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VILLAGE BACKDROP: HOPESPYRE 2.0



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Their beliefs considered heretical by the Church of the God of the Sun and their presence viewed as a threat to the cruel ruler of their homeland, the members of the Church of the Redemptive Flame fled and founded a new home in remote Hopespyre. The cult now wants nothing more than to live a sin-free life in their new refuge but events conspire against them. The evil elemental lord of fire has set his sights on the cult and schemes to subvert its good intentions. Ageing church leader Dagor Thursh edges closer to death each day, and a struggle is growing for the right to succeed him, its flames fanned by followers of the elemental lord who have infiltrated the village.

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HOPESPYRE AT A GLANCE

Ruler: Dagor Thursh
Government: Magical
Population: 156 (70 humans, 38 half-orcs, 22 half-elves, 10 dwarves, 8 elves, 8 halflings)
Alignments: NG, LN
Languages: Common, Ignan
Resources & Industry: Farming, magical goods

When the PCs arrive in Hopespyre, the following items are for sale:

- **Potions:** *healing* (400 gp), *fire resistance* (400 gp)
- **Scrolls (Magic-User):** *fireball* (900 gp), *light* (300 gp)
- **Scroll (Cleric):** *atonement* (1,500 gp)
- **Wondrous Items:** *phylactery of faithfulness* (7,500 gp)

Founded 40 years ago by Dagor Thursh, the secluded village of Hopespyre is his Church of the Redemptive Flame's refuge from the sinful world. Members of the church live a simple life, celebrating their faith and supporting one another with almost no need for anything beyond the boundaries of the village. Hidden deep in the wilderness, Hopespyre offers not just a sanctuary from spiritual threats but also physical ones: the church of Darlen, which views the Church of the Redemptive Flame as a heretical cult, and the tyrant in whose bloody service Thursh laboured for too many years would like nothing more than to discover the village's location and do away with it forever.

Hopespyre stands around the constantly burning Font of Redemption, a bonfire emblematic of the village's faith. Several nearby longhouses dominate the other buildings. They house the single men and women of the community, who support each other in a faithful life as they wait to find a marital match and establish a home of their own.

Well-armed guards, constantly vigilant for threats from monsters and secular and religious authorities, stand watch at the village's borders. Despite that, those judged safe find a warm welcome in Hopespyre, with invitations to services and the communal meals that follow. While the reception is sincere, should visitors cause Thursh to fear they are agents of the church's enemies, they won't leave the village alive.



What no church members realise is that a great threat is already in their midst—the servants of a sinister elemental lord who seeks to subvert the village to his own sinister purposes.

VILLAGE LORE

A character may know something about Hopespyre, its history and surrounds. Determine how knowledgeable the characters are and then impart some (or all) of the information below:

- A group of religious heretics fled civilisation and founded Hopespyre as a place of refuge.
- The leader of the heretics is a former soldier who preaches the sinful can cleanse themselves in fire.
- The locals are welcoming, but also extremely paranoid; those considered threats aren't allowed to leave.

VILLAGERS

Appearance: Women wear their long hair unbound, while men grow beards of impressive lengths.

Dress: Villagers uniformly wear white linen trousers and tunic. Adults also wear a red, orange or yellow shawl—the colour indicates their state of redemption.

Nomenclature: *male* Breel, Fahis, Stoig; *female* Aseri, Harag, Ketka; *family* Fireborn (this name is shared by a handful of Dagor Thursh's illegitimate children), many others take fire-related names (Embered, Ashblown and so on) when they join the community.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

While in Hopespyre, a character may hear one or more rumours. The PC can learn this information in several ways: perhaps by overhearing two locals gossiping, chatting with regulars over a few drinks at the local taverns and so on. Use the table below, to determine which rumours the character learns.

D6 RUMOUR	
1*	All the half-orc children you see around here? They're all related to Dagor. (While the cult leader certainly has many illegitimate children and some grandchildren, not all of the half-orc youth are his progeny)
2	Some recent converts were kept at Visitors' House for months but in time accepted Dagor's teachings.
3*	The villagers feed an innocent to the Font of Redemption a few times a year, to keep it burning.
4	A delegation of Darlen's church was wiped out when they tried to broach a rapprochement with village leaders, and their bodies were buried in the woods.
5	Friyet never forgave Dagor for not marrying her; she was the only one who didn't realize he never really loved her.
6*	Dagor has begun saying those who do not choose repentance willingly should be burnt. (Katin Shiss and his followers are carefully spreading this lie.)

