

TYRANNY'S BLEAK DEPTHS

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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Rumors of an alliance between the Council of Blades in Mulmaster and a group of Banite Warlock Knights of Vaasa portend evil for the entire Moonsea region. Your patron has asked you to join an expedition to the Delhalls, a mine rich in gems and copper where a recent earthquake has revealed new passages. The miners say that strange, haunting melodies resound in the depths, luring men to their deaths. While concealing your true allegiances, you must discover the source of this mysterious song and determine whether it will be an adversary or an ally in the fight against the Black Lord. A *Living Forgotten Realms* Core Special adventure set in Vaasa for characters levels 11-14.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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OFFICIAL D&D PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an event, or you received it from your organizer. To play this adventure and receive rewards for it, you must schedule it as an event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To schedule a game for public play, you must be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. Information on enrolling in the program can be found at www.wizards.com/wpn. If you are scheduling the game for private play, you do not need to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. The person who schedules the event, called the organizer, is in charge of making sure the event is scheduled before play, runs smoothly on the date scheduled, and gets reported back to Wizards in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the organizer is also the table DM. You don't have to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network to DM this adventure if you are not the organizer.

By scheduling and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, DMs gain rewards for scheduled play if they are members of the DM REWARDS program. DMing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

To learn more about event scheduling and DM REWARDS, visit the D&D Events website at www.wizards.com/dnd and click on "Events."

PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a session tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an officially scheduled event, complete and turn in this sheet to your organizer directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks may have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware

of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are filled with good information about being a DM for a D&D game.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 11-14. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the lower levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the higher levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group agrees to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group agrees; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

Reading the Numbers: Each encounter has a level and sometimes other values (such as XP or skill check DCs) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter - that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success - they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly among the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there are encounters remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. **Encounters that do not give out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone.** Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

LASTING EFFECTS

Sometimes a PC suffers a lasting effect that isn't easily resolved before the end of the adventure. The two most common lasting effects are the death penalty and diseases.

Death Penalty: When a character dies and is brought back to life by the Raise Dead ritual, that character suffers a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks until they have reached three milestones. The player should simply record the adventure where the character died on their adventure log, and then keep a running tally of milestones reached. Once the PC has reached the third milestone since coming back to life, they no longer suffer the penalty.

Diseases: Diseases take hold of a character and last until they are cured or they reach their final state. Normally, a PC makes an Endurance check after each extended rest to see if the disease improves, worsens, or maintains its current condition. At the end of the adventure, any character suffering from a disease must resolve the disease to either its cure or final state, using the necessary number of extended rests to do so. Other characters adventuring with the PC may decide to aid the afflicted character during this time. If a disease reaches its final state and the PC can get a Cure Disease ritual cast (and pay the appropriate costs), they may do so.

Other Lasting Effects: Other effects that last beyond the scope of the adventure should be resolved at the DM's discretion. Any effects that last for a specific period of time (that end after a certain number of days or a certain number of extended rests) should be resolved at the end of the adventure in which the effect was obtained (unless otherwise specified). Effects that use some sort of adventuring benchmark of unknown duration (such as milestones) should be recorded on the character's logsheet and tracked across adventures.

WHAT'S A CORE SPECIAL ADVENTURE?

Core Special adventures are designed to provide a challenging and epic (but fair and fun) experience where the players must work together in order to successfully complete the entire adventure within the time limit. The adventure as a whole is intended to be only slightly more difficult than other adventures, and not impossible to complete in a standard four-to-five hour convention slot.

The combat encounters in this adventure are designed to pose a tough challenge for the typical party of the expected levels (11-12 for low tier, 13-14 for high tier). The design intentionally features two combats instead of the usual three or four. This is both to make the fights more challenging (by spending a higher percentage of the adventure's XP budget on each combat) but also to help ensure that the adventure can be completed in a single convention slot, since Paragon tier combat encounters often run longer than their Heroic tier counterparts.

GLORY TIER

When player characters reach Paragon tier, the difference between "typical" parties and "heavily optimized" parties can become rather wide. There is no way to predict in advance whether your table will be one of those super-groups that cuts through normal encounters like a hot knife through warm butter. To help you challenge these parties, this adventure includes an optional "Glory Tier."

The Glory Tier offers suggestions and monster upgrades you can use to make the combat encounters more difficult. You can use none, some, or all of them, as you see fit. The PCs earn no additional XP for facing these options, and you may only use the Glory Tier with the players' consent. If the PCs have the power to win every fight in two or three combat rounds and that's the kind of game the players enjoy, then please, let them enjoy it. But if they specifically tell you that they are looking for a tough challenge, the Glory Tier might help you give them the beat-down they crave.

Again, to be very clear: The baseline encounters in this adventure are already more difficult than those in a standard LFR adventure. The Glory Tier will make things even harder. Do not use these options to TPK a party of less-experienced players or less-optimized characters. That is no fun for anyone. If you have a table of new players who are using pre-generated 11th-level characters and who have never played Paragon tier

before, do NOT use the Glory Tier. Even the baseline encounters might need to be toned down in this case.

The best way to find out what level of challenge to use is to ask the players. Have they played together many times before, or did they just meet for the first time five minutes ago during mustering? Do they have a good mix of class roles in the party, or are they unbalanced in some fashion (lacking a leader, have three leaders, mostly defenders with low damage output, mostly strikers with high damage output)? How experienced are they with Paragon tier? Do they generally find LFR adventures to be too easy, too hard, or about right? What level of difficulty do they want in the combat encounters (“take it easy on us,” “bring it on,” or somewhere in between)?

As always, we trust you to use good judgment and give the players a fun, but fair, level of challenge.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

When she was alive, the Ice Queen Iyraclea was one of the goddess Auril’s most powerful servants. As a Chosen of the Frostmaiden, Iyraclea wielded a small portion of the goddess’s power, and she used it for very evil ends. From her icewrought palace atop the Great Glacier, Iyraclea amassed an army of monsters and undead to threaten the entire Bloodstone region. When Iyraclea was finally slain, Auril preserved her as an exarch. Her influence on the world waned (as did the Great Glacier itself, which has been slowly melting ever since).

As an incredibly powerful spellcaster in her own right, not to mention a Chosen, Iyraclea had access to resources beyond the ken of most mortals. She had made various contingency plans to guard against her own death, including the creation of various clones and simulacra. Most of these were eradicated by the Spellplague, but one “shard” of Iyraclea did survive, sealed beyond the ravages of time in a magical vault beneath a Vaasan mine known as the Delhalls. This particular type of clone is called an *iceborn*; it is a simulacrum of a real person, made of living ice. Like most clones, an iceborn believes itself to be the real person from whose flesh it was created.

A recent earthquake collapsed part of the mine, breaking open some passages that had been undiscovered for hundreds of years. When the foreman sent his dwarven slaves back into the mine to clear the debris, most of them failed to return. The few survivors reported terrifying sights and sounds in the new tunnels: unusual crystal formations, bizarre plants, and a haunting voice singing a tune that none understood but few could resist. Those who followed the song went deeper and deeper into the mine, never to return.

The Delhalls are located in the nation of Vaasa, which is ruled over by the Warlock Knights, a group of fanatics dedicated to the slumbering primordial Telos. From Telos’s body they harvest the metal known as *ironfell*, which gives them much of their power, but also binds them to Telos in the same manner as a star pact. Nevertheless, some of the Warlock Knights are secretly worshippers of Bane, and this faction has long sought an alliance with the Council of Blades, the Banite rulers of Mulmaster. The Banites have their greedy eyes on the entire Moonsea region, and they have nearly accumulated enough power to have a serious chance of making their dreams of conquest come true.

Following the earthquake that put a stop to the Delhalls mining operation, the local Warlock Knight (Fellthane Vorlenth, a member of the Banite faction) was intrigued by the strange reports his foreman was sending. After some research and investigation, Vorlenth determined that the mysterious song the slaves had followed to their doom was an ancient prayer to Auril, the Frostmaiden. He also discovered some ancient texts suggesting that several hundred years ago Iyraclea hid a treasure vault beneath the Delhalls. Vorlenth believes that there is an artifact of power, something that once belonged to the Ice Queen herself, potentially within his grasp. Such a prize would go a long way towards helping the Warlock Knights bring the fractious monsters and undead of the Great Glacier under their control, perhaps even allowing them to reassemble Iyraclea’s ancient army.

Vorlenth arranged for an expedition, led by a priestess of Auril, to go into the mines and seek the treasure vault. Of course, being an evil schemer himself, Vorlenth did not trust any of the evil mercenaries he hired. In order to avoid having any one member of this expedition betray the mission, the Warlock Knight cleverly parceled out his research and knowledge among the individual members in such a fashion that none of them could hope to find the vault or open it without the others. This plan failed to account for one contingency, however, which was that the entire expedition met an untimely demise after discovering a patch of evolved oblivion moss (*Monster Manual 3*) in one of the newly unsealed caverns. The oblivion moss digested not only the bodies of the expedition, but also their memories, meaning that the knowledge needed to locate and enter the vault is still available, but in a most unusual form.

Meanwhile, within the vault itself, the iceborn of Iyraclea waits, gathering strength and singing prayers to Auril, in hopes that her mother will soon free her from the vault. The Ice Queen is eager to reclaim her frozen throne.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

Word of the potential alliance between the Banite Warlock Knights and the Council of Blades has reached Yazeth Cobb, a powerful cleric of Amaunator and frequent meddler in the evil plans of those who would threaten the Moonsea region. Many of the PCs know Yazeth from previous adventures, so they will not be surprised to receive his call for help.

Introduction: The PCs meet Yazeth in the nation of Damara, itself a rather benighted land, but nothing compared to the evil within Vaasa. Yazeth explains the situation and asks the PCs to go to the Delhalls and see what the Warlock Knights are so excited about. Yazeth does not know about the previous expedition, so he cannot share this information with the PCs.

Encounter 1 (Roleplaying): Arriving at the Delhalls, the PCs discover that the half-orc foreman has nearly run out of dwarven slaves, and is unable to operate the mine. He mistakes the PCs for another group of adventurers sent by Fellthane Vorlanth to go into the mines after the first group, who have yet to come back after two days. Assuming they are willing to play along with this cover story, the foreman allows the PCs to enter the mine.

Encounter 2 (Exploration): The PCs begin searching the Delhalls. It doesn't take long to reach the end of the established mining tunnels (most of which are now blocked off by rubble and debris from the earthquake) and move into the newly revealed passages.

Encounter 3 (Combat): The PCs discover a cavern filled with evolved oblivion moss. The moss has already absorbed the memories of the previous explorers, and attempts to do the same to the PCs.

Encounter 4 (Skill Challenge): After the battle, the PCs quickly discover it could take weeks or months to traverse the huge maze of ancient tunnels that have been revealed by the earthquake. However, by eating the oblivion moss, they can tap into the memories of the other group, who did have the necessary information. The memories are all jumbled up, and the PCs must sort out which memories belonged to which members of the previous expedition before they can make sense of the information. To make things interesting, a few of the PCs' own memories are mixed in with those of the dead adventurers.

Encounter 5 (Exploration): With the benefit of the knowledge held by the dead explorers, the PCs make their way through the tunnels, bypassing a number of traps, hazards, and dead ends. Throughout, they hear a haunting song, sung by a female voice. The song is an elaborate prayer to the Frostmaiden. The PCs finally reach an ancient vault covered with holy symbols of

Auril and the personal sigil of Iyraclea, the Ice Queen. Among the memories they have "borrowed" is the knowledge of the ritual needed to open this vault.

Encounter 6 (Combat): Inside the vault, the PCs discover that the "treasure" the Warlock Knight was seeking is actually a person - or, at least, a simulacrum of a person: Iyraclea herself. The iceborn has several powerful elemental guardians to assist her, including a blizzard dragon. When she is destroyed, the iceborn says something about returning to her palace and retrieving "the Witch-King's artifact."

Encounter 7 (Roleplaying): After destroying the iceborn and plundering the vault, the PCs return to the surface. They encounter the local Warlock Knight and a cleric of Bane, and must devise a way to extricate themselves from the situation without bringing the entire wrath of Vaasa down on their heads (at least, not immediately).

Conclusion: The PCs return to Yazeth Cobb in Damara and make their report. He is relieved that they destroyed the iceborn, but concerned about her mention of an artifact of the Witch-King Zhengyi. The iceborn's statements suggest that this artifact might have been hidden long ago by the Ice Queen. Her former palace is located far to the north, atop the Great Glacier. (This is a lead-in to SPEC2-2 P2 *Tyranny's Bitter Frost*, which the PCs can play when they reach the appropriate levels.)

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Before beginning play, check to see which of the PCs have met Yazeth Cobb, an Elturgardan merchant and high-ranking cleric of Amaunator. Yazeth has appeared in several previous adventures, among them SPEC1-1 *Shades of the Zhentarim*, SPEC1-2 *Zhent's Ancient Shadow*, QUES1-1 *Black Cloaks and Bitter Rivalries*, and CORE2-1 *Killing the Messenger*. Those PCs who know Yazeth receive a mental sending, asking them to come to the city of Helgabal, in the nation of Damara, to meet with him about an urgent matter.

For those PCs who have not worked for Yazeth before, he has heard of their reputation as powerful adventurers who have moved beyond the boundaries of normal heroic deeds. These PCs are recruited by someone of importance who is known to them (a noble or other powerful person, a wealthy or influential patron, or someone else whose judgment the PC trusts). You can identify an appropriate NPC by looking at each player's story awards, or simply ask the player to name someone of a good alignment, reasonably well-known or important, and whom the PC trusts. This individual knows of Yazeth Cobb's previous deeds, and that he is

looking for adventurers to help with a matter in the Bloodstone Pass region. Each PC's trusted patron asks him or her to travel to Helgabal and meet with Yazeth.

Finally, ask each player to fill out the information on Handout 1 (at-will powers) and Handout 2 (memories). It will save time if you cut these handouts apart in advance so that each player can fill out his or her information at the same time, instead of passing a single sheet of paper around the table.

When everyone is ready to begin, read the following:

Following the directions you were given, you have traveled to the city of Helgabal in the land of Damara. The last twenty years have not been kind to this once-prosperous city, or to the people who live here. Since the fall of the Dragonsbane dynasty, a petty tyrant named Yarin Frostmantle has risen to power, though his grip on the throne is tenuous at best.

Yazeth Cobb is a middle-aged human whose wrinkled face shows the signs of a lifetime of worry. He is not clad in his usual elaborate finery of gold and white Amaunatori robes, apparently preferring to keep a lower profile. He does, however, wear a prominent holy symbol, engraved with a golden sunburst.

"Greetings, my friends, for I hope I may call you such," says the cleric with a thin smile. "I thank you for coming, and I apologize for asking you to drag yourselves all the way out here to the wild frontier. But I assure you, the matter I wish to speak with you about is both urgent and worthy of your attention."

At this point, Yazeth greets each PC he knows by name and recites a few of the character's past deeds (such as saving Yazeth's life in SPEC1-2, or infiltrating the Zhentarim in QUES2-1). Those characters he does not know, Yazeth offers a firm handshake. This is your opportunity to let each player introduce his or her character to the rest of the group. When this is done, proceed:

"You might think that I have asked you to meet me here in Damara because the problem is here. Although this kingdom has many troubles, and I for one certainly look forward to the day that the despot Frostmantle returns to whatever gutter he crawled from, Damara's rescue will have to wait for another time. The threat I need you to investigate is located on the other side of the Bloodstone Pass, in the benighted land of Vaasa.

"Tell me, what do you know of the Warlock Knights?"

The information in the Appendix will come in handy here. You can allow the PCs to roll Knowledge checks, let any players who have read the appropriate entries in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide* share what they know, or simply give the appropriate sections of the Appendix to the players. Yazeth then continues:

"So, the Warlock Knights are already a menace entirely unto themselves, but the situation is even worse than that. Although each Warlock Knight swears fealty to the Ironfell Council and ostensibly serves the being known as Telos, there is a faction within the Knighthood whose true allegiance lies with Bane, the Black Lord. The members of this faction dare not expose themselves to their fellows, but I have learned that they have recently made overtures to the Council of Blades in Mulmaster, offering the possibility of an alliance. With access to the power of Ironfell and the Warlock Knights' armies, the forces of Bane would be able to mount a campaign of terror and destruction across the entire Moonsea region. This cannot be allowed to happen.

