

# Heartburn

**An Elemental Evil adventure  
for 3–6 characters of 1st level**



**Trystan Goetze**

# Heartburn



## An Elemental Evil Adventure for 3–6 characters of 1st level



**Designer:** Trystan S. Goetze | **Version** 1.0 | This adventure was written during the Fall 2019 RPG Writer Workshop: Writing Your First Adventure. | For a full list of sources, credits, and acknowledgements, see the Acknowledgements section. | *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, Ravenloft, Eberron, the dragon ampersand, Ravnica and all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries. This work contains material that is copyright Wizards of the Coast and/or other authors. Such material is used with permission under the Community Content Agreement for Dungeon Masters Guild. All other original material in this work is copyright 2019 by Trystan S. Goetze and published under the Community Content Agreement for Dungeon Masters Guild.*

### CONTENT ADVISORY

Housefires • Arson • Spontaneous combustion • Severe food poisoning





# HEARTBURN

After a village tragically burns down following an agricultural fair, the characters investigate the cause, which leads them from a corrupt magistrate to a temple beneath a quarry, where they have a run-in with the Cult of the Eternal Flame.

*Heartburn* is an adventure for 3–6 characters of 1st level. It should take one to three sessions of four hours to complete, depending on the characters' actions. It takes place in the Dessarin Valley region of the Forgotten Realms, or a similar region in a different setting.

This module can be used as a standalone adventure, or as an introduction to the *Princes of the Apocalypse* campaign. The campaign book is not required to run this adventure. It is recommended, but not essential, that you and your players have access to the free *Elemental Evil Player's Companion*.

## SYNOPSIS

This adventure is broken into five chapters, plus an epilogue.

**Chapter 1: Blacksoil Butterworks.** The characters arrive in the village of Blacksoil during its annual agricultural fair. The new village magistrate, Halanthar Coldrake, is showing off some new baked goods produced with a secret ingredient of his.

**Chapter 2: Fiery Indigestion.** The following night, everyone who tried the experimental baked goods doubles over in pain, and some spontaneously combust, transmogrifying into fire elementals that set the village on fire. The village burns through the night and is razed to the ground.

**Chapter 3: Poison Detected.** The following day, the survivors set off for the nearby city of Yartar to seek sanctuary, but not before imploring the characters to find out why this happened. There is good

reason to suspect the magistrate, so the characters go to his manor. There they learn that the secret ingredient came from the nearby Sundial Caldera Quarry.

**Chapter 4: Digging for Answers.** When they confront the quarrymaster, Throkdran Granitefoot, he tells them that he and his workers have been working under threat from a cult of pyromancers that have moved in to an abandoned volcano temple beneath the quarry.

**Chapter 5: Turning up the Heat.** The characters confront the cultists and their leader, Tredelia Breville, obtaining concrete evidence that Halanthar Coldrake and his boss, Lady Vestrie Ashill, had conspired with the cult to burn down the village and make it look like an accident.

**Epilogue.** Once the characters have despatched the cultists, they may follow up with the quarrymaster, the villagers, the Waterbaron of Yartar, and the corrupt magistrate. The adventure leads on to *Princes of the Apocalypse*.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

**Scorched Earth.** The village of **Blacksoil** is situated in a productive valley named for its dark sooty soil. This geographic feature is the legacy of a great eruption hundreds of years ago, when the top of Needle Mountain blew off, and waves of ash and lava buried the surrounding countryside. This makes for very productive farmland, and, once a year, the village hosts the **Blacksoil Butterworks**, an agricultural fair celebrating the villagers' work.

**Hidden Temple.** The only other visible reminder of the eruption is **Sundial Caldera**, the broad crater left behind when the volcano collapsed in on itself. The caldera is now the site of a quarry and mine, but beneath it lurks an ancient secret: the remains of the **Temple of the Sleeping Fire**, and a still intermittently active portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire in the magma chambers deep below. In recent months, the **Cult of the Eternal Flame** has moved in to the ruins.

**A New Invention.** A new magistrate has recently been appointed in Blacksoil: **Halanthar Coldrake**. He has introduced a new method that has intrigued the local bakers. By adding a secret ingredient to the dough — which he allows no one to see — bread can be baked immediately, without waiting hours to rise. This ingredient is actually a powdered form of fire elemental — which has the unfortunate consequence of causing painful indigestion, and occasionally

causes those who consume it to transform into living fire.

**Scheming Nobles.** Halanthar is no inventor: he acts at the behest of **Lady Vestrie Ashill**, the suzerain of Blacksoil. Lady Ashill has long coveted the scenic valley where Blacksoil sits, and wants to rebuild her manor there. After making a deal with **Tredelia Breville**, the leader of a local congregation of the Cult of the Eternal Flame, she has hatched a plan to raze the village to make room for her new estate — and make it look like an accident.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

Here are some suggestions for how to bring the characters in and get them invested:

- The characters are from Blacksoil originally, and are attending the fair before setting off to seek their fortune as adventurers.
- One of the characters' family members works at Sundial Caldera, and in recent weeks their letters have stopped, so the character has come to Blacksoil to make sure they're alright.
- The characters arrive in Blacksoil as part of a caravan. They had been hired to protect a shipment of goods sent from another settlement for the fair.
- The fire cult has been abducting and killing villagers all over the Dessarin Valley recently. One or more characters may be seeking the cult for revenge or justice, or to mount a rescue. Their information has led them to Blacksoil.
- The characters have heard rumors that there is a lost temple beneath Sundial Caldera, and are seeking whatever riches are buried there.
- If one or more characters are part of one of the five factions, see Appendix C for further suggestions.

## HOW TO USE THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure can be used as a standalone module, or as part of the Elemental Evil storyline that centres on the *Princes of the Apocalypse* adventure.

## PLACING THE ADVENTURE

In the Forgotten Realms, the adventure's major locations are in the Dessarin Valley region. Specifically, the village of Blacksoil and the Sundial Caldera may

be placed in the Dessarin Hills, about a day's travel south of Yartar.

In a different setting (published or homebrewed), Blacksoil and the surrounding locations may be placed in any thinly-settled frontier region marked by hills, valleys, and rocky outcrops.

## USING THE DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

Instead of read-aloud boxed text, this adventure adapts James Introcaso's **descriptive bullets** format (see <https://worldbuilderblog.me/2019/04/11/we-can-do-better-than-boxed-text/>). When the characters first enter an area, the place is described using several one- to two-sentence bullet points, which are off-set by distinctive borders and shading. Here is the general format:

- Bullet points in a plain typeface are details the characters are aware of as soon as they enter the area. These bullet points can be read aloud or paraphrased.
- *[Bullet points enclosed in square brackets and set in italics describe important features of the area that are initially hidden from the characters.]*

Additional details and guidance for the DM then follow.

## USING THE MONSTER REFERENCES

In the encounter descriptions, monster names are noted in **{bold text surrounded by brace brackets}**. This is a cue directing you to the creature's statistics block. When these names reference statistics blocks created for this adventure, a brief parenthetical note will point you to Appendix A. When there is no such note, the creature's statistics block can be found in the *Monster Manual*.

