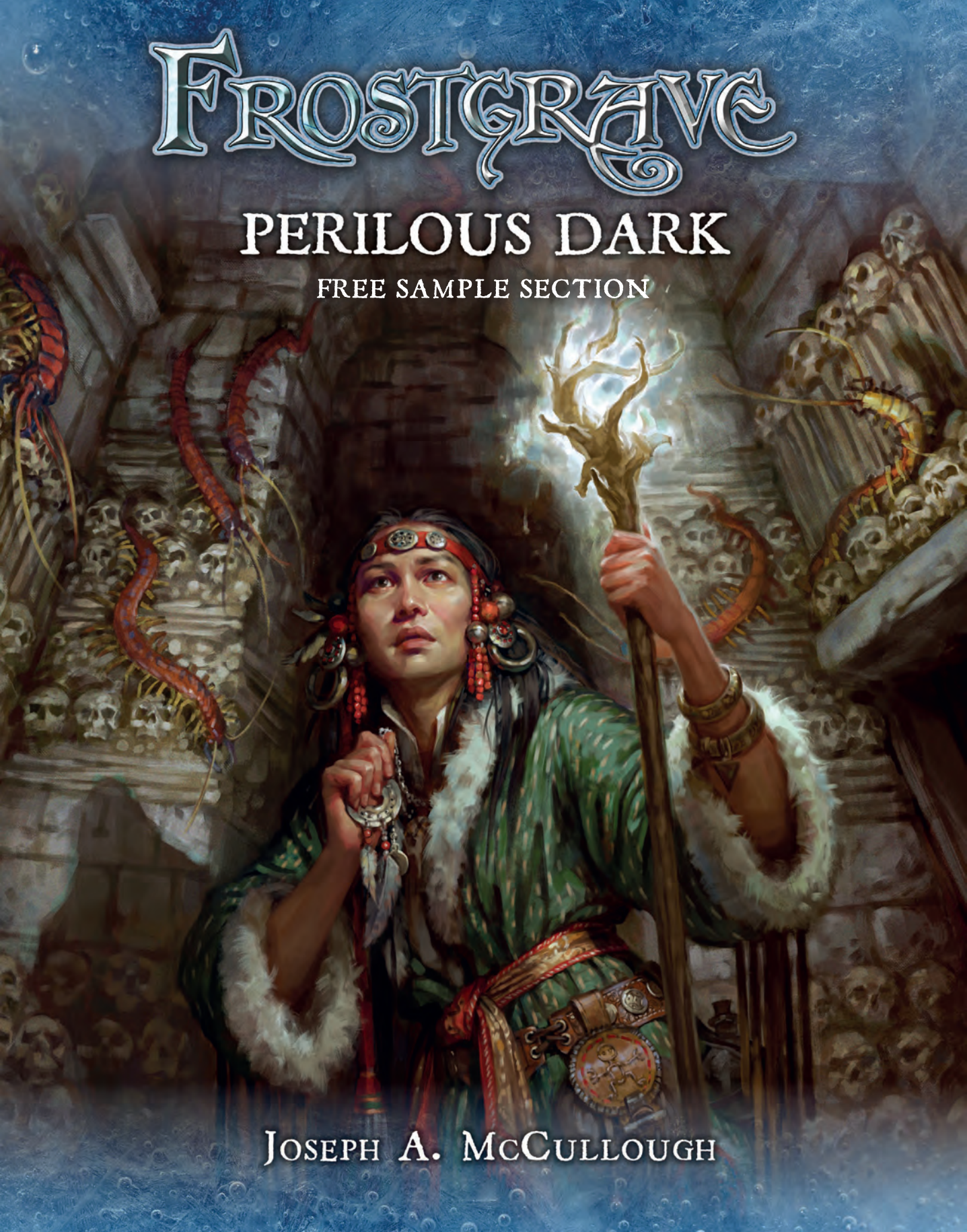


FROSTGRAVE

PERILOUS DARK

FREE SAMPLE SECTION



JOSEPH A. McCULLOUGH

INTRODUCTION

Soon after the *Frostgrave* rulebook was released, I wrote a three-scenario campaign called Dark Alchemy that was designed to be played either solo or cooperatively. To this day, it remains one of the most popular additions to the game. Despite this, I never followed up on it. I wrote the occasional solo scenario for magazines articles, but I never attempted to write a full-set of solo rules for the game. Solo scenarios are much more difficult to design than player-vs-player scenarios, and, at the time, I just didn't feel ready.

Over the last three years I have gained tremendous amounts of experience in writing wargames rules. I reworked *Frostgrave* into a new setting with a new kind of protagonist (*Ghost Archipelago*), I designed a set of mass-battle rules (the forthcoming *Oathmark*), and I even designed a wargame created to be played solo or cooperatively (*Rangers of Shadow Deep*). During all this work, I have learned many new techniques and methods for both designing and playing wargames and have been able to experiment with numerous scenario mechanics to see what works and what doesn't. Most importantly, I have gained a great deal of confidence in my own ability to write rules and design scenarios. This greater confidence led directly to the writing of this book.

Whenever I sit down and start planning the next *Frostgrave* expansion, I ask myself a question: 'How is this book going to be different?' It would be easy to write a book that included nothing more than new scenarios, monsters, and treasure, and I daresay that many people would be happy enough to have it. But if I took this approach, I would very quickly grow bored. To keep my own interest in the game, I need to always be pushing forward, trying new things. I want to make sure that each book gives players something *new* – something that changes or enhances the game experience or helps players to use their own creativity. To that end, I decided that this book would be different from any that have gone before it in two ways. First, all the scenarios in the book would be designed to be played by either one player on their own or by two players working together. Second, instead of just presenting new rules and scenarios, the book will discuss the different techniques that can be employed when creating these kinds of scenarios, in order to aid players in designing their own. So, really, it is part expansion and part 'how-to' guide.