"I have learned that the Banites recently sent a handful of emissaries to meet with key Warlock Knights and pursue certain goals. One of those goals involves a mine called the Delhalls. The mine is quite profitable, although unspectacular. However, there was recently an earthquake, which collapsed some of the tunnels and revealed new passages that were not on any map. I do not know many details, but my sources tell me that a particular Warlock Knight by the name of Vorlanth has gotten especially excited about something in this newly discovered area. He sent word to his Banite allies that he was close to recovering some sort of ancient artifact or item of power from the mine, though he did not say exactly what.

"Anything that would bring more power to the Warlock Knights, or that would cement their ties with Mulmaster, must be stopped. I need you to go into Vassa, explore the Delhalls, and find out what Vorlanth is after. Don't let him get it. Recover it if you can, destroy it if you must. I wish that I could give you better information, but I am certain that you will be able to learn more once you are on the ground.

"Will you help me stop this unholy alliance?"

Assuming the PCs accept, proceed to Encounter 1. Yazeth answers any questions that the PCs ask to the best of his ability, but he really does not know anything more than what is stated above. If the question of payment comes up, he wrinkles his nose in disgust, but promises that their efforts will not go unrewarded, so long as they are successful.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE BOSS

Important NPCs:

Yazeth Cobb (Radiant Servant of Amaunator)

Foreman Omog (half-orc supervisor of the Delhalls)

The shortest path between Damara and Vassa is through Bloodstone Pass, but the pass is sealed at both ends by massive gates, and not even Yazeth's influence is strong enough to get the PCs through the Damaran Gate, much less the Vaasan Gate. If they have flying mounts, they could simply soar over the pass. (The Phantom Steed ritual won't do the trick, as the mountains are far more than 50 feet high. Even the gates are 30 feet high, so the 10-square height limit of Phantom Steed would force the PCs to fly right down the center of the pass, buzzing the fortifications, risking ballista fire and other attacks from the forces barricading both ends of the pass. It would certainly be exciting, though!)

The players may argue that their characters should be allowed to bring mounts, but this is impractical at best. They know they will be going into an underground mine, which is not an environment that most mounts find pleasant. Furthermore, it is a journey of at least 250 miles from Bloodstone Pass to the Delhalls, so the PCs would take several days to make the journey, even on flying mounts (for example, a griffon with overland flight 15 covers up to 75 miles per day, based on PH 261).

Once the PCs are ready to depart, Yazeth provides them with two ritual scrolls of Linked Portal (PH 307) and information about a permanent teleportation circle in a long-abandoned wizard's tower. The circle is located in the remote countryside of Vaasa, on the edge of the Bottomless Bogs no more than a few hours' travel away from the Delhalls. All that remains of the tower are some tumbled stones, but the circle still functions.

If the PCs lack a ritual caster, Yazeth performs the first casting for them (although anyone can use a scroll).

The portal takes you to the edge of a bog. Only a few mud-encrusted stones remain of the tower that once stood proudly on this spot. Leaving the marshy ground, you head toward the foothills of the western Galena Mountains, where the Delhalls are located.

Outside the entrance to the primary mine shaft, you can see signs of the recent earthquake. Broken stones are piled everywhere, far more than would normally be found even outside an active mine. A small number of dwarven slaves, manacled to long chains, work to clear debris and repair damaged equipment.

The dwarves are supervised by a surly half-orc who clearly has a quick hand with his whip and an equally sharp tongue. So thoroughly dispirited are the slaves

that they hardly seem to react to the lashings, either verbal or physical.

Allow the players to decide what they want to do here. They could just sneak into the mine, assuming reasonably high group Stealth scores or some form of invisibility that can include the entire party, or they can approach the foreman directly.

If they try to talk with any of the slaves, the dwarves cower and point at the foreman, not wanting to be punished for shirking their duties or consorting with strange people. If the PCs offer to kill the foreman and release the slaves, they seem terrified at the prospect. Freedom is a distant memory at best. The only thing that they can imagine happening after being set free is that the Warlock Knights would hunt them down and kill them.

The half-orc foreman is named Omog. Since adventurers of a goodly bent are quite uncommon in Vaasa, Omog naturally assumes that the PCs were sent by the local Warlock Knight, Fellthane Vorlanth. The first group of "explorers" that Vorlanth sent a few days ago went into the mine and never came out. As long as the PCs don't do anything horribly obvious to blow their cover, they can easily deceive the half-orc and learn a few tidbits of information.

- It all started a few weeks ago when we got hit by that earthquake. Tore up all the tunnels, and killed a bunch of my slaves.
- Then I lost a bunch more slaves when I sent them in to clean up the mess. Found some new tunnels that nobody had ever seen before.
- Most of the ones that went into the new tunnels didn't make it out. The few who did come back, well, they weren't right in the head any more. Not that dwarves are ever right in the head, ha!
- They told some crazy story about hearing this song that they didn't understand, but they wanted to follow. I think they just tried to sneak off and found out that there are worse things down there than up here.
- The mine is a real maze, the tunnels go on for miles in all directions. Could take months to get the new area all surveyed and mapped. Especially since most of my dwarves are dead. What am I supposed to do with a bunch of dead dwarves?
- Yeah, Knight-Fellthane Vorlanth got real excited when he heard about the strange stuff down in the mine. Especially the singing, although I don't understand what's so great about that.
- The Fellthane sent a group of explorers to go in. They looked like a tough bunch. There were five of them. Didn't really pay that much attention, to

tell you the truth. But I do remember that they didn't seem to trust each other very much. It was like they all had their own agendas, something that they knew that the others didn't know, you know?

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

After talking with Omog (or sneaking past him), the PCs enter the mine. Proceed to Encounter 2. There is no treasure and no experience to be gained in this encounter, and it does not count toward a milestone.

ENCOUNTER 2: THE DELHALLS

SETUP

Get a marching order for the PCs and determine what they will use for light. Beyond the entrance, there is no natural light in the mines, and there aren't enough dwarven slaves left for Omog to resume normal operations, so there are no torches or other artificial light sources in use right now. Besides, nearly everybody who's entered the mine since the earthquake has failed to return, so Omog is in no hurry to get back down there. For once, the dwarven slaves are in complete agreement with their overseer. The few surviving dwarves are working outside the mine while Omog waits for a fresh shipment to arrive from Fellthane Vorlanth.

There's nothing special about the Delhalls; it's just a mine. Most of the primary tunnels seem to have collapsed during the recent earthquake. The unfortunate dwarves have a lot of back-breaking work ahead of them before this mine will be able to resume its normal operations.

Tracks lead deeper into the mine, but there are many more sets of boot prints going in than coming out.

With a DC 29 Perception check, the PCs can determine that the vast majority of the tracks belong to the dwarven slaves. However, the most recent set of tracks is about two days old, and consists of perhaps half a dozen Medium sized humanoids. On a DC 34 or higher, the PCs can determine that there were five members of the party and one of them was a dragonborn.

After walking through the mines for about an hour, the PCs reach the end of the "established" tunnels. A collapsed section of wall reveals much older, natural passageways leading deeper into the earth. There are no tool marks on the stone walls, indicating that either

these passages were shaped entirely by natural forces or there was magic involved in their construction.

As the PCs move into the unexplored section of the mine, they start to see some unusual phenomena. Read the following:

Until now, the pacing and direction of the tracks have been quite uniform. As you move into the newly-uncovered passageways, the tracks suddenly seem to veer in all directions at once. It's as if every dwarf flipped a coin at every intersection to decide which way to go. Some of the tracks change from a walking speed to a run, and you see the first signs of darker spots where bodies might have landed. Whatever happened down here, it was chaotic and deadly.

On a DC 32 Perception check, the PCs can faintly hear what sounds like someone singing. However, the noise is coming from somewhere much deeper in the mine, and it's impossible to make out the words or even the tune. The PCs can choose to calibrate their travel direction by trying to listen at each intersection and head down the passage where the singing seems to grow louder. By doing this, they eventually make their way into the section of caves where the previous explorers sent by Fellthane Vorlanth met their end.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs have been following the song for a little while, they notice that the cavern begins changing. Read the following:

The air feels warm and moist as you continue down the tunnel. Patches of green moss appear on the walls and ceiling, growing steadily larger until you are walking on a living carpet instead of the bare stone of the mine shaft. There is something unnaturally vibrant about these plants. They shouldn't even be alive down here, much less thriving.

This discovery will likely put the players (and the PCs) into "proceed cautiously" mode. As they continue down the mossy tunnel, they enter Encounter 3.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 3: OBLIVION

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 14/17 (5600/8000 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures and hazards at the low tier:

- 1 oblivion moss mindmaster (O)
- 2 evolved mossling guardians (G)
- 1 evolved mossling creeper (C)
- 1 evolved mossling hurler (H)
- 1 evolved mossling grower (R)
- mossy deathcap (see map)

This encounter includes the following creatures and hazards at the high tier:

- 1 oblivion moss mindmaster (level 14) (O)
- 2 evolved mossling guardians (level 14) (G)
- 1 evolved mossling creeper (level 14) (C)
- 1 evolved mossling hurler (level 14) (H)
- 1 evolved mossling grower (level 14) (R)
- mossy deathcap (level 14) (see map)

As soon as the characters step onto the thick carpet of moss, they feel the oblivion moss mindmaster picking through their thoughts and memories. It copies some of their at-will powers and uses these to create its guardians. If the players ask to make a Nature check to identify the type of moss, give them the following:

Nature DC 21: The plants resemble a dangerous species called oblivion moss. Oblivion moss is a foul plant that feeds on the memories of its foes. Sinking mental tendrils deep into the mind of its prey, an oblivion moss can plunder its victims' training and experience, creating simulacra that use the enemy's power. When an oblivion moss is destroyed, the memories of those it has slain linger within it. By eating a portion of the moss, an individual can temporarily gain the memories of the moss's recent victims. These memories are difficult to recall, often taking the form of vague visions and daydreams.

Set up the map and have the players place their miniatures in the start area. Before rolling initiative, make this attack against each PC and then read the following text.

Absorb Memories (psychic)

Attack: +15 / +17 vs. Will

Hit: The target cannot use its encounter or daily attack powers (save ends both).

The cavern ahead is coated on the floor, walls, and ceiling with the moist green moss, just like the tunnel you have been following. Without warning, the plant life at your feet erupts with a sickly green light.

For those who are hit by the initial attack:

You feel a stabbing pain in your mind. Something is riffling through your memories like a deck of cards, taking the ones it finds interesting and casually discarding the rest. You reach for your trusty ... your ... say, what DO you normally do in this kind of situation, anyway? It's suddenly very hard to recall.

This is where you use the list of at-will powers you collected from the players. Remember that the oblivion moss uses its own listed attack roll, no matter what defense the original power attacks or what the host PC's attack roll would be. The base damage for the attack is identical to the PC's base damage when using that attack. The moss uses the PC's key ability score for its damage bonus (but its attack roll is pre-calculated, so do not adjust this value). A hit triggers everything that is listed on the "Hit" line of the power, but a mossling does not benefit from "Miss" effects or anything that is listed on an "Effect" line. For [W] powers, the moss uses whatever damage dice are associated with the PC's primary weapon (whatever he or she would normally wield when using that power).

The standard mosslings in the *Monster Manual 3* are limited to just the base damage plus ability bonus, but these mosslings are evolved. They benefit from feat bonuses, item bonuses, and enhancement bonuses (basically, all static bonuses that are always active and do not require activation). The moss does not benefit from magic item properties (including critical hit properties), nor does it copy any triggered abilities or situational bonuses (such as power bonuses or combat advantage) that the PC gains during the fight.

To keep things moving, you might consider having the appropriate player roll the damage when his or her PC's powers are used (since they know their own at-will powers). You should still make the attack rolls, since you will be using the mossling's listed attack bonus and targeted defense, not the PC's bonus or the power's normal targeted defense.

During the battle, the PCs get occasional flashes of memories when they are struck by the oblivion moss. They also feel their own memories being stolen by the moss. You can make up tiny snippets or flashbacks for these effects, or you can paraphrase some of the memories belonging to the PCs and NPCs from Encounter 4.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The mosslings are unaffected by any of the terrain features (although they can trigger mossy deathcap by entering its square).

Illumination: The cavern is unlit. The PCs must provide their own light. The mosslings have blindsight.

Moss-Covered Walls and Floor: A carpet of wet green moss covers the walls and floor of the cavern. This imposes a -5 penalty to Stealth checks unless the character is flying (tracks are more obvious and the moss makes a squishing noise with every step).

Open squares are considered normal terrain (only squares with specific terrain features are difficult terrain). However, the moss is slick even in open squares. Any character wishing to run or charge must make a DC 16 Acrobatics check or slip and fall prone, ending the movement. (No Perception check is needed to tell that the moss is slippery, so warn the players about this terrain effect before springing it on them.)

Memory Theft (green moss): The narrow entrance tunnel and the initial two rows of squares shown in a green color are filled with memory theft moss. This moss is not sentient, but has the ability to *absorb memories* in a similar fashion to the oblivion moss mindmaster. After the first full round of combat, whenever a character starts his or her turn standing on a square of memory theft moss, repeat the *absorb memories* attack shown above against that character.

At the end of each combat round (not each character's individual turn!), the memory theft moss spreads 5 feet forward (occupying another two rows of squares) until it has filled the entire 8x8 square entrance area at the upper right of the battle map (this takes a total of 4 rounds, since the tunnel and the first two rows are already filled when the encounter begins).

This effect is intended to encourage the characters to move deeper into the room instead of having the fight bottleneck at the tunnel entrance.

Rubble (Thick Moss): Squares that show rubble represent thicker patches of mushroom-infested moss. These squares are difficult terrain.

Dead Bodies: Squares containing bodies (including the puddle) are difficult terrain. The bodies are mostly those of dwarven slaves, sent to reopen the mine, but the members of the previous adventuring party are here as well. The bodies have already been reduced to nothing more than furry green outlines by the moss, rendering even basic details such as the creature's race and gender unrecognizable. The PCs are unable to learn anything useful from studying the bodies.

Mossy Deathcap: There are two areas of mossy deathcap shown on the map (they are the 2x2 dark

patches). This hazard has its own stat block, which is included with the monster stats for low and high tier.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 10 feet high.

TACTICS

As long as the oblivion moss mindmaster is alive, the mosslings are capable of using sophisticated tactics despite their extremely low Intelligence score. Once the mossmaster has been destroyed, any remaining mosslings revert to very basic tactics, mindlessly attacking the nearest PC.

The mindmaster prefers to fight at range. It uses *absorb memories* whenever that power is available. Otherwise it alternates between *scramble the mind* (on a hit, slide the target into the mossy deathcap for additional damage) and *scour the mind* (on a hit, grant the benefit of invisibility to the creeper so that it gains extra damage from combat advantage). The mossmaster uses *direct mossling* to help position its allies, and *absorb damage* to redirect attacks that would otherwise kill a mossling (it will not reduce itself to 0 hit points by doing this, however).

The individual mosslings are straightforward combatants. Each has an at-will power copied from one of the player characters; part of the fun of this encounter is using the PCs' own powers against them. The players have probably worked hard to maximize their damage output with at-will attacks, and now they get to enjoy being on the receiving end of their own optimization efforts.

The mossling hurler avoids melee. It uses *simulacrum attack* every turn (make sure you choose the highest-damage at-will ranged attack power from among all the PCs to give to the hurler, ideally one that allows multiple attack rolls, such as *twin strike*).

The mossling creeper tries to gain combat advantage before attacking. Its at-will *tendrils strike* allows it to shift 2 squares. With combat advantage, the creeper's *tendrils strike* might do more damage than most of the available at-will powers from among the PCs, so for the creeper's *simulacrum attack*, try to choose something that has a good control effect other than shifting (such as knocking the target prone).

The mossling grower fights side-by-side with one or both of the guardians so that its allies can benefit from its *shield of vines* aura. As with the creeper, the grower's own at-will *tendrils strike* might outdamage many of the PCs' powers, so for its *simulacrum attack*, choose a leader-style power, perhaps one that grants a bonus to the grower's allies or a imposes a penalty on the target.

