

SF 2

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— Adventure 2: Burning Desires —

By Gary Schotter & Jeff Harkness

**SWORDS &
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This book is dedicated to the memory of Dustin “Lanky” Ray Cook, 1985-2009.

Special Thanks

Jeff would like to dedicate this book to Tammy, Kaitlyn and Alyssa. Gary would like to dedicate this work to Christina, Brooklyn, Kaden and Amberlyn. We also want to thank Greg Wilson for his wisdom and advice in solving many dilemmas and game mechanics issues.

And a special dedication to the 32 PCs who lost their lives during playtesting.



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**TOUGH
ADVENTURES
FOR TOUGH
PLAYERS**

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Splinters of Faith

— Adventure 2: Burning Desires — By Gary Schotter & Jeff Harkness

This adventure begins in a dwarven village and temple soon after a religious artifact has been stolen. Clues lead PCs deep into the Sin Mire swamp to uncover an underwater temple complex and an orc cleric behind the theft. It is designed for characters of 2nd to 4th level.

A plume of dark smoke roils upward into the soot-filled sky, creating low-hanging ashen clouds that drift above the city's many belching chimneys. The ring of hammers striking anvils by the score fills the air, a metal on metal song accompanied by a chorus of dwarven voices.

Two dwarven sentries stand at attention alongside the city's entry into the 20-foot-tall limestone block walls. One spits a stream of tobacco juice across the dusty path and nods. "Welcome to Anvil Plunge." Above them in a tower window, a loaded crossbow swivels in your direction and another dwarf waves down at your small group. The searing smell of superheated metal wafts through the open gates.

Anvil Plunge

Location: Mountains, high hills

Nickname: Forge of Kings

Deity: Dargath, god of dwarves, mining, strength, blacksmithing and brewing

Worship domains: Air, Earth, Fire, Law, Strength, Water.

How to Use This Adventure

This adventure is a small part of the Splinters of Faith campaign, which leads PCs to restore a broken scepter and destroy a reawakened death-priest. The first nine adventures require PCs to obtain a ritual to restore the relic. The final adventure finds the PCs and the reformed scepter facing off against a death-priest on his home turf. (More background information on the full campaign can be found in *Splinters of Faith 1: It Started with a Chicken ...*)

At this point in the campaign, the relic – called the *Scepter of Faiths* – is simply two pieces of splintered wood. These pieces are even useable for crafting a new weapon. But they do serve as a blueprint for the dwarves of Anvil Plunge to recreate the relic.

If you don't want to run the full campaign, don't worry. This adventure is complete on its own. Each adventure follows a similar setup where the PCs visit a good temple, then are recruited/hired/asked to take part in an adventure before receiving the blessing they seek. The PCs must then travel to an "evil" temple to complete their mission.

If you plan to run the adventure without the others that precede it, you'll need to devise a way to get the PCs started. Since each adventure starts with a "good" temple, this could be as simple as having the temple elders request aid against the "evil" temple. Of course, the promise of gold, magic and the thrill of adventure also might not hurt.

Leader: Brovok Ashenchisel (male dwarf Cleric10)

Servants: 30 (Fighter 3), 25 subpriest (Cleric 1-3); 10 priests (Cleric 4-6)

Basil Ironhorn (Fighter 2, Cleric 4), Gizzard Bumgut (Ranger 6)

Dress: Metallic-colored robes with primary colors symbolizing rank within the clergy

Unique characteristic: An aboveground dwarven community on a hill overlooking a vast swamp

Background

The dwarven temple of Anvil Plunge is a small aboveground complex dedicated to Dargath, the god of dwarves and mining. Dargath has many faces, but above all else, he symbolizes forging in every aspect.

The temple's most sacred ritual, the *Ceremony of Forging*, involves the four elements: earth to yield; air to bellow; fire to shape; and water to temper. Dargath deems each step important to the complete forging process. For that reason, the shrines to the deity's four elemental aspects encircle a large ancient anvil within a central chamber. These temples to the elements sit at the cardinal points of a compass around the central anvil shrine, with fire opposing water, and earth opposite air. Of the four, the earth temple is the most lavish.

The elemental shrines each hold a sacred relic that the dwarves believe was a gift from Dargath himself. The fire shrine holds the *Flame of Dargath*, while the earth shrine contains the *Soul of Dargath*. The water shrine is the resting place of the *Tear of Dargath*, and the air shrine

New Deity: Dargath

God of Dwarves, aspect of craftsmanship and creation

Alignment: Lawful Good

Domains: Strength, Elements (any)

Typical Worshippers: Almost exclusively Dwarves

Favored Weapon: Warhammer

Dargath is a serious dwarf who focuses on creation and perfection in craftsmanship, whose skills as a blacksmith to the gods are unequaled. Dargath's tenets are as rigid as the steel he cherishes, but his principles are wholesome and good. He detests evil and inferior weapons. Dargath stays out of the politics of his fellow gods, supporting good and law with his skills at the forge. He confines himself in an iron stronghold atop the Ringing Mountain in Elysium.

Dargath proudly, and some say stubbornly, takes only one form, that of an aged dwarf. His metallic silver hair and beard reveal his identity. He wears adamantite armor and always carries Rolikamsk, his indestructible warhammer. Rolikamsk is dwarvish for "Life's Spark."

Dargath's followers are perfectionist in their craft of blacksmithing. Transforming ore into weapons, armor or tools is itself a sacred ceremony. Priests endure rigorous training. They adorn themselves with robes or sashes containing metallic threads to signify their rank. Acolytes wear bronze while high priests wear mithral or platinum.

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was built to house the *Breath of Dargath*. Unfortunately, the *Breath of Dargath*, a small bronze nozzle, vanished many years ago during a gnoll invasion before Anvil Plunge had constructed its outer wall. Dargath's followers to this day seek any information about this most holy of relics. Each artifact is detailed below in the temple that houses it. Fortunately for the PCs, the *Breath of Dargath* is not needed to complete the *Blessing of Joining Flame* and restore the *Scepter of Faiths*. Most of the work is done in the fire shrine using the *Flame of Dargath*.

Besides the central four temples, four additional shrines sit at the intercardinal points in a second ring around the great anvil. These shrines represent the lesser aspects of Dargath, and venerate mining, strength, craftsmanship and brewing.

Laborers and clergy live in stone houses built around the interior of Anvil Plunge's outer wall. From above, the entire temple complex resembles a wheel, with the shrines acting as the spokes, and the anvil at the center. The outer wall would be the tire's rim.

Anvil Plunge

Anvil Plunge (hamlet): 100-gp limit; Assets 450 gp; Population 91; Mixed (dwarf 80%, human 15%, gnome 4%, half-elf 1%).

Authority figure: Patriarch Brovok Ashenchisel (Lawful male dwarf Cleric 10). **Important characters:** Master Blacksmith Basil Ironhorn (Lawful male dwarf Fighter 2/Cleric 4); Master Guard Gizzard Bumgut (Lawful male dwarf Ranger 6).

Locations in Anvil Plunge

A 20-foot-high circular wall of limestone blocks surrounds the hamlet of Anvil Plunge. Two gates pass through the 8-foot-thick wall.

A 30-foot-tall tower stands to the left of each entrance as visitors pass into the village. A wrought-iron gate opens during the day to admit visitors and patrons. The gate is sealed shortly after dusk, and doesn't open for any reason until the sun rises. The dwarves learned a hard lesson after the gnoll attack that cost them the *Breath of Dargath*.