*False rumour.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS AT A GLANCE

Most of the village comprises peasant homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Font of Redemption:** This ever-burning pyre at the centre of the village is Hopespyre's spiritual heart.
2. **Dagor Thursh's Home:** Other than two guards, little distinguishes the cult leader's home from other residences.
3. **Brothers' House:** The village's unmarried men live in this wooden longhouse.
4. **Sisters' House:** This wooden longhouse shelters Hopespyre's single women.
5. **Visitors' House:** Half-hostel and half-prison, visitors stay here for free, treated as guests but watched with a wary eye.
6. **Communal Kitchens:** The village's communal meals are prepared here and served on long, bench-lined tables.
7. **Makers' Hall:** Craftsmen use this site, originally several houses that were later connected, to make magic items.
8. **Secret Shrine:** Secret followers of the elemental lord of fire meet at this home owned by Katin Shiss' supposed sister.
9. **Watch Tower:** Two guards occupy these towers at all times, keeping an eye out for threats within and without.

NOTABLE FOLK

Most of the population are simply well-meaning church members. A few, however, are of interest to adventurers:

Barja Embersin (location 4; NG female dwarf thief 2) is the overprotective "mother" of the Sisters' House.

Dagor Thursh (location 2; NG venerable male half-orc fighter 3/ cleric 6) is the ageing founder of Hopespyre and the Church of the Redemptive Flame.

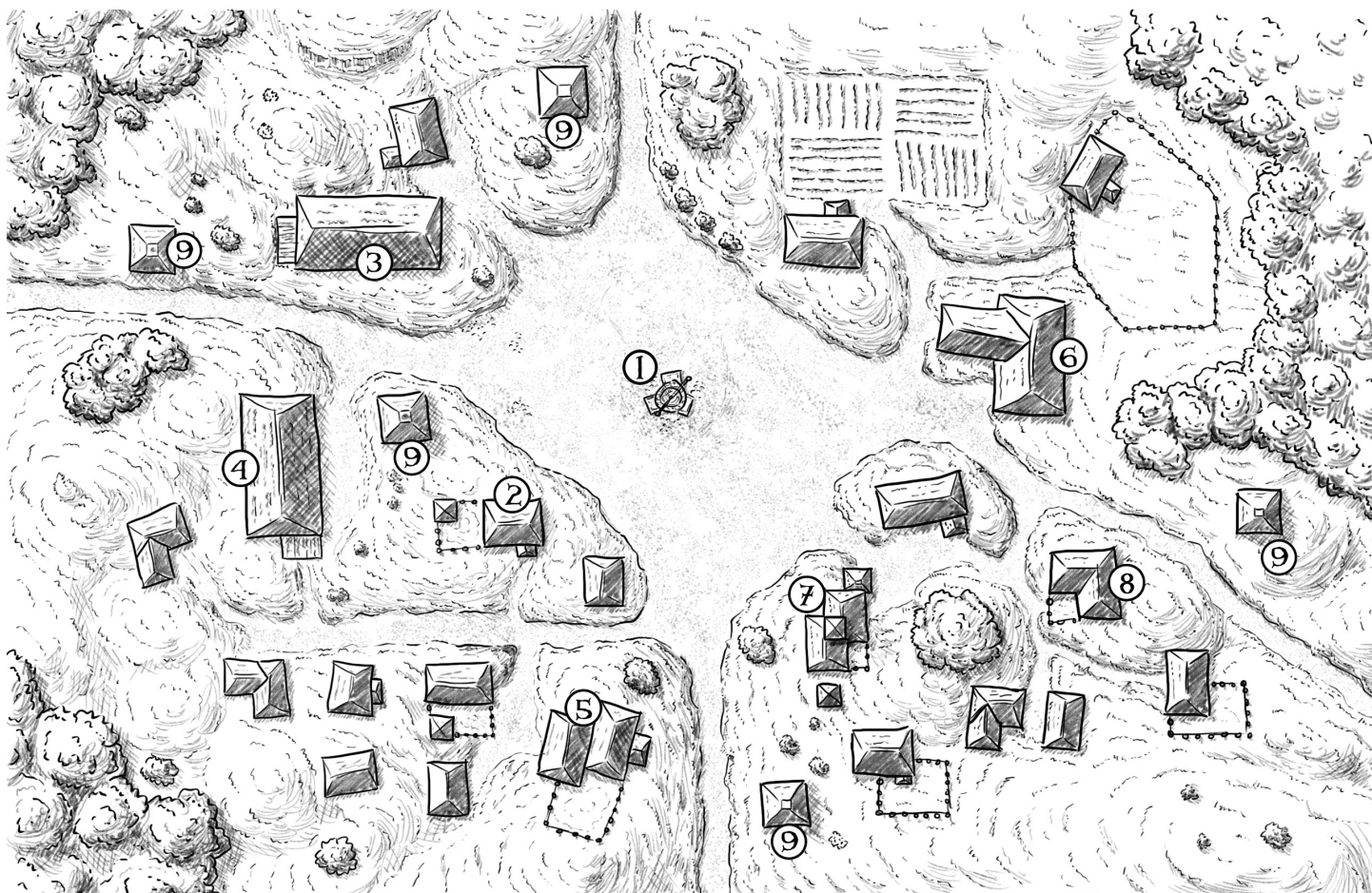
Denmin Thursh (location 7; NG middle-aged male half-orc cleric 5) is Dagor's oldest son, by his now dead wife, and a true believer; he hopes to continue his father's work.

