

TEMPLE OF THE OPAL GODDESS



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The Temple of the Opal Goddess is a dungeon crawl adventure for 4-6 characters of levels 5-8 (Tier 2).

Background

Millennia ago a powerful highborn woman, Lady Lashpera, fell into the trap that so many nobles do. Living a life of indolent luxury, she wasted her youth on shallow pursuits; social prestige, vapid parties and romantic trysts. As Lashpera grew older, and her energy and enthusiasm waned, she began to dream the fanciful dream of eternal life. Fanciful for most, but with practically unlimited wealth and time and resources only such wealth can buy, she began to seek out wizards, witches, seers and academics – anyone who might actually be able to direct her to a fabled fountain of youth. Though she spend years in the pursuit, suffering setbacks and failures – some which almost cost both her fortune and her life – she finally stumbled onto enough clues that connected, however obliquely, to suggest that an ancient temple once held the key to something called “Vitae aeternus sine mortem” which she translated as “Life eternal without death”. The various texts, tomes, scrolls, carvings and scraps had vastly more information that could (and should) have been translated, but after long years she was growing old, and her impatience got the better of her.

Expendng the last of her wealth she commissioned an expedition to this lost temple. One by one her followers fell to the hazards along the journey, not least of which were the temple's nightmarish guardians. Finally deep underground, alone and injured, Lashpera discovered the chamber that held the secret of the temple – an opalescent gemstone that glowed with potent magic. Seizing it in her bloody hands she rejoiced – her blood unlocking the stone's power. Then she screamed! The magic coursed through her, suffusing her, and turning her body to living opal, with the gem embedded in her left palm. She had become immortal, but she was no longer flesh and blood. Worse still, the gem did not restore her looks, so she became a fixed statue of her current state, a bedraggled and sunken woman in her late middle age, scarred and unlovely. She lost her mind at that point. She spent many years wandering the lands in a rage, destroying as she went. First travellers and isolated cottages or hunting lodges, but soon she plagued the nearby towns. Militia were sought to slay ‘the beast’, but no weapons could harm her, and she slew or routed all opposition with her opalescent claws. In time she tired, and Lashpera the Immortal, Lashpera the Bitter, returned to her temple to brood.

As the years passed barbaric tribes began to filter in, their hedge witches and medicine folk leaving her tributes. Bored, and a little lonely, she allowed this, occasionally gracing such givers with curses or praise. Soon, they began to seek her out for favour or advice. Some she destroyed, but others she indulged, mostly at a whim. What started as a barbaric placation eventually grew into a cult, and the tribes began ranging out, pillaging and plundering to bring tribute to their “goddess”.

Eventually warriors of justice came to oppose the terrible evils in the land, as the righteous are wont to do. Paladins, priests and mighty mages came and drove back and destroyed the savage cult, delving deep into Lashpera's temple. Unlike those in the past, these opponents brought enchanted weapons that could harm her, and in the depths a great battle was fought as the Opal Goddess clashed with the forces of light. Eventually, the last knight standing thrust his blade through her hand, cleaving the Opal and shattering the sword. With the opal destroyed, Lashpera's soul was cast from its vessel, and the bitter immortal finally died.

However, for all the evil she had committed in life, and her unliving existence thereafter, Lashpera had come to the attention of the Demon Princes of the Abyss. She was a powerful soul who might become a powerful demon – given time and the right ‘encouragement’. Though several sought her, it was Fraz Urb'luu, Prince of Mischief and Misdirection, that snatched her up and spirited her away from under the noses of the others. For the next several centuries, under the attentions of the Prince and his selected trainers, she was shaped into a demon of power and cunning. Lashpera was beautiful, as she desired in life, and though she became a favoured servant, she chafed under the brutal rule of her prince and secretly sought ways to be free of him.

In time, she recalled much of her former mortal existence, and surmised that if she could reconnect with the Opal she might once again harness its power. It might even be enough to break free and reclaim her own destiny. She allowed her name to be carried to the mortal realm by lesser demons, where any number of foolish wizards might summon her. Sure enough, in only a few scant years a would-be diabolist did just that, and she appeared to do his bidding. Biding her time, she slowly mislead and misdirected her master into researching the location of the ancient temple, then when she had enough information, tricked him into a situation from which her could not escape. With his death she became free to walk the mortal world. She hastened to her temple, only to discover to her chagrin that within several miles of the location she became weakened and feeble. So weak in fact, that she was barely a shade more potent than a mere mortal woman. She had no explanation for this, and her worry grew. Near the temple she discovered that a fortress had been carved into the earth itself, populated by degenerate humanoids. In her weakened state she knew she could not win through, so she retreated to plan.

Taking on a mortal guise was a simple trick, so she infiltrated a scholarly institute – a large coastal castle the mortals called Candlekeep – posing as a student (going by Lira), to try to determine the extent of the years and the history of the temple since she'd been gone. Wading through the often unflattering accounts of her time as ruler of the temple, she discovered that the last survivor of the conflict – the knight that slew her – had remained and erected a small monastery outside the temple as

a way of guarding the dangerous ruins. Several generations of monks watched over the temple, but eventually moved on when the lands became infested with aggressive humanoid tribes. The accounts suggested that several tribes held the area for centuries before being overrun by a powerful human cult, dedicated – ironically she felt – to her and her resurrection. The sketchy accounts suggested the cult dwelled in the temple only a short time before at some point appeared to simply vanish, almost overnight. The complex lay abandoned until a few years ago, where hunters stumbled onto it inhabited by a tribe of Orcs. They left the creatures to their own devices and moved on. The accounts ceased there.

Lashpera was now more determined than before to discover the changes wrought in ‘her’ temple. Why was it weakening her? What connection did she have to it? Could this mysterious effect be used against her, or could she use it to empower herself if she mastered it? What happened to her Cultists? Why did they vanish?

Lashpera had learned from her previous failures, both those as a mortal, and those in the Abyss, where failure resulted in harsh and prolonged punishment. She researched the temple before it was hers, discovering not only what she learned the first time, but information that might have saved her had she the patience in life. The Temple was originally dedicated to a long forgotten Mulhorandi deity of earth called Geb. This particular temple seemed to attribute Geb’s works to include the preservation of ancient species for all time by setting bones to stone and preserving through fossilisation, to ‘give lost species life everlasting beyond death’. She vaguely recalled skeletons in the temple from her time as a mortal, but her memories were hazy. Frustrated, and burning with a deep, smouldering anger and resentment, she set a plan in motion to reclaim that which was hers.

It was not too difficult to find a nobleman that met her needs. Young and idealistic, just knowledgeable enough to be useful (but not so knowledgeable to be sceptical), a reputation as a learned man (more cultivated than factual), eager for fame that adventure brings, and the wealth that comes with it, Antivar Ravengard (nephew of Grand Duke Ulder Ravengard of Baldur’s Gate) suited her purposes. Seducing the young lord was easy, and convincing him to patronize an ‘archaeological expedition’ to reclaim this lost temple was easier still. Thoughts of glory and wealth overcame any good sense he might have possessed.

Several weeks ago the expedition set out, soldiers, servants, scholars and the young noble and his student lover. They set out with the fanfare of a carnival, and it was this disregard that ultimately ended their campaign. Ambushed in sight of the temple by the cunning orc forces, the troupe was slaughtered, save for the nobleman and a few servants (including Lashpera). Realizing the value of Antivar as a prisoner, the orc chief

dispatched one roughed up servant to Baldur’s Gate with a ransom demand.

Ulder Ravengard received this demand, but finds himself in a difficult position politically. He can’t very well send the Flaming Fist out to rescue one of his little known errant nephews without being scrutinised for personal misuse of the mercenaries, nor can he ‘hire’ them himself. He also cannot pay the ransom for fear of looking weak or capitulating, as it might damage the reputation of the Flaming Fist or destabilise his leadership position. His best course of action is to quietly hire some adventurers to ‘manage’ the situation out of the public eye.

Meanwhile, Lashpera, who could not resist effectively in her weakened state, and is yet unwilling to expose herself when she might turn things to her advantage, is trying to play both sides. While holding to her paramour and encouraging him to wait on rescue, she is making herself and her knowledge of the temple available to the chieftain’s shaman advisor in the hopes she can convince the orcs to take her deeper into the complex. The orcs are resistant, fearing the creature in the depths, but are being slowly swayed by this ‘scholar’s’ stories of power for the taking.

Why is Lashpera Weak?

In the depths of the temple, the opalescent statue of Lashpera’s body remains where she was slain all those centuries ago. It is inactive, yet still linked to the demoness. As Lashpera’s new demonic form approaches her old, vitality is being transferred to the Opal form, her soul now being shared by both. As the demon grows weaker, the Opal Avatar begins to stir from its death-like state. More information on this can be found in the relevant statblocks in Appendix 2.

In the temple below, the Archivist – a Gebite scholar turned Lashpera worshipper – watches with interest as his mistress slowly regains the vestiges of life. He is not fully aware of the significance or connection of ‘Lira’ in the clutches of the orcs above, but he knows something is happening, and plans to assist to bring it to fruition, so that his goddess might live again.

Hook

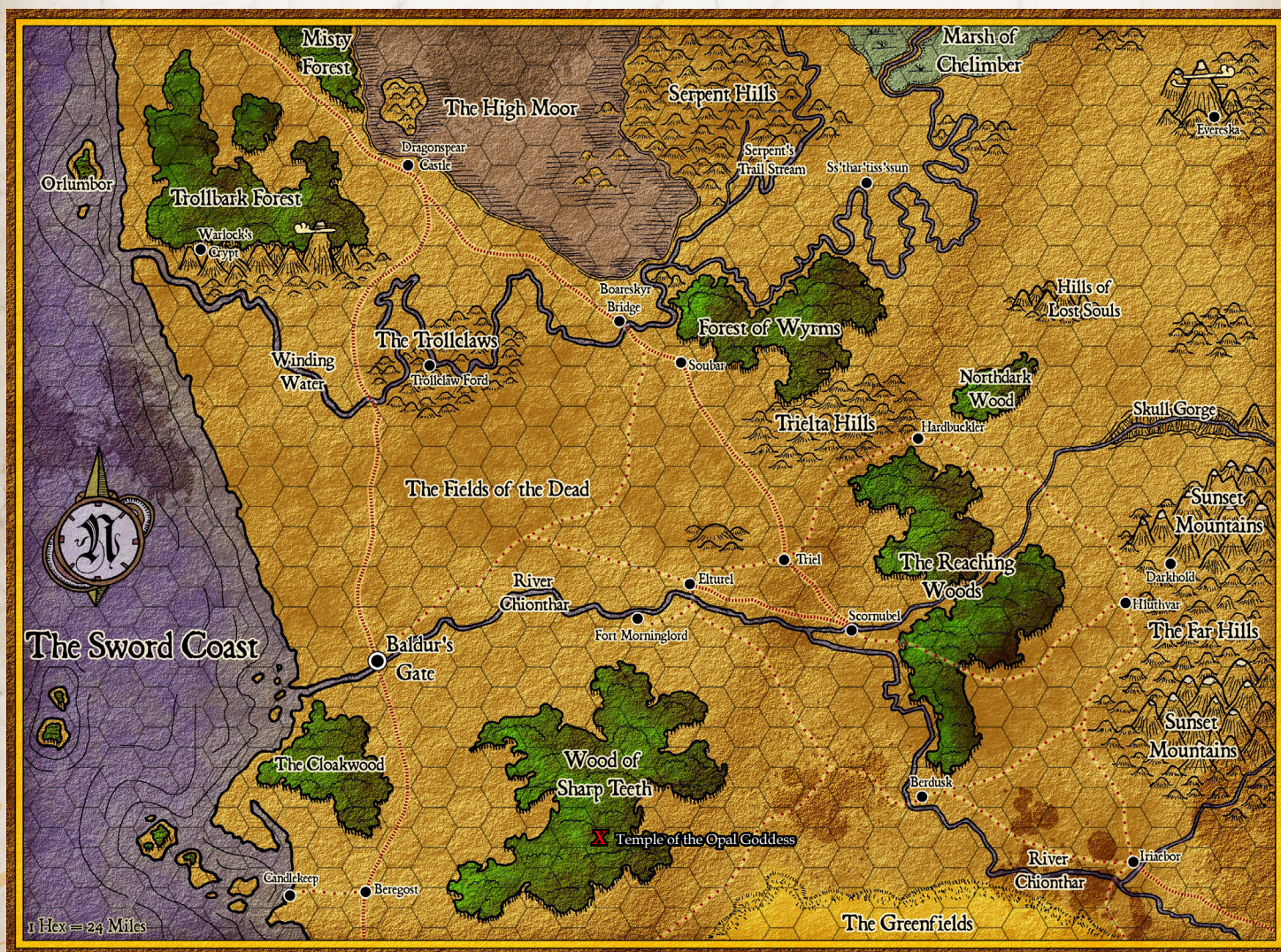
The PCs are contacted through associates or the Adventurer’s Guild in Baldur’s Gate (or further afield if the DM wishes – Ulder is powerful and has a long reach) concerning a rescue mission.

Antivar’s expedition was well known, as it set off amid much fanfare and pageantry. While the destination was not as clearly divulged, Ulder has access to Antivar’s various notes, plans and schedules (such an undertaking required much preparation) as well as accounts from his house servants. There are enough scraps there to offer the following;

- An 'approximate' map to the temple location. Precision is not guaranteed, but there are enough landmarks to consider it accurate.
- The temple was dedicated to a cult of a creature known as the Opal Goddess. Centuries ago this creature ravaged the lands surrounding the temple, but was eventually slain by adventurers, one of whom founded a monastery near the site.
- A couple of decades ago a new cult of the Opal Goddess rose in the temple and abandoned monastery, but strangely seemed to vanish without trace. Since then it's rumoured that the ruins are inhabited by humanoid tribes.
- Antivar's expedition was ambushed near the site by orc warriors, and Antivar and a few retainers and scholars were taken captive. The orc chieftain - Grushnak the Grim - has issued a ransom demand of 10,000 gold pieces and 100

battleaxes of the finest steel to be delivered for Antivar's safe return (the last provided by the messenger sent with Grushnak's demand). The orcs identify themselves as the Tribe of the Troll Claw, but this tribe is not particularly well known in the area.

This information, along with descriptions of the expedition are provided to adventurers that are willing to undertake the rescue. The primary reward is 1,000 gold for Antivar's safe return, with secondary rewards of 100 gold for Grushnak's head, 100 gold per retainer rescued (there were 6 remaining when the messenger was sent), and 1 gold per orc ear presented. The secondary rewards can only be claimed with either Antivar's rescue or evidence of his death. The rewards can be claimed at the Flaming Fist Headquarters in Baldur's Gate.



Research

While PCs are provided with everything they need to set out by the contract, they may wish to do their own research before they go forth.

With the exception of magical divination (which the DM should adjudicate as they will – possibly providing information from the selection below), there are several ways to get relevant information.

The DM may see fit to add any other information that they deem relevant.

Folklore – This option relies on the local lore and stories passed along amongst the common folk. Characters attempting to gather information in this way seek out local storytellers, bards, amateur historians and general gossips among the shops and taverns of the city. A **Charisma (Persuasion)** check may reveal the following information upon reaching the requisite DCs. For every 10gp spent on drinks, meals, trinket purchases and/or tips for performers characters may add +1 to their checks.

DC 10 – Antivar was ‘inspired’ to this archaeological expedition through his current lover, a pretty scholar by the name of Lira. Rumour suggests they met when he visited Candlekeep recently. Her influence on him was profound.

DC 15 – Antivar showed some small interest in history prior to now, but Lira’s passion for it spurred him to this endeavour. It’s not only for his lover’s favour however. Antivar is an ambitious nobleman who lives in the shadow of his famous uncle, and seeks to build his own reputation.

DC 20 – While the temple might have historical significance, it is also rumoured to have great wealth too. A servant overheard Lira and Antivar talking, and it was said that the cult used to bring their goddess treasure as tribute, and that the goddess possessed a magical gem. It is likely Antivar is in it as much for the treasure as anything else.

Academic and Arcane Study – This option involves PCs delving into structured libraries and repositories of lore. Baldur’s gate (and other cities) has a public library, and several academic organisations or private collections. An **Intelligence (Arcana)** or **Intelligence (History)** check may reveal the following information upon reaching the requisite DCs. For every 10gp spent on gratuities or donations characters may add +1 to their checks. If the PCs travel to and access the library at Candlekeep they gain *advantage* to the check, however unless they already have acquired access previously, a donation on a unique book of lore is required to obtain access. The DM should determine if the PCs have (or can create) such a donation, or at their discretion may allow the PCs to purchase a unique book of lore in Baldur’s Gate (whose merchants are well aware of Candlekeep’s requirements and may stock a few rare books) at

between 50-200gp.

DC 10 – The Opal Goddess was the focus of a cult that venerated her as much for her destructive and vengeful nature as her power. Vague written accounts from cultists suggest her skin was made of living opal, impervious to mortal weapons, and she could blast her enemies with bolts of arcane energy from her hands and rend them with stony claws.

DC 15 – The Temple of the Opal Goddess was believed to have strange magical properties. Though never directly associated with her religion, rumours persist that deep in the bowels of her temple strange calcified creatures moved in darkness, and that if one were to remain their long enough, the calcification process might begin to overtake living creatures.

DC 20 – Very sketchy research suggests that there may be some connection between the temple and a source of eternal life. While much of this is rumour, hint or implication, it appears in one form or another in numerous ancient texts, the persisting corroboration suggesting there might be some truth to it even with the lack of detail.

