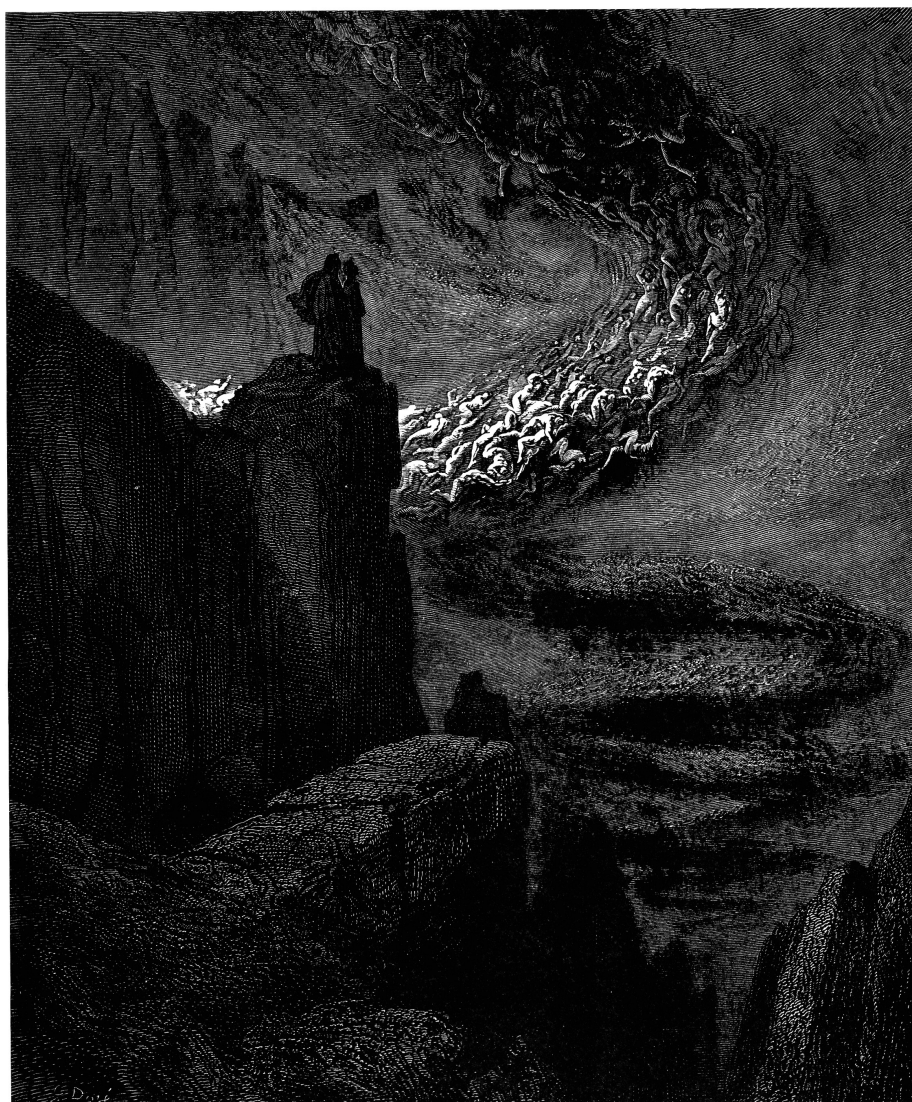


DC-PoA-CONMAR-01



Something Sinister



A group of kobold miners have uncovered something very unusual at the bottom of their mine. They need a band of brave adventurers to make sure that what they have found is not a risk to their health. Are you brave enough to heed the call?

A two to four hour Plague of Ancients Dungeon Craft module for level 1-4 characters.

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DungeonCraft Details

Adventure Seed Title: In Too Deep

Adventure Seed Hook: Kobold miners at the gem mine near Termalaine have uncovered dangerous artifacts on the mine's third level, affecting their judgement and reasoning.

Adventure Seed Reward (Two-hour): *potion of climbing, lantern of tracking (aberrations)*

Adventure Seed Reward (Four-hour): *psi crystal*

Adventure Primer

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st to 4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

This adventure occurs in Termalaine and deep within a kobold driven gemstone mine northeast of the town.

Background

Thousands of years ago during the **AGE OF DISCOVERY**, a **NETHERESE** archmagi named **OXIUM DARKCALLER**, led a team of explorers into the icy reaches of **ICEWIND DALE** in search of a magical relic, discovered by his powerful scryers.

Not far from the city now known as **TERMALAINE**, named by its geological counterpart of which the ground around the city is riddled with, the Netherese explorers started digging far into the ground. After weeks of digging, the excavators breached the ceiling to a huge subterranean cave.

10 feet under the cave floor, they found what **OXIUM** had come here for. A purple stone, possibly fallen from the sky eons ago, radiating purple light as well as strong magic. Thus, **OXIUM** named it the **SKY STONE**. The goddess **SHAR** saw what **OXIUM** had found, and in envy she immediately manipulated **OXIUM** to build a temple, unknown to **OXIUM** that he controlled by **SHAR**. The temple was to be constructed from **CHARDALYN** and **OXIUM** to leave the stone behind to sanctify the place. **OXIUM** was also ordered to keep the temple safe for eternity while the rest of his crew was banished for just as long, as **SHAR** needed ensure that only **OXIUM** knew of the **SKY STONE**'s existence. To hide the **SKY STONE** from the prying eyes of the magistrates of Illusk, he inserted the stone into a lantern to make it more mundane. This lantern now goes by the name the **LANTERN OF SHAR**.

Millenia have passed, and both the temple and **OXIUM** have been long forgotten, until a haphazard team of **KOBOLD MINERS** dug through the cavern wall and discovered the sinister, black temple.

Now, a group of **KOBOLD MESSENGERS** have been sent to Termalaine, asking for aid, ensuring that nothing evil lurks in the temple.

Theme

Some elements of the adventure carry a distinct horror theme. As a DM you are encouraged to regulate the suspense, based on your player's maturity. Remember, every player is supposed to have fun.

Overview

The story of the adventure is spread across **six parts** and takes approximately **four hours** to play. In the module, you will also find guidance on running the module in **two hours**.

- **Prologue: What Happens in Termalaine.** There is a festival in the city and the party dive into the local customs and cuisine, eventually meeting Travelling M'agh who takes them to The Eastside Inn.
- **Call to Action: The Eastside.** At the Eastside, the party is introduced to Rinna who offers the characters their quest. This is the *Call to Action*.
- **Part 1: Across the Ice.** The party is presented with one to three random encounters as they make way across the icy landscape north of Termalaine, making way to the mining camp.
- **Part 2: Into the Temple of Darkness.** The party is taken to the newly dug section of the mine. Make sure the temple does not present any danger to the kobold mining operation. This is **Story Objective A**.
- **Part 3: On the Run!** As the party uncovers the temple's sinister origin, finds the stone in the lantern and as the cavern collapses, they must escape.
- **Part 4: Home, sweet home.** As the party returns to Termalaine, Rinna and Travelling

M'agh are startled by their findings. Rinna offers to take the lantern to a local magistrate to have it examined thoroughly, possibly sent to Waterdeep or Candlekeep. This is **Story Objective B**.

Running on a time budget?

The following guidance allows you to cut the module short by 90 to 120 minutes:

The Prologue can be condensed into just the last part, where the characters meet each other in The Eastside and are given the quest from Rinna, M'agh and the kobolds.

Part 1 can also be - either in part or entirely - cut short or removed by limiting or omitting the encounter table rolls during the trip to the kobold mine.

Remember to check up on the available rewards when playing as a 2-hour adventure instead of a 4-hour adventure.

Adventure Hooks

The characters can be in Termalaine for various reasons. The following are suggestions.

Looking for M'agh in all the right places.

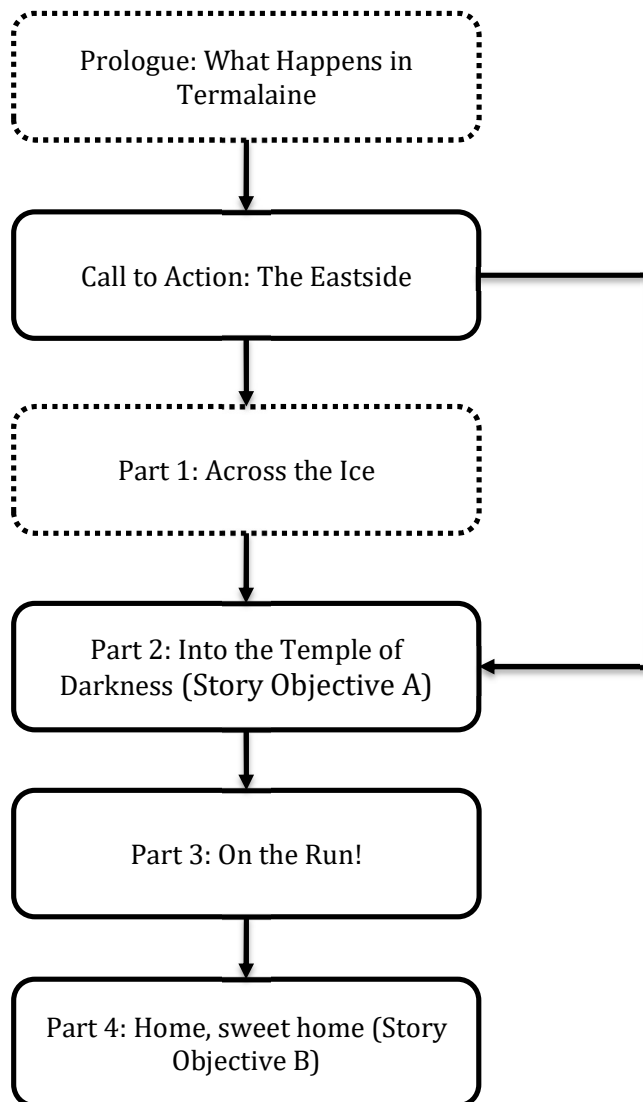
Characters familiar with the gray orc tribe, The Graylings, may at some point have heard about the legendary Travelling M'agh, explorer extraordinaire! Rumour has it he is currently visiting Termalaine, perhaps you can catch a glimpse?

I'm hunting books! If the characters are familiar with Oar's Rest, they might have heard about Theren Natacia and his love for books. Maybe this far-off place has something you can treat him with?

Newcomers to Frozenfar. The characters have arrived at Termalaine as their final destination from the south and are looking to make a little coin.

Adventure Flowchart

This section provides a basic understanding of not only the flow of the adventure, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objectives. When running the 2-hour version of the adventure, leave out the boxes with the dotted frame.



Prologue: What Happens in Termalaine

Estimated duration: 30-45 minutes

The characters have arrived in Termalaine during a festival and spend some time exploring the fairground. They end up at The Eastside where they meet **RINNA** and **TRAVELLING M'AGH** who introduces them to the kobolds and their immediate problem.

Running on a time budget?

If you are playing this adventure with less than 4 hours available, you can start with the Call to Action and save some time. Remember to leave out the 4-hour magic items reward if you skip the Prologue.

Scene A: Bright Lights, Big City

As the characters arrive in Termalaine, there is as a celebratory festival is taking place in the city. There are plenty of stalls to visit and things to see. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Due north of Bryn Shandar, you find another one of the larger settlements in Ten Towns. Perched on the eastern shores of Maer Dualdon, the town of Termalaine constantly reminds you, why this region is also known as Frozenfar. The wind, blowing in from the west across the lake, is as biting as the snowy owl bear's beak and as cold as the banshee's wail.

In true Termalanian style, this does not seem to bother the locals. As you make it through the town, you see people busy having up colorful decorations in bright color, muttering things like 'Hurry up, it's almost time' and 'When does the procession start?'.

Following the stream of people, you end up at the city square where bright lights accentuate the buzz of the locals. A celebration is on the way, and everyone is invited!

The celebratory festival area is divided into several smaller locations found below. Let the characters walk around, perhaps let them have a great role-playing segment with each other, while they stop by 2 or 3 locations along the way. This segment should end with the procession through the streets as the last event, see Developments.

Termalaine is – like the rest of Icewind Dale – engulfed in a magical darkness, imposed by Auril.

Feel free to award the players with minor bonuses during the festival for excellent roleplaying, but do not let them carry over to the remaining adventure.