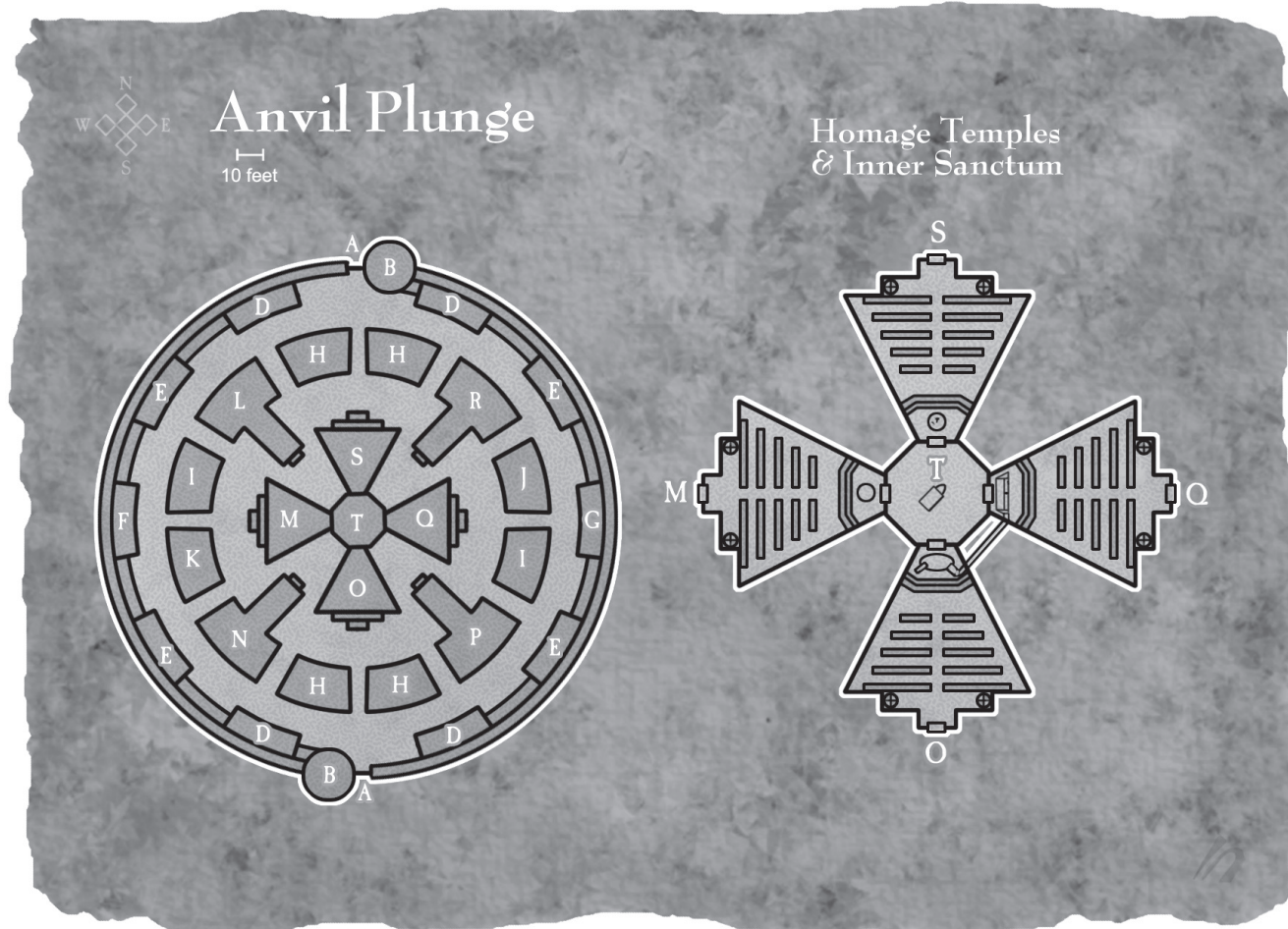
Anvil Plunge reveres order and balance. Built around an adamantite anvil, the temple pays homage to metal craft in all its guises. Buildings are designed with a simplistic beauty that displays the stone's natural splendor. The dwarven attitude toward construction is that if you're going to do it right, stone's the way to go. But that doesn't mean that it can't be beautiful in its own right.

Area A: Guards

Two solemn **guards** (dwarf Fighter 1) watch these gates at all times. They answer questions with short, curt answers. Visitors asking more in-depth questions are directed to the temple priests. Another guard observes from the tower and stands ready to summon aid if new arrivals get out of hand. Most visitors are allowed to pass without incident. Suspicious behavior or appearance causes the dwarves to block the entrance and question visitors thoroughly. This "questioning" usually involves the loaded crossbow in the tower pointed at the suspicious party.

Area B: Ground Level

The door to the tower is inside Anvil Plunge's walls, but barred from the inside to keep invaders from gaining access to the weapons inside. An iron ladder ascends through a trapdoor to the second level. A fireplace, eight bunks and sixteen locked footlockers fill the



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chamber. Guards use the room as barracks.

Each locker contains a spare tunic, 1d8 sp and personal effects (locks of a lover's hair, combs, letters, etc.)

Area B2: Tower, Second Level

Four arrow slits line the wall, three facing the grounds outside the wall and one covering the area just inside the gate. Eight loaded heavy crossbows line the walls next to four barrels of bolts. A table and four chairs sit in the room, and a door leads to the top of the wall. A ladder leads down through a trapdoor to Area B1 and up to Area B3. As many as **1d4+1 off-duty guards** (dwarf Fighter 1) lounge here to play cards and socialize.

Area B3: Tower Roof

A **guard** (dwarf Ftr1) at the top of the tower mans a large crossbow (2d6 points of damage) mounted on a swiveling shaft. If trouble arises, the guard blows a huge iron horn mounted on an iron tripod. Within 1 round, **2d8 guards** (dwarf Fighter 1) arrive to bolster the guards at the gate. A ladder leads through a trapdoor in the floor to Area B2.

Area C: The Wall

The wall is 20 feet high and 8 feet thick. A three-foot-wide stone partition lines the exterior and provides cover for sentries that patrol the ledge. Eight stone staircases descend from the top of the wall into the inner courtyard, the bottom steps emerging in alleys among the hamlet's perimeter buildings. Two **guards** (dwarf Fighter 1) armed with heavy crossbows patrol the wall around the clock.

Area D: Stables

The stables are little more than thatch-covered lean-tos. Eight to 10 ponies and one riding horse can be housed in each stable. Youth tend the horses.

Area E: Warehouses

Common supplies and food stock are stored in these two-story stone buildings.

Area F: Temple Market

This two-story building's first floor is a general store. PCs can purchase weapons and armor at a 10 percent markup from the price listed in the Swords & Wizardry Core Rules.

Romsel Brutemouse (Lawful male gnome) runs the store and records purchase orders for exports. His office and private residence fill the building's two-room second floor. All profits are returned to the temple.

Area G: Treasury

Two **guards** (dwarf Fighter 1) are always stationed at the iron door of this windowless, stone building. The temple's treasury and other valuable materials used for exceptional crafts are stored within. The single-room treasury contains 12 iron chests, each bolted to the stone floor. Each chest is locked.

In total, the chests contain: 1,650 gp; 6,950 sp; 8,450 ep; 10,900 cp; five 10-pound ingots of adamantite (1,000 gp total); 156 uncut rubies and sapphires (25 gp each); 366 various semiprecious stones (10 gp each); a

large nonmagical crystal sphere (500 gp); two spools of gold wire (50 gp each), four spools of silver wire (25 gp each) and 10 sheets of gold leaf (20 gp each); a *divine scroll* (*raise dead*, *cure serious wounds*, *monster summoning VI*), a *wand of cure serious wounds* (8 charges); drow-made elvin chainmail and human-sized *mithral chainmail*; 10 various pieces of darkwood (250 gp total); 10 volumes covering topics such as alchemical silver and cold iron forging, and masterwork techniques (100 gp each).

Area H: Barracks

Ten **guards** (dwarf Fighter 1) live in each of these single-story buildings. At any given time, 1d4+1 guards are present.

Area I: Common Houses

Common laborers reside in small apartments on the ground level of these houses. Skilled laborers live on the second floor.

Area J: Officers' Residence

Four **sergeants** (dwarf Fighter 3) live on this building's first floor, with one on duty at all times. **Master Guard Gizzard Bumgut** (Lawful male dwarf Ranger 6) and his wife, Anveela, and their son, Gristen, live on the second floor. The master guard can be found here most evenings.

Gizzard is a bit of a loner, but he is well respected and trusted. He hates orc-kind and distrusts arcane spellcasters.

Area K: High Priest's Quarters

This two-story building is the home of **Brovok Ashenchisel** (Lawful male dwarf Cleric 10) and his wife, Errillia, and their four young quadruplet sons.

Burns scar Brovok's face and arms, and his gray hair and beard lie singed upon his chest. His dedication to Dargath is equaled only by his love of metalworking. Brovok is stern and serious, but a bit of a braggart when speaking of his craft and his faith.

If asked about the *Scepter of Faiths* or shown the broken pieces of the original, or if the PCs ask about the *Blessing of Joining Flame*, Brovok is speechless. He has heard of both, but only in the words of his most ancient ancestors. But he also remembers dire warnings for the world tied to the return of the scepter.

Area L: Shrine to Brewing

The air smells of hops and yeast around this popular shrine to brewing. The building is only one story despite looking much larger from the outside. Carved designs of barley and hops decorate a stone altar in the entrance chamber. Ornate metallic steins and ceramic pitchers sit in a circle atop the altar.

Large vats, copper tubing, barrels and brewing equipment fill the entire back room. This small brewery produces Dargath's blessed ale. The ale is almost strictly used for rituals and special occasions, and is not given away without just cause. Water from the *Tear of Dargath* in the water shrine is used to make the high-grade ale. A smaller brewery in the room is used by Dilgetta Ashenchisel (Lawful female dwarf, brewmaster) to brew her own special ale, which she reserves for visitors. **Dilgetta** is a stout, yellow-bearded dwarf who remains constantly relaxed.

Area M: Homage to Water

This shrine reveres water's role in the forging process. A stone fountain within the structure gurgles with a gentle flow of water. The

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temple's iron doors remain open throughout the day so visitors may find peace and solace in the sounds of the bubbling waters. Watching over the shrine are **2 guards** (dwarf Fighter 1).

Bas-relief sculptures of swirling water decorate the shrine's interior walls, and two six-foot-tall stone statues of Dargath, each holding a decorative metal flask, stand to each side of the front door. A stone basin serving as an altar sits upon a three-foot-wide dais in the chamber. A locked iron gate separates this temple from the inner sanctum containing the sacred anvil.

