

THE FROZEN LABYRINTH



A frozen labyrinth, undead creatures, and a hidden orbstone.
Pack your sword. Bring your spellbook. Pray to your gods.
Do you dare to explore the frozen labyrinth?

RISE OF THE ICE DRAGONS ~ ADVENTURE ONE



THE FROZEN LABYRINTH



The dwarven scholar Bjorn Amberclan needs your help. He seeks a magical orbstone that is said to be hidden at the heart of a frozen labyrinth in the north.

But beware – the icy corridors are filled with evil monsters and nasty traps that have claimed untold lives.

And some creatures that should stay dead will awaken again...

Pack your sword. Bring your spellbook. Pray to your gods.

Do you dare to explore the frozen labyrinth?



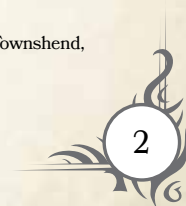
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EASTERN FARRAWAY

BASED ON THE ORIGINAL MAPS FROM AURORA GNAMTRIX'S TRAVEL CHRONICLES: EXPLORING EASTERN FARRAWAY REGION



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OVERVIEW

ABOUT THIS ADVENTURE

The Frozen Labyrinth is an adventure for the world's greatest roleplaying game (5e). It is designed for a group of three to five 7th-level characters and can be played as a one-shot 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 cold weather.

FEATURED CONTENT

- A dangerous labyrinth with various encounters and traps.
- New monster: Winter eel.
- Detailed NPCs with background descriptions.
- New magic item: Sword of Adrestia.
- Legend & Lore: The orbstones.
- 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-tfl/>

SYNOPSIS

The characters have escorted the dwarven scholar Bjorn Amberclan to Northwind Gate, a large town in the north that is famous for its extensive library, the Seven Keys Library.

Bjorn is researching a legendary orb that was recently discovered in the abandoned mines under his hometown of Winterhold during a battle with dark elves. His mission is kept secret, as other dubious people may be interested in claiming the orb and using it for their own evil plans.

The adventure begins when Bjorn returns with a book to the inn where he and the characters are staying. He has found out that there is another orbstone located in a frozen labyrinth not far from Northwind Gate and asks the characters if they can retrieve it in exchange for a reward.

To reach the frozen labyrinth, the characters must cross a frozen lake on which they are attacked by a winter eel (a new monster introduced in this adventure).

Once they enter the labyrinth, they have to defeat monsters and traps to locate the orb.

When the party has found the orb and travel back to Northwind Gate, they are attacked by an invisible stalker. The creature has been summoned by a cult that collaborates with a legendary ice dragon, and they search for the orbstones for their own dark and nefarious scheme.

HOW TO RUN THIS ADVENTURE

This is primarily an exploration adventure. The main quest for the characters is to explore the frozen labyrinth and find the magical orbstone. The labyrinth is magical and filled with various encounters.

Before the adventure begins, the DM rolls on a table to decide where the entrance to the underground temple can be found. If the character gets stuck, the DM can let them find the entrance by chance to speed things up.

As a suggestion, the DM may want to discourage the characters from using methods that would spoil the fun of exploring (e.g. using spells such as *arcane eye*, sending in familiars to scout the area, or trying to fly over the labyrinth).

The most important part of the adventure is to explore the labyrinth, and the DM has full liberty to add more monsters, traps, or to improvise the effects of unstable magic. After all – the adventure is meant to be exciting and fun!



ADVENTURE FLOWCHART



BEFORE THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

BJORN
AMBERCLAN



BACKGROUND

A group of cultists have opened a portal to another realm and summoned a legendary ice dragon who calls himself Isdrekin Nixius. The cultists worship dragons and hope that their devotion will be rewarded. Ice dragons are the forefathers of white dragons, but the ice dragons were banished from the Material Plane several thousand years ago.

Isdrekin disdains the cultists, but finds them useful for his own schemes. With their aid, he plans to create permanent portals to his natural plane and bring great numbers of ice dragons to the Material Plane so that they can enslave all living creatures in Eastern Faraway.

For his plan to succeed, Isdrekin needs three legendary orbstones that contain magical abilities for creating permanent portals. The orbs were created to close portals to other realms and have been hidden or lost for centuries, but Isdrekin has been working together with the cultists and their contacts to search for them relentlessly.

Isdrekin and the cultists have already found one orbstone, but they have heard rumours that another orb, called *The Pledge*, was recently found in Winterhold.

Isdrekin has also joined forces with the white dragons, who cower to his superiority. On Isdrekin's order, the white dragons have banded together to kill or drive away other dragons from their territories.

The dragons that have escaped abandoned their lairs and moved south, which in turn has pushed many other beasts and monsters from their homes and into other areas, including Buckwild.

TODAY

The Pledge has been taken to Northwind Gate by a scholar called Bjorn Amberclan, who intends to study the orbstone at the Seven Keys Library.

The characters have escorted Bjorn to Northwind Gate and agreed to help him. However, Bjorn's mission and research have to be kept secret, as Bjorn has received information that other people are searching for the orbs, too.

What Bjorn and the characters don't know is that Isdrekin and the cultists have spies and doppelgangers who are looking for them and will do anything in their power to get orb.

IF THE CHARACTERS HAVEN'T PLAYED THE SECRETS OF THE DROW TRILOGY

If you haven't played the previous trilogy, or if you are playing this adventure as a one-shot adventure, the following information can be used to introduce the characters to the adventure:

The characters are helping the dwarven scholar Bjorn Amberclan, who is a cousin (or childhood friend) of one of the characters. Bjorn is researching a legendary orbstone and the characters have agreed to help him. However, the orb could be dangerous in the wrong hands, so the characters must work in secrecy.



HOOKS

The following hooks can be used to motivate the characters to help Bjorn with his mission.

BARBARIANS, FIGHTERS

Even the puniest of tavern thugs can figure out that searching for the magical orb that the scholar seem so keen to find will obviously lead to other greater treasures – and plenty of good fighting!

Finding an orbstone will take courage, steel, and strength. And you have plenty of those resources.

BARDS, ROGUES

During your travels, you have heard many songs and tales about legendary orbstones.

The minstrels' words and the tavern stories vary, but they all agree on one thing: The orbstones are priceless. The brave adventurers who discover them will be famous for generations to come.

CLERICS, PALADINS, MONKS

You are convinced that the orbstone is so powerful it must be considered a holy item and thus is worthy

of a quest. Only those strong in spirit and might will succeed in finding the orbstone.

Evildoers are most likely seeking the orbstone for their own nefarious schemes, so speed is clearly of the essence.

DRUIDS, RANGERS

Lately, you can't ignore the telltale signs that nature is out of kilter anymore. Beasts roam far from their natural habitats, and the wind in the forests whispers of dark tidings.

All signs point to a connection between the disturbances and the legendary orbstone. You must find it and bring balance back to nature.

SORCERERS, WARLOCKS, WIZARDS

You read about the orbstone in an old, musty tome many years ago when you were young. According to legend, the orbstone has been lost for centuries, but it is said to contain immense magical powers.

If you can unlock its secrets, your knowledge and might would increase greatly.

CHAPTER 1: IN NORTHWIND GATE

Northwind Gate is a town located a couple of weeks northeast of Winterhold in a region that sees rough winds and long dark winters. The town has a population of around 4,000 people and is renowned for the Seven Keys Library.

This large old library was founded more than a thousand years ago by a group of adventuring mages and holds Eastern Faraway's possibly largest collection of books, tomes, and scrolls.

Besides the famous library, Northwind Gate features three academic schools: The Academy of Alchemy, the Department for Higher Education, and the School of Wizardry.

Another landmark is the stream Riversnake, which meanders lazily through the town. Because

the river has its origin in a hot spring, its temperate waters provide the small valley in which Northwind Gate is located with a mild, pleasant climate even in deepest winter. Also, the water is believed to alleviate the effects of ageing.

This rumoured property of the river, and the presence of an unparalleled selection of books, make Northwind Gate a popular destination for wizards and scholars as well as many students of lore and magic. The town is also a popular trading destination, as it is strategically located between Winterhold and Whiteport and borders on the harsh Hinterlands region farther north.

VADENA LJUNG

Vadana 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. Vadana 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.



VADENA LJUNG

I shall travel to Northwind Gate
and visit the Seven Keys Library.

