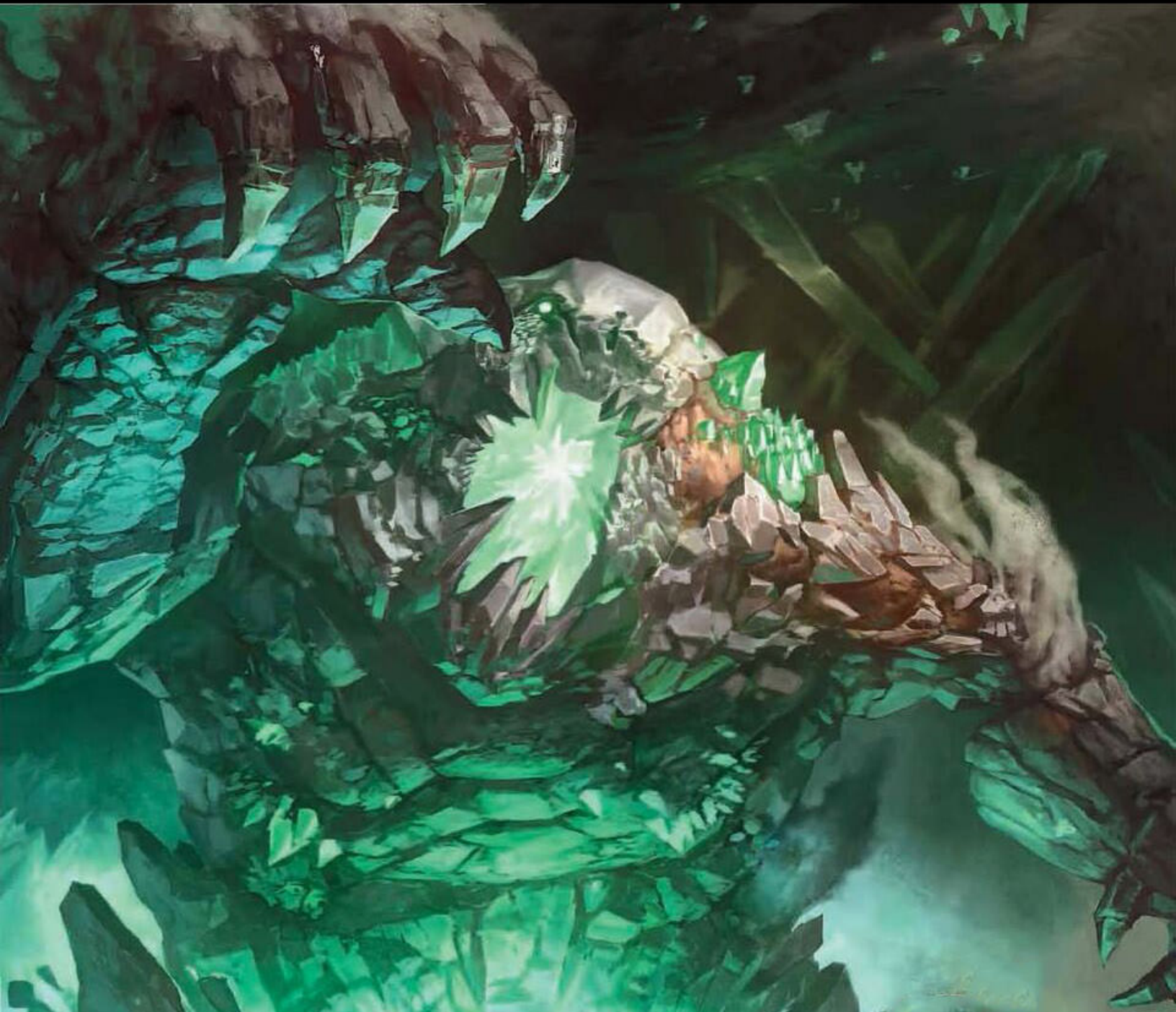


TEMPLE OF THE PRIMORDIALS



Solve the mysteries of the ancients in this adventure for the world's greatest roleplaying game

CREDITS

Author: Taylor Reisdorf

Cover Illustration: Wizards of the Coast

Cover Design: Taylor Reisdorf and Tim Reisdorf

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FOREWORD

Temple of the Primordials is not your typical tomb raiding adventure. There are no rooms full of skeletons or ancient curses. If you’re expecting a mindless hack-and-slash module, you are in for a surprise.

Of the three pillars of gameplay, **exploration** is one that many groups struggle with. The introduction section in the *Player’s Handbook* describes it as a “give-and-take” wherein players engage in organic interaction with the world, but in practice many groups struggle with the many nuances that are often elude their notice, whether because the adventure is too subtle or because their characters don’t emphasize the requisite skills. This is particularly the case when it comes to one of my favourite fantasy tropes: puzzles.

There are many games which do puzzles well. The *Tomb Raider* series has been popular for decades, along with other notable franchises such as *The Legend of Zelda*, *God of War*, and *Uncharted*. But the relationship between puzzles and fantasy goes back thousands and thousands of years to the ancient Greeks, whose greatest heroes often faced tests of wisdom in the form of riddles.

Yet, puzzles and D&D have a very chequered history. All too often, they are presented in a way that offers a challenge to the players and not the characters, which can pose problems for roleplaying and seem to consume precious minutes of game time, leaving the players resentful that their progress has been stymied.

Hence where this adventure comes in. Within these pages you will find an attempt to do puzzles correctly, in a way that allows all players to engage with the content, even if it means their character is really just smashing the different puzzle pieces and throwing wrenches into all the gears.

Just remember that the masters of the temple may not appreciate their trials being thwarted..

Taylor Reisdorf
Dungeon Master’s Workshop

ON THE COVER

Ogrémoch, an elemental prince, emerges from the earth to destroy upstart adventurers.

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TEMPLE OF THE PRIMORDIALS

Temple of the Primordials is a short adventure for 1st-level characters. It is designed to introduce characters to the existence and history of the ancient Primordials, as well as advance them to 3rd level.

The adventure begins at the site of the temple and leaves the DM to guide the characters to this point. Some sample quest hooks are provided in the Quest Hooks section below.

HISTORY

The Temple of the Primordials is an ancient site lost for aeons beneath an untamed jungle. It once stood at the centre of a vast city that worshipped the elemental lords of Toril: Akadi, the Queen of Air; Grumbar the Earthlord; Istishia, the Water Lord; and Kossuth, the Lord of Flames. During the cataclysmic conflict known as the Dawn War, in which the primordial fought the gods for supremacy over the world, these four powers claimed no quarrel with either side. Instead, they constructed a great edifice through which they could channel their elemental essence and gain superiority over those lesser primordials who shared their nature. In this, they succeeded beyond any expectation, and themselves became gods over their elemental portfolios.

