

PAL5-04

# Seeds of Winter

## A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>®</sup> Theocracy of the Pale Regional Adventure

Version 1.0

**By Neil Harkins**

Triad Reviewer: Donovan Hicks

Growfest has arrived, but frost remains on the ground, delaying the planting and its celebration. Although the nearby Rakers are free of the mysterious Winterwind, plans from years ago are incubating—hardly a reason for the Pale to rejoice. An adventure for characters of Average Party Level 6-10 who remember the taproom tales of veteran Palish adventurers.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS<sup>®</sup> rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of the author. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 system license, please visit [www.wizards.com/d20](http://www.wizards.com/d20)

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK and RPGA are registered trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. LIVING GREYHAWK is a trademark of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This scenario is intended for tournament use only and may not be reproduced without approval of the RPGA Network.

# Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

## Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

## Playing the Game

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters to participate in the adventure before the session begins, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's*

Guide when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

## Tracking

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM fill out the RPGA Tracking Sheet. The DM should complete the top of the form and list his name and RPGA number. The players should each list their name and RPGA number. After the form is filled out it should be given to the Event Coordinator.

## Living Greyhawk

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials discussed in the Preparation section above that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer*.

## Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc.) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately. Nevertheless, if a character has the Mounted Combat feat, he may bring a single warhorse, light or heavy, with him in the adventure and it will not count toward the APL calculation.

- Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC may gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character will receive only one-half of the experience points for the adventure. Further, if the PC is three character levels or more lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that PC will receive one-half gold for the adventure as well. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Further, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the scenario unless the highest APL supported by the adventure is APL 12.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If a group is APL 1 there are two things that the group can do to help even the score.

- Attempt to create a table of six 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

## Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in the Theocracy of the Pale. Characters native to the Theocracy of the Pale pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

## Pale Holy Day

Some player characters may wish to give or attend services in-game on Pholtan holy days. For adventures set in the Theocracy of the Pale, a member of the

Church of the One True Path may ask the judge at the beginning of an Adventure to determine how many days it is until the next Pholtan Holy day. This is accomplished by rolling a d8, rerolling if the result is 8. If a 7 is rolled, the first day of the adventure is a Pholtan Holy Day. Otherwise, the die result indicates the number of days until the next Pholtan Holy Day. Due to the special nature of the Theocracy of the Pale, on Holy Days, Judges are encouraged (but not required) to work-in a brief scene involving Pholtan worship, possibly including a brief 1-2 minute sermon by a PC if his or her level is at least fifth level and the judge believes that there is time available.

## Special Rules for the Pale

It is illegal for adventurers to display a human holy symbol other than that of Pholtus in the Pale as of September 1, 2005. Even before that time, Judges should begin to discourage the display of non-Pholtan holy symbols by having Priests of the Church of the One True Path or other authorities of the Pale question the wearing of the holy symbols of false deities.

After September 1, 2005, PCs displaying the holy symbol of any human deity other than that of Pholtus should be fined 200 gp and their holy symbol should be confiscated for destruction by the Palish authorities. This action should take place as soon as any Palish authorities notice the holy symbol. This may leave a non-Pholtan cleric without his holy symbol for the adventure as non-Pholtan holy symbols may not be purchased in the Pale without a Gather Information check DC 25 to locate a merchant who can sell him one.

Non-human PCs are exempt from this law when displaying their racial deities' holy symbol(s). Non-humans are heathens beyond redemption and do not

|              | Mundane Animals Effect on APL | # of Animals |   |    |    |
|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------|---|----|----|
|              |                               | 1            | 2 | 3  | 4  |
| CR of Animal | 1/4 & 1/6                     | 0            | 0 | 0  | 1  |
|              | 1/3 & 1/2                     | 0            | 0 | 1  | 1  |
|              | 1                             | 1            | 1 | 2  | 3  |
|              | 2                             | 2            | 3 | 4  | 5  |
|              | 3                             | 3            | 4 | 5  | 6  |
|              | 4                             | 4            | 6 | 7  | 8  |
|              | 5                             | 5            | 7 | 8  | 9  |
|              | 6                             | 6            | 8 | 9  | 10 |
|              | 7                             | 7            | 9 | 10 | 11 |

matter in the greater scheme of Pholtus. If they can be brought to the light of Pholtus, this is good and perhaps they can be redeemed, but if they do not, it is of no consequence. Non-humans wearing the holy symbols of a human deity are treated the same as a human wearing a non-Pholtan holy symbol.

## Adventure Background

This scenario draws on several Pale Regional scenarios of the past four years.

In late CY 591, the Bloodtooth tribe of goblins cut off supply routes to the Palish mining town of Copper Gorge, high in the Rakers. The chieftain, Targh, reasoned that they were reclaiming goblin lands stolen by Palish settlers. When the goblins attacked in force, they did not expect a group of adventurers on a mission of mercy to have arrived and organized some defenses. As a result, the Bloodtooth tribe was decimated. (These events happened in PAL1-o8 *Cold Comfort* by Gareth Hughes.)

A few survivors of the goblin warband escaped back to their caves, bringing word of the demise of Targh, his shaman, Grod the Wailer (a bard), and most of their warriors. Ironically, their prospects of survival had now become bleak as a result of their failed conquest.

A young apprentice to Grod, named Slag, set out to find other tribes of goblins willing to help them. A week later, many miles from his caves, frozen and near death, Slag was discovered by a huge white dragon calling himself\* "Winterwind". A deal was quickly struck: the goblin's servitude in exchange for saving his life. (\*Not being familiar enough with Draconic anatomy, Slag asked the dragon if it was male or female, to which it replied that it was male, thanks for asking. Apparently observing the shape of the crest is how one determines the gender of a dragon from a polite distance.)

The dragon already had a purpose in mind for someone small and cunning with the ability to disguise himself (one of the few tricks Grod had taught Slag). It involved a clutch of five white dragon eggs that Winterwind's mate had laid about a year prior.

One of these eggs had hatched early in CY 591, but the wyrmling was slain soon after, by adventurers from the Pale exploring the Rakers. (These events happened in PAL1-o2 *Absence of Law* by Bart Scott.) Fearing further hunting, Winterwind decided that his brood's best chance for survival was to designate a guardian for each egg. The guardians would transport the eggs to secret and safe locations, to hatch and mature without the attention of the Pale.

Conveniently, the dragon had obtained a tome of Draconic magicks which described a spell to keep an egg protected in stasis for an indefinite period of time until actively incubated by dragon's breath. The tome also told how to make a magical ring from a dragon's claw, which could slowly transform a humanoid or giant into a half-

dragon of the type that donated the claw and, thus, capable of incubating an egg of the same type. The rings would also provide several defenses and incentives to protecting the egg and the wyrmling it would yield.

Being inclined to the dramatic, Winterwind likened these guardians to gardeners, planting his seeds throughout the Pale, so that one day, they might grow to assist him in making the lands occupied by the Theocracy inhospitable to these despicably lawful humans. The dragon insisted to Slag that these minions be referred to as such, and even spelled "gardeners", if the need arose to ever commit it to script, although that would certainly compromise the secrecy of his plot.

Disguised as a halfling with the name "Mikkos Cassadine", Slag entered the Pale and began searching for a ring-forger capable of constructing four of these complex rings (one for each remaining egg).

This led him to the greatest ring-forger the Pale has ever known, the reclusive Zambaric III, to whom he presented the relevant pages from the draconic tome and a white dragon's claw from which to carve the rings. (Zambaric was met by PCs much later, in PAL4-o1 *Lost Soul* by Frank Bayer.) As payment, he offered a good deal of gold (from Winterwind's hoard) and some scrolls of cold magic, and promised some of the rare material component "coldfire", which the spells require, upon completion of the rings.

Zambaric was fascinated by the notes alone and accepted immediately, as a personal challenge, without much thought as to how they could be used. Each ring would require one full year to complete, though, which would provide plenty of time to ponder its uses and real purpose.

Winterwind had already selected his first "gardener": a female half-elf sorceress by the name of Shill, but she would actually get the second ring. (She was encountered and slain in PAL4S-o3 *Twisting In the Wind*, an interactive event at Kublacon 2004. The existence of the dragon egg in her care was unknown at the time.)

As Zambaric made the rings, Slag travelled the Pale's underbelly, searching for two other guardians for the last two eggs. If Slag completed all these tasks successfully, he himself would be given the final egg and ring.

Nervous at the prospect of being discovered, Slag quickly unloaded two eggs at a black market outside Holdworthy, to an ogre named Mosk and a mysterious female tiefling poison-merchant named Umar. Umar agreed only under the condition that Slag obtain some dragon bile from Winterwind, as it can be used as an extremely potent contact poison. Slag agreed to deliver the poison when he delivered her completed ring.

Mosk hid in a cave in the hills west of Holdworthy, and hatched his egg soon after receiving the first ring, but the wyrmling was feisty and dug through to another

cave used by cultists of Hextor. Both Mosk, now transformed into a half-dragon, and his wyrmling were discovered and slain when the Theocracy cracked down on heathen activities in the area. (These events happened in PAL2-05 *The Heretic* by Joe Streeper.)

The second ring was brought to Shill, who began her transformation immediately, but hesitated to hatch her egg, instead hiding it in the Twist mines before she was slain by adventurers.

During this time, long-sealed rifts to the fiendish planes called the 'Scars of Nerull' began to reopen in the landscape of the Pale (These events began in PAL2-03 *Stitch in Time* by Derek Schubert.) Instead of assisting the local Old Faith druids to re-establish their seals, the Theocracy decided to punish the druids involved with the seals for their secrecy as if they were complicit. (These events happened in PAL3S-04 *Dark Scars Against the Light* and PAL4S-02 *Unnatural Law*, which many Pale authors collaborated on.)

Some of the druids found themselves at the black market outside Holdworthy, looking for assistance in smuggling them out of the Pale to avoid persecution. Slag agreed to help them in exchange for some druidic training, instead of monetary payment. Having accumulated many contacts in the black market, he organized an 'underground railroad' to help them flee.

When Slag came to Zambaric for the third ring, the old wizard had begun to get suspicious of the mysterious halfling and his interest in these rings. Somehow, Zambaric suspected, the legendary Winterwind might be involved. Although he had completed the third ring, he told Slag that unforeseen delays had prevented him from completing it on time, and that both the third and fourth rings could be picked up together, in one year's time. Slag was greatly annoyed by this, but was subject to Zambaric's whim. He returned to the caves that his newly formed goblin warband, the Ice Claw Tribe, had claimed. Little did he know, Zambaric had an *arcane eye* following him to the caves, and observed him transform back to his goblin appearance.

Now aware of Slag's true identity, but still unsure of the goblin's motives, Zambaric decided to finish the fourth ring, but confront this goblin about the deception before deciding whether or not to give him the rings. However, in the event of a mishap, just before his final meeting with Slag, he encoded a message of what he knew and suspected into a word chain puzzle, which he intended to send to his longtime friend, Father Bartok.

Over the next year, Slag established peaceful trade contact with the Frigdrasil tribe (Frost Barbarians) that now inhabits the northern Rakers (featured in PAL4-08 *Winters Past* by Donovan Hicks). Although Chief Fjorgens Iceblood was unimpressed by this goblin, the shamans were extremely interested in the rare scrolls and spell components being offered. The shamans gave Slag a *Bracelet of the North* and a Frigdrasil war hound in trade.

Fjorgens thought that Slag was weak and useless, but the shamans were willing to trade with him for his cold magic.

The Ice Claw tribe also got help from a diabolical caribou-like creature called a rejkar (see the *Monster Manual III*), which was roaming the Rakers looking for new thralls. It transformed their raw wood and steel into masterwork weapons. The goblins owe it a favor, which it has not yet come to collect.

Shortly after that, news of Winterwind's death began spreading across the Pale. Slag still refuses to believe that his powerful master could have been slain, though his master no longer contacts him. But the goblin continues his mission, now with renewed sense of importance, that the unhatched wyrmling he carries might be the last of its lineage.

Slag finally returned to Zambaric and was surprised by his direct questions. The wizard did not let on that he knew where Slag called home but confronted him about being a goblin, and then accused him of carrying on some foul plan devised by Winterwind. In a panic, the goblin used the dragon's bile he had obtained some time ago for Umar and paralyzed Zambaric. In the moment before the poison took effect, the old wizard grasped the parchment with his special puzzle. Slag examined the parchment but was not smart enough to tell it apart from the hundreds of other parchments with puzzles scrawled upon them.

After tearing apart the cottage and finding the two remaining rings, Slag took back the notes on their construction and unleashed a snowflake ooze. (Winterwind had given him the ooze in a special jar, for dealing with a situation where he needed to 'cover his escape'.) He didn't want to kill the old wizard, but Zambaric knew too much and would surely send the Pale looking for him and destroy the Ice Claw tribe just like the Bloodtooth was slain. Or at least this is how it seemed to Slag at the time. The ooze finished off the helpless Zambaric and would remain to prevent anyone else from finding out what the old wizard knew.

Slag then set out to Holdworthy, where he gave the other ring to Umar and suggested she go into hiding.

And that brings us to the present...

(DM Aid #1 contains a timeline of these background events.)

## Adventure Summary

At the start of this adventure, Slag is in Holdworthy, having just presented one of the final two rings to Umar. They have each put on their ring, which has begun their transformations, and is now protecting them from scrying.

Encounter One opens in Wintershiven at a dimensional anchoring ceremony at the Pious Pilgrim. The date is that of the Growfest celebration, although

with a late frost still upon the ground and a bitter chill in the air, no planting has begun, thus there is little to celebrate. The winter of CY 594/595 has been unusually harsh, and the longest in many generations of records.

At the anchoring ceremony, an old priest named Father Bartok asks the party to check in on his old friend Zambaric. They usually keep in touch by sending puzzles to each other via magical means (the spell *sending*), but Zambaric stopped sending puzzles a few days ago.

In Encounter Two, the party witnesses some political turmoil, in which a poor, blind Pholtan seer warns of obscure portents.

Shortly after the party passes through Holdworthy, Slag sets out from there for Ogburg, actually following them on the road, unbeknownst to either him or the party.

Zambaric's cottage lies two miles south of Ogburg; however, the cold has damaged the mechanism of the city's south gate. The adventurers are directed to the east gate, where a ranger named Bryanna practices archery. She has information about geography in the Rakers should the party think to come back and ask her later.

Slag passes through Ogburg at about exactly the same time the PCs reach Zambaric's cottage. He rejoins his dog Mush at the foot of the Howling Mist Pass and begins to ascend it, leaving no trace, but traveling slower once he feels confident that the guards Winterwind assigned to this pass many years ago (the belkers in Encounter Five) will prevent anyone from following him.

Encounter Three takes place at Zambaric's cottage, where the party finds a bizarre sight. Drifts of snow inside the cottage cover the old wizard's body and the contents of his library, which have been scattered about as if someone had been searching for something.

The snow is actually the snowflake ooze left by Slag. After dispatching it, the party can find clues. If the party uses energy attacks, they might damage the papers and accidentally destroy an important clue.