Water pours into the basin from an ornate decanter known as the *Tear of Dargath* (actually a *decanter of endless water*). A mithril band bolted to the bottom of the basin holds the decanter inches above the water's surface. A Strength check is needed to bend the mithril band and release the decanter. Water gushes out of the decanter to fill the pool. The water then flows over the lip of the basin, where it drips down the sides of the altar before pouring through iron grate set in the floor.

The dwarves use the water to cool weapons forged in the inner temple. The water has no other special properties. The overflow from the fountain drains into the sewers and flows downhill into the Sin Mire Swamp. The dwarves do not know the decanter's command words and have never attempted to stopper the container. The *decanter* has flowed for centuries, in fact, the run-off greatly expanding the borders of the Sin Mire.

Fiedora Blackhelm (Lawful female dwarf Cleric 6, blacksmith) tends the shrine. This young, thin dwarf is very flirtatious. She favors dwarven adventurers of good alignment and eagerly inquires about their adventures and heroic deeds. She's not above making up excuses about why her would-be suitor should stay and "protect" the shrine.

Area N: Shrine to Strength

This shrine is dedicated to strength, endurance and perseverance — qualities the dwarves value. The open-floored room holds a single slab of granite, lines of stone benches and a crude altar. Behind the altar, an open space allows the dwarves to perfect their physical prowess by exercising with crude weights constructed of iron anvils with metal handholds attached. Battered practice dummies dressed in orcish garb stand in orderly ranks, ready to be stabbed and slashed by dwarven warriors. Miscellaneous weaponry sits in stone shelves about the edges of the room for dwarves to pick up and train with. Anvil Plunge's guards work out here daily to stay at their peak.

Thak Weevilmush (Neutral dwarf male Fighter 5) oversees the shrine and those paying homage to strength. He has a strange accent and is not from the local clan. Thak's mannerisms are crude, and his smell is overbearing. But despite these shortcomings, he is kindhearted and dedicated to Anvil Plunge and Dargath. Unknown to all, Thak is actually a half-ogre who was slain many years ago when he took a frost giant's axe square to the face. His friend Thumall Badden, a druid, reincarnated Thak, but unfortunately, things didn't go as planned. Thak returned as the dwarf he appears as these days. At first, Thak found life as a dwarf incredibly difficult, and he feared adventuring in his new form. Finally, he stumbled upon Anvil Plunge and discovered a newfound purpose in helping train the dwarves to be their physical best. Thak wears a peculiarly dainty silver charm around his neck on a silver chain. The charm is a nonmagical charm snapped off of a bracelet worn by Thumall Badden. (See Area E-13 in *Splinters of Faith 6: Morning of Tears* for Badden's fate.)

Area O: Homage to Air

This structure reveres air's role in forging. The temple's iron doors are locked at all times, and **2 guards** (dwarf Fighter 1) watch the building.

This temple is only used when the forge in the Homage to Fire temple is in operation. Vents and rollout windows line the upper walls, and a huge bellows sitting atop a three-foot stone dais dominates the room. Behind the bellows is a locked iron gate that separates this temple from the inner sanctum and the sacred anvil. Two six-foot-tall

bluish stone statues of Dargath stand to either side of the entrance. Each statue appears to be howling.

Early in Anvil Plunge's history, a bronze nozzle fit on the tip of the bellows. The *Breath of Dargath*, however, was carried away during the great gnoll wars before Anvil Plunge built its surrounding wall. A nonmagical nozzle now replaces the artifact, but the forging ceremony has not been the same since the relic vanished. The dwarves would give anything to have the artifact returned. (See Area 4-8 of *Splinters of Faith 5: Eclipse of the Hearth* for details on the location of the missing relic.)

Huttum Lyford (Lawful human male, weaponsmith) oversees the shrine and operates the bellows. Huttum is the youngest member of Anvil Plunge. He is tall and desires nothing more than to become the world's greatest blacksmith. He is fanatical even by dwarven standards. Aside from ale, his conversations revolve around blacksmithing. The dwarves label him a dwarf-wannabe. Huttum wears dwarven garb and speaks with an exaggerated dwarven accent.

Area P: Shrine to Mining

Miners pray at this shrine for luck and safety while delving into the depths of the ground. They arrive every morning before dawn to pray before heading into nearby mines. Benches fill the room, all facing a block of rough stone that serves as an altar. A huge, silver pick hangs from chains above the rock. Various coins fill collection buckets before the altar.

This shrine is open around the clock. Patrons can always be found praying in silent devotion. **Hulman Ashenchisel** (Lawful dwarf Cleric 8) is the lead priest. Hulman is an ancient dwarf mostly retired from daily duties. Hulman hobbles around the shrine with his cane and ear horn during predawn hours. He is currently seeking a devout dwarf to replace him. Hulman is of the Ashenchisel clan and Brovok's elder uncle.

Proceeds collected by the temple go to help down-on-their-luck miners or to fund those just getting started.

Area Q: Homage to Fire

A double-door forge sits atop a three-foot dais within this shrine. Priests of this shrine and the high priest of the inner sanctum use the forge to craft weapons and other holy implements. Bronze tubes running from the Homage to Air temple's huge bellows feed the flames of the forge, which is used daily as the focal point for most of the temple's ceremonies. Two iron statues of Dargath stand against the back wall, each holding forth a lump of coal alight with a *continual flame*. Like the other temples, the inner sanctum is accessible through this shrine, but it means going through the oven-like forge to get to the sacred anvil.

The forge holds the *Flame of Dargath*, Anvil Plunge's most treasured artifact. The plain-looking lump of coal produces a continuous flame that has never been extinguished. It is said that Dargath plucked it from the world's core and forged the first dwarf from its flame. History says he then gave the relic to the dwarves to start the fires in their forges. Besides an inextinguishable flame, the *Flame of Dargath* has no other known properties.

The iron doors remain locked when the shrine is not in use. Watching the doors are **2 guards** (Dwarven Warrior 3).

Belvord Ironsinker (Lawful dwarf Cleric 7) is the residing priest. Belvord is a somber and unemotional dwarf. Although he does little forge-work these days, he is the official caretaker of tools and equipment for all forge ceremonies. He aids Brovok Ashenchisel during rituals.

Area R: The Shrine to Smithing

Belvord Ironsinker (Area Q) oversees this shrine, and can usually be found within. Blacksmiths and foundry workers travel great

distances to have their tools blessed upon the anvil-shaped stone altar. On most days, ceremonies of ringing steel echo throughout Anvil Plunge.

Forging of any kind in the shrine is more than a menial task; it is treated with dignity, reverence and thoughtful reflection. Usually **2d8 underpriests** (dwarf Cleric 3) work here. For a small donation or task, Belvord may cast spells within his means for virtuous individuals.

Area S: Homage to Earth

The Homage to Earth temple is built from a mix of marble, granite and feldspar. Two ornate stone doors remain open during daylight hours, welcoming those who call upon Dargath. Stone statues of Dargath stand inside the door, each holding an axe in one hand and a lowered pick in the other. Intricate patterns of stone and minerals decorate the temple's interior walls, the swirls in the rock glittering with precious gemstones. Rows of stone benches line the interior of the shrine.

A round, five-foot-tall altar carved from an unfamiliar stone sits upon a three-foot-tall dais. An adamantine chisel and hammer lie upon the altar. Brovok Ashenchisel holds daily rituals of forging at dusk within the temple, which is reserved solely for his use. Ore used in the rituals is kept on the altar in preparation for the ceremony and is replaced afterward by new raw materials. The ore varies depending upon the day. Adamantine is used once a year. During these grand ceremonies, the inner sanctum is opened on all sides.

An sealed iron grate passes from this shrine into the Inner Sanctum containing the holy anvil.

Area T: The Inner Sanctum

This area is off-limits to all except the high priest and those he asks to accompany him. Masterwork hammers, tongs, chisels, punches and other blacksmithing tools line shelves on the walls. Small workbenches around an adamantine anvil of the highest quality that shines brightly from atop a block of oak. The anvil in the inner sanctum can be viewed through the grate openings in each of the temples to the four elements; the opening leading into the Homage to Fire temple (Area Q) goes through the heart of the forge.

Adventure Background

Legend says that the *Flame of Dargath* is the last remaining lick of flame from when Dargath created dwarves and presented them with the gift of fire. The flame is a three-inch tongue of fire burning on a nondescript lump of coal. The flame never extinguishes, and the coal never burns away. As far as the dwarves know, no known means exist to extinguish the flame or destroy the ember. Anvil Plunge's priests are the sole protectors of this holy relic. From its small flame, they have lighted countless masterwork forges to craft weapons of great power. The original *Scepter of Faiths* was first hardened in this very flame.

But the *Flame of Dargath* recently vanished from the guarded temple. Searches of the grounds and the surrounding land yielded no clues. Even Gizzard Bumgut's vaunted tracking skills uncovered little. Divination magic revealed that the relic was stolen and is no longer close by. The priests are at a loss; without the *Flame of Dargath*, the forge in the *Homage to Fire* shrine may cease to burn.

