

The Fortress of Two Seasons



Dungeon Master's edition

The characters approach Greyspan along the western road as a toll bell begins ringing without rhythm. A red pennant hangs from the gate: rescue assistance requested; treasury authority granted.

OPENING READ-ALoud

Rain streams down the mountain road toward a fortress gate standing half open. Beyond it, a stone bridge disappears into blowing snow, though the nearer towers drip with summer rain. A bell strikes three quick notes, pauses, then strikes again. A soldier struggles out of the gate dragging a stretcher with one broken handle. Behind him, someone shouts that the gallery roof is moving.

Credits

Adventure credit: bandolek

Rules basis: Dungeons & Dragons fifth edition, 2014 rules, using the System Reference Document 5.1. Greyspan's transit procedure, survivor coordination rules, wardglass beads, and all named opposition statistics are original homebrew for this adventure.

This work includes material taken from the System Reference Document 5.1 ("SRD 5.1") by Wizards of the Coast LLC, available at <https://dnd.wizards.com/resources/systems-reference-document>. The SRD 5.1 is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>.

The fortress, characters, factions, situations, and adventure prose are original.

Overview

Summer rain beats against Greyspan's western windows; winter ice entombs its eastern gate. Between them, a failed planar crossing hangs open over a gorge. Twenty-four people remain inside. The next transit will either reunite the fortress, open a negotiated road through winter, or tear the bridge from its foundations.

AT A GLANCE	DETAILS
Characters	Four level 9 characters
Rules	D&D 5e, SRD 5.1, 2014 rules
Expected play	5-6 hours; target schedule 330 minutes
Structure	Six encounters, with flexible order through the middle
Likely combat	One short optional fight and one defensive finale; fighting the frost delegation adds substantial danger
Main objectives	Rescue twenty-four stranded people; decide the fortress's future
Themes	Divided authority, obligations to strangers, disaster response, bargains with dangerous neighbors
Content notes	Exposure, entrapment, threatened civilian deaths, predatory hospitality
Maps	One fortress site plan and one bridge enlargement, each with separate DM and player views
Rest assumption	Characters arrive near full resources; one short rest is possible at a significant time cost
Rules notation	Procedures and creatures marked homebrew are original rules for this adventure

Place Greyspan on a mountain trade route above a deep gorge, near a settlement capable of receiving evacuees. The fortress and its inhabitants require no established campaign setting.

DM Introduction

Greyspan was built around an engine intended to carry a section of mountain road across otherwise impassable distances. Custodian Oren Vale activated it in response to a genuine distress signal from a winter-bound refuge. He knew the primary alignment lens was due for replacement, but the new optic had not arrived. The lens fractured: Greyspan's western half remained in summer, its eastern half caught in an adjacent winter realm, and the engine began charging for an automatic second transit. Twenty-four people survive under shelter wards powered through the central bridge. Without intervention, the second transit destroys that bridge and fractures both wings' foundations.

Commander Maelin Rusk wants everyone moved west and the bridge demolished. She does not know demolition will immediately end the shelter wards. Oren knows how to stabilize the engine but initially conceals his responsibility for the failed crossing. His maintenance worker, Tova Reed, can also explain the controls. Their records, tools, and authority are available to the characters; neither official is indispensable. The damaged gallery holds trapped travelers and evidence of the failed lens. The winter shelter holds the remaining survivors, supplies, and operating instructions.

Lady Sere Vault has followed the breach with two rime hounds. Her frost court hopes to claim the stranded people as indebted guests, but she will accept a bounded, voluntary bargain for passage and assistance. The characters can negotiate, fight, or bypass her. They can also evacuate everyone and abandon Greyspan. To preserve it, they must set two brakes, choose CLOSE or PASSAGE at the bridge selector, and keep its latch armed through a six-round transit while breach-born scavengers try to open it. CLOSE restores the fortress and shuts the breach; PASSAGE leaves a twelve-hour road into winter before closing safely. Demolition remains an immediate, destructive fallback.

Hook

The characters approach Greyspan along the western road as a toll bell begins ringing without rhythm. A red pennant hangs from the gate: **rescue assistance requested; treasury authority granted**.

Tal, a gate runner dragging a broken stretcher, asks for help carrying people out before the next bell sequence. He reports trapped travelers, failing wards, and a commander preparing to destroy the bridge.

For a commissioned opening, the nearest town sent the characters to inspect Greyspan after caravans stopped arriving that morning. The patron need not know about the planar failure.

Tal knows: Eight people are in the summer reception hall, four travelers are in the damaged gallery, and twelve people were last counted on the winter side. He has seen unidentified movement beyond the winter courtyard.

Tal does not know: The engine's controls, the frost court's demands, or the consequences of breaking the bridge.

First-Session Guide

Read the DM Introduction, The Transit Procedure, and the six encounters before play. Prepare:

- A transit dial marked 0-12, starting at 0.
- Control markers: **Summer Brake: released**, **Winter Brake: released**, and **Selector: PASSAGE, unarmed**.
- A demolition marker at **0 of 3 pulls**.
- Six survivor group cards, each naming four people.
- Identity cards for the five gallery and court creatures, plus the three finale creatures.

- Separate player copies of the two maps and four handouts.
- The Return-Visit and Continuity Ledger for damage, supplies, control states, and promises.

Known at the start: Greyspan is experiencing a magical disaster, help is welcome, people remain on both sides, and the bridge is unstable.

Visible inside: Shelter lamps shine; the engine's bell and dial give a readable warning; both courtyards are open to the sky; the bridge remains traversable.

To discover: The wards depend on the bridge; two local brakes and the bridge selector can control the transit; the frost delegation will bargain; demolition requires accounting for everyone still on the affected structure.

Exploration uses fictional time, as defined under **Exploration Time: Dial 0-5**. Begin initiative only when a scene requires it. Real-world discussion does not advance the dial unless the characters spend that time in the fiction.

If the table wants threatened death without civilian fatalities, agree before play to use **Optional Lost in the Crossing Treatment** under Civilian Movement and Injury.

Target Runtime

SEGMENT	TABLE TIME	LIKELY FICTIONAL TIME
Opening, orientation, and Encounter 1	35 minutes	10 minutes
Encounter 2: gallery rescue	45 minutes	10-20 minutes
Encounter 3: winter shelters	40 minutes	10 minutes
Encounter 4: court audience or bypass	45 minutes	10-20 minutes
Encounter 5: brake operation and commitments	45 minutes	10-20 minutes
Encounter 6: six-round defense	70 minutes	36 seconds
Resolution and character decisions	30 minutes	Variable
Deliberation and transition allowance	20 minutes	Included where spent
Total	330 minutes	Usually under two hours before the finale

A court fight adds 25-40 minutes. The following cuts can preserve time for the finale.

Fast or Uncontested Routes

After a rapid rescue, a compact 3-4 hour schedule is sufficient: opening 15 minutes, gallery 25, winter rescue 30, court decision 25, brakes 15, finale 30-45, and aftermath 20, with the remaining time for planning. Once all survivors are safe, the remaining choice concerns preserving Greyspan, accepting a passage agreement, or leaving.

If both brakes are set and every arriving reaver is contained or defeated, establish final control positions and remaining civilian movement, then resolve uncontested rounds together. Account for R3's possible arrival at the start of round 3 before advancing past it. Respect spell durations, concentration, exposure pulses, and latch state. A barrier that expires before dial 12 needs a continuation plan. If nothing can contest a valid final state, narrate the remaining bells and resolve the ending.

Optional Cuts

Ground the gallery notes. Show the grounding-chain solution immediately. Kes and the damaged lens case still require attention.

Shorten the audience. If the characters arrive with the maintenance record and a clear offer, Sere states her acceptable terms at once. One exchange can settle the bargain.

Bypass the audience chamber. Oren identifies the outdoor route through W4. It reaches the winter brake without entering W1.

Operate controls during exploration. A character examining a brake can set it immediately. Encounter 5 then takes about five minutes to review stored states, evacuation destinations, and the selector choice.

Use **Continuity Rules** when omitting or revisiting encounters.

Stakes

STAKE	PRESENT CONDITION	WHAT CAN CHANGE IT
Twenty-four lives	Twelve people on each side; four initially injured or trapped	Rescue, healing, shelter, teleportation, final stabilization
The fortress	Structurally intact except for the gallery roof	Controlled transit preserves it; demolition or uncontrolled transit destroys the bridge
The mountain road	Closed by the split	Closure restores a usable crossing after repairs; negotiated passage restores it after twelve hours
The shelter wards	Active in S1, S2, and W2	Remain active while the bridge stands; fail immediately on demolition

STAKE	PRESENT CONDITION	WHAT CAN CHANGE IT
Maelin and Oren's cooperation	Fragile but recoverable	Evidence and shared planning can reconcile them; coercion may leave lasting distrust
The frost court's access	A temporary breach, unsuitable for a caravan	A passage bargain grants one limited crossing; closure excludes the court
Public confidence	Travelers believe the fortress failed without warning	An honest explanation and survivor testimony can rebuild trust

Without intervention: Tal leads the eight people in S1 to the western refuge. He cannot free Kes or organize a crossing into winter. At dial 6, the crisis begins; at dial 12, the unbraked, unarmed engine causes **Uncontrolled Transit**. The court withdraws into winter rather than remain in the collapsing fortress.

Tal follows better instructions when given them. The other survivors can also move and work without personal escort; see **NPC Independence**.

Factions

Greyspan Garrison

Representative: Commander Maelin Rusk, practical, exhausted, and angry at decisions made without her knowledge.

Goal: Move the stranded people onto ordinary ground and prevent another uncontrolled transit.

Leverage: Gate authority, rescue funds, organized labor, a demolition key, and knowledge of the western approaches.

Fear: Losing people while experts argue over a repair they cannot guarantee.

Voice: Short statements followed by a concrete request. "Tell me which door stays open. I can work with a door."

Knowledge: S0 is beyond the affected foundations; the emergency fuse can destroy the bridge; Tal counted twelve people in winter before snow filled the courtyard.

Concealment: She has tested the fuse key but has not pulled the lever. Nobody has permission to do so without her.

What persuades her: The ward diagram, a set brake, or a practical evacuation plan for both sides. Visible evidence requires no Persuasion check.

Offers: A 300 gp advance, litter carriers, her key, and responsibility for the western evacuation.

If threatened: She orders the garrison to protect survivors. She refuses to release public money without a reason but steps aside rather than turn the rescue into a battle.

Escalation: At dial 4, she asks for a direct report. At dial 5, if no one has explained the ward dependency, she moves to S4 with the key. She has not begun demolition. These actions cease if she accepts repair or negotiated passage.

Greyspan Custodians

Representatives: Oren Vale, engine keeper; Tova Reed, maintenance worker.

Goal: Preserve the shelters and return both halves to the same plane.

Leverage: Records, winter access, warm brine, tools, and knowledge of the controls.

Fear: Demolition before the winter shelter empties.

Oren's voice: Explanations that start too far back. Under pressure, he catches himself: "The part you need is this."

Oren knows: All three controls, the six-round crisis, selector modes, and ward dependency.

Oren conceals: He authorized the crossing with a lens already marked for replacement. The distress signal was real; he chose urgency over inspection.

Tova knows: The winter brake procedure, courtyard route, and location of the reserve lenses.

What persuades them: A plan protecting W2's occupants. They accept evacuation and deliberate demolition once the rooms are empty.

Offers: Records, tools, repair labor, shelter supplies, and authorization to take the three reserve lenses.

If blamed or threatened: Oren admits responsibility. Public denunciation damages his standing but does not make him withhold instructions or sabotage the controls.

The Frost Court Delegation

Representative: Lady Sere Vault, wearing a narrow crown of clear ice, with exactly two rime hounds.

Goal: Recognized passage and a profitable obligation. Claiming survivors as dependent "guests" is her opening demand.

Leverage: Knowledge of winter, a limited escort, and the ability to exclude R3 from the finale.

Fear: A collapsed crossing or returning to court with nothing.

Voice: Courteous, literal, transactional. "A guest may leave. A debt must be named first."

Knowledge: The scavengers feed on the engine and are not her servants. She can exclude one under a passage agreement.

Concealment: She cannot command the engine or compel agreement with words alone. No reinforcements await her during this adventure.

Offers: A binding passage agreement, exclusion of R3, and guidance for a caravan beyond the breach.

What persuades her: The three reserve lenses, a bounded toll agreement, or equivalent consideration; see **Acceptable Bargains**.

If refused: She allows visitors to leave. If they are closing the breach, she withdraws before the final pulse.

Her powers over promises are fully defined under **Making the Agreement Binding**. She has no undisclosed power to seize names, memories, souls, or player control.

Locations

Greyspan's two fortress wings stand 120 feet above the gorge floor, joined by B1. All traversable fortress floors are at map elevation 0. Summer occupies the west wing and winter the east. Alternating rain and snow mark the seam above the bridge without blocking passage.

