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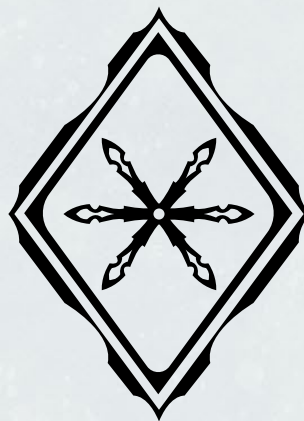
A Plague of Ancients Adventure

The plan is in motion, and you must scour the breadth and depth of Icewind Dale for the components an extraplanar stranger needs to create explosive devices powerful enough to bury the ancient Abeiran city of Xorvintroth and seal away the horrors residing within. Are you up to the challenge?

Part Nine of the *Plague of Ancients* Series of Adventures.

A Four-Hour Adventure for 5th through 10th-Level Characters

Optimized for APL 10.



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

The only real stumbling block is fear of failure. In cooking, you've got to have a what-the-hell attitude.

—Julia Child

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th- to 10th-level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 10**. Characters outside this level range can't participate in this adventure.

This adventure occurs across Icewind Dale, specifically in Sunblight, the Lost Tower of Netheril, and near Bryn Shandar.

BACKGROUND

The fallen star witnessed by the **THUUNLAKALAGA GOLIATHS** isn't what it appeared to be: it's a **NAUTILOID** piloted by gnomish **CEREMORPHS** that was chased into one of Auril the Frostmaiden's great blizzards and now lies earthbound.

To make matters worse, the neogi masters of the **DEATHSPIDER** pursuing the nautiloid arrived. Slavers, the **NEOGI** capitalized on the havoc sown by the Everlasting Rime to capture and enslave whomever they could find. One such captive, a **GIFF** named **LIEUTENANT PROOK**, managed to escape and has allied with the Thuunlakalaga goliaths.

Finding no survivors among missing goliath hunters they were tasked to rescue, the characters returned to **WYRMDOOM CRAG**, having narrowly escaped the horrors of the ancient **ABEIRAN** city of **XORVINTROTH**. The city is festering with **ABERRATIONS** from the **FAR REALM**; long-dormant terrors that threaten the entirety of **ICEWIND DALE**. Hope remains in Lieutenant Prook's plan to bury the city forever, but his explosive devices need additional components from across Icewind Dale.

OVERVIEW

The adventure's story is spread over **four parts** and takes approximately **4 hours** to play. **Parts 1, 2, and 3 can be played in any order.**

Call to Action: The Sign (30 mins). Lieutenant Prook tells the characters he needs three important components to finish constructing the bombs needed to bury Xorvintroth.

Part 1: Power Circulator (60 mins). The characters head to Sunblight to acquire the fiery dragon blood needed to power the explosive devices. This is **Story Objective A**.

Part 2: Thermal Excitron Plural-Zed Alpha (60 mins). The characters venture to the Lost Spire of Netheril to create this bizarre-looking component by using the rune chamber there. This is **Story Objective B**.

Part 3: Detonation Amplifier (60 mins). The characters seek out the destroyed chardalyn dragon's remains to obtain some of its crystal. This is **Story Objective C**.

Part 4: Assembly (30 mins). With all three parts acquired, the characters help Lieutenant Prook assemble the bombs. This is **Story Objective D**.



STORY AWARDS

At certain points in the adventure, you'll see this glyph along with an entry describing how the specified story award is earned or impacted by the story. Ignore the entry if it refers to a story award none of the characters have.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

This adventure follows directly on from DDAL10-08 *Volatile Thoughts*. If your players are new to the Season 10 Seasonal Campaign, here are ways to involve them in this scenario:

Delvers Wanted. Characters staying in Ten-Towns hear from a goliath messenger that the Thuunlakalaga clan is hiring help to delve into dangerous local sites.

Echoes of Netheril. Characters with the Hermit or Sage background might be interested in the knowledge that can be recovered from the broken Netherese spire buried in the snow. They hear a team is being assembled to delve there soon.

One for the History Books. Rumors of Lieutenant Prook's ambitious scheme draw characters with the Folk Hero or Entertainer background to Wyrmdoom Crag. They'll either be a part of the story or tell of it for years to come.

The Greater Good. Characters, particularly paladins or others honor-bound to protect, have heard of a great evil lurking in the Dale and been persuaded to help vanquish it.

Loyal Ally. Characters who've met Lieutenant Prook or the Thuunlakalaga goliaths previously are approached by them to lend their support during Lieutenant Prook's latest mission.

CALL TO ACTION: THE SIGN

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

WYRMDOOM CRAG

With the containment vessels prepared, Lieutenant Prook is ready to construct the bombs he believes will be sufficiently powerful to bury Xorvintroth and seal away the horrors within. In this part, Lieutenant Prook asks the characters to gather three key components he needs to craft the devices. All three components are found in locations described in chapters 2 and 3 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*.

This adventure presumes the events of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* have already taken place, but each part provides guidance on how to incorporate this adventure into a campaign in which this hasn't happened yet, but is likely to happen in the future.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS

Allow each player a minute or so to introduce their character, describe their appearance and mannerisms, and the reason why they're in Wyrmdoom Crag. Be sure to give everyone equal time in the spotlight and be prepared to gently stop people if they run on. Character introductions are crucially important for the players to understand who the other characters are, to build a basis for roleplaying opportunities, and for you, the DM, to learn more about the characters so you can create story elements that really speak to them.

Award **inspiration** (explaining what inspiration is and how it works) once everyone's had a turn.

INSPIRATION

Inspiration can be awarded by the DM for roleplaying, clever thinking, contributing to the fun, or for any other reason. If a player has inspiration, they can state they're using it **before** rolling an attack roll, a saving throw, or an ability check to get advantage on that roll. Having advantage means you roll two d20s (or one d20 twice) and use the higher roll.

Players can earn inspiration once and can't earn it again until they've used it or given it away to another player who doesn't have inspiration. What does this mean? The more you award inspiration, the more players will try to earn it!

LIEUTENANT PROOK'S BRIEFING

The characters are invited to a meeting with the goliath chieftain, Ogolai Orcsplitter ("Old Goat"), and Lieutenant Prook in Wyrmdoom Crag's great hall. If the characters aided Lieutenant Prook in obtaining and charging the

containment vessels for the bombs during DDAL10-08 *Volatile Thoughts*, Old Goat thanks them for their aid and requests they help Lieutenant Prook once more. If the characters haven't previously interacted with the Thuunlakalaga clan, Old Goat explains the dire situation and the danger posed to her clan, and all of Icewind Dale, by the Aberration-filled city of Xorvintroth. She requests that they aid Lieutenant Prook with his plan. Characters who didn't play DDAL10-07 *Into Darkness* or DDAL10-08 *Volatile Thoughts* may find the idea of creating bombs to destroy a city jarring or understandably be concerned about collateral damage. Old Goat assures them the city is full of Aberrations and destroying it is only for the good of Icewind Dale and her clan. Whatever was awoken within the city makes the "normal" threats of the area pale in comparison.

After Old Goat's introduction, Lieutenant Prook briefs the characters on the additional components he needs to bury Xorvintroth. Read or paraphrase:

A stout hippopotamus-headed giff paces back and forth, addressing you in a gruff voice, "For this operation to succeed, you must acquire three key components. Only then can we assemble the bombs that will bury Xorvintroth forever! Well then, what are you waiting for? Hop to it!"

Lieutenant Prook can provide the characters with more information about the components and a crude map of their expected locations. Provide the players with **Handout 1: Lieutenant Prook's Map**. Once briefed, the characters should decide which part they wish to collect first. The three components are:

Power Circulator. This component taps into the device's power source and creates a thermal feedback loop— instantaneously generating a tremendous amount of heat. The goliaths of Wyrmdoom Crag have told Lieutenant Prook that a red dragon's heart powered a once-mighty forge in **Sunblight** (chapter 3 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*). He asks the characters to venture to the stronghold, find the heart, and obtain some of the blood contained within. If asked about a container for the blood, he suggests the forge, having been powered by the heart, must have something suitable.

Thermal Excitron Plural-Zed Alpha. This device converts heat into the best kind of explosive energy—loud and destructive explosive energy. Lieutenant Prook has a hologram blueprint for the device he needs, but no way to make it. He instructs them to seek out the **Lost Tower of Netheril** (chapter 2 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*). There, they'll find a device with the ability to create a real object from an illusory one.

LIEUTENANT PROOK (LEF-TEN-ANT PR-OOK)

Giff interstellar mercenary

Lieutenant Prook (he pronounces lieutenant as “leftenant” and prefers to be addressed as such) once commanded a brigade of his fellow hippopotamus-headed giff mercenaries, but his entire unit was captured by neogi slavers. Of them, he’s the sole survivor. The neogi ship recently crashed in Icewind Dale while pursuing the *Id Ascendant*—an illithid nautiloid piloted by gnomish ceremorphs. In the chaos, Lieutenant Prook managed to escape, but underestimated the cold.

What They Want. While Lieutenant Prook’s immediate goals are survival and recovery, once out of the woods, he plans to find a way to exact his revenge on the neogi who enslaved him and killed his unit.

Gruff and No-Nonsense. Lieutenant Prook doesn’t waste time on pomp and circumstance; he focuses on his goals with laser precision and those who question his orders (yes, orders) or methods are quick to earn a scathing admonishment. To that end, however, he’s loyal and honorable without apology. He would throw down his life to save those he considers allies.

OGOLAI (OH-GO-LIE) ORCSPLITTER

“OLD GOAT” THUUNLAKALAGA

Goliath warrior

The chieftain of the Thuunlakalaga goliaths is an elderly goliath with a heavily scarred face. She dresses plainly in goat hide clothing and carries an immense greataxe fashioned from white dragon bone. She has a crippling fear of griffons stemming from a childhood trauma that’s created tensions between her clan and the Akannathi goliaths of Skytower Shelter (see *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*).

What They Want. Old Goat’s first priority is the safety and prosperity of her clan—especially in these unusual and trying times. She’s quick to stymie dissent, particularly from Kaskur Spearsong. She fears his disagreements will turn violent, but does everything within her power to delay this apparent inevitability for as long as possible.

