



DIVINING EVIL

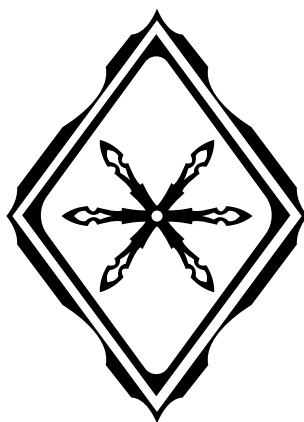
A Plague of Ancients Adventure

A gruesome murder sends you into the frozen wastes in search of answers. Will you find what you seek, or will your journey simply create more questions?

Part Three of the *Plague of Ancients* Series of Adventures.

A Four-Hour Adventure for 1st- and 2nd-Level Characters

Optimized for APL 3.



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

The dream didn't leave; people just don't know a nightmare when they're right in the middle of one.

—Marlon James, *A Brief History of Seven Killings*

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st- to 4th-level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range can't participate in this adventure.

This adventure occurs in Icewind Dale—specifically the area in and surrounding Wyrmdoom Crag.

BACKGROUND

ICEWIND DALE, the frigid expanse north of the **SPINE OF THE WORLD**, is deep in the grip of the **EVERLASTING RIME**—a name bestowed upon the wrath of **AURIL THE FROSTMAIDEN**. Denied the sun's warmth, the people of **TEN-TOWNS**, the **GOLIATH CLANS**, and the **REGHED NOMADS** in the surrounding wilds, huddle near their fires to drive away the cold, hoping they'll be able to endure the chill until the sun rises once more.

Unbeknownst to them however, the cold is the least of their concerns. Among the **THUUNLAKALAGA** clan—the goliaths of **WYRMDOOM CRAG**—the druid **FERAL-TONGUE** has gone missing, and in his absence, beasts infused with **CHARDALYN** are driving away prey and fomenting madness in the minds of the people they encounter.

All is not yet lost; **OLD GOAT**, the leader of the Thuunlakalaga clan anticipates a sign. Salvation will be heralded by a **FALLING STAR** on the distant horizon, an ember of hope to melt away the icy grip of doubt in her heart.

OVERVIEW

The adventure's story is spread over **four parts** and takes approximately **4 hours** to play:

Call to Action. Just outside Wyrmdoom Crag, Frostclaw brutally murders Rikuur Hideminder in his hut while looking for an item in his possession. Old Goat asks the party to investigate.

Part 1: Red Snow. As the clan are forced to deal with an unusual predator, the characters are left to investigate. Perhaps Rikuur's students may be able to ascribe a motive? This is **Story Objective A**.

Part 2: Seeking the Lair. The characters learn Rikuur had an object made of chardalyn, which leads the characters to something—hopefully, the murderer. This is **Story Objective B**.

Part 3: Awakened Darkness. The characters find Frostclaw's lair. Judging by the traps, Frostclaw knew they were coming and left recently. As the party searches her den, they learn more about Feral-Tongue's schemes. This is **Story Objective C**.

Part 4: Vile Guardians. Deep in Frostclaw's lair, the characters find more chardalyn before they're set upon by creatures under Feral-Tongue's corrupting influence and must race back to Wyrmdoom Crag. This is **Story Objective D**.



STORY AWARDS

At certain points in the adventure, you'll see this glyph along with an entry describing how the specified story award is earned or impacted by the story. Ignore the entry if it refers to a story award none of the characters have. If it refers to a story award the characters just earned, it provides information for you and the players.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

This adventure assumes the characters played DDAL10-01 *The Frozen North* and DDAL10-02 *Gnashing Teeth*. These characters are recovering from their previous ordeals when Rikuur's body is discovered. Consider the following hooks if the characters are new to the region:

The Hunt(ed). These characters heard rumors of a new horror in the dark, northern wilds and sought out the guidance of local goliaths, who may be able to shed light on the mystery.

Secret Past. Characters with the Sage background have unearthed tales of a long-lost civilization in the northern wastes and have struck out to determine whether their theories are true.

Bad Flight. Characters with the Charlatan or Criminal background lost a big wager and took flight rather than face their debtors. What better place to lay low than Icewind Dale?

Once Upon a Time. Entertainers and Folk Heroes are always on the lookout for a good tale or adventure. This one's going to knock socks off—assuming frostbite doesn't take the foot first.

NARRATING FROSTCLAW, THE HUNTER

Though they only directly encounter her twice, the characters are constantly hunted by the awakened owlbear as the story arc develops. To ensure you instill the appropriate sense of paranoia and dread this villain deserves, leave signs of her passage for the characters to encounter as they adventure beyond the safety of Wyrmdoom Crag. Examples include:

- A large, white feather stained with blood.
- The mutilated carcass of a beast or a missing goliath hunter.
- Large paw prints that're quickly erased by the wind and snow.
- A dead tree with huge claw marks gouged into the trunk.
- Growls and roars; their source obscured by blowing snow.
- A circular pattern of deliberately arranged body parts.
- A character's name whispered on the wind.

WORST WAKE-UP CALL EVER

Estimated Duration: 10 minutes

CONTENT WARNING

The following scenes deal with death and loss; they're meant to be powerful. **A verbal table warning before you begin part 1 is strongly recommended.** Read your table as you play and adjust your performance to suit your group's comfort level. **Avoid triggering your players.** If you're using safety tools (see appendix D) and a player indicates they're growing uncomfortable, move along—no questions asked. If this gives you additional time to work with, add another combat encounter during **part 2** (I suggest **C4. Here Kitty, Kitty**).

WYRMDOOM CRAG

Themes: Confusion, shock, surprise.

It's the dead of night when the characters, and the goliaths of Wyrmdoom Crag are awakened by screaming outside. The characters investigate and learn that whatever killed Rikuur Hideminder was looking for something in his hut. Old Goat urges them speak to Souljoined, Rikuur's three students—each provides insight into the last few days of Rikuur's life.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS

If need be, allow each player a few minutes to introduce their character, describe their appearance and mannerisms, and the reason they came to the Dale. Encourage the players to develop bonds by asking them to describe one positive interaction or event that occurred between their character and one other at the table. Character introductions provide a solid foundation for roleplaying opportunities and give you, the DM, hints as to which game elements will be most attractive to your players.

Award **inspiration** once everyone's had a turn.

AREA INFORMATION

Wyrmdoom Crag has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. Most chambers in Wyrmdoom Crag are carved natural stone, worn smooth in places by years of use. Ceilings are between 10 and 15 feet high. The feast hall is 80 feet long, with a rectangular firepit in the middle of the cavern.

Temperature. Inside the Crag, it's warm with the occasional frigid draft. Outside, the blizzard has been raging for four days and nights and shows no sign of relenting.

Visibility. The firepit and oil lamps keep the hall brightly lit and cast deep, moving shadows. Outside, it's dark, and driving snow heavily obscures everything beyond 30 feet.

Sounds and Smells. Crackling fires and blowing wind, with the soft, rhythmic breathing of sleeping goliaths—before the scream. Packed bodies, sweat, and smoke.

MURDER IN THE NIGHT

The characters' sleep is interrupted by Frostclaw's brutal murder of Rikuur. She used her Icy Breath to freeze his head, muffling his cries, then tortured him while searching his hut. Unable to find what she was looking for, she retreated into the dark, blizzardy night undetected—snow immediately covering her tracks.

"EEEEEEEEAAAAARRRGGGGARGLE—" A primal scream of torment and anguish slices through the white noise of the howling northern winds.

INSIDE VOICES!

If you want to shock the players into the mood, yell this first line. Be aware that you may be playing in an apartment, someone's basement, or around other tables running adventures. You don't want to create issues. Be a courteous DM and check around before the adventure.

The village is ripped from its already uneasy slumber. It's only been two days since the pair of guards were killed at the end of DDAL10-02 *Gnashing Teeth*.

LAST TIME ON . . .

Having sheltered the group from the deadly wilds of Icewind Dale in DDAL10-02 *Gnashing Teeth*, the Thuunlakalaga clan asked them to look into the strange things happening around their home. The party met Rikuur Hideminder and his goats, saved Kaskur Spearsong from freezing to death, and discovered that Feral-Tongue (formerly Kugan Windwhisper) had been corrupted by something and likely driven insane.

ONE-SHOT?

If the party didn't participate in the previous adventure, Kaskur can share the above information, having investigated Kugan's dwelling by himself.

CHARACTER INFORMATION

Ogolai Orcsplitter ("Old Goat") and **Kaskur Spearsong** stand outside **Rikuur Hideminder's** hut, lines of worry (and in Kaskur's case, anger) clearly visible on their faces. Countless other **goliaths** surround the hut—some crying, some cursing and spitting in anger, others in silent shock.

OGOLAI (OH GO LIE) ORCSPLITTER “OLD GOAT” THUUNLAKALAGA

Lawful neutral goliath warrior

The chieftain of the Thuunlakalaga goliaths is an elderly goliath with a heavily scarred face. She dresses plainly in goat hide clothing and carries an immense greataxe fashioned from white dragon bone. She has a crippling fear of griffons stemming from a childhood trauma that's created tensions between her clan and the Akannathi goliaths of Skytower Shelter (see *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*).

What They Want. Old Goat's first priority is the safety and prosperity of her clan—especially in these unusual and trying times. She's quick to stymie dissent, particularly from Kaskur Spearsong. She fears his disagreements will turn violent but does everything within her power to delay this apparent inevitability for as long as possible.

Done It, Seen It; but the End Is Nigh. Old Goat has been around a long time and seen many things. This experience lends her a tremendous amount of wisdom to draw on when making decisions. However, she's getting old and refuses to surrender the yoke of leadership until a worthy (equally wise) replacement is found. If it weren't for his sharp tongue, Old Goat would've offered Kaskur the mantle of leadership years ago. However, she fears what the clan would become under his leadership.

KASKUR (KASS KERR) SPEARSONG THUUNLAKALAGA

Neutral goliath warrior

This headstrong and impetuous goliath leads the clan's hunters. He's grown angry and frustrated at the lack of game in the area, and he resents Old Goat's “poor leadership” for a lack of solutions. He wields a longbow taller than most humans and claims he once felled an elk from a half mile away. He wears little in the way of clothing, even in the driving wind—a feat that's earned him the respect of his fellow hunters.

