

The Conqueror Worm

Introduction: Over five centuries ago, there came unto the arctic lands of the North from a far-removed dimension an elder being of unfathomable menace. The White Worm, as it was called by the scholars, was a colossal annelid-like creature with rubbery, corpse-white skin. The primitive humans the foul beast encountered were ill-equipped to deal with the manifold, eldritch magicks in its possession. However, before the dread worm could wholly enslave the Northern lands, the great frost giant jarl Harald Hardrada managed to deal it a near-fatal blow. And so the White Worm entered into a deep, recuperative sleep until such time as it felt strong enough to challenge the varied kingdoms of the North once again.

Unfortunately for the current inhabitants, the White Worm has just awakened from its centuries-long slumber, and is trying to build up its magical army once again. The PCs can prevent the completion of such by retrieving the magical weapon of the long-dead frost giant jarl and then putting the abominable White Worm to the sword in its ice-walled citadel.

STOP! If you plan to participate in this adventure as a player, then stop reading here. Prior knowledge of this module's contents will only spoil your enjoyment of the game.

Notes for the Game Master: The Conqueror Worm is an OSRIC adventure designed for four to six player characters of levels 10 through 14. (60 total levels). The party should include at least one thief or assassin (PC or NPC) due to the high number of traps encountered. At least one +2 weapon should be available to the members of the group.

Background: Over five centuries ago, an elder being of unfathomable menace from a far-removed dimension came unto the arctic lands of the North. The White Worm, as it was called by the scholars, was a colossal annelid-like creature with rubbery, corpse-white skin. It rode upon the frigid waters of the arctic sea in a colossal berg of ice, which was pierced through with various and sundry tunnels and chambers. The primitive humans and giant-kin the foul abomination encountered were ill-equipped to deal with the manifold, eldritch magicks in its possession. Those who weren't frozen solid by the waves of intense cold emanating from the White Worm's ice-walled citadel soon fell victim to the terrible weird the creature worked upon their minds, becoming its thralls forevermore.

And so the situation stood until the jarl of a distant nation of frost giants received word of the enslavement of his brothers to the North by the terrible White Worm. He amassed a mighty army to liberate his fellow giants, but such was quickly cut down by the great horde of enemies the White Worm unleashed. The great jarl was forced to do something he had never done in all his years: retreat with his small band of survivors back to his homeland. Once there, he recruited several sorcerers well-versed in extra-planar lore to find a means to beard the White Worm in its frozen lair. After several months of diligent research, a particularly puissant human sorcerer and historian calling himself Vhombi was able to craft a brand of dread power. The brand had been engraved by the sorcerer himself with a series of powerful runes indigenous to the Northern lands not to mention a few rare sigils perfected centuries before by the fell wizards of Atlantis. He called it **Wormbane**, and sold it to the frost giant jarl for a veritable king's ransom of exotic jewels and gold coins.

It took the frost giant liege a full year to assemble his army, which was comprised of an equal number of runecasters and berserkers. Standing at the front of the line with **Wormbane** held proudly aloft, the jarl and his army managed to break their way through all of the defenses that the White Worm had assembled in the intervening year, at long last arriving at the gates to its frozen citadel. The jarl was greatly disheartened all throughout the battle, for he was forced to cut down the very people he had vowed to liberate, his fellow frost giant brothers, for such were under the

magical hegemony of the dread worm. To make matters worse, on the second level of the citadel was quartered a cabal of fell dweomercreafters recruited from several worlds and dimensions. In spite of the odds against him, the frost giant jarl was able to make his way up to the throne room of the White Worm, and even managed to pierce the side of the colossal beast with his enchanted blade **Wormbane**. Seeing the stream of brackish fluid pulsing out of the wound, the jarl thought his work done. Unfortunately, what started as a sluggish stream soon turned into a raging flood, which forced the giant to quickly make his way from the throne room lest he drown in the foul-smelling life-blood of the White Worm.

It was several days later that the jarl learned that the blow he dealt to the White Worm was not a fatal one, for one of his scouts had looked upon the wretched creature perched upon the pinnacle of its citadel of ice. The scout could have sworn that the mammoth annelid was even smirking, almost goading him to send his frost giant brothers to challenge it once again. The jarl, having lost his best warriors in the assault, would never be able to amass another army powerful enough to challenge the White Worm again. Several decades later, the king eventually died and was buried in a massive cairn several miles away from the site of his last great battle, with his beloved **Wormbane** in hand.

In the intervening centuries, the White Worm entered into a deep sleep to recover from its injuries, for the frost giant jarl had, indeed, delivered it a near-fatal wound. Before going into hibernation, the elder horror had geased its remaining followers to stand guard over its body until such time as it felt strong enough to challenge the kingdoms of the North once again.