This book also includes rules for 'dungeon crawls', with randomly created dungeons. This style of gaming, where a party of heroes ventures deep underground on the hunt for treasure, dates back to the original *Dungeons & Dragons*. Such a set-up never really worked for *Frostgrave* while it was a competitive game, but for the solo or cooperative gamer, it can be a load of fun – the ultimate exploration of the unknown. It is also an incredibly random, open-ended, and potentially lethal style of game. I suppose, though, that's what being a wizard in *Frostgrave* is all about.

This book also differs from any that have gone before it in one other, minor way. This is the first *Frostgrave* book where I have written the introduction first. In every other book, I have saved the introduction for last as I was never quite sure what the finished product was going to contain until I had written it. This time, I mapped out the book in advance. I'm sure that there will be changes and unexpected additions as I go along – this is the joy of the creative process – but with the idea of what I want to accomplish so clear in my head, I decided to first write this introduction to help establish the road I want to travel.

Even more than the books that have preceded it, *Perilous Dark* should be viewed as a toolbox. Players should take what they want from this book, use it in whatever fashion brings them the most fun, and discard anything that doesn't fit with their style of gaming. One of the best parts about playing solo is that you aren't beholden to anyone else for which rules you choose to use, or those you choose to ignore. You are completely free to create, and play, in any style you wish.

One thing that this book is not is exhaustive. I am sure there are numerous solo and cooperative techniques that I haven't covered or even considered. If you have developed some new rules, or come up with some great scenarios, please consider sharing them with the rest of us. There is an extremely active online *Frostgrave* community, centred around the *Frostgrave: Fantasy Wargames in the Frozen City* Facebook group, the *Frostgrave* forum on Reddit, and the *Frostgrave* page on the Lead Adventure Forum. Please check them out and share your thoughts, games, terrain, and warbands. Even when playing solo, it is nice to have other gamers to talk to!

As always, if you want to keep up with me, my various writing projects, and what is coming up for *Frostgrave*, you can find me at therenaissancetroll.blogspot.com.





THE BASICS

Just so everyone is on the same page, I thought it wise to define what I mean by solo and cooperative play as it relates to *Frostgrave* in general and this book in particular. When playing solo, players take their full warband as they would for a normal competitive game and pit them against the challenges of a specific scenario. 'Cooperative' refers specifically to two players working together. In this case, both players should take their wizard and up to four soldiers from their permanent warband – the idea being that the two players will together field the same number of figures as a solo player. This keeps the table from getting too crowded and means that the scenarios can generally be run either solo or cooperatively with only a few changes. That said, with two wizards, likely from different schools, as well as the pick of their best soldiers, cooperative players will have more capabilities and potential power than the solo player. For that reason, all the scenarios presented in this book are intended for solo play, but also have a 'Cooperative Modifications' section that typically makes the scenario just that little bit harder.

While there is no specific reason that *Frostgrave* cannot be played cooperatively by three or more players, each additional player, and the diverse capabilities that each new wizard brings, means that it becomes increasingly difficult to balance the scenario versus the players. I have not attempted this balance for the scenarios in this book, but if players have a larger play-group, they are encouraged to do so on their own.



GETTING STARTED

If you are going to start a new campaign that you intend to play solo, you should follow the wizard and warband creation rules found in the *Frostgrave* rulebook. This way, you will be able to use this warband for any game – solo, cooperative, or player-vs-player – and you can even switch between the different modes of playing using the same warband.

If you are starting a new campaign and intending to mainly play cooperatively, you should do things a little bit differently. If you create a warband in the normal way, there is no incentive to buy an apprentice or any more than four soldiers, and players could just load up on the best soldiers right at the beginning. So instead, you create your wizard in the normal way but, when building a warband, you only have 200gc to hire a maximum of four soldiers. This still means that your starting warband (when pooled with those of your cooperative partner) will be slightly better than that of a solo player, but the difference will not be too extreme.

After playing a few cooperative games, the players will likely have accumulated enough gold that they can expand to a 'full warband' should they want to play solo or player-vs-player games, or if they want to have a large warband that allows them to pick and choose specific soldiers for a given scenario.



OBJECTIVES

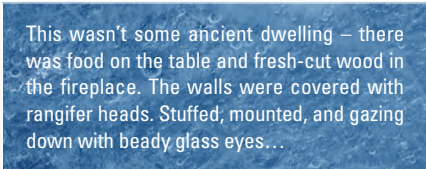
In normal games of *Frostgrave*, the player's primary objective is the acquisition of treasure (okay, there is always that one guy who seems to forget about the treasure and just wants to kill everything, but in general it is about the treasure).

When creating solo scenarios with treasure as the main objective, players should only place two treasure tokens on the table, and both should be in dangerous and hard-to-reach locations. By decreasing the number of tokens available, it greatly increases their value and helps maintain the interest in the acquisition of treasure.

In cooperative games, the players should place three treasure tokens, again in dangerous or difficult locations. At the end of the game, the players should pool all treasure tokens recovered, roll for them together, and then divide up the spoils however they agree. If players can't agree on who gets a specific treasure, place it in a 'common vault' where it can be added back into the treasure pool after the next game, and so on, until the players reach an agreement.

Games based on the acquisition of treasure are a good way to start a new campaign, as it will be familiar to players and help build up their warbands. Without the competitive aspect, however, it will eventually grow stale. One of the real joys in claiming treasure in the player-vs-player game is in outwitting your opponent and the stories it creates. You can't really outwit a scenario, and while you'll likely get some great moments, the treasure eventually just becomes a points tally.

In the long run, it is better to set other objectives in solo and cooperative scenarios. In game terms this is easy enough to do. You simply take all or some of the experience points that would normally be given to securing treasure tokens and assign them to some other goal. For example, let's say you want to create a scenario built around the destruction of an evil statue. After coming up with rules on how the statue could be destroyed, you would simply create an experience points rewards list for the scenario. Something like this:



This wasn't some ancient dwelling – there was food on the table and fresh-cut wood in the fireplace. The walls were covered with rangifer heads. Stuffed, mounted, and gazing down with beady glass eyes...

- +10 experience points for each treasure token secured.
- +80 experience points if the statue is destroyed.

