

The Temple of Air

This fantastic building, then called "Shrine of the Wise Forefathers" was created during the last days of the Empire by a powerful shaman using conjured spirits. It was financed by a rich bureaucrat who wanted to dedicate it to his ancestors. In fact, he built a statue for each of his known forefathers.

However, he was killed during the civil war when a horde of aberrations attacked his home. The temple was infested by the foul creatures of the shadow plane and was considered haunted ever since.

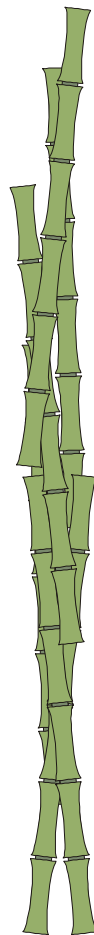
15 years ago, a wandering wu jen - Floating Fox - greatly interested in air magic and allied to several spirits found the temple and when the evil inhabitants attacked her, she decided to clear out every single one of them and take over the place as her new base of operations. After a month of guerilla warfare, she was able to settle here. Awed by the site's properties, she named it the "Temple of Air" and started using it for both research and her raids on the surrounding villages.

The Temple

The temple is made of a strange stone that seems milky from afar and almost translucent when close (even though it is not possible to actually see through it). This material is actually condensed clouds, brought in by celestial spirits that helped build the shrine. Other materials used are more mundane.

The statues surrounding the temple depict the ancestors of the unnamed bureaucrat. Each looks different but a family relation is evident. The ashes of each can be found inside the huge clay figures and with the proper spells, their spirits can be contacted.

The flying platform is of course a magical item (weighing several tons)



enchanted with the ability to levitate. It holds an altar that looks different from the rest of the construction both in material and style. It is surrounded by statues of clay soldiers.

The altar is magical as well, everybody concentrating while sitting on it for more than 2 rounds, is affected by a fly spell as cast by a 15th level sorcerer. This item is a trophy won during the civil war by the forces of shadow which Floating Fox found nearby. She is currently trying to find out if it has any other properties. It takes 10 men to move it and a day to drag it a single mile.

Defences

Aside from the wu jen and her retinue (which are described later on) the temple has several defence mechanisms most of which stem from the original construction. The traps on the stair where set up by the quartermaster.

The Wall of Blades

The statues marked red on the DM's map have a special defence mechanism which was designed to protect the inner sanctum. Anybody who passes between two of these statues (all of which wear the outfit of military officers and hold large swords made of real metal) is subject to a scything blade trap (DMG, pg. 115). Once triggered the trap has to be reset to work again.

These traps were created shortly after the civil war started, when the bureaucrat decided to hide here. A small button on the inside of the 'perimeter' can be used to disable the traps in order to walk out to the other ancestors.

+8 melee attack, 1d8 damage, search: 21, disable: 15

The Eternal Guardians

The floating platform originally held an altar dedicated to the founder of the family line. Close observation will still

reveal the foundation of this wooden building. In order to guard this important item, it was surrounded by 7 terracotta warriors. Anyone who enters inside their circle will be attacked unless he wears the ring of the founding father (now in the hands of Floating Fox). The warriors will never leave the platform and cannot be commanded by anyone.

The Stairs

The stairs in the side of the cliff where originally intended to be the only access point to this shrine, to discourage thieves and other attackers. There where no traps set up here to avoid accidents. Since Floating Fox's allies can fly however (or have flying steeds), it was decided to rig the stairs with a pit trap (somewhere in the middle). Due to the fact that it was put in later however, it is relatively easy to spot (but hard to circumvent). Since it is easier to find, each PC gets a spot check vs. 20 in addition to any search attempts.

Spiked Pit Trap (DMG 115): 4d6, +10 melee (1d4 spikes for 1d4+2 damage), a Ref save of 20 avoids, search: 10, disable: 20.

The Denizens

Currently, the temple is inhabited by Floating Fox and her retainers. They use this temple as an easily defensible position from which they conduct raids on the four surrounding villages. Three of these have decided that paying tribute is better than getting killed and do not resist the plunderers. Fox is modest and only takes enough to provide for her group.

The group consists of 8 people: Fox, a level 3 wu jen, Handsome, a human expert in trap making and accounting, Ugly, a spirit, and 4 bandits recruited along the way. The humans ride on giant bees, which have been given to them as a favour by the wu jen's spirit mentor (who

in return received a statue in the main building).

Daytime Defence

The steeds are usually allowed to go free and look for food when not needed and can be called by small whistles (taking 1d10 rounds to arrive). At any time of the day, one bandit flies circles around the compound every ten minutes while another one is on reserve with his bee. The other two (who are responsible for the night shift) sleep in the main building.

Ugly is usually walking around the temple every 30 minutes unless he is out with Fox to gather tribute or looking for magical components (10% chance).

The ruler herself, Floating Fox, is either out with Ugly or doing research on the altar. If the weather is bad, she will be inside the main building mediating.

Night-time Defence

At night, the two bandits who sleep during the day are sitting outside, listening for attackers. The bees sleep under the roof of the shrine and Ugly is out to hunt (within a one-mile radius of the shrine). All others sleep within the main building (which is quite crowded at that time).

