
TEMPLE OF SHENNOG



Temple of Shennog

Rumours & Hooks

Ancient records suggest the *Ulgoth Foothills* once housed an asylum dedicated to the goddess *Shennog*. The cultists who dwelt within offered solace and acceptance to those who struggled with despair, guilt, and other afflictions of the mind. Temple ministrations did not come cheap however; gods know what became of the cultist's gold.

Word has reached *Northgate* that an abandoned temple of Shennog has been rediscovered in the wilderness. Legend suggests those who enter are cured of their mental afflictions. *Master Meldrin*, a wealthy fish merchant, is offering 1,000 gold to have his (seemingly incurable) daughter *Tessa* escorted to the temple.



Deep in a secluded valley, set atop a tall plinth of grey stone, lies the crumbling remains of an ancient shrine. The ruin is marked with a giant spider icon, holy symbol of the deity Shennog.

Shennog is the goddess of night, mystery, deceit and madness. Often shunned by commoners, she is nevertheless called upon in times of treachery and despair, and offers compassion to those suffering mental anguish. Most writings depict Shennog as a formless shadow, a broken mirror or a giant spider. Shennog's temples and asylums are uncommon in small villages and towns, but are present in most cities.

In this instance, her temple is decorated with symbols of arachnids and shadow. The sacred hall has stood since the Second Age, concealed by a potent misdirection charm that only recently waned.

The party might become involved by stumbling across the temple in their explorations, learning of the gold and other riches hoarded by the

old cultists, or under contract with Master Meldrin, acting as Tessa Meldrin's escort in a last ditch attempt to cure her madness. The young woman stopped speaking three years ago, avoids eye contact, and is largely unresponsive, but accepts guidance by the hand or elbow. At the GM's discretion, Tessa might emit a short, sharp cry of torment from time to time.

Random Encounters

While the party are exploring the temple in Areas 1-3, there is a 30% chance of a random encounter every half hour. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d6:

1. 1d4 *Giant Eagles* (LFG p.106) appear from the skies, squawking ravenously. Their favourite tactic for quarrelsome prey is to dash them on the rocks below, then pick the meat from their hard shells.
2. A raiding party of 4d6 *Beastmen* (LFG p.100) are in the hills nearby, and pick up the party's scent. Perhaps they track

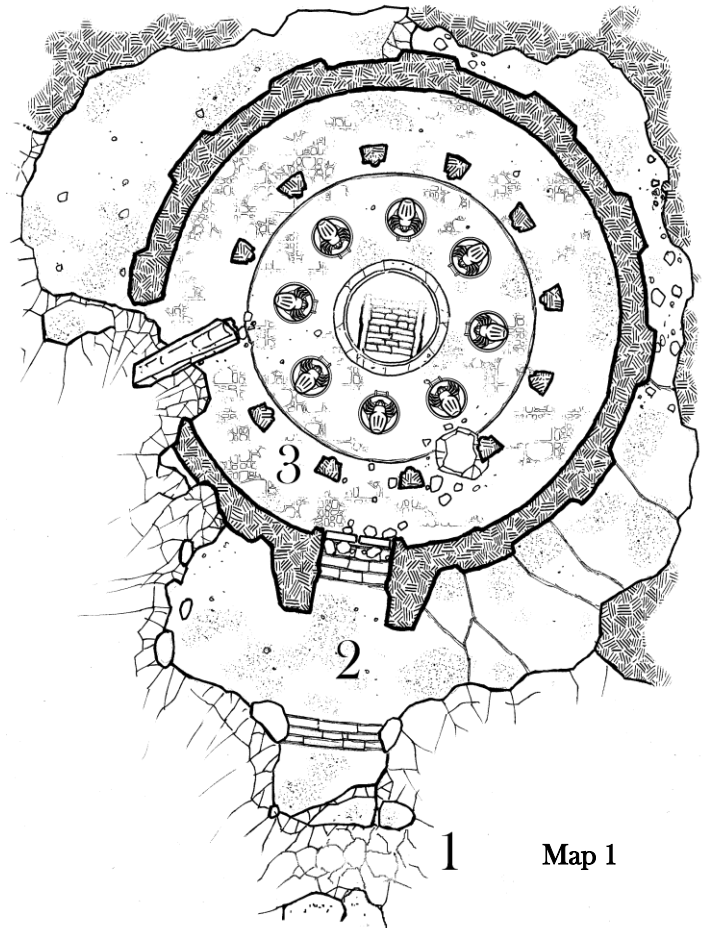
the party into the temple, or wait outside in ambush, gathering in numbers.

