



CHAPTER 6. THE FANTASTIC LIE

The first part of the *Hand of the Eight* adventure path draws to a conclusion as the characters travel to the tallest mountain in all of Omeria, Trenrock Mountain in the Basilisk's Spine Mountains. There, they discover the Tower of Burshai. Within the ancient tower, the characters discover that they and nearly every person living in Omeria have all been victims of a centuries-old lie.

The Fantastic Lie is a 4th-level Fifth Edition adventure for 3-5 characters. Characters who survive the adventure should reach the 5th level by the adventure's conclusion. This is the sixth chapter in *The Hand of Eight* adventure path. It can be played as the kickoff for the larger adventure setting or as a one-shot adventure for your characters to follow. The campaign is intended to be set in the DMDave crowdsourced campaign world of Omeria, but can just as easily be inserted into any other large city overlooking a large ocean or sea.

BACKGROUND

Odonburg is a nation of five million humanoids that covers the southern portion of Omeria. Odonburg's capital, also named Odonburg, was founded in 540 AT by two native brothers, Odon and Oxon, both of the Dinzer clans that ruled Ancient Xuchaebar. Odon, of course, became the first Emperor of Odon. Meanwhile, his troubled brother Oxon became one of the first of the Seven Eyes. Oxon retired after a year on the council to begin work on his masterpiece, the Amazing Clock.

The Dinzers, as the people of Odonburg are collectively known, are recognized for two things. First, they are incredibly well-mannered and thoughtful of decorum. Even the toothy wuhlos of Jabros know how to carry themselves in front of others. Second, they are by leaps and bounds the

most technologically advanced nation in Omeria if not the world. Incorporating magic with modern engineering, Dinzers have turned the jungles and savannahs of southern Omeria into a true utopia. Crime is low, poverty is almost totally eradicated, and on average, Dinzers live 20-30 more years than the other Omerians.

A big part of Odonburg's success in the realms arcane is due to their monopoly of the natural resource emerald Odonburgite. Emerald Odonburgite is a glowing, green gem that emits powerful evocation energy. Energy collected from samples even as small as an acorn is enough to offer an infinite supply of charges for their weapons, vehicles, and other magic items. Unfortunately, emerald Odonburgite is extraordinarily rare. As such, the Dinzers jealously guard their limited supply.

Today, Odonburg celebrates its quincentennial. Throngs of revelers roam through the streets in spontaneous parades. Bars, inns and homes are entering the fourth day of festivities. Even the Holy Palace is alive with cheer. Dinzers all over the long continent recognize their role in creating the greatest nation in the world.

There is one, however, who is not currently celebrating. Holy Evadimus, the 17th Emperor of Odonburg sits at a table with five of the Seven Eyes, his mind troubled by the news of recent events. In addition to the council, the Emperor is joined by representatives of all the major guilds in the nation, as well as his top military strategists. While Evadimus listens to them speak, he thumbs at the tip of his walking stick. The emerald Odonburg wrapped in gold casing at the top of the stick still radiates a dull, green glow.

"Holy Emperor?" asks Qadalf the Storm, Lord General of the Odonburg Men-at-Arms. Evadimus turns his attention back to the others. Qadalf continues.

"Our man in Orbea tracked the party into the Wallingmiotta soon after we disabled her craft. As predicted,

they survived. Unfortunately, they still met with the danaavrakt.

"Aruxius," Evadimus nods. "I met him once. I was young. Very tall, if I remember correctly."

"Ah, yes, sir," Qadalf uses a minor illusion spell on the war table to show where the party is currently located. "As you can see, they're still traveling with Omnaweahl the Mago-detective."

"I'm having trouble understanding, Lord General," says the Fourth Eye, Imnotosh, interrupting Qadalf. "Why was the girl not put in the loop? Or why we didn't get someone else who knows all the facts to carry out this mission? Instead, we have one of our own trouncing around through northern Omeria with a group of murderous thugs ready to undo everything that our ancestors spent 500 years to create."

"Plausible deniability, Holy Eye," Qadalf bows his head. "Despite being 'murderous thugs', her cohorts are resourceful. It was best to have someone on the inside who didn't realize they were on the inside."

The council murmurs. Qadalf bites his lip. Evadimus clears his throat.

"Then what are the next steps, Lord Commander?"

"Ah, well, Holy Emperor," Qadalf says, changing the details of the illusion spell to show a snow-covered mountain, likely somewhere in the Basilisk's Spine. "They will undoubtedly head to the Tower of Burshai."

Imnotosh scoffs. An image of a delapidated tower among the Spine's peaks appears in Qadalf's illusion.

"Then all is lost," says the Fourth Eye of Odonburg.

Silence falls over the room. The image of the lonely, snow-capped tower sits at the center of the table. Finally, the Holy Emperor leans forward and speaks.

"We are the children of Odon and Oxon, aren't we? Dinzer blood runs through our veins. Therefore, we must do as we Dinzers always do: expect the best and prepare for the worst."

An hour later, a Dinzer condor-class flyer took off from Odonburg's Skyhold on a northern trajectory.

Estimated Time of Arrival to the Tower of Burshai: 6.8 hours.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure begins when the characters start the arduous journey climbing Trenrock Mountain at the heart of the Basilisk's Spine mountain range. At the top of the mountain, they discover a long-abandoned structure known only as the Tower of Burshai. As they climb through the strange tower, they begin to unravel a vast conspiracy. Once they connect the pieces of the puzzle, they soon learn that everything that they've ever learned is untrue and that the fantastic lie has long blinded them from what is real and what is fake.

