

JAUNT

The Hamlet of
Winterton



BLOOD
in the **SNOW**



Hamlet of **WINTERTON**

Population: 190 according to latest tax rolls

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Illustrations, maps,

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BLOOD in the SNOW

AN OLD SCHOOL ADVENTURE

3 - 6 PLAYERS • LEVELS 2 - 4

Farms in the hamlet of Winterton are being raided at night. Who, or what, is doing the raiding is a mystery. Animals have disappeared and now a visiting merchant has gone missing. The only clue is a blood drenched hat sitting in the snow along a stretch of road.

Blood in the Snow is intended as a small side-adventure set in Winter, in a tiny village in the Bay of Spirits. A desperate clan of goblins are raiding the settlement and the player characters have been asked, or hired, to help.

A clan of Redcap Goblins have been stranded in a series of caves at the end of a narrow ravine, cut off from the Wilds by an early Winter storm. Days of heavy snow and driving wind blocked the group's route out of Winterton Vale, forcing them

to wait out the season within the snowbound cavern. Weeks had passed and food sources dwindled, eventually leaving the goblins no choice but to dig their way out. A miscalculation of direction resulted in digging towards the nearby hamlet of Winterton, instead of away from it and out of the valley. Their tunneling brought them to the edge of a road running through the small village. Not one to admit error, the Redcap chieftain took it as an opportunity for his clan to replenish their supplies, wreaking havoc on the small village under the cover of darkness and the fierce Winter gales. Raiding outlying farms at night and using the drifting snows and hidden tunnel to evade discovery, the group soon grew stronger and more daring.



Hamlet of WINTERTON

Population: 190 according to latest tax rolls

A small village in the Lower Bay region and one of the few settlements located away from the coast. The tiny hamlet was a Winter home for those trying to escape the harsh weather along the shore. Moderate snowfalls and milder temperatures made living here somewhat more inviting, despite the threat of goblin or bandit attacks. Eventually settlers stayed, tired of traveling the long journey back and forth between their Summer and Winter homes.

Winterton is located in a sheltered vale surrounded by high hills and mountains. This natural buffer shields the quiet valley from harsh winds and ocean storms. A deep, slow flowing river meanders through the hamlet, its waters rarely freezing over even during the coldest months. The surrounding land is fertile enough for small scale farming and the growing of an indigenous grape that is vital to its economy.



Description

Winterton began its days as a Winter home for some inhabitants of the Lower Bay. Many would fish and farm along the coast during the warmer seasons, then move inland after the Harvest, prior to the first of the Winter storms. Here they would wait out the cold, dark months in the sheltered vale before returning to the coast to fish and farm again. Eventually tiring of the arduous three day journey, some settlers stayed year-round. The valley proved ideal for farming and the surrounding countryside provided plenty of game, freshwater fish, berries, and mushrooms. The discovery of Snow Grapes and the construction of an abbey brought more settlers to the area, eventually establishing a permanent village.

Winterton, and surrounding land, is a fief under the rule of the O'Meere family. The distant territory was given to the clan in return for its loyalty to the Barony in days long past. Generations of ruling lords have shown little interest in the valley other than as a way to fill their coffers. Many past rulers have never set foot in the tiny settlement. A manor and estate is maintained by the O'Meeres, but this is for the purpose of preserving its claim to the fief. The current lord is Kealan O'Meere, another absentee ruler in a long line of similarly inclined lieges. His interests in the hamlet are carefully handled by a steward who resides on the estate. A small contingent of Wyvern Guard are stationed here to protect the interests of the Baron.

A small militia can be mustered from among the settlers during times of trouble. Goblins, bandits, and worse wander the hillsides and forests, occasionally chancing a raid on outlying farmsteads and traders along the roadway.

The valley itself is at the base of a series of wooded hills and rugged mountains. A deep, slow flowing river runs through the valley eventually reaching the waters of the Lower Bay 30 miles to the southeast. A roadway leads to the valley from the coast allowing overland travel in the warmer months. Much of the route is impassable throughout the Winter, cutting the valley and hamlet off for months at a time. Despite this, the surrounding countryside is abundant with game and storehouses and root cellars are kept well-stocked. The valley has a pleasant climate compared to the open coastline, but Winters here can still be challenging. Heavy snowfalls and blizzards are not uncommon and there is always the threat of goblin or bandit raids given Winterton's inland locale.

Snow Grapes.

An odd subspecies, this unique variety of grape is found only in specific locations around the Bay of Spirits. At first disregarded as a type of holly species, and therefore poisonous, it was only after a group of Enibrian Druid

noticed its strange grape-like qualities that cultivation began. For most of the traditional growing season Snow Grapes appear as nothing more than twisted scrub and vines with sharp, stiff holly-like leaves and small, seemingly useless fruit clusters. The plants were considered little more than weeds until Druids witnessed what occurred following the first major frost, at the start of Autumn. The otherwise stiff, featureless leaves took on a vibrant green and shriveled fruit began to plump and grow. Over the following weeks, and after each frost, the vines thrived, bearing large white globes where tiny clusters had once been. The grapes were ready to pick after the season's first heavy snowfall and the Druids found they were able to produce an amazing wine from the fickle fruit.

Eventually the wine was perfected with the use of an old recipe rumored to be Elvish in origin. The process was able to imbue the wine with a naturally cooling flavor that quickly made the drink extremely popular. Originally named 'Gelid's Tears', the clear, crisp vintage was eventually renamed Icewine or Elven Icewine and sold in markets in the South. The popularity outgrew the supply and another abbey at Dove's Crest began successfully cultivating Snow Grapes, although the actual fermentation and production of the wine takes place in the abbey in Winterton where the recipe is a closely kept secret. The market for Icewine is so strong that only a small quantity of barrels are kept for local consumption. The illegal trading of Icewine, or any wine or spirit produced in the Bay for that matter, is a serious crime. Still, a 'lost' 20 gallon cask (rundlet) of Winterton Icewine can fetch over 1000 gp on the Smuggler's Market. Imitations exist, but those who have a taste for wine know the difference.

Icewine.

The Abbey in Winterton is the home of this highly prized vintage, utilizing the native Snow Grapes to produce a colorless wine that rivals even the Elven vintners. These grapes lack tannins, resulting in a completely clear liquid. Although not syrupy in texture or consistency, the liquid appears to flow slowly - similar to that of nearly frozen water, but without any bubbles or carbonation. It has a 'soft' appearance with a subtle aroma of pine when first poured. The initial taste feels cold to the tongue - a result of the grape's natural qualities and a special fermentation process that seems to trick the senses into thinking the wine is chilled. Flavors range from refreshing with a hint of citrus and gooseberry to more robust fruit like apple or plum. There is no taste of alcohol despite having the same alcoholic content per volume as fortified wine (approx. 20%). The regular market cost for a rundlet (20 gallon barrel) of Winterton Icewine is 2500 gp or approximately 25 gp per bottle (750 ml / 1/5 gallon).



