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Steam Dragon's Revenge

by Peter Schweighofer

Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast®



Series III

Number 1

How to Use This Product

This adventure is specifically designed to be easily incorporated into any existing D&D campaign. Feel free to alter the names of places and characters and customize the details of the adventure to fit your own world.

You should be able to run this adventure in a single game session. You should read it through at least once and study those sections you will need to know well. In particular, you should familiarize yourself with the features and capabilities of any new monsters, spells, and magic items introduced in the adventure.

You can get the adventure started quickly and easily by reading the intro on the back cover to your players. You may also wish to photocopy the map on pages 8 and 9, both for your own reference and to show to the players, if appropriate.

Dungeons & Dragons®

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STEAM DRAGON'S REVENGE

By Peter Schweighofer

DM BACKGROUND

When several heroes from Trommel slew the steam dragon Glorack years ago, the dragon's body vented steam and scalding blood, melting the ice in her lair and sending her corpse and treasure hoard deep into the glacier. The heroes fled, knowing they had vanquished the dragon and could not recover the gold from such a frozen tomb.

A band of ice gnomes (also called glazvirg) living deeper in the Fallow glaciers eventually heard of Glorack's demise. They began scheming to secretly recover her treasure for their own vengeful purposes. The glazvirg moved into the area and started operations to recover the treasure. They rigged a network of insulated canvas hoses and tapped hot springs deep beneath the glacier, using natural geothermal steam to bore through the ice and toward Glorack's frozen tomb.

They quickly realized their operation required general laborers and schemed to lure hapless victims into their ice caves. By venting steam out of the glacier and spreading a few rumors in the valley below, they resurrected the threat of a steam dragon living near Trommel. The adventurers who entered the caverns encountered a mechanical steam dragon the glazvirg manufactured, one that lured them into captivity and slavery. So far the ice gnomes have attracted enough workers to recover the treasure, but always welcome more.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Steam Dragon's Revenge is a d20 System adventure designed for 4–6 characters levels 5–7. To vary the difficulty of certain encounters to suit different party sizes or experience levels, simply alter the number of opponents. Although designed as a standalone adventure, *Steam Dragon's Revenge* can be worked into an existing campaign in any glacial or arctic region with a ready source of geothermal vents.

In Trommel the village elders offer to outfit the party with a modest amount of equipment (no more than 250 gp for each character), including insulated fur boots with soles specially crafted to maintain a hold on icy surfaces. Should they defeat the steam dragon, the characters earn whatever treasure they recover—the elders relinquish any claim on the hoard in lieu of paying the party an



additional reward. If they expose the ice gnomes and free their slaves, the characters also earn the captives' gratitude.

FALLOW GLACIER CAVERNS

The characters begin by approaching the Fallow glacier in the high valley above Trommel. The caves within present movement difficulties only for those who refused the offer of footgear specially crafted to maintain solid footing on ice. Consider all areas dimly lit by light filtering and reflecting through fissures, crevasses, water tunnels, and other icy surfaces. The glazvirg use lamps and lanterns to illuminate the lower caverns.

STEAM DRAGON'S LAIR

The glazvirg carved the glacier's upper caves to resemble those leading to Glorack's lair. Using flexible steam pipes, they bored through the ice, making the passages look like they were created by natural water erosion and the shifting of massive ice slabs.

1. CAVE ENTRANCE

You stand before an immense ice wall: the edge of the vast Fallow glacier. A small stream emerges from a cave, carrying water melted from within and running down into the valley. A few wisps of steam rise from the water and billow from small fissures inside the cave. Both steam and water give off an unpleasant odor. The ice walls within seem like blue-green glass, reflecting light to reveal a passage leading up into the glacier.

The stream runs directly through the cave center in a small

channel carved by warm water. Anyone making an Alchemy check (DC 15) realizes the foul smell comes from deep within the earth...or from hellish beasts like steam dragons who live there. Characters can navigate the passage into the glacier easily enough, even though the stream runs down its center.

