

RAGING SWAN PRESS

VILLAGE BACKDROP: RIFTHAMMER





YOUR TIME IS PRECIOUS

MAKE YOUR CAMPAIGN PREP. EASIER

JOIN RAGING SWAN PRESS'S PATREON CAMPAIGN

[PATREON.COM/RAGINGSWANPRESS](https://patreon.com/ragingswanpress)

VILLAGE BACKDROP: RIFTHAMMER

Nestled in a twisting ravine amid the Luminous Desert's endless windblown dunes, Rifthammer is home to a desert-dwelling tribe of dwarves. Hidden in the cool shadows of their cliff-side home, these reclusive folk offer peaceful seclusion for those seeking refuge from the desert's relentless heat, or simply the troubles of the wider world. However, not all is as idyllic as Rifthammer's dwarven masters pretend, and a festering ruin of otherworldly creatures in the darkest recesses of the rift threatens all who reside above.

Rifthammer can serve as a base of operations for adventurers looking to explore the surrounding Luminous Desert, or as a jumping-off point for subterranean adventures in the ruins of an ancient city that long ago collapsed into the rift's lightless depths.

CREDITS

Design: Creighton Broadhurst and Robert Brookes

Additional Design: Steve Hood and Mike Welham

Development: Creighton Broadhurst

Art: Claudio Pozas and William McAusland. Some artwork copyright William McAusland, used with permission. Some artwork copyright Claudio Pozas, used with permission.

Cartography: Robert Brookes

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Raging Swan Press or as expressly permitted by law.

©Raging Swan Press 2020.

CONTENTS

Credits	1
Contents	1
Rifthammer at a Glance	2
Village Lore	2
Villagers	2
Whispers & Rumours	2
Notable Locations	3
Notable Folk	3
Life in Rifthammer	4
Trade & Industry	4
Law & Order	4
Customs & Traditions	4
Village Dressing	4
The Surrounding Locality	5
The Arnafiq Rift	5
Notable Locations	6
1: Council Hall	6
2: Angbannar Home	6
3: Hall of the Six	6
4: Foveg's Hammer	7
5: Tenderlands	7
6: Quinar's Home	8
7: Rifthammer Garrison	8
8: Animal Pens	8
9: Deepwell	8
10: Endra Mine	8
11: The Lift	8
OGL V1.0A	9

To contact us, email gatekeeper@ragingswan.com

To learn more about Raging Swan Press, visit ragingswan.com

To learn more about Raging Swan Press on Patreon, visit
patreon.com/ragingswanpress



RIFTHAMMER AT A GLANCE

Ruler: Senior Councillor Chekorak Angbannar

Government: Council

Population: 122 (120 dwarves, 2 humans)

Alignments: LN, LG

Languages: Common, Dwarven

Resources & Industry: Stone, textiles, iron, copper

Hidden in the cool shadows of the two-mile deep Arnafiq Rift, Rifthammer is a secret sanctuary nestled in the bosom of the unforgiving Luminous Desert. Cut into the sides of the chasm, the dwarven hold of Rifthammer straddles the rift with centuries-old arched stone bridges of exquisite dwarven craftsmanship.

Four millennia ago, Senkajor Azhai—the temple-city of a terrible and blasphemous cult—stood where Rifthammer now stands. A savage earthquake, however, created the Arnafiq Rift, and cast the temple-city into its depths. These ancient, forsaken ruins now lie hidden miles below Rifthammer in the rift's lightless depths amid the black waters of a nameless lake in which horrible, alien things dwell.

Rifthammer's prideful and insular dwarven families settled along the Arnafiq Rift 1,508 years ago. Exiled from their ancestral hold, Thor Dilak, after losing an inter-clan dispute the dwarves sought refugee from their enemies and the desert's blazing sun in the rift's cooling shadows. The industrious dwarves cut Rifthammer from the chasm's living rock and delved deep into the unending darkness of its deepest reaches. They built the mechanical paternoster pump that powers the Deepwell and even cut now all but forgotten stairs all the way to the rift's floor.

For centuries, the dwarves lived prosperous and secluded lives until 553 years ago when the emergence of a disease—swiftly dubbed “stoneshame”—of unknown origin ravaged the population. While the dwarves survived the initial outbreak, it returned a century later to claim more lives and has followed this pattern ever since. Stoneshame turns living flesh into solid stone. Some of Rifthammer's folk believe stoneshame is a curse laid on their bloodline by the gods, while others insist it was brought to Rifthammer by foreign traders. Stoneshame's origin remains a mystery to Rifthammer's dwarves, for every time they have successfully expunged it the disease re-emerges a generation later. Many dwarves believe, the ancient, ebon-cloaked ruins lying far below Rifthammer hold the answer to the disease's origins—and perhaps even hide a means of eradicating stoneshame forever. Due to their prideful nature, however, the dwarves have refused outside help and hide those afflicted away from outsiders' prying eyes.