With the edifice having served its purpose, the primordial deities abandoned it to their mortal followers, who built a great city around it which lasted for centuries until a major flood diverted a local river, depriving the city of its supply of fresh water. Within the span of a few years, thousands of people departed, and the city was ultimately abandoned to be swallowed up by the wilderness.

The temple would remain empty for thousands of years until it was stumbled upon by an exiled druid named Mhorro. A series of tragedies in his life had set Mhorro on a path to seek the downfall of civilization, believing it would restore balance to the world. Though the ancient primordials had long ago left the temple, their power still resonated strongly within its very foundations, and Mhorro spent nearly a year learning to channel it, twisting the elements toward their destructive aspects to suit his vengeful agenda.

Since Mhorro attuned himself to the temple, every natural disaster that has befallen the land has been amplified to become especially deadly. Powerful storms have coincided with spring tides, causing storm surges that overwhelm breakwaters and dikes; minor tremors within the earth have been magnified into terrifying quakes that have caused widespread land subsidence; clouds have swirled with greater intensity, causing heavy rains and violent whirlwinds; and heat waves have blasted farmland, baking the soil until it cracks.

OVERVIEW

The adventure begins when the characters arrive in the lost city in search of the temple of the primordials. Part 1 of the adventure features a test to allow the characters entrance to the temple proper and frames the character of the locale.

Part 2 of the adventure involves various tests of mettle that challenge the characters to demonstrate an understanding of each element's nature. Failure in these tests causes complications later in the adventure.

Part 3 of the adventure pits the characters against Mhorro himself. This does not have to be a combat encounter, but the druid is prepared to defend himself against those who would interfere with his plans.

USING MONSTER REFERENCES

Throughout the adventure, each encounter presents monster names in bold. This is a visual cue pointing you to look up the monster's stat block in the *Monster Manual*.

Some monsters are adjusted for this adventure. These adjustments are indicated in the adventure's text and supersede the creature's regular stats in the specified ways.

QUEST HOOKS

Below are some example quest hooks that you can use for this adventure. Feel free to work with your players to come up with other options that suit their characters.

You are part of a druid circle that seeks to preserve the balance of the elements. Recent natural disasters have led you to believe a force is tampering with that balance.

Your mentor had a great love of all things old. He spent twenty years seeking out clues of a lost city, but he died before he could find it. Can you complete his life's work?

Local authorities have granted you a full pardon for your past crimes. The only condition is that you must join an expedition to investigate the cause of the frequent natural disasters affecting the land.

Your superiors have recommended you for an important expedition, promising a major promotion if the mission is a success.

Elements



Air



Water



Earth



Fire

PART 1: ELEMENTAL RIDDLE

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters are ready to begin.

The ruins of the city are far more extensive than you could have imagined. Wide streets, the cobbles cracked and riven by tall grass, offer some guidance through what you can only estimate is more than a thousand acres of ruined walls and crumbled foundations showing the wear of untold centuries.

At long last, you find yourselves at your destination. While all around you is ruin, the temple in the city's centre stands as proud and stong as if it had been built only yesterday. As you approach, you realize that it is unlike any other structure you have ever seen. By all appearance, the towering edifice seems as though it had been formed naturally, with no mark of tools or mortal hands having shaped its smooth, solid stone walls.

After a short climb up ancient steps, you arrive before a pair of mighty stone doors covered in intricately detailed elemental motifs in relief. Before the doors is a large dais from which rise four columns supporting a bronze dome. At the foot of each column is a large stone bowl.

The columns and bowls are part of a riddle that opens the doors. This riddle is intended to be easy in order to introduce the players to the adventure with a positive start.

BOWLS

The bowls are set seamlessly into the stone floor of the dais and cannot be removed. If examined under the effects of a *detect magic* spell, they give off a faint aura of divination.

A creature that examines the bowls notices a fine layer of grit in the earth column's bowl (no check required to notice). None of the other bowls have residue of any sort, as though dust and detritus simply avoids them.

A character who succeeds a DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check can deduce that these bowls are here for offerings. The nature of the offerings is the riddle that must be solved, with the markings on the columns serving as the only hint.

COLUMNS

These columns are each 50 feet tall and are plain save for four wide bands that feature a repeated symbol (no check required to notice). The symbol is different for each column, but each column has only one symbol. If examined under the effects of a *detect magic* spell, the columns give off a faint aura of evocation.

A creature that succeeds a DC 10 Intelligence (History) check will recognize the symbols as being associated with the four elements: earth, water, air, and fire.

SOLUTION

When a character introduces the correct element to the bowl, the markings on the pillars begin to glow: green for earth, white for air, red for fire, and blue for water. A character can sprinkle dirt in the earth bowl, splash water in the water bowl, blow into the air bowl, and lower or kindle a flame into the fire bowl. Each pillar remains aglow for 1 minute after it is activated.

When all four pillars are activated, read or paraphrase the following:

With a great groan, the colossal doors to the ancient temple swing open ponderously of their own accord. Darkness lies beyond, impenetrable and foreboding.

SETBACKS

Should the characters fail to solve the riddle after triggering the first pillar, they earn one level of enmity from the temple (see the Enmity of the Primordials sidebar).

PART 2: THE TEMPLE

The following areas correspond to the labels on the map of the temple on page 12.

1. THE ANTECHAMBER

This is the entrance hall to the temple.

The echoes of your footsteps are lost in the vastness of this room. Easily fifty feet long and just as wide and with the ceiling a distant sight over a hundred feet above, it is more a cavern than a chamber.

At the very centre of this space is a towering, 80-foot tall, freestanding column matched only in height by statues emerging from the walls to the north, east, south, and west. Each statue is unique in its design: to the north is a beautiful woman with arms outstretched, her voluminous clothing caught in an eternal breeze; to the east, a lithe man sitting atop the crest of a mighty wave; to the south, a stern man, bare chested and holding a flaming sword; and to the west, a muscular man carrying a boulder on one mighty shoulder.

As soon as the characters enter this area, their means of ingress vanishes and is replaced by a dark corridor which passes beneath the east statue. Similar passages exist beneath the other statues, as well, each fading to darkness beyond even the sight of characters with darkvision.

THE COLUMN

While it is currently inactive, whenever the characters succeed in the trials of rooms 2–5 it gains a glowing band showing that room's associated element.

