ENTER DRAKENBERG CASTLE

Ruthless kidnappings, deadly challenges, and an evil ice dragon. Pack your sword. Bring your spellbook. Pray to your gods. Are you brave enough to enter Drakenberg Castle?

RISE OF THE ICE DRAGONS ~ ADVENTURE THREE

ENTER DRAKENBERG CASTLE



Your friend Bjorn Amberclan has been kidnapped by the evil ice dragon Isdrekin Nixius!

Isdrekin wants three magical orbstones in exchange for your friend's life. But that isn't the end of his list of demands.

You have to enter Drakenberg Castle, survive the deadly challenges, confront Isdrekin, and save your friend – before it is too late.

Pack your sword. Bring your spellbook. Pray to your gods. Are you brave enough to enter Drakenberg Castle?

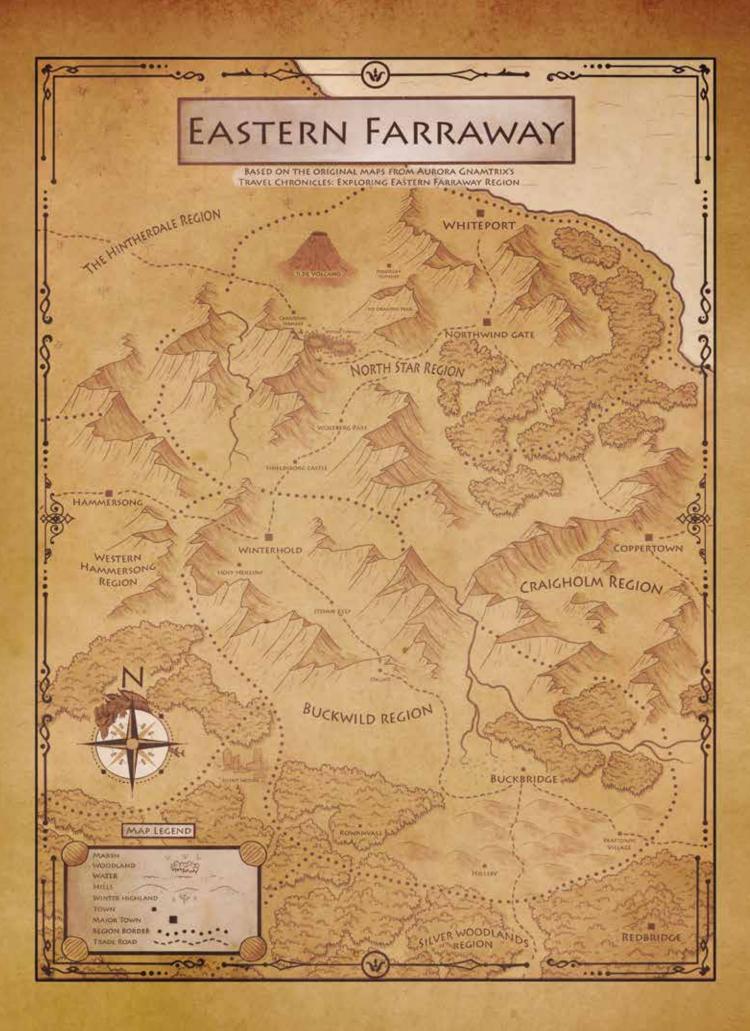




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OVERVIEW

ABOUT THIS ADVENTURE

Enter Drakenberg Castle is an adventure for the world's greatest roleplaying game (5e). It is designed for a group of three to five 9th-level characters, and can be played as a one-shot episode or as part of the *Rise of the Ice Dragons* trilogy.

This adventure can be used in any campaign that features a region with mountains or a town.

FEATURED CONTENT

- Classic adventure with three different challenges.
- ➤ New monster: Ice dragon.
- Detailed NPCs with background descriptions.
- ➤ New unique magic item: Staff of the Ice Dragon.
- ➤ Legend & Lore: Drakenberg Castle.
- Original full-colour maps and illustrations.

ADDITIONAL DOWNLOADS

Maps, VTT tokens, and handouts for the adventure can be downloaded here: http://midnight-tower.com/additional-downloads-edc/

SYNOPSIS

The characters are currently in Northwind Gate, a large town in the north famous for its extensive library. They have helped their dwarven friend and scholar Bjorn Amberclan find three legendary orbstones. However, other people with nefarious intent are interested in the orbstones, and Bjorn is kidnapped by the tyrannical ice dragon Isdrekin Nixius. Isdrekin wants to use the orbs to open a permanent portal to the Plane of Ice, summon other ice dragons, and ultimately rule Eastern Farraway and enslave everyone.

The adventure begins when the characters receive a message from Isdrekin, who wants to

trade the orbstones for Bjorn's life. The characters have to travel to Drakenberg Castle, where they encounter a group of white dragons.

When the characters arrive at the castle, they are faced with three different challenges that test their strength, agility, wit, and courage. The characters finally meet Isdrekin in the castle's courtyard and must fight him while also protecting Bjorn.

After defeating Isdrekin and saving Bjorn, the characters return to Northwind Gate, where they are honoured with a public ceremony and a banquet, held by the Lord and Lady of Northwind Gate.

HOW TO RUN THIS ADVENTURE

This is a classic fantasy adventure with three different challenges. The main quest for the characters is to survive the challenges and save their friend Bjorn. Isdrekin has created the challenges to find out how strong, nimble, wise, and courageous the characters are. Therefore, all characters will have their opportunity to shine – or to fail and face the dire consequences.

The most important part of the adventure is to have fun while trying to solve the challenges, and to save their friend from a most unpleasant fate!

ADVENTURE FLOWCHART



BEFORE THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

BACKGROUND

A group of cultists have opened a portal to another realm and summoned an ice dragon who calls himself Isdrekin Nixius. Ice dragons are the ancestral forefathers of white dragons, but they were banished from the Material Plane thousands of years ago.

Isdrekin has made his lair at the ruins of Drakenberg Castle due to its strategic location and symbolic value. It is situated near Ice Dragons Peak, the location where the ice dragons were once banished, and it is easy to defend.

With the aid of magic, Isdrekin has created a glorious ice castle of his design on the foundations of the old ruins. He has also conjured up an illusion around the castle that makes it resemble the original ruins when seen from a distance.

THE DRAGON'S SCHEME

Isdrekin collaborates with white dragons and searches relentlessly for three legendary orbstones called *The Pledge, The Promise,* and *The Pact.* He wants to use the orbstones to open a portal to the Plane of Ice and summon more ice dragons. His goal is to rule Eastern Farraway and enslave everyone. The orbstones were lost and hidden for centuries, but they have recently been rediscovered.

Isdrekin has received information that the orbstones are in the possession of the characters. He is calculating and unwilling to confront the characters directly, so he kidnaps their friend Bjorn Amberclan and plans to offer Bjorn's life in exchange for the orbstones.

IF THE CHARACTERS HAVEN'T PLAYED THE PREVIOUS ADVENTURE IN THE TRILOGY

The characters have agreed to help a dwarven scholar called Bjorn Amberclan, who is a cousin to or childhood friend of one of the characters. Bjorn studies three legendary orbstones that have recently been discovered. The orbstones have powerful magical properties and can be used to open permanent portals to different planes of existence.

However, other people with nefarious plans are searching for the legendary orbs, too. It would be catastrophic if the orbstones fell into the wrong hands.

IMPORTANT

One of the challenges at Drakenberg Castle is that the characters must face their deepest fear.

Therefore, before the adventure starts, ask each player which creatures or monsters their character dreads the most, or if their character has a phobia. Make a note of their answer, as this fear will manifest later as a ghost.

CHAPTER 1: IN NORTHWIND GATE



he characters are currently in Northwind Gate, a town situated roughly two weeks northeast of Winterhold. With a population of

around 4,000 people, Northwind Gate is famous throughout the region for its extensive library called the Seven Keys Library, which includes a huge collection of old and rare tomes.

It is also known for its local mild climate and healing water from Riversnake, a wide river that meanders through the town and originates from a nearby hot spring. See the appendix for more information about Northwind Gate.

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

The characters are staying at the inn The Wanderer's Wand. They have been helping Bjorn Amberclan retrieve three magical orbstones. However, Bjorn has left the characters a letter in which he explains that he must travel to Winterhold unexpectedly because his old mentor Edna Hellmund is gravely ill.

