

JADE REGENT SESSION SUMMARY 06/10/2012

ATTENDANCE

Ernest admits, “I spent Friday night at the office, drinking. Well, technically I was working on scripting, but after a while everything just turned into a blur of Jaegermeister and peppermint schnapps.”

Paul mourns, “Patrick will be late today, and Tim will be missing. Nobody knows where Matt is.”

Chris comments, “Bruce, your keyboard sounds fantastic. It sounds like you’re plunging your fingers into pudding over and over again.”

Bruce mourns, “Please don’t say things like that about my laptop. I already get enough local comments about how fanciful it is – there’s no need to provide additional ammunition.” *Georgina* lurks in the background, making rude comments about fanciful computers.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Harwynian Fallingleaf	Bruce	Elegant Elven Transmuter	6
Yoshihiro Kaijitsu	Ernest	Tien Reckless Mounted Archer-Knight	6
Jacob Frostfang	Matt	Ale-Loving Kellid Party Sorcerer	6
V’lk	Chris	Mute Feral Elf Stabber (and Oracle)	2/4
Gobo Samarillian	Patrick	Blind Gnomish Fortuneteller	6
Bjorn the Unlucky	Tim	Ulfen Woodsman	6

GIFTS FROM THE HEARTHMISTRESS

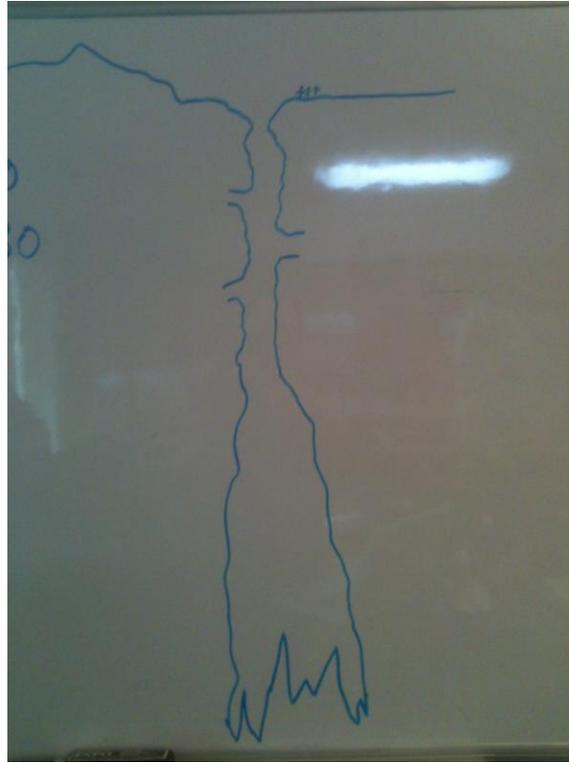
We plan to go slay the white dragon that has been bothering the Erutaki village and, arguably, is in our way if we want to proceed across the Crown of the World. *Sonameet*, the Hearthmistress of Iqaliat, gives the characters sets of *Claws of the Ice Bear* to aid them in their fight against the white dragon. The *Claws of the Ice Bear* are climbing claws that provide the following benefits when strapped to the hands:

- A +2 confidence bonus to Climb and Acrobatics skill checks (when using both hands for the purpose);
- The wearer may ignore penalties for moving slick and icy surfaces (as long as both hands are used)
- They may be used as spiked gauntlets
- Three times per day, they can provide the benefit of a *Spider Climb* spell for 1 round.

ONTO THE HIGH ICE

The characters travel for two days up onto the High Ice. The weather gets substantially worse, prompting *Harwynian* to bring out his wand of *Endure Elements* and protect everyone who doesn't already have some protection from cold. As the characters get higher into the High Ice they note that the sun never really sets – it simply circles around the horizon. The characters' native guide *Tiktik* is familiar with these effects, leaving them fairly confident in their way to the dragon's lair. He explains that there are several other hazards, problems like *polar mirages* and *bone chill*. The *Endure Elements* spells nicely evade the second problem. Snow goggles help against the first.

