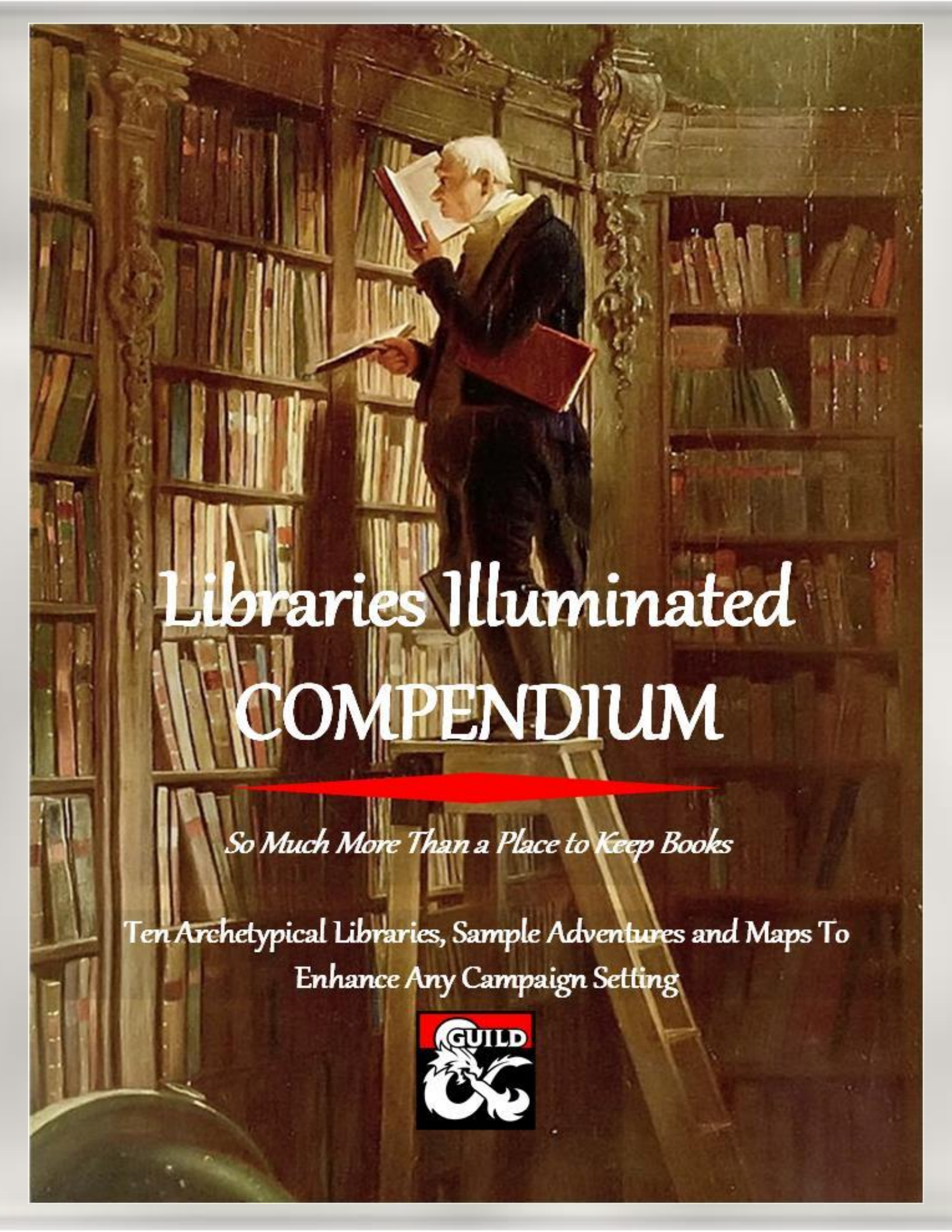


The background of the cover is a painting of an elderly man with white hair, wearing a dark robe and a yellow collar. He is standing on a wooden ladder in a vast, ornate library. He holds a red book in his left arm and a quill in his right hand, looking at an open book. The library has tall, dark wooden bookshelves filled with books. The lighting is warm and focused on the man.

Libraries Illuminated COMPENDIUM

So Much More Than a Place to Keep Books

Ten Archetypical Libraries, Sample Adventures and Maps To
Enhance Any Campaign Setting



CREDITS

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Cover Art: *The Bookworm* a painting by Carl Spitzweg c. 1850

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CONTENTS

Glossary and Tables	Page 3
Character Backgrounds	Page 4
Artisan Tools	Page 7
Monastic Library	Page 8
University Library	Page 10
Sylvan Lorekeep	Page 12
Arcane Library	Page 14
Guild Archives	Page 16
Royal Library	Page 18
Otherworldly Library	Page 21
Hall of Records	Page 23
Private Holdings	Page 26
Abandoned Library	Page 28

APPENDIX I CHARTS, GLOBES AND MAPS

Nautical Charts	Page 30
Globes and Armillary Spheres	Page 32
Terrestrial Maps	Page 33
Sample Adventures	Page 35

APPENDIX II TROPHIES AND CURIOSITIES

Curiosities	Page 43
Random Curiosity Tables	Page 44
Trophies and Spoils of War	Page 45
Sample Adventures	Page 46

Full Page Maps	Page 56 - 71
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It's not just about books...

In many adventure settings libraries are cast in a passive role. They serve as scenery to set a mood or simply as a backdrop against which other action unfolds. Even when they play a more active part it's often as somewhat of a time sink. Players can spend a lot of time hanging about a library while searching for some clue or needed bit of lore among the endless shelves. Not to mention suffering the attention of a curmudgeonly librarian reluctant to help. Libraries can be much more pivotal and dynamic. As we will see, libraries vary in type and are more than a place to keep books out of the wet. They are centers of learning, statements of political power and repositories of new and ancient secrets.

Many historians place the collection of written records in the same league as the beginnings of agriculture and the first large settlements when talking about the start of civilization as we know it. For the first time knowledge about building societies, when to plant and harvest along with advances in medicine, law and the sciences, could be transmitted to many people and across generations. Previously this could only be done by a local teacher through discussion and oral history providing you happened to live near a sage. This newfangled record keeping was a very big deal and accelerated advancements. Libraries are a civilization's memory.

Until very recently libraries were not by nature self-serve. This is why librarians were critical to the function of the library and why you wanted to keep on their good side. They understood the complex, convoluted and sometimes downright baffling systems for storing and indexing their collections. A skillful librarian had an excellent memory and was probably a tiny bit obsessive. Prior to the early Middle Ages works were maintained in the form of scrolls. Even though some might have been marked with a visible title on the outer edge they weren't designed for casual browsing. It wasn't until the 16th Century that titled spines were slowly becoming the norm. Imagine trying to find something specific among scores of shelves filled with untitled volumes. In past ages being an organized library meant folios might have an index number glued to their spines. Finding that one grimoire with the storm summoning sigil you've been looking for in the stacks of the Imperial Athenaeum is nearly a quest unto itself.

Okay, so it's also about the books.

Although much more than the sum of their holdings, libraries are about, *mostly*, written knowledge. They were however also repositories of maps and charts along with all sorts of other curiosities before the appearance of what we think of as museums.

Standard books can be handwritten manuscripts scratched onto parchment or the more familiar paper version. Even these vary quite a bit in quality, material and ornaments.

Gilded pages, color illustrations, embossed covers set with precious stones as well as locking devices are only a few of the accessories used throughout past ages. The Glossary on the next page has a listing of various book types to choose from. You may also use the table found in the Abandoned Library section to randomly generate book condition. That all being said, a library's collection doesn't have to be only neat and bound volumes. It might not have any bound texts at all.

We often only think in terms of books because that's what we're familiar with. Scrolls come second and are the icon for *ancient* writings. This leaves out a large number of other styles and types you can use depending on the culture and age you've set your adventure. A few examples to add variety: rolls of papyrus, clay tablets, thin strips of wood sewn together or etched copper plates. The options aren't limited to historical examples. One can easily imagine other mediums made possible by magic or alchemy: books of glass, smoke or knotted cords like those used by the ancient Andeans. There's no reason why a tome couldn't be a mix of types incorporating parchment, metal, bone and thread for example.

This is all great but, besides some fancy architecture all libraries are pretty much the same.

Not so I say! Although by definition all libraries have some similarities due to their fundamental function each can be quite unique. What follows are tables for gener-

ating random volumes, character backgrounds and tools for professions associated with libraries and examples, including a short playable scenario and extra adventure hooks, for ten different categories of libraries. Each have their own quirks and strengths allowing you to weave them into any campaign setting. These were designed as general guides and not intended to be ridged. The sample adventures can play out in different ways and were left a little vague so they can be tweaked by the DM to fit the play style of their group.



Three tables have been provided to generate random volume Type, Subject and Condition (see Abandoned). These should help with coming up with the odd text as needed on-the-fly. As for the specifics of the book; that's up to the DM. There are a number of supplements available with predesigned titles you can add to any library's collection.

VOLUME TYPE

- 1 Codex
- 2 Clay Tablet
- 3 Compendium
- 4 Folio
- 5 Grimoire
- 6 Manual
- 7 Manuscript Bound
- 8 Manuscript Bound - Oversized
- 9 Manuscript Illustrated
- 10 Manuscript Unbound
- 11 Octavo
- 12 Opusculum
- 13 Palimpsest
- 14 Printed and Bound
- 15 Printed and Bound - Large Format
- 16 Printed and Bound - Multi Volume Set
- 17 Scroll
- 18 Tome
- 19 Vade Mecum
- 20 Wooden Slips

SUBJECT

- 1 Agriculture / Animal husbandry
- 2 Alchemy
- 3 Anatomy
- 4 Architecture
- 5 Art
- 6 Astrology
- 7 Astronomy and star charts
- 8 Botany / Herbalism including cabinets of pressed plants and boxes of seeds.
- 9 Chemistry
- 10 Classical Literature and Poetry
- 11 Engineering
- 12 History
- 13 Law
- 14 Legends and Myths
- 15 Mathematics
- 16 Metallurgy
- 17 Military Science
- 18 Natural History/ Beastiary
- 19 Psychology
- 20 Religion

Anthenaeum	syn for Library
Charter	A written grant by a country's legislative or sovereign power, by which a body such as a company, college, or city is founded and its rights and privileges defined.
Codex	A handwritten manuscript of bound sheets: paper, vellum, papyrus, or similar materials.
Compendium	A collection of concise but detailed information about a particular subject, especially in a book or scroll.
Folio	An individual leaf of paper or parchment, numbered on the left or front side only, occurring either loose as one of a series or forming part of a bound volume.
Frontispiece	An illustration or plate inserted immediately in front of the title page, with the illustration facing the title page.
Gazetteer	A geographical index or dictionary of place names which may also contain maps.
Grimoire	A textbook of magic, typically including instructions on how to create magical objects like talismans and amulets, how to perform magical spells, charms and divination, and how to summon or invoke supernatural entities such as angels, spirits, deities and demons
Incunabula	Refers to the earliest of printed books.
Ledger	A book or other collection of financial accounts.
Octavo	Means "in eighth" or "for the eighth time", refers to the size of book pages produced from folding a full sheet of paper on which multiple pages of text were printed to form the individual sections of a book.
Opusculum	A small or minor text typically short and thin.
Palimpsest	A manuscript page, either from a scroll or a book, from which the text has been scraped or washed off so that the page can be reused for another document.
Scroll or Roll	A document of paper, parchment or the like that can be rolled up for storage.
Tome	An especially large, heavy and scholarly book.
Vade mecum	Meaning "go with me" is a reference book, manual or handbook, usually quite small as to be carried for easy use.
Vellum	A thin specially treated untanned "leather" from calf skin, also known as parchment. High quality parchment from calf skin is called vellum; general quality parchment is made from calf, goat or sheep skin. Typically used for documents and book bindings.



Librarians, Scribes and Bookbinders

There are a number of professions closely associated with libraries and books. The most obvious is the librarian but those with a copyist or bindery skills are also to be found in close proximity to major book holdings.

What follows are three new Backgrounds and one new Tool Set for PC or NPC development.

LIBRARIAN

You have spent years learning the complex methods needed to classify and organize large collections of books and related objects. Over time you've come to specialize in several categories that interest you. You studied scrolls, manuscripts, and tablets. Your efforts have made you an expert on volumes in these areas of reference.

Discuss what sort of library you were trained in with your Dungeon Master. Was it a University, Monastery or vast Imperial collection? How far up in the hierarchy were you? Did something disastrous befall the library to send you out into the world? Or was it more personal?

Skill Proficiencies: Investigation, History

Tool Proficiencies: Select one from Calligrapher's Supplies (as per Scribe), Cartographer's Tools, Bookbinder's Tools.

Languages: One of your choice

Equipment: Artisan Tools, a handwritten notebook with your personal indexing system, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 10 gp.

SPECIALTY

To determine the subject of your area of expertise, roll a d20 or choose from the options in the subject table on the previous page

FEATURE: RESEARCHER

When you attempt to learn or recall a piece of lore, if you do not know that information, you often know which volumes or references you can obtain it. Usually, this information comes from one of various types of libraries you have knowledge of. Your DM might rule that what you seek is secreted away in an almost inaccessible collection, or that all *known* copies have been lost yet rumors of its survival persist.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Librarians are defined by their almost obsessive sense of organization and their characteristics reflect this need for order. Devoted to recorded knowledge a librarian values all forms of the written word and the ideals which protect them. To a librarian no book is inherently good or evil and all are worthy of preservation.

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I can quote from multiple authors on almost every event.
- 2 I can find my way to any given section in any library after only five minutes.
- 3 The world is a chaotic place and I'm used to helping out those who aren't as organized as I am and explain in detail what they can do to become so.
- 4 There's nothing I like more than finding a missing book.
- 5 I'm willing to listen to every side of an argument before I make my own judgment.
- 6 If people were smarter they wouldn't need me to show them where the books are.
- 7 I have little skill in social situations unless we're talking about books.
- 8 I'm convinced that people are always trying to steal volumes from my library.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Knowledge.** The path to self-improvement is through studying the written word. (Neutral)
- 2 **Legacy.** Without libraries a society has no memory of history or justice. (Good)
- 3 **Logic.** Understanding can only come from orderly study. (Lawful)
- 4 **Free-spirited.** Books should not be in libraries but circulated freely among all people. (Chaotic)
- 5 **Power.** Those who control access to history and knowledge can decide the fate of empires. (Evil)
- 6 **Without Judgement.** It is the role of a librarian to protect all knowledge without censorship or bias. (Any)

d6 Bond

- 1 It is my duty to protect my institutions collection.
- 2 I am the curator of a secret collection of tomes the contents of which are so terrible they must forever be sealed away.
- 3 I work to preserve a library, university, scriptorium, or monastery.
- 4 My life's work is the most complete collection in my area of expertise.
- 5 I've been searching my whole life for the last known copy of an ancient work of forgotten lore.
- 6 I gave my whole life to my institution. Its continued existence is my legacy.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I become so obsessed with organizing I have frequent insomnia.
- 2 Most people don't understand the complexity of a libraries indexing system and I go out of my way to make sure they do.
- 3 The only thing that needs to survive is a civilization's library. Everything else is expendable.
- 4 I'm sure the answer to every problem is in a book even if one is already right in front of me.
- 5 I give more attention and love to my books than I do friends and family.
- 6 Your deeds are irrelevant to me until they've been bound and published.

SCRIBE

There is a saying; if you want it pretty, hire a calligrapher. If you want accuracy, find a Scribe. You spent years in a temple or monastery's scriptorium, a university copy room or court hall of records learning to accurately transcribe books and documents. This required developing a keen facility deciphering all manner of handwriting. You are also versed in the official language of contracts, charters and religious doctrine allowing you to interpret otherwise dense legal documents.

Discuss with what sort of employer you were trained with your Dungeon Master. Was it a court or notary house where contracts were the order of the day. Perhaps it was a religious order or University. What event led to your decision to pack up and leave? Did someone or something force you out of your comfortable position? Or were you tasked to copy a secret treaty that made you a liability and you've been on the run ever since.

Skill Proficiencies: History, Religion

Tool Proficiencies: Calligrapher's Supplies

Languages: Two of your choice

Equipment: Calligrapher's Supplies, a magnifying glass, sealing wax, a set of common clothes, and a pouch containing 15 gp.

SPECIALTY:

Select either Secular or Religious

FEATURE: NEGOTIATION

Your knowledge of legal or religious language allows you to quickly understand the basis of a dispute or other conflict by reviewing the relevant documents. Having done so you can judge which party is in the right according to the Law or Common Tradition.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Scribes are typically tidy and a bit fastidious especially when they're working. Accuracy drives them. There is nothing worse than completing a page of copy only to realize there is an omitted word somewhere at its center. A skilled copyists aspires to produce transcriptions so precise as to be indistinguishable from the original. Precision is the scribe's path to perfection.



d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I've never seen a script I couldn't decipher no matter how scrawled.
- 2 There are over a hundred accepted legal forms of address and I am familiar with ninety of them.
- 3 Verbal contracts are for people who can't afford a scribe.
- 4 There's nothing like having your employer ask you "which is the original?"
- 5 An opinion is just noise until it is written down.
- 6 If a person wants to be perceived as educated they'd best learn to write properly.
- 7 Social events are like unwritten doctrine, they're different every time.
- 8 I've seen enough contracts to know everyone is only out for themselves.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Precision.** Striving for the highest level of precision is the only path to perfection. (Neutral)
- 2 **Clarity.** If an idea is worthy of lasting consideration it is important enough to record in absolute and unambiguous detail. (Good)
- 3 **Unbiased.** The task is to faithfully record or copy what was said or written without censorship or alteration. (lawful)
- 4 **Detachment.** It is not my place to explain obvious flaws in a document regardless of the consequences. (Chaotic)
- 5 **Power.** Those who record the law can have more power than those who conceived it. (Evil)
- 6 **Legacy.** By faithfully copying I insure a document's path into the future. (Any)

d6 Bond

- 1 I have a duty to my institution or employer.
- 2 Each contract, charter or book I copy is a work of art.
- 3 I work to preserve rare, ancient or crumbling pages by faithfully copying them.
- 4 My life's work is the copying of a multi-volume collection without error.
- 5 Successfully copying a work thought lost and unintelligible is the highest form of satisfaction.
- 6 I gave my whole life to my institution. Its continued existence is my legacy.

d6 Flaw

- 1 The originals I copy have no value other than to highlight my skill as a copyist.
- 2 I've seen many poorly written contracts that brought men to ruin but that's not my problem.
- 3 I believe that my copies are often better than the originals.
- 4 I prefer to only associate with the merchant and noble classes who appreciate the value of a good scribe.
- 5 I constantly recommend changes to the language of what I'm transcribing.
- 6 My skills are too well developed to work on anything but the rarest of documents.

TRAVELING BOOKBINDER

Unlike your citybound brethren you travel from small town to tiny monastery then on to obscure colleges binding new manuscripts and repairing old volumes. You have more in common with traveling Tinkers than you do with urban Binders fettered by Guild Rules and mired in local politics. Your arrival is generally welcome as you bring a bit of civilization with you. Most small communities don't have access to or couldn't support a local bookbinder. Big city folk would never consider that their rural countrymen also want their family or town histories bound for posterity. Or that a tiny temple of monks could produce illustrated manuscripts to rival Orders ten time their size yet have no one with the skill to bind them.

You may stay in a town for only a day or so selling a few simple folios you made along the way. You might also spend a month at a monastery or college binding their new works and repairing those damaged by age, rodents or the elements.

Skill Proficiencies: History, Insight

Tool Proficiencies: Bookbinder's Tools

Languages: One of your choice

Equipment: A set of Bookbinder's Tools, One or more letters of recommendation from clients, a set of traveler's clothes, and a pouch containing 15 gp.

FEATURE: ARTISAN BUSINESS

You may not be as fussy about contracts and the like compared to city bookbinders but you still know what constitutes reasonable compensation. Not only that but you can appraise any book with an eye to making a profit. You also know what is needed to create finished works from raw materials as well as the principles of firm negotiation and good trade.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

As a hardworking, hard travelling artisan you know how to apply yourself to a task and the rigors of the road are nothing new to you. These skills serve you well if you decide to end your rounds and travel much further afield. You are by nature a bit of a loner and sometimes find constant company irritating.

Variant TRAVELING BOOKBINDER: Book Trader

In addition to your bookbinding and repair services you have noticed a small market for books among the communities you frequent. You always have your eye out for unwanted volumes or those to be had for a small sum. You never have more than a dozen and they are often quickly sold a couple of towns over. You might also act as a scout for very small collectors, monasteries or newly founded colleges locating books to add to their holdings in return for a finder's fee. Likewise you can agree to sell a handful of volumes on commission for a widow or inheritor who has no interest in the books themselves and only wants to turn them into cash. Others may have interest in certain topics and will pay extra if you acquire something that peaks their interest. It is possible you have formed a partnership with a book seller in a larger town to carry works out to a larger market for a cut of the profits. A bookbinder-book trader covering a large area is likely to have a pack animal or a mule and small cart.

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I enjoy preserving the history and stories of small-town folk.
- 2 Urban bookbinders are soft. Doing excellent work with just what's at hand is a true testament of skill.
- 3 It is satisfying to do work for people who appreciate my craftsmanship.
- 4 There's always another challenge ahead.
- 5 I provide excellent value for a fair price.
- 6 I enjoy seeing new people all the time and being able to leave when they become boring.
- 7 No social event need be so formal that you can't hold it in a tavern.
- 8 Cheat me and I'll make sure everyone in a hundred miles knows about it.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Quality.** It's true that everything worth doing is worth doing to the best of your ability. (Neutral)
- 2 **Generosity.** If a work needing my skill is exceptional enough, helping to protect it can be reward enough. (Good)
- 3 **Integrity.** I am committed to maintaining the highest quality of my craft regardless how much I'm being paid. (lawful)
- 4 **Freedom.** Everyone should be free to pursue his/her own livelihood in their own way. (Chaotic)
- 5 **Greed.** I hear a lot of talk and use what I hear to coerce the best price for my services. (Evil)
- 6 **Legacy.** I hope to be remembered by the quality of my craft. (Any)

d6 Bond

- 1 My workshop is wherever I am.
- 2 I discovered that my finest work was later destroyed though an act of malice.
- 3 I owe a great debt to my former master who taught me that an artisan need not be chained to one place.
- 4 I continue to travel because I fear returning to my former home.
- 5 In a vision I saw a crumbling book holding great wisdom. It is my destiny to find and repair it.
- 6 I will one day gain revenge on those who drove me from my guild and hometown.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I believe people don't want me around after I've finished working for them.
- 2 I become angry with those who criticize my work or appear unappreciative.
- 3 I steal small valuables from the places I work.
- 4 I pretend to be happy-go-lucky when I'm really desperately lonely.
- 5 I think I'd have more business if rural people were smarter and actually learned to read.
- 6 I harbor grudges and when I'm alone for too long I obsess over dark fantasies of revenge.

BOOKBINDER'S TOOLS

To a bookbinder a well-made volume is as much a work of art as anything made from wood, gold or stone. To a bookbinder, skillfully bound manuscripts are not only pleasing to the eye but protection for the possibly unique work between the covers. Using bookbinder's tools, they can bind new works or repair damaged volumes. It is also possible to carefully examine stitching, glues and medium (paper, parchment, papyrus, etc.) to determine a volume's likely age and origin.

Components. Bookbinders supplies include bone folders for creasing pages, large-eye needles, a spool of heavy thread, beeswax, an awl, two sets of clamps, bookbinder's ribbon and a gluepot with brush. A Traveling Bookbinder will also have a collapsible book press.

Arcana Your expertise in working with pages and binding grants you insight on Intelligence (Arcana) checks when examining magical books or tomes.

Investigation. You gain additional insight on Intelligence (Investigation) checks when studying book bindings and materials for clues to their origin, age and history.

Craft a Folio. As part of a long rest you can produce a simple multi-page folio. This thin volume holds up to 100 blank pages and can be used to record a journal, note taking or as a sketchbook. The folio is not as durable as a fully bound book but will hold up to travel providing you have access to bookbinder's tools and a source of paper or parchment.

Bookbinder's Tools

Activity	DC
Repair a book in half the time	10
Determine a volume's age and origin	15
Duplicate the outward appearance of a book	15
Craft a volume suitable for a magical spell tome	20

TRAVELING BOOKBINDER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills History +3, Insight +2
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any one language in addition to Common
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Tool Proficiency. Bookbinder's Tools

Artisan Business Sense. Traveling Bookbinders may not be as fussy about contracts and the like compared to their city brethren but they still know what constitutes reasonable compensation. They can appraise any book with an eye to making a profit. The Traveling Binder also knows what is needed to create finished works from raw materials as well as the principles of firm negotiation and good trade.

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

LIBRARIAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 9 (2d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills History +4, Investigation +4
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages any one language in addition to Common
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Tool Proficiency. Select one from Calligrapher's Supplies, Cartographer's Tools, Bookbinder's Tools

Researcher. Whenever a librarian attempts to learn or recall a piece of lore, if they do not know that information, they often know from which volumes or references it can be obtained. This information comes from one of various types of libraries they have knowledge of.

ACTIONS

Club. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

SCRIBE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 9 (2d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills History +3, Religion +3
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any two languages in addition to Common
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Tool Proficiency. Calligrapher's Supplies

Negotiation. The Scribe's knowledge of legal or religious language allows them to quickly understand the basis of a dispute, or other conflict, by reviewing the relevant documents. Having done so they can judge which party is in the right according to the Law or Common Tradition.

Specialty. Select either Secular or Religious

ACTIONS

Club. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (1d4) bludgeoning damage.



Monastic Library

“Live in the serene peace of libraries lined with texts bound in Faith.” —Patriarch Aphoris

Monastic libraries, in many cases, were not libraries in the conventional sense; meaning a building or other space built specifically to house a collection of books. Instead it refers to the sum total of texts held by a religious house. This could be anything from a massive temple to a tiny woodland shrine. At the core of any monastic library are the sacred scriptures as well as commentaries and philosophical writings based upon them. After these, an Order would add more practical works on topics of law, medicine, and history. Whatever knowledge was necessary to teach the religion and run the Order’s daily business.

The original design of most monasteries made little accommodation to store an accumulation of books or scrolls. Those works not in use by the resident clerics, monks or paladins were kept in chests, cabinets or tiny bookrooms scattered about the buildings. This sometimes made finding a specific volume difficult. Only the largest of monasteries built central library rooms. Such collections grew by copying texts from other houses as well as the occasional purchase or donation. How long ago the monastery was founded will determine the likely size and content of its library. Those of a venerable sort will have extensive collections across a broader range of topics. In some religious libraries, those with rare or ancient manuscripts, fear of theft resulted in books being chained to their shelves. Houses with a central library always had a catalogue which contained an index of works, a brief description or category code as well as a diagram showing how the library was laid out.

Most monasteries engaged in copying texts. The monastery’s scriptorium could be a room with many monks scratching away but just as likely a collection of tiny rooms with a single scribe working alone. Each scriptorium was managed by an *armarius* or provisioner. It was they who supervised the copying efforts and provided scribes with their ink, pigments and parchment.

Adventure

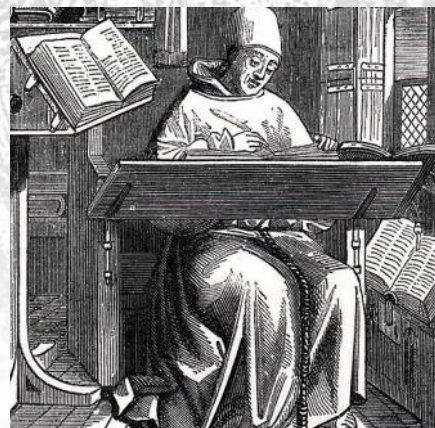
The Monastery of Six Pearls

During a terrible storm the Party arrives in the port town of Steel Net on Sickle Bay. They are there perhaps to book passage on a ship or returning to the coast after adventuring inland. They quickly learn that the current tempest is just the latest in a string of calamities afflicting the town as well as the countryside for miles along the coast. Heavy rain and powerful winds

are a daily occurrence. Aquatic beasts are attacking from the shore and sea monsters have wrecking ships attempting to reach harbor.

All the troubles began a few weeks earlier when the captain of a fishing vessel hauled up a small gold idol of the demigoddess Amphneri in his nets. Greed overcame his better judgement

and the captain pried out the inset pearls and attempted to melt the statuette down. Due to its radiant nature he failed but did succeed in bringing Amphneri’s wrath down on Steel Net. Local priests have tried in vain to appease her with prayers and sacrifice.



Just before the Adventurers arrived one of these priests had a vision. Only the repair and sanctification of the statuette will lift the town’s curse. But the necessary ritual is detailed only in the rare *Book of Bright Waters*. The single known copy is held at the monastery of Six Pearls on Ynys Perlau, an island five days travel along the coast. The townspeople are too frightened of the violent weather and marauding sea creatures to make the journey themselves. The Party is enlisted to do so on their behalf for a suitable reward.

The journey between Steel Net and Ynys Perlau exposes the Party to the dangers of high winds such as fallen trees across the road. The entire trip should be considered under difficult terrain. Torrential rain causes flooding and makes normal fire impossible. Even magical fire is reduced to 25% strength. Half the distance runs just above the sand dunes making it within easy reach of creatures emerging from the ocean. The Party is at high risk of attack both day and night. The choice of monster is up to the Game Master’s discretion.

The island of Ynys Perlau can be reached by boat or a quarter mile-long causeway appearing at low tide. Although the island seems just outside the region affected by storms the sea is still very rough making a crossing dangerous for a small boat. The Six Pearls in the monastery’s name represent the Prime Goddess of the Sea and her five demigoddess daughters. Each lesser goddess has domain over a different aspects of the ocean.

Upon arriving, the Abbot of the monastery is suspicious of the Party and their motives. After all, a group of unknown, possibly scruffy and bedraggled looking, Adventurers have appeared on his doorstep and asked to be given one of his Order’s unique and most sacred tomes. The monks are aware Amphneri is angry but do not know the cause. A detailed retelling of events in Steel Net may help convince them.

- The Adventurers must persuade the Abbot and the Chief Librarian to trust them and give the *Book of Bright Waters* into their keeping. The Abbot will not decide quickly, taking 1-2 days to render his opinion. During that time the Adventurers will be treated as guests. If the monks agree they will insist on the Chief Librarian and a senior cleric accompanying the Party back to Steel Net. It seems that, even with the Book, only a priest of their Order can perform the needed ritual.

- Any lack of courtesy or insult offered will put the Party at further disadvantage with the Abbot. If he refuses their request the Party could choose to obtain the book by force or stealth. If they decide upon this option the Adventurers will discover the monks are not as harmless as they appear and are capable of defending themselves with martial skill and divine (clerical) magic. The *Book of Bright Waters* is kept in room 6a of the accompanying map. They will also have to devise a plan to abduct or coerce one of the monks and gain their cooperation to enact the ritual. This might be an issue if the monk in question was just abducted and threatened by the Adventurers. This method, even if successful, will not go over well with the citizens of Steel Net. Any reward the Party receives under these conditions will be minimal.

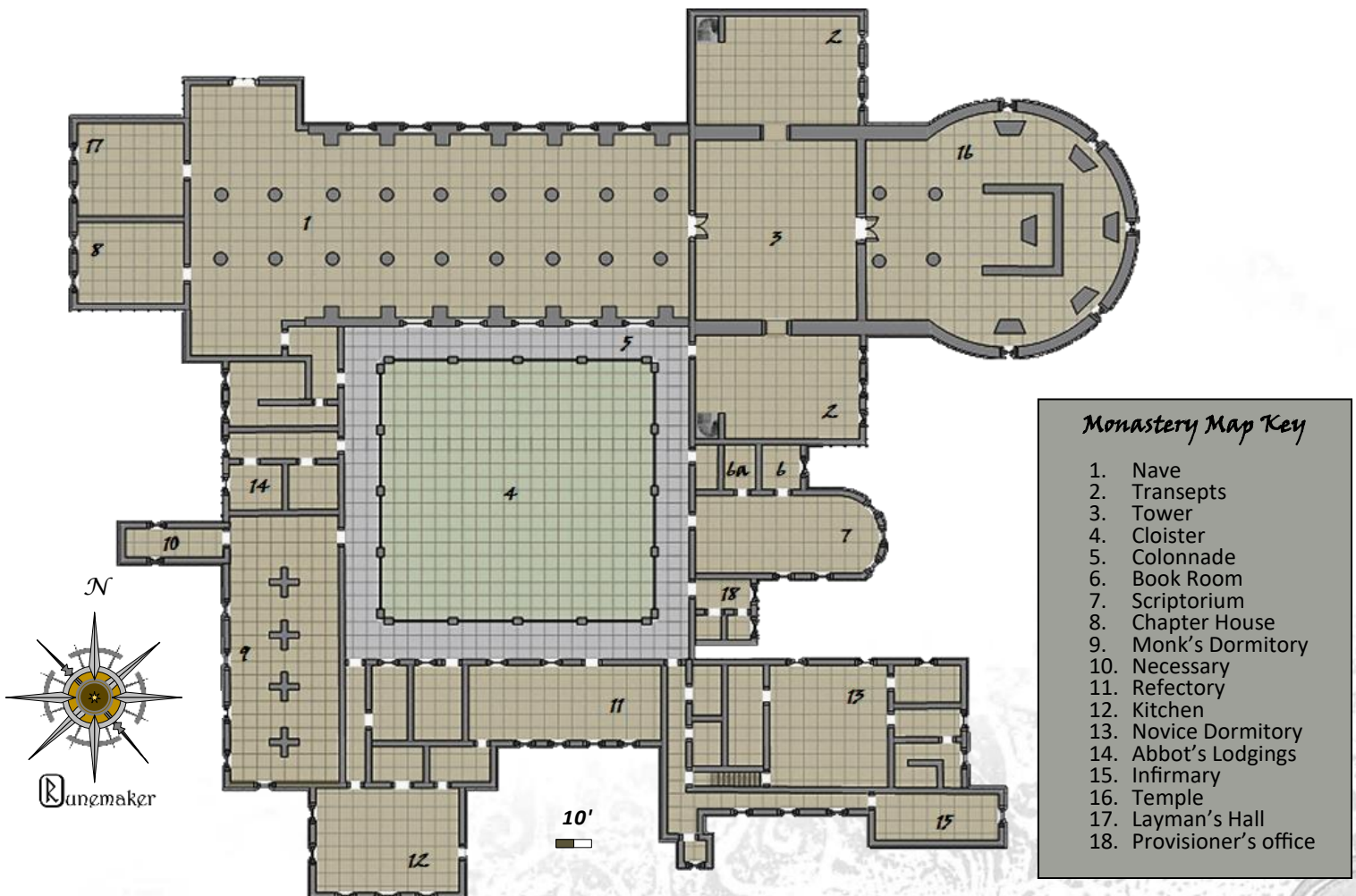
Whether by agreement or force returning with at least one monk is critical to the mission's success. Be this the senior cleric and Chief Librarian, or another priest, none of them are of high level (as determined by the DM) and the Adventures will need to protect them from harm. After arriving safely in Steel Net the Party could additionally be required to help obtain special material components for the ritual.