What They Want. Kaskur has grown tired of Old Goat's personal fears preventing an alliance with the goliaths of Skytower Shelter. He views her as weak and her ideas as outdated, especially when Kugan Windwhisper (Feral-Tongue)—who Kaskur views as even weaker than Old Goat—is involved. He wants to usurp control of the clan for himself.

Words Are Wasted Wind. Kaskur doesn't have a negotiator's tongue; he's terse and speaks his mind without hesitation. Despite this, he's experienced and knows the area better than any of his peers.

Old Goat and Kaskur are sharing an uncharacteristic moment of civility as they discuss what's happened and what should be done about it. One thing is clear: the perpetrator of this horrific act must be brought to justice. Old Goat is wracked with concern and the last few days have added years to her. Rikuur was well-respected; a shepherd and a valued teacher—something even Kaskur wouldn't dispute.

As the characters arrive, they're initially blocked from getting close by a pair of guards, however Old Goat waves them in upon noticing them.

CALL ME BY YOUR NAME

If a player had a particularly good roleplay with Old Goat in a previous story, have Old Goat refer to their character by name, rather than addressing the group.

OLD GOAT'S REQUEST

Old Goat acknowledges her appreciation for the party's previous assistance. **Old Goat wants the party to investigate the murder.**

Inevitably, Old Goat and Kaskur disagree on who should investigate; Old Goat worries that Kaskur is too hot-tempered and headstrong to entrust with it, while Kaskur feels that outsiders have no business being involved further. Knowing Old Goat won't concede, he throws his hands up in frustration and pushes his way through the crowd—leaving bloody footprints as he goes.

Old Goat has already sent out hunters to find what they can. She therefore suggests the party focus on investigating the hut first and then finding Rikuur's students, **Souljoined**, in the crag. **Souljoined have already been informed of Rikuur's death.**

RED SNOW

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

THE GAME IS AFOOT

Themes: Shock, suspicion, sorrow.

Old Goat urges the characters to speak to the clan, in particular the trio called Souljoined; they may be able to provide insight into the last few days of Rikuur's life.

The clan is terrified. Word travels fast in a small village, especially when a brutal murder occurs in the middle of the night. The entire place is awash with tense and high-stress emotions. The clan isn't that big. So many murders in such a short time would take a toll on any community.

STORY OBJECTIVE A

Questioning Rikuur's students is **Story Objective A**.

This part of the adventure is a dark murder mystery where the party realizes the attacker came from outside the clan and was looking for an item in Rikuur's possession.

DM TIPS

This section is presented in such a way that if letting your players bounce around isn't your strong suit, guiding them through the sections as listed will hopefully have the same result. If they go off script or you need a refresher on the big picture, **appendix C** has a one-page summary of part 1 in note form. This is meant to facilitate player randomness and help the DM stay focused, not replace what's listed in part 1.

Similarly, some players aren't good at puzzles. As such, the skill checks provided throughout can be used if assistance is needed—though you still need to let them fail forward.

Don't let bad rolls punish the players! Any information the characters miss in Rikuur's hut can be conveyed by the NPCs throughout the following interactions.

By the end of this part, the party should have Thugeo Goatchaser's lockbox, and Old Goat should be sending them after the murderer.

A. RIKUUR'S HUT

Rikuur's hut is a bloody mess. **Remember the content warning** before getting too invested in the horror.

AREA INFORMATION

Rikuur's hut is located outside Wyrmdoom Crag and the protection provided by its guards. The hut has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. Woven bark and furs cover most the hut's floor.

Light. Old Goat stoked the fire back to life; the interior is brightly lit.

Sounds and Smells. Smoke and burning wood from the firepit mixed with the metallic odor of blood.

Hut. Rikuur and Souljoined would winter here together until Souljoined moved into Wyrmdoom Crag to have their own spaces. With just Rikuur's belongings, it looks a little empty.

Missing Box. There was a box on top of the hearth which contained a chardalyn arrowhead—the same black stone featured in the most recent drawing of Rikuur and Souljoined. Rikuur gifted Thugeo Goatchaser the box to protect it. Rikuur's paranoia was growing deeper and he thought Grakal Dawnbearer would steal the black stone or Nararhak Tree-Eye would give it to Old Goat. Thugeo has the stone now and is starting to be affected by it too. (See **B3. Thugeo Goatchaser: Arena Anguish**).

A1. THE BODY

Rikuur's entrails are arranged to form the Giant runes for "Corrupted Ice" and "Where?" in the same style as the guards' entrails were two nights earlier. His eyes are wide and filled with terror and his face is a rictus of pain and anguish. His left leg and right arm are missing. His face is damp and severely frostbitten, and his head lies in a puddle.

- A successful DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check deduces that he was attacked in his sleep and dragged from his bed.
- A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check confirms Rikuur was alive during his dismemberment. His leg was taken first, then his arm. Further examination and a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation or Nature) check suggests it was the work of a creature rather than a weapon.
- A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana or Nature) check indicates magic wasn't used, but his face was encased in ice—muffling his screams. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the character discovers a cone-like area, still cold to the touch, at the head of the bed.

A2. THE ROOM

Rikuur's murderer was definitely looking for something. They went through everything in the hut, it's been tossed.

Among the mess is a large, white feather like the one found by the two guards killed the other night. This one is soaked in Rikuur's blood.

Under some tossed furs, the party find a bundle of drawings. Many are done by children but get progressively more beautiful as the artist improved over time. The art depicts Rikuur with the trio, Souljoined, as kids, as adolescents, and finally as adults. In the most recent piece, Rikuur is wearing a new pendant with a black stone.

There's also something missing from the mantelpiece, a small box of some kind.

- A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check gleans that the murderer was toying with Rikuur as they searched the room. Like a pseudodragon with a field mouse.
- A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) identifies the feather as an **owlbear** feather. If the check fails by 7 or more, the character misidentifies it as a **griffon** feather.

KASKUR SPEARSONG

Kaskur is riddled with guilt. He feels responsible because he cares for his clan, not because he was involved in Rikuur's murder. If the characters talk to Kaskur, he grudgingly accommodates them. He offers small bits of information, as he likely did in DDAL10-02, and also mentions the fight, below. Kaskur doesn't think the characters murdered Rikuur, though he's suspicious of them as they're outsiders.

Kaskur heard Grakal and Rikuur screaming at one another earlier that day—it was a huge fight. He'd never seen, or heard of, such a thing from either of them.

If the characters have an unpleasant history with Kaskur, they may not trust him and make accusations against him. If they do, he grows outraged and ends the conversation—promising that Old Goat will hear about this affront.

OLD GOAT

Old Goat suggests talking to Souljoined—Rikuur's three students. If the feather in the hut was misidentified, it leads Old Goat to suspect the Akannathi goliaths of Skytower Shelter. She doesn't tolerate accusations against Kaskur—while they don't always see eye to eye, his loyalty to the clan is beyond doubt. She's quick to tersely dismiss suggestions that Kaskur is the guilty party.

B. SOULJOINED

While they have their own separate responsibilities, Rikuur's three students function as a unit; Rikuur once joked that the three were joined at the soul, resulting in a single moniker the clan lovingly uses when speaking about the trio: Souljoined.

Grakal Dawnbearer is the heart of the group, while **Nararhak Tree-Eye** and **Thugeo Goatchaser** are the brains and brawn, respectively.

B1. GRAKAL DAWNBEARER: LOST IN COLOR

Since learning of Rikuur's death, Grakal has secluded themselves in their living quarters. When the characters arrive, **Grakal** is wracked with grief, hugging a large, brightly colored wool blanket. They look up at the party with tear-filled eyes.

GRAKAL (GRAH-KUHL) DAWNBEARER THUUNLAKALAGA

Lawful good goliath bard

So named due to the colors of their hides and clothes, worn to look like a sunrise, with a personality to match. Grakal is softly spoken despite their extremely loud appearance. However, Grakal is easily the funniest and most joyous of Souljoined. Their ability to respond with snide remarks is unparalleled, but it's generally only heard by the other two resulting in "random" fits of laughter.

Grakal's prize possession is a large blanket with different tales of the goliaths' culture woven into a beautiful pictography. Throughout, trinkets and baubles from other cultures are woven in. Grakal often tries to incorporate their love of goliath cultures, other cultures, and color into their outward appearance. Some see it as ostentatious; Grakal knows it allows others to lower their guard around them so they can teach with less resistance.

What They Want. To never lose the family unit they're in.

Grakal would give their life for the other two Souljoined and can't imagine a world without them.

Not Enough Flair. Grakal loves going to Good Mead and interacting with Ten-Towns. Grakal has a weak spot for food and flashy items from other cultures.

Grakal was Rikuur's biological child. While they didn't have a mother growing up, Grakal never wanted for love—some families are simply different. The last conversation the two had was a large fight over a matter so trivial Grakal has forgotten what it actually was. Rikuur had a wholly uncharacteristic bout of rage and blew up at Grakal.

The bond between Souljoined is beyond that of a family, and Grakal's anguish is made all the worse knowing the others are in pain as well.

Grakal saw Rikuur wearing the stone in the pictures from the hut. They don't know what it was. Rikuur started wearing it about a tenday ago and stopped wearing it two days ago. The other two might know more; Nararhak is the smart one and is incredibly passionate about nature and Thugeo is the artist. Grakal wagers that the characters can probably find Nararhak in the Crawl, and Thugeo at the goat-ball arena.

B2. NARARHAK TREE-EYE: FOREST THROUGH THE TREES

Nararhak is in the Crawl—an area where outsiders aren't generally permitted (though the characters likely don't know this). Provided the characters wait patiently outside the chamber, **Nararhak** emerges after an hour. Characters who enter are politely informed they aren't allowed within and asked to wait outside.

**NARARHAK (NA-RUHR-UCK) TREE-EYE
THUUNLAKALAGA**

Lawful neutral goliath druid

Nararhak was orphaned at birth amidst a raid from another clan. Though spared, the violent circumstances of their birth damaged Nararhak's left leg, leaving them slow and clumsy when without a crutch. Rikuur Hideminder took the child in and raised them in the ways of storytelling and nature.

