

The Trial of the Elements

Final Initiation for the Monks of Zhao Guang Si

Apprentices studying the Path of the Morning Glow at the Zhao Guang Si monastery have two final initiation tests required to graduate and take their place among the ranks of the other monks.

Students must first pass the Trial of Fire and Ice within the Huo Yu Bing Caverns to access the teleportation portal that will take them here, to the Trial of the Elements. That first trial might result in the student recovering a blue shard that protects them from cold damage, and a red shard that protects them from fire damage. While neither is required to pass the trials, both will make it easier to pass both the Trial of Fire and Ice as well as the Trial of the Elements.

The Central Room

After completing the Labyrinth of Fire and Ice in the Huo Yu Bing Caverns, initiates will be teleported into this octagonal room, where they will appear on a dais of white marble in the center of the room.

At the compass points of this room are four daises made of gray marble. Each has a brass circle with runes inscribed on it, with a different sigil for each. On the eastern dais, the sigil is of a cloud with a lightning bolt. On the southern dais, the sigil is of a ball of flames. On the western dais, the sigil shows a drop of water. On the northern dais, the sigil is of a cut gemstone.

There are four statues along the remaining four walls of the octagonal room. The statue on the northeastern wall is of a crouching cat. On the southeastern wall, the statue is of a winged person. The statue on the southwestern wall is of a serpent, and in the northwestern wall, it is of a horned skull.

When anyone first appears on the central dais, the horned skull statue in the northwestern corner will speak and say:

“Welcome! Before the Trial of the Elements, present thyself before each of us for a battle of wills.”

The initiate may approach the statues in any order. For the willpower battle, the Game Master will roll a d20+5. The initiate then rolls a d20 and adds their Wisdom bonus. If the initiate has the highest score, they win the willpower battle and achieve a magical effect for the next 24 hours. If they fail, there is no harmful effect, but they do not achieve the magical bonus and may not try again.

The following gifts are available:

- **Cat Statue (NE corner):** The initiate benefits from a *Spider Climb* spell for the next 24 hours.
- **Winged Person (SE corner):** The initiate benefits from a *Feather Fall* spell for the next 24 hours.
- **Serpent (SW corner):** The initiate is immune to poison and diseases for the next 24 hours.
- **Horned Skull (NW corner):** The initiate is immune to electrical damage for the next 24 hours.

Once they have completed a battle of wills with each statue, the horned skull statue will speak again:

“Present thyself on any dais to begin that trial of the elements.”

Initiates may embark on the trials in any order.

The Trial of Air

When the student reaches the top of the dais on the eastern wall, a teleportation portal on the wall will glow with a purplish light, and the horned skull statue will speak:

“If thou art ready to begin the Trial of Air, step now through the portal.”

Stepping through the portal deposits the traveler on a dais on the eastern wall of a long room that is 160 feet by 100 feet. The room is filled with clouds that cover the floor, making it impossible to see how far down the floor is. Ornate columns carved to look like clouds sprinkle the room.

Those wishing to cross the room must make a standing long jump from one column to the next. As gravity is magically lighter here, the initiate can move a full foot for each point of Strength they have. When they land on the next pillar, they must make a Dexterity check against moderate difficulty to avoid slipping off and falling.

The floor is 30 feet below, and anyone who slips will suffer falling damage unless they can fly or are protected by the *Feather Fall* spell. Climbing back up a pillar requires a Strength check of moderate difficulty. Success is automatic if they are under the effect of *Spider Climb* or a similar ability.

Each pillar has a one in six chance of delivering a bolt of lightning that deals 1d10 electrical damage unless they are immune to electricity. In addition, the room is protected by a pair of creatures that magically manifest as a flying creature, which may be hawks, harpies, small air elementals, or similar creatures.

There are a few outcrops in the room. Landing on one does not require a Dexterity check to avoid slipping off, and they do not deliver electrical damage.

Visitors are permitted to use any magical, trained, or innate abilities to travel across the room, including flying if they can do so.

If they reach the dais on the eastern wall, two milky white crystals are on either side of a teleportation portal. Retrieving a shard from either crystal will activate the teleportation portal, allowing them to return to the central room and embark on the next trial.

The Trial of Fire

When the student reaches the top of the dais on the southern wall, a teleportation portal on the wall will glow with a purplish light, and the horned skull statue will speak:

“If thou art ready to begin the Trial of Fire, step now through the portal.”

Stepping through the portal deposits the traveler on a dais on the northern wall of a long room that is 160 feet by 100 feet. The floor is covered with molten lava, with ornate pillars rising ten feet above the lava.

