

“STARLIGHT ON ICE” – An Unseighlie Faerie Castle

Set in Shadow Vale northeast of Pine Bluff, Smeisserand, Saltwave

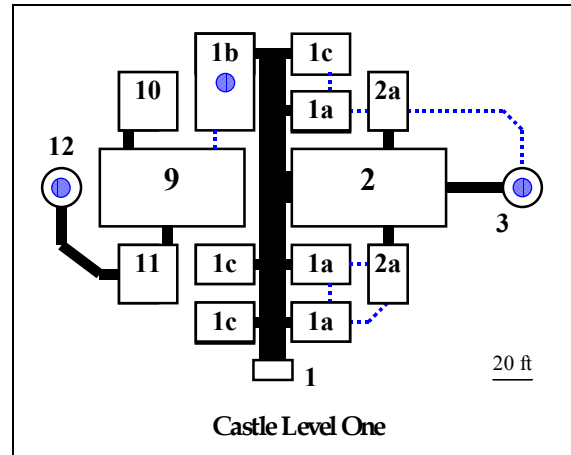
by SilverDragon

Design

This adventure is written for the Dungeons & Dragons 3rd Edition Rules. While it is set in the author’s Saltwave campaign, Dungeon Masters may easily transfer it elsewhere, as desired. It is appropriate as written for a party of 8th to 10th level, with about 32-40 total character levels.

Setup

The heroes are attempting to reach some goal, perhaps a quest or item retrieval mission. This goal can be for themselves, or on behalf of another party or organization, as the DM pleases. This adventure is set up as a side trek that provides additional danger, treasure, information and allies.



To set the stage, a distraught farmer or woodcutter should appeal to the PCs for help in finding a little boy who has been lost in the forest for three days. The parent tells the PCs that the child found a strange gold-dipped oak leaf about six days before. If the PCs ask to see the leaf, the parent shows them an extremely fine and perfect leaf of gold. The child said that the faeries from the Ice Castle gave him the leaf. The parents found nothing but an empty clearing with a rune-marked stone when the child showed them where he met the faeries. Three days ago, the boy went missing from his bed in the middle of the night, and the parents fear that faeries took him. They ask the adventurers to find their son.

If more reason is needed to depart from the current quest, arrange for the parents or a local person to have information or resources that the PCs need to achieve their goal, and make the PCs’ help in finding the boy a condition for that person’s cooperation.

Plot Encounters

These encounters are necessary to the plot, and should be played in order, if possible. In particular, the first three encounters give the PCs clues about how to find and enter the castle, and what to look for once inside. The remaining encounters give the PCs the things they will need to obtain to escape the castle and return.

1. Mysterious Clearing
2. Castle of Ice
3. Prisoners
4. Faerie Treasure
5. Escaping the Castle

Standard Castle Features

Hallways. All hallways are 15' wide and arch to a point 10' above the floor. The walls are made of smooth, well-fitted marble and granite [-20% climbing penalty]. The floors are smooth stone of the opposite type of stone as the walls (i.e., granite walls with marble floors), but placed in complementary patterns and colors.

Doorways. All doorways are 5' wide and arch to a rounded 8' height. They are set in from the hallways by 5' and allow the doors to open out of the chamber into the doorway annex without brushing against the ceiling. Construction of walls and floor is the same as the adjacent hallway.

Doors. All doors are made of polished, fine-grained wood. All doors come in pairs, with gold fittings and hinges. All doors have locks (DC 25), but not all doors are locked. Some have traps (DC 20 Search to detect), and these will be noted in the key. Most doors have decorative carvings depicting woodland scenes.

Secret Passages. Secret passages are noted on the map by blue dotted lines. These are normal 5' wide and 8' high secret passages with doors easily opened from within the passage. All secret doors require a DC 20 Search check to find.

Traps. All traps have a DC 20 Search to detect, and a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid.

Keyed Encounters

1. Entry Hall. [Silent, abandoned hall] There is an area of reversed gravity extending 20' between the first and second set of doorways. The castle doors will disappear and not return after every member of the entering group takes their eyes off of them.

1a. Living Quarters. [Doors locked; trapped in entryway with falling stone blocks 4d6] The two rooms on the east side are living chambers for the faerie. There are six faerie in each room, and they will exit through the secret passages to set the trap in the audience chamber (2). The west side room is abandoned.