Surely the Seven Keys Library
will have more information about
the mysterious orbstone that
we have found.

- Extract from Bjorn Amberclan's
travel journal

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

After a long journey through the majestic winter-clad mountains, the characters have reached Northwind Gate. They have spent the last couple of days at an inn called The Wanderer's Wand, where they have been able to rest, recover, and eat well.

The Wanderer's Wand is a comfortable inn, tucked away on Inkwell Street near the town's market square. The inn is flanked by a glassblower and a shop called Scriptum, which sells parchments, scrolls, quills, ink, and other items for scholars.

The inn is a two-storey building of half-timbered walls and has unusually high ceilings. The exposed beams in the ceiling, as well as the wooden stair's balusters and newels, have been carved to resemble climbing vines, and there are landscape and forest paintings on the walls.

The rooms are lit in the evening by magical hanging lanterns with stained glass. They contain glittering lights that move slowly behind the glass panels like drowsy butterflies. (The lanterns' enchantment is temporary and only lasts for twelve hours.)

Many of the regular guests are senior scholars, travellers, and merchants. Travelling bards entertain most evenings from a low corner stage and happily take requests from the audience.

The inn is managed by the half-elf Vadena Ljung and her wife, Mirrelion, who is a ranger. Vadena is willowy with short auburn hair and large eyes. She wears plain dresses in forest colours and a white apron with pockets. Mirrelion helps out at the inn when she isn't out hunting. She has long black hair in a braid, several rings in her ears, and usually wears practical clothes and leather armour.

A NEW DISCOVERY

Bjorn has been at the Seven Keys Library from dawn to dusk to research the orb.

One evening, when the characters have just finished eating dinner at The Wanderer's Wand inn, the door slams open and Bjorn rushes in. He carries a thick leather-bound tome with yellowing pages under one of his arms.

"I have found what I was looking for!" he says excitedly and struggles to keep his voice down. A few other guests look up from their meals and glance curiously at your party.

"Come to my room," Bjorn says and looks around. "I'll tell you what I have learned!"

The characters follow Bjorn to his room, where he places the tome on a table overflowing with books, parchments, and scrolls. He found the crumbling tome tucked away in one of the library's deepest vaults. The tome is called *A Brief History of Rare Magical Items and Their Legends* by Shyael Amarallis. It is written in an archaic form of Dwarvish that few can decipher.

Bjorn opens the tome, adjusts his spectacles, and runs a finger along the runes on the page.

"According to this book," Bjorn explains, "more than one orbstone was created. They were used many years ago to seal off portals to different planes of existence. The orb that we have in our possession is called *The Pledge* and was used to close the portal to the Plane of Shadow, but this book mentions other orbs too. One of them is called *The Promise* and was used to close a portal to the Feyworld, and there was a third orb named *The Pact* that closed the portal to the Abyss."

"If someone has access to three orbs," Bjorn continues, "they can open permanent portals to any other plane of existence. That would spell disaster! We must find the other orbs and prevent this from happening."

See chapter 7 for more information about the orbstones and the portals.

THE WANDERER'S WAND MENU

Mains	Price
Whiteport salmon, almond potatoes, white sauce with a hint of horseradish	3 sp
Roasted deer with chanterelle mushrooms	3 sp
Vegetable soup with cream	2 sp

All meals are served with fresh bread, butter, cheese, and a side of vegetables or mushrooms (depending on the season).

Drinks

Silver Woodland's finest wine	1 sp
Zacki Buttercup's amazing fizzing wine	3 sp
Southlake wine (red, white, or rose)	5 sp
Western Faraway red wine, special import (bottle)	10 gp
Bloomhaven elvish port	4 sp
Highland pale ale	5 cp
Black currant lemonade	4 cp
Fresh apple juice	4 cp

Prices are per glass, but all drinks can be served in pitchers.

Pot of tea (lavender, camomile, peppermint, or The Wanderer's Wand Special Blend), served with honey and a slice of lemon	3 cp
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Desserts	Price
Blueberry pie	1 sp
Pickled pears with thick chocolate sauce	1 sp
Almond cake slice	1 sp

All desserts are served with frozen whipped cream mixed with vanilla.

Travel rations

Smoked deer, pickled vegetables, mature cheese, and dried fruits and nuts	5 sp
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All rations are wrapped in waterproof waxed linen.

Lodging

Private room	8 sp
Large room (sleeps four)	25 sp

Breakfast is served between dawn to noon and is free for lodging guests.

Bards welcome!

If you would like to provide entertainment for the evening, speak directly to Vadena and we will find out what can be arranged.

THE HISTORY OF THE LABYRINTH

Bjorn explains that according to his research, the second orb is rumoured to be hidden “beneath the winter maze in the north”, which Bjorn believes is a reference to a frozen labyrinth located a couple of days’ travel from Northwind Gate. Local rangers consider it a perilous place to be avoided, and few have entered the labyrinth and returned.

Through his research, Bjorn has unearthed more information about the labyrinth. It was initially constructed by a minotaur and his enslaved goblins. The minotaur, called Assok the Destroyer, was a fearful creature and a compulsive hoarder. He found a place where he could hide his treasure and forced his goblins to build an elaborate labyrinth out of ice. However, due to the erratic magical field in the area, the labyrinth began to expand by itself and added new magical traps and dangers.

Assok the Destroyer terrorised the region for centuries and seemed to be unusually long-lived, perhaps as a side effect of the magic in the labyrinth. However, a couple of years ago, a mighty knight called Trentvin Mayton, a paladin of Tyr and member of the White Rose Order, vowed to slay the minotaur. Armed with his famous greatsword, the *Sword of Adrestia*, he entered the labyrinth boldly and without fear.

However, neither the paladin nor the foul minotaur has been seen since then, and therefore most people think that the paladin succeeded with his quest, but paid with his life.

Bjorn adds that magic is unstable in the area, which means that it is impossible to survey the labyrinth from above. More than one brave adventurer or stubborn scholar have fallen from the sky and perished.

THE QUEST

Bjorn suggests that the characters leave for the frozen labyrinth the following morning and search for the second orb. He promises to reward them with 100 gp each if they can find the orb and bring it back to him. Bjorn also asks the characters to take *The Pledge* with them for safeguarding, while he continues his research in Northwind Gate.

LEAVING NORTHWIND GATE

Many shops and markets in Northwind Gate open early, so the characters can buy gear and travelling rations before they depart.

In addition to the adventuring gear in the core rulebooks, there are also other items for sale in Northwind Gate that are specifically for winter adventuring (see the sidebar).

When the characters are getting ready to leave early the next day, the skies are clear and dark blue with only a hint of the rising sun on the horizon.

Before they depart, Bjorn gives them a rugged leather tube that contains a map he drew last night. The map is simple but neat and shows a detailed description of how to reach the frozen labyrinth.

He suggests that the characters follow the road northwest and cross a frozen lake. This is by far the quickest way to the labyrinth, as the mountains are steep, covered in knee-high snow, and filled with dangers. The journey will take three days.

“You should get ice skates,” Bjorn says. “They’d let you cross the lake swiftly and easily. If you don’t know how to skate, you’ll learn quickly. It is great fun! I used to skate often when I was a student here together with my friend Ian.”

His gaze becomes dreamy as he muses over old memories from his youth.

KRELL

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.

A full description of the winter adventuring gear can be found in the appendix.

SETTING OUT

As the characters leave the balmy dale of Northwind Gate behind and follow the winding road, the temperature soon drops to well below the freezing point. Snow covers much of the mountain landscape, but here and there are small clusters of pine trees, mounds of moss-covered boulders, and patches of green-grey lichen.

While there are occasional footprints of animals and humanoids in the snow, they meet few other travellers along the way.

At one point, they encounter a half-orc ranger with a missing ear called Oгна.

She offers to sell fresh rabbit meat for 2 cp if the characters are friendly to her and her lynx companion Krell.

CHAPTER 2: CROSSING THE LAKE

During mid-afternoon on their second day of travel, the characters arrive at the frozen lake that Bjorn mentioned. The lake is surrounded by steep, frost-coated cliffs that are riddled with icicles and clearly impassable.

The lake is roughly circular, just under 2 miles wide, and covered by a layer of solid ice at least one foot thick. Crossing the lake takes roughly 30 minutes at normal walking speed. However, the extremely slippery ice counts as difficult terrain for characters who walk on it without the aid of ice grips.