S0: Western Refuge

A stable road terrace west of x 0, beyond the affected foundations. A supply cart, canvas awning, and iron road marker mark the gathering point for evacuees, triage, and recovered property.

Tal can lead survivors here without checks once assigned. Transit pulses and displacement cannot reach it; ordinary storm exposure remains. The road connects through the western apron and S1's gate.

S1: Summer Reception Hall

Benches, wet cloaks, and three shelter lamps fill the reception hall. The lamps' gold centers remain steady despite rainwater on the floor.

Groups A and B begin here: eight people, including Maelin and Tal. Maelin's key and the treasury chest are initially present. The engine dial is visible through the east door. A brass lamp plate identifies the bridge spine as the shelter's power supply.

S1 protects occupants from pulses while B1 stands. The safe western apron begins immediately beyond x 40; S0 is the gathering point farther west. See **Distance and Access Checks**.

S2: Broken Gallery

Four travelers sheltered beneath the glazed roof when a stone rib fell. Kes is pinned beneath a crosspiece; a damaged lens case lies in the rubble. Two storm motes arc toward a loose grounding chain.

The gallery connects to S4 and has a ten-foot roof opening for aerial entry. Its lens and inspection tag establish the cause of the failure. Scene 2 defines its one-time aftershock and rescue window.

S3: Summer Brake House

A copper exhaust pipe runs through a squat stone cylinder. Three colored panes show the trapped heat; engraved instructions explain the brake.

The north door opens into S4. See **Setting the Summer Brake** for operation and localized blowback.

S4: Summer Courtyard

Rain falls onto broad paving connecting S1, S2, S3, and B1. The courtyard is open to the sky and outside the shelter wards. It serves as a route junction and evacuation staging point.

B1: Central Bridge

A thirty-foot-wide stone span with waist-high rails. The selector plinth stands at its center; the breach glimmers near the winter end.

The selector displays both brake states and the selected mode. A diagram identifies the rooms that lose protection if the bridge is severed. The deck remains intact until demolition or uncontrolled transit.

W4: Winter Courtyard

Shallow snow fills the paving grooves without creating difficult terrain. From the bridge, the entrances to W1, W2, and W3 are visible.

The open courtyard provides an aerial landing and a route around Sere's audience chamber. It is outside the shelter wards.

W2: Winter Shelter

Three shelter lamps and a small brine kettle warm the former mess room. Tools, blankets, and maintenance slates line the walls. Groups D, E, and F begin here: twelve people.

The maintenance record, warm brine, reserve lenses, and protective beads are here. A north clerestory offers an alternate exit. Occupants remain protected while B1 stands.

W3: Winter Brake House

Ice grips a toothed wheel beneath a hand-powered heater. A return pipe glows inside the wall, and thawing instructions are engraved beside the clutch.

Its north door opens into W4. See **Setting the Winter Brake** for thawing methods and cold backlash.

W1: East Hall

Sere has arranged three chairs and a shallow silver bowl in this receiving chamber. Its west door stands open; ice seals the eastern gate.

Sere and her two hounds begin here. No civilians do. The delegation watches the west door without automatically attacking visitors.

E0: Eastern Refuge

A stable ledge beyond the eastern apron, separated from it by a sixty-foot gap. It can receive flying, teleporting, or otherwise mobile evacuees.

E0 is outside the affected structure. Reaching it does not require continuing through the winter realm.

Map Specifications

These coordinates govern both maps.

Units: Feet. **North:** Increasing y. **Square size:** 5 feet.
Creature coordinates identify the southwest corner of the occupied square. Room boundaries describe usable interior space; walls lie along those boundaries and doors open through them.
Humanoids, hounds, and reavers are Medium. Storm motes are Small but also occupy one 5-foot square.

Authoritative Geometry

KEY OR FEATURE	COORDINATES	ELEVATION AND CONSTRUCTION
S0 western refuge	x -80-0, y 60-100	Stable ground, z 0
Western apron	x 0-40, y 40-120	Stable ground, z 0
West fortress platform	x 40-120, y 40-120	Engine-bound structure, z 0
S1 reception hall	x 40-80, y 60-100	Roof at z 20
S2 gallery	x 80-120, y 95-120	Roof at z 20 except opening below
S3 summer brake house	x 80-120, y 40-65	Roof at z 20
S4 summer courtyard	x 80-120, y 65-95	Open sky
B1 bridge	x 120-200, y 65-95	Deck z 0; rails 3 feet high
East fortress platform	x 200-280, y 40-120	Engine-bound structure, z 0
W4 winter courtyard	x 200-240, y 65-95	Open sky
W2 winter shelter	x 200-240, y 95-120	Roof at z 20
W3 winter brake house	x 200-240, y 40-65	Roof at z 20
W1 east hall	x 240-280, y 60-100	Roof at z 20
Eastern apron	x 280-320, y 40-120	Engine-bound structure, z 0
Eastern gap	x 320-380	Open gorge; no connecting walkway
E0 eastern refuge	x 380-420, y 60-100	Stable ground, z 0
Gorge floor	Below unsupported areas	z -120
Gallery roof opening	x 100-110, y 105-115	Open from z 0 to sky
Gallery rubble	x 100-110, y 105-115	Difficult terrain, up to 3 feet high; Kes is pinned within it
Summer brake cylinder	x 100-105, y 50-55	Solid 5-foot-square obstacle, 6 feet high

KEY OR FEATURE	COORDINATES	ELEVATION AND CONSTRUCTION
Winter brake cylinder	x 220-225, y 50-55	Solid 5-foot-square obstacle, 6 feet high
Selector plinth	x 155-160, y 75-80	Solid 5-foot-square obstacle, 4 feet high
Fuse housing	x 160-165, y 75-80	Solid 5-foot-square obstacle, 4 feet high
West bridge pylon	x 140-145, y 65-70	Solid 5-foot-square obstacle, 8 feet high
East bridge pylon	x 175-180, y 90-95	Solid 5-foot-square obstacle, 8 feet high
Breach plane	x 190, y 70-90	Vertical light plane, z 0-20; does not block movement before resolution
East hall table	x 260-270, y 75-80	3 feet high; difficult terrain to climb across
Treasury chest	x 45-50, y 65-70	Low object; occupies its square, provides no meaningful cover

Unused platform margins are exterior maintenance ledges accessible by climbing or flight. They have no additional doors or secret passages. Interior stone walls are 20 feet high.

Doors, Windows, and Connections

CONNECTION	OPENING	CONDITION
Western apron ↔ S1	x 40, y 75-85	Open double gate
S1 ↔ S4	x 80, y 75-85	Open double door
S4 ↔ S2	y 95, x 95-105	Open 10-foot doorway
S4 ↔ S3	y 65, x 95-105	Unlocked 10-foot door
S4 ↔ B1	x 120, y 65-95	Full-width open connection
B1 ↔ W4	x 200, y 65-95	Full-width open connection
W4 ↔ W2	y 95, x 215-225	Unlocked 10-foot door
W4 ↔ W3	y 65, x 215-225	Unlocked 10-foot door
W4 ↔ W1	x 240, y 75-85	Open double door
W1 ↔ eastern apron	x 280, y 75-85	Ice-bound double gate
W2 north clerestory	y 120, x 215-220, z 10-15	Latched inside; 5-foot-square opening
S2 roof ↔ gallery	Listed roof opening	No door; rubble below

East gate: Two actions with tools, a successful DC 17 Strength check, or at least 10 fire damage directed at the ice opens it. A failed Strength attempt costs the action without worsening the gate. Once opened, it stays open.

W2 clerestory: Opens with an action from inside. Outside, the latch can be reached through a broken pane; the pane has AC 13 and 5 hit points. Breaking it does not disable the ward. The opening admits a Medium creature without squeezing.

Named Starting Positions

IDENTITY OR OBJECT	STARTING SQUARE OR AREA
Maelin, Tal, Eda, Joss: Group A	S1, four separate squares in x 50-60, y 75-85
Pell, Rud, Sive, Fen: Group B	S1, four separate squares in x 65-75, y 85-95
Lio	S2, (85, 110)
Brin	S2, (90, 115)
Amra	S2, (95, 115)
Kes	S2, (105, 110), pinned beneath the rubble crosspiece
Storm mote M1	S2, (90, 105), hovering 5 feet above the floor
Storm mote M2	S2, (110, 100), hovering 5 feet above the floor
Grounding-chain reel	S2, (95, 100)
Lens case and damaged lens	S2, (100, 105), in rubble
Oren, Tova, Linn, Harl: Group D	W2, four separate squares in x 205-215, y 100-110
Nera, Besh, Col, Iven: Group E	W2, four separate squares in x 225-235, y 100-110
Yara, Sol, Venn, Daro: Group F	W2, four separate squares in x 215-225, y 110-120
Sere	W1, (260, 85)
Rime hound H1	W1, (250, 70)
Rime hound H2	W1, (250, 90)
Reaver R1, when triggered	B1, (185, 70)
Reaver R2, when triggered	B1, (185, 80)
Reaver R3, if it arrives	B1, (185, 90)

Place each survivor in a distinct square within the assigned area, clear of doors, controls, and solid furnishings.

If a reaver's arrival square is occupied, it appears in the nearest unoccupied bridge square east of x 180. If none exists, it waits beyond the breach until one opens. Arrival never displaces or damages another creature.

Distance and Access Checks

- B1 is 80 feet long.

- The direct route between courtyard centers, (100, 80) and (220, 80), is 120 feet.
- The selector's southern operating square is (155, 70), adjacent to the selector and west of the fuse housing.
- The fuse can be operated from (160, 70), (165, 75), or (160, 80).
- A brake requires an adjacent operator; it cannot be reached through a wall.
- Each brake-house door opens onto the courtyard serving that wing's shelter.
- W2's door to S0's boundary at x 0 is approximately 250 feet via W4, B1, S4, and S1.
- The western safety boundary is x 40. A creature wholly west of that line on the apron is beyond transit pulses and structural failure. S0 begins another 40 feet west and serves as the gathering point.
- The eastern apron ends at x 320; E0 begins at x 380. Flight from the east gate to E0's near edge covers 100 feet.
- Reavers can reach the selector vicinity with normal movement, but must route around the plinth to reach a free adjacent square.
- The selector and fuse occupy two adjacent squares, leaving the y 80-90 lane open for side-by-side Medium movement.
- Three-foot rails provide half cover against suitable attacks from below or across the gorge, but not attacks along the bridge.

DM Schematic

The DM Map Sheets show the route network, control labels, and arrival markers. Use the coordinate tables for tactical positions.

Player-Safe Schematic

The Player Map Sheets show visible architecture, doors, roof opening, clerestory, scale, and north arrow. They omit occupants, encounter numbers, hidden control functions, hazards, ward boundaries, treasure, and arrival markers. There are no secret rooms or passages.

The Two Map Assets

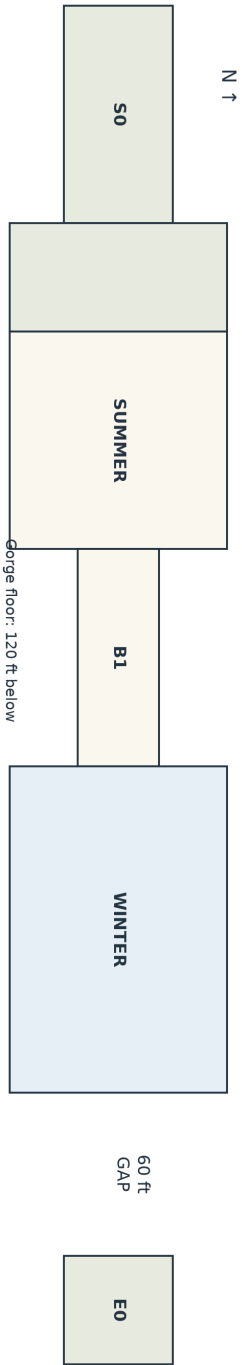
Map 1: Greyspan site plan. Covers x -80-420 and y 40-120, with additional vertical space for labels, in a color DM view and a player-safe view. An 11 × 8.5-inch landscape placement may span a two-page reference spread only if the gutter leaves the bridge unobscured.

Map 2: Bridge tactical enlargement. Covers x 110-210 and y 55-105 at a 5-foot grid. It includes courtyard edges, rails, pylons, selector, fuse housing, and breach. The DM view adds control labels and arrival markers; the player view retains physical objects without those labels or markers.