Immediately, the focus of the scenario shifts. Players will still want to secure treasure – money is money after all – but they will be more focused on the destruction of the statue and that large pot of experience points. In a cooperative game, total all the experience points generated by all the figures. Both wizards receive this amount, they don't have to 'split it'.

Scenario objectives are the best way for players to add a narrative to their games. Maybe they need to destroy that statue because it is a source of

necromantic power that is animating all the skeletons in an area. Or maybe there is a friendly demon trapped inside the statue that will reward the players with information if it is released. In this way, the objective from one scenario can lead directly into the next. Perhaps the demon tells the players about a secret chamber, containing an ancient and powerful artefact...

Without a sound, an arc of fire shot up from somewhere in the city and landed in the wastes to the north. It stayed there for several minutes, like a burning rainbow, dripping fiery shards, and then was gone...

In truth, scenario objectives are only limited by the players' imaginations. They can be as simple as getting from one side of the table to another or as complex as having to collect three power crystals, place them in the proper alignment, open the door to another

dimension, and speak the ancient words to summon forth... well, whatever you want. As you play through the scenarios in this book, you'll see examples of different objectives. The scenarios are designed so that they get more complex as they go along, as the story itself gets more intricate.

As a final warning, when designing a scenario, just make sure that you don't create an objective that can be met by simply casting one spell. If the objective is to get to the other side of the table, create a reason that a wizard can't just teleport right to the other side on the first turn of the game. Or, if destroying a statue, why it can't just be Elemental Bolted. You can just say that certain spells can't be used in a given scenario because of the strange magic effects of a given room, but if you do this too often, it'll start to become annoying and pointless to have such spells. Better to come up with a more practical reason, such as huge amounts of terrain blocking line of sight to the other side of the table, or the stone being immune to all forms of shooting attack, or a big hulking creature who happens to be standing right in front of the objective!



WHAT THIS BOOK DOESN'T DO

Some people may be disappointed to learn that this book does not cover playing a game of *Frostgrave* where one player's wizard and warband faces off against a wizard and warband controlled by the game. There are two reasons for this. First, it is extremely difficult to create rules that allow a figure to cast different spells in different situations. While it can be done, and examples can be found in the *Thaw of the Lich Lord* and *The Maze of Malcor* supplements, these rules are long, complex affairs that tend to slow down the game. Even worse, the charts will only work for one specific wizard, with a specific set of spells. Furthermore, even with such rules in place, the rules will only mimic human intelligence, and the game-controlled wizard will often, if not usually, make a sub-optimal move. It can be fun to play and experiment this type of game, but it does not lend itself to ongoing campaigns.

That, then, is basically the second reason such rules do not appear in this book. Solo and cooperative *Frostgrave*, even more than player-vs-player, should concentrate on building a narrative. It is this story that underlies your games that is likely to give you the most enjoyment in the long term. By removing other wizards from the equation, it allows the designer to focus totally on what the next scenario should contain, and not worry about the random intervention of other spellcasters looking for loot. This idea is at the heart of this book and will be discussed at great length in the following chapters.



LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

The hardest part of designing any solo or cooperative scenario is ‘balancing’, which is just the fancy wargaming term for setting the level of difficulty. Traditionally, games that are played solo have an extremely high level of difficulty – just think about the classic card game Solitaire. Usually, the player loses. This is to keep the game interesting as it is played multiple times. It is a good approach to take if you are creating a one-off scenario, but not so good if you want the scenario to be part of a campaign. The campaign isn’t going to last very long if the wizards get destroyed in the first scenario every time.

Instead, when creating these scenarios, it is best to aim for that semi-mythical level of difficulty known as ‘challenging’. Basically, the scenario works best if the players win if they play smart and get a bit of luck on the dice and lose if they make stupid decisions or have a really bad run of die-rolling luck. Now, as has been pointed out by many a reviewer, *Frostgrave* is a more random, more ‘swingy’, wargame than most and, as most of the scenarios in this book contain further random elements, chance plays a big part in how any given scenario will play out. You can, of course, rework all the scenarios to decrease the random element down to a level that suits your taste, but, really, the best move is to embrace the randomness! It is the wildness, the randomness of *Frostgrave* that does so much to create memorable moments, both good and bad.

Once we have accepted that randomness is occasionally going to make a scenario either ‘easy’ or ‘nearly impossible’, we can get down to the work of balancing it. I’d love to share some great game-designer secret on this score, but the truth is that the best way is simply to just play the scenario a bunch of times and see how it works out. Each time, you can modify it a little to make it harder or easier, depending on how the last playthrough went. Generally, the modifications should be small. An extra creature or two on the table at the start of the scenario, or just giving a creature +1 Fight can make a big difference to the scenario difficulty. In time, you will start to develop a sense of what is a suitable level of challenge for a given warband, but it will never be perfect. Thankfully, perfect is not necessary, it is only necessary that it is fun.

For setting the difficulty of the scenarios in this book, I have assumed that players will be starting with new wizards when they play Scenario 1. The scenarios then get progressively harder as wizards go up in level, get better soldiers, and acquire more magic equipment.

CREATURES

The rules for uncontrolled creatures in the *Frostgrave* rulebook are relatively simple. This works well when creatures are just a sideshow to the real battle between wizards. It doesn't work quite as well in games where creatures are the main threat. In order to make creatures more challenging, and to make solo and cooperative games more dynamic, I suggest you use the following new rules for creatures.

The first, and most important, of these is to modify the turn sequence. If you follow the normal phases, the players will move all their figures, and then all the monsters will go. Instead, players should use this new turn sequence.

1. Wizard Phase (roll for initiative as normal if playing cooperatively)
2. Creature Phase I (any creatures that have at least Fight +5 or Health 20)
3. Apprentice Phase
4. Creature Phase II (all creatures that have not previously activated)
5. Soldier Phase

As you can see, this will allow the creatures to sometimes seize the initiative, especially against lowly soldiers. While I have given specifications for what creatures go in Creature Phase I, that is really just a general guideline. When



designing your own scenarios, it is a good idea to specify which creatures will activate in Creature Phase I. This can have a dramatic effect on the difficulty of a scenario and makes for more interesting bad guys.