The characters finally approach a gigantic crack between two slabs of frozen rock. *Yoshihiro* switches from snowshoes over to the Claws of the Ice Bear (and the companion foot-claws). The characters set a rope and start climbing down. Cold air gushes out from the fissure. Yoshihiro exclaims, "That's semi-natural!" as he turns on several of *Suishen's* powers. They decide not to buff up yet as the descent may take some time. This turns out to be a nearly fatal mistake.



The characters quickly come to understand that the fissure leads to a vertical shaft ending in sharp ice spines that would spell doom to any who fell upon them. There are three side passages, and those are the characters' targets. *V'lk* leads the way, well equipped with ice claws and a knotted rope. The fairy *Spivey* (who is able to ride on his shoulder) is with him. He descends to the ice cave on the near side, planning to anchor the rope and then swing across the crevasse to get to the ones on the far side.

It is at this point that the white dragon *Vegsundvaag* burrows out from the ice wall to attack! *V'lk* complains (wordlessly), "Did anyone think to tell me that dragons are able to burrow? I think not!" He is still aware enough to avoid being surprised by the creature's appearance, though the sight of a dragon's huge face coming at him from under the ice doesn't do his pants any good.

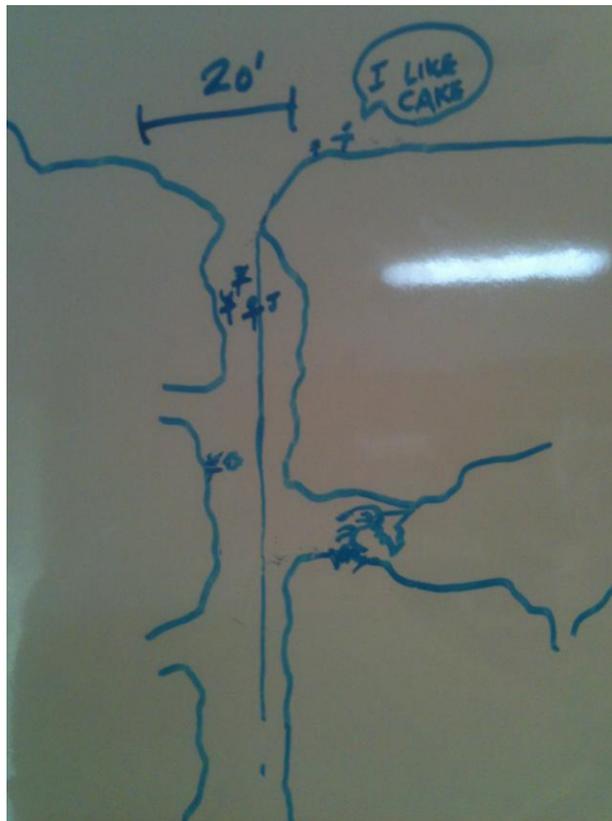
Spivey screams, then gathers her wits and casts *Lesser Confusion* on *Vegsundvaag*. To the amazement of all, the dragon is confused (albeit for a single round only).

Vegsundvaag is a large dragon with glittering scales. Her body is stout and muscular, measuring fifteen feet from snout to the base of her tail. Her face is marked

with claw-marks. She focuses upon V'lk and screams at him in draconic. None of us speak draconic.

V'lk grabs Spivey, swings away from Vegsundvaag to the far side of the fissure, activates *Spider Climb*, and clambers up to the higher passage. Harwynian casts *Levitate* and moves down among the rest of the group, mostly hanging on ropes along the fissure, leaving *Gobo* and Tiktik alone up on the surface.

