

## In the Coils of the Serpent Queen

A fourth level adventure.

Adventure **level 4** worth **16885 XP**.

### **Synopsis:**

In this adventure, the adventurers explore a subterranean complex dedicated to **Merrshaulk**. There, they will get the chance defeat evil, right wrongs and earn treasure.

### **Adventure hooks:**

The players can discover the temple is several ways. For example, they can stumble upon it while traveling through the jungle. Alternatively, the Yuan-Ti have been raiding villages for slave labor. While they have been careful only to target small isolated settlement, such practice is bound to attract attention and the players might be contacted by survivors or neighbor of raided villages or might discover such a village and follow the slavers' tracks (maybe helped by some cautious markings left on tree barks by a courageous prisoner) to the complex. Some slaves might also have escaped captivity and bring words to the players. Finally, it is likely that the slavers would have sold some of the few valuables (small jewelry and trinkets) they found in the village in exchange for supply. It is possible for a former village member to have recognized it and tasked the players to investigate.

### **Entering the complex:**

The complex was carved out from natural caves and is enclosed within the mountain and there are only two entrances. The main one is the natural mouth of the cave. The cultists have been careful not to alter its outside appearance, save for planting a few trees and bush to try and mask it from the outside, although the effort is recent and the foliage has yet much to grow to actually cover the cave (it takes a perception DC=5 to notice the entrance). A survival roll (DC=10) allows the player to notice that the place is actually due to the subtle efforts of sapient beings rather than nature. The entry is zone 1A on the map.

Alternatively, a few slaves have recently dug their way out of their cells and their escape route can provide a more discrete route of entry. It takes some efforts (Perception DC=15) to find the escape tunnel but this lead directly to the slave pen in B3.



**First floor:**

Three cultists guard the entrance. The two guards are low ranking cult member that have yet to be initiated in the ritual magic. The adept that supervises them, however, is higher ranking as demonstrated by the slightly more ornate robes he is wearing (cultists wear concealing robes and donning them would confer a +5 circumstance bonus to impersonate a member of the cult).

Guard duty is a chore reserved to low ranking members and the guards are not particularly alert. When they spot the adventurers, they might try to alert the rest of the cult, but everybody is distracted by the ceremony and, unless they manage to flee there, their cries will remain unheard.

### Encounter A1: The entrance guard (Cr 3; 870 xp):

Human guard (11): \_\_\_\_\_

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

Human guard (11): \_\_\_\_\_

Human Guard	CR 1/3	(XP 135)
Warrior level 1 (skill points 2)		
Init +0; Perception +1		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
AC 12, Touch 10, flat footed 12 (+0 Dex, +2 leather armor)		
hp 11 (1d10+1)		
Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +0		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
Speed 30		
Single Attack Spear +3 (1d8x3) or Shortsword +3 (1d6+2/19-20x2)		
Space 5ft.; Reach 5		
Special Attacks: Power Attack		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
Str 14, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Chr 8		
Base Attack 1 CMB 3; CMD 14		
<b>Feats:</b>		
Power Attack: You can choose to take a -1 penalty on all melee attacks and combat maneuver checks to gain a +2 bonus on all melee damage rolls. Every +4 base attack penalty increases by -1 and damage by +2, Skills Perception +1		
Languages Common		
<b>Treasure:</b> Leather armor (10gp); Spear (2gp); Shortsword (10gp)		
<b>Total worth (22gp)</b>		

