

Winter Wonderland



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A 4-Hour Adventure for five 5th-10th Level Characters

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Adventure Code: CCC-AN-03





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CCC-AN-03 Winter Wonderland

Introduction

Welcome to *Winter Wonderland*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 6**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

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

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

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Before Play at the Table

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), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your **players** (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Adventure Primer

Adventure Background

The winter solstice is an important day in many cultures, regardless of race or nation. It is the longest night of the year, and for many it is a time to celebrate. These celebrations take on many different forms. But one tradition, a tradition of generosity and love of one's fellow man, is found throughout all cultures. A member of the community steps up and leads by example, one person who understands that it is better to give than receive, one person who does their part to spread a message of peace and goodwill towards mankind. This benefactor goes by the name of Santa.

Over the centuries the mantle of Santa has been used in turn by numerous good-hearted souls. Santa has been human, gnome, tiefling, dwarf, and for a short time a goliath. But for the past century a jolly old elf has been Santa and he's been doing a fantastic job.

The elvish Santa's understanding of the magical weave and the feywild allowed him to create a special ritual. When performed on the night of the winter solstice, Santa can travel in his magical sleigh to anywhere in the realms. This allows him to demonstrate his generosity and deliver presents to children everywhere in just one night.

Santa may be able to perform the ritual alone and deliver the presents alone, but he needs assistance crafting all those gifts. Every year Santa puts out a call for helpers. Some helpers stay for years, while others stay as little as a few weeks. Volunteers are never turned away. Although the overwhelming majority of Santa's helpers are elves, all races are welcome.

Santa's Shady Secret Past

Before elves, Santa originally employed gnome tinkerers in his workshop. The gnomes were master builders and the toys they created were magnificent. After a few years the gnomes began to resent that their exceptional goods were being given away for free. Their greed got the better of them and they tried to take over Santa's operation so they could earn huge profits.

Santa used his magic to stop the rabble-rousers before they could do any real damage. He dismissed his gnome workers and enlisted the help of elves he knew he could trust. However, Santa felt the gnome

ringleaders needed to be punished. He placed a curse upon them, turning them into living statuettes that he kept close in his gardens. He wanted them to see the life they once had. For decades the garden gnomes watched as waited.

An archfey prince, the spirit of winter, known in the North by some as Jack Frost, heard the mental pleas of the garden gnome leader. They shared a dislike of Santa. The archfey agreed to free the gnome, in exchange for his services. The gnome was granted magic and the command of a few minor elemental spirits to help him accomplish the archfey's bidding.

Adventure Overview

Someone's stolen the gifts from Santa's workshop on the eve of the winter solstice. If they're not recovered before nightfall, the winter solstice celebration will be ruined and children across the realms won't get any presents.

When the party returns to Santa's workshop to collect their belongings they discover the shop's been ransacked and all the toys are missing. Snowy footprints lead out of the workshop and into the forest. The light snowfall will cover the tracks if the party doesn't follow them immediately. In just a few short hours Santa will finish his rituals and if the presents aren't loaded into the sleigh by then the winter solstice celebration will be ruined.

Part 1. The Frosty Snowman: The footprints lead through the forest to a clearing. The party spots opened presents just off the path near some snowmen. When the heroes get too close to the snowmen or investigate the presents, the snowmen attack. A giant snowman wearing a top hat emerges from behind some trees and joins the battle.

Part 2. It's Abominable: The footprints lead to a cave. More presents are spotted near the entrance and inside the cave. Nearing the cave entrance triggers a small avalanche, possibly trapping some of the party in the cave or burying others. An abominable snowmonster hidden nearby investigates the noise from the avalanche and attacks the characters.

Part 3. Santa's Soldiers: When the characters return to the workshop they head to Santa's private ready room to check on his welfare. On the way they hear noises coming from the hangar. Toy soldiers standing attentively activate to defend Santa's privacy. Donner and Blitzen wander the hangar and won't let the party past. If the heroes try to take

cover in Santa's sleigh, the seat comes alive and attacks them.

Part 4. Save the Slumbering Santa: Once past Santa's defenders, the party must gain entrance to Santa's ready room. Inside, they find Santa unconscious. Garden gnomes with weapons immediately attack intruders. Another gnome has performed a ritual on the sleeping Santa. Santa can only be awakened if the warlock's ritual is broken.

Adventure Hooks

Faction Fear. You've recently run afoul of one of the other factions. At the behest of your faction's leadership they've recommended that you step out of the spotlight for a short time. Losing you now to some rival's blade will jeopardize the factions long-term plans which require your unique abilities. Stay safe and visit a friend to your faction way, way up North.

Atonement. At some point in your recent past you've done something, or allowed something to be done, that doesn't sit right with your moral compass. At the time you may have justified it as "for the greater good" but as time past you realize that it's left you feeling guilty. You realize that if you do a completely selfless act it could wipe away this black mark and allow you to move forward with a clean slate. You've heard about a noble cause a jolly old elf undertakes each year in the far north. Perhaps he'll let you become a helper for his annual charity.

Do It for the Children. Each year Santa brings on new hands to help him craft toys. It doesn't pay that much, but sometimes doing charitable acts feels good, especially for the children of the realm.

Introduction

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

General Features

Santa's residence is a huge manor that functions as a home for Santa and the toymakers, a toy workshop, a warehouse, and even a hangar and stables.

The interior is comfortably warm all year round.

Terrain. The ceilings in Santa's workshop are 20 ft tall unless otherwise noted.

Light. Santa's home is lit by ever-burning torches that produce bright light in all rooms unless otherwise noted.

Done for the Season

You've spent the past few weeks making toys in Santa's workshop. It was hard work, but you found a way to put your special skills to use. Knowing that you helped make these gifts warms your heart in a way slaying a monster or acquiring gold pieces never has.

Tonight is the winter solstice, the night when Santa delivers all of the presents to children everywhere. To prepare, Santa spends the afternoon performing rituals that will allow him to cross the realm in just one night. To ensure no distractions, he generously covers tab at The Gingerbread House, a cozy little tavern not far from the workshop. Here Santa's helpers partake in some special cider to celebrate another successful year. The ensuing party is usually as legendary as Santa himself.

As appealing as a party sounds, the draw of home and warmer climates to the South calls you. You return to Santa's workshop to gather your belongings before heading for home.

Santa's workshop is a massive structure that reminds you of a nobleman's manor. The evergreen trees in the yard were meticulously arranged and sculpted. The walkway is free of snow, obviously due to some minor enchantment. Even the garden gnomes standing in a row as you approach the house look happy to be part of the well tended grounds.

When you enter the workshop you're shocked to discover that the presents are gone. Someone robbed Santa's workshop!

Santa left strict instructions that he's not to be disturbed during his preparations and ritual castings or else it could delay his departure and jeopardize his mission. He's scheduled to depart in just a few hours. It's up to you to retrieve the presents by then and save the solstice.

Character can search the workshop but don't let them dwell on it. The characters have been working here for weeks so checks to notice details are quite easy. Emphasize the falling snow and the urgency of following the tracks before they disappear.