SKIS AND SKATES

Characters who bought skis or ice skates can use them to cross the frozen lake swiftly if they succeed on a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (player's choice). See below for the outcome of the check.

If a character holds hands with one or more other characters, they receive a +5 bonus on the check. However, if they fall as a result of the check, characters who hold their hand must immediately succeed on a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check or fall over too.

- On a result of 6 or less: Failure! You fall over, take 1d6 bludgeoning damage, and must make a new check to continue.
- On a result of 7 to 12: Failure! You fall over and must make a new check to continue.
- On a result of 13 to 17: Success! You make unsteady progress but can cross the lake at your normal walking speed.
- On a result of 18 or more: Success! You excel at this. If you made the check using Strength (Athletics), your speed is double your normal walking speed. If you made the check using Dexterity (Acrobatics), you can make pirouettes and other elegant moves.

BEWARE OF THE CREATURE FROM THE DEEP

When one or more characters have travelled about halfway across the frozen lake, the character in the lead is attacked by a **winter eel** (a new monster introduced in this adventure).

Suddenly the ice groans before it cracks under your feet. You fall into icy water that is so cold it rips the air from your lungs.

You only have a moment's warning as you see a dark shadow in the water.

A hideous large creature that resembles an enormous eel with slimy chin barbels and a long horn moves with snake-like speed towards you. It opens its fanged maw and lunges at you!

The winter eel burrowed through most of the ice using the sharp horn on its head to create a trap.

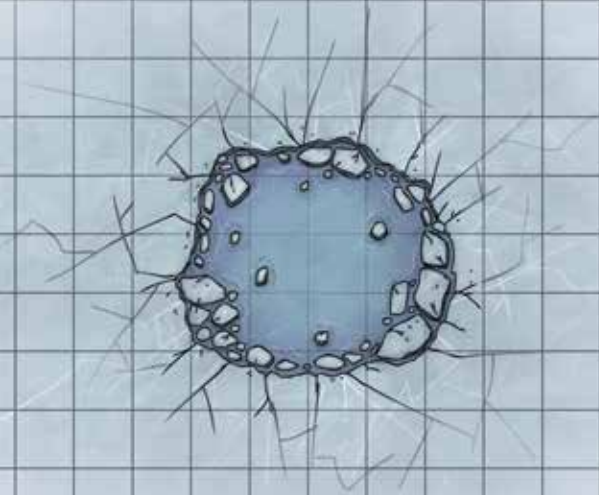
The hole in the ice that the winter eel has created is 20 feet in diameter. Elsewhere, the ice has AC 14 and 25 hit points per 10-foot section and vulnerability to fire damage.

Winter eels are clever predators that attempt to grapple their prey to drag them under the ice and drown them. A character who is Grappled and pulled under the surface suffers the normal consequences of suffocation as described in the core rulebooks. In addition, the character must succeed on a DC 20 Constitution saving throw every round or take 1d6 + 1 cold damage due to the water's low temperature.

Getting out of the icy water takes one round and requires a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. If a character has access to ice claws or if someone throws them a rope, they can add +5 to the check.

When the winter eel has 10 or fewer hit points left, it abandons its target, swims for the bottom of the lake, and remains there until it is fully healed.

WINTER LAKE



One square = 5 feet

The hole in the ice through which the winter eel attacks.

CHAPTER 3: THE HIDDEN ORBSTONE

The *Promise* is hidden underneath the labyrinth in an underground temple that Assok the Destroyer used as his treasure chamber. The orbstone is buried under a flagstone marked with an elven rune.

The underground temple is primordial and was built several thousand years ago. It was used for dark rituals and blood-drenched ceremonies.

FINDING THE TEMPLE

Before the characters enter the labyrinth, roll 1d6 to find out where the entrance to the underground temple can be found:

- 1–2. The entrance to the underground temple is a natural crack in a wall in Area 3, just wide enough for the largest character in the party to squeeze through. After 15 feet, the crack opens into the domed ceiling of the temple.
- 3–4. The underground temple can be accessed through the frozen ground in Area 9. When the heaviest character in the party steps on the ground in this location, a 5-by-5-foot hole cracks open in the ice. The character must succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw or fall through the ceiling into the temple, land on the flagstones near the stone altar, and take 4d6 bludgeoning damage. On a successful save, the character avoids falling and takes no damage.
- 5–6. The entrance is hidden in the wall in Area 9. It is controlled by a lever, which is concealed behind an illusionary ice wall nearby. A character can spot the lever by succeeding on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check. If the lever is pulled, a large secret door slides open and reveals a staircase down to the temple. This entrance was built by the enslaved goblins on the minotaur's order. The trap was devised by one of the goblins who had some skill in magic. If one of the characters walks towards the entrance, letters begin to glow in the ice above the entrance. The words read: "Speak my name or taste my hatred!"

TRAP

Any creature who enters and doesn't immediately speak the words "Assok the Destroyer" is lashed with dark energy and must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. The creature takes 2d8 necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

OPTIONAL: IF THE CHARACTERS GET STUCK

If the characters can't find the entrance to the underground temple in the labyrinth (or if the DM wants to speed up the adventure), read the following section out loud:

A sudden burst of magical energy shakes the labyrinth and causes its walls to glow bright blue. There is a small earthquake, and a large crack appears in the ground next to you.

When you look through the crack at your feet, you glimpse what looks like an ancient stone altar in a large underground room.

HIDDEN DETAILS

Some of the spaces in the labyrinth feature one or more details that are not immediately obvious or easily found. These details are marked "➤ On a closer look," followed by the difficulty and ability check required to discover them. Sometimes the characters need to make multiple checks to find all items or hidden clues.

To characters who can perceive magic, for example through the spell *detect magic*, the entire labyrinth is magical and it is impossible to detect any specific areas or items that are magic unless you are very close to them (e.g. in the same room or corridor).

TRAPS

While the minotaur is long dead, the labyrinth is magic and defends itself from outsiders by magical means. The traps are explained in the descriptions below after each area.

UNSTABLE MAGIC

Magic has behaved erratically on the location where the frozen labyrinth is situated long before the underground temple was constructed or the labyrinth was built. Powerful enchantments can fizzle and fail, while a simple cantrip may have spectacular results. The phenomenon affects even magical items.

No one knows why the weave of magic is so fickle in this particular spot. The theories among scholars and wizards vary, but some suggest that the effects are due to a comet strike, natural fluctuations of magic, a side effect of volcanic activity, or that an extremely powerful dragon once dwelled here.

Every time a spell is cast or a magic item is used, roll 1d6 to find what happens.

1. The spell or item fails and has no effect. There is also an additional unexpected effect, determined by rolling once on the Wild Magic Surge table in the core rulebooks.
2. The spell or item fails and has no effect.
3. The spell or item works as expected. If it has a duration, it is half of what it normally is.
4. The spell or item works as expected.
5. The spell or item works as expected. If it has a duration, it is doubled.
6. The spell or item works as expected. If the spell deals damage, it is doubled. There is also an additional unexpected result, determined by rolling once on the Wild Magic Surge table in the core rulebooks.



CHAPTER 4: INTO THE FROZEN LABYRINTH



After three days of travel, the party arrives at the frozen labyrinth towards the evening.

As you enter a low valley, you glimpse the frozen labyrinth as lattices of dark lines in a massive glacier farther ahead. Jagged, forbidding mountains rise behind the labyrinth and frame its far sides. Snow falls lightly from the evening sky, and an icy wind plays with the tumbling snowflakes.

A single tall, narrow opening allows entrance to the labyrinth.

The walls of the labyrinth are 50 feet high and consist of smoky blue-white ice. Checks made to climb the walls are made with disadvantage and require an ice climbing kit.

The floor is made of rugged ice and in most places covered with a layer of snow one foot deep. Due to the persistent wind, the snow is wispy and full of strange patterns, making it impossible to make out any footprints or tracks of other creatures. The labyrinth magically absorbs some of the snowfall to keep its corridors open.

HERE BE DRAGONS?

The character with the highest passive Perception notices a dragon soar far above the labyrinth. Illuminated by the bleak, setting sun, its wings flash and glitter in the sky like tiny diamonds.