Religious History – This means of inquiry involves the PCs delving into the histories and archives of their own religion or the religions of the region. Unlike the academic research above, most religions tend to collect information as pertains to the workings of their (and other) churches rather than general arcana or history. The PCs can access church libraries, or question archivists or acolytes to obtain relevant information. An **Intelligence (Religion)** check may reveal the following information upon reaching the requisite DCs. For every 10gp spent on tithes (or bribes) they may add +1 to their checks. If the PCs are lucky enough to have a Cleric or Paladin of Tyr (see below), or of a church that has a significant presence in Baldur’s Gate (or their locale if elsewhere) they gain *advantage* to their check. Official churches of significance in Baldur’s Gate include Gond, Umberlee and Tymora, while the faiths of Helm, Ilmater, Lathander and Oghma maintain shrines. The DM may determine any others.

DC 10 – The Temple of the Opal Goddess was a focus for a decadent cult that venerated capricious destruction. The Cult has two known periods of emergence – around 2000 years ago is the first recorded appearance, and the cult resembled little more than a band of tribal savages that scoured the lands. Around 20 years ago there was a resurgence, and in this case the cult was far more sophisticated and organised, almost like a structured religion. The two incarnations seem incongruous with each other except they venerate the same figure – the Opal Goddess. The Opal Goddess herself is unlikely to be an actual deity, but might instead have been a powerful monster or fiend.

DC 15 – The initial cult was destroyed by a force assembled from goodly religions of the day. There is some debate about which participated, but it is likely Tyr or a power associated

with justice was one of the religions. The monastery set up in the wake of the cult's demise was at least in part devoted to the principle of justice.

DC 20 - The paladin that founded the monastery carried a broken sword - a relic of the age that is suggested to have been sundered fighting the Opal Goddess. The sword was never recovered, and disappears from records after that time. It is possible it is still in the temple or monastery.

The Journey

The journey from Baldur's Gate is some 10 days by foot on the most direct route, accounting for the forest being *Difficult Terrain*. The early journey itself is mostly irrelevant to the adventure, and DMs can expand on or summarize as they please.

The temple itself is located deep in the Wood of Sharp Teeth, several days off the nearest road, where the wilds hold sway and cultured races do not venture. There are a few local orc and goblin tribes, but most are small and insignificant. The Tribe of the Troll Claw are the only tribe of note, and only because they are organized enough to have taken and held territory (the temple) whilst the other tribes are essentially nomadic. The reputation of the Troll Claw tribe does not extend past the region, so the PCs will not have heard of them.

The local wildlife includes some herd animals such as deer and bison, wild pigs and the occasional bear. Rabbits, birds and other small animals are plentiful. PCs might encounter the odd solitary monstrous predator. If using encounters, the DM should describe the plentiful flora and fauna, noting that the untamed wilds abound with life. Encounters should be checked for every 4 hours on the table below.

Encounter Table

Roll Encounter Description
(1d20)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1-12 No encounter of significance. The wilds teem with wildlife however, so PCs experience evidence of this as a minor event;</p> <p>1. Birds swooping playfully, chasing each other through the trees</p> <p>2. Hawks or owls hunting small animal life on the ground, diving with sharp precision.</p> <p>3. Mice, squirrels or other small mammals skittering through the brush</p> <p>4. Frogs clustered on fallen logs, croaking out in a chorus</p> <p>5. A swarm of harmless butterflies flitting in a lazy cloud of colourful wings.</p> <p>6. A swarm of ants 'reclaiming' a dead animal, creating an undulating ribbon through the undergrowth.</p> <p>7. A huge red and black python slowly sliding through</p> | <p>tree branches, head swivelling and tongue tasting the air</p> <p>8. An unusual flower or hanging plant with sweet smelling fragrance or bright colouration.</p> <p>9. Fish slipping through shallow ponds or creeks, momentary flashes of silver near the surface.</p> <p>10. Buzzing insects that persistently bother characters and horses alike with incessant droning and the occasional bite.</p> <p>11. The snapping of dried sticks and leaves as several deer bound by, on a parallel course around a hundred yards away.</p> <p>12. The low grunt and rustle of plants as a small, shaggy boar roots around for grubs in the dirt.</p> <p>13</p> |
|---|---|

- 13 **Strolling Bear** - With brown fur greying at the edges, and bone spurs splitting with great age, a huge **Dire Bear** ambles completely uncaring into the midst of the party, growling low and snuffling, but decidedly with an indifferent warning rather than aggressiveness. It will merely continue on if not attacked, simply reminding the PCs contemptuously that it 'owns' this range. However, if the PCs are carrying any fresh fruit or herbs (such as a herbalists kit), it will stop and casually tear open packs or saddlebags to reach and then eat these 'treats' before moving on.
- 14 **Deadly Pool** - The trail the PCs are following passes into a depression and through a small clear pool of water before continuing up a rise. Allow the PCs are Wisdom (Perception) check (or use passive Perception) vs DC 15 to realise that there is an odd silence in the immediate area, as if no wildlife is within 20 feet or so - an strange 'dead' patch in the otherwise verdant surrounds. The pool is actually a Clear Ooze (a variant **Grey Ooze** that appears as water rather than stone) that lies in wait until prey steps in or over it before springing its ambush. After the ooze is slain a search of the undergrowth in the area shows hundreds of small animal bones.

- 15 **Peach Tree** - In a particularly pleasant grove in the wilderness, the PCs come across a lone peach tree. Anyone with proficiency in the **Nature** skill can instantly tell that peach trees are not native to this area. Otherwise though, it seems perfectly normal, and animals and birds flit around it like any other tree. There are around a dozen or so ripe peaches on the tree, and about 2 dozen unripe ones. The tree is actually an **Awakened Tree**, brought to like many years ago by a lonely druid. When the druid passed away the tree began to wander the wilderness. It is of average intelligence and speaks common. It is currently dozing, however, and doesn't immediately react to the PCs presence. If anyone picks a fruit (or

otherwise makes contact with the tree) it snaps awake and gives any thieves a smart rap on the head with a branch (or two). It is perfectly content to converse in a slow, boring way (unless the PCs love to hear about trees, soil, sunlight and squirrels). It knows nothing (and cares nothing) about any of the elements of the adventure. If asked, it will give the PCs one peach apiece, but not if they tried to 'steal' them. The peaches are perfectly normal fruit.

16 **Orc Scouts** – The Tribe of the Troll Claw have not become the dominant tribe in the area through carelessness or stupidity. They are expecting a contingent of humans, maybe to pay the ransom, or maybe to attack. Several scout pairs have been sent out to watch for travellers, and report back if they are envoys or assault forces. Two **Orc Scouts** watch this trail from concealed positions. DC 16 Perception (passive) checks are needed to spot these watchers. They will spot the PCs with a passive Perception of 15. If unseen, or if spotted and left alone, they will not challenge the PCs, but instead circle around and back to the temple directly, potentially putting the tribe on alert for intruders (See the Temple – **Sounding the Alarm** - below).

17 **Snares & Pits** – The Tribe of the Troll Claw hunt for sport, but systematic trapping is far more effective for feeding the tribe consistently. Scouts check each trap every 1d6 hours. If the PCs roll up this encounter, they stumble across one of these in one of several states (Roll 1d4);

1. **Simple Spike Pit Trap** – A 10 foot deep pit filled with spikes and concealed with underbrush. A DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) to spot before standing on it, anyone doing so falls 10 feet (1d6 bludgeoning damage) onto sharpened wooden stakes (1d6 piercing damage).
2. **Noose Trap** – A tensioned noose concealed in the undergrowth designed to tighten around a limb and hang the catch high in the air (away from predators). A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot it. Once triggered the catch is raised 20 feet into the air, hanging (usually upside down) from a single trapped limb. PCs caught must make DC 13 Dexterity checks to hold onto items in their hands (else they are dropped). The rope can be severed easily by any blade, but a 20 foot fall awaits (2d6 bludgeoning damage) those that fail to take precautions.
3. **Noose Trap – Triggered**. The PCs hear some thrashing, bleating and a strange hooting growl before they see the actual trap. In a

small clearing a deer has been hooked and hung by a noose 20 feet in the air. Its leg is broken and it's bleating in pain. Below it an **Owlbear** claws and calls in frustration. If presented with other targets for its rage (such as PCs) it attacks.

4. **Pit Trap – Triggered and Occupied**. A pit with statistics above, only open and visible to any nearby (Automatically seen). The first time the PCs encounter an open pit, it has the corpse of a goblin scout in it. The scout has a single *arrow of lesser slaying (Orc)* in its quiver of otherwise unremarkable arrows. Similar to an arrow of slaying but less powerful, the arrow deals an additional 3d10 piercing damage to an orc target, with a DC 14 Constitution saving throw to halve damage. Any subsequent open pits have the corpses of deer or boar in them.

18 **Shy Dryad** – in a relatively quiet clearing near a brook, a **dryad** named Nyma lives with a large family of squirrels in a small willow. The Dryad remains hidden near the base of the tree, but either a DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) or a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) will allow characters to filter enough small clues to recognise the unusual situation for what it is (ie a strangely shaped 'shrub' near the base of the willow that would not survive the lack of direct sunlight, the calm nature of the squirrel group in a tree not noted for such inhabitants, and an overly large number against a fairly aggressive predator/prey ratio etc.). The dryad is shy, but protective of her 'babies'. If approached in a genuine and unthreatening manner, Nyma may warm enough to the PCs to hold a guarded conversation. She can direct them to the temple, give them rough numbers of the orc tribe (12-15 warriors and an equal number of women and young). She can even tell them that the tribe has a shaman, and recount the tale of Brulgurt the troll (below) and where to find him (she knows his hunting grounds). She knows of the Awakened Peach tree, but will not disclose its existence or location. If the PCs have previously stolen from or injured the tree she will not interact with them at all, preferring to flee and return later.

19 **Quickling Race** – three **quicklings** are undertaking a race through the woods to determine who is the fastest amongst them (they are all equal). The PCs are likely to initially see them only as a series of blurs across the undergrowth. However, they will quickly abandon this for the chance to harass the 'trespassers' in their woods. The quicklings will

skirmish, steal and harry the PCs or animals, using the undergrowth as **cover** from missile fire and not allow themselves to get bogged down in melee. If the tide turns against them, or one or more of them are slain, the remaining quicklings try to lead the PCs into pits and snares, or into local monsters or orc scouts.

Aggressive Troll - A massive troll - **Brulgurt** - lumbers through the woods, seeking prey. The troll is fire scarred and is missing its left hand. In its place the troll has lashed a series of sharpened animal ribs that act as a makeshift claw. In the unlikely event the PCs calm the aggressive creature and converse with it (impossible if any of the PCs are Orcs or Half Orcs), they can discover that it is named Brulgurt, and has an undying hatred of orcs, particularly a local clan that severed his claw and burned the stump so it would never regrow. It was severed by big orc with a flaming axe. The tribe now use his claw as some kind of totem. The Tribe of the Troll Claw are the tribe residing in the Temple, and if the PCs indicate their intent to destroy the tribe they may be able to convince the Troll to ally with them. Of course, Brulgurt is stubborn, aggressive, loud, smelly, will not follow instructions or orders, is prone to turning on allies and will ruin any hopes of stealth infiltration.

The Tribe of the Troll Claw

The Tribe of the Troll Claw is only a small clan, but has risen to dominance in the area. This is primarily down to three factors - A powerful shaman, a canny warleader and a chief who is intelligent enough to manage the two to advantage so that neither becomes a threat to his position. Grushnak the Grim is a cunning chieftain, and his tribe has prospered because of it. He is intelligent enough to recognise opportunity, and wise enough to keep a fine balance in his tribe. His warleader - Velkesh - is a tactical animal, and a disciple of Ilneval. Grushnak gives him the freedom to plan various raids and sorties, and the troops to accomplish them. Velkesh is kept occupied, and the victories are attributed to Grushnak in the eyes of the tribe. Suthrain is a mystic, obsessed with the secrets of the spirits and the 'Vision of Grumsh'. Grushnak indulges the shaman, often having Velkesh plan raids on sites or tribes that have objects or artefacts that she covets. In turn Suthrain supports Grushnak, proclaiming him amongst Grumsh's favoured few. Armed with tactics and magic the Tribe of the Troll Claw have vanquished larger tribes or monsters, thus reinforcing their trust and belief in Grushnak's status. The tribe has flourished this way for many years.

However two things currently threaten this existence. The first is the temple. On Suthrain's desire, and Grushnak's command, the core of the tribe moved here 3 seasons ago (9 months), clearing out and taking over the place. Too small to house the

whole tribe, several outer camps of scouts were established as a perimeter. The remainder of the tribe settled into the upper levels, while Suthrain sought to explore the lower levels. The shaman was chased out by a terrifying serpent of stone, and though it cannot (or has not) breached the upper level, the tribe remains nervous about it and any other horrors the lower levels might contain. Resentment is growing about remaining in the temple. Suthrain has leveraged her support of Grushnak on remaining in the temple until she can figure out a method to destroy or evade the beast.

Secondly is the arrival of the human explorers, and what they might represent. Velkesh recognised Antivar's heraldry, and his connections and worth, but also the risk at angering Balduur's Gate. The ransom scheme was a gambit to make them seem a larger and more menacing opponent (the tribe does not need nor could really use 100 battleaxes) to buy themselves time. Scouts have been sent to spy on the city, looking for large troop movements or Flaming Fist contingents (and thus the PCs will actually slip the scouts notice initially). Added to this is the presence of 'Lira' the scholar. Suthrain has taken a liking to her, and the scholar's knowledge of the temple. Tensions within the tribe are rising as the shaman voices plans of entering the lower levels once more.

Temple of the Opal Goddess

Features

The temple is almost entirely underground, dark except where lit by torches (no natural light except the exits and Area 36).

In both the upper and lower levels most of the passages are 10 feet high and rooms 15 feet high (except where stated otherwise). In the upper level the doors are all iron bound wood, though none have locks. In the lower level the doors are all stone, but again a generally unlocked, though tough to open.

Inhabitants

The upper temple is inhabited by the Tribe of the Troll Claw which consist of 22 **Orc Warriors** (spread between the temple and monastery), 12 **Orcs**, 12 **Orc Younglings**, 6 **Wardogs**, **Suthrain** the shaman, **Velkesh** the warleader and the chieftain **Grushnak**. There are also 7 prisoners - including **Antivar**, his **Retainers** and **Lira** (temple stablocks start on page 32).

Outside the temple grounds there are another 24 **Orc Scouts** in total in various patrols, camps and extended missions, though most of these are not in the vicinity of the temple at the time of this adventure. Some may encounter the PCs passing through the woods, and some can be recalled if the alarm sounds.

The lower levels of the temple have only four creatures of note – the **Stone Serpent**, a **Stone Ooze**, the cult **Archivist** and the calcified body of Lashpera, animating as the **Avatar of the Opal Goddess**. The temple abuts a massive cavern that houses some unusual calcified flora and fauna, but these are either relatively harmless (for the most part) or for the DM to expand upon if they so choose.

On Approach

The main temple is built into a small forested hill, which has a natural lake on one side. Only the vast entry is visible externally, and a stone bridge has been built to link the hill to the main approach. The trees have been cleared back for the lake edge for 50 yards in all directions, both to allow for clear sight and to supply building materials to the tribe.

To the south of the main hill is a small flat topped island, reachable by a wooden plank suspension bridge. Dominating this is an old monastery, a squat one story building with a slightly angled peaked stone shingle roof and a three story tower attached. The top level of the tower holds a massive bell. Careful observation – DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) – will allow a sentry to be seen periodically. If the sentry does spot the PCs at any point, it will strike the bell repeatedly with a hammer, sounding the alarm (See **Sounding the Alarm** and Area 7, below).

To the north, sheltered from view of the trail is a small pebble beach with an old row boat pulled up onto it. Anyone wandering more than 50 yards past the trail and to the beginning of the treeline will be able to see it.

DMs note – Unless the PCs scout into the trees on the north side the players should not be shown this section of the map.

The lake is blue and relatively clean, but opaque beyond the first few feet due to standard silt and other impurities. The lake is cold, and varies from 10 to 40 feet deep in most places. There are few shallows, so anyone falling in will need to swim – DC 10 Strength (Athletics) – to stay above water, and climb – DC 12 Strength (Athletics) to pull themselves out. The ledge and rocks at Area 10, the drain at Area 11, and the pebble beach at Area 21 are the only ‘shallows’ in the lake that allow swimmers to stand and walk out without effort. There are also old bridge foundations below Area 6 that will allow a swimmer to cling on, but there’s no easy exit from the water here.

Time of Day

The time of day makes a difference in terms of where the temple inhabitants are under routine conditions. Assuming the PCs have not alerted the tribe to their presence, the activity cycles are as follows;

Dawn/Dusk – these are major gathering times, and the tribe has large meals at dawn and dusk, lasting around an hour

before normal activities commence. Scouts rotationally bring in game, each scout group rotating through to be present at one big meal every 2 days (otherwise they eat in their satellite camps). The majority of the tribe, including the chieftain, shaman and warleader gather in the main hall (Area 18) to eat, drink and tell tales of glory. Lira will also be present for these. Sentries and runners are left in Areas 7-9, and a single sentry is on watch at Area 2 and 23.

