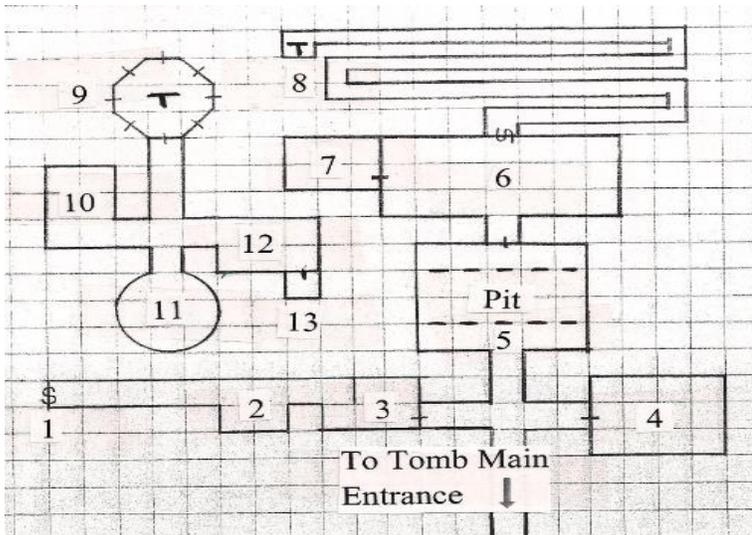


A Wild Chase by Jeff McKelley



DM Note: Sometimes I like to drop players into a short already-in-progress old-school adventure. No milling about a tavern listening for rumors or searching about for a quest. The adventure is happening now.

Read to Players: You are being chased across a cold icy open plain by five giants. A sheer impenetrable cliff face rises before you. Dexter, your guide says, "The secret door is right up there in the cliff face. Somewhere. Find the door and then I will give you the spell to open it."

The previous evening, you had agreed to infiltrate an underground, monster-infested tomb to destroy the phylactery of a mage named Ganter Snow. Dexter knows a secret way into the tomb. Mostly. He says the wizards, who have captured Ganter, gave him the location of the hidden door and the spell needed to open it to get into the tomb. He just needs a bit of help along the way. You are the help. You are at the location Dexter has indicated. He says "The secret door should be here somewhere.". The giants are about three minutes behind you.

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1. Secret door in the cliff face. Once the door is found, Dexter will give the PCs the spell paper. The paper says "Forward I am heavy, backwards I am not." PCs have three minutes to say the password "ton" (which opens the door) before the giants arrive. The frost giants will not pursue into the tomb.
2. The air is cold and still. The darkness overwhelms what little light seeps in from the doorway. Along the S wall web-covered skeletal remains. If the PC search the skeletons will find a +1 shield, 9 arrows, a brass key and an iron hammer. Two shadow spiders attack the party as they search this room.
3. A large, now-dry fountain is built into the N wall. The fountain contains coins and an inscription that reads "Each person must cultivate his own garden." Leaving coins in the fountain will cause the PC to be Blessed for their next combat; taking coins causes one point of damage per coin.
4. Bunk area. The party is greeted by a foul odor and an ogre who grabs a nearby spear and rush toward them (attacks immediately).
5. Two large stone slabs, 20 long and 6 high are in the N section of the room, 5' from the N wall. As soon as the PCs enter 5' into the room, three ogre archers who are behind the stone slabs will fire arrows at the party. The center 20' section of the room is a 10' deep pit covered with an illusionary floor.
6. Room with tapestries on the walls, altar near the N wall, ogre-sized chairs and tables, an ogre-sized chest (locked, ogre-sized treasure inside) and six ogre-sized ogres: four normal, one shaman, and one chief who fights with +2 2-handed long sword. The altar has a concealed panel (locked, trapped with sleeping gas) in the N face which opens to small area containing a silver amulet, four wool prayer shawls, a silver holy symbol and a pearl broach.
7. Room contains a large sarcophagus in the center area. Once in the room, PCs will encounter Ilsa, the spectral priestess of the tomb. Ilsa will ask the PCs to retrieve Ganter's phylactery for her in exchange for a magic item of great value. She will explain that she and Ganter worked together to keep the tomb free of intruders, so that Ilsa could have her eternal rest and Ganter could have a secure place for his work. With Ganter captured, Ilsa does not have the power to keep the tomb clear, but with the phylactery she would be able to keep her tomb free from intruders. She will give the party a key made of cedar wood to gain access to Ganter's lair, telling the PCs that "the cedar key matches the cedar (seeder) door." She will not attack unless attacked.
8. On this winding icy 5' wide path movement is slowed to half normal speed. PCs not wearing a wool prayer shawl will suffer minor cold damage once per round while they are on the icy path. The trap door in the floor at end of path can be unlocked with the brass key and opens to the ceiling in room 9.
9. A layer of ice covers the walls, ceiling and floor. There are eight doors in this octagonal room, one on each wall. The doors are all made of cedar and each has an image carved into it: Alchemist, Blacksmith, Carpenter, Farmer, Merchant, Priest, Soldier and Weaver. The cedar key will only open the Farmer (seeder) door in the S. The other doors do not open. Choosing the wrong door causes a blast of cold in the room, causing moderate damage.
10. In the center area of this large library are a chair and writing desk with an ink well and feather quill on top it. A note on the desk says "Ilsa called me a silly one. She will never get my phylactery. To find the right one, I told her 'Chase me and you will go nowhere'." The last phrase is written several times, followed by a smiley face. A central desk drawer (locked and trapped with a Lightning Bolt glyph) contains a Bag of Holding and a gold ring.
11. The ice para-elemental Hoen stands inside a summoning circle etched into the ice floor in the center of the room. Hoen will address the PCs, asking them to release him so that he may return to his home plane. If they will but break the summoning circle, he will be free to leave. What he actually wants to do is absorb all the PCs' body heat, killing them in the process. If pressed, he will attempt to trick the party into attacking him with fire, which will partially melt the floor ice and summoning circle, freeing him. If freed, he will summon four ice mephits and attack the party.
12. A four post bed with frost-covered curtains sits in the NE corner while large wooden wardrobe sits in the SW corner. Upon entering the room, the PCs will hear growling and barking. An illusionary ice hound will attack any PC stepping more than 5' into the room. The bed is a normal bed; the wardrobe is full of clothing and one cloak will stand out as being of exceptional quality (Cloak of Warmth).
13. The shelves which line the walls of this room are full of phylacteries. Each phylactery has the image of an animal embossed into its leather lid. Animals on the phylacteries include: eagle, duck, cockatoo, falcon, crow, goose, grouse, swan, parrot, owl, hawk, loon, hen, wren, jay, lark, and quail. The phylactery with the goose is the true phylactery. It may be safely taken from the room or destroyed. Attempting to take from the room or destroy any other phylactery will cause it to implode, dealing serious cold damage to all within 30'.