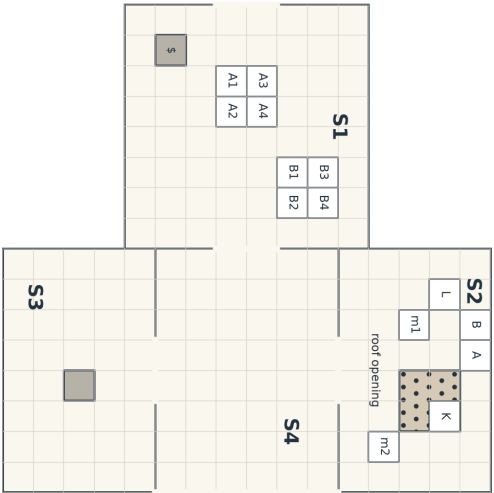
DM Map Sheets

THE FORTRESS OF TWO SEASONS

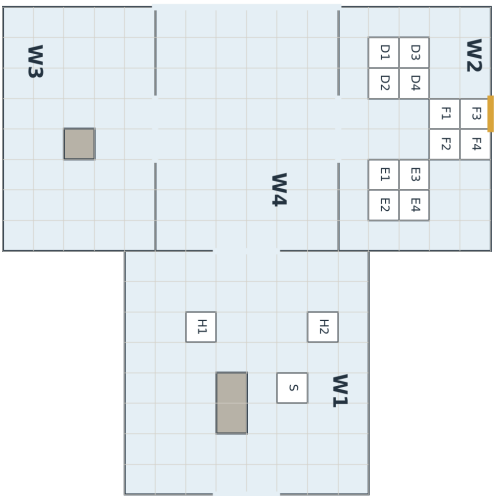
Greyspan site plan | DM ONLY



SUMMER WING - 5 ft grid



WINTER WING - 5 ft grid



Site overview has the same orientation and geometry as the enlarged wings. Bridge: 80 x 30 ft. Rooms: 20 ft walls.

Gallery roof opening: 10 x 10 ft. Winter clerestory: 5 ft wide, 10-15 ft above floor. The east gate opens onto the apron.

DM: groups A/B in S1; gallery survivors L/B/A/K; groups D/E/F in W2. S = Sere. Notes and hounds retain individual identities.

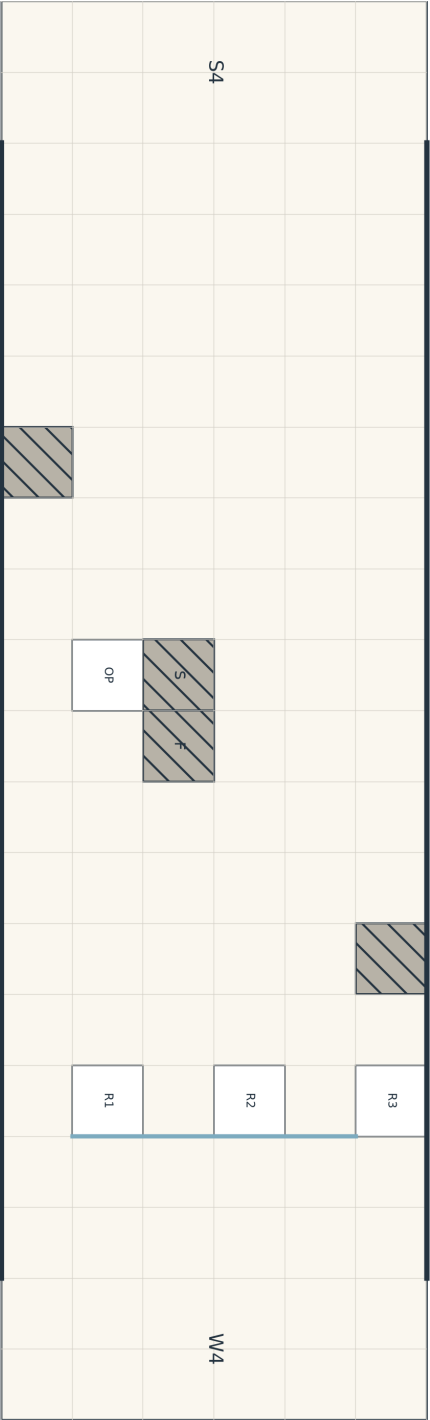
Map key: use the keyed location descriptions on the following pages.

The Fortress of Two Seasons

THE FORTRESS OF TWO SEASONS

Bridge tactical enlargement | DM ONLY

N ↑



B1 - 80 ft between courtyard edges

GRID: 5 FEET. Rails are 3 ft high. The gorge floor is 120 ft below the deck. Open courtyard connections at both ends.

Two central blocks: 4 ft high. Pylons: 8 ft high. Pale vertical plane: 20 ft high; it does not block movement.

S = selector; F = fuse. OP is a clear selector operating square. R1/R2 arrive at crisis start.

R3 arrives at round 3 unless Sere crosses before that deadline and maintains exclusion. No marker is an additional enemy. Keep actual actor positions. Arrival fallback uses the nearest clear bridge square east of x 180.

Map key: use the keyed location descriptions on the following pages.

The Transit Procedure

Homebrew: Greyspan uses one time dial, two stored brake states, a selector, and a demolition counter. Brake states and demolition pulls do not measure time.

Starting State

ELEMENT	INITIAL STATE
Transit dial	0
Summer brake	Released
Winter brake	Released and frozen
Selector	PASSAGE
Selector latch	Unarmed
Demolition lever	0 of 3 pulls
Shelter wards	Active in S1, S2, W2
Gallery aftershock	Not yet occurred
Court agreement	None
Reavers	None present

The dial measures the buildup to the second transit; the first has already failed.

Exploration Time: Dial 0-5

Advance the dial by 1 for every **20 minutes of fictional time** after the opening. Accumulate minutes without rounding short actions up to a dial increment.

A room examination, detailed conversation, or organized rescue takes about ten minutes unless the encounter gives a faster procedure. Known routes take actual movement time; spells take their stated casting time.

At each increase, the bell rings the new number once and all engine dials display it. At dial 4, copper seams glow. At dial 5, the breach produces a sustained organ-like note.

Failure and combat add only time actually spent. Dismantling a casing might consume ten minutes; a missed attack consumes six seconds.

Beginning the Crisis

The crisis begins when the exploration dial reaches 6 or an adjacent creature uses an action to pull the selector's **Begin Transit** handle. The handle advances the dial directly to 6 regardless of brake state. Its warning reads: **SIX PULSES TO TRANSFER**.

At 6, roll initiative. The crisis lasts exactly six rounds, ending at dial 12. Do not add exploration increments during these rounds.

Crisis Round Order

1. Characters and creatures take their turns.
2. At initiative count 0, coordinated civilians move.

3. Advance the dial by 1.

4. At values 7-11, apply an exposure pulse.

5. At 12, resolve the engine immediately; there is no additional exposure pulse.

Each exposure pulse deals **1d6 cold damage** to every creature on an engine-bound platform or B1 outside S1, S2, W2, or an active protective effect. Roll once for all affected creatures.

Roofs alone give no protection. S0, E0, and the western apron at x 0-40 are beyond the pulse. A creature's whole footprint must be west of x 40 to leave the affected platform. Check each person's position; one sheltered member does not protect a whole group.

Resistance, immunity, temporary hit points, and other applicable abilities work normally.

Setting the Summer Brake

An adjacent creature can read S3's engraving without a check.

1. **Vent:** Use an action to turn the exhaust valve. The pane changes from red to white and the vent remains open.

2. **Brake:** Use an action to pull the locking arm. With a white pane, the brake becomes **set**.

Pulling the arm while the pane is red fails and sprays the operator's square. The operator makes a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2d6 fire damage on a failure or half on a success. The pane remains red; the spray neither accumulates structural damage nor destroys the brake.

Repeated venting has no further effect. Alternatively, at least 5 cold damage applied to the cylinder turns the pane white in place of venting; the arm must still be pulled.

Setting the Winter Brake

An adjacent creature can read W3's engraving without a check.

1. **Thaw:** Pour warm brine over the clutch as an action, turn the heater crank with two actions, or apply an effect that would deal at least 5 fire damage to the clutch.

2. **Brake:** Use an action to pull the thawed locking arm. The brake becomes **set**.

Different creatures can perform the crank actions, which need not be consecutive. Record partial progress. Once thawed, the clutch stays thawed for the adventure because the return pipe maintains its heat.

An applicable sustained heat source warming the whole room thaws the clutch after one minute. W2 is a separate room; heating W3 does not injure its sheltered occupants.

Pulling the frozen clutch fails and forces a DC 14 Constitution saving throw: 2d6 cold damage on a failure, half on a success. The clutch remains frozen without becoming permanently jammed.

Fire applied only to thaw the clutch does not damage the housing. Deliberate destruction uses **Attacking the Structure**.

Stored States and Remote Information

A set brake remains set until an adjacent creature releases it with an action. Pulses, abandonment, Oren's absence, and rest do not reset it. The brakes need no simultaneous operation, ongoing attendance, password, ancestry, attunement, or mandatory check.

An action with an iron spike or similar durable wedge jams a set brake. Releasing it then requires an adjacent creature first to spend an action removing the wedge.

The selector's gold summer light and blue winter light become steady when their brakes are set. Anyone who can see the plinth can read them.

Choosing and Arming the Selector

An adjacent creature uses an action to change the mode:

- **CLOSE:** Reunite Greyspan with the local world and close the breach.
- **PASSAGE:** Reunite Greyspan while retaining a stable road into winter for twelve hours.

The selector begins in **PASSAGE**. Merely confirming the current mode costs no action.

With both brakes set, an adjacent creature can use an action to **arm the latch**. Choosing a different mode and arming are separate actions. Changing mode or releasing either brake immediately unarms the latch. Otherwise it stays armed until an adjacent creature uses an action to unlatch it.

At dial 12: Both brakes must be set and the latch armed for the selected mode to succeed. Otherwise use **Uncontrolled Transit**.

Protecting the Selector

An adjacent creature can use an action to **guard the latch** until the start of its next turn. This prevents another creature's unlatch action unless the guard becomes incapacitated, moves more than 5 feet from the plinth, or willingly stops.

Guarding does not block movement or prevent attacks, grapples, shoves, or other interference. A readied action can rearman an opened latch if its trigger and normal action requirements are met.

Projecting a Shelter

An adjacent creature can use an action at the selector to project a **20-foot-radius shelter sphere**, centered on the plinth's center, until the end of the current round.

Creatures inside take no damage from that round's exposure pulse. The sphere does not block movement or attacks, provide protection outside its radius, or persist without another action next round. It reaches neither courtyard.

Projection requires an intact bridge but works with an armed or unarmed latch. It changes no control state or dial value.

Emergency Demolition

Maelin's key opens the fuse housing with a normal object interaction. Alternatively:

- An action and successful DC 16 Dexterity check with thieves' tools opens it; failure costs the action.
- Dealing 15 damage exposes the lever. The housing has AC 17 and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

The exposed lever requires **three separate actions** to demolish the bridge. Different creatures can pull it, even in the same round. Each pull displays one red bar; progress persists. Before the third pull, an adjacent creature can use an action to reset all pulls to 0 without a check.

Describe the first two bars and the engraved demolition warning before the third pull. That pull immediately:

- Destroys B1, its controls, and its pylons.
- Ends all shelter wards and projected shelter.
- Closes the breach and cancels the remaining transit procedure.
- Leaves both wings standing but unsafe for long-term occupation.

Everyone on B1 falls 120 feet unless an ability avoids or arrests the fall, taking **12d6 bludgeoning damage** under SRD 5.1 falling rules. There is no intact edge to catch when the whole bridge collapses.

People in the wings remain on their floors. Pulses end with the breach, but occupants must leave by their remaining routes and face ordinary weather. See **Deliberate Demolition** for aftermath and winter exposure.

Attacking the Structure

Missed attacks and small area spells do not accidentally destroy B1.

For deliberate destruction, each of its two support assemblies has **AC 17, 60 hit points, damage threshold 10**, and immunity to cold, poison, and psychic damage. They are accessible beneath the bridge near either end. Destroying both causes the same result as the third demolition pull.

An instance of damage below 10 deals no damage to a support. Other interactions follow the spell's actual text; creature-only spells cannot target supports.

Each brake and the selector has **AC 17, 40 hit points**, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A destroyed required device cannot satisfy controlled-transit requirements. Ten minutes of work with suitable tools and parts from either brake house restores it to function at 1 hit point, without a check.

Dismantling the selector also takes ten minutes and makes it nonfunctional. Carrying it does not move the bridge connection or create a portable portal.

Magic and the Engine

The engine is a magical device, not a spell.

- **Dispel magic:** A DC 16 spellcasting ability check suppresses one targeted shelter lamp, brake indicator, or projected shelter for one round. It does not change physical brake positions or stop transit. Explain this limit before the spell is spent.
- **Antimagic:** Magical outputs cease within the effect; physical controls still move. Suppression of the selector at dial 12 prevents controlled transit while it remains suppressed.
- **Teleportation:** Works normally, with the spell's familiarity, destination, range, and creature limits. There is no interdiction.
- **Divination:** As appropriate to the spell, can reveal the failed lens, ward dependency, consequences of a selector choice, or Sere's intended bargain.
- **Flight:** Works normally. Rain and snow obscure distant views but impose no special flight check.
- **Walls and force effects:** Constrain reavers according to their rules, including when placed before transit begins. They create no alternative arrival point and do not prevent resolution if the selector functions. They protect against pulses only if they provide relevant damage protection.
- **Cold protection:** Works against pulses, but not collapse or falling.
- **Summoned operators:** A creature that can understand instructions and manipulate a control can operate it. Apply its actual description when deciding what it can understand or handle.

