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All published Eventyr Games DM's resources for Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden

ICEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN

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CEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN TAKES the characters on an adventure in the coldest and most inhospitable region of the Forgotten Realms - a region made even more inhospitable by the fact that Auril, the Frostmaiden, has cast a spell of perpetual darkness over Icewind Dale and the people of Ten-Towns.

This adventure is a mixture of a lot of different things - horror and humor, sandbox and railroad, gritty survival and epic fantasy. It's filled to the brim with interesting content, fantastical locations, and exciting enemies and encounters. That doesn't mean, however, that it is always an easy campaign for the DM to run.

On the following pages, we will take a look at the base premise of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden and provide advice on how to start the adventure and which elements to possibly include, exclude, or emphasize. We will also go over various rules and concepts described in the book, including wilderness survival rules and character secrets. But first, let's take a quick look at the story and structure in Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden.

OVERVIEW

One thing that can make Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden difficult to run for the DM, is the way its story and structure is presented. The adventure starts out as an open sandbox-style adventure in Chapter 1 and 2, before becoming more linear as it weaves through three separate stories in the later chapters. This makes the campaign's story feel a lot less cohesive than most other official campaigns, and creates a structure that can quickly become confusing for both DMs and players.

In this section, we'll provide a quick overview of the story and structure of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden, doing our best to lay everything out clearly and concisely, so it's easy to understand what is going on.

STORY

Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden doesn't really have a story, so much as it has three stories - or plots which are loosely connected. In brief summary, they are:

- Auril's Everlasting Rime. For the last two years, Auril has cast a nightly spell of darkness over Icewind Dale.
- Duergar Despot. The duergar Xardorok Sunblight has raised a fortress in the mountains and is searching for a crystalline substance called chardalyn so he can build a dragon and unleash it on Ten Towns.
- **Netherese Necropolis.** The Arcane Brotherhood, spellcasters from Luskan, are searching for a Netherese city buried under the Reghed Glacier.

As mentioned, the connection between these stories is very loose. Auril's Everlasting Rime is the backdrop to the entire adventure, acts as the reason why Xardorok has come to the darkened Icewind Dale, and can be used to motivate the characters to seek out the Netherese necropolis as they try to find a way to end it. Beyond that, however, the stories aren't really that well connected.

PACING & STRUCTURE

Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden can reasonably be divided into three parts - or acts - each of which are relatively self-contained, and can easily be played separately. In summary, the structure of the campaign is:

- Act 1 (chapters 1-2). The characters travel around Ten Towns and Icewind Dale doing smaller quests.
- Act 2 (chapters 3–4). The characters try to prevent Xardorok's dragon from destroying Ten-Towns.
- Act 3 (chapters 5–7). The characters battle Auril and other villains as they search for the Netherese necropolis and a way to end the Everlasting Rime.

The benefit of the acts being so self-contained is that you can - with relative ease - start the adventure at virtually any level between 1st and 7th, and also end the adventure early without having to abandon story points.

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

When the story and structure isn't entirely cohesive, it can potentially impact the adventure's pacing and purpose. From the start, the goal of the adventure will appear to be ending the Everlasting Rime, but if you run the adventure as written, the characters can accomplish this as soon as Chapter 5. And if they do so, the apparent goal of the adventure becomes looting an ancient Netherese necropolis instead – something that isn't even on the table at the beginning of the campaign and maybe isn't the kind of adventure that the players created characters for.

If you are running a sandbox-style game with players and characters that don't necessarily need the story to follow a classic narrative structure, this isn't much of an issue. But, if you and the players prefer a more 'heroic' journey with clear purpose – adventure in Icewind Dale until we're strong enough and have found a way to end the Everlasting Rime! – then it can be a bit jarring.

Luckily, it is something that can be fixed with relatively minor changes. On the following pages we'll discuss how to establish motivation and purpose from the start. In the DM's resources for later chapters Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden, you will find advice on how to bind the story better together and keep the characters motivated.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

In this section, we go over what you may want to cover in a session 0, take a look at how you can hook the characters into the adventure, and discuss how to start the campaign at higher levels and from other campaigns.

HAVING A SESSION 0

Even more so than usual, Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden benefits from having a session 0 with the players, where you go over the campaign's theme & setting, character concepts & backgrounds, and story hooks & motivation, before starting the campaign.

THEME & SETTING

It is a good idea to let your players know exactly what kind of theme and setting the adventure presents, both so they know what to expect and can tailor their characters to the adventure, and so you can get a sense of what your players may want to have emphasized.

You can start by informing the players that:

- The main focal point of the story is Icewind Dale, which Auril, the Frostmaiden, has enveloped in perpetual darkness.
- The adventure will take place wholly in arctic wastelands, small settlements, and various dungeons.
- The adventure features themes of survival, horror, and isolation, but also has comedy, Indiana Jones-style relic hunting, sci-fi elements, and classic high fantasy.

You can also ask the players if they would enjoy:

- · An emphasis on wilderness survival, where the characters must battle constantly with the environment, or a less granular approach, where you don't bother too much with the minutia of survival?
- A sandbox-style game, where they are left to figure out for themselves where to go and what to do, or a more cohesive story, where the ultimate goal is clearer?

Their answers to these questions will help inform you on how to run the adventure, including which themes to emphasize and what style of play you should encourage.

CHARACTER CONCEPTS & BACKGROUNDS

Knowing the adventure's theme and setting, the players should have an easier time putting together characters that would work well and be enjoyable to play. If you want to use the secrets included in the book (pg. 14), you can start by asking the players:

If they would like to draw secrets before making characters, since some secrets can have a big impact on a character's background, or prefer secrets that don't interfere too much with character backgrounds (see 'Character Secrets' on pg. 6 of this document).

Whether you use secrets or not, you can inform the players that:

- · The characters should have a reason for being in Icewind Dale. You can let them draw inspiration from the Character Hooks in the book (pg. 13).
- · All races can be found in Icewind Dale, but humans and dwarves are particularly common.
- Characters that work well in cold environments and have spells/abilities that are effective against arctic threats and creatures may be more enjoyable to play.

If you're not afraid of giving mild spoilers, you can also tell the players that:

- · Evil druids and wizards, duergar, devil worshipers, undead, dragons, giants, and perhaps even the Frostmaiden herself, are among the possible threats in the adventure. Characters with backgrounds that involve these will work well.
- The adventure may also have something to do with ancient artifacts and epic magic long lost and forgotten - characters who have an interest in such things will probably feel right at home.

STORY HOOKS & MOTIVATION

In the adventure as written, we're given no clear, singular story and hook, so it pays to make sure that the players have a firm reason for why their character is an adventurer – someone who will go on more or less any adventure in front of them. You may want to emphasize that this isn't about deciding if the characters want to go on adventures and accomplish minor tasks and quests, but why they want to do so. Especially if you're starting at 1st level, the adventure will at times almost require that the characters are willing to accept various tasks and quests simply because they're adventurers.

At its core, there's two types of motivation that works well with this adventure:

- *Opportunist*. The character seeks to exploit the chaos that reigns in Icewind Dale to amass riches and power.
- Fledgling Hero. The character seeks to aid the people of Icewind Dale - either because they live there or because they were sent there to do so - in any way they can, with the ultimate goal of breaking Auril's spell.

When both you and your players know clearly what motivates their characters, it becomes easier to set up a base hook for the adventure, as well as making sure the characters are properly motivated to embark on the adventure. In the section 'Adventure Hooks' on the following page, you will find more information about how you can hook the characters into the adventure to begin with, either as a group or separately.

As we cover the various chapters of *Icewind Dale*: Rime of the Frostmaiden, we will also discuss specific hooks for smaller quests and subplots as they occur, and how you can ensure that the characters stay motivated throughout.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

As mentioned before, *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* has three separate stories. This can make it more difficult to determine how best to hook the characters into the adventure. In this section, we will take a closer look at the various hooks presented in the book and provide some additional hooks you can use to get the player characters invested in Icewind Dale.

CHARACTER HOOKS

The campaign book presents various hooks (pg. 13) tied to the characters' backgrounds. A handful of these has the character being a local of Icewind Dale – Folk Hero, Outlander, Soldier, and Urchin – while the rest provides various reasons for why the character has come to Icewind Dale from elsewhere. Only one actually provides a *real* hook that is more than just a reason why the character is in Icewind Dale: the Acolyte, which has the character traveling to Ten Towns to break Auril's spell of eternal darkness.

All told, these character hooks can help the players come up with explanations for why their characters are in Icewind Dale, but don't do much to actually hook them into the campaign's story.

FOR GOLD AND GLORY

The most common motivation for adventurers is gold and glory. While Icewind Dale doesn't seem to promise much of either, the potential for heroes to arise is always greatest where the outlook is bleakest. The characters may find themselves in Icewind Dale simply because they think there's an opportunity to become rich and famous heroes. If that is their primary motivation, you will need to add some additional incentives along the way, since many of the quests in the book offer no promises of tangible rewards. You will find suggestions on how to improve rewards throughout the DM's resources for *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*.



On a Mission

A surefire way to ensure that the characters know what they're supposed to do and why they're in Icewind Dale, is to start them off with a mission. While this mission should be clear enough to leave no confusion about the goal, it also needs to be vague enough to encompass the multitude of different quests and stories in *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*. This means the mission should probably be some variation of:

"Go to Icewind Dale and help out the troubled Ten-Towns as best you can, possibly even ending Auril's Everlasting Rime."

Below are some ideas for factions that could have hired one or more of the characters to take on this mission.

Council of Speakers. Ten-Town's ruling council has come together to hire adventurers to aid the people of Icewind Dale, offering a retainer of 10 gp per week the characters remain in Ten-Towns to help out: "In times like these, we need someone who are willing to travel around the Ten-Towns, acting as beacons of hope and providing aid to any who needs it".

Emerald Enclave. This group of druids, rangers, and similar folk seek to restore and preserve the natural balance in Ten-Towns: "The darkness that has taken hold over Ten-Towns is unnatural and upsets the natural order. Find a way to end it and restore balance."

Harpers. This benevolent faction hires the party to aid Ten-Towns however they can: "The poor folk of Ten-Towns are suffocating in darkness and isolation. Do what you can to aid the people of Ten-Towns and shine a little light in their lives."

Lord's Alliance. This confederation of powerful northern cities wants to restore trade with Ten-Towns: "Darkness, chaos, and lawlessness reigns in Icewind Dale these days, making trade with the towns nearly impossible. Do what you can to restore order in Icewind Dale and, if at all possible, end the spell of darkness that has been cast on the land."

Order of the Gauntlet. This faction of knights and paladins seek to stamp out the evil that is growing in Icewind Dale: "Ten-Towns has fallen into depravity, some cities even going as far as sacrificing people to appease the evil Auril! Be the champions of order and justice that Ten-Towns desperately needs in this time."

Zhentarim. This group of scoundrels and ruthless merchants seek a foothold in Icewind Dale (beyond their presence in Targos): "Go to Ten-Towns and ingratiate yourself with the townsfolk and their leaders. Become the heroes they so desperately need, so that when the dust settles, they will beg for us to stay and lead them."

Missions Rewards

If the characters have received their mission from a faction, you can reward them as thus:

- 1 renown per quest completed in Chapters 1 & 2.
- 10 renown for dealing with Xardorok and the dragon, minus 1 for each town that is destroyed by the dragon.
- 10 renown for ending Auril's Everlasting Rime

If the characters need monetary compensation as well (or if they're hired by the Council of Speakers), they will also receive a total of 1,000 gp for stopping Xardorok, and 2,500 gp for ending Auril's Everlasting Rime.

STARTING AT HIGHER LEVELS

Because the campaign is so modular and divided into different parts, starting at higher levels is relatively simple. Below are some quick pointers for how and where to start the adventure at higher levels.

STARTING AT 2ND LEVEL

For experienced players who don't really care for level 1 play – where characters are incredibly fragile and can't do a lot – starting at 2nd level may be preferable. Luckily, this is very easy in this campaign. Most of the content in Chapter 1 is tailored to 2nd-level characters anyway, so skipping 1st level only requires you to perhaps level the characters up a bit slower and maybe scale up the quest in Bryn Shander – that's about it.

STARTING AT 3RD LEVEL

You can still lead with Chapter 1, even if the characters start at 3rd level, but you may want to keep the chapter a bit shorter and focus on the more difficult quests and locations. Xardorok and the duergar's presence in the region may serve as the hook, and you can steer the characters toward the southern towns: Caer-Dineval, Caer-Konig, and Easthaven, where they can quickly unravel the duergar plot before heading into Icewind Dale and toward Xardorok's Fortress.

STARTING AT 4TH-6TH LEVEL

When starting the adventure at 4th–6th level – perhaps coming from a different campaign, see 'Starting from Other Campaigns' on this page – you will probably want to lead with Xardorok and his duergar. In this case, the mission – stop the duergar before they destroy Ten-Towns – makes for a very direct and easy-to-follow hook.

Even so, you will probably still want to give the characters a chance to experience and explore Ten-Towns, since the dragon's attacks on the town don't carry the same weight or importance if the characters aren't just a little invested in, or familiar with, the towns.

STARTING AT 7TH LEVEL OR HIGHER

If you start the characters at 7th level or higher, you can head straight to Auril's abode or even the Caves of Hunger, leading with the quest to end Auril's Everlasting Rime and/or locate the Netherese Necropolis. If you're going with the latter, you may want to cut Auril's Everlasting Rime out of the adventure entirely, as the darkness it has cast across Icewind Dale won't mean as much to characters who haven't really been there and seen its effect. In this event, simply exploring the Netherese necropolis could be enough quest on its own. If you have already played through a different campaign, you can have the *mythallar* (or some other ancient artifact) in Ythryn be the key to preventing or stopping some other disaster or calamity the characters care more about from earlier adventures.



STARTING FROM OTHER CAMPAIGNS

If you're already playing – or have finished up – one of the other published campaigns, you may want to have that adventure lead into this one. Luckily, because *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* is so modular and can be started at different levels, this isn't too difficult. Below is inspiration and advice for starting from three other published campaigns (beware, spoilers!).

GHOSTS OF SALTMARSH

Several of the *Ghosts of Saltmarsh*-adventures can lead into *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*.

Characters that have 'dealt' with the lizardfolk in Chapters 2 & 3, or the sahuagin in Chapter 6, may learn that the sahuagin have moved south and begun terrorizing the shorelines there because a curse of terrible cold has wrecked their usual territories to the north. Deal with the curse in Icewind Dale and end the sahuagin threat for good!

You can also have the characters learn about Xardorok and his plans for a chardalyn dragon from the shaman aboard the 'Emperor of the Waves' – a follower of Lolth, who hates the duergar deeply.

Alternatively, the cultists on Abbey Isle are followers of Asmodeus, who were ransacked by Levistus' cultists (from Caer-Dineval) trying to learn the archfiend's plans in Icewind Dale. The surviving cultists know that Asmodeus has grand designs for Icewind Dale and that he is using a duergar as his instrument of destruction!

LOST MINE OF PHANDELVER

If the group is playing through the Starter Set-adventure *Lost Mine of Phandelver*, the characters should be around 5th level when it ends.

If you haven't finished the *Lost Mine of Phandelver* yet, you can have the secret map found in the Wave Echo Cave be a map that shows the location of Xardorok's fortress in Icewind Dale, along with a brief outline of his plan to build a chardalyn dragon – plans The Black Spider stole from duergar he abducted in the Underdark. If the characters tell anyone – such as Sildar or Gundren – about the map or the plans, the NPC will urge them to head to Icewind Dale to stop the evil duergar!

If you have already wrapped up Lost Mine of Phandelver, you can instead have Sildar or Gundren approach the characters with information about the darkness that has settled over Icewind Dale and urge them to go see if they can help out. See the 'Lord's Alliance' under 'On a Mission' for inspiration.

WATERDEEP: DRAGON HEIST

If the characters finish *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist* in good standing with a faction, that faction's representative can approach them with news of the disturbance in Icewind Dale, using the mission statement from 'On a Mission' on the previous page. You can also have Laeral Silverhand deliver the new mission to the characters.

If the characters end up in bad standing with Waterdeep's authorities or various factions they have double-crossed, you can have any NPC that is still friendly to them – or just neutral – strongly suggest that they go to Icewind Dale, since it is the ideal place for troublemakers to lay low while things 'cool down'. You can also have Laeral Silverhand banish the characters to Icewind Dale if she discovers that they have stolen from the city, informing them that dealing with the troubles in Icewind Dale will be their way of doing penance.

CHARACTER SECRETS

The characters secrets presented in 'Appendix B' of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* is a fun little addition that you can use to spice up your game. Guidance for using these hooks are given in the book (pg. 14), which we add to below by clearly laying out the different types of secrets and how you can use them.

Types of Secrets

While some of the secrets can have a very big impact on the characters and even the campaign as a whole, others have very little influence on either. The secrets can be separated into three general 'types': useful secrets, story secrets, and flavor secrets.

USEFUL SECRETS

There are a handful of secrets that boosts the character's abilities and give them tangible in-game benefits:

- Doppelganger
- · Littlest Yeti
- · Midwinter Child
- Orc Stone
- · Owlbear Whisperer

Out of these, Doppelganger, Midwinter Child, and Orc Stone provide the most tangible benefits and will make the character significantly stronger.

STORY SECRETS

There are a handful of secrets that tie into the story or locations that the characters may arrive at on their own:

- · Escaped Prisoner
- · Old Flame
- · Pirate Cannibal
- · Reghed Heir
- · Runaway Author
- · Spy

These secrets provide some background information for the characters, but, most importantly, they can actually come into play on their own throughout the campaign, without you having to any additional work.

FLAVOR SECRETS

The rest of the secrets serve mainly as flavor that can provide some background information:

- · Alagondar Scion
- · Drizzt Fan
- · Elusive Paramour
- Reincarnation
- Ring Hunter
- · Slaad Host

In most cases, the only difference between these secrets and the Character Hooks in the book (pg. 13) is that they are more specific, giving the DM a little more to work with if you want to tie them into the story.

USING SECRETS

Whether or not you want to include these secrets is up to you – and if you think the players will enjoy them.

CONSIDER THE RAMIFICATIONS

Some of the secrets fundamentally change a character's backstory, so if you have players that write pages of backstory and really pour their heart and soul into them, they may not appreciate drawing a 'Doppelganger'-secret or 'Pirate Cannibal'-secret that completely negates everything they had in mind for their character.

If this is the case, you will probably want to have players draw secrets *before* they make their characters, so they can form their backgrounds around the secret. You can also choose to include only more 'harmless' secrets that have minimal influence on a character's background and personality, such as 'Drizzt Fan', 'Old Flame', 'Owlbear Whisperer', and 'Ring Hunter'.

MAINTAINING BALANCE

Depending on the sentiment of your players, you may find that having one player draw an immensely useful secret such as 'Midwinter Child' can cause envy with a character that draws 'Drizzt Fan', or a similarly negligible secret. You can avoid this issue by either only using the secrets that give boosts in power (listed under 'Useful Secrets'), or by excluding the useful secrets – or at least the strongest ones, such as 'Doppelganger', 'Midwinter Child', and 'Orc Stone'.



WILDERNESS SURVIVAL

Below is general advice for using and adapting the Wilderness Survival presented in the book (pg. 11).

AVALANCHES

In brief summary, the rules for avalanches are as follows:

- The characters rolls initiative and must try to evade the avalanche, which moves up to 600 ft. per round.
- A character caught in an avalanche is blinded and restrained, and must make DC 15 Strength saving throws to avoid taking damage as it rolls down.
- When the avalanche stops, characters caught in it suffers exhaustion each minute until it is digget out.

With these rules, you more or less decide from the start who will get caught in the avalanche, as you decide where the characters are and how wide the avalanche is. If you want rules that are a bit less rigid and leave more up to chance, you can use the alternative rules below.

OPTIONAL: AVALANCHE AS A SKILL CHALLENGE

Below is a way to run an avalanche as a skill challenge.

Setting the DC. First, determine the DC for all skill checks and saving throws during the challenge: DC 10 is easy, DC 13 is moderate, and DC 15 is hard.

Skill Checks. Each character makes three skill checks to determine how soon they notice the avalanche and how cleanly they get out of the avalanche's path – or find something to hold on to! – before they are swept away:

- · Wisdom (Perception) check.
- · Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.
- · Strength (Athletics) check.

A character proficient in the Nature or Survival skills has advantage on all checks. When the checks are made, count each character's successful checks:

- 3 Successes. The character gets clear without issue.
- 2 Successes. The character gets clear but takes 1d10 bludgeoning damage in the process.
- 1 Success. The character is swept away, taking 2d10 bludgeoning damage and ending up partially buried.
- **O Successes.** The character is swept away, taking 3d10 bludgeoning damage and ending up buried.

Aftermath. When the avalanche is over, any characters who didn't become buried must now hurry to extricate their buried companions before it is too late:

- Partially Buried. A partially buried character is restrained, but has its head and arms free. It, or another creature within 5 feet of it, can spend 1 minute and make a Strength (Athletics) check to get it free.
- Buried. A buried character is blinded and restrained, and must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each minute, suffering one level of exhaustion on a failure. The DC increases by 1 each minute. A buried character cannot extricate itself, unless it has magic or features that can aid it. Other creatures can locate a buried character by spending 1 minute and succeeding on a Wisdom (Perception) check and extricate it by spending 1 minute and succeeding on a Strength (Athletics) check.

BLIZZARDS

In brief summary, the rules for blizzards are as follows:

- Lasts 2d4 hours and limit hearing to 100 ft., visibility to 30 ft., estinguishes flames, erases track, makes nonmagical flight difficult, and gives disadvantage on ranged weapons attacks and most Perception checks.
- If they travel during a blizzard, the party must make DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) checks each hour to stay on course. If they fail by 5+, a party member becomes lost.

In short, a blizzard can affect the party by making combat difficult, causing delay, and splitting the party.

USING BLIZZARDS

When deciding whether or not to use a blizzard, you may want to ask yourself what it accomplishes. Blizzards are best used when:

- You want to make an encounter more challenging or interesting by having it take place during a blizzard.
- The characters are in a hurry, and you want to force them to choose between staying put or continuing on.

If the blizzard doesn't add anything to the current situation, it is nothing more than a boring inconvenience, where you roll some dice to determine how many hours the characters waste. In that case, you should probably just roll quickly through it – or skip it entirely.

Reducing Rolls. As written, the characters have to make a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check each hour while traveling through the blizzard, which can potentially last up to 8 hours. If you want to avoid having to roll eight survival checks in a row, you can choose that they always make three rolls, regardless of the duration of the blizzard or the journey in front of them.

OVERLAND SPEED

There's a few issues with the way overland travel is handled in the book.

First, speeds are incredibly slow. A character without snowshoes' pace of 1/4 mile per hour comes out to a speed of about 2 feet per round, while a dogsled covers only a distance of 1 mile per hour (a speed of roughly 9 feet per round), even though real-world dogsleds usually average around 5 mph even in the worst conditions.

Second, we don't know if these speeds include rest or not. In the *Player's Handbook* (pg. 182) we learn both how far the characters can travel in an hour and in a day (which is 8 hours of travel and 16 hours of resting), but we don't know how this would work in Icewind Dale.

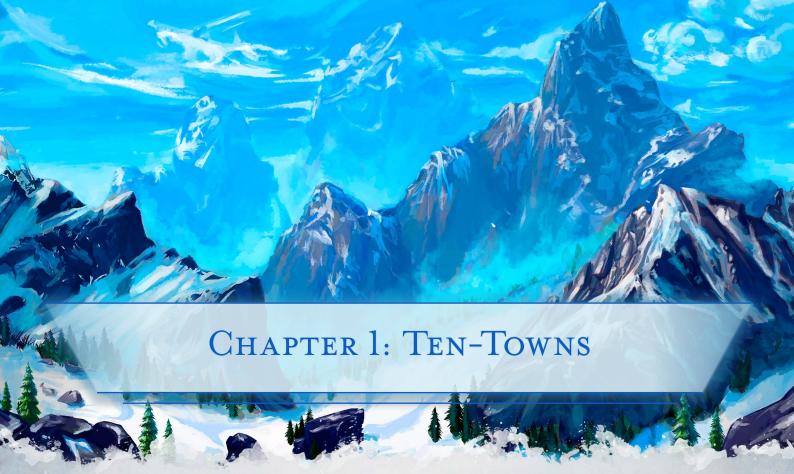
Third, the book doesn't give us a pace for traveling on roads, but instead lists the long travel between the towns take under each town, which are often inconsistent.

ALTERNATE TRAVEL IN ICEWIND DALE

The table below features set travel paces for mountain, snow, and road, which are all twice as fast in the book. In addition, the travel table also shows the distance you can expect the characters to travel in a day – including rests. The 'Icewind Dale Travel Cheatsheet' that comes with this download has a map that shows the distances between towns in miles.

Travel in Icewind Dale

		– Distance per H	Hour ——	William /	— Distance per	Day —
Method of Travel	Mountain	Snow	Road	Mountain	Snow	Road
Dogsled	1 mile	2 miles	3 miles	12 miles	24 miles	36 miles
On foot, with snowshoes	1/2 mile	1 mile	1.5 mile	4 miles	8 miles	12 miles
On foot, without snowshoes	1/4 mile	1/2 mile	1.5 mile	2 miles	4 miles	12 miles



CEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN STARTS in the frontier setting that is Ten-Towns. Isolated and beset by foes from both within and outside their town's borders, each of the ten towns are struggling to survive Auril's Everlasting Rime.

On the following pages, we will go over the material presented in Chapter 1 of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden. We start by giving a brief overview of what's going on in the chapter, before discussing which town you can start the adventure in and how to run the starting quests. Next, we'll go over each of the ten towns, summarizing and evaluating each while offering advice on how to run them, including guidelines for adjusting encounter difficulty. Lastly, you will find advice about how you can guide the party through Ten-Towns and establish a loose structure for the chapter.

It's strongly recommended that you read through Chapter 1 of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden before reading the following pages. And always remember, the advice and ideas given here are options you know best what works at your table.

OVERVIEW

The first chapter of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden is essentially a setting description with a bunch of quests sprinkled in. The main purpose of the chapter can be summarized like this:

- · Get the characters familiar with Icewind Dale and make them invested in Ten-Towns before the dragon is unleashed on the towns in Chapters 3 and 4.
- · Level the characters up to 4th level, so they are ready to head into Icewind Dale proper.
- Give information about or foreshadow later events. NPCs, and locations, such as Auril the Frostmaiden, the Arcane Brotherhood, and Xardorok Sunblight.

With that in mind, let's take a closer look at how you can make Chapter 1 as fun and manageable as possible for both you and the players.

STARTING TOWN

The first order of business is to determine a starting town. The book tells you to just pick one, or roll one at random, but also suggests that you pick Bryn Shander if in doubt. This makes good sense - as written, Bryn Shander is clearly the obvious choice. It has a simple quest tailored to 1st-level characters, it is central in Icewind Dale, and both starting quests fit well when starting in Bryn Shander. It is also the place newcomers to Icewind Dale would naturally go first. So, unless you have a good reason to start the adventure elsewhere, you probably won't regret starting the story in Bryn Shander.

SACRIFICES TO AURIL

The book describes that the towns are making sacrifices to appease Auril, with the biggest towns - Bryn Shander, Easthaven, and Targos - sacrificing one person each month, and the other towns giving up food or warmth.

While an interesting premise, there's some potential issues with the idea of having sacrifices. First, beyond their inclusion in the starting quest 'Cold-Hearted Killer', they aren't really mentioned, making them seem something like an afterthought. Second, it seems a bit drastic that the lawful good and chaotic good speakers in Bryn Shander and Easthaven would condone a practice as abhorrent as human sacrifice.

CHANGING THE PREMISE

You can choose to have the sacrifices of warmth and food be superstitions held by individual people or families, instead of communal acts. As for the human sacrifices, these are performed in Dougan's Hole, Good Mead, and Targos – towns that have either neutral, evil, or missing speakers. Because the two 'bastions of civility', Bryn Shander and Easthaven, aren't involved in the practice, it is easier to communicate to the characters that most Ten-Towners find the sacrifices abhorrent.

WHY HUMAN SACRIFICES?

The book doesn't really describe how the sacrifices came to be, except that it "started a little over a year ago, when it became clear that Auril was angry and summer would not be returning anytime soon" (ID: RotF, pg. 21).

You can tie the sacrifices a bit more to the story by having them be the work of Ravisin and Vurnis, the two frost druid sisters the party can find near Lonelywood (ID:RotF, pg. 85). Before Vurnis died, the sisters had been traveling to various towns, trying to convince speakers and townsfolk that only human sacrifices would appease Auril. This was, of course, a lie, and just another part of the druids' plan to demoralize and destroy Ten-Towns.

Most dismissed the idea of human sacrifice - though the number of Ten-Towners who are desperate enough to consider it increases steadily - but the Speakers of isolated Dougan's Hole and Good Mead were convinced. Though not particularly superstitious or religious, the Zhentarim leadership of Targos also adopted the practice, seeing it as the means for an excellent protection racket (hold lotteries and allow townsfolk to pay to have their name excluded from the draw).

If the characters inquire about the sacrifices in the various towns that practice it, they shouldn't have a hard time learning that "two sister druids of the wilderness came to the town almost a year back, claiming that it was the only way to appease Auril". This also foreshadows the encounter with Ravisin in 'The White Moose'-quest.

STARTING QUESTS

Below we will go over the two starting quests presented in Chapter 1: 'Cold-Hearted Killer' and 'Nature Spirits'.

COLD-HEARTED KILLER

In quick summary, this quest plays out as follows:

- Getting the Quest. A retired bounty hunter tells the party that she thinks Sephek Kaltro, a merchant's guard, is behind three recent murders in Ten-Towns.
- **Find Sephek.** The party must find Sephek by following Torg's caravan as it travels around Ten-Towns.
- Slay Sephek. Once they find the caravan, the characters must contend with Sephek and perhaps the merchant Torrga and the caravan's other guards.

This quest accomplishes two things: it ties into Auril's presence in Icewind Dale (Sephek is controlled by a winter spirit) and it forces the characters to travel to different towns in search of Torg's caravan. Note that Sephek is a very tough challenge for 1st-level characters, so it is probably best to only allow characters to catch up with him when they are 2nd level or higher.

ADAPTING COLD-HEARTED KILLER

One potential issue with Cold-Hearted Killer is that it is a bit too straight-forward. As presented in the book, Hlin Trollbane straight out tells the characters that Sephek is the killer, based on nothing other than her gut feeling ("I'm guessing he's good with a blade" and "it was like the cold couldn't touch him").

If you want the quest to a bit more of a murder mystery, you can have Hlin be less confident in her suspicions, leaving room for the characters to do a little investigation on their own. This isn't overly difficult to do, and will make the eventual discovery of Sephek as the killer feel more earned. Instead of having Hlin declare Sephek the killer, you can change her reasoning to something like:

"These three murders have two things in common. First, all three victims reportedly came from towns that sacrifice to Auril - you never know, that may have some to do with it."

"Second, all three murders happened while the travelling merchant company Torg's was in town. I know, because I make a habit of keeping track of where Torrga Icevein - the owner of Torg's - goes. Always causing trouble, that one!"

"I don't know who's doin' them murders, but I'd bet me pa's beard that it's got something to do with those lotteries and with that scoundrel Torrga and her thievin' caravan!"

This leaves the characters with two options for solving the mystery: try to find out where Torg's is heading and intercept it, or ask around about the victims in Bryn Shander, Easthaven, or Targos to learn more.

Investigating the Murders. In each town, the party can speak with people who know more about the victim.

In Bryn Shander, we can create the NPC Tilna Melo (CG human commoner), who grudgingly accepted the dwarf glassblower Branak's bribe, and divided the 10 gp bribe between the Bryn Shander's poorest families. If you have changed where the sacrifices are held (see 'Sacrifices to Auril' on the previous page), Tilna rented a room to the dwarf, who fled from Good Mead to avoid being drawn in the lottery there. In either case, she remembers telling a 'handsome, blue-eyed' man about the dwarf, the night before Branak was slain.

In Easthaven, we make up a halfling NPC named Tegon Dapperfeet (N halfling commoner), who serves as aide to the town Speaker. He kept the name of his sister, the halfling trapper Elsie Dapperfeet, out of the lottery or took her in, after she fled the lottery in Dougan's Hole. She was killed in his cabin, and though he didn't get a good look at the killer before he disappeared into the darkness, he will never forget those icy, blue eyes.

In Targos, Skath (LE tiefling veteran, described in ID:RotF, pg. 56) is responsible for the lottery. He openly admits to accepting a bribe from the shipbuilder Terren – and urges more people to offer him bribes, if they want to dodge the lottery too. He remembers telling an underdressed, blue-eyed human about Terren's bribe a day or two before the shipbuilder was killed.

Example. For an example of how to run this quest, see 'Cold-Hearted Killer as Structure' on pg. 14 of this document.

NATURE SPIRITS

In quick summary, this quest plays out as follows:

- Getting the Quest. The acolyte Dannika Greysteel offers 25 gp and a magic lantern for a live chwinga.
- Find Chwingas. The characters must travel from town to town using the lantern to look for chwingas.
- Confronting Chwingas. The characters can convince a chwinga to follow them by playing nice with it.

This quest's main purpose is to get the characters moving from town to town – and to offer a cute little scene at the end, where the characters can have a tea party with the chwingas and receive supernatural charms. As written, this quest works well if you prefer something light and fanciful to get the party moving about Ten-Towns - a breath of fresh air!

Spicing it Up. If you want to add just a bit drama to the quest, you can have an encounter occur as the characters run into the chwingas, where the creatures encountered - a yeti, a frost druid and an awakened beast, or a chardalyn berserker – actively try to kill or capture the chwingas.

RUNNING TEN-TOWNS

On the following pages, we go over each of the ten towns, offering advice on how to run them. Only locations and encounters where there's a need for comments are included. Under each town, there's also a note about the difficulty of the town's quests and other encounters, including advice on how you can adjust the difficulty to parties of lower or higher levels. Bear in mind that every party is different, and that both party size, character levels, equipment, and player behavior can impact how easy or difficult an encounter is, so the adjustments below each town are only suggestions, and can be implemented wholly, partially, or not at all.

BREMEN

In this friendly town, the characters can hear a story about tieflings and black ice, which may send them toward Caer-Dineval. They can also get the quest 'Lake Monster', which has them sailing out to confront an awakened plesiosaurus, which can in turn foreshadow Ravisin, the Frostmaiden's servant near Lonelywood.

LAKE MONSTER

This quest is short and not overly challenging. It does have a few issues that can be quickly ironed out.

Getting the Quest. There's a long background for Grynsk, a dwarven fisherman that wants the characters to go fishing, which essentially boils down to Grynsk mistaking the party for fishers, asking them to catch trout for coppers, and dismissing them if they refuse. Then a half-elf researcher arrives, chastising the dwarf for sending the characters to their death for his own gain, before proceeding to do exactly the same. Tali offers no reward at all, even though they actually have a reward ready (a spell scroll of animal friendship and 5 gp) if the characters are successful. Consider having Tali simply present the promise of this reward to begin with. You can also have Tali approach the characters at an inn or tavern in town if the characters don't come by the docks or you don't want to bother with Grynsk's story.

Scouting the Lake. There's a table with all kinds of events that can happen while the characters wait for the plesiosaurus to appear. You can also just pick one or two of these events to help pass the time while they wait, before having the plesiosaurus show up after a few hours - just so things aren't dragged out too long.

Clever Beast. As the plesiosaurus appears, we are presented with another rolling table. Once again, you may want to just choose what the plesiosaurus does. Having the plesiosaurus first splash water on the boats before diving under and try to capsize a boat gives the characters a chance to resolve matters peacefully, while also making the encounter somewhat exciting.

Lake Monster Map. To help you run the 'Lake Monster'-quest, these resources include a map for a possible encounter with the plesiosaurus.

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

The 'Lake Monster'-quest is the only provided option for combat in Bremen, but is written in a way where non-combat or non-lethal combat is most likely, so there should be no reason to adjust difficulty.

BRYN SHANDER

In Icewind Dale's largest settlement, the characters can learn about a researcher, which may send them toward 'Black Cabin' (pg. 116). They can also get the quest 'Foaming Mugs', which sends them halfway to Kelvin Cairn in search of a band of iron-stealing goblins from Karkolohk (pg. 140). In summary, Bryn Shander has some interesting locations with various rumors and bits of information, but isn't otherwise too busy. This makes it an ideal starting town.

House of the Morninglord

The gnome in this temple, Copper, can ask the characters to check in on his friend, who is working to end the eternal winter, in the Black Cabin. The Black Cabin isn't impossible for lower level characters to contend with, but you may still want to withhold information about it until the characters are a bit higher level and better prepared to travel in Icewind Dale, especially if you use Bryn Shander as starting town.

FOAMING MUGS

This quest is pretty simple: kill some goblins, retrieve a sled filled with iron ingots, and get a reward.

Getting the Quest. It seems a bit odd that the dwarves will pay the characters 50 gp each to retrieve a sled with iron ingots worth only 150 gp in total. You may want to reduce the reward to either one 50 gp gemstone or one 10 gp gemstone for each character.

Goblins. Six goblins at once can be difficult for 1st-level characters, but luckily they can easily surprise the goblins hauling the sled. You can also make negotiation easier by having beleaguered goblins freely suggest an alternative to continued combat: "we makes trade, yes, dumb iron for real treasure? Maybe you have gold, food, warm blanky, anything?" and allow the characters to feel clever by buying back the iron for a couple of rations or a few gold pieces.

Map. To help you run the 'Foaming Mugs'-quest, these resources include a map for a possible encounter with the goblins in the snow.

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

The 'Foaming Mugs'-quest makes for a suitable encounter for 1st-level characters. Below is advice for adjusting encounters in Bryn Shander to characters of higher levels.

- 2nd Level. Replace two goblins by the sled with a polar bear (friendly to the goblins) that smells the characters when they sneak up, negating surprise.
- 3rd Level. Add two polar bears (friendly to the goblins) by the sled, that smell the characters when they sneak up, negating surprise.



CAER-DINEVAL

In Caer-Dineval, the characters can unravel a cult of devil-worshipers called the 'Knights of the Black Sword', get acquainted with Arcane Brotherhood-member Avarice, and learn about Xardorok's evil plans.

KNIGHTS OF THE BLACK SWORD

It seems like good advice to only have the cultists initiate contact with the characters if they fulfill one of the requirements listed in the book (at the top of pg. 40). Otherwise, you may want to allow the characters to pass through Caer-Dineval without any overt attempts to lure them into the keep itself.

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

Though none of the combatants encountered in the Keep at Caer-Dineval are particularly tough on their own, they are numerous enough to challenge 2nd-level characters. Below is advice for adjusting the difficulty to other levels.

- **1st Level.** Remove one **cultist** from each of the four towers (C4). Have Huarwar (C6) be a **cultist.**
- **3rd Level.** Replace one **cultist** in each of the four towers (C4) with a **cult fanatic**. Increase Kadroth's (C9) hit points to 50 and his spell DC to 14, and give him a 3rd-level spell slot and the spell *spirit guardians*.

CAER-KONIG

In Caer-Konig, the characters can get the guest 'The Unseen', which will have them crossing paths with Xardorok Sunblight's son Nildar, and learn about Xardorok's intention to destroy Icewind Dale. As such, Caer-Konig ties in well with the story and Chapter 3 in particular — and can also lead characters to Easthaven.

THE UNSEEN

This quest has a lot of build-up filling several pages in the book, which boils down to the characters tracking down invisible duergar who are stealing from the town.

