



FOR 4 PCS OF
6TH - 7TH LEVEL

THE INTERNAL SALT PITS

A SE WARLOCK ADVENTURE
BY RICHARD GREEN

THE INFERNAL SALT PITS

GM Note: When a creature's name appears in **bold**, that's a cue that its stat block appears in the *System Reference Document*, 5.1. If the stat block appears in the *Tome of Beasts*, it is noted as such.

Adventure Background

The infamous Ghatazi Salt Pits lie deep in the Crescent Desert, northwest of the city of Saph-Saph. Here, gangs of wretched slaves dig precious salt from the ground to be sold in the markets of the Free Cities of the Desert and Nuria Natal at the behest of cruel, diabolical overseers.

Based in a ruined donjon overlooking the salt pits, the desolate mining camp is presided over by the gilded devil, Khemunsiri, and his ruthless cabal of devils and cultists of Mammon. The donjon was built centuries ago by a Nurian Red Portal wizard named Shabhenti Djalit,, Master of Worlds, on a powerful ley line. Shabhenti opened a Red Portal inside his fortress and used it to travel to many different planes and times. When the hubristic wizard ran foul of the fiendish inhabitants of the Eleven Hells, the ley line's power faded, and the donjon fell into ruin. The Red

Portal, however, still functions—it was this gateway that brought Khemunsiri and his infernal servants to Midgard.

Now, Tamasheq nomads and caravans from Saph-Saph and further afield visit the salt pits to trade gold, supplies, and chained slaves for blocks of the pinkish salt. Many working in the salt pits are wicked folk who were sold into slavery as punishment for their crimes. When their miserable lives come to an abrupt end, the devils sell their souls to visiting night hags who trade them in the souks of Hell.

Adventure Hooks

- The PCs are hired by the Hand of Nakresh to rescue an enslaved criminal named Ruhdjek from the salt pits. Unused to hard physical labor, Ruhdjek is dead by the time the party arrives. Can they steal his soul back from the night hag merchants?
- The PCs are employed as guards on a caravan from Saph-Saph or Nuria, but their unscrupulous caravan master attempts to sell them to the slavers at the salt pits.
- The Honorable Society of Portal Wizards in Per-Anu asks the adventurers to investigate reports of a long-forgotten Red Portal inside a ruined donjon in the desert.

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The Mining Camp

The key features of the mining camp at the Ghatazi salt pits are as follows.

Cultists: The cultists of Mammon are the public face of the operation; the devils stay out of sight unless the alarm is raised. 1d4+2 **cultists** can be found in the camp during daytime. They wear white robes, copper half-masks with leering, diabolic features, and pendants bearing three gold coins – Mammon’s holy symbol. They direct newcomers to the donjon to meet with Nebmontu in area 2.

Salt Pits: From dawn to dusk, 30 slaves (**commoners**) are hard at work in this network of glistening 15-foot diameter tunnels carved out of the salt, 30 feet beneath the surface. Chained together in groups of five or six and working under the watchful eye of Pakero and Sudek, a pair of **salt devils** (*Tome of Beasts*, p.113), the slaves hew out slabs of salt and haul them up using a bucket and pulley system. Sections of chain have 10 hit points, and can be broken with a DC 20 Strength check, but the slaves are too frightened or exhausted to try. Each slave starts the day suffering from level 2 exhaustion and ends their shift at level 3. Deaths are frequent.

Slave Quarters: The slaves are housed inside three sheds built from bricks of milky-pink salt. Each shed is 20-feet long and 10-feet wide and holds up to a dozen chained slaves. Conditions inside are squalid and the crude roofs made from badly cured camel hides are crawling with biting flies.

Camel Pen: A pair of sickly looking **camels** destined for the cooking pot are kept inside this wooden pen.

Oasis: A half dozen date palm trees surround a large pool that provides the camp with cool, clean water. Visitors to the salt pits pitch their tents in the shade of the trees and allow their camels to drink from the water. Current visitors include:

- Zaida ag-Eshnunna, a Tamasheq **bandit lord** (*Tome of Beasts*, p.418), her **bandit captain** and eight **tribal warriors**. Zaida and her men, clad in white robes and cobalt turbans, belong to the Vanhu Dewabi tribe that wanders the Crescent Desert. They are here to buy salt with the gold they have made rustling camels.
- Tafra Scrag-Ear, a hot-tempered gnoll merchant (**veteran**) and his six **gnoll** caravan guards are here to trade a dozen slaves—all convicted criminals—in exchange for five camel loads of salt.

The Ruined Donjon

On a ridge above the mining camp stands the ruined stone fortress used as a base by the gilded devil, Khemunsiri, and his allies. Sections of the south and northeast walls have collapsed, and part of the domed tower in the southeast corner lies open to the elements. The rest of the structure remains intact.