When not with Souljoined, Nararhak tends to be very apprehensive and cautious in their interactions having suffered a great deal of bullying in the past. They're wary of outright strangers.

The name "Tree-Eye" comes from Nararhak's heterochromatic eyes, their right is a brown, barky color and the left is the color of deep-green leaves. Nararhak is always chewing on something. If they start speaking while overly excited, small bits of spittle tend to spray from their mouth.

What They Want. To know more. Nararhak is always ready to hear another tale or read another story or learn another language. When sharing the stories and history of the clan, few hold up to Nararhak's narrations.

Brains of the Operation. Few in the clan know more about the different flora, fauna, and sacred places than Nararhak does. Even Old Goat seeks advice from Nararhak from time to time.

Nararhak is holding their pain in for now, they'll grieve when they're ready. Rikuur showed them what life was like when one isn't treated as a liability, and instead as an equal.

If asked about the feather from Rikuur's hut, Nararhak identifies it as an owlbear's, though from an unusually large one. Though they've never seen the drawings before, they identify them as Thugeo's work, affirming the artistic skill.

Speaking of Thugeo, Nararhak mentions a noticeable change in Thugeo's behavior over the last few days—they seem more withdrawn, paranoid, and prone to rage. Unlike everything Thugeo has been since he defeated those demons as a youth.

**B3. THUGEO GOATCHASER:
ARENA ANGUISH**

Thugeo is handling his grief his own way—by playing goat-ball, a wildly popular game among the goliaths.

GOAT-BALL

Goat-ball is a team sport similar to dodgeball. It uses a furry, misshapen ball made of stuffed goat hide and also requires a dozen or more elevated platforms (usually pillars or tree stumps) arranged in a random pattern. Two teams of four players clamber onto the platforms, pass the ball back and forth, and try to knock their opponents off their platforms. A team wins if all its opponents are knocked out of the game.

Rules. To determine the outcome of a goat-ball game, each player makes a Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. Add up the totals for each team. The team with the highest total wins. In the event of a tie, the game goes into overtime and all the players reroll.

Area Information. Fifteen crude stone pillars stand on this raised arena and bleachers have been carved into the back wall. The arena is empty except for a lone goliath (**Thugeo**). His possessions lay in a heap at one end of the chamber.

Among his possessions is a fur-lined box covered in stiacciato carvings, so delicate that the images almost appear to move in the ambient light. The box tells the story of Rikuur bringing Souljoined into his family. It holds an arrowhead.

Seemingly harmless, the arrowhead is made of chardalyn from Feral-Tongue's staff. While its hold on those who possess it is weak and slow to manifest, it's still evident. Thugeo is reluctant to surrender it to the characters—even after possessing it for only a day. A successful DC 11 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals this reluctance. Rikuur entrusted Thugeo with the chardalyn arrowhead and it's the cause of their bouts of rage—though neither knew it.

Creature Information. Thugeo is alone in the goat-ball arena running across the different stone posts and being incredibly aggressive with the ball.

THUGEO (THOO-JEE-OH) GOATCHASER THUUNLAKALAGA

Chaotic good goliath warrior

A goat got loose during one of Rikuur Hideminder's training sessions and Thugeo created quite a commotion chasing it through the village. He eventually caught the goat eating away merrily in one of the storage huts, earning Thugeo the name Goatchaser, and the goat, Honey.

Rikuur Hideminder entrusted Thugeo with the chardalyn arrowhead and it's causing his bouts of rage—though he doesn't know it. Teachings, training, and being part of Souljoined soothed his rage and brought calm. Within a day's chardalyn influence, Thugeo has started to show brief bouts of that old rage, followed by guilt and self-loathing.

What They Want. The chardalyn arrowhead is the first secret Thugeo has ever kept from Souljoined and it's only at Rikuur's insistence. Thugeo doesn't want to let it go.

What a Specimen! Thugeo is one of the clan's best goat-ball athletes. He's physically impressive and incredibly friendly. He's the last of Souljoined to get the joke and sometimes doesn't at all. The other two never make him feel bad for that and he often has no idea when he "doesn't get it."

As they arrive, the characters see Thugeo loose a rage-filled yell at Grakal (or Nararhak if the party met with them first), tuck a square object into their jerkin laying at the side of the court, then hop onto the pillars and start running mock plays on the goat-ball field.

In the days prior to his murder, Rikuur frequently related to Thugeo that he was going to leave the clan behind; that "it" compelled him to do so. Thugeo wasn't entirely sure what "it" was. Now, Thugeo is fighting the chardalyn's urge to lose control of his rage and to take off into the wilderness.

Thugeo has Rikuur's missing box (from the mantelpiece) and issues a curt warning to characters who poke around his possessions. If asked for the box, he clearly struggles to part with it—something a successful DC 11 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals; characters who are kind to him, or (if time permits) win a quick bout of goat-ball against him, more easily convince him to do so. If the characters don't think to ask about the box or seem reluctant to, Grakal (or Nararhak) does so. In either case, Thugeo relinquishes the box and the arrowhead within; the character who takes possession of it gains the **Chardalyn Arrowhead** story award.

NOT AN HEIRLOOM

This chardalyn arrowhead isn't an heirloom, it's a corrupted piece of crystal. Thugeo isn't reluctant to give it up because of its connection to Rikuur, but rather because the stone is twisting him.



STORY AWARD: CHARDALYN ARROWHEAD

The character who retrieves the chardalyn arrowhead earns this story award. A character with this story award becomes rash in their decision making and more irritable—listed as

a flaw on their character sheet. They also find the hand-carved arrowhead's unusual property of lightly tugging toward the mountains to the southeast—almost like a lodestone pulls toward iron.

THE CHARDALYN ARROWHEAD

While its hold on those who possess it is weak and slow to manifest, it's still evident. The arrowhead is a small fragment of a larger piece of chardalyn in Frostclaw's lair—which it's drawn to, not unlike a lodestone is drawn to iron. As an action, a character can use it like a compass, directing them to the mountains southeast—guiding the characters toward Frostclaw's lair.

OLD GOAT STILL HAS IT

As the conversation with Thugeo ends, two goliaths arrive to inform the party that Old Goat wishes to speak with them. Along the way, the guards let slip that the blizzard has lifted, and the hunters found tracks heading into and out of an outcrop of rocks near the hut. The outbound tracks are fresher, which leads the hunters to believe the thing that left the tracks waited to either watch or to wait out the storm. Either way they definitely led toward the mountains to the southeast (the same direction the character with the arrowhead has felt it tugging toward) before the weather erased them.

As the party enters Old Goat's area of the crag, they cut short a heated argument about what to do next. Kaskur is still seething over these deaths and, feeling helpless, is lashing out at his leader. He thinks they should be out in the wilderness looking for whoever did this.

Old Goat disagrees, wanting to give the party the time it needs. If the party misidentified the feather, Kaskur might even suggest they prepare to attack the Akannathi goliaths of Skytower Shelter, feeling betrayed as well—especially considering the tracks initially lead in that general direction. This only further exacerbates the argument with Old Goat who, despite having no love lost for the Akannathi, has no interest in fighting them, or their griffons.

By now, the characters should be able to explain that the murderer was after the arrowhead in the box and that the arrowhead is drawing them toward the southeastern mountains.

Old Goat tells them to go, almost grateful the problem isn't internal. Kaskur is likely to stay on duty for the rest of the night and not let anyone past him.

UMM, WHAT IF?

If the party couldn't solve the mystery or convince Thugeo to give up the stone, Souljoined comes to Old Goat and tells her and the party what they think is happening:

- That the stone is cursed! Thugeo is acting similarly to how Rikuur did in the days leading to his death.
- Who or what killed Rikuur may have been looking for the vile thing: evil begets evil.
- That the culprits likely aren't the Akannathi goliaths, but indeed someone or something else.
- That the stone is drawing the holder toward the mountains southeast.

SEEKING THE LAIR

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

ICEWIND DALE WILDERNESS

Themes: Horror, mystery, being hunted.

Old Goat has tasked the party with following the chardalyn arrowhead in the hope they can bring the clan's tormentor to justice. This part pits the characters against the dangers of Icewind Dale and concludes when they discover the entrance to Frostclaw's lair.

STORY OBJECTIVE B

Navigating the frozen wilds and using the chardalyn arrowhead to locate Frostclaw's lair is **Story Objective B**.

AREA INFORMATION

Icewind Dale has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The wilds are wide and open. Examples include: cliffside roadways, mountain ridges, and open tundra.

Weather and Temperature. Well below freezing. Heavy snowfall and the windchill factor make it feel even colder.

Light and Visibility. At best, the auroras streaking across the sky or a rare sliver of sun breaking through the gloom offer dim light. Otherwise, it's completely dark.

LIGHTING IN ICEWIND DALE

Unless otherwise noted, daytime hours provide dim light outdoors, while nighttime hours are dark. The permanent dusk of Auril's curse makes the promise of sunlight a teasing possibility, but the sun never breaks through.

The Corrupted. Each creature in the following adventures has been corrupted in some small way by chardalyn. They're the start of Feral-Tongue's plans to build an army, as seen in **part 3**. Replace antlers, claws, and teeth with black, crystalline versions. These are purely cosmetic changes but bring them to the attention of the party.

The Arrowhead. When the chardalyn arrowhead gets close to the corrupted creatures—at the start of each of these encounters—it begins to pull in all directions. After the encounter, it starts to pull back to the cave in **part 3**. This disruption also helps mask Frostclaw's presence.

My Mountain, My Rules. Frostclaw tracks the players from Wyrmdoom Crag and beats them back to her lair to set traps; this is her domain. She remains out of sight and does things to affect the encounters if necessary.

Frostclaw's meddlings occur on initiative count 20 (losing ties). She's never encountered directly; she's here to create that bump-in-the-night, creature-under-the-bed effect.

DEADLY CREATURES, NOT GAME-ENDERS

Frostclaw is malevolent and some fates are worse than death. If all the characters are reduced to 0 hit points, Frostclaw drags them back to her lair to play with later. They wake up in **part 3**, sealed inside the **eating pit** (area D2) with the dwarf body. Each character gains one level of exhaustion and 1 hit point. They can also spend up to two Hit Dice to regain additional hit points.