Characters can make Intelligence (Investigation) checks DC 8 to notice the following details:

- Santa's bag is missing. That must be how the gifts were removed from the workshop.
- Someone tracked snow into the workshop as there are snowy puddles all around. The tracks originate at a window. The window is unlocked and there is snow and frost on the inside and outside of the pane.
- There is no evidence of tracks leading into any rooms other than the workshop. The thief seems to have taken the gifts and left.
- Outside there are tracks in the snow. Smaller tracks that come from the nearby forest, head towards the window, and then head back again.
- The tracks are disappearing quickly as the newly falling snow covers them.
- You see evidence that small snowballs were thrown at Santa's workshop and the garden gnomes.
- Some of the garden gnomes were toppled over as the bandit made his escape.

Part 1. The Frosty Snowman

Estimated Duration: 30-45 minutes

In this encounter the party faces **five ice mephits** and **one giant snowman (hill giant)**.

General Features

It's cold outside and there is a light snow falling.

Terrain. All surfaces outside are covered in snow. Tracks are buried under fresh powder after 5 minutes.

Weather. The light snow fall isn't too bad yet. It does not hinder visibility or movement.

Light. It's later winter afternoon. Snow clouds block direct sunlight.

Smells and Sounds. The smell of pine trees is pleasant, but not overwhelming in the forest.

Do You Want to Build a Snowman?

You have no trouble following the tracks leading away from the workshop. However, the light snowfall aids the thieves escape as it covers the tracks with freshly fallen powder. If you don't follow the tracks now you may never know who the culprits were or where they went.

After following the tracks for 15 minutes through the forest you come to a clearing. The slightly obscured tracks you're following pass through the clearing and continue through the forest.

In the clearing are six snowmen. Some are standing upright and some are toppled over. Atop a 10 ft outcropping at the far side of the clearing you see two more upright snowmen. There are opened presents near the snowmen on the small hill.

- **Three ice mephits** are hiding inside the snowmen.
- Not every snowman has a mephit hiding inside of it. It's up to the DMs to choose which snowmen are merely snowmen, and which are actually ice mephits. Ice mephits who have not acted are indistinguishable from regular snowmen. Once a mephit acts the characters can easily distinguish it from inanimate snowmen.
- As soon as a character gets within 10 ft of a snowman, the one mephit hiding inside it uses its breath weapon and triggers initiative. Character have disadvantage on their saving throw because the mephit was hidden.
- The other two ice mephits join the fight immediately, gaining advantage on their first melee attack because they're hidden inside the snowmen. Wisdom (Perception) DC 18 to detect.

- At the beginning of round two read the following aloud.

From atop the outcropping, a giant snowman parts the pine trees and slowly shuffles into view. The snowman wears a brightly coloured scarf a black top hat. In one hand he carries a huge broomstick and in the other he grasps a massive snowball. In a low, moaning voice he makes a bold declaration in elvish.

- Characters who speak elvish understand that the giant snowman said "HAPPY BIRTHDAY!"
- An additional **two ice mephits** stay close to the giant snowman directing him to attack the party. The ice mephits use the help action to give the giant snowman advantage if it's fighting characters in melee. The ice mephits will use their action to disengage and retrieve the giant snowman's hat if it's knocked off his head.
- If the giant snowman's hat is removed or subjected to *dispel magic*, the giant snowman suffers the effects of a *slow* spell:
 - Half speed
 - Can only make one attack per round
 - Cannot take reactions
 - -2 to AC and Dexterity saving throws
- While his hat is off, the giant snowman remains under the *slow* spell's effects and does not get a saving throw. If *dispel magic* was cast on the hat, the giant snowman can make a saving throw with disadvantage to end the *slow* spell's effects at the end of its turn each round.
- The giant snowman will not attack anyone who wishes him a happy birthday for one round. If done in elvish he won't attack that character unless they attack him first.
- The ice mephits will fight until destroyed. The giant snowman will stop fighting if any character wishes him a happy birthday after all the ice mephits are destroyed.

When the combat ends the characters can search the clearing. They find a dozen opened presents strewn about. Any character who makes an Intelligence (Investigation) check DC 12 finds the empty gift boxes that contained the giant snowman's scarf, top hat, and broomstick. The rest of the presents are various knick-knacks worth approximately 100 gp. If the characters collect the gifts and return them to the workshop Santa will reward their generosity with 100 gp and each character will receive an additional 100 XP.

After the battle the first character to retrieve or stow an item finds a wrapped gift in their pack that Santa placed there earlier that day. It has a note that reads: "Thanks for all your hard work. Drink this when you need to feel happy. From Santa" This is an eggnog-infused *potion of healing*. When consumed it restores 1d4+1 hp and grants cold resistance against the next attack that deals cold damage. This effect only lasts one hour or until used. A player can extend the eggnog's resistance against a second attack at the cost of inspiration. The special eggnog loses its magical potency in 24 hours whether it's consumed or not. Every character finds a similar gift among their possessions.

Adjusting this Encounter

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

- **Very Weak:** Remove one mephit, reduce the Hill Giant's hit points to 100.
- **Weak:** Reduce the Hill Giant's hit points to 140.
- **Strong:** Increase the mephit's hit points to 30, increase their death burst DC 12 and damage 9 (2d8) slashing on a failed saving throw, increase the Hill Giant's hit points to 130. (+600 XP)
- **Very Strong:** Increase the mephit's hit points to 36, increase their death burst DC 14 and damage 9 (2d8) slashing on a failed saving throw, increase the Hill Giant's hit points to 160. (+1,000 XP)

Treasure

The presents are various knick-knacks are worth 100 gp.

One eggnog-infused *potion of healing* per character.

Development

If the characters spend more than five minutes in the clearing before they proceed, the snow will completely cover the tracks they were following.

If they follow the tracks within five minutes proceed to Part 2.

If characters insist on staying in the clearing longer than five minutes read the following and then proceed to Part 3.

What began as merely a light snowfall has become a full-on snow storm. The trail you were following has been completely covered and, despite your best efforts to find it again, there's absolutely no trace of it. As the cold wind picks up you're confident you can make it back to the workshop before the snow storm gets much worse. Hopefully the thieves didn't make off with anything that can't be replaced. Otherwise many little girls and boys will be very sad in the morning when they don't receive a present from Santa.

XP Award

If the characters collect the gifts and return them to the workshop they each receive an additional 200 XP.

Part 2. It's Abominable

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

In this encounter the party faces **four ice mephits** and **one yeti (reduced-threat)**.

General Features

It's getting colder outside and snow fall is getting heavier, creating whiteout conditions as the characters arrive in the valley.

Terrain. All surfaces outside are covered in snow.

Weather. Whiteout conditions. This snow causes the area to be heavy obscured.

Light. The snow blocks the natural light, creating dim light conditions.

Smells and Sounds. The wind howls, as do monsters in the area.

Whiteout Conditions Ahead

You continue following the tracks through the forest away from the clearing for another 30 minutes. The terrain becomes rockier as the trail moves ever upwards towards the mountains. The trees thin as you enter a valley. The steep rocky sides rise about 30 ft on either side of you before levelling off. There's a trail that leads through the valley and up a gentler slope at the far end about 100 ft from your current position.

The tracks lead towards the slope, but veer into a cave just shy of the slope. Near the cave mouth you see brightly coloured presents in the snow.

