

The Clockwork Palace

An Adventure Location featuring a Cult, New Magic, Personalities, Creatures and Adventure Seeds.

Introduction

At the edge of the city stands the Clockwork Palace, a huge building made not of stone but of brass. Over a mile long, it is an intricate mechanism of clocks, levers, hydraulics, and only the clockwork god knows what else. The uses of some parts of the mechanism are obvious. Clocks are everywhere within the palace, mechanical men guard the automatic doors, and an orrery (a mechanical model of the planetary system) dominates the main entrance lobby.

But even those who live there, the Clockmakers, know few of the Palace's ancient secrets. Nor do they know its original function. Was it a temple to a mechanical god? Was it *itself* a god? Did the Clockmakers once build the Palace, or did they move there, before even their accurate records began?

This short supplement for OpenQuest details the Clockwork Palace, its mechanical magic, the Clockmakers, and half a dozen adventure outlines linked to the palace. You can use it in any OpenQuest fantasy game where such a part mechanical, part magical wonder fits in.



Legals

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The Clockmakers

The Clockmakers believe the universe is a vast mechanism, which they call the Universal Machine, and that one who understands the Universal Machine can see both the past and the future, mapped out by the mechanical motions of a deterministic world. Some Clockmakers are fatalistic, but most strive to improve their own craft and understanding.

The Clockmakers all dwell in the Clockwork Palace. They wear uniform grey robes, without sign or insignia. Many carry magical clockwork items, described below, and can learn the magic to create more such.

Clockmakers are not priests worshipping a god. They are philosophers seeking to understand the Universal Machine. Nonetheless, they have access to some Divine Magic spells granted by their understanding, and the Clockwork Palace (to be precise, the Orrery within the Clockwork Palace; see below) serves as a temple. However, rather than Lore (Religion), Clockmaker cult ranks and Divine Magic uses the Lore (Mathematics) skill.

Type of Cult: Philosophical Movement.

Worshippers: The Clockmakers are mechanics, mathematicians, and inventors. All Clockmakers are initiates of their cult, living and working in the Clockwork Palace; there are no lay members. They can learn any of the Clockmaker Battle Magic spells at unlimited magnitude, and Divine Magic spells at a maximum magnitude of 2.

Worshipper Duties: Clockmakers attend the machinery of the Clockwork Palace, and labour in its workshops. Some go out into the world to buy food and supplies, or sell some of the minor marvels made in the Palace. A few even go on missions for longer times, and at greater distances. Clockmakers are free to come and go as they please, but being a Clockmaker is a full-time job.

Cult Skills: Craft, Lore (Mathematics), Engineering, Mechanisms.

Battle Magic: Create Power Mechanism (see below), Cushion Fall, Hand of Death, Heal, Mobility, Speedart, Unlock.

Divine Magic: Divination, Divine Heal, Repair and Replace, See Past.

Special Benefits:

An initiate in the Clockmakers can learn the unique Clockmaker spell, *Create Power Mechanism*. They have a +25% bonus to any use of the Mechanisms skill in a workshop within the Clockwork Palace, and know how to navigate the outer portions of Clockwork Palace with its shifting rooms and doors.

There are no Priests or Holy Warriors amongst the Clockmakers. Rather, Clockmakers have a circle of Masters. Getting to become a Master requires 5 Improvement Points, and the skills Lore (Mathematics), Engineering, and Mechanisms all at 75%. A Master Clockmaker is not limited in the magnitudes of Divine Magic he or she has access to.

Further, a Master Clockmaker has a mechanical servant or messenger, programmed to obey his or her orders.

New Spell: Create Power Mechanism

Permanent

The *Power Mechanism* is a rotating device made of clockwork, powering the clockwork magic items of the Clockmakers (examples are described below). It is effectively a Magic Point store, and for each Magnitude of this spell, one Magic Point can be stored in the Mechanism.