In scenes where a fight is likely, the number of monsters and/or NPCs listed in the text is usually presented as a range. These ranges are a guideline to help you adjust the number of hostile creatures appearing. When making these adjustments, consider the number of

PCs in the party, the PCs' resources (especially hit points, spell slots, and other powers on a long rest cooldown), and your players' level of experience.

## USING THE MAPS

Maps for the areas in Chapters 4 and 5 are included as separate files. Individual rooms or features are keyed to the number in the subheader of the relevant section of the text. For example, area 5.3 on the map of the Temple of the Sleeping Fire is keyed to the entry in the section labeled "5.3 Occult Library."

## CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

If you use experience points (XP), each chapter has a summary of the XP awards the characters may receive for their actions. Some of these are standard combat XP awards, but many are for social or exploration decisions or achievements. You can use these summaries as a checklist, checking off or tallying each award as its conditions are met. If the characters take some action not listed in these awards but of similar significance to the story, use these summaries as a guide for how much XP to award.

**Variant Rule: Story-Based Advancement.** If you eschew XP in favour of having the characters level up at story-appropriate moments, tell the players to advance their characters to 2nd level at the end of the adventure.

## CONNECTING WITH ELEMENTAL EVIL

This adventure can be used as an introduction to the *Princes of the Apocalypse* campaign. It supplements or replaces the Trouble in Red Larch material for 1st-level characters (Chapter 6).

At the adventure's conclusion, the characters may continue either from the Tomb of Moving Stones mini-adventure (*Princes of the Apocalypse*, Chapter 6), or, if they have reached 3rd level, they may start from the main content of that adventure (*Princes of the Apocalypse*, Chapter 3).

The epilogue to this adventure provides some ideas for bridging the gap between *Heartburn* and the longer campaign.







## CHAPTER 1: BLACKSOIL BUTTERWORKS

The adventure begins with the characters arriving in Blacksoil during the Blacksoil Butterworks agricultural fair.

### THE FAIR

- The village square is lined end-to-end with brightly coloured stalls. Happy village and country folk of all ages and races bustle from stall to stall, sampling food and drink, bartering for trinkets, or trying their luck at games.
- Only a few miles of farmland away, rounded hills rise high on either side of the village. The dark, char-coloured soil contrasts sharply with the green meadow grass and amber grain.

The Blacksoil Butterworks has much to offer! Here are some suggested activities (or, make your own):

- **Fair Food.** A family of dwarves works assembly line style, mixing, frying, seasoning, and selling their treats. They make a waffle-like bread, with intricate geometric patterns imprinted by the irons, fried till crispy then dunked in lightly spiced sugary syrup. A young dwarf girl eagerly takes the characters' orders: 2 cp for one treat, 5 cp for three.
- **Ring Toss.** A snappily-dressed half-elf man calls for all who wish to try their luck to step forth and toss the Rings of Arcane Power upon the Potions of Joyous Mirth! To play, a character must wager at least 2 cp. The character then makes three DC 14 Dexterity checks. One success: the character makes

back their wager. Two successes: the character makes back double their wager. Three successes: the character makes back double their wager, and receives a 25 gp art object (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 134) as a prize.

- **Trinkets.** An older gnome couple have set up a stall in a quieter corner of the fair, where they have set out small trinkets made of semi-precious stones, with prices ranging from 5 sp to 2 gp. They tell the characters that these are all from a new mine that just opened up at the Sundial Caldera Quarry. They offer the quarrymaster's calling card, suggesting that he may need some muscle to clear out whatever critters may be lurking deeper in the caves. The card has a sundial logo and the name "Throkdran Granitefoot, Quarrymaster" printed on it.

They are noted as travelers who are visiting for the fair, and the village elders greet them in the midst of the festivities, welcoming them to the village. The head elder is a CG lighfoot halfling man in his fifties named **Perrin Goodbarrel** (of the Westbridge Goodbarrels) {**commoner**}. He dresses in an old striped sack suit that is fraying at the cuffs and seams. He warmly greets the characters and says he hopes they spend — er, *enjoy* themselves a lot while they're in town. He owns and operates Goodbarrel House, a trading post in the village, where basic goods can be purchased.



## THE BAKE-OFF

- At the sound of trumpets, everyone's attention turns to a group of three stalls clustered around a long table, where the elders have gone to sit. Each stall has an array of beautiful baked goods: glazed buns, golden pastries, intricately braided loaves, and other goodies, freshly baked for sampling.
- A dark-haired Damaran human man with sharp features and a scruffy beard steps up onto a crate to address the crowd. He is dressed in the bright red robes and gold chain of a lord magistrate, and hides his discomfort in the late summer heat with a bright smile.
- The magistrate speaks: "Good people of Blacksoil! The moment you have eagerly been awaiting has come! Before you make your way 'round to sample the goods produced by our master bakers, a brief announcement. With the support of our suzerain, the honourable Lady Ashill, I have had the good fortune to work with each of these talented people to try a new invention of mine. By adding a small quantity of a *secret ingredient*, we have been able to produce fine breads in a tiny fraction of the usual time. I encourage you to try my humble creations and judge for yourselves! And as usual, you may cast your vote for the blue ribbon here at the judges' table. Enjoy!"

There are three bakers vying for the blue ribbon: a hill dwarf alewife whose beer breads are packed with nuts and fruit; a moon elf pâtissier whose magically raised pastries are almost lighter than air despite being decadently buttery; and a Damaran human baker who specializes in finely textured white bread, which is extremely difficult to come by this far in the countryside. They are all intrigued by Coldrake's secret ingredient, but their feelings vary from doubts about its safety, to thinking it will be a flash in the pan fad, to anticipating a lucrative business opportunity.

### TRYING THE BREADS

Coldrake's experimental breads are quite popular; the characters get a chance to sample some only at the first baker they visit. They are largely indistinguish-



*Halanthar Coldrake*

able from the baker's standard fare, except the flavour is slightly metallic. Any characters who eat it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. **Do not tell the players whether they succeeded yet.** Make a note of what they roll for now. If they ask what's up, tell them they feel fine, for now.

The bakers don't know exactly how Coldrake's method works, as he wouldn't allow anyone to see him add the secret ingredient. If they ask Coldrake about the ingredient says it's a fairly simple alchemical compound, only slightly magical. He refuses to explain more, saying it's a trade secret. Characters who are trained in Insight may attempt a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check. On a success, the character can tell that Coldrake is hiding something.





## THE ASHTRACK INN

- The festival's revelries continue after the stalls all close for the night, with attendees gathering in the Ashtrack Inn for food, drink, and music.
- The inn is a simple affair, but well-maintained. The common room on the ground floor is packed with festival-goers singing along to a country tune being plucked on a lyre by a minstrel.
- Stairs next to the bar lead up to shared rooms on the second floor, and private suites on the third floor.

