

TEMPLE OF THE FALSE GOD

AN ADVENTURE FOR 3RD TO 5TH LEVEL CHARACTERS



DEEP IN THE TROPICAL FORESTS ON THE southern tip of the continent, an isolated tribe of lizardfolk dedicate their daily lives to the worship of Cihua, the Serpentine Goddess. It is said that she is the one who poisons the waters of the surrounding marshes and wetlands, forcing away all but the most degenerate and hardy of creatures, and provides fresh, clean water only to those who serve in her name. That the lizardfolk are able to survive here at all is proof of her divine intervention, and those who suffer from the poisoned water are rightly punished as non-believers. The true origins of the temple are a mystery, for it was not built by the lizardfolk. They merely stumbled upon it in the oppressive wilderness, and subsequently answered the call of the divine. However, the lizardfolk have been deceived, for it is not Cihua who speaks to them, but an ancient naga deity who seeks to control them. What is clear is that the temple's influence fouls the land. How long the temple has existed, or by whom it was created, is unknown.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- The players stumble upon the ancient temple while adventuring through the jungle.
- A nearby tribe or civilization knows the temple is the source of corruption and hires the adventurers to take care of it.
- A wealthy noble has heard rumors of the treasure said to be contained within and wishes for the adventurers to retrieve it for them.

OVERVIEW

The temple is constructed of hewn limestone; covered in moss and damp from the humidity. There are no light sources within the temple, shrouding its interior in total darkness. Unless otherwise stated, ceilings are seven feet high and hallways are ten feet wide. Doors are carved from large stone slabs and swing outwards on their hinges. Mold growing within the temple gives the air the smell of must and rotting wood. The occasional dripping of water echoes throughout its chambers, falling from seams in the stone above.

A. GUARDED GATES

The temple itself is surrounded by a wall of solid stone, 10 feet high and topped with sharpened spikes. Characters can climb over the wall with a successful DC 18 (Strength) Athletics check or an equivalent (Dexterity) Acrobatics check. A creature who makes a failed attempt to climb over the wall takes 2d6 piercing damage on the spikes above,

but then lands on the other side. In front of the temple, a steep stone staircase rises to a pair of iron gates set into the wall that serve as the primary point of entry. These gates are defended by **two lizardfolk spirit-speaker guards**, who diligently stand watch and work in eight-hour shifts, then rotate with their replacements from the nearby lizardfolk village.

The lizardfolk spirit-speaker guards use **priest** statistics, with the following modifications:

- Their AC is 15
- They use their claws instead of a mace to attack, gaining a +4 bonus to hit on their melee weapon attack rolls and dealing 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage on a hit.

B. THE DESCENT

Stone staircases lead up the angular facade of the temple towards the only interior access point: a 10-square-foot hole at its apex. The drop from the hole to the surface of the pool below in Area C is 40 feet.

C. SACRIFICIAL POOL

Skeletal remains fill an 8-foot deep pool recessed into the stone floor of this square room. To the south, a set of stone double doors are carved to depict a monstrous snake ripping out the hearts of various humanoid sacrifices. To the east & west, water flows from the pool through 1-inch spaced steel grates, that lead to the exterior. In each of the room's four corners, four large bowls are mounted on stone plinths.

Characters who succeed on a DC 10 (Intelligence) Investigation check notice small, linear grooves carved in the floor that lead from each bowl and meet under the stone doors to the south. Filling each bowl with water from the pool triggers a hydraulic mechanism that opens the doors. They can otherwise be broken through; a section of the door large enough to fit through has an AC of 17 and 27 hitpoints. Any attempt to damage the doors animates **six skeletons** from the remains scattered under the water. Characters who search the remains find nothing of value; sacrifices were stripped before being slaughtered and thrown into the temple.

The doors open into a short hallway, where water from the pool is carried through a trench in the floor to Area D.

