

A Fantasy Roleplaying Adventure Module

TEMPLE OF 1000 SWORDS

by Brad Kerr



DESIGNED FOR USE WITH
**OLD-SCHOOL
ESSENTIALS**

TEMPLE OF 1000 SWORDS



Written by Brad Kerr

Cover by Matt Stikker

Interior Art:

Brad Kerr

Tyler Smith Owings (p.13)

Ramón Perales Cano (17,21)

Play Testers:

Bob Peyton, Dan Cohen,

Derrick Martin-Campbell,

Matt Stikker,

Steven Lindberg

Special Thanks:

Nathan Page, Steven

Lindberg, Ramsey Ess

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INTRODUCTION

The Temple of 1000 Swords is a fantasy adventure module for Old-School Essentials or other role playing games with old-school sensibilities. Parties of approximately 3rd level characters will find the dungeon to be a suitable challenge.

This book provides a small but densely furnished dungeon, easily insertable in most fantasy campaigns. Several aspects make this dungeon unique:

- The temple is absolutely *lousy* with swords. Every room is filled with huge piles of rusted blades. Though most of these weapons are useless junk, industrious player characters who take the time to search may find a unique or unusual weapon (page 6).
- A magical forge created by a god is capable of instantly transforming anything into a sword (page 22). Be prepared for weird or unconventional sword creations.
- A powerful relic, the “Nine of Swords” is split up like a jigsaw puzzle in nine pieces throughout the dungeon. (page 6).
- The god of swords himself dwells in the temple and issues bloody quests to visitors (page 22).

HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE

Centuries ago: worshipers of Gladio, god of swords, build a temple beneath a waterfall. Gladio blesses his followers with a magical forge which instantly creates swords from any material. An Emperor and Empress of Swords preside over the temple.

Eventually: Gladio is forgotten; his churches fall to ruin. The waterfall temple becomes the last bastion of Gladio and the god himself walks its lonely halls.

Some time ago: two tribes of monstrous humanoids—druks and merfolk—move into the temple. By Gladio’s influence, they wage bloody war on each other.

A few years ago: a wandering swordsman discovers the forge and dedicates himself to Gladio. This Hierophant travels the countryside spreading the “word” of his lord through sword-duels and eventually wanton slaughter.

Recently: Piotr, a spear-wielding and vengeance-seeking knight tracks down and slays the Hierophant. Gladio places a geas on Piotr to create swords until his blood-debt is paid.

Now: swords fill the temple and spill out into the waterways and shores of the countryside.

THE FACTIONS

DRUKKS are a beast-person tribe of humanoid, carnivorous ducks who occupy the western rooms of the dungeon. They stand approximately 5' tall and have a flat bill full of sharp teeth. Drukks are horribly messy eaters and usually have blood-caked mouths and feathers. Their appearance and screech-like speaking voices often leads to quickly-escalating hostility with other intelligent peoples.

Druk reinforcement arrives weekly through the western tunnels. All drukks carry potions of water-walking and water-breathing to help combat the merfolk.

MERFOLK are water-breathing humanoids with long fins in place of legs. The arrogant mermaids and mermen of the temple value conventional beauty, mean-spirited pranks, and physical challenges. To sustain themselves, they harvest cave-kelp, oysters, and pearls in the temple's flooded eastern chambers.

Merfolk reinforcements arrive periodically through the eastern waterfalls. All merfolk carry ampoules of land-walking and air-breathing.

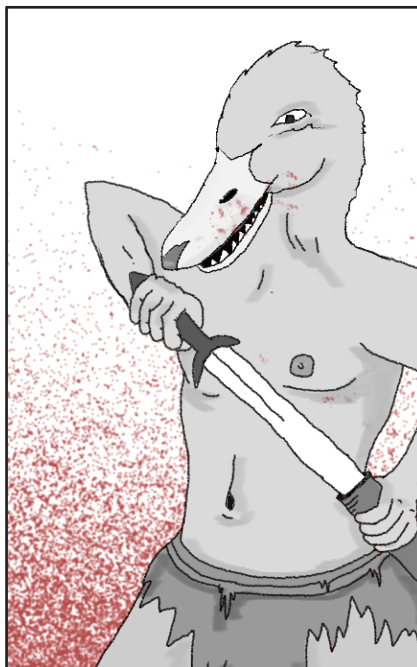
Both factions hate each other and are subtly nudged towards violence by the divine ambiance exuded by the god of swords. PCs who parlay with either faction will be urged to join in the struggle. The drukks want the head of Queen Lydia (location T6); the merfolk want to crush the drukks' despicable egg (location T15).

USING THIS BOOK

Bolded text denotes easily discernible room details. A referee should paraphrase or expand upon this information when the player characters enter a room.

Italicized text communicates confidential information to the referee. This includes traps, secret doors, or pertinent historical details.

Unless otherwise noted, assume each room has 10' ceilings, walls carved from dark stone, a pile of scavenge-able swords, and no natural source of light.



ADVENTURE HOOKS

The temple works best as an out of the way dungeon for player characters to stumble upon. To help point parties in the right direction, here are some possible hooks:

- The party wants something “impossible”—forgotten information, a resurrection, transportation to another plane. A powerful being in the temple is rumored to grant wishes. *Gladio, god of swords, will indeed grant wishes for a price. See page 22.*
- Large quantities of rusted swords have been washing up in a creek by a local village; a concerned community leader asks the PCs to head upstream to investigate.
- An ancient text describes a magic relic called the “Nine of Swords” and lists its last known location as the temple.
- Piotr, a knight and comrade of a PC embarked on a quest for vengeance against a blood-thirsty priest and hasn’t returned. A concerned group of adventures follow his trail. *Piotr defeated the Hierophant and was enslaved by Gladio in retribution. See page 22.*

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

For each new room or each passing turn, there is a 1-in-6 chance of a random encounter. Roll 2d6 and consult the table below. **Additional monster stat blocks are found on page 23 and 24.**