The innkeeper, a NG Tethyrian human woman in her late thirties named **Alethra** "**Allie**" **Marsk** (use the **{noble}** stat block, but add the spellcasting trait: 1st-level spellcaster, Charisma-based, sorcerer spells known: Cantrips (at-will) — *prestidigitation*, *thaumaturgy*; 1st-level (2 slots) — *create or destroy water*) is a

minor magician, and makes a show of mixing liqueurs and spirits using her cantrips.

For drink, the choice is between a strong dwarven brown ale (similar to a lambic) or a small beer (similar to a session ale). Rooms and meals available here range from Poor to Comfortable (see the *Player's Handbook* for prices).

## REWARDS

The characters may receive the following XP rewards from this chapter:

- 50 XP for participating in a fair activity.
- 50 XP for making an impression (good or bad) on the elders.
- 50 XP for eating one of the experimental breads.
- 50 XP for speaking with Coldrake or any of the bakers about the nature of the experimental breads.





## CHAPTER 2: FIERY INDIGESTION

The night takes a turn for the worse, as the secret ingredient in Coldrake's breads activates.

### STOMACH PANGS

Well after midnight, everyone who ate Coldrake's experimental breads doubles over in severe abdominal pain. If the characters are asleep, those feeling the pain wake up screaming. If the characters are still carousing, they note that about a third of the crowd in the inn experiences this. **Any player characters who ate Coldrake's breads and failed their saves also take 1d6 fire damage.**

After a few moments of confusion, there is the sound of explosions and shouting outside, and a warm red glow through the windows. Half the village is on fire. The innkeeper immediately moves to act, and the villagers rally behind her. Everyone's pains pass in a few moments, and the characters are free to join the villagers in fighting the flames.

## INFERNO

- Much of the village is ablaze. The heat is incredible and the smoke-filled night sky seems to burn crimson.
- The villagers have set up a bailing line passing buckets of water down from nearby spring up the hill, and priests are using their meagre magic to create more water. You hear cries for help, barely audible over the roar of the inferno.
- *[Characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) of 12 or higher notice that some of the fire is alive, leaping with purpose from building to building, spreading the fire as far as possible.]*

The characters may try to assist by:

- Joining the line passing buckets of water to throw at the fire, or casting *create or destroy water*. Characters doing so must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw to keep up with the heavy lifting and/or stave off the effects of high heat. On a failed save, they take one level of exhaustion. Either way, they are able to save one home from the blaze.
- Rushing into a burning house to save a villager crying for help. Characters doing so must make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. On a success, they carry the villager out, and neither is hurt too badly. On a failure, they reach the villager and lead them out, but take 2 (1d4) fire damage in the process.
- Using whatever other abilities they can make a case for.

Whatever they do, however, the fire is too far advanced to save more than one or two buildings.

The living fire, satisfied with the destruction, soon attacks the characters. It is composed of 2–4 **{lesser fire elementals}** (see Appendix A). The elementals are interested only in spreading fire and pain, and fight to the death.

After the fight, there comes a cry of alarm from up the bailing line: the spring has run dry! The elders shout for everyone to retreat to the hills, and regroup in front of Coldrake's manor house, which is about half a mile away on higher ground. They spend the night waiting for survivors to arrive and receive first aid. Coldrake's servants assist, but there is not nearly

enough room in the small manor house to accommodate everyone.

## REWARDS

The characters may receive the following XP rewards from this chapter:

- 50 XP per lesser fire elemental they defeat.
- 50 XP if they attempt to assist in dousing the flames somehow.



## CHAPTER 3: POISON DETECTED

The villagers regroup the following morning, and assess the damage. Most of the village is destroyed. The elders decide to take the villagers north to the nearest major city to seek sanctuary. But they suspect that the fire was foul play, and ask the characters to investigate.

## REFUGEES

- In the morning light, it is shocking how much of the village has been reduced to ash and soot. Charred timbers, darker than the soil for which the village is named, are all that is left of most buildings. The Ashtrack Inn is one of only a few structures still intact.
- The villagers are congregating in the remains of the town square. People are calling out to family members they haven't yet found. Children are crying. Adults are gathering up what remains of their possessions from the devastation.

## A PLEA FOR HELP

In the midst of the devastation, Perrin Goodbarrel approaches the characters with a request. He suspects foul play is behind the fire, but neither he nor any of the villagers can remain to investigate. The nearest city, Yartar (or a similar major city if not set in the Forgotten Realms), is a day's journey north and they need to get underway. Goodbarrel is hoping the characters will be willing to look into the matter and

report back. If someone did this on purpose, perhaps the Waterbaron of Yartar will assist.

If the characters need additional motivation before agreeing to help, here are some suggestions:

- The elders promise that when they reach Yartar, they will seek assistance from the Waterbaron, including a fee for the characters' efforts.
- Perrin Goodbarrel has some funds kept by the guild of merchants and traders in Waterdeep, and will send for a fee of 50 gp per character.
- Recall their reasons to be on this adventure in the first place (see Adventure Hooks, in the Introduction). If they are already investigating Coldrake or cult activity, this should be enough.

## GATHERING INFORMATION

The elders help the characters in asking around the crowd of villagers. They learn the following information:

- Witnesses say they saw their friends or family members double over in pain, then explode into living flame that spread itself across their homes.
- Allie Marsk, who was one of the bake-off judges, points out that only those who tried Coldrake's breads seem to have felt the abdominal pain. Survivors confirm this.
- The bakers are convinced that Coldrake's alchemical ingredient had something to do with this. One says she tried to get a peek as Coldrake was adding it, and saw him put a small metal jar away in his robes. She's not



*Coldrake's Manor*



sure, but she thinks she saw the sundial-shaped logo of the Sundial Caldera Quarry on it.

At this point, the characters should have more than enough information to go after Coldrake.

## THE MAGISTRATE

- Coldrake's manor is built about half a mile from the village, on a spur from the gravel road leading to Sundial Caldera.
- The house is an elegant, if small, country home. Its white shingled exterior contrasts with the dark sooty soil around it.

## A MYSTERIOUS LETTER

Upon arrival at the manor, the head servant will take them to meet the magistrate in his study. The servant asks them to wait in the antechamber a moment. On his way out, he yawns and absently drops an envelope addressed to Coldrake, which falls in plain sight to the characters.

Inside is a letter written in two distinct hands. The first part, in broad, angular letters, reads, "Please advise. —Granitefoot."

The second part, written in a cramped cursive with many small curlicues, is ciphered. A character can attempt a DC 10 Intelligence check to decipher the text (adding their proficiency bonus if they are a wizard or if they have proficiency with calligrapher's tools or forgery kits). On a success, they immediately understand what the letter says. On a failure, they will need to take an hour to work it out. Deciphered, it reads: "I trust the ingredient is to your liking. Report on results. If more is needed, we shall need time to prepare. —T.B."

After a few minutes, the servant returns and ushers the characters to Coldrake's study.

