

THE WAREHOUSE SIEGE

We must reclaim the warehouse. Otherwise, the lives of hundreds of folks in the city shall be at stake. Countless townsfolk will die in the next winter otherwise...

Bailiff Grant

LORE

FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS are a complex issue in the medieval world. They must be optimized for speed and efficiency or else the most fragile of crops and animal produce rot on the way to the cities. For a king to dine on fresh fruits, fish, and red meats, the resources must travel for miles in a day or two, or else it is all spoiled before reaching the castle. That is why grains and flour are such a staple for communities, they have a long shelf life and can be stored for weeks or even months under the right conditions. But as it is, magic offers new alternatives...

ARTIFICIAL ICE

A **MAGE** **LOOKING** to earn the king's favor a few decades ago figured out a way to make the transportation and storage of fresh goods more efficient. Through dangerous experiments with evocation and summoning magic, the mage managed to open small, controlled portals to a faraway frozen realm in the Astral Sea. He placed the small gateways in steel containers and filled them with water. The freezing temperatures emerging from the portals would freeze the water. The resulting steel-encased enclosures, if kept under the right circumstances and with constant maintenance, become sources of unlimited cold. With the king's permission, the mage had an underground warehouse built. In its depths, two rooms contain six cubes of his signature magical ice. The extreme cold is then sent down a ventilation shaft system that keeps several chambers at near-freezing temperatures. The warehouse operation started fifteen years ago. Since then, farmlands and cattle farms around it have thrived as the warehouse buys all produce until it is needed elsewhere and then sends it well-packed into nearby towns, cities, and many a lord's manor.

ADVENTURE HOOK

A **BAND OF** brigands attacked the underground warehouse a week ago at night. They have set up a defensive position in the loading bay that no one has been able to storm. They hold the employees and the warehouse hostage. Bailiff Grant has not yielded to their abusive demands as of yet. Instead, he offers a reward of 1,500 sp to mercenaries able to drive them out of the warehouse.

FEATURES OF THE WAREHOUSE

Tier 1 Adventure

Light. The torches on sconces feature *continual flame* spells. The magic fizzles out in 1 minute if removed.

Chamber Ceilings. All areas have 10-foot-tall, flat ceilings made of undecorated, plain-hewn stone.

Climate. The cold rooms feature near-freezing temperatures. All other underground areas are frigid enough to require the staff to wear winter clothing.

1. THE PATH TO THE WAREHOUSE

Picturesque landscapes of the region's countryside flank the well-traveled road to the warehouse. From afar, there appear to be several carts stationed by the surface building, outside of the entrance ramp.

The one-story, wooden building next to the entrance ramp (area 4), serves as an office that coordinates deliveries and purchases to local providers. A wooden sign bolted to the door reads 'Cold Warehouse'.

2. WAITING ROOM

Six people wait in this room. Four merchants whose carts are stationed in area 4 are worried about their produce spoiling before the problem is solved. The other two are a guard and Bailiff Grant, who offers a reward for getting rid of the brigands (see **Adventure Hook**).

The characters learn from the bailiff that the criminals in area 5 have a strong defensive position, ten guards have already perished trying to storm the bay, and that the criminals demand 5,000 sp, and to be able to flee without being chased. Seven employees are in danger; Miranna, the warehouse manager, is one of them. The bailiff has a gold ingot the characters can use to negotiate for prisoners. The ingot must be retrieved later.

3. MANAGER OFFICE

Miranna, the warehouse manager, works here. She is the highest-ranking person in the warehouse. The office contains a desk and a bookshelf packed with delivery manifests, backlogs, and contracts with nearby suppliers. There is a safe-box under the desk but it was emptied by the brigands a week ago. Gorlu, a clerk, is here trying to make sense of the mountain of pending paperwork.

4. THE ENTRANCE RAMP

An arched gate leads to a slanted ramp into the inwards of a squat hill. Two carts are stationed outside while six crossbows-wielding guards stand watch.

If the characters inquire about the situation, they learn that the brigands and the six **guards** are at an impasse. Guards have died trying to get into the warehouse. The brigands lost two men and a horse trying to get out two days ago. The guards warn them that the brigands set up several heavy crossbows on the loading bay carts. The guards attempted twice to descend but were driven off. The 30-foot-long ramp descends 20 feet into the hill.