Location 1: Northern Drinks

A stall selling various hot beverages. Mulled wine (4 cp per cup), mead made from honey imported from Goldenfields (8 cp per cup), warm gooseberry wine (4 cp per cup), hot cocoa (2 cp per cup) and hot kaeth (3 cp per cup) for the parents. The beverages have no mechanical effect. Northern Drinks is located across multiple locations in the town square.

Location 2: Mothers Meats

Various cured and cooked meats traditional to the north. Yak (tender and juicy), elk (tough and leathery), bear (wild taste), boar (soft and juicy) or how about a slice of cured, smoked yeti (beef jerky)? All slices and cuts are priced at 5 cp apiece and have no mechanical effect. Mothers Meats has three stalls across the town square.

Location 3: Greens Beans

Vegetables and the likes are not easy to find in the cold north. This stall is a wagon, insulated with thick layers of fur both outside and in, making sure the temperature inside the wagon does not shrink below 32 degrees. A small wood stove is also doing its best to keep up the temperature. Mr. Green, who owns the wagon, and his assistant Filch take orders from the menu, and Filch fetches the produce inside while the customer waits. All the produce is imported from Goldenfields or Triboar. One can buy corn

on the cob (4 cp), a bag of potatoes (12 cp), salads (6 cp) and today's specialty: Chultan

plantain (20 cp for 3). Every produce is wrapped in paper to preserve it against the cold.

Location 4: Dance Off (Dexterity/Charisma based event)

In a rather large, heated tent not far from the harbor, a hardwood floor has been laid out. The characters can dance-off against one or more of the NPC mentioned below or other characters.

The participating player chose a relevant skill to use for the dance off. Dexterity (Acrobatics), Charisma (Performance) or any skill they can justify based on their dance moves. DM's can grant a bonus to the skill roll for impressive feats such as incorporating a direct insult into your dance or similar. Roll against the opponents DC (see below).

If they fail the skill check, the round is lost.

Each dance-off is best of three. The winners get a flacon of yeti's breath – an sweet, alcoholic beverage with a taste of ginger and menthol - to enjoy during the night. This beverage is otherwise not purchasable in Termalaine at the moment and evaporated no later than by the end of the adventure.

Failure indicates the player has had enough of being taunted and mocked by the opponent and audience and loses his temper / runs away crying or similar.

Dance-off NPCs

- Timmy Toesmasher (male dwarf, DC 11)
- Brigitte Jahn (female human, DC 13)
- Johnny Lightfoot (male elf, DC 15)

Developments

As the party has been through a few of the events, point their attention to the music that suddenly fills the air from the edge of the town square. Read or paraphrase the following:

Termalaine is buzzing with life, as delicate, almost ethereal music start to fill the air from somewhere nearby. The sun is in zenith, which does not say much up here in the north, currently embraced in a perpetual darkness, so the lanterns along the streets in Termalaine have been lit, so everybody can enjoy the ceremonial procession about to take place.

Lines along the streets are hundreds of the town's citizens as well as travelers and adventurers. Everyone, young and old, is squeezing their way in front of one another, to get as close to the street as possible, and still stay out of the way of the coming floats.

The first float is decorated in white wool, sprinkled with shiny pieces of rock, mocked up to look like a snow-covered landscape. Tiny huts, with even tinier lights in them, line the fabricated snowy hillsides, and up-beat seasonal music of magical origin fills the air around the float. In the center, a young woman, a human clad in a snowy white, long-haired fur, repeats a small trick, where she unfolds her arms and her coat turns a bright orange, not unlike the warm sun from the spring. As she does so, the tiny huts cast tiny shadows on the hillsides, and tiny cheers are audible from inside the huts.

As the first float passes by, the bystanders gasp in awe of the beauty and marvel of the tiny magical huts.

You can hear from the locals around you, that all the floats have a similar theme, celebrating the sun's return. They are paid for by the town's businesses and donations from travelers.

The second float slides eerily by, not making a sound as it moves across the muddy snow laced road. On this float, a massive battle-scene is created. Tiny figures, about half of them humanoid, while the other half is a mix of polar bears, a strange sahuagin-like fish people, and yetis.

On top of the float are two people. One of them is covered in white furs, sprayed with a maroon-colored liquid, resembling an injured creature fight for its life. The other is looking victorious, brandishing a golden sword with a that emits rays of light. As the float passes by, sounds from battle, people yelling and beasts screaming in a multitude of animal-like growls and yells, can be heard from the battlefield.

The bystanders cheer and boo while a fight between the human and the 'yeti' rolls back and forth, always leading to the yeti's demise.

Listening to the other people around you, you learn that this float tells the story of a great fight between the local wildlife and the settler in the area where Termalaine was founded. The sword, wielded by the fighter, symbolized the sword used by the heroic Broth Hearthlight, as he slayed the final yeti leading to peace in the area, thus laying the first brick in the Termalaine foundation.

Finally, the third and last float approaches. More beautiful and breathtaking than the first two. This float is decorated resembling Kelvin's Cairn. The glistening snow reflects the timid rays of the winter moon in the sky, only to be slowly lit up by an orange, warm sun, rising from behind the mountain. The sun's light, as well as its warmth, easily reaches the first few rows of people on each side of the road, before setting again behind the Cairn.

The party learns that this final float is the solemn reminder to the sun that it needs to rise again in the spring, to grant us warmth and light, so we can continue to cherish and celebrate its glory.

As the procession disappears down the street, the group of spectators disperse and soon the party is only in the company of a tall, male orc, dressed in expensively looking winter clothes, brandishing a monocle on his right eye. He spots the group and approaches. He is very upfront and greets the party.

'Ah, fellow adventurers! This far up here in the cold north!? How peculiar! I am M'agh of the Graylings, but you can call me Travelling M'agh, as that is indeed what I am! If you have not planned for accommodations for your stay in Termalaine, allow me to take you to the Eastside, the most luxurious guest house north of the Spine of the World! Come on then, you'll freeze to death out here!'

The very friendly orc insists on leading the group through town to the Eastside inn. A DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that he is genuinely friendly in every way possible. The Eastside is the only inn with sleeping accommodations, so **TRAVELLING M'AGH** speaks truthfully in every way.

Roleplaying Travelling M'agh

The friendliest grey orc north of Chult! A charming, good-spirited, heart warm explorer from Damara, having crossed western Faerûn in search of cultural knowledge. His jolly spirit cannot be bend, even by the harshest of moody adventurers, and he insists on taking the party to the Eastside.

Call to Action: The Eastside

Estimated duration: 15 minutes

Inside the Eastside inn, the characters meet **RINNA**, who introduces the characters to the kobolds and their predicament in the mine a few hours northeast of Termalaine. Helping the kobolds, is the call to action.

Area Information

On the eastern edge of town, the Eastside opens its doors to most of the travelers to Termalaine. And they seem to heed the call. The common room is filled, almost to the brim, with other travelers, and quite understandably why. There is a wonderful smell of cooked food coming from the kitchen, the fire in the hearth is inviting as is the smile on the innkeeper's face, a young woman that despite her age, seems very versed in serving the customers.

Whether the party arrives with **TRAVELLING M'AGH** or not, the characters find a rare empty booth in the inn, as another party get up and leaves while they wait. They can order food and drinks if needed. Shortly after, they are approached by **RINNA**, who is here to meet the other party of adventurers (who just left) but she works with what she gets.

If the party arrive with **TRAVELLING M'AGH**, they see **RINNA** and **M'AGH** hug briefly before **M'AGH** points towards their table, sending **RINNA** in their direction.

RINNA introduces herself to the party and offers them a task. It is a simple, easy way of making both a little coin and a little fame. Behind **RINNA**, three nervous-looking **KOBOLDS** try to blend in with the inn's patrons, while keeping an eager yet anxious stare at the party.

RINNA will share the following with the adventurers.

RINNA is in Termalaine to visit an old friend, but she happened upon a group of distraught

kobolds outside the Eastside. They are running a gem mine not far to the north-east of Termalaine and while digging out a new section of the mine's third level, the kobold broke down a wall to a huge chamber with a sinister building in its center

Now the kobolds are afraid the building is cursed and needs a group of adventurers to make sure it is safe. If the party shows a positive attention towards the kobolds, they come closer and confirm **RINNA**'s description

As they have not started digging out any gems yet, the kobolds are not able to pay much. But the party is free to keep what they find.

Wasn't Rinna lost in Avernus?

If either of the characters have met Rinna before, she dismisses them quickly, excusing them for mistaking her for someone else. Rinna can skip back and forth in time, due to the chromomagic weaved into her DNA, and she does not always know what will happen later in her life and she cannot recall what has passed so far.

The kobolds' promise of both riches and fame, at least in their ranks, should lead the party on the track of the main objective: Visiting the gem mine to assess the situation. This is the **Call to Action**.

Development

When the characters are ready to take off in the direction of the kobold gem mine, proceed to **Part 1: Across the Ice**. While staying at the Eastside, the characters can spend a little time preparing for the trip across the cold wilderness by shopping for any non-magical equipment according to the Equipment list in *Player's Handbook*, chapter 5.

This is also an excellent time to remind them to stock up on cold weather clothing if they do not already own this. These are sold for 10gp.

Part 1: Across the Ice

Estimated duration: 40-60 minutes

Running on a time budget?

If you are playing this adventure with less than 4 hours available, you can skip Part 1: Across the Ice and save some time. If you do, remember to leave out the 4-hour magic item reward.

The trip across the snow- and ice-covered wilderness is rough and tough and takes around 2-3 hours for the characters. Below you will find a selection of various small encounters. Each encounter is estimated for 20 minutes. Roll or choose 2-3 encounters from the table below to make the trip more eventful. Once they are at the mine, proceed to Scene A.

Cold Weather Travel

As the party is travelling under very hard conditions. On top of the encounters, the party is also struggling with the environment, given the rules described in *Dungeon Master's Guide*, chapter 5 or for a more challenging experience refer to *Knuckleheads & Other Such Curiosities*, chapter 4, by Greg Marks.

Table of encounters

Roll	Encounter	Type
1	A Hole in the Lake	Trap/Social
2	Knock Knock	Puzzle
3	Lurker in the Deep	Trap/Combat
4	Ice Jumping	Trap
5	Snow and Ice	Combat
6	Let it Snow	Trap
7	Mist-chievous	Combat
8	A dwarf without manners	Social

Scene A – The kobold mine

Once the party has made it to the kobold mining camp, read or paraphrase the following:

Dots of orange light start to show up further ahead through the falling snow. Out of Icewind Dales perpetual darkness, a palisade with an opening for easy entry, suddenly startles you, when a high-pitched voice yells something ('They're here!' in draconic) in a foreign language and suddenly you hear a dozen feet clickity-clacking across the icy ground. A group of 4 kobolds, clad in big furry coats, are coming towards you, and signal to you that you should follow along.

They lead you across the makeshift kobold camp to a small wooden construction, made to keep the snow out of the entrance to the mine. As you descend into the darkness, you only take a few steps before you feel the wooden floor under your feet and your footsteps start to echo through the tunnel.

Shortly after you descend the kobolds stop you with a jolt, and chains start to rattle. You find yourself in a rectangular space and notice a wooden sign with crude letters saying in Common: Welcome to Hell.

Scene B – Approaching the cavern

The tunnels stretch deep under the frozen ground above. Signs of digging are clear as you follow the kobolds through the network of tunnels, but no diggers are working. As the party passes through the tunnels, eventually they are brought to a halt by the kobolds. They anxiously peek around the corner and point in that exact direction.

If the party looks around the corner, read or paraphrase the following:

The tunnels open into a large, almost cathedral-like cavern, at least 120 feet tall and double as wide. In the center of the cavern rises a plateau with a magnificent building.

Made from the blackest stones you have ever seen; it still somehow reflects itself in the darkness and lights up a single spire reaching for the ceiling at the back of the temple.

A wide ramp leads from the tunnel path across the cavern floor to the front wall's tremendous (12 feet tall) double-doors.

Area information

The building is a temple to Shar, though this is not immediately apparent to the characters. Investigating the stone requires the Stonecunning skill and a successful DC 16 Intelligence (History). Characters local to Icewind Dale makes this check with advantage. A successful check reveals that the temple is built from chardalyn, the fabled stone of the north.

A character, who uses Divine Sense or similar divination, will sense a strong sense of evil emanating from the building itself.

It is possible to walk around the temple, yet there is only one entrance, the double doors. The stone is sleek and polished, creating slightly twisted reflections of the characters when they get within 3 feet of the building. This is a harmless yet unsettling feature.