Unfortunately for the clans of giants, humans, and demi-humans who have come to make the Northern lands home over the past 500 years, the White Worm has just awoken from its deep slumber. Though physically powerful again, the White Worm is bereft of much of its once-impressive arsenal of spells. To remedy such it has sent out two of its most apt pupils, Vermis and Ud Lux, to recruit a new cabal of sorcerers. On account of the great magical powers at the disposal of Vermis and Ud Lux, the White Worm has already been quite successful in the past few weeks. The two sorcerers, employing such spells as **charm monster** when necessary, have already convinced or forced twelve high-level magical devotees to join forces with their master. (Unfortunately, seven of these twelve wizards have already become the grim provender of the White Worm - see note below). Apart from the loss of several prominent wizards from the neighboring lands, the inhabitants of the North have noticed a marked and quite anomalous drop in temperature over the past month. Such is on account of the White Worm having re-activated the magical ice crystal atop its citadel, which has been continuously sending out waves of super-cold ice particles for miles around. If the crystal is not deactivated soon, the Northern lands could enter into another ice age, one leading to the extinction of all life thereon save for the minions of the White Worm.

The head of the local wizards' guild in the neighboring city of Phom Thult recently learned of the White Worm's return when a failed recruit of the fell creature came unto his tower. The man told the arch wizard that two emissaries of the White Worm had first educated him as to the nature of their mighty lord and then promised him untold riches and rare magical appurtenances if he joined with them. Knowing something of the terrible history of the colossal annelid beforehand, the potential recruit declined their offer. Not being satisfied with his refusal, Vermis and Ud Lux attempted to magically compel the man to join up. Thanks to luck the failed recruit was able to resist the spells cast on his person and then race away from the two mages, knowing that collectively they could have easily snuffed him out in a magical duel.

The PCs are brought into the adventure when they are approached by an associate of the head of the local wizards' guild while relaxing in one of the many mead halls in Phom Thult. The man briefs them on parts of the White Worm's history, afterwards offering them 3,000 gp apiece if they agree to infiltrate

its citadel and put the elder horror to the sword. The associate suggests that the PCs explore the cairn of an ancient frost giant jarl along the way, for a powerful weapon inimical to the White Worm is rumored to have been buried with the body.

The primary goal for the PCs is to defeat the White Worm in battle. It is not absolutely necessary for the PCs to defeat the minions of the horrible creature, for the powerful charm they are all under is instantly removed when their leader is dispatched. To keep the PCs from dallying, the temperature in all of the lands within a 20-mile radius of the magical crystal atop the White Worm's citadel drops 5 degrees per day. Being as the city of Phom Thult lies only 10 miles south of the White Worm's citadel, the citizens thereof have a vested interest in ridding the world of the abomination. Since it is the dead of winter when the PCs arrive on the scene, the temperature in the snowy lands of the North is already hovering at around 40 degrees Fahrenheit. When the temperature drops below 0 degrees, the lands within the magical globe's area of effect immediately start freezing, resulting in a 20% loss of all human and demi-human life. For every ten degree drop below zero, these populations suffer another 20% reduction. In game terms, this means that the PCs have sixteen days to complete their mission before the lands surrounding the White Worm's citadel become wastelands destitute of humanoid life. Obviously, native arctic creatures such as polar bears and elk, will not be as badly affected by the magic of the White Worm's citadel as will their human and demi-human neighbors, but even they start experiencing a decline in population when the temperature reaches 60 degrees below zero, suffering an immediate 20% loss, with another such loss for each subsequent 20 degree drop in temperature.

For each day of travel on the ice or 8 hours spent sleeping, the PCs lose 2 hp if wearing appropriate winter clothing. The PCs lose twice the number of hp/turn should they be improperly outfitted. The PCs' normal movement rate is halved while trudging their way to the citadel. The PCs also lose one additional hp in the same time periods for each 10 degree drop in temperature. Furthermore, the snow becomes increasingly difficult to negotiate as it ices over, meaning that movement rates are reduced by a further 10% for every 10 degree drop in temperature unless the PCs have access to such winter aids as skis, in which case they can travel at their normal movement rate, or even faster downhill if the GM desires, regardless of the temperature. Obviously, magic can affect both the PCs' loss of hp from the cold and their progress on the snow.

As stated above, the valley containing the citadel of the White Worm lies 10 miles from the city of Phom Thult. Being as the PCs will probably be averaging around 3 miles of travel a day taking into account slower-moving members of the party such as heavily-armored fighters, it takes them about 3 ½ days to reach the valley. (PCs employing skis can reach their destination in half that time). Of course, the GM needs to take into account even more efficient modes of travel such as fly and teleport spells.

The Game Master should situate the citadel of the White Worm and its environs in any mountainous, arctic region in his campaign world with a large body of water close by. That being said, the site of the adventure should still be located several miles away from any sizeable villages or cities, and should have a Norse feel to it.

Note: At the start of the adventure, the White Worm has the spellcasting ability of a 10th level magic user and a 15th level cleric. For every wizard it consumes, it gains a level of ability in both classes up to its limits in each. The metabolism of the White Worm is such that it can safely consume only one wizard per day, meaning that the PCs have five days before it reaches its maximum level of 15 as a magic user and 20 as a cleric. (The dread worm has already consumed seven of the original twelve wizards its thralls brought with them from Phom Thult). Obviously, such means that the PCs' best option is to rest as little as possible on their journey to the citadel of the White Worm and to efficiently negotiate the tomb of the frost giant king along the way there.

