

The Ice Caves of Azinth

by James Macduff

Your party has received a royal decree from the kingdom of Azinth, a small but prosperous principality on the edge of a huge mountain range. King Ezred of Azinth has heard tales of your exploits and wishes to speak to you on "a matter of some urgency." You have all heard rumors of a war brewing between Azinth and an aggressive neighbor, the kingdom of Kanshek.

After an uneventful journey, you arrive at King Ezred's palace. The imposing keep looks prepared for war: The ramparts have been reinforced and the guards are all clad in utilitarian mail – not the ceremonial armor one usually sees in peacetime. Ezred smiles as you enter the throne room and beckons you to take a seat near him. He's a tall, robust man with a graying beard, and though you can see worry lines creased across his face, he greets you as if you had just dropped by for tea.

"I have a task which needs completion," he begins, "and I feel that you have the proper mettle to see it through. Five years ago, the snow began to fall in our northern mountains. It has not stopped since. Our northern border has been cloaked in ice for all that time, blocking the passes to our northern neighbors. We sent parties up to clear them, but none ever returned. I believe that Kanshek instigated this magical winter. Normally, it wouldn't have been a problem – we had trade routes through other nations, and our ports remained busy enough to support the economy – but this looming war has cut off many of our supply lines. We need the passes open to get supplies and equipment from our allies.

"A few days ago, I received a message from an unknown party who claims he knows how to end this five-year winter. He has arranged a meeting at an abandoned inn near the highest mountain pass. I would send my own troops, but I cannot afford to pull any from the front lines.

"Will you help me end this unnatural freeze? You must meet this man and do whatever it takes to clear those passes. If you perform this task for me, you will have the eternal gratitude of the Kingdom of Azinth."

Hope you brought your mittens.

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Requires the use of the
**Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook,
Third Edition, published by
Wizards of the Coast®**

The Ice Caves of Azinth is a d20 System adventure booster designed for 3-5 characters of levels 2-4. It can be played as a standalone adventure or dropped into any ongoing campaign setting.



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How to Use This Product

This adventure is designed to be easily dropped into your existing *Third-Edition D&D* campaign. It can be run in a single session, and it makes for an excellent evening's gaming. To prepare yourself to run it, you should read it completely at least once to familiarize yourself with the material. You may wish to photocopy the map in the center of the book for ease of use as well. The text on the back of the book can be read to your players to introduce them to the adventure. After that, you're ready to begin. Good luck!

Dungeons and Dragons®

This module requires the use of the *Dungeons and Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition*, published by Wizards of the Coast.® You won't be able to run this adventure without it.



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DM Background

(Note: Feel free to replace the kingdoms and personalities here with those from your own campaign if you wish.)

The mountainous terrain on the northern side of the kingdom of Azinth has been frozen in ice for over five years. Passes have been blocked, snow has fallen in the height of summer, and no one venturing into the northern mountains has ever returned. King Ezred thinks that these circumstances were caused by his nation's enemy, the Kingdom of Kanshek, in preparation for war. He has asked the party to investigate a message from an unknown person who claims to know how to end the seemingly eternal winter.

Azinth's trouble is being caused by a feud – but not the feud Ezred thinks. Five years ago, a pair of reclusive wizards in the mountains – Magal the Undying and Kavon Deralia – had been squabbling over esoteric matters and arranged a meeting in the caves beneath Magal's tower to resolve their differences. Unfortunately, tempers flared rather than cooled, and their argument devolved into an open duel. Powerful explosions shook the earth for miles around, and arcs of magical power rose in frantic bursts from Magal's tower as the two unleashed their awesome powers at each other.

After several hours of blistering magic, the duel reached its apex: Magal summoned a water elemental from a nearby spring, which enveloped Kavon in an effort to drown her. As a last-ditch effort to defeat her rival, Kavon activated a magic necklace known as the *Circle of Ice*. The artifact placed her in a magical sleep, but it had an unforeseen reaction with the elemental in which she was encased.

The elemental froze solid, and the *Circle* unleashed a wave of magical winter. Snow began falling in a 100-mile radius, and temperatures dropped to well below freezing. The sudden atmospheric change caused the ceiling above the two combatants to collapse. Magal was crushed beneath a ton of rock (rendering his name somewhat fallacious), and Kavon remained trapped in suspended animation within the frozen elemental. The ice and cold will remain until she is released from her frigid prison.

The letter comes from Primus, an artificially created servitor of Kavon. Primus has searched vainly for his mistress for five years. He finally determined her location, but he cannot free her himself. He needs help from outsiders (i.e., the party) to get to her. King Ezred is willing to provide the party with any nonmagical equipment they need, including winter clothes, torches, and mountain ponies for climbing the treacherous mountain pathways. The inn specified in Primus's note lies some 60 miles from Ezred's castle.