GLORY TIER

If the players have asked for an additional challenge, you can consider using some or all of the following adjustments:

- A non-minion mossling begins the battle with 25 / 30 temporary hit points; the mindmaster begins the battle with 50 / 60 temporary hit points.
- Give the mosslings access to the magic item properties and critical hit bonus dice that the PCs normally use with their at-will powers. This will increase the overall damage output of *simulacrum attack*. (However, a mossling cannot activate magic item powers, even if the power is a free action or requires no action.)
- Increase the size of the mossling grower's *shield of vines* from aura 1 to aura 5, and increase the range of *cultivating burst* from 3 squares to 10 squares.
- The hurler can use *simulacrum attack* twice per round instead of once per round. (Only use this option if none of the PCs had a ranged at-will attack power that can hit multiple targets.)
- The mindmaster gains regeneration 20 (or even regeneration 30 if there are a number of high-damage-dealing PCs). This will allow it to use *absorb damage* without killing itself so quickly.
- When the mindmaster is first bloodied, it spawns five mossling minions. The minions can appear anywhere within 5 squares of the mindmaster. They have the same stats as the evolved mosslings, other than minion hit points.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present, the level of challenge the players have asked for, and the relative strength of the party compared to a normal group for this tier. (These changes are not cumulative.)

Four PCs (normal table): Remove one of the mossling guardians.

Four PCs (strong table) or Five PCs (normal table): No changes; run as presented.

Five PCs (strong table) or Six PCs (normal table): Add another mossling hurler.

Six PCs (strong table): Add another mossling hurler and another mossling creeper.

Instead of another standard mossling, you may add five mossling minions. You choose the mix and placement; the minions have the same stats as the evolved mosslings, but with minion hit points ("1 hp; a missed attack never damages a minion").

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs struggle with this battle, or if they start running low on powers, you can use the memory effect to help them instead of harming them. For example, the leader could suddenly get a memory of healing word, recharging that power. Other PCs could get memories giving them an action point or recharging second wind or one of their other encounter powers. Don't make it obvious, because the players need to feel like they are overcoming the challenges, but especially if you have a group of less-experienced players when it comes to Paragon tier, try to help them in subtle ways while still giving them a sense of accomplishment.

After destroying the mosslings, the PCs can finish the job of excavating the tunnel at the back of the room. The previous adventuring party had begun this task. They were overwhelmed and consumed by the oblivion moss.

The ancient tunnels beyond this cavern wend through the earth for miles, and would take far more time to search than the PCs have available. Somewhere within those tunnels is an ancient vault, sacred to Auril, which the PCs have absolutely no idea how to open. However, the PCs can obtain all the information they need in the form of the previous explorers' memories stored inside the oblivion moss. In order to access those memories, however, the PCs will need to eat a most unusual meal and then sort out a jumble of confusing thoughts. Proceed to Encounter 4.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 1120 / 1600 XP each for defeating the oblivion moss.

TREASURE

Amongst the rotted bodies, the PCs discover a *mask of the impish grin* and a *crest of vigilance eternal*.

They also find a pile of damaged weapons, including a warhammer, a glaive, a crossbow, a dagger, and a longbow. The significance of these items is explained in the next encounter.

ENCOUNTER 3: "OBLIVION" (LOW LEVEL)

| | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Oblivion Moss Mindmaster | Level 12 Elite Controller | |
| Large fey magical beast (plant) | XP 1,400 | |
| HP 250; Bloodied 125 | Initiative +6 | |
| AC 26, Fortitude 24, Reflex 22, Will 25 | Perception +12 | |
| Speed 2 (forest walk), climb 2 | Blindsight 20 | |
| Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1 | | |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Mind Blindness • Aura 1 | | |
| Any enemy that starts its turn within the aura treats the mindmaster as invisible until the start of the enemy's next turn. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Corroding Touch (acid) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 1d8 + 5 acid damage, and ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends). | | |
| r Scramble the Mind (psychic) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +15 vs. Will | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the mindmaster slides the target 5 squares. | | |
| r Scour the Mind (psychic) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +15 vs. Will | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the mindmaster or one of its allies is invisible to the target until the end of the mindmaster's next turn. | | |
| R Absorb Memories (psychic) • Recharge 5 6 | | |
| Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +15 vs. Will | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the target is dazed and cannot use its encounter or daily attack powers (save ends both). | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| Direct Mossling • At-Will (1/round) | | |
| Effect: One mossling within 10 squares of the mindmaster can move its speed as a free action. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| Absorb Damage • At-Will | | |
| Trigger: A mossling within 20 squares of the mindmaster takes damage. | | |
| Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The mindmaster takes the damage instead of the mossling. | | |
| Str 17 (+9) | Dex 10 (+6) | Wis 23 (+12) |
| Con 21 (+11) | Int 19 (+10) | Cha 16 (+9) |
| Alignment unaligned Languages Common, telepathy 10 | | |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Evolved Mossling Guardian | Level 12 Soldier | |
| Medium fey humanoid (plant) | XP 700 | |
| HP 126; Bloodied 63 | Initiative +11 | |
| AC 28, Fortitude 25, Reflex 22, Will 23 | Perception +10 | |
| Speed 6 (forest walk) | Blindsight 10 | |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Forgotten Purpose • Aura 1 | | |
| Any enemy that starts its turn within the aura is slowed until the end of its next turn. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Tendril Strike • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 10 damage, and the guardian shifts 1 square and slides the target 1 square into the space it occupied. | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| M Simulacrum Attack • At-Will (1/round) | | |
| Effect: At the beginning of the encounter, choose one at-will melee attack power belonging to an enemy. | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: The target takes damage and is subject to effects as though it were hit by the chosen attack. The damage roll uses the ability score modifier of the creature from whom the power was chosen. The damage does not include any bonuses or penalties to the damage roll that the owner of the power might have. In addition, the guardian gains any benefits from the power's Hit entry, using the ability score modifiers of the creature from whom the power was chosen but not including any bonuses or penalties. | | |
| Str 18 (+10) | Dex 16 (+9) | Wis 18 (+10) |
| Con 22 (+12) | Int 3 (+2) | Cha 15 (+8) |
| Alignment unaligned Languages -- | | |

Notes: The mindmaster and all mosslings are from MM3; the ability to create minions using *absorb memories* has been removed (when running under convention time constraints, play will move much more smoothly if the DM picks simulacrum attack powers up front and then attaches those powers to standard creatures who will last for the entire encounter, instead of constantly picking new powers as minions are created and destroyed).

The mossling minion creatures have been converted to standard creatures; *simulacrum attack* changed from a standard action to a minor action (1/round) as the damage output of most PCs' at-will attack powers is not high enough to be viable as a monster's primary attack mode at these levels.

| Evolved Mossling Hurler | | Level 12 Artillery |
|--|-------------|--------------------|
| Small fey humanoid (plant) | | XP 700 |
| HP 93; Bloodied 46 | | Initiative +6 |
| AC 24, Fortitude 22, Reflex 22, Will 26 | | Perception +12 |
| Speed 6 (forest walk) | | Blindsight 10 |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Bash • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 6 damage. | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| R Simulacrum Attack • At-Will (1/round) | | |
| Effect: At the beginning of the encounter, choose one at-will ranged attack power belonging to an enemy. | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: The target takes damage and is subject to effects as though it were hit by the chosen attack. The damage roll uses the ability score modifier of the creature from whom the power was chosen. The damage does not include any bonuses or penalties to the damage roll that the owner of the power might have. In addition, the hurler gains any benefits from the power's Hit entry, using the ability score modifiers of the creature from whom the power was chosen but not including any bonuses or penalties. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| C Memory Deathstorm (psychic) | | |
| Trigger: The hurler drops to 0 hit points. | | |
| Attack (No Action): Close burst 2 (enemies in burst); +15 vs. Reflex | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 6 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | |
| Str 14 (+8) | Dex 11 (+6) | Wis 22 (+12) |
| Con 15 (+8) | Int 3 (+2) | Cha 16 (+9) |
| Alignment unaligned | | Languages -- |

| Evolved Mossling Creeper | | Level 12 Skirmisher |
|---|--------------|---------------------|
| Small fey humanoid (plant) | | XP 700 |
| HP 122; Bloodied 61 | | Initiative +14 |
| AC 26, Fortitude 23, Reflex 25, Will 24 | | Perception +11 |
| Speed 8 (forest walk) | | Blindsight 10 |
| TRAITS | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The creeper deals 2d6 extra damage against any creature granting combat advantage to it. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Tendril Strike • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 10 damage. | | |
| Effect: The creeper shifts 2 squares. | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| M Simulacrum Attack • At-Will (1/round) | | |
| Effect: At the beginning of the encounter, choose one at-will melee attack power belonging to an enemy. | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: The target takes damage and is subject to effects as though it were hit by the chosen attack. The damage roll uses the ability score modifier of the creature from whom the power was chosen. The damage does not include any bonuses or penalties to the damage roll that the owner of the power might have. In addition, the creeper gains any benefits from the power's Hit entry, using the ability score modifiers of the creature from whom the power was chosen but not including any bonuses or penalties. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| Mossy Slide • At-Will | | |
| Trigger: An attack misses the creeper. | | |
| Effect (Immediate Reaction): The creeper shifts 2 squares. | | |
| Str 16 (+9) | Dex 22 (+12) | Wis 20 (+11) |
| Con 18 (+10) | Int 3 (+2) | Cha 16 (+9) |
| Alignment unaligned | | Languages -- |

| Evolved Mossling Grower | | Level 12 Controller (Leader) | |
|--|--------------|------------------------------|--|
| Small fey humanoid (plant) | | XP 700 | |
| HP 120; Bloodied 60 | | Initiative +10 | |
| AC 26, Fortitude 23, Reflex 24, Will 25 | | Perception +9 | |
| Speed 8 (forest walk) | | Blindsight 10 | |
| TRAITS | | | |
| O Shield of Vines • Aura 1 | | | |
| Plant allies within the aura gain a +2 bonus to all defenses. | | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | | |
| m Tendril Strike • At-Will | | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 10 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of its next turn. | | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | | |
| M Simulacrum Attack • At-Will (1/round) | | | |
| Effect: At the beginning of the encounter, choose one at-will melee attack power belonging to an enemy. | | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | | |
| Hit: The target takes damage and is subject to effects as though it were hit by the chosen attack. The damage roll uses the ability score modifier of the creature from whom the power was chosen. The damage does not include any bonuses or penalties to the damage roll that the owner of the power might have. In addition, the grower gains any benefits from the power's Hit entry, using the ability score modifiers of the creature from whom the power was chosen but not including any bonuses or penalties. | | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | | |
| Cultivating Burst | | | |
| Trigger: The grower drops to 0 hit points. | | | |
| Effect (No Action): Each nonminion plant ally within 3 squares of the grower gains 20 temporary hit points. | | | |
| Str 14 (+8) | Dex 18 (+10) | Wis 16 (+9) | |
| Con 16 (+9) | Int 3 (+2) | Cha 20 (+11) | |
| Alignment unaligned | | Languages -- | |

| Mossy Deathcap | | Level 12 Blaster | |
|--|--|------------------|--|
| Hazard | | XP 700 | |
| <i>This patch of moss-speckled mushrooms appears highly toxic and unstable.</i> | | | |
| Hazard: A patch of mossy deathcap fills a 2x2 square area. These squares are difficult terrain (creatures with <i>forest walk</i> ignore this). | | | |
| Perception | | | |
| No check is necessary to notice a patch of mossy deathcap. | | | |
| Additional Skill: Nature | | | |
| DC 16: The character identifies the mixture of moss and mushrooms as mossy deathcap. | | | |
| Trigger | | | |
| When a creature enters the mossy deathcap's space, a cloud of toxic spores erupts into the air. | | | |
| Attack | | | |
| Immediate Reaction | | | |
| Attack: Close burst 3 (non-plant creatures in burst); +15 vs. Fortitude | | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 5 poison damage, and ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends). | | | |
| Miss: Half damage. | | | |
| Countermeasures | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A character can move through squares of mossy deathcap without triggering the spores with a successful Acrobatics check (DC 22). A character can attack the mossy deathcap (AC 5, other defenses 10; hp 70; resist 20 poison). Destroying the mossy deathcap prevents it from attacking, but the squares are still treated as difficult terrain. | | | |

ENCOUNTER 3: "OBLIVION" (HIGH LEVEL)

| | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Oblivion Moss Mindmaster (level 14) Level 14 Elite Controller | | |
| Large fey magical beast (plant) | | XP 2,000 |
| HP 282; Bloodied 141 | | Initiative +7 |
| AC 28, Fortitude 26, Reflex 24, Will 27 | | Perception +13 |
| Speed 2 (forest walk), climb 2 | | Blindsight 20 |
| Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1 | | |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Mind Blindness • Aura 1 | | |
| Any enemy that starts its turn within the aura treats the mindmaster as invisible until the start of the enemy's next turn. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Corroding Touch (acid) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 1d8 + 7 acid damage, and ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends). | | |
| r Scramble the Mind (psychic) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +17 vs. Will | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 9 psychic damage, and the mindmaster slides the target 5 squares. | | |
| r Scour the Mind (psychic) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +17 vs. Will | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 9 psychic damage, and the mindmaster or one of its allies is invisible to the target until the end of the mindmaster's next turn. | | |
| R Absorb Memories (psychic) • Recharge 5 6 | | |
| Attack: Ranged 5 (one creature); +17 vs. Will | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 9 psychic damage, and the target is dazed and cannot use its encounter or daily attack powers (save ends both). | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| Direct Mossling • At-Will (1/round) | | |
| Effect: One mossling within 10 squares of the mindmaster can move its speed as a free action. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| Absorb Damage • At-Will | | |
| Trigger: A mossling within 20 squares of the mindmaster takes damage. | | |
| Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The mindmaster takes the damage instead of the mossling. | | |
| Str 17 (+10) | Dex 10 (+7) | Wis 23 (+13) |
| Con 21 (+12) | Int 19 (+11) | Cha 16 (+10) |
| Alignment unaligned Languages Common, telepathy 10 | | |

| | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Evolved Mossling Guardian (level 14) Level 14 Soldier | | |
| Medium fey humanoid (plant) | | XP 1,000 |
| HP 142; Bloodied 71 | | Initiative +12 |
| AC 30, Fortitude 27, Reflex 24, Will 25 | | Perception +11 |
| Speed 6 (forest walk) | | Blindsight 10 |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Forgotten Purpose • Aura 1 | | |
| Any enemy that starts its turn within the aura is slowed until the end of its next turn. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Tendril Strike • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 12 damage, and the guardian shifts 1 square and slides the target 1 square into the space it occupied. | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| M Simulacrum Attack • At-Will (1/round) | | |
| Effect: At the beginning of the encounter, choose one at-will melee attack power belonging to an enemy. | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: The target takes damage and is subject to effects as though it were hit by the chosen attack. The damage roll uses the ability score modifier of the creature from whom the power was chosen. The damage does not include any bonuses or penalties to the damage roll that the owner of the power might have. In addition, the guardian gains any benefits from the power's Hit entry, using the ability score modifiers of the creature from whom the power was chosen but not including any bonuses or penalties. | | |
| Str 18 (+11) | Dex 16 (+10) | Wis 18 (+11) |
| Con 22 (+13) | Int 3 (+3) | Cha 15 (+9) |
| Alignment unaligned Languages -- | | |

Notes: The mindmaster and all mosslings are from MM3; the ability to create minions using *absorb memories* has been removed (when running under convention time constraints, play will move much more smoothly if the DM picks simulacrum attack powers up front and then attaches those powers to standard creatures who will last for the entire encounter, instead of constantly picking new powers as minions are created and destroyed).