## QUESTIONING THE MAGISTRATE

- Coldrake sits behind his desk, poring over papers and reports. When you enter, he motions for you to take a seat in the plush red sofa and chairs across from him.
- He speaks in a measured tone: "Welcome, travelers. I assume you are here to discuss the dreadful tragedy of last night."

The characters likely have questions or accusations for Coldrake. In the ensuing conversation, Coldrake's

aim is to direct the characters to Sundial Caldera Quarry using as few lies as possible, hoping that the cult will finish off these meddlers. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check at key moments in the conversation can reveal that he is lying (if he is) or that he is not telling the whole truth.

- **If asked to account for his whereabouts last night**, he says that after participating in the bake-off judging, he returned directly home, where he remained for the evening. He also claims to have suffered stomach pains late last night. None of this is a lie, and the servants will corroborate every detail — but the reason for his stomach pains was a deceptive countermeasure. He took a mild toxin after dinner to create the appearance that he, too, was a victim.
- **If the characters point out the connection between the fire and those who ate Coldrake's breads**, he feigns surprise and horror both that his work was the cause: "What! But if that's true then I...the village... curse that Throkdran! I never should have trusted that dwarf!"
- **If asked where the ingredient came from**, he tells them honestly: "The ingredient came to me from Throkdran Granitefoot, the quarymaster at Sundial Caldera. His workers extracted it."
- **If asked about the ciphered portion of the letter**, he is appalled that they have read his letters, then dismisses the section as having been written by "an associate of Granitefoot's." This is technically true, but omits much.
- **If the characters suggest they are going to arrest him**, he chuckles. "On whose authority? I act with the blessings of my suzerain, the honourable Lady Ashill."
- **If Zhentarim characters confront him about his past** (see Appendix C) he looks startled for just a moment before regaining his composure, saying: "I do not fear the Black Network. I am owed favours and debts by some of the most powerful people on the Sword Coast. See what wrath comes to you if you take those thugs' revenge for them."

Eventually, he tires of answering their questions and asks, "Will that be all? I must attend to making rebuilding arrangements for the village."



If at any point the characters choose to attack, they will encounter the servants (6 LN human {commoners}), who flee; guards (2 LN human {guards}), who fight back but flee when reduced to 1/2 or less; and/or Coldrake himself (NE human {spy}), who attempts to create an opening to escape. If the characters are defeated, they wake up six hours later in area 5.4 (see Chapter 5). Their equipment is in a heap on the far side of the room, next to one {Eternal Flame Initiate} (See Appendix A), who has dozed off.

## REWARDS

The characters may receive the following XP rewards from this chapter:

- 50 XP per clue they get from questioning the villagers about the fire.
- 200 XP if they confront Coldrake and learn that the ingredient comes from Sundial Caldera Quarry.
- 200 XP if they find Coldrake's correspondence without fighting or confronting him.
- 25 XP per guard defeated in combat.
- 200 XP if they defeat Coldrake in combat.

## CHAPTER 4: DIGGING FOR ANSWERS

At this point, the characters should have enough information to lead them to the next location: Sundial Caldera. Upon arrival, it is clear that something isn't right: the workers are all hiding in their huts, and the quarrymaster, Throkdran Granitefoot, is clearly nervous about something.

### SUNDIAL CALDERA

- The caldera is roughly circular, about a mile across. The uneven, rocky ground lies about 100 ft below that of the surrounding land.
- At the centre is a tall spire of natural stone rising 150 ft from the floor of the caldera. It casts a long shadow across the depression, which moves almost imperceptibly as the sun tracks across the sky.



## 4.1. STEPS DOWN

- Several rough-hewn staircases lead down into the caldera, joining with paths that lead to the quarry; next to these staircases are pulley systems for hoisting up stone cut from the quarry.

## 4.2. WORKERS' HUTS

- A group of eight huts is clustered a short walk away from a quarry pit. The largest is clearly the quarrymaster's hut.

Throkdran Granitefoot (NG dwarf {**noble**}, replace rapier with battleaxe) can be found in the quarrymaster's hut (4.2.a). The other workers (3 human and 3 dwarf {**commoners**}) hide from the characters.

When confronted about the secret ingredient, Granitefoot at first denies any knowledge, but if pressed even slightly he over-dramatically submits to be arrested. It is obvious that he is hiding something (no check needed).

When asked what's really going on, Granitefoot looks resigned, then tells them the whole story.

- His workers started excavating new gem mines in the caves that branch off below the central spire of the caldera.
- They stumbled across a temple full of "evil pyromancers." The cult has been forcing them to extract minerals for their alchemy experiments, threatening the workers or their families if they disobey.
- Recently, the cult demanded that they harvest a strange copper-like ore that always felt warm to the touch.
- A few days later, the cultists told Granitefoot to expect an order for *saleratus cindrix* from Lady Vestrie Ashill, care of Lord Magistrate of Blacksoil. They left a small crate of the stuff, and a servant came to collect it.

Granitefoot doesn't know anything else: the nature of the ore or the secret ingredient are a mystery to him. He tells the characters to do as they wish, so long as they do not draw the cult's attention to him or his crew. If told about the fire in Blacksoil, he is silent for a moment, then murmurs a prayer to the dwarven gods, tears streaming down his face and into his beard.

## 4.3. QUARRY PIT

- A large rectangular pit has been cut out of the floor of the caldera. It drops down step-wise to its lowest point about 80 ft. below.
- At the bottom of the pit, an entrance to a mining tunnel opens in the north wall.

The pit measures 600 ft x 350 ft. The tunnel connects to area 4.4.

## THE MINES

Beneath the quarry are tunnels leading through mines and a natural spring to the lost Temple of the Sleeping Fire.

## 4.4. GEM MINE

- After 50 ft, the tunnel opens into a cavern (40 ft x 35 ft and 80 ft high). Veins of semi-precious stones glint in the cave walls, and there are signs of light mining activity here: piles of hewn stone, discarded picks, half-filled mining carts.
- A side passage winds away on the east and west walls of the cave.
- The air here feels strangely warm and dry for a cave, and there is a faint smell of sulphur.
- [*Characters who know what they're looking for might find a valuable gemstone.*]

Characters can attempt a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check if they wish to look for loose precious stones. Characters with some knowledge of mining or gemsmithing have advantage on this check. On a success, the character finds a loose gemstone worth 25 gp among the piles of stones. The east passage connects with area 4.5 after winding for 80 ft. The west passage leads to area 4.6 after sloping down for 100 ft.

## 4.5. SPRING

- The passage opens into a cave that falls away beneath you, descending 200 ft down. Stalactites drop nearly half that distance from the cave ceiling. Again, the air is strangely dry and warm.
- At the bottom of the cave, there is a small spring, from which a stream trickles down a slope and disappears into a natural tunnel. The mouth of this tunnel is much wider than the pitiable flow of water.

If the characters approach the spring, a beautiful, pale-skinned humanoid wearing an aquamarine raiment bursts out of the water and asks, “Why have you come here?” The creature is a {**naiad**} (see Appendix A), the spirit of this spring. Heavy irrigation, a hot summer, and a recent increase in heat from the magma chambers beneath the caldera have nearly dried up the spring.