Once the rite is complete Amphneri will be appeased and the storms will immediately clear. Providing they didn't kill, maim or inflict undue mental trauma upon any of the monks, each player may have a 5% chance of Amphneri granting them a one-time boon. If called upon the goddess will render limited assistance providing the request falls within her sphere of influence.

Other Adventure Hooks

- A powerful noble has died without leaving an heir. It is learned that decades earlier a secret document of succession was drafted, signed and given into the keeping of an order of reclusive monks. The Party has been hired by a faction loyal to the noble's house to retrieve this document and keep it out of the hands of their rivals who seek to destroy it.
- A sect of clerics have kept the original manuscripts of their holy founder, in a deep vault beneath the monastery. A recent earthquake has opened a crack in the stone floor allowing an evil, subterranean threat to invade the sacred vault. The clerics have brought in the Party to rid them of the danger.
- The Patriarch of a remote monastic order has gone mysteriously missing along with their oldest text, the *Codex Alamatha*. The order's primary duty has always been to guard against trespassers entering the vast nearby ruins. Only their patriarch really knows why. Deep below the ruins lies the source of the ancient city's destruction, a portal to the outer realms. A group intent on reopening the gateway has abducted the patriarch and stolen the Codex believing both are the key to the success of their plan.

Inspirations: Melk Abbey, Kremsmunster Abbey, Strahov Monastery, Saint Florian Monastery, Saint Gallen Abbey, Pachu Monastery, Sera Monastery. Imagined: *Name of the Rose* by Umberto Eco.





University Library

"The library is where you can discover what your instructors are afraid to teach you." —Golam Nar

University libraries throughout Europe typically grew out of monastic collections when a religious house decided to expand their educational activities. Colleges where their secular equivalent which might evolve instead from a guild or arcane school. In the latter case it is not uncommon for long forgotten tomes of lore to lay buried in the stacks. The number of collected volumes will depend greatly on the institution's current status. Those on the rise or falling from popularity may have rather modest numbers. Depending on the culture and degree of literacy, a large collection could consist of 15,000 or only as few as 200 titles. Common topics would be: Theology, Magic, Law, Medicine, History and Geography. Less common topics could include Astronomy, Astrology, and Alchemy among virtually any other field pertaining to the area of study specialized in by the College.

Undergraduate students would not be expected to need or own books. Much of their instruction was provided as lectures and discussion. Those pursuing graduate and masters studies were the primary consumer of library texts. Fellows and other long-term members of an academy were often expected to bequeath their books to the institution at the time of their death.

Use of library volumes was usually limited to on premise consultation. Copying out large passages, or even entire books, was common. Along with ink and other writing implements and supplies, stationers sold paper or blank, simply bound, books for the purposes of note taking and copying. Occasionally a set of books might be set aside and loaned to scholars against a deposit or pledge to replace them should the work be lost.

Like Monastic libraries some of the more rare and valuable volumes were chained to reference desks or only made available by appointment and used under the supervision of a librarian. Many libraries were locked after dark not only as proof against thieves, seeking to profit from the lucrative book trade, but also due to lack of light and the very real fear of fire.



Adventure -The Musär Folio

In the past three months the small College of Art and Artificing has experienced a series of strange events and unsolved attacks on its grounds including the library. A distorted figure has been seen by several witnesses skulking about on moonlit nights. The local rat population has tripled and become a serious nuisance. Five students and instructors have survived being attacked while walking the grounds at night. They described a lanky, foul-smelling beast covered in brown-gray fur. The snouted monstrosity gambles about on all fours but can also stand upright and walk on two. The victims were mauled by sharp claws and teeth but also infected with an unknown disease needing healing magic to cure. Understandably fear of the possibly plague-ridden rat infestation and a stalking creature has made residents rather nervous. Many students, and a few professors, have already left the College.



The local sheriff and his deputies are unable to apprehend the beast probably because they haven't tried very hard. The sheriff has suggested the College hire an exterminator. Unimpressed with local law enforcers The Provost, Bursar and Chief Librarian have brought in a team of Adventurers they hope can better deal with the unusual circumstances. If questioned about odd happenings in the recent past the Party will be told that everything was quiet and status quo as they prepared for the annual Canvas and Clockwork Exhibition. The Chief Librarian mentions in passing that the only event of note was the arrival of a large bequest of books, about three months ago, from a former Fellow who recently died. This benefactor's name was Avram Sobolan, who specialized in small clockwork animals, and lived in a medium-sized town four days travel to the east

Should the Party want to know more about Sobolan and travel to his hometown they can learn the following:

- There was a creature loose in town for many months who assaulted more than a dozen people, two of whom died.
- A hoard of rats had flooded the town
- The cause of Sobolan's death was a self-inflicted bolt to the heart. He tied himself to a chair with some type of living wire in the sights of a crossbow fitted with a clockwork timing device to pull the trigger. The local magistrate says, *"The only weird thing about it was the bolt being made of pure silver."*
- The attacks and rat problem ended around the same time as Sobolan's death.

Investigating around the College the Party can learn the following:

- If checked, all the books received from Sobolan are accounted for except one. Called the *Musār Folio* it was cataloged as a naturalist's study on rats with some "minor mention of arcane controls." The work is described as a slightly oversized folio bound in dark leather with an embossed rat skull on the cover.
- All the attacks happened during nights with a full moon.
- One of the assistant librarians named Dimitru has been behaving strangely; always tired and twitchy-nervous. He appears sickly and takes to his bed for a couple of days every few weeks.
- Dimitru was the one who catalogued and shelved Sobolan's books.
- Dimitru has not been seen since the Adventurers began their investigation.

The *Musār Folio* describes, in detail, the biology and behavior of rats. Sobolan acquired the book intending to use it as a reference while perfecting his gear driven rodents, quite the rage at the time. The last two pages contain a complex arcane glyph with a legend explaining how using it, with a drop of blood, will grant power to command rats. It does in fact do this, however the folio is cursed. Anyone using the glyph will also contract lycanthropy and become a wererat on the next full moon. This was the fate that befell Sobolan and for which he took such extreme measures. The folio will detect as magic and cursed but not evil.

Dimitru also used the glyph and has inherited the curse. In his **Wererat** state (5e MM Page. 209) he has built a nest of sorts under the library's south staircase. The folio is there. Part of the curse compels the victim to remain within one thousand yards of the book. If confronted Dimitru will shape change before attacking. If it is a full moon night he has no control of the shifting and has advantage on all attacks. He can, as an action,

also summon 1-20 **Rats** (5e MM Page 335) or 1-4 **Giant Rats** (5e MM Page. 327) every second round. These allies will arrive in one round.

If subdued and restrained Dimitru can be restored by a **Remove Curse** cast once per day, on three consecutive nights of the full moon.

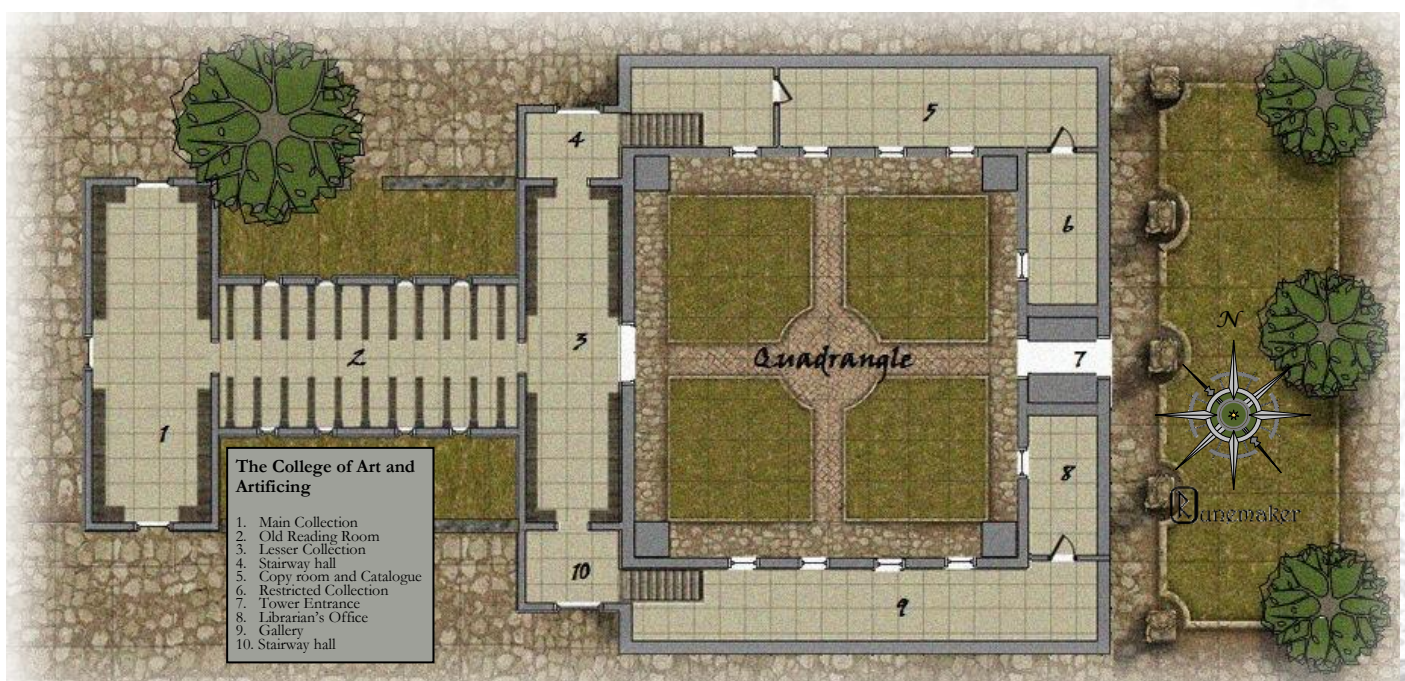
Other Adventure Hooks

1. A former mentor to one of the Party members has died and left them a considerable sum of gold. The inheritance has a condition though. The former student must personally escort the mentor's books to insure they are safely delivered to his old college located in a city some three weeks overland travel away. One of the books is the last known copy of a work containing some secret lore: lost spell, clue to a hidden trove, the location of a tomb, etc. A powerful individual seeks to get their hands on the book and sends minions to steal it.

2. A College library has discovered a rash of recent thefts from their main collection. The librarians believe they have accounted for all physical and magical means of entering the stacks but the thefts continue. Just recently a few of the missing books have turned up for sale at nearby bookstalls and shops. Their owners claim the previously purloined books were sold to them by a halfling woman.

3. The senior librarian in charge of acquisitions for the University of Lind is beside himself over the disappearance of three clerks in as many weeks. All were working in a locked room where newly purchased and donated books are stored before being catalogued. The only evidence of their vanishing; a terrible scream and a small bit of blood. One of the many book chests in the room is an old and cunning **Mimic** (5e MM Page. 220.)

Inspirations: Trinity College, Dublin. Merton College, Queens College, Cambridge.





Sylvan Lorekeep

"Like all living things a library is not made but grown." —
Tadg mac Nuadat

Sylvan or woodland libraries, sometimes referred to as a *Lorekeep*, fall into two general categories. Those maintained by forest-dwelling races such as Wood Elves or Firbolg. The second are collections belonging to druid circles and other nature worshiping groups. Seldom, if ever, are either type housed in conventional structures.

Wood elves prefer to build on and within giant tree species. Their design appears deceptively primitive but on close examination one will find the craftsmanship and joinery of exceptional quality. Where some druidic groups might emulate the elven model most house their lore in log structures, deep dry caves or in specially built barrow mounds often accompanied by rings of standing stones called *menhir*.

Although wood elves bind their texts they are in the form of soft covered folios stored flat in many slotted bookcases. Druid circles favor a simpler approach preferring scrolls made of natural materials such as hides, bark paper, papyrus or wooden tablets. Most works are kept tightly rolled and secured with cord. Topics in both types fall predominantly into those of Natural law, husbandry, herbology, nature magic, weather and history.

Many sylvan dwellers tend towards the reclusive. Their repositories are not easily found nor immediately recognized as such. It would be rare for a Druid Circle to allow the uninitiated direct access to their lorekeep.

Adventure

A History of Deadly Spores

Vast numbers of mushrooms called Shroud Caps are sprouting throughout the farmlands surrounding the town of Lak's Crossing. Highly poisonous if touched or eaten they also release clouds of toxic spores if disturbed. Many livestock and a few villagers have already died and the problem seems to worsen every day. Local lore maintains this has happened before and a druid from the Root-Stone circle was able to banish the fungus. The Party is asked to travel to the *lorekeep* barrow of *Bün-clach*, located deep in a nearby forest, to ask the Master Druid for aid. The townspeople will provide a rough map to the site.

On their six-day journey, besides having to avoid the ever-present Shroud Caps, the Adventurers are beset with unusually bad weather for the season. They are also frequently attacked by mainly botanical monsters. On arriving at the lorekeep they find the site abandoned. The dozen or so small huts located beside the *Bün-clach* mound are shrouded in vines and weeds as are the standing stones leading to the barrow's entrance. The passage is blocked by thick thorn bushes. Upon investigation it will be discovered that all the inch-long thorns are pointing outward as if protecting the doorway. The thorns can be damaged with physical force or any number of energy spells. However the wall grows (heals) as fast as it is damaged.



Either that night, if the Party camps nearby or immediately if they become frustrated and decided to leave, the strong scent of honeysuckle will fill the air. This is caused by myconid rapport spores being released in the area. The Party will realize they are in telepathic contact with the local myconid Circle dwelling beneath them as well as the Master Druid whose body is inside the mound.

The Adventurers learn that four human generations ago a myconid colony became tainted by an upwelling of evil from the Underdark. The colony became violent and attacked many underground settlements including other myconid Circles. In the end they were destroyed by an alliance of Myconids and Dwarfs. At least that is what they thought. The Sovereign of the tainted Circle survived and retreated into uncharted caverns where it went slowly insane. In its twisted thoughts the surface world was somehow responsible for its plight. So began the first attack on the land around Lak's Crossing. A Root-Stone druid attempted to exorcise the tainted sovereign and restore it to balance. She thought she succeeded when it vanished without a trace at the conclusion of the ritual. Apparently it survived.

The Black Sovereign attacked *Bün-clach* because it knew an account of the last conflict was kept in its library. The Master Druid only survived with the assistance of the local myconid colony. Although the myco-

nids will not violate their pacifist ways they will direct the Party to the caves serving as the Black Sovereign's lair. If the Adventurers agree to stop him the Master Druid will allow them into the barrow and access to the library where they will discover the needed ritual. If they succeed the myconids promise to reward them with various spores and treasure they have discovered underground.

The cave lair is located a mile north of Lak's Crossing in rugged terrain. The **Black Sovereign** (5e MM Page 232) has acquired the ability of a 4th level druid. It is charcoal gray in color with

orifices that leak a thick white substance. It will have 4-8, formerly human, **spore servants** (5e MM Page 230) in attendance (use the Bandit template from 5e MM Page 343.) The spore servants have been spreading the toxic fungi at night. The Black Sovereign will not attempt to flee as it believes it is invulnerable. If reduced to zero hit points it will collapse into a mass of gray ooze and will reform within twenty-four hours. Only the ritual, a blessing of neutrality, followed by burning will destroy the sovereign permanently. Once this is done all the toxic fungi will wither in the light of the next day.

Other Adventure Hooks

1. A ten-year old boy in the village of Ikyeong was born with a birthmark resembling a kirin signifying he is destined to become a member of the Duijao Druid Circle. This is a reason for rejoicing and worry. The Duijao have always helped with bountiful crops and protection from wild beasts. But their numbers have dwindled to a scarce few since the local warlord made them outlaw. The Adventures are asked to escort the boy to the Duijao library of Chunqu-Zou, in the mountains, so he can begin training. The Warlord is informed and sends a squad of warriors to stop them.
2. After an unexpected total eclipse woodland animals have

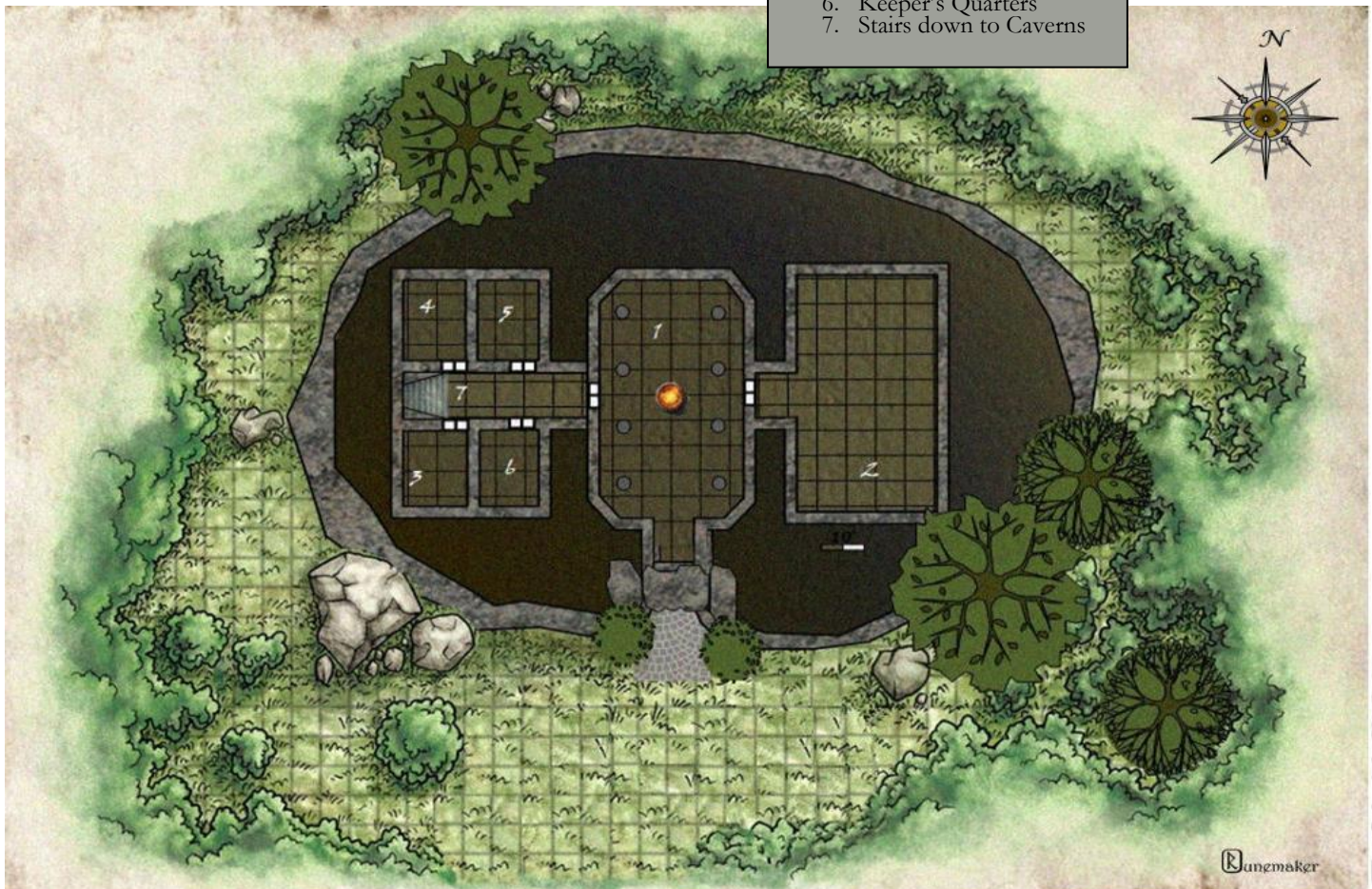
become vicious and will attack anyone on sight. They show no fear and behave as though rabid. The Party must travel to the wood elf library of Arel os Ansrivarr to search for an answer and possible cure.

3. The library maintained by the clan shaman of Aiy-Ysyakh is under attack. Every night of the new moon a dragon spirit assaults the temple with bone numbing cold while trying to claw its way into the library. The shaman's charms and wards have kept it out thus far but they fear having to ultimately abandon the temple so have solicited aid from local Adventurers. A recently acquired scroll in the library was made from the hide and bones of the dragon spirit's former body. Giving up the scroll will banish the spirit and end the attacks.

Inspirations: The library of Gondolin (J.R.R. Tolkien), Celtic Druids of Ireland and the barrow mounds of Carnac, France.

The Lorekeep Barrow of Bün-clach - Map Key

1. Ritual Hall
2. Library
3. Training Room
4. Storage
5. Training Room
6. Keeper's Quarters
7. Stairs down to Caverns



Dungmaker



Arcane Library

"People can lose their lives in libraries. They ought to be warned." —S. Bellow

Arcane and mystic libraries house the amassed knowledge, both practical and theoretical of a spell caster, spell casting organization or secret society. An individual wizard's library is a type of private holding (see below) as the latter type has aspects in common with either guild or college repositories. Books, scrolls and tomes in these libraries, if not enchanted in their own right, tend to acquire an aura of magic due to their prolonged proximity to arcane workings. A large weight of magical texts stored together can have a profound effect on their surroundings.

When things get out of hand colored mists, random illusions and the presence of unusual plants or animals can manifest spontaneously. Some exceptionally potent tomes have been known to warp space and time. Often magical precautions must be taken to contain these problems.. Volumes might be kept in rune inscribed vaults or circles of protection. Special Arcane collections can often be found located in or near an environment sympathetic to their domain. For example tomes of necromancy might be kept in catacombs or close to a necropolis whereas bound works of fire magic could be enhanced when in immediate proximity to a volcano or lava pit.

Because of the jealous nature of wizards every self-respecting arcane library will be protected by a potentially vast array of wards, fiendish traps and natural or unnatural guardians. If you are familiar with wizards, given the choice between a valuable gem or spell book, most will want both -- but they'll settle for the spells. To spell-casters knowledge *is* wealth.

Adventure Mirrored Writings

The Fellowship of Illusion is notorious for its library of unintelligible books. Rarely has anyone succeeded in getting their hands on a volume but those who have find their efforts wasted. The Fellowship's tomes not only seem to be written backwards and upside down but also in what seems an impenetrable code. Even magic has failed to decipher their tomes other than to reveal their partly insubstantial nature. The true number of members belonging to the Fellowship is another secret they closely guard but it is much smaller than they would have believed by the public. Their arcane hall has been very quiet in the last few weeks with no one seen coming in or out.

The Adventurers are approached by an Illusionist of the Tenth Rank calling herself Geamăna who is also the Fellowship's senior librarian. It seems the Fellowship has fallen victim to its own cleverness. In order to secure their library from prying eyes they opened a gateway to a mirror dimension on the borders of the Plane of Shadow. Their hall and library were duplicated there, though as twisted mirror version of the



originals, in the process. The Fellowship then swapped all books between the two so the contents of the real library reside on the shelves of its mirrored twin.

Just over two weeks ago Geamăna returned from a journey to a Southern city to find her hall populated by mirror duplicates of friends and colleagues. These living illusions were easily dispelled on the Material Plane. Searching the mirror library she found the doors to the rest of the realm open with their wards shattered. She fears her fellows were abducted by some force of shadow and reflection. Geamăna wants to hire the Party to accompany her on a scouting and rescue mission into the mirror realm. The Fellowship is small but not without resources. She promises to pay in gold and magic in return for the Adventurer's aid.

A **Shadow Dragon** (see 5e MM Page 85) named Umbrastaf has discovered the Fellowship's mirrored hall. Finding it quite to his liking the dragon decided to take up residence in the observatory at the opposite end of the building from the library. He eventually realized the warded room led to the Prime Material Plane. Umbrastaf was finally able to break the wards and send his Shadow servants to kidnap the illusionists. They were then replaced a few at a time with mirror clones. The residents of the hall were none the wiser until it was too late. Umbrastaf is holding them, at least the nine still alive, hostage. He's doing so both for their company, the Plane of Shadow being mostly devoid of entertainments, and to coerce them into opening a gate large enough for him to escape into the Prime Material plane.



None of the captured illusionists know how the original portal was opened by their predecessors. They have tried unsuccessfully to convince Umbrastaf that the knowledge needed to create the portal he desires is stored in their version of the library. Figuring this to be a not-so-clever ruse on their part the dragon has declined to allow any of them to leave. He has tried to find the lore himself through his shadow clone proxies but they have proven too mindless for

the task. The situation is increasingly frustrating Umbrastaf making him dangerous and unpredictable.

Umbrastaf will have 4-8 **Shadows** (5e MM Page 269) at his command as well as 1-3 **Shadow Demons** (5e MM Page 64.) Umbrastaf will not attack immediately but engage in conversation with a Party to determine if they are of any use to him. If the Adventurer's are caught attacking, deceiving or boring Umbrastaf he will have his Shadows engage the group and use his breath weapon as his first attack.

Other Adventure Hooks

1. A member of the Collegium Arcanum has defected to the Academy of Sorcery in a neighboring city. This mage has stolen a map or globe marking all the Lines of Power throughout the land. This chart was the work of centuries and is key to the Collegium maintaining its status as the premiere school of magic. The Collegium will pay handsomely for the return of the map along with a sizeable bounty if the offending mage is brought in with it.
2. The *Codex Magonicus* is rumored to be the most complete tome of spells ever compiled. Allegedly simply holding the Codex can increase a spell caster's abilities. The book has been elusive because it can camouflage itself to appear as a mundane bestiary with no discernable magic. A mage has

discovered the secret of locating the Codex but to their dismay learn that the tome is already, unbeknownst to them, in the labyrinthian book stacks of the *Ekdilosi* wizards. The mage hires the party to help penetrate the library and steal the Codex.

3. The Conclave of Meta-sorcery has a problem with its library; too much magic. The wards keeping the accumulated magic from getting out of control are failing. Chaotic forces are causing random spell effects, creature summonings and illusions. The problem for the Conclave is that the grimoire explaining how to fix the library's wards is *in* the library. Instead of risking their own necks the sorcerers have retained the Adventurers to venture within and retrieve the book.

Inspirations: The Unseen University – Disc World Series (Terry Pratchett), Medieval University of Toledo, Spain. The Librarians television series, The Akashic Records





Guild Library

The library room is a realm of order. —Tomas Gray

Guilds or craft associations represented almost every class of tradesman right up to the 19th Century. They could be just a loose fraternity or formal guild with all the associated Rules and hierarchy.

Guilds provided support to their membership in a multitude of ways. The Guild could represent individual artisans involved in court cases or disputes between rival Masters. The Guild held authority to inspect the shops of its members to ensure the quality of workmanship. Shoddy or inferior goods could be confiscated or destroyed and the offending Master fined. These inspections were carried out by officials of the Guild who also inspected the shops of other artisans in related crafts most likely to consider poaching on the Guild's monopoly.

Artisans occupied what could be called the middle class of their time. They held more status in the community than did farmers and peasants though not as much as merchants or the *robed* professions made up of doctors and lawyers. During the transition from the Middle Ages and throughout the Early Modern period the artisan's way of life and the nature of their work changed, as a group they adapted accordingly. Artisans led socially rich and complex lives.

Like any large organization they generated and amassed documents and publications. Guild libraries are relatively small collections housed in the guildhall. Their contents generally fall into two categories. The first being business records: lists of Masters, contracts and decisions handed down by the guild's leadership. The second are Manuals of the Craft that might include general references, the notebook of a famous Master or processes considered trade secrets known only to the membership. The latter are kept locked and secure. Industrial espionage was alive and well in the Renaissance. Members found guilty of betraying the membership were often treated harshly. Stripped of their right to work in the craft an offender would quickly be reduced to poverty.

The Guildhall was seldom left entirely unattended. It was not just a place for occasional meetings of the rank and file. The hall was a daily place of business where the board of Masters and a number of clerks worked. Larger guilds could also have notaries and lawyers in the building. Often the guild would hold money from the collection of dues and fees as well as funds for the widows of deceased members. If so a strong room was in order and in many cases guarded through the night.

Adventure—The Silk Ledgers

The Adventurers find themselves entangled with a criminal element known as the Under Grate for reasons involving gambling debts, owing a favor in exchange for needed information, etc. Their contact with the organization is a shifty half-elf rogue who goes by the name of Reny the Wick. Rumor has it Reny is an accomplished burglar who does a bit of arson on the side. If you ask him, he'll deny it. The arson's mostly just a hobby.

Reny brings word that the Under Grate has a job for the Party. His boss wants them to break into the Silk Merchants Guildhall and steal a pair of specifically numbered ledgers (26 and 27.) Then bring them immediately to Reny at an address he'll provide. The unusual part is that they are to wait until Reny's done with them then return the ledgers to their original place in the Guildhall that same night. They must leave no evidence behind that might lead anyone to suspect there ever was a break in. If persuaded, Reny will tell the Party where to obtain a floorplan of the hall. He also provides a sinister warning. If any of them are caught and mention the Under Grate was involved, their life expectancy will be very short.

The Silk Merchants Guild is housed in a very secure building. All the windows except those at the entrance facing the street are covered with bars. Since the guild keeps funds on-site in a strong room there are also three guards (use the **Veteran** template from the 5e MM Page 350) who patrol the inside during the night. One is always on duty at the strong room entrance. The other two are stationed in the cloak/guard room. Every hour or so one or both of them does a patrol of the building.

The guild is located in a business-oriented section of the city and there is little foot traffic after dark. There are the occasional passing City Guard 1-3 times during the night.



The ledgers are kept in the guild's library and record room which is accessed through the clerk's office. The doors to both rooms are locked. One other complication; the guarded strong room is right next door to the library. Travel to the address provided by Reny, waiting for a syndicate forger to make a few extra entries in the ledgers then getting back to the guildhall will take approximately two hours.

Should guardsmen apprehend the Adventurers they will find the local magistrate very partial to the powerful silk merchants interests and receive a stiff sentence. Should they try to blame the syndicate an assassination attempt (or success) will not be far behind. If they decided to fight their way out of custody the Party will find both the authorities and the crime boss' men on their tail.

Other Adventure Hooks

1. A collective of independent weavers hire the Party to steal the formula for purple-prismatic dye from the more powerful and rich Guild of Dyers. The formula is kept in an iron vault in the Dyer's guildhall.
2. The chronometer used by the astronomer-star mages of *Stara Jadugara* is broken. Without it they cannot calculate the exact time of an important conjunction of planets due in

the next few weeks. The Adventurers are asked to travel to a city where the artificer who built the chronometer lives and escort them back to make repairs. Upon arriving they learn the artificer died decades ago and left all his manuals to his Guild. The party needs to persuade the Grand Master to loan them the necessary references or, failing that, acquire the manuals by other means.

3. The Party is contracted by a somewhat sinister individual to deliver a small strong box to another city for an attractive fee. At the gates they find guards searching everyone. The box carried by the Adventurers is opened and found to contain forged mastership papers with a very real guild seal on them. The Party is accused of the recent break-in and murder of a clerk at the influential Carpenter's guild. The only way the players can clear their name is to find the real preparator.

Inspirations: *The Hands of Honor – Artisans in Early Modern France, Women, Gender and Guilds in Early Modern Europe, the Zaanstreek guilds of Medieval Holland.*





Royal and Imperial Libraries

"In this place a man can surround himself with a thousand books and have at least one place in the world in which it is always possible to be happy." —A. Birrell

Royal or Imperial libraries share the same goal of any building project funded by a monarch, be it a monument or palace, to make a statement about that ruler's power and glory. These tend to be large opulent, sometimes to excess, and overall very grand structures. Libraries are no exception. Royal libraries are known at least as much for their fabulous architecture, sheathed in expensive materials, as their contents. These structures can also be somewhat odd in appearance or layout. Often the monarch, insisting on having a hand in the design, invariably introduce idiosyncrasies into the finished product. This known to drive both architect and builder to drink. Something similar can happen if, instead of building new, a ruler decides to renovate an existing library constructed by a predecessor and rededicate it to themselves.