The Abbey in Winterton

Overlooking the small village, the abbey is the most important site in the valley. It is home to an order of Enibrian Druids responsible for the fermentation of highly prized Icewine. Snow Grapes are grown along the surrounding hills then picked, crushed, fermented, barreled, and aged for a year in larch barrels until exported to markets in the South. A small allotment for local consumption is permitted. The secret process is rumored to stem from an old Elven recipe and is well-guarded. Acolytes and Initiates take part in the process, but it is only the Abbess (feminine of 'Abbott') who possesses the full recipe.

Abbess Alene Gallach, the elderly head of the Winterton Abbey, is devoted to her craft and her path as a High Druid of Enibria, having served in the role for almost 20 years. She started out as an Acolyte alongside Martain Wicklow (the Blue Goose) and remains close friends with the innkeeper. She is attractive and quick of wit, with long silver-grey hair worn braided beneath clothing that befits her station. A finely etched silver torc speaks of her rank as a High Initiate and she is well respected throughout the area. Members of the abbey tend to keep to themselves, and Alene is no different. A formidable individual, she expects loyalty and hard work from her Druids and Priests (if Specialty Priests are permitted).

Abbess Alene Gallach. Druid; Lvl: 9; SCL: 10; HP: 68; AC: 0 (+4 leather armor, +2 shield); Abilities: S 10, I 15, W 18, D 15, C 17, Ch 16; Weapons: d8 (+3 scimitar), d6 (+3 quarterstaff); AL: N. The Abbess will protect the secrets behind the fermentation of Icewine with her life. Recipes of such esteem are considered to be inspired by the goddess herself, and therefore holy canon.

Serving Enibria under the guidance of the Abbess are an assortment of Acolytes (1st level Druids and Clerics), Initiates, and Priests. Commonfolk work the vineyards alongside members of the abbey, but few are given access to the main buildings themselves. The fermentation process involved in making Icewine is off-limits to all but a select, devout few. Several Druids of Gelid (god of Winter, Ice, and the Northern Forests) also make the abbey their home. Prayers and blessings from the chaotic deity are part of the winemaking endeavor. The population of the abbey, like the surrounding hamlet, can fluctuate throughout the seasons. Harvest and early Winter are the busiest time for the area when visiting Druids from outlying abbeys hope to catch a glimpse of the fabled wine being crafted. The abbey typically houses approximately 20 Acolytes and half as many Initiates and Priests of levels 3-5. Upon reaching 2nd level, Acolytes are expected to venture out into the world, beyond the walls of the abbey. These Ovates and Adepts (2nd level Druids and Clerics) roam the countryside and coastline furthering the cause of Enibria - aiding farmers, learning different brewing

methods, harvesting rare ingredients, etc. Some return to renew their life in the abbey, while others fall victim to the wilds or the lure of adventure. The resident Druids of Gelid are comprised of 3 Acolytes and a 4th level Druid Initiate. (Game Notes: The titles and terms may seem confusing at times. They are a throwback to 1st Edition AD&D in which class levels were given names/ranks. Hence the use of Acolyte to refer to a 1st level Druid; Ovate as a 2nd level Druid; and so on. Use or disregard as you see fit.)

Skilled with scimitar and scythe, the Druids of the abbey rarely require guards or soldiers for protection. It is a High Crime to steal from an abbey or to assault its clergy and only the very foolish would chance the vengeance of the Barony or the church. The Wyvern Guard is tasked with protecting all abbeys throughout the Bay, but given Winterton's importance to the alcohol trade, the Barony keeps a watchful eye for trouble.

Order of the Vine. A clandestine organization of Rangers, Druids, Bards, Monks, and devout followers of Enibria whose purpose is to preserve the abbeys and their integrity in the region. Any crime against an abbey or member of its clergy is considered a crime against the goddess. The majority of infractions are handled by the abbey, locals, or the Wyvern Guard. Serious crimes and violations against an abbey may warrant the involvement of the Order of the Vine. The secret network is ruthless in 'righting wrongs' committed against the faith and rival even the most powerful thief and assassin guilds in the use of spies, agents, and informants. The exact structure of the Order is unknown. They receive directives from the highest members of Enibria's church and act above, or below, the law, often coming into conflict with agents of the Barony.



Symbol of the Order of the Vine. Depicted as twisted copper (sometimes intricately carved) in the form of a clover with Black Iron wound throughout. Worn by members of the Order and left to tarnish with time - often portraying the experience of the wearer. The symbol also acts as an enchanted talisman: +2 vs Faerie magic and Poison (ingested); +1 to Armor Class.



Hamlet Key

A. Abbey.

A large stone and wood structure that serves as an abbey for an order of Enibrian Druids dedicated to the production of Icewine. Originally constructed as a lord's manor and keep, the property was eventually converted to a temple and abbey in order to accommodate the fledgling vineyard. (Full description on previous page.)

B. O'Meere Estate.

The northern estate of Lord Kealan O'Meere, this sprawling property is surrounded by a 6' stone wall and comprised of a manor house, barracks, stable, storehouse, and small smithy. A minor vassal in the Baron's court, Lord Kealan is nonetheless very wealthy given his fief's economic importance in the Bay. He loathes Winter and spends much of his time enjoying his fortune in the South. His manor has subsequently suffered from his absence and looks nothing like his wealth would imply. Eidwik Stewart maintains the estate in the interest of the vacant land-baron. Eidwik is Wellborn and loyal to his lord, and the Barony. He resides here with his family and a small contingent of servants and guards.

Eidwik Stewart. Wellborn Steward; SCL 11; HP: 30; Abilities: I 15, Ch 14; AL: LN. Eidwik is a plain man despite his rank and birth. He stems from a line of Stewards that have served the O'Meere family for centuries. He has spent his entire life in the area in the service of his lord, having never ventured beyond the waters of the Outer Bay. If it were not for the required annual appearance in the Baron's Court as O'Meere's representative, Eidwik would not leave the tiny village at all. The Steward, like his father before him, has never met his liege, despite being responsible for the entirety of the lord's affairs in Winterton.

A small garrison of Wyvern Guard are stationed here - having taken up residence in 2 buildings along the south wall. The guards pass their time gambling or depleting the lord's ale. They are here to protect the Baron's interests in the abbey and its wine, paying little heed to the settlers of the valley. There are currently 10 Wyvern Guard assigned to this area and most are usually found on or around the estate. They are comprised of 2 Sergeants (3rd level Fighters) and 8 Guards (2nd level Fighters). This group reports directly to a Lieutenant in Dove's Crest. There are a dozen horses and 3 mules in the stables.

C. Trader's Emporium.

A large assortment of items ranging from used pots and pans to scraps of armor and weapons. Much of the merchandise here has seen better days, but occasionally great finds can be had. The Trader's Emporium is part pawn shop, part warehouse, and home to Cambell Birse. Cambell is a pleasant man of 4 decades who originally hails from the

South. He made his home and business in Winterton after visiting the hamlet and falling in love with the vale, and its Icewine. For almost 20 years he has operated the Emporium; storing, trading, buying, and selling goods from all over. He lives modestly and spends a good portion of profits on his favorite libation. Rare items can sometimes be found here and Cambell is an excellent way for adventurers to off-load extra gear or pick up necessary equipment. The store itself is a clutter of bins, shelves, racks, and crates. Nothing has been organized, however, Cambell keeps a close inventory on all stock - a requirement given the strict tax laws.