Trawla of the Sin Mire (Chaotic female orc), an orc shaman, stole the *Flame of Dargath*. Trawla wants to extinguish the flame to gain favor with her deity, a twisted elemental princess called Alyhedra. How she pulled off the heist is a testament to Trawla's ingenuity. The orc first cast *polymorph self* to transform into an otter to enter the temple's inner sanctum via a sewer pipe that empties into her swamp lair. In this much-smaller animal form, Trawla wriggled through the iron gates that separate and seal off the temples to the elements. She stole the *Flame of Dargath* and then relied on a *potion of fire resistance* to scamper through the forge itself. She left the holy sanctum the same way she had entered. Once safely back in the Sin Mire, she placed the flame in an iron box to transport back to her mud-tunnel lair.

The dwarves of Anvil Plunge have met Trawla before, but their encounters usually ended in a stalemate. Trawla never leaves the swamp and the dwarves are too afraid to go in after her (although they'll deny fearing *anything* if accused of it). Over the years, numerous dwarven guards have reported seeing the smelly orc standing on small islands offshore, taunting them, cursing Dargath's faith and belittling the temple. Most of the dwarves write her off as harmless, but Brovok correctly assumes she might be behind this latest affront. The dwarves don't know Trawla is a druid, but they do know that she lives in the northern reaches of the vast Sin Mire swamp.

Unfortunately for the PCs, Brovok Ashenchisel requires the *Flame of Dargath* to perform the *Blessing of Joining Flame* to forge a new *Scepter of Faiths* based on the "blueprint" that the broken pieces of the original scepter provide. If played as a standalone adventure, Brovok offers a reward of human-sized *mithral chainmail* (AC 5 [14]) and 500 gp for the safe return of the *Flame*.

Searching the Temple

The dwarves missed several important clues during a hasty search of the inner sanctum and the *Homage to Fire* shrine. They focused solely on these two areas, ignoring completely Trawla's entry point into the temple complex. An Intelligence check in the *Homage to Water* temple uncovers a small tuft of brown fur lodged in an iron grate over a drain that leads to the swamp. The fur is from an otter. Another Intelligence check inside the *Homage to Water* shrine reveals dried otter prints that lead from the drain to the forge.

Covering the bars of the sewer grate are patches of dried red mud mixed with clay. The dwarves believe that this particular mud comes from remote islands in the swamp's northeast section. A ranger who frequents Anvil Plunge with his pet coyote recently has been telling tales of monstrous mounds formed from the clay

and mud. Unfortunately, the ranger, Ruscart, recently left to explore a submerged village he has heard about in the swamp and is not expected back for a few weeks.

If the grate covering the drain in the *Homage to Water* shrine is removed, small-sized creatures can traverse Anvil Plunge's narrow sewer system to where it empties into the Sin Mire. However, Brovok knows that the pipe empties into the swamp farther downhill from the temple and can lead PCs overland to the spot if asked.

PCs traveling through the pipe or following the dwarves' directions end up at the edge of the Sin Mire swamp. The dwarves are apprehensive about entering the swamp because of its depth and nasty inhabitants. It is virtual suicide for a group of armored dwarves to explore the uncharted marsh with its changing water depths, sucking mud pits and underwater menaces.

The Sin Mire

The Sin Mire sits in the lowlands below the hills surrounding Anvil Plunge. The marshland has grown steadily over the centuries as runoff from the *Tear of Dargath* has emptied into the swamp. The marsh now stretches for many miles, winding through the valleys and former lowlands, swallowing villages and other settlements unfortunate enough to be in its inexorable march. The morass averages five feet deep, but small islands, deep holes and fields of shallow, grass-covered wetlands are common. Cypress, sawtooth oak, chestnut and cottonwood trees draped in hanging moss cloak the majority of the swamp. The trees grow 60 to 80 feet tall, with trunks averaging three feet in diameter. Trunks are normally free of branches for the first 50 feet, but clotted with the ever-present hanging moss.

The Sin Mire grows a little more every year. Currently, the fen covers more than 1,200 square miles. Several small settlements swallowed by the expanding marsh lie scattered throughout the swamp. Ruins jut out of the turbid waters in many places. But despite its harsh climate, many creatures still call the Sin Mire home. A vast lizard folk city, a submerged village inhabited by restless undead, and even a brass dragon are rumored to be among the marsh's many inhabitants.

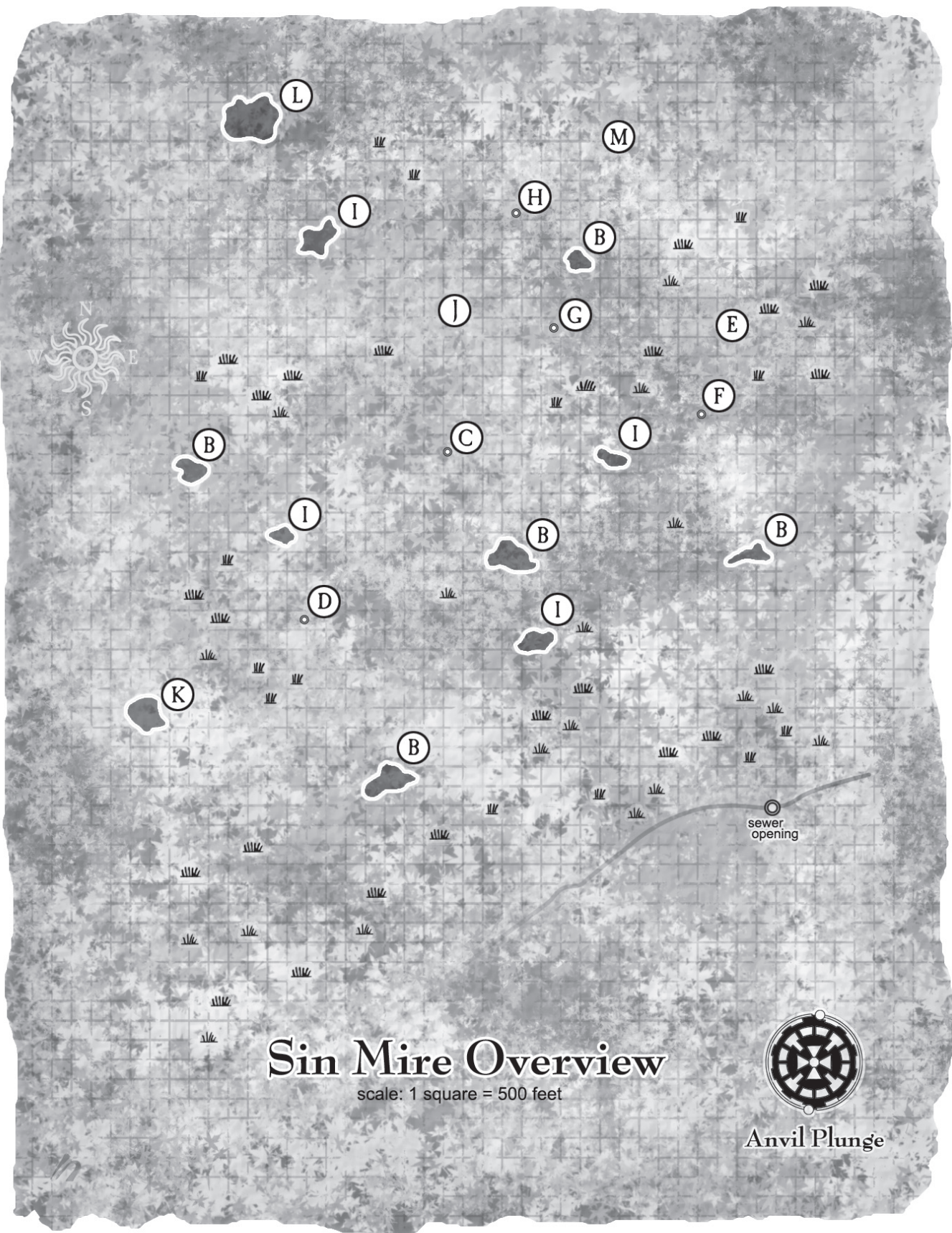
Travel in the Sin Mire

Traversing the Sin Mire poses many obstacles. Travelers marching on foot encounter varying water depths and long stretches between dry land. Walking or riding on horseback is slow because of limited paths and the danger to the animal from holes and underwater predators. A boat or raft is the easiest way to safely navigate the quagmire.

The dwarves of Anvil Plunge do not venture into the Sin Mire, but they occasionally fish along its banks. Anvil Plunge has no boats, and few lack the knowledge or skill to create such vessels. The closest village with a boat is several days away. The dwarves aren't willing to wait that long.

Trees and rope, however, can be crafted into usable rafts, and the dwarves gladly cut and tie logs together to create these makeshift crafts. Crafting a suitable raft requires an Intelligence check. Enterprising PCs may also attempt to create wooden or leather canoes, but this is a much more difficult venture. A wooden canoe requires a +5 Intelligence check, while a leather canoe requires a +10 Intelligence check. Failure by more than 5 indicates that the watercraft falls apart in 2-7 hours. The GM should roll the check secretly.