When activating creatures, follow the updated Creature Priority list as presented in *The Maze of Malcor* (page 11). If you do not have this book, use the priority list in the *Frostgrave* rulebook (page 45), but drop the 10" limitation from step 2 – creatures only need to have line of sight, actual distance does not matter.

Creatures should always activate in Health order, starting with the creature with the highest current Health that is eligible to activate in that phase and working downward.

Remember, if a creature is involved in a multiple combat, it will always attack the enemy with the lowest current Health.

Increase the Will stat of all creatures by +2. Creatures in the standard game are generally supposed to be prey for a wizard's spells. When the creatures are the main threat, this shouldn't necessarily be the case. This includes the creatures listed in this book.

Finally, when moving creatures, use the following additional rules:

- If a creature can make a single move that moves it into combat with a spellcaster, it will do so, prioritizing the highest level spellcaster (and wizards before apprentices).
- Creatures will never intentionally move into combat against multiple opponents.
- If there is a route that a monster can travel that will take it into combat with the closest warband member in one move, without ending up in combat with multiple warband members, it will take that route.

While these rules do add a bit of complexity to creatures, they will all become second nature after just a game or two, and the increased challenge they provide during a game definitely makes them worth using.



SPELLS

The spells in *Frostgrave* were created specifically for player-vs-player games and, as such, some of them just have no place in solo or cooperative games. Spells such as Fool's Gold, Forget Spell, Reveal Invisible, and Beauty have no real use in such games. So, if you are creating a wizard specifically for solo and cooperative play, it is worth giving your spell selection some extra thought.

On the flipside, there are a few spells that are probably just a little too good when the enemy is incapable of complex thought or casting spells. So, for the purposes of these games, some spells are given a new 'limited duration' rule. This rule applies to Circle of Protection, Invisibility, Monstrous Form, and Wall. At the end of any turn in which these spells are in play, roll a die. On a 1–10 the spell immediately ends. This does not preclude the spellcaster casting the same spell again next turn. This rule takes the place of the normal rolls made for Wall at the end of each turn.

So, while these spells remain powerful tools for a spellcaster, they are subject to failure just when the caster needs them most, thus increasing the drama.

THE BASICS – SUMMARY

Rule	Solo	Cooperative
Warband Building	As normal	Wizard as normal. 200gc to hire no more than 4 soldiers
Treasure Tokens	Place 2	Place 3
Treasure Acquisition	As normal	Agree division or store in common vault until division can be agreed
Experience Points	As normal	Both players receive full amount
Creatures	New turn sequence. Updated Creature Priority list and movement. Creatures add +2 to Will	
Spells	Limited duration rule for certain spells (Circle of Protection, Invisibility, Monstrous Form, Wall) – roll at end of turn, spell ends on 1+	





CHAPTER ONE

LIMITED TIME, UNLIMITED MONSTERS

When creating a solo scenario, the first instinct is to either fill up the table with monsters or to create an opposing warband to play against. Unfortunately, neither of these methods tend to create a truly satisfying game by themselves. The table full of monsters tends to quickly bog down into a pure dice-rolling affair, with players occasionally able to take advantage of the rather simple rules for uncontrolled creature actions. While creating an opposing warband and playing it yourself can lead to a somewhat more interesting game, it suffers from the problem that it is nearly impossible to outsmart yourself. Since you know the tactics you are likely to employ and the best counters for those moves, the whole game either hinges on you making less than adequate moves for the enemy warband or the luck of the dice – neither makes for a great game.

Accepting the above, the designer is forced to look for alternate ways in which to challenge players and bring drama to the game – ways that do not rely on intelligent opposition. The simplest method for achieving this is to add a timing element to the scenario, either limited time or unlimited monsters.

METHODS OF TIME LIMITATION

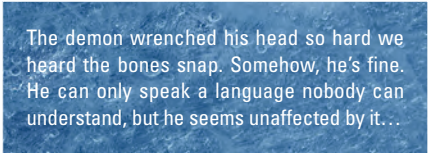
There is a reason that the ticking time-bomb is such a common trope in movies. The countdown to destruction creates tension and drama and forces the heroes into action. Without the timing element, the heroes could just call in the bomb squad and they could take their time defusing it. The same is true for wizards in *Frostgrave*. Given enough time, most wizards can figure out a simple way to use magic to overcome any problem. After all, cast Elemental Ball enough and it will eventually kill just about anything. By limiting the time to achieve an objective, it forces players into action.

The easiest method of limiting time is the most literal – simply cap the number of turns in the scenario. If players know that they have only eight turns in which to recover the Sword of Stabbing and break through the door,

they are unlikely to just stand in the corner firing arrows until all the monsters are dead. The designer should create some justification for why the time is limited, as this adds greatly to the narrative and thus the drama. Maybe there is a giant explosive rune that is slowly going critical, perhaps the wizards have been poisoned and only have a short time to drink the antidote, or perhaps some tentacled monstrosity is about to break through a portal from another dimension.

Even more fun is to create some form of limited time that is expressed on the table. If the walls on either side of the table are closing in each turn, like some giant trash compactor, the heroes are more likely to move quickly to find a door! There really is an infinite number of ways this can be achieved. Maybe the table is slowly filling with poison gas, forcing all the warband members to make increasingly difficult Will Rolls each turn or suffer damage. Perhaps a fire is spreading across the room, or maybe the floor is slowly falling away into a bottomless pit.

Remember not to get too carried away with turning each scenario into a complete death trap. The point is not to make the scenario impossible, but just to make sure that the wizards have to keep moving.



The demon wrenched his head so hard we heard the bones snap. Somehow, he's fine. He can only speak a language nobody can understand, but he seems unaffected by it...

MONSTER SPAWNING

One of the easiest and most-popular ways to ensure that a wizard keeps moving is to create an 'unlimited monster' situation. While almost every scenario should start with some creatures on the table – to make sure there is some challenge from the get-go – it is the potential for an ever-growing mob that is going to keep the warbands from sitting around. The simplest way to do this is to roll for a random encounter at the end of every turn, using the rules found in the *Frostgrave* rulebook (page 108). Those rules were not, however, designed for solo or cooperative scenarios. The monsters they generate are more often pests than true threats.

