ICEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN
TOWER OF ILLUSION

Expanded Content for
Chapter 7: Doom of Ythryn

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Credits

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Introduction

The tower of illusion was one of eight towers of magic in the ancient floating Netherese city of Ythryn. Now the tower, along with the city, lies trapped in a frozen tomb. The wizards of this great tower are either long dead or have lost their minds to madness. Yet the tower still holds powerful magic waiting to be tapped.

What's This All About?

Chapter 7: Doom of Ythryn is the climax of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*. This epic chapter has characters investigating the ancient city of Ythryn for a way to put an end to the Everlasting Rime. The basic outline of this chapter is the following:

- **Learn the Rite of the Arcane Octad**, in order to get through a force field protecting the central tower of Ythryn (the Spire of Iriolarthas).
- **Kill the Demilich Iriolarthas**, who lives in the Spire of Iriolarthas and is attuned to the *Ythryn Mythallar*.
- **Attune to the Ythryn Mythallar**, which allows characters to end the Everlasting Rime.

This supplement is one of several short expansions to the locations in Ythryn (more can be found at **this link**) with the following objectives:

- **Expand on the Eight Arcane Towers**, making each one its own mini-dungeon adventure with exciting challenges and clear direction for the DM.
- **Provide Detailed Maps**, for an immersive experience in person or on a virtual tabletop, rather than a brief 'theatre-of-mind' scene.

This supplement presents the events that occur in the Tower of Illusion as an alternate to those described on page 255 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*. Additionally, this supplement references the Hall of Silk described on page 244 of the book. As always, it is up to you how much of the content you want to use. It's perfectly fine to use some parts of this supplement while discarding others, or simply let the ideas presented here inspire new ideas of your own. This supplement assumes a party of 4–6 characters of 9–11th level.

History of High Illusionist Ajamar

High Illusionist Ajamar was an eccentric individual among wizards due to his great love for the arts. In Ythryn, he was known for setting the latest Netherese fashion trends and providing consultation on costumes and special effects for the city's world-renowned theater. Ajamar was also known for writing essential textbooks (such as *Ajamar's Guide to the Phantastic*) on the School of Illusion for Netherese academies. His greatest desire, however, was to write fiction for the theater. Unfortunately for Ajamar, his creative literary efforts always fell flat - never funny, dramatic, or emotional enough to ever be given real consideration.

When Ythryn fell from the sky, Ajamar was mortally wounded. In his final hours, he weaved *programmed illusion* spells throughout the Tower of Illusion with all of his passion, hoping that one day someone might find them and discover his legacy. After Ajamar's death, the magical disruption of the spindle twisted many of the illusions in strange ways.

Adventure Summary

After their arrival at the Tower of Illusion, the party will be greeted by the programmed illusion of High Illusionist Ajamar. Ajamar asks the party to perform a scene of the play he wrote in his final hours in exchange for any information he was programmed to hold (including a line of the Rite of the Arcane Octad). The party will have to perform the scene as best they can, suffering the consequences of a poor performance at the hands of the twisted illusory audience. Once the party completes the scene, Ajamar's illusion provides the party with the information they seek. Additionally, Ajamar provides a small riddle giving the party a chance to claim some extra treasure in the tower.

Running the Adventure

The following sections describe what the characters find at the Tower of Illusion in Ythryn. Locations Y14. Hall of Silk and Y22. Tower of Illusion refer to the Map 7.2 Necropolis of Ythryn on page 236–237 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*. Locations within the tower refer to the maps on pages 4 and 5 of this document.

Y22. Tower of Illusion

As the characters approach the tower, you can read the following:

> A strange mist envelopes this tall tower. A purple symbol reminiscent of an eye can be seen through the haze at the top of the tower, which appears to track your movement. The entrance appears to be blocked by rubble.

Characters proficient in Arcana, or who succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, recognize the arcane symbol as representing the magical school of illusion. A *detect magic* spell cast here reveals an aura of illusion magic. The aura is particularly strong from the mist.

Entering the Tower

The main entrance is blocked by rubble and debris from the fall of Ythryn. Characters can clear the rubble through conventional means, but it will take time. You can have each party member make a Strength (Athletics) check. If the group average roll is less than 10, it takes 1 hour to clear the rubble and the group may experience a random encounter from the Ythryn Encounters table on page 233 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*. Otherwise, the group can clear the rubble without incident in roughly half an hour.