The mossling minion creatures have been converted to standard creatures; *simulacrum attack* changed from a standard action to a minor action (1/round) as the damage output of most PCs' at-will attack powers is not high enough to be viable as a monster's primary attack mode at these levels.

| Evolved Mossling Hurler (level 14) | | Level 14 Artillery |
|--|-------------|--------------------|
| Small fey humanoid (plant) | | XP 1,000 |
| HP 105; Bloodied 52 | | Initiative +7 |
| AC 26, Fortitude 24, Reflex 24, Will 28 | | Perception +13 |
| Speed 6 (forest walk) | | Blindsight 10 |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Bash • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 8 damage. | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| R Simulacrum Attack • At-Will (1/round) | | |
| Effect: At the beginning of the encounter, choose one at-will ranged attack power belonging to an enemy. | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +21 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: The target takes damage and is subject to effects as though it were hit by the chosen attack. The damage roll uses the ability score modifier of the creature from whom the power was chosen. The damage does not include any bonuses or penalties to the damage roll that the owner of the power might have. In addition, the hurler gains any benefits from the power's Hit entry, using the ability score modifiers of the creature from whom the power was chosen but not including any bonuses or penalties. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| C Memory Deathstorm (psychic) | | |
| Trigger: The hurler drops to 0 hit points. | | |
| Attack (No Action): Close burst 2 (enemies in burst); +17 vs. Reflex | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 7 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | | |
| Str 14 (+8) | Dex 11 (+6) | Wis 22 (+12) |
| Con 15 (+8) | Int 3 (+2) | Cha 16 (+9) |
| Alignment unaligned | | Languages -- |

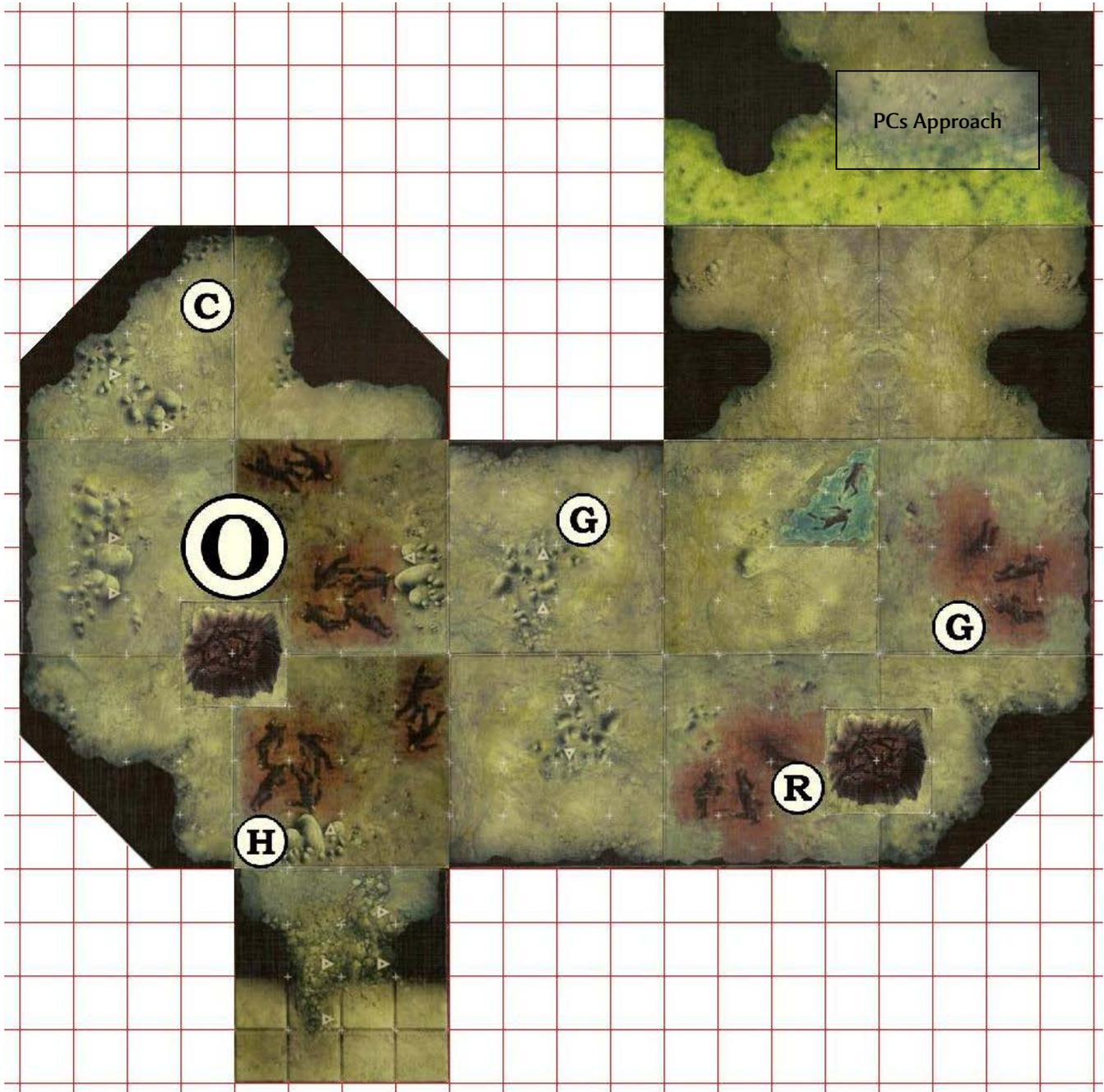
| Evolved Mossling Creeper (level 14) | | Level 14 Skirmisher |
|---|--------------|---------------------|
| Small fey humanoid (plant) | | XP 1,000 |
| HP 138; Bloodied 69 | | Initiative +15 |
| AC 28, Fortitude 25, Reflex 27, Will 26 | | Perception +12 |
| Speed 8 (forest walk) | | Blindsight 10 |
| TRAITS | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| The creeper deals 2d6 extra damage against any creature granting combat advantage to it. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Tendril Strike • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 12 damage. | | |
| Effect: The creeper shifts 2 squares. | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| M Simulacrum Attack • At-Will (1/round) | | |
| Effect: At the beginning of the encounter, choose one at-will melee attack power belonging to an enemy. | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: The target takes damage and is subject to effects as though it were hit by the chosen attack. The damage roll uses the ability score modifier of the creature from whom the power was chosen. The damage does not include any bonuses or penalties to the damage roll that the owner of the power might have. In addition, the creeper gains any benefits from the power's Hit entry, using the ability score modifiers of the creature from whom the power was chosen but not including any bonuses or penalties. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| Mossy Slide • At-Will | | |
| Trigger: An attack misses the creeper. | | |
| Effect (Immediate Reaction): The creeper shifts 2 squares. | | |
| Str 16 (+10) | Dex 22 (+13) | Wis 20 (+12) |
| Con 18 (+11) | Int 3 (+3) | Cha 16 (+10) |
| Alignment unaligned | | Languages -- |

| Evolved Mossling Grower (lvl 14) Level 14 Controller (Leader) | | |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| Small fey humanoid (plant) | | XP 1,000 |
| HP 136; Bloodied 68 | Initiative +11 | |
| AC 28, Fortitude 25, Reflex 26, Will 27 | Perception +10 | |
| Speed 8 (forest walk) | Blindsight 10 | |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Shield of Vines • Aura 1 | | |
| Plant allies within the aura gain a +2 bonus to all defenses. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Tendril Strike • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 12 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of its next turn. | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| M Simulacrum Attack • At-Will (1/round) | | |
| Effect: At the beginning of the encounter, choose one at-will melee attack power belonging to an enemy. | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: The target takes damage and is subject to effects as though it were hit by the chosen attack. The damage roll uses the ability score modifier of the creature from whom the power was chosen. The damage does not include any bonuses or penalties to the damage roll that the owner of the power might have. In addition, the grower gains any benefits from the power's Hit entry, using the ability score modifiers of the creature from whom the power was chosen but not including any bonuses or penalties. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| Cultivating Burst | | |
| Trigger: The grower drops to 0 hit points. | | |
| Effect (No Action): Each nonminion plant ally within 3 squares of the grower gains 20 temporary hit points. | | |
| Str 14 (+9) | Dex 18 (+11) | Wis 16 (+10) |
| Con 16 (+10) | Int 3 (+3) | Cha 20 (+12) |
| Alignment unaligned | Languages -- | |

| Mossy Deathcap (level 14) | | Level 14 Blaster |
|---|--|------------------|
| Hazard | | XP 1,000 |
| <i>This patch of moss-speckled mushrooms appears highly toxic and unstable.</i> | | |
| Hazard: A patch of mossy deathcap fills a 2x2 square area. These squares are difficult terrain (creatures with <i>forest walk</i> ignore this). | | |
| Perception | | |
| No check is necessary to notice a patch of mossy deathcap. | | |
| Additional Skill: Nature | | |
| DC 16: The character identifies the mixture of moss and mushrooms as mossy deathcap. | | |
| Trigger | | |
| When a creature enters the mossy deathcap's space, a cloud of toxic spores erupts into the air. | | |
| Attack | | |
| Immediate Reaction | | |
| Attack: Close burst 3 (non-plant creatures in burst); +17 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 6 poison damage, and ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends). | | |
| Miss: Half damage. | | |
| Countermeasures | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A character can move through squares of mossy deathcap without triggering the spores with a successful Acrobatics check (DC 23). A character can attack the mossy deathcap (AC 5, other defenses 10; hp 80; resist 20 poison). Destroying the mossy deathcap prevents it from attacking, but the squares are still treated as difficult terrain. | | |

ENCOUNTER 3: "OBLIVION" (MAP)

TILE SETS NEEDED
DU3 Caves of Carnage x2



PCs enter from the upper right-hand corner. The mosslings are initially concealed in the carpet of moss on the floor and walls (Perception DC 26/27). If the PCs move into the cavern as a group, trigger the combat encounter when they get towards the center, to avoid a bottleneck in the upper right. If some of the PCs scout ahead, then trigger the combat when the scouts perceive or are perceived by the mosslings. See the text for details on a pre-combat surprise attack that all the PCs in the tunnel and cavern are subjected to (the bright green squares and entrance tunnel contain memory theft moss). The rubble-choked tunnel at the bottom of the map is the exit to the next encounter.

ENCOUNTER 4: WHO ARE YOU?

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 12/14, COMPLEXITY SPECIAL (700/1000 XP)

SETUP

Each member of the dead adventuring company had a secret, a particular piece of information that only he or she knew and that was vital to the success of the mission. The PCs need to learn those secrets in order to locate and open the ancient vault beneath the Delhalls. There's only one way to get what they need, and that's to eat the oblivion moss.

If the PCs did not make Nature checks to identify the moss in Encounter 3, they may do so now, and will learn the same information. In particular, they learn that oblivion moss stores some of the memories that it steals, particularly of those creatures it kills. When the moss itself dies, those memories can be accessed by eating the moss, but they often come in a confused jumble, making it difficult to sort things out.

There is more than enough moss for everybody in the party to chow down, but some of the PCs might prefer not to partake. (Elves, eladrin, and devas may feel particularly squeamish about the moss, because these races are a particular favorite food of oblivion moss due to their long lifespans leading to extensive collections of memories.)

A DC 15 Insight check suggests that the more people who eat the moss, the fewer memories each of them will need to comprehend, but ultimately it's up to the players. Even those who don't eat the moss can participate in the skill challenge, assuming those who do eat the moss describe their visions out loud.

Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs eat the oblivion moss:

The moss is slimy and chewy as you place it in your mouth. Moments later, you feel strange thoughts bubbling up inside your mind. Thoughts that don't belong to you. Images whirl past: faces, names, details both mundane and intimate. In bits and pieces, tiny flashes of consciousness, you experience the memories of lives that you have never lived. But there are so many! The visions are chaotic and jump from instant to instant, even from person to person. It's hard to make sense of these daydream-like visions.

Take **Handout 3** (which contains the expedition members' memories) and cut it up into the individual "thought lines." Try to make sure that each player gets at

one of the "secret" memories (up to five). The other memories you should distribute at random. Also take **Handout 2** (which is where the players answered questions about some of their own PCs' memories) and cut it up into similar-sized pieces. Mix all the papers up and divide them evenly among all the players of PCs who ate the moss. The characters must now figure out how to combine the memory fragments so that they can discover and use each individual NPC's secret.

SKILL CHALLENGE: CONCENTRATION

There are five "secrets" among the slips of paper representing the NPCs' memories. Each of those secrets is associated with a specific NPC. (You can pick them out because they use the word "secret" which is different from all the other memories.) By correctly identifying all the memories that belong to a particular individual, the PCs can cause those disjointed memories to coalesce into a single coherent thought, which releases that secret into the PC's mind. The person who actually learns the secret is whichever PC got the piece of paper representing the secret itself, even though the memories associated with that secret are likely spread out among multiple PCs. The assumption is that the characters are talking through this as they struggle to comprehend the daydream-like visions swirling in their minds.

Note that the players can solve this puzzle simply using the pieces of paper; they don't have to make skill checks at all. On the other hand, if the players aren't interested in the physical manipulation of the memories, then they can resolve this encounter as a skill challenge.

Goal: The PCs attempt to focus the stream of memories, separate them out by the individual who lived each life, and connect the pieces of information that belong together.

Complexity: Special (5 NPC secrets to identify)

Primary Skills: Endurance, Insight, Intelligence

Other Skills: Heal

Victory: Each time the PCs correctly classify a set of memories as belonging to the same individual, they learn that individual's secret.

Defeat: If the PCs are unable to learn the key pieces of information (particularly the route to the vault) then they will be unable to proceed, but there is no set number of failures at which this occurs. However, on a failed skill check, or an incorrect attempt to identify a single NPC's memories and secret, the character takes psychic damage equal to his healing surge value.

To run this encounter as a hybrid puzzle and skill challenge, have the players arrange the memories into

groups that they think go together. Then, to confirm if a group is accurate, the PC trying to learn a secret can make a primary skill check. If the primary skill check succeeds and the group of memories is correct, then the memories coalesce and the PC learns the secret.

To run this encounter as a pure skill challenge, simply give the PCs a secret for every 2 successful skill checks that they make. Part of the idea behind this encounter is to enable some fun roleplaying, especially since some of the memories that the players are given were written by other players. The PCs are experiencing small bits and pieces of each other's lives through the oblivion moss. The hope is that this will spark some discussion and examination of the various characters' motivations and personalities, but it's up to the players how much or how little time they want to spend on this.

Endurance DC 17/18 (1 success, no maximum)

The PC controls his breathing, slows his racing heart, and focuses all his attention on remaining calm and sorting out the jumbled memories.

Insight DC 17/18 (1 success, no maximum)

The PC makes an intuitive leap that connects two memories that seem unrelated but actually do belong to the same person, or rules out a memory that belongs to someone else (such as another player character).

Intelligence DC 12/13 (1 success, no maximum)

The PC thinks about how various memories might be connected and finds a link between two related memories that belong to the same person, or realizes that a given pair of memories does not belong together.

Heal 17/18 (not a success or failure; 1 max per PC)

The first time a character fails a skill check and would suffer psychic damage, another character may attempt a Heal check to stabilize the afflicted PC and prevent the loss. Each PC can only be "saved" in this fashion once during the skill challenge.

The Weapons: Focusing on the weapon that belonged to a particular individual can be helpful in causing memories to coalesce. Adventurers spend a lot of time using, training with, cleaning, repairing, or just thinking about their weapons. Each NPC had his or her own personal weapon.

Any PC can use one of the weapons as a focus to help control the memories. Holding a weapon and making a successful primary skill check causes one memory associated with the NPC who owned that weapon to become identified.

Important Note: There are three memories for each NPC (two observations that reveal details about who they are, and one where the NPC thinks about his or her own secret). To unlock each secret, the players just need to match up the three memories that go together.

MEMORIES AND NPCs

The five NPCs in the exploration party, their basic characteristics, and their secrets are:

- **Lysara is a human female priestess of Auril.** She wielded the warhammer. Her secret is that only she knows how to understand the words of the mysterious song, which is a divine chant sacred to the Frostmaiden. She can follow the song without succumbing to its control.
- **Kallista is a tiefling female rogue.** She venerates Cyric. Her weapon is the crossbow. Her secret is that only she knows the correct way to disable the vault's traps and physical safeguards.
- **Kathra is a female dwarven star pact warlock** who worships Shar. Her weapon is the dagger. Her secret is that only she knows the correct ritual needed to deactivate the vault's magical wards.
- **Quarfein is a male drow ranger** and a follower of Lolth. He wielded the longbow. His secret is that he had seen and memorized an ancient map of the tunnels, so only he knows the path to find the vault.
- **Bharash is a male dragonborn warlord.** He serves Bane, the Black Lord. He wielded the glaive. His secret is that only he was given the knowledge of which keystones to push, and the order in which to push them, to open the vault.

Remember, the PCs are not possessed by the spirits of the dead. The NPCs are not putting the memories into the PCs' minds, and the memories don't change (they are fixed moments in time).