Story Objective A

Clearly, the kobolds are afraid of the building and could use some help making sure that it is indeed benign. Investigating the temple is Story Objective A.

Development

Once the characters are ready to enter the temple, lead the party straight to **Part 2: Into the Temple of Darkness**.

Part 2: Into the Temple of Darkness

Estimated duration: 90 minutes

Area Information

The temple has the following general features.

Walls and ceiling. The ceiling is 8 feet tall and both walls and ceilings are adorned with carvings on bone and grinning, snarling, twisted skulls, carved out of the black chardalyn. The chardalyn inside is as reflective as the outside of the temple, so the walls and ceiling are reflecting the party as they walk around, creating sensory disturbances.

Light. No light is lit inside the temple except what the characters bring.

Smells and sounds. The air inside the temple is stale. The inside of the temple is completely silent. Only the sounds the characters or any creatures make are audible.

Note to the DM

Make sure to use the lack of background sounds and the reflective surface of the chardalyn to your advantage and create an eerie feeling within your players. Movement caught out the corner of one character's eye could easily just be another character reflected in the chardalyn. Or is it? Play on these sensory disturbances.

Area 1 - Entrance

The door, leading into the temple, is a 12 feet tall double door. It is not locked and opens outwards. It is created from chardalyn, has a circular iron handle on each of the door. It is heavy but open surprisingly easy.

As the door is opened, the insides of the temple let out a breath of stale, heavy air, revealing that the door has been closed for a very long time. A DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a dust-covered, double-edged circle - the symbol of Shar, identified by a DC 15 Intelligence (History) or Intelligence (Religion) check - carved across the two doors.

Once the party has moved further into the temple - **Area 2** or further - the door closes and locks.

Area 2 - Hall of Ascension

Behind the double doors, a hallway arcs left and right. In the wall opposite the door, an alcove holds a 3-foot tall, square pedestal with a bowl carved into the top. An empty sconce is located 2 feet above the pedestal in the alcove. The hallway is little more than 5 feet wide and 8 feet tall.

The pedestal is a part of the mechanism to get out of the temple. In the alcove, above the pedestal only visible by darkvision or if a torch is placed in the sconce, a short sentence is written in Netherese:

'Give life to Shar'

To open the doors from the inside, liquid needs to be poured into the bowls on each of the three pedestals in **Area 2**. This could be water from a waterskin, a potion or something similar

Investigating the bowl, a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check will reveal old specks of dried out colorless liquid on the rim of the bowl.

Two more alcoves like this are in the hallway, one in front of **Area 3** and one 20 feet in the other direction down the hallway. They all make up the mechanism to open the door.

Area 3 - Common Room

The hallway opens into a grand room, the ceiling reaches up at least 25 feet above the slick chardalyn floor of this common room. Pieces of furniture, chairs, tables, cabinets, are placed meticulously in the room, creating an obstacle free path leading through to the next room. Across from the entrance to this common room is another alcove with a pedestal like the one across the entrance to the temple. A sconce with an old torch is located above the pedestal in this alcove.

Lighting the torch will cast a light on the common room, making the above description visible to everyone.

The pedestal in the alcove is similar in description and function as the pedestal in **Area 2** and is a part of the puzzle to get the main door to open when escaping the temple.

If the characters search the room, allow them to find the following using an Intelligence (Investigation) check. The descriptions below are cumulative (Read as far down as the check calls for):

DC	Result
< 11	The room seems mundane. Tables are clean, cabinets are empty.
11-16	Searching the cabinets and tables, you find evidence of an old civilization. Old pieces of parchment with Netherese scriptures, mostly educating in the differences between the light and the dark side, Selûne and Shar. A single container with stale water is positioned on a stool next to a small table.
17+	Investigating the writings, you keep finding the same symbol repeatedly amongst the writing, a double-edged circle with a black center. A DC 15 Intelligence (History) or Intelligence (Religion) check will reveal this to be the symbol of Shar.

Area 4 - Prayer Room

Across from the Common room is the Prayer Room. Wooden benches are lined up on rows, all facing the northeastern end of the room, where a simple altar is located. On the wall above the altar a double-edged circle, made from the purest chardalyn, hangs from chains affixed to the ceiling.

This room is as dark as the rest of the temple, and no visible sources of light are available. Searching the pews will reveal nothing of interest, and the altar holds little but a cloth, a couple of pewter cups and a censer, only worth a little gold.

As in area 3, no echo is returned despite the tall ceiling in this part of the temple.

Area 5 - Acolytes Antechamber

On the way through the hallway to this chamber, the characters pass the third alcove with a pedestal and sconce. It is similar in description and function to the pedestal in **Area 2** and is a part of the puzzle to get the main door to open when escaping the temple.

This small open chamber holds a door leading west. The chamber itself holds a small wooden chair and table, both cleaned and put aside. The door, leading west, is made from wood yet very well preserved and closed tightly in the door opening.

Not a sound can be heard from behind the door. It is stuck, so it needs a little nudge to open.

The table and chair were a notary's spot but have now been put away. It hides nothing of interest.

Area 6 - Acolytes Study Room

Behind the door, the acolyte's study room lies untouched for ages. Rows of tables with chairs fills the room in pairs of two next to each other and tall cabinets are placed along the walls.

This room looks like a teaching room. Tables and chairs are set up in rows and cabinets cover the western wall. Behind the glass doors on the cabinets, you can see books and scrolls and things in jars. A wooden door in the south wall leads further into this part of the temple.

Investigating the tables leaves nothing of interest. However, if a character decides to investigate the cabinets, the books and the jarred items, a passive Perception of 13 will have that character notice a little movement out of the corner of their eye. As they turn towards the

movement, a **BRAIN IN A JAR** starts turning in its jar to “look” back at the character.

Give the character a few seconds to react, and then roll for initiative as the **BRAIN IN A JAR** lashes out with its *chill touch*.

Note to the DM

As it has been dormant for so long, all attacks the **BRAIN IN A JAR** makes, are made with disadvantage, while all saves against its spells by the players are made with advantage.

The **BRAIN IN A JAR** is only capable of fighting for three rounds before it exhausts itself, goes into a fit of spasms and eventually dies in its jar. It has forgotten how to talk, so its only sound is its death rattle.

If the cabinets are searched further, a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check will dig out an old, dusty Potion of Climbing.

Area 7 - Acolytes Library

Behind the door is what seems to be some sort of library. Glass doored cabinets line the eastern walls, old books line every shelf from left to right. Another wooden door leads further south.

The books are basic and uninteresting. Treatises, notes from some ancient historian, etc. All written in Netherese. If a character decides to bring back a few, they amount to a little gold as a part of the reward.

Area 8 - Acolytes Living Quarters

Bunk beds are placed evenly spaced in this room. This seems to have been the living quarters of a group of acolytes. Robes, tattered and ripped, hang on the bunk beds, while straw mats provide a somewhat comfortable place to sleep.

At the end of each bunk bed is a chest. Most of them are left open and empty, while one is still closed and locked. It requires a DC 13 Dexterity

with Thieves’ Tools check to unlock the chest. If no one is proficient, a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check can break open the lock. The check has AC 15 and 6 hit points. As the chest is opened, a **POLTERGEIST** manifests and bolts through the room, targeting the one opening the chest.

‘LEAVE MY BELONGS ALONE!’ a high-pitched scream echoes through the chamber as the ghostly image of a male human bolts out of the blue across the room, aiming for the opened chest!

The **POLTERGEIST**, a former acolyte named **THAURUS**, uses its *telekinetic thrust* to throw the character 10 feet away from the chest.



Roleplaying Taurus

Taurus is not keen on fighting but will attack and try to kill the characters if they do not heed his warning. He was left behind when the temple was emptied. It all happened so fast he did not get a chance to collect his things. An energy wave swept through the temple, and that is the last thing he remember.

He insists that the characters should leave his belongings in the chest. They are of no value to them, and since he is bound to this place, he loved to have his earthly leftovers close by.

What does he want? His belonging to be left alone.

If the characters decide to defeat the **POLTERGEIST** and search the chest, it holds nothing but a few letters in Netherese, some partly dissolved clothes and a holy symbol of Shar – a black disc with a purple rim.

Area 9 - Preparation Chamber

The door leading to this chamber, a wooden door, is slightly ajar.

The wooden door leading into this chamber is left slightly ajar. The small crack between the door and the wall reveals an almost barren chamber with nothing but a chair and a small, tall table. On the northern wall, a single large double-edged circle is painted in faded, dark colors.

If investigated, the tall table holds a small piece of parchment. Written in Netherese, it takes a little effort to understand, but if a character can read it, it is a list of steps to go through for "Preparation". If no one is capable of reading Netherese, all that can be concluded is that it is probably a list of something.

A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) will reveal the secret door in the east wall leading into area 13.

Area 10 - Oxium's Chamber

A wooden door, adorned with a silvery, double-edged circle, blocks your way.

It requires a DC 15 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check to unlock the door. However, a mechanical trap is hidden; a poison needle trap that can be found with DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) and disarmed with a DC 15 Dexterity check using Thieves' Tools. An unsuccessful try at disarming the trap will trigger it. Triggering the trap extends a poisoned needle 3 inches out from the lock, and the character triggering the trap takes 1 piercing damage and 11 (2d10) poison damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour. If the trap is triggered, the door opens.

Once the trap is sprung or disarmed and the lock is picked, the door can be opened.

Behind the door, a lush and decadent chamber is revealed. Thick carpets cover the chardalyn floor, soft, pillowed chairs and a chaise lounge is placed around a small coffee table. A desk is located along the northern wall, and next to it is an opening leading into another chamber. On the southern wall is an old painting of a self-confident and slightly arrogant looking human male, dressed in a dark robe lined with fur stands against a lavish green background, an open landscape from someplace far away from here. Also on the southern wall is an opening leading to a smaller chamber.

These are the living quarters of **OXIUM DARKCALLER**, the archmagi who found the sky stone and ordered the building of the temple. This chamber holds mostly mundane items that would make life more than bearable to most. On the desk are writings, letters, and a diary, all with texts written in Netherese that circulate around life in the temple. The diary in particular details everything that is mentioned in the "Background" section of the module. This can be conveyed to the characters if they can read the diary.

Area 11 - Oxium's Study

This is clearly some sort of study. Books and scrolls line the shelves on the walls, while parchments and notebooks are sprawled on a desk in the center of the room.

The scrolls and parchments, written in Netherese, all revolve around the **SKY STONE**, **OXIUMs** thoughts on its perceived origin (outer space), its purpose (to convey messages from the gods) and how best to use it (try to get insights on godly matters to impress the court in Illusk, Saharelgard and even Oxium's hometown, Sepulcher).

Other papers disclose experimentation with the sky stone and its effects on living things, such as local animals and even humanoids and eventually some of the acolytes.

- **OXIUM** notes that the sky stone seems to enhance the power of chardalyn.
- Another page states, that **OXIUM** gets a message from Shar, directing him to wipe all living life from the temple to please Shar – this is in fact a lie fabricated in **OXIUM's** chardalyn and sky stone twisted mind.
- On one page, there is a mention of a writing in Common, though **OXIUM** is not happy he has to bow to the "visitors from Illusk". The actual writing in Common is not mentioned.

Area 12 - Oxium's Chamber

The frame of a huge bed takes up most of the space in this small chamber. What is left of the bed linen is in disarray. This must have been Oxium's private chamber. A large wardrobe is pushed against the wall opposite of the bed. A wooden chest is located at the foot of the bed.

As soon as a character steps into the chamber, the ethereal remains of **OXIUM**, in the form of a **GHA**ST, manifest in Area 10 and immediately surprise-attacks the closest character, aiming at

magic users over melee fighters. On the second round, two **ZOMBIEs** manifest, both former acolytes under **OXIUM**, coming out through the chardalyn walls.

OXIUMs remains fight till death and cannot be reasoned with.

Adjusting the encounter

Suggestions for scaling this encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove the two **ZOMBIEs**.
- **Weak:** Remove one **ZOMBIEs**.
- **Strong:** Replace the **GHA**ST with a **DEATHLOCK WIGHT**
- **Very Strong:** Replace the **GHA**ST with a **DEATHLOCK**



Area 13 - The Reliquarium

Note to the DM

It is imperative that the players do not know about the three possible outcomes of the riddle on the pedestal, and thus they should not be able to notice the three rooms behind the tapestries. To the characters, this is a round room with seven tapestries.