The winds pick up and the snow begins swirling, creating whiteout conditions. Your visibility is almost immediately reduced to 30 ft. You hear a howl on the wind that echoes off the valley walls. The source could be miles away or just beyond your line of sight, hiding in the snow.

- Characters with a Passive Perception of 15 or more can see 45 ft through the snow. This snow causes the area to be heavy obscured.
- **Two ice mephits** are hidden 15 ft above the cave mouth, perched on the snowy cliff-side. They are indistinguishable from the ice and snow. However, characters may spot them once they move within 30 ft of their location by making a Wisdom (Perception) check DC 18 as an action. If the ice mephits are attacked or otherwise engaged in any way they cause the avalanche immediately and fly up the cliff.

Beware of Avalanche!

- When one or more characters enter the cave, the ice mephits use their frost breath to trigger a small avalanche. They want to split the party, trapping some of the characters inside the cave. If it looks like multiple characters will enter, the ice mephits ready actions until the character get inside. If it looks like only one character is going to enter, they settle for trapping just one character. Once the avalanche is triggered, characters that are not trapped in the cave or under the snow hear the ice mephits beating wings as the creatures fly up the cliff.
- When the avalanche is triggered the cave entrance is completely blocked by ice and snow. The ice mephits are not trying to bury the characters, just trap them inside. However, if any characters are under the avalanche they can make a Dexterity saving throw DC 10 to jump out of harm's way.
 - Character that succeed can jump into the cave or remains outside. If the save succeeds by 5 or more the character remains on their feet, otherwise they fall prone.
 - Characters that fail are buried under the snow. They take 2d10 (11) bludgeoning damage and are restrained and blinded. They can attempt to dig themselves out by making a Strength (Athletics) check DC 20 with disadvantage. Allies can dig them out by making two successful Strength (Athletics) checks DC 15.
- It takes three rounds of digging, Strength (Athletics) check DC 15, to create an opening large enough for the character to get through. Characters using a shovel have advantage on the check.
 - Character using magical fire can melt away the snow. They must do 25 points of fire damage to create an opening large enough to get through.
 - Characters who deal any thunder damage will cause more snow to fall. This doubles the time required to free an ally or dig a passage through, and doubles the damage required to create an opening (50 hit points). If a character is still buried when a second avalanche happens they automatically take an additional 2d10 (11) bludgeoning damage.
- After triggering the avalanche, the two ice mephits fly to the top of the cliff and hide. When they hear the yeti come to investigate the noise they fly down to join their brethren in the ensuing battle.

Until then they try to remain out of sight and only fight if a character climbs to the top of the cliff.

Give Me Shelter

When a character enters the cave, after the avalanche is resolved, read the following.

The cave passage is approximately 10 ft tall and 10 ft wide. There are tracks in the snow near the cave entrance. You spot smaller tracks, matching the ones you've been following. You also notice other much larger, clawed foot tracks indicating that something double your size has entered and exited this cavern recently.

Continuing down the passage the tunnel turns sharply before opening into a larger cavern. On the far side of the cavern you spot Santa's crimson sack that he carries gifts in. On the cave floor, near the bag are numerous opened presents. A few feet from the Santa's sack, pine needles and dried leaves make a crude bed for a very large creature. Tufts of white fur are easily spotted on the sleeping pallet. Next to the bed are bones of various forest animals. The bones have scratches on them that were clearly made by something that gnawed away all the flesh from the bones.

- The cave is dark; characters will need to provide their own light source if they do not have darkvision.
- This cave is the yeti's lair. Hoping to create the most possible mischief, the ice mephits brought Santa's sack full of presents here. They hoped someone would follow the trail they left and try to recover the presents.
- The opened presents are more toys and nick-knacks suitable for children. The curious yeti opened some of the gifts. Their combined value is 400 gp. If the characters collect the gifts and return them to Santa's workshop they will receive 400 gp as a reward and an additional 400 XP per character.
- On the cave floor near the presents is Santa's sack.

A Howl on the Wind

Read the following one round after the avalanche happens, or if none of the characters decide to go near the cave entrance, read at the start of round three. If all the characters are trapped in the cave, read the following when the first character exits the cave.

Again, you hear the frightening howl on the wind, this time there is no mistaking that its source is close by. Before you can pinpoint the exact location of the howling creature, you see a massive form appear from out of the swirling snow. It's a savage creature covered in white fur and it charges towards you. You've heard the stories of this creature and the tales have woefully underprepared you for the ferocity of the Abominable Snowmonster of the North.

- The **yeti** tries to get as many characters as possible in its cold breath on its first turn. It will continue to use its cold breath as often as it can, ensuring it targets any character who uses fire magic.
- An additional **two ice mephits** have been keeping close tabs on the yeti and have been following it since they arrived in the valley.
 - These two ice mephits stay 40 ft away from the characters, using the whiteout conditions to hide in the round when the yeti first attacks.
 - They try to sneak up to the characters so they can attack with advantage the next round. After that they use their cold breath.
 - The ice mephits know their frosty bodies will explode when they're killed so they deliberately remain near characters, especially spellcasters.

Adjusting this Encounter

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

- **Very Weak:** Remove two mephits
- **Weak:** Remove one mephit.
- **Strong:** Increase the mephit's hit points to 30, increase their death burst DC 12 and damage 9 (2d8) slashing on a failed saving throw (+400 XP)
- **Very Strong:** Increase the mephit's hit points to 36, increase their death burst DC 14 and damage 9 (2d8) slashing on a failed saving throw, use the Yeti's unaltered statistics (+2,900 XP)

Treasure

The presents are various knick-knacks worth approximately 400 gp.

Santa's Sack which is a *Heward's Handy Haversack*.
See ***Player Handout 2***.

Development

When the battle with the yeti and ice mephits is over the characters can take shelter from the snowstorm in the cave. After about one hour the snow subsides and they can safely return to Santa's workshop. Characters can take a short rest during this time.

XP Award

If the characters collect the gifts and Santa's sack, and return them to the workshop they each receive an additional 400 XP.

Part 3. Santa's Soldiers

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

In this encounter the party faces **two giant reindeer (giant elks), five toy soldiers (animated armor)** and **one mimic**.

General Features

Santa's residence is a huge manor that functions as a home for Santa and the toymakers, a toy workshop, a warehouse, and even a hangar and stables.

The interior is comfortably warm all year round.

Terrain. The ceilings in Santa's home are 20 ft tall unless otherwise noted.

Light. Santa's home is lit by ever-burning torches that produce bright light in all rooms unless otherwise noted.

Welcome to the Workshop

After the worst of the storm passed you made your way back to Santa's workshop. The rest of Santa's helpers must have remained at The Gingerbread House when the storm hit, because everything looks the same as it did when you made your hasty departure a couple of hours ago. The workshop is still in disarray and the snowy footprints have melted into pools of water.

The characters can search the workshop making Intelligence (Investigation) checks DC 8. They quickly realize that there isn't anything noteworthy to find here. The workshop contains all the usual tools of the trade the character would expect to find in a functional toy workshop. There are materials for making toys and various tools strewn about the workshop, and this hasn't changed since they left.

While you look around the workshop you realize that at the very least Santa should have finished his rituals by now and noticed the missing toys and chaos in the workshop. Is he ok? Perhaps the toy robbery wasn't the perpetrator's only goal here tonight.