Done It, Seen It; but the End Is Nigh. Old Goat has been around a long time and seen many things. This experience lends her a tremendous amount of wisdom to draw on when making decisions. However, she’s getting old and refuses to surrender the yoke of leadership until a worthy (equally wise) replacement is found. If it weren’t for his sharp tongue, Old Goat would’ve offered Kaskur the mantle of leadership years ago. However, she fears what the clan would become under his leadership.

Detonation Amplifier (Formula Four). An explosion is good, but a bigger explosion is better. While the explosive itself is a crucial component of the device, generating enough power for the bombs to bury an entire city requires a means of amplification. In this case, a large amount of chardalyn—something Lieutenant Prook wagers will be available in plenty following the defeat of Sunblight’s chardalyn dragon (chapter 4 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*).

TRAVELING

Travel between each of the three locations and Wyrmdoom Crag takes multiple days. You can use **Appendix A: Traversing Icewind Dale** to add detail to the travel time and provide additional roleplaying opportunities on each journey.

Lieutenant Prook can accompany the characters on their mission. One of the players (chosen at random if they can’t agree) can control Lieutenant Prook as a sidekick during this adventure.

Give that player Handout 2: Sidekicks.



POWER CIRCULATOR

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

SUNBLIGHT

The characters search Sunblight for the materials needed to construct the bombs' power circulators. With luck, the device will be able to tap enough of the red dragon blood's latent fiery energy to detonate the bomb.

Xardorok Sunblight, his aspirations (see chapter 3 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*), and the forge powering them have been destroyed. In the wake of his defeat, a small group of Icewind kobolds has taken up residency in his citadel and has begun to worship the destroyed red dragon heart inside the forge. The characters find the citadel largely empty, aside from the vestibule and forge.

STORY OBJECTIVE

Obtaining the first bomb component is **Story Objective A**.

To reach the citadel, the characters must trek into the Spine of the World mountains. The citadel rises up more than a hundred feet: a sheer, imposing mountain wall, carved with arrow slits. A narrow staircase hewn from the floor of the gray rock leads up to an icy shelf and the vestibule entrance.

VESTIBULE

The kobolds have cobbled together scavenged armor and weapons to create a duergar dummy to stand guard here. Surrounded by hidden pressure plates, its slightly silly beard of bristling pine needles masks an early warning system for the kobolds and a fiery trap. The characters need to disable it to avoid alerting the kobolds in the forge of their presence. When they enter the vestibule, read:

A snarling duergar, hammer and shield raised as if to attack, stands at the back of this chamber. Two narrow exits flank the shuddering figure, but it doesn't advance or cry out at your arrival.

VESTIBULE FEATURES

This area (see the map in **appendix B**) corresponds to area X2 from chapter 3 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* and has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. This 20-foot-by-25-foot room is hewn from plain gray stone and the floor is paved with flagstones, many of which have been dislodged. A **duergar dummy** stands between the two narrow exits.

Lighting. The room is dimly lit by sunlight filtering in from the entrance.

Sounds. The scrabbling of claws on metal and a faint squeaking, along with the gentle rattle of the duergar dummy's metal armaments.

Duergar Dummy. Characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher realize the duergar is a poorly constructed dummy with something trapped inside that's causing it to shake. A character who inspects the dummy and makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check spots a cage behind the dummy's breastplate containing the angry brown-and-black-striped **lemming** responsible for the dummy's movement and noise. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the character also notices that the arm holding the hammer raised is suspended by a taut, thin rope and the raised shield is dented in the center. The rope runs down behind the helmet and into the dummy's core, where it's interlocked with the opening mechanism on the lemming's cage. Characters who make a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check deduce that releasing the hammer will cause a clang loud enough to echo through the citadel's halls, warning the trap maker of the characters' approach. The dummy's trap is triggered by a few concealed **pressure plates**.

Pressure Plates. Characters who inspect the floor near the dummy and make a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notice a pressure plate system hidden beneath the loosened flagstones covering the rear 10 feet of the room, across the base of the statue and the two exit passageways. Placing more than 20 pounds of weight on a pressure plate triggers the duergar dummy's **trap**. Wedging an iron spike or other object under the pressure plates prevents the trap from activating.

Trap. When the trap triggers, the characters hear an ominous hissing and the sparking of flint on steel. Roll for initiative! On initiative count 20 of the **2nd round** (losing ties), the dummy releases a 20-foot cone of fire from its mouth. Each creature in the area must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Prone characters have advantage on the saving throw. The lemming is outside the cone's area. The cone of fire also ignites the rope securing the hammer-holding arm. On initiative count 20 of the **3rd round** (losing ties), the rope burns through, the hammer

strikes the dummy's shield, and a loud clang echoes down the hallway, alerting the kobolds in the forge to the characters' presence. Putting out the fire, removing the shield or breaking off the dummy's arm with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check are possible solutions, but award inspiration for inventive alternatives!

Rescue the Lemming! Opening the cage to free the lemming dislodges the rope holding the hammer, causing it to strike the shield unless the mechanism is disabled first. Removing the shield or carefully unhooking the rope mechanism requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check or DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. If the characters free the lemming, it runs out the vestibule entrance, pausing at the threshold to look back at one character before it disappears. Choose a character who was key in aiding the lemming's escape. A **chwinga** appears and uses its Magical Gift to bestow that character with a *charm of heroism*. The charm wears off at the end of this adventure.

FORGE

The forge contains the fiery dragon's blood needed to construct the bomb. The forge is connected to the vestibule via a series of corridors bereft of ornamentation, and then by travelling down a mechanical elevator. To obtain the blood they need from the forge, the characters will need to subdue the new kobold occupants.

When they enter the forge, read or paraphrase:

Waves of heat emanate from the glowing, pyramid-shaped forge in the center of this cavern that beats with an eerie rhythm. Several kobolds, each with red stripes painted across their faces, dance to the beat in the glow of the forge.

FORGE FEATURES

This area (see the map in **appendix C**) corresponds to area X24 from chapter 3 of *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* and has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The floor of the vast cavern is covered in rubble.

Lighting. The room is dimly lit by the glow of the forge.

Ceilings. The cavern's ceiling slopes from 40 feet high at the north end, to 20 feet high at the south wall.

Guard Towers. Four 20-foot-high guard towers stand along the room's north and east walls. Each tower has a pressure plate at the top which controls the **flame spout** at its base. The flame spout is set in the middle of the wall, facing toward the center of the room. The battlements grant creatures **half cover** against ranged attacks.

Heat Haze. The heat emanating from the forge creates a shimmering effect that grants creatures standing adjacent to the forge **half cover** against ranged attacks.

Flame Spouts. When triggered, a spout emits a 20-foot cone of fire. Each creature in the area must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Due to how the spouts are positioned, Small or Tiny creatures and prone Medium creatures avoid the cone's area and take no damage. A character who investigates the tower wall and makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the flame spout.

Pressure Plates. Each tower has a 5-foot-square pressure plate on the roof. Placing more than 20 pounds of weight on a pressure plate triggers the **flame spout** embedded in that tower. A kobold standing on a pressure plate can retrigger a flame spout by jumping on the spot. The pressure plate is clearly visible to a creature on top of a tower or above it.



CREATURE INFORMATION

A number of kobolds are here, dancing before the ruined remains of the red dragon's heart in worship. A kobold **warlock of the archfey** stands atop the middle northern tower, leading four kobold **bandit captains** in worship below. Two kobold **archers** keep watch atop the northwestern tower.

Playing the Pillars. You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:

Combat. Keep the kobolds split into smaller groups and use the traps to their best advantage. If the kobolds were alerted to the characters' presence, the **warlock of the archfey** and **archers** have hidden at the top of the towers and the **bandit captains** are positioned at the base of those towers, under the **flame spouts**. The **bandit captains** use ranged attacks to draw the characters into the area of the flame spouts. The kobolds by the pressure plates wait to catch as many characters in a flame spout as possible before activating one for the first time, after which they activate them as often as possible. If caught in melee, the warlock uses *Misty Escape*, teleporting to another tower. Teleporting west allows them to activate a flame spout, while teleporting east makes it significantly harder for the characters to engage them in melee.

Exploration. Each flame spout has an adapted nozzle causing it to spray above the heads of Small or shorter creatures. A character who makes a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools can adjust the nozzle to either block the spout completely or to make it include all creatures in the cone's area.

Social. If the characters attempt to negotiate for the blood they need, the fanatical kobolds accuse the "warmbloods" of trying to corrupt their god and leap to attack. The **warlock of the archfey** mocks the characters to urge the other kobolds on.



ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove one **archer** and one **bandit captain**.

Weak: Remove one **bandit captain**.

Strong: Add one **archer** and one **bandit captain**.

Very Strong: Add two **archers** and one **bandit captain**.

TREASURE

The warlock has a chunk of blood-red crystal adhered to their dagger, which can be removed by destroying the dagger or by attuning to the crystal. This crystal is a *ruby of the war mage*.

OVERLAPPING ICEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN

This adventure presumes the events of *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* have already transpired and that Xardorok Sunblight and his underlings have been defeated. If they haven't been defeated yet, the stronghold is temporarily manned by a skeleton crew; the encounter contains duergar versions of the same creatures detailed above, applying the following adjustments:

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 120 ft.

Duergar Resilience. The duergar has advantage on saving throws against poison, spells, and illusions, as well as to resist being charmed or paralyzed.

Innate Spellcasting (1/Day each). The duergar can cast the *enlarge/reduce* (enlarge option only) and *invisibility* spells on itself, but only while not in direct sunlight.

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

THERMAL EXCITRON PLURAL-ZED ALPHA

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

LOST SPIRE OF NETHERIL

The characters venture to the Lost Spire of Netheril in pursuit of the rune chamber—a magic device with the power to transmute an illusory object into a real one. Lieutenant Prook has provided the characters with a handheld device that projects an illusory hologram of a bizarre-looking device with various wires and protrusions.

STORY OBJECTIVE

Obtaining the second bomb components is **Story Objective B**.

