

A 1st Level Dungeon Crawl Classics Adventure

By Mark Bishop

# The Frost Fang Expedition



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Purple Sorcerer Games

Be sure to check out the separate appendix PDF that comes with the Frost Fang Expedition. It's filled with tips for running the adventure, paper miniatures, patron spell sheets, and easily printable versions of all the maps and images included in the adventure!



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# The Frost Fang Expedition

*An Instant Action*  
Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG Adventure  
for 4-8 1st Level Adventurers  
By Mark Bishop

Introduction .....	3
Running the Frost Fang Expedition/History of Neverthawes .....	4
Dagon's Note .....	10
People and Places.....	11
Player Introduction.....	12
Rumors and Scuttlebutt .....	14
The Expedition Begins/NPC's .....	16
Main Map/Encounter Index.....	18-19
Encounter Descriptions.....	20-58
Appendix A: Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardoch .....	59
Appendix B: Spell Duels Simplified .....	61
Appendix C: Dagon's Amulet.....	62
Appendix D: Malotch as Patron .....	64
Appendix E: Linking to Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry.....	68

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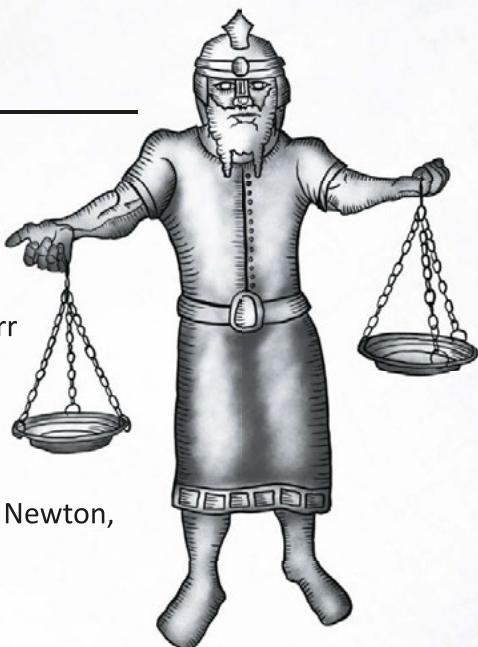
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# The Frost Fang Expedition

*High above the Village of Neverthawes, near the icy peak of Frost Fang Mountain, a mysterious castle floats among the clouds, dangling precariously like an anvil above the wilderness town. The stone keep houses the bizarre workshop of a reclusive sorcerer known as Dagon the Doleful. For over a hundred years the floating island, or earth mote, has cast a shadow of foreboding upon the village beneath it. Recently though, the lights have gone dark in Dagon's floating castle, and large chunks of the earth island have begun to fall from the sky.*

*Today an expedition leaves from the base of Frost Fang Mountain to investigate these mysterious changes. Adventurers must endure a treacherous journey to the mountain's peak, and then cross a tenuous bridge that stretches to Dagon's surreptitious sanctum in the sky.*

*But be warned: not all who join the expedition harbor pure motives. Rumors report that great wealth and incomprehensible arcane knowledge are ripe for the taking if the castle is reached. Even the most noble of heart might be tempted by the treasures accrued by the eccentric wizard. Will explorers seek to find and aid Dagon the Doleful, or will they attempt to pilfer the castle's riches? Will they seek means to keep the castle aloft or abandon the village to a crushing death? The frozen backdrop is set. The time for action has come.*

*In the Frost Fang Expedition, only one thing is certain... the adventurers will face great danger from within and without Dagon's castle walls. None who join the expedition will return unchanged, if indeed they return at all!*

# **Running the Frost Fang Expedition**

The Frost Fang Expedition is an *Instant Action Adventure* designed to be enjoyed in a single action-packed session of mystery and derring-do. This makes the adventure ideal for convention play or for a home game where you wish to wrap up play in a single session. That being said, play times can vary widely from group to group depending on play style. If it is the judge's intention to run this game in a four hour block (such as a convention game), it is recommended that the party begin with pre-generated characters in order to allow sufficient time for game play.

If on the other hand, the clock is not a factor at your table, we have provided background information and a short history of Neverthawes, Dagon the Doleful, and the Frost Fang Mountain region, enabling you and your players to immerse yourself in a fantastic setting suitable for extended campaign play.

In order to help streamline the narrative to the judge's taste, each new chapter contains a section of *Adventure Notes*, "cliff notes" of a sort that highlight the key information judges need to know for that area. This is especially useful for judges seeking the bare-bones narrative needed to move the game along in a time-restricted setting, but should also prove helpful for those who are integrating the adventure into a larger campaign.

## **The History of Neverthawes**

The Village of Neverthawes was formed in the shadow of the Frost Fang Mountains, just north-east of the once prosperous **Ardokk Mines**. The village and nearby regions all benefited greatly from the prodigious amounts of gold and other minerals mined by the Ardkokk dwarves. Every man, woman, and child within a hundred miles grew up hearing the stories of the mines and their legendary grandeur.

A mysterious sorcerer of great renown, **Dagon the Doleful**, had also lived in the area for generations before Neverthawes was established. Villagers had found his once-isolated castle's high walls a comforting neighbor when they founded their village, but as the mines prospered, new arrivals came to Neverthawes seeking its fabled wealth,

expanded the village borders again and again. The more the village encroached, the more secretive and paranoid the old wizard became. Despite the keep's proximity, few villagers had ever passed beneath its portcullis. As the years passed, the orange-bearded, gaunt-faced Dagon increasingly shunned the people of the village, losing himself in his experiments and retreating from human contact. The portcullis remained closed, rusted into place, with only an occasional thick plume of green or purple smoke rising above the parapets betraying Dagon's earthly existence at all.

The Ardkk Mines, and thus Neverthawes, continued to prosper and grow for a generation before Dagon finally found the creeping impingement of the village unbearable. Certain that prying eyes were upon both him and his arcana, the reclusive sorcerer determined to hide his wizardry once and for all — in a place where he would never be bothered again. Early one morning, the village awoke to the sound of strange guttural incantations wailing down from behind the castle walls. Some said they witnessed Dagon through the metal gates, slashing his own arms while kneeling before a glowing hourglass that seemed to hover in mid-air before him. Suddenly the earth began to shake, the peal of an ear-splitting thunderclap echoing across the valley. Through rattling windows the villagers watched as Dagon's castle and yard wrenched itself from the earth and began to slowly rise into the heavens. The entire village gaped in awe as the *earth mote* rose skyward, finally arresting its ascent near the peaks of Frost Fang.

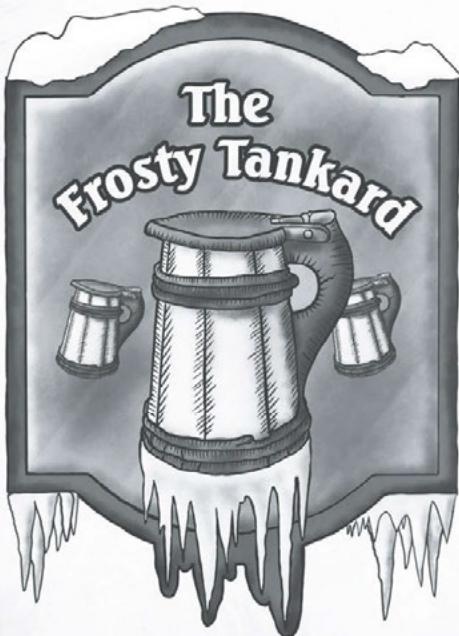


Local legend might have remembered the rise as astonishing and magnificent had not the old wizard's actions also triggered a chain of events that doomed the Ardokk dwarves and their legendary mines forever. For in the ensuing earthquake, an evil beast was freed from her underground prison; an ancient medusa named **Helgathia Myrr**. Some say it was Dagon himself who had imprisoned (then forgot) her in the rune-locked chamber eons ago. Regardless, the serpent-haired demon stormed through the halls of Ardokk with complete surprise, petrifying every man, woman and child into lifeless stone. In a matter of days, the medusa completed her horrific campaign: transforming the Ardokk mines into a seemingly lifeless, stony tomb.

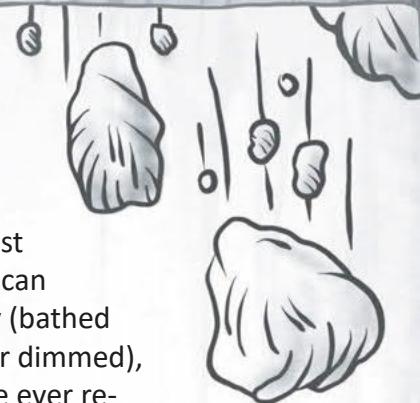
The effect upon the region was nearly as swift. Without the flow of gold from the mountains, the local economy collapsed. Barter ceased as rumor and fear ran wild. Many believed the creature would leave the mines and destroy Neverthawes as well, so they fled. Those who stayed behind held the brash wizard in great contempt, cursing his name for the recklessness he displayed.

A decade passed before anyone dared to venture back into the Ardokk mines. The first was a halfling named **Egad Greenthicket** who claimed that Dagon the Doleful had visited him in a dream. The aged sorcerer was supposedly filled with remorse, seeking to right his wrongs,

“better a little, and too late than nothing at all, ever”. Egad woke the next morning to find a rolled parchment on his nightstand, wrapped around a small mirror. Few if any believed the halfling’s improbable story, but some villagers remember clearly that early one morning Egad took the scroll, the mirror, and his favorite cow up the path to the old Ardokk mines. Both Egad and his cow disappeared into the mouth of the mountain, never to be heard from again.



Soon after, the bravery of the villagers returned. A few hardy souls scaled the mountain with supplies intent upon building a bridge that would connect the earth mote and Dagon's floating castle to the nearest peak of Frost Fang. Although the tenuous rope bridge can still be seen spanning the gap to this day (bathed in the eerie lights of the castle that never dimmed), none of the workers who built the bridge ever returned. Nor did any souls who went looking for them.



One hundred years have now passed since Dagon's castle vaulted skyward. It remains as great a mystery today to the few plucky descendants, traders, trappers, and hard-scrabble miners who remain as when it rose generations ago. But answers might finally be forthcoming! Two weeks ago, a mysterious medallion fell from above, smashing through the roof of the temple of local cleric **Levi Fangred**. He claimed that a note was attached from Dagon himself, breaking his long silence to request urgent aid from the village. Since then, the castle lights have at last gone dark, and large chunks of the earth island's cliff edges have begun to break off and tumble down on the village below. Some fear that the old wizard is dead or dying, and that the entire castle might soon come crashing down upon them. With such an impending catastrophe looming literally above them, Levi has summoned all willing souls to the **Frosty Tankard**, a local ale house, to form an emergency expedition.

The call for adventurers has gone forth. Known opportunists, cut-throats and mercenaries have descended upon the desperate town in waves, sensing an opportunity for profit. Locals in fear of their lives have begun to load their belongings into wagons, preparing to depart. Better to face the wilderness, they reason, than to be squashed into bloody pulps from above!

Such a quick death might be considered a blessing compared to what surely awaits those who join Levi Fangred in scaling Frost Fang Mountain!



## Dagon and the Hourglass

Briefly mentioned in the town's history, Dagon's mysterious floating hourglass will play an integral role in this adventure. What the PCs decide to do with the hourglass at Dagon's castle will, in the end, determine the outcome of their drama. Clues to the nature of the hourglass will be revealed to players as the journey unfolds through dreams, notes, and the words of NPCs, but it's important for the judge to understand the history of Dagon and the enchanted hourglass before play begins. The PCs will likely die in confusion about what they need to do during the final encounter if they haven't acquired the information necessary to deal with Dagon and the hourglass!

No one knows quite how old Dagon the Doleful is, though none alive can ever remember a time without him. His wrinkled and creviced face reveals a man possessing ancient wisdom and experience, his features framed by unruly locks of bright orange hair - at least it was the last time that anyone saw him. Though everyone knew of the old wizard, few ever mingled with him, and the rare social encounters were always awkward due to Dagon's searing gazes and long, menacing pauses without conversation. In chance meetings on the streets of Neverthawes, he seemed more enamored with the careful and intrusive inspection of lapel buttons, walking sticks and ear lobes than the folk of the village.

In a short period of time, Dagon grew weary of human contact altogether, lowering the metal slats of his portcullis for good. Rumors ran rampant after that. Children declared seeing the wizard roaming the streets at night, his left arm as greasy and limber as the body of a serpent.

In fact, their reports were accurate. Dagon, corrupted by the experiments he conducted within the castle walls *was* undergoing changes, both physical and mental. In order to further plunder the depths of mysticism and magic, Dagon had entered an unholy pact with a creature not of this realm: the carrion crow goddess **Malotoch**. The bargain had expanded and altered the old wizard's mind, but at the price of corrupting his physical appearance. Dagon quickly grew to understand that every new unveiling of the universe's secrets came at great cost.

A day arrived when Dagon realized he trusted neither himself nor the unholy portals he had opened so near to the village's population. Rather than recklessly imperiling the village, Dagon strove to keep it safe, beseeching Malotoch to create the earth mote out of her own immense power to separate his castle from the village. The price for such a request was severe: every year he would sacrifice a portion of his remaining being to the dark goddess to keep the castle afloat. She fixed a magical hourglass in Dagon's castle courtyard to continually remind him of this patron pact. The earth mote will stay afloat as long as the hourglass is turned once every year. When the hourglass is turned for its 100th time, Dagon must submit himself completely, subsumed and forever in servitude to Mistress Malotoch. With the agreement fulfilled, only another soul's servitude, coupled with another pact, will keep the earth mote intact and afloat. Only then will the citizens below be safe from total destruction.

As the ever-more corrupted Dagon the Doleful descended into madness, he scribbled notes and pleas for aid, dropping them onto the village below. He has hidden the fact that his own fate is sealed, realizing that a replacement must be found or Neverthawes is doomed. Perhaps in his last cogent moment, he purposefully dropped his final plea for help through the rooftop of Levi Fangred, the town's cleric and a devoted disciple of the lawful Ulish.

Should the expedition, by some miracle of luck or valor, actually reach the castle of Dagon the Doleful, tough decisions will need to be made regarding the fate of Neverthawes in an uncertain environment. Will Dagon in his final corrupted state allow anyone to complete the ritual that will turn the hourglass and save the village, but also doom him to an eternity of servitude? If the ritual is completed, will anyone in the expedition submit to 100 years of servitude to the chaotic Mistress Malotoch to keep the castle afloat?

The fate of the castle and the village now lies in the hands of the few hardy souls who have undertaken an impossible journey: scaling the frozen reaches of the Frost Fang Mountains only to find themselves deposited into the clutches of a deranged and defiled wizard!