Human adept (Serpent Cultist Adept)	CR 2 (XP 600)
Adept level 4 (skill points 16)	
Init -1; Perception +5	
<b>DEFENSE</b>	
AC 9, Touch 9, flat footed 9 (No Armour, Shield, none) (-1 Dex)	
hp 19 (6+3d6+4);	
Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +6	
<b>OFFENSE</b>	
Speed 30	
Melee Single Attack Mace +1 (1d8x2)	
Space 5ft.; Reach 5	
<b>Adept Spells</b>	
Level 0 (3) DC 12	
Bleed; Detect Magic; Detect Poison	
Level 1 (3) DC 13	
Protection from Good X 2	
Magic Fang X 1	
Level 2 (1) DC 14	
Inflict Moderate Wounds (Conjuration) [Healing]	
Invisibility	
<b>STATISTICS</b>	
Str 9, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Chr 13	
Base Attack 2 CMB 1; CMD 10	
<b>Feats</b>	
Master craftman (Poison)	
Brew Potion,	
Simple Weapon Proficiency,	
Skill Focus: +3 to Heal skill	
<b>Skills</b> Craft Poison: +6; Handle Animal 10, Heal 11, Know Local 6, Know Nature 6, Knowledge Religion 5, Linguistic 1; Perception 5,	
Languages Common; Draconic	
<b>Equipment:</b> Heavy Mace (12gp); 2x potions of cure light wounds (2x50gp); 2x poison bloodroot (2x100gp) <b>Total worth: 312gp.</b>	

The temple behind the guards is dark and damp, and only gets darker and damper as the players explore it further.

As the players approach, they hear the numerous voices chanting for the ceremony that is taking place in the main room. Most of the participants are in the lower level or on the balcony but two adepts are on the players' side. They are watching the ceremony, however, and are turning their back to the players.

If the adepts have time to shout, the ceremony will be interrupted and a difficult fight will take place. Instead, the players might decide for a more subtle approach: sneaking past these two guards, backstabbing them or donning the robe and bluffing them into an ambush...

### Encounter A2: The watching adepts (Cr 4; 1200 xp):

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

In the lower level (B1) are 11 low ranking cultists (human commoners) as well as two adepts. On the balcony (A3) are two more adepts as well as the high priest.

Unless disturbed by the players, the ceremony stops after about 30 minutes and the cultists disperse.

Behind locked doors (Disable device DC=15) is the area A4, where the high priest's second in command has his quarters. Unless they were killed by the players, he returns there immediately with a colleague, once the ceremony is over, and work on transcribing some magic scrolls.

**Encounter A4:** Two adepts (Cr 4; 1200 xp):

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

In area A5 are the high priest's quarters. The doors are locked (Disable Device DC=15) and trapped (Fireball Trap -CR 5) as well as guarded by at least one Cultist guard. After the ceremony is over, unless slaughtered in A3, two more cultists arrive to reinforce the guard.

**Encounter A5T:** Fireball trap (Cr 5; 1600 xp).

**Encounter A5:** Three guard (Cr 1; 400 xp):

Human guard (11): \_\_\_\_\_

Human commoner (7): \_\_\_\_\_

Human commoner (7): \_\_\_\_\_

Human Commoner	CR 1/3	(XP 135)
Commoner level 1 (skill points 2)		
Init +0; Perception +1		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
AC 10, Touch 10, flat footed 10 (+0 Dex, +0 armor)		
hp 7 (1d6+1)		
Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
Speed 30 ft		
Melee		
Single Attack Dagger +1 (1d4 /19-20x2)		
Space 5ft.; Reach 5		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
Str 12, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Chr 9		
Base Attack 0 CMB 1; CMD 11		
<b>Feats</b>		
Master craftman		
<b>Skills</b> Craft poison +6, Perception +1		
<b>Languages</b> Common		
<b>Equipment:</b> Dagger (2gp)		

Inside the room is the high priest's private chambers. It is full of various fineries worth 300gp as well as a locked and trapped chest (Acid arrow trap; Cr 3). Inside the chest are a wand of magic missile and a potion of cure light wound).

Room **A6** is the small kitchen of the complex. In there, an adept and his second in command supervise a team of two slaves working on the next meal. They are not participants to the ceremony and will be present regardless of how the events unfold in **A3**.

If the slaves have the opportunity, they will try to help the players by grabbing some cooking implement and backstabbing (-1 to hit 1d3 points of damage) the priest if he proves distracted.

