

Session 27 – The Frozen Ledger

Music

Music thumbnail / audio placeholder: Session 27 artwork and Varrick Songweave recording to be added after the recap is approved.

Images





Image placeholder 3: Xerathor the Frozen Ledger (upload the supplied Arcanaloth reference image to BookStack).

Image placeholder 4: The darkened temple and the party's approach (upload one of the supplied Roll20 screenshots or an approved scene image).

☐☐ Campaign Arc

- **Campaign:** Spelljammer
- **Session:** 27 – **The Frozen Ledger**
- **Date:** 24 October 2026
- **Dungeon Master:** James / Jamie / Sicareus
- **Setting:** The frozen serpent temple in Carceri → an altered, light-starved counterpart of the temple on Agathys, Carceri's sixth layer
- **Next Session:** 14 November 2026 (discussed and pencilled in at the table)

☐☐ Previously On...

Session 26 ended midway through the fight in the frozen temple beyond the Voice of the Ravines' portal. Rigg's ambush, Dino's swordwork, Valen's sculpted Fireball and attacks from High Jinks and her newly summoned Sphinx of Wonder, **Tiv v2**, had destroyed most of the Ice Mephits. The **Ice Devil** remained on its feet, however, and the final Mephit was still active. The guardian's spear had already imposed punishing movement and action restrictions, while Leydrick's healing and

defensive magic helped keep the front line intact.

Beyond the fight, the party was still pursuing the Illithids under **Primus' command** to reach the Red Prison, stop the Mind Flayers and release the imprisoned Resident, **Tharizdun**. The blue dragon had granted passage at the price of the **Wand of Winter** and warned that the journey would take the group into yet more dangerous territory. The means of getting back remained uncertain.

Overview

The frozen battle resumed without mercy. Tiv v2 traded blows with the last Mephit, Dino continued to hold the line against the Ice Devil, and Leydrick repeatedly restored battered companions while still finding time to throw his dwarven hammer. The guardian's punishing attacks nearly broke through the party's defences, but the group survived the final exchange and defeated both the Ice Devil and the remaining Mephit. A Prayer of Healing gave the party the breathing room to investigate, uncover another set of transportation sigils and move on.

That next passage was unlike the portals before it. Dino's attempt to probe the darkness with his Moon-Touched sword resulted in his entire body being pulled through, with Valen following in a hurried attempt to help. The others joined them in a similar, unnervingly cold passage through immense distance. They emerged in a version of the temple where even magical light seemed muted. The darkness was not simply a spell waiting to be dispelled: this was **Agathys**, the bottom layer of Carceri. Careful movement, an oddly familiar ringing bell and Dino's enthusiastic leap across the ice drew the attention of a book-bearing, jackal-faced **Arcanaloth**.

The creature introduced himself as **Xerathor the Frozen Ledger**. He had already made terms with the Illithids and was far more interested in contracts and souls than a fight. A first bargain bought the party protection from the lethal cold at the risk of their souls if they died here, while restricting their actions against Xerathor and his portal. Further bargaining took a surprisingly personal turn, with the three negotiators agreeing to part with valuable property and even memories in exchange for personal boons. As the session closed, the party had gained real power, surrendered valuable things, and discovered that the Illithids may possess an exit the party themselves could not use.

Party Members

Character	Player	Class / Subclass	Race	Notable Actions
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Garrick “Rigg” Dalhart 	Moose / Ben / Elemunk	Rogue (Swashbuckler)	Human	Delivered the decisive wrench uppercut against the Ice Devil; investigated the encounter with Xerathor by stealth and sleight of hand; traded for enhanced Dexterity and speed.
Leydrick Gefinhal 	Jared / Galindis	Cleric (Life Domain)	Dwarf	Maintained Shield of Faith and emergency healing during the final rounds; dispatched the last Mephit with the Dwarven Thrower; led the post-battle recovery with Prayer of Healing.
High Jinks 	Kate / Keitachan	Warlock (Great Old One)	Tabaxi	Fought with Eldritch Blast and supported Tiv v2 through dangerous Mephit attacks; used Invisibility and her senses to explore; bargained for Wisdom and a limited familiar-protection boon while refusing to trade away the Ring of Spell Storing.
Dynoth “Dino Roar” Rokos 	Robb / Baconbuff	Artificer (Battle Smith) / Fighter (Psi Warrior)	Githyan ki	Pressed the Ice Devil with his two swords and psionic strikes; shielded Rigg with Protective Field; was pulled into the next portal while testing it; negotiated the initial cold-protection agreement with Xerathor.
Valen Pyre 	Justin / Slitzer	Wizard (Evoker)	Human	Contributed Eldritch Blasts, discovered the portal magic, examined Agathys' unnatural darkness with Detect Magic and Arcana, and negotiated away his Feywild wizard-tower deed and its associated memories for a boon.