The spire protrudes from the snow in a 20-foot-high spur of unnaturally smooth rock. The characters must climb down through holes in the floor to reach the lower levels.



BREATH OF LIFE

In travelling to the rune chamber on the spire's lowest level, the characters pass through a destroyed wizard's laboratory. They might be able to create potions with ingredients salvaged from the reagent cabinet, but must first contend with several living spells created by the tower's latent magic energy.

Read or paraphrase:

Upside-down storage cupboards and shards of shattered flasks suggest this was a wizard's laboratory. Before you can see if any reagents can be salvaged, a flicker of movement reveals this abandoned spire isn't entirely empty.

LABORATORY FEATURES

This area (see **appendix D**) corresponds to level 3 of the Lost Spire from chapter 2 of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* and has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The once ceiling, now floor of this 25-foot-wide quarter-circle room is strewn with **shattered glass** and alchemical equipment.

Lighting. The room is lit by sconces enchanted with *continual flame* spells set around the walls. The flames still point toward the original ceiling.

Shattered Glass. The shards strewn across the floor make it painful to move. The area is **difficult terrain**. When a creature in contact with the ground moves into or within the area, it takes 5 (2d4) piercing damage for every 5 feet it travels.

Reagent Cabinet. While much of the glassware has smashed, some ingredients remain well preserved in intact vessels. A character who inspects the cabinet and makes a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a scrap of parchment with two recipes written on it. Give the players **Handout 3: Recipe Riddles**. The characters can use these recipes to create a *potion of greater healing* and a *potion of hill giant strength* if they combine the correct ingredients. Refer to **appendix E** for guidance.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Two living spells occupy the spire. A **living Bigby's hand** emerges from the corner of the room, while a **living blade of disaster** moves straight through the west wall of the chamber to attack.



ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative.

Very Weak: Replace one **living blade of disaster** with one **living Bigby's hand**.

Weak: Replace one **living Bigby's hand** with one **living burning hands**.

Strong: Replace one **living Bigby's hand** with two **living burning hands**.

Very Strong: Add one **living Bigby's hand**.

HOLOGRAMS MADE REAL

Using the device provided by Lieutenant Prook and the rune chamber, the characters can create three copies of a thermal excitron plural-zed alpha.

Read or paraphrase:

The walls of this chamber are inscribed with interconnected runes and marred with cracks. What is now the ceiling bears similar inscriptions that swirl inward, converging around a golden crystal disk five feet in diameter.

RUNE CHAMBER FEATURES

This area has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. This 15-foot-by-20-foot room is upside-down, with the **rune chamber** the characters need to use located on the ceiling.

Lighting. The room is lit by sconces enchanted with *continual flame* spells set around the walls. The flames still point toward the original ceiling.

Rune Chamber. When an illusory object is placed under the crystal disk, the disk gives off a soft, golden light. When the characters activate the rune chamber using the hologram projector, the object becomes real permanently. Once the characters create three copies, the hologram projector provided by Lieutenant Prook ceases functioning.

OVERLAPPING ICEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN

This adventure presumes the events of *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* have already transpired and that Dzaan has either been destroyed by the rune chamber or transmuted into a real person (in which case, he's left the tower). If this hasn't taken place yet, the tower and its occupants are encountered as described in the hardcover adventure. Dzaan allows the characters to use the rune chamber—suggesting that replicating the components would be a “good test run.”

TREASURE

The ingredients in the reagent cabinet may be successfully combined to create a *potion of greater healing* and a *potion of hill giant strength*.

DETONATION AMPLIFIER

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

DRAGON CRASH SITE

Lieutenant Prook tells the characters to seek out the destroyed remains of the chardalyn dragon that ravaged Ten-Towns recently and to obtain **twelve pounds of chardalyn**.

STORY OBJECTIVE

Obtaining the third bomb component is **Story Objective C**.

This adventure presumes the chardalyn dragon crashed a few hours away from Bryn Shander. The crash site is set amid snow covered hillocks and contains the metallic skeleton of a massive dragon, which has driven a furrow through the snow and ground, felling multiple trees in its descent.

WHAT?! WON'T HAGGLE?

The characters venture to the destroyed dragon and find its remains picked nearly clean by local merchants. As they arrive, the last of the chardalyn is loaded into a wagon belonging to one such merchant who's unwilling to part with their cache.

CRASH SITE FEATURES

This area has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The open area contains the carcass of a metal dragon, nearly picked clean of black crystal shards, lying in a furrow carved into the earth.

Lighting. The area is in bright daylight.

Wagon. A small wagon with a green awning stands out due to the fur-trimmed birdcage sitting alongside the driver's seat.

GALLIA (GA-LEE-AH)

Human (Ffolk) merchant

Gallia travels the Realms collecting recipes and items to trade. Dressed in thick furs and smelling very slightly of fish and herbs, Gallia has come to Ten-Towns in search of a long-lost recipe, as well as profit, with her beloved chicken companion.

What They Want. Gallia wants safe passage back to Bryn Shander, so she can continue her travels across the Realms.

Henpecked. Gallia is cheerful and would do anything for Henrietta. When negotiating, she consults with her beloved chicken on any offers made, implying that Henrietta rules the roost and the deal is out of her hands if Henrietta doesn't like the terms offered.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Gallia the merchant (a **commoner**) is loading the last scraps of chardalyn onto her wagon while happily chatting away to her chicken, Henrietta, when the characters arrive.

Gallia is reluctant to part with the chardalyn she acquired, feeling she only got scraps, but realizes the characters are an opportunity for safe passage back to Bryn Shander. With Henrietta's help, she negotiates an exchange of chardalyn for protection from the Reghed barbarians that've been harrying other caravans in the area. Gallia is far less interested in offers of gold, knowing it won't keep the barbarians away from her wagon. If pressed to offer a monetary price, she consults with Henrietta then asks for 50 gp per character per pound (e.g. five adventurers would be asked to pay 250 gp per pound of chardalyn—a total of 3,000 gp for the twelve pounds they need). She assumes this very high price will convince the characters to escort her instead.

If the characters really don't want to escort Gallia, they can negotiate for a slightly lower price. A successful DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check persuades her to lower the price by 5 gp per character per pound of chardalyn. The characters may lower the price this way twice (to 40 gp per character per pound), but that's the lowest Gallia will go, even for a friendly acquaintance.

Characters who opt to murder Gallia for the chardalyn or try to steal from her should be reminded of the rules regarding renown suspension, but ideally playing Gallia and Henrietta as friendly characters will avoid this situation. If the characters do steal the chardalyn, the berserkers ambush them as they're travelling instead.

HENRIETTA (HEN-REE-ET-AH)

Chicken companion and business adviser

Henrietta is a white chicken with tufts of feathers around her feet. She was raised by Gallia from a chick and has accompanied her ever since. Despite Gallia's claims otherwise, Henrietta is an ordinary, if well-traveled, chicken.

What They Want. Food, specifically grain, and to be left in peace.

Unflappable. Henrietta usually sits and watches Gallia's transactions with an occasional cock of the head. Unperturbed by new surrounds and loud voices, she will, however, peck anyone other than Gallia who tries to take her eggs.

CHARDALYN BERSERKERS

If the characters escort Gallia and Henrietta to Bryn Shander, they're ambushed along the way by Reghed nomads driven mad by their contact with chardalyn.

Read or paraphrase:

Snowbanks line the road back to Bryn Shander. The calm day is shattered by yells as several figures, their torsos bare and frostbitten, leap over the banks to attack.

AMBUSH SITE FEATURES

This area is keyed to the map in **appendix F** and has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The ambush occurs on a 25-foot-wide road where the snow has turned to slush, patches of which have formed into **slippery ice**. Five-foot-wide snowbanks line either side of the road. Two snowbanks each conceal a **spiked pit**. Pine trees line the area beyond the snowbanks.

Lighting. The area is in bright daylight.

Slippery Ice. Several 10-foot-square patches of ice have formed on the path, making those areas difficult terrain. When a creature enters the area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, it must make a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.

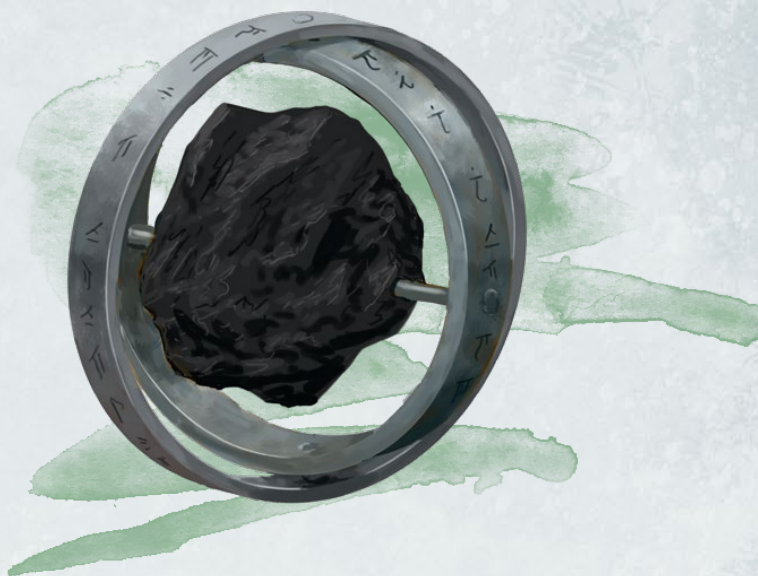
Spiked Pit. The mage instructed the berserkers to dig two pit traps, each measuring 5 feet wide, 15 feet long, and 20 feet deep. These are covered with pine branches and hidden under the snowbanks. A character who inspects the snowbanks and makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check can tell the snow there has been disturbed. When a creature steps onto the area, the branches underneath give way, dropping them into the pit filled with chardalyn-tipped spikes. A creature that falls into the pit takes 22 (4d10) piercing damage and 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage and must make a successful DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of its next turn. Falling into the pit reveals the 5-foot-square section the character fell through, but the cover on the rest of the pit remains intact. A character inside the pit can see the full extent of the pit under the snow. Climbing out the pit requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. The nomads avoid the area with the pits.