Every imperial library will have one, or ten, statues and carvings of the monarch responsible for its dedication. These are typically life size or grander placed at entrances or other prime locations. It is also common for there to be one or more *Curiosity Halls* where strange items, art and trophies of war looted from conquered territories or objects from the ancient past are displayed. One can also find a collection of maps and charts in such a library. Due to their powerful, and rich, patrons imperial libraries may be the only place to find exceptionally rare works. The presence of such extensive holdings tends to attract a large population of sages and scholars. Depending on the library's age and location, one or more colleges may have sprung up nearby.

Adventure—

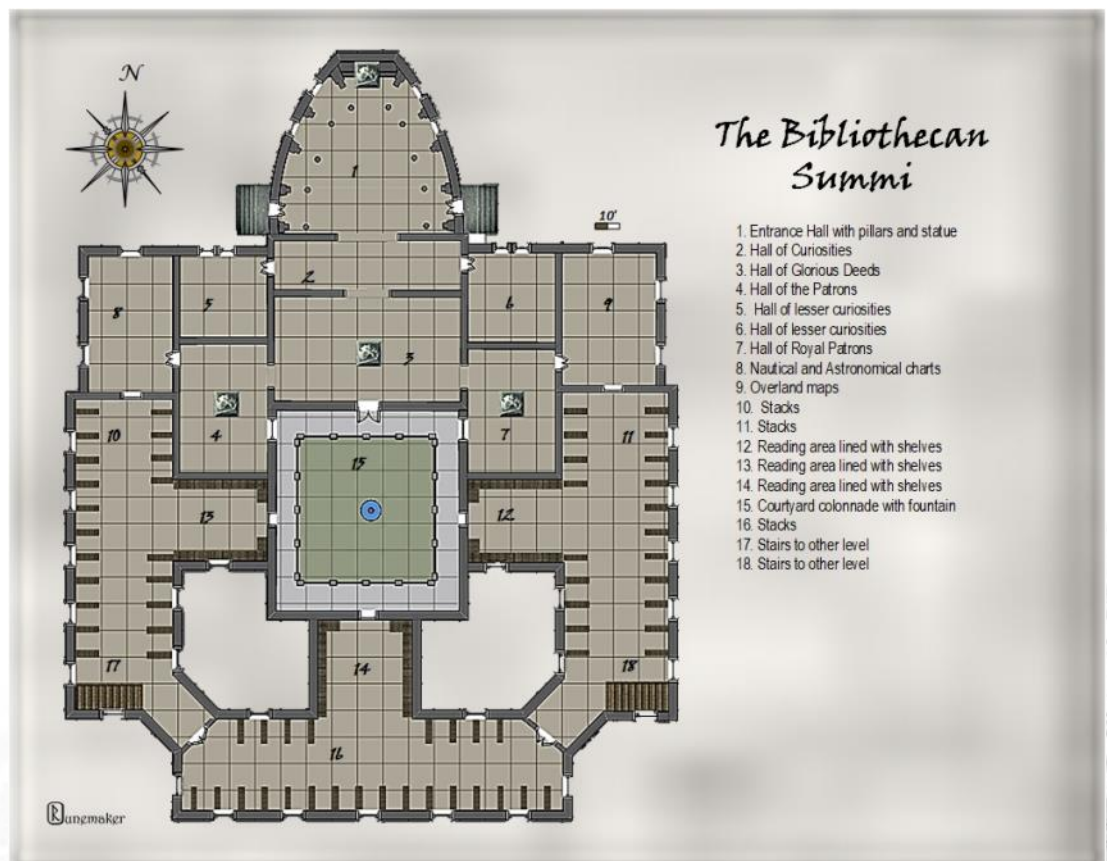
Construct Confusion

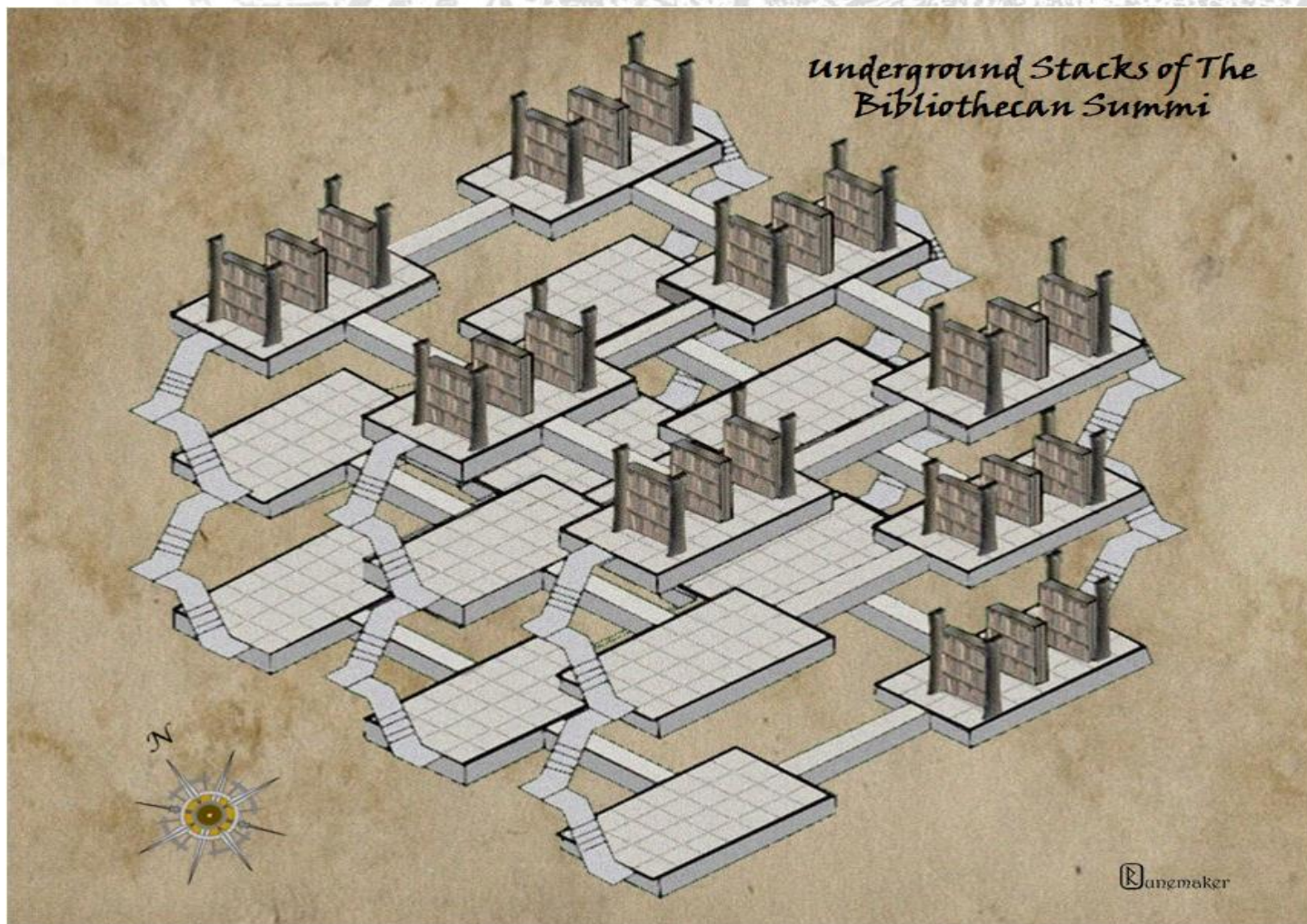
The Bibliothecam Summi of the Sül Kauryer Imperium, located in the capital city of Detineri, is renowned throughout the continent not only for its vast collection but the unique nature of its librarians.

A little over two centuries ago the Bibliothecam's holdings had already grown to such a size it was necessary to employ a small army of librarians, archivists and scribes. Even so finding and retrieving any particular work upon request took days. Trying to manage incoming acquisitions was even worse. None of this was to the liking of His Imperial Majesty. The then First Reader was desperate for a solution. A wizard calling herself Chizuire came forward and proposed a solution. She would build and activate two hundred constructs whose function it would be to manage and protect the library. Her proposal was accepted and the auto-librarians of her design have functioned flawlessly ever since. Until now.

First Reader Agathon has a very large problem. It started out small about three months ago with a misplaced volume here, a request filled with the wrong scroll there. Subtle enough that none of the Bibliothecam's living staff paid any notice until the auto-librarian's behavior became so erratic it was impossible to overlook.

Now the auto-librarians have stopped performing their duties completely and disappeared into the library's underground stacks which no one has entered for a century. A six-person group of librarians and city guard went into the sublevel stacks two weeks ago and have not returned. Agathon fears informing his superiors. Not only is his job on the line but the Imperial Guard might damage or destroy the constructs. The truth is, without the auto-librarians nobody knows how the collection is indexed. Agathon is afraid it would take them years, even decades, to reorganize if that were to happen. He is asking the Adventurers to enter the





stacks and find out what exactly is going on down there and return with that information. The only other thing he can tell them is that according to records Chizuire powered and controlled the auto-librarians by means of a lavender orb she installed beneath the library.

There are two staircases leading down to the lower level stacks under the reading rooms. However, instead of a single large basement level the Party discover that the constructs have continually enlarged the stacks over time. The space is a veritable maze in three dimensions.

The space resembles a U-shaped cavern, 120' on a side, with platforms carved from stone eight stories (90') deep. The platforms are connected horizontally by a labyrinth of catwalks and vertically by open stairs. Each section is held up by four stone pillars and has four or more bookcases. Each case is 15' high and 18' wide. The edge of some but not all of the platforms and catwalks are protected by a 3' high railing made out of wood or iron. They appear to be haphazardly constructed and the Party may not want to rely on them for their safety. The lighting in the

stacks is considered low throughout.

Any auto-librarians the Party encounter will exhibit a range of bazaar behaviors (*use the Auto-librarian Symptoms table to generate*) but are not generally violent. If anything, it seems the constructs have all gone bonkers.



On the floor at the center of the stacks the Adventurers will find the orb left by Chizuire at the center of what appears to be a 6' diameter pool of luminescent water. The orb is glowing only faintly and flickers from time to time giving the impression of a candle flame about to sputter out. A **Psychic Gray Ooze** (5e MM Page 240, 243) has taken up residence in the pool and is the cause of the auto-librarians problems. Its psionic nature is interfering with the librarians' central control. The remains of the initial scouting group will be found either around the pool or where they apparently fell from the catwalks above. If threatened the Ooze will command 1-6 of the nearest constructs to attack the Party. Killing the Ooze will restore

the auto-librarians who will immediately begin cleaning and organizing.

AUTO-LIBRARIAN SYMPTOMS

- 1 Speaking Backwards
- 2 Follows the Party about complaining about how much work it is to keep the books in order.
- 3 Constantly asks the Party if they've made a selection yet.
- 4 Becomes violent if the Party touches books. It believes they will never return them.
- 5 Only uses sign language.
- 6 Behaves very depressed
- 7 Constantly insists everything is it's fault.
- 8 Obsessively lining up every book on every shelf so the spines are all the same distance from the edge.
- 9 Shouts "Leave me alone!" if approached
- 10 Only speaks in cat meows
- 11 Believes it is the Emperor and will become violent if not shown what it thinks is proper respect.
- 12 Appears to be carefully selecting books before tossing them over the rail to fall to the floor far below.
- 13 Immediately attacks the Party
- 14 Immediately runs screaming from the Party
- 15 Is having a conversation with one or more invisible persons
- 16 Obsessively cleans each page of a book with a tiny brush
- 17 Is randomly resorting scrolls in a hundred slot rack
- 18 Huddled in a corner rocking back and forth
- 19 Asks the party if they think its skin "looks funny" to them.
- 20 Will suddenly grab a book and tear it apart screaming "Die! Die!" then become inactive again.

Auto Librarians

As for the auto-librarians themselves, they resemble the **Warforged Envoy** from the D&D 5e *Eberron* campaign setting in their form.

AUTO LIBRARIAN

Medium Warforged, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	9 (-1)

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Fists. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (1d4) bludgeoning damage.



Other Adventure Hooks

1. Senior Librarian Cambrian of the Imperial library is convinced the building is haunted. For months now mysterious rapping and tapping sounds have echoed through the halls at night. Strange bobbing lights have been seen from outside. Local clerics have been unable to confirm the presence of a spirit nor have their prayers stopped the manifestations. The Librarian hires the Party to patrol the library at night, since all of his staff are too afraid to do so and discover the source of the spiritual activity. The true cause are a trio of royal scribes who, having found an old plan of the library, are hunting for the walled-up entrance to what they believe is a treasure vault.

2. Tensions are high in the capital after a recent military campaign successfully annexed a neighboring

region. As usual, to the winner goes the spoils, and Imperial agents have looted art and library collections as well as treasure. The Party is approached by a rebel who wants them to help steal back a cultural object now on display in the Imperial library's trophy hall.

3. A Queen who fancies herself a bibliophile and scholar has ordered the archivists of the Royal Library to compile an encyclopedia of everything known within her realm. Among other things this involves collecting, cataloging, summarizing and occasionally copying every book in the kingdom. The High Archivist is critically short on manpower and considering the Queen's unpredictable degree of patience is worried about showing sufficient progress. He has hired the Party to retrieve written works from another city and deliver them to the Royal Library.

Inspirations: The Library of Trantor, Foundation trilogy by Issac Asimov. the library of Constantinople, the Imperial Library of Strassburg, the Library of Pergamum, The Library of Trajan.



Otherworldly Libraries

"Within a library you are free, not confined by temporal or spatial climates. It is the most universal of institutions, transcendent and pure." —Om Xutixtiox

Otherworldly libraries often do not house knowledge in the form of books or even as written words at all. There is a wealth of other storage mediums be they magical, technological, biological or some comingling of two or more. Lore might be housed in cylinders of memory gel, magical spheres or crystalline shapes even disembodied heads. Not only do such collections range from the unfathomable to the macabre but the structures housing them are often equally fantastic or disturbing. Such places are built using non-Euclidean architecture by the alien intelligences who designed them: torus, spheres and spirals devoid of right angles and may even take advantage of folding space in on itself for that 'just so' aesthetic sensibility. In such a library just moving from room to room is no simple task.

Most often Otherworldly libraries are found in the Outer Realms as well as Devine and Infernal regions. Dealings with the librarians in such a repository can range from frustrating to lethal. Adventurers need to remember they're not on the Prime Material anymore. Their concepts of right and wrong, law and order, even logic may no longer apply. They also need to consider that the location of many otherworldly libraries are on planes of existence with environments hostile to human biology and how to deal with it.

Adventure—Disharmony of the Spheres

During a meteor storm a building-sized, jagged shard of what appears to be obsidian glass has ripped through the sky and impaled the ground within the expanses of the Eastern forest. It took weeks for word of a deadly blight affecting everything that lives in an alarmingly widening ring around the object to make it to the outside world. Trees are reported to wither, their bark becoming sickly gray. Eventually they collapse into a pool of rotting slime.

An expedition, boasting wizards, heroes and High priests among its ranks, was sent to the region by the Emerald Sovereign. Only one survivor returned, tuned old and sickly, to report that the shard is a vessel of pure chaos. The Laws of Time, Space and Nature are being twisted and broken. The shard's consumption of land and life shows no sign of stopping. Thousands are fleeing from the east. The most knowledgeable mages, scholars and sages have been summoned to the capital along with priests of every god. A call also went out for Adventurers with knowledge of strange and ancient secrets. Everything tried thus far has done no more than slow the wave of decay for a short time.

Now, when there is nothing left to try an ancient gold dragon named *Naj Tunika* has arrived. She explains this has all happened before and will happen again. The surge in chaos is part of the Cycle of Creation but there is a way to defeat it.

She offers to gate a small Party to the Couatl Athenaeum of *Coba Naachtum* on the Lawful Plane of Arcadia. Their goal is to secure and return with the Tome of Eternal Opposition. A sentient book possessing Law powerful enough to cancel out the shard. The dragon warns that the librarians may not be sympathetic to the Adventurer's need.

The athenaeum is not a building in the conventional sense but a series of interlinked spheres. Their interior surfaces are polished, iridescent mother of pearl. The spaces are well lit by a diffuse light with no apparent source. Walking on this material is considered difficult terrain due to its extremely low friction. The architecture is obviously designed for creatures who can fly or levitate. Corkscrew spirals hang suspended like axles through the center of the spheres. These hold racks of spheres and strange objects including the occasional scroll or book. The primary form of storage for Couatl are psionic which they access via their telepathic ability. Any non-telepathic being touching a record sphere will have their mind flooded with random sounds and images.

The Couatl librarians and patrons will not immediately react to the Party's presence. They will in fact largely ignore them completely. This will change if they make a ruckus or damage any part of the collection. Being lawful creatures the Couatl will try to determine what the Adventures are doing in the library and explain, like you would to a child, why they should not touch things. Unless attacked the Couatl will not offer any harm to the party but will threaten to remove them back to the Material Plain if they do not show civilized behavior. If any Couatl are attacked they will telepathically summon aid in the form of every other Couatl in the library (20-30 at any given time.)

If the Party is courteous they may obtain an audience with Ikkun, Master of the Index. If the Adventurers haven't broken anything or been a nuisance before the meeting Ikkun will be neutral to them. Having caused any serious disruption will ren-



der any persuasion roll at a disadvantage. Bringing a gift, a rare or unusual tome, or offering to perform a task for the Athenaeum will give the Party an advantage. The Tome of Eternal Opposition can be easily convinced to provide aid if told of the situation that brought the Party to Arcadia. The Tome has a deep loathing of chaos and will happily assist.

If the Adventurers decide to steal the Tome, it is located at the “top” of the library in room 12. No form of direction sense will function in the Athenaeum. Besides the slick surfaces each spherical chamber has a slightly different scale than others it is attached to. Every map square can equal 5, 10, 15 or 20 feet (1d4 to determine) There are circular openings at the top and bottom of some spheres. However just because the opening is at the top of a sphere doesn’t mean the room entered is “above” the one exited. These distortions may make it difficult for the Party to navigate.

Successfully obtaining the Tome and returning with it will win the Adventurers glory and the gratitude of the Emerald Sovereign who will be generous with rewards.

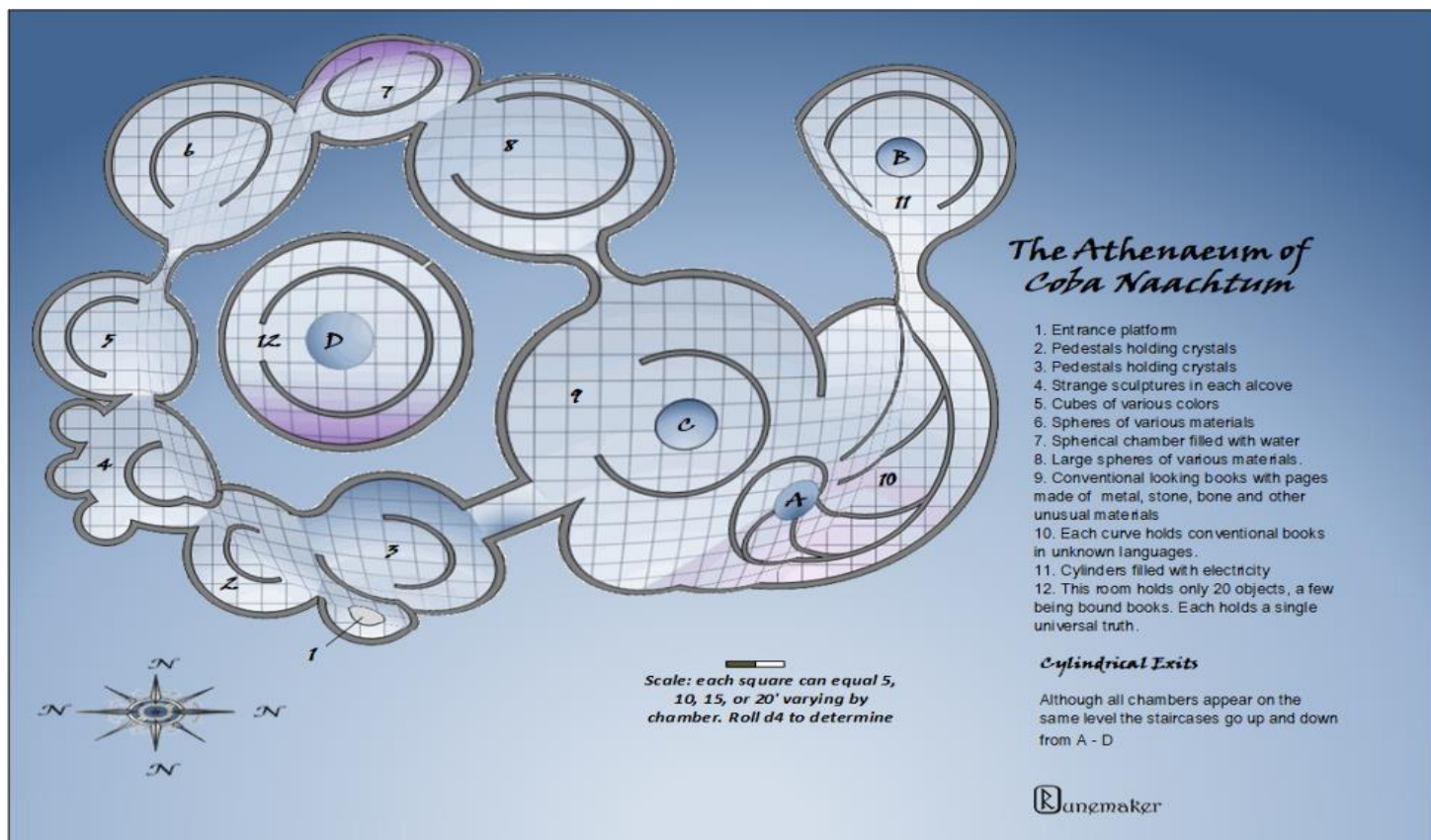
Other Adventure Hooks

1. During a sea battle of one-hundred war galleons, on the edge of the open seas, one of the contenders’ massive flagship was holed and rapidly sank into the depths. The mighty hulk crashed into an ancient Aboleth ruin on the ocean floor. The shock activated a forgotten magical device. This resulted in a mile-wide whirlpool and cyclonic storm of hurricane proportions. The storm has raged unabated for three weeks growing in size and ferocity. Soon it will reach the populated coast to devastating effect. A divine messen-

ger in the form of a Solar appears and announces that the storm device can be stopped by obtaining knowledge from an Aboleth library residing on one of the elemental planes of water. There is an entrance at the bottom of a nearby lake. The Adventurers need to overcome working underwater and the Chuul guardians to retrieve the secret from the clear cylinders of brain matter where it is stored. There may even be one Aboleth librarian still in residence.

2. Men and women, all of them scholars and sages, are disappearing. Nearly thirty of so far. When the former tutor and friend of a Party member becomes one of the abducted the Adventurers investigate. The common denominator to all the vanishings are clawed footprints burned into the floorboards. They discover a portal was opened from an infernal plane. This leads the Party to the burning and noxious hall of a demonic noble where they learn the horrible truth. The heads of the collected people are being kept alive by pumping them full of an oily ichor. The infernal noble considers them his reference library concerning things on the Prime Material plane.
3. A violent conflict between the manifestation of a local earth goddess and an evil rival has leveled a large section of a port city. Although the goddess prevailed and slew her foe she was wounded by a divine weapon and is unconscious. Her pain and suffering is being psychically broadcast to everyone within a few miles. People are fleeing the city by the hundreds. The Clerics of the goddess need the Party to escort their Matron through a celestial portal to the Solar Realm and retrieve the knowledge to heal their patroness from the medical library of *Heliosclepius*.

Inspirations: The Egyptian goddess Seshat, The Palace of Tir na Nog, the Anunnaki realm of Igigi of Sumerian myth.





Hall of Records

"It is our duty to preserve history. Such a place as this is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of civilization." —Janvir Kardimajur, Kaj Archivist of the Dövon

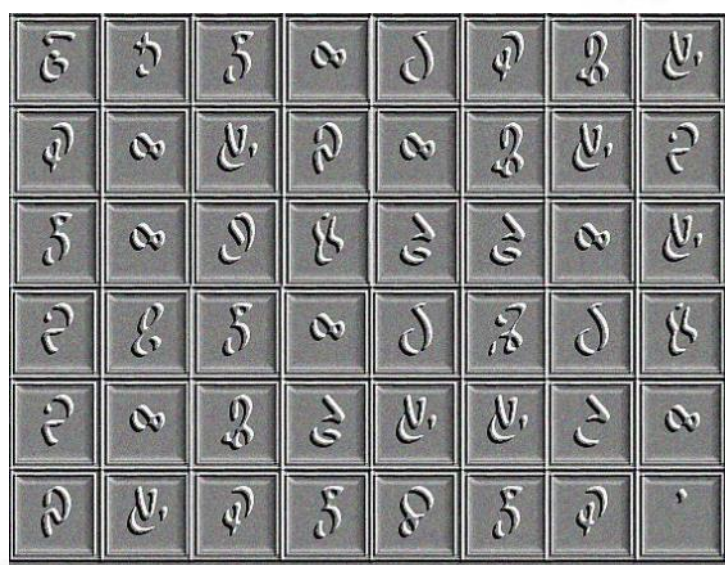
Halls of Records, although not technically libraries in the mundane sense, are a trove of history. Documents in the form of deeds, charters, treaties, contracts, wills of inheritance fill ledgers, boxes or niche. Many cultures had record repositories before traditional libraries. A hall of records often was associated with a civil court and found among a complex of public buildings in the largest of cities. Royal genealogies were often kept in the vaults of such a hall.

Alternatively a Hall of Records can refer to a lost or secret collection of lore and history hidden away by a dying civilization. Often this takes the form of stone tablets or inscribed plates of copper or gold. Materials are selected for their durability to withstand the ages and are sometimes enhanced with magic. The hope behind such a repository is that descendants of some remnant survivors will rediscover this hidden knowledge and rebuild their society anew. This sort of repository is frequently well secured with locks and traps to keep out the unworthy and uninitiated. Since it was not the builder's intent for the Hall of Records to be forever forgotten a key to locating and accessing it might be hidden in folktales, poems or songs. An ancient object passed down from one generation to the next by a survivor could contain a key or other clue to opening the vaults.

Adventure—Repository of the Twin Obelisks

The Dövoni once ruled over a vast empire covering two-thirds of the known lands. Eons ago a natural calamity put an end to the empire that was already in severe decline caused by weak rulers and wide-ranging rebellion. Thus the Dövoni passed out of living or written memory except for ruined bits of their monuments occasionally stumbled over by Adventurers or well diggers. The most enigmatic of these are the Twin Obelisks. They are located some few days travel into the Western desert and preserve carved panels of the undeciphered Dövon language.

The Adventurers are hired by a caravan master to replace his normal guards. He is taking a pair of sages to the obelisks but his men believe them to be haunted and refuse to go. The journey will take about two weeks. Once the Party joins the caravan they learn the sages in question are an old man, who looks the part, and a young woman, who does not. They



are Master Refnaro and Lenari respectively. Lenari has dark skin and the rare golden eyes that mark her as a descendant of the Dövon. The elder sage is definitely from the north and is not accustomed to desert travel. Lenari will occasionally go into almost a trance-like state and describe things about the ancient empire as if she had been there herself. She also wears a bracelet featuring a raised scarab beetle carved from green stone.

When the caravan arrives the Party discovers that Master Refnaro claims to understand the Dövon language. Lenari it seems has racial memories that have driven her here since the death of her mother. One of the many carved panels of glyphs on the obelisks also features an indented scarab carving. Lenari uses her bracelet like a key to turn the beetle. When she does the individual glyphs pop out and can be depressed like buttons. Master Refnaro consults his copious notes and scrolls and enters a combination derived from an inscription of the same symbols on Lenari's bracelet. A deep groaning is heard from underground. The sand spills away from the space between the obelisks as a stone slab slides aside to reveal descending stairs. The caravan master refuses to enter. Lenari offers the Adventures their share of whatever treasure lies bellow if they help her locate the ancient knowledge she knows to be hidden there.

The staircase descends at least two-hundred feet into the earth. It ends in a chamber with a sealed metal door. A carved tryptic on one wall depicts two sphinxes flanking a Wyvern. Above it Dövon script reads "Protectors of the Empire."

What follows are a series of sealed chambers leading to three large circular vaults. Each chamber has a complex puzzle lock and defenses which trigger if the wrong solution is applied to the locks or they are tampered with. None of these are instantly lethal unless you want them to be. They were designed to force trespassers to flee. Although the Adven-

Scarab Puzzle Lock



I used this lock design on a door leading from an inside garden into the secured section of a keep. Each symbol is intended to represent an element, metal or magical concept. In my original the symbols were alchemical. The idea being that there is a relationship between some of the symbols and their paired scarab. This could be based on their color, material or mythic property to the lost civilization involved. This example uses a six-symbol combination.

Each of the scarab and Döveni symbols are embossed on a beveled bronze disc. The scarab discs cannot be moved manually. Each of the Döveni symbols can be depressed like buttons. Pushing one will cause it to lock in place. If a symbol associated with a scarab is pressed the scarab will rotate to face inward. These settings are “entered” or cleared by depressing the center design.

- Pressing more than six symbols without depressing the center design will cause an automatic reset.
- Pressing three or less symbols and the center design will result in a reset.
- Pressing a wrong combination of three or more symbols and the center design will trigger the trap.

In my original version of the scarab puzzle it activated an **Insect Plague** (5e Player’s Handbook Page 254.) if triggered. Swarms of biting beetles flew out from the mouths of the corner statues decorating the indoor garden. The swarm’s range was limited to the garden thereby motivating the Party to leave the area. They lasted for 10 minutes then would fall to the ground apparently dead. If the trap was retriggered within 1 hour the swarm would rise up and attack. After an hour the insects decay to dust.

tures may expect treasure in the form of gold, gems and powerful items the riches stored within consist of written histories, literature and accumulated knowledge. Still very valuable if the Party thinks out of the box.

A note on traps and puzzles.

Halls of Records are intended to eventually be found by initiated descendants or inheritors of those who built it. In this case the Döveni but can just as easily be any civilization the DM chooses. It isn’t impossible to progress and succeed providing one has an understanding of the progenitors, their history symbols and how they viewed the world. Each puzzle’s key should depend on some insight into the builder’s society or an heirloom handed down. They should not be simply random no matter how challenging.

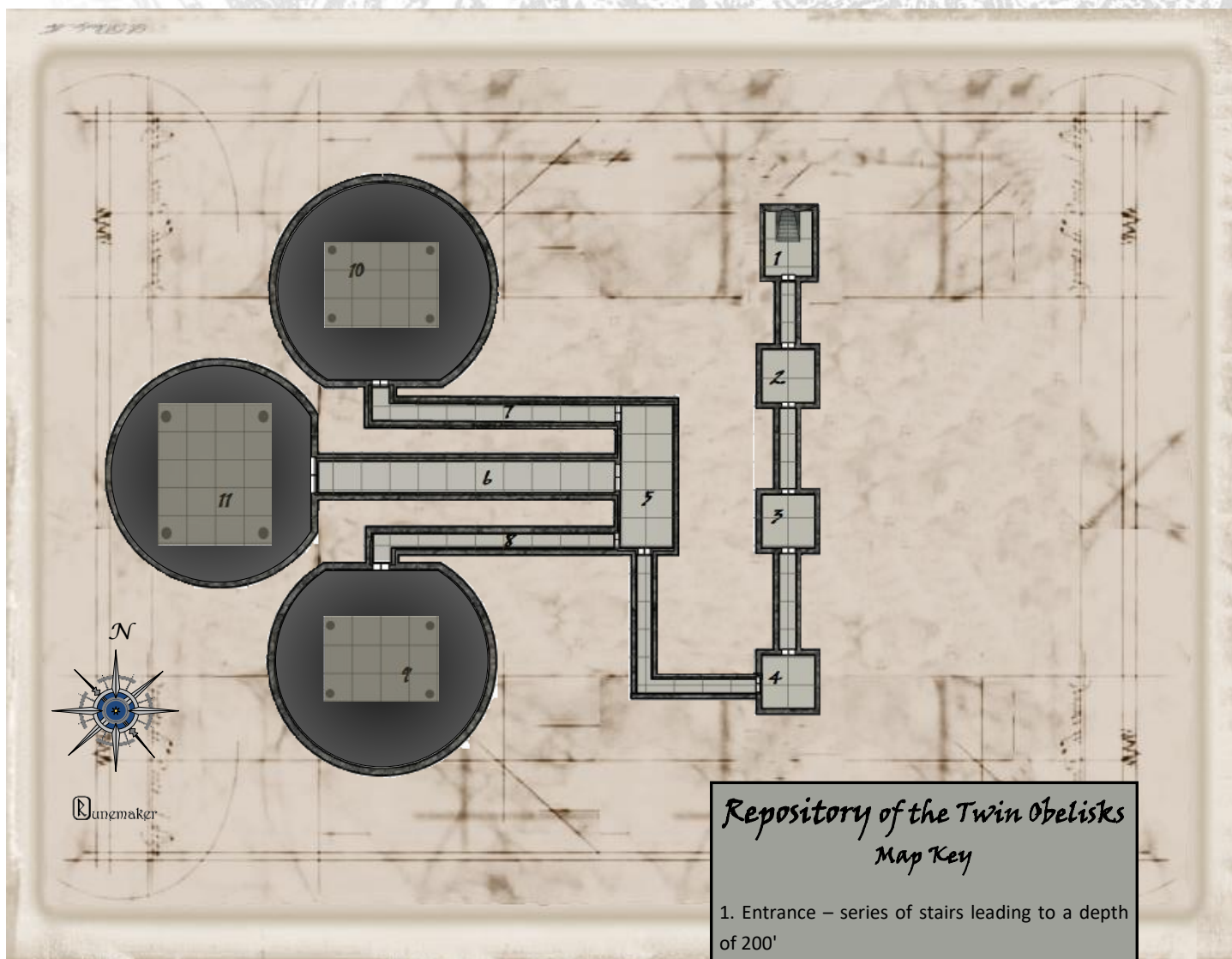
Here are a few examples of relic knowledge.