Friyet Halsh (location 6; N middle-aged female human) is Udealia's vainglorious mother. She still resents Dagor Thursh for refusing to marry her when his wife died.

Katin Shiss (location 8; LE male half-elf cleric 4) is secretly a cleric of the elemental lord of fire; he married Udealia Fireborn as part of a scheme to subvert the community.

Shan Whistletree (location 5; NG male halfling fighter 4) is the host of the Visitors' House.

Udealia Fireborn (location 1; N female half-orc cleric 3) is an illegitimate daughter of Dagor; she's encouraged by her husband and mother to take power as her father declines.



LIFE IN HOPESPYRE

Life in Hopespyre is generally peaceful, if overly regulated. However, the threat of discovery and persecution hangs over the village, which casts a pall over its people, on occasion.

TRADE & INDUSTRY

Forced to remain secret, Hopespyre has little to speak of in the way of economy or external trade links. Much of the village's daily life revolves around religious activities and growing food. New converts are expected to donate their material goods for the good of the community.

Hopespyre's surfeit of spellcasters' magic and crafting help bring in money either from the rare visitor or through occasional trading trips to far-off towns. It should come as no surprise many of the items crafted here have fire-based powers, and Denmin is happy to make such items on commission for guests—as long as they respect the cult's teachings and vow to never reveal Hopespyre's location.

LAW & ORDER

Though many villagers have committed serious crimes in the past, few misdeeds occur in Hopespyre, where almost all of the citizens have accepted Thursh's vision to leave their sins behind. Outsiders are always the first suspect, when a crime occurs—unless there are witnesses to the fact (or the outsiders have impenetrable alibis). If any confusion over their guilt or innocence remains, the suspects are forced to “speak their truth” while inside the radius of the so-called *Zone of Truth* emanating from the Font of Redemption (location 1).

Even for those who wished to do so, the watchful guards make misdeeds difficult. Petty crimes are typically handled with a public Forgiving, the transgressor confessing publicly and possibly having his shawl changed to indicate a reduced level of redemption. Dagor Thursh deals with more serious crimes personally—after he communes with the flames.

CUSTOMS & TRADITIONS

Residents of Hopespyre all adhere to the tenets of the Church of the Redemptive Flame, most visibly in their choice of clothing: adult church members mark their state of redemption by wearing coloured shawls.

Those who have achieved the highest state of redemption, by declaring their sins to an entire gathering and safely entering the Font of Redemption to burn them away, wear red shawls. Those who announce their sins to Dagor Thursh or another red-shawled member of the church and allow that person to take their burden into the fire wear orange shawls. Finally, those at the least state of redemption—who write their sins on paper that is then fed to the fire—wear yellow shawls. Children wear simply white linen clothes, receiving their first shawl at special Forgiving ceremonies that mark their passage into adulthood.

VILLAGE DRESSING

Use this table to generate the minor sights and sounds the characters experience as they explore Hopespyre.