CREATURE INFORMATION

A small band of Reghed nomads ambush the wagon Gallia is driving. Three **chardalyn berserkers** burst onto the road from behind the snowbanks on either side while a **mage** hangs back, behind a spiked pit, letting the others engage in melee. Gallia and Henrietta hide in the wagon during combat, which grants them total cover.

Playing the Pillars. You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:

Combat. The mage is more than happy to engage in friendly fire if it means catching more of their enemies in the area of a spell, anticipating that their foes may not expect the tactic. The mage might also cast a *greater invisibility* spell early in the encounter.



Exploration. Allow the characters to use the wagon and snowdrifts to provide cover. The characters may exploit the terrain and spiked pit by goading the berserkers or using clever positioning.

Social. Gallia reassures Henrietta that “these heroes will save her from going in the pot.” Use this to compliment characters who were particularly polite in conversation with Gallia.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative.

Very Weak: Remove two **chardalyn berserkers**.

Weak: Remove one **chardalyn berserker**.

Strong: Add one **chardalyn berserker**.

Very Strong: Add one **chardalyn berserker** and one **mage**.



STORY AWARD: CHARDALYN POISONING

Characters who keep any of the chardalyn find the substance's affinity for magic affecting them in inopportune ways. So long as the character retains the chardalyn (no matter the amount), they have disadvantage on saving throws against spells, and spell attacks against them have advantage.

OVERLAPPING ICEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN

This adventure presumes the events of *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* have already transpired and that the chardalyn dragon has been destroyed. Adjust the dragon crash site to where the characters brought it down and consider having Gallia request an escort to a different town, if sensible. If the chardalyn dragon hasn't been destroyed yet, this part can be pursued during the relevant section of the hardcover adventure.

ASSEMBLY LINE

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

THE WYRMDOOM CRAG-ADJACENT PROJECT

With all three components obtained, Lieutenant Prook must assemble the three bombs he believes will suffice to bury Xorvintroth. Old Goat is apprehensive about allowing him to construct the devices in Wyrmdoom Crag—and rightly so. As such, Lieutenant Prook chooses a suitable location a half-day's march from the goliaths' home. As the characters were out obtaining the components, he was preparing the makeshift workshop needed to assemble them (though if the characters brought Lieutenant Prook along as a sidekick, he spends a couple hours now preparing the workshop with their assistance).

STORY OBJECTIVE

Assisting Lieutenant Prook build the bombs is **Story Objective D**.

The characters gather at the makeshift workshop ready to start assembly. The assembly has three stages.

Read or paraphrase:

The three components, acquired from across the Dale, sit on a makeshift workbench in this remote shack. Now it's time to assemble the bombs. Thorough preparations and a steady hand will be needed.

WORKSHOP FEATURES

This area has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. Rocky ground, recently cleared of snow, and makeshift wooden walls define the perimeter of this 25-foot-by-35-foot shack.

Lighting. The area is brightly lit by lanterns secured to the walls.

Sounds and Smells. The workshop smells faintly of alchemical components: glues, smoke, and acrid substances. The shack's walls creak in the wind.

STAGE 1: CAREFUL PREPARATIONS

The first stage of any crafting is to ensure all components are laid out and all instructions are accessible and clear. With a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation)

group check, the characters ensure everything they need is to hand. On a failure, the characters misplace a key component—all checks in stage 2 are made with **disadvantage**.

STAGE 2: DELICATE ASSEMBLY

With the components laid out, careful handiwork is needed to assemble the bombs. With a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) **group check**, the bomb carapaces are assembled precisely and without incident. On a failure, the carapaces are still assembled, but the characters each take 7 (2d6) slashing damage from cutting themselves on sharp components. A character proficient with alchemist's supplies, jeweler's tools, thieves' tools, or tinker's tools can add their proficiency bonus to the check. Characters who are both proficient in Sleight of Hand and proficient with a relevant set of artisan's tools have advantage on their check.

STAGE 3: FEEDBACK LOOP

In putting the finishing touches to the bombs, Lieutenant Prook triggers a feedback loop that spawns a dangerously hot vortex of flame. Luckily, Lieutenant Prook brought instructions for a ritual that can close and banish the vortex, the characters just need to enact it, and fast!

Read or paraphrase:

You watch with anticipation as Lieutenant Prook goes to place the final component. A bright flash and a bang confound your senses. Blinking to clear your eyes, you see a rapidly expanding vortex of flame threatening to destroy the bombs, the workshop, and everyone in it. Sparks fly from it, coalescing into destructive, miniature elementals. Lieutenant Prook yells, "Enact the fail-safe ritual!"

The characters need to close the vortex so construction of the bomb can be completed safely. The characters should enter into initiative order to resolve this stage. Provide the players with **Handout 4: Fail-Safe Ritual**.

Flaming Vortex. The vortex and the emerging elementals cause each creature to take 21 (6d6) fire damage at the start of each of their turns. The smoke and crackling impose disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

I'll Save You! When a character would take damage from the flaming vortex, another character may use their reaction to reduce the damage dealt by 1d20 + their Constitution modifier. They then take damage equal to the damage prevented this way. Only one creature can reduce the damage from a flaming vortex at a time.



Closing the Vortex. The characters need to perform a ritual of closing in order to banish the vortex. Each round, a character can attempt to close the vortex as an action. Completing the ritual requires **five** successful checks. Refer to **appendix G** for guidance.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative.

Very Weak: The vortex only requires 4 successful checks to close. The vortex only deals 14 (4d6) damage.

Weak: The vortex only deals 14 (4d6) damage.

Strong: The vortex requires 7 successful checks to close.

Very Strong: The vortex requires 9 successful checks to close.

TREASURE

As the vortex closes, it collapses in upon itself, leaving behind a *portable hole*.

WRAP-UP: SPECIAL DELIVERY!

The characters close the vortex, and Lieutenant Prook finishes constructing the bombs. Now it's time for Lieutenant Prook's favorite part; using them! He thanks the characters for their aid and returns with them to Wyrmdoom Crag to rest. He asks them to ready themselves for the precarious trek to transport the devices to Xorvintroth and, if detonated successfully there, to secure a future for Icewind Dale safe from the Aberrations of the Far Realm.

REWARDS

At the **end of the session**, everyone receives rewards based upon their accomplishments:

PLAYER REWARDS

The players earn the following rewards:

ADVANCEMENT

A character participating in this adventure gains one level.

OPTIONAL: DECLINING ADVANCEMENT

Each player can decline advancement if they so choose; this has its benefits. It's possible for a character to advance beyond an adventure's level range, meaning they'd be unable to play an adventure as planned. Similarly, advancing too quickly means a character won't earn as much gold as their peers.

Conversely, remind players that the amount of gold their characters can earn per level is limited; characters declining advancement might reach a point where they no longer earn gold.

GOLD

Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically feature cues for this, but you can add it where you see fit. The maximum gold you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

| Tier | Hourly GP Award | GP Limit per Level |
|------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | 20 gp | 80 gp |
| 2 | 30 gp | 240 gp |
| 3 | 200 gp | 1,600 gp |
| 4 | 750 gp | 6,000 gp |

MAGIC ITEMS

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items, described in **handout 5**:

- *Portable hole*
- *Potion of greater healing*
- *Potion of hill giant strength*
- *Ruby of the war mage*

STORY AWARDS

The characters may earn the following story awards, described in **handout 5**:

- **Chardalyn Poisoning**

DM REWARDS

For running this adventure, you earn a DM Reward. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure:

GALLIA (GA-LEE-AH)

Human (Ffolk) merchant

Gallia travels the Realms collecting recipes and items to trade. Dressed in thick furs and smelling very slightly of fish and herbs, Gallia has come to Ten-Towns in search of a long-lost recipe, as well as profit, with her beloved chicken companion.

What They Want. Gallia wants safe passage back to Bryn Shander, so she can continue her travels across the Realms.

Henpecked. Gallia is cheerful and would do anything for Henrietta. When negotiating she consults with her beloved chicken on any offers made, implying that Henrietta rules the roost and the deal is out of her hands if Henrietta doesn't like the terms offered.

HENRIETTA (HEN-REE-ET-AH)

Chicken companion and business adviser

Henrietta is a white chicken with tufts of feathers around her feet. She was raised by Gallia from a chick and has accompanied her ever since. Despite Gallia's claims otherwise, Henrietta is an ordinary, if well-traveled, chicken.

What They Want. Food, specifically grain, and to be left in peace.

Unflappable. Henrietta usually sits and watches Gallia's transactions with an occasional cock of the head. Unperturbed by new surrounds and loud voices, she will, however, peck anyone other than Gallia who tries to take her eggs.

LIEUTENANT PROOK (LEF-TEN-ANT PR-OOK)

Giff interstellar mercenary

Lieutenant Prook (he pronounces lieutenant as "leftenant" and prefers to be addressed as such) once commanded a brigade of his fellow hippopotamus-headed giff mercenaries, but his entire unit was captured by neogi

slavers. Of them, he's the sole survivor. The neogi ship recently crashed in Icewind Dale while pursuing the *Id Ascendant*—an illithid nautiloid piloted by gnomish ceremorphs. In the chaos, Lieutenant Prook managed to escape, but underestimated the cold.

What They Want. While Lieutenant Prook's immediate goals are survival and recovery, once out of the woods, he plans to find a way to exact his revenge on the neogi who enslaved him and killed his unit.

Gruff and No-Nonsense. Lieutenant Prook doesn't waste time on pomp and circumstance; he focuses on his goals with laser precision and those who question his orders (yes, orders) or methods are quick to earn a scathing admonishment. To that end, however, he's loyal and honorable without apology. He would throw down his life to save those he considers allies.

OGOLAI (OH-GOH-LIE) ORCSPLITTER "OLD GOAT" THUUNLAKALAGA

Goliath warrior

The chieftain of the Thuunlakalaga goliaths is an elderly goliath with a heavily scarred face. She dresses plainly in goat hide clothing and carries an immense greataxe fashioned from white dragon bone. She has a crippling fear of griffons stemming from a childhood trauma that's created tensions between her clan and the Akannathi goliaths of Skytower Shelter (see *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*).