Civilian Movement and Injury

Homebrew: All twenty-four survivors use this profile and coordination procedure, replacing their usual combat distinctions for this adventure.

Survivor Profile

Medium humanoid; AC 12; hp 9; speed 30 ft.
STR 10, DEX 10, CON 10, INT 10, WIS 10, CHA 10.
Saving throws and untrained ability checks +0; passive Perception 10.
Languages: Common, plus any language appropriate to a character's background.
Improvised defense: Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target; Hit: 2 bludgeoning damage.
Survivors prioritize escape, aid, and carrying injured people.
Fen, Kes, Iven, and Daro start at **3 hit points**. Fen, Iven, and Daro have movement injuries reducing speed to **15 feet**. Kes is pinned; after release, Kes has the same reduction.
Magical healing that restores at least 1 hit point ends a movement injury. It does not free Kes from the crosspiece.

Survivor Ledger

GROUP	PEOPLE	STARTING LOCATION	SPECIAL CONDITION
A	Maelin, Tal, Eda, Joss	S1	Able to move; Maelin initially coordinates
B	Pell, Rud, Sive, Fen	S1	Fen injured
C	Lio, Brin, Amra, Kes	S2	Kes pinned and injured
D	Oren, Tova, Linn, Harl	W2	Oren initially reluctant to leave the engine
E	Nera, Besh, Col, Iven	W2	Iven injured
F	Yara, Sol, Venn, Daro	W2	Daro injured

This is the complete population. Tal, Maelin, and Oren are included in the twenty-four.

Coordinated Movement

Outside initiative, a group follows a clearly explained route without repeated checks. One uninjured survivor can lead. Tal can guide western groups and Tova winter groups; another named survivor can replace either.

During initiative, groups move at count 0:

GROUP CONDITION	MOVEMENT
No slowed or carried member; movement and Dash	60 feet
Walking with a speed-15 member	30 feet
Two uninjured survivors carry one injured person on a litter	40 feet

The litter rate is a complete homebrew carrying abstraction. Groups may split; track each separated person's movement.
A group stops before a visibly occupied hostile square and calls out the obstacle. It does not abandon a member without explicit instruction.
Brief route orders require speech, not an action. Organizing a new litter, lifting an unconscious person onto it, or changing carriers takes one participant's action.
Two intact litters are in S1 and two in W2, enough for all four initially injured people. Tal's broken litter can be repaired with one minute of work or suitable magic.
Damage and Death
Track actual hit points. At 0, survivors use normal 2014 death saving throws, stabilization, healing, and damage-while-unconscious rules.

Roll one damage value per exposure pulse. Individual hit points need separate notation only when injury, healing, or protection makes members differ.

Enemies do not execute unconscious survivors; their objectives are mechanisms, escape, or leverage. Environmental damage can still harm an unconscious person.

Optional Lost in the Crossing Treatment

If agreed before play, a survivor who would die instead vanishes into a stable pocket of winter. The person does not count toward the immediate rescue reward and requires a later, optional recovery expedition. State this treatment openly before it matters. Player-character death rules remain unchanged.

NPC Independence

Maelin can evacuate A and B once given a destination and told whether demolition is authorized. Tova can lead D, E, and F once the winter plan is clear. Oren leaves when someone accepts responsibility for the controls or evacuation is chosen.

Checks are appropriate for disputed claims, uncertain trust, or sacrifice-not for asking people to use a visibly safe exit.

Essential Information and Discovery

ESSENTIAL CONCLUSION	DIRECT EVIDENCE	INDEPENDENT ROUTE	FAILURE CONSEQUENCE
Destroying the bridge ends the shelters	Diagram at selector	S1 lamp sign; Oren's explanation	Misreading with a rushed DC 12 Intelligence check costs a minute; another source remains
The summer brake must be vented first	Engraving on S3 cylinder	Tova's record; white/red pane feedback	Wrong order causes local fire spray
The winter clutch must be thawed	Engraving in W3	Tova; brine kettle label in W2	Forcing it causes cold backlash
Both brakes keep their settings	Locking dogs visibly engage	Record; steady selector indicator	No check required
The crisis lasts six rounds	Begin Transit warning	Oren; dial's six remaining segments	No check required
ESSENTIAL CONCLUSION	DIRECT EVIDENCE	INDEPENDENT ROUTE	FAILURE CONSEQUENCE
The court cannot	Delegation asks for	DC 14 Wisdom (Insight)	Sere notices suspicion and

ESSENTIAL CONCLUSION	DIRECT EVIDENCE	INDEPENDENT ROUTE	FAILURE CONSEQUENCE
command the engine	access	during audience; Oren's explanation	insists on precise terms
Closure requires no court bargain	CLOSE position and instructions	Oren; direct magical investigation	No check required
E0 is stable	Visible gap and rock strata	Flight reconna issance; Tova's route sketch	Failed DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) assessment costs ten minutes of scouting
The original failure was mechanical	Cracked lens and tag in S2	Maintenance record; Oren's confession	Careless extraction breaks the lens; tag and record remain

Legible instructions require no Arcana check. A character proficient in Arcana automatically understands the procedure after ten minutes examining the engine. A rushed examination takes an action and a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. Failure reveals the visible indicators without an inferred explanation; it never supplies false instructions.

Encounter Matrix

1. A Key Before the Axe KEY: S1/S4 MAIN SITUATION: Establish rescue authority; prevent premature demolition OPPOSITION OR PRESSURE: Conflicting information USEFUL CHANGE: Evacuation organized; key and payment assigned
2. The Gallery Holds Its Breath KEY: S2 MAIN SITUATION: Free Kes and ground storm motes OPPOSITION OR PRESSURE: Two motes; one announced aftershock USEFUL CHANGE: Four travelers rescued; cause established
3. Twelve Under the Lamps KEY: W2 MAIN SITUATION: Reach winter survivors and choose their route OPPOSITION OR PRESSURE: Injury, group movement, mistrust

USEFUL CHANGE: Evacuation or shelter plan; record and brine
4. Guests of the White Crown
KEY: W1
MAIN SITUATION: Negotiate, reject, bypass, or fight
OPPOSITION OR PRESSURE: Sere and two hounds
USEFUL CHANGE: Agreement, withdrawal, or defeated delegation
5. The Two Brakes
KEY: S3/W3/B1
MAIN SITUATION: Set controls and commit to a plan
OPPOSITION OR PRESSURE: Local backlash and remaining time
USEFUL CHANGE: Stored brakes and chosen mode
6. Hold the Last Crossing
KEY: B1
MAIN SITUATION: Defend the selector through six rounds
OPPOSITION OR PRESSURE: Two reavers; one possible arrival
USEFUL CHANGE: Closure, passage, demolition, or uncontrolled transit

Scene Flow

SCENE	ENTRY LEADS	CHANGED STATE TO RECORD	AVAILABLE EXITS
1	Tal's request; rescue pennant	Payment, Maelin's orders, key holder, A/B movement	S2, S3, B1, S0
2	Gallery shouting; traveler count	Kes, motes, aftershock, lens evidence	S4, roof, S0 by escort
3	Winter count; lamps; aerial scouting	D/E/F destinations, injuries, supplies, Oren's disclosure	W3, W1, B1, clerestory
4	Invitation; east gate; bargain	Treaty, court location, hostile hp	W4, eastern apron, breach during crisis
5	Instructions; rising dial	Brakes, selector, latch, demolition pulls	Rescue routes; early crisis
6	Dial 6 or Begin Transit	Round movement, latch, reavers, group locations	S0, E0, shelters, controlled passage

Scenes 2-5 can occur in any order or be divided among characters.

Scenes

Scene 1: Rain at the Muster Table

Runtime: 30-35 minutes.

Objective: Establish the rescue count and organize the western evacuation.

Stakes: Maelin may pursue demolition before she understands the wards.

Arrival: Use while A and B remain in S1.

READ-ALoud

Water drips from a row of helmets onto the reception table. A woman in a rain-dark coat braces a map with her forearm. A brass key lies beside six wooden counters. Near the west door, two soldiers adjust a blanket beneath an injured companion's leg.

DM Prompt: Maelin asks who is taking charge of the gallery rescue.

Encounter 1: A Key Before the Axe

Location: S1, possibly moving into S4.

Trigger: The characters enter or call to Maelin from the courtyard.

Occupants: Groups A and B; no hostiles.

Pressure: Maelin intends to evacuate west and then demolish B1.

What Is Evident

The six counters represent groups of four. Maelin has their names and reliable counts, but knows current conditions only in the summer rooms.

The chest contains 1,800 gp in rescue and repair funds, which the red pennant authorizes Maelin to release. She will give the demolition key to a character accepting responsibility for the bridge.

A lamp's brass plate reads: **SHELTER CIRCUIT - CENTRAL SPINE - DO NOT SEVER UNDER OCCUPANCY**. Examining the lamp finds it without a check.

Maelin's Opening Position

"Get the gallery people out. Get the winter people across if you can. Then we drop the bridge."

She believes the lamps have independent power and that delaying demolition risks everyone. Showing her the plate changes her understanding immediately. She asks how long the wards last after demolition; following its diagram establishes that they end at once.

- Procedure**
- Maelin provides **Handout: Muster Slip**.
 - Assign destinations. She can send A and B to S0 now, with herself and Tal temporarily remaining if desired.
 - Assign the key. She keeps it only if nobody accepts responsibility.

4. Release the **300 gp advance**, credited toward the rescue contract.
5. Choose the next destination: the gallery, winter side, and summer brake are all accessible.

A full discussion takes about ten fictional minutes; a concise emergency briefing takes two.

Checks and Leverage

DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine): Confirms Fen can tolerate litter movement. On failure, Fen reports pain and requests the available litter; evacuation remains possible.

DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion): Wins acceptance of a claim supported only by confidence. On failure, Maelin requests physical evidence or a direct winter report.

Military, engineering, or rescue experience supports cooperation when paired with specific assignments. A sensible plan needs no roll: "Tal takes these eight to the road marker; you leave the fuse untouched while we count winter."

Immediate Demolition

Maelin asks whether the twelve winter survivors and four gallery travelers have been accounted for. If the characters knowingly insist, she relinquishes the key but refuses to perform the final pull while people remain in danger. Resolve their choice under **Emergency Demolition**.

Violence

The garrison uses the Survivor Profile, retreats west with Fen, and seeks cover. Maelin can surrender the key and chest to stop bloodshed. Injuring or robbing the garrison affects testimony and payment without blocking access to the machinery.

Outcomes and Leads

Success: The party has the count, ward warning, evacuation leader, key access, and advance.

If trust fails: Tal still points out S2 and carries messages. The lamp plate and B1 diagram remain available. Maelin's escalation follows **Greyspan Garrison** and can be interrupted.

The muster names lead to Kes in S2 and Oren in W2; the plate points to B1. S3's cylinder is visible through its door.

Return: If empty, S1 contains wet boot tracks, unlit mundane lanterns, and steady shelter lamps. Omit any removed key or chest. After demolition, the shelter lamps are dark and the east doorway looks toward the broken courtyard edge.

Scene 2: Glass Above the Travelers

Runtime: 40-45 minutes.

Objective: Rescue four travelers and recover evidence of the failure.

Stakes: An aftershock threatens Kes with injury and a harder extraction.

Arrival: Use before the aftershock while Kes remains pinned.

READ-ALoud

Three travelers crouch beside a fallen stone rib, working a folded cloak beneath it. A fourth person's boot protrudes from under the crosspiece. Above the rubble, two bright knots of rainwater snap blue threads toward a loose copper chain.

DM Prompt: Kes is conscious and can explain where the crosspiece presses.

Encounter 2: The Gallery Holds Its Breath

Location: S2.

Trigger: Entry, use of the roof approach, or disturbance of the rubble.

Opposition: M1 and M2, two storm motes.

Terrain: Rubble is difficult terrain and provides at most half cover. Walls give total cover. The roof opening permits flight and sight from above. Use **Named Starting Positions**.

Visible Problem and Warning

Kes's left leg is trapped beneath the crosspiece, not the whole stone rib. Dust sifts from an overhead socket. Lio says, "It did that before the first piece fell." Tell the players another shift is imminent.

For action-scale rescue or combat, begin a **three-round local rescue window**. If the characters instead spend several minutes discussing in the gallery, the aftershock occurs before they act. This timing belongs only to the gallery; it does not advance the transit dial beyond elapsed time.

Freeing Kes

Any of these methods works:

- **Lift together:** Two creatures adjacent to the rubble each use an action in the same round. Combined Strength scores of at least 28 lift the crosspiece without a check.
- **Lever:** An adjacent creature uses an action with a crowbar, stout pole, or suitable tool and succeeds on a DC 15 Strength check. Help works normally.
- **Cut the binding strap:** An iron packing strap holds the crosspiece down. Finding it takes an action and a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check, or one minute without a check. Cutting it takes an action with a suitable edged tool.
- **Teleport or transform:** Applicable magic works according to its targeting and movement rules. The stone has no special anchor.
- **Break the crosspiece:** AC 15, 20 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage. Deliberate attacks can avoid Kes; area effects still affect Kes if they include them.