CURING STONESHAME

Characters who discover the source of stoneshame and are able to save the people of Rifthammer from its scourge would be hailed—reluctantly—as heroes for generations to come and always have loyal, proud allies in Rifthammer.

VILLAGE LORE

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

- Rifthammer is a remote settlement hidden in the shadow of a miles-deep chasm, populated by insular dwarves who dislike outsiders.
- The dwarves of Rifthammer are reclusive but highly resourceful and are not dependant on trade to survive. However, their numbers are dwindling.
- An ancient temple once sat where Rifthammer now stands, but was swallowed by the desert when the Arnafiq Rift opened up below it.

VILLAGERS

Appearance: Rifthammer's rugged and hardy dwarves have darkly tanned skin and coarse black hair. They favour braided hairstyles and beards.

Dress: Villagers wear loose-fitting robes of earth tones accented with glass and iron jewellery; they often braid this jewellery into their hair. Primary colours of red and yellow are dyed in blocky patterns on sashes to denote family association.

Nomenclature: *male* Crajor, Derhkan, Enjar, Girjen, Halok; *female* Berun, Ciriq, Ferqia, Sirni, Tiljac; *family* Aunbren, Clengrad, Fronmirn, Kastriman, Wandrunn.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

While in Rifthammer, a character may hear one or more rumours. The character 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	Rifthammer is physically large enough to be considered a city, but its small population is only that of a village.
2*	The dwarves of Rifthammer are actually elementals whose natural form is that of a statue.
3	Deep below Rifthammer on the rift floor lies an ancient temple of a forgotten religion. None alive have ever reached the ruins and returned.
4	The outlander Quinar rudely inquired about the absence of burial sites in Rifthammer.
5*	If you listen to the wind blowing down into the rift you can hear the songs of the long-dead priests who died when their temple sank into the deep.
6	Rifthammer is protected from sandstorms due to its location, but is occasionally plagued by violent elementals and other creatures. Local gnoll tribes, however, give the ruins a wide berth.

*False rumour.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

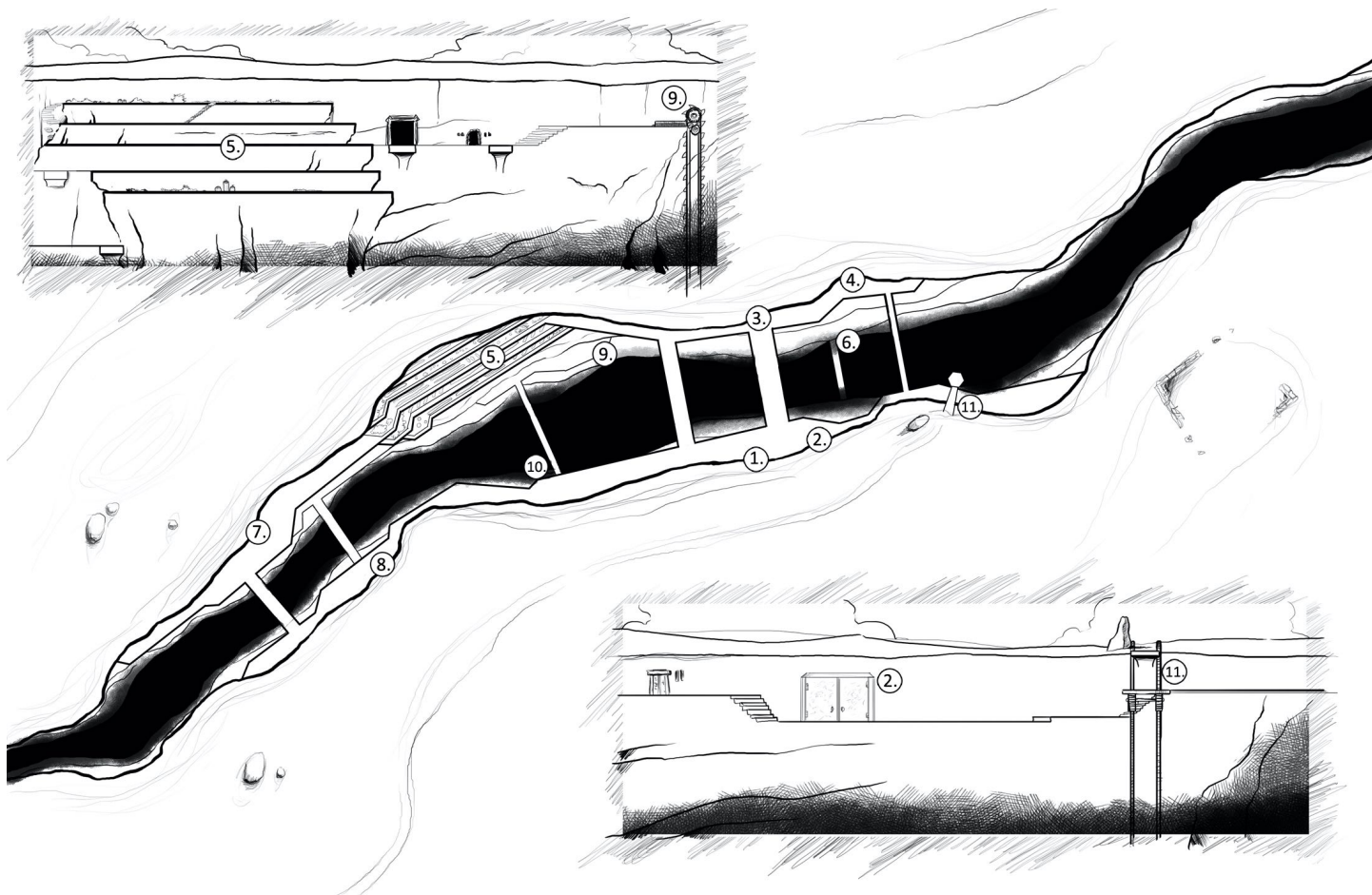
Most of Rifthammer comprises normal homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Council Hall:** This once opulent council hall has fallen on hard times as Rifthammer's population slowly dwindles.
2. **Angbannar Home:** Here dwell the Angbannar family.
3. **Hall of the Six:** All Rifthammer's clergy perished from stoneshame; their temple now stands empty.
4. **Foveg's Hammer:** A large wooded pavilion stands outside Rifthammer's largest forge and smithy.
5. **Tenderlands:** Tiered gardens carved into the rift walls grow much of Rifthammer's food supply.
6. **Quinar's Home:** The human necromancer Quinar and his young daughter live here.
7. **Rifthammer Garrison:** The Rifthammer guard's depleted ranks are based here.
8. **Animal Pens:** These pens hold giant lizards and other unusual animals used as livestock in Rifthammer.
9. **Deepwell:** This clockwork paternoster pump hauls water up from the rift's depths.
10. **Endra Mine:** The dwarves mine copper, tin and iron in these tunnels. They use played out areas as tombs.
11. **The Lift:** This hand-powered wooden lift ferries cargo to and from the surface or (rarely) down into the rift.