2. CHASM

The passage continues rising through the ice until you reach a chasm that opens up for 10 feet. The cave continues its winding way on the other side.

The characters must somehow cross the 10-foot fissure. Anyone attempting complex movement near its edge must make a Reflex save at DC 10 or slip on the ice and fall. The chasm drops into darkness for 60 feet (and 6d6 points of damage) before ending in a pile of jagged ice. The glazvirg did not connect this chasm to their slave pen lest cries for aid echo up too close to the cave entrance.

3. ODD STONE BLOCK

Make a Spot check (DC 20) for each character entering this section of the passage (or a Search check if the character is actively searching the area). Successful characters notice an odd block of stone partly melted into a corner. Someone bored a hole through the rock then spit it into two mating halves. Characters who spend time extracting the stone from the ice can more thoroughly examine it. The hole seems large enough for a pipe or hose to pass through, but this piece of masonry seems out of place in the ice caves.

The glazvirg accidentally left this block behind after boring the caves with their steam hoses. The hoses—made from canvas coated with pitch—slowly melt any ice beneath them. The stones allowed the glazvirg to lay hose through ice caves; the lower block protected the ice, and the upper half held the hose in place. Characters might notice such blocks throughout the glazvirg caverns where steam hoses run to various locations.

4. STEAM DRAGON'S CHAMBER

"Who dares violate Glorack's lair?" demands a thundering voice. Ahead the passage opens into a vast ice cavern, at the far end of which looms a menacing steam dragon. Red scales cover much of her hide, but silvery white scales highlight portions of her body, including her billowing wings. Her neck writhes in anger, the reptilian head seeking intruders. Fangs glisten like silver, and steam vents from her flared nostrils. Her heavy tail sways impatiently. "Speak up, you puny vermin!" she demands. "Nobody disturbs Glorack without dire consequence!"

The steam dragon appears real through a combination of mechanical workings and illusions created by glazvirg hiding



behind an illusory wall of ice to one side of the contraption. They intend to draw intruders onto the chamber's fragile floor, which won't collapse under the characters' weight unless weakened by a burst of steam from the dragon. If the characters somehow avoid the collapsing ice floor, the dragon's handlers manipulate their contraption to make attacks to push them toward the gaping chasm in the chamber. Those falling through the floor are swept down an icy chute into location #5 in the glazvirg caverns below.

Steam Dragon Machine: Hardness 10; hp 150; Init +1; AC 20 (-2 size, +12 natural); Atk +6 melee (2d6 claws or 2d6 tail slap), +10 ranged (5d10, steam). Characters making a DC 20 Ref save can dodge the scalding steam cone and suffer half damage.

Wyshynn, Female Glazvirg III5: CR 5; Small Humanoid (gnome); HD 5d4+5; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +2 melee (1d6, ice axe), +3 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); SQ Glazvirg traits; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 12. *Skills*: Alchemy +7, Bluff +4, Concentration +5, Hide +3, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Perform + 5, Scry +7, Spellcraft +7.

Feats: Combat Casting, Maximize Spell, Spell Mastery (change self, major image, ventriloquism).

Possessions: Fur mantle, ice axe, light crossbow and 20 bolts, satchel for supplies and spell components.

Spells Per Day: (4/4/3/2): 0—daze, flare, light, read magic; 1st—change self, mage armor, silent image, ventriloquism; 2nd—blur, invisibility, minor image; 3rd—displacement, major image. If characters avoid the collapsing floor and uncover the dragon's true nature, the glazvirg illusionist Wyshynn and the five ice gnomes working the contraption (**hp 6, 6, 6, 7, 8**) make a fighting retreat toward the passage in the rear of their hidden area. This leads to a shaft with a simple winch, rope, and basket elevator that allows access to the glazvirg caverns below. Steam hoses that power the dragon's mechanisms also rise from the shaft.

The hidden corner of the main cave contains a few cots and some cooking supplies to cater to the comfort of those glazvirg watching for intruders.