Several Clockmakers with this spell can add their Magnitudes. Casting this spell is not so much an ordinary magic as a feat of engineering; it takes one hour per Magic Point stored.

Any Clockmaker contributing towards making a Power Mechanism must contribute one Improvement Point each, otherwise, the Power Mechanism does not run permanently, but rather is exhausted and ruined when the Magic Points are exhausted.

If everyone involved in creating a Power Mechanism spends an Improvement Point, the Mechanism runs forever, and recovers lost Magic Points at the rate of one per hour.

Clockwork Magic

Clockwork magic could be reasonably common in your game world, or something obscure. The Clockmakers are an obscure faction, not even fully knowing their own agenda. Clockwork Magic items tend to involve time in some way. Clockwork items all have a part which slowly rotates with time. This rotating mechanism stores the Magic Points used by the item's powers. Unlike ordinary magic items, the user cannot transfer their own Magic Points into a Magic Point store; rather, the item regenerates its own Magic Points at the rate of one per hour.

Clockwork Magic effects are based on Battle Magic, but often with effects at relatively high magnitudes.

Boots of Great Speed

These magical boots can distort the times needed to travel; they contain the spell Mobility 6, and store 12 Magic Points.

Clockwork Crossbow

This device actually speeds time, allowing it to fire lots of times in quick succession, or to really speed a single missile at its target.

Mechanically, the Clockwork Crossbow is a light crossbow (1D8 damage) which can cast the battle magic spells Multimissile 2 (OpenQuest, page 112), and Speedart 2 (OpenQuest, page 113). It stores 8 Magic Points.

The Hand of Time

This fearsome device is shaped like a skeletal hand, with fingers that flex in time with the mechanism. It causes a shock as the weight of time comes down on a victim it touches when activated. The *Hand of Time* is enchanted with the Battle Magic spell Hand of Death 4 (OpenQuest, page 110), and stores 4 magic points.

Healing Cabinet

The healing cabinet looks disturbingly like a coffin. One who climbs in gains the benefits of the casket's magic spell, Heal 6, which in this case rewinds a portion of time to undo an injury. It can also cure disease, or reattach a severed limb. The Healing Casket stores 18 magic points; climbing in for two or even three doses of the Heal 6 spell at once is permitted.

Helm of Times Past

One who dons this helm falls under the influence of the spell Invoke Ancestor Spirit 3 (OpenQuest, page 207). It stores 3 magic points.

Rod of Weariness and Restoration

This simple device takes the form of a metal rod about as long as a human hand, containing the usual rotating mechanism. When pointed at a target, the rod can cast the spells Restore Energy 3 (OpenQuest page 113) and Sap Energy 3 (OpenQuest, page 113). It stores 6 Magic Points.

Safety Belt

The safety belt triggers automatically when the one who wears it falls any distance, slowing time for them and so slowing their descent. The wearer can also trigger it to put themselves under the influence of the spell Walk on Water 3. It contains the spell Cushion Fall 6 (OpenQuest, page 107), and stores 9 Magic Points.

Strengthening Cord

The Strengthening cord is a piece of wire with a small rotating mechanism. To use it, a character winds it around an object. It contains the spell Harden 1, and stores 3 Magic Points; it automatically takes effect when the object the item is attached to is threatened with damage, temporarily freezing it time.

Universal Key

The universal key is made of metal which mystically flows, meaning it will fit any lock in existence. It is enchanted with the spell Unlock 5 (OpenQuest, page 115) and stores 10 Magic Points.

Wand of Rust

This wand is made of rusty metal, though the usual rotating mechanism is free of corrosion. When pointed at another metal object, it accelerates time, covering it in rust. When pointed at a metal weapon, the effect is that of the spell Dull Weapon 3 (OpenQuest, page 108). It stores 9 Magic Points.

