

MINI1-3

BUILDING THE PYRE

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING* *FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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Adventurers have gained a clue that the cult activities in Sambral are directed by superiors in Ramekho. The best chance of defeating the cultists is to find them before they notice anyone looking for them. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Ramekho for characters levels 1-4. It is recommended that you play the Embers of Dawn mini-campaign adventures in sequential order with one character for the best enjoyment and play possibilities within the mini-campaign, but it is not required.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DM REWARDS program. DMing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2012.

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PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your organizer directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks may have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware

of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are filled with good information about being a DM for a D&D game.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 1-4. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the lower levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the higher levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group agrees to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group agrees; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

Reading the Numbers: Each encounter has a level and sometimes other values (such as XP or skill check DCs) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter – that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success – they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly among the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there are encounters remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. **Encounters that do not give**

out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone. Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

LASTING EFFECTS

Sometimes a PC suffers a lasting effect that isn't easily resolved before the end of the adventure. The two most common lasting effects are the death penalty and diseases.

Death Penalty: When a character dies and is brought back to life by the Raise Dead ritual, that character suffers a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks until they have reached three milestones. The player should simply record the adventure where the character died on their adventure log, and then keep a running tally of milestones reached. Once the PC has reached the third milestone since coming back to life, they no longer suffer the penalty.

Diseases: Diseases take hold of a character and last until they are cured or they reach their final state. Normally, a PC makes an Endurance check after each extended rest to see if the disease improves, worsens, or maintains its current condition. At the end of the adventure, any character suffering from a disease must resolve the disease to either its cure or final state, using the necessary number of extended rests to do so. Other characters adventuring with the PC may decide to aid the afflicted character during this time. If a disease reaches its final state and the PC can get a Cure Disease ritual cast (and pay the appropriate costs), they may do so.

Other Lasting Effects: Other effects that last beyond the scope of the adventure should be resolved at the DM's discretion. Any effects that last for a specific period of time (that end after a certain number of days or a certain number of extended rests) should be resolved at the end of the adventure in which the effect was obtained (unless otherwise specified). Effects that use some sort of adventuring benchmark of unknown duration (such as milestones) should be recorded on the character's logsheet and tracked across adventures.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure is Part 3 of the *Embers of Dawn* mini-campaign, which follows the PCs investigation into, and efforts to disrupt, a cult devoted to a sleeping Dawn Titan known as Achazar, the Raging Flame. In *MINI1-1 Stirring the Embers*, the characters discovered a cult known as the Reborn Flame was at work in the city of

Tarmalune. The cult was kidnapping innocent victims and performing strange experiments on them. The adventurers received information from a cultist named Lekarel, who died at the conclusion of the adventure that the cult was also working out of Sambral.

In *MINI1-2: The Burning Scent of Perfumed Swords*, the PCs followed the cult to Sambral and learned more about the cult by discovering a hideout in the cellar of a perfume and incense shop. After a confrontation with the cultists, the characters learned that the cult's superiors could be found in Ramekho. At the conclusion of that adventure, plans were made to travel to Ramekho.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

The PCs realized that they must travel to Ramekho with great haste, in the hope of reaching Ramekho and locating the cultists before the cultists found out they were coming. Unfortunately, word has already reached the cultists and they will send an ambush to intercept the party.

Once in Ramekho the PCs will be led to Rathloff, a citizen who has information about the cult. Rathloff steers the characters toward a quarry operation. After reconning the quarry and getting inside, the characters will learn that the fire cult plans to perform a sacrifice to their fiery lord by breaching the barrier between the Prime Material plane and the plane of Elemental Fire. This breach will cause a volcanic eruption and wipe out a large section of the region, allowing the cult to gain the attention of the sleeping Dawn Titan by the massive sacrifice of lives.

The adventure culminates in a battle between the PCs and a high-ranking member of the cult, plus his minions.

IN SLUMBER REMAIN QUEST CARD

Some PCs may have the In Slumber Remain Quest card in their stack. These PCs are looking to complete three tasks in order to participate in the second Quest adventure, *Stir Not the World's Doom*. The tome they seek in order to complete task one can be found among Rathloff's books during Encounter 11. If a PC notices it and later reads this tome, tell the player to record their successful completion of task one on their log. Should a PC have the In Slumber Remain Quest card in their stack and have already complete task one, give them the information in Encounter 11 anyway, as it provides additional clues about the Quest adventure.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Events in Tarmalune and Sambral have led to your discovery of a fire cult that clearly has evil plans in the works. You suspect that their aims involve more than a few citizens in several cities. Their trail now leads you to Ramekho—where will it lead next? And what heinous deeds will it reveal? You have no time to lose—you might be able to track down the cult in Ramekho before they learn you are coming. Stealth and speed will be your allies in this mission.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE ROAD TO RAMEKHO

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/4 (779/941 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

1 kenku ringleader (R)

8 kenku ruffians (M)

2 kenku warriors (W)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

1 kenku ringleader (R)

7 kenku ruffians (M)

1 kenku warriors (W)

2 kenku sneaks (S)

In the previous adventure, the characters boarded a ship bound for Ramekho. Read the following:

Your ship has cleared the docks and is gliding smoothly across the bay. The weather is fair and the ship should make good time. Less than a mile from Sambral, a sailor calls out, "Fire! Fire in the bilge!"

The sailors leap to action. Some hurry below, and others scurry to the rigging as the captain calls out, "Bring her about! Hard to starboard!" The cry is repeated by the sailors. Then you notice black smoke beginning to pour from some of the portholes and the hatches.

The ship returns to the dock. You disembark and wait to learn the fate of the ship. After nearly an hour, the second mate approaches you. "We'll be in port a couple of days to make repairs. Something caught fire in the cargo hold. Lucky for us, it burned through some water barrels, and when they gave way, the water put out some of the fire. We need to make some repairs and lay in new supplies."

The mate scratches his head and pauses. "Funny thing is, our Cappy's real superstitious. He labels our water barrels to read 'oil.' And the lamp oil kegs are marked 'salt.'" He nods with a bemused grin and turns back to his ship.

If the characters search for another ship bound for Ramekho, they find that none will depart that day. Their only option is to set out on foot. The DM should stress the haste necessary. The PCs must reach Ramekho

before the cult is aware of the decimation of its cell in Sambral.

The PCs depart Sambral in order to reach Ramekho as quickly as possible. The journey is unremarkable; the landscape is mostly grassy plain, and few travelers are met. Just outside Ramekho, the party is attacked by the Double Axes, a mercenary group hired by the fire cult to kill the PCs.

Once the adventurers are on the road heading north, read:

You packed up and departed from Sambral in a rush, and are now on the road to Ramekho. Once you are out of the foothills near Sambral, the going becomes much easier. The landscape flattens into a grassy plain, and you can see the countryside for a considerable distance.

By pushing hard, you reach the River Tantulph in the afternoon on the second day of your trip and make the crossing. The tree-lined banks and fresh water provide an inviting respite. But you have no time to linger—you must learn about the fire cult before they find you.

At last, you see Ramekho in the distance. Sunset will be upon you in about an hour. As you near Ramekho with the Dragon Sea not far beyond it, a light fog gradually appears.

The sunlight dims, the fog thickens, and as the road passes between a wide thicket, a group of armed bird-men leaps from the brambles. They quickly assume a well-rehearsed formation that blocks your passage along the road.

The PCs are heading north on the map. No one is surprised.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has a few important features.

Illumination: The sun has not yet set but night is falling; consider the light levels to be dim. The fog does not interfere with vision within 50 feet. Beyond 50 feet the fog causes total concealment.

Dim light doesn't affect characters with low-light vision, but characters with normal vision have a hard time seeing—it grants concealment (-2 to melee and ranged attack rolls).

Terrain Features: The ambush takes place about half a mile outside of Ramekho. The adventurers are on a level dirt road heading west. A great thicket of small sumac trees crowds the road on both sides. The thicket borders the road for about 30 yards, and is about 15 yards deep. The road is about 10 feet wide.

The sumac thickets are dense, requiring 4 squares of movement to enter. The Double Axes concealed themselves behind the sumacs at the beginning of the long line (the area on the map), not within them.

Any square that contains mostly foliage counts as blocking terrain. Any square that contains partial foliage counts as covering terrain.

Flow Mud: A section of magically tainted mud is attracted to vibration. This ground at some point becomes loose when a creature moves within 2 squares. The area affected is 2 squares by 2 squares.

Flow Mud	Multi-Use Terrain
<i>"The mud puddle swirls with color as it flows quickly towards motion."</i>	
Moves into target's square, +5 vs. Reflex; target is knocked prone. Flow Mud will randomly shift 2 squares every turn at the end of the round. Roll a d8 and shift in that direction. Flow mud is difficult terrain. Area affect is burst one (2x2).	

TACTICS

The Double Axes jump out just as the players pass beyond the sumacs. They use their Mimicry ability to add confusion and taunt players. Their taunts are funny and mock the characters as if they know them personally. If the DM knows the characters well, he can invent specific taunts for them. Otherwise, some taunts are provided here.

- "Hey, ugly! Was your mother a dwarf or a scrag?"
- "You wizards are so wimpy—if I roasted you, you wouldn't make a big enough meal to feed a gnome!"
- "We've met your kind before! Muscles like an old nag and a brain like a green slime!"
- "Are you just gonna stand there? Or are you gonna try to hit me with that toothpick you're carrying?"

Although the Double Axes taunt and jeer, they fight smart. They are mercenaries who won't fight to the death. If the ringleader and more than half of their number are incapacitated, the remaining kenku run.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove two of the kenku ruffians.

Six PCs: Add another kenku warrior.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The goal of this encounter is for the PCs to question at least one mercenary and learn that contact was made at

the Angry Octopus. If any mercenaries are alive following the battle, the PCs may question them. They know nothing about the cult, and can only say that they were hired by an average-looking elderly human man with brown hair at a tavern called the Angry Octopus. The contact wore peasant clothing and the bag of coins he offered did most of the talking.

If all mercenaries are killed, allow the PCs to search the bodies and discover a small bag of coins on one of the men (his share of the fee for the ambush.) Inside the bag will be a slip of parchment bearing a drawing of an octopus. The octopus matches a sea creature on the wooden sign that hangs above the Angry Octopus tavern.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 155/190 experience points each for defeating the Double Axes.

TREASURE

A pair of *acrobat boots* and a *symbol of life* +1 are carried by the kenku ringleader. The kenku have 50/60 gp of coins per PC on their person.