**Encounter A6:** One adept and a cultists (Cr 2; 735 xp):

Human commoner (7): \_\_\_\_\_

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

**A7** is the entrance of a secret passage. It takes a perception check; DC=15 to notice it from the outside.

In **A8**; the cult stored most items from the temple's previous owner that did not appear immediately valuable to them.

Despite the screening they conducted, they missed a wand of cure light wound.

The stairs in **A9** lead to B on the next level.

The room in A10 has been co-opted as a teaching/leaving quarters for the lower ranking members of the cult. Unless slain A3; 6 cultist commoners will be present there when the players arrive.

**Encounter A10:** 6 cultist commoners (Cr 2; 810 xp):

Human commoner (7): \_\_\_\_\_

The final room at this level is where the cult store their most precious relics. It is locked behind a solid door (Disable device DC=15 to open; the high priest carries the keys). After the ceremony, it is guarded by three cultist guards.

**Encounter A11:** Three more guards (Cr 1; 400 xp):

Human guard (11): \_\_\_\_\_

Human guard (11): \_\_\_\_\_

Human guard (11): \_\_\_\_\_

Inside the vault the players can find a Platinum cup with royal crest (worth 1200gp); a golden idol with strange carving (worth 1000gp); a gilded demon skull (worth 300gp); a wand of cure light wounds and 52gp.



**Lower floor:**

The players may arrive on this floor in three ways: they might take the stairs (or jump down) in **A3**, in which case they arrive in **B3**.

They might take the secret stairs in **A9**, which lead them to **B7**.

Or they might have found the slave's escape tunnel and followed it to **B4**.

In **B1**, two adepts are working on alchemical potions. If the players attack, one of the adept will drop some strange pellet in one of the boiling alembics. It produces an acrid smoke that fills the room. The

adepts are somehow immune to the smoke but any other breathing creature that starts its turn in the smoke must succeed a DC=10 fortitude roll or be staggered for a turn.

**Encounter B1:** My little chemists, two adepts (Cr 4; 1200 xp):

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_ Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

From **B2** starts a westward tunnel that leads to the breeding pool (area **C**).

As mentioned; **B4** is an escape tunnel dug out of earth. It is long and claustrophobic and leads to B5.

In **B5** is the slave pen. The slaves are kept behind locks (Disable Device DC=10 to open). They are watched over by Kallun. The dwarf stumbled upon the cult when it was just started and joined it, less by religious conviction than because it offered the promise of many slaves to torment. He is a vicious bully but, thankfully for the players; prone to sleeping on the job which give them the advantage of surprise.

**Encounter B5:** The slaver slapped (Cr 4; 1200 xp):

Kallun (42): \_\_\_\_\_

Dwarf Fighter (Kallun)	*Elite*	CR 4 (XP 1200)
Fighter level 5 (skill points 10) Heavy Foot		
Init +2; Senses Darkvision 60; Perception +0		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
AC 17, Touch 12, flat footed 14 ( Scale mail, Shield, none)		
(+2 Dex, +5 armour, +1 feats)		
hp 42 (0d8+5d10+10+5);		
Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1		
Resistance to poison +2, Resistance to spells +2		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
Speed 20		
<b>Melee</b>		
Single Attack Waraxe, dwarven +9 (1d10+6 X3)		
Full Attack Waraxe, dwarven +5 (1d10+6 X3); Battle axe +4 (1d8+2 X3)		
Space 5ft.; Reach 5		
Weapon Training become proficient in a weapon group 1		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
Str 16, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Chr 6		
Base Attack 5 CMB 8; CMD 20		
<b>Feats</b>		
Nimble moves: Ignore 5 feet of difficult terrain when you move.		
Power Attack.		
Weapon Specialization: +2 to damage rolls,		
Cleave: Get extra attack if hit monster to adjacent foe, -2 AC until your next turn ,		
Martial Weap Prof,		
Shield Proficiency: Can use shields,		
Simple Weapon Proficiency,		
Tower Shield Proficiency: Can use the tower shield and suffer only normal shield skill penalties		
Two-Weapon Fighting: Get extra attack at -2 to all attacks,		
Weapon Focus: +1 to attack rolls		
<b>Skills</b> Climb 7, Intimidate 5, Know Arch & Eng 4, Know Dungeon 4, Perception 0, Ride 2, Survival 0,		
Swim -3		
<b>Languages</b> Common, Dwarven		
<b>SPECIAL ABILITIES</b>		
Defensive Training +4 Dodge AC against Giant type		
Stability +4 bonus on being bullrushed or tripped		
Bravery Save vs fear + 1		
Treasure: Scale Mail (50gp); Mstwk Dwarven waraxed (330gp); Battleaxe (10gp)		
Total worth: 390gp.		