A better method for monster generation is to either set the monsters that will appear each turn or to create a specific random encounter list for the scenario. For example, if you want to create a classic zombie horde scenario, you may just decide that every turn, two more zombies will enter the table (to add to the ten or so that were there when the scenario began). Or, if you wanted to add some variety, and make the threat a bit more random and unpredictable, you might create a random encounter table that could look something like this.

Zombie Horde Generation Table	
Die Roll	Result
1–4	1 Zombie
5–8	2 Zombies
9–12	3 Zombies
13–16	2 Zombie Hounds
17–19	Zombie Knight
20	Roll twice, ignore a second roll of 20

This way, players can never feel completely comfortable with what will be coming onto the table at the end of the turn. Maybe they'll get lucky and only one zombie will appear this turn, or maybe they'll be really unlucky and face a zombie knight with a pair of zombie hounds. Of course, there are no zombie knights or zombie hounds in the *Frostgrave* rulebook, but I figure they are easy enough to create by just using the stats for Knights and War Hounds and making them undead.

The designer will, of course, have to work out if his random encounter table provides the right level of challenge, which can be quite difficult, since it is a random table. Chances are, though, if you play the scenario a couple of times, it will quickly become obvious if the table produces too many or too few monsters of the right power level to challenge the players in a given scenario.

Once the designer has determined which monsters can or will come onto the table, it remains to identify *where* they enter, as this can be hugely important to a scenario. If the zombies keep entering the table right next to the vortex crystal the players are trying to recover, it is going to be extremely difficult to pick it up. Again, it generally works best to have the creatures enter from one of several possible points. The easiest way to do this is to roll for either the centre point of a random table edge or a random corner, remembering that corners tend to be slightly farther away from the action than centre points. Another popular method is to create specific 'spawn points' in the scenario. Spawn points can be anything, but probably work best as small pieces of scatter terrain with numbers on them. If you place six spawn points, numbered 1–6, you can roll a six-sided die to determine where any given creature enters the table (if you can find a d6 somewhere under all those d20s). Using spawn points allows the designer to have creatures potentially enter the table at any point. In this way, he could put a couple of spawn points right near the vortex crystal, so there is always a chance of zombies popping up, but the others can be scattered around the table so that the zombies aren't just piling up right on top of the objective.

CARRYING TREASURE

According to the *Frostgrave* rulebook, all figures carrying treasure have their move reduced by half. This rule exists so that during player-vs-player games the opposing player has a greater chance of retaking a treasure token before it exits the table. When designing solo and cooperative scenarios, it is worth considering if this rule should be used or not. If the main purpose of the scenario is securing treasure, it probably should be used as this will increase the difficulty and drama of this objective. However, in games where treasure is a secondary objective or time is a pressing concern, this rule often makes securing treasure so slow and difficult that it is not worth even attempting. For that reason, it is often better to drop it (the rule, not the treasure). Most of the scenarios in the book do not use this rule, although, since it is at odds with the rulebook, it will be stated in every case.

SCENARIO ONE

WRITHING FUMES

One of the soldiers you've recently hired tells you about a previous trip she made into the Frozen City. Her band was returning from a bloody, yet successful, expedition, when they passed by a large, broken doorway. The wizard she was with said it was the doorway to a famous weapon shop. They were about to explore when a pair of large constructs attacked. Not wanting to risk the gains they had already made, they decided to run for it and come back later. Of course, a short time thereafter, a snow troll killed that wizard, and the band dissolved. The soldier is sure that she could lead you back to that weapon shop. She remembers it clearly, because it is just on the other side of a large alchemical refinery...

Set-Up

This scenario is played on a 2.5 x 2.5' table. The warbands should set up within 4" of one table corner. In the opposite corner, place a doorway. The rest of the table should be filled with ruins as per a standard game of *Frostgrave*. Five numbered spawn points should be placed on the table. One should be in the exact centre of the table. The other four should each be 10" away from the centre one so that they form an 'X'.

One large vapour snake should be placed at each spawn point. Two Ballista II constructs should be placed 8" in front of the doorway and about 5" from one another.

Place two treasure tokens on the table. One next to each of the spawn points closest to the corners that contain neither the doorway nor the warband's deployment area.

Special Rules

The exit door is jammed in place. To open it, a figure must be adjacent to the doorway, spend an action, and make a Fight Roll with a Target Number of 14. Figures receive +2 to this roll for every other warband member also adjacent to the doorway. If the roll succeeds, the doorway is opened, and figures may exit the table by moving through it. If the roll fails, the doorway is still blocked, but it can be attempted again as many times as needed.

On the first two turns, the vapour snakes will follow the normal rules for

uncontrolled creatures. Starting with Turn 3, if a vapour snake is called upon to make a random move, it will instead move towards the doorway. The Ballista II constructs will never make a random move. If there are no figures within line of sight and they are within 6" of the doorway, they will take no actions. Otherwise, if called upon to make a random move, they will make one move towards the doorway.

Warband members do not suffer a movement penalty for carrying treasure tokens in this scenario. Treasure tokens may only be secured by carrying them through the doorway.

Do not roll for random encounters when picking up treasure. At the end of each turn, roll on the Writhing Fumes Encounter Table below and place the creatures specified at the spawn point indicated.

