

THE DM TOOL CHEST

TEMPLE OF THE HOLLOW ECLIPSE



A TEMPLE SINKS INTO THE SWAMPS AS ITS DARK SECRET
SPREADS MADNESS TO THE DENIZENS WITHIN



TEMPLE OF THE HOLLOW ECLIPSE

Temple of the Hollow Eclipse is a Fifth Edition adventure intended for **three to five characters of 7th to 8th level** and optimized for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 7**. An ancient temple contains a rift to the plane of madness that is corrupting the land into a deadly swamp. It has attracted the attention of a naga who has made the temple her lair, and her crazed lizardfolk cult is attacking caravans to pay her tribute. This adventure takes place in the Freelands campaign setting but fits into any existing campaign with an ancient ruin in a swamp with only a few modifications and name changes.

GM Note: This adventure includes references to the addictive nature and effects of imbibing hallucinogenic fantasy mushrooms. As addiction and drug usage may be a sensitive subject, please read the entire adventure and talk to your players to determine if this story is right for your table. As the GM, it is up to you to decide what should or should not be included in the provided adventure. We strongly encourage open communication with your players about topics such as these.

BACKSTORY

The Order of the Hollow Eclipse was a group of mages dedicated to bringing about an apocalypse by merging the material plane with the plane of madness. They referred to themselves as Lunatics—literal moon fanatics. From their hidden keep, they conducted dark rituals that eventually backfired, destroying themselves and corrupting the land in the process. A century later, the

Order is long forgotten, and the crumbling remains of their lair sinks inch by inch into the middle of a dark and deadly swamp now known as the Restless Marsh. In the heart of the ruin, the rift the Order managed to open continues to leak into the material plane slowly.

A moonchild naga named Sarkalsa discovered the sinking ruins and delved into its secrets as she claimed it for her lair. The residual magic still permeates the stones, and the naga is slowly becoming corrupted by the madness leaking from the rift within the ruins. A lizardfolk tribe living in the surrounding swamps has come under her spell and worships her as their god. They've begun to attack caravans traveling the area and bringing captives and loot back to Sarkalsa as tribute. While they have not been bold enough to venture further than the edges of the Restless Marsh, it's only a matter of time before they expand further and threaten the nearby settlements directly.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Strange occurrences in the nearby Restless Swamp have given cause for the characters to investigate. After speaking to Drildor the Sane—a crazed hermit living in the swamps—the party heads towards a crumbling ruin seeking answers. They find a sinking keep occupied by a cult of crazed lizardfolk and ragged humanoids under the thrall of hallucinogenic plants. They must work their way through the flooded keep to reach the temple hidden within, confront the half-mad naga controlling the cult, and determine how to destroy the rift leaking corruption from the plane of madness.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Here are a few ways to hook your characters into this adventure:

THE SINGING SURVIVOR

As the characters are traveling near a swamp, they hear the sound of off-key wordless singing from the nearby reeds. A rail-thin human man sits among the muck and mire in rags, making a crown of twisted cattails as he laughs maniacally and sings to himself through blackened teeth. He is a merchant named Artos who was captured by the naga's cult who went mad from the effects of the rift and the plants they fed him. He cannot speak but wordlessly beckons the characters to follow him, leading them directly to Drildor the Sane's hut.

AMBUSHED CARAVAN

The characters' patron has reached out to the party at the behest of a merchant they frequent to sell their adventuring loot. Something attacked their caravan while traveling near the Restless Swamps, and only a single survivor managed to escape. They told a tale of an ambush by crazed lizardfolk and mud-covered people dressed in rags attacking and taking everyone prisoner, including the merchant's niece Amalia. The merchant reached out through the patron to request the characters' help to rescue the missing niece and stolen goods. Tracks from the ambush site lead directly to Drildor the Sane's hut.

THE ANCIENT ORDER

A local wizardly scholar named Lorenthia has posted a notice seeking adventurers willing to brave the Restless Marsh, a local swamp rumored to be cursed. She has uncovered a dusty scroll that hints at an ancient keep called the Hollow Keep that was once in the heart of the swamp. It was home to a powerful order of mages that disappeared along with a secret treasure of great worth. Lorenthia offers the party a reward for every historical artifact or piece of information they bring back from the ruins. She offers the hidden treasure to the party in exchange for pointing them to seek out Drildor the Sane, a hermit who lives near the swamp and may know where the ruins are located.