2d6	Encounter Description
2	An ill wind blows...Gladio’s ambient aura radiates through the dungeon. Anyone possessing a sword must Save vs spells or attack the person or creature within line of sight that they like the least.
3	A starving gelatinous cube (full of swords) desperately seeks sustenance. (Page 24)
4	An iron mongrel feeds on rusted swords but will eat non-rusted metals, given the opportunity. (Page 24)
5	A crown-laden spirit appears, weeps, and pleads for forgiveness before disappearing. Swords grow overwhelmingly heavy for 1 minute. (Page 20)
6	A “tumble-weed” of swords rolls into the room. All must succeed on a Dexterity check or suffer 1d6 damage.
7	2d6 drukk warriors on patrol (Page 23)
8	2d6 merfolk warriors on patrol (Page 23)
9	2d4 drukks engage 2d4 merfolk in bloody melee.
10	An exhausted knight scavenges non-sword materials to craft into swords (<i>Magically enslaved Piotr, see room T19 and page 22</i>).
11	The aftermath of a terrible drukk/merfolk battle. Find 1d6 x 10gp among the bodies.
12	A special sword reveals itself atop the piles of rusted blades. (Roll twice for a random sword on page 7 and take the more interesting option).

THE NINE OF SWORDS

The temple houses a powerful relic, a sword split into nine demi-blades which click together like puzzle pieces; each part bears a Roman numeral (1 through 9) and faintly radiates magic. Only when every piece is assembled does the sword reveal its power. Gladio himself scattered these blades to test the mettle of would-be sword lords.

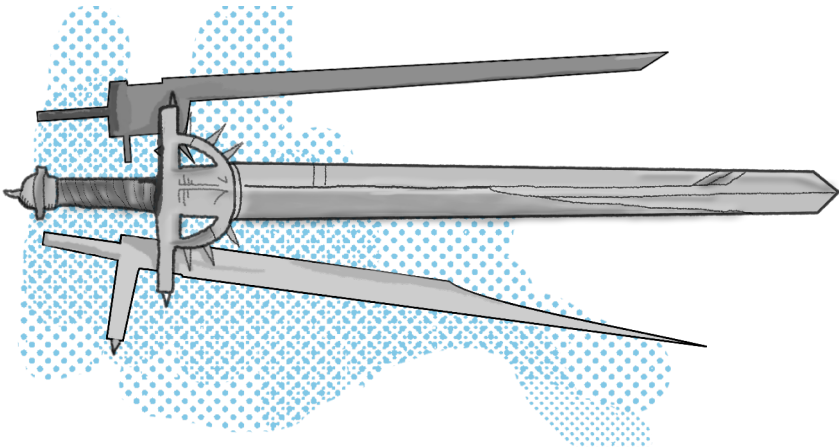
The Nine of Swords:

- Grants +1 to attack rolls, damage, initiative, and armor class
- Swinging the Nine of Swords attacks every target, friend and foe, in 8 directions simultaneously with spinning spectral blades.
- The curse: anyone who wields the sword is tortured with terrible nightmares of their vanquished foes. The PC must save vs spells each night or gain no benefit from the rest. This condition lasts 72 hours after use of the blade.

Rooms which contain a demi-blade display this sword icon: 

Index of demi-blade locations:

- Part I: in the drukk egg's nest (location T15)
- Part II: in front of Gladio's statue with part IX (location T3)
- Part III: In Queen Lydia's possession (location T6)
- Part IV: Above the Hierophant's bed (location T8)
- Part V: In the Sand-person's arena (location T9)
- Part VI: Nestled in the tower of swords (location T16)
- Part VII: Above the Emperor's throne (location T17)
- Part VIII: Impaling the vampire prisoner (location T11)
- Part IX: In front of Gladio's statue along with part II (location T3)



SEARCHING FOR SWORDS

Huge piles of swords are littered throughout the temple. A vast majority of these are rusted iron or rotting wood but some swords are truly special. The god-forge of Gladio is capable of transforming anything into a sword and many bizarre creations are waiting to be discovered. Note that many of these swords are not functional as actual swords.

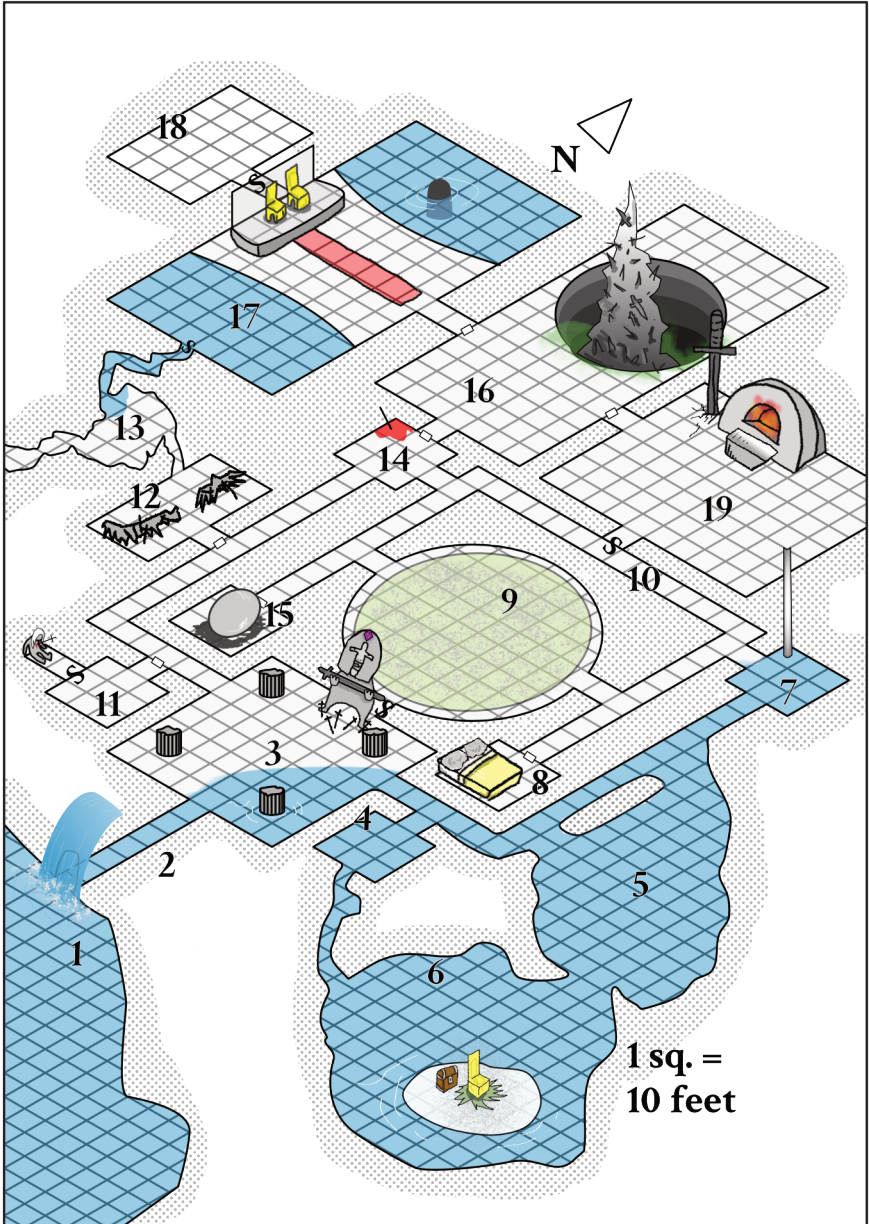
A PC who wishes to search a pile of swords may spend 1 turn (10 minutes) and roll 1d6. Rolling a 1 results in the PC taking 1 point of damage as they injure themselves on the haphazardly scattered blades. Rolling a 5 or 6 means the PC has discovered an interesting sword; roll a d100 and consult the following table to reveal the result of the search. Remember to check for random encounters every time the PCs perform a search.