Getting the Quest. If you don't want to leave it up to the characters' altruism whether or not they accept this quest, you can have Trovus offer up a relic of his adventuring days – a breastplate of warning (dragons) – as a reward if the characters succeed.

Following The Tracks. The book dictates that the characters lose the tracks about 50 feet away from the building, but can pick a new track up again in the morning. This little hurdle could cause the characters to wander around aimlessly, or completely abandon the search, and doesn't seem to add anything to the adventure. To avoid issues, you may want just let the characters find the tracks on the first go.

The Duergar's Information. While foreshadowing Xardorok and the duergar threat is cool, you may not want to blow the lid off the whole operation just yet – it wouldn't do for the characters to go tromping off toward the mountains in search of Xardorok at 2nd level. You may decide that the common duergar don't know where Xardorok's fortress is, and give Nildar – who should know – a better chance of escaping (see 'Nildar's Escape'). The letter found in his quarters gives the party a clue on where to go next, so it's not just a dead end.

Breastplate of Warning (Dragons)

Armor (breastplate), common

This magic armor is inscribed with Draconic glyphs.

Warning (Dragons). This armor is created to warn against dragons. When a dragon is within 120 ft. of the armor, the glyphs on its surface glow with a dull, red light.

Nildar's Escape. As the Duergar Outpost is written, there's only a slim chance that Nildar can escape, even if he hears the characters coming, since his room is at the back of the fortress with only one way in or out. If you want to give Nildar a better chance of getting away – so he can't tell the party where Xardorok's fortress is, or so he can become a recurring villain – you can put a secret escape route in his chamber that leads to the western part of 'O8. Duergar Quarters'. If Nildar flees here, he will order the duergar in area O8 and the spore servants in 'O7. Spore Servants' to cover his retreat, giving him at least a chance of getting away.

Adjusting Difficulty

The encounters in the duergar hideout are not too difficult and should be appropriate for 2nd-level adventurers. Below is advice for adjusting difficulty to characters of 1st or 3rd level.

- 1st Level. Remove one sleeping duergar (O8) and 2 spore servants (O7). Reduce duergar hit points to 13.
- **3rd Level.** Add 1 duergar to O3 and O8. Increase Nildar's hit points to 40.

DOUGAN'S HOLE

In this unfriendly and desolate town, the characters can get the quest 'Holed Up', where they encounter devious winter wolves and an awakened mammoth. Dougan's Hole is one of the least developed towns and its quest doesn't tie into the larger story.

HOLED UP

This quest to free two children from an awakened mammoth and two winter wolves is very reminiscent of classic Brothers Grimm-adventures, and has a distinct fairytale-feel. There's an added benefit to this quest: it's not really tied to Dougan's Hole, and can very easily be plotted in anywhere else in Icewind Dale, whether as a random encounter while the characters are traveling or in another town they pass by.

Getting the Quest. This quest isn't really given, as much as it dumps into the characters lap as they encounter the devious winter wolves outside town. If you want to use a more traditional approach, have the children's' mother Hilda beseech the adventurers for aid, since the Town speaker refuses to do anything, and offer her late husbands boots of the winterlands as a reward.

Adjusting Difficulty

The encounters in the 'Frost Giant Ice Lodge' are very difficult, and are best suited for characters of 3rd or 4th level. Below is advice for adjusting the difficulty to lower levels.

- 1st Level. Koran and Kanan are awakened wolves.

 Norsu uses the elephant statblock and has four levels of exhaustion due to hunger (half speed & hit points, disadvantage on ability checks, attacks, & saves.)
- 2nd Level. Koran and Kanan are awakened dire wolves. Norsu uses the elephant statblock.
- **3rd Level.** Norsu has three levels of exhaustion due to hunger (half speed, disadvantage on ability checks, attacks, and saving throws).

EASTHAVEN

In this prosperous town, the characters can run into duergar and learn more about Xardorok's plans. They also witness the execution of a member of the Arcane Brotherhood, and get the quest 'Toil and Trouble', in which they must procure a cauldron of plenty. They may also be involved in capers by Zhentarim and Duergar.

All told, Easthaven is one of the most developed towns described in the book, featuring multiple quests and quest locations, as well as strong ties to the main story.

EASTHAVEN FERRY

Unless you have a particular reason why you want the characters to find the duergar here early, you probably shouldn't make a big deal about the Easthaven Ferry to the characters until they have already been to Caer-Konig and dealt with Nildar. Since Durth, who lives on the ferry, has a map to Xardorok's fortress, characters may head there as soon as they find him – which may just be a bit too early.

Map. To help you run 'Easthaven Ferry', these resources include a map for a possible encounter aboard the Easthaven Ferry.

TOIL AND TROUBLE

This quest has the characters searching a hag's lair for some missing fishers.

Public Execution. This is a nice bit of foreshadowing for Dzaan, who may show up later in the adventure, but it does have potential to cause issues. The characters may try to intervene, for no other reason than adventurers are notoriously bad at just letting things happen without trying to insert themselves into the situation. To avoid a potential conflict here, you can either have Dzaan already burning when the characters arrive - his dying screams draw their attention! - or have Captain Arlaggath really underscore the wizard's crimes, and make very clear to the party that 12 well-armed soldiers (veterans) are nearby.

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

As written, Easthaven is probably best suited for a party of 2nd-level adventurers. Below is advice for adjusting the difficulty to other levels.

- 1st Level. Replace the water weird (U7) with an ice mephit. Remove the will-o-wisp (U10). Have just two duergar carry out 'The Chardalyn Caper'.
- 3rd Level. Allow the frost giant skeleton (U9) to act at the end of the second round.



Flaming Longsword

Weapon (longsword), uncommon

The blade of this magic longsword is dyed a bright crimson. Flaming. When you hit with an attack using this weapon, the target takes an extra 1d4 fire damage.

GOOD MEAD

In this mead-hub, the characters can get the quest 'The Mead Must Flow' where they are tasked with tracking down a couple of verbeegs. They may also come to blows with the Zhentarim, as they involve themselves in election of a new speaker for the town.

THE MEAD MUST FLOW

This quest has the party tracking down a verbeeg and retrieving the town's honey mead.

Getting the Quest. If you don't think the characters will risk their lives just for free lodging and drink, you can sweeten the deal by offering them the now-deceased Speaker Kendrick's flaming longsword – which would be a suitable reward given his temperament and the name of the town's shrine to Tempus.

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

The encounters are fairly difficult and will probably work best for characters of 3rd level or higher. Below is advice for adjusting difficulty to lower level characters.

- 1st Level. Remove the verbeeg marauders' 'Multiattack'-feature and halve their hit points. Use a **brown bear** statblock for the cave bear.
- 2nd Level. Remove the verbeeg marauders' 'Multiattack'-feature.

LONELYWOOD

In isolated and friendly Lonelywood, the characters can get the quest 'The White Moose', which sends them against an awakened white moose and the frost druid Ravisin. Lonelywood doesn't have much going on, besides foreshadowing Auril and leading to Bremen.

ELVEN TOMB

The party delves into an ancient elven tomb.

E4. Sarcophagus and Crystal Pillars. The mummy and the brazier is a cool touch, but since the party is unlikely to have a humanoid hand with them, they won't be able to get the fire going. If you want to make this more likely, you can allow a character to activate the brazier's magic by sticking its hand into the brazier while the other ingredients are burning – without taking any damage from the fire! You can also allow a nonhumanoid hand – such as fox's paw – do the trick.

E5. Moon Dial & E7. Mirror of the Full Moon. The inscription in E5 about the mirror in E7 says that a character can have 'seven questions answered', but a crystal ball – which the mirror is described as – is used to cast scrving, not answer questions, and has no limitations on use. If you want the inscription to make more sense, you can either have the mirror function like the spell commune, but with seven uses per day, or change the inscription in E5 to: "Gaze upon your own face and find who you seek".

Adjusting Difficulty

The encounters in 'The White Moose' are difficult, but should be manageable for a party of 3rd level or higher. Below is advice for adjusting difficulty to lower levels.

- 1st Level. Skip any random combat encounters. Remove the awakened white moose's 'Multiattack'feature and halve its hit points. Limit the frost druid's spellcasting to 2nd level and reduce its hit points to 40.
- 2nd Level. Skip the banshee-encounter. Limit the frost druid's spellcasting to 3rd level or lower.

TARGOS

In this large town, the characters can get the quest 'Mountain Climb', in which they must travel to Kelvin's Cairn to rescue a wilderness guide and confront yetis. They can also get themselves entangled with the Zhentarim, if they're not careful. Targos doesn't tie too much into the larger story in Icewind Dale, but its quest serves well to get the party moving around Icewind Dale.

MOUNTAIN CLIMB

This quest is a fun little expedition that has the party traveling all the way to Kelvin's Cairn.

Getting the Quest. As written, the party is supposed to follow the dog to the home of Keegan and Garret. If you find that the characters do not oblige the dog, you can have Keegan show up looking for it instead, and then give the characters the quest as he sees them. If the characters don't seem particularly interested in traveling to Kelvin's Cairn without a suitable reward, you can have Keegan put a value on his scrimshander artwork – 40 gp - instead of saying it isn't worth much.

Journey to Kelvin's Cairn. If you double the overland travel pace as suggested earlier in this document, the 12-mile journey directly from Targos to Kelvin's Cairn through the Dwarven Valley takes 'only' 12 hours, or 1½ traveling days, if the characters have snow shoes. The characters can get there in 6 hours – a single day of travel – if they can acquire a dog sled.

Avalanche. Because of the way this scenario is set up and how the rules for avalanches are written, most of the characters are unlikely to be able to move up to 100 ft. (depending on where they are) in difficult terrain in a single turn to avoid taking up to 3d10 bludgeoning damage from the avalanche. To allow you to easier adjust the difficulty of the avalanche, you can use the variant rules for avalanches given earlier in this document instead, and use the recommended DCs given under 'Adjusting Difficulty' below.

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

The 'Mountain Climb'-quest should work for 2nd-level characters. Below is advice for adjusting difficulty.

- 1st Level. Set the DC of the avalanche to 10. The crag cats in the 'Fallen Climber'-encounter flee if either is reduced to half hit points. Change the yetis' multiattack feature so they make two claw attacks or uses Chilling Gaze, and reduce their hit points to 30.
- **2nd Level.** Set the DC of the avalanche to 13.
- **3rd Level.** Set the DC of the avalanche to 15. Increase the male adult yeti's hit points to 70.



TERMALAINE

In this prosperous and friendly town, the characters can get the quest 'A Beautiful Mine', which has them clearing kobolds, a grell, and a ghost out of a mine. Along the way, they may find a crystal connected to an illithid ship (see 'Id Ascendant', pg. 132).

A BEAUTIFUL MINE

This location runs pretty well, except for one potentially dangerous issue. In M3, a character who fails a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw is swept away to their death – you may want to give the character, or another character who can grab hold of them, a DC 10 Athletics check to prevent them from dying from just one failed save.

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

While the ghost in 'A Beautiful Mine' is dangerous, the encounters should still work for a 2nd-level party. Below is advice for adjusting difficulty to other levels.

- 1st Level. Remove the grell's 'Multiattack'-feature. Janth's ghost only attempts to possess characters, and loses 10 hit points each time a possession ends.
- 3rd Level. Double the number of icewind kobolds.

SUMMARY

All told, each of the ten towns in Icewind Dale presents something of interest, making for viable and worthwhile adventure locations. Which of them you want to use should depend on your and your players' preferences, as well as how difficult you want encounters to be, and how you want to tie locations to the story. Below is a brief summary of the difficulty and story-ties of each town.

If you run the locations as described in the book, the towns and their challenges can roughly be divided into three difficulties: easy, medium, and hard.

- Easy (Level 1). Bremen and Bryn Shander.
- Medium (Level 2). Caer-Dineval, Caer-Konig, Easthaven, Targos, and Termalaine.
- Hard (Level 3+). Dougan's Hole, Good Mead, and Lonelywood.

This doesn't mean that you can't run these locations even if the characters are lower or higher level than suggested here, just that you may have to make some adjustments to the encounters if you do.

Some of the towns tie strongly into the three main plots, some can lead to other locations or quests – and some are more or less completely disconnected from the rest of the campaign.

- Bremen. Can lead to Caer-Dineval, foreshadows Ravisin in Lonelywood.
- Bryn Shander. Can lead to Black Cabin & Karkolohk.
- Caer-Dineval. Foreshadows the Arcane Brotherhood and can lead to Xardorok.
- Caer-Konig. Can lead to Xardorok.
- Dougan's Hole. No ties.
- Easthaven. Foreshadows the Lost Spire of Netheril and the Arcane Brotherhood, can lead to Xardorok and
- · Good Mead. Can lead to Id Ascendant and Targos.
- Lonelywood. Foreshadows Auril, can lead to Bremen.
- Targos. Can lead to Bryn Shander, Caer-Dineval, Caer-Konig, and Kelvin's Cairn.
- Termalaine. Can lead to Id Ascendant.

STRUCTURING TEN-TOWNS

While the Ten Towns make for an excellent sandbox - and sandboxes are fun! - you may still want to guide your players toward the content you think they would have most fun with. You can do this by giving them information that allows them to make free choices about where to go, but limiting the information to 2-3 of the towns or locations you think fits them best.

CHOOSING A GENERAL DIRECTION

If you run the locations and quests as they are presented in the book, you may want to start the characters out with an easy quest and then steer them toward increasingly difficult quests. Likewise, it's also probably best not to steer the party towards Xardorok too soon, which means saving Caer-Dineval, Caer-Konig, and Easthaven for last.

Going off these observations, it seems like a good idea to start the adventure off in one of the central or western towns - Bremen, Bryn Shander, Targos, and Termalaine to let the characters find their footing. Once they have reached 2nd or 3rd level, you can begin steering the action toward eastern towns - Caer-Dineval, Caer-Konig, and Easthaven – where the difficulty is greater and the story ties are stronger. Dougan's Hole, Good Mead, and Lonelywood are all quite tough and don't have particularly strong story ties, so you can hold off on these, or guide the party towards them once they have reached level 3.

Below is some advice on how you can build an open structure that steers the party without railroading them.

COLD-HEARTED KILLER AS STRUCTURE

You can use the starting quest 'Cold-Hearted Killer' as a structure for the first chapter of the adventure. An example of how this can be accomplished is detailed below, but you can and should change things around to fit your preferences.

Bryn Shander. We start by changing the order of the murders, so that the first murder happened in Easthaven, the second in Bryn Shander, and the third in Targos. This gives us a more logical path of travel for the caravan (from south to north). Assuming that the characters start in Bryn Shander (see 'Starting Town'), it makes sense for them to head to Targos first to determine where the caravan is heading and/or learn more about the shipbuilder that was murdered there.

Targos. In Targos, they can ask around to find out that Skath (a veteran and Zhent mercenary who leads the militia) is responsible for the monthly lotteries. If they confront him - he often hangs out at 'Three Flags Sailing' – he freely admits to taking a bribe from Terren the Shipbuilder, and also that he said the same to that "weird, blue-eyed fellow that followed Torrag around" (Sephek) who asked him a few days ago if anyone had paid to get out of the lottery. The party has a suspect now, but don't know where Torg's is heading next.

Bremen/Termalaine. If the characters head up to Bremen or Termalaine to look for Torg's, they can complete the quests there, but don't find anyone else who has seen Torg's caravan (it didn't pass through there).

Targos. When the characters return to Targos (or if they decide to leave without heading to Bremen or Termalaine first), they are approached by Keegan or his dog Boy (ID:RotF, pg. 57), and given the quest 'Mountain Climb'. There's added incentive here - Keegan informs the party that Garret was heading to Caer-Konig and

Torg's Location
Days before/after
advantura start

adventure start	Location
-5	Easthaven
-4	The Eastway
-3	Bryn Shander
-2	Targos
-1 & 0	Dwarven Valley
+1	Caer-Konig
+2	Caer-Dineval
+3	Easthaven
+4	Good Mead
+5	Dougan's Hole
+6	Good Mead
+7	Easthaven
+8	The Eastway
+9	Bryn Shander
+10	Targos

Kelvin's Cairn with a group of adventurers, and that the group accompanied Torg's at least some of the way, as the caravan was looking to make a shortcut across the Dwarven Valley. If the characters can find Garret, he'll surely know where Torg's was headed!

Kelvin's Cairn. When the characters find Garret, he can inform them that Torg's was heading to Caer-Konig, and planned to head west from there, going to Caer-Dineval, Easthaven, Good Mead, and Dougan's Hole. If the characters take the long route around to Kelvin's Cairn, they may run into Torg's on the way instead.

Catching Up. You can use the Torg's Location-table to determine when and where the characters catch up to Torg's, or simply decide when you think the time is right.

Summary. In the example detailed here, the adventure starts in Bryn Shander - where there's a 1st-level appropriate quest – before guiding them north, where there's towns with 2nd-level appropriate quests. It then steers them to the east, preferably starting with the less dangerous towns Caer-Konig, Caer-Dineval, and Easthaven, before possible leading them to Good Mead, and Dougan's Hole, where the toughest challenges are.

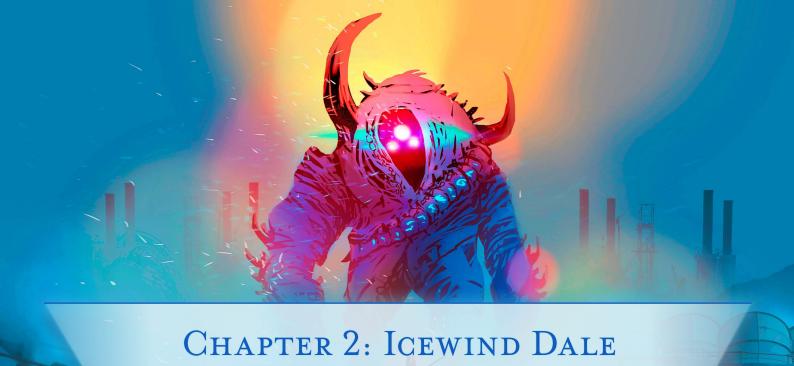
Using Rumors to Guide the Party

The book also provides ten rumors (pg. 18) that you can use to steer the party toward your preferred towns. As long as they have more than one viable option for where to go next, the players are unlikely to feel railroaded, and as long as they don't have too many, they probably won't end up feeling overwhelmed. Below is an example of how you can use rumors to guide the party.

Bryn Shander. The characters finish the quest in Bryn Shander and get to 2nd level before hearing rumors 1 (Bremen), 9 (Targos), and/or 10 (Termalaine).

Bremen, Targos, & Termalaine. The characters finish quests in some or all of these three towns. If they don't pick up leads that steer them east or south on their own (the story about Huarwar in Bremen or the 'Mountain Climb'-quest in Targos), you can provide them with rumors 3 (Caer-Konig), 4 (Caer-Dineval), and/or 8 (Lonelywood), once they reach 3rd level.

Caer-Dineval & Caer-Konig. While handling quests in Caer-Dineval and Caer-Konig, the party are clued into the threat of Xardorok. This should eventually lead them to Easthaven, but if it doesn't, you can use rumor 6 to help them get there. Now they're 4th level and ready to take on the challenges of Icewind Dale - and Xardorok!



N CHAPTER 2: ICEWIND DALE, THE CHARACTERS ARE let out into the cold and desolate wilderness of Icewind Dale, where they will come face-to-face with frosty foes and fierce friends, while exploring the many wonders of the desolate tundra.

On the following pages, we will go over the material presented in Chapter 2 of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden. First, we'll give a brief overview of the chapter, and what is expected to accomplish, before discussing how to run the chapter as a whole. We will then go through the 'Wilderness Encounters' and 'Places of Interest' presented in the chapter, offering advice on when and how to use them.

It's strongly recommended that you read through Chapter 2 of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden before reading the following pages. And always remember, the advice and ideas given here are options you know best what works at your table.

OVERVIEW

The second chapter of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden is essentially a continuation of the sandboxstyle approach established in chapter 1. In truth, it shouldn't be viewed as something that has to be played after Chapter 1: Ten-Towns, but as something that can be used concurrently. We will go over that on the following pages, as we discuss when and how to use the various encounters and locations in Icewind Dale. That being said, the chapter's purpose can be summarized like this:

- · Get the characters familiar with Icewind Dale and let them finish quest threads from Chapter 1.
- Get the characters leveled up to as high as 7th level.
- Give information about or foreshadow later events, NPCs, and locations, such as Auril the Frostmaiden, the Arcane Brotherhood, and Xardorok Sunblight.

With that in mind, let's take a closer look at how we can make Chapter 1 as fun and manageable as possible for both you and the players.

RUNNING CHAPTER 2

In this section we discuss how to run Chapter 2, adding to or elaborating on the information given in the book. This starts with a discussion about when and how to introduce the content in Chapter 2: Icewind Dale, before going over each of the 'Icewind Dale Quests' and 'Wilderness Encounters' presented in the chapter.

STARTING CHAPTER 2

While the introduction to chapter 2 states that it is designed for characters of 4th level or higher, this isn't necessarily the case when you take a closer look at the encounters and locations described in the chapter. Plenty are doable at lower levels or can easily be adjusted so they are - which you can find guidance for later in this document.

This means that you can – and perhaps should – begin to seed rumors about various Icewind Dale-locations as early as 2nd or 3rd level. In this way, chapter 1 and chapter 2 mesh together and become one big sandbox, instead of two separate environments - something that seems to have been the original intention anyway, even if the book doesn't make that entirely clear. This has the added benefit of providing a more varied pace, where the characters can shift between urban intrigue and wilderness exploration.

The question then becomes how to get the characters moving into Icewind Dale proper. The book provides several 'Tall Tales in Ten-Towns' that can inspire exploration, as well as 'Icewind Dale Quests' that tie to each location. The tall tales are fine for what they are - quick rumors you can sprinkle in whenever you feel like it – but some of the quests could use some work, which will be examined under 'Icewind Dale Quests' on the following pages. On the last pages of this guide for chapter 2, you will find advice on creating a structure that ties locations in chapter 2 closer to the adventure's main stories and later chapters.

ICEWIND DALE QUESTS

The 'Icewind Dale Quests' described in the book (pg. 103) offer a hook for each of the adventure locations in the chapter. Below we will go over each, reviewing the scenario and offering possible adjustments.

WHALE OIL ACQUISITION

This quest has the party accompanying a whale oil merchant out on the Sea of Moving Ice aboard Angajuk for a reward of 150 gp.

This quest is very bare-bones. It doesn't really offer anything of interest besides what is already described at 'Angajuk's Bell' (pg. 114), which isn't the most exciting location to begin with. Unless you really want the party to visit Angajuk early on, you may want to just wait until the characters need a ride from the whale in Chapter 5.

PROVISIONS FOR MACREADUS

This quest has the party bringing supplies to Macreadus in the Black Cabin on behalf of Copper Knobberknocker with a promise of free healing as compensation.

The real hook in this quest is not the provisions, but the possibility of ending the Everlasting Rime, so in that regard, it's just what is already presented in the description of Bryn Shander in Chapter 1. All told, this is a serviceable way to get the characters to the Black Cabin, that you can present to the characters whenever you want.

GNOLL HEADS

This quest has the characters fetching gnoll heads for the speaker of Caer-Konig, Trovus, with a reward of 10 gp per head.

Just like the Cackling Chasm isn't the most exciting location, this quest doesn't move the needle much either. You can certainly use it – and fetching monster heads is a classic D&D-trope – but it isn't all that interesting. Be aware that if you use this quest, the characters will go into the chasm trying to take the head of every gnoll, and not just kill the gnoll fang of Yeenoghu, Chyzka (something the other gnolls will peacefully allow the characters to do). This makes the location a lot tougher, though still doable for characters of 5th-level or higher.

ZERO RUM

This quest has the party fetching rum off a pirate ship for tavernkeepers in Bremen, who will pay 150 gp + the price of the rum for their troubles.

Although it is great that the adventure offers up significant financial incentives, it seems a bit ludicrous that tavernkeepers would be able to pay 150 gp in addition to the price of the rum. Reward aside, the quest itself isn't very interesting and can't even be completed.

Changing the Quest. Instead of a quest to fetch rum, you can have this mission be about stealing the dragon's treasure. There are many NPCs that could offer a 'hot tip' about a dragon's hoard possibly being kept on a wrecked ship (they've seen the dragon circling the wreckage) freely or for a reward of 1/5th of the treasure. These NPCs could include: the Zhentarim Speaker Naerth in Targos, Clan Battlehammer dwarves, a friendly goliath werebear the party runs into, or even a frost giant riding a mammoth — perhaps fetching the treasure is the payment it wants for sparing their lives!

DISTRESS SIGNAL

This quest has the party going out to stop the distress signal from the 'Id Ascendant' on behalf of four Ten-Towners, who can offer up 250 gp. This quest works fine to get the party moving toward the nautiloid and gives them incentive to stop the distress signal.

Changing the Quest. If you want a more interesting reward, you can have the townsfolk offer their psychic services instead of gold – or in addition to a more modest amount of 50 gp. While they can't use their abilities at the moment because of the signal's interference, they each promise to use their psychic powers on behalf of the characters once the signal has been quieted. Their abilities mimic spells, but are psychic (they aren't magical and don't require components), and can only be used once per day. Their abilities are:

- Vedda Starsprit can use speak with dead, and can even cast the spell without a corpse as long as she touches a person or object close to the deceased individual.
- · Nars Beldrun can use divination.
- Telvaster Hangingbell can use locate object or locate creature, with an extended range of up to 10 miles.
- Kaska Lang can use *scrying*, seeing the images in his head instead of in a crystal ball or mirror.



YSELM'S WAY

This quest has the party searching for a giant's treasure in Jarlmoot on behalf of a treacherous frost druid.

The premise here is interesting – a frost druid that wants to lure the characters into a trap - but there's a minor issue with it. Yselm offers to lead the characters to Jarlmoot for 25 gp, even though she wants them to go - so what if they refuse to pay her price? And what if the characters aren't motivated by the promises of treasure?

Changing the Quest. You can avoid the issue of the reward becoming a potential showstopper by simply having her offer her guide services for a tenth of any treasure they find – or even freely, because she purports to have seen a vision that describes the characters as the only ones who could claim the treasure. Conversely, you could also appeal to more heroic characters by having Yselm claim that the Jarlmoot may hold magic that could end Auril's Everlasting Rime!

PEACE OUT

This quest has the party going on a diplomatic and/or assassination mission to Karkolohk on behalf of Bryn Shander for a reward of 300 gp.

The way this guest is worded the characters are likely to go into Karkolohk guns blazing, which ruins any possibility of a peaceful resolution. This is a shame, because the most fun thing about Karkolohk is the potential to negotiate with Yarb-Knock and learn the truth of his predicament.

Changing the Quest. Instead of offering 300 gp for Yarb-Gnock's head, you can have Speaker Duvessa Shane and Sheriff Markham Southwell approach the characters together. The pair will pay the characters 100 gp to head to Karkolohk and assess whether the goblins intentions are true, and another 200 gp to either negotiate a 'not-too-costly' truce with the goblins - or exterminate the threat. Shane is hoping for a peaceful resolution, while Southwell distrusts the goblins and warn the characters that he thinks it is a trap.

HUNT FOR THE RED YETI

This quest has the characters stumbling into the Lost Spire of Netheril while looking for a Red Yet.

While the premise seems initially interesting - a yeti-hunting contest! - this one really boils down to the characters stumbling across the Lost Spire of Netheril (as they could have done doing literally anything else), and then losing 300 gp in a bet they didn't have any chance of winning. As written, you may as well just skip the formalities and have the characters stumble across the spire at random.

WOLF TRIBE CANNIBALS

This quest has the party dealing with Wolf Tribe cannibals on behalf of a concerned Wolf Tribe member.

There's a few issues with this quest as written. First, why is this the characters' problem? When Aluka comes into town and issues her warning, there's little incentive (besides being adventurers) for the characters to handle the issue. Second, a fully hostile Reghed Tribe camp is a lot of enemies – potentially very difficult for the party to survive and for the DM to run.

Changing the Quest. You can resolve the first issue by having the characters be called to a meeting with, or approached by, the town's speaker of whichever town they're in, where Aluka is also present and can detail the predicament. The town speaker then offers the characters a financial incentive - say 50 gp - to deal with the matter. Second, instead of having the mission

be a full blown assault on the camp – which would mean that you and your players have to deal with nearly forty combatants - you can lay it out as a crisis of leadership. Aluka can explain that most of the tribe detest the chieftain's gruesome decrees, but none dares protest. Only a handful of warriors and the tribe's shaman back him fully. If the party has an appropriate warrior, she may suggest that they challenge Sangra - something he would have a hard time refusing - to a duel to the death, instead of outright destroying the tribe. Conversely, if the characters are possessed of magic or charm, she may suggest that they convince the tribe's Great Warrior (see 'Reghed Tribe Camp', ID:RotF pg. 152), an honorable woman named Katina, that she must challenge Sangra for leadership of the tribe – and that the characters help make sure she wins the contest. As a last resort, Aluka may also suggest that they take out the chieftain under cover of night without anyone else noticing, although it galls her to even suggest it.

BEHIND BARS

This quest has the party seeking out Vaelish Gant in Revel's End on behalf of Speaker Duvessa Shane for a reward of 250 gp.

This quest is fine as far as it gets the party traveling to Revel's End, but because there's very little to actually do at Revel's End, and Vaelish Gant has very little useful information, there isn't much of a point to it - besides showing off a cool location.

A GOLIATH PROBLEM

This quest has the characters seeking out two tribes of goliaths to broker a peace on behalf of a goliath warrior, who offers a figurine of wondrous power (silver raven).

The goliath camps are quite fun in themselves, and this quest sets the characters firmly on the path toward brokering a peace, which seems the most entertaining way to handle this scenario. Kwan's backstory - looking for Oyaminartok and becoming a thief and gambler doesn't have very much to do with the quest, however.

Changing the Quest. Instead of looking for Oyaminartok, you can have Kwan be banished from her tribe because chieftain Arn discovered that instead of killing a goliath from Wyrmdoom Crag (Aruk from area W6 in Wyrmdoom Crag) when she had him at her mercy after he'd fallen into a ravine, she helped him out, nursed him back to health, and fell in love with him. The pair is convinced that the tribes must be united, not only so that they can be together, but also to the benefit of both tribes. Instead of meeting her in a town, you can have the party come across Kwan in the wilderness – fighting for her life against an abominable yeti or a pair of crag cats - after which she explains her situation and asks the characters for their aid.

Dragon Bone Stew

This quest has the party fetching dragon bones on behalf of Dannika Graysteel for a reward of one potion of resistance (cold) each.

While essentially just a fetch quest, it works fine to get the party going to Wyrmdoom Crag – and possible reintroduces an old NPC, which is always fun.

Changing the Quest. The quest doesn't mention how the characters can acquire the dragon bones once they're at the camp. You can have Chieftain Ogulai offer to give them a dragon bone if they can help heal the aarakocra in W6. While they help treat the aarakocra, you can also have Aruk appeal to them to end the goliath feud (see 'A Goliath Problem' above).

WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

The book presents a list of Wilderness Encounters (pg. 105), which you can use to challenge the characters as they travel around in Icewind Dale. The section in the book also includes advice on how and when to use random encounters, which we will expand on below, before taking a closer look at each encounter, discussing their merits and offering advice on how to run them.

Beneath the description of each combat encounter, you will also find advice on the encounter's difficulty, including tables that show how difficult encounters with varying difficulty is for a party of four characters.

RUNNING WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

Unless you just want to use a random encounter to stall because you have nothing else prepared for the rest of the session, you are probably best off only running random encounters that add something to the game. There's a longer blog post about creating great encounters on eventyrgames.com, but to quickly summarize, an encounter adds something to the game when it provides information, consequences, or entertainment:

- Information tells the characters something useful or interesting about the story, the world, the setting, or themselves.
- Consequences for the characters or their environment, whether good (gaining resources, improving reputation, etc.) or bad (losing resources, looking bad, etc.)
- Entertainment is something that is fun and enjoyable, such as an amusing NPC, a puzzle, or a tactically challenging combat.

As an example, a single yeti is both inconsequential, uninformative, and boring – but an abominable yeti may be a tough enough challenge to have dire consequences! Likewise, a band of battlehammer dwarves with nothing to say serves no purpose as an encounter – but if they can point the characters to the 'Lost Spire of Netheril', the encounter suddenly becomes worth the effort.

WHEN TO USE WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

While rolling on random encounter tables can be fun and add an element of excitement to the game, you may still want to select your random encounters with a bit of care, depending on the party's situation and what you are trying to accomplish.

Combat Encounters. Random combat encounters should be used sparingly and in a way that makes sense. As a general rule of thumb, you should always weigh your options. If the combat encounter you have rolled is less fun than what is at the character's destination and if it doesn't add anything else to the game – in terms on information, consequences, or entertainment – then you may be better off just skipping it. You can also follow these guidelines when trying to decide on which encounter you should use:

- If the characters are traveling toward a location you think will be easy for them to handle, you can 'soften them up' with a minor combat encounter just before they reach their destination. While the encounter itself likely won't be very tense or exciting, the resources the characters spend dealing with it becomes consequential when the characters need them later.
- If the characters have far to travel between destinations and thus will have plenty of time to take a long rest before they arrive but are itching for a fight, you can run a combat encounter that is difficult enough to challenge them on its own, or two or more lesser encounters, that will in combination be enough to challenge the party.

Non-combat Encounters. If you mainly want to use wilderness encounters to give a sense that time is passing and to add depth and realism to Icewind Dale, you are often best served using non-combat encounters. They usually take up less time and can be used to provide the characters with useful information or entertaining scenarios. As we go through the encounters on the next page, we will suggest ways you can enhance non-combat encounters to make them more informative and/or exciting.



ARVEIATURACE

This short encounter with Arveiaturace is a fun, little (hopefully) non-combat encounter that will strike fear into the hearts of your players. It seems most fun to run during a blizzard. Unless the characters are really smart, resourceful, or powerful, there's little chance they can handle a combat encounter with Arveiaturace. Try to make this obvious when you run the encounter and give the characters every chance to either make a quick escape or speak peacefully with the old dragon.

Changing the Encounter. If the characters stumble upon Arveiaturace during a blizzard, you can have Arveiaturace accidentally shake off Meltharond as she shakes the characters off. Panicking, Arveiaturace forgets all about the characters, which gives them a chance to escape. You can play up her sounds of despair ("By Tiamat, not again, not again, oh dear Master, don't move, I'll find a way to get you back in the saddle... Oh, Tiamat, what a mess!"), which may even cause the characters to feel pity for the ancient dragon. You can have Arveiaturace offer – truthfully – a lift or other guidance to the party in return for their aid in putting Meltharond back in his saddle.

AWAKENED BEAST

The characters come across an awakened beast, which is told to spy on the party and report back to the frost druid that awakened it. This encounter works well when the party are lost, meandering about, or could use a little guidance. You can have the awakened beast either ask a lot of questions about the characters and what they're doing or lead them into a very dangerous area — or an encounter with more dangerous foes, such as chardalyn berserkers, a frost giant riding a mammoth, or a coldlight walker.

BATTLEHAMMER DWARVES

The characters run into shield dwarves from Clan Battlehammer, which they can speak with. This encounter doesn't really have that much to offer as written, but can be used to guide the characters if they're lost – help them get to where they're going, avoid dangers, or learn more about the land.

Changing the Encounter. You can enhance this encounter by having the dwarves – let's say there's three of them - be engaged in a heated debate when the characters find them. The three dwarven brewers cousins- are having a discussion about which of their ales (this is just an example, they could also be cooks, candymakers, bakers, etc.) is the best. When they notice the characters, they ask them for their aid in settling the matter. If you're playing in person, you can bring three different beers (again, just an example) to the table and have the players taste each, making an entire little event out of the scenario. If you're playing online, you can describe the taste of each ale, making references to brews you think the players would know. Once the characters have had their taste of each brew, they must make a decision. If they can't or won't decide, or they end up in a tie, the dwarves become unfriendly and quickly pack up their stuff to get moving. If the characters choose a winner, the dwarf excitedly gives the characters a 1-gallon cask of their best brew and offers up any help or advice they want, while the two others sulk and urge their cousin to get on with it!



CHARDALYN BERSERKERS

This encounter is a straight combat encounter with 2-5 chardalyn berserkers. There's a little twist to it the Frostmaiden's Ring, which instantly and without a saving throw teleports the party to the 'Cave of the Berserkers'. This is something of a deus ex machina, that screams: "I want you to go here!". But since there's not much to do in the cave besides fight more berserkers. it seems like a drastic move for a very little reward.

Changing the Encounter. Instead of using the ring, you can have the berserkers leave clear tracks back to the cave, and make sure you point out the tracks out to the characters. You can also add some tension to the scene by having the chardalyn berserkers be chasing down a Battlehammer dwarf or fighting a pitched battle with a goliath werebear as the party arrives on the scene. The dwarf may tell the party that his friend was taken back to the berserker's cave, while the goliath werebear can ask for the characters' aid in clearing out the cave and ending the berserker threat.

Difficulty. If you roll for the number of berserkers, this encounter can be difficult enough to challenge characters of up to 7th-level or higher.

Chardalyn Berserker Encounter Difficulty

Party		— Chardalyn		
Level	2	3	4	5
4	Deadly	_	_	_
5	Hard	Deadly	_	
6	Medium	Hard	Deadly	_
7	Easy	Medium	Hard	Deadly

CHWINGA

This encounter with a chwinga is a cute, little event that is unlikely to take up much time at the table.

Changing the Encounter. You can add some excitement to the encounter by having the chwinga be fleeing for its life from another threat. Saving a chwinga's life may be just the thing you need to make a bland encounter with a pair of crag cats, icewind kobolds, or a yeti more memorable. While the foes encountered may not be strong enough to threaten the characters, intervening quickly enough to save the chwinga's life could still be challenging - and one of the chwinga charms (ID: RotF, pg. 283) is a cool reward for success!

COLDLIGHT WALKER

This is a straight combat encounter with a coldlight walker. The suggestion to have the coldlight walker be one of the humanoid sacrifices made by the Ten-Towners gives it a cool flavor, but it otherwise doesn't do much except make the character spend some resources.

Difficulty. If encountered alone, a coldlight walker is a deadly foe for 3rd-level characters and becomes negligible once the characters pass 5th level.

CRAG CATS

A straight combat encounter with a pack of 1d4 crag cats isn't really the most inspiring or exciting encounter. You are probably best off either not using this encounter at all, opting for more interesting encounters, or only using it when the resources the characters must spend to defeat them will be needed before they can take a rest and replenish them. It can also work if combined with a social encounter, such as Battlehammer dwarves or a chwinga (see above).

Difficulty. There's a big difference in difficulty between 1 crag cat and 4. Instead of rolling, you can just pick the number of crag cats you want, based on how difficult you want the encounter to be. Remember, the crag cats retreat when two or more of them are dead, which makes the encounter a bit easier than it otherwise would be.

Crag Cat Encounter Difficulty

	— Crag Cats —				
Party Level	1	2	3	4	
1	Medium	Deadly	_	_	
2	Easy	Medium	Hard	Deadly	
3	_	_	Easy	Medium	
4		- T		Easy	

FROST DRUID AND FRIENDS

This combat encounter has the party facing a frost druid with three awakened friends.

Difficulty. How challenging this encounter is depends greatly on which allies the frost druid is bringing to the fight. The goat, reindeer, and walrus are roughly equal in power, but an awakened tree is a big leap up. The table below shows the encounter's difficulty depending on how many of the druid's three allies are awakened trees.