Along with the letter, Bjorn also left an old book that he believes could be useful to the characters. The thick tome is called Forgotten Legend and Lore in the North Star Region (fourth edition) by Shyael Amarallis, and contains information about the legends, lore, and history about the region around Northwind Gate.

THE KIDNAPPING

What the characters don't know is that Bjorn was tricked into leaving town. The letter Bjorn received was forged and authored by the ice dragon Isdrekin Nixius, who covets the legendary orbs for his own purposes. Isdrekin has kidnapped Bjorn and brought him to Drakenberg Castle, where he now is held prisoner.

AN UNEXPECTED LETTER

When the characters gather for breakfast in the common room, the half-elven innkeeper Vadena Ljung greets them.

"I hope you had a good sleep?" Vadena asks and tilts her head to one side. She often enquires about her guests' well-being, and this morning is no exception. "Are you hungry? Breakfast will be ready in a moment."

Vadena's forehead creases for a second. "Oh, I nearly forgot. Someone left you a letter this morning."

She fetches a sealed envelope from a pigeonhole cabinet carved with climbing vines, and gives it to the characters.

The letter is penned in beautiful, old-fashioned longhand on thick expensive parchment.

To my small but most bothersome friends. Allow me to begin this letter by congratulating you on acquiring the three legendary orbstones known as The Pledge, The Promise, and The Pact. Where many others have failed, you have prevailed. I must say that I am a little bit impressed, and that is a rare thing indeed.

Unfortunately, I too am in need of the orbstones. You seem to be a loyal group of adventurers, and I suspect that no amount of coin will convince you to part with the orbstones. Therefore, I regret to inform you that I have kidnapped your dwarven comrade Bjorn.

Deliver the orbstones to me at Drakenberg Castle before the clock strikes midnight, and I shall return your friend to you unharmed. I will also reward you graciously for the inconvenience.

I apologise for succumbing to methods so crude as kidnapping. But I assure you that your friend is more or less unhurt. For now.

Yours truly, Isdrekin Nixius Lord of Drakenberg Castle Deliver the s Drakenberg strikes midn friend to ye reward you the incence To my small but most bethersome friends, Allow me to begin this letter by congratulating you on acquiring the three legendary orbstones known as the Pledge, the Promise, and the Pact. Where many others have failed, you have prevailed. I must say that I am a little bit impressed, and that is a rare thing indeed.

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Unfortunately, I too am in need of the orbstones. You seem to be a loyal group of adventurers, and I suspect that no amount of eain will convince you to part with the orbstones.

Yours **G**sdre Lord

Therefore, I regret to inform you that I have kidnapped your dwarven comrade Bjorn.

If the characters ask the innkeeper who delivered the letter, she is hesitant to answer at first, but a few kind words win her over.

Vadena explains that she never saw the person who delivered the letter, but her wife, Mirrelion, mentioned that she had noticed a tall man in a hooded cloak earlier this morning before she went out to hunt.

If the character asks Vadena if she can give them any more information, she suddenly remembers Mirrelion had mentioned something odd: Even though the brisk morning was uncommonly cold and the hooded stranger wasn't wearing proper outdoor clothing, he seemed strangely untroubled by the cold weather.

Vadena doesn't know anything about Drakenberg Castle except that there is a ruin with a similar name outside Northwind Gate.

READING IS REWARDING

If any one of the characters reads (or has read) the book Forgotten Legend and Lore in the North Star Region that Bjorn left them, they recognise the name and can easily learn that Drakenberg Castle is located near Ice Dragons Peak, the highest point on a mountain ridge that stretches south from Frostcliff Outpost. According to ancient myth, it was there that the ice dragons were banished from the Material Plane several thousand years ago.

The characters also find information about the mighty ice dragons in the book. They are described as clever, strong in magic, and fearsome in battle. However, the text mentions that ice dragons have one weakness: Although their armour is as hard as ice and can withstand both blades and magical attacks, they are susceptible to bludgeoning weapons and magical force damage.

CHAPTER 2: DRAGONS IN THE SKY



he journey to Drakenberg Castle is bitterly cold. There is no proper road, so the characters must trudge through knee-high snow while leaning into the

wind. Snow falls from heavy clouds every step of the way. If the characters have access to snowshoes or skis, the journey is easier but still slow.

ARRIVING AT THE CASTLE

After a long, hard trek, the characters arrive at Drakenberg Castle. When they come closer to the ruins, they experience a brief, tingling sensation as Isdrekin's illusion of the old ruins disappears, and they behold the splendour of the dragon's recreated castle.

The sun has set and night has fallen when you reach the breathtaking sight of Drakenberg Castle.

Its foundations are made of grey rock, but from them rises an enormous castle in carved ice. Snow swirls and dances around white towers and elegant spires that glitter faintly with magical illumination. In the distance beyond the castle, Ice Dragons Peak looms, its silhouette perfectly resembling that of a dragon.

Suddenly, something dark flashes past high above you. As you squint and look up through the falling snow, you see several large shadows in the sky, circling the area.

The shadows are one **white dragon wyrmling**, three **young white dragons**, and two **adult white dragons** that are under Isdrekin's command. They have been ordered to watch out for the characters but not harm them.

SNEAKING PAST

Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check can reach the gates to Drakenberg Castle unnoticed by the dragons. Due to the snowy conditions, the area is lightly obscured.

If the dragons spot the characters, they fly lower and roar menacingly while feigning attacks. The **white dragon wyrmling** can't suppress her hunting instincts and makes a cold breath attack against the characters before she is viciously wing-slapped by one of the older dragons in reprisal for her disobedience.

THE ICE DRAGON WATCHES

The dragons' behaviour notifies Isdrekin that the characters are approaching the castle.

If the characters manage to sneak past the white dragons, Isdrekin becomes aware of them as soon as they reach the entrance to the castle. He uses enchanted mirror-like ice blocks to spy on the characters, and he can also use the ice to display an illusionary image of himself to address the characters directly.

THE RUINS OF DRAKENBERG CASTLE

CHAPTER 3: A FIRST MEETING



staircase leads up to the twenty-foottall castle gates. Both the stairs and the doors are made of thick ice. The gates open at the slightest touch. All surfaces in the castle are immune to damage

and magical effects.

Beyond the gates is a vast room made entirely of ice, almost 100 feet across and with a ceiling 30 feet overhead. The room has no windows or other doors. Ambient blue-tinted light fills the chilly air. The doors close behind the party and the wail of the blizzard outside dwindles to a whisper.

A MASTER'S MIRAGE

An image of a tall man appears inside the mirror-like ice wall at the far end of the room.

He is bald, dressed in a long blood-red robe, and holds a pale staff with a carved dragon head. He is handsome and graceful, but his flawless face makes him look more like an ideal version of a human being than a real one.

"Greetings, guests. My name is Isdrekin Nixius, and I welcome you to Drakenberg Castle." He speaks in a melodic voice with no trace of an accent. "I have to say that I am impressed by your commitment to save your bearded friend. Loyalty is such a rare quality these days."

Isdrekin pauses for a moment.

"I have prepared three challenges that you must pass before you can join me and your friend. If you survive them and give me the orbstones, I have a proposal for you: I am always searching for faithful servants who can aid me in my quest to conquer and enslave Eastern Farraway, together with the rest of my kin. The challenges will allow me to evaluate if you are worthy to serve me."

ISDREKIN NIXIUS

"My name is Isdrekin Nixius, and I welcome you to Drakenberg Castle."

ISDREKIN NIXIUS

Isdrekin Nixius is a male **young ice dragon** (LE). In his humanoid shape, he is tall, graceful, and completely bald. His features are handsome, but his face is strangely flawless. He wears a long blood-red robe and carries a pale staff with a carved dragon head. In his draconic shape, Isdrekin is a large majestic dragon with powerful wings, icicle-like teeth, and translucent glittering scales.

Isdrekin is cunning and strategic but has a weakness for flattery. He also has a streak of arrogance and believes that he – and all ice dragons – are vastly superior to all other species.

Trait: I am always polite, refined, and wellspoken, regardless of the circumstances.

Ideal: Dominance. As an ice dragon, I am a supreme being. All shall serve me or be destroyed. (Evil)

Bond: My kin and their future matter more than anything else. I aim to lead them as we conquer Eastern Farraway and the lands beyond.

Flaw: I am overly proud and unable to see why my actions are evil.