To whom it may concern...

I am not long for this world. My body and soul are corrupted and failing.

I wish to spare your township. Please bring quickly the following...



thirteen crow's feet

2 lbs. sycamore bark, north side

1 pint of porcupine blood

I will also need the ritual scroll held in safety's keeping by the blue-skins at the top of the mountain. You'll know them when you see them.

Please accept the amulet as a gift to the brave soul who undertakes the journey.

It will give you strength for the trials you may face. I would also desire a loaf of fresh raisin bread (this is not for the spell... I just miss it).

Sincerely,  
Dagon



## People & Places of Neverthawes

Many buildings in the village are now empty or have been re-purposed after the defeat of the mines. No demand remained for the fine luxuries of a haberdashery or a dedicated tobacco shop among the small populace remaining.

**The Frosty Tankard:** The only tavern left in town; the site where PCs will join the expedition. Owned by one-eyed **Lemeth Strunk**, it is filled with a large stone hearth, a crackling fire, and a host of seedy characters eying your pockets. Visitors take care.

**The Mountain Merchant Hall:** If the PCs need supplies before they leave, they can get them here from foppish proprietor **Chauncey Evergood**. (Chauncey is famous for his delicious raisin bread which he's offloading at fire-sale prices: 2 loaves for a single copper piece). But the party needs to hurry. On the morrow, he'll be loading up his wagons and leaving town for good. Chauncey's great-grandfather was one of the builders of the bridge that links the earth-mote to the mountain's peak. *"First they were frozen by the bitter cold, and then they were cooked by the dragon's breath. They were stupid men. Brave... but stupid."*

**Temple of Ulish:** The last remaining temple in Neverthawes, served by cleric **Levi Fangred**. It was through his roof that Dagon's amulet and request for aid fell. Levi has bravely volunteered to lead the expedition to Dagon's castle.

**Ardokk's Axes and Shields:** In recent years this shop has proved more a museum than a store. Owner **Gruin Ardokk** is the last known descendant of the Ardokk dwarves in the area. He will join the expedition with the intentions of reclaiming the Ardokk Mines and seeking revenge against the wizard who destroyed his clan.

**Irongate's Midnight Smithery:** Recently crushed by a large chunk of Dagon's crumbling earth mote. **Dornthrek Irongate** sits with a pint each evening near the hearth of The Frosty Tankard, bitter at his lot in life. Mention Dagon the Doleful and you'll hear a string of curses as long as a fence rail.

**The Gilded Griffin:** A modest inn maintained by **Erlathan and Elora Duskmere**, an elvin couple, both silver-haired and finely arrayed. They remember old Dagon well, even keeping an upstairs room for him, where he stayed on infrequent trips to visit the couple. A portrait of the wizard still hangs above the bed. More peculiar is the door in the room that seems to lead nowhere, with only a wall of brick behind it. Erlathan and Elora seem to take the village's impending doom in stride. *"Whatever shall happen, shall happen whether the linens are changed or not. If we are to perish, we shall perish upon clean sheets."*

## Player Introduction

*In the cold north of the Barrier Hills sits the wilderness village of Never-thawes, where the citizens have grown accustomed to a very peculiar sight. Although outsiders might be struck dumb at the sight of a castle resting upon an enormous chunk of earth hovering high above the village, the locals view the wizard's castle as nothing more than an annoying shadow that blots out the noonday sun.*

*"Dagon the Doleful", as he has been named, lives in the castle, perched upon the earth mote that hangs above the village so ominously, floating near the highest peaks of Frost Fang Mountain. Even from the town square it is easy to see a crudely-constructed rope bridge spanning the distance between the mountain's snowy crest and the old wizard's fantastical home.*

*You have responded to a call for help from the village: the castle lights have grown dark as chunks of the earth island have begun tumbling down with devastating effect upon the town. It is feared that the entire mote may soon plummet to earth, completely crushing the village and the citizens beneath it. An expedition is being formed to scale the mountain paths to investigate whether the old wizard inside the castle is still alive, and if anything can be done to keep the castle afloat.*

*As you enter the village, you notice one family after another busily loading their wagons and hitching up their horses. Along the muddy streets, nervous chatter is paired with occasional glances skyward. Word has gone out that local cleric Levi Fangred is recruiting willing souls for the expedition within The Frosty Tankard just ahead. Shady characters, muscle-for-hire, and obvious cut-throats stand in groups, whispering as you walk by. Perhaps they have come in response to the promise of 76 gold pieces for*

each man or woman who can reach the castle? Or perhaps the rumors of great treasure and arcane wisdom contained within the castle have proved a more enticing draw? Just before you enter the tavern, you glance up one last time at the stone walls of the keep looming ominously above you in the dull grey skies. So many questions waiting to be resolved!

## **Beginning the Expedition**

After reading the introduction, the players should have a vague understanding of the challenge awaiting them. In the role-play portion of the adventure that takes place inside *The Frosty Tankard*, the judge can reveal additional information to the players about Neverthawes, Dagon the Doleful, the Ardkokk Mines, and the other members of the expedition that will accompany them.

### **Adventure Notes**

- PCs can join the expedition by speaking with cleric Levi Fangred, seated at a corner table. He will offer 38 gold pieces now; with 38 more upon completion of the journey. He wears an amulet he claims was dropped from the castle above by Dagon the Doleful himself, and will show literate PCs the note that was attached to it. (**See Dagon's Note on page 10**).
- It will benefit the PCs greatly to meet with Gruin Ardkokk, the last known descendant of the famed Ardkokk Mines. The sullen dwarf is deep in his cups, but eager to begin the expedition, and no one knows more about the history of the mine than Gruin. In his drunken state, he will likely publicly accuse cleric Levi Fangred of being a lily-livered pacifist, unfit to lead a herd of goats, much less an expedition to the top of Frost Fang. He might also mention that the only good wizard is a dead wizard...
- Conversations with Gruin, Levi, Lemeth, or other tavern patrons should include important foreshadowing clues regarding the Ardkokk Mines and town history:
  - **Gruin:** “*The mines been closed for a hundred years, since Dagon unwittingly unleashed the beast.*”
  - **Lemeth:** “*Brave soul went in the mines to destroy the creature and never returned.*”

- “A hundred years ago Dagon the Doleful’s castle broke free, bringing ruin to a whole dwarven clan.”
- (Concerning the ongoing feud between Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardokk) “*Those two are always going at it. One despises the old wizard; the other thinks he hung the moon.*”
- PCs can also spend their coin to prepare themselves for the journey. Along with the items listed in DCC Tables 3-1 through 3-5, players may wish to procure items specific to a mountain expedition such as picks (3 gp), climbing cleats (2 gp), and cold-weather wear (gloves, coats, etc. 10 gp total). At the judge’s discretion, these items can provide a +2 bonus to checks for climbing, frost-bite, etc.
- Feel free to populate The Frosty Tankard with additional rustic locals or dangerous newcomers. Any player who chooses to interact should be rewarded with a 1d10 roll on the rumor table.

## Rumors and Scuttlebutt

1. “When the old wizard dies, so shall we all. The legend tells of an hourglass that only he can turn to ward off disaster. If he is dead, then we are all doomed.”
2. “My grandfather told me that a fierce dragon sleeps upon the carcasses of the men who built the bridge. You should speak to Chauncey at the Mountain Merchant Hall. His great-grandfather was one of the men incinerated by the devil-bird.”
3. “Aye, there is a shortcut through the mountain that would save half a day’s travel, but only a fool would journey through the old Ardokk Mines. Those haunted halls are guarded by a beast with serpents for hair, as well as seven-hundred dead dwarves. Poor Egad Greenthicket and his cow passed that way and never returned!”
4. “The river is swollen at the old Boulder Bridge, and I’ve heard talk of bandits. They say that one of them is as large as a house and smells like a dead catfish in the sun. You’ll do well to avoid that path to the mountain’s top.”
5. “Gruin Ardokk is the last of his clan and drinks himself into a stupor every night. I’ll wager a whole keg that he intends to murder the old wizard, falling castle or nay.”

6. "Levi Fangred is sober of mind and a good man to lead the expedition, though of late he seems somewhat obsessed with finding the old wizard."
7. "There are rumors of a strange clan that inhabits the mountain's peak. Some say they are like dwarves, but with blue skin and jagged teeth."
8. "You can be certain that the stories about the dragon are true. Many in the village have seen the gouts of flame from his nostrils. It is no legend. The Frost Fang dragon is as real as you and I."
9. "Gruin Ardokk's own mother told him of the she-beast that destroyed the mines and all the Ardokk clan. Serpents for hair, and a gaze that turns men into stone. The shortcut through the mine would be a fool's folly."
10. "Not many remember the old wizard, but the Duskmeres of The Gilded Griffin Inn knew him as a friend. Kept a room for him, they did. Top floor... and Dagon's mad gaze looks down from a portrait upon a door leading to nowhere!"



# The Expedition Begins!

The expedition will leave at first light. The PCs can make arrangements for spending the night in Neverthawes if you wish to role play such encounters. You may prefer to jump right in to the expedition if time is scarce. Judges can decide if they wish the night to pass without incident: there are, after all, some very shady and nefarious characters lurking about! The NPC stats of Gruin, Levi, Agandis, and Drakoe listed below should suffice as models for a shadowy encounter with bandits or ruffians attempting to steal the medallion in Levi's possession, or relieving the PCs of their recently acquired gold coins!

Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardokk are the two primary NPCs playing a role in the expedition. If there are less than 4 1st level PC's, the judge may wish to add more NPCs to the group if they feel the expedition's strength needs shoring up.

At certain points in the adventure (listed in the Adventure Notes for each chapter), the judge will need to take control of the NPCs to implement key actions. It is important, however, that in general playing the NPCs should not steer the party or shine above the PCs. When, *and if*, the NPCs engage in an encounter, the judge should settle their actions simply and swiftly and move on. It is also recommended that NPCs should act together at the end of the initiative order.

**Gruin Ardokk (dwarf merchant):** Init -1; Atk warhammer +2 melee (1d8+2); AC 14; HD 1d10; hp 11; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.

*Possessions:* warhammer, chain mail, lantern, 36 cp in purse.

**Levi Fangred (human cleric):** Init +1; Atk battleaxe +0 melee (1d10) AC 11; HD 1d8; hp 11; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP: heal 4/day (character's HD); *blessing* spell 4/day (pg.255 DCC), Turn Unholy 4/day (pg.96 DCC); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +3; AL L.

*Possessions:* battleaxe, holy symbol, dagger, shovel, 50 gp. **Dagon's Enchanted Amulet:** wearer gains +2 to Luck while climbing Frost Fang, +1 to Strength and Agility. In Dagon's presence, wearer will be compelled to defend the powerful wizard to the death. (Wearer must succeed on a DC 16 Will save at the beginning of each turn in order to resist this effect. A roll of 18+ will allow them to remove it).

## Optional NPCs and expedition members

**Agandis Thistlecreek (halfling chicken butcher):** Init +0; Atk handaxe +1 (1d6+2); AC 11; HD 1d6; hp 7; MV 20'; Act 1d20 (two-weapon 2d16); SP two-weapon fighting, Good luck charm (+11 Luck to Start), Stealth (+3 sneak and hide), infravision; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1; AL L.

*Possessions:* handaxe (x2), 5 lbs. chicken meat, hand-sized mirror, 29 cp.

**Drakoe Harenhall (human ropemaker):** Init +1; Atk short sword +1 (1d8+1); AC 13; HD 1d12; hp 11; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; AL N.

*Possessions:* Hide armor (+3), short sword, dagger, rope 100', candle, 12cp.

These characters were generated by the Purple Sorcerer Upper Level Character Generator. If you need more or different characters to fill out your expedition, feel free to make your own! (Again, if you are running this adventure as a convention game, for time's sake it is recommended that you arrive with pre-gen characters in order to finish

the expedition in a four hour window.)





# Encounter Index

1-1	Leaving Neverthawes.....	20
1-2	The Mines of Ardkokk.....	21
1-2A	Ardokk Hall of Remembrance .....	23
1-2B	Ardokk Reception Chamber .....	24
1-2C	Ardokk Treasury.....	27
1-3	Boulder Bridge .....	28
1-4	The Devil's Stairway .....	33
1-5	Abandoned Mill .....	35
1-6	Tunnels of Frost Fang .....	39
1-6A	The Ugnoid Encampment.....	41
1-6B	The Ugnoid Dragon Room .....	44
1-7	The Bridge .....	46
1-8	Dagon's Castle, Outer Walls .....	49
1-8A	Dagon's Cloud Castle.....	50
	The Final Confrontation .....	52
	Adventure's End .....	56

# The Frost Fang Expedition!

## Encounter Table

Area	Type	Encounter
1-1	C	(Bandits/optional. See <i>The Expedition Begins!</i> )
1-2	C/T	Rust Centipedes/Ceiling Trap
1-2A	C/T	Dwarven Ghosts/Tribute Trap
1-2B	C	Medusa Cow
1-2C	C	Dwarven Ghosts
1-3	C	Spell Goat/Mummified Yeti, Ugnoid
1-4	C/T	Frost Gnats
1-5	C/T	Possessed Windmill
1-6	C	Frost Fang Ugnoids
1-6A	C	Frost Fang Ugnoids/Trained Penguins
1-6B	C	Frost Fang Ugnoids/Dragon
1-7	C/T	Frost Fang Ugnoids/Precarious Bridge
1-8	C	Mutated Evergreenk
1-8A	C	Dagon the Doleful/Scroll Golems

## Area 1-1: Leaving Neverthawes

*The cock crows into a dull gray morning sky, echoing with distant thunder. In the cold drizzling rain, a few of the town's citizens have gathered to see you off. The Barren Road stretches out before you, from this vantage point it seems to wind forever up the face of Frost Fang Mountain.*

*Setting off, the first leg of your journey runs west toward Shiver Creek, before the road cuts north toward the mines of Ardokk. After an hour of slogging over a muddy rutted trail, the expedition comes to a crossroads. You can either continue along the Barren Road toward Frost Fang via the Boulder Bridge, or you can save valuable daylight by cutting through the abandoned Ardokk mines.*

Both directions contain challenges and difficult decisions. The shortcut through the Ardkokk Mines, however, will shave valuable hours from the journey and could allow the party to reach the summit before nightfall (helping them avoid potential frostbite). Conversely, it is likely the more dangerous route.

