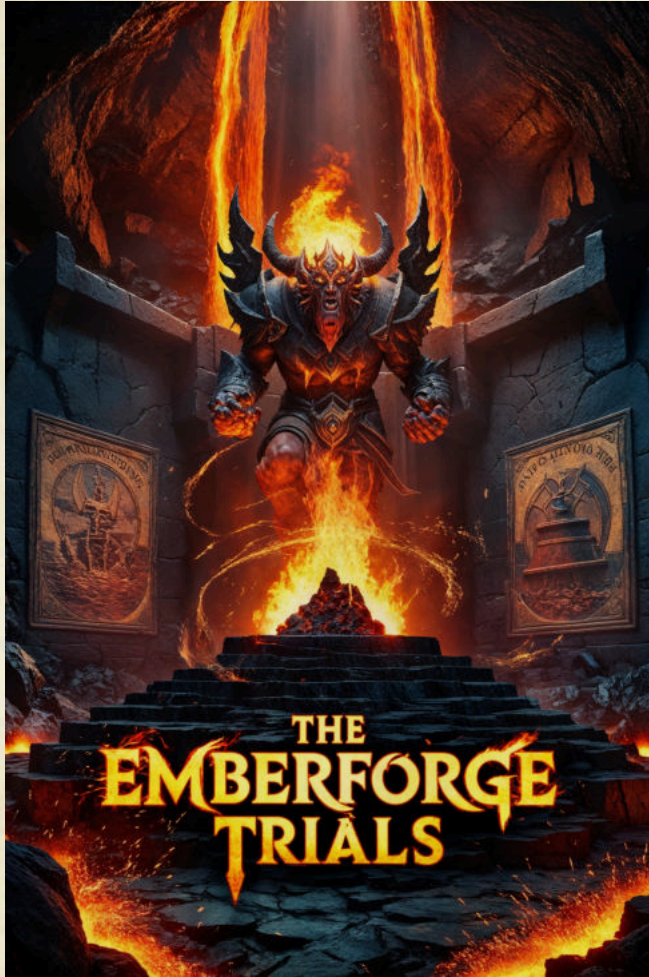


THE EMBERFORGE TRIALS



CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

- **Theme/Genre:** High Fantasy, Mystery, Trial-by-Ordeal Adventure
- **Tone:** Heroic with Mystical Undertones
- **Target Level for Players:** Level 5
- **Expected Duration:** 2 hours
- **Player Focus Preferences:**
 - **Combat:** Medium
 - **Roleplay:** High
 - **Exploration:** Medium

BACKSTORY AND SETTING

WORLD OVERVIEW

The story unfolds in the kingdom of **Mythras Vale**, a vast land where arcane forces shape its history. Long ago, the dwarves of the Emberforge Clan forged powerful magical artifacts from the heat of the Emberforge—a mystical, ever-burning forge said to be blessed by the gods of fire and creation. However, the destruction of their greatest creation led to a curse that decimated their citadel deep within Ashfall Mountain. Now, the Emberforge slumbers, locked behind enchanted trials designed to test the hearts of any who dare to reactivate it.

LOCAL AREA

The adventure begins in **Molgrin's Hollow**, a bustling dwarven mining town set at the base of Ashfall Mountain. Smoke rises from blacksmith forges, and the smell of soot and molten metal lingers in the air. The town is full of tension as workers and artisans grow nervous over recent tremors deep in the mountain—rumors of the Emberforge stirring anew run wild.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Centuries ago, the Emberforge Clan forged the **Flameheart Crown**, an artifact of immense power. This crown was said to channel raw elemental fire, but its sheer destructive force led to its misuse, destroying the clan's citadel. To protect the forge from ever being misused again, the trials were created, ensuring only the worthy could gain entry. For centuries, the Emberforge magic faded into legend... until now.

IMPORTANT NPCs

- **Thaldrin Ironight (Dwarf Priest of Moradin):** A devout follower of the smithing god, Moradin, Thaldrin believes the recent activity of the Emberforge is a divine sign.
 - **Motivation:** Wants to see the forge reignited to restore dwarven prominence in the region.
- **Vayne Coalshade (Human Mercenary):** A charming yet sinister figure who offers “helpful” warnings about entering the mountain—“for a price.”
 - **Motivation:** Secretly working for a noble family that seeks to claim the Emberforge for themselves.
- **Emeris Brightbrand (Dwarven Scholar):** Quirky and scatterbrained researcher obsessed with the Emberforge Trials.
 - **Motivation:** Desires knowledge and personal fame if the party succeeds. She has early schematics hinting at what the trials may entail.

PLOT HOOK

OPENING SCENE

As the party enjoys the warmth of a roaring hearth in the local tavern, the ground trembles beneath them. Loose mugs shake off tables, and the faint sound of grinding stone echoes from deep within the mountain. In the aftermath, Thaldrin Ironight approaches the party in desperation, his heavy boots clattering as he hurriedly speaks:

“Adventurers, you’ve seen it, aye? The mountain stirs—it’s no mere quake. The Emberforge awakens after countless years dormant. We’ve no time; the trials will open soon, and only the worthy can pass through to avert disaster—or claim what lies within. Will you answer the call of your courage and prove yourselves to the forge?”

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Navigate the **Emberforge Trials** within Ashfall Mountain and either reignite the ancient forge or ensure its eternal silence.