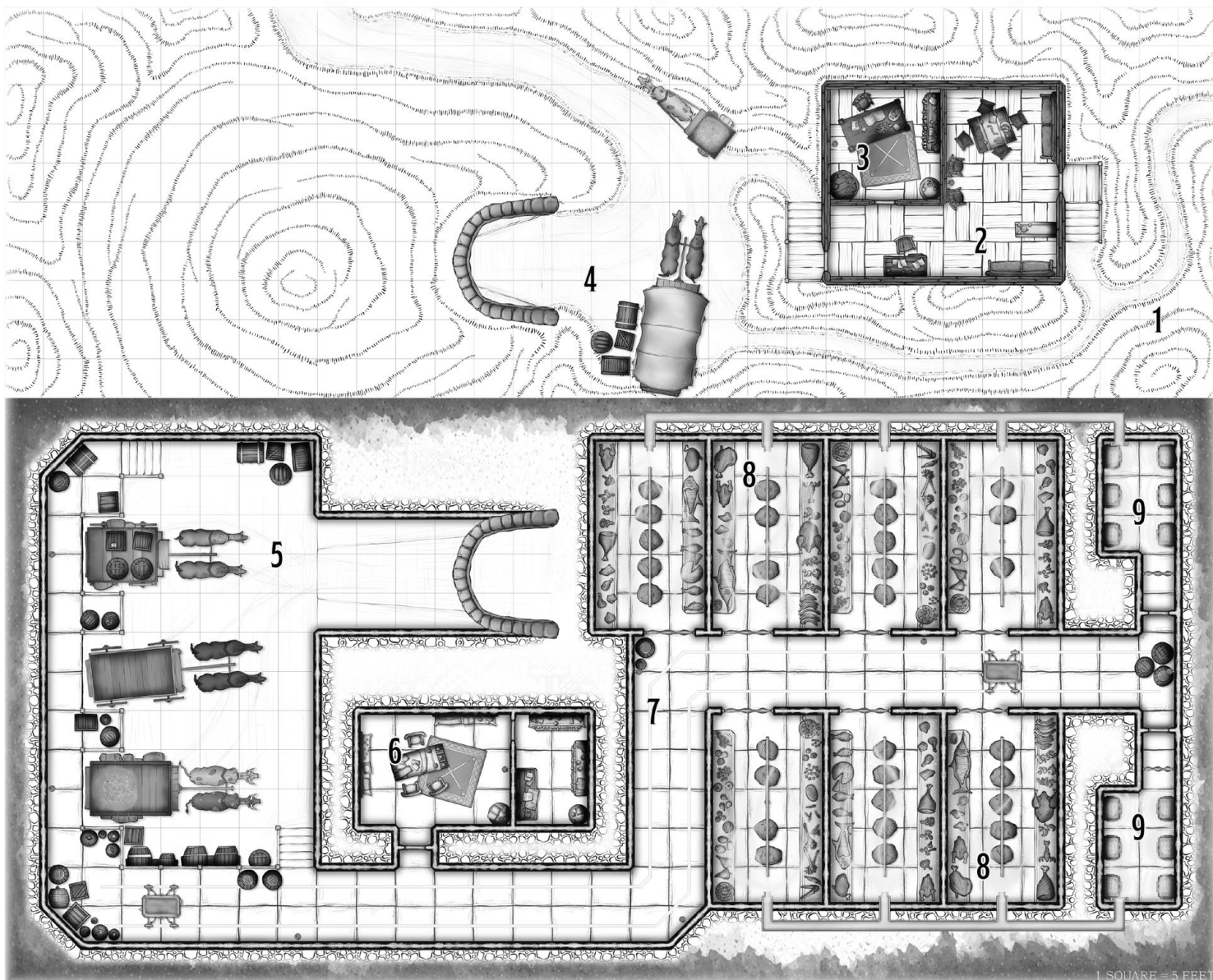
The characters learn that the brigands are not yet willing to negotiate and that there are 12 of them in the warehouse. The characters are free to choose how to approach this encounter. If the characters try to communicate with the brigands, the leader, Alanis, shouts back from below and insists on the ludicrous demands.

5. THE LOADING BAY

The ramp leads down to a well-stocked loading bay. The three unloaded carts have crudely-mounted crossbows on their wagons aimed at the ramp.

Three **bandits** operate each of the heavy crossbows on the carts. They have driven off the bailiff's men twice in the previous days. In addition, there are four other **bandits** at all times wielding shortbows. Depending on how the characters choose to approach this encounter, the bandits may be aware of their attack. In that case, the bandits shower them with bolts as they descend from area 4. The characters may catch the bandits unaware by using a **Stealth** check, or perhaps even negotiation or subterfuge with a successful **Reaction** roll.

Either way, if the characters gain the advantage in this engagement. Any remaining bandits flee and attempt to alert their leader in area 6. If successful, the band of brigands regroups at the end of the hallway in area 7.



6. WAREHOUSE OFFICE

Alanis (**bandit leader**) and four of his accomplices (**bandits**) await here. They may be sleeping when the characters first approach area 6 (4-in-10 chance); which may be of relevance depending on how things develop.

The office contains inventories of the cold room's contents and remains half-eaten food as the brigands have eaten their fair share from the cold rooms in the past few days. The adjoining room is an archive of past logs and inventories but it now serves as an improvised cell. Miranna and six employees have been trapped here for a week. They are weak and malnourished.

Treasure. Under the desk, Alanis stored 800 sp and 3,600 cp, the contents of the safe-box in area 3.

7. SERVICE HALLWAY

This long hallway provides access to each of the seven cold rooms and the two rooms with artificial ice. The way is marked by a set of iron rails on the floor. Two service carts can be used over these rails to easily move stuff from the cold rooms to the loading bay.

If the bandits manage to flee from the characters, whoever is left regroupes at the end of area 7, near the doors to area 9. In a desperate attempt to coerce the characters, Alanis threatens to destroy one of the ice cubes and cause the destruction of the warehouse. If the characters do not comply, the bandit leader strikes one of the cubes and causes it to explode. Contrary to his expectations, the explosion is not powerful enough to bring the chamber down but it causes the man to freeze to death.

8. THE COLD ROOMS

Each of the rooms features metal shelves from floor to ceiling packed with meats, vegetables, and fruits. It is clear that the brigands have eaten some of it but not enough to even make a dent in the enormous supply.

9. THE ARTIFICIAL ICE CUBES

Each of the rooms contains six artificial ice cubes. They are fragile and must be treated with care. Moving or damaging them causes the portal within to collapse and cause a 10-foot-wide, lethal, freezing explosion.

DEVELOPMENT

THE CHARACTERS RECOVER the warehouse and save the prisoners from certain death at the hands of the heartless brigands. Bailiff Grant is happy to announce that the characters are heroes and promises to feature them as such in the upcoming tourney, next month. The bailiff pays the 1,500 sp reward. If Miranna survives the adventure, she lets the bailiff know that the money stolen from the safe-box is yet to be found. If the characters are found possessing it, they may be in trouble with the law. But that is an adventure for another day...