Isdrekin steps aside and reveals Bjorn Amberclan, gagged and hanging from a rope tied around his wrists, above a pit filled with long vicious-looking spikes of ice. Part of his face is covered in blood and his clothes are torn. He looks at the characters with wide eyes filled with fear.

Bjorn is suspended by a rope that runs through a hook in the wall and down to the ground, where it is tied off around an ice block. A thick wax candle near the knot is steadily burning through the rope.

"If I were you, I would hurry," Isdrekin says and studies Bjorn the way someone looks at an insignificant insect. "I believe your friend has an hour or less left to live unless you come to his rescue. Godspeed, and best of luck."

With those words, the image of Isdrekin disappears.

Special: If any of the characters are dragonborn, or sorcerers with draconic bloodlines, they hear Isdrekin say the following telepathically:

Why do you surround yourself with these lowborn weaklings, hmm? I can tell that you have potential far beyond theirs. Leave them and join me. Let me help you achieve greatness beyond your wildest dreams.



DRAGONCHESS

The moment after Isdrekin vanishes, an elegant Dragonchess board in pure crystal on a round ornate table sculpted from ice appears in the middle of the floor.

Dragonchess is a complicated three-dimensional chess game with 15 different types of pieces. It is commonly played by the upper class, but it is also popular among military commanders and scholars. Each player has 42 pieces that are spread out over three levels.

THE FIRST MOVE IS YOURS

One character in the party can make an Intelligence check to figure out the best move in the game. Other characters can assist, which gives the player advantage on the check. A character who is proficient with the Dragonchess gaming set can add their proficiency bonus to the check.

Find the outcome of the check on the table below.

DRAGONCHESS RESULTS

5 or less	Failure: You lose a dragon
6 to 10	Failure: You lose a hero, unicorn, or mage
11 to 15	Failure: You lose a warrior
16 to 20	Success: You take one of the opponent's warriors
21 to 25	Success: You take one of the opponent's heroes, thieves, or unicorns
26 or more	Success: You take the opponent's dragon, or a similar valuable piece

The game will be played three more times as the characters take on Isdrekin's challenges. Each game grants the characters a point of success or a point of failure. The DM should keep track of how many points the characters accumulate, as this score affects Isdrekin's attitude to the characters towards the end of the adventure.

LIGHTS OUT

When the characters have made their move, the table and the Dragonchess board vanish. The room then turns completely dark for a moment. Even darkvision and magical sources of light are suppressed.

CHAPTER 4: THE FIRST CHALLENGE



hen the light returns a few seconds later, the characters find themselves standing on a small patch of soggy grass in the middle of a swamp inside a large cave.

The swamp fills the entire cave, which is roughly 50 feet in diameter and illuminated by an ambient dusk-like glow. Around the grassy patch, murky water flows sluggishly between crooked malformed trees and clusters of reeds.

Thick, sticky spiderwebs are stretched between the trees and fill the cave like a glistening tangle. Squelching noises come from the murky water and mingle with the croaks from hidden amphibians.

The hazy air is heavy to breathe, and the smell of decaying vegetation is highly unpleasant. There are no exits from the cave.

WORLDS WITHIN A WORLD

The characters are still present in the room they first entered, but they are caught up in an eerily lifelike illusion. As far as the characters can tell, the environment, creatures, and threats present in the challenges are undoubtedly real. The characters also take damage and suffer other effects as normal.

Any character who tries to move beyond the cave wall and the boundaries of the other challenges find that this is impossible. The only way to leave the illusion is through the spell *wish* or through the magical double doors that appear when the challenges have been overcome.



A cave filled with a swamp and sticky spiderwebs.

THEY WATCH FROM ABOVE

Eight brown **giant spiders** sit in the middle of their webs among the crooked trees throughout the swamp. The hairy spiders are the size of horses and have vivid red markings on their backs. They occasionally shift and move around, but they don't appear to have noticed the characters.

While the characters are taking in the scene, a pair of tall double doors in ice materialise 30 feet away. The doors hover like a mirage above the swamp. A complex symbol that glows aquamarine appears in front of the characters and pulsates slowly. Seconds later, a similar symbol appears in front of the tall doors. It is clear to the characters that they need to move through the swamp and reach the double doors on the other side of the cave to complete the first challenge.

A TRIAL OF AGILITY

To reach the doors, the characters must navigate through the spiderwebs on foot (or move through them by other means) without touching the strands. If they fail, they must fight the spiders.

Moving through the spiderwebs without alerting the spiders requires each character to succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) or (Acrobatics) check. Because of the boggy ground and sticky webs, the cave counts as difficult terrain. On a successful check, the character manages to slip through the webs and move a distance up to their normal movement speed before they must make a new skill check.

On a failed check, the character manages to move a distance equal to half of their normal movement speed before they accidentally disturb a spiderweb. Roll 1d4 to see how many spiders that notice the disturbance. Alerted spiders immediately climb down from their trees and attack the character who interfered with the spiderweb.

If any other members of the party want to join the combat, the dense spiderwebs mean a character must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) or (Acrobatics) check each round to use melee attacks, ranged attacks, or cast spells with somatic components. They may also need to succeed on additional skill checks if they want to move to the character engaged in combat. Each failed check attracts the attention of one more spider that will join the fight.

Once the combat is over, the character who failed their check can make a new check to continue onward.

EXIT

When all characters are standing inside the glowing symbol on the other side of the swamp, the ice doors open slowly before them.

CHAPTER 5: THE SECOND CHALLENGE



he characters walk into a room with walls, floor, and ceiling made of ice. It is identical to the first room that they entered when they arrived at the castle.

There are no windows or doors except for the one that leads back to the swamp behind them.

NEXT MOVE

As soon as the last character has entered the room, the doors close behind the party. At the same time, an elegant crystal Dragonchess board appears on an ice-carved table in the middle of the floor.

The Dragonchess board is the one that the characters encountered earlier, and the pieces are arranged as they were before, but someone – presumably Isdrekin – has made a countermove against the characters.

See chapter 3 for how the game is played and make a note whether the characters gain a point of success or a point of failure.

After the characters have made their move, the Dragonchess board and the ice table disappear, and the room goes completely dark for a few seconds.

IT IS GETTING HOT IN HERE

When the light returns, a wall of hot air hits the characters. They are standing in an arid desert in the middle of a square eroded ruin roughly 40 feet across. The ancient, withering walls are made out of sun-bleached stone and form a natural boundary of the area.

A white sun blazes mercilessly in the sky, while fine sand gently drifts across the dunes and around the characters' feet. The air is incredibly dry and the temperature is sweltering.

RHYME AND REASON

In the middle of the ruin is a low, raised platform in withered stone. A **gynosphinx** languishes on the platform and looks down at the party with a hint of a wry smile on her feline lips.

The gynosphinx is flanked by two **lamias**, which study the characters like cats watching a mouse that unwittingly has ventured within their reach. One of them licks its lips. A pair of tall double doors in hazy ice materialise at the far end of the ruin behind the gynosphinx and the two lamias. Moments later, a pulsating symbol in aquamarine forms on the sand near the characters' feet, and a similar symbol appears in front of the doors.

"Well, well, well," the gynosphinx says in a purring voice, "what have we here? A band of fools with much to fear? Or brave heroes who never flee? Solve this riddle, and we shall see."

The gynosphinx beckons to the characters while the lamias look increasingly excited. She then presents the characters with a riddle that they have to solve if they wish to cross the ruin to the other side.

THE RIDDLE

A female dwarf, a male tiefling, a female gnome, and a female elf once fought a frost giant that guarded a large treasure. The giant was wounded and offered each of them a ring with their personal favourite gem if they let it live.

The four gems in the rings that the adventurers could choose from were diamond, emerald, moonstone and ruby. But which adventurer favours which specific gem?

- The dwarf likes moonstones, but it isn't her favourite gem.
- Neither the tiefling nor the gnome likes emeralds.
- ➤ The person who likes rubies is a woman.
- The dwarf's favourite gem is either moonstones or diamonds, although she can have only one favourite gem.
- The tiefling likes rubies, but it isn't his favourite gem.



The ruin in which the characters face a difficult riddle.

Optional: The DM can make this challenge harder by setting a time limit for the players to solve the riddle. For example: Five minutes for an easy challenge, three minutes for a harder challenge, or two minutes for a very hard challenge.