If Santa is still in the building he's likely in his private ready room upstairs. That is where Santa performs his rituals on the eve of the winter solstice. Although you've never been in Santa's private room you know the only way upstairs is through the hangar where Santa keeps his sleigh. As you begin to head in that direction you hear heavy stomping noises coming from the hangar.

Characters may decide to go outside and try to access the second floor via a window or rooftop entrance. Although this is not the intended direction for the adventure, there's no reason to disallow it. If the party splits up, they'll have to face the upstairs and downstairs encounters simultaneously. If this happens don't pull punches. Actions have consequences. If the entire party decides to climb to the second story they can gain entrance into Santa's private ready room through one of the open windows. Go right to Part 4. During this encounter have the two toy soldiers in the hallway outside the doors of Santa's private ready room animate at the beginning of round two and join the combat. They are not hampered by the locked door.

Please Don't Sleigh the Reindeer

If the characters stay inside and proceed to the hangar read the following.

You enter the large hangar through a set of double doors on the southern side. On the eastern side of the hangar there are massive barn doors. One of the doors is opened a few feet making the whole room chilly. On the southern side, to the right of where you entered, are large doors that lead to the stables where the reindeer are housed. Along the northern wall opposite where you entered, ten human-sized, metallic, toy soldiers stand at attention. There is a break in their ranks between the second and third soldiers where a staircase leads upward. Parked in the western end of the hangar is Santa's sleigh. It's a magnificent vehicle, reflecting the torchlight off its polished red finish and silver trim.

Small wet footprints lead from the open door to the stables and then to the staircase. Two of Santa's giant reindeer wander freely around the hangar. You recognize them as Donner and Blitzen. These creatures are twice the size of normal reindeer. They notice your presence and move towards you aggressively. They're not acting like the gentle, docile animals you met the last time you were in here.

The **two giant reindeer** are confused and angry. They were attacked by the gnomes berserkers when they passed through the hangar. Characters with a Passive Perception of 15 or any character who makes an active Wisdom (Perception) check DC 11 notices dried blood from recent wounds on both reindeer; evidence of their recent encounter.

There are numerous ways the character can handle the interaction with the reindeer. Listed below are a few examples, but reward creativity. Remember that the players should still receive XP for successfully interacting with the reindeer; they are not required to kill the animals to earn full XP.

- **Talking:** Character can try talking to the reindeer to calm them down and convince them they mean them no harm.
 - One or more characters can make Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks DC 16 as an action to use soothing words and try to befriend the reindeer.
 - To convince the animal the characters are friendly, the characters must make two successful checks in a row. The first check is made with disadvantage because the animals are wounded.
 - If either reindeer takes damage The DC increases to 20 and any successful checks are negated. If either reindeer is healed the DC is lowered to 12.
 - Rangers, druids, nature clerics and characters with the outlander background gain advantage on these checks.
 - The reindeer understand common, elvish, and sylvan, but usually receive commands in elvish. Any character who speaks to them in elvish does not have disadvantage on their first check.
- **Magic:** Character can try to use magic to stop the reindeer's assault or befriend them.
 - Any suitable spell or ability can help the characters. Examples include *Speak with Animals*, *Dominant Beast*, etc. Reward creativity.
 - If the either reindeer falls under a character's spell they can then be calmed with a single Wisdom (Animal Handling) check DC 16 made with advantage.
- **Freedom:** Characters may try to direct the reindeer outside.
 - This is the easiest way to get the reindeer to stop their attack. The barn doors must both be fully opened. They are heavy, and difficult

to open due to recent ice and snow buildup. Each door requires a Strength (Athletics) check DC 15 to fully open them. On a successful check the doors open in one round. On a failed check it takes the character two rounds to open the door.

- When both doors are opened any reasonable action that will flush the reindeer outside convinces them to leave. They will return after three rounds have past unless the characters close the barn doors. Characters have advantage on the checks to close the doors.

A Real Nutcracker... Sweet!

The toy soldiers have commands to protect Santa and stop anyone from going upstairs. The gnome warlock has altered the magical instructions and **five toy soldiers** will animate and attack anyone who enters the hangar. Only two toy soldiers animate in round one. Each round thereafter another toy soldier animates at the top of the round until five have come to life. Only five of the 10 toy soldiers animate.

The DM can decide which toy soldiers come to life and in which order. The toy soldiers will pursue any character that manages to get past them and go upstairs.

Santa's sleigh is a great place to take cover from the reindeer and the toy soldiers. However, it has its own defensive capabilities. The seat is a mimic that attacks anyone other than Santa who climbs aboard the sleigh or ends their turn adjacent to it. The toy soldiers have been instructed not to go within 5 ft of the sleigh. Characters can make a Wisdom (Insight) check DC 12 if they see a toy soldier deliberately avoid moving near the sleigh to understand this limitation. The mimic will not attack the reindeer. The mimic won't willingly leave the sleigh.

DM notes: *If the party handles the reindeer quickly and without expending any significant resources, the DM may choose to have additional toy soldiers animate.*

If the party is exceptionally powerful, the DM may decide that the toy soldiers are immune to all damage until they animate. This reduces the likelihood of a single spell like fireball destroying half of the toy soldiers before they can challenge the party.

Adjusting this Encounter

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

- **Very Weak:** Remove one giant reindeer, remove one animated armor
- **Weak:** Remove one animated armor
- **Strong:** Increase the animated armor to 44 hit points and 6 (1d8+2) bludgeoning damage (+500 XP)
- **Very Strong:** Increase the animated armor to 54 hit points and 8 (1d10+2) bludgeoning damage (+1,000 XP)

Treasure

None.

Development

Once the toy soldiers are defeated the characters can head upstairs.

XP Award

If the party stops the reindeer without either animal taking any damage, each character receives an additional 200 XP.

Part 4. Save the Slumbering Santa

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

In this encounter the party faces **four gnome berserkers** and **one gnome warlock of the archfey**.

General Features

Santa's private ready room is cold as the windows are all open when the character's arrive.

Terrain. The ceilings in Santa's private ready room is 30 ft tall.

Light. Santa's private ready room is lit by ever-burning torches that produce bright light.

Get Ready for the Ready Room

The stairs heading up from the hangar lead to a long hallway. Along one side of the hallway are huge windows that overlook the beautiful landscape. In front of the windows are very comfortable looking couches and chairs.

At the end of the hallway stand two more toy soldiers on either side of large double doors. The doors have intricate bas relief carvings of elves playing happily in a winter forest, all surrounding Santa who looks particularly jolly.

- These toy soldiers do not animate or attack the characters.
- The doors are locked. Character can try to pick the lock by using Dexterity (Thieves Tools) DC 17. Alternatively they can try forcing open the doors making a Strength (Athletics) check DC 20, or try damaging the doors. Doors have AC 15, 25 hit points, resistant to piercing damage, vulnerable to fire and thunder damage.
- When the doors are opened there are **two gnome berserkers** waiting for the party. They stand on opposite sides of the door with readied actions to attack anyone who opens the doors. The other **two gnome berserkers** are dodging.
- If the characters manage to pick the lock on the first try, or use magic such as a knock spell to open the doors quietly, none of the gnome berserkers are readied or dodging.
- If the characters were pursued up the stairs by toy soldiers and did any fighting in the hallway the gnomes in Santa's private ready room heard them and are ready, regardless of how quietly they open the door.