ENCOUNTER 1: ROAD TO RAMEKHO (LOW LEVEL)

Kenku Ringleader	Level 4 Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 54; Bloodied 27	
AC 20; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 15	
Speed 6	
m Spiked Chain (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage and the target is marked until the of the kenku ringleader's next turn.	
R Sling (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage.	
M Press the Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; targets an enemy marked by the kenku; +11 vs. AC; 2d4+5 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
C Flock Reaction (minor; recharge 4 5 6)	
Close burst 3; targets kenkus; the target shifts 1 square as a free action.	
Flock Effect	
A kenku ringleader gains a +3 bonus instead of a+2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another.	
Mimicry	
A kenku ringleader can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ringleader's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +10, Intimidate +10	
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 18 (+6)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 10 (+2)
	Cha 16 (+5)
Equipment leather armor, sling, spiked chain	

Kenku Ruffian	Level 3 Minion Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 38
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 15	
Speed 6	
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Flock Effect	
A kenku ringleader gains a +3 bonus instead of a+2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another.	
Mimicry	
A kenku ringleader can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ringleader's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Stealth +9	
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 17 (+4)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 9 (+0)
	Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, club	

Kenku Warrior	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 44; Bloodied 22	
AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 14	
Speed 6	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.	
r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.	
M Fluttering Attack (standard; at-will)	
The kenku warrior shifts 4 squares and makes a basic attack during that movement.	
Combat Advantage	
A kenku warrior deals 1d6 extra damage on melee attacks against any target granting combat advantage to it.	
Flock Effect	
A kenku ringleader gains a +3 bonus instead of a+2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another.	
Mimicry	
A kenku ringleader can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ringleader's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 17 (+4)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 9 (+0)
	Cha 11 (+1)

ENCOUNTER 1: ROAD TO RAMEKHO (HIGH LEVEL)

Kenku Ringleader	Level 4 Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 54; Bloodied 27	
AC 20; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 15	
Speed 6	
m Spiked Chain (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage and the target is marked until the of the kenku ringleader's next turn.	
R Sling (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage.	
M Press the Attack (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; targets an enemy marked by the kenku; +11 vs. AC; 2d4+5 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
? Flock Reaction (minor; recharge 4 5 6)	
Close burst 3; targets kenkus; the target shifts 1 square as a free action.	
Flock Effect	
A kenku ringleader gains a +3 bonus instead of a+2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another.	
Mimicry	
A kenku ringleader can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ringleader's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +10, Intimidate +10	
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 18 (+6)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 10 (+2)
	Cha 16 (+5)
Equipment leather armor, sling, spiked chain	

Kenku Ruffian	Level 3 Minion Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 38
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 17; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 15	
Speed 6	
m Club (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 5 damage.	
Flock Effect	
A kenku ringleader gains a +3 bonus instead of a+2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another.	
Mimicry	
A kenku ringleader can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ringleader's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Stealth +9	
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 17 (+4)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 9 (+0)
	Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, club	

Kenku Warrior	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 44; Bloodied 22	
AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 14	
Speed 6	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.	
r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.	
M Fluttering Attack (standard; at-will)	
The kenku warrior shifts 4 squares and makes a basic attack during that movement.	
Combat Advantage	
A kenku warrior deals 1d6 extra damage on melee attacks against any target granting combat advantage to it.	
Flock Effect	
A kenku ringleader gains a +3 bonus instead of a+2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another.	
Mimicry	
A kenku ringleader can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ringleader's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 17 (+4)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 9 (+0)
	Cha 11 (+1)

Kenku Sneak	Level 4 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 42; Bloodied 21	
AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 15	
Speed 7 (4 while invisible)	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.	
r Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +9 vs. AC; 1d4 + 6 damage.	
Disappear into the Flock	
While it has cover from other kenku, a sneak can make a Stealth check to become hidden.	
Hidden Strike	
A kenku sneak deals 2d4+4 extra damage against any target from which it is hidden.	
Flock Effect	
A kenku ringleader gains a +3 bonus instead of a+2 while flanking, and it grants a +3 bonus instead of +2 while aiding another.	
Mimicry	
A kenku ringleader can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by the ringleader's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked.	
Sniper	
A hidden kenku sneak that misses with a ranged attack remains hidden.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Bluff +8, Stealth +9, Thievery +11	
Str 15 (+4)	Dex 18 (+6)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 13 (+3)
	Cha 13 (+3)
Equipment leather armor, 6 daggers	

ENCOUNTER 1: ROAD TO RAMEKHO MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Ruins of the Wild x2



ENCOUNTER 2: THE ANGRY OCTOPUS

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 3 (300/450 XP)

SETUP

In order to learn about the cult, the PCs must follow up on their only lead from the kenku and find the Angry Octopus in Ramekho. If they ask for it by name or show the octopus drawing to a resident, the fourth or fifth citizen they approach will recognize the tavern and provide correct directions.

When they start asking questions at the tavern, the PCs will be met with angry stares and threatening looks. The tavern and its patrons do not want to attract unwanted attention.

As the adventurers enter the city, read:

You quickly discover that Ramekho is not a seaside resort. Instead, this town has not seen a fresh plank or new nail in a long time. Everything seems to be leaning or sagging.

The residents are equally run down. No one you see suggests the idea of a family. Sailors, doxies, adventurers, teamsters, and stevedores make up the population.

Turning down a crooked street, you spot a weathered sign bearing the painted carving of a black octopus. It grips a trident as if ready to hurl it as passersby.

The inside of the tavern could be the inside of dozens of taverns that you've visited in your years. Tables, chairs, a bar and barkeep, and patrons at various stages of inebriation are spread before you.

This is a typical situation of asking for information inside a tavern. Atypically, the patrons do not want to answer the PCs' questions about the cult. Reactions range from mild annoyance to red-faced anger, and from dark looks to swinging fists. A few patrons make a religious sign of protection when they hear the characters' inquiries.

The adventurers will not locate the man who paid the Double Axes mercenaries. His description is too common and too vague for anyone to concretely recognize him.

Unless the characters are extremely careful in their questioning, they will anger the patrons and a fight will break out, resulting in their ejection from the Angry Octopus. After the PCs have asked a few questions

without any success, it becomes clear that the drunken patrons are spoiling for a fight. They learn that the locals do not wish to discuss the cult but if the PCs push it, a fight breaks out.

If a character realizes that the locals are becoming agitated and a fight is imminent, they may leave peacefully before the Skill Challenge has finished and thereby avoid the fight (and the healing surge loss that comes from losing the Skill Challenge).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The characters reach the Angry Octopus after nightfall, but the tavern is well lit with whale-oil lamps.

Terrain Feature: Like other taverns, the taproom is filled with tables and chairs, costing 2 squares of movement. Aisles cross through the room; characters that use them experience normal movement rates.

SKILL CHALLENGE: VISITING THE TAVERN

Goal: The PCs attempt to gain information about the fire cult at the tavern, but succeed only in getting thrown into the street. The PCs must get out of the tavern without injury.

Complexity: 3 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidate, Streetwise.

Victory: The PCs are thrown into the street or forced out of the tavern without being injured. They gain no information on the fire cult or leads to follow.

Defeat: The PCs are thrown into the street or forced out of the tavern and are injured in the scuffle. They lose one healing surge for being unsuccessful. They gain no information on the fire cult or leads to follow.

Acrobatics 13/14 (1 success, No maximum): Jumping over tables and chairs, or up onto the bar, could help a PC escape injury as they try to flee.

Athletics 13/14 (1 success, No maximum): A strong PC might be able to move furniture, grapple an opponent, or escape a grasp in order to escape injury.

Bluff 15/16 (1 success, 2 maximum): A Bluff skill might be used to divert attention or convince an NPC that the character is not a threat. It might also convince NPCs that the characters have plans to take down the cult.

Diplomacy 11/12 (1 success, 2 maximum): Negotiation is perhaps one of the best ways to escape the tavern without injury, but the drunken patrons are only willing to listen to so much talk.

Insight 13/14 (1 success, No maximum): A clever PC might be able to show concern or empathy for the

tavern patrons and convince them that she is on their side.

Intimidate 15/16 (1 success, 1 maximum): Intimidation might convince patrons that the characters will leave if they are left alone, that they will cause harm if they are harmed, or that they have great strength or fire power that can be used against the patrons.

Streetwise 13/14 (1 success, 2 maximum): A savvy character might convince patrons that he is just like them, and wants no trouble or unwanted attention from the cult.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The expected outcome of this adventure is that the PCs will be ordered out of the Angry Octopus or physically kicked out. The encounter that follows can take place once the adventurers have departed the Angry Octopus.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60/90 experience points for successfully completing the skill challenge.

TREASURE

The PCs do not find any treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 3: EJECTED FROM THE ANGRY OCTOPUS

SETUP

The characters will either be tossed out of the Angry Octopus or forced out by angry patrons. When they are outside in the street, read the following:

You stand in the street, scratching your heads at the “welcome” you received at the Angry Octopus. As you debate your next move, a girl of about ten years old walks up to you. She is grimy and thin, and she’s the first child you’ve seen in Ramekho. “My grandpa needs help,” she says. “Will you come?”

If the characters ignore the girl or tell her to run along, she persists, to the point of tears if necessary. If the PCs press her with questions about what’s wrong, the girl begs the PCs to follow her and takes off running.

If the characters follow the girl, read the following.

The little waif leads you down the street and around a few corners. The streets twist and turn and lead off at odd angles. She leads you to a narrow lane flanked by houses that are tiny, but in good repair. She waves for you to follow her inside. As you pass through the door, you notice a drawing of a sun scratched into the wood of the door. Is that a child’s idle artwork, or a symbol of Amaunator?

An elderly man is seated in a chair, darning a sock. The room is lit by two rushlight lamps; it’s a wonder that the old fellow can see his sewing in the dim light. He looks up as you enter. “Forgive me if I don’t rise,” he says congenially. “These aren’t the legs of a colt any more.

“You’ve met my granddaughter, Glindarra. She has instructions to bring home any adventurers who show an interest in certain matters here in Ramekho.

“My name is Rathloff, and I don’t like what’s going on. I’m just not strong enough to do much about it.”

Rathloff explains that he has had eyes on the fire cult for a long time. He doesn’t know what they are up to, but he doesn’t like it. He has information:

- Most folk in town are afraid to talk about the fire cult. They don’t want to attract attention.
- The stories he has heard from the few people who managed to get released from the quarry suggest the fire cult has a strong interest in the quarry’s

that lie outside of town (to the north). The cult has either taken over the operation or found a way to influence the owners and/or managers.

- In particular, Rathloff had a friend named Merott who escaped the mine before dying a few months ago of lung rot from too much time below ground. He told Rathloff horrible stories about the mines, and that has spurred Rathloff to look into the quarry and the fire cult. When he heard the PCs were looking into rumors about the Cult of the Reborn Flame, he hoped they would be the brave allies he has been looking for.
- Rathloff suggests that if the PCs can actually capture a member of the cult, they should. The chance to gain more information is critical.
- The quarry is operated both by ordinary paid workers and by criminals working off their sentences. A deal exists between the local constabulary, made up mostly of hired adventurers, and the quarry operators; certain criminals are forced to work in the mines as part of their sentencing. Rumors are circulating that criminals are not always released at the end of their sentences.
- Rumors are also circulating that homeless people and drunks are sometimes forced into the mines to work. This has never been proven, but the rumors persist.
- The mine is mostly limestone, but there are rumors they may also mine some semi-precious metals as well.
- If the PCs ask about Glindarra’s parents, Rathloff sadly says both of them passed away due to the coughing plague nearly eight years ago. Glindarra never knew her grandmother, but Rathloff still remembers her, a spitfire of a serving girl Rathloff met during his time as a sailor in Tarmalune. The woman dropped their baby boy on Rathloff’s door one night and he never saw her again. Her name was Halagortha. If the PCs mention they know Halagortha (MINI1-1 *Stirring the Embers*), Rathloff is interested to hear whatever tales they have of her.

The characters will be able to realize that although Rathloff is frail, his mind is sharp. They should have no reason to doubt Rathloff’s information.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the characters agree to investigate the quarry, Rathloff is delighted. They receive the Story Object **MINI15**

Friend of Rathloff. He gives directions to the mines and explains the general layout of the operation in case to they want to get a look at it (Encounter 4). He also suggests that the characters might have several options to gain access to the mine: they could sneak in (Encounter 5), hire on as laborers (Encounter 6), or get themselves arrested and be delivered to the quarry as prisoners (Encounter 7).