Personalities

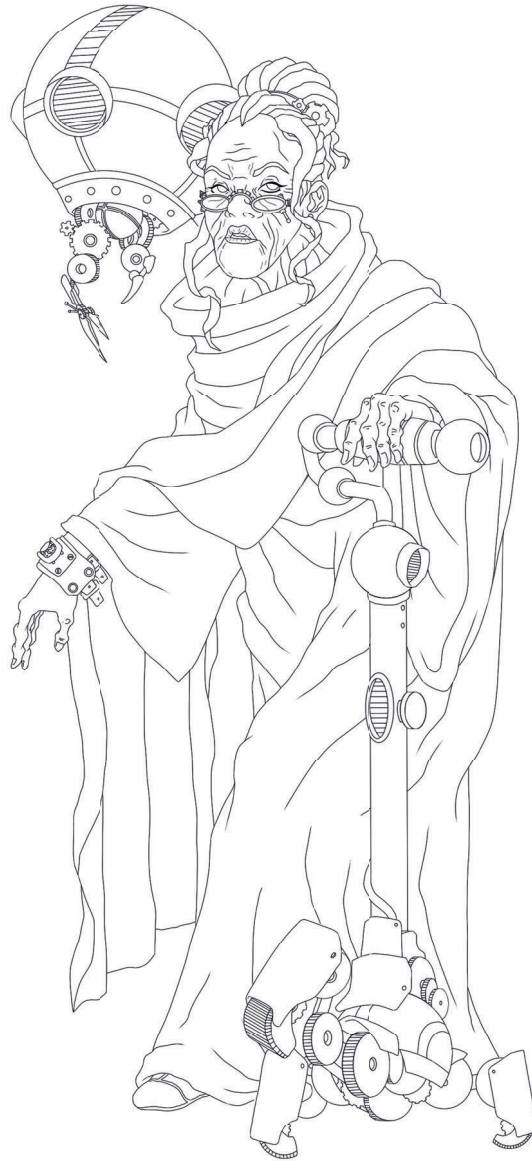
Master Sheyas

Sheyas is the Master Clockmaker who most often deals with visitors to the Clockwork palace. She is an old woman with wrinkled tea-brown skin. Sheyas who wears glasses, refracting lenses which correct her weak eyesight, an advancement over most ordinary technology in the world.

Sheyas views herself not so much an inventor as a tinkerer. She has great talents in making old things work again, and in adopting and modifying new technology, even that not of the Clockmakers, to new purposes.

The old woman is also fond of “labour-saving” gadgetry of all kinds, and will show it off to guests. Some of these gadgets are useful and practical. Most, however, are not.

Sheyas might serve as an eccentric patron of player characters. She will sponsor expeditions to recover ancient technological artefacts and manuscripts, and to investigate new findings.



Master Sheyas' Gadgets

Some of Sheyas' gadgets are:

An automatic tea-making device, incorporating a kettle, tea strainer, and mechanical arm to pour the tea. More often than not, the device misses the cup, or sprays hot tea everywhere. However, Sheyas is keen to improve it, and will often try the new improved version on unsuspecting visitors, hoping it will work this time.

The wardrobe. One can step into the wardrobe and be dressed with clothing the wardrobe itself selects for a named occasion. The device works, but is slow, taking at least thirty minutes.

A self-playing accordion, which can play a variety of songs, either a specific piece or general music for a named occasion. After the first few notes, it drifts just slightly off-key. Sheyas seems unaware of this.

The automatic barber; a globe which covers the entire head, to cut the wearer's hair, and if necessary shave him. It emits alarming snipping and whirring sounds, and those who wear the device have been known to scream. But surprisingly, it is very efficient, and does a quick and neat job.

