit – and giving it a bit more to do. If the characters fight the flameskulls in H2, it runs up to see what's going on, before quickly fleeing as it sees the characters. For their part, the characters see the small figure briefly standing in the tunnel entrance before it ducks away, giving them an opportunity to chase after it. If the characters capture the kobold, you can have Ipzzikit tell them the following if threatened with sunlight or water:

- **Who are you?** "Ipzzikit wants no harm, but Ipzzikit so hungry, yes, so hungry!"
- **Why are you here?** "Great Tekeli-li tell Ipzzikit to guard caves, yes. Ipzzikit must obey master!"
- **Who is your master?** "Tekeli-li is master, yes. Gnoll – vampire! Strong! Smart!"
- **Where is your master?** "Master everywhere, yes, everywhere. Has sleeping place – but is wake now!"
- **Are there more kobolds here?** "Yes, yes, Ipzzikit has friends, many friends. And powerful master!"

Ipzzikit can offer to lead the characters to most locations in the caves, such as 'H39. Passage to Ythryn', 'H17. Den of Vampire Spawn', or 'H20. Icy Crypt', but will try to escape from the characters as soon as Tekeli-li shows up (such as in 'H5. Icicle Drop', which is just ahead).

## H8. ARCANE EYE ACTIVATOR

The characters can get a guided tour of Ythryn here.

**Arcane Eye.** Giving the characters an opportunity to activate the *arcane* eye here is pretty interesting. It will allow them to essentially scout out the entire Caves of Hunger at their leisure. If you don't want to give everything away, you can have the eye run into trouble at the following locations:

- As it passes into 'H15. Drakareth's Doom', the eye shows a dark form coalescing before going dark, as the wraith Drakareth snuffs out the *arcane* eye (either using *dispel magic*, which it would have known in life, or using a mystic feature of its undead existence).
- As the eye passes into 'H27. West Observation Platform', the character briefly sees a drow's face through the eye before the spell is lost, as the drow mage Yilsebek casts *dispel magic* on it.
- As it passes into 'H31. Thing in the Ice', the character briefly sees the alien entity in the ice through the eye, before the spell is dispelled by the eldritch creature.
- As it passes into 'H36. Frozen Grove', the dryad Hathowyn uses the magic of her grove to snuff out the spell, allowing the character only a brief glimpse of its fey beauty before vision is lost.

## H9. GOLEM HEAD

The characters can find an iron golem head here.

**Losin' Its Head.** While it is not mentioned in the description here, this head belongs to the headless golem in Ythryn's bazaar (area Y13, pg. 244). It seems like a wasted opportunity not to allow the characters to reunite the golem with its body, if they think so far ahead. As it can only communicate by blinking its eyes, the characters will have to come up with the idea of bringing the golem head with them on their own – or you can have Vellynne suggest it. The golem head can sense where its body is and can guide them toward it (blinking 'yes' or 'no' each time they ask for directions) if they bring it. There's no official weight for iron golems provided in the fifth edition rules, but earlier editions had it weighing in at around 5,000 lbs – making a head-weight of around 250 lbs seem about right. That's probably too heavy to carry by hand, but small enough to fit in a *bag of holding*, such as the one in 'H2. Crashed Skycoach'. If the characters bring along the head and reunite it with its body, they may gain a valuable ally – which is explained in more detail in the DM's resources for Chapter 7: Doom of Ythryn.

## H12. CURSE OF HUNGER

The characters may end up cursed with hunger here.

**Curse of Hunger.** The book states that to avoid the curse, a character must eat a handful of food each hour, or succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. To make bookkeeping easier, you can take this to mean that a cursed character must eat 4 rations per day instead of just 1 – and that they can't get the benefit of a long rest, because they have to eat constantly. You may also want to make the curse a little harder to shake off – just succeeding on a single DC 15 Constitution saving throw is a bit easy – by ruling that the curse ends only when a character has made 3 successful saving throws, or if removed with *remove curse* or similar magic.

## H23. REMORHAZ NEST & H24. REMORHAZ MOTHER

The characters can encounter remorhazes here.

**Steaming Water.** The book mentions that the water here is hot, but not hot enough to deal damage. If you want to make the battleground a bit more interesting, you can decide that the near-boiling water here deals 1d6 fire damage per turn to any creature that enters the water for the first time on a turn, or starts its turn in it.

## H30. VLAGOMIR'S SPARK

The characters can gain a supernatural charm here.