☐☐ Key Locations

- **Frozen serpent-temple chamber:** The sixty-foot-high, ice-encrusted battlefield where the Ice Devil and remaining Mephits were defeated; the guardian's body burned and sank away after its collapse.
- **Runed altar / forward portal:** The newly found transportation sigils used after the party recovered. Testing the passage produced a powerful, involuntary pull rather than a normal step through a doorway.
- **Agathys' darkened temple:** An altered version of the same temple at the bottom of Carceri. Frosted floors, pillars and an altar remained recognisable, but light illuminated far less than expected and much of the space carried magical effects.
- **The damaged altar and outer doorway:** Investigation suggested that a return mechanism had been scraped, worn or disrupted, with residual magic still present but requiring an extraordinary amount of power to reactivate. The outside lay in extreme darkness and cold.

☐☐ Session Highlights

- **The guardian's last rounds:** Rigg inflicted heavy wrench and Sneak Attack damage, including a pushing strike; Dino continued his Moon-Touched and Dancing Longsword assault. His Sap attacks and psionic abilities helped the party withstand the high-threat foe.
- **A brutal change of target:** The Ice Devil moved past Dino to attack Leydrick and Rigg. Its spear inflicted severe damage and imposed restrictions on movement and available actions. Rigg's *Uncanny Dodge* and Dino's *Protective Field* reduced one particularly dangerous hit; the logged *Protective Field* roll was **13**.
- **The final blow:** Rigg's roughly **32-damage** wrench uppercut broke the guardian's resistance. The DM described the creature falling as its body began to burn and sink into the ground. This confirms the encounter victory, not necessarily the permanent death of the devil on its native plane.
- **One last explosion:** Leydrick's Dwarven Thrower finished the final Ice Mephit. Its Death Burst caught Tiv v2, but the Sphinx succeeded on its Constitution save and survived. Earlier, High Jinks had also invoked her familiar-protection reaction against a Mephit's mixed slashing and cold damage.
- **Recovery rather than a long rest:** Leydrick's *Mass Healing Word* restored **19 HP** during combat. Afterward, his fourth-level *Prayer of Healing* restored **26 HP** and granted short-rest benefits following its ten-minute casting time.
- **Into the unknown:** Valen located further magical transport sigils. Dino tested the portal with his glowing sword, failed the Strength save against the pull, and was dragged through. Valen followed; Rigg and then the others reunited with them on the far side. High Jinks had cast *Invisibility* on herself, Leydrick and Tiv before crossing.

- **Darkness with rules of its own:** Valen's magical examination detected widespread effects, but the diminished light was characteristic of Agathys itself rather than an ordinary removable darkness spell. A bell rang near the chamber's centre as High Jinks moved, and Dino used *Jump* to cross the slick ice toward it.
- **Xerathor's ledger:** A jackal-faced Arcanaloth materialised, applauding Dino's manoeuvre. Calling himself **Xerathor the Frozen Ledger**, he confirmed that Illithids had already passed, having made an arrangement involving souls. When he opened his book, faint screams and visions of ghostly figures suggested the nature of his collection; not all of the figures were Illithids.
- **The first contract:** Xerathor offered protection from Agathys' cold in exchange for a claim on the party's souls if they died there. The terms he recited forbade attacking him or destroying the place, reopening his portal, or travelling back upward through the layers by that route. Dino agreed and shook his hand; Xerathor bestowed a warming effect over the party. The precise duration was not given beyond “at least for now.”
- **The way out is somebody else's problem:** Dino's checks found residual but damaged altar magic. Xerathor would not allow use of his own portal, but suggested that the Illithids must have brought another means of leaving. The party considered obtaining that means from the expedition they were already chasing.
- **A rogue and a ledger:** Rigg attempted to swap Xerathor's visible book for Valen's old spellbook, then changed tactics when the DM clarified the book never left Xerathor's hand. A **29 Sleight of Hand** secured a hard, cold object from his pocket. When Rigg later presented it as a bargaining chip, Xerathor identified it as an **Alhoon crystal** and noted that he already owned several.
- **Bargains within bargains:** Valen, Rigg and High Jinks each struck an additional deal and signed the open ledger. Xerathor delivered three character-specific boons, but the group would need to account for the possessions and information surrendered in return (recorded under Loot & Discoveries).