DRILDOR THE SANE

THE RESTLESS MARSH

The Restless Marsh is a stretch of swamp that earned its name by its gradual growth over the past hundred years. It encompasses roughly twenty-five square miles of fetid marshland filled with all manner of creatures; few willingly enter the swamp, and even fewer return. There are no civilized settlements within its borders beyond a small lizardfolk tribe eking out a miserable existence.

CANDY CAPS

There is a small mushroom unique to the marsh nicknamed "candy caps" for its sweet smell and pink cap. Just like actual candy, eating these mushrooms makes teeth quickly turn rotten and black. Eating them causes intense hallucinations combined with euphoric sensations that eventually cause permanent insanity. A creature that eats one mushroom gains a +2 bonus to Charisma saving throws for 24 hours, gains resistance to psychic damage, and experiences mild hallucinations. Roll a d8 and consult the Mild Hallucinations table to determine what the creature sees.

At the end of the 24 hours, unless another mushroom is eaten, the creature gains a temporary -2 reduction to their Constitution and Charisma scores and becomes poisoned for the next 24 hours that can only be removed by a *lesser restoration* spell or similar effect. Eating another mushroom removes these penalties instantly but adds an additional hallucination and doubles the re-

MILD HALLUCINATIONS

d8 EVENT

- 1 All the colors you see start to shimmer and pulsate, and you gain a -2 penalty to Perception checks that rely on sight.
- 2 You feel as though everyone is looking at you from the sides of their eyes and you become distracted by your paranoia. You gain a -2 penalty to Intelligence checks and saving throws.
- 3 You begin to feel overly warm and struggle to breathe unless you remove all your armor and clothes.
- 4 You hear the pulse of blood and air reverberating in your ears, muffling the sounds of everything else around you. You gain a -2 penalty to Perception checks that rely on hearing.
- 5 You feel compelled to speak in a sing-song voice and must rhyme everything you say.
- 6 Your body feels light as a feather at the same time as your hands and feet feel leaden. You gain a -2 penalty to Strength checks and saving throws.
- 7 You see a tiny angel on your left shoulder and a tiny demon on your right shoulder, and they constantly tell you what choices you should make, often bickering with each other.
- 8 You feel as if your body is slowly shrinking and then growing, throwing off your balance. You gain a -2 penalty to Dexterity checks and saving throws.

covery time. Once eight mushrooms have been eaten, the creature gains a permanent madness effect for each eight after that. This effect cannot be removed beyond a *wish* spell or divine intervention.

DRILDOR THE SANE

Drildor (CN human **mage**) is one of the few human residents of the swamp, and he lives in a ramshackle hut near the outskirts. He is a hunched and wizened older man with heavy wrinkles, a thick grey beard that is home to a one-eyed squirrel named Kissle, and an overpowering smell of rot from his time spent in the swamps. A former professor at the Academy of Arcane Arts in the capital, Drildor secretly spent his evenings researching the plane of madness against the academy's strict rules. Upon discovering his research, he was banned from the grounds and drawn to the swamps by the open rift in the Hollow Temple. Growing increasingly mad by proximity to the rift, he continued his studies until he was forced to leave the temple by the naga Sarkalsa. He shares his hut with Artos (N human **commoner**), a former merchant that went mad after being captured by the naga's cult and forced to eat candy caps until he wandered away in his madness (see Adventure Hooks: The Singing Survivor).

DRILDOR'S HUT

Drildor's Hut sits on a muddy island about half a mile inside the border of the Restless Marsh under a twisted oak tree covered in speckled black and green moss. The hut is a 10-foot square shack made of thrown-together mismatched wooden planks and barely held together by rusted nails and rotting ropes. The thatched reed roof was poorly made and leaks whenever it rains. Inside is a small cooking fire that does double duty to heat the space. Moldy blankets cover piles of reeds that Artos and Drildor sleep on as beds. The only real furniture is a locked cherrywood chest bound in iron that Drildor brought from the academy. The chest contains his spellbook (filled with all the spells on the **mage** stat block) wrapped in a waterproof pouch, a *wand of magic missile*, and a pouch holding a dozen candy cap mushrooms.

Once the characters arrive at the hut, read aloud the following:

The stench of the fetid swamp is as thick as the muddy pathway that leads you to a small ramshackle hut sitting beneath a rotting oak tree. The thrown-together planks appear ready to collapse at the slightest touch, and it's a wonder that it's even standing. A wizened older man caked in mud sits in the doorway, feeding bits of food to a one-eyed squirrel that appears to live in his thick grey beard. His eyes shine with intelligence and madness, or possibly both. "Ah, the new students have arrived!" he exclaims with a broad smile exposing a mouth full of rotting teeth.