Frost Druid and Friends Encounter Difficulty

		— Awakened Trees —			
Party Leve	l 0	1	2	3	
3	Deadly	Deadly	_	_	
4	Medium	Hard	Deadly	- NAT	
5	Easy	Medium	Hard	Deadly	
6	Easy	Medium	Medium	Hard	
7	_	Easy	Medium	Hard	

FROST GIANT RIDING A MAMMOTH

This encounter is very cool, but also very difficult – it's probably good that there's plenty of options given for negotiating with the frost giant in the encounter's description. If you run this encounter against lower level parties, make sure you have a backup ready if things are looking bad for the characters. Perhaps a goliath werebear shows up to lend a helping hand or Arveiaturace flies past, distracting the giant who exclaims: "There's the beast! Out of my way, small fools, lest my quarry escapes me!" before riding off potentially leaving a set of tracks the characters can follow to the Dark Duchess (ID:RotF pg. 127).

DIFFICULTY

A frost giant and a mammoth is a tough encounter for characters of up to 6th or 7th level, and probably shouldn't be used against characters of 4th-level or lower.



GNOLLS

This encounter is another straight combat encounter, that offers little in the way of story relevance or excitement. It will work if you need a challenge that is appropriate for lower level parties.

Changing the Encounter. You can give this encounter a bit more depth by using it to steer the characters toward the 'Cackling Chasm'. A defeated gnoll surrenders, and blames Chyzka, the gnoll fang of Yeenoghu, for the gnolls' desperate attacks, promising that the gnolls will leave Icewind Dale if the characters can get rid of Chyzka. While still not the most exciting encounter, this combination of encounter and location does well to fill out an adventuring day for a lower level party with only minimal preparation.

DIFFICULTY

A pack of 4–7 gnolls is at least a medium encounter for a 3rd-level party, but is probably little more than an inconvenience once the characters reach level 5.

Gnoll Encounter Difficulty

— Gnolls —

Party Level	4–5	6–7
2	Hard	Deadly
3	Medium	Hard
4	Easy	Medium
5		Easy

GOLIATH PARTY

In this non-combat encounter, the characters meet a band of goliaths they can face off with in athletic contests. This is a fun little encounter, that is definitely worth running.

Changing the Encounter. The encounter works fine as written, but some of the individual athletic contests can be changed to make them a bit more engaging:

- Tug o' War. If you want to add just a bit of randomness, you can have each team use their combined Strength scores as suggested, but add a d20 roll to the total when determining the winner. This makes it so a clearly stronger team will still nearly always win, but allows for upsets to happen infrequently.
- Hand Standing. It seems like it would be more fun to have the team that has the last person (hand) standing be declared the winners, which means that the contest doesn't end until all participants in one team have failed their checks. To avoid the contest going on forever, simply have the DC of the Athletics check increase by 5 with each roll.

GOLIATH WEREBEAR

This is a fun non-combat encounter that can easily be combined with other encounters or locations. A goliath werebear can be used to bail the characters out of a deadly encounter if they ever get in over their head, or to steer them toward locations such as 'Black Cabin', 'Cackling Chasm', 'Cave of the Berserkers', 'Dark Duchess', 'Karkolohk', and so on.

HERD OF BEASTS

This encounter seems more of a description – "this happened on your journey" – than an actual encounter. As the book also suggests, it offers most as a prelude to an encounter with beasts – crag cats, yetis, etc. – or hunters – goliaths, humans, etc.

HUMANS

These encounters with tribes of humans can be run as both combat or non-combat encounters. While the description in the book provides the parameters of the encounter, there's not a whole lot of flavor to it.

Changing the Encounter. If the encounter is with indifferent tribes - bear or elk - you can use it to provide meaningful information about the character's destination. The scouting party is led by Affra, a middleaged trapper with a warm smile and humorous eyes. If approached with respect, she will invite the characters to eat with her - smoked and salted meat - and share a potentially useful rumor ('the White Wyrm has been seen circling the shipwreck', 'the frost giant spirits at Jarlmoot will test you, so be careful', or 'the gnolls are grumbling with hunger and dissatisfied with their leader', etc.). If the encounter is with the Wolf or Tiger Tribe, consider implementing the 'Wolf Tribe Cannibals'-quest here (you can replace the Wolf Tribe with the Tiger Tribe without issue). The scouting party is led by the stern Kamakani, who almost reluctantly orders his warriors to capture the characters. When he sees how powerful they are, however, he calls off the attack, and instead asks the characters to aid him in disposing of the evil chieftain.

Difficulty. Because this encounter features between 5–10 tribal warriors or scouts, it can offer a challenge for parties from anywhere between 2nd and 5th-level. You can also mix and match the various types of combatants to make combat a bit more engaging and fun to run.

Human Encounter Difficulty (Tribal Warriors)

— Tribal Warriors —

Party Level	5–7	8–10
2	Hard	Deadly
3	Easy	Medium
4	_	Easy

Human Encounter Difficulty (Scouts)

- Tribal Warriors -

Party Level	5–7	8–10
2	Deadly	_
3	Hard	Deadly
4	Medium	Hard
5	Easy	Medium



ICE TROLL

This encounter is a straight-forward combat encounter. It serves well when you need to throw a hard challenge in front of the party, but otherwise doesn't have much to offer, since trolls don't make for great conversation partners.

Difficulty. The ice troll's Cold Aura makes it deceptively dangerous, especially for lower level characters. Thus, even though it is outnumbered 4 to 1, it is a decent encounter for 5th-level characters and still a relevant - albeit probably not too difficult - foe for a party of 6th or 7th-level adventurers.

ICEWIND KOBOLDS

This encounter is fairly simple and can be run both as a combat or non-combat encounter.

Changing the Encounter. You can use this encounter to foreshadow the 'A Beautiful Mine'-quest in Termalaine, if you haven't run that yet. The kobolds are deserters from Trex' band, who didn't want to follow the 'winged' kobold anymore, since it started acting and speaking weirdly. They know that the kobolds have taken over the mine near Termalaine. This can work both to get the party moving toward Termalaine and will also help them realize that something is off about Trex.

Difficulty. Kobolds are unimpressive foes. If run as a combat encounter, a handful of kobolds is easy enough to put in front of even 1st-level characters – and barely an inconvenience for characters of 3rd level or more.

Icewind Kobold Encounter Difficulty

	— Icewind Kobolds —			
Party Level	2–3	4–5	6–8	
1	Easy	Medium	Hard	
2	<u> </u>	Easy	Medium	
3	_	_	Easy	

ORCS OF THE MANY-ARROWS TRIBE

Canonically, the Orcs of the Many-Arrows Tribe were orcs who - at least for a period of time - tried to coexist peacefully with other civilized societies. It seems a shame to play this only as a combat encounter.

Changing the Encounter. Instead of leading with hostility, you can have the orc leader openly declare to the party that: "King Lorgru says Yartakh must return with food or treasure. What can you offer, that my warriors cannot take from you with force?" to let the party know that a peaceful resolution can be found.

Difficulty. This encounter is a tough encounter for a 5th-level party and still a suitable challenge for 6th and 7th-level characters. If you want to keep the combat a bit more manageable and decrease difficulty, you can remove the half-ogre from the encounter.

PERYTONS

This encounter is a straight combat encounter. On its own, it's not too interesting - although the perytons' flyby tactics may prove an entertaining and frustrating challenge - but it can be combined with a non-combat encounter for greater effect. If the characters come upon a couple of Battlehammer dwarves, a chwinga, or a scouting party of Reghed warriors being harassed by perytons, it adds a little depth to the scene.

Difficulty. If played cleverly, using dive attacks and flyby, the perytons are a tough challenge for 3rd-level characters and should put at least a dent in 4th- and 5th-level characters as well, since they fight to the death.

SNOWY OWLBEAR

The snowy owlbear is a fun, new take on a D&D classic, so even though this encounter is fairly straight forward, it still has some merit. The most entertaining outcome is probably either feeding the snowy owlbear to get rid of it or claiming it as a loyal (and expensive!) pet. You can make that outcome more likely by describing that the snowy owlbear looks hungry and seems most interested in the character who carries the party's rations.

Difficulty. A snowy owlbear is a decent challenge for a party of 2nd- or 3rd-level adventurers and an insignificant threat to characters of 5th level or higher.

Үеті

While the yeti is the quintessential snowy monster, it isn't necessarily the most fun encounter. If you have run, or think to run, the 'Mountain Climb'-quest in Targos, the party will probably face enough yeti for one adventure.

Changing the Encounter. If you choose to run an encounter with ordinary yetis, you can combine it with non-combat encounters, as previously described under 'Crag Cats' and 'Perytons' above. Throwing an abominable veti at a lower level party during a blizzard can also be fun moment of intense horror, especially if you do your best to let the characters know that this is not an ordinary yeti, and that their best option is to try to escape it. If things go south and the characters don't take the hint, you can have them stumble upon Arveiaturace in the ice (the dragon's sudden tossing about scares the yeti off) or have a goliath werebear or similar ally show up to help the party.

Difficulty. The difficulty of this encounter varies a lot based on what you roll on the table. The yeti tyke is negligible, but the 1d4 yeti or the abominable yeti present very real threats to even high level characters. An abominable yeti is a deadly encounter for 5th-level characters and still a tough adversary for 7th-level characters, while 1d4 yeti remains a challenge even at higher levels, as per the table below.

Yeti Encounter Difficulty

	— Yeti —					
Party Level	1	2	3	4		
2	Hard	Deadly	_	_		
3	Medium	Deadly		-		
4	Easy	Hard	Deadly	_		
5	(-	Medium	Hard	Deadly		
6	_	Easy	Medium	Hard		
7	<u> </u>	_	Easy	Medium		



ENCOUNTER TABLES

On this page, you will find additional encounter tables made using the encounters in Chapter 2: Icewind Dale.

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

Below are all the combat encounters in the book categorized by difficulty. A very easy encounter is a moderate challenge - an encounter that will test their strength, but is unlikely to be fatal – for a party of four adventurers of 2nd to 3rd level, while an easy encounter should be a moderate challenge for a party of four adventurers of 3rd or 4th level, and so on. You can choose the lower or higher range encounter based on whether you want the encounter to be more or less difficult (i.e. a party of four 5th-level adventurers will probably find a coldlight walker easy, while an ice troll is a tough foe).

Very Easy Encounters (Level 2-3)

- d6 Encounter
- Crag Cats (1d2 crag cats)
- Gnolls (1d2 + 3 gnolls)
- Humans (1d3 + 4 tribal warriors)
- Icewind Kobolds (2d4 icewind kobolds)
- **Snowy Owlbear**
- 6 Yeti

Easy Encounters (Level 3-4)

- d6 Encounter
- Crag Cats (1d2 + 2 crag cats)
- 2 Frost Druid and Friends (frost druid + beasts)
- Gnolls (1d2 + 5 gnolls)
- Humans (1d3 + 7 tribal warriors)
- Humans (1d3 + 4 scouts)
- Perytons (2 perytons)

Medium Encounters (Level 4-5)

- d4 Encounter
- Coldlight Walker
- Frost Druid and Friends (frost druid, treant + beasts)
- Humans (1d3 + 7 scouts)
- 4 Yeti (2 yeti)

Hard Encounters (Level 5-6)

- d4 Encounter
- Chardalyn Berserkers (1d2 + 1 chardalyn berserkers)
- 2 Frost Druid and Friends (frost druid, 2 treants + beast)
- Ice Troll
- 4 Yeti (3 yeti)

Very Hard Encounters (Level 6-7)

- d6 Encounter
- 1 Chardalyn Berserkers (1d2 + 3 chardalyn berserkers)
- 2 Frost Druid and Friends (frost druid, 3 treants)
- 3 Frost Giant Riding a Mammoth
- Orcs of Many-Arrows Tribe (orc war chief, orc eye of gruumsh, half-ogre, 6 orcs)
- Yeti (4 yeti)
- Yeti (1 abominable yeti)

All Combat Encounters

Inn	_							
d20	н	n	c	റ	ш	n	te	r

1-2	144.	1 Chauda	Jun D	erserkers
1-/	104 +	- Charda	aivn B	erserkers

Coldlight Walker 3-4

1d4 Crag Cats 5

Frost Druid and Friends (Frost druid and 3 6-7 awakened trees, mountain goats, elks, or walruses)

8-9 Frost Giant Riding a Mammoth

10 Gnolls (1d4 + 3 gnolls)

11–12 Humans (1d6 + 4 tribal warriors or scouts)

13 Ice Troll

14 Icewind Kobolds (2d4 icewind kobolds)

15-16 Orcs of Many-Arrows Tribe (orc war chief, orc eye of gruumsh, half-ogre, 6 orcs)

17 Perytons (2 Perytons)

18-19 **Snowy Owlbear**

20 Yeti (1d4 yeti or 1 abominable yeti)

Non-Combat Encounters

The table below provides an overview of the non-combat encounters described in Chapter 2.

All Non-combat Encounters

d10 Encounter

- 1 Arveiaturace
- 2 Awakened Beast
- 3 Battlehammer Dwarves
- Chwinga
- Goliath Party 5
- Goliath Werebear 6
- 7 Herd of Beasts
 - Humans (friendly tribes) 8
- 9 Icewind Kobolds (friendly)
- Yeti Tyke

COMBINING ENCOUNTERS

Combining non-combat and combat encounters often enhances both. You can use the tables of non-combat encounters below to determine which non-hostile creatures that are being attacked by hostile creatures and are 'In Need of Aid', or which non-hostile creatures that show up to provide the characters 'Aid When Needed', if a combat encounter proves too tough.

In Need of Aid

d8 Friendly Creatures

- Awakened Beast
- Battlehammer Dwarves
- Chwinga
- Goliath Party
- Goliath Werebear
- Herd of Beasts
- Humans (friendly tribes)
- Icewind Kobolds (friendly)

Aid When Needed

- **Friendly Creatures** d6
- 1 Arveiaturace
- 2 Battlehammer Dwarves
- Goliath Party 3
- Goliath Werebear
- Humans (friendly tribes)
- Icewind Kobolds (friendly)

PLACES OF INTEREST

The meat of Chapter 2: Icewind Dale comes in the form of 13 'Places of Interest' (pg. 113-169) which the characters can visit as they travel around Icewind Dale. These locations are all thoroughly described in the book and provide challenges of varying difficulty. Some are accessible to characters of any level, while others are very deadly for even high-level adventurers.

On the following pages, we will go over each of these places of interest, offering advice on how to run them, suggest varies changes, and give advice on how to adjust the location's difficulty. Finally, we will also provide an overview of the locations, giving our thoughts about how interesting and difficult each is, as well as provide an example of how intertwine some of the locations more closely with the campaign's primary stories.

ANGAJUK'S BELL

This location is where the characters can find Angajuk, the awakened sperm whale that is probably their easiest way to reach the Island of Solstice in Chapter 5. Angajuk is an interesting creature and a fun concept, but as an adventure location, 'Angajuk's Bell' doesn't have that much to offer. The encounter with giant vultures is trivial for characters of 3rd level or higher, as is the potential fight with whale hunters looking to poison Angajuk.

EARNING ANGAJUK'S TRUST

Instead of having the characters earn Angajuk's trust by fishing for an octopus or befriending a dolphin, you can have the sperm whale bemoan that a ship wreck further down the coast has lured the White Wyrm Arveiaturace to the area. Because of its past run-ins with Auril's roc, the sperm whale is afraid of huge, flying creatures. If the characters can go to the wreck and either sink or burn it (so the dragon will leave), they will earn the whale's favor - plus, they are free to any treasure they find in the wreck. How they accomplish this feat is up to them (see more under 'Dark Duchess' on the following pages).

This both gives a plausible reason for the characters to visit 'Dark Duchess' (pg. 127), and gives them a way out when the dragon shows up to confront them - Angajuk waits just off-shore, calling to the party, and allows them to escape underneath the frigid water in its air bubble.

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

As written, the characters can encounter 3 giant vultures and 5 thugs here, which is just enough to give a party of 3rd-level adventurers a challenging day. If the characters are higher level, or you want to make it more likely that the whale hunters will get to use a character as bait for Angajuk, you can adjust the encounter to higher levels:

- 4th Level. Jendren is a veteran.
- 5th Level. Jendren is a gladiator.
- 6th Level. Jendren is a gladiator and 2 of the whale hunters are veterans.
- · 7th Level. Jendren is a gladiator and all the other whale hunters are veterans.

Note: Difficulty

Each location features an assessment of the location's difficulty. Unless otherwise noted, this assessment assumes that the party consists of 4 characters and that the characters complete the encounters at the location without a long rest.

BLACK CABIN

This location has a lot going on. In quick summary, the Lathanderite Macreadus managed to get incinerated while trying to create a device that could end Auril's Everlasting Rime. The characters are likely to make the same mistake, ending up as ethereal ghosts that must work to revive themselves by fixing Macreadus' device.

If you and your players like encounters that aren't exactly traditional or straight-forward, the Black Cabin offers a refreshingly different challenge to the party.

B2. WOODEN WALKWAY

If a character stands on the walkway outside the door to B4, the walkway collapses. As written, this basically means: succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or die. While the saving throw is easy, succeed-or-die rolls are often not very fun. And, while any character that dies here are revived if the party fixes the Summer Star, they are still excluded from most of the rest of the session (as they don't get to reform as a ghost), which isn't fun either.

You can make the scenario both more intense and survivable by using the rules for pulling itself up given under Weak Floor in 'B4. Main Room', but applying it if the check fails, instead of only when it succeeds. This means that a character who is slipping down the cliff manages to grab hold of a tree root on the way, and must then succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check as an action to pull itself up - a check other creatures can use the Help action to assist with. This increases the characters' chance of survival significantly, while also making the scenario more tense and exciting.

B4. Main Room

There's two possible issues with the scenario in this

Summer Star. The Summer Star's explosion is incredibly deadly – but that is, of course, the point. Once one or more characters die, they can communicate with Macreadus and learn that the Summer Star must be fixed - and when it's fixed, they are returned to life again. This is actually a cool premise, but there's an issue: the players don't know this. And because they don't, they may react poorly to being incinerated in a blast of radiant light that they have little chance of avoiding and that deals ways too much damage for their level. You can mitigate this by quickly having the ghostly Macreadus inform the characters that fixing the Summer Star may be the key to restoring them to their physical forms.

Weak Floor. While a character that falls through the floor and dies can be revived by Lathander later, it still isn't the most fun way to go out. You can choose to allow a character that succeeds to jump clear safely, while a character that fails still manages to grab hold of the edge, giving them the opportunity to pull themselves up as described in the book.

DIFFICULTY

The Black Cabin can be run at any level if you exclude the 'Frostmaiden's Revenge'-encounter, since the challenges within - falls from great heights and the exploding Summer Star – are likely to kill high level characters as easily as lower level characters. As the only encounter at the location, the 'Frostmaiden's Revenge'encounter should be very difficult - and will be for a party of 4th-level adventurers. The book provides advice for adjusting its difficulty to higher levels, but if you run the encounter for 3rd-level characters, you may want to exclude the ice mephits.

CACKLING CHASM

This location has no ties to the various stories in Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden and thus serves mostly as a quick location you can run if you don't have time to prepare anything else, or if you think the characters will enjoy a session of good old fashioned gnoll slaughter.

Z2. Feasting Cave & Z3. Shrine to Yeenoghu

The description doesn't explicitly say that the gnolls try to negotiate with the characters, although it suggests that 'they don't attack intruders right away'. To add a bit of depth to the scene, you can have the biggest of the four gnolls here - a scarred, graying gnoll named Aizkal - yip loudly that: "Yeenoghu has answered our calls! It is a sign, brothers!" before telling the party that "We gnolls have no quarrel with you folk. It is our fool leader Chyzka that is the enemy. Yeenoghu forbids us from harming Chyzka, but has send you to aid us. It is best for all that Chyzka dies - both for gnolls and those-with-soft-flesh!"

If the characters need more convincing, the gnolls may also offer to serve the characters as guides or foragers, although the creatures are not to be trusted and will turn on the characters as soon as they get the chance.

DIFFICULTY

If the characters head into the Cackling Chasm with the intention of wiping out every last gnoll, the Cackling Chasm's full roster makes for a decently challenging adventuring day for characters of around 4th or 5th level (although a well-placed fireball or lightning bolt will make short work of the lesser gnolls). If the characters have come only to kill Chyzka, or you have the gnolls offer the party that option even if they have the characters at their mercy, the Cackling Chasm can be run as early as 2nd or 3rd level.

- 6th Level. Replace three gnolls with gnoll pack lords.
- 7th Level. Replace six gnolls with gnoll pack lords.

CAVE OF THE BERSERKERS

This location is tied peripherally to the story – since it includes chardalyn and worshipers of the frostmaiden but is otherwise mainly a combat location.

Q5. FROSTMAIDEN'S FIRE

The brazier makes the chardalyn berserkers in the cave invincible, which is a fun little twist – except that there's very little chance that the characters will make any connection between the berserkers' unwillingness to die and the brazier. To make this more obvious – and thus increasing the likelihood that the characters actually interact with the brazier - you can describe how each time the light leaves a berserker's eyes, it inhales a big gulp of the white, odorless smoke that seems to flow from the brazier and is instantly revitalized.

Q6. Slaughterhouse & Q7. Meat Storage

You can foreshadow Xardorok's fortress and the duergar by putting a couple of fully- or partially-dismembered duergar in these two gory chambers. The gray dwarves were foraging for chardalyn when they crossed the berserkers' path – and came to a swift end. If the characters haven't yet found their way to the fortress, you can have one of the dwarves carry a map to it.

RETURNING BERSERKERS

This is a very tough challenge, but also potentially fun. If the characters are lower level, you can allow them to spot the berserkers coming toward the cave, giving them a chance to either ambush the berserkers, escape through the waste chute, or find a place to hide. Hiding or running from three berserkers will be very tense if the characters already had trouble dealing with just the one inside the cave.

DIFFICULTY

As written, this location makes for a tough adventuring day for a party of 5th-level adventurers. Below is advice on adjusting the difficulty to higher or lower levels:

- · 2nd Level. Remove one white dragon wyrmling and skip the 'Returning Berserkers'-encounter.

- 7th Level. Add two Chardalyn Berserkers to area Q6.



DARK DUCHESS

This location has potential to be a lot of fun. Of course, it works especially well if a player has the 'Pirate Cannibal'-secret, but it should be good fun either way.

BURNING THE SHIPWRECK

As suggested under 'Angajuk's Bell' earlier in this document, you can have the sperm whale ask the characters to destroy the shipwreck so that the White Wyrm will leave the area. Your players may also get the idea of burning the shipwreck on their own, as a means to handle the troll or get at the treasure.

The specifics of burning a frozen ship's hull includes a lot of variables, but to simplify matters, you can assume that characters who use oil (there's oil in 'D7. Storage'), alchemist's fire, other flammables, or magic, can spend an hour starting a fire strong enough to really take hold. Even then, it takes another two hours for the ship to burn through. The frozen wood produces a lot of smoke as it burns, which quickly draws the attention of Arveiaturace, increasing the chance of her arriving to 40 percent per hour.

ARVEIATURACE ARRIVES

The scenario that plays out when Arveiaturace arrives is really fun, but also very dangerous – which is not very surprising, when an ancient dragon is involved.

Dragon's Breath. Assuming that the characters are at least 4th or 5th-level, they should be able to handle a round or two of Arveiaturace's attacks before they find a way to slip away. The dragon's breath, however, is another matter entirely. To avoid using it against the characters without making it too obvious that you're holding back, you can have the dragon use it's breath weapon but miss because of its bad eyesight - completely encasing a portion of the ship in ice! You can also have the dragon expend its breath weapon to refreeze its treasure, if the ice has been chipped away from it, or to extinguish the fires, if the ship is burning.

Rescue & Escape. As the book mentions, you can have Tinjong the Verbeeg show up to aid the party's escape. This is a fun scenario, with one minor issue: Tinjong's escape plan hitches on fog cloud which does nothing against Arveiaturace's blindsight. If you think your players will notice that discrepancy, you can have the verbeeg use pass without trace instead. You can also have Angajuk the sperm whale show up to rescue the characters, allowing them to board its air bubble and swim with it back to 'Angajuk's Bell'. This is also a good way to make the characters aware of Angajuk before they need a way to get to Auril's Abode in Chapter 5.

DIFFICULTY

Assuming that you don't throw the full weight of the ancient dragon against the party, this location features only combat with an ice troll and 4 icewind kobolds, making it a tough challenge for a party of 4th or 5th-level adventurers. Making it harder is simple enough - just have Arveiaturace get a round or two more attacks in before the cavalry arrives. If you want to make the location easier, replace the ice troll with two yetis.

ID ASCENDANT

This alien and otherworldly location is very interesting, especially if your players are big Spelljammer or sci-fi fans, who will appreciate the introduction of spaceships and laser pistols. This location runs especially well if the characters already have a psi crystal, but can also work even if they don't – you don't have to follow the book's decree that the 'Id Ascendant' will only last 24 hours more after the characters found it. If you extend the time frame, the characters have ample time to get back to Ten-Towns and locate the psi crystal in the gem mine near Termalaine (see 'A Beautiful Mine', ID:RotF pg. 94).

LASER PISTOLS & RIFLES

These weapons deal a lot of damage, but are balanced by the characters not being proficient with them, until they spend the necessary downtime to learn how to use them.

You can, of course, rule that the weapons are treated as martial weapons - they will still be balanced somewhat by requiring reloading (the 'Crossbow Expert'feat won't help with that). For creatures with the 'Extra Attack'-feature, this means that while the laser weapons have the advantage of dealing radiant damage, they are still not much more powerful than making two attacks with a longbow (since a character can add their Dexterity modifier to both those attacks). Classes such as the rogue, who would benefit greatly from using a laser pistol, won't have proficiency with it because they lack proficiency with martial weapons.

N2. CARGO HOLD

The characters are unlikely to avoid combat with the flesh golem here if they aren't being led in by the gnome ceremorphs. The book dictates that the gnome ceremorphs will try to kill the characters if any of the squidlings die here – which seems like a shame, since speaking with the gnome ceremorphs is more fun than fighting them. To avoid such a disaster, make sure to describe how the small, squid-like creatures scurry away, seemingly curious and non-hostile, when the flesh golem attacks - making it less likely that the characters will go out of their way to attack them.

DIFFICULTY

If the characters end up fighting everything in the nautiloid, they will have to quarrel with two carrion crawlers, a flesh golem, three gnome squidlings, two gnome ceremorphs, and a bulette, which means they should probably be around 6th level. If you want to make things a bit easier, or it's clear that the characters have been pushed to their limit, you can always skip the bulette that attacks them on the way out.

If we assume that matters are resolved more diplomatically, they will only have to contend with the carrion crawlers, the flesh golem, and the bulette, which should be doable for a party of 4th-level adventurers. Again, you can make things easier by skipping the bulette, making the location appropriate for 2nd- or 3rd-level adventurers.

IARLMOOT

This location is really interesting and ties very well into both the setting and Auril and her Everlasting Rime. It's also a very tough location, especially if you have Yselm Bloodfang lead the characters to 'Jarlmoot' - which seems like the most fun way to go about it.

II. RING OF THRONES

There's a couple of things to note here.

Cold Vulnerability. It's important to note that creatures inside the ring have vulnerability to cold damage if they aren't resistant or immune to begin with. This makes the frost giant skeleton's Freezing Stare incredibly lethal, and also greatly increases the strength of the frost druid's ice storm and the winter wolf's Cold Breath. Keep this in mind when determining how difficult the encounter should be – you can always choose to not apply vulnerability, if you think it makes the encounter too lethal for the characters.

Invisible Stalkers. The frost giant skeleton is thematically very appropriate, but the invisible stalkers that follow it are much less so. In addition, invisible stalkers are very uninteresting foes - they are basically hard-to-hit creatures with low damage output, which means that a fight with them is likely to be long and uninteresting. If you want to preserve the danger of the encounter, you can skip the invisible stalkers and instead have two or three frost giant skeletons appear simultaneously at the start of the event.

12. HALL OF BRAZIERS

Riddles are always cool, and the riddle here is overall both interesting and solvable.

Poem. The third line of the poem ("Climb a mountain with a stone in your shoe") stands out a bit, both by being a bit too long and, frankly, by sounding a bit weird "with a stone in your shoe"? If you want to, you can instead have the poem be:

Snatch a scale from a sleeping wyrm; Against the blowing wind, stand firm. Like mountain's stone, strong and true; On little feet, death comes for you. Be the arrow that starts the war; Let life's blood fall till it falls no more.

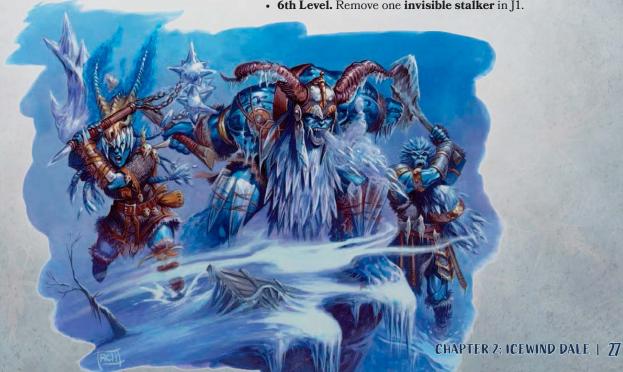
Stone Braziers. The characters have to put various ingredients into each brazier to open the door. This is cool and the characters should be able to figure it out by simply trying various things. If you want to make trial-and-error a bit more costly, however, you can apply a consequence each time the characters put a wrong object into a brazier:

- Wyrm. Dragon's breath spews from the brazier. Each creature within 10 ft. of the brazier must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 1d6 fire damage, 1d6 cold damage, 1d6 lightning damage, 1d6 acid damage, and 1d6 poison damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.
- Vind. A small tornado manifests briefly. Each creature in the room must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw as they are thrown around, taking 3d6 bludgeoning damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.
- **Fjell**. A thunderous boom erupts from the brazier. Each creature within 10 ft. of it must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 4d8 thunder damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.
- **Dod.** The creature who dropped the object in the brazier takes 2d6 necrotic damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.
- · Krig. The character must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw, or be affected as by the spell enemies abound (from Xanathar's Guide to Everything).
- Liv. A shadow springs forth and attacks the party.

DIFFICULTY

If run as written, 'Jarlmoot' is a very tough location, probably best reserved for characters of 7th level if they are led there and betrayed by Yselm. Below is advice for adjusting the location's difficulty to parties of lower level.

- 3rd Level. Skip the two invisible stalkers in J1. Allow the characters a free round of attacks against the frost giant skeleton in J1 as it forms slowly. Remove the winter wolf from the encounter with Yselm. Skip the frost giant under 'Leaving Jarlmoot'.
- 4th Level. Skip the two invisible stalkers in J1. Replace the winter wolf in J1 with a dire wolf. Skip the frost giant under 'Leaving Jarlmoot'.
- 5th Level. Skip the two invisible stalkers in J1. Replace the winter wolf in J1 with a dire wolf.
- 6th Level. Remove one invisible stalker in J1.



KARKOLOHK

This location features some creative concepts, albeit it doesn't tie into any of the adventure's main stories. It has a long backstory, which boils down to the goblin fortress being led by a gnome disguised as a goblin, who's becoming desperate as he's falling out of favor with his goblin minions.

GNOME DIPLOMACY

This quest runs well if you use the 'Peace Out'-quest, although one thing isn't very clear: what is Yarb-Gnock and the goblins getting out of the peace treaty? The book describes how he will offer to not attack carayans from Ten-Towns, but not what he wants in return, which seems like an oversight. You can have him ask that 100 rations of food be delivered to Karkolohk each month in return – a request the Council of Speakers will have a hard time agreeing to. Conversely, you can also have Yarb-Gnock simply use the characters to facilitate his escape, which seems like the most fun outcome anyway - see 'Example: Running Karkolohk' on this page.

K5. MAIN BATTLE PLATFORM

The shield guardian found in this location is from the 'Lost Spire of Netheril' (ID:RotF pg. 145), where it is described that it wandered around in the tundra for centuries, powered down, and was found recently by the goblins. This seems like very convenient timing. Instead, you can decide that the shield guardian attacked Dzaan and the his adventurers when the 'Lost Spire of Netheril' was opened. They managed to overpower it and left it in the snow, where scavenging goblins found it soon after. If the characters ask about it, Yarb-Gnock or another goblin can tell them where the 'Lost Spire of Netheril' is (on the far side of Lac Dinneshere), possibly prompting the party to go there afterward.



Goblin Reactions

There's a discrepancy in the description of the goblins' reactions to Yarb-Gnock leaving Karkolohk. Under 'Gnome Diplomacy' we're told that "Mistaking any attempt by Yarb-Gnock to leave Karkolohk as an abduction orchestrated by the characters, the goblins attack the characters as they try to flee the fortress with Yarb-Gnock in tow", while the text in K12. Chief's Quarters maintains that: "While in his Yarb-Gnock disguise, Spellix can be used as a hostage to facilitate the characters' escape, or he can command the goblins to stand down and allow the characters to leave the fort unmolested". To compromise, you can have Yarb-Gnock's commands to stand down work at first, but have Manafek arrive to spoil the escape as described under 'Example: Running Karkolohk'.

EXAMPLE: RUNNING KARKOLOHK

Below is a blueprint for how you can run Karkolohk in an interesting manner, which assumes that the characters have come to make a peace treaty with the goblins.

K1. Watchtowers. As the characters approach the watchtowers, they can loudly proclaim themselves as diplomats from Bryn Shander. The goblins in the watchtowers accept this and lead them in safely, taking them through the camp to 'K12. Chief's Quarters'.

K12. Chief's Quarters. The goblin guards knock on the door, prompting Spellix to quickly put on his disguise while muttering: "Yes, yes, Yarb-Gnock is coming, by Glittergo- eh, by Maglubiyet - stop knocking!" and, once he hears that the diplomats are here: "Great! Fantastic! Prepare the feast then, Yarb-Gnock will be right out!"

K11. Dining Room. The characters are led to the dining room and quickly joined by Yarb-Gnock, who enthusiastically greets the party and asks them how things are in Ten-Towns. Once dinner is served, he shoos any other goblins out and requests that they take him back to Bryn Shander to negotiate the peace deal. If the characters see through his disguise - which should be pretty easy - he drops it immediately and begs the characters to take him to Bryn Shander before the goblins see through it as well and kill him!

K3. Courtyard If the characters acquiesce and lead Yarb-Gnock out, the disguised gnome can get them past the goblins in area K9 easily enough. Once they're on the walkways overseeing 'K3. Courtyard' moving southward out of the camp – however, they are accosted by the distrustful Manafek, who has five other goblins and a worg in tow. She asks loudly: "Leavin', are we, Yarb-Gnock?". When Yarb-Gnock nervously says he's going to Bryn Shander to negotiate a treaty, she responds with: "Don't forget to take you's disguise off then, Yarb-Gnock. 'Em tall folks don't take kindly to goblins, or so I've's heard!" before turning to her entourage and the four goblins looking on from the two watchtowers (areas K4) around the courtyard: "Yarb-Gnock's a gnome in goblin's clothing. I swear it on Maglubiyet's blood. Filthy liar's what he is!". She demands that the characters turn over Yarb-Gnock, who in turn pleads with them to get him out of the camp.

Escape. The characters can diffuse the situation quickly by simply handing over the gnome, who's hauled yelling and screaming off to be thrown over the cliff at area K7. If they choose to fight, they will have to contend with 6 goblins and 1 worg in area K3 and 2 goblins in each of the watchtower's south of the courtyard, who are firing arrows. The 4 goblins from area K9 arrive after two rounds. If the characters make a big commotion using loud magic, the remaining 16 goblins from the various watchtowers arrive within 5 rounds. If more than half of the goblins are killed - about 15 or so - the rest of Karkolohk's forces flee and hide, hoping that the murderous adventurers will leave on their own.

DIFFICULTY

If you run Karkolohk in a manner akin to what's described in 'Example: Running Karkolohk' or the players intend to go in guns blazing, they should be able to handle the goblins at around 3rd level, assuming that they take the goblins on peacemeal, and don't allow themselves to be swarmed by all thirty goblins at once. This also allows you to keep a handle on things by having more goblins show up if things are too easy, or delay the goblins' arrival if the characters are getting overwhelmed.

LOST SPIRE OF NETHERIL

This location is great and does well to foreshadow Ythryn in Chapter 7, as well as the Arcane Brotherhood and their involvement. While you can use a tall tale or the 'Hunt for the Red Yeti'-quest to get the party here, as the book suggests, you can also lead the party here more organically by having them visit Karkolohk first (see the previous page), or by tying it into the plot (see 'Structure in Chapter 2' at the end of this guide for chapter 2).

GUARDIAN AMULET

This location features a shield guardian amulet that matches the shield guardian in Karkolohk. If the characters acquire both, they can gain the aid of a functional shield guardian, which is a very powerful ally indeed! While the shield guardian's hit point maximum is already reduced to 80 in the book, you may want to take this a bit further. If you reduce its AC to 13, its maximum hit points to 55, its Strength to 16, its Constitution to 10, and its regeneration to 5 hit points per turn, and take away its Multiattack, the damaged shield guardian becomes less overpowering as an ally to the characters - though still very powerful.

APPROACHING THE SPIRE

Rolls without consequences aren't fun, so the 'Slippery Entrance' is a bit pointless. Consider either omitting this roll or having a character take 1d6 bludgeoning damage as they land at the bottom of the tunnel.

P5. Upside-Down Potion Storage

Remember, the characters would realize that any contents of the chest will spill out when its opened, so make sure the players do as well. If they proceed to open it without taking precautions, you can simply let them know that: "You realize that when the chest opens, its contents will fall down upon you, if you stand right underneath it." This doesn't directly tell them that they need to catch whatever's inside, so they may still spill the potions and break them – but they at least had a chance.

BUGBEAR INCURSION

The bugbears that arrive at the end seem like something of an afterthought, as they aren't tied to the area or the story in any meaningful way. Depending on what has happened with the characters previously, you could consider replacing the bugbears with:

- · 2 cult fanatics and 4 cultists send by Avarice (see 'Caer-Dineval', ID:RotF pg. 37) to investigate the spire. They question the characters about what they have found here, trying to learn as much as they can. They recognize Dzaan by his description and will attempt to kill him/his simulacrum, if he is with the party. They otherwise prefer to not harm the party and fight only to defend themselves. If questioned, they can tell the party about Avarice and the Black Swords in Caer-Dineval.
- 8 goblins and 2 worgs from Karkolohk, if the party haven't been there already. They attack the party on sight, but surrender if half or more are slain. If questioned, they can tell the party that they found the shield guardian a few weeks ago here and show them the way to Karkolohk, where they can speak with their leader, Yarb-Gnock.
- 1 duergar mastermind and 3 duergar from Sunblight fortress, who are searching the spire for chardalyn. They attack on sight and fight to the death, only sharing the fortress' location if questioned with magic.

DIFFICULTY

Assuming that the characters don't get into a fight with Dzaan, which they have no reason to, this location is appropriate for 4th-level adventurers. Below is advice for adjusting the difficulty to parties of lower or higher level.

- 3rd Level. Reduce the number of bugbears to 4.
- 5th Level. Add one basilisk to area P14 and replace 1 bugbear with a bugbear chief.
- 6th Level. Add one basilisk to area P14, replace the will-'o-wisp in area P15 with a wraith, and replace 1 bugbear with a bugbear chief.
- 7th Level. Add 2 basilisks to area P14, replace the will-'o-wisp in area P15 with a wraith, and replace 2 bugbears with bugbear chiefs.