If the characters don't wish to investigate the mines, the cult continues with its activities and the adventure ends.

Using Rathloff's home is a safe place for an extended rest. That is up to the PCs, but there is no penalty for resting.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Some PCs might look to use Streetwise to gather information around town about the quarry or the Cult of the Reborn Flame. A DC 10 Streetwise and a half hour of time confirms the general information about the quarry that Rathloff gave including its location and that it is staffed both by legitimate miners and by convicts. Many people have stories about someone they know being convicted of a minor crime and being sent to the quarry. It seems like even the smallest infraction can get one sent to the quarry. Rumors abound that all is not right in the quarry.

A DC 15 Streetwise turns up no information about the quarry owners, but allows the PC to realize that someone has gone out of their way to hide their identities and perhaps even spread disinformation.

ENCOUNTER 4: DIGGING FOR ANSWERS

SETUP

Guards: (Bluff +2, Insight +4, Perception +4)

The party now knows about the cult's activities at the mine. They have two options: they can try to get a casual look at the mines by pretending to be heading out on a hunting/adventuring mission or other ruse, or they can figure a way to enter the mines (by getting arrested (Encounter 7), sneaking in (Encounter 5), or getting hired (Encounter 6)). If the PCs try to inspect the mine from a distance, proceed if this encounter. Otherwise, skip ahead.

When the characters arrive at the quarry for the first time, read the following.

A wide gravel road leads up to a sturdy wooden gate. Several wagons are parked just inside the gate, with a horse stable and watering trough to the right of the gate. The entire operation is fenced in by wooden posts strung with five horizontal strands of wire. A few guards are visible inside the gate, with a large guard house just to the left of the gate.

A gaping hole in the earth is clear evidence that mining operations are indeed underway. The hole is at least a hundred yards across. You see a wagon being loaded with large chunks of limestone. An enormous rock crusher is banging away noisily, and crushed rock is spilling out into a wagon with high sides.

A few additional buildings appear to be offices, bunkhouses for workers, and a mess hall. In the distance is a smaller area that seems to be under greater security. It is surrounded by tall fence posts that are criss-crossed with wire. Slats are weaved into the wire, blocking your view. A large sign is painted with the words "Danger—Keep out." Two guards stand at this inner gate, and they appear to take their job more seriously than the lackadaisical guards at the front gate.

The quarry is located in a hollow within a hilly area. Part of the fenced-in quarry is rimmed by tall aspen trees. The characters have plenty of covering terrain that they can use to approach the mine. The outer fence is not an obstacle, as the PCs can easily slip through the strands of wire.

If the characters pretend to be passing by, the gate guards take little notice of them—they just watch casually to see where the PCs are going. If the characters approach, the guards will answer general

questions. They know nothing about the cult—for them, this is only a job serving as a guard at a limestone quarry. If the characters ask too many questions, the guards eventually become impatient and ask them to move along.

If the characters ask any specific questions about the fire cult, the guards have orders to alert their boss. After saying they know nothing about it, they alert the Vigo the Foreman after the PCs are out of sight.

If the PCs ask about the secure area, the guards know nothing. They only know that two different rumors have been circulating—that something valuable such as copper or gems has been found, or that something dangerous such as magnesium or earth's blood (petroleum) was discovered.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

This encounter should end uneventfully unless the characters attempt something stupid. If the characters attract unwanted attention or upset the quarry workers or guards, the DM may twist the outcome so that the characters end up as prisoners or workers inside the mine in order to keep the adventure progressing.

After investigating, the PCs could choose to go back to Rathloff (Encounter 3), attempt to sneak into the quarry (Encounter 5), hire on as workers (Encounter 6), or try to get arrested and sentenced to quarry labor (Encounter 7).

ENCOUNTER 5: SNEAKING INTO THE MINES

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 3 (300/450 XP)

If the characters choose to sneak into the mines, use this encounter. If they try to get hired, skip to Encounter 6. If they choose to get arrested, skip to Encounter 7.

SETUP

The goal of this encounter is for the characters to sneak into the mines and either conceal themselves within the operation or to alter their appearance so they blend in with the other quarry workers. The foremen and overseers pay little attention to individual workers; they're all considered rabble.

If the PCs wish to blend in with the other workers, they will need to hide or leave behind armor, large magical items, large weapons, and shields. Most of the quarry workers wear loose fitting breeches and baggy shirts. If the characters cannot match their clothes to those of the workers, coating themselves in rock dust will help them avoid notice.

The PCs might also try to sneak in when the daily delivers of food and supplies are made, perhaps hiding in the crates and barrels.

Or if the PCs are so inclined, they may instead try to climb over or under the fence under the cover of darkness.

The DM should refer to the description of the quarry compound in Encounter 4 to understand the layout and features.

SKILL CHALLENGE: SNEAKING IN

Goal: The PCs will attempt to sneak into the mining area and blend in with the workers.

Complexity: 3 (8 successes before 3 failures). PCs gain a +2 bonus to all checks made to sneak into the quarry if they have previously investigated the dig site in Encounter 4.

Primary Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Bluff, Perception, Stealth.

Other Skill: Perception.

Victory: If the PCs win the skill challenge, they sneak into the quarry unnoticed and blend in with the workers.

Defeat: If the PCs fail, they are caught trying to sneak in and are locked in the stable. After a few hours, they are escorted out of the mines, walked half a mile down the

road, and released. Alternatively, if the PCs have already been making a nuisance of themselves, the characters will be declared guilty of a crime by Vigo the foreman and forced to work in the mines. If the PCs try to fight free, use the statistics for Human Guards in Encounter 8 and have the PCs fight six guards.

Acrobatics DC 13/14 (1 success, No maximum): Depending upon the tactics the PCs select, Acrobatics could be useful for sneaking, concealment, or escape.

Athletics DC 13/14 (1 success, No maximum): Any number of Athletics skills might be needed depending upon the characters' methods; such as climbing the fence or jumping from the roof of one building to the next.

Bluff DC 13/14 (1 success, No maximum): If the PC attempts to bluff their way in via the daily deliveries, they will have to get passed some bored guards.

Perception DC 10/11 (0 successes, No maximum): Characters will need to know where any guards, workers, or obstacles are as they try to sneak in. By succeeding in a Perception check, the PC notices a pattern to the guards' movements and sneaks in when the guards aren't looking. This gives a +4 bonus to the PC's next skill check.

Stealth DC 13/14 (1 success, No maximum): PCs will need to be silent, careful, and agile as they sneak into the compound.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: If successful, the PCs gain entry into the mine (proceed to Encounter 8).

Failure: If the PCs are captured, they are locked in the horse stable until their fate can be decided. They are either escorted down the road and released or eventually convicted of a crime and forced to work in the mines as prisoners (proceed to Encounter 7). In addition their description is reported to the cult and they receive the Story Object **MINI16 Known Description**.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60/90 experience points for successfully completing the skill challenge.

TREASURE

The PCs do not find any treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 6: LABORERS FOR THE MINE

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 3 (300/450 XP)

If the characters choose to try to get hired into the mines, use this encounter. If they try to sneak in, go to Encounter 5. If they try to get arrested, skip to Encounter 7.

SETUP

The goal of this encounter is for the characters to get hired as laborers for the mines. The DM will need to follow the players' lead as to whatever form of persuasion they would like to attempt with Vigo.

Vigo the Foreman: Vigo is a typical laborer who has more muscle than brains. He is a large, rough looking human man. The quarry is usually looking for workers, and Vigo tends to hire anyone who looks physically fit and doesn't give attitude.

Assuming that the characters approach the front gate of the mine/quarry area, the guards will fetch a foreman who will interview them for employment. Let the characters wait for a good hour or so before the foreman can arrive. Labor is always needed in the mine, so they stand a good chance of being hired. The key will be in appearing to be average laborers. If the characters look like macho, know-it-all adventurers, they will be turned away. Vigo is not looking for trouble and adventurers are NOT wanted.

Once they are hired, the characters will be expected to work hard to earn their 2 sp per day, and this limits their ability to investigate the cult. They will receive three meager meals a day and have access to the bunkhouse where they are free to speak with the other workers.

SKILL CHALLENGE: GETTING HIRED

Goal: The PCs will attempt to get hired at the mines.

Complexity: 3 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Athletics, Bluff, Diplomacy.

Other Skills: Insight.

Victory: If the PCs are successful, they convince a foreman to hire them and they are taken to the bunkhouse inside the quarry area.

Defeat: If the characters fail, the foreman turns them away. They must then attempt to sneak in or get arrested.

Athletics DC 10/11 (1 success, No maximum): Depending upon the physiques of the PCs, they might be able to prove their worthiness to work in the mines.

Bluff DC 12/13 (1 success, No maximum): The PCs will need to devise some good stories to convince the foreman to hire them.

Diplomacy (DC 15/16) (1 success, 2 maximum): The characters can negotiate in any way they see fit to convince the foreman to hire them, but he is only willing to take up to two people who try to talk their way in.

Insight DC 15/16 (1 success, No maximum): Characters might be able to judge the motivations and attitudes of the foreman in order to convince him to hire them. A successful Insight check gives the PCs a good idea how to impress Vigo and a +2 to their next skill check to do so.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: The characters are hired by the foreman and are taken to a bunkhouse to get settled. They will start work the next day.

Failure: The foreman doesn't like what he sees, and turns the PCs away. In addition their description is reported to the cult and they receive the Story Object **MINI16 Known Description**. They will have to sneak into the quarry (Encounter 5) or get arrested in order to gain access (Encounter 7).

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60/90 experience points for successfully completing the skill challenge.

TREASURE

The PCs do not find any treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 7: PRISONERS OF THE MINES

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 3 (300/450 XP)

If the characters try to get arrested to gain access into the mines, use this encounter. If they try to get hired, go to Encounter 6. If they choose to sneak in, go to Encounter 5.

SETUP

Adventurer NPCs: When the characters begin their antics to get arrested, an adventuring party will show up to get them under control and arrest them. Because Ramekho is lawless and depends upon adventurers for law enforcement, no city constables or guards exist in the city.

The PCs can likely dream up a dozen ways to get arrested and become workers at the mines. Allow them to carry out their plan.

Ramekho is a lawless town, and most law enforcement is carried out by adventuring parties. If any PCs put up a fight or resist arrest for realism, have those PCs lose a healing surge. Criminals are turned over to the town jail, which is administered by several judges and prison guards.

When the PCs are arrested, they will be held in a small prison in Ramekho for two days while their fate is decided, then will be transported to the mines and turned over to the foremen. Prisoners are locked inside a bunkhouse at night and are chained together in groups of three while they are working. They are treated harshly.

When the characters are taken to jail, all of their possessions, except their clothes, are confiscated.

The characters would be wise to have an escape plan in place before they get themselves arrested. Possibilities include: bribing a guard, hiding their gear inside before getting arrested, or just fighting their way out. Of course some crimes, such as murder, might just get you executed instead of sentenced to hard labor.

SKILL CHALLENGE: GETTING ARRESTED

Goal: The PCs will be attempting to get arrested in order to be taken into the mines.

Complexity: 3 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Any. **DC 11/12** (1 success, 8 maximum): The characters can get arrested in any

manner they choose. If the characters devise a plausible scenario, the DM may opt to skip the skill checks and allow the players role-play being arrested instead.

Victory: If the PCs are successful, they get arrested, then tossed in jail. On the third day, they are taken to the mines to work off their crimes.

Defeat: A day passes without the characters getting arrested in this lawless town. They must keep trying, or can change tactics to sneak into the mines or get hired there.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: If the characters are arrested, they will be delivered to the mines to begin work.