What They Want. Old Goat's first priority is the safety and prosperity of her clan—especially in these unusual and trying times. She's quick to stymie dissent, particularly from Kaskur Spearsong. She fears his disagreements will turn violent, but does everything within her power to delay this apparent inevitability for as long as possible.

Done It, Seen It; but the End Is Nigh. Old Goat has been around a long time and seen many things. This experience lends her a tremendous amount of wisdom to draw on when making decisions. However, she's getting old and refuses to surrender the yoke of leadership until a worthy (equally wise) replacement is found. If it weren't for his sharp tongue, Old Goat would've offered Kaskur the mantle of leadership years ago. However, she fears what the clan would become under his leadership.



CREATURE STATISTICS

The following creatures appear in this adventure:

ARCHER

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 18 (+4) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) |

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Archer's Eye (3/Day). As a bonus action, the archer can add 1d10 to its next attack or damage roll with a longbow or shortbow.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The archer makes two attacks with its longbow.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

SUNBLIGHT KOBOLDS

Make the following adjustments to the **archer** stat block:

Size Small

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

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

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

BANDIT CAPTAIN

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 15 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) |

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any two languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The captain makes three melee attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The captain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

SUNBLIGHT KOBOLDS

Make the following adjustments to the **bandit captain** stat block:

Size Small

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

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

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

CHARDALYN BERSERKER

Medium Fiend, Typically Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 90 (12d8 + 36)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 9 (-1) | 11 (+0) | 9 (-1) |

Skills Survival +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Chardalyn Madness. The berserker must roll a d6 at the start of each of its turns. On a 1, the berserker does nothing on its turn except speak to a nonexistent, evil master whom it has pledged to serve.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The berserker attacks three times with a melee weapon.

Chardalyn Flail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of its next turn.

Chardalyn Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of its next turn.

CHWINGA

Tiny Elemental, Typically Neutral

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 5 (2d4)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 (-5) | 20 (+5) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) |

Skills Acrobatics +7, Perception +7, Stealth +7

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages —

Challenge 0 (0 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Evasion. When the chwinga is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Innate Spellcasting. The chwinga's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom. It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material or verbal components:

At will: *druidcraft, guidance, pass without trace, resistance*

Unusual Nature. The chwinga doesn't require air, food, or drink. When it dies, it turns into a handful of flower petals, a cloud of pollen, a stone statuette resembling its former self, a tiny sphere of smooth stone, or a puddle of fresh water (your choice).

ACTIONS

Magical Gift (1/Day). The chwinga targets a Humanoid it can see within 5 feet of it. The target gains a supernatural charm of the DM's choice. See chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information on supernatural charms.

Natural Shelter. The chwinga magically takes shelter inside a rock, a living plant, or a natural source of fresh water in its space. The chwinga can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect while inside this shelter, and the shelter doesn't impair the chwinga's blindsight. The chwinga can use its action to emerge from a shelter. If its shelter is destroyed, the chwinga is forced out and appears in the shelter's space, but is otherwise unharmed.

COMMONER

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) |

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

LIVING BIGBY'S HAND

Large Construct, Unaligned

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (5d10 + 25)

Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 26 (+8) | 10 (+0) | 20 (+5) | 1 (–5) | 10 (+0) | 1 (–5) |

Saving Throws Dex +2, Wis +2

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +2

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Magic Resistance. The living spell has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Unusual Nature. The living spell doesn't require air, food, drink or sleep.

ACTIONS

Force Fist. *Melee Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 26 (4d8 + 8) force damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, the living spell can move it up to 5 feet and move with it, without provoking opportunity attacks.

Grasping Hand. The living spell attempts to grab a Huge or smaller creature within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target takes 15 (2d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns. The living spell can grapple only one creature at a time and can't use Force Fist until the grapple ends.

LIVING BLADE OF DISASTER

Small Construct, Typically Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d6 + 36)

Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 19 (+4) | 6 (–2) | 10 (+0) | 3 (–4) |

Damage Immunities poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +3

Magic Resistance. The living spell has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Unfettered. The living spell can move through any barrier, even a wall of magical force.

Unusual Nature. The living spell doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Force Blade. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 26 (4d12) force damage, unless the living spell rolled an 18 or higher on the d20 for the attack, in which case the attack is a critical hit that deals 78 (12d12) force damage instead.

REACTIONS

Preemptive Strike. The living spell makes a melee attack against a creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the living spell.

LIVING FROST FINGERS

Medium Construct, Unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 25 ft., fly 25 ft. (hover)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 3 (–4) | 6 (–2) | 6 (–2) |

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, poisoned, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Amorphous. The living spell can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Magic Resistance. The living spell has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Magical Strike. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) cold damage.

Spell Mimicry (Recharge 5–6). The living spell unleashes freezing cold in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

MAGE

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 9 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 11 (+0) |

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any four languages

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +3

Spellcasting. The mage is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *misty step*, *suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fireball*, *fly*

4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility*, *ice storm*

5th level (1 slot): *cone of cold*

ACTIONS

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

WARLOCK OF THE ARCHFEY

Medium Humanoid (Any Race), Any Alignment

Armor Class 11 (14 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 49 (11d8)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 9 (-1) | 13 (+1) | 11 (+0) | 11 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 18 (+4) |

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +6

Skills Arcana +2, Deception +6, Nature +2, Persuasion +6

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages any two languages (usually including Sylvan)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Innate Spellcasting. The warlock's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 14), requiring no material components:

At will: *disguise self*, *mage armor* (self only), *silent image*, *speak with animals*

1/day: *conjure fey*

Spellcasting. The warlock is a 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It regains expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights*, *eldritch blast*, *friends*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, *vicious mockery*

1st–5th level (3 5th-level slots): *blink*, *charm person*, *dimension door*, *dominate beast*, *faerie fire*, *fear*, *hold monster*, *misty step*, *phantasmal force*, *seeming*, *sleep*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Misty Escape (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). In response to taking damage, the warlock turns invisible and teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It remains invisible until the start of its next turn or until it attacks, makes a damage roll or casts a spell.

SUNLIGHT KOBOLDS

Make the following adjustments to the **warlock of the archfey** stat block:

Size Small

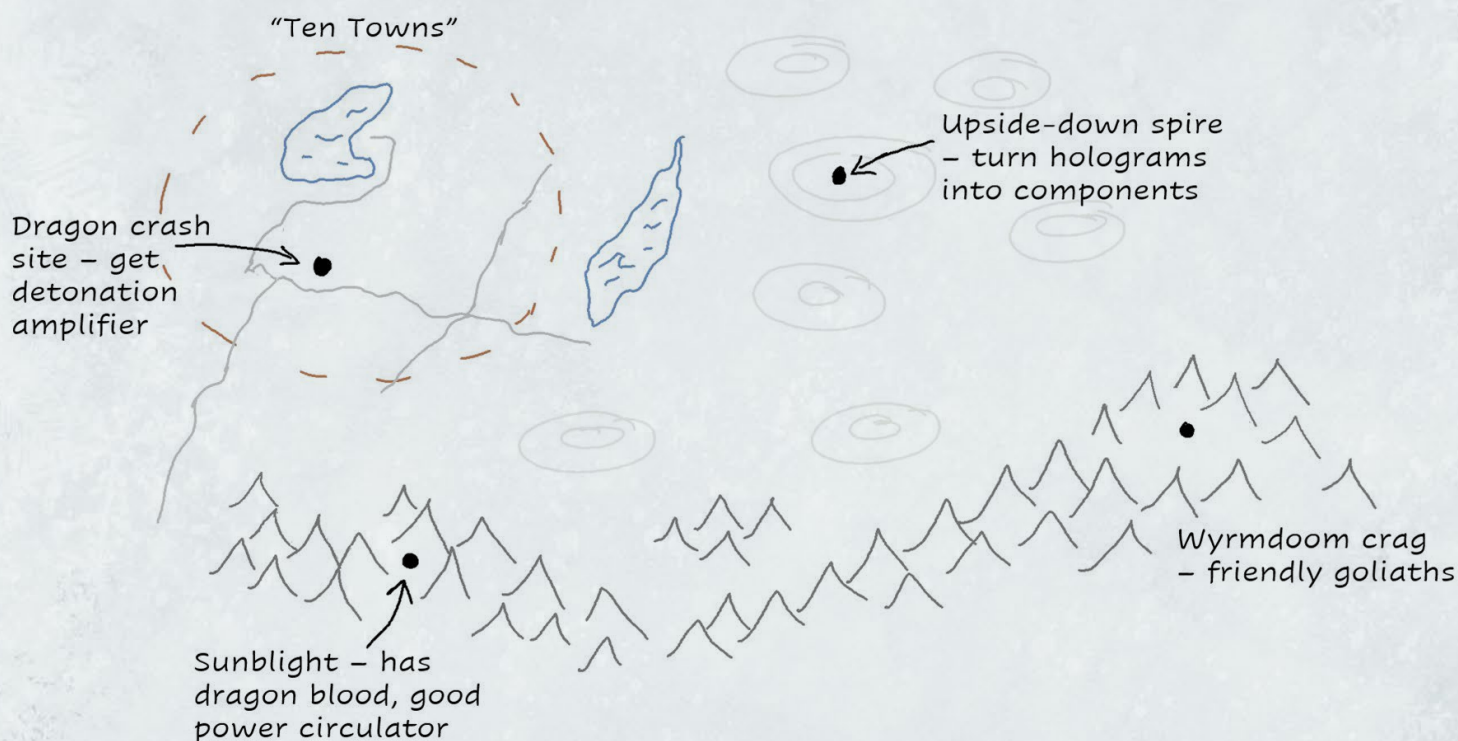
Senses darkvision 60 ft.

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

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

HANDOUT 1: LIEUTENANT PROOK'S MAP

Lieutenant Prook has annotated a rough map showing the locations of the bomb components. The well-traveled members of the Thuunlakalaga tribe have estimated travel times between these sites for you.