## Adventure Notes

- Gruin Ardkokk will try to persuade the party to venture into the mines of his forefathers. He will tell of great treasure still buried and guarded by a “she-devil”. He promises an additional 50 gold to anyone who helps him defeat the “vile ruination of my people’s legacy”.
- Levi Fangred will caress the amulet around his neck, explaining that his heart tells him the mines are a fool’s folly, and it is better to stick to the road. Regardless of the decision, either NPC will grumble, but go along with the majority.
- If the party enters the mines, proceed to **Area 1-2: The Mines of Ardkokk**. If they choose to stay on the Barren Road, they will soon arrive at **Area 1-3: Boulder Bridge**.

## Area 1-2: The Mines of Ardkokk

*Carved into the side of the mountain above you, the mouth of the Ardkokk Mines can just be made out, covered with winter-dead branches and vines. The entrance is literally the enormous carved mouth of a dwarven warrior!*

Entering the tunnel reveals a once-great dwarven hall with massive columns and tiered platforms. Most of the doors are blocked by massive cave-ins, but to the north, one massive door remains clear. Footsteps echo in this cold, dead cavernous chamber.

## Adventure Notes

- Dwarves smell gold coming from behind the massive doors ahead.
- The door is locked and rusted, requiring a DC13 open locks check to pick; DC 10 if lubricant is applied. The door can be smashed with a DC 12 Strength check, but doing so attracts 1d4 **Rust Centipedes** and triggers a ceiling fall (see page 22).

- PCs can apply their Luck modifier to a DC 15 Listen check to hear the faint dinging of a cowbell echoing in the distance.
- Gruin Ardokk will argue that the party needs to press forward. Levi Fangred will counter they should “turn back and seek a path under the open skies”.
- All chambers in the mines excepting the entrance are dark, requiring some form of light source to navigate.

**Dagon's amulet:** This powerfully enchanted amulet worn by Levi Fangred affects not only the wearer, but also those nearby. Anyone who touches the amulet might suddenly see a vision. Likewise, anyone who uses magic, prayer, or other mystical skills (or who even strikes a magical beast!) in its presence might feel its effects. Refer to the table in **Appendix C on page 62** for a list of possible visions, most providing important clues that will help the players complete the adventure.

**Rust Centipede (1d4):** Init +2; Atk bite +1 melee (2+ corrosion damage); AC 8; HD 1/2; hp 2; MV 15` or climb 15`; Act 1d20; SP corrosion (Any metal weapon that strikes the creature is weakened, suffering a -1 to hit and damage going forth. Any successful bite attack also inflicts a -1 to wearer's metal armor bonus); SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1; AL N.

**Falling Ceiling Trap:** DC 12 Reflex save for all in room; 1d4 damage.



## **Area 1-2A: Ardokk Hall of Remembrance**

*Beyond the ornately carved door a stone corridor leads to a long rectangular hall, lined with statues of dwarven warriors; seemingly a tribute to the Ardokk lineage. Gruin Ardokk grimly places one brawny hand upon the first statue, while Levi Fangred mutters that there is no time to waste on sentimentality. Suddenly the already chill hallway grows noticeably colder as the braziers on the wall flicker to life with a sickly green flame.*

### **Adventure Notes**

- A door similar to the entrance rests on the far side of the chamber. The spirits of undead dwarves inhabit this room and can be detected by any cleric with a successful DC 11 Personality check.
- A few steps into the chamber, engraved dwarven runes form a threshold upon the floor reading: “Only in tribute shall any pass these our forefathers.” One of the statues on this side of the threshold holds a scale in each perfectly balanced hand, a gold coin resting on each, covered in dust. Anyone who crosses the threshold without placing a gold coin in tribute on one of the trays awakens 1d4 dwarven ghosts. Additionally, after everyone has crossed the threshold, if the scales are not balanced the PCs will hear an ancient mechanism grinding as it pushes open a stone slab on either the right or the left wall (depending which side of the scale was lifted up) releasing 1d4 rust centipedes! Each round that the scale is not balanced results in an additional monster joining the fray. (The scales of the statue raise and lower as coins are placed on them).
- A successful DC 13 Intelligence check will recognize that the ding of a cowbell is sounding from the end of the hall, behind the door.
- The door ahead is stuck slightly ajar. As the PCs leave the room, the green braziers dampen and die behind them. Any unresolved combat will follow the party into the next room.
- Levi or Gruin might take this opportunity to pass a note or whisper to a party member with whom he feels a kinship (see **Appendix A: Judge’s Notes on pages 59-60**).

- Any close inspection of the statues will reveal that one models a grotesque deformity: a figure sporting strange alabaster horns and over-sized teeth. Gruin Ardkk will not discuss its appearance, repulsed by the “obvious vandalism”.

**Dwarven Ghosts of Ardkk (1d6):** Init +2; Atk special (see below); AC 10; HD 2d10; hp 12; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP undead traits, half damage from non-magical weapons, ethereal mining pick +2 melee (1d4 dmg, and the attacked creature must make a DC 12 Will save to resist overwhelming fear accompanied by 1d4 rounds of uncontrollable weeping as they see a vision of the dwarves' demise: -2 to all attacks); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N.

## **Area 1-2B: Ardkk Reception Chamber**

*The dusty presence of one-hundred year old air surrounds you as your footsteps echo in the darkness of this large room. The chamber is lined with tall pillars near the walls, with dozens of other vague, shadowy shapes scattered throughout the space. The clip-clop of hooves on stone pavers and the lonesome dink-dink of a solitary cowbell bounce off the stone walls from somewhere in the dark.*

### **Adventure Notes**

- A hundred petrified Ardkk dwarves stand scattered throughout the room, frozen in various defensive postures. This chamber was once used by the Ardkks to negotiate with emissaries from distant lands, the Ardkk Treasury conveniently attached to one side. A staircase winds upward to the northern exit of the mines.
- The outer edges of the room are lined with large pillars. The silhouette of a cow can be seen ambling behind them in the shadows. The PC with the lowest luck will step into a fresh pile of cow dung (phlogiston manure).
- A petrified stone **Egad Greenthicket** crouches like a statue in the center of the room, mirror in one raised hand, a scroll in the other (both items also petrified). The skeletal remains of the once-fearsome medusa lie crumpled and caked in dust before him.

# THE MINES OF ARDOKK

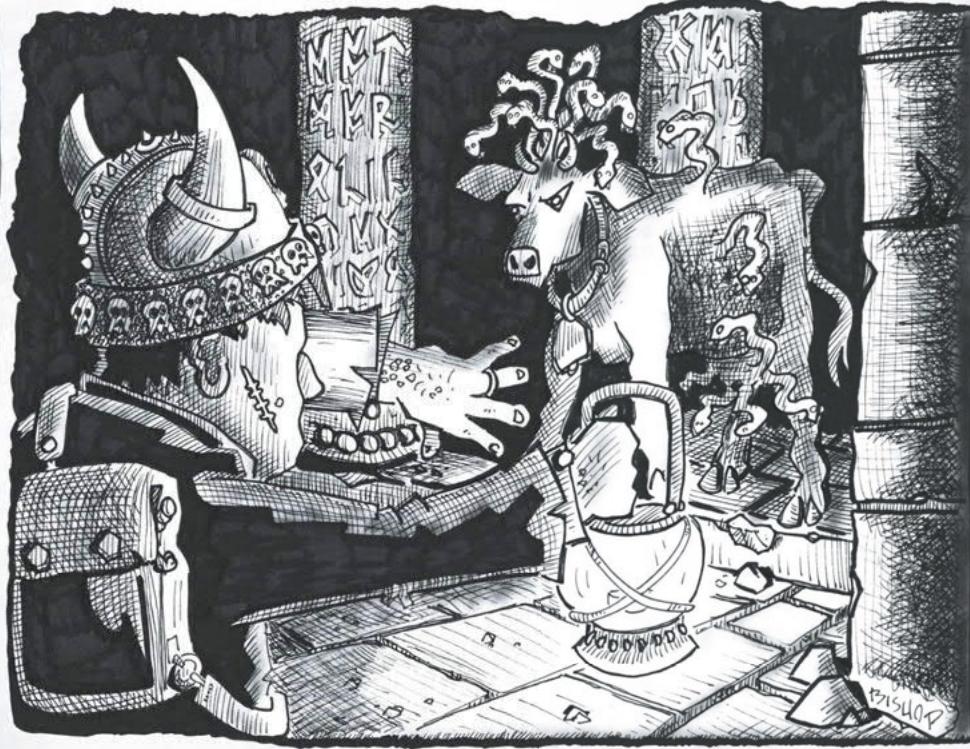


- The scroll in Egad's clenched fist was a transference spell created by Dagon: the halfling used it to entrap the creature inside the less intimidating bovine. Arcane forces have kept the cow alive these many years. It does not speak, being no more intelligent than an ordinary cow. It will likely become spooked and make inadvertent attacks when discovered.

**Medusa Cow:** Init +2; Atk snake bite +2 melee (1d4+2) and petrification (DC11 Will save to resist); AC 13; HD 3d8; hp 17; MV 25'; 4d20; SP petrifying gaze (DC 12 Will save); SV Fort +2, Ref +2 Will +0; AL N.

The startled Medusa Cow (or “Moodusa” for judges who prefer the outlandish!) can make up to four snake attacks each turn (no more than two against one target). A successful bite attack that delivers damage forces the victim to make a DC 11 Will Save or begin the metamorphosis of petrification. Such victims suffer an immediate -2 penalty to attack rolls as their muscles begin to seize up.

Any attack, melee or ranged, made against the cow requires looking at it, unless the attackers eyes are closed (-4 melee; -4 ranged penalty to



such attacks). Any attacker looking at the cow must make a DC 11 Will save after the attack or begin the process toward permanent petrification, as if they had been bitten.

Affected PCs must make an additional save to shake off the effects on their next round; failure results in complete paralyzation. If the poor PC fails a third and final save on the following round, they are turned permanently to stone. (Success frees them from the paralyzation).

A character brandishing a mirror as an action can force the medusa cow to make the same DC 11 Will save. The process for the cow is the same as with the PCs to avoid petrification. (Looking at the creature through the mirror offers no protection — a PC must make the same DC 11 Will save as if they looked on it directly).

The far wall sports a weapon rack holding two short swords (d6), a long sword (d8), and two fine ebony throwing daggers (d4/d10). The table nearby holds a suit of studded leather armor (+3 AC bonus), an Ardokk shield (+1 AC bonus) and a rabbit's foot on a chain (extra roll on a death saving/roll under Luck throw, one-time use).

Due to their proximity to the amulet, anyone who uses magic in this encounter or strikes the Moodusa has a 50% chance of seeing a vision regarding Dagon and the hourglass (see **Appendix C on page 62**).

## **Area 1-2C: Ardokk Treasury**

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*A hundred bejeweled chests line the walls and shelves of this vault. Though cobwebbed and dusty, their resplendent design reveals the great craftsmanship of the Ardokk dwarves. One chest lies open in the center of the room, spilling over with more gold pieces than you could imagine could exist in one place!*

### **Adventure Notes**

- If the players enter the treasury, as in the hallway, they feel the room grow suddenly cold as the braziers upon the walls come to life with green flames. A ghostly Ardokk dwarf will appear over every chest, each peering intently at the PCs. If any character should approach one of the chests, the ethereal dwarves will begin to tighten their grips on the deadly looking pick-axes in their hands.

- Gruin Ardokk will step forward to plead before the dwarven spirits that he promised the party 50 gold each for helping to destroy the medusa. They will honor this vow, but nothing more.
- Should the adventurers attempt to steal the gold, they will meet almost certain death as they face the wrath of the three-hundred Dwarven Ghosts of Ardokk (minus any that were defeated in the Hall of Remembrance.)

**Dwarven Ghosts of Ardokk (1d6 each new round):** Init +2; Atk special (see below); AC 10; HD 2d10; hp 12; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP undead traits, half damage from non-magical weapons, ethereal mining pick +2 melee (1d4 dmg, and the attacked creature must make a DC 12 Will save to resist overwhelming fear accompanied by 1d4 rounds of uncontrollable weeping as they see a vision of the dwarves' demise: -2 to all attacks); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N.

After the PCs reach the end of the Mines of Ardokk, read or paraphrase the following:

*The stairs that lead upward through the chamber of pillars eventually exit on the north side of the mountain onto the Barren Road. Snow is falling at this higher elevation and the air is bitterly cold. From here, you can continue westward toward the peaks and what appear to be overgrown stairs cut into the steep sides of the mountain, or head north-east towards what looks to be a derelict windmill.*

If the party decides to continue via The Devil's Stairs, proceed to **Area 1-4**. If they decide to head toward the abandoned windmill, proceed to **Area 1-5**.

## **Area 1-3: Boulder Bridge**

*The rain has turned to snow as bitingly chill air envelopes you. The rooftops of distant Neverthawes have long disappeared into the mists below. You hear what sounds like thunder, then realize that another chunk of the earth mote has broken off, falling onto the hapless village. Levi Fangred says a quick prayer and quickens his step. Ahead, you hear the murmur of a mountain stream as a stone bridge comes*

into view. "Boulder Bridge" mutters Gruin Ardokk. On this side of the bridge you see a small, blue-skinned man poking at a campfire. A goat sits nearby, a long horn seemingly strapped to its head.

The goat is named **Doranthel** and is actually a cursed elf with what can only be described as a *unicorn complex*. He commands the blue-skinned, runaway ugnoid (see sidebar) named **Klaklak** and a mummified yeti named **Tarr**. Doranthel is one of the missing bridge-builders. While constructing the rope bridge to Dagon's castle many years ago, he and the other workers were captured by the ugnoids and forced to pilfer the mining rails from the Ardokk mines, re-laying the tracks atop the mountain. After that, he and the others were subjected to depraved black magic rituals by the tribe's shaman. Many perished, while others cast themselves from the high cliffs to find escape.