The dragon is too far away for the characters to make out what kind of dragon it is, but it looks very large and almost translucent. After a couple of minutes, it flies away and disappears behind the mountains.

The dragon is Isdrekin Nixius in his natural dragon shape. He is spying on the characters from high above. He has learned about the characters and their current whereabouts from the cultists he collaborates with, who use spies and doppelgangers in Northwind Gate to gather information about the orbstones.



AN UNCANNY FEELING

As the characters venture closer, all wizards, sorcerers, and warlocks in the party sense how magic forces fluctuate and swirl around them. The hair at the back of their necks rise, and the cold air seems to hum with rippling energy that changes in an unpredictable manner.

AREAS

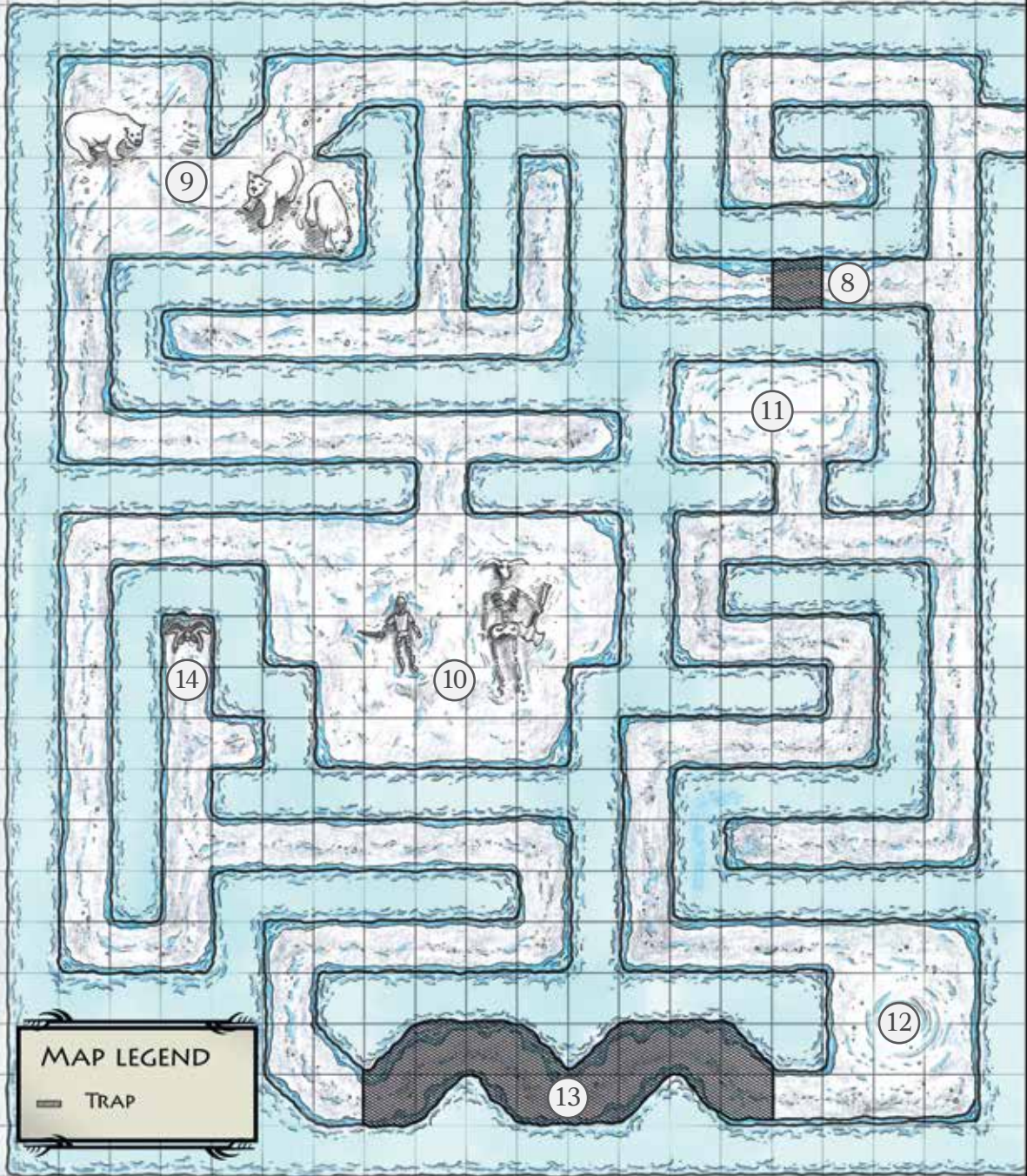
1. SLEEPING GIANT

A **frost giant** is resting here after scouting on behalf of its tribe far to the north. The giant is exhausted after weeks of travelling and deep asleep with one arm wrapped around a large bulging sack. Characters who succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check can sneak past the giant without rousing it.

TREASURE

The sack contains 14 gp, 93 sp, 71 cp, a keg of quality mead (10 sp, weight 8 pounds), and the deep-frozen leg of a goat. The sack can be stolen with a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. If awakened, the giant immediately attacks the nearest character.

THE FROZEN LABYRINTH



The western part of the frozen labyrinth.



The eastern part of the frozen labyrinth.

2. ABANDONED LAIR

The snow in this space is littered with stiff, dirty rags and broken bones.

➤ On a closer look, DC 12 Wisdom (Survival): Some of the bones have deep incisions that were made by the large canine teeth of a carnivore.

The bones are the remains of an unfortunate ranger who was slain and brought here by a trio of polar bears. The bears are currently in Area 9.

3. THE GRAVE

In the western part of this space, the snow rises to a mound. A frost-covered wooden cross rises at an angle from the top of the mound. Someone has carved “Here rests Cazhulia from the Snow Bear Tribe. She fought bravely and recklessly” into the length of the cross.

The cross marks a shallow grave. If the characters dig in the snow beneath the cross, they find the corpse of a half-orc woman clad in black leather armour and clutching a massive maul. The head of the maul is made of black iron, and over one hundred notches are carved into the handle.

The woman’s body is eerily well preserved due to the cold, and the characters have the impression that her frost-coated eyelashes could spring open at any moment.



4: ENRAGED ELEMENTALS

As soon as one or more characters enter this space, the labyrinth summons two hostile **water elementals** that don’t appreciate being snatched away from their normal plane of existence. The elementals appear in a blue flash of magical energy and immediately attack the characters.

5: A CULTIST CUT SHORT

A snow-white **hawk** picks at a bloodied corpse that lies on the ground in the middle of this space. The bird isn’t hostile and flies away for 1d10 rounds if the characters attack or move closer, after which it circles back, perches on one of the walls, and waits for a good time to continue feeding.

The corpse belonged to a male human. It is clad in dark brown robes that have been ripped apart in places. A wooden medallion, engraved with an ancient arcane rune, hangs from a chain around its neck. Characters who are successful on a DC 10 Intelligence (Medicine) check know that the man was slain by a large predator. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (History) or (Arcana) check reveals that the rune means “Return”.

If the characters have played the mini-adventure *Horror at the Wayfarer Stones*, featured in the *Great Old One Compendium*, they recognise the robes and the medallion from their encounter with the cultists at the standing stones. The cultist was sent by Lavinia, the leader of the cult, to search for the orb in the labyrinth.

TREASURE

The cultist carried a small canvas backpack with a bedroll, one day’s travel rations, and a *Potion of Healing*.

6: WILFUL WALLS

The snow on the ground in this space is piled up closely against the walls, revealing the gleaming ice beneath.

TRAP

When more than three characters have entered the corridor, the air is filled with the hum of surging magical forces as the walls glow aquamarine and slam together violently.

A creature standing on the trapped areas (see map) must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3d6 bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. After the walls have slammed together, they move apart to their original position after 1d6 rounds.

The trap can be detected by a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. The trap is magical and can be temporarily deactivated for ten minutes by a successful *dispel magic* (DC 16) cast on the walls.

It is also possible to leap past the sections of the wall that slam together before the trap is triggered. This requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check for each of the three trapped sections.

On a successful check, the character takes no damage and jumps to the next safe area, but on a failed check, the character suffers 3d6 bludgeoning damage.

7: THE CEILING IS A LIE

Several rough blocks of ice rest on the walls around this space.