DAMAGED SHIELD GUARDIAN

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (Natural Armor) Hit Points 55 (10d10) Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned

Senses Blindsight 10 ft., Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception

Languages Understands commands given in any language but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Bound. The shield guardian is magically bound to an amulet. As long as the guardian and its amulet are on the same plane of existence, the amulet's wearer can telepathically call the guardian to travel to it, and the guardian knows the distance and direction to the amulet. If the guardian is within 60 feet of the amulet's wearer, half of any damage the wearer takes (rounded up) is transferred to the guardian.

Regeneration. The shield guardian regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

Spell Storing. A spellcaster who wears the shield guardian's amulet can cause the guardian to store one spell of 4th level or lower. To do so, the wearer must cast the spell on the guardian. The spell has no effect but is stored within the guardian. When commanded to do so by the wearer or when a situation arises that was predefined by the spellcaster, the guardian casts the stored spell with any parameters set by the original caster, requiring no components. When the spell is cast or a new spell is stored, any previously stored spell is lost.

Fist. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Shield. When a creature makes an attack against the wearer of the guardian's amulet, the guardian grants a +2 bonus to the wearer's AC if the guardian is within 5 feet of the wearer.

REGHED TRIBE CAMP

This location is good to have if you need it - and will come into play in chapter 5 – but doesn't otherwise provide anything of interest to play through.

DIFFICULTY

If you assume that the entire tribe is hostile, the characters will have to face two gladiators, a druid, and 36 tribal warriors – and potentially 36 wolves. That's beyond lethal for characters lower than 5th level, but begins to become manageable if characters have access to spells like fireball or ice storm, which can make short work of the lesser combatants. Hopefully you won't have to run a combat like that, since handling so many combatants is quite the hassle, but if you do, consider using the rules for 'Handling Mobs' (Dungeon Master's Guide pg. 250). In quick summary, if a character has an AC of between 15-20, you can assume that they are hit once and take 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage for each 2 tribal warriors that attack them (or are hit once for each 4 tribal warriors that attack, if the warriors don't have advantage from their 'Pack Tactics'-feature.

REVEL'S END

Revel's End is a very interesting location, that unfortunately isn't utilized to its full potential. The characters may go here on behalf of Speaker Duvessa Shane from Bryn Shander to speak with Prisoner 237, but learn very little from him. You can get more out of the location if you have the characters stage a prison break here - see 'Structure in Chapter 2' later in this document, and the supplement 'Revel's End: Prison Break' by Dan Kahn (included with this download).

SKYTOWER SHELTER & WYRMDOOM CRAG

This location and Wyrmdoom Crag are closely linked and run in much the same way. As noted under 'Icewind Dale'-quests earlier in this document, each works best if the characters come here to help make peace between the tribes, making for a fun session of non-combat.

ENDING THE GOLIATH FEUD

The book dictates that the characters can only convince Arn to consider a peace with the Wyrmdoom goliaths if Kanaiaka, Arn's mother, urges him to do so. But the way the adventure is written, the characters have no way to meet Kanaiaka, since Arn repels them at the barricade outside Skytower Shelter. To give them a chance to inure themselves with Kaniaka and Arn, you can instead:

- · Have Arn invite the characters into his cave when he first speaks with them, where they can meet his mother and get a chance to cure her blindness.
- Have Kanaiaka come to the barricade if the characters discuss peace with Arn, asking her son: "Who's there, son - tell me who you are speaking to", giving the characters a chance to sway her.
- · Have Arn ask the characters if there are any healers or magicians among them and suggest that if they can cure his mother's blindness, he will be in their debt.

As a note here, the book doesn't state explicitly what magic is required to end Kaniaka's blindness, but since the characters are unlikely to be high enough level to cast greater restoration, you can assume that blindness can be cured with the 2nd-level spell lesser restoration.

You may also want to take a look at the adventure 'Wyrmdoom Hunt' by Dan Kahn, which offers another interesting way to end the goliath feud.

S9. FEASTING CAVE

This little contest is quite fun, but also quite random - a character with a Strength score of 10 has a decent chance of beating a goliath warrior with 18 Strength, which seems a bit weird. You can amend this by ruling that a character participating in the contest automatically succeeds on Strength (Athletics) checks that are lower than its Strength score, which means that a goliath warrior will only have to roll once the DC reaches 20.

W2. GOAT-BALL COURT

You can make the game of Goat-Ball a bit more dynamic by having all participants make both a Strength (Athletics) check and a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, instead of only one or the other.

DIFFICULTY

The two goliath camps run best as non-combat locations, as they are extremely deadly for even 7th-level characters. Make sure the players realize the strength and numbers of their adversaries, especially if they accept Arn's mission to take Ogolai's cloak - and intend to do so violently. If combat does erupt, be quick to let non-aggressive NPCs (Kaniaka in Skytower Shelter and Ogolai in Wyrmdoom Crag) deescalate tensions and suggest a parlay instead.



LOCATIONS OVERVIEW

In this section, we will first give a brief overview of the 13 locations described in Chapter 2: Icewind Dale, ordering them by difficulty and summarizing their ties to the main stories or other locations.

DIFFICULTY

The difficulty of the various locations vary greatly if you run them as written, making some locations appropriate for a party of four 3rd-level characters, while other locations are dangerous even for 6th- or 7th-level characters. Below is a quick overview of their difficulty relative to one another, assuming that each location is run as the adventure seems to intend, that the entire location is handled in one adventuring day, and that the characters will be hard-pressed by the end, but will most likely prevail.

- · Likely Non-Combat. Revel's End, Skytower Shelter, Wyrmdoom Crag.
- Easy (Level 3-4). Angajuk's Bell, Cackling Chasm, Karkolohk, Lost Spire of Netheril.
- Medium (Level 4-5). Black Cabin, Dark Duchess, Id Ascendant.
- Hard (Level 5-6). Cave of the Berserkers, Reghed Tribe Camp.
- Very Hard (Level 6-7). Jarlmoot.

This doesn't mean you can't run these locations at other levels, just that you may want to make some adjustments if you do, use wilderness encounters to soften the characters up beforehand, and/or have friendly NPCs provide aid to the characters.

STORY TIES

Some of the locations tie in strongly to the rest of the campaign, while other locations are more self-contained and have very little to do with the rest of Icewind Dale. Below is a quick overview.

- · Angajuk's Bell. Can come into play when the characters need to visit Auril's Abode in Chapter 5.
- Black Cabin. Ties to Auril's Everlasting Rime, although it has little actual effect on it. Also ties to Copper in Bryn Shander.
- · Cackling Chasm. No ties, except for a captured chardalyn berserker.
- Cave of the Berserkers. Loosely tied to Auril, whom the berserkers worship.
- Dark Duchess. No ties.
- Id Ascendant. Ties to the gem mine near Termalaine.
- Jarlmoot. Can tie to Auril, if the frost druid Yselm is
- Karkolohk. Ties to Id Ascendant through the Egg-Shaped Crate and to the Lost Spire of Netheril through the shield guardian.
- · Lost Spire of Netheril. Foreshadows Ythryn, ties to Karkolohk through the shield guardian, and provides information about the Arcane Brotherhood.
- · Reghed Tribe Camp. No ties.
- Revel's End. Provides information about the Arcane Brotherhood and Ythryn.
- Skytower Shelter. Ties to Wyrmdoom Crag.
- · Wyrmdoom Crag. Ties to Skytower Shelter, foreshadows Kapanuk in Xardorok's Fortress.

LOCATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

Chances are that you aren't going to use all locations in your game, which means you should only pick those you think are the most interesting. This is of course very subjective, but below are some recommendations and the reasoning behind them.

FAVORITE LOCATIONS

A handful of locations seem to provide more interesting premises than the rest: Black Cabin, Dark Duchess, Id Ascendant, Jarlmoot, and the Lost Spire of Netheril.

Black Cabin. This ties well into the story – how to end Auril's curse – and can make for some very interesting scenarios, although it should be run with care.

Dark Duchess. Although it has no story ties worth mentioning, the scenario here is very enticing exploring a frozen shipwreck, contending with an ice troll, before fleeing an angry, near-blind ancient dragon is just good entertainment.

Id Ascendant. Again, while this location doesn't tie with the story, it is a very strange and otherworldly location that is too good to pass up, if you and your players are into that sort of thing.

Jarlmoot. Rituals, riddles, and betrayal – this location has a lot to offer, and ties in well with Auril, if the frost druid and her betrayal is utilized.

Lost Spire of Netheril. This seems like a must-run location. It foreshadows Ythryn really well and makes it so that the characters aren't taken completely by surprise when Vellynne shows up and begins talking about Netherese ruins.

WORTHWHILE LOCATIONS

While perhaps not the most inspiring locations, these are worth running, especially if they somehow tie to character backgrounds, secrets, or other events that have transpired throughout the campaign. They are: Cave of the Berserkers, Karkolohk, Revel's End, and Skytower Shelter/Wyrmdoom Crag.

Cave of the Berserkers. This ties a little into Auril's Everlasting Rime and offers combat with dragon wyrmlings and tough berserkers, making it a decent location for characters that are starving for combat.

Karkolohk. If run as a 'rescue-mission', this location can provide some decent fun, and lead organically to the Lost Spire of Netheril.

Revel's End. The concept here is really cool, and even if the characters don't get too much out of their visit, it will at least foreshadow the Arcane Brotherhood and later chapters of the campaign.

Skytower Shelter/Wyrmdoom Crag. Ending an old grudge between goliath clans is interesting, and the various athletic contests can provide some low-tension fun. If you have goliath characters, or just players who like these type of diplomatic challenges, you wont go wrong with these locations.

THE REST

The last three locations are places that you probably won't feel bad about not including: Angajuk's Bell, Cackling Chasm and Reghed Tribe Camp.

Angajuk's Bell. The encounters here feel uninspired and lackluster. You may as well hold off on this location until the characters have need of Angajuk in Chapter 5.

Cackling Chasm. This location has no story-ties and doesn't really provide anything of interest to the party.

Reghed Tribe Camp. This will come into play in Chapter 5 – there's little reason to include it before then.

STRUCTURE IN CHAPTER 2

What you get in Chapter 2: Icewind Dale is essentially all the tools you need to build a sandbox. A wide variety of interesting locations and a multitude of different rumors and quest hooks to get things moving. What you don't get, however, is any semblance of structure – that part is left up to you, the DM. This gives you the freedom to pick and choose locations as you see fit, which is awesome but it can end up feeling a bit random and meandering, if the characters just keep stumbling into side quest after side quest, with little actual direction.

You can combat this and give yourself a semblance of structure – at least for the later parts of Chapter 2 – by tying some of the locations to the greater story. We do this by changing the premise of Vellynne's Quest, so the characters play a more active role in finding Ythryn. Below is an example of how you can do this, using some of the most interesting and compelling locations in Chapter 2: Icewind Dale.

VELLYNNE'S QUEST

When Vellynne presents her quest at the end of Chapter 4 (ID: RotF, pg. 194), she basically tells the characters:

- · Where the entrance to Ythryn is (a waterfall in the Reghed Glacier).
- · Where they can find what they need to open the glacier (the Codicil of White on Island of Solstice).

You can expand this scene of – let's be honest – bland exposition to a much more interesting premise by deciding that Vellynne has a lot less information. Instead of having divined the answers to every question, the necromancer doesn't know where the entrance to Ythryn is, only that it is supposedly somewhere in the Reghed Glacier – which stretches for more than 50 miles. She also knows that it is sealed with magic – the same magic prevents her from divining its location - and that an object called the Codicil of White is needed to open it but she doesn't know where the codicil is either.

Vellynne doesn't leave the characters completely in the dark, however, as she does have some ideas about how to learn more. She suggests that the characters work on figuring out where the Codicil of White is (See 'Finding the Codicil of White' below), while she tries to find out where the characters can enter the Reghed Glacier to find the lost city of Ythryn. Just as in the book, it is assumed that the characters are around 6th or 7th-level when they receive Vellynne's quest to help her find Ythryn.

FINDING THE CODICIL OF WHITE

As in the book, the Codicil of White is hidden on Auril's Island of Solstice, but the party won't learn this information directly from Vellynne. In this example, Vellynne can tell the party of two possible places to learn more: 'Jarlmoot' and the 'Dark Duchess'.

You can choose to have Vellynne tell the characters about both of these locations, letting them choose the option they prefer – or you can choose the single option you prefer from the start, if your players don't mind being railroaded a bit. You can also choose to not have Vellynne tell them about either, forcing them to ask around on their own to learn more about 'Jarlmoot' or the 'Dark Duchess' - or any other location, where you decide they may be able to learn more about the Codicil of White. Ahead are summaries of the information Vellynne can give the characters about each location.

JARLMOOT

Vellynne has heard talk of an ancient circle of frost giant spirits who possess a vast knowledge of Icewind Dale.

"Rumor has it that there's a circle of giant thrones in the tundra, where the frost giants of Icewind Dale go when they need answers - an oracle of sorts. I don't know exactly where it is, but there's a wilderness guide in Dougan's Hole who claims to know where it is."

The guide Vellynne has heard of is Yselm (see 'Yselm's Way, ID:RotF pg. 103). If the characters seek out Yselm in Dougan's Hole, she can lead the characters to 'Jarlmoot', just like described in the book. You can then run 'Jarlmoot' mostly as written, except that the frost giant king Reggaryarva allows the characters to ask one question after they pass his test of combat. Assuming the characters ask where to find the Codicil of White:

"The Frostmaiden's faithful has hidden her most holy texts in the fortress of Grimskalle on the mist-shrouded Island of Solstice in the Sea of Moving Ice. Most sailors and creatures of the sea know how to find it - and to avoid it, if they can."

Once the characters ask this question, you can have the frost giant king's throne rise into the air and reveal the hidden staircase - prompting Yselm's treachery, if she has led the party to Jarlmoot. The frost giant ghost will only answer one question each month, so the characters won't be able to learn more here for a while.

DARK DUCHESS

As in the book, Vellynne's treasured professor orb has been stolen by her rival Nass Lantomir, but instead of conveniently finding Nass' body on the Island of Solstice, the wizard's corpse is in the wreck of the Dark Duchess:

"Most of the information I have about Ythryn and the Codicil of White comes from a family heirloom: a professor orb named Professor Skant. Professor Skant was to lead me to the Codicil of White, but was stolen from me by a rival before I even got to Icewind Dale. She travelled here by ship more than a month ago, but never arrived, as far as I can tell. Recently, I heard a whale oil merchant from Bryn Shander talk about a ship wreck by the coast in the Sea of Moving Ice - likely the Dark Duchess, the ship the thieving Nass Lantomir travelled on. If you can find Professor Skant on the ship, he can lead us to the Codicil."

The characters can either travel directly to the Sea of Moving Ice and look for the *Dark Duchess* or they can inquire with the whale oil merchant Helka Jaggerath in Bryn Shander (the NPC from the 'Whale Oil Acquisition'-quest on pg. 103). You can run the Dark Duchess as it is written, except that the party finds Nass' frozen corpse near the shipwreck. You can run the scenario with her ghost as detailed in the book (pg. 200), except that the professor orb was picked up by kobolds, who took it to the Dark Duchess on behalf of Arveiaturace, where it now lies encased in the second layer of icy treasure (pg. 129). Once retrieved, Professor Skant does indeed know where the Codicil of White is. The professor, however, does not know the location of the entrance to Ythryn in the Reghed Glacier.

If the party don't end up going to the Dark Duchess, but you still want them to have the professor orb, you can always have them find Nass' corpse and the orb on the Island of Solstice, just as it is described in the book.

FINDING THE GLACIER ENTRANCE

When the characters have figured out where to find the Codicil of White it is up to them if they want to track down Vellynne first, or head to the island on their own. In any event, when they have retrieved the Codicil of White and speak with Vellynne again, she has learned of up to three ways they may be able to find the entrance to Ythryn: the Lost Spire of Netheril, Revel's End, and the goliath tribes in Skytower Shelter and Wyrmdoom Crag.

Again, whether or not you choose to have Vellynne tell the party about all these locations or just one or two of them, is entirely up to you. You can choose the options you think your players would prefer or you find most interesting – and even just choose your lone favorite, if your players don't mind a linear story.

THE LOST SPIRE OF NETHERIL

Vellynne believes the party may find a way to locate the entrance to Ythryn in the Lost Spire of Netheril:

"One of my colleagues, a Red Wizard of Thay named Dzaan, was burned at the stake in Easthaven not long ago. His death is inconsequential, of course, but the reason is not: the townsfolk executed Dzaan because he had killed a band of adventurers who helped him find a spire that had broken off from Ythryn itself when it fell. If we can find this spire, it may possess knowledge or magic that can help us figure out where to find its entrance in the glacier!"

At your discretion, you can either have Vellynne already possess information about where the spire is or decide that the characters must travel to Easthaven to learn more. In any event, once they reach the Lost Spire of Netheril, you can run the location as written (though you may want to adjust the difficulty to fit the party's level).

The only change you need to make is that the skeletal apprentice in 'P9. Collapsed Staircase' (pg. 148) isn't missing a finger, but instead wears a *ring of partnership*, which allows its wearer to always sense the location of its counterpart. It is often worn by lovers – in this case, the skeletal apprentice in the 'Lost Spire of Netheril' had a passionate relationship with another Netherese apprentice, who is now floating (dead) in 'Y25. Hall of Weightless Wonder' in Ythryn (pg. 256). A character that puts on the ring will immediately sense it pulling them toward the east, leading them faultlessly to the entrance to the 'Caves of Hunger' in the Reghed Glacier.

REVEL'S END

If anyone knows where the entrance to Ythryn is, it has to be Vaelish Gant, another member of the Arcane Brotherhood who sits imprisoned in Revel's End:

"There's a prison here in the north called Revel's End, where a former colleague of mine is imprisoned. He betrayed the brotherhood and the laws of Icewind Dale, and has been excommunicated by the brotherhood. I have reason to believe, however, that before his imprisonment, Vaelish Gant managed to find the entrance to Ythryn."

Ring of Partnership

Wondrous Item (ring), uncommon (requires attunement) These onyx rings always come in pairs. While wearing the ring, you know the shortest, most direct route to the other ring, as if affected by the spell find the path.

Vellynne suggests that they visit Vaelish Gant at Revel's End, which you can run much as it is described in the book, the only exception being that Vaelish Gant does indeed know where the entrance to the Caves of Hunger in the Reghed Glacier can be found. It is up to you to decide what it takes to get Vaelish Gant to share that information. The characters may be able to trick him into telling it – offering false promises of a reduced sentence – or they may have to break him out to get the information. If the latter is the case, you can find guidance on how to run a prison break in the supplement 'Revel's End: Prison Break' by Dan Kahn (included with this download).

SKYTOWER SHELTER & WYRMDOOM CRAG

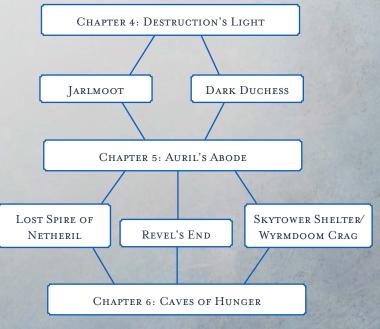
Vellynne believes that the goliaths of the frozen tundra, who live near the Reghed Glacier, may know where to find the entrance to Ythryn.

"I've heard that two tribes of goliaths live in the mountains south of the glacier. They are hardy folk, with a vast knowledge of the tundra and the Reghed Glacier. The people in Ten-Towns seem to believe that if anyone knows where to find a hidden entrance in the glacier, it would be them."

Finding the goliath tribes is easy enough, as many Ten-Towners can point it out on a map. When the characters reach either of the two tribes, you can run them much as written in the book, with the exception that both chieftains know the location of the entrance – but won't immediately share it with the characters. Chieftain Arn is hostile, while Chieftain Ogolai is wary of outsiders who seek to disturb the mighty glacier. The characters can get the chieftains to share the location of the entrance by solving the conflict between the tribes – or through combat, bribes, or magic, at your discretion.

SUMMARY & OVERVIEW

If you open up Vellynne's Quest like this, you can involve more of the locations in chapter 2, while still maintaining a semi-sandbox-structure, where the players get to decide how to proceed and where to go. It is also possible to mix-and-match these locations, so that the characters can learn the location of *the Codicil of White* from Vaelish Gant at Revel's End or the location of the entrance to Ythryn from the frost giants at Jarlmoot – the structure and ideas laid out here are just examples.





N CHAPTER 3: SUNBLIGHT, THE CHARACTERS DELVE into a mountain fortress and face off with duergar, quaggoth and other denizens of the Underdark in an attempt to prevent a crazed duergar despot from destroying all of Ten-Towns!

On the following pages, we will go over the material presented in Chapter 3 of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden, as well as parts of material presented in Chapter 4: Destruction's Light, as these chapters are linked closely together. The focus is on providing overview, structure, troubleshooting, and generally making Xardorok's fortress more exciting for your players - and easier for you to run.

It's strongly recommended that you read through Chapter 3 and 4 of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden before reading the following pages. And always remember, the advice and ideas given here are options - you know best what works at your table.

OVERVIEW

The devious plot of Xardorok Sunblight to unleash the chardalyn dragon to destroy Ten-Towns is an incredibly interesting concept that should provide several sessions of intense and harrowing gameplay.

The event, as presented in the campaign book, is quite simple. Having run into various duergar in Ten-Towns - or been told about them by a town's speaker - the characters head out toward Xardorok's fortress in the mountains. Once they're there, the chardalyn dragon sets off toward Ten-Towns, forcing them to make a difficult decision about what to do first: infiltrate the fortress or chase after the dragon?

Chapter 3 sets up a cool premise, but there is some room for improvement. On the following pages, you will find a discussion on how to start Chapter 3, various adjustments you can make to better setup the dragon's destruction of Ten-Towns, and in-depth advice on running an infiltration of Xardorok's fortress.

STARTING CHAPTER 3

In this section, we will discuss when and how to start chapter 3 – and, in extension, chapter 4. In quick summary, the book provides two ways to get the party moving towards Xardorok's Fortress:

- · Clues in Ten-Towns. The characters run into duergar in Ten-Towns, and are either told the location of Xardorok's fortress, or find a map that shows the way.
- Speaker's Quest. The characters are given a quest to infiltrate Xardorok's fortress and stop his evil plans by one of Ten-Town's speakers (ID: RotF, pg. 171).

Each hook presents some challenges, which are examined in more detail below.

CLUES IN TEN-TOWNS

Finding out about the duergar's evil plans on their own is by far the most rewarding way the characters can shamble their way into chapter 3. As presented in the book, the most 'natural' way for this to happen is:

- · Caer-Konig. The characters undertake 'The Unseen'quest in Caer-Konig and discover Durth Sunblight's letter to his brother Nildar Sunblight (pg. 51), which tells them that Durth is on the ferry in Easthaven.
- Easthaven. The characters confront Durth Sunblight on the Easthaven Ferry and discover a map (pg. 60), showing the way to Xardorok's Fortress.
- · Caer-Dineval (optional). The characters may at some point also learn more about Xardorok and his evil plans from Hethyl Arkorran in Caer-Dineval (pg. 43).

Allowing the characters to find and follow these clues and thus leading them to Xardorok's fortress organically is strongly recommended. This doesn't mean that you have to railroad the characters toward Caer-Konig and Easthaven, just that you try to give the characters enough rumors and information that they are likely to go there of their own volition. However, you may want to be careful of the timing when you do so.

TIMING & CHARACTER LEVEL

If you want the characters to find Xardorok's fortress by following clues in Ten-Towns, it's important to note that Xardorok's fortress is very dangerous for 4th-level characters and will require a lot of rewriting to make appropriate for 2nd- or 3rd-level characters. To avoid sending the characters to an early grave, you may want to make sure that they don't find the clues in Caer-Konig and Easthaven too soon.

If you go by the book, the characters need to have finished three quests to reach 3rd level and five quests in chapter 1 to reach 4th level. If the characters start in Caer-Konig, find Durth's letter, and then head directly to Easthaven and find the map, they could potentially reach Xardorok's fortress before they have reached 3rd level.

There's a few ways you can avoid this:

- · Start the characters in a town far away from Caer-Konig (i.e. Bryn Shander), and steer them toward other towns before leading them to Caer-Konig, so they don't get the map before having the opportunity to finish five quests and reach 4th level.
- Don't present 'The Unseen'-quest in Caer-Konig before the characters are 3rd level, even if they pass through the town before that.
- Don't have Durth leave behind a map, and have interrogated duergar be unable to find its location without one, so the party can't find the fortress before they get a map. You can then have a speaker provide the map when the characters have reached a high enough level (see 'Speaker's Quest' on this page).

TIMING & CHAPTER 2

Another potential issue is that if the characters learn about Xardorok's plans while handling quests in Chapter 1, they may head directly to the fortress – and never get to experience any of the fun locations in chapter 2.

This is mostly an issue of perception, however. It seems clear that while Xardorok's fortress is given its own chapter in the book, it was initially written as just another location in chapter 2. It makes sense to continue to think of it that way. Likewise, chapter 1 and 2 can also overlap a lot more than the book seems to suggest.

This means that you can start introducing locations from chapter 2 as soon as the characters are 2nd or 3rd level. You can also continue to steer the characters toward locations in Icewind Dale after they have dealt with Xardorok and his dragon.

There's an example of how you can do this under 'Example: Fitting in Chapter 3' on the next page. The DM's resources for Chapter 2: Icewind Dale also provides a detailed look at the difficulty of each of the locations in Chapter 2, as well as a guide on how to tie some of the locations into Vellynne's quest, making it easier to run locations in Icewind Dale after the characters finish chapters 3 and 4.

Note: Character Level

The campaign book suggests that Chapter 3: Sunblight starts when the characters are 4th or 5th level, and that Chapter 4: Destruction's Light begins when the characters are 6th level. However, if you run the chapters as written, the characters get to choose which they want to do first - try to save Ten-Towns or defeat Xardorok - which means that both chapters are supposed to start at around 4th to 6th level.

Our recommendation is that the characters are level 5 upon their arrival to the fortress. This greatly increases their chance of success and reduces the need for the DM to make on-the-fly adjustments to encounter difficulty.

SPEAKER'S QUEST

The book suggests that if the characters don't learn about Xardorok's fortress in Ten-Towns (or learn about it, but ignore it), a speaker from one of the towns invite the characters to a meeting. Here, the speaker makes the mission plain: duergar are building a chardalyn dragon in the mountains to destroy Ten-Towns, and the characters are asked to go deal with the problem. There's a two primary issues with the 'Speaker's Quest' as written - exposition and motivation - each of which is briefly discussed below.

EXPOSITION OVERLOAD

While the quest presented by the speaker is serviceable and very much to the point, it is not very interesting. The characters are basically told everything all at once and are then asked to deal with it. It's a lot of exposition that ends up not feeling very deserved.

Get them to Caer-Konig. As described under 'Clues in Ten-Towns' on the previous pages, the way to Xardorok's fortress feels a lot more organic if the characters discover the duergar's plot by running into Xardorok's sons in Caer-Konig and Easthaven. If the characters haven't already done so, you can have the speaker that reaches out to the party (both Danneth Waylen from Easthaven and Duvessa Shane from Bryn Shander are fitting candidates) instead voice concern over 'duergar activity' around Lac Dinneshere and ask them to investigate. This investigation will eventually lead to Caer-Konig, where they can pick up 'The Unseen'-quest. This leads them to Nildar Sunblight in the Duergar Outpost and from there to Easthaven, where they can confront Durth and find the map to Xardorok's fortress. When the Speaker learns this information, they can then put forth their quest to stop Xardorok and the dragon.

Convincing the Adventurers. If the characters have found clues about the duergar threat, but have chosen not to act on the information – or never acquired the map – you can have the speaker approach the characters to express concern about 'duergar activity'. If the characters tell the speaker that they have encountered duergar threatening the destruction of Ten-Towns, and have a map to the fortress, the speaker then asks them to resolve the issue, much as the 'Speaker's Quest' suggest. If the characters have all the information, but lack only the map, this can be the missing piece the speaker provides: a map confiscated from a captured duergar!

A MATTER OF REWARD

The book states that the speaker who presents the quest offers no reward – in fact, if the characters ask for one, the speaker is insulted and leaves the characters be. This seems a bit weird. In Chapter 2: Icewind Dale, both speakers and various prominent townsfolk offer hundreds of gold pieces for killing a goblin, fetching gnoll heads, or speaking with a prisoner, but somehow the Council of Speakers can't muster any reward to save Ten-Towns from imminent destruction?

If you use the 'Speaker's Quest', you can have the speaker provide the characters with everything they need – dogsleds, snowshoes, provisions, etc. The speaker also offers a potential reward of 1,800 gp if they save Ten-Towns, with 100 gp coming from each of the six smaller towns, and 300 gp each from the four largest towns (Bryn Shander, Easthaven, Targos, and Termalaine). They only receive a town's reward if they prevent the destruction of that town – so it's unlikely they will get the full amount, though they don't know that yet.

Example: FITTING IN CHAPTER 3

Below is an example of how Chapters 1–5 can we woven more tightly together, while setting the characters on a course toward Xardorok's fortress. This is, of course, just one way things can unfold, and is only meant to demonstrate how you can make a loose structure for the first half of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden.

- 1st level. The characters start in Bryn Shander, where they complete the 'Foaming Mugs'-quest, and get the 'Cold-Hearted Killer'-quest.
- 2nd level. The characters follow Torg's caravan through Targos to Bremen, where they complete the 'Lake Monster'-quest. Heading back to Targos, they get the 'Mountain Climb'-quest, which they complete to learn that Torg's caravan is in Caer-Konig.
- 3rd level. The characters catch up with Torg's caravan in Caer-Konig and kill Sephek Kaltro. They head straight back to Bryn Shander for their reward, where they learn about 'Black Cabin' from Copper and hear about 'Karkolohk' from Speaker Duvessa Shane. The characters decide to visit the 'Black Cabin', stopping by Termalaine on the way to complete the 'A Beautiful Mine'-quest and find the psi crystal.
- 4th level. The characters survive (in a manner of speaking) the 'Black Cabin' and head back to Ten-Towns, where they are met with rumors about unseen thieves in Caer-Konig. They now have information steering them toward 'Karkolohk', 'Id Ascendant', and 'The Unseen'. They decide to go with 'Karkolohk', quickly resolving that matter before returning to Ten-Towns to complete 'The Unseen'-quest in Caer-Konig, and find Durth's letter. They head to Easthaven, completing the 'Toil and Trouble'-quest, defeating Durth, and finding his map aboard the ferry.
- **5th level**. Armed with all the necessary information, the characters head to Xardorok's fortress. They stop by 'Id Ascendant' on the way, before defeating both the duergar and the dragon.
- 6th-8th level. The characters get Vellynne's quest, which has them visiting 'Jarlmoot' to figure out where the Codicil of White is. After obtaining the codicil in Chapter 5, the characters learn where the entrance to Ythryn is at the 'Lost Spire of Netheril'. Advice on how to use locations in chapter 2 with 'Vellynne's Quest' can be found in the DM's resources for Chapter 2: **Icewind Dale**

In summary, the characters in this example have completed the following quests in chapter 1:

- Starter Quest: Cold-Hearted Killer.
- Bryn Shander: Foaming Mugs.
- Bremen: Lake Monster.
- Targos: Mountain Climb.
- Termalaine: A Beautiful Mine.
- Caer-Konig: The Unseen.
- · Easthaven: Toil and Trouble.

And have visited the following locations in chapter 2:

- · Black Cabin.
- · Karkolohk.
- · Id Ascendant.
- · Jarlmoot.
- · Lost Spire of Netheril.

While, of course, also dealing with Xardorok's fortress and the chardalyn dragon. This isn't all the content in the book, of course, but it is a sizable portion of it, and certainly enough to get them to 8th level before they venture into the depths of the Caves of Hunger.

RUNNING CHAPTER 3

In this section we will take a closer look at Chapter 3: Sunblight, giving advice on how to run the chapter. We start by going over how to implement the 'Difficult Decision' - stop the dragon or infiltrate the fortress before giving advice on where to put Xardorok, how to handle 'The Muzgardt Conspiracy', and troubleshooting various plans of infiltration and locations in the fortress.

DIFFICULT DECISION

Right as the characters arrive at Xardorok's fortress, the chardalyn dragon is unleashed on Ten-Towns. This is meant to force the characters to make a tough decision about whether or not to deal with Xardorok first, or head back to Ten-Towns to stop the dragon scourge.

This is a cool idea, but the timing is somewhat convenient and actually also cheapens the difficult choice the characters must make. Because the characters don't know the dragon's route, how fast it can travel, or perhaps even what it intends to do, they may not even realize that they have a choice – or what the potential consequences of that choice is.

CHANGING THE TIMING

Instead of having the chardalyn dragon fly up from the fortress as the characters approach, you can have the dragon remain on the assembly platform in the forge (area X25). The dragon isn't unleashed toward Ten-Towns before it becomes apparent to Xardorok – or one of his underlings – that the fortress is under assault. Ideally, this happens during an epic showdown with Xardorok and his minions. The choice now isn't whether to head back or not, but whether or not the characters should take a long rest and spend time looting the fortress before setting off in pursuit of the dragon.

Introducing Vellynne

Although Vellynne isn't described until chapter 4, her introduction is addressed here because it coincides with the dragon's release. As written (pg. 187), Vellynne shows up as the characters start back toward Ten-Towns, which, once again, is very convenient timing.

If you move the dragon's release so it happens during a showdown with Xardorok in the fortress' forge, you also get an opportunity to introduce Vellynne in a more natural way: Vellynne is a prisoner in the duergar's dungeon, which is right next to the forge. Once the battle is over, she calls to the characters from her cell, asking them to set her free and offering her aid. More details about this scenario is provided under 'X28. Dungeon' later in this document.

If the characters don't take the time to find Vellynne in the fortress, you can always have them run into her as they leave the duergar fortress, as described in the book.

WHAT THIS ACCOMPLISHES

By moving the dragon's release so it happens during an epic battle, and then having them find Vellynne in the dungeon shortly after, we accomplish the following:

- The release of the chardalyn dragon doesn't seem like a suspicious coincidence, but makes logical sense.
- · Vellynne no longer shows up out of the blue, but actually has a reason for being where she is.
- The difficult decision isn't whether or not they should handle the fortress or the dragon first, but whether or not they should rest before chasing after the dragon which is discussed in detail later in this document.

THE MUZGARDT CONSPIRACY

Part of what makes the fortress both more interesting and more survivable for the characters, is the inclusion of the treacherous Grandolpha Muzgardt, who leads a faction of duergar seeking to overthrow Xardorok.

As written, the characters can meet Grandolpha in 'X8. Private Dining Hall' on the Command Level, which means that they should have time to plot with her before going below to take on Xardorok in the 'Forge Level'.

SETTING UP THE MEETING

The infiltration of Sunblight is most interesting if the characters get the chance to speak with Grandolpha. As written in the book, this will only happen if the characters barge into 'X8. Private Dining Hall'.

You can help facilitate the meeting by having one of the duergar from 'X3. Upper Barracks' run toward 'X6. Guard Post' to raise the alarm and get reinforcements when the characters enter the fortress - only to have one of the duergar loyal to Grandolpha (either one of her bodyguards or the duergar Dreck from 'X6. Guard Post') bash the alarmist duergar unconscious (in full view of the characters, if possible). You can also have the five duergar on the Command Level loyal to Grandolpha give direct aid to the characters during a fight with the nine duergar in 'X3. Upper Barracks' - which also helps make the encounter less deadly for lower level characters.

Having Grandolpha's duergar intervene directly in this manner should let the characters know that this new duergar is a potential ally - making a peaceful conversation with Grandolpha much more likely.

WHAT GRANDOLPHA WANTS

The book describes in detail who Grandolpha is and that she wants to depose Xardorok, but doesn't actually specify why Grandolpha wants to get rid of Xardorok beyond Xardorok being a crazed despot, of course.

It would seem congruous with Grandolpha's aid to the characters - and especially her decision to let them go after they have killed Xardorok – to have her motivation be gold. Specifically, the gold she can earn if a trade relationship is established between Ten-Towns and Clan Muzgardt, opening up a whole new market for Darklake Stout and other exports from Gracklstugh.

With this as her motivation, it not only makes sense that Grandolpha wants to overthrow Xardorok (to take possession of his fortress and put an end to his lunacy), save Ten-Towns (so there's something to trade with), and let the characters go (to let Ten-Towns know her peaceful intentions and act as her goodwill-ambassadors).



WHAT GRANDOLPHA KNOWS

Under 'X8. Private Dining Hal' (pg. 176), the book provides pieces of information that Grandolpha will share with the party, but none of them actively aid the characters in defeating Xardorok. If you want to give the characters a bit more aid - which is advisable if they're lower level - you can have Grandolpha also provide one or more of the following pieces of information:

- · In addition to the information about Xardorok's plans listed in the book, Grandolpha emphasizes that Xardorok intends to release the dragon soon (if it hasn't already been released) and explains that the dragon will be released through ice doors in the top level, which are manned by duergar loyal to Xardorok.
- While she doesn't know exactly where Xardorok is right now, she can explain to the characters that the western elevator leads to Xardorok's throne room and the eastern elevator leads to the temple – and that the shaft behind 'X9. Portcullis' leads into the forge.
- Grandolpha can let the party know where there's duergar loyal to her: two guards in 'X21. Treacherous Guards', four in the guard towers in 'X24-X26. Forge', and ten guards in 'X33. Lower Barracks'.
- Grandolpha can tell the characters that yelling "Darklake Stout!" in Dwarvish or Undercommon will let her followers know that the characters are allies.

WHAT GRANDOLPHA CAN DO

If the characters are lower level or just think to ask, there's also several ways Grandolpha can aid them directly, at your discretion:

- Grandolpha can send out a duergar to find out where Xardorok is in the fortress, making it easier for the characters to head there directly.
- · Grandolpha can send a duergar to Xardorok and ask him to meet her alone in 'X29. Deep Duerra's Temple', where the characters can then ambush him.
- Grandolpha can send some or all of the five duergar with the characters, making a confrontation with Xardorok in 'X19. Chardalyn Throne' or 'X24-X26. Forge' more survivable for lower level characters.

HANDLING GRANDOLPHA'S DUERGAR

What help Grandolpha's duergar can provide ranges from simply letting the characters pass through an area without trouble to actively fighting duergar loyal to Xardorok. There's a few places where the characters may end up fighting alongside Grandolpha's duergar:

- · If you have Grandolpha send some or her duergar with the characters (see 'What Grandolpha Can Do' above).
- The party faces Xardorok in 'X19. Throne Room', where the two duergar at 'X21. Treacherous Guards' may come to their aid.
- The party faces Xardorok in 'X24–X26. Forge', where four of the twelve duergar in the towers are Grandolpha's followers,

In these scenarios, you may want to consider letting the players control Grandolpha's duergar. This both takes some of the work off your plate and gives your players more to do in the combat. Duergar are quite simple combatants, so it shouldn't be too overwhelming.

Having Grandolpha's duergar present during combat provides an additional benefit, as it gives you more control over the encounter's difficulty. If the characters are in trouble, you can focus their enemies' attacks against the treacherous duergar instead of the characters, giving the party time to regroup or escape.

WHERE IS XARDOROK

The book provides you with a table to help determine where Xardorok is in his fortress when the characters arrive (pg. 173). Randomness is fun, but where you place Xardorok will have a big impact on how difficult the characters' confrontation with him will be, as well as how the chardalyn dragon is released, if you use the changes to 'Difficult Decision' suggested earlier.

Each of the four options for Xardorok's location provided by the book are examined in detail below, with comments on how it affects the encounter's difficulty.

ON HIS THRONE

If Xardorok is in 'X19. Chardalyn Throne', he is encountered together with a quaggoth thonot, 4 quaggoth, 4 quaggoth spore servants, and 4 duergar - but with 2 duergar loyal to Grandolpha close by to potentially aid the characters.

