

The Volcanic Vault of the Forge Father

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In ages long past, the Dwarven Sorcerer-Priest Hargen the Seven-Crowned stole a fragment of the Elemental Plane of Fire. Using this stolen power, he built a hidden vault deep within the earth. A volcano formed around the Shard, and in his volcanic vault, he forged many great and terrible weapons, to war with the Gods themselves. However, exposure to the raw power of the Fire Shard corrupted the dwarves, twisting them into ferocious **Ash Ghouls**. With the last of his power, Hargen sealed the vaults. However, recent volcanic activity has caused the tunnels to reopen, and eager adventurers are taking the opportunity to plunder its depths before it is drowned in lava.

In the Vault

It is incredibly hot inside the Vault. Heat exhaustion is a very real threat, especially to ill equipped parties. Every turn, roll below to see what happens. The lava level starts 200' below the lowest level of the vault. When it comes in contact with a room, it will take about 10 minutes for it to be consumed fully, killing everything in it and destroying any items. If the lava comes into contact with Shard, the lava will rise 10' every 10 minutes, in addition to any other effects.

1. Quiet moment, the volcano is still.
2. The volcano quakes, all movement is considered difficult and delicate tasks are impossible. The lava rises 10'.
3. The volcano belches smoke, and all vision is heavily obscured. The lava rises 10'.
4. Searing heat! Save or take heat damage and a level of exhaustion. The lava rises 10'.
5. The lava rises 20'.
6. Wandering monster!
 1. 1d6 hungry **Ash Ghouls** crawl from cracks in the walls.
 2. 1d4 **Ash Shades** materialize from the dust.
 3. 1d3+1 **Fire Spirits** caper about.
 4. A harmless **Dwarven Phantom** reenacts a scene from the past.

Random Treasure

Roll on this table when a player spends a turn searching for treasure. Replace duplicates with a small satchel of ancient gold coins equal to the roll x50.

1. A copper pendant in the shape of a hammer.
2. A silver plated snuff box.
3. Golden signet ring.
4. A bejeweled beard comb.
5. A leather blacksmith's apron that can nullify 1 instance of fire damage per day.
6. A golden tablet, inscribed with the instructions of safely using the Fire Crystal.

1. The Entry Hall

A long, narrow passage leads from the Volcano exterior to this large. Room is cluttered with old stone furniture, and littered with skeletons. 5 Ash Ghouls (2HD, burning/blinding ash breath) prowl here, picking at bones

2. The Forge Father's Shrine

A crumbling statue of the Forge Father sits in this austere room. It is open to the sky; the volcano's vent is 200 feet above the shrine platform. Peeking out from a crack in the statue is a golden tablet. It could be removed (10-40 minutes of work) and would be very valuable to an interested party, but taking it could result in a curse. While the statue is whole, the room is considered hallowed ground. Praying to the Forge Father will be rewarded with an hour of fire resistance.

Sitting in front of the statue is a non-descript metal box that is cool to the touch. It is completely immune to any heat, and is thus capable of safely holding the Fire Shard.

3. Undine's Fountain

A beautiful marble fountain dominates the room, which is remarkably comfortable. Sitting on a raised dais in the fountain is **Undine** (7HD, water magic), an imprisoned water nymph. She will beseech any visitors to free her using a spell found in the library. Drinking from the fountain will cure wounds and remove exhaustion (once a day per drinker). Around her neck is a platinum choker, studded with sapphires. It can only be removed when she is slain or magically freed.

4. The Copper Library

A large room littered with broken stone bookcases, and small copper tablets. 4 Ash Shades (1HD, vitality drain) lurk in shadows. In the center of the room is a locked/trapped (acid cloud) chest that contains a copper tablet that functions as a spell scroll. It can be read to instantly banish any elemental creature, such as **Undine** or the **Primal Guardian**. A thorough search of the room (10-60 minutes) will yield 2d3 copper tablets that function as spell scrolls (random spell level 1-4).

5. The Slagged Hall

A large, long hall, stacked high with melted ingots of various metals. 6 mischievous **Fire Spirits** (1HD, fire magic) caper about here. They will try to stop anyone from entering the forge. They can be bribed with flammable objects (torches are ok, lantern oil is better. Gun powder? Perfect!). If properly bribed, they will warn about the **Primal Guardian**, a powerful fire spirit bound to an enormous suit of armor.

One of the Fire Spirits is brandishing pristine metal tongs. Like the metal box, they are completely immune to heat and can be used to handle the Shard.

6. The Primal Forge

This large, brightly lit room is even hotter than the rest of the vault, thanks to the presence of the Fire Shard. On an anvil near the shard rests the Unmaker's Blade, a pure white long sword of indeterminate material. It is a magical sword that ignores any sort of metal. Standing behind the anvil, is an imposing 10' tall suit of armor, crafted to resemble a Dwarf warrior. If the sword or the Shard is interfered with, this **Primal Guardian** (8HD, large sweeping hammer and fire laser) will activate to destroy any intruders.

The Fire Shard itself is magically suspended over an open pit, down to the lava below. It radiates immense heat, and will nearly instantly vaporize anything that comes in contact with it. If it is taken from here, a volcano will begin to form underneath it's resting place, and it will erupt in a matter of months.