Poles and oars are commonly used to propel the rafts. Makeshift



Sin Mire Overview

scale: 1 square = 500 feet



Wandering Monsters

Many creatures live within the ever-growing Sin Mire. Check for wandering monsters every three hours that the PCs travel. Roll 1d20 and consult the following chart:

1. BLACK DRAGON WYRMLING: HD 6; 6 hp; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), bite (3d6); Save 11; Move 9, fly 24; CL/XP 3/120 XP. Special: Spits acid

2. MONSTROUS CRAYFISH: HD 4; 30 hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6); Save 14; Move 6, swim 15; CL/XP 3/60 XP. Special A crayfish can survive out of water for 1 hour.

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3. VIPER, HUGE: HD 2; 14 hp; AC 6 [13]; Atk bite (1d4) + poison; Save 16; Move 12; CL/XP 2/30 XP. Special: Poison (+1 save or die)
Special:

4. GIANT WATER SPIDERS (2): HD 2+2; hp 16, 14. AC 6 [13]; Atk Bite (1d6) + poison; Save 16; Move 18; CL/XP 5/240 XP. Special: Poison (+1 save or die), surprise

5. CROCODILE (2): HD 3; 21 hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk bite (1d8+1) and tail slap (1d12+1); Save 14; Move 12; CL/XP 3/60 XP.

6. SWAMP MONKEYS: A colony of swamp monkeys lives in the trees. The loud and territorial simians harmlessly bombard passers-by with fruit, twigs and feces.

7. ASSASSIN VINE: HD 4+2; 28 hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk 4 slams (1d8); Save 13; Move 3; CL/XP 6/400 XP. Special:

Camouflage (+5 Wisdom check to see), Entangle (Nearby plants grab victim, slowing Movement by 6)

8. BEAVER DAM: Several beaver families created a dam that stretches hundreds of feet across and creates a 12-foot-deep pool of water to either side. Each beaver den has a 25 percent chance of containing 2d6 random coins of various types and items such as glass bottles, cooking utensils and tools. The skittish beavers flee into the water if threatened.

9. TREANT: HD 8; 42 hp; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 strikes (2d6); Save 8; Move 12; CL/XP 8/800 XP

The treant's arbor is being threatened by the growing Sin Mire and it wants someone to help build a dam to block the waters from rotting his trees.

10. GIANT LEECH: HD 3; 21 hp; AC 8 [11]; Atk bite (1d6+Str drain); Save 14; Move 5, Swim 15; CL/XP 3/60 XP. Special: Drains 1 Str with hit.

11. SHOCKER LIZARD (2): HD 3; 19 hp; AC 6 [13]; Atk bite (1d4), shock (1d8); Save 14; Move 12; CL/XP 4/120 XP.

12. BLOATED CARCASS: The body of a swamp animal bloated from many days in the sun floats in the water.

13. DEAD TRAVELER: Occasionally, travelers try to cross the Sin Mire. Those killed in the swamp float about the fen for days. Bodies typically have 1d20 cp and 1d6 gp.

14.-20. No encounter.

oars can be created using items such as coal shovels or wooden forge paddles easily found in and around Anvil Plunge. Brovok provides rope, wood axes, and barrels of water and rations if PCs agree to travel into the Sin Mire to find and return the *Flame of Dargath*.

A raft poled through the swamp has a speed of 10 feet. Any water depth over 10 feet, however, makes poling useless, and requires PCs to paddle. Paddling a raft decreases its movement to 5 feet. Canoes don't suffer this penalty, as they are crafted to slice through the water.

Typical raft: Capacity four medium-sized persons; Spd 10 ft. (5 ft. in deep water).

Wooden Canoe: Capacity three medium-sized persons; Spd 15 ft.

Leather Canoe: Capacity two medium-sized persons; Spd 20 ft.

If the PCs do not conceive of building a raft, Gizzard or Brovok suggests the idea. The dwarves agree to watch and care for any mounts and other transportation PCs can't take along.

While boats and rafts make travel easier, many creatures native to the area realize land dwellers are at a disadvantage in the water. Intelligent creatures often direct their attacks at the unstable crafts, hoping to toss PCs into the water to gain the upperhand.

Area A: Giant Frogs

Three giant frogs hunt in the five-foot-deep water in this watery grassland. The three frogs investigate disturbances caused by poles and oars slapping the water. The frogs attempt to grab creatures using their tongues, although they will leap from the water to attack creatures standing on rafts.

GIANT FROG (3); HD 1+4; 10 hp; AC 7 [12]; Atk bite (1d6+2);

Save 17; Move 15; CL/XP 1/15 XP. Special: Tongue constrict (1d6 crushing damage)

Area B: Crocodile Island

A muddy island clear of surrounding trees provides a sunning spot and nesting ground for **8 crocodiles**. Smaller juvenile crocodiles dive into the water to flee threatening PCs, but two large males move to intercept intruders as six nesting females fiercely protect the island and their eggs.

CROCODILE (8); HD 3; 21 hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk bite (1d8+1) and tail slap (1d12+1); Save 14; Move 12; CL/XP 3/60 XP.

Area C: Marmel's Abode

A young and naïve **grig** named **Marmel** lives in a hollowed snag of a giant sawtooth oak tree. Desperately lonely and bored, Marmel has no luck attracting a female to start a family. Local swamp dwellers don't share his sense of humor, and enjoy his pranks even less. After a bit of teasing and joking, he gladly assists good-humored PCs. Marmel travels frequently through the Sin Mire and saw the druidess Trawla leaving a sewer pipe carrying the *Flame of Dargath* (which he calls a glowing rock). If asked, he'll mention the druidess and the general direction where she can be found. He gives ambiguous directions, such as "Take a right after the 14th big tree just past the 72nd little tree."

GRIG (1); HD 1+1; 4 hp; AC 3 [16]; Atk short sword

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

(1d6-3) or longbow (1d6-3); Save 18; Move 9, fly 6; CL/XP 4/120 XP. Special spells (*polymorph self*, *plant growth*, *invisibility*, *pyrotechnics*), fiddle (Wisdom save or start dancing uncontrollably).

Area D: Zombie Canoe

Rowing a wooden canoe slowly in a circle around a tree are 2 zombies. A priest of Orcus named **Daznashal the Vicious** created the zombies to help him deliver treasure to a skum city deep under the swamp. Daznashal built a raft to haul the treasure into the Sin Mire, then attached the canoe powered by his zombie servants. Unfortunately, three giant crocodiles attacked the raft, overturning it and dumping the priest and the treasure into the swamp. The zombies rowed away from the struggling priest, still towing the empty raft, leaving Daznashal to his own devices. (See Area I1 of Adventure 10: "Remorse of Life" for more on the priest.)

The raft finally snagged around a tree, but the zombies obliviously continued to row, stuck for three days in hot sun in the same spot. Eventually, a board broke on the raft, allowing the zombies to pull away. The raft remained behind, snagged on the tree. The bloated undead in the canoe didn't get far. The board snagged another tree, and the zombies mindlessly kept rowing, the canoe circling the tree. The board continues to rotate around the tree as the zombies row. Burn marks around the tree's trunk show that the zombies have been here for some time. The zombies continue rowing until disturbed. They were commanded to defend the canoe, and don't attack unless PCs get in their way.

ZOMBIES (2): HD 2; 12 hp; AC 8 [11]; Atk weapon (1d8); Save 16; Move 6; CL/XP 2/30 XP.

Area E: Water Spiders

The water drops off to a depth of eight feet. Infesting the area are

4 **giant water spiders** that wait underwater for prey to pass above before they attack. The spiders survive underwater in bell-shaped nests made of silk that trap air. Air bubbles line the spider's hair, providing them with oxygen while swimming. One of the four nests holds the cocooned body of a satyr. The drained husk wears a belt with pouches containing five 25 gp gems, a bottle of excellent wine, and a *potion of levitation*.

GIANT WATER SPIDER (4): HD 2+2; 17, 14, 12, 9 hp; AC 6 [13]; Atk Bite (1d6) + poison; Save 16; Move 15, Swim 18; CL/XP 5/240 XP. Special Poison (+1 save or die), surprise

Area F: Log

A five-foot-diameter hollow log juts at an angle out of the swamp in five feet of standing water. The log is empty, but lurking beneath it is an **anaconda**. The snake attacks anything disturbing the log. The reptile does not live in the log, but uses the massive leaning log to shade the bulk of its body. It slithers around the log underwater, then up the log to attack beings looking inside the hollow.

CONSTRUCTOR SNAKE (2): HD 3; 24 hp; AC 4 [15]; Atk bite (1d4), constrict (1d4+4); Save 14; Move 15; CL/XP 3/60 XP.

Area G: Village Ruins

The ruins of a small village are visible just above the waterline. The top two feet of stone walls and rock chimneys are all that is left of the settlement. Erosion from the elements and damage from violent storms in past years have scattered the remainder of the walls. The village's name is long forgotten, as are its original inhabitants. The water is 10 feet deep throughout the village.

An old temple's intact stone roof rises five feet above the waterline. The flat roof measures 20 feet by 30 feet. The remains of campfires



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of past visitors sit in the center of the flat surface. The spot offers a stable and dry resting spot. The water-filled interior of the squat temple is a mess of broken furniture and rotting curtains.

A group of **5 lacedons** inhabits the village. These aquatic ghouls hide in the muck-filled underwater cellars of submerged houses.