At the end of their journey, just as they learn the truth, someone they thought to be their ally appears and reveals their true nature. From there, the characters are given a difficult choice:

Do they share what they learned with the rest of the world?
Or do they allow the fantastic lie to continue?

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Following their meeting with the danaavrakt Aruxius, the party should know the secrets of the book, Prime. No longer masked by Aruxius' illusion spell, the characters are free to read the book revealed to be the Journal of Duda Weysevain. Allow the characters to read the snippets from the book presented as a player's handout in the adventure supplement.

It's a long journey from the location of Aruxius' cabin to their destination, Trenrock Mountain. You are free to fast forward to their arrival at the goblin village of Mogresz, or you can have them travel through the Wallingmiotta and Gar Wabrizz. It's ultimately up to you.

While this adventure is intended to be played as part of the Hand of the Eight adventure path, you can also run it as a separate adventure. If you do, here are some hooks you can use:

MILITARY ACTIVITY

For whatever reason, there has been notable military activity in the Basilisk's Spine Mountains. The party has been tasked by the government of Knotside to uncover what's happening on the Spine, specifically around Trenrock Mountain.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

The party has heard that Trenrock Mountain is the tallest in all of Omeria and that no one has yet tamed it. The goblins of Mogresz are even offering a 500 gp reward to the first person or party that can summit it.

MYSTERIOUS TOWER

Supposedly, an ancient mage tower sits at the top of Trenrock Mountain, the tallest mountain in the Basilisk's Spine. Legends say the tower is filled with all sorts of magic artifacts.

MOGRESZ

Mogresz is less a village than a permanent goblinoid encampment at the southern end of Gar Wabrizz. Jammed into the rocks at the base of an imposing cliff face known as the Walls of the Woink, Mogresz is home to 60-some goblins. It was settled a decade ago by the great goblin warrior Woink the Beard. Woink was known for collecting elven ears and placing them on a necklace. At one point, Woink's necklace was so thick with pointed ears it looked like a fleshy, rotting beard—hence the name. The majority of Mogresz's inhabitants are veterans of the Elven Wars and their extended families. Far enough away from their continued aggression with the elves of Olyothy, the Mogreszians cater to tourists and thrillseekers who hope to pass the Basilisk's Spine at its thickest point. Seeing as the mortality rate is at its highest at this point, they always collect payment in advance.

When the players are ready, read the following:

It's been a long journey from the Wallingmiotta to the foot of the Basilisk's Spine Mountains, but you've finally arrived in the goblin village of Mogresz. In the background, the mighty



spires of the Basilisk's Spine Mountains act as a dark wall to Central Omeria.

Like much of Gar Wabrizz, the goblins are comfortable around the presence of "tall ones." After all, it's their lands. And with the exception of the elves to the west, no humanoid has drawn arms against the Garrish in close to a century.

Still, the squat, green and orange humanoids throw you a wary eye. Less to say, "What are you doing here?" and more to ask, "Why are you here?"

A little over two weeks ago, Omnaweahl made arrangements for you to meet a guide in town named Heekt. Deemed "the best mountain guide this side of the Basilisk" Heekt came with high praise. As you walk past the wooden palisades into the mud-caked village, she motions to a tall, narrow, thatch-roofed hut with a sign written in Goblin.

The sign reads: "Heekt's Tours for Not Smart Humans."

HEEKT

Heekt's hut is a 5-foot diameter, mud-floored hovel that leaks from multiple holes in its thatching. It reeks of urine and more-often-than-not Heekt is found sleeping on a short, lumpy bed, his oversized frost-bitten feet hanging over the edge.

Once awakened (it'll take a minute), Heekt stands up, cracks his back and puts his moldy, yak-wool ushanka on his head. He then smiles and says, "Y'okay."

From there, he's all business. The charge for his services is 10 gold pieces per day to lead the characters through the Spine to the base of Trenrock Mountain. He places the gold under his hat, pats a curved dagger he wears on his hip, winks, then goes right to it.

Heekt is a **goblin** with proficiency in Intelligence (Nature) and Wisdom (Survival). He adds double his proficiency bonus when he makes checks using either of those skills as they relate to the Basilisk's Spine Mountains. With Heekt as their guide, the party will have no trouble finding their way through the mountain pass.

Overall, Heekt is a fun, talkative NPC with plenty of quirks. He loves talking about the flora and fauna he finds along the way (whether the characters want him to or not). Although small, he's completely unhindered by the snow and difficult terrain of the pass. Frequently, he'll rush ahead, turn back, and look confused that the characters aren't moving at the same pace as he. Also, Heekt also has an irrational fear of the number eight. If Heekt, the party, and Omnaweahl number eight total people, he'll refuse to go until someone exits the group (he gladly will) or they add someone else. His friend Kaybo will join the party as a porter for an additional 10 gp per day. As a **goblin** with a Strength score of 8, Kaybo is a lousy porter. Together, the two will argue in Goblin about sports—particularly goblin footie—all the way up the pass.

Finally, Heekt's catchphrase is "Y'okay." He says it when he's happy, mad, sad, and every emotion in between.

STOCKING UP IN MOGRESZ

Being out of the way like they are, Mogresz allows the laws of supply-and-demand to rule their prices. The characters can expect nearly everything in the small, goblin village to cost twice what it normally does. Furthermore, there's a chance that the goblins will reject any non-Garrish currency given to them, especially if it's elven.