✕ Encounter Resolution

Creature / Companion	Final Status	Notes
Ice Devil	Defeated; body vanished	Rigg's uppercut felled it. Its body burned and sank away; a permanent death was not established.
Final Ice Mephit	Destroyed	Finished by Leydrick's Dwarven Thrower; triggered one last Death Burst.
Tiv v2 / Sphinx of Wonder	Alive	Survived the battle and the last Death Burst; later received a lesser, not fully quantified protective boon.
Xerathor the Frozen Ledger	Alive; non-hostile at session end	Completed negotiations with the party. No fight occurred.

Creature / Companion	Final Status	Notes
Illithid expedition	Still ahead; unseen this session	Xerathor confirmed an earlier passage and a negotiated arrangement. The party did not catch up.

☐☐ Key Scenes

1. The Uppercut — Rigg and the Ice Devil

The towering guardian had already struck Rigg with its spear. With the worst of the impact diverted, the rogue remained close enough to meet the devil's gaze. He brought his oversized wrench up beneath its chin in a decisive upward swing. The creature fell; its body began to burn and sink into the frozen floor. For all the planning, the finishing move was unmistakably Rigg's.

2. A Handshake in Agathys — Dino and Xerathor

In the darkened temple, Dino did not immediately draw steel against the jackal-faced stranger. He asked about the Illithids, pressed for terms, and tried to find a way around the restriction on leaving. Xerathor answered with his ledger, his insistence on a soul claim and a pointed refusal to let anyone reuse his portal. Dino finally shook the offered hand. A wave of warmth spread through the party: the bargain had immediate value, and a potentially appalling price.

3. The Price of a Tower — Valen and Xerathor

Valen offered the deed to the wizard's tower he had acquired during the party's earlier travels through the Feywild. Xerathor found the property interesting enough to intrude telepathically into the wizard's memories of the place. Valen recognised the mental probing and allowed him to see more. The proposed chess wager fell away; the creature wanted both the deed and the memories of what lay within. Valen accepted the bargain for a gift of arcane understanding.

4. The Ring Stays — High Jinks and Xerathor

High Jinks' fear for her frequently lost familiars gave Xerathor another opening. He offered lasting protection in exchange for her Ring of Spell Storing. She refused: the healing spells inside could save her living companions, whereas a destroyed familiar could still be resummoned. Instead, she offered a Driftglobe and Gloves of Missile Snaring for a lesser boon. Xerathor agreed. Tiv v2 received some measure of protection, but the full strength and mechanics of the effect remained undisclosed.

□ Ongoing Threads & Plot Hooks

- **The race for the Red Prison:** The Illithids have already gone onward from Agathys' temple and have a sizeable lead. Their ultimate progress toward the Resident remains unknown.
- **Primus and Tharizdun:** The compelled objective remains to stop the Mind Flayers and release the imprisoned god, even as the party increasingly questions what that would unleash. Xerathor doubted that mortals could release such a prisoner.
- **Souls under contract:** The cold-protection agreement places a claim on the party's souls if they die here. How this interacts with other supernatural obligations, and the exact enforcement of the restrictions, has not been tested.
- **No straightforward retreat:** Xerathor's portal is barred by agreement; the altar's return magic is damaged and would demand extraordinary power. The Illithids' means of departure is only an inference from their having come this far, not a recovered device.
- **Three new personal bargains:** Valen, Rigg and High Jinks signed for boons. The resulting bonuses were stated, but the future consequences, any lingering conditions and the final inventory removals should be tracked.
- **Valen's surrendered memories:** Xerathor asked for memories of the inside of the wizard's tower alongside the deed. Valen agreed; the transcript does not show a later test proving exactly which memories were erased or retained.
- **Tiv v2's new protection:** The DM described a minor protective effect on the familiar, weaker than the permanent protection offered for the ring. Its mechanics and limits were not specified before play ended.
- **The wider Illithid conflict:** The badly wounded Alhoon that escaped in Session 25 and the other expedition mentioned earlier in the campaign remain unresolved. Xerathor's collection of soul-bound figures adds another complication, not confirmation that all the Illithids were killed.
- **The bound blue dragon:** The Voice of the Ravines remains imprisoned at the earlier ruined temple. Nothing in this session freed it or reversed the Wand of Winter trade.