While this system provides the potential for an “infinite treasure generator,” referees are encouraged to dissuade such meta-gaming with diegetic story developments. The drukks and merfolk will eventually conscript more powerful wandering fiends into their war. Gladio will issue more and more outlandish quests (room T19) to returning “pilgrims.” PCs who flood a local economy with swords will inadvertently encourage violence and unrest via Gladio’s expanding influence. Et cetera.

d%	Sword Discovered
01	Glass Sword
02	Ceramic sword
03	Spellbook sword (functioning spell book; has 4 rand. lv 1 spells)
04	Wax candle sword
05	Slime sword (floppy, 1d4 acid)
06	Submarine sandwich sword
07	Cactus sword (1d2 damage but falls apart after one hit)
08	Papier-maché sword
09	White marble sword
10	Reverse sword (sharp handle/dull blade)
11	Glass perfume bottle sword
12	Wooden torch sword (burns up after 1 hour)
13	Cobblestone sword
14	Stained glass sword
15	Emerald sword (worth 600 GP)
16	Spoon sword
17	Fused spinal column sword
18	Stiff-bristled brush sword
19	Sledgehammer sword (heavy tip/ wooden blade & handle)
20	Mirror sword (fragile)
21	Fish sword (dead)
22	Silver sword (250 GP)
23	Linen sword
24	Leather sword
25	Studded leather sword
26	Chain sword (like a flail but sharp)
27	Iridescent dragon scale sword (250 GP)
28	Sunglasses sword (dark lenses in the middle of the blade)
29	Teeth sword (Many teeth fused together, gross)
30	Hair sword (ponytail)
31	Tiny (6") steel sword
32	Small (1') sword
33	Masterwork (+1) sword
34	Large (6') sword
35	Huge (10') sword

d%	Sword Discovered
36	Skeleton arm sword
37	Gold sword (500 GP)
38	Magic ice sword (never melts)
39	Ice sword (melting)
40	Sword-shaped puddle
41	Beef jerky sword
42	Flask sword (filled with whiskey)
43	Stone sword
44	Bronze sword
45	Mithral sword (silver, 250 GP)
46	Adamantine sword (unbreakable)
47	Dragon tooth sword
48	Human skin sword (hairy)
49	Dirt sword
50	Compacted mammal feces sword
51	Rat corpse sword
52	Sponge sword
53	Autumn leaves sword
54	Key sword (opens something...)
55	Antenna sword (attracts ants)
56	Giant pencil sword
57	Magnet sword
58	Feather duster sword
59	Ruby sword (600 GP)
60	Bouquet of flowers sword
61	Double sword (blade on each end)
62	Double sword (two blades on same end)
63	Triple sword (star shaped-- handles in middle)
64	Triple sword (three blades on same end)
65	Geode sword (stone exterior, crystal center)
66	Crystal Sword (fragile) (100GP)
67	Crystal sword (stores one spell)
68	Fishing rod sword (functional)
69	Unholy concatenation of recognizable body parts sword (intelligent, gibbering, not nice)
70	Sapling sword (living, tree)
71	Hemp rope sword

d%	Sword Discovered
72	Scissors sword
73	Lead pipe sword (hollow center)
74	Immovable sword (as the immovable rod, magical)
75	Steel file sword
76	Egg sword
77	Hard candy sword
78	Drill sword (has a crank)
79	Lute sword (functional, fragile)
80	Soap sword
81	Blowgun Sword (functional)
82	Fork sword
83	Rattlesnake Sword (rattles, 1 in 6 chance of envenomating, save vs poison or die)
84	Tin sword
85	Lace doily sword
86	Umbrella sword (functional)
87	Brick and mortar sword
88	Coiled spring sword (bouncy)
89	Ink sword (anything struck by blade is dyed black)
90	Trombone sword (functional)
91	Bomb sword (explodes when struck, 6d6 damage to all nearby)
92	Hat sword (wearable)
93	Octopus sword (sticky)
94	Bacteria culture sword (save vs poison or contract fever)
95	Unicorn horn sword (user can talk to horses)
96	Tongue sword (wet, magic, speak the languages known by victims of the blade)
97	Magic stretching sword (+5' reach)
98	Magic light sword (sheds light like a torch, +1 dmg vs undead)
99	Cursed Insanity Blade (save vs spells or attack nearest person)
00	Magic Grandfather sword (+1, intelligent, mustached, grandfatherly)



T1: THE WATERFALL

A cave, faintly visible behind a waterfall.