Four accessible cellars contain the lacedons' treasure. The cellars are 15 feet underwater, however, and the items lie scattered in the silt and mud. An initial Wisdom check uncovers an object. After the first object is found, though, the check becomes more difficult (Wisdom check +5) as the searching stirs up thick clouds of muck. Once disturbed, the silt clouds take 1d4 hours to settle.

The first cellar holds a pouch containing 36 gp, 98 sp and an emerald (50 gp); a jade statue of a human female warrior with "Arcuri" inscribed on the base (250 gp); an elf skull; a cask of ale; a *potion of extra healing*; and a masterwork silvered dagger.

The second cellar contains a coffer holding 24 semiprecious stones (5 gp each); a tube of several ruined scrolls; and a suit of human-sized scalemail.

The third cellar contains a gnawed dwarven corpse wearing full plate mail; a dwarven waraxe; a metal shield; a *potion of fire resistance*; a *potion of healing*; a small waterproof box holding 10 tinder twigs; and a flask of oil.

The final cellar contains a vest made of inflated bladders (the outfit holds up to 200 pounds); a gold unholy symbol resembling a bloated, froglike demon (100 gp); a severed gnome hand with a platinum ring (45 gp); a grappling hook; a quiver of 12 arrows; an oar; and a shovel.

LACEDONS (5): HD 2; 14 each hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4); Save 16; Move 9, swim 12; CL/XP 3/60.

Special: Immunities, paralysis

Area H: The Grain Silo

A leaning stone silo is all that remains of a farm. The top of the silo stands 20 feet above the waterline, leaning against the foundation of a submerged stone barn. Despite its appearance, the silo is stable. The water is 10 feet deep and filled with thousands of harmless freshwater jellyfish.

The silo is the abode of **Snaw, an aquatic ogre**. Snaw waits in the upper reaches of the silo with a pile of rocks. He attempts to sink any boats before diving into the water with his large longsword to finish off opponents.

The hollow silo is accessible by an underwater entrance at the base, 10 feet below the surface. The interior of the 15-foot-diameter storage tower is steep and slick with algae. Snaw pelts climbing PCs with rocks and fights with his longsword. He leaps from the silo into the swamp if cornered. Snaw gains a +1 attack modifier for attacking from higher ground against PCs climbing the silo. He also carries a club covered in crocodile hide.

A half-buried coffin jutting from the bottom of the silo holds Snaw's treasure. The coffin requires a DC 20 Strength check to pull it free of the silt. The coffin may also be freed by digging underwater for two hours. The coffin contains a longsword; a leather saddlebag holding eight bars of silver (20 gp each); a decomposing crocodile snack; +1 *hand axe*; a beaver skull necklace; a *potion of healing*; and a dead white dove in a birdcage.

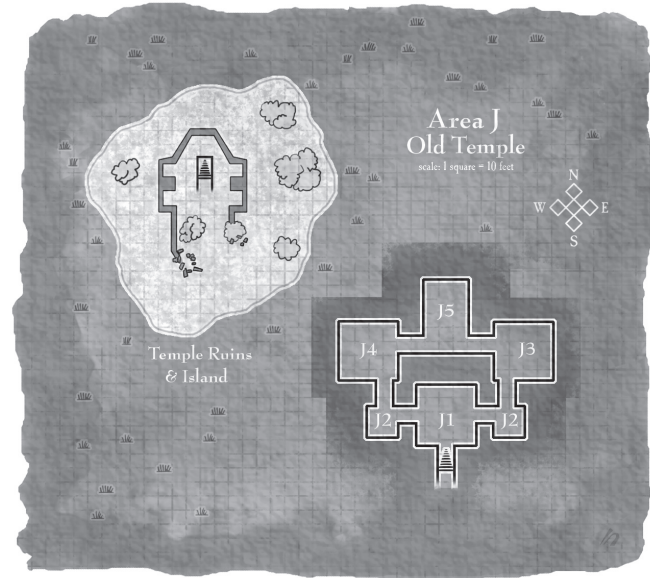
SNAW (AQUATIC OGRE): HD 4+1; 29 hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk spear or club (1d10), or rocks (1d4); Save 13; Move 9, Swim 12; CL/XP 4/120.

Area I: Islands

These islands are free from any threats and are suitable to rest upon. Each island contains small trees that can be used to repair rafts and poles.

Area J: The Old Temple

A stone temple sits on this patch of dry land. A leather canoe sits untended near an extinguished campfire and the remains of a meal of fish and eggs. An unfurled bedroll and a backpack of supplies sit near the fire pit. A **coyote** guards a staircase descending into a pool of stagnant, algae-covered water. A limp string tied to a stone block drapes down the stairs into the water below.



The coyote is the animal companion of a ranger named **Rusgart** (male human Rgr6) who was exploring the swamp searching for a sacred artifact of the sun god Arden. The ranger met his end in the water-filled catacombs beneath the temple. The coyote growls at anyone disturbing the camp or approaching the stairs. If approached with gentleness, the coyote may befriend PCs. A leather collar around the coyote's neck holds a brass nameplate inscribed with "Gravy." The animal remains wary and restless until presented with the ranger's remains (Area J5).

The ranger's remaining items are a leather backpack; a mostly blank journal detailing his adventures in the Sin Mire and the location of odd clay "pillars"; a turtle-shell shield; a longbow; three quivers containing 36 arrows; a love letter from a woman named Elisabeth from the town of Shieldfane pleading with Rusgart not to go into the swamp (See Shieldfane in *Splinters of Faith 7: The Heir of Sin* for more on Elisabeth); a longsword; 50 feet of rope; three 10-foot poles; fishing equipment; four weeks of dry rations; a wood ax; a bed roll; a crowbar; flint and steel; a bull's-eye lantern; a miners pick; a shovel; a whetstone; and two vials of antitoxin.

GRAVY, COYOTE ANIMAL COMPANION: HD 3; 21 hp; AC 3 [16]; Atk bite (1d4); Save 16; Move 14; CL/XP 3/60 XP.

In the Ruins

The temple ruins are in poor condition, with eight feet of swamp water filling the entire complex. Chambers within the temple have 10-foot-high ceilings, allowing a small, two-foot space of breathable air. The corridors linking these pockets are eight-foot-tall and completely submerged.

Area J1: The Entry Room

This 20-foot-by-20-foot room is empty. The line Ruscart trailed behind him as he entered the water swirls in the eddies of water flowing through the chamber. It's obvious that the line has been cut and floats free in the current.

Area J2: Reverence Chamber

The short passage ends in a small 10-foot-by-10-foot room. A torn bag containing 15 gp lies scattered on the floor.

Area J3: Burial Vaults

Wall niches holding skeletal remains line these 20-foot-by-20-foot chambers. Common leeches breed in the room. Although harmless, the leeches are a distraction. Any living creature that starts its turn within one of these rooms must succeed at a DC 10 Fortitude save or become nauseated for 1 round as the slippery parasites seek a warm host. The leeches cling to creatures passing through the room, and can only be pulled off once PCs leave the waterlogged complex and return to (semi) dry land. The leeches do no other damage.

Area J4: Burial Vault

The room is empty, but a patch of **green slime** floats atop the water. Anyone raising his head above the surface to catch a breath of air is in for a nasty surprise. The slime blends well with the stagnant water and is very difficult to see (Intelligence check +5). The slime cannot sink onto PCs swimming through the room beneath it, but it does cling to surfaces. Anything surfacing in the middle of the slime pulls fragments of the creature underwater when submerging.

Area J5: Burial Chamber

The 15-foot-by-25-foot room contains a mound of bones. The majority of the remains are of common swamp animals, but parts of humanoids can be found as well.

The fresh corpse of a human man floats atop the water. The man's head and face are a pulpy mass. A small floating glass sphere with *continual light* within illuminates the room. Warped shadows dance around the chamber as the sphere bobs above the waves. The floating body is **Ruscart**, a ranger.

Ruscart's *+1 spear* lies in the room below the body, and a longsword and shortsword are still strapped to his waist. A belt pouch holds a *potion of healing*. A gold promise ring (10 gp) adorns his left hand.

A **wight** lives within the mound of bones on the floor of the room. The ranger was severely wounded by the wight, but escaped and fled into the green slime chamber. As he came up for air, the slime dealt the final blow, robbing the wight of its spawn. The wight brought the body back here to devour at its leisure.

Hanging around the neck of a statue in the room is an amulet with the holy symbol of Arden engraved upon it. The item is an *Amulet of Arden's Radiance*.

WIGHT: HD 3; 22 hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk claw (1 hp + level drain); Save 14; Move 9; CL/XP 5/240 XP. Special Level drain (1 level), can only be hit by magical or silver weapons

Tactics: The wight swims out to attack anyone nearing the bones or the ranger. It suffers the same penalties for underwater combat as PCs, although it is not in danger of drowning.

New Magic: Amulet of Arden's Radiance

This golden amulet bears an engraving of a rising sun. The amulet grants clerics a +1 bonus when turning undead.

