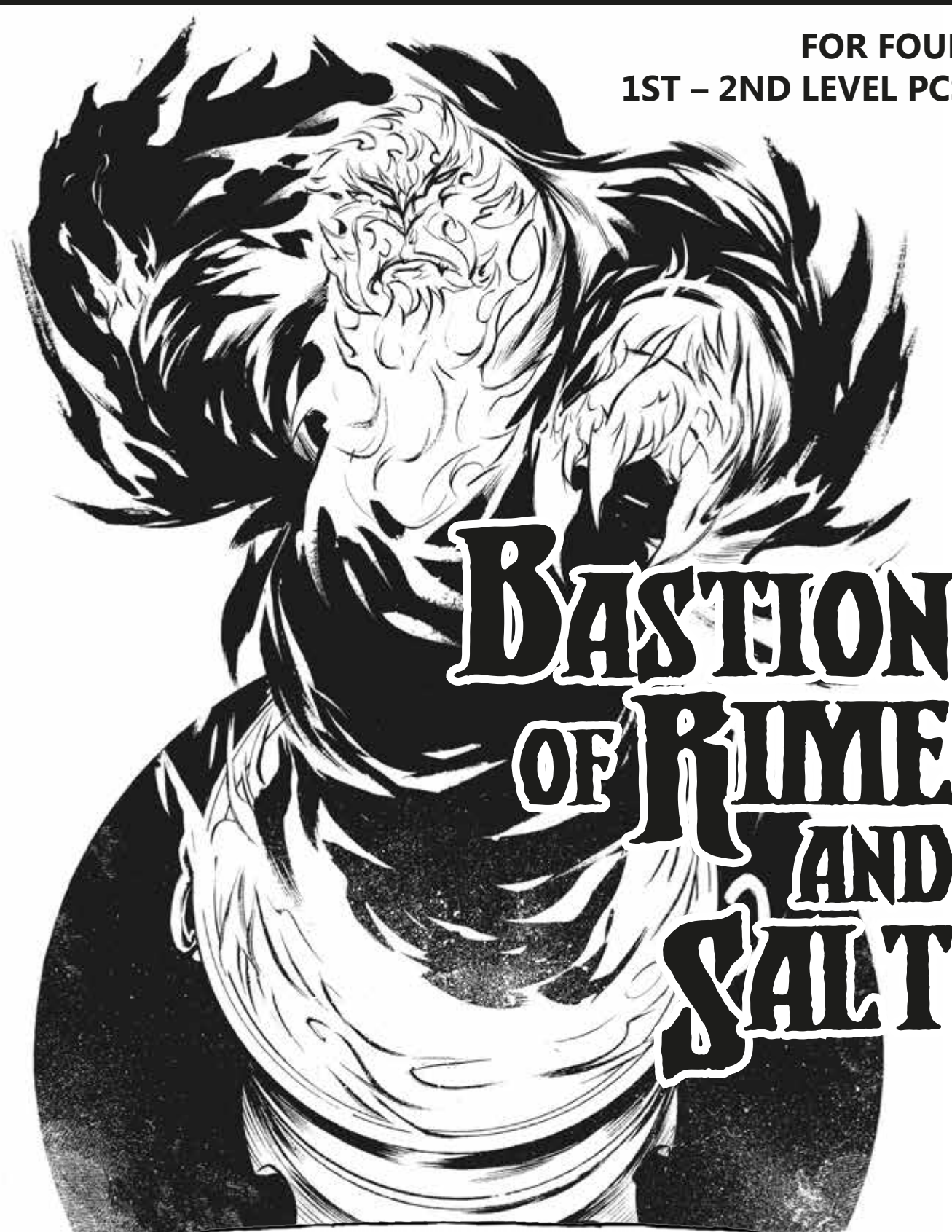




FOR FOUR
1ST – 2ND LEVEL PCS

BASTION OF RIME AND SALT

A 5E WARLOCK MIDGARD ADVENTURE
BY JON SAWATSKY

BASTION OF RIME AND SALT

GM Note: When a creature's name appears in **bold**, that's a cue that its stat block appears in the *Monster Manual*. If the stat block appears in the *Tome of Beasts*, it is noted as such.