Artos sits next to Drildor, singing softly to himself while twisting a bundle of reeds into crowns for the characters to wear. Drildor's madness flickers on and off, switching his personality between a highly educated wizard and a crack-pot hedge mage. The mad mage still believes himself to be a professor at the academy and the characters to be new students, and he grows impatient with the characters unless they play along. Drildor knows the following information, although most of it is part of his delusions.

- He is a professor of the Academy of Arcane Arts on sabbatical studying the intricacies of the planes of existence.
- The squirrel is named Kissle, and she is the ruler of an extradimensional plane visiting on holiday. She only speaks to those she trusts, such as Drildor and Artos.
- There are ruins located just a few miles away from this very spot that has been taken over by very rude lizard-folk. They kicked Drildor out of his room, and he laments losing his notes. (Drildor gives the party detailed directions to the temple and a small iron key if the characters promise to retrieve his satchel).
- The ruins hold secrets that Drildor was attempting to study, but he could not get past the ancient wards.
- Artos is Drildor's star pupil, and he is training him to take a position at the academy once his studies are complete. Artos eats a mud pie and nods happily.
- The swamps are a delight, but some of the residents can be a bit testy, so it's best to avoid them when possible.

If the characters push for more information and succeed on a group DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check, roll a d4, and consult the Mad Mage's Musings table to determine what they learn. This check can be made with advantage if the characters defer to Drildor's status as a professor, give a treat to Kissle, or show other signs of respect. If the characters show frustration or disdain for