Writhing Fumes Encounter Table		
Die Roll	Result	Spawn Point
1	Small Vapour Snake	1
2	Small Vapour Snake	2
3	Small Vapour Snake	3
4	Small Vapour Snake	4
5	Small Vapour Snake	5
6	Small Vapour Snakes (2)	1
7	Small Vapour Snakes (2)	2
8	Small Vapour Snakes (2)	3
9	Small Vapour Snakes (2)	4
10	Small Vapour Snakes (2)	5
11	Large Vapour Snake	1
12	Large Vapour Snake	2
13	Large Vapour Snake	3
14	Large Vapour Snake	4
15	Large Vapour Snake	5
16	Large Vapour Snake & Small Vapour Snake	1
17	Large Vapour Snake & Small Vapour Snake	2
18	Large Vapour Snake & Small Vapour Snake	3
19	Large Vapour Snake & Small Vapour Snake	4
20	Large Vapour Snake & Small Vapour Snake	5
21	Large Vapour Snakes (2)	1
22	Large Vapour Snakes (2)	2
23	Large Vapour Snakes (2)	3
24	Large Vapour Snakes (2)	4
25	Large Vapour Snakes (2)	5

Cooperative Modifications

During set-up, place an additional small vapour snake at each spawn point. Place one additional treasure token next to the centre spawn point. When rolling on the Writhing Fumes Encounter Table, add +5 to the roll.

Treasure and Experience

Roll for treasure as normal after this scenario. Experience points are gained for casting spells as normal, otherwise experience points are only gained in this scenario for the following:

- +10 experience points for opening the doorway.
- +15 experience points for each Ballista II construct destroyed.
- +20 experience points for each treasure token secured.
- +20 experience points for each warband member that exits through the doorway.

SETTING UP TERRAIN

Frostgrave is famous for its crowded tables, packed with terrain and line-of-sight blockers. As many players have discovered, especially when playing against an elemental, having lots of terrain is the only way to survive! This maxim doesn't hold quite as true when playing solo or cooperatively. In these games, super-crowded tables swing the advantage in the direction of the players. Taking advantage of terrain requires intelligent movement and placement of figures. Players can accomplish this, but the creatures, when controlled by their simple AI system, cannot. In fact, if there is too much terrain, players might be able to completely skirt around many of the creatures. While this might make you feel clever if you do it once, it will quickly grow old.

So, in general, it is better to have slightly more open tables when playing solo and cooperatively. Don't overdo it though, this is *Frostgrave* after all, and a table featuring great-looking terrain is part of the joy of playing!

SCENARIO TWO

ISHER'S WEAPON SHOP

Once the city's finest purveyor of weapons and armour, Isher's large store held racks and racks of swords, spears, bows, and armour. The truly rare and powerful items, however, were kept in an enchanted cabinet at the back of the store that could only be opened by turning two locks simultaneously. As the warband makes its way through the broken door into the remains of the shop, it is met by a heady smell, a mixture of excrement and wet dog. The once-gleaming weapons now lie scattered about the floor, broken or rusting. At the back of the store, however, the enchanted cabinet still stands, with its locks a short distance away to either side. Suddenly, there is a horrendous bellow, and gnolls start pouring from every corner...

Set-Up

This scenario is played on a 2.5 x 2.5' table. All the table edges represent walls of the shop. Place a doorway in the centre of one table edge. This is the warband's entry and exit point. In the centre of the table edge directly opposite the doorway, place a cabinet. Against the same wall, place two lock markers – one on each side of the cabinet, each 8" away from it. These are the magic locks. Place one numbered spawn point in each corner of the table. The rest of the table should be filled with broken walls and large chunks of rubble.

Place two gnoll thugs (as Thug, *Frostgrave* rulebook, page 23) at each spawn point, and two gnoll knights and/or templars (as Knight/Templar, *Frostgrave* rulebook, page 23) in front of the cabinet. Place all the warband members within 4" of the doorway.

Special Rules

At the start of any turn, if there are warband members adjacent to both lock markers, and these warband members are not in combat, then the cabinet is unlocked. Immediately place two treasure tokens in front of it. Figures suffer no movement penalties for carrying treasure tokens in this scenario.

Warband members may only exit the table through the doorway by which they entered.

Do not roll for random encounters after picking up treasure tokens in this scenario. Instead, at the end of each turn, roll on the Isher's Weapon Shop Encounter Table below and place the creatures specified at the spawn point indicated.



If a gnoll is called upon to make a random move during this scenario, it will instead move directly toward the centre of the table. If it is already at the centre of the table, it will not move.

Players should keep track of the turns in this scenario. If Borock has not appeared by the end of Turn 5, place him at a random spawn point instead of rolling on the encounter table that turn.

Isher's Weapon Shop Encounter Table		
Die Roll	Result	Spawn Point
1	Gnoll Thugs (2)	1
2	Gnoll Thugs (2)	2
3	Gnoll Thugs (2)	3
4	Gnoll Thugs (2)	4
5	Gnoll Archer*	1
6	Gnoll Archer*	2
7	Gnoll Archer*	3
8	Gnoll Archer*	4
9	Gnoll Knight*	1
10	Gnoll Knight*	2
11	Gnoll Knight*	3
12	Gnoll Knight*	4
13	Gnoll Thug & Gnoll Archer*	1
14	Gnoll Thug & Gnoll Archer*	2
15	Gnoll Thug & Gnoll Archer*	3
16	Gnoll Thug & Gnoll Archer*	4
17	Borock**	1
18	Borock**	2
19	Borock**	3
20	Borock**	4

* Gnoll archers (as Archer, *Frostgrave* rulebook, page 23) can be replaced by gnoll crossbowmen (as Crossbowman, *Frostgrave* rulebook, page 23), and gnoll knights by gnoll templars if that better fits the available figure collection.

** If Borock has already appeared in the scenario, a subsequent roll of 17–20 will instead generate 1 gnoll knight and 1 gnoll archer at the indicated spawn point.

Cooperative Modifications

During set-up, add one gnoll archer at each of the two spawn points furthest from the doorway. When the cabinet is unlocked, place three treasure tokens instead of two. When rolling on the encounter table each turn, roll two dice and take the higher result.



Treasure and Experience

Any treasure token recovered during this scenario may be exchanged for either a vampiric crossbow or a sword of wounding and healing. Two treasure tokens may be exchanged in order to acquire both weapons, but only one of each is available. Otherwise, roll for treasure as normal after this scenario. Experience points are gained for casting spells as normal, otherwise experience points are only gained in this scenario for the following:

- +20 experience points for each figure that exits the table if at least one treasure token has been secured.
- +20 experience points for each treasure token secured.
- +40 experience points for unlocking the cabinet.
- +40 experience points if Borock is killed.

