

SUNKEN TEMPLE'S GRIP

The Sunken Temple of Xylos descends into perpetual twilight, its coral-encrusted architecture groaning under the crushing weight of the deep. Unstable currents churn through its flooded chambers, carrying whispers of madness and the grotesque transformations wrought by the parasitic entity that binds the temple and its inhabitants, a slow, horrifying merging that threatens to spill out into the world.

ADVENTURE HOOKS & RUMORS

- A desperate fisherman claims to have seen figures rising from the depths near the temple, their bodies contorted and shimmering with an unnatural luminescence, chanting in a language that chills the soul – a sign of the Deepwater Cult's efforts to hasten the entity's arrival.
- Rumors circulate among sailors of a powerful priestess within the temple, said to possess the ability to manipulate the water currents themselves, creating deadly whirlpools to defend the temple and accelerate the merging process.
- A scholar researching ancient aquatic faiths speaks of a ritual performed by the Deepwater Cult, designed to amplify the entity's influence by channeling the temple's unstable currents into a single, devastating surge.

LOCATIONS

1. The Sunken Courtyard

The entrance is a vast, submerged courtyard, choked with luminescent algae and skeletal remains of long forgotten explorers. Pressure fluctuations are severe here, causing sudden, disorienting surges of water that can sweep adventurers off their feet and into the labyrinthine corridors beyond. Visibility is poor, limited to a few feet by the murky water and swirling sediment. Strange, echoing whispers seem to emanate from the coral encrusted walls, hinting at the temple's madness.

2. The Sunken Library

Waterlogged scrolls detail the entity's origins and the cult's history, guarded by animated water elementals.

3. The Pressure Valve Chamber

A massive chamber with malfunctioning pressure valves, requiring a puzzle to stabilize and open a hidden passage.

4. The Coral Gardens

Bioluminescent coral formations conceal a network of tunnels and a dangerous, mutated sea creature.

5. The Heart of the Bloom

This colossal chamber is dominated by a pulsating, bioluminescent growth the physical manifestation of the parasitic entity. The Deepwater Cult priestess stands before it, chanting in a guttural tongue, surrounded by her grotesquely mutated followers. The temple's architecture is visibly warped and fused with the entity's growth, and the water currents here are at their most violent and

ENCOUNTERS

| Name | Details |
|-----------------------|--|
| Cult Fanatics | Three Deepwater Cult zealots, wielding tridents and chanting prayers to the entity. |
| Mutated Guardian | A hulking, amphibious creature, warped by the entity's influence, protecting a key artifact. |
| Pressure Surge | A sudden, powerful surge of water forces the players to make Strength saving throws or be swept into a dangerous area. |
| Ritualistic Sacrifice | The players stumble upon a cult ritual, witnessing a captured creature being prepared for sacrifice to the entity. |

TREASURE

- Amulet of Respiration:** Allows the wearer to breathe underwater for an extended period, but slowly induces a craving for the deep.
- Coral Blade:** A sharp, bioluminescent blade that deals extra damage to mutated creatures, but has a chance to inflict a temporary mutation on the wielder.
- Scroll of Binding:** Contains a ritual to temporarily weaken the entity's influence, but requires a rare and dangerous component found in the Coral Gardens.

NPCS

- Sister Morwen:** A Deepwater Cult priestess, fiercely devoted to the entity and eager to convert others.
- Old Man Tiber:** A grizzled, former explorer who survived a previous expedition and possesses knowledge of the temple's secrets.
- Kaelen the Diver:** A rival treasure hunter, also seeking the temple's artifacts and willing to betray anyone for profit.

PLOT RESOLUTIONS

- The adventurers could attempt to disrupt Sister Morwen's ritual at the Heart of the Bloom, risking a direct confrontation with her and her mutated followers. Success severs the entity's connection to the temple, but the sudden disruption could cause a catastrophic collapse, trapping them within.
- The PCs might seek out Old Man Tiber for information on the temple's secrets, potentially gaining access to a hidden passage or a weakness in the entity's influence. However, Tiber's knowledge comes at a price, and he might demand a dangerous task or a share of any recovered treasure.
- The adventurers could choose to confront Kaelen the Diver, attempting to forge an alliance or outmaneuver them for control of the temple's artifacts. This gamble could lead to a mutually beneficial outcome, or a bitter betrayal with severe consequences for whoever is left standing.