**Vlagomir's Spark.** To allow a character to gain a giant form is a very interesting concept, but there are some immediate issues with it. First, it seems unfair that paladins should be excluded from getting the charm. Second, while the charm does increase the character's Strength, the book doesn't mention if the character's weapons also deal additional damage, as is the case when using the spell *enlarge* – it seems only fitting that the damage die of any enlarged weapons are at least doubled – or even tripled. Third, the book makes no additional mentions of the possible consequences being so large will have, but you can decide that:

- As soon as a character has grown to 9 ft. or more (becoming Large) it has disadvantage on attack rolls in areas with 'low' ceilings, such as the tunnels in the Caves of Hunger and the interior of many areas in the Necropolis of Ythryn.
- As soon as a character has grown to 15 ft. or more (becoming Huge), it can no longer squeeze through tunnels in the Caves of Hunger or doorways in Ythryn.
- As the character grows bigger and stronger, it also becomes slower and more clumsy. Once the character is 9 feet tall, its Dexterity score becomes 12, unless it is already lower. For every 3 feet of additional height it gains, its Dexterity score decreases by 1, to a minimum of 8.

With the introduction of these drawbacks, Vlagomir's Spark becomes a bit less powerful, and potentially even so big an issue that the character will actively seek to reverse the transformation.





### H31. THING IN THE ICE

The characters face an alien entity here.

**Dominated.** The book doesn't mention what happens if the other characters try to pull their friends away – which seems likely to happen – but you can decide that dominated characters respond with violence to their friends' interventions. The dominated character attacks anyone who interferes with it, but lets off as soon as they disengage, so it can resume its staring at the ice wall. Remember, each time a dominated character takes damage, it gets to repeat its Wisdom saving throw.

### H32. MIRRORED CAVERN

The characters may face Tekeli-li in this cave.

**Vampires and Mirrors.** The premise here is fun – a battle in a cave full of mirrors that distort and disorient the characters. There's just one issue – the book says Tekeli-li doesn't cast a reflection, which means the characters should have no issue clearly seeing where he is. We are, however, saved by the gnoll vampire's description (ID:RotF, pg. 291), which mentions that the gnoll vampire – unlike ordinary vampires – can cast reflections in mirrors if they want to. Just remember to describe how Tekeli-li at first casts no reflection, but then does, as soon as combat breaks out.

**Combat.** As written, the mirrors only makes it so that ranged attacks have disadvantage. You can make this encounter a bit more interesting – scary even – by deciding that the mirrors have the following effect:

- The mirrors make it difficult to perceive where creatures within the cavern are. Once on its turn, a creature that moves within the cavern can take the Hide action as a bonus action and roll a Dexterity (Stealth) check. The creature is effectively invisible from all other creatures in the cavern with lower passive Perception than the result of its Stealth check.

This change makes it so that Tekeli-li (but also the characters) can try to 'hide in plain sight' on their turn, as long as they move around. Remember, an 'invisible' creature becomes visible after making an attack or casting a spell, which means it must move again and take a new Hide action before becoming 'invisible' again.

### H36. FROZEN GROVE

The characters can meet a dryad here.

**Tekeli-li's Aid.** If the gnoll vampire has been harassing the characters throughout the caves, they are probably more than ready to finally deal with it. If you want the characters to have a final encounter with Tekeli-li, where the gnoll doesn't just slink away as a cloud of mist, you can have the dryad Hathowyn aid the party. If Tekeli-li is close to destruction and seems likely to get away, Hathowyn calls upon the magic of her grove, causing water to begin pouring down the walls and even forming thin 'doors' of water barring the tunnel entrances leading out of the room. Since Tekeli-li cannot pass through water, he has no other choice but to bare his teeth and attack the characters with furious abandon. Hathowyn can also aid the characters if they are having trouble dealing with Tekeli-li, using *entangle* to pin down the vampire, or appearing quickly from a tree to deliver a blow with her club, before disappearing back into the safety of her tree. If the characters are faring really poorly, you can also outfit Hathowyn with a *daylight* spell, which should be enough to turn the encounter in the party's favor.

### H37. WEIRD INSIGHTS

The characters can speak with four nothics here.

**The Nothics' Information.** The nothics in this chamber can provide a lot of useful information about Ythryn, including the identity of Iriolarthas and that a ritual is needed to enter his spire. This will help the characters navigate Ythryn, so you may want to make conversation likely by having Vellynne suggest it and have the nothics appear eager to converse.

**The Mythallar and the Spindle.** Note that the nothics claim that Ythryn's *mythallar* won't function as long as the Spindle (ID:RotF, pg. 252) remains in the city. This seems to be an error: Not only is this not mentioned again in Chapter 7: Doom of Ythryn, but the book explicitly states that the Spindle can't be moved, destroyed, or dispelled. You can instead have the nothics explain that none can attune to the *mythallar* unless Iriolarthas – who is already attuned to it – permits it, which is in line with what the book says (pg. 256).



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