3. *Rockfall!* This room of the temple, or section outside, is highly unstable and collapses/slides away at a perilous moment. Adventurers must make a *Luck* (Dex) save or suffer 4d6 damage (rubble)/drop down the 150 ft cliff side.
4. 2d4 *Ogres* (LFG p.120) have taken up residence in this chamber, or can be heard approaching from over a nearby rise. It's been a long while since the last game of "Crack goes the man skull", and ogres like playing games.
5. A single, massive 20 ft *Giant Serpent* (LFG p.122, 11 HD, 2d8 + poison causes 1d6 attribute loss) is sleeping in this chamber, or stalking the party outside. Either way it's very hungry. If nesting, 1d3 half buried giant serpent eggs might be found (300 gp each to the right collector).
6. An *Ochre Jelly* (LFG p.119) burbles out of a large crack in the ground, wall or ceiling, seeking to engulf the closest party member and absorb them.

Area 1 - Crumbling Bridge

The temple is situated on a 150 ft pillar of black stone with steep, scree ridden sides. Scaling the pillar from the bottom of the valley is certainly possible, but time consuming and conspicuous (1d2 hours, with random encounter rolls each half hour).

The stone bridge that once spanned the gap to the temple entrance is crumbling and highly unsafe. There are three 10 ft gaps where the bridge has collapsed entirely, and what structure



remains is hazardous at best, threatening to crumble away if humanoid weight is applied.

Anyone crossing the bridge has a 30% chance of causing a partial collapse, requiring a *Luck* (Dex) save to avoid plummeting 150 ft to the floor below. Jumping across the three gaps requires a Dex check. Adventurers might rope themselves together or take other precautions to ensure they don't fall.

Area 2 - Entry

There are two ways into the temple: the main entry doors, or via holes in the roof and/or western wall.

Either way, upon setting foot on temple ground, an adventurer must first resist the fading misdirection charm that protects the temple (*Luck* (Will) save at advantage, else flee the site

for 1d4 minutes, plus permanent amnesia for the last 2d4 hours).

The double doors are made of solid granite and are unyielding. Breaking them down with a pick axe or similar is possible but will take many hours and probably draw a Random Encounter. The doors are locked and may be picked with a Dex (Traps & Locks) check.

Entering the temple via the hole in the roof requires a Str (Athletics) check to scale the building without falling off. The roof hole is approximately 25 ft high. Alternatively the party can carefully walk around the western wall and enter through the breach.

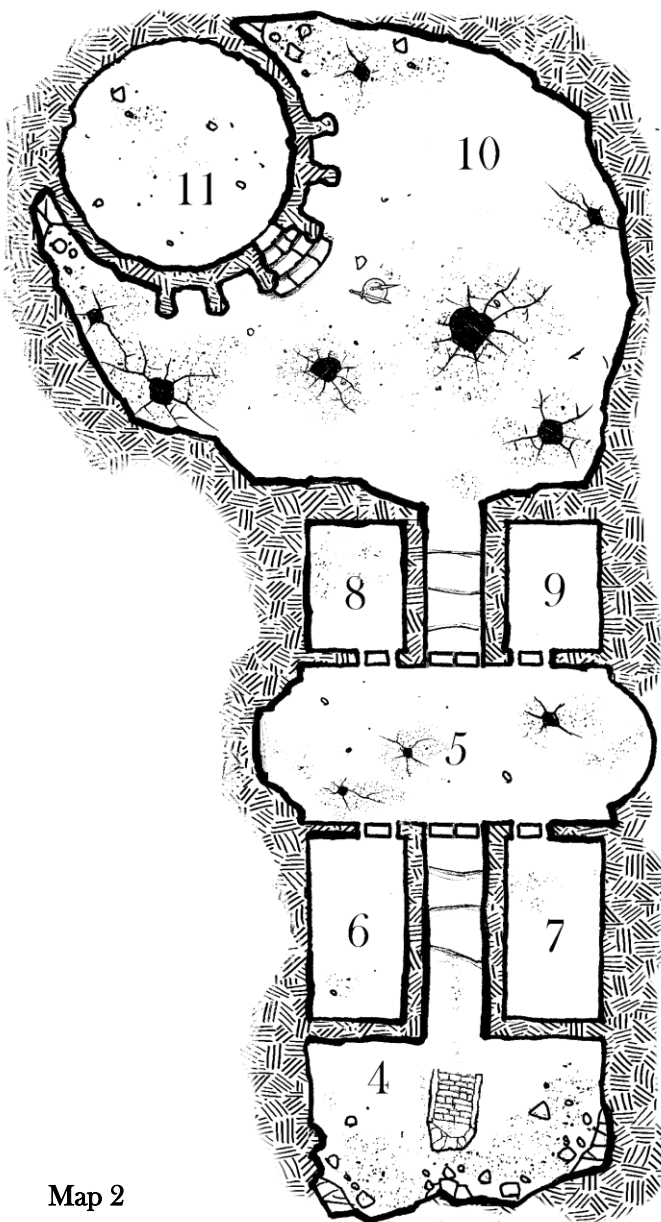
Area 3 - Atrium

This 70 ft diameter enclosed atrium is 45 ft tall and covered with faded murals. The murals depict Shennog weaving her web to manipulate scenes of madness, asylum, treachery, escape and nocturnal activity.