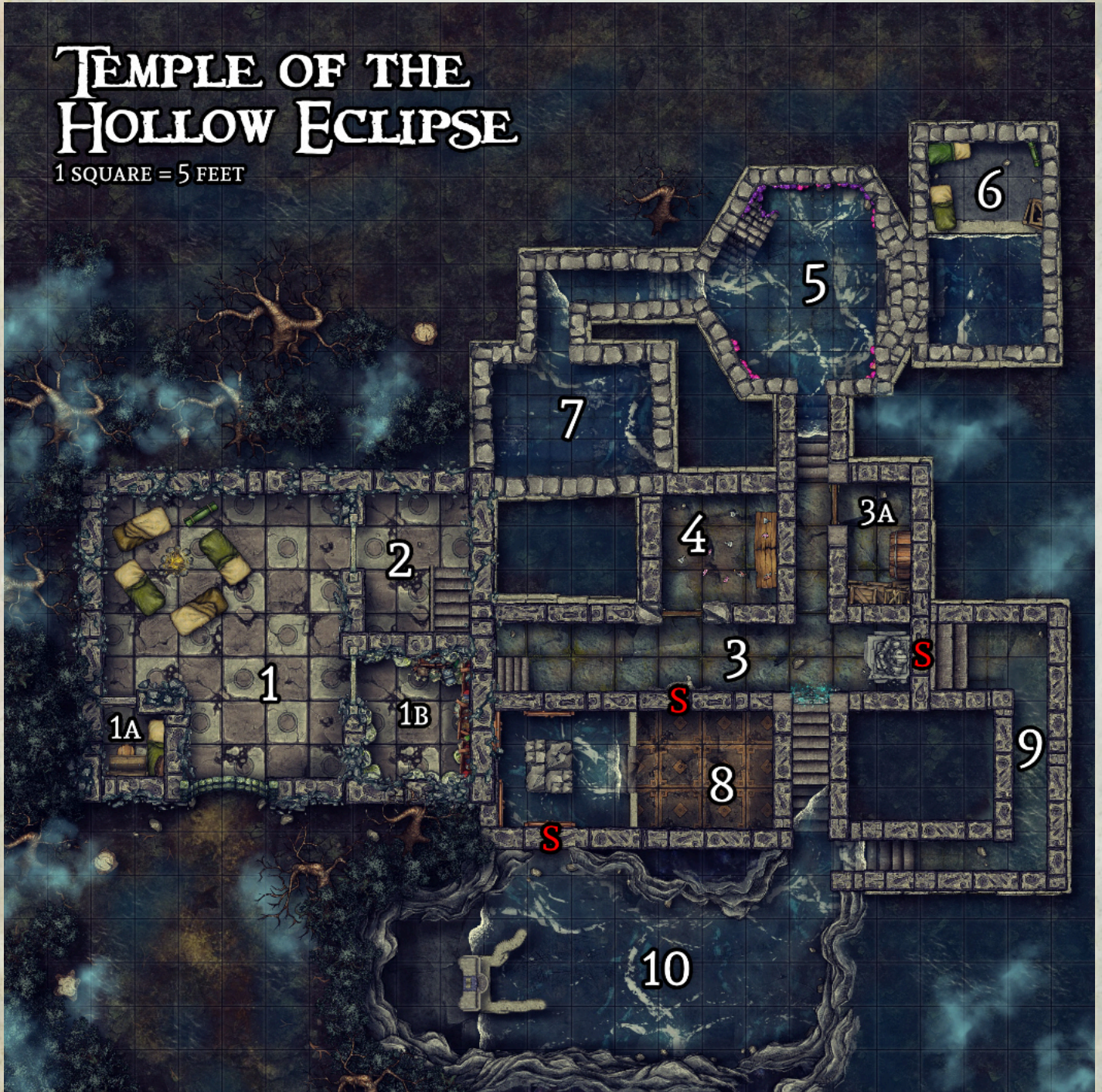
MAD MAGE'S MUSINGS

d4 EVENT

- 1 The swamp has overtaken most of the ruins and flooded many areas. Eating purple mushrooms lets you breathe underwater for a brief period.
- 2 There is a magically protected gate under the ruins that's quite shocking; Drildor was unable to figure a way past.
- 3 Drildor recalls hearing the lovely voice of a woman singing from within the temple but never saw the singer.
- 4 The mage grins as he tells the characters to "seek the secrets of the moon" within the temple.

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1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



the pair's mental state, the check is made with disadvantage. Drildor does not share any further information if he feels intimidated in any way and casts *invisibility* on himself to end the conversation.

Artos hands each character a crown of fragrant reeds before they leave. Insects are repulsed from the characters as long as they wear the reed crowns so they can travel through the swamp without being bothered. Otherwise, the bugs prevent them from gaining the benefits of a short or long rest. The crowns lose their repellent fragrance after 24 hours.

GETTING TO THE TEMPLE

The Restless Marsh is considered difficult terrain, and the temple is 5 miles directly west of Drildor's hut, in the very center of the swamp. For each hour of travel time, roll a d6 and consult the Restless Marsh Random Encounters table to see what the party runs into during their travels. Reroll on duplicates or choose an encounter the characters have not come across yet.

Once the characters arrive at the ruins, read aloud the following:

Rising through the mist-veiled and scum-covered swamp is a crumbling ruin enveloped in rotting vines. The tips of what must have once been battlements now sit barely above the waterline. The main building of the ancient fortress appears to be mostly intact, its gate yawning open for a final gasp as it sinks into the swamp. Fragmented carvings depicting the moon's phases adorn the keystone above the entrance with a hint of firelight flickering from within. Besides the constant buzz of insects and other swamp creatures, the ruin sits in silence.

RESTLESS MARSH

d6 EVENT

- 2d4+2 mud-covered lizardfolk *scouts* mounted on *giant lizards* ambush the party with advantage on their Dexterity (Stealth) checks.
- 3 *wights* amble out of the swamp. Each wields a longsword bearing the crest of an ancient kingdom worth 25 gp to a collector of antiquities.
- The party stumbles into a 20-foot-wide section of quicksand. Each character must succeed on a DC 15 Strength check to pull themselves out or become restrained. A restrained character sinks at a rate of 1d4 feet per round until the character is submerged and begins to drown.
- 1 *shambling mound* and 2 *violet fungus* lurch out of the marsh towards the party.
- The waters and twisting paths become confusing, and the party must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check or become lost, adding an additional mile of travel to the total travel distance.
- The party manages to find a path of relatively dry land that speeds up their travels, removing 1 mile from the overall travel distance to the temple.

THE HOLLOW TEMPLE

Once the fortress of the Order of the Hollow Eclipse, a powerful circle of magi, these ruins are now home to a crazed moonchild naga and her lizardfolk cult. The majority of the fortress was destroyed during the failed magical experiments that backfired, killing all of the ancient order and leaving a small rift to the plane of madness seeping into the material plane. Over the years, this seepage corrupted the land, turning it into the surrounding swamp. The naga Sarkalsa has gravitated to the rift, transforming the ruins into her temple, soaking in its energy. Her loyal lizardfolk tribe ate candy caps and went mad within the crumbling walls.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless otherwise noted in the area descriptions, these general features are prominent throughout the temple.