The basin and stream are choked with rusted swords. PCs have a 2-in-6 chance of stepping on a sword (1d4 damage) unless extra caution is taken while wading through the water.

T2: TUNNEL

A tunnel: walls carved from limestone, slippery floors covered in 1' of running water. 10' ceilings. Sounds echo. Light refracted dimly through the waterfall dances across the uneven walls.

A trap: a sword-spangled pit hidden by the current (Dexterity check, 1d6 damage on failure); falling into the pit causes a sea-saw like board counterweighted with bells to swing up and make a racket, alerting the drukks in area T3. Because of all the swords flowing through here, there's a 3-in-6 chance that the trap won't actually activate.

T3: VESTIBULE

Vaulted ceilings, doric pillars, the echoing sounds of water. A massive statue of an armored god looms from the northern wall. A sword-choked stream flows from the east. A dark hallway leads west.

A secret door to room T8 is concealed beneath the statue's legs.

1d4+2 drukks stand guard and pass the time practicing swordplay or singing drukk battle hymns (screaming).

A pile of fine swords is placed before the statue as an offering. Two of them glow faintly in the dark (blades 2 and 9 of the nine). An enormous gem (1000 GP) is embedded in the statue's forehead; it's a treacherous climb to reach it (Strength check).

Drukk

Awful duck people

AC 6 [13], **HD** 1+1 (5hp), **Att** 1 × sword (1d8) or Bite (1d4+1), **THAC0** 19 [0], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 6, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 10, **NA** 2d4 (1d6 × 10), **TT** D

- **Drukk battle scream:** Drukks scream while fighting. If 5 drukks are present, the volume is enough to deafen anyone within 50' for 1d6 minutes.
- **Leaders:** For every 10 in a group, there is a 2HD leader. For every 50, there is a 4HD leader (saves: D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (4)).

T4: OYSTER GARDEN

A dark, flooded, and dripping cavern.

The floor has been lowered to facilitate a large underwater cave-kelp and oyster garden; a sudden drop-off will catch careless adventurers unaware. A giant octopus labors here harvesting cave-kelp and irritating the oysters to help with pearl production. She is surly and has a sword but generally dislikes combat.

A submerged tunnel concealed by darkness, water, and kelp leads to area T6.

Giant Octopus with a Sword

AC 7 [12], **HD** 7 (32hp), **Att** 7 × tentacle (1d3 + constriction), 1 x sword (1d8), **THAC0** 12 [+6], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D11 W12 P13 B14 S15 (3), **ML** 7, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 450, **NA** 1 (1d2),

- **Constriction:** Tentacles grab and constrict after a hit. Each constricting tentacle inflicts: 1d3 automatic damage per round, plus a -1 penalty to attacks.
- **Severing tentacles:** Requires a hit with a cutting weapon inflicting 6 or more damage.
- **Ink cloud:** When escaping, can emit a cloud of black ink (80' diameter) and jet away at 3 times normal speed.

T5: MERFOLK GROTTO

A vast, echoing cavern with low-ceilings and deep black water. Waterfalls trickle in from cold subterranean streams. Pearl-like orbs illuminate the room from beneath the water.

An (unreliable) mermaid with a conch-horn is posted in the pool to keep watch over anyone entering from the west. There is a 3-in-6 chance that she's doing her job.

The 10' of space adjacent to the western wall is walkable but immediately drops off into a deep cavern pool.

4d6 merfolk frolic here (only 3d4 of them are warriors). The merfolk may initially seem welcoming but quickly reveal an underlying arrogance. They may tease a PC for not swimming, trying too hard to swim, or just not swimming as beautifully as merfolk (to the guffaws of the gathering crowd). They are insufferable locker room bullies who will socially exploit any visible weaknesses. They typically challenge non-drukk interlopers into a potentially embarrassing physical challenge before resorting to violence.

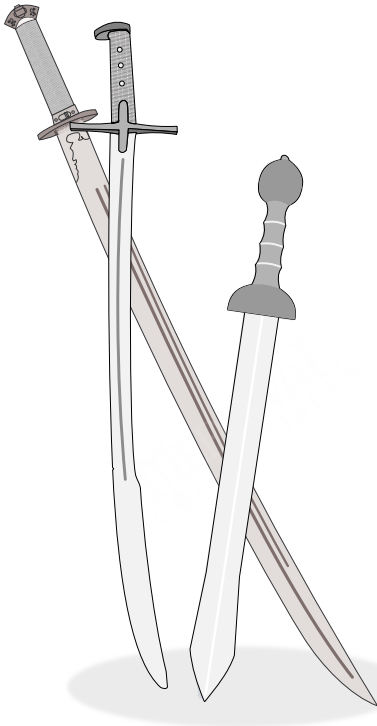
d4	What are the merfolk doing?
1	Cavorting quietly underwater
2	Playing water polo with a dismembered drukk head.
3	A party is starting—they're getting drunk off fermented seaweed and oyster sauce.
4	A party is ending—they're drunk, angry, and ready for violence (or romance?).

Merfolk

Fish-tailed rascals of the sea

AC 6 [13], **HD** 1 (4hp), **Att** 1 × sword (1d8) **THAC0** 19 [0], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 8, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 10 (leader: 20/75), **NA** 0 (1d20), **TT** A

- **Leaders:** For every 10 in a group, there is a 2HD leader. For every 50, there is a 4HD leader (saves: D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (4)).
- **Guardians:** Use trained sea creatures or monsters to guard their homes.



T6: THE ISLAND

An island of cold black stone rises from the subterranean lake.