C. ENCOUNTER ELEGANZA EXTRAVAGANZA

As the characters navigate the frozen wilds, they inevitably come across something; while it's a wide-open space, it should be made to felt alive—as if it wants to kill them.

Running this part of the adventure in an hour is likely to need only one encounter, feel free to use more if you'd like and if time permits. Alternatively, if there's enough time for a brief combat rather than a full encounter, random encounters are provided in a table at the end.

THE ENCOUNTERS

Use your judgment as a DM and pick an encounter that best fits your party and the mood, or let the dice decide for you. (I'm partial to **C3 Take My Breath Away** and **C5. Silver Tower**)

CI. SPECIAL DELIVERY!

A delivery of mead from Good Mead went missing a tenday ago. The characters find its remnants partially buried in the snow.

Area Information. An overturned brewery cart with "GooD MeaD MeaderY" stenciled on the side blocks this cliffside road. The cart is large enough for three Medium creatures to take cover in. Only one cask hasn't exploded from the cold: it's frozen solid.

Aurochs. One of the two aurochs that were pulling the cart is still harnessed to it: frozen in place with a large spike in its neck and a big bite taken out of it. Any character who made a Medicine check on Rikuur's body in **part 1** notes similarities in the bite marks. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check identifies the spike as a manticores.

Weather. The wind imposes disadvantage on ranged weapon attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing. Further, the wind and snow extinguish open flames, disperse fog, erase tracks in the snow, and make flying by nonmagical means nearly impossible. A creature flying in the wind must land at the end of its turn or fall. During combat, at the end of their turn, any creature concentrating on a spell in a blizzard must make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw or lose concentration.

Creatures. Two **manticores** live on the cliff face and have been growing concerned with the unusual weather. They captured and polished off one of the aurochs over the last tenday, then Frostclaw started consuming the other one—firmly convincing the manticores to stay away. The sight of fresh—not frozen—food is exciting! Even the high winds aren't enough to deter them, though it hinders their movement.

Frostclaw. If the characters notice the manticores and try to hide, Frostclaw might attract them with noise. If the characters hide in the cart for more than two rounds Frostclaw creates a rockslide—upsetting the cart and removing its cover.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **manticore**; and remove the **manticore's** Multiattack action.
- **Weak:** Remove one **manticore**.
- **Strong:** Add one **manticore**.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **manticore**; the **manticores** have 102 hit points.

Treasure. Scattered around the cart are handcrafted ceramic mugs and a *potion of healing*.

C2. THINNING THE HERD

The stone guides you through a pass, crossing ways with a small herd of **moose** who are unlikely to take kindly to the characters' presence.

Area Information. A small valley midst the mountains forms a low tundra.

Weather and Visibility. Still winds and heavy snow—one can almost hear the flakes hit the ground. It's difficult to see beyond 60 feet.

Terrain. The thick powdered snow is around 3-feet deep, counting as difficult terrain. Small creatures may need to use snowshoes or be carried.

Crevasse. Sixty feet east of the path, the snow conceals a deep crevasse. Characters who make a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check notice how the snow there settles unusually. If a character with a passive Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Survival) score of 13 or higher gets within 10 feet, they realize the snow hides a crevasse. A creature that steps on the snow must make a successful DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or fall 20 feet into the 120-foot-deep hollow, landing on a ledge.

Creatures. A territorial **bull moose** and four **moose** (a **giant elk** and **elks**, respectively) gather 60 feet away, stripping bark from the trees audacious enough to grow here. They stand almost as tall as a goliath, with long legs built for navigating powder snow and ignoring difficult terrain. These majestic creatures have a humped back, a goatlike chin beard, and large, disklike antlers with some points on the edges. They aren't to be trifled with—especially in a herd. However, food is scarce in Wyrmdoom Crag and the goliaths would be thankful for their meat.

Whether the party decides to hunt the moose or Frostclaw spooks them, the moose charge in the direction of the party, putting the characters between a crevasse and their antlers.

Frostclaw. If the party goes to investigate the snow or tries to sneak past the moose, Frostclaw spooks the herd, sending it thundering toward the characters.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **giant elk** and one **elk**.
- **Weak:** Replace one **giant elk** with one **elk**.
- **Strong:** Add one **giant elk**.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **giant elk**; creatures knocked prone by its Charge are also pushed 10 feet.

Treasure. On a ledge 20 feet down the crevasse, a frozen dwarf corpse wearing leathers emblazoned with the “GooD MeaD MeaderY” crest is partially buried by snow—their legs clearly broken. The dwarf has a pouch with a handful of coins and a clay flask full of light, sweet mead hanging from their belt.

C3. TAKE MY BREATH AWAY

Stone markers are used by goliath clans throughout Icewind Dale to mark different spots for various reasons. Some are warnings, others navigation markers; this one marks good winter hunting grounds.

Area Information. A respite from the snow and a rare break in the clouds lets the characters glimpse the auroras weaving across the sky. A path in the snow leads through a 40-foot-square area of low shrubs and a handful of boulders the size of a grown goliath, with a few sparse evergreen trees growing among them. Dancing in the air amidst the frozen greenery, the characters see a twinkling light. Dashed **atop** one of the boulders is a wagon with “GooD MeaD MeaderY” stenciled on the side is—its load of reusable bee skeps lay scattered on the ground.

Creatures. An **air elemental** is playing in the grove with its bee friends—the frozen bees are very dead, and the twinkling light is the auroras reflecting off an interesting piece of metal it found earlier. The elemental and the frozen bees from the skeps dance and flit around in the wind. It's having the time of its life. If the characters attack, or the elemental notices them passing by, it drops its boring old toys (creating a short-lived rain of bees) to play with these exciting new ones.

SKEP-TICAL

Skeps are medieval beehives, oblong wicker domes that look like Winnie-the-Pooh beehives. Most skeps must be destroyed to retrieve the honey. These ones appear to be an innovation that allows beekeepers to lift out different sections to retrieve the honey.

I BEE-LIEVE IN YOU

First impressions are likely to be of a swarm. Let the players stew it over—insects in arctic conditions? If an attack deals fire damage to the “swarm,” have the charred bees remain in the swarm just to add to the bizarre factor.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak:** Replace one **air elemental** with two **chardalyn mephits**.
- **Weak:** Replace one **air elemental** with one **air weird**.
- **Strong:** No changes.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **air weird**.

Treasure. A scroll case half-buried in the snow contains a *spell scroll of lesser restoration*.

C4. HERE KITTY, KITTY

The chardalyn arrowhead leads the party to an old ruin—and beyond.

Area Information. The structure's remaining walls lie at a 45-degree angle to the ground. They're quite old—a successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check suggests they're likely Netherese in origin—perhaps a place of worship based on the beautiful ornate craftsmanship. Inside, three stone sarcophagi rest against the far wall. A large snowdrift has formed through what used to be a window.

Creatures. Two **saber-toothed tigers** are playing in the ruins of an ancient Netherese building, using the head of an unfortunate traveler as a ball. The cats aren't likely to take an interest at first, as long as the party stays back. Once the party has examined the sarcophagi, the “ball” rolls to their feet. At which point, the cats are likely to become very interested in the party.

Frostclaw. While the characters explore, Frostclaw uses her Icy Breath to freeze the area around the entrance of the ruin. The area counts as difficult terrain, and creatures that enter the area must make a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone, ending their movement.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **saber-toothed tiger**.
- **Weak:** The **saber-toothed tigers** only have 37 hit points.
- **Strong:** Add one **saber-toothed tiger**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **saber-toothed tigers**.

Treasure. Two sarcophagi are empty, the third has a few slender, rectangular grave coins of silver and copper resting at the bottom—each about a half inch wide and two inches long.

C5. SILVER TOWER

This ruin was a wizard's tower before it became a silver dragon lair. Its previous occupant planned to guide the folk of Ten-Towns—until Frostclaw found the young silver dragon and destroyed it and their few remaining unhatched eggs.

Area Information. The snow swirls and clears for a moment to show a stone-set opening that looks melted into the surrounding mountainside. Beyond the jagged, 10-foot-wide entrance, the first chamber is quite large, measuring 60 feet high, 60 feet wide, and 80 feet deep. The chamber's rear walls are broken, and five tunnels exit in different directions.

Immediately beyond the entrance sits the long-frozen corpse of a remorhaz—rearing back as if to attack. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check suggests it was placed here to scare off trespassers.

BOO! BET I SCARED YOU, HA-HA!!!

Feel free to describe this as if the remorhaz is mid-lunge, especially if the party or a scout is sneaking in. If they attack it, let them go into initiative for a round or two before they realize it's a frozen corpse.

The ruins are quite old—a successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check suggests it's likely Netherese in origin. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the character realizes it's a former tower now sunk and fused into the mountain.

The tunnels are made from packed snow and ice and count as difficult terrain. The walls glitter like diamonds under any light source and the ice is so clean it casts reflections. Any creature taller than 5 feet feels cramped, though they can still move around. All tunnels move in a serpentine manner in three dimensions through the ice.

Tunnels 1 and 3. These tunnels lead back to each other, narrowing in the middle. Medium creatures that squeeze through the middle must make a successful DC 11 Strength (Athletics) check or gain one level of exhaustion struggling to get out.

Tunnel 2. This tunnel leads down an old set of stairs to another room, which has been converted into a roost—complete with a clutch of shattered eggs. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check determines three hatched and four were destroyed or eaten. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check determines that there were originally eight eggs. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, they find the unhatched egg that survived destruction. The dragon egg is a smooth ovoid whose shell resembles silver-streaked ice. It's unlikely the egg will ever hatch; however, one character can keep it as a trinket.

Tunnel 4. This tunnel leads down into the hoard area. This cavern would've been filled with treasure, but it's been cleared out. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check finds something overlooked when it was cleaned out. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, they also discover a silver scale. See “**Treasure**,” below.