Heekt will remind the party to stock up on plenty of climber's kits as well as enough rations to last a month or two. He warns that it's roughly 5-10 days to the base camp, and then it takes another 30-40 days to summit the mountain.

If the party is low on gold, Omnaweahl can spot them whatever they need for the journey (within reason).

BASILISK'S SPINE MOUNTAINS

As the tallest and largest mountain range in Omeria, the Basilisk's Spine Mountains are likely to be one of the greatest challenges that the characters ever face. While passable in certain parts, the area where the characters begin their journey is known all over the continent for the danger it represents. Very few creatures that lack methods of flight have ever made it up Trenrock. Even then, the high winds at the top of the mountain make it almost impossible for flyers. Not even the stormborne vultures of the Weysevain Coast can approach the top due to its winds. Superstitious goblins—such as Heekt and Kaybo—believe that air elementals known as djinn protect the mountain from the lower folk. Only their children, the windborne, can enter the domain of the djinns without drawing their wrath.

JOURNEY TO THE BASE CAMP

It's approximately 50 miles from Mogresz to the Trenrock Base Camp. Even with Heekt as a guide, it takes 5 days for the characters to reach the camp. Harsh weather, rugged terrain, and aggressive creatures hug the narrow passages to the base camp. As the characters travel to the base camp, roll a d20 three times per day of game time, checking for encounters each morning, afternoon, and evening

or night. An encounter occurs on a roll of 16 or higher. An encounter occurs on a roll of 16 or higher. Then, roll another d20 and check the Basilisk's Spine Encounters table to determine the nature of the encounter.

On a result of "Another expedition" the party encounters 1d4 + 1 **guards** led by another **goblin** (likely a friend of Heekt's) heading back to Mogresz. They appear tired, hungry, and even have a few injured among them. They recommend that the characters turn back.

BASILISK'S SPINE ENCOUNTERS

d10	Encounter
1	1 air elemental
2	1 basilisk
3	2d8 + 1 blood hawks
4	1 bulette
5	1 druid
6	1 giant goat
7	1 manticore
8	1 ogre
9	1 saber-toothed tiger
10	Another expedition*

TRENROCK MOUNTAIN

Trenrock Mountain is 29,030 feet high. Very few humanoids have ever reached the top of the mountain. Of course, thousands of tried. Too difficult to recover, their corpses litter the mountain, especially within 1,500 feet of the mountain.

This section contains information that will help you run this part of the adventure smoothly. For each day that the party travels up the mountain, follow these steps:

- Using the Trenrock Mountain progress map, identify the mark on the map that the characters are in. If the characters have become lost or had to backtrack, don't share this information with the players. Otherwise, you can show them where they are.
- Let the players determine whether or not they wish to keep moving or to rest. While there should be a sense of urgency, the exhaustion of climbing the mountain may require them to take some time off the trail.
- Check for the mountain's weather conditions to see how difficult the DC to continue will be. If effects such as extreme cold, high wind, and heavy precipitation come up, apply the conditions for the day and make the appropriate checks.

TRENROCK MOUNTAIN WEATHER CONDITIONS

d100	Weather Conditions	DC	Effects
0–10	Cold, no wind	10	—
11–45	Cold, windy	15	—
46–70	Cold, moderate winds, light accumulation	20	Extreme cold
70–98	Very cold, high winds, moderate accumulation	20	Extreme cold, high winds
99+	Blizzard conditions	25	Extreme cold, high winds, heavy precipitation

- Let the players choose a navigator, then make a Wisdom (Survival) check on the navigator's behalf to determine if the party becomes lost.
- Certain areas on the map have keyed encounters. See the Trenrock Encounters section below for details.
- At the end of the day, mark off rations and water the party has used.

TRAVEL ON THE MOUNTAIN

Even though it's only 22 miles from the base camp to Trenrock's summit, because of the difficulty involved, characters moving at a normal pace can only travel 1 half mile per day. Each mark on the Trenrock Progress Map equals 1 half mile.

If characters move at a fast pace, the easiest way to deal with their progress is to roll a d4. On a roll of 3 or 4, they advance 1 additional half mile that day. Characters moving at a fast pace take a -5 penalty to their passive Wisdom (Perception) scores, making them more likely to miss clues and walk into ambushes.

If characters set a slow pace, roll a d4. On a roll of 1 or 2, they do not advance that day. On any other result, their caution is rewarded, and they travel the same distance as a group moving at a normal pace. Characters moving at a slow pace can move stealthily. As long as they're not in the open, they can try to surprise or sneak by other creatures they encounter.