A tunnel, hidden by the dark water and seaweed, connects to area T4.

Lydia, the unhinged queen of the merfolk, dwells here--either on her coral throne or riding around on her water elemental steed. She's bored and violent and constantly threatens that she'll marry anyone who bests her in combat. She's probably joking. Regardless, she challenges any stranger to a one-on-one sword fight. Losers are bullied relentlessly by merfolk but usually not killed.

She's accompanied on her island by her long suffering "color guard," Hestia and Deema. (Use normal merfolk stat block). They are loyal but weary.

Lydia wields blade 3 of the Nine but she's not really attached to it. A huge coral chest with a living sea urchin "lock" holds 50 perfect pearls worth 20GP each. Lydia's secret song opens the lock and pacifies the urchin and its sting (save vs death or die).

Treat Lydia as a 4HD Merfolk leader.



T7: WET SWORD HEAP

Hundreds of swords fill this room in terrible heaps, all partly submerged in knee-high standing water. A pile of sandbags prevent the water from flowing west into an adjoining hallway.

There are more swords here than in most rooms. The oxidizing iron and murky water give the room's scent a unique bouquet of blood and mold.

A chute behind a fake stone panel connects to room T19. It's narrow but technically traversable with a Strength check (failure means a scary slide into a pile of swords, 1d6 damage).

T8: QUIET BEDROOM

Note: don't roll for random encounters in this safe space.

Behind a locked door: an inviting bed chamber. It features an oversized feather bed with a yellow quilt, a writing desk, and a dresser filled with robes, silks, and swords. The clothing and bed are huge. Perfumed candle stumps atop the dresser and an old tobacco pipe contribute to a fine smelling room.

The key to this room is found on the Hierophant's corpse in room T14.

The fearsome Hierophant lived here until his recent demise. His reputation endures; the dungeon's denizens will not enter this chamber. The exotic silks in the dresser are worth 300 GP. Blade 4 of the Nine is mounted over the bed. A party of 5 can sleep comfortably on the enormous mattress.

A diary on the writing desk comprises a ponderous and minutely detailed account of the priest's life. 1d4+1 hours spent reading it (or a successful Intelligence check and ten minutes) reveals the following details:

- The Hierophant searched long for a new "Emperor and Empress" of swords but found no one worthy.
- The Hierophant's bloodlust grew over time. A fondness for chivalrous duels slowly devolved into senseless slaughter. His last "duel" was against a traveling theatre troupe.
- There have been no new entries in the diary for several weeks.
- Apparently, the dungeon's "sword/fish" have not been fed in some time. (Room T17)

T9: SANDY ARENA

Druks and merfolk avoid this area.

Shifting white sand covers the floor of this circular, domed arena. Humanoid-shaped mounds of sand rise up around each of a dozen scattered swords, slash each other apart, then reform again.

Archways open to hallways in the east and west. A closed stone door exits south.

In its purest expression of purpose, the temple battles itself here in an endless churn of pointless sword violence. 2d4 sand-persons rise and take up blades to attack each other or anyone else who enters the sand. One of the sand-persons wields blade 5 of the Nine.

The hidden door from area T3 is easy to spot from this room.

Sand-Persons

Sword-wielding sand spirits.

AC 6 [13], **HD** 2 (9hp), **Att** 1 × Sword (1d8), **THAC0** 18 [+1], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 20, **NA** 2d4 (0)

- **Bound to the sands:** Sand-persons cannot leave the arena.
- **Effectively immortal:** the sand-embodied spirits of the temple rise again within 1d3 rounds of being slain.

T10: LONG HALLWAY

There's a hidden door halfway down into area T19. The plaster-covered wood looks just like stone.

T11: THE PRISONER

This 30' square room seems to serve as a drukk latrine. Feathers are caked to the floors in masses of unidentifiable viscous fluids. A pile of swords has been carefully corralled into one corner. One wall is poorly bricked up with stones and mud--obviously hiding a passage on the western wall. Brown paint(?) spells out "DON'T."

The wall can be removed with 10 minutes of noisy work; roll for random encounters.

Behind the wall is a shallow 10'x20' chamber. A pale, shaggy-haired prisoner dressed in white is impaled against the wall by a glowing sword through his heart (blade 8 of the Nine). This honey-tongued prisoner is Remy LeFou, clearly a vampire. He'll promise to not bite the party if they free him and further bargaining may be possible. He'll keep his word but he's hungry and will absolutely cause long-term problems for everyone (killing beloved NPCs, turning the mayor into a vampire, etc.).

Remy came to the dungeon four years ago hoping to drink the blood of a god. The Hierophant defeated and imprisoned him in this chamber.

T12: DRUKKS' LAIR

Palisades of mud and swords bisect the room into two sections. The floor is caked with squalor; feathers and dirty hay rain down constantly from makeshift "rafters" in the ceiling. Past the barricades, a tunnel stretches west.

The drukks make their base here-- bedding up in the timbers and defecating on the floor. They hide treasure (1d6 x 10pp) in their fetid mud nests and scream all day long.

2d4+4 drukk warriors reside here at all times and are highly intolerant of trespassers. Should combat break out, a phalanx of drukk warriors hold a line behind their sharpened palings while warriors rain swords down from above. Drukks will parlay but will let no one pass into the tunnels beyond.

See the drukk stat block on page 23.

T13: MUD WARRENS

Slipshod, claustrophobic tunnels form an incomprehensible maze of mud and rusted swords.

These tunnels either lead nowhere or to an alternate exit on the surface or to the underdark drukk city (referee's call). The first tunnel on the right however is a waterlogged secret entrance into the throne room (T17).

T14: THE HIEROPHANT

Check twice for random encounters.

The corpse of a very tall pope lies facedown in a pool of blood. A spear pierces its abdomen. His mitre has rolled away exposing stringy white hair on a grey scalp. Hallways stretch east and south. A stone door leads north (locked).

A key around the corpse's neck opens the doors to T16 and T8.