Day/Night – While the orcs really have no particular preference for day or night activity, the presence of the humans had necessitated a certain routine for some. Around half the orcs are active during the day, while the other half sleep and recreate. Suthrain is active exclusively during the day presently, questioning Lira and conducting research and divinations. Velkesh is currently most active at night. Grushnak tends to vary his routine from one to the other.

The prisoners in Area 8 retain a standard day (activity) - night (rest) cycle, and Lira is removed each morning to consult with the shaman, and returned late each night to sleep. More recently she sleeps in the shaman’s quarters, spending only every second or third night in the cells.

Sounding the Alarm

If the tribe comes under threat, they will organise to repel assault with military precision. Velkesh has drilled the warriors numerous times to get a rapid, tactically sound defence in place. The response will of course be subject to conditions (when, where and how a threat is revealed, how many troops remain etc) so the DM will need to manage this appropriately. The most important element is that the tribe reacts in an organised fashion.

The Alarm Bell

Once an alarm is raised, the sentry in the bell tower (Area 7b) will strike the bell many times, repeating it in intervals. The bell tone is loud, and reverberates through the woods for miles. A single strike will not raise an alarm, as this could be an accident or a low flying bird. Only repeated strikes result in a response.

The alarm serves two purposes – alert the tribe within the temple to an external threat, and to recall the scouts in the woods. Even if a threat is discovered inside the temple, the tribe will still try to sound the bell.

Once the bell has sounded, the orcs within the temple will grab arms and move to defensive positions. They will not stop to don armor until after the defence points are activated. A pair of orcs will move to the kennel and release the wardogs, armoring them if there is time. One minute after the bell has sounded 1d4+1 scouts will arrive from the surrounding woods. 10 minutes later another 1d4+2 will arrive. Half an hour after the alarm has sounded another (and final) group of 1d4+2 will arrive.



Defence Points

The tactical points are Areas 5, 18 (near the stairs) and 23. When the alarm is sounded, the orc warriors will spread roughly evenly to these locations and await orders, or combat obvious foes they encounter there or on the way. In an alert situation the young act as message runners, reporting to the above areas and the monastery (Areas 7, 8 & 9).

If overwhelmed at any location, the tribe will fall back to area 18 for a last stand, trying to make full use of its numbers. If they lack numbers they instead fall back to Area 22 and try to hold out for reinforcements from the scouts.

Area 1 - Approach and Bridge

The brush has been cleared on the approach to the bridge, leaving a 50 yard open area to the tree line. The bridge itself is old but well crafted, assembled from weathered grey stone blocks. Moss grows thickly in places, and you can hear the lapping of the lake against the stone supports below.

The bridge is exactly what it seems. It was crafted in ancient times and remains sturdy to this day. The blocks do not appear to match

the stone of the island or surrounds – they were transported from Areas 24 onwards, the original temple builders making use of the excavation stone. The remainder was piled on the islet, which was eventually turned into the monastery many hundreds of years later.

Area 2 - Main Entry

A huge arched entrance leads directly into the face of the rock here. The arch is deeply weathered and covered in moss and creepers, but the faded remnants of carvings can just be made out. The tunnel beyond is dark, but deep within the faint glow of torchlight can be seen.

To the south a narrow path clings to the rockface, leading to a rope bridge that connects the island fort to the larger hill.

Taking a brief moment to examine the carvings, PCs will note that around half of it is so worn that whatever was there is merely half symbols or traces so fine as to be illegible. That which is actually readable is written in Mulhorandi, and (assuming anyone can read it) seems to indicate that this location is “sacred to the earth”. A more detailed examination, and a successful DC 14 Intelligence

(Religion) check will actually correctly interpret the passages to read that this is a “temple dedicated to Geb of the Sacred Earth” and that Geb is an ancient, long forgotten deity of earth, stone and calcification.

The path to the south is angled downwards from the wall out, slick with moisture and loose pebbles. Anyone traversing it carefully must make a DC 10 Dexterity check or slip and fall in the lake. Anyone running or undertaking other strenuous activity (such as fighting) makes the check at *disadvantage*. The water is only 10 feet below, but anyone falling is likely to make a fairly noticeable splash if any sentries remain in the area.

Area 3 - Barracks

This circular chamber has a domed roof that peaks some 25 feet above the floor. Three entrances lead off and a fourth alcove ends in a couple of narrow arrow slits overlooking the lake. This room is clustered with tightly packed straw pallets, while racks against the walls hold various weapons and piecemeal armour. The walls and ceiling seem to have some sort of faded murals or paintings, but these are marred, defaced and covered with tattered tribal flags and banners.

This is the communal barracks for the warriors of the tribe. There are around 20 pallets here, packed in so that only small walkways (of around 1-2 feet) exist between them. At any given activity cycle there might be up to 10 **Orc Warriors** sleeping or lounging in here, or engaging in other forms of recreation.

The barracks house both male and female warriors, and has no privacy to speak of. Personal items and objects are stuffed under or in the pallets. Theft is punishable by crippling and exile, so possessions are safe from pilfering. Regular gambling and contests of prowess keep the unruly orcs in check, and ensure desired loot can be ‘redistributed’ to the strong or fortunate (instituted by Velkesh).

Each pallet has 1d12 copper, 1d6 silver and 1d4 gold as well as numerous knives, trinkets, scraps, trophies or curios. Spare weapons and armour are hung on wall racks while personal arms are kept on the warriors themselves. At the DM’s discretion (to keep things simple) a full loot of the room might net an average haul of 130cp, 70sp and 50gp.

The banners and flags appear to be captured from various tribes or enclaves of other humanoids. These are in poor condition and are often smeared with blood. A deeper look at the murals reveal them to be dual-layered. The oldest seem to depict the stars on the ceiling leading to land below and deeper into depictions of caverns below the earth. Painted over the top of this are demonic figures and scenes of death and slaughter. The second set of paintings seem to conform to the basic layout of the older ones, almost as if the artist intended to show the newer mural conquering the older one.

Area 4 – Stores

This room is a jumble of crates, boxes, barrels and miscellaneous poles, ladders and banners.

This storage room holds various useful items and tools for the tribe. There are two 15 foot ladders, a dozen wooden poles of lengths ranging from 8 to 15 feet, several banner frames, lengths of cloth ranging from cotton to hessian, a number of animal hides, empty packs and sacks, a crate of tools (hammers, nails, saws, brushes, steel pitons etc), pots of glue, pots of paint, crates of animal bones and teeth, coils of rope (4 coils of 50ft rope), and a small pile of wooden boards, table and chair legs etc.

The store room is Velkesh’s idea to keep supplies on hand for maintaining the temple.

Area 5 – Guard Room

This room has a table and chairs located just inside the doorway, with well-worn cards and coins scattered across its top. Barrels and iron barricades are piled deeper in the room.

There are 6 copper pieces and 3 silver pieces on the table. The cards are worn but serviceable. A close examination – DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) – reveals that these are very subtly marked. If used by a gambler who is aware of the marks that gain *advantage* to all checks with the deck.

At any given activity cycle at least 2 **Orc Warriors** are stationed here, sometimes up to 4. The iron barricades are heavy, requiring at least 2 people of 12 Strength to move them. Their ‘outward’ faces are studded with blades, spikes and hooks to make climbing difficult and dangerous. The barrels (8 in all) are filled with oil, and concealed in one corner is a satchel containing a dozen torches and flint and tinder.

Defence Point

When the alarms sound the sentries here drag the barricades out to block the exits to Area 2 and Area 6. The barricades provide **half cover** (+2 AC and Dexterity saving throws) for anyone manning them, and are high enough to require a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to clamber over. Failure indicates 1d4 slashing damage is taken.

The barrels are filled with naphtha (flaming oil), and can be tipped from behind the barricades to spread out toward the entrances (the floor slopes slightly downwards toward the outside). Each barrel can cover 4x5’ foot squares. The oil creates difficult terrain when unlit, and if lit burns for 1d6 rounds, causing 1d6 fire damage per 5’ section entered. Burning the oil consumes it.

Area 6 – The Rope Bridge

A worn and weathered bridge made from thick rope and wood planks spans the gap here, linking the hill to a small island. The bridge is affixed to what appear to be the cracked foundations of a stone bridge, long since fallen into the lake. Below it you can see a couple of broken stone supports jutting from the water.

The rope bridge looks very fragile, but is actually structurally intact. It creaks alarmingly when used, and will dip to within a few feet of the lake at its centre when crossed, but is not in danger of failing. The rope and boards are slick with moisture, making it resistant to attempts to burn (fire), but it will collapse after taking 10 or more points of slashing or fire damage. The orcs may use this tactic to limit access or trap attackers during an assault.

Area 7 – Monastery Tower

This round chamber is almost completely bare save for a scattering of loose stones and bricks and a small exposed recess in the east wall at around head height. A metal ladder is fixed to the west wall, leading up to a trap door in the ceiling.

There is nothing of significance in this room. The recess in the west wall was once a secret niche that held the hilt of Granfang (see Area 8). A close examination matches a loose stone on the floor to the niche, and that once in place the niche is very difficult to detect (requiring a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) to do so).

The ladder is safe to use, with only a surface coating of rust.

Area 7a – Tower 2nd Level

This circular room is dark, with no windows in its walls. A metal ladder on the east wall leads up to a trap door in the ceiling. Placed against the walls are several crates and a rack of bows. A trapdoor in the floor leads down.

There are 4 longbows here in usable condition. One of the crates holds dried foodstuffs, and the other is partitioned into two sections each containing 50 crossbow bolts and 50 arrows. There are no crossbows, however.

The ladder is safe to use, with only a surface coating of rust.

Area 7b – Tower Top

The tower top is partially open to the elements, with only a 3 foot-high half wall enclosing it, leaving around 4 feet open on all sides before the conical roof blocks out the sky. Several shingles are missing from the roof, and the stones are slick with moisture. Hung from the rafters is a massive iron bell. Several cogs and gears still cling to a broken mechanism above the bell, though it is clear that numerous parts are missing.

There is 1 miserable **Orc Warrior** here at all times. If an assault force is sighted, the orc strikes the bell repeatedly to raise the alarm (See **Sounding the Alarm** above). The low wall offers

half cover (+2 AC and Dexterity saving throws) to defenders, but the tower top is fairly open.

The bell used to have an elaborate clockwork mechanism that struck the bell at pre-set times. This has long ceased to function, and parts have been lost, but the striking arm remains and has been removed to allow the orcs to manually strike the bell as required.

Area 8 – Prison

This large chamber has been sectioned into two halves by a wicked looking series of iron bars, rods and scraps lashed together with rope and chain to create a makeshift cell block. On the near side a splintered and hard worn table and chairs dominate the room, its heavily scarred top covered with a scattering of food, mugs and coins. On the opposite side a group of filthy prisoners stare at you through the sharp mass of metal.

There are 3 **Orc Warriors** inside the monastery, with at least 1 watching the prisoners at all times. The other two might be here as well (playing cards or knucklebones) or resting in Area 9.

The bars are somewhat makeshift, but would still take considerable time and effort to dismantle. The cell has a functioning door, with a heavy padlock on it. The orcs have the key, or it could be opened by a DC 12 Dexterity check using Thieves Tools.

The prisoners are Antivar and his remaining retainers – a couple of which are guards, but the rest are servants. Lira will not be here as the shaman Suthrain now keeps her close. If freed, Antivar is grateful, but does not wish to leave without Lira or his family sword. He knows Lira has been ‘making herself useful as a historian’ to the tribe’s shaman, and while she used to sleep with the prisoners she is only brought back infrequently now. As for his sword, he has no clue where it is, but assumes the chief has it due to its high quality. The family heirloom is integral to his honour, and he declares he’d rather die than leave it. If asked for a description he’ll indicate it has a distinctive golden basket hilt with the coat of arms of the city of Baldur’s Gate stamped on it. If asked further he’ll think to reveal it is a rapier.

If the PCs take the time to search the room they can get a handful of coins from the table (9 copper and 5 silver pieces) and discover that one of the chairs has a sword hilt jammed into it to act as a replacement for a missing leg. The blade is shattered about 6 inches from the hilt, but the elaborate hilt and guard are unmistakably unique. The blade detects as magical, and while it is not usable as a sword it can be as a dagger (albeit slightly unbalanced), and it grants a +1 AC bonus if grasped (practically it could also be held in off hand in combat). More importantly, it is the hilt of *Granfang*, the sword that slew

Lashpera centuries ago. The blade fragments can be found in Area 35.

Area 9 – Sleeping Pallets

Four straw pallets surround an improvised firepit in the centre of the room. The chamber is otherwise featureless.

Monastery duty is tedious, but it does allow for more room than in the main temple. The four pallets have a few personal items, weapons and coinage belonging to the 4 orcs stationed here (a total of 14cp, 15sp and 3gp can be collected). The firepit is a circle of stones from the building arranged around a stack of ash and wood.

Area 10 – The ‘Shallows’

A natural trail slopes down to the water’s edge here. Several rocks protrude from the lake, and a couple of wooden planks have been laid across to connect two of the larger ones. Across from the island is a small opening leading into the hillside. The opening clears the water level by only 2 feet.

The shallows are actually the remains of the stone bridge at Area 6, fallen into a jumble of blocks below the surface with only a few protruding. These are worn and slippery, requiring a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) to traverse – hopping from one to the next - without falling in. The wooden planks provide a stable surface to the limit of their reach (no checks required).

The planks were laid by an enterprising orc that pulled ‘latrine cleaning duty’, and they have been left in place to facilitate that. The remainder of the planks are in Area 11. Unless the planks from Area 11 are added, there is no way to traverse this entry from this direction without getting into the water.

Area 11 – Waste Runoff

The stench of rot and faeces emanating from this area is almost overpowering. This room is split into two levels, with an upper landing that has a set of stairs down to a pair of stone platforms 10 feet below - just above water level. From the look of it, the upper landing serves as a latrine, while a narrow chute in the east wall seems to allow garbage in. A couple of planks have been placed across the channel to reach another stone platform, which has more planks and crates stacked on it.

The water in this chamber is horribly befouled. Anyone wading or swimming in it must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or gained the *poisoned* condition. Affected creatures get another save each hour to negate it. In addition, regardless of saving throws, the creature reeks to high heaven. All attempts at Stealth are at *disadvantage* as their stench proceeds them. A happy side-effect is that the dogs in Area 14 will not attack affected creatures under any circumstance, instead whining and slinking away.

The eastern chute is only 1 foot wide and 2 feet high, too narrow for most PCs to enter. It leads up to the kitchen (Area 12). The crates have soiled cleaning supplies (buckets, rags etc) and there are 4 additional planks (6 foot long) against the wall. The planks can be used to ‘bridge’ the platform with the stones at Area 10, by resting them on small niches in the tunnel out. This allows for walking above the fetid water.

Area 12 – Kitchen

Lingering heat can be felt throughout this room coming from the shimmering coals of the massive fireplace dominating the entire south wall. Huge metal spits attest to the regular roasting of animals. Benches to the east and west are piled high with pots, pans, and knives of all shapes and sizes. In the middle of the west wall a narrow chute descends, its mouth stained with dried blood and chunks of flesh.

If the PCs enter this area just before dawn or dusk the oven fires will be in full blaze, and 3 **orcs** will be cooking one of the two major meals of the day, with the odd youngling underfoot or fetching ingredients from Area 13.

The chute is 1 foot wide and 2 feet high, and empties into Area 11.

Area 13 – Pantry

This room smells heavily of blood, and the floor is covered in old brown stains. Dozens of animal carcasses hang from hooks all around the room, some fresh enough to continue to drip. Against the south wall are a number of wood crates.

The carcasses (mostly deer and boar, with the occasional bear or wolf) hang from all points, making this room difficult to traverse and to see through. Any fighting in this room offers **half cover** (+2 AC and Dexterity saving throws) to any participants.

The crates contain a few root vegetables and a few other edible plants. A half a dozen clay jars in one crate hold dried herbs for seasoning.

Area 14 – Kennel

The unmistakable scent of dog wafts from this chamber as you enter. Piles of straw and bones lie scattered about. Hung from a rack near the entry are various leather harnesses and animal training accoutrements.

The kennel contains 6 fully grown **dogs** and a dozen puppies. The dogs are bred to be both track and bring down quarry, whether animal or humanoid. The dogs are loved by the tribe, but are still vicious and ill tempered – much like the orcs themselves.

When taken into battle, the dogs are fitted with leather and metal harnesses, offering them an AC of 14. These are kept on

the rack here. If the alarm is raised several orcs may attempt to fit the dogs with war harness. This takes 1 minute (10 rounds) per dog.

On the north wall there are a few iron fittings and smooth holes set into the stone, as if something had been removed. This was once the outer works of a winch mechanism that raised the portcullis at Area 23. While the internal components are still inside the wall, too little of the external components remain to make it functional again.

Area 15 – Common Hearth

This chamber is packed with straw pallets in small clusters, with narrow walkways between them. Braziers are located throughout the room, providing both light and heat. The walls are covered with a patchwork of banners, hangings and washing lines.

The dozen (or so) **orcs** assigned to domestic responsibilities and equal numbers of **younglings** live here, amidst the shared accommodations. Except at meal or incursion times most will be found here, though each has duties at varying times of the day or night. Each pallet has a variety of personal possessions and trinkets, but no coinage (only active warriors get a share of the loot).

Despite not being full warriors the male and female orcs and younglings here are not defenceless, for orcs are hardy and brutal, and even the weakest can hold their own. The inhabitants here will attack intruders and participate in defence of the temple. Unwary adventurers might fall to their blades as easily as those of the warriors.