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs comprehend the five critical pieces of information, they are able to resume their exploration of the Delhalls. Proceed to Encounter 5.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 140 / 200 XP each for figuring out how to tap into the memories of the previous adventuring party.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 5: ANCIENT HALLS

SETUP

The PCs need five secrets from the dead adventurers in order to successfully complete their mission. This encounter can be presented as a series of brief scenes or vignettes; it isn't a skill challenge, but you can call for skill checks from the appropriate characters in each scene, to represent the character using the borrowed memories to overcome that obstacle.

A PC drawing on a correctly identified secret is automatically successful when using that secret to overcome its corresponding obstacle, even if the PC is not trained in what might seem like the required skill (such as Thievery for the rogue's memory). The PC with the appropriate memory enters a sort of fugue state and is able to take the necessary actions without thinking.

SECRET 1: THE MAP

The drow, Quarfein, was the only member of the party who knew that an actual map existed of the ancient tunnels. Thanks to his familiarity with navigating the lightless world of the Underdark, Quarfein was easily able to memorize the map.

Drawing on this memory, the PC who learned Quarfein's secret guides the party unerringly through miles of twisty little passages, all alike.

If you have time, describe the PCs following the directions of the PC holding Quarfein's secret. Occasionally the PC loses hold of those memories, and he or she leads the entire party right up to the edge of a precipice or down a tunnel that leads to a dead end. Suddenly the memories flood back, and the PCs are saved from a terrible fall or from wandering through passages for hours because of a wrong turn.

SECRET 2: THE SONG

As the PCs make their way deeper into the tunnels, they hear the beautiful song again, but it is much clearer now. The singer has a haunting, female voice that sounds both human and otherworldly. Similar to the Supernal language, everyone comprehends the primal aspects of the song's meaning, but without necessarily understanding the specific words. They feel compelled to follow the song, which evokes a sensation of bitter cold, freezing winds, and driving snow.

Drawing on the memories of the priestess of Auril, the PC who learned Lysara's secret knows the song for what it is: a mystic prayer to the Frostmaiden. This character can follow the song and rally the others so they do not succumb to its control.

If you have time, describe how the song, as the PCs travel through the tunnels, has the ability to fog one's mind with its beauty and charm. PCs find themselves wandering away from the rest of the group without realizing it, walking into walls and very close to precipices. Just when the song seems about to completely steal the minds of the PCs, the PC holding Lysara's memories begins singing in harmony with the mystical song. This allows the PCs to regain their faculties and avoid an unpleasant death, wandering the tunnels forever until they die of thirst or starvation.

SECRET 3: THE VAULT (TRAPS)

After a while, the song stops, as if the singer needs to conserve her breath. The PCs can feel the temperature dropping with every step they take. A few minutes later, the PCs exit the winding maze of tunnels and enter a cavern. The entire far wall of the cavern is taken up by a worked stone wall covered in runes and glyphs. Basic skill checks identify these as sigils of Auril, as well as the personal markings of the Ice Queen Iyraclea. The stone is very cold to the touch.

The character who learned Kallista's secret knows that there is a series of deadly traps hidden within the chamber and the wall. Moving almost faster than the eye can follow, this character is able to identify and disable the various traps.

The PCs who holds Kallista's memories remembers that mechanical traps in the floor and walls of this chamber. He or she leads the other PCs through the chamber, around falling ice blocks, geysers of ultra-frigid mist, and razor sharp ice shards that fly out of the walls. Occasionally have the PC remember a trap at the last moment, as a fellow PC stands in an area that is about to be obliterated by some hazard. Just in the nick of time, the PC with Kallista's memories leaps forward, knocking the other character away from danger.

SECRET 4: THE VAULT (WARDS)

With the traps disabled, the stone wall can now be approached safely. There is still no sign of a door or other entrance. Many of the runes and sigils carved into the wall glow with a dangerous light. There are numerous powerful magical wards to complement the physical traps.

The character who learned Kathra's secret has the memory of a specific ritual that, when invoked, disables these wards. The ritual has arcane, divine, and primal components. When it is completed, many of the glowing sections of the wall disappear, and a section of wall near the center shimmers, revealing the outline of a door.

The PC holding Kathra's memories studies the runes for several minutes. Slowly, the understanding of

how the runes can be deactivated comes to the PC. During this time, a bat flies into the cavern and comes very close to one of the runes. The bat freezes in mid-air and turns into a block of ice, which smashes the bat into a million tiny pieces when it hits the ground. While the PC is deactivating the runes, his or her hair and skin take on a pale bluish-white hue.

SECRET 5: THE VAULT (DOOR)

With all the guards and wards removed, the vault may now be opened safely. However, there are hundreds of stones carved with symbols. They must have something to do with opening the newly revealed door, but it would take ages to try pressing them in every combination, and that's assuming that randomly trying things wouldn't reactivate all the traps.

The character who learned Bharash's secret knows exactly which stones to press (identifying them by the markings) and in what order. Some of the stones are very high on the wall, requiring PCs to work together to lift one another to reach the correct stones.

When the sequence is completed, the stone rumbles, an ancient mechanism comes to life, and the door slides into the ground.

As the PCs prepare to step through the door, the singing starts again: beautiful, clear notes that carry a deadly echo. The person singing is inside the vault.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The PCs can now proceed into Iyraclea's treasure vault and find out what the Frostmaiden's Chosen hid here when she was still a mortal. Proceed to Encounter 6.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 6: ICEBORN

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 14/16 (5600/8000 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

2 chillfire destroyers (level 12) (D)

2 ashfrost assassins (A)

1 adult blizzard dragon (B)

Iceborn of Iyraclea (level 12) (I)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

2 chillfire destroyers (D)

2 ashfrost assassins (level 14) (A)

1 adult blizzard dragon (level 14) (B)

Iceborn of Iyraclea (level 14) (I)

When the adventurers enter the area, everything is frozen and still. None of the monsters are "in position" on the battle map, so don't roll initiative yet. Read the following:

The inside of the vault has been cleverly carved to create the illusion that you are outdoors in the middle of a winter storm. Tiny lights twinkle along the walls, creating a pattern that looks like swirling snow. The center of the room is filled with a lake of frozen water. The ice is very thick, but blue light filters up from somewhere far beneath the surface. A ten-foot-tall dais occupies the far side of the room. Statues of various elemental creatures stand in silent rows leading to twin staircases that ascend the platform.

In the center of the dais is a white throne made of pure ice. Seated on the throne is a beautiful human woman with pale blue skin. The ice seems to grow into and around her body, making her part of the throne. Her mouth is open, and she is singing, though her chest does not move. Her eyes flicker briefly but she does not interrupt her song or otherwise acknowledge your presence.

The woman on the throne looks exactly like the long-dead Ice Queen. The character hosting the memories of Lysara (the human cleric of Auril) recognizes her immediately. The knowledge that this cannot be the true Iyraclea (who is an exarch of Auril) combined with this being's appearance as a seemingly exact duplicate, suggests that this creature is some kind of simulacrum

or copy (Arcana DC 20). Nevertheless, if she can channel any portion of the true Ice Queen's power, she will be dangerous indeed. The PCs need to wake her up and destroy her, rather than leaving her here to possibly form an alliance with the Warlock Knights or strike out on her own. (The iceborn has never been outside the vault, and has no idea that she is not the real Iyraclea.)

In order to release the frozen Ice Queen from her torpor, two PCs must stand on the blue rune: "Lysara" and the character hosting the memories of Kathra (the dwarf warlock). "Lysara" must make a Religion check, while "Kathra" must make an Arcana check. These two characters immediately realize what they need to do. The other characters can arrange themselves as they see fit, but may not advance beyond the closest boundary of the frozen lake. Some sort of invisible but inexorable force prevents them from moving any closer until they activate the rune.

It doesn't really matter what the players roll, but feel free to use their results to influence how you describe the scene; for example, if they both roll high, the ritual proceeds very smoothly; if they both roll low, there are a number of false starts as the PCs struggle to bring forth the appropriate memories, etc.

[PC channeling Lysara] speaks the words of a prayer to Auril while [PC channeling Kathra] touches various points on the rune-scribed floor. The blue light glows with greater intensity as they proceed. A blast of chilly air erupts from the throne, scouring the ice away from the blue-skinned woman's body. She stands and flexes her fingers in wonder. "Is it true? Am I reborn at long last? Lady Frostkiss be praised!"

She turns and regards [PC channeling Lysara] with cold blue eyes. "But something is wrong. You are no priestess of the Frostmaiden. What trickery is this? You would profane this sacred place!"

Iyraclea, for so she clearly believes herself to be, raises her arms in a gesture of power. A column of ice erupts from the center of the frozen lake, shattering to reveal the white scales and unfurling wings of a dragon. The surface of the ice instantly refreezes, forming an unbroken sheet once more. Several of the statues shudder to life, turning in your direction.

"Now you shall feel the chill of death upon you. The Ice Queen has returned!"

Although the original (evil) adventuring party might well have been able to parlay with the iceborn, the PCs do not have that luxury. The PCs must not allow even this pale fragment of the original Ice Queen's power to return to the world.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The stone floor is covered with a thin sheen of ice, but this does not impede movement. Squares not otherwise marked are treated as normal terrain.

Illumination: The area is brightly lit by dozens of flickering blue lights shining beneath the surface of the frozen water. This indirect illumination gives everything in the room a blue hue, and creates tiny rippling shadows across all surfaces and creatures.

Frozen Lake: The frozen water is slippery. A character who wishes to move at more than half speed or use the run or charge action must succeed on a DC 16 Acrobatics check or fall prone, ending the movement. Creatures attempting to stand up from prone on these squares must succeed on a DC 11 Acrobatics check or they are unable to find their footing, remaining prone. The blizzard dragon and the ashfrost assassins ignore these terrain effects.

Blue Rune: The iceborn can activate or deactivate the blue rune as a free action. While the rune is active, any creature that enters the rune's square takes 2d10 cold damage and suffers ongoing 10 cold (save ends). Creatures with the cold subtype are immune. Remember that PCs do get a saving throw to avoid being forced into damaging terrain. A character within 3 squares of the rune can suppress this effect with a DC 20 Arcana check made as a standard action. This deactivates the rune for one round plus one additional round for each 5 points above 20 (DC 25, DC 30, etc.)

Ceiling: The ceiling is a total of 20 feet high (rising 10 feet above the dais, which is itself 10 feet tall).

TACTICS

The blizzard dragon activates *rising winds* at the start of its first turn. Every time this power discharges, the dragon activates it again on its next turn. With its *claw* attacks and its *freezing winds* aura, the dragon should be able to slide PCs around quite often. It tries to maneuver PCs onto the frozen surface, where it and the ashfrost assassins likely have a movement advantage. The dragon tries to stay on the frozen surface if possible to benefit from its *ice walk* ability.

The chillfire destroyers engage PCs who do not step onto the frozen surface. They use *freezing slam* if they are marked, or if there are prone targets available, and they use *trample* if they are not marked or if they can reach more than one PC to try and knock them prone.

The ashfrost assassins always look for combat advantage, which can come from flanking or from knocking creatures prone with their *slam* attack. They can ignore the frozen water, which allows them to flank effectively with the blizzard dragon.

The iceborn's primary attack routine is to use *fury of winter* for two basic attacks. Assuming she is not engaged in melee, she can then use *frosty glare* twice against the same PC. If the first attack hits, the PC has vulnerable 5 cold for the second attack. If she is engaged in melee, she might be able to use *fury of winter*, make an *ice fist* attack at her first attack, and if that hits, then use *frosty glare*, since the target will be unable to take the opportunity attack after being hit with *ice fist*. If necessary, she uses *icerazor* to push a PC off her dais and down onto the frozen lake (1d10 falling damage, but the PC gets a save to fall prone at the edge). She can also use *breath of the frostmaiden* to deal damage, knock targets prone, and rearrange the battlefield to her liking (most likely teleporting an ashfrost assassin directly adjacent to a prone PC, since the assassins can keep a character prone with repeated *slam* attacks).

The dragon is a clumsy flier, so unless the PCs are flying, it only uses its fly speed as a movement option to get from one spot on the ground to another spot on the ground. The iceborn can hover and attack at range, so she pursues any flying PCs. The dragon's *freezing winds* aura also allows it to move flying PCs in three dimensions, which it uses to force them back to the ground (to be clear, forced movement cannot damage flying PCs by slamming them into the ground, and it cannot fling ground-bound PCs into the air). See the most current Rules Update on the D&D website, or the *D&D Essentials: Rules Compendium*, for the most up-to-date rules regarding forced movement in three dimensions.

GLORY TIER

If the players have asked for an additional challenge, you can consider using some or all of the following adjustments:

- Give the iceborn an "ice shield" granting her resist 10 all. This shield is tied to the life force of the adult blizzard dragon. When the dragon is bloodied, the shield drops to resist 5 all; when the dragon is killed, the shield is gone. The PCs should be able to determine what is going on using appropriate skill checks.
- Creatures within the blizzard dragon's *freezing winds* aura lose all cold resistance.
- The iceborn and the blizzard dragon begin the encounter with temporary hit points equal to their bloodied value.
- Add a second blue rune to the battle map, with effects identical to the first. This rune should be placed somewhere on the surface of the frozen water. This gives the blizzard dragon more target squares to slide PCs into with its aura.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present, the level of challenge the players have asked for, and the relative strength of the party compared to a normal group for this tier. (These changes are not cumulative.)

Four PCs (normal table): Remove one of the ashfrost assassins.

Four PCs (strong table) or Five PCs (normal table): No changes; run as written.

Five PCs (strong table) or Six PCs (normal table): Add another chillfire destroyer.

Six PCs (strong table): Add another chillfire destroyer (pick a different statue) and another ashfrost assassin (which begins the encounter on the dais with the iceborn).

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

When the iceborn of Iyraclea is reduced to 0 hit points, she is destroyed. The PCs cannot knock her unconscious or take her prisoner. The magical ice that composes her body shatters, ending her existence. Any remaining monsters continue the battle, fighting to the death, but the PCs can retreat and still consider their mission successful so long as they destroy the simulacrum of Iyraclea.

If the PCs have been struggling with the battle, feel free to have all the rest of the monsters either die instantly or turn into minions with 1 hp each when Iyraclea is destroyed. This can provide a way for you to let the players pull out a victory instead of a TPK. If things are going badly for the PCs, give them skill checks to figure out that the iceborn might be the “key” to all the other monsters.

As the iceborn dies, she calls out to Auril. She is not the true Iyraclea, but she does have all the memories that Iyraclea had, as of the moment the iceborn was created. One of those memories is of particular importance. Read the following:

"You fools! Do you think you can destroy ME, Iyraclea, Queen of the Great Glacier? This is but a temporary setback, for I have an even greater power hidden away in my glorious ice palace. Zhengyi thought that he was so clever, but I hid it from him, oh yes. Once my full strength has returned, I will retrieve it, and then you will feel my true wrath! I will ... I ... will... I..."

There is a loud SNAP, like a frozen tree branch breaking, and a seam appears along the side of Iyraclea's face. A spiderweb of tiny cracks spreads along her skin. The icy shell of her body swiftly begins falling

to pieces, revealing nothing inside. She is nothing more than a simulacrum, a shell of sentient ice.

In the last instant before she dies, Iyraclea opens her mouth to sing, to praise the Frostmaiden once more. All that comes out is a single pure, stark note. It hangs in the air for a long moment before shattering along with the rest of her body.

The PCs have prevented the return of a powerful threat to the region. They can loot the vault and then return to the surface. Proceed to Encounter 7.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 1120 / 1600 XP each for defeating the iceborn of Iyraclea and her elemental allies.

TREASURE

A number of valuable magic items were entombed here along with the iceborn. The PCs discover a pair of *gloves of ice*, a *robe of defying frost* +3, a *tome of the north wind* +3, a bundle of 25 *frozen arrows* +3, and a suit of *frozen armor* +3.

The adventurers also find a cache of diamonds and sapphires worth 850 / 1700 gp per PC.