This most important clue is a sheet of what appear to be word chains (also called 'doublets'), which were Zambaric's favorite type of puzzle. The puzzles are actually an encoded message, mentioning Winterwind, "The Howling Mist Pass" (a steep chasm ascent into the Rakers, east of Ogburg), and "The Anvil" (a geographic formation above some caves which Slag's warband currently calls home).

Encounter Four explains many ways in which the adventurers can piece together where the murderer can be found. Here, the adventure branches; there are two ways to go: the Howling Mist Pass, which is short but too steep for horses (Encounter Five), or the much longer northern route, east of Eltison, which can accommodate horses (Encounter Seven). The former involves a combat with belker guardians placed there by Winterwind many

years ago, while the latter has an NPC encounter which gives insight into Slag's complex character. As Slag is currently in transit, time is significant. These factors determine which encounters the PCs will face.

If the party makes all haste up the pass, they will catch up with Slag on the tundra the next morning in Encounter Six. Unless the party gives him an immediate sense of danger, he will be friendly, as he would to other potential allies. If confronted with his crime, and association with Winterwind, he will do whatever he can to escape, and protect his unhatched wyrmling.

Slag is on the way to rejoin his warband at the base of a natural geographic formation called 'the Anvil', where Slag has used cold magic he learned from Winterwind to build fortified defenses. If the party fails to catch up with Slag or he escapes from them, he will be guarded by the Ice Claw Tribe (Encounter Eight), which are significantly more dangerous with his leadership. This will also be the case if the party takes the longer route east of Eltison.

Whether Slag is faced alone, or after/with his warband (possibly encountering him again after he escapes the first time), the party is faced with a moral dilemma: should Slag go free and should he keep the egg?

The party may then face minions of Winterwind on the return journey (Encounter Nine or Encounter Five in reverse if they didn't ascend the Howling Mist Pass) unless they left on good terms with Slag, in which case they run into a deadly collapsing crevasse (Encounter Ten).

A diagram of the possible paths is provided as DM Aid #2.

The conclusion depends on the party's actions. Regardless of whether they bring Slag and/or his white dragon egg to the Theocracy, Shill's egg is found in the Twist Mines and turned over to the Church, making them aware of this development.

A critical events summary at the end tracks how things were left by the PCs.

## Preparation for Play

It is recommended that the judge obtain each PC's Will save, Spot and Listen check modifiers, and record several d20 rolls from each player for secretly determining if they can prevent Slag's escape in either Encounter Six or Encounter Eight.

## Introduction

*Growfest of CY 595 has arrived, but there is no celebration of planting in Wintershiven today, as the harsh winter of CY 594-595 has persisted longer than ever before in the 350-year history of the Pale. You find yourself in the capital city, shivering in the*

*brisk air along with other observers of the anchoring ceremony of the Pious Pilgrim. Gouvernail, the proprietor, had planned to throw a great Growfest celebration anyway, but he also wanted his establishment to be the first to receive wards against extradimensional attacks. The wholesale shifting of an inn to Acheron, as happened here two years ago, will never happen again in the Pale!* (This was in PAL3-06 Fog of War by Brian Moseley and Nick Tulach.)

*A few months ago, some adventurers, guided by the divinations of Jarret Beak, obtained the secrets of permanently anchoring large areas to the Material Plane in such a way that would not bankrupt the Theocracy.*

*Members of the Clergy and the Arcanist Guild are present, as well as some of the adventurers, but few of the public turned out. Most chose instead to stay inside by their hearths, waiting expectantly for the soil to thaw.*

The PCs may introduce themselves to each other, since they are probably among the more colorful or noteworthy members of the crowd.

## Encounter One

The party is approached by an old cleric with a request.

*An older member of the clergy, bundled well in a fur-lined white robe, seems to notice you and wanders over through the onlookers to ask, "Be you adventurers?"*

Give the players a chance to respond before continuing.

*He strokes his thick, grey beard with a gloved hand as he goes on. "I thought you might be. My name is Father Bartok, and I was once a young adventurer myself, but, eventually, we all retire. If you don't mind a word from a reasonably wise old man, it's good to figure out your real passion—what you like to do, aside from adventuring, and use adventuring to achieve that goal. Adventuring only for its own sake is merely pursuit of power, which unfortunately always leads to evil. Luckily, we clerics live to serve, thus, I will always have work to do. Something comes to mind about idle hands being the playground of fiends, but forgive me, I didn't mean to preach at you on such a day of celebration. I actually wanted to ask if you were going south near Ogburg anytime soon...?"*

*"You see, I have a friend, also an old and retired adventurer like myself. His name is Zambaric, a very talented wizard, although he's gotten a little bit funny in his old age. He lives just outside Ogburg, a bit of a recluse, but every day we keep in touch by casting a sending spell to each other to exchange puzzles. Except, I haven't heard from him in a few*

*days, which has me a bit worried. Although not an avid Pholtan like me, he is religious about those puzzles! I would scry to make sure he's alright, except his cottage is warded to prevent those and other unwanted magical intrusions. Would you mind dropping in to see if he's OK?"*

This is the obvious "hook", and you should try to entice the party to "bite". If you've got time for some role-playing, there are some details of the other NPCs present at the ceremony at the end of this section.

Father Bartok is a bearded Oeridian, about 60 winters old, who grew up in Ahlissa near Kalstrand. He was one of the last remaining Pholtans in the area, but was unable to compete with the rise of Hextorism over the past few hundred years. One day, a party of adventurers approached him for healing services while they were exploring nearby crypts. He joined them, and befriended the party wizard, Zambaric, as they both had a passion for puzzles (it was actually Bartok that introduced Zambaric to the "word chain" puzzles that he grew to love!). After many years of adventuring around the Glorioles, Bartok decided to finally follow the other pilgrims to the Theocracy and convinced Zambaric to settle there as well. Bartok was stationed by the Church in Wintershiven, but Zambaric disliked the extreme cold that far north, thus had a cottage built south of Ogburg.

Every few years, Zambaric would travel to Wintershiven to buy rings that he would later enchant. Bartok always took advantage of this opportunity to catch up with his old friend. The last such meeting was two years ago. Zambaric was working on a lengthy commission to make four complex magical rings for a halfling named Mikkos Cassadine. The instructions for the rings were in an ancient tome written in Draconic, which the halfling had acquired from a bookseller somewhere. Zambaric wasn't completely sure of the features of the end result, but the process itself was fascinating to him. Unlike most of his rings, which are forged metal, these four rings were to be carved from a great claw, which the halfling also provided. Bartok told Zambaric to be careful when fiddling with the unknown but was not overly concerned for his competent friend. "He can take care of himself," he thought.

Zambaric is a reluctantly registered Arcanist in the Pale. Bartok will explain that his friend is extremely reclusive and paranoid, and very much dislikes the bureaucracy of the Arcanist Guild and the Church (especially the tithe/tax collectors). He has never been a member of the Arcanist Guild, although many members are certainly familiar with his reputation and handiwork. He looks favorably on their apprentice program that teaches the arcane arts to the next generation; he himself, though, has little patience for teaching.

Bartok believes that Zambaric's cottage is protected to prevent scrying, as well as extra-dimensional travel (a very costly abjuration of his own invention, not similar to

that which is currently being employed throughout The Pale).

The PCs may also talk with Gouvernail (male human Com2/Exp2), the proprietor of the Pious Pilgrim in Wintershiven. He originally scheduled the ceremony to happen in spring with a great outdoor festival. The late winter has unfortunately ruined those plans, although he is still relieved that his prized establishment is no longer in danger of being transported to another plane again! "Gouver" is a friendly fellow with an ample belly, a beet-red nose, and large clear eyes. He recently gave up smoking, so he seems nervous and fidgety.

## Encounter Two

Later in Wintershiven, the party observes tensions in the current political climate.

*As you prepare to leave the capital of the Pale for Ogburg, you hear a great commotion coming from the center of the city.*

*Despite the cold weather, the Basilica of Wintershiven is full of citizens clamoring loudly that the Theocrat open the central grain reserve to them. Many are farmers from smaller towns, hoping to go home with some grain for their families.*

*They gave grain to their local stores last harvest and every harvest before that, and now, during this hardship, expect to withdraw their grain, but are finding that they are being rationed!*

Each city in the Theocracy has its own grain stores. The local farmers contribute to these stores during harvests and withdraw during long winters. These local grain stores are only built to hold a few months' worth of grain for the surrounding area, so any excess is sent to the larger central grain repository in Wintershiven, which is for emergency purposes only.

*You can hear many saying that the central grain reserve has diminished over the past two years. It seems Theocrat Baslett has been continually approving the requests of the Provisional Governor of Atherstone to feed the Tenha refugees, in an attempt to maintain order there. The recent invasion of Tenh has also cost the Pale, as its war machine requires a great deal of food. The conquest was easier because Tenh—now the Stonelands—is still barren, but its reward does little to replenish resources in the short term.*

*Because of this, the attitude of the majority is distinctly conservative and xenophobic, to the point that some Oeridians insist the Tenha be forcibly driven out of the Pale. Some Flan farmers in attendance are offended by these remarks, but all share the disapproval of the current Theocrat's*

*judgement in this matter. All are angry and frustrated.*

*Eventually, some quiet to hear a burly farmer up on a wall. Although his words don't promise deliverance, they bring a prophetic focus to the anger of the crowd.*

*"All ye faithful!!! Hear me! We are all angered by these events, but know that Pholtus has not abandoned us! He has given us warnings, but he chose one of his faithful, a lowly blind beggar, to be his vehicle, instead of a heathen! For the past year, Brother Jeremiah has traveled the Pale, preaching of his vision, and none of us listened. We put our trust in our leaders, who in turn put their trust in a heathen! Listen now to Brother Jeremiah recount his visions, and tell me that it is not Pholtus warning us!"*

*He then pulls onto the wall a shabbily dressed man with a walking staff. He is not old but has endured hardship beyond his years. His broad frame is gaunt, his posture stooped. Even from this distance, you notice his eye sockets are empty and blackened. Although obviously overwhelmed by the noise, he begins to speak.*

*"One year ago, I was blinded. But where Pholtus hath taken away, he hath also given! My vision was replaced with the sight beyond sight, through which I see a large clawed talon, reaching down from the sky, to dig into the beloved fields of our sacred homeland, as if to plow the soil! I watched this claw then bury several big white globes. But no plant grew from these seeds! Oh no, a field of ice spread from that very spot, to cover our land! All the farmers tried to break the ice with picks and plows, but it was so strong their implements broke instead! And we were starving, my dear people! Every night, I have seen these events unfold, and awoke to tears from my sightless eyes. I knew this winter would be the hardest we have ever faced due to some as yet unknown force. I travelled to your cities and shared this vision. But now, the portents of my visions are upon us as I have feared."*

*As he pauses for a moment, the farmer quickly seizes the attention of the crowd back from Jeremiah.*

*"Many of us heard Jeremiah, none of us took it to heart. But this is not our fault, good people! Should the weight of prophecy and grain accounting fall on us? These are the duties of our government!"*

*The blind prophet attempts to speak words of encouragement that counter this rebellious interpretation of his vision, but is drowned out by the loud farmer.*

*"I ask, how did the Theocrat and his Council of Nine Prelates not see this coming? Were they*

*distracted by this constant infighting between the progressives and conservatives? Do they not have a seer with access to the fabled Yin Ling Ruby, much more powerful than this pilgrim here? Perhaps if we ask the right questions, we will get answers!"*

*Having lost the crowd's ear, Jeremiah feels his way down from the wall. The crowd parts to allow him to leave, some touching him as he passes, in case he is really blessed by Pholtus. The rest resume their shouting, taking this new direction with vigor.*

*"Why, I hear that the Theocrat's advisor, Jarret Beak, isn't even a Pholtan!"*

*"It's true! He worships BOCCOB, the UNCARING one! He is more concerned with furthering his powers of sorcery than helping the common man!"*

*"Beak sent adventurers out to find means of protecting taverns from disappearing! An imaginary threat! While we all face real starvation!"*

*"We kicked the druids out of the Pale, but they could've predicted the weather at least!"*

*"Pholtus himself chose the child Garreth to be the Champion of the Pale instead of Governor Gaston or Tristan Spencer, over the votes of the council; surely this is another sign from on high! Brother Jeremiah should be the high seer of the Pale!"*

*"Beak is a heretic!"*

*"Beak must go!"*

*The shouts continue as the crowd waits for a statement from the Theocrat, which instead comes in the form of a regiment of Marchmen. The soldiers sweep across the basilica, pushing the farmers to disperse. At the first sign of their presence, the previously outspoken burly farmer blends back into the crowd, obviously not eager to spend time in Wintershiven's New Dawn Camp.*

*All the farmers seem to know better than to hurl rocks at these armored soldiers, and as food is simply too scarce, they rely on words, which fail to slow their approach. Eventually, the crowds all leave without further incident, but their anger still simmers.*

If the party uses magical means or takes a couple hours to track him down, the outspoken farmer can be found in a tavern, grumbling and drinking himself into a stupor. His name is Farrell Sureplow ("...of the Eltison Sureplows"), and he has little more to say than what he already has. He is a frustrated farmer who heard other people saying things about Jeremiah, and he chose to shout them, being a career loudmouth. If questioned extensively, he believes the Theocrat is being misled by a

heathen advisor, and that their fortune will improve once Jarret Beak is removed.

The party can also attempt to follow Brother Jeremiah. They can find him at a different nearby inn, where some pilgrims have paid for his food and lodgings. He is indeed blind, and truly believes he has seen a vision exactly as he has told it, and that it was sent to him by Pholtus.

Jeremiah was a member of the Prelatal army unit that eradicated the faranth (aberrations from PAL1-02 Absence of Law and PAL2-07 Appetites). On the return from this mission, he barely managed to survive an avalanche that slew all his fellow soldiers. Then, frostbite from a sudden snowstorm took his eyes. As his sight faded, all he saw was the sun reflecting off the snow, a blinding light. After a few days of hallucinating, he eventually stumbled downhill and was rescued by adventurers. His military pension would have afforded him a regeneration of his eyes, but he refused, saying that his blindness was a gift from Pholtus, and he would not be ungrateful and exchange it for the weaker sight of those unblessed by Pholtus.

Any attempts to check out his story with Bardic Lore, Sense Motive, Gather Information, or Knowledge (local – Nyron and her environs) verify Jeremiah's story as he tells it.

The white dragon eggs are indeed the "Seeds of Winter" in his vision, although Jeremiah has no knowledge of this, nor should the players have any in-game indication of that at this point.

If one of the PCs casts a *divination* in an attempt to ascertain Jeremiah's motivations, the response will be vague: "Time will reveal the true threat to the Pale through this new Seer."

## Encounter Three

Ogburg lies about 300 miles southeast of Wintershiven. The city of Holdworthy is 75 miles along the way but is not detailed here. Passing through Ogburg, the party has a chance to (re)meet a valuable resource and discover Zambaric's fate.