1. Songs, prayers, hymns, poetry.
2. Rituals either religious or secular ceremonies.
3. Symbols such as flags, heraldry, seals.
4. Favored animals and plants.
5. Social hierarchies or cast rankings.
6. Language written or spoken.

A second universal characteristic of these repositories is that there are *always* guardians. In the example above there are three protectors, one in each vault. They initially appear to be statues of sphinx and wyvern but are in actuality stone golems. Such guardians require a verbal key, the answer to a riddle or reciting the last lines of an ancient poem, in order to allow passage and prevent deadly attack. The guardians should also take a form or have some ability which is somehow of symbolic or central importance to the culture who placed or bound them there. They should not just be random monsters or beasts chosen exclusively for their level of challenge.

Other Adventure Hooks

1. The upper most portion of a stone building has been exposed after a hurricane scoured the coastline. Worn panels are inscribed with the language of a near mythical culture which vanished eons ago. The interior is fraught with a wide range of exclusively lethal traps. Though most of the contents are decayed after so long a few of the vaults hold ancient knowledge and possibly artifacts.
2. A land dispute between two landed nobles has escalated into armed skirmishes along their borders. One of the barons has presented a charter to the local magistrate which allegedly supports his claim. The magistrate suspects the document is a forgery. Due to the unrest she is unable to spare



Repository of the Twin Obelisks *Map Key*

1. Entrance – series of stairs leading to a depth of 200'

2-5. Every door has a complex lock or puzzle to solve before opening. Each room has at least one trap.

6-8 Various traps along the entire length.

9. A complex puzzle lock involving the Elements to open. A small landing looks out to a large platform with shelves of items. The entire room is a deep shaft with smooth edges ending in deep water 100' below.

10. A complex puzzle lock involving plants. Otherwise the same as room nine.

11. Master Vault. This door has two puzzles and requires a key in the form of a symbol of the people who built the repository. This vault houses all their history and powerful objects. The chamber is the same as room nine.

any of her law enforcers and has hired the Party to fetch a copy of the original from the provincial archives. The baron learns of this and will try to stop the Adventurers from succeeding and exposing his deception.

3. Many years of drought and an encroaching desert have convinced the *Tyopari* people that the world is coming to an end. Their Lore Masters have inscribed the last thousand years of *Tyopari* history onto nine-hundred copper discs. The Adventurers are hired to protect the caravan carrying the discs to their final repository deep in the desert. Just before reaching their destination the Party will uncover hints that this is a one-way trip both for the Lore Masters and anyone accompanying them.

Inspirations: Edgar Cayce's Hall of Records beneath the Egyptian Sphinx, The Dropa Discs, The Trajan Courts of Rome.



Private Holdings

"To add a library to a house is to give that house a soul." — Cicero

Private collections are often found in societies where literacy is limited to a small, learned percentage of the population. This is also true of cultures where printing has not yet been invented so collecting handwritten manuscripts or scrolls is a privilege afforded only to wealthy individuals. These same people were also frequent collectors of artifacts and maps which were displayed alongside their volumes.

In many cases the contents of these collections are specialized in accordance with their owner's particular interests or obsessions: botany, astronomy or monstrous taxidermy to name but a few. These collections can become so absurdly esoteric their works are virtually useless to anyone other than a rival bibliophile with similar tastes. Because of the wealth necessary for engaging in private collecting these individuals live in large dwellings, are members of high society and have influential friends. Stealing from or swindling such individuals could come at a high cost.

Adventure

Stealing Back What was Stolen

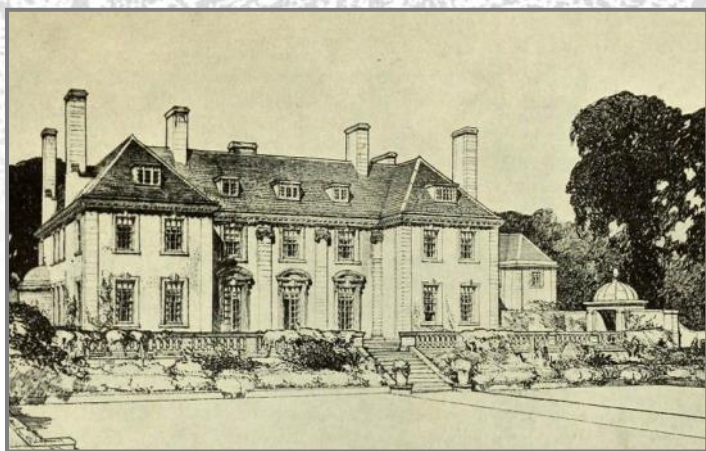
Ottokar Merx is a powerful and influential but corrupt magistrate who also holds a seat on the city's council. He has become wealthy by abusing an obscure law allowing him to confiscate the property of persons convicted of high crimes. Surprisingly enough, it seems that



almost everyone brought into his court ends up being guilty of such offenses especially if they own something

Merx covets. He has a number of *professional* witnesses in his employ who always seem to be in the right place at the right time to see exactly the right things that bring about convictions. Some of them are kept busy giving testimony in two or three trials a week.

Two months ago a dandy by the name of Helmer Claes was convicted of the accidental death of a young woman. It was difficult for Helmer to prove otherwise since he is a blackout drunk and couldn't remember any of the night in question beyond which tavern it started at. Predictably the verdict was guilty and he was thrown in prison. The contents of Helmer's apartments were transferred into Merx's keeping.



Word of these events just recently reached Helmer's family, who are well-to-do wine makers from the south. Wilhard Claes, Helmer's older brother has come to seek his sibling's release. Also the confiscated property did not belong to Helmer but to his family. Wilhard appeared in Merx's court to file an official appeal. He even offering to buy back some of the goods. The magistrate considered the request very carefully, for all of three minutes, before denying it and having the older Claes removed from the courtroom.

Wilhard Claes is without influence in the city but not without means. He has hired the Party to help retrieve his family's belongings but is interested in one heirloom in particular. It seems Helmer had borrowed an impressively bound tome containing the Claes family lineage going back some twenty-four generations. It also holds their land rights, titles and grants. The Claes want the book returned at all costs so long as they are not directly implicated. Wilhard will pay the Adventurers quite well to find a way of getting the tome out of Merx's house.

Merx's manor is located in the wealthy section of the city among others of similar standing. The residents of the house consist of Merx and his wife, two maids, a cook, and a man servant. All except the cook have sleeping quarters in the third-floor attic. Merx and his wife have rooms on the second floor in addition to a pair of guest rooms and quarters occupied by Merx's *assistant* Tharmon. This assistant/bodyguard is a bit of a thug (use **Veteran** template 5e MM Page. 350) and is with the Magistrate at all times except for the three days a week, when Merx is presiding over his biased and self-serving court.

The grounds are surrounded by an eight-foot high wall with a large garden in the back and a gate with circular drive at the front. At night all the doors and windows are locked, barred and shuttered from the inside. Merx keeps a **mastiff** in the house (5e MM Page 332) who is free to roam at night. The dog will bark and attack intruders. During the day the mastiff is tied up behind the kitchen. Tharmon will quickly respond to any alert. If directly threatened, and if he has time, Merx will use a potion of Gaseous Form to escape. The Tome containing the Claes lineage is in the library locked inside one two book chests. Merx has not had the time to sort through the goods taken from Helmer. If the Party can devise a way to remove



either both chests or at least their contents from Merx's house and return them to Wilhard he will gratefully pay a bonus to the characters.

If instead the Party should fail and are caught in the process Merx will see to it they are imprisoned for a very long time preferably doing hard labor. If they succeed or fail but are identified the Magistrate will use his influence in the city to make the characters wanted enemies of the city. Wanted posters will begin to appear throughout the city and the local guardsmen will have an eye out for a group matching their descriptions. Merx's need for revenge will force characters to either find a way to clear their names, pinning the attempted or successful robbery on someone else, or to avoid being hunted down it may become necessary for them to flee the city. Should they get away with the tome without being identified or leaving evidence behind and return it to Wilhard Claes at his lodgings they will be paid handsomely before Claes immediately departs the city.

Other Adventure Hooks

1. A blackmailer has come into the possession of indiscrete letters written by a member of high society to their former lover. Fearing scandal and the harm it would do to the young newlywed's reputation, as well as their spouse's, the Party has been hired to get them back. It is rumored the blackmail-

er keeps the letters tucked into a book of poetry in his private library.

2. A goldsmith hires the party to "rescue" a tome he claims was stolen from him by a jeweler rival. The book never really belonged to the goldsmith but he learned that a map to a forgotten treasure trove was hidden in the books frontispiece illustration. The jeweler's volume is one of only five surviving copies.
3. A recent fire destroyed the house of a local sage. The building was reduced to ash except for the library. There is a strange glow about the place at night ever since and the townspeople are frightened and nervous. The sage's spirit is protecting the library. If the party communicates with the ghost and agrees to arrange for the safety of the books the sage will direct them to a powerful tome or work containing some useful secret from his collection.

Inspirations: Merely House, County Dorset 1785, Holkham Hall Norfolk, UK 1723, The library of H. Bradley Martin. Villa of the Papyri, Herculaneum.



Abandoned Library

“Deserted libraries hold the shades of their archivists and scholars within them and are haunted by echoes of wonder.” — Olara Night

Abandoned and ruined libraries can originally be any of the types mentioned previously. The former nature of the library as well as the climate and terrain where it is located will help determine its current state and level of decay. These ruins can be found partially buried in sand or ice, overgrown by forest and jungle or drowned beneath a sea or lake. Simply locating and entering one of the abandoned can be an adventure in its own right. Not all abandoned repositories though are found in remote wilderness. Some may be at the heart of cities or buried and forgotten beneath their foundations and cellars. These might have been sealed up for fear of their contents or perhaps a curse has kept visitors away for years or centuries.

The chief danger of these aging piles is, like any other ruin, the instability of its architecture. Walls have fallen, floors and roofs have rotted away. It’s all too easy for an Adventurer to fall through a floor or have a precariously balanced pillar or archway collapse on them. Wildlife is another concern. Open to the elements these ruins are attractive to a wide variety of local beasts and monsters. Abandoned doesn’t necessarily mean defenseless. The former librarians may have left wards or traps behind. Over time these might have ceased to function or could still be active but behave in unpredictable ways.

Any surviving contents of a ruined library will vary considerably in condition. Depending on the environment this can range from magically preserved, and likely very valuable, to rotted piles of pulp. The **Condition** table can be used to generate random works in varying states of decay.

Adventure—The Vaults of Kolyma

The eccentric sage and historian Aytal Saryada has arrived in the far northern trading town of Nyurba looking to hire Adventurers for an expedition to the Yus Khyng ice fields. He is paying rather well for both brains and brawn. Saryada will only explain his ultimate goal after the expedition has set out on its three-week trek onto the glaciers. The Party may have already heard rumors of previously unknown ruins to the north. Although it is

well known that reindeer herders and seal hunters have been finding odd trinkets and other objects in the area for generations. It was likely one of these that brought Saryada to Nyurba.

Several warm years have caused the ice to recede and reveal the remains of the forgotten city of Kolyma partially melted from the glaciers. The sage intends to explore the frozen remains. His primary obsession is finding the legendary *House of One Hundred Thousand Scrolls*. The Adventurers may be concerned that, already being mid-summer, it may be too late to travel so far north and back before bad weather sets in. The sage is offering a 20% interest in any treasures found and a bonus after their safe return.

The route to the ice fields takes the Party through pine forest and out onto the tundra. Beyond that are the fields of ice surrounded on two sides by towering glaciers and the frozen sea on the third. The outer ruins are little more than heaps of stones giving the suggestion they once were walls. Deeper and closer to the glacial walls are newly exposed architecture. Even though the building stones are massive, eons and tons of ice have mostly ground away the upper portions of the buildings.

Saryada is ecstatic when he finds an obelisk at the entrance of a large building identifying it as the House of Scrolls.

Sections of the building are still partially encased in ice. The stone arches that once held up a vaulted roof over the entrance hall along with their supporting columns are mostly intact though the roof itself is gone. Ice has accumulated in corners and chokes some of the narrow passages. In the once great stacks and reading room intact scrolls can be chipped out of the ice where they have been preserved. Those already thawed have decayed to unintelligible scraps. Only 20% of the collection was originally in a bound form.

Use the three random book generating tables to determine type, condition and content of a salvaged text. Any item determined to be “Preserved – Excellent Condition” on the condition table has a 50% chance of containing spells.

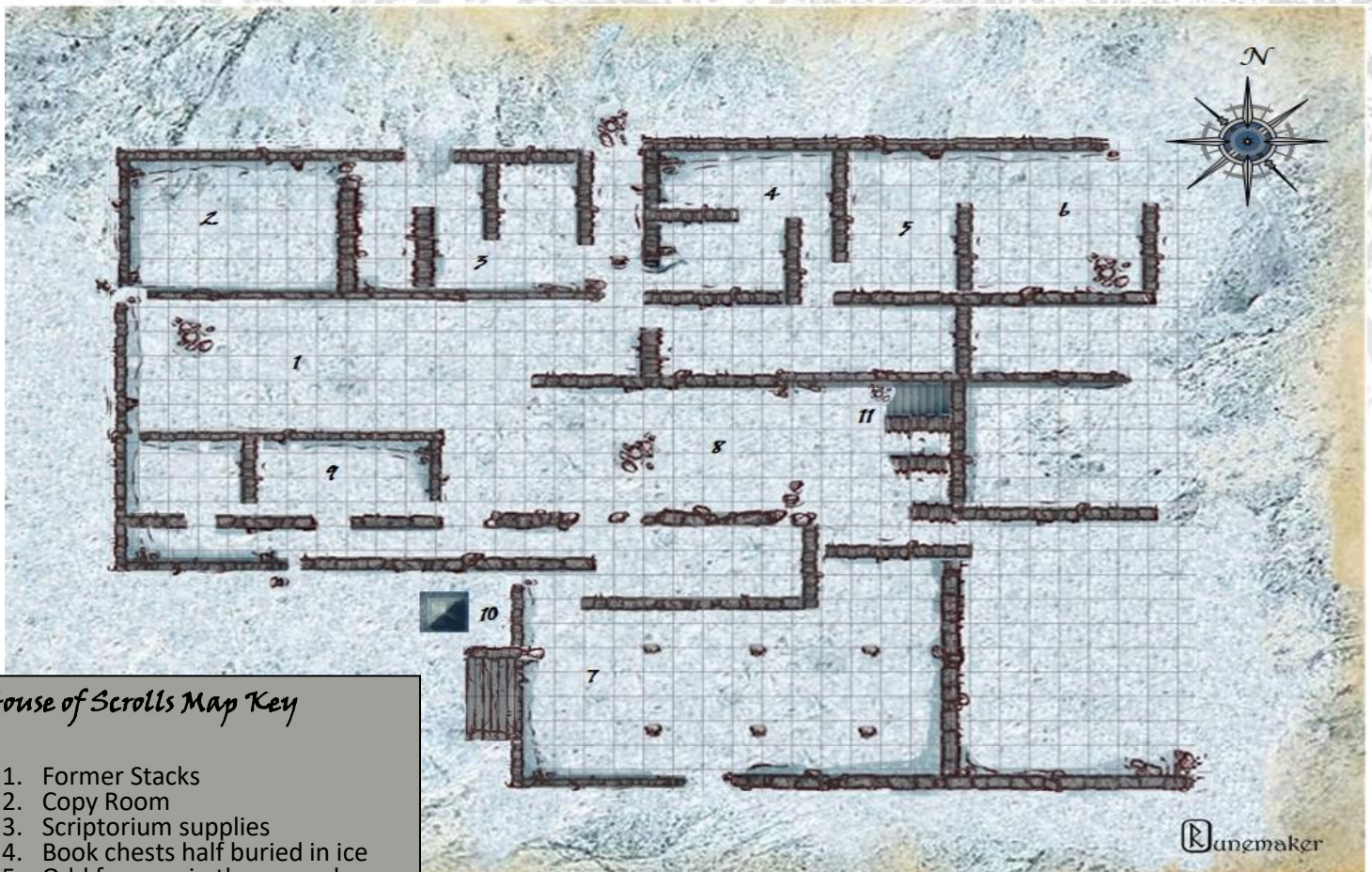
Working carefully the Party can recover up to d20 x 2 items per day. At night the temperature drops dramatically making continued work too slow to be worth the time expended. Successful investigation will uncover an ice bound stairway leading into the cellars. These rooms were used to store uncatalogued, duplicate and damaged works. The same conditions apply here as the surface area except there is a 40% higher likelihood a book or scroll will be mostly intact. Providing there is time, a search of the nearby ruins may reveal additional treasures.

All the activity around chipping and hammering ice, campfires

CONDITION *

- 1 Artificially Preserved (good to excellent)
- 2 Binding Damaged
- 3 Burned or Scorched
- 4 Clay Tablet broken
- 5 Covered with Spores and Mildew
- 6 Covers Rotted
- 7 Damaged by Previous Looters
- 8 Decayed to an Unidentifiable Mass
- 9 Disintegrates if Moved
- 10 Fair Condition
- 11 Pages Badly Faded
- 12 Pages Badly Stained
- 13 Pages Damaged by Worms
- 14 Pages Missing
- 15 Pages Mostly Faded Beyond Legibility
- 16 Pages Torn
- 17 Pages Water Stained
- 18 Papyrus Brittle and Flaking
- 19 Parchment Rotted
- 20 Several Books Melded Together by Decay

*Adjust for environment as needed



House of Scrolls Map Key

1. Former Stacks
2. Copy Room
3. Scriptorium supplies
4. Book chests half buried in ice
5. Odd furrows in the ground
6. Scattered animal bones
7. Great Hall of Scrolls
8. Reading Room
9. Map Room
10. Obelisk
11. Stairs Down to Vaults

and the like will draw the attention of young or adult **Remorhaz** in the immediate area. (5e MM Page 258, adjust the number and type depending on the Party strength.)

Other Adventure Hooks

1. Many centuries ago a cataclysm caused the great city of Kestryn to sink beneath the waters of a vast lake. Only the ruined tops of a few buildings poke through to the surface. There have always been legends about the Library of Kyn. As the city sank the librarians used the amassed knowledge to seal their building against the element. It is said they exist there still though in some altered aquatic form. A partnership consisting of a wizard and an artificer have built a submarine and intend to discover the truth. The Party has been hired to assist.
2. On a recent adventure the Party obtained a map supposedly revealing the way to the legendary *Upatinath Shri* temple complex. If the map is correct it is located high in icy Eastern Mountains close to a peak known as Ice Splitter. History records that the order of warrior monks who once resided there were destroyed by a warlord over a generation ago. The li-

brary at *Upatinath Shri* was rumored to house an extensive collection of martial and mystic texts.

3. While digging the foundations for a new armory workmen have broken into a series of tunnels and chambers of unknown origin. Since then nine men have either vanished or been attacked by an unknown assailant. The City Guard tentatively explored the tunnels but retreated when they found an inscription identifying the complex as the lair of the once powerful Reach of the New Moon. This secret society was banned more than a century ago and all its members executed for horrible crimes. Their Grand Mistress' last words were a prediction that the Reach would rise again for all their knowledge was safely hidden, protected by undying guardians waiting for those with the courage to take up the mantle of the New Moon again..

Inspirations: The fabled Library of Atlantis, Chateau de Floret, Belgium. The Library of Celsus, Ephesus.



APPENDIX I CHARTS, GLOBES AND MAPS



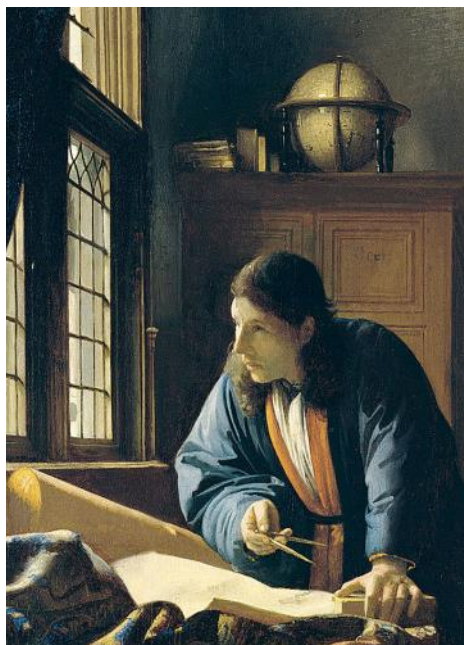
No major self-respecting library would be without a map room. Here cases, racks and drawers were filled with nautical charts and terrestrial maps of every type. Massive examples of such often decorated the walls. Globes and other cartographic spheres were also proudly on display.

In ages past some maps were intended only as artistic and philosophical representations of the world. Many others were a wealth of vital information to statesmen and diplomats planning conquest or colonizing of new lands in the name of empire. The same was true for the clergy seeking new regions to spread their faith. A map or nautical chart revealing a competitors trade route was worth a hundred times its weight in gold to a powerful merchant house on the lookout for ways to extend their commercial influence and personal fortunes. Throughout history maps were the focus of spies, thieves and assassins.

Unlike flat maps geographic globes were mainly an impressive way of showing off cartographic information and were sought after status items. Celestial Globes and Armillary Spheres were crucial tools to astronomers and astrologers. Every powerful sovereign had their on-staff star gazers to predict auspicious dates, omens

and to watch for powerful arcane alignments of heavenly bodies. Bereft of their tools these sages would be working literally in the dark.

As we saw with books, maps were not always and certainly are not required to be on rolled up sheets of parchment. They were



D20	Result	D20	Result
01	Ancient Sea Chart	11	Simple Local Map
02	Ancient Mariner's Log	12	Complex Medieval Map
03	Portolan Chart	13	Underground Map
04	Mercator Chart	14	Orbis Terrarum Map
05	Globe	15	Orrery Small
06	Globe, Ancient	16	Orrery Large
07	Celestial Sphere	17	Orrery Massive
08	Armillary Sphere Standard	18	Atlas
09	Armillary Sphere Complex	19	Terrestrial Map, Damaged
10	Itinerary Map	20	Nautical Chart, Damaged

Charts, Globes, Maps—Random Generation Table

also carved into wood, ivory or metal. A coveted chart might be a page ripped from a rare atlas or stone tablet unearthed in an ancient desert tomb. The only surviving maps of a vanished civilization might exist only as painted frescos in their ruined palaces. The way through dangerous mountain passes are often drawn on a hide bartered for from a barbarian in exchange for a finely wrought blade. There are so many alternatives to the mundane and stereotypical.



Nautical Charts

Charts serve as a graphic representing an area of the sea, or other large body of water, along with the adjacent coastal regions. Depending on the scale and design of the chart it will also provide information on water depths and natural features of the seabed such as islands, sand bars or reefs. Charts can also contain a host of other details such as: shape of coastlines, harbors, visible landmarks, tides or currents. Charts would also warn of dangerous places where unusual weather or arcane forces might cause ships to wreck or disappear without a trace. Here be Dragons!

Nautical charts were not just an aquatic version of a topographic map they were vital to marine navigation using bearings. A bearing is the angle between the line joining the two points of interest and a line from one of those points to North as determined by the ship's course or a compass reading. On nautical charts, the top of the chart is always *true* north, rather than magnetic north. Most charts would include a compass



points on the chart. These are also known as *windrose lines* and were determined by observation combined with compass readings.

The straight lines crisscrossing portolan charts represent the primary headings of the mariner's compass from a given point. All portolan charts have windroses usually showing the full thirty-two compass points. The principal bearing lines are oriented to magnetic north. Grid lines will vary to a greater or lesser extent for charts drawn in different eras due to the natural shift of the earth's magnetic field over time. Following a thousands of years old map too closely is likely to put an adventurer's ship far off

course. In medieval times, monsters started appearing on nautical charts and might have been just for decoration. For the adventurers in a campaign world they could be very real.

Depending on the relative level of development in a campaign setting the type of readily available charts would vary. For convenience these will be presented as Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance charts. There is nothing preventing one or more of these types to exist simultaneously across the various cultures of your campaign world.

Ancient Charts

Before the introduction of more advanced charts sailors had no reliable drawings to guide them. They relied on compass readings, providing they had one, combined with their practical experience and knowledge of navigation lore. Captains and navigators kept sailing logs that listed ports in the order ships would encounter them along a given route. They would often add notes on relative direction and elapsed time between each port. These records might also contain rough sketches of the coastline, easily visible landmarks and maybe depth soundings for treacherous areas. Under these conditions many ships were limited to following coastlines or short trips across open water making them vulnerable to pirates.

Medieval Charts

During the Middle Ages ancient maps gave way to a style called Portolan. Compared to earlier charts these were much more accurate. Portolan comes from the Italian *portulano*, meaning *related to ports or harbors*. Portolan charts are very distinctive and easily recognized by their networks of *rhumb lines* radiating out from compass roses located at various

Renaissance Charts

In the mid-1500s a new sort of nautical map was introduced called the Mercator projection. Its primary improvement was to show bearings in a way that made those on the chart identical to the corresponding angles in nature. A course plotted on such a chart could be used as a direct course-to-steer at the helm without conversion. These charts were an order of magnitude more accurate than their portolan predecessors and allowed for relatively safe travel across vast stretches of open water far from any coastline.

Nautical Chart Adventure Hooks

1. Each year the city of Port Gangosza hosts a boat race pitting the fastest coastal ships against each other for a hefty prize. Most of these vessels are owned by wealthy merchants. One such merchant, Idira Graffach, is the heavy favorite only her ship's pilot has gone missing along with his coastal charts. Idira suspects her primary rival, Astor Sanecir of kidnapping the navigator. There is some evidence pointing in Sanecir's direction but not enough for the local magistrate to act upon. Idira hires the party to find her pilot and return him before the race.
2. The Adventurers find themselves passengers on a large galleon. In route strange things begin to happen which

make the ship appear haunted. The crew is baffled and insist nothing like this had ever happened before. It turns out the Captain purchased a new set of charts from a chandlery in the last port. If pressed he'll admit that he had never seen the place before and that it wasn't there the next day. The Captain was given cursed portolan charts by a trickster god which slowly darkened from black ink on parchment to white ink on black paper. There are hidden riddles in the map. Unless the riddles are solved the ship is locked onto the chart's rhumblines which will never take it near land.

3. Nearly a century ago the renowned navigator and explorer Pyre el Riessari, Admiral of the Sultan's navy was dying. He loaded his flagship with tools, building materials and supplies along with his fanatically loyal crew and set off on a last voyage. Along the way to an undisclosed location the ship stopped at many major ports where, by the Sultan's order, funerary gifts were collected. Laden with treasure the ship vanished. Most thought el Riessari sunk the ship in some deep part of the Storm Sea. Now a navigator's log has surfaced reputed to tell the lost ship's tale and reveal its final location. It alleges that the flagship was grounded on an island and a tomb erected around it. The Admiral's crew vowed to protect it for all time.



Globes, Armillary and Celestial Spheres

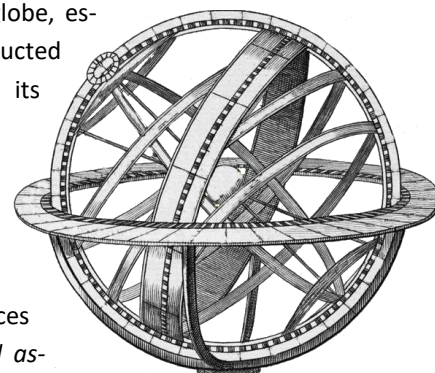
Globes



Spherical representations of the world have been around for at least the last 2,000 years. The construction of globes posed a number of problems for their makers. These were mainly selecting the right materials and to how best to represent two-dimensional maps on a three-dimensional sphere. Metal tended to corrode or made

the globe too heavy where lighter materials might not hold their shape or deform when they got hot or wet. One of the preferred methods involved covering a mold of Papier Mache with vellum. After drying the spherical shape was cut in half at the equator and reinforced with wooden rings. After being re-assembled a map drawn on the parchment strips called *gores* were pasted onto the sphere. Of course any globe was only as accurate as the map it was based upon.

In the Medieval period forward globes were often seen as status symbols. They were a must have item for any powerful and influential ruler, lord or well-off merchant. Globes were proudly displayed beside their collections of books, maps and other curiosities. A skillfully made globe, especially an ornately constructed one, was a valuable item in its own right.



Armillary Spheres

These astronomical devices were also known as *spherical astrolabes* or *armilla*. They were intended to provide a model of objects observed in the night sky fixed into a complex arrangement of spherical rings centered on the Earth or Sun. They were used to calculate celestial positions and other astronomically important alignments. The rings could be rotated by hand in order to predict the position of desired planets, moons or stars at a specific time and place. The main horizontal ring was divided into 360 degrees matching all the points of the compass. At the south pole of the sphere was a circle of twenty-five hours to determine time. The device took great skill to use properly.

The armillary sphere was used as a teaching tool and functioned as a crude analog computer for solving astronomical problems. As a tool the sphere started to fall out of use by the end of the Middle Ages. Like the Globe it became something displayed to impress and imply the superiority of its owner's education and intellect.

Celestial Spheres

The principle function of these smooth spheres was to model of the constellations as seen from above the earth. It could be used for navigation or as a practical tool allowing



astronomers to specify the apparent positions of objects in the sky if their distances were unknown. Use of these spheres for navigation, especially onboard a ship was problematical and the astrolabe provided easier and more accurate readings. Like Globes and Armillarias many celestial spheres were destined to grace private libraries.

Orreries

A brief mention here of a device related to both Celestial and Armillary spheres, the Orrery.

This is mechanical model of celestial objects, major planets, that illustrates or predicts their relative positions and motion usually centered on the sun. Depending on their size Orreries are driven by tiny or massive clockwork mechanisms with a globe representing the Sun at the center, and a planet at the end of each arm. They could be massive but not to scale, due to the problems with modeling the distances, eccentric orbits and enormous masses involved,

Adventure Hooks

1. An order of Astronomer Monks have spent centuries preparing to fight back the invasion of an evil hoard. They believe a rare alignment of celestial bodies will allow a rift into the Prime Material paving the way for invading forces. But now their sacred Armillary Sphere has been stolen by demonic agents. Without it the Monks cannot accurately predict the time and place of the rift's opening. The Order must hold itself ready so enlist the Party to track down the thief and return the sphere. The only clue leads to a near-by port town.
2. The Academiae Incantorum has in their possession a globe displaying all of the magical ley lines and nodes across the world. It is said they inherited it from an ancient civilization long ago sunk below the Great Ocean. The glowing ley markings seem to flow like phosphorescent strands of silver. Ten years ago one of the globe's nodes winked out. Over the past decade six more have vanished. The last was a little more than a month ago. The Academiae has hired the Party to protect one of their Wizard-Sages on an expedition to the physical location of the recently darkened node located in the Eastern Mountains.
3. An age ago the Linnäesolani tribe of Moon Elves built nine Arrow Ships. These vessels constructed from albino oak and silver could cut across the waves with incredible speed. They could also rise up and sail through the sky. Navigating an Arrow Ship required an enchanted celestial sphere set into the vessel's wheel. All of these ships were

confirmed destroyed but one, long lost over the southern glaciers. This vessel has recently emerged from the ice with its magics intact but its celestial sphere missing. Rumors have reached the last few Linnäesolani of a silver sphere having found its way into the collection of a West kingdom Sorcerer. The Moon Elves hire the party to act as their agents with the intention that they purchase the sphere and failing that to obtain it at any cost for an immense reward.



Terrestrial Maps

Many early land maps were so strange and imprecise they could never be used for actually finding your way to a destination. They were only intended to show the relative location of one place to another and were missing the most basic of scales. Sometimes they didn't tell you how to get to a place at all only what sort of commodities were available once you managed to find it. These were more pictographic catalogue than map. Many were symbolic or philosophical representations of how a group imaged or hoped the world really was. Early maps were carved or draw on clay tablets as part of official documents involving land ownership and the like. Over time paper replaced clay and parchment making them more portable and useful for navigation, trade and military campaigns.