Background

High in the coastal cliffs east of Stannasgard, the proud dwarven city of forges and ships, an ancient fortress sits empty, facing the sea. The dwarves discovered the place before they built Stannasgard, and those early settlers named the place Binalric, *the watcher's keep*. At first, the dwarves thought it perfect to house them as they planned their city and sourced the stone it required, but the fortress proved inhospitable in long-forgotten ways. A few old stories still circulate through the dwarven capitol about Binalric, but none now live who remember why their ancestors preferred hide tents along the beach to the stone walls of that desolate place.

Over the years, several noble families have attempted to occupy the strategically positioned fortress, but none have lasted more than a few weeks. An impossible chill is said to permeate the stone of Binalric, and no fire can touch its frosty climate. The last occupants were a stalwart band of sailors led by a dwarven merchant captain named Konrin Damnbreaker. Konrin stored goods in the fortress and hoped to use it as a hub for his trade concerns in the region. The sailors and Konrin disappeared without a trace over a decade ago, and no soul has entered the fortress since—even with the promise of Konrin's valuable trade goods still locked away in its depths.

A scholar visiting Stannasgard claimed the place once belonged to a lost clan of seafaring dwarves, whose reach extended far and wide. The scholar believe Binalric was a vault where the dwarves kept some of their most valuable artifacts. She attempted to mount an expedition into the fortress, but she could not find enough willing souls in Stannasgard and moved on.

Today, the fortress is empty, housing only cold wind and memories.

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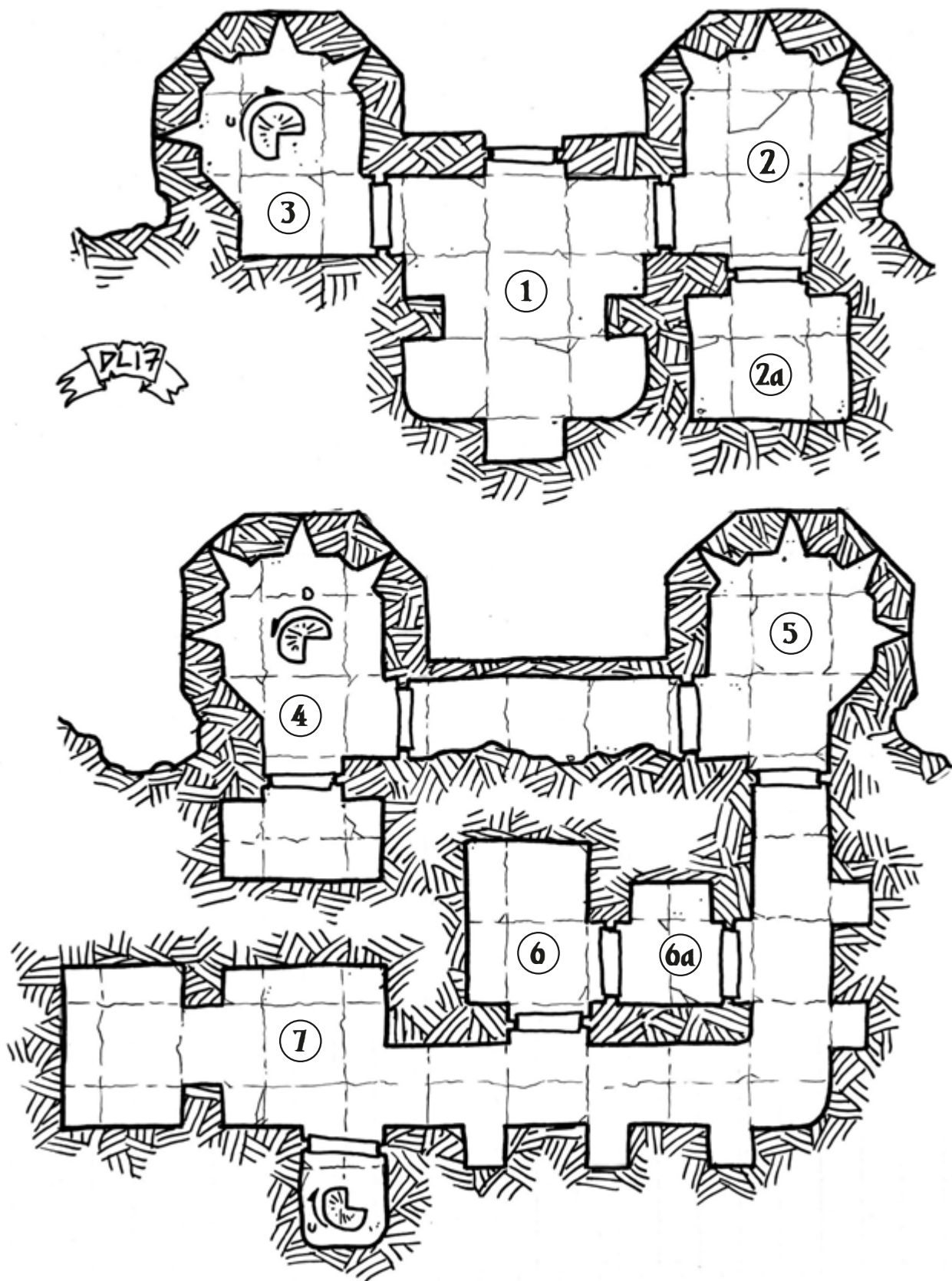
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MAP: [CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THIS MAP FOR YOUR VIRTUAL TABLE TOP.](#)