You'd heard rumours about Santa's private ready room, but what you see when you peer inside is not what you expected. This is where Santa performs his rituals on the eve before the winter solstice; it's where he summons the magic that allows him to deliver all the presents to all the children of the realms in one night. It's revered as a sacred, almost holy place, where this beloved elf would begin his selfless act of charity. But there is no joy here now.

Santa lies unconscious on the floor in the centre of the ritual circle. Three gnomes are at his side. A gnome wearing a snow-white cloak leans over Santa and speaks directly in Santa's his ear. "Not so jolly now are you, fat man! Let's see how you like the cold chill nipping at your nose." The gnome looks at you with a wicked smile and says "My master has fulfilled his promise. He freed us so that we could take our revenge. Indeed, it will be a dish best served cold. Very, very cold."

Beside the gnome in the cloak two gnomes holding massive shovels stand on guard. On either side of the door are two more shovel-wielding gnomes who are ready to prevent you from getting to Santa.

The room is incredibly cold. This is likely because the three windows are all wide open. Trails of cold vapor enter Santa's ready room through the windows and wisp around the summoning circle on the floor.

Remind the players that their actions should not harm Santa. They're here to rescue him, not kill him. Large area of effect spells like *Fireball* or *Shatter* will likely include Santa in their blast radius so they should not be used during this encounter.

The room is colder than the rest of the workshop or stables. The gnome wearing the snow-white cloak is a **gnome warlock of the archfey** and has performed a ritual to keep Santa unconscious. As long as the windows are open and the room remains cold, Santa cannot be awakened.

The gnome berserkers always attack recklessly. If they cannot reach any of the characters they will not dash, choosing instead to dodge. The berserkers are not trying to kill the characters, merely incapacitate them. They will only stop fighting if knocked unconscious or if they hear Santa command them to stop.

The warlock was promised revenge upon Santa. His archfey master, an elf prince of winter known as Jack Frost, granted him his warlock powers and gave him very specific instructions. Santa is not to be killed, merely incapacitated and unable to complete his annual delivery. Should he remain unconscious

for another hour the warlock will have completed his task.

- When the characters arrive, the warlock is willing to talk. He will do anything to keep Santa under the spell's effects a little bit longer.
- If the negotiations don't seem to be going in his favour, he threatens to kill Santa if the characters don't back off. This is a bluff. The gnome warlock's Charisma (Deception) is +6. Characters can make opposed Wisdom (Insight) checks.
- If attacked, the warlock uses his magic to defend himself.
 - He begins by casting *blink*.
 - He'll try to cast *faerie fire* if he can target at least two characters and avoid targeting any of the gnomes.
 - If he's not concentrating on another spell, he'll cast *charm person* on the most dangerous looking melee combatant that is not an elf or gnome.
 - The warlock will use his *eldritch blast* cantrip as a last resort even if enemies are adjacent to him and he suffers disadvantage on the attack rolls.
 - The warlock's white cloak was a gift from his patron, Jack Frost. The pattern on the cloak looks like falling snow that continues to fall. Anyone who dons the cloak feels cold, especially their nose. If they keep it on for more than one round they hear Jack Frost's voice in the back of their mind, taunting them.
- While the windows are open the warlock has resistance to all damage.

Awaken From Winter's Slumber

Waking Santa is the real objective. Once he wakes up he will command everyone to stop fighting. The gnomes will immediately stop as they revere Santa and respect his awesome power. When Santa awakens, the gnomes realize they've lost and surrender.

- Santa is under the effects of a modified *sleep* spell. The warlock used a ritual granted to him by his archfey master, Jack Frost, who is jealous of Santa's accomplishments.
- As long as Santa is kept in the cold he cannot be awakened. Santa cannot be moved out of the circle. Any attempts to do so automatically fail. Make it clear to spellcasters that magic will not help them move Santa.

- Characters may try to revive Santa. Casting spells like *cure wounds*, *aid*, *dispel magic*, *remove curse*, etc. have no effect. However, if such magic is used, Santa momentarily regains consciousness just long enough to whisper "So cold."
- Once all three windows are closed the room warms up quickly. The ritual magic is nullified and Santa can now be awoken. The warlock's resistance ends the first time all three windows are closed. It does not return if the windows are opened again.
- There are three open windows, each of which can be closed by anyone adjacent to it as an object interaction on their turn. A character can use their action to hold a window open or closed. Only one character can do so at a time. Two characters fighting to open/close a window make opposed Strength (Athletics) checks to determine success.
- The gnomes know that they must keep the windows open for Santa to remain unconscious so they actively thwart attempts to close the windows. They will re-open windows on their turn, provoking opportunity attacks if necessary to move adjacent to a window.
- The windows are magically protected and cannot be broken, even if they are subjected to damaging spells like *thunderwave* or *shatter*.
- Anyone pushed out of an open window can make a Dexterity saving throw (DC 10) as a reaction to grab the ledge before falling. If they fail the saving throw and fall, they do not take any damage as there are large soft snow drifts below the windows. It is an easy 30 ft climb to get back up to the window. The windows cannot be opened from the outside.

When all three windows are closed, the warlock's ritual is temporarily broken. Character can wake Santa by shaking him or making very loud noises (as per the *sleep* spell). This only works if all the windows remain closed. If any of the windows are re-opened Santa cannot be awakened.

Use the window images provided in **Appendix 1** to make it easier for players to visualize and remember which windows are opened and closed. It is recommended that the DM does not show players the window images until they close one of the windows. The visual aid will likely indicate to experienced players that the windows are important to the encounter, something they may not have realized until that point.

Once Santa wakes up, read the following.

The jolly old elf opens his eyes and looks around the room. He may not know what's going on but this is his house, and in his house he is the master. "STOP!" he shouts. The gnomes immediately stop fighting and remain still.

"There shall be no fighting on the eve of the winter solstice. This is a time for peace and love." Santa manages to get to his feet. He looks around the room and when he sees the gnome's snow-white cloak there is a flash of acknowledgement. "Oh, Jack. Does your jealousy truly run this deep?" he says aloud as he looks at the frosty build-up on the windows.

"I have history with these gnomes," Santa says to the party. "And perhaps their punishment did exceed their crimes. I don't blame them for wanting revenge. I don't blame them for accepting aid from the prince of winter. I am to blame for this."

"In the spirit of the season I offer the gnomes forgiveness. I hope that they'll acknowledge my sincerity and accept my apology. Let's wipe the slate clean and begin our relationship anew."

"And to my saviours," he says as he addresses the party "thank you. I'll see that you are rewarded for your role in my revival and freedom."

If Santa is awakened and stops the combat early, characters should still receive full XP for defeating all the gnomes in the room, whether they were reduced to 0 hit points or not.

Adjusting this Encounter

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

- **Very Weak:** Remove one Berserker
- **Weak:** Reduce the Berserker's hit points to 50
- **Strong:** Increase the Warlock's hit points to 69, and save DC to 16
- **Very Strong:** Increase the Warlock's hit points to 88, and save DC to 17

Treasure

None

XP Award

The character's each earn an extra 50 XP for every gnome's life who is spared.