THE STATUES

A character who examines the statues can deduce with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check that the statues represent, in order of north, east, south, and west: Akadi, goddess of elemental air; Istishia, god of elemental water; Kossuth, god of elemental fire; and Grumbar, god of elemental earth. A character with the Acolyte background, a warlock of the Primordial, or a follower of any of these gods automatically succeeds on this check.

Additionally, carved into the lintel of the archways leading to the corridors under the statues is the elemental symbol of the primordial deity: air for Akadi, water for Istishia, fire for Kossuth, and earth for Grumbar.

ENMITY OF THE PRIMORDIALS

Though abandoned for thousands of years, the temple remains suffused by the power of the primordial deities who used it to ascend. This ancient magic is not idle, and responds to any intrusion in a variety of manners determined by the level of enmity someone has earned. Keep track of the party's enmity level and consult the Enmity table, below.

The effects on the Enmity table are cumulative.

ENMITY

Level Effect

- 1 Subtract 1 from any hit points recovered from expending Hit Dice (minimum 1).
- 2 Suffer 1 additional damage from attacks that deal acid, cold, fire, lightning, poison, or thunder damage.
- 3 Deal 1 less damage with attacks that deal acid, cold, fire, lightning, poison, or thunder damage.
- 4 Cannot benefit from resistance to acid, cold, fire, lightning, poison, or thunder damage.
- 5 Gain vulnerability to acid, cold, fire, lightning, poison, and thunder damage.

In addition to the ways players can earn enmity in each room, they also earn 1 level on a long rest.

2. AIR TRIAL

This chamber contains the Trial of Air, one of four trials the party must complete to access area 7.

The floor of this room drops off 8 feet to a labyrinth of deadly stone spikes shaped by aeolian forces, with the only safe passage above them being a network of criss-crossed, six-inch-wide wooden beams. A few moments after you enter, five orbs—one ensconced along each wall and one in the centre of the chamber clutched in a stone claw—suddenly flare up with light and a blast of air buffets you from the west.

The room is 60 feet in each dimension and has only one means of ingress and egress: the hallway from which the characters enter in the southeast corner.

AIR TRIAL

Complex trap (level 1, moderate threat)

This trap is ultimately solved by deactivating the orb in the **north** wall. However, several elements of the trap threaten to thwart this goal.

Trigger. This trap activates as soon as a creature enters the room, and it remains active while any creature is in the chamber.

Initiative. The trap acts on initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties).

Active Elements. The Air Trial includes a Gust of Wind that affects the entire area, controlled by the Orbs.

Gust of Wind. Roll a d4. A gust of wind blows from the north (1), south (2), east (3), or west (4). Any creature balancing on a wooden beam perpendicular to this direction must succeed a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall off the beam into the spikes below. A creature wearing heavy armour makes this check with disadvantage.

Orbs. There are four fist-sized orbs which pulse with light immediately before a gust of wind occurs. One orb (the **north** orb) controls the trap, while the other three orbs are bait. The orbs radiate an aura of evocation under the scrutiny of a *detect magic* spell or similar effect.

Dynamic Elements. The gust of wind becomes stronger if the wrong orb is deactivated.

Gust Intensifies. If any of the four orbs aside from the **north** orb are disabled, the DC of the Dexterity (Acrobatics) check it prompts increases by 1. This is cumulative for each orb that is deactivated.

Constant Elements. The Wooden Beams present an obstacle that affects each creature in the trap and the Spikes pose a hazard.

Spikes. A character who falls into the spikes suffers 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Wooden Beams. A character must succeed a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check when they move along these beams, unless they move at a slow pace (half speed). Passing a creature on these beams is impossible.

Countermeasures. Each of the trap's active elements can be thwarted by particular countermeasures.

Gust of Wind. Characters can attempt to keep each other from falling or anticipate the gusts to better prevent themselves from being blown off the beams. These options are described below.

Strength (Athletics), DC 10. As a reaction, a creature within 5 feet of another creature when the Gust of Wind effect occurs can latch on to one creature within reach. Both creatures then roll their next Dexterity (Acrobatics) check against the Gust of Wind effect with advantage.

Wisdom (Perception), DC 13. As an action, a creature can attempt to watch the active orbs for the sudden flare of light and use the brief moment before the wind gusts to secure their footing. That creature has advantage on their next Dexterity (Acrobatics) check against the Gust of Wind effect.

Orbs. The four orbs along the walls can be deactivated with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check or by dealing 10 damage in a single attack to one (they have an AC of 12 and a damage threshold of 5). If the gust of wind would originate from a direction with a disabled orb, the Gust of Wind effect does not occur. If the **north** orb is deactivated, the Gust of Wind effect ends and the stone claw that clutches the orb in the centre of the room opens, allowing that orb to be taken (see Elemental Orbs, below).

SETBACKS

If the characters take longer than 10 rounds to pass this trial, they earn one level of enmity from the temple (see the Enmity of the Primordials sidebar).

3. WATER TRIAL

This chamber contains the Trial of Water, one of four trials the party must complete to access area 7.

The smell of fresh water fills your nose before you even arrive in this chamber. A splendid, freestanding fountain with a wide basin dominates the the centre of the room, its gentle trickle soothing to the ear. To the north, a marble statue of a woman holds a pair of golden scales, one side weighed down with an orb of the brightest blue and the other side holding an empty bowl.

Rather disturbingly, someone seems to have scratched something into the west wall.

The room is 60 feet in each dimension and has only one means of ingress and egress: the hallway from which the characters enter in the southeast corner.

THE FOUNTAIN

The fountain is ancient but still in working order. Under the scrutiny of a *detect magic* spell or similar effect, it radiates an aura of both transmutation and evocation. Should a character manage to drink the water, they can immediately spend Hit Dice as though they had spent a short rest, gaining the maximum number of hit points for any Hit Die expended.

On the rim of the basin are two stone jars. These are the only containers that will hold water from the fountain (the water simply passes through all other containers, even if poured into it from one of these jars). One of the containers is a little more than twice as large as the other. With a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check, a character can estimate the capacity of the two jars as 5 gallons and 3 gallons. These two numbers are also written on the bottom of the jars in Primordial, which a character with the cloistered scholar or sage background can deduce with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (History) check if no one in the party speaks Primordial.

THE RIDDLE

When the characters approach the statue, read or paraphrase the following:

At your approach, a smooth and mellifluous voice issues from the statue's lips. In the Common tongue, it says:

“Three lords sought to claim the prize,
but all were brave and none were wise.
Five maids wept to see them die,
and soon were forced to bid good bye.
Four would do to fill the bowl
and so achieve your solemn goal.”