GLAZVIRG CAVERNS

The region beneath the false steam dragon lair contains the main glazvirg mining operations and support areas to extract Glorack's treasure from the ice. Several areas contain hoses braced by carved rock fixtures (like the one discovered at location #3) bringing steam to vital areas. Piercing any of these denies steam to certain operations (notably the slave pen, mine pit, and the steam dragon lair above), erodes the ice in the region of the breached hose, and alerts the glazvirg that something is amiss. If the characters sufficiently damage the mine or gnome forces, the remaining glazvirg make a fighting retreat to location #13, where they make a final stand before destroying the steam vent and the mines.

5. SLAVE PEN

The chute from the steam dragon's lair above deposits hapless victims here, dropping them against a metal grate that is part of a larger cage imbedded in the ice. Bits of equipment slip through the bars and continue down the shaft. Several prisoners here offer aid to newcomers, hauling them into the slave pen proper. Although most of the walls are ice, the one opposite the chute consists of metal bars. To escape one would have to get through the padlocked door and the two growling polar bears lounging in the chamber beyond. A single tarred hose leads in from a passageway, giving off heat and steam for those unaccustomed to the cold.

The glazvirg imbedded a huge cage within the ice to hold their slaves, then made sure the chute from above dropped into a depression at one end. Each character must make a Reflex save at DC 15 for each bit of gear in their hands or strapped to their bodies (excepting clothing and armor). On a failed save, that particular piece of equipment is jarred loose from the character's impact with the grate and falls farther down the chute (ending up in location #6). Escaping back up the shaft requires several Climb checks (DC 30)—though the "steam dragon" no doubt waits for any fugitives.

The pen contains 5–8 slaves at any time, the others rotated through grueling eight-hour shifts in the mine pit. Slaves are 2nd-to 4th-level adventurers of varying classes, though the heavy work has weakened many. The bars between the slaves and the polar bears are extremely sturdy (2-in. thick, Hardness 15, 60 hp, Break

DC 25), while the padlock is made of fine gnome craftsmanship (Open Lock DC 30). If the chute deposits characters here, a patrol of 5 glazvirg (**hp 5, 5, 6, 7, 7**) soon appears to relieve them of any useful items—if the characters refuse, the gnomes remove the steam hose and plunge the cave into extreme cold, frustrating the other slaves. The hose only provides a few wisps of steam, never enough to bore through the ice to the cage bars beneath the floor. The glazvirg rely on the lock, bars, and two bears to keep the slaves tame. Any fight here echoes through the ice caverns and rouses the gnomes on guard in location #7. If they disarm and surrender, the characters may have a chance to fight for freedom in a few hours, when the glazvirg shackle their ankles and lead them into the work area or mine pit to search for Glorack's treasure.

Polar Bears (2): CR 4; Large Animal; HD 8D8+32; hp 58, 63; Init +1; Spd 40 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 15 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural); Atk 2 claws +13 melee (1d8+8, claws), +8 melee (2d8+4 bite); SA improved grab; SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 27, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6. *Skills:* Hide +10, Listen +4, Spot +7.

6. WINCH SHAFT

This cavern adjoins the open space of a pit mine the gnomes are sinking into the glacial ice. A team of slaves hauls baskets full of debris from the pit edge, pouring them out on worktables where three gnomes examine the contents. Several steam hoses pass through here to the mine pit, slave pen, and down another corridor. Three more gnomes guard the passage to the slave pen and watch over the work area.

This narrow cave contains the winch machinery, ropes, and basket for hoisting gnomes between the glazvirg caverns and the dragon's lair above. If these become disabled, those using this route must make several Climb checks (DC 30) to negotiate the shaft. Steam hoses rise up the shaft but easily break loose of their moorings if anyone attempts to climb them.

The chute from the slave pens empties here, spilling out a trickle of water and any equipment lost when characters hit the grate. The glazvirg regularly check this and claim any useful gear as their own. Practical items go to the supply chamber off of location #10, while magical or particularly valuable items go to location #11.