ANSWER

- It can be deduced that the dwarf's favourite gem is diamonds.
- The tiefling's favourite gem can't be emeralds or rubies, so it must be diamonds or moonstones.
- As the dwarf's favourite gem is diamonds, the tiefling's favourite will be moonstones.
- The gnome doesn't like emeralds, so her favourite gem must be rubies.
- This means the elf's favourite gem is emeralds.

MIND OVER MELEE

If the characters can answer the riddle, the gynosphinx and the lamias graciously move aside to let the characters pass, although the lamias look deeply disappointed.

If the characters give the wrong answer, try to reach the symbol in front of the doors, or attack any of the creatures, the gynosphinx shakes her head in disappointment and disappears while the two lamias instantly and gleefully attack the characters.

EXIT

When all characters are standing inside the glowing symbol on the other side of the ruin, the ice doors open.

The doors open even if the characters haven't solved the riddle and regardless if they are engaged in combat, as long as all of the characters are within the boundary of the glowing symbol. The lamias don't follow the characters through the doorway into the next room.

CHAPTER 6: THE THIRD CHALLENGE



nce more, the characters enter a room completely made of ice and identical to the previous rooms. There are no windows or doors in sight, apart from the opening that leads back to the desert behind them.

When the last character has entered, the double doors close and fade into the ice wall. The crystal Dragonchess board appears on its ice table in the middle of the floor. As before, it seems that someone has made a countermove against the characters, who now should make their move.

See chapter 3 for how to play Dragonchess, and make a note whether the characters gain a point of success or a point of failure.

THE HOST INTRUDES

After the characters have made their move, the elegant Dragonchess board and the table vanish, and a mirage of Isdrekin appears in one of the ice walls. Like before, the mirage is almost lifelike but clearly an illusion.

Isdrekin looks at the characters with an intrigued expression on his face.

"I apologise for the interruption," Isdrekin says politely. "But may I suggest that you hurry up? After all, your friend is in dire peril."

Isdrekin steps back and you see Bjorn hanging from his bound wrists. He tries to say something through his gag, and although you can't hear him, Bjorn's panic is evident. The candle has burned through most of the rope, and only a thin piece of a blackening strand prevents Bjorn from falling and spearing himself on the razorsharp ice spikes in the pit below.

"Take your time," Isdrekin says. "However, I would not recommend that you dilly-dally for too long, of course."

With that, the vision disappears, and darkness fills the room once more.

UNHALLOWED BE THE GAME

The light returns slowly, and weak moonlight floods the area. As the characters' eyes adapt to the gloom, they realise that they are standing inside a large dimly lit cemetery surrounded by a crooked wrought-iron fence.

The cemetery is 50 feet long and 60 feet wide. It is filled with dead trees, graves, and tombstones, a couple of which lean quite alarmingly. At the far end of the cemetery, a pair of double doors in ice are located by the crooked black fence.

Some of the graves have marble statues as their headstones. The statues are dressed in sombre funeral garments, and their faces are partly hidden by mourning veils, pulled-down top hats, or upturned collars. Nevertheless, the characters realise with an icy shiver that the silent statues resemble them.

A symbol similar to the one in the previous rooms appears by the characters' feet, but this time no matching symbol appears by the double doors at the other side of the cemetery. Instead, several smaller symbols light up one by one in front of the statues that look eerily like the characters in the party.

The aquamarine symbols pulsate slowly, as if beckoning the adventurers.

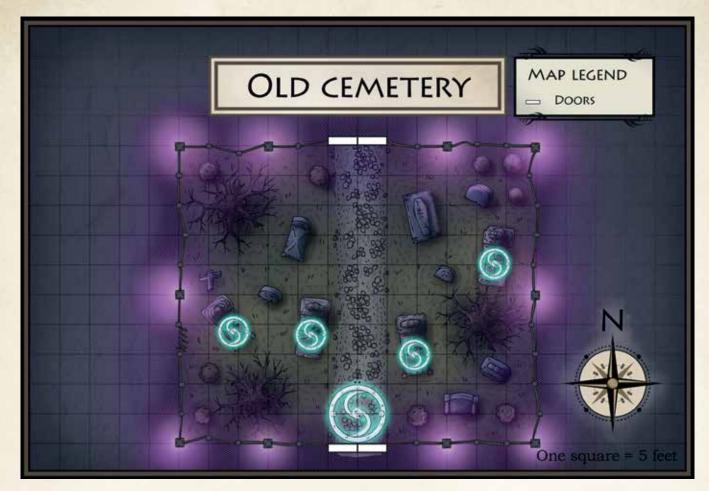
WELL-KNOWN TERRORS

When a character steps on the symbol in front of their corresponding statue, the character must immediately make a DC 15 Wisdom check.

On a successful save, the character's mind is invaded by deeply unsettling images before they manage to conquer their fear. The character takes 1d10 psychic damage and nothing more happens.

On a failed save, the grave by the statue breaks with an ear-splitting crack, and a ghost rises from the stone debris and attacks the character. The character also immediately takes 2d10 psychic damage and is Frightened.

The decaying, translucent ghost resembles something from the character's worst nightmare. The DM is encouraged to use the information shared by the player before the adventure to make this a truly horrifying experience.



The old cemetery where the characters' worst nightmares await.

The character must make a new saving throw at the end of their following turn. For each failed save, the character takes another 2d10 psychic damage.

When a character succeeds on their save, defeats their ghost, or dies, they are no longer Frightened and the symbol in front of their statue disappears.

ONE MORE GAME FOR THE ROAD

When all characters have overcome their individual challenges, the Dragonchess board appears for a final time. Make a note of whether the characters gain a point of success or a point of failure. Once the characters have made their move, the pieces move by themselves as Isdrekin makes his countermove.

Add together the points of successes that the party has gained during all games, and check the table below to determine how the game ended. Isdrekin's attitude to the characters depends on how well they played.

DRAGONCHESS GAME OUTCOME

o Successes	You have lost the game badly. Isdrekin's attitude is pitying
1 Success	You have lost the game narrowly. Isdrekin's attitude is scornful
2 Successes	The game ended in a stalemate. Isdrekin's attitude is neutral
3 Successes	You sacrificed many pieces but won the game through a last-minute insight and a little bit of luck. Isdrekin's attitude is surprised and respectful
4 Successes	You crushed your opponent mercilessly. Isdrekin's attitude is impressed, which he tries to hide badly

The Dragonchess board and the table vanish after the game is completed, and a large pulsating symbol appears in front of the tall, icy double doors. When all characters are standing inside the symbol, the enchanted ice doors slowly open before them.

CHAPTER 7: THE LORD OF THE CASTLE



he tall double doors swing open majestically, and the characters enter the open-air courtyard of Drakenberg Castle. Towering walls, made of brilliant ice

and decorated with beautiful woven tapestries, rise from the old stone ruins. Some of the tapestries have motifs of humans, dwarves, elves, and other races, all of whom bow to a magnificent ice dragon. Other tapestries portray epic battles in which ice dragons crush large forces and triumph in battle.

Parts of the withered buildings are still visible and have survived throughout the centuries, such as an old well, a broken archway, and the frostcovered remains of a stable that lean against a toppling stone wall surrounded by ice.

The ground consists of a thick layer of snow with patches of frost. Snowflakes tumble down from blue-white clouds. The air is unnaturally cold and absolutely still, although the raging blizzard can still be heard from afar.

COIN AND CAPTIVE

In the western part of the courtyard is Isdrekin's dragon treasure hoard. The mounds of coins are scattered on the snow-covered ground along with numerous glittering diamonds, golden goblets, and other jewellery and sparkling gems. A few blades, pieces of armour, and other items are also half-buried in the hoard.

In the eastern side of the courtyard, Bjorn hangs bound from his wrists above a pit filled with long sharp spikes of ice. Bjorn's face is bruised, bloodied, and pale with fear. He looks at the characters, and a small glimmer of desperate hope lights up his eyes. The wax candle has almost burned through the last of the scorched rope.

THE CONQUEROR'S SEAT

In the middle of the courtyard is an imposing throne made of pure ice and coated with intricate patterns of glittering frost. A Dragonchess board on a table of ice stands close to one of the armrests. Isdrekin sits on the throne and watches the characters with speculative interest.

ISDREKIN NIXIUS

When the last character has entered the courtyard, Isdrekin addresses the party from his throne.

"I am so pleased that you have survived my challenges. I hope you found them as entertaining as I did," Isdrekin says. "If you would be so kind as to leave the orbstones on the table, I shall release your friend before he falls to his untimely death."