The naiad does not attack, but looks distressed and sad.

- If asked why they are upset, they lash out: “Isn’t it obvious? My poor spring has nearly dried up! The summer was hot and those villagers drew far too much for their fields. And



now, the heat in these caves has gotten so bad, I’ve gone from river to creek to rivulet!”

- If the characters suggest that the fire cultists might be responsible, the naiad gets a wicked grin. “If it’s fire-worshippers behind this, I might just have something.” They disappear beneath the surface and return after a moment with a *wand of water jet* (see Appendix B). The naiad offers it to the characters, saying, “That’s yours to keep if you kill every last one of those bastards.”

## 4.6. TEMPLE FRAGMENTS

- Jutting out of the jagged rock, as if crushed on all sides by the surrounding stone, are chunks of broken masonry.
- In the wreckage, you spot broken columns, sections of foundation, and carved statues and bas-reliefs depicting robed figures, braziers, and vaguely humanoid figures made of flame.
- A fissure in the stone rising 100 ft above your heads cuts a 10 ft wide passage onward into the caves.
- [*Hidden amid the rubble is a magic lantern.*]

The fragments of masonry are remains of what was once a much larger Temple of the Sleeping Fire. The passage through the fissure leads to area 5.1.

A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check can find a *spotlight lantern* (see Appendix B) amid the stones.

## REWARDS

The characters may receive the following XP rewards from this chapter:

- 100 XP for confronting Granitefoot and learning that the cult is present in the caves beneath the quarry.

The characters may receive the following treasure in this chapter:

- A gemstone (25 gp).
- A *wand of water jet*.
- A *spotlight lantern*.



# CHAPTER 5: TURNING UP THE HEAT

The characters confront this branch of the fire cult within the Temple of the Sleeping Fire. After defeating the cultists, they obtain concrete evidence that the cult was working with Ashill and Coldrake to destroy Blacksoil.

## WARM WELCOME

The cultists are in the middle of a minor ritual when the characters arrive. Their leader, Tredelia Breville, welcomes them and indulges their questions for a moment, confident that these intruders will be easily destroyed.

### 5.1. ENTRY HALL

{**Tredelia Breville**} (see Appendix A) is performing a rite with 2 {**eternal flame initiates**} (see Appendix A). 0–2 {**lesser fire elementals**} lurk inside the brazier.



Tredelia Breville

- The narrow passage through the stone opens up to a huge cave 250 ft wide and over 100 ft high. It is very warm (30°C / 86°F).
- About 80 ft from the entrance, a 50 ft wide stone staircase rises 20 ft to a massive brass brazier, 10 ft in diameter, which blazes with an orange flame. Standing around the brazier are several robed figures chanting in Ignan. The flames seem to dance to their words.
- Behind the cultists is a 15 ft tall, 10 ft wide stone archway made of masonry blocks, each etched with a symbol resembling a brazier. A yellow-red glow flickers in the passages beyond.

When the cultists notice the characters, they stop their chanting. Breville greets them like old friends who have dropped by for a visit, in her peculiar way: “Ah! Welcome, kindling. I am Tredelia Breville, Keeper of the Eternal Flame. To what do we owe the pleasure of visitors?”

If the characters do not attack immediately, she entertains their questions for a few moments.

- **If they ask about the secret ingredient**, Breville chuckles: “Ah, the *saleratus cindricis*. I am quite proud of that creation. Most servants of the Eternal Flame think so narrowly in how to use fire — either it is for destroying or for forging. But fire does so many other things. Really, fundamentally, it *transforms*: dough into bread, wood into ash, villagers into living embodiments of arson.”
- **If they ask about Coldrake or Ashill’s involvement**, Breville tells them that she doesn’t particularly know or care why Coldrake sought her out. “It pleases the Eternal Flame like nothing else to change the beautiful to ash. It is a joyful reminder of what is to come when the All-Consuming Fire enters this world.”
- **If they ask why the cult is doing this**, she says: “The world gets warmer every year. It will eventually burn up. Why not make the most of it while you can?”

Breville eventually tires of talking to the characters and orders her followers to burn them. She retreats to her inner sanctum (area 5.7).

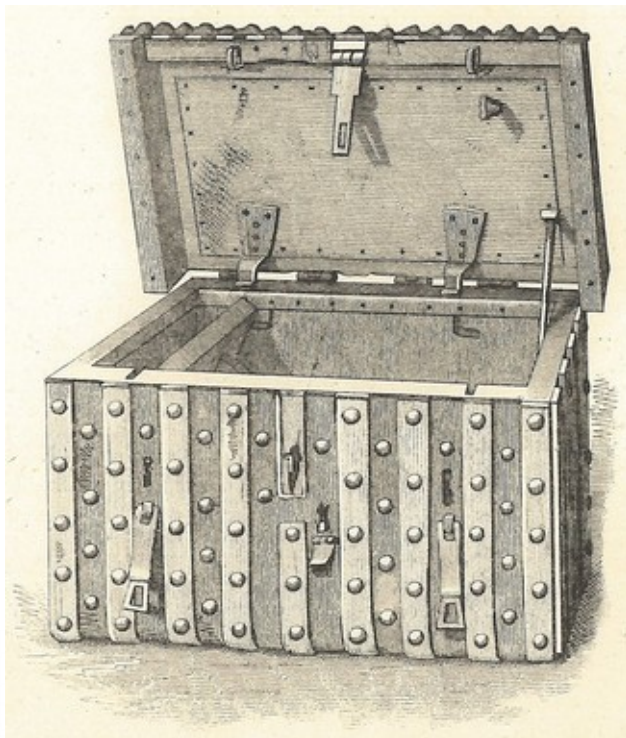
## OUT OF THE FRYING PAN

The characters pursue Breville deeper into the temple. Some side chambers have treasures to discover, and hints at other activities of the cult in the Dessarin Valley.

### 5.2. MAIN HALLWAY

- Beyond the archway is a 15 ft wide hallway, well-lit with burning sconces. The floor slopes downward to the end of the hall 50 ft away, but the ceiling remains at a constant height.
- The stone walls are decorated with intricate mosaics showing stylized flames. There are two iron doors in the left wall, and one in the right wall.
- At the end of the hallway is a black iron double door with a relief of an erupting volcano. The brazier-like symbol has been painted on the doors in a bright shade of red.
- The heat is oppressive (35°C / 95°F), and the smell of sulphur strong.

The doors in the left hand wall lead to areas 5.3 and 5.4. The door in the right hand wall leads to area 5.5. The door at the end of the hall leads to area 5.7.



### 5.3. OCCULT LIBRARY

- This small (10 ft x 30 ft) room is lit by an ironwork chandelier. Along one wall there is an iron desk with an uncomfortable-looking iron chair.
- The desk has a stack of stone tablets and an iron hammer and chisel for engraving them.
- There are several wrought-iron shelves lining the walls, which hold curious tomes.