D20 DRESSING/EVENT

1	The village gathers for a public Forgiving ceremony to welcome a youth into adulthood.
2	Signs of riders are spotted near Hopespyre, stoking fears of the village's discovery.
3	An old half-orc trains several villagers in arms, demanding military precision from his students.
4	A villager's body is found, burned to death. (He was killed on orders of Katin Shiss, who feared the man had discovered his secret.)
5	A group of young men work diligently to clean the Brothers' House.
6	Villagers celebrate Founder's Day, the anniversary of the church's founding. Young couples sneak off into the shadows—and Barja Embersin spends the evening dragging them back into the light.
7	A handful of children giggle as they make up supposed misdeeds to declare to each other as sins.
8	Several villagers work hard in a communal garden.
9	White snow covers the village except for a small circle cleared by the heat of the central bonfire.
10	An attractive older woman stands outside a home, screaming loudly at someone inside, as a younger woman with her looks away in embarrassment. (This is Friyet Halsh and her daughter, Udealia Fireborn.)
11	A strong burnt smell lingers over the village.
12	Sounds of hammering and loud encouragement come from several homes.
13	Chickens scratch for insects in the grass.
14	Villagers' voices rise in prayer, reaching a crescendo as a woman throws some papers into a bonfire.
15	A soldier in the tyrant's army arrives at the village, claiming she has come in search of her own redemption, but many villagers don't trust her.
16	A couple of shaggy brown dogs bark furiously as a young girl laughingly chases after them.
17	The smell of baking bread wafts from the communal kitchens near the centre of the village.
18	A handsome half-elf (Katin Shiss) juggles balls of fire for the amusement of several children.
19	Udealia Fireborn denounces a visitor to the village, claiming she heard the voice of Darlen condemning the person in the Font of Redemption.
20	An overlooked yellow shawl, apparently discarded or lost, gathers dirt on the outskirts of the village.

THE SURROUNDING LOCALITY

Hopespyre's location is a secret, one willingly shared with no one who is not a member of the Church of the Redemptive Flame. Quite intentionally, no roads lead to the village; even newcomers to the church are typically directed to somewhere a day or two away where they can be met by a trusted member and led on a circuitous route to the village. Those without such a guide are most likely to find Hopespyre by sheer chance, with their ability to convince the inhabitants they are no threat determining whether their discovery was good fortune or bad.

The village can be placed in any remote area where a GM wants to set it. It may work as a way to break up the party's travel to a distant dungeon, or as a possible surprise, but welcome, refuge if the characters find themselves in trouble while travelling in a remote, dangerous or forbidding place.

In a Forest or Jungle: Lurking in the depths of a primal, ancient stretch of woodland, trees and other thick undergrowth hem Hopespyre in on all sides. Local elves and fey may know of the village, but probably avoid the place thanks to the intolerant, unforgiving stance of some of Hopespyre's clergy.

In the Hills: Nestled deep in the hills at the head of a tree-choked, near-trackless sheltered valley, one does not see Hopespyre until one is almost atop it.

In the Mountains: Far from civilisation, in a high-up mountain valley, Hopespyre suffers from intense winds and storms. Even the strongest winter storm troubles not the Font of Redemption, however. Watchers can see travellers coming from miles away, making it virtually impossible to reach the village unseen.

On an Island: The nameless island on which stands Hopespyre rears from the ocean's endless, eternal waves far from any known shipping lane. Because of the island's isolation, the villagers make no real attempt to mask their location and, thus, at night the Font of Redemption blazes brightly and is visible for many miles.

NEARBY DANGERS

Regardless of where the village stands, intelligent creatures in the area have learned to keep their distance, thanks to the powerful magic of Hopespyre's inhabitants. Still, such dangers may threaten hunter-gatherers who venture outside the village, or drive adventurers nearby to look for sanctuary in Hopespyre. In addition to any monsters normally found in Hopespyre's terrain, creatures from the elemental plane of fire may lurk nearby, drawn by the irresistible presence in the Font of Redemption.



NOTABLE LOCATIONS IN HOPESPYRE

1: FONT OF REDEMPTION

Hopespyre is built around this ever-burning bonfire, which also serves as the village's spiritual centre. Services are held daily at sunrise at the Font, as are many ceremonies, including the Forgiving rituals, wherein cultists give their sins to the fire to be burned away. Such religious activities can be led by any church member who has attained a red shawl, though typically Dagor Thursh conducts them. His children, Denmin Thursh and Udealia Fireborn, are most likely to act in his stead when he's unable to lead services for some reason.