Beginning the Adventure: The PCs are relaxing in one of the many mead halls in the small city of Phom Thult when they are approached by a long-haired, middle-aged man with a beard nearly stretching to his belly. It is obvious that the man is a wizard of some sort, for he is bedecked in a long, fur-lined burgundy robe with a series of esoteric sigils sewn therein with gold thread. He asks if they would be interested in a lucrative business proposal involving a long, certainly dangerous journey to the frozen lands north of Phom Thult. If the PCs answer in the affirmative, then the man formally introduces himself, saying that he belongs to the Academy of Elder Magicks, a prominent wizards' guild in the city. He then tells them that he wishes to put a stop to the recent abductions of several high-ranking mages from both his guild and several others in the city. He says in somewhat hushed tones that a terrible creature from Phom Thult's ancient past, the White Worm, may be responsible. He then goes on to relate the history of the White Worm. If the PCs still appear interested, read to them the following speech:

"All that being said," the bearded man continues, "I want you to know that the dread White Worm has just awakened from its centuries-long slumber. My associates learned of such second-hand from a sorcerer that the emissaries of foul beast tried and failed to recruit. According to this man, the White Worm is seeking to build up its magical army once-again so that it can, at long last, destroy all life first in Phom Thult and then the whole of the world. We cannot allow our planet to fall like the many others did at the hands of the foul creature. My mission for you is this: You must first travel five miles north to the cairn of the frost giant jarl Harald Hardrada. Once there, you must retrieve his legendary blade Wormbane, for such is the only weapon known to be able to affect the White Worm. Afterwards, you must infiltrate the citadel of the White Worm and put the elder horror and its minions to the sword, sparing none if possible. Know that your adversary has many powerful creatures in its thrall, which includes several frost giants and wizards recruited from many different worlds and dimensions. If such mission is agreeable, then I am prepared to offer each of you 3,000 gold coins up front and a like amount should you bring back proof of the White Worm's demise. I have spoken."

If the PCs accept the mission, the man gives them a rough map to both the cairn of the frost giant jarl and the gated pass leading to the citadel of the White Worm. As stated previously, the cairn of the frost giant king lies 5 miles north of Phom Thult, with the valley containing the citadel of the White Worm lying another 5 miles in the same direction. The land north of Phom Thult is relatively flat arctic tundra, and is ringed on both sides by tall mountains.

Wandering Monsters: As the PCs make their way to the citadel, the GM should check for wandering monsters twice daily, once during the day and once at night. There is a 4 in 10 chance per check that a random encounter occurs. Of course, the PCs may also encounter relatively harmless animals along the way such as elk, deer, ordinary wolves, owls, etc, but such are not detailed in the adventure. When an encounter is called for, consult the following:

1). 2-4 **Frost Giants** (AC 4; MV 120 ft.; HD 10+1-4; hp 65 each; #AT 1; Dmg 4-24; SA Hurling rocks for 2-20 hit points; SD Impervious to cold; AL CE). These haughty, over-sized humanoids enjoy preying on their much weaker and slower human and demi-human neighbors, especially dwarves. They attack all such on sight, and never parley. Frost giants encountered outside the valley containing the citadel of the White Worm are not under the elder horror's thrall. These independent giants make their homes in massive caves carved into many of the surrounding tall mountains.

2). 5-8 **Winter Wolves** (AC 5; MV 180 ft.; HD 6; hp 30 each; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA Frost breath; AL N (E)). These voracious and foul-tempered creatures are on the constant hunt for fresh meat – the PCs should suffice.

3). 2-4 **Yeti** (AC 6; MV 150 ft.; HD 12; hp 70 each; #AT 2; Dmg 2-12, 2-12; SA Stare, squeeze; SD Impervious to cold; AL N). The

species of yeti native to the North is much taller and bulkier than usual, averaging 12-15' in height and weighing around 1000 pounds. Being as these yeti have a very strong taste for the flesh of humans and demi-humans, they will attack the PCs on sight.

4). **2 Ancient Huge White Dragons** (AC 3; MV 120 ft., 300 ft. flying; HD 7; hp 56 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4, 1-4, 2-16; SA Breath weapon; AL CE). Only two white dragons terrorize the arctic tundra in this part of the North. They are a mated pair that enjoys hunting on the wing, attacking any humanoids they spot on the ground. They always initiate combat with their breath weapons, afterwards making repeated dive attacks from the air with their razor-sharp claws. If their claw attacks appear to be having little effect on the PCs, they employ their breath weapons once again. They prefer to eat their slain victims in the comfort of their own home, which is an 80-foot deep and 30-foot wide cave located high up on one of the mountains to the east. Such is indicated on the wilderness map with an "X." The following treasure horde can be found in their lair: 10,500 cp, 12,500 sp, 5,500 ep, 8,300 gp, a 500 gp amethyst, a 1,000 gp opal, 101 10 gp ornamental stones, and a single flawless star ruby worth 5,000 gp. There are also **3 javelins of lightning**, a **large shield +1**, **+4 vs. missiles**, a **flail +1**, and a **scroll of protection from lycanthropes** in the hoard.

5). **1-2 Polar Bears** (AC 6; MV 120 ft.; HD 10; hp 65 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8, 1-8, 2-20; SA Hugs for 3-18 hp; AL N). The polar bears native to the North are quite similar to cave bears apart from their white coloring and colossal size. Such terrors stand a full 15' high when rearing up on their hind legs. They are quite nasty, and attack medium-sized parties on sight. On account of their coloring, they are very hard to spot on the tundra, surprising their victims 5 times in 6.