TRAVEL TIME BETWEEN LOCATIONS

| Location 1 | Location 2 | Approximate Travel Time (Days) |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Wyrmdoom Crag | Sunblight | 8 days |
| Wyrmdoom Crag | Upside-down spire | 4 days |
| Wyrmdoom Crag | Dragon crash site | 8 days |
| Upside-down spire | Dragon crash site | 5 days |
| Sunblight | Dragon crash site | 2 days |

HANDOUT 2: SIDEKICKS

LIEUTENANT PROOK (WARRIOR SIDEKICK)

Medium Humanoid (Giff), Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, Improved Defense)

Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 18 (+4) | 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 11 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) |

Saving Throws Con +5

Skills Intimidation +5, Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common

Proficiency Bonus +4

Attacker. Lieutenant Prook gains a +2 bonus to all attack rolls (already included).

Battle Readiness. Lieutenant Prook has advantage on initiative rolls.

Extra Attack. Lieutenant Prook can attack twice, instead of once, whenever he takes the Attack action.

Firearms Knowledge. Lieutenant Prook's mastery of his weapons enables him to ignore the loading property of muskets and pistols.

Headfirst Charge. Lieutenant Prook can try to knock a creature over; if he moves at least 20 feet in a straight line that ends within 5 feet of a Large or smaller creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or take 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

Improved Critical. Lieutenant Prook's attack rolls score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20 on the d20.

Improved Defense. Lieutenant Prook has a +1 bonus to his AC (already included).

ACTIONS

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage, or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 30/90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

Fragmentation Grenade (1/Day). Lieutenant Prook throws a grenade up to 60 feet. Each creature within 20 feet of the grenade's detonation must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 17 (5d6) piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

BONUS ACTION

Second Wind (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). Lieutenant Prook regains 1d10 + 10 hit points.

HANDOUT 3: RECIPE RIDDLES

The upside-down cabinet holds a number of intact jars, flasks, and vials with handwritten labels. In addition, you find a piece of parchment with two recipes.

Pine needles

Goat blood

Oil of wintergreen

Yeti fur

Fox tears

Wing of hare

Powdered walrus tusk

Clear spring water

Horse sweat

Squid blood

Phase spider silk

Bear claw

Knucklehead trout eggs

White wyrmling scale

It takes hard work to
replace what a warrior
lost in battle.
Combine in equal parts:

- Blood, but only royal
blood will do
- Exertion of a noble steed
- Sweet sorrow of the
wailing fox

RECIPE 1

Tooth of walrus,
claw of bear,
Pinch abominable hair,
To cover up
the taste bizarre,
Add Icewind's
finest caviar.
Combine with needles
from a tree,
Then you'll as strong
as yeti be.

RECIPE 2

HANDOUT 4: FAIL-SAFE RITUAL

A fiery rift is expanding out of control and it needs to be closed before disaster strikes! Lieutenant Prook copied down a rift-closing ritual which suggests possible courses of action, but heroes such as yourselves might also know a thing or two about closing a rift.

I'LL SAVE YOU!

When another character would take damage from the flaming vortex, you may use your reaction to reduce the damage dealt by 1d20 + your Constitution modifier. You then take damage equal to the damage prevented this way. Only one creature can reduce the damage from a flaming vortex at a time.

Failsafe ritual - rift closure for dummies.

Did a rift tear through reality when you attempted to assemble a bomb? Then follow these easy steps to save the day!

- Keep the fire elementals away from the bomb at all costs!
- Look for the weakest spots in the rift, these will be the best locations for symbols.
- Draw this symbol at three points around the portal/rift:
- Perform a ritual closing command in your best dramatic voice.



Disclaimers: Someone with knowledge of the arcane or a wielder of magic may be able to accelerate this ritual. Parts may be completed in any order. Ritual performed at user's own risk.

HANDOUT 5: CHARACTER REWARDS

The characters may earn the following rewards in this adventure:

MAGIC ITEMS

PORTABLE HOLE

Wondrous item, rare

Dry, blisteringly hot air carrying embers and ashes blows from within the *portable hole* whenever it's opened.

This fine black cloth, soft as silk, is folded up to the dimensions of a handkerchief. It unfolds into a circular sheet 6 feet in diameter.

You can use an action to unfold a *portable hole* and place it on or against a solid surface, whereupon the *portable hole* creates an extradimensional hole 10 feet deep. The cylindrical space within the hole exists on a different plane, so it can't be used to create open passages. Any creature inside an open *portable hole* can exit the hole by climbing out of it.

You can use an action to close a *portable hole* by taking hold of the edges of the cloth and folding it up. Folding the cloth closes the hole, and any creatures or objects within remain in the extradimensional space. No matter what's in it, the hole weighs next to nothing.

If the hole is folded up, a creature within the hole's extradimensional space can use an action to make a DC 10 Strength check. On a successful check, the creature forces its way out and appears within 5 feet of the *portable hole* or the creature carrying it. A breathing creature within a closed *portable hole* can survive for up to 10 minutes, after which time it begins to suffocate.

Placing a *portable hole* inside an extradimensional space created by a *bag of holding*, *Heward's handy haversack*, or similar item instantly destroys both items and opens a gate to the Astral Plane. The gate originates where the one item was placed inside the other. Any creature within 10 feet of the gate is sucked through it and deposited in a random location on the Astral Plane. The gate is one-way only and can't be reopened.

POTION OF GREATER HEALING

Potion, uncommon

Unsurprising given its ingredients, this concoction tastes of blood, sweat, and tears, making it an acquired taste.

You regain 4d4 + 4 hit points when you drink this potion. Its red liquid glimmers when agitated.

POTION OF HILL GIANT STRENGTH

Potion, uncommon

This potion smells of pine needles and a cold winter day.

When you drink this potion, your Strength score changes to 21 for 1 hour. The potion has no effect on you if your Strength is equal to or greater than 21.

RUBY OF THE WAR MAGE

Wondrous item, common (requires attunement by a spellcaster)

This ruby is a roughly fashioned chunk of blood-red crystal. The red color pulses gently.

Etched with eldritch runes, this 1-inch-diameter ruby allows you to use a simple or martial weapon as a spellcasting focus for your spells. For this property to work you must attach the ruby to the weapon by pressing the ruby against it for at least 10 minutes. Thereafter the ruby can't be removed unless you detach it as an action or the weapon is destroyed. Not even an *antimagic field* causes it to fall off. The ruby does fall off the weapon if your attunement to the ruby ends.

STORY AWARDS

CHARDALYN POISONING

Characters who keep any of the chardalyn find the substance's affinity for magic affecting them in inopportune ways. So long as the character retains the chardalyn (no matter the amount), they have disadvantage on saving throws against spells, and spell attacks against them have advantage.

APPENDIX A:

TRAVERSING ICEWIND DALE

A long trek awaits the characters between each location. Travelling these distances in detail is beyond the scope of this adventure's timeframe, but you can use the suggestions below to add roleplaying opportunities and more detail to each journey. For each period of travel, roll for or choose an encounter from the table below. Ways to resolve each encounter are suggested below, but feel free to adapt them to suit your party. Award inspiration for inventive or thematic solutions.

If you're running this adventure alongside *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*, you can expand the journey using the "Mountain Travel" rules in the opening section, adding encounters as you see fit from the "Wilderness Encounters" section in chapter 2.

RESTING DURING THE ADVENTURE

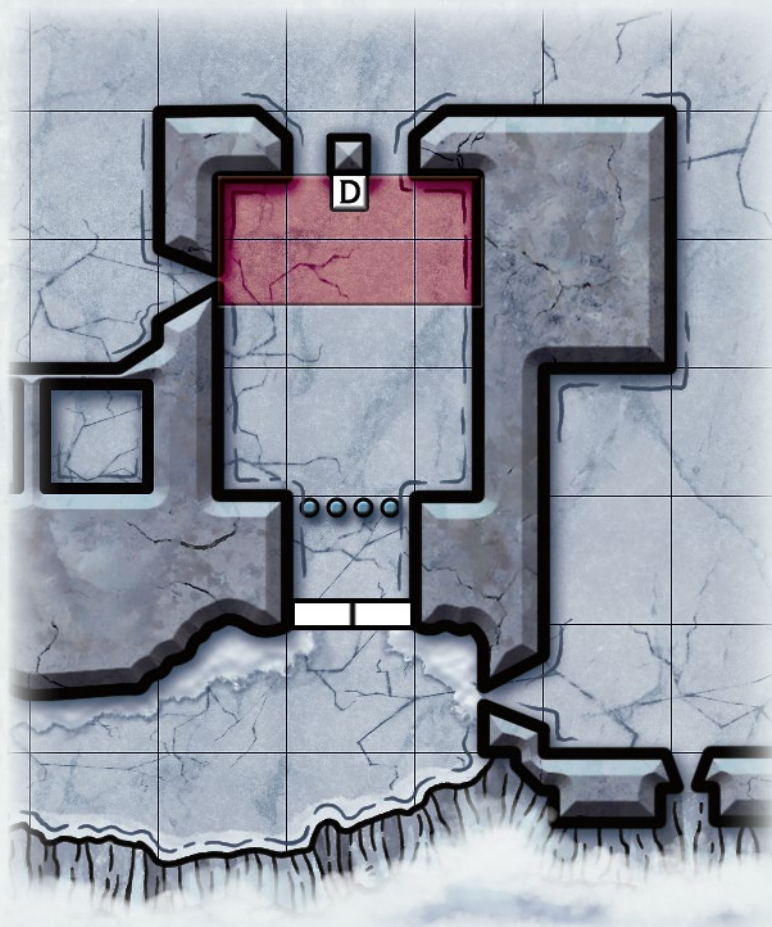
Due to the distances involved, it's presumed the characters benefit from a long rest between each part. If you aren't running in a time-pressured environment, feel free to adjust the difficulty of the encounters to reflect the increased resources the characters will have at their disposal.