While the characters can get at Xardorok directly by taking the western elevator (X6 to X22), facing Xardorok by his throne still makes for a very tough encounter, and also places Xardorok quite far away from the forge, which is an issue if you want the dragon to be released from there. In addition, the battleground here – a big square chamber - isn't very interesting.

IN THE FORGE

If Xardorok is in 'X24-X26. Forge', he is encountered alongside a duergar and 6 quaggoths - but with another 12 duergar looking on from surrounding guard towers and 3 duergar hammerers arriving as reinforcements.

The characters' easiest ways to the forge are either by flying or climbing down 'X26. Vertical Shaft', or through 'X30. Eastern Elevator', where they will encounter only a single duergar hammerer on the way. Either way, the encounter in the forge is an enormous battle in a cool location. It is, however, extremely difficult because of the many enemies - but if the characters have managed to secure the aid of Grandolpha, four of the duergar in the guard towers will betray their compatriots to aid them.

IN THE TEMPLE

The characters can also encounter Xardorok alone in 'X29. Deep Duerra's Temple', which may draw the barbed devil from 'X31. Devil in Disguise' and the duergar hammerer from 'X30. Eastern Elevator'.

The characters can get directly here by taking the elevator down from X12. Training Room, encountering only the duergar hammerer on the way. All told, this location makes for a relatively easy encounter with Xardorok – but only if the characters prevent him from getting reinforcements from the forge, which is close by.

IN THE TORTURE CHAMBER

If Xardorok is in 'X34. Torture Chamber', he is accompanied by 2 duergar mind masters. He can get help from 'X31. Devil in Disguise' or 'X33. Lower Barracks', but both of these locations are quite far away.

The characters can get to this area easiest by taking the elevator down to 'X30. Eastern Elevator', dealing with the duergar hammerer there, and then cutting through the secret door in 'X29. Deep Duerra's Temple' (which they could have been told about by Grandolpha). This makes for a rather easy encounter with Xardorok, but the battleground is bland. It also puts Xardorok far away from the chardalyn dragon, if you want him to be able to call for its release.

OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

In quick summary, the four options are:

- · X19. Chardalyn Throne. Tough encounter, bland battleground.
- X24-X26. Forge. Tough encounter, interesting battleground.
- **X29. Deep Duerra's Temple.** Potentially easy encounter, interesting battleground.
- · X34. Torture Chamber. Easy encounter, bland battleground.

While you can certainly leave Xardorok's location up to a die roll, you can also take control of the situation and the fortress' difficulty by placing Xardorok where it makes most sense for you.

If you want the chardalyn dragon to be unleashed while the characters are having a pitched battle with Xardorok, it makes most sense that the characters encounter him in either the forge or in the temple just next to it, where he can quickly get to the forge and call for the dragon to be released. Which you choose should depend on the party's strength, and the aid you give them. If the characters are 6th or 7th level and/or have the aid of Grandolpha's duergar, they should be able to contend with Xardorok in his forge, while characters of 4th or 5th level are more likely to survive an encounter with Xardorok in his temple.

If the chardalyn dragon has already been released, or you don't care if it happens during the characters' encounter with Xardorok, you can also have him be by his throne or in the torture chamber. Again, which of these works best probably depends on the characters' level - if they are stronger, they have a better chance of dealing with Xardorok in the throne room, and if not, sneaking in to take on Xardorok in the torture chamber is doable for 4th or 5th-level characters.



LOCATIONS IN THE FORTRESS

In this section we will go over the areas in Xardorok's fortress, troubleshooting various areas and encounters, and offering advice on how to adjust or run them. Only areas where additional insight is provided are listed.

X2. VESTIBULE

The book dictates that one duergar in X3 watches this room, and that she calls to arms if 'she sees or hears intruders inside the fortress', but doesn't provide any specifics beyond that. It's unclear whether or not the characters have a chance of noticing her before she notices them, and if simply opening the gate – which the characters have to do – alerts her to their presence.

In the end, it's up to you to decide. If you are feeling benevolent, or just think the characters will have a hard time against the nine duergar in X3, you can decide that the arrow slit gives only a limited view of the vestibule. This means that the duergar in X3 is not alerted by the door opening (if it's done quietly) and that the characters just need to succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) group check to pass through unnoticed (by crawling below the field of vision provided by the arrow slit).

X4. XARDOROK'S WAR ROOM

This room is instrumental if the characters are to know the dragon's flight plan. Even if they do know the flight plan, however, they don't know the timeline of the dragon's attacks. If you want them to have this information - and thus allow them to make more informed decisions when they set out to chase it down - you can outfit the table with a timeline that counts from 1 to 50 hours. This timeline shows, precisely, how long it takes the chardalyn dragon to fly to each town, and how long it remains in each town destroying it up until it reaches Bryn Shander, where it's programmed to remain until it sustains too much damage, or the city is completely destroyed, at your discretion.

X19. CHARDALYN THRONE

The book doesn't mention what the myconid sovereign in this room does during combat, but does describe it as 'uncooperative' toward the duergar. If you think the party could use the help, you can have the myconid sovereign fight on their side if battle breaks out in this chamber.

Xardorok's Fortress Roster

Area	Creatures	Notes
X3. Upper Barracks	9 duergar	The duergar here watch X2. Vestibule and attack if they spot the characters.
X6. Guard Post	1 duergar	This duergar is loyal to Grandolpha and hides from characters
X8. Private Dining Hall	Grandolpha Muzgardt, 3 duergar, 1 chardalyn pseudodragon	Grandolpha and her followers are not immediately hostile
X10. Durth's Quarters	Durth (duergar mind master)	Durth is only here if he abandoned Easthaven Ferry or managed to steal chardalyn from the Easthaven Town Hall
X11. Nildar's Quarters	Nildar (duergar), ogre zombie	Nildar is here if he abandoned his outpost
X12. Training Room	4 animated armor	The armors animate only if touched
X13. Western Gear Room	2 duergar, 2 duergar hammerers	All attack non-duergar on sight
X14. Workshop	2 duergar	Try to hide and fight only in self-defense
X15. Eastern Gear Room	1 duergar	Grows to Large size before entering combat.
X16. Northwest Cavern	4 duergar, 1 umber hulk	Duergar unleash umber hulk and only attack when its dead.
X17. Duergar Mines	3 rust monsters	Rust monsters attack anyone wearing metal gear
X18. Guarded Corridor	4 duergar	The duergar have heavy crossbows (+2 to hit, 1d10 piercing damage)
X19. Chardalyn Throne	1 Myconid sovereign, 1 quaggoth thonot, 4 quaggoth spore servants	The myconid sovereign isn't hostile to the characters. Battle here draws reinforcements from X18 and X20.
X20. Quaggoth Den	4 quaggoths	Run to X19 if they hear combat there
X21. Treacherous Guards	2 duergar	Both duergar are loyal to Grandolpha, will allow characters to pass by
X24-X26. Forge	Thontara (duergar), 12 duergar, 6 quaggoths	One duergar in each of the four towers are loyal to Grandolpha. Battle here draws reinforcements from X28.
X27. Giant Lizard Pens	6 giant lizards	Are hostile toward non-duergar, but can't attack through gates.
X28. Dungeon	3 duergar hammerer, 1 doppelganger, 1 goliath warrior	The duergar hammerers run to X24–26 if battle erupts there.
X29. Deep Duerra's Temple	F'yorl (mind flayer)	The mind flayer has no psionic powers or armor, and only 9 hp
X30. Eastern Elevator	1 duergar hammerer	Attacks on sight
X31. Devil in Disguise	Klondorn (barbed devil)	Klondorn is disguised as a duergar priest
X33. Lower Barracks	15 duergar	Ten duergar are loyal to Grandolpha
X34. Torture Chamber	Nefrun (duergar), 2 duergar mind masters	Nefrun is being tortured by the mind masters, but will attack the characters if released.
X36. Duergar Hammerers	2 duergar hammerers	Attacks on sight.

X24-X26. Forge

If you intend for the chardalyn dragon to be released from here (as described under 'Difficult Decision' earlier in this document), describe the chardalyn dragon on top of the platform when the characters enter:

Atop the platform is a huge dragon made entirely of dark ice. It sits immobile, surrounded by cranes and held to the platform by heavy iron clamps.

While the dragon could certainly aid the duergar against the characters, its movements are limited by the ceiling and its 'Radiant Breath' is likely to cause lots of collateral damage. Most importantly, the insane Xardorok is compelled by the will of Asmodeus to prioritize the destruction of Ten-Towns over the preservation of his own life. Thus, as soon as Xardorok spots intruders, he calls for the chardalyn dragon to be released, so it can embark on its destructive journey.

Release the Dragon! Thontara's horn is the signal that wakes the dragon up and sets it on its predetermined course - and lets the duergar in Ice Gate Level know that they should open the ice gate. When she blows it as an action, you can read:

The dragons' eyes glow with a bright golden light as it lets out a terrible roar, tearing itself free from the massive clamps that hold it. The dragon then hurls itself into the air, heading south and upward toward a shaft in the ceiling.

Roll initiative for the dragon, which mindlessly flies toward 'X29. Vertical Shaft' on its turn. The characters are unlikely to stop it from leaving, but may take the chance to get a few attacks in before it flies off.

Closed Ice Gate. If the character have taken care of the duergar on the Ice Gate Level or taken other measures that prevent the ice gate from being opened, the chardalyn dragon barges through the massive gates, taking 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage (which is halved because of its damage resistances) as it does so. This also causes heavy chunks of ice to rain down the shaft. Any creature right under the shaft must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage on a failure, and half as much on a success.

Plan B. If Xardorok isn't around to give the command, Thontara can decide to release the dragon on her own. You can also outfit the dragon with a 'dead man's switch': the dragon is magically attuned to Xardorok, and can sense when the duergar dies - which causes it to set out upon its path of destruction!

X28. Dungeon

If you want to introduce Vellynne here, the necromancer is imprisoned in one of the cells, her hands encased in tightly locked iron gauntlets, which prevent her from casting spells with somatic and material components. After the dragon has been released and the characters have defeated the duergar loyal to Xardorok, they hear Vellynne call: "Get me out – I can help you stop the dragon before its too late!"

Vellynne's Story. Once released from her cell, the necromancer explains that she was captured by duergar out on the tundra. She knows of Xardorok's plans for Ten-Towns, if the characters haven't already heard them, and informs the characters that they will have to hurry if they want to prevent Ten-Towns from being destroyed. Luckily, Vellynne can help the party catch up to the chardalyn dragon by providing them with fresh sled dogs or the use of her animate dead spell, as described under 'Vellynne's Aid' later in this document.

Vellyne's Allies & Equipment. If Vellynne still has her kobolds - zombified or otherwise - and her sled dogs, these sit imprisoned in other cells in the dungeon. All Vellynne's equipment (her spellbook, dogsleds, bracers of defense, and wand of magic missiles) is stashed in the Northwest and Northeast rooms described under 'X29. Deep Duerra's Temple' in the book.

Vellynne as Backup. If the characters are fairing poorly during an encounter in the forge, you can also have Vellynne show up with her kobolds (and potentially her other cellmates) to lend a helping hand – having taken advantage of the party's diversion to break free.

X30. EASTERN ELEVATOR

The book has an error here, stating that the elevator leads to areas X6 and X13, though it clearly leads to areas X12 and X15.

AFTERMATH

If the characters allied with Grandolpha, you can have her show up to put an end to hostilities when Xardorok is dead, quickly convincing any surviving duergar that they are better off laying down their arms and following her. You can do this as soon as you want to – in order to stop combat before it begins to drag on, or even to help the characters survive if they are in deep trouble.

Once the battle is over, Grandolpha does her best to inure herself to the party, lending them whatever resources they need to go after the dragon, showing them the dragon's flight plan if they missed it, and allowing them to take prisoners with them. If the characters are suspicious, you can have her explain her dreams of a trade alliance to the characters.

If Vellynne is also present, you can have her act as described above, and offer her aid to the party (see 'Vellynne's Aid' later in this document).

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

The overall difficulty of Xardorok's fortress depends on the characters' actions, as well as where they encounter Xardorok. This makes determining the precise difficulty of the entire fortress hard. Luckily, you have some dials you can turn in the fortress, which allow you to increase or decrease difficulty on the fly:

- · Placing Xardorok. As described under 'Where is Xardorok', putting the duergar leader in the more secluded locations (X29 or X34) makes an encounter with him much easier, especially if the characters know where he is and how to get there directly.
- Adjusting the number of Enemies. The easiest way to decrease difficulty is by reducing or increasing the number of enemies in various locations, most notably areas X3, X19, and X24–X26. Often this can be done by simply deciding whether or not reinforcements from other areas show up or not.
- Grandolpha's Aid. As described under 'The Muzgardt Conspiracy', there are many ways Grandolpha can lend aid to the party, including sending some of her duergar with the party to fight alongside them. She and her duergar can also come to the characters' aid during the first battle in area X3, or in a 'final battle' with Xardorok, if the characters get in over their heads.

Note that if you place the dragon in the forge, it is perfectly okay if the characters aren't pushed to their limits by the encounter with Xardorok. Having a little left in the tank makes the decision to rest or not even more difficult (see 'The Journey to Ten-Towns' later in this document).

EXAMPLES: XARDOROK'S FORTRESS

There's a lot of information to take in for both for you and the players once they arrive at Xardorok's fortress. To make it easier for you to visualize how the party's infiltration could go, two examples are given below.

EXAMPLE 1: THE PERFECT PLAN

Below is an example of how the assault on the fortress could go if the characters are clever about it.

- The characters get into the fortress quietly (using knock or with the aid of the duergar in 'X6. Guard Post'), and use invisibility to surprise and ambush the 9 duergar guards in 'X3. Upper Barracks'.
- Dreck (from X6) approaches the characters on behalf of Grandolpha and leads them to her in 'X8. Private Dining Room', where they learn all her information, and concoct a plan to ambush Xardorok in 'X29. Deep Duerra's Temple'.
- Before heading off to ambush Xardorok, they depose of the duergar on the Ice Gate Level in an attempt to keep the dragon from being unleashed.
- After taking the elevator down from X12, they quietly ambush and kill the duergar hammerer in 'X30. Eastern Elevator'.
- In 'X29. Deep Duerra's Temple', the characters ambush Xardorok, who is quickly aided by the barbed devil in 'X31. Devil in Disguise'.
- · Xardorok escapes to 'X24-X26. Forge', where he orders the duergar Thontara to use her horn to release the chardalyn dragon, while the six quaggoths attack the characters.
- The dragon departs the forge sustaining heavy damage as it crashes through the closed ice gate - and a big battle ensues, but with the aid of the treacherous duergar in the guard towers, the characters are able to win the day. As soon as Xardorok dies, Grandolpha arrives with her loyal duergar and ends the fight.

In this scenario, the characters seize every opportunity given to them, which makes for a smooth and hassle-free infiltration of the fortress. Even though the chardalyn dragon is still unleashed, the characters have hurt it already and are fresh enough to head directly after it.

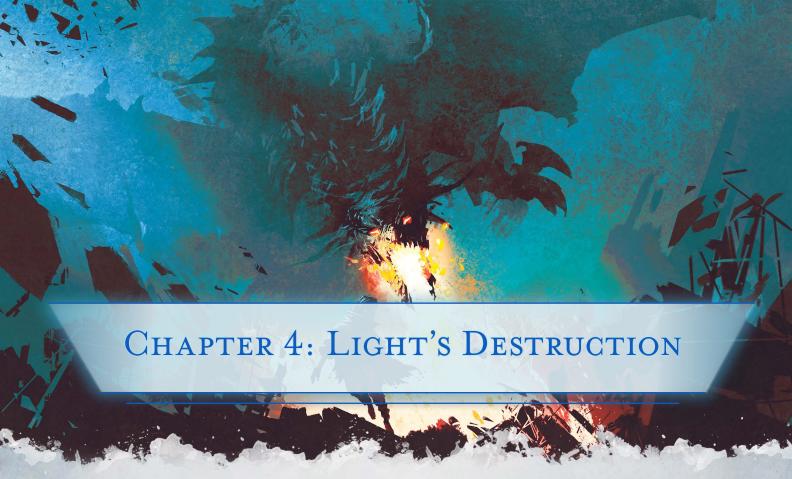
EXAMPLE 2: A PLAN OF CHAOS

Below is an example of how the assault on the fortress could go if the characters take a more 'direct' approach.

- The characters are led into the fortress by the duergar in 'X6. Guard Post', but are immediately spotted and attacked by the 9 duergar in 'X3. Upper Barracks'.
- Grandolpha and her 4 loyal duergar comes to the characters' aid, but diplomacy fails and the characters end up taking out Grandolpha without learning much.
- · Heading down the first route they stumble across, the characters take the elevator down from X6, arriving in 'X21. Treacherous Guards', where they are allowed to pass through by two **duergar** guards – whom the characters kill anyway, "just to make sure".
- They don't find Xardorok in 'X19. Chardalyn Throne', but end up fighting 1 quaggoth thonot, 4 quaggoth spore servants, 4 quaggoths, and 4 duergar here.
- They proceed out through 'X16. Northwest Cavern', where they bump into 4 duergar and an umber hulk.
- The characters manage to get past 'X23. Outer Gate', but not without drawing the attention of the 3 duergar in the nearest guard tower. A pitched battle erupts in the forge room, but once again Xardorok isn't here. During the battle, Thontara uses her horn and releases the chardalyn dragon.
- After dealing with the forces in the forge the characters proceed through the gates to either 'X29. Deep Duerra's Temple' and then 'X31. Devil Disguise', where they deal with the barbed devil.
- The characters backtrack to go through 'X32. Trapped Hall' and then into 'X33. Lower Barracks', where they deal with 15 duergar (taking advantage of the duergar's infighting) before they finally find Xardorok alongside 2 duergar mindmasters, which they kill in a pitched battle.
- Pressing on, the characters eventually find themselves in 'X37. Treasure Vault', which they take the time to loot before finding a secure place to rest.

In this scenario, which is only really possible if the characters are higher level, the characters make certain to run headfirst into nearly encounter the fortress has to offer - and is not given much aid by the DM. This example makes it almost certain that the characters will need a long rest before heading back out, and thus makes it very difficult for them to catch up with the dragon before it destroys most of Ten-Towns.





N CHAPTER 4: DESTRUCTION'S LIGHT THE characters must race back to Ten-Towns to catch up with the chardalyn dragon and attempt to prevent its destruction of Ten-Towns - a journey littered with high stakes, difficult choices, and incredible danger!

While this premise is awesome and cool - get to Ten-Towns as fast as possible, to saves as many people as possible! - the execution of it is less than perfect. The description of the dragon's path of destruction could use a good summary and the rules for overland travel in the book are confusing at best – and nearly useless at worst! - making the scenario challenging to run for the DM.

On the following pages, you will find revised travel rules to help make the characters' pursuit of the dragon both more exciting for the players and easier for you to run, an expanded 'Dragon Overview' table that helps keep track of the dragon's movements, as well as an elaborate walkthrough of the characters journey to Ten-Towns and their inevitable showdown with the dragon.

DRAGON SCOURGE

Chapter 4 revolves around the characters' pursuit of the chardalyn dragon. It's meant to be a harrowing chase that forces the characters to make tough choices along the way, while hundreds of innocent lives hang in the balance. Do they clean out the fortress, or chase down the dragon immediately? Do they take a long rest or push ahead? Which town do they make their final stand in?

In reality, however, there's not many meaningful choices to be made. If you use the speeds provided in the 'Overland Travel' and 'Mountain Travel'-sections (ID:RotF, pg. 11-13), the characters can barely make it back in time to take on the dragon in Bryn Shander, and that's only if we assume that they have a dogsled, and that neither the characters nor the dogs need a long rest.

On the following pages, we will offer adjustments to the book's travel rules and additional advice on how to handle the characters' pursuit of the dragon.

RECOMMENDED TRAVEL RULES

Below are the travel rules that we recommend you use while playing Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden, and during chapter 4 in particular.

Double Speed. As suggested in the resources for Chapter 1: Ten-Towns, doubling the speeds listed under 'Overland Travel' and 'Mountain Travel' (ID:RotF, pg. 11-13) sets a more realistic pace of 2 mph in deep snow for dogsleds and 1 mph for characters with snowshoes.

Travel Between Towns. Instead of flipping back and forth between pages to use the confusing and often inconsistent travel times listed under each town, the roads' lengths in miles are measured out (see the map on the next page), and travel on the snowy roads has a fixed pace of 3 mph for dogsleds and 1.5 mph on foot.

Travel per Day. As it is also the way overland travel works in the Player's Handbook (pg. 182), we can assume that characters can effectively travel only 8 hours/day and must spend the remaining 16 hours at rest or risk exhaustion. Sled dogs, however, can keep their travel pace for 12 hours/day. This is both realistic and also follows the intention of the rules for sled dogs laid out in the book (ID:RotF, pg. 20), which determines that a sled dog must rest for 1 hour after each hour of travel. The only change is that we allow for the dogs to travel for 12 hours and then rest 12 hours, instead of constantly switching between travel and rest.

No Rest on a Sled. Because riding on a sled is uncomfortable and involves frequent stops (getting off to carry the sled across ravines, etc.) characters can't get the benefit of a long rest while traveling on a sled. They can take short rests and get enough sleep to avoid exhaustion, but must stop for 8 hours to get the full benefits of a long rest.

Summary. These rules are summarized in the 'Travel in Icewind Dale'-table on the next page, which also features a map with the distances of routes the characters are likely to travel during chapter 4, and a complete 'Dragon Overview'-table.

Travel in Icewind Dale

	—— Distance per Hour ——			— Distance per Day ——		
Method of Travel	Mountain	Snow	Road	Mountain		Road
Dogsled	1 mile	2 miles	3 miles	12 miles	24 miles	36 miles
On foot, with snowshoes	1/2 mile	1 mile	1.5 mile	4 miles	8 miles	12 miles
On foot, without snowshoes	1/4 mile	1/2 mile	1.5 mile	2 miles	4 miles	12 miles



Dragon Overview

Location	Flight Time	Arrival (total time elapsed)	Destruction Time	Departure (total time elapsed)	Damage Taken (HP on departure)	Casualties (% of population)
Dougan's Hole	2 hours	2 hours	⅓ hour	21/2 hours	0 (147 HP)	25 people (50%)
Good Mead	1/2 hour	3 hours	1 hour	4 hours	0 (147 HP)	25 people (25%)
Easthaven	11/2 hours	51/2 hours	8 hours	131/2 hours	-10 (137 HP)	250 people (33%)
Caer-Dineval	1 hour	141/2 hours	1 hour	151/2 hours	0 (137 HP)	≈ 100 people (99%)
Caer-Konig	1 hour	161/2 hours	1½ hours	18 hours	0 (137 HP)	100 people (66%)
Termalaine	2 hours	20 hours	6 hours	26 hours	-5 (132 HP)	100 people (16%)
Lonelywood	1/2 hour	261/2 hours	2 hours	281/2 hours	0 (132 HP)	0 people (0%)
Bremen	11/2 hours	30 hours	2 hours	32 hours	-5 (127 HP)	100 people (66%)
Targos	1/2 hour	321/2 hours	8 hours	401/2 hours	-15 (112 HP)	500 people (50%)
Bryn Shander	1/2 hour	41 hours	12 hours	53 hours	-40 (72 HP)	2,400 people (200%)
Sunblight	31/2 hours	561/2 hours	_	_	+1d6 HP/hour	TOTAL: 3600/4200 (85%)

THE JOURNEY TO TEN-TOWNS

Once the characters realize that the dragon is heading to Ten-Towns – whether that's before they enter Xardorok's fortress or after they have already cleaned it out - they will need to journey back and try to stop the dragon. This chase should be an interesting and harrowing journey, full of tough choices. Below we will go over what this journey entails and how you can make it more exciting for the players, assuming you use the recommended rules for travel detailed on the previous pages.

OVERVIEW

The characters journey to Ten-Towns can be divided into four stages, each of which will require tough choices:

- 1. Starting the Journey. The characters must decide whether to rest and how they will travel to Ten-Towns.
- 2. Get Off the Mountain. Travel 2 miles through the mountains, or circumvent the mountains by traveling 8 miles through snowy canyons.
- 3. Across the Tundra. Travel 10 miles across the snowy tundra to either Dougan's Hole or Good Mead, or 12 miles through the snow to Easthaven.
- 4. Travel in Ten-Towns. Travel on roads to the town where they want to make a stand against the dragon.

Below we will go over each in turn, looking at the various choices the characters must make at each stage, and the potential consequences of those choices.

1. STARTING THE JOURNEY

The first choice the characters must make is whether or not they want to take a long rest before pursuing the dragon. Next, they will also have to decide how they want to travel. There's likely several choices available to them:

- On Foot with Snowshoes. This option should be the bare minimum, as they are likely to either have their own snowshoes, or can retrieve them from area X29.
- On a Dogsled. If the characters arrived by dogsled, they may choose to leave the same way. Vellynne may also have provided the characters with dogsleds.
- On a Zombiesled. If the characters have spoken to Vellynne, she may have provided them with an alternative to sled dogs: zombies! These can either be reanimated sled dogs, duergar, or quaggoths, as described under 'Vellynne's Aid' on the next page.

These choices are very significant. Delaying for 8 hours or more to rest may very well come at the cost of hundreds of lives, but if they don't have fresh sled dogs, the characters may have no choice but to rest - unless they're willing to accept Vellynne's distasteful aid.

2. GET OFF THE MOUNTAIN

Standing at the top of the mountain near Xardorok's fortress, the characters may be able to see the dragon streaking towards Dougan's Hole in the distance. They now face another choice: travel 2 miles across the mountain to reach its foot at the northern end, at the risk of getting lost or even setting off an avalanche (see the 'Mountain Travel'-rules), or head down the mountain to the south and trek 8 miles around the mountains.

Mountain Travel. If the characters fail just two of the DC 15 Survival checks required to get off the mountain, they might as well have gone around it instead. And if they fail by 5 or more and trigger an avalanche, they could end up suffering exhaustion or even lose both their dogs and their sleds. Make sure the characters understand these risks and the timelines involved, so they can make an informed choice about how to proceed.

3. Across the Tundra

The next leg of the journey is across the deep snow of the open tundra. If the skies are clear and it hasn't been too long since the dragon was released, they should be able to see the dragon either laying waste to Dougan's Hole (<2½ hours), Good Mead (3–4 hours), or Easthaven (5½– 13½ hours) in the distance. There's 10 miles to Dougan's Hole and Good Mead, and 12 miles to Easthaven. So which one to aim for?

If they decide for Dougan's Hole or Good Mead, they will arrive too late to stop the dragon there. And while the journey is 2 miles shorter across the snow, they will now have to travel up to 12 miles on the road to get to Easthaven, which may make them miss the dragon there as well, if they ever had the chance. On the other hand, characters that head straight for Good Mead and from there to Bryn Shander have a shorter route than characters going through Easthaven. Tough choices!

Blizzard. This is the perfect time to introduce a blizzard, if the characters are making good time and you want to make things a bit more exciting! As the characters are halfway across the tundra, a 4-hour blizzard blows over them. If the heroes haven't done so yet, they may take this opportunity to hunker down for a long rest. If not, they can travel on at the risk of getting lost and wasting even more time. If they decide to press on, but are either tied together or on dog sleds, you can decide that a failure by 5 or more (which would normally mean that a character becomes separated from the party) results in a Wilderness Encounter instead.

4. TRAVEL IN TEN-TOWNS

If the characters are making record speed in a dogsled, they can arrive in Easthaven after just 8 hours - in the middle of the dragon's attack! Conversely, if they rested or got lost along the way, they may arrive to see the dragon laying waste to Caer-Dineval, Caer-Konig, or flying across the Dwarven Valley toward Termalaine. While Easthaven is lost in this case, they may still be able to catch up to the dragon in Termalaine or mount a defense in Bryn Shander, Targos, or Bremen. Remember, even if the characters manage to catch up with the dragon early, dealing 30 damage to it may cause it to fly toward its next target (see 'Dragon's Behaviour' later in this document) and the chase continues.

Finding Sled Dogs. If the characters' sled dogs are in need of a break once they reach Ten-Towns - or they never had any dogs at all! - they may want to search for fresh dogs. You can allow a character that spends 1 hour looking for sled dogs in a destroyed town find 1d6 fresh sled dogs with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation), DC 15 Wisdom (Perception), or DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) skill check. Multiple characters can perform this check simultaneously. In a town that hasn't been destroyed yet, the characters should be able to procure fresh dogs in ½ hour without the need for a check - but must pay 50 gp for each, unless they can convince the dogs' owner that the need is dire with a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Town in Chaos. The book provides a table of events (pg. 192) to occupy the characters during the dragon's attack. You can also use these encounters when the characters arrive in a ruined town, as a way to put even more tough choices in front of them. Dealing with a 'Building Collapse', 'Malevolent Townsfolk', or 'Thieves' may cost the characters a ½ hour (a potentially meaningful amount of time) and valuable resources they will miss sorely when they encounter the dragon later.

VELLYNNE'S AID

In the book, Vellynne arrives just as the characters head back toward Ten-Towns, offering them a lift on her three dogsleds. While it is suggested that you change the timing of this to be less suspiciously convenient (as discussed under 'Introducing Vellynne' earlier in this document), the idea that Vellynne arrives to offer her aid can provide for some interesting choices and even moral quandaries. Below we will go over various forms of aid you can have Vellynne offer the party.

SLEDS AND FRESH SLED DOGS

As written in the book, Vellynne has sleds and fresh sled dogs she will let the characters borrow. This is a good option if the characters don't have their own dogs and you want to at least give them a chance of stopping the dragon in Easthaven.

SLEDS AND ZOMBIFIED SLED DOGS

Vellynne has used magic to reanimate her sled dogs as zombies. These sled dogs are just as fast as their living counterparts, but have no need for rest, enabling them to travel for 24 hours in a day (covering twice as many miles per day as a regular sled dog). This option works well if you want to make sure that the characters don't just take Vellynne's dogsleds and leave her in the snow, as the zombie dogs will only follow her commands which means they have to bring her along.

USING ANIMATE DEAD

Another option, and one that may force the characters to make a tough moral choice, is that Vellynne offers to cast animate dead for the party. With two 4th-level spell slots and three 3rd-level spell slots, she can make up to 9 zombies, which can be either sled dogs or humanoids.

Sled Dogs. While the spell animate dead can technically only target humanoids, you can choose to make an exception for Vellynne. This option works especially well if the characters have sled dogs, but can't use them because they are exhausted from their travel to Xardorok's fortress. Will they kill their own dogs and let Vellynne reanimate them so they can make it to Ten-Towns in time to stop the dragon?

Humanoids. Vellynne can also use animate dead to bring back dead duergar or quaggoths from Xardorok's fortress, who can drag the characters on sleds. While these zombies don't travel any faster than characters wearing snowshoes, they don't tire out and can even aid the characters in combat. But can the characters stomach the thought of being surrounded by zombies under an unknown necromancer's control?



PLANNING THE PURSUIT

When starting this chapter, you may want to think about what your preferred outcome is. Do you want the characters to be able to intercept the dragon as early as Easthaven, or are you fine with their options being limited to saving only one or two towns?

When you know which outcome you prefer, you can then take steps to ensure that the characters have the resources and means of transportation available to them that will allow them to obtain that outcome - if they're lucky and make the right choices, of course. This also allows you to make informed choices about the potential challenges you want to put in front of the characters - blizzards, wilderness encounters, etc. - so you force them to make tough decisions that are actually meaningful, which is half the fun of a scenario like this.

Below we will go over three of the most likely outcomes, describing what the characters must do to accomplish each, if you are using the recommended rules for travel described in this document.

BEST CASE SCENARIO

Unless they happen on a scroll of teleportation or a carpet of flying, the characters won't be able to catch up to the dragon before it destroys Dougan's Hole and Good Mead. They can, however, catch up with the dragon in Easthaven, but only if they make haste and get there before 13½ hours has passed. To do this, they must have at least partially fresh sled dogs or zombified sled dogs available to them at Xardorok's fortress.

This scenario is interesting, because the characters' choices will have a significant impact on how many towns they can save. If they take a long rest before heading out, but otherwise make perfect time, they will just miss the dragon in Easthaven, but can still catch up with it in Termalaine. At worst, the characters should be able to save at least Bryn Shander, Bremen, and Targos if they choose to do so, of course.

MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

If the characters start out with exhausted sled dogs (that can travel for 3 hours or less) and/or zombified humanoids to pull them on a sled, they won't be able to reach Easthaven in time to intercept the dragon. They may, however, be able to catch up the dragon in Termalaine, but only if they push themselves and find fresh sled dogs along the way.

This scenario is also interesting because it offers the characters a chance of saving half of Ten-Towns, but only if they're smart enough to see it – deducing it from the dragon's flight path as shown in the fortress – and if they put themselves through an exhausting 20+-hour journey. Even if they are unlucky or make poor decisions, the characters should at least be able to make it to Bryn Shander or Targos before the dragon.

WORST CASE SCENARIO

If the characters don't have sleds available and must walk (with snowshoes) back to Ten-Towns, they have a small chance of making it in time to save Targos or Bremen, but will most likely only arrive just in time to make a stand in Bryn Shander.

This scenario is a bleak one, and because the characters are so far off to begin with, the various choices they make along the way actually have less significance, making the minutia a bit less interesting. An extra hour or two of delay won't make much of a difference if they are already 40 hours behind!

Showdown!

In this section we will go over the characters' inevitable showdown with the dragon, discussing how this battle could look and offering various suggestions on how to run it in a way that makes it as entertaining as possible.

DRAGON'S BEHAVIOR

In the book, we're told that if the characters deal 30 damage or more to the dragon without destroying it, the dragon flies on to the next town - unless it happens in Bryn Shander, in which case the dragon flies back to Xardorok's fortress for repairs.

This behavior can make for an entertaining scenario, where the characters catch up with the dragon in, let's say, Easthaven, and send it scurrying toward Caer-Dineval. Making haste, they can catch up with it again in Termalaine, deal another 30+ damage to it (bringing it to less than 70 HP), and continue harrowing it as it flies on to Lonelywood, Bremen, and Targos. This both makes the encounters with the dragon more survivable for lower level characters and also continuously forces them to make tough choices about where to go next and how approach the showdown with the dragon.

Where this behavior can become an issue, is in Bryn Shander. Having the characters chase the dragon all around Ten-Towns only for it to retreat to Xardorok's fortress before they can destroy it can end up feeling a bit anti-climactic. In addition, if the forge is still operational, they are likely to find the dragon fully replenished once they catch up with it again in the fortress. And if the forge isn't operational, the dragon's retreat only prolongs its inevitable destruction by dividing up the final showdown into two, less tense, battles.

CHANGING THE DRAGON'S BEHAVIOR

If you want the character's stand against the dragon in Bryn Shander (or elsewhere) to be final, you can decide that the dragon remains in the town as long as it can easily find living targets. In Bryn Shander, it runs out of living targets after 12 hours have passed (because the remaining 300 survivors manage to hide from it), but if the characters show up and don't run off and hide, the dragon remains in Bryn Shander until the party has destroyed it - or it has killed the characters!

WEATHER CONDITIONS

The book dictates that a storm descends on Ten-Towns after the dragon leaves Termalaine, meaning that the characters will have to fight it under strong wind and heavy snowfall if they face it in Lonelywood, Bremen, Targos, or Bryn Shander.

It seems like the bad weather is used in the book to make up for the damage the dragon has taken at this point, since it will affect only the characters by giving them disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and ranged weapon attacks. This isn't a bad idea, and makes for a pretty cool visual, but if the characters are already underdogs – low level, running low on resources, exhausted - you probably don't need to make things even harder for them.

NPC SUPPORT

The book's idea to let helpful Ten-Towners aid the characters is a good idea. You can make such aid have a bigger impact by using NPCs the characters have met before - the innkeeper they spoke with in their starting town, the Speaker of that town they helped, and so on facilitate the aid, and possibly die in the process.

WHAT CAN VELLYNNE DO?

If Vellynne is with the party, the book describes how she can fight alongside the characters, but tries to stay out of trouble, using her wand of magic missile against the dragon and vampiric touch to stay alive. Another way to use Vellynne without putting her directly in harm's way is to have her use animate dead (if she hasn't already) to return dead townsfolk as zombies and use them to distract the dragon. Some characters may take issue with her tactics, which can make for an entertaining roleplaying moment before, during, or after the battle.

If Vellynne Dies. The campaign book would have you keep Vellynne alive at all cost, since she's pivotal to the plot moving forward. Of course, since you decide who and how the dragon attacks, this shouldn't be too difficult to accomplish. Still, if Vellynne ends up dying - or otherwise can't continue on with the party, for any reason – she isn't irreplaceable. This is covered in depth under 'Replacing Vellynne' later in this document.

SETTING UP DEFENSES

The book mentions that characters may want to make it to a town ahead of the dragon and set up a defense there, but doesn't provide much guidance about how that looks.

SIEGE WEAPONS

The book tells us that Targos has siege weapons, but doesn't mention which other towns have them or how they can be used. If you want to, you can decide that the four biggest towns all have ballista available:

- · Bryn Shander has 6 ballista.
- · Easthaven has 3 ballista.
- Targos has 4 ballista.
- · Termalaine has 1 ballista.

The dragon targets siege weapons first, so if the characters arrive in a town after the dragon, they are unlikely to find an operable ballista. In addition, duergar saboteurs try to destroy them 10 minutes before the dragon arrives, successfully taking out 1d4 ballista in each town unless the characters intervene (making for a nice little prelude to the big showdown with the dragon).

Using Siege Weapons. A description of the ballista can be found in the Dungeon Master's Guide (pg. 255). In summary, three characters working in concert can make a ranged weapon attack (+6 to hit, range 120/480 ft, 3d10 piercing damage) with the ballista each round. You can keep this as it is, making it a worthwhile option for characters that lack strong ranged attacks of their own - or allow the character aiming the ballista to use their own attack bonus and add their Dexterity modifier to the attack's damage on a successful hit, making it a more enticing weapon against the dragon.

Besides protecting and manning the ballista, the characters' time is best spend evacuating the town's citizens. What this means precisely up to you, but it seems reasonable that a timely evacuation will reduce the casualties in that particular town by as much as 75%.

RUNNING THE SHOWDOWN

While you can't know for certain exactly where the characters will face off with the dragon, it is likely to in one of the ten towns. Below is a blueprint to running an encounter with the dragon in one of the Ten-Towns, following these three steps:

- · 1. Aerial Assault
- · 2. Town in Chaos
- · 3. Dragon Landing

1. AERIAL ASSAULT

The dragon begins its assault by flying over the town and strafing it with its 'Radiant Breath', which has a 120 ft. range. You can describe how the dragon does this a few times in areas too far away from the characters to do anything about it (+600 ft.), before it eventually strafes the town within range of the characters – without directly targeting them, unless they are manning a ballista or otherwise drawing attention to themselves. This gives them one round of ranged attacks against it when it is within a range of 90 ft. of them, and another round of ranged attacks at 270 ft. range as it flies away.

Encounter Maps

This download provides a Ruined Street Map, a Ruined Harbor Map, and a Ruined Wall Map, which can be used as the scene of the characters' showdown with the dragon.

2. Town in Chaos

After the dragon has made an aerial assault, it flies away to replenish its breath weapon. You can run one of the 'Town in Chaos'-encounters listed in the book (pg. 192), to fill out the waiting time between attacks. Encounters such as 'Building Collapse' or 'Malevolent Townsfolk' make especially good sense given the dragon's recent destruction. If the characters arrive more than halfway into the dragon's destruction of a town, you can also skip step 1 entirely and start the showdown with a 'Town in Chaos'-encounter.