6). **1 Will-O-Wisp** (AC -8; MV 180 ft.; HD 9; hp 50; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; SD Dimming, immune to all spells save protection from evil, magic missile, and maze; AL CE). These evil orbs of glowing light attempt to drain the life of any so foolish as to cross their path.

7). **7-10 members of Norse Hunting Party:**

1 Norseman Leader (AC 2; MV 90 ft.; F7; hp 58; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon; S 16, I 11, W 14, D 17, C 18, Ch 11; AL N). Possessions: **ring mail +2**, **battle axe +2**, **spear**, **potion of super heroism**.

1 Norseman Leader (AC 4; MV 90 ft.; F6; hp 45; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SD +2 to saves vs. mind-influencing spells; S 18, I 14, W 16, D 13, C 15, Ch 17; AL N). Possessions: **chain mail +1**, **battle axe +2**, **spear**, **potions of super heroism** and **fire resistance**.

1 Norseman Leader (AC 0; MV 90 ft.; F7; hp 61; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon; S 17, I 10, W 12, D 16, C 16, Ch 10; AL N). Possessions: **plate mail +1**, **battle axe +3**, **spear**, **potion of super heroism**.

4-7 Norseman Hunters (AC 2; MV 90 ft.; F5; hp 40 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; S 17, I 12, W 10, D 15, C 15, Ch 13; AL N). Possessions: **chain mail +1**, **battle axe +1**, **spear**.

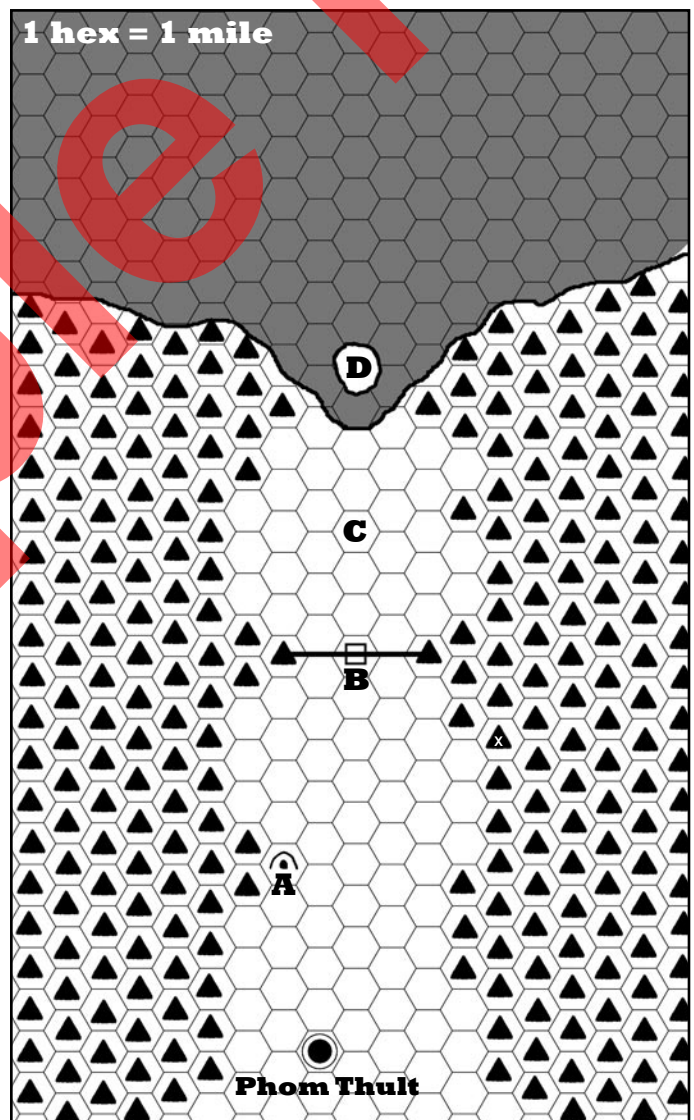
Tribes of these Norsemen range wide and far on a daily basis for game such as elk and, on occasion, polar bears. They are typically armed with both spear and battle axe, using the former for ranged combat and the latter for close-quarters melee. When encountered, three 7th level fighters are always present leading the hunting party. The remaining hunters are all 5th level fighters. They are not automatically hostile, and may join up with the PCs if offered an equal cut of any treasures and meat procured along the way. They are not in the thrall of the White Worm, and know very little of its history. About all that they can tell the PCs is that the mountain pass to the north is walled over and guarded by several frost giants atop tall towers. They have never had the opportunity to see what lies beyond the walled pass.

8). **1-2 Polar Worms** (AC 6; MV 90 ft.; HD 15; hp 90 each; #AT 1 and 1; Dmg 2-24, 2-8; SA Swallow whole, poison; AL N). These creatures are identical to their purple cousins apart from their corpse-white coloring. They burrow up from the ground and attempt to swallow whole their victims.