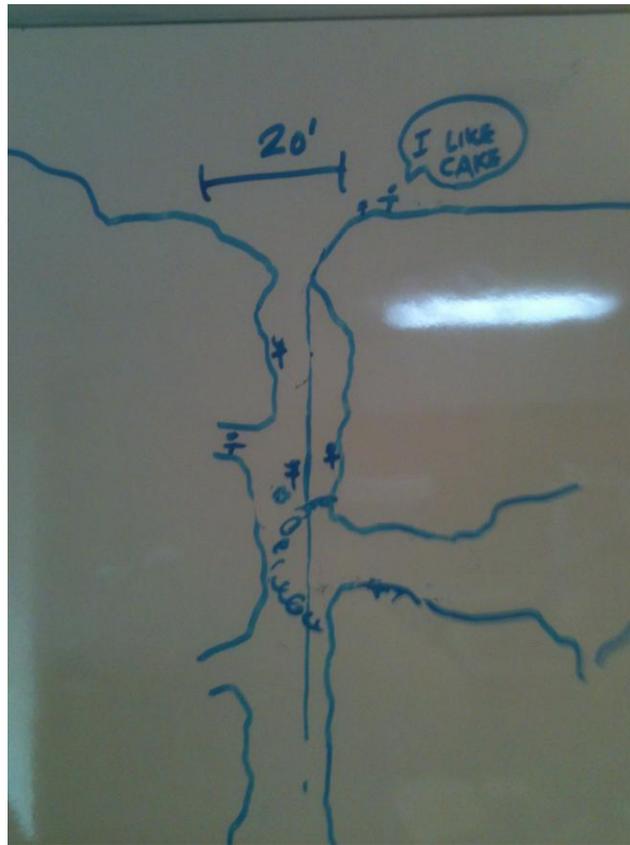
Gobo the mostly blind gnome hears the sounds of breaking ice and roaring dragon from below. "That's not good," he thinks to himself.



Gobo and Jacob both spend some time casting defensive spells, *Shield of Faith* and *Shield*. Spivey casts *Resist Energy* on V'lk, hoping to keep him safe against dragon breath.

Yoshihiro nocks an arrow and sends it into the dragon. It is a good hit, but does not inflict enough damage to slow Vegsundvaag down all that much. He calls out, "Hey, elf! Anytime you want to cast fiery ammunition on me it would be fine!"

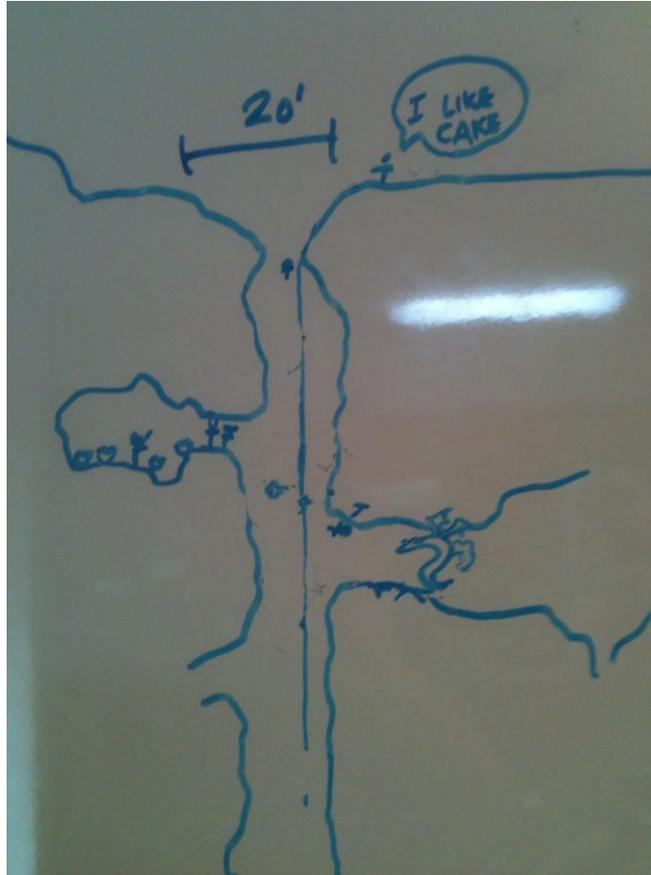
Vegsundvaag responds by casting *Fog Cloud* inside the fissure. Everyone grumbles.



V'lk makes it down into the fissure deeply enough to see the bottom of the cavern floor. It is littered with ruined shells and a small talisman made from remorhaz scales. The talisman looks similar to the Hearthmistress' talisman from Iqaliat.