When characters clear the rubble, they can see the misty interior of the tower. The mist can be dissipated with a *dispel magic* spell. Otherwise, when the party enters the tower, you can read the following:

> The dark room is full of mist. Panicked voices call out and echo from all around. An explosion sounds from the center of the room followed by fast heartbeats, sobbing, and ragged, gasping breaths. Suddenly, all of the sounds cease, and the room falls quiet.
>
> As the mist settles, flamboyantly dressed mannequins can be seen lying haphazardly around the room. A winding staircase leads further up into the tower.

The sounds are an illusory memory of the fall of Ythryn. All characters in the room must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or suffer 2d6 psychic damage. The memory (and damage) only occurs once.

Tower of Illusion

Y22A.

Stage
+5 FT

+0 FT

+15 FT

Up to Y22B

Down to Lower Floors
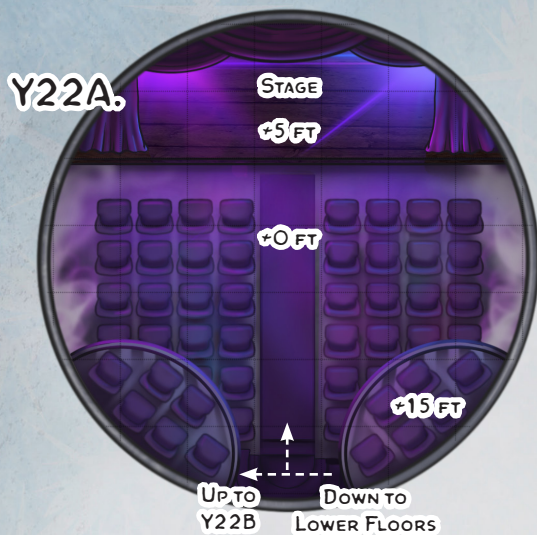
Y22A. Rehearsal Stage

When characters reach the top of the stairs, you can read the following:

> This round room holds an intimate theater. Plush purple seating arranged in rows face a small stage covered by curtains on the far side of the room. Purple magical lights illuminate the room.

This room served both as a workshop space for illusory effects to accompany many of Ythryn's art forms and as a place where the Ythryn elite could view small exclusive performances. When a character approaches the stage, you can read the following:

> After a brief flicker, a purple robed human man with wild colors running through his hair appears before you.

The human is a *programmed illusion* spell depicting High Illusionist Ajamar. It speaks in Loross, which can be translated by *professor skant.*

> "I am High Illusionist Ajamar. This is likely the final performance at my little theater. If you are hearing this message, then I did not survive Ythryn's fall. But alas, the show must go on. I am programmed to share information pertaining to the legacy of the Tower of Illusion under the condition that my dying wish is met. I always aspired to be a great play writer, but my time never came. If you would indulge me, I would ask that you graciously perform a scene from my final work. In my personal quarters you will find the manuscript of *The Nether Trolls*. If you need costumes, I recommend commissioning them at the Hall of Silk, if it's still standing. Once you are ready to perform the scene, please pull the curtains back and I'll invite the audience in to spectate. They are hard to impress, but respond well to creativity."

Ajamar has written a script that is sitting on his desk upstairs (see Handout A). The scene involves four gender neutral roles: Andas, Benor, Cimon, and a Narrator. The party will need to read and act the lines of the scene, making skill checks to appease the illusory audience, described below. The use of costumes, props, and magic can aid the skill checks greatly, as described later in "Rewarding Creativity". Failure on checks will result in psychic consequences, as described later in "Audience Reception".

Setting the Stage

Once the party collects the scripts from Ajamar's Quarters (Y22B), they can take some time to prepare for their debut. You can make it clear that the players need not memorize their lines (though it is assumed the characters would have) and the characters need not speak in Loross (many theater enthusiasts enjoy performances in foreign languages).