9). **Snowstorm:** Strong winds suddenly build up on the tundra, resulting in a total whiteout for the next 3-18 turns. PCs are effectively blinded for one turn. After such time, the PCs can still only see 30 feet in any direction. Combat during a snowstorm is at -3 "to hit." Unless the party immediately stops moving, it becomes lost. Lost parties change the direction of their travel randomly and then move in that direction for the distance their movement rate indicates, which is at 1/2 scale speed.

10). **Hidden Crevasse:** The PCs encounter a 30-foot diameter patch of thin snow, which breaks apart when they walk over it. Those PCs failing to make a successful Dexterity check at a -4 penalty plummet into the newly-created 30-60-foot deep crevasse, suffering appropriate falling damage.

WILDERNESS MAP



- A: The Cairn of the Frost Giant Jarl
- B: The Gated Pass
- C: The Citadel Environs
- D: The Citadel of the White Worm

A. The Cairn of the Frost Giant Jarl

Before the PCs stands a 30-foot tall mound of snow. It is readily apparent that such is not a natural formation, for purple-hued granite stone-work pokes out in places and massive steel bivalves bar the entrance thereto. Moreover, an imposing statue of what can only be a male frost giant stands directly behind the mound, its massive bulk soaring a good 50 feet or more above the tundra. It has been carved from some manner of blue rock, perfectly matching the natural skin tone of a living giant of the North. It wields with both hands a rune-etched brand and wears a filigreed conical helm decorated with what appear to be the horns of a white dragon. It is quite obvious that the creature rendered in stone must have had high standing in his community, for there is a noble cast to his face, even by human standards, which is in stark contrast to the brutish features common to his race.

The structure before the PCs is the cairn of the great frost giant jarl Harald Hardrada. The cairn was constructed by the jarl's loyal followers to his exact specifications several years before he died of old age. The jarl's last request was that he be buried with **Wormbane** in the hope that in the years to come a mighty warrior would enter his tomb and claim his magical brand to finish what he had started but failed to do those many centuries before, namely, slaying the dread White Worm. To test the mettle of his future champion, Jarl Harald designed his tomb to be a deadly gauntlet, forcing the chosen one to defeat an assortment of fell guardians, solve a series of mind-bending riddles, and bypass a succession of trapped areas. Though not absolutely necessary for the successful completion of the adventure, retrieving **Wormbane** from Harald's tomb will greatly aid the PCs in their battle with the White Worm, for such counteracts the creature's immunity to weapons of less than +3 enchantment and temporarily lowers its resistance to most spells.

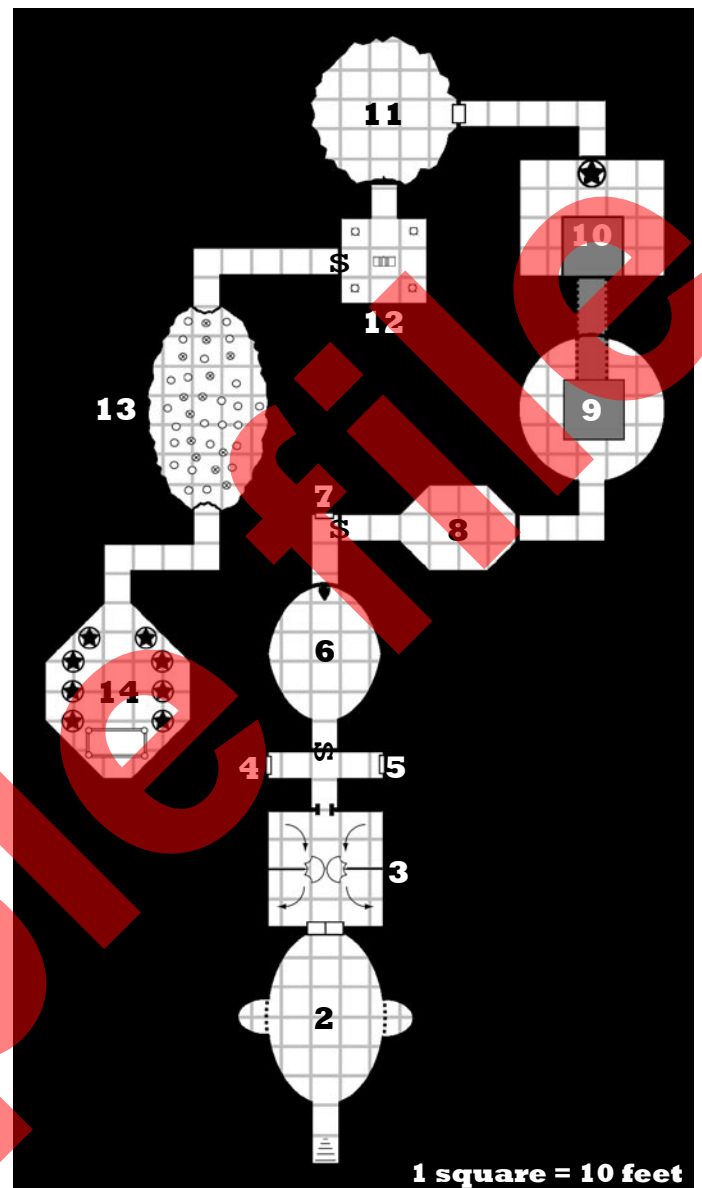
Dungeon Features: All of the rooms and corridors in the cairn have been carved out of the native granite, most of which have been polished smooth. Except where noted otherwise, they all feature 25-foot high flat ceilings. All doors are constructed of solid iron and sealed with the spells **wizard lock** and hold **portal**. The only means of opening these doors, short of breaking them down with brute force, is to cast thereon either two **knock** spells, two **dispel magic** spells, or one of each. Secret doors are hidden on both sides. Unless noted otherwise, secret doors pivot about their centers when the correct wall stone is depressed. They must be pushed outward to open. Affixed to the ceiling of each and every corridor and chamber in the cairn is a 1-foot diameter chunk of rough-cut crystal with a **continual light** spell cast thereon, which bathes its space in a warm green glow. The outer walls of the cairn are warded against any form of extra-dimensional travel such as that afforded by the spells **teleport**, **phase door**, and **passwall**. However, these restrictions do not apply to extra-dimensional travel within the confines of the cairn.