Harwynian draws out a wand and casts *Flame Arrow* on Yoshihiro's quiver, then hovers down to near the rest of the group (except Gobo, who's still high up at the lip of the fissure). Gobo starts climbing down to the egg cavern.

Jacob clambers into the fog cloud, hunting for the dragon. The others commend him for his bravery as he feeds himself to the creature. Or so they think – the fog is suddenly blown away by a tremendous wind that threatens to tear him from his perch. He observes that the dragon is the source of the wind and is right in front of him looking him in the face. He tells the others, "It's still here!"



V'lk decides that things have gotten very much out of hand. He drinks his potion of *Flame Breath* and prepares to drop down to the dragon's chamber to burn it down. Harwynian, now that he's in the egg cavern and can see several other characters, casts *Haste* on Yoshihiro, V'lk, Spivey and himself.

Jacob decides to ignore his comrades' advice to get the heck out of the dragon's cavern. The others assume that he is a goner. He proves them wrong – he cleverly casts *Mirror Image* and watches as one of his images dies a fanged death. Jacob casts *True Strike* and lashes out at Vegsundvaag, getting an excellent hit! His strike leaves the dragon both wounded and fatigued.

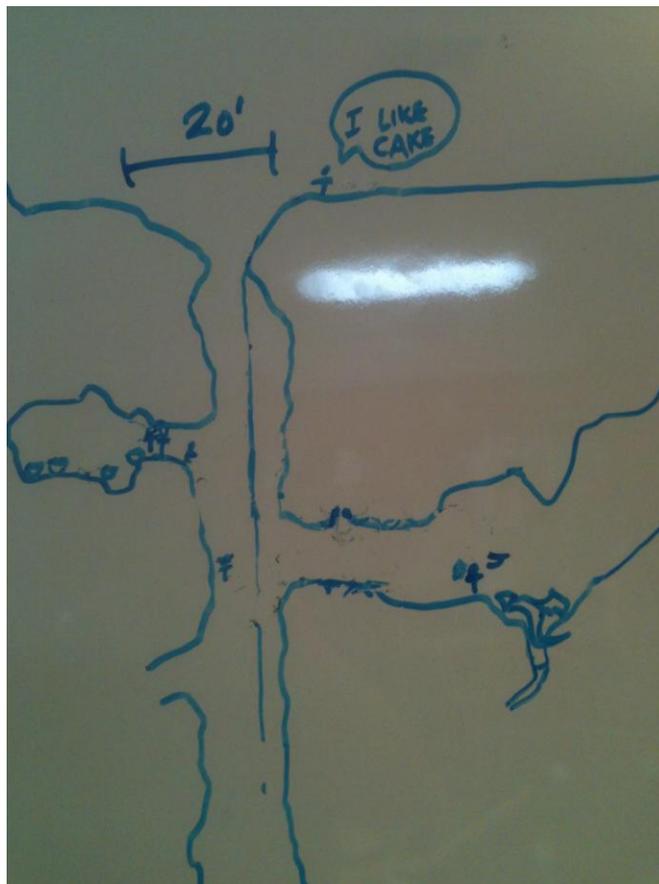
Yoshihiro has *Flame Arrow*. He is *Wind Walking*. And he has *Haste*. The world is his oyster. He holds his attack, waiting for the dragon to come within range. It doesn't, leading to the characters to reflect upon the fact that while the white dragon is the stupidest of the dragons, it is at least as smart as a human. Yoshihiro flits down into line of sight and shoots the creature with a flaming arrow, inflicting a light wound.

V'lk casts *Grace* and waits for Gobo to provide a moon bridge to the dragon. Harwynian casts *Protection from Energy* (cold, of course). He tells Gobo, "I'd like you to live!" and casts *Protection from Energy* upon the gnome as well.

Yoshihiro observes Gobo hanging on a rope outside of the egg chamber. He hauls the gnome inside and explains that someone broke Vegsundvaag's eggs and made it look like the Erutaki did it. Of course, there is also a good chance that the Erutaki actually did break her eggs – and there's no way to tell which is the case.