Encourage the players to role-play the scene, but make it clear that there are no penalties for a player who isn't comfortable acting. Characters can be more charismatic than their players and visa versa and that's okay. This encounter is written such that player participation is only rewarded and never punished. You can feel free to tell the players that the reading of the script will be a skill challenge and they can be as creative as they want with props, planned use of spells and illusions for special effects, and costumes, which may provide them with bonuses to the checks during the performance.

Starting the scene. Once someone pulls the curtains back on the stage, an illusory audience appears. You can read the following:

> As the curtains open, the magical lighting in the room grows dim and a spotlight appears on the stage. The seats fill with a dozen strangely dressed illusory humans all with purple glowing eyes. Ajamar addresses the audience in the strange language of the Netherese and then motions to you to begin.

At this point, the characters can begin reading their lines. At key moments during the reading, one or more of the characters must make a check to determine the quality of the presentation.

- **A Strong Opening.** The Narrator must make a successful DC 20 Charisma (Performance or Persuasion) check to set the scene strong (Line 1 of Handout A).
- **Objection.** The character playing Cimon must make a successful DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check after delivering the line, "I object!" (Line 3 of Handout A).
- **The Reveal.** The characters playing Cimon and Benor must make a successful DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check after dropping their disguises (Lines 5 and 7 of Handout A) to reveal that they are trolls.
- **Villain's Demise.** The character playing Andas must make a successful DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check and a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check to act out being eaten by the dragon and then hiding from the audience (Line 9 of Handout A).
- **True Love's Kiss.** The characters playing Benor and Cimon must make successful DC 15 Charisma (Performance) checks to deliver the kiss (Line 12 of Handout A).

Rewarding Creativity. There are endless ways that the party can enhance their performance. You can use the following guidelines when providing bonuses during the scene reading:

- Use of relevant cantrips (such as *thaumaturgy, minor illusion,* and *prestidigitation*), instrumental accompaniment, and costumes allows checks to be made with advantage.
- Use of relevant spells, such as *alter self, disguise self, silent image,* or *major image* decreases the DC of the check by two times the level the spell was cast at. (For example, using a *major image* spell at level 3 would lower the DC by 6 to be 14 and the check would be made with advantage).
- Pulling off an incredible feat, such as successfully casting an *illusory dragon* spell when the dragon appears, can allow for automatic success of a check.

Audience Reception. The audience has been horribly warped by the effects of the magical spindle, such that the sights and sounds of their disapproval cause waves of psychic energy to assault the party. Each audience member is its own *programmed illusion* spell.

The first time a check is failed, the audience grows visibly agitated. The second time a check is failed, all party members on stage must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be affected by a *phantasmal killer* spell, repeating the save at the end of every other line of the script. Characters frightened this way have a -2 on Charisma checks. The third time a check is failed (and any check thereafter), the character who made the check must succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or be affected by a *mental prison* spell. Characters affected by a *mental prison* spell have disadvantage on all skill checks related to the performance of the script.

Development. Ajamar's programmed illusion is grateful to the party for performing the scene, regardless of their performance quality. Once the scene is concluded, the programmed illusion can provide answers to the following questions. If asked other questions, it replies, "I'm sorry, my responses are limited, you'll have to ask the right questions."

- Q: Do you know a line of the Rite of the Arcane Octad?
  - A: "Sixth, hide thyself behind a mask."
- Q: What is the secret with the mirror in the room upstairs? (or) Do you keep any treasure in the tower?
  - A: "My mirror is a doorway whose surface isn't real, so if there's no one pushing back then resistance you won't feel."

Once both questions have been answered, the illusion states that it has completed its programming and disappears.

Y22B. Ajamar's Quarters

When the characters reach the top of the stairs, they emerge at a doorway. The door is unlocked. Once the door is opened, you can read the following:

> This room is dominated by a large purple carpet covered in eye-symbols. A robed skeletal corpse lies slumped into a comfortable chair sitting next to a small table covered in papers. Eclectic hats and outfits lie strewn about the floor. On the far side of the room stands a beautiful mirror.

The skeleton belongs to High Illusionist Ajamar. His positioning indicates that he was writing near the time of his death. A DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check identifies several broken ribs. Four copies of the script of *The Nether Trolls* sit on a table in plain view (see Handout A). The clothes lying about the room are nonmagical.