1. **CAIRN ENTRANCE:** (not mapped) The massive double doors on the outside of the man-made hill opening onto the cairn are locked and trapped. A failed attempt to find and remove the trap thereon causes the 50-foot high statue standing along the north side of the hill to spew forth highly caustic acid. The 20-foot wide jet of acid spills over the top of the hill and onto the 20-foot square area in front of the entrance doors. Unless a successful Dexterity check at a -2 penalty is made, anyone standing before the doors is coated in the acid, which deals 10-60 hp of damage and destroys armor as per green slime.

The double doors open onto a 20-foot wide hallway with a descending staircase along the far wall. Four statues of the frost giant jarl line both the east and west walls. The heads of such nearly touch the rough-hewn ceiling 25-feet overhead. The stairs burrow into the earth for a good 70 feet, terminating in the 10-foot square landing preceding area 2.

2. **ICE GUARDIANS:** The stairs leading off from area 1 terminate in a 10-foot wide landing opening onto a 40-foot by 60-foot long lozenge-shaped chamber, which is entirely coated in a

MAP OF THE CAIRN



thick layer of cloudy ice. Various shapes have been chiseled into the ice on all of the walls, depicting the frost giant jarl in his battle with the dread White Worm. Of course, such show the jarl always having the upper hand in the battle. In the last scene the jarl is shown delivering what appears to be a fatal blow to the White Worm with his magical brand Wormbane. The shallow niches along the east and west walls each contain an ice golem. Each niche is closed off by a solid wall of ice, making the golem lairing therein virtually undetectable. As soon as PCs reach the midpoint of the room, both golems burst through the walls, surprising their opponents 5 times in 6. They battle to death, even following their foes up the stairs to area 1 and through the double doors leading to area 3. They will not leave the tomb, however.

An ice golem is midway in strength between an iron and stone golem, and appears as a 10-foot tall solidly-built man with crude features. It is fashioned from magically-altered ice which cannot be melted and is of a hardness greater than granite. It can breathe forth a cloud of super-chilled air, filling a 10-foot cube, once every 6 rounds, which causes 4-40 points of damage (save vs. dragon breath for half damage). The means of construction for the ice golem are the same as for a stone golem except that the magical tome or magic user employed must be of 17th level or higher.

Ice golems (2) (AC 3; MV 60 ft.; HD 15; hp 70 each; #AT 1; Dmg 3-30; SA Frost breath; SD +2 or better weapons to hit; immune to all spells save fire-based ones, which slow by 50% for 3 rounds; cold-based attacks heal 1 hp per 1 hp of damage dealt; surprises 5 times in 6 in arctic environments; AL N).

3. **SCYTHING BLADES:** This 40-foot square chamber features intricate carvings in bas-relief on all of the walls. They depict the jarl Harald Hadrada performing great deeds such as wrestling polar bears with his bare hands, leading massive armies of frost giants and winter wolves on the battlefield, lifting massive boulders above his head, etc. An archway lies along the far wall to the north, opening onto a T-shaped hallway. The busy wall carvings make it difficult to notice the 1-inch wide seams that run the length of the east and west walls, which are located 3 feet above the floor. (The PCs must make a successful Intelligence check a -2 penalty to notice such). As soon as one of the PCs reaches the midpoint of the room, massive spring-loaded, wedge-shaped scything blades swing out of the seams along both walls. Their long handles allow them to sweep the entire width of the room, missing each other at the midpoint of their travel by mere inches. Any PCs in the room when the blades are released must make a successful Dexterity check at a -4 penalty to avoid being hit. Those failing their check suffer 10-40 points of damage. PCs rolling 30-40 points of damage have a 20% chance of being either beheaded or cut in half by the blades (50% for either), resulting in their immediate deaths.
4. **FALLING BLOCK:** The door at the end this branch of the hall is false and firmly anchored to the wall. The door is coated in strong glue similar to that of a mimic. PCs touching such are stuck fast, and can only break free with a successful bend bars roll. A mere segment after the door is touched, a 10-foot cube block of stone detaches from the ceiling, crushing any beneath it for 10-40 points of damage. The only way to avoid the block is to first free one's hand from the door and then make a successful Dexterity check at a -3 penalty.
5. **RAINBOW BRIDGE:** The door at the end of this branch of the hall is false, and opening such triggers a **prismatic spray** spell. If activated, all PCs (up to 7) standing in the east-west hall are subject to the effects of the powerful **dweomer**. The frost giant jarl created this trap in honor of Bifrost, the Rainbow Bridge, which extends from the world of mortals to that of the gods in Norse mythology.
6. **DRAGON'S HEAD:** The walls of this 40-foot diameter chamber are bare save for the life-sized white dragon head jutting from the middle of the far wall. It is coated in a 1-inch thick layer of crystal-clear ice, making the features of the polar wyrm easily visible. 10 feet into the room the PCs can make out a series of massive rune-like characters carved onto the floor. They translate from the frost giant tongue into Common as: *I have a frozen heart that mine enemies say can never be thawed. I say those with such feelings haven't any sense left in their heads.* The only way to proceed beyond this room is to cast a fire-based spell at the dragon head, melting the ice encrusted thereon. Doing so causes the entire 10-foot wide section of wall containing the dragon's head to sink into the floor, revealing the 20-foot long hallway ending at area 7. The ice on the dragon head is 100% resistant to normal fire and can only be affected by the magical variety.
7. **DANCING HAMMER OF THE NORTH:** At the north end of this hallway is yet another false door, behind which is found a 3-foot deep recess. Mounted to the wall of this cavity is a massive **two-handed dancing battle hammer** sized for a frost giant. After the door is opened, the magical weapon flies from its mount and attacks the door opener. For purposes of hit determination, the weapon has the following statistics: AC 0; MV 120 ft.; attacks as 10 HD monster for this encounter and as a normal dancing