ENCOUNTER 6: "ICEBORN" (LOW LEVEL)

| | | |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Iceborn of Iyraclea (level 12) | Level 12 Elite Artillery (Leader) | |
| Medium elemental animate (cold) | XP 1,400 | |
| HP 192; Bloodied 96 | Initiative +8 | |
| AC 26, Fortitude 24, Reflex 24, Will 27 | Perception +9 | |
| Speed 6, fly 6 (perfect) | | |
| Resist 10 cold; if the iceborn takes cold damage and her next attack hits, one target of that attack takes an extra 10 cold damage. | | |
| Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1 | | |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Frost Cloak • Aura 5 | | |
| Allies within the aura gain resist 10 cold. | | |
| Killing Frost | | |
| The iceborn's attacks ignore the first 10 points of cold resistance. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Ice Fist (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +15 vs. Reflex | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 6 cold damage, and the target cannot make opportunity attacks until the end of the iceborn's next turn. | | |
| r Frosty Glare (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +17 vs. Will | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 10 cold damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 cold until the end of the iceborn's next turn. | | |
| Fury of Winter • At-Will | | |
| Effect: The iceborn makes two basic attacks. | | |
| r Icerazor (cold) • Recharge 4 5 6 | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +17 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 10 cold damage, the iceborn pushes the target 5 squares, and the target is slowed (save ends). | | |
| C Breath of the Frostmaiden (cold, teleportation) • Encounter | | |
| Attack: Close blast 5 (enemies in blast); +15 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 7 cold damage, and the target is knocked prone. | | |
| Effect: The iceborn and her allies within the blast teleport to any square within the blast. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| Gift of the Ice Queen • At-Will | | |
| Trigger: When first bloodied | | |
| Effect (Free Action): <i>breath of the frostmaiden</i> recharges, and the iceborn uses it immediately. If she has not already expended it, she uses it immediately without expending it. | | |
| Skills Arcana +15, Intimidate +16 | | |
| Str 10 (+6) | Dex 14 (+8) | Wis 16 (+9) |
| Con 18 (+10) | Int 18 (+10) | Cha 21 (+11) |
| Alignment evil | | |
| Languages Common, Elven, Giant | | |

Notes: Azara Iceborn (*Dragon Magazine* 374) reflavored with power names taken from the original stat block for Iyraclea the Ice Queen (*Epic Level Handbook*), resistance and effects improved for Paragon tier, added *killing frost* trait, and damage expressions updated to MM3 standards.

| | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Adult Blizzard Dragon | Level 12 Elite Controller | |
| Large elemental magical beast (cold, dragon) | XP 1,400 | |
| HP 252; Bloodied 126 | Initiative +12 | |
| AC 26, Fortitude 24, Reflex 25, Will 23 | Perception +11 | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk), fly 8 (clumsy) | | |
| Darkvision | | |
| Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1 | | |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Freezing Winds • Aura 1 | | |
| The dragon slides any enemy that ends its turn in the aura 1 square. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Bite (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 6 cold damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the dragon's next turn. | | |
| m Claw (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 10 cold damage, and the dragon slides the target 2 squares. | | |
| Double Attack • At-Will | | |
| Effect: The dragon uses <i>bite</i> and <i>claw</i> or uses <i>claw</i> twice. | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| C Rising Winds (cold) • Recharge at the start of any turn when <i>freezing winds</i> is aura 1 | | |
| Effect: The <i>freezing winds</i> expands to aura 3. At the start of the dragon's next turn, the <i>freezing winds</i> expands to aura 5. At the start of its following turn, the dragon makes the following attack. | | |
| Attack (No Action): Close burst 5 (enemies in burst); +15 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 3d8 + 6 cold damage, and the target is immobilized and blinded (save ends both). | | |
| Effect: The <i>freezing winds</i> aura reverts to its original state and size (aura 1). | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| C Chill Rebuke (cold) • Recharge when first bloodied | | |
| Trigger: An enemy's melee attack deals damage to the dragon. | | |
| Attack (Immediate Reaction): Close blast 5 (enemies in blast); +15 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 1d10 + 9 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). | | |
| Sudden Flurry • At-Will | | |
| Trigger: The dragon is hit by a cold attack. | | |
| Effect (Free Action): The dragon slides each enemy in its aura 1 square. | | |
| Str 19 (+10) | Dex 23 (+12) | Wis 20 (+11) |
| Con 22 (+12) | Int 20 (+11) | Cha 17 (+9) |
| Alignment unaligned | | |
| Languages Common, Draconic, Primordial | | |

Notes: *Monster Manual* 3

| Chillfire Destroyer (level 12) | | Level 12 Brute |
|---|--------------|----------------------|
| Large elemental magical beast (cold, fire) | | XP 700 |
| HP 153; Bloodied 76 | | Initiative +11 |
| AC 24, Fortitude 24, Reflex 23, Will 23 | | Perception +11 |
| Speed 5 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 cold, 10 fire | | |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Leaking Firecore (fire) • Aura 2 | | |
| While the chillfire destroyer is bloodied, each creature that starts its turn within the aura takes 10 fire damage. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Freezing Slam (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +17 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 10 damage plus 1d12 cold damage. | | |
| M Trample (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Effect: The chillfire destroyer moves its speed and can move through enemies' spaces. This movement provokes opportunity attacks. When it enters an enemy's space, the chillfire destroyer makes a trample attack against that enemy. | | |
| Attack: Melee 0 (enemy in the same space); +15 vs. Reflex | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 10 damage plus 1d12 cold damage, and the target is knocked prone. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| C Firecore Breach (fire) | | |
| Trigger: The chillfire destroyer drops to 0 hit points. | | |
| Effect: The destroyer does not die until the start of its next turn. Until then, the destroyer can take no actions. At the start of the destroyer's next turn, it makes the following attack. | | |
| Attack (No Action): Close burst 3 (creatures in burst); +15 vs. Reflex | | |
| Hit: 4d10 + 5 fire damage. | | |
| Str 16 (+9) | Dex 20 (+11) | Wis 20 (+11) |
| Con 23 (+12) | Int 5 (+3) | Cha 12 (+7) |
| Alignment unaligned | | Languages Primordial |

Notes: *Monster Manual 2* with updated damage expressions, and clarified wording for the *trample* power.

| Ashfrost Assassin | | Level 12 Skirmisher |
|---|--------------|----------------------|
| Medium elemental magical beast (cold, fire) | | XP 700 |
| HP 121; Bloodied 60 | | Initiative +14 |
| AC 26, Fortitude 23, Reflex 26, Will 24 | | Perception +10 |
| Speed 7 | | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 cold, 10 fire | | |
| TRAITS | | |
| Combat Advantage | | |
| An ashfrost assassin deals 1d8 extra cold damage and 1d8 extra fire damage against any creature granting combat advantage to it, instead of knocking that creature prone. | | |
| Mutable Form | | |
| When squeezing, an ashfrost assassin moves at full speed, provokes no opportunity attacks for squeezing, and does not take a -5 penalty to attack rolls for squeezing. | | |
| Flowing Slurry | | |
| An ashfrost assassin can move across liquid and ignores difficult terrain. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Slam (cold, fire) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +15 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 1d8 + 5 cold damage plus 1d8 + 5 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone and cannot stand up until the end of the ashfrost assassin's next turn. | | |
| M Ashfrost Slide • At-Will | | |
| Effect: The ashfrost assassin moves its speed and can make a <i>slam</i> attack at any point during this movement. It doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target. | | |
| C Ashfrost Torrent (cold, fire) • Recharge 6, or recharges when the ashfrost assassin takes cold or fire damage | | |
| Attack: Close burst 3 (creatures in burst); +14 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 2d6 + 3 cold damage plus 2d6 + 3 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone. | | |
| Skills Stealth +17 | | |
| Str 15 (+8) | Dex 22 (+12) | Wis 19 (+10) |
| Con 17 (+9) | Int 7 (+4) | Cha 8 (+5) |
| Alignment unaligned | | Languages Primordial |

Notes: *Plane Below* with updated damage expressions.

ENCOUNTER 6: "ICEBORN" (HIGH LEVEL)

| | | |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Iceborn of Iyraclea (level 14) | Level 14 Elite Artillery (Leader) | |
| Medium elemental animate (cold) | XP 2,000 | |
| HP 216; Bloodied 108 | Initiative +9 | |
| AC 28, Fortitude 26, Reflex 26, Will 29 | Perception +10 | |
| Speed 6 | | |
| Resist 10 cold ; if the iceborn takes cold damage and her next attack hits, one target of that attack takes an extra 10 cold damage. | | |
| Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1 | | |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Frost Cloak • Aura 5 | | |
| Allies within the aura gain resist 10 cold. | | |
| Killing Frost | | |
| The iceborn's attacks ignore the first 10 points of cold resistance. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Ice Fist (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. Reflex | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 8 cold damage, and the target cannot make opportunity attacks until the end of the iceborn's next turn. | | |
| r Frosty Glare (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +19 vs. Will | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 12 cold damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 cold until the end of the iceborn's next turn. | | |
| Fury of Winter • At-Will | | |
| Effect: The iceborn makes two basic attacks. | | |
| r Icerazor (cold) • Recharge 4 5 6 | | |
| Attack: Ranged 10 (one creature); +19 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 12 cold damage, the iceborn pushes the target 5 squares, and the target is slowed (save ends). | | |
| C Breath of the Frostmaiden (cold, teleportation) • Encounter | | |
| Attack: Close blast 5 (enemies in blast); +17 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 8 cold damage, and the target is knocked prone. | | |
| Effect: The iceborn and her allies within the blast teleport to any square within the blast. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| Gift of the Ice Queen • At-Will | | |
| Trigger: When first bloodied | | |
| Effect (Free Action): <i>breath of the frostmaiden</i> recharges, and the iceborn uses it immediately. If she has not already expended it, she uses it immediately without expending it. | | |
| Skills Arcana +16, Intimidate +17 | | |
| Str 10 (+7) | Dex 14 (+9) | Wis 16 (+10) |
| Con 18 (+11) | Int 18 (+11) | Cha 21 (+12) |
| Alignment evil | Languages Common, Elven, Giant | |

Notes: Azara Iceborn (*Dragon Magazine* 374) reflavored with power names taken from the original stat block for Iyraclea the Ice Queen (*Epic Level Handbook*), resistance and effects improved for Paragon tier, added *killing frost* trait, and damage expressions updated to MM3 standards.

| | | |
|--|---|---------------------|
| Adult Blizzard Dragon (level 14) | Level 14 Elite Controller | |
| Large elemental magical beast (cold, dragon) | XP 2,000 | |
| HP 284; Bloodied 142 | Initiative +13 | |
| AC 28, Fortitude 26, Reflex 27, Will 25 | Perception +12 | |
| Speed 8 (ice walk), fly 8 (clumsy) | Darkvision | |
| Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1 | | |
| TRAITS | | |
| O Freezing Winds • Aura 1 | | |
| The dragon slides any enemy that ends its turn in the aura 1 square. | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| m Bite (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 2d8 + 8 cold damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the dragon's next turn. | | |
| m Claw (cold) • At-Will | | |
| Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 10 cold damage, and the dragon slides the target 2 squares. | | |
| Double Attack • At-Will | | |
| Effect: The dragon uses <i>bite</i> and <i>claw</i> or uses <i>claw</i> twice. | | |
| MINOR ACTIONS | | |
| C Rising Winds (cold) • Recharge at the start of any turn when <i>freezing winds</i> is aura 1 | | |
| Effect: The <i>freezing winds</i> expands to aura 3. At the start of the dragon's next turn, the <i>freezing winds</i> expands to aura 5. At the start of its following turn, the dragon makes the following attack. | | |
| Attack (No Action): Close burst 5 (enemies in burst); +17 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 3d8 + 7 cold damage, and the target is immobilized and blinded (save ends both). | | |
| Effect: The <i>freezing winds</i> aura reverts to its original state and size (aura 1). | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| C Chill Rebuke (cold) • Recharge when first bloodied | | |
| Trigger: An enemy's melee attack deals damage to the dragon. | | |
| Attack (Immediate Reaction): Close blast 5 (enemies in blast); +17 vs. Fortitude | | |
| Hit: 1d10 + 10 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). | | |
| Sudden Flurry • At-Will | | |
| Trigger: The dragon is hit by a cold attack. | | |
| Effect (Free Action): The dragon slides each enemy in its aura 1 square. | | |
| Str 19 (+11) | Dex 23 (+13) | Wis 20 (+12) |
| Con 22 (+13) | Int 20 (+12) | Cha 17 (+10) |
| Alignment unaligned | Languages Common, Draconic, Primordial | |

Notes: *Monster Manual* 3

| Chillfire Destroyer | Level 14 Brute |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Large elemental magical beast (cold, fire) | XP 1,000 |
| HP 173; Bloodied 86 | Initiative +12 |
| AC 26, Fortitude 26, Reflex 25, Will 25 | Perception +12 |
| Speed 5 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 cold, 10 fire | |
| TRAITS | |
| O Leaking Firecore (fire) • Aura 2 | |
| While the chillfire destroyer is bloodied, each creature that starts its turn within the aura takes 10 fire damage. | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | |
| m Freezing Slam (cold) • At-Will | |
| Attack: Melee 2 (one creature); +19 vs. AC | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 12 damage plus 1d12 cold damage. | |
| M Trample (cold) • At-Will | |
| Effect: The chillfire destroyer moves its speed and can move through enemies' spaces. This movement provokes opportunity attacks. When it enters an enemy's space, the chillfire destroyer makes a trample attack against that enemy. | |
| Attack: Melee 0 (enemy in the same space); +17 vs. Reflex | |
| Hit: 3d6 + 12 damage plus 1d12 cold damage, and the target is knocked prone. | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | |
| C Firecore Breach (fire) | |
| Trigger: The chillfire destroyer drops to 0 hit points. | |
| Effect: The destroyer does not die until the start of its next turn. Until then, the destroyer can take no actions. At the start of the destroyer's next turn, it makes the following attack. | |
| Attack (No Action): Close burst 3 (creatures in burst); +17 vs. Reflex | |
| Hit: 4d10 + 6 fire damage. | |
| Str 16 (+10) | Dex 20 (+12) |
| Con 23 (+13) | Int 5 (+4) |
| | Wis 20 (+12) |
| | Cha 12 (+8) |
| Alignment unaligned | Languages Primordial |

Notes: *Monster Manual 2* with updated damage and clarified wording for the *trample* power.