THE WEST WALL

Scratched into the wall (using *druidcraft*) are notes made by Mhorro while attempting to solve this riddle (give the players Handout 1). A character who spends 1 minute examining the markings can attempt a DC 10 Intelligence check to realize that they are the first four steps of a six-step series someone may have used to solve the riddle.

ELEMENTAL ORBS

To unlock the Sanctum, the characters must first recover the four elemental orbs located in areas 2 through 5.

An elemental orb is a Tiny object, about the size of a Medium creature's head. It weighs about 1 lb. and can easily fit into a backpack or a sack (but not a belt pouch). A *detect magic* spell or similar effect reveals an aura of abjuration magic around each orb.

The orbs can't be destroyed by any means. If they're discarded, buried, or taken more than a mile outside the temple, they teleport back to their resting places inside their respective chambers.

SOLVING THE RIDDLE

The bowl on the scales must be filled with exactly four gallons of water from the fountain to even the scales and release the orb. There are many methods of varying complexity for getting the correct quantity of water. Below are two possible methods.

METHOD ONE

Step 1. Fill the 5-gallon jug with water from the basin. (Five gallons of water in the 5-gallon jug.)

Step 2. Fill the 3-gallon jug with water from the 5 gallon jug. (Two gallons of water in the 5-gallon jug; three gallons of water in the 3-gallon jug.)

Step 3. Dump out the 3-gallon jug. (Two gallons of water in the 5-gallon jug.)

Step 4. Empty the remaining two gallons from the 5-gallon jug into the 3-gallon jug. (Two gallons of water in the 3-gallon jug.)

Step 5. Fill the 5-gallon jug from the basin again. (Five gallons of water in the 5-gallon jug; two gallons of water in the 3-gallon jug.)

Step 6. Fill the 3-gallon jug back up completely from the 5-gallon jug. (Four gallons of water in the 5-gallon jug; three gallons of water in the 3-gallon jug.)

METHOD TWO

Step 1. Fill the 3-gallon jug with water from the basin. (Three gallons of water in the 3-gallon jug.)

Step 2. Empty the 3-gallon jug into the 5-gallon jug. (Three gallons of water in the 5-gallon jug.)

Step 3. Fill the 3-gallon jug again. (Three gallons of water in each jug.)

Step 4. Fill the 5-gallon jug to full with the 3-gallon jug. (Five gallons of water in the 5-gallon jug; one gallon of water in the 3-gallon jug.)

Step 5. Dump out the 5-gallon jug. (One gallon of water in the 3-gallon jug.)

Step 6. Empty the 3-gallon jug into the 5-gallon jug. (One gallon of water in the 5-gallon jug.)

Step 7. Fill the 3-gallon jug again. (One gallon of water in the 5-gallon jug; three gallons of water in the 3-gallon jug.)

Step 8. Empty the 3-gallon jug into the 5-gallon jug. (Four gallons of water in the 5-gallon jug.)

Freehanding or estimating the right amount of water is impossible. Any attempt to produce to the correct quantity short of using the different jugs to come to the precise amount automatically fails and, if the bowl is overfilled, triggers the appearance of the chamber's guardian (see Failure below). If the bowl is underfilled, the water magically vanishes after a few moments, allowing the characters to try again. There is always a delay between water being poured in and the scales rebalancing, and as soon as it has balanced the water vanishes, thus foiling any attempt to simply add water until it reaches the correct balance.

Once the appropriate water level has been filled, the scales will slowly come to balance, and the orb can be removed.

Thieves' Tools. It is possible (although extremely difficult) to foil the counterbalances of the scales in order to prevent them from tipping. This takes 10 minutes and requires three separate skill checks involving thieves' tools: one Dexterity, one Intelligence, and one Wisdom. The DC for these checks is 15. Should any of these checks fail by 5 or more, the chamber's guardian is summoned (see Failure below). Once this is done, the scales can be equalized to release the orb.

FAILURE

Should the characters overfill the bowl, even by a single ounce, the scales tip too far and the chamber's guardian is released.

The guardian appears to be a water elemental, but uses the stats of a **thug** with the following changes:

- Its creature type is elemental.
- It has a swim speed of 90 feet.
- It is immune to poison damage.
- It is immune to exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, and unconscious conditions.
- It has darkvision out to 60 feet.
- It speaks Aquan.
- It does not have a heavy crossbow or a mace; its Mace attack is a Slam attack instead.
- It has the following feature:

Freeze. If the guardian takes cold damage, it partially freezes; its speed is reduced by 20 feet until the end of its next turn.

ELEMENTAL ORBS

Once the guardian is slain or the scales properly balance, one section on each of the four walls opens, revealing niches holding bright blue orbs. Each of the orbs appears identical, even under the scrutiny of a *detect magic* spell or other effect, but the orbs in the north, south, and west walls are fakes that are trapped. Any creature that touches one of the fakes must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. A creature suffers 3 (1d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. If this damage reduces a creature to 0 hit points, that creature is frozen solid.

SETBACKS

If the characters trigger the appearance of the guardian, they earn one level of enmity from the temple (see the Enmity of the Primordials sidebar).

4. FIRE TRIAL

This chamber contains the Trial of Fire, one of four trials the party must complete to access area 7.

The temperature of this room is uncomfortably hot, and no sooner have you entered than you feel sweat beading on your skin. The entire floor here is grated steel providing a means to walk above a bed of incandescent coals that stretches across the room.

Each wall is decorated with a relief carving with flame motifs, and each features a pedestal supporting identical red orbs. In the centre of the room is a tall pillar surmounted by an enormous red gem and with four objects in recessed niches, one on each of its four sides.

The room is 60 feet in each dimension and has only one means of ingress and egress: the hallway from which the characters enter in the northeast corner.

ORBS

Each of the four orbs rests on a pedestal. They radiate an aura of abjuration under the effects of a *detect magic* spell, and the pedestals they rest on emanate an aura of evocation.

Only the orb on the south pedestal is real, the others are traps. A creature that touches one of them must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 3 (1d6) fire damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. Unless the party has retrieved the crown from the pillar (see the Pillar below) and places it on the pillar as they remove the orb, the south pedestal also triggers a trap. Each trap can be defeated with a DC 12 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check, but if this check fails by 5 or more it triggers the trap.

Each pedestal has a symbol etched beneath the orb. They are: a dagger (north), a crown (south), a scroll (west), and an urn (east).

PILLAR

This pillar is 40 feet tall and is crowned by a red jewel the size of a man's head. On each of its four sides is one item recessed in a niche. They are: a crown (north), a scroll (south), a dagger (west), and an urn (east).