☐☐ Loot & Discoveries

Item / Discovery	Finder / Holder	Description / Status
Protection against Agathys' cold	Xerathor → party	Warming magical protection granted after Dino's handshake. Soul-forfeiture conditions apply if party members die on the layer; exact duration and coverage remain unspecified.
Rigg's boon — hunter's swiftness	Rigg	+2 Dexterity and +10 ft movement speed. Xerathor described the power through a vision of a swift forest predator or panther.
Valen's boon — arcane knowledge	Valen	+2 Intelligence and +1 to Arcana. The DM said “Arcana saves”; as Arcana is ordinarily a skill, the exact character-sheet implementation should be confirmed.
High Jinks' boon — insight and familiar ward	High Jinks / Tiv v2	+2 Wisdom to High Jinks and a lesser protective magic on Tiv v2. The precise familiar benefit was not yet mechanically defined.
Wizard's tower deed	Valen → Xerathor, by contract	Previously held title to Valen's Feywild wizard's tower. Offered and accepted as consideration for the boons; should no longer be treated as an unencumbered party asset.
Memories of the tower interior	Valen → Xerathor, by contract	Nonphysical payment requested alongside the deed. Agreed in conversation; the exact effect on Valen's recollection needs a follow-up check.
Alchemy Jug	Rigg → Xerathor, by contract	Rigg's long-running source of beer and other liquids was offered alongside the crystal. The agreed exchange treats it as spent, although a discrete on-screen handover is not described.
Alhoon crystal	Rigg (taken from Xerathor)	Rigg covertly lifted the cold, stone-like object from Xerathor's pocket. Xerathor identified it as an Alhoon crystal when Rigg offered it in the secondary bargain. The final physical handover is not separately narrated.
Hat of Disguise	High Jinks → Xerathor, by contract	The familiar Mind Flayer disguise hat attracted Xerathor's interest and became part of the negotiated consideration. High Jinks put it on during talks; no later use or return was recorded.
Driftglobe and Gloves of Missile Snaring	High Jinks → Xerathor, by contract	Offered together in place of the Ring of Spell Storing for the lesser familiar-protection benefit. Both were included in the agreed bargain; their individual handover was not narrated.
Ring of Spell Storing	High Jinks — retained	Explicitly not traded . The party clarified its intended five-level load as a third-level <i>Fireball</i> , first-level <i>Healing Word</i> and first-level <i>Cure Wounds</i> . The Fireball expended in Session 26 was verbally replenished by Valen after Session 27 concluded.
Illithid passage / escape clue	Party	Xerathor had traded with Illithids who preceded the party. He hinted that they must have planned a separate means of leaving, because his portal cannot be reused by the party under the contract.
Ice Devil / Mephit remains	Party	No confirmed coin, equipment or other loot recovered. The devil's body vanished, and the Mephit's defeat produced another dangerous death burst rather than a reward.

The Frozen Ledger's boons: Xerathor offered neither conventional treasure nor a simple enchantment of an existing weapon. His gifts arrived as changes to the recipients themselves: a hunter's speed for Rigg, hard-won arcane knowledge for Valen and sharper wisdom for High Jinks. They are confirmed bonuses, but they came through a signed exchange with a professional collector of souls.

The Ring of Spell Storing: High Jinks' refusal to surrender the ring preserved one of the party's most flexible safety nets. The corrected combination of one third-level spell and two first-level spells accounts for its normal five levels of capacity. In practice, its value was exactly what convinced her to keep it: a place to hold both emergency healing and serious offensive power.

□ Cliffhanger

- The party is together inside the **darkened temple on Agathys**, with the Ice Devil and last Mephit defeated behind them.
- **Xerathor remains alive** and the party has made a soul-contingent agreement for protection against the cold. His portal is not available for their return under the agreed terms.
- **Rigg, Valen and High Jinks have received boons**, but have agreed to surrender substantial possessions and information. Tiv v2's lesser protection remains only partially explained.
- The Illithids are still ahead. Finding their route onward — and potentially taking whatever exit they arranged — has become the immediate practical problem.
- The overriding objective has not changed: find the Red Prison and confront the Illithid scheme surrounding the imprisoned **Tharizdun**.

Next Session: 14 November 2026 (pencilled in at the table).

Revision #1

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