Failure: If they don't get arrested, they'll just have to keep trying until they do. In addition their description is reported to the cult by spies in town and they receive the Story Object **MINI16 Known Description**.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60/90 experience points for successfully completing the skill challenge.

TREASURE

The PCs do not find any treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 8: INNER WORKINGS OF THE MINE

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 1/3 (525/775 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 2 human guards (G)
- 2 tiefling heretics (H)
- 1 tiefling darkblade (D)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 2 human guards (G)
- 2 tiefling heretics (H)
- 1 tiefling darkblade (D)

Encounters 5, 6, and 7 all lead to this encounter. The characters have gained access to the quarry and now have opportunities to observe and eventually find their way into the restricted area.

Conditions are harsh, especially for prisoners. Workers are not fed well, and they work in 12-hour shifts. A day shift and night shift use the same bunkhouse, with one shift working while the other sleeps. The Dm is encouraged to role-play the PCs investigations.

Characters have plenty of opportunities to hear rumors, talk to others in the bunkhouse or cafeteria and gain information from fellow workers, as follows:

- One particularly talkative worker is Ferd, a half-elven man in his later years. After taking a liking to the PCs he is happen to tell them what he knows. He claims his sentence (for stealing food) ended ten months ago, but the guards won't let him leave.
- The mine is actually a quarry hauling limestone out of the ground and shipping it.
- Prisoners are rarely released on time when their sentences are finished. Some prisoners were given no release date and fear that they are here indefinitely.
- The restricted area is sealed off because something valuable was discovered, possibly copper or gems.
- The restricted area is sealed off because something dangerous was discovered, possibly earth's blood (petroleum) or magnesium. Ferd has never been in the restricted area, but has

talked to some who have, through the fence. Once you go in, you never come out.

- If talked to through the fence, workers in the restricted area report that quarrying goes on very much like the rest of the quarry, but the area is unusually hot, as if the ground itself is heated. Workers must be rotated often due to the heat.
- Workers in the restricted area have not seen any sign of any valuable or dangerous substances. They also report that the overseers are continuously measuring the tunnels, making calculations, and making corrections to the course of the tunnels.
- The foremen and overseers have been seen participating in some kind of a religious ritual in the restricted area.
- Some of the workers and prisoners have taken part in the religious ritual or been inducted into something like a cult.
- The ceremonies involved a lot of strange chanting and fire magic.

GETTING INTO THE RESTRICTED AREA

This quarry is home to the activities of the fire cult. Since the appearance of Returned Abeir, they have discovered that a hot spot lies underground at this location—a weak spot between the Prime Material plane and the Elemental Plane of Fire. The cult wishes to locate the weak spot, break through the breach, and harness the power of Elemental Fire to aid in achieving its goals.

During the previous portion of the encounter, the characters should have learn the general layout of the mine, the general flow of operations, and that something secretive is going on in the restricted area. In order to proceed in their investigations, they need to get past the guards at the inner gate enclosing the restricted area. Unfortunately these guards are much more alert and distrustful. They aren't about to just let anyone inside.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has a few important features.

Illumination: The PCs must decide when to confront and bypass the guards. Daylight offers no illumination penalties. During twilight, dim light doesn't affect characters with low-light vision, but characters with normal vision have a hard time seeing—it grants concealment (–2 to melee and ranged attack rolls).

Gate Area: The terrain surrounding the inner gate is level and comprises hard-packed dirt. The wooden gate (about 5 feet high) and fencing (6-foot posts criss-crossed with wire) are the only features. The fence or

gate can be climbed with a DC 10 Athletics check. The gates are barred, but can be broken by force (all defenses are 5, 60 hp, resist all 5).

TACTICS

These guards are considered elite; they are paid to keep busybodies away and paid more if they have to kill trespassers. They will fight to the death to stop anyone for entering that is not supposed to.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove one tiefling heretic.

Six PCs: Add one 1 tiefling heretic.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The goal of this encounter is for the characters to learn more about the cult and its plans. They should learn that something secretive is going on inside the restricted area. In order to access the restricted area, they will have to fight the guards at the inner gate.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 105/155 experience points each for defeating the guards.

TREASURE

The guards have 20/30 gp of coins per PC on their person and the tiefling darkblade wears a suit of *darkleaf armor* +1.

ENCOUNTER 8: INNER WORKINGS OF THE QUARRY STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Human Guard	Level 1 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +5	
HP 31; Bloodied 15	
AC 16; Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 12	
Speed 5	
m Halberd (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage and the target is marked until the end of the human guard's next turn.	
M Powerful Strike (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires halberd; reach 2; +8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +7 vs. AC; 1d8+1 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Streetwise +6	
Str 16 (+3)	Dex 14 (+2) Wis 11 (+0)
Con 15 (+2)	Int 10 (+0) Cha 12 (+1)
Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow with 20 bolts	

Tiefling Heretic	Level 1 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 30; Bloodied 15	
AC 15; Fortitude 12, Reflex 13, Will 13	
Resist 6 fire	
Speed 6	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC (+6 against a bloodied target); 1d4 damage.	
r Balefire (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
Ranged 10; +4 vs. Reflex (+5 against a bloodied target); 1d8+3 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).	
R Serpent Curse (standard; encounter) ♦ Illusion, Psychic	
Ranged 10; illusory snakes appear and attack the target; +4 vs. Will (+5 against a bloodied target); 1d6 + 3 psychic damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).	
Cloak of Escape (immediate reaction, when the tiefling heretic is hit by a melee attack; at-will) ♦ Teleportation	
The tiefling heretic teleports 5 squares.	
Infernal Wrath (minor; encounter)	
The tiefling darkblade gains a +1 power bonus to its next attack roll against an enemy that hit it since the tiefling darkblade's last turn. If the attack hits and deals damage, the tiefling darkblade deals an extra 5 damage.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Supernal
Skills Bluff +12, Insight +8, Stealth +12	
Str 15 (+2)	Dex 20 (+6) Wis 16 (+3)
Con 18 (+4)	Int 13 (+1) Cha 20 (+5)
Equipment dagger	

Tiefling Darkblade	Level 2 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 34; Bloodied 17	
AC 15; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Resist 7 fire	
Speed 6; see also <i>cloak of lurking</i>	
m Poisoned Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
+7 vs. AC (+8 against a bloodied target); 1d6+3 damage, and the tiefling darkblade makes a secondary attack against the same target. Secondary Attack: +5 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
Cloak of Lurking (move; recharge 6) ♦ Teleportation	
The tiefling darkblade teleports 5 squares and becomes invisible until the end of its next turn.	
Infernal Wrath (minor; encounter)	
The tiefling darkblade gains a +1 power bonus to its next attack roll against an enemy that hit it since the tiefling darkblade's last turn. If the attack hits and deals damage, the tiefling darkblade deals an extra 3 damage.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Supernal
Skills Bluff +11, Stealth +13	
Str 12 (+2)	Dex 20 (+6) Wis 14 (+3)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 12 (+2) Cha 16 (+4)
Equipment leather armor, poisoned short sword	

ENCOUNTER 8: INNER WORKINGS OF THE QUARRY STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Human Guard	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +6	
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 14	
Speed 5	
m Halberd (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage and the target is marked until the end of the human guard's next turn.	
M Powerful Strike (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Weapon	
Requires halberd; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common
Skills Streetwise +7	
Str 16 (+4) Dex 14 (+3) Wis 11 (+1)	
Con 15 (+3) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)	
Equipment chainmail, halberd, crossbow with 20 bolts	

Tiefling Heretic	Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 42; Bloodied 21	
AC 15; Fortitude 12, Reflex 13, Will 13	
Resist 8 fire	
Speed 6	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC (+8 against a bloodied target); 1d4+1 damage.	
r Balefire (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
Ranged 10; +6 vs. Reflex (+7 against a bloodied target); 1d8+4 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).	
R Serpent Curse (standard; encounter) ♦ Illusion, Psychic	
Ranged 10; illusory snakes appear and attack the target; +6 vs. Will (+7 against a bloodied target); 1d6 + 4 psychic damage, and ongoing 5 psychic damage (save ends).	
Cloak of Escape (immediate reaction, when the tiefling heretic is hit by a melee attack; at-will) ♦ Teleportation	
The tiefling heretic teleports 5 squares.	
Infernal Wrath (minor; encounter)	
The tiefling darkblade gains a +1 power bonus to its next attack roll against an enemy that hit it since the tiefling darkblade's last turn. If the attack hits and deals damage, the tiefling darkblade deals an extra 5 damage.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Supernal
Skills Bluff +13, Insight +9, Stealth +13	
Str 15 (+3) Dex 20 (+7) Wis 16 (+4)	
Con 18 (+5) Int 13 (+2) Cha 20 (+6)	
Equipment dagger	

Tiefling Darkblade	Level 4 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +4; low-light vision	
HP 46; Bloodied 23	
AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14	
Resist 9 fire	
Speed 6; see also <i>cloak of lurking</i>	
m Poisoned Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
+9 vs. AC (+10 against a bloodied target); 1d6+4 damage, and the tiefling darkblade makes a secondary attack against the same target. Secondary Attack: +7 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
Cloak of Lurking (move; recharge 6) ♦ Teleportation	
The tiefling darkblade teleports 5 squares and becomes invisible until the end of its next turn.	
Infernal Wrath (minor; encounter)	
The tiefling darkblade gains a +1 power bonus to its next attack roll against an enemy that hit it since the tiefling darkblade's last turn. If the attack hits and deals damage, the tiefling darkblade deals an extra 3 damage.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Supernal
Skills Bluff +12, Stealth +14	
Str 12 (+3) Dex 20 (+7) Wis 14 (+4)	
Con 16 (+5) Int 12 (+3) Cha 16 (+5)	
Equipment leather armor, poisoned short sword	

ENCOUNTER 8: INNER WORKINGS OF THE QUARRY MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Caves of Carnage x1



ENCOUNTER 9: YOU'RE GETTING WARMER

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/4 (775/900 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 duergar thuerge (T)
- 2 flamespikers (F)
- 2 dust devils (D)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 duergar thuerge (T)
- 2 flamespikers (F)
- 2 dust devils (D)

After the characters defeat the guards at the gate of the restricted area, they gain access to a downward sloping hill that leads to a natural cave mouth. Inside, a tunnel winds downward in a crude spiral. A few dead ends, no longer than about 10 feet, jut off the spiral at erratic intervals. Characters who succeed in a DC 10 Dungeoneering skill check might guess that the builders of this tunnel had a specific target in mind and made a few wrong turns, then had to correct to stay on course.

As the PCs travel, they will pass several teams of convicts, chained together, digging. The convicts are only too happy to flee if the PCs suggest it is possible. Otherwise they assume the PCs belong in the mine, possible as more workers or as enforcers, and avoid them. They can give directions to the end of the tunnel if asked.

The tunnel walls are warm to the touch and grow warmer as you travel downward. The air becomes hot and uncomfortable. A number of natural narrow tunnels, too small for humans, snake off of the tunnel.

After traveling downward for nearly an hour, you reach a large cave. The cave is roughly rectangular and rivers of lava flow across both ends. An additional pit of lava bubbles to the surface near the middle of the room. In the exact center of the room, an altar with a faintly glowing statuette waits to fulfill its purpose.

The room is not vacant; a gray-skinned dwarf and four creatures made of swirling earth, air or fire stand guard.

DM NOTE: The lava flows through naturally formed channels in the floor. When considering the selected

dungeon tiles, ignore the artwork that indicates walls on either side of the lava channels.