A character who examines the pillar notices that there is a lever behind it, initially obscured from view by the pillar itself. Pulling this lever will turn the pillar so that it turns clockwise one step and presents the items in the niches to the next cardinal direction.

Each of the items on the pillar can only be removed if they face the orb associated with the item (see Orbs, above). They otherwise resist all means to dislodge them, requiring simultaneous DC 15 Strength (Athletics) checks from two characters with a cumulative Strength score of 33 (there isn't enough room for more than two characters to attempt this). A failed attempt causes the gem ensconced atop the pillar to attack one of them (the DM decides which). The gem has a +6 to its attack roll and deals 3 (1d6) fire damage.

SETBACKS

If the characters trigger any of the traps in this chamber, they earn one level of enmity from the temple (see the Enmity of the Primordials sidebar).

5. EARTH TRIAL

This chamber contains the Trial of Earth, one of four trials the party must complete to access area 7.

The scent of fresh earth and rain fills this chamber, which seems less like an indoor space and more like a piece of the jungle inexplicably transposed inside the temple. A large tree dominates the centre of the room and several more stand along the periphery. The floor is an uneven tangle of roots and moss, and vines hang along the walls, giving way only to three enormous, closed flower buds along the west, east, and north walls.

The only sight that is not a living thing are four stone pillars along the south wall.

The room is 60 feet in each dimension and has only one means of ingress and egress: the hallway from which the characters enter in the northeast corner.

FLOWER BUDS

The three buds along the west, east, and north walls each contain identical orbs, of which only the west orb is real. The buds open after the riddle is solved (see Pillars, below) or the guardian is slain (see Failure, below).

PILLARS

The four pillars are decorated on each side by four different images. In clockwise order, they are: a flower, a sunburst, a leaf, and a snowflake. When the characters first arrive, the pillars show, from left to right, sunburst, flower, sunburst, flower. Anyone who succeeds a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check while examining the pillars notices a note carved into the second pillar (by Mhorro with *druidcraft*) that reads, “Turning one also turns those to the right”.

Each pillar has a lever next to it which turns the pillar one step clockwise. The first objective of this trial is to set the pillars to display the seasons in the proper order. The task is complicated in that each lever also rotates the pillars to the right of the associated pillar, such that the rotating the second pillar from the right will also cause the first pillar on the right to rotate.

FAILURE

The DM should keep track of how many times the players have the pillars turn. After 6 turns, the chamber’s guardian is summoned. The guardian appears to be an earth elemental but uses the stats of a **thug** with the following changes:

- It is immune to poison damage.
- It is immune to the exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, and unconscious conditions.
- It has darkvision out to 60 feet.
- It speaks Terran.
- It does not have a heavy crossbow or a mace; its Mace attack is a Slam attack instead.
- It has the following features:

Earth Glide. The guardian can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the elemental doesn’t disturb the material it moves through.

Should the characters attempt to remove the orb from the north or east flower after the pillars are solved or the guardian is slain, it releases a cloud of toxic spores. All creatures within 10 feet of the flower must succeed a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 hour.

SETBACKS

If the characters trigger the appearance of the guardian, they earn one level of enmity from the temple (see the Enmity of the Primordials sidebar).

6. NARTHEX

This area is only made accessible after the characters complete all four trials. Upon their return to area 2, they find the column has risen up, revealing a spiral staircase beneath that leads down a full thirty-three revolutions.

Four statues stare at each other solemnly across the width of this room, two on each side. At the far end, a pair of tall double doors seemingly hollowed from the stone by natural erosion stand shut. In the centre of the room is a plinth.

This room is 80 feet long and 40 feet wide. It is the site of the last trial before entering the Sanctum (area 7).

STATUES

The statues are 10 feet apart and 10 feet from either end of the hall. In clockwise order starting from the northwest, they



are: air, water, fire, and earth. Each statue appears to be a smaller version of the corresponding statue in the antechamber.

When a statue is approached, a voice will issue forth and speak a riddle that can provide a clue as to its nature.

AIR

The following riddle is spoken by the northwest statue.

*Voiceless I sing,
breathless I blow,
toothless I bite,
shapeless I flow.*

WATER

The following riddle is spoken by the northeast statue.

*I always run and never walk,
always murmur, never talk,
I have a bed, but never sleep,
I have a mouth, but never eat.*

FIRE

The following riddle is spoken by the southeast statue.

*I have no lungs and yet I breathe.
I have no mouth and yet I eat.
I have no legs and yet I dance.
Those who tame me will advance.*

EARTH

The following riddle is spoken by the southwest statue.

*I have three brothers, though some would say four.
They say we are all; some less and some more.
On my face do you tread; in my bosom are nursed
the seeds of all life, from the last to the first.*

PLINTH

The plinth is approximately four feet tall and has four semi-circular depressions in it which can hold the four elemental orbs. These depressions are aligned in a square, parallel to the organization of the statues.

Characters who examines the plinth and succeeds a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that the motifs which decorate this plinth are notably different from the other images that appear throughout the temple. Rather than images of waves, flames, and other primary expressions of the four elements, instead there are icicles and lava flows. A character who succeeds a DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check can deduce that these images represent the combination of multiple elements.

To solve this riddle, the characters must place the orbs in the following arrangement: water (northwest), air (northeast), earth (southeast), and fire (southwest). If all the stones are inserted and their positions are not correct, hidden vents within the plinth, the statues, and even the tiles on the floor begin to release noxious gas. Creatures in the area must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 3 (1d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. The gas clears in a few moments and the vents close, ready to release again within seconds.

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

In this mini-adventure, characters gain levels when they progress through the different challenges of the temple. These milestones are as follows:

- Characters who acquire all four elemental orbs advance to 2nd level.
- Characters advance to 3rd level when they put a stop to Mhorro's plans.

7. SANCTUM

This is the deepest part of the temple and the location of Mhorro's self-imposed imprisonment.

A profound sense of sadness and anger seems to hang in the air as thick as the mist in this chamber, and even less warm. The first few steps inside are a labyrinth of menhirs seemingly lifted up from the earth and precisely carved with stunning images accompanied by inscriptions in an unfamiliar script. A brief examination suggests that they convey some kind of narrative.

Beyond the standing stones, the chamber opens into a forest landscape complete with a majestic canopy and mossy undergrowth in place of a stone floor. Here and there, small pools of water seem either partially frozen or near to boiling, and as you take in your surroundings a sudden blast of heat causes you to flinch as a small geyser of lava briefly jets up from a far corner.