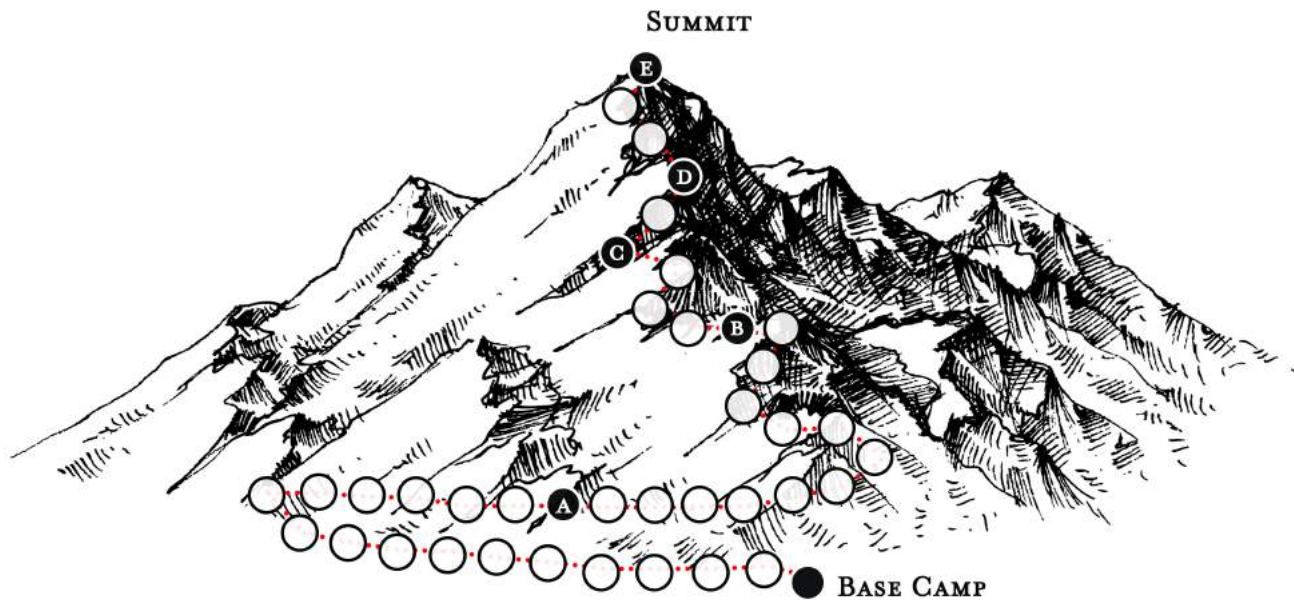
WEATHER CONDITIONS

With winter fast approaching, Trenrock is subject to all manner of horrible weather. At the start of each day, roll percentile dice and consult with the Trenrock Weather Conditions table below. For each day that the party has been traveling up the mountain, add 1 to the roll (to a maximum of 30). The effects listed are detailed in the DMG.

NAVIGATION

Have the players designate one party member as the navigator. The navigator might be an NPC, such as a guide, and the party can switch its navigator day to day. At the start of each new travel day, the GM makes a Wisdom (Survival) check on behalf of the navigator. The result of the check determines whether or not the party becomes lost over the course of the day. The DC of the check is based on the day's weather conditions. See the Trenrock Weather Conditions table below for details. Apply a +5 bonus to the check if the group sets a slow pace for the day, or a -5 penalty if the group is moving at a fast pace.

If the check succeeds, the navigator knows exactly where the party is on the Trenrock Mountain Progress Map.



TRENROCK MOUNTAIN PROGRESS MAP

If the check fails, the party becomes sidetracked and lost. Roll a d4. On a result of 3 or 4, the party is lost but did not lose any progress. On a result of 1 or 2, the party goes back one space on the progress chart. Until they find their path again, they are not aware that they've lost their progress or how much they've lost.

TRENROCK ENCOUNTERS

Although there are no random encounters on the mountain, there are harrowing moments and points of interest along the way. Each of the encounters is keyed to a letter on the Trenrock Mountain Progress Map.

BASE CAMP

The base camp of Trenrock Mountain is a rocky, flat clearing. Litter is strewn about, signs that other groups have been through the pass. However, there are no other expeditions around. Heekt explains that with winter fast approaching "only fools and madmen" dare to summit Trenrock. He offers no guesses as to which the characters are but assumes they are probably both.

Heekt warns that it's an arduous journey from the base camp to the top of the mountain, a task that will take the characters over a month to perform. Like many of the goblins of his village, he believes that Trenrock is cursed. Tales of those who've perished along the way rising from the dead to attack travelers are enough to keep Heekt from going any further. No amount of gold or non-magical persuasion will change his mind. He does hope, however, that if the characters are successful, they visit him again to tell their

tale. The goblin then heads back to Mogresz.

After Heekt leaves, the party is free to rest at the base camp as long as they need it. They have a long journey ahead of them.

A - THE WAILING PASS

The long narrow path that hugs the base of Trenrock is known as the Wailing Pass. It stretches for nearly 5-miles and is filled with rocky crevasses, snowdrifts, sliding rocks, and other challenges. Many who climb Trenrock fail to get past the pass. The characters are able to get through most of it without any issues until they reach the midway point of the pass. When they reach the spot marked A on the map, read the following:

If the last few days of travel weren't bad enough, it's just gotten worse. The narrow, snow-covered path you've sidled across for the last three days abruptly comes to an end. It looks as if the path itself slid down the mountain. The only thing between you and the far side is a sheer drop easily 300 feet down. Up above you, there is nothing but cliff face and the lumbering mountain above.

From where they're standing, it's 100-feet to the other side. The path they are on is 5-feet wide at its widest point. The drop from where they are is 300-feet straight down. They have a few options.

A character can make DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a successful check, they realize that there might be another path around. The path would take two days to get back to. From there, it takes 1d6 + 1 days for them to get back on track (however, they won't know that until the added time

comes to an end).

It is possible to climb along the cliffside to the other side of the gorge. A character without a climb speed who chooses this route must make a Strength (Athletics) check at the start of each of their turns. If the character moves at less than half their movement speed (minimum of 5 feet), they add +5 to their check. Refer to the Sidling results table below to check their progress.