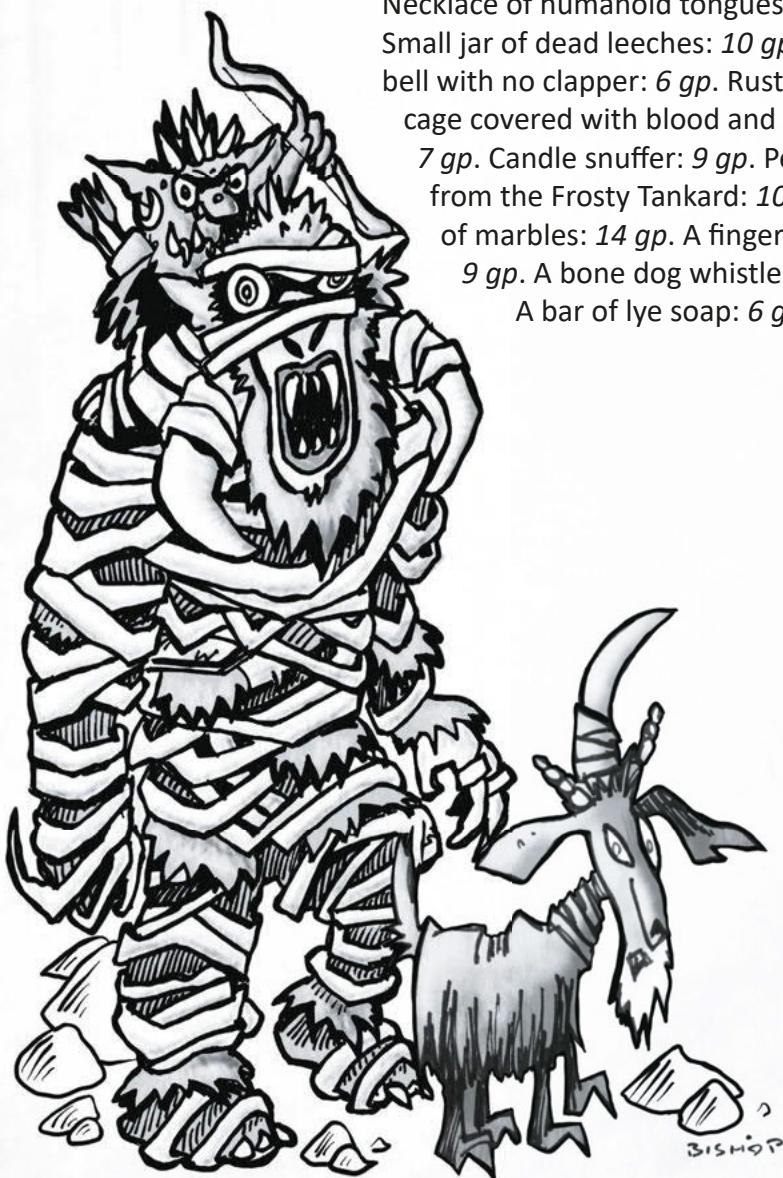
## Adventure Notes

- Doranthel wears the horn on his head, somewhat madly believing himself to be a unicorn rather than a goat. He is unable to quell his goat voice when he speaks. *"Hello baaaannndd of travelers. What haaaaave you to trade with us today?"*
- Doranthel intends to extort the expedition by selling them a few less-than-valuable items from his campsite, making it clear that none shall pass who do not participate in the charade.
- The stream's current is swift, freezing, and dangerous. Swimming across requires a DC 14 Strength or Agility check on 3 successful rounds; Failure results in 1d4 damage each missed roll until crossed.
- Gruin Ardokk will remind the party that this could have been avoided if they had taken the shortcut through the mines. Levi Fangured will tell them that every path is fraught with its own peril.



The giant Tarr will ominously receive the payment for each transaction. He will pass each coin to Klaklak, who will climb on his back, bite the coin, and then drop it into a pouch. The prices are obviously over-inflated; such is the business of extortion. Doranthel will only allow the party to pass if they each purchase one item listed in the possessions inventory below:

8' of singed rope: 8 gp. Skull of a cat: 9 gp. Ukulele with no strings: 10 gp. Necklace of humanoid tongues: 12 gp. Small jar of dead leeches: 10 gp. Small bell with no clapper: 6 gp. Rusty birdcage covered with blood and feathers: 7 gp. Candle snuffer: 9 gp. Pewter cup from the Frosty Tankard: 10 gp. Bag of marbles: 14 gp. A finger in a box: 9 gp. A bone dog whistle: 12 gp. A bar of lye soap: 6 gp.



**Tarr the Mummified Yeti (9` tall 800 lbs.):** Init -2; Atk claw +4 melee (1d8+2) or hurled stone +4 missile fire (1d8+2, range 60`); AC 14; HD 5d10; hp 28; MV 30`; Act 1d24; SP vulnerable to fire (x2), crit on 22-24, undead traits, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *paralysis* spells; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2; AL C.

**Doranthel the “Unicorn”:** Init +1; Atk hoof +1 melee (1d4) or spell +2 (see SP); AC 11; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 30`; Act 1d20; SP *mirror image* (DCC pg. 182), *Scorching Ray* (DCC pg. 192); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4; AL C.

**Klaklak the Ugnoid:** Init -1; Atk dull sword -1 melee (1d3) or short bow -1 (1d6) missile fire; AC 8; HD 1d6; hp 5; MV 20`; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60`; SV Fort -2, Ref +0, Will -2; AL C.

**Possessions:** Doranthel: A key to the chest dangles around his neck. Klaklak: A short bow, six arrows, and a short sword.

A medium-sized locked chest (DC13 to pick without key, DC 15 to smash) rests near the campfire.

When opened a Shrieking Dodo erupts from the chest, erratically flying around the campsite, emitting an ear-piercing scream (DC 12 Fort Save or 1d3 damage and character is deaf for 1d6 rounds). The bird will fly away after one round (DC 20 to catch and subdue). Items inside the chest include: 82 gp, 1 set of hide armor (+3 AC bonus), 1 set of scale armor (+4 AC bonus), carved bone blowgun with five needles (1d4 dmg) with vial of poison (extra 1D6 damage, 5 uses), **Scroll of Feather Fall** (1 use), 3 small clay pots, each filled with oil, a short wick and a flint igniter (1d6+2 and ongoing fire damage). If the chest is smashed, there is a 50% chance that one of the clay pots will explode, destroying all but the scale armor and the gold. Roll damage for all within 5`.

From this location the PCs may choose to travel up the steep stairs carved into the mountain in **Area 1-4**, or bypass that area and instead make their way to the abandoned windmill in **Area 1-5**.



## Brief History of the Ugnoids

In their early days, the Ardkokk dwarves faced starvation and near-extinction as they began to delve into the bowels of their frozen mountain, seeking to claim its abundant gold deposits and raise their clan to prominence.

While conducting their obsessive search for gold, the first Ardkokks discovered a series of tunnels that led down to the underground village of a tribe of blue-skinned goblins. The two factions warred for over a decade until the arrival of a new malevolent enemy caused them to set aside their agendas long enough to ensure their own preservation. The evil medusa **Helgathia Myrr** terrorized the two clans, indiscriminately laying waste to any in her path, goblin or dwarf. A fiendish trap was laid by the Ardkokk dwarves, using the unknowing goblin clan as bait. A series of tunnels around the goblin village were collapsed, imprisoning the beast in a chamber that would remain closed another thousand years (until inadvertently opened by the ascent of Dagon's earth mote).

But unbeknownst to the clever Ardkokks, many dwarven families they believed had been killed by the medusa were, in actuality, trapped by the tunnel collapse in the lowest levels of the mountain along with their goblinoid enemies. Whether forced into slavery by the goblins, or coaxed into action by their own realization that rescue would never come, the gene pools of the two species were eventually mixed. Generations of interbreeding passed before Dagon's earthquake freed them all (including Helgathia Myrr) a hundred years ago. The inbred aberrations (part goblin; part dwarf) eventually made their way from the mountain's core to the bitterly cold pinnacle of Frost Fang Mountain.

The blue-skinned, bug-eyed creatures—that some have referred to as “ugnoids”—have learned to survive in the harsh environment of the icy mountain’s peak. Their speech is a strange mixture of goblin and dwarf, and both those races find the dialect at the same time familiar and foreign when heard. Twisted by their long years trapped in the heart of the mountain, the repulsive and primitive ugnoids of Frost Fang are as ferocious as feral wolves, determined to guard the peaks where they live against all comers.

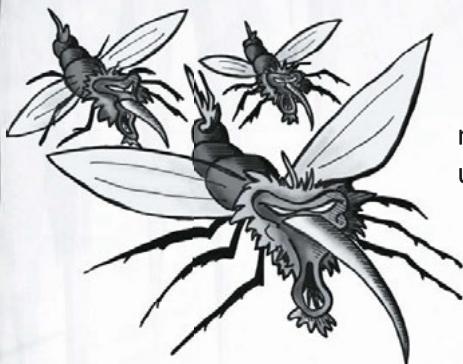
## **Area 1-4: The Devil's Stairway**

*The Barren Road continues to climb through the heavy snow of the Frost Fang Mountains, meandering ever closer to the ominous earth-island above you. Suddenly the rough hewn cliff reveals a granite stairway carved into the mountain, leading upward toward the summit. Almost hidden by tangled brush, trees, and snow, the stairs would be impossible to traverse with horse and cart, but on foot, it may serve to save valuable daylight.*

Adventurers that take the stairs will climb for nearly an hour before the judge should have them make a DC 10 Stamina check. Any PC that purchased special cold-weather gear at the adventure's start may be granted a +1 or +2 bonus to their check, at the judge's discretion. Anyone who fails the check will lose 5` off their speed until their next extended rest.

### **Adventure Notes**

- Determine the party marching order (there is room for two PCs side-by-side on the stairs) and ask the lead character(s) for an Intelligence check as they progress (DC 15 to notice that a section of the stairs appear to be moving slightly). A 10` gap in the stairway has been filled by millions of Frost Gnats that blend in with the natural color of the granite, forming an illusion of steps where none exist. The first step onto the Frost Gnats will lead to a nasty 20` plunge down onto a rocky ledge (2d6 damage) unless the character makes a DC12 Reflex save and grabs the lip of the previous stair.
- The skeletal remains of a long dead adventure lay on the lower ledge. He wears dwarf-sized studded leather armor in some disrepair (+2 AC bonus), and grips a warhammer fashioned as a ram's head (1d8 dmg). He wears an amulet similar to the one that Levi Fangred bears, though rusted and broken beyond repair.
- Whether a character falls or not, the Frost Gnats will swarm the party when they attempt to cross the breach, attacking until the party reaches the top of the stairs. To proceed, PCs must succeed on a DC 13 Strength or Agility check to leap across the gap. If a rope is secured, party members can be hoisted to the other side with a DC 10 Strength or Agility check by those already across



(up to four PCs on the far side can participate in this check). Once across the chasm, it is 60' to the top of the stairs. The characters may move their normal speed in one round up the steps (remember any Stamina penalties incurred earlier on the stairs).

- Due to the proximity of Dagon's amulet, anyone who uses magic in this encounter has a 50% chance of seeing a vision regarding Dagon and the hourglass (see **Appendix C on page 62**).

**Frost Gnats:** Init +4; Atk swarming bite +2 melee (1d4 plus sting); AC 8; HD 4d8; hp 26; MV 40'; Act special; SP bite all targets within 40'x40' space; half damage from non-area attacks, double damage from area attacks, sting (DC8 Fort save or 1d3 allergic reaction. 1: Face swells and target is blinded for 1d4 rounds. 2: Feet swell and target loses another 5' speed for 1d4 rounds. 3: Bleeding from ears and fingernails, 1d4 added damage); SV Fort +0, Ref +6, Will -2; AL N.

At the end of this encounter, read or paraphrase the following:

*From just above you, a thunderous screech echoes across the mountain peaks, but you see no sign of what made it. The wind howls and the bitter cold bites at your exposed skin as your fingers and toes grow numb. You suddenly glimpse a momentary burst of flame on Frost Fang's peak. You have almost reached the top!*

Continue on to **Area 1-6: The Tunnels of Frost Fang**

## Area 1-5: The Abandoned Mill

*The cold winds and swirling snow have reduced visibility to twenty feet in front of you. From somewhere up ahead, you hear the repetitive mechanical groan of the turning of what sounds like a derelict windmill. When the pathway at last levels off, just beyond a crusty snowbank you see the windmill's slowly turning sails, tattered and neglected. (Should the party approach) As you draw nearer, the sound of snoring fills your ears. Suddenly, there is a tremendous series of pops and creaks as the windmill stretches, and then turns to face you!*

The windmill is actually a trapped demi-patron of Azi Dahaka named **Seleeshara** who longs to be free of her prison. Immediately upon seeing the party, she will lumber toward the adventurers and ask each in turn “Are... you... a wizard?” (For added interest, start with a character who is *not* a wizard.) If someone answers in the affirmative, she will use one of her sails to point to a runic circle nearby, comprised of smooth boulders and large mushrooms. “Release... me...”

### Adventure Notes

- The windmill stands 25' tall and possesses limited speech abilities, only able to form the most rudimentary phrases. She will continue to point to the circle until someone steps inside. If players attempt to bypass the windmill, she will become aggressive. Actual attempts by anyone to pass her will enrage the giant creature: roll initiative!
- When someone enters the circle, the windmill will utter, “*Sacrifice... of... blood.*” Any letting of blood will cause an inscription to magically appear on the largest stone in the circle, invisible to anyone outside the runic circle. Reading the inscription aloud with the letting of blood is tantamount to performing the ritual. (See **Ritual of Thralldom Dissolution** on page 37).
- Gruin Ardkok will voice support for the idea of releasing the “spirit”. Levi Fangred will oppose such thinking, citing that there was a reason that the “creature” was imprisoned in the first place, and that it could be evil. Levi will appear increasingly agitated and eager to move on to the top of the mountain, clutching the amulet to his chest.



# Ritual of Thrallodom Dissolution

**Casting Time:** 3 attempts to succeed before ritual can no longer be completed. Caster must be in runic circle with the letting of blood as evidence to Azi Dahaka that the circle is inhabited. At least one point of spell burn must be expended during the first attempt. The judge may request a finger, toe, ear lobe, or scoring of the left arm to awaken Azi Dahaka.

**General:** Any soul who calls upon the desert prince of storm and waste invites the archfiend to measure his or her worth as a follower. Successfully casting the ritual gives the caster an opportunity to attempt a patron bond (DCC pg. 148) with Azi Dahaka. (Any magic user immediately recognizes the chaotic nature of the patron).

**Manifestation:** Roll 1d4. 1: Small snakes begin to writhe, squirm, and fall from the caster's sleeves. 2: Heat from the runic circle begins to melt the snow around you. 3: The caster's tongue elongates and forks. 4: The caster's eyes grow large and bulge for the duration of the ritual.

**1-3:** Failure, and caster vomits a squirming mass of small rattlesnakes, taking 1d4 damage.

**4-6:** Failure, and a finger on the caster's non-dominant hand turns into a snake. If not severed from the hand before the next round, it will attempt to bite the caster (+4 melee, 1d4 ongoing poison damage, DC 8 Fort Save). Severing the finger causes 1 hp damage.

**7-9:** Failure. The caster's ears and nose disappear as their head morphs to resemble that of a cobra for the next 1d10 days before slowly returning to normal. The caster becomes susceptible to cold for the duration as well, suffering a -2 to resist cold checks.