1. ENTRANCE CHAMBER

A partially collapsed archway forms a wide opening that leads inside the fortress.

Four **cultists** of Mammon stand guard here. If the PCs say they are here to meet with Nebmontu, they are shown into the Long Hall (area 2). If they are attacked, the cultists shout for help, alerting their comrades in the hall, the devils in the tower (area 6), and possibly the night hags in area 3.

2. LONG HALL

Worn carvings on the walls of this long, impressive hallway depict a robed figure, shown in profile, journeying to many exotic locations. A statue of a ram-headed sphinx, carved from glistening, pinkish salt stands against the east wall. Beyond lies a rubble-choked alcove. Salt crunches underfoot.



Here, the PCs can meet Nebmontu, a silver-tongued **cult fanatic** who seems delighted to do business with the newcomers. He wears the same pendant and white robes as the other cultists, but no mask. Three masked **cult fanatics** sit behind desks, recording recent salt transactions on papyrus scrolls. Ghatazi rocksalt is of superior quality; a 50-lb block sells for 10 gp. The cultists purchase slaves from for between 2 and 6 blocks each, depending on their physical condition.

The carvings on the walls are in the ancient Nurian style and depict Shabhenti Djalit's travels through the Red Portal. What were once arrow slits in the south wall have widened into openings large enough for a medium-sized creature to squeeze through.

Along the western wall, a secret door to area 10 can be found with a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check; it opens with a touch. The rubble pile opposite can be climbed with a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. Anyone making it to the top can peer through into area 3.

3. GUEST QUARTERS

The walls of this guest chamber are decorated with faded frescoes depicting sphinxes, serpopards, and other exotic beasts.

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Two **night hags**, Evanthe and Jalena, arrived recently through the Red Portal to purchase the souls of dead slaves, and they are staying in this chamber as guests of Khemunsiri. The hags use *change shape* to appear as Tamasheq nomads when out of this room, but even in disguise, they still cackle disconcertingly.

Three sealed glass jars sit on a shelf, and each contains a tiny, glowing figure—a trapped humanoid soul that the hags have bought from the devils. A coffer containing 300 gp, each coin stamped with a grinning demon's face, and two empty glass jars can be found under one bed.

4. LIVING QUARTERS

Nebmontu and the other cult fanatics make their home in this chamber, sleeping on simple camp beds. Four locked chests (DC 15 to pick) contain their precious loot: 750 gp, 17 tiger eye agates (10 gp each), a green garnet (100 gp), and a painting of a Nurian god-king on papyrus (125 gp).

5. RUINED AREA

The outer walls of the donjon have collapsed in several places. A **skitterhaunt** (*Tome of Beasts*, p. 352) inhabiting a giant scorpion's carapace lairs here and will aggressively attack intruders. Noxious green goo leaks from its exoskeleton. In addition, ambient magic within the donjon has attracted a **manabane scarab swarm** (*Tome of Beasts*, p. 374). The clicking, luminescent beetles appear as soon as spells or magical items are used in the area.

6. DEVIL'S TOWER

This partially ruined, three-story tower is home to a squad of Khemunsiri's diabolic servants. Three **bearded devils** stay out of sight on the middle floor (area 6a), but they respond if the alarm is raised by the cultists. A **barbed devil** named Naxthris keeps watch over the mining camp from what's left of the domed top floor (area 6b), hurling flame at intruders.

7. RED PORTAL

Stone double doors carved with hieroglyphics recording Shabhenti Djalit's great deeds lead into the chamber holding the Red Portal. At the center of the room is a shimmering archway, and a whiff of sulphur provides a clue to its destination, the Eleven Hells. Anyone stepping through finds themselves in a blasted hellscape beneath a blood red sky, not far from a dread city of rusted iron. Fortunately, the portal is still visible from this side and works both ways.

8. CULTIST QUARTERS

Rank and file cultists of Mammon live here. During the day, four **cultists** will be asleep on camp beds. The PCs can find 120 gp and a salt carving of a camel (25 gp) in the wooden trunks that hold their personal belongings.

9. STOREROOM

Supplies, mining tools, chains, rope, and other gear are stored here.

10. TEMPLE OF MAMMON

This chamber is dominated by the 15-foot tall rocksalt statue of a grinning archdevil with huge horns and a fat bell. His near-naked body is adorned with gold jewelry. Stacks of salt blocks fill the alcoves around the walls.

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Khemunsiri, the slavers' **gilded devil** (*Tome of Beasts*, p. 106) leader, can be encountered here, with Sawab, his **salt devil** (*Tome of Beasts*, p. 113) lieutenant. Only a handful of the salt pits' most trusted customers have met Khemunsiri, and even then, the fiend wears a loose fitting, white djellaba and a headscarf of golden silk to conceal his true appearance.