SIDLING RESULTS

Check Total	Result
5 or less	The character slips and falls.
6–10	The character makes no forward progress this turn.
11–20	The character moves at half their normal movement speed.
21+	The character moves at half their normal movement speed plus an additional 5 feet.

If the character has a rope secured to them and they slip, the creature that is holding the rope must make a DC 10 Strength saving throw. The creature adds +5 to the saving throw for each additional creature holding the rope. On a successful saving throw, the character stops falling. Otherwise, the character pulls the creature down with them.

A creature who falls off the edge takes 1d6 falling damage for every 10 feet that they fall (to a maximum of 20d6). The gorge is 300 feet deep.

B - DINZER ATTACK

As the characters are climbing a particularly difficult stretch of the mountain, they hear the sounds of something approaching from the south. Depending on the weather conditions, they may not be able to make out exactly what it is. However, the roar of the engines should become apparent once they are within 5 miles (1 if there's heavy wind).

The characters have exactly one round to realize what's happening. If Omnaweahl is with them, she knows what it is: "Condors! Get down!"

At this point, everyone needs to roll initiative. The Dinzer condor is 1 mile away, so it's unlikely that the characters will have a mode to attack them. But at the speeds they travel, they will be within range in two rounds.

Once the condor arrives, it launches a fireball at the mountainside. Any characters that are clearly visible when this happens will be targeted by the fireball (DC 14 Dexterity saving throw). Immediately after the condor attacks, it flies out of range (moving at speeds of 300 miles per hour). If there are no visible targets, the condor fires in the general area.

Of course, the fireball isn't the only thing the characters have to worry about. The explosion triggers an avalanche.

Each creature on the mountain during the avalanche must immediately make a DC 12 Strength saving throw.

On a failed saving throw, the creature is buried under snow, taking 13 (3d8) bludgeoning damage plus 13 (3d8) cold damage as a result. The creature is also blinded, restrained and is suffocating. At the end of each of their turns, if the creature is still restrained, it takes an additional 4 (1d8) cold

damage. On the restrained creature's turn, it can use its action to make a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check to determine which way it is oriented. On a successful check, the creature knows which way is up. On its next turn and each subsequent turn, it can use its action to make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. On a successful check, the creature is no longer blinded, restrained, or suffocating.

A creature that succeeds its initial saving throw takes half as much bludgeoning and cold damage but suffers no other ill effects from the avalanche.

A creature can also search for a creature buried in the avalanche by making a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check. Once they've located their ally, they can use their action to dig the creature out (no check required).

Following the disaster, if Omnaweahl survived, she's in an extreme shock that her own people would attack her. It's clear that everything she's ever believed in has slowly started to unravel during the adventure. For the rest of the journey, she stays quiet and seems aloof.

C - THE PRISMATIC ROAD

With only a few thousand feet to go before the characters reach the top, they come to the Prismatic Road, named so for the colorful banners and clothing buried under the snow and ice. The Prismatic Road is doubly cursed.

First, once the characters enter the area, they feel an overwhelming sense of dread fall over them. For whatever reason, something in the back of their minds is telling them to go no further. A creature in the area must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. Creatures immune to being charmed automatically pass their saving throws. A creature that fails its Wisdom saving throw gains a curse. While cursed, the creature is stunned. If the creature leaves the Prismatic Road (it's approximately 100-feet long) the curse automatically ends for it and it is no longer stunned. A remove curse spell removes the curse and makes the creature immune to the effects of the road for 24 hours.

Second, those that have succumbed to the curse rise from the ice as zombies. Sixteen **zombies** attack. The zombies are immune to cold damage.

Any creature that dies on the Prismatic Road returns as a zombie in 24 hours.

D - THE TOWER OF BURSHAI

The characters' destination is not actually at the top of the peak, but a few thousand feet before it. The Tower of Burshai is detailed below.

E - TRENROCK MOUNTAIN SUMMIT

The top of the 29,030-foot mountain offers an outstanding view of the world around it. A creature standing at the top can see over 220 miles in all directions—weather permitting, of course. Beyond the bragging rights that come with summiting the tallest mountain in Omeria, there is nothing else to be found there.

THE TOWER OF BURSHAI

As the characters come into view of the Tower, read or paraphrase the following:



Jutting out of the rock and snow like an old, broken dagger, a 300-foot tall tower made from the same black stone as the mountain stands on the path before you. Cracked and crumbling in various places, the most unusual feature of the tower is the large missing section at its center. While any mundane tower would surely collapse with such damage, the tower's upper section remains aloft, floating in space as if it was still one whole piece.

This must be the Tower of Burshai.

Shortly after the founding of Odonburg, a group of adventurers discovered the abandoned tower. Although there are theories, no one is sure who or what created the original

structure. However, what its new purpose would be was automatically clear. Recently appointed Emporer Odon tasked a unit of 20 Dinzers to reach the tower and convert it into an arcane amplifier. As the highest known spot in the land, its reach would be considerable.

For a time, a small group of specialists remained at the tower. And then, as the centuries rolled on, most forgot about the Tower of Burshai. Of course, records were kept of its location and purpose by the highest-ranking Dinzer officials. When those officials would step down and name their replacement, the replacement was debriefed on the Tower. For many, the tower's purpose was a lot to take in and some couldn't handle it. Those who refused to play a part stepped away from their roles. Shortly thereafter, their memories were modified to forget what they learned.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless otherwise stated, the tower has the following features.