The Truth about Binalric

Long ago, seafaring dwarves did occupy the fortress, and they stored a powerful artifact in its depths: the *Slatelight Ring*. The ring had the power to turn water to stone and vice versa, and the dwarves kept it safe behind a host of armed guards. The dwarves found themselves at war with a strange race of sea spirits, who were angered by some minor slight, and then they arose from the waters and erased the dwarves from history. Binalric is one of a handful of remaining edifices built by the dwarves.

One of the sea spirits stayed behind, lairing in the fortress, coveting the ring—even as its magic dwindled. Today, Binalric hosts a number of frozen and salt-encrusted creatures in its upper chambers. The spirit inhabits the walls, unchallenged and unknowable.

Sharp Hooks and Enticing Stories

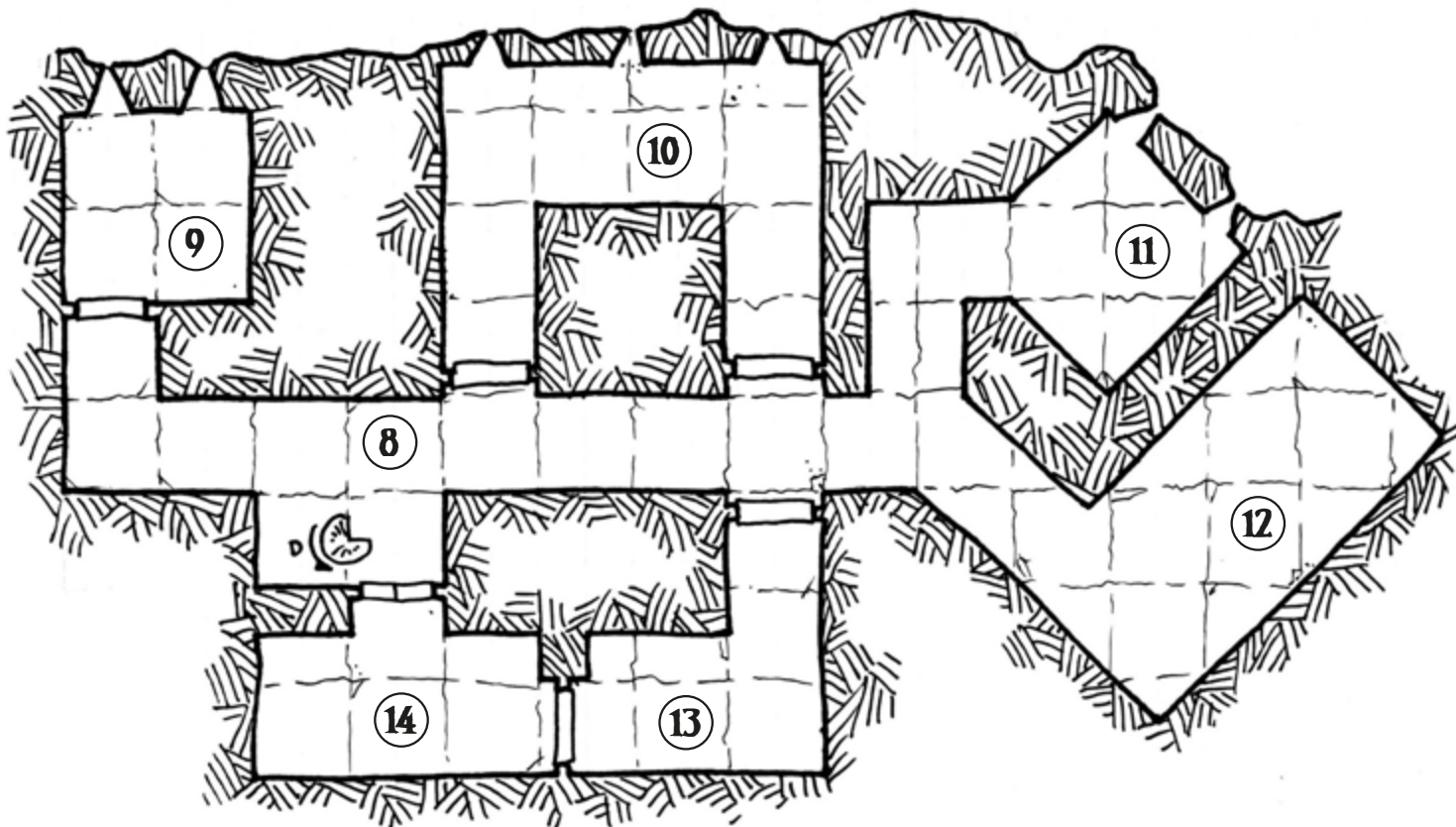
- One of the noble families of Stannasgard wishes to claim Binalric, ending the mystery of the place for good. They offer the adventurers 500 gp and the services of a fast ship for twenty days (fully crewed) to explore the fortress and reveal whatever secrets it holds. They offer an experienced guide (**scout**) to assist them with the task.