Cambell Birse. Trader/Merchant; SCL: 7; HD: d6-1 (hit die type for non-Adventure class humans); HP: 35; AC: 8 (+2 cloak of protection); Abilities: I 15, W 13, C 16; Weapons: d3 (+3 stiletto/dagger); AL: N. Cambell possesses a tiny intricately carved statuette depicting a dog. Upon command, the figurine becomes a large black dog under his control. Oftentimes he allows the enchanted creature to wander the store or sit in a nearby corner, keeping the beast for company more so than its intended function as a guard dog or as a deterrent to would-be thieves. Although diligent with taxes and inventory, Cambell is not above fencing contraband or 'shady' goods. He has contacts within the Smuggler's Market (a criminal organization of smugglers, pirates, and fences operating throughout the Bay) and is discrete in his dealings. Despite this, he is in excellent standing with the abbey and will have nothing to do with illegally acquired Icewine. Cambell could be a wealthy man if it were not for his love of the costly drink.

D. Blacksmith and Cooper.

This property consists of a residence and a blacksmith/barrelmaker shop. Duncan Dubh lives and works here with his wife and 3 sons, all fine coopers trained in the craft of barrelmaking. Their line of larch barrels are used in the aging and storing of wine by the abbey. It is a good business and Duncan is a respected member of the hamlet. He is a master smith, having been trained in the Baron's reserve army as a young man. Originally from the area, he is good friend of Martain and can be found drinking away evenings with the Innkeep in the taproom of the Blue Goose.

Duncan Dubh. Fighter/Blacksmith; Lvl: 4; SCL: 7; HP: 40; AC: 8 (+2 chain mail); Abilities: S 18(03), I 9, W 13, C 16; Weapons: d3 (+3 stiletto/dagger); AL: N. Duncan is of average height with a build that comes from a lifetime of work over an anvil and forge. He is usually quiet and reserved but has been known to let-loose after a few pints of Northern Stout and a song or two from a visiting bard.

E. The Blue Goose Inn & Tavern. (Full description on following page.)



THE BLUE GOOSE



The Blue Goose is quite popular during the warmer months as wealthier folk and visitors from the South travel inland to Winterton for a taste of its signature wine. During the Winter the unassuming Inn and Tavern is relatively quiet when only a few travelers or desperate adventurers can be found mingling with the locals. Rooms are located on the second floor and are small, but comfortable and dry. During the Winter, stones heated over the large taproom hearth are wrapped in cloth and placed at the foot of guest's beds as an extra comfort. Care should be taken not to kick the cloth free of the hot stone.

The Proprietor is Martain Wicklow, a former member of the local abbey. Martain has owned the inn since leaving the abbey almost half a century ago. He is in excellent standing with the order of Druids, hence his special allotment of Icewine. A widower with adult children, he now lives on the top floor of the building, having converted the second floor to rent-able rooms several years back. He employs a cook and several serving wenches. Like most folk around the Bay, Martain enjoys a good song or story. Bards and entertainers hold a special place in his heart, and such individuals are given free lodging and food (no drink).

Martain Wicklow. Druid/Innkeeper; Lvl: 5; SCL: 7; HP: 38; AC: 8; Abilities: S 12, I 11, W 16, D 10, C 15, Ch 17; Weapons: +2 quarterstaff; AL: N(g). Martain is well over 6 decades old and a wealth of information about the area. His drink of choice is Fiddler's Port.

The only establishment of its kind in the small hamlet. It is open year round for weary travelers and thirsty locals. The exterior is weathered board and wood. Despite its drafty appearance, the Goose is quite warm and inviting. Rooms and a residence comprises the upper two storeys while the main floor serves as a taproom, dining area, and kitchen. This is the only place in the Bay of Spirits, other than a few select cellars and the Baron's court, where one can legally purchase the highly prized Icewine - a specialty of the nearby abbey.

FOOD & DRINK

Inn and Tavern
Proprietor . Martain Wicklow
Rooms . 4 Silver/Night

Common Platter . 8 Copper
Smoked salmon, trout, or char served with fried tuber, bread and molasses

Traveler's Platter . 2 Silver
Roasted duck or goose, pork pie, fried tuber, slaw, cloudberry or black cherry pie

Drink
Spruce Beer . 6 Copper
Gallowale . 8 Copper
Northern Stout . 1 Silver
Windfall Cider . 8 Copper
White Crow Whiskey . 1 Silver
Fenshire Mead . 2 Silver
Fiddler's Port . 1 Silver
Ruby Wine . 5 Silver
Icewine . 5 Gold



F. General Goods and Store.

This large structure serves as the home and business of the Ambrus family. Anse and Alda Ambrus run the general store, along with a troupe of their sons and daughters. It is a busy place and a gossip spot for locals. Items are household in nature and are geared towards the inhabitants of the isolated village. Items sold to non-locals are subject to a 25% increase in price.

G. Gristmill.

This somewhat rundown building is the local mill, using the energy of the adjacent river to grind grain and corn into grist and flour. The miller is a man by the name of Osgar Finch. Osgar lives in a nearby farmhouse with his wife and children. He is rumored to operate an illegal whiskey still out of an abandoned keep somewhere in the hills south of Winterton.

H. Modest Farmhouses.

These family dwellings are mostly constructed of wood and house farm folk who settled in the valley centuries ago. These farms often produce a mix of vegetables and fresh meat. Root vegetables, cabbage, greens, corn, and peas are popular crops and many farms raise several chickens, ducks, geese, or pigs. All are followers, to some degree or other, of Enibria.

