

Title and Overview



SCÉNARIO FLASH SHADOWDARK

Forge of Lost Souls

Shadowdark RPG · Level 2-3 · 2-3 hours · English

Where iron still sings with voices that should be long gone.

In the villages among the low hills, locks heat up on their own, forgotten blades tremble in the middle of the night, and the smell of cold ash rises from the wells. Folks say an ancient forge, sealed away after a ritual fire, has begun to breathe again beneath the stone. Something is still at work down there.

The forge was built by Master Azhur Vey, arcanist and weaponsmith, who learned to bind fragments of soul into metal to make blades that could never break. His apprentices ended up nailed to the anvils, his patrons vanished, and the place was buried beneath consecrated rubble. The seal has failed. The PCs go below to recover a stolen weapon, find a missing victim, or stop the magical disturbances before they spread.

- Recommended level: 2-3
- Players: 3-5
- Estimated time: 2-3 hours
- Tone: cursed forge, sacred soot, old-school metal horror
- Play promise: a compact mini-dungeon, supernatural pressure, choices between greed, mercy, and destruction

Immediate hooks

- A noble house offers 150 gp for the return of a stolen family sword, last seen in the hands of a brigand who died three days ago.
- The village smith begs the PCs to stop the phenomenon before every weapon in the militia wakes at once.
- Every fire spell cast in the region now draws whispers in an unknown tongue; a local wizard funds the expedition.
- One PC recognizes on an old sword guard the same maker's mark that has haunted their dreams for the last week.

Hook and Text Map

Read aloud

The service stair drops into impossible heat. The air smells of wet iron, burnt grease, and something sweeter, almost human. Below, a hammer falls somewhere in the darkness at steady intervals, but no living arm lifts it. Every blow rattles your teeth. Faint deep-red gleams slide between the arches as if the forge still breathes beneath the mountain.

GM background

When Azhur Vey realized that good steel held an oath better than any skull, he began sealing dying souls into his alloys. His weapons grew keener and more willful. When those creations finally turned on the workshop, the survivors sealed the forge behind the last quenching wards. Yet the furnace-heart never truly died: it still sustains Azhur's spectral echo and animates the riveted iron workers.

The disturbances come from a cycle restarted by accident. Looters removed a seal-blade from its resting place, reopening the soul conduits. As long as the soul furnace burns, the forge drags metal, magic, and memory toward itself. If the PCs do not end it, ordinary weapons across the region will begin to thirst for blood.

Text map of the forge

- 1. Bellows Descent: an oiled stone stair, motionless hauling chains, dead lamp niches. Two melted helms still hold 14 gp and a black-bronze key.
- 2. Hall of Cold Anvils: six overturned benches, broken tools, scorched silhouettes fixed in soot. Careful search: master tongs worth 25 gp, plus a half-burned journal explaining that one seal-blade is missing.
- 3. Quenching Canal: a green, oily channel crossed by a mesh walkway. Low vapor above it repeats broken words. Falling in deals 1d6 damage and immediately draws the slag leeches.
- 4. Chain Gallery: hanging hoists, rune-bound hooks, unfinished suits of armor dangling like bodies. The crash of sudden movement wakes the riveted sentries.
- 5. Chamber of Soul Quenching: vats of black salt, weapon molds, a copper circle engraved around an altar-anvil. Here wanders Nyra, the last apprentice, bound to the place by remorse.
- 6. Furnace Heart: a vertical furnace split by white-red cracks, the master anvil, an empty rack where the seal-blade once rested. Azhur's echo still commands the constructs here and seeks a new soul to rivet into metal.

Useful details and secrets

- The black-bronze key opens a hidden wall coffer in the Chamber of Soul Quenching; it contains a filter mask, 22 gp, and a consecrated workshop stamp.
- The mesh walkway over the Quenching Canal can be lowered or raised from the Chain Gallery with a winch that still works.
- Nyra knows the furnace can be soothed without battle if a willingly offered weapon is returned to the empty rack and Azhur's stamp is broken in the living coals.
- Any non-magical weapon left for one minute beside the Furnace Heart takes on a red sheen and whispers a temptation tailored to its bearer.

Encounters, Creatures, and Treasure

Encounters

- Iron workers: 2d4 small constructs still hammer invisible plates in the Hall of Cold Anvils. They ignore the PCs until the first sharp noise, bright light, or stolen tool.
- Slag leeches: in the Quenching Canal, these gleaming things swim beneath the oily film and leap toward the warmth of blood.
- Nyra the Bound: the ghost of an apprentice covered in forge burns, lucid only in flashes. She wants her master's work destroyed, but fears she too will be consumed if the furnace dies.
- Riveted sentry: an empty heavy suit of armor descends from the chains in the Gallery if anyone cuts a hoist, shouts, or tries to carry off a weapon forged here.
- Echo of Azhur Vey: in the Furnace Heart, the master smith is now only a charcoal silhouette veined with embers. He bargains first. He promises power, answers, or perfect steel to anyone who offers him a name, a memory, or a soul.

