

THE ARCANES REPOSITORY



◆ AN ADVENTURE MODULE ◆

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VAULT OF FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

READ ALOUD

Impossibly tall, floor-to-ceiling rows of obsidian bookshelves spiral endlessly upward into a domed ceiling painted with luminescent, shifting constellations. Motes of pure purple magical energy drift like tangible dust in the unnervingly still, dry air. A heavy, oppressive silence presses aggressively against your ears, broken only by the occasional flutter of enchanted, semi-sentient parchment turning itself over in the dark.

This specific, highly restricted wing of the Grand Library has been hermetically sealed and warded for over four centuries following the disaster remembered only as the Unravelling. Only the highest-ranking Archmages holding the Supreme Cipher possess the clearance required to bypass the adamantine wards on the primary entrance. Even then, an armed escort of abjuration specialists is universally recommended by the faculty.



MAGICAL ANOMALIES

GM NOTES

The sheer concentration of raw magical theory and unbridled arcane potential heavily saturates this room, causing ordinary spellcasting to behave completely erratically. Any time a character casts a spell of 1st level or higher, roll a d20. On a 10 or lower, the spell feeds on the ambient energy and takes on a second, unintended effect of the GM's choosing.

The books here do not merely store knowledge passively; they actively and aggressively want to be read. Some grimoires, bound in the flesh of long-dead fiends, will try to charm weak-willed wizards into opening them, promising infinite cosmic power in exchange for releasing the entity trapped within the text.

THE SENTIENT CODEX

One book in particular, heavily chained to an altar and bound in shimmering, prismatic dragon scales, hovers slightly above its pedestal, continuously whispering horrific, multiverse-shattering secrets into the minds of absolutely anyone within twenty feet.

SKILL CHECK

DC 20 **Intelligence (Arcana)** to safely and accurately decipher a single page of the Codex without taking an instantaneous 4d10 psychic damage from the sheer vastness of the alien logic it contains. A natural 1 results in permanent madness.

UNNATURAL GUARDIANS

The Archmages who successfully sealed this repository did not leave it undefended. The guardian constructs are programmed to vaporize unauthorized intruders instantly, without warning or quarter. Security protocols dictate complete eradication over containment.

LIBRARY DEFENSES

D8	ENCOUNTER	THREAT LEVEL
1	2d4 Animated Spellbooks swarming like angry hornets.	Medium
2	A wandering warden-construct with a detonation rune bound into its chest.	Hard
3	A bound Fire Elemental currently burning through the archives.	Hard
4	A hidden ward-glyph detonating with lightning damage.	Hazard
5	A localized, permanent gravity reversal field covering the hallway.	Hazard
6	The confused, desperately repeating spectral echo of a dead wizard.	Social
7	A swarm of mechanically augmented, enchanted ink-spiders.	Easy
8	An iron colossus specifically forged from melted magic wands.	Deadly

THE HEAD LIBRARIAN

At the epicenter of the grand spire, meticulously managing the vast forbidden collection, is a bizarre entity bound to the library by an incredibly ancient, inescapable geas designed by the Founders.



GM NOTES

The Head Librarian (a maned, riddling sphinx) is not inherently evil, but they care absolutely nothing for mortal lives, politics, or pleas. Their only imperative is the absolute protection, categorization, and preservation of the forbidden tomes. If the players miraculously present a valid, high-tier library card (flawlessly forged or legitimately obtained), the Librarian will assist them efficiently. If they so much as dog-ear a page, the Librarian will respond with overwhelming, apocalyptic force, sealing every exit behind walls of hardened light.

THE ARCHMAGE'S FAMILIAR

While the original founding Archmages are long dead or mysteriously absent, occasionally their immortal familiars still heavily roam the endless halls, acting as secondary security measures. These creatures have passively absorbed so much ambient magic over the centuries that they have mutated into highly dangerous, almost completely unique magical forces.

READ ALOUD

A massive, opalescent dragon completely composed of coalesced arcane energy descends slowly from the upper wooden balconies. Its scales shift violently through the colors of the chromatic spectrum, actively shedding loud sparks of pure arcane energy as it lands softly on a stack of ancient encyclopedias. It stares directly through your physical form, reading your intentions.



ARCANE DRAGON

Huge dragon (construct), neutral

Armor Class: 19 (natural armor, magical deflection) **Hit Points:** 256 (19d12 + 133) **Speed:** 40 ft., fly 80 ft.



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws: Dex +6, Con +13, Wis +8, Cha +10 **Skills:** Arcana +17, Perception +14, Stealth +6, History +12 **Damage Immunities:** force, nonmagical bludgeoning **Senses:** blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 24 **Languages:** Draconic, Common, Celestial, telepathy 60 ft.

Written Out (3/Day). The dragon can declare that a spell cast at it was never cast. The caster's slot is spent, no effect occurs, and the caster forgets the spell until it next prepares.

Redirection. A spell that fails to land on the dragon does not stop. When the dragon succeeds on a save against a spell, or a spell attack misses it, the dragon nominates any other creature it can see within 120 feet and the spell resolves against that creature instead, rolling afresh. The dragon has been known to nominate the caster, and finds it funny.

Defeating the arcane guardian requires tactical mastery and likely heavy reliance on purely martial weapons, given its devastating spell reflection abilities and incredibly high magic resistance.

THE ARCHITECT'S CURSE

The repository was not simply abandoned; it was intentionally sealed to contain a catastrophic magical outbreak. The original archmages who built this facility were experimenting with raw, unfiltered time-scriving—attempting to write histories of events that had not yet occurred. This paradox shattered their minds, and their fragmented consciousness now haunts the uppermost shelves as weeping, incorporeal echoes.

These "Chronal Wraiths" cannot be fought physically. They continuously scream prophecies of the characters' inevitable, often highly specific deaths. Anyone attempting to read a book while within 30 feet of a Wraith must succeed on a DC 19 Intelligence saving throw or become paralyzed by a sudden, overwhelming influx of alternate timelines, rendering them completely catatonic until physically dragged from the room.

THE INQUISITOR'S GAZE

Possession of these grimoires is essentially a death sentence within the borders of the Holy Empire. The Inquisition has established a dedicated task force, the "Silent Hand," entirely devoted to tracking down recovering artifacts originating from this specific repository. To even attempt to sell one of these books on the black market is to invite an immediate, overwhelming response from highly trained mage-hunters who specialize in anti-magic tactics and brutal interrogation. If the party intends to utilize the knowledge within, they must do so in absolute secrecy, constantly warding their minds against magical scrying and their lodgings against mundane spies.

TREASURE

Repository Secrets

- *The Regent Staff* (Requires Attunement by a spellcaster of the fifth circle or higher).
- *The Unclouded Codex* (Untouched for four centuries).
- A heavily detailed map pointing to the submerged location of a crashed sky-city of the drowned empire.
- A flawless diamond worth exactly 10,000 gp, currently glowing fiercely with imprisoned, highly unstable elemental energy.
- *Three Scrolls of the Falling Sky* written in draconic blood.