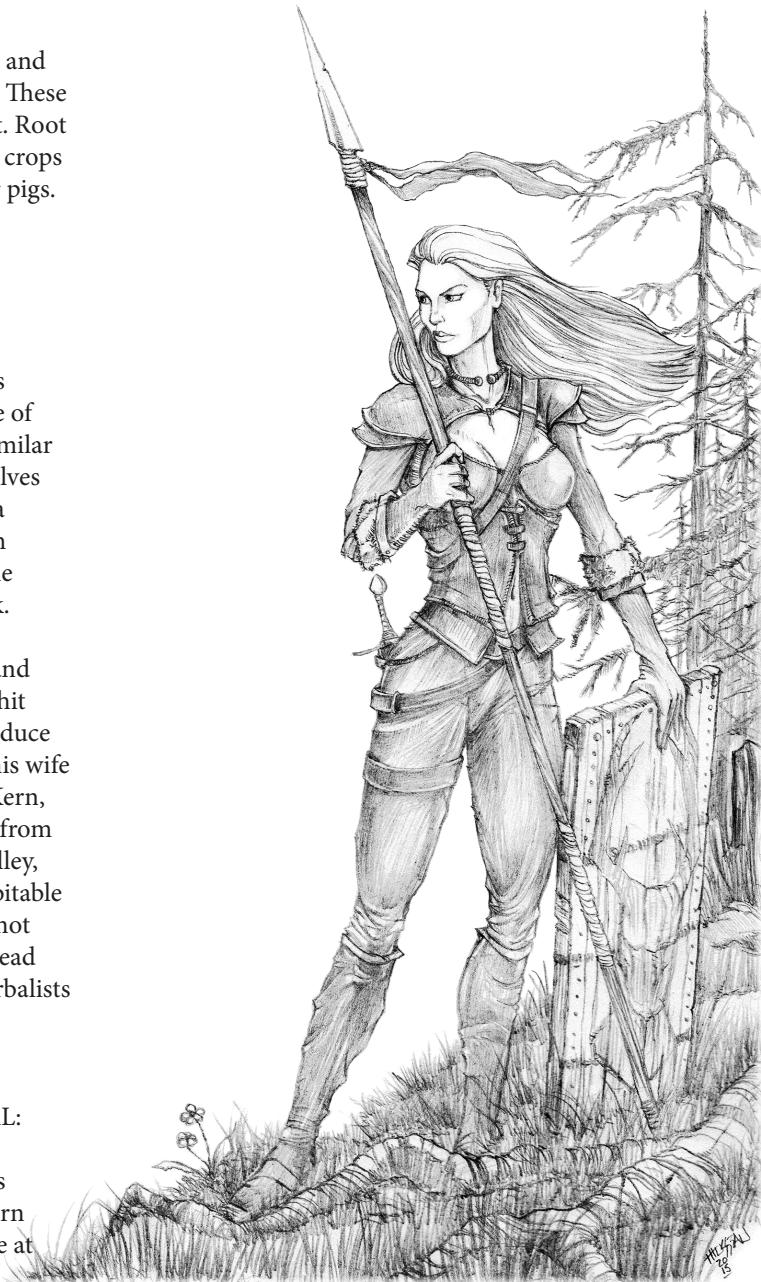
I. Gilio's Herbs & Apothecary.

This aromatic shop is filled with dried herbs, spices, ointments, and an assortment of charms and trinkets. Gilio Korte is the local apothecary and healer. All of his concoctions are of his own creation following a lifetime of tutelage under his late father, a Druid of Kern (a god similar to Enibria, with a focus on Agriculture and Forests). Salves and elixirs can be purchased (or bartered) for treating a broad range of ailments - from toothaches and stomach problems to bites and wounds. All recipes contain home grown and foraged ingredients and are reputed to work. Gilio's does not produce or sell magical potions of any kind. That said, many of his concoctions have healing and restorative properties. Healing salves can restore d4+3 hit points per application and poison antidotes can help reduce the effects of a giant wasp's sting. Gilio lives here with his wife - also a follower of Kern. Gilio's father was a Druid of Kern, descended from a line of devout worshipers stemming from lands to the North. His descendant helped settle the valley, using their expertise as followers of Kern to carve a habitable place among the Wilds. Unlike this late father, Gilio is not a Druid. He has no aptitude for the calling and has instead devoted much of his life to his herbs and recipes. If Herbalists are allowed as a class then Gilio fits the bill.

Gilio Korte. Herbalist; Lvl: 6; SCL: 6; HD: 32; AC: 9; Abilities: I 14, W 15, D 15; Weapons: d4 (+1 dagger); AL: N. Gilio is somewhat of a loner, preferring to spend his days in his herb garden or huddled amongst old recipes and notes. His seldom seen wife is also a follower of Kern - a Ranger and active adventurer. She spends some time at

'home', particularly during the Winter months, but is often away for days or weeks at a stretch exploring hidden valleys and forgotten ruins, leaving Gilio to tend to his plants and ointments.

Nessa Ridgerow. Ranger; Lvl: 5; HP: 55; AC: -1 (+3 leather armor, +2 wooden shield); Abilities: S 16, I 12, W 14, D 17, C 17, Ch 13; Weapons: d6 (+2 spear), d6 (+2 short sword); AL: NG(n). Nessa is an active adventurer in the Lower Bay area. She is a Ranger of Kern - a minor deity popular amongst hunters, foresters, and farmers; an offshoot of the church of Enibria and Sylvana. Nessa collects rare plants and herbs during her travels, bringing home prized ingredients to her Herbalist husband. She is a member of the Far Winds Adventuring Company, a loose band of adventurers based out of Dove's Crest.