Master Sheyas

STR 9

CON 10

DEX 12

SIZ 11

INT 18

POW 15

CHA 14

Damage Modifier: 0

Hit Points: 11, Major Wound: 6

Armour: None

Movement: 15m

Plunder Rating: 3

Combat: Close Combat 50%, Walking Stick D8

Resistances: Dodge 30%, Persistence 80%, Resilience 40%

Skills: Craft 80%, Engineering 70%, Influence 60%, Mechanisms 100%

Magic: Battle Magic 80%, Lore (Mathematics) 100%

Battle Magic: Create Power Mechanism 8, Heal 3, Unlock 5

Divine Magic: Divination 3, Repair and Replace 3, See Past 3

Lucio the Golden

Most people think that the merchant Lucio is called “the Golden” because of his blonde hair and smooth talking ways. But there is a secret behind the name. Lucio always wear long sleeves and gloves, hiding the fact that his right arm is actually a clockwork mechanism with a gold casing. This arm has immense strength, though the rest of Lucio’s body is human.

Lucio is not one of the Clockmakers, but he is in their debt for his replacement arm, and serves them. He has always been excellent at finding markets and selling goods, but terrible at long-term investments. Although ambitious and good at making money, Lucio could never maintain it, and eventually sold his arm to a necromancer to get out of some horrible debts.

Now that Lucio works for the Clockmakers, they look after his long-term financing, leaving shorter-term deals to Lucio’s own considerable initiative. Indeed, his talents are enriching the Clockmakers, though some within the Clockwork Palace grumble as Lucio’s mercantile activities in their name puts them and their devices in greater public sight. Lucio himself might privately grumble that he has lost control over his own destiny, but in truth is happier and more successful trading for the Clockmakers than he ever was by himself.

STR 11 (20 with enhanced arm)

CON 11

DEX 14

SIZ 14

INT 15

POW 10

CHA 16

Damage Modifier: 0 (D6 with enhanced arm)

Hit Points: ,Major Wound:

Armour: Leather (AP2)

Movement: 15m

Plunder Rating: 4

Combat: Close Combat 70% Hatchet 2D6, Ranged Combat 65%, Light Crossbow D8

Resistances: Dodge 60, Persistence 50%, Resilience 50%

Skills: Craft 50%, Deception 80%, Driving 60%, Influence 90%, Perception 50%, Riding 60%, Streetwise 90%, Trade 100%

Magic: Battle Magic 60%

Battle Magic Spells: Befuddle 2, Fist of Gold 1, Thunder's Voice 3, Tongues 2

Initiate Modrigian

Modrigian was known as "The Wizard of Locks". He was the best locksmith and lock pick in civilisation, capable of even thwarting magical security. Modrigian's talents were more in demand for illicit activities, and he became a valuable asset for several thieves' guilds.

Then he got ambitious. Modrigian wanted not just to earn good money working for thieves' guilds, but to rule them, building a criminal empire spanning many guilds and cities. He knew secrets, and secrets lead to blackmail opportunities. He thought he was indispensable. He was wrong; several groups of enemies united with the aim of ending him and his ambitions.

So Modrigian vanished, giving himself to the Clockmakers. Most people assume he is now dead, but enemies still look for him. And Modrigian still maintains contact with some of his old criminal connections. As far as the Clockmakers are concerned he has now taken up an honest trade building on his mundane talents, but in fact Modrigian seeks to learn all he can from the Clockmakers. His ambitions sleep, but they have not vanished.

In manner, Modrigian seems shy, and has a slight stutter. This is not an act, but Modrigian's stutter and shyness vanish when he feels he is completely in command of the situation. In this case, he is confident and brutal.

STR 11

CON 13

DEX 16

SIZ 12

INT 15

POW 14

CHA 14

Damage Modifier: 0

Hit Points: 12, Major Wound: 6

Armour: Leather (AP2)

Movement: 15m

Plunder Rating 4

Combat: Close Combat 50%. Rapier D6, Ranged Combat 70%. Heavy Crossbow 2D6

Resistances: Dodge 75%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 40%

Skills: Athletic 60%, Deception 90%, Engineering 30%, Influence 60%, Mechanisms 150%, Perception 50%,

Streetwise 80%, Trade 40%

Magic: Battle Magic 70%, Lore (Mathematics) 40%

Battle Magic: Hand of Death 4, Multimissile 3, Speedart 4, Unlock 4

Note: Modrigian's heavy crossbow is a Clockmaker weapon, and is the same size and weight of an ordinary light crossbow, though it has no other special properties.