| d10 | Encounter | Suggested Checks |
|-----|-----------------------|---|
| 1 | Broken-down Dogsled | A character can calm the sled dogs with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check, while a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check helps pull the sled out of a snowdrift. With a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using woodcarver's tools, a character repairs a broken strut on the sled. |
| 2 | Hunted by the Owlbear | The characters can mask their tracks with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Perception) check lets the character to anticipate the owlbear's tactics correctly. |
| 3 | Join Us Fishing? | With a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check, a character hooks a knucklehead trout. They must then make a Strength (Athletics) check contested by the trout's Strength (Athletics) check (a +2 bonus) to land the fish. The trout has advantage on the check. On a success, the character catches the trout, on a failure it escapes. |
| 4 | Sudden Blizzard | With a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) group check , the characters safely navigate the blizzard together and ignore its eerie whispers. |
| 5 | A Hare-y Situation | A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) or Charisma (Intimidation) check might allow the characters to drive the hungry crag cats away from the snowshoe hare. |
| 6 | Chwinga Cha-Cha | A DC 15 Charisma (Performance) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check determines how well the character dances. On a success, the chwinga is impressed by their dancing, and offers the character a harmless, sweet frozen berry as a gift. |
| 7 | Stampede! | A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling or Insight) or Intelligence (Nature) check allows the character to anticipate the herd's behavior and avoid them stampeding the group. |
| 8 | Trapped Reindeer | A successful DC 10 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Wisdom (Survival) check allows the character to open the trap, either by resetting its mechanism or through sheer force. Alternatively, dinner! |
| 9 | Crevasse | A character can pull their ally back out with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check, while a character who makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check guides their ally to reliable handholds to climb back out with. |
| 10 | White Dragon | With a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check a character realizes the dragon isn't interested in them, it's already secured a meal. |

APPENDIX B:

VESTIBULE MAP (PART 1)

Reproduction of area X2 (chapter 3, *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*). Duergar dummy positioned between the two exit tunnels, the shaded area shows the pressure plates concealed beneath loosened flagstones.



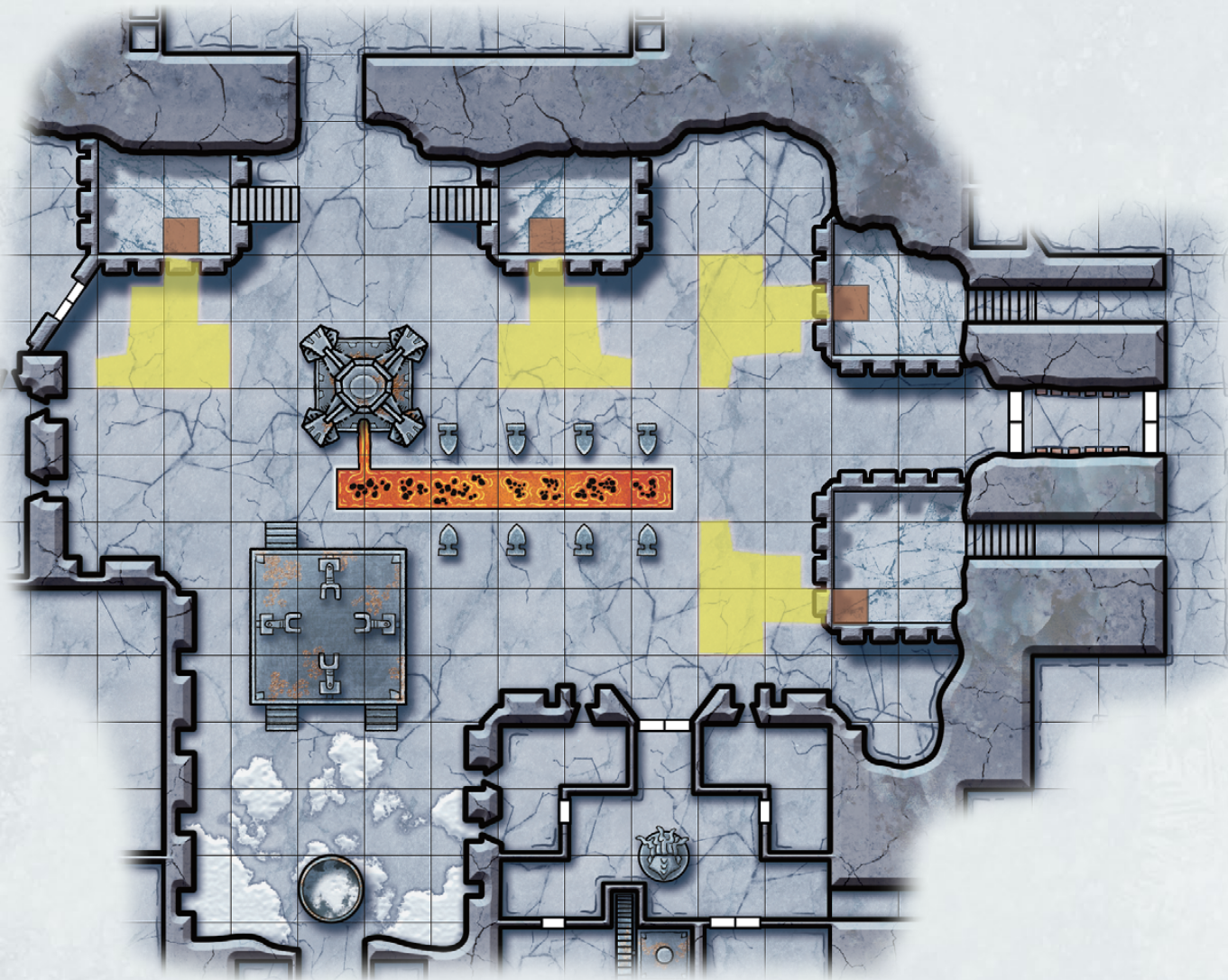
D = DUERGAR DUMMY

SHADED AREA: PRESSURE PLATES

ONE SQUARE = 10 FEET

APPENDIX C: FORGE MAP (PART 1)

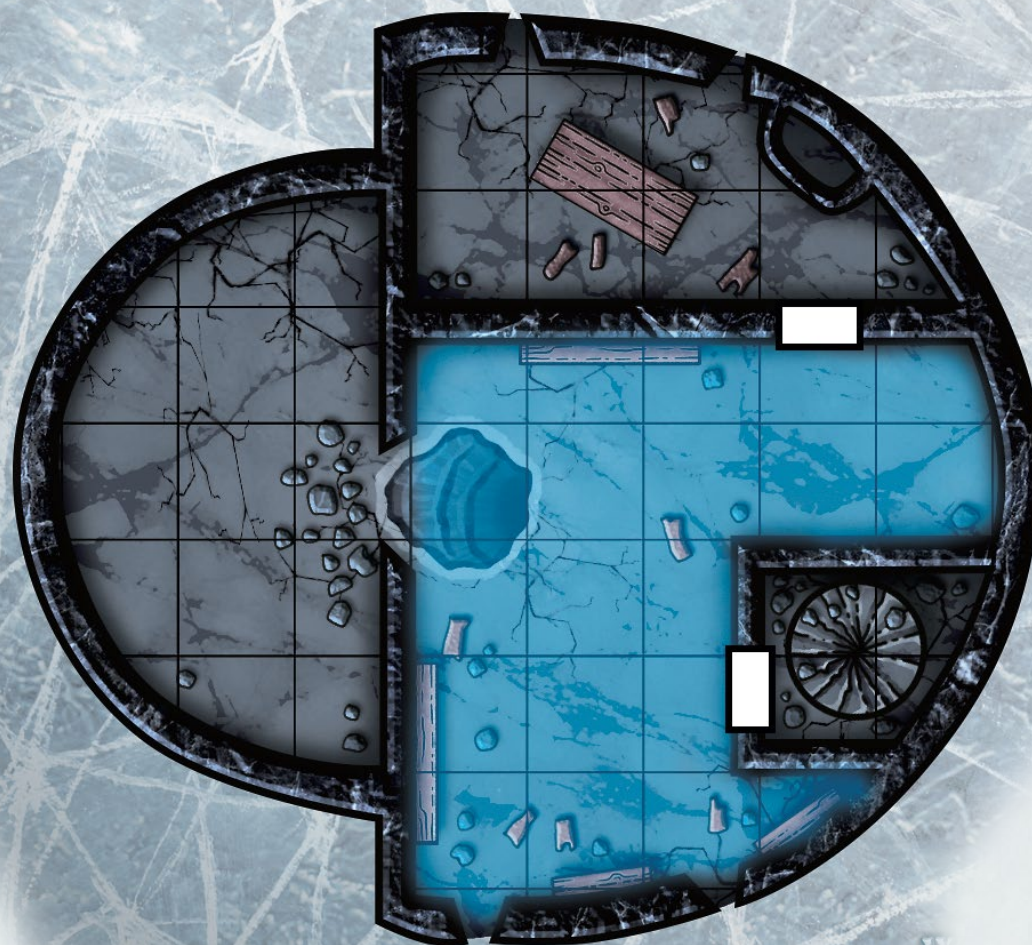
Reproduction of area X24 (chapter 3, *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*). Pressure plates for the flame spouts shown in brown. Suggested areas for the 20-foot cone shown in yellow. The characters are expected to enter through the doors in the top left corner.



ONE SQUARE = 10 FEET

APPENDIX D: SPIRE MAP (PART 2)

Reproduction of level 3 of the Lost Spire of Netheril (chapter 2, *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*). Light gray shows the hole in the ceiling from the floor above, dark gray shows the hole to the floor below. The area bordered in blue contains the shattered glass hazard.



ONE SQUARE = 10 FEET

APPENDIX E:

RECIPE RIDDLES SOLUTION

The characters need to combine the correct reagents to create two potions. There are only enough reagents left intact to make one of each potion.