In **B6** is the cult's armory. An adept is currently inventorying it alongside two low ranking cultists.

**Encounter B6:** You can't fight in the war room! Two guards; one adept (Cr 3; 870 xp):

Human guard (11): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

Human guard (11): \_\_\_\_\_

The stairs in **B5** leads up to **A9**.

Finally, in **B8** the adventures finally meet the high priest as he is rumaging through the old, decrepit and abandoned library. Two more adepts are with him.

**Encounter B8:** High priest and cohort (Cr 6; 2400 xp):

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

Human high priest (25): \_\_\_\_\_

Human cultist (Serpent High Priest)	CR 4	(XP 1200)
Cleric level 6 (skill points 18) Adept		Domain: Scalykind; Trickery
Init +1; Senses; Perception +9		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
AC 12, Touch 11, flat footed 11 ( No Armour, Amulet of natural Armor +1; +1 Dex)		
hp 25 (8+5d8)		
Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +8		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
Speed 30		
Melee Single Attack Longsword+3(1d8-1 19-20/x2)		
Space 5ft.; Reach 5		
Adept Spells		Channeling: 3d6 -5 times a day
Level 0 (4) DC 13		
Bleed		
Touch of Fatigue		
Detect Magic		
Detect Poison		
Level 1 (3+1) DC 14		
Bane		
Cause Fear(Necromancy)[Fear Mind-Affecting] X1		
Protection from Good		
Magic Fangs		
Level 2 (3+1) DC 15		
Cause Moderate Wounds		
Delay Poison		
Enthrall		
Invisibility		
Level 3 (2+1) DC 16		
Hold Person		
Inflict Moderate wounds		
Greater Magic Fangs		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 17, Chr 15		
Base Attack 5 CMB 4; CMD 14		
<b>Feats</b>		
Combat Casting: +4 Concentration checks for Defensive casting.		
Disruptive Spell: Targets affected by a disruptive spell must make concentration checks when using spells or spell-like abilities (DC equals the save DC of the disruptive spell plus the level of the spell being cast) for 1 round.		
Master Alchemist		
Selective Channeling		
Skills Know Arcana 7, Know Religion 7, Perception 9		
Languages Common, Draconic		
Treasure Amulet of Natural Armor (2000gp); longsword (50gp)		<b>Total: 2050gp</b>

**Breeding pool:**

The final encounter occurs in the breeding pool. The watery center of the pool is about 3 feet deep and difficult terrain for all but the serpent queen. The queen carries her staff of "vile serpentitudiness": a +1 Quarterstaff that can spit acid three times a day (15ft cone; reflex half; 1d4 damage) and is worth 4000gp. The serpent queen also carries a small bag of semi precious stones worth 40gp and wears bracers of armor +1.

