THE SAGE OF LUNE

The fabled Sage of Lune once dispensed wisdom from her weird and deadly abode, the Palace of a Hundred Shrines. But visitors are no longer welcome, warded away by a clan of dogfolk.

THE HUNDRED SHRINES

The Palace of a Hundred Shrines was built by foolish and pious King Raeldus. Hoping to win favor with the unseen world before his death, he commanded every order, cult, and spirit oracle to build and maintain a shrine within the palace. Some came willingly, but many were forced.

A mishmash of faiths occupied it for a decade, but Raeldus' heirs quietly deconsecrated it a few years after his death.

A few hardy cults lingered, but being too remote to easily attract new converts, their numbers dwindled.

It stood abandoned (but for a few passing bandits) for a century, before the coming of the Sage of Lune.

THE PALACE STRUCTURE

The palace's two large levels are each divided into sixteen rooms, in a four-by-four grid.

The rooms are square, twenty paces across, with tall, narrow corridors leading to adjacent rooms through the thick interior walls.

THE MAIN GATE

A dark corridor leads inward for ten paces, before splitting at a T-junction that leads to the two outer rooms adjacent to the gate.

LOWER ROOMS

The precise arrangement of rooms in the interior is known only to the Sage; roll randomly as adventurers explore it.

1. Peace Shrine
A fat candle atop a stone sphere burns eternally.

2. Devouring Death
A giant wooden face floats in a pool of black oil. It animates to devour anything placed or climbing upon it.

3. the goblet of Ossola
In a vinegar-smelling bare room, a huge glass basin rests on one side of a round altar.

4. Pit Trap Rooms (3)
The dogfolk have removed the altars, leaving these rooms empty.

5. Shrine of the Dawn
At dawn each day, a triangle-in-circle quartz glyph on a round altar glows fiercely, filling the room with painfully bright sunlight.

6. Dogfolk Lair
d10 dogfolk are here, dozing. If they have been alerted by sentries, they are only feigning sleep, and another d10 are moving to ambush from behind.

7. Magpie Spirit
A huge pile of furniture and bric-a-brac collected from the lower level fills the room.

A tiny personality cult once held a shrine here, but only the invisible spirit of their founder remains.

Desperate for offerings and worshippers, it has convinced itself the whole palace was built in its honor, and has revealed it is a shrine to "Ossola", shown as a massive gelatinous blob. Further pictograms explain that she grants immortality to those who follow her path, which is explained in detail in the altar's book. (It was removed from the palace long ago.)

The bottom of the bowl is a miniature portal to Ossola's realm, a barren landscape dotted with acid-filled craters, and listening, predatory oozes.

THE SITUATION

Wooden Shutters
The outer 'walls' of the lower level are heavy wooden shutters slung between iron rods, every inch decorated (d10). The upper level windows are similarly shuttered.

The shutters are meant to open to the outside, although locks (badly rusted) hold them closed. They could be hacked through.

While they are closed, the interior is dark.

Haze from the incense rooms fills the palace, deadening sounds and blocking sight further than thirty paces.

Lower Rooms (d10)

The exact arrangement of rooms in the interior is known only to the Sage; roll randomly.

1. Peace Shrine
A fat candle atop a stone sphere burns eternally.

2. Devouring Death
A giant wooden face floats in a pool of black oil. It animates to devour anything placed or climbing upon it.

3. the goblet of Ossola
In a vinegar-smelling bare room, a huge glass basin rests on one side of a round altar.

Pictograms on the altar reveal it is a shrine to "Ossola", shown as a massive gelatinous blob. Further pictograms explain that she grants immortality to those who follow her path, which is explained in detail in the altar's book. (It was removed from the palace long ago.)

The bottom of the bowl is a miniature portal to Ossola's realm, a barren landscape dotted with acid-filled craters, and listening, predatory oozes.

The sharp spikes are closely spaced: they injure but do not impale.

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painstakingly pushed items from all over the palace.

