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ALTERNATE DUNGEONS: FRIGID ICE CAVE





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ALTERNATE DUNGEONS: FRIGID ICE CAVE

Not all dungeons feature the traditional setup of a monster-filled subterranean network of rooms and passages. Druidic groves, haunted houses, rank sewers and more can all serve as an exciting backdrop to the PCs' adventures. Such locations present their own set of unique design challenges, though, for the time-crunched GM plotting the next adventure.

This instalment of Alternate Dungeons presents loads of great details, hints and tips for a GM designing an adventure set in a frigid ice cave. Designed to save a GM's time while adding flavoursome details to bring the locale alive in the player's minds, Alternate Dungeons: Frigid Ice Cave is an essential tool in any GM's arsenal.

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Thank you for purchasing *Alternate Dungeons: Frigid Ice Cave*; we hope you enjoy it and that you check out our other fine print and PDF products.

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FRIGID ICE CAVE: AN ALTERNATE DUNGEON

Inhospitable, remote, beautiful and mysterious, glacial caves and icy cavern networks comprise the only natural shelters in most frozen northlands. It's no wonder explorers are drawn to such sites when many such places have never been glimpsed by a living person. But wonder and mystery aren't all that await adventurers in such isolated locales; natural arctic denizens (and unnatural ones too, no doubt) may be drawn to such caverns in places where shelter is scarce and the elements harsh.

Though gold and riches are unlikely to await explorers at the end of the earth, adventure is never in short supply; an explorer might find anything buried in the timeless ice: rare mineral veins, primeval fossils or ancient, magical objects.

It's easy to imagine a frigid cavern network as an adventuring site—rooms and corridors can be laid out in linear or haphazard form, depending on how the caverns formed, and such a location can be as large or as small as needed. For those rare creatures adapted to live in such a dangerous place. Icy cave networks offer seclusion and refuge, making such sites perfect hiding places for tundra-dwelling villains, dragons and other monsters.

DEFINING THE DUNGEON

An ice cave is easy to imagine and even easier to define: any series of frozen, underground chambers and hollows. The walls of such caverns might be formed from ice or from stone, but probably feature some of both. Icy caves are virtually always dangerous to navigate, featuring slippery slopes, steep drops, frigid waters, deadly inhabitants and the ever-looming threat of avalanches, plummeting stalactites and cracking ice.

Your ice caves might be comprised of an entire series of icy chambers and corridors, only a handful of caverns or even a single hollow. Unlike a fortress, temple or haunted house, no expectation of size or scope exists for a natural cavern network.

DESIGNING THE DUNGEON

The ecology of an icy cavern is, in some respects, easy to design. Water is easily accessible for all denizens—ice is everywhere and bodies of frigid water are no doubt a feature of such a cave. Food sources, on the other hand, might be much scarcer in such an extreme and inhospitable environment. Certain lichens might grow in frigid northerly climes, but vegetation may overall be harder to find. Inhabitants might subsist on fish, vermin and small rodents such as rats or weasels—or the monsters might subsist on one another. Whatever the solution, bear in mind the scarcity of natural resources in most remote or extreme locations.

Surface access, on the other hand, should be abundant. Any number of cracks and corridors might lead to the surface, and

ice—being much softer than stone—is relatively easy to tunnel through. Underground rivers might connect the icy dungeon to any number of waterways as well.

Within each chamber or icy encounter, terrain and layout are important for setting an atmosphere of isolation, mystery and natural wonder. Below are some features and ideas a GM could use when designing locations within a frigid ice cave.

Cliffs: Cliffs might be encountered on the exterior or interior of an icy cavern. A cliff typically requires a DC 15 Climb check to scale and is 1d4 × 10 ft. tall, although the needs of your dungeon might mandate a taller cliff. A cliff isn't perfectly vertical, taking up 5-foot squares if it's less than 30 ft. tall and 10-foot squares if it's 30 ft. or taller.

Chasms: Usually formed naturally, chasms function like pits in a dungeon setting. Chasms aren't hidden, so characters won't typically fall into them by accident. A typical chasm is 2d4 × 10 ft. deep, at least 20 ft. long, and anywhere from 5 ft. to 20 ft. wide. It takes a DC 15 Climb check to climb out of a chasm.

Ice Sheets: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square covered by a sheet of ice, and the DC of Acrobatics checks there increases by 5. Additionally, a DC 10 Acrobatics check is required to run or charge across an ice sheet.