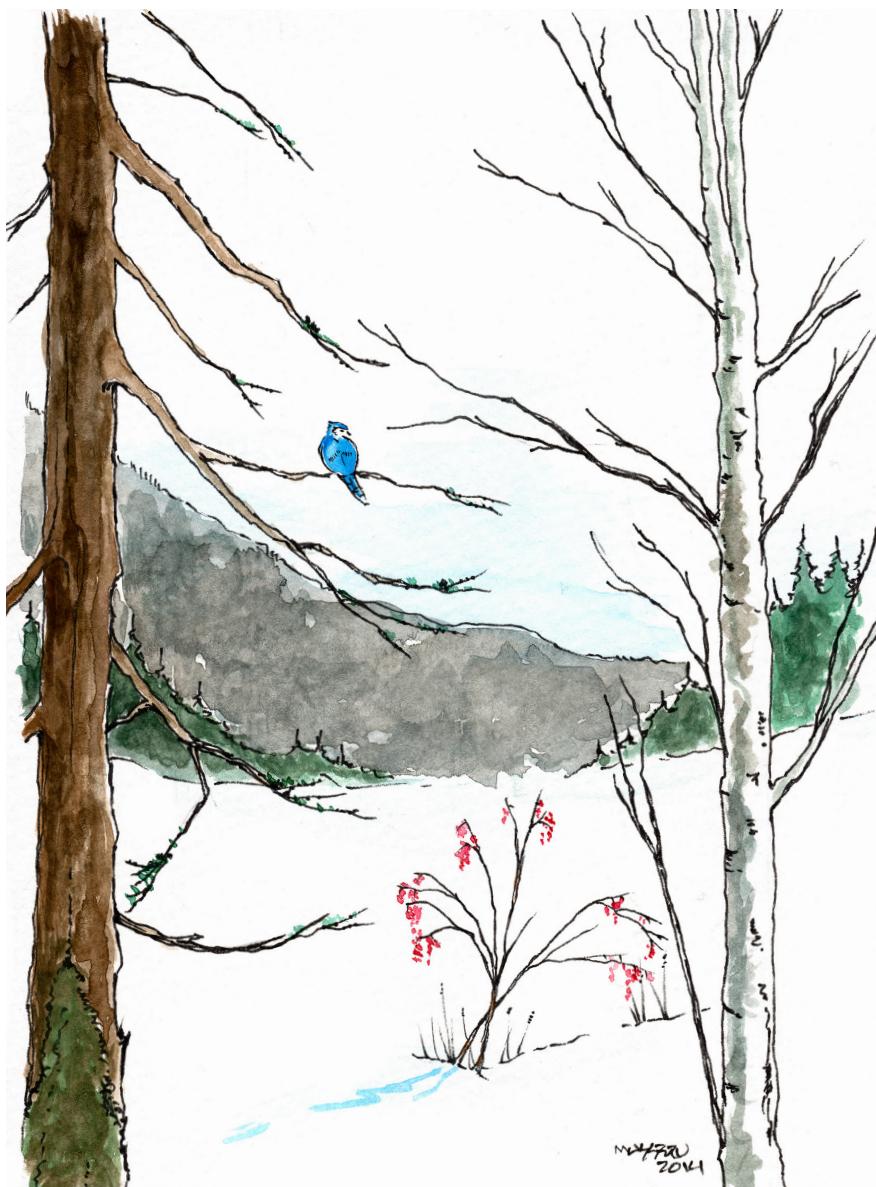


Winter Setting

As the name of the hamlet may imply, Winterton is intended to be a Winter setting. It can be utilized year-round, but the scene and scenario depicted here best fits a time of year when snow, blizzards, freezing temperatures, and limited travel are the norm. The player characters may find themselves stranded here after an early blizzard, perhaps having been driven off course by a fierce northern storm. They may be in Winterton to sample the Icewine or are merely here out of boredom, looking for an opportunity to explore the wilds, biding time until the Spring thaw.

Adventuring in Winter can be an adventure all its own. Freezing temperatures, blizzards, heavy snowfalls, and blowing drifts (whiteouts) can hamper travel and increase the odds of getting lost. Frostbite, hypothermia, and death due to exposure are constant threats unless one is properly prepared. Even the hardiest of explorers has succumbed to Gelid's Breath and the winds of the North.

Whiteouts and blizzards can reduce visibility to 5' or less and exposed flesh can freeze in sub-zero (Celsius) temperatures. Layers of warm clothing are essential, as is a heavy cloak or overcoat. Snow squalls and sudden storms can quickly conceal tracks and reduced visibility can increase the chances of a surprise encounter. Movement will also be hampered in cases of deep snow and icy surfaces. Equipment such as snowshoes, crampons, tinder kits, winter blankets, and rope can mean the difference between life and death.



This is not meant to say that adventuring in Winter can't be fun. It's simply a reminder that weather can be an effective and important element of game play. Not every excursion into the wintry outdoors will turn deadly, or even be noteworthy. Winter and the weather are a fact of life and inhabitants of the area go about their business without much thought to their environment. Common sense plays an essential role in making such settings work. Extreme weather should be used sparingly, and only then if it helps to further the plot or flow of the game. Tidbits and suggestions on how to use the weather to embellish the setting are here simply to help guide those not overly familiar with life in a northern temperate or sub-arctic clime. An encounter with a band of hobgoblins may sound cliché until you add a sudden snow squall or raging blizzard.

Wilderness and northern survival skills can help boost the success of any adventuring party. Rangers and Druids bode well, as do northern Elves and Dwarves. Human inhabitants of the area have also acquired the skills and wisdom to be able to survive in this unforgiving land. Walking (and Combat) while wearing snowshoes can be challenging to the inexperienced and knowing how to read the weather can help make the best of a bad situation.



The Adventure (Blood in the Snow)

A deep and steep-walled ravine runs beside the abbey. During Winter, blizzards and heavy snowfalls hide the ravine completely. Freezing temperatures slow the stream to a trickle and drifts block the narrow canyon well into Spring. An enterprising group of Redcaps (any suitable Humanoid group or band of rogues can be substituted) have been using the caves at the upper reaches of the ravine as a lair during the months preceding the Winter storms. The group was caught by an early blizzard and forced to remain in the caves until the weather changed. With no sign of a thaw in sight, the resourceful goblins began tunneling through the accumulated and hard-packed ice and snow. Not known for possessing an abundance of intelligence, the Redcaps eventually discovered that they had been tunneling in the wrong direction - leading towards the hamlet instead of out of the valley. Deciding that they were well past the point of return, they continued, bypassing the abbey until they were through a heavy drift and onto the main road.

It was from here the goblins launched raids on nearby farms - a chicken or duck here, a goose or piglet there - in an attempt to replenish supplies and much needed food. The group had resorted to eating the weakest in order to survive before a decision was made to tunnel out. Their numbers had been reduced by half over the course of the months they were stranded, but the new food and a chance to raid the unsuspecting village gave them newfound strength and courage.

Farmers assumed their animals had fallen prey to foxes and owls. There were never any traces or footprints in the snow. Redcaps are skilled trackers and even better at concealing themselves, using their surroundings as camouflage and cover. The raids were performed during heavy snowfalls in the darkest hours of night. All evidence of their activity quickly disappeared beneath the falling snow and blowing drifts. The Redcaps would be back in their caves high in the snow-filled ravine long before the hamlet awoke.

The raids have escalated, becoming more daring and frequent. The latest event occurs during an intense blizzard, on an evening when the player characters find themselves waiting out the storm in the local tavern and inn (the Blue Goose). A group of Redcaps, on their way back to the tunnel after a successful farm raid, stumbled upon a highly inebriated merchant and his equally intoxicated guard. The two were at the abbey and after generous amounts of wine took a wrong turn in the blizzard and headed away from their lodgings at the Blue Goose. Despite having put up a struggle, the drunken pair were quickly subdued and dragged back to the goblin's lair via the snow tunnel/

This adventure begins in the taproom of the Blue Goose. Other travelers are here, along with several locals, warming

themselves over bowls of hot stew or passing the time, and the storm, with drink. During the early evening, after the sun has set, several events will occur that set the stage for this unfolding scenario:

- A farmer from a nearby pig farm will come into the tavern claiming that his farm was raided. He couldn't make out the bandits in the storm, but they looked smaller than human, making off with a young pig as they scurried away towards the direction of the abbey.
- Soon afterwards another villager comes to the inn - a woman on her way to fetch her husband. She speaks of having heard muffled screams and squeals coming from beyond the abbey, on the roadway near the edge of the ravine. In the blowing snow she thought she could make out the faint flicker of torches, but the lights soon disappeared.
- A patron at the inn, after hearing of these events, becomes frantic. Her husband, and his guard, have yet to return from a wine sampling trip to the abbey. She is clearly upset and pleads with any able-looking individuals to go out and search for her husband, fearing that he may have gotten himself into trouble. It is obvious that none of the other patrons or locals are up to the task, even at the offer of 5 gold pieces per individual simply to search. (She will go as high as 10gp/individual).

It is expected that the PCs will agree to help in the search for her merchant husband and his guard companion. After all, that is the purpose of heroic adventure, or at least an easy way to earn some coins!

Locals know of several small caves along the ravine and there have been reports of goblins (specifically Redcaps) in the area prior to the Winter snows. The intention is to lead the Party in the direction of the snowed in ravine beyond the abbey where they are likely to discover blood in the snow. The source of the blood is a filthy, dark red cap almost completely covered in snow - the blood seeping through to form a bright red patch on the otherwise white roadway.

