

THE ARCANES REPOSITORY

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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 of the Spellplague. 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

DM NOTES

The sheer concentration of raw magical theory and unbridled arcane potential heavily saturates this room, causing standard, weave-based spells to behave completely erratically. Any time a character casts a spell of 1st level or higher, roll a d20. On a 10 or lower, roll immediately on the Wild Magic Surge table as the spell uncontrollably feeds on the ambient energy.

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 Shield Guardian equipped with <i>Fireball</i> .	Hard
3	A bound Fire Elemental currently burning through the archives.	Hard
4	A hidden <i>glyph of warding</i> 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 Golem 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.

DM NOTES

The Head Librarian (an Androsphinx) 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, however, the Librarian will respond with overwhelming, apocalyptic force, sealing the exits with forcecages.

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.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Spell Reflection. If the dragon makes a successful saving throw against a spell, or a spell attack misses it, the dragon can aggressively choose another creature (including the spellcaster) it can prominently see within 120 feet of it. The spell automatically targets the chosen creature instead of the dragon. If the spell forced a saving throw, the chosen creature makes its own save. If the spell was an attack, the attack roll is completely rerolled against the chosen creature.

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. Defeating the golem merely silences the immediate alarm; the true challenge lies in physically extracting the knowledge from the repository before the automated fail-safes obliterate the entire wing.

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 Chronomancy—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.

To successfully loot this library, the party must move with extreme precision, ignore the horrifying whispers of their own demises, and locate the specifically warded lead-lined lockboxes containing the undamaged, stable grimoires. These texts are considered priceless by modern academicians, and highly dangerous by modern inquisitors.

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. The knowledge of raw Chronomancy is intoxicating, offering the theoretical ability to rewrite past tragedies, but every alteration creates a ripple in the timestream that attracts the attention of far more terrifying, extra-dimensional entities dedicated to pruning alternate timelines—including the party's own.

TREASURE

Repository Secrets

- *Staff of Power* (Requires Attunement by a Sorcerer, Warlock, or Wizard).
- *Tome of Clear Thought* (Untouched for four centuries).
- A heavily detailed map pointing to the submerged location of a crashed Netherese flying city.
- A flawless diamond worth exactly 10,000 gp, currently glowing fiercely with imprisoned, highly unstable elemental energy.
- Three *Scrolls of Meteor Swarm* written in draconic blood.