This room is truly the center piece in the temple. 30 feet vaulted ceiling; huge tapestries dress the wall all around the sides of this chamber. In the center of the circular room, you find the only light-giving object in the temple so far: a gilded lantern floating above a triangular chardalyn slab, illuminating the middle of the room in bright purple colors, emanating from a piece of glowing rock inside the lantern.

This is the relic of the temple: The Lantern of Shar. The item was assembled by **OXIUM** to be presentable as a relic to those above him. In detail, it is a lantern with the truly magnificent piece inside, the **SKY STONE**.

The tapestries show various imagery from life 2500 years ago.

- One shows the building of the temple
- One where people are gathering around a gigantic tower in an icy setting
- One with mages displaying great magical skills
- One with a strange humanoid figure, wielding a gigantic hammer, looking down upon a village in a snowy setting
- One with an image of Toril with a Nautiloid (Illithid star ship) in the background
- One with brave Netherese adventurers fighting a beholder
- One with a group of adventurers running through mining tunnels, fear across their faces

Getting the lantern

The characters should feel enticed to get the lantern. After all, TRAVELLING M'AGH mentioned this as something of potentially grand historical value.

To get the lantern, the characters need to examine the three-sided chardalyn slab over which the lantern floats.

The stone slab

On each of the three sides, three sentences are written in Common. Under each sentence is a hole bored into the stone. To choose a side on the stone slab, a drop of any type of liquid must be poured into the hole under the desired sentence. This could be water from a waterskin, a potion or something similar.

The three sentences are as follow:

- 'We are the ones who have watched you for all of time'
- 'I have eyes everywhere and I remember everything'
- 'I am ever present, in life as in death'

Developments

Depending on what side the characters choose, the following happens.

'We are the ones who have watched you for all of time'

A 9-foot tall **ULITHARID** tears through the tapestry with the Nautiloid and steps into the chamber. Make sure to describe the sheer size and the horror the creature presents itself with. The six tentacles twirl and swirl around the creature's body and tries to reach for the characters. It should be apparent to the characters that this is an immensely dangerous creature, a very powerful Illithid, whom is very much to strong for them to take on.

'I have eyes everywhere and I remember everything'

A **GAUTH** light the tapestry showing the beholder on fire, gives the characters a moment to consume its horrific description - there is no fault in letting the players believe it is a beholder. Make sure to stress that this is a fight that cannot be won. If the characters at some point believe they can take the fight, have the **GAUTH** use its Pushing Ray on one of the characters to convince them otherwise.

'I am ever present, in life as in death'

The tapestry with the hammer-wielding strange humanoid figure falls and reveals a 2-foot-tall humanoid with a hammer just as long, a gaping mouth where the belly should be and a head without a face. This is a **TOMB TAPPER**. Let the characters gaze on the terror for a moment, but make sure they understand that this is an impossible fight.

Once the monster, the watchers of the relic, has been revealed, the lantern drops to the stone slab and can be grabbed by a character. Once the lantern is release, continue to **Part 3: On the Run!**



Part 3: On the Run!

Estimated duration: 30 minutes

As the massive monster, triggered by releasing the Lantern of Shar, is unleashed, the party should do the wise thing and start running for their lives.

Stage 1: Escaping the temple

Releasing the lantern makes **OXIUM's** ghostly image appear in the center of **Area 13** to warn the characters of things to come for disturbing this holy place. Read or paraphrase the following:

As the monstrous guardian, you inadvertently released, briefly regard you with hungry interest, as if pondering if you taste well, a translucent image of a robed man appears in the middle of the room.

'Ah, faithless rats! You dare to disturb the most holy of places? Shar will not be pleased! Run. Run for your lives as the many years of solitude have made my watchman... Hungry.'

Screams and wails make it through the tunnels as the summoned creature begins to approach the party, forcing them on the run.

Note to the DM

These monsters cannot be reasoned with, and they have only one goal in mind, killing the disturbance.

As the characters start making it through the tunnels of the temple, make sure to note the tightness of the hallway, the wicked imagery - the twisted reflections and the snarling skulls - and the eerie screams and wails, that sounds like they're coming out of the walls.

Remember to keep up the speed, make this a stressed section where the players feel that they need to act quickly. If possible, add a ticking clock as an audible sound effect, to stress the need for speed.

Unlocking the double door

To exit the temple, the characters need to open the double door in **Area 2**. There are no handles on the inside, so the characters have two options. A DC 24 group Strength check to force the door open, or to use the mechanism designed

to open the door: pour liquid into the three pedestals in the alcoves in the hallway (**Area 2**). This could be water from a waterskin, a potion or something similar. (Remember the container with stale water in **Area 3**). Once liquid is poured into all three pedestals, the double doors open.

If the characters take too long to decide how to approach the door, remind them of the sound of the creature slowly closing in from down the hallway. If the players take more than 10 minutes to discuss a solution, the creature is now so close an encounter is inevitable.

Stage 2: Escaping the cavern

The cavern outside the temple is shaking, causing severe jerks and jolts to the temple and the players. Near the entrance to the cave, the kobolds are gesturing for the characters to move quickly. Stones and rocks are falling from the roof of the cavern, making the cavern a dangerous hazard.

To cross from the temple entrance to the tunnel entrance, each character must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take a blow to the head from a falling rock, causing 1d6 bludgeoning damage for each failed save.

Development

As the characters reach the ascending tunnel path, undead acolytes - once followers of **OXIUM** and wiped out by **SHAR** and now turned to **ZOMBIES** - start breaching through the wall of the mine. The characters and kobolds must bolt single file through the mines, trying to avoid the collapsing tunnels as well as the emerging **ZOMBIES**.

Stage 3: Escaping the mine

To escape the collapsing mine, have the characters roll for initiative. While in this initiative, they must take turns making DC 12

Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks to make it out alive. It takes three checks to escape the tunnel. If a character fails a check, a **ZOMBIE** punches an arm through the tunnel wall or rubble behind the party and makes a *slam* attack on the character. This can be a deadly attack, so unconscious characters can be picked up in the flight by another character spending a bonus action to pull them along.

A character who carries an unconscious character, makes the Dexterity (Acrobatics) check with disadvantage.

Development

As soon as the characters make it out of the mining tunnel and into the makeshift lift, the third level of the mine collapses entirely, closing it off for any future endeavors. The kobolds take the characters to the top level, thank them profusely in kobold and point them in the directions of Termalaine, repeating **RINNAs** name.

Going back to Termalaine, progresses the characters onwards to **Part 4: Home, sweet home.**

Part 4: Home, sweet home

Estimated duration: 10 minutes

The journey back to Termalaine is remarkably uneventful, as if someone or something is keeping watch over the party. Clear skies, fresh snow, even the temperature seems above its usual deadly level of freezing. This rise in temperature is closely related to the events in *DC-PoA-CONMAR-03 Unfrozen*.

As the characters arrive in Termalaine, the citizens are avoiding them like the plague. Meeting **RINNA** and **TRAVELLING M'AGH** reveals that the lantern is of evil origin.

Scene A: Back in Termalaine

As the party makes way through Termalaine, a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) will notice that the shoves and pushes from the busy Termalainians have subsided, as the local citizens and travelers alike seem to avoid the party; they can sense the evil radius of the **LANTERN OF SHAR** – something the characters cannot sense while being so close to the lantern.

A DC 12 passive Perception check will disclose the same, as the party makes way towards the Eastside.

Scene B: Inside the Eastside

Back at the inn, the patrons almost fall over each other as they try to get out of the way of the party. A group of other guests get up and leave their table as the party passes by. When they sit down, guests located on the nearby tables slowly inches away.

They are greeted wholeheartedly by **RINNA** and **M'AGH**, who are excited to see them back in Termalaine, yet they both quickly draw away with a disgusted expression on their faces. Read or paraphrase the following:

'What on Toril are you carrying around?' Rinna exclaims, 'what did you find down there?', she continues, clearly knowing that you found something down there in the deep. She casts a wary glance in M'aghs direction who responds with a slow, anxious shake of his head.

Development

RINNA is expecting the characters to hand over the **LANTERN OF SHAR**. Be very insisting on having the lantern handed over to **RINNA**, but allow the party to decide otherwise, and leave **RINNA** slightly distrustful towards them.

The characters can choose between the following outcomes.

- Hand over the lantern to Rinna.

As you hand over the lantern to **RINNA** and **M'AGH**, they quickly hide it in a linen bag, lined with a shiny material. A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check, passive Perception or passive Wisdom score will reveal that the material had a strange glimmering effect rippling across it, with twirly bright colors not unlike a spinning celestial body. **RINNA** quickly closes the bag, tells **M'AGH** to pay the party and rushes out the door. If any of the characters decides to bolt after **RINNA**, she is quickly lost in the crowd. Or time and space.

- Ignore Rinna's request and talk their way out of it.

If any character passes a DC 18 Charisma (Deception) check, **RINNA** and **M'AGH** sighs and gives up trying to get the object. Instead, **RINNA** thanks the characters and asks **M'AGH** to pay the party, then she turns around and disappears into the crowd of the inn. Or into time and space.

M'AGH hastily casts a spell, excusing himself explaining that he really does not want to do this, and with a flash emanating from where the party keeps the lantern, the lantern disappears into another dimension, **M'AGH** excusing with a shrug.

Conclusion

M'AGH then procures a *lantern of tracking (aberrations)* from his many-pocketed coat and hands it to the characters along with a pouch of gold pieces (appropriate for their play time).

If playing the 4-hour version of the module:
M'AGH pulls out another object from a different pocket, a small shiny stone, and places it next to

the *lantern of tracking (aberrations)*. It is a *psi crystal* which he also hands the characters.

If the characters have no further questions or comments, **M'AGH** thanks the characters for their service, bows politely and disappears into the crowd, following **RINNA**.

Finishing business with **RINNA** and **M'AGH** is **Story Objective B**.

Character Rewards

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; it's suggested that you print off enough copies of this page to be able to give one to each of your players (crossing out rewards they didn't receive during the session):

Two- or Four-Hour Adventure:

Lantern of Tracking (Aberrations)

Wondrous Item, common

This hooded lantern burns for 6 hours on 1 pint of oil, shedding bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet.

While the lantern is within 300 feet of any creature of the Aberration type, its flame turns bright green. The lantern doesn't pinpoint the creature's exact location, however.

Potion of Climbing

Potion, common, consumable

When you drink this potion, you gain a climbing speed equal to your walking speed for 1 hour. During this time, you have advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks you make to climb.

The potion is separated into brown, silver, and gray layers resembling bands of stone. Shaking the bottle fails to mix the colors.

Only as Four-Hour Adventure:

Psi Crystal

Wondrous Item, uncommon (requires attunement by a creature with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher)

This crystal grants you telepathy for as long as you remain attuned to it. See the introduction of the Monster Manual for rules on how this telepathy works.

The crystal also glows with a purplish inner light while you are attuned to it.

The higher your intelligence, the greater the light's intensity and the greater the range of the telepathy (see the Psi Crystal Properties table).

Psi Crystal Properties

Intelligence Score	Range of Telepathy	Light Intensity
3-7	15 feet	Dim light out to a range of 5 feet
8-11	30 feet	Bright light in a 5-foot radius and dim light for an additional 5 feet
12-15	60 feet	Bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an addition 10 feet
16 or higher	120 feet	Bright light in a 15-foot radius and dim light for an additional 15 feet

Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure.

Rinna (*Ree-nuh*)

(Female half-orc plane traveler, chaotic good)

Rinna was born with a drop of chromomagic in her DNA, granting her the ability to skate across time and space. She is always looking for something fun to do, yet she is abundantly aware that some things should best be left buried in the dark.

What does she want? Make sure that everybody is having the best time!

Oxium Darkcaller (*Oxy-um*)

(Male human warlock, lawful evil)

Archmagi of the Netherese empire, philanthropic explorer of the cold north, hunter of the sky stone. Dead set on proving he was right about the stone that fell from the skies, he set out to locate the sky stone. He found it, was spellbound by Shar's temptations, and eventually found his doom inside the temple when Shar discovered his meager plan to rise in power within Netheril rather than submit to her will.

What does he want? For the Lantern of Shar to remain within the temple where it belongs.

Thaurus the Acolyte (*Thah-rus*)

(Male human poltergeist, lawful neutral)

The ethereal remains of an acolyte who suffered a terrible fate inside the temple when Shar unleashed her anger on Oxium.

What does he want? For nosy adventurers to leave his earthly belonging alone.

