

THE TEMPLE OF DEATH



Pirates are not historians nor are they interested in knowing culture or legends, but they should know their treasure . . .

PREPARING TO PLAY: When all are gathered to play, and the Players are prepared, begin the adventure by following the steps given below.

Background: The Adventure will begin with your reading the following narrative, thus setting the stage for the adventure that is to follow.

Every village along the coast has stories of their gods dwelling in the jungles. Mostly these are all fear and folklore. However, few places in all the world have turned Godly men into believers of a heathen's temple. Not far inland, so say both the natives and other Christian sailors, there stands a ruined temple to a long dead deity. It is, indeed, a temple now of death. Nobody knows who built it or even when. The natives shun it and venture miles, even days out of their way to avoid it on hunt, for all who venture there never return, for it is said its lure of gold inside is too strong . . .

Legends: The natives, and perhaps other explorers, will have many tales to tell of this ruin. The party to learn 1 story from the following chart, plus one additional roll for every 30 gold spent in pursuit of such lore. Do no re-roll duplicate results—the same tales can certainly pop up again.

Legends

Roll	Legend of the temple
11-12	The gods in the temple are said to bless those of noble heart, that to give gold to them is to be rewarded with greater gold beyond this life
9-10	The temple is guarded by the living dead, who, having arisen from their grave, fear only their own kind
6-8	The temple is haunted, but the dead will not dare to cross into the godly realm, a place beyond great pits of fire
4-5	The hoard of the conqueror awaits beyond the chasm of death
1-3	The hoard of the conqueror can only be found by one who commands the moon

EXPLORING THE TEMPLE: Finding the lost temple is not difficult—the natives know where its gates are, and they should not be far—the danger is in exploring these ruins. When the party finally dares enter, tell the tale of their adventure by the following Encounters. Run them one and all in the order they are presented.

1) Entrance

The jungle is reluctant to give up its secrets, and its dead. Slashing your way through a labyrinth of poisonous green, you stand at last before the silent stone ruins of a tiered temple, its stepped slopes ascending into a hazy, yellow sky. There before you is its only door, a wide, dolmen arch spotted cursed symbols written in ancient blood.

A Search of the overgrown courtyard may find a human skeleton hanging in the dense trees. Upon its neck is a medallion bearing a diamond cut to resemble a crescent moon. The entire medallion is worth a good 2400 gold.

2) Forbidden hallway

Once inside the temple, you pass from blistering sunlight into soul-chilling darkness. Ahead of you is a corridor running straight back, narrow but its ceiling is twice as high as it needs to be. Weird, inhuman figures glow upon the walls. Painted in some strange substance which gleams under your light as a pool does under the midday sun, they seem to resemble humans only in the most base of ways, seeming more skeletal, alien or demonic than alive, and posed in all manner of ways, so their purpose cannot be determined—some stand at guard, some are leaping, others seem to kneel as if to their god, and so forth.

The hallway is rigged with traps. The trick is to match the position of the figures on the walls every step of the way. For example, if one of the luminous figures is squatting, and one crouches or squats as he walks past it, he will so avoid a trip-wire at head height. There are dozens of trips and dozens of figures running the length of this hall, so if one does not specifically mimic the strange

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beings, the triggers will seem to be random every time. A trap can be tripped every 10' of this 200' long passage, and each done so will cause a bolt to shoot from the being's eyes, hitting a trespasser for an automatic blow of 3 Base Damage. Solving this puzzle merits 45 Experience Points.

3) Chasm of doom

The corridor opens into broad antechamber with a low-ceiling. The walls are formed of thin stone stacked in uneven layers, giving the already low ceiling the impression of slowly crushing the area with its immense weight. To either side, several hallways lead into dimly lit areas. Straight ahead, wide stairs descend to a rope-bridge spanning an awe-inspiring chasm, smoke and flame belching up from the untold depths.

Lurking in the shadows are spirits, which shall emerge and attack the party once they pass through this area. The corridors all round the chasm, and those who go that way will each be attacked by a group of 1-6 spirits, while those who crossed the bridge will, by such a display before the gods, be facing only 1-3 spirits. All of their statistics are as B1, A10, E11, G1, W4, I9, C1, L6, DS 12, Survival 1, Attack at +1* using a sword for Base Damage 4, Morale 9*, and Movement Rate 200'. They have no treasure (at least not here . . .)

4) Chamber of the dead

Deeper into the temple, you enter a chamber that is built entirely of blood-red stone. However, an eerie, green light permeates the area, so that all seems dark or sickly colored. The chamber is too vast to see its far walls, though your echoes tell you there are other passages in the darkness.

This room contains coffins scattered all about the floor, which the party will bump into as they move through the area. More shadows, the same as those in Encounter 3, await to ambush the party in the unseen halls, 1-12 of them for each trespasser. However, once the fight starts, should anyone lie inside a coffin, the shadows will forever leave him alone, fearing him as a god.

5) Grand staircase

A grand staircase begins a steep descent into the lightless bowels of the earth. Skeletons litter the steps, clad in the rotting clothes, armor and with the widest variety of weapons from the last ten centuries—Conquistadors lie alongside Knights of the Crusades, and many others.

The stairs are trapped. Each step is a trigger. To step on any causes spikes to shoot out of the walls, impaling the trespasser for Base Damage 10. The only way to avoid this is to use the vines and other filth on the ceiling to 'fly' down the stairs, a feat requiring an Agility Check at a -2 penalty.

6) False treasure room

The stairs end in a large chamber filled with an unspeakable hoard of treasure! Mounds of golden coins arise from a shallow, sunken floor. All the water's wavering light seems to conjure ghostly hands that are counting it for you. The walls are covered with fading frescoes depicting the edges of the world where devils stand guard.

There is a total of about 2000 gold here, all in coins from the natives. However, a Search may discover a secret door. This door, however, cannot be opened. All the coins here weigh down a single pressure-plate which keeps it closed, and when that weight is lessened, its unseen latch has even less pressure against it—the party must make the total gold here 3000 in order to cause it to open . . .

7) Hoard of the conqueror

The secret chamber contains 34000 additional gold. There are no traps. However, one coin—the last to be taken—will prove to be magical, so that when it is removed from the hoard, it will echo with an unearthly voice in the Character's native language: "The conqueror knows you! Beware . . ." Just what this means is up to you and your game's needs.

FINISHING THE ADVENTURE: Once the party returns, other treasure-seekers will flock to the ruin and claim any and all treasure they left behind.