"I was wondering when others would find this place", comes a raspy voice from the west side of the room. Nestled in a natural seat in the hollow of a tree, you had initially overlooked the man as part of the tree. In fact, as you look closer, that seems to be exactly the case, as his flesh seems like bark and you cannot truly discern where his brown robes end and the tree begins.

Mhorro is a druid who was exiled by his circle after the death of his beloved, a dryad named Ashara, caused him to seek the destruction of the town sheltering the loggers who had cut down her tree. Not powerful or knowledgeable enough to bind her to a new tree himself and unable to call on the archfey who had first bound her and subsequently spurned her for falling in love with a mortal, Mhorro accepted Ashara's spirit into his own body, becoming part fey. Unfortunately, Ashara's personality did not survive as he had hoped, and Mhorro was left only with memories of her love for him, which drove him on this dark course of revenge.

Characters can interpret this story from the carvings that Mhorro has made in the walls of the sanctum. If this makes them sympathetic toward him, that is their error. These tragic events did not ennoble Mhorro; they drove him mad.

The room is 60 feet in each dimension. Mhorro's seat is in a tree along the west wall. The entrance is along the east wall.

LAVA POOL

A 5-foot by 5-foot pool of lava occupies the northwest corner of the room, sustained by elemental magic. The pool is lower than the rest of the floor and has a steep bank of earth that provides some shelter from its intense heat. Any Medium or smaller creature can approach within 15 feet of the lava before they begin to be exposed to the pool. A creature that ventures closer can duck down to approach safely within 5 feet.

If the creature does not duck down or foolishly approaches closer, they must immediately make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, they take 22 (4d10) fire damage if they are within 10 feet of the lava, or 110 (20d10) fire damage if they are within 5 feet of the lava. Additionally, they immediately gain one level of exhaustion. On a successful save, the creature takes half that damage and does not gain a level of exhaustion. This damage repeats every time a creature enters within range of the lava or starts their turn there.

A creature that falls into the lava is instantly slain and cannot be restored to life by any method other than *true resurrection* or a *wish* spell, as their body is utterly destroyed.

FACING MHORRO

Mhorro is a **druid** with the following changes, increasing his challenge rating to 3 (700XP):

- He has 40 hit points.
- He has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered.
- He speaks Common, Druidic, Primordial, and Sylvan.
- He has the *moonbeam* spell prepared in place of *longstrider* and *goodberry* instead of *animal messenger*.
- He has the following features:

Legendary Resistance (1/Day). If Mhorro fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

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

Legendary Actions. Mhorro 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. Mhorro regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Detect. Mhorro makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Cantrip. Mhorro casts a cantrip.

Primordial Wrath (Costs 3 Actions). Mhorro targets one creature he can see within 30 feet of him with a blast of elemental power. The target must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw against this magic, taking 7 (2d6) damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. The DM determines the type of damage by rolling 2d4 and choosing one. The possible results are: (1) acid, (2) cold, (3) fire, and (4) lightning. If both dice were the same, the magic is so powerful it also affects another creature of Mhorro's choice within 10 feet of the first target. That creature must make its own save and the DM makes a new damage roll, which could cause the magic to affect yet another creature.

A creature can only be targeted once each time this ability is used.

Additionally, while in the Sanctum, Mhorro gains the ability to use lair actions on initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties). The possible lair actions are detailed below; Mhorro can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- Mhorro rolls a d4. On a result of 1 or 2, he regains a spell slot of 1st level. On a result of 3 or 4, he regains a 1st or 2nd level spell slot. If he has no spent spell slots of that level or lower, nothing happens.
- A cloud of noxious gas fills a 20-foot-radius sphere centred on a point Mhorro chooses within 60 of him. The cloud spreads around corners and remains until he dismisses it as an action, uses this lair action again, or dies. The cloud is lightly obscured. Any creature in the cloud when it appears must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 2 (1d4) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. A creature that ends its turn in the cloud takes 2 (1d4) poison damage.
- Vines lash out like whips, attempting to ensnare up to three creatures Mhorro can see within 60 feet of him. Each creature must succeed a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or take 2 (1d4) slashing damage and be restrained. A creature can take an action to make a DC 10 Strength or Dexterity check, ending the restraint on a success. On his turn, Mhorro can use an action to cause the vines to drag a restrained character up to 30 feet. A creature can resist this movement with a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

Mhorro isn't completely insane, but Ashara's memories have become a separate part of his identity that he interprets to be speaking to him even though he knows that she is dead (a fact which drives his fanatical desires for revenge). In his conversation with the party, he will frequently include her in his comments as though she is present in the chamber. If asked who he is referring to, he will gesture exasperatedly at a small sapling to his right (which he salvaged from the tree to which Ashara had been bound and has preserved with druidic magic).

Characters can have a surprisingly pleasant conversation with Mhorro if they abide by a few conditions:

- Any attempt to inflict harm on his person will be met with a fight to the death.
- Damaging the standing stones or the sapling to Mhorro's right is inexcusable and will trigger a fight to the death.

As long as the characters remain cordial, Mhorro will not initiate outright hostility. He will recount what has led him to the temple and outright admit that he is responsible for the disasters that have befallen the region (under the innocuous, if cryptic, agenda of "restoring balance"). He utterly refuses to abandon this quest.

Poor Hospitality. If it becomes apparent to Mhorro that the characters mean to oppose his agenda but the situation is still more-or-less cordial, he will subtly prepare for a fight. A character with a passive Perception of 13 or higher will notice dozens of vines slowly snaking their way closer to the party members. A character who notices this has advantage on their Dexterity saving throw against being restrained by the third option of Mhorro's lair actions. If a creature was not aware of the approach of the vines, they make their Dexterity saving throw with disadvantage instead.

TREASURE

The only thing of value in the chamber is a moonstone amulet Mhorro wears around his neck (worth 2,500 gp) and his staff, which is a *+1 quarterstaff* carved with druidic motifs and is half the normal weight of a quarterstaff. A creature attuned to the item can use a bonus action to cause it to glow with the pale radiance of moonlight, shedding dim light in a 5-foot radius until this bonus action is used again or the attunement is broken. A druid or a creature with fey ancestry (such as an elf) can attune to the staff in just 1 minute.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

With Mhorro's defeat, the temple grows quiet again and the natural disasters affecting the region begin to subside in their intensity. The front entrance of the temple immediately reappears in area 1 and there is no opposition to the characters departing.