Ceilings, Floors, and Walls. The ruin's crumbling stone walls are barely standing and choked with vines with ruined carvings depicting phases of the moon carved into the crowns. The ceilings that remain are 9 feet high and in danger of collapse at any moment. The floors have shifted and are covered in debris, and many areas are underwater, ranging from 2 to 5 feet deep or completely flooded, as noted in the adventure text.

Doors. Regular doors are made of splintered planks bound in rusted iron and have an AC of 15, 4 hit points, and immunity to psychic and poison damage. Secret doors can be found with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception or Investigation) check.

Lights. The location descriptions assume the characters have light sources or assisted vision. The naga and lizardfolk do not require light to see, and other than a cook fire, there are no light sources in the temple.

Climate. The flooded temple is muggy and reeks of the rot from the swamp. Swarms of mosquitoes and other irritating bugs crawl among the scummy water.

Rift of Madness. In their attempt to open a rift to the plane of madness, the ancient order failed spectacularly, resulting in an explosion that killed them all and left a tear between the planes slowly seeping energy. Each sentient creature must succeed on a DC 12 plus their Intelligence modifier Intelligence saving throw or take 4 (1d4+2) psychic damage for every hour spent in the temple. This effect does not affect Constructs, the Undead, or any creature under the effects of long-term madness. Creatures with an Intelligence score of 16 or higher can feel the psychic presence of the rift but cannot discern what it is or where it is located.

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following descriptions correspond to the keyed locations on the provided map of the temple.

1. LIZARDFOLK CAMP

The swamp mist swirls around your ankles as you pass the vine-choked stone entrance and into the ruin beyond. Firelight from the northwest corner of the open-air room casts dancing shadows among the piles of rubble that are all that remains of the upper floors. Two wooden doors sit on the eastern wall, and a rusted iron door is on the southwestern corner of the room. Four sets of molding bedding surround the campfire, each occupied by a lounging lizardfolk warrior oddly staring into the sky above with black-toothed grins on their faces.

Encounter: Drugged Scouts. The four lizardfolk scouts in this room are under the influence of candy caps (see page 3) and ignore the characters if they are moving stealthily and succeed on a group DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check. A failure results in the camp turning hostile. Additionally, any attempt to open the door to Drildor's room or interact with the scouts also snaps them out of their trance.

Treasure. Each scout has a leather pouch holding various objects, including small bits of bone wrapped in fur, 2d6 sp, a dried frog corpse missing one leg, and a small lapis lazuli worth 20 gp.

1A. DRILDOR'S ROOM

This room is the only one that seems to have completely survived the ravages of time and is entirely intact. The locked rusted iron door (AC 19, 18 hit points, and immunity to psychic and poison damage) can be opened with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools or forced open with a successful DC 18 Strength check. If Drildor gives the party a key (see Drildor's Hut), it unlocks the door.

A dusty bedroll and a small desk holding half-melted candles sit in the small room. Underneath the desk is a dark-leather satchel filled with loose parchment covered in various sketches and notes written in cipher. A character that spends 10 minutes studying the notes and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check discerns they are highly detailed notes on extra-dimensional planar travel and piercing the veil between the planes.

1B. RUINED LIBRARY

Disintegrating bookcases filled with the remains of mildewed and ruined tomes ring the perimeter of this ancient library.

Hazard: Toxic Mold. Any creature that breathes the air in this room must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) poison damage and begin to suffer wracking coughs for the next 10 minutes. While coughing, the creature gains disadvantage on all attack rolls and Stealth checks. Creatures with resistance or immunity to poison damage automatically succeed their saving throw.

Treasure. A character searching through the remains of the bookshelves who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check uncovers a book and silver amulet tightly wrapped in a leather parcel that protected them from the elements and mold. The book is entitled *A Treatise on the Plane of Madness* and details a mad mage's journey through the plane and his experiences. If a character succeeds in noticing the presence of the rift (see General Features), they deduce that the energy they are feeling is similar to what is described within this book. The circular amulet is 4 inches in diameter and engraved with a highly detailed moon on one side opposite an enameled black circle. A 1-inch square hole cuts through the center. This amulet opens the secret door to area 9.

2. COLLAPSING STAIRWELL

A stone staircase in the corner of this room winds deeper underground. A few wooden planks cover gaps where the staircase partially collapsed into a sinkhole.