Usable by: Clerics

Area K: Muddy Den

An island of raw earth rises above the swampy terrain. Snapped and shattered bones litter the churned dirt around a hole. A **bonesnapper** lives inside the hole and hunts the surrounding swamp for crocodiles, large fish and anything else crossing its path. The bonesnapper is a cunning and experienced predator, rarely waiting around in its lair for prey. Often, it submerges in the swampy water, hiding its head in the reeds, and watches the island for anyone foolish enough to approach. It tries to flank and attack PCs from the rear as they investigate the muddy hole.

Jawbones of various creatures line the walls of the dank mud tunnel. The one-room lair is humid and fetid, with a depression in the chamber serving as a wallowing hole. A human jawbone stuck in the wall holds three gold teeth (3 gp). Buried deep in the mud wallow is a pair of mud-caked *Gauntlets of Swimming and Climbing*.

BONESNAPPER: HD 4; 28 hp; AC 3 [16]; Atk bite (1d8); Save 13; Move 12; CL/XP 4/120 XP.

The Tome of Horrors by Necromancer Games, Page 28.

Tactics The bonesnapper attacks with its powerful bite and tail slap. After biting a foe, it swings its tail around to smash the same opponent. If flanked or attacked by more than one creature, the bonesnapper divides its attacks between its foes. The bonesnapper fights to the death.

Area L: Deep Pool

The clear water is free of algae and weeds around this break in the ground, where an underwater pit 50 feet across opens in the middle of the swamp. The pit drops into an underwater cave system 60 feet below the ground's surface. The water is five feet deep around the pit's edges. The cavern accesses the underground realm of the Sin Mire.

Near the entrance of the cavern lies a **wyrmling black dragon**. The creature uses the pool as a hunting area and playground. It lies in wait at the bottom and swims up under boats and rafts, attempting to sink them. A meager amount of treasure lines the floor of the pit. An open chest contains 250 sp, 185 gp and 35 pp, plus a small marble statue of Arden (50 gp), a jeweled necklace (150 gp), an ivory smoking pipe (25 gp), a *potion of healing*, and a sunken, but usable leather canoe with two paddles.

BLACK DRAGON WYRMLING: HD 6; 6 hp; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), bite (3d6); Save 11; Move 9, fly 24; CL/XP 3/120 XP. Special: Spits acid

The underwater caverns beneath the Sin Mire are beyond the scope of this adventure, but rumors tell of a skum city (true), a terrible aboleth tyrant (also true), and a mythical treasure hoard.

Area M: The Crayfish Chimney

A 20-foot-tall crude tube of mud juts from the sludgy bog. Traveling through the muddy bog reduces movement by 20 feet. PCs with

Trawla's Tunnels

Trawla, the druidess who stole the *Flame of Dargath*, lives deep in a maze of mud tunnels. Giant crayfish created the chimneys leading to her home.

The tunnels and rooms are made of mud and dirt. Tunnels generally measure 10 feet in diameter and often plunge underwater for spans before returning to dry land. The rooms have 10-foot ceilings and smooth floors. The walls are rough and rounded. PCs swimming in the tunnels can move slightly faster (base movement +3) because of the many handholds in the clay tunnels.

movement less than 20 feet cannot wade through the sludge unaided. The Referee is free and encouraged to develop this area for further adventure.

The tube's exterior is dried mud with numerous rough handholds. PCs can easily scale the two-foot-thick mud wall (Dexterity check). The 10-foot-diameter interior is slick and pliable, however, increasing the difficulty of climbing down the interior (Dexterity check +10). After the initial 20-foot drop, the passage turns into a downward-sloping tunnel 25 feet long.

Area M1: Entrance Chamber

Deep scars and scrapes mar the sloppy mud walls and floor. A **monstrous crayfish** lies covered in mud along the far wall (Wisdom check +6 to spot). The creature guards the entrance and attacks anyone entering the chamber.

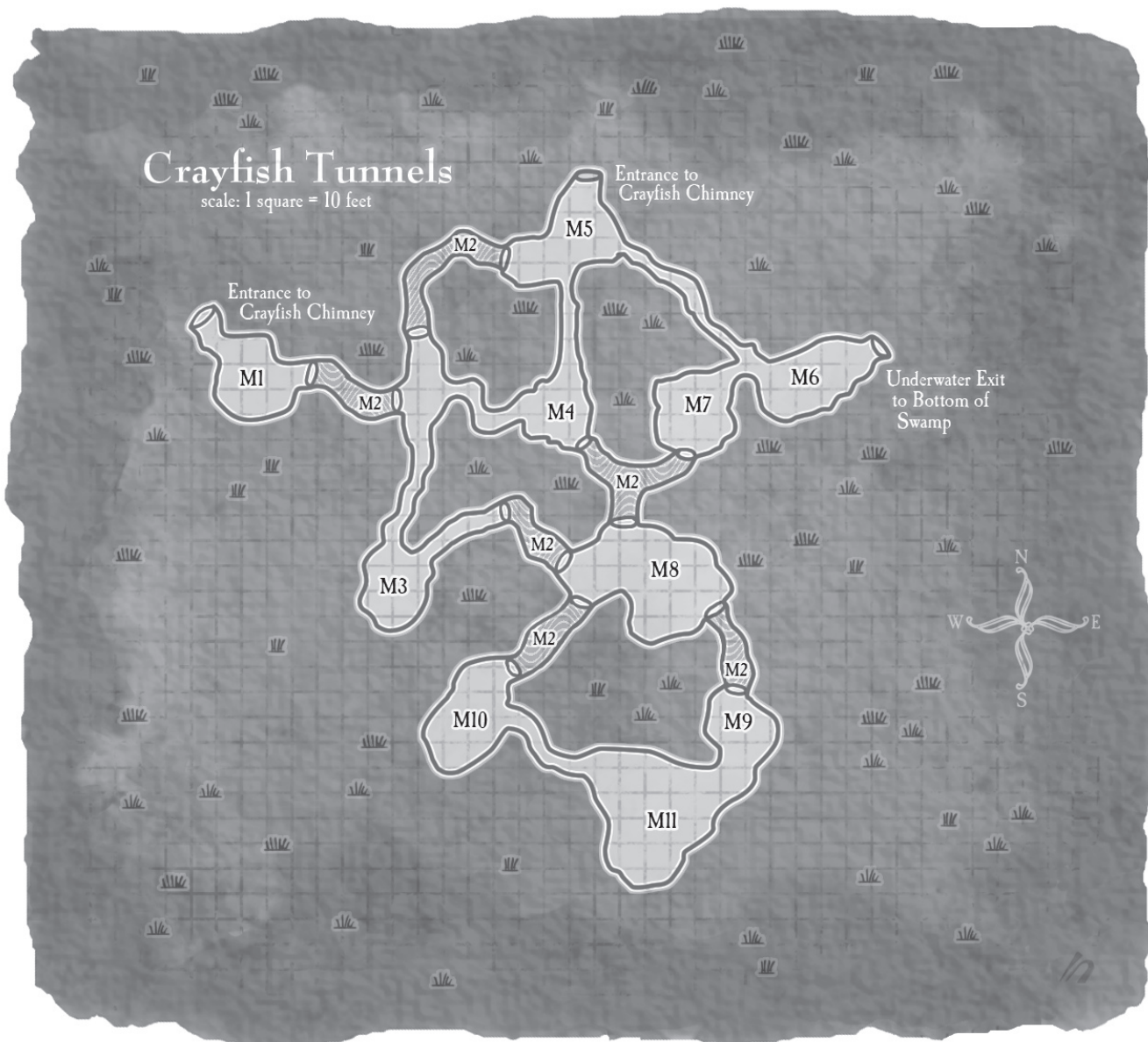
MONSTROUS CRAYFISH: HD 4; 30 hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6); Save 14; Move 6, swim 15; CL/XP 3/60 XP Special A crayfish can survive out of water for 1 hour.

The Tome of Horrors by Necromancer Games, Page 48

Tactics: The giant crayfish prefers to ambush its prey, lying in wait until its target moves in close. The crayfish then springs from its hiding place and attacks with its claws. Grappled prey is usually dragged back to the creature's lair while still alive and slowly devoured.

Area M2: Water-Filled Passage

These passages slope downward below the floor level, into the water table of the Sin Mire, so that murky water seeps through the mud walls. The passages vary in length, but are completely submerged,



forcing PCs to continue underwater.

Area M3: Vingmort's Lair

Withered and sun-dried heads and skulls of various humanoids and animals decorate this foul-smelling room. Trawla's son, **Vingmort** (Chaotic male orc), collects the trophies to decorate his lair. A damp pile of moldy clothing serves as a bed, and a heavy crossbow and a quiver of 13 bolts hang on the wall. Vingmort lounges here when not accompanying his mother.

VINGMORT (ORC): HD 3; 23 hp; AC 5 [13]; Atk trident (1d8+1) or short sword (1d6); Save 17; Move 12; CL/XP 1/15 XP. **Possessions:** Masterwork trident, shortsword, *ring of protection +1*, *potion of extra healing* and *potion of heroism*. **Personality:** Vingmort is Trawla's son and only follower, although he would turn on his mother in an instant if it somehow benefited him. His thin hair drapes over his domed head like wet straw, hiding eyelids that droop incredibly low over bloodshot eyes. The tall orc with wrinkled, pasty skin dreams of controlling the Sin Mire. Vingmort covers himself head to toe in mud, making him harder to see (Wisdom check +5) in the mud tunnels.