The blocks of ice are eight **ice mephits** that are using their False Appearance ability to look indistinguishable from normal ice shards. They attack the characters as soon as the last member of the adventuring party has entered the space.

8: FOUL WEATHER

➤ On a closer look, DC 15 Wisdom (Survival): The temperature feels slightly colder in this passage than elsewhere in the labyrinth.

TRAP

When a character has moved halfway down the passage, there is a magical burst of energy as the spell *ice storm* is triggered. The spell is centred on the character and its save DC is 17.

In addition, the spell causes a blizzard to rage 1d4 minutes throughout the entire labyrinth, making it heavily obscured and freezing cold.

The trap can be detected by a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check and can be temporarily deactivated for 1 hour by a successful *dispel magic* (DC 14) cast on the floor.

9: UNBEARABLE OCCUPANTS

A family consisting of three **polar bears** are inhabiting this space. They are huddled in the middle and sniff at the air with their black noses while gazing at the sky.

The polar bears were summoned into the labyrinth months ago and find its icy atmosphere strange but comfortable. They are currently resting after hunting before they return to their lair in Area 2, but will attack the characters on sight.

If any of the polar bears lose more than 30 hit points or are killed, the whole family of polar bears are teleported away to a remote and safe area by the labyrinth, and regain all of their hit points instantly.

Any slain polar bear will then come to life again as if they were affected by the spell *resurrection*.

10: THE FALLEN HERO AND THE HORNED ONE

Two skeletons lie ten feet apart on the ground in the middle of this large space. One is clad in ornate full plate armour with the helmet's visor open to reveal a grinning skull. The other is much larger, and two huge curved horns protrude from its bull-like cranium.

Everything is tinted a faint, pallid blue by the towering ice walls that frame the scene. The air is hushed and the snowfall seems curiously gentle, as if the elements were revering the fallen creatures.

These skeletons are the remains of the minotaur Assok the Destroyer that once ruled the labyrinth and the paladin Trentvin Mayton, who pledged to slay it. The minotaur's skeletal fingers still hold a tremendously large battleaxe, and the paladin's armoured gloves clutch a long, elegant greatsword.

It is obvious to the characters that the two fell dead while still fighting. There are still signs of battle at the site: The walls are dented and chipped, and large cracks mar the ground.

THE RULER AWAKENS

When a character comes within 5 feet of the remains of the minotaur, the labyrinth resurrects the skeleton as an undead monster that immediately attacks the nearest creature.

The monster uses the statistics of a **minotaur skeleton** with the following modifications added by the labyrinth's influence:

- It has an Armour Class of 17 (natural armour) and 115 hit points.
- Its Constitution saving throw modifier is +5.
- The minotaur skeleton has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.
- It has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn undead.
- The undead gaze of the minotaur can instil mindless terror. As a bonus action, the minotaur skeleton targets one creature it can see within 40 feet of it. If the target can see the skeleton, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become Frightened until the end of the skeleton's next turn. If the target fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also Paralyzed for the same duration. A target that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to this effect. The minotaur skeleton can only use this feature three times per day.
- Its challenge rating is 7 (2,900 XP).

TREASURE

The paladin's elegant full plate armour is intact and usable. The greatsword is a magical weapon called the *Sword of Adrestia* and is in perfect condition. See chapter 8 for more information about this item.

You also find a scroll case in pure silver (worth 50 gp). The scroll case is engraved with intertwined roses surrounding the Mayton family crest: Two rearing white harts facing each other under a blazing sun. It contains three scrolls: A *Scroll of Magic Circle*, a *Scroll of Raise Dead*, and a *Scroll of Remove Curse*.

11: ABANDONED CAMP

This space is filled with a one-foot-deep layer of uneven snow.

➤ On a closer look, DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation): Underneath the snow are the charred remains of a makeshift campfire. It is more than two weeks old.

12: INTERRUPTED EVIL

When the first character enters the space, the labyrinth summons a surprised and infuriated **ice devil** that materialises in a blue-white flash of arcane energy. The devil curses loudly in Infernal and immediately attacks the nearest creature. It disappears at the end of the first round in a puff of hot smoke that stinks of sulphur.

The devil was in the middle of negotiating an infernal contract with a damned soul. This sudden interruption ruins the fiend's plans, which infuriates it no end. Roll 1d6 to find what the devil does after the interruption.

- 1–2. The devil successfully negotiates its contract despite the interruption, and nothing more happens.
- 3–4. The devil successfully negotiates its contract, but the final result isn't as favourable as the devil had wished. For this reason, it sends an **imp** 1d4 days later to harass the characters for their interruption.

5–6. The devil fails to negotiate its contract due to the interruption, which makes it lose status and prestige in Hell. Enraged and insulted, it travels to the Material Plane at some point in the future to settle the score with the characters.

13: CORRIDOR

This passage is still and quiet. Small mounds of snow lie piled up against the walls.

TRAP

When a creature has travelled halfway down the passage, arcane forces rise with a whirring sound as the walls glow aquamarine and slam together so forcefully that long cracks form in the ice. All creatures in the passage must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4d6 bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

After the walls have slammed together, the passage is effectively sealed off until the walls move back to their original positions 1d10 minutes later.

The trap can be detected by a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check. Characters who know which part of the floor is trapped can try to avoid this area by zigzagging through the corridor at running speed, a trick that requires a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a successful check, the character avoids triggering the trap, but on a failed check, the character triggers the trap and suffers 4d6 bludgeoning damage.

14: A STONY GUARD

This corridor is filled with a knee-high layer of snow. An alcove at the northern end contains a stone sculpture of a hunched demonic figure. Small icicles hang from its oversized fangs, and the dragon-like wings are coated with glittering frost.

The sculpture is a **gargoyle**. It was fascinated by the vicious exploits of the minotaur and made its home here centuries ago. After the minotaur was killed, it chose to remain in the labyrinth and prey on creatures that become lost in its passages. The gargoyle is wary of dangerous opponents and attacks only if a creature comes within 10 feet of it.



CHAPTER 5: THE UNDERGROUND TEMPLE



Read the following out loud when the characters have found the underground temple:

You descend into an icy-cold underground room in which the shadows seem thicker than they should be. The towering walls are made of smooth obsidian and covered with crude carvings of creatures sacrificed alive and figures baptised in blood.

A massive stone altar stands in the middle of the room. Its surface is covered with dark stains, and spidery icicles hang from its sides. The altar is decorated with ancient runes and unsettling images.

The domed roof is supported by four large pillars, one in each corner. Piles of coin, gems and other valuables lie scattered against the walls. You realise that this must be Assok the Destroyer's treasure.

The chilly air smells of decay, and a suffocating silence fills the room. Even an unschooled peasant would be able to tell that the temple is prehistoric.

Characters who are of good or neutral alignment are uncomfortable in the underground room, and they hear strange whispers and mutterings in their head. Animal companions and non-evil familiars refuse to enter the room.

A SINISTER SANCTUARY

The temple is square and 60 feet in diameter. Its floor consists of large coarse flagstones. The ceiling is 30 feet where it meets the walls, and rises to be 40 feet high in the middle.

The edges of the stone altar are inscribed with primitive Primordial runes. The text reads:

*With flesh and bone, we honour the night.
With pain and suffering, we serve the darkness.
With eye and tooth, we praise the eater of gods.
Baltesium, Baltesium, Baltesium.*

The translation of “Baltesium” is unknown to the characters.

➤ On a closer look, DC 18 Intelligence (History or Religion): The temple is several thousand years old and was used for dark, barbaric ceremonies. It is possible that the rituals that were carried out here have left residual powers in the altar. Alternatively, the shadowy deities that were revered here may have used the altar to influence their worshippers.

➤ On a closer look, DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception): Someone has carved a small elvish rune into one of the flagstones in the floor in a corner.

TRAP

The altar is strongly magical. Any creature that is of good or neutral alignment and touches the altar must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, some of the evil forces in the altar leak into the target’s mind. The target is filled with uncontrollable rage and violently attacks the nearest creature for two rounds.

TREASURE

Assok the Destroyer’s treasure amounts to 23 pp, 1,094 gp, 781 sp, 833 cp, a quartz gem (worth 30 gp), an onyx (worth 50 gp), a bronze crown (worth 120 gp), a box of turquoise animal figurines (worth 100 gp), two brass mugs with jade inlay (worth 25 gp each), a *Potion of Superior Healing*, and a *Potion of Animal Friendship*.