Treasure. On the table are four copies of the script of *The Nether Trolls*, a spell scroll of *illusory dragon*, and a *deck of illusions*.

Mirror. Ajamar's mirror is a magical doorway into a secret room that can only be passed through by a creature who's reflection does not appear in the mirror when it is touched (such as if the creature is invisible). A creature that examines the mirror sees the room reflected as normal, except there is a large coat closet in the reflection that does not exist in the real room. Under the scrutiny of a *detect magic* spell, the mirror radiates an aura of *illusion* and *conjuration* magic.

Mirror Treasure. Within the mirror room, there is an unlocked armoire. The armoire contains a *cloak of displacement,* a *cloak of billowing,* a *cloak of many fashions,* and 100 gp worth of jade dust.

Armoire

Mirror

Y22B.

Scripts

Exit to Y22A

Conclusion

Once the party completes the scene, regardless of how well they performed, Ajamar's illusion thanks them and provides them with the sixth line of the Rite of the Arcane Octad. After that, the party can try to find more treasure in the tower through Ajamar's mirror, or depart for another tower. The next closest towers are Y20. Tower of Evocation, Y24. Tower of Enchantment, and Y26. Tower of Transmutation all of which are visible from this tower.

Troubleshooting

Acting the Scene. Acting can be intimidating and is not for everyone. If your party is not interested in reading the script line by line or engaging with the creative aspects of the performance, you can simply summarize the script for them and have the characters perform the skill checks.

Party Size. The scene is written for four actors. If there are fewer than four party members, Ajamar's programmed illusion can play the role of Narrator. In this case, you can skip the first skill check "A Strong Opening". If the party consists of less than three characters, the party may have to enlist the aid of NPCs or switch roles mid-scene.

Solving the Mirror Riddle. The mirror riddle can be solved easily by using an *invisibility* spell, but not all parties may have access to this magic. Another creative solution is potentially covering the mirror with a cloak to hide one's reflection and pushing through it. You may also allow a creature to use a *misty step* spell, or similar spell, to teleport into the room.

Magic Items

Cloak of Billowing
Wondrous Item, common

While wearing this cloak, you can use a bonus action to make it billow dramatically.

Cloak of Displacement
Wondrous Item, rare (requires attunement)

While you wear this cloak, it projects an illusion that makes you appear to be standing in a place near your actual location, causing any creature to have disadvantage on attack rolls against you. If you take damage, the property ceases to function until the start of your next turn. This property is suppressed while you are incapacitated, restrained, or otherwise unable to move.

Cloak of Many Fashions
Wondrous Item, common

While wearing this cloak, you can use a bonus action to change the style, color, and apparent quality of the garment. The cloak's weight doesn't change. Regardless of its appearance, the cloak can't be anything but a cloak. Although it can duplicate the appearance of other magic cloaks, it doesn't gain their magical properties.

Deck of Illusions
Wondrous Item, uncommon

This box contains a set of parchment cards. A full deck has 34 cards. A deck found as treasure is usually missing 1d20 − 1 cards (see Basic Rules pg. 161)

The magic of the deck functions only if cards are drawn at random (you can use an altered deck of playing cards to simulate the deck). You can use an action to draw a card at random from the deck and throw it to the ground at a point within 30 feet of you.

An illusion of one or more creatures forms over the thrown card and remains until dispelled. An illusory creature appears real, of the appropriate size, and behaves as if it were a real creature except that it can do no harm. While you are within 120 feet of the illusory creature and can see it, you can use an action to move it magically anywhere within 30 feet of its card. Any physical interaction with the illusory creature reveals it to be an illusion, because objects pass through it. Someone who uses an action to visually inspect the creature identifies it as illusory with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The creature then appears translucent.

The illusion lasts until its card is moved or the illusion is dispelled. When the illusion ends, the image on its card disappears, and that card can't be used again.

Potion of Invisibility
Potion, very rare

This potion's container looks empty but feels as though it holds liquid. When you drink it, you become invisible for 1 hour. Anything you wear or carry is invisible with you. The effect ends early if you attack or cast a spell.