### A Lonely Archer

*After stopping to refresh your provisions, and for a warm meal in Ogburg, you notice that even the city-dwellers who don't make their living off the land are inconvenienced by this unusually long and cold winter; the gears that operate the South Gate apparently froze and broke during the course of the night! As such, the guards direct you, along with many other annoyed travelers, to the East Gate instead, to get back on the southern road.*

The party may decide to gather some information about Zambaric in Ogburg. With a DC 15 Gather Information

check, they learn that once a month, the old wizard uses the *sending* spell to send a local store a list of provisions he wants delivered to his cottage. An errand boy leaves the foodstuffs and occasionally some other mundane items requested upon his doorstep, and takes a pouch of coins. They have not heard from him in about three weeks now, but expect he'll be needing fresh provisions again soon. Several months back, Zambaric requested a book about the geography of the Rakers.

***Outside the East Gate are the archery ranges, empty, save for one rugged young woman practicing, apparently undeterred by the cold air. She is long-limbed and lean, wearing clothing more suited for summer—not even a hat or hood. Her head is bare, with dark hair pulled back to stay out of her brown eyes. Nearby, a large white horse with a thick mane and tail snorts quietly.***

The woman is Bryanna (female human Rgr4), a former member of the Trailblazers. (PCs may have met her in PAL3-04 *Full Circle* by David Baker or in PAL4S-02 *Unnatural Law*.) Her mount, named Colin, is an intelligent magical beast called an asperi and is currently giving commentary on her shooting via telepathy. If no PCs have met her previously, a Knowledge (local – Nyrond and her environs) or Bardic Knowledge check of DC 20 will allow the PCs to recognize her based on what they might have heard about her (the information here).

The Trailblazers was a loose organization of rangers who explored the Palish borders, mapping routes and reporting to the Theocracy what they saw. About a year ago, the Trailblazers were incorporated into the Prelatal Army Scout Corps, which has too much structure (i.e. paperwork!) for Bryanna's taste, so she left to teach archery to young students here, mostly girls, for the time being. Unfortunately, classes have been slow all winter because it is too cold. She has cast *endure elements* on herself today and therefore feels comfortable despite her light clothing.

She may be a useful resource to the party after they discover the clues from Zambaric's cottage as well.

### **Zambaric's Cottage**

When the PCs proceed from the city to Zambaric's place, read or paraphrase the following:

***It's about a half-hour walk to Zambaric's cottage, and the last bit is a dirt track off the main road, where the ground crunches monotonously under each frosty step.***

***Some old signs adorn the front yard; one demands "No trespassing!" while the others contain threats that have been weathered to the point of being illegible.***

Ask the PCs for a Spot check (DC 10) to notice that there is no smoke coming from the chimney, which is disconcerting, given the cold. At this point, the PCs will

probably suspect something is amiss. The cottage is 30 ft. x 30 ft. with front and back doors; a bedroom and privy are at the back and the front half is one large area, complete with a stove, several crammed bookcases, and a large desk/worktable. There are windows on either side of the front door, both open very slightly. If the PCs look through the windows, read or paraphrase the following:

***You look inside the window to a very odd sight; large drifts of snow cover the floor! There is no snow on the ground outside the cottage, and it doesn't look like there has been any recently. Loose papers and snow flutter about in the draft from the window.***

***Lying in the corner is an elderly male human dressed in a deep blue robe. He clutches some papers in a black-fingered fist. Icicles hang from his nose, making slanting bars across his gaping mouth; rime rings his horror-filled eyes, which stare out the window.***

Make sure to describe the scene inside as extremely bizarre and creepy! It is quite obvious that the room was searched extensively before all the snow was unnaturally deposited inside.

The body is that of Zambaric III. He is dead, from the cold aura of a snowflake ooze hiding in the room. Some dragon bile contact poison still remains in his system. It damaged his strength such that he could not defend himself.

When the ooze attacks, read or paraphrase this description (verbatim from the *Monster Manual* III):

***What at first appeared to be just a bank of snow is in fact a lacy, delicate-looking creature resembling an enormous snowflake with a complex structure.***

#### **Creatures:**

##### **APL 6 (EL 6 with circumstance)**

☛ **Snowflake Ooze (1):** hp 63; see Combat Appendix APL 6.

##### **APL 8 (EL 8 with circumstance)**

☛ **Advanced Snowflake Ooze (1):** hp 125; see Combat Appendix APL 8.

##### **APL 10 (EL 10 with circumstance)**

☛ **Advanced Snowflake Oozes (2):** hp 125, 125; see Combat Appendix APL 10.

**Tactics:** The snowflake ooze is mindless. It attacks whoever comes into the room first. It grabs and constricts whatever it can.

Note that any use of fire, acid, or electricity inside the cottage is likely to ruin some of the papers. A wizard in the party is likely to understand the significance of the knowledge that could be lost. Ask for an Intelligence check DC 10 from any party members who seem

oblivious to this fact. Destruction of the papers result in some scroll/spell access lost on the AR, and they lose a puzzle clue as to who slew Zambaric, and where the murderer can be found. For every such splash/area effect used in the room, rip a random corner off Player Handout #1 (after 4 such tears, only a diamond-shaped piece of paper will remain), and cross off one of the four rare scrolls mentioned below to represent it being destroyed.

## The Evidence

Once the ooze has been dispatched, the party may investigate the scene.

## Zambaric and the Word-Puzzle Clue

Zambaric is quite dead and has been for a few days. Some residual poison remains in his system if a party member casts *detect poison* for it. A Heal check of DC 20 reveals he was rendered immobile by poison. A DC 30 check identifies the poison as dragon bile.

Zambaric's fist grips whatever remains of a parchment (Player Handout #1), upon which appear to be several completed "word chain" puzzles (also called "doublets") that Zambaric enjoyed in life (PAL4-01 *Lost Soul* by Frank Bayer). Closer investigation should reveal there are quite obvious simpler solutions to several of the puzzles than what Zambaric scribbled down. Surely one as intelligent as Zambaric would have caught that! The puzzles are, in fact, an encoded message.

Between each line of a word chain, one letter is changed to something new. Those new letters from each word chain can be strung together to spell words, which once combined, are clues to the trail of his murderer. The solution to the encoded message puzzle is shown on DM Handout #2. The message is as follows: WINTER WIND RINGS GOBLIN RAKERS HOWL MIST PASS ANVIL.

If the party is not familiar with word chain puzzles, either Father Bartok or anyone at an Arcanist Guildhouse would recognize these puzzles as such and explain them. This is described in the next encounter.

## Scrolls and Spellbooks

The other papers about the room appear to be scrolls of arcane spells, which are most probably unlike any they've ever seen. They are from the *Frostburn* expansion book:

- *ice web* (Sor/Wiz4)
- *suppress flame* (Sor/Wiz5)
- *wall of coldfire* (Sor/Wiz4)
- *waves of cold* (Sor/Wiz6)

If a PC uses *read magic*, an appropriate Knowledge (arcana) or Spellcraft skill check (DC 15 + spell level) reveals that these spells require a special material component called "coldfire". Although activating the scroll does not require the component, if one were to

scribe the spell to their spellbook and prepare it, they could not cast it without the rare material component.

The Draconic tome with the instructions on forging the rings is not here. Slag/Mikkos took it when he left.

Several of Zambaric's old spellbooks are here, although they only have low-level spells (all 3rd-level and lower Wizard spells listed as "core" in the LGCS). Zambaric committed all his higher-level spells to memory with his Spell Mastery feats.

## Last Will and Testament

Zambaric has written that the spellbooks be given to the Pale's Arcanist Guild, although PCs can spend additional TUs scribing spells from these books before handing them over. This is covered in the Conclusion section.

## Other Books

There are many other books here on various topics. If a PC spends a few minutes looking explicitly for a book on Geography of the Rakers, they may find one. It mentions the Howling Mist Pass: a steep and narrow ascent to the icy plateaus, east of Ogburg, where a geothermally-heated stream creates a constant fog, while the wind through the narrowness of the chasm creates an unsettling howl. With the maps in the book, the party can easily locate the pass. There is also a brief mention of a landmark called the "Anvil" because of a resemblance to one, and the irony of it being the exact opposite of the high temperatures in a forge. The formation is a day's travel west from the top of the pass, across the tundra.

## Speak with Dead

If the party wishes to cast *speak with dead* on Zambaric's body, they may certainly do so. Here are answers to the questions most likely to be asked:

- **Who killed you?** A goblin disguised as a halfling.
- **What was his name?** The name he told me was Mikkos Cassadine.
- **How do you know he was a goblin in disguise?** I used an *arcane eye* to follow him from my cottage and saw him change back to his normal appearance.
- **Why did he kill you?** To keep me from informing the Theocracy about him.
- **What did you know about him?** I made four rings for him over the past few years.
- **How did you learn to make these rings?** The goblin provided excerpts from an ancient Draconic tome which described them.
- **What did the rings do?** They transform the wearer, granting them features as if they were born of draconic blood.

- **What did he plan to do with the rings?** I assumed he intended to continue some plans set in motion by Winterwind before the latter was slain, although I did not know how.
- **What is the purpose of the puzzle?** I encoded some information mentioning the goblin and where he lives.
- **How do you know where he lives?** I used an *arcane eye* to follow him from my cottage once.
- **What is the encoded message in the puzzle?** (Zambaric's body answers with the solution, mentioned above).
- **Do you wish to be raised from the dead?** No, I have lived a full life, and have probably caused enough trouble by my carelessness.
- **Where is the "Howl(ing) Mist Pass"?** East of Ogburg. There is a Geography book on my shelf, which describes its location and features.
- **What is "The Anvil"?** A natural landmark up in the Rakers, about a day's travel east of the Howling Mist Pass. It is (also) mentioned in the Geography book on my shelf.

**Development:** Move on to Encounter Four when the PCs leave Zambaric's place.

## Encounter Four

This encounter is meant to be somewhat freeform role-playing. The PCs should feel free to utilize any resources they have available to them, including knowledgeable local Pale NPCs, libraries, etc. You should be able to accommodate any of their ideas, while also steering them in the right direction if necessary, although try to do so without it being obvious.

Barring any magical means of transportation, any route that does not take the party to the Howling Mist Pass before nightfall will not result in catching up with Slag by himself on the tundra the next day. Instead, he will only be encountered after the party has dealt with his warband, reinforced by his presence.

### Reporting the Murder

Knowledge (Local – Nyron and her environs) or even a basic Intelligence check of DC 5 should bring to mind that the Pale is an extremely lawful society, and a murder must be reported to the authorities immediately. In this case, Zambaric's property is the jurisdiction of the Pale Patrol assigned to the Prelacy of Dawn and operating out of Ogburg. Upon reporting a murder, the party will meet one Master Sergeant Roderick (Clr7/Rog1), a gruff detective who will first take separate statements from each party member, under a *zone of truth* (Will DC 16). Resisting the spell is considered admission of guilt,

though the caster does not actually know who is resisting. In addition to comparing stories afterwards (which they do in case one's version of the truth was influenced by enchantments or illusions unbeknownst to them), he will ask if the PCs took any of Zambaric's property, which must be legally handled, as specified in Zambaric's will. Any party member that has stolen anything must return it immediately, and will be sentenced to time in a New Dawn Camp based on the item's value. Roderick's personality is extremely gruff, "by-the-book", and suspicious and should be role-played accordingly.

Roderick will then suggest/perform some of the following activities during his investigation and fill the party in as he progresses.

- Gather Information skill check: No matter how long or who the PCs ask about the halfling, they will come up with nothing substantial.
- Any attempt to *scurry* on Slag will fail, as he is warded by the protections of the ring. Roderick can be convinced to cast this the following day and will explain that it did not succeed.
- NPC Spellcasting: If the PCs make a donation equivalent to the normal NPC spellcasting cost to a local church, a resident 7th-level Pholtan Cleric (or Roderick, if the party is dealing with him) will prepare any requested spell without an xp component on the following day to cast it for the party. The party must also provide any material components with a specified gp value. The results of such spellcasting, whether by party members or an NPC are as follows:
  - *Speak with dead* (provided they bring Zambaric's body to the Church): Use the answers from the previous Encounter to handle these cases. Note also that if presented with a dead body, the priest will insist this murder be reported to the City Watch immediately if it has not already been done.
  - *Divination*: Regardless of the deity, the response should be "The path of the howling mist leads to the anvil where the fates of many are being forged." This is a second chance to get back on track in the event the party destroyed the parchment in the first combat.

### Help from Bryanna

Returning to Ogburg, the PCs find that the South Gate is still not fixed, and Bryanna will still be at the East Gate. If PCs ask her about any two of the following three words: "Howl(ing)", "Mist" (or "Wind"), or "Pass", it will cause her to make the association and give the information in

the following paragraph. One of those words by itself is simply not enough.

*"I know of a place called the Howling Mist Pass, just a few hours east of Ogburg, in the Rakers. It's a shortcut up to the icy plateaus high above if you survive it. Most of the Trailblazers refused to explore the pass, opting for the much longer route around the north from Copper Gorge up to the top. Because of their reluctance, Colin and I decided to scout it a few years ago, and I'll never try it again. Luckily for us, Colin can fly, as a normal horse would never make it without breaking its leg. Even magical horseshoes of the zephyr wouldn't work, I think. The ledge is too narrow as is the bottom of the chasm below where the stream runs, but that's nothing compared to the mist. The internal heat of the rock under the stream melts the snow that slides down from the peaks, making a permanent mist. You can't see more than ten feet in front of you. With all the switchbacks, too, you've got to take it slow."*

*"Heard enough to deter you yet? Well, there's more... Colin and I were flying along the ledge when we thought we saw shapes materialize from the mist itself, but when we looked closer, there was nothing there. All of a sudden we both started choking as if the mist itself was inside our lungs trying to tear us apart! Colin flew straight up and, finally, we got out of the mist. We were both coughing up blood, but the pain seemed to lessen once we were out of there. Anyway, after that, there is no way either of us will ever go back there!"*

Colin agrees by telepathy with all the pertinent parts of her tale. They may direct the party to the start of the pass but will absolutely not accompany them.

If asked about the/an "Anvil", Bryanna will be able to give the following information if the PCs previously asked her about the Howling Mist Pass:

*"If you make it to the top of the pass, about a day's journey east over the tundra is a formation that looks like a giant anvil. I guess it's a bit of a joke actually. The ranger who mapped that area was the son of a blacksmith, and the cold up there was the furthest thing from the heat of his father's forge. Anyway, when he reported back with his notes, the name stuck and even made it into a geography book."*

After gaining information from Bryanna, she requests that the party return to her after their expedition into the Rakers to tell her what they found. If they don't return to her in 5 days, she assumes things went badly and flies Colin along the northern route (avoiding the Howling Mist Pass) to search for the party or their remains.

Locating and asking another former Trailblazer or researching a book will result in similar information, but instead of her personal account of the dangers (belkers)

lurking there, a footnote might read: "A few separate explorers have reported seeing insubstantial spirits in the mists of the pass. Perhaps the howling of the wind and the obscuring fog caused their minds to play tricks on them? Unfortunately, the treacherous footing of the path itself has prevented any further exploration, leaving these reports unverified."

If the party insists on bringing horses up the Howling Mist Pass, they will die from a broken leg. They can certainly bring horses with them along the northern route east of Eltison though.