Typical Clockmaker Initiate

In case you need them, these are the stats for a typical Clockmaker Initiate. Master Clockmakers should be designed as more powerful individuals, at least on a par with the player characters.

STR 11

CON 12

DEX 11

SIZ 12

INT 17

POW 15

CHA 11

Damage Modifier: 0

Hit Points: 12, Major Wound: 6

Movement: 15m

Armour: None

Plunder Rating: 2

Combat: Close Combat 45% (Wrench D4+1)

Resistances: Dodge 35%, Persistence 70%, Resilience 40%.

Skills: Athletics 40%, Craft 50%, Engineering 50%, Mechanisms 60%, Perception 50%.

Magic: Battle Magic 70%, Lore (Mathematics) 75%.

Battle Magic (Choose 8 points): Create Power Mechanism, Cushion Fall, Hand of Death, Heal, Mobility, Speedart, Unlock.

Divine Magic (Choose 5 points): Divination, Divine Heal, Repair and Replace, See Past.

Clockwork Creatures

Clockwork Messenger

The Clockwork Messenger appears as a metallic bird, resembling a large eagle. It is lighter than it looks, and also more intelligent. Clockwork Messengers obey instructions to go to a location and address somewhere there with a particular message, returning with a reply. They can also fly incredibly quickly in the open, and are sometimes employed to fly somewhat more slowly within the confines of the Clockwork Palace.

Clockwork Messengers will attack anyone who seeks to obstruct them, but only until they cease their attempts to prevent the message getting through.

STR 2D6+6 (13)

CON 2D6 (7)

DEX 3D6+12 (23)

SIZ 1D6 (3)

INT 7

POW D6+6 (9)

CHA 5

Damage Modifier: +2D6

Hit Points: 5, Major Wound: 3

Movement: 15m, 60m flying

Armour: Metal Skin (6AP)

Plunder Rating: 0

Combat: Close Combat 60%, Talon 1D4

Resistances: Dodge 80%, Persistence 100% (see below), Resilience 100% (see below)

Skills: Athletics 30%, Perception 30%

Special: Clockwork Messengers are immune to fatigue, disease, poison, and mind control.

Clockwork Guardian

Clockwork Guardians are shaped like fearsome bears. They are programmed to attack intruders, who are usually all non-Clockmakers, though those within the Inner Palace may well attack anyone, and obey no Clockmaker instructions. Clockmakers suspect that these Guardians

STR 3D6+15 (25)

CON 2D6+6 (13)

DEX 3D6 (11)

SIZ 3D6+15 (25)

INT 7

POW D6+6 (9)

CHA 5

Damage Modifier: +2D6

Hit Points: 19, Major Wound: 10

Movement: 23m

Armour: Metal Skin (6AP)

Plunder Rating: 0

Combat: Close Combat 60%, Bite D8+2D6, Claw 3D6

Resistances: Dodge 20%, Persistence 100% (see below), Resilience 100% (see below)

Skills: Athletics 30%, Perception 30%

Special: Clockwork Guardians are immune to fatigue, disease, poison, and mind control.

Clockwork Servant

Clockwork Servants are metallic humanoids, with a rudimentary intelligence sufficient to perform a single task well, and obey simple instructions from a designated master.

STR 4D6 (14)

CON 2D6+6 (13)

DEX 3D6 (11)

SIZ 2D6+6 (13)

INT 7

POW D6+6 (9)

CHA 5

Damage Modifier: +D4

Hit Points: 13, Major Wound: 7

Armour: Metal Skin (6AP)

Movement: 15m

Plunder Rating: 0

Combat: Close Combat 25%, Fist D3+D4

Resistances: Dodge 20%, Persistence 100% (see below), Resilience 100% (see below)

Skills: Athletics 30%, Perception 30%, See below

Special: A Clockwork Servant has a particular function. One skill related to that function is raised to 100%.