Assault on the Road

The road into the mountains winds through a gorgeous vista of hillocks, hollows, and pine-covered woodlands. Although it is summer, the temperature drops steadily the further you ride – far more quickly than normal. Snow begins falling on the afternoon of the first day's travel, and by sunset it has completely covered the countryside. The village and farmhouses of Azinth slowly drop away, leading to dilapidated structures which have been abandoned to the cold. The north end of the kingdom feels like a frost-shrouded ghost town.

As light begins to fade, you can see an empty farmhouse up the road, on the far side of a small copse of trees. It looks like a good place to spend the night.

Though the people of Kanshek have nothing to do with the perpetual snow, they have no desire to see the mountain passes reopened. A spy informed them of King Ezred's plan, and they dispatched a squad of **6 guerilla fighters (hp 19 each)** to stop the heroes before they reach the inn. These soldiers are waiting in the trees to ambush the heroes once they pass. The men are all skilled fighters. They dress in nondescript clothing with no discerning marks, and wear chain mail with short bows and bastard swords. If more than half of the ambushers are killed, the survivors flee. Captured soldiers reveal who they are working for and why, and they swear not to molest the party any further if released. They are good to their word – if the party is willing to accept it.

Kanshek Soldiers (6): CR 3 (2nd level). SZ M (humanoid); hp 19; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 armor); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 armor); Atk: bastard sword +6 melee (1d10+2), composite longbow +4 melee (1d8+2); SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8; AL N. Skills: Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +5. Feats: Exotic Weapon (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

The Man at the Inn

It takes another day's travel after the ambush to reach the inn where the party is to rendezvous with Primus. The snow flies more rapidly as they travel north, and by midday the heroes need to bundle up in warm clothes or suffer the effects of exposure to the cold. For this, the heroes must each make a Fortitude saving throw every hour (DC 15, +1 per previous consecutive check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage from hypothermia.

The hills rise higher and higher, leading to imposing mountain peaks which dominate the horizon. The wilderness from here on in is covered in snow and ice, and the path becomes treacherous at points. You may ask for periodic Balance checks (DC 15) to avoid slipping and falling.

The snow eventually tapers off (making travel easier), and the party comes across the inn just after sunset.



The inn stands at the crossroads of a pair of trails, one heading deeper into the mountains the other running parallel to the taller peaks, presumably circling back toward Azinth. The place has clearly been abandoned for some time, though there are signs of recent use. It is a huge, cavernous building, with multiple gables. A rotting stable stands nearby. Empty windows gape out at the road, and a huge snowdrift rests in the open doorway. A sign bearing the inn's name – The Owl's Roost – hangs by rusty chains over the awning, creaking in the wind. As you approach the inn, the sputtering flame of a candle can be seen within.

Assuming the party enters the inn, read the following passage:

The abandoned main room is scarcely warmer than the snowy road outside. Icicles hang from the rafters, and the few remaining pieces of furniture are covered in drifts. A long bar extends along the length of the right-hand wall, warped and twisted by exposure to the elements.

The candle burns on a wobbly table in the center of the room, filling the inn with yawning shadows. The light illuminates a hulking form wrapped in a hooded cloak and standing in an open doorway. The figure stands almost eight feet tall, but you cannot make out its face.

"You come from Ezred?" it asks in a lisping voice.

"I am Primus, first servitor to Kavon Deralia, Mistress of Magic, Lady of the Mountains, my all-knowing creator, and blessing unto the world. I bid you welcome in her name and thank you for making such a harrowing journey."

Primus steps into the light and pulls his hood back. His face is a nightmarish jumble of disparate parts sewn together by what appear to be leather stitches. His right eye is clearly reptilian, while his left is a bright, elfin blue. An oversized hand wrapped in crude bandages extends openly as he gestures for you to gather around the table. Once you have settled, he begins:

"Five years ago, my mistress vanished while on a journey to visit a fellow celestial. At the same time, this cursed cold descended upon the world, doubtless a sign of mourning that the Lady of the Mountains had passed from our lives. But I would not accept that such a bright light would ever dim. For five years, I searched for signs of her. I travelled every inch of these mountains, saw things that would drive lesser creatures mad. I endured pain and suffering, the likes of which you can scarcely conceive. Finally, after all of my trials, I discovered that which I had sought so long: My mistress yet lived!

"Alas, I could not reach her, for she remained trapped deep beneath the earth, and my form could not squeeze into the tiny entrance. I despaired of saving her. I could not show my face in Azinth, and I knew that the king would deny my request for aid, for a monster I must seem to one such as he.