Ice Slick: A sheet of ice becomes more dangerous the moment it begins to melt, or "sweat," becoming especially slick and dangerously frictionless.

A creature traversing slick ice at more than half speed must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check at the start of that movement. Failure indicates the creature falls prone at the start of the movement. Running or charging on slick ice increases the DC by 5, with the same effect on a failed Acrobatics check. A creature succeeding at this check by 5 or more can increase its move across the ice by 10 ft., but is considered flat-footed until the start of its next turn. Creatures that cannot be caught flat-footed are immune to this flat-footed effect.

Ledges and Levels: Crumbling ledges and yawning gaps are iconic to any cavern expedition, but combined with the prospect of tumbling into the icy depths, falling dangers take on a new level of danger—no pun intended. Cliffs and ledges also offer great opportunities for PCs to glimpse wandering foes or fleeing villains before encountering them up close.

Steep Slopes: Characters moving up steep hills must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square comprising a steep slope. Characters running or charging downhill must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check upon entering the first steep slope square. Mounted characters make a DC 10 Ride check instead. Characters who fail this check stumble and end their movement 1d2 × 5 feet later. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone in the square where they end their movement. A steep slope increases the DC of Acrobatics skill checks by 2.

RUNNING THE DUNGEON

Above and beyond the abundant opportunities a frigid ice cave provides for monster encounters and wild animal lairs, running such a site offers a handful of additional challenges and special occasions for a GM to throw at players. Below are listed a few special considerations a GM should keep in mind when running an icy cavern as a dungeon.

Crumbling Columns and Stalagmites: Patches of cracking or thawing ice may cause tall ice formations to topple. Anyone in the path of such a falling formation must make a DC 15 Reflex saving throw to dive clear, or take 3d6 damage. Successful or not, attempting such a save causes a character to fall prone. Fallen ice columns and stalagmites are as likely to block cavern corridors as to bridge chasms or gaps, and may provide memorable and interesting challenges (and set piece battles) if used in either way. Such structures might be as few as 5 feet or as many as 20 feet tall, and can usually be climbed with a DC 22 Climb check (note this DC includes the modifiers for climbing a slippery surface).

If used as a trap or as a part of an encounter, a crumbling ice column has a CR of 1.

Environmental Cold: In conditions of severe cold or exposure (below 0° F), an unprotected character must make a Fortitude saving throw every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check), taking 1d6 nonlethal damage on each failed save. A character who has the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and might be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters wearing a cold weather outfit only need check once per hour for cold exposure damage.

A character who takes any nonlethal damage from cold or exposure is beset by frostbite and hypothermia (treat him or her as fatigued). These penalties end when the character recovers the nonlethal damage she took from the cold and exposure.

Starvation and Supplies: Accounting for the ever-present threat of starvation is a fundamental consideration in preparing for arctic expeditions (and a common storytelling trope in “man vs. wild” adventures). While ice (and therefore water) may be abundant, characters might find themselves without food and with no means to obtain more. In cold and temperate climates, Medium characters need at least a gallon of fluids and about a pound of food per day to avoid starvation. (Small characters need only half as much.)

A character can safely go without food for three days. After this, a starving character must make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 nonlethal damage. Characters suffering nonlethal damage equal to their total hit points begin to take lethal damage instead.

Volcanic Tremors: Volcanic activity is relatively common in glacial and mountainous northern tundra; and even dormant

volcanoes can produce significant seismic tremors. Tremors last anywhere from 1d4 rounds to 2d6 minutes and increase Climb DCs by 2. The tremors might start an avalanche (see below) or collapse a cave or cliff (similar to an *earthquake* spell).

Water Dangers: Any character can wade in relatively calm water that isn't over his head; no check required. Similarly, swimming in calm water only requires a DC 10 Swim check.

By contrast, fast-moving water is much more dangerous. Characters must make a DC 15 Swim check or a DC 15 Strength check to avoid going under. On a failed check, the character takes 1d3 nonlethal damage per round (or 1d6 lethal damage if flowing over rocks and cascades).

Very deep water is not only generally pitch black, posing a navigational hazard, but worse deals water pressure damage of 1d6 points per minute for every 100 feet the character is below the surface. A successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) means the diver takes no damage. Very cold water deals 1d6 nonlethal damage from hypothermia per minute of exposure.