Trap: Pit Trap. The planks are set to collapse and drop anyone stepping on them into the 10-foot-deep pit beneath. A character with a passive Perception score of 15 or higher or who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the planks are not secure enough to bear weight. Anyone falling into the pit takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

3. MAIN HALLWAY

The stairwell ends at a 50-foot-long hallway, its walls covered in bas reliefs of hooded figures performing various rituals involving the moon. A soft blue glow comes from the far end of the hall, slightly illuminating a bend leading north and a statue with outstretched arms. A wooden door sits 15 feet down the hallway on the northern wall opposite an elaborate relief depicting two hooded figures holding an eclipsed moon between them in their outstretched hands.

Characters proficient in Religion or Arcana or who succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence (Religion or Arcana) check recognize the rituals depicted on the walls as a form of perverse moon worship combined with strange planar magic. The character instantly understands these

rituals as highly dangerous and almost apocalyptic in nature.

Southern Secret Door. A secret door sits between the hooded figures and under the eclipsed moon held between them. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the door, and that opens by pressing on a hand from either figure simultaneously. A wall section swings inward to area 8 with a soft click.

Enchanted Door. The soft blue glow emanates from the silver door leading to area 10. When the characters investigate, read aloud the following.

A soft blue glow emanates from a silvery door decorated with intricate designs and runes. The door does not have a visible handle or hinges.

A character proficient in Arcana or who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check recognizes the runes as a protective ward that also gives a warning that roughly translates to “Only Lunatics May Enter.” The door is enchanted to instantly open and deactivate the spell for a creature possessing the amulet of the Order of the Hollow Eclipse (found in area 6). Otherwise, touching the door results in a blast of lightning shooting from the runes. Characters within 5 feet of the door must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) lightning damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one. The blast also alerts the lizardfolk in area 5 of the party’s presence, who come to investigate the noise.

Hooded Statue. The hooded statue at the far end of the hall hides a secret staircase leading to area 9. The base has a carving of the moon’s phases with an indentation where the full moon is positioned. The amulet found in area 1b can be placed here and twisted to open a door leading to area 9.

3A. STORAGE

There are barrels and crates filled with food and various items in this room.

If the adventure hook “Ambushed Caravan” is used, these crates are the missing shipment the merchant sent the party after. The entirety of the goods is worth 500 gp and consists mainly of food and crafting tools, including a complete set of carpenter’s tools and smith’s tools.

Secret Treasure. A character stepping into the room with a passive Perception Wisdom score of 13 or higher or who succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a flagstone in the room that wiggles slightly when stepped on. Underneath is a hollow space containing a rotten leather satchel holding 2d10 gp, 4d8 sp, and 8d6 cp and a *potion of poison* that resembles a *potion of healing*.

4. LABORATORY

A thick layer of grime covers a wooden table against the eastern wall of this laboratory. There are shards of broken glass on the ground and swirling tracks in the dirt.

The tracks were made by Sarkalsa when she first came to the ruins and explored each chamber. She broke the few remaining bits of alchemical glassware in her madness because she enjoyed the sound of their shattering. A character who succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check determines the tracks are at least two weeks old and recognizes them as being made by a giant serpent but cannot determine the species. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, they determine the tracks do not move in a typical serpent movement pattern.

Secret Compartment. A character searching the room who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check uncovers a hidden compartment behind a loose stone in the northern wall. Inside is a small wooden box big enough to hold three vials holding a thick pink liquid that smells of strawberries. These are *potions of lunacy* derived from candy caps that grant the mushroom’s positive effects and mild hallucinations, but without the side effects once it wears off.

5. LUNATIC LAIR

The lower section of this area is under 2 feet of water and is considered difficult terrain.

Sunlight slips through broken slats of the tower’s damaged ceiling, casting rainbows across the oily surface of the swamp water filling the bottom floor. A winding staircase along the perimeter ends ten feet shy of the twenty-foot high ceiling where a second story once might have been and down another ten feet to the pool at the bottom—flooded staircases exit to the east and west. Pink and purple mushrooms line cracks in the walls and give off an oddly sweet scent of wild berries.

Mushrooms. A dozen pink candy caps and a dozen purple weeping jack mushrooms may be harvested from the walls and identified with separate DC 13 Wisdom (Nature) checks. A creature that eats a weeping jack mushroom can breathe air and water for 1 hour, after which the creature gains 1 level of exhaustion.