Travelling M'agh (Mak)

(Male gray orc noble, lawful good)

A distinguished orc of the Greylings-tribe, 6'2" tall. Well-versed in the customs of humans but still very curious, almost childishly, towards the other humanoid races. Left his tribe, the Graylings, in the mountains of Damara more than a decade ago, desiring to chronicle as much of the people of the Western Faerûn as possible. **What does he want?** He wants to learn as much of the customs and values of the humanoids of the Sword Coast and extended areas.

Creature Statistics

Brain in a Jar

Small undead, any alignment

Armor Class 11 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 55 (10d6 + 20)

Speed 0 ft., fly 10 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	3 (-4)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws INT +6, CHA +4

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Paralyzed, Poisoned, Prone

Senses Blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius); see also "Detect Sentience" below, Passive Perception 10

Languages the languages it knew in life (Netherese)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Detect Sentience. The brain can sense the presence and location of any creature within 300 feet of it that has an Intelligence of 3 or higher, regardless of interposing barriers, unless the creature is protected by a mind blank spell.

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The brain's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *chill touch* (see "Actions" below), *detect thoughts*, *mage hand*, *zone of truth*

3/day each: *charm person*, *hold person*

1/day each: *compulsion*, *hold monster*, *sleep* (3rd-level version), *Tasha's hideous laughter*

Magic Resistance. The brain has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magic effects.

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

Actions

Chill Touch (Cantrip). Ranged Spell Attack: +6 to hit, range 120 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (3d8) necrotic damage, and the target can't regain hit points until the start of the brain's next turn. If the target is undead, it also has disadvantage on attack rolls against the brain until the end of the brain's next turn.

Mind Blast (Recharge 5-6). The brain magically emits psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence saving throw or take 17 (3d8 + 4) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Deathlock

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with Mage Armor)

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws INT +4, CHA +5

Skills Arcana +4, History +4

Damage Resistances Necrotic; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks that aren't Silvered

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 11

Languages the languages it knew in life (Netherese)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The deathlock's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic, disguise self, mage armor*

Spellcasting. The deathlock is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 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): *chill touch, eldritch blast, mage hand*

1st-3rd level (2 3rd-level slots): *arms of Hadar, dispel magic, hold person, hunger of Hadar, invisibility, spider climb*

Turn Resistance. The deathlock has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Deathly Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage.

Deathlock Wight

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with Mage Armor)

Hit Points 37 (5d8 + 15)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Innate Spellcasting. The wight's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic, disguise self, mage armor*

1/day each: *fear, hold person, misty step*

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

Actions

Multiattack. The wight attacks twice with Grave Bolt.

Grave Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) necrotic damage.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

Flameskull

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40 (9d4 + 18)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Arcana +5, Perception +2

Damage Resistances Lightning, Necrotic, Piercing

Damage Immunities Cold, Fire, Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned, Prone

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Illumination. The flameskull sheds either dim light in a 15-foot radius, or bright light in a 15-foot radius and dim light for an addition 15 feet. It can switch between the options as an action.

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

Rejuvenation. If the flameskull is destroyed, it regains all its hit points in 1 hour unless holy water is sprinkled on its remains or a dispel magic or remove curse spell is cast on them.

Spellcasting. The flameskull is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It requires no somatic or material components to cast its spells. The flameskull has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrip (at will): *mage hand*

1st level (3 slots): *magic missile, shield*

2nd level (2 slots): *blur, flaming sphere*

3rd level (1 slot): *fireball*

Actions

Multiattack. The flameskull uses Fire Ray twice.

Fire Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack.* +5 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) fire damage.

Gauth

Medium aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 0 ft., fly 20 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws INT +5, WIS +5, CHA +5

Skills Perception +5

Condition Immunities Prone

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., Passive Perception 15

Languages Deep Speech, Undercommon

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Stunning Gaze. When a creature that can see the gauth's central eye starts its turn within 30 feet of the gauth, the gauth can force it to make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw if the gauth isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. A creature that fails the save is stunned until the start of its next turn.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes at the start of its turn to avoid the saving throw. If the creature does so, it can't see the gauth until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the gauth in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

Death Throes. When the gauth dies, the magical energy within it explodes, and each creature within 10 feet of it must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 13 (3d8) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) piercing damage.

Eye Rays. The gauth shoots three of the following magical eye rays at random (reroll duplicates), choosing one to three targets it can see within 120 feet of it:

1. *Devour Magic Ray.* The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or have one of its magic items lose all magical properties until the start of the gauth's next turn. If the object is a charged item, it also loses 1d4 charges. Determine the affected item randomly, ignoring single-use items such as potions and scrolls.

2. *Enervation Ray.* The targeted creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

3. *Pushing Ray.* The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 15 feet directly away from the gauth and have its speed halved until the start of the gauth's next turn.

4. *Fire Ray.* The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 22 (4d10) fire damage.

5. *Paralyzing Ray.* The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

6. *Sleep Ray.* The targeted creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or fall asleep and remain unconscious for 1 minute. The target awakens if it takes damage or another creature takes an action to wake it. This ray has no effect on constructs and undead.

Ghast

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances Necrotic

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the ghast must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the ghast's Stench for 24 hours.

Turning Defiance. The ghast and any ghouls within 30 feet of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Ice Mephit

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 (+0)	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.

Poltergeist

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Damage Immunities Necrotic, Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10

Languages Understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The poltergeist can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

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

Invisibility. The poltergeist is invisible.

Actions

Forceful Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) force damage.

Telekinetic Thrust. The poltergeist targets a creature or unattended object within 30 feet of it. A creature must be Medium or smaller to be affected by this magic, and an object can weigh up to 150 pounds.

If the target is a creature, the poltergeist makes a Charisma check contested by the target's Strength check. If the poltergeist wins the contest, the poltergeist hurls the target up to 30 feet in any direction, including upward. If the target then comes into contact with a hard surface or heavy object, the target takes 1d6 damage per 10 feet moved.

If the target is an object that isn't being worn or carried, the poltergeist hurls it up to 30 feet in any direction. The

poltergeist can use the object as a ranged weapon, attacking one creature along the object's path (+4 to hit) and dealing 5 (2d4) bludgeoning damage on a hit.

Snow Golem

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire

Damage Immunities Cold, Poison; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned

Senses Blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), Passive Perception 8

Languages --

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Cold Absorption. Whenever the golem is subjected to cold damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the cold damage dealt.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Melt. While in an area of extreme heat, the golem loses 1d6 hit points at the start of each of its turns.

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

Actions

Multiattack. The golem makes three melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) cold damage.

Snowball. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) cold damage.

Tomb Tapper

Huge construct, lawful neutral

Armor Class 17 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 207 (18d12 + 90)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	10 (+0)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +6

Damage Resistances Lightning

Damage Immunities Cold, Fire

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened

Senses Blindsight 240 ft. (blind beyond this radius),
Passive Perception 16

Languages understands Common and Undercommon
but doesn't speak, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Petrified Death. A tomb tapper reduced to 0 hit points turns into a lifeless stone statue. Anything it's wearing or carrying is not transformed.

Sense Magic. The tomb tapper senses magic within 30 feet of it and can use an action to pinpoint the location of any creature, object, or area in that range that bears magic. This sense penetrates barriers but is blocked by a thin sheet of lead.

Tunneler. The tomb tapper can burrow through solid rock at half its burrowing speed and leaves a 10-foot-wide, 20-foot-tall tunnel in its wake.

Unusual Nature. The tomb tapper doesn't require air or sleep.

Actions

Multiattack. The tomb tapper makes two melee attacks with its sledgehammer or with its claws. If it hits the same creature with both claws, it can pull that creature within 5 feet of its mouth and make a bite attack against it.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d10 + 6) slashing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Sledgehammer. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 15 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:*

27 (6d6 + 6) bludgeoning or force damage (tomb tapper's choice). If thrown, the hammer returns to the tomb tapper at the end of its turn, landing at the tomb tapper's feet if it doesn't have a hand free to catch the weapon.

Ulitharid

Large aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (Breastplate)

Hit Points 127 (17d10 + 34)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	19 (+4)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws INT +9, WIS +8, CHA +9

Skills Arcana +9, Insight +8, Perception +8, Stealth +5

Senses Darkvision 120 ft., Passive Perception 18

Languages Deep Speech, Telepathy 2 miles,
Undercommon

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Creature Sense. The ulitharid is aware of the presence of creatures within 2 miles of it that have an Intelligence score of 4 or higher. It knows the distance and direction to each creature, as well as each creature's Intelligence score, but can't sense anything else about it. A creature protected by a *mind blank* spell, a *nondetection* spell, or similar magic can't be perceived in this manner.

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

Psionic Hub. If an elder brain establishes a psychic link with the ulitharid, the elder brain can form a psychic link with any other creature the ulitharid can detect using its Creature Sense. Any such link ends if the creature falls outside the telepathy ranges of both the ulitharid and the elder brain. The ulitharid can maintain its psychic link with the elder brain regardless of the distance between them, so long as they are both on the same plane of existence. If the ulitharid is more than 5 miles away from the elder brain, it can end the psychic link at any time (no action required).

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The ulitharid's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *detect thoughts*, *levitate*

1/day each: *confusion*, *dominate monster*, *eyebite*,
feblemind, *mass suggestion*, *plane shift (self only)*,
project image, *scrying*, *telekinesis*

Actions

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 27 (4d10 + 5) psychic damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 14) and must succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or be stunned until this grapple ends.

Extract Brain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one incapacitated humanoid grappled by the ulitharid. *Hit:* 55 (10d10) piercing damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the ulitharid kills the target by extracting and devouring its brain.

Mind Blast (Recharge 5–6). The ulitharid magically emits psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw or take 31 (4d12 + 5) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Vampiric Mist

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws WIS +3

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold, Lightning, Necrotic, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained

Senses Passive Perception 11

Languages --

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Life Sense. The mist can sense the location of any creature within 60 feet of it, unless that creature's type is construct or undead.

Forbiddance. The mist can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

Misty Form. The mist can occupy another creature's space and vice versa. In addition, if air can pass through a space, the mist can pass through it without squeezing. Each foot of movement in water costs it 2 extra feet, rather than 1 extra foot. The mist can't manipulate objects in any way that requires fingers or manual dexterity.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The mist takes 10 radiant damage whenever it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, the mist has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Actions

Life Drain. The mist touches one creature in its space. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving

throw (undead and constructs automatically succeed), or it takes 10 (2d6 + 3) necrotic damage, the mist regains 10 hit points, and the target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to 0.

Zombie

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws WIS +0

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Appendix A - Encounters

Encounter: A Hole in the Lake

By Martine Brandt Lassen

Estimated duration: 20 minutes

Area Information

The party is arriving upon a lake, 200 feet in diameter. It is part of a river, and has not frozen solid, however there are thin pieces of ice floating occasionally.

Edge: Roll a d6, 1-2 the edge is frozen, 3-4 the edge is soft snow. A roll of 5-6: the edge is secure and stable. When stepping on the edge, a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal which one it is. The frozen edge is slippery and falling prone will make the character fall into the water. The soft edge is treacherous and stepping here will make the character fall through directly. Using a stick will reveal each area correctly.

More information: To read more about lakes, see *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*, *Bremen*, *Unsafe waters*.

Creature Information

THARKOR (a male neutral good **veteran** dwarf) is sitting in a rowboat, waving his arms, hollering for help, almost tipping the boat over in the process. He has been out on the lake, in the cold, for almost a whole day (this amount of time can be changed to reflect time passing through the rest of the adventure) and have three levels of exhaustion (less/more as time goes by).

How Did He End Up Here? While looking for recipes, Tharkor rented a boat and had it brought here, as he heard there was a very rare fish in this lake, the mythical Axebill, to see if it would taste any good. He has not witnessed any jumping fish when sitting on the lake. The locals that brought him here left shortly after and have been scheduled to pick up the boat in a tenday.

When Saved. If Tharkor is saved he will need warmth around a campfire, where he wants to hear the character's favorite recipes (these can be entered by sending the following information to tharkor.oar@gmail.com, please include the

recipe with measurements, and the story of how the character met Tharkor and a description of the character – disclaimer: Tharkor might adjust the recipe and description or might not be able to publish it at all). Afterwards Tharkor will turn back to Termalaine.

Encounter Information

Boat. The boat is moving about in the middle of the lake, 80-100 feet out. The oars have fallen into the water and been taken down the river. The boat is moving slowly down the river too, but not fast enough to affect the encounter.