Area 16 – War room (Velkesh's quarters)

A huge table dominates the centre of this room, covered with a worn and marred map of the area, its corners held down by embedded knives. In the torchlight you can see writing and symbols drawn at various points on the map. A set of shelves nearby holds inks and small figurines. A banner bearing the symbol of Gruumsh hangs on the south wall, while one bearing the symbol of Illneval hangs on the north.

Toward the back of the room is a plain cot, a weapon rack and an armour stand.

This chamber is where Velkesh and Grushnak plan out raids and track the locations and movements of other tribes or threats in the region. Anyone who can read Orcish can interpret the map, and pick out the location of not only the temple, but several other orc and goblin tribes in the Wood, as well as the cave of a troll called Brulgurt. A couple of other marks are more speculative, suggesting the possible presence of a wyvern lair and a web-nest of ettercaps (these are for the DM to develop if they choose).

The shelf holds quills and a series of coloured inks for marking

the map, as well as dozens of small wooden figurines that have been carved in amazing detail, representing orc warriors, scouts, goblins, trolls, dragons and men. Various colour seem to split these further into factions or groups. Some orcs bear the Troll Claw symbol, and some humans are adorned with a Flaming Fist symbol.

Depending on the time of day **Velkesh** might be found here. He currently sleeps during the day and is active at night.

Area 17 – Treasury

This door is locked – requiring a key (either from Grushnak or Velkesh) or a DC 16 Dexterity check using Thieves Tools to open. The door/lock could be broken, but it is very sturdy (AC 14, Damage Threshold 5, Hp 5).

This chamber is filled with crates and boxes, with several bolts of cloth leaning against the far wall. Dominating the centre of the room is an ornate, unlit brazier made of iron and silver.

This room holds anything of worth that the tribe has collected either from the temple itself, or on its various raids that did not get put to immediate use or allocated to an individual.

The ornate brazier is a remnant from the Cult of Lashpera, and though a potent item it comes with potentially devastating drawbacks. The orcs know how to use it, but Velkesh is still trying to determine a tactical way to employ it without it causing more damage than benefit.

Brazier of Woe – Wondrous item, very rare.

This ornate brazier of iron and silver is cast to show demonic features over its entire surface. It weighs 200lbs and is cumbersome to move. When incense and wood is placed in the brazier (any of either, but enough to fuel a fire) and the command word spoken the brazier catches alight and burns for 10 minutes, producing a cloud of purple smoke in a 20 foot radius. Anyone who spends 1 or more rounds in the smoke must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw (those in the smoke may voluntarily fail the saving throw if they choose) or become intoxicated, incurring the *poisoned* condition but gaining an additional 1d8 to any damage roll (of the same type as the source of the damage). This effect lasts for 1 hour. Anyone spending 5 or more rounds in the smoke must make a second Constitution saving throw, this one at DC 16 (which may be voluntarily failed). Failure indicates that the individual becomes *Confused* (as per the spell), but has their Strength score increased to 20 (if it is lower, or no change if it is higher). This secondary effect also lasts for an hour, and stacks with the initial effect. Creatures immune to poison are immune to all the effects of the Brazier. A creature can only be affected by the brazier once per day.

The crates contain various items;

- Miscellaneous religious iconography from the original

temple (Geb) and the secondary temple (Lashpera) including various censers, symbols, texts, tablets, bowls, ewers etc made of silver, iron and gold chasing, weighing 400lbs and worth around 400gp (1gp per pound). Specific attempts to sell to collectors or historians might increase the value by an additional 50% at the DMs discretion)

- The bolts of material are 7 lengths of silk (6 feet by 25 feet long) that are only slightly soiled and worth 200gp each currently – less if they can't be kept clean before being brought to a viable market. The orcs recognise the potential value of the cloth but have no use for the flimsy material.
- One crate contains a dozen mostly rotten books, with only a few vague passages and pages still legible. However, there are two books of worth. One – mostly damaged - contains a formula for creating *potions of levitation*, assuming the reader has the magical aptitude and the correct ingredients (DM's discretion as to what level of detail is required). The other 'book' is actually a series of incredibly thin stone plates threaded together with iron rings. The plates have extremely fine etchings on them, and the book is amazingly durable (Damage Threshold 7, Hp 5). It is a copy of the holy text of the religion of Geb (written in an ancient dialect of Mulhorandi). To a collector it would be worth 400gp. To a priest of Geb it would be priceless.
- One crate holds a **venomous snake** that lies atop a dozen sacks. The snake is the chief's pet and viciously attacks anyone else opening the crate. The sacks hold a total of 378cp, 279sp, 329gp and 34pp spread randomly throughout the bags.
- Antivar's sword is casually tossed into a corner here. It is a *Rapier* +1, but no self-respecting orc would wield it. Grushnak recognizes its value as trade, sale or even ransom, but not as a weapon.

The secret door in the north wall is exceptionally well hidden, both in its construction and in the fact that the silk bolts have been placed against it. It would take an amazingly perceptive individual – DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) – to spot it in passing or one highly attuned to details – DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) to find it on a painstaking, detailed search.

Area 18 – Great Hall

This massive chamber is lit by torches on sconces around the walls, two bronze braziers to the east and a massive fire pit carved into the floor in the centre, and the smell and haze of smoke hangs in the air.

The bulk of the room is dominated by two long wooden tables with bench seating for as many as two dozen, while a raised platform to the east holds the chieftain's chair, along with four other places of honour. Heavy tapestries hang on the walls – half a dozen in all – depicting various battle scenes. In the tapestries and on free standing banners the Troll Claw symbol of the clan is prominent.

At dawn or dusk most of the clan and clan leaders are here

– feasting, drinking, boasting, and having brutal but good natured (relatively speaking) contests including arm wrestling (and occasional finger breaking), knife throwing (at each other's plates, mugs etc) and insult hurling. Occasionally Grushnak, Velkesh or Suthrain will engage in oratory or storytelling, each expounding on their topics of expertise. The main seats are for Grushnak, his favoured consort (Relgri at this time – see Area 22), Velkesh, Suthrain and the last is a reward for a warrior who recently earned distinction. If the hall is full Lira will be here also, collared and sitting at Suthrain's feet behind the main table.

At all other times the hall is quiet, but retains the heat and some smoke residue.

Both the concealed doors (north leading to Area 21, and east leading to Area 17) are hard to detect due to the heavy tapestries, requiring a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check to discover.

Area 19 – Temple

This large chamber is a confusing jumble of clearly clashing themes. Once some kind of temple, the bas-relief on the walls have been scratched and painted over, and several layers of wall hangings depicting clashing themes of stone, destruction and mysticism have been placed around the room. The centre of the room is a jumbled mess of shattered stone pews, draped with cloths and festooned with candles and freestanding iconography. It gives the effect of a demented miniature mountain range. To the west an alcove holds a shattered stone altar, draped across which are the desiccated remains of creatures – organs, skin and bones all arranged in intricate patterns. The chamber is jarring to look across.

During the day Suthrain and Lira are likely to be found here discussing the lore of the temple, or planning a sortie into the lower levels. While both appear to be enthusiastic about the discussion, Lira will have a slave collar on, ensuring no one mistakes her for a willing participant.

Suthrain is a mystic, one that has no fixed focus or path, but collects a hodge-podge of various lore, talismans and techniques. Anything she feels she can use to increase her power, and the power of the tribe is added to her eclectic repertoire. The orcs put up with her vaguely blasphemous and erratic ways for two reasons. The first is that it is undeniably effective. Her influence has allowed them to become powerful and feared. She was the one who animated their Tribal Totem – the Troll Claw – and her knowledge and magic have carried the day in many battles. The second is that they fear her – though they will not admit it. So she is given latitude to collect and experiment. Eventually the tribe's fear may lead to them turning on her, but for now her use outweighs their discomfort.

A detailed search of the temple indicates it was once a shrine to

Geb, and the original bas-relief reflect scenes of earthen caverns and strange underground ecologies. These are mostly scratched out and covered over, and little of the original content can be discerned. The layer on top of this are paintings of a dark, hag-like figure emerging from the dark caverns to wreak death and destruction on her foes, with various human and humanoid tribes falling to her attacks. Interestingly, these are relatively sophisticated paintings, and many are designed to make use of the underlying bas-relief (for example having the avatar of destruction emerge from the pre-existing bas-relief caverns). Searching the room finds numerous eclectic 'ritual' objects from various religions or mysticisms, and a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) will determine that most of these are a piecemeal selection of bits and pieces from numerous sources, none of any real power or worth.

The exception are the collection of items on the altar. The collected entrails, if used correctly and within 10 minutes of the kill and dissection, give *advantage* on the saving throw for a *Contact Other Plane* spell. Unfortunately for any PC casters, the ritual involves fresh offerings from a rare and dangerous creature (a Nothic) as well as precise knowledge of timing and arrangement of the parts which they will find almost impossible to duplicate without detailed instructions. In addition to the 'divination' parts, there are 3 small jars (unstoppered) here filled with a pungent translucent liquid, suspended in which are centipedes (think tequilla and worms). These are magical, and are in fact newly crafted *Potions of Climbing*, assuming one has the stomach to consume the contents.

Area 19a - Closet

This tiny room has dozens of cloaks, robes and vestments hung on pegs. All look tattered and moth eaten.

The clothing here is a range of garments from both the Geb and Lashpeera cults, most of which are as poor as they seem. There is a single ragged cloak that is stiff and rough to the touch, almost like it is crusted in sand or salt. It is *Calcified Cloak*, a common wondrous item that offers a +1 bonus to AC. However, it also interacts oddly with the calcification effects of the lower levels, increasing the AC bonus to +3 (total), but the renders the wearer more susceptible to the aura, incurring *disadvantage* to saves vs the calcification process. These additional effects only occur on Level 2 and 3 of this location (See **Calcification Aura**, Lower Level 1).

Suthrain knows what the cloak does, but is fearful of its effects within the temple.

Area 20 - Shaman's Quarters

A thick incense haze fills this room, obscuring vision and filling your nostrils with a sweet, cloying scent. The room is lit and heated by a large central brazier, and the walls are hung with gauzy fabrics. A dresser and mirror stand against the west wall, and a huge pile of



cushions in the northeast corner seem to serve as a bed.

During the day this room is likely to be empty, but at night both **Suthrain** and **Lira** are found here. Unless the alarm has been sounded they will both be abed, and possibly in a compromising position. Lira has seduced Suthrain as a means of furthering her agenda, though if this is revealed she will claim it was in effort to spare her life. Should this be revealed to Antivar it may sever any lingering attachment he has to Lira (which is fine by her as he has served his purpose).

The room contains little of value beyond some impressive looking outfits Suthrain uses to 'enhance' her mystic image and a handful of coins and gems (17sp, 23gp, and 4 small sapphires worth 50gp each) in the dresser. There are a few grooming items (hairbrush, comb, hand mirror) and a few personal trinkets of no real interest. A small incense burner and a dozen blocks of incense can also be found here.

Area 21 - Escape Plan

A dark stairway is cut into the rock here, terminating on a small pebble beach. A shallow cave holds various boxes and crates, and a weathered rowboat rocks gently in time with the lapping water.

This exit predates the occupying orcs, and while Velkesh wanted this security threat walled up, Suthrain talked Grushnak into leaving it as an option (ostensibly for his favoured consort). The compromise was to place a *Glyph of Warding* on the landing just behind the tapestry to Area 18. The glyph is difficult to - spot DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) - and triggers Explosive Runes that deal 5d8 thunder damage on triggering. Grushnak, Velkesh, Suthrain, Relgri (current favoured consort) and Lira

(a recent, secret addition) do not trigger the Glyph, and are all aware of its placement.

The boxes and crates contain basic survival provisions (tents, rope, blankets, pots, waterskins and several weeks dried rations), boat repair items (hammer, nails, pot of pitch) and 2 spare oars. The rowboat is seaworthy – if just barely.

Area 22 – Chieftain's Quarters

This chamber is hung heavy with trophies and skins – both animal and humanoid. Skulls, chains, weapons and a few tattered banners decorate the walls. A heavy tapestry covers the entire east end, depicting an impressive Orc warrior slaughtering elves by the dozen, bodies piling high. A mound of furs that act as a bed dominate the majority of the western half of the room, and a carved wooden throne adorned with teeth, bones and furs sits to the east, flanked by large iron braziers.

This is the quintessential 'savage tribe king' chamber, and while Grushnak actually enjoys it, it is as much a work of appearance and perception as personal taste. During the night **Grushnak** and his current consort (Relgri - **Orc Warrior** statistics) can be found here, while during the day they go about their respective duties.

The concealed door (east leading to Area 17) is hard to detect due to the heavy tapestry, but scuff marks and poor furniture replacement habits leave a small section open near its base, partially spoiling the effect. It requires a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check to discover.

The room's furnishings are savagely comfortable, and may fetch a reasonable price (150gp) if removed and sold to an amenable buyer. Most of the trophies are worthless except to Grushnak, who keeps the banners, bones, skulls and weapons (mundane and often broken) of significant foes displayed here. If PCs end their careers against the orcs their weapons might be added to the display.

A more detailed search of the room uncovers several books under the edges of the bedding, and behind the throne. Most of these are local histories or political analysis of the Baldur's Gate region. These are written in common, and there are more than a dozen books in all (each worth 20gp or so). One of the books is actually a very rare, first edition history of the shipping families, routes and cargoes that helped establish Baldur's Gate as a major power in the region. It is penned anonymously, is several hundred years old and most importantly **not** featured among the tomes of Candlekeep. If correctly identified – DC 20 Intelligence (History) – it could be sold for as much as 500gp, or traded for special access or favours from the inhabitants of the library (DM's discretion). Grushnak keeps his scholarship quiet as this does not fit the image of a savage orc chieftain, though in truth this revelation would not hurt his standing in the clan greatly.

Area 23 – The Bent Portcullis

A massive iron portcullis blocks the hall here, limiting access to a grand staircase that descends into darkness beyond. The portcullis bulges toward the hall, its bars twisted and broken in a section of a few feet across. Crates have been piled up here to block the hole created. It almost looks as if something big and powerful struck the portcullis from the other side.

The crates are filled with rocks, but can be shifted enough to slip past. The broken bars allow medium sized creatures to squeeze through, but limited to a rate of one creature per round. Larger creatures take 4 rounds of wriggling to make it through. The rate of egress may be important if the PCs are forced to flee from Area 25

Temple Lower Level 1

The Calcification Aura

Permeating the lower 2 levels of the complex is an aura of calcification. Over time everything begins to take on the properties of earth and stone. Inanimate objects without maintenance or proper care eventually become frozen and fossilized. Living creatures that are not part of the natural ecosystem of Area 36 eventually become petrified.

The air here feels dry and dusty. Exposed skin becomes dry and cracked over the course of a few minutes, and then joints slowly become stiff, followed by skin stiffening and movement slowing. Within a handful of hours to days a living creature slowly petrifies.

Upon entering, and every hour a living creature spends within the lower levels, it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. A failed save results in one level of *exhaustion*. Each failure results in successive levels of exhaustion gained, with the 6th level resulting in the *petrified* condition. The exhaustion can be relieved or removed as per normal, though the calcification aura continues to affect creatures that remain within it indefinitely. Priests of Geb (or another Deity that grants the Domain of Earth), creatures from the Area 36 ecosystem and creatures of Elemental Earth are immune to this effect, while undead and constructs are less affected, though still ultimately become calcified (DM determines the end results of such a situation). Certain special cases apply, such as the Stone Ooze and the Archivist below.

This should represent a limited risk for most PCs or NPCs, who should not be here long enough for significant issues to arise, and will begin to notice the changes if they remain for a protracted period. There are a couple of exceptions, however; Wearing the *Calcified Cloak* (Area 19a) means that a character incurs *disadvantage* to the saving throws, likely resulting in a more rapid onset.

Attunement to the *Troll Claw* (worn by Suthrain) will grant a



character *advantage* against the calcification aura saves, though this comes with its own issues (see the entry on the *Troll Claw*, page 27).

Both the **Stone Ooze** and the **Avatar of The Opal Goddess** have abilities that can increase the effect or potency of the calcification aura, or interact differently with those affected. DM's should be aware of this prior to commencing these encounters.

Area 24 – Grand Staircase

The wide stone staircase leads down, pausing briefly at a narrow landing before continuing downward into darkness. To either side of the landing are stone statues. They appear to have once been matching figures, though their details have been rent by jagged claw marks.

The statues once represented the figure of Geb, carved to depict him as a powerfully built man, garbed in an ornate robe and bracers, and gripping a staff in his hands. However, Lashpera (in her opal hag-like form) defaced these statues in a rage while claiming the temple as her own, leaving distinct 4 taloned claw marks that can be seen throughout the lower levels. A DC 16 Intelligence (Religion) can reveal their original depictions and religious significance.

The secret door behind the eastern statue can be found with a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Area 25 – The Well Room

This circular chamber has a domed ceiling that rises to a height of 15 feet, making the area a perfect hemisphere. Closed double doors are set in its west and south walls. The centre of the room is dominated by a massive well that drops away into darkness. The waist high wall surrounding it is scraped and chipped in places, yet unnaturally smooth in others.

The well drops away into darkness, some 100 feet to Area 31 below (the shaft is actually 85 feet, while the chamber itself is 15 feet high). The inner surface of the shaft has both strange patterned smoothed areas (caused but the passage of the Stone Serpent) and jagged claw marks (where Lashpera would climb the shaft). The Stone Serpent is coiled directly below the shaft, so any light, movement or dropped objects will gain its immediate attention.