1b. Magic Vortex. [Doors locked] Inside this barren room is a swirling tornado-like vortex of brilliant blue light. It tumbles and rotates about its center with the noise of a laundromat full of washing machines thumping in perfect unison. It requires a DC 20 Reflex save for creatures or objects within 5 ft. to avoid being sucked into the vortex. Anything put into the vortex is subject to the DM's whim. For a random roll, possibilities include (d8): 1) wild surge, 2) random polymorphing, 3) ability score boosting, 4) magic item stripping, 5) special power bestowal, 6) random teleport, 7) granting of wishes, and 8) instant irrevocable death. If the DM chooses a malefic result (instead of a random roll), he or she should give some hint about the danger.

2. Audience Chamber. [Columns spaced at 10' intervals] The first major foray of faerie defenders will engage the intruders here. They have a magical ward set to protect the last third of the chamber. Nothing massing more than 75 lbs can get by. The faerie will attack using short bows and elf-shot [DC15 Fort. save to avoid 5d4 hp cold damage], until the PCs get close, when they will break out the rapiers.

Unseighlie Guards (12): AC 23 (+1 small, +4 Dex, +8 *Elven Chainmail* +3); HD 5d8+10; 50 hp; Atk: Rapier +11 (1d6+4), Crit. 18-20/x2. Shortbow +11 (1d6+2), Crit. x3. SA Weapons are magical ice, DC 15 Fort. Save to avoid 5d4 cold damage per strike). Saves: Fort. +6, Ref. +6, Will +3. Stats: Str 14, 19 Dex, 14 Con, 14 Int, 14 Wis, 18 Cha. Skills: Listen +10, Spot +10. Feats: Alertness, Wpn Finesse (rapier), Wpn Focus (rapier, shortbow), Wpn Specialization (rapier). Gear: small Elven Chainmail +3, Unseighlie Ice Rapier, Shortbow, Elf Shot arrows. CR 5.

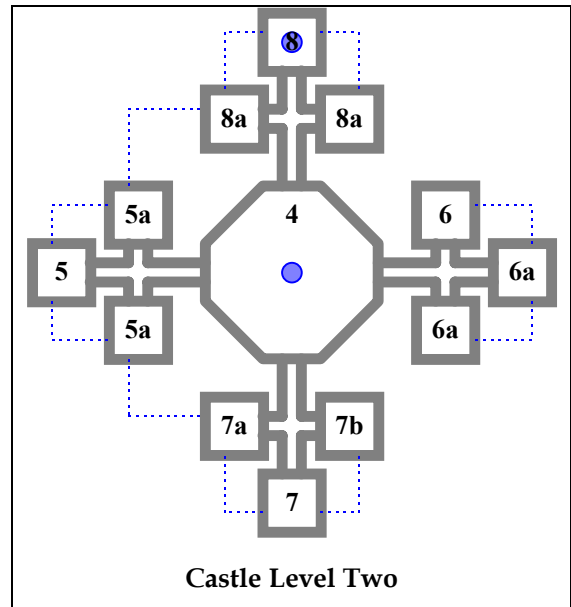
2a. Guard Chambers. [Doors unlocked, peepholes disguised amidst the carvings] This is where the faerie arm themselves to fight off intruders. They have barrels of ice water from which they create their elf-shot arrows.

3. Circular Shaft. [Golden portico gate locked] At the end of the hallway is a sparkling shaft of blue light. Anything left completely within it for a few seconds will disappear, harmlessly teleported to the Upper Hall (4) on the second level. This is a two-way teleporter.

4. Upper Hall. [No gates or doors] The blue shaft of light sparkles in the center of this chamber. There are 3 Unseighlie guards who are questioning a survivor from the battle below. The faerie-folk will flee to the west, toward the champion in (5), leaving the gargoyles to delay the intruders. There are eight Stone Lion Gargoyles, two for each exit. Only those protecting their exits will attack, unless the first pair is destroyed, at which point all remaining gargoyles will become enraged and attack.

Unseighlie Guards (3): all stats are as those above in Room 2.

Stone Lion Gargoyles (8): AC 21; HD 16d8; 90 hp; Atk: 2 claws +12 (1d8+8), 1 bite +12 (2d6+8), Crit. x3. SA Roar as *shout* spell. SQ Immune to critical effects, construct immunities, 20/+4 damage resistance, gargoyle may *haste* itself. Saves: Fort. +8, Ref. +3, Will NA. Stats: Str 26, 10 Dex, NA Con, NA Int, NA Wis, NA Cha. Skills: none. Feats: Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative. CR 14.