TARGET POINTS

Under the normal *Frostgrave* rules, uncontrolled creatures wander around randomly until they see a figure and charge at it. This works fine for player-vs-player games where the monsters are generally an annoyance and not the main threat. In solo or cooperative games, where the monsters are the primary enemy, this can feel a bit silly. Instead, it is better to give the monsters a clear direction. In most scenarios it works best to nominate a 'target point'. In situations where a creature would normally make a random move, it should move towards the target point instead. If it is already on the target point, it should stay there.

Usually, the best target point for a scenario will be the primary objective. So, if the players are trying to steal the gems from the eyes of the demon statue, have the demon statue serve as the target point. That way, all the creatures that would normally just wander around head for the statue. This not only makes more sense but leads to more tense – and more fun – games, as the monsters are always closing in around the players.

In more complex scenarios, picking a target point can be a bit tricky, because the players either don't have a very specific objective point, or they have multiple objectives scattered across the table. In this case, it might be best to nominate a target point that is either near the centre of these objectives, or near the centre of the table with good lines of sight all around.

SCENARIO THREE

THE DOG DAYS

When you arrived back at base after your foray into the weapon shop, one of your soldiers showed you a peculiar blade he had picked up from the floor. It was covered in strange runes that you didn't recognize, and you could detect some faint enchantment upon it. After several days of research, and calling in a few favours, you finally translated the runes and discovered the origins of the sword. The blade was once carried by a member of an elite mercenary unit called the Reavers. These mercenaries hired out for work as bodyguards (and, some say, assassins) for Felstad's most influential citizens. The Reavers' captain is said to have carried a sword of great power, and to have equipped his troops with similar – though lesser – weapons that could always guide the Reavers to him should he be lost or captured. Organizing your soldiers for another expedition, you set off into the Frozen City using the enchanted sword as your guide. As you push through the ruins, you become increasingly convinced that the sword is leading you to the Reavers' old barracks. While their base likely contains some fabulous treasures, you also remember reading that the mercenaries kept some strange pets...

Set-Up

This scenario is played on a 2.5 x 2.5' table. In the centre of the table, broken remnants of a wall mark out a 1 x 1' square. All four corners of this square should still exist, but only small fragments of the rest of the wall. The rest of the table should contain a scattering of small terrain elements such as broken walls, statues, furniture, and the like.

One of the four table corners should be designated the warband's entry point. Four numbered spawn points should be placed on the table – one in the exact centre of the table, and the other three in the corners not containing the warband's entry point.

Place four 'time crystals' on the table – one next to the spawn point in the centre of the table, one next to the spawn point in the corner opposite the entry point, and the remaining two at the midpoint of the table edges not adjacent to the corner containing the entry point.

Place five chronohounds on the table, two at the central spawn point, and one at each of the other spawn points.

No treasure tokens are placed in this scenario.

All warband members should start within 6" of the entry point.

Special Rules

Whenever a chronohound is killed, place it to one side. At the end of each turn, replace this chronohound on the table, fully healed, at a random spawn point.

The only way to stop the chronohounds from returning – and thus win the scenario – is to smash all the time crystals. To smash a time crystal, a figure must be adjacent to it and not in combat. It may then spend an action to attack the crystal. The crystal has Fight +1, Armour 16, Health 1. If the crystal takes a point of damage, remove it from the table. The crystals are immune to all shooting attacks, magic or mundane. Crystals can be moved around by Telekinesis as though they were treasure tokens. Note that it is possible for a time crystal to win a combat, damage, and even kill a warband member.

We'd been trudging for several, cold, quiet hours, when a wave of snow suddenly rushed towards us. It crashed over us, throwing us all over. I ended up on my back in a snow drift, watching as the wave sped onwards...

Once all four time crystals have been destroyed, the chronohounds will no longer return to the table. The scenario ends when there are no time crystals and no chronohounds left on the table (or no warband members, of course).

Cooperative Modifications

Add a sixth chronohound to the scenario. This chronohound does not start the game on the table but appears at a random spawn point at the end of Turn 1.

Treasure and Experience

If all the time crystals are destroyed and all the chronohounds killed, two treasure tokens are gained (or three treasure tokens in a cooperative game). One treasure token may be exchanged for a free choice of any item on the Magic Weapon and Armour Table in the *Frostgrave* rulebook (page 62). Experience points are gained for casting spells as normal, otherwise experience points are only gained in this scenario for the following:

- +15 experience points for each warband member still on the table at the end of the scenario.
- +50 experience points for each time crystal destroyed.

NEW TREASURE

At the end of any *Perilous Dark* scenario, a player that has acquired treasure may exchange one roll on the regular Treasure Table (*Frostgrave* rulebook, page 57) for a roll on the Perilous Dark Treasure Table below. None of the magic items on this table can be purchased. The only ways to acquire one of the items on this table is to roll it as a treasure after a scenario, trade for it with another player, or find it as part of a specific scenario.

SWORD OF WOUNDING AND HEALING

(Purchase Price - 400gc)

This magic hand weapon has a +1 damage modifier. Furthermore, its pommel contains a draught of healing potion. The wielder of the sword can spend one action (which may replace the usually compulsory movement action) to consume this potion and heal up to 2 points of lost Health. Between games, a wizard can sacrifice a potion of healing to replenish the sword. Note the sword can only ever be used to heal up to 2 points, and even though a potion of healing can restore up to 5 points of lost Health when used separately, it is completely used up in replenishing the sword.

VAMPIRIC CROSSBOW

(Purchase Price - 300gc)

This wicked-looking magic crossbow features a spiked stock that gouges the shooter's arm or shoulder when the weapon is fired. When making a shooting attack with this crossbow, a figure may sacrifice some of its own blood to empower the crossbow. The figure immediately takes 2 points of damage, but the attack counts as a magic shooting attack that deals an additional +1 damage on top of the usual crossbow damage modifier (so +3 damage in total).