The books have steel covers decorated with gems and gold and silver leaf, and their pages are thin flat pieces of stone into which writing has been engraved. They include the following:

- Multiple books in Ignan, concerning the binding and control of fire elementals.
- A few books in a mix of Abyssal and Common, regarding to fiery apocalyptic prophecies.
- Books in Dwarfish and Elfish on smithing, forging, and metalwork.
- Two loose stone pages; these are spell scrolls: *flaming sphere* and *protection from energy* (fire only).

### 5.4. CULTISTS' CHAMBERS

- This room is about 40 ft long and 30 ft wide. It is furnished with eight beds with wrought-iron frames.
- In the floor at the far end of the room is an iron trapdoor.
- *[Three of the beds conceal iron strongboxes.]*

The mattresses of the beds are stuffed with wool treated with a fire retardant alchemical substance.

The trapdoor leads to a larder that is magically cooled to a temperature of 5°C / 41°F. Stored here are various cured meats, hardtack, nuts, and other iron rations, as well as several barrels of drinking water and wine. Lastly, there are 2 small vials containing *potions of healing*.

To find the strongboxes, a character must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check. A successful DC 14 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) or Intelligence (Tinker's Tools) check opens each lock; a DC 18 Strength check can break open each box. Each strongbox contains 4d6 sp, and one of the following:

- Three polished obsidian knives (worth 10 gp each).
- A pewter belt buckle with an intricate flame design and set with a red banded agate (worth 25 gp).
- A bundle of steamy love letters from one cultist to another somewhere in the Sumber Hills, engraved on thin sheets of stone.

## 5.5. FORGES

- This chamber is 50 ft long and 30 ft wide. The air is thick with a chemical smell, and extremely hot (60°C / 140°F).
- Much of the space is occupied by six large furnaces that blaze with intense heat inside. There is an iron door in the wall at the end of the room.

The door leads to area 5.6.

## 5.6. STOREHOUSE

This room contains the raw materials and finished products from the forge.

- This room shares the 30 ft wall with the forge, but only extends 20 ft deeper. Stepping in is a shock, as it is magically cooled to 10°C / 50°F.
- The room has many tall iron shelves loaded with glass bottles and ceramic containers of various shapes, labeled with the strange glyphs used by alchemists.

There are many alchemical substances stored here, including:

- Sealed ceramic jars filled with white powder that bursts into flame instantly upon touching the air.
- Flasks of acid.
- A row of iron jars filled with reddish powder similar to gold dust. This is the secret ingredient.

Identifying each requires a DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana; Alchemist's Supplies) check.

## INTO THE FIRE

The characters reach Breville's inner sanctum and confront the Keeper of the Eternal Flame.

## 5.7. INNER SANCTUM

Breville retreats here during the fight in area 5.1. She has time to prepare for the characters' arrival. In addition to **{Tredelia Breville}** (see Appendix A), there are 0–2 **{flamewings}** (see Appendix A).

- The doors open to a large, irregularly shaped cavern of black-coloured rock, about 65 ft across at its widest point. The heat is intense (70°C / 158°F).
- There are wide cracks in the rough-hewn stone floor that are covered with metal grilles. Below, you can see the orange glow of slow-moving magma.
- Breville stands over another brass brazier muttering some incantation. She looks up at your entrance and grins a terrifying rictus. She raises her hands, and magma bursts up from the grilles in the floor.
- *[At the rear of the cave, there is a stone panel carved with an image of a volcano, painted over with the brazier-like symbol. The panel conceals a small hollow where Breville keeps her correspondence.]*

Breville is now past reasoning with; she only wants to see the characters burn. She and her servants fight to the death.

The stone panel is not particularly hard to find or open — no check is needed; they need only say they search the room. Inside the hollow is a stack of fired clay tablets with writing in a mix of Ignan and Common:

- Some are ciphered in the same fashion as the letter to Coldrake (see Chapter 3). They specifically detail, date by date, the request from Ashill to work with the cult to burn down Blacksoil and make it look like an accident, and Coldrake's retrieval of the secret ingredient from the cult through the intimidated Granitefoot.
- Those that aren't ciphered are between Breville and cultists in Scarlet Moon Hall (see *Princes of the Apocalypse*, Chapter 3), and concern relatively mundane things like the transfer of cultists from one place to another. The town of Red Larch is mentioned several times.



## REWARDS

The characters may receive the following XP rewards from this chapter:

- 50 XP per lesser fire elemental defeated.
- 50 XP per eternal flame initiate defeated.
- 25 XP per flamewing defeated.
- 200 XP for defeating Breville.
- 100 XP for finding Breville's letters.

The characters may receive the following treasure in this chapter:

- The following spell scrolls: *flaming sphere*, and *protection from energy* (fire only)
- Two *potions of healing*.
- Three obsidian knives (10 gp each).
- A pewter belt buckle with an intricate flame design and set with a red banded agate (25 gp).



## EPILOGUE

The characters may bring news that the cult has been defeated to various NPCs they have met along the way.

### THE QUARRYMASTER

If the characters inform Granitefoot that the cult has been defeated, he is overjoyed and rewards the characters with six gemstones, each worth 25 gp.

### THE ELDERS OF BLACKSOIL

If the characters bring the news to the elders, they are grateful, and ask the them to present what they have discovered to the Waterbaron of Yartar. The Wa-

terbaron pays them 50 gp each for information about cult activity. If the characters obtained the evidence incriminating Ashill, the Waterbaron will send troops to depose the lady and annex her land in the coming weeks.

## ONWARD TO ELEMENTAL EVIL

The characters have rooted out this cell of cultists, but more elemental evil is lurking in the Dessarin Valley. From here, the characters may be spurred on to the main story of *Princes of the Apocalypse* in any of the following ways (or, make up your own based on how this adventure went):

- The Waterbaron of Yartar offers a reward for more information about cult activity in the valley. Her agents have reason to believe that there has been some recently in the town of Red Larch, in the Sember Hills to the south. She wants them to investigate.
- The characters are contacted by an agent of their faction, telling them to follow a lead on cult activity in Red Larch or somewhere nearby.
- The characters may be interested in following the clue they found among Breville's correspondence: that there has been fire cult activity at Scarlet Moon Hall. The nearest settlement is Red Larch, so that should be their next major stop. While on the way to Red Larch or once the characters arrive, you should try to drive their investigations toward the other cults, since Scarlet Moon Hall is intended for 6th-level characters.
- The Cult of the Eternal Flame has been kidnapping villagers across the valley. Some of the Blacksoil villagers may have been abducted while *en route* to Yartar.



## APPENDIX A: STATISTICS BLOCKS

This appendix presents stat blocks for monsters and NPCs created specifically for this adventure.



## ETERNAL FLAME INITIATE

*Medium humanoid, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 9 (2d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

**Damage Resistances** Fire

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common, Ignan

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The eternal flame initiate is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). It knows the following sorcerer spells (for spells marked with an asterisk,\* see *Princes of the Apocalypse* or the *Elemental Evil Player's Companion*).

