

The Dark Ember trials have been the only way for adventurers and aspiring heroes to be chosen to enter the Ember Vault. It is rumoured that those who are worthy are selected to enter the caverns beneath the City of Mylos known as the Ember Vault and there at the end of the dark caverns waits a being that will grant any wish that the requestor, if worthy, has. However, not just anyone can enter into these games and often the lords of Mylos will hand select people from their own houses to take part in the games as a way of ensuring that the ambitions of the houses are put forth as wishes of the potential victor. But not all houses play fair and the party is thrown into the mix by the way of an unknown sponsor whose ambitions and desires bode poorly for Mylos.

**DM:** (One of the nobles has discovered that the wishes granted are limited and that those who wish for it will be tempted towards releasing the creature bound, an Efreeti. Once unbound it will rise up and destroy the city and those responsible for the games.)

The party had made their way to Mylos for the ember games, a multi-day contest where the noble houses of Mylos pit their best warriors against each other at the hopes of receiving the prize at the end of the vault, an unlimited wish.

At the Inn that they were staying at for the night, the Dusky Mule, the party entered in a game of chance with and by a stroke of luck they won prime seats to the Ember Games, near the front of the arena. The following day the chorus of celebration coming from the Arena reached their lodgings and they made their way to the arena for a full day of competition.

**DM:** (The ticket winning was rigged, they were chosen to attend by the noble; the villain of the story, and have been set up.)

Shortly after sitting down in their seats the party hears their names be called down to the arena. In shock from hearing their names called, they stood in the seats they had won earlier that day. The Ember Vault games were the talk of the town, and this year's nominees were rumoured to be the best yet.

However, by some twist of fate or sheer luck, they found themselves nominated to participate in the games. As they moved forward, the crowd parted and whispered. It was rare for a party not affiliated with one of the great houses of Mylos to be nominated, and even rarer for the sponsor to be the mad-king, who hadn't had a coherent thought in decades - but it was by his name that they had been nominated, chosen by the ember games itself as it were.

Standing before the announcer, a short man, he examined them and conferred with a peer. He announced that they were chosen to compete at the Dark Ember Arena for their own sake, not for a lord. He explained the rules: three tests over several rounds, with points awarded based on strength, wits, or skill. The group closest to sixty points would be anointed the Ember Champions and allowed into the labyrinth below. If there was no clear winner, the geass would decide, and its decision was final.

**DM:** (The party can contest the decision but they have the rules explained to them. Their name has been entered into the games and a Geass will ensure they compete for the honour of their sponsor, the king. The Geass will take a fee upon those who conduct themselves in dishonour.)

The party had the games explained to them and realised that, looking at all but one of the competing teams they had the best chance, if not the only chance of succeeding in the games.

Many of the competitors were experienced house warriors or mercenaries but as they watched them compete they were nothing compared to their own strength and experience. The first competition was testing accuracy and lethality on the battlefield where each team had a single member take down illusionary targets with a ranged weapon of their choice before their direct competitor takes out more. Several competitors produced bolts of flame or

launched arrows or bolts.

**DM:** (Here one of likely contenders of the cup, Lord Voiron's Chosen, refer to 433TuNoAn, 'accidently' strikes down one of the competitors from lord

Plero's own team who had wandered onto the field when forbidden to do so. This team is the direct competitor to the party and it means that the party scores highly this round with no competition. Lord Plero had bewitched his own man and made him enter the arena to guarantee that the party would make it to the final rounds.)

The next four rounds experienced similar accidents and were based on.

1. Navigating a trapped corridor,
2. Cracking a magical lodestone that is resistant to all damage but magical.
3. Obstacle course.
4. 1 on 1 combat with training blades,

Each participant must go once and no more than twice each.

After each round the groups were judged and scored magically by the geass over the arena. The party experienced a balanced score each round, not perfect but high enough to become second over all. However, Voiron's group of warriors ended up only dropping ten points over the course of the competition. As the arena was cheering for the victory over the favourites the geass started to re-score, the parties score moving to be a perfect sixty out of sixty points. The host and games master was beset with calls to overrule the geass. However, the geass had already set three burning diamonds of energy above the head of the party nominating them as the only ones able to open the door to the vault and enter. The nobles however declared that Lord Voiron's warriors were to enter with the party and that they were both declared winners.

The roar of the crowd died down as the party

travelled deeper into the vault and its dark walls; they became increasingly aware of how close the other warriors from the house of Voiron where to them. After an hour of travelling through the twisting tunnels the party realised that the others were no longer following them.

Their location was quickly revealed as several arrows whistled past them.

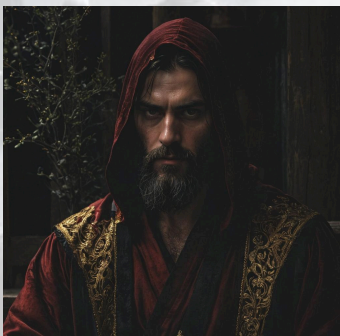
**DM:** (The Voiron's warriors attacking would be a **low to moderate challenge** encounter with a similar number of creatures to the party. Several of Voiron's warriors use poisoned weapons and are experts in stealth. Refer to 433FrEnITVa)

The further the party delved deeper the hotter it got and the signs of those warriors and those, the embers anointed that had been lost a long time ago. But as they walked down a hallway the heat started to rise and the remains of these lost warriors and adventurers could be found along the walls. Slowly, the burnt skeletons of the deceased stood and with unnatural energies they shambled towards the party.

**DM:** (A **very trivial encounter**, all of them die nearly instantly but they are immune to fire damage as their bones appear to be embers as they trudge towards the party. Several of them have three faint motes of burning diamonds hovering above their skeletal heads. The previous Embers Anointed. Refer to 433FrEnITVa)

The party moved deeper down the tunnel and eventually came to a cavern where the source of heat could be seen. A well of lava moved dozens of feet below them and the cavern they found themselves in was hewn from sharp yet rough obsidian. The obsidian platforms were nearly as hard to walk on as they were to get onto. At the end of the platforms an obsidian throne stood with a large gem that appeared as if it was made from lava itself. A figure swirled in the depths of the stone as if waiting to be released.

**DM:** (Refer to map on next page, see also 433ThEmVa, the creature is a trapped efreeti who will ask for freedom so he can take vengeance against those who have locked him down here. He will offer them one wish however the magic that binds him means that whatever they wish will go to their master. In this case Lord Plero - but the efreeti doesn't know who they are. The Party can elect to fight it, but it is very powerful (an **extremely hard challenge**), Refer to 433FrEnITVa for guidance. If they free the creature with the wish, then the room will cease being filled with Lava, cooling down over a day or so, and they are left alone in the vault.)





The Ember Games - 433SuEmGa

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