Encounter: Lunatic Lizards. Unless otherwise attracted by the noise of the enchanted door (area 3), there are two lizardfolk **scouts** and a lizardfolk **veteran** lounging in the pool. They can be surprised if the characters move stealthily and succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check. Each is wearing a black hooded half-cloak with an embroidered depiction of an eclipsed moon on the left shoulder, formerly owned by the ancient order. They discovered them among chests in area 6 and wore them randomly.

6. LIVING PRISON

This large chamber was once a two-story living quarter for the order members. The walls have crumbled away, leaving only an upper floor filled with dirty bedrolls and a few broken chests overlooking the flooded bottom level. The lizardfolk cult has kept their prisoners here and fed them candy caps mixed into their food. There are three emaciated human **commoners** in little more than rags: Erik, Marvin, and Amalia (see *Ambushed Caravan Adventure Hook*) who were all taken from the same caravan attack. They each have 1 hit point, under the effects of the poisoned condition, and are on the verge of mental and physical collapse from their maltreatment.

The prisoners are thankful for the rescue but are too weak to swim through to the next area without healing or assistance from weeping jack mushrooms found in area 5. They are eager to leave. They can share the following information:

- The lizardfolk ambushed their caravan just a few days ago, bringing them here, and fed them barely cooked meals of frogs and mushrooms. They do not know about the effects of the pink candy caps.
- They have been repeatedly sick from the food and are experiencing the side effects of the mushrooms.
- The lizardfolk keep mentioning someone named Sarkalsa, saying they “will be pleased with the new additions to the cult.”
- One of the lizardfolk dropped an amulet that Amalia grabbed and hid. The silver amulet is in the shape of a blue-edged moon with a black enameled layer to symbolize a lunar eclipse. It is the key to opening the enchanted gate in area 3.

7. STATUE ROOM

The stairwell leading to this room from area 5 descends into a chamber flooded with swamp water. The murkiness of the water reduces all vision to 5 feet. The shattered remains of statues litter the floor with a two-foot tall silver statue of a hooded figure holding a moon in cupped palms worth 200 gp hidden in the rubble. The statue can be found with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Encounter: Slimy Waters. A **black pudding** hides suspended near the top of the water, gaining a +4 bonus to its Stealth score as it blends into the floating swamp muck.

8. HIDDEN ALTAR

The upper portion of this bifurcated room is covered in a thin layer of slimy green and black swamp growth. The growth is harmless, but characters stepping onto it must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw to avoid slipping, taking 1 point of bludgeoning, and falling prone on a failure. Characters moving at half speed automatically succeed in their saving throw.

A short flight of steps leads into a chamber flooded with 3 feet of murky swamp water. The broken remains of a small stone altar stand in the pool's center, barely rising above the top of the water. Resting atop the altar is a shortsword inlaid with mother-of-pearl along the blood gutter of the blade and a large opal inset in the pommel. This magic weapon grants its wielder a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with the sword. The sword has 1d3+1 charges that renew at dawn. A creature attuned to this weapon can take an action to expend a charge to cast *moonbeam* through it without the need for concentration.

Secret Door. The secret door to area 10 can be found by a character searching for secret doors that succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check. It is located in the back of a rotting wardrobe and can be opened by pushing on a knot in the wooden panel. Due to the swamp waters, the door has swollen and only opens with a successful DC 16 Strength check or two characters with a combined Strength score of 30 or higher.

9. SLIMED HALLWAY

The entirety of this 30-foot-long hallway is covered in a thin layer of viscous black goo that seems to react when exposed to direct light. The sticky slime makes the hallway difficult terrain, and any creature who enters the area must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw, or their movement speed becomes 0. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the start of its turn. A creature that starts its turn in the goo must succeed a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) acid damage. The slime is flammable, and a 5-foot cube section can be burned away with fire in 1 round.



CANDY CAP MUSHROOMS

10. RITUAL ROOM

The Order of the Hollow Eclipse held their rituals here, and they all died in an arcane explosion when their efforts to open a portal failed. The irregular walls of this massive chamber have almost completely collapsed, exposing mud and the rough stone behind walls bearing blast marks. A successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals the impacts to have come from a powerful magical blast. The room is flooded with 3 feet of swamp water and is considered difficult terrain. When the characters first enter the room, read aloud the following:

Strange swirling blast marks cover the collapsing stone walls of this flooded chamber. The smell of swamp rot mixes with the buzz of insects in the air. Two ramps lead along the walls to a platform bearing an altar overlooking the room, flanked by a pair of kneeling lizardfolk. A shimmering tear in the fabric of reality itself hangs above the altar, pulsating with energy and bathing a coiled serpent-like figure beneath it with shifting light. The figure unwraps itself, its scales shimmering as it lifts its head to peer at you. It bears the face of a human woman with a wild glimmer in her eyes that hints at madness as it sways rhythmically. “Who dares to disturb me?” it hisses angrily.