THE BURIED PRIZE

If the characters remove the flagstone with the elven rune, they find a simple box in oak. The box is so old and brittle that it falls apart as soon as anyone touches it.

Inside the box is *The Promise*. The orb is the size of a large apple and made from a glassy, perfectly smooth material. Violet flames move slowly inside the orb and cause it to glow purple.

When the orb is unveiled, a tremor runs through the labyrinth and the air seems to hold its breath for a moment; then everything returns to normal.

CHAPTER 6: BACK TO NORTHWIND GATE

When the characters are making their way back to Northwind Gate and are halfway to their destination, an **invisible stalker** attacks the party.

You are trudging through snow between quiet mountains while icy winds tug at your clothes. Suddenly, the nearby snow shifts as if something unseen is heading towards you!

The invisible stalker was sent to hunt the characters by Lavinia Voiera, the leader of the cult that works with Isdrekin Nixius. Characters who succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check know that they are being attacked by an invisible stalker, and that these creatures are often used for

retrieving objects for their summoner, usually a high-level spellcaster. (If the characters fail on this check, Bjorn provides the characters with the same information once they meet him in Northwind Gate.)

AFTERMATH

The characters receive a group award of 8,700 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.

THE END

The hunt for the orbstones goes on! Lavinia and her fellow cultists will return in *The Quest for the Last Orbstone*, the next adventure in the *Rise of the Ice Dragons Trilogy*.



The snowy path on which the invisible stalker attacks.

CHAPTER 7: LEGEND & LORE

THE ORBSTONES

Once upon a time, permanent portals across Faraway allowed people to travel freely between the Material Plane and many other realms. However, due to increasing political tensions that threatened to turn into a full-fledged war, it was decided that the portals had to be closed.

To this end, magical items known as orbstones were created to store the arcane powers of the portals as these were deactivated by a group of powerful spellcasters.

ARCANE ORBS

The orbstones were made in pairs; one was used to close a portal on the Material Plane, while its twin closed the corresponding portal on the other plane.

Some of these orbstones are known by name and have their own documented history. One known orb is *The Pledge*, which was used to close the portal to the Plane of Shadow. Another, known as *The Promise*, closed a portal to Feyworld. A third orbstone, which was named *The Pact*, was used to close the portal to the Abyss.

While a few of these orbstones have been rediscovered, the names and whereabouts of the other orbstones remain lost to time.

FORGOTTEN PORTALS

In most cases, only faint traces of residual magic are left at the sites where the permanent portals once existed, and only a few know where these sites are located. Many sites have been altogether forgotten, while others have been destroyed on purpose or by accident.

However, a few portals still exist and remain partially active. These portals open very rarely, for example only once every year on a specific day, through complicated rituals, or when magic is especially strong, such as when certain stars align.

The old portal sites are often hidden or guarded by various creatures.



LINGERING THREATS

After the portals were sealed off, it was feared that the orbstones could be used to reopen the portals again, which could ignite old conflicts between the different realms. There was also a potential risk that someone could use the orbs to open permanent portals to other, more strange or dangerous planes.

Therefore, a group of adventurers were enlisted in the utmost secrecy to hide the orbs so that they never would fall into the wrong hands.

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND

Legends tell of a party of four adventurers who took up the quest to hide some of the orbs.

The dwarven member of the party hid *The Pledge* in the mines beneath Winterhold. An elf took *The Promise* into a labyrinth of ice guarded by a minotaur outside Northwind Gate, while the human hid *The Pact* in a grave in Silent Woods.

A fourth member of the party, a half-orc, was entrusted with a fourth orb. However, due to a serious fire in a library many years ago, all further information about the orb, including where it was hidden, has been forever lost.

CHAPTER 8: NEW MAGIC ITEMS



SWORD OF ADRESTIA

Weapon (greatsword), very rare (requires attunement)

This greatsword is several centuries old, but untouched by the teeth of time. It is a clanforged weapon and was crafted according to a secret formula that has been handed down through generations of blacksmiths among the Bharindor Clan in Hammersong.

The sword is made of triple-hardened steel, and its elegant pommel is inlaid with a large flawless sapphire. The sword was magically enchanted by clerics and paladins of the White Rose Order during a long morning ceremony in praise of Tyr, the god of courage and strategy.

PROPERTIES

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The bonus increases with time as you gain new levels. In addition, new features of the sword are unlocked as you gain more experience.

When a creature attunes to the weapon, the sword bestows the wielder with its first-tier powers. As long as the attunement remains unbroken, the sword's second-tier powers are unlocked when the user has gained two more levels. Its third-tier powers are unlocked when two additional levels have been gained.

For example:

- If a 1st-level character attunes to the weapon, its first-tier powers are unlocked.
- When the character reaches level 3, the weapon's second-tier powers are unlocked.
- Finally, when the character reaches level 5, the weapon's third-tier powers are unlocked.

More examples:

- If a 4th-level character attunes to the weapon for the first time, the weapon's first-tier powers are unlocked.
- When the character reaches level 6, the weapon's second-tier powers are unlocked.
- When the character becomes level 8, the weapon's third-tier powers are unlocked.

The powers from the weapon stack with those provided by other sources, such as spells, potions, and other magical items. All previously unlocked powers remain active whenever a new tier is unlocked by the same character. However, increased attack and damage bonuses are replaced and not added together.

For example, the first tier provides +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls, and is replaced with a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls for the second tier (hence, it doesn't stack and become a +3 bonus).

If a different character attunes to the weapon, its second and third tiers are locked again, even if they have been unlocked by a previous owner. All bonuses, powers, and other boons bestowed by this item are permanently lost if the attunement ends.

The wielder of this weapon becomes intuitively aware of new powers when they are unlocked.

POWERS

First tier

- You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The additional damage is radiant damage.
- **Heavenly Retribution.** Once per day, the sword allows you to deal divine damage as a reaction when you take damage. This effect is similar to that of the spell *hellish rebuke*, but the damage dealt is radiant damage, and the target is surrounded by a halo of holy sunlight that comes from above rather than flames.

Second tier

- You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The additional damage is radiant damage.
- When you hit a fiend or an undead creature with the weapon, the creature suffers an additional 2d10 radiant damage.

Third tier

- You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. The additional damage is radiant damage.
- You can cast the spell *conjure celestial* once per day. The spell summons a celestial creature that is loyal to you and fights at your side against evil creatures. Once this feature has been used, it can't be used again until the following dawn.



CHAPTER 9: NEW MONSTERS



WINTER EEL

Winter eels are grotesque aquatic creatures that inhabit lakes in cold regions. They have long writhing chin barbels, their bodies are slick and slippery, and a sharp horn (a spear-like bone) protrudes from their heads. They are known as the “Mountain lake monsters” around Northwind Gate and “Storsjöödjur” among the nomadic tribes.

Winter eels prefer deep lakes and are active only during winter. They use their horns to carve out and weaken sections of ice that regularly are crossed by other creatures. The winter eel then patiently waits for unwary creatures to cross the weakened ice and fall into the lake. At this point, the winter eel attacks and tries to drag its targets in under the solid ice surface to drown its victim. It later brings the corpse to the bottom of the lake, where the winter eel devours it over several days.

Winter eels spend the warmer months of the year in hibernation at the bottom of the lakes and

only rarely visit the surface. They reproduce via mitosis: A new winter eel grows as a formless polyp on the original winter eel’s body. When the new winter eel is partly developed, it detaches and seeks out its own territory. This often occurs during spring when multiple lakes become interconnected as the winter snow melts away.

Winter eels grow rapidly during the first year of their lives, and most are medium to large in size. The maximum size of winter eels is unknown, but it is believed that their growth is unlimited if there is a sufficient supply of food. Some accounts tell of winter eels in Northern Faraway that were gargantuan in size, but other scholars dispute these reports.

Amphibious. Winter eels have gills and clusters of smaller lungs, and can breathe air and water.

Return to the Deep. Winter eels can retreat from fights without provoking attacks of opportunity. They can also use this ability while moving away from combat while grappling a target.