**10-12:** Failure, and the caster's skin takes on the appearance of a green cactus with needles and yellow flowers for 1d6 days.

**13-15:** Success! The spirit is freed from her windmill prison. The structure rattles violently and explodes (all in area must succeed on a DC 10 Reflex save or take 1d4 damage). She manifests in her true form as a giant glowing dragonfly, and quickly darts off into the clouds.

**16-18:** Success and the windmill implodes upon itself. Emerging from the rubble, the freed creature appears as a giant glowing dragonfly. Grateful, it grants you a boon of +2 should you ever decide to form a patron bond with her master, Azi Dahaka. She tells you that it was Dagon the Doleful who imprisoned her and that the wizard is not to be trusted.

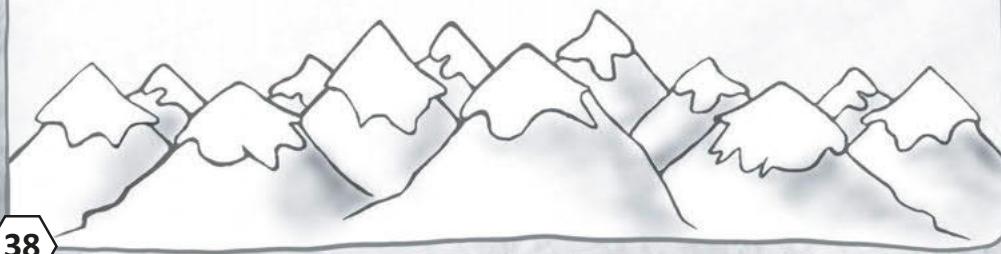
**19 or higher:** Success and Azi Dahaka himself manifests before you in the clouds to free the spirit from her prison. He tells you that it was Dagon the Doleful who captured his servant and hid her in this place behind the cold winds of winter, away from his searching eyes. He grants the caster one use of the spell *snake trick* (DCC pg. 333) with a +4 boon. Azi Dahaka also recognizes the caster's pluck and says that he will reveal the secrets of the universe to them if they destroy the wizard who bound Seleeshara (forming a patron bond).

**Seleeshara the Demi-Patron (Windmill Form):** Init +4; Atk sail slam +4 melee (1d8+2) and stone hurl +2 missile fire (1d8+2) or spell (see SP); AC 14; HD 4d12; hp 42; MV 50'; Act 2d20; SP spells (+4 spell checks) *sleep* (pg. 155), *magic shield* (pg. 146), *snake trick* (pg. 333); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +2; AL C.

At the conclusion of this encounter, the PC closest to Levi Fangred will be briefly blinded by the sun's reflection on Dagon's amulet and will see a vision (see the table in **Appendix C on page 62**). Once resolved, read or paraphrase the following:

*From just above you, a thunderous screech echoes across the mountain peaks, but you see no sign of what made it. The wind howls and the bitter cold bites at your exposed skin as your fingers and toes grow numb. You suddenly glimpse a momentary burst of flame on Frost Fang's peak. You have almost reached the top!*

Proceed to **Area 1-6: The Tunnels of Frost Fang**.



## **Area 1-6: The Tunnels of Frost Fang**

Before reading the following flavor text aloud, have each of the PCs roll 1d20 modified by their Fortitude bonus and compare the results on the following table. (If the players took the shortcut through the Ardkokk Mines, they receive a +2 to their rolls. If they purchased cold-weather clothing, they receive another +2 to their rolls).

**1-3:** Extreme frostbite and fatigue. Take 1d6 damage; lose 1d10 toes.

**4-7:** Extreme frostbite. Take 1d4 damage and lose 1d6 toes.

**8-11:** Frostbite. Take 1d3 damage and lose one toe.

**12-14:** Shivering, -2 to attack rolls until warmed up.

**16-17:** Cold, but no other ill effects.

**18 or higher:** The cold invigorates you. Add a +2 to your next initiative roll.

*At long last, the crest of Frost Fang stands before you. The Barren Road ends in the darkness of a tunnel that old timers have told you leads through the mountain's peak to the floating earth-mote on the other side. As snowflakes swirl around you and the rest of the expedition, caked blood from earlier challenges has frozen to your skin and coats. From this vantage point, you spy two small blue-skinned humanoid figures perched on a ledge overlooking the tunnel. They seem distracted, unaware of your presence as they shout at each other in some unknown gibberish, squabbling over a game of cards being played on a small boulder between them. A set of rails like the tracks for a mining cart protrude from the mouth of the cave, ending at the edge of the precipice.*

The ugnoids speak a primitive amalgamation of the goblin and ancient dwarven languages. Anyone familiar with either of these dialects will pick up bits and pieces of information, but not the whole. Each of the ugnoids guards are armed with shortbows and short swords. They will not initiate combat, instead demanding (in their own language) that the interlopers lay down their weapons outside the mouth of the cave and submit to having their hands bound before being allowed to enter. If attacked, they will retreat into the tunnel on the ledge to seek reinforcements.



## Adventure Notes

- There is ample rock and tree cover for any character to attempt to sneak to the front of the tunnel entrance (DC 12 Agility check), and/or to climb the sheer rock wall (DC 12 Agility check).
- The main tunnel at the end of Barren Road leads to the communal living area of the ugnoid tribe. The smaller tunnel from the ledge where the two guards are posted leads to the back of the cave and into the “dragon” holding room. If the party manages to silence the guards before they sound an alert, it’s possible to enter the cave on the ledge undetected by the tribe.
- If the PCs enter the larger main tunnel, they will immediately feel warmth and hear the crackling roar of a distant fire. A DC 8 Intelligence check will detect subtle movements in the dark alcoves and side tunnels, and an awareness that the party is being watched. Proceed to **Area 1-6A**.
- If the PCs enter from the tunnel on the ledge, they will come to the dragon holding room. Proceed to **Area 1-6B**.

**Frost Fang Ugnoids (50):** Init -1; Atk club, spear or dull sword -1 melee (1d3) or sling -1 (1d3) missile fire; AC 8; HD 1d6; hp 3; MV 20`; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60`; SV Fort -2, Ref +0, Will -2; AL C.

## Area 1-6A: The Ugnoid Encampment

*As you enter the mouth of the cave, you are greeted by rapturous warmth, the crackle of a fire echoing in the distance. The rails that ended on the precipice outside disappear into the darkness of a large chamber ahead, the wooden ties beneath the silvery rails branded with the Ardokk crest. As the cave widens out, you feel a hundred shining eyes staring at you from behind the rocks and from within shadowy alcoves of the cave.*

The party is surrounded by the ugnoids, hovering at a safe distance as they brandish crude spears and shields in the shadows. If allowed, they will urge the PCs forward down the widening cave until they find themselves in the heart of the encampment. There the party will be forced to their knees as an ugnoid Shaman (leading several long-toothed penguin-like creatures on leashes) will emerge from a tent structure to shamble forward slowly before stopping before the party. Behind him

an ugnoid Chieftain leads an old bearded man in shackles. The prisoner's back is crooked, his skin is dotted with sores. The frail man's milky gaze indicates that he is blind as he stumbles along clumsily behind the chieftain.

## Adventure Notes

- The chieftain uses the old man (the last remaining survivor of the captured bridge workers of yore) as an interpreter. Long ago, his name was **Thilas Evergood** (great-grandfather to Chauncey Evergood of the Mountain Merchant Hall), but he now answers to **Blugdonk**, meaning "eye-saliva of the infected hyena". (*See History of Thilas Evergood*).
- Communicating through Thilas, the ugnoid chieftain will demand to know why the PCs are trespassing. He will deny passage through the tunnel unless the party agrees to give him half of what they find in the castle after the "demon stone worm" is destroyed. He will refuse any request to send his own people to face Dagon.
- The ugnoid chieftain can be mollified (helping negotiation checks) by offering him raisin bread if any party members procured some from Chauncey Evergood.
- If provoked, the ugnoids will attack viciously until half their numbers have been slain or the shaman and/or the chieftain are defeated. At any of these moments, have the remaining ugnoids make a morale check (DCC pg. 94), and continue to make morale checks each round on their initiative. On a failure, the creatures will retreat into the dark alcoves and tunnels of their mountain compound.
- An important quest item, the **Ritual Scroll** required by Dagon, is kept in a chest inside the Shaman's tent. The PCs may appropriate it in a variety of ways, through negotiation, thievery, or skirmish. (If the players have forgotten about the scroll and its importance in completing the ritual, Gruin or Levi could remind them).
- As a reminder, any character that calls upon other-wordly powers such as magic or prayers during the encounter will find themselves experiencing "phlogistonical feedback" during the attempt. Roll on the table provided in **Appendix C on page 62** for results.

The northern exit of the encampment leads to **Area 1-7: The Bridge**.

## History of Thilas Evergood

After suffering as a prisoner for so many years, poor blind Thilas Evergood is a broken man, nearly devoid of any remaining humanity. Pale-skinned and gaunt, his hair and beard are now wispy grey strands. His fingernails are long and dirty, his teeth stained yellow and ground to a point to more closely resemble those of his captors.

Thilas will obediently translate any dialogue between the two parties. If the chieftain suspects that he is not accurately relaying everything being said, he will viciously lash the captive human, driving him to his knees.

If freed and questioned, Thilas will relay to the PCs what he can remember, adding that he no longer trusts his own memory to be accurate. He recalls that while a few of the workers attempted to breach the castle's gates when work on the bridge began, none ever returned to camp, so that effort was abandoned. He can remember an occasional puff of green smoke or ringing of a gong from behind the walls. As the discussion continues, his memory strengthens, recalling that the ugnoids were friendly up until the construction of the bridge was finished, only then turning upon the workers. Some of the workers were killed outright, but most were forced into slavery, pressed into raiding the Ardkokk mines for supplies to build the "dragon" in Area 1-6b. When their usefulness was expended, they were subjected to cruel, deviant experiments by the shaman.

If questioned too intensely, Thilas will collapse into tears, crying out that he wished he had never been born. There are a multitude of ways the PCs might respond to the captivity of Thilas Evergood!

**Ugnoid Shaman** (The **Chieftain** also uses these stats minus the spells): Init +2; Atk clawed staff, +1 melee (1d6) or spell +4 (see SP); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 10; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP Spells: Mirror Image (pg.182), Scorching Ray (pg.192); SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +2; AL C.

*Possessions: A locked chest (DC 10) inside the Shaman's tent contains the Ritual Scroll of Dimensional Resonance.*

**Subterranean Attack Penguins (4):** Init +1; Atk claws and teeth, +1 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d6; hp 5; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60'; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N. *These penguins have claws, teeth and bad attitudes.*



## Area 1-6B: The Ugnoid Dragon Room

(If the party approaches from the outside)

*A tunnel burrows into the mountain on the backside of the ledge which housed the guards you first encountered. (Should they enter) Your progress through the winding darkness of the tunnel proves uneventful, the passage eventually gives way to a large chamber with rails upon the floors, much like what you have seen outside the mines. The rails end near the eastern wall of the chamber, where a panoramic opening beckons, offering an incredible view of the valley (and even occasionally of Neverthawes far below) through the clouds. With a start you notice you are far from alone in this chamber: crouching in the shadows of a rough alcove carved into the far wall, the still silhouette of an enormous serpentine creature looms, leathery wings tucked in at its sides!*

(Assuming the party is sneaking in from outside) If the Ugnoid guards on the ledge were taken out before sounding any alarm, the PCs will find a clear path to the Dragon Room. If a noisy confrontation took place, the PCs could meet 1d4 Ugnoid warriors in the tunnel, at the judge's discretion. The dragon is a mobile, mechanical furnace, created by the ugnoids. The contraption was designed to intimidate trespassers and scare off unwanted company. Covered in leather, the apparatus is packed with crude gears, pulleys and ropes. It travels on the rails that run to the eastern opening, allowing it to access the precipice where it can shoot gouts of flame and sound its gigantic alphorn.

### Adventure Notes

- If the PCs decide to appropriate the mechanical dragon, a DC 12 Thievery Check will be required to unlock the chains that hold it in place. A DC 28 Strength Check is required to move it along the tracks (up to four PCs can participate in this check). If the PCs should predictably attempt to figure out how to shoot flames

from the dragon's mouth, a DC 10 Intelligence Check is required to understand how to fire the weapon (3 uses). Thief characters are likely predisposed to understanding the creature's mechanics, receiving a +3 bonus to the check.

Again, assuming the party has penetrated the chamber by stealth, if they should fail any of the checks mentioned above, an ugnoid guard will arrive to investigate what's going on; roll initiative! If any ugnoid is still standing at the beginning of the next round, they will call out, summoning an additional 1d8 ugnoids.

- Due to the proximity of Dagon's amulet, anyone who uses magic in this encounter has a 50% chance of seeing a vision regarding Dagon and the hourglass (see **Appendix C on page 62**).
- The rails and the tunnel in this room lead back to the Ugnoid encampment (see the Tunnels of Frost Fang map). Should the party venture this way, use the descriptions found in Area 1-6A.
- The tenor of possible negotiations with the chieftain in Area 1-6A can vary wildly depending on what happens in this room. Using stealth, the party might achieve total surprise, catching the chief off-guard. If the party has noisily dispatched a sizable number of guards, the chief might be intimidated by an aggressive approach. Conversely, if the party has struggled, he might respond with aggression himself. Be prepared to be flexible!

**Frost Fang Ugnoids (8+):** Init -1; Atk club, spear or dull sword -1 melee (1d3) or sling -1 (1d3) missile fire; AC 8; HD 1d6; hp 3; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60'; SV Fort -2, Ref +0, Will -2; AL C.

**Frost Fang Mechanical Dragon:** Init (that of driver); Atk flamethrower +4 (3d6) 50' cone; AC 10; HD 3d8; 17hp; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP 3 uses of flamethrower.



## **Area 1-7: The Bridge**

*As you exit the warmth of the mountain's interior, you are slapped by the icy winds of the summit, starry skies shining above through whipping tendrils of snow. Before you swings a precarious, weather-worn bridge comprised of frozen ropes and ice-encrusted wooden treads. Through the driving snow you can just make out the silhouette of Dagon's castle in the distance against the moonlit night sky.*

### **Adventure Notes**

- The rope bridge to Dagon's castle is 90' in length and dangerous even if the PCs are not being pursued by the blue-skinned ugnoids. Crossing requires a DC7 Agility or Strength check to cover its length without slipping on ice or falling through a rotten board. If the party is escorted by friendly ugnoids, add +2 to checks to make it across safely. If being chased, unless the party has set a rear guard the ugnoids will sever the ropes to the bridge when the adventurers reach the halfway point, requiring each party member to succeed on a DC10 Agility or Strength check to hold on as the bridge collapses.
- Since the consequence of falling is a one-thousand foot drop onto Neverthawes below (100 d6 damage), it is good to remind PCs that they can augment rolls before or after by burning Luck points.
- Upon any fail, have the PC roll 1D10 on the table below.