ROLEPLAYING SARKALSA

Sarkalsa has succumbed to the madness seeping from the rift. She sees all intruders into her domain as enemies seeking to steal her “power.” While she is not initially hostile, she quickly regards the characters as intruders unless otherwise convinced. Characters attempting to reason with her must succeed on a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check to get her attention. Any hostile actions taken against her or a failed check result in her attacking the party. Casting *greater restoration* or a similar effect on her removes her madness temporarily to the point she recognizes in horror that the rift has poisoned her mind, and she flees the location.

Encounter: The Mad Naga. Sarkalsa is a **moon-child naga** (see Appendix) and protected by two lizardfolk **scouts**. The scouts obey Sarkalsa’s commands and defend her to death in their madness. If Sarkalsa is convinced to leave the location or cured of her madness, she flees the temple, and the scouts follow her; she leaves the swamp and never returns.

Every other round starting on the second round of combat, Sarkalsa can take an action to pull energy from the rift. This causes a psychic blast to emanate from her in a 20-foot-sphere. Creatures caught in the blast must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw from being bombarded with a cacophony of voices in their minds, taking 10 (3d6) psychic damage and becoming stunned until the start of their next turn on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one and not being stunned.

Treasure. Searching the water in the chamber reveals a dozen skeletons with charred bones. One bears a *ring of shooting stars* on one bony finger while another wears a platinum amulet similar in design to the one found in area 6 except decorated with a circle of diamonds. This amulet was worn by the head of the Order and is worth 2,000 gp.

Secret Door. Due to the resulting damage from the arcane blast done to this side of the door, it is easy to find the secret entrance to area 8. The entry is stuck and can be forced open with a successful DC 16 Strength check or by two or more characters with a combined Strength score of 30 or higher.

CLOSING THE RIFT

The altar is adorned with engravings depicting the moon’s phases with a sword overlaid atop the full moon. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (History or Arcana) check reveals the carvings depict a ritual using a special moon-bonded blade during the full moon to create a portal between the planes. This blade could be the one found on the hidden altar (area 8) or one the characters must discover as part of another quest. Either way, the characters cannot close the rift themselves and must seek the assistance of Drildor the Sane, who understands these rifts.

CONCLUSION

Defeating or persuading Sarkalsa scatters the remaining lizardfolk cultists as their bond to her is severed. The rift into the plane of madness must be closed with the help of Drildor the Sane, who may require the characters to complete additional quests to gather needed materials.

THE SINGING SURVIVOR

If the temple has been cleared and the party returns to their hut, Drildor and Artos are happy to see the characters return and excited to return to their old accommodations. Drildor is willing to help the characters close the rift and rewards the characters as promised if they return his satchel of notes.

AMBUSHED CARAVAN

If the merchant’s daughter Amalia was rescued and the stolen goods recovered, the merchant rewards the characters with its total value of 500 gp. The party may become requested more often as the merchant sings their praises to others, and their expertise is sought out for other dangerous missions.

THE ANCIENT ORDER

Lorenthia pays the full value of any artifacts found in the temple—such as the pendants—and 500 gp for a detailed description of what they saw on the walls and statuary. She makes plans to meet with Drildor now that the temple has been cleared to study the rift and assist in closing it before others fall victim to the spread of its madness.

APPENDIX

NAGA, MOONCHILD

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d10 + 20)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wisdom +6, Charisma +7

Skills Arcana +4, Deception +7, Insight +6, Persuasion +7

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Rejuvenation. If it dies, the moonchild naga returns to life in 1d6 days and regains all its hp. Only a wish spell can prevent this trait from functioning.

Innate Spellcasting. The moonchild naga's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring only verbal components:

- *At will:* charm person, friends, mage hand, message, minor illusion, poison spray, suggestion
- *3/day each:* color spray, dispel magic, fear, hold person
- *1/day each:* dominate beast, hypnotic pattern

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 18 (4d8) poison damage.

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the naga can't constrict another target.

Starry Gaze. The moonchild naga's bottomless gaze inexorably draws the eye of one target within 30 feet. If the target can see the naga, it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned until the end of the naga's next turn. If the target's saving throw is successful, it is immune to the naga's gaze for the next 24 hours.

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