D. TURNTABLES

Empty braziers made to resemble clawed talons mount the walls of this octagonal room. Short, carved trenches in the floor abut three closed stone doors that lead to the west, south, and east. Nine stone turntables are set flush with the floor tiling, and are themselves recessed with carved trenches that are consistent with those near the doors.

Turntables. Each turntable bears the carving of a snakehead and has been installed with a lever that juts outward from the floor, allowing it to be rotated. The turntables can be rotated to "lock" into place in ninety-degree increments — rotating the turntables in the appropriate pattern allows water to flow from the trench in the northern hallway towards any of the three doors in the room. To open a door, the turntables must be rotated so that the snakehead carved into each turntable faces the direction of the door to be opened, which

will align the trenches and allow the water to trigger the corresponding hydraulic system.

E. SPIRIT IDOL

A 15-foot deep, 10-foot long pit runs horizontally from wall-to-wall in this room. Across from the pit on a narrow stone platform, a golden idol carved to resemble a coiled, snarling snake is flanked by two ever-burning torches.

Crushing Walls. Any character that climbs into the pit immediately activates the pressure-sensitive crushing walls to the east and west of the room, which begin to rapidly advance inward, powered by a series of levers. To climb out of the pit unassisted, characters must make a successful DC 15 (Strength) Athletics check, or take 3d8 bludgeoning damage from the walls before they narrowly escape to safety. Once the walls have collapsed inward, characters can navigate around them to continue forward to the idol beyond. Characters with a passive Perception of 14 or higher notice a **secret door leading to Area X** previously hidden behind the east wall. The walls eventually return to place after 2d4 minutes.

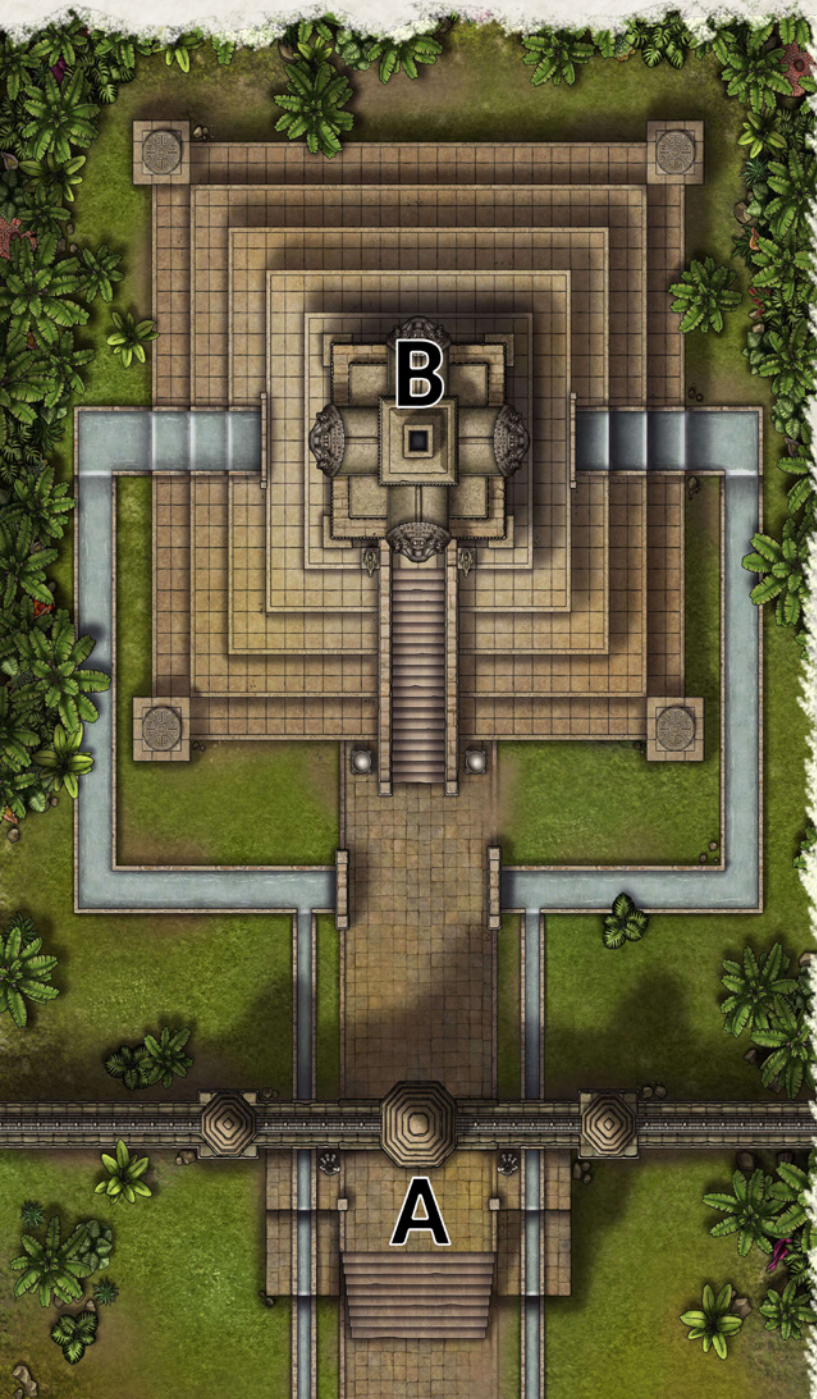
Approaching the stone platform upon which the idol rests summons the spirit bound to protect it. The spirit takes the form an orc, dressed in a decorated robe and wielding a gnarled wooden staff. "*Who dares defile our place of worship?*" he asks menacingly. The spirit does not immediately attack the party, and may communicate any or all of the following information if the characters choose to indulge it:

- The spirit is what remains of an ancient orcish clan, long lost to history.
- They worshipped an entity they called Xoher, a minor naga deity who purified their water and poisoned their enemies.
- They built the temple in Xoher's name.
- Xoher now manipulates the lizardfolk, drawing strength from their worship so that she may recover the power she once had.

Unless the characters can convince the spirit of their deference to Xoher with a successful DC 18 (Charisma) Persuasion check, it will attack (use **ghost** statistics). Under no circumstances does it allow them to remove the idol, which is made of solid gold and worth 1000 gp.

X. SECRET ROOM

This small room holds a locked chest made of iron, etched with Orcish script that reads "*Glory be to Xoher*". The lock can be smashed open with a DC 18 (Strength) Athletics check or a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Inside the chest is 150 gp worth of gems and precious metals, as well as a *Periapt of Health*.



F. EAST HALLWAY

This corridor ascends from south to north. Relief carvings of orcs in acts of worship to a giant snake decorate the walls. Characters who succeed on a DC 13 (Wisdom) Perception check notice a series of pressure plates just a few feet beyond the doorway. These plates activate the advancing spike wall, described below. Characters can disarm the trap by taking five minutes to wedge the plates with pitons or shims. Doing so requires a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

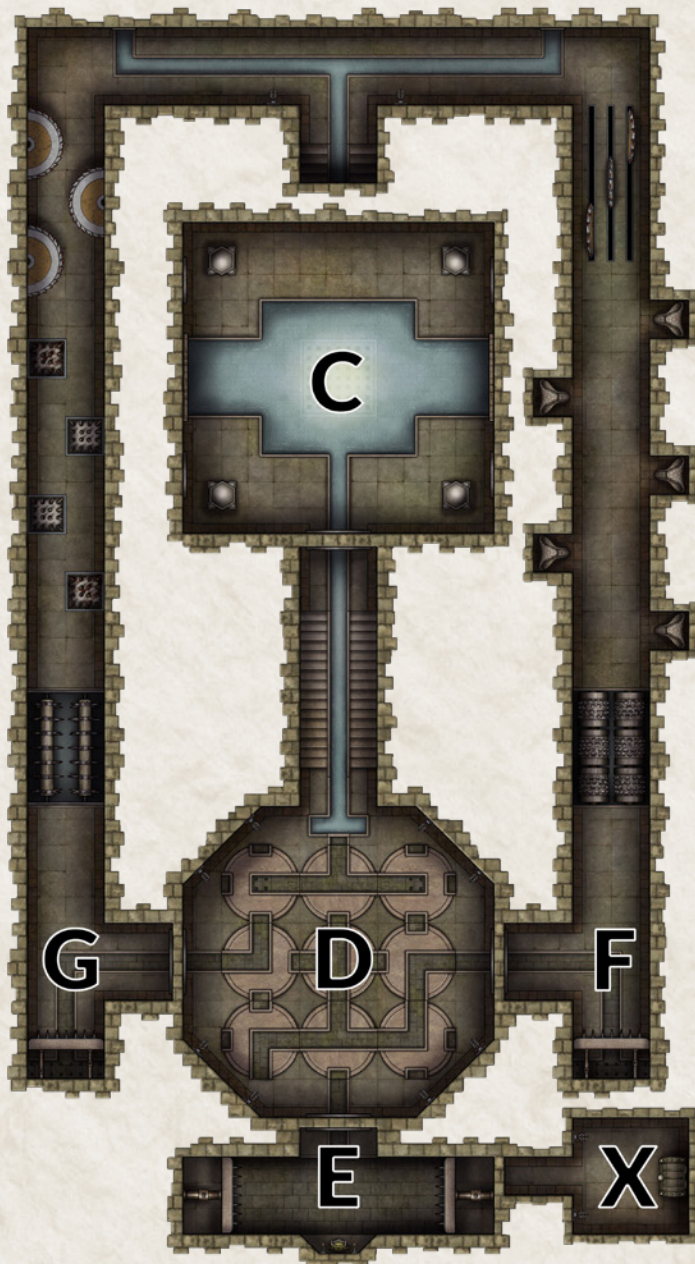
Advancing Spike Wall. A spike wall, concealed by a false wall in front of it, lies at the southern end of this hallway. If triggered by the pressure plates, a mechanism retracts the false wall and pushes the spikes forward at a rapid pace. When this occurs, anyone who has a passive Perception