Diagrams and O-T Maps



Orbis terrarum, orb or circle of the lands; with the letter T inside an O), also known as an Isidoran map, is a type of early world map. They were based on the idea that the known continents could be divided into three sections surrounded by water. These early maps had only a few major cities marked along with

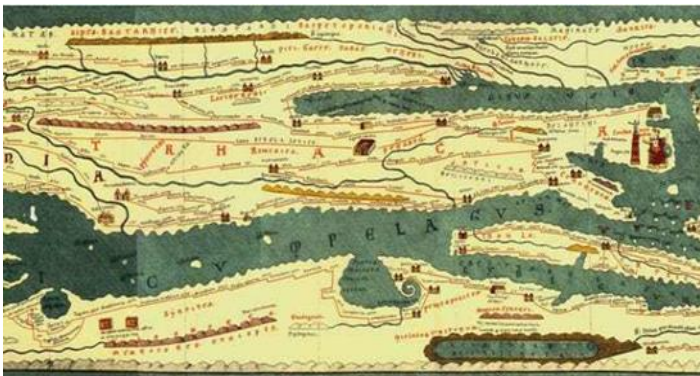
important bodies of water. These were also known as *Mappa Mundi*.

Simple Maps

Whereas the O-T and *Mappa Mundi* were concerned with representing the “known world” simple maps were often more detailed and useful though on a generally local scale. These would show how to get from city to city and mark notable landmarks, water sources and dangerous areas along the way.



Complex Maps



Eventually much more detailed Medieval maps started to appear. They were typically quite a bit larger than their predecessors though often still not very accurate compared to modern maps. These included features such as cities, rivers, and landforms such as mountains ranges, hills and valleys among other topographic features. Notations in the borders cited local fauna and flora gleaned from explorers accounts or those in ancient books.

Various types of Complex maps evolved to serve different purposes. One of these were Itinerary Maps. These laid out important routes for pilgrimages, traders and the movement of troops. One such was the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, a Roman map, showing all their highways from England to Asia. It also noted stopping places, prominent towns, and mountain ranges. Many of these maps were created to be of use to the specific peoples who produced them. An overland map would be of little use to a Dwarf living most of their lives underground. But a plan show-

ing tunnels, caverns and subterranean rivers would be quite valuable.

Atlases

An atlas is a compilation of maps presented in the form of a bound publication. They also contained social, religious, economic, and geopolitical information for specific regions therein. The early atlases were a solution to a problem; accurate maps were too big. Many were large enough to cover an entire wall so not very practical for taking onboard ship or caravan travel. In 1570 a cartographer named Ortelius divided up one of his tapestry-sized maps into multiple small sections and bound them into a book at the request of a trading ship captain. Sometimes all copies of an important or rare map have vanished and the only surviving example might be in an old atlas collecting dust on a forgotten shelf.

Adventure Hooks

1. The Party has been hired by a team of Royal surveyors to act as guides and guards while they map a newly acquired territory. Local rebels know this is the first step to formal annexation and colonization. They want to stop the survey and kidnap the King's cartographer to force negotiations.
2. The central temple of a clerical sect was recently all but destroyed by fire. The centerpiece of the Order's worship is the fresco of a world map drawn by their founding prophet. The rebuilt temple cannot be consecrated until the map is redrawn above the altar. No copy of the map survives except at the Order's ancestral home which after a thousand years is now deep in territory controlled by tribes of giants. The Hierophant of the Order engages the Adventurers to find the ancient temple and return with a copy of their sacred *Mappa Mundi*
3. The Party finds themselves in a city with a history reaching back 1500 years. Over the centuries new buildings have gone up over the old. Builders breaking into forgotten cellars, tombs and tunnels is a common event. A group of somewhat shady gnomes hire the Party to explore and clear out any monstrous vermin they find in a complex of underground workings. The gnomes recently *acquired* a map to the workings they want to use as the headquarters of a new criminal organization.

Inspired Uses in Adventure Settings

Maps have always been an important part of role-playing adventures. They have become increasingly complex over the years going from rough floorplans to fantastic pieces of artwork. I'm a huge fan of maps and love cartography. I've been making my own game maps for a long time. However maps have become so detailed that they either can't be given to players for fear of giving everything away or are so expansive they don't prove useful to the mission at hand. Even *simpler* maps can contain too much accurate information making things less challenging for the players. This, of course, depends of the group. If the players constantly need a push to progress, perhaps giving them a road map to adventure is necessary.

Consider though that when it comes to player maps, less may be more. Nobody said maps have to be precise. As we've seen they frequently weren't. Leaving out a few details can add realistic unpredictability to the game and keep players from becoming complacent. Just maybe that halfling you met at the tavern, you know, the one with the sick grandmother who sold you a map to the abandoned gem mines? It's entirely possible she didn't have your best interest at heart. Even if the Mage who hired the party to help with a relic hunt *believes* his map shows all the lethal traps doesn't mean it really does. Especially if it turns out he bought it from a halfling at that same bar.

Charts, globes and maps along with all they represent can be excellent motivations for adventure. As was discussed in the ***Libraries Illuminated*** supplement libraries are not just stages for things to happen on but active players. The same goes for maps and charts. Yes, they can be the McGuffin only there to push the adventurers along to a specific place or event. But they can also embody an entire adventure in and of themselves. Making simple changes like putting the lost tomb on an island and instead of an overland map showing the way, a nautical chart falls into the adventurer's hands ups the ante. They'll need to find an experienced sailor to interpret the chart and have to arrange for more than a few horses to use it. What follows are two example adventures where charts, maps or globes feature prominently in the plot.

What follows are examples, of short playable scenarios where a Chart, Globe or Map play a significant role. Each have their own quirks and strengths allowing you to weave them into any campaign setting. These were designed as general guides and not intended to be ridged. These sample adventures can play out in different ways and were left a little vague so they can be tweaked by the DM to fit into your campaign and the play style of the group.

Sample Adventures

Magical and Mercantile



The Seven Rings of Seren's Armillary

Two hundred and six years ago a starmancer named Seren Cyshier and his followers arrived in the vicinity of the small farming town of Heathfield. They immediately set to work building a tower on the nearby plain. Attached to it was a circular and domed structure incorporating an existing and ancient circle of standing stones into its walls. The wizard's reputation among the local folk was one of kindness and generosity. In many other places it was quite the opposite.



Cyshier, drawing power from alignments of the stars and planets, had constructed a gateway connected to six other stone circles. He and his followers would descend on an area via these gates. He could afford to be generous with his neighbors because looting and pillaging other cities provided

him with ample wealth. Only Cyshier and his followers knew the truth of the gate's workings. After nearly a decade a powerful band of heroes tracked down Cyshier and assaulted his lair. Rumor has it the wizard and his servants were all slain. The Adventurers hauled away anything of value and burned the tower to its foundations. Only the odd, circular hall remained.

In recent years, the round hall and its lands came into the possession of Baron Glavid Darbinger. The Baron has built a manor around the wizards round hall. He relates how during construction a magically preserved iron chest was found beneath the floor of the old tower's cellars. Inside the Baron discovered Cyshier's notebooks detailing the construction and operation of the gate hall. The key component was a power channeling armillary sphere.

The actual truth of events is a bit different. The adventurers who raided Cyshier's lair admit to defeating and killing the wizard but his followers escaped to parts unknown through the

gateway. They took Cyshier's body and all but one part of the armillary sphere with them. The stand and central sphere of the armillary escaped the tower in the hands of Cyshier's apprentice. The Baron never found a chest. What he knows was handed down through his family. He is descended from the apprentice and is a mage himself though he takes pains to conceal the fact. According to his family's lore, Cyshier should have returned a century ago. Tired of waiting the Baron's taken matters into his own hands. He coverts the gateway along with the power it will bring him.

The Baron provides a map he claims shows the location of a hidden fastness where he believes the rest of the armillary has been hidden. He is willing to pay a high price for the missing rings and any other useful information or relics the Party returns with.

The location on the map is only a few miles from one of the gateway's stone circles, about a two-week journey. What they discover near the end is a little town on the edge of a basin-shaped valley. The place appears to once have been much larger and prosperous. The townspeople can tell the Party that the basin used to be a lake. An earthquake 109 years ago shifted the course of the lake's source river causing it to dry up. They can also tell the players how the rich of the area once built lavish tombs in the hills overlooking the lake. The map leads to one of them.

The Mausoleum

The tomb has the appearance of a Grecian-style mausoleum, leaning slightly on its foundations and hemmed in by trees grown up since its construction. The stone doors are wedged in the skewed door-frame and takes a successful DC 17 Strength roll to force it open. The interior is completely unadorned. An armillary sphere is carved into the cover of a sarcophagus at the center of the thirty-foot square space. A successful DC 15 Strength roll is needed to shove the cover off the crypt. Inside are a few bones and scraps of cloth. Investigation will reveal that the bottom of the sarcophagus is a hatch giving access to descending stairs.



The Tomb Beneath

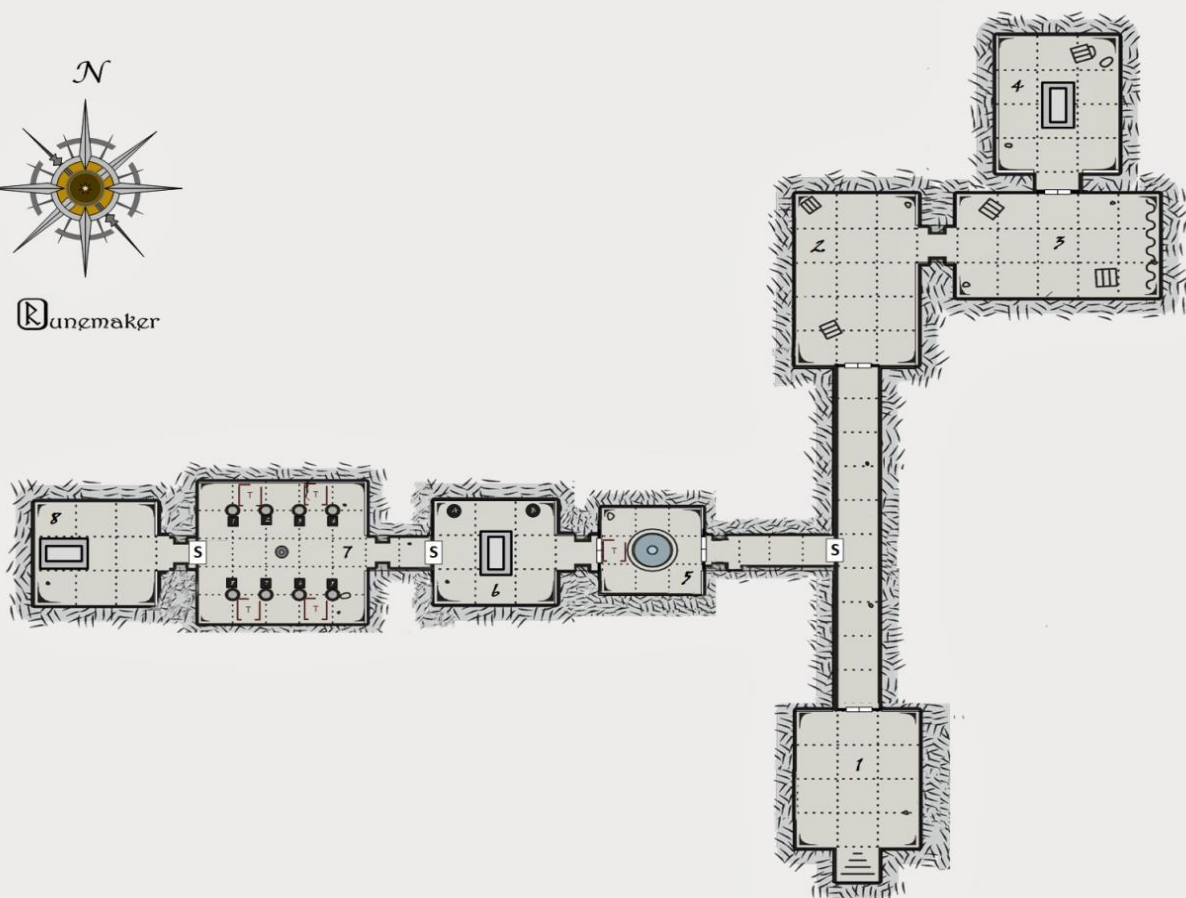
1. Entry Hall: The room is empty. A heavy layer of dust covers the paved floor indicating the lack of recent visitors. Unlocked double doors lead into a long hallway.

2. Workshop: The long hall ends in another set of double doors. These open into a room that can only be a magical or alchemical workshop. Long tables and shelving line the walls. Every surface is filled with alchemical glassware along with bottles and jars of dried material. A thick layer of dust and cobwebs cover everything. All of the materials here are common magical and alchemical components of no real value.

3. Workshop: This area is much the same as the previous workshop. On a successful DC19 Intelligence check will reveal a large number of materials in the room are involved in the construction of golems. Searching through the bottles will yield two vials of alchemist's fire. None of the rest has any value.

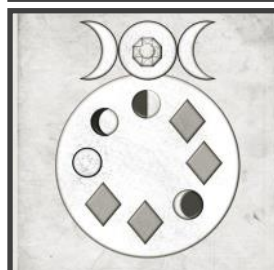
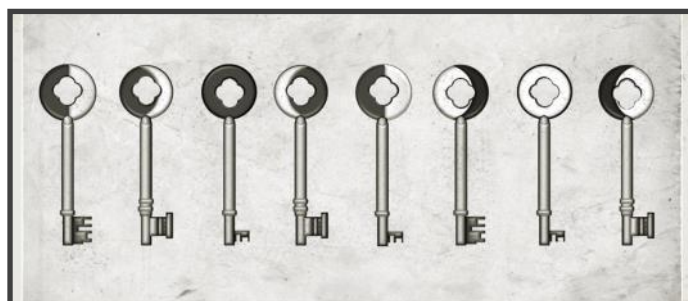
4. Counterfeit Tomb: The double doors of this room are locked and take a successful DC 15 Dexterity roll to pick. This white marble lined chamber holds a sarcophagus like the one on the surface. Both the crypt and the walls are ornately carved with interwoven floral and astronomical designs. There are chests and urns lining the East and West walls. The urns hold scented but highly flammable oil. The chests are locked but empty taking only a DC 10 dexterity roll to unlock. Three exceptionally clear silver-backed mirrors hang on the North, East and West walls. A successful DC 15 Strength roll is needed to shove the cover off the crypt. Inside is the desiccated corpse of a man dressed in ornate wizard's robes. Grasped tightly by both hands is a set of nested armillary rings that shine like gold.

The body is not that of Cyshier but some unfortunate individual used in his place. As soon as the door was opened a mechanism opened many tiny valves allowing lamp oil to drip rapidly down the channels hidden in the wall carvings. It takes five minutes for the walls to become soaked. A character can detect the oil on a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check if examining the walls. If anyone attempts to remove the rings from the corpse's hands they pull a hidden wire. This trap can be detected and disarmed on a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. The wire triggers a **Scorching Ray** to fire from each of the mirrors. The rays are angled to bounce off the next mirror to the left then hit an oil filled urn on the floor. Three of the urns explode into flame and ignite the walls. Each creature in the room takes 3d6 initial fire damage and an additional 2d6 for every round they remain. The contents of the room are consumed by the flames except for the mirrors.



5. Fountain Room: The fountain is bone dry. The doors to the West are trapped by a suspicious and amateurishly concealed pressure plate, detectable on a DC 7 Wisdom check. This trap is a cunning bit of reverse psychology. Stepping on the pressure plate doesn't do anything. Successfully "disarming" the supposed trap actually triggers it. The Eastern doors slam shut with great force and liquid mercury gushes from the fountain at an alarming rate, sloshing out onto the floor, rising to a depth of 1 foot in just two rounds. The trapped adventurers find that the liquid is so dense they can float on it and don't sink. Drowning isn't a worry but the liquid is flowing at high pressure and will eventually fill the room crushing anyone inside against the stone surfaces. The players have 20 minutes before the room is filled. A dispel magic cast on the fountain against a DC 15 will stop the flow. The Eastern doors can be forced open with a successful strength roll against DC 20. The Western doors require a DC 25 to force open. Pulling up the false pressure plate will reveal a lever unlocking the Western doors.

6. False Tomb: There is a carved plaque on the North wall depicting diamonds and moon symbols. The largest of which has a power-blue cut crystal set into the center. This chamber also



holds a sarcophagus like the one in Room 4. Inside are the mummified remains of a man in ornate robes clutching another set of armillary rings. Close inspection will reveal that the body is a fake, just a stuffed scarecrow-like mannequin, and the

rings are painted wood. The "body" does have a pouch with nine iron keys, each inlaid with silver representing phases of the moon, inside. Under the body, built into the floor of the sarcophagus, are nine keyholes arranged in a circle.

To open the secret door on the West wall all keys must be inserted into their proper holes then the four keys indicated by the diamonds on the plaque must be turned in clockwise

order one by one. If any of the keys are in the wrong location or tuned out of sequence a **Cone of Cold** centered on the sarcophagus fires from the crystal set into the plaque. Each player must make a Constitution saving throw against DC 15. A creature takes 8d8 on a failed save or half if successful. Players standing in areas marked A and B on the map reduce any damage they would take by 50%. The trap will only trigger once and cannot be disarmed.

7. Hall of Stars and Statues: There are eight statues of hooded figures each sitting on a stone bench in front of pillars holding up the ceiling. A pedestal of bronze sits at the center of the chamber. Located two feet from the center of the West wall is an engraved stone stela. The walls and ceiling are decorated with scores of carved and painted planet, star and zodiac images. To the left of the stela is a complex seeming mechanism of gears in a wood and metal frame.

The Players have reached the tomb's most complex defenses. Six of the statues (all except 4 and 5 on the map) are the self-petrified followers of Cyshier. On a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check a player will notice that the superficially identical statues have different faces and each is wearing a circlet with a planetary symbol engraved on it. These are the missing rings. Each figure also holds an opaque glass sphere in its cupped hands that radiate Alteration magic. The other two statues are **Stone Golems** (D&D 5e Monster Manual page 170) who attack anyone passing beyond the center of the room without speaking the command word, "*Celestial*."

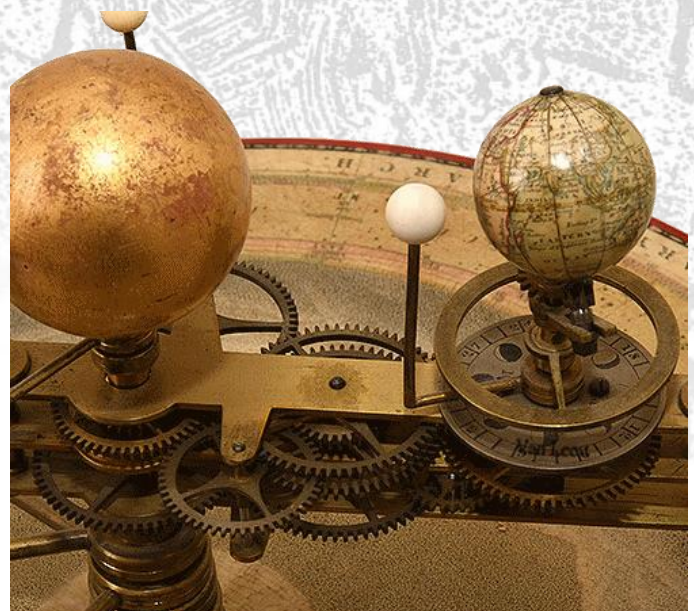
The geared device in the corner is a decayed water clock. It ceased to function when the lake above dried up depriving it of fluid. It will radiate with faint magic to a Detect Magic spell. The clock was supposed to wake Cyshier's followers after one-hundred years. They've overslept by quite a bit. Breaking the spheres releases a thick gas that reverses the petrification. It takes a full ten minutes for the effect to complete. During that time, the Followers can be restrained. All are wizards but too weak from the long stasis to resist.

Pit Traps

Marked on the map are four pit traps. If a creature steps on the trapdoor the lid flips open dumping the creature into the 10-foot deep pit taking 1d6 piercing damage from the spikes at the bottom. The traps can be disabled on a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves tools.

Secret Door

The secret door may be detected on a successful DC 18 Wisdom check. To open the passage to Area 8 the players must study the stela, the bronze pedestal, and the frescoed ceiling. **Figure 1** represents the stela carving. On a successful DC 15



Intelligence (Arcane or History) a player will recognize it for a type of horoscope diagram. The bronze pedestal has an engraved surface that partially resembles the stela, **Figure 2**. On a successful DC 15 Wisdom check the players can discover that the outermost ring of the pedestal will rotate. There are only depressions where the planetary symbols should be. The ceiling is painted with a faded fresco representing the zodiac as a star chart, **Figure 3**.

To open the door the players must locate the seven missing planet symbols. They are hidden on the walls among many similar carvings. It takes a successfully DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check each to locate. Once found they are easily removed from the wall. Searching the chamber puts the Party at risk of triggering one or more of the trap doors. Once all the symbols are replaced the outer zodiac ring of the pedestal must be rotated so the indicator line matches up with the stars representing **Pisces** (green arrow) to match the stela. The symbols for Mercury and Jupiter must be pressed at the same time. Bolts can be heard sliding allowing the secret door to open easily.

If any part of the sequence is wrong when one or more symbols are pressed lightning shoots from the center of the fresco. Anyone standing in the room's center nine grid squares will be hit if they wear any ferrous metals taking 5d6 electrical damage if unsuccessful on a DC 16 Intelligence roll, half as much if successful. The spell trap resets after three minutes and can be disabled by a dispel magic.

8. Inner Tomb: This is the real tomb of Cyshier. Laying on top of the sarcophagus lid is a life-like marble statue of an older man in wizard's robes. His arms are crossed. He holds a rod in one hand and an armillary ring in the other. There are a number of painted urns in the otherwise empty room. The statue

figure on the lid is the actual petrified body of Seren Cyshtier. He was killed in the attack on his stronghold, that much of the tale is true, and his followers brought him here for internment.



Opening the sarcophagus frees the undead **Basilisk** entombed inside. (D&D 5e Monster Manual page 24 with the following modifications: Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5+the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the creature drops to 1 hit point instead, Damage Immunities Poison.) The zombie creature is slow in reviving itself. The players have one round before dealing with its attacks. If they remember, they can use the three silver mirrors from Area 4 to help against the Basilisk's Petrifying Gaze. The creature is bound to this room and will not pursue the Party beyond it.

Inside the sarcophagus is a bronze box containing a glass ball, like the ones in Area 7, which can reverse petrification. One must be used on Cyshtier's body if the last armillary ring is to be retrieved. The rod he is holding is a **Rod of Alertness** (5e Dungeons Master's Guide page 196.) One of the urns holds 97 assorted gems.

The Players will need to decide what to do with Cyshtier's followers. If the Adventures succeed in returning the armillary rings to the Baron he will honor his contract and pay them well. However he considers the Party a possible threat to his imminent rise to power. The Baron hires bounty hunters and/or assassins after them within one month of their return.

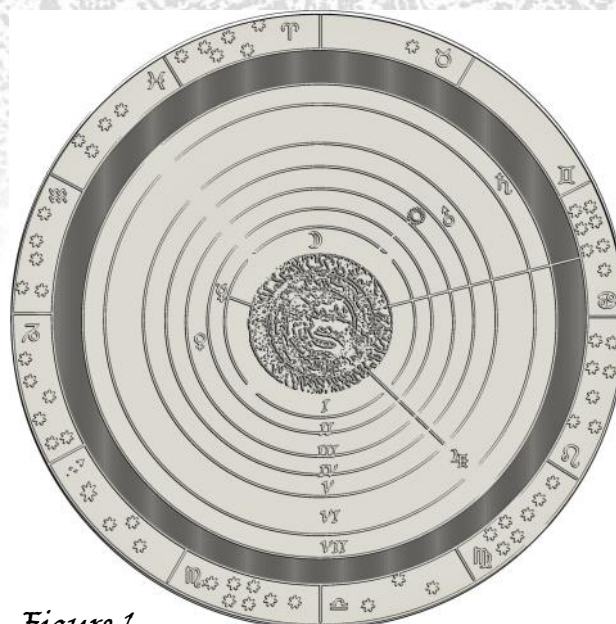


Figure 1

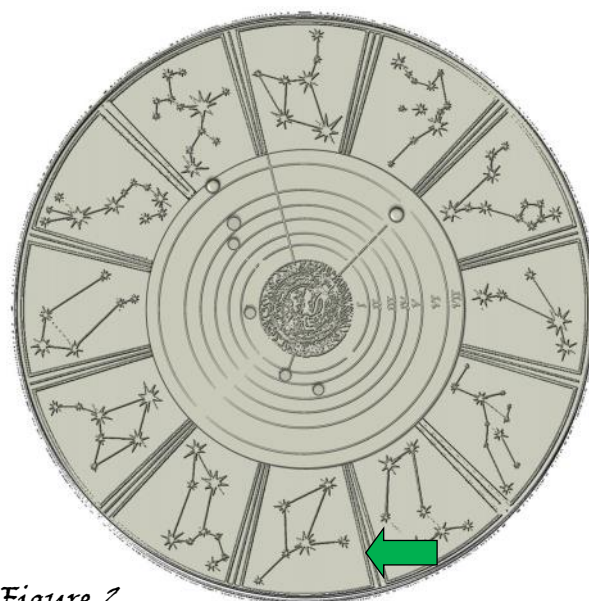


Figure 2



Figure 3

Adventure of the Ivory Case

The Adventurers are either agents for or members of the Vendramin merchant house. Their current duty has them assigned to the country's northern most port city. Kornaro is a small port on the Gulf of Mistral concerned mainly with fishing and hauling lumber from the lands to the north. They are approached by a House agent they know by the name of Antos Loredan. Antos has just returned from a mission to the mountain regions of the North Lands. He quietly tells the party that he has secured an important trade agreement with several dwarven clans. This is quite a coup as the northern dwarves are known to be almost impossible to negotiate with. Antos seems extremely nervous though. He tells the Party that he is sure he's being followed by agents of the Dandolo, a deadly rival of the Vendramin. He wants the Party to take charge of carrying important documents to the city of Morosin, the seat of Vendramin power. He asks them to meet him elsewhere later than night.

When the party arrives at the rendezvous they discover Antos has been attacked and gravely wounded. The bodies of two would-be assassins lay nearby. He presses an ivory scroll case into the Party's hands. "Take it!" he insists. "You must leave now! I was right. The Dandolo know and will do anything to get these papers." After giving his warning Antos loses consciousness. If they leave him where he is without healing Antos will die of his wounds. The scroll tube is sealed but if the players open it they find a contract with dwarf clans for gold, silver, iron, copper, and tin in exchange for produce and creature comforts, furniture, rugs and the like. There is also a map showing a secret way up the rivers to the interior of the northern highlands into dwarven territory. Securing the trade rights to this market will significantly shift the balance of power between the warring Houses in the Vendramin's favor. The Dandolo will stop at nothing to get their hands on the documents.

The party has two main options for traveling to Morosin, overland and by ship. If the players use their position with the Vendramin to access the Post Road they can travel an average of 30 miles per day. By sea they can double that. The Dandolo will be on their heels the whole way. The players should make their own decisions based on how much they know of the following information.



The players know Antos had a ship in port. If they decide to go to the docks intending to use it to escape they quickly discover the Captain is missing. By inquiring about the ship they make themselves known to Dandolo spies. If the players use the Post Road they need to present their Vendramin House pass to do so. Again this will identify them to lurking spies.

Taking to the sea

If the Party decides to leave by ship there are currently three departing Kornaro. Two are allied with the Dandolo which will not be obvious unless the Players ask around. The third is the *Merweasel*, an independent



coastal frigate Mastered by Captain Lars Cooperson. Should the Party book with a Dandolo ship there is a 50% chance the captain has been alerted to watch for them. That chance increases to 100% the next time the ship docks. The Dandolo crew will wait until the first night at sea to ambush the party and take the documents. If the Party leaves on the *Merweasel* the Dandolo ships give chase.

The Post Road

The well-maintained road (marked in red on the Trader's Coast map) exists to support a rapid and reliable way of sending letters and dispatches between cities. This is accomplished by a string of stations where fresh horses are kept. A rider changes horses every station and often rides through the night. There are stations located, usually in a small town or village if possible, no less six hours fast travel between them. The great merchant houses pay to access this system for anyone with documents identifying them as House Agents.

The exact route of the Road and all of its livery stations is no secret. If it is known the Party has taken to the Post Road it is probable the Dandolo will have Agents stationed at one or more of the stations down-road (South) of the Party's last reported position. A cautious group would approach each livery station with justified caution.

Merchant House Presence

The great Merchant Houses have some level of presence in all of the cities and ports on the Trader's Coast. This breaks down into the following categories. The Players will know what each of these categories are but will likely not know the exact level a House has in a given city. How much of the information found in the Merchant's Knowledge Table is known to the Party is up

to the discretion of the DM.

Avoiding Capture

What follows are some general guidelines for what is basically a deadly game of hide and seek. The DM should feel free to modify and add to these in any way that seems logical and fits with the campaign setting. The Party can use any combination of land and sea travel to safely reach Morosin. Within 48 hours of the attack on Antos all Dandolo forces on the Trader's Coast are alerted to be on the watch for the Party.

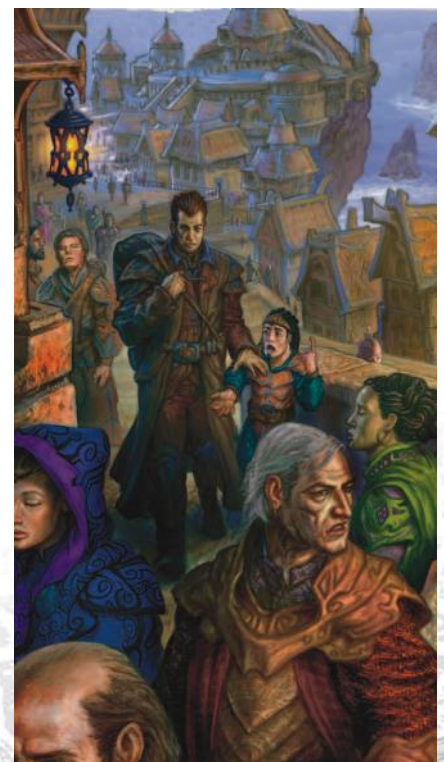
1. **Initial flight** – The players' risk of being confronted by Dandolo forces starts at 5% and increases by 1% for each hour they delay leaving Kornaro after their second encounter with Antos.

2. None of the ships the Party might book passage on can afford to travel without taking on cargo and stopping at every or every other port on the way south. If they stay on the *Merweasel* the chance of encountering Dandolo forces when docking in a port town increases to 100% as soon as they make their first port call. Each time the Party changes ships, providing they are not observed doing so, decreases the confrontation risk by 50%. Sneaking off a ship before it docks decreases their risk by 90%.

3. The party has a 10% chance of being spotted leaving on the Post Road in Kornaro. Their risk of being intercepted increases by 2% at each Post station until they arrive at the next city. It increases by 5% in any 24 hours they take a long rest.

4. Leaving the Post Road decreases the risk by 5% per day if using local roads. This decreases their distance travelled to a max of 20 miles per day.

5. Leaving the Post Road and going overland, avoiding all roads and towns, decreases risk by 50% the first day and 90% on day two. This leaves the Party open to random encounter attacks and decreases their distance travelled to 10 miles per



Cities of the Trader's Coast – Merchant's Knowledge

City	Merchant House Resources		Post Road Access	River Access	Sea Port
	Vendramin	Dandolo			
Biarrin	B,C	B,C	No	No	Yes
Darribia	A	C,D,E	Yes	Yes	No
Gezo	B,C	C,D,E	Yes	Yes	No
Inakilodo	A	A,C	Yes	No	No
Kornaro	A,C	B,C	Yes	No	Yes
Lekea	B,C	A,C	No	No	Yes
Morosin	C,D,E	A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Port Sarrel	C,D,E	C,D,E	Yes	Yes	Yes
Port Solabe	B,D,E	C,D,E	Yes	Yes	No
Suloagi	C,D,E	B,C	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tol Mestoy	A,C	A,C	Yes	No	No
Tol Ursua	B,C,E	B,C,E	Yes	Yes	No
Utrik	A,C	B,C	No	No	Yes
Vaskar	C,D,E	B,C	No	Yes	Yes
Yrun	B,C	A,C	No	No	Yes

A	House Agents	Agents act as local representatives where there is no House Trade Office or Trading House. The only resource they can offer is their local knowledge.
B	Trade Office	A small local branch consisting of a manager and handful of clerks. Aid is limited. They can arrange ship passage, provide a loan to 150gp, dispatch messengers.
C	Trading House	A large local branch consisting of several managers, many clerics, local agents, and a small contingency of guardsmen. Aid available: ship passage, loan of up to 500gp, message dispatches, temporary lodging, local combat support.
D	Warehouse(s)	Located on or near the docks these buildings hold House goods for local sale or awaiting shipment. They employ a supervisor and 1d4 x 3 workers and watchmen.
E	Mercenaries	In places where the presence of other Houses is particularly contentious and skirmishes frequent a House may maintain a small force of 2-20 mercenaries on the payroll.

10. For each livery station on the Post Road where the players deploy some sort of disguise, dividing their numbers or other countermeasures against being recognized reduces the threat by 5%. Although most livery hands are not on the Dandolo payroll, it is in the party's best interest to appear unmemorable. That way when a Dandolo Agent offers the stable boy a silver coin if he's seen anyone matching the Party's description they can honestly say no.