- The party acquires a book in a previous adventure that recounts the exploits of Konrin Damnbearer, and it suggests the dwarf left a large amount of valuable trade goods behind in a “drafty ruin overlooking the sea near Stannasgard”.

Haunted Walls

Binalric is haunted by an ancient sea spirit. Use some or all of the following effects as the party explores the place. The effects end if the brazier is lit in area 13 and the spirit is defeated.

- Icy hands appear and grasp at a PC who must succeed a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 2 (1d4) necrotic damage.
- A strange wailing forces the party to succeed a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for one minute.
- Blinding snow whips through the ruins, heavily obscuring the entire place for one minute.



Area Descriptions

Alone on the high snowy cliffs overlooking the sea, the ancient stone fortress is eerily quiet and imbued with an unnatural stillness and cold. The following descriptions present the setting, possible encounters, and items located in each area.

1. ENTRYWAY

The doors (AC 14, 75 hp, damage threshold of 10) into Binalric are frozen shut. A DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check suggests heating the hinges to gain access. Alternately, a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check forces the doors open. There is a good chance that an **ice mephit** from area 2 comes to investigate if the party is too loud.

2, 2A ICE MEPHIT'S OUTLOOK

Four **ice mephitis** have made their home in these two chambers. Jagged pieces of ice hang from the ceiling threatening to fall at any moment. In combat, on initiative 20, there is a 50% chance that a shard of ice falls. PCs caught under the shard must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

3. DEAD SAILORS ON THE STAIRS

Seven frozen corpses block access to the stairs below. They appear to be sailors dressed for winter. They are from Konrin's crew but were slain by the sea spirits a long time ago. Each sailor carries an unlit torch.

4. FROST COVERED CHAMBERS

A thick layer of frost coats the bottom of the stairs and floor of these two connected chambers. Once all the PCs are down the stairs, three of the sailors from area 3 rise as **zombies** and shamle down. The zombies' attacks do an extra 1 cold damage.

5. KONRIN'S QUARTERS

Konrin (**wight**) sits on a broken chair staring out one of the arrow slits at the sea. His mind is gone, his body is warped by the magic of the place. Konrin is not interested in fighting. He will back away and cower from the PCs, babbling about "lighting the brazier" and the "icy voices". He most likely flees from Binalric given the opportunity. If pressed into combat, Konrin cannot use the multiattack action and loses his damage resistances.