score of 12 or lower is surprised. Everyone rolls initiative, including the wall, which has a +5 bonus to the roll. On its turn, the wall moves 60 feet. Anyone in its path must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 3d10 piercing damage and have a 50 percent chance to drop anything they are carrying in hand. The wall ultimately meets the northern end of the hallway, where it stays for 2d10 minutes before the lever mechanism that controls it retracts it back into place.

Grindwheels. A false floor tile conceals rolling grindwheels kept moving by flowing water below the temple. Characters with a passive Perception of 12 or higher can notice the false tile and move around it. A passive Perception of 15 or higher is required to notice the false tile if characters are fleeing from the spike wall. Characters who trigger the grindwheels must succeed a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 3d6 points of bludgeoning damage. Characters fleeing from the spike wall make this check with disadvantage.

Flame Statues. Statues resembling snakeheads are recessed into the walls of this corridor, belching flame at those who pass in front of them. Characters with a passive Perception of 12 or higher can notice the smell of oil in the air and avoid the flame by crouching forward. A passive Perception of 15 or higher is required to notice the oil if characters are fleeing from the spike wall. Characters who trigger the statues must succeed a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 3d6 points of fire damage. Characters fleeing from the spike wall make this check with disadvantage.

Floor Blades. Blades powered by hydraulic systems slice upwards from grooves carved into the floor. Characters with a passive Perception of 12 or higher can notice these grooves and move around them. A passive Perception of 15 or higher is required to notice the grooves if the characters are fleeing from the spike wall. Characters who trigger the blades must succeed a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 3d6 points of slashing damage. Characters fleeing from the spike wall make this check with disadvantage.