Dandolo Attacks. Each group of attacking Dandolo will have, depending on how much of an annoyance the party has become, 1-12 members (difficulty adjusted for the relevant strength of the player's party.) These will consist of 80% fighters and 20% rogue (spies.) The DM may choose to also add a caster class if the Dandolo have reached the desperation stage. Rangers or Bounty hunters can be substituted for one or more of the hired fighters. They might also deploy other means of tracking such as hounds or other trained beasts.

day over rough terrain.

6. The same risks as sea travel applies to river and lake ships.

7. Arriving at a city, either by land or sea, risks detection unless the Party actively uses mundane or magical countermeasures to go unnoticed. The risk of encountering Dandolo forces increases by 20% (from their current risk percentage,) in a city where that House maintains a Trading Office or Mercenaries. The risk increases to 75% where the Dandolo have a Trading House. These values can be reduced if the Party makes contact with Vendramin representatives undetected. The Dandolo have spies watching all House Vendramin offices and warehouses.

8. The risk of detection in the city of Darribia, the seat of Dandolo power, is 99%..

9. The longer the Party are successful at defeating or avoiding Dandolo efforts to capture them the more desperate the Dandolo become. After 5-7 days they will resort to putting a generous bounty out on the Players as well as using magical means of detection and summoned creatures

In the End. If the Party successfully reaches Morosin and hands the documents over to Patriarch Sebastiano Vendramin they will receive rich rewards and promoted status within the House. They will however have gained powerful new enemies. House Dandolo, along with most of the Great Merchant Houses, are not known for accepting failure gracefully. Revenge is often the order of the day. The Dandolo will be watching for an opportunity to disgrace the Party, or worse.

If the Party are captured by agents of House Dandolo they will eventually be ransomed back to House Vendramin. As mentioned above, failure is not well tolerated within the Great Houses even from their own family and members. After their return from Dandolo captivity the Party risks banishment from the House effectively being stripped of all good and privileges. If they are lucky a second chance might be offered in the form of some exceptionally dangerous, possibly suicidal, mission to redeem themselves in the eyes of House leadership.

APPENDIX II TROPHIES AND CURIOSITIES



In previous ages, some types of libraries also functioned as what we would think of as a museum before there were museums. Royal Libraries in particular could have one or more Curiosity Halls. In these were displayed war trophies looted from conquered territories alongside collections filled with a whole host of unique and strange items both natural and manmade.

Granted it's odd to think of libraries holding collections of objects that are in no way *books* or even maps. As centers of learning it wasn't that strange for samples of unusual beasts along with archeological objects and those from distant lands to end up under the roof of a Royal, Arcane, University or Private library. In a different context it was the same for trophies displayed mainly in Imperial builds or the Private Holdings of educated and wealthy persons where a library's contents served to impress as much, or more so, than to inform. Trophies of war were certainly displayed in palaces but also on specially erected monuments located in public spaces. Doing so was an act of aggrandizement and intimidation by the sovereign who had won them through battle. Nothing says *I'm better than you* than hanging up your enemy's armor beneath their bleached skull.

When it came to collecting curiosities, kings and wealthy patrons were not immune to fraud any more than the next enthusiast. It was just *much* riskier to pull a con on them should the huckster be found out. Trying to put one over on the Necromancer's Guild was an equally bad idea. See the bit about bleached skulls above and you get the idea. That being said, sometimes it didn't matter to the owner if an item wasn't genuine so long as people *believed* it was real. For example, the *true* Excalibur (it could be any old sword because nobody knows what it looked like do they?), *actual* nail clippings of Anubis (boring but what other body part of a god are you likely to get your hands on?) or the *bona fide* eyeball of a demigod (which is totally not a fist sized hunk of amber cunningly shaped by a gnomish jeweler.) The thing is though, sometimes they *were* real and could cause a whole lot of problems for everyone involved.

Curiosities Animal, Vegetable, Mineral and Monstrous



Although humans and other races, dragons come to mind, have always engaged in some level of collecting it didn't become an official pastime, at least for the aforementioned humans, until the Renaissance. Before that people held onto things they liked that might happen to all be in the same category. Wizards possibly being an exception. Formal collecting was closely tied to advances in navigation that allowed far flung trade in exotic items.

Cabinets of curiosities were limited to those who could afford to create and maintain them. Many monarchs,

in particular, developed large collections. Rulers and wealthy merchants displayed objects from distant lands as a way of demonstrating their power and influence. Often these would include gifts from foreign elite making the contents of such collections wide and varied. These were not for study but for show just as were their shelves of, largely unread, books.

Intentional collectors, who could also be Princes, were a bit more focused in what they acquired depending on their per-

Random Curiosities—Fauna

D20	Result	D20	Result
01	Roc Feather	11	Owlbear Claws
02	Unicorn Horn	12	Insect Carapace, Giant
03	Purple Worm Tooth	13	Dragon Skull, Young
04	Manticore Spines	14	Butterfly Collection
05	Mastodon Tusk	15	Snakeskin, Giant
06	Pseudo Dragon, Stuffed	16	Water Elemental Corpse (Jar of Water)
07	Dire Wolf Fur	17	Wyvern Stinger
08	Shark Jaws	18	400 Human Teeth in Glass Container
09	Seashells, Large	19	Rats and Mice, Stuffed
10	Griffon Egg	20	Braided Strand of Pegasus Mane

Random Curiosities—Flora

D20	Result	D20	Result
01	Myconid Hand	11	Insect Eating Plant
02	Tome of Pressed Flowers	12	Man Eating Plant
03	Pineapple		Tome of Pressed Leaves
04	Needle Blight Thorns	14	Mummified Dryad
05	Pinecone, Giant	15	Treant Heart
06	Shambling Mound tendrils	16	Mandrake Root
07	Dried Shrieker	17	Various Exotic Nuts
08	Bag of seeds	18	Rose Hips
09	Dried Gourds	19	Wood Staves, Various
10	Thorn, Giant	20	Tome of Plant Sketches

Random Curiosities—Mineral

D20	Result	D20	Result
01	Quartz Crystal, Rough	11	Fossil, Small
02	Semiprecious Stones, Various	12	Fossil, Large
03	Medusa Petrified Creature	13	Petrified Wood
04	Meteorite	14	Amber with Insect Inside
05	Piece of an Earth Elemental	15	Glowing Stones
06	Gargoyle Claw	16	Geode
07	Slaad Brain Gem	17	Precious Stone
08	Jade, Carved Small	18	Obsidian Glass
09	Xorn Teeth	19	Volcanic Dust
10	Metallic Ore, Various	20	Dragon Bloodstone

Random Curiosities—Monstrous

D20	Result	D20	Result
01	Beholder Eye	11	Large Preserved Heart
02	Two-Headed Lamb	12	Jar of Ooze
03	Two-Headed Snake	13	Burned out Phylactery
04	Infernal Blood	14	Preserved Mutant Bat
05	Ghoul Tongue	15	Preserved Giant Parasitic Worm
06	Hell Hound Hide	16	Container of Severed Fingers
07	Failed Homunculus	17	Unidentifiable Fetal Glob
08	Preserved Brain	18	Mutated Animal, Extra Limbs
09	Zombie Head in Jar	19	Partially Digested Corpse
10	Conjoined Fetal Animal	20	Humanoid Skin

sonal interests. Even so, these collections were not the carefully ordered and catalogued items of later museums. Early collections of curiosities were often chaotic appearing where the method of their madness was known only to the owner. There was usually an internal logic to such groupings. The earliest of cabinets were known as *Wunderkammer* who's contents were displayed and sorted by degrees of relatedness not by rigid classification systems. Items were arranged for aesthetic effect and were left unlabeled with the exotic mixing with ancient and contemporary. Often the cabinet was housed in or near a library which held reference works on related topics.

The existence of a well-stocked Cabinet would eventually reach other collectors. A cabinet owner might travel to visit another collection either out of genuine curiosity and admiration or to spy on the contents of a rival. This sometimes led to the exchange of gifts suitable for collecting that created networks of like-minded sages enthusiastic about plants, insects, or giant's teeth. A general set of standards for what made up a proper cabinet began to emerge. In the late 1500's a noble collector advised that three types of items were indispensable in forming a *Wunderkammer*: firstly small sculptures and paintings; secondly "curious

items from home or abroad"; and thirdly "antlers, horns, claws, feathers and other things belonging to strange and curious animals". A serious collector had to have all of these or more.

Some curiosity cabinets strayed into the macabre and contained many double-headed, multi-limbed creatures and a myriad of other bizarre items that were not *always* malformed but mysterious, twisted, and monstrous in their own right. Preserved biological or anatomical specimens were the most prized. Skulls lined shelves beside whole skeletons wired together. Glass vessels of every shape and size held pickled examples of organs beside mutated and unborn creatures. Examples of the Taxidermist's art stared out through glass eyes.

Adventure Hooks

1. Garnalon Religeer a renowned collector of skins and hides has hired the Adventurers to retrieve a black dragon skin, he recently purchased, from the docks of the nearest port city. The task is simple and it only takes a week to arrive at the docked ship. However the mate

Random Curiosities—Odd Items

D20	Result	D20	Result
01	Clockwork Toy	11	Straw Poppet
02	Sculpture, Tiny	12	Astrolabe
03	Sculpture, Small	13	Magnifying Glass
04	Ancient Artifact	14	Glass Vase
05	Primitive Culture Artifact	15	Mortar and Pestle
06	Painting, Tiny	16	Large Iron Keys
07	Painting, Small	17	Strands of Beads
08	Wax Seal	18	Urn Filled with Ashes
09	Old Coins	19	Miniature Globe
10	Surgical Tools	20	Broken Dagger

of the slain dragon has discovered the whereabouts of the remains. Wanting them back she repeatedly attacks the Party on their return trip.

2. Princess Arnardarria sends her trusted band across the great inland sea to the distant city of Marl. She has charged them with delivering a painted griffon's egg. The Princess sends it from her collection to the sage Nestor Overmore for his cabinet of curiosities in exchange for a gift he had sent her previously. When the Party arrive they find Marl under siege and must decide how to fulfill their mission.

3. The party comes across a merchant wagon surrounded by zombies. Oddly enough they don't appear to be attacking. Even so the merchant screams for help. After the party dispatch the zombies the merchant gives them a life-sized toad sculpted in gold by way of thanks before hastily departing. What the Adventurers don't know is the toad was the last figurine the Necromancer Nöol of Blood Bog needed to complete his frog collection. The Merchant had absconded with the figurine thinking to sell or melt it down. Wanting his property the necromancer sends seemingly endless groups of undead to plague the party until Nöol gets her toad.

Trophies and Spoils of War

Looting and pillaging; the taking of trophies during and after warfare is an old tradition. Objects plundered by conquering armies have gone by many names: war trophies, blood trophies, spoils of war, war booty, and spolia. The features that made an object desirable as a trophy were material value, craftsmanship, and

pedigree. In the ancient world *tropaeum* were erected to commemorate a victory over an enemy. This usually took the form of a real or sculpted tree with a pair of arm-like branches upon which was hung the armor, weapons and sometimes the head or skull of the defeated foe. Often a plaque or other carving was affixed to the *tropaeum* providing details of the victory and glorifying the general or Emperor involved.

Things changed little into the Middle Ages except the capture of battle standards became more popular. The average Medieval army boasted so many banners that only those of great chiefs or nobles were worth taking for the status they brought. Trophies tended to have greater symbolic value beyond their intrinsic worth. Stripping the losers of their cultural treasures: Seals, Standards, Ancestral Weapons, and the like was a further act of violence and humiliation for the defeated. Often this Imperial scale looting grew to a truly monumental scale. Entire buildings could be disassembled for their columns, doors, capitals, dressed stone and carvings to name a few. Taken to embellish the city of the victor their absence left the ransacked city disfigured and scarred. Not even sacred sites were spared. During such rampages, a king might intentionally desecrate the temples of their rivals as a way of showing their superiority over even the gods of the defeated country. Of course doing so could earn them the wrath or curses of said gods. Odysseus would be a good example. All of these trophies would be hauled back by the victors and prominently displayed on, inside of or built into public buildings such as palaces and civic buildings including libraries.

Although trophies technically fall into the spoils of war category this is usually a term referring to smaller more portable items. Looting was basically stealing by soldiers. It was often an expected part of their compensation for fighting. Mercenary armies could turn on and even sack the city of their employers

if they felt underpaid by poor loot. Anything small and valuable that wasn't bolted down, or sometimes even if it were, was ripe for the taking. Plunder could consist of a dazzling array of objects including anything made of precious metals, bells, lamps, holy relics, gems, art objects, sculpture and often people. Unlike the large-scale items above this form of personal looting was done for cash and to impress the folks back home. Some of these items would end up on display in a soldier or commander's



hometown or dwelling. They became lesser versions of Imperial trophy taking though no less symbolic.

Spoils of War—Random Generation

D20	Result	D20	Result
01	Gold object	11	Rugs
02	Silver object	12	Decorative lamps
03	Sculpture, Small	13	Official Seal
04	Metalwork	14	Keys
05	Gems or Pearls	15	Holy relic
06	Textiles	16	Metal plaque
07	Crystal object	17	Relief carving
08	Ivory object	18	Platinum object
09	Glasswork	19	Minor magic item
10	Bell, large	20	Weapon

Adventure Hooks

1. The Adventurers learn through a mutual friend that a notable General, recently returned from a campaign, is plagued by strange events. It turns out that among the spoils she returned with was a platinum idol from a looted shrine. The idol must either be returned or the General dedicate a new shrine to the deity.
2. It has taken decades for the Adventurer's kingdom to recover from a crushing defeat at the hands of the neighboring Battani. Priests have finally found a legitimate heir to the slain king but need the Sovereign's Rod and Sphere, sacred symbols of rulership to restart the monarchy. Looted years ago the Rod is displayed in the Battani Palace and the Sphere in their Royal library. The Party is charged with returning these objects to their rightful home.
3. A wagon train of rich spoils are in route to their new owner's homeland. Hearing rumors that getting their hands on even one of the wagons would make them rich, the Party has decided to hijack part of the train. Succeeding will earn them the enmity of a powerful noble.

Inspired Uses in Adventure Settings

We've seen two different kinds of collecting. The first motivated by intellectual inquiry, status seeking and obsession. The second being tangible symbols of victory or the humiliation of defeat in war. Collectors of curiosities are driven towards completeness, whatever that mean to them, but usually one of everything in a category or one thing in every category. This sort of obsession, fueled by competition between rival collec-

tors, drives them to reach further afield for increasingly exotic specimens. This is a dangerous but lucrative opportunity for Adventurers willing to stick their necks out retrieving Roc feathers or Purple Worm teeth in exchange for gold, magic or services owed. An entrepreneurial Party might even specialize in obtaining rare items and have a reputation for obtaining obscure objects whatever it takes. The number of possible adventures this can generate are at least as many as there are beasts and monsters, minerals, and plants.

Whereas reputation, wealth and personal advancement might motivate Collector adventures, Spoils of War engender different emotions. These can be revenge and retribution to be meted out by a defeated people against their victors or hated oppressors. In these scenarios characters want to set the scales right and restore honor and dignity to their clan or country. Although reputation and honor play a strong part there may be more pragmatic reasons for the Adventurers to set off on a mission to retrieve a potent symbol to rally their people around. Living in a conquered land stripped of its riches leaves little chance for advancement. Would-be adventurers might even have difficulty obtaining the necessary gear to begin such a carrier without rebelling. On the victor's side the opposite is true. Living in a land of privilege, possibly under threat from enemies, engenders a desire to protect that way of life. Old foes defeated but now gathering strength again is an example of one such threat. Perhaps all the rabble need to weld themselves into an army is that banner or crown taken from them long ago.

Sample Adventures



The Rarest of Pearls

The Master Jeweler Dhavala Seshadri is an expert on the topic of pearls and an avid collector of every type and everything associated with them. Dhavala's collection of curious things include many seashells, small sculptures depicting or embedded with pearls and cultural objects of pearl divers. Her prized pearls include white, ivory, gray, black, gold, blue, iridescent, oblong, irregular, and perfectly spherical. Her largest is the size of a halfling's fist the most powerful is a **Pearl of Wisdom**.

There is one pearl she has been searching for all her life, the legendary Orange Pearl of a Sphinx Noble. This strange object grows in the forehead of the most powerful of sphinx. But

these exceptional creatures are rarely encountered let alone hunted down. It is said when they become too old they retreat to a secret place to die. A temple dedicated to Wind and Storm gods where their souls can return to the Elemental Plane of Air. This sanctuary and the bones therein are protected by fierce winged guardians.

Dhavala believes she has discovered the location of the Wind Temple from a scrap of ancient parchment telling of a deep valley hidden in the Pahaadka mountains. Being far too old to embark on such an expedition Dhavala has hired the Adventurers to undertake the journey and bring back, if they can, a single Orange Pearl. She has provided them with directions and a map written in magical ink that only becomes visible at an altitude higher than 8,000 feet. It will show them the way but not until they are well into the heights.

Traveling to the Temple

Overland travel will be the most arduous and time-consuming method of reaching the hidden valley, *assuming* Dhavala's map is accurate (see *Libraries Illuminated Appendix I; Charts, Globes and Maps for more detail on the nature of maps in adventure settings*.) Hidden places are by definition in remote locations. The journey to a point where the characters need to begin serious climbing should take six to eight weeks. Proceeding beyond that point will require climbing gear and will slow travel to 10% of normal. Traveling through the mountainous wilds will also expose the Party to harsh weather and attacks by random beasts. Although the temple is located where Dhavala's map indicates, travelling in a straight line through uncharted mountains is impossible. The Adventurers will have inevitably strayed off course and will take an additional 1-20 days to locate the actual valley. The only access is a steep and narrow pass.

It is likely to occur to some players (DC 18 Intelligence check) that going overland is a dangerous waste of time and arrange for some sort of aerial travel (see *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 119.). Magical flight or the use of flying steeds will require periodically landing for rest and recharge. These times on the ground are subject to random encounters. The use of an airship does not require landing except in an emergency. Although this method allows for greater speed and an easier time of locating the valley from the air it is not risk free. Strong winds in the mountains can push a weekly powered craft off course. Players will have to contend with high altitude sickness and extreme cold as detailed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 110.)

Flying mounts will not enter the Temple valley willingly and cannot be forced to do so short of a Wish spell. Airships and characters using magical flight will find it impossible to penetrate the barrier of buffeting winds surrounding the valley. Trying to do so has a 95% chance of wrecking an airship with all passengers taking 6d6 of falling/bludgeoning damage. There is a 60% chance the airship will be damaged beyond repair. Flying characters will be slammed into the nearest cliff face and take 4d6 bludgeoning damage. Due to the unpredictable strength and direction of the winds this will happen every round until a player lands. In all but the most exceptional of cases descent to the valley floor must be on foot.

AARAKOCRA GUARDIAN

Medium humanoid, neutral good

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 26 (5d8)

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Auran

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Dive Attack. If the aarakocra is flying and dives at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a melee weapon attack, the attack deals an extra 3 (1d6) damage to the target.

ACTIONS

Talon. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Javelin. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Gust of Wind (2/Day). A line of strong wind 60 feet long and 10 feet wide blasts in a direction of its choice. Each creature that starts its turn in the line must succeed on a Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet away from you in a direction following the line.

Any creature in the line must spend 2 feet of movement for every 1 foot it moves when moving closer to you.

The gust disperses gas or vapor, and it extinguishes candles, torches, and similar unprotected flames in the area. It causes protected flames, such as those of lanterns, to dance wildly and has a 50 percent chance to extinguish them.

As a bonus action on each turn before the spell ends, the direction of the blast can be changed.

AARAKOCRA PRIEST

Medium humanoid, neutral good

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 28 (5d8)

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)

Skills Medicine +7, Perception +7, Persuasion +3, Religion +3

Senses passive Perception 17

Languages Auran

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dive Attack. If the aarakocra is flying and dives at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a melee weapon attack, the attack deals an extra 3 (1d6) damage to the target.

Spellcasting. The priest is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The priest has the following cleric spells prepared:

- Cantrips (at will): light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy
- 1st level (4 slots): cure wounds, guiding bolt, sanctuary
- 2nd level (3 slots): lesser restoration, spiritual weapon
- 3rd level (2 slots): dispel magic, spirit guardians

ACTIONS

Talon. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Javelin. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Gust of Wind (2/Day). A line of strong wind 60 feet long and 10 feet wide blasts in a direction of its choice. Each creature that starts its turn in the line must succeed on a Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet away from you in a direction following the line.

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As a bonus action on each turn before the spell ends, the direction of the blast can be changed.

The Guardians

Unless otherwise specified **Aarakocra** guard and maintain the Temple. This clan has a roost perched on a wide ledge high above the structure. Considering their dislike of closed spaces serving inside the temple is an act of devotion and sacrifice. Guardians will not engage in melee unless attacked. They will challenge all trespassers demanding that they leave and use force if necessary. The Guardians are empowered by the elemental magic of the temple's Planar gate which provides them with improved stats and an added ability.

Aarakocra as a people put very little importance on ownership. If the Adventurers open negotiations with the Guardians instead of attacking them the Priests can be persuaded, on a DC 16, Charisma check to give the Party an Orange Peel in exchange for performing a service in devotion to the gods of Wind and swearing an oath to never return or speak of the temple's location.

SUMMONING AIR ELEMENTALS

Three **aarakocra** guardians within 30 feet of each other can magically summon an air elemental. Each must use its action and movement on three consecutive turns to perform an aerial dance and must maintain concentration while doing so (as if concentrating on a spell). When all three have finished their third turn of the dance, the elemental appears in an unoccupied space within 60 feet of them. It is friendly toward them and obeys their spoken commands. It remains for 1 hour, until it or all its summoners die, or until any of its summoners dismisses it as a bonus action. A summoner can't perform the dance again until it finishes a short rest. When the elemental returns to the Elemental Plane of Air, any aarakocra within 5 feet can return with it.

Temple of the Wind Soul

The temple is snuggled into a narrow end of the three-mile-long valley opposite the overland pass. The valley floor is covered with sparse vegetation and scoured by a strong breeze that never stops. From the air, or from a vantage above the pass, it is possible to see the permanent whirlwind above the temple caused by a Planar portal to the Elemental Plane of Air. Keenly perceptive characters might also notice flying figures much larger than a bird moving in the sky over and near the temple. The temple's architecture is Eastern Indian in style with elaborate exterior carvings and tall, elongated stupas. What appears to be a ten-foot-high wall runs around the entire structure on top of which is a wide walkway. Although

there are many narrow windows and others covered with carved lattices of stone there are no doors to be found. The temple was designed exclusively for flying creatures and the only way inside, short of a magical method, is via the roof.

Temple Exterior

Area 1 is a large expanse of bas relief carvings depicting many winged creatures and humanoids in various acts of combat, worship and generally enjoying flight. Area 2 is a wide walkway at a height of 10 feet above the valley floor that runs around the entire periphery. There are no doors secret or otherwise.

Roof Level

The lowest part of the roof is 50 feet from the valley floor. The nature of the temple's elaborately carved exterior allows it to be climbed on a DC 12 Strength or Dexterity check.

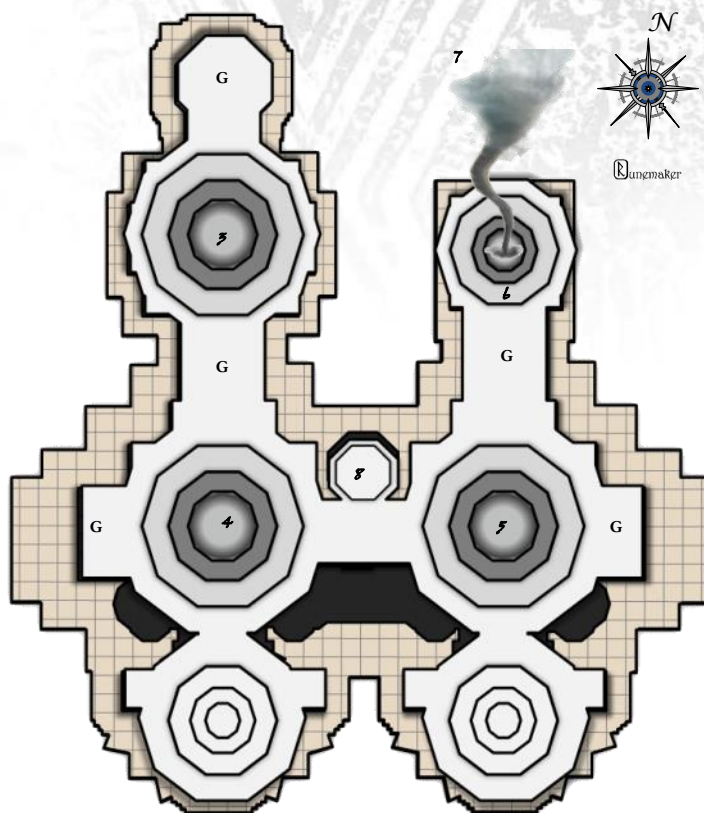
Areas 3-6 - These openings provide access to the interior. The first three are 30' in diameter openings at the top of 70' high stupa towers. The temple floor is 110' below. Area 6 is a 20' wide opening however any creature approaching within 20' must make a DC 16 Strength check or be sucked up into the Planar Portal (No. 7.)

Area 7 – Planar Portal to the Elemental Plane of Air. A permanent whirlwind reaching 500' into the air marks the location of the portal. (See Area 20.)

Area 8 – Exarnation Platform. It is here that the bodies of aarakocra and sphinx are left to be consumed by vultures and eagles in a form of Sky Burial. The bodies remain until only bones are left. These are taken and interred below. There is a 15% chance there is a partial body on the platform.

Areas marked "G" are watch stations manned by 1-2 **Aarakocra Guardians**.





Temple of the Wind Soul—Roof Level

Temple Interior

Area 9 – Hall of Preparation. This hall is dedicated to the recently deceased. Bodies are placed on the stone platform at the arched center of the hall under the open ceiling. Here priests perform various rituals to ease the soul's passage. The body is prepared for excarnation.

Area 10 – Hall of Sending. It is here the priests perform the final rites to release the soul from the cleansed bones of the deceased. The doors to the Soul Gate are opened by a concealed lever in the altar under the ceiling opening. The lever can be detected on a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check. There is a 50% chance one of the two priests will be present in this area at any time. If attacked they will call for aid from the sphinx in Area 18a and Guardians in Area 18c.

Area 11 – Ossuary Antechamber. There are two Guardians stationed in this room. The oddly shaped room beyond has a pillar at its center formed from hundreds of bones melded together.

Area 12 to 17 – Ossuary Crypts. The bronze doors to these rooms will emanate abjuration magic and can only be opened by casting Gust of Wind on them. The doors can be forced on a successful DC 25 Strength check. Faint light and a breeze of air circulates in these rooms from the outside. The interior is filled,

floor to ceiling, with carefully stacked and interwoven bones. A pale greyish dust coats the floor. The room gives the impression of great age. Area 16 contains the bones of four Sphinx Nobles. Each has an orange pearl imbedded in the bones of the forehead.

Area 18a – Androsphinx Guardians. Two **androsphinx** guard the doors to the Soul Gate. They are only absent during the Sending ritual when they will be in Area 10. The sphinx will challenge trespassers and attack if engaged in melee or if a character moves to unbolt the doors to Area 20. They will also come to the aid of the priests in Area 10 should they be attacked. It is possible to reason with the creatures but persuasion will be at a disadvantage if the sphinx know the characters have killed guardians or if they mention anything having to do with sphinx remains.

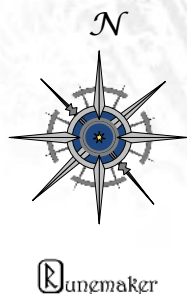
Area 18b – Gynosphinx Guardians. Two **gynosphinx** guard the doors to the Hall of Rest. Like their counterparts in area 18a they will challenge trespassers and attack if engaged in melee or if a character moves to enter Area 19. If pressed in battle one of the gynosphinx will use their teleportation ability to escape into Area 9 and summon help from the androsphinx in Area 18b.

Area 18c – Aarakocra Guardians. At any time there are 1-4 guardians in what amounts to a small lounge and dining area. They will challenge trespassers and attack if engaged.

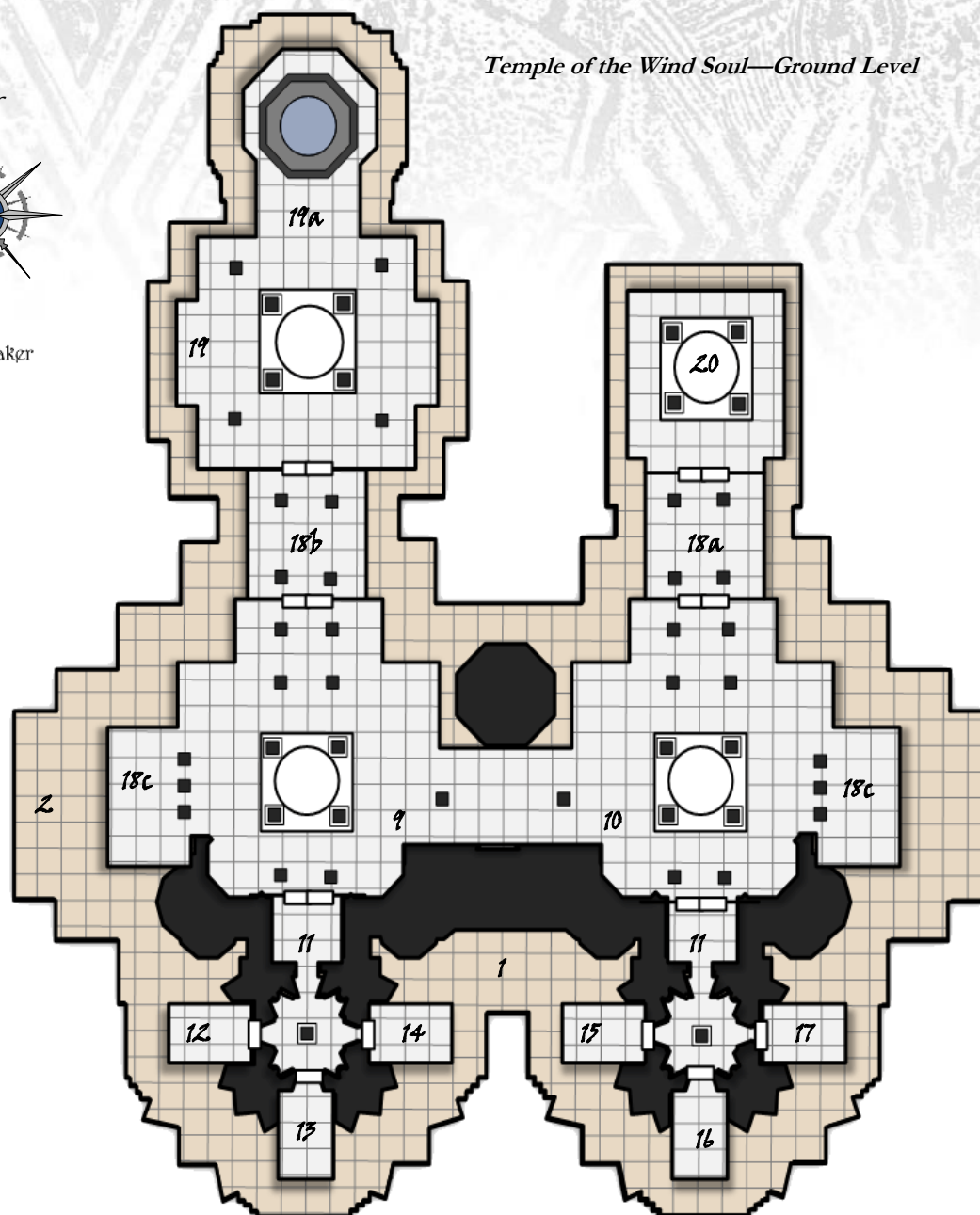
Area 19 – Hall of Rest. This large hall is furnished with many large soft pillows in bright colors embroidered in gold and silver. Thick tapestries featuring bird motifs cover the walls. In this hall the weakened and dying sphinx is hosted and cared for until it is near to death. There is a 20% chance an exceptionally old sphinx is lounging in the area.

Area 19a – Anodyne Pool. This large basin of crystal-clear water is only two feet deep. The water is pleasantly warm and any creature immersing itself will experience a sense of peaceful wellbeing and be free of pain for twelve hours. Water removed from the basin has no magical properties.

Area 20 – Soul Gate. It is believed that the rituals performed by the temple priests allow the souls of sphinx and aarakocra to be taken into the planar gate through the arches in this room. The closed doors are heavy bronze with massive bolts holding them shut. The near defining roar of wind causes the doors to vibrate. These are only opened when a Sending Ceremony is being performed in Area 10. Releasing the bolts will cause the doors to burst open and creates a sudden violent vacuum. Any



Temple of the Wind Soul—Ground Level



creature in the room or in Area 18a outside must make a DC 17 Strength save or be swept up into the vortex and shot out into the Elemental Plane of Air.

Area 21 – Oubliette. The door to this area is locked. It can be opened with a successful DC 11 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Over the years many trespassers have tried to violate the temple. All have failed. Having no need for loot the Guardians tossed their bodies down this 180' pit into a cavern deep below. To the aarakocra these defilers deserve only to be interred in the darkness. If the Adventurers climb down into the cavern they will find a pile of *many* bones. Most of the gear is rotted and rusted. If they take the time to search the entire pile, 6-12

hours they can locate the following treasure.