Ceiling. The ceilings throughout each level are twenty feet high. They are made the same soft, metal alloy that the doors, floors, and walls are made of.

Communication Panels. Set into the wall beside most of the doors is a screen. The screen has two uses. First, a properly credentialed Dinzer can wave their hand in front of it in order to open the door (see below). Second, the screen creates two-dimensional illusions of the areas of the tower both providing a map of the tower as well as giving access to a communication system. If a character touches an area on the map, it highlights. From there, they can speak into the panel. In doing so, their voice is broadcast into the area as if by the magic mouth spell.

Detect Magic. The entire tower exudes faint traces of illusion and transmutation magic.

Doors. Many of the doors are made from soft steel unlike anything the characters have used or seen. The doors that are still standing automatically slide open when a credentialed Dinzer (like Omnaweahl) waves his or her hand in front of the panel. Otherwise, a sealed door requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to pry open. Furthermore, a character can spend 1 minute examining the mechanisms to better understand how they work. At the end of the minute, they must make a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. On a success, the doors open automatically for them for the remainder of their duration in the tower.

Floors. Like the ceilings, doors, and walls, the floors are made of a soft metal alloy. Carpeting is common through, but much of it has rotted away from the arid conditions. In some areas, water pools from where it enters the holes in the ceilings and walls.

Light. Unless the ceiling is missing, any time the characters enter a new level or interior area of the tower, panels in the ceiling automatically light up as if affected by the light spell. The lights can detect the presence of living things, so undead and constructs won't trigger them. A creature can operate the lights by saying "lights on" or "lights off" aloud. Also, the lights automatically turn off after 1-minute passes of no living creatures in an area.

Power Cells. Many of the magic features of the tower are powered by emerald Odonburgite kept in the two columns in Area 14. If the Odonburgite is removed, all of the magical features in the tower cease to function.

Walls. All of the walls are made from a dense-yet-soft metal alloy that exudes faint traces of illusion and transmutation magic. A character that makes a successful DC 10 Intelligence check with a relevant tool proficiency—such as carpentry or masonry—recognizes that the architecture is unlike anything they have ever seen. It is aberrant in its design.

KEYED ENCOUNTERS

The following encounters are keyed to the locations marked on the maps of the Tower of Burshai. Areas 1 through 11 are on the map on page 9, Areas 12 through 23 through 30 are on the map on page 11, and Areas 24 through 30 on page 14.

1 - ENTRANCE

As the characters approach, read or paraphrase the following:

Just ahead you see the door into the tower. It seems to be made of some sort of steel with a seam running down its center. There are no handles or hinges that you can detect.

If Omnaweahl or another Dinzer is with the party, the door opens the moment they step within 5 feet of it. Immediately, the lights within the first level spring to life.

2 - CHECKPOINT

The first time the characters enter this area, read:

Panels in the ceiling glow with dim light, illuminating this room 20-foot wide and 10-foot deep entryway. Opposite the entrance, a pair of double doors similar to the ones you just walked through are set into the wall. In a nook in the northern wall, a podium made of the same strange, soft steel that the doors, walls, and ceiling were made of stands. Oddly, there is no dust in the room. It's as if the tower was in use literally minutes before you entered.

Although the temperatures are freezing outside, the room you are in slowly starts to warm. Within minutes, it's at a comfortable temperature.

Originally, this area was a checkpoint for people entering the tower. A guard stood at the podium and checked credentials. The panel on the podium functions as one of the communication panels described under General Features.

3 - GATHERING HALL AND STAIRS

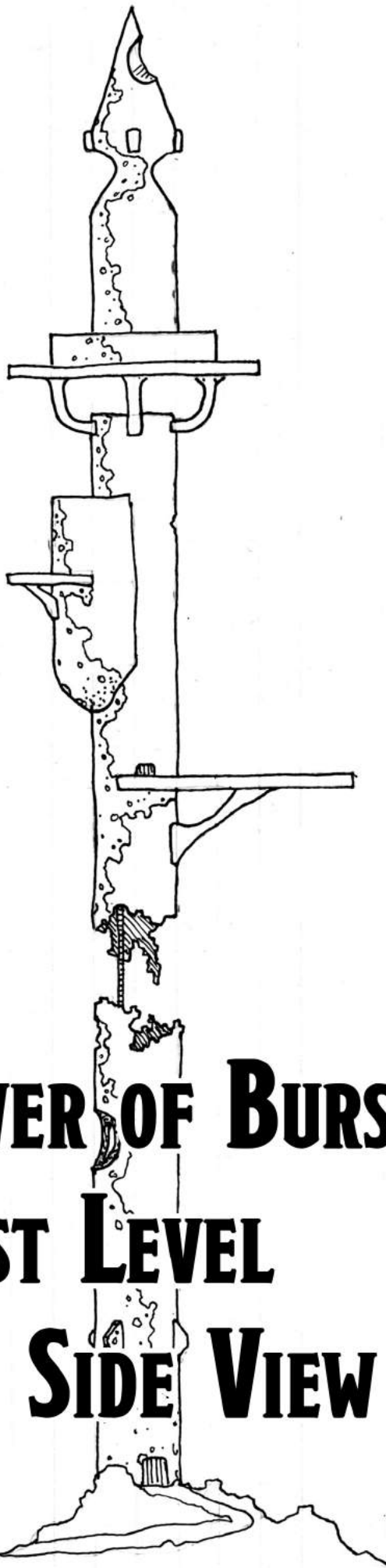
This room is 30-feet wide north-to-south and 15-feet wide east-to-west. A staircase in the center of the western wall rises ten feet then diverts at its landing. At the center of the landing set into the wall is the statue of the wizard Odon.