With some searching and a little investigation the players may uncover a concealed tunnel in a snowbank near the roadway. From here they can discern where the tunnel may lead. An encounter with a crazed goblin, in a hunt for its lost cap, will confirm any suspicions as who the inhabitants of the tunnel are.

At this stage, if the PCs decide to inform the merchant's wife as to his suspected fate, she will offer a total of 200 gp for his safe return. This will involve entering the tunnel and locating the missing merchant and his companion.



Snow Tunnel and Caves.

There are a total of 13 Redcaps occupying the tunnel and caves of the ravine along with several animated corpses (Zombies). This number can be adjusted to fit the Party's abilities if required. The Redcaps are lead by a chieftain and his shaman mate, a priestess of Malady (goddess of death and disease).

1. Ravine. A ravine runs perpendicular to the road, extending up and out of Winterton Vale. It is currently snow and ice filled, and is hardly discernible as anything more than a snowed-in depression in the hillside. Snow depths are anywhere from 15 - 20 feet (4.5 to 6 meters) in places.

2. Blood in the Snow. A small patch of bright red seeps through the snow in the middle of a roadway below the hill that serves as the home of the abbey. The falling snow fails to completely conceal it and it seems the more it snows, the more the blood spreads. (This is the lost hat of a Redcap. These thick leather caps are soaked in blood and somehow linked to the regenerative life-force of the Redcaps. A full description of these goblins is found at the end of this section.)

3. Tunnel. This carved out tunnel in the snow is almost undetectable to the average passerby. Even a close look at the snowbank will not reveal anything other than a wall of white and grey. The entrance has been concealed by a large chunk of hard snow. (Treat this as a Hidden or Concealed Door for Dwarves or similar races. Beyond the snow-door lurks a Redcap, waiting for an opportunity to retrieve its much needed hat. The creature is crazed and desperate at this point and will attack if the door is discovered and opened, lunging out to seize at its lost headwear.)

Redcap (1): AC: 5; Mv: 9"; HD: 2+2; HP: 16; #Atk: 1; Dmg: d6+1 (spear), d6+1 (short sword); SD: Regenerate 2 hp/day, including small digits; Int: ave; AL: LE; Size: M (4-5' tall); XP Value: 95. (A small leather pouch contains 14 cp, 5 sp.)

The tunnel itself is a hollowed out passageway that runs up, along the floor of the ravine. The surrounding floor, ceiling, and walls have been carved to a width and height of approximately 5 - 10'. Water drips constantly. Although cool, the air is not particularly cold, being sheltered from the outside elements. Slush and puddles of melt-water line the icy floor. There is an earthen, almost musty, scent to the air.

4. Stream. This slow flowing stream is barely a trickle as it meanders along the tunnel floor to disappear along its course beneath a small, icy overhang. The rock wall of the ravine forms the opposite wall of the passageway. The water is cold and clear and barely a foot deep.

5. Rubble and Logs. A pile of twisted branches and logs

lay at the base of a small 5' high rocky ridge, having been deposited here during warmer months. (A search of the pile will reveal several bones (animal and humanoid) and a watertight bone scroll case (contains 3 pieces of parchment: a registered charter for an adventuring group named '3 Wizards and a Dwarf' based out of Dove's Crest; a scroll with 3 spells (Feather Fall, Jump, Shield); and a scroll with 2 spells (Darkness 15', Knock).

6. Pool. A deep pool is at the base of a rocky cliff and an ice tunnel that extends overhead, leading further up into the ravine. Water trickles into the 8' diameter pool from above and the depth is approximately 6'.

There are two corpses here - the almost fleshless remains of previous victims of the Redcaps. They appear to have once been human and have been animated by the Redcap shaman to guard this area of the tunnel.

Zombies (2): AC: 8; Mv: 6"; HD: 2; HP: 13 each; #Atk: 1; Dmg: d8; Int: non-; AL: N; Size: M (6' tall); Zombies are slow and always strike last in a melee round.

7. Redcaps (2): HP: 16 each. These goblins have been sent back to find their 'hatless' comrade. Each has a small leather pouch containing a total of 18 cp, 6 sp, and 2 gp.

8. Trap. Triggering a trap here will cause overhanging chunks of ice to fall down into the tunnel in an area of 5'. Those beneath the falling ice boulders suffer 3d6 hp of damage while those in the immediate area (10') suffer d6 hp of damage. The ensuing noise will be enough to alert the 2 Redcaps in area 10.

9. Ravine Caverns. The icy tunnel leads to a dark cave opening in a rocky wall. The wall is part of the ravine's cliff face and snow and ice has been cleared around it. The entrance is roughly circular, being approximately 5' in width and height. There is a sour odor in the air and no light emanates from inside the pitch black cave.

The cave walls are of natural stone and wet with condensation. The rocky floor is uneven, rough, and slippery in places. Small bones (mostly animal) and scraps of filthy cloth are scattered about.

10. Cavern. This 15' x 15' cavern is filthy with scraps of rotten meat, waste, and bones. This is where the Redcaps first took refuge during the Winter storms before eventually exploring and inhabiting the inner caves. There are 2 Redcaps here, unless the trap in area 8 was triggered, in which case they would have ran to that area to fight. Otherwise, they will be encountered here as guards.

Redcaps (2): HP: 13 each. One has a copper necklace (worth 3 gp).



11. Cavern. This cavern contains piles of debris and waste - mostly useless. The air has a strong odor of decay and rot.

12. Zombies. Two slow moving, nearly fleshless human size creatures wander this corridor as part of the shaman's undead guard.

Zombies (2): AC: 8; Mv: 6"; HD: 2; HP: 13 each; #Atk: 1; Dmg: d8; Int: non-; AL: N; Size: M (6' tall).

13. Sleeping Chamber. A faint glow can be seen emanating from this chamber along the tunnel past area 12. This large cavern is the main sleeping area for the Redcaps. Filthy furs, hides, and cloth serve as beds for about a dozen of the goblins. Scraps and small bones litter the floor. The cavern is illuminated by a human skull on the floor in the far left corner. A sickly yellow glow from its empty eye sockets and nose give enough light to see.

There are 6 Redcaps here. They are huddled near the center of the cavern, ravenously consuming what looks to be a recently killed corpse.

Redcaps (6): AC: 5; Mv: 9"; HD: 2+2; HP: 16; #Atk: 1; Dmg: d6+1 (spear), d6+1 (short sword); SD: Regenerate 2 hp/day, including small digits; Int: ave; AL: LE; Size: M (4-5' tall); XP Value: 95.

(The corpse is that of the merchant's guard. He has become a meal for the hungry goblins. The glowing skull is the result of an enchanted stone placed inside the cavity and used as a light source. The stone has a 'Continual Light' spell cast upon it. A search of the chamber and the goblins will yield 96 cp, 53 sp, 25 gp, 3 bloodstones (worth 50 gp each), and a +2 silver dagger. Amongst the filthy furs and rags is a Winter Wolf pelt (worth 1500 gp). It also acts as a Cloak of Warmth to whomever wears it.)