### Visiting Father Bartok

If the PCs have the puzzle but failed to solve it, they might even go all the way back to Father Bartok in Wintershiven. He will notice the hint below, then figure it out five minutes after that and explain it to the party, although some xp should be lost for taking this "easy" route. Bartok will also verify his friend's handwriting and affirm that encoding secret messages is most certainly something the eccentric wizard would do.

*"This appears to be a 'doublet' or word chain puzzle, although its already solved, and quite poorly, certainly not what I'd expect from such a brilliant mind as Zambaric."*

*"Usually, two words are proposed, each with the same number of letters. Then, one links these words together by interposing other words, each which differs from the next word in one letter only. Only one letter may be changed in one of the given words, then one letter in the word so obtained, and so on, till we arrive at the other given word. The letters must not be interchanged among themselves, but each must keep to its own place. As an example, the word 'head' may be changed into 'tail' by interposing the words 'heal, teal, tell, tall'."*

*"Although there can be multiple solutions, generally, the shortest solution is the best one. In the fourth one, he has: must, gust, oust, bust, lust. That could have easily been just one step. Zambaric would have never missed that."*

If the PCs destroyed the puzzle, Father Bartok will cast an appropriate divination (see the NPC spellcasting section earlier in this encounter). Again, some xp should be lost for taking this route.

### Other Hints

Visiting a Pale Arcanist Guild house, the PCs will be able to find someone who can determine that the puzzle is actually an encoded message.

If the party uses divination magic about which path to take, the answer should suggest that the most expedient route be taken.

**Development:** If the party has accumulated these clues, they are probably preparing for a trip into the Rakers. If not, Master Sergeant Roderick (see “Reporting the Murder” above) will ask them to do just that:

*“Normally, I’d say murder is the kind of fate that is coming to those who cavort about with the uncivilized races and close the book on this case. But since Zambaric was a powerful wizard, and a crafter, I’d sleep a lot safer at night knowing something dangerous isn’t in the wrong hands. Unfortunately, this lead isn’t enough for me to back a mountaineering expedition, but if you adventurers were to investigate it and bring me back some results, I could reward you. Not to mention that fact that you’d be doing the Pale a great service.”*

If any party members have stolen anything from Zambaric’s cottage and were caught by Roderick, their sentence in a New Dawn Camp can be significantly reduced if they undertake this task, and report back.

Proceed to Encounter Five or Seven, as appropriate.

## Encounter Five

If the party chooses to brave the Howling Mist Pass, proceed with this encounter. The pass is about 12 miles outside town.

Modify the details of this encounter based on whether the party is ascending to find Slag or returning from the Rakers to the Pale through the pass, with or without Slag.

*A dozen miles east of Ogburg, through the foothills of the Rakers, you locate the start of what must be the Howling Mist Pass and find the name to be most appropriate. The wind blows down the chasm strong enough to suspend an untended cloak and carries with it a fog that dampens your faces and clothes, making them feel even colder in the chilly air.*

*The path narrows to a ledge with a sheer drop into a chasm. To your right, a cliff wall ascends about eighty feet, and another rock wall, similar save for its lack of a ledge, can be faintly seen across the chasm.*

*Although the bottom cannot be seen through the mist, the burbling of a stream can faintly be heard, so it can’t be too far down...*

The wind is about 15 mph. Appropriate magical means could cause the wind to cease and disperse some of the mist, but the mist will fill the chasm again within 5 rounds.

Have the party establish a marching order and clearly state any preparations, like a rope tied between each member. You should not remind them of preparations; they should be able to think of these safety precautions on their own.

A few years ago, Winterwind successfully summoned some belkers through a gate to the Elemental Plane of Air and assigned them to guard this short passage up into the Rakers. These creatures know Slag worked for Winterwind and allow only him to pass, but lie in wait to attack any unwanted visitors, like the PCs.

### Creatures:

#### APL 6 (EL 9 with terrain)

➤ **Advanced Belker (1):** hp 93; see Combat Appendix APL 6.

#### APL 8 (EL 11 with terrain)

➤ **Advanced Belker (2):** hp 93, 93; see Combat Appendix APL 8.

#### APL 10 (EL 13 with terrain)

➤ **Advanced Belker (3):** hp 127, 127, 127; see Combat Appendix APL 10.

**Setup:** To prepare for this combat, you should draw a chasm varying in width from 20 to 30 feet wide, with a ledge along one side varying in width from 5 to 10 feet. Explain that the ledge inclines about 5 feet higher for every 15 feet on the battlemat.

During combat, any PC moving through or attempting an action in a square adjacent to the edge must succeed at a Balance check (DC 10), or plummet 40 feet into the stream. Out of combat, the PCs can move slowly enough along the ledge so as not to require such checks. The Climb check from the stream to the path is at DC 20, due to the moisture making it slippery.

Due to the ever-present mist, visibility is poor. Any creature 10 or more feet away has concealment (20% miss chance); beyond 30 feet, a creature has total concealment (50% miss chance). There is no miss chance at 5 feet.

The belkers approach in smoke form, making almost no sound. Because of the mist, the belkers may not be seen until they are 30 feet away. Make Hide checks for them as they approach the PCs and set up the encounter at the distance the PCs spot the belkers.

**Tactics:** The belkers first engulf some PCs while in smoke form, hoping to get their smoke claws inside the PCs. They then shift back to physical form and attack relentlessly. At APL 10, the belkers may use their Snatch feat to pick up PCs and then drop them into the chasm the next round on a successful grapple check; they choose not to gain altitude (to inflict more falling damage) before dropping the PC.

If the PCs understand Auran, they overhear the creatures talking to each other (or itself, at APL 6): “We must obey the master—no intruders allowed! Little scaly one can pass but not these. These too big, not scaly.”

**Treasure:** There is no treasure here if the PCs are going up. If the PCs took the long route up from Ogburg and

are taking the pass to return, then they find an *amulet of health* on the corpse of a winter wolf soon after fighting the belkers. This was another minion of Winterwind (like those in Encounter Nine), but the belkers killed it anyway.

APL 6 or 8: *Amulet of health* +4

APL 10: *Amulet of health* +6

**Development:** If the PCs are going up the mountain, proceed to Encounter Six, or to Encounter Eight if they waited more than a day before leaving Ogburg (and will not catch Slag alone). If the PCs are coming down from the Anvil, proceed to the Conclusion.

It should be noted that Winterwind had placed the belkers here to guard the pass before his death. They are unaware of his death due to Slag's refusal to accept his master's death. Therefore, they continue in their assigned task.

## Encounter Six

If the PCs wasted little time in solving the puzzle and getting to the Howling Mist Pass, they may catch up with Slag on the tundra, as he is taking his time going home. Consider it to be another ten miles east of the pass.

Although Slag leaves no trace in the few feet of snow (difficult terrain) due to his druidic abilities, Mush, the Frigdrasil war hound he rides, does leave tracks (Track check, DC 15).

 **Slag Grizz'nak:** male half-dragon goblin Brd4/Drd5; hp 54; see Combat Appendix - all APLs.

 **Mush:** Frigdrasil war hound (animal companion); hp 37; see Combat Appendix - all APLs.

Slag is not overly alert or intelligent, but he is extremely clever and eager to avoid trouble.

He has made this trek from the Anvil to the Pale and back many times and never encountered another living soul, so he certainly doesn't expect to be followed. The party will be coming up behind him and probably spot him before he spots them, but if Slag is aware of the party before they are of him, he will share a *tree shape* with Mush (two gnarled and weather-beaten mountain junipers, which may still look out of place if they are the only trees around) until the party passes.

If the party surprises him at close range (without time for him to activate his hat into the halfling disguise) with a non-threatening hail, he is impressed and has a friendly disposition, offering some provisions to travellers "out of their element".

This close, the party may notice that the specks of white about him are scales instead of snow or icicles, and he seems oddly comfortable without cold-weather gear. He also appears stronger than the average goblin and is protective of the extradimensional haversack which

contains his treasured dragon egg. There is a ring on his finger that appears to be made from carved bone. The ring is slowly bonding with his finger (as if a cursed item) and will vanish altogether soon, having imbued its power into Slag. It radiates strong magic, primarily Transmutation and Abjuration, and cannot be removed by physical means; it becomes nonmagical if removed by some other means from its original wearer.

If the party hesitates to confront him, Slag will launch into long tales, which he could possibly use to aid in his escape if the situation changes. He will state himself merely as a wanderer. He will admit to helping Maertha (see next Encounter), if questioned about it. His motivation was that he felt sorry for her.

If confronted/accused of Zambaric's murder, he is stunned and claims it was "an accident". He agrees to tell them his long tale from the beginning (paraphrase the Adventure Background section) as he hopes to use his storytelling performance to facilitate his escape. He will cast a disguised *harmonize*, then a disguised *enthrall* on the party, and a *fascinate* (as a move action) on the two PCs which most look like spellcasters. If that is successful, he will move away to the extent of his voice, use *dust of disappearance* on himself (and move in a random direction, leaving no tracks, to avoid *glitterdust* and *faerie fire* spells), then wild shape into an eagle and fly to his warband at The Anvil, even leaving Mush if necessary.

Secondary tactics would be to cast *obscuring mist*, then cast *meld into stone* (sharing with Mush if possible) with his *metamagic rod of Silent Spell* to avoid giving away his tactics. At this altitude, boulders and other stony crags are common, jutting out from the snow, so he should be able to find a stone big enough to accommodate him and Slag.

If he manages to hide somewhere but fears he will be found, he could also convert any spell into a *summon nature's ally* (using the *lesser metamagic rod of silence*) to get as many creatures from the 1st-level table as possible, and command them to run off in different directions, as soon as he wild shapes into the same type of creature and also runs off, hoping to distract the party with decoys.

If all avenues of escape are closed down, he will debate the issues of his case with the PCs, giving himself a strong defense:

1. Zambaric had agreed to a lawful transaction: construct these rings as described in exchange for various payments. Slag held up his side. Slag deceived Zambaric as to his true identity and the true use of the rings, claiming to be the errand boy of a wealthy master, but Zambaric's desire for rare magics and knowledge caused him to accept the deal without any precautions or consideration. The laws of the Pale are only to protect who they like, and are not fair, nor equal, so he could not go to the Palish authorities with his grievance.

2. Zambaric threatened to turn Slag into the Palish authorities, which Slag equates to certain death, just like all the other druids that he helped to escape. Slag claims he acted in self-defense, grabbing the first thing in his pocket, namely the contact poison. (Slag will admit the following only if forced to: He thought that the poison would kill Zambaric outright, or else he wouldn't have left the snowflake ooze.)
3. Slag admits that he has a white dragon egg but insists that the wyrmling isn't irrevocably evil. He honors its right to live and he intends to raise it to respect nature. Winterwind just wanted his kind to survive, separate from his schemes. Dragons are such majestic creatures, but they are being hunted to extinction!
4. If there were some way for Slag to make amends or restitution for Zambaric's death without endangering Slag's freedom (or that of his egg), Slag would be receptive and cooperative. He offers some of his magic items, enough to pay for a *raise dead*.
5. The Pale killed the tribe into which he was born. He claims the land around Copper Gorge was goblin land before the Palish settlers drove them out. (But Slag conveniently doesn't know whom the goblins drove out before that.)

Slag is ultimately a coward and wants to surrender if he cannot escape. He will only use force against the party as a last resort if the PCs are attacking to injure him and will not listen to his surrender. He attempts to gain their sympathy, even resorting to bribery if they will let him go.

If he escapes, he hurries off to prepare and bolster the defenses of his warband. If the party convinces him of their good will, he will train them in the secrets of cold magic that he has learned. If the party gives him any reason to be suspicious of future unpleasant visits from the Pale, he mobilizes the warband to seek a new home at a higher altitude, where many of them may die.

**Development:** If the PCs continue with Slag to the camp of his tribe, proceed to Encounter Eight.

## Encounter Seven

This encounter occurs if the party chooses the longer, easier northern route up into the Rakers.

This route is about 120 miles long: 30 miles in the flats and foothills and 90 more miles in the mountains proper. The terrain reduces overland travel to 3/4 of normal. Travelling in the most direct route will take 5 days for most parties, assuming they are mounted (speed 40 ft. on horseback). However, each day a Survival check (DC 15) is needed to stay on that direct route toward "The Anvil". A failure results in another day being spent picking up the trail and one more successful check being

necessary to get back on track. The amount of provisions the party has should be tallied and ticked off for every day they travel in the Rakers and are unable to replenish their supplies. Starvation can result if the PCs get lost and run out of provisions. Similar methods must be used even to return to the Pale, as every day snow covers their tracks. If things have gone this disastrously, Bryanna and Colin will spot the party on a scouting mission in one week's time, give food, and lead any survivors home; in that case, proceed to the Conclusion.

One reason for a party to choose this route might be to bring mounts with them, although the mounts require their own provisions.

About 30 miles along the route (probably the morning of the second day), the PCs meet a woman who knows Slag. Read or paraphrase the following:

*The foothills east of Eltison are a much easier ascent and even populated with a small rugged settlement, although most of it looks deserted. Hearing you out on the path, a grubby-looking woman with a large nose emerges from one cabin to offer some advice, "If you're traveling farther up, be careful! Them snowstorms can come out of nowhere, and strand you. I got caught in one a few months ago and wouldn't have made it back without some help."*

Her name is Maertha, and if asked for more details about her rescue, she tells the following story:

*"Weirdest thing. I was just about starving, due to my no-good husband off chasing gold, so I set out trying to catch a rabbit, when I twisted my ankle, and a storm came up while I was limping home. The others around here say I hallucinated it, but I swear, a goblin rode up on a dog and shaped a hut out of the snow around me with some magic! Crazy enough, you'd think that would freeze me dead for sure, but it kept me warm through the night, and when I woke, there were two freshly killed rabbits for me stew-pot! Saved my life, it did."*

If the party asks about the gold, or her husband, she offers:

*"First mention of gold in Tobinsford, my no-good husband left with the rest of them right before this winter from hell. Since then, I've been fending for myself. I hope he froze to death up north."*

Tobinsford is a remote village in the foothills east of Landrigard, north of this settlement. There have been some recent claims of gold there, but many locals remain skeptical.

Maertha doesn't have any more information than that. Slag did indeed cross her path and had sympathy for her, remembering when he was rescued from death in the cold by Winterwind. He built her an igloo with the *snowdrift* spell, then treated her wounds after she passed out and caught her some rabbits for food as she seemed to

be mumbling about needing some repeatedly in her sleep. He left before she awoke.

**Development:** Successfully reaching the Anvil takes the party to Encounter Eight.

## Encounter Eight

The party encounters Slag's warband of goblins, the Ice Claw Tribe at their base beneath the Anvil.

*The outline of some crags resembling an anvil comes into view through a snowstorm, which blew up about an hour ago from the east. Under your feet, the snow is packed down and easier to move across.*

A Track check (DC 5) will confirm there is an abundance of four-legged Medium canine (worg) tracks circling this area recently, which has packed down the snow, so it is no longer rough terrain. Until the PCs reach the shelter of the Anvil, though, their visibility is limited by the light snowfall (Spot checks at -4—see DMG, page 94).