NOTABLE FOLK

Most of the population are nothing more than hardworking dwarves. A few, however, are of interest to adventurers:

- Bijor Fulwernn** (location 7; LN female dwarf fighter 3) serves on Rifthammer's council and is Rifthammer's guard captain.
- Chekorak Angbannar** (location 2; LN middle-aged male dwarf fighter 3) serves as the Senior Councillor of Rifthammer.
- Foveg Einhannar** (location 4; CN old male dwarf fighter 3) believes Rifthammer should seek outside aid to deal with stoneshame. The surly blacksmith is a former council member.
- Ingmir Angbannar** (location 2; NE female dwarf thief 2) loves exploring and is plotting an expedition into the rift's depths. She is Chekorak's daughter.
- Oreg Bakkar** (location 7; NG male dwarf fighter 2) suffers from stoneshame. He is a guard and Bijor's husband. He has only been afflicted a few weeks, but the disease has quickly taken hold over him.
- Pariq Hanbaurn** (location 1; N male dwarf) leads the trade guild. He is a member of the Rifthammer council.
- Quinar Shanmassan** (location 6; NG male human wizard 5) lingers in Rifthammer to study the ruins. He is a scholar and researcher and also offers his services as a doctor to locals and travellers.



LIFE IN RIFTHAMMER

Isolated Rifthammer is a village in crisis and decline, consumed by the horror and humiliation of stoneshame and the slow, lingering death it brings. While the industrious dwarves' ingenuity provides them with plentiful food, drink and other essentials an aura of sorrow and hopelessness hangs over the settlement.

TRADE & INDUSTRY

The Endra mine provides Rifthammer with an abundance of tin, copper and iron. Visiting traders purchase manufactured goods including steel weapons and armour as well as bronze jewellery and dwarven art. Giant spiders harvested from the rift provide silk for textiles.

Trade caravans visit twice a year, with occasional visitations by adventurers between these larger arrivals. When merchant caravans arrive, a tent bazaar springs up at the edge of the rift. Such arrivals are the cause of much celebration and raised spirits among the villagers who come up to trade, share stories and forget their troubles.

LAW & ORDER

The Rifthammer guard struggles to maintain a proper watch in the face of thinning numbers and sinking morale. Bijor Fulwernn, preoccupied with concerns over her husband Foveg's worsening condition, has allowed the watch to become lax, of late.

Foreigners visiting Rifthammer are scrutinised more for the questions they ask than the deeds they perform. Villagers act as informants for the watch regarding travellers who may be getting too close to the secret of stoneshame. Such folk are vigorously encouraged to leave Rifthammer.

The villagers have enough troubles and do not turn on one another. Rifthammer has enough resources to prevent theft of food and other basic staples. While crime in Rifthammer is low, the occasional drunken fight or public argument results in the watch getting involved. Rifthammer does not have a prison; all crimes punishable by imprisonment instead result in exile.