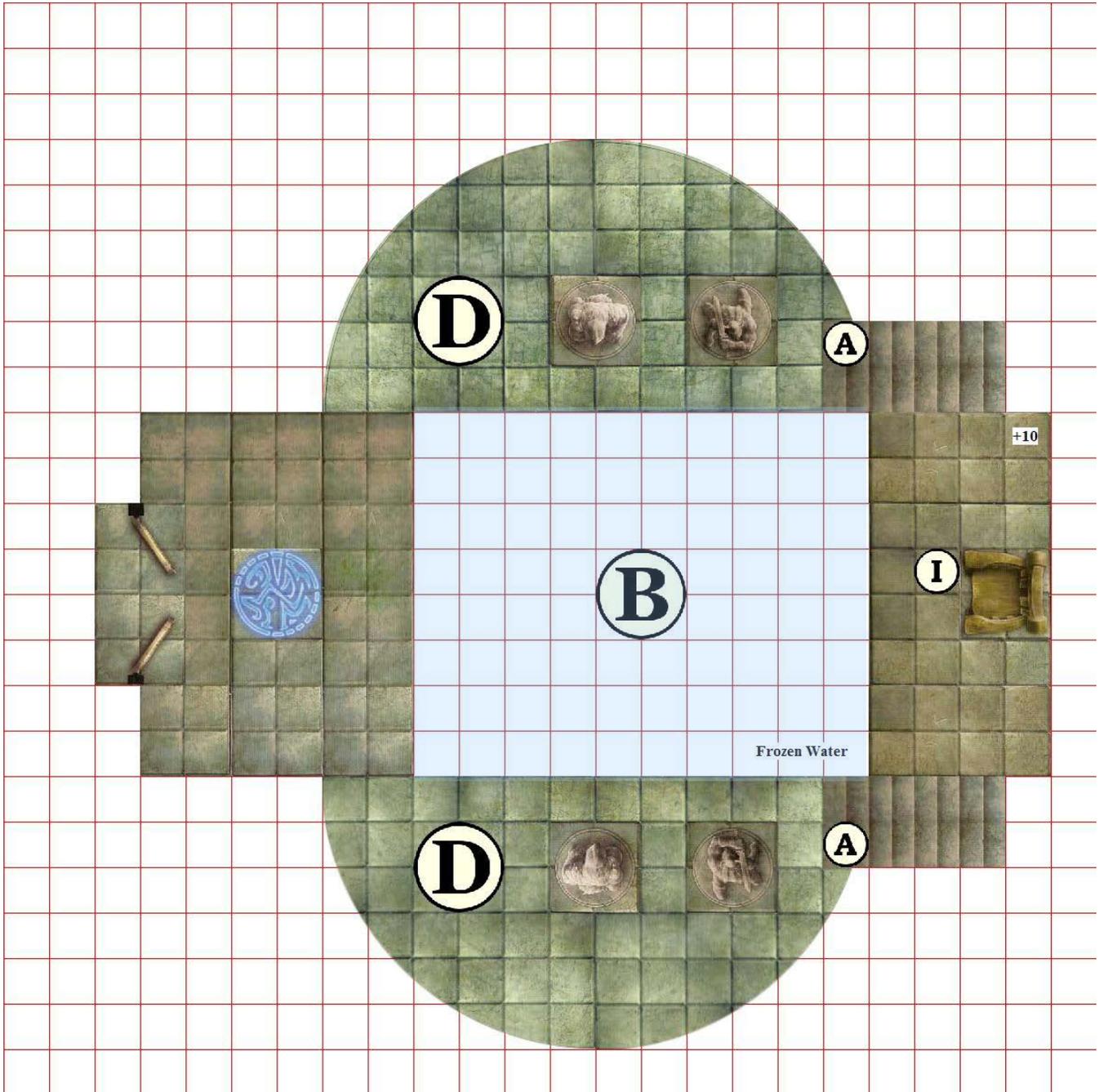
| Ashfrost Assassin (level 14) | Level 14 Skirmisher |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Medium elemental magical beast (cold, fire) | XP 1,000 |
| HP 137; Bloodied 68 | Initiative +15 |
| AC 28, Fortitude 25, Reflex 28, Will 26 | Perception +11 |
| Speed 7 | |
| Immune disease, poison; Resist 10 cold, 10 fire | |
| TRAITS | |
| Combat Advantage | |
| An ashfrost assassin deals 1d8 extra cold damage and 1d8 extra fire damage against any creature granting combat advantage to it, instead of knocking that creature prone. | |
| Mutable Form | |
| When squeezing, an ashfrost assassin moves at full speed, provokes no opportunity attacks for squeezing, and does not take a -5 penalty to attack rolls for squeezing. | |
| Flowing Slurry | |
| An ashfrost assassin can move across liquid and ignores difficult terrain. | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | |
| m Slam (cold, fire) • At-Will | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. Fortitude | |
| Hit: 1d8 + 6 cold damage plus 1d8 + 6 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone and cannot stand up until the end of the ashfrost assassin's next turn. | |
| M Ashfrost Slide • At-Will | |
| Effect: The ashfrost assassin moves its speed and can make a <i>slam</i> attack at any point during this movement. It doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target. | |
| C Ashfrost Torrent (cold, fire) • Recharge 6, or recharges when the ashfrost assassin takes cold or fire damage | |
| Attack: Close burst 3 (creatures in burst); +16 vs. Fortitude | |
| Hit: 2d6 + 4 cold damage plus 2d6 + 4 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone. | |
| Skills Stealth +18 | |
| Str 15 (+9) | Dex 22 (+13) |
| Con 17 (+10) | Int 7 (+5) |
| | Wis 19 (+11) |
| | Cha 8 (+6) |
| Alignment unaligned | Languages Primordial |

Notes: *Plane Below* with updated damage expressions.

ENCOUNTER 6: "ICEBORN" (MAP)

TILE SETS NEEDED

DU1 Halls of the Giant King x2, DU4 Arcane Towers x2



PCs enter through the double doors on the left-hand side of the map; combat triggers when two PCs stand on the glowing blue rune and make the appropriate skill checks (see encounter text for details). Note that initially there are three statues on either side of the frozen water; some animate when combat begins (they become the chillfire destroyers). The dais is raised 10 feet above the floor/water level. The staircases are not considered difficult terrain.

ENCOUNTER 7: THE BOSS'S BOSS

SETUP

Upon exiting the mine, the PCs discover that Foreman Omog is no longer in charge. (You will need to adjust this text if the PCs did not speak with Omog when they first arrived at the mine. No matter how they got in, they are not able to get out unnoticed unless they are able to take some truly extraordinary precautions.)

The half-orc foreman has company when you emerge from the mine. A bald-headed human cleric of Bane scrutinizes the dwarven slaves with a skeptical eye, while a Warlock Knight clad in ironfell plate armor stands impassively. A large number of heavily-armed soldiers, presumably the knight's retainers, stand nearby, along with several grey-clad warlocks.

"Here they are now, mighty Knight-Fellthane," says the foreman obsequiously, pointing in your direction. "These are the ones who went into the Delhalls after the first group you sent didn't come back."

The Warlock Knight removes his helmet and scowls at you. "I don't recognize you. Who sent you? You're not working for that fool, Knight-Executor Angath, are you? I warned him to stay out of my business..."

This is purely a roleplaying scene. The foreman repeats whatever cover story the PCs gave him (they were sent by the Warlock Knights, they were sent by the Council of Blades, they just happened to be in the area, etc.) The cleric of Bane (who does not give his name) and the Warlock Knight (whose name is Vorlenth, but everyone refers to him by his rank, Fellthane) demand two things: that the PCs identify themselves and that they explain just what exactly they have been doing in the mines.

There are a number of approaches the PCs can take in response to this. Thanks to the endless politics of the Warlock Knights, Vorlenth initially believes that they are spies sent by one of his rivals, as opposed to meddling do-gooders. This gives the PCs an opportunity to talk their way out of the situation, if they are so inclined.

The PCs might go the bluffing route (either claiming that they didn't find anything, or lying about what they really found). They might make a political play and claim to represent a more powerful Warlock Knight, such as a Vindicator or Councilor. They might pretend to represent some other evil or mercenary faction (such as the Zhentarim). They might choose to proclaim who they really are ("We're the good guys and we just destroyed your potential ally!"). Some groups will just attack the NPCs outright. They might ask for a moment

to confer and use the opportunity to create a diversion (perhaps causing a mad scramble among the slaves by throwing some gold on the ground, or trying to inspire the slaves to riot against the foreman).

Any plausible approach should have a good chance of succeeding. The PCs simply need to escape back to Damara and make their report to Yazeth Cobb, preferably without having the entire nation of Vaasa chasing after them. Just roll with whatever the players come up with and have fun. Call for appropriate skill checks (use DC 17/18 for typical skill checks, or 22/23 for more outlandish things), allow creative uses of powers, and so forth. If it comes to blows, the cleric and knight call for reinforcements, leaving their men to fight the PCs while they escape to report to their respective organizations. There is no need to play this battle out; the PCs can defeat the retainers, but not before the important NPCs make their escape.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The remainder of the PCs' return journey to Damara is uneventful. Read the following:

Yazeth is relieved to see you. "What have you learned of the alliance between Mulmaster and the Warlock Knights?" he asks nervously. "Did you recover the item, or destroy it? What threat lurks beneath the Delhalls?"

Allow the PCs to report their success or failure, along with any other pertinent details. The fact that clerics of Bane and Warlock Knights are openly working together is bad news, and Yazeth nods grimly if the PCs inform him of this.

If the adventurers destroyed the iceborn, read the following:

"My friends, you have performed a great service to the light on this day - perhaps greater even than you realize. In life, the Ice Queen was one of Auril's most powerful agents. Had her rebirth been successful, even in a lesser form, she would surely have raised a new army from among the monsters of the Great Glacier. Even more terrifying is the thought that she might have formed an alliance with the Warlock Knights or the Council of Blades. Damara is in perilous enough condition as it is; should any more threats arise, I fear this land would quickly be overrun.

"Still, the creature's final words give me pause. If there truly is an artifact that once belonged to the Witch-King Zhengyi in the ruins of the Ice Queen's palace, we must find it before the Warlock Knights can

get their hands on it. I will see what more I can learn of this, and if you will allow, I may contact you when the time comes. Again, you have my thanks.”

If the adventurers discovered the vault, but did not destroy the iceborn, read the following:

“This is terrible news,” sighs Yazeth. “The rebirth of so powerful a servant of the Frostmaiden, even in a weakened form, does not bode well for either the Moonsea region or Damara. This new Ice Queen will surely try to claim her predecessor’s palace in the Great Glacier, and will no doubt command the loyalty of the many monsters that dwell there. Things will go far worse for us should she form an alliance with the Warlock Knights. I fear that we are ill-prepared to resist such a threat; I must make preparations at once. Perhaps Myth Drannor will heed my warnings.

“Yet, all is not lost; if we can find the Ice Queen’s palace before this newborn servant of Auril grows into her full strength, perhaps we can yet thwart her ambitions. I will see what more I can learn of this.

“For now, I think you should go. The Council of Blades may be aware of your presence here, and I would not have more agents of evil drawn to this suffering land. We have done enough harm already by our failure, no matter how well-intentioned we might have been.”

If the adventurers did not discover the vault, read the following:

“It is a tragedy that you were unable to learn anything of what lies beneath the mines,” laments Yazeth. “I must see if I can find another, stronger group of adventurers to investigate. I only hope that they will not be too late to stop the Warlock Knights and the Council of Blades from gaining access to this power, whatever it may be. There is nothing more you can do here; I thank you for your efforts, even though they were in vain.”

TREASURE

For destroying the iceborn of Iyraclea, Yazeth Cobb gives each PC a reward of 500/700 gp, along with access to any magic neck slot item of the character’s choosing (item level less than or equal to the character’s level plus 1, from any player-legal source). They receive neither the gold nor the magic item if they failed to defeat the iceborn.

STORY AWARDS

If the PCs destroyed the iceborn simulacrum of Iyraclea, they have certainly earned the wrath of the true Iyraclea. Although she is but an exarch, she is still a being of great power. The PCs receive the story award **SPEC32 Ire of Iyraclea** to commemorate this.

Each PC who successfully channeled the memories and learned the secret of one of the NPCs has been changed slightly for the experience. Although the effect is not one of domination or possession, and the memories do fade a day or so later, the thought patterns do affect the PC in subtle ways. These characters receive **SPEC33 Personality Splinter**.

As long as the PCs found the vault and got inside, regardless of whether they succeeded or failed at defeating the iceborn and her guardians, they have learned that powerful forces are moving in Vaasa. They receive SPEC34 On the Trail of Tyranny, which is the beginning of a Major Quest. The Quest continues in SPEC2-2 P2 Tyranny’s Bitter Frost and concludes in SPEC2-2 P3 Tyranny’s Perilous Bastion.

Of course, the PCs can play the other SPEC2-2 adventures when they reach the appropriate level bands, even if they failed in this adventure and thus are not on the Major Quest.

REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

Encounter 3: Oblivion

1120 / 1600 XP

Encounter 4: Who are You?

140 / 200 XP

Encounter 6: Iceborn

1120 / 1600 XP

Total Possible Experience

2380 / 3400 XP

Gold per PC

1350 / 2400 gp

(Encounter 6: 850 / 1700 gp; Conclusion: 500 / 700 gp)

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or something else of value. Each player makes one and only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that amount to that character's base gold award. It is possible and permissible for a character who spends more gold than he or she earns to have a negative total for the adventure. PCs receive 20% of the item's market price when they sell any magic item or consumable. They receive 50% of the market price for ritual books and alchemical formulas.

If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose

that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon +1* is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a *+1 duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BUNDLES:

Bundle A: *mask of the impish grin** (11th level, PH Races: Tiefling)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle B: *crest of vigilance eternal** (12th level, AV2)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle C: *gloves of ice** (11th level, AV2)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle D: *robe of defying frost +3** (13th level; AV)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle E: *tome of the north wind +3** (13th level; Arcane Power)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle F: *frozen armor +3** (14th level, AV)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle G: *25 frozen arrows +3** (13th level, AV2; choosing this bundle does not count as a found magic item)

Found in Encounter 6

Bundle H: any magic neck slot item with an item level less than or equal to the character's level plus 1 (may be chosen from any player-legal source)

Found in the Conclusion

Consumable plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a level 14 *potion of resistance (cold)* plus 500 / 1300 gp to their rewards from this adventure. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log. That character (and only that character) then receives the consumable plus the listed amount of gold (if any) instead of any other treasure bundle. Consumable items obtained in this fashion do not take up found magic item slots.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 1300 / 2100 gp to their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards. In this adventure, the PCs may earn all three story awards if they meet the criteria.

SPEC32 Ire of Iyraclea

You destroyed something that was very precious to the Ice Queen, Iyraclea, once Chosen and now Exarch of Auril. Sometimes you think you can feel her freezing breath on the back of your neck.

For as long as you possess this story award, you gain vulnerable 3 cold. If you have cold resistance, that resistance is reduced by 3. If you do not have cold resistance, every time you take cold damage, you take 3 additional cold damage.

This story award expires when you reach 21st level, if it has not already been removed by another award.

SPEC33 Personality Splinter

Your mind was filled with a chaotic mixture of memories belonging to different creatures. The actual memories have long since faded, but you are changed ever so slightly by the experience.

You have gained a new, minor quirk or other personality trait. This can be so subtle that almost no one will ever realize anything has changed, or it can be more obvious. If you need inspiration, there are some sample mannerisms and quirks on page 186 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, but you are free to interpret this story award in any way you choose.

SPEC34 On the Trail of Tyranny

You have learned of an alliance forming between Banite Warlock Knights of Vaasa and the Council of Blades in the oppressive city of Mulmaster. The initial skirmish is over, but even greater dangers lie ahead before you can claim victory in the undeclared war against this evil tandem.

This Story Award is the beginning of a Major Quest that continues in SPEC2-2 *Tyranny's Bitter Frost* and concludes in SPEC2-3 *Tyranny's Perilous Bastion*.

NEW RULES

Crest of Vigilance Eternal

Level 12

The undying courage of the deva race fuels the power of this item to keep you focused in combat.

Lvl 12 (13,000 gp)

Item Slot: Arms

Power (Daily): Immediate Interrupt. Trigger: An effect dazes or stuns you. Effect: You make a saving throw against the triggering effect. On a save, the effect ends.

Special: This item can be bracers, a light shield, or a heavy shield. (You decide at the time you choose this item.)

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault 2*, page 112.

Gloves of Ice

Level 11

Encrusted with elemental ice, these gloves don't freeze your hands while worn.

Lvl 11 (9,000 gp)

Item Slot: Hands

Property: Choose one: Your cold attacks gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls, or your cold attacks ignore 5 points of the target's resistance to cold. You can switch between properties as a minor action.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault 2*, page 59.

Mask of the Impish Grin

Level 11

This steel mask bears the likeness of an imp's infectious smile and allows its wearer to temporarily disappear from view.

Lvl 11 (9,000 gp)

Item Slot: Head

Property: You gain a +3 item bonus to Bluff checks.

Power (Daily, Illusion): Free Action. Trigger: You successfully use Bluff to create a diversion to hide. Effect: You become invisible to each enemy that your Bluff check succeeded against. The invisibility lasts until the end of your next turn or until you attack.

Reference: *PH Races: Tiefling*, page 29.

Freezing Arrow +3

Level 13

The shaft of this arrow is shaved from unmelting ice.

Lvl 13 (650 gp)

Ammunition

Enhancement: +3 attack rolls and damage rolls

Property: When you hit an enemy with an attack using this ammunition, that enemy takes 3d6 extra cold damage and is slowed until the end of its next turn.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault 2*, page 27

Potion of Resistance (Cold)

Level 14

This pale blue potion smells like fresh snow.

Lvl 14 (800 gp)

Potion

Power (Consumable): Minor Action. Drink this potion and spend a healing surge. You do not gain hit points as normal. Instead, gain resist 10 cold until the end of the encounter. Only one *potion of resistance* can be in effect on you at once.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 188

Frozen Armor +3

Level 14

Fashioned from blue-tinted steel, this armor is cool to the touch.

Lvl 14 (21,000 gp)

Armor: Scale, Plate

Enhancement: +3 AC

Property: Resist 10 cold.