Vegsundvaag decides that she's not about to stand for being shot full of arrows or cut with greatswords. She engulfs Jacob and Yoshihiro in freezing breath to no effect and then burrows into the cavern wall.

The characters wait anxiously, knowing that the dragon is going to spring out at them. It obliges a moment later, bursting from the fissure wall, evading Yoshihiro's arrow and making a flyby attack upon Jacob. It retreats back into the cave and Jacob follows. Spivey frantically flutters behind him trying to cure his many wounds.



Gobo casts a moon bridge, angled from the upper egg chamber to the lower dragon chamber. The bridge has no traction, of course, so crossing it is quite an adventure. V'lk slides down it like it's a waterslide and ends up near Jacob in the ice caver where the dragon is cornered.

Yoshihiro takes an arrow shot at the dragon from the central shaft and misses, as it hunkers down of convenient line of sight. V'lk tries breathing fire at it, inflicting a bad burn even though it avoids the worst of the blast. It cries out in pain. Harwynian slides down the moon bridge and hits the dragon dead on with a *Scorching Ray*, critically wounding it. As an added benefit, his spell also brings in a fire elemental to serve him for a round. The dragon leaps up to the roof of the cavern and clings there to get out of melee range. Jacob draws out his wand of *Scorching Ray* and inflicts another critical injury, burning it almost to nothing. Vegsundvaag's bones and organs are exposed from the heat of the attacks!

Yoshihiro calls out a challenge, draws Suishen, and flies to the attack! He cleaves through Vegsundvaag's head, driving his blade into her brain. The dragon's corpse falls down onto V'lk, who gets out of the way just in time.

Jacob exclaims, "I must have the dragon's heart! See, it is almost exposed and easy for me to reach!"

Harwynian shudders, "That is barbaric! Distastefully barbaric!"

Yoshihiro engages in a bit of butchery then presents his handiwork. "Who's up for some dragon heart?" He and Jacob partake. V'lk drinks from the dragon's blood. Harwynian averts his gaze in distaste.

THE DRAGON'S SPOUSE

The characters examine the depths of the dragon's lair. They find the shattered bones of another dragon. Harwynian flies down with *Levitate* to examine. He concludes that the bones haven't been down there all that long. Most likely the body was picked clean by scavengers.

BEGVNEVAG'S HOARD

The characters manage to locate Vegsundvaag's hoard in the depths of the ice fissure. They recover a large number of desirable items:

- One *Lesser Dragonslaying Arrow*
- A *Shortsword +2*
- A potion of *Protection from Arrows*
- A *Ring of Feather Falling*
- A *Horse Terracotta Talisman*
- A wand of *Ray of Enfeeblement* (15 charges)
- A masterwork bright steel shield
- A masterwork cold iron spiked gauntlet
- A masterwork composite shortbow (+2 STR)
- A masterwork spear
- Climber's kit
- 200 feet of silk rope
- A piece of amber worth 100 gold
- 3 bloodstones (50 gold each)
- A blue sapphire worth 500 gold
- A leather quiver decorated with winter wolf fur and engraved with snowcaster elf designs (500 gold)
- 3104 copper pieces
- 2521 silver pieces
- 594 gold pieces
- 202 platinum pieces

TERRACOTTA TALISMAN (HORSE)

The *Horse Terracotta Talisman* provides the bearer with bonuses drawn from the spirit of an ancient fighting steed. It provides two powers: once per day it may be used to reroll an attack roll with a +1 bonus, and once per day it can cast *Phantom Steed* as the spell (CL 6, 6 hour duration).

DIVISION OF THE SPOILS

The characters draw lots for the *Ring of Feather Falling*; Jacob wins. Yoshihiro gets the *Horse Terracotta Talisman*. Harwynian gets the *Wand of Ray of Enfeeblement*. Gobo takes the potion, and makes a point of extracting a nice-looking fang from the dragon's mouth.

BACK TO THE SURFACE

When the characters return to the surface, they find that Tiktik is still talking about foods he likes. He hadn't really even realized that they had gone. Or that they'd been involved in life-or-death struggle against a dragon.