SACKING THE DUNGEON

Seeding treasure throughout a remote natural cavern complex is trickier than in more traditional dungeons.

Artifacts and Powerful Items: A remote, uninhabitable and supremely treacherous cavern of ice and stone makes a great hiding place for an artefact, a powerful magical object or some other treasure meant to be hidden away from the world of meddling humanoids and greedy magic-users.

Dead Adventurers: A slain adventurer makes a great source of treasure, and stumbling across such a thing is a thematic way to remind your PCs the dungeon wants them dead!

Frozen Objects: At extremely cold temperatures, ice makes for a very effective preservative. Almost anything on this list (especially dead adventurers and sunken vessels) might be found frozen in the icy walls or frigid depths of your ice cavern.

Natural Resources: “Natural” treasures are a great choice; the allure of valuable ore veins, rare plants, magical ley lines or even the hides of unusual monstrous denizens could all motivate adventurers to explore the dungeon.

Sunken Vessels: Expeditions to the frozen north are fraught with peril—any number of natural calamities might befall an expeditioner's ship laden with equipment and supplies. Such a vessel might also contain a wealth of...

Trade Goods: Whether trekking by land or by sea, explorers need supplies to survive. Furs, rations, gear and rarer goods like exotic spices make for great treasures...and depending on the kind of campaign you're running, food might be more valuable than gold in the desolate tundra.

FRIGID ICE CAVE: DRESSING

The descriptions, characteristics and visual cues used to colour the icy caverns establishes the tone of the adventure, cements the players' expectations and help make the frozen dungeon an unforgettable locale. Even if the scenario only includes (but isn't centred around) an icy cavern complex, a little dressing can make an otherwise trivial foray to into such a place a memorable scene.

FUNCTION

Where wood, harvestable stone and other building materials are scarce, caverns and other natural formations and fissures make excellent foundations for organized structures. Dotting your icy cavern with ruins or even structured dwellings break up an otherwise monotonous flow and backdrop for the adventure, and allows for more types of appropriate encounters. Whether settled and occupied or merely an untouched natural formation, the cavern's function likely includes providing home, shelter and safety to its inhabitants. Below, find a handful of examples as to how a frigid ice cavern's denizens might utilize the site.

Ancient Guardians: Remote, ancient sites make great hiding places for artifacts and other powerful objects—and such items of power are very rarely without their equally-ancient guardians. Constructs, elementals, outsiders, undead and other immortal creatures are the best choices for such a role.

Elemental Bond: In places where the barriers between worlds are thin, creatures from the other planes might bleed through. Elementals with the cold, air and water subtypes are appropriate choices in a planar-adjacent dungeon.

Such a place might also constitute a place of great power or potential for spellcasters or fey creatures, drawing characters to the site in order to manipulate or capitalize on its extraplanar or elemental properties.

Hibernation: Some creatures (like polar bears and perhaps arctic dragons) can hibernate for entire seasons, lairing in caves and caverns during a long period of metabolic rest and inactivity.

Shelter and Survival: Simple, elemental survival instinct may motivate most of the dungeon's denizens. Even a shallow cave can provide shelter from the ice, snow, wind and rain, and most natural caverns are filled with plenty of nooks and crannies for wild animals to claim.

Sympathetic Magic: A wonderful tool for populating what might otherwise be a desolate or dangerous place, the *sympathy* spell is a perfect tool for attracting (or explaining) the presence of monsters in unusual locations.

Conversely, an *antipathy* spell might drive creatures out of a nearby habitat or settlement, forcing them to take shelter in the icy dungeon.

DRESSINGS

Use the table on the following page to generate interesting characteristics for the frigid ice dungeon. Some of the features listed below may be inappropriate for the abandoned site based upon its setup; ignore or modify any such entries as appropriate.

You can use this table in a number of ways. You might roll on the table whenever you feel like spicing up a frozen cavern, or whenever the PCs first encounter a new room or natural feature within.

Dungeon Dressings as Treasure: A few of the dressings below include descriptions of valuables or expensive art objects. These dressings typically have a gp value equal to the gp award for an encounter with a CR equal to the party's APL -2.

Multiple Dressings: A GM may roll multiple times on the dressings table below, or simply choose dressings as desired to create the atmosphere that he or she prefers.