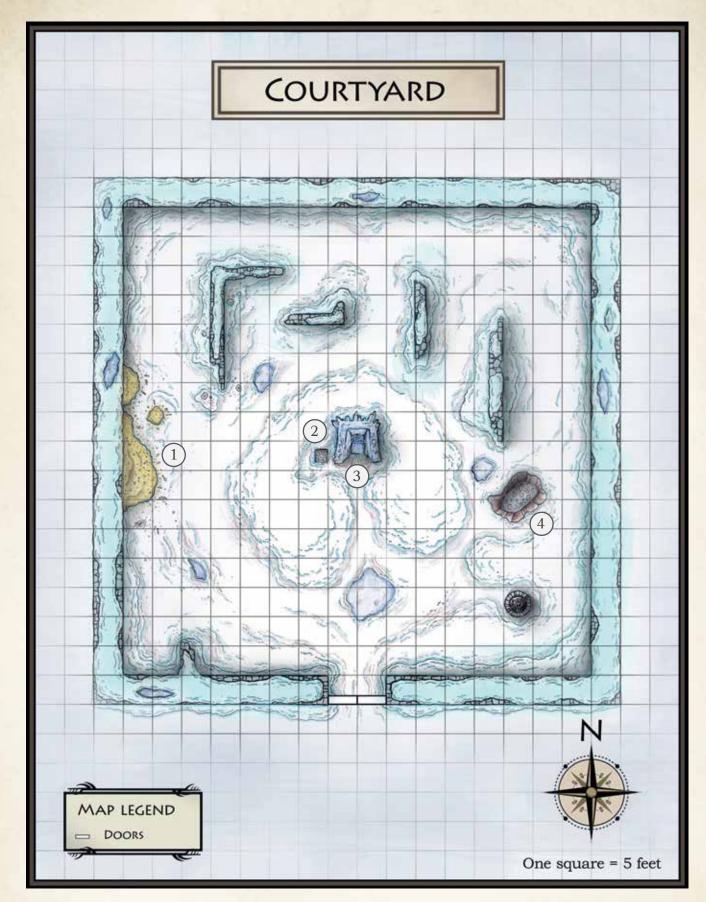
Isdrekin gestures idly with his hand, and a beautiful table in crystalline ice materialises in front of you.

Isdrekin explains that he will use the orbstones to bring back great numbers of ice dragons to the Material Plane. He plans to conquer Eastern Farraway and the lands beyond and enslave everyone. He offers the characters the chance for them to join him and become his loyal servants. Their role will depend on the outcome of the Dragonchess game and may include anything from becoming Isdrekin's strategical advice group to significantly simpler tasks such as running errands or executions.

THE DRAGON'S SCHEME

Isdrekin's proposal is sincere and he assumes that the characters will agree to it. He has enjoyed watching the characters face the different challenges, and fails to see that the characters are unlikely to be interested in collaborating with him after he has kidnapped and threatened their friend. Being a dragon, he has a weakness for flattery, but he doesn't fall for exaggerated compliments.

However, Isdrekin never trusts anyone fully and attacks at the first sign of deception or open hostility. While the main goal of the challenges was to find out if the characters are worthy of serving him, they were also meant to inform him



The courtyard of Drakenberg Castle. 1: Treasure hoard. 2: Dragonchess board. 3: Throne. 4: Ice pit.

about the characters' strengths and weaknesses. He reckons that if the characters are foolish enough to attack him, the challenges will have exhausted most of their spells and potions or even left them injured, and that way they will be easier to deal with. Either way, Isdrekin will be able to claim the orbstones.

ALTERNATIVE ENDING

The future of the characters and the fate of Eastern Farraway depend on the actions the characters take. The DM is encouraged to underline that Isdrekin means to enslave all of Eastern Farraway and lay waste to land and lives alike, should the characters agree to help him.

However, if the characters still decide to support Isdrekin's tyrannical plan and give him the orbstones, the characters' alignments instantly change to Evil. This event can mark the beginning of a high-level evil campaign, as Eastern Farraway is destined to face widespread destruction.

Later the same evening, the characters watch in awe as Isdrekin uses the orbstones to open a huge portal at the top of Ice Dragons Peak and brings back hundreds of ice dragons to the Material Plane. Isdrekin and the rest of his kin then proceed to conquer Eastern Farraway and slaughter thousands of innocent people.

Eventually, one day Isdrekin grows convinced that the characters plan to overthrow him, so he arranges to have them killed.

SHOWDOWN

If the characters don't agree to become Isdrekin's servants or refuse to give him the orbstones, Isdrekin wastes no more time with words and attacks them.

Isdrekin is a **young ice dragon** (his statistics can be found on the next pages). He initially remains in humanoid form and uses spells in combat. However, if he loses half or more of his maximum hit points, he uses a bonus action to transform to his natural shape of a dragon.

In his dragon form, Isdrekin fights strategically while taking full advantage of his ability to fly. One of his tactics is to fly up to the battlements on the wall around the courtyard and attack his targets using his breath weapon and spells.

Ice dragons are ancestral dragons, creatures of unusual cunning and might, and even young ice dragons such as Isdrekin have access to lair actions.

Isdrekin can also snatch and fling characters over the courtyard's wall. To do this, Isdrekin must be in his dragon form and succeed with a grapple attack against the target, which must be a medium-sized or smaller creature. Isdrekin can then use a bonus action to hurl the grappled target over the wall.

A character who is thrown over the wall takes 6d6 bludgeoning damage upon landing on the frozen rocks 25 feet beyond the wall. The wall is 15 feet high and 5 feet deep. Climbing the wall requires a successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check. There are no gates or other openings into the courtyard, and no stairs that lead to the top of the wall.

SAVING BJORN

One or more characters can work together to rescue Bjorn. After moving to where he is suspended, one character can grab hold of the rope and prevent Bjorn from falling into the pit. It takes two rounds for a character to lower and manoeuvre Bjorn to safety next to the pit. If two or more characters collaborate, this takes only one round.

The wax candle burns through the last remains of the rope 1d4 + 1 rounds after the battle starts. Once this happens, Bjorn falls into the ice pit and drops to 0 hit points.

ISDREKIN NIXIUS

Medium humanoid or large ice dragon (shapechanger, dragon), lawful evil

Armour Class 19 (natural armour) Hit Points 199 (19d10 + 95) Speed 30 ft. (40 ft., fly 90 ft., swim 20 ft. in dragon form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +8, Wis +11, Cha +13

Skills Arcana +10, History +4, Insight +7, Perception +12, Intimidation +11, Persuasion +11

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning, force Damage Immunities cold

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 22

Languages Common, Draconic, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Ice Walk. Isdrekin can move across and climb icy surfaces without needing to make an ability check. Additionally, difficult terrain composed of ice or snow doesn't cost him extra movement.

Staff of the Ice Dragon. Isdrekin expends one or more charges from his magical quarterstaff to cast a spell (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The staff has 15 charges. He can choose from the following spells: *arcane eye* (3 charges), *conjure elemental* (5 charges), *fog cloud* (2 charges), *ice storm* (5 charges), *legend lore* (3 charges), *mirror image* (2 charges), *or unseen servant* (1 charge).

Change Shape. Isdrekin can magically polymorph into a humanoid or back into his true form as a bonus action. Any equipment he wears or carries is absorbed or borne by the new form (Isdrekin's choice). He reverts to his true draconic form if he dies.

Isdrekin's statistics, other than his size, speed, and attacks, are the same in each form. He retains the ability to cast spells and use the *Staff of the Ice Dragon*.

Innate Spellcasting. Isdrekin's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells once per day, requiring no material components:

At will: minor illusion, prestidigitation 1/day each: disguise self, identify, illusory script, arcanist's magic aura, major image, hallucinatory terrain, programmed illusion, magnificent mansion



ACTIONS

Multiattack. In dragon form, Isdrekin makes three attacks: One with his bite and two with his claws. In humanoid form, he makes two melee attacks with his magical quarterstaff.

Bite (Dragon Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 2d10 + 10 piercing damage.

Claw (Dragon Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2d8 + 10 slashing damage.

Glacial Breath (Dragon Form Only, Recharge 5–6). Isdrekin exhales a hail of ice shards and freezing air in a 50-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 6d10 piercing damage and 6d10 cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that rolls a natural 1 on a saving throw against Isdrekin's breath attack must immediately make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a fail, the creature is slain and frozen solid.

