

Gem-Doomed Burningtown

[\[The Day After Ragnarok\]](#)

City: Burningtown, North Carolina

Population: 8,000

Controls: Not even itself.

Government: Squatters

Problem: Unrest

Heroic Opportunity: Trade Goods

City Aspect: Red in tooth and claw.

Before the Serpentfall Burningtown wasn't even really a place; it was a part of Franklin, North Carolina. Not much happened there. Even the end of the world seemed to pass the area by. The survivors of the Serpentfall kept close and kept going, as best they can.

But in 1947 a former miner went missing -- and came back out of the night six weeks later, with a backpack full of sapphires and a mind full of madness. Before he died, he told his neighbors about lost underground Cherokee cities and horned serpents crawling through the living rock, leaving gemstones behind. They never found the cave and the city where the madman said the gems came from,

but they **did** find new seams of sapphires and rubies in the older mines.

Despite the locals' best efforts, a gem rush was soon on. Thousands of people from all over the Poisoned Lands came boiling into Burningtown Creek, looking for enough gems to go to, well, anywhere else but the Poisoned Lands. The original settlers were soon displaced; some died, some disappeared, more than a few exploited the newcomers enough to escape themselves, and some joined in the gem-soaked madness themselves. Every mine, every half-abandoned seam, every stream and rivulet now has its prospectors; and the Burnington shantytown in the middle of it all grows ever-larger.

Burningtown has no law; not even the one that its inhabitants brought with them. But it does have gems. The seams are rich with sapphires of all colors, and rubies with unique flecks of serpentine green. Every night, men gather in the streets to shout, kill, and revel over the day's finds. It is said that so many rubies have been ground into Burningtown's streets that they have taken a reddish hue. Others say that the color is from the spilled blood.

Every faction in North America that can reach North Carolina has an agent near Burningtown. Not **in**; near.

Many people have learned, to their cost, that Burningtown is a good place to catch the gem madness.

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