D%	FRIGID ICE CAVE DRESSINGS
01	A powerful magical weapon or wondrous item is frozen within the icy dungeon wall.
02–04	Heavy snow has accumulated on the floor. It takes 4 squares of movement to move through such squares.
05–07	A yawning gorge splits the icy ground, spanning a depth of 2d12 x 10 ft.
08–10	An adventurer's corpse rests on a tall shelf of ice 2d4x10 ft. above the floor.
11–13	Icicle stalagmites cover the floor of a corridor, creating difficult terrain (2 squares of movement to enter).
14–16	An intense cold permeates a chamber, reducing the temperature by 2d10 degrees.
17–19	A slow-moving waterway divides the room, slick stepping-stones providing the only way across (a DC 18 Acrobatics check is required to cross without slipping off).
20–22	Cold magic is enhanced within the chamber, as the enhanced magic (cold) planar trait. Consequently, it is colder in here than the rest of the complex.
23–25	Fire magic is impeded within the chamber, as the impeded magic (fire) planar trait. Consequently, it is warmer in here than the rest of the complex.
26–28	A maze of semi-transparent ice walls 5 ft. high makes navigating a room confusing and difficult.
29–31	Chilly mist blankets an entire chamber. The mist provides concealment (20% miss chance) to those within.
32–34	A small lake or watering hole comprised of pitch-dark, ice-cold water dominates the centre of the room. A thin sheen of ice, which is easily broken) covers the pool.
35–37	An eerie, animal howling sound echoes through the caverns, here from somewhere far away. The creature making the noise is in terrible pain.
38–40	An enormous stalactite of ice looms over the room. A very loud noise (such as a thunderstone) or an area of affect attack spell may shake it loose, causing it to plummet to the chamber floor, cracking the ice and dealing 4d6 damage (DC 15 Reflex halves) to characters caught directly underneath.
41–43	A crashing waterfall tumbles down one icy wall, trickling into cracks and chasms in the floor. The floor near the waterfall is particularly slippery and treacherous.
44–46	Water trickles onto the frozen ground, making it more slippery. Add 2 to the DC of Acrobatics checks on the slippery ice.
47–49	Sharp, cracked shards of ice dominate the floor, acting as scattered caltrops.
50–52	Fragile ice crystals, icicles and icy tunnels create beautiful chiming noises each time the wind blows into the chamber.

53–55	The carcass of an animal decorates the floor, frozen blood soaked into the ice and snow all around it. Some of the blood has been used to daub disturbing runes on the floor.
56–58	A foreboding message is etched into the ice (in a language appropriate to the adventure).
59–61	A frozen-solid pool contains a wealth of treasure at the bottom, barely visible through the ice.
62–64	The entrance to the next chamber is carved out of the ice, resembling a monstrous, gaping maw.
65–67	Icy rapids rush through the chamber in a fast-moving stream. Characters falling in must make a DC 15 Swim check or a DC 15 Strength check to avoid going under and taking 1d6 lethal damage.
68–70	A burnt-out campsite and a smattering of spoiled (and frozen) supplies litter the ground in one chamber. It is impossible to tell how long they have lain here.
71–73	The bones of an enormous creature are visible, frozen within the icy wall of one large chamber. They appear scorched and burnt.
74–76	Steamy hot springs boil in pools set into the cold stone floor.
77–79	A permanent <i>wall of ice</i> (with a caster level equal to the party's APL + 3) divides the room into two roughly equal partitions.
80–82	A small fortune in silver ore is just waiting to be mined out of the walls, here. However, prospective miners must break through the wall's icy covering to get at the previous ore.
83–85	Large animal tracks are abundant on the snowy ground in this chamber.
86–88	Scaffolding rests against an icy wall into which a great etching is clearly being carved.
89–91	Diffused daylight filters in through the semi-transparent ceiling of ice, raising the light level within the room by one step during the day.
92–94	A beautiful ice sculpture occupies the centre of the room. A discarded set of tools—a hammer and chisels of various sizes lie discarded nearby.
95–97	A near-deafening rush of noisome wind whistles and whips through the chamber, increasing the DC of Perception checks made to listen by 5.
98–99	The ice in the ceiling of this area is unstable (DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) reveals. A very loud noise (such as a thunderstone) or an area of affect attack spell may cause it to collapse. Characters in the room suffer 8d6 damage (DC 15 Reflex halves) and may be trapped as if they were in the slide zone of an avalanche.
100	This area is filled with snow and ice. Recently, the ceiling collapsed killing several creatures. The snow is loosely packed and can be cleared twice as quickly as normal. Extensive excavations reveal several crushed and frozen bodies (and perhaps some minor treasure).