Quarterstaff (Humanoid Form Only).

Melee Weapon Attack: +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 1d8 + 9 bludgeoning damage.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20, Isdrekin takes a lair action to cause one of the effects below. He can't use the same effect two rounds in a row. Characters with initiative rolls of 20 act before the lair actions.

Thundersnow. A 15-foot radius sphere within 120 feet of Isdrekin is filled with a thunderous snowstorm shot through with searing lightning. The storm spreads around corners, and its area is heavily obscured. Each creature in the storm must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 2d6 cold damage and 2d6 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that ends its turn in the storm takes an additional 2d6 cold damage. The storm lasts 5 rounds or until Isdrekin dies.

Mirage. Spectacular, bewildering illusions flicker and flash inside a 30foot cube within 120 feet of Isdrekin. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be Charmed until initiative count 20 on the next round. Charmed creatures are Incapacitated and have a speed of 0.

Arctic Husk. The air around one creature within 60 feet of Isdrekin solidifies in a shell of ice. The creature must succeed on a DC 13 Strength check or take 1d6 cold damage and become encased in ice until initiative count 20 on the next turn. An encased creature is Incapacitated. The encased creature retains its initiative.

ISDREKIN'S DEATH

If Isdrekin is slain, read the following out loud:

Mortally wounded, Isdrekin crashes to the ground. The impact of the fallen dragon makes the entire castle tremble and results in a massive cloud of snow and shattered ice that covers the courtyard.

"How...can it end like this?" Isdrekin gasps in disbelief. "Impossible. All my beautiful plans, thwarted by...these weak, warmblooded, pathetic creatures."

The ice dragon draws a final rasping breath and moves no more.

When Isdrekin dies, his enchantments rapidly dissolve. The tapestries fade, the ice walls start to crumble, and the throne collapses in a huge cloud of ice and snow. The characters sway briefly as the magical ice castle turns to rubble around them.

Scores of white dragons that circle far overhead shriek in anger. Leaderless, they scatter across the sky and start fighting each other viciously a moment later.

TREASURE

Isdrekin's dragon hoard contains 21 pp, 1,824 gp, 133 ep, 1,415 sp, 27 various gems and small diamonds (worth 25 gp each), two silver necklaces (worth 50 sp each), eight engraved golden goblets (worth 100 gp each), and eleven ornate rings (worth 20 gp each).

The treasure also contains a shining chainmail with a broad belt in red engraved leather, and a sturdy double-headed greataxe in matte steel with bronze inlays. The chainmail is an *Armour of Resistance (fire)*, and the axe is a *Greataxe +2* in dwarven design.

Isdrekin's staff is an enchanted weapon called *Staff of the Ice Dragon*. See chapter 9 for more information about this magical item.

CHAPTER 8: THE END OF A TRILOGY



fter Isdrekin has been defeated, the characters and Bjorn (if he is alive) return to Northwind Gate and The Wanderer's Wand without incident.

The rough winds that have whipped across the landscape abate, and the temperature rises slightly, although it is still wintry cold.

A few days later, the characters receive a letter from Lord and Lady Warblington, the most prominent nobles in Northwind Gate. The elegant envelope is delivered to the inn on a silver tray by a shivering servant dressed in the Warblington house's livery.

It has come to our attention that you have served our lands from great devestation. We have also been teld that you showed extraordinary bravery in the face of grave danger. On behalf of the town of Northwind Gate we wish to express our gratitude for your services Please attend a ceremony in your honour at three o clock at the town hall. The ceremony well be led by Niniann Envindra, Head of the Seven Keys Library tegether with several other exclusive members of the Academy of Alchemy the Department for Higher Education and the Scheel of Wexardry among others. This aremony will be followed by a private languet at our humble above Warblington Court where we will be joined by other notable citizens and special quests. Yours Graciously Lord and Lady Warblington, the 12th Duke and Duchess of Northwind Gate

The letter reads as follows:

It has come to our attention that you have saved our lands from great devastation. We have been told that you showed extraordinary bravery in the face of grave danger. On behalf of the town of Northwind Gate, we wish to express our gratitude for your services.

Please attend a ceremony in your honour at three o'clock at the town hall. The ceremony will be led by Niniann Envindra, Head of the Seven Keys Library, together with several other exclusive members of the Academy of Alchemy, the Department for Higher Education, and the School of Wizardry, among others.

> This ceremony will be followed by a private banquet at our humble abode Warblington Court, where we will be joined by other notable citizens and special guests.

Yours Graciously,

Lord and Lady Warblington, the 12th Duke and Duchess of Northwind Gate

THE CEREMONY

The ceremony is a grand affair witnessed by several hundred people. It is announced with loud fanfares that are heard all over town. The characters are roundly applauded as they arrive at the town hall, which has been decorated with lengths of green and white bunting. Important people and various nobles in Northwind Gate take turns praising the characters for their bravery and shaking their hands.

At the end of the ceremony, the characters and Bjorn receive a medal of honour each. The silvery medals hang from broad bands of deep green silk. Each medal is shaped into a silver key, inlaid with adamantium, and decorated with tiny studded emeralds in a neat pattern.



AN EXTRAVAGANT BANQUET

The banquet that follows the ceremony is a lavish affair with more than seventy-five guests. One of those who attend is Lord and Lady Warblington's young son, Bilbertius, a lanky man around eighteen years old.

Bilbertius drinks too much wine, complains endlessly about how the actors at his theatre company are worthless, and moans that no one appreciates his highly developed genius. The characters may have encountered some of the unemployed actors that Bilbertius recently fired during one of his frequent tantrums.

The evening ends with a spectacular show of magical fireworks organised by the Alchemy Academy. The fireworks paint the winter sky above Northwind Gate in cascades of brilliant colours that light up the dark sky.

THE ORBSTONES

The orbstones are brought to the underground vaults beneath the Seven Keys Library, where they will be safeguarded. The library's vault is known for its security and protects other rare magical items and artefacts. Nïniann Envindra, the Head of the Seven Keys Library, says that she will personally guarantee the orbstones will be safe and secure.

TIGHTENED TIES

The characters and Bjorn's actions have also strengthened the diplomatic ties between Winterhold and Northwind Gate.

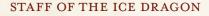
Lord and Lady Warblington decide to send a group of their best-trained soldiers to Winterhold to support the town's protection. A drow invasion threatened Winterhold recently, and while the dark elves were beaten back, it is a question of time before they launch another attack or another threat appears on the horizon.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

The characters receive a group award of 15,000 XP for accomplishing the quest, plus additional XP for defeating monsters. Alternatively, the DM can use this as a milestone award and the characters gain one level.



CHAPTER 9: NEW MAGIC ITEMS



Staff, legendary (requires attunement by a spellcaster)

This staff is carved from pale, smooth wood of unknown origin. Its head is shaped like a dragon's head that sometimes blinks and changes expression. While holding the staff, you gain a +2 bonus to spell attack rolls, your spell save DC increases by 2, and you gain a +1 bonus on AC. The staff can also be wielded as a magic quarterstaff that grants a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it.

Spells. The staff has 15 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it, using your spell save DC: *conjure elemental* (5 charges), *fog cloud* (2 charges), *ice storm* (5 charges), *arcane eye* (3 charges), *mirror image* (2 charges), or *unseen servant* (1 charge).

The staff regains 1d10 + 5 charges daily at midnight. If you expend the last charge, the staff needs 1d100 days to absorb natural background magic to renew 1 charge. It then recharges normally.

Icy Obliteration. When you cast a spell that deals cold damage, the damage is doubled. You can use this feature after you have made your attack roll, but before your target has made a saving throw and you have rolled the damage. The feature drains the staff of all its charges except for one, and the staff will not recharge until midnight 1d6 + 1 days later.

Sentience. The staff is lawful evil and has an Intelligence of 15, a Wisdom of 16, and a Charisma of 18. It has hearing and darkvision out to a range of 120 feet. The staff communicates telepathically with its wielder in a whispering voice. It can speak, read, and understand Draconic and Common.

Personality. The staff retains the shrewd, manipulative personality of the ice dragon that was its original owner. It criticises other previous wielders and constantly tries to reinforce its hold on the wielder through flattery, threats, and promises.

Its purpose is to strengthen the influence of Tiamat in the world. If the wielder neglects this purpose, a conflict between the staff and its wielder occurs at next midnight.

Draconic Visage. When a creature attunes to the staff, their pupils turn into reptile-like vertical slits.