WINTER EEL

Large aberration, neutral evil

Armour Class 16 (natural armour)

Hit Points 127 (17d8 + 51)

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (0)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances acid, poison; piercing

Damage Immunities cold, lightning

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive

Perception 11

Languages understands Common and

Deep Speech but can't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The winter eel makes two attacks, each of which can be replaced with one use of its Electrical Discharge feature.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d8 + 4 piercing damage. If the target is a creature and Large or smaller, the target is grappled. The following round, the winter eel will retreat from combat along with the grappled target and drag it in under the ice.

Electrical Discharge. The winter eel's long chin barbels can produce a lethal shock of electricity. Once per day, the winter eel can use an action to try to stun a target. The slimy chin barbels become surrounded by blue, sparkling electricity, and each creature within 5 feet of the winter eel must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 6d6 lightning damage and is stunned for 1d4 rounds. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't stunned. If the winter eel takes lightning damage, its electrical discharge ability is instantly recharged and can be used again.

The winter eel is an interesting creature that deserves further study.

It actually reminds me of one of the first experiments on eels that I conducted when I left Northwind Gate. A strange coincidence, surely.

- From Evg Ashwood's lost research notes

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).

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 purpose-built 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 provides 1d6 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

ANIMAL WINTER BARDING

Animal winter barding consists of padded double-layered blankets filled with goose feathers. They are secured with leather straps and tied cords. The barding comes in various sizes suitable for all types of mounts, animal companions, and familiars.

Animal winter barding decreases levels of exhaustion due to freezing temperatures by one step.

INSULATED IRON FLASK

Initially a gnomish invention, flasks (also known as thermoses) have become frequently used throughout the colder regions of Eastern Faraway. A flask is made of hardened glass surrounded by a metal shell, which prevents heat from leaving the glass flask. It is commonly used outdoors for transporting hot beverages or liquid foods, such as soup or stew.

An alternative design that allows the heat to dissipate slowly is commonly used for heating beds or bedrolls.

ICE CLIMBING KIT

An ice climbing kit is similar to a climbing kit, but contains picks, ice screws, spiked crampons worn over boots, thick gloves, and a mountaineer's ski pole.

ICE SKATES

Ice skates are special boots fitted with sharpened runners made of metal, bone, or wood.

Ice skating can increase your movement up to double your normal walking speed and requires a successful Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) skill check (player's choice). The DM decides the difficulty of the skill check depending on the situation.

ICE YACHT

An ice yacht is a light sailing boat supported by two side runners constructed to be used on ice. Ice yachts have been used since ancient times, especially in the Hinterlands and Northern Faraway. The light design of the yacht in combination with its design means that it is an efficient long-distance mode of transport that can

reach speeds of 30 mph or more during the right wind conditions.

SET OF ICE CLAWS

A set of ice claws consists of two wooden handles with metal spikes. They are often worn around the neck on a leather cord. Ice claws are used as small handheld ice picks and are usually used by adventurers and others when crossing iced-over lakes and rivers. If someone should fall through the ice, ice claws can be used to get a proper grip on the slippery ice.

All skill checks made to hold on to ice are made with advantage when using a set of ice claws.

SNOWSHOES

Made of carved white oak and hemp rope with leather straps, snowshoes prevent the wearer from sinking into deep snow by spreading the weight of the wearer over a larger area.

Snowshoes allow the wearer to cover difficult terrain more efficiently. Instead of moving at half speed in snow-covered terrain, your speed is only decreased by a quarter. Hence, if a creature's normal base speed is 40 feet, it would be 20 feet in snowy difficult terrain, but snowshoes enable a base speed of 30 feet in the same terrain.

Despite their practicality, snowshoes are bulky and cumbersome, and the wearer has disadvantage on Dexterity checks and saving throws made while wearing them.

SKIS

Skis are often used in the North Star Region during wintertime as an effective mode of transport. The skis are commonly made of carved hardwood, such as mountain beech or grey ash. A set of skis usually comes with a pair of poles that can be used for balance and to increase speed.

Using skis on level ground or gentle hills doesn't require a skill check, but skiing down steeper hills or at high speeds requires a successful Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) skill check. The DM decides the difficulty of the skill check depending on the situation.

SLED

Sleds are smaller and lighter than sledges and are commonly used by adventurers. They can be used for transporting adventuring gear and slide easily over snow and ice thanks to their broad runners. They can be pulled by either people or animals.

Some sleds have thinner runners made of metal and are meant to be used exclusively on ice. These can also be used for swift transportation across iced-over lakes, rivers, and streams.

THICK SLEEPING MATS

These sleeping pads are made of thin braided twigs of birch and grass interwoven with layers of wool and strips of pelt. The technique is more than a thousand years old and has been used by the nomads in the Hinterlands.

Thanks to the design, sleeping pads offer protection from extreme cold weather and decrease levels of exhaustion due to freezing temperatures by one step. The sleeping pads are easily folded and light to carry.

WINTER CLOTHES

This set of clothes is suitable for outdoor adventuring in cold climates. It includes a pair of leggings, a long-sleeved shirt, knee-high winter boots, knitted legwarmers, woollen socks, leather trousers with crisscross-tied sides, a leather belt, a long double-buttoned coat, and a cape in thick wool with fur trimming.

The outfit also includes a pair of thick mittens, a trapper hat, and a long knitted scarf that comes in various designs.

WINTER TENT (SLEEPS 2)

A winter tent is similar to an ordinary tent, but consists of three different layers and an extra-thick underlay for the tent. The winter tent is also sturdier and made of thick materials that can withstand strong winds and severe blizzards. During extremely snowy conditions, the winter tent can also be covered with snow for extra insulation and protection.

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.

DISCOVERING THE UNDERGROUND TEMPLE

Suggested changes to falling damage when discovering the temple:

Tier 1: 2d6 bludgeoning damage.

Tier 2: Use the falling damage as described in the adventure.

Tier 3: Use the falling damage as described in the adventure.

Tier 4: Use the falling damage as described in the adventure.

Adjust the DC for saving throws and skill checks as previously mentioned.

Suggested changes to damage from the trap at the entrance to the temple:

Tier 1: 1d8 necrotic damage.

Tier 2: Use the damage described in the adventure.

Tier 3: 3d8 necrotic damage.

Tier 4: 4d8 necrotic damage.

Adjust the saving throws and skill check DC as previously mentioned.

TRAPS

Suggested changes to the first slamming walls trap (Wilful walls, Area 6):

Tier 1: 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

Tier 2: Use the damage described in the adventure.

Tier 3: 4d6 bludgeoning damage.

Tier 4: 5d6 bludgeoning damage.

Adjust the saving throws and skill check DC as previously mentioned.

Suggested changes to the second slamming walls trap (Corridor, Area 13):

Tier 1: 2d6 bludgeoning damage.

Tier 2: Use the damage described in the adventure.

Tier 3: 6d6 bludgeoning damage.

Tier 4: 8d6 bludgeoning damage.

Adjust the saving throws and skill check DC as previously mentioned.

Suggested changes to the *ice storm* spell trap (Foul weather, Area 8):

Tier 1: Change the spell to two *ray of frost* that randomly target two of the characters in the group.

Tier 2: Use the spell described in the adventure.

Tier 3: Change the spell to *cone of cold*. The spell targets as many players as possible.

Tier 4: Change the spell to *wall of ice*. The DM decides the shape and location of the spell.

Adjust the saving throws and skill check DC as previously mentioned.

ENCOUNTERS

Replace the **frost giant** with:

Tier 1: One **ogre**. CR 2 (450 XP).

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

Tier 3: One **cloud giant**. CR 9 (5,000 XP).

Tier 4: One **storm giant**. CR 13 (10,000 XP).



Replace **two water elementals** with:

Tier 1: One **gelatinous cube**. CR 2 (450 XP).

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

Tier 3: Use the monsters as described in the adventure.

Tier 4: Three **water elementals**. CR 13 (10,800 XP).

Replace eight **ice mephits** with:

Tier 1: Four **ice mephits**. CR 3 (800 XP).

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

Tier 3: Ten **ice mephits**. CR 6 (2,500 XP).

Tier 4: Fifteen **ice mephits**. CR 11 (6,000 XP).

Replace three **polar bears** with:

Tier 1: Three **brown bears**. CR 2 (600 XP).

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

Tier 3: Four **winter wolves**. CR 9 (5,900 XP).

Tier 4: Two **remorhaz** (and their two eggs). CR 18 (21,600 XP).