When the PCs arrive, they are immediately attacked by Kharynben, the waiting duergar, and his elemental guards.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has a few important features.

Illumination: The cave should be pitch black, but visibility is good due to the glow of red-hot lava. Consider the room to be in dim light that is equivalent to twilight (granting concealment if a creature does not have low-light vision or darkvision). Note that this affects both elementals if the statuette is removed from the altar (see below). If in the area of effect of a cold power, the lava cools causing the room to grow dark. No other light sources are present.

Altar: The stone altar in the center of the room counts as blocking terrain. A statuette depicting a pillar of flame glows with a faint unholy light. While on the altar, it gives low-light vision to all followers of the Cult of the Reborn Flame. If damaged (any non-Will targeting attack that does any damage) or removed from the altar, this affect ends.

Lava Pits: If any creature is pushed or somehow ends up in the lava they take 2d6+3 fire damage upon entering or beginning their turn in a lava containing square. Ignore the blocking walls of the tile. There is just a lava filled crack in these locations.

TACTICS

The duergar (Kharynben) will begin with his *brimstone hail* if he can catch several of his enemies within the burst. He will then move to use his *wave of despair* in the next round. He would prefer to avoid hitting his own creatures. The flamespikers will position themselves in a defensive position to the duergar to best hit their enemies and the dust devils will move about to cause the most damage. They using their *stinging sands* first and then move through the biggest concentration of blind foes with their *gale blasts* as soon as possible.

As the PCs need to recover the duergar thuerge alive if they have any hope of interrogating him, make sure to offer the chance to kill or just incapacitate the duergar to the PC who strikes the final blow.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove one dust devil.

Six PCs: Add another flamespiker.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs defeat the duergar and his elementals, they can rest here for a short time. They still need to figure out what is going on and stop it before escaping the tunnels and the mine. Proceed to the next encounter once the players are ready. If the duergar has been slain, proceed with the next encounter as an automatic failure. Rathloff did warn them to take and interrogate prisoners.

The PCs should realize that they have a chance to gain valuable information if they keep the duergar alive for questioning. Their interrogation, if any, takes place during the next encounter.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 150/180 Experience Points each for defeating the duergar and the elementals.

TREASURE

Kharynben carries a *wand of witchfire* +1 and a *thundering weapon* +1. There is also 50/70 gp on the duergar theurge.

ENCOUNTER 9: YOU'RE GETTING WARMER STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Duergar Theurge	Level 4 Controller
Small natural humanoid, dwarf (devil)	XP 175
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +6; darkvision	
HP 51; Bloodied 25	
AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 15, Will 17	
Resist 5 fire, 5 poison	
Speed 5	
m Warhammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 1 damage.	
R Hellbolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
Ranged 10; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 4 fire damage.	
R Infernal Quills (minor; encounter) ♦ Poison	
Ranged 3; +9 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage, and the target takes ongoing 2 poison damage and a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save end both).	
C Wave of Despair (standard; daily) ♦ Psychic	
Close blast 5; +8 vs. Will; 3d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is slowed and dazed (save ends both).	
A Brimstone Hail (standard; recharge 5 or 6) ♦ Fire	
Area burst 2 within 15; +8 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 4 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
A Vile Fumes (standard; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ Poison	
Area burst 2 within 15; +8 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 4 poison, and the target is blinded until the end of the duergar theurge's next turn.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, DeepSpeech, Dwarven
Skills Arcana +9, Dungeoneering +11, Religion +9	
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 12 (+3) Wis 18 (+6)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 15 (+4) Cha 11 (+2)
Equipment robes, warhammer	

Dust Devil	Level 3 Skirmisher
Small elemental magical beast (air, earth)	XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +0	
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 18; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14 (-2 to all defenses while slowed or immobilized)	
Immune disease, petrification	
Speed 8	
m Grasping Winds (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 3 damage, and the dust devil slides the target 2 squares.	
M Gale Blast (move; recharge 5 6)	
The dust devil shifts 5 squares and attacks each enemy it moves adjacent to (one attack per creature); +8 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone.	
C Stinging Sands (standard; encounter)	
Close burst 3; +8 vs. Fortitude; the target is blinded until the end of the dust devil's next turn.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Primordial
Skills Stealth +10	
Str 8 (+0)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 8 (+0)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 5 (-2) Cha 15 (+3)

Flamespiker	Level 3 Soldier
Medium elemental magical beast (air, earth, fire)	XP 150
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +3	
HP 45; Bloodied 23	
AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 14, Will 14	
Immune disease, petrification, poison; Resist 10 fire	
Speed 7	
m Stonespike (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 – 1 damage plus 1d6 fire damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 fire and is marked until the end of the flamespiker's next turn.	
R Spikebolt (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage.	
M Thunderfire Thrust (immediate reaction, when an enemy within 2 squares of the flamespiker shifts; recharge 5 or 6)	
The flamespiker uses <i>stonespike</i> against the triggering enemy. On a hit, the flamespiker makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary Attack</i> : +8 vs. Fortitude; 5 thunder damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Primordial
Skills Stealth +10	
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 15 (+4) Wis 15 (-1)
Con 18 (+5)	Int 6 (-1) Cha 8 (+2)

ENCOUNTER 9: YOU'RE GETTING WARMER STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Duergar Theurge	Level 5 Controller
Small natural humanoid, dwarf (devil)	XP 200
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +6; darkvision	
HP 63; Bloodied 31	
AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 18	
Resist 5 fire, 5 poison	
Speed 5	
m Warhammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 1 damage.	
R Hellbolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
Ranged 10; +9 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 4 fire damage.	
R Infernal Quills (minor; encounter) ♦ Poison	
Ranged 3; +10 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage, and the target takes ongoing 2 poison damage and a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save end both).	
C Wave of Despair (standard; daily) ♦ Psychic	
Close blast 5; +9 vs. Will; 3d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target is slowed and dazed (save ends both).	
A Brimstone Hail (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Fire	
Area burst 2 within 15; +9 vs. Reflex; 3d6 + 4 fire damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
A Vile Fumes (standard; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ Poison	
Area burst 2 within 15; +9 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 4 poison, and the target is blinded until the end of the duergar theurge's next turn.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, DeepSpeech, Dwarven	
Skills Arcana +9, Dungeoneering +11, Religion +9	
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 12 (+3) Wis 18 (+6)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 15 (+4) Cha 11 (+2)
Equipment robes, warhammer	

Dust Devil	Level 3 Skirmisher
Small elemental magical beast (air, earth)	XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +0	
HP 47; Bloodied 23	
AC 18; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 14 (-2 to all defenses while slowed or immobilized)	
Immune disease, petrification	
Speed 8	
m Grasping Winds (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 3 damage, and the dust devil slides the target 2 squares.	
M Gale Blast (move; recharge 5 or 6)	
The dust devil shifts 5 squares and attacks each enemy it moves adjacent to (one attack per creature); +8 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone.	
C Stinging Sands (standard; encounter)	
Close burst 3; +8 vs. Fortitude; the target is blinded until the end of the dust devil's next turn.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Primordial	
Skills Stealth +10	
Str 8 (+0)	Dex 18 (+5) Wis 8 (+0)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 5 (-2) Cha 15 (+3)

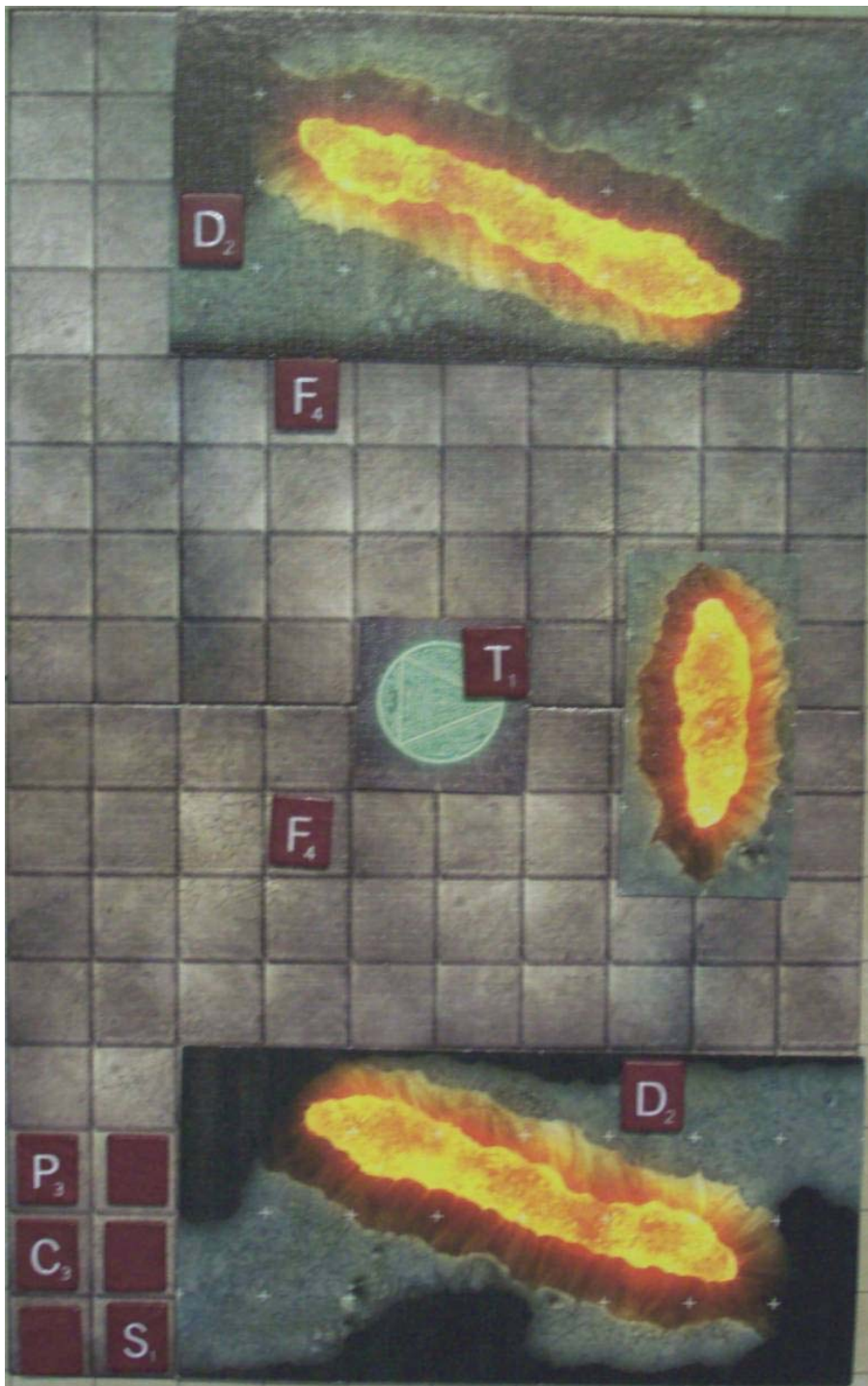
Flamespiker	Level 5 Soldier
Medium elemental magical beast (air, earth, fire)	XP 200
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +4	
HP 66; Bloodied 33	
AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 16	
Immune disease, petrification, poison; Resist 10 fire	
Speed 7	
m Stonespike (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 1d8 damage plus 1d6 fire damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 fire and is marked until the end of the flamespiker's next turn.	
R Spikebolt (standard; at-will)	
Ranged 5/10; +12 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage.	
M Thunderfire Thrust (immediate reaction, when an enemy within 2 squares of the flamespiker shifts; recharge 5 or 6)	
The flamespiker uses <i>stonespike</i> against the triggering enemy. On a hit, the flamespiker makes a secondary attack against the same target. <i>Secondary Attack</i> : +10 vs. Fortitude; 5 thunder damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Primordial	
Skills Stealth +11	
Str 13 (+3)	Dex 15 (+5) Wis 15 (+0)
Con 18 (+6)	Int 6 (+0) Cha 8 (+3)

ENCOUNTER 9: YOU'RE GETTING WARMER STATISTICS MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Arcane Corridors x2

DM NOTE: The lava flows through naturally formed channels in the floor. Ignore the artwork that indicates walls on either side of the lava channels. There are no walls.