Those wishing to cross the room must make a standing long jump from one column to the next. As gravity is magically lighter here, the initiate can move a full foot for each point of Strength they have. When they land on the next pillar, they must make a Dexterity check against moderate difficulty to avoid slipping off and falling.

If they slip, they fall ten feet into the lava, taking 2d6 damage from the lava each turn that they remain in it, unless they are immune to fire damage, such as possessing a red shard from the Trial of Fire and Ice. Climbing back up a pillar requires a Dexterity check of moderate difficulty unless they benefit from the *Spider Climb* spell or have a similar ability.

There are a few outcrops in the room. Landing on one does not require a Dexterity check to avoid slipping off.

The room is protected by three small fire elementals who will attack at random and without coordination.

Visitors are permitted to use any magical, trained, or innate abilities to travel across the room, including flying if they can do so.

If they reach the dais on the southern wall, two bright red crystals are on either side of a teleportation portal. Retrieving a shard from either crystal will activate the teleportation portal, allowing them to return to the central room and embark on the next trial.

The Trial of Water

When the student reaches the top of the dais on the western wall, a teleportation portal on the wall will glow with a purplish light, and the horned skull statue will speak:

“If thou art ready to begin the Trial of Water, step now through the portal.”

Stepping through the portal deposits the traveler on a dais on the eastern wall of a long room that is 160 feet by 100 feet. The floor is covered with icy water, with ornate pillars rising ten feet above the water.

Those wishing to cross the room must make a standing long jump from one column to the next. As gravity is magically lighter here, the initiate can move a full foot for each point of Strength they have. When they land on the next pillar, they must make a Dexterity check against moderate difficulty to avoid slipping off and falling.

If they slip, they fall ten feet into the cold water. For each turn they remain in the water, they must make a Constitution check of moderate difficulty. If they fail, they take 1d6 damage unless they are immune to fire damage, such as possessing a blue shard from the Trial of Fire and Ice. Climbing back up a pillar requires a Dexterity check of moderate difficulty unless they benefit from the *Spider Climb* spell or have a similar ability.

A pair of sharks patrol the waters and may attack anyone who falls in. In addition, six tentacles rise above the waves throughout the room and may attack anyone on a pillar.

There are a few outcrops in the room. Landing on one does not require a Dexterity check to avoid slipping off, and the tentacles mysteriously will not attack anyone on an outcrop.

Visitors are permitted to use any magical, trained, or innate abilities to travel across the room, including flying if they can do so.

If they reach the dais on the western wall, two bright turquoise crystals are on either side of a teleportation portal. Retrieving a shard from either crystal will activate the teleportation portal, allowing them to return to the central room and embark on the next trial.

The Trial of Earth

When the student reaches the top of the dais on the northern wall, a teleportation portal on the wall will glow with a purplish light, and the horned skull statue will speak:

“If thou art ready to begin the Trial of Earth, step now through the portal.”

Stepping through the portal deposits the traveler on a dais on the southern wall of a long room that is 160 feet by 100 feet. The floor is covered with grass, but anyone can easily see serpents, rats, and giant spiders throughout the room.

If they slip, they fall ten feet onto the ground, taking falling damage unless they can fly or are protected by a spell or ability like *Feather Fall*. Climbing back up a pillar requires a Dexterity check of moderate difficulty unless they benefit from the *Spider Climb* spell or have a similar ability.

While on the ground, they will be attacked each turn by a snake, rat, or spider. The snakes and spiders are venomous, and the rats are diseased. An attack that causes damage requires the victim to making a Saving Throw against poison unless immune to poison through a magical effect or ability. These creatures will not attack anyone on a pillar.

There are a few outcrops in the room. Landing on one does not require a Dexterity check to avoid slipping off. Each outcrop has one snake on it, but new snakes will not climb up if the snake on them is slain.

Visitors are permitted to use any magical, trained, or innate abilities to travel across the room, including flying if they can do so.

If they reach the dais on the northern wall, two bright green crystals are on either side of a teleportation portal. Retrieving a shard from either crystal will activate the teleportation portal, allowing them to return to the central room and embark on the next trial.

Graduation

If an initiate has retrieved a shard from each of the four Trial of the Elements rooms, the horned skull statue will speak, saying:

“Congratulations, graduate. You have passed the Trial of the Elements. Stand on the dais in the center of the room with all four shards, and you will be transported home.”

Doing so will result in being teleported to dais in the Ritual Room in the basement of the Temple of Zhao Guong Si.