Replace the modified minotaur skeleton with:

Tier 1: One **minotaur skeleton** without any additional modifications. CR 2 (450 XP).

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

Tier 3: The monster in the adventure has the appearance of a minotaur skeleton, but uses the statistics of one **mummy lord**. In addition, its *Blinding Dust* and *Whirlwind of Sand* actions use snow rather than sand. CR 15 (13,000 XP).

Tier 4: The monster in the adventure has the appearance of a minotaur skeleton, but uses the statistics of one **lich**. CR 21 (33,000 XP).

Replace the **ice devil** with:

Tier 1: One **bearded devil**. CR 3 (700 XP).

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

Tier 3: One **ice devil**. CR 14 (11,500 XP).

Tier 4: One **pit fiend**. CR 20 (25,000 XP).

Replace the **gargoyle** with:

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

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

Tier 3: Increase the gargoyle's hit points to 90. CR 6 (2,300 XP).

Tier 4: Increase the gargoyle's hit points to 187. CR 11 (7,200 XP).

Replace the **invisible stalker** with:

Tier 1: One **cult fanatic**. CR 2 (450 XP).

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

Tier 3: Two **invisible stalkers**. CR 10 (6,900 XP).

Tier 4: Three **invisible stalkers**. CR 15 (13,800 XP).

THE WINTER EEL

Change the statistics for the **winter eel** in the following way:

Tier 1:

Armour Class 13 (natural armour)

Hit Points 59 (7d12 + 14)

Damage Immunities —

Condition Immunities —

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 1d6 + 2 piercing damage. If the target is a creature and Large or smaller, the target is grappled. The following round, the winter eel will retreat from combat along with the grappled target and drag it in under the ice.

Electrical Discharge. The winter eel's chin barbels sparkle with electricity, and each creature within 5 feet of the winter eel must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 3d6 lightning damage and is stunned for one round. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't stunned. If the winter eel takes lightning damage, its electrical discharge ability is instantly recharged and can be used again.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Tier 2:

Use the monster as described in the adventure.

Tier 3:

Armour Class 17 (natural armour)

Hit Points 200 (16d10 + 112)

Multiattack. The winter eel makes three attacks, each of which can be replaced with one use of its Electrical Discharge feature.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** 2d8 + 6 piercing damage. If the target is a creature and Large or smaller, the target is grappled. The following round, the winter eel will retreat from combat along with the grappled target and drag it in under the ice.

Electrical Discharge. The winter eel's chin barbels sparkle with electricity, and each creature within 5 feet of the winter eel must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 7d6 lightning damage and is stunned for 1d4 + 1 rounds. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't stunned. If the winter eel takes lightning damage, its electrical discharge ability is instantly recharged and can be used again.

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Tier 4:

Armour Class 18 (natural armour)

Hit Points 247 (15d20 + 90)

Damage Resistances acid, poison

Damage Immunities cold, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, restrained

Multiattack. The winter eel makes three attacks, each of which can be replaced with one use of its Electrical Discharge feature.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. **Hit:** 3d8 + 8 piercing damage. If the target is a creature and Large or smaller, the target is grappled. The following round, the winter eel will retreat from combat along with the grappled target and drag it in under the ice.

Electrical Discharge. The winter eel's chin barbels sparkle with electricity, and each creature within 5 feet of the winter eel must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 8d6 lightning damage and is stunned for 1d4 + 2 rounds. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't stunned. If the winter eel takes lightning damage, its electrical discharge ability is instantly recharged and can be used again.

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

HOW TO SCALE TREASURES

Adjust the fallen paladin's treasure as follows:

Tier 1: Use the same treasure as described in the adventure.

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

Tier 3: Use the same treasure as in the adventure and replace the full plate with a *Full Plate +2*.

Tier 4: Use the same treasure as in the adventure and replace the full plate with a *Full Plate +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.

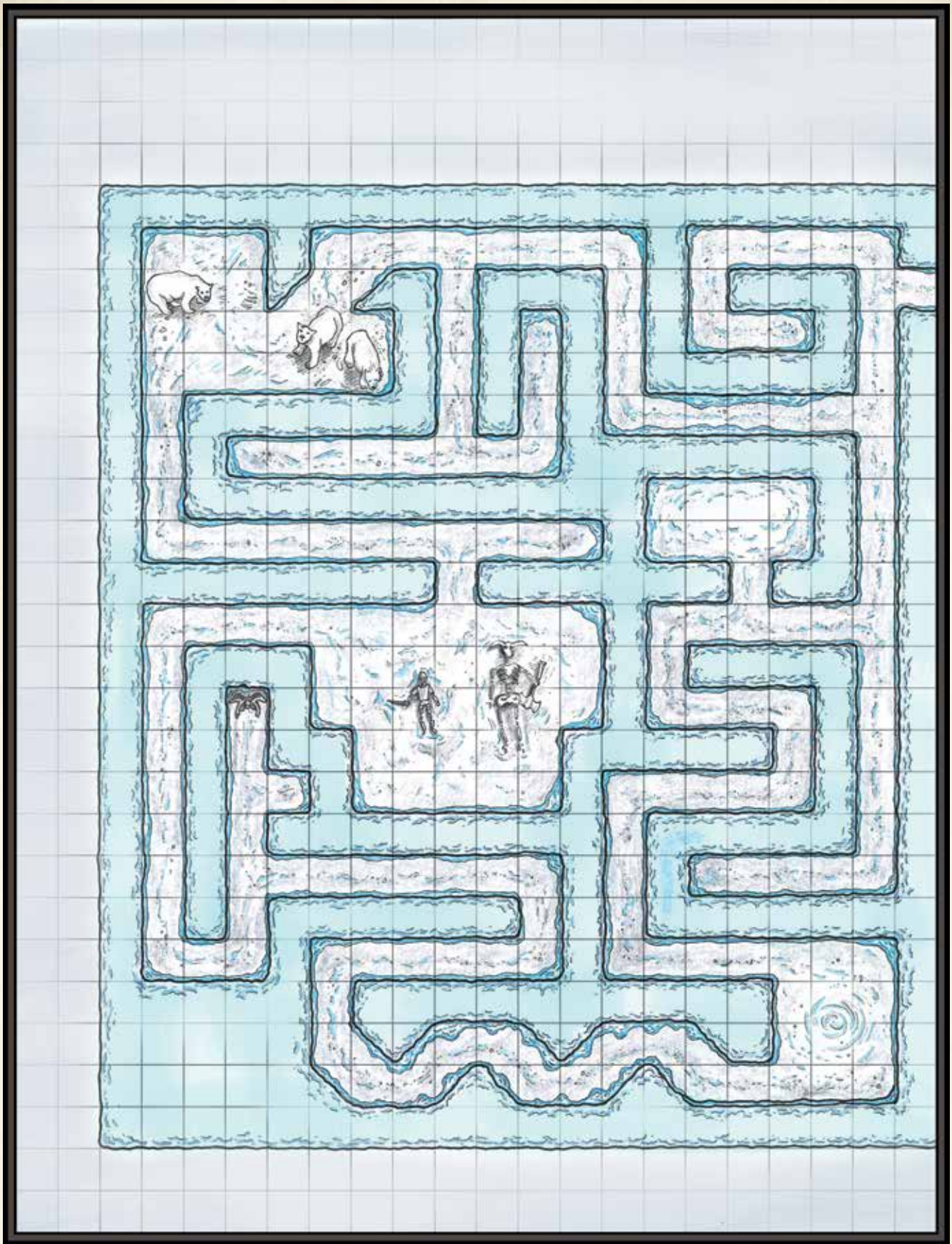
Other treasures in the adventure:

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.



The western part of the frozen labyrinth: Player version.

THE FROZEN LABYRINTH



ENTRANCE

One square = 5 feet

The eastern part of the frozen labyrinth: Player version.

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TEXT

Tove Lund Jorgensen
Erik Jorgensen

ART

Tove Lund Jorgensen
Lyra Jorgensen
Alaina Milare

DESIGN

Erik Jorgensen

MAPS

Toby Lancaster (Dark Realm Maps)
LeslieAnn Khoury (Lizard Ink Maps),
<https://www.lizardinkmaps.com>

BETA READING

Anders Jordahl
Paul Sherliker

PROOFREADING

Pauline Nolet, www.paulinenolet.com

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