If the PCs captured Slag in Encounter Six but continued toward "The Anvil", he will use any means possible to alert his warband. Overall, though, the warband will not be optimally prepared.

### Creatures:

#### APL 6 (EL 9 with terrain and buffs)

👉 **Goblin Chargers (3):** hp 16 each; See Combat Appendix APL 6.

👉 **Worgs (3):** hp 30 each; see *Monster Manual*.

👉 **Goblin Archers (4):** hp 16 each; see Combat Appendix APL 6.

#### APL 8 (EL 11 with terrain and buffs)

👉 **Goblin Chargers (6):** hp 16 each; see Combat Appendix APL 8.

👉 **Worgs (6):** hp 30 each; see *Monster Manual*.

👉 **Goblin Archers (6):** hp 16 each; see Combat Appendix APL 8.

#### APL 10 (EL 13)

👉 **Goblin Chargers (12):** hp 16 each; see Combat Appendix APL 10.

👉 **Worgs (12):** hp 30 each; see *Monster Manual*.

👉 **Goblin Archers (12):** hp 16 each; see Combat Appendix APL 10.

**Setup and Tactics:** The base of the Anvil is a 'V' pointing to the entrance of some caves in which Slag's new tribe has settled. The party approaches from the wide end of the V, roughly 150 ft. from the narrow end. The rock walls making this V are 50 feet tall (Climb DC 20). Slag

has used his *snowdrift* spell (see the Special Rules section) to create battlements (5 feet tall and 5 feet thick) for the archers along both walls of the V. A larger snowdrift, 10 feet tall and 10 feet wide, conceals a light catapult to one side of the cave mouth.

The readiness of the warband will depend on if they are aware of the party approaching (Slag escaped in Encounter Six, or the lookout notices the party) and how prepared they can get before the party reaches them.

Slag casts *snowsight* on one archer (or more if expecting company) every watch shift.

The archers man a light catapult loaded with an oversized tanglefoot bag (covers a 10-ft. space when it hits, although there is no chance of sticking to the snow, only entanglement). Targetting squares near the PCs requires an attack roll (+2 ranged) against AC 15. A miss scatters 2d8 ft. away in a random direction. It takes 2 rounds of preparation before it can fire again, although when re-aiming, they gain an additional +2 on the attack roll for each previous miss. If a PC investigates the goo, a Knowledge (nature) check at DC 15 tells them the goo is a mixture of various evergreen tree saps.

If the *snowsight*-enabled guard spots the party approaching, he will alert the chargers, who will get on their worg mounts in front of the entrance to their caves. The goblins will also fire a warning tanglefoot with the catapult, accompanied by a booming warning in Goblin (shouted through a hollowed tusk of some large creature): "GO AWAY! OR ELSE!"

When the PCs come into range for combat to actually begin, Slag will cast *inspirational boost* as a swift action and begin using his Bardic Music to inspire courage, affecting his entire warband.

Thus inspired, the chargers will ride their worgs out to meet the party, while the archers move down the corridors behind the snow-battlements to arrow slits that provide +4 cover to their AC, but these slits limit the archer's firing arc to only 45 degrees. Meanwhile, Slag travels the corridors of his battlements, using charges from his *wand of haste* on each group of archers, then use his Bardic Music to inspire courage again. After this, he will retreat into the caves where he will cower until the fight is over.

**PCs Surrender or Negotiate:** If the party is doing poorly, the warband will suggest that their lives will be spared if they surrender. It should also be made clear that the goblins feel they are defending their home from intruders. Negotiation is a possibility with an exceptional Diplomacy check. Although Slag may be friendly to travellers on the tundra, closer to their home, the goblins in the warband are obviously unfriendly. Any PC bard attempting to *fascinate* will cause Slag to *countersong*.

**PCs Retreat:** If the party retreats back into the deeper snow on the plateau from which they came, the

chargers will not pursue where they cannot charge, and the archers and catapult cannot target that far away.

**Victory:** If the warband is defeated, Slag will sob and plead for mercy for the life of the unborn wyrmling as well as its 'guardener' (himself). Refer to Encounter Six for what Slag knows and how he reacts to the PCs.

If Slag and any of his warband are asked where they obtained their masterwork weapons, they respond that an intelligent caribou-like creature referred to in their legends as a "rejkar" (*Monster Manual III*) came to them speaking their language, and offering them masterwork weapons if they provided it with lumber and iron ore. They did as requested, and it transformed the raw materials into piles of weapons! They haven't seen the intelligent beast since then, but before leaving, it said that it may request a favor from the goblin warband in the future. A successful check with any of the following skills can reveal some additional information:

- Spellcraft DC 35: The creature used a spell-like ability equivalent to the arcane spell *fabricate*.
- Bardic Knowledge DC 30: In the legends of the peoples inhabiting colder climates, there is a creature known as the rejkar, which resembles an ordinary caribou but is extremely intelligent and has many bizarre supernatural powers. It often bestows its favors upon a clan in the way of food, tools, or weapons, but eventually causes the downfall of the clan.
- Knowledge (the Planes) DC 15: There is a type of outsider from Cania, the Eighth (of Nine) Hell of Baator, called a "rejkar". It looks like a shaggy white caribou.
  - DC 20: A rejkar is actually very smart and has a spell-like ability equivalent to the arcane spell *fabricate*.
  - DC 25: A rejkar can also freeze someone with its mere gaze.
  - DC 30: Give the Bardic knowledge results as well.

This creature is not featured in this module, thus its stats are not provided in the Appendix.

**Treasure:** Masterwork composite longbows, lances, and morningstars (all Small), plus the goblins' other equipment. The sap-flinging catapult is not included as loot.

**Development:** The PCs will probably want to return to the Pale. If the PCs came up the long way but want to descend by Howling Mist Pass, go to Encounter Five. If the PCs captured or killed Slag or took the egg, go to Encounter Nine. If they let him go with his egg, go to Encounter Ten.

## Encounter Nine

If the party has captured Slag or his egg and are returning with them to The Pale, some creatures come to the goblin's aid. If the party decimated the goblin warband but failed to capture Slag, these creatures come to dispense some retribution. If the party ascended the Howling Mist Pass (Encounter Five) and plans to return the same way, this encounter occurs on the tundra before the top of the pass. If they are returning on the easier northern passage, this also occurs on the tundra before that descent.

*After several days of snow, the sky is finally clear, and the reflection of the sun is bright off a tall drift of snow about 50 feet away. Was that a snorting sound coming from beyond it?*

The snorting is the sound of some fearsome creatures sent by some unknown source to recover Slag and/or his precious cargo. This unknown source has also placed some magical protections on the beast(s) in addition to a magical amulet, which should imply that they serve some master.

When the creatures appear, read or paraphrase the following:

**APL 6:**

*Two large wolves, the size of horses, stride around the snowdrift. Their fur is stark white and their blue eyes hold a malevolent intelligence. Their muzzles fume with frosty breath.*

Give the PCs a Spot check (DC 20) to notice this further fact:

*Around each one's neck hangs a golden amulet on a chain.*

**APL 8:**

*A huge wolf, standing ten feet at the shoulder, strides around the snowdrift. Its fur is stark white and its blue eyes hold a malevolent intelligence. Its muzzle fumes with frosty breath.*

Give the PCs a Spot check (DC 20) to notice this further fact:

*Around its neck hangs a golden amulet on a chain.*

**APL 10:**

*A huge creature, standing ten feet at the shoulder, steps around the snowdrift. Built generally like a muscular horse but with an extra pair of legs, it is covered in white fur. Ramlike horns crown its head and sharp, upward-curving tusks protrude from its mouth.*

Give the PCs a Spot check (DC 25) to notice this further fact:

*Around its neck, barely visible among the shaggy fur, hangs a golden amulet on a chain.*

**Creatures:**

**APL 6 (EL 9 with terrain and buffs)**

❧ **Winter Wolves** (2): hp 63 each; see Combat Appendix APL 6.

**APL 8 (EL 11 with terrain and buffs)**

❧ **Advanced Winter Wolf** (1): hp 187; see Combat Appendix APL 8.

**APL 10 (EL 13 with terrain and buffs)**

❧ **Tlalusk** (1): hp 216; see Combat Appendix APL 10.

**Setup:** This combat takes place in two-foot-deep snow, which is considered difficult terrain. Each square counts as two squares of movement, and there are no 5-foot steps (only 10-foot or 15-foot (diagonal) moves).

The snowdrift is 50 feet away from the lead PC and is 10 feet tall and roughly 20 feet in radius. The monsters start behind it.

**Tactics:** The monsters emerge from around the snowdrift and attack. The winter wolves use their breath before closing for melee. The tlalusk bellows first and then charges or tramples foes.

In the event these creatures defeat the party, they will leave the bodies (not eat them) at the top of the Howling Mist Pass. Bryanna will eventually discover them there, having taken the long northern route to look for the PCs if they don't return after five days. She will bring them back to the Church to determine what happened. *Speak with dead* will be cast, as will *raise dead* if the PC can repay its cost.

**Treasure:**

APL 6: *Amulet of health* +4 (2)

APL 8: *Amulet of health* +4

APL 10: *Amulet of health* +6

**Development:** Proceed to the Conclusion.

## Encounter Ten

The party that has consciously decided to let Slag go free with his egg encounters some natural hazards on the return journey.

*After several days of snow, the sky is finally clear, and the reflection of the sun is bright off a tall drift of snow about 50 feet away.*

Similar to Encounter Nine, this occurs on the tundra right before whichever descent the party chooses.

**Trap:** The ground is unstable and behaves like a spiked pit trap, 60 feet (12 squares) wide and 25 feet (5

rows of squares) across, but only the middle row opens in the first round, as described below.

Have the party determine their marching order across the snowy plain. If a party member is actively searching or using Survival to guide their way, they may use that skill to notice an unstable fault line in the square ahead. Additional Search or Survival checks will allow the PCs to locate the other squares of the trap.

The first Medium or larger-sized creature to cross the fault line causes the surface to collapse beneath their feet into a rift 5 feet (1 row) across and 60 feet wide, down to a cave full of sharp upward-pointing icicles. In each of the subsequent two rounds, five more feet on either side of the original fault also becomes unstable—a total of 15 feet (3 rows) across in the second round and 25 feet (5 rows) in the third—collapsing and burying anything that already fell into the cave.

**APL 6 (EL 9):**

❧ **Icicle-Spiked Pit:** CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset for 3 rounds, then no reset; DC 25 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target, for 1d4+4 piercing damage each) multiple targets (affects all in specified squares); Search or Survival DC 27; Disable Device N/A.

❧ **Falling Snow:** CR 4; mechanical, location trigger; automatic reset for 3 rounds, then no reset; Atk +19 melee (2d6 bludgeoning); multiple targets (can strike all creatures in specified squares), Spot DC 24; Disable Device N/A.

**APL 8 (EL 11):**

❧ **Icicle-Spiked Pit:** CR 10; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset for 3 rounds, then no reset; DC 30 Reflex save avoids; 60 ft. deep (6d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target, for 1d4+5 piercing damage each) multiple targets (affects all in specified squares); Search or Survival DC 31; Disable Device N/A.

❧ **Falling Snow:** CR 6; mechanical, location trigger; automatic reset for 3 rounds, then no reset; Atk +19 melee (4d6 bludgeoning); multiple targets (can strike all creatures in specified squares), Spot DC 24; Disable Device N/A.

**APL 10 (EL 13):**

❧ **Icicle-Spiked Pit:** CR 12; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset for 3 rounds, then no reset; DC 35 Reflex save avoids; 100 ft. deep (10d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target, 1d4+5 piercing damage each) multiple targets (affects all in specified squares); Search or Survival DC 35; Disable Device N/A.

↗ **Falling Snow:** CR 8; mechanical, location trigger; automatic reset for 3 rounds, then no reset; Atk +19 melee (6d6 bludgeoning); multiple targets (can strike all creatures in specified squares), Spot DC 30; Disable Device N/A.

Consider the initial collapse as a surprise round and handle the next few rounds in initiative, as a party member that has fallen must be rescued quickly, although as the rescuers will find out, the area still remains dangerous.

Give each PC a normal turn to act before the next 5-foot row collapses. Each PC may make a Spot check (DC 15) to notice the carcass of a large white wolf impaled on an icicle below with something metallic glinting around its neck. The Spot DC of the trap will convey that the edge is still unstable.

As a special case, casting an Evocation or Conjunction spell with the [Cold] descriptor at either edge of the rift will cause some squares (those within the spell's area, or one square if it is a ray or ranged touch spell) to solidify for a number of rounds equal to the level of the spell, potentially long enough to rescue anyone and retreat to a safe distance away.

After one round has elapsed, the next row of squares on either side collapses, depositing chunks of snow and possibly more creatures on anything that fell in the previous round(s). This snow buries them, requiring a DC 20 Strength check to get free. A buried creature will not take any further damage from any subsequent snow falling, although for each layer of snow above them, it will require one more round of digging to rescue them (and the Strength check for them to dig their own way out increases by 5). Buried creatures are also subject to suffocation dangers or could already be unconscious and bleeding out, in need of rescue.

Give the PCs another round of Spot checks and actions before the third row of squares collapses on each side of the pit (5 rows total), again dropping more snow (and victims) into the rift.

#### **Treasure:**

The corpse of a large winter wolf lies at the bottom. It wears a magical amulet made of gold.

APL 6 or 8: *Amulet of health* +4

APL 10: *Amulet of health* +6

**Development:** Proceed to the Conclusion.

## **Conclusion**

Regardless of whether the party brings back a white dragon egg or merely word of one, the public is already aware of the existence of at least one other egg.

*Finally making your way back through Wintershiven, you find the city is abuzz with*

*rumors... a white dragon egg was just discovered deep in Jaramai Twist's silver mines and brought to the Theocrat. "It must have belonged to that weird, dragon-blooded, half-elf sorceress that those adventurers killed last year!" some say.*

*It is also said Jarret Beak now sees the same "Seeds of Winter" vision that Jeremiah has seen, although a little too late, according to the critics. The Theocrat has not given up on his advisor, but Jarret's confidence in his own abilities is waning. Scribes take down his dreams every morning, and rumors leak from the scriptorium that he is coming up blank more and more often.*

*Brother Jeremiah, on the other hand, is now welcomed on his tours of the Theocracy, gaining more and more believers in his prophetic visions.*

*Spring appears to be finally breaking through the long winter, and the farmers race to plant their seeds, although this late, they know their yield will be smaller at harvest. Palish merchants are wary of depending upon imports from Urnst or from Nyrond, given its recent political instability, and the citizens of the Pale feel considerably less secure in their government's grain reserves.*

If the party brings Slag (alive or dead) and/or his white dragon egg to the Theocracy, they gain an appropriate monetary reward (though it probably disappears with the gold cap) along with the Favor of the Theocracy of the Pale on their AR, which can be used for advancing in certain meta-orgs.

If the party lets Slag go free, they gain the Disfavor of the Pale for failing to stop a potential security risk. Circle the Disfavor of the Pale on the AR. They do, however, receive Friends in Cold Places on their AR and the various benefits associated with that.