Cantrips (at will): *control flames*,\* *fire bolt*, *light*.  
1st level (2 slots): *burning hands*.

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Eternal flame initiates are passionate newcomers to the Cult of the Eternal Flame, having only just mastered some basic fire spells. They protect their fellow cultists with zeal, and obey their master's orders without question.



## FIRE ELEMENTAL, LESSER

*Medium elemental, neutral*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 5 (1d8)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

**Damage Resistances** Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

**Damage Immunities** Fire, Poison

**Condition Immunities** Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 10

**Languages** Ignan

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Fire Form.** The elemental can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. A creature that touches the elemental or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 2 (1d4) fire damage. In addition, the elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature takes 2 (1d4) fire damage and catches fire; until someone takes an action to douse the fire, the creature takes 2 (1d4) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

**Illumination.** The elemental sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light in an additional 30 feet.

**Water Susceptibility.** For every 5 feet the elemental moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

### ACTIONS

**Touch.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) fire damage. If the target is a creature or a flammable object, it ignites. Until a creature takes an action to douse the fire, the target takes 2 (1d4) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

Lesser fire elementals are much like their larger, more powerful cousins. Their instinct is to spread their fire to anything flammable they can sense, including other creatures. Weaker spellcasters interested in summoning elementals often start with these lesser specimens.

## FLAMEWING

*Tiny elemental, neutral*

**Armor Class** 12 (natural)

**Hit Points** 2 (1d4)

**Speed** 10 ft, fly 40 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	2 (-4)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)	4 (-3)

**Damage Immunities** Fire, Poison

**Condition Immunities** Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained, Unconscious

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 8

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Illumination.** The flamewing sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light in an additional 30 feet.

**Water Susceptibility.** For every 5 feet the flamewing moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

### ACTIONS

**Flaming Lockjaw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) fire damage, and the flamewing attaches to the target. While attached, the flamewing does not attack. Instead, at the start of each of the flamewing's turns, the target takes 5 (1d4+3) fire damage as the heat from the flamewing's natural flames singe and smoulder the target's flesh.

The flamewing can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. It does so after inflicting 10 points of damage, or when the target dies. It also detaches (and flees) if it takes any damage and survives. A creature (including the target) can use its action to detach the flamewing, but takes 2 (1d4) fire damage in the process.

Flamewings are minor fire elementals that spread fire to living beings by instinct. Through a process sages do not fully understand, it is through burning living creatures that flamewings derive sustenance. They appear to be bat-like creatures composed of orange-red elemental fire, but instead of a defined head they have a hideous maw like a lamprey's mouth, rimmed with rows of teeth of blue fire.

## NAIAD

*Medium fey, chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural)

**Hit Points** 36 (8d8)

**Speed** 30 ft, swim 60 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

**Skills** Insight +3, Persuasion +5

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Aquan

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Amphibious.** The naiad can breathe air and water.

**Shape Water.** The naiad can cast *control water* at will, requiring no components. Their spellcasting ability for this spell is Charisma. This use of the spell has a range of 30 ft and can affect a cube of water no larger than 30 ft on a side.

**Speak with Animals.** The naiad can comprehend and verbally communicate with beasts.

### REACTIONS

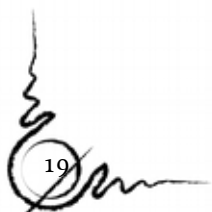
**Water Shield (Recharge 5, 6).** When the naiad is targeted by a weapon or spell attack that deals damage, they may use their reaction to cause a 5 ft cube of water within 10 ft of them to form a wave that blocks or interferes with the attack. The attacker has disadvantage on this attack.

### ACTIONS

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) slashing plus 4 (1d8) poison damage.

**Water Lash.** The naiad causes a 5-ft cube of water within 60 ft of them to take a shape of their choice and strike one target they can see within 5 ft of that water. The target must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, it takes 17 (4d6+3) bludgeoning damage, and if it is a large or smaller creature, it is pushed up to 15 ft in a straight line or is knocked prone (naiad's choice). On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and isn't pushed or knocked prone.

Naiads are protector spirits bound to a specific source of water, be it a lake, river, spring, waterfall, or aquifer. They are fickle and temperamental, but usually not malicious. They protect their water source with fury, drowning any who would pollute or drain it.





## TREDELIA BREVILLE

*Medium humanoid, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (*mage armor*)

**Hit Points** 39 (6d8+12)

**Speed** 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Con +5, Cha +5

**Skills** Deception +5, Insight +5, Perception +3, Religion +3

**Damage Immunity** fire

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common, Ignan, Elfish

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Spellcasting.** Tredelia Breville is a 2nd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). She knows the following sorcerer spells (for spells marked with an asterisk,\* see *Princes of the Apocalypse* or the *Elemental Evil Player's Companion*).

Cantrips (at-will): *control flames*\*, *create bonfire*\*, *fire bolt*, *light*.

1st-level (2 slots): *burning hands*, *mage armor* (already factored into Tredelia's AC and 1st-level spell slots).

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

### LAIR ACTIONS

When in her inner sanctum (area 5.7), on initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Breville takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- A blast of magma surges from one of the grilles in the floor, forcing one target of Breville's choice to make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 4 (1d8) fire damage, or half as much damage on a successful save.
- Breville summons 1 {**flamewing**} (see above) to join the fight. She make take this lair action twice only.

Tredelia Breville was raised by a wealthy merchant family who were privately obsessed with the occult. This led a young Tredelia to the Cult of the Eternal

Flame through a family friend. Her understanding of the cult's philosophy is slightly different from those closer to Vanifer, the current fire prophet. While Vanifer and her followers view the world as impure and in need of cleansing destruction by fire, Tredelia is more cynical and less proactive when it comes to destruction. She believes that fire represents not the power of cleansing, but the power of transformation. She is not actively pursuing the summoning of Imix, the Prince of Evil Fire, into this world, but nor would she oppose it. She thinks it is inevitable, and wants to get the most out of this world that she can before the flames come.



## APPENDIX B: MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items have been created for this adventure.

### SPOTLIGHT LANTERN

This brass lantern has an intricately cast flame motif. Upon speaking the command word — “Lumina!” — it sheds bright light in a 60 ft cone in a direction of your choice. The edge of the illuminated area is sharp; there is no buffer of dim light between the area of bright light and darkness. Speaking a different command word — “Murx!” — snuffs out the light.

### WAND OF WATER JET

This wand is fashioned from a short piece of copper pipe carved with arcane runes signifying a torrent of water. The wand has 3 charges. While holding it, you can use an action and expend 1 charge to produce a blast of 5 gallons of high-pressure water from the end of the wand, directed at a point of your choosing within 40 feet of you. The jet of water can do one of the following (your choice each time you use this ability):

- Clean surfaces of up to one five-foot square in area of any nonmagical coating.
- Push an object weighing up to 50 lbs up to 10 feet.
- Force a creature to make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 2d8 bludgeoning damage and is pushed 10 feet away from you. On a successful save,

the creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed.