3. Dragon Landing

If the characters managed to hit the dragon with their ranged attacks, it returns to attack them directly, aiming its 'Radiant Breath' in a line to hit as many of them as possible. If the characters can see it coming, you can allow them the opportunity to prepare an action to either take cover or make a ranged attack against it, as it closes the distance. If the characters still haven't dealt enough damage to the dragon to make it head for the next town, or you have decided that it remains in the town until destroyed, the dragon lands near the characters and begins attacking them with melee attacks.

When the dragon is in direct combat with the characters, keep a close eye on its and the characters' hit points and resources. If the characters are near death, you can have NPCs intervene and send the dragon flying off to the next town. If combat is going well and feels tense and challenging, you can always choose that the dragon stays and fights until the bitter end!



AFTERMATH

While you get a complete walkthrough of the dragon's path of destruction in the book, it doesn't actually tell us much about what happens after the dragon's attack. Below we will go over a few of the most likely scenarios, as well as discuss how the story continues from here.

HEROES OF ICEWIND DALE

If the characters made record speed and managed to defeat the dragon in Easthaven - it didn't or couldn't get away before being destroyed – less than 300 townsfolk will have perished. Even if the characters only send the dragon fleeing from Easthaven before catching up with it again in Termalaine, Bremen, or Targos, they will still probably have saved more than 3,000 lives.

As witness accounts of their courageous actions reach the surviving settlements, the characters are likely hailed as heroes in all of Ten-Towns (or at least the towns that weren't destroyed) – giving them a lifetime supply of free food, drinks, and lodging in most of Ten-Towns. If they were offered a reward (see 'Speaker's Quest' earlier in this document) before embarking on their mission to Xardorok's fortress, they receive 300 gp from each large town (Easthaven, Termalaine, Targos, and Bryn Shander) they managed to save, as well as 100 gp from each of the smaller towns that weren't destroyed.

CHAMPIONS IN THE RUBBLE

If the characters were late in their efforts to save Ten-Towns and only caught up to the dragon in Bryn Shander or Targos, they may still have saved the lives of hundreds - or even thousands - of people. Looking over the smoldering ruins of nearly all of Ten-Towns, however, it doesn't feel like much of a victory.

While the characters will receive gratitude for the effort they did put in, many townsfolk - survivors from ruined settlements especially - will find it hard to call them heroes or saviors. If the characters were promised a reward, they may find that it is not so forthcoming – the speaker arguing that every piece of gold is needed to rebuild the destroyed towns and provide for the many refugees. Characters who insist on receiving whatever payment they're entitled to may find that the people of Ten-Towns become embittered against them.

COMPLETE DESTRUCTION

If the characters somehow failed completely, allowing the dragon to destroy all of Ten-Towns, Bryn Shander included, about 600 Ten-Towners survive - and six times as many don't. Half of the survivors are in Bryn Shander, while the rest are scattered in the other nine towns.

In this scenario, there's no cause for celebration at all. Ten-Towns is decimated, and its future is uncertain. Unless something is done to aid them, more of the survivors are likely to perish in the coming days, succumbing to hunger and exposure. The smaller towns are likely to be abandoned entirely, with only Bryn Shander, Easthaven, and Targos retaining any population worthy of note.

While sad and unsatisfying, this event does provide you with an opportunity to motivate the characters with a chance to undo it all, as described under 'Going Back in Time' later in this document.

EXAMPLES: DRAGON SCOURGE

The scenario in chapter 4 is complex and can be hard to get a good handle on, even with the aid provided on the previous pages. To help you get a sense of the chapter, two complete examples of how the chapter can go are provided below.

Example 1: Heroes of Icewind Dale

In this example, the characters are given a chance to be the heroes of Icewind Dale - and seize on it!

- Starting the Journey. Having been clever in taking out Xardorok, the party is not in dire need of a rest before heading out to catch the dragon. Vellynne offers them the use of her zombified sled dogs, which they accept.
- Get off the Mountain. Heading straight across the mountains and rolling well, the characters spend only 2 hours getting to the foot of the mountains.
- Across the Tundra. Knowing the dragon's travel path, they realize they have a chance to catch it in Easthaven and head directly there. They run into a blizzard, but only lose 1 hour while traveling through it.
- Easthaven. Arriving in Easthaven after 9 hours, the characters fight a quick battle with the dragon, before sending it scurrying away toward Caer-Dineval.
- Rest. The characters are tired and spent now. Realizing they won't catch the dragon before Termalaine anyway, they decide to take a long rest.
- · Across the Dwarven Valley. After their rest, the characters travel across the Dwarven Valley toward Termalaine, facing a pair of yeti on the way.
- **Termalaine.** The characters face off with the dragon in Termalaine, once again sending it scurrying away.
- Lonelywood. The characters chase the dragon to Lonelywood, where it once more is sent packing.
- Targos. The characters aren't fast enough to catch the dragon in Bremen, but make it to Targos, getting a short rest along the way. They deal with duergar saboteurs before the dragon's arrival, and bring ballista to bear against the dragon. In a pitched battle, the characters manage to finally destroy the chardalyn dragon and become heroes of Icewind Dale!

EXAMPLE 2: PYRRHIC VICTORY

In this example, the characters are dealt poor cards, but try to make the best of them.

- Starting the Journey. Having fought pitched battles in Xardorok's fortress, the party decides that both they and their dogs need a long rest before heading out.
- Get off the Mountain. Using regular sled dogs, the characters brave the mountains, but lose one hour doing so, getting down after 11 hours has passed.
- Across the Tundra. The characters cross the tundra toward Good Mead, but run into a blizzard. They travel through it, but lose an additional 3 hours doing so and run into a coldlight walker on the way!
- Good Mead. Arriving in Good Mead after a total of 19 hours have passed, the characters spend an additional hour finding fresh sled dogs and aiding survivors before heading north.
- Targos. Passing through Bryn Shander on the way, the characters arrive in Targos after 25 hours and decide to make a stand here. In a pitched battle, they send the dragon scurrying toward Bryn Shander.
- Bryn Shander. The characters face the dragon again in Bryn Shander, where they manage to defeat it with the help of the militia, but most of Ten-Towns' other settlements have been destroyed.

VELLYNNE'S QUEST

At the end of chapter 4, the parameters of Vellynne's quest – the quest that will steer the characters toward chapters 5–7 – is described. There's a few potential issues with this quest and the way it is given to the party, which has to do with its reliance on exposition, using Vellynne as a quest-giver, and the characters motivation.

VELLYNNE'S INFORMATION

One of the issues you may have with Vellynne's quest is the information she presents. As written, her quest is linear – go here, then here – and relies heavily on exposition, with Vellynne telling the characters exactly where they need to go and what they need to do.

In the DM's resources for Chapter 2: Icewind Dale, we presented a way to alter the way Vellynne presents her quest so it includes more of the locations in Chapter 2: Icewind Dale and is less reliant on exposition to get the characters moving. In quick summary, Vellynne doesn't know exactly where the entrance to Ythryn is, or where the Codicil of White, which is needed to open it, can be found. She does have some suggestions, however, which can send the characters toward locations such as 'Jarlmoot', 'Dark Duchess', 'Revel's End', 'Lost Spire of Netheril', and the goliath tribes, to learn first where the Codicil of White is – and then to find Ythryn's entrance.

VELLYNNE AS QUEST-GIVER

As the linchpin that ties the entire campaign together, Vellynne Harpell is given a very prominent role in *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*. Vellynne, however, isn't a character that is necessarily universally likable or even particularly trustworthy. While agreeable and resourceful, she is still a necromancer and part of the Arcane Brotherhood, an organization with a dubious reputation. It is not impossible to imagine how some characters may be wary of trusting her, or even downright refuse to follow her. Luckily, there are ways you can make Vellynne more trustworthy – or even replace her as quest-giver, if you feel you need to.

MAKING VELLYNNE MORE TRUSTWORTHY

There's various ways you can improve the chances that the characters will trust Vellynne and accept her quest.

Demeanor. Instead of emphasizing how 'cold and dispassionate' Vellynne is, you can put an emphasis on how lovingly she treats her sled dogs and her kobolds and how genuinely concerned she seems for the safety of the townsfolk of Ten-Towns – while still having her be coldly pragmatic when it comes down the pivotal moments, as she has no qualms about reanimating the dead or causing collateral damage if she has to.

Actions. If the characters have Vellynne along for the ride as they chase down and confront the dragon, Vellynne should have plenty of opportunities to show herself as both resourceful and trustworthy. Have her put herself at risk to help a character during one of the dragon's attacks, follow commands without hesitation, and generally be as helpful as possible.

Other NPCs. You can also give Vellynne the backing of NPCs the characters already trust. Speaker Duvessa Shane or another such NPC may speak on her behalf, expressing their trust in her. You can even have the NPC be present when Vellynne presents her quest to the party, urging the characters to accept because they believe that Vellynne is right about Ythryn potentially offering a chance to revert Auril's Everlasting Rime.

REPLACING VELLYNNE

While the adventure presents Vellynne as nearirreplaceable, this isn't truly the case. At no point does Vellynne do anything that other NPCs couldn't do, if you change things around a little. Below are some ideas for possible replacements for Vellynne, if she dies during chapter 4, or the characters for some reason take a strong disliking to her.

Dzaan or Nass Lantomir. The wizard Dzaan (or his simulacrum) or Nass Lantomir (who would, in this case, still be alive) can easily serve as replacements for Vellynne. Either can have the same exact backstory and the same ties to the professor orb as she would, and are likely just as trustworthy as Vellynne would have been.

Council of Speakers. You can also have the Council of Speakers act as quest-givers instead of Vellynne. Wishing to put an end to Auril's Everlasting Rime, they call the characters – heroes who helped stop the dragon's destruction of Ten-Towns! - to a meeting, where they beseech them to find the fabled city of Ythryn and help put an end to the endless winter. While they may be acting on information provided by Vellynne (or another wizard from the Arcane Brotherhood) and may ask that the characters take the wizard along on the journey, the quest still comes from them – and not from Vellynne.

Oyaminartok. The fabled goliath werebear Oyaminartok is mentioned often and described in detail in the book (pg. 293), but is never really given anything to do. If you have foreshadowed Oyaminartok, or you just want a replacement for Vellynne that is more trustworthy, the legendary goliath werebear can be the one who seeks out the party to tell them about Ythryn. Having heard of their heroics against the dragon, she sees fit to tell them about Ythryn, a longlost and legendary city that presumably holds powerful magic that could aid Icewind Dale. This knowledge doesn't come from dusty books, but from oratory myths passed down from goliath to goliath for millenia - but Oyaminartok is nonetheless convinced that they are true.

Professor Skant. If you can't or won't include Vellynne, but still want the characters to have her professor orb with them, you can just have them find the orb in exactly the same place as they normally would. You can also use Professor Skant as the quest-giver, if you let the characters find the orb earlier - in Xardorok's fortress (stolen by the duergar), in the 'Dark Duchess' (stolen by Nass Lantomir), or in the 'Lost Spire of Netheril' (stolen by Dzaan). It can be Professor Skant an object likely to be far more trustworthy than Vellynne - who offers up information about Ythryn and informs the characters that finding the lost city may be the key to ending Auril's Everlasting Rime.



MOTIVATING THE CHARACTERS

In the book, the motivation to find Ythryn provided to the characters by Vellynne essentially boils down to "it holds magic beyond our wildest dreams" and "we might even find something there to end this hateful winter".

If the characters are adventurous and greedy most characters are - they may not need much more motivation than this. But if the characters are more motivated by aiding Ten-Towns, you may want to emphasize how finding Ythryn will benefit the people of Icewind Dale – and how not finding it could harm them!

ENDING AURIL'S EVERLASTING RIME

The promise of ending Auril's Everlasting Rime is a good hook, as this is likely what both players and characters believe they are supposed to do in a campaign called Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden.

Making the Hook Stronger. As the book describes (pg. 194), Vellynne can tell the characters about the mythallar, which she believes might be able to revert Auril's Everlasting Rime. You can make this hook a bit stronger by simply having her be certain that it is still intact and can be used to end Auril's Everlasting Rime.

Retaining Motivation. A potential issue with this hook is that the characters may be able to end Auril's Everlasting Rime before they even find Ythryn, which invalidates the whole premise. If you want to avoid this, you will have to make some changes when you run chapter 5. The easiest way to do it is by not letting the characters face off with Auril in Chapter 5 and/or by deciding that defeating Auril on the Island of Solstice doesn't undo the spell she has already cast on Icewind Dale. See the DM's resources for Chapter 5: Auril's **Abode** for more information about handling Auril's role.

GOING BACK IN TIME

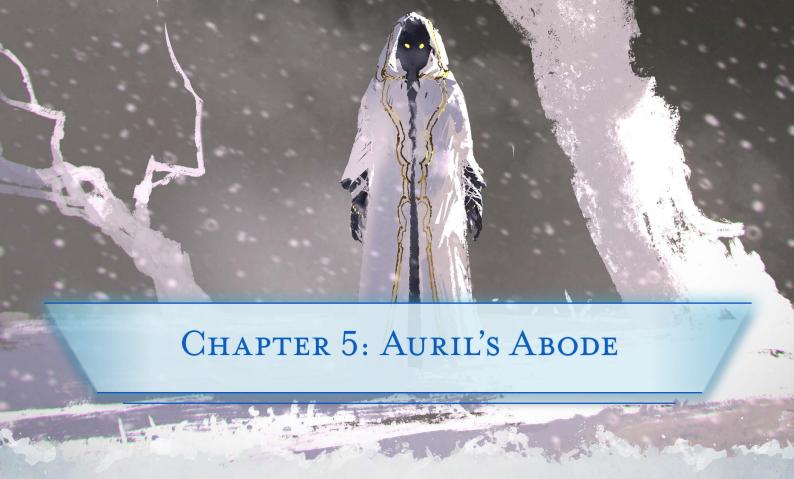
The *mythallar* and its ability to control the weather doesn't have to be all Ythryn has to offer. If the dragon's attack on Icewind Dale has left most of Ten-Towns destroyed, you can have Vellynne offer an enticing lure: Ythryn may hold magic that can turn back time!

While the information is sparse, ancient records and rumors tell of magic that can be used to turn back time, designed exactly to mitigate destructive events such as the one that has just befallen Icewind Dale. If the characters can help her discover such magic, Vellynne believes that she may be able to undo the dragon's destruction! Whether or not you allow the obelisk in Ythryn (ID:RotF, pg. 255) to actually accomplish this feat and how that would look is up to you - and is something that is discussed in more detail in the DM's resources covering Chapter 7: Doom of Ythryn.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF INACTION

If the characters are wary of trusting Vellynne, or don't bite immediately on her suggestion that they may find something to end Auril's Everlasting Rime in Ythryn, she has another ace up her sleeve: she isn't the only one looking for the Netherese necropolis.

While the characters may not trust Vellynne, they can at least make sure to be with her when she explores Ythryn and help ensure that she gets there first – before her rivals, wizards with even darker motives than her own, get their hands on the powerful magic Ythryn contains. In other words, not helping Vellynne find Ythryn doesn't just mean missing an opportunity to end Auril's Everlasting Rime – it may actually make matters in Icewind Dale even worse!



N CHAPTER 5: AURIL'S ABODE, THE ADVENTURERS embark on their quest to end Auril's Everlasting Rime, beginning with a journey to the frigid and isolated Island of Solstice in the Sea of Moving Ice, where they must battle fearsome foes and undergo dangerous trials to find the Codicil of White.

While the characters' trip to Island of Solstice may seem as just a simple stepping-stone to get to the lost Netherese necropolis of Ythryn, it could end up being the most dangerous step of their journey, as they can potentially face off with Auril herself! This also makes the Island of Solstice a difficult location for the DM to run - how do you navigate the deadly environs of the island, Auril's tests, and a potential run-in with a deity?

OVERVIEW

The structure of Chapter 5: Auril's Abode is quite straight-forward, although it is not entirely linear. In this chapter, the characters are meant to:

- Travel to the Island of Solstice.
- **Explore** the island and **find** Professor Skant.
- Battle foes inside Grimskalle.
- Pass Auril's tests and acquire the Codicil of White.

As a location-based chapter, Chapter 5: Auril's Abode shouldn't be too difficult to run – but appearances can be deceiving. The chapter presents a few major challenges to the DM, which are addressed on the following pages:

- · How to handle Auril's role in the chapter without disjointing the story - or how to replace her entirely.
- · How to handle the characters' journey to the island, so it doesn't become linear or boring.
- How to handle the pacing of the chapter, so the characters' stay on the island is tense and exciting.
- How to run the various locations on the island, including Auril's tests in the dungeon of Grimskalle.

AURIL'S ROLE

As the adventure is written, Auril herself is present on the Island of Solstice, which means that it is possible for the characters to encounter and even defeat her!

Defeating a deity is an interesting prospect, but if the characters' main motivation for finding the lost city of Ythryn is to end Auril's Everlasting Rime, they are robbed of that motivation if they defeat Auril on the Island of Solstice. If that happens, the adventure has, in essence, concluded two chapters too early and the excursion to Ythryn ends up being little more than an afterthought, rather than the climax of an epic adventure. From a story-telling perspective, this can make the adventure feel a bit disjointed.

However, while the potential to defeat Auril and end her Everlasting Rime midway through the adventure is something the writers have emphasized in interviews and which the book also takes care to mention regularly, it doesn't actually seem like it is necessarily the way events are intended or expected to unfold. It is, at the very least, not something that needs to happen - in fact, the adventure may work better if it doesn't. Below are some suggestions for how you can avoid that a meeting with Auril derails the adventure and disjoints the story.

Avoiding Auril

On page 203, we're told that when Auril casts her spell each night, she "is gone for several hours, during which time the characters can explore Grimskalle without fear of running into her". This seems like a sound suggestion - and is a good way to avoid that the adventure is disrupted by Auril's defeat on the island. To help you steer the party toward avoiding Auril instead of fighting her, you can have NPCs with the party recognize Auril's presence and urge the characters to wait until she's gone before delving into Grimskalle:

- Vellynne can suggest that: "I can sense Auril's presence. I think we can explore the isle, but let's steer clear of the fortress until she leaves."
- · Professor Skant can inform the party that: "Auril herself resides on this island, but she leaves each night to weave her spell. I don't think she will bother with us, as long as we are careful not to disturb her."
- Nass Lantomir's ghost can also tell the party that: "Auril lives in that fortress, but leaves each night to cast her spell of darkness. Only a fool would break into a goddess' home while she's there to defend it!"

It's recommended that you have Auril be away for around 8 hours, as it can help set a good pace for the adventure, which is something that is explained in more detail under 'Pacing Chapter 5' later in this document.

ENCOUNTER WITH AURIL

If the characters choose to ignore these warnings and end up encountering Auril anyway, it isn't too difficult to ensure that the goddess doesn't die. As the book suggests (pg. 206), you can just have teleport to her roc and make a stand there or even flee on the back of the huge beast, if she needs to. Even so, allowing the characters to encounter Auril can create two additional issues: if she is nearly defeated, it makes her a lot less scary – and what happens if she defeats the party?

DEFEATING AURIL

If the characters defeat Auril and send her fleeing, you should make clear to the party what the book makes clear to the DM several times: Auril is weakened because she devotes much of her power to continually casting her spell of darkness. If the characters send the goddess fleeing, Vellynne, Professor Skant, or another NPC can let the characters know that:

"It is your luck that you face her in such a weakened state. Keeping the spell of darkness over Icewind Dale must take a heavy toll on her. Make no mistake - had she not been weakened so, there would have been nothing left of you but shard of ice and frozen statues!"

If no NPCs are with the party, you can have any character with a decent Intelligence score or proficiency in Arcana or Religion realize as much on their own.

DEFEATED BY AURIL

If the characters face off with Auril but are defeated, Auril will let them flee to discourage others from visiting her island. Still, adventurers being adventurers, they may not decide to flee before it is too late. You can encourage them to do so by:

- Making it clear how superior Auril is during the fight she smirks slightly after being hit, disdainfully reduces a character to 0 hit points with a wave of her finger, etc.
- · Having Auril hold back once the outcome of the fight is secure, not acting on her turn, but smiling cruelly and using Legendary Actions to punish any character that continues to fight against her.
- Having friendly NPCs such as Professor Skant or Vellynne urge the characters to flee while they can.

If all else fails, you can have Auril reduce the characters to 0 hit points either with nonlethal damage, or stabilizing them afterward, and have the characters awake in 'I6. Garden of Death', saved from freezing to death by one of the NPCs that helped them get to the isle, a friendly awakened walrus, or a similar creature. While humiliated and defeated, the characters can still explore Grimskalle - although they have better wait until Auril leaves the island this time around.

THE RIME IS EVERLASTING

If you like the idea of the characters potentially defeating Auril, but want to keep the characters' motivation intact, you can decide that Auril's spell is permanent. In this case, Auril isn't setting off from Grimskalle each night to cast her spell to uphold it, but to strengthen it. The changes her spell has made to Icewind Dale's climate will not reverse on their own, but Auril isn't satisfied yet, so she recasts the spell each night, making the spell stronger - the climate colder, the snowfall heavier, the blizzards more frequent – with each casting. If you haven't begun running the adventure yet, you can let the characters know this from the start - explaining how the weather is getting gradually worse - or you can just decide that this process will take centuries, making it so slow as to be imperceptible to a mortal, but little more than the blink of an eye for a goddess.

By making this simple change, Auril's defeat is merely a delay for the goddess, who can continue her work as she returns on the next winter solstice. To actually end her spell, the characters will have to find the mythallar in Ythryn. Professor Skant or Vellynne can tell the party this, or a character with a decent Intelligence score or proficiency in Arcana may realize it on their own.



REPLACING AURIL

If you want to keep Auril mysterious and ominous, you can also remove her from the island entirely, and instead replace her with the frost giant druid Geluvicken.

AURIL'S SERVANT

Geluvicken is the daughter of the frost giant Queen Vassavicken, who lays entombed underneath Grimskalle, and is one of Auril's most zealous followers. In this scenario, it is Geluvicken who takes off from Grimskalle each night to strengthen Auril's spell. Geluvicken is also the hidden hand behind the frost druid activity in Icewind Dale - it was she, who sent Ravisin and her sister to ravage Ten-Towns (pg. 85) and/or Yselm to lure the characters into a trap (pg. 103).

RUNNING GELUVICKEN

Like her goddess, Geluvicken is arrogant and aloof, but she also possesses a great fury and an unyielding devotion to her goddess. She will attack at any perceived slight to Auril and will never accept defeat, fighting on to the bitter end. Read more about running an encounter with her under 'Encounter with Geluvicken' later in this

GELUVICKEN'S DEFEAT

Using Geluvicken instead of Auril also serves another purpose: her defeat allows you to introduce Auril as the adventure's main villain in a more ominous way. When Geluvicken is nearly defeated, or the characters are close to escaping from her with the Codicil of White in hand, read or paraphrase:

The frost giant roars in anger as specks of snow and shards of ice whirl around her, slowly lifting her until she hovers several feet of the ground. Turning her face to the skies, the giant yells: "Frostmaiden, I have failed you! Accept my final offering - this pitiful mortal coil and my eternal soul - so that you may deliver your cold judgement to those who have wronged you. Auril, I beseech you, use me as your vessel!" While the giant speaks, rime spreads across her body, until she is completely covered in a thick layer of ice, just as the last words cross her lips. The giant's body stills then, as does the whirlwind of ice and snow, as if time itself has stopped. Creaking loudly, the giant's head turns toward you, eyes glowing with a fierce, blue light. She looks straight at you - through you, almost, her gaze as cold and sharp as icicles - and says in a voice that is simultaneously as soft as a whisper and as deafening as thunder: "I see you." With those words, the giant's frozen body and all her belongings explode into millions of small, icy shards that come clashing to the ground underneath it, until there's nothing left of the giant but scattered piles of ice and snow - and the echo of an eerie voice on the wind: "I see you..."

Geluvicken's sacrifice has brought Auril – or at least an aspect of her divinity - to the Material Plane. The goddess has come to finish the work that has been started - and to get vengeance on the adventurers, and prevent them from undoing her spell. Luckily, Auril is yet too weak to manifest in a physical form, and must bide her time. This gives you a chance to introduce Auril in her various forms later in the adventure, as she stalks the party through the snow, before eventually bringing her full strength to bear against them in Ythryn. The DM's resources for Chapter 6 and 7 cover this in detail.

SUMMARY

You can avoid Auril's presence on the island causing problems by:

- · Encouraging the characters to avoid her.
- Having Auril flee instead of dying or allowing the characters to escape her with their lives.
- Having Auril's Everlasting Rime remain in effect even if the goddess is killed.
- · Replace Auril with the frost giant Geluvicken.

GELUVICKEN

Huge giant, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (patchwork armor) Hit Points 172 (15d12 + 75) Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws STR +10, CON +9, WIS +9, CHA +5 Skills Athletics +10, Nature +5, Perception +9, Survival +9 Damage Immunities Cold Senses Passive Perception 19 Languages Common, Druidic, Giant Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Geluvicken fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

Spellcasting. Geluvicken is a 15th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following druid spells prepared:

- Cantrips (at will): druidcraft, frostbite, produce flame, resistance
- 1st level (4 slots): fog cloud, ice knife, thunderwave
- 2nd level (3 slots): hold person, moonbeam, spike growth
- 3rd level (3 slots): dispel magic, sleet storm, slow, wind wall
- · 4th level (3 slots): freedom of movement, ice storm
- 5th level (2 slots): commune with nature, cone of cold
- 6th level (1 slot): bones of the earth, investiture of ice
- · 7th level (1 slot): whirlwind
- · 8th level (1 slot): control weather

Actions

Multiattack. Geluvicken makes two attacks with her staff.

Staff of Auril. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 25 (3d12 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) cold damage and the target must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the target is restrained as ice forms around its legs. As an action, a restrained creature can attempt to free itself or another creature within its reach from the ice, doing so with a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check.

Stomp. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (2d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Frostbite. A creature within 60 ft. Geluvicken can see must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the target takes 10 (3d6) cold damage and has disadvantage on the next weapon attack it makes before the ends of its next turn.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Geluvicken can take 3 legendary actions. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Geluvicken regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Cast Cantrip. Geluvicken casts a cantrip. Stomp. Geluvicken makes one Stomp attack. Staff of Auril (Costs 2 Actions). Geluvicken makes one attack with her staff.

GETTING TO THE ISLAND

Before the chapter can being in earnest, the characters have to get to the Island of Solstice. This means that they need to learn where the codicil is and how they can get to it. In the book, both questions are answered by Vellynne Harpell, who tells the characters that the Codicil of White is on the Island of Solstice and that the sperm whale Angajuk can take them there – which is very convenient, but may also feel a bit too easy.

In the DM's resources for Chapter 2: Icewind Dale, you can find advice on how you can make Vellynne's quest a bit less linear, so the characters have to figure out that they can fin the Codicil of White on the Island of Solstice from various locations in Icewind Dale, such as 'Jarlmoot' or the 'Dark Duchess'. Below is advice on how you expand on this, by making the characters active participants in deciding on how to get to the island.

How to get to the Island

When the characters learn about the Island of Solstice whether from Vellynne or another source – you can have characters local to Icewind Dale know that:

- The Sea of Moving Ice is hard to navigate. Securing a ship that will sail there is likely to be both difficult and expensive. The closest port where such a ship could be is the prison 'Revel's End'.
- The awakened sperm whale Angajuk, who resides near the coast of the Sea of Moving Ice, has reportedly offered rides to humanoids in the past.
- The goliaths living in the Spine of the World are often seen riding on the backs of griffons, who can fly fast and far across Icewind Dale.

If none of the characters are local, or you just want them to work a little more for the information, you can have Vellynne suggest that they ask around in Ten-Towns. There they shouldn't have a hard time learning more perhaps from an old human fisherman named Darlan 'Four-fingers', who's lost most of his fingers to frostbite:

"You's looking to get onto the Sea of Moving Ice? Eh, blasted waters those - and cold as Stygia too! There's a few brave ship captains who travel there, taking goods and no-gooders to and from Revel's End up north. Oh yeah, and then there's Angajuk, the ol' talkin' whale. Once hauled my cousin's friend out 'em waters - saved her life, most likely. I's heard it sometimes takes on passengers!"

If the party speaks with Darlan in a tavern, you can have Rosie Ogord, a diminutive halfling trapper, chime in:

"If you're not looking to fish, but just want to get there - and get there quick - maybe you should ask the goliaths living down by the Spine of the World. I see them flying by on griffons from time-to-time - now, that's traveling in style!"

Armed with this information, the characters should be allowed to make a decision about how to proceed on their own. The book provides ways for the characters to acquire each method of transportation - befriending Angajuk, paying Sharlasta Stormsword, or persuading the goliath tribes – which are all serviceable ways to proceed. If the characters end up heading toward the goliaths, you may want to take a look at the excellent adventure Wyrmdoom Hunt by Dan Kahn, which expands on the quest to end the goliath feud.

ON THE WAY TO THE ISLAND

Figuring out how to get to the island is one thing, actually getting there is another. In quick summary, the book says that:

- · Angajuk travels there on a leisurely, picturesque journey that takes three days.
- The Ravenous, Sharlasta Stormsword's ship, gets to the island in five days.
- The book doesn't say how long it takes to get there on griffons, but if we assume a pace similar to previous publications and the chardalyn dragon, they should make the journey in about 12-18 hours.

If you want to keep control of the pacing (see the next page), it makes sense to have the characters arrive in the middle of the day, so they have time to explore the island before Auril/Geluvicken departs for her nightly trip.

A ROC ON THE ROAD

If you want to spice the journey up a bit, you can also have the characters run into Auril/Geluvicken and her roc along the way, which also allows you to foreshadow her presence on the Island of Solstice. Regardless of their method of travel, the characters may run into the roc and its passenger as they get closer to the island:

- · If traveling aboard Angajuk, the Sperm Whale must come up for air every 90 minutes. On one of these occasions, it – and the characters – senses the giant roc fly by overhead. Fierce and hungry, the roc dives down toward the sperm whale, which panics and quickly begins to dive under the surface.
- If traveling on the Ravenous, the characters are awakened – if they are sleeping below – by a loud, bird-like cawing and a terrified shriek, as the roc dives down to snatch one of the Ravenous' sailors off the deck. Characters who are on the deck or who get there quickly can see the enormous bird flying away, its victim's shrieks slowly becoming less audible.
- If traveling by griffon, the sound of the roc's huge, flapping wings precede it, causing the griffons to panic and try to hide. Have the players roll a DC 14 group Dexterity (Stealth) check for the griffons (+2). On a success, the griffons quickly dive away, allowing the characters to see the roc as it flies swiftly past above. On a failure, the roc attacks one of the griffons that failed the check, before quickly being ordered away by its rider (see below).

In all cases, Auril/Geluvicken wants to waste no time with the roc's escapades and commands it to fly away even if attacked or provoked. With a speed of 120 ft., it is highly unlikely that the characters can catch up with it, but you can allow them to gain a glimpse of its rider either a horned, owl-like humanoid (Auril's first form), or a fearsome-looking frost giant dressed in winter clothes.

SUMMARY

You can expand upon the characters' journey to the island by making these changes:

- The characters know about all three methods of travel or learn about them from locals, and can choose which method they wish to pursue.
- To allow you to control the chapter's pace, have the characters arrive in the middle of the day.
- Have the characters briefly encounter Auril/Geluvicken and her roc while en route to the island.

PACING CHAPTER 5

Assuming the character faces every possible challenge in Chapter 5 – which they could, if they wanted to – they will have to contend with:

- Ice mephit (I1)
- Frost giant skeleton (I2)
- 20 ghouls (I2)
- 2 giant sharks (I2)
- 5 merrow (I2)
- · 3 sea hags (I2)
- Nass Lantomir's ghost (I3)
- 7 yetis (I5)
- Abominable yeti (I5)
- Ice troll (I6)
- Frost giant (G3)
- 6 ice mephits (G6)
- 7 piercers
- Auril or Geluvicken (G8)
- Roc (G9)
- 2 frost giant skeletons (G12)
- 6 giant vultures and Isarr Kronenstrom (G19)

In addition to these challenges, the characters may also run into various other hazards, minor traps, and possibly suffer exhaustion due to extreme cold and Auril's tests.

Looking down this list, a group of 7th-level characters will be hard-pressed to survive all these encounters within a single day of adventuring. But, if the characters are allowed unlimited rests, many of the challenges in the chapter become negligible. Complicating pacing even further, the chapter's toughest fight - a showdown with Auril or her powerful druid follower - can possibly happen in the middle of the chapter.

Generally, you want a pace that ensures that each day of adventuring - the period between long rests - is tense and exciting, without being too lethal for the characters. To do this, we must create opportunities for a long rest when it is needed, while also making sure that the characters can't abuse long rests to the point where encounters never become dangerous. Below are some of the ways we can accomplish this in chapter 5.

SETTING A DEADLINE

The easiest way to ensure that the characters don't 'spam' long rests is by setting a deadline for their time on the island. If the characters have been transported here by one of the means provided in the book (pg. 197), this is rather easy. The sperm whale Angajuk, the ship from Revel's End, and the griffons from Skytower Shelter, won't remain at the island for more than 24 hours because of the island's incredible cold and dangerous inhabitants. This deadline allows the characters, at most, two long rests, if even that.

Note that using a 24-hour deadline will require you to make changes to some of Auril's tests. See 'Test of Endurance' and 'Test of Isolation' later in this document.

RESTRICTING THE LONG REST

Another way we can control the pacing of the chapter is to control when the characters can take a long rest. We can do this by changing the regional effects described in the book (pg. 198), which says that creatures without resistance or immunity to cold damage only regain hit points equal to their Constitution modifier when expending a Hit Die during a short rest.

This is already a bit of a weird effect, because it heavily incentivizes that the characters take long rests instead

of short rests. Usually, you would want the characters to take short rests while at a dangerous adventure location, so that they can get a little - but not everything - back before each encounter. By making short rests worse, you're making the characters take more long rests, which can really mess up the chapter's pacing. You can fix this by changing the rule to:

· Creatures that lack resistance or immunity to cold damage can't gain the benefit of a long rest while within 1 mile of the island.

There's one caveat here: this regional effect is only in place while Auril/Geluvicken is on the island. This means that the characters can actually take a long rest, just not whenever they want to. You can use this to control when the characters take a long rest.

TIMING THE LONG REST

Assuming that all characters don't have resistance to cold damage, they will have to do without a long rest while they make their initial exploration of the Island of Solstice - during which they may face the various encounters on the shipwrecks, the yetis, the ice troll, and Nass Lantomir's ghost. This should be doable for a 7th-level party in a single day of adventuring, assuming that they are just a bit clever about it.

However, once they find Professor Skant, they are told that this effect is only in place while Auril/Geluvicken is on the island. Conveniently, Auril/Geluvicken is usually away for most of the night, perhaps even as much as 8-10 hours. The characters now have a difficult choice to make: will they use this time to take a long rest, and then head into the fortress knowing that Auril/Geluvicken may get back soon after, or will they forego the long rest and take advantage of Auril/Geluvicken's departure to investigate the fortress without fear of running into her?

If the characters have taken care of business on the island itself before going into Grimskalle, they can potentially encounter an elderly frost giant, ice mephits, piercers, frost giant skeletons, a Reghed tribe leader and giant vultures, and Auril's other tests. Once again, this makes for a decent day of adventuring for a party of 7th-level characters.

Whether or not they will have to contend with Auril/ Geluvicken is up to you. If they take a long rest before heading in, you can have them run into her somewhere inside the fortress, or as they're trying to leave with the Codicil of White (see 'Encounter with Geluvicken' later in this document). If they press on without a rest, the challenges inside the fortress may be difficult enough to handle even without Auril/Geluvicken showing up, and you can allow the characters to slip away just before she returns to the fortress.

SUMMARY

To maintain a good pace in Chapter 5, you may want to:

- Set a deadline of 24 hours for the characters' stay on the island, by having Angajuk, Sharlasta, or the griffons insist that they will only stay for that long.
- Change the regional effect so that characters without cold resistance or immunity can't take a long rest while Auril/Geluvicken is on the island.
- Give the characters the opportunity to take a long rest as Auril/Geluvicken leaves the island on her nightly flight to cast her spell of cold and darkness.

RUNNING CHAPTER 5

On the following pages you will find advice on how to run the various encounters and locations on the Island of Solstice and inside the fortress of Grimskalle.

ISLAND OF SOLSTICE

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

II. RUINED DOCK

If they arrive by ship or on the back of Angajuk, the characters' first 'challenge' is the ruined dock.

Climbing the Dock. An Athletics check is required to climb up the docks, but there's no consequences to failure, which makes the check pointless. You can either decide that no check is required, or that a character who fails the check falls 20 feet into the frigid water, taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage and potentially suffering exhaustion from the cold water.

Söpo the Ice Mephit. An ice mephit waits for the characters here, ready to act as a 'helpful' guide. It only speaks Aquan or Auran, however, making it very unlikely that characters can communicate with it. You may want to have Söpo speak broken common, so it can welcome the characters as they arrive atop the stairs:

A small, winged creature of ice sits perched at the top of the stairs, its eyes lighting up as it sees you. "Welcome, welcome, to the Island of Solstice. So pleasant it is to have visitors. Söpo, am I – at your service," rasps the creature, shaking snow off its wings before continuing: "It is your first time here, yes – Söpo has not seen you before, no, never. Let Söpo show you the beautiful island, yes. Any questions you have, Söpo shall answer!"

If the characters haven't acquired the *professor orb* yet, and you want to make certain that they do so, you can have Söpo mention that:

"Söpo has had no visitors for a long time. And the last to come was alone and wet, and very cold, oh so very cold. The Frostmaiden's cold touch took her before Söpo could talk much with her. Nothing poor Söpo could do to warm her, no," the creature says apologetically, shrugging his icy shoulders. "She lies not far from here, no, not far at all."

I2. SHIPWRECKS

The various shipwrecks around the isle hold different challenges. These are, in essence, mini-encounters the characters can take on at their own leisure – but only if they can withstand the cold of the frigid water and by diving down to each shipwreck, if they have no other means of breathing underwater. While none of the encounters pose a particularly difficult challenge to 7th-level characters, the characters may get themselves into trouble if they decide to thoroughly search through every ship without taking a long rest.

The Hags and the Professor. If having Professor Skant just lying about the isle seems a bit too easy, or you just want the characters to explore some of the shipwrecks, you can have the orb still be on Nass Lantomir's wrecked ship – coincidentally also the ship where three sea hags have made their lair. The hags – Ellin, Marlin, and Atrunia – have no great need for the professor orb, although they enjoy the polite and intelligent conversation Skant provides. They will trade Professor Skant for an ice troll heart and can point the characters toward '16. Garden of Death', if the characters haven't already defeated the troll there.

The characters can, of course, also just choose to kill the sea hags and take the orb and their other treasures. In either case, Professor Skant is relieved to be freed from the sea hags, whom it describes as "passionate, but also quite exhausting, conversation partners."

Replacing the Trident. A +2 trident is a strong weapon, but also not very interesting. If you want to, you can replace it with a *freezing trident of the ocean* (made using **Nybor's Tome of Enchanted Weapons**).

Maps. This download provides maps of two Sunken Shipwrecks, which you can use to run encounters in or around the sunken shipwrecks.

Freezing Trident of the Ocean

Weapon (trident), very rare (requires attunement)
This trident seems to be made entirely of azure ice.

Freezing. When you hit with an attack using this weapon, the target takes an extra 1d6 cold damage and its speed is reduced by 10 feet (to a minimum of 10 feet) until the start of your next turn.

