Temple of Clewg at Estreham

Summary

The Temple of Clewg is a white domed sanctuary located in the bowl-shaped valley of Estreham within the southern continent of Cottalem. It serves as the primary spiritual hub for the Clewgists, a religious sect dedicated to spiritual perfection and finding one's specific place in the universe. The temple is famous for a potent anti-male curse and as the site where Yngvild broke an involuntary Geas.

Description

Architecture and Layout

The temple is a white domed building situated in the centre of an oval grove. Unlike traditional circular temples, this structure is noticeably off-centre and oval in shape. It is ringed by immense pillars and remains open at both ends for the entire height of these supports. The walls can be raised or lowered like sails; at the southern end, the walls are frequently raised, while the remaining gaps are blocked with wicker hurdles except along the East-West axis. The floor is constructed of a material smoother and cooler than any standard masonry.

The Sacred Grove and Pool

The temple is surrounded by a continuous circle of twelve large chestnut trees. The canopies of these trees overlap, and at least one branch per pair is braided to physically join the trees into a unified ring. Within this circle lies a small steaming pool lined with smooth pink rock, which feeds a crystal clear lake on the western side of the grove via a small stream between the sixth and seventh trees.

Spiritual Significance

The Clewgists believe that the universe is an illusion and that reality is the work of an insane prime mover. The temple is a place of labour toward spiritual perfection. It is rumoured to be the location of the mythical "Chestnut Lodge", a term used by Yendorian splinter sects to refer to the original seat of their faith. The birds within the grove are known to speak with a collective harmonic voice, acting as a conduit for the deity Clewg to welcome initiates or deliver omens.

The Curse of Estreham

The temple is protected by a lethal curse laid by the Clewgists when the Quirinites attempted to suppressed them. This curse ensures that no man who is not a direct initiate of the mystery can

approach the sanctuary. The bodies of men, ranging from prospectors to soldiers, are regularly found miles from the temple, having died shortly after entering the cursed zone. This protection has made the site a preferred winter location for the matriarch Alfarinn and her female household, as it provides absolute security against male interference.

Recent History

In the year 774, the temple was the site of a miraculous divine intervention. Yngvild the Fierce, acting as a champion of Malfin, used the sentient black blade Jafnadr to perform a blood sacrifice upon the temple's black rock altar. This act successfully broke the involuntary geas laid upon Noren by the renegade Rojden. Following the ritual, Noren was restored to life and initiated into the mysteries of Jorunn within the temple grounds.

Relationships

People

- Alfarinn: The demi-god matriarch who utilises the temple as a safe haven for her daughters.
- Clewgists: The primary inhabitants and guardians of the temple.
- Yngvild the Fierce: A hero who sought sanctuary here and performed the high ritual of resurrection.
- Noren: The only known man to survive the temple's environs in recent history due to his status as a subject of divine intervention.
- Alfinna: A daughter of Alfarinn who maintains a workshop nearby, creating sculptures such as the great black bear.
- Inibrakemi: A shapeshifting agent of the state who frequently visits the temple.

Places

- Cottalem: The continent where the temple is located.
- Minhaton: The closest major town to the temple, located approximately one hour away by flight.
- Riggin Dale: A region thirty miles north-east of the temple used as a rendezvous point for Skyssian agents.
- Ocaso: An abandoned coastal fort to the west used as an extraction point for those fleeing the temple.

Concepts

- Mystery Cults: The temple serves as a nexus for the mysteries of Clewg, Jorunn, and Malfin.
- Geas: The location is famous for the removal of these magical compulsions.

Skyss - Story Background	Characters	Skyss - Places	Pantheons of the World	Other Background

fantasy, world-building, Skyss, Temple, Clewg, Estreham, 2026, Player: James

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Last update: **10 Apr 2026 16:27**