FRIGID ICE CAVE: DENIZENS

As with most dungeons set in the wilderness, an ice cave is a haven for monsters just looking for a place to shelter from the elements. This section includes examples of creatures that might inhabit such a cold and lonely place. Each entry includes a CR where appropriate.

Frost Giants (CR 9): Frost giants are great (and obvious) choices for high-level icy dungeons, providing ample opportunity for encounters with the numerous “pet” monsters (including humanoid slaves) they are known to keep, such as winter wolves, linnorms, white dragons, remorhaz and arctic animals such as polar bears and tundra wolves.

Orcs, and other Humanoids (CR varies): With so many cold- and ice-themed monsters to choose from when populating the dungeon, it is easy to overlook a special opportunity: the chance to paint campaign “staples” like orcs, goblins and other traditionally-evil humanoids with a new brush. Given a simple change of scenery and a culture and lifestyle adapted to wildly different physical circumstances, plain old orcs become new- and-unusual arctic orcs, with fur-lined hoods, snow goggles and mammoth-tusk spears! Goblins become ice goblins—blue-skinned walrus riders who use a whalebone currency! Choose new equipment, feats and skills to reflect their adaptation to a different sort of climate; these brand-new monsters will subvert the PCs’ (and players’) expectations and be truly memorable.

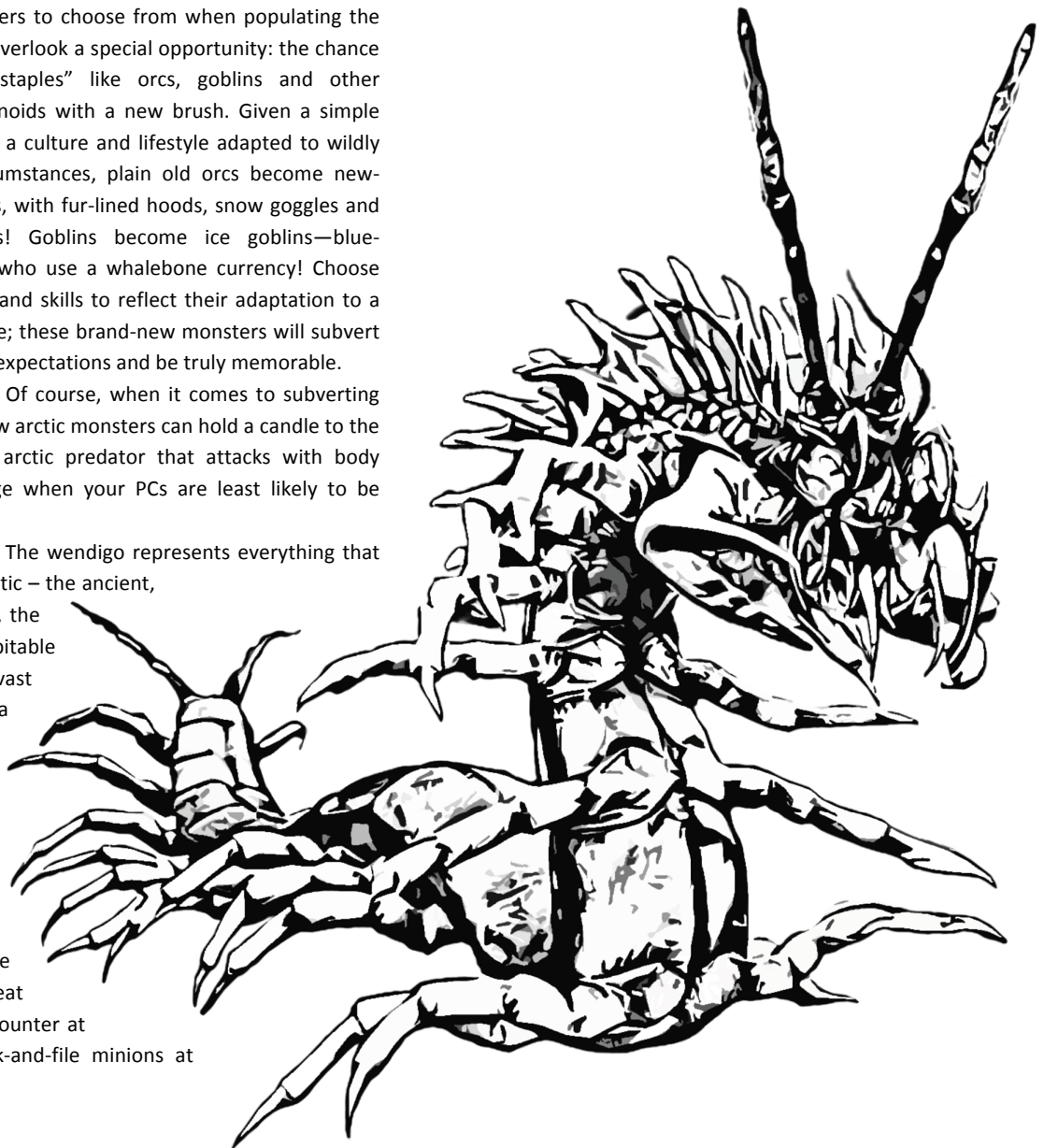
Remorhaz (CR 7): Of course, when it comes to subverting player expectations, few arctic monsters can hold a candle to the mighty remorhaz—an arctic predator that attacks with body heat-based fire damage when your PCs are least likely to be prepared for it!