CUSTOMS & TRADITIONS

With the death of Jarniq Arnlorn, last high priest of Rifthammer, the dwarves have turned their backs on the gods they once worshipped. Now, they pay only lip service to the religious traditions and ceremonies their pious ancestors once observed.

Every year, the dwarves still celebrate Arrival Day which marks the day their ancient progenitors discovered the Arnafiq Rift. Even this celebration has faded over the years; while the dwarves love their home they have come to closely associate it with the curse of stoneshame. As suggested by its name, stoneshame is a matter of great shame and sorrow among the dwarves. They do not often talk of its to strangers and dwarves suffering from the virulent disease are hidden away from outsiders.

VILLAGE DRESSING

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

D20 DRESSING/EVENT

1	Workers flee a subterranean creature that tunnelled into the Endra Mine.
2	The water table in the rift has lowered and Deepwell no longer produces water, a disastrous drought may ensue.
3	The clicking cries of unknown creatures call up from the darkness of the rift, at night.
4	Travelling merchants set up a bazaar above Rifthammer, offering all manner of luxuries not normally available to the villagers. The merchants do a brisk business.
5	A massive sandstorm rolls in and dangerous creatures fleeing the storm descend on Rifthammer.
6	Ingmir Angbannar is looking for adventurers to help with her forbidden expedition to the ruins in the rift.
7	Strong wind blows through the rift, creating an eerie keening sound that echoes through Rifthammer.
8	Two dwarves hold a muttered conversation in the shadow of a building. At the characters approach, they fall silent.
9	At night, the ethereal howls of hunting gnolls float over the desert's softly glowing sands.
10	Dust devils caper across several of Rifthammer's bridges and leave intricate swirl patterns in the sand.
11	Buzzards ride the thermals above Rifthammer, ever-watchful for their next meal.
12	A dust cloud on the horizon could herald the arrival of more visitors, the approach of desert raiders or a particularly powerful dust devil. Whatever it is, it's heading straight for Rifthammer.
13	Far below, in the depths of Arnafiq Rift, rocks calve away from the rift's walls and tumble loudly into the lake below.
14	Two members of the watch approach the party and exchange stilted pleasantries before going on their way.
15	Wavering heat shimmers rise from the desert sands, creating strange mirages.
16	A ragged shadow seems to crawl up one of the rift's walls from the darkness below, but the higher it goes, the more it fades away into nothingness.
17	Swathed in a deep cloak, a muttering dwarf staggers passed the party.
18	Far out in the desert, something metallic glimmers in the sun's unrelentingly harsh rays.
19	On the horizon, buzzards circle lower and lower toward their next meal.
20	Ingmir Angbannar approaches the party and engages them in seemingly random conversation. In reality, she is trying to gauge their interest in exploring the Arnafiq Rift.

THE SURROUNDING LOCALITY

The Arnafiq Rift cuts through a wide swath of the Luminous Desert. Inhospitable burning sands, ever-shifting wind-blown dunes and scattered cacti forests comprise the remote village's bleak and desolate surrounds. No other permanent settlement lies so far into the desert as the dwarven hold of Rifthammer.

A single dusty trail wends its way through the ever-shifting sands to Rifthammer. It is along this trail the twice-yearly trade caravans and the increasingly infrequent wandering adventurers come to Rifthammer.

Small packs of gnolls and their hyena pack-mates stalk the dune-sea at night when the desert sands glow softly with the sunlight they absorb during the day. Some nameless fear or elder tradition, however, keeps the gnolls away from Rifthammer and the Arnafiq Rift. Nevertheless, the hunting packs' howls can sometimes be heard echoing through the night; to the superstitious or uninformed, the howling sounds like the laments of the lost souls of all those who have died amid the Luminous Desert's deadly, sun-blasted sands.

To the east, the gnoll Shadescar tribe dominate the sands and aggressive hunt any passing through their territory. The gnolls also battle—or perhaps more accurately, avoid—the desert tan worms endemic to the region. Tan worms—similar to the more commonly known purple worms—appear in a variety of sizes and are voracious desert predators.