"Then I heard news of a war brewing between Azinth and her neighbor. I knew that king Ezred would need the



eternal winter to end if he wished his kingdom to survive. With my guidance, he would send people to help me free my lost mistress. And here you are.

"I can lead you to the caves where the Lady of Mountains is imprisoned, and I can tell you how to free her once you find her. Then the winter will end and your king will have his passes open again. We leave in the morning."

The last sentence come across as an absolute truth rather than a suggested plan.

How the characters deal with Primus is up to them. He wants nothing more than to free his mistress and, he assumes the party desires it as badly as he does. He defends himself if attacked, but otherwise he's as helpful as he can be. He is happy to answer questions, although his knowledge is limited. He knows that Kavon lies beneath the ruined tower "of a fellow celestial" and that she has been trapped in ice. Primus seems to believe that the mountains are mourning for the loss of his mistress and that the snow will stop if she is returned. He is unshakable in the belief that Kavon is a perfect goddess, and he becomes confused (though not hostile) if the heroes suggest otherwise. They clearly don't understand.

If the characters express concerns about sleeping in the inn, he offers to stand guard for them ("My mistress wisely built me so as not to require sleep," he explains). If they mention the cold, he excuses himself without a word and returns several hours later with enough firewood to roast an ox. The next morning, the heroes presumably take the golem at his word – while keeping a careful eye on him, of course – and allow him to take them to Magal's tower. Otherwise, their mission may well be at an unsuccessful end.

Primus (Flesh Golem): CR 7. SZ L; HD 9d10; hp 49; Init 0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (-1 size, +10 natural); Atk: 2 slams +10 melee (2d8+5); Reach 10 ft.; SA berserk; SQ construct, magic immunity, damage reduction 15/+1; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 21, Dex 11, Con –, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 1; AL N. Skills: Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +8. Feats: Improved Initiative, Track.

Journey to the Tower

In the morning, Primus leads the heroes off the established path and onto a barely visible game trail leading straight into the wilderness. It becomes quite treacherous, ascending to a series of perilous mountain ledges before finally terminating at a small snow-covered vale. You can make the journey as simple or as hazardous as you wish, but be sure to emphasize the dangers inherent in the territory. Multiple parties from Azinth have died in these mountains, and the PCs should feel it. The cold gnaws mercilessly at their extremities, and unprotected characters should suffer the effects of cold exposure (Fortitude saving throw (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or 1d6 points of subdual damage). Luckily, Primus leads them through with surefooted assurance. He seems unconcerned by the precipitous drops and perilous ledges and moves like a mountain goat through the snow and ice.



When you feel the party has had enough, read the following passage:

Though it seems like the cliffs and ledges will never end, they finally give way to firmer ground. Primus leads you down a slippery slope to the opening of a wide vale. It must have been a beautiful place once, but some dreadful catastrophe seems to have stricken it. A small forest of dead trees rise up out of the snow, and here and there you can spot skeletons in the drifts – not all of which are human.

At the far end of the vale, you can see a dark finger of stone pointing into the air, a massive tower, the top of which has been sheared off and now lies broken on the icy ground around the building.

"There," Primus gestures. "There is the resting place of my benevolent mistress."

Remorhaz

The skeletons are the result of a **remorhaz (hp 73)** that has taken up residence nearby. It considers the valley a private hunting ground and has dined well on Magal's surviving minions in the area. The party's vibrations attract its attention, and it attacks when they are about halfway across the vale. It rises up out of the ground with a colossal crash and attempts to grab the nearest character and scurry off with him or her.

Normally such a creature would prove too strong for inexperienced heroes. However, Primus leaps valiantly to their defense, and the polar worm retreats from the encounter after losing only a third of its hit points. It was looking for an easy meal, and it can be driven off by a fierce counterattack. The PCs might assume that they've seen the last of it. Would that it were true.

The tower stands buttressed up against the rising peaks at the far end of the valley. Stones and debris from the ruined top can be found over 100 feet away. It appears as if the building exploded from the inside.

Huge cracks and fissures in the earth spread out from the tower's foundations. Some of them hiss with jets of steam, and all of them look unstable. (One of them, in fact, killed Magal the Undying as it opened.) Primus leads the party to the edge of a particularly large crack, one big enough to allow man-sized or smaller creatures to pass through, but not the golem. A character looking close enough (Spot, DC 10) can see marks on the edges of the crevasse: the places where Primus attempted to force his way down the crack.