Saving Tharkor. Allow the characters to be creative when saving Tharkor and make checks when needed. An example is throwing a grappling hook would need a Strength (Athletics) check with DC 20, and two ropes tied together. Pulling the boat back to shore would require navigating the ice flakes.

The Myth of the Axebill

The axebill was said to be a fish living far north. Its mouth was shaped as an axe, to allow them to cut through the ice and jump up from the water to collect insects. In reality, this was a story a local fisherman told a girl to impress her, but the story stuck and have attracted tourists ever since.

Dramatis Personae

Tharkor. A male dwarf and possibly the worst chef possible. Tharkor is also present in *CCC-ARCON01-01 Forest Song* and *CCC-CONMAR01-02 Finding Linric*.

- **What They Want:** To improve his cooking skills and open a restaurant with food from all over Faerun.
- **A chef at heart:** Tharkor puts in his best effort at cooking, though the food does not reflect this.

Rules compendium

Rowboat Statistics

A rowboat has a speed of 1½ miles per hour and can hold up to four Medium creatures and their gear. An undamaged rowboat has AC 11 and 50 hit points. A rowboat reduced to 0 hit points in the water sinks over the course of 1d4 rounds.

Unsafe Waters

The lake is covered in ice floes, which make travel dangerous. As the characters row out from Bremen, their boats must steer around 1d4 + 1 ice floes. Any character who tries to steer a boat around an ice floe must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom check, adding their proficiency bonus to the roll if they're proficient with water vehicles. On a failed check, the boat hits the ice floe and takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

Slippery Ice

Slippery ice is difficult terrain. When a creature moves onto slippery ice for the first time on a

turn, it must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone.

Thin Ice

Thin ice has a weight tolerance of 3d10 × 10 pounds per 10-foot-square area. Whenever the total weight on an area of thin ice exceeds its tolerance, the ice in that area breaks. All creatures on broken ice fall through.

Frigid Water

A creature can be immersed in frigid water for a number of minutes equal to its Constitution score before suffering any ill effects. Each additional minute spent in frigid water requires the creature to succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures that are naturally adapted to living in ice-cold water.

Encounter: Knock, Knock

By Martine Brandt Lassen

Estimated duration: 10-20 minutes

The characters see a purple glow behind a pile of snow. Turning the corner, they find a 4-foot-tall stone door, which is the source of the glow. The edge is 4 inches thick and inscribed with runes. Walking around the door will reveal that the back is blank and featureless. On the upper part there is a text in Sylvan above the picture of the smiling face of a pointy-eared female with a bird's nest hat (see handout in Appendix B).

In the middle of the stone panel there is a stone panel with 4x4 square windows, most have circles in them, some have crosses. Each column and row have been labeled. On the ground, there are eight round, flat rocks. The rocks can only be placed in the windows with circles, not crosses.

Solution. The numbers on the rows and columns denote how many rocks belong within.

Finally, the face needs to be pushed. There are several correct combinations.

Correct response. If the rocks are placed correctly and the face is pushed, the characters hear distant cheering and the door swings open. Behind it is a small 5-foot extra-dimensional chamber with a pedestal. On top there is a piece of blank parchment. The character who carries the parchment will be able to cast *faerie fire* (DC 12) at will until their next short or long rest or the end of the adventure.

Incorrect response. If the rocks are placed incorrectly and the face is pushed, the characters will hear a giggle and the one pushing will be outlined by a purple glow, as if affected by *faerie fire* until they take a short or a long rest.

Background. Barda and Muzzgrin are two gnomes who like to challenge each other's wits by leaving puzzle-doors in random locations. They also appear in *CCC-ARCON01-01 Forest Song*.

Encounter: Lurkers in the Deep

By Martine Brandt Lassen

Estimated duration: 20 minutes

Area Information

As the party is moving across the ice, it suddenly cracks open and they slide in along the walls. The crack then closes above, so there's no escape in that direction. They are now 300 feet below the surface.

There are two paths, east and north. The eastern path looks very circular. A DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check or a ranger with *avored enemy monstrosity* will know that it was made by a large, heated monster with a burrow speed.

The northern path looks natural. A DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check or a ranger with *avored terrain arctic* will know that there will be environmental hazards by heading this route. Trying to burrow their way out, they will trigger drops in the ice for every 30 feet dug, which each trigger a 10 feet fall and they will hit the cave on the northern path on the way.

Eastern path

This path leads straight back out, but a **REMORHAZ** is blocking the path.

What do they want: To eat the adventurers.

Adjusting the Encounter

These are suggestions for scaling the encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak** or **Weak** party: Replace the **REMORHAZ** with a **YOUNG REMORHAZ**

Northern path

The first obstacle along this route is a 15 feet wide crack, the second obstacle is a 19 feet high jump to relocate the path.

When the characters are 100 feet from the surface, 5 **ICE MEPHITS** are hiding in a small cave like structure.

What do they know/want: The **ICE MEPHITS** are happy and content living in their little cave, and do not want to be disturbed. They remain hidden until the characters are close, then attack

by surprise to chase them. They will leave the characters alone if they run out of the tunnel. They know a **REMORHAZ** has made a tunnel to the east and keep their distance.

Adjusting the Encounter

These are suggestions for scaling the encounter. These are not cumulative.

- Very weak party: use 2 **ICE MEPHITS**
- weak party: use 3 **ICE MEPHITS**
- strong party: use 7 **ICE MEPHITS**
- very strong party: use 10 **ICE MEPHITS**

Rules compendium

Long Jump. When you make a long jump, you cover a number of feet up to your Strength score if you move at least 10 feet on foot immediately before the jump. When you make a standing long jump, you can leap only half that distance. Either way, each foot you clear on the jump costs a foot of movement.

This rule assumes that the height of your jump does not matter, such as a jump across a stream or chasm. At your DM's option, you must succeed on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to clear a low obstacle (no taller than a quarter of the jump's distance), such as a hedge or low wall. Otherwise, you hit it.

When you land in Difficult Terrain, you must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to land on your feet. Otherwise, you land prone.

High Jump. When you make a high jump, you leap into the air a number of feet equal to 3 + your Strength modifier (minimum of 0 feet) if you move at least 10 feet on foot immediately before the jump. When you make a standing high jump, you can jump only half that distance. Either way, each foot you clear on the jump costs a foot of movement. In some circumstances, your DM might allow you to make a Strength (Athletics) check to jump higher than you normally can.

You can extend your arms half your height above yourself during the jump. Thus, you can reach above you a distance equal to the height of the jump plus 1½ times your height.

Encounter: Ice Jumping

By Casper Akto Kanstrup

Estimated duration: 20 minutes

A river that transports large chunks of iceberg down to the sea, stands between the adventurers and the Kobold mine. After a long travel, the adventurers have found a potential crossing point.

This crossing point features 3 long narrow islands with 10-15 feet between them, which they should be able to cross. Both sides of the river show no other signs of crossing points as far as the eye can see. A few dead trees, some fallen others holding out in the wind, line the riverbank.

The party is standing in front of the only feasible crossing point of the river, which features 3 long narrow islands. They should be able to cross the river here. Normally this would not be a big problem to cross, but the harsh cold water and the ice chunks makes this a harder than usual assignment. This prompts the characters to make skill checks to succeed.

For this encounter, use the map in Appendix C named 'Ice Jumping'.

Note to the DM

Allow the players to use different skills and smart gameplay to gain advantage on rolls or lower DC's as you see fit.

An example could be a player having managed to get to the North Main Land, using a log (18 feet) as a bridge to the third island.

Jumping. To jump across, in addition to having the strength check to do this, you are also required to succeed on a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check or fall in the water.

Swimming. Swimming across to the small islands is possible, but difficult. To successfully swim across a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check is required. Now they are wet, see **Falling in the Water**.

Falling in the Water. If a character falls in the water, they take 2d6 bludgeoning damage from hitting the drifting ice, also their clothes get drenched in cold water. Allow the player to decide what side to climb up on afterwards.

Cold clothes. A character with cold clothes needs to spend an hour in a sheltered area, drying their clothes by a campfire or similar heat source. While doing this, they can't benefit from a short rest. If a character decides to walk on in their cold, wet clothes, they take 1d6 cold damage for every hour they spend in these clothes, because of hypothermia.

Important distances

- South Main Land to first Island: 10 Feet
- First island to Second: 12 Feet
- Second Island to Third: 14 Feet
- Third Island to North Main Land: 15 Feet

Encounter: Snow and Ice

By Casper Akto Kanstrup

Estimated duration: 20 minutes

Traveling through the snow gets rather tedious and the constant white view offers little in terms of variety, so the emergence of a small mountainside is a nice change of pace. As the adventurers approach, they suddenly hear a loud manic laughter and a flaming skull bursts out of a cave in the mountainside.

The **FLAMESKULL** and its two **ICE MEPHIT** allies have been bound to this area to guard a treasure chest in the cave, containing an important relic. Therefore, they move to attack anyone getting within 50 ft. of the cave and will keep attacking until the intruders are at least 100 ft. away from the cave.

For this encounter, use the map in Appendix C named 'Snow and ice'.

Adjusting the encounter

These are suggesting to scaling the encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove the 2 **ICE MEPHITS**
- **Weak:** Remove 1 **ICE MEPHIT**
- **Strong:** Add 1 **ICE MEPHIT**
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 **ICE MEPHITS**

The Flameskull: As the **FLAMESKULL** have been guarding this area for many years it knows that often, its mere presence is enough to scare people away and therefore it will hold off using its *fireball* spell for the first round. If the party is **weak** or **very weak**, it will hold off for the first 2 rounds, unless brought below half hp.

The Ice Mephits: The **ICE MEPHITS** knows that often the presence of the **FLAMESKULL** will scare people away and therefore wait with attacking until the second round, preferring to stay hidden in the snow until then

The Treasure chest: If the adventurers defeat the **FLAMESKULL** and its allies they are unfortunately in for a surprise, as the chest is empty except for a single note (See Appendix B-Handouts).

Encounter: Let it Snow

By Casper Akto Kanstrup

Estimated duration: 20 minutes

As the party keeps traveling, the wind suddenly picks up and it starts to snow, landing the party in a small blizzard, after traveling in these conditions for around an hour they come to a canyon cliff, though it may not give peace from the constant snow, it can give shelter from the blistering cold winds.

A snow obsessed bard once roamed this area but was killed while in the process of a magic ritual. This has cursed the area and caused the snow to take form and rain snowballs on anyone trying to pass through the canyon.

Area Information

The area has the following feature:

Light. Though daytime, the absence of any sun and the constant falling snow makes it difficult to see things up ahead. Imposing disadvantage on all ranged attacks and on all Wisdom (Perception) checks relying on sight and reducing visibility to 60 ft.

Sound. The falling snow absorbs a lot of sound, so besides the adventurers themselves, not much can be heard. Though now and then what sounds like a clear bell sound can be heard. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check allows a character to discern, that it sounds like a melody.

The Canyon. The canyon is rather narrow standing only 15 feet wide, it is 300 ft. long. The sides of the canyon are extremely steep, and they are 50 ft. tall. Because of the slippery weather and the steepness of the walls, they are impossible to climb.

The Bard. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (History) check will let the character have heard rumors of a canyon where a clear bell seems to ring and recall that the death of a bard in the middle of a magical ritual is to blame.

When the adventurers enter the canyon, they have some peace from the blistering cold winds of the blizzard. As soon as they are 30 ft. in, a giant snowball hit next to them. Looking up they see multiple lumbering figures on the edge of the cliffs hurling what looks like giant snowballs at them. The players are to get through the canyon as fast as possible, while avoiding the snowballs. Let the party roll initiative. The **SNOW GOLEMS** act on Initiative count 0.

The Snow Golems. Each cliffside has 30 **SNOW GOLEMS** spread out over the area. Just like the players, the **SNOW GOLEMS** have disadvantage on ranged attacks. Even though there are multiple **SNOW GOLEMS**, only make one attack on each character. The edge of the cliffs makes it harder to hit the **SNOW GOLEMS** as it provides them with half cover

Hiding. The players can take an action to press their bodies against the cliffside, providing them with three-quarters cover for the round.

Fire. A player can ready an action to throw a fire spell at an incoming snowball, this disrupts the attack, and they are safe for the round. If a fire spell with an area of effect is used, it also saves allies in a 10 ft. radius from being attacked that round.