Wendigo (CR 17): The wendigo represents everything that men fear about the arctic – the ancient, elemental danger of it, the aggressively inhospitable environment, the vast loneliness of such a place and the ever-present fear of starvation.

Winter Wolves (CR 5): As arctic encounters go, it’s hard to beat the winter wolf. These monsters make a great choice for a tough encounter at low levels or for rank-and-file minions at

high levels. They’re intelligent, evil and organized, they’ve got thematically appropriate breath weapons, a predatory culture based on a “follow-the-leader” pack mentality and they’re too fast for most PCs to outrun.

Yeti (CR 4): Despite its obvious use for a tough, “big-ugly-brute” style encounter, the yeti is an excellent candidate for a “misunderstood monster” encounter as well. Most players may not realize the typical yeti isn’t an evil creature at all, and that yeti are, in fact, a race of intelligent creatures with a culture all their own. In fact, some primitive cultures might revere or pay tribute to local yeti tribes—meat offerings work particularly well in this regard.



FRIGID ICE CAVE: TRAPS & HAZARDS

Treacherous ice floes and centuries of melting and reforming ice ensure a glacial cavern is never a safe place to adventure. Pits, cave-ins and collapses, and any number of physical hazards are abundant in subterranean caverns of any stripe, though icy networks sport a number of dangers unique to such locations.

MUNDANE TRAPS & HAZARDS

The following traps and hazards are non-magical, and many are formed naturally. Any traps listed here do not have a reset mechanic. Each entry includes a CR where appropriate.

Avalanches (CR 7): Outdoors, an avalanche can be spotted from hundreds of feet away—but what about an avalanche that passes through or buries a cavern or chasm? Even underground, it's possible to hear the roar of an avalanche advancing. Under optimal conditions (when no overwhelming sounds are occurring nearby), a character who makes a DC 15 Perception check hears the avalanche or landslide when it is 1d6 × 500 feet away, though this DC is increased by 1 for every 5 ft. of solid earth between the listener and the surface. These DCs replace the usual DCs for listening through a wall, as the rumbling roar of an avalanche is easy to detect.

An avalanche normally consists of two distinct areas: the bury zone (in the direct path of the falling debris) and the slide zone (the area the debris spreads out to encompass). Characters caught in an underground area mowed down by an avalanche are always in the slide zone, taking 3d6 damage (or no damage if they make a DC 15 Reflex saving throw). Those who fail their saves are buried, taking 1d6 nonlethal damage per minute until freed, as usual.

What's worse is that an avalanche typically buries the mouth or entryway into a cavern that it flows through, filling exits with 2,000 lbs. of debris per 5-ft. square filled. Characters who aren't buried can dig out spaces like these. In one minute, using only his hands, a character can clear rocks and debris equal to five times his heavy load limit. Armed with an appropriate tool, such as a pick, a crowbar or a shovel, a digger can clear loose stone twice as quickly as by hand.

Lastly, note it is possible for characters (such as those buried in an avalanche) to drown in substances other than water (such as a mass of loose snow)!