### **Falling From Bridge**

1. Your feet become entangled in the dangling frozen ropes. Climbing back to the bridge requires two rounds and two DC7 Agility checks.
2. An icy gust of wind slams you into the cliff walls, inflicting 2 hp damage but allowing you the opportunity to make a DC8 Strength, Agility, Stamina or Luck check to grab the craggy surface. (Friends from above can lower ropes to fashion a rescue).
3. On a lower ledge, Ugnoids armed with crossbows shoot a bolt through your upper thigh. An attached chain causes you to swing and dangle on the cliff beneath them. Take D6 damage. Your move.
4. Your fingers latch onto a frayed rope covered in frozen rain. DC10 Agility, Strength, or Luck check to hang on until help arrives.

5. The trajectory of the falling treads and ropes sends you cliffside where you land on a narrow ledge, taking d4 damage. DC12 Agility required to climb the frozen walls. The ledge will crumble in two rounds.

6. There is a loud roar and a chain lasso catches you in mid descent. Through the falling snow, you feel yourself being hauled up to a cliff-side cave by an amorous white-furred yeti. Think fast!

7+. The PC plummets to the village 1000 feet below.

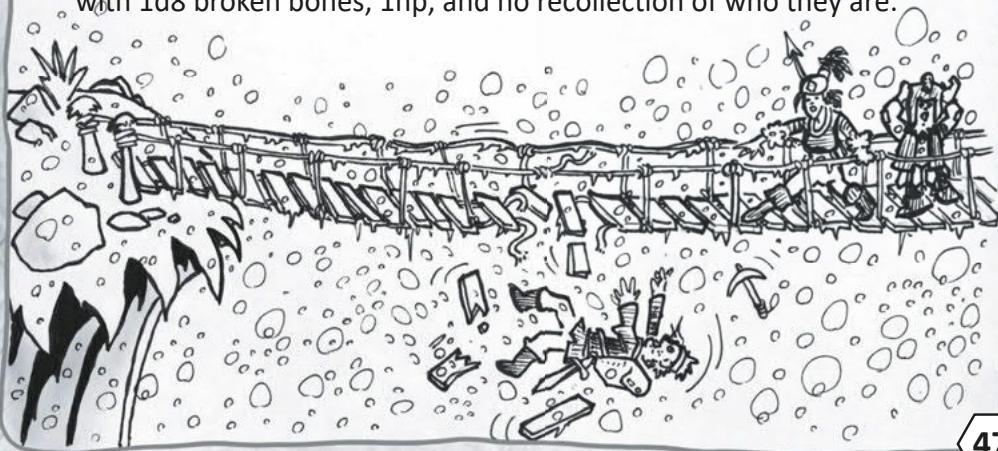
Should an adventurer fall or fail any of these checks, all is not yet lost. There is still a very small chance that the unfortunate PC can survive the fall. Roll a d4 on the following table.

1. The PC plummets down the stone fireplace of The Frosty Tankard, triggering an explosion of internal organs, blood and projectile embers, setting the tavern on fire.

2. The PC slams through the roof of The Gilded Griffon onto a second floor bed, and then crashes through the floor to the first level onto another bed. There is a 50% chance the PC survives with 1d10 broken bones and a single remaining hit point.

3. The PC is impaled upon the steeple of Levi Fangred's temple of Ulish. Immediately a murder of carrion crows swarm down onto the warm carcass. There is a 50% chance that the corpse will be resurrected by Malotoch to serve some nefarious whim for the dark god (judge's discretion).

4. The PC falls a thousand feet through the frozen rain and snow, their body becoming entombed in ice before landing in Neverthawes Lake. There is a 50% chance that the body is recovered and revived with 1d8 broken bones, 1hp, and no recollection of who they are.





## **Area 1-8: Dagon's Castle, Outer Walls**

*On the bridge, the frozen winds had relentlessly burned your exposed skin, but as you step onto Dagon's floating earth-mote you are greeted by an unimaginably humid summer climate and a lush emerald lawn. The outer walls of the castle glimmer in the bright moonlight, constructed of smooth river granite some twenty feet high. A gate looms fifty yards to the right of the bridge, its closed portcullis visibly rusted even from this distance. Sparse, knotted evergreen trees surround the entire circumference of the outer wall in even spacing, the ground about them chewed up as if by some enormous rodent. The limbs of many pines are adorned like insane festival trees; decorated with bits of armor, weapons, and what appears to be shredded coats, cloaks, tunics, and bones.*

### **Adventure Notes**

- The outer walls of the castle compound can be scaled with a DC 14 Agility check, though approaching the wall will trigger an attack from a nearby "guardian tree". The portcullis can be lifted with a DC 40 Strength check: up to four PCs can contribute to the task.
- As mentioned, whether the party attempts to scale the wall or lift the front gate, one of the trees will attack the party. The **Evergreenk** is actually a single earth elemental, stationed by Dagon to act as a castle guardian to ward off trespassers. It can burrow underground to inhabit any of the trees surrounding the castle walls. The creature can only inhabit one tree at a time, deforming the tree into a mutated version of itself, lashing about with branches festooned with weapons, shields, and broken bones. The swirling branches churn the ground around it, siphoning up the rotting carcasses of victims past, their appendages joining the lethal whirlwind. If defeated, the elemental will simply move to another tree, though its reach is limited to that of the tree it inhabits.
- The first PC to deliver a successful melee attack to the bark of the Evergreenk will experience a vision of a thousand carrion crows erupting skyward from the trunk, forming briefly into the silhouette of a caped lady. The menagerie will then quickly shift into the form of an hourglass, its sands running out. The vision ends abruptly in a gale of ghostly laughter.

**Mutated Evergreenk (1):** Init +5; Atk short sword, spear, battle-axe, claw, bite +2 melee (1d6): AC 12; HD 5d8; hp 34; MV (from tree to tree); Act 4d20; SP the Evergreenk makes four attacks, utilizing any weapons it acquires from its victims; SV Fort+4, Ref+5, Will+2; AL C.

**Possessions:** A satchel hangs from the carcass of an armored warrior lying at the feet of the tree. **Inside are the components requested by Dagon in his letter to Levi Fangred;** thirteen crow's feet, 2 lbs. of sycamore bark, and one pint of porcupine blood. In addition there are 4 enchanted roots that heal 1d6 dmg each. The same note that Levi the Cleric carries is clutched in the warrior's hand: evidence that over time Dagon has reached out to others beside Levi for help! Judges can use the encounter's scattered detritus to re-fortify the party with weapons lost or destroyed during the course of the adventure.

## **Area 1-8A: Dagon's Cloud Castle**

*As you enter the grounds, Dagon's castle looms dark and ominously quiet across the courtyard. Near the westernmost wall, a glowing hourglass hovers above a stone wizard's circle in the garden. Strange phlogistonian pulses and colorful vibrations emanate from it, the sands inside the top cylinder sparse and running out fast. Broken furniture lies scattered about the courtyard.*

**Note:** It's very important that the players have received enough clues through visions, Dagon's note, and the words of Gruin and Levi that they can understand what needs to be done in the final encounter. Otherwise they will almost certainly die in confusion!

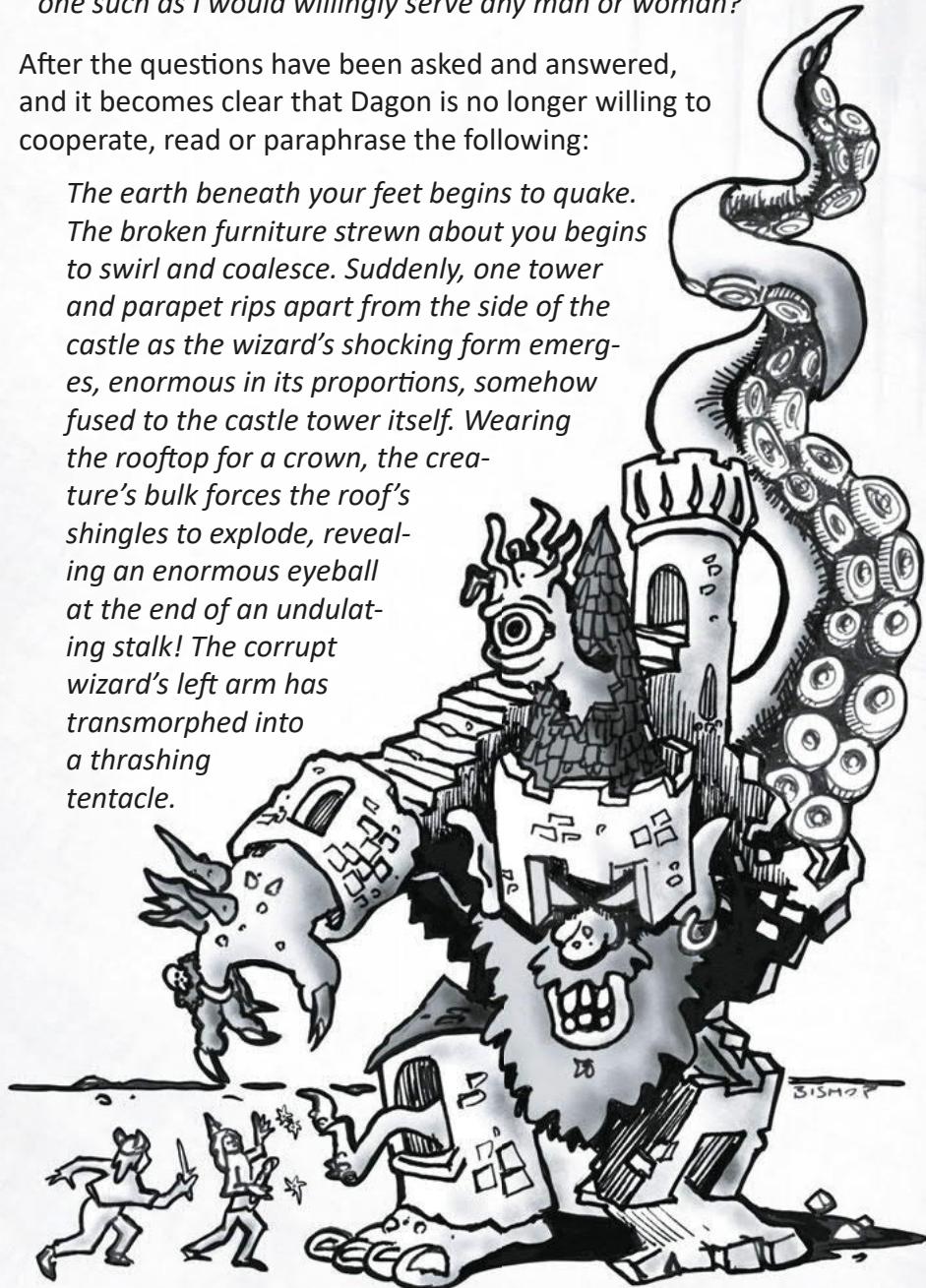
When the expedition members approach either the castle or the hourglass in the garden, they will be greeted by an immense, yet calm voice that seems to come from every direction. The judge can use this role-play opportunity to have Gruin Ardokk and Levi Fangred expound their positions in response (Levi hoping to save the wizard; Gruin to destroy him). The PCs can likewise choose a side or remain ambivalent.

The booming voice is that of Dagon the Doleful. He will question the party, and attentive PCs will discern that his questions reveal that he no longer has any intention of sacrificing himself to Malotoch.

- “What is the purpose of those who dare cross my bridge?
- “Your valor is offered in vain. Would you place your very soul into the hands of such an evil, malicious creature as she?
- “I am more powerful than ever! Do you believe that one such as I would willingly serve any man or woman?”

After the questions have been asked and answered, and it becomes clear that Dagon is no longer willing to cooperate, read or paraphrase the following:

*The earth beneath your feet begins to quake. The broken furniture strewn about you begins to swirl and coalesce. Suddenly, one tower and parapet rips apart from the side of the castle as the wizard's shocking form emerges, enormous in its proportions, somehow fused to the castle tower itself. Wearing the rooftop for a crown, the creature's bulk forces the roof's shingles to explode, revealing an enormous eyeball at the end of an undulating stalk! The corrupt wizard's left arm has transmorphed into a thrashing tentacle.*



*As the monstrosity steps forward, his thunderous voice greets you. "Mortal mushrooms, you are too late. I will not serve her, nor will any of you! She is the apocalypse! She is death! Better that all souls in Neverthawes perish than to sacrifice my strength or yours in obedience to her!"*

## **The Final Confrontation**

In his waning moments, and in an effort to thwart the carrion crow goddess, Dagon has madly reasoned that if he does not turn the hourglass on this 100th year, he can avoid his pledge of eternal servitude to Malotoch. Corrupted beyond capacity to reason or to be reasoned with, he babbles incoherently if questioned, *"There are strange rainbows bleeding into long black cats"* and *"I have seen mountains for fingers and entire thimbles on fire!"*

### **Adventure Notes**

- At this moment the true power of Dagon's Amulet will be revealed. At the beginning of every turn, whoever wears it must succeed on a DC 16 Will Save or be compelled to join the wizard in his rampage against the expedition. The PC will attack Gruin first, followed by the PC with the lowest Luck if the dwarf is slain. The PC can only remove the amulet if their Will Save roll was 18 or higher.
- If Levi Fangred still wears the amulet, barring a failed Will save, he will immediately attack Gruin Ardokk.
- Before initiative is rolled, Dagon animates four **Scroll Golems** to aid him in eradicating the party.
- The castle is kept afloat by the magic in the ethereal hourglass. In six rounds the earth-mote will fall from the sky as the last grain of sand drops. This can be avoided if the ritual is completed inside the wizard's circle, allowing the hourglass to be turned. To add to the tension of the encounter, place a d6 in the middle of the table, turning it to the appropriate number at the top of each round!
  - **Completing the ritual:**
    - **Round One:** The porcupine blood must be poured in the crevices of the circle. (This and the other steps require one action).

- **Round Two:** The sycamore bark and the crow's feet must be burned together inside the circle.
- **Round Three:** The scroll of Dimensional Resonance must be read aloud.
- Once each of these actions has been performed, the ethereal hourglass will become corporal long enough to be turned, keeping the earth-mote aloft another year while dooming Dagon to eternal servitude.