14. Storage Chamber. This 15' x 15' cavern acts as a storage area for the Redcaps. Most of the items here are from pillaging raids on farmsteads in the area. Redcaps have an affinity for anything crafted from copper, so there are numerous copper pots, pans, and utensils amongst a heap of useless junk and debris. A makeshift log gate/door blocks the exit to this chamber. (There is nothing of real value here.)

15. Shrine. The stench of decay is apparent before reaching this 20' x 20' cavern. The walls and floor have been coated in blood - the rock and stone throughout stained a dark, red color. Bones and skulls have been arranged in the center of the floor in what appears to be a ritualized fashion. Two low-burning oil lamps provide some illumination. There is an unconscious human male bound by leather straps against the far wall. He has been stripped and his body covered in crude and strange symbols. There is a Redcap shaman here - a crouched, hideous looking female goblin clad in filthy garments and adorned with tiny bones and skulls

(faerie skulls). She appears to be in the middle of a ceremony preparation and is accompanied by 2 Zombies.

Redcap Shaman. Cleric (Specialty Priest of Malady): Lvl: 5; HP: 35; AC: 5; Abilities: W 15; Weapons: d6 (+2 club); Spells: 4 1st level, 3 2nd level; and 2 3rd level Cleric spells (Cause Light Wounds (2); Cure Light Wounds; Darkness (Light); Hold Person; Silence 15' Radius; Heat Metal (Druid spell); Animate Dead; Cause Disease (Cure); AL LE. The shaman possesses 25 cp, 15 sp, 5 gp, and 2 small clay jars (Healing Salve - foul smelling, but restores 2d4 hp/application. There are 2 applications per jar.).

Zombies (2): AC: 8; Mv: 6"; HD: 2; HP: 13 each; #Atk: 1; Dmg: d8; Int: non-; AL: N; Size: M (6' tall).

(The human male is the kidnapped merchant. He is unconscious and wounded, but nonetheless alive. If rescued he will be grateful to the Party and reward them accordingly once united with his wife.)

16. Chieftain's Chamber. This large cavern is the sleeping area for the Redcap chieftain and the shaman. It is a dark and crudely furnished chamber with rotting and blood-stained hides scattered about.

The only occupant is a tall and burly goblin (by goblin standards) and leader of the Redcap group. He is cowardly and will wait to see the outcome of the encounter with the shaman and her undead companions before attacking, preferring to lurk in the shadows of his chamber for an opportunity to surprise.

Redcap Chieftain. Fighter: Lvl: 4; HP: 38; AC: 5; Abilities: S 16, I 11; Weapons: d6 (+2 short sword), d4 (+3 dagger), Javelin of Lightning; AL: LE. The chieftain wears a fine, albeit blood-encrusted, copper bracer worth 50 gp.

(A search of the cavern will yield 200 cp, 50 sp, 20 gp, 5 bloodstones (worth 50 gp each) and 4 pieces of jade (worth 25 gp each). There are also 4 jars containing Healing Salve stashed among the rags and clutter.)

Due to the occupant of area 17, the Redcaps haven't ventured beyond this point. The mission will be complete with the rescue of the merchant and the defeat of the Redcaps. Venturing beyond this point is completely optional, providing an extra encounter for the Party (if needed) and an option to explore deeper if the collapsed tunnel in area 18 is excavated.

17. Water Chamber. A small pool is near the left hand wall of this large 30' diameter cavern and a collapsed tunnel is at the far right. This area is dark and unlit with little of the debris and filth encountered in previous caves and chambers. It appears that the Redcaps have not delved into this area of the cavern system.



The pool itself is approximately 10' in diameter with clear, still water. Droplets of condensation from the cavern ceiling occasionally disturb the otherwise calm surface.

(This is the lair of a Water Weird - a large, serpent-like creature formed from the liquid contents of the pool. The shaman had been attempting a ritual to appease the creature in order to gain access to the collapsed tunnel (area 18).)

Water Weird (1): AC: 4; Mv: 12"; HD: 3+3; HP: 23; #Atk: 0; Dmg: nil; SA: drowning (strikes as a 6 hd creature; save vs paralyzation or be dragged into the pool); SD: Piercing/ slashing weapons inflict only 1 hp of damage; Int: very; AL: CE; Size: L (10' long).

(The pool is only 3' deep and contains the creature's treasure: 220 cp, 150 sp, 75 gp, 2 agates (worth 25 gp each), 1 bloodstone (worth 50 gp), +2 long sword in a jeweled scabbard (scabbard is worth 500 gp), and a finely carved platinum ring (+2 Ring of Protection).)

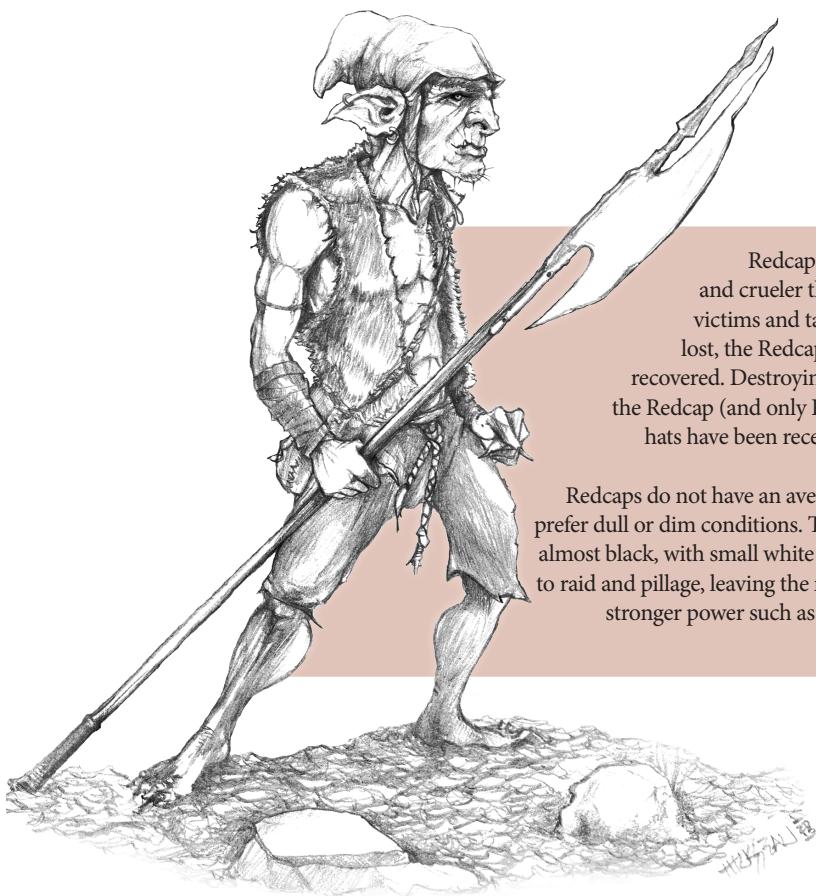
18. Collapsed Tunnel (Optional). There is a collapsed passageway at the far end of the Water Chamber (17). Large boulders and rocks block any further travel beyond this point.