4 - LOWER CONTROL ROOM

This room is a 30-foot diameter circle. Two staircases set into the western wall descend while a spiral staircase at the center of the room continues upward. Against the eastern wall are two large curved desk 10 feet apart. Above each desk are panes of blackened glass that seemingly float in space. The desks are covered in arcane glyphs that radiate green light.

The two panels were security panels for the tower. In addition to the desks, there are multiple chairs throughout the room.

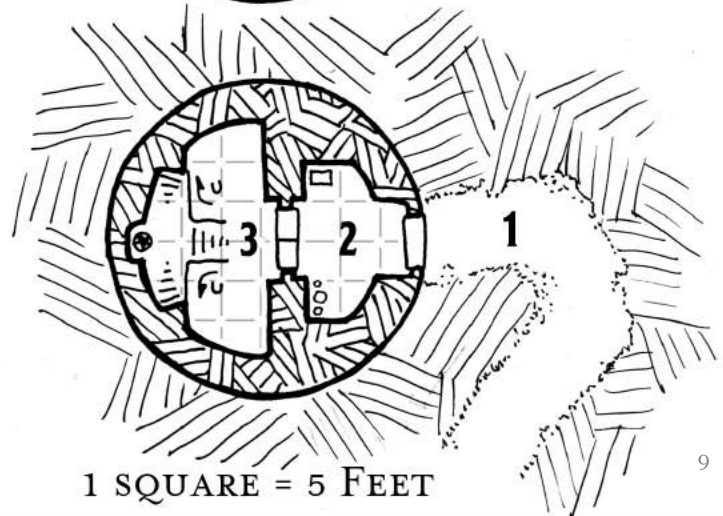
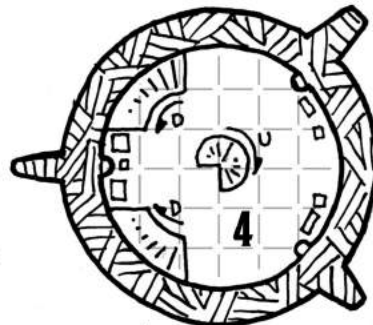
A creature that uses the control panels can operate it as a crystal ball that projects its images on the screen. The magic in the screens ceases to function if removed from the area.



TOWER OF BURSHAI

FIRST LEVEL

AND SIDE VIEW



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Encounter. Six remote travelers (use the **animated armor** stat block except they have the Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores of a **mage**) guard this room. They are piloted by Dinzers over 1,000 miles away. None of them will reveal their true identity, although it's likely Omnaweahl recognizes that they are Dinzer-made. In addition, she points out that they are 721 models, over three centuries old.

Treasure. Resting on one of the control panels is an old *wand of magic missiles*. Its emerald Odonburgite battery is dead, so it only has 4 charges remaining.

5 - BANNER

Hanging against the southwestern wall is a 500-year-old version of the flag of Odonburg, still in mostly perfect condition.

6 - REST CHAMBER

This unusually shaped room is shaped like an "L". At the far side of a room, there is a desk with books stacked upon it. A pair of red and blue robes hang from hooks. The most unusual thing, however, is the seven-foot-tall black cylinder against the innermost wall. There is a small, rectangular glass window, allowing you to look inside it. It appears to be empty.

The cylinder is a sleeping sarcophagus. By speaking the command word "Time to Sleep" the sarcophagus opens. If a Medium or Small creature steps inside, the sarcophagus closes behind the creature and then creates a sleep effect. A creature who does not wish to be affected by the sleep effect must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. Otherwise, they fall unconscious for 1 minute. During that minute, the interior of the sarcophagus emits a dull green light. At the end of the minute, the light vanishes, the creature awakens and the sarcophagus opens. The creature then gains the same benefits as if they had just completed a long rest. Plus, the sarcophagus' energy provides the creature as much nourishment as if they consumed 1 day of rations and the required allotment of water. Once a creature uses the chamber, they cannot gain the benefits from the chamber again for 8 hours. Other creatures are still free to use it.

The books in the room give a little insight into the chamber's original inhabitant. The titles are *A Treatise of Ettercap Biology* by Onerius, *Fey and their Origins* by Shebaris, *The Myth of the Titans* by Ilrune Entumal, and *The Complete History of Olyothyrs Part 1*. The *Age of the Fey* also by Ilrune Entumal (the latter two are written in elvish).

7 - REST CHAMBER

This unusually shaped room is shaped like an "L". At the far side of a room, there is a desk with books stacked upon it. A pair of red and blue robes hang from hooks. The most unusual thing, however, is the seven-foot-tall black cylinder against the innermost wall. There is a small, rectangular glass window, allowing you to look inside it. Within, you see the mummified remains of a humanoid.

500 years ago, one of the Dinzers working in the tower went

to sleep in their sleep sarcophagus and never woke up. If the chamber is opened using the command word "Time to Sleep" the creature attacks as a mummy. However, it's been in the chamber so long, it's picked up a new trait: Regeneration. At the start of its turn, the mummy regains 10 hit points as long as it has 1 hit point remaining. If the mummy takes fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. The mummy is CR 4 (1,100 XP).