7000 sp, 25,000 gp, 110 pp, 13 x 100gp gems, Slippers of Spider Climbing, Brooch of Shielding, Adamantine Armor (Chestplate), Potion of Hill Giant Strength, Elixir of Health, Oil of Sharpness, Spell Scroll 5th Level, Armor +2 Leather. The DM is free to add or modify this list as they see fit.

Returning with the Orange Pearl will earn the Adventurers the promised reward as well as greatly enhanced reputation. If the Players break their oath to remain silent as to the location of the temple they will incur a curse and the wrath of one or more gods of the Air and Storm domain.

Sample Adventures

◆ *Totem of the Goblin King*

Tyberlinis is a prosperous city peacefully sitting at the crossroads of two major trading routes. This was not always the case. For many years increasingly large warbands of goblinoids plagued the city and surrounding villages. About sixty years ago the people of Tyberlinis had had enough. A force of adventurers, city guard, armed militia and a squadron of Duke's Men swept through the hills destroying every goblin they could find. It took four months and several pitched battles but the surviving goblins were driven off and few if any have been seen since although a few were spotted recently.

During what the locals call the Goblin War many stolen goods and kidnapped citizens were liberated. Among the spoils of war captured by the Tyberlinis was a stone totem, about two feet tall, of a serpentine dragon coiled around a pillar. Whatever it meant to them; the goblins fought to the last to keep it from falling into the hands of humans. Obviously not of goblin crafting the Duke gifted the item to the library his family founded where it sits in a display cage along with other curiosities.

The Adventurers have been hired by a gnomish merchant named Miles Glissengom a seller of dry goods and sundries in the Student Quarter. For the last three weeks his storehouse has been repeatedly robbed. Although he has hired guards and put triple locks on the doors the thefts continue. Nothing of very great value has been taken, mostly food and housewares, but Glissengom isn't taking well to being victimized. He tells the Party that one of his rival merchants must be the culprit and "they must always be watching." He feels this way because he stationed guards inside the storehouse for three nights without incident so withdrew them. And on the fourth night he was robbed again. The City Guard came in and had a look around but found nothing of note.

Examining the storehouse a successful DC 17 investigation roll will reveal a cleverly hidden trapdoor in a corner of the building. It opens into a tunnel less than three feet in diameter. Only a small creature could crawl

along the descending passage without getting stuck. (If one of the Party are able to transverse the passage they will exit in Area 14 on the map.)

Lore and Rumor

Scouting about the neighborhood the Party finds that it consists of a dozen other shops catering to students and the general public, the Ducal library, the Tymbrin College, livery stable, and three taverns. If they speak to the locals they can discover 1-6 bits of information from the Lore and Rumor table.

The Kobolds

A gang of kobolds from the Smooth Snout clan have invaded the sewers. They haven't done so of their own free will. Most of their clan is being held hostage by a hobgoblin outcast named Kraznaz who is trying to unite several goblin war bands into a small army. He has some idea about avenging his many kin killed in the Goblin War. To bring all the squabbling factions together Kraznaz intends to make himself supreme commander but lacking other hobgoblins to back him up he needs the Goblin King's Totem to legitimize his rule over the mostly goblin hoard. The Hobgoblin sent the kobolds into Tyberlinis to steal the goblin relic from the library and bring it back to him. The Smooth Snout agreed for fear of their clan's safety. Arriving in the city four weeks ago they went about trying to get at the Totem doing what they always do, dig and be stealthy.

D20 Results Lore and Rumor

- | | |
|----|--|
| 01 | The nearest entrance to the sewers is a block away from Glissengom's emporium in an alley. |
| 02 | A few other merchants have suffered small pilfering in the last few weeks. |
| 03 | Talk among the scribes who work at the library and frequently drink at the Blue Hen is that the library must be infested with rats because of the scratching heard from the walls. At least one of the scribes thinks it must be ghosts. |
| 04 | Local merchants are overheard to complain about the sewers backing up twice of late during heavy rain. After all what do they pay their taxes for? |
| 05 | Vague reports of goblins being spotted in the area outside the city. |
| 06 | Rat men have been seen in the sewers and back alleys at night. Repairmen won't go down into the tunnels to fix a broken pump because of it. |
| 07 | A sinkhole opened up a few streets over during the last heavy rain. Swallowed up a wagon and team of horses. |
| 08 | In one of the local villages an entire field of wheat turned purple overnight. |
| 09 | The Duke's Men are complaining of extra patrols and how they dislike the Duke hiring on more men-at-arms. |
| 10 | Someone snuck into a gnomish cobbler's shop and filled all the shoes and boots with manure. |

The Sewers

Unless otherwise specified all areas filled with water are 0-0.5 inches deep up to 1 foot from the tunnel wall and 1-2 feet deep in the center. Most of the water is tainted with sewage and slippery. Areas of water not tinted in green on the map are storm water inflows designed to help flush the system. Above every 25' there is a 2' diameter grate in the ceiling that drains from the cobbled street above. Kobold dug tunnels are 4' x 2.5' in diameter. The area is considered difficult terrain with only filtered light from street drains providing light. At night, the tunnels are completely dark.

To further conceal their presence the kobolds are wearing giant rat pelts and crude masks which makes them appear to be ratmen, at least in the dark tunnels. For entertainment they've been stealing from and playing tricks on the gnomish merchants. If confronted or at least persuaded to listen, providing one of the characters speaks Draconic, the Kobolds can be reasoned with. Given a better alternative that guarantees the safety of their folk the Kobold leader, Chaster will agree to stand down and direct a force to Kraznaz's camp. If the Smooth Snout are freed they will be receptive to a contract with the city to move into and maintain the sewers in exchange for a yearly payment of apples and hard cider.

Traps

The following traps are designated in red on the sewer map.

Trap 1: An 8' deep pit has been dug in the center of the tunnel which has filled with water and can only be detected on a successful DC 15 Investigation check. Falling into the pit will soak a creature and anything they carry in sewerage. They must make a DC 12 Constitution save or become diseased within 24 hours. The infection will last for 1-4 days unless **Cure Disease** is used.

Trap 2: A tripwire runs across the tunnel under the water. The wire can be detected on a successful DC 13 Investigation check. Triggering the trap causes a rusty but sharp and heavy great axe head to fall from a slot in the ceiling. Roll to hit with advantage against the AC of the character who tripped the trap. The blade causes 1-8 hit points of damage.

Trap 3: A tripwire runs across the tunnel just before it merges with another. The wire can be detected on a successful DC 13



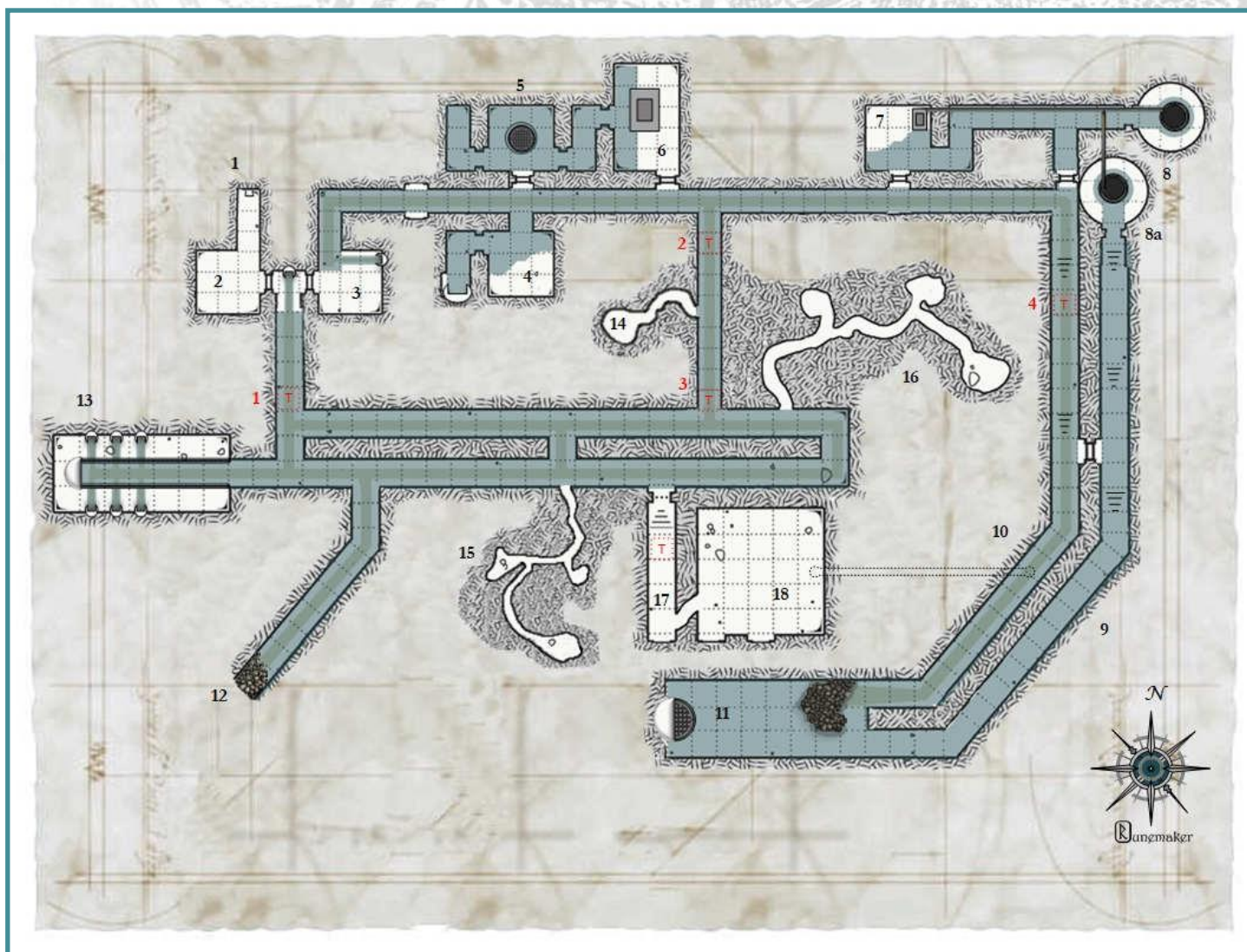
Investigation check. Triggering the trap causes a spring-arm attached to the north wall of the east-west tunnel to strike anyone standing in the opening. The arm has three knives lashed to it. Roll to hit for each of the blades with advantage. A character takes 1d4 hit points of damage for every blade that lands an attack.

Trap 4: A tripwire runs across the tunnel under the water. The wire can be detected on a successful DC 13 Investigation check. The wire is here to literally trip anyone stumbling upon it. A character must make a DC 14 Dexterity save or fall forward into the tunnel. As the slope in this section is very steep a fallen character will slide downward for 30' as per Area 10 above. Sharpened bits of metal have been driven into the sides and bottom of the raceway 30' from the wire. A sliding character will come in contact with 1d4 blades taking 1d4 points of damage each. In addition They must make a DC 12 Constitution save or become diseased within 24 hours. The infection will last for 1-4 days unless **Cure Disease** is used.

Area 1 - Sewer Entrance. This is the entrance, via a manhole in an alley, closest to Glissengom's shop. A rusty metal ladder descends 30'.

Area 2 - Maintenance Station. Normally this room would house tools and supplies for the sewer workers. The room is empty except for a few wooden pegs in the west wall and the remains of a broken and rotted barrel. The doorway to the east has a 1' high lip separating it from the tunnel beyond.

Area 3 - Like Area 2 the doorway into this room has a 1' lip probably to help keep it free of sewerage from the tunnel to the west. The bulk of this room is raised 3' above the level of the water filled tunnel leading north. Four steps allow access down.



Area 4 - Like Area 2 the doorway into this room has a 1' lip. The room is empty except for standing water rising up to fill half the area.

Area 5 - Rainwater catchment. Water from storm drains collects in this area. The door into the main tunnel is something like a hatch to keep the sewerage out. There is a large drain in the center of the room. The water in this area is currently at 3' in depth.

Area 6 - Pump Room. This room is dominated by a combination waterwheel and suction pump device that stands 6' tall. It is used to pump rainwater up to storage tanks on the surface. The wheel is jammed with several large pieces of wood. Based on the way they are positioned it seems intentional.

Area 7 - Pump Room. This room has a much smaller version of the pumping apparatus in Area 6. It's inactive and does not appear damaged. There is a pipe extending from the pump into the east wall.

Area 8 - Storm Runoff Cistern. This circular chamber holds a

deep cistern at its center. There are circular conduits in the wall where collected rainwater is fed in. A pipe runs down the north wall of the tunnel outside and down into the cistern.

Area 8a - Storm Runoff Cistern. This circular chamber holds a deep cistern at its center. There are circular conduits in the wall where collected rainwater is fed in. A runs from the north wall and down into the cistern. The tunnel to the south is three feet lower than the cistern. Excess water flows down the south tunnel.

Area 9 - Storm Water Flush Line. Excess runoff from Area 8a flows down this tunnel which descends at a steep angle. There are no overhead drains in this section of the system.

Area 10 - Sewerage Effluent Line. This tunnel descends downward at a steep angle. The surfaces are covered in algae and slick mud. Each character traveling downward must make a successful DC 14 Dexterity check or fall prone. A fallen creature will slide 30' before they can attempt another DC 14 Dexterity check to regain control. See also Trap No. 4.

Area 11 - Culvert to River. Tunnels 9 and 10 both exit into this

larger, vaulted chamber. There is a large pile of rocks partially blocking the north sewer line. At the western end is the entrance to a culvert with a metal grate over it. One side has been pried up so there is a space large enough for a small creature to squeeze through. Past the grate is a 3' high tunnel that runs for a quarter of a mile and ends at the river outside the city.

Area 12 - Blocked Tunnel. This tunnel is completely blocked by rocks and dirt.

Area 13 - College Sewer Station. This vaulted chamber has a 7' ceiling. There are six pipes draining sewerage into the main line. These are the drains from the College above. In the SW corner is a large pile of rags and bits of wood. This is the nest of two Giant Diseased Rats that the Kobolds have avoided. Searching through the nest on a successful DC 12 Investigation check reveals a gold ring worth 25gp among bits of broken glass and metal.

Area 14 - Kobold Tunnel to Glissengom's. This narrow tunnel is dug into the earth and stone is obviously not part of the sewers. The passage slopes gradually upward and comes up beneath Glissengom's storehouse. On a DC 15 Investigation check a character may detect the faint tracks of small reptilian feet in the tunnel's dirt floor.

Area 15 - Kobold tunnels. These tunnels are the same as the one in Area 14. The small chambers at the end of each has a vertical shaft going up about 30' and ending at the foundation of a building but no further. On a DC 15 Investigation check a character may detect the faint tracks of small reptilian feet in the tunnel's dirt floor.

Area 16 - Kobold Tunnels. The first two side tunnels resemble those found in Area 15. The chamber at the end of the tunnel shows much more activity. A number of buckets and sacks are piled here. There are shovels and a crude scaffolding assembled in the chamber rising up to a stone surface with a 3' diameter hole chiseled into it. The opening leads into the sub-basement, really the foundation footings, of the Duke's Library. There are signs of digging and chiseling at several points around the footings. None of them have broken into the library proper.

Area 17 - Trapped Entrance to the Kobold Lair. The door to this corridor is above the waterline, made of stone and very old. Behind it are a short flight of stairs leading up about 10'. A crude wall or gate of wood planks blocks the hallway 30' from the stairs. A tripwire runs across the corridor just past the stairs. The wire can be detected on a successful DC 13 Investigation check. Triggering the trap causes two heavy crossbows concealed behind the barricade to fire down the hallway. Roll

to hit with advantage against the closest two characters. Each bolt does 1d10 damage. Anyone struck must also make a DC 12 Constitution save or become poisoned for the next ten minutes unless healed.

Behind the barricade there is a hole in the east wall only large enough for a small creature to crawl through. It is blocked by a large rock at the far end. The rock can be moved on a successful DC 12 Strength check.

Area 18 - Kobold Lair. The ceiling of this large room is supported by several arches and has the look of an abandoned cellar. There are a dozen or so simple pallets, a few barrels and crates of food stuffs, a cooking fire along with odd bits of personal gear scattered around the chamber. If the kobolds feel trapped by a superior force and the Party has not tried to parlay with them they will flee through their escape tunnel. This is a hole in the ceiling with a rope dangling from it. The rope can be pulled up behind them. The tunnel, only big enough for a small creature to crawl through, leads to a false street drain in the ceiling of tunnel 10. From there the kobolds will try to escape through the culvert and out to the river. Searching the room with a successful DC 14 Investigation check will uncover a scrap of paper with a sketch of the Goblin King's Totem. There are several giant rat hides hanging on pegs along with the Kobold's scary masks. A cage of rats sits by the cooking fire.

I hope you have enjoyed this Compendium and will find it helpful in world and campaign building. If so please leave a review or comment on the Dungeon Masters Guild site

COMING SOON

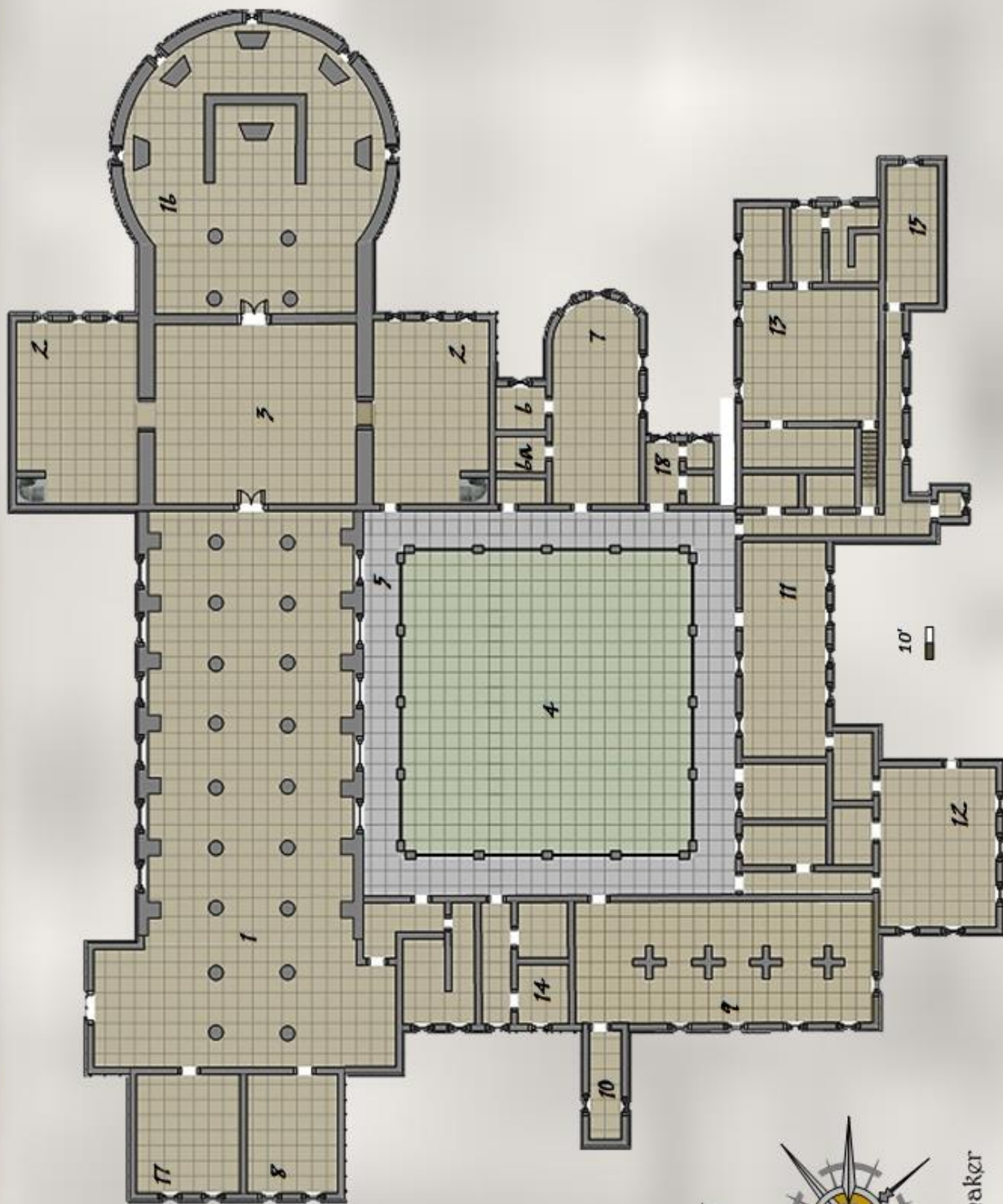
ILLUMINATED ADVENTURES

Expanded, and fully playable D&D 5th Edition modules based on the samples found in the

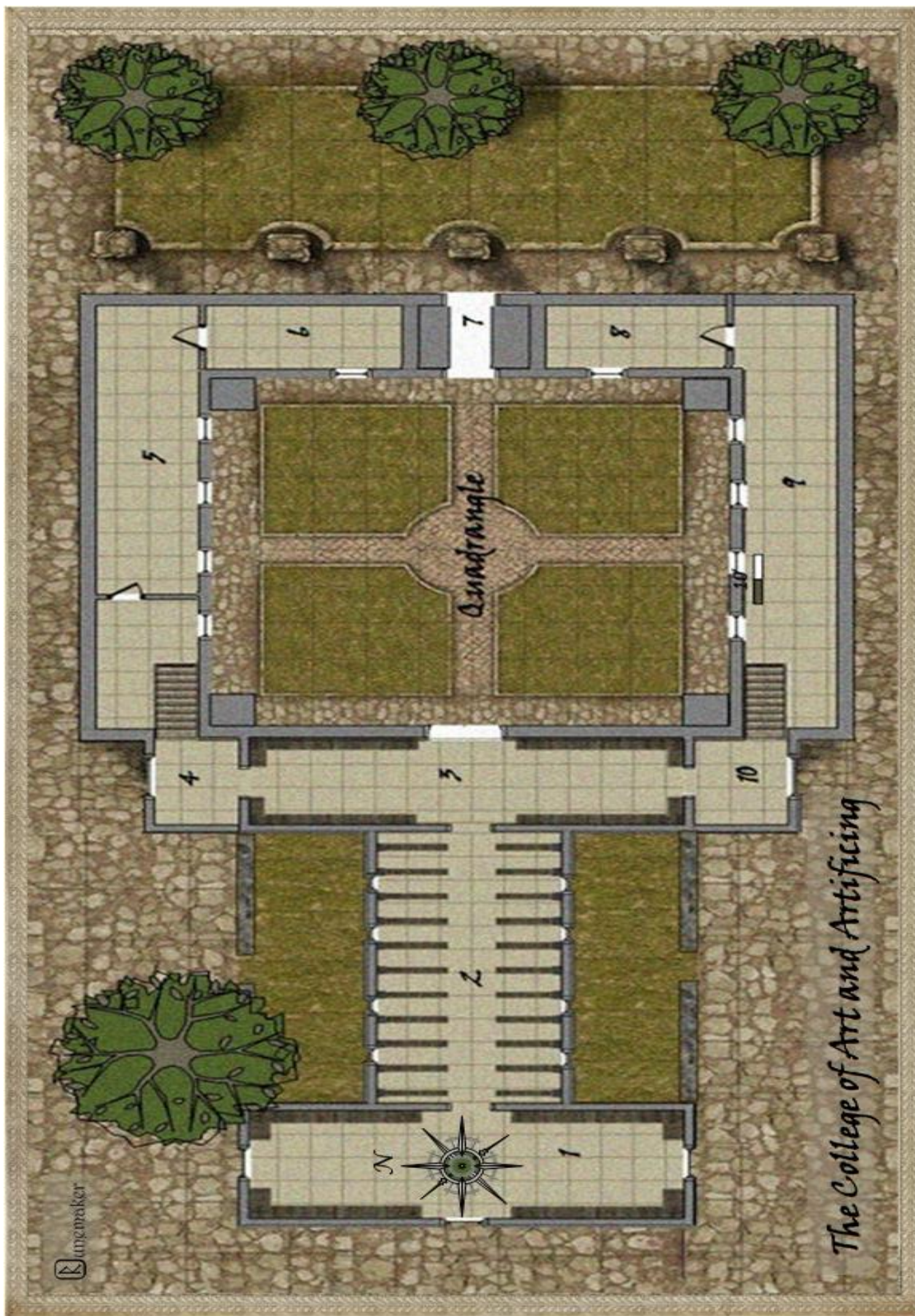
Libraries Illuminate Supplements.

"It's not just about Books"