BESTIARY

Ballista II

The Ballista II was one of the most popular construct models produced by the infamous Kregian Armour Works. It combined the durability and hitting power of a standard large construct with long-range firepower. The Ballista II's ammunition supply was limited, however, and it was thus far less common to find it fielded in pitched battles than providing security for some of Felstad's most wealthy establishments.

Ballista IIs have a large, integrated bow that fires heavy arrows. All bow attacks from a Ballista II do +2 damage. Furthermore, any figure damaged by such an arrow is knocked back 2" directly away from the Ballista II. Creatures with the 'Large' trait are immune to this knockback. If a Ballista II ever rolls a 1 when making a shooting attack, it has run out of ammunition and may make no further shooting attacks in that scenario.

Ballista II						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
4	+3	+2	13	+4	14	Construct, Large, Bow, Heavy Arrows (+2 damage, 2" push-back), Limited Ammunition

Borock

A horrific amalgam of gnoll and minotaur, Borock's size and power quickly established him as alpha in his gnoll tribe.

While gnolls are generally somewhat cowardly by nature, Borock's savagery has spread to the rest of his tribe. Any gnoll that is within 12" of Borock does +1 damage during combat. This does not affect Borock himself, who already does +2 damage thanks to the huge weapon he always carries.

The complex workings of Borock's hybrid brain make him immune to Mind Control.

Borock						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
6	+5	+0	12	+6	16	Large, Two-handed Weapon, Gnoll Savagery, Immune to Mind Control



Chronohound

The strange creatures known as chronohounds are only rarely seen in the Frozen City as they can move through time the way other creatures can move through the three-dimensional space. Due to this ability, chronohounds are practically immortal, moving to a different point in time if they are ever close to death. Thankfully, they rarely remain in any one time for very long, unless there is some focus point, usually time crystals, that draws them in.

Chronohounds resemble large, lean, and hairless hounds. They have long tongues that loll out of their mouths, and they are constantly salivating. Beyond aggressive, they seem to relish violence, and will usually attack strangers on sight... which tends to mean that everyone they meet is a stranger...

Impermanent in time and unconcerned for self-preservation, chronohounds are immune to the Control Animal, Mind Control, Monstrous Form, Reveal Death, Slow, and Transpose spells, and to all forms of poison and wounding.

Because they mostly operate by senses other than sight, they can see invisible figures and can always draw line of sight to warband members, even if there is terrain in the way. Chronohounds never count as wounded.

The ability of chronohounds to essentially return from the dead will be handled by individual scenarios and thus is not noted in their stats.

Chronohound						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
8	+3	+0	10	+8	10	Animal, Limited Spell Immunity, Immune to Poison, Never Wounded, See Invisible, Always have Line of Sight.

Vapour Snake

In the annals of ancient Felstad there are occasional mentions of vapour snakes. These strange, smoky entities sometimes formed as the result of the mystical refinement process of the alchemical fuel used for much of the city's lighting and heating. Why these creatures look so much like actual snakes is anyone's guess. While the cataclysm brought an end to this alchemical refinement, damage to the various processing workshops may still sometimes causes the spontaneous generation of a vapour snake.

Whether large or small, all vapour snakes behave in the same fashion. Composed as they are of nothing more than wispy fumes, they are nearly impossible to destroy using missile weapons. Bow, crossbow, and javelin attacks do a maximum of 1 point of damage to a vapour snake. This also applies to shooting attacks generated by the Bone Dart, Explosive Rune, and Grenade spells. These creatures can generally only be killed by dispersing the fumes that form them – this is most often accomplished with melee attacks.

The fumes that compose vapour snakes are highly flammable. If they ever take damage from an Elemental Ball, Elemental Bolt, or Scattershot spell, or from an explosive cocktail, but are not destroyed, they are set on fire. If a flaming vapour snake ever moves into combat with a figure, or a figure activates while in combat with a flaming vapour snake, that figure immediately takes 2 points of damage.

It is unknown what instinct drives vapour snakes, but they do not appear to have 'minds' in the sense that is commonly understood – they are immune to all forms of mind control.

Small Vapour Snake						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
6	+1	+0	11	+0	10	Shooting Attack Damage Maximum, Flammable, Immune to Mind Control

Large Vapour Snake						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
5	+3	+0	12	+0	12	Shooting Attack Damage Maximum, Flammable, Immune to Mind Control

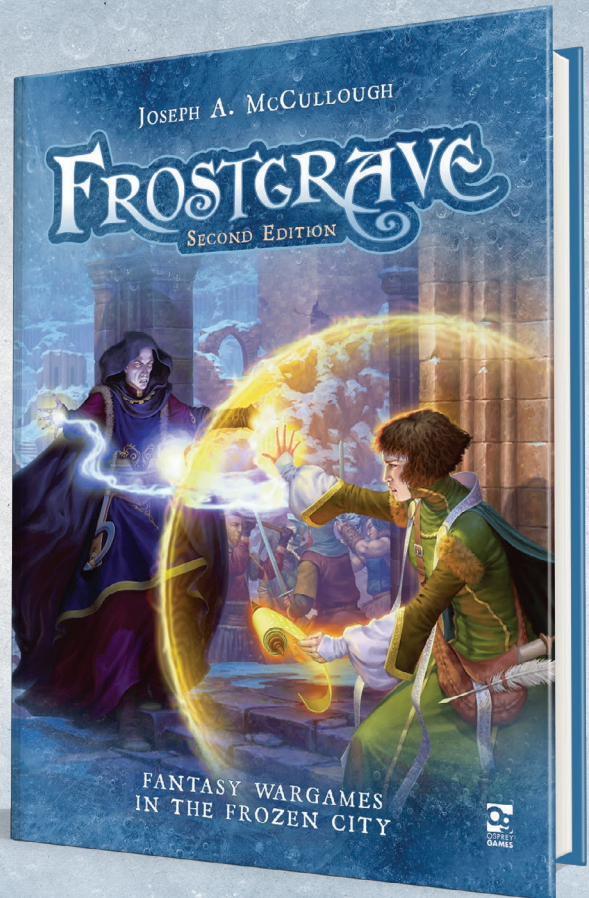
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