"Somewhere down there, my lady lies trapped," Primus rumbles. "I hear her mind calling to me, but I can move no closer. The crevasse is too narrow for my body to pass. You must find her and free her using this." He holds out a strange glowing ball that radiates heat when touched. (*This is an efreet orb. See "New Magic Item" on page 15.*) "When you find her, you must clench this ball in your right hand, lay it as close to my mistress as you can, and say the word 'sun.' Do not do this until you have located the Mistress of Magic, for its powers may only be used once. I will wait here until you return, my friends, and beware: The other celestial had servants of his own, who doubtless lurk in the caves beneath."



Primus can carefully lower the party one by one into the crevasse, then hand them down their equipment as they wish.

Remorhaz: CR 7. SZ H (beast); HD 7d10 +35; hp 73; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft, burrow 20 ft; AC 20 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +11 natural); Atk: bite +13 melee (2d8+12); Face 10 ft. by 20 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; SA improved grasp, swallow whole; SQ heat, tremorsense; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 26, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 10; AL N. Skills: Listen +10, Spot +9. Feats: Power Attack.

The Ice Caves

Chamber 1: Entrance

The crevasse empties into a huge cavern. Your torches illuminate a mirror surface of ice coating every inch of the walls, floor, and ceiling. You can slide harmlessly along the slick surface from the crack to the floor. Gigantic icicles hang down from the corners, and small eddies of snow blow merrily across the area. The crevasse runs lengthwise across the surface, illuminating the chamber with harsh sunlight from above. The northern and southern ends stretch off into the darkness, beyond the reach of your torches.

The south end of the cavern gradually narrows into an icy passageway. It also contains a pile of frozen bones (human and otherwise) stacked crudely against the wall. The most recent samples are cool but not frozen, suggesting that something has fed recently.

If the heroes move south past the bones, read the following passage to them.

The cavern gradually grows narrower, shrinking into a rough-hewn passage that extends east-southeast. The formation looks entirely natural, with stalactites and stalagmites competing for space with the icicles. As you move forward, you can hear a series of grunts and growls coming from further down the passage.

Chamber 2: Snow Apes

The passageway eventually widens into a large, natural chamber much like the entrance. It is occupied by a small tribe of **5 snow apes (hp 32 each)**, a variant of dire apes with white fur to match the climate.

There are two males and three females in the band. They have built a crude nest in the center of the chamber, and one of the males always watches the nearby passageways. The party's scent has alerted the apes to the presence of interlopers, and they aggressively defend their territory. They hurl chunks of ice at long range (1d6+5 damage per chunk), then use their claws and teeth at close range. The apes retreat



if they suffer more than 50% casualties or witness a significant display of flame-based magic (*fireball* or the like), pulling back into the northern passageway toward Chamber 3. The apes are aware of the deadfall there and know how to pass it without harm. They do not pursue retreating adventurers, but they eagerly devour any bodies left behind.

Snow Apes (5): CR 3. SZ L (animal); HD 5d8+10; hp 32 each; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., climb 15 ft.; AC 15 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural); Atk: ice chunk +3 ranged (1d6+5), 2 claws +8 melee (1d6+6), bite +3 melee (1d8+3); Reach 10 ft.; SA rend 2d6 +12; SQ scent, cold subtype (immune to cold, double damage from fire without save); SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 22, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7; AL N. Skills: Climb +14, Move Silently +9, Spot +9.

Chamber 3: Deadfall

This chamber opens up naturally from the great central cavern. It appears much the same as the rest of the area, though there is more ice and debris littering the floor here than elsewhere.

