

The Ruined Temple

ARISE BROTHERS! *The gong summons us. When we hear it, we are compelled to attend the altar, defend the sanctuary, and repel invaders. So is the oath we have taken, even in death to serve her holiness..*

—*Brother Ebenad, The Elven Concession*

This is a three part multi-encounter. The PCs will encounter Orcs, Skeletons, and a Manticore. Through role-play, the party may avoid fighting the Orcs and the Manticore.

The party approaches the Ruined Temple. When the players crest a hill, and the Temple is within sight, read the following:

Before you stands the burnt husk of a once glorious but now forgotten Temple. The only entrance appears to be the main doorway. Both halves of the huge wooden door now lay flat on the ground, blackened. Three huge beams that held the roof aloft now lay inside the Temple. The floor beams are sagging under the weight; the floor itself appears as if its about to collapse. The floorboards also appear rotten.

Only the Sacristy and Altar area at the back of the Temple has a stone floor. A huge gong hangs from rusty chains along the rear wall.

A group of three Orcs sits around a lantern in a corner, playing cards. They do not notice you.

CARE TO WAGER, ANYONE?

If the players approach the Orcs in a non-threatening way, the Orcs could easily be persuaded to accept more players at their game. However, the game turns violent after a few turns, as one of the Orcs yells “Cheater!”, and all three immediately attack the PCs.

The Orcs are easily tricked, so if the PCs come up with a plan to distract the Orcs, lead them away from the temple, or to scare them off, let the PCs have fun with it.

The Orcs have been hired to repel invaders, but have been warned not to go near the Sacristy, especially the Altar.

UNFORTUNATE ACOLYTES

A successful Perception Check DC 15 reveals the remains of five badly burned human bodies. All that is left of them is a blackened skeleton. These skeletons awaken and attack any intruders when the gong in rang. Pressure plates in the floor around the altar trigger a trap which releases a small iron ball that rolls down a hidden chute, which strikes the gong.

Touching the altar without presenting a holy symbol of the order results in a lightning bolt attack +2, 1d10 Damage.

GOING ON A TRIP?

The floor is very weak in four separate places. These squares are marked on the map, and can be detected with a normal Detect Traps roll DC 12. The Orcs know the locations of all the weak spots in the floor, and will avoid them. If the PCs are nearly defeated by the Orcs or Skeletons, have one of them fall through the floor, to even out the odds. If the final standing Orc is below half hit points, he attempts to flee. He runs into the Sacristy, steps on a pressure plate, and sets off the gong trap.

MANTICORE... SURPRISE!

On the last turn of combat, one of the roof beams crashes through the floor, allowing the Manticore trapped below to climb to the upper level of the temple. The manticore taunts the PCs mercilessly.

If the PCs choose to converse with the Manticore while fighting, they could learn that the Manticore has been hired to repel invaders, and the identity of the employer.

SPIKED PIT TRAP

Entire Basement Level of Temple

Weak Floorboards: Sixteen squares on the map have been marked as especially weak spots in the wooden floor. A Perception Check of 12 will reveal them.

Center Space: The middle square on the map is the last beam holding up the entire floor. If it is attacked and takes any amount of damage, the entire floor falls into the basement. All PCs and monsters without flying fall into the Spiked Pit trap. Allow saves versus falling only to those near the edge.

Complete Floor Collapse: Save this event for the most dramatic moment, especially if the party is winning the battle. A PC with Detect Traps or Dungeoneering DC15 can find the weak point.

Multi-Part Encounter

In a Multi-Part Encounter, it is important that the monsters come at the PCs in waves, and not all at once. Battling the Orcs, Skeletons, and Manticore at the same time will mostly likely spell doom for the PCs. Use drama and Role-Play to introduce the next monster at the perfect moment.

If more than one PC falls: Let the remaining PCs finish off the current monsters, take an opportunity to take a short rest, recover some hit dice, before introducing the next monster. If the party has less than 5 members, or has PCs lower than level 2, save the Manticore encounter for when they emerge from the archive, after having met Synn. If the Orcs or Skeletons are too much for the party to handle, have one or two of them fall through the floor.

1. The last Orc charges a PC or attempts to run away, triggering a pressure plate, which awakens the Skeletons. Or, the Orc runs to the gong and rings it, awakening the Skeletons.
2. The last Skeleton falls through the floor, making a hole wide enough for the Manticore to escape the pit.
3. A beam falls through the floor, allowing the Manticore to escape.