The double doors that lead to adjacent rooms are carved stone, and are slashed with the same 4 clawed marks that deface the other statues and icons here. While the doors aren't locked or bound, the once metal hinges have slowly been overtaken by calcification and do not move easily. A DC 14 Strength check is required to open the doors, and this is a loud process where stone grinds and chips away. Each time any set of doors is moved, there is a 1 in 6 chance (1 on 1d6) that the hinges actually break away, sending the massive stone portals crashing to the floor.

An inspection of the walls indicate faint vestiges of murals under a surface layer of calcification. These murals depict a hag-like woman terrorizing villages.

The secret door in the north wall is hidden under a layer



of calcification, but can be found with a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. Like the other doors here, the hinges are transformed, requiring a DC 14 Strength check to open, and have the same chances of collapsing as above.

Area 26 – The Unfinished Elevator

This irregular octagonal chamber has a distinctly unfinished look to it. Though the walls are roughly finished and lack the murals, carvings and adornments found in other areas. Crates made of stone are stacked in small clusters, and some have shattered, disgorging a strange array of rocky debris. The Eastern portion of the room is dominated by an alcove, with a floor of stone much lighter colour than that of the rest of the complex.

When the Gebites constructed the temple here, they placed the Elevator (Area 27) dangerously close to the edge of the strange underground cavern. In time this partially collapsed. Fearing that the collapse might worsen, they commenced a second shaft here, though never finished it. The alcove is actually the start of that shaft, and is roughly 20 feet deep. The different coloured stone is actually a dormant Stone Ooze that has taken residence in the perfectly sized niche. The Stone Ooze is dense enough that characters will not fall through or into it, but those that stand on or otherwise interact with it will rouse it into an active - and hungry - state.

The crates were once wooden, now petrified under the effects of the Calcification Aura. They are extremely fragile and can be broken by hand, the brittle stone snapping like chalk. The contents are difficult to identify, requiring a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check to determine they are petrified remains of wood and metal cranes, pulleys, ropes and stoneworking tools.

Area 27 – The Elevator

This chamber has fallen away into a massive cavern. Fifteen feet past the doors the walls and floor are sheared away, leaving a vast expanse beyond lit by intermittent shafts of sunlight (or moonlight) breaking through the cavern ceiling. The space is huge, stretching far into the distance and deep into the earth.

An alcove sits to north, and mural of coloured stones is recessed into the northern wall next to it.

Even a cursory examination of the room indicates the collapse was unintentional, cracks and crumbling stone showing near the edges. Bas-relief of caverns and earth creatures – elementals and bulettes among less identifiable fauna - adorn the walls, ending abruptly at the collapse, clearly continuing on the now missing surfaces.

The cavern itself stretches beyond sight, the sunlight only illuminating small areas within the first few hundred feet. The ceiling is only a dozen or so feet above the level of the room, fissures visible between stalactites that show glimpses of sky

Serpent at the Bottom of the Well

From this point on the DM must remain aware of the PC's actions and how it might precipitate an encounter with the Stone Serpent.

The serpent is coiled up at the base of the well in Area 31 on the level below. It is dozing but semi-conscious, can see in darkness and even sense the presence of living creatures. It is fiercely territorial and will attack 'interlopers' (it is accustomed to the Stone Ooze and the Archivist).

PCs making any sound will rouse the serpent, including actions such as loud talking or actions, forcing the doors in Area 25, or dropping anything down the well.

The serpent has a passive Perception of 18, so any PC actions in stealth should be compared to this. It has a Dexterity (Stealth) of +8, and will certainly try to ambush unwary adventurers.

Once aroused it can reach the top of the well in 1 round if it uses a Dash Action.

It will not retreat while there are intruders, fighting until they retreat to where it can't go (Area 23) or they, or it, are slain.

If the PCs retreat and take a long rest, it will also take a long rest, and overconfident players might be in for a shock if/when they encounter a fully healed Stone Serpent.

beyond. These open up to the top of the hill the temple is carved into. The cavern floor is 100 feet below, though this is difficult to determine without better lighting.

The alcove to the north is an elevator, though this might not be obvious at first glance. It is a closed cube on 5 sides, with only the side facing into the room open. It can hold up to 12 people (3 per 5 foot square), though those near the open side might find the ride uncomfortable. A massive chain is fixed to the top (hidden while the elevator is in Area 27) that is connected to the gears and counterweight that make it function (Area 29).

On the north wall next to it (between the elevator and the door)

is a stone mosaic of Geb's holy symbol, a stylized mountain. Upon closer inspection – DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check – there are two stones that can be depressed in the mural – one at the base of the mountain and one at its peak. These lower and raise the elevator respectively (the peak of the mountain 'calling' the elevator from its lowered position). There is a few seconds delay, allowing an individual time to push the button then board the elevator. The elevator is also slow enough to give a clueless operator time to jump on once it begins its descent, taking more than 2 and a half minutes to reach the bottom or top (at a rate of around 1 foot every 2 seconds).

Using the elevator without first attending to the maintenance of the gears is problematic. After the first 20 feet, there is a cumulative 1% chance per foot travelled that the gears will seize, trapping the elevator along its course. The DM should roll 1d100 and add 20. The result is how many feet the elevator travels before stopping (ie a roll of 53+20 would mean that it travels 73 feet before seizing 27 feet from the ground below). Any result greater than 100 indicates that it makes it to the cavern floor before seizing. There is an enclosed shaft for the first 10 feet, then the elevator is open on all sides. If the elevator stops along its journey characters can climb out, and potentially back up the chain, but this will require a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check, or risk falling. Alternatively they could drop/fall to the cavern floor below (Area 30) if they are close (or reckless) enough, taking appropriate falling damage (1d6 bludgeoning per 10 feet fallen).

Anyone riding in the elevator gets a long look at the cavern

The stone cube slowly descends, allowing you a long look at the cavern beyond. The shafts of light through the cavern ceiling illuminate only a few sparse sections, but you can see stalagmites and stalactites in single and clustered formations, some of which have joined to form massive stone columns. The occasional winged creature flits about, perhaps disturbed by your grinding descent. As the cavern floor comes into focus you see flowstone and glittering mineral deposits, as well as odd rigid stone formations that look a little like fossilized plants. You spot small furtive movements on the cavern floor and guess that there are at least a few living creatures down here.

See Area 36 for a more detailed description of the cavern ecosystem.

Finally, any use of the elevator generates a significant noise unless the works have been oiled (see Area 29), rousing the Stone Serpent and alerting the Archivist if the party has not already encountered them.

Area 28 – Service Storage

This small nook holds the remnants of containers, crates, pots and racks of tools. Everything here seems petrified, though mostly intact.

This area held the tools and materials for keeping the elevator works (Area 29) in good condition. Almost everything has petrified over time, making it useless, though characters can make out the items used to be various tools and parts (cogs, gears etc). On a very close examination – DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check – the PCs can find one hammer that, while covered in a layer of calcification, is actually intact, and is in fact a *Warhammer* +1.

There are a dozen large stone pots here, their lids crusted shut. Chipping or forcing them open reveals each contains 10 litres of oil, untouched by time or calcification. If this oil is liberally applied to the elevator works the elevator will not seize, and it will operate relatively quietly. While the tools for application are all effectively destroyed, any cloth or rags the PCs bring with them would suffice to spread the oil.

Area 29 – Elevator Works

This room is dominated by a massive series complex gears and pulleys, with an enormous chain threaded through the works. The chain appears to be attached to a massive stone cube on one end, and disappears through an aperture in the floor at the other.

This is the works that manages the elevator. It consists of several dozen cogs and pulleys, as well as a coil for the chain and two wheels suspended directly above both the elevator and counterweight that allows them to lower and rise in a vertical manner. A subset system of smaller counter weights assists to gain torque and account for the difference in passenger load (which is ultimately negligible against the weight of the elevator/counterweight). A clever character – DC 14 Intelligence check – can figure out the basic operations, and the system of weight-counterweight that allows the elevator to operate, as well as the call-recall systems attached to the mosaics in Area 27 and Area 30. Such characters can note that the system was mostly metal now converted to stone (including the chain), and also that there is a lack of maintenance and that the system is likely to seize without some form of lubrication.

The elevator works is in a very brittle state, and can be easily damaged. Any rough handling or striking breaks the works and locks the elevator in its current position.

Area 30 – Elevator Landing

This area has roughly worked stone that gives way to a massive cavern to the east, and becomes more precisely cut to the west, where a double doorway lies open. One of the doors has been torn from its hinges, shattered on the floor, while the other leans at an angle, the lower hinge broken but the upper clinging on tenaciously.

If the party arrives by elevator (if it actually reaches the ground) this slides smoothly to a halt with the barest audible impact of stone on stone, such is the precise nature of the mechanism. On

the wall directly to the west of the elevator is the same coloured stone mosaic as Area 27, with the peak stone and base stone acting as prompts to raise and lower. The mechanisms are hidden in the wall.

A closer look at the doors shows they have suffered from an impact, the cause of which was the Stone Serpent. The doors themselves are plain, but have Geb's Symbol (a Mountain) in bas relief on the face of each portal.

Area 30a is a small cave where the counterweight comes to rest when the elevator is at Area 27. It is an otherwise plain area.

Area 31 - Grand Vestibule

If the stone serpent is undisturbed, read the following first;

A huge black snake with reflective scales is coiled in the centre of this chamber, its bulk making the otherwise large room seem frighteningly cramped.

If the stone serpent has vacated the area, read the following;

This hemispherical chamber is similar to the one directly above it, though the cylindrical shaft extends upward from the ceiling rather than the floor. Directly below the shaft opening – some 15 feet above – is a huge mosaic in green and blue stones depicting the mountain symbol of Geb. The mosaic has ancient claw marks rent deeply into it, but these have been worn smooth by the passage of the serpent over time. The walls show painted murals of a monstrous woman with opal skin eviscerating hapless victims of all races and cultures. They are grotesquely detailed and seem untouched by the passage of time.

Four double doorways lead off in cardinal directions, all but the east stand intact and closed, their stone surfaces and calcified hinges barring exit. The east portals have been sundered, revealing a cavern beyond.

While it is likely the Stone Serpent has been encountered previously, this is where it makes its lair. It ignores the Archivist, and nothing else enters the temple. When it (infrequently) requires food, it ventures into the cavern at Area 36 to ingest some of the local wildlife, having no issues digesting the stony creatures found there. Most of the time it simply sleeps.

The murals are artistically quite impressive, even if the content is particularly horrific. Casual observation indicates the artist has immense talent, and the realism in the art might turn the stomach of individuals less used to violence than adventurers. A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) indicates that the paintings are actually relatively recent, or recently restored.

The doors leading north, south and west will need to be forced as their hinges have succumbed to the calcification aura. A DC 14 Strength check is required to open the doors, and this is a loud process where stone grinds and chips away. Each time any set of doors is moved, there is a 1 in 6 chance (1 on 1d6)



that the hinges actually break away, sending the massive stone portals crashing to the floor.

Area 32 - The Grand Gallery

Every inch of this curving hall is covered in painted murals, some grand and sweeping in scope, others small and cramped, or squeezed in between other scenes. The effect is one of jumbled confusion, where individual scenes seem to have coherence, but there's no context between them. Some murals depict the monstrous clawed woman in various acts of stalking or destruction, or basking in the adulation of worshippers, but others are of seemingly unrelated scenes of stone carving or construction, or scenic vistas or hellish landscapes.

To the south are a pair of stone portals intricately carved with hundreds of images of the hag-like face of the woman represented in the art. A pair of statues flank the doors, dazzlingly detailed likenesses of the woman with claws upraised as if preparing to strike.

The gallery is the work of the Archivist, who has had decades to paint this seemingly random gallery. All the scenes are in fact a history of this temple, both before and after the coming of Lashpera. They are not ordered however, and PCs would need the Archivist's input to make any sequential sense of the depictions.

There is a section of the wall on the south side of the hall that is hinged open. This is a secret door that would be otherwise difficult to detect *if closed*, requiring a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. The hinges here are (and have always been) stone, and are maintained so this portal swings easily. Currently the Archivist has left it open. While he does not need to do so to come and go (thanks to his Stonewalking ability) he has done so in the hopes that the orcs (or the PCs if he is aware of them) will penetrate deeply enough in the temple to find it. Despite being consumed by his self-appointed 'duties' the archivist is lonely and eager for the opportunity to converse with outsiders, but will only do so if he is 'interrupted'. He is not above facilitating that interruption in some small ways.

The doors to Area 35 are calcified like all the rest, requiring a DC 14 Strength check is required to open the doors, and this is a loud process where stone grinds and chips away. Each time the doors are moved, there is a 1 in 6 chance (1 on 1d6) that the hinges actually break away, sending the massive stone portals crashing to the floor.

The statues of Lashpera are so detailed as to be extremely lifelike, but they are simply works of a master sculptor. Each is set in the same pose, but minute differences can be seen between them.

Area 33 – The Archive

The walls of this room are carved in tiny, orderly script – clearly a record or reference in an organized language. Stacks of stone tablets are arranged in rows here, creating a series of freestanding walls with narrow access between them. A low stack near the entry appears to be the latest, and several blank and partially completed tablets lie nearby.

Unless something has caused him to venture forth sooner, the Archivist can be found here chiselling away at the tablets (after all, the events of the PCs incursions are significant enough to warrant recording). He will cease and interact with the PCs on arrival (See below for more detail). So long as the PCs are non-destructive he will be a calm and patiently precise conversationalist, pleased to discuss the temple and its history. If even one of the tablets or murals is damaged (or the PCs have previously damaged anything he is aware of) his calm façade will give way to a murderous rage, and he will turn his attentions to destroying the perpetrators.

The room itself is the temple archive. Here the Archivist records the significant events of the temple, day by day and year by year. Here are thousands of tablets stacked here (each 2 feet high, 1 foot wide and an inch thick) and accessing older ones would require a slow, painstaking restacking. The tablets only have information the archivist considers significant, so there are gaps in the days and months representing 'slow and uneventful' periods of history. All the records are chiselled in Mulhorandi.

The walls are reserved for Gebite doctrine and dogma. Almost everything of significance about this religion is found here (it is not relevant to the adventure, but a small appendix – page 43 – has been provided to facilitate this if any PCs are interested). While this predates the Archivists current loyalties (to Lashpera), his nature is to preserve records, so they remain.

The Archivist and Lira

The Archivist is happy to share the history of the temple and information on Geb, Lashpera and the time after up until now (see the Background, Research and Geb Appendix sections). He can confirm the known facts of the Background that pertain to the temple itself, and Lashpera's early history, but nothing on her from after her death). He can discuss the Calcification Aura (page 18) and the ecosystem in Area 36 (page 25). The Archivist can discuss Lashpera's method of death, but won't mention that her 'avatar' is 'returning to life'. The Archivist will never lie, but he will choose not to discuss a subject, or imply he has nothing relevant to say.

The Archivist recognizes Lira as some form of incarnation of Lashpera, and believes (correctly) that her presence is affecting the Avatar in Area 35. He also assumes (correctly) that she is hiding this fact, and though eager to see his goddess return, he will try to passively assist rather than actively force the issue. He will not directly talk to or engage her, nor intentionally reveal her, though sharp characters – DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) – might notice he constantly stares at her, as if trying to memorise her and her actions. Similarly, Lira (despite being a supposed historian and ultimately the driving force behind the expedition) asks very few questions and also avoids too much interaction with the Archivist. The DM should pit her passive Deception (19) against any stated PC Insight checks to indicate this seems inconsistent with her stated purpose. This is the characters chance before Area 35 to sense something is very amiss with Lira. If this is discovered and acted upon, Lira will try to use Deception to convince the PCs she's simply overawed by the events and revelations delving into the temple has unearthed. Failing this, she tries to reach Area 35, or flees from the PCs to fight another day (and try to take the Opal later, preferably when they are weak from combating the Avatar).

Area 34 – The Archivist's Quarters

This room is an artist's workshop or studio. Paintings and stone sculptures, some only partially finished, are spread around the room on various stands, benches or podiums. A rack of paints rests against the far wall, and frames holding artisan's tools – brushes and fine chisels – are arranged in impeccable order next to those.

When not recording the temple's events in either tablets or murals, the Archivist spends his time here perfecting his skills. Unlike the records and murals these are the Archivist's private works, and he is more evasive (and even dismissive) about discussing them, though he will concede to their accuracy if

approached about their historical value.

The works around the room are clearly those of a master, and just as clearly the same work as the newer art in the temple, as well as the sculptures in Area 32. The subjects are almost universally Lashpera's opal hag form, which matches the renderings of her elsewhere. While the art is masterful, it is unfinished, and effectively worthless until complete.

The artisan tools are for sculpture and painting. The paints are all created from flora and fauna from the cavern and surrounding woodlands. A DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check can determine this, though the thought of animal (and even humanoid) blood, bone and viscera serving as some of the components might give characters pause.

Area 35 - The Temple of the Opal Goddess, Lashpera the Destroyer

As the doors grind open you see a grisly chamber beyond, and the stench of decay and old blood hits you. The walls are plain stone, but stained with brown crusted splashes of dried blood, like a mad painter had flung it in all directions. The floor is littered with yellowed and broken bones, collected in odd little piles and clusters. You can see both animal and humanoid bones in the mounds.