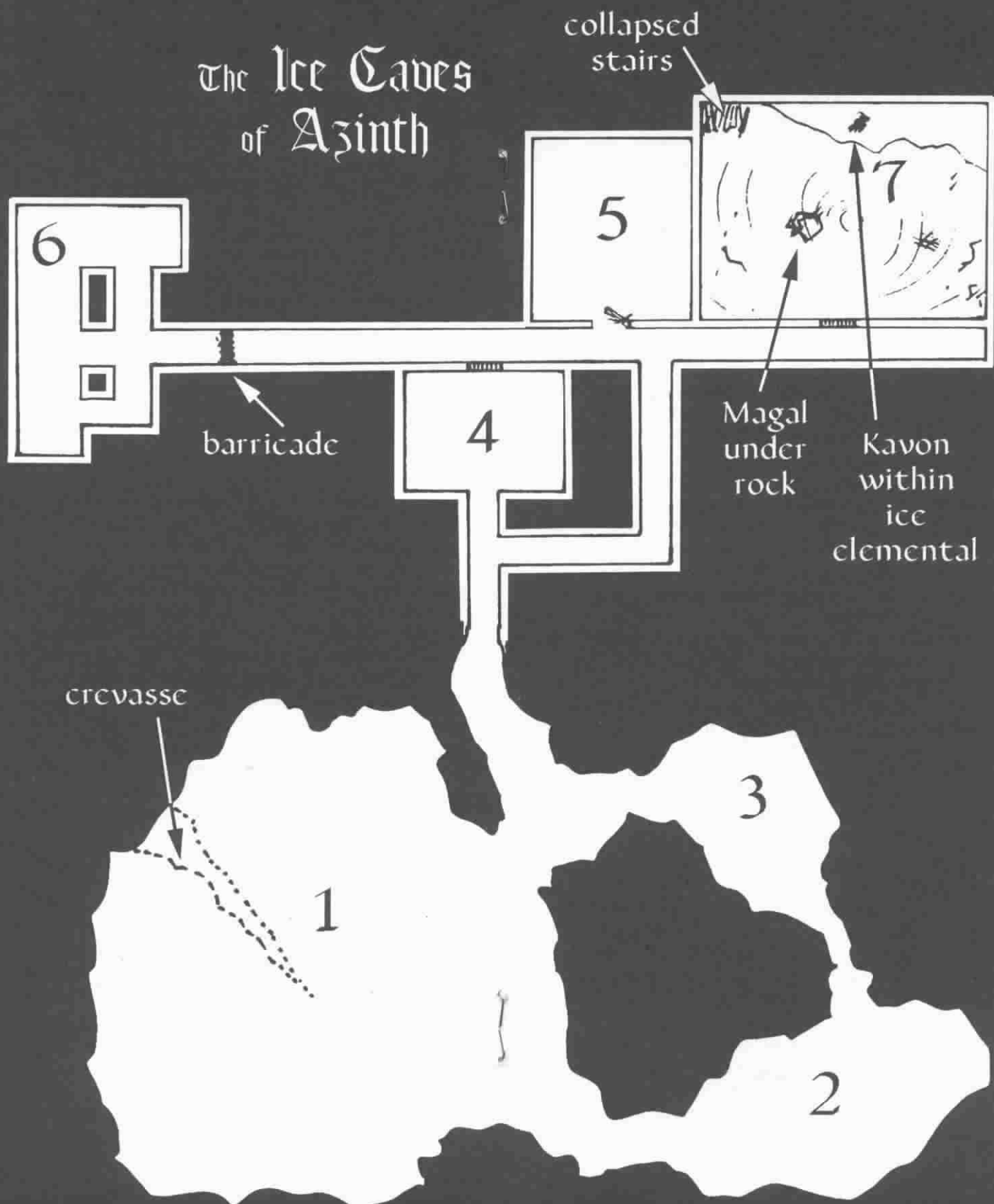
The southeastern portion of this great cavern has collapsed, but a thin sheet of ice has developed over the open pits. Anyone weighing more than 50 pounds who steps on the indicated area of the map breaks through, dropping to the stone floor some 60 feet below. (Pit Trap: 6d6 damage, Reflex save (DC 20) avoids, Search (DC 20).) Luckily, a huge stalactite (also indicated on the map) has fallen across the pit, forming a solid walkway to traverse it. Though it is hidden by ice and debris, careful PCs who make a Search roll (DC 20) should be able to spot it. In addition, observant heroes pursuing the snow apes from Chamber 2 can avoid the deadfall by following their path. You should mind the heroes' attitude during such a scenario. If they're madly charging after the apes, they should fall through. If they're proceeding carefully or watching the apes closely, give them a Spot roll (DC 15) to notice how precisely the apes chose their path. d

The bottom of the pit contains a pair of dead snow apes and a frozen, human corpse wearing the robes of a wizard's apprentice. (This is Magal's assistant, who was killed in the collapse while rushing to his master's aid). The body is wearing an ornate necklace worth approximately 2,000 gp, and it has two *potions of healing* and a set of *boots of elvenkind*.

Chamber 4: The Ice Mephit

The areas north of the main cavern seem smoother and more artificial. The passages have a uniform feel to them. Unlike the natural formations further south, these were clearly shaped by human hands and are probably the underground levels of the wizard's tower.

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As you enter a small room, the impression becomes crystal clear. The straight walls consist of neatly laid stone, and the frost cannot hide the arcane symbols etched into the floor. A set of bookshelves lines the walls, filled with all manner of frozen scrolls and icicle-lined tomes. The books have apparently been replaced haphazardly, some piled in stacks, others shoved into corners. A strange, winged creature – about four feet tall with blue translucent skin – is perched atop one of the bookshelves. He’s reading a small book, and as you enter, he throws it grumpily upon a growing pile of texts in the corner.