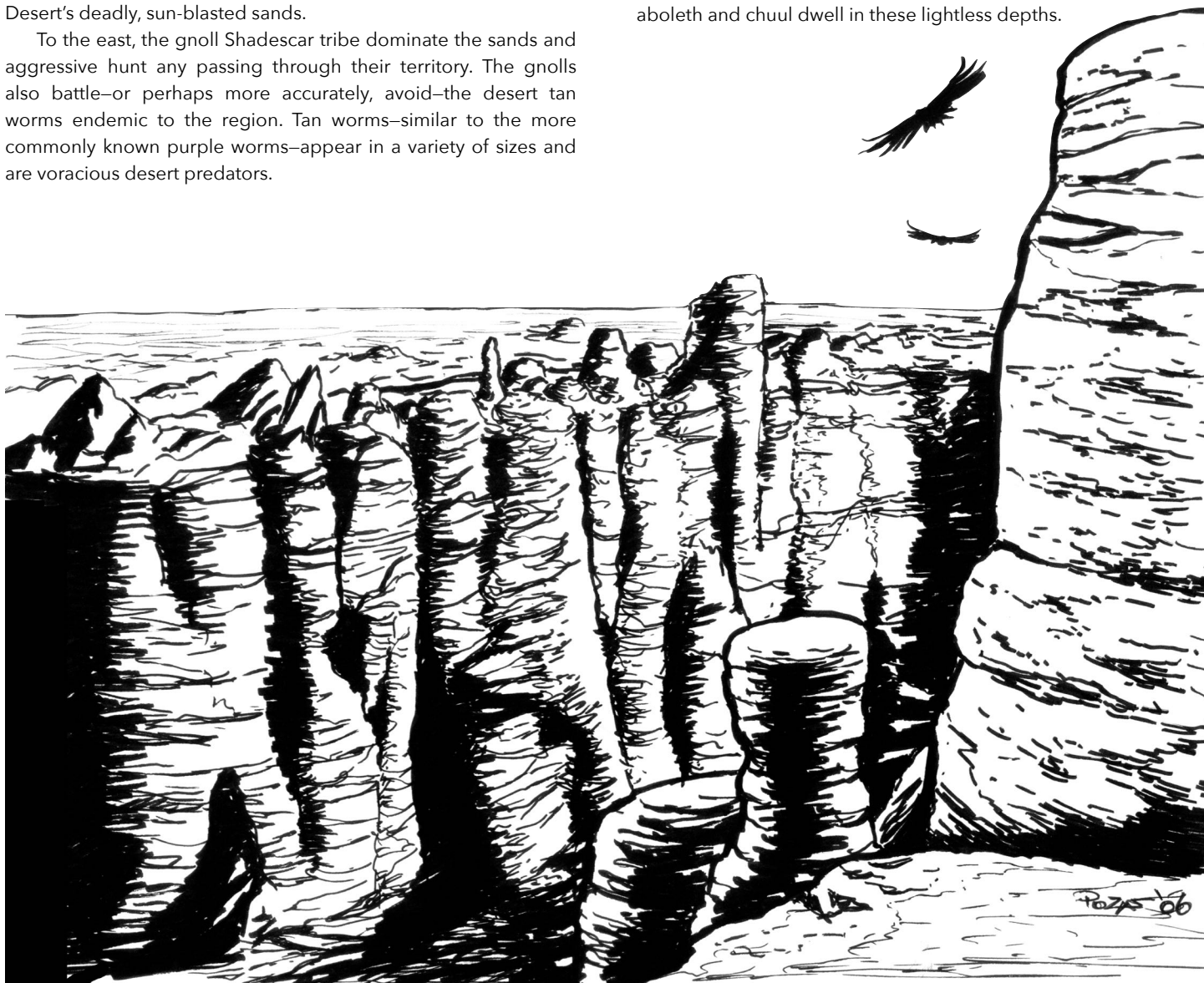
THE ARNAFIQ RIFT

Far below Rifthammer ancient mysteries lurk awaiting discovery. The easiest means to access the deep ancient ruins is by means of the lift (location 11). However, even this marvel of engineering only descends 800 feet.

The lift ends at a tiered pool of water fed by the emergence of an underground river. The pool's runoff cascades over a ledge into even deeper darkness where only the mechanism of the paternoster pump reaches.

Ancient dwarf-cut stairs carved half a millennia ago by the first settlers lead down the remaining mile and a half. The stairs meander downwards through long-forgotten tunnels reclaimed by horrors of the deep, and are dangerous in the extreme.

The worst terrors below Rifthammer lie in the flooded lakes two miles below the village, amid the darkness of the rift floor. Here, the ruins of Senkajor Azhai bristles up from the water's surface like the exposed ribcage of a dead creature. The ancient peoples who lived in this temple-city venerated strange, blasphemous elder gods, and deep denizens such as aboleth and chuul dwell in these lightless depths.



NOTABLE LOCATIONS

1: COUNCIL HALL

Carved into the southern cliff, the Council Hall is Rifthammer's oldest structure. Constructed when dwarven settlers first arrived over a thousand years ago, elaborate reliefs carved from sandstone depicting robed dwarves in scenes of commerce and trade decorated its facade. Their dress is similar to current fashions in the village, but more ostentatious, incorporating far more jewellery than commonly worn today.

Beyond the tall, stone outer doors, the dwarves of Rifthammer fashioned a central hall to be envied by all visiting foreigners. Unfortunately for the people of Rifthammer, time has not been kind to this palatial structure. Once polished marble floors are veined with fissures from settling walls are cracked and once finely wrought moulding has crumbled away. Even the metalworking of the hall's great chandeliers and sconces have corroded from poor maintenance. Ever since the stoneshame struck, care for the hall has dwindled.