They are immune to fatigue, disease, poison, and mind control.

Within the Clockwork Palace

There is no map of the Clockwork Palace. Within, the metallic walls and gears shift according to the Palace's own desires. The Clockmakers can sometimes predict these movements, and have little difficulty navigating the outer portions of the Palace. They cannot control them, however.

The one stable area is the Entrance Hall, which is fronted by double doors twice as tall as a man. Unusually in the busy and often cramped palace, the Entrance Hall is a wide open area, with a floor of black marble veined with gold. Eight Clockwork Guardians keep watch here, allowing no outsiders to enter without permission.

There are other smaller entrances to the Clockwork Palace, but these are unstable, temporary openings in the outer shell of the Palace machinery. Their temporary nature, and the fact that none even in the Clockmakers know where they all appear, means that these temporary entrances are often unguarded.

That is not to say the temporary entrances are *safe*. The Clockwork Palace has been known to create traps as well as doorways.

The Outer Palace

The Outer Palace is comparatively safe and comparatively stable. Directions change over time, but they are almost predictable, and the Clockmakers know how to navigate the corridors of the Outer Palace. This area is home to the dormitories of junior Clockmakers, and the apartments of those higher in rank. There are laboratories and lecture halls, offices and kitchens; in short, everything that is needed for the Clockmakers' day to day life, training, and work.

Navigating the Clockwork Palace

No skill rolls are needed for Clockmakers to navigate the Outer Palace. Outsiders must make a Perception skill test to avoid becoming lost, and blundering into an "interesting" encounter or location.

When it comes to predicting temporary entrances, or navigating the Inner Palace, only a Clockmaker can make the attempt. They need a Lore (Mathematics) test to work out where to go without blundering into an "interesting" situation.

Clockwork Palace Traps

These traps are mechanical in nature and varied in form. They are found near temporary entrances to the Clockwork Palace, and guarding some of its inner secrets even from the Clockmakers.

Such a trap needs a Perception check for a character to find who is not being careful, and a Mechanisms test to disarm it. These traps are generally mechanical in nature, and include crushing walls, and sharpened gears rolling out from the walls, ceiling, or floor. However, traps delivering an electric shock also occur.

A failed Mechanisms test to disarm a trap, or an attempt to bypass a trap without disarming it leads to one of the following two situations, depending on the nature of the trap.

- A single character must make a Dodge test or suffer 2d6 points of damage.
- A single character suffers 2d4 points of damage, with no chance of avoiding it.
- Everyone in the group must make Dodge tests or suffer d6 points of damage.
- Everyone in the group suffers d4 points of damage with no chance of avoiding it.

The Inner Palace

The Inner Palace holds the secrets of the Clockmakers. Some of these are ancient secrets, forgotten even by the Clockmakers themselves. They are a hazardous area. There are unpredictable traps. Doors shift. Rogue Clockwork Guardians will attack anyone, even Master Clockmakers.

The Clockmakers only enter the Inner Palace in times of great need. For modern Clockmakers, the big draw of the Inner Palace is the Great Orrery. The Orrery charts the movement of the sun, stars, and planets precisely. A Clockmaker who studies the Orrery may recover his or her Divine Magic spells.

Further, any Clockmaker can attempt to use the Orrery to tell the future, as if using the Divine Magic Spell *Divination*. Such studies require a successful Lore (Mathematics) test.

Another draw of the Inner Palace is the Archives, which contain old designs of unique mechanisms that no longer exist, but perhaps could be rebuilt. The Archives also catalogue much of the three thousand year long history of the Palace and the Clockmakers. Sometimes this history touches upon the outside world, especially those parts of it that were of interest to the Clockmakers when it was recorded.