## **Gift of the gnomes**

At the conclusion of the adventure, after the characters have rested up and spent a night or two in a warm bed, each PC is visited individually by a gnome hailing from the Yatil Mountains. The gnome knows the identity of the character, and the read-aloud text below can be paraphrased to include that information. Read the following to the players:

*Your last adventure complete, you spend a few days resting and relaxing, enjoying what comforts civilization offers. One day, as you are out walking about, a well-worn gnome traveler dressed in an earthen robe with stitchings of gold waves you down. As he approaches, his face beams with the delight of your attention.*

*“Good adventurer, I thank you for a moment of your precious time. Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Clegin, Master Illusionist of Gnome Vale. The Laird Gwaylar, our headman, has sent me to search for worthies that may be willing to aid our cause. Having heard of your recent exploits, I must say, I am quite impressed by your actions. You must be one of the stalwarts spoke of in the foretellings of our Chief Cleric. Thus, I have this gift for you, if you will accept it.”*

*Clegin pulls a polished gemstone from one of his robe pockets. The gem has a symbol of arcane power etched in its face. “Please, take this. It is now but an interesting bauble, but I have the power to enchant it into something that would be of greater use than exchange for mere coin. When the time is right, you might find yourself on the path to my home, and then, as is foretold, you will aid my people who have been beset upon by evils thought vanquished. If you are successful in your task to be, I shall reward you by awakening the arcane power within the gem I offer. I and my people thank you for all you’ve done, and all you’ve yet to accomplish.”*

If the character accepts the gemstone:

*Clegin hands you the gemstone. The same smile plays upon his face as when he first greeted you. “I have others to seek out. Soon, our paths shall cross again, brave one.” He turns from you, and walks down the street, disappearing in the crowd.*

If the character does not accept the gemstone:

*A look of confusion furrows Clegin’s brow. “I am certain you are the one spoken of, yet you do not accept my gift? Are you sure you would not reconsider?”*

Give the player another chance to think it over. If they accept, read the acceptance text above. If they continue to decline, read the following:

*Clegin resigns himself to a slow smile. “Gift or no, our paths shall meet again. I am certain that something can be arranged at a later time. I must leave now; I have others to seek out. Good day to you, brave one.” He turns from you, and walks down the street, disappearing in the crowd.*

Characters can make a DC 20 Knowledge (geography) skill check to know that Gnome Vale is a very isolated community of gnomes located deep within the Yatil Mountains.

Clegin has more errands to run, and can’t sit and chat any longer with the character. If pressed for more information, he simply says that all will be revealed in due time.

If a character accepts the gift, they receive the *Gnome Vale gemstone* listed on the Adventure Record. If they

refuse, cross this item off the Adventure Record. Its purpose will become known at a later time.

If a character already has a gemstone, they may receive a second (or third) gemstone if it is of a different color than the ones already possessed by the character. A character may not possess more than one of the same color gemstone.

## The End

## Critical Events Summary

Please e-mail answers to the following questions to [nharkins@well.com](mailto:nharkins@well.com), with the subject line “Seeds of Winter Feedback”:

1. Did the party learn of Slag’s dragon egg?
2. Did the party learn of Umar’s dragon egg?
3. Did the party tell the Church or public about these dragon eggs?
4. Did Slag survive? With possession of the egg?
5. Did the party give Slag’s egg to the Church/Theocrat?
6. Did the party leave any survivors of the Ice Claw Tribe?
7. Did the party slay the belkers?

## Experience Point Summary

Note that the branches in the plot result in players only experiencing 2 of the following 4 encounters: Five, Eight, Nine, and Ten (the only non-viable combinations are Five and Nine, and Nine and Ten).

### Encounter Three

Defeat the snowflake ooze

APL6 180 xp

APL8 240 xp

APL10 300 xp

### Encounter Five

Defeat the belkers

APL6 270 xp

APL8 330 xp

APL10 390 xp

### Encounter Eight

Defeat the goblin warband

APL6 270 xp

APL8 330 xp

APL10 390 xp

### Encounter Nine

Defeat the pursuing winter wolves or tlalusk

APL6 270 xp

APL8 330 xp

APL10 390 xp

### Encounter Ten

Survive the collapsing ice

APL6 270 xp

APL8 330 xp

APL10 390 xp

### Story Award

Solving Zambaric's encoded message puzzle

All APLs 100 xp (no hints) / 50 xp (with hint)

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL6 80 xp

APL8 125 xp

APL10 170 xp

Total possible experience:

APL6 900 xp

APL8 1,125 xp

APL10 1,350 xp

## Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

### Encounter Three:

All APLs: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 348 gp - scroll of ice web (58 gp per PC), scroll of suppress flame (94 gp), scroll of wall of coldfire (58 gp), scroll of waves of cold (138 gp).

### Encounter Six:

All APLs: L: 28 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 2,981 gp - cloak of Charisma +4 (1,333 gp per PC), wand of haste (206 gp), hat of disguise (150 gp), dust of disappearance (292 gp), Heward's handy haversack (167 gp), metamagic rod of lesser Silent Spell (250 gp), metamagic rod of lesser Extend Spell (250 gp), pearl of power (2nd level) (333 gp).

### Encounter Eight:

APL 6: L: 407 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 8: L: 692 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

APL 10: L: 1,384 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp.

### Encounter Five (descent), Nine, or Ten:

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1,333 or 2,666 gp - 1 or 2 amulets of health +4 (1,333 gp each per PC).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 1,333 gp - amulet of health +4 (1,333 gp per PC).

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 3,000 gp - amulet of health +6 (3,000 gp per PC).

## Total Possible Treasure

APL 6: L: 435 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 5,995 gp - Total: 6,430 gp (cap 900 gp)

APL 8: L: 720 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 4,662 gp - Total: 5,382 gp (cap 1,300 gp)

APL 10: L: 1,412 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 6,329 gp - Total: 7,741 gp (cap 2,300 gp)

## Special

**Favor of the Theocracy:** This counts as a Favor of Pholtus usable for meta-org advancement.

**New Dawn Camp:** This PC loses 4 TUs for stealing the possessions of Zambaric III. The penalty is reduced to 1 TU if they brought the murderer to face Palish justice.

**Disfavor of the Pale:** This character allowed a fomenter of chaos and a possible threat to the Pale to go free. The government of the Pale and the Church of the One True Path now view them in a bad light. All meta-orgs which require favors for promotion, cost twice as many favors. All Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Gather Information checks against any authorities of the Pale are at -5 circumstance penalty. This effect lasts for one year from the date on this AR or until 4 Favors of the Pale have been used to prove the character's commitment to the Pale. Any favors used in this way are considered used and should be crossed off of the granting documentation.

**Friends in Cold Places:** Clerics have access to cast 1 of the following spells from *Frostburn*: *frostburn*, *lesser frostburn*, and *mass frostburn*. Druids may learn two of the following spells: *snowdrift*, *snowsight*, *snow walk*, or *thin air*, OR gain access to the feat *Beckon the Frozen*. Paladins gain access to the feat *Winter's Mount*, but it can only be used with a caribou mount for Medium PCs, or a *Frigdrasil* war hound for Small PCs, provided they have obtained access to one in *PAL4-08 Winters Past*.

**Vials of Coldfire** (50 gp/ounce). Access: Adventure, if Slag was captured or slain. Access: Regional, if Slag was left to go free.

**Scrolls from Zambaric III:** *ice web* (Sor/Wiz4), *suppress flame* (Sor/Wiz5), *wall of coldfire* (Sor/Wiz4), *waves of cold* (Sor/Wiz6).

**Gnome Vale Green Gemstone:** A gnome calling himself Clegin presented you with a well-cut, human's palm-sized gemstone colored green. Upon the face is etched a symbol of arcane magic signifying the school of transmutation; there is also a lingering aura of this magic upon the gemstone. If sold, it will fetch 50 gold pieces. You do not have to pay for this item. You may only possess one *Gnome Vale green gemstone*.

## Items for the Adventure Record

### Item Access

APL 6 and 8:

Hat of Disguise (Adventure; DMG; 1,800 gp)

Cloak of Charisma +4 (Adventure; DMG; 16,000 gp)

Amulet of Health +4 (Adventure; DMG; 16,000 gp)

Dust of Disappearance (Adventure; DMG; 3,500 gp)

Rod of Lesser Extend Spell (Adventure; DMG; 3,000 gp)

Rod of Lesser Silent Spell (Adventure; DMG; 3,000 gp)

Wand of Haste (11 charges) (Adventure; DMG; 2,475 gp [225 gp/charge])

Pearl of Power (2<sup>nd</sup> level) (Adventure; DMG; 4,000 gp)

Vials of Coldfire (Adventure or Regional, as above; Frostburn; 50 gp/ounce)

APL 10:

(all APL 6 & 8 Items plus the following:)

Amulet of Health +6 (Adventure; DMG; 36,000 gp)

Heward's Handy Haversack (Adventure; DMG; 2,000 gp)

## Combat Appendix – All APLs

### Encounter Six and/or Eight

**Slag Grizz'nak:** male half-dragon goblin Brd4/Drd5; CR 11; Small Dragon; HD 4d6+5d8+27; hp 54; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 17) [[+1 size, +1 Dex, +4 Natural Armor, +2 Leather Armor]]; Base Atk/Grp: +6/+2; Atk +10 melee (1d4+3/18-20, masterwork Small scimitar) or +9 melee (1d3+3, claw); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d4+3/18-20, masterwork Small scimitar) and +4 melee (1d4+1, bite), or +9/+9 melee (1d3+3, 2 claws) and +4 melee (1d4+1, bite); SA Breath Weapon 1/day; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Immune to sleep, paralysis, and cold, Wild Shape 1/day (Small or Medium), Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, Nature Sense, Resist Nature's Lure (+4 on saves vs the spell like abilities of Fey), Wild Empathy, Bardic Knowledge +4, Bardic Music 4/day (countersong, fascinate, inspire courage +1); AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 15 (19).

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +9, Concentration +15, Hide +15, Move Silently +9, Perform (oratory) +16, Ride +5, Tumble +6; Augmented Summoning, Beckon the Frozen (see Special Rules section), Disguise Spell (see Special Rules section), Spell Focus (conjuration).

**Languages:** Goblin, Common, Druidic.

**Breath Weapon (Su):** 30-ft. cone, once per day, damage 6d8 cold, Reflex DC 17 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Bard Spells Known (3/3/1 per day):** 0—prestidigitation, mage hand, mending, daze (DC 14), ghost sound (DC 14), lullaby (DC 14); 1st—disguise self (DC 15), inspirational boost (see Special Rules section), Tasha's hideous laughter (DC 15); 2nd—enthrall (DC 16), harmonize (see Special Rules section).

**Druid Spells Prepared (5/4/3/1):** 0—know direction, create water (2), purify food and water (2); 1st—obscuring mist, snowsight (2) (see Special Rules section), snowdrift (see Special Rules section); 2nd—snow walk (see Special Rules section), thin air (DC 14) (see Special Rules section), tree shape; 3rd—meld into stone.

**Possessions:** Masterwork Small scimitar, 3 Small daggers, Small leather armor, cloak of Charisma +4, wand of haste (11 charges), hat of disguise, dust of disappearance, Heward's handy haversack, metamagic rod of lesser Silent Spell, metamagic rod of lesser Extend Spell, bracelet of the North (Fire Resist 10), pearl of power (2<sup>nd</sup> level), 5 sprigs of holly, spell component pouch, 1 white dragon's egg in stasis.

**"Mush", Frigdrasil War Hound (Animal Companion):** CR -; Medium Animal; HD 5d8+15; hp 37; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 19 (touch 13, flat-footed 16) [[+3 Dex, +6 Natural Armor]]; Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+6; Atk or Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+4, bite); SA Trip;

SQ Scent, Evasion, Link, Share Spells; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

**Skills and Feats:** Jump +11, Listen +7, Spot +6, Swim +4, Survival +1 (+5 tracking by Scent), Alertness, Endurance, Track.

**Tricks:** Attack (x2), Defend, Guard, Track, Seek, Fetch, Come, Work, Down.

The white dragon egg in Slag's possession has several custom enchantments on it: one akin to a *wall of force*, but shaped to surround the elongated egg perfectly (one foot long and 6 inches wide), another is akin to a permanent *time stop* within the force barrier, and finally a trigger which dispels the other effects when subjected to the breath of a white dragon or half-dragon. These enchantments have a caster level of 20 and are otherwise permanent. In every other way, the egg is certainly that of a white dragon, and weighs exactly one pound.

The force barrier is impervious but can be destroyed with a *disintegrate* spell. If the enchantments are removed, it has a hardness of 8 and 10 hit points, and it takes a Strength check of DC 12 to break it open. White dragon eggs must be buried in snow or ice for about 300 days to incubate properly. It is unknown how far it was into incubation before it was enchanted.

## Combat Appendix – APL 6

### Encounter Three

**Snowflake Ooze (source: Monster Manual III):** CR 5; Medium Ooze; HD 6d10+30; hp 63; Init -5; Spd 15 ft.; AC 5 (touch 5, flat-footed 5) [[-5 Dex]]; Base Atk/Grp: +4/+9; Atk or Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+7 plus 2d4 cold, slam); SA Cold Aura, Constrict (1d8+7 plus 2d4 cold), Improved Grab; SQ Airy, Blindsight 60 ft., Immunity to Cold, Ooze Traits, Split, Vulnerability to Fire; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref -3, Will -3; Str 20, Dex 1, Con 20, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +13 (can always “take 10”), Hide -5 (+7 in snowy or icy terrain).

**Airy (Ex):** Since a snowflake ooze’s physiology is made up of a little ooze and lots empty space, it is difficult to know where to attack. Any piercing melee or ranged attack directed at it has a 20% miss chance (the blow or missile passes harmlessly through the creature’s space. Even a *true seeing* effect is useless in determining where and how to strike the creature.

**Constrict (Ex):** A snowflake ooze deals automatic slam and cold damage with a successful grapple check.

**Cold Aura (Ex):** A snowflake ooze exudes cold. Any creature within 5 feet of one takes 1d6 points of cold damage (DC 18 Fortitude half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a snowflake ooze must hit a Small or smaller-sized creature with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

**Split (Ex):** Bludgeoning weapons deal no damage to a snowflake ooze. Instead, the creature fractures into two identical snowflake oozes, each with half of the original’s current hit points (round down). A snowflake ooze with 10 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

### Encounter Five

**Advanced Belker (source: Monster Manual I):** CR 8; Huge Elemental (Air, Extraplanar); HD 11d8+44; hp 93; Init +4; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 23 (touch 12, flat-footed 19) [[-2 size, +4 Dex, +11 natural]]; Base Atk/Grp: +8/+18; Atk +11 melee (1d8+5, wing); Full Atk +11/+11 melee (1d8+5, 2 wings) and +6 melee (1d6+2, bite) and +6/+6 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws); Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Smoke Claws; SQ

Darkvision 60 ft., Elemental traits, Smoke form; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11.

*Skills and Feats:* Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +7, Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse.

*Languages:* Auran.