5. Unseighlie Champion. [Doors locked after the faerie from (4) flee here for help] This is the chamber of the Unseighlie Champion, Lord Fallen Star. He has just finished donning his ornate, fluted, green full plate armor with the help of his four lady friends. He will challenge the intruders to put forth their strongest to duel him for their trespass. Fallen Star is a fighter wizard, but will not use his spells unless the PC party does so first. If he wins, he expects the remaining PCs to surrender to him for imprisonment, servitude, and questioning. One of his maidens will sneak out through the secret door at a good time to alert other unseighlie leaders. The others will watch the fight and make appropriate noises. The room has level 14 treasure.

Lord Fallen Star: AC29 (+1 small, +3 Dex, +15 armor); FT/WZ 8/9; 130hp; Init+7; Atk: *Bastard Sword of Dancing* +3 +17/+12/+7 (1d10+9); Stats:19/17/16-17/15/17. SV: Fort. +12, Ref. +10(+9), Will +11; Skills: Spot+6, Concentration+15. Feats: Exotic Wpn (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword), Expertise, Power Attack, Combat Reflexes, Still Spell, Combat Casting, Cleave, Improved Disarm. Spells:4/5/5/4/2/1 Shield, Magic Missile, x2, x3, True Strike; See Invisible, Mirror Image, Melf's Acid Arrow; Shield (Still), Magic Missile (Still); Lightning Bolt, Flame Arrow, Fly, See Invisible (Still); Phantasmal Killer, Otiluke's Resilient Sphere; Fire Shield (Still). Gear: *Small Mithral Plate Armor* +3 (armor bonus +11, Max Dex +3, Armor Check -2, Spell Failure 25%, Spd 20, Wt 25 lb.), *Small Mithral Shield* +3 (armor bonus +4, Armor Check 0, Spell Failure 0%, Wt 2.5 lb.). CR 17.

Unseighlie Maids (4): all basic stats as the Unseighlie guards, but they only have ice daggers, and no armor.

5a. Living Chambers. [Doors locked] These are living chambers, finely appointed. Contents include assorted clothing, jewelry, and artworks in a martial motif. Each room has a level 12 treasure. Also hidden by illusion within a potted plant, trapped [poison darts, 20 hp/10 hp], and guarded by a fire trap [DC 17, 1d4+9] are the spell books of Lord Fallen Star.

6. Magic Vortex. [Doors locked] Inside this barren room is a swirling tornado-like vortex of brilliant blue light. It tumbles and rotates about its center with the noise of a laundromat full of washing machines thumping in perfect unison. It requires a DC 20 Reflex save for creatures or objects within 5 ft. to avoid being sucked into the vortex. Anything put into the vortex is subject to the DM's whim. For a random roll, possibilities include (d8): 1) wild surge, 2) random polymorphing, 3) ability score boosting, 4) magic item stripping, 5) special power bestowal, 6) random teleport, 7) granting of wishes, and 8) instant irrevocable death. If the DM chooses a malefic result (instead of a random roll), he or she should give some hint about the danger.

6a. Evacuated Chambers. [Doors unlocked] Empty, barren rooms. Evacuated because of the instability of the vortex in room 6.

7. Prison Chamber. [Doors locked; trapped with "kneeknockers" DC 20 Search, Atk: +12 (4d6 damage) at knee height, Fort. save to avoid bludgeoning leg critical] Inside the faerie prison are three cells. One holds several human children, very scared. Another holds five cat-like humanoids. These tabaxi are trespassers caught by the unseighlie. The third cell holds a sullen human man in clothing that was recently very nice. The prisoners are currently guarded by five goblinoid unseighlie warriors. The faerie will summon help from (7a) by pulling a bell cord. The reinforcements will arrive in three rounds from the hallway behind the PCs.

Unseighlie Goblin Guards (5): All stats are as the Unseighlie guards from 2, but appearance, manner, and equipment is of goblin appearance instead of elfin, and the blades and arrows do poison damage instead of cold. Poison does 1d6 Con/2d6 Con.

Human: Master Ulrich Wengel, Wiz 7, a wizard from Katraal (the capital city of Smeisserand). He was investigating rumors of faerie essence and was captured. He is a scholarly wizard, usually carries his staff with him everywhere, and is an easily frustrated person of middling years. He would prefer to leave by the most expedient method, but would be content to guard the children from harm while the PCs find a way out.