Spell Scroll
Scroll, varies

A spell scroll bears the words of a single spell, written in a mystical cipher. If the spell is on your class's spell list, you can read the scroll and cast its spell without providing any material components. Otherwise, the scroll is unintelligible. Casting the spell by reading the scroll requires the spell's normal casting time. Once the spell is cast, the words on the scroll fade, and it crumbles to dust. If the casting is interrupted, the scroll is not lost.

If the spell is on your class's spell list but of a higher level than you can normally cast, you must make an ability check using your spellcasting ability to determine whether you cast it successfully. The DC equals 10 + the spell's level. On a failed check, the spell disappears from the scroll with no other effect.

The level of the spell on the scroll determines the spell's saving throw DC and attack bonus, as well as the scroll's rarity, as shown in the Spell Scroll table.

Spell Level	Rarity	Save DC	Attack Bonus
8th	Very rare	18	+10

Handout A

Each of the four copies of the scene is the same and written in Draconic script. Ajamar seems to have highlighted certain lines (represented by a '*') that he believes will be integral to the success of the scene and marked stage directions with [text in brackets]. The translation is provided below:

1. *Narrator: We join our characters at sundown in the chapel. Andas and Benor are about to be married. By marrying Benor, Andas gleefully gains rulership over both Ythryn and Sunrest. Benor desires Andas's hand because without true love's kiss by sundown, Benor will suffer a ghastly fate. What Benor doesn't know is that their actual true love, Cimon, is racing to arrive in time to proclaim their love for Benor and stop them from marrying the wrong person.

2. Andas: People of Ythryn, we gather here today to bear witness to the union of Benor and myself of course. By the power vested in me by the Arcane Octad I now pronounce us -

3. *Cimon: I object! [Pause for laughter.] Benor, you can't marry Andas! They don't love you!

4. Benor: Cimon, what are you doing here? You're about to ruin everything. When you turned your back on me, I moved on.

5. *Cimon: Benor, I had no choice, I didn't want you to see the truth about me. That truth is... I'm a horrible... grotesque... troll. [Cimon drops their disguise and reveals themself as a monstrous green troll.]

6. Andas: Guards, seize the troll [pointing to Cimon]! I want their brain put in a jar in my study. [Turns to Benor.] My love, shall we get back to the happiest day of our lives?

7. *Benor: No Andas. I cannot marry you. Cimon, there's something I've been keeping from you too. [Benor turns to look at the final rays of sunlight and begins to turn into a monstrous green troll.]

8. Andas: By Mystral, you're both disgusting. Guards, kill them both.

9. *Narrator: Magen enter the room from all sides. The scene looks hopeless for our heroes when suddenly Cimon lets out a mighty call. Within moments, a huge dragon crashes into the chapel and eats Andas whole. With their leader defeated, the magen stand down. All eyes return to Benor and Cimon.

10. Cimon: Benor, I love you.

11. Benor: Cimon, I love you too.

12. *Narrator: Cimon and Benor approach each other and share a romantic kiss. As their lips touch, the room begins to glow and both of them lift up into the air. A wave of light spreads over the room. When it clears, Cimon and Benor are both human again. Everyone cheers and the curtains close.

Handout A - DM Notes

Rewarding Creativity Quick Notes.
- Cantrips, costumes, and props give advantage.
- Spells (or potentially other items or abilities that have to recharge) can lower the DC by x2 the spell level.
- Amazing feats can cause auto success.

1. *A Strong Opening.* The Narrator must make a DC 20 Charisma (Performance or Persuasion) check to set the scene strong

2. None

3. *Objection.* The character playing Cimon must make a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check after delivering the line, "I object!"

4. None

5. *The First Reveal.* The character playing Cimon must make a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check after dropping their disguise to reveal that they are a troll.

6. None

7. *The Second Reveal.* The character playing Cimon must make a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check after dropping their disguise to reveal that they are a troll.

8. None

9. *Villain's Demise.* The character playing Andas must make a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check and a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check to act out being eaten by the dragon and then hiding from the audience.

10. None

11. None

12. *True Love's Kiss.* The characters playing Benor and Cimon must succeed a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check to deliver the kiss.

A Dan Kahn Compendium

We hope you've enjoyed the content in this compendium. If you find any errors, have a good idea, or just want to get in touch, you can reach out to Dan Kahn at leprekahn7@gmail.com.

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