Khemunsiri is a devious smooth talker who takes delight in corrupting greedy mortals to damn their souls for eternity. The devil will first attempt to negotiate with the PCs, tempting them with promises of riches to come. If this approach doesn't work, he will try *suggestion* and *dominate person* before resorting to more aggressive tactics. Khemunsiri wears 1,000 gp worth of gold jewelry that he can reshape into a +2 *heavy flail* using his *scourge of avarice* action or consume to heal himself with his *voracious greed* action.

Treasure: In addition to Khemunsiri's jewelry, gold trinkets worth 1,250 gp decorate Mammon's statue. The 200 blocks of salt, each weighing 50 lbs., are worth 2,000 gp.

GILDED DEVIL

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (coin mail)

Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +6, Wis +7, Cha +6

Skills Deception +9, History +5, Insight +10, Persuasion +9, Sleight of Hand +8

Damage Resistances cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy (120 ft.)

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the devil's darkvision.

Liar's Largesse. A gilded devil has influence over the recipient of a gift for as long as that creature retains the gift. The recipient receives a –2 penalty on saving throws against the gilded devil's abilities and a further –10 penalty against scrying attempts made by the gilded devil. A *remove curse* spell removes this effect.

Magic Resistance. The devil has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The gilded devil's weapon attacks are magical.

Innate Spellcasting. The gilded devil's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The gilded devil can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect thoughts*, *major image*, *suggestion*

3/day each: *dominate person*, *polymorph*, *scorching ray* (4 rays), *scrying*

1/day: *teleport* (self plus 50 lb. of objects only)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gilded devil makes two heavy flail attacks.

Heavy Flail (Scourge of Avarice). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Betrayal of Riches (Recharge 5–6). As a bonus action, a gilded devil can turn rings, necklaces, and other jewelry momentarily against their wearer. The devil can affect any visible item of jewelry on up to two creatures within 60 feet, twisting them into cruel barbs and spikes. Each target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to halve the damage from this effect. If the saving throw fails, the victim takes 13 (3d8) piercing damage and an additional effect based on the item location targeted.

LOCATION	EFFECT
Arms	Melee damage halved until short rest
Hand	Drop any held item
Eyes	Permanently blinded
Head	Disadvantage on Int checks until long rest
Feet	Speed halved for 24 hours
Neck	Stunned, unable to breathe for 1 round
Other	No additional effect



An item is treated as jewelry if it is made of a precious material (such as silver, gold, ivory, or adamantite), adorned with gems, or both, and is worth at least 100 gp.

Scorn Base Metals. A gilded devil's attacks ignore any protection provided by nonmagical armor made of bronze, iron, steel, or similar metals. Protection provided by valuable metals such as adamantite, mithral, and gold apply, as do bonuses provided by non-metallic objects.

Scourge of Avarice. As a bonus action, a gilded devil wearing jewelry worth at least 1,000 gp can reshape it into a +2 *heavy flail*. A creature struck by this jeweled flail suffers disadvantage on all Wisdom saving throws until his or her next short rest, in addition to normal weapon damage. The flail reverts to its base components 1 minute after it leaves the devil's grasp, or upon the gilded devil's death.

Voracious Greed. As an action, a gilded devil can consume non-magical jewelry or coinage worth up to 1,000 gp. For each 200 gp consumed, it heals 5 hp of damage. A gilded devil can use this ability against the worn items of a grappled foe. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw to keep an item from being consumed.

SALT DEVIL

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +7, Cha +5

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances acid, cold; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Celestial, Common, Gnoll, Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the devil's darkvision.

Magic Resistance. The devil has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The devil's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). The devil can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *darkness*

1/day each: *harm*, *teleport*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The devil makes two scimitar attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is neither undead nor a construct, it also takes 5 (1d10) necrotic damage, or half damage with a successful DC 15 Constitution saving throw. Plants, oozes, and creatures with the Amphibious, Water Breathing, or Water Form traits have disadvantage on this saving throw. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target also gains one level of exhaustion.

SKITTERHAUNT

Large ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 95 (10d10 + 40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities acid

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Broken Shell. A creature that hits the skitterhaunt with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 5 (1d10) acid damage.

Infest Vermin. If the skitterhaunt damages a Medium or smaller beast, it can try to infest it as a bonus action. The damaged creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the target must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. If the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0, the skitterhaunt has devoured the creature's insides and the affected becomes a skitterhaunt, retaining its outward shell but replacing its flesh with skitterhaunt ooze.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The skitterhaunt makes two claw attacks and one sting attack.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage plus 5 (1d10) acid damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). The skitterhaunt has two claws, each of which can grapple one target.

Sting. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. **Hit:** 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) acid damage.

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Acid Spray (Recharge 6). The skitterhaunt spits acid in a line 30 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line takes 18 (4d8) acid damage, or half damage with a successful DC 14 Dexterity saving throw.

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