Originally fed continuously by members of the church with wood cleared to make room for the expanding community, the Font of Redemption in time began to simply burn on its own, which Dagor Thursh and the other cultists see as proof of their beliefs. Adding to their fervour, they discovered they were unable to lie while in the pyre's light.

In truth, though, their prayers attracted the attention of the elemental lord of fire, who saw a way to take advantage of their faith. He empowers the pyre, keeping it burning at all times and causes it to act as a *zone of truth* (those with the zone must save against spells to resist telling the truth). As part of his plan, any follower of the elemental lord of fire within the bonfire's radius of illumination benefits from immunity to fire as if they had drunk a *potion of fire resistance* and automatically succeed at their saving throws made to resist telling the truth.

While the characters are here, one or more of the below events may occur. Choose or determine randomly:

1. A trio of young men and women gaze rapturously as a half-orc woman in a red shawl (Udealia Fireborn) walks with papers listing their sins into the fire where she lets the notes burn away to ash.
2. The central bonfire flickers, turning blue and then green before returning to its normal colours.
3. A dwarven man tries to enter the fire after declaring his sins, but cries out in pain as the heat forces him to retreat. Others judge his failure as a sign he was either insufficiently repentant or truthful, or both.
4. Katin Shiss stands in the heart of the font and decries a sinful world, saying it and any who haven't found redemption in the church (such as the characters) need to be cleansed of their wrongdoing. (He doesn't explicitly endorse violence but hints at it.)
5. The village gathers as a young man and woman are united in marriage by Dagor Thursh. Barja Embersin cries in joy throughout the ceremony, repeatedly telling any male characters how beautiful and happy life is in the village.
6. Four armed church members place their sword blades into the fire for a minute before withdrawing them and heading toward the outskirts of the village.

2: DAGOR THURSH'S HOME

This home looks much like the rest of the village's homes, with a tidy garden out front and smoke curling from the chimney, though two constant guards outside (typically LN male half-orc fighter 4) hint at its importance.

Here dwells Dagor Thursh; he spends much of his time working happily in his flower garden when he is not leading services or attending to other community needs (as his flagging energy allows). Thursh is welcoming to friendly, respectful visitors and it is a great honour to be welcomed inside his home for a private audience (and perhaps confession).

3: BROTHERS' HOUSE

This handcrafted log longhouse shelters the community's single adult men, providing them with a dormitory and workspace.

The yellow-shawled, lazy Oddrick Harf (NG male middle-aged half-orc fighter 2) nominally oversees the men and their work, but in truth he can barely be bothered. He spends much of his time sleeping by the fire, and is only aware of the goings-on in his immediate vicinity. His attitude drives Barja Embersin (location 4) wild with anger—something she struggles with on a daily basis. Because of Oddrick's attitude, this place is often disorganised, smelly and messy.

UDEALIA FIREBORN

N female half-elf cleric 3

Worry lines crease the brow of this curly-haired half-orc woman.

Mannerisms: Udealia frequently plays with her red shawl, twisting it around her fingers and worrying it back and forth across her shoulders.

Personality: Used as a tool by her mother since before she was born, Udealia suffers from anxiety. She wants to live up to her mother's and husband's desires that she assume leadership of the church when her father dies, though she has no such ambition of her own.

She faithfully follows Dagor's teachings, and is happiest when others share their sins with her so she can unburden them by taking the wrongdoings into the Font of Redemption.

Background: Udealia Fireborn is the illegitimate daughter of Dagor Thursh, the product of an affair her vainglorious mother hoped would lead to personal power. She spent her childhood being pushed into the centre of the church, becoming a devout follower.

Now a young woman, she was romanced by and eventually married an apparent half-elf convert to the village, Katin Shiss (location 8). Oblivious he too sees her as a conduit to power, Udealia loves him deeply and remains excited about having left the Sisters' House for her own home.

THE CHURCH OF THE REDEMPTIVE FLAME

Though the church of Darlen would disagree, members of the Church of the Redemptive Flame believe they also follow the Shining Light, god of the Law, Order, Justice, and the Sun. The cult, however, puts much more focus on sin.