Shadowdark creatures

- Iron worker: AC 13, HP 8, MV near, ATK hammerlet +2 (1d6). Special: riveted shell, reduces non-magical slashing damage by 1; if two workers strike the same target in the same round, the target must pass a DC 11 STR check or fall prone.
- Slag leech: AC 12, HP 5, MV near swim, ATK bite +3 (1d4). Special: on a hit, the target also takes 1 fire damage at the start of its next turn; a torch or immersion in clear water drives them off.
- Riveted sentry: AC 15, HP 18, MV near, ATK chain mace +4 (1d8) or hook launch +3 (1d6). Special: runic magnet, once per combat it pulls a wielded metal weapon to itself from near range; the bearer must pass a DC 13 STR check or drop the weapon.
- Echo of Azhur Vey: AC 14, HP 22, MV near levitate, ATK ember hands +4 (1d6) or forge command +4. Special: forge command, instead of dealing damage, Azhur animates an inert metal weapon or tool within near range so it attacks at once with +3 (1d6); if the sacred stamp is broken in the furnace, Azhur takes 1d8 damage and loses this ability for 1d4 rounds.

NPCs and entities

- Nyra, last apprentice: she first appears as a reflection in polished metal, then as a charred young woman in a burnt leather apron. Motivation: free the trapped souls without letting Azhur choose a new bearer. Secret: she was the one who stole the seal-blade before her death, hoping to doom the forge forever.
- Boren the Lost: a badly wounded looter hiding beneath a workbench in the Hall of Cold Anvils. Motivation: get out alive with his share. Secret: he sold the seal-blade to a fence in the village, but the weapon walked away on its own in the night and returned to the Furnace Heart.

Trap and obstacle

- The central drop hammer: a hidden pressure plate before the altar-anvil triggers a heavy suspended hammer. DC 13 DEX check to avoid it; failure: 2d6 damage and the target is pinned beneath chains until passing a DC 12 STR check. The mechanism can be jammed with an iron bar, triggered at range, or used against the riveted sentry.

- The quenching choice: to extinguish the Furnace Heart without blowing it apart, the PCs must pour oil, black salt, and quenching water into the coals while placing a willing blade on the empty rack. Without this sequence, any brutal attempt at destruction causes a backlash: everyone in the room takes 1d8 damage and every ordinary metal weapon becomes unstable for 24 hours.

Treasure

- Seal-Blade of the Faithful Ashes: magical longsword. While drawn, its bearer can sense constructs, secret doors, and metal-bound enchantments within near range. Once per day, on a successful hit, it can deal +1d6 fire or necrotic damage, bearer chooses. Curse: at each dawn after it shed blood the previous day, pass a DC 12 WIS check or hear the muffled pleas of the bound souls all day, suffering disadvantage on the next concentration check or spellcasting test involving silence.
- Wall coffer: 22 gp, 3 smoky agates worth 10 gp each, a filter mask granting advantage on the next check against smoke, vapors, or forge dust.
- Azhur's master tools: worth 90 gp if sold together to an armorer or occultist; if consecrated and melted down, they end the forge's lingering minor influence over the village.

Endings, Follow-Up, and Credits

Possible endings

- Cold-ash ending: the PCs perform the proper quenching sequence, break Azhur's stamp, and let Nyra guide the souls into silence. The constructs collapse. The region is saved, but weapons forged here become highly sought after by collectors and cults.
- Banked-ember ending: the PCs seize the Seal-Blade or bargain with Azhur's echo to carry the forge within themselves as a spiritual brand. The furnace falls quiet for a time, but every rare weapon they meet later may recognize their scent and try to serve them or possess them.

Hooks for what comes next

- The fence who first bought the seal-blade was only a middleman for a brotherhood of occult duelists who collect inhabited weapons.
- In the cooled slag of the Furnace Heart appears an incomplete map leading to a second site: a liturgical arsenal where other souls were socketed into suits of war armor.

ORC license and compatibility

- Compatible with Shadowdark.
- Independent third-party product designed for Shadowdark RPG, with no official affiliation to The Arcane Library.
- This scenario is published for the MythCore line within an ORC-compatible publishing framework; adapt the final legal notice to the PDF layout and the line's distribution requirements.

Credits

- Design and text: AITTIA Studio
- Line direction: MythCore
- Editorial line: Flash Shadowdark Scenarios

Notes for the illustrator

- Cover: immense underground forge split into the rock, central furnace blazing, hanging chains, adventurer silhouettes in backlight, shower of sparks, and faint faces visible in the metal.
- Interior 1: Hall of Cold Anvils, ruined workbenches, small riveted iron workers laboring in the soot, burned journal lying open, yellow torchlight against the red glow of distant embers.
- Interior 2: dark green Quenching Canal with mesh walkway, low vapor forming incomplete mouths, riveted sentry descending from the chains in the background.
- Finale: altar-anvil before a vertical furnace, Azhur's spectral echo made of charcoal and embers, translucent Nyra beside him, glowing seal-blade on an empty rack.

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