The creature was originally a water mephit, a small, elemental creature who Magal convinced to serve as his helper. The magical reverberations of the wizards’ duel transformed the creature into an **ice mephit (hp 13)**, a fact which has caused it no end of consternation. It has tried for some time to reverse the process, but so far has been unsuccessful. The PCs have caught it futilely poring through Magal’s old spellbooks in its umpteenth effort to glean some vital clue.

The heroes’ presence surprises the mephit, but unless they attack, the creature quickly takes on a friendly countenance and attempts to engage the heroes in conversation. It appears particularly interested in any wizard characters. Magicians represent a potential “cure,” and if the PCs seem receptive, the mephit attempts to bargain with them in exchange for helping it transform back to its natural state.

The mephit claims it knows how to restore Kavon (it’s lying), and it makes any number of outlandish promises to get the help it desperately needs. None of the thing’s words are true, and the spirit intends to backslide out of the bargain as soon as it can assume its natural form again. If the heroes agree to assist the creature, it wishes to begin immediately and pesters them to drop all their other concerns in order to “make it better.” If the heroes don’t agree, it pesters them to reconsider, following them out of the area if necessary. It becomes a source of constant annoyance for the remainder of the adventure, flitting around the heroes’ heads, asking irksome questions, and ruining any chance of surprising any of the caves’ other monsters.

If attacked, the mephit attempts to escape, flying high to avoid melee weapons and holding off the party with its cold breath. If it escapes, it continues to plague the heroes throughout the adventure, using its high mobility and icy breath to hamper their every effort.

Use of the efreet orb reverts the mephit to its original form, but then the item can’t be used to help Kavon – not before recharging leastways, and the heroes have no idea the orb is reusable.

The books in the room are seriously damaged by the cold, but careful reconstruction can produce a few spell scrolls: *dispel magic*, *sleet storm*, *fog cloud*, and *shocking grasp*. Reconstructing each scroll requires the services of a good scribe (charging at least 200 gp per scroll), and 1d4+2 days of work per scroll. It requires a Profession (scribe) skill check (DC 14) to determine which scrolls can be saved.



Ice Mephit (1): CR 3. SZ S (outsider, air, cold); HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 improved initiative); Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 18 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +4 natural); Atk: 2 claws +4 melee (1d3 +2 cold); SA breath weapon (cone of ice shards, 10 ft., once every 1d4 rounds; damage 1d4, reflex half (DC 12)), magic missile 1/hour (3rd level), chill metal 1/day (6th level), summon mephit. SQ cold subtype (immune to cold, double damage from fire without save), fast healing 2, damage resistance 5/+1. SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 15; AL N. Skills: Bluff +6, Hide +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spot +6. Feats: Improved Initiative.

Chamber 5: Den of the Hounds

A stout doorway with a huge padlock once blocked the entrance to this chamber, but the barrier has long since been smashed. Frost coats the tattered remnants of the door, which hang from the wall by a rusty pair of hinges.

The room beyond is almost bare, save for an assortment of cages that lie in pieces against one wall, a few remnants of what may have once been laboratory equipment. The cages originally looked big enough to each hold a creature the size of a large wolf. Several huge snowdrifts have built up in the corners of the room, and the wind whistles through a set of tiny cracks in the ceiling.

Magal originally used this room as a lab, performing gruesome experiments on living subjects. The cages once held a group of seven hellhounds, bound magically while Magal poked and prodded them. The duel with Kavon and resulting magical backlash reacted strangely with the beasts’ essence, transforming them into hounds of winter. Four of the transformed creatures escaped into the nearby woods, where they have been breeding, but **3 Hounds of Winter (hp 22 each)** remained in the complex and currently wait in ambush. They have buried themselves in the snowdrift closest to the door (undetectable by normal means), and they wait until the characters have all entered the room before attacking. They will fight to the death.

The cracks in the room’s ceiling lead to the surface, but they are too small for anyone to squeeze through. Most of the lab has long since been destroyed, a few magic items remain intact. A careful search produces a *potion of protection from fire* in a shatterproof bottle and a +1 *short sword of frost*.

Hounds of Winter (3): CR 3. SZ M (outsider, evil, cold, lawful); HD 4d8+4; hp 22; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +5 natural); Atk: bite, +5 melee (1d8 +1); SA breath weapon (cone of frost, 30 ft., every 2d4 rounds, 1d6 +3 damage, coats everything within the radius in a slippery coat of ice, creating effects equivalent to a grease spell); SQ Scent, outsider, cold subtype (immune to cold, double damage from fire without save), icewalking. SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6. AL LE. Skills: Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +8. Feats: Improved Initiative, Track.