On the way back, V'lk remembers that the shaman the characters fought before they headed to the dragon's lair had possessed dragon egg shell fragments. The characters deduce that the Five Winds Army might have deliberately slain the dragon's mate and broken her eggs to enrage her, to prevent travelers from crossing the High Ice.

Upon their return to Iqaliat the characters are welcomed as heroes. The villagers throw them a feast, complete with some very questionable local delicacies (squashed birds, fermented for a year in the belly of a walrus). V'lk slices himself an extra-large slice of walrus blubber.

The Hearthmistress Sonameet has examined the pictograms the characters uncovered before their departure and has some new information for them. The three-fingered skeletal claw symbol is *Sithhud's* mark, associated with the long-banished demon lord. The dark-winged woman may have found a way to reclaim the demon-lord's powers, possibly through the strange black monoliths springing up on the High Ice.

The strange tower depicted in one of the pictograms is the Storm Tower. Sonameet advises that the characters may want to visit it to assure their safe passage across the High Ice. It stands some 700 miles away across the High Ice, along the western edge of the Alabastrine Peaks.

THE GRATITUDE OF IQALIAT

Sonameet gives the characters a *Sashimono of Comfort*. This is a banner three feet tall and one foot wide decorated with three lotus flowers. It may be displayed in a variety of ways. It grants *Endure Elements* (to everyone in the vehicle it is hung from, the mount and rider carrying it, the creature carrying it, or if it is planted in the ground to everyone within 30 feet). The characters decide to display it from *Koya's* wagon. She also gives the characters two fully-charged wands of *Endure Elements*, which are divided between V'lk and Gobo.

With the dragon threat gone, the village of Iqaliat gains several benefits (improved settlement stats). The villagers provide the characters with discounts on equipment, some of which serve to improve the stats of their caravan.

In return, Yoshihiro gives Sonameet the stone hammer and the amulet. He advises her to use them well to teach the youth of the village.

EQUIPPING FOR THE LONG WALK

The characters decide to sell some of their trade goods to make room for additional food and gear to cross the High Ice. A trip to the Storm Tower means that the characters' caravan will need to travel away from the normal trade path, which will affect their ability to resupply from villages along the way. They clear five trade slots and fill them with food (25 gold). The journey to the Storm Tower and the other side of the High Ice will take 25 days. With the extra provision space, the caravan can carry 23 days' worth of food. The characters hope to be able to hunt enough to make up the difference.

The characters distribute 700 gold each for last-minute shopping.

WHAT IS A SNOWCASTER ELF?

Yoshihiro asks the locals, "What is a Snowcaster elf, and why are they decorating my quiver?" They tell him that the Snowcaster elves live up on the High Ice. They are

pale-skinned and very mysterious. They might make toys and love snow-cones. They are gruff towards outsiders, but respect shows of force. “I think we can arrange that,” says Yoshihiro.

ICE TROLL AMBUSH

The caravan isn't even out on the High Ice for a day when a pack of ice trolls attacks! It is the trolls' misfortune that the caravan is well equipped with alarms and traps, which they emplace around their campsite. The first indication the characters have that a bunch of trolls are attacking is the sound of traps triggering and trolls cursing.

The rest of the encounter is technically successful, but very bruising: the characters drive the trolls off with bravery and fire magic, at the cost of about two-thirds of the caravan's hit points. The characters head back to Iqaliat to repair their wagons. They decide that they would be well served by armoring one of their wagons at a cost of 2000 gold. The villagers of Iqaliat cover the entire cost in gratitude for the fact that the characters saved the children of the refugees some time ago.

The characters spend an extra week eating pickled walrus. Harwynian spends a fair amount of the time writing scrolls for himself and for Jacob. Harwynian also starts writing his memoir, titled *Out of the Frost: A Journey of Hardships through Ice to Bring Freedom to the Far Side of the World*. Harwynian is quite pleased by his succinct title.

BACK TO THE HIGH ICE

The characters' caravan rolls back to the High Ice. Their scouts fairly swiftly find the tracks of the ice trolls. The characters guide the caravan to avoid them.