Tabaxi: Torretts, Scout Leader, m, FT/WZ 5/5
Rrethra, Scout, f, FT/WZ 3/3
Ksilsar, Fighter, f, FT2
Sseret, Fighter, f, FT2
Milsset, Fighter, f, FT2

7a. Guardroom. [Doors locked and barred] The five other goblinoid guards are resting in this chamber. They will grab their arms and assist their fellows three rounds after they are alerted.

Unseighlie Goblin Guards (5): All stats are as the Goblin Guards from 7.

7b. Storage. [Doors locked] The equipment of the tabaxi and Ulrich is stored here. This equipment is standard for the level of the characters. The secret doors to this room are trapped [falling block, 4d6 hp].

8. Transport Chamber. [Golden portico gate, locked] Inside this room is a sparkling shaft of blue light. Anything left completely within it for a few seconds will disappear, harmlessly teleported to the Hall of Mirrors (9) on the first level. Anyone knowing the secret command words can use this as a teleporter to anywhere within or outside of the castle. These words are written in a scrap of paper in one of Lord Fallen Star's spell books.

8a. Meat Locker. [Doors unlocked] There are several human bodies on ice and hanging from hooks here in these freezing chambers. The cold is powered by brown mold colonies stored in locked iron trunks. Creatures here will take 1d6 points of subdual damage per round from magical cold. No treasure or items of interest. Opening a trunk will release the mold, causing 4d8 hp of magical cold damage within 10 ft.

9. Hall of Mirrors. [exit doors are hidden by enchanted mirrors, DC 25 Search to locate] Enchanted mirrors completely cover the walls and ceiling of this room, which reaches up more than 80 feet. The floor is made to resemble uneven forest floor, with moss, dirt, twigs, fallen leaves, and detritus. The mirrors are enchanted to make it look and feel like those in the room are actually outdoors in a deep forest. The mirrors will reveal themselves to touch as cool, smooth, and flat. The mirrors are unbreakable by anything short of a disintegrate spell. There is a large oak tree in the center of the room that is the home of an Unseighlie Nymph. This nymph is a corruptor, and loves nothing better than to twist the nature of people and beautiful places to evil.

Milasayam, Unseelie Nymph: AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 natural); HD 4d8; 24 hp; Init +3; SA *charm, corruption; SQ dimension door*; SR 20; SV Fort. +1, Ref. +4, Will +6; 8 Str, 16 Dex, 11 Con, 16 Int, 16 Wis, 24 Cha; Skills: Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15, Innuendo +11, Knowledge (Nature) +11, Listen +9, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +11. Feats: none. CR 5.

Anyone (male or female) who sees an unseighlie nymph must make a DC 22 Will save or fall completely in love with the creature. Smitten creatures consider the unseighlie nymph as the center of their respective universe and will do anything short of ending their own lives—or directly violating a basic tenet of their ethos—to please their beloved. Those who save can see the nymph's evil nature.

An unseighlie nymph exudes a corrupting influence that gradually distorts and destroys her natural surroundings and people in her company. This influence can completely corrupt 5 square miles of territory in 4 months. Corrupted areas become twisted, horrifying visions of their former beauty. Nothing grows in these areas—even after the unseighlie nymph moves on. Powerful magic is needed to reverse the damage. Every week that a creature spends by her side causes the individual to lose 1 point of Charisma and 1 point of Constitution as the nymph's power stoops him with age, disease, and other wasting effects. This ability damage is permanent.

Unseighlie nymphs hate beauty and goodness, and strive to pervert these attributes in the natural world. Milasayam rests here in the Unseighlie Castle when pursued by druids or others who have discovered her secrets. She plans to return to the world soon to cause more corruption, and would like nothing more than to ruin a druid's grove or a section of the Aelvenwode. She will claim to be a dryad brought here to amuse the unseighlie court, and trapped by the mirrors. If pressed, she will dimension door inside her tree, and then to someplace else in the castle. She is in no way harmed or hampered by the destruction of her tree, and would get a good laugh at anyone destroying it to try to weaken her.

10. Outer Treasure Chamber. [Door locked and trapped with poison needle] Treasure stuff, minor, but the door to this room must stand open before the teleporter trick in the Inner Treasure Chamber (room 11) will be deactivated. Treasure level 12.

11. Inner Treasure Chamber. [Door locked and trapped with poison needle and trapped again with a falling block trap (4d6) and trapped thrice with a poison gas jet] Trick: Unless the door to the Outer Treasure Chamber (room 10) is standing open, anything that goes through the doorway to the Inner Treasure Chamber will emerge back into the Hall of Mirrors from the doorway of room 10. A party of Unseighlie (4 13th level characters) will arrive about the time this room is breached. CR 17. Treasure level 20.