Once the chamber is clear of its undead inhabitant, it functions the same way the sleep sarcophagus described in Area 6 does.

The books in the room are *The 10th Level* by Odon (still a commonly printed book in Odonburg), *Practical Transmutation* by Tifarihm, and *All Living Things* by Hulay of Elsath. The latter is written in a hodgepodge of Celestial and Infernal. Unless a creature can read and understand both languages, it's exceptionally difficult to read without magic.

Treasure. Tucked into the copy of *All Living Things* is a *scroll of comprehend languages*.

8 - FOURTH LEVEL PASSAGE

Once the characters reach the top of the steps from the level below, read the following:

This area is cold and dark. To either side of you are sealed doors. They do not appear that they operate. A huge hole in the ceiling gives you a glimpse into the floor above which seems to be mostly destroyed. In fact, you can see outside the tower from where you stand.

The two doors in this passage leading to Areas 9a and 10 no longer operate automatically. Both require successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) checks to pry open. Once a door is opened, cold air rushes into the area thanks to the gaping holes in the wall.

9A - DESTROYED OFFICE

This room was an office. Long ago, something attacked the tower, destroying the room. Now it lies in ruin. None of the magical effects that pervade the rest of the tower function in this room. Exposed to the elements, freezing wind flies in from the mountainside.

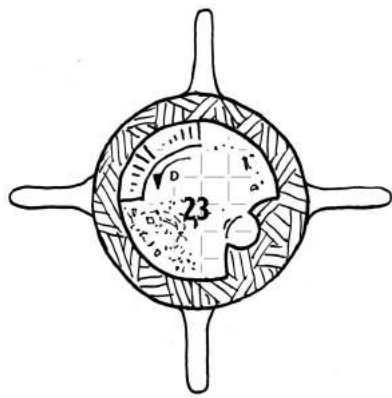
9B - DESTROYED RESTING CHAMBER

Similar to Areas 6 and 7, this was once a resting chamber. However, the sarcophagus was torn from the room and launched out onto the side of the mountain. A creature that gazes out of the massive hole in the wall can see for 200 miles to the south.

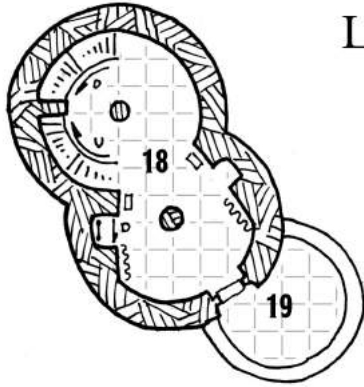
Treasure. Amid the rubble of the room, the characters can find a single, intact *fireball* bead, as the *necklace of fireballs*.

10 - DESTROYED STUDY

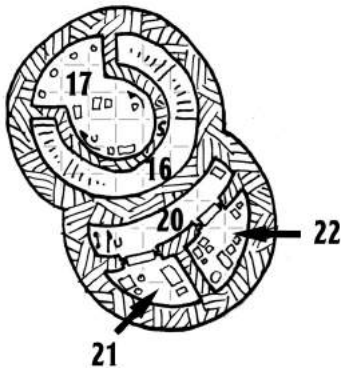
This room is dark and empty. At the south end, where a door probably once stood, is a large hole in the wall. Just beyond it, there is another larger hole that looks out on the southside of Trenrock Mountain.



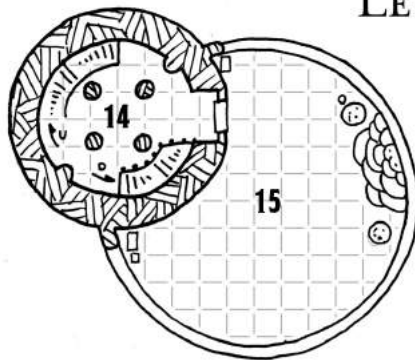
LEVEL 10



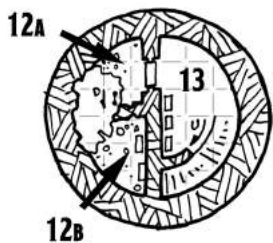
LEVEL 9



LEVEL 8



LEVEL 7



LEVEL 6

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

TOWER OF BURSHAI

LEVELS 6-10

11 - SHATTERED FLOOR

Whatever damaged the tower years ago removed much of this level. All of the walls have collapsed. The upper end of the tower floats above. The only thing connecting this level to the next is a simple ladder, but definitely not for structural purposes. Judging by its rusted iron composition and less-than-smooth craftsmanship it was a later addition to the tower.

At the northwestern end of the room, buried in rubble, is a skeleton wearing the blue and red robes of Odonburg (albeit, a few hundred years old). Its right hand is permanently locked in a somatic component. A character with proficiency in Arcana automatically recognizes it as the hand symbol for the chill touch cantrip.

12A - SHATTERED LANDING

The door here still functions. However, the lights and other amenities no longer work. It is cold and dark.

12B - DESTROYED WORK ROOM

The other side of the landing are the remains of an old workroom. Most of the books are burned (a combination of fire and radiant damage) but there are still some old charts on the walls. The charts depict spider-like creatures that bear a slight resemblance to krigs although they are missing their extra arms and prominent abdomens.

13 - RECORD ROOM

This semi-circle room is 30 feet wide north-to-south and fifteen feet deep. A large, curved staircase hugs the way to the