If alerted to intruders, Vingmort hides along a wall by pushing himself backward into the pliant mud and waits for an elf or the last PC in the party to pass before leaping out to attack.

Area M4: Troglodyte Chambers

Inhabiting this chamber are **5 troglodytes**. The disgruntled water-dwellers are part of a troglodyte tribe that lives deeper within the watery tunnels beneath the Sin Mire. Trawla invited them to witness the extinguishing of the *Flame of Dargath* and to discuss a possible alliance. Since the arrival of the **skum** (Area M8), they have been largely ignored. In fact, Trawla granted the skum the closer room and purposely moved the troglodytes to this chamber to create a rivalry for her attention. The troglodytes are quite angry and are discussing plans to teach Trawla a lesson. They eagerly take out their anger on anyone entering the room.

TROGLODYTES (5): HD 2; 12 hp; AC 6 [13]; Atk club (1d6), 2 claws (1d4), bite (1d4); Save 16; Move 9; CL/XP 2/60 XP.

Area M5: Underwater Entrance

Cultivated fungi cover the room's floor and walls. Some of the mushrooms are quite large, but none are harmful. Hidden under the cover of the fungi are **4 small cottonmouth vipers**. The aggressive water snakes strike at anything crossing through the room.

SNAKE, SMALL VIPER (4): HD 1-1; 7, 6, 5, 4 hp; AC 7 [12]; Atk bite (1d4-2 plus poison); Save 17; Move 12; CL/XP 1/15 XP. *The Tome of Horrors* by Necromancer Games, Page 318.

Area M6: Crayfish Mother

Another monstrous crayfish guards this underwater entrance. This smaller creature holds hundreds of hatchling crayfish under the protection of her tail. If the battle goes against her, she scuttles through the underwater entrance to escape.

The entrance tunnel extends 50 feet until it opens into the swamp.

MONSTROUS CRAYFISH: HD 4; 30 hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6); Save 14; Move 6, swim 15; CL/XP 3/60 XP Special **A crayfish can survive out of water for 1 hour.** *The Tome of Horrors* by Necromancer Games, Page 48

Area M7: Empty Room

Piles of decaying fish fill this otherwise empty room. Two tunnels filled with water open in the floor. The right tunnel loops under the floor of the chamber.

Area M8: Emissary Chamber

The room is filled with five feet of water. The floor is muddy and slick, but firm enough to walk on safely. Two **skum** emissaries newly arrived at Trawla's temple to Alyhedra rest here. The pair traveled from a cavernous submerged city far below the Sin Mire to witness the ceremony to extinguish the *Flame of Dargath*. The skum are tired of waiting for Trawla's promises and are already making plans to return home. The pair is relaxed, taking advantage of Trawla's "hospitality," but they are always up for a fight.

SKUM (2): HD 2; 13 hp; AC 7 [12]; Atk trident (1d8+1), 2 claws (1d4), bite (1d6); Ranged trident (1d8); Save 16; Move 9, swim 15; CL/XP 2/30

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Area M9: Aquatic Companion

Trawla's aquatic companion resides here when not accompanying its master. The **monstrous crayfish** waits above the water-filled entrance tunnel into the room. The crayfish snaps at PCs' heads as they break the surface of the water. It immediately answers Trawla's calls for aid.

MONSTROUS CRAYFISH: HD 4; 30 hp; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6); Save 14; Move 6, swim 15; CL/XP 3/60 XP Special **A crayfish can survive out of water for 1 hour.**

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Area M10: Trawla's Quarters

Dried weeds hang in clumps from the ceiling, creating curtains around a pile of moist moss and lichen that serve as a bed. The clay walls are decorated with crude hieroglyphics depicting dwarves suffering watery deaths and sea monsters eating the little beings. The figures of the dwarves are crude and often rudely drawn. Clothing made of fish scales and crocodile hide lie in a waterlogged chest.

A makeshift table of bone and exoskeletons holds a flickering candle, a bowl of cold fish stew, a bottle of cheap beer, and several sheets of leather that Trawla uses as paper. Some contain scribbles in orcish describing theories on extinguishing the *Flame of Dargath*; others detail proposed alliances with skum and troglodyte cities located somewhere beneath the swamp. A keg of unguent made from the fat of various mammals sits near the bed. Trawla uses the fat as a balm to protect her skin from the moist conditions of life in the water. A cold-iron trident piercing a humanoid heart hangs on the wall above the bed. A wineskin holding blood dangles from a hook on the wall near the table.

Area M11: The Temple to Alyhedra

This is the largest chamber in the crayfish tunnels. A four-foot-tall turtle shell serving as an altar sits near the far wall. The shell is coated with fatty wax and gooey chum. Oily smoke rises from several viscous candles placed atop the altar. Oils, liquid, juices and other indescribable fluids sit in bowls on the floor and around the altar. An iron box glowing with a soft red radiance sits in the center

New Deity: Alyheedra

Demon Princess of Evil Water Creatures

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Domains: Water, Evil, Animals, Plants

Typical Worshipers: Evil druids and rangers (especially those of aquatic origin), sea hags, and evil water subtype creatures

Favored Weapons: Trident

Symbol: A black trident piercing a heart

Alyheedra has few followers above the surfaces of the oceans, seas and lakes. Very few land-dwelling scholars even know — or care — that she exists. Her dictum is simple: The strong dominate the weak.

The goddess rules over all evil water creatures from her ice fortress on her own chaotic plane. Few oppose her rule due to the plane's unsavory environment. She is rarely encountered without an entourage of elder water elements and dao sorcerers.

Alyheedra is most often depicted as an enormous tidal wave with embellished demonic facial features, or as a comely blue-skinned storm giant or a revolting sea hag. Red tides bringing masses of dead sea-life ashore are seen as a sign of her presence. She is never without her black trident. Her priesthood dresses in leathers and scales of water-dwelling creatures and often drape themselves in decaying seaweed. The stench of fish surrounds her clerics.

Trawla stands over the box, holding her pale head in frustration. She is at her wit's end trying to extinguish the everlasting flame. Every attempt so far has been a failure.

The druidess is embarrassed by her inability to dampen the flames. Even more humiliating, she knows the skum ambassadors are growing weary of waiting and are threatening to leave. She deeply wishes to bring her religion to the skum city below the Sin Mire (she's written off the troglodytes as "useless") but she's beginning to realize that extinguishing the artifact might be beyond her means.

If warned, Trawla calls for her crayfish companion to assist her and casts preparatory spells.

TRAWLA OF THE SIN MIRE (ORC SHAMAN, CLERIC 7):
HD 7; 43 hp; AC 4 [15]; Atk heavy mace (1d6+1); Save 9; Move 9; CL/XP 7/600 XP Special Spells 1—*Cure Light Wounds, Light;* 2—*Hold Person, Speak with Animals;* 3—*Locate Object;* 4—*Cure Serious Wounds;* 5—*Insect Plague*

Combat Gear heavy mace, giant fish scale mail, turtle shell shield, *potion of fire resistance*, and *cloak of elvinkind*.

Other Gear lard-caked mink stole (20 gp), dwarf-ear necklace, burlap robes, unholy symbol, Vingmpor's baby shoes

Personality: Trawla gained unnatural powers over aquatic creatures from her demon princess. Although she can communicate a rudimentary language with any creature with a water subtype, they do not always listen or react in a friendly manner. Trawla is a withered and pale orc with stringy whitish-gray hair. She keeps her skin protected from the moist environment by applying fatty wax. She smells strongly of pungent decay and fish.

Concluding the Adventure

of the altar among the candles. The box holds the *Flame of Dargath*. The box is extremely hot, causing 1d6 points of damage if picked up unprotected. The iron box sets flammable objects ablaze within a few rounds.

If PCs return the *Flame of Dargath* to Anvil Plunge, Brovok uses the relic in a ceremony to create a new *Scepter of Faiths*. The *Blessing of Joining Flame* ceremony requires one week of the dwarves working around the clock at the Homage to Fire forge. The dwarves work in



ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

shifts to complete the task as outlined in ancient descriptions they have of the ritual. They view the process as an honor and privilege, and put forth their best efforts in crafting the scepter to match – and exceed – the original. Once finished by the dwarves, the new *Scepter of Faiths* is equivalent to an adamantite masterwork heavy mace. The scepter can also now be imbued with additional powers to bring it up to par with the original scepter.

Brovok suggests PCs from here contact **Olik Ashenchisel** to learn more about the goddess Ayianna and the *Guidance of Fate* blessing. He tells PCs to seek out Ashenchisel Imports in Bargarsport. The dwarves of Anvil Plunge will gladly outfit PCs with any normal equipment (within reason) that they may need for the next leg of their journey.

The PCs have crafted a new *Scepter of the Faiths*, but they still must imbue the relic with its many powers. The campaign continues in *Splinters of Faith 2: Culvert Operations* as the PCs travel into the sewers beneath a decadent city in search of Clandestine, the city of thieves.

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