At the heart of the hall lies the council chamber; an amphitheatre-style meeting hall with low, tiered steps on which the people of Rifthammer can comfortably gather to discuss the troubles or issues facing the community. In the middle of the round stage the sigil of Rifthammer is inscribed: a double-headed warhammer sundered into two halves. Ionic columns decorated with faded banners and tapestries collect dust, while stonework reliefs in the ceiling depicting the dwarven pantheon in debate are cluttered with cobwebs.

While the hall still sees business on rare occasions, rarely do all the councillors meet together, and even more rarely are the people of Rifthammer invited to these tense arguments and debates. More often than not, the Council Hall stands vacant and dark, a shadow of its once glorious past.

STAYING IN RIFTHAMMER

Rifthammer boasts no (functioning) inn or tavern; such a business would be unsustainable—too few folk visit the village on a regular basis and the dwarves simply socialise in each other's homes or gather at the end of the day on one of the many bridges spanning the Arnafiq Rift.

Visitors may be invited to stay with a particular family (perhaps the Angbannars [location 2]) or could be given the use of one of the settlement's many abandoned homes. Alternatively, travellers are welcome to pitch their tents among the Luminous Desert's softly glowing, ever-moving sands (to do so, though, is not without its own risks).

Wherever visitors to Fithammer stay, the dwarves keep a surreptitious eye on them. Villagers quickly report to Chekorak Angbannar (location 2) or Bijor Fulwern, the captain of the guard (location 7) if the characters seem overly interested in stoneshame and its origins.

2: ANGBANNAR HOME

A modest stone dwelling adjacent to the Council Hall, this five-room, two-storey residence is carved into the cliff face like all other Rifthammer dwellings. It is the home of Senior Councillor Chekorak Angbannar (LN middle-aged male dwarf fighter 3) and his young daughter Ingmir (NE female dwarf thief 2).

Chekorak's wife passed away three years ago from the stoneshame. Since then Chekorak has spent less and less time at home, choosing to occupy himself with obsessing over the challenges facing his community. Ingmir has taken advantage of her father's absence to use his charts and records to plot an expedition into the rift's depths, but has been unable to find others to accompany her on such a dangerous journey.

3: HALL OF THE SIX

Across the chasm from the Council Hall stands the second-oldest structure in the village. Mirroring the Council Hall's construction, the temple features sandstone reliefs of dwarves at work crafting and creating; some work metal at anvils, others weave cloth and even more etch jewellery and carve stone. While the Council Hall depicts commerce, the Hall of the Six depicts industry.

The tall, stone temple doors are locked and no clergy maintains this place of worship.

Inside, the temple is a spacious underground cathedral with a natural stone ceiling contrasting with a smooth marble floor riddled with cracks and fissures from the passage of time. Tapestries depicting the holy symbols of the dwarven gods are moth-eaten and ratty, shrouded in dust and cobwebs from decades of abandonment.

INGMIR ANGBANNAR

NE female dwarf thief 2

Slender and lithe for a dwarf this woman has glimmering black eyes and a short, neatly trimmed beard.

Mannerisms: Ingmir is blessed with the ability to remain completely still for long periods of the time. She is also capable of intense concentration.

Personality: Self-centred, and steeped in grief at her mother's death, Ingmir is frustrated by her fellow dwarves' apathetic acceptance of stoneshame and Rifthammer's slow decline. Driven and determined, she plans to save Rifthammer and rise to rule it in her father's stead.

Background: Ingmir's mother died of stoneshame three years ago. Since then, she has become obsessed with the challenges facing Rifthammer—a community she sees as her rightful inheritance.

Come with Me? Ingmir has been plotting an expedition into the Arnafiq Rift for a year or so, but knows none of her fellow residents will come with her. She tries to get to know the party, and if they seem suitable for her purposes she proposes an expedition—and makes it clear her knowledge of the chasm is critical for the success of such a delve.

At the back of this massive hall of worship lies a white marble altar caked with dust. Dust-wreathed statues of the traditional dwarven pantheon stand behind the altar. The statues depict:

- **Duregal the Highlord, Father of the Dwarves** (LG greater god of dwarves).
- **Dalrak Grimtooth, Lord of War** (LN greater god of war and battle).
- **Khanoss the Miser** (NE greater god of wealth and greed).
- **Thaun the Forgemaster** (N greater god of metal, mountains and mining).
- **Valra the Hearth-Mother** (LG greater goddess of safety, truth and home).
- **Vorngrimm the Trickster** (N [CN] greater god of wealth and luck).

Inset into the altar interlinked adamantine, silver, steel, cold iron and mithral rings symbolise the dwarven gods, joined in a chain of unity in spite of their different compositions. Kneeling in front of that altar is the petrified corpse of Jarniq Arnlor, the last high priest of Rifthammer.