**Smoke Form (Su):** Most of the time, belkers are more or less solid, but at will, it can assume a smoke form similar to a *gaseous form* spell (CL 11<sup>th</sup>). It can switch forms once per round as a free action, and spend up to 20 rounds per day in smoke form. In smoke form, it can fly at 50 ft. (perfect).

**Smoke Claws (Ex):** A belker in smoke form can engulf opponents by moving on top of them. It fills the air around one Large or smaller creature without provoking an attack of opportunity. The target must succeed a DC 17 Fortitude save or inhale part of the creature. The smoke inside the creature solidifies into a claw and begins to rip at the surrounding organs, dealing 4d4 points of damage per round. An affected creature can attempt another Fortitude save each subsequent round on their turn to cough out the semi-vaporous menace.

### Encounter Eight

**Goblin Chargers:** male goblin War3; CR 1; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 16) [[+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 Hide Armor, +2 heavy wooden shield]]; Base Atk/Grp: +3/-1; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d6/x3, masterwork Small lance) or +5 melee (1d6, masterwork Small morningstar); SA —; SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Handle Animal +4, Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Ride +11; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack.

*Languages:* Goblin.

*Possessions:* Masterwork Small lance, masterwork Small morningstar, Small dagger, Small hide armor, Small heavy wooden shield, cold weather outfit.

**Goblin Archers:** male goblin War 3; CR 1; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 14) [[+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 Hide Armor]]; Base Atk/Grp: +3/-1; Atk or Full Atk +6 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork Small composite

longbow) or +5 melee (1d6, masterwork Small morningstar); SA —; SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Ride +6, Spot +2, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

*Languages:* Goblin.

*Possessions:* Masterwork Small composite longbow, masterwork Small morningstar, Small dagger, Small hide armor, quiver with 50 arrows, cold weather outfit.

## **Encounter Nine**

**Buffed Winter Wolf (source: Monster Manual I):** CR 5 (before buffs); Large Magical Beast (Cold); HD 6d10+30; hp 63; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 19 (touch 10, flat-footed 18) [[-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural, +4 Mage Armor]]; Base Atk/Grp: +6/+14; Atk or Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+6 plus 1d6 cold, bite); Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Breath Weapon, Freezing Bite, Trip; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold, Low-light vision, Scent, Vulnerability to Fire; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16 (20), Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide -1 (+6 in snow or ice), Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Spot +6, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by Scent), Alertness, Improved Initiative, Track.

*Languages:* Giant, Common.

**Breath Weapon (Su):** 15-foot cone, once every 1d4 rounds, damage 4d6 cold, Reflex DC 16 half (DC 18 with *amulet of health* +4). The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Freezing Bite (Ex):** A winter wolf deals an extra 1d6 points of cold damage every time it bites an opponent, as if its bite were a frost weapon.

**Trip (Ex):** A winter wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent (+8 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the winter wolf.

*Bufs:* *mage armor* (20<sup>th</sup>-level caster), and *resist energy (fire)* 30 (20<sup>th</sup>-level caster).

*Possessions:* *Amulet of health* +4.

## Combat Appendix – APL 8

### Encounter Three

**Snowflake Ooze (source: Monster Manual III):** CR 7; Large Ooze; HD 10d10+70; hp 125; Init -5; Spd 15 ft.; AC 4 (touch 4, flat-footed 4) [[-1 size, -5 Dex]]; Base Atk/Grp: +6/+15; Atk or Full Atk +15 melee (2d6+13 plus 2d4 cold, slam); Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Cold Aura, Constrict (2d6+13 plus 2d4 cold), Improved Grab; SQ Airy, Blindsight 60 ft., Immunity to Cold, Ooze Traits, Split, Vulnerability to Fire; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref -2, Will -2; Str 28, Dex 1, Con 25, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +17 (can always “take 10”), Hide -9 (+3 in snowy or icy terrain).

**Airy (Ex):** Since a snowflake ooze’s physiology is made up of a little ooze and lots empty space, it is difficult to know where to attack. Any piercing melee or ranged attack directed at it has a 20% miss chance (the blow or missile passes harmlessly through the creature’s space. Even a *true seeing* effect is useless in determining where and how to strike the creature.

**Constrict (Ex):** A snowflake ooze deals automatic slam and cold damage with a successful grapple check.

**Cold Aura (Ex):** A snowflake ooze exudes cold. Any creature within 5 feet of one takes 1d6 points of cold damage (DC 20 Fortitude half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a snowflake ooze must hit a Medium or smaller-sized creature with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

**Split (Ex):** Bludgeoning weapons deal no damage to a snowflake ooze. Instead the creature fractures into two identical snowflake oozes, each with half of the original’s current hit points (round down). A snowflake ooze with 10 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

### Encounter Five

**Advanced Belker (source: Monster Manual I):** CR 9; Huge Elemental (Air, Extraplanar); HD 15d8+60; hp 127; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 24 (touch 13, flat-footed 19) [[-2 size, +5 Dex, +11 natural]]; Base Atk/Grp: +11/+21; Atk +14 melee (1d8+5, wing); Full Atk +14/+14 melee (1d8+5, 2 wings) and +9 melee (1d6+2, bite) and +9/+9 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws); Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Smoke Claws; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Elemental traits, Smoke form; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +14, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11.

*Skills and Feats:* Listen +11, Move Silently +8, Spot +11; Ability Focus (Smoke Claws), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Snatch, Weapon Finesse.

*Languages:* Auran.

**Smoke Form (Su):** Most of the time, belkers are more or less solid, but at will, it can assume a smoke form similar to a *gaseous form* spell (CL 15<sup>th</sup>). It can switch forms once per round as a free action, and spend up to 20 rounds per day in smoke form. In smoke form, it can fly at 50 ft. (perfect).

**Smoke Claws (Ex):** A belker in smoke form can engulf opponents by moving on top of them. It fills the air around one Large or smaller creature without provoking an attack of opportunity. The target must succeed a DC 19 Fortitude save or inhale part of the creature. The smoke inside the creature solidifies into a claw and begins to rip at the surrounding organs, dealing 4d4 points of damage per round. An affected creature can attempt another Fortitude save each subsequent round on their turn to cough out the semi-vaporous menace.

### Encounter Eight

**Goblin Chargers:** male goblin War3; CR 1; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 16) [[+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 Hide Armor, +2 heavy wooden shield]]; Base Atk/Grp: +3/-1; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d6/x3, masterwork Small lance) or +5 melee (1d6, masterwork Small morningstar); SA —; SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Handle Animal +4, Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Ride +11; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack.

*Languages:* Goblin.

*Possessions:* Masterwork Small lance, masterwork Small morningstar, Small dagger, Small hide armor, Small heavy wooden shield, cold weather outfit.

**Goblin Archers:** male goblin War3; CR 1; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 14) [[+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 Hide Armor]]; Base Atk/Grp: +3/-1; Atk or Full Atk +6 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork Small composite longbow) or +5 melee (1d6, masterwork Small morningstar); SA —; SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Ride +6, Spot +2; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: Masterwork Small composite longbow, masterwork Small morningstar, Small dagger, Small hide armor, quiver with 50 arrows, cold weather outfit.

## Encounter Nine

---

**Buffed Advanced Winter Wolf (source: Monster Manual I):** CR 9 (before buffs); Huge Magical Beast (Cold); HD 15d10+105; hp 187; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 21 (touch 9, flat-footed 20) [[-2 size, +1 Dex, +8 natural, +4 Mage Armor]]; Base Atk/Grp: +15/+23; Atk or Full Atk +21 melee (3d6+12 plus 1d8 cold, bite); Space/Reach: 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Breath Weapon, Freezing Bite, Trip; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Cold, Low-light vision, Scent, Vulnerability to Fire; AL NE; SV Fort +18, Ref +14, Will +8; Str 26, Dex 12, Con 20 (24), Int 9, Wis 14, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +1 (+8 in snow or ice), Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Spot +7, Survival +4 (+8 when tracking by Scent); Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Track.

Languages: Giant, Common.

**Breath Weapon (Su):** 15-foot cone, once every 1d4 rounds, damage 6d6 cold, Reflex DC 22 half (DC 24 with *amulet of health* +4). The save is Constitution-based.

**Freezing Bite (Ex):** An advanced winter wolf deals an extra 1d8 points of cold damage every time it bites an opponent, as if its bite were a frost weapon.

**Trip (Ex):** An advanced winter wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent (+16 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the winter wolf.

Bufs: *mage armor* (20th-level caster), and *resist energy (fire)* 30 (20th-level caster).

Possessions: *Amulet of health* +4.

## Combat Appendix – APL 10

*Skills and Feats:* Listen +11, Move Silently +8, Spot +11, Ability Focus (Smoke Claws), Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Snatch, Weapon Finesse.

*Languages:* Auran.

**Smoke Form (Su):** Most of the time, belkers are more or less solid, but at will, it can assume a smoke form similar to a *gaseous form* spell (CL 15<sup>th</sup>). It can switch forms once per round as a free action, and spend up to 20 rounds per day in smoke form. In smoke form, it can fly at 50 ft. (perfect).

**Smoke Claws (Ex):** A belker in smoke form can engulf opponents by moving on top of them. It fills the air around one Large or smaller creature without provoking an attack of opportunity. The target must succeed a DC 19 Fortitude save or inhale part of the creature. The smoke inside the creature solidifies into a claw and begins to rip at the surrounding organs, dealing 4d4 points of damage per round. An Affected creature can attempt another Fortitude save each subsequent round on their turn to cough out the semi-vaporous menace.

### Encounter Eight

**Goblin Chargers:** male goblin War3; CR 1; Small Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (touch 12, flat-footed 16) [[+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 Hide Armor, +2 heavy wooden shield]]; Base Atk/Grp: +3/-1; Atk or Full Atk +5 melee (1d6/x3, Small lance) or +5 melee (1d6, morningstar); SA —; SQ: Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Handle Animal +4, Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Ride +11; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack.

*Languages:* Goblin.

*Possessions:* Masterwork Small lance, masterwork Small morningstar, Small dagger, Small hide armor, Small heavy wooden shield, cold weather outfit.

**Goblin Archers:** male goblin War3; CR 1; Small Humanoid; HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 14) [[+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 Hide Armor]]; Base Atk/Grp: +3/-1; Atk or Full Atk +6 ranged (1d6/x3, masterwork Small composite longbow) or +5 melee (1d6, masterwork Small morningstar); SA —; SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Ride +6, Spot +2; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

### Encounter Three

**Snowflake Ooze (source: Monster Manual III):** CR 7; Large Ooze; HD 10d10+70; hp 125; Init -5; Spd 15 ft.; AC 4 (touch 4, flat-footed 4) [[-1 size, -5 Dex]]; Base Atk/Grp: +6/+15; Atk or Full Atk +15 melee (2d6+13 plus 2d4 cold, slam); Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Cold Aura, Constrict (2d6+13 plus 2d4 cold), Improved Grab; SQ Airy, Blindsight 60 ft., Immunity to Cold, Ooze Traits, Split, Vulnerability to Fire; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref -2, Will -2; Str 28, Dex 1, Con 25, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +17 (can always “take 10”), Hide -9 (+3 in snowy or icy terrain).

**Airy (Ex):** Since a snowflake ooze’s physiology is made up of a little ooze and lots empty space, it is difficult to know where to attack. Any piercing melee or ranged attack directed at it has a 20% miss chance (the blow or missile passes harmlessly through the creature’s space. Even a *true seeing* effect is useless in determining where and how to strike the creature.

**Constrict (Ex):** A snowflake ooze deals automatic slam and cold damage with a successful grapple check.

**Cold Aura (Ex):** A snowflake ooze exudes cold. Any creature within 5 feet of one takes 1d6 of cold damage (DC 20 Fortitude half). The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, a snowflake ooze must hit a Medium or smaller-sized creature with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

**Split (Ex):** Bludgeoning weapons deal no damage to a snowflake ooze. Instead the creature fractures into two identical snowflake oozes, each with half of the original’s current hit points (round down). A snowflake ooze with 10 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

### Encounter Five

**Advanced Belker (source: Monster Manual I):** CR 9; Huge Elemental (Air, Extraplanar); HD 15d8+60; hp 127; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 24 (touch 13, flat-footed 19) [[-2 size, +5 Dex, +11 natural]]; Base Atk/Grp: +11/+21; Atk +14 melee (1d8+5, wing); Full Atk +14/+14 melee (1d8+5, 2 wings) and +9 melee (1d6+2, bite) and +9/+9 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws); Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Smoke Claws; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Elemental traits, Smoke form; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +14, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: Masterwork Small composite longbow, masterwork Small morningstar, Small dagger, Small hide armor, quiver with 50 arrows, cold weather outfit.

## **Encounter Nine**

---

**Tlalusk (source: Frostburn):** CR 11; Huge Magical Beast (Cold); HD 16d10+128; hp 216; Init +0; Spd 60 ft.; AC 22 (touch 8, flat-footed 22) [[-2 size, +10 natural, +4 Mage Armor]]; Base Atk/Grp: +16/+34; Atk +24 melee (2d6+10, hoof); Full Atk +24/+24 melee (2d6+10, 2 hooves) and +22 melee (2d6+5, bite) and +24 melee (2d6+5, gore); Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Bellow, Trample 2d8+15; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Fast Healing 5, Immunity to Cold, Low-light vision, Scent, Spell Resistance 20, Vulnerability to Fire; AL N; SV Fort +18, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 30, Dex 11, Con 20 (26), Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 11.

*Skills and Feats:* Listen +13, Spot +12; Alertness, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack (hoof), Improved Overrun, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Languages: Understands some Giant.

**Bellow (Su):** Once per minute, a tlalusk can bellow. This horribly loud blast affects a 30-ft. cone, but can be heard for miles. Any creature within the area must make a DC 23 Fort save (DC 26 with *amulet of health* +6) or be stunned and deafened for 1d6 rounds. A successful save results in being deafened for 1 round, and not stunned.

**Trample (Ex):** As a standard action during its turn each round, it can run over large or smaller creatures, dealing 2d8+15 points of bludgeoning damage. A trampled opponent can attempt either an attack of opportunity at a -4 penalty or a DC 28 Reflex save for half damage.

Bufs: *mage armor* (20th-level caster), and *resist energy (fire)* 30 (20th-level caster).

Possessions: *Amulet of health* +6.

## Special Rules

### New Spells from Races of Stone

#### **Harmonize**

Transmutation

Level: Bard 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 min./level

You blend magic and music seamlessly. While this spell is in effect, starting a bardic music effect requires only a move action. Concentrating on a bardic music effect that requires concentration still requires a standard action.

### New Spells from Complete Adventurer

#### **Inspirational Boost**

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-affecting, Sonic]

Level: Bard 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 swift action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round or special; see text.

When you play your instrument, sing your song, recite your epic poem, or speak your words of encouragement, you fill your allies with greater confidence than normal. While this spell is in effect, the morale bonus granted by your inspire courage bardic music increases by 1.

The effect lasts until your inspire courage effect ends. If you don't begin to use your inspire courage ability before the beginning of your next turn, the spell's effect ends.