A failed lever attempt costs the action and visibly shifts the crosspiece, without injuring Kes or causing another collapse.

Once free, Kes can be carried or healed under **Survivor Profile** and **Coordinated Movement**.

The One-Time Aftershock

At the end of the third local round, the socket slips. Creatures in the rubble make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw: 2d6 bludgeoning damage on failure, half on success. Pinned Kes automatically fails.

If Kes remains trapped, the combined Strength threshold rises to 32 and the lever DC to 17. Strap-cutting, crosspiece destruction, and magic remain available. The aftershock is then spent.

The Storm Motes

Initially, the motes lash at the chain and rubble. Each becomes hostile if attacked or if a creature ends its turn within 5 feet. A hostile mote attacks the nearest active creature that is neither prone nor unconscious and does not pursue outside S2.

Grounding: The reel at (95, 100) has two free chain ends. An adjacent creature uses an action to press one end into a floor socket. Two actions ground both ends and harmlessly discharge both motes, regardless of remaining hit points.

Arcs visibly travel toward the sockets. Identifying the solution takes an action and a DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check, or one minute of observation without a check. Touching ungrounded chain deals 1 lightning damage.

Mage hand or another applicable effect can manipulate the chain. The two-action requirement remains unless the effect explicitly permits both manipulations together.

Lens Evidence

Reaching and recovering the case takes an action. Its damaged lens has no sale value; the inspection tag advises replacement before another transit. Give **Handout:**

Cracked Lens Inspection Tag.

Careless extraction or an attack can destroy the lens, but the metal tag survives. If the evidence is missed, Oren and the maintenance record provide independent accounts. No lens evidence is required to operate the controls.

Outcomes and Leads

Success: Group C can evacuate. Record Kes's condition, mote states, aftershock, and recovered evidence.

If the party retreats: Over the next ten minutes, surviving travelers try the strap method and free Kes if the aftershock has not killed them. They then wait in S2 for a route. Surviving motes remain.

The tag names Oren in W2. The chain's power line leads toward S3 and B1. A rescued traveler can carry evidence to Maelin.

Return: A freed Kes leaves an empty gap under the crosspiece and discarded packing cloth. After the aftershock, the socket lies on the floor. Grounded motes and departed travelers remain absent.

Scene 3: The Room That Still Remembers Warmth

Runtime: 35-40 minutes.

Objective: Reach the twelve winter survivors, learn the controls, and choose their destination.

Stakes: W2 is protected, but its injured occupants need transport or protection to cross during the crisis.

Arrival: Use while D, E, and F remain; omit departed people and removed supplies.

READ-ALoud

Snow melts in a narrow line across the doorway. Inside, a man with ink on his cuffs holds a slate against his chest. Beside him, a woman in a leather apron tightens a litter's straps. Two seated travelers watch the shelter lamps while a kettle steams at their feet.

DM Prompt: Tova asks whether B1 is still open and whether Maelin knows about the lamps.

Encounter 3: Twelve Under the Lamps

Location: W2.

Trigger: Arrival through W4, the clerestory, or teleportation.

Occupants: Twelve survivors; no hostiles.

Pressure: Injuries, incomplete trust, and the choice between evacuation and sheltering through controlled transit.

Immediate Facts

The lamps protect W2 while B1 stands. Drifting snow cannot cross the threshold; creatures and carried objects can.

Tova has organized three groups and prepared two litters for Iven and Daro. A covered kettle holds one dose of warm brine. If lost or used elsewhere, another dose takes ten minutes at the wall heater. W3's hand crank offers a faster fallback.

Oren's Explanation

Oren explains that the engine can still be stabilized, then describes the brakes, selector, and six rounds. He provides accurate instructions even if the characters distrust him.

The inspection tag prompts an immediate admission. Asking why the marked lens remained installed also receives an honest answer. A DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check notices his avoidance of personal responsibility, not false technical advice.

His account: the winter refuge's distress signal was genuine; the compatible primary lens had not arrived; he thought one short crossing safer than leaving people to freeze. W2's reserve lenses cannot replace the primary optic; see **Item: Reserve Alignment Lens**. The failed transit never reached the signal's senders, who are not additional captives in this adventure.

Oren favors CLOSE, accepts PASSAGE with terms protecting the occupants, and accepts evacuation if the characters will not trust the machine.

Rescue Planning

ROUTE OR PLAN	REQUIREMENTS
West: W2 → W4 → B1 → S4 → S1 → western apron → S0	Open route; does not enter W1 or require Sere's permission
East: W2 → W4 → W1 → eastern apron → E0	Deal with or bypass the delegation, open the gate, and cross the sixty-foot gap
Aerial: W4 directly to either refuge	Flight or transport; the clerestory provides an alternate loading point
Shelter: Remain in W2 through controlled transit	Preserve B1 and complete the controls

The clerestory's access rules are under **Doors, Windows, and Connections**. Tova follows a clear destination and trigger: "Go west now," "Stay until the blue indicator is steady," or "Wait here for transport."

Supplies and Ownership

Tova releases:

- One dose of warm brine.
- Two litters.
- **Handout: Winter Maintenance Record.**
- Two wardglass beads.
- Three reserve alignment lenses.

Oren authorizes the lenses as salvage for rescue work. Each is worth 200 gp and weighs 2 pounds in its padded brass sleeve. They are not required for the emergency cycle. The engine can complete one controlled cycle using its surviving fixed optics.

Tova explains the beads' one-person, one-minute protection before handing them over; full rules are under **Item: Wardglass Bead**.

Checks with Consequences

DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine), one minute per injured person: A splint removes the speed reduction for **one ten-minute evacuation**, without restoring hit points. Failure spends the minute; litters and magic remain available.

DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana), one minute comparing record and lamp: Confirms wards persist through successful transit. Failure leaves Oren's claim unverified, but the selector diagram provides the same fact.

Obtaining the record, carrying brine, and asking people to evacuate require no check.

Rejecting Oren

Tova provides instructions and takes charge. Oren leaves the tools available and can be escorted, guarded, or left with the shelter. A promised inquiry affects his later standing.

Outcomes and Leads

Success: D, E, and F have a route or shelter plan; the party has instructions and assigned supply holders.

If discussion fails: The record remains on the public workbench. Tova explains it and keeps everyone in W2

unless given a route.

The record points to W3 and S3. If Sere remains in W1, her invitation is audible: "Those responsible for the crossing may enter." W4 also offers an immediate return west.

Return: Departed groups leave empty bedrolls. Removed lenses and beads stay absent. Used brine leaves an empty vessel until someone reheats another dose.

Scene 4: The Price of Being a Guest

Runtime: 35-45 minutes; a full fight adds 25-40 minutes.

Objective: Accept a bounded bargain, reject the court, or remove its delegation.

Stakes: Passage and help have a price; promises made on others' behalf can burden survivors.

Arrival: Use with Sere and both hounds present; adjust for wounds and absences.

READ-ALoud

A tall figure in a pale coat waits behind three chairs, a crown of clear ice above her brow. Two white hounds lie on opposite sides of the room. A silver bowl rests on the table. The eastern gate is frozen shut; the way back to the courtyard is clear.

DM Prompt: Sere offers seats. She says entering alone does not make anyone her guest.

Encounter 4: Guests of the White Crown

Location: W1.

Trigger: An audience, passage through the hall, or attack.

Opposition: Sere, H1, and H2.

Terrain: The table can provide half cover. Both hounds have clear paths to the west doorway. Use **Named Starting Positions** and the east-gate rules under **Doors, Windows, and Connections**.

What Sere Wants

Sere proposes that all twenty-four stranded people enter winter as guests until Greyspan pays a shelter debt. If challenged, she asks for another offer. She does not claim the existing lamps have already created a debt.

The bowl is mundane. Drinking, sitting, giving a name, or accepting warmth creates no obligation. Investigation reveals this. Only explicit spoken acceptance of written terms binds a signatory.

Acceptable Bargains

Sere accepts either offer without a check if the party can provide the consideration.

The Lens Compact: The three reserve lenses, worth 600 gp total, transfer to Sere after successful **PASSAGE**. In exchange:

- No unwilling person enters winter.
- No debt attaches to any survivor.
- Her caravan crosses once during the twelve-hour opening, carrying no unwilling passengers or prisoners.

- She excludes R3 from the final encounter.
- Her delegation does not attack the party, civilians, or controls.
- The passage closes automatically after twelve hours.

The One-Winter Toll: For the same passage agreement, Greyspan grants the court a publicly posted right to request one voluntary **10 gp toll** from each willing merchant caravan using a future, separately authorized winter crossing during the next year. No crossing or minimum revenue is promised; refusal incurs no punishment; the right expires after one year. Maelin and Oren must both accept because the concession concerns Greyspan.

Sere values public recognition enough to accept uncertain toll revenue. The right does not authorize entry after the current passage closes.

Other offers may provide approximately 600 gp in value or an equally bounded public concession. A DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check persuades her to accept about 300 gp. Failure leaves the original offers available without starting combat.

Staging Sere's Intervention

After agreement, Sere walks from W1 through W4 to the breach at **x 190, y 85**: approximately 70 feet, taking one exploration minute or her actual movement and Dash actions in initiative. Her hounds remain where they are unless separately moved. Tell the party when she reaches her position before they choose Begin Transit.

At crisis start, she steps through if already beside the breach. Otherwise, she must reach and cross it **before the start of round 3**. Crossing from an adjacent square costs 5 feet of movement. She must remain beyond it, able to perform the exclusion, until the start of round 3. She cannot fight on the bridge during this intervention.

At that instant, successful exclusion permanently removes R3's only arrival window. Sere may return afterward; later injury, departure, or breach of agreement cannot restore the missed arrival. If she is blocked, incapacitated, or late, R3 arrives normally. She warns the party if they start before she is ready.

Record her location, crossing time, and whether the intervention succeeded.

Making the Agreement Binding

Homebrew: The compact binds only Sere and characters or officials who explicitly consent. It cannot bind absent survivors.

Write the terms on ordinary paper. Each consenting party says, "I accept these terms freely." The words glow blue, revealing later alteration.

A knowing breach appears on the paper as unquestionable evidence for the court. The contract neither compels behavior nor inflicts damage; it has no hidden curse. Sere honors it because of law, reputation, and self-interest.

Give Handout: Terms at the Silver Bowl only after filling the agreed consideration.

Alternatives to Bargaining

Reject and leave: Sere permits withdrawal. W4 and W3 are outside her control.

Evacuate through W1: She allows visibly evacuating civilians to use the east gate if they do not interfere with the delegation. She requests compensation but does not seize them if refused; a fight would jeopardize her escape.

Bypass: Flight, exterior ledges, W4, and teleportation provide routes. Apply their normal rules without an extra discovery check.

Force withdrawal: Showing both brakes set and CLOSE selected convinces Sere to retreat into the breach when the crisis begins. A credible threat and DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation) check prompt early withdrawal toward it. Failure leaves her available for negotiation without provoking attack.

Combat Procedure

Sere fights if attacked, restrained, or deprived of her crown or hounds by force. She seeks a pause and an escape.

- H1 blocks the west doorway.
- H2 protects Sere or threatens a concentrating spellcaster.
- Sere uses Rime Fan against at least two active opponents when she can spare the hounds.
- Otherwise, she attacks a threatening melee opponent and moves toward W4 when retreat is necessary.
- Hounds do not pursue into S0 or attack noncombatant civilians.

At 35 hp or fewer, Sere offers mutual withdrawal. **At 15 hp or fewer,** she surrenders if escape is blocked. Surviving hounds retreat on her order or when she is incapacitated.

If surrender is accepted, she yields her nonmagical crown as a pledge and leaves when given a route. It has negligible resale value but can serve as political evidence.

Identity and Movement

Track Sere, H1, and H2 separately. Withdrawal takes them through W4 toward B1. Before crisis, Sere waits at the breach edge; she cannot cross the inactive transit. Once crisis begins, she and surviving hounds can enter and leave.

Use their actual locations and persistent injuries. The delegation does not become reavers.

Outcomes and Leads

Agreement: Timely intervention earns R3's exclusion and supports a negotiated PASSAGE.

Rejection or failed bargain: W4 stays open for brake work and evacuation. CLOSE remains available.

Defeat or surrender: The party controls W1 and access to the eastern gate. A party retreat leaves the delegation in its current condition.

Return: A departed delegation leaves chairs and westbound tracks. Opened or broken gate ice retains its state. Any compact remains exactly as agreed.

Scene 5: The Teeth of the Machine

Runtime: 35-45 minutes, or 5-10 if controls are already operated.

Objective: Configure the engine and place survivors.

Stakes: At dial 12, a missing brake or unarmed latch causes uncontrolled transit.