**Encounter C:** Serpent and cohort (Cr 7; 3200 xp):

Human adept (19): \_\_\_\_\_

Serpent Queen (66): \_\_\_\_\_

Description of the encounter	Loot found	Encounter Worth	Budget Surplus
<b>A1:</b> The entrance guard -Cr 3	356	800	444
<b>A2:</b> The watching adepts -Cr 4	624	1150	526
<b>A4:</b> Two adepts -Cr 4	624	1150	526
<b>A5T:</b> Fireball trap -Cr 5	0	1550	1550
<b>A5:</b> Three Guards -Cr 1	26	260	234
Chest in high priest's room -Cr3	800	800	0
<b>A6:</b> One adept and a cultists -Cr 2	314	550	236
<b>A8:</b> Wand of cure light wounds	0	750	750
<b>A10:</b> 6 cultist commoners -Cr 2	12	550	538
<b>A11:</b> Three more guards -Cr 1	66	260	194
<b>Loot in Vault</b>	3302	0	-3302
<b>B1:</b> My little chemists, two adepts -Cr 4	624	1150	526
<b>B5:</b> The slaver slapped -Cr 4	390	1150	760
<b>B6:</b> Two guards; one adept -Cr 3	356	800	444
<b>B8:</b> High priest and cohort -Cr 6	2674	2000	-674
<b>C:</b> Serpent queen -CR7	5352	2600	-2752
<b>Total:</b>	<b>15520</b>	<b>15520</b>	<b>0</b>

Serpentfolk Cleric *Elite*	CR 6	XP 2400
Neutral evil Medium Monstrous humanoid		
Cleric level 2 (skill points 12) Cleric (Domains Evil and Chaos)		
Init +8; Senses Darkvision 60, Scent; Perception +12		
<b>DEFENSE</b>		
AC 18, Touch 14, flat footed 13 (+4 Dex, +3 Natural, +1 bracers)		
hp 66 (5d10+2d8+28+2);		
Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +11		
Immunity to mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, Spell Resistance 15		
<b>OFFENSE</b>		
Speed 30		
Melee Single Attack Quarterstaff +10 (1d4/19-20)		
Space halfft.; Reach 0		
<b>Special Attacks</b>		
Poison DC(17) Bite—injury; save ForFrequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d2 Str; cure 2 saves.		
Channel Energy 3+CHA mod / day in 30ft burst. DC 10 + 1/2 level + CHA mod, number of d6 = 1		
Touch of chaos (Sp) Touch attack 1 rnd target rolls twice and takes the worst result when rolling d20. Per day = 3+ WIS		
Touch of Evil (Su) Melee touch sickens creatures for 1/2 level rounds. Per day = 3 + WIS mod		
<b>Spell-like Abilities</b>		
Spell-like Abilities CL 4th; concentration +7		
Spell-like Abilities (CHR) 1st DC(16) At will Disguise Self, Ventriloquism		
Spell-like Abilities (CHR) 2nd DC(17) 1/day Ventriloquism, Mirror Image		
Spell-like Abilities (CHR) 3rd DC(18) 1/day Suggestion		
<b>Spells Known:</b>		
<b>Cleric Spells</b>		
CL 2 Concentration 6		
Level 0 (4) DC 14		
Bleed(Necromancy)[ ] X 4		
Level 1 (4) DC 15		
Inflict Light Wounds(Necromancy)[ ] X 2		
Magic Weapon(Transmutation)[ ] X 1		
Protection from Good(Abjuration)[Evil] X 1		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
Str 10, Dex 19, Con 19, Int 18, Wis 19, Chr 20		
Base Attack 6 CMB 6; CMD 20		
<b>Feats</b>		
Combat Casting: +4 Concentration checks for Defensive casting,		
Great Fortitude: +2 Fortitude save,		
Improved Initiative: +4 Initiative checks.		
Selective Channeling		
<b>Skills</b> Acrobatics 9, Appraise 4, Diplomacy 12, Disguise 10, Escape Artist 17, Heal 10, Know Arcana 12, Know Religion 10, Linguistics 9, Perception 12, Sense Motive 12, Spellcraft 12, Use Magic Device 14		
<b>Languages</b> Aklo, Common, telepathy 100ft, Undercommon		
<b>Treasure</b> Staff of vile serpentituidness; bracers of armor		<b>Total worth: 5000gp</b>
<b>SPECIAL ABILITIES</b>		
Aura of deity		