Lord Dismal Beach: AC31 (+1 small, +4 Dex, +16 armor); FT 13; 102hp; Init+8; Atk: *Unholy Iceburst Rapier* +3 +23/+18/+13 (1d6+7 (base) +1d6 (frost) + 2d6 (unholy) + DC15 Fort. save to avoid 5d4 cold damage), Crit. 15-20/x2; Stats:15/19/14-10/12/10. SV: Fort. +12, Ref. +8, Will +7; Skills: Spot+6, Climb/Jump+14. Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier), Expertise, Ambidexterity, Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Improved Disarm, Improved Critical (rapier), Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack. Gear: *Small Faerie Chainmail* +5 (armor bonus +10, Max Dex +4, Armor Check -2, Spell Failure 20%, Spd 30, Wt 20 lb.), *Mithral Buckler* +5 (armor bonus +6, Armor Check 0, Spell Failure 0%, Wt 2.5 lb.). CR 13.

Lord Twocicles Wrangelf: AC25 (+1 small, +4 Dex, +16 armor); FT 13; 102hp; Init+8; Atk: **paired** *Unholy Iceburst Rapiers* +3 +23/+18/+13 (1d6+7 (base) +1d6 (frost) + 2d6 (unholy) + DC15 Fort. save to avoid 5d4 cold damage), Crit. 15-20/x2; Stats:15/19/14-10/12/10. SV: Fort. +12, Ref. +8, Will +7; Skills: Spot+6, Climb/Jump+14. Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier), Expertise, Ambidexterity, Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Improved Disarm, Improved Critical (rapier), Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack. Gear: *Small Faerie Chainmail* +5 (armor bonus +10, Max Dex +4, Armor Check -2, Spell Failure 20%, Spd 30, Wt 20 lb.). CR 13.

Lady Magicfinger Twinkle: AC21 (+1 small, +4 Dex, +6 armor); WZ 13; 52hp; Init+8; Atk: *Wizard's staff thingie* +2 +7/+2 (1d6+7 (base) +1d6 (frost) + 2d6 (unholy) + DC15 Fort. save to avoid 5d4 cold damage), Crit. 15-20/x2; Stats:8/18/14-16(18)/12/10. SV: Fort. +8, Ref. +12, Will +13; Skills: Spot+6, Concentration +17. Feats: Scribe Scroll, Combat Casting, Brew Potion, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Craft Wands, Spell Focus (evocations). Spells: 5/5/5/5/3/2/1. Gear: *Bracers of Armor* +3, *Wand of Magic Missile* [9th level caster], *Cloak of Resistance* +2, *Ring of Protection* +2, *Wand of Lightning Bolt* [10th level caster], *Wand of Fireball* [10th level caster], *Amulet of Natural Armor* +1, *Headband of Intellect* +2. CR 13.

Lady Sugarplum Twinkle: AC21 (+1 small, +4 Dex, +6 armor); WZ 13; 52hp; Init+8; Atk: *Wizard's staff thingie* +2 +7/+2 (1d6+7 (base) +1d6 (frost) + 2d6 (unholy) + DC15 Fort. save to avoid 5d4 cold damage), Crit. 15-20/x2; Stats:8/18/14-16(18)/12/10. SV: Fort. +8, Ref. +12, Will +13; Skills: Spot+6, Concentration +17. Feats: Scribe Scroll, Combat Casting, Brew Potion, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Craft Wands, Spell Focus (evocations). Spells: 5/5/5/5/3/2/1. Gear: *Bracers of Armor* +3, *Wand of Magic Missile* [9th level caster], *Cloak of Resistance* +2, *Ring of Protection* +2, *Wand of Lightning Bolt* [10th level caster], *Wand of Fireball* [10th level caster], *Amulet of Natural Armor* +1, *Headband of Intellect* +2. CR 13.

12. Magical Vortex. [Door of reinforced silver with runes and symbols meant to confine magic within. Locked and trapped with a permanent *symbol of repulsion* DC 21 Will save to resist.] Beyond this door is a spherical chamber with another thumping, throbbing magical vortex. This one flashes with different colors, as well as the familiar blue light. It will bestow a permanent +1 intelligence ability bonus and give a truthful and infallible answer to the character's current dilemma or question.