Summer arrival:

READ-ALoud

Copper pipes descend into a stone cylinder beneath three colored panes. Engraved arrows lead from an exhaust wheel to the panes, then down to a broad locking arm.

Winter arrival:

READ-ALoud

A toothed wheel sits beneath a hand crank and narrow heating pipe. Beside it, an instruction plate hangs at eye level, its deeply cut letters legible beneath the frost.

DM Prompt: Describe the current state: red or white summer pane, frozen or thawed winter clutch, and lowered, engaged arms for set brakes.

Encounter 5: The Two Brakes

Locations: S3, W3, B1.

Trigger: The characters configure the engine or respond to the rising dial.

Opposition: None automatically. Motes remain in S2 and the delegation retains its recorded position.

Pressure: Travel, control actions, and time remaining before dial 6.

Commitments

Through Maelin, Oren, or the controls, establish:

- Whether survivors evacuate or shelter through transit.
- CLOSE or PASSAGE.
- The key holder and any demolition authorization.
- Who operates or guards the selector.
- Where wounded characters retreat.
- Whether to begin early.

Evacuation and abandonment remain valid choices.

Operating the Brakes

Use **Setting the Summer Brake**, **Setting the Winter Brake**, and **Stored States and Remote Information**.

Summer reminder: Vent, then brake: one action each. Wrong order: DC 14 Dexterity save, 2d6 fire damage, half on success. At least 5 cold damage can substitute for venting.

Winter reminder: Thaw with one brine action, two crank actions, or at least 5 fire damage; then brake with one action. Forced frozen clutch: DC 14 Constitution save, 2d6

cold damage, half on success.

Split-Party Operation

The controls work independently. Characters can report success through a messenger, familiar, sending effect, or the selector lights.

Travel between brake houses follows their courtyards and B1. Flight can shorten the route; the courtyards have no roofs. Summoned operators and barriers use **Magic and the Engine**. Wedging brakes and removing the selector use **Stored States and Remote Information** and **Attacking the Structure**.

Maelin's Deadline

If Maelin still expects demolition, a steady indicator and shelter diagram draw her into the repair plan. She asks: "If it is unarmed at the last bell, what do we do?"

Demolition ends the breach immediately but destroys B1. With everyone evacuated it can serve as a fallback; with occupied shelters it leaves people isolated without wards. Record whether she is authorized to act. She does not silently complete the third pull.

Ready Positions

Before an early start, characters choose any legal positions. The map permits an operator beside the selector, defenders east of the plinth, rescuers in either courtyard, aerial support, or defense from one end with a summoned operator at the latch.

Outcomes and Leads

Ready: Both brakes are set, mode chosen, latch armed or assigned, and everyone's location recorded.

Incomplete: Partial work persists. A fast or teleporting character can finish a brake during crisis; evacuation and demolition also remain available.

Begin Transit or dial 6 starts Scene 6. If the party leaves, resolve the unattended engine from its actual states at dial 12.

Return: Use the recorded panes, clutch, arms, wedges, tools, brine, and housing damage. No control resets on departure.

Scene 6: Six Bells Across the Gap

Runtime: 60-70 minutes if contested; 5-15 once all arrivals are resolved and no threat can change the outcome. See **Fast or Uncontested Routes**.

Objective: Maintain a valid engine state through dial 12 and protect anyone still crossing.

Stakes: The sixth round decides Greyspan's fate.

Arrival: Use at crisis start while B1 stands. Describe arrivals only where they can legally appear.

READ-ALoud

The bridge's copper seams brighten. Rain hangs above the western rail, then falls upward in silver threads. At the winter end, two narrow shapes press through the widening breach. The selector rings once. Six dark segments remain beyond the new light.

DM Prompt: Announce both brake indicators, mode, and latch state before initiative.

Encounter 6: Hold the Last Crossing

Location: B1 and connected courtyards; survivors remain in their recorded locations.

Trigger: Dial 6 or Begin Transit.

Opposition: R1 and R2 at crisis start; possible R3 at the start of round 3.

Objective: Reavers try to unlatch the selector so they can feed on the disordered breach. They do not operate brakes.

Arrival Count

R1 and R2 arrive at crisis start. R3 arrives at the start of round 3 unless Sere successfully excludes it under **Staging Sere's Intervention**. An agreement alone is insufficient: she must cross before round 3 and sustain the intervention until that round begins.

Defeating, ignoring, or refusing Sere leaves the normal three-reaver schedule. Successful exclusion is permanent for the crisis. If B1 was demolished before crisis, no reavers arrive.

Use **Named Starting Positions** for placement and occupied-square handling. R3 is the only reinforcement.

Initiative and Environmental Order

Homebrew timing: Reavers act at initiative 12, after player characters tied at 12. Civilians move and the dial resolves at count 0, under **Crisis Round Order**.

Place R3 before anyone acts in round 3. If excluded, describe a third shape turning away beyond the opening.

Reaver Tactics

Round 1: R1 approaches the selector and unlatches if it reaches an unguarded control. R2 attacks a blocker or threatens a rescuer.

Later: An adjacent reaver prioritizes an armed, unguarded latch. Against a guard, it attacks or shoves; other reavers engage standing defenders.

R3: Approaches the least defended side, obeying walls and occupied squares.

Unlatching replaces Multiattack. Reavers neither deliberately demolish B1 nor seek distant brakes. They do not execute civilians or perfectly identify spells; the armed latch feels to them like a painful knot of ordered energy.

Escalation and Retreat

At the end of round 3, frost forms around the breach without additional damage.

At **15 hp or fewer**, a reaver retreats if it can reach the breach without moving closer to a visible enemy, using

Disengage when needed. Entering the plane removes it permanently.

At dial 11, a reaver unable to reach or unlatch the selector before resolution tries to escape. One already beside an unguarded latch attempts to open it. Reavers do not surrender.

Moving Survivors

At count 0, move groups before the pulse. The rates are **60 feet uninjured, 40 with a litter, or 30 with a slowed member**; see **Coordinated Movement**.

S1, S2, and W2 protect occupants while B1 stands. The western apron protects creatures wholly west of x 40 independently of wards; S0 and E0 are also safe.

The selector's projection protects within **20 feet** for the current round. A wardglass bead protects one person. If a reaver blocks a route, groups stop; a character can clear a lane, redirect them along the other bridge lane, carry someone, or order retreat to shelter.

High-Level Solutions

Apply **Magic and the Engine** to flight, teleportation, and barriers. A successful mass evacuation makes preservation voluntary; it does not require replacement captives or an accelerated disaster.

Banishment works on reavers. Their origin is the winter-adjacent breach; if the spell's duration and conditions permanently return one to its home plane, it does not reappear.

Reavers lack flight and ranged attacks. Climbing and jumping do not let them reach a hovering creature beyond their normal reach.

Falling from B1

Resolve a shove toward a rail according to the creature's position.

Homebrew ledge safeguard: A creature forcibly moved over a rail can use its reaction for a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw**. Success catches the edge; it hangs in its former edge square for targeting and climbs up with **15 feet of movement**. Failure causes a **120-foot fall**. Flight, feather fall, teleportation, and other applicable abilities can intervene.

This safeguard does not apply to B1's destruction.

Final Resolution

After round 6's civilian movement, advance to dial 12:

STATE	OUTCOME
Both brakes set, latch armed, CLOSE	Controlled Closure
Both brakes set, latch armed, PASSAGE	Negotiated Passage
A required state missing	Uncontrolled Transit
Demolition already completed	Transit has ended; do not resolve again

There is no final check. Demolition is available only if completed before dial 12.

Proceed to **Resolution Paths**. If people remain reachable in a stranded wing or the gorge, continue rescue using the established geometry and remaining resources.

Opposition Statistics

All creatures below are **homebrew for D&D 5e, SRD 5.1, 2014 rules**. Challenge ratings are encounter-building estimates.

Storm Mote

Small elemental, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 27 (6d6 + 6)

Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

4 (-3)

DEX: 16 (+3)

CON: 12 (+1)

INT: 3 (-4)

WIS: 10 (+0)

CHA: 6 (-2)

Saving Throws Dex +5

Damage Resistances thunder

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

Condition Immunities grappled, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Unstable Form. The mote can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch without squeezing, but cannot pass through solid material.

Gallery Anchor. The mote cannot willingly move outside S2. If forcibly moved outside, it becomes inert until returned to S2; after one minute outside, it dissipates.

Grounding Vulnerability. Grounding both gallery-chain ends destroys both motes without damage to nearby creatures. See **The Storm Motes** in Scene 2.

Arc Lash. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) lightning damage.

Discharge on Defeat. When reduced to 0 hit points by damage, the mote flashes. Each creature within 5 feet makes a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3 (1d6) lightning damage on a failure or no damage on a success. Grounding does not trigger this trait.

M1 and M2 each make one attack per round. They have no Multiattack or ranged attack.

Rime Hound

Medium monstrosity, lawful neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 38 (7d8 + 7)

Speed 40 ft.

16 (+3)

DEX: 14 (+2)

CON: 12 (+1)

INT: 5 (-3)

WIS: 14 (+2)

CHA: 8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages understands Common and Sylvan but cannot speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The hound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Ice Walker. The hound ignores difficult terrain caused by ice or snow.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) cold damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

Interpose. When a creature within 5 feet of the hound attacks Sere, the hound can use its reaction to impose disadvantage on that attack roll. It must see the attacker.

H1 and H2 each have one bite per turn. Interpose is a reaction, not an attack; a hound can protect Sere only while adjacent to her.

Lady Sere Vault

Medium fey, lawful neutral

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 105 (14d8 + 42)

Speed 30 ft.

12 (+1)

DEX: 16 (+3)

CON: 16 (+3)

INT: 16 (+3)

WIS: 14 (+2)

CHA: 18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +5, Cha +7

Skills Insight +5, Persuasion +7

Damage Immunities cold

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Courtly Composure. Sere has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Multiattack. Sere makes two Frost Scepter attacks.

Frost Scepter. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) cold damage. The attack is magical and does not depend on a recoverable magic weapon.

Rime Fan (Recharge 5-6). Sere releases frost in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the area makes a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) cold damage on a failure or half on a success. On a failed save, the creature's speed is reduced by 10 feet until the end of its next turn. Multiple uses do not stack this reduction.

Winter Step (2/Day). As a bonus action, Sere teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space she can see. This is teleportation, not planar travel.

Measured Reprisal. When a creature within 5 feet hits Sere with a melee attack, she can use her reaction to deal 5 cold damage to that creature.

Exclusion of the Third. While honoring the compact, Sere can exclude R3 by crossing the breach before round 3 and remaining beyond it until that round begins. Successful exclusion is permanent for this crisis; she cannot exclude R3 after it enters. She cannot join the party's combat during the intervention. The feature affects only R3 and has no offensive use against other creatures. Use **Staging Sere's Intervention** for movement, timing, and interruption.

Sere has no legendary actions, legendary resistances, spell slots, or unlisted spells. Her scepter and crown are ceremonial objects, not transferable sources of her abilities.

Seam Weaver

Medium aberration, unaligned

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 68 (8d8 + 32)

Speed 35 ft., climb 20 ft.

18 (+4)

DEX: 14 (+2)

CON: 18 (+4)

INT: 5 (−3)

WIS: 12 (+1)

CHA: 6 (−2)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +6

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3

Damage Resistances cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Seam Sense. The reaver knows whether the selector is armed while within 120 feet of it. This sense provides no information about hidden creatures, spell effects, or brake locations.

Clinging Limbs. The reaver can climb rough stone without an ability check. It must use its climb speed and cannot occupy unsupported air.

Multiattack. The reaver makes two Hook attacks.

Hook. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) cold damage.

Unlatch. While within 5 feet of the selector, the reaver uses its action to unarm the latch unless a creature is guarding it under **Protecting the Selector**. This replaces Multiattack.

Shove. The reaver can replace one Hook attack in Multiattack with a shove, using Athletics +6 against the target's Athletics or Acrobatics under normal 2014 contest rules. This substitution is a homebrew feature. It can push 5 feet or knock prone, not both.

Breach Exit. Entering the breach plane lets the reaver leave the encounter permanently. It cannot reappear elsewhere through this feature.

Reavers have no ranged attacks, teleportation, flight, or immunity to control spells. Track R1, R2, and R3 separately.

Difficulty, Resources, and Scaling

The default assumes four level 9 characters near full resources. The gallery offers minor combat pressure or a noncombat solution; the court is a hard optional fight; the finale divides actions between defense, controls, and rescue.

Using the 2014 encounter multipliers as a rough guide:

FIGHT	BASE XP	ADJUSTED XP	INTERPRETATION FOR FOUR LEVEL 9 CHARACTERS
Two storm motes	400	600	Minor combat pressure

FIGHT	BASE XP	ADJUSTED XP	INTERPRETATION FOR FOUR LEVEL 9 CHARACTERS
Sere and two hounds	3,200	6,400	Approximately hard
Three seam reavers	3,300	6,600	Approximately hard before objective tradeoffs
Two seam reavers after compact	2,200	3,300	Easier defense

Unlatching consumes reaver actions, while civilian protection can consume party actions. One reaver's Multiattack deals about 27 damage if both attacks hit. Follow their control-focused tactics rather than concentrating every attack on one character.