Tunnel 5. This tunnel leads up and out the back of the lair. On a ledge, the characters find the carcass of a young silver dragon covered with large beak gouges and claw marks. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Medicine) check confirms the gouges match those on Rikuur's body. The arrowhead pulls further into the mountains.

Creatures. There are two **silver dragon wyrmlings** hiding in the lair discussing what to do now their parent is dead. One wants to continue their parent's work from here. The other wants to relocate after seeing to their parent's funeral arrangements.

The silver dragon wyrmlings hide from the characters and observe when they approach the young silver dragon's body. If the party desecrates the body, the wyrmlings threaten them or even attack. Characters fluent in Draconic can communicate with the wyrmlings. Good-aligned creatures have advantage on Charisma checks when dealing with the wyrmlings. Conversely, evil-aligned creatures have disadvantage instead. The wyrmlings have no interest in fighting and want to carry on with their parents' original goal.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove one **silver dragon wyrmling**.
- **Strong:** No changes.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **silver dragon wyrmling**.

Treasure. While the hoard has been picked over by robbers or dragonkin, the characters can find winter-themed trinkets such as an intricately carved walrus tusk. Roll once on the Icewind Dale Trinkets table in *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

In addition to the encounters above, you can roll on the table below and incorporate the indicated monsters into a setting of your choice—useful if there isn't enough time for one of the encounters detailed above.

ICEWIND DALE RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d6	Encounter
1	A saber-toothed tiger .
2	Two elks .
3	A small caravan of five dwarf and human commoners lost in the wilds. They have smoked fish and dried fruits and berries to trade with the goliath clans and Ten-Towns. They speak of a monster in the dark hunting them.
4	A manticore .
5	An air weird .
6	A mauled yeti carcass, torn apart and feasted on by something big.

FROSTCLAW'S DEN ENTRANCE

Roots of a dead tree casually drape over the entrance to an opening into the rockface. There's a layer of dead leaves placed at the entrance.

AWAKENED DARKNESS

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

MAISON DE FROSTCLAW

Themes: Creepy, morbid, isolation.

In this part, the characters enter and explore Frostclaw's lair—an icy cave consisting of four chambers. The owlbear has decorated her lair with cave paintings of herself and Feral-Tongue (depicted as a goliath with a black staff creating and commanding a vast host of animals) descending on Ten-Towns to slaughter the residents.

STORY OBJECTIVE C

Learning Feral-Tongue's plans is **Story Objective C**.

AREA INFORMATION

Frostclaw's lair (see **appendix A**) has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The roots of a dead tree drape over an entrance surrounded by rotting leaf mold. The ceilings range from 5 to 15 feet in height. The walls of the lair are a patchwork of ice, stone, and dirt. The ceiling is struck through with veins of chardalyn—allowing the mephits within to lay undetected.

Weather and Temperature. The interior is clear of wind, yet still frigid and dangerous without winter clothes.

Light. Darkness.

Sounds. The irregular sound of wind outside and ice moving and shifting in the cave.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Frostclaw makes her home in a cave bear's former den. Frostclaw ate well the night she claimed this place. The **chardalyn mephits** living in the cave with Frostclaw stay hidden until the party tries to remove the chardalyn fragment.

The mephits have been helping Frostclaw build the traps in the cave. They really enjoy the sheer cruelty of her. The mephits giggle and laugh as the characters come close to setting off the traps. They also sigh with disappointment if the party finds the traps. All these sound the same as ice shifting and cracking.

WHY WAIT? DO IT NOW!

Because you want the element of fear and suspense to be prevalent, consider pre-rolling a few sets of initiative scores—using one for an encounter in part 3 and the start of part 4. This allows you to slip into initiative without breaking immersion and possibly killing the mood.

D1. ENTRANCE

Tree roots have created a 5-foot-wide opening into the ground. This opening is surrounded by leaf mold—these out-of-place leaves in the snow are there to make noise when someone enters the cave. The terrain grants disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. A character who makes a successful DC 11 Intelligence (Nature) check infers this is likely a bear den. Just past the cavern mouth, the ground slopes down at a 30-degree angle for 10 feet. The leaves and the slope make the cavern entrance difficult terrain.

WATER YOU DOING?

There's a simple, yet cunning, trap just past the tree roots at the entrance. A simple trip wire made from dried intestines tied to a bucket of water perched precariously on the roots above. A character who makes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the trip wire and the attached bucket, which is then easily avoided. The first creature to trigger the trap upsets the bucket and gets soaked in frigid water. Unless the character is able to dry off within the next 10 minutes, they must make a successful DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.

This still-liquid water trap should alert the party to two things: one—whoever they're tracking is ready for them, and two—they're either still here or were until recently.

RUDIMENTARY, YET EVIL

There's a second trap at the entrance: a chute that deposits the character in **area D2. Eating Pit**. A second successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check is required to find this trap on the way in or a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check is required to find this trap on the way out. It has a one-way trigger designed to catch a creature rushing out the cave, not one walking in. This pit trap is filled with icy shards angled to cut up leathers and footwear. If a character slides or climbs down the chute, their speed is reduced by 10 feet unless they have a change of clothes. The characters can deactivate the trap by tripping it and climbing around it without penalty.

D2. EATING PIT

Frostclaw usually brings her prey here to consume. It's a harrowing place of bones, blood, and stone.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The ceiling of this 50-foot-wide circular room is 5 feet high and tapers down like an inverse dome to meet the outer edge of an icy ring. The ring is between 10 and 15 feet wide, surrounding uneven snow

filling the center of the room. 5-foot-wide, nearly circular openings set into the east and south walls lead to the roost (area D3) and the trophy room (area D4), respectively. The ring around the room is slippery without clawed paws, and the snow in the center of the room conceals a **pit trap**.

Icy Ring. Moving along the 3-foot-high ring requires Medium or larger characters to crawl. Characters wearing heavy armor must make a successful DC 10 Strength saving throw or slide into the center.

Pit Trap. In the center of the room is a 20-foot-deep pit trap that the chardalyn mephits have gleefully concealed. A character who steps on the snow falls into the pit. A successful DC 11 Strength (Athletics) check is required to climb out the pit, made with disadvantage due to the ice coating the walls. The bottom of the pit is littered with bones, body parts, and bits of berries and bark. The most prominent thing is the frozen, partially eaten dwarf **corpse**. A character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 13 or higher notices something off about the snow and ice center of the room. A physical testing or a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check confirms the covering is thin and will collapse if weight is put on it.

Corpse. The dwarf's face and the top of its head have large beak gouges, and its chest cavity has been cracked open. The crest of "GooD MeaD MeaderY" is still visible on the dwarf's clothing. Looks like this merchant won't be making their delivery. The dwarf is wearing a sturdy set of boots along with coin pouches. If the pit trap collapses, it doesn't cover the corpse, the body remains discoverable.

CREATURE INFORMATION

When the corpse is disturbed, a mass of carnivorous caterpillars (a **swarm of centipedes**) emerges in a grotesque display and attacks the creature nearest the corpse.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** The **swarm of centipedes** retreats into the snow after two rounds.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add one **swarm of centipedes** which gains surprise at the start of combat.

TREASURE

The characters find a set of *boots of striding and springing* and various gold and silver coins on the dwarf's body. At first glance, the boots appear to be normal, if a bit worn. On closer inspection, the boots are designed that way. Clever gears and springs are embedded into the soles—likely the handiwork of gnomes.

D3. ROOST

The roost is east of the eating room.

Dimensions and Terrain. This 10-foot-high triangular room, 20 feet on a side, holds a large ground bird's nest made of bones and sizable branches—whatever lives here is a large creature. The nest lies opposite the western entrance and takes up most of the room to the eastern point at "the back." The nest is messy with large white feathers and a half-eaten goliath leg—too chewed on to identify who it belongs to.

Now That's a Complex. On the walls above the nest rough art is etched in the same style as the wall art in the trophy room (area D4).

The wall art portrays a large snowy owlbear stood on their hind legs in a regal, front-facing pose. Behind the owlbear is a large, skull-headed goliath bearing twisted antlers and wearing a cloak. The goliath looks to be embracing the owlbear from behind.

A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) or DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check, made with advantage if the character is proficient with painter's supplies, suggests that the skull-headed goliath is in a protectorate and empowering position behind the owlbear—as one would be positioned behind an heir.

SUCH JERKS

If the party enters this room before the trophy room, the mephits do their best to scare the characters by mimicking an owlbear shrieking.

D4. TROPHY ROOM

Frostclaw has been doing her best to track what's happened to her since she awakened. She's taken to etching or cave painting the major events of her life. She's also been keeping mementos—items that catch her attention or reminders of successful missions, much like a magpie.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. This room is the largest within the lair; a natural cave carved by eons of erosion. The ceilings stretch 15 feet above this irregularly shaped, 40-by-40-foot chamber, the walls of which are covered in **etchings** and **cave paintings**. The room is also filled with a handful of small **stands** made from rock and ice that display different trinkets.

Paintings. Each wall in the chamber displays etchings and cave paintings (see **appendix B**). A creature that investigates the paintings and makes a successful DC 11 Wisdom (Insight) check feels an aura of omnipotence or the imperious attitude of an emperor attributed to the art. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the character also deduces that the owlbear reveres the goliath as a deity.

- The north wall bears cave art of green trees and a cave opening with steam coming from it. Next to a tent, a cloaked and hooded goliath holding a staff touches a meek looking owlbear on the forehead.
- The images on the south wall portray the same owlbear transforming from a weak, pitiful creature to one of power—twice as large and healthy, with stunningly white feathers and fur and with a large, jagged, black beak. Above this new creature, in Giant runes (the same type the characters have seen before), is written the name “Frostclaw.”
- On the east wall, the goliath stands before a vast host of creatures—converting each in turn as he did Frostclaw. As before, each becomes strong and powerful, yet twisted.
- The image on the west wall covers the whole wall, and the skull-headed goliath, their staff now topped with a large stone, commands a vast host of mutated animals descending on Ten-Towns' residents. There are different scenes of the animals; flooding into towns, breaking down doors, using fire to burn, attacking goliaths in caves, ripping humanoid limb from limb, heads without bodies, limbs used as toys, mutated beasts playing in entrails. The beast army is led by Frostclaw.