7. WORK CAVE

Enslaved characters pass through here on their way to the mine pit. Although the glazvirg working at the tables are armed, they do not expect an attack. Gnomes treat freed characters as intruders they turn over the worktables for cover, then try maneuvering the characters toward the mine pit edge.

8. WATER PUMP

This open chamber houses a water pump worked by four slaves. A hose running into the mine pit draws water up then channels it through another hose draining into a fissure in some exposed rock nearby. Three gnomes supervise the slaves and guard a passage from which several steam hoses emerge.

Closer examination of the drainage fissure reveals foulsmelling steam rising from the depths. The water pumped out of the mine eventually seeps deep underground, where magma heats pockets of water that vent into location #12. The three gnomes (hp 5, 6, 6) watch the slaves shackled to the pump and prevent access to the passage with the steam hoses.

9. MINE PIT

An immense ice cavern spirals down into the glacier, ending at a small pond where runoff from the excavation collects. Three teams of slaves chip away at the walls with puny tools, seeking treasure trapped within the ice. Two hoses run down the mine pit. Four slaves at the bottom use a steam hose to melt away more ice and expand the mine. The other hose rises from the water to a pump that helps remove runoff. Two teams of three gnomes supervise the slaves. The slaves fill a basket on a rope that others hoist to the work area above. A few white bones rise from the water at disturbing angles, reminders that the mine uncovers a dragon's grave.

The slaves' picks are ineffective weapons (1d4 damage), though the steam from the hose is enough to scald anyone caught in its three-foot plume (2d10 points of damage, Ref save DC 12 for half damage). The gnomes (**hp 5, 5, 5, 6, 8, 8**) shut off the steam flow before changing the slaves or approaching them. All slaves have their ankles shackled to prevent sudden or swift movement.



10. BARRACKS

The glazvirg use this cavern for barracks. Rows of orderly camp cots piled with furs and blankets fill much of the room. A kitchen at one end contains a few boxes of stores and a smoldering camp stove on some flat rocks. Six gnomes (**hp 5, 5, 6, 6, 7, 7**) rest here during a break in their shift—they do not awake unless other glazvirg raise the alarm. Most of the gnomes carry their wealth on them, though some stash a few gold coins in secret pockets sewn into their bedrolls.

A short passage leads to a storeroom with supplies for the mining expedition: crates of food, barrels of ale, heaps of tarred steam hoses, a pile of insulating rocks, spare rope and winches, and leftover mechanical parts for the "dragon." A disorderly pile in one corner contains mundane items collected from captives, including an assortment of lanterns, candles, torches, an empty scroll case, and a climber's kit.

11. KALADYNN'S CHAMBERS

Furs and tapestries decorate half of this finely appointed chamber, while the other half serves as a work area. A single gnome works furiously, loading crates and salvaged treasure onto a sledge. Some items sit on a table awaiting inspection.

The glazvirg is Kaladynn, leader of the mining operation. He busily prepares to send another sledge of treasure recovered from the mine back to his ice gnome colony deeper within the glacier. When he notices intruding characters, he attempts to justify the operation, even offering them part of the spoils. Meanwhile, his faithful polar bear pet, Raebling (hp 70), wakens from his slumber among the furs in Kaladynn's quarters and moves to attack the characters. Kaladynn grabs the nearest item in the sledge (a +2 short sword of wounding) and attacks.

Kaladynn, Male Glazvirg Ftr7: CR 7; Small Humanoid (gnome); HD 7d10+14; hp 53; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 15 ft.; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +7 armor); Atk +11 melee (1d6+2, +2 short sword of wounding), +3 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); SQ Glazvirg traits; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +5, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +4, Listen +5. Ride +3, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, Mobility.

Possessions: +2 *chainmail* (Spell Resistance 15), fur mantle, light crossbow and 20 bolts, +2 short sword of wounding.

The sledge contains a small hoard, part of Glorack's treasure recovered from the mine and some items taken from captives: two chests with 478 gp, a small box with gems and jewelry worth 1,200 gp, an assortment of non-magical weapons and armor, a +3 bastard sword, a staff of frost (28 charges remaining), and a ring of climbing. If the glazvirg are on alert, this sledge (harnessed to a polar bear) may have already reached the escape tunnel in location #12.