Conclusion

Santa realizes that the night of winter solstice is almost upon him and hastily completes his rituals. He offers to drop off the characters anywhere in the realms if they want to accompany him in his sleigh.

Any gnomes that survive the encounter with the party were freed from their curse and Santa allowed them to leave North Pole.

As a special reward for their part in retrieving the toys and rescuing Santa, he gives the characters a special version of his magical gift sacks (*Heward's Handy Haversack*). It's made of red and white leather and has golden clasps. There are silver bells on the bag, but they only make noise on the night of the winter solstice. Those who hear the bells ringing are reminded of a happy moment from their childhood and experience the most peaceful and restful night of sleep they can ever remember having.

While travelling with Santa, he tells the characters about his original relationship with the gnomes and what led to this final encounter. Read the details in the Background.

Rewards

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character.

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Ice Mephit (Small Snowmen)	100
Hill Giant (Giant Snowman)	1,800
Abominable Yeti	2,500
Giant Elk (Giant Reindeer)	450
Animated Armor (Toy Soldiers)	200
Mimic (Santa's Sleigh)	450
Berserker	450
Warlock of the Archfey	1,100

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Returning presents	200
Returning presents	400
Peaceful interaction with reindeer	200
Sparing the gnomes	25 each

The adventures minimum and maximum XP awards are located on the Adventure Rewards document. Note that DDAL adventures award a maximum of the "target XP" award. Only epics may grant the "maximum" amount.

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 2,500 **experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 4,000 **experience points**.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Recovering Presents	100
Recovering Presents	400

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system detailed in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Heward's Handy Haversack

Wondrous Item, rare

This haversack is made of red and white leather and has golden clasps. There are silver bells on the bag, but they only make noise on the night of the winter solstice. Those who hear the bells ringing are reminded of a happy moment from their childhood and experience the most peaceful and restful night of sleep they can ever remember having. This item can be found in **Player Handout 2**.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Story Awards

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

Silver Snowflake. For exemplifying the spirit of generosity and assisting Santa in a way no one else could, you've earned the Silver Snowflake. It is a small silver trinket that is always cool to the touch. When conversing with children, if you show them the silver snowflake and tell them that you know Santa, they will immediately believe you. This may make them more inclined to help you or answer questions honestly at the DMs discretion.

Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

Appendix. Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Santa (SAN-ta). This jolly old elf has lived for centuries but still feels young at heart. He has an infectious laughter and always looks for the good inside everyone. He's exceptionally overweight for an elf, but his fine red garments make him look and feel slimmer.

Appendix. Monsters

Ice Mephit (Small Snowmen)

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 21 (6d6)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	11 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +3

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning, fire

Damage Immunities cold, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Aquan, Auran

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Burst. *When the mephit dies, it explodes in a burst of jagged ice. Each creature within 5 feet of it must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.*

False Appearance. *While the mephit remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary shard of ice.*

Innate Spellcasting (1/Day). *The mephit can innately cast fog cloud, requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.*

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) cold damage.

Frost Breath (Recharge 6). *The mephit exhales a 15-foot cone of cold air. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5 (2d4) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.*

Hill Giant (Giant Snowman)

Huge giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 105 (10d12 + 40)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	19 (+4)	5 (-3)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +2

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Damage Immunities cold

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Giant, Elvish

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. *The giant snowman makes two attacks with his quarterstaff or snowballs.*

Quarterstaff (Broomstick). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Snowball. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. Hit: 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 6 (1d10) cold damage.

Abominable Yeti (Reduced-Threat)

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 88 (11d10 + 66)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	10 (+0)	22 (+6)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages yeti

Challenge 9 (2,500 XP)

Fear of Fire. If the yeti takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Keen Smell. The yeti has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Snow Camouflage. The yeti has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in snowy terrain.

Reduced-threat. The yeti has half the normal hit point maximum (already adjusted above), -2 penalty on attack rolls and saving throw DCs (already adjusted in stat block below). The yeti has -2 to ability checks and saving throws. The yeti is worth half the normal XP (already adjusted above).

Actions

Multiattack. The yeti can use its Chilling Gaze and makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d6 + 7) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) cold damage.

Chilling Gaze. The yeti targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the yeti, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw against this magic or take 21 (6d6) cold damage and then be paralyzed for 1 minute, unless it is immune to cold damage. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the target's saving throw is successful, or if the effect ends on it, the target is immune to the yeti's gaze for 1 hour.

Cold breath (Recharge 6). The yeti exhales a 30-foot cone of frigid air. Each creature in that area must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Ice Mephit (Small Snowmen)

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 21 (6d6)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	11 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +3

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning, fire

Damage Immunities cold, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Aquan, Auran

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Burst. *When the mephit dies, it explodes in a burst of jagged ice. Each creature within 5 feet of it must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.*

False Appearance. *While the mephit remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary shard of ice.*

Innate Spellcasting (1/Day). *The mephit can innately cast fog cloud, requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.*

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) cold damage.

Frost Breath (Recharge 6). The mephit exhales a 15-foot cone of cold air. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5 (2d4) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Giant Elk (Giant Reindeer)

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 42 (5d12 + 10)

Speed 60 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Giant Reindeer, understands Common, Elvish, and Sylvan but can't speak them

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Charge. If the reindeer moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Actions

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (4d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Animated Armor (Toy Soldiers)

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

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

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Antimagic Susceptibility. The armor is incapacitated while in the area of an *antimagic field*. If targeted by *dispel magic*, the armor must succeed on a Constitution saving throw against the caster's spell save DC or fall unconscious for 1 minute.

False Appearance. While the armor remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal suit of armor.

Actions

Multiattack. The armor makes two melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Mimic (Santa's Sleigh)

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +5

Damage Immunities acid

Condition Immunities prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Shapechanger. The mimic can use its action to polymorph into an object or back into its true, amorphous form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Adhesive (Object Form Only). The mimic adheres to anything that touches it. A Huge or smaller creature adhered to the mimic is also grappled by it (escape DC 13). Ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

False Appearance (Object Form Only). While the mimic remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary object.

Grappler. The mimic has advantage on attack rolls against any creature grappled by it.

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the mimic is in object form, the target is subjected to its Adhesive trait.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) acid damage.

Berserker

Medium humanoid (gnome), chaotic good

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

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

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

Warlock of the Archfey

Medium humanoid (gnome), chaotic good

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 49 (11d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +6

Skills Arcana +2, Deception +6, Nature +3, Persuasion +6

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses Devil's sight 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Gnomish, Common, Sylvan

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The warlock's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components.