When the ritual is completed, the carrion crow goddess **Malotoch** will appear as an ebony shadow in the dark night, a true carrion crow dragon as large as the mountain itself. Wrapping Dagon in her wings, she will restore the deranged wizard back, in part, to his original state (a second-level wizard more appropriate to the PCs ability to defeat). The wizard will retain his disfigured, corrupted body, but shrink in size, losing power and strength. If the scroll golems are still standing, they will rush to form a semi-circle around the weakened mage as Malotoch rises skyward to observe the battle's completion.

## Roleplaying Dagon the Doleful

Dagon begins the encounter as a powerful 5th level sorcerer who, if in his right mind, would likely lay waste to the party with a few good rolls. To even the playing field, judges should play him as an illogical





mad-man not fully aware of his presence inside this realm. Judges can also use the health of the party to decide how ferociously Dagon will attack the expedition. If the party has limped into this final climactic encounter, you may prefer to allow Dagon's dice to land where they may with his tentacle and eyeball attacks, but skip the wizard's spells and impressive spell bonuses. (These he will save to thwart the completing of the ritual or to use as defensive spells in case another magic user engages him in a spell duel).

If on the other hand, the party has easily thwarted every danger met thus far, amping up the challenge with a barrage of Dagon's spells will complicate the completion of the ritual, inflict some delicious damage, and prolong the drama.

**Dagon's strategy for thwarting the ritual's completion:** Dagon will make an eye attack and a tentacle melee attack on his turn in the initiative order, holding his second spell action until a PC attempts to complete any of the ritual steps.

- When the blood is about to be poured, he will attempt to cast *control ice* (pg. 239) and *freeze the blood only* (d6 damage to all in circle).
- When the bark and the crow's feet are about to be burned, he will attempt to cast *gust of wind* (pg. 219) to snuff out the flame and disperse the components.
- When the scroll is about to be read, he will attempt to cast *forget* (pg. 170) on the character reading the scroll. Should he somehow be pushed from the mote's edge, he will attempt to cast *feather fall* (pg. 140).

**Dagon the “Deranged”:** Init +4; Atk tentacle +5 melee (1d8+2) and scorching eye +5 (1d6+2 and target must succeed on a DC 12 Reflex save or catch fire, ongoing) and spell +7 (see SP); AC 14; HD 5d4; hp 33; MV 40'; Act 2d20+1d14; SP Spells: *control ice*, *gust of wind*, *forget*, *enlarge*, *feather fall*, *flaming hands*, *magic shield*; SV Fort +4; Ref +4; Will+5; AL C.

**Dagon the Doleful (after Malotoch “demotion”):** Init +2; Atk tentacle +2 melee (1d4+2) and scorching eye (1d4) and spell +2 (see SP); AC 12; HD 2d4; hp 7; MV 25'; Act 2d20+d14 Spells: *control ice, gust of wind, forget, enlarge, feather fall, flaming hands, magic shield*; SV Fort+2; Ref+2; Will+5; AL C.

**Scroll Golems (4):** Init +0; Atk table legs +1 melee (1d4+1); AC 10; HD 1d6; hp 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref +0; Will -1; AL C.

## Dagon's Fall

The scroll golems collapse if Dagon is defeated. Malotoch, in dragon form, will swoop down and snatch the fallen wizard in her jaws, flinging the limp body into the air and swallowing the carcass with a satisfying crunch. What happens next depends upon the actions of the PCs and the judge.

## If The Party Should Fail

If the PCs failed to turn the hourglass by the sixth and final round, the story need not end in total catastrophe unless the judge deems that to be the right outcome. The judge could decide to have Malotoch, in a grotesque demon-bird form, appear in the dark clouds above the party in time to claim the old wizard as her prize. Discovering the party meddling in her affairs, she might be persuaded to keep the earth island afloat: the cost of course being an unholy pact requiring the completion of some other treacherous new quest! Judges should tailor the new pact to best meet the unique characteristics of the party.



## Adventure's End

If the resourceful party has defeated Dagon and saved the earth mote, after the dust settles read or paraphrase the following: *"Dagon the Doleful has proved a wretched victim of his own thirst for power. Somehow, the village has been saved and the hourglass turned. A ray of morning light shines upon the bloodied faces of your expedition as a new day begins. Before you most of Dagon's castle stands intact, a symbol of one man's aspirations and eventual everlasting nightmare. What secrets have been hidden in that castle for the last century? The castle door hangs on one hinge, beckoning you to enter the dead wizard's sanctum..."*

## Treasure

The party is free to explore the sections of the castle that remain standing. The place is full of interesting oddities accumulated by the reclusive wizard over the decades. Depending on the style of story/campaign the Judge is pursuing, important decisions will need to be made regarding the parsing out of magical items. Feel free to modify the adventure's treasure to fit what works best for your campaign.

Dagon was a man of simple tastes before he lost himself within the darkest corners of magic. His castle is decorated with tapestries in need of dusting and sparse furniture. The kitchen looks more like a laboratory than a place to prepare food. In an upstairs room, across from a portrait of the old wizard stands a wooden door inscribed with runes. If opened, the door appears to cover a solid brick wall. If the magic runes are decrypted (DC 12 Intelligence check), however, a portal is discovered that transports PCs directly to the upper room of the Gilded Griffon. (Granting the party easy access to the village below, especially important if dozens of angry ugnoids are waiting beyond 90 feet of open air!)

Various arcane treasures are scattered throughout the castle, adorning mantles, hanging on wall mounts and gathering dust upon shelves:

- A knotted hickory staff that glows with green phosphorous veins, allowing the magic user to learn the appropriate number of spells each level, as the green tendrils creep up the user's arm.
- Enchanted mithral goggles (+2 to detect magic).
- Dwarven shield of magnetism (50% chance that a foe's metal weapon sticks if they miss on their attack).

- A small bejeweled chest containing 532 gp, 5 mithral bars (of incomparable worth to the right buyer, but dangerous to possess for that reason!), and a rolled nautical map to an unknown island off the coast. Written in the margins are the words “It exists! Danta-far’s sword of glass!”.
- A strange metal tube that flares at one end like a trumpet, with a piece of wood attached to the other end. Near it is a pouch containing a fine ebony powder and a handful of lead pellets. (*A blunderbuss, black powder and ammunition!*)
- A set of leather armor engraved with a dragon (*resist 3 fire*).
- Hanging on a coat rack, a cape and cowl comprised of long black feathers (*ignore the first ten feet of falling damage when worn*).
- A dragonscale kilt. Engraved upon the belt, a scene of an angel and a devil locked in combat (*negates deity disapproval once per day*).
- Ruby-encrusted duel miniature scimitars with a criss-cross back sheath (*+2 to initiative when using in combat*).
- A smaller wizard’s circle near a north facing stained-glass window. An open book on a nearby pedestal details strange incantations, each apparently associated with a point on a fold-out map.

## Malotoch

There is also an implied opportunity for someone in the party to form a patron bond with Malotoch, the chaotic carrion crow goddess. She might be willing to make the same offer to one of the PCs that she made to Dagon the Doleful, providing the PC is willing to turn the hourglass once each year for a hundred years and face the certainty of eternal servitude! (See **Appendix D: Malotoch as a Patron on page 64** for more info).



## If the earth-mote is not saved...

If the party has been unable to come to some agreement with Malotch after failing to turn the hour glass, read the following:

*A great shadow begins to grow as the poor citizens of Neverthawes Township look up for the very last time. Mothers hold their children and farmers remove their caps as the darkness descends quickly from the sky. There is no time for goodbyes or lament. In one catastrophic moment, the township of Neverthawes and all who lived beneath Dagon's castle are smashed into dust. For generations, even full-grown warriors will weep for the innocent village's grisly demise.*

*The end.*

## Where do we go from here?

As the adventure draws to a close, Judges will find themselves contemplating if this Level 1 adventure can act as the beginning of a longer campaign. Fear not! If the castle has been saved, seeds have been planted from which the thoughtful judge can nurture further plots, exploits, and explorations. Here are some kick-off points for your consideration:

*A tiny portion of the Mines of Ardokk may have been travelled through, but the mines are far from reclaimed. Gruin Ardokk might beseech the PCs to help him recover his birthright by descending deeper into the darkness, where the Ardokk crown still lies buried. What else will they find during their descent?*

*Emboldened by the expedition's success, opportunist and mercenaries mount an attack upon the newly-claimed castle. Rumors of rare artifacts have reached the ears of jealous wizards. If a pact was formed with the ugnoids, they too may come calling to claim their share.*

*Found among the castle's treasure is a map to an unknown island... mentioning something about a glass sword? Is it possible that with proper masts and sails that this entire earth mote may be moved and guided with the winds to new locations? What sort of crew would have to be recruited to man such a massive "vessel"?*

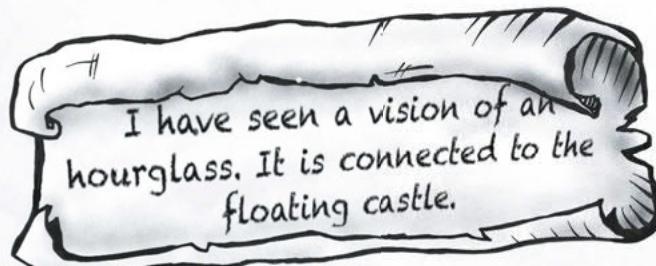
## Appendix A: Levi & Gruín

DCC is a game that respects the judge's discretion at the gaming table, and so, there is no right or wrong way to approach The Frost Fang Expedition. We have endeavored to provide a colorful landscape filled with fantastic situations and characters for you and your players to do with as you will. That being said, here are a few tips regarding the adventure that may prove helpful.

Along with adjudicating the rules, the judge also shares (through the often opposing viewpoints of Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardkokk) important information about adventure topics. This can be useful for when the players come to an impasse or a hard decision. Have the two NPCs speak their minds and let the chips fall where they may. In general, Levi will support pushing on no matter what, intent on saving the wizard. Gruin will wonder aloud why Levi is willing to imperil the party, and his desire to exact his revenge upon Dagon is clear. The PCs can weigh what they have heard and make up their own minds.

### The Game Within The Game

Depending upon the tastes of the judge and the players, allowing both Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardkokk to pass secret notes to the players can sow seeds of distrust among the PCs. Where Levi might lean toward alliances with lawful or neutral characters, Gruin would tend to search for support among chaotic or neutral PCs. Notes could be delivered with something along the lines of: *"The cleric Levi whispers this to you as he passes by in the corridor"*. If each person at the table at some point receives a note, then all will wonder what the others know that they do not. (Sample printable notes can be found in the **PDF appendix** included with the adventure).

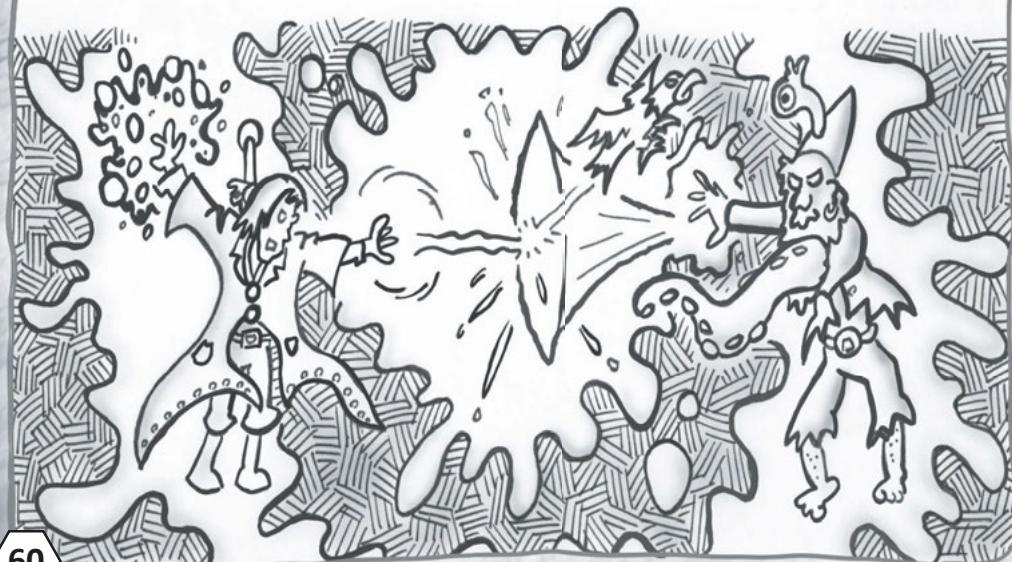


### Notes from Levi Fangred might say:

- *"If I should perish, make sure that Dagon's Amulet makes it back to him safely."*
- *"No matter what, do not allow the dwarf Gruin to keep us from our mission."*
- *"I have seen a vision of an hourglass. It is connected to the floating castle."*
- *"The dwarf Ardokk will betray us. He gathers sympathizers even now."*

### Notes from Gruin Ardokk (rightful heir of Ardokk Mines) might say:

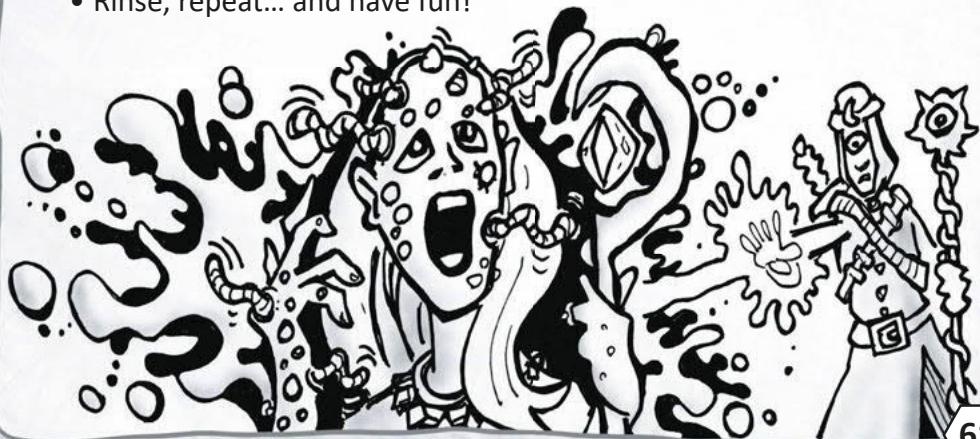
- *"Levi Fangred cares not for you or I. He will betray us all to the wizard."*
- *"We should take the cleric's amulet. It has power over his mind."*
- *"I have seen the cleric whispering to the others. Watch your back."*
- *"We cannot trust Levi simply because he holds to some simple-minded faith!"*
- *"Just as I can smell gold, I can smell trouble. This wizard we seek is beyond saving. And the cleric Levi Fangred knows it!"*



## Appendix B: Spell Duels Simplified

The climactic final confrontation in The Frost Fang Expedition could easily lead warring wizards into a spell duel. Don't be daunted! You can find the full explanation of rules beginning on page 98 of the Dungeon Crawl Classics rulebook. Here are the bare bones of quickly resolving a spell duel:

- A spell duel begins when a caster decides to "counter" a spell attack with a spell attack. That person moves in the initiative order to just behind the original caster. Both casters set a D20 on the table with a 10 showing to track momentum.
- The attacker declares a spell and makes a spell check. The defender does the same. The high roller wins, and sets their d20 momentum die to 11. Failed spells have no other effect. If both spells succeed, their normal effects are applied simultaneously, unless otherwise stated in the spell description.
- Cross-reference the two spell checks on table 4-5 (DCC page 100) to determine the die to roll on table 4-6 (DCC page 101). The number rolled on this table is modified by the difference between the two momentum trackers. For example, if the attackers momentum is set at 13 and the defenders at 10, the counterspell on table 4-6 would be at +3 if the attacker won, or at -3 if the defender won. Then read the results of either an attacker or defender victory.
- If the two spell checks are identical, refer to table 4-7 (DCC page 103).
- Resolve spell actions, return to the initiative order and proceed with the actions of other PCs.
- Rinse, repeat... and have fun!



