

FORGOTTEN REALMS

ARVEIATURACE, THE WHITE WYRM

[by Justin Alexander - October 21st, 2021](#)



When I [reviewed](#) *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*, I commented that Arveiatrace — the white wyrm with the dead body of her beloved wizard-rider strapped to her back — was one of the coolest things created for the book.

I wasn't alone. You can find lots of people [saying the same thing](#).

She's still very cool.

But it turns out she wasn't created for the book.

I realized my mistake recently when I was reading through [Storm King's Thunder](#) and noticed a reference to Arveiatrace. (Which is a testament to how cool her presentation in *Rime of the Frostmaiden* is, because it made her stick in my mind so that future references would stick out like that.)

My curiosity piqued, I started digging deeper. And it turns out Arveiatrace is also mentioned in [Tyranny of Dragons](#), where her mate Arauthator is trying to find a new rider for her in the hopes that it will convince her to take the rotting corpse off her back.

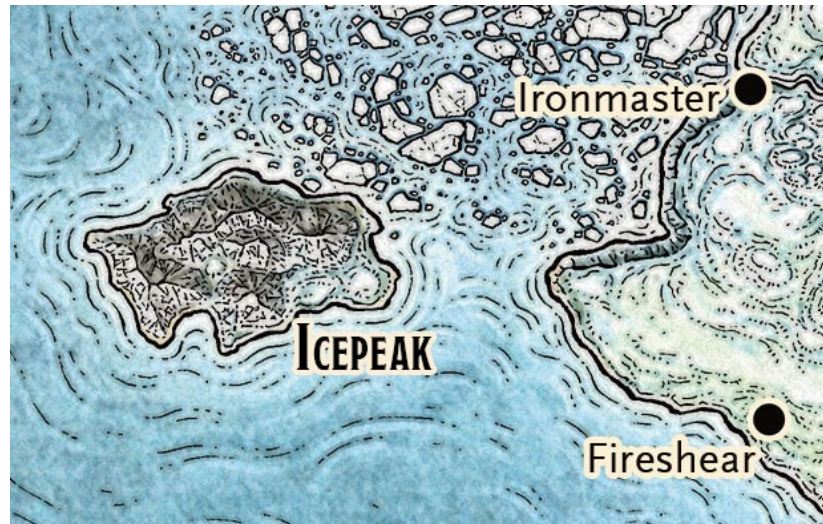
(True story.)

Around this time, Arauthator and Arveiatrace were both mentioned in R.A. Salvatore's *Rise of the King*, but their origin actually traces back through *Dragons of Faerun* (a 3rd Edition supplement that I'm pretty sure is the source text from which they entered 5th Edition) all the way to *Dragon Magazine* #230, where Ed Greenwood launched a column called *Wyrms of the North*. The first column was dedicated to Arauthator. The second column, in #231, was about Arveiatrace, featuring art by Storn Cook:



If you go back and read the original article, there are some really interesting games of Telephone that you can trace through the later books where it seems fairly clear authors were aware of one of the older references, but didn't realize (just like me at the beginning of this article!) that it was all based on a larger body of previous lore.

For example, Arveiatrace's lair is located in Icepeak, where it is part of the lair of the wizard who was/is her rider.



Because Arveiatrace doesn't actually appear in *Tyranny of Dragons*, this lair is not mentioned there. But it is mentioned that her mate, Arauthator, has a lair inside a hollowed out iceberg.

For *Storm King's Thunder*, whoever wrote the section describing Icepeak (p. 92, where it appears as "Ice Peak") knew the original source for Arveiatrace or, more likely, *Dragons of Faerun* and places her lair "correctly" in Icepeak.

But whoever wrote the section on the Sea of Moving Ice (p. 106) was probably sourcing strictly from *Tyranny of Dragons* and so writes, "Each dragon [Arauthator and Arveiatrace] makes it lair inside a hollowed-out iceberg."

In *Rime of the Frostmaiden*, the author of Arveiatrace's section (p. 105) once again is sourcing strictly from *Tyranny of Dragons*, is unaware of either reference in *Storm King's Thunder*, and decides to place the "unknown" location of her lair atop the Reghed Glacier.

I love this kind of thing because it's a simple exemplar of something that happens *all the time* in actual history texts describing the real world. For example, check out CGP Grey's "[The Race to Win Staten Island](#)," which brilliantly tears apart a historical legend which has perniciously crept its way into historical "fact."

Another fun fact here is that, in her original appearance, Arveiatrace is a straight-up draconic whore:

Arauthator regards the white dragon Arveiatrace as an acceptable mate when he feels inclined. He employs a sending spell to call her to his lair for dalliance, giving her gems from his hoard after each mating but firmly escorting her out of his domain to rear any hatchlings that may result on her own.

(No shame intended, to be clear. Everyone's a consenting Adult age category here.)

Where are their kids, by the way? That could be a really interesting thread to pull on in your *Tyranny of Dragons*, *Storm King's Thunder*, or *Rime of the Frostmaiden* campaigns. Or, if your players have already run through those campaigns, to drop into a future storyline.

My favorite anecdote from Dragon #231, though, is that Laeral Silverhand of Waterdeep heard that Arveiatrace had besieged Candlekeep in response to someone writing a disparaging remark about Melathorand, her dead wizard-rider. So Laeral immediately commissioned *The High History of the Mighty*

Mage Melathorand (he's the dreamiest!) and hand-delivered a copy to Arveiatrace, cementing a long-term alliance with the tempestuous wyrm (which apparently lasts unto the present day).

It's also worth noting that Melathorand's corpse has been strapped to her back for over a hundred years now. I'm guessing it's not in great shape.

Or perhaps Arveiatrace periodically seeks out preservation spells to maintain the corpse in good condition. Although if she's aware of that need, it raises the question of why she has not resurrected the mage. Does the mage not wish to return to life? (Why not?) Or is his soul trapped somewhere? That could be a fascinating adventure seed!

Alternatively, perhaps Arveiatrace is utterly mad and someone (likely Arauthor?) is the one who periodically arranges for the corpse to be magically preserved or restored.

Long story short, if you want to add a lot of lore to your presentation of Arveiatrace, track down Dragon #231 for "Wyrms of the North: Arveiatrace, the White Wurm" (which, again, you can also currently read [here](#)). Pretty much everything else is just a cliff's note version of Greenwood's original work.