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

Spellcasting. The warlock is an 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its 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:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

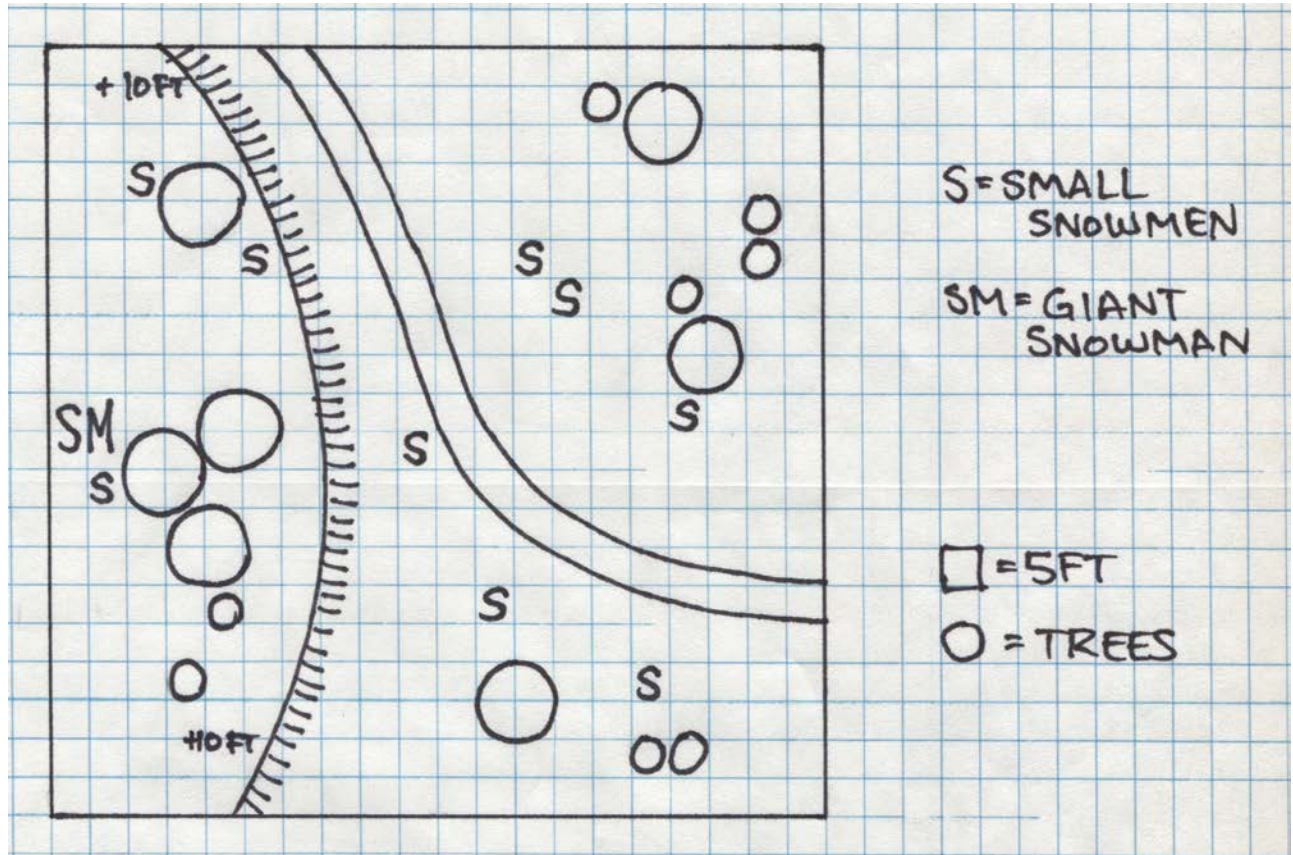
Reactions

Misty Escape (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

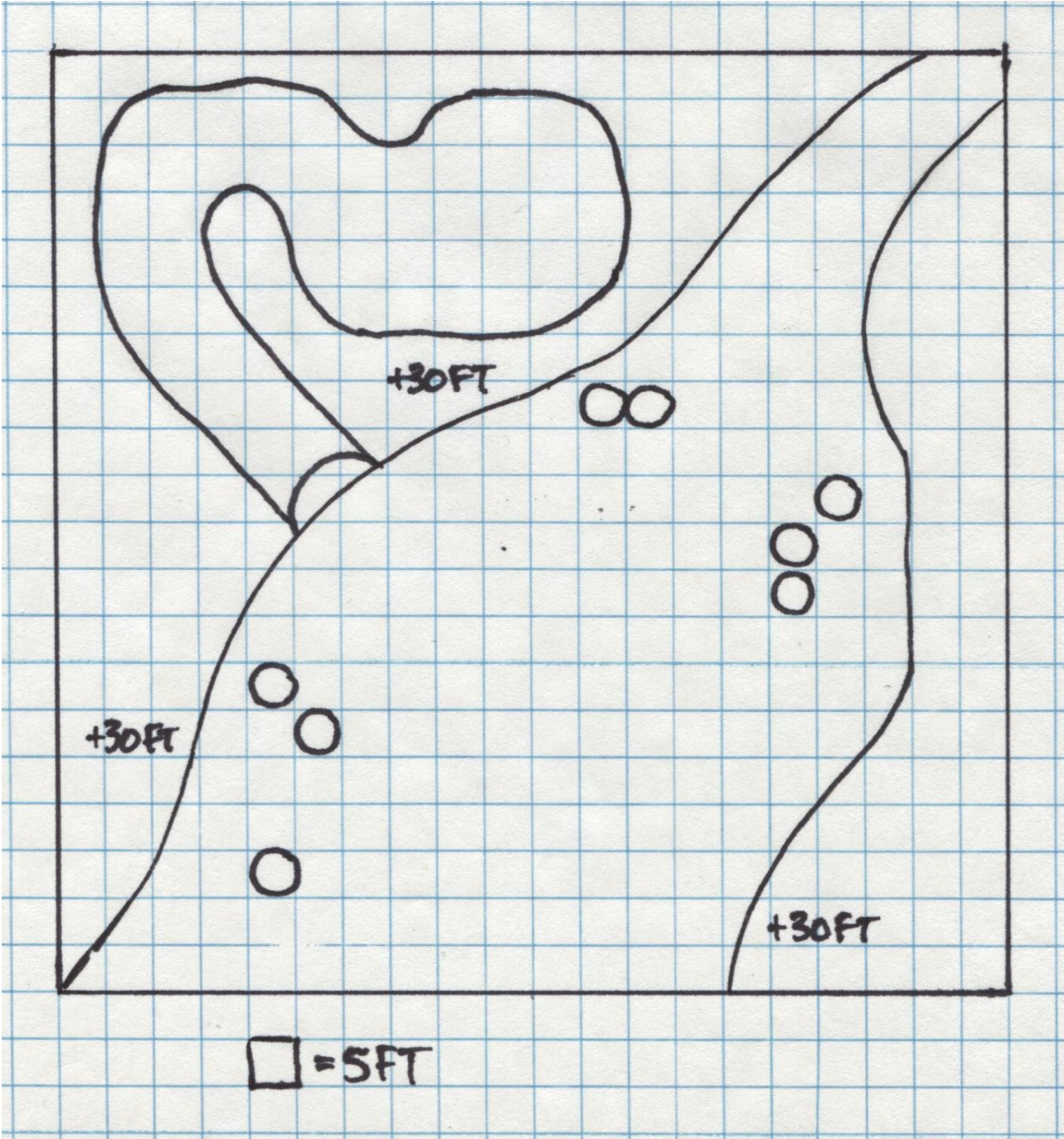
In response to taking damage, the warlock turns invisible and teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It remains invisible until the start of its next turn or until it attacks, makes a damage roll, or casts a spell.