KEY LOCATIONS

LOCATION 1: MOLGRIN’S HOLLOW (STARTING AREA)

- **Atmosphere:** Bustling, industrial town tinged by fear and uncertainty. Lanterns shed warm yet flickering light, and the din of hammer on anvil fills the streets.
- **Important NPCs:** Thaldrin (quest-giver), Vayne (shady figure lurking near the tavern), and Emeris (scholar with schematics of the mountain).
- **Encounters:**
 - A group of superstitious miners warns the party about shadowy spirits in the mountain (roleplay opportunity).
 - Vayne attempts to manipulate the party into retrieving “something special” for him as a side deal.

LOCATION 2: THE STONE HALL (INTERMEDIATE TRIAL AREA)

- **Atmosphere:** A cavernous hall with ancient dwarven murals depicting the rise and fall of the Emberforge Clan. A warm orange glow pulses from the walls, and the air grows warmer.
- **Challenge:** A **Trial of Wits and Courage** guards the way forward. The players must solve a puzzle to proceed or face a combat encounter as the room animates magical guardians.
 - **Puzzle:** Tiles on the floor depict a forge-fire sequence (coal, flame, hammer, anvil). Players must step on the tiles in proper sequence to reignite the forge mural.
 - **Hints:** The correct sequence can be deduced from the murals or schematics provided by Emeris.
 - **Combat Alternative:** Animated **Stone Forgeings** (AC 16, HP 40, Weakness: Cold Damage).

LOCATION 3: THE EMBERFORGE HEART (FINAL AREA)

- **Atmosphere:** A sprawling chamber with a massive, dormant forge surrounded by an obsidian dais. Molten lava flows beneath fragile metal grates. The air pulses with heat and magical energy.
- **Challenge:** A fire elemental guardian known as **The Forge Warden** emerges to test the party’s worthiness.
 - **Stats for The Forge Warden:**
 - **AC:** 17
 - **HP:** 125
 - **Abilities:** Multiattack (fire lash, lava spray), Area denial (flaming zones), Fire absorption (immune to fire damage).
 - **Tactics:** The Warden will focus on splitting up players and using environmental hazards to its advantage. Destroying it requires teamwork and agility to avoid falling into the molten flows.

ENCOUNTERS AND CHALLENGES

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

- **Random encounters** in Ashfall Mountain's tunnels:
 - Fire elementals (MM pg. 125)
 - Magma mephits (MM pg. 216)
- **Boss fight:** The Forge Warden (custom stat block above).

ROLEPLAY ENCOUNTERS

- **Wayne Coalshade's Betrayal:** If Wayne is involved, he may try to double-cross the party late in the adventure, bringing mercenaries or attempting to steal forged artifacts.
- **Thaldrin's Dilemma:** Thaldrin may express doubts about reigniting the Emberforge as the likely destruction it caused centuries ago becomes evident.

PUZZLE

The **Trial of Wits and Courage** puzzle mentioned above can be augmented by adding magical flaming scripts that offer cryptic phrases as clues.

CLIMAX AND RESOLUTION

FINAL CHALLENGE

The party must defeat **The Forge Warden** while navigating environmental hazards (falling molten grates, heat exhaustion effects). Once victorious, they are presented with a choice:

1. **Reignite the Forge:** Restore the Emberforge to its former glory, bringing prosperity and power—but with potential for future misuse.
2. **Silence the Flames:** Seal the forge permanently, ensuring its destructive power is never unleashed again.

STAKES OF SUCCESS OR FAILURE

- **Success:** The forge is reignited or sealed, depending on the party's decision. Either choice has far-reaching consequences that may impact Mythras Vale and dwarfkind forever.
- **Failure:** If the party dies or retreats, the Emberforge will destabilize, causing a cataclysmic eruption in Ashfall Mountain, decimating Molgrin's Hollow.

NARRATIVE CONCLUSION

Thaldrin offers prayers of gratitude (or despair), while Emeris eagerly records every detail. If the players reignite the forge, they leave as heroes, but whispers of the forge's potential danger amplify.

REWARDS

LOOT

- **Flameheart Pendant (Rare Magic Item):** Grants immunity to fire damage for one hour per day.
- 500 gp in dwarven gold ingots scavenged from the trials.
- Optional: A piece of Emberforge scrap metal, hinting at future forging potential.

STORY REWARDS

- Honored titles and dwarven reputation within Molgrin's Hollow and beyond.
- Emeris promises to spread their legend through scholarly works.

XP

Standard milestone for Level 5 completion.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

CUSTOM MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

- **The Forge Warden (as above).**
- Animated **Stone Forgelings** (CR 2, appropriate for intermediate combat).

SIMPLE MAPS

- **Molgrin's Hollow:** A simple town map with key landmarks (the tavern, temple, and smithy).
- **Stone Hall:** A circular room with tile traps and murals.
- **Emberforge Heart:** A large rectangular chamber with molten grates and the obsidian forge dais.

PLAYER HANDOUTS

- Dwarven schematics hinting at the puzzle sequence.
- A faded letter from an ancient Emberforge blacksmith warning against reigniting the flames.

ATMOSPHERIC MUSIC

- **Exploration:** "Dwarven Elegy"
- **Combat:** "Battle Drums of the Forge"
- **Mystical Moments:** "Echoes of Emberforge"

This concludes "The Emberforge Trials". May your players find valor in fire and discover the true path of dwarven legacy!