Music. A player who has discovered that the bell-like sound is in fact a melody, can attempt a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check, to replicate the melody. If this check succeeds the **SNOW GOLEMS** stop their attacks for a round.

Note to the DM

This is NOT intended to be a combat encounter, if the party has some way to go up the cliffs and engage the Snow Golems directly, it will become deadly very soon.

When the party gets out of the canyon, the wind picks up again, but they are safe from the Snow Golems attacks, as the curse only makes them attack people in the canyon.

Encounter: Mist-chievous

By Rasmus Møller

Estimated duration: 20 minutes

A storm swiftly approaches, and the characters are forced to find shelter until the next morning. Wolves are howling in the far distance under the moonlight and a dense ground fog moves across the land while a **VAMPIRIC MIST** deviates and finds its way into the cave.

The characters may wish to investigate the cave, before deciding whether they want to take shelter in it or not. The cave is harmless and can belong to a bear or just be a small crevice in the rocks. If the characters decide to leave the opportunity for shelter and challenge the approaching storm, they automatically take up to 2 points of Exhaustion at the DMs discretion before finding a crevice in the rocks and another opportunity for shelter.

You can begin this encounter as the first-night watch begins. Another option would be to trigger the encounter if you feel like you need to keep the adventure moving. The kobolds accompanying the party are too frightened to take part in the encounter.

Read or paraphrase the following text:

Outside the cave, you hear wolves howling in the far distance as the night approaches and the dim moonlight navigates its way into the cave. A light breeze follows, slowly leading a mysterious ground fog into the cave. You start to feel goosebumps all over the body, as you notice the fog starts to compress into a humanoid silhouette with faint red veins. It looks at you, somehow smiling before it aggressively wraps itself around (choose a character).

Special. The **VAMPIRIC MIST** sneaks up on the party. It attacks the (sleeping) character with full hit points. Every time **VAMPIRIC MIST** succeeds its action *draining blood*, it grows in

size and becomes progressively redder, and after 3 successful actions, it starts dripping blood when hit by an attack (cosmetic effect).

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are suggestions for scaling the encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak:** The **VAMPIRIC MIST** only has 15 hp and the healing from its *Life Drain* action is only 5 hp.
- **Weak:** The **VAMPIRIC MIST**'s healing from its *Life Drain* action is only 5 hp.
- **Strong:** Add one **VAMPIRIC MIST**
- **Very strong:** Add a **VAMPIRIC MIST** and give them both 40hp

General Features

The area has the following features.

Cave/Crevice. The cave is relatively clean and could easily be an active inhabitant for a bear.

Temperature. As the night approaches so do even colder temperatures. Finding shelter is essential and traveling during the night is fatal.

Light. A dim light from the moon.

Tactics

Following the surprise round, the **VAMPIRIC MIST** attacks each character once before returning to its first victim.

Note to the DM

Taking turns on characters avoid a TPK, but still makes it a deadly encounter for characters with low hit points. If a character is about to die, let a cloud obscure the moonlight forcing the Vampiric Mist to disengage/flee the scene, insinuating the creature's powers are fueled by the moon.

Development

All the characters have to survive this encounter but get the impression of they are far away from home and safety. The characters can take a long night's rest before continuing the adventure the following morning.

Encounter: A dwarf without manners

By Rasmus Møller

Estimated duration: 20 minutes

As the characters continue north-east, the landscape expands into a majestic area with snow-covered hills. Fresh footprints emerge on the snowy path as foul words are carried by the howling wind, and a dwarf without manners (**JACK FROST**) appears in the distance. Read or paraphrase the following:

It has only been an hour since you started the journey north-east, and the constant wind in your eyes and trudging through the snow has started to test your determination. The path ahead of you curves its way through the snow-covered hills as small canyons begin to form on either side.

A sudden and unexpected: 'BUGGER OFF!' echoes from the distance. Emerging on the path in front of you is a tipped-over sleigh, a small ordinary grey bag, and further away is a short humanoid dressed in deep red garments and black boots.

As you get closer you can identify the humanoid as a male dwarf, and catch a short glimpse of his mighty white beard being pulled by a glimmering entity before it disappears much to his frustration: 'SHOW YOURSELF YOUR LITTLE DEVIL! I'M GONNA BREAK YE LIKE AN ICICLE!'

While straightening his beard he notices your approach and shouts: "AND BY MORADINS BEARD, WHO ARE YOU?"

Roleplaying Jack Frost

Jack Frost (**SCOUT** statistics) is an experienced dwarf who works as a cartographer saving up money to leave Icewind Dale for good. He has a magical (miniature) sleigh and his leather armor is covered by multiple layers of deep red-colored winter cloth. His face and hands are dry because of the climate and small ice shards dangle from his white beard. He is short-tempered and pessimistic about his current life, which reflects his attitude and aggressive vocabulary.

What does he want? To complete his very last map of the area, get paid, and take all his hard-earned savings to buy passage on the ship heading south.

What is holding him back? His map has been taken, and thus his opportunity to travel south.

He tells them the following:

- He is a cartographer and has been working on a map for days
- A small creature suddenly appeared and bullied him by pulling his mighty beard and disappeared with his parchment
- Rumor has it that kobolds have been sighted on the surface in temperatures that should be too cold for creatures like them (he points them towards the gem mine)

Development

After the party gets acquainted with the dwarf, a hoarse giggle interrupts the conversation. Read or paraphrase:

"HUSH!" Jack suddenly snarls while a hoarse giggle echoes around you. With a calm gesture, he puts his index finger on his lips and slowly draws a dagger from under his cloak and points it towards (choose a character).

He suddenly turns towards (choose another character) as the air next to your shoulder starts to freeze with a light cracking sound. The air compresses into thousands of glimmering ice shards, reflecting the light and creating a small entity with a pair of wings, an elongated nose, and arms clinging on to a piece of parchment.

The hoarse giggle continues as the creature snaps its humanlike fingers and magically tears the parchment into pieces. Jack leaps through the air, but with another snap, the creature disappears right in front of him as he and the many pieces fall to the ground: "JUST LEAVE ME... GET OUT OF MY SIGHT"

If the characters pity Jack Frost and offer a total minimum of 30 gp for his travels, or successfully mends his map using *mending*, he becomes full of appreciation and apologizes for his behavior and tells them kindness is a rare gift. "Farewell adventures!" He tips over the sleigh, and with a warm "Ho-ho-ho" the sleigh magically becomes alive and sets course towards Termalaine.

Appendix B - Handouts

Handout A for Encounter: Knock Knock

*My sister dear, a riddle face
Solving circles opens case
Rows and columns neatly stacked
Waiting for the problem cracked*

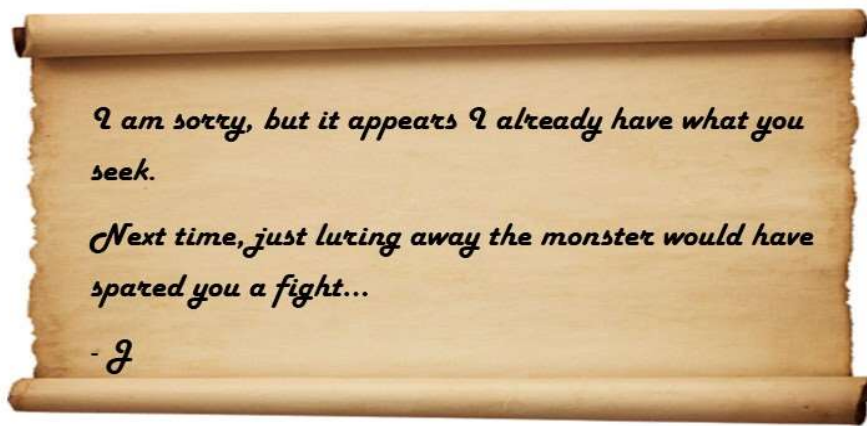


I	II	III	II	
X	O	O	O	II
O	X	O	O	II
O	O	X	O	I
O	O	O	X	III

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

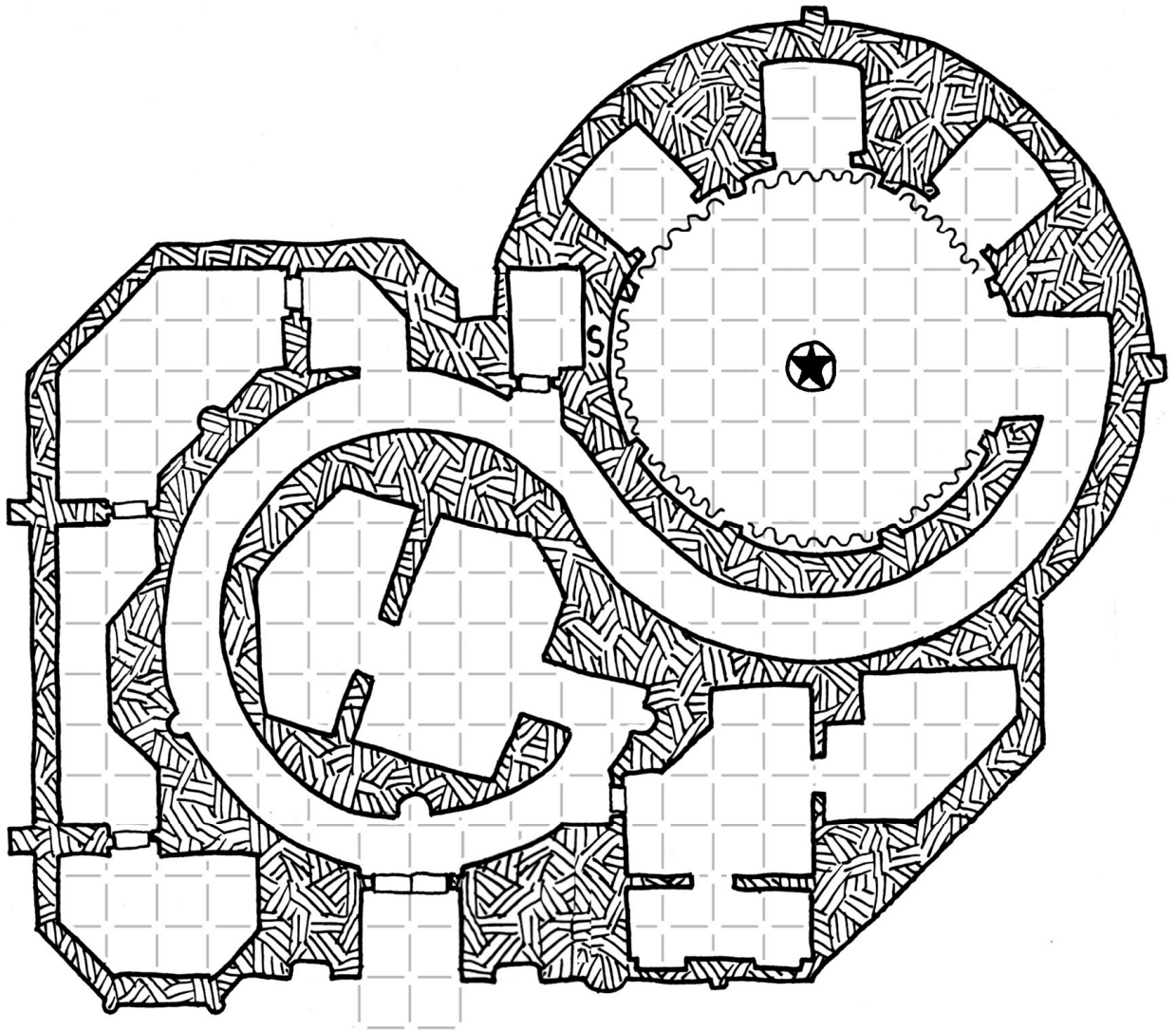
Handout B for Encounter: Snow and Ice

*I am sorry, but it appears I already have what you seek.
Next time, just luring away the monster would have spared you a fight.
- J.*