Ocean. This weapon has 3 charges. While you carry it, you can use an action and expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells (save DC 15): water breathing (1 charge), dominate beast (1 charge, can only target a beast that has an innate swimming speed), or control water (2 charges). The weapon regains all expended charges daily at dawn.



13. NASS LANTOMIR'S GHOST

This is where the characters – very conveniently – find Nass Lantomir and the professor orb. There's a few potential issues with this location.

Finding the Corpse. Nass Lantomir's corpse is a bit out of the way, so unless the characters make a point out of investigating the entire island, there's no guarantee that they will find it on their own – which is a problem, if you want them to have the orb. You can make discovery of the corpse more likely by having Söpo tell them about Nass' corpse when they arrive (as described under 'I1. Ruined Dock' on the previous page), or by pointing out the corpse ('there seems to be a humanoid shape buried underneath a layer of snow') to the characters if they arrive on the back of griffons.

The Convenient Orb. It is very convenient that Nass is still holding on to the professor orb when the characters find her. If you want the characters to put a bit more effort into finding the orb, you can have the orb be in the sea hags' possession (as suggested under 'I2. Shipwrecks' on the previous page) or even have it be stolen by murderous sahuagin, as detailed in the adventure Temple of the Four Gods by Dan Kahn. In either case, Nass Lantomir's ghost – if the characters have an opportunity to speak with her – lets the characters know that she didn't have time to grab the orb before swimming to shore, which means it likely went down with the ship.

Nass Lantomir's Ghost. The book describes how the ghost tries to possess any character that disturbs Nass' remains, but otherwise doesn't elaborate much on how the DM should handle this scenario. Here are some suggestions:

- · When Nass' remains are disturbed, the ghost immediately tries to take control of the character. You can have the player roll a DC 14 Charisma saving throw, or you can make the saving throw for them, without letting anyone know what you're rolling (make sure to note the characters' Charisma saving throws before the session). On a failure, the ghost possesses the character without anyone else noticing.
- Discreetly let the player controlling that character know that they have been possessed by a ghost (you can give them the 'Nass Lantomir Handout' that came with this download). They can roleplay their character much as they would anyway, except that some of their statistics change, and they have a strong dislike toward Vellynne, and will take advantage of any opportunity to convince the other characters to either send her away or kill her, or even purposefully try to harm her in an inconspicuous way (such as 'accidentally' including her in their spells' areas of effect during combat).
- If the player seems annoyed or perturbed by this development, you can let them know that this change won't last forever. If the character is ever reduced to 0 hit points, is affected by Turn Undead, or is targeted by dispel evil and good, the possession ends. It also ends when the character acquires the Codicil of White.

If the character avoids possession or the ghost is expelled from its host at any point, Nass' ghost becomes clearly visible to the party. Upon seeing Nass, Vellynne (if she is with the party) reacts with cold scorn:

"I see that you have gotten much what you deserve, Nass. Were you too inept to foresee your own demise, or just arrogant enough to believe you would be able to avoid it?"

For her part, Nass wastes no time on Vellynne, instead turning her ghostly form toward the characters:

"This old hag is a second-rate wizard at best, and a necromancer at that. She is useless! I, on the other hand, am an accomplished diviner and could be of great aid. You seek the Codicil of White, I presume? Help me possess this windbag's decrepit form, and I shall help you find it!"

Nass wants the characters to stand down while she attempts to possess Vellynne, intervening only to keep the wizard from casting spells. Nass isn't lying - if she takes possession of Vellynne, she will help the characters find the Codicil of White, as it is the only way she can find her eternal rest. Vellynne will vehemently argue against allowing the ghost to possess her, instead urging the party to destroy the spirit and get on with it. If the characters help Nass' ghost possess Vellynne, the necromancer will hold a grudge against them once the possession is over and she regains control of her bodyperhaps even causing her to betray them once they have reached Ythryn in chapter 7.

I4. ICE STATUES

This scenario is pretty cool - the Frostmaiden materializing in a snowy form to curse a character that touches one of her statues. If you want it to be more likely to happen, you can decide that just touching a statue is enough to provoke the goddess.

Map. This download comes with an 'Ice Statues' map, which shows some of the ice statues at the foot of the mountain in the middle of the island, which you can use to run an encounter here.

I6. GARDEN OF DEATH

Allow a character with proficiency in Arcana or Nature to know the properties of an ice troll heart, providing a good reward for completing this encounter.

Map. This download comes with a 'Garden of Death' map, which can be used to run an encounter here.

You can make some or all of the following changes to locations on the Island of Solstice:

- I1. Ruined Dock. Skip the check to climb the dock or introduce a consequence for failure, and allow Söpo to speak Common so it can communicate with the party.
- I2. Shipwrecks. Have the sea hags be in possession of Professor Skant and ask for a troll heart in trade, and replace the +2 trident with a freezing trident of the
- I3. Nass Lantomir's Ghost. Use the 'Nass Lantomir Handout' to handle Nass' ghost's possession of a character.
- I4. Ice Statues. Have Auril show up to curse a character that just touches one of her statues.
- I6. Garden of Death. Allow a character proficient in Arcana or Nature to know what a troll heart does.

GRIMSKALLE

Below is a closer look at some of the locations inside Grimskalle, including advice on how to run them.

G3. FROST GIANT WARDEN

The book describes Ertgard as deaf, but also says that the characters can interrogate him. If none of the characters can speak sign language, you can have Ertgard instead be nearly deaf, which causes him to shout and ask the characters to repeat their questions.

Deception. Instead of having Ertgard immediately attack, you can have the aging giant exclaim (in giant): "Who goes there? My queen, is it you?" as the characters open the door to his room (briefly forgetting that Queen Vassavicken is long dead). This gives the characters a chance to impersonate the queen if they know Giant and succeed on a DC 10 Charisma (Deception) check, potentially getting information from him without having to fight him first. Each time a character speaks, it must repeat this check. On a failure, or if Ertgard ever gets within 20 ft. of the characters, Ertgard realizes he has been deceived and attacks.

Replacing Auril. If you have replaced Auril with Geluvicken, replace any mentions of Auril or the Frostmaiden in Ertgard's information with Geluvicken.

G8. QUEEN'S BEDCHAMBER

If you have replaced Auril with Geluvicken, the frost giant is here if she hasn't departed on her nightly journey to bolster Auril's Everlasting Rime. She rests on a giant, broken bed in the room to the west - her mother's old bedroom - and hears the party coming if they are attacked by the piercers in G7, or if they fail on a group DC 19 Dexterity (Stealth) check. If she notices the characters or the characters attack her, she exclaims in giant: "Intruders! Sacrilege!" before attacking. See 'Encounter with Geluvicken' later in this document for advice on how to handle this encounter.

G15. Tests of the Frostmaiden

This is where the fortress gets complicated. In order to get to the Codicil of White, the characters must succeed on four tests. The process is as follows:

- · A test begins when the characters opens one of the doors in areas G16-G19.
- When the test begins, the characters are teleported to a location in the frozen tundra of Icewind Dale.
- While undergoing the test, the characters have the Frostmaiden's symbol floating above their head, which Reghed tribe members recognize and fear.
- To enter Auril's vault, each test has to be passed by at least one party member.

In short summary, the four tests are:

- Test of Cruelty. The characters must slay defenseless elderly, or at least abandon them to their fate.
- Test of Endurance. The characters must make a long trek through the tundra without becoming too exhausted or dying.
- · Test of Isolation. The characters must watch over a tribal camp for six days, and pass the test by becoming isolated from the rest of the party.
- Test of Preservation. The characters must protect a child from a murderous Reghed chieftain.

The idea here is cool, but it can present some issues. Under each of locations G16-19, there's advice on how to run and possible alter each of these tests.

G16. Test of Cruelty

For some parties, this test will be the most difficult – and most difficult for the DM to handle. Assuming that the characters aren't evil, it is hard to imagine that they will allow Gunvald to slaughter and eat the elderly - and much less that they will aid him in doing so. Of course, that is also the point – have the characters face a tough moral choice. But, in this case, it seems very unlikely to work. Not only is the action very reprehensible, the characters may not even be sure that allowing the elders to be eaten is what they need to do to pass the test.

Using NPCs. To make sure the characters understand their options, you can have Vellynne (or another NPC with the party) help them out. She can offer to do the deed, explaining that she believes only one of them has to pass the test. If the characters balk at this, she can also explain that simply walking away and leaving the elders to their fate is probably good enough.

An Alternative Solution. If the characters are hesitant, you can also allow for another solution to the test: killing Gunvald, even though he pleads for mercy. If the characters attack him to prevent him from killing the elderly, he will drop to his knees once he drops to 0 hit points and beg: "Let me live, I beg you! Do not be cruel – I do only what I do to save the tribe!". If the characters hesitate, the tribe's evil shaman chimes in: "You must kill him. As the frostmaiden says: 'Let cruelty be the knife that keeps your enemies at bay!" While this doesn't guarantee that the party passes the test, it does make it much more likely.

G17. TEST OF ENDURANCE

In this test, the characters must endure a hard trek through the frozen tundra.

Starting the Test. The first potential issue with this test is how it starts. The characters arrive, but are immediately asked to leave by the King of the Elk Tribe, who will only give them an opportunity to make the journey with the tribe if they first assure him that they mean no harm. If the characters allow King Jarund to shoo them away, or simply don't understand that they're supposed to make the trek alongside the elk tribe, they automatically fail the test. To make it more likely that this doesn't happen, you can have them instead arrive after the march has already begun, and have Jarund call out: "Auril's emissaries have come! Come, warriors of the Elk, let us show the Frostmaiden that we can endure more than even her chosen servants!'

Time Frame. During this test, the characters can potentially rack up to four levels of exhaustion over 14 hours. There's two issues with this – first, if the characters have a ride waiting near the island (such as the griffons), 14 hours is a long time to spend on this test. Second, four levels of exhaustion will take days to recover from, potentially making any encounters after this test exceedingly difficult. If you want to, you can instead set the following parameters for the test:

- The trek is a three-hour jog through a heavy blizzard.
- · Each character must make a Constitution saving throw after each hour, gaining a level of exhaustion on a failure. The DC is 10 + 3 for each hour after the first.
- · A character with two levels of exhaustion becomes too slow to continue and is left behind by the tribe (but will still be teleported back when the test is over).
- Any party member who completes the journey with two or fewer levels of exhaustion passes the test.

The test is still roughly as difficult as before, but is far less punishing, and can be completed in less time.



G18. Test of Isolation

In this test, the characters are tasked with watching over an empty camp for six days.

This test is a bit weird. The characters just have to sit around and wait, making a group DC 10-20 Wisdom (Survival) check each day, losing one party member with each failure. Characters can only lose if they die or stop Bjornhild from performing her raid – which means that the only purpose of the rolls were to figure out who has to make another DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or suffer indefinite madness. In addition, the test takes 6 days to complete, which means that any ride the characters had to the Island of Solstice is probably long gone and that they will have plenty of time to take long rests, making any subsequent encounters much easier.

Changing the Test. If you want a shorter test that is perhaps also more exciting and makes a bit more sense, you can change the test as described below:

- The test takes only 3 hours, but is intensified eldritch whispers and faceless horrors scream from the dark around the camp, tearing at the characters' sanity.
- Each character must make a Wisdom saving throw at the end of each hour. The DC is 10 + 3 for each hour after the first. On the first failure, a character suffers a long-term madness (Dungeon Master's Guide, pg. 260).
- On the second failure, or if a character rolls a natural 1, a character also becomes hostile toward the other characters and will try their best to kill them. You can allow the player to determine themselves how their character attempts to do this and have the scenario play out much as you would an ordinary combat encounter. Whenever a deranged character takes damage, it can repeat the Wisdom saving throw. On a success, it still suffers long-term madness, but is no longer hostile towards the other party members (unless it fails another saving throw at the end of the
- · All party members who complete the waiting period without failing more than one saving throw passes the Test of Isolation.

With these changes, the test both takes a more reasonable amount of time and becomes a great deal more challenging, as the characters may have to face each other in combat to pass the test.

G19. Test of Preservation

In this test, the characters must protect a young boy from the chieftain Isarr Kronenstrom.

This test is fairly straight forward and both what they are required to do and how they can accomplish it, should be pretty clear to the characters. As a minor change, you can make it just a bit easier to speak with Aerix. Since calm emotions is a rather rare spell, and having Aerix account of events will help give some context to what is going on, you may want to allow a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check to do the trick instead.

G20. Entrance to the Vault

The one big issue with Auril's tests and this room is that if the characters fail just one test, they won't be able o enter this room. The book provides a solution to this problem by having three frost druids show up to lead the characters into the room. This seems suspiciously convenient. In addition, because the party must complete all quests to gain entrance, as soon as all characters fail to pass a test (such as refusing to let the elders be eaten during the 'Test of Cruelty'), there's no reason to attempt the other tests at all.

Changing the Requirements. You can avoid the need for convenient visitors and keep the characters motivated to undertake all the tests by changing what the disembodied voice in the room says (pg. 212) to:

"This way is shut to all but those who undertake the tests of cruelty, endurance, isolation, and preservation."

By requiring only that the characters undertake the quests, and not necessarily pass them, you ensure that the characters will have to take each test, while also enabling them to enter even if they all failed one or more of the tests.

Consequences of Failure. However, while the door will open if all the tests weren't passed, failure isn't without consequences. If all characters failed one or more of Auril's tests, the two bas-reliefs of frost giants on either side of the door breathe a blast of cold at the party as the door opens. Each creature in the room must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) cold damage for each test none of the characters passed on a failure, and half as much on a success.

G21. HALL OF THE FOUR WINDS

After passing Auril's tests, the characters gain entrance to this chamber, where they can read some helpful information about Auril's tenets, but little else. This is good information, but it comes a bit late. You can allow the characters to read the tenets of Auril's faith before they are expected to adhere to them during the tests, by simply by having 'G20. Entrance to the Vault' be on the other side of this room (the door to 'G22. Chamber of the Codicil') instead.

SUMMARY

You can make some or all of the following changes to locations inside Grimskalle:

- G3. Frost Giant Warden. Ertgard is only nearly deaf.
- G16. Test of Cruelty. Killing the evil Gunvald as he begs for mercy is also enough to pass the test.
- G17. Test of Endurance. Jarun doesn't try to shoo the characters away, and the test takes only 3 hours, during which the characters must make DC 10, 13, and 16 Constitution saving throws, suffering exhaustion on each failure. Characters that complete the journey with two levels of exhaustion or less, pass.
- G18. Test of Isolation. The test takes only three hours, during which the characters must make DC 10, 13, and 16 Wisdom saving throws, gaining long-term madness on the first failure, and attacking their allies on the second failure. Characters that complete the test without failing twice passes the test.
- G19. Test of Preservation. Allow a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check to calm Aerix.
- G20. Entrance to the Vault. The door opens when the characters have undertaken all four quests, but have them be hit with a blast of cold if they all failed one or more tests, dealing 18 (4d8) cold damage for each test they all failed (DC 15 Constitution save halves).
- · G21. Hall of the Four Winds. Help the characters understand what's expected of them by moving this room to be just before 'G20. Entrance to the Vault'.

ENCOUNTER WITH GELUVICKEN

Part of the reason you may want to use Geluvicken instead of Auril is that having the characters encounter her creates fewer issues – in fact, you probably want the characters to encounter her, so you can use her death (or anger at the characters' escape) to foreshadow Auril. Below we will take a closer look at where this encounter can happen and how to run it.

IN THE BEDCHAMBER

If the characters infiltrate the fortress while Geluvicken is home and head into her bedchamber, the frost giant immediately attacks. Two snow golems manifest from piles of snow near the staircase and attack alongside her.

OUTSIDE THE CHAMBER OF THE CODICIL

If Geluvicken was home when the characters entered the fortress, or has returned while the characters underwent Auril's tests, she is alerted to their presence as soon as the door to 'G22. Chamber of the Codicil' is opened. She hurries down to confront the characters in 'G10. Ice Rink', where she commands the reluctant giant walrus Ukuma to fight alongside her.

As the Characters are Leaving the Island

If Geluvicken is only just returning home as the characters are leaving, or is slow to react to the theft of the Codicil of White, she pursues them on her roc:

- If the characters are leaving on the back of Angajuk, Geluvicken and her roc show up as they are 120 ft. from 'I1. Ruined Dock'. Once all characters are atop Angajuk, the whale dives under the surface, preventing Geluvicken from continuing the chase.
- If the characters are leaving on the Ravenous, Geluvicken and her roc show up shortly after the ship sets off from the island. The characters have little chance of escaping the swift roc, but are aided by the ship's two ballista (+6 to hit, range 120/480 ft., 3d10 piercing damage), which are manned by six sailors.
- If the characters are leaving on griffons, the roc catches up to them in the air shortly after they depart the island. The characters are unlikely to escape on the slower griffons, but the griffons can aid them in combat against Geluvicken and her mount.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

Regardless of where the characters encounter Geluvicken, she meets them in much the same manner: by cursing them as "Intruders!" and "Defilers!" and swearing that they will become "offerings to the Frostmaiden!". Her tactics in combat are simple:

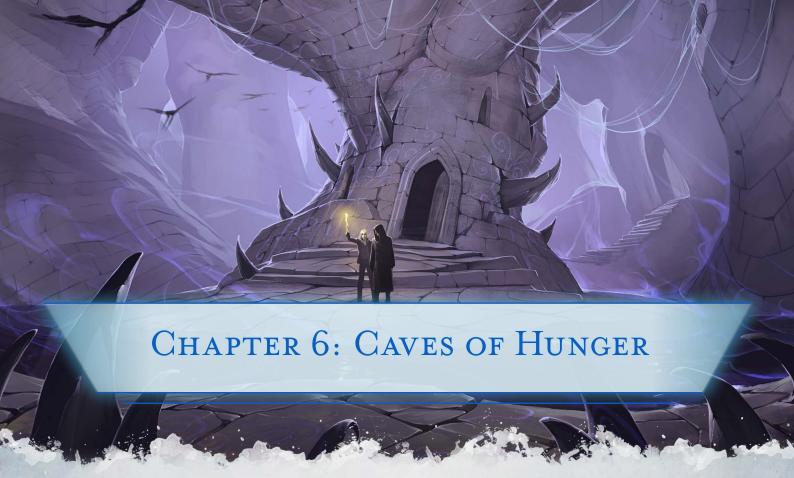
- · Geluvicken focuses her attacks on any character who has the codicil.
- If she has had time to prepare, she has freedom of movement cast upon herself.
- Her strongest spell (control weather) is of little use in combat, so she relies on spells like whirlwind, cone of cold, and ice storm to deal with the characters.

Geluvicken fights on until the better end, fanatical in her resolve to slav the characters. As described under 'Replacing Auril' earlier in this document, the characters' victory against, or escape from, Geluvicken will prompt her to summon Auril, who manifests slowly – on the material plane, and will continue to haunt the characters as they search for Ythryn and a way to end her Everlasting Rime.

ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY

If the characters are on their last leg and very low on resources, you can make an encounter with Geluvicken easier by employing some or all of the following changes:

- · Geluvicken has two levels of exhaustion (due to her efforts to bolster Auril's Everlasting Rime).
- · Geluvicken's 8th-level spell slot has been expended casting control weather during her nightly journey.
- If the fight happens in 'G8. Queen's Bedchamber', have only one or no **snow golems** be present.
- If the fight happens in 'G10. Ice Rink', the giant walrus Ukuma turns against Geluvicken and aids the party.
- If the fight happens as the characters are leaving the island, have the roc focus its attacks on Angajuk or the sailors on the Ravenous, or spend all its movement keeping Geluvicken in range of the party if they are on the backs of griffons.



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 unmistakeable 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)

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.

Caves of Hunger Roster

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

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 dawn 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. Losing 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 characters 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 dawn spell, which should be enough to turn the encounter in the party's favor.

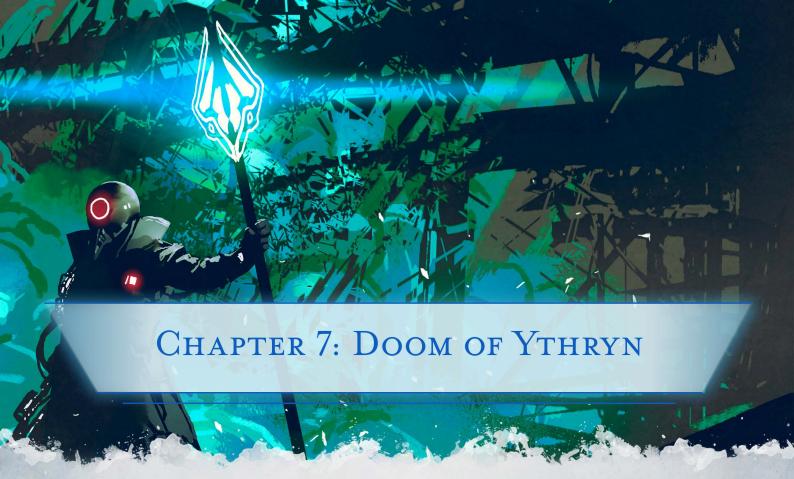
H37. WEIRD INSIGHTS

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).





N CHAPTER 7: DOOM OF YTHRYN THE BRAVE adventurers delve into the ancient ruins of the Netherese city Ythryn, a city that once soared high in the skies above, but which now lies entombed in ice deep underneath the Reghed Glacier.

In this chapter, the epic adventure comes to its conclusion, as the characters face off with eldritch enemies, ancient arcanists, and miraculous magic to uncover Ythryn's long-lost treasures and end Auril's **Everlasting Rime!**

OVERVIEW

The objective of this chapter seems simple at first glance: loot Ythryn's treasures and/or find the Ythryn mythallar and use it to end Auril's Everlasting Rime.

In reality, it is a bit more complicated than that. In order to activate the Ythryn mythallar, the characters must first destroy Iriolarthas. Both Iriolarthas and its treasures are inside the Spire of Iriolarthas, which is surrounded by a force field. To get past the force field, the characters must learn about and perform the Rite of the Arcane Octad, which can only be done by finding inscriptions in various locations throughout the city. Meanwhile, both Avarice and Auril potentially show up to thwart the characters' efforts.

In summary, the characters must thus accomplish the following during their stay in Ythryn:

- · Learn the Rite of the Arcane Octad by visiting various locations in the city.
- Deal with Avarice, who wants Ythryn's treasures.
- · Deal with Iriolarthas, who prevents them from using the mythallar and guards Ythryn's greatest treasures.
- Deal with Auril, who wants to prevent the characters from using the mythallar to end her Everlasting Rime.

On the following pages, you will find an in-depth look at the NPCs that feature prominently in Chapter 7, advice about pacing the chapter, and suggestions on how to handle the characters' exploration of Ythryn.

NPCs in Ythryn

There are three very prominent NPCs that may show up during the characters' stay in Ythryn: Avarice from the Arcane Brotherhood, Iriolarthas the demilich, and Auril the Frostmaiden. Below is advice on handling each of these NPCs.

AVARICE

Of the three NPCs detailed in the chapter, Avarice is the least important. She can be omitted and the chapter runs almost exactly the same as it otherwise would. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't include her, as she can be used to stir things up and increase the characters' sense of urgency by foreshadowing Auril.

As written (pg. 259), Avarice shows up 12 hours after the characters arrive in Ythryn. She sets up camp in 'Y28. Skydock Spire', and sends out cultists to loot the city. It is likely that Avarice will arrive while the characters are still exploring the city and trying to figure out the Rite of the Arcane Octad, which seems like as good a time as any. Her presence presents a complication to the party – or a potential ally, if they are in need of aid - and gives you a chance to foreshadow the impending arrival of Auril the Frostmaiden.

MEETING WITH AVARICE

The book presents a lot of random rolls to determine when and where Avarice's cultists are encountered. You can make things easier by deciding that:

- · Shortly after Avarice's arrival, the characters run into 5 cult fanatics who attack them on sight. If interrogated and magically coerced, a fanatic can tell the party that Avarice is in the city and lead them to her base in 'Y28. Skydock Spire'.
- If the characters don't seek out Avarice on their own, she eventually sends her raven to give them a message once she learns of her scouting party's destruction. She invites them to meet her in the rotating glass

- chamber above 'Y28. Skydock Spire', where she is surrounded by all her surviving minions.
- Avarice offers to partner with the characters if they eject Vellynne from their group and promise her the first pick of any spellbooks they find.
- If the characters haven't defeated Auril yet, Avarice urges the characters to accept her aid by telling them that "the Frostmaiden was not far behind us when we entered the glacier – I can help you claim your prize before its too late!" Avarice and her minions can aid them by gathering inscriptions from the eight towers.
- If the characters ally with Avarice, she doesn't go with them personally, but has her cultists help gather inscriptions to figure out the Rite of the Arcane Octad. She will follow them inside the spire, but is likely to betray them after Iriolarthas has been dealt with - if she feels she has much to gain by doing so (such as the staff of power) without putting herself at great risk.

ENCOUNTER WITH AVARICE

If the characters refuse Avarice's diplomatic overtures, or refuse to meet with her at all, Avarice decides that they have to be eliminated. She may wait until they show her how to pass through the force field or even until they have reached Iriolarthas' treasures. The latter makes good sense if Iriolarthas was defeated earlier in the adventure, but you still want to have a final encounter in the study before the characters can claim his treasures.

In combat, Avarice keeps her distance, letting her gargoyles and surviving cult fanatics (it seems likely that about 10 (3d6) cult fanatics will have survived) engage the characters in melee combat, while she uses fly to stay out of reach, fire shield to dissuade melee attackers, and powerful evocation spells such as fireball and cone of cold to target clusters of enemies.



IRIOLARTHAS THE DEMILICH

The book describes Iriolarthas in detail (pg. 231), and offers various ideas about how to roleplay it as the characters explore the city. The demilich, which the book says "drifts about the necropolis in lonely despair", "judges new arrivals in silence", "watches to see what they do", and "follows them around". Most notably, the book suggests that Iriolarthas will attempt to destroy the characters preemptively if it thinks they aren't send from another Netherese enclave to restore the city.

This is all well and good, but Iriolarthas isn't just a mad, floating skull – it is the key to using the Ythryn mythallar (if alive, Iriolarthas prevents the characters from attuning to the mythallar) and the guardian of the powerful treasures in 'Y19q. Iriolarthas' Study'. If the characters destroy Iriolarthas in a 'random' confrontation midway through their exploration of the city, they don't get to have a climactic battle with the demilich before using the mythallar and claiming its treasures. This is especially anti-climactic if the characters have also already dealt with Auril, as the adventure will then suddenly have no final boss. See 'Pacing Chapter 7' on the following page for more information about how to ensure that the adventure has a satisfying conclusion.

MEETING WITH IRIOLARTHAS

Even if you don't have Iriolarthas directly interfere with the party, it can still be fun to have the demilich follow the characters around to observe them from a reasonable distance, prompting the characters to try and figure out what or who the flying skull is as they explore the ruins. Instead of having Iriolarthas confront them out in the open, the demilich is biding its time, learning the characters' strengths and weaknesses, preparing itself for a final encounter with them in its study. In this case, Iriolarthas may send magen or nothics to challenge the characters, but won't risk itself trying to destroy them, until it is confronted within its spire.

ENCOUNTER WITH IRIOLARTHAS

When the characters do encounter the demilich in '19q. Iriolarthas' Study', you can assume that it has a good understanding of the characters' abilities, proficiencies, and tactics, as it has observed them while they explored the city and overcome various challenges.

Armed with this information, Iriolarthas will direct its living demiplane to engulf the character with the lowest Dexterity saving throw, use its Life Drain against the characters with the lowest Constitution saving throws, target a character with a low Wisdom saving throw with Vile Curse, and so on. Iriolarthas will also make sure to try and remove characters that can deal magic damage which it is most vulnerable to – first, while trying to stay out of range of powerful melee attackers.

Remember also that Iriolarthas has access to its lair actions while within its spire, which makes it a much tougher challenge than otherwise. Especially its ability to hinder spellcasters with an antimagic field or prevent the characters from regaining hit points can be very effective.

AURIL

If Auril survived chapter 5, she shows up in the final chapter to prevent the characters from ending her Everlasting Rime. As written (pg. 260), she arrives a day after the characters have entered Ythryn, dispels the force field around Iriolarthas' spire, stands on the spire's balcony, and sends her minions out to kill the characters.

AURIL'S ARRIVAL

While the idea of having Auril show up and display her godly powers by casually dismissing the force field and taking up position on the balcony is cool, it also messes up the chapter's pacing. The characters are unlikely to have figured out the Rite of the Arcane Octad in just one day, so to have Auril show up and just make all their efforts meaningless by dispelling the force field can feel like a bit of a letdown. In addition, if Auril is on the balcony of the spire, the characters may end up having to face her and Iriolarthas in rapid succession, which would likely be too much for them to handle.

You can still have Auril show up after 24 hours, but instead of claiming the balcony as her base of operations, she takes up position in a location the characters have already explored, such as 'Y24. Tower of Enchantment' or 'Y4. Tower of Abjuration'. The sudden drop in temperature and a 'random' encounter with her minions should let the characters know that Auril has arrived

ENCOUNTER WITH AURIL

Auril is a fitting final encounter for the adventure, which means that an encounter with her needs to be placed at the very end. You can do this by having Auril show up to attack the characters in full force once they begin unraveling her Everlasting Rime, as described below.

After dealing with Iriolarthas in his study, the characters can finally attune to 'Y23. Ythryn Mythallar' and use it to cast control weather and end Auril's Everlasting Rime. However, you can decide that casting the spell isn't enough: To completely undo the effects of Auril's Everlasting Rime, the spell must be in effect for the full 24 hours, during which the character(s) casting the spell must remain within 30 feet of the mythallar.

Once the spell is cast, Auril quickly becomes aware of what is happening and hurries to throw her full strength at the characters. Whether Auril and her minions show up at 'Y23. Ythryn Mythallar' mere minutes after the characters start casting the spell or halfway through the 24-hour window (if you want to give the characters an opportunity to take a long rest) is up to you.

You can start this battle of with a skirmish – a frost giant skeleton and a pair of winter wolves – which lets the party know that Auril is probably onto them. An hour or so later (enough for the party to take a short rest and prepare themselves), Auril shows up with her remaining forces. Remember, you can choose to include only some of Auril's creatures to begin with, introducing more during the combat if the characters are having a too easy time dealing with Auril. Conversely, if the characters are getting overwhelmed, you can let characters attuned to it know how deadly touching the mythallar is, which may prompt characters to push foes into the mythallar. The most important thing is that this final battle is suitably difficult, while still making sure that the characters have a chance of actually defeating Auril. Knowing what is at stake, Auril fights until all three of her forms are destroyed. When the frostmaiden dies, her minions may flee or turn into mists of snow, at your discretion.

SUMMARY

In summary, you can make the following changes while running the three main NPCs in Ythryn:

- Avarice. Arrives after 12 hours, invites the characters to a meeting and offers a partnership (she wants them to reject Vellynne and to give her any spellbooks they find), and will attack them at her full power shortly before they enter Iriolarthas' spire if she is rejected.
- **Iriolarthas.** Observes the party but doesn't attack them until they confront it in 'Y19q. Iriolarthas' Study'.
- Auril. Arrives after 24 hours, doesn't dispel the force field around Iriolarthas' spire, takes up position in an abandoned location, and sends her full might at the party when they use the mythallar to end her spell.

PACING CHAPTER 7

Chapter 7 is in large part about exploring the Necropolis of Ythryn. This makes the chapter into a sandbox of sorts, as the characters are free to choose how to conduct the search of the city. They aren't completely free to do as they choose, however, as there are some locations in the city they will have to visit in order to find information about the Rite of the Arcane Octad.

On the following pages, the various challenges in Chapter 7: Doom of Ythryn are analyzed to establish a sample structure and pace for the chapter, which you can follow to ensure that the chapter remains entertaining and manageable for both you and the players.

GENERAL STRUCTURE

As the final chapter of the adventure, the pacing of Chapter 7: Doom of Ythryn is important not only for gameplay reasons - keeping combat encounters exciting, but not overwhelming – but also because you want the adventure to have a satisfying ending. Having a climactic battle in the middle of the characters' exploration of the city, followed by a lot of cleaning up afterwards (going from building to building dealing with minor encounters) simply isn't very satisfying. You can ensure this by dividing the chapter into three separate parts (or just two, if the characters already dealt with Auril and the Everlasting Rime earlier in the adventure):

- 1. The characters explore the city, dealing with various locations and encounters, including Avarice.
- 2. The characters explore Iriolarthas' spire, dealing with the demilich and obtaining its treasures.
- 3. The characters activate the mythallar, and have a climactic battle with Auril and her minions.

The book partially establishes this structure by requiring the characters to explore the city and figure out all the steps of the Rite of the Arcane Octad before they can enter Iriolarthas' spire to destroy the demilich and take its powerful magic treasures. However, as mentioned under 'Iriolarthas the Demilich' and 'Auril the Frostmaiden' on the previous pages, this only works if you don't have the demilich try to destroy the characters before they enter 'Y19. Spire of Iriolarthas', and if you ensure that the characters don't encounter Auril before they activate 'Y23. Ythryn Mythallar'.

Having an understanding of this general structure is a good first step to ensure that the chapter's pace remains exciting and engaging. To further build out this structure, however, we also need to take a closer look at the various challenges the characters must face in Ythryn and when we should expect them to need a rest.

CHALLENGES IN YTHRYN

Looking at the various challenges in Ythryn (see the 'Necropolis of Ythryn Roster' later in this document), we can establish a rough estimate of how many days - i.e. long rests - the characters will need while in Ythryn.

FIGURING OUT THE RITE

The characters first objective is to find all eight steps of the Rite of the Arcane Octad. The characters will likely run into these encounters as they do so:

- 6 demos magen (Y4)
- 4 living Bigby's hands, 3 night hags (Y7)
- 1 treant, 4 needle blights (Y10)
- 3 galvan magen, 3 demos magen, 1 hypnos magen, 1 blue slaad, 1 green slad (Y15)
- 8 gelatinous cubes (Y20)

This doesn't include any traps, hazards, and random encounters the characters may also run into. All told, a party of 9th-level characters will likely need 1-2 long rests while exploring the Necropolis of Ythryn.

DEALING WITH AVARICE

If you follow the suggestions about dealing with Avarice earlier in this document, the characters' potential showdown with the wizard should happen just before they enter 'Y19. Spire of Iriolarthas'. In this encounter, the characters must contend with:

- Avarice
- · 2 gargoyles
- · 10+ cult fanatics.

This is a decently tough encounter, but will most likely not be too difficult for the characters to handle at 10th level. Dealing with Avarice and her underlings should, however, be enough to motivate the characters to take another long rest before exploring the spire.

DEALING WITH IRIOLARTHAS

After they have secured passage through the force field surrounding 'Y19. Spire of Iriolarthas', they will likely have to contend with these creatures within the spire:

- 1 hypnos magen (Y19a)
- 3 brain in a jar (Y19b)
- 2 living blades of disaster (Y19k)
- 1 demilich, 3 nothics, 1 living demiplane, 3 galvan magen, 2 flesh golems (Y19q)

Again, this seems appropriate for a single day of adventuring. The final encounter with Iriolarthas will be potentially deadly - this is fine as it should be a climactic encounter - and the characters will likely want to take a long rest afterward.

DEALING WITH AURIL

If Auril is present, the last encounter comes as the characters activate the *mythallar* to end her spell:

 Auril and up to 3 frost giant skeletons, 6 snow golems, 6 winter wolves, X coldlight walkers

This is the adventure's final encounter and is sure to challenge even well-rested 11th-level characters.

SUMMARY

In summary, the characters will probably need around 4–5 long rests while in Ythryn:

- 1 long rest immediately after arriving in the city.
- 1-2 long rests while exploring the city.
- · 1 long rest after dealing with Avarice.
- · 1 long rest after dealing with Iriolarthas.

SAMPLE STRUCTURE

Summarizing all this information, you can try to establish a structure for the chapter. This structure isn't a fixed itinerary that you or the players have to adhere to, but can be used to give you an overview of how you expect events to unfold. Just having an idea of what the characters will probably do and how the chapter might unfold, will help you know what to prepare and help you improvise when you need to.

Below is an example of how the chapter could be structured, including various rests and major encounters. This example is only meant to serve as inspiration - you both can and should shuffle things around to fit your vision for the chapter and expectations of how the characters will proceed.

ARRIVING IN YTHRYN

• Long Rest. The characters arrive from the Caves of Hunger and immediately take a long rest (advancing to 9th level as they do so).

- Exploring Ythryn. The characters begin their exploration of Ythryn.
- · Avarice Arrives. Avarice arrives and the characters encounter her minions not long after.
- Exploring Ythryn. The characters continue their exploration of Ythryn.
- Long Rest. After a hard day of exploration, the characters take another long rest.

Day 2

- · Auril Arrives. Auril arrives in the city and the characters encounter her minions shortly after.
- Exploring Ythryn. The characters' exploration of Ythryn concludes as they discover all steps of the Rite of the Arcane Octad.
- Dealing with Avarice. If the characters didn't strike a deal with Avarice, she attacks them with all she has.
- Long Rest. The characters wisely take a long rest before entering the spire (advancing to 10th level).

Day 3

- Spire of Iriolarthas. The characters enter the spire and deal with the various challenges within.
- Dealing with Iriolarthas. The characters face Iriolarthas in an epic battle in his study.
- Ythryn Mythallar. The characters attune to the mythallar and use it to begin casting control weather.
- Long Rest. While waiting for the spell to finish, the characters take another long rest (advancing to 11th level).

Day 4

- Dealing with Auril. Auril and her forces attack the party while they are attuned to the Ythryn mythallar, resulting in a final, climactic battle.
- Conclusion. The characters finish using the *Ythryn* mythallar, end Auril's Everlasting Rime, and can leave Ythryn as wealthy heroes!

RUNNING CHAPTER 7

Below is advice on running chapter 7, including suggestions about handling the Rite of the Arcane Octad, tracking time, and using random encounters, as well as a detailed look at various locations within Ythryn.

RITE OF THE ARCANE OCTAD

The book details an arcane ritual, 'The Rite of the Arcane Octad' (pg. 234), which must be completed to pass through the force field that encompasses '19. Spire of Iriolarthas' and '23. Ythryn mythallar'. Performing this ritual is thus essential if the characters want to acquire Ythryn's most powerful treasures (the staff of power, the scroll of tarrasque summoning, and the scroll of the comet) and if they want to activate '23. Ythryn mythallar' and end Auril's Everlasting Rime.

UNDERSTANDING THE RITUAL

The steps required to perform the 'Rite of the Arcane Octad' is hidden in various locations around the city. The characters may stumble upon these clues as they explore Ythryn, but are otherwise given only a few opportunities to actually learn what the Rite of the Arcane Octad is and that they have to perform it to pass through the force field. As written, they can learn this information from:

- The nothics in 'H37. Weird Insights' (pg. 229).
- The doppelganger in 'Y5. Prison' (pg. 239).

To avoid a situation where both characters and players become frustrated because they don't understand how they are supposed to pass through the force field surrounding Iriolarthas' spire, you can make it a bit easier to learn about the Rite of the Arcane Octad. At your discretion, you can allow the characters to learn about the ritual from:

- Ythryn Lore. Change the piece of Ythryn Lore (pg. 235, number 17) about the force field to: "In times of trouble, the wizards raised a force field around the enclave's central spire that only someone performing the Rite of the Arcane Octad could pass through." This makes it so that characters may learn about the ritual from various locations in Ythryn.
- Y6. Spire Entrance. An inscription above the gate reads: "Perform the Rite of the Arcane Octad to enter."
- Y7. Tower of Conjuration. The night hags know about the Rite of the Arcane Octad and will trade information about it for the characters' memories.
- **Y9. Library.** Scrivenscry knows about the Rite of the Arcane Octad and can tell the party about it if they help him search the library.
- Y18. Tower of Necromancy. Cadavix' ghost knows about the Rite of the Arcane Octad and shares information about it if they help uncover his body.
- Y29. Museum. The nothics know about the Rite of the Arcane Octad and can tell the party about it.

