

CROWN SERIES: GROUNDBREAKING PAST



WELCOME, TRAVELER, TO THE CROWN SERIES! THIS is the first of a series of loosely connected oneshots that I will be releasing under this saga. I really hope you will like them. Feedback is always appreciated.

SETTING

The initial setting begins in the world of Teyfarae. It's people are diverse as its lands are wide. Gnomes, humans, elves, halflings and dwarves populate the various biomes that comprise the Sylvas kingdom's territory.

To the east and to the south, lakes and rivers give way to the ocean. To the west lies the jungle, and further still the border with the Abyrae republic. To the north, the country of Yesteinia. And across the sea to the north-east, the Blaen Bror empire.

Tensions have been escalating as of recently between Sylvas and Abryae, and most of the armed forces have been redeployed to guard the borders. This is why it was a surprise for the party when they were told that their help would be needed elsewhere.

The Fractui, the government division responsible for hiring this mismatched band of mercenaries, has appointed the party to a very special mission to the north-west of the capital, deep into the jungle. The temple is located a week's journey by wagon from the capital, where the expedition originated. The terrain is a mix of medium jungle, hills, and mountains.

OBJECTIVE

The party's mission is to secure the temple and any intriguing artifacts within before the non-combatant experts arrive to explore it.

MAIN CAMP

The main camp consists of two wagons, overseen by Division Leader Victor Pixie—a man in his forties, sporting a salt-and-pepper mustache and short gray hair. Four experts accompany him. They'll patiently await the party's findings.

ENTRANCE TO THE TEMPLE

Upon reaching the temple entrance, two massive statues stand on either side. One depicts a cloaked figure holding an orb, while the other portrays a helmeted warrior in a seemingly meditative pose, with his fists against each other.

The temple's architecture showcases stone walls with sizable cobblestones. Gaps between the stones occasionally allow light to filter through. The doorways

are gothic in style with oval-shaped arches, and the double doors measure five feet each.

INTERIOR

Upon entering the temple, gemstones embedded in the ceiling illuminate upon intrusion. The right side of the structure has collapsed, creating an impassable barrier. The interior space is square in shape. Two human-sized skeletons stand in remarkably pristine condition, defying decomposition. They stand tall and upright.

In the far wall of the building a mural can be appreciated. Upon closer inspection, it hides an array of magical and primitive runes. These symbols bear a faint resemblance to celestial and sylvan markings, yet are distinctly unique. Some phrases allude to a "first series" and "Gungnir."

Activating these runes triggers the mural to shift and show an animated vision. The player's gaze is taken beyond the continent's edge to witness a dark violet or black star in the sky. Across the ocean lies another landmass, crowned by snow-capped mountains and a black tower with a crimson spire.

CHAMBER OF STATUES

Within the main room stand four statues. The first portrays a heavily armored warrior, one fist slightly larger than the other. The second sculpture depicts a warrior adorned with fin-like or leaf-like armor, wielding a longsword. The third statue showcases a miner with two long braids almost touching the ground, equipped with an ornate and elegant bow. The final statue portrays a hooded figure cradling a sphere, seemingly distinct from the entrance statue.

The reflection of the players in the water doesn't correspond to the incoming light. Upon touching the water, a high pitched noise can be heard. As the room fills with light, emanating from crevices in the walls, the door seals shut. Water begins to fill the room, and the adventurers swim downward to emerge in a chamber with four doors set into the walls.

Doors to the left and right are fake. The ceiling is made of water, in a reverse pond fashion. If players are to go back into it, they will find the doors to the front and back of the chamber continue as a straight corridor. Back door cannot be manually opened. Front door is unlocked, however trapped needing a DC 15 investigation to reveal it. Upon triggering the trap, the back doors swing open and after a few seconds of rumbling, a boulder can be seen rolling down through it. Being crushed by the boulder deals 6d6 buldgeoning damage.

Players can try to outrun the boulder with 2 out of 3 successful DC 12 dexterity or athletics checks. The corridor to the front continues for a while in a slanted slope, finishing at a 5 feet chasm with a waterfall on the other side. Going through the waterfall a portal is found to the next scene.

SKY PLATEAU

The waterfall spits out everyone into a field of grass. It's a rounded plateau, surrounded by a wall of stone. It's a bit cold and the air feels a bit light. The grass is green and there are what looks like pine trees both inside and outside the walls. There is a 10ft wide moat between the ground and the stone walls, inside which falls the waterfall. In the center of the circle a stone tower stretches to the sky, with no visible openings or entrances.

The wall is crumbled on the north-western side of the circle. Three stone structures can be found at the circle's cardinal points. They look like stone arches similar to door frames but empty. In the center of the arch, there is a 3ft tall hollow obelisk with a square shaped hole on each side which allows access to the interior. The area is enough to comfortably let a hand in. Doing so reveals several runes etched into the obelisk's interior. The runes cannot be easily identified with a school of magic, however they appear to be very old.

The obelisk to the west looks the same but the archway seems to be collapsed. The northern obelisk, however, appears to have crumbled completely into ruins. Where the obelisk should be is just an empty hole in the ground with runes carved all around the sides.

Obelisks can be activated using the following:

- West: Transmutation magic (lights up in yellow)
- East: Conjuraton magic (lights up in purple)
- North: Enchantment magic (lights up in red)

Upon successfully activating all obelisks, a door appears on one of the tower's sides. The door leads to a spiral staircase which climbs to the top. The top of the tower is a circular area with a wide view to all of the landscape. Players might notice at this point they are in a floating island that is surrounded by a faint forcefield that covers it like a dome.

In the center of the tower's topmost floor is a gauntlet: The Gungnir. It is floating atop a flat stone pedestal.

If anybody interacts with the Gungnir and removes it from it's pedestal, two things occur:

1. The magical forcefield is deactivated
2. Time freezes for the person who touches the gauntlet and colors seem to turn to negative. The Gungnir attaches itself to the person's hand while they hear a song in their head: "Bramwishel Neskell Gungnir Tron".

GUNGNIR

Weapon (Gauntlet), Legendary (requires attunement), Reach (5ft)

A glistening golden gauntlet that emits a soft orange glow.

You gain a +5 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon when targetting objects or structures. It has the following additional properties:

Activate As a bonus action, you can sing Gungnir's song to activate it's powers. It allows the user to add +3d6 extra bludgeoning damage to any unarmed strike attack made with the gauntlet. Once used, this property of the weapon cannot be used until the next short rest.

HELL ADVANCES

As the party comes out of the tower, a red fiery portal opens up in the ground and demons start coming out. The island was being protected by the forcefield, but now that it is gone nothing is stopping all sorts of creatures from trying to claim the gauntlet. From the portal emerge several demons, some of which may take a couple of turns to appear:

- 2 Spined Devils
- 1 Imp
- 1 Barlgura
- 1 Bone Naga

The Barlgura yells "Hand over the Gungnir" in a hoarse voice.

ENDING

As players return through the waterfall, they reappear directly in the original room with the statues. Pixie is there to receive them with three elite government wizards, who quickly seal the watery portal and stand by.

Pixie demands the Gungnir be given to him and saves it in a huge metal crate engraved with powerful runes. He pays the party 10.000 gp each as a reward and are deeply congratulated. All details of the day the party retells are carefully recorded.

As the party exits the temple they see increasing numbers of elite wizards running past them in formation. Upon reaching the basement they encounter not one but fifteen wagons stationed and dozens of government officials patrolling around. A special wagon is prepared to take the party home...