The Hierophant was killed here by Piotr. The body lies undisturbed though its cursed blood incites further violence (roll twice for random encounters).

The magic spear grants an extra attack each round against sword-wielding opponents. If the spear is removed: a beat passes before the corpse shudders with a hoary sigh, then rises as a wight, hungry for warm blood.

Wight

AC [14], HD 3* (13hp), Att 1 × touch (energy drain), THAC0 17 [+2], MV 90' (30'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 50, NA 1d6 (1d8), TT B

- **Undead:** Immune to poison, mind control, charm, hold, sleep, etc.
 - **Mundane weapon immunity:** Only harmed by silver weapons or magic.
 - **Energy drain:** A successfully hit target permanently loses one experience level (or Hit Die). This incurs a loss of one Hit Die of hp.
-



T15: BIG WEIRD EGG

1d2 drukk warriors are posted outside the room on guard duty.

An enormous 6' egg rests on a nest of swords and dried kelp. 1d4+2 drukk warriors and a non-combatant drukk midwife protect the nest behind the closed door.

A glowing sword is tangled in the nest (blade 1 of the Nine).

A drukk laid an egg here and it won't stop growing. The drukks believe that a herculean mallard will soon hatch to lead them to victory. **If the egg sustains at least 8 points of damage** a fetal drukk horror emerges, attacks anything within range, and dies in one minute.

Fetal Drukk Horror

AC 6 [13], HD 5 (22hp), Att 1 × bite (1d8), primal scream or psychic assault, THACO 15 [+4], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 175, NA 1 (0)

- **Primal scream:** All within earshot save vs breath weapon or take 1d8 damage.
- **Psychic assault:** As the 4th level magic-user spell "confusion."

d4	What are the drukks doing?
1	All of the drukks are asleep.
2	"Feeding" the egg (rubbing mermaid meat on the egg).
3	Carefully adding swords to the nest.
4	Having an angry, sweaty workout; eager to fight.

T16: THE TOWER

A cathedral-sized chamber contains an oppressive, clattering eminence of swords emerging from a pit. Blades of all sizes extend in every angle from a great and terrible tower in a kind of brutal gas-belching art installation.

A moment after the PCs enter, the tower begins to clink and cascade as 1d4+1 sword/person hybrids crawl out from their sword nests, lustily attacking while begging for death.

These sword/person hybrids were sword enthusiasts who laid their own bodies on the Gladio Forge (room T19) becoming half-sword/half-person. It was a terrible idea; they're in constant pain.

At least one sword on the pile is glowing but it's a tricky climb to get to it (blade 6 of the Nine). Climbers must succeed on a Dexterity test or fall prone into the swords for 1d6 damage.

Sword/Person Hybrids

AC 2 [17], HD 3 (13hp), Att 1 × sword parts (1d8), THACO 17 [+2], MV 60' (20'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), ML 11, AL Chaotic, XP 35, NA 1d6 (0)

- **Absorb metals:** Hits with non-magical, metal weapons cause damage, but the weapon may become stuck in the sword/person (save versus spells). Stuck weapons can be removed if the sword/person is killed.

T17: THRONE ROOM

A wide and echoing chamber of mildewed opulence. A moldy rust-colored rug leads from the door to a raised dais which hosts two stately stone thrones. The rug is flanked by two large pools; the shadows of fish move subtly through murky, scum-gilded waters. A large black stone protrudes from the northern pool.

A black sword dangles worryingly by a thread over the throne (blade 7 of the nine). An inscription above the dais reads “MAY SWORDS BE EVER BLESSED BY THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS.”

The black sword falls on anyone who sits on the left throne. A hidden switch in its armrest opens a secret door to area T18.

The puzzle: The black stone in the northern pool has a sword-shaped hole in its top. It’s a reverse “sword-from-the-stone” situation. Inserting a sword into the hole causes a chest to rise up in the southern pool. The chest holds a scepter (750 GP) and two magical crowns. However, removing the crowns from the chest causes a stone obelisk to rise in front of the door, blocking the room’s only exit. Replacing the crowns lowers the obelisk back into the floor.

The crowns: denote the “Emperor and Empress” of swords. Any who don them take the roles of Emperor and Empress (gender is irrelevant) and is granted the following benefits when standing within 10 feet of each other:

- Allies’ swords within 30’ increase their damage value by one step (ex. d8 to d10).
- Enemy swords within 30’ decrease their damage value by one step (ex. d8 to d6).
- Can understand the witless, awful, alien language of swords. Invaluable to blacksmiths; maddening to most rational minds. Asking a question to a sword requires a Wisdom check, failure incurs 1d6 psychic damage.
- Sword/person hybrids and Sandpersons will not attack (rooms T16 and T9.)

The pools: are 12’ deep and hold 2d4 hungry sword/fish. They haven’t been fed since the Hierophant died and will attack anything that enters the water.

Hidden tunnel: The southern pool’s water level is slightly lower as a result of the drukk’s inadvertent tunneling into the pond; a muddy, submerged, and narrow secret tunnel leads from the southern pool to area T13.

Sword/Fish

Half sword half fish.

AC 7 [12], **HD** 2 (9hp), **Att** 1 × sword-beak (1d8), **THAC0** 18 [+1], **MV** 120’ (40’), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 8, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 20, **NA** 2d4 (0)

- **Pack tactics:** One sword/fish attempts to drag its prey to the bottom of the pool while the others stab it with their sword-beaks.

T18: ROYAL CHAMBER

An ancient stone apartment from a crueler time--the furniture is all sculpted from swords: table, chairs, mirror, bed. All lie covered in dust. A skeleton's remains splay across the bed; another sits in a heap beside a sword and a pair of golden opera glasses.

The Empress, overcome with grief from a life of violence, slew her sleeping husband before falling on her own blade. Her spirit now haunts this chamber.

The haunt: A moment after all PCs have entered the room, the weeping ghost appears and pleads, "No more...please forgive me...no more." All swords become extremely heavy (Strength check, -1 for every sword in a PC's possession). Any character who fails is pinned to the ground by the weight of their own weapons (though they may voluntarily abandon them to move freely). The ghost grows more distraught before "attacking" with cursed, numbing tears.