Floating Fox

female human Wu Jen 3: CR 3; Size M; HD 3d4+3; hp 13; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Attack +1 dagger (1d4), or +5 ranged (light crossbow 1d8); SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +5; AL CN; Str 10 (+0), Dex 18 (+4), Con 12 (+1), Int 15 (+2), Wis 12 (+1), Cha 9 (-1).

Skills: Concentration +9, Spellcraft +8, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Knowledge (Air Spirits, Magic etc.) +6, Listen (cc) +3, Spot (cc) +3,

Possessions: dagger, light crossbow, 20 bolts, scroll of elemental burst, scroll of



ice blast, talisman of levitation, ring of the ancestor (non-magical, 300 gp), 20 gp

Feats: [Sudden Action], [Spell Secret: Elemental Burst (Enlarge)], [Spell Secret: Resist Elements (Extend Spell)], Discipline, Craft Talisman, Dodge

Wu Jen Spells Known (4/3/2):

0th -- Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mage Hand, Mending, Open/Close, Read Magic, Detect Magic

1st -- Elemental Burst, Endure Elements, Smoke Ladder, Obscuring Mist, Ghost Light

2nd -- Resist Elements, Ice Blast.

Spells Memorised: Flare, Ghost Sound, Open/Close, Detect Magic, Elemental Burst, Smoke Ladder, Ghost Light, Ice Blast, Resist Elements

Floating Fox is a young wu jen looking for power and money. She spent her youth as an abused slave in some evil half-fiend's court before she was able to slay him during an uprising. Fox is disillusioned and wants to gather as much knowledge as possible. Her old master was a wu jen and she is convinced that knowledge inevitably leads to power.

While she is not evil, Fox is convinced she has the right to certain luxuries, which she is quite willing to take from weaker people. She does avoid excessive violence and cruelty when possible, however. The problem with this is that she is not very fear-inspiring and thus had to perform several murders to intimidate the peasants she raids.

Fox is young with athletic build and not that bad looking. She has a tendency to stare hatefully at people when in thought however, which makes her quite unsympathetic. Fox wears wide silk robes that she stole from a noblewoman and carries a crossbow with her all the

time. When intimidating her victims, she loves to point this weapon at their heads.

Handsome

Male human Exp2: CR 1; Size M (5 ft., 7 in. tall); HD 2d6-6; hp 4; Init -1 (-1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (-1 Dex, +3 armour); Attack +0 spear (1d8); SV Fort -3, Ref -1, Will +6; AL CE; Str 9 (-1), Dex 9 (-1), Con 5 (-3), Int 11 (+0), Wis 16 (+3), Cha 15 (+2).

Skills: Craft (Trapmaking) +7, Profession (Accountant) +8, Search +4, Disable Device +5, Intimidate +7, Diplomacy +7, Spot +6, Listen +5

Feats: Skill Focus (Trapmaking), Alertness.

Possessions: Shortspear, leather scale armour, talisman of resist elements, talisman of smoke ladder, si wang symbol.

Handsome is a young man of noble appearance. He does not look much of a warrior, however, moving slowly and looking quite skinny. People who first meet Handsome are immediately comfortable with him and will be willing to help him. When intimidating people, he does not threaten them - rather he evokes the feeling in them that what they are doing is wrong. Fox uses him to get the tribute from the peasants (she and Ugly stay in the background). The peasants are actually convinced that Handsome is trying to protect them from his master as long as they help him by being submissive. Nothing could be further from the truth though.

Handsome is an utterly evil person. He enjoys inflicting harm to others by building traps or by exploiting them. He is not after material gain, he just enjoys taking away things from weak people. he tries to avoid combat at all cost though, preferring to flee or hide, abandoning his 'friends' without qualms.



Fox likes Handsome a lot, she is in love with him. She does not see his evil side, since he carefully hides that from her. Actually, he is very afraid of her and pretends to like her, fearing her wrath. Given the chance however, he would love to kill her (or lure her into a trap), in order to take over her gang.

Ugly, a loyal follower of Fox who has suffered from Handsome's sarcastic remarks on more than one occasion would love to kill him but dares not as long as Fox is alive.

Ugly

Ugly is a tongue lasher guixian, who is lawful evil. He was commanded by the spirit mentor of Floating Fox to protect her at all costs and will do anything to ensure her welfare no matter how much collateral damage this might cause. Ugly is motivated by his oath, his love for scaring villagers (he is forbidden to kill them by Fox unless they misbehave, a term that leaves room for interpretation), and his hunger for rice. He is quite stupid (int 8) and hardly capable of a normal conversation.

Ugly is utterly loyal to Fox, even though he tries to twist her orders if it does not inflict harm to her (i.e. he will kill the occasional villager if he can get away with it). He hates Handsome, however, and would like to kill him. Only the fact that Fox likes him keeps Handsome alive.

Ugly has littered the surrounding rice fields with the corpses of small animals that he has killed, a fact that might alert PCs of his nature.

Bandits

These young men ran away from their villages (which are not in the area except in the case of Stu Pit). They are lazy and cowards at heart, preferring to use threats to actually fighting. If ordered by Fox however, they will be willing to fight

- they dread the punishment she would inflict on them.

Stu is a newcomer in the gang and not entirely trusted yet. He is the son of a village elder, who was discontent with his lot in life and decided to be the bully rather than the victim. However, he still has a conscience and might be talked into giving up if confronted by powerful heroes.

These bandits have the stats of *Peasant Bandits of the Lawless Lands*, as described in the NPC section.