The caravan travels for six days. On the sixth day, the caravan approaches a monolith of black stone twenty feet high protruding from the ice. As the characters approach, the weather conditions worsen, becoming blizzard-like.

The characters circle the caravan and move forward to investigate. The monolith has the structure of an obelisk, marked with swirling wind patterns. A pile of corpses stands nearby. They are frozen solid and display various gaping wounds. The corpses

are not magical, but the obelisk is overwhelmingly magical, with a flavor of necromancy and transmutation. Gobo lays *invisibility to undead* on us all to minimize risk.

Gobo looks closely at the bodies. All of them are frozen solid, and marked with a symbol of a three-fingered claw. They have been killed in various ways: weapons, claws, lightning. V'lk draws a picture of a hungry storm with small figures running around underneath it. There are sixteen bodies, Erutaki and Snowcaster elf both.

Yoshihiro pours alchemist's fire upon the pile and sets them on fire. They burn like normal corpses. We're not sure if they were zombies and the invisibility worked and or not.

V'lk moves closer to the black obelisk. Harwynian casts *Protection from Evil* on him (and on himself as well). He notices that Jacob is also casting defensive spells. The obelisk is sunk deeply into the ground. As far as the characters can determine, the obelisk is too deeply anchored for them to be able to influence it too much. Yoshihiro kicks it in frustration.

SLOGGING THROUGH THE DRIFTS

Two days later, the characters encounter an area of rough terrain. The ice is unstable and surrounded by deep snow drifts. The caravan is forced to slow down to cross the area. Gobo helps out with his moon bridge, but the characters still face four days' of slow travel. The characters attempt security checks to speed their progress.

The characters draw close to the Alabastrine Peaks. On the thirteenth day of the trip the characters discover that *creeping rot* is making its way through the caravan's foodstuffs. Initial efforts to arrest the contagion are not effective: the caravan's speed is reduced by half, and other stats (armor class, attack and defense) are degraded. The disease worsens, until too many people are sick to even keep the caravan moving. By the time Gobo's and Koya's healing start to cure the disease the caravan has been stopped for five days.

Since the beginning of the journey, the characters have lost a total of eight days and stores are too low to last across the entire High Ice. The characters move their camp away from where they were disease-stricken. They adopt a routine of moving slowly

every other day to allow time for hunting; each hunting day provides (roughly) a half-day of surplus food. Harwynian swaps out cantrips for *Prestidigitation* and adopts a regular regimen of cleaning out the wagons, especially the cook's wagon and the food stores.

THE STORM TOWER

The characters are able to see the bluish glow surrounding the Storm Tower from fifty miles out. Ten miles out they are able to see the tower itself. The tower is a massive hexagonal stone structure hundreds of feet high standing in a lake of chill slush. A shattered causeway leads across the lake. The light comes from the peak of the tower. A slow storm nexus circulates around the tower.

As the characters approach the tower, a squad of seven frozen dead approach (there were eight, but Gobo's *invisibility to undead* fooled one of them and it wandered off). Harwynian manages to cast a *Haste* before one of them paralyzes him with cold. Which is convenient, because Bruce chooses this moment to run off and tend his pot pies.

The undead mob the group and Hiro and his horse and passenger (Gobo) are beset by a batch. Hiro lays about with his flaming sword and chops both undead menacing him down. Gobo tries to cast a spell from his perch on the back of the horse but the furious melee prevents him.

V'lk, Gobo, and Harwynian get paralyzed by their opponents' cold claws. Jacob, Akumu, and Hiro lay about themselves for a couple long minutes and finally fell all the cold zombies.

Yoshihiro surveys the battlefield and says, "Well, that sucked. Are you guys okay?" The others are slowly coming unfrozen.

Harwynian offers, "Thanks to your efforts, yes. Thanks for killing the undeads!"

Yoshihiro comments, "Yep. Flaming sword helped."

And at that moment, everyone levels up! Huzzah!

THE END OF THE SESSION

The characters are at the threshold of the Storm Tower, and seventh level. Next session – they enter the tower!