When the stoneshame last came, Jarniq devoted his every waking moment to researching a cure for the disease, but was among the first to die from the illness. Seeing the death of a servant of the gods as an ill omen, the people of Rifthammer left him in the temple where he took his last breath and have kept the place sealed like a tomb ever since. Unless they are cunning and surreptitious, characters poking about the temple are immediately reported to Chekorak Angbannar (location 2) and Bijor Fulwern, the captain of the guard (location 7) who take immediate steps to curtail the characters activities.

STONESHAME DISEASE

The secret of Rifthammer is a virulent supernatural disease emanating from the ruins at the bottom of the Arnafiq Rift. Stoneshame is transmitted by the bites of seemingly harmless insects dwelling in the damp, dark passages miles below Rifthammer. Occasionally, the pump hauls up the water-borne larvae of these insects. These then hatch and briefly live in and around Rifthammer, causing another outbreak of stoneshame.

Stoneshame manifests as patches of rocky growths on infected flesh that eventually results in full-body petrification. Afflicted creatures feel their joints seizing and skin hardening, and eventually become paralysed and suffocate. A creature killed by Stoneshame is petrified. Spells such as *stone to flesh* return the creature to their normal state (and cure them of the disease if cast before death) but do not return them to life (if cast after their death).

- Stoneshame is an acute, terminal disease. Every week, a character suffers from stoneshame they lose 1 point of Dexterity as their skin slowly turns to stone. A character dies, when their Dexterity score drops below 3.

4: FOVEG'S HAMMER

Located down the street from the Hall of the Six (location 3), Foveg's Hammer is Rifthammer's oldest and largest smithy. A large wooden pavilion stands outside displaying Foveg Einhannar's (CN old male dwarf fighter 3) wares during daytime hours. At night, Foveg's apprentices move the wares inside for safe keeping—more out of habit than because they fear theft and the like.

Customers are not permitted inside the smithy, but Foveg brings out the following items for customers to inspect:

- **Magical Arms & Armour:** +1 *chainmail* (3,500 gp), +1 *warhammer* (2,500 gp).
- **Mundane Arms & Armour:** Plate armour (400 gp plus free fitting).

Foveig was once a member of Rifthammer's council. However, after repeated (failed) attempts to convince the council to seek outsiders' help with stoneshame were disregarded he resigned. Foveig knows Chekorak's daughter Ingmir wants to seek answers regarding the stoneshame far below the village in the rift's depths, and has agreed to supply her with weapons and armour. Sadly, he is too old to take such a dangerous journey himself; consequently, he would look kindly on anyone accompanying her.

5: TENDERLANDS

Built on the Arnafiq Rift's south-western face, the Tenderlands are a collection of tiered gardens growing with abundant vegetation, from desert staples like cactus and yucca to more common fare like potatoes and other tubers. The Tenderlands receive the most sunlight of all Rifthammer due to their position and aspect and are the community's lifeblood. Water is brought to the Tenderlands by ancient aqueducts crafted by the original settlers.

FOVEG EINHAMMAR

CN old male dwarf fighter 3

White streaks highlight this old dwarf's beard. His sinewy muscles, though, yet writhe beneath his thin shirt.

Mannerisms: Foveg is quiet and thoughtful. Failing eyesight gives him a permanent squint.

Personality: Age has brought Foveg wisdom and he considers his words and actions carefully—a marked difference to his impulsive youth. (He still makes odd decisions, though; that, at least, hasn't changed with age). Foveg hates stoneshame—he has lost good friends to the disease—and remains frustrated with the council's refusal to seek answers or outside help.

Background: One of Rifthammer's oldest folk, Foveg remembers a time when the village was a bustling place. This saddens him, and also gives him the impetus to help Ingmir Angbannar in her quest to explore the Arnafiq Rift's depths in hopes of finding a permanent solution to stoneshame.

6: QUINAR'S HOME

This modest dwelling built into the cliffside was purchased by the foreigner Quinar Shanmassen (NG male human wizard 5) last year. While not open to the public, Quinar's home is none the less visited frequently by the people of Rifthammer, as he is the only trained physician in the village.

- **Healing Services:** 3 sp per day of long-term care or other treatment.
- **Spellcasting Services:** Up to 3rd-level spells available.

While not a traditional healer, Quinar is a student of wizardry that focuses on lifeforce manipulation; he hates to call himself a necromancer due to the negative connotations of the term. Quinar originally came to Rifthammer to study the medical traditions of the dwarves while mentoring his daughter Antum Shanmassen (NG male human wizard 1) in witchcraft. He decided to stay after forging a friendship with the Angbannar family (location 2) and learning the settlement had no healers. Unfortunately, Quinar probed too deeply into the funerary and burial rites of the Rifthammer dwarves and Chekorak feared he would discover the stoneshame. The wizard was politely asked to leave the councillor's home, but was offered an unoccupied residence nearby.