A 5 foot statue of shimmering opal stands near the centre of the room, but oddly off to one side. It is carved in the likeness of the monstrous hag-like woman depicted in the murals elsewhere. She is dressed in tattered robes and holds a hand aloft, palm out as if warding you off. A shard of glinting metal protrudes from her palm.

In a recess at the far end of the chamber is a hideously carved stone altar, its stone so blood caked that the original color is a mystery. An ancient corpse lies atop it, ribs snapped open, vacant eye sockets staring at the ceiling.

The bones and corpse are the remains of sacrifices that Lashpera's cult made to her. Some are centuries old, but some date back as recently as 20 years ago - the second incarnation of the cult. The vast majority are ancient (and ultimately unremarkable) creatures and people unfortunate enough to be swept up in the cult's last culling before a band of adventurers - including Granfang's paladin owner - assaulted and slew them and their goddess. Some of the bones are newer - the remains of the last cult, slain by the Archivist - though they are indistinguishable from the victims at this point. The adventurer's remains were removed by the paladin for burial in the forest above. If closely investigated the characters find that all the bones are fossilized to brittle stone.

The statue is Lashpera's opal form, currently a mere statue left inanimate by the assaults of the ancient heroes - a shard of Granfang embedded in the Opal (the other shards of the sword lie scattered at her feet). If the PCs have brought the hilt of Granfang with them the sword reforms as they enter, the shard



pulling free of the statue. If they did not bring the sword, the fragment remains where it is until removed (requiring a DC 18 Strength check). Inspecting the inanimate statue reveals the pearly opal embedded in its palm, still shimmering (and detecting as magical) despite the steel shard through it. The shard would need to be removed to remove the opal. Even if the statue's hand is removed, once the Avatar animates (see below), the disconnected hand still under its control (which might be highly surprising to anyone holding it). The Avatar can reconnect the hand by placing it back on its wrist, or can simply have it hover, move and act at its command (see the Avatar statblock).

The statue is inanimate as the PCs enter, but oddly appears to have slightly different variations each time it is gazed upon (slight expression changes, or minute position shifts of arms or claws). At first it might seem like a trick of the light or shadow, but PCs examining the statue for an extended period and making a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) can confirm actual movement. The statue is regaining 'life' in the presence of Lira, and will be fully animate in 2d4 rounds of the PCs entering the room, becoming the **Avatar of The Opal Goddess**. The PCs can attack it as it is 'coming to life' (and it is essentially helpless at that time - considered to have the *paralysed* condition) but the Archivist will defend his goddess. Once fully active it will attack the intruders, and the Archivist will join in, desperate to safeguard his goddess.

Treasure - Searching the room, either before the avatar animates

or the dust has settled reveals a small pile of valuables behind the altar - obviously a tribute to the goddess. This pile includes a pile of loose coins (754gp, 679sp and 481cp) as well as 12 gems (worth 50gp each) and an *Ioun Stone of Insight* (+2 Wisdom). The corpse of the Avatar yields raw opal also (See statblock).

Lira and Lashpera

Lira and the Avatar are essentially now separate but linked entities, each holding a part of Lashpera's full power. Lira is a reincarnation of Lashpera's soul, while the Avatar is only a vestige personality trapped in the calcified body, driven by primal urges to destroy anything and anyone that does not directly serve or submit to her. While animated, the Avatar recognizes Lira as 'part' of itself, and leaves her alone, but is not under her control in any way. The Avatar recognizes the Archivist as a servant, and similarly ignores him. The PCs, however, are seen as interlopers to be destroyed.

Lira needs the Opal in the Avatar's hand to restore herself. Removing this would 'kill' the Avatar, or more rightly allow Lira to absorb the Avatar's essence. The shard of *Granfang* has sundered the Opal, but once removed the gem would become whole again, ready for Lira's use. If the PCs were not present, Lira believes she could pacify the Avatar with her will, allowing the transfer to occur peaceably, but while they are present the destructive instincts of the Avatar will take precedence.

If the PCs don't have the hilt of *Granfang* to automatically remove the shard from the statue, Lira (assuming she is still with the party) attempts to remove the shard under the guise of "investigating the statue" or attempts to get the PCs to do so. In time she could remove it from the statue, but having the characters fight and slay it (or be slain by it) suits her just fine - better to have them out of the way, or at least be wounded and lacking resources to confront her.

If the PCs have discovered her and driven her off, she trails them here if she can, seeking to opportunistically steal the Opal at the conclusion of the combat, or scavenge it after they depart in the unlikely event they were to leave it behind.

At the conclusion of the battle with the Avatar (assuming Lira still lives), read or paraphrase the following;

With a ponderous groan the statue topples, striking the floor and shattering into hundreds of fragments. The hand with the embedded opal clatters away across the stone, spinning to a stop at the feet of Lira, who is skulking near the doors. Her twisted grin is manic, nothing like the demure scholar she seemed. Grabbing it up, she laughs as the stone falls away, leaving the gem free in her hands. Instantly it embeds itself in her palm and she transforms into a beautiful, demonic figure garbed in gothic armor, her pale appearance somewhere between the scholar and the statue. "I am whole again!" she exults, basking in her restoration, before turning her wicked grin on you. "I suppose I have you to thank for this. What would be an appropriate reward I wonder?"

At this point the restored Lashpera has achieved her goal. She has no particular plan or attachment for the temple. Her long years as a slave in the abyss has educated her in the ways of true power, and curbed her wantonly destructive urges. She has no care for the Archivist or the history here either. But as yet, she has no fixed plans on what to do next, and the PCs don't factor in at all. All she really wants is to survive and go forth to build a power base and subjugate weaker creatures. Like every unique demon of a certain stature she has the potential to become a demon lord in time.

The DM and the PCs can have a lot of impact on what happens next. If the PCs are weak (and the DM is not confident they would survive a combat), she could dismiss them as a threat and simply move on. She has no specific desire to destroy them (beyond the usual demonic urges). If they seem amenable she might offer them a chance to serve her. She could make use of mortal slaves. She feels *slightly* indebted and might offer them a boon or favour, but only if it suits her whims - she's not bound to repay them. If they choose to attack she's eager to flex her newly renewed powers, but she'll attempt to flee if things turn against her. She won't risk banishment back to be abyss and the slavery it represents (if she's slain in the Realms her soul returns to Fraz Urb'luu in the abyss). If she is slighted or defeated she will hold a grudge and seek to enact revenge on the PCs in the future.

Area 36 - The Deep Cave

The description from Area 27 can be paraphrased if not already given. The primary cavern is 100 feet in height, several hundred feet wide, almost 1000 feet long and gradually slopes down and away. At the far end a series of smaller caverns and tunnels lead off and deeper into the Underdark. This area is left for the DM to detail or simply close off if they choose.

The cavern itself pierces the hill above in dozens of places, allowing sun and starlight in, as well as water, wind and other weather effects. The cavern itself is moist and humid, remaining comfortably warm in summer regardless of the time of day, and cooler (though not as harsh as the lands above) in winter. Water flows down constantly in rivulets from the lake above, creating a cascading series of streams and pools that drain out of the lowest point in the cavern. The cavern has hundreds of columns, stalagmites and stalactites reaching from its floor and ceiling, creating natural barriers and undulating terrain. Mineral deposits in the walls cause light to reflect and shimmer, and certain areas have differing bands of minerals, gems or metals that change the colours and textures of various sections of the walls.

Within the cavern is a strange ecosystem brought about by the presence of the Calcification Aura, which radiates from this location. Most plants and creatures subjected to it calcify quickly, but over the centuries species have either partially or completely adapted to it, such as the Stone Serpent. What

results is a local flora and fauna that either slowly calcify over their lifespan, resulting in strange preserved shrubs, ferns or animals that seem like rough sculptures, or still living creatures of elemental earth that resemble 'surface' species. Exploring the cavern the PCs can document hard bodied insects and bats, small rodents and creepers and mushrooms that behave as they would expect, but have tough outer surfaces like rock. In addition, they can find amazing fish or critters that 'swim' through the earth as well as water, crabs that seem to become rocks and vice versa, and other such wonders. There are also a few **bulettes** (landsharks) that come and go, as well as the occasional earth mephit. Somewhere in the lowest portion of the cavern is a massive **Elder Earth Elemental** that exists as a spiralled column of earth and mineral deposits, occasionally changing shape or angle at its unknowable whim. The cave is also a pilgrimage point for bands of Petch and Svirkneblin.

Aside from a few small predatory creatures (stone snakes or spiders) and the occasional hungry landshark, the cavern is relatively safe for PCs – beyond the effects of the Calcification Aura. However, if anyone tries to damage or alter the cavern, or extract any precious metals the cavern seems to come alive with one purpose – destroy or drive off the defilers like wrathful nature itself has turned against them. The creatures all move with an unnatural coordination, and more numerous and dangerous creatures begin to come forth from the lightless depths below. Inexorable, this purge does not stop until the defilers are driven to the surface. If the PCs trigger this, they (and the orcs if they still inhabit the upper level) will be forced

to flee or die. The cavern denizens do not affect the Stone Serpent, Archivist, the Avatar or Lira (Lashpeera), nor will they extend as far as the Monastery (Areas 7-9).

Conclusion

The adventure may climax and conclude in any number of ways, as the PCs choices ultimately affect the environment of the dungeon.

The PCs might defeat or release a powerful demon, trigger a purge from the earth, or uncover lost lore of the region and a religion rarely seen in the in the Sword Coast and the North. Any or all of these things might trigger ongoing consequences for the local area, Baldur's Gate or beyond.

That being said, most of what occurs (or does not occur) in the lower sections of the dungeon are optional encounters and outcomes.

The party was hired to retrieve Antivar, his retainers and neutralise the Orc threat. Returning to Baldur's Gate achieving any/all of these goals should be considered a success, and they will earn the thanks, and promised reward of Ulder Ravengard. If the PCs cannot or will not retrieve Antivar, or actually get him killed, they will earn the enmity of the powerful lord, who is not above besmirching their reputation at the least, and making their lives difficult in ways only a man with the resources of the Flaming Fist at his disposal can.



Appendix 1 - Magic Items

Troll Claw

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

This grisly item is a large green skinned, leathery hand suspended from a thick iron chain. The long fingers end in yellowed claws. The hand flexes periodically of its own accord.

The attuned wearer gains regeneration at a rate of 1d6 hp every 10 minutes, provided they have at least 1 hp. The regeneration ability ceases to function for 1 hour if the wearer is damaged by fire or acid. The Troll Claw does not assist the owner to regenerate lost limbs.

The Troll Claw grants the wearer advantage on Constitution saving throws to avoid or reduce effects that alter their physical body, such as polymorph or petrification.

The Troll Claw is not without its detriments however. Attunement to the claw requires eating a portion of the flesh on the item (which promptly regrows). The act itself is nauseating, and most creatures find stomaching the flesh difficult. While stomach acid will keep the flesh from growing, it is never fully digested. The attuned creature must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw each day or suffer the *poisoned* condition. Success means the creature feels only mildly queasy (no mechanical effects). The *poisoned* condition might be alleviated via magic, but while the flesh is ingested it can never be permanently avoided. Three consecutive failed saves causes the creature to vomit up the flesh, losing attunement.

Granfang

Weapon (sword), very rare.

This sword is an intact hilt with the blade shattered about a foot after the hilt. The 'blade' is a collection of steel fragments held together in a barely perceptible magic field.

Granfang looks broken and ineffective, but acts in all ways (weight, balance etc) like a longsword. The weapon is solid, and the sections cannot be removed (unless subject to anti-magic effects).

The blade is a +1 weapon that deals force damage rather than slashing damage. It also grants the wielder +1 to AC when held. If subject to a successful *Dispel Magic* (treat as 7th level effect) or anti-magic effect, the sections fall to the ground and the weapon is completely ineffective until its magic returns (10 minutes in the case of *Dispel Magic* or once removed from ongoing anti-magic area of effect). If the sections are within 20 feet of each other when this occurs the blade reforms. If pieces are ever separated, they automatically re-join the hilt if it is later brought within 20 feet, bursting through containers and barriers with an equivalent Strength of 30.



Opal of Lashpera

Artifact (requires attunement)

This opal is a cream pearlescent gemstone in a circular cut 1 inch in diameter. The gem seems to shimmer under any light and is warm to the touch.

The opal was once an artefact of the faith of Geb, a gem that radiated strange properties tied to the earth. Its connection with the tainted spirit of Lashpera has twisted it into a darkly demonic item.

The opal, when attuned, sinks into the palm of the user, granting them immortality in the form of transformation into a creature of elemental earth type. This transformation instantly calcifies their inner organs ceasing their aging process and sustaining them without food, water or the need to sleep. It also slowly hardens and strengthens their flesh, granting a +1 bonus to AC and +1 to Strength each month, to a maximum total of +8 over 8 months. This natural hardening does not stack with armor. However, it also reduces their Dexterity by 1 each month, to a total of 8 points loss after 8 months, as the stony form slowly becomes less fluid and dextrous.

The attuned wielder becomes dependant on the gem. Removing it results in the petrified condition. This is reversible in the first 8 months of attunement with *Greater Restoration*, but after this point only the gem itself can reverse the condition.

Destroying the Opal

The opal of Lashpera is both an elemental and infernal item and it has existed as the conduit for a split soul. In order to destroy it, the opal must be sundered, with each half taken to the heart of the elemental plane of air and the Heavens respectively, and there kept apart for 8 months. At the end of this time the opal crumbles to dust.

Appendix 2 – Creatures and NPCs

Random Encounters

AWAKENED TREE

Huge plant, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 66 (7d12 + 21)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	6 (-2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +2

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

False Appearance. While the tree remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal tree.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., *Hit:* 14 (3d6+4) bludgeoning damage.

Brulgurt the troll has adapted to his 'clawless' existence in the wake of the ill-fated encounter with the orc tribe now calling itself the Tribe of the Troll Claw (a name which rankles the volatile beast).

He has crafted himself a prosthetic claw from stone and bone, garnished from local sources and sharpened to a razor's edge. At the conclusion of each battle or kill the brittle claws are often damaged, so he keeps replacements in his possession to ensure his wicked prosthesis is always at its brutal best.

He has also discovered that he can dip the claws in a concoction made from rotting flesh to sicken opponents that don't die in the initial exchanges of a fight, ensuring himself advantage as the battle wears on.

He carries a belt pouch with him at all times, in which he keeps a half dozen claws, a sealed pot of the foul substance he poisons them with (12 doses), a chunk of uncut agate that he thinks is pretty (worth 50gp) and a battered, rusted helm sized for a dwarf (a trinket from his first actual fight - other than killing

BRULGURT, TROLL

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (-2)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception, 12

Languages Giant, Orc

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Keen Smell. Brulgurt has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Regeneration. Brulgurt regenerates 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If he takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. Brulgurt dies only if he starts his turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Brulgurt makes three attacks: one with his bite, one with his claw and one with his makeshift claw

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.

Makeshift Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 11 (3d4+4) piercing damage. Target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure the target gains the poisoned condition for 1 hour.

beasts - which holds immeasurable sentimental value to him).

Brulgurt's fondest dream is to confront the orc that took his hand and use his new 'claw' on him. Its a frustrating dream because the 'Orc King' never leaves his fortress (The Temple) without enough guards to ensure Brulgurt is no match for them. He secretly fears the orc, and the potential loss of his other hand but cannot let go of his desire for revenge. Its enough to drive him to go against his natural instincts and potentially ally with the PCs for an assault on the Temple.

DRYAD

Medium fey, true neutral

Armor Class 11 (16 with barkskin)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Elvish, Sylvan, Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Magic Resistance. The dryad has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Speak With Beasts And Plants. The dryad can communicate with beasts and plants as if they shared a language.

Tree Stride. Once on her turn, the dryad can use 10 feet of her movement to step magically into one living tree within her reach and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of the first tree, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both must be Large or bigger.

Innate Spellcasting. Dryad's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12). Dryad can innately cast the following spells,

requiring no material components:

At will: *druidcraft*

3/day each: *entangle*, *goodberry*

1/day each: *barkskin*, *pass without trace*, *shillelagh*

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, (+6 to hit with shillelagh), one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage or 8 (1d8+4) bludgeoning damage with shillelagh.

Fey Charm. The dryad targets one humanoid or beast that she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see the dryad it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed. The charmed creature regards the dryad as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the dryad's control, it takes the dryad's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can.

Each time the dryad or its allies do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the dryad dies, is on a different plane of existence from the target, or ends the effect as a bonus action. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the dryad's Fey Charm for the next 24 hours.

The dryad can have no more than one humanoid and up to three beasts charmed at a time.

Nyma, like most dryads is cautious and distrustful of humanoids, particularly in this forest, where the orcs of the Tribe of the Troll Claw hold sway.

Nyma will be cautious to the point of almost fearful of the PCs upon initially encountering them. Some fast talking - a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check - will be required to stop her from simply vanishing via her Tree Stride ability, spying on the PCs from a safe distance until they leave. If the PCs have druids, elves or gnomes among their group, the DC becomes 12, but if there are half-orcs or other savage races represented (DMs discretion) the DC rises to 16.

Nyma is fairly well informed about the current state of the Wood and the creatures within it, however will be very reluctant to discuss what she considered to be secret information with outsiders. If the PCs present themselves as either looking to remove some of the external creatures (ie the humans who came through recently) or some of the more destructive or disruptive denizens (the Orcs, Brulgurt or other monsters) she will be more helpful on those subjects. She can direct the PCs to the temple, and she can tell them that the orcs number somewhere

between 20 to 30 warriors and scouts, though some of those range through the woods at any given time. She is aware of the human explorers, the ambush that took place not far from the temple, and the subsequent capture of the survivors. Critically, she can tell the PCs that the prisoners are kept in the building outside the main temple complex.