The floor here drops away in three concentric rings, each level 5 ft lower than the last, navigated by step cavities carved into the walls. 11 pillars surround the highest level (one has fallen over), and 8 verdigris bronze spider statues line the second level. Stairs leading down make up the final level, but this section is covered by 8 stone wedges that fit together to form a circle. The stone wedges are heavy and interlocked, preventing them from opening without the proper trigger.



Each of 8 bronze spiders has one leg that is secretly hinged (found by trial and error, or a Perc (Traps & Locks) check if the statues are examined). If all 8 statues have their hinged leg moved to point at the stone wedges, the trigger is activated, and the wedges slide away, revealing the stairs descending into cold darkness below.



Map 2

If there are no other random encounters in the Atrium, 1d3 *Grey Oozes* are lurking here, most likely masquerading as pools of dirty water under broken roofing. The ooze(s) might stalk the party for a time, possibly bombarding one of them with their emotion burst ability, in an attempt to disorientate and separate their prey before striking.

Grey Ooze, AC 12, HD 6, Pseudopod 2d4 + special or Emotion Burst, 19: a psychic lash drains the target 1d4 Int (*Luck* (Will) save resists), S18 D16 C16 I4 P14 W16 Ch1, L8, Mv

40 ft inc walls, ceilings. Emotion burst ability extends up to 120 ft, single target, *Luck* (Will) save or suffer a moderate madness. 40% chance of recharging each hour.

Hidden in the hinged mandibles of one the bronze spiders is something valuable (Perc (Detection) check to find, or by player description; 1 x Valuables, LFG p.147).

Area 4 – Stairs

These 10 ft wide stone steps descend 30 ft into the earth. The interior below has 8 ft ceilings, made of worked stone, and is completely dark, cold and musty, being unused for centuries. Adventurers will need to bring their own light source. A 10 ft wide, stepped corridor, descends 40 ft north to a set of heavy stone doors marked with a spider icon. The doors are stuck but unlocked. They must be slid aside to open (Str check).

There is a large amount of fallen rubble in this chamber, and the walls and ceiling are precariously unsteady. Fighting in this chamber, or explosives such as alchemists fire, have a 25% chance of triggering a cave in causing 6d6 damage and requiring a Con check to avoid suffering an Injury or Setback (LFG p.54). A *Luck* (Con) save halves the damage and negates any injury.

Area 5 – Gathering Chamber

This 30 ft x 70 ft chamber was a gathering space for the faithful, for meditation and other spiritual preparations before entering the grand worship hall in Area 10. The double doors to the north and south are unlocked, but stuck, requiring a Str check to slide aside. The doors to Areas 6-9 open normally.

The walls here are decorated with large, rotting tapestries that once displayed passages from scripture and scenes of divine intervention. An Int (General Lore) check suggests the writing is from the ancient Ramoran Empire. Part of the western wall is fragile, and may be collapsed by

targeting weak points (falling rubble causing 5d6 damage within 10 ft).

The floor is littered with large 2 ft diameter holes, the collapsed tunnels of *Barrow Bugs*, 2d4+1 of which live here and are hostile to intruders.



Barrow Bugs

No. Appearing: 2d4+1

Armor Class: 16

Hit Dice: 5

Attacks: Claw (2d4+2) and Spit (special)

Nat 19: the bug makes an extra Spit attack.

S:16 D:13 C:16 I:3(15) W:12 Ch:3

Luck: 8

Move: 30 ft or 5 ft burrowing.

Barrow bugs are 3 foot, subterranean insect carnivores with hard, spiky carapaces and sharp claws. They have a hive mentality, communicating with each other by chemical signals and sharp, discordant sounds. Barrow bugs have poor eyesight and navigate via acute smell and sensing tremors in the ground up to 120 ft distant. Their Spit attack shoots a burrowing larvae at the target, which causes 1d3 points of damage, and requires a *Luck* (Con) save to avoid paralysis in a random limb. This save must be made each round, or until an action is

spent to remove the larvae by blade, fire or acid (Int (Apothecary) check and 1d3 damage).