weapon if wielded; hp 30; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12 + special; SA +1 "to hit" on 1st round, +2 "to hit" on 2nd round, +3 "to hit" on 3rd round, +4 "to hit" on 4th round (sequence then repeats); SD ignores attacks dealing less than 4 hp of damage).

8. **EATERS OF THE DEAD:** This massive octagonal room is devoid of any features save for the massive bronze portal along the east wall and the two 15-foot tall emaciated, hunched-over creatures that stand motionless along both the north and south walls. They resemble gaunt frost giants with pallid gray skin and long, ebon claws. Such were frost giants that were expelled from their clan on account of their cannibalistic habits. Upon dying, these abominations arose as ghouls. They were captured soon after Harald Hadrada's death and convinced by his frost giant clerics that their crimes in life would eventually be forgiven by Odin if they stood guard over their jarl's tomb until such time as a champion came to claim **Wormbane**. They have been trapped here for centuries awaiting this champion, and are convinced that one of the PCs is such. As soon as the PCs reach the midpoint of the room, the cunning frost giant ghouls pounce, fighting to the death. (Jarl Harald's cleric failed to inform the ghouls that this champion was to be kept alive). Apart from their increased size, HD, and damage potential, the frost giant ghouls conform to the statistics and abilities of their human counterparts.
- Frost Giant Ghouls** (4) (AC 6; MV 90 ft.; HD 10+1-4; hp 70 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8, 1-8, 4-12; SA Paralyzation; SD Immune to sleep or charm spells; turned as ghost; AL CE).
9. **POOL OF FRIGID DEATH:** The hallway from the south opens onto a 40-foot diameter room with no apparent exits. In the middle of the floor is a 20-foot square pool enclosed by a 2-foot high rune-festooned lip. The waters therein are 20 feet deep and comfortably warm. At the bottom of the north wall of the pool is a 5-foot diameter tunnel that extends straight ahead for 30 feet, exiting along the bottom south wall of a similar pool in area 10. Being as the waters of the pool are crystal clear, the PCs can see several shining coins of assorted type totaling 1,000 gp along the bottom. Each is minted with a depiction of Jarl Harald Hadrada on one side and that of his beloved brand **Wormbane** on the other. These treasures should clue the PCs into the fact that what lies before them is an offering pool, and that they should make a contribution of their own. If the PCs deposit coins or gems into the pool totaling 1,000 gp in value, then they can safely negotiate the waters therein. However, if such is not done before entering the pool in this room or that in area 10, then they activate a ring of invisible magical runes when they are halfway through the connecting tunnel. (Taking any of the coins already at the bottom of the pool also triggers the trap). Any passing by the active runes trigger a **cold of cold** spell whose area of effect covers all of the water in both pools and the connecting tunnel. (9-36 +9 points of cold damage; save vs. spells for half damage). PCs still in the water at this time are truly doomed when such instantly freezes into a solid block of ice, trapping them in place and suffocating them. Without aid of magic, it will be at least seven days before the ice melts into water again.
- Merciful GMs may wish to provide a more overt clue for their PCs. In such cases, have the runes on the lip of the pool translate from the frost giant tongue into Common as: *A generous offering unto the Gods of the North can lead to much gain.*
10. **WOLF OF WINTER:** The 5-foot diameter tunnel from area 9 exits along the bottom south wall of the 20-foot square, 20-foot deep pool in this room. At the bottom of the pool are 1,000 gp worth of various coins. The pool here functions exactly like that in area 9, meaning that the PCs are in for a rude surprise if they take any of the coins in the water. PCs exiting the pool see a stone