In addition to this, the book mentions that Avarice and Vellynne can help the characters if they are having trouble deactivating the force field, but doesn't elaborate on how that would look. Professor Skant may also be able to provide help, if the party has the orb with them.

Vellynne. If she is traveling with the party, Vellynne can deliver the following comments as the characters investigate the city, until the characters realize that there's a ritual they need to perform to pass through the forcefield:

- The first time they come near the force field, Vellynne says: "There must be some sort of way to pass through this forcefield. A passphrase or a ritual of some sort...'
- The first time they find a clue in one of the towers: "This seems to be a step in a ritual of some sort. We should keep our eyes open for more inscriptions like
- The second time they find a clue in one of the towers: "It seems each of these steps are connected to the eight schools of arcane magic. Perhaps performing this ritual will grant us access to the central spire!"

At your discretion, Vellynne may also be able to provide advice to the characters if they are having trouble figuring out what they're supposed to do along the various steps in the ritual.

Professor Skant. The illustrious Professor Skant is mentioned only twice in Chapter 7, although he has been setup as something of an expert on everything Netherese. If the characters are stumped, you can always have the *professor* orb clue them in:

- · "Force fields like these would usually require a passphrase or ritual of some sort to pass through"
- "Netherese society revolved around the eight schools of magic – the towers dedicated to these schools may hold more clues about how to proceed."

Avarice. If the characters have a really hard time and don't have Vellynne or Professor Skant around to help them, you can also use Avarice to move things along. You can have her send her raven familiar to set up a meeting with the characters after arriving in the city, where she offers to help the characters enter the spire of Iriolarthas in return for first pick of the magical treasures within, as suggested under 'Avarice' earlier in this document.

TRACKING TIME

Keeping track of time is relatively important while the characters are in the Necropolis of Ythryn, especially if you are adhering to the book's advice about when Avarice and Auril show up (after 12 hours and 24 hours, respectively), how often the characters must roll against the arcane blight (every 12 hours), and when to roll for random encounters (every hour).

The book provides the following guidelines for tracking time in Ythryn (pg. 234):

- · Moving 200 ft. takes 5 minutes.
- Exploring an unnumbered location takes 30 minutes.

To simplify time tracking and to avoid being bogged down counting minutes, you can also choose to use this alternative rule instead:

• Exploring a location (unnumbered or not) takes 1 hour. This includes time spent walking to the location, short encounters and conversations, but doesn't include any long-duration activities, such as reading books or playing a game of chain lightning.

Whenever the characters visit a location, you simply mark down the hours that have passed since their arrival in the city. In the end, it isn't hugely important exactly how many minutes have passed, just that you have a sense of how many hours have passed, when it's appropriate to rest again, and when newcomers – Avarice or Auril – show up in the city.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The book provides a table of encounters (pg. 233), which it tells you to roll on after each hour or whenever the characters search an unnumbered building. These encounters are overall fairly good, but you may still want to be careful about how and when you use them.

WHEN TO USE RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

As discussed in the **DM's resources for Chapter 2: Icewind Dale**, there's a time and place for random encounters. If you roll for random encounters as suggested by the book, the characters will face an encounter roughly every other hour, which could quickly become pretty tiresome, as the characters are likely to spend several days exploring the Necropolis of Ythryn.

Instead of rolling for random encounters every hour, you can be a bit more tactical about when to use encounters, employing them only when:

- There hasn't been a battle for a while and the players are itching for combat, but aren't likely to visit a location with an encounter anytime soon.
- The characters are looking to take a long rest without really needing one yet push them a bit!
- Avarice has arrived in the city and you want to let the characters know that she is here (use the random encounter with cult fanatics).
- Auril has arrived in the city and you want to let the characters know that she is here (use a random encounter with coldlight walkers, frost giant skeletons, and/or winter wolves)

WHICH RANDOM ENCOUNTERS TO USE

As mentioned, the random encounters provided by the book are mostly fine, as they fit the city's theme and/or tie to the arrival of Avarice and Auril. That being said, there are some you may want to emphasize or omit:

- Gargoyles are not very interesting combatants and aren't unique to Ythryn either, making an encounter with them fairly pointless and uninspiring.
- Encountering Iriolarthas outside 'Y19. Spire of Iriolarthas' robs the characters of an opportunity for a climactic battle with the powerful demilich in his spire.
- Nothics can provide information if interrogated, making them a good encounter if the characters could use some guidance on how to proceed.



LOCATIONS IN YTHRYN

There's a lot to see and a lot to do in the Necropolis of Ythryn. On the following pages, additional advice and troubleshooting is provided for some of the locations in the city. Only locations where advice is given are listed.

Y3. CHAIN LIGHTNING STADIUM

The characters can play a game of chain lightning here against a rival team of galvan magen.

Chain Lightning. This location is really fun and is thankfully placed centrally in the city, making it quite likely that the characters will get to experience a game of chain lightning. The rules for the game are fun and actually tactically challenging, as the participants must decide between throwing the ball directly or charging the ball first, while making various skill checks to determine their success. There is one small oversight, however, as the book doesn't detail what happens if the team on offense doesn't win the group Dexterity (Athletics) contest during Step 2. It seems logical that if the team on defense wins this contest – i.e. has more successes than the team on offense – they take possession of the ball and Step 2 is repeated with their team now on offense.

Y4. Tower of Abjuration

The characters can find the first clue to the Rite of the Arcane Octad in the ceiling of this chamber, along with the anvil of disjunction, which can destroy magic items.

Anvil of Disjunction. We're not told immediately, but the anvil of disjunction comes into play when the characters need to destroy Ivira's crown from 'Y24. Tower of Enchantment'. An additional use for the anvil is provided in these resources, as it can be used to release any eyes the characters have lost to the orb of divination (see 'Y11. Tower of Divination' on the following page).

Map. This download comes with a map of the 'Y4. Tower of Abjuration' in both a 30 ft. diameter version – as it is described in the book – and a 60 ft. diameter version, which provides more room for combat.

Y5. PRISON

The characters can find the doppelganger Xerophon here, who can help them learn that the Rite of the Arcane Octad is required to pass through the force field.

Sequestered. As written, Xerophon is hidden with the spell *sequester*, which a netherese wizard repeatedly cast on the doppelganger while conducting experiments. There's a few issues with this, however:

- Sequester costs 5,000 gp with each casting.
- Sequester needs to be dispelled the characters may not have access to dispel magic.

To make it more likely that the characters actually get a chance to speak with Xerophon if they don't have access to *dispel magic*, you can have the *sequester* spell be an effect of the operating table instead. A character that examines the table finds a command word ("Amnior") in Loross etched into the table. Speaking the word dispels the *sequester* spell, or casts it on any creature strapped onto the table, if it isn't in effect already.

Y7. Tower of Conjuration

This download comes with a map of the 'Y7. Tower of Conjuration' in both a 30 ft. diameter version – as it is described in the book – and a 60 ft. diameter version, which provides more room for combat. The download also comes with a map for the Hag's demiplane den.

Yll. Tower of Divination

The characters can divine the location of a missing clue to the Rite of the Arcane Octad here.

Eye Injury. Quickly summarized, losing an eye means disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight and on ranged attack rolls. If a character loses an eye (or two!) here and seem bummed about it, you can give them a potential solution. Allow the orb to be moved - weighing a hefty 100 lbs - and transported to 'Y4. Tower of Abjuration' where it can be destroyed on the Anvil of Disjunction, restoring eyesight to anyone who lost their eye to it. A character with a high Intelligence score or proficiency with Arcana may realize this, or Vellynne or Professor Skant can suggest it.

Y13. BAZAAR OF THE BIZARRE

The characters encounter a headless iron golem here.

A Head Returned. If the characters picked up this golem's head from 'H9. Golem Head' (pg. 220) and brought it along, you can give them a chance to reunite the two. The body doesn't realize the characters' intentions, however, and mindlessly attacks them until they get its head close to it. When the headless golem is within 5 ft. of its head, you can describe how it grabs its head as if to throw or smash it, before it realizes what it is holding. Moving carefully, the golem puts its head back on its shoulders, nods gratefully to the party and stands at rapt attention. The characters now have the aid of an iron golem! In order to avoid this completely screwing up the balance of subsequent encounters, you can rule that:

- The golem still uses the headless iron golem statblock, except that it isn't blinded or deafened as long as its head is on its shoulders.
- The golem's head is perched precariously and falls off when it takes the Multiattack action.
- The golem can't be healed or repaired (mending isn't strong enough), making its durability very limited.

Y14. HALL OF SILK

The characters can get fancy silk robes spun by phase spiders here.

Spider Silk Robes. To make the robes the characters can acquire here a bit more exciting, you can have the illusory Silksmith Mixyll offer to have a robe enchanted with magic properties. This isn't free, however, for as the Silksmith explains: "valuable gemstones with a combined value of approximately 5,000 gold pieces is required to fuel the enchantment process". If the characters can deliver them, these gemstones are consumed as part of a 1-hour communal ritual performed by the galvan magen, whereupon they transform a spider silk robe into a War Caster's Silk Robe (made using Nybor's Tome or Enchanted Armor).

Y15. OBSERVATORY

This download comes with a map of 'Y15. Observatory' in both a 30 ft. diameter version – as it is described in the book – and a 60 ft. diameter version, which provides more room for combat.

War Caster's Silk Robe

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

These beautiful robes are made from phase spider silk.

War Caster's. When you cast a spell of 1st level or higher while wearing this robe, you gain a +1 bonus to AC and all saving throws until the end of your next turn or until you cast another spell of 1st level or higher.

Fey. This robe has 3 charges. While wearing it, you can expend 1 or more of its charges and use an action to cast one of the following spells (save DC 15): faerie fire (1 charge) or blink (2 charges). The robes regains all expended charges daily at dawn.

Nacronalis of Vthrum Boston

Area	Creatures Notes				
Y2. Wizard Spires	Possibly 1d3 + 1 gargoyles	20% chance that gargoyles are at a tower, they attack on sight.			
Y4. Tower of Abjuration	6 demos magen	The magen attack anyone who tries to use the anvil.			
Y5. Prison	1 doppelganger	Doppelganger Xerophon poses as Netherese manservant. Living hands attack on sight, night hags are on a demiplane, will try to obtain memories from characters instead of attacking them			
Y7. Tower of Conjuration	4 living Bigby's hands, 3 night hags				
Y9. Library	1 arcanaloth	The arcanaloth Scrivenscry thinks characters are librarians.			
Y10. Arboretum	1 treant, 4 needle blights	The Nether Oak awakens if characters fail DC 20 Stealth check.			
Y12. Wellspring of Answers	1 hydra	The Telepathic Pentacle if light is shined down well or a character fails its Insight check by 5 or more while sitting on the bench.			
Y13. Bazaar of the Bizarre	1 iron golem (headless)	The headless golem attacks anyone nearby.			
Y14. Hall of Silk	6 demos magen, 5 galvan magen, 4 phase spiders	The magen and spiders attack only if characters attempt to steal.			
Y15. Observatory	3 galvan magen, 3 demos magen, 1 hypnos magen, 1 blue slaad, 1 green slad	The magen outside attack anyone who tries to enter. The blue slaad attacks on sight. The green slaad ignores characters that doesn't disturb it or its telescope.			
Y18. Tower of Necromancy	Crawling claws, 1 ghost	Crawling claws attack only if disturbed. Ghost only in self-defense			
Y19a. Main Entrance	1 hypnos magen	Warns characters to flee, attacks if they don't.			
Y19b. Ballroom	3 brain in a jar	Attacks if their illusion is dispelled.			
Y19e. Liquefaction Chamber	1 brain in a jar, 1 helmed horror	Attacks only if threatened or attacked, tries to talk with characters.			
Y19k. Dome	2 living blades of disaster	Attacks characters within their range.			
Y19q. Iriolarthas's Study	1 demilich, 3 nothics, 1 living demiplane (3 galvan magen, 2 flesh golems)	Iriolarthas attacks anyone who tries to steal its treasures, noth aid it. Galvan magen and flesh golems are within the living demiplane.			
Y20. Tower of Evocation	8 gelatinous cubes	The cubes wake after 10 minutes, attack anyone in the room.			
Y23. Ythryn Mythallar	1 tomb tapper	Shows up the first time a character tries to attune to the mythallar			
Y29. Museum	6 nothics, 4 spitting mimics	Nothics attack on sight, mimics attack if touched or disturbed.			

Y18. Tower of Necromancy

The characters must dig through the ruins of the tower of necromancy to find the tower's inscription.

What to do? If the characters arrive here to find the inscription and discover the next step in the Rite of the Arcane Octad, they may find themselves stumped by the destroyed tower. You can give them a helping hand by having the ghost of Cadavix approach them, speaking in a melancholy voice:

"I lie beneath those ruins, if you would believe it. Crushed and smashed - all the magic in the world at my fingertips, and I was killed by bricks and stone. A pity it is!"

If the characters ask Cadavix about the inscription, you can have him tell them that it is likely on a piece of rubble among the walls. If they ask him to just tell them what the inscription says, you can have him insist they recover his corpse first.

Digging. The book tells us that excavating Cadavix' corpse and the piece of wall that bears the inscription takes 50 hours divided by the number of excavators, which is likely to mean around 10 hours of work for the average party. Depending on the pace you want to set, this could be a bit much. You can decide that it instead takes 15 hours divided by the number of excavators, as the crawling claws do their best to help, reducing the time spent here to 3 hours or less.

Y19B. BALLROOM

The characters can participate in an illusory ball and encounter brains in a jar here.

Roleplaying the Illusion. Setting up an entire ball can be quite the task for the DM. To make things easier for yourself and to clue the characters into the true nature of the scene before them, you can have the illusory courtier here act as mindless NPCs. They ask no real questions of the characters and speak only in short, often-repeated phrases, such as:

- · "Come, dear, have a dance with me!"
- · "Have you heard rumor has it that Iriolarthas has found an ancient artifact from Ostoria. A spindle of some sort!"
- "You really should visit the Hall of Weightless Wonder. Does miracles for both mind and body, just miracles!"
- · "Athrynia has a winged hare as a pet. Isn't that marvelous - a winged hare!"
- "Oh dear, but where is your wand? Don't tell me you don't have one!"

Seeing Through the Illusion. The ball is an illusion, but the book gives no way for the characters to actually determine this. You can allow the characters to make a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check if they take time examining their surroundings, realizing that they are surrounded by illusions on a success.

Dispelling the Illusion. If the characters don't have dispel magic, but you still want them to be able to unveil the illusion and fight the three brains in a jar here, you can have any interference with the illusion provoke the three brains. The first time a character touches, attacks, or otherwise disrupts the illusion, all the illusory quests quiet immediately and turn angry gazes on the character, before quickly going back to the revelry as if nothing had happened. If a character interferes again, the illusion drops and the brains in a jar attack.

Y19J. CHAMBER OF SORCERY

The characters can speak with a living spell named Everlast here.

Secret Door. Not only is the door to 'Y19k. Dome' placed 30 ft. above the floor and leads up into a wall of force, it is also hidden - requiring a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check to find. This makes it very hard to find – which is a shame, since entering the upper levels of the spire through 'Y19k. Dome' is quite a bit more fun than just flying in through the balcony. To make it a bit easier for them to do this, you can decide that the shaft isn't hidden behind a secret door, but is instead clearly visible to anyone below.

Ү19к. Доме

The characters must find a way to pass through a dome of force here.

Green Crystal. The characters are unlikely to see the connection between the wall of force and the green crystal unless they make noise loud enough to make the crystal - and wall of force - flicker. If the characters wait here a while, you can allow a character with proficiency in Arcana to realize that something must be powering this wall of force, extending it past its normal duration.

Wall of Force. The book says that the wall of force here can't be dispelled while the green crystal is glowing above the door, but a wall of force already can't be dispelled – it can only be destroyed with a disintegrate spell. To allow the characters a way to enter if they are unable to figure out a way to destroy the green crystal, it is probably just fine to let this be as it is. If none of the characters can cast disintegrate, you can allow them to find a scroll of disintegrate in 'Y26. Tower of Transmutation' or 'Y9. Library'.



Y19n. STASIS CHAMBER

The characters find the Spindle that caused Ythryn's fall. The Spindle. It seems like the Spindle was originally meant to play a bigger role in the chapter. The nothics in the Caves of Hunger (pg. 229) mention that the mythallar won't function while the Spindle is in the city, but this is never mentioned again, and the text here clearly states that the spindle can't be moved or destroyed. Whatever the case is, simply having the Spindle here but not doing anything with it (unless the characters randomly decide to cast a high-level spell at it) seems like a waste. You can have any character proficient in Arcana realize both that casting a powerful spell on it may cause it to flare up (as described in the book), and that some of the Spindle's antimagic properties can be temporarily transfered to an object that is held to it for a minute or more.

A weapon gains this property if held to the Spindle:

· Spell Absorption. When a spell or magical effect you can see deals damage to you while you are holding this weapon, you can use your reaction to halve the spell or effect's damage against you. The next time you hit with an attack using this weapon, the target takes extra force damage equal to the damage prevented this way.

And a wearable object gains this property:

Spell Turning. When you are the target of a harmful spell or magical effect while wearing this item and must make a saving throw, you can choose to make the saving throw with advantage. If the saving throw succeeds, the magic has no effect on you and instead targets the caster, as if it had cast it on itself. If the spell or magical effect requires concentration, it lasts until the end of the caster's next turn, even if they choose not to maintain their concentration on it.

Each property can be used only once, but may still prove useful for characters heading into battle with Iriolarthas.

Y19p. HIGH COURT BALCONY

The characters can enter the spire through this balcony. **Door.** The door can be opened with a DC 18 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check, but since there's no consequence to failure, this check is completely superfluous. To make this just a bit more dangerous, you can have a failed attempt to open the door from the outside result in a concussive blast of force going off. Each creature within 10 ft. of the door takes 18 (4d8) force damage and must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a creature is pushed back 10 ft., and must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw. On a success, the creature manages to stop itself from going over the railing, taking only 2d6 bludgeoning damage as it smashes into the railing. On a failure, the creature is blasted out over the balcony's railing and falls 200 feet to the street below.

Y22. Tower of Illusion

The characters must survive a deadly illusion to read the next step in the Rite of the Arcane Octad here.

Illusory Script. Having the real script be hidden by an illusion is quite fun, but can create some issues. If the characters don't realize that this script is illusory and try to perform the ritual, they may never realize which of the steps they did wrong. You can make this less likely by having any character who examines the illusory script and succeeds on a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check realize that it is indeed illusory, and by having either Vellynne or Professor Skant voice their suspicions about which of the steps were performed wrong, if the characters try the Rite of the Arcane Octad and fail.

Turning Back Time

As written, the characters can turn back time using the staff of power at 'Y21. Obelisk'. When doing so, however, they send the entire world back to the Year of Chilled Marrow, which is more than 1,500 years ago. This is an interesting way for the campaign to end – and for a new one to begin – but you may want to allow for a less drastic outcome.

In the DM's resources for Chapter 3 & 4, we discussed how turning back time could be the characters' end goal, if Ten-Towns were completely destroyed by the chardalyn dragon. In this case, you can allow the characters to turn back time a few weeks (or a few years, if they also want to go back to before Auril's Everlasting Rime). If Auril is in the city, you can have her show up with her minions before the party reaches the obelisk. An epic combat around the obelisk could be very climactic, as Auril does her utmost to prevent the characters from activating the obelisk and undoing her work.

If the characters manage to turn back time a few weeks or years, they will be able to undo much of the damage that has been done to Icewind Dale, but may be disappointed to find that nobody recognizes their heroic efforts – or even know who they are! – when they return to Ten-Towns.

Y23. YTHRYN MYTHALLAR

This download comes with a map of 'Y23. Ythryn Mythallar' made by TehoX Maps.

Y27. MUSIC HALL

The characters can conduct an orchestra here.

Conducting the Orchestra. With the potential of taking 5d10 psychic damage with each failure on the line, a single inspiration seems like a meager reward for success. You can instead have every character that hears the performance get the benefit of the bless spell for 8 hours, which is a far more substantial reward.

SUMMARY

You can make the following changes to locations in the Necropolis of Ythryn:

- Y3. Chain Lightning Stadium. If the defending team wins the Athletics contest in Step 2, they become the team on offense and Step 2 is repeated.
- Y4. Tower of Abjuration. The Anvil of Disruption can be used to destroy the orb of divination from Y11.
- **Y5. Prison.** The operating table can be used to cast/ dispel the spell sequester on whoever lies on it.
- **Y11. Tower of Divination.** If the orb of divination is destroyed in Y4, all eyes lost to the orb are restored.
- Y13. Bazaar of the Bizarre. The golem puts its head back on if it comes within 5 ft. of it and obeys the party.
- Y14. Hall of Silk. The characters can pay 5,000 gp in gemstones to gain a robe with magic properties.
- **Y18. Tower of Necromancy.** Cadavix helps clue the characters in about what they're supposed to do.
- **Y19b. Ballroom.** The characters can see through the illusion with a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check and dispel it by interfering with it repeatedly.
- Y19j. Chamber of Sorcery. The shaft isn't hidden.
- Y19k. Dome. A character proficient in Arcana realizes that something is powering the wall of force.
- Y19n. Stasis Chamber. A character proficient in Arcana realizes that touching a weapon or armor to the Spindle can give it temporary magic properties.
- Y19p. High Court Balcony. If an attempt to open the balcony door from the outside fails, a force blast deals 4d8 force damage and threatens to throw the characters off the balcony.
- Y22. Tower of Illusion. DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) realizes the script is illusory.
- Y27. Music Hall. Hearing the orchestra play gives a character the benefit of the bless spell for 8 hours.

ICEWIND DALE TRAVEL CHEATSHEET

AVALANCHES

- · Each character rolls initiative as the avalanche comes.
- On initiative 10 and 0, the avalanche moves 300 ft.
- If caught, character makes DC 15 Strength saving throw each time avalanche moves, taking 1d10 bludgeoning damage on a failure, half on a success.
- Creatures buried by the avalanche are blinded and restrained, and gain a level of exhaustion every 5 minutes. They can free themselves as an action with a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check, but if they fail three times, can't try again. Other creatures can spend 1 minute digging a buried creature out.

BLIZZARDS

- · Lasts 2d4 hours.
- Hearing is limited to 100 ft., visibility limited to 30 ft.
- Extinguishes open flames, erases tracks, and makes nonmagical flight nearly impossible.
- Disadvantage on ranged weapon attacks, Perception checks that relies on hearing, and – if not wearing goggles – Perception checks that rely on sight.
- A creature must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of its turn to maintain concentration.
- If they travel during a blizzard, the party must make DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) checks each hour to stay on course. If they fail by 5+, a party member becomes lost.

EXTREME COLD

- · Average temperature in Icewind Dale is -49 °F.
- If exposed, a creature must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at end of each hour or gain 1 exhaustion.
- Creatures that have resistance or immunity to cold damage, wear cold weather clothing, or are naturally adapted to cold climates are immune.

FRIGID WATER

- · No effect for a number of minutes equal to Con score.
- Each additional minute, DC 10 Constitution saving throw or one level exhaustion.
- If wearing clothing, effect lasts until wet clothes are replaced with dry clothes.
- Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage are immune.

ILLUMINATION

- · Natural light in Icewind Dale never brighter than dim.
- Twilight between 10:00-14:00.
- Otherwise dark, until Auril's aurora or the full moon appears in the night sky.

OVERLAND TRAVEL

- · Travel speeds across Icewind Dale's snowy tundra.
- · Dogsleds must rest for 1 hour after each hour of travel.

Method of Travel	Distance per Hour			
Dogsled	1 mile			
On foot, with snowshoes	1/2 mile			
On foot, without snowshoes	1/4 mile			

MOUNTAIN TRAVEL

- At the end of each hour, navigator makes DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check.
- On a failure, the party must backtrack, losing 1 hour.
- If it fails by 5 or more, the party is caught in an avalanche starting 2d6 x 100 ft. above them.

Method of Travel	Distance per Hour
Dogsled	1/2 mile
On foot, with snowshoes	1/4 mile
On foot, without snowshoes	1/8 mile



ICEWIND DALE TRAVEL CHEATSHEET (VARIANT RULES)

AVALANCHES

- · Set DC to 10 (easy), 13 (moderate), or 15 (hard).
- Each character makes Wisdom (Perception), Dexterity (Acrobatics), and Strength (Athletics) checks.
- 3 successes: clear;
 2 successes: clear, 1d10 bludgeoning damage;
 1 success: 2d10 bludgeoning damage, partially buried;
 0 successes: 3d10 bludgeoning damage, buried.
- Partially Buried. Restrained, it or another creature can get it free in 1 minute with Strength (Athletics).
- Buried. Blinded and restrained. Must make DC 10 Constitution saving throw each minute, suffering 1 level of exhaustion on failure. DC increases by 1 each minute. Can't extricate itself. Another creature can find it by spending 1 minute and succeeding on a Wisdom (Perception) check, and extricate it in 1 minute with a Strength (Athletics) check.

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Travel in Icewind Dale

Method of Travel	—— Distance per Hour ——			—— Distance per Day ——		
	Mountain	Snow	Road	Mountain	Snow	Road
Dogsled	1 mile	2 miles	3 miles	12 miles	24 miles	36 miles
On foot, with snowshoes	1/2 mile	1 mile	1.5 mile	4 miles	8 miles	12 miles
On foot, without snowshoes	1/4 mile	1/2 mile	1.5 mile	2 miles	4 miles	12 miles



Printing Guide

By popular demand, this guide will show you how to print the maps included in this download using a standard printer. This is only one method out of many, but one we have found usually works well for most.

Download PosteRazor

First, download the <u>free software PosteRazor</u> (Eventyr Games has no affiliation with PosteRazor and take no responsibility for any issues using PosteRazor – always do your own due diligence before downloading unknown software). PosteRazor allows you to make cutout PDFs out of JPEG files, in 5 easy steps:

Step 1: Load an input image

After installing and launching PosteRazor, select the 'Input Image' (the map you want to print). Because of a bug with how images are rendered by Photoshop, you may see that the resolution of the image is reported as 72 DPI under 'Image Informations', and that the size in inches doesn't match up with the maps real size. Ignore that for now, we'll fix that in step 4.

Step 2: Define the printer paper format

Choose your printer paper (usually letter or A4) as well as the orientation of the printer, which can influence the amount of paper used to print the map, but otherwise isn't too important. Also select a border width (the blank space around the print on each piece of paper) – usually between 0.2 and 0.5 inches, depending on the accuracy of your printer.

Step 3: Define the image tile overlapping

Overlapping is simply put the amount of overlap each piece of the map has with the next piece. If you're using tape or glue to put the map together, you'll probably want at least 0.2 inches of overlap. As for the position of the overlap, it doesn't matter too much, but we usually go with Bottom Right.

Step 4: Define the final poster size.

Because of the minor bug mentioned in Step 1, you'll often see a wrong 'Absolute Size' suggested here. We always include the actual dimensions of the map in inches in the map's file title (such as 30x30 or 40x20, etc.). Input these numbers under Width and Height in absolute size, and you'll get an accurately sized map. If you think the print uses paper inefficiently, you can go back to step 2 to change the orientation and see if that helps. You can even get away with creating a map with slightly smaller squares, by reducing the absolute size of the map by up to 20 percent.

Step 5: Save the Poster

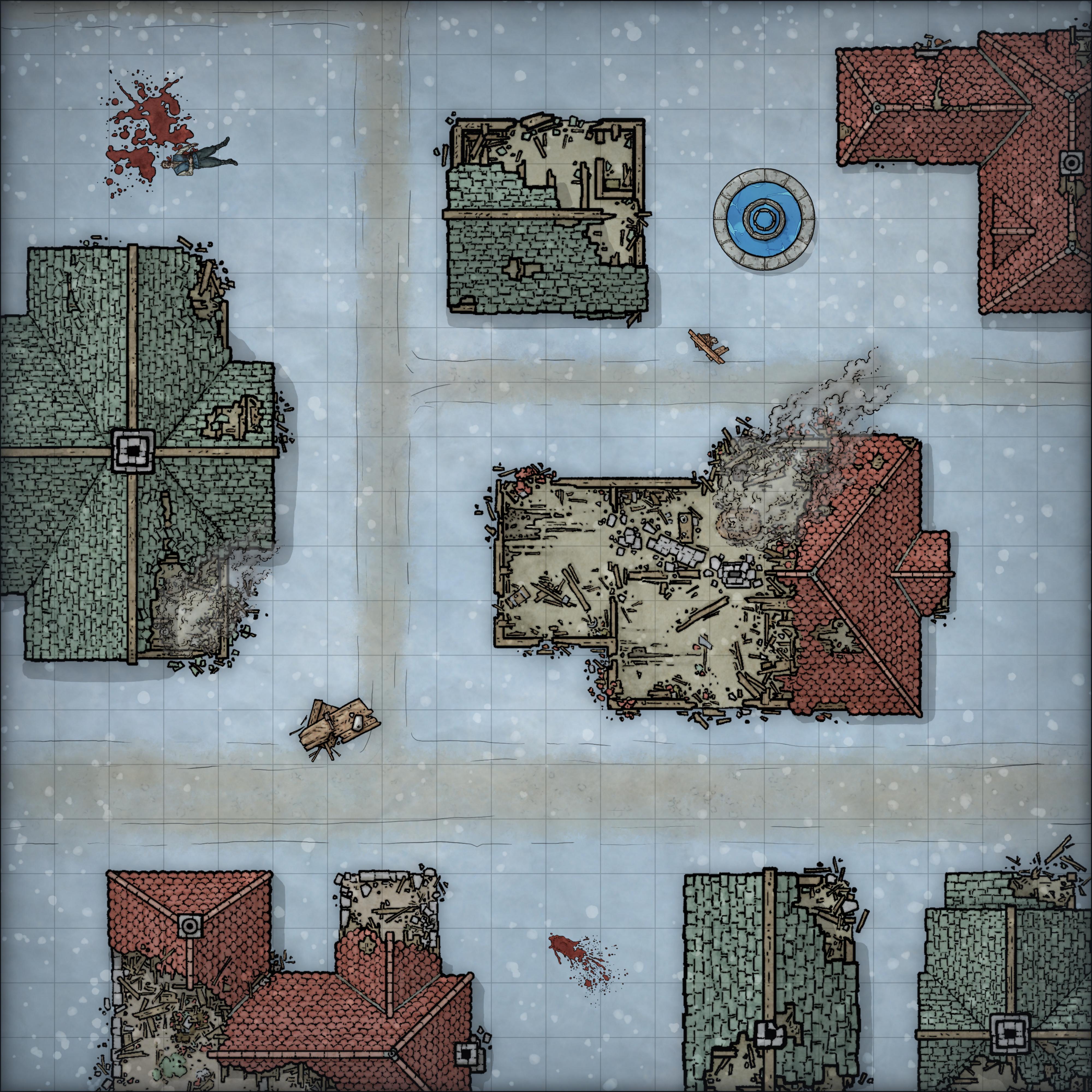
Congratulations, you're done, and now have a ready-to-print PDF of the map that matches your specifications.

Why not just include the printable PDFs in the download?

Because everyone has their preferences when it comes to paper size, borders, overlap, and which map (gridded, ungridded, or even DM's version) they want to print, we'd have to create a handful of PDFs for each map, and we would still probably not cover everyone. With this guide, you should be able to print out your maps exactly how you want them every time, and it works with all maps and not just ours. If you have any questions or encounter difficulties, you are more than welcome to leave a comment on the product, on eventyrgames.com, or shoot us an email to ivaleur@eventyrgames.com, and we'll do our best to help you.



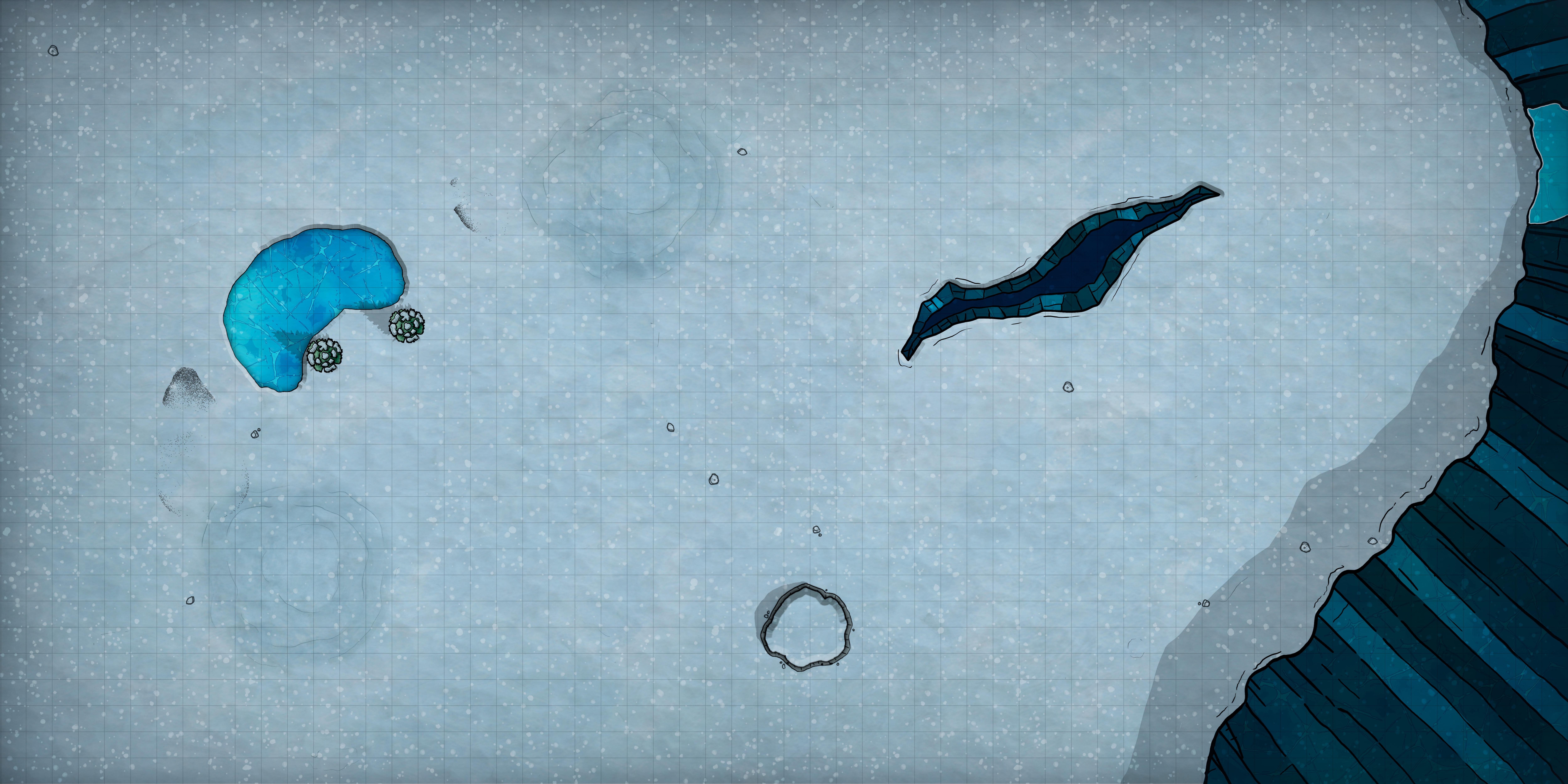


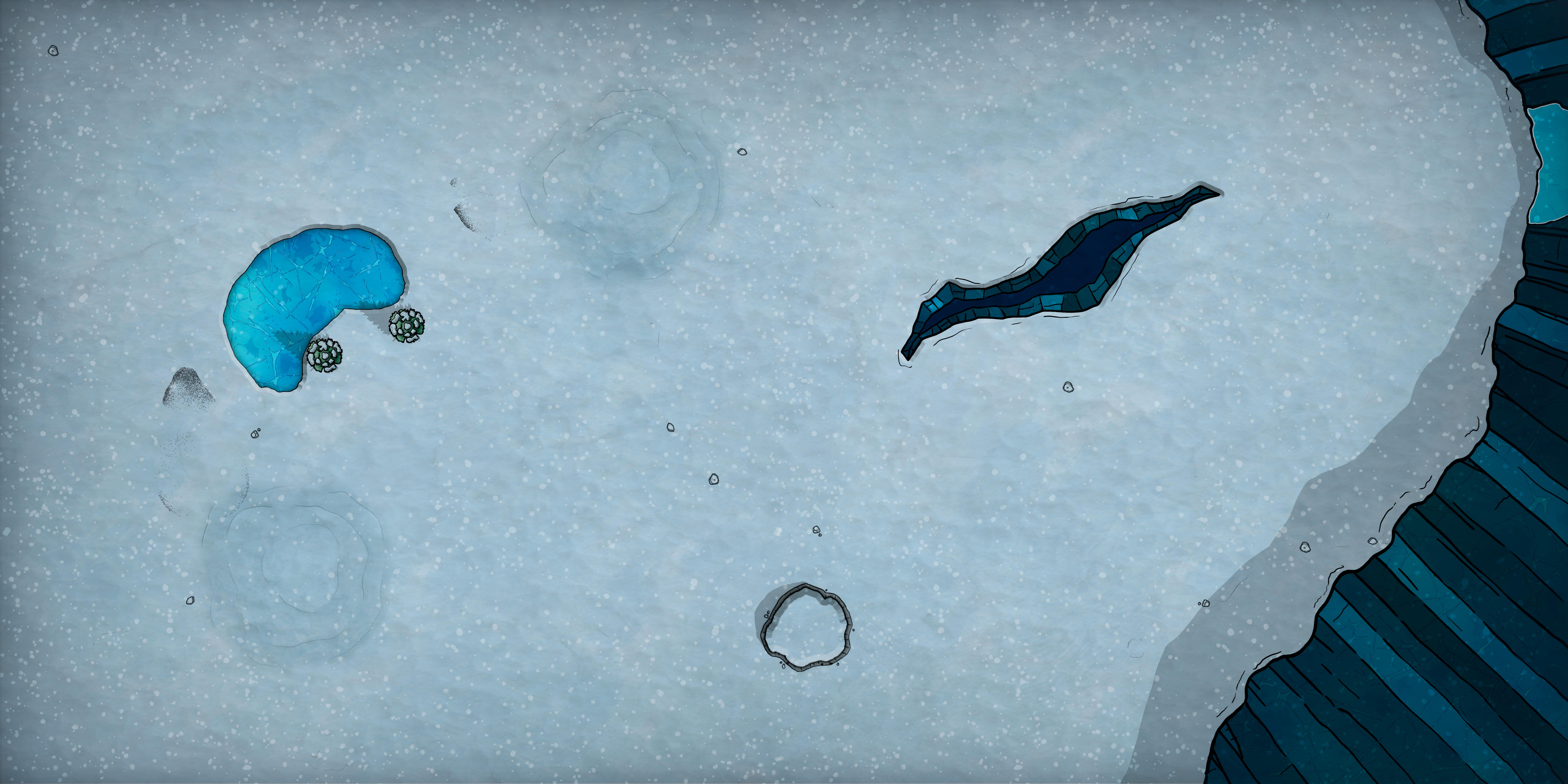












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