Soulbound. Those that attune to the staff sacrifice a fragment of their soul to it. As a result, the spell raise dead has no effect on a creature attuned to the staff unless it is cast by a dragonborn.



CHAPTER 10: LEGEND & LORE

DRAKENBERG CASTLE

The history of Drakenberg Castle begins with a cataclysmic battle that saw ice dragons exiled from the Material Plane to the Plane of Ice several thousand years ago. It was the culmination of the Second Winter War, a conflict in which chromatic dragons loyal to Tiamat fought against metallic dragons and their allies.

Powerful human and elven champions took part in the war and rode dragons into battle. According to legend, the final battle included evil fire and ice dragons on one side, opposed by a force of goodaligned sun and thunder dragons.

Scholars have hypothesised that sun dragons are the ancestors of the golden dragons, while fire dragons and thunder dragons are forefathers of the red and bronze dragons of today. However, some claim that there is no direct hereditary connection between them and that they are simply different subspecies.

END AND EXILE

The Second Winter War lasted nearly a decade. No quarter was given, and no mercy was shown by either side. Defeat would mean loss of vast territories, diminished influence in the world, or even extinction.

The final battle took place around Ice Dragons Peak, west of where the town of Northwind Gate is situated today. For seven days and seven nights, the dragons and their riders clashed, toppling cliffs, vaporizing lakes, and scarring the landscape for millennia to come.

Ultimately, the sun and thunder dragons won the battle. After slaying the last fire dragon, they created a portal to the Plane of Ice, forced the ice dragons through the portal, and sealed it off.

This ended the war, and the surviving ancestral dragons withdrew from the Material Plane. However, the exiled ice dragons swore to return one day and reclaim their lands.

A CASTLE COMES TO BE

The remaining champions built numerous watchtowers in case the ice dragons reappeared. One such watchtower, located near Ice Dragons Peak, was named Drakenberg Tower. Over time, it was joined by a large garrison, a beautiful chapel, a small library, and improved fortifications. This was the foundation of Drakenberg Castle.

As the ice dragons remained absent, trade flourished while the garrison grew smaller. Fifty years after the end of the war, the Queen of Farraway gave Drakenberg Castle to Sir Wyldmark, a newly appointed knight who had prevented an attempted assassination of the queen. Sir Wyldmark changed his name to Drakenberg and became the first Lord of Drakenberg Castle.

DISASTER STRIKES

But the golden days didn't last. During an annual April Ball, when young nobles eligible for courting were presented to large gatherings at the castle, the nearby active volcano Ilde had a partial eruption that forever changed the fate of Drakenberg Castle.

Ice Dragons Peak and the nearby area suffered a disastrous earthquake. The castle was ruined, and more than one thousand people, including Lord Drakenberg himself, lost their lives. Those who survived the earthquake fled to Northwind Gate, which was mostly spared from the earthquake, and they never returned to the castle again.

Some whispered that Lord Drakenberg had sold his soul to a devil and failed to keep his end of the bargain, but this claim has remained unproven.

AN ENIGMATIC LANDMARK

The ruins of Drakenberg Castle were said to be haunted by the ghosts of those who perished in the earthquake, and there have never been any attempts to rebuild the castle.

With time, the history behind Drakenberg Castle faded into obscurity, but the jagged mountain ridge next to the old ruins is still called Ice Dragons Peak. Most locals believe the name stems from how the mountain peak resembles a sleeping dragon covered in snow.

APPENDIX

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

BJORN AMBERCLAN

Bjorn Amberclan is a middle-aged male mountain dwarf **commoner** (LG). He is short for a dwarf and has copper-coloured hair around a bald patch. He is specialised in archaeology and the long-gone Ironshield Clan, especially their ancient language.

Trait: Fieldwork is all good and well, but the best kind of research is the type that can be done surrounded by books in a comfy inn.

Ideal: Knowledge. I'm deeply passionate about archaeology and my special research area is ancient runes. (Good)

Bond: I search for information and knowledge that can help protect my hometown of Winterhold.

Flaw: I'm comfortable to a fault and try hard to avoid both dangers and unnecessary adventures (I loathe outdoor camping).

VADENA LJUNG

Vadena Ljung is a willowy half-elf female commoner (NG) with short auburn hair and large eyes. She often wears plain dresses in forest colours and aprons with practical pockets. She lives in Northwind Gate together with her wife, Mirrelion. Vadena is kind-hearted, hardworking, and secretly very proud of the good selection of wines offered at her inn, The Wanderer's Wand.

Trait: I always ask my guests how their day has been. I enjoy listening to other people and taking part in their busy lives.

Ideal: Simplicity. Hard work and honesty lead to happiness. (Good)

Bond: I love my wife with all my heart, and I will let nothing come between us.

Flaw: I always want people to feel welcome at my inn, but I can't stop fussing over small details. If someone complains, I take it very personally.

NORTHWIND GATE

FOOD, DRINK, AND LODGING

There are several inns, taverns, and taprooms in Northwind Gate. Three famous (and infamous) establishments are:

- The Golden Goose, one of the town's finest inns and a favourite of local nobles, including Lord and Lady Warblington. It is known for its small but delicious portions and expensive eight-course meals.
- The Quill, also known among students as "The Feather", is located near the town hall. This lively tavern offers cheap food and drink, lofty philosophical discussions, and loud debates. The Quill is famous for its "Threefoot Ale", a dwarven ale served in a three-foot-long glass and meant to be downed in a single go.
- The Floating Taproom is a converted paddlewheel boat that travels up and down Riversnake in Northwind Gate. It is crewed by retired gnome sailors from Whiteport. A smaller boat called Boy follows The Floating Taproom during the evening and picks up intoxicated people who have fallen overboard for a small fee.

SHOPS

Some of the many shops in Northwind Gate include Rough (outdoor equipment), Vials and Mixtures (potions), Scrolls For You (books, scrolls, and other literature), Scriptum (supplies for scholars), The Shining Blade (melee weapons) and its sister shop The Quiet Arrow (ranged weapons).

On the first Tuesday in every month, a night market at the town square offers a variety of goods, including magical items and rare books.

WORSHIP

For those of faith, the largest temples in Northwind Gate are dedicated to Mimir (God of wisdom), Tyr (God of justice), and Dunatis (God of mountains).

A large oaken tree near the Academy of Alchemy is said to be blessed by Silvanus (God of nature). Its branches are covered with braided strips of colourful cloth added by followers of Silvanus in hope of good fortune.

There are also plenty of chapels and shrines in honour of other deities.

BATHING

The town is widely known for its thermal baths. Anyone can enjoy a dip in the river, and those willing to part with 5 sp get access to purposebuilt bath houses that provide private pools, towels, thick pieces of soap (lavender, rose, or acacia), and heated lemon-scented showers for rinsing off the slightly sulfidic water. 30 minutes spent in the bath gives 1d6 of temporary hit points and removes one level of exhaustion.

Other landmarks include the Museum of Extraordinary Items from the Past (entrance 5 sp), the Old Astronomy Tower (entrance 5 cp), and Warblington Court Pleasure Gardens (entrance 1 gp; open afternoons to well-dressed visitors only).

WINTER ADVENTURING GEAR

Item	Cost	Weight
Animal winter barding	10 gp	30 lb.
Insulated iron flask	5 sp	2 lb.
Ice climbing kit	25 gp	25 lb.
Ice grips for shoes	5 sp	3 lb.
Ice skates	2 gp	5 lb.
Ice yacht	50 gp	150 lb.
Set of ice claws	3 cp	1 lb.
Snowshoes	5 cp	3 lb.
Skis	2 gp	5 lb.
Sled	5 gp	35 lb.
Thick sleeping mats	1 gp	7 lb.
Winter clothes	10 gp	8 lb.
Winter tent (sleeps 2)	4 gp	30 lb.

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HOW TO SCALE THIS ADVENTURE

Make the following adjustments to scale the adventure up or down so it suits the level of your group.

TIERS

Tier 1 represents levels 1–4 for an adventure group of three to five characters.

Tier 2 represents levels 5–10 for an adventure group of three to five characters.

Tier 3 represents levels 11–16 for an adventure group of three to five characters.

Tier 4 represents levels 17–20 for an adventure group of three to five characters.

SKILL CHECKS AND SAVES

Adjust the DC for skill checks and saves in the following way:

Tier 1: Decrease all DC checks by -2.