6, 6A THE SAILOR'S STORES

These two chambers contain rations and water, enough for 100 days. The contents of six explorer's packs are distributed between the two rooms.

Treasure: A lockbox (DC 14 Dexterity check to open) contains 200 sp and a *potion of healing*.

7. HALLS OF THE FRAUGASHAR

Five intrepid **fraugashar** (*Tome of Beasts* p.206) have tunneled into this section of the ruins (tunnel not shown on map). They have made a comfortable home for themselves here, and the spirits leave them alone. They have done some raiding and banditry in the region. Two of the goblins are gone hunting when the party arrives, but they may return mid-combat to challenge a strong party. The floor here is slick with ice; PCs moving more than half their speed must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone at the end of their movement.

Treasure: They have amassed 75 gp, 180 sp, and a set of ivory dice (25 gp value).

8. THE WINDY HALL

A strong magical wind blows through this hallway. It blows against the PCs regardless of the direction they face. The first time they move into this hall, each PC must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or suffer one level of exhaustion.

9. LOST LIBRARY

The original inhabitants kept a small library. All but one book are too damaged to read. The book is written in a variety of Dwarvish dialects and tells the history of the fortress. It makes several references to the war against the sea spirits.

10. THE ARMS ROOM

Two **animated armors** guard this stocked armory.

Treasure: It contains ten suits of chainmail (medium size), ten shields, ten light crossbows, 200 bolts, ten battle axes, and a variety of helms and boots. A *+1 battle axe* is mounted on the wall over its mundane cousins.

11. GLITTERING ICE

This chamber is covered in beautiful hypnotizing ice. PCs who see the ice for the first time must succeed a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or be paralyzed for one minute as they stare at the shimmering colors. Four **witchlights** (*Tome of Beasts*, p. 409) dwell in the ice. Once the familiars of a dwarven wizard, the creatures have grown evil in their master-less existence.

12. THE SNOWY BARRACKS

The remains of ten ancient dwarves lay in their beds in these forgotten barracks. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation or Medicine) check reveals that they froze to death. A number of the remains animate and attack the party (**skeletons**, at least five is recommended).

13. THE EXTINGUISHED BRAZIER

The original dwarven inhabitants had a magical brazier constructed in this chamber. They planned to use it to repel the sea spirits, but they were unable to light it before being overrun. Lighting the brazier summons a spirit that haunts Binalric. The spirit (**firegeist**, *Tome of Beasts*, p.202) possesses the brazier and attacks. Killing the spirit in its fire form permanently destroys it.

14. THE RING ROOM

This small chamber contains the now greatly waned *slatelight ring* (see below). It sits on a plain plinth at the center of the room. Removing the ring summons a spirit that haunts Binalric (**shadow**). The spirit attacks the party. If slain, it rises again within 30 minutes.

Magical Item

The seafaring dwarves who built Binalric had among them a powerful ring warden (see *Deep Magic: Ring Magic*) who created several wondrous rings. One such ring remains deep in Binalric.

SLATELIGHT RING (WANED)

Wondrous object (ring) *very rare* (requires attunement)

This decorated thick silver band is adorned with a single polished piece of slate. Creatures attuned to this ring may cast *land bond* (*Deep Magic: Ley Lines*, p. 10) once each day. Additionally, bearers of the *slatelight ring* gain darkvision out to 60 feet. Once taken from Binalric, unless it is immersed in salt water every 30 days, the ring loses its magic permanently. The bearer learns this fact once attuned to the ring.



WITCHLIGHT

Tiny construct, neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 10 (4d4)

Speed fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (–5)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	7 (–2)

Skills Perception +3

Damage Immunities poison, radiant

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

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages understands the language of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Dispel Magic Weakness. Casting *dispel magic* on a witchlight paralyzes it for 1d10 rounds.

Luminance. A witchlight normally glows as brightly as a torch. The creature can dim itself to the luminosity of a candle, but it cannot extinguish its light. Because of its glow, the witchlight has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Thin As Light. While a witchlight is not incorporeal, it can pass through any opening that light can.

ACTIONS

Light Ray. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) radiant damage.

Flash (Recharge 5–6). The witchlight emits a bright burst of light that blinds all sighted creatures within 30 feet for 1d4 rounds

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