Area 6 – Chancel of Mysteries

This 20 x 40 ft room is completely black in colour, the walls, floor and ceiling decorated with specks of quartz that glitter like tiny stars when exposed to torchlight.

The chamber is otherwise completely empty. After the first person enters the room, a pressure plate is activated, causing the door to swing back into place and lock. A *Luck* (Dex) save allows an adventurer to wedge something in the door (or similar), preventing it from closing. A strength check at disadvantage is required to pry it open again.

An adventurer spending time in the room feels strangely alone and somehow more open to the secrets of the universe. Praying to Shennog for one hour invokes a Dark Blessing (roll 1d12 and see below; whether the blessing comes from Shennog is uncertain). Effects are permanent unless removed via *Cure Malady* or similar):

1. Invoke *Darkvision* (as the spell) once per adventure.
2. Suffer 1 point of Int loss.
3. Turn a failed stealth or deceit related check into a success, once per adventure.
4. Suffer 1 point of Willpower loss.
5. Gain 1 point of Int.
6. Suffer a severe madness (“*The sunlight sears my soul, I cannot abide it*”).
7. Gain 1 point of Willpower.
8. Blindness in one eye (per Injuries & Setbacks table).
9. Gain 1 point of Perception.

10. No obvious effect, but one previously trustworthy character the adventurer knows will betray him/her at an important moment.

11. Every dusk, regain one Reroll Pool die.

12. Every dawn during an adventure, make a Willpower check or lose one Reroll Pool die.

Area 7 – Chancel of Madness

This 20 x 40 ft chamber is filled with desks carved with spider icons, bookcases and tomes. Books are stacked everywhere, including piled up on the floor. Scrolls and sheets of parchment are similarly strewn across all surfaces, rising two feet above floor level. Maps and charts are hung five deep on the walls, and even a few plastered onto the ceiling above.

Hiding beneath the sea of scrolls are 2d6 *Crawling Terrors*, which wake from ageless dormancy after 1d4 rounds:



Crawling Terrors

No. Appearing: 2d6

Armor Class: 12

Hit Dice: 2

Attacks: Bite (1d4 + special)

Nat 19: the aberration unleashes a pulse of savage madness, causing all adventurers within 10 ft to make a *Luck* (Will) save or attack the closest ally.
S:10 D:15 C:10 I:3(10) W:16 Ch:1

Luck: 4

Move: 30 ft

Crawling terrors are 2 ft shiny, bulbous, spider like creatures with oily maw tentacles. They are alien monstrosities spawned from another dimension, seeking only to dominate and feed on other life forms. Anyone bitten by a crawling terror must make a *Luck* (Will) save or lose 1d3 Will. A target reduced to zero Will becomes an eager thrall, following the terror's telepathic orders until slain or starved.

If the terrors are defeated, the books and scrolls might be read. An adventurer who studies the parchments for a time discovers that the words shift and flex before their eyes, revealing some piece of knowledge the character seeks, mixed with strange and disturbing truths. Studying the scrolls for one hour allows an Int check to learn one piece of information the PC desires (the answer might be cryptic at the GM's discretion), but the scholar suffers a severe madness (LFG p.91: "*The darkest corners conceal the greatest secrets, and I must know them.*")

If the books, scrolls and papers are gathered and taken from the temple, most crumble to dust, but a handful survive (absent any sagacious ability), worth 5d100+200 gp.

Area 8 – Chancel of Night

This 20 x 30 ft room is pitch black and ensorcelled with light negating magic. Torches, lanterns etc brought into the room are extinguished and cannot be relit.

Inside the sacred chamber is a large 3 ft chest, storing ceremonial robes, amulets and other holy paraphernalia (1 x Carry Loot, Valuables and Trinkets & Curios LFG p.136, 147, 141). The chest is bolted to the floor, locked and trapped

with a poison needle (potent spider venom, causing 5d6 damage + 1d6 Con loss (*Luck* (Con) save for half). The poison needle is extremely difficult to detect in the dark (disadvantage at -3 penalty to the Dex (Traps & Locks) check).

Area 9 – Chancel of Deceit

This 20 x 40 ft meditation room is set with crumbling wooden chairs, and two stone holy water fonts, still filled with what appears to be water.

The first time a person drinks from the first font, they gain a +5 bonus on their next attempt at stealth or deceit. When used, they also suffer a minor madness (curable in the usual way). A *Luck* (Will) save resists the madness effect.

Drinking from the second font suppresses any madness the imbiber might be suffering, but only for 1d6 months. After this time, the madness returns, possibly at a higher severity level (50% chance). If Tessa is with the party, this font may benefit her for a time.