Tier 2: Use the DC checks in the adventure.

Tier 3: Increase all DC checks by +2.

Tier 4: Increase all DC checks by +4.

TRAP

Suggested changes to effects when the characters steps on the smaller symbol at the old cemetery:

Tier 1: The character takes 1d10 psychic damage on a failed save and is Frightened, or half as much damage on a successful save and nothing more happens. For each failed save, the character takes another 1d10 psychic damage each turn until the character succeeds on their save, defeats the encounter, or dies.

Tier 2: Use the encounter described in the adventure.

Tier 3: The character takes 2d10 psychic damage on a failed save and is Frightened, or half as much damage on a successful save and nothing more happens. For each failed save, the character takes another 2d10 psychic damage each turn until the character succeeds on their save, defeats the encounter, or dies.

Tier 4: The character takes 3d10 psychic damage on a failed save and is Frightened, or half as much damage on a successful save and nothing more happens. For each failed save, the character takes another 3d10 psychic damage each turn until the character succeeds on their save, defeats the encounter, or dies.

ENCOUNTERS

Replace the white dragon wyrmling with:

Tier 1: Use the encounter as described in the adventure.

Tier 2: Use the encounter as described in the adventure.

Tier 3: One young white dragon. CR 6 (2,300 XP).

Tier 4: One young white dragon. CR 6 (2,300 XP).

Replace eight **giant spiders** with:

Tier 1: Two giant spiders. CR 2 (600 XP).

Tier 2: Use the encounter as described in the adventure.

Tier 3: Five **phase spiders.** CR 10 (7,000 XP).

Tier 4: Eight phase spiders. CR 15 (14,000 XP).

Replace two **lamias** with:

Tier 1: One griffon. CR 2 (450 XP).

Tier 2: Use the encounter as described in the adventure.

Tier 3: Two **lamias** and one **gynosphinx.** The gynosphinx takes part in the battle but teleports away permanently if it loses more than half of its hit points. CR 13 (10,000 XP).

Tier 4: Two **lamias** and one **gynosphinx.** The gynosphinx takes part in the battle. CR 17 (18,800 XP).

Replace each **ghost** with:

Tier 1: One ghast. CR 2 (450 XP).

Tier 2: Use the encounter as described in the adventure.

Tier 3: One vampire. 13 (10,000 XP).

Tier 4: One mummy lord. CR 15 (13,000 XP).

ISDREKIN NIXIUS

Change the statistics for Isdrekin Nixius in the following way:

Tier 1:

Armour Class 16 (natural armour)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +6, Wis +9, Cha +11

Staff of the Ice Dragon. Isdrekin expends one or more charges from his magical quarterstaff to cast a spell (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The staff has 15 charges. He can choose from the following spells: fog cloud (2 charges), mirror image (2 charges), ray of frost (2 charges), sleet storm (5 charges), or unseen servant (1 charge).

Innate Spellcasting. Isdrekin's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells once per day, requiring no material components:

At will: *minor illusion* 1/day each: *disguise self, arcanist's magic aura, invisibility, hypnotic pattern*

Multiattack. In dragon form, Isdrekin makes two attacks: One with his bite and one with his claws. In humanoid form, he makes two melee attacks with his magical quarterstaff.

Bite (Dragon Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d10 + 4 piercing damage.

Claw (Dragon Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8 + 4 slashing damage.

Glacial Breath (Dragon Form Only, Recharge 5–6). Isdrekin exhales a hail of ice shards and freezing air in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2d10 piercing damage and 2d10 cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that rolls a natural 1 on a saving throw against Isdrekin's breath attack must immediately make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a fail, the creature is slain and frozen solid. **Quarterstaff (Humanoid Form Only).** Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1d8 + 4 bludgeoning damage.

Isdrekin can't take any legendary actions or lair actions.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Tier 2:

Use the encounter as described in the adventure.

Tier 3:

Armour Class 19 (natural armour)

Hit Points 207 (18d12 + 90)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +13, Wis +11, Cha +17

Staff of the Ice Dragon. Isdrekin expends one or more charges from his magical quarterstaff to cast a spell (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The staff has 15 charges. He can choose from the following spells: arcane eye (3 charges), conjure elemental (5 charges), fog cloud (2 charges), ice storm (5 charges), legend lore (3 charges), mirror image (2 charges), or unseen servant (1 charge).

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

Innate Spellcasting. Isdrekin's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells once per day, requiring no material components:

At will: minor illusion, prestidigitation 1/day each: disguise self, identify, illusory script, arcanist's magic aura, invisibility, suggestion, hypnotic pattern, major image, hallucinatory terrain, programmed illusion, magnificent mansion, mirage arcane

Multiattack. In dragon form, Isdrekin makes three attacks: One with his bite and two with his claws. In humanoid form, he makes two melee attacks with his magical quarterstaff.

Bite (Dragon Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d12 + 10 piercing damage.

Claw (Dragon Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +18 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d10 + 10 slashing damage.

Glacial Breath (Dragon Form Only, Recharge 5–6). Isdrekin exhales a hail of ice shards and freezing air in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 26 Dexterity saving throw, taking 8d10 piercing damage and 8d10 cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that rolls a natural 1 on a saving throw against Isdrekin's breath attack must immediately make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a fail, the creature is slain and frozen solid.

Quarterstaff (Humanoid Form Only). Melee

Weapon Attack: +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d8 + 9 bludgeoning damage.

Isdrekin can also take lair actions as described in his statistics.

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Tier 4:

Armour Class 20 (natural armour)

Hit Points 276 (19d12 + 153)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +10, Wis +13, Cha +15

Staff of the Ice Dragon. Isdrekin expends one or more charges from his magical quarterstaff to cast a spell (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The staff has 15 charges. He can choose from the following spells: arcane eye (3 charges), conjure elemental (5 charges), fog cloud (2 charges), ice storm (5 charges), legend lore (3 charges), mirror image (2 charges), or unseen servant (1 charge).

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

Innate Spellcasting. Isdrekin's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells once per day, requiring no material components:

At will: *minor illusion, prestidigitation* 1/day each: *disguise self, identify, illusory script, arcanist's magic aura, invisibility, suggestion,* hypnotic pattern, major image, hallucinatory terrain, programmed illusion, magnificent mansion, mirage arcane

Multiattack. In dragon form, Isdrekin makes three attacks: One with his bite and two with his claws. In humanoid form, he makes two melee attacks with his magical quarterstaff.

Bite (Dragon Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +15 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3d10 + 10 piercing damage.

Claw (Dragon Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +15 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3d8 + 10 slashing damage.

Tail. Melee Weapon Attack: +18 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2d8 bludgeoning damage and 3d8 piercing damage.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 26 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened 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. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Glacial Breath (Dragon Form Only, Recharge 5–6). Isdrekin exhales a hail of ice shards and freezing air in a 50-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw, taking 8d10 piercing damage and 8d10 cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that rolls a natural 1 on a saving throw against Isdrekin's breath attack must immediately make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a fail, the creature is slain and frozen solid.

Quarterstaff (Humanoid Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +16 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3d8 + 9 bludgeoning damage.

Legendary Actions. Isdrekin can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The dragon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. Isdrekin makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Tail Attack. Isdrekin makes a tail attack.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). Isdrekin beats his wings. Each creature within 15 feet of Isdrekin must succeed on a DC 25 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d8 + 12 bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. Isdrekin can then fly up to half his flying speed.

Isdrekin can also take lair actions as described in his statistics.

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

HOW TO SCALE TREASURES

Adjust Isdrekin's treasure as follows:

Tier 1: Decrease the value of the treasures by half the value, and add a breastplate and a *Greataxe* +1.

Tier 2: Use the same treasure as described in the adventure.

Tier 3: Double the value of the treasures in the adventure, and add an *Armour of Resistance (fire)* and a *Greataxe +2*.

Tier 4: Increase the value of the treasures in the adventure fivefold, and add an *Armour of Resistance (fire)* and a *Greataxe* +3.

Adjust Bjorn's reward as follows:

Tier 1: 50 gp.

Tier 2: Use the same reward as described in the adventure.

Tier 3: 200 gp.

Tier 4: 300 gp.

Other treasures in the adventure:

Tier 1: Decrease the value of the treasures by half the value.

Tier 2: Use the treasures in the adventure.

Tier 3: Double the value of the treasures in the adventure.

Tier 4: Increase the value of the treasures in the adventure fivefold.

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