

FOR THE JUDGE

Winter's Heart is a 0-level micro adventure intended for 8-12 characters, inspired by a children's book titled The Golden Heart of Winter. Judges can use it to start a campaign that takes place in Elfland.

BACKGROUND

Vergla, a Rime Witch of the Winter Court, has ensorcelled the Mountains That The Sun First Kissed, sapping all warmth base to peak and cursing a twinned mountain range in the mortal realm. Those who fall asleep there in the mortal realm, awaken in Elfland, freezing in the unceasing blizzard and finding themselves drawn to her beautiful singing emanating from an open cave mouth.

Every poor wretch who enters these caves is enslaved under the guise of penance for trespassing and forced to mine for the Heart of the Mountain. If the Rime Witch is ever able to steal the Heart, then all warmth will leave the volcanic mountain range in both Elfland and the mortal realm. Forever claiming it for the Winter Court of Fey and making passage a frigid death sentence.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

You camped in the mountains you knew, but awoke in ones far less familiar and far more frigid. A song on the wind drew you to the only shelter available, but you were stripped of all iron and obvious weaponry and thrown into slavery at the hands of a Fey witch. Vergla, a mistress of frost, seeks the Heart of the Mountain and forces you to mine deep into the last remaining warmth of the mountain.

d6 RUMORS

- 1 The mountain isn't just a mountain. It's a dormant volcano!
- 2 The witch cannot return to the Winter Courts until she fulfills a promise.
- 3 This is land stolen from the Summer Court.
- 4 The witch can't stand the smell of the latrines. Good place for a nap.
- 5 The crawlers leave you be so long as they hear metal striking stone.
- 6 The blizzard will end if the witch is slain.

d4 EVENTS

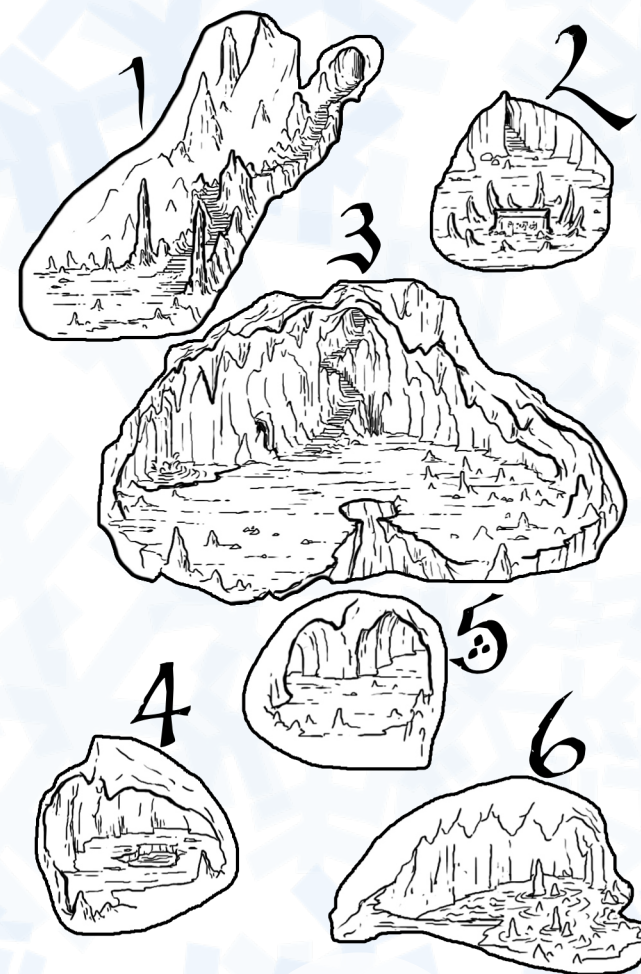
- 1 Cave-In: DC 10 Ref save or take 1d6 damage
- 2 Shaken by Spirits: A skeleton with 1d3 gold teeth. It unleashes a baleful shriek. DC 8 Will save or frightened to death.
- 3 Lost: Succeed on a Luck check or go missing forever. Perhaps you found a way home...
- 4 Hungry Crawlers: 3 starving Crawlers attack all the PCs.