Power (Daily, Cold): Immediate Reaction. Trigger: You are struck by a melee attack. Effect: Deal 3d6 cold damage to the attacker, and the attacker is immobilized until the end of your next turn.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 46

Robe of Defying Frost +3

Level 13

Minute ice crystals from the Elemental Chaos stud this robe, which protects against the effects of cold and imbues your attacks with an icy chill.

Lvl 13 (17,000 gp)

Armor: Cloth

Enhancement: +3 AC

Property: Resist 10 cold.

Power (Daily, Healing): Immediate Interrupt. Trigger: You would take cold damage. Effect: You take no cold damage, you gain a +1 power bonus to AC until the end of your next turn, and you can spend a healing surge.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 49.

Tome of the North Wind +3

Level 13

Covered in a thin patina of frost even in blazing heat, this tome unlocks the secrets of ice magic.

Implement (Tome)

Enhancement: +3 attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +3d8 cold damage

Property: When you use a wizard cold power through this tome, and the target of the power is slowed, that target takes damage equal to your Constitution modifier if it moves while slowed.

Property: This tome contains two wizard daily cold powers. Both powers must be of a level equal to or lower than that of the tome. Choose these powers when you acquire the tome; they cannot be changed later. You can add these powers to your spellbook.

Power (Daily, Arcane, Cold, Implement): Free Action. Choose a power contained in this tome and expend an unused wizard daily attack power of equal or higher level. You gain the use of the chosen power during this encounter. The power is lost if you do not use it before the end of the encounter.

Reference: *Arcane Power*, page 152.

APPENDIX: LEGENDS AND LORE

Sources for the following information include the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide*, “Realmslore: Hall of the Frostmaiden” by Brian R. James (*Dragon* 367) and “Realmslore: Vaasa” by Brian R. James (*Dungeon* 177).

DAMARA

Damara is wild, rugged, and rustic—a frontier as unrefined as it is remote. This is a northerly land of windswept plains, ice-crowned mountains, dark pine forests, and long, fearsome winters. Any who stray too far from the walled towns end up fighting for their lives against horrible monsters.

About twenty years ago, the last heir to the old Dragonsbane dynasty was assassinated and the ambitious Lord Yarin Frostmantle took the throne. King Yarin’s hand in the death of his predecessor is an open secret in Damara. Stronger and wealthier than anyone else, Yarin is absolutely ruthless in crushing those who dare question his legitimacy.

Helgabal: This once-prosperous trading city is the former seat of Damara’s throne. While Damara’s people groan under tyrannical rule, deadly perils loom on all fronts. To the west, the Warlock Knights of Vaasa grow stronger and threaten war. To the north, the receding Great Glacier has uncovered passages to the monster-infested Frostfell at the top of the world. To the east, the demon-haunted Dunwood grows darker and more deadly every day. All the while, feral tribesfolk from Narfell engage in ever bolder raids.

Damaran Gate: This fortress wall guards the end of Bloodstone Pass between Damara and the Warlock Knights of Vaasa. The Damaran Gate is 3 miles long and 30 feet high, studded with ballista-defended towers, and flanked by castles at either end. The castles and gate are regularly patrolled and filled with stockpiles of food and armaments in case of an invasion. A similar gate is situated on the Vaasan end of the Pass.

VAASA

Vaasa is a desolate realm of bogs, tundra, and windswept mountains in the northwest corner of the Bloodstone Lands. The dreaded Warlock Knights of Vaasa gather an army of monsters of all descriptions, preparing for the day when their terrible hordes will sweep away neighboring kingdoms, spreading their alien evil.

Commoners: Vaasan society is built upon the backbreaking labor of the peasant working class, known locally as serfs. Serfs are a hardy folk, eking out a modest living under harsh conditions and with limited

resources. As a feudal society, population centers in Vaasa are divided into fiefdoms presided over by Fellthanes. These landed lords in turn acquiesce to the authority of Vindicators and the Ironfell Council in Telos. Though the aristocracy is predominantly human, the majority of Vaasan citizens are shield dwarves and mountain orcs, toiling tirelessly in countless mines lining the slopes of the Galena Mountains.

Warlock Knights: Vaasan lords are, without exception, all members of the Warlock Knights. While some titles are hereditary, most earn their rank through hard work and exploiting the weaknesses of their rivals. As the nobility of Vaasa’s brutal feudal system, Warlock Knights have life-and-death authority over the common folk of the realm. As their name implies, all Warlock Knights dabble in the arcane arts, through their mastery of martial exploits remains their primary competency.

Bound Ones: In Vaasa, practitioners of arcane magic are permitted their studies only by swearing lifelong fealty to the Warlock Knights. Known as *Nishaadhri*, or Bound Ones, this order of warlocks is commonly garbed in gray robes, each wearing a dark veil over their eyes. *Nishaadhri* gain their formidable abilities through a special star pact with the primordial Telos. Luminaries function almost as priests do in other kingdoms, presiding over shrines and temples consecrated to Telos. Luminaries are also responsible for the crafting of shardsouls, monstrous automatons formed from Telos’s body and set to serve in Vaasa’s armies.

Telos: An entity called Telos, Master of the Iron Sky, is the focus of the Warlock Knights’ power. The most powerful members of the Warlock Knights advise this mighty ruler of Vaasa as a group called the Ironfell Council. Members of the council, as well as their servants, also compete with each other for status and power.

Some of the priests who call themselves Warlock Knights are Banites. They keep alive their connection with Bane’s center of worship in Mulmaster. Certainly, all Warlock Knights view the rest of the Moonsea region with greedy eyes. Damara, Impiltur, and the stronger Moonsea cities keep a worried eye on Vaasa, recognizing the Warlock Knights and their potent master as a threat potentially as significant as Thay, Netheril, or the Abolethic Sovereignty.

SITES OF INTEREST

Delhalls: This mine is rich in gems and copper. A recent quake collapsed several main shafts into the Delhalls and sealed the entrance. The local lord quickly dispatched dwarf slaves to reopen the mine, but the new shafts revealed spaces not previously known to exist. Exotic crystal rock formations and strange, haunting melodies resound in the depths, luring miners ever deeper.

The Great Glacier: Though considerably diminished in size from the time when cartographers dubbed it the Great Glacier, the enormous ice flow remains impressive. Slowly, the glacier gives up its secrets as the Novularond Mountains surface from their icy prison. Ruins from some lost civilization stand on those peaks. White dragons and other creatures of cold roam the glacial waste.

Castle Perilous: Long ago, the famed Castle Perilous was a seat of power. The self-styled Witch-King Zhengyi housed a huge army in and around the castle, repeatedly using it to attack the kingdom of Damara. The lich was finally destroyed and his army defeated, and his castle fell into ruin. Two years ago, a great earthquake rattled northern Vaasa and Damara. The ruined castle sloughed off crumbling stone and the marks of age, revealing a sleek and dark edifice beneath. Black runes shimmer with darkness on this castle's walls, absorbing the wan northern light but providing no clues to the castle's sudden rejuvenation.

AURIL

Chaotic Evil Goddess (Frostmaiden, Storm-bringer, Icedawn, Lady Frostkiss)

Religion DC 15: Auril (awe-ril) is a vain and fickle creature whose cold heart remains untouched by any hint of true love, noble feeling, or honor. She is a somewhat aloof deity, and she embodies freedom and impulse. She toys with those who offend her by trapping them in snow storms and then driving them insane by tantalizing them with visions of warmth and the comforts of home before she freezes them to death. Her eternal beauty is cold and deadly—the flower of womanhood preserved forever in a slab of arctic ice, but with sensibilities to match the ice.

Auril is one of the so-called Three Furies, along with Malar and Umberlee. She owes allegiance to Silvanus. Her portfolio includes cold, winter, wind, and storms. She appears as a haughty winged faerie of terrible, cold beauty, with bone-white skin and angular features. Her mane of flowing black hair is adorned with an ornate crown of platinum and diamonds.



IYRACLEA, THE ICE QUEEN

History or Religion DC 25: The human cleric Iyraclea was one of Auril's Chosen, invested with a portion of the Frostmaiden's divinity. At the height of her power, Iyraclea lived in a castle of sculpted ice somewhere in the northern reaches of the Great Glacier. She was killed during the Year of Rogue Dragons (1373 DR). Without Iyraclea's attention and ministrations, the Great Glacier has been slowly melting for over a century. Upon her death, Iyraclea was elevated to the status of exarch, and now serves the Frostmaiden in her Astral dominion.

ZHENGYI, THE WITCH KING

History DC 25: Despite the passage of more than a century since his demise, the name Zhengyi still invokes fear in the hearts of men. In the Year of the Bright Blade (1347 DR), the Witch-King gathered to Castle Perilous a mighty army, the ferocity of which has never been matched. With this monstrous host, the powerful lich quickly tamed the Vaasan tundra and moved to capture Damara as well. Only through the valiant efforts of Gareth Dragonsbane and his stalwart companions was Zhengyi ultimately defeated and his horde scattered.

HANDOUT 1: POWERS WORKSHEET

In this adventure, the DM needs information about your character's at-will powers. Please fill out the following information for your "best" or "favorite" at-will power, whether melee or ranged. (You don't need to provide information about basic attacks, unless you have an at-will power that may be used as a basic attack.) Include all static bonuses (such as ability score, item, feat, and enhancement bonuses). List all effects (such as push 1) that only occur on a Hit (but not things that only occur on a Miss, or "Effects" that happen regardless of whether you hit or miss).

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| Power Name: Range/Targets: Attack (+X vs. Defense): Hit (XdY+Z damage, and...): | Power Name: Range/Targets: Attack (+X vs. Defense): Hit (XdY+Z damage, and...): |
| Power Name: Range/Targets: Attack (+X vs. Defense): Hit (XdY+Z damage, and...): | Power Name: Range/Targets: Attack (+X vs. Defense): Hit (XdY+Z damage, and...): |
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| Power Name: Range/Targets: Attack (+X vs. Defense): Hit (XdY+Z damage, and...): | Power Name: Range/Targets: Attack (+X vs. Defense): Hit (XdY+Z damage, and...): |

HANDOUT 2: GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Please answer two or three of the following questions from your character's perspective (keeping in mind the sensibilities of the other players at the table). Do NOT put your character's name or your name on your answers, but DO write in complete sentences (for example, write "I hope no one ever finds out about X" instead of just writing "X").

- I hope no one ever finds about ...
- It was a terrible day when ...
- One of my biggest regrets is ...
- I became an adventurer because ...
- One of my proudest moments was ...
- Someday I hope to ...

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HANDOUT 3: MEMORIES AND SECRETS

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|---|---|
| <p><i>My friends call me Lysara. But you are not my friend. The Frostmaiden's companionship is all that I require.</i></p> | <p><i>Yes, I'm a drow. What of it? You think you're the first person who ever stared at me like that? You were expecting maybe a worshipper of Mielikki?</i></p> |
| <p><i>People keep telling me that Cyric is insane. But he makes perfect sense when he whispers to me. I think it's everyone else who's crazy.</i></p> | <p><i>The dragonborn said his name was Bharash. He had an arrogant sneer, like I should have heard of him. I hope he actually knows how to use that glaive.</i></p> |
| <p><i>That Kathra seems a little off, if you ask me. She keeps staring at the sky and muttering to herself. And she never lets that nasty-looking dagger out of her sight.</i></p> | <p><i>Quarfein seems like a quiet one. But I imagine he's just busy looking for an opportunity to betray the rest of us to the Spider Queen. If he ever turns that longbow in my direction, I've got to strike first.</i></p> |
| <p><i>They cast me out, claimed it was unnatural for a dwarf to worship Shar. But the beauty of the endless night, filled with stars, far surpasses the dark caves of my homeland.</i></p> | <p><i>Kallista seems friendly enough, but I've got my eye on her. Those tieflings will just as soon shoot you in the back as look at you. Besides, only a fool would trust a follower of the Prince of Lies. And I'm no fool.</i></p> |
| <p><i>I, Bharash, shall bring all glory to Bane... and to myself, of course. This alliance WILL serve the Dark Lord's interest, even if the Warlock Knights think they're getting the better end of the bargain.</i></p> | <p><i>The pale-skinned human swings that warhammer quite well. I wonder if she's ever met a frost giant? She sure does have an icy demeanor. Get it? Icy? Ha!</i></p> |
| <p><i>My secret is my faith. Only I know the true meaning of the song. The rest of them are mindless fools, but I will guide them. All that matters is to recover the precious relic, as Lady Frostkiss commands.</i></p> | <p><i>This ritual is a powerful secret. Without me, the rest of you would be burned to ashes by the magical wards. And it would serve you right! But the star-signs say that this is where I am supposed to be.</i></p> |
| <p><i>What the rest of these idiots don't realize is that there IS a map of the tunnels. I'm the only one who has seen it. So they'd better not anger me. Without my secret, they'll wander around down there forever.</i></p> | <p><i>The others don't respect my leadership. That's fine. When the time comes, they'll be eager to listen to me, because nobody else knows how to open the door to the treasure vault. Until then, it's my secret.</i></p> |
| <p><i>A treasure vault! Now that's my kind of job. But what the rest of you don't realize is that I did a little secret studying. There are some seriously nasty traps down there, and only I know how to disable them.</i></p> | |

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

LIVING FORGOTTEN REALMS

(character name)

HAS RECEIVED STORY AWARDS FROM:
(cross out those not received)

SPEC2-2 PI TYRANNY'S BLEAK DEPTHS

SPEC32 Ire of Iyraela

You destroyed something that was very precious to the Ice Queen, Iyraela, once Chosen and now Exarch of Auril. Sometimes you think you can feel her freezing breath on the back of your neck.

For as long as you possess this story award, you gain vulnerable 3 cold. If you have cold resistance, that resistance is reduced by 3. If you do not have cold resistance, every time you take cold damage, you take 3 additional cold damage.

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This Story Award is the beginning of a Major Quest that continues in *SPEC2-2 Tyranny's Bitter Frost* and concludes in *SPEC2-3 Tyranny's Perilous Bastion*.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

LIVING FORGOTTEN REALMS

(character name)

HAS RECEIVED STORY AWARDS FROM:
(cross out those not received)

SPEC2-2 PI TYRANNY'S BLEAK DEPTHS

SPEC32 Ire of Iyraela

You destroyed something that was very precious to the Ice Queen, Iyraela, once Chosen and now Exarch of Auril. Sometimes you think you can feel her freezing breath on the back of your neck.

For as long as you possess this story award, you gain vulnerable 3 cold. If you have cold resistance, that resistance is reduced by 3. If you do not have cold resistance, every time you take cold damage, you take 3 additional cold damage.

This story award expires when you reach 21st level, if it has not already been removed by another award.

SPEC33 Personality Splinter

Your mind was filled with a chaotic mixture of memories belonging to different creatures. The actual memories have long since faded, but you are changed ever so slightly by the experience.

You have gained a new, minor quirk or other personality trait. This can be so subtle that almost no one will ever realize anything has changed, or it can be more obvious. If you need inspiration, there are some sample mannerisms and quirks on page 186 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, but you are free to interpret this story award in any way you choose.

SPEC34 On the Trail of Tyranny

You have learned of an alliance forming between Banite Warlock Knights of Vaasa and the Council of Blades in the oppressive city of Mulmaster. The initial skirmish is over, but even greater dangers lie ahead before you can claim victory in the undeclared war against this evil tandem.

This Story Award is the beginning of a Major Quest that continues in *SPEC2-2 Tyranny's Bitter Frost* and concludes in *SPEC2-3 Tyranny's Perilous Bastion*.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

LIVING FORGOTTEN REALMS

(character name)

HAS RECEIVED STORY AWARDS FROM:
(cross out those not received)

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Event Name: _____ Event Code: _____
(This number was given to the organizer when the event was scheduled)

Adventure Title: _____ Session Number: _____
(For administrative use only)

Date of Play: / /
Month Day Year

Start Time: :
Hour Minute

Give hour in military time standard (p.m. hours = hour +12). Don't record the exact minute the adventure played. Instead list the closest 30-minute interval the game was scheduled to start at (30 or 00).

A legal table has no less than four players, and no more than six players.

| Player Name | RPGA/DCI Number |
|-------------|--|
| 1 | <input type="text"/> |
| 2 | <input type="text"/> |
| 3 | <input type="text"/> |
| 4 | <input type="text"/> |
| 5 | <input type="text"/> |
| 6 | <input type="text"/> |

DUNGEON MASTER

DM Name: _____

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