9. SPIRAL STAIRS
An enormous, decorated (d4) wooden staircase ascends to a matching room on the upper level.

10. STATUES & STAIRS
Four wooden statues stand floor to ceiling, representing four ages of life. They are hollow; a statue of a middle-aged woman conceals rickety stairs that spiral up to the Sage's cupola.

A brass soldier guards the stair, and will not leave it voluntarily.

THE DOGFOLK
Twenty dog men, bewitched by the Moon Baby, occupy the palace.

Replacement bands from a warren several days away come every six or seven days.

The enchantment prevents them from hunting during their stay, and they survive on rations of dried meat. Most are hungry and anxious.

Their objective is to drive off the curious with traps and threats, but they will resort to violence if intruders fight or attempt to ascend to the cupola.
They are unarmed and fearful of metal weapons. If provoked to attack, they make lunging feints to separate individuals, whom they bite and drag down (or drag away) to be torn apart.

**Sentries**
If outnumbered, sentries will either sneak away to fetch d6 reinforcements or attempt to lure (with sounds, shadows) into a trapped room.

**The Sage’s Cupola**
A circular pool is filled edge-to-edge with a reflection of the moon’s surface. Here, the Sage of Lune used her magical lenses to search the moon’s surface for microscopic mirror versions of earthly events, people, and omens.

The cupola is now home to the Moon Baby and the Brass Soldiers.

**The Brass Soldiers**
Moving at one eighth normal speed, these solid metal statues are easily avoided by retreating, but in tight quarters (or when attacked with short weapons, pushed, or rushed past) they attempt to grab limbs or clothing.

Their grip cannot be dislodged; seized victims have only moments to cut off whatever has been grabbed before being strangled by metal fingers.

Two are on patrol in the palace, one guards the upper stairs, and the remaining nine remain in the cupola.

Nearly impervious to harm (especially electricity), they only ‘die’ if their silver hearts are bored into or melted.

Patrolling brass soldiers will not kill except in defense (i.e. against melting or drilling), but seek to drag whomever they grab to the cupola for interrogation by the Moon Baby (or whoever wears their control ring).

They will march (underwater if necessary) to rejoin whomever holds their control ring.

**The Moon Baby**
For decades, the Sage of Lune used her powers of moon scrying to benefit others. A year ago, however, she turned her lenses on her own reflection, trying to find her own microscopic mirror image in the reflecting pool.

In an instant, she was replaced by the Moon Baby, an alien being from the lunar surface.

Identical in appearance to the Sage, but hollow and inside out, with the near side always invisible. It makes a ceramic click on the stone floors as it walks, and is a profoundly unsettling sight.

It pretends to be the Sage. In conversation, it is friendly, warm (as was the Sage), and apologetic about any mistreatment by the brass soldiers.

**False Visions**
What it wants, however, is to give clairvoyant visions. Anyone who accepts a vision from the Moon Baby sees a plausible but false vision, a creation of the Moon Baby.

From that moment on, the Moon Baby can see out of the recipient’s eyes. The Moon Baby’s alien mind allows it to integrate this sight from everyone it has ever bestowed a vision upon.

**In Combat**
Normal weapons cannot harm it; any object striking it becomes a watery reflection and splashes to the floor.

The Moon Baby attacks with a silvered knife; it can inflict cuts at any range and always on the far side of the target.

It wears the brass soldiers’ control ring as a bracelet, and always stays near the circle of brass soldiers.

**Reflector**
If magic targets the Moon Baby, roll a d4. On a 1, the effect is reversed (fire becomes ice, harming spells heal, etc.). On a 2 or 3, the effect is reflected back toward the caster. On a 4, both.

**Moon Baby’s Kiss**
If the Moon Baby locks eyes and kisses a being with magical powers, they too are instantly replaced by a Moon Baby version of themselves, loyal to the Moon Baby.

Victims will join the Sage of Lune on the moon.

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Text and illustrations by Michael Prescott. Edited by Andrew Young