ENCOUNTER 10: TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 3 (300/450 XP)

SETUP

The characters have reached the cult's ritual room deep below the quarry. In order to learn the cult's plans, they can interrogate the duergar who stood guard here.

Duergar Thuerge (Kharynben): Kharynben is the principle defender of the ritual room. He knows everything about all of the activities that have taken place here, and he knows the cult's plans for this area. He is the party's best chance at gathering the information they need to stop the Cult of the Reborn Flame.

The duergar in your captivity is an old, tough-as-nails dwarf. He is surly, belligerent, battle-hardened, and rude. He looks and smells as if he might have been carved from solid coal. When he chooses to speak to you, every fourth word is a Dwarvish curse. He is clearly uncooperative.

SKILL CHALLENGE: INTERROGATION

Goal: The PCs have the chance to question the duergar and learn the truth about the cult's activities inside the mine.

Complexity: 3 (8 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidation.

Victory: The PCs learn that the cult wants to breach the Elemental Plane of Fire and cause a volcanic eruption that will wipe out Ramekho and a large section of the countryside. It is hoped that this "sacrifice" will awaken Achazar, the Raging Flame.

Defeat: If the PCs lose the skill challenge, they do not learn everything from the duergar.

Bluff DC 15/16 (1 success, 2 maximum): The PCs might need to devise some good stories to convince the duergar to talk. They might be able to convince him that he is in trouble with the cult, or invent a suitable story that will motivate him to talk, but he is wise to attempts to manipulate him and he won't fall for it more than twice. Should someone attempt a Bluff a third time, it is neither a success nor a failure.

Diplomacy DC 11/12 (1 success, No maximum): The characters can attempt to negotiate in any way they see fit, inventing trades or rewards such as offering Kharynben his freedom.

Insight DC 11/12 (1 success, 1 maximum): Characters might be able to judge the motivations and attitudes of Kharynben in order to convince him to tell what he knows. Once his motivations are clear, Insight can no longer be used.

Intimidation (DC 15/16) (1 success, No maximum): Intimidating Kharynben will be difficult. He has seen many battles, suffered many wounds, and charged into danger without fear. If the characters hit on the right tactic, they just might be able to intimidate him. Threats that involve cold receive a +2 bonus to the roll, but attempts to threaten him with lava or fire automatically fail. He loves fire.

For each success the PCs receive during the Skill Challenge, Kharynben imparts one of the following useful pieces of information (choose appropriately to the question asked):

- Kharynben is one of the two high priests of the cult in Ramekho. (A DC 11 Insight check suggests that he is bluffing, and he is actually subordinate to the other priest.)
- The other cult priest is called Pyrultimus. While obviously a fake name, Kharynben does not know his real name or where he lives.
- Pyrultimus is a human about 50 years old, extremely lean, and perpetually sunburned. He dresses well, so he likely has some money.
- The quarry is just a cover for the cults attempt to breach into the Elemental Plane of Fire.
- The cult wants to breach the Elemental Plane of Fire and cause a volcanic eruption that will wipe out Ramekho and a large section of the countryside.
- It is hoped that a massive fiery "sacrifice" will awaken Achazar, the Raging Flame. The Raging Flame will then wipe out the Dragon Overlords and reward his faithful with riches and power!
- The Cult's Ramekho cell is largely based around the quarry and holds its ceremonies in the Restricted Area's tunnels. Everyone uses a pseudonym and hides their face so not even other members of the cell know who each other are.
- Most of the guards know nothing about the cult, though Vigo knows something is going on. In general the guards are just toughs who take money to do what they are told. Most of them don't especially care about their jobs or their prisoners.

Once the characters have learned about the purpose of the quarry and about the high priest of the cult, they might guess that if they can capture or kill the brains

behind this scheme, they may succeed in preventing a catastrophe. First, they need to escape the mine.

The characters can reach the mouth of the cave easily, and without resistance. By the time they exit, the camp has discovered that the guards to the restricted area are dead or missing. All of the guards inside the quarry compound are searching for the infiltrators who attacked the guards.

Approximately one hour has passed since the PCs entered the cave. Determine the time of day, and incorporate this information into the scene that follows.

It's time to get out of this compound before you are discovered. As you steal quietly across the grounds, you notice several roving patrols of guards who are hunting for you.

The guards are overworked and treated badly by their superiors, so they are half-hearted in their tasks. This is further complicated by a worker's uprising. The chaos caused by the party's infiltration has caused some of the convicts to fight back against the guards and try to escape. The guards are busy just trying to contain the workers. The PCs can escape the compound easily if they are careful.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: The PCs learn that the cult wants to breach the Elemental Plane of Fire and cause a volcanic eruption that will wipe out Ramekho. They can plan their next move in order to stop the cult.

They also learn that a high priest named Pyrultimus is in charge of the operation to release Elemental Fire onto Ramekho. Pyrultimus is about 50 years old, extremely lean, and perpetually sunburned.

Failure: If the PCs learn nothing from Kharynben, they discover two bodies lying outside the fencing that surrounds the mine. One body is dead, but the other is alive—he is a man who was believed to be dead and was abandoned to await burial. He worked in the tunnels. If the characters offer him assistance, he explains the cult's plans to try to trigger an eruption.

Once the PCs defeat the guards and put some distance between them and the mine, they are free to hunt for Pyrultimus, the cult high priest that they learned about.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60/90 experience points for successfully completing the skill challenge.

TREASURE

No additional treasure is recovered in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 11: HOW TO FIRE THE BOSS?

SETUP

By now, the characters should know that asking questions about the cult only stirs up trouble. Their best bet is to return to Rathloff and ask if he can give them further direction.

You arrive at Rathloff's cottage and find him harvesting peas from a tiny garden. He is surprised but pleased to see you. He invites you inside where you can speak privately. Glindarra is happily embroidering a brightly colored sun on a piece of fabric.

Rathloff listens intently as the characters describe their adventure within the mine. He is shocked that the cult's plans are so bold, so massive, and so near completion.

It might make sense though. While the PCs were gone, Rathloff has been doing some research. He has amassed a sizable occult library over his many years and has dug into some of the musty old tomes, which suggest a ritual involved a planar breach and the blood of a dragon could possibly be used to awaken the Raging Flame. The implications leave him shaken. See below for more details.

Rathloff has never heard of Pyrultimus, and agrees that it is a name he adopted after joining the cult to hide his identity. The physical description of the high priest rings a bell, though. Rathloff knows of a man who is about 50 years old, lean, and constantly sunburned (as per the duergar's description).

Rathloff gives directions to Front Street. It is a short lane filled with warehouses on one end (near the docks), and four-story tenements on the other end. Rathloff has seen the man coming and going from a blind alley that intersects Front Street.

IN SLUMBER REMAIN

Should any of the PCs be possess the *In Slumber Remain* quest card, there is one tome of particular interest to them. Mixed in with Rathloff's other disturbing bits of lore, is a moldy tome bound in a dark wooden cover. Painted on the wooden cover is a faded scene of a blasted wasteland of snow and wind. A dark tower with one light shining from its highest window can be seen in the background. While the title displayed is *The Caves of Twilight*, the tome lists no author. Presented as a work of fiction, the tome describes one man's journey to answer a call he hears only in his dreams. The voice eventually

drives him to find a cave in the north reaches of the continent in a range of snowy mountains. Once inside the cave he begins to meet creatures clearly not of this world, and he is chased deeper and deeper into the caves until he crossed paths with the thing whose voice he hears in his dreams. The story ends with him willing walking into the embrace of the otherworldly thing. What is perhaps most disturbing, the story becomes more and more disjointed as it progresses as though the writer was suffering from some sort of malady that affected his reason. Two-thirds of the way through the story switches from third to first person perspective.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The characters will have no difficulty learning what they need to know from Rathloff, and proceeding to the next encounter. Using Rathloff's home is a safe place for an extended rest.

ENCOUNTER 12: PYRULTIMUS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (750/950 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 beholder gauth (G)
- 2 barghest savagers (B)
- 1 gnome arcanist (A)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 beholder gauth (G)
- 2 barghest savagers (B)
- 1 gnome arcanist (A)

Rathloff provided accurate directions to the home of Pyrultimus. The characters locate his dwelling easily. As the characters walk down Front Street searching for the blind alley, read the following:

Front Street is a rough neighborhood. The west end, near the docks, is crowded with warehouses, wagons, and burly workers. The workers don't have time to answer questions from passersby and are in no mood to have loiterers in their way. The eastern end gives way to tightly packed tenement buildings that are three and four stories high. The area is fairly quiet, with most men out working for the day. A few women are hanging laundry, sweeping the sidewalk, and tending chickens in a pen.

Rathloff told you that the alley would be easy to find by scanning the rooflines rather than the sidewalks. Sure enough, you spot a break between the buildings, let your eyes wander down, and locate the entrance to the alley.

The alley is no more than fifteen feet wide and feels like a gorge between the four-story tenements. Abandoned crates litter the sides of the alley, making the passable path only about eight feet wide. A dozen or more laundry lines are strung across the alley bearing sheets, breeches, and baggy shirts. Pigeons wander aimlessly among the crates that crowd the alley. A rusty iron walkway connects the two buildings on the second floor, and the doors to the walkway stand open.

At the far end, the alley opens into a courtyard. The scene is much the same—crates, debris, pigeons, and laundry lines full of clothes. But you notice that the courtyard is bisected by an iron fence with a gate.

Within that gate, the courtyard is clean and is landscaped with shrubbery and blooming plants.

The building that rises behind that fence is clean and well kept. The ground level is sheathed in polished black marble. The upper floors are painted white. All of the windows on the first and second floor are secured by iron grates. Two balconies jut from the third floor and two more extend from the fourth floor.

Clearly, this structure was carefully designed to be hidden by the surrounding buildings.

As you take it all in, a few swirls of magic catch your eye. Motes of colorful dust swirl together and take form as several of the high priest's minions materialize before you.

The minions will immediately leap into battle. Engaging in battle in the high priest's own front yard attracts the attention of Pyrultimus, and after one round of combat he steps out onto a third-floor balcony.

Although you are battling for your life, you see movement on the third floor balcony. A lean man of about 50 years old steps out to watch the battle. He appears to have a serious sunburn.

This must be Pyrultimus. He pauses to watch the battle for a moment. Then he bellows across the courtyard.

"My puny friends! How good of you to come here and entertain my minions! I fear they were growing bored, and you are so kind to give them sport. Alas, you will not survive to tell the tale!" He laughs loudly and pauses to observe the scene before him.

"I should love to stay and witness your demise at the hands of my pets, but I have business elsewhere. Instead, I shall simply say, 'Farewell! Die well!'"

He snaps a wrist and a column of fire erupts before him, hovering in mid air. He steps off the balcony and into the fire, and is spirited away like a dried leaf in a windstorm.

