

Lost Temple of the Mad Apsara

Created by John Jordan

Long ago the inhabitants of this land dug down beneath a sheer cliff to reach the water deep below, carving a well and a temple to the guardian spirit of the water source. For decades they prospered and then they died and their settlement crumbled to dirt and dust over several hundred years. Only the well, and the guardian, remain. Once worshipped as a god now she languishes, scared, lonely, and angry.

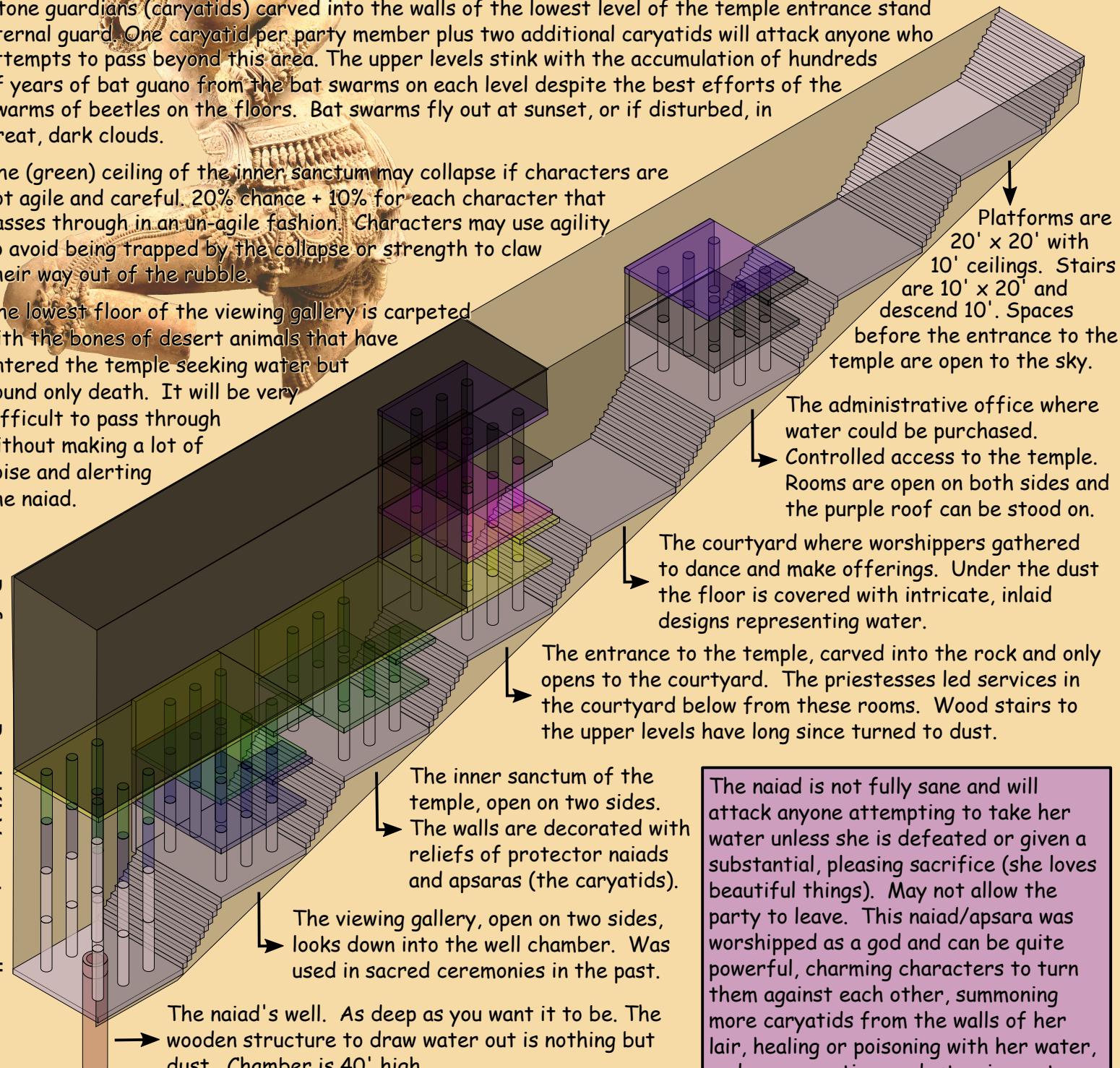
The two platforms and stairs between the entrance and administrative office have been largely filled with drifting dirt (treat as quicksand), but players should be able to see the entrance and make their way further down. The sides and columns are carved with life size reliefs depicting farmers at work in irrigated fields, water healing the sick, and dancing worshippers offering animals, produce, works of art and even themselves to the naiad.

3d6 poisonous snakes have taken up residence in the upper portion (black level) of the administrative office and will attack anyone who enters and will drop onto anyone who passes beneath this level.

Stone guardians (caryatids) carved into the walls of the lowest level of the temple entrance stand eternal guard. One caryatid per party member plus two additional caryatids will attack anyone who attempts to pass beyond this area. The upper levels stink with the accumulation of hundreds of years of bat guano from the bat swarms on each level despite the best efforts of the swarms of beetles on the floors. Bat swarms fly out at sunset, or if disturbed, in great, dark clouds.

The (green) ceiling of the inner sanctum may collapse if characters are not agile and careful. 20% chance + 10% for each character that passes through in an un-agile fashion. Characters may use agility to avoid being trapped by the collapse or strength to claw their way out of the rubble.

The lowest floor of the viewing gallery is carpeted with the bones of desert animals that have entered the temple seeking water but found only death. It will be very difficult to pass through without making a lot of noise and alerting the naiad.



Reference: Rani Ki Vav stepwell.