12. PRESSURE DOME

The three glazvirg (**hp 6, 6, 8**) fend off any attackers by discharging steam plumes (2d10 damage, Reflex save DC 12 for half damage) from vents on the pressure dome. If nobody has yet raised the alarm, they do so by striking a metal bell on the dome. They hold off the characters until relief arrives and the sledge from Kaladynn's chambers safely heads up the escape tunnel. At that point, the remaining glazvirg follow, releasing a wheeled ram waiting up the slope. The ram rolls straight at the pressure dome—if nobody stops it in one round, it hits the dome, rupturing the metal and filling the entire chamber with scalding steam (5d10 damage, Reflex save DC 15 for half damage). The heat begins melting the ice caves, sending an immense block crashing down over the escape tunnel entrance. Characters have 3d6 rounds to flee before the lower glazvirg caverns completely collapse beneath the glacier's weight.

NEW MONSTER



GLAZVIRG (ICE GNOMES)

Small Humanoid (Gnome)
Hit Dice: 1d8+1 (6 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 20 ft.
AC: 16 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +2 leather, +1 buckler)
Attacks: Ice axe +1 melee; or light crossbow +2 ranged
Damage: 1d6 ice axe, or 1d8 light crossbow
Face/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Glazvirg traits.
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0
Abilities: Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 11
Skills: Climb +1, Hide +4, Jump +1, Listen +1, Move Silently +1, Profession (miner) +1, Search +1, Spot +2
Climate/Terrain: Cold land and underground

Organization: Company (3–5), squad (12–25, plus 1 4–6th level leader and 2 3rd-level lieutenants), or band (35–60 plus 1 2nd-level sergeant per 20 adults, 4 3rd-level lieutenants, and 2 5th-level captains)

Challenge Rating: 1 Treasure: Standard Alignment: Usually lawful evil Advancement: By character class

Glazvirg descend from an ancient branch of gnomes banished for their intense jealousy, greed, and conspiring nature. They plotted to betray their own kind for love of gold and power. When their fellows exposed their treachery, these gnomes were exiled into the frozen wastelands, where the unrelenting cold, isolation, and their own anger twisted them into hateful creatures.

Today ice gnomes live in remote colonies in cold terrain: tundra, glaciers, ice fields, and snowy mountain ranges. They construct subterranean strongholds and cities using the natural environment to their benefit. Glazvirg often befriend and tame polar bears, which they employ as domesticated guard beasts and trained mounts.

Glazvirg frequently scheme their revenge against those who persecuted them. They quest for vast treasures and powerful magic relics to aid their revenge. Ice gnomes prefer stealth and subterfuge to overt confrontation. They have far more advantages in their home terrain and in their own ingenuity, for their numbers are too small to field an effective army.

Glazvirg have light blue skin accented by stunning blond hair. Their size and physique reflect those of normal gnomes, though they possess several different racial qualities than their cousins. Years of living in the cold allowed them to adapt to their environment. They have attuned their sense of balance and modified their clothing for moving on ice without difficulty.

COMBAT

Glazvirg rely on their advantages in icy terrain and their cunning when confronting foes. They maneuver around opponents, keeping to natural cover while using their light crossbows to harass the enemy. They prefer to deceive enemies using their *ghost sound* and *dancing lights* spells, and even cast *ray of frost* to ensure vulnerable ground becomes an icy obstacle. In close combat, glazvirg leap forward, swinging their ice axes while fending off blows with bucklers.

As exiles, ice gnomes find no disgrace in retreat. If a skirmish goes against them, they rapidly fall back to more secure positions (often of their own design) where they regroup and deploy to take advantage of enemy weaknesses. Sometimes they lure foes onto dangerous ground, into the lair of angry beasts, or into a previously set trap. When all else fails, glazvirg retreat down a prepared escape route—destroying its entrance once they've passed.