Chamber 6: Festung Bugbear

As you move cautiously down this corridor, your light illuminates what appears to be a rough barricade barring the passage ahead. Suddenly, a pair of javelins whiz out of the darkness, directly toward you.

This section of the dungeon houses a group of 7 **bugbears (hp 16 each)** that moved in following Magal's demise. They have managed to eke out a sizeable territory. The javelins come from a pair of sentries ensconced behind the barricade. After hurling the javelins, they alert their fellows. By the time heroes reach the barricades, the entire band is prepared for them. The bugbears fight defensively, but do not retreat. They wish only to drive the party out of their territory. If the entire clan is slain, the party may investigate the area beyond. There's not much to find: a few filthy, straw mats, a battered dart board, the skulls of several enemies (including a pair of snow apes), and a locked chest containing the bugbears' treasure: 1,000 gp and a ring worth 500 gp.

Bugbears (7): CR 2. SZ M (goblinoid); HD 3d8 + 3; hp 16 each; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +3 natural, +2 leather, +1 small shield); Atk: morningstar +4 melee (1d8+2), or javelin +3 ranged (1d6+2); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9; AL CE. Skills: Climb +2, Hide +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Spot +3. Feats: Alertness.

Chamber 7: The Living Tomb

This high-vaulted chamber contains the shattered remnants of what appears to be a wizard's laboratory. Smashed bottles and furniture are spread throughout the room, and several ruined diagrams hang on the walls. The ice on the floor forms patterns of concentric circles, like ripples on a pond that had suddenly frozen over. The walls and ceiling have fallen in places, and chunks of masonry litter the floor. A stairway in the corner – presumably leading to the now-missing tower above – has completely collapsed. A skeleton in wizard's robes lies crushed beneath a particularly large stone.

The far wall is covered in ice, like a huge waterfall. In the center sits a bizarre sight: a huge, translucent, vaguely humanoid shape rising up out of the surrounding ice. The crude face has a look of anger on it, and the sculpture's primitive arms thrust up toward the ceiling. A female form hangs suspended in the center of the outcropping, as unmoving as the rest of the chamber. You can see blonde hair and blue robes through the distorted ice, and the figure's hands seem to grasp at her throat.

This former laboratory of Magal now contains the bodies of the two duelists: one dead beneath the rubble, one sealed within the ice. The woman in the outcropping is Kavon



Deralia, trapped by her own magic in the frozen body of a water elemental. The party has reached its goal.

The *efreet orb* has the magic to break the spell. The PCs must simply follow Primus' instructions: clench it in a right hand, place it within two feet of the frozen elemental, and say the word "sun" aloud. Activated, the ball explodes in a brilliant burst of fiery power, instantly melting the ice and releasing the trapped magician.

Unfortunately, the magic frees the **water elemental (hp 68)** as well. Three rounds after the *efreet orb* detonates, the elemental reforms and launches an attack against Kavon. She has 82 hit points, but it takes her 15 rounds to recover from her lengthy hibernation. She is quite helpless before the creature unless the party steps in to defend her. The elemental turns its attention to the PCs if they take action against it. The ice in the chamber is considered water for purpose of combat. (Everyone is touching water, although no one is underwater.)

Water Elemental, Large (1): CR 5. SZ L (elemental, water); HD 8d8 + 32; hp 68; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., swim 90 ft.; AC 20 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +9 natural); Atk: slam +10/+5 melee (2d8 +7); Reach 10 ft.; SA water mastery (+1 attack and damage if both it and opponent touch water), drench (touch douses any nonmagical fire and dispels magical fire as dispel magic), vortex (once every 10 minutes); SQ elemental, damage reduction 10/+1; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11; AL N. Skills: Listen +11, Spot +11. Feats: Cleave, Power Attack.

Epilogue

If all goes well, the party defeats the elemental and rescues Kavon. The sorceress is extremely grateful, and once she has recovered, she can take them out of the caves with no further incident. Even if the heroes do not succeed in saving Kavon from the elemental, releasing her from the her frozen prison still breaks the magical spell. The snow tapers off almost immediately, and within a week the ice and frost have melted, freeing the passes for Azinth to bring in supplies.

One final, unpleasant revelation awaits the party. As they exit the caves, they come across the body of Primus, his dead hands locked around the corpse of the remorhaz. The beast returned while the party was beneath the tower, and the ensuing melee claimed the lives of both participants.

Kavon allows the party to keep the *efreet orb*, and she escorts them back to the abandoned inn where they first spent the night, though she won't go further into Azinth. (Her presence in the mountains is still a secret, and she wants to keep it that way). If the promise to not reveal her existence, she provides them each with one magic item apiece from her collection: anything listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and valued at 8,000 gp or less.