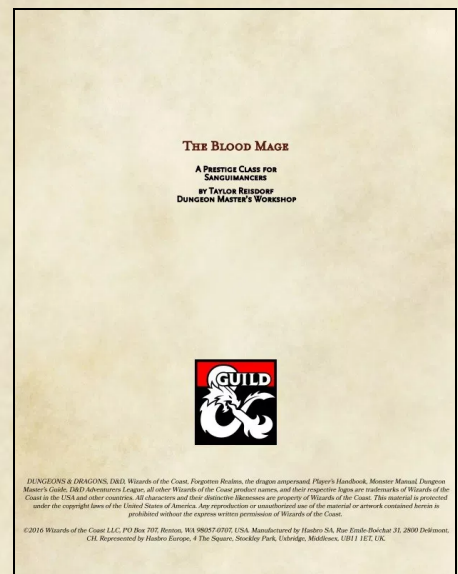
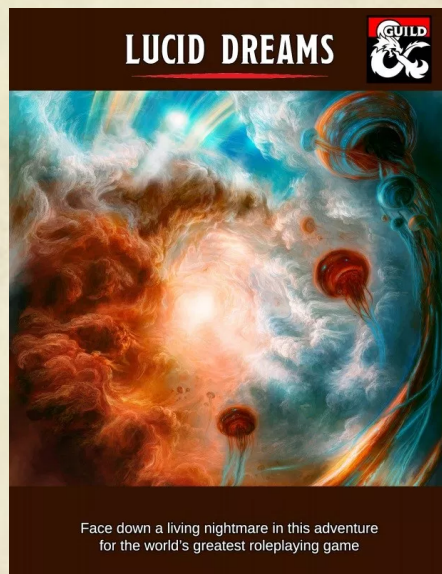
The consequences of this adventure are up to the DM to determine. Mhorro's death might not resonate well with other druids of a similar mind to him. On the other hand, the efforts of the characters toward ending the scourge of elemental evil may make instant celebrities of the party. With such fame, they would undoubtedly attract the attention of wealthy benefactors in need of their particular brand of professional services.

There is also the matter of the temple itself. It would be a priceless archaeological site, provided expeditions could be mounted to it. And perhaps not all of it is crumbled ruin.

Of course, depending on how you introduced the players to the plot, you may have other things planned. Mhorro's staff or amulet could be an important piece of a scheme or ritual, and the characters retrieving them only draws them deeper into some plot. Perhaps the temple itself was preventing some deeper power from rising, such as Tharizdun, the Elder Elemental Eye.

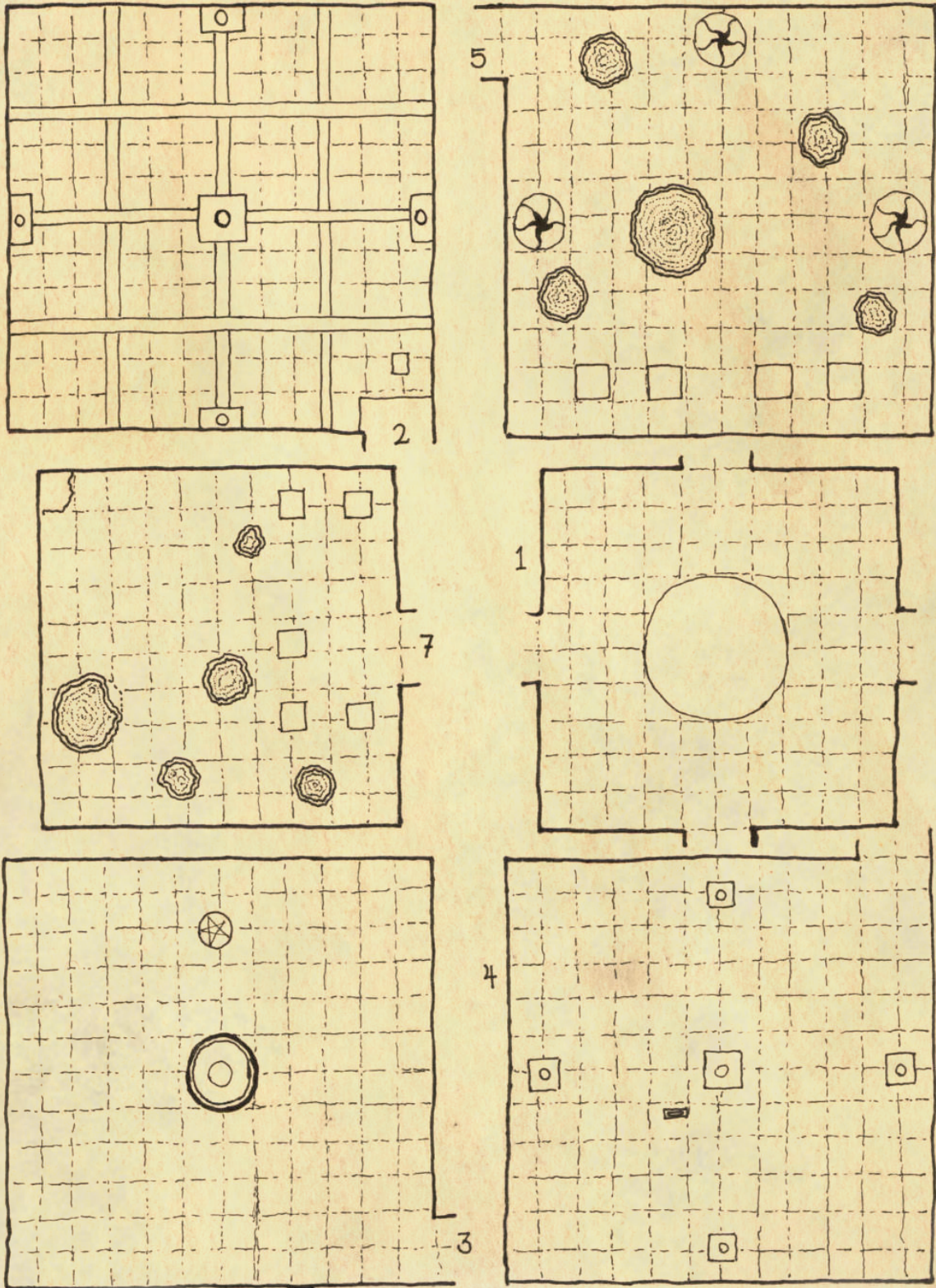
Wherever the adventurers go, this is likely not the end of their story.

OTHER TITLES BY DUNGEON MASTER'S WORKSHOP



APPENDIX A: MAPS

Temple of the Primordials



APPENDIX B: PLAYER HANDOUTS

HANDOUT 1: WATER TRIAL HINT

	5	3
1	5	◇
2	2	3
3	2	◇
4	◇	2
5		
6		



THE PRIMORDIAL

Your patron is a god-like being of raw entropy and elemental power. In days of yore, the primordial fought with the gods for dominance of the world in a war that lasted for thousands of years. Though many primordials are inveterate foes of the gods, some are of a more neutral disposition and pursue aims that defy mortal comprehension.