Defeating the ghost in combat temporarily pauses the curse though her spirit reappears after 24 hours. Alternatively, anyone wearing a crown from area T17 or a confident cleric speaking with authority may absolve the ghost of her sins and end the curse. She'll ask for her bones to be buried away from the gaze of Gladio.

Ghost of the Weeping Empress

A weeping queen begs for forgiveness.

AC 4 [15], HD 6** (27hp),

Att 1 × numbing tears (1d8 + sleep (save vs paralysis)), THACO 14 [+5],

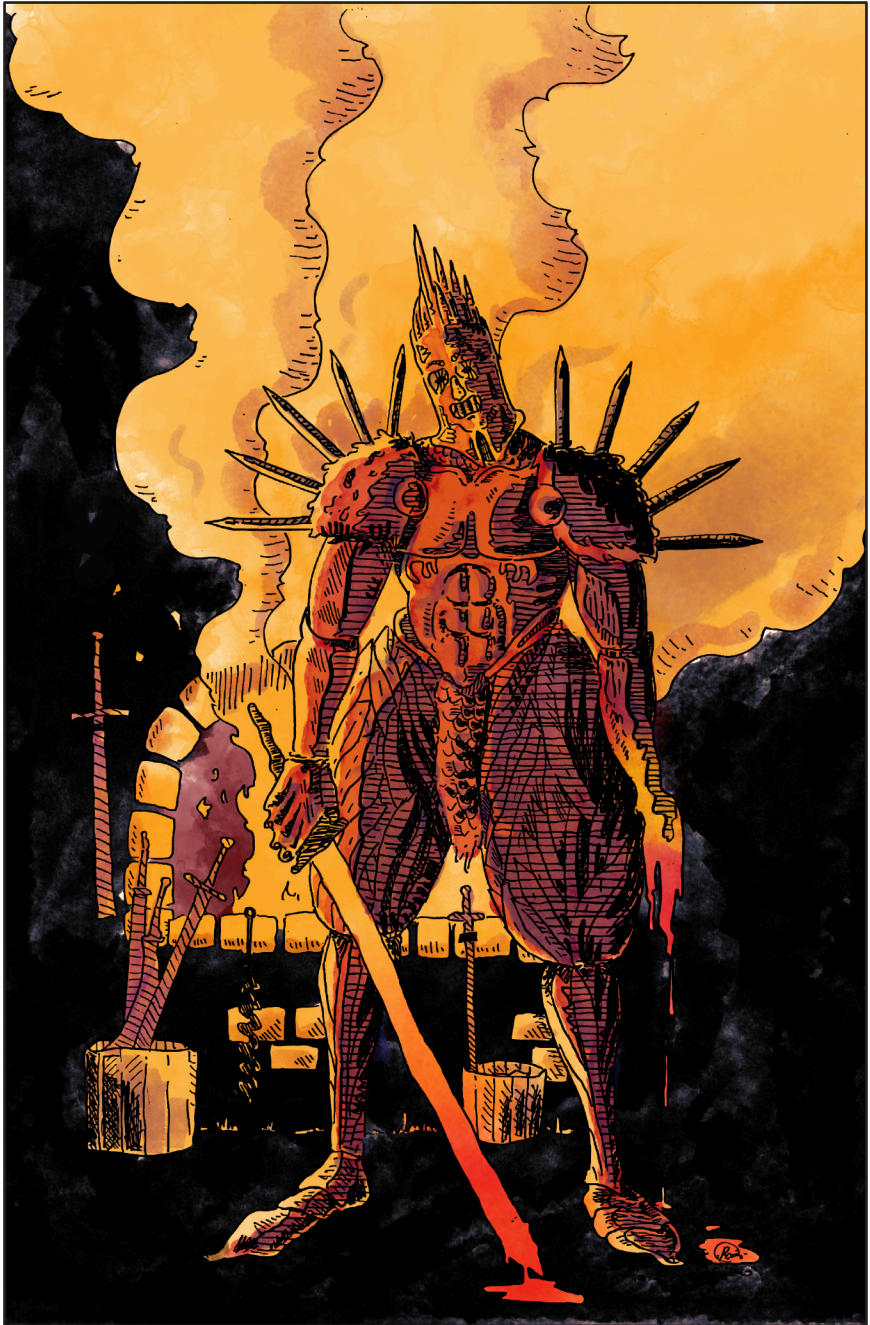
MV 150' (50') / 300' (100') flying,

SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (6), ML 11, AL Chaotic, XP 725, NA 1 (0)

- **Undead:** Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. charm, hold, sleep).
- **Mundane damage immunity:** Only harmed by silver weapons or magic.

Treasure: The skeletons wear emerald rings worth 500 GP each. An additional 2450 GP is piled throughout the chamber but requires a turn to consolidate and collect.

The opera glasses: hold a curse of their own; any who gazes through the lenses sees every creature they've ever killed staring back at them. *Note: ask the player how many creatures they see (ballpark estimate).* The PC must save vs wands or permanently lose CON from fright. "A lot" of slain creatures = 1d6 CON, "not many" = 1d3 CON, "none" = no CON lost. Surviving the ordeal grants a permanent 1d3 to WIS.



T19: FORGE OF GLADIO

A cavernous stone chamber hosts an ever-burning forge. Beside it is an immense, decorative 15' sword buried in the floor and an ornamental anvil-shaped pedestal which bears the inscription: "By Gladio's power, may any offering find its edge." A small pile of iron ingots sits nearby.

Anything placed on the anvil instantly becomes a sword composed of the substance of its original form (e.g. placing a plant on the pedestal transforms it into a sword made out of plants). Note that the law of conservation of mass (mostly) applies: placing a single gold coin on the anvil will make a tiny gold sword. Placing a sword on the anvil turns it into a different kind of sword (longsword, scimitar, falchion, etc.).