Stands. These stands are made of rock and ice and hold a variety of baubles and trinkets, including some from the encounters in **part 2**. One also has a goliath's arm on it.

A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) or Intelligence (Investigation) check identifies the arm as Rikuur's by the matching tattoos.

The Wall Fragment. The chardalyn arrowhead is drawn to the large chardalyn fragment embedded deeply in the wall, where it forms the top of the goliath's staff in the west and final image. As the two pieces come together, they almost vibrate.

CREATURE INFORMATION

If the characters try to dislodge the chardalyn fragment, five **chardalyn mephits** interrupt, dropping from the ceiling to attack. When the mephits drop they appear as large icicles.

These mephits are particularly cruel. They know they explode when they die, so they do everything they can to swarm the characters and stay as close as possible. The mephits fight to the death while making owlbear noises and mocking screams the whole time.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak:** Remove four **chardalyn mephits**.
- **Weak:** Remove two **chardalyn mephits**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add three **swarms of centipedes**. On initiative count 20 (losing ties), chunks of ceiling ice fall on a random character who must make a successful DC 12 Dexterity saving or take 5 (2d4) bludgeoning damage and 5 (1d10) cold damage.

If the party takes the fragment before exploring the roost (area D3) the mephits wait until the party return to the eating pit (area D2) before attacking.

TREASURE

The stands contain enough trinkets for each player to claim one if they wish. Roll on the trinkets table in the *Player's Handbook* or the Icewind Dale Trinkets table in *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*.

DEVELOPMENT

The characters have learned the murderer was the snowy owlbear, Frostclaw. They've also seen the pictographs on the wall and know Frostclaw expects the skull-headed goliath to give her an army of twisted beasts to lead in a slaughter of the humanoids living in Icewind Dale.

Now they need to return to the Thuunlakalaga clan to put this murder to rest and to warn Old Goat about what they've learned.

KEEP THAT TENSION

The break from part 3 to part 4 is difficult. Part 3 ends with a mephit fight, part 4 begins with mephits swarming the players forcing an escape.

Whether you're playing this in one sitting, or you're splitting these sections up into their own one-hour sessions, judge how much time you have left and adjust part 4 accordingly.

Either way, parts 3 and 4 tend to flow together. By watching your pacing, you won't be done too fast or need to drag things out to fill time.

VILE GUARDIANS

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

ICEWIND DALE WILDERNESS

Themes: Fear, thrill, escape.

In the depths of Frostclaw's lair, the characters find another shard of corrupted chardalyn from Feral-Tongue's staff embedded in the wall. The shard can be removed with a little excavation work on the surrounding ice. As soon as it's removed, the party are beset by arctic beasts and chardalyn mephits. A chase through the wilderness back to Wyrmdoom Crag ensues only to reach a climatic end with a hungry remorhaz.

AREA INFORMATION

The monsters chase the party from the den through mountainsides, cliffs, crevasses, down the tundra, all the way back to the Crag. During the chase, try to incorporate some of the areas the party passed on the way to Frostclaw's den.

Weather and Terrain. Outdoors—fast moving chase.

Temperature. Well below freezing. Heavy snowfall or wind as the table instructs.

Light. Darkness, unless specified.

Sounds. Echoing sounds of ice cracking and snapping as the mephits excitedly chatter back and forth about the torment they're about to inflict.

STORY OBJECTIVE D

Escaping before being captured is **Story Objective D**.

YOU DON'T SCARE M— RUN, RUN!!

With the fight from part 3 over, the characters can finish removing the fragment from the wall.

Released Fragment. When this fragment is removed from the wall, a blast of energy engulfs all characters in the room. This energy grants each character their choice of either the benefits of a short rest or removes one level of exhaustion, to a minimum of 1.

The **chardalyn mephits** have been living their best life in Frostclaw's cave helping her set traps and play with her food before she consumes it—play often being torture. With no one to pester them and an endless supply of nefarious entertainment, the arrangement works well for both parties.

P-P-PARANOID

If you've been playing up the chardalyn arrowhead thus far, the characters should be growing paranoid about becoming corrupted like the other characters who possessed the arrowhead were. As the DM, your biggest power now is to smile and simply ask, "That's a good question. Are you?" Don't give them much time to think about it though because . . . [see below].

CREATURE INFORMATION

When the fragment is released or the party decides to leave it behind, four **chardalyn mephits** drop from the cave ceiling or crack and peel off the icy walls of whichever room the characters were in at the end of **part 3**. With the same cracking sounds coming from the other rooms, it quickly becomes apparent the den is overflowing with the creatures.

This time, the mephits attack ruthlessly; playtime is over. The party will likely stand their ground for a few rounds. Whether the party is holding its own or not, add three or more mephits at the end of every round. Eventually, the party should realize flight is their best option—if they don't, suggest it. As the characters flee, they may encounter the trap designed to catch creatures leaving the den in area D1, if they haven't already.

DON'T PUNISH

Remember, you aren't trying to punish them for running, you want it to be their best option. The mephits are cruel. If necessary, have them swarm and fight with each other over something trivial giving the players a chance to run without incurring attacks of opportunity.

Breaking out of the cave and into the ever night, dozens of eyes gleam in the aurora's light. New recruits to Frostclaw's corrupted army join the mephits in the chase!

BEGINNING THE CHASE

The mephits simply number too many for the characters to defeat—it also doesn't help that they explode. Use the chase rules in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Once out of the den, the characters begin the chase 60 feet ahead

of the mephits (who only use the Dash action). At the start of their turn, each character rolls on the table below. The specified ability checks are just suggestions; work with the characters if they want to do something else, and reward creativity accordingly.

CHASE COMPLICATIONS TABLE

d20	Complication
1	You step through a thin sheet of ice into a creek of frigid water. You must make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) cold damage.
2	You're caught in a stampede of corrupted moose. You must make a successful DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone and take 5 (2d4) bludgeoning damage and 2 (1d4) piercing damage.
3	You run through a cluster of tree branches, which strike your face (+3 to hit), dealing 2 (1d4) piercing damage on a hit.
4	A crevasse blocks your path. You must make a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to cross the impediment. On a failure, moving around the impediment counts as difficult terrain.
5	A storm blows in, coating everything in hoar frost. You must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw as the ice accumulates on you. On a failed save, you take 3 (1d6) cold damage, and your speed is halved until the end of your next turn.
6	You dive through a copse of trees and bushes. The area counts as difficult terrain. You must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw to avoid ice-laden branches. On a failed save, you take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.
7	You slip and fall into a creek. You must make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.
8	Powder snow threatens to slow your progress. Make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to navigate the area. On a failed check, the ground counts as difficult terrain until the end of your next turn.
9	The wind drives into you, slowing you down. You must make a successful DC 13 Strength saving throw or your speed is halved until the end of your next turn.
10	A griffon rider from the Akannathi goliaths of Skytower Shelter sees you and starts driving you back toward the mephits. You must make a DC 13 Strength or Intelligence saving throw to either hold your ground or find a clever place to hide. On a failed save, you're dragged back 60 feet.
11–20	No complication.

ENDING THE CHASE

This chase ends when the majority of the characters are either defeated or start their turn more than 100 feet away from the mephits.

FAST-PACED, NOT A SLOG

The party should feel stressed and overwhelmed until they get back to the cave and fight the remorhaz. That said, if the chase would slow things down, or just doesn't feel right, skip it. Just make sure you keep the urgency of getting away from the flood of mephits. Perhaps have the chase be short—a round or two. Perhaps have it end with the remorhaz bursting from the ground and being sufficiently distracted by the mephits for the party to get away.

POOR WAY TO GO

If by some horrible dice rolls, the party falls to the mephits and you still have time, the characters each wake up to helpful goliaths administering a *potion of healing* to them or dragging them back to Wyrmdoom Crag.

WE'RE SO CLOSE

As the party draw close to Wyrmdoom Crag, read:

Light from the crag fires glows welcomingly through the gloom. Silhouettes of the Thuunlakalaga clan take shape. They're waving frantically and shouting. Too late, it becomes clear they were warning you. There's a rumble followed by a burst of snow from the ground, and a screech as a hungry remorhaz surfaces, crushing any chardalyn mephits that had managed to keep up.

CREATURE INFORMATION

As the chase ends back at the camp a hungry **young remorhaz** ambushes the party from beneath the snow.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak:** Replace one **young remorhaz** with one **ankheg**.
- **Weak:** Replace one **young remorhaz** with one **ankheg** that has a Multiattack action allowing it to make two Bite attacks.
- **Strong:** The **young remorhaz** has 143 hit points.
- **Very Strong:** Add one **ankheg**.

If the party is holding their own, the clan stays behind, they're only here to step in if absolutely needed.

GOLIATH EX MACHINA

If time is running short, or the players really need a hand, have the goliaths shoot arrows or throw javelins from the cave entrance on initiative count 20 (losing ties). This could count as taking the Help action to aid one or two of the characters or be ranged weapon attacks (+4 to hit), dealing 4 (1d8) piercing damage on a hit. Don't rob the players though! If they're close to slaying the remorhaz or if they need a win, let them have it without the assist. Keep the remorhaz around for long enough to be dangerous then have a player make the kill shot.

WRAP-UP: HOME AGAIN

Exhausted yet safe, the party has made it back to Wyrmdoom Crag. Old Goat is grateful for helping the clan again and letting them know about the danger Frostclaw and some Feral-Tongue's plans present.

Defeating the remorhaz provides the clan with food for several days—something for which even Kaskur is grateful. Besides, removing that creature from the ecosystem is likely to improve hunting as well.

TREASURE

The clan is so happy with party both solving the murders and defeating the remorhaz that the clan smith, Wayani Highhunter, offers to incorporate material salvaged from the remorhaz into weapons or suits of armor that the characters possess (though metal armor modified in this

way is still made of metal). Examples of this can be found on the Who Created It or Was Intended to Use It? tables in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

REWARDS

At the **end of the session**, everyone receives rewards based upon their accomplishments:

PLAYER REWARDS

The players earn the following rewards:

ADVANCEMENT

A character participating in this adventure gains one level.