Many villagers believe Quinar could help discover the source of the stoneshame and (perhaps) a cure. However, the council refuses to share the secret with an outsider, let alone a human and Quinar remains ignorant of the disease (although he knows the dwarves are hiding some great secret from him). Chekorak's daughter Ingmir is considering telling them both the truth, in the hopes they accompany her on her planned expedition into the rift's depths.

7: RIFTHAMMER GARRISON

Designed to house 300 guards, the Rifthammer garrison now only has an active strength of 15 dwarves.

Excess wings of the Rifthammer garrison complex were sealed off as funds to maintain them dried up. Now, more than two-thirds of the complex lies behind locked, iron doors. Rumours persist among the populace that tunnelling monsters have made their way into the garrison and have constructed nests within. Captain of the guard Bijor Fulwern (LN female dwarf fighter 3) rebukes this speculation and rumourmongering, and sees no need to unseal the unused portions of the complex to disprove the rumours.

Bijor runs a tight but understaffed watch which struggles to meet the demands of the village in defending it from threats encroaching from the desert above and the rift below. However, ever since her husband Oreg (NG male dwarf fighter 2) came down with stoneshame a few weeks ago, Bijor has become distracted and desperate to find a way to save him from his fate. She might even look the other way, if visitors seem motivated to cure her husband and discover stoneshame's source.

8: ANIMAL PENS

These iron-gated pens contain domesticated herd animals. The pens are tended to by the same hardy and resilient farmers that have maintained the Tenderlands for generations. The dwarves herd monitor lizards for meat, giant spiders for silk used in textiles and hardy goats for producing milk and cheese.

9: DEEPWELL

Deepwell was constructed by the second generation of settlers, to circumvent the need for dangerous water hauls from the rift's depths. Built over 25 years, Deepwell is a mechanical paternoster pump that uses pulleys and buckets to haul water up from far below. The machine is maintained by an elaborate clockwork mechanism that must be wound daily, but provides clean drinking water for all the people of Rifthammer.

10: ENDRA MINE

The source of Rifthammer's wealth, Endra Mine is named after one of the village's original settlers, Endra Angbannar. This network of ancient tunnels has expanded greatly over the thousand and a half years since Rifthammer's founding, but in smaller and smaller increments as of late. Abundant veins of copper, tin and iron were once mined by industrious workers. With Rifthammer's population dwindling, however, the mines have seen less frequent work and much of the older chambers have fallen to disuse and abandonment. Further complicating matters is poor record keeping from expansions of the mine since the emergence of stoneshame, leaving much of the mine's passages uncharted in modern reckoning.

Most of the older, depleted tunnels have been converted into crypts, and the remains of Rifthammer's dead are secreted away here in the mine's dim, eternal cool. One sealed cavernous vault, hidden behind severally cunning crafted secret doors, contains the statue-like bodies of those slain by stoneshame. Here, far removed from where foreigners might find them, the dwarves' remains have been gathered together like some macabre museum display. No one comes here, except to carefully deposit the remains of a loved one taken by the disease.

11: THE LIFT

Designed at the same time as the Deepwell, Rifthammer's lift is a clockwork mechanism solely powered by hand crank. The sophistication of the gear assembly enables a single creature to crank the lift up to the top of the village and the desert beyond.

The lift's track also allows it to descend deep into the rift to the Deepwell's (location 9) source. Usage of the lift to access the deeper chasm has been forbidden ever since the emergence of stoneshame, however. The lift moves at a maximum speed of 20 ft. a round making the ascent or descent a long journey indeed. (This gives the villagers ample opportunity to spot any explorers' illicit usage of the lift; such use inevitably results in Rifthammer's watch being called out.)

OGL V1.0A

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10 Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12 Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13 Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14 Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15 COPYRIGHT NOTICE: Open Game License v 1.0 ©2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Open Game License v1.0a. Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast Inc.

System Reference Document: ©2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Authors: Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Deities & Demons. ©Raging Swan Press 2019; Author: Creighton Broadhurst.

Village Backdrop: Farrav'n. ©Raging Swan Press 2017; Author: Mike Welham.

Village Backdrop: Rifthammer. ©Raging Swan Press 2020; Author: Creighton Broadhurst and Robert Brookes.

To learn more about the Open Game License, visit wizards.com/d20.

Product Identity: All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, deities, artefacts, places and so on), dialogue, plots, storylines, language, incidents, locations, characters, artwork and trade dress are product identity as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e) and are not Open Content.

Open Content: Except material designated as Product Identity, the contents of *Village Backdrop: Rifthammer* are Open Game Content as defined in the Open Gaming License version 1.0a Section 1(d). No portion of this work other than the material designated as Open Game Content may be reproduced in any form without written permission. The moral right of Creighton Broadhurst and Robert Brookes to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988.



GLOAMHOLD AND ITS SURROUNDINGS



THE SHARD

SHOALSTONE

THE BLACK TOWER

LANGUARD

GLOAMHOLD

SHARD BAY

DUNSTONE

WELLSWOOD

WASHFORD

THE OLD ROAD

THORNHILL

THE SALT MIRE