MAPS

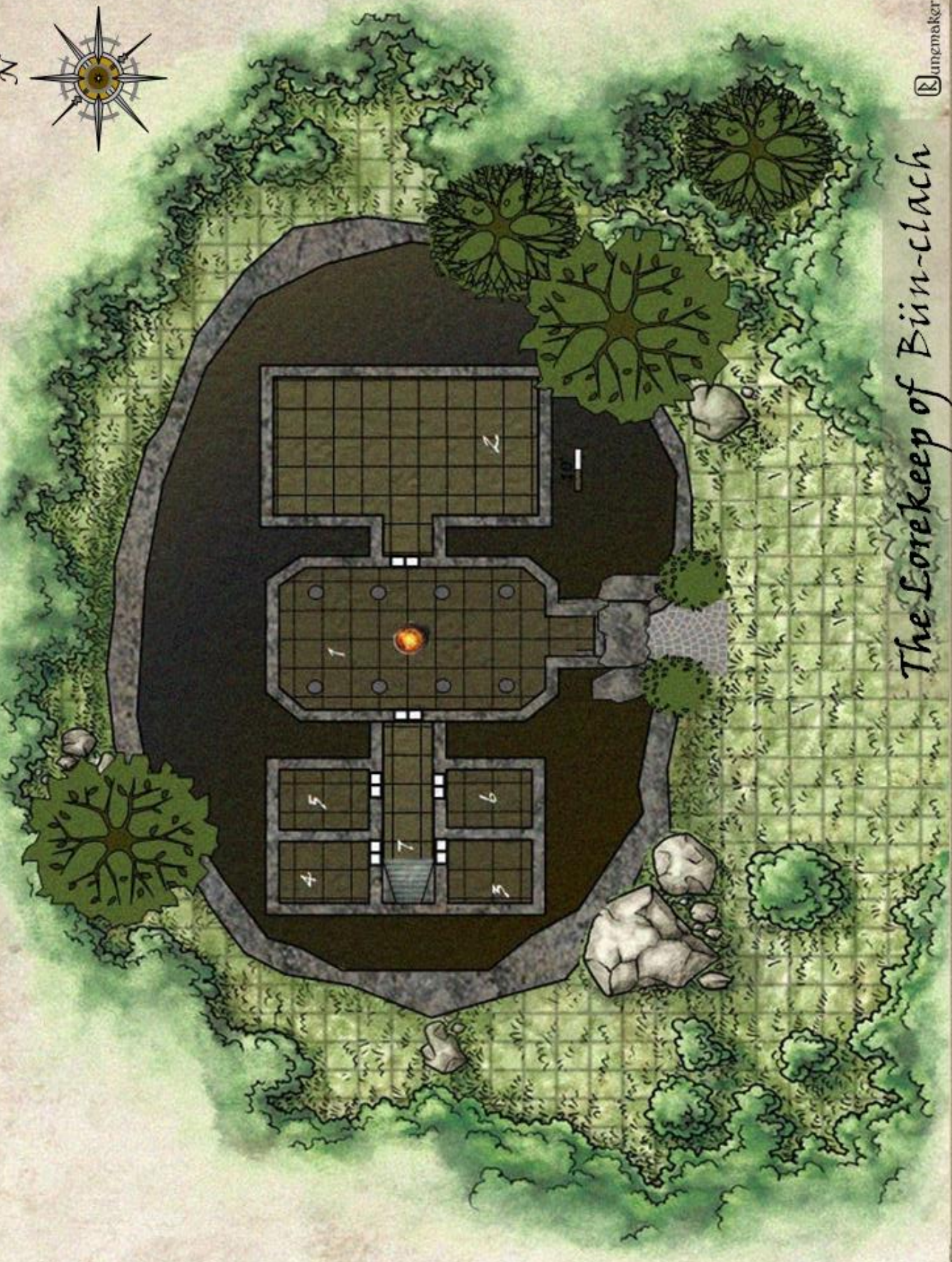


Monastery of the Six Pearls





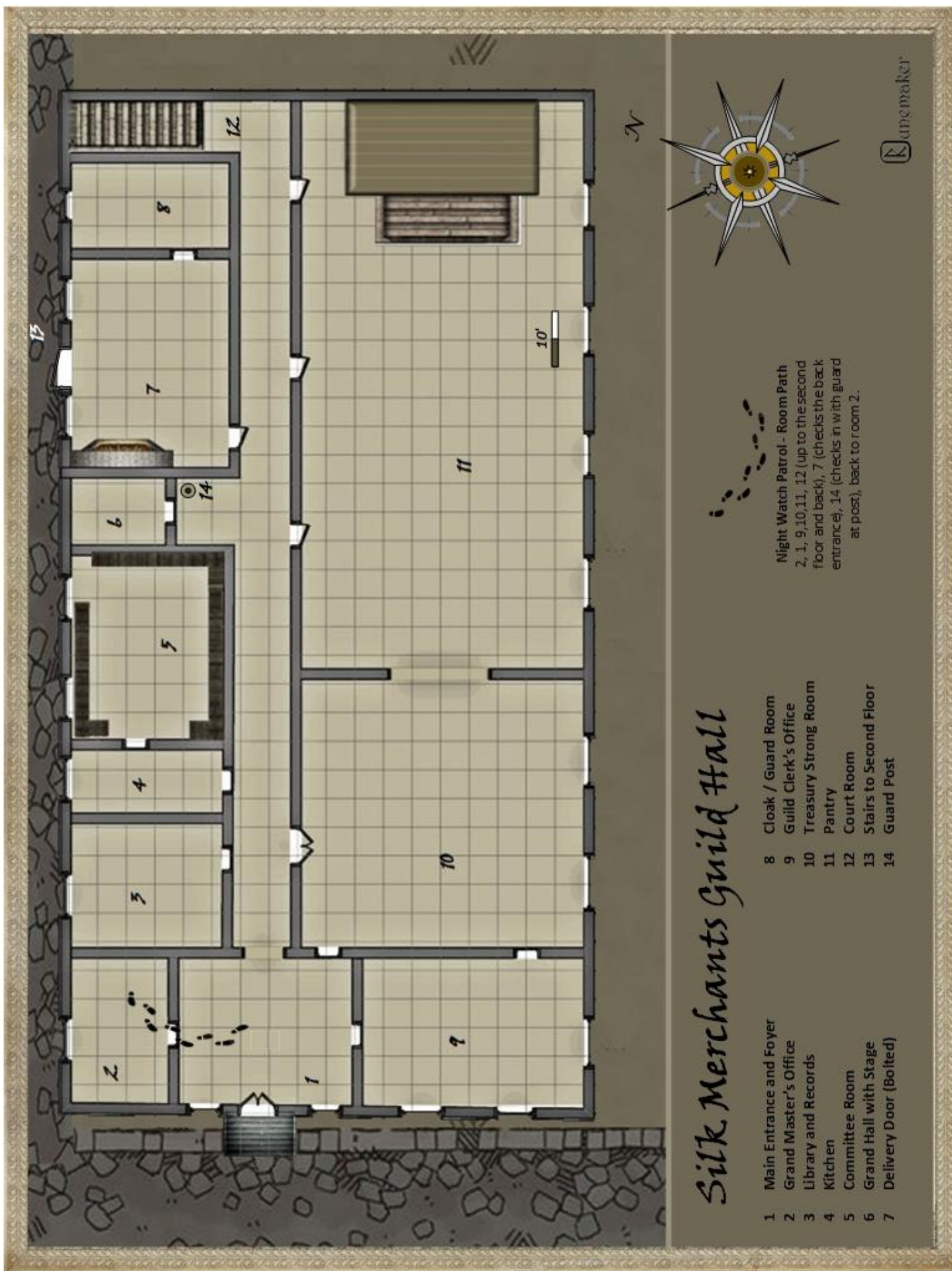
The Lorekeep of Bün-clach

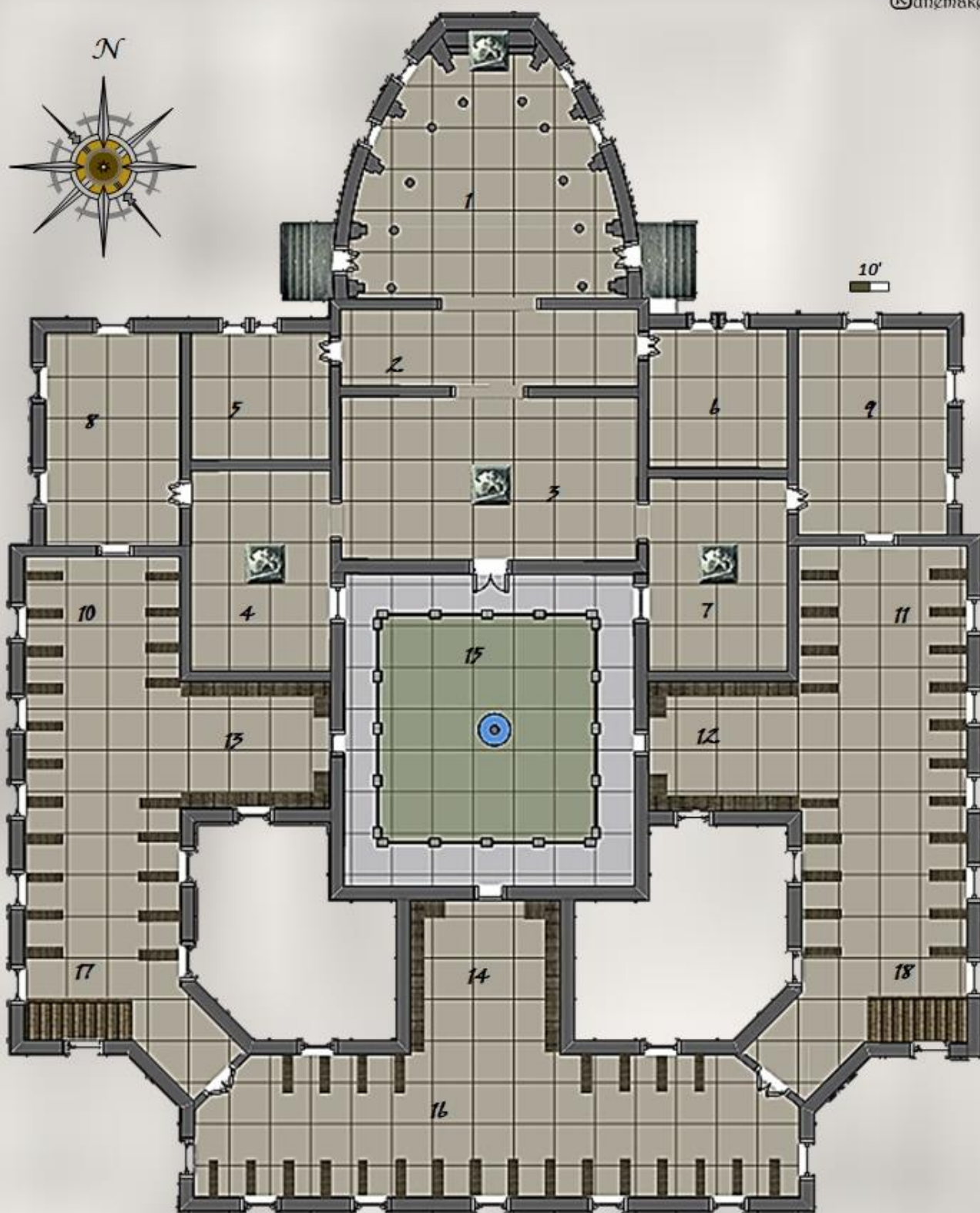


The Fellowship of Illusion



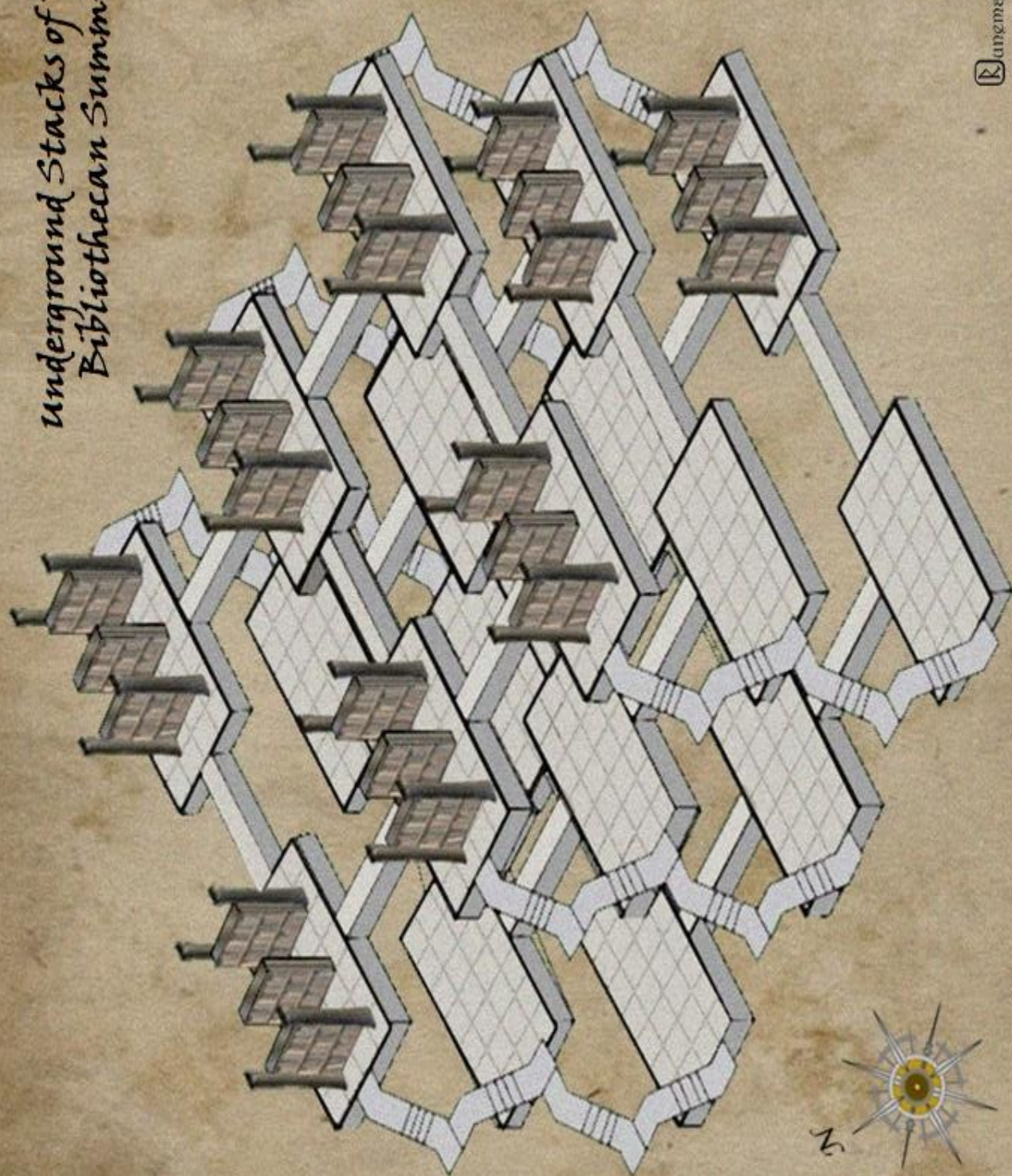
Runemaker





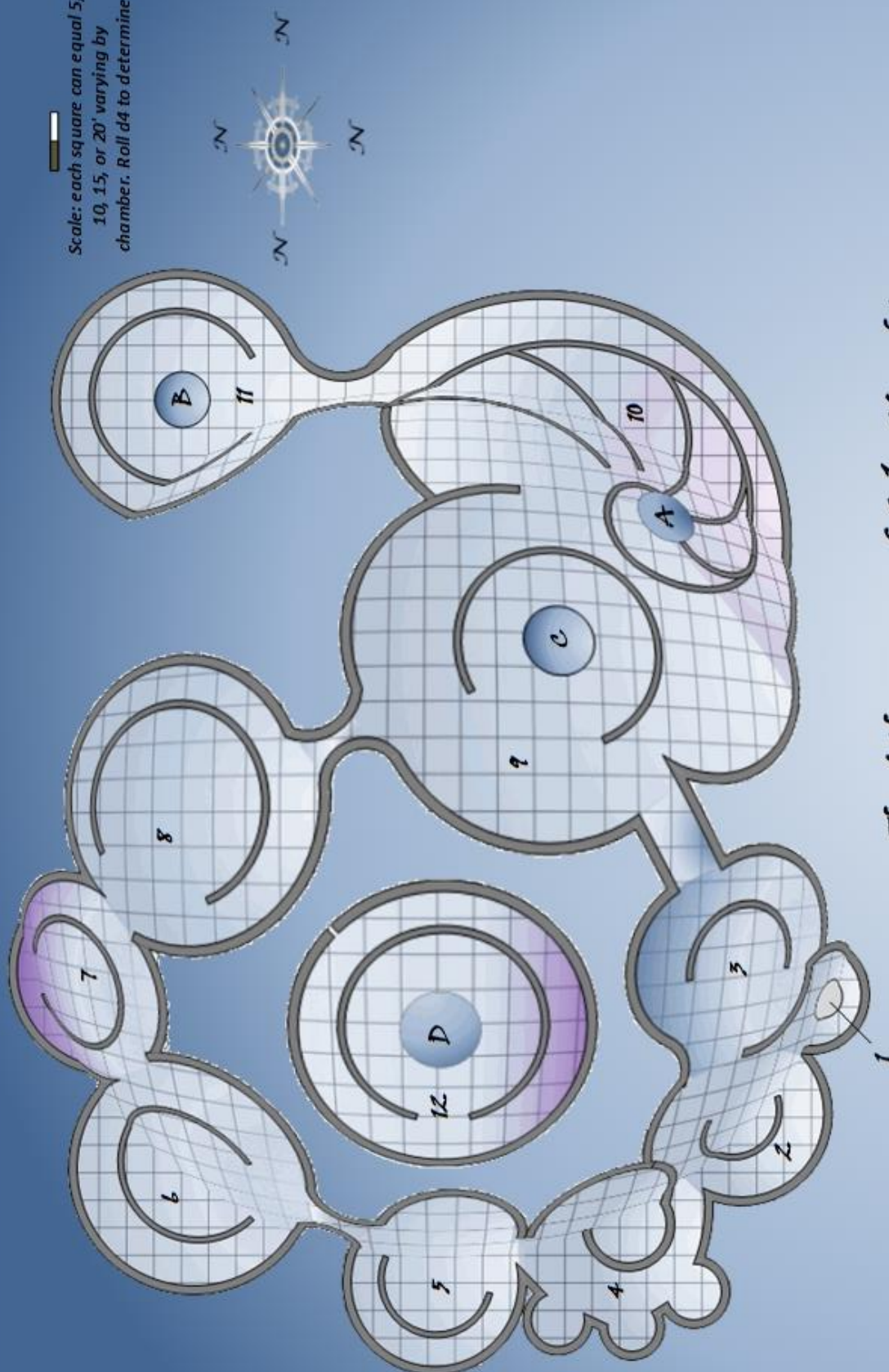
*The Bibliothecan Summi
Ground Level*

*Underground Stacks of The
Bibliotheca Summi*

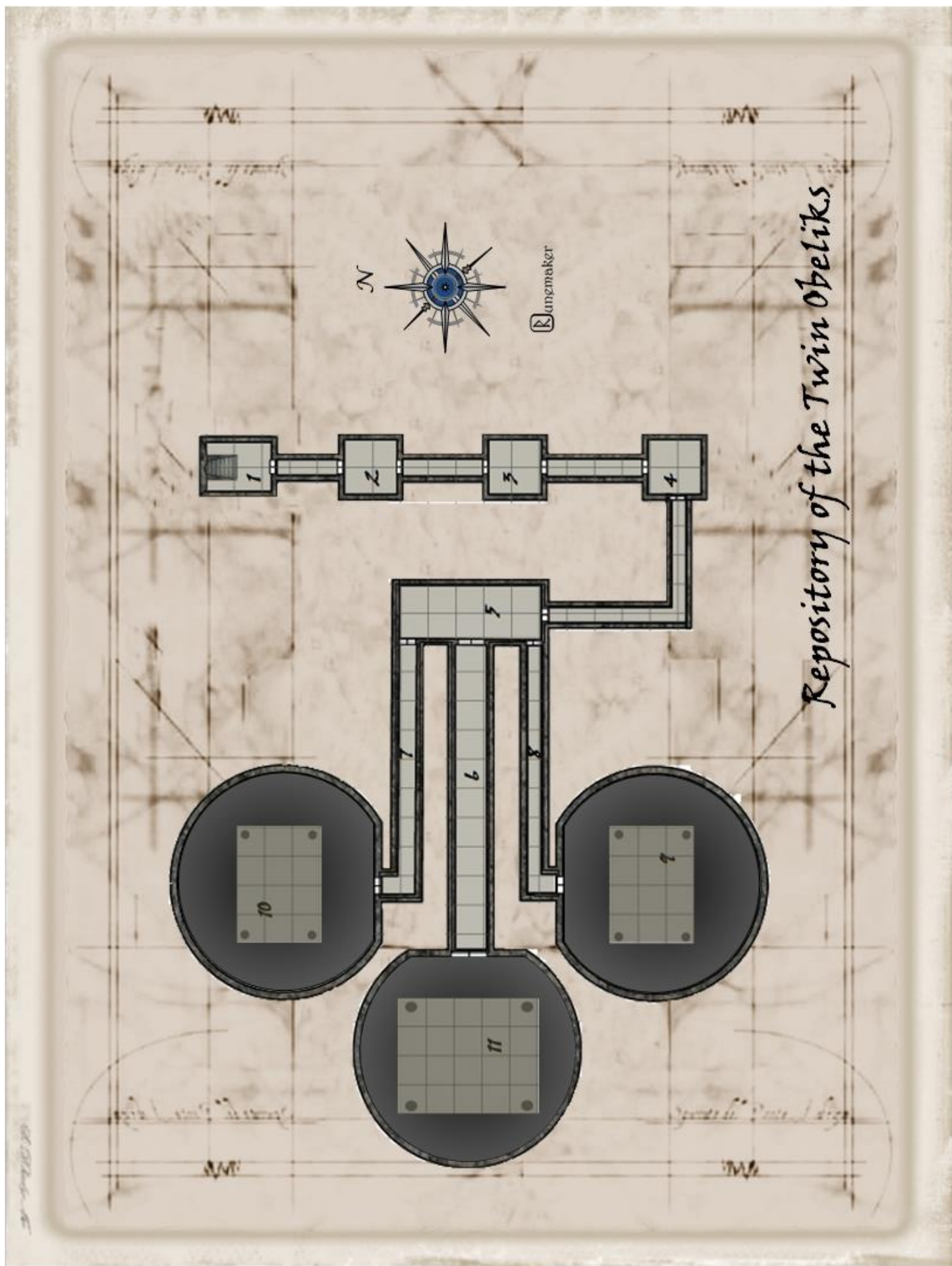


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Scale: each square can equal 5, 10, 15, or 20' varying by chamber. Roll d4 to determine



The Athenaeum of Coba Naachtum



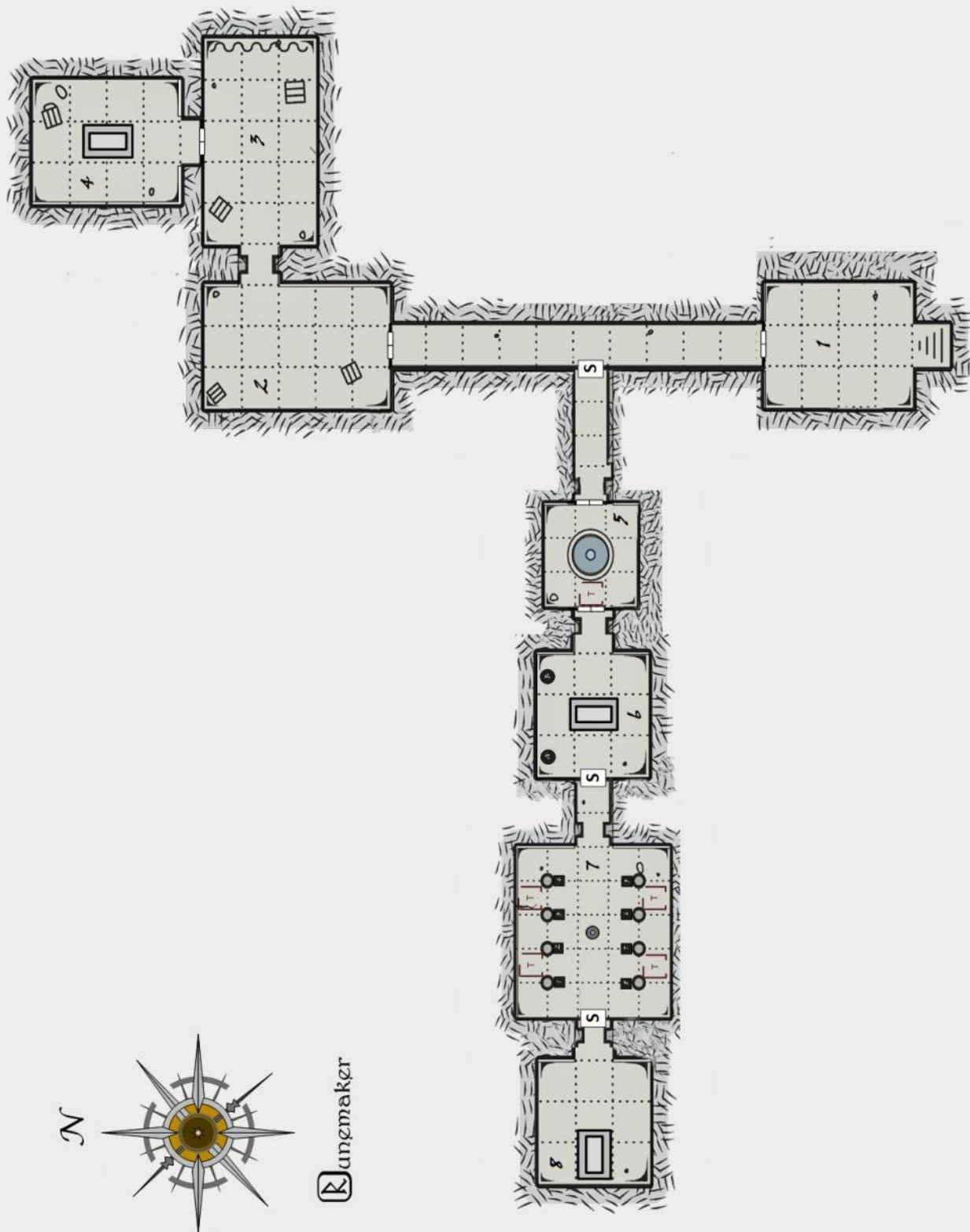


Plan of Eyford House – Ground Floor

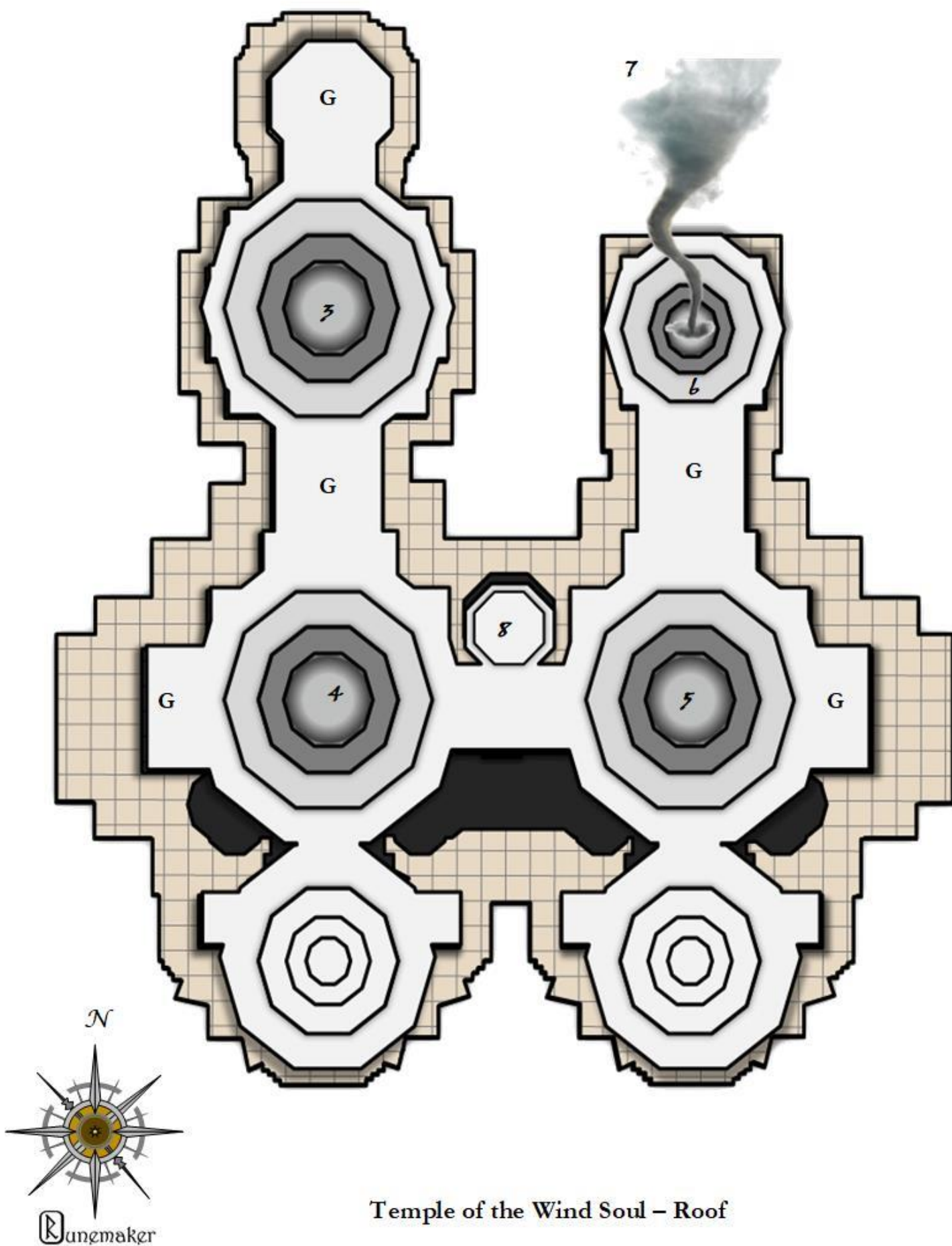


The House of Scrolls

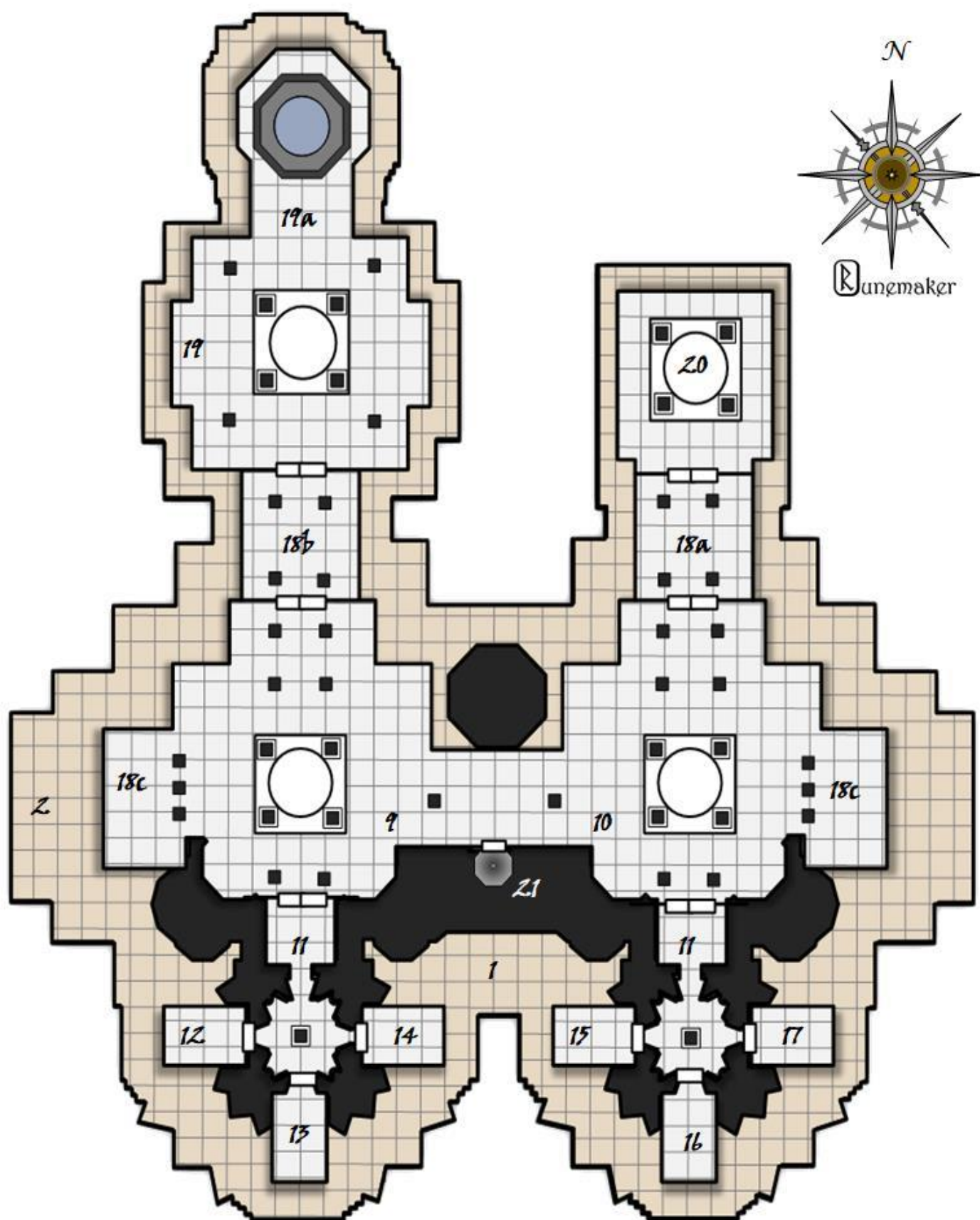
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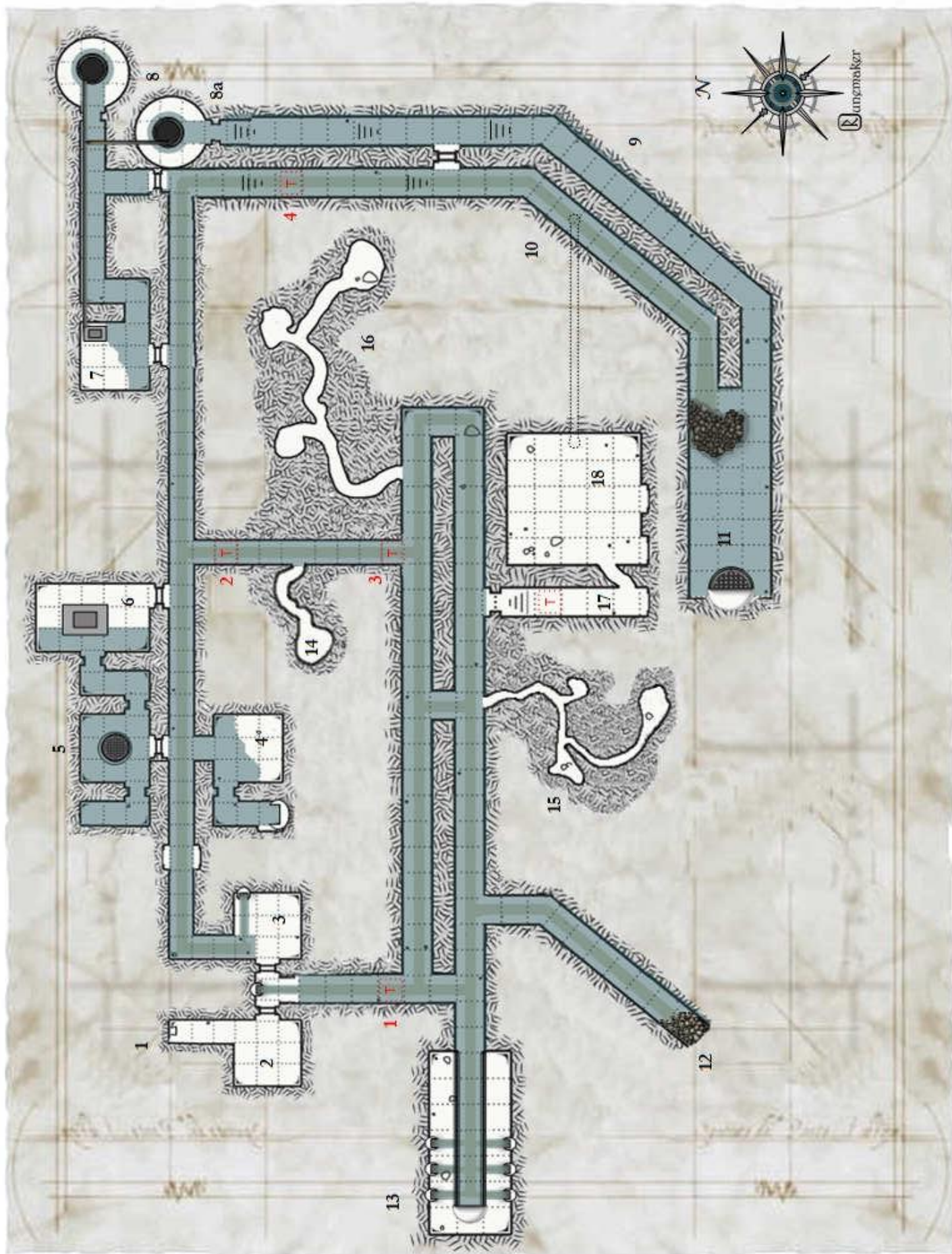


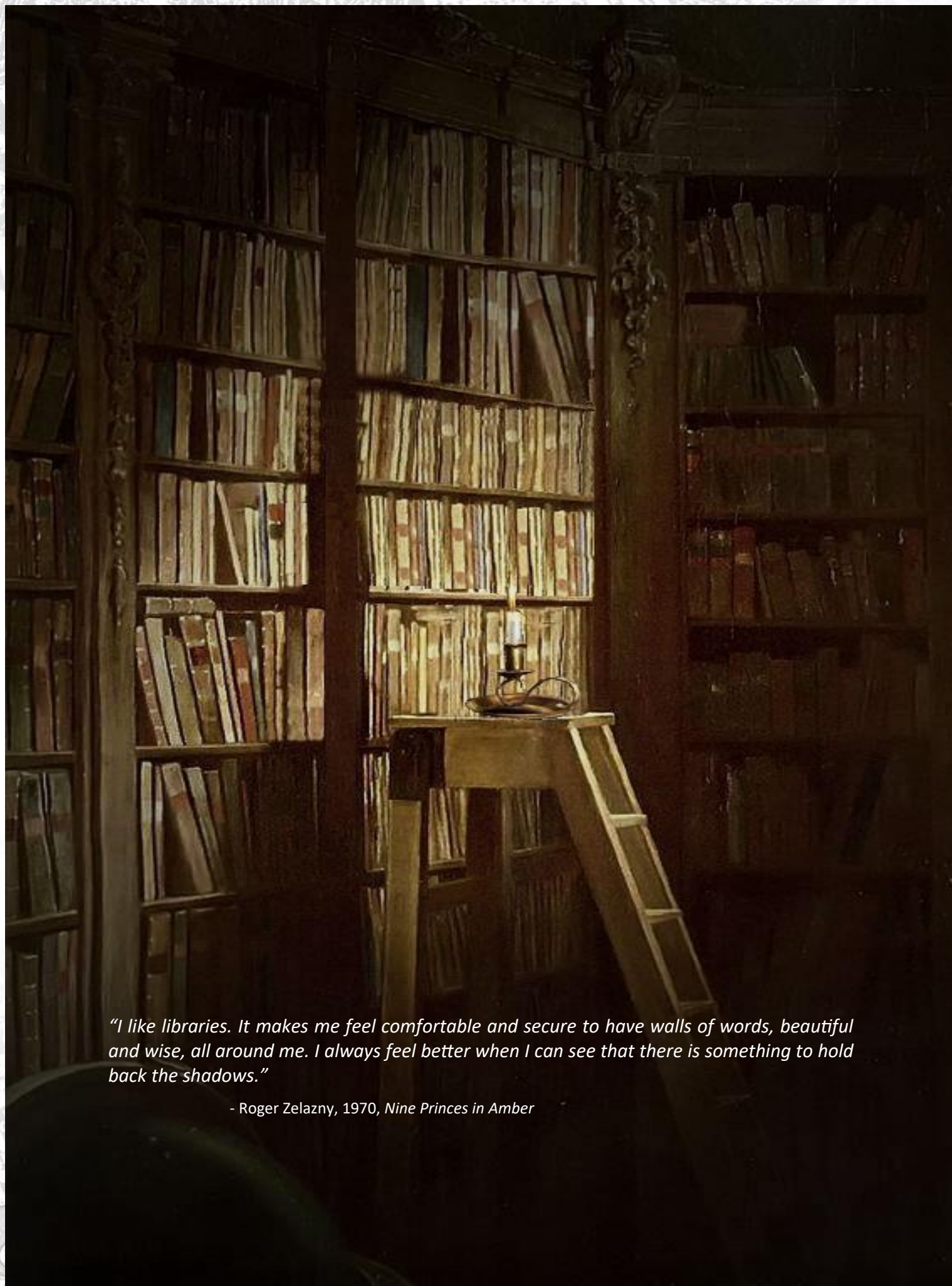


Temple of the Wind Soul – Roof



Temple of the Wind Soul – Ground Level





"I like libraries. It makes me feel comfortable and secure to have walls of words, beautiful and wise, all around me. I always feel better when I can see that there is something to hold back the shadows."

- Roger Zelazny, 1970, Nine Princes in Amber