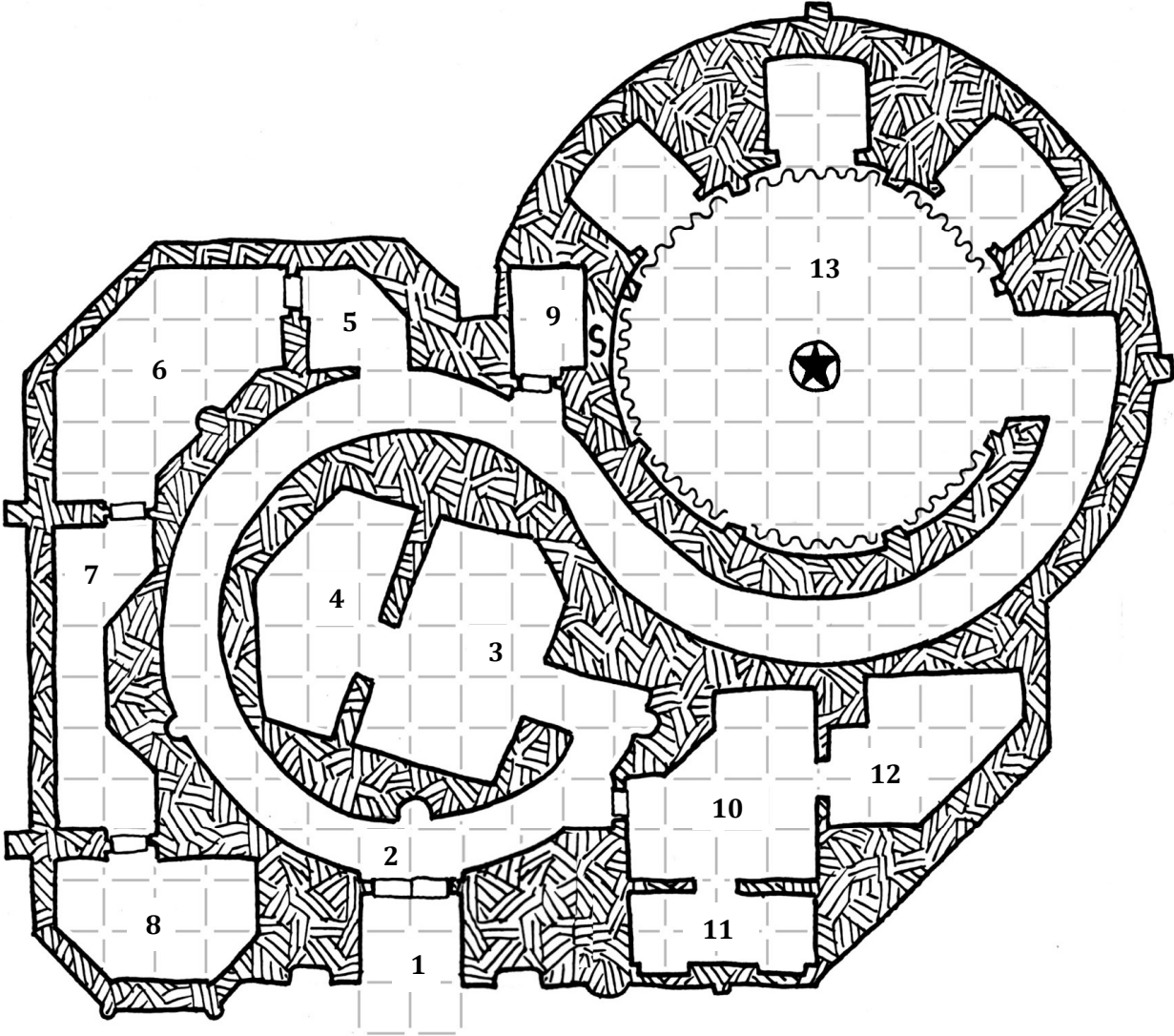


Appendix C – Maps

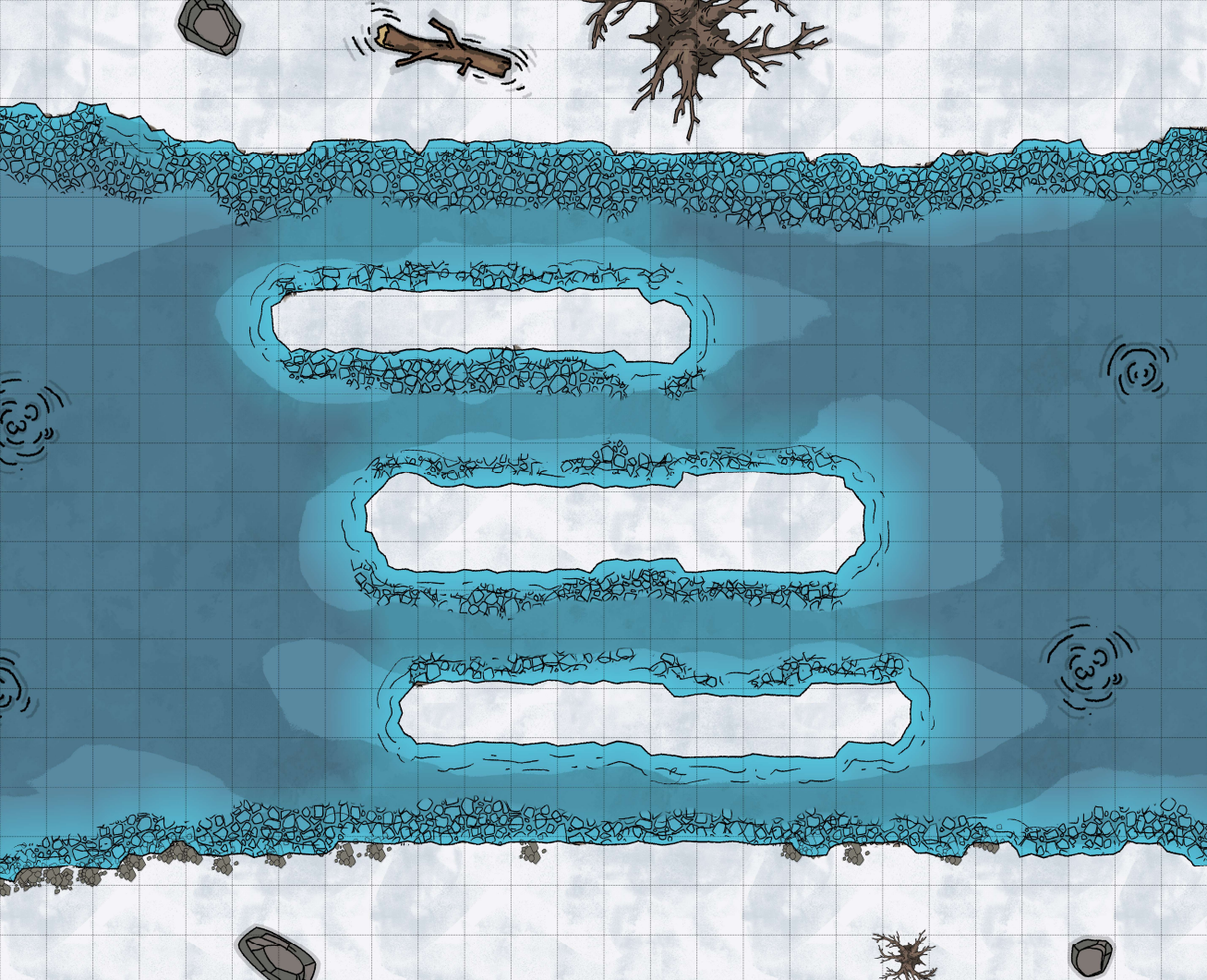
Map for The Temple of Darkness – Players version



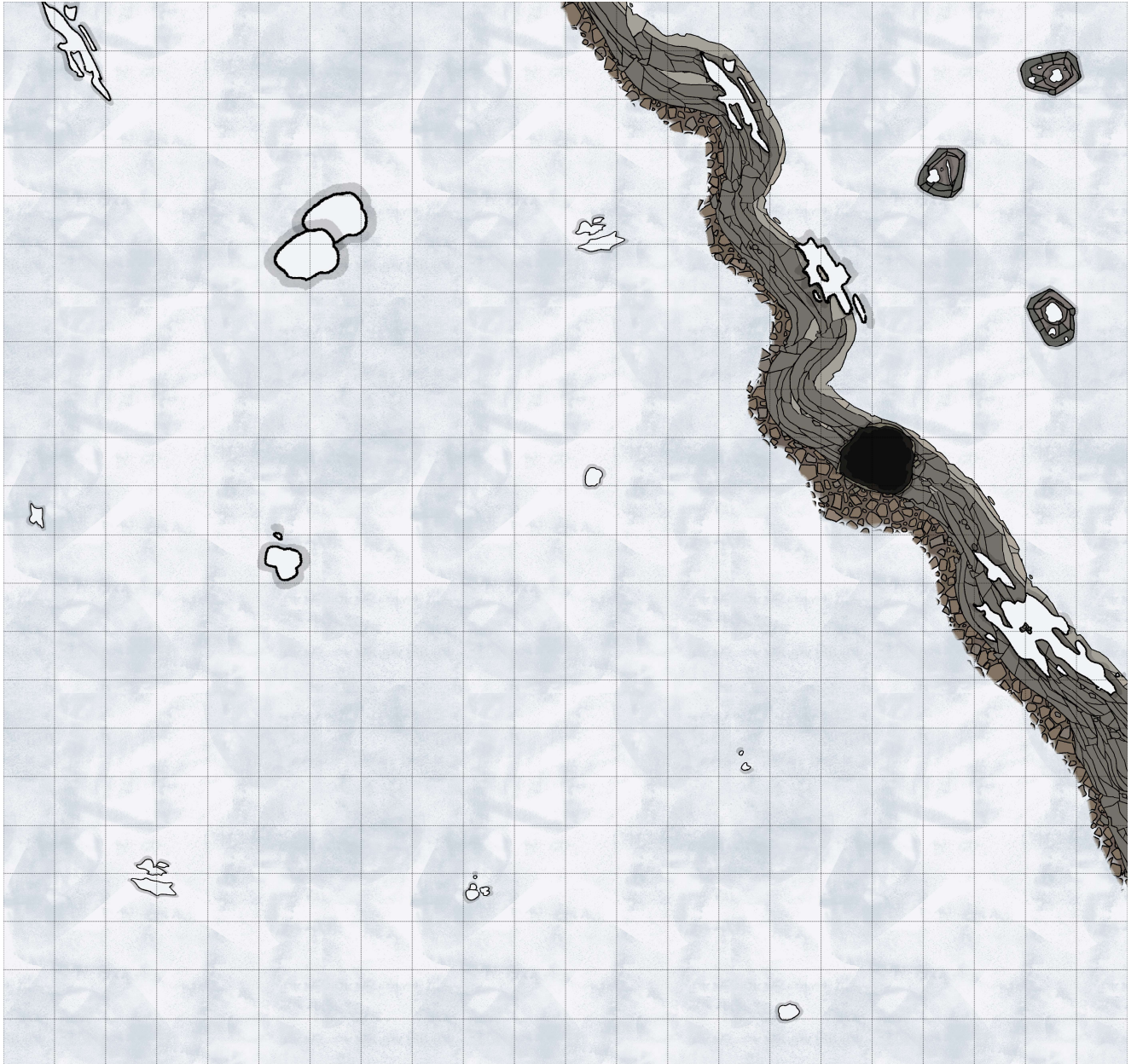
Map for The Temple of Darkness – DMs version



Map for Encounter: Ice Jumping



Map for Encounter: Snow and Ice



Appendix D: Notes from the Author

Running a D&D Adventurers League module can be extremely rewarding. From the opening scene, with the players presenting their characters, to the conclusion, coming home, back to safety and celebrating another tale told with success.

Something Sinister is a story with some complex elements. Indeed, the prologue is very straightforward, close to feeling “railroaded” and is intended to make the players feel safe in each other’s company.

From there, things get complicated. The wilderness encounters in part 1, kindly contributed by upcoming writers like myself, can be very tricky, as will the dungeon run in part 2. Finally, the escape from the mine in part 3 is also a little complicated in the mechanics, so over all make sure to read and prepare for playing the

module by reading the module from beginning to end to make sure you note down what you find tricky.

Something Sinister can be very rewarding in both setting the theme – horror, not unlike what we know from the “Alien” movie franchise – is the primary mood that needs to be catered for, particularly in part 2 but also the stress of escaping in part 3.

I am always very open towards suggestions that will make the module an easier read, so feel free to reach out to me through DMsGuild with any feedback. It will be greatly appreciated.

Enjoy the game!

Casper Kirketerp-Helenius
Author of *Something Sinister*

Appendix E: Dungeon Master Tips

To DM an adventure, you should 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 to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they can’t return to the first if outside its level range.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

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. Familiar 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 Perception score, and anything the adventures specifies as notable (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master 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 the 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 that 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 cannot, 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.

Adjusting This Adventure

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result 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