In addition to Kavon's rewards, a grateful King Ezred rewards the heroes with 2,000 gp apiece and a medal for Valor in the Defense of Azinth. The entire kingdom considers them heroes, and they should find their reputation in the area significantly enhanced. The exact effects are up to you.

Hounds of Winter

Medium-Sized Outsider (Evil, Cold, Lawful)

Before his untimely demise, Magal the Undying wished to discover the essence of certain infernal beasts. To this end, he captured several hell hounds for the purposes of experimentation. He had made significant progress, in fact, when Kavon Deralia came calling. His experiments were the source of their feud. She thought he went too far, and she worried that his effort might unleash a cataclysm that would destroy the entire region.

The wave of magical energy unleashed by the *Circle of Ice* engulfed Magal's "altered" hell hounds, transforming them into the hounds of winter. They promptly broke free from their confinement (designed to contain fire-based creatures only) and ran rampant through the ice caves. A handful of them escaped the area and have begun breeding in the frozen wastes. Within a few years, the mountains north of Azinth should be full of the beasts.

The hounds of winter appear as large, powerful mastiffs with thick, white fur composed of thousands of tiny ice crystals. Their skins and tongues are frost blue, and their eyes glow a wintry white. Winter hounds are every bit as evil and vicious as their hot-blooded cousins, and they enjoy toying with their prey – sometimes for hours – before killing it.

Combat

The hounds of winter hunt in packs, using the local terrain to their advantage. They rarely stray outside of their established territory. They seem to enjoy chasing their prey – sometimes they draw a hunt out for hours – and often work to drive potential victims into deadfalls, dead ends, and other terrible positions. They like to use their icewalk ability to good advantage, cornering their prey in the middle of frozen ponds or other slippery surfaces.

Hit Dice: 4d8+4 (22 hp)
 Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
 Speed: 40 ft.
 AC: 17 (+1 Dex, +5 natural)
 Attacks: Bite +5 melee
 Damage: Bite 1d8 +1
 Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
 Special Attacks: Breath weapon (cone of frost, 30 ft., every 2d4 rounds, 1d6+3 damage; coats everything within the radius in a slippery coat of ice, creating effects equivalent to a *grease* spell)
 Special Qualities: Scent, outsider, cold subtype (immune to cold, double damage from fire without

save), icewalking
 Saves: Fort +5, Reflex +5, Will +4
 Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6
 Skills: Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +8
 Feats: Improved Initiative, Track
 Climate/Terrain: Any cold land and underground
 Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (5-12)
 Challenge Rating: 3
 Treasure: None
 Alignment: Always lawful evil
 Advancement Range: 5-8 HD (Large)

Attacks: The bite of the hounds of winter is icy cold and causes frostbite damage (factored in to the stats) in addition to the fangs. Once every 2d4 rounds, each hound can breathe a cone of cold, 30 feet, damage 1d6 +3. Anything within the radius of the breath becomes coated with slick, slippery ice; treat the area as if a *grease* spell had been cast upon it. The cunning hounds have learned to use their breath weapon indirectly – to trip up fleeing victims or prepare a kill site before the hunt begins.

Icewalking: The hounds are able to move across ice and snow as if it was solid, stable, dry ground. This is partially due to their vicious claws, but it's mostly owed to their magical nature.

Efreet Orb

Some believe the *efreet orb* is an amazing artifact that originated in the fabled City of Brass, but in actuality it's just the creation of a minor magic-user with a flare for the dramatic. Kavon Deralia won the device in a card game with her magic-wielding peers many years ago, and it has remained in her treasure trove ever since. It is not known if any other *efreet orbs* exist, but Kavon herself has learned how to create additional orbs, and she can teach qualified wizards how to do so if she wishes.

The orb appears as a small globe about the size of a tennis ball. It constantly glows a soft, warm red, providing light equal to the flame of a single candle. It radiates heat at all times, although it may be handled without damage. It's more really warm than hot.

When the *efreet orb's* user clenches it in his right hand and utters the first command word ("fire"), the warmth increases dramatically. It then protects all those within a 10-foot radius from all chilling effects of weather and outdoor exposure. Even so, it can still be handled barehanded.

If the user hurls the orb and utters the second command word ("sun"), then it explodes in powerful blast of heat, causing an effect equal to a *fireball* spell cast by a sixth-level wizard. Each time this ability is used, it temporarily drains the orb of all its powers. It takes two to four days of "recharge time" before it can be used again.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, light, burning hands, *fireball*; **Market Price:** 12,000 gp. **Weight:** 1 pound.