Appendix. Maps

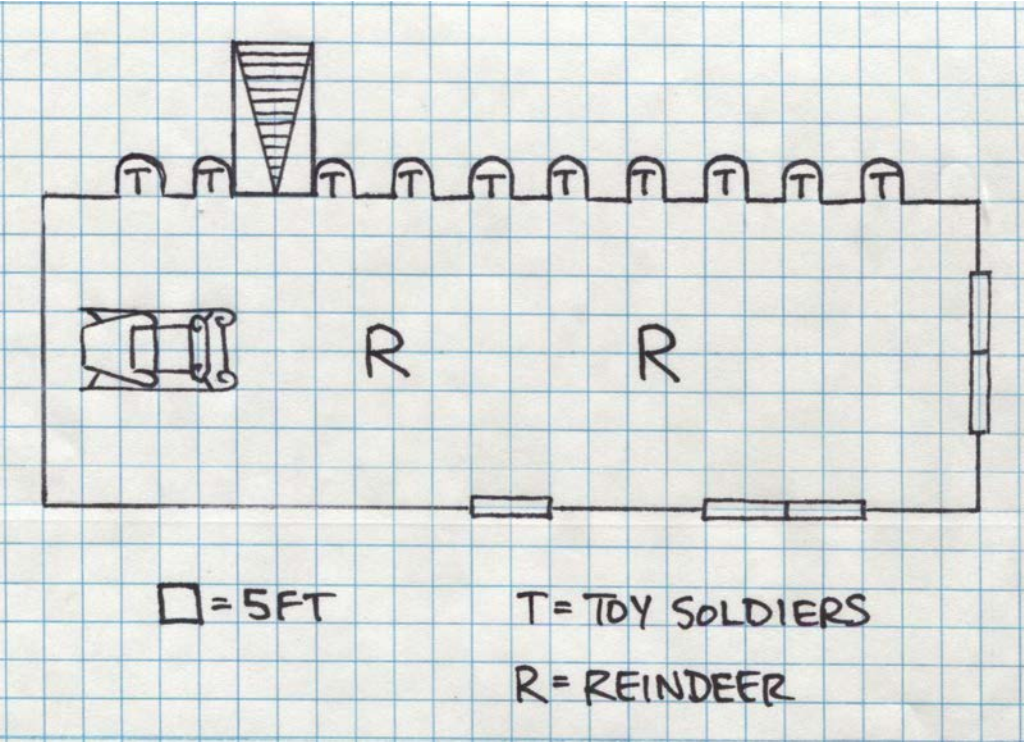
Part 1. The Frosty Snowman



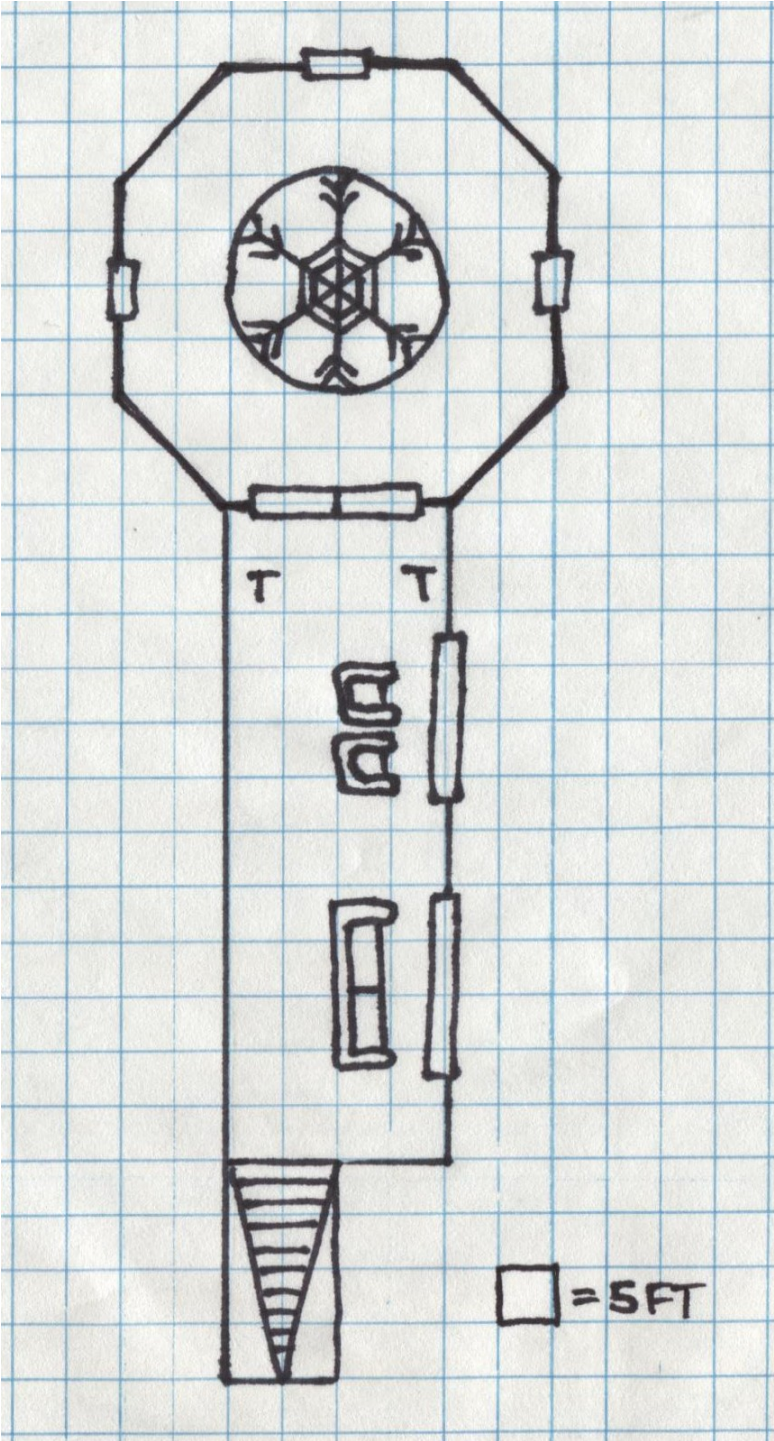
Part 2. The Abominable Snowmonster of the North



Part 3. Santa's Soldiers



Part 4. Save the Slumbering Santa



Appendix 1. Windows

In Part 4, character will be opening and closing windows as they try to break the warlock's ritual. Use the images of open and closed windows on the next page to give players a clear visual aid.

Remember not to show players these images until after they have closed the first window. Letting them see the window images before that may give them a hint for completing the encounter that their characters haven't discovered yet.



Player Handout 1. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

Story Award

Silver Snowflake: For exemplifying the spirit of generosity and assisting Santa in a way no one else could, you've earned the Silver Snowflake. It is a small silver trinket that is always cool to the touch. When conversing with children, if you show them the silver snowflake and tell them that you know Santa, they will immediately believe you. This may make them more inclined to help you or answer questions honestly at the DMs discretion.

Player Handout 2. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Heward's Handy Haversack

Wondrous Item, rare

This haversack is made of red and white leather and has golden clasps. There are silver bells on the bag, but they only make noise on the night of the winter solstice. Those who hear the bells ringing are reminded of a happy moment from their childhood and experience the most peaceful and restful night of sleep they can ever remember having.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.