OPTIONAL: DECLINING ADVANCEMENT

Each player can decline advancement if they so choose; this has its benefits. It's possible for a character to advance outside an adventure's level range, meaning they'd be unable to play an adventure as planned. Similarly, advancing too quickly means a character won't earn as much gold as their peers.

Conversely, remind them that the amount of gold their characters can earn per level is limited; characters declining advancement might reach a point where they no longer earn gold.

GOLD

Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically features cues for this, but you can add it where you see fit. The maximum gold you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

Tier	Hourly GP Award	GP Limit per Level
1	20 gp	80 gp
2	30 gp	240 gp
3	200 gp	1,600 gp
4	750 gp	6,000 gp

MAGIC ITEMS

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; these items are described in **handout 1**:

- *Boots of striding and springing*
- *Potion of healing*
- *Spell scroll of lesser restoration*

STORY AWARDS

The characters may earn the following story award; described in **handout 1**:

Chardalyn Arrowhead

DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

For running this adventure, you earn a DM Reward. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure:

GRAKAL (GRACK-UHL) DAWNBEARER THUUNLAKALAGA

So named due to the colors of their hides and clothes, worn to look like a sunrise, with a personality to match. Grakal is softly spoken despite their extremely loud appearance. However, Grakal is easily the funniest and most joyous of Souljoined. Their ability to respond with snide remarks is unparalleled, but it's generally only heard by the other two resulting in "random" fits of laughter.

Grakal's prize possession is a large blanket with different tales of the goliaths' culture woven into a beautiful pictography. Throughout, trinkets and baubles from other cultures are woven in. Grakal often tries to incorporate their love of goliath cultures, other cultures, and color into their outward appearance. Some see it as ostentatious; Grakal knows it allows others to lower their guard around them so they can teach with less resistance.

What They Want. To never lose the family unit they're in.

Grakal would give their life for the other two Souljoined and can't imagine a world without them.

Not Enough Flair. Grakal loves going to Good Mead and interacting with Ten-Towns. Grakal has a weak spot for the food and flashy items from other cultures.

KASKUR (KASS-KERR) SPEARSONG THUUNLAKALAGA

This headstrong and impetuous goliath leads the clan's hunters. He's grown angry and frustrated at the lack of game in the area, and he resents Old Goat's "poor leadership" for a lack of solutions. He wields a longbow taller than most humans and claims he once felled an elk from a half mile away. He wears little in the way of clothing, even in the driving wind—a feat that's earned him the respect of his fellow hunters.

What They Want. Kaskur has grown tired of Old Goat's personal fears preventing an alliance with the goliaths of Skytower Shelter. He views her as weak and her ideas as outdated, especially when Kugan Windwhisper (Feral-Tongue)—who Kaskur views as being even weaker than Old Goat—is involved. He wants to usurp control of the clan for himself.

Words Are Wasted Wind. Kaskur doesn't have a negotiator's tongue; he's terse and speaks his mind without hesitation. Despite this, he's experienced and knows the area better than any of his peers.

NARARHAK (NA-RUHR-UCK) TREE-EYE THUUNLAKALAGA

Nararhak was orphaned at birth amidst a raid from another clan. Though spared, the violent circumstances of their birth damaged Nararhak's left leg, leaving them slow and clumsy when without a crutch. Rikuur Hideminder took the child in and raised them in the ways of storytelling and nature.

When not with Souljoined, Nararhak tends to be very apprehensive and cautious in their interactions having suffered a great deal of bullying in the past. They're wary of outright strangers.

The name "Tree-Eye" comes from Nararhak's heterochromatic eyes, their right is a brown, barky color and the left is the color of deep-green leaves. Nararhak is always chewing on something. If they start speaking while overly excited, small bits of spittle tend to spray from their mouth.

What They Want. To know more. Nararhak is always ready to hear another tale or read another story or learn another language. When sharing the stories and history of the clan, few hold up to Nararhak's narrations.

Brains of the Operation. Few in the clan now know more about the different flora, fauna, and sacred places than Nararhak does. Even Old Goat seeks advice from Nararhak from time to time.

OGOLAI (OH-GOH-LIE) ORCSPLITTER "OLD GOAT" THUUNLAKALAGA

The chieftain of the Thuunlakalaga goliaths is an elderly goliath with a heavily scarred face. She dresses plainly in goat hide clothing and carries an immense greataxe fashioned from white dragon bone. She has a crippling fear of griffons stemming from a childhood trauma that's created tensions between her clan and the Akannathi goliaths of Skytower Shelter (see *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*).

What They Want. Old Goat's first priority is the safety and prosperity of her clan—especially in these unusual and trying times. She's quick to stymie dissent, particularly from Kaskur Spearsong. She fears his disagreements will turn violent but does everything within her power to delay this apparent inevitability for as long as possible.

Done It, Seen It; but the End Is Nigh. Old Goat has been around a long time and seen many things. This experience lends her a tremendous amount of wisdom to draw on when making decisions. However, she's getting old and refuses to surrender the yoke of leadership until a worthy (equally wise) replacement is found. If it weren't for his sharp tongue, Old Goat would've offered Kaskur the mantle of leadership years ago. However, she fears what the clan would become under his leadership.

THUGEO (THOO-JEE-OH) GOATCHASER THUUNLAKALAGA

A goat got loose during one of Rikuur Hideminder's training sessions and Thugeo created quite a commotion chasing it through the village. He eventually caught the goat eating away merrily in one of the storage huts, earning Thugeo the name Goatchaser, and the goat, Honey.

Rikuur entrusted Thugeo with the chardalyn arrowhead and it's causing his bouts of rage—though he doesn't know it. Teachings, training, and being part of Souljoined soothed his rage and brought calm. Within a day's chardalyn influence, Thugeo has started to show brief bouts of that old rage, followed by guilt and self-loathing.

What They Want. The chardalyn arrowhead is the first secret Thugeo has ever kept from Souljoined and it's only at Rikuur's insistence. Thugeo doesn't want to let it go.

What a Specimen! Thugeo is one of the clan's best goat-ball athletes. He's physically impressive and incredibly friendly. He's the last of Souljoined to get the jokes and sometimes doesn't at all. The other two never make him feel bad for that and he often has no idea when he "doesn't get it."

CREATURE STATISTICS

The following creatures appear in this adventure:

AIR ELEMENTAL

Large elemental, neutral

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 90 (12d10 + 24)

Speed 0 ft., fly 90 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	6 (–2)	10 (+0)	6 (–2)

Damage Resistances lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Auran

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Air Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Whirlwind (Recharge 4–6). Each creature in the elemental's space must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 15 (3d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage and is flung up 20 feet away from the elemental in a random direction and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes an object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone.

If the saving throw is successful, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't flung away or knocked prone.

AIR WEIRD

Large elemental, neutral

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 58 (9d10 + 9)

Speed 0 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage Resistances fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Auran but doesn't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Breath of Life. The air weird dies if it leaves the air to which it is bound or if that air is destroyed.

Invisible in Air. The air weird is invisible while fully surrounded by air.

ACTIONS

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 13) and pulled 5 feet toward the air weird. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, the air weird tries to suffocate it, and the air weird can't constrict another target.

ANKHEG

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor), 11 while prone

Hit Points 39 (6d10 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	1 (–5)	13 (+1)	6 (–2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the ankheg can bite only the grappled creature and has advantage on attack rolls to do so.

Acid Spray (Recharge 6). The ankheg spits acid in a line that is 30 feet long and 5 feet wide, provided that it has no creature grappled. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

CHARDALYN MEPHIT

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 21 (6d6)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (−2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	9 (−1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception + 2, Stealth +3

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning, fire

Damage Immunities cold, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Aquan, Auran

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Burst. When the mephit dies, it explodes in a burst of jagged ice. Each creature within 5 feet of it must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

False Appearance. While the mephit remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary shard of ice.

Innate Spellcasting (1/Day). The mephit can innately cast *fog cloud*, requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.

Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) cold damage.

Ice Breath (Recharge 6). The mephit exhales a 15-foot cone of cold air. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5 (2d4) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

CHARDALYN MEPHITS

The chardalyn mephits' immunity to cold damage is replaced with necrotic damage. Further, its False Appearance renders it indistinguishable from a shard of chardalyn. Finally, its Death Burst, Claws, and Ice Breath deal necrotic damage instead of cold damage.

COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

ELK

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 13 (2d10 + 2)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	2 (−4)	10 (+0)	6 (−2)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Charge. If the elk moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

ACTIONS

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one prone creature. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

GIANT ELK

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 42 (5d12 + 10)

Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	7 (–2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Giant Elk, understands Common, Elvish, and Sylvan but can't speak them

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Charge. If the elk moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

ACTIONS

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one prone creature. *Hit:* 22 (4d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

MANTICORE

Large monstrosity, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	7 (–2)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Tail Spike Regrowth. The manticore has twenty-four tail spikes. Used spikes regrow when the manticore finishes a long rest.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The manticore makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws or three with its tail spikes.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Tail Spike. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 100/200 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

SABER-TOOTHED TIGER

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 52 (7d10 + 14)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (–4)	12 (+1)	8 (–1)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Smell. The tiger has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Pounce. If the tiger moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the tiger can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

SILVER DRAGON WYRMLING

Medium dragon, lawful good

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +2, Con +5, Wis +2, Cha +4

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +2

Damage Immunities cold

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Draconic

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage.

Breath Weapons (Recharge 5–6). The dragon uses one of the following breath weapons:

Cold Breath. The dragon exhales an icy blast in a 15-foot cone.

Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Paralyzing Breath. The dragon exhales paralyzing gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

SWARM OF CENTIPEDES

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (−4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (−5)	7 (−2)	1 (−5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

A creature reduced to 0 hit points by a swarm of centipedes is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

YOUNG REMORHAZ

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	3 (−4)	10 (+0)	4 (−3)

Damage Immunities cold, fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Heated Body. A creature that touches the remorhaz or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

HANDOUT 1: CHARACTER REWARDS

The characters may earn the following rewards in this adventure:

MAGIC ITEMS

BOOTS OF STRIDING AND SPRINGING

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)

The boots are gnome-crafted, with gears and springs embedded in the soles. At first glance they appear worn, but on closer inspection, the boots are designed that way.