The final secret of the Clockmaker is the centre of the machinery which moves the doors, walls, and traps of the Palace. This place, called the Heart of the Machine, almost has the status of legend to the Clockmakers. Getting here is hard; the corridors leading here constantly shift, and the traps and clockwork creatures on the way obey no human instruction.

The Heart of the Machine is a mass of gears, belts and pistons, shaped roughly like a human face. A few of the Clockmakers who have visited here have claimed that the Heart of the Machine has given them instructions in a rasping metallic voice. They regard this voice as akin to the voice of a god, and the instructions, however enigmatic, as divine orders which must be obeyed.

Random Encounters within the Clockwork Palace

Roll d10 or choose.

- 1: A Clockwork Messenger flying down the corridor, hurrying to get out the way.
- 2: A Clockmaker hurrying about his business.
- 3: A Clockwork Guardian, on the watch for intruders.
- 4: Two Clockmakers, standing in conversation.
- 5: A Clockwork Servant, cleaning and tidying.
- 6: A Trap! If in the Outer Palace, the Clockmakers know it is there and how to avoid it. Outsiders, of course, will not.
- 7: A store room, containing a notable Clockwork Device, but protected by a trap.
- 8: The remains of a laboratory accident. The area may still be dangerous. Two Clockwork servants under the direction of a Clockmaker are working to clean things up.
- 9: Moving walls, where the corridor changes shape with a grind of gears.
- 10: Choose or reroll twice.

Scenario Seeds

Crime and Clockwork

Items from the Clockmakers are involved in a series of high profile crimes. Clockwork crossbows in violence. Universal keys in heists. One of the thieves' guilds is going on a rampage, and the player characters have the job and the contacts to stop it.

The Clockmakers convincingly say they have no involvement, but mention the merchant Lucio the Golden, who does sell minor Clockwork items. Lucio is innocent, but does know how to find the thieves' guild in question. Further enquiries reveal the guild has a contact within the Clockwork Palace, the former would-be criminal overlord Modrigian (see page XX). Modrigian is trying to use the Guild against would-be rivals, the higher profile crimes bringing down the forces of the law.

Modrigian will deny everything, but if he sees the player characters in private, he will offer to cut them in on the deal, pointing out that what he opposes is good for everyone. And he has a Clockwork Guardian ready should they prove resistant to his overtures.

Into the Palace

The heroes are hired by a noble to retrieve something valuable from the Archives of the Clockwork Palace, a unique magical item that once belonged to his family. He regards it as an heirloom. An ancestor, who gave it to the Clockmakers for safe-keeping, regarded it as a weapon too dangerous to be kept in the family. Both dangerous and indestructible.

Getting to the archives requires either sneaking into the Clockwork Palace, perhaps through a temporary entrance, or working with contacts within. The Archives themselves are within the Inner Palace, an area dangerous even to the Clockmakers. The heroes may have permission to go there, but they won't have any help.

Then there is the artefact, a semi-sentient gold chain capable of reading and controlling the minds of others at a great distance. Maybe the noble's ancestor was right to keep it out of his hands.

The Lake of Fire

The Clockmakers hire the player characters for a job, or rather two jobs. The merchant Lucio the Golden has discovered the location of a legendary place in his travels- the lake of pure fire. The heroes are to visit the place with a special container, to capture some of the fire for the Clockmakers to use in magical experiments and manufacturing.

If a player character has earned the Clockmakers' trust, one of them has another mission- to take and destroy the mind-controlling necklace featuring in the previous scenario.

Getting there is not easy. From the fringes of civilisation, the heroes must pass a fearsome desert of ice, populated with hostile giants. The lake of fire itself is a sacred place to the giants, and they will not be freely allowed access.

Meanwhile, the necklace will prove tempting to the one carrying it as a way past the giants. But once they have tasted its power, will they be able to give it up?

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