Nyma is not intended to be a combat encounter, but if forced to fight she has 3 charmed **Wardogs** (stolen from orc patrols) nearby, who arrive within one round of her call. She keeps them away from the squirrels because their presence upsets the little creatures. In addition she will target the largest, strongest, and least intelligent looking PC to charm for protection.

If the PCs manage to befriend Nyma, she can be used as a springboard for other adventures in the Wood of Sharp Teeth, perhaps asking the PCs to investigate other incursions, drive off dangerous predators or the like.

DIRE BEAR

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 103 (9d12 + 45)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +5

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages -

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Keen Smell. The dire bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Bloodrage. If the dire bear is brought to less than half its hit points, it can use its reaction to enter an enraged state for 1 minute. During this time it gains advantage to all of its attacks. When the rage ends it gains 1 level of exhaustion.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dire bear makes two attacks, one with its bite and one with its claws

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+6) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6+6) slashing damage.

GRAY OOZE

Medium ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (3d8 + 9)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Skills Stealth +2

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Amorphous. The ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Corrode Metal. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal that hits the ooze corrodes. After dealing damage the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the ooze is destroyed after dealing damage. The ooze can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical metal in 1 round.

False Appearance. While the ooze remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an oily pool or wet rock.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage. Target also takes 7 (2d6) acid damage, and if the target is wearing nonmagical metal armour, its armour is partly corroded and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armour is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

ORC SCOUT

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Survival +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Keen Hearing And Sight. The orc scout has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The orc scout makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Handaxe. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., Hit: 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

The orc scouts are scattered throughout the Wood of Sharp Teeth. They are assigned in pairs, and they work autonomously from the main Tribe. Their primary roles are to hunt and gather fresh food, as well as scout for threats to the Temple and keep watch on the local forest denizens.

The scout pairs return to the temple once per week or so, in a rotating roster. Scattered throughout the wood are a number of small 'hunting blinds', hidden camps in small crags or shallow caves where meat, blankets, fire supplies, knives, arrows and the like can be found. When not returning to the Temple, the patrols make use of these. The blinds are communal, and no personal or valuable items are left behind.

In addition to their weapons, each scout carries a signal horn for raising the alarm across distances, but they have been instructed to use them only in the most dire of circumstances (full scale assault, dragon sighting etc) where the entire Tribe is under imminent threat of annihilation. At first, the PCs will

OWLBEAR

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 59 (7d10 + 21)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13, darkvision 60 ft.

Languages -

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Sight And Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight and smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two attacks, one with its bite and one with its claws

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d10+5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8+5) slashing damage.

not qualify as such a threat, and encountered scouts will seek to report their presence in person, and maybe harry, snare or snipe the PCs if they think they can safely do so. The scouts are not interested in a toe-to-toe fight, and will skirmish only.

Each scout carries a handful of coins (1d6gp, 1d6sp, 1d4cp), and the odd trophy or trinket they have found or made in the wilderness.

QUICKKLING

Tiny fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 10 (3d4 + 3)

Speed 120 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	23 (+6)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +8, Perception +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Blurred Movement. Attack rolls against the quickling have disadvantage unless the quickling is incapacitated or restrained.

Evasion. If the quickling is subject to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The quickling makes three dagger attacks

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., *Hit:* 8 (1d4+6) piercing damage.

ANTIVAR RAVENGARD

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Arcana +3, History +3, Persuasion +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Rapier +1. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. Antivar adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit. To do so he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

his retainers his responsibility to care for. It is the perfect blend of patronising and responsible attitudes that should generate mixed feelings in the PCs.

His current state of incarceration has dented both his confidence and arrogance a little, though once safely back to civilization these will recover no less for the experience. In time it might lead to wisdom.

Once freed, he will expect the PCs to 'rescue' Lira, reclaim his heirloom sword, and escort them all back to safety. If they do not immediately comply with his command, he will fall to reasoning, wheedling, threatening and finally begging to get his way.

If the PCs do not wish to have a group of prisoners tailing them throughout the adventure Antivar may be convinced to hide in the surrounding woods until their return. This requires the promise to recover Lira and his rapier, and a successful DC 14 Charisma check (Intimidation, Persuasion or Deception apply at DM's discretion, or player stated course of action).

Antivar has no possessions when first encountered. His statistics (above) assume the return of his heirloom rapier, or the DM can modify if needs be.

Orcs & Prisoners

Antivar is a young man with olive skin, dark hair and (until recently) immaculately groomed facial hair.

Antivar typifies some of the best and worst qualities expected to be found in nobility, particularly young nobles.

He is entitled, arrogant (though currently less so), narcissistic and blithely oblivious to his faults. He expects to be agreed with when he makes a statement and obeyed when he issues a command.

On the other hand he is intelligent, brave and loyal (which in this case is potentially doing more harm than good). He also takes his 'noblesse oblige' (noble obligations) seriously, and considers

GRUSHNAK, ORC CHIEFTAIN

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +6, Wis +3

Skills Intimidation +5, Persuasion +5, Insight +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, Grushnak can move up to his speed toward a hostile creature that he can see.

Gruumsh's Fury. Grushnak deals an additional dice damage (same as the weapon) when he hits with a weapon attack (included in the attacks).

Flaming Axe. Grushnak carries a greataxe of dwarvish design that can accomodate a flask of alchemist's fire in the shaft. At the press of a stud the concotion is released through channels in the blades, causing it to be wreathed in flames. Each strike with the axe deals an additional 1d4 Fire damage. This effect lasts for 10 rounds before the alchemist's fire is exhausted. Reloading the axe with a new vial takes an action.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Grushnak makes two attacks with his greataxe or spear.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d12+4) slashing damage. +1d4 Fire damage

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage.

Battle Cry (1/Day). Each creature of the Grushnak's choice that is within 30 feet of him, can hear him, and is not already affected by Battle Cry gain advantage on attack rolls until the start of Grushnak's next turn. Grushnak can then make one attack as a bonus action.

Grushnak is a massive orc with deep green skin, black hair, long tusks and a mass of white scars in the left side of his face.

LIRA

Medium fiend, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 144 (17d8 + 68)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +6, Cha +9

Skills Deception +9, Persuasion +9, Arcana +8, History +8, Perception +6, Stealth +6

Condition Immunities petrified

Senses passive Perception 16, truesight 60 ft.

Languages Common, Orc, Infernal, Abyssal

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Nondetection Aura. Lira is under a constant Nondetection spell effect. She does not detect as a fiend to any abilities that detect fiends, though she does take damage from abilities that deal damage or extra damage to fiends.

Innate Spellcasting. Lira's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16). Lira can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *Disguise Self*, *Friends*, *Mage Hand*, *Minor Illusion*, *Prestigation*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Lira makes two weapon attacks.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

He might be considered handsome by the standards of his race, and has wise eyes.

Grushnak (left) carries with him 4 flasks of alchemist's fire which he uses to 'power' his flaming greataxe. He also carries a key to the Treasury (Area 17), and 54 gp, 23 sp and 13 cp in loose coins. He wears an intricately carved tooth necklace (worth 50gp) and has another just like it in his pouch (also worth 50gp) that he plans to surprise his consort, Relka, with on her birthday.

Lira is a pretty woman with pale skin and chestnut hair, bound tightly into a pony tale. She has the mousey look of a scholar, but comes to like when passionately discussing the temple. Lira's statblock (above) assumes she is armed by the PCs or finds a stray knife.

ORC

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (hide armour)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 9 (1d12+3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

ORC YOUNGLING

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (hide armor)

Hit Points 6 (1d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Handaxe. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

ORC WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (hide armor, shield)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 30/120 ft., *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

The orcs in the temple can be found in essentially three types;

Orc Warriors are the elite forces trained by Velkesh. They use superior tactics and shields over standard orcs, and are part of the reason the Tribe is so successful. They still fight with the ferocity of their kind, but tend to acquit themselves in a more organized fashion.

The Orcs are more typical of their kind, lacking the regimented training provided by Velkesh. Their primary tasks around the temple are domestic in nature - cook the food, manage the dogs, raise and train the young etc. They are every bit as deadly as expected of their race, however, and woe betide adventurers that scoff at a greenskin in a cook's apron or oven mitts.

The Younglings are smaller, faster and no less ferocious than their adult counterparts. It is said orcs are born with blades in hand, and these children certainly reinforce that reputation.

There are no non-combatants amongst the tribe.

In addition to their weapons, most of the orcs will carry a few personal items or trinkets, as well as tools of their respective jobs. If the temple comes under assault, they join the battle, with the younglings acting as runners and scouts. Some may carry flasks of Naptha (see Area 5) to use as molotov cocktails.

RETAINER

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) damage.

Suthrain is a strange of seer, mystic and prophet. She is attractive in her way, with smooth skin and long green hair, but madness edges her eyes. She is unusual by orc standards, but is brutal, unpredictable and undeniably powerful, and thus commands respect and fear amongst the tribe.

There is no greater daily reminder of this than the still squirming Troll claw that hangs around her neck. It is the symbol of the tribe (having been severed by Grushnak and animated by Suthrain), and acts as both figurative focus for her position as 'speaker for Grummsh' and literal focus for her spellcasting ability.

The Tribe has settled in the temple at Suthrain's insistence, as she has become obsessed with discovering its secrets and power. It has this that has caused her to form a bond (relationship) with Lira, and though tells herself she is just using the scholar and would discard her once her value ceased, the truth is that she genuinely cares for Lira (Unfortunately the same cannot be said for Lira and her feelings toward Suthrain).

In defense of the temple Suthrain has numerous spells she can bring to bear, but is acutely aware of the damage enemy spellcasters could cause in the tight confines of the temple and will always address this threat first. She will seek to engage from behind orc lines, and will use *Counterspell* to counteract area of effect spells that might devastate the tribes warriors en mass.

Unlike the rest of her tribe, Suthrain is not interested in fighting to the death, and if it appears the tribe will fall she will try to escape using the exit and boat at Area 21.

SUTHRAIN

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (hide)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +5, Cha +4

Skills Arcana +3, Religion +3, Perception +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, Suthrain can move up to her speed toward a hostile creature that she can see.

Troll Claw. Suthrain wears the Troll Claw, a magic item from which the tribe takes its name. Whilst wearing it Suthrain regenerates 1d6 hp every 10 minutes, and has advantage on Constitution saving throws against effects that alter her body - such as polymorph or petrification. The Troll Claw ceases to function for 1 hour if she sustains Fire or Acid damage.

Spellcasting. Suthrain is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Suthrain has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, light, mending, spare the dying*

1st level (4 slots): *bane, command, cure wounds, identify, inflict wounds*

2nd level (3 slots): *aid, augury, hold person, silence, suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, bestow curse, glyph of warding, non detection, speak with dead*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye, confusion, divination, stone shape*

5th level (1 slots): *contact other plane, legend lore, scrying*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Signs & Portents. Suthrain gains occasional insights that assist her to avoid injury. As a reaction, Suthrain can impose disadvantage on a single incoming weapon or spell attack directed at her.

VELKESH, BLADE OF ILNEVAL

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +3

Skills Insight +3, Intimidation +4, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, Velkesh can move up to his speed toward a hostile creature that he can see.

Foe Smiter Of Ilneval. Velkesh deals an extra die of damage when he hits with a longsword attack (included in the attack).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Velkesh makes two melee attacks with his longsword or two ranged attacks with his javelin. If Ilneval's Command is available to use, he can use it after these attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Ilneval's Command (Recharge 4-6). Up to three allied orcs within 120 feet of Velkesh that can hear him can use their reactions to each make one weapon attack.

Velkesh is a powerfully built orc with skin so dark green as to almost be blue. He wears his black hair in a topknot. He has scars, but unlike most orcs these are fine and small, suggesting he is a skilled enough combatant to keep any wounds shallow.

Like the other leaders of the Tribe, Velkesh is not a typical orc. Early in life he heard the calling of Ilneval rather than Grumsh, and though every bit as physically powerful as the next orc, Velkesh is more cunning and tactically minded than any other he's ever encountered. Though he is still as chaotic and bloodthirsty as the rest of the tribe, he is obsessed with plans and strategies over blindly bashing at an enemy.

Grushnak was wise enough to recognise Velkesh's talents, and

WARDOG

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (15 with armor harness)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Hearing And Smell. The orc wardog has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The orc wardog has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the wardog's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4+2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

give him the opportunity to exercise them in a way that keeps him from plotting to take over the tribe. Velkesh uses his energy dreaming up clever but simple enough strategies for the tribe to enact, and spends all of his time trying to force the otherwise chaotic creatures into these unfamiliar methods of waging war.

Velkesh realizes his position is as much to keep him occupied as to advance the tribe, but its content - for now - examining just how efficient he can make the tribe. If he ever reaches the limit of what the tribe can achieve militarily, the uneasy truce between himself and Grushnak will fail and there will be a power struggle.

Even though he is no weakling, if combat breaks out Velkesh will always seek orcs to command. He knows he can inspire them to greater efforts that they could achieve separately, and that this is often the difference between victory and defeat.

Velkesh carries a small journal and charcoal with him wherever he goes. Contained within (in Orcish), are supply orders, inventories, tactical plans and snippets from a number of famous military speeches each with a simplified 'orc version' to deliver to his troops. He also carries a key to area 17.

Lower Temple Denizens

The Archivist appears as an old man with rough skin and white dreadlocks that clatter as he moves. These resemble stalagmites in their calcified state. He is garbed in a stiff grey robe.

The Archivist, who has long since forgotten his own name, sees himself as the caretaker and curator of the Temple of the Opal Goddess.

He arrived as a priest of the Geb - one of a dozen - as part of a mission that was following up on ancient lore about a sacred site to Lord Earth. He was less devout than the rest - more a clerk than a holy man. At this time the priesthood was failing and the pilgrimage was a desperate attempt to rediscover their lost deity.

Upon their arrival, the upper levels were uninhabited, and they found signs of both the original Geb occupants and that of the degenerate Cult that co-opted and defaced the site. The other priests were incensed, but the Archivist was intrigued, and dutifully catalogued both the initial and subsequent occupation. The lower levels were nothing short of miraculous to the priests, as was the ecology of the caves. As priests of Geb they were

aware of, but unaffected by, the calcification aura.

The discovery of the damage wrought, and the opal 'statue' of Lashpera caused dismay amongst the clergy, but the Archivist was struck by her beauty and power. He saw her as an evolution of stone, and superior to the waning influence of Geb. It was then that he finally had a religious epiphany, and turned on his fellow priests, slaughtering them as sacrifice to his new mistress.

He then raised a new cult in her honour, but when worship failed to stir her from her 'slumber', he slaughtered the cult in sacrifice and, with the patience of stone - returned to waiting.

Over the long years his faith has never wavered, being bolstered by the development of his stony form and visions of the history of the temple. He is more convinced than ever his mistress is close to awakening. He honed his artisan craft, and began adorning the temple with statues and murals, supplementing his endless records with the beauty of art.

With the proximity of Lira, he has felt the Avatar finally begin to stir. He is not sure what to expect, but devoutly prepares to serve his mistress as she desires.

ARCHIVIST

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 119 (14d8 + 56)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +7

Skills Arcana +6, Religion +6, History +6, Nature +6, Performance +5

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities petrified, paralyzed, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses blindsight 50 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Mulhorandi, Common, Terran

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Stonewalking. The Archivist can move through stone at will at his standard speed, and can remain within a stone surface indefinitely. He can choose which stone sources to affect (so he can stand on a stone floor while walking through a stone wall). Whilst within stone he can 'see' using his blindsight ability.

Primal Frenzy (1/Short Rest). The Archivist can choose to enter a

state of Primal Frenzy as a bonus action. This state lasts 10 rounds, and during that time he gains an additional claw attack when he takes the attack action, and all his attacks are at advantage. All attacks against him during this time are at advantage. The archivist can end the state early as a free action.

Story Of Stone. The Archivist can cast a special form of Clairvoyance at will. The sensor created can only form within the temple itself. In addition to viewing the present events around the sensor, the Archivist can actually view the past events that occurred historically within the sensor's range, choosing a date/time period and viewing 10 minutes of time from the chosen moment.

Innate Spellcasting. Archivist's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14). Archivist can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *Stone Shape*

3/day each: *Slow*

1/day each: *Wall of Stone*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Archivist makes two claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d4+2) slashing damage.

AVATAR OF THE OPAL GODDESS

Medium construct, chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 117 (18d8 + 36)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +8, Con +5, Wis +3, Cha +5

Damage Immunities poison, bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Resistances fire, cold, lightning

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder

Condition Immunities petrified, poisoned, exhaustion, charmed, blinded, frightened, paralyzed, unconscious

Senses passive Perception 10, truesight 60 ft.

Languages Common, Infernal, Abyssal

Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

Blood From A Stone. When the Avatar strikes a creature affected by the Calcification Aura the target begins to bleed uncontrollably. For every level of Exhaustion they possess from the aura, a bleeding creature loses 1 hp at the beginning of their turn. This bleeding can be halted by any application of magical healing, or by removal of the Exhaustion caused by the

Calcification Aura.