Rest Opportunities

S1 and W2 allow a short rest while warded. One hour advances the exploration dial by 3. If crisis interrupts the rest, it grants no completed-rest benefit.

An eight-hour long rest cannot finish before the second transit. Leaving to rest does not pause the engine.

Concrete Scaling

PARTY	CHANGES
Three level 9 characters	Each reaver has 52 hp; R3 never arrives. Sere has 85 hp and only H1 is present. Motes unchanged.
Four level 8 characters	Each reaver has 58 hp; remove Hook cold damage. Sere has 90 hp; Rime Fan deals 5d6. Other counts unchanged.
Four level 10 characters	Each reaver has 78 hp. No count increase. Sere and motes unchanged.
Five level 9 characters	Each reaver has 85 hp; Hook attacks are +7 to hit. No count increase. Sere has 125 hp; hounds unchanged.

Scaling leaves control costs, pulse count, survivors, geometry, and rewards unchanged. In the three-character version, H2 and R3 are absent throughout.

Fighting Sere does not change the default finale. Successful barriers or teleportation do not add enemies.

Items and Rewards

Item: Wardglass Bead

Wondrous item, common; homebrew; no attunement

A thumb-sized glass bead holds a stationary gold spark. Exactly two are in W2's maintenance box.

Activation: As an action, crush the bead and touch yourself or one willing creature within 5 feet.

Effect: The target gains cold resistance and takes no damage from Greyspan's exposure pulses for **1 minute**.

Limits: One target. Consumed on use; no charges, recharge, or recovery. Multiple beads do not stack or extend an existing duration; a later activation starts a new one-minute duration.

Ownership: Tova releases them for rescue work. The party may retain unused beads after a good-faith rescue effort.

Value: Campaign-dependent; excluded from coin totals.

Item: Reserve Alignment Lens

Valuable component; nonmagical

Three palm-sized crystal disks are stored in W2, each in a padded brass sleeve. Each is worth **200 gp** and weighs **2 pounds including its sleeve**. Instrument makers and arcane engineers buy them.

They have no activation, charges, attunement, or independent magical effect. They fit secondary survey instruments. Greyspan's primary transit optic is **twelve inches** across with a different mounting; these disks cannot replace it, singly or together.

The emergency controls dissipate the stored transit charge using surviving fixed optics. These lenses are unnecessary for that cycle and can be authorized as salvage by Oren or Tova. The Lens Compact transfers them to Sere after successful **PASSAGE**.

S2's damaged lens is a separate object with no sale value.

Item: Demolition Key

Tool; nonmagical

Maelin's iron key opens the fuse housing without activating demolition. It has no charges or magical effect.

Record its holder. Making a functional duplicate requires appropriate tools and at least one hour.

Reward Ledger

REWARD	OWNER AND LOCATION	ACCESS CONDITION	AMOUNT
Rescue advance	Greyspan treasury, S1	Accept rescue responsibility	300 gp for the party
Remaining rescue payment	Same treasury	People brought to safety	Up to 1,500 gp more
Three reserve lenses	Custodians, W2	Oren or Tova authorizes salvage	600 gp total
Two wardglass beads	Custodians, W2	Issued for rescue	Two consumables
Damaged lens	Gallery, S2	Recover from rubble	0 gp

REWARD	OWNER AND LOCATION	ACCESS CONDITION	AMOUNT
Court regalia and bowl	Sere, W1	Surrendered or taken	Ceremonial; no assumed treasure value

Payment Formula

Pay 75 gp per named survivor brought to lasting safety, crediting the 300 gp advance toward the total:

Total contract payment = the greater of 300 gp or 75 gp × survivors saved, to a maximum of 1,800 gp.

- Twenty-four saved: 1,800 gp total, including the advance.
- Sixteen saved: 1,200 gp total; 900 gp remains after the advance.
- Four or fewer saved: 300 gp total.
- A good-faith unsuccessful rescue does not require repayment of the advance.

A person counts if alive on the stable western apron, at S0 or E0, or in Greyspan after successful CLOSE or PASSAGE. Someone delivered unwillingly into court custody counts only once free and safe.

Maelin can release the physically present emergency funds. If she dies, Tal and Oren can jointly authorize payment. If all officials are absent, survivor testimony supports a later claim through the nearest settlement.

Taking the chest gives possession of the same 1,800 gp, not additional treasure. Theft can affect law and relationships; the money is never paid twice.

Maximum liquid reward: 1,800 gp payment + 600 gp lenses = 2,400 gp for the party.

With the Lens Compact: 1,800 gp, since Sere receives the lenses.

Accomplishment Reward

Homebrew objective XP option: Award 12,000 XP to the party, divided equally, for resolving the crisis and bringing the rescue to a meaningful conclusion. Four characters receive 3,000 XP each.

This replaces creature XP. Grounding, negotiation, bypass, evacuation, retreat under pressure, and combat can all earn it. Reduce or withhold it only for abandonment without meaningful effort, not for sacrificing Greyspan to save people.

Alternatively, count the adventure as one substantial milestone under the campaign's advancement pace.

Resolution Paths

Resolve the mechanism, then count survivors, property, and obligations. Spent resources, casualties, and promises persist.

Controlled Closure

Requirements: Both brakes set; CLOSE selected; latch armed at dial 12.

The winter wing returns to the local world. The breach narrows to a line and vanishes. Summer rain falls across both courtyards.

People: Living occupants remain in place. Pulses end. Shelter lamps provide ordinary warmth for twenty-four hours, permitting treatment and departure.

Structure: Both wings and B1 survive; the gallery roof stays broken. The engine remains inert until a compatible twelve-inch primary lens is fitted and a full inspection completed. The survey lenses cannot make that repair.

Court: Sere and surviving hounds beyond the breach remain in winter. Any still on B1 pass safely to the winter side in the threshold's visible outward sweep and cannot immediately return.

Reavers: Remaining reavers on the fortress side are expelled through the same threshold. Retreated or defeated creatures do not return.

Possessions: Authorized lenses and unused beads remain with their holders unless transferred or spent. Apply **Payment Formula**.

Relationships: Maelin credits the party with saving the road. Oren accepts an inquiry. Concealing his negligence leaves a future political issue.

Return: Greyspan is a repair site with an ordinary working bridge. Travelers remember the rescuers; no inevitable new breach reverses the result.

Optional follow-up: Investigate the genuine distress signal through a separately chosen expedition.

Negotiated Passage

Requirements: Both brakes set; PASSAGE selected; latch armed at dial 12. An agreement is recommended, not mechanically required.

Greyspan returns to the local world. Beside B1's eastern end, a stable walkable opening leads to a cold, sheltered caravan yard.

People: Under the listed compacts, survivors remain free to evacuate or stay.

Structure: B1 and both wings survive. After exactly **twelve hours**, the opening closes automatically without another crisis or defense.

Court: Under an agreement, Sere's caravan crosses once and leaves by the ordinary road. It consists of **six wagons and eighteen willing attendants:** post-crisis travelers, not reinforcements or rescue targets.

Reavers: Stabilization immediately expels remaining R1-R3 and excludes those three for the entire twelve-hour opening, with or without a bargain. Their feeding opportunity ends; no further arrival occurs.

Without agreement: Sere asks permission to cross. The party and garrison can refuse, negotiate, or admit voluntary travelers. PASSAGE alone grants neither ownership nor permission for an army.

Possessions: Transfer lenses only if the Lens Compact applies and PASSAGE succeeds. Under the toll agreement, retain them and record the bounded one-year right.

Relationships: Maelin honors terms she accepted despite her unease. Oren sees a repairable machine but accepts the need for oversight.

Return: For twelve hours Greyspan is a supervised crossing; afterward it is an ordinary fortress awaiting repairs. Only written compact terms continue.

Optional follow-up: Trade, diplomatic scrutiny, or debate over future transit policy. There are no retroactive guest debts.

Evacuation Without Preservation

The party may rescue everyone and leave the engine unresolved.

People: Those on stable ground remain safe. Saving all twenty-four earns full rescue payment; preserving Greyspan was never a condition.

Structure: Without a valid configuration, **Uncontrolled Transit** occurs at dial 12 and the road is lost.

Relationships: Maelin supports prioritizing lives. Oren grieves Greyspan but acknowledges the rescue.

Return: After the ten-minute evacuation window, both engine-bound platforms have collapsed into the gorge. Foundations and scattered debris remain; the road needs a new crossing. The closed breach leaves no court access.

Optional follow-up: Recover public records or help build a replacement route.

Deliberate Demolition

Requirement: Third fuse pull or destruction of both supports.

Apply **Emergency Demolition** immediately: B1 and controls are destroyed, bridge occupants fall, wards fail, and the breach and pulses end.

People: Stable-ground occupants remain safe. The wings retain their floors. The summer wing can evacuate through S1; the winter wing requires flight, teleportation, the east gap, climbing to the gorge floor, or another credible route.

With blankets and the kettle, the winter wing remains survivable for **one hour**. Afterward, use the campaign's cold-weather rules or worsening exposure with continuing rescue opportunities.

Structure: Both wings stand, but engineers later condemn the unsupported approaches. No ordinary foot route connects them.

Court: Sere retreats if given time. Delegation members on B1 face its fall; stranded survivors do not become court property.

Possessions: Bridge contents fall into the gorge. Recovery requires reaching them.

Relationships: Maelin supports demolition when it protects people or is the last viable option. Preventable, knowing casualties shape survivor and official judgment.

Return: Each wing can be approached independently. Lamps remain dark; the destroyed bridge's control states no longer matter.

Uncontrolled Transit

Trigger: Dial 12 without both brakes set and an armed latch.

B1 tears free. Each wing shifts several feet and fractures its foundations.

Immediate effects:

- Creatures on B1 fall 120 feet unless they prevent the fall.
- Creatures inside either wing make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw**, taking **4d6 bludgeoning damage** on failure or half on success.
- Shelter wards end.
- The breach closes.
- Both engine-bound platforms begin settling toward collapse.

Last evacuation window: Each wing remains traversable for **ten minutes**, then its engine-bound platform collapses into the gorge. During that window, S1's west route works; winter exits remain those already established.

Announce the window through cracking floors, tilting walls, and Oren or Tova's assessment.

People: Apply damage and determine who can move. Stable-ground occupants are unaffected. Rescue continues during the ten-minute window.

Court and reavers: Those beyond the breach stay there. Creatures on collapsing stone face its hazards.

Possessions: Save them by carrying them out or later retrieving them from the gorge.

Relationships: Rescue efforts and saved lives still count. Responsibility follows the party's decisions and the evidence.

Return: Broken foundations and gorge debris replace Greyspan. The road ends at the gorge; no portal remains.

A Partial Rescue

Apply this overlay to any ending.

Name everyone saved, missing, dead, or taken under an explicit agreement. Maelin asks after Fen; Tova after Iven; Lio speaks for Kes; Yara asks about Daro.

For anyone stranded alive, state the location, access, and remaining shelter time. For example: "Twelve people remain in W2. The east gap is open, and the room is habitable for another hour."

Later adventures must respect the outcome: destroyed bridges require rebuilding, closed breaches require a new cause to reopen, and fulfilled bargains acquire no undisclosed terms.

Return-Visit and Continuity Ledger

Update after major scenes and before return descriptions.

STATE	RECORD
Transit dial and accumulated exploration minutes	—
Summer vent	Red / white
Summer brake	Released / set / wedged / damaged
Winter heater work	0 / 1 / 2 actions
Winter clutch	Frozen / thawed
Winter brake	Released / set / wedged / damaged
Selector mode	CLOSE / PASSAGE
Selector latch	Unarmed / armed
Fuse housing	Locked / open / broken
Demolition pulls	0 / 1 / 2 / completed
Gallery aftershock	Pending / spent
Kes	Pinned / freed; hp ____; location ____
M1 and M2	Current hp or grounded/destroyed
Sere, H1, H2	Current hp, location, agreement or surrender
Sere's intervention	Crossing time ____; sustained to round 3 / interrupted / late
R1, R2, R3	Not arrived / current hp / retreated / destroyed / excluded
Groups A-F	Location, route, leader, injuries
Reserve lenses	Individual holders or transfer status
Wardglass beads	Holder and unused/used
Brine	W2 / carried / used / reheating
Demolition key	Holder
Treasury	Paid, carried, or remaining
Handouts delivered	Muster / tag / record / compact
Promises and inquiry	—
Final outcome	—

Continuity Rules

Departed people return only for a reason and with enough travel time. Healing removes the initial movement injury as specified. Enemies retain damage after retreat or surrender; consumed, transferred, and confiscated items stay in their recorded states.

The aftershock occurs once. Grounded motes do not reform. Open gates stay open unless closed; broken glass remains broken; demolition-darkened lamps stay dark. Controls retain completed and partial work under **The Transit Procedure**.