Cracking Ice Ledges (CR 1/2 or more): In places where ice is thin or fragile (DC 20 Perception spots), shelves of cracking, crumbling ice and stone present a danger to explorers. When characters place more weight on such a surface than it can handle, the surface may crack, causing several effects. Thin surfaces (less than 5 ft. thick) crumble away entirely, dropping

characters as a pit trap of the appropriate depth and CR. Sharp ledges may “spiderweb” out across the cracking surface (or the surface below it), affecting the area as though caltrops had been strewn across it. Additionally, characters failing a DC 20 Reflex saving throw against a cracking surface fall prone.

As an additional danger, cracking surfaces may set off other dangers, such as avalanches or falling stalactites or stalagmites (see “Running the Dungeon”).

Fog and Mist (CR –): Combined with steep cliffs and natural chasms and pits, mist can create a lethal hazard all its own in areas rife with sudden changes in elevation.

Frost Fangs Trap (CR 7): As mechanical traps go, those that utilize the existing features of a glacial dungeon—like access to large quantities of freezing water—are especially great choices for glacial dungeon defences.

Icewind (CR 2): When a powerful arctic wind is funnelled through a narrow network of ice-cold tunnels in exactly the right way, a powerful wind phenomenon called an icewind may result. When an icewind passes through an area, creatures caught in its path must make a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw or take 1d4 nonlethal cold damage and be pushed 5 ft. away from the source of the wind. Additionally, an affected creature is checked as though by windstorm-force winds for one round.

Spiked Pit Traps (CR 2): Traps incorporating spikes are great thematic choices in icy dungeons, substituting icy stalagmites of ice for traditional “spikes,” of course.

MAGICAL TRAPS

Current or former inhabitants of the caves might have created the magical traps listed below, or they could be the products of magical phenomenon.

MIRRORS ICE TRAP CR 12

Type magic; Perception –; Disable Device 30

EFFECTS

Trigger special; **Reset** automatic reset

Effect A vertical shelf of polished, reflective ice acts as a *mirror of life trapping*, except the “mirror” can hold only one creature at a time.

WALL OF ICE TRAP CR 9

Type magic; Perception 30; Disable Device 22

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (*alarm*); **Reset** none

Effect A *wall of ice* spell effect traps characters in an enclosed space, exposing trapped characters to the chill emanating from the wall; creatures that make a DC 22 Reflex saving throw may leap back and away from the wall before it forms.

DOOM ON BLACKSTONE PEAK

A tribe of reclusive, temperamental yeti have made their home on Blackstone Peak for as long as anyone can remember, but never have the people of Hardhall, a wealthy ore-mining hamlet at the foot of the mountain, had any trouble with them...until now. Recent attacks by lone yeti, rampaging and frothing mad, demonstrate no apparent or ostensible motive.

One young village scholar believes proximity to some eldritch portal or dimension atop Blackstone Peak is to blame for recent conflicts with the once-cloistered yeti. After recent and out-of-season displays of a northern light phenomenon over the peak, village elders have begun to seriously consider this strange possibility. A party brave enough to trek to the yeti's cavernous lair atop the mountain to investigate the source of the troubles would no doubt earn the esteem of Hardhall's generous elders.