COMPATIBLE WITH
**DCC
RPG**



GMG3PEB3 \$4

WINTER'S HEART



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A level 0 pamphlet adventure for Dungeon Crawl Classics

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1. THE MOUNTAIN'S MOUTH

The cave's maw howling with frigid wind. Snow falls from the sky, forming a thick white quilt across the ridge line.

The exit is only guarded by the blizzard that covers the mountain range. Those attempting to brave the blizzard must make a DC 14 Fort save every turn or take 1d3 Stamina damage until they can warm themselves. Those who seek to reclaim any lost starting equipment can make a Luck check to find it in the snow.

2. THE WITCH'S CHAMBERS

Luxurious furnishings adorn the witch's chambers. A large stone table is covered with delicious foods and an ice bowl full of fragrant wine.

Vergla is normally here unless something call her attention through her empathetic mind link to her crawlers. Prisoners who gain her favor may briefly eat with her and be regaled with stories of the Winter Court. Her favored pet, Fifi, gets scraps from her table and guards this area and a fey relic (judge's discretion; use *Elfland: Beyond The Field We Know*, if available.) Fifi fears whomever holds Vergla's dagger.

In the event of a volcanic explosion, this room has vessels with which to escape. The stone table can fit up to 8 PCs and the ice bowl, which is enchanted to never melt, can carry up to 2 PCs. There are also a variety of valuable items in here, gathered from past slaves, though the exact nature is left to the judge's discretion.

Vergla, Rime Witch: Init +2; Atk serpent fang dagger +3 melee (1d4+1) or spell; AC 13; HD 3d8; hp 22; MV 30'; Act 1d20+1d14; SP immune to cold, sleep, and charm effects, automatically notice glamours and illusions, Frost curse (DC 14 Will save or be transformed into ice), spells (+3 to spell check, charm person, find familiar, sleep); SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; AL C.

3. SLAVE QUARTERS

Moss clumps suffice as bedding and mushrooms as meager sustenance, clustered around a cerulean fire.

Some nights, the restless spirits of dead miners can be heard calling out from deep down in the tunnels. Mining picks (d6 damage), made from copper and wood, are kept in piles near the entrances to the tunnels below. Those resting here must make a DC 8 Fort save to gain the effects of a night's rest.

4. LATRINES

Water drips into a foul pit of filthy emissions.

The Rime Witch and her crawlers cannot stand what mortals do here and abhors the smell. Slaves take lengthy breaks here.

5. MINE TUNNELS

Steep, dark, and rough, but the only place the cold doesn't touch your bones.

Crawlers merely watch the PCs as long as the clinking sound of mine picks is heard. All PCs spending a day in the mines must make a Luck check. When a PC rolls a critical success on their Luck check, they dig through a wall that reveals Area 6 (resolved after all failures). For each failure, roll on the Events Table.

Crawlers: Init +3; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4+2); AC 12; HD 1d8+3; hp 8 each; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP immune to sleep and charm effects; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will -2; AL C.



6. THE HEART CHAMBER

Magma glows with blistering heat. A golden heart is embedded in a far wall.

Vergla arrives soon after this room is breached and attempts to rush PCs into action. Due to the intense heat, PCs gain a d30 to resist her Fey curse.

Reaching the Heart of the Mountain can be done by climbing along the edges of the magma pool (2 DC 10 Agility checks), using a "watercraft" and finding a way to move it along, jumping across stones thrown into the magma (4 DC 5 Agility checks), or other clever methods. On a failure, the individual falls into the magma and dies.

The Heart of the Mountain resembles the romantic ideal of a heart, rhythmically beats, weighs 40 pounds, and is worth 400 gold if melted for pure value. If removed from the chamber, a volcanic eruption occurs after 1d10 minutes.

ENDING FACTORS

- 1 The Heart is stolen. Winter claims the mountain, both in Elfland and in the mortal realm. The heart grants +1d to saves versus cold for those within 10' of it, but is sought after by the Summer Court.
- 2 The Heart remains with the mountain. A blessing of +1 Luck to those who defended nature. The witch is slain and melts away. Spring returns to the mountains and eventually gives way to Summer. Whoever dealt the killing blow receives a +1 to all saves versus the cold.
- 3 The witch lives. The PCs are killed or banished back to the native realm. If any PC gained her favor, she forcibly bonds them to her patron, either the King or Queen of Elfland.
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