Piotr, a gaunt, armored knight toils here, creating swords and sending them down a chute into area T7. His bloodshot eyes and sunken cheeks stand in sharp contrast to his shining mail. When he runs out of raw materials, he scavenges the dungeon for supplies. *Gladio placed a geas on this knight in recompense for his slaying of the Hierophant (area T14). Piotr is forced to create swords until his blood debt is paid.*

Shortly after the PCs arrive, Gladio himself emerges from the forge with a resounding "Tally-ho!" He is large and otherworldly; a walking mass of armor and swords. PCs must save vs paralysis or freeze in fear at the sight of the living god.

Gladio: is an imposing but benevolent entity with a booming laugh and a special affection for adventurers. As the god of swords, Gladio's sole concern is that people kill each other with swords. As such, he's quick to assist adventurers towards further acts of destruction. Though Gladio may present himself as a caring and generous patron, he is at his core an evil god; any association with Gladio leads only towards death.

Gladio will commend PCs who have collected the Nine of Swords ("A true sword lord indeed!"). He will ask to hear of the PCs' exploits. **At some point, he will issue a quest.** This may be because:

- The PCs seek a special favor from a god (lost knowledge, a resurrection, etc.).
- The PCs seek to free Piotr.
- A PC has stolen the gem from the statue in area T3.
- The PCs have made "too many" swords using the magical forge.
- Really for any reason at all...

Gladio casts a geas (as the 6th level magic-user spell) on the party: "You must kill 9 people with swords within 9 days or die."

Further notes: Gladio sees this as a "fun challenge." Swords must be used to injure the victims but are not required to be the "killing blow." The victims must count as "people" to Gladio: druids don't count; merfolk only count as ½ of a person. Pointing a sword at a creature will magically alert a PC if a creature is "worthy."

BEYOND THE TEMPLE

The Temple of 1000 Swords has the potential to reverberate into future adventures within a campaign.

Gladio's quest: For most reasonable people, Gladio's quest is a waking nightmare; for some groups, it's a normal Tuesday night. How does the party find acceptable targets? If the quest challenges a party's morality, could another god or entity counter the geas? At what price?

Gladio returns: If a party takes Gladio on as a friend or patron, what further quests will he issue? How much blood is too much? Conversely, if the party comes to resent Gladio, what happens if temples to Gladio pop up in familiar villages? What will they do if Gladio's influence leads a peaceful land towards war? How do you fight against a god of violence?

The Emperor and Empress: What authority does the new emperor and empress hold? Who arrives to pledge their loyalty? Who challenges their power?

Furthermore: Was Lydia actually serious about marriage? What hatches from the egg? How badly does Remy (the charismatic vampire prisoner) screw up everyone's lives?

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Drukk

Armor Class 6 [13]

Hit Dice 1+1 (5hp)

Attacks 1 × sword (1d8) or Bite (1d4+1)

THAC0 19 [0]

Movement 120' (40')

Saving Throws D12 W13 P14 B15 S16

Morale 6

Alignment Chaotic

XP 10

Number Encountered 2d4 (1d6 × 10)

Treasure Type D

- **Drukk battle scream:** Drukks scream while fighting. If 5 drukks are present, the volume is enough to deafen anyone within 50' for 1d6 minutes.
- **Leaders:** For every 10 in a group, there is a 2HD leader.

Merfolk

Armor Class 6 [13]

Hit Dice 1+1 (4hp)

Attacks 1 × sword (1d8)

THAC0 19 [0]

Movement 120' (40')

Saving Throws D12 W13 P14 B15 S16

Morale 8

Alignment Neutral

XP 10 (leader: 20/75)

Number Encountered 0 (1d20)

Treasure Type A

- **Leaders:** For every 10 in a group, there is a 2HD leader. For every 50, there is a 4HD leader (saves: D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (4)).
- **Guardians:** Use trained sea creatures or monsters to guard their homes.

Gelatinous Cube (Full of Swords)

A swollen 10' cube of ooze filled to its capacity with swords; starving and desperately seeking biological materials to absorb and digest.

Armor Class 8 [11]

Hit Dice 8 (36hp)

Attacks 1 × touch (2d4 + paralysis)

THACO 12 [+7]

Movement 60' (20')

Saving Throws D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2)

Morale 12

Alignment Neutral

XP 650

Number Appearing 1 (0)

Treasure Type *Special

- **Easy to hear:** On a roll of 1–4, due to a clanking mass of swords sticking to the ooze.
- **Paralysis:** For 2d4 turns (save versus paralysis).
- **Energy immunity:** Unharmed by cold or lightning.
- **Embedded items:** At least 100 swords are carried around inside the cube; they fall out as the cube is destroyed.

Iron Mongrel

A lumbering, bear-shaped creature composed of rock and crystal. It eats metal and will attack the armor off of unlucky adventurers. Typically wanders off after a big meal (chain mail or better).

Armor Class 6 [13]

Hit Dice 5 (22hp)

Attacks 2 × claw (1d4), 1 × bite (1d8)

THACO 15 [+4]

Movement 120' (40')

Saving Throws D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2)

Morale 8

Alignment Neutral

XP 175

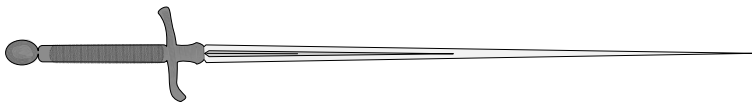
Number Appearing 1d4 (1)

Treasure Type Special

- **Armor eater:** On a successful bite attack a PC must save vs paralysis or have their armor devoured.
- **Elemental defense:** Takes half damage from non-magical attacks.
- **Diamond stomach:** Creature's digestive tract contains 2d4 x 100 GP worth of diamonds.

ONE MORE SWORD BEFORE YOU GO...

The Door Sword: Has a doorknob on the pommel. Kill someone with it and then speak aloud where you wish to go; the body will split open like a door, revealing a bloody staircase to your destination. Only works once. (Gladio is willing to part with one.)



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