## Appendix C: Dagon's Amulet and Ritual

Throughout the adventure text, judges have been reminded that certain actions, such as the use of magic, prayers, or the striking of magical beasts in melee, when performed near the magically imbalanced amulet worn by Levi Fangred can trigger preternatural visions. Judge should use these opportunities to prepare the PCs for the final ritual and confrontation with Dagon at the adventure's end. Although the judge will be familiar with Dagon and his pact with Malotoch, the PCs will only know what has been revealed to them through these visions and other interactions with NPCs during the expedition!

Whenever an encounter's *Adventure Notes* remind you, or when you feel the PCs' actions make it appropriate to do so, roll 1d10 on the table below. Recurring visions are fine. Each vision begins and ends in a flash of light, lasting only a few seconds. At the judge's discretion, the vision may impair the recipient for one round, with a -1 to attack and defense as a result of the distraction.

1. "You are in a green field, watching as a young red-haired boy waves a stick at a butterfly. The butterfly suddenly turns into a bat! The boy turns to you, his eyes as red as coals, his voice becoming as coarse as thunder. 'The hourglass must turn or the village is doomed. The blood, the bark, the crow, the scroll.'"
2. "You awaken in a forest, bare sycamore branches overhead. A crow caws from some distant perch. Suddenly a tiny porcupine waddles past you, and then another. Soon a dozen or more creep past your prone body, marching through the autumn leaves. One of them stops and looks deep into your eyes. 'Our blood awakens the circle. It would be best to remember that. We are first.'"
3. "All is darkness except for the wizard's circle you stand upon. The grooves beneath your feet fill with blood. There is the smell of burning sycamore and then a flaming crow lands upon your shoulder. Everything inside the circle is aflame. As the smoke thickens, you find yourself inside an immense hourglass. A vortex appears beneath you. Your throat fills with sand as you, the crow, and the flaming wizard's circle are sucked into the void."
4. "There is a tap upon your shoulder. You turn to see a young, red-haired wizard smiling behind you. 'You are brave indeed!' he says."

‘But someone in your own party will betray you... be wary of the amulet. It has a mind of its own! Remember: red, brown, black, then white!’

5. “A little peasant girl reaches through a rusted portcullis and begs for freedom. Blood begins to seep from her eyes. You try to answer but find your mouth is grotesquely sewn shut. Her eyes meet yours. ‘The blue-skins have the scroll. Without it, all is lost!’”
6. “You are lost in the forest. Up ahead, the crows feast upon a decaying corpse. As you approach the body, you realize the rotting face that stares back at you is your own. The decomposed jaw begins to move. ‘I burned the bark before I poured the blood! What a fool! Hear me! The blood, the bark...’ The jaw suddenly turns to dust as evil laughter reverberates through the dim wood.”
7. “A beautiful priestess places a familiar medallion around your neck, gently brushing her fingers against your skin. ‘You are chosen by Malotoch herself, who tires of withered wizards. I desire a new conqueror. Remember, to defeat the wizard, the order of things matters. Dagon shall no longer come between us!’”
8. “You find yourself aboard a ship, storm-tossed and buffeted by the crashing waves. A red-haired wizard rises from the sea, as large as a mountain. His eyes are like fire as tentacles wrap themselves around the vessel. ‘So eagerly you approach your doom! Blood always comes first, aye... but what is next? Ha! Wet wood does not burn! I am not ready to submit to her just yet!’”
9. “You are seated at a corner table in the The Frosty Tankard, across from a seemingly crazed, red-haired wizard. ‘You will fail and you will die. All of you!’ he cackles. Suddenly his eyes come into focus as his cracked lips and yellow teeth broaden to a smile. ‘Are you really here or is this all a dream?’ He turns over an enormous hourglass before brandishing a knife and driving it with lightning speed through your hand and into the table. He leans toward you. ‘The blood, the bark, the crow, the scroll. It is the only way.’”
10. “You approach an hourglass, hovering above a stone circle. The carved runes at your feet begin to fill with blood. You toss sycamore bark into the circle, followed by thirteen crow’s feet, both bursting into flame. The smoke from the circle causes the symbols on a scroll in your hand to morph into words you recognize. As you read them, the symbols lift from the page and swirl around you. A huge shadow begins to grow, filling the sky...”

## Appendix D: Malotoch as Patron

The goddess Malotoch is the lord over ruin, delighting in the aftermath of war, famine and disaster. Much as the carrion crow pecks at the eyeballs of the dead, Malotoch scours the various planes, looking for the wretched consequences of man's evil against man, basking in the aroma of spilled blood and fetid flesh.

To garner patron favor from the carrion crow goddess is to make a deal with a chaotic scavenger who is aloof and subject to whim. She demands from her servants a lifetime of devotion to her unholy tenants: show no mercy to the weak, never bury the dead, taste the blood of your foes so that she may savor its flavor, and to never, ever, receive healing from a disciple of Justicia, whom she loathes.

Malotoch forms a patron bond with mortals only in the knowledge that she will one day feast upon the flesh of the soul who served her in life.

### **Invoke Patron Check Results**

**12-13:** Malotoch is engaged at some distant battlefield, feasting upon the carcasses of the fallen. She prefers to not disengage, but your petition finds favor as she shares the life force she dines upon. You receive 6 additional HP for the rest of the day.

**14-17:** A murder of crows arrives to swirl around you, an impediment to all foes. All attacks against you take a -4 penalty for the next 1d6 rounds.

**18-19:** Your pleas have awakened the sleeping goddess. She spitefully morphs your body to that of a large crow for the next 1d4 rounds, but in so doing, your vision improves (+2 to attacks), your agility improves (+3 to AC and initiative), and you have the ability to fly 50' per round until the spell ends.

**20-23:** Malotoch hears your voice and sends 1d6 vultures to do your bidding. Vultures act on your initiative; Atk bite +4 melee (dmg 1d4); AC 8; HP 1; MV 10', fly 40'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0; Ref +2; Will +0; AL C. They remain with the caster for 1d4 days, following basic commands.

**24-27:** The ground around your opponents erupts with the rotting carcasses of the dead who attempt to drag 1d6 foes underground. Each foe must succeed a DC 15 Reflex save or suffer 2d8 rending damage. Regardless, targets are immobilized for 1d4 rounds.

**28-29:** Malotoch sends an enormous raven in 1d4 rounds. The bird is large enough to be ridden as a mount. It acts on your initiative; Atk bite and claw +6 melee (dmg 1d10); AC 14; HD3d8; HP18; MV 20', fly 60'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3; Ref +4; Will +0; AL C.

**30-31:** The same as 28-29 results, but 1d6 ravens to do your bidding.

**32+:** Malotoch recognizes your rising power and grants you and each ally +5 to all attacks, saving throws, spell checks, and damage rolls for 1d8+CL rounds. The caster and all allies also automatically succeed on any Recovering the Body checks made before the next sunrise.

## **Patron Taint**

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Since Malotoch appropriates spell knowledge from those she devours, the goddess favors her followers with arcane knowledge pecked from the dead brains of fallen sorcerers. Patron taint (and any other effects) occurs whenever a natural 1 is rolled on a spell check. Roll 1D6 on the table below. Whenever a caster has acquired all six taints and all effects, there is no longer a need to roll.

**1:** The first time this taint appears, a murder of crows will follow the caster for 1d4 days, keeping their distance but always in shouting distance. The second time they appear, they will flock around the caster, pecking around his feet and perching on their shoulder for 1d10 days. The third time, the crows will accompany the caster the remainder of his days.

**2:** The caster will lose his appetite for anything other than meat. If rolled a second time, the caster will only be able to consume raw meat, which he always craves. A third time and the caster must consume some part of his victims or suffer Malotoch's disfavor in the form of a -5 to all spell checks for 1d4 days.

**3:** The caster begins to sprout feathers on his back and arms, making tight clothing uncomfortable. On the second taint, the caster's nose will elongate, taking on the characteristics of a beak. On the third, the caster will sprout black feathers over the entire body, along with short, deformed wings upon their back. These will not enable flight but will make the wearing of any shirt or armor nearly impossible.

**4:** Seeing your spell attempt and failure as a sign of weakness, Malotoch will curse you with the stench of death for 1d4 days. On the second taint, the stench will return and your skin will be covered with boils and puss for 1d6 days (-2AC). A third time will result in the stench proving unbearable for all in a 30' radius for 1d6 days, causing everyone's eyes to water (-3 to all attacks inside radius).

**5:** Frustrated by your failure, the Carrion Crow Goddess resurrects the nearest corpse to follow you around for 1d3 days, commanding it to whisper "I am you, by and by". On the second taint, 1d6 corpses will follow the caster for 1d4 days, whispering the same. On the third taint, the caster will cause corpses to rise and follow him every time he passes a cemetery, barrow, or battlefield.

**6:** The caster immediately falls asleep, drawn into a dream where he or she will converse with Malotoch herself. She will toy with the caster's mind, revealing the secrets of the universe, though the knowledge wreaks havoc on the caster's brain. This sadistic exercise delights Malotoch to no end. The caster awakens in 1d4 rounds with a permanent -1 to personality, +1 to intelligence. This result can be duplicated two more times.

## **Patron Spells**

Malotoch picks through the brains of dead wizards and tosses arcane knowledge to her followers like raw meat to hyenas.

**Level 1:** Feather Fall (Page 140 DCC Rulebook)

**Level 2:** Scare (Page 191 DCC Rulebook)

**Level 3:** Fly (Page 217 DCC Rulebook)

## Spellburn

Malotoch revels in the caster's foolish use of spellburn. When a caster sacrifices ability score points, roll 1d4 on the table below.

**1:** The caster must carve the mark of the crow's talon into his own forehead (expressed as Stamina, Strength or Agility loss). The spell is cast when the blood reaches the caster's eyes (blind for 1 round).

**2:** Malotoch craves the taste of flesh. The caster can expend spell burn without feeling the effects of the drain if he or she consumes two pounds of flesh from any human or humanoid creature before the next sunrise. It must be raw and offered up to Malotoch in tribute and veneration in an hour long ritual. If the ritual is not offered up before the next sunrise, Malotoch will exact the point amount (abilities at judge's discretion) +1d4 additional points.

**3:** A murder of crows begins to swirl above the caster. For every ability point spent, a crow lands upon the caster, pecking at any exposed skin, cawing and drawing blood (expressed as Stamina, Strength or Agility loss). If the caster is able to succeed at a DC14 Fort Save, he or she will regain the burned points at twice the normal speed.

**4:** A pack of hyenas form a circle around the spellburner. An ally may join the caster in the circle and also expend ability points at a rate of two for one, chanting "Take what is thine oh Malotoch!" The burner(s)lose five pounds for every point sacrificed, growing gaunt and weak (expressed as Stamina, Strength and Agility loss). The caster also gains a +4 boon to all spell checks until the next sunrise.



## Appendix E: Linking To Nebin Pendlebrook

If you and your party are coming directly to **The Frost Fang Expedition** from Mark Bishop's DCC funnel adventure **Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry**, the following tips can help make the zero-level to first-level transition for the PCs a natural progression.

The Frost Fang Mountains, Neverthawes, and the Ardkokk Mines lie just north-east of Nebin Pendlebrook's home in Bitterwood Barrow near the edge of the Ebon Wood. As survivor's of the funnel adventure emerge from the underground pantry at the conclusion of the adventure, they will be greeted by the townsfolk, either immediately or during their trip back to Bitterwood and the Bloody Bullfrog Tavern. There they will learn of the exciting opportunity to gain riches and glory to the north in Neverthawes.

Here are some “strings” that the judge can use to tie the two adventures together:

- At the conclusion of NPPP, amongst the treasure is a deed to a building in Neverthawes, along with a map to its location. Notes on the map might indicate that the property is the nicest home in town; perhaps even a deed to the Frosty Tankard itself! (A tavern of their own!). Of course when they arrive they will quickly learn that their new property is in grave peril.
- Among the other treasures are many valuable jewels, none of which could be bartered in the small village of Bitterwood Barrow for anything of any worth. Nearest large village? Neverthawes.
- Also among the treasure is a polished silver mirror. It's not a plot hook, but it could come in handy inside the Ardkokk Mines!
- The funnel survivors learn from Bitterwood's villagers that a mad wizard to the north has recently passed, leaving all his magical possessions unguarded. “It is a secret not known to many.” Of course when the party arrives, they learn that the story is common knowledge and getting to the castle is the real adventure.

- If freed and still amongst the living, Varooth Moss (the captive wizard in NPPP), might give the PCs a hastily scribbled note to deliver to his old friend Dagon the Doleful in Neverthawes. “He is in my debt. He knows the way to control the winds around him. Present this and he will impart to you that knowledge as payment of his age-old obligation.”
- Lastly, the mirror portal in NPPP can be accessed from Dagon’s wizard’s circle inside his sanctum. It is marked “beneath Bitterwood” on the fold-out map. It is unfortunately a one-way trip and can not be re-entered from the Bitterwood side.





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**Bone-Chilling Thrills From The Author Of  
Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry**

The Frost Fang Expedition challenges PCs to reach the top of a frozen and treacherous peak on a mission of discovery: why have huge chunks of a mysterious sorcerer's floating castle begun raining down on the once quiet village of Neverthawes? The quest for answers will uncover hidden motives, fearsome foes, and deadly environments galore!