The complete list of reagents is shown below. Use the additional descriptions to aid with attempts to solve the riddle:

- Squid blood—contained in an opaque stoppered vial, this solution is bright blue.
- Fox tears
- Horse sweat
- Powdered walrus tusk
- Bear claw
- Yeti fur
- Knucklehead trout eggs
- Pine needles
- Oil of wintergreen
- Goat blood
- Phase spider silk—wound on a spindle, the prized export of Ythryn
- Wing of hare—stored in preserving alcohol, a wing from a prized pet of a mage of Ythryn
- White wyrmling scale
- Clear spring water

RECIPE 1 SOLUTION

The characters have been given the following recipe:

It takes hard work to replace what a warrior lost in battle.
Combine in equal parts:
Blood, but only royal blood will do
Exertion of a noble steed
Sweet sorrow of the wailing fox

The recipe requires the characters to combine squid blood, horse sweat, and fox tears. Correctly completing recipe 1 creates a *potion of greater healing*. The characters may attempt to get clues on the following aspects:

Hard Work. With a successful DC 10 Wisdom check, the character remembers that hard work in battle usually equates to blood, sweat, and tears. Drawing attention to the mention of blood, exertion, and sorrow in the lines that follow may also serve as a good hint.

Only Royal Blood Will Do. The characters need to choose which vial of blood to add to the recipe. With a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check, a character recalls that the blood of squids and octopi is blue. Alternatively, uncorking the vial of squid blood reveals its bright blue color. A successful DC 10 Wisdom check prompts the character to consider linking royal to blue, either in terms of “blue blood” or the color royal blue.

RECIPE 2 SOLUTION

The characters have been given the following recipe:

Tooth of walrus, claw of bear,
Pinch abominable hair,
To cover up the taste bizarre,
Add Icewind’s finest caviar.
Combine with needles from a tree,
Then you’ll as strong as yeti be.

The recipe requires the characters to combine powdered walrus tusk, bear claw, yeti fur, knucklehead trout eggs and pine needles. Correctly completing recipe 2 creates a *potion of hill giant strength*. The characters may attempt to get clues on the following aspects:

Abominable Hair. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (History or Nature) check reminds the character that the largest and most intimidating yeti are referred to as abominable. A character with the Outlander background has advantage on this check.

Icewind Dale’s Finest Caviar. With a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check or a DC 15 Intelligence check using cook’s utensils, a character remembers that caviar is a food consisting of fish eggs, often sturgeons’, but other species too, such as trout. A character with the Noble background or the Chef feat has advantage on this check.

Needles from a Tree. With a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check or a DC 10 Wisdom check using an herbalism kit, a character remembers the thin, pointed leaves of most conifers, including pine trees, are called needles.

Recipe 1 ingredients*

Recipe 2 ingredients†

Pine needles†

Goat blood

Oil of wintergreen

Yeti fur†

Fox tears*

Wing of hare

Powdered walrus tusk†

Clear spring water

Horse sweat*

Squid blood*

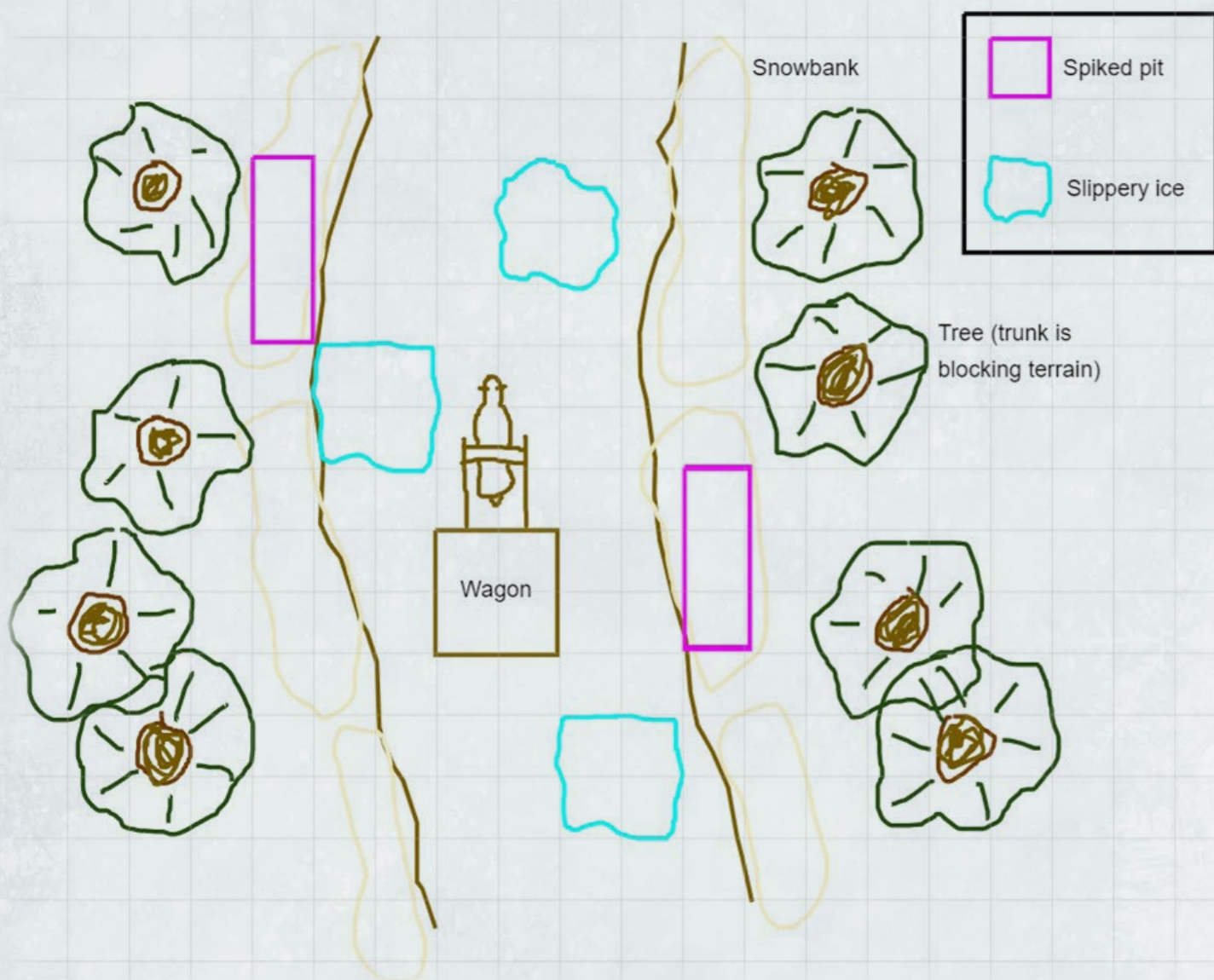
Phase spider silk

Bear claw†

Knucklehead trout eggs†

White wyrmling scale

APPENDIX F: SNOWY PATH MAP (PART 3)



APPENDIX G:

CLOSING THE VORTEX

The characters need to perform a ritual to banish the vortex so the bomb assembly can be completed. Lieutenant Prook has instructions for a ritual to contain explosive energies as a safety measure during bomb assembly. A range of skills and tools can contribute a success. Use the following suggestions to help adjudicate the ritual or prompt characters to action:

Hold the Vortex Shut. With a successful DC 17 Strength (Athletics) check, a character leverages their raw strength to shove an elemental back into the vortex or prevent the crack from tearing open further.

Ritual Shortcut. A character who makes a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check recalls how the ritual to close the vortex might be accelerated safely.

Draw Out the Runes. A successful DC 17 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check or DC 17 Dexterity check using calligrapher's supplies, cartographer's tools, a forgery kit, or painter's supplies allows a character to keep a steady hand and faithfully reproduce the runes needed in the ritual circle.

Read the Vortex Energies. A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check allows a character to watch the patterns in the fire to predict when the portal will be at its weakest, or to spot locations where the runes could be drawn to greatest effect.

Act Out the Components. A successful DC 17 Charisma (Performance) check allows a character to correctly perform the ritual's somatic and verbal components.

I HAVE A SPELL FOR THAT!

Naturally, spellcasting characters may suggest casting a certain spell would be a fitting solution to the problem. If they cast an appropriate spell using a spell slot of **4th level or higher**, it counts as a success in the closing ritual.

Appropriate spells include, but aren't limited to, spells that subdue the fire by dealing cold damage or conjuring water such as *cone of cold*, *ice storm*, and *tidal wave*, or *dispel magic* (treat the vortex as a 4th-level spell, but don't automatically end the vortex on a success).

If a character casts an appropriate spell, but doesn't expend a spell slot of a high enough level, drop the player a hint about the intensity of the vortex or how their spell (briefly) looked promising, but didn't manage to take hold.

APPENDIX H:

DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

To DM an adventure, you must have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character within the adventure's level range (see Adventure Primer). Characters playing in a hardcover adventure may continue to play too, but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they can't return to the first if they level beyond its level range.

NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

https://dnd.wizards.com/ddal_general

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure—such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception) score, and anything the adventures specifies as notable (such as backgrounds, traits, and flaws).

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a player or DM, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for level, magic items, gold, and downtime days. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information are added at the end of the adventure session—whether they completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they can't, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Players Guide* for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

NEW PLAYERS? NO PROBLEM!

With starter adventures like this one it's possible you may have players new to D&D, or just new to fifth edition. It's up to you as the DM to ensure they a) have fun with the game and b) learn the basics of how to play. At this level, having fun is more important than learning every rule exactly right. Be gentle with new players who make mistakes.

Make sure to keep your players smiling and rolling dice. Be positive and enthusiastic when describing the action, and you'll notice they quickly follow suit.

If you're a new DM, then welcome—and thank you! New DMs are the lifeblood of the D&D community. This adventure includes sidebars like this one that explain of some rules used as the adventure progresses!

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the characters' levels and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

| Party Composition | Party Strength |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 3–4 characters, APL less than | Very Weak |
| 3–4 characters, APL equivalent | Weak |
| 3–4 characters, APL greater than | Average |
| 5 characters, APL less than | Weak |
| 5 characters, APL equivalent | Average |
| 5 characters, APL greater than | Strong |
| 6–7 characters, APL less than | Average |
| 6–7 characters, APL equivalent | Strong |
| 6–7 characters, APL greater than | Very Strong |

SAFETY TOOLS

Safety tools ensure that players aren't pushed beyond their comfort levels. They let your players know you want them to have a positive experience.

A broad range of safety tools are available for you and your players online, but for more information reach out to your Event Organizer or to community@dndadventurersleague.org