An omitted encounter has not occurred offstage. If characters first fly to W2, Maelin still holds the key, directs A and B, and has not paid the advance. If a brake is set during exploration, Scene 5 begins with it set.

Record changes caused by messengers or split-party actions. Evidence delivered to Maelin can alter her orders while other characters negotiate with Sere.

Player Handouts

DM Distribution Guide

Share each handout separately at its acquisition point.

Muster Slip: Maelin or Tal provides it in Scene 1.

Cracked Lens Inspection Tag: Acquired with the damaged case in S2.

Winter Maintenance Record: Tova provides it in W2, or characters read it on the workbench.

Terms at the Silver Bowl: Share only after agreement in W1. Fill the consideration line first and omit unused alternatives.

Handout: Muster Slip

GREYSPAN - PEOPLE STILL INSIDE

Reception hall

Maelin, Tal, Eda, Joss

Pell, Rud, Sive, Fen

Gallery

Lio, Brin, Amra, Kes

Winter mess room

Oren, Tova, Linn, Harl

Nera, Besh, Col, Iven

Yara, Sol, Venn, Daro

Six groups. Four people in each. Twenty-four total.

Western gathering point: the iron road marker beyond the apron.

Mark a destination beside every name. Do not count someone safe merely because they have left a room.

Handout: Cracked Lens Inspection Tag

PRIMARY TRANSIT ALIGNMENT LENS - INSPECTION

Twelve-inch optic. Secondary survey spares have incompatible diameter and mounting.

A hairline fracture crosses the inner ring.

Replace before the next transit. A short crossing places the same initial load on the lens as a long crossing.

Shelter lamps may remain in service while the engine is idle.

Custodian acknowledgment: O. Vale

A later note, written beneath the inspection:

Distress signal confirmed. Compatible primary replacement has not arrived. I accept responsibility for one emergency activation.

Handout: Winter Maintenance Record

MAINTENANCE FINDING

The primary alignment lens fractured during the emergency activation. It was already due for replacement; the compatible optic had not arrived. Oren authorized the activation after receiving the distress signal. The failed lens left the two wings caught between realms.

ONE CONTROLLED RETURN

Summer brake

Open the exhaust until the viewing pane is white. Then lower the locking arm.

Winter brake

Thaw the clutch with warm brine or the hand heater. Then lower the locking arm.

Both arms remain locked after the operator leaves.

Bridge selector

Two steady lights mean both brakes are set.

CLOSE returns Greyspan and shuts the opening.

PASSAGE returns Greyspan and holds a road open for twelve hours. The road then closes by itself.

Choose the setting. Arm the latch.

Beginning the transit leaves six pulses. The final pulse uses the controls as they stand at that moment.

Shelters

Reception, gallery, and winter mess room draw protection through the bridge spine.

Severing the bridge ends their protection immediately.

The selector can project a brief shelter around itself while the bridge remains intact.

Handout: Terms at the Silver Bowl

AGREEMENT FOR ONE PASSAGE

The undersigned freely accept these terms.

Greyspan's opening shall be set to PASSAGE for one controlled cycle.

No unwilling person shall be taken through the opening. No survivor's name, service, memory, or future shall become a debt under this agreement.

Lady Sere Vault's caravan may cross once during the twelve-hour opening. It shall carry no unwilling passengers or prisoners.

Lady Sere Vault and her escort shall not attack the rescuers, occupants, or controls. She shall prevent the third seam scavenger from entering during the final transit.

The agreed consideration is:

If the controlled passage does not open, the consideration is not owed.

The opening closes after twelve hours. No continuing right exists except one expressly written above.

A knowing breach shall be recorded on this page. This agreement imposes no hidden penalty.

Accepted freely by:

Quick Reference Sheets

Engine at the Table

Use **The Transit Procedure** for complete rules and exceptions.

TASK	REQUIREMENT	COST	RESULT
Vent summer cylinder	Adjacent operator	1 action	Pane turns white
Set summer brake	White pane	1 action	Summer brake set
Thaw winter clutch	Brine, heater, or fire	1 brine action; 2 crank actions; or ≥5 fire damage	Clutch stays thawed
Set winter brake	Thawed clutch	1 action	Winter brake set
Choose selector mode	Adjacent operator	1 action to change	CLOSE or PASSAGE; latch unarms
Arm latch	Both brakes set	1 action	Latch armed
Unlatch	Adjacent operator; no active guard	1 action	Latch unarmed
Guard latch	Adjacent creature	1 action	Blocks unlatching until next turn; see Protecting the Selector
Project shelter	Adjacent operator	1 action	20-foot-radius pulse protection this round
Begin transit early	Adjacent operator	1 action	Dial becomes 6; crisis starts
Open fuse housing	Key, tools, or damage	Key interaction; action and DC 16 Dexterity check with thieves' tools; or 15 damage	Lever exposed
Pull demolition lever	Exposed lever	3 actions total	Third pull destroys B1
Reset demolition pulls	Before third pull	1 action	Counter returns to 0

Crisis Round Sheet

ROUND	DIAL AFTER ROUND	NEW OPPOSITION	END-OF-ROUND EFFECT
1	7	R1 and R2 already present	Move civilians; 1d6 exposure pulse
2	8	None	Move civilians; 1d6 exposure pulse
3	9	R3 at round start unless excluded	Move civilians; 1d6 exposure pulse
4	10	None	Move civilians; 1d6 exposure pulse
5	11	None	Move civilians; 1d6 exposure pulse
6	12	None	Move civilians; resolve engine; no additional pulse

Reavers act at 12, after tied player characters. Civilians move and the dial resolves at 0. Check individual positions for ward, apron, and protective-effect coverage under **Crisis Round Order**.

Evacuation Dispatch Sheet

Group: ____

Leader: ____

Destination: S0 / E0 / stabilized shelter / other specified place

Route: ____

Departure trigger: ____

Movement: 60 feet / 40 feet with litter / 30 feet with slowed member

Protection: ____

Fallback if blocked: ____

Specify a fallback such as "return to W2 if the bridge lane is occupied" or "wait inside S1 for the escort."

NPC Bargain Reference

PERSON	WANTS NOW	ACCEPTS READILY	WILL NOT DO VOLUNTARILY
Maelin	Rescue and a clear bridge decision	Evidence, assigned responsibility, accountable evacuation	Demolish while knowingly stranding people without necessity

PERSON	WANTS NOW	ACCEPTS READILY	WILL NOT DO VOLUNTARILY
Oren	Preserve shelters and repair his mistake	Another competent operator; oversight; necessary evacuation	Lie about the control sequence
Tova	Move people with practical tools	Clear destination, litters, brine use, independent brake work	Wait for rank to settle every small decision
Sere	Valuable, recognized passage	Lenses or bounded toll compact	Accept undefined obligations or remain for certain collapse
Tal	Move the named people to safe ground	Messenger and escort duties	Abandon a carried survivor to join a fight

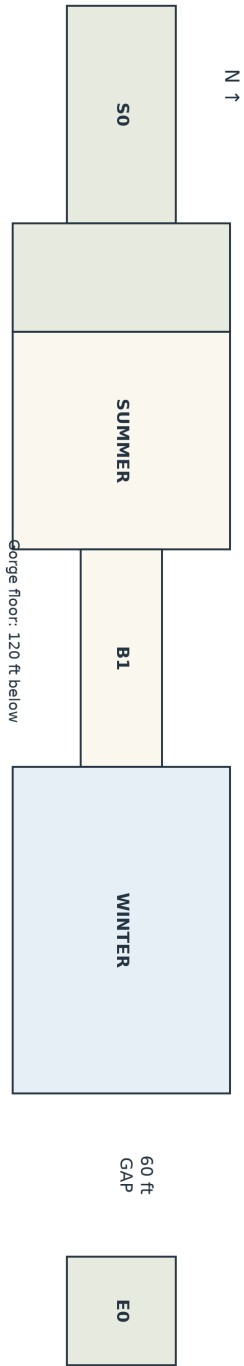
Player Map Sheets

Share each sheet when the party knows its layout, covering unexplored rooms as needed. These views omit DM positions and hidden mechanics.

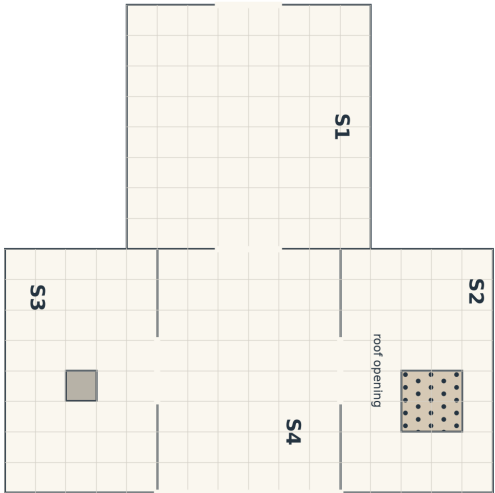
The Fortress of Two Seasons

THE FORTRESS OF TWO SEASONS

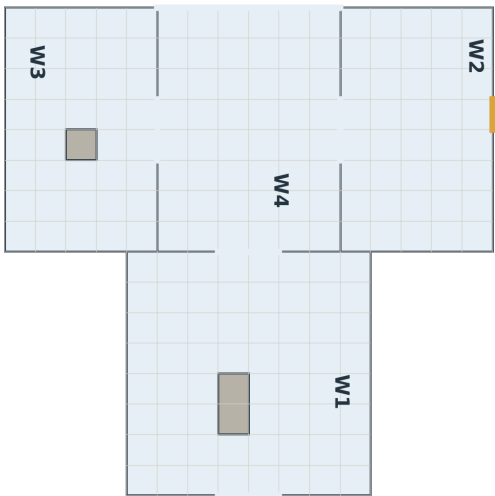
Greyspan site plan | PLAYER MAP - reveal interiors as explored



SUMMER WING - 5 ft grid



WINTER WING - 5 ft grid



Site overview has the same orientation and geometry as the enlarged wings. Bridge: 80 x 30 ft. Rooms: 20 ft walls.

Gallery roof opening: 10 x 10 ft. Winter clerestory: 5 ft wide, 10-15 ft above floor. The east gate opens onto the apron.

Room keys identify places only. The diagram grants no knowledge of unexplored rooms or their occupants.

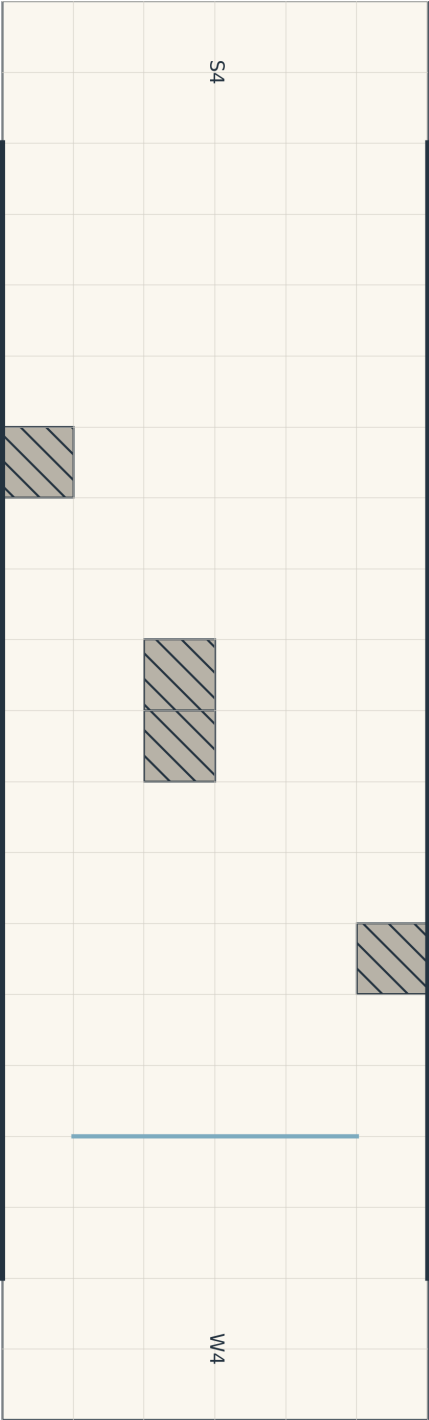
Map key: use the keyed location descriptions on the following pages.

The Fortress of Two Seasons

THE FORTRESS OF TWO SEASONS

Bridge tactical enlargement | PLAYER MAP

N ↑



B1 - 80 ft between courtyard edges

GRID: 5 FEET. Rails are 3 ft high. The gorge floor is 120 ft below the deck. Open courtyard connections at both ends.

Two central blocks: 4 ft high. Pylons: 8 ft high. Pale vertical plane: 20 ft high; it does not block movement.

Visible objects and clear lanes are shown. No control functions, encounter arrivals, or ward boundaries are disclosed.

Map key: use the keyed location descriptions on the following pages.

Session Notes

Decisions, discoveries, and the next adventure.

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