Teachings: Everyone sins, but everyone can find redemption through the cleansing fire. A sin-free life is a better life—almost as good as it will be in the heavenly afterlife—and the faithful must strive to live without sin every day. When they fail, as all do at times, they must confess their sins to each other and the god, and then give them to the fire to be burned away. If the entire world were sin-free, it would become like unto heaven.

Holy Texts: The Church of the Redemptive Flame interprets Darlen's doctrine through the oral teachings of Dagor Thursh. His daughter, Udealia Fireborn, has begun recording these commentaries in a series of scrolls she has dubbed *The Light of Truth*, unaware of the corruptions in the message secretly introduced by her husband.

DARLEN

LG greater god of law, order, justice and the sun

Epithets: The Justicar, the Shining Light, the Noble One

Symbol: The rising sun

Favoured Weapon: Longsword

Raiment: Voluminous, white cowled habits; unless expecting battle, clerics do not wear armour

Worshippers: Nobles, paladins and warriors; enemies of Braal

Teachings: The strong must protect the weak. Those with great abilities or aptitudes must use their gifts for the betterment of their fellows. The faithful must be ever vigilant for evil's rise, but must show mercy when dealing with its tools.

Holy Texts: Darlen's teachings are set down in the *Scripture of Law*—a vast tome containing teaching, stories and lessons by some of his early, prominent followers. *Divine Order* and *On Darkness' Rise* are important early commentaries penned by legendary high priests.

Additional Notes: The holy warriors of the Order of the Watch Eternal stand between Ashlar and the darkness pressing in on all sides. Its members are heroes and protectors of the common-folk. Some of their number delve into Gloamhold's sinister, benighted depths while others patrol the duchy's bounds or strike out into the surrounding wilderlands.

Temples & Shrines: Darlen's faithful live throughout Ashlar. The Watcher's Spire—also known as the Champion's Abbey—is one of the most heavily fortified places in the duchy. The faith's paladins and warrior monks train at Tor Abbey in readiness for the unending fight against the encroaching darkness.

4: SISTERS' HOUSE

This building, identical to the Brothers' House, accommodates Hopespyre's single adult women.

Unlike her counterpart in the Brothers' House, the corpulent orange-shawled Barja Embersin (NG female dwarf thief 2) serves as an extremely overprotective mother. She keeps close tabs on all her charges and their comings and goings, and patrols regularly to make sure no men gain entry to her sanctum. Though gruff, especially with men she doesn't know, she's an incurable romantic—she believes part of her job is helping find husbands for her charges but has very specific thoughts on proper courtship. She keeps an eye on any male visitors, hoping to find some who will be willing to convert to the Church of the Redemptive Flame and make a home with one of her charges.

5: VISITORS' HOUSE

The Visitors' House provides small rooms where guests can stay free of charge. (Food is served in the communal kitchens [location 6]). However, though the building is appointed as a simple hostel, it serves a dual purpose. The solid construction and windows with shutters that open only a few inches keep guests inside when they're not meant to be wandering the village freely. The

DAGOR THURSH

NG venerable male half-orc fighter 3/cleric 6

A grey beard covers burns scars on the face of this red-shawled, elderly half-orc. Stooped shoulders show age is beginning to take its toll.

Mannerisms: Dagor, at peace now with the misdeeds of his youth, typically wears a beatific look on his face.

Personality: Dagor truly believes in his teachings, that one can find redemption from one's sins through fire. He hopes others will do the same and choose to better themselves. However, he also is all too aware of the lengths to which his enemies will go, and zealously guards his people's safety. He would rather take extreme measures against a perceived threat and have to once more enter the Font of Redemption to find forgiveness than allow his people to come to harm.

Background: In his youth, as a soldier for a cruel despot, Dagor witnessed and was responsible for unspeakable acts of horror. Soul blackened by his experiences, for many long years he saw no escape from the army. He found his way out, however, amid the flames of a *fireball* that slew most of his companions. Surviving, he took the experience as a sign he finally had to start a new life. Preaching that one's sins could be burned away in fire, he quickly attracted a following he eventually led to a place he dubbed Hope's Pyre (later shortened to Hopespyre). Left a widower during the journey, he has never settled down with a partner again, though his charisma attracted followers to more than his word, making him more than a spiritual father for many in the village.

inquisitive, attentive, orange-shawled Shan Whistletree (NG male halfling fighter 4) serves not only as host, but also guard. Small hidden holes in the walls enable Shan to see and hear what passes between guests; he immediately reports any concerns to Dagor. Shan is assisted in his hosting duties by a half-dozen villagers.