GHOULS AT GREY GORGE

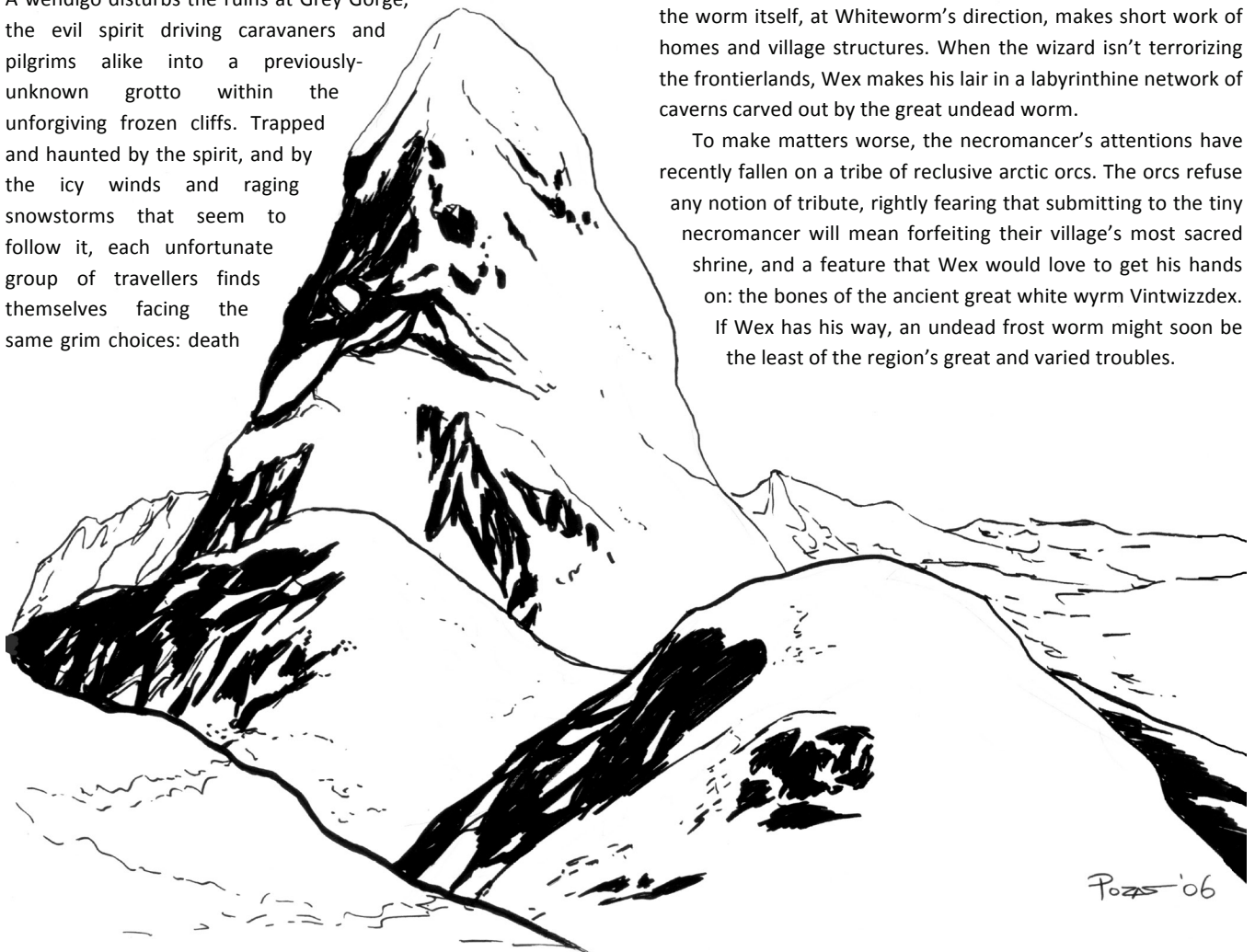
A wendigo disturbs the ruins at Grey Gorge, the evil spirit driving caravaners and pilgrims alike into a previously-unknown grotto within the unforgiving frozen cliffs. Trapped and haunted by the spirit, and by the icy winds and raging snowstorms that seem to follow it, each unfortunate group of travellers finds themselves facing the same grim choices: death

at the hands of the monster, death by starvation, or—perhaps worst of all—resorting to cannibalism, and the Curse of the Grey Ghoul, a transformation rumoured to befall those poor, desperate souls that eat of their own kind within these ancient, spirit-haunted ruins.

WHITEWORM'S TRIBUTE

Gnomish necromancer Wex Whiteworm demands tribute from frontier villages in a cold, northern borderland. The wizard and his minions demand homage from human, orc and gnomish villages alike, and woe to frontiersman that defy him. A brilliant villain to be sure, Wex has raised a tremendous frost worm from the dead—a feat thought impossible, due to the worm's deadly death throes. Whatever his secret, Wex's modus operandi when disciplining delinquent villages is a sight to behold: the wizard's undead worm bursts up through the earth, carrying in its belly a horde of undead horrors, which dribble from the worm's gaping maw and scurry in every direction, cutting down the living while the worm itself, at Whiteworm's direction, makes short work of homes and village structures. When the wizard isn't terrorizing the frontierlands, Wex makes his lair in a labyrinthine network of caverns carved out by the great undead worm.

To make matters worse, the necromancer's attentions have recently fallen on a tribe of reclusive arctic orcs. The orcs refuse any notion of tribute, rightly fearing that submitting to the tiny necromancer will mean forfeiting their village's most sacred shrine, and a feature that Wex would love to get his hands on: the bones of the ancient great white wyrm Vintwizzdex. If Wex has his way, an undead frost worm might soon be the least of the region's great and varied troubles.



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