

# ASHEN WASTES SANCTUARY

The Ashen Wastes Sanctuary stands as a crumbling fortress where failing cooling wards threaten to unleash a dormant volcanic entity upon the kingdom. Mutated Cinder Wardens now guard shifting Ash storms that bury corridors, forcing travelers to navigate by thermal currents alone.

## HOOKS & RUMORS

- A scout reports the Ash storms shifting earlier than usual, revealing a hidden path while the Cinder Wardens prepare their final sacrifice ritual deep below.
- Diplomats seek entry to negotiate with the mutated monks before they ignite the core, but the shifting layout makes their location impossible to pinpoint visually.
- A rival faction plans to force open the sealed gates to steal cooling crystals, unaware that the Ash storms will likely bury their assault team alive.
- An old map shows a secret ventilation shaft, yet travelers must rely on feeling heat rather than sight to find it before the layout changes again.

## RANDOM EVENTS (D6)

1	<b>Ash Storm Surge</b>	A sudden wall of hot ash sweeps through the room, reducing visibility to zero and dealing fire damage every round.
2	<b>Cooling Pipe Burst</b>	A massive leak releases scalding steam that fills the area, forcing players to seek high ground or hold their breath.
3	<b>Warden Ritual Flash</b>	The monks' chanting intensifies, causing all flames in the room to flare up and ignite nearby flammable materials instantly.
4	<b>Thermal Current Shift</b>	The direction of warm air currents reverses unexpectedly, throwing off navigation and leading players into dead ends or traps.
5	<b>Magma Seep Leak</b>	Molten rock begins oozing from cracks in the floor, creating hazardous terrain that slows movement and burns footwear.
6	<b>Structural Collapse Warning</b>	A deep rumbling sound echoes through the walls, signaling an imminent ceiling collapse that forces immediate evacuation or cover.

## LOCATIONS

### Ash

Shifted Gateway Glowing embers illuminate swirling gray dust as searing heat warps the air, forcing...

### Soot

Choked Corridor Crumbling basalt walls radiate intense heat that warps vision, while thick ash c...

### Cooling Vent Shaft

Massive copper pipes hiss steam into the stagnant air, creating a blinding white fog that limits...

### Warden Prayer Circle

Stone altars glow with residual heat, casting long shadows where mutated monks meditate in silenc...

### Core Ignition Chamber

Mutated Cinder Wardens chant around a pulsating magma heart, their charred robes flapping in supe...

## ENCOUNTERS (D6)

1	<b>Ash Burial Ambush</b>	-Choked Corridor: A sudden wall of Ash collapses from the ceiling, burying half the corridor and separating the party. Players must dig out trapped allies while avoiding falling debris that deals fire damage on impact. They can trigger a steam vent to clear the Ash or fight through the choking dust blindly.
2	<b>Steam Vent Sabotage</b>	A mutated Warden attempts to overload the cooling pipes, causing explosive bursts of scalding steam across the room. Players can use the rusted platforms for high ground or redirect the steam flow to knock the enemy off balance. Negotiation is possible if they prove they understand the ventilation system's mechanics.
3	<b>Magma Pit Collapse</b>	The floor tiles give way under combat pressure, dropping three party members into a shallow magma pit surrounded by monks. Players must climb out using loose chains while avoiding fire attacks from above. They can seal the pit with stone slabs or use water to cool the lava temporarily.
4	<b>Thermal Current Duel</b>	-Choked Corridor: Two rival Warden factions clash in the narrow hallway, using thermal updrafts to launch fireballs that ignite the Ash clouds. The fighting creates shifting visibility zones where players can hide or strike unseen. They can join one side, sabotage both groups, or slip past while the factions destroy each other.
5	<b>Pipe Pressure Puzzle</b>	A complex system of valves requires precise timing to lower the temperature before the room explodes from pressure buildup. Players must coordinate actions across different platforms while dodging escaping steam jets that deal burn damage. Failure triggers a massive explosion, but success reveals a hidden cache of cooling crystals.
6	<b>Silent Vigil Interruption</b>	The chanting monks enter a trance state, becoming immune to physical attacks but vulnerable to sound-based disruption or water. Players must break their concentration by shattering the stone altars or flooding the room with coolant. Failure results in the monks awakening as enraged fire spirits that pursue relentlessly.

## TREASURE

**Thermal Compass** – This brass device spins wildly in normal air but points directly toward heat sources when held close to skin. Found in the Cooling Vent Shaft, it helps navigate ash storms by detecting safe thermal currents. The compass is cursed: prolonged use causes severe burns on the user's hands unless wrapped in cooling cloth.

**Warden's Charred Robe** – A tattered garment woven from fire-resistant fibers that grants immunity to heat damage for one hour. Recovered from a fallen monk in the Warden Prayer Circle, it smells of burnt hair and ash. The robe slowly disintegrates with each use, eventually crumbling into dust after three activations.

**Cooling Crystal Shard** – A jagged blue crystal that absorbs intense heat when held, creating a small zone of freezing air around the wielder. Hidden behind a loose tile in Soot-Choked Corridor, it can extinguish fires or cool magma pits temporarily. Overuse causes frostbite on the user's grip and may shatter if dropped on hot surfaces.

**Steam Valve Key** – An ornate iron key that opens any locked valve in the sanctuary's ventilation system, redirecting steam flows at will. Stolen from Inquisitor Varrick's quarters, it allows players to create barriers or clear paths instantly. The key is cursed: using it too often causes the user's skin to blister and peel as if burned by steam.

## NPCs

**High Warden Kaelen:** A scarred leader of the Cinder Wardens who believes sacrificing his life will reignite the core and save the kingdom. He offers to guide players through hidden tunnels if they agree to help him reach the Core Ignition Chamber. His fanatical devotion makes him unpredictable, and he may turn hostile if players interfere with his ritual plans.

**Rogue Engineer Tamsin:** A former sanctuary technician who fled after discovering the cooling wards were deliberately sabotaged by a rival faction. She carries blueprints of the ventilation system and can help players bypass traps or disable hazards. She demands payment in rare cooling crystals and warns that Kaelen's plan will destroy everything if executed.

**Ash:** Blind Seer Mire A mutated Warden who lost her sight to ash exposure but perceives thermal currents with supernatural accuracy. She guides travelers through the shifting corridors by interpreting heat patterns in the air. She refuses to fight but will reveal hidden paths or warn of impending ash storms if offered fresh water or food.

**Rival Inquisitor Varrick:** A zealot from a neighboring order who seeks to destroy the volcano entirely, even if it means killing everyone inside. He leads a small squad of mercenaries and offers to buy the party's loyalty with gold and weapons. He will betray them immediately if they show hesitation or attempt to save the sanctuary instead of destroying it.

## PLOT RESOLUTIONS

The adventurers could aid High Warden Kaelen to reignite the core, stabilizing the volcano but condemning the mutated...

The adventurers might follow Rogue Engineer Tamsin's blueprints to sabotage the pipes, cooling the entity but causing...

The adventurers could ally with Rival Inquisitor Varrick to destroy the sanctuary, securing gold while betraying Ash...

The adventurers might use the Thermal Compass to guide the monks away from the core, saving lives but leaving the kin...

The adventurers could trigger a steam explosion in the vent shaft, trapping all factions inside while escaping with c...