Upon his exit, Pyrultimus's snaps a wrist as if cracking a whip. Down the alley behind you, you hear the squeal and clang of rusty metal. From the iron walkway that connects the buildings across the alley, a fence drops down and seals off the passage. You are trapped in the courtyard with a 6-foot high wall of iron bars at your backs.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

This area has a few important features.

Illumination: Full daylight, unless the characters chose to come at a different time of day.

Fence: Any square that contains fencing counts as blocking terrain but can be climbed with a DC 10 Athletics check. The lock on the gate can be picked with a DC 15 Thievery check.

Litter and debris: Along the edges of the alley and courtyard, crates, trash, and other debris are strewn. These squares count as rough terrain.

Laundry Lines: Depending upon the PCs' height and actions (levitating, flying, firing arrows), the laundry could block line of sight, DM discretion.

Platform: The platform is raised 5' in the air. It is a wooden structure with stairs and a low wall around it. The low wall does provide cover to anyone standing behind.

Trellis: There is a rose bush trellis that runs up the side of the building. A DC 10 Athletics check allows a PC to climb up the trellis to the balconies; each is 15 feet above the next.

TACTICS

The gnomearcanist (Taimen Grimrin) will keep himself behind the wall on the platform lobbing his spells at the attackers. Not that the gnome arcanist can use the power of his *spidersilk mantle* to climb to another balcony to move himself out of harm. The barghest savagers (in wolf form) will block the alley entrance as best they can and will fight to the death. The beholder gauth will hover above the barghest using his eye attacks. The gauth will fight to the death. The gnome can be taken as a prisoner and will provide any information that he can. Should the beholder be slain and the gnome is bloodied, he immediately surrenders.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove one of the Barghest Savager.

Six PCs: Add another Barghest Savager.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs have defeated the minions, they have a chance to investigate the mansion or interrogate the gnome, Taimen Grimrin.

Interrogating Taimen: Taimen is a coward and is by no means devoted to his master's cause. He originally joined the cult when his adventuring party (all of whom are since dead) decided to work security for the mine. Taimen ingratiated himself to the man who appeared to be the mine's owner and was later inducted into the Cult of the Reborn Flame as a minor member. He stayed with the cult only to enrich himself, though he did not believe

many of the cult's ramblings. In exchange for his life, he is happy to share all he knows:

- He does not know Pyrultimus' real name. It is common for the cult members to use pseudonyms.
- He isn't sure, but he thinks Pyrultimus may be the leader of the entire cult, because he knows that he has traveled to visit multiple cells.
- He does know that all the recent investigations into the cult's activities have worried its leadership. Pyrultimus has been having Taimen destroy incriminating information and he knows the cult have been assassinating anyone that knows about them.
- Taimen once traveled with Pyrultimus to the city of Harglast to meet with a particularly active cell there, and he believes that Pyrultimus has gone to Harglast to help them clean up loose ends before the cult implements its end game, whatever that might be.

Investigating the House: The inside of the house is well appointed and it is clear that whoever Pyrultimus is, he is quite wealthy. In addition to several documents involving the limestone quarry, there are many receipts for purchases made in the city of Harglast. While not conclusive, it seems likely that he must spend at least some time in that place. In addition to this information, the home has a large collection of occult paraphernalia that will merit further study.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 150/190 experience points each for defeating the guards.

TREASURE

A box of *Everlasting Provisions* and a ritual book of *endure elements* and *tenser's floating disk* are found on the Taimen Grimrin. He also wears a *spidersilk mantle* +1. He also has 30/40 gp as well.

ENCOUNTER 12: PYRULTIMUS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Beholder Gauth		Level 4 Elite Artillery
Medium aberrant magical beast		XP 300
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +10; all-around vision	
HP 82; Bloodied 41		
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 18		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed fly 6 (hover)		
m Bite (standard; at-will)		
+11 vs. AC; 2d4 damage.		
R Central Eye (minor; at-will)		
Ranged 5; +9 vs. Will; the target is immobilized until the end of the beholder gauth's next turn.		
R Eye Rays (standard; at-will) ♦ See text		
The beholder gauth uses two <i>eye ray</i> powers chosen from the list below. Each <i>eye ray</i> must target a different creature. Using eye rays does not provoke opportunity attacks.		
1-Fire Ray (Fire): Ranged 8; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d6+4 fire damage.		
2-Exhaustion Ray (Necrotic): Ranged 8; +9 vs. Fortitude; 1d8+4 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).		
3-Sleep Ray (Sleep): Ranged 8; +9 vs. Fortitude; the target is slowed (save ends). <i>First Failed Saving Throw</i> : The target is knocked unconscious (save ends).		
4-Telekinesis Ray: Ranged 8; +9 vs. Fortitude; the beholder gauth slides the target 4 squares.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Deep Speech
Str 12 (+3)	Dex 15 (+4)	Wis 16 (+5)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 18 (+6)	Cha 20 (+7)

Barghest Savager		Level 3 Brute
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)		XP 150
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +9; low-light vision	
HP 47; Bloodied 23		
AC 15; Fortitude 16, Reflex 14, Will 14		
Speed 6 (8 in wolf form)		
m Bite (standard; usable only in wolf form; at-will)		
+6 vs. AC; 2d8+4 damage.		
m Battleaxe (standard; usable only in bugbear form; at-will) ♦		
Weapon		
+6 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage.		
Jump Strike (standard; recharge 5 6)		
The barghest savager shifts 3 squares before and after attack:		
+6 vs. AC; 3d8+5 damage.		
Power Feed (standard; usable only in wolf form; encounter) ♦		
Psychic, Reliable		
+4 vs. Will; 2d6+5 psychic damage, and the barghest savager gains one use of an at-will or encounter attack power that it has seen the target use during this encounter.		
The savager must use the gained power while in its bugbear form and before the end of the encounter. The attack bonus for the power is +7 vs. AC and +5 vs. any other defense.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Stealth +8		
Str 18 (+5)	Dex 15 (+3)	Wis 14 (+3)
Con 13 (+2)	Int 12 (+2)	Cha 11 (+1)
Equipment battleaxe		

Gnome Arcanist (Taimen Grimrin)		Level 3 Controller (Leader)
Small fey humanoid (gnome)		XP 150
Initiative +1	Senses Perception +1; low-light vision	
Aura of Illusion (Illusion) aura 5; the gnome and all allies in the aura gain concealment and can hide in the aura.		
HP 46; Bloodied 23		
AC 16; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 13		
Speed 5; see also <i>fey step</i>		
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+6 vs. AC; 1d4 damage.		
R Fire Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire		
Range 10; +6 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+4 fire damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).		
R Startling Glamor (minor; at-will)		
Range 10; +7 vs. Will; the target slides 1 square.		
C Illusory Terrain (standard; recharge 4 5 6) ♦ Illusion		
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +7 vs. Will; the target is slowed (save ends).		
Fade Away (immediate readtion, when the gnome target takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion		
The gnome arcanist turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.		
Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation		
The gnome arcanist teleports 5 squares.		
Reactive Stealth		
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a stealth check to escape notice.		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +12, Bluff +8, Insight +6, Stealth +8		
Str 10 (+1)	Dex 10 (+1)	Wis 11 (+1)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 18 (+5)	Cha 15 (+3)
Equipment robes, dagger		

ENCOUNTER 12: PYRULTIMUS STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Beholder Gauth	Level 5 Elite Artillery
Medium aberrant magical beast	XP 400
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +10; all-around vision	
HP 102; Bloodied 51	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 19	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed fly 6 (hover)	
m Bite (standard; at-will)	
+12 vs. AC; 2d4 damage.	
R Central Eye (minor; at-will)	
Ranged 5; +10 vs. Will; the target is immobilized until the end of the beholder gauth's next turn.	
R Eye Rays (standard; at-will) ♦ See text	
The beholder gauth uses two <i>eye ray</i> powers chosen from the list below. Each <i>eye ray</i> must target a different creature. Using eye rays does not provoke opportunity attacks.	
1-Fire Ray (Fire): Ranged 8; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d6+4 fire damage.	
2-Exhaustion Ray (Necrotic): Ranged 8; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d8+4 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).	
3-Sleep Ray (Sleep): Ranged 8; +10 vs. Fortitude; the target is slowed (save ends). <i>First Failed Saving Throw:</i> The target is knocked unconscious (save ends).	
4-Telekinesis Ray: Ranged 8; +10 vs. Fortitude; the beholder gauth slides the target 4 squares.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Deep Speech
Str 12 (+3)	Dex 15 (+4)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 18 (+6)
	Wis 16 (+5)
	Cha 20 (+7)

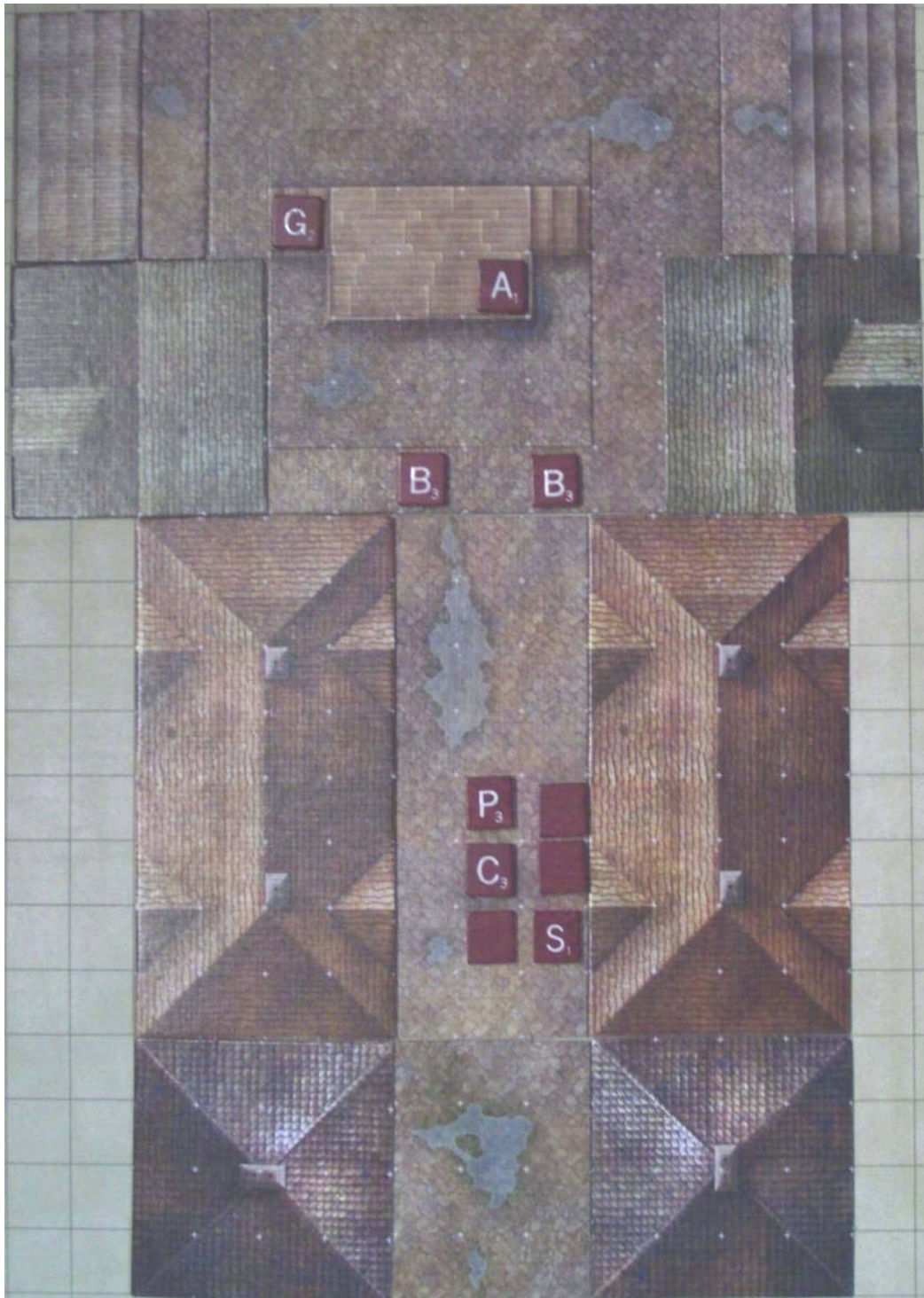
Barghest Savager	Level 4 Brute
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)	XP 175
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +9; low-light vision	
HP 63; Bloodied 31	
AC 16; Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 15	
Speed 6 (8 in wolf form)	
m Bite (standard; usable only in wolf form; at-will)	
+7 vs. AC; 2d8+4 damage.	
m Battleaxe (standard; usable only in bugbear form; at-will) ♦	
Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage.	
Jump Strike (standard; recharge 5 6)	
The barghest savager shifts 3 squares before and after attack: +7 vs. AC; 3d8+5 damage.	
Power Feed (standard; usable only in wolf form; encounter) ♦	
Psychic, Reliable	
+5 vs. Will; 2d6+5 psychic damage, and the barghest savager gains one use of an at-will or encounter attack power that it has seen the target use during this encounter.	
The savager must use the gained power while in its bugbear form and before the end of the encounter. The attack bonus for the power is +7 vs. AC and +5 vs. any other defense.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Stealth +9	
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 15 (+4)
Con 13 (+3)	Int 12 (+3)
	Wis 14 (+4)
	Cha 11 (+2)
Equipment battleaxe	