While you wear these boots, your walking speed becomes 30 feet, unless your walking speed is higher, and your speed isn't reduced if you are encumbered or wearing heavy armor. In addition, you can jump three times the normal distance, though you can't jump farther than your remaining movement would allow.

POTION OF HEALING

Potion, common

You regain 2d4 + 2 hit points when you drink this potion. The potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated.

SPELL SCROLL OF LESSER RESTORATION

Scroll, uncommon

A *spell scroll* bears the words of a single spell, written in a mystical cipher. If the spell is on your class's spell list, you can read the scroll and cast its spell without providing any material components. Otherwise, the scroll is unintelligible. Casting the spell by reading the scroll requires the spell's normal casting time. Once the spell is cast, the words on the scroll fade, and it crumbles to dust. If the casting is interrupted, the scroll is not lost.

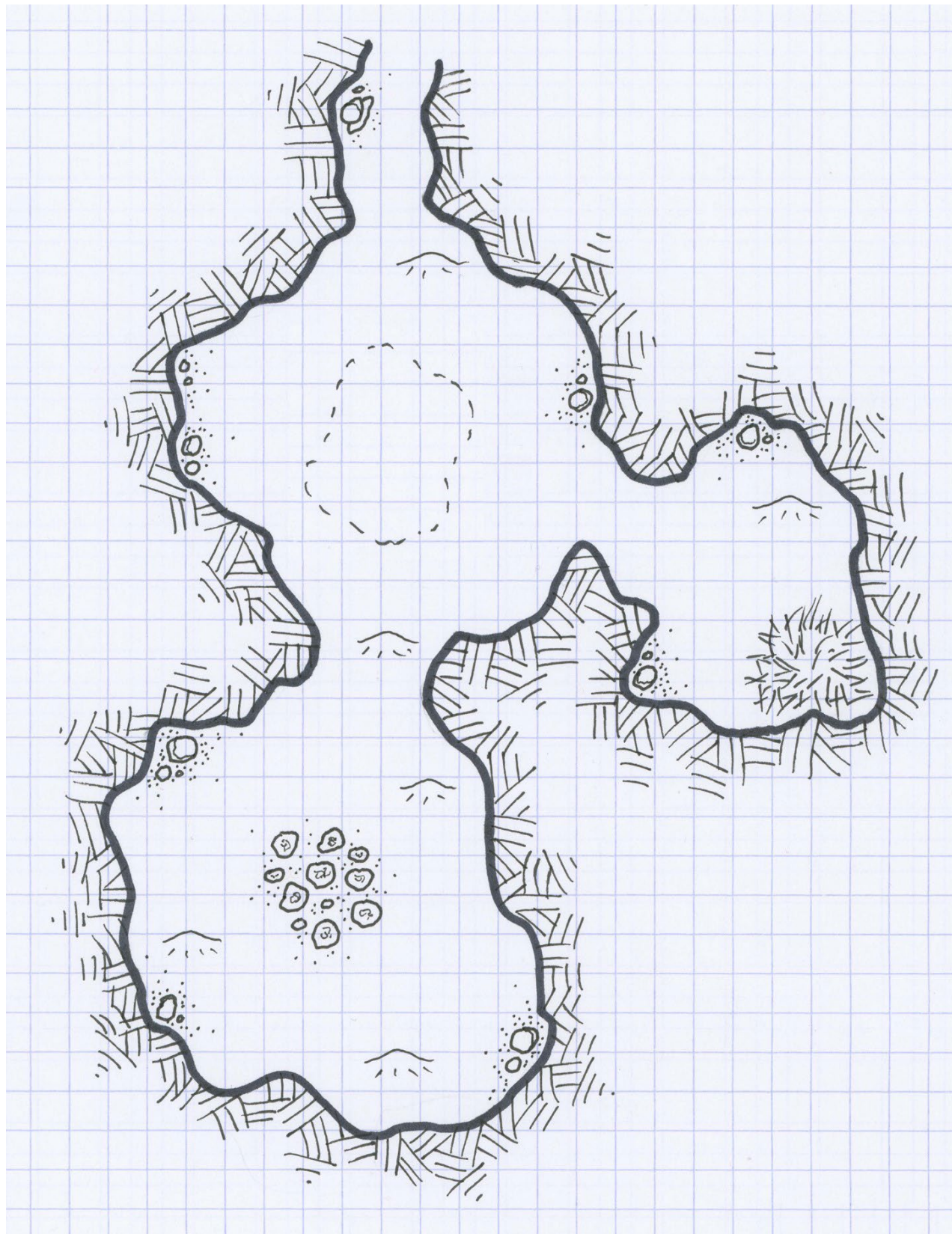
If the spell is on your class's spell list but of a higher level than you can normally cast, you must make an ability check using your spellcasting ability to determine whether you cast it successfully. The DC equals 10 + the spell's level. On a failed check, the spell disappears from the scroll with no other effect.

STORY AWARDS

CHARDALYN ARROWHEAD

The chardalyn arrowhead is corrupted, and a character possessing it is likely to act more rashly and becomes more irritable—a trait the character should add to their flaws.

APPENDIX A: FROSTCLAW'S LAIR MAP



APPENDIX B: FROSTCLAW'S ART



FIGURE 1: NORTH WALL



FIGURE 2: SOUTH WALL



FIGURE 3: EAST WALL



FIGURE 4: WEST WALL

APPENDIX C:

A PRIMER IN MURDER

It can be challenging to run a murder mystery at the table. You're never certain if the players will solve the scenario—that they'll have the appropriate skills or out-of-character knowledge—or if they'll break the story all together.

The following information is for the DM only. So, if things go sideways, you have a brief overview to guide them back with or to improvise as necessary:

WHO?

DID THE KILLING?

- Frostclaw, an awakened owlbear. Do your best to avoid beast clues so the players don't make the connection too fast.

WAS KILLED?

- Rikuur Hideminder, the goat shepherd and clan teacher.
- Rikuur was the teacher and guardian of the three goliaths who make up Souljoined.

ARE THE SUSPECTS?

- At first anyone in the clan; primarily Kaskur Spearsong and Souljoined—Thugeo Goatchaser, Grakal Dawnbearer, and Nararhak Tree-Eye.
- Let the party suspect Kaskur. Eventually, it becomes clear the murderer was someone outside the clan.

WHERE?

- The murder occurred in Rikuur's hut, located just outside Wyrmdoom Crag. Rikuur tended the mountain goats that live nearby and stayed close to them.

WHEN?

- The murder occurred while everyone was sleeping, two nights after the deaths of two guards during a celebration. The guards' killer remains unknown.
- The reason the guards didn't see anything suspicious was because the blizzard limited visibility to 5 feet.

WHAT?

- Frostclaw was searching for the chardalyn arrowhead Feral-Tongue (formerly Kugan Windwhisper) gave Rikuur.
- Unbeknownst to anyone in Wyrmdoom Crag, Rikuur gave the arrowhead to Thugeo for safekeeping. The chardalyn was affecting his judgment and making him paranoid, as it's now doing to Thugeo.

WHY?

- Frostclaw wants the chardalyn arrowhead.
- She sees herself as being better than the goliaths. In a place of power. Blessed.
- Frostclaw enjoys inflicting pain and torment on her bipedal prey.
- Frostclaw also really enjoys the kill—like a cat playing with a mouse as it devours it.

HOW?

- Frostclaw crept into Rikuur's hut in the dead of night during the blizzard.
- She used her Icy Breath to encase Rikuur's head in ice. This prevented his screams being heard outside the hut at all due to the blizzard.
- She then bit off his leg to prevent him escaping, followed by his arm to stop him fighting back.
- While he screamed into the ice, she went about the hut looking for the arrowhead. When she couldn't find it, she started to cut him open asking, "Where?"
- Getting caught up in the torture, Frostclaw initially forgot that Rikuur couldn't answer while frozen (and that he'd already lost a lot of blood). So when he died, she vented her frustration by using his insides to write the glyphs the party found.
- Annoyed that she didn't find what she wanted, she left the hut to wait for the storm to settle a bit and try again later.
- Instead of trying again later as planned, she had to avoid the search parties and began tracking the party when they left Wyrmdoom Crag.

WHAT NEXT?

- The three goliaths who make up Souljoined each have different bits of information to add:
- Grakal can reveal Rikuur wasn't himself lately, and that the three loved him.
- Nararhak can help identify who drew the paintings and that the feather from Rikuur's hut belongs to an owlbear.
- Thugeo has the box holding the chardalyn arrowhead Frostclaw was looking for and, reluctantly, will give it to the players so it can guide them to Frostclaw's lair.

APPENDIX D: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

To DM an adventure, you must have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character within the adventure's level range (see Adventure Primer). Characters playing in a hardcover adventure may continue to play too, but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they can't return to the first if they level beyond its level range.

NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

https://dnd.wizards.com/ddal_general

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure—such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception) score, and anything the adventures specifies as notable (such as backgrounds, traits, and flaws).

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a player or DM, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for level, magic items, gold, and downtime days. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information are added at the end of the adventure session—whether they completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they can't, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Players Guide* for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

NEW PLAYERS? NO PROBLEM!

With starter adventures like this one it's possible you may have players new to D&D, or just new to fifth edition. It's up to you as the DM to ensure they a) have fun with the game and b) learn the basics of how to play. At this level, having fun is more important than learning every rule exactly right. Be gentle with new players who make mistakes.

Make sure to keep your players smiling and rolling dice. Be positive and enthusiastic when describing the action, and you'll notice they quickly follow suit.

If you're a new DM, then welcome—and thank you! New DMs are the lifeblood of the D&D community. This adventure includes sidebars like this one that explain of some rules used as the adventure progresses!

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the characters' levels and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition	Party Strength
3–4 characters, APL less than	Very Weak
3–4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3–4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6–7 characters, APL less than	Average
6–7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6–7 characters, APL greater than	Very Strong

SAFETY TOOLS

Safety tools ensure that players aren't pushed beyond their comfort levels. They let your players know you want them to have a positive experience.

A broad range of safety tools are available for you and your players online, but for more information reach out to your Event Organizer or to community@dndadventurersleague.org