statue of a winter wolf three times larger than normal along the north wall of a 50-foot wide by 40-foot long chamber. Its head is low to the ground, well within reach of the PCs, and its mouth is wide open. An inscription has been engraved on the floor directly before the fearsome eidolon, which translates into Common from the frost giant tongue as: Even the great Wolf of Winter cannot survive on hate alone. If the PCs examine the cavity behind the slaving jaws of the statue, they find some dried blood. Both the dried blood and the inscription should clue the PCs into the fact that the Wolf of Winter requires an offering of freshly-spilled blood. PCs depositing 8 hp worth of blood spilled from their veins into the mouth of the statue causes it to sink into the floor, revealing a 10-foot wide by 10-foot long opening in the wall. If either an insufficient amount of blood is deposited or none is offered whatsoever, then 2 rounds later the statue animates into a real winter wolf standing 10 feet high at the shoulders, which immediately attacks the PCs, fighting to the death. (It even pursues the PCs as they flee to other areas of the tomb). Thankfully, the winter wolf's animation also reveals the opening along the north wall to the corridor beyond.

Colossal Winter Wolf (AC 5; MV 180 ft.; DH 18; hp 100; #AT 1; Dmg 6-24; SA Frost breath; AL N (E)). SA—The frost breath of this winter wolf causes 10-60 points of damage, which it can employ once every four rounds.

11. ENCYSTED IN ICE: The door from the east opens onto a 50-foot diameter cavern with rough-hewn walls, ceiling, and floor, all of which are coated in a thick layer of ice. Hanging from the middle of the south wall is a 15-foot diameter mask of the frost giant jarl Harald Hardrada. As soon as the PCs step 10 feet into the room, the entrance door slams shut and locks. At the same time, the magical iron mask partially animates, and the booming voice of the jarl starts reverberating off the cavern walls. The mask asks the following two questions in the language of the majority of PCs present in the room:

1: "Brave warriors and good steel possess it; humans lack it. What do I speak of?"

2: "What can be as cloudy as a winter day or as clear as a pane of glass, yet fragile like a human's offer of truce?"

The answer to the first question is "strength" or "mettle" and the answer to the second question is "ice." For every round (real time) that the PCs waste in correctly answering the two questions, a 5-foot thick layer of ice accretes on the roof of the cavern. Being as the ceiling is a mere 15-feet overhead, the PCs have 3 rounds to make good their escape from the room before being crushed to death by the accreted ice, no save. Answering both questions in the time allotted results in a rough-cut doorway materializing in the middle of the south wall and the door along the east wall unlocking.

12. TEST OF HONOR: The corridor from the north opens onto a 30-foot square room with massive iron cauldrons standing at all four corners. In addition, a large iron-banded oak chest sits in the middle of the floor. If the PCs examine the front of the chest, they find an inscription in Giantish saying: Take what you need and nothing more. PCs attempting to open such find it to be both locked and trapped with a poison needle. (Those pricked must save vs. poison at a -2 penalty or die). Within the chest is a bed of 40 pp, atop which rests a closed leathern bag with pull string and four stoppered clay jars. The bag contains flint and steel and the jars contain equal amounts of magical oil. If the PCs pour exactly one jar's worth of the magical oil into each of the four cauldrons and then set such alight with the flint and steel provided or some of their own, then a doorway materializes along the middle of the west wall.

It is best that the PCs heed the inscription on the chest, for doing otherwise by taking more than what they need to solve the puzzle of the room, meaning the magical oil and the flint and steel, will have disastrous consequences. If removed from the chest, each pp explodes for 1 hp of fire damage 1 turn later. (Save vs. magical fire for half damage). Make sure to note beforehand which PCs are carrying the trapped pp, and how many of such coins are being stored in a given backpack, bag of holding, etc.

13. WATCH YOUR FOOTING: The corridor from the north opens onto a 70-foot long and 40-foot wide lozenge-shaped cavern with rough-hewn walls. An archway is located along the far wall to the south. Spanning the floor of the cavern, which lies 60 feet below the level of the entranceway, is a series of 2-foot diameter flat-topped stalagmites. There are twenty such stalagmites in total. Each is located roughly 5 feet away from its nearest neighbor, and there are roughly nine rows of three or four stalagmites each spanning the length of the cavern. The first and last row of stalagmites lies 5 feet away from either archway. The goal of the PCs is to jump from one stalagmite to the next until they reach the exit along the south wall. Unfortunately, several of the stalagmites have been scored in places, weakening them. Should one of these weakened stalagmites be jumped onto, which are indicated with an "X" on the map, it collapses under the feet of the PC in question, sending him to the floor of the cavern unless a successful Dexterity check at a -4 penalty is made. (Roll for falling damage). A successful check indicates that the PC was able to jump onto a randomly determined adjacent stalagmite just in time, possibly requiring yet another check if such should be weakened as well. PCs examining the stalagmites closely can detect the score marks along the length of a weakened column with a successful Intelligence check at a -2 penalty. (Dwarf PCs can instead choose to check for unsafe stonework). This entire cavern is under an anti-magic ward that prevents travel-related spells such as fly and teleport from functioning.

14. TOMB OF HARALD HARDRADA: The door along the north wall opens onto a roughly octagonal chamber that is 60 feet long and 50 feet wide. Four life-sized granite statues of the great frost giant jarl Harald Hardrada line both the west and east