Shard In The Works. The shard of Granfang has sundered the Opal in the palm of the Avatar. Until the shard is removed it cannot use its Radiant Beam ability. The shard can be removed with a successful DC 18 Strength Check, or automatically if the hilt of Granfang is present within 20 feet.

Shades Of Venus. The Avatar retains control over its entire form, including any parts removed prior to animation. Removed parts can hover and move at the will of the Avatar, with a flight speed of 30. The Avatar can utilise removed limbs remotely as if they are still attached, including grasping or attacking with them. Any removed parts returned to the main body of the Avatar regraft immediately.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Avatar makes three attacks with its Opalescent Claws or two attacks with its Radiant Beam.

Opalescent Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d4+6) slashing damage plus Blood From A Stone (above)

Radiant Beam. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60/180 ft., *Hit:* 16 (3d8+3) radiant damage.

The Avatar of the Opal Goddess is a vestige personality trapped within the stony corpse of Lashpera's transformed human body.

Despite the fact that Lashpera's soul has moved on, the Avatar continues to retain a spark of life. It is a creation of the unique circumstances of its connection to the earth based ecology of the caverns and the Opal's 'life preserving' properties. It shares a link to Lashpera/Lira's soul.

The Avatar was essentially inert until Lira came into proximity of the Temple. Prior to this the Archivist could sense the nascent spirit within the statue, but it had no 'spark'. Once Lira arrived at the temple it began to draw on the shared soul to kindle the embers of life within it, weakening Lira as it used her to awaken.

The Avatar is in early stages of animation when the PCs arrive. Lira has been in the temple long enough for the sluggishness of the centuries to fall away. The Avatar has actually moved minutely several times before the PCs reach it, though this has only been observed by the Archivist. Once Lira reaches the lower levels (or maybe simply if enough time has passed the Avatar has drawn from the shared soul sufficiently to animate

and resume a lesser semblance of what it once was.

The Avatar is not Lashpera. It retains vestige memories up until the point of its death, and limited reasoning capacity. It recognizes the Archivist as a servant though a magical connection (it and the Opal actually provides the visions he receives through his Story of Stone ability) and it 'feels' Lira as part of itself. The creatures of the earth ecology pose no threat to it. Everyone else is an intruder and an enemy.

The Avatar is consumed by rage at all times, and destruction is its first instinct. It can suppress this drive with a significant effort of will, but will only do so under unusual circumstances. It can speak Common, Infernal and abyssal, though it does so haltingly, with a voice like a screaming wind through stone caverns - high pitched and fluctuating. It is very unlikely to talk or negotiate with the PCs unless they are very compelling (DM's discretion). Its one focus after awakening is to 'cleanse' its temple of interuders - including the PCs and any orcs that might remain. After that it will seek to range forth and recapture its territory of old.



The Avatar's tactics are brutally straightforward. It assaults anyone it can reach with its claws, initially targeting the closest, but switching to any creature that demonstrates an ability to harm it. It will hammer a single foe until it drops before moving on unless a more dangerous opponent presents itself. If any creatures prove difficult to reach with its claws, it uses its radiant beams. If the shard or Granfang remains in its palm, it uses its actions to try to remove it, requiring a DC 18 Strength check (a roll of 12 or better for it).

Shards of Opal - Upon destruction, the Avatar shatters into shards of opal. Most of these are brittle and worthless, crumbling to fine powder at the touch. It is almost as if the gemstone is corrupt and lifeless. This effect appears to be random and inconsistent however, and some shards of opal remain intact. The PCs can gather a dozen shards of opal worth 50gp each in raw form, or up to 100gp each if cut and polished by a master jeweller.

DM's Note - The combat with the Avatar is meant to be hard, and could very well be deadly. Between the damage immunity to non magic weapons, the high AC and hit points, and the high damage output the Avatar is a significant foe. Add to this the Blood from Stone ability - and the likely possibility of assistance from the Archivist and you could be looking at a TPK for under prepared parties. There are some mitigating elements however. The module provides up to 3 magic weapons, and the PCs may get several rounds of attacks on the Avatar as it comes to life. The

BULETTE

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 94 (9d10 + 45)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	21 (+5)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages -

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Standing Leap. The bulette's long jump is up to 30 feet and it's high jump is 15 feet, with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 30 (4d12+4) piercing damage.

Deadly Leap. If the bulette jumps at least 15 feet as part of its movement, it can then use an action to land on its feet in a space that contains one or more other creatures. Each of those creatures must succeed on a DC 16 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (target's choice) or be knocked prone and take 14 (3d6+4) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (3d6+4) slashing damage. On a successful save, the creature takes only half the damage, isn't knocked prone, and is pushed 5 feet out of the bulette's space into an unoccupied space of the creature's choice. If no unoccupied space is within range, the creature instead falls prone in the bulette's space.

shard of Granfang *may* limit the ranged abilities of the Avatar. If this is not enough, and you feel the situation may be overwhelming, you could make any/all the following changes to the Avatar;

1. Change its damage immunity to damage resistance if the PCs have no or only 1 or 2 magic weapons between them.
2. Make the Avatar's AC ablative. Each successful hit chips away at its protective opal shell, reducing the AC by 1 for each hit, to a minimum of 14.
3. **Thunder Vulnerability** - for 1 round after being hit by a thunder based ability, any hits on the Avatar are automatically critical hits.
4. **Limited Bleeding** - The Avatar's Blood from Stone ability works only once per creature, after which they are immune to it.

ELDER EARTH ELEMENTAL

Huge elemental, true neutral

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 216 (16d12 + 112)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	10 (+0)	24 (+7)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +13, Wis +7, Cha +5

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities poisoned, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses tremorsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Terran

Challenge 13 (10000 XP)

Brittle. If the elder earth elemental takes at least 20 points of thunder damage during a single turn, its Armor Class is reduced by 2 until the end of its next turn. Additional thunder damage before the end of the elemental's next turn does not reduce its armor further.

Earth Glide. The elemental can burrow through non magical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so the elemental doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Siege Monster. The elemental does double damage to objects and structures.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the elemental fails a saving throw, it can choose to instead succeed.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elder earth elemental makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 35 (6d8+8) bludgeoning damage.

Tremor (Recharge 4-6). Each creature touching the ground within 120 feet of the elder earth elemental must make a DC 21 Strength saving throw or take 35 (6d8+8) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The elder earth elemental can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The elder earth elemental regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Aftershock. Each creature within 10 feet of the elder earth elemental must make a DC 21 Strength saving throw or take 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

Slam (Costs 2 Actions). The elder earth elemental makes a slam attack

Stone's Throw (Costs 2 Actions). The elder earth elemental launches a stone at a creature within 120 feet. Treat this as a slam attack, but it is a ranged weapon attack.

The Elder Earth Elemental is a new monster, and one look at it should be more than enough to realize that it is an absolutely overwhelming challenge for the PCs.

It is not meant to be a combat encounter. It is meant to show consequence for overly destructive or greedy behavior. The Earth ecosystem is a natural wonder, and smart players should realize they have stumbled onto something wondrous and unique. If they act in a way as to damage this, they invite repercussion.

That being said, the cavern purge event should be played as cinematically as possible, ensuring the players understand that the earth itself is rejecting them for their defilement. Otherwise harmless creatures should swarm them, stone plants lash out and trip and drag at them, the earth should convulse, buck and heave. The Elemental is here to ensure that players standing in defiance of the cinematic display are faced with an obviously unbeatable force, and should retreat in the face of it.

If the elemental is roused the DM should use it sparingly rather

than all out. Have it menace the PCs initially, the maybe use a Slam or Tremor and a legendary action or two. Then while the PCs are reeling from this, have it stop and try to restore parts of the cavern damaged in its assault - righting fallen pillars, plants or the like. This should give the PCs ample time to retreat. As the PCs exit the retreat is likely to be slowed (either they have to use the elevator, climb the chain etc) so too should the elemental slow to effectively allow the escape. Maybe it throws a few rocks (which should cinematically come close but miss). If the PCs try to hole up in the temple (or have no ready means of escape) merciful DMs might halt the elemental at the end of the Area 36 cavern.

Any PC foolish enough to continue the attack during this reprieve, however, should be squashed like a bug. The elemental has no mercy it its stony heart.

The base elemental statistics are drawn from a DM's Guild product - **The Planar Bestiary by Chris "Goober" Ramsley**. It is a great resource and I urge you to check it out.

LASHPERA

Medium fiend, chaotic evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 144 (17d8 + 68)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +6, Cha +9

Skills Deception +9, Persuasion +9, Arcana +8, History +8, Perception +6

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons, fire, cold, lightning

Condition Immunities petrified, poisoned

Senses passive Perception 16, truesight 60 ft.

Languages Common, Orc, Infernal, Abyssal

Challenge 10 (5900 XP)

Nondetection Aura. Lashpera is under a constant Nondetection spell effect. She does not detect as a fiend to any abilities that detect fiends.

Magic Resistance. Lashpera has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects

Abyssal Blade. Lashpera may conjure a hellish sword to her grasp

as a bonus action. The weapon counts as magical, and deals 2d8 slashing damage and an additional 2d6 necrotic damage on a successful strike. If the blade is ever broken or leaves Lashpera's grasp it disappears.

Teleport. Lashpera can magically teleport, along with any equipment she is wearing or carrying, up to 120 feet to an unoccupied space she can see

Innate Spellcasting. Lashpera's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17). Lashpera can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *Disguise Self*, *Friends*, *Mage Hand*, *Minor Illusion*, *Prestigation*

3/day each: *Charm Person*, *Invisibility*, *Phantasmal Force*

2/day each: *Major Image*

1/day each: *Mirage Arcana*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Lashpera makes two melee weapon attacks with her abyssal blade or two ranged spell attacks with her radiant beam.

Abyssal Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage

Radiant Beam. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, range 60/180 ft., *Hit:* 18 (3d8+5) radiant damage.

Lashpera's appearance is that of the art on the module cover and on page 26, resembling a darker, demonic form of Lira.

Lashpera is - perhaps confusingly - the final reincarnation of the fiend Lira (who was the human Lashpera) and the Avatar joined once more. Whilst separate each entity was weaker because of the presence of the other, the recombined Lashpera is a powerful unique demon, verging on the cusp of becoming a demon lord.

Lashpera has access to both her demon abilities, and the powers of the Opal, making her a formidable opponent as the best of times. When the PCs encounter her it will be at the conclusion of battling the Avatar and the Archivist, and it is unlikely that they will have the resources for a direct conflict.

The confrontation with Lashpera is not intended to be a combat, though some players may push it in that direction. If the DM and players wish it can become a combat encounter. However, Lashpera's priority throughout the adventure has been to reclaim her Opal, and use her restoration as a means to break free of her abyssal master Fraz Urb'luu. Fiends that die on the prime plane are banished back to the Abyss, and in her case

that means directly back to the clutches of her manipulative master. She wishes to avoid this at all costs, and will not risk a fight if it is not necessary.

With her restoration, her goals have shifted to amassing power and security on the prime plane. She has no interest in the temple or this isolated place as she did in her former life. Her ability to disguise herself, charm and mislead others, and her considerable knowledge, intellect and new found self control will allow her to create a more sophisticated cult amongst the human nobility - starting in Baldur's Gate. The PCs have been useful in achieving her goals thus far, and if they appear amenable she will offer them a place as favoured servants in her new religion.

If combat does commence, she will use her abilities (*Invisibility*, *Teleport*, *Non detection* and her illusions) to attempt to escape, fearing a lucky strike or spell could banisher her back to the Abyss. If she is forced to flee under threat she will harbour a deep grudge against the PCs and plot to have her 'revenge' when the time is right. Even if she leaves on good terms (relatively speaking) her activities are likely to bring her into conflict with the PCs again in the future. Lashpera's efforts to rise to power in Baldur's Gate could be the hook for future adventures.

STONE OOZE

Huge ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 161 (14d12 + 70)

Speed 20 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	6 (-2)	20 (+5)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Skills Stealth +3

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire

Condition Immunities petrified, blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Amorphous. Thew ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Corrode Metal. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal that hits the ooze corrodes. After dealing damage the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the ooze is destroyed after dealing damage. The ooze can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical metal in 1 round.

False Appearance. While the ooze remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from dry stone.

Touch Of Stone. Each contact with the Stone Ooze exacerbates the effects of the Calcification Aura. If a creature touches or is struck by the Stone Ooze it must make an additional DC 10 Constitution saving throw vs the Calcification Aura or suffer its effects, gaining a level of Exhaustion. Any immunities, bonuses or penalties a creature has against the aura applies to this ability.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) bludgeoning damage. Target also takes 14 (4d6) Acid damage, and is affected by the Touch of Stone ability. If the target is wearing nonmagical metal armour, its armour is partly corroded and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armour is destroyed if the penalty reduces its AC to 10.

STONE SERPENT

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 189 (18d12 + 72)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +8

Skills Athletics +10, Perception +8, Stealth +8

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities poisoned, petrified

Senses blindsight 50 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages -

Challenge 8 (3900 XP)

Expert Climber. The stone serpent moves at full speed when climbing.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Stone Serpent makes two Bite attacks or two Poison Jet attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 16 (2d10+5) piercing damage. Target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Poison Jet. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 20/40 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (3d6+5) poison damage. Target must also make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or gain the Blinded condition for 1 hour.

Appendix 3 - The Religion of Geb

Geb

Titles: King of the Riches Under the Earth, Father Under the Skies and Sands, Lord Earth

Symbol: A Mountain

Power: Lesser Deity¹

Portfolio: The Earth, Miners, Mines, Mineral Resources

Geb was one of the oldest gods of the Mulhorandi pantheon², and represented earth, forgecraft, riches and mining. He was depicted as a powerfully built man, bear chested garbed in an ornate kirtle, and bearing a stone staff. It was said he was an even-tempered being of patience, caution, and - though he tended to limit external emotional displays - humour and appreciation. He retained good relations with most of the Mulhorandi pantheon (many of which were his children) and had a cooperative rather than competitive relationship with other deities of earth and forge, such as Grumbar, Moradin and Flandal Steelskin.

The Priesthood

The Gebite priesthood concerned themselves with the earth and everything in and under it (rather than on the surface). They studied and promoted geology, metallurgy and mining, considering the earth's riches as Geb's gifts, and earthquakes and cave-ins signs of his displeasure.

The Priesthood would bless mining operations, and dig alongside miners as they delved into the earth. They would protect, heal, and - if necessary - rescue deep earth delvers.

Aside from gathering the earth's riches, the priesthood pursued spelunking and discovery of mysteries within the earth. They also traversed great mountain ranges and fostered relations with races and creatures of the earth.

History of the Religion

In Ancient times the Imaskari (forerunners of the great Netheril Empire) captured the Mulan people from another world and brought them Toril. These people brought their religion with them (the Mulhorandi pantheon), and eventually with the aid of AO the overgod, the Mulhorandi pantheon were able to manifest on Toril to help guide and emancipate their people.

During the time of Troubles (YR 1358 DR) when the Gods walked the surface of Faerun, Geb lead the majority of his faithful to build a great temple - The Golden Forge - that served to contain a great volcano that might otherwise cause utter devastation to the surrounding lands.

In the year 1385 the Spellplague that ripped across Toril effectively destroyed Mulhorand, and the Mulhorandi

pantheon vanished. The remnant Mulhorandi peoples found themselves without their gods and enslaved by the Imaskari once more.

In the Year 1484, preceding the Second Sundering, 'chosen' of the gods began appearing - mortals claiming to be invested with divine power and mandate - and the Mulhorandi pantheon reappeared as represented by these chosen - however Geb was not among them. Ousting the Imaskari once more, the Gods of Mulhorand remained to manifestly rule their people, as both earthly monarchs and gods.

For the DM

There is no official material on Geb in 5th edition as of yet, hence his 'lost religion' status in this adventure.

With the geographical distance between Mulhorand and the North, the loss of the Mulhorandi gods more than a hundred years ago, and their recent re-emergence as apparent 'living demi-gods', it is unlikely many in the North know much (or anything) of the 'old' religion or the true state of the 'current' pantheon. Given the rebuilding effort required since emancipating their people from a second extended enslavement, it seems likely the new pantheon are concerned only with the direct rulership and advancement of their people and lands, and would have little time or resources to devote to the expansion of their priesthoods and religious doctrine beyond the borders of Mulhorand at this time. Sources of historical lore - such as Candlekeep - are significantly out of date in the current time period.

As discussed under the Archivist's section, The cavern (Area 36), its calcification properties and its elemental earth based ecology would have been nothing short of a miracle for the clergy of Geb, seeing it as a blessing and a sign that the area would be sacred to their Deity.

1 - Last recorded status - He may be a demi-power or even a dead power now.

2 - The Mulhorandi pantheon is a slight re-envisioning of the Egyptian Pantheon. It is recognizable as such, with many of the historical elements and likenesses preserved.

References

Forgotten Realms wiki,
Powers and Pantheons (2nd edition),
Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting (3rd edition),
Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide (4th edition),
Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide (5th edition).

A noble scion and his retinue from Baldur's Gate left on an adventure amid much fanfare. That was two weeks ago. Rumours in the taverns suggest only a single soldier returned, bearing grievous wounds and a ransom demand.

Is this a simple case of misadventure, or are darker conspiracies afoot? Can you locate and rescue the nobleman, or will you fall victim to the malevolent powers stirring deep within the Temple of the Opal Goddess?

Set along the Sword Coast in the Forgotten Realms, this adventure is for 4-6 characters of levels 5-8.