- **Accommodation:** One- or two-bed chambers, free. (Rooms are single sex, except for couples Shan believes are married.)

6: COMMUNAL KITCHENS

The aroma of baking bread and bubbling stews fills the air near this large building at all times of the day. While some families eat in their own home, most villagers come together at mealtimes to dine at long, bench-lined tables.

Among the cooks is the orange-shawled Friyet Halsh (N middle-aged female human), a still-attractive woman whose beauty is marred by her own awareness of it. The ambitious Friyet was brought into the cult by her parents and has been constantly frustrated by her inability to gain power. She went so far as to seduce Dagor Thursh after the cult leader's wife died, but was enraged when he refused to acknowledge the brief relationship even after she bore him a child, Udealia Fireborn (location 8). She now lives her life through her daughter, pouring all of her energy into trying to ensure Udealia succeeds Dagor as the church's leader.

- **Food & Drink:** Meal (porridge in the morning, stew at night) free.

7: MAKERS' HALL

Makers' Hall is the main production facility for magic items in the community. Originally just a one-room workshop in Denmin Thursh's home, the building has been expanded several times to allow for more workers.

The legitimate son of Dagor Thursh, Denmin (NG middle-aged male half-orc cleric 5) oversees production and spends much of his time in the workshop. With his father looking mostly after the community's spiritual welfare, the red-shawled Denmin long ago took responsibility for the village's material needs, coordinating the production of magic items and the occasional trips by some of the village's most trusted members to trade them for necessities.

Though he truly believes in the Church of the Redemptive Flame, Denmin tends to be more focused on its mundane needs than its spiritual ones, leaving room for others to try to usurp his birthright as the cult's next leader. Currently, Denmin has several exceptional items for sale

- **For Sale:** *necklace of missiles* (2,200 gp; 1x 5d6, 2 x 3d6), +1 *flame tongue longsword* (4,500 gp).

8: SECRET SHRINE

This seemingly normal home, owned by the yellow-shawled "Lidja Shiss" (CE female half-elf cleric 3), serves as the secret meeting place for the handful of followers of the elemental lord of fire in the village. Here they plot and scheme to subvert the church to their master's own designs—to use its followers as the spark to set the surrounding region aflame.

Lidja, whose true name is Caramin Berall, arrived at the same time as Katin Shiss (CE male half-elf cleric 4), posing as his widowed sister, to give him a reason to spend time at their secret shrine in her home. The red-shawled Katin can often be found here when he's not at the home he shares with his wife, Udealia Fireborn, and mother-in-law, Friyet Halsh.

9: WATCH TOWER

This simple 10 ft. high wooden platform has a roof and guardrail to protect its occupants and a ladder that is pulled up when not in use. Two orange-shawled guards (typically LN male or female human thief 4 during the day and LN male or female half-orc fighter 4 at night) are on duty at all times, keeping an eye out for any danger lurking inside or outside the village. Each watch tower is equipped with a hunting horn—which is sounded only when danger seems close at hand.

KATIN SHISS

CE male half-elf cleric 4

This tall half-elf's red hair clashes with the red shawl around his neck, though his blue eyes and wide smile exude a calm warmth.

Mannerisms: Katin Shiss almost always smiles, and has a pleasant word for anyone he meets. When he is not "attending on his poor sister," he stays close to his new wife, often touching her as a "sign of affection."

Personality: Katin is the snake in Hopespyre's garden, his warm charm covering his true intention of taking over the church. He cold-bloodedly plots each step, exerting complete authority over his followers.

Though his wife's love for him is true and she would be devastated to learn of the darkness in her husband's heart, for him it is simply a matter of convenience. His apparent doting on her is merely a front to let him keep close tabs on what he sees as his best chance to succeed at his plan.

Background: Katin Shiss is a devoted follower, but not of Dagor Thursh and the Church of the Redemptive Flame; he instead follows the elemental lord of fire. Led by his deity, he managed to make his way to Hopespyre with a few other worshipers, including one posing as his sister, for the sole purpose of subverting the villagers to his own ends. He has managed to covertly convert several people, who now work with him as he makes inroads with a handful more who remain utterly unaware of his true intentions.

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