This area has been included as an optional continuation of a dungeon/cave adventure, provided the GM has the material to delve deeper. If not, this area can simply be ignored.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE.

Upon rescuing the merchant and defeating the Redcaps the Party can return to the village for their reward of 200 gp. If any of the Redcap's hats were collected they can be sold at Gilio's Herbs & Apothecary for 5 gp per cap. This is part of an ongoing bounty on certain goblinoid races. Redcap hats can fetch a good price although collecting them can be quite messy.

Winterton itself can be used as a base from which to venture further into the countryside, or simply as a one-off mini-adventure. The merchant himself, once healed and rested, may employ the Party as guards to escort a shipment of Icewine to the nearest port 30 miles away.



REDCAP

BORDER GOBLIN

First introduced in 'The Haunt of Crow Gulch' and later in 'The Boarman of Grackle's Vale'.

Redcaps are Border Goblins from the North. They are more cunning and crueler than their cousins. Redcaps dye their hats in the blood of their victims and take great care to keep and protect these garments. If the cap is lost, the Redcap will lose hit points at a rate of 2/day until death, or the hat is recovered. Destroying the hat will kill the Redcap. The treasured garments bestow the Redcap (and only Redcaps) with the ability to Regenerate 2 hp/day provided the hats have been recently dyed. Lost digits (fingers, nose, ears, etc.) can grow back.

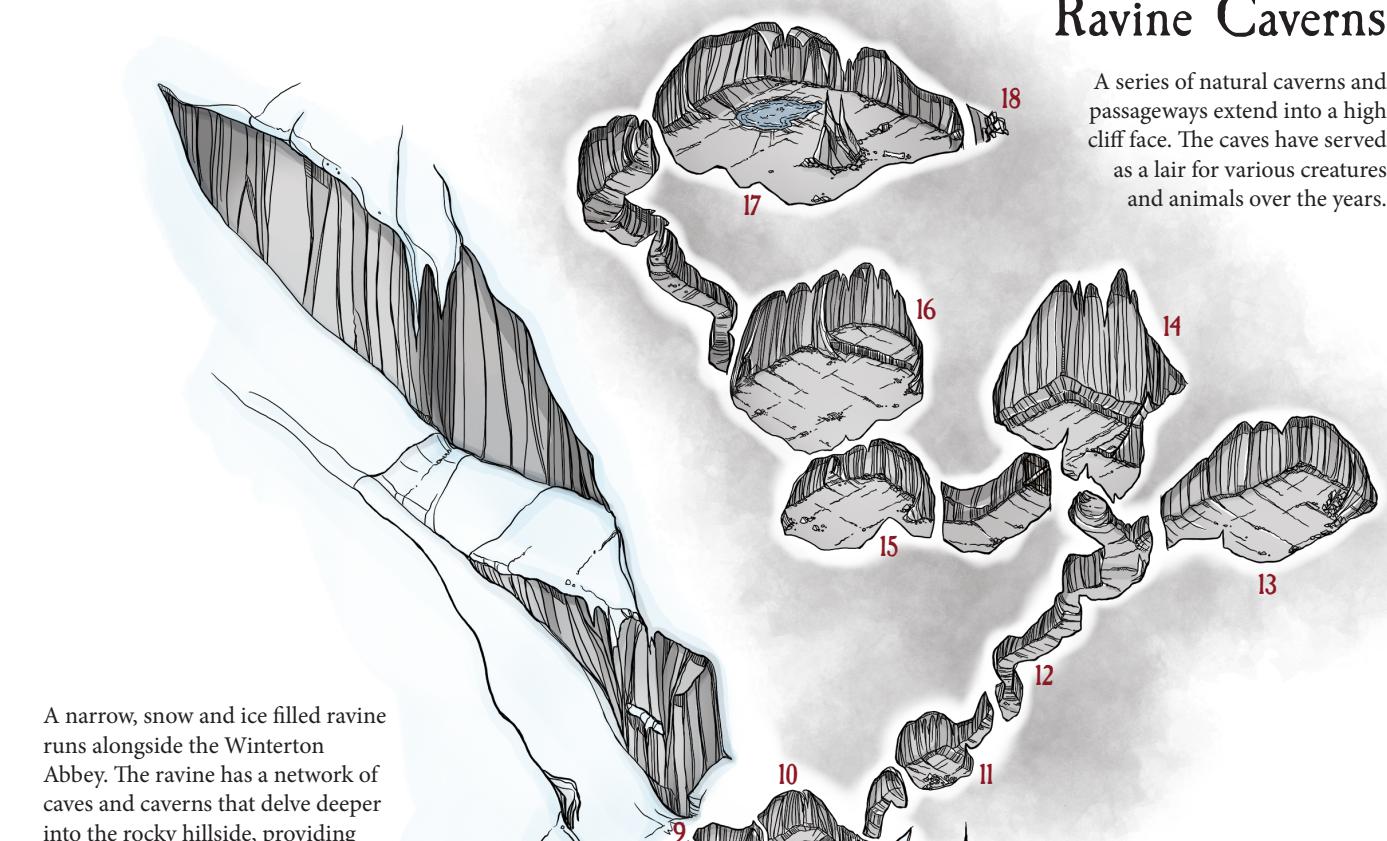
Redcaps do not have an aversion to sunlight that their lesser relatives have, although they prefer dull or dim conditions. They are also leaner and slightly taller. Their eyes are deep red, almost black, with small white pupils. Redcaps inhabit old ruins and deep forests, preferring to raid and pillage, leaving the mining to the common goblins (Clackers). They often serve a stronger power such as a Mage or Priest, but will not serve beneath other goblinoids. They behave like regular goblins in all other respects.

Redcap: AC: 5; Mv: 9"; HD: 2+2; #Atk: 1; Dmg: d6+1 (short pole arm or spear), d6+1 (short sword); SD: Regenerate 2 hp/day, including small digits; Int: ave; AL: LE; Size: M (4-5' tall); XP Value: 95. They are fond of copper and value copper coins over silver and gold.



Ravine Caverns

A series of natural caverns and passageways extend into a high cliff face. The caves have served as a lair for various creatures and animals over the years.



A narrow, snow and ice filled ravine runs alongside the Winterton Abbey. The ravine has a network of caves and caverns that delve deeper into the rocky hillside, providing shelter and a base of operations for a small clan of goblins.

Snow Tunnel

Drifts of snow have concealed much of the ravine. Snow and ice depths are anywhere from 15 - 20 feet (4.5 to 6 meters) in places. The carved out tunnel extends from the cliff face to the edge of the roadway below.



1 square
equals 10 feet





1 square
equals 10 feet

PLAYER HANDOUT



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