Gnome Arcanist (Taimen Grimrin)	Level 5 Controller (Leader)
Small fey humanoid (gnome)	XP 200
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +2; low-light vision	
Aura of Illusion (Illusion) aura 5; the gnome and all allies in the aura gain concealment and can hide in the aura.	
HP 62; Bloodied 31	
AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 15	
Speed 5; see also <i>fey step</i>	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d4+2 damage.	
R Fire Bolt (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire	
Range 10; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+5 fire damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).	
R Startling Glamor (minor; at-will)	
Range 10; +9 vs. Will; the target slides 1 square.	
C Illusory Terrain (standard; recharge 4 5 6) ♦ Illusion	
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +9 vs. Will; the target is slowed (save ends).	
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome target takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion	
The gnome arcanist turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.	
Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation	
The gnome arcanist teleports 5 squares.	
Reactive Stealth	
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a stealth check to escape notice.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +13, Bluff +9, Insight +7, Stealth +9	
Str 10 (+2)	Dex 10 (+2)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 18 (+6)
	Wis 11 (+2)
	Cha 15 (+4)
Equipment robes, dagger	

ENCOUNTER 12: PYRULTIMUS MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Streets of Shadow x2



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have driven Pyrultimus from his home and gathered information that he has likely fled to Harglast, it should be clear that the party will have to follow him yet again. If Pyrultimus is given enough time, he will cover the cult's tracks before the PCs can catch up with him.

After sharing what information you have gathered with Rathloff, he sits back in his chair contemplating all you have said.

"While you may have done a great deal to save Ramekho, I fear for the future of the entire Windrise Ports. With this Pyrultimus on the run, he knows we and others are looking for him and he will try to cover his tracks so that we cannot find him until it is too late. If we rest, he will disappear and we will never see him again until the cult accomplishes their mad dream of awakening the Raging Flame. They must be stopped. I will do all I can to research their evil plot and contact our friends throughout the Ports, but I'm afraid you must leave immediately. If we you are to have any hope of stop him, you must be in Harglast as soon as possible. Travel fast my friends!"

Those PCs that worked with Rathloff (likely all of them), receive the Story Object **MINI15 Friend of Rathloff**. If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter 5, 6, or 7 and were noticed by the guards, their likeness has been reported to the Cult of the Reborn. These PCs receive the Story Object **MINI16 Known Description**.

The End.

REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

Encounter 1: The Road to Ramekho

155 / 190 XP

Encounter 2: The Angry Octopus

60 / 90 XP

Encounter 5: Sneaking into the Mine

60 / 90 XP

Encounter 6: Laborers for the Mine

60 / 90 XP

Encounter 7: Prisoners of the Mine

60 / 90 XP

Encounter 8: Inner Workings of the Mine

105 / 155 XP

Encounter 9: You're Getting Warmer

150 / 180 XP

Encounter 10: Take me to your Leader

60 / 90 XP

Encounter 12: Pyrultimus

150 / 190 XP

Minor Quest: Stop the Ritual Beneath the Quarry

30 / 110 XP

Total Possible Experience

775 / 1,095 XP

Gold per PC

150 / 200 gp

(Encounter 1: 50 / 60 gp; Encounter 8: 20 / 30 gp; Encounter 9: 50 / 70 gp; Encounter 12: 30 / 40 gp)

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or something else of value. Each player makes one and only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that amount to that character's base gold award. It is possible and permissible for a character who spends more gold than he or she earns to have a negative total for the adventure. PCs receive 20% of the item's market price when they sell any magic item or consumable. They receive 50% of the market price for ritual books and alchemical formulas.

If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon +1* is listed

as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a +1 *duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BUNDLES:

Bundle A: *symbol of life* +1 (level 2; Players Handbook)
Found in Encounter 1

Bundle B: *acrobat boots* (level 2; Players Handbook)
Found in Encounter 1

Bundle C: *darkleaf armor* +1 (level 4; Players Handbook)
Found in Encounter 8

Bundle D: *wand of witchfire* +1 (level 3; Players Handbook)
Found in Encounter 9

Bundle E: *thundering weapon* +1 (level 3; Players Handbook)
Found in Encounter 9

Bundle F: *everlasting provisions* (level 4; Players Handbook)
Found in Encounter 12

Bundle G: *spidersilk mantle* +1 (level 3; Adventurer's Vault 2)
Found in Encounter 12

Bundle H: *ritual book of endure elements and tensor's floating disk*
Found in Encounter 12

Consumable plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a *potion of healing* plus 200 / 300 gp to their rewards from this adventure. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log. That character (and only that character) then receives the consumable plus the listed amount of gold (if any) instead of any other treasure bundle. Consumable items obtained in this fashion do not take up found magic item slots.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose

to add 250 / 350 gp to their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards. Normally, if a PC earns three awards, they may only have 2 of them and must pick which two they want before ending the session (exceptions to this will be noted in the story award text).

MINI15 Friend of Rathloff

You have made friends with the elderly occultist Rathloff in the city of Ramekho. Despite his meager home, he has access to a wealth of eldritch knowledge that will certainly help defeat the Cult of the Reborn Flame.

MINI16 Known Description

The Cult of the Flame has noticed you as an enemy and they know what you look like. They will come for you. Now you have to ask yourself, is every person who looks at you on the street a member of this terrible cult who has just spotted you, or are you just being paranoid.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form.

1. How did the PCs get into the quarry?

- a. They snuck in or used guile.
- b. They got arrested and were put to work.
- c. They hired on as laborers.
- d. They fought their way in.
- e. They never got in.

2. Did the PCs stop the ritual to breach the Elemental Plane of Fire?

- a. Yes!
- b. They tried but failed.
- c. They never got inside the restricted area.

3. How do you (the DM) rate this adventure?

- a. Five stars - excellent (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars - very good
- c. Three stars - average
- d. Two stars - below average
- e. One star - really awful (worst possible rating)

4. How do the players rate this adventure? (You can average their individual ratings or use any other system that is agreeable to the group.)

- a. Five stars - excellent (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars - very good
- c. Three stars - average
- d. Two stars - below average
- e. One star - really awful (worst possible rating)

NEW RULES

SPIDERSILK MANTLE Level 3+

Spun from the silk of a demonweb terror, this mantle grants you a spider's effortless ability to climb.

Lvl 3	+1	680 gp	Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp
Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Power (Encounter): Minor Action. You gain a climb (spider climb) speed equal to your speed until the end of your turn.

Reference: *Adventurer's Vault* 2, page 109.

APPENDIX

Based upon the Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide, p. 217.

RAMEKHO

Population: 12,000; an accurate count is difficult as large numbers of adventurers and drifters are currently moving through the city regularly.

Government: None

Defense: The shipping and mining members of the Merchant's Guild hire bands of adventurers to police the city. This leaves the enforcement of order somewhat haphazard. What would be considered minor crimes, such as vandalism or noise disputes, are usually dealt by local citizens and a stout club. Serious crimes, such as arson or murder, eventually attract the attention of hired adventurers who trounce the offenders and deliver the offender into indentured servitude in one of the nearby mines or quarries. The Merchants Guild of Ramekho maintains a force of approximately 500 adventurers who patrol the city and drive off any raiders that trouble the quarries and shipping lanes.

Inns: Fish in a Barrel (moderately priced inn with a large attached restaurant specializing in local seafood), The Eveningmist Club (fancy inn that requires a private membership to enter), Coln's (cheap flop house), and many more.

Tavern: The Angry Octopus (rough and cheap, popular with sympathizers of the Cult of the Reborn Flame), The Foaming Mug (rambunctious but fun), The Color (popular tavern among miners), the Boson's Mate (on the docks and popular among sailors), and many more.

Supplies: Dockside Market (for seafood and nautical gear), Guild Bazaar.

Temples: Like most cities in Returned Abeir, organized religions are a new introduction since the Blue Breath of Change. Ramekho has no temple but does host in Dockside, the Lady's Token (Umberlee).

RAMEKHO LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful skill check.

History DC 10: Ramekho is a dilapidated city built on the mouth of the Sundarra River that has little or no laws. This makes the city a popular stopping off point for adventurers who often chafe under the governmental eye of more organized cities. This lawlessness does not mean Ramekho is a place of complete chaos. The members of the Merchant's Guild hire bands of adventurers to police the city.

History DC 10: Ramekho is well known as having thriving shipping, fishing, and strip mining industries.

History DC 20: Sambral and the other Windrise Ports were long in thrall to a Dawn Titan called Achazar, which manifested as a swirling column of fire in Tarmalune. As the millennia wore on, Achazar moved less and less. The quiescent Dawn Titan hasn't stirred in decades, and the Windrise Ports have declared their independence.

Nature DC 10: The silty River Sundarra offers easily fishing. In particular the Yellow Finned Oponi is considered a local delicacy and can be found cooked in various ways throughout the city.

Religion DC 15: Religion is not common in Ramekho. The following of minor cults or general superstition is more universal than worshipping one of the gods. The followers of Umberlee have constructed a small shrine in Dockside that sailors patronize when going to sea.

CITY DISTRICTS

Dockside: The largest district in Ramekho is called Dockside. Made up of the docks and warehouses that line the river and seafront. It is always busy and smells strongly of fish.

The Slag: The slums of Ramekho are often called "The Slag" in reference to the smelting operations that can be found here. People populate this area have a hard life, but are fiercely prideful of their self-sufficiency.

The Hills: The high ground of Ramekho is filled with the houses of those merchants who are rich enough to belong to the Guild. The Guild Bazaar can be found in this district.