Entities of this sort include Kossuth, Lord of Fire; Dendar the Night Serpent; Asgorath the World Shaper; and Ubtao the Deceiver.

PRIMORDIAL FEATURES

Warlock Level	Feature
1st	Elder Tongue, Elemental Attunement
6th	Greater Attunement
10th	Elemental Form
14th	Superior Attunement

EXPANDED SPELL LIST

The Primordial lets you choose from an expanded list of spells when you learn a warlock spell. The following spells are added to the warlock spell list for you.

PRIMORDIAL EXPANDED SPELLS

Spell Level	Spells
1st	<i>burning hands, thunderwave</i>
2nd	<i>gust of wind, scorching ray</i>
3rd	<i>erupting earth,* lightning bolt</i>
4th	<i>conjure minor elementals, ice storm</i>
5th	<i>cone of cold, wall of stone</i>

* this spell appears in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*

ELDER TONGUE

Your pact has imbued you with the essence of raw elements. You can speak, read, and write Primordial. Knowing this language allows you to understand and be understood by those who speak its dialects: Aquan, Auran, Ignan, and Terran.

ELEMENTAL ATTUNEMENT

At 1st level, you are able to attune to an element associated with your patron. Choose one of the following: earth, fire, ice, or storm. You gain features based on your choice, as shown below.

Earth. You gain resistance to acid and poison damage and, while underground, always know your depth and which direction is north. Additionally, you can choose to deal acid or poison damage instead of force damage when you cast *eldritch blast*.

Fire. You gain resistance to fire damage and can comfortably exist in environments as warm as 150 degrees Fahrenheit. Additionally, you can choose to deal fire damage instead of force damage when you cast *eldritch blast*.

Ice. You gain resistance to cold damage and can comfortably exist in environments as cold as -50 degrees Fahrenheit. Additionally, you can choose to deal cold damage instead of force damage when you cast *eldritch blast*.

Storm. You gain resistance to lightning and thunder damage and can infallibly predict the weather within the next 24 hours. Additionally, you can choose to deal lightning or thunder damage instead of force damage when you cast *eldritch blast*.

GREATER ATTUNEMENT

Beginning at 6th level, you gain additional benefits based on your elemental attunement.

Earth. You gain resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons.

Fire. Warlock spells you cast ignore fire resistance. Additionally, when you roll a 1 or a 2 on a damage die for a warlock spell that deals fire damage, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll, even if the new roll is a 1 or a 2.

Ice. When you deal cold damage to a creature using a warlock spell, that creature must succeed a Constitution saving throw or its speed decreases by 10 feet until the start of your next turn.

Storm. When you deal lightning or thunder damage to a creature using a warlock spell, that creature must succeed a Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet.

ELEMENTAL FORM

At 10th level, you have become so suffused with elemental magic that you can briefly assume an elemental state. Your elemental shape is determined by your elemental attunement as shown in the Elemental Form table below. You can remain in this form for a number of hours equal to half your warlock level. Once you have used this feature, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

While you are transformed, the following rules apply:

- Your game statistics are replaced by the statistics of the new form, but you retain your alignment, personality, and Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. You also retain all of your skills and saving throw proficiencies, in addition to gaining those of the new form. If the form has the same proficiencies as you and the bonus in its stat block is higher than yours, use the form's bonus instead of yours.
- When you transform, you assume the hit points and Hit Dice of the new form. When you revert to your normal form, you return to the number of hit points you had before you transformed. However, if you revert as a result of dropping to 0 hit points, any excess damage carries over to your normal form.
- You retain the benefit of any features from your class, race, or other source and can use them if the new form is physically capable of doing so. However, you can't use any of your special senses, such as darkvision, unless your new form also has that sense.
- You choose whether your equipment falls to the ground in your space, merges with your new form, or is worn by it. Worn equipment functions as normal, but the DM decides whether it is practical for the new form to wear a piece of equipment based on the form's nature, shape, and size. Your equipment doesn't change size or shape to match the new the new form, and any equipment that the new form can't wear must either fall to the ground or merge with it. Equipment that merges with the new form has no effect until you leave the form.

ELEMENTAL FORM

Elemental Attunement	Elemental Form
Earth	Earth elemental
Fire	Fire elemental
Ice	Water elemental
Storm	Air elemental

SUPERIOR ATTUNEMENT

Starting at 14th level, you gain additional benefits based on your elemental attunement.

Earth. Your Constitution increases by 2, as does your maximum for that ability score.

Fire. When you roll damage for a warlock spell that deals fire damage and you roll the the highest number possible on any of the dice, roll that die again and add that roll to the damage.

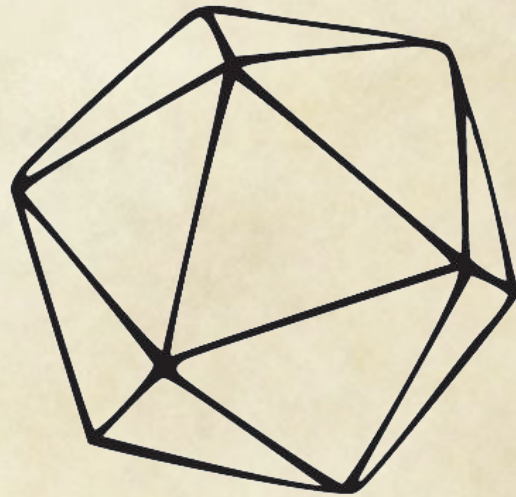
Ice. When you deal cold damage to a creature using a warlock spell, that creature has disadvantage on its next attack roll, ability check, or saving throw (your choice) before the end of its next turn.

Storm. When you deal lightning or thunder damage to a creature using a warlock spell, that creature cannot take reactions until the start of its next turn and the first attack against it before the start of its next turn has advantage.

QUIRKS

d6 Quirk

- You prefer your food hot from the fire and seem to never burn your fingers or tongue when you eat.
- Your skin is always cold to the touch.
- Your voice has a resonance, as though you were speaking from within a deep well.
- Your hair blows randomly, even in an enclosed room.
- You can identify most rock types by taste.
- You sweat profusely, even in cool weather.



DUNGEON MASTER'S WORKSHOP

Disclaimer: You should consult your physician before mixing your physiology with elemental forces. If you develop a rash that literally burns or freezes, you should head to the nearest temple immediately, as this may be a side effect of serious a medical condition.

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