Spells: Glazvirg with Intelligence scores of 10 or higher may cast *ray of frost, dancing lights*, and *ghost sound* once per day as a 1st-level wizard (spell failure penalties for armor apply).

Speak with Animals (Sp): Once per day an ice gnome can speak with animals as a 1st-level druid to communicate with a coldterrain mammal.

Glazvirg Special Traits (Ex): Ice gnomes receive several racial benefits.

 Small: Glazvirg gain a +1 size bonus to AC and attack rolls and a +4 size bonus to Hide checks; however, they must use smaller weapons than humans use, and their lifting and carrying capacities are three-quarters of those of Medium-size creatures.

• Low-light Vision. Glazvirg can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, ice-reflected light, and similar conditions of poor illumination.

• +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds, goblinoids, and other gnomes.

- +4 dodge bonus against giants.
- +2 racial bonus on Hide checks in cold and arctic terrain.
- · Cold resistance 20.

• Icecunning: Glazvirg receive a +2 racial bonus to checks regarding any natural or man-made ice formations. An ice gnome can also intuit depth, sensing the approximate distance within glaciers and ice packs.

• Proficient with handaxe, ice axe, light hammer, light pick, light crossbow, and buckler regardless of character class.

NEW WEAPON

ICE AXE

Size: Small Cost: 8 gp Damage: 1d6 Critical: x3 Range Increment: — Weight: 5 lbs. Type: Piercing or Slashing

An ice axe consists of a short wooden haft with a specialized pick-axe head: one end sharpened into a piercing pick, with the other end hammered and flared into a flat axe head. Often the handle's end contains a lanyard to loop around the user's wrist, ensuring the tool isn't lost if dropped.

Although an effective weapon, the ice axe also serves as a handy tool in icy terrain. The axe chips away at ice, while the pick pries off chunks or bores holes. Users often drive it into icy slopes to stabilize their position or help them ascend or descend while maintaining control. An ice axe provides a +2 circumstance bonus on Climb checks.

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Peter Schweighofer lives in Williamsburg, Virginia, where he works at the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, and continues his freelance writing endeavors. He has written material for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, published several science fiction and historical fantasy stories, edited two *Star Wars* anthologies, and reported for a newspaper in Connecticut. His work for Fantasy Flight Games includes the Legends & Lairs adventures *The Tuggarth Gauntlet* and *The Sewer Fiend*, plus contributions to *Mythic Races*.

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Steam Dragon's Revenge

Instant Adventure for 4–6 characters levels 5–7

A hundred years ago the steam dragon Glorack made her home within the Fallow glacier, not far from the village of Trommel. She emerged from her lair to pillage the countryside, scalding peasants, roasting knights within their own armor, and rending countless brave souls with her talons. Glorack hoarded gold from dwarven holds, elven jewelry, gnomish magical items, and coin from many unfortunate nobles.

Finally an intrepid band of heroes penetrated her ice caves to destroy her. When they inflicted a seemingly mortal blow on Glorack, the dragon's carcass and her treasure melted deep into the ice in the scorching steam and blood that poured from her body. The steam dragon was vanquished.

> For a century the lands near the Fallow Range glacier fields enjoyed freedom from Glorack's tyranny. Now Glorack has returned!

The villagers of Trommel fear that the dreaded steam dragon has somehow risen from entombment within the deep ice of the Fallow glacier. Scouts report signs that a dragon has moved back into the icy wastelands.

Trommel's elders have already sponsored several expeditions to destroy the steam dragon, but none have returned. Brave youngsters from the village and experienced adventurers from lands afar climbed into the glacier and assaulted the steam dragon's lair. If they weren't cooked alive by Glorack's scalding breath, they probably froze to death trapped in an icy crevasse or a frigid underground lake. Nobody ever discovered their remains or stories of their true demise.

The village elders offer to equip adventurers heading into the Fallow Range, seeking the glacier and the small cave at its base. Although they can grant no reward for slaying the steam dragon, they relinquish all rights to Glorack's treasure to anyone who destroys her before she rises from her icy lair to terrorize the countryside.

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