### New Spells from Frostburn

#### **Frostburn**

Necromancy [Cold]

Level: Cleric 4

This spell functions like *lesser frostburn*, except that it deals 3d12 points of frostburn damage +1 point per caster level (maximum +20).

#### **Frostburn, Lesser**

Necromancy [Cold]

Level: Cleric 2

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude half

Spell Resistance: Yes

When laying your hand upon a creature, you channel cold energy that deals 1d12 points of frostburn damage +1 point per caster level (maximum +5). When cast upon a cold subtype creature, this spell heals a like amount of damage, rather than harming it.

### **Frostburn, Mass**

Necromancy [Cold]

Level: Cleric 6

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart.

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude half

Spell Resistance: Yes

Cold energy spreads out in all directions from the point of origin, dealing 3d12 points of frostburn damage, +1 point per caster level (maximum +20) to nearby enemies. Like other frostburn spells, *mass frostburn* cures cold subtype creatures in its area rather than damaging them.

### **Ice Web**

Conjuration (Creation) [Cold]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 4

Components: V, S, Coldfire

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. +10 ft./level)

Effect: Webs of coldfire in a 20-ft.-radius spread

Duration: 10 min./level (D)

Saving Throw: Reflex negates; see text

Spell Resistance: No

*Ice web* creates a many-layered mass of strong, frigid strands of pure coldfire.

These masses must be anchored to two or more solid and diametrically opposed points—floors and ceiling, opposite walls, or the like—or else the *ice web* collapses upon itself and disappears. Creatures caught within the *ice web* become entangled in the strands. Attacking a creature in the *ice web* won't cause you to be entangled.

Any creature moving into or through the spell's area takes 1d4 points of frostburn damage per round.

In addition, anyone in the effect's area when the spell is cast must make a Reflex save; if this save succeeds, the creature is entangled, but not prevented from moving, though moving is more difficult than normal (see below). If the save fails, the creature is entangled and can't move from the space, but can break loose by spending 1 round and making a DC 20 Strength check or a DC 25 Escape Artist check. Once loose (either by making the initial Reflex save or a later Strength check or Escape Artist check), a creature remains entangled, but may move through the *ice web* very slowly. Each round devoted to moving allows the creature to make a new Strength check or Escape Artist check. The creature moves 5 feet for each full 5 points by which the check result exceeds 10.

If you have at least 5 feet of *ice web* between you and an opponent, it provides cover. If you have at least 20 feet of *ice web* between you, it provides total cover.

The strands of an *ice web* are immune to damage from cold. Any fire—a torch, burning oil, a flaming sword, and so forth—can melt 5 square feet of coldfire strands in one round.

*Ice web* can be made permanent with a permanency spell. A permanent *ice web* that is damaged (but not destroyed) regrows in 10 minutes.

Creatures with the cold subtype may pass unimpeded and unharmed through an *ice web*.

Coldfire component: Two ounces of coldfire.

## Snowdrift

Transmutation

Level: Druid 1, sorcerer/wizard 1

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Snow touched, up to 10 cu. ft./level

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You can form existing snow into any shape that suits your purpose. For example, you can make a snow bank for concealment, sculpt a snow statue or idol, open a tunnel in deep snow, or simply cover a set of tracks. *Snowdrift* also permits you to raise snowy barriers around a door or house to prevent vision in or out, or to clog a chimney with snow. Snow cannot be made into weapons with this spell and *snowdrift* does not affect solid ice in any form.

Arcane Material Component: A pinch of white flour.

## Snowsight

Transmutation

Level: Druid 1, ranger 1, Winter 1

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 hour/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The subject gains the ability to see to the normal limits of its vision even in whiteout conditions, and ignores all penalties due to snow glare and snow blindness. *Snowsight* is no better than normal vision. During daylight, this usually means the subject can see to the horizon; at night, vision is restricted to ambient light or darkvision as appropriate for the subject creature. *Snowsight* does not grant creatures the ability to see in darkness.

## Snow Walk

Transmutation

Level: Druid 2, ranger 2, Winter 2

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Targets: One creature/level touched

Duration: 10 min/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The subjects can walk on top of snow rather than through it, avoiding the usual movement penalties and leaving neither footprints nor scent. Tracking the subject is impossible by nonmagical means, and the gliding along the surface of the snow adds 10 feet to the target creature's land speed. (This adjustment is treated as an enhancement bonus).

## Suppress Flame

Transmutation [Cold]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 6

Components: V, S, Coldfire

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: 10-ft. cube/level (S)

Duration: 1 hour/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You imbue an area with a combination of cold and negative energies that suppresses flame. Illumination emitted by fire (torches, *continual flame*, and so on) is reduced by half. For example, a hooded lantern within the area of a *suppress flame* spell clearly illuminates a 15-foot-radius (instead of a 30-foot radius) and provides shadowy illumination in a 30-foot radius (instead of a 60-foot radius).

In addition, all damage caused by fire, including all fire spells and spell-like effects, is reduced to 1 point per die. So a *fireball* cast by a 10th-level wizard would deal 10 points of fire damage to those who failed their Reflex save or 5 points of fire damage to those who make their Reflex save, rather than 10d6 points of fire damage or half that amount, respectively, outside the confines of a *suppress flame* spell. A caster can make a caster level check (DC 10 + plus the *suppress flame*'s caster level) to cause normal amounts of damage from fire spells. A new caster level check must be made for each spell cast.

Coldfire component: Ten ounces of coldfire.

### Thin Air

Necromancy [Cold]

Level: Cleric 2, druid 2, sorcerer/wizard 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: 30-ft. radius emanation

Duration: 1 min./level

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: No

This spell thins the oxygen in the area, causing creatures caught therein to suffer the effects of extreme altitude sickness. Subjects failing their saves take 1 point of ability damage to all ability scores because of altitude sickness (see page 90 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide*). Characters acclimated to high altitude receive a +4 competence bonus on their saving throws. Creatures that do not breathe are immune to the effects of the spell.

### Wall of Coldfire

Evocation [Cold]

Level: Druid 5, sorcerer/wizard 4

Components: V, S, Coldfire

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect: Opaque sheet of coldfire up to 20 ft. long/level or a ring of coldfire with a radius of up to 5 ft. per two levels; either form 20 ft. high.

Duration: Concentration + 1 round/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

An immobile, opaque curtain of frosty coldfire springs into existence. One side of the wall, selected by you, sends forth waves of cold, dealing 2d4 points of cold damage to creatures within 10 feet and 1d4 points of cold damage to those past 10 feet but within 20 feet. The wall deals this damage when it appears and on your turn each round to all creatures in the area. In addition, the wall deals 2d6 points of frostburn damage +1 point of frostburn damage per caster level (maximum +20) to any creature passing through it.

If you evoke the wall so that it appears where creatures are, each creature takes damage as if passing through the wall.

The opaqueness of the coldfire grants concealment (20% miss chance) against attacks made from the opposite side of the wall. If any 5-foot length of wall takes 20 points of fire damage or more in 1 round, that length goes out. (Do not divide fire damage by 4, as for normal objects.)

Wall of coldfire can be made permanent with a *permanency* spell. A permanent wall of coldfire that is extinguished by fire damage becomes inactive for 10 minutes, then reforms at normal strength.

Coldfire component: Three ounces of coldfire.

### **Waves of Cold**

Necromancy [Cold]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 6

Components: V, S, Coldfire

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 60 ft.

Area: Cone-shaped burst

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Waves of frigid energy render all creatures with the fire subtype in the spell's area shaken for the duration of the spell. Any creature with the cold subtype caught in the area of this spell loses its immunity to cold for the duration of the spell. Whether or not a creature makes its saving throw, it becomes immune to further castings of this spell for 24 hours.

Coldfire component: Two ounces of coldfire.

## **New Feats from Frostburn**

### **Beckon the Frozen**

Creatures you summon are infused with cold energy and have the cold subtype.

Prerequisite: Augment Summoning, Spell Focus (conjunction).

Benefit: When you summon a creature or creatures using any summon spell, you can opt to summon a version of the creature from an extraplanar frostfell. If you do so, the summoned creature gains the cold subtype, and its natural attacks deal an additional 1d6 points of cold damage. Creatures with the fire subtype can never be enhanced with the cold subtype in this manner.

## **New Feats from Complete Adventurer**

### **Disguise Spell**

You can cast spells without observers noticing.

Prerequisite: Perform (any) 9 ranks, bardic music.

Benefit: You can cast spells unobtrusively, mingling verbal and somatic components into your performances. To disguise a spell, make a Perform check as part of the action used to cast the spell. Onlookers must match or exceed your check result with a Spot check to detect that you're casting a spell (your performance is obvious to everyone in the vicinity, but the fact that you are casting a spell isn't). Unless the spell visibly emanates from you, or observers have some other means of determining its source, they don't know where the effect came from.

A disguised spell can't be identified with a Spellcraft check, even by someone who realizes you're casting a spell. The act of casting still provokes attacks of opportunity as normal.

## DM Aid #1: Timeline of Events leading up to Present

### CY 590

A clutch of 5 white dragon eggs is laid by a mate of Winterwind.

### CY 591

One white wyrmling hatches early but is quickly slain by adventurers (PAL1-02 *Absence of Law*).

Bloodtooth goblins attack Copper Gorge, and are decimated (PAL1-08 *Cold Comfort*).

Slag leaves his dying tribe and almost dies but is saved by Winterwind.

Slag, in disguise, and on behalf of Winterwind, commissions Zambaric to make the rings.

### CY 592

Slag gives one egg to Mosk and another to Umar.

Zambaric completes first ring and Slag takes it to Mosk.

Mosk finds a cave, where he hatches Wakkali.

Mosk and Wakkali are both slain by adventurers (PAL2-05 *The Heretic*).

Slag obtains the dragon's bile for Umar from Winterwind.

### CY 593

Zambaric completes the second ring. Slag delivers the ring to Winterwind, who gives it to Shill.

### CY 594

Zambaric loans adventurers a Ring of Enhancement after they assist him in solving some puzzles (PAL4-01 *Lost Soul*).

Zambaric begins to suspect Slag.

Shill is slain by adventurers in the Twist Mines (PALS4-03 *Twisting in the Wind*).

Zambaric completes the third ring but lies to Slag that it's not completed.

Zambaric's arcane eye follows Slag back to his new "Ice Claw" tribe.

Winterwind is slain by the silver dragon, Brennan (PAL4-08 *Winters Past*).

### CY 595

Zambaric completes the fourth ring and encodes suspicions in puzzle.

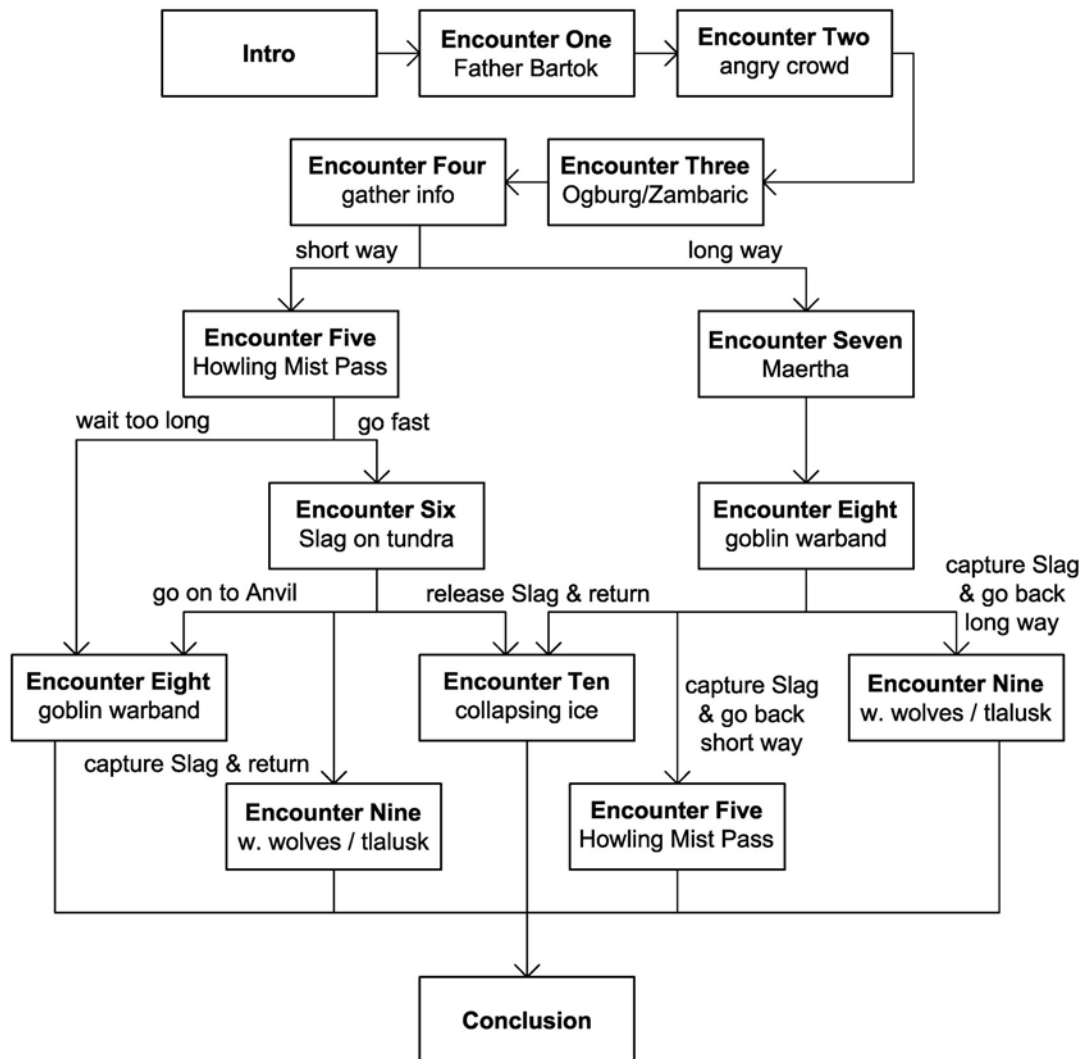
Zambaric confronts Slag when he returns.

Slag poisons Zambaric, finds the rings, and leaves the snowflake ooze.

Slag delivers the third ring to Umar, and begins the return to his new tribe.

Umar goes into hiding.

## DM Aid #2: Flowchart of Encounters



## Player Handout #1: Zambaric's Final Page of Puzzles

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| bags  | peer  |
| wags  | pear  |
| wigs  | peak  |
| wins  | peek  |
| tins  | reek  |
| tine  | seek  |
| tire  |       |
|       | cease |
| rag   | chase |
| wag   | chose |
| wig   | whose |
| win   | whole |
| din   |       |
|       | tore  |
| waves | more  |
| wares | mire  |
| wires | sire  |
| wines | site  |
| wings |       |
| sings | filed |
|       | piled |
| must  | paled |
| gust  | pales |
| oust  | sales |
| bust  |       |
| lust  | wove  |
| list  | wave  |
| lint  | wane  |
|       | vane  |
|       | vine  |
|       | line  |

peel