G. WEST HALLWAY

The false wall to the south has crumbled partially, revealing the spike wall behind. Pressure plates here are identical to those in Area F.

Advancing Spike Wall. This spike wall, though revealed through the crumbled false wall in front of it, functions identically to the spike wall in Area F.

Grindwheels. These grindwheels function identically to those in Area F, though their mechanisms have degraded over time, causing them to deal only 3d4 points of bludgeoning damage.

Pit Traps. Spiked pit traps, 10-foot deep, have been hidden beneath false floor tiles. Characters with a passive Perception of 15 or higher can notice the false tiles and move around them. A passive Perception of 15 or higher is required to

notice the grooves if the characters are fleeing from the spike wall. Characters who walk over the pits must succeed a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 3d6 points of piercing damage. Characters fleeing from the spike wall make this check with disadvantage.

Wall Blades. These wall blades function similarly to the floor blades in Area F.

H. ASPECT OF XOHER

A stone staircase leads down from the hallway above into a rectangular chamber that holds a large pool of water at its southern end. Three spigots, carved to resemble snakeheads, are mounted on a stone pillar in the middle of the northern end of the room; water flows from the spigots down into floor trenches and towards the pool. A stone dais rises from the water, on top of which is a 10-foot tall statue of a poised serpent.

A stone platform extends from the northern end of the room to the stone dais, submerged one foot under the water. Travel on this platform is treated as difficult terrain. The pool itself is 20 feet deep. When the characters approach the pool, an aspect of Xohar herself, a **ghost naga**, manifests. "You are brave to disturb a god", she says. Xohar is a naga minor-deity who has been greatly weakened in power after the eradication of her original orcish followers. Given her weakened state, she is genuinely worried that the characters may be able to destroy her aspect and eliminate her influence in the region. She does not immediately attack, and instead offers that they immediately leave the temple and never return in exchange for her **Blessing of the Serpent**.

BLESSING OF THE SERPENT

Characters granted this blessing are bestowed a serpentine quickness, receiving a permanent +2 bonus to initiative rolls. This blessing only lasts as long as Xohar maintains her influence in the world.

If combat breaks out, **four poisonous snakes** emerge from the pool of water and aid Xohar in battle. On Xohar's first turn, she summons forth a cascade of water from the snakehead pillar as a bonus action. Characters standing between the pillar and Xohar must succeed a DC 12 Strength saving throw or take 1d8 points of bludgeoning damage and be thrust into the pool by the force of the flow.

Characters who search the room with a successful DC 15 (Wisdom) Perception check discover a secret door behind the statue that leads to Area Y.

Y. HIDDEN ALCOVE

Light from ever-burning torches dances off the treasure scattered in this room. Ceremonial urns, chests, and lockboxes are piled against the walls. A skeletal figure lies slumped against a near wall, clad in religious garb. Against the far wall, a gleaming trident rests on a stone altar.

The skeleton is what remains of an orc priest who was entombed in the temple as a sacrifice to mark the end of its construction. To calculate the treasure in this room, roll on the 0-4 CR Treasure Hoard table on page 137 of the DMG.

Worshipper's Trident. This trident acts as a +1 weapon and allows its wielder to cast Poison Spray as a bonus action a number of times per day equal to their proficiency bonus.



GHOST NAGA

Large undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 61 (8d10 + 17)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Abyssal, Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The naga can see 60 ft. into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The naga can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Spellcasting. The naga is a 5th-level spellcaster that needs only verbal components to cast its spells. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The naga has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mending, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

First Level (4 slots): *command, false life*

Second Level (3 slots): *hold person, blindness/deafness*

Third Level (3 slots): *bestow curse, hypnotic pattern*

ACTIONS

Spectral Fangs. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) psychic damage plus 6 (2d6) poison damage.

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