## APPENDIX C: FACTION HOOKS

If a character is part of one of the five factions (or an organization similar to one of them), the following may also serve as hooks:

**Harpers:** Agents in Yartar have been monitoring the activities of country nobles in the Dessarin Hills and are concerned about the behaviour of Lady Vestrie Ashill. It has been rumoured for some time that she has connections to organized crime or worse. Harper-affiliated characters have been sent to Blacksoil to gather intel on Ashill's new lord magistrate for the village, Halanthar Coldrake.


**Order of the Gauntlet:** The Order has received reports of the fire cult's activities in the Dessarin Valley. Drawing on old records, they have determined that the temple beneath the Sundial Caldera is a likely outpost of the cult. As a first test of their mettle, characters affiliated with the Order have been sent to root out the cult and bring them to justice.

**Emerald Enclave:** The druid circle that watches over the Dessarin Hills is concerned that the unusually hot summer, combined with the villagers' heavy irrigation of their fields and new mining activities at Sundial Caldera, may be causing a local spring to run dry. Enclave-affiliated characters have been sent to investigate the source of the spring, which is beneath the quarry.

**Lords' Alliance:** The Waterbaron of Yartar, Nestra Ruthiol, is seeking to expand her city's influence in the sparsely populated Dessarin Hills. Publicly, her pretense is to spread peace and prosperity throughout the region. Characters affiliated with the Alliance have been sent to Blacksoil by Ruthiol's agents to identify potential contacts through which they might establish closer ties.

**Zhentarim:** Halanthar Coldrake is supposed to be dead. Ten years ago, he was a fixer for the Black Network, but he betrayed agents of the organization to the City Watch of Waterdeep in exchange for a reward. The Zhentarim dispatched assassins after Coldrake, and he was reported dead shortly thereafter. Now that he seems to have mysteriously

reappeared as the lord magistrate of Blacksoil, Zhentarim-affiliated characters have been sent to the village to find out if he is the same man, and to finish the job if need be.



## APPENDIX D: HISTORICAL NOTE

This adventure is inspired in part by real-life events. In late 18th century Britain, millers and bakers were adding various adulterants to their flour to make it appear whiter and higher grade. A controversy erupted with the publication of a pamphlet by Peter Markham entitled *Poison Detected*, which suggested that some of these adulterants were toxic. However, some adulterants also enhanced the rising of their breads — a precursor to modern baking powder.

The idea of a secret leaven being added to bread not by bakers but by the town magistrate comes from a story about a kind of gingerbread in the Netherlands in the 14th century. You can learn more about these events in a playlist of YouTube videos produced by Townsends (a living history supply company based in the USA that specializes in 18th–19th century American culture): <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4e4wpjna1vySZZLECS0Z7dABedvx2-pe>



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This adventure was written as part of the Fall 2019 RPG Writer Workshop. Many thanks to Ashley Warren, Jack Kiser, and the entire workshop community for their guidance and support. I am particularly grateful to the group of five playtesters that the workshop connected me with; their extensive and constructive advice was invaluable. Thanks also to RamblinRev, TelwynGSF, and DMTweak420 for reading earlier drafts of this adventure. Special thanks to Emily of [fantasynamemakers.com](https://fantasynamemakers.com) for maintaining such an incredibly useful resource. Finally, thank you to my partner, Kat Curwin, for believing in me even when I don't believe in myself.



HEARTBURN

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Trystan Goetze trained to be a philosopher, but was raised by D&D. He has been playing TTRPGs since 2000, and is the author of several short supplements on the DM's Guild. When not DMing a game or planning the next one, he writes and teaches philosophy at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he is currently a postdoctoral fellow. You can follow him on Twitter @errantcanadian, or visit his website at <http://www.trystangoetze.ca/>.

## D&D 5E RULES SOURCES

*Basic Rules, Player's Handbook, Dungeon Master's Guide, Monster Manual, Princes of the Apocalypse, Tales from the Yawning Portal.*

## ARTWORK

Art is listed in order of appearance. Any art not listed here comes from the Dungeon Masters Guild Creator Resource art packs, and is owned by Wizards of the Coast.

- “Painting of the big fire of 1654 in the Dutch village De Rijp,” by Egbert van der Poel (1621–1664), public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brand\\_De\\_Rijp1\\_WEB.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brand_De_Rijp1_WEB.jpg)
- “A Nocturnal Fire,” by Egbert van der Poel (1621–1664), public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Egbert\\_van\\_der\\_Poel\\_-\\_A\\_nocturnal\\_fire.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Egbert_van_der_Poel_-_A_nocturnal_fire.jpg)
- “The annual fair,” by Albrecht De Vriendt (1843–1900), public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Albrecht\\_De\\_Vriendt\\_-\\_The\\_annual\\_fair.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Albrecht_De_Vriendt_-_The_annual_fair.jpg)
- “A tailpiece with 3 steins, a club, a roasted capon, and a loaf of bread,” artist unknown (1916), public domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FamHis082.png>
- “Caricature of Sir James Whitehead,” by “Hay,” Vanity Fair (16 March 1889), public do-

main, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sir\\_James\\_Whitehead.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sir_James_Whitehead.JPG)

- “Village fair by night,” by Hendrik Gerrit ten Cate (1803–1856), public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hendrik\\_Gerrit\\_ten\\_Cate\\_001.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hendrik_Gerrit_ten_Cate_001.jpg)
- “Fire of the Town During the Summer,” by Kazimierz Żwan (1792–1858), public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%C5%BBwan\\_Fire\\_of\\_the\\_town.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%C5%BBwan_Fire_of_the_town.jpg)
- “Bloxholm Hall,” by Edward Trollope (1817–1893), public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bloxholm\\_Hall.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bloxholm_Hall.jpg)
- “The Quarry,” by John Frederick Herring, Sr (died 1865), public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Quarry\)\\_by\\_John\\_Frederick\\_Herring,\\_Sr.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Quarry)_by_John_Frederick_Herring,_Sr.jpg)
- “Image of a chest,” artist unknown (1862), from Domesday Book, or, The Great Survey of England, fac-simile of the part relating to Somersetshire, public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Domesday\\_chest.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Domesday_chest.jpg)
- “Staring into the fire,” by Sidney Paget (1860–1908), public domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Twis-01.jpg>

Page number decals and half- and full-page dividers were designed by Meshon Cantrill and provided by the Dungeon Masters Guild for use in the Fall 2019 RPG Writer Workshop.

## FONTS

- Linux Libertine O (body) and Linux Biolinum O (subtitle, sidebars, descriptive text, stat blocks), licensed under the [GPL](https://www.gnu.org/licenses/gpl-3.0.html) (with [font exception](https://www.gnu.org/licenses/exception-fn.html)) and [OpenFont](https://www.openfont.org/) licences, <http://libertine-fonts.org/>
- Cheap Fire (cover and half-title), by Richard D. Collins, free for commercial use, <https://www.dafont.com/cheap-fire.font>