Area 10 – Grand Worship Hall

This enormous 110 x 90 ft cavern has a 40 ft ceiling studded with stalactites. The tiled floor once mimicked an elaborate spider web, but is now marred by barrow bug holes. The bug tunnels might pose a trip hazard to adventurers fighting around them at the GM's discretion.

In addition to 3d6 ordinary barrow bugs, this chamber is home to a single, 8 ft *Alpha Bug*, a male tyrant with a large rhino like carapace horn.

Alpha Bug

No. Appearing: 1

Armor Class: 17

Hit Dice: 10 (100 hp)

Attacks: 2 Claws (3d4) and Spit (special)

Nat 19: the alpha buries the target in a pile of earth and stone, requiring an action and successful Str check to break free.

S:20 D:12 C:18 I:4(15) W:16 Ch:4

Luck: 10

Move: 40 ft or 10 ft burrowing.

The Alpha Bug is a Boss Monster with all the usual benefits (LFG p.95). The alpha's Spit attack causes 1d6 damage but is otherwise identical to a standard bug.

The stone steps ascend 15 ft to Area 11 but are shrouded by a jet black curtain at the top. The bugs have an innate sense of the unnatural forces beyond, and do not venture there.

Area 11 - Inner Sanctum

This 40 ft chamber is the inner sanctum of the temple, sparsely decorated with a red veined, white marble altar. The ceiling is patterned with hundreds of replica spiders.

Three *Werespiders* stand eternal guard here, spawned during the prior age by cultists who delved too deep into forbidden mysteries. The three monsters are in stasis until the entry curtain is drawn, at which time their eyes flicker open, as they click and clatter to life. They attack obvious intruders, but wily adventurers might fool them into believing they are new age worshippers come to pay homage.

Lycanthrope, Werespider, AC 15 (armoured), HD 7, Spear 1d8+2 and Claw 1d6, 19: the target is bound in webs, losing their action until they break free (Str contest vs Str 18), S18 D16 C13 I13 P14 W14 Ch8, L9, Mv 30 ft inc walls, etc.

Werespiders are lycanthropes with the usual benefits (LFG p.95). Once per combat, werespiders may launch a 10 ft mass of webs up to 60 ft. A failed *Luck* (Dex) save renders the

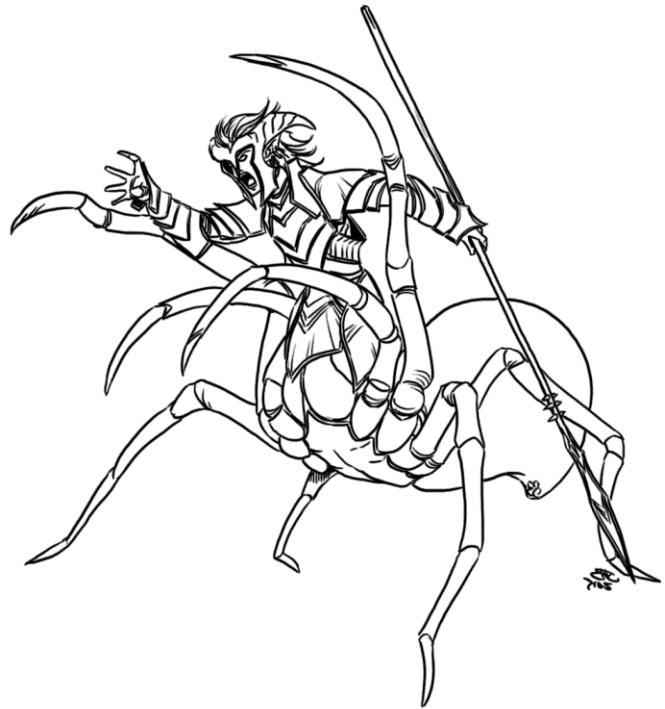
target helpless until they spend an action to break free (Str contest vs Str 18).

If the werespiders are defeated, and the room searched, the party discovers the marble altar is designed to be pushed aside (requires a Str check). Hidden underneath is the cult's cache of tithed gold (1 x 7 HD Lair Treasure, 1 x Valuables, 1 x Potion LFG p.140, 147, 150).

Aftermath

If the temple is cleared, the misdirection charm and other magic within comes to an end months later. In the future, something inherent about the site draws giant spiders to the region. Alternatively, brigands or Urogot might take over, or perhaps barbarians raze the site and declare it cursed.

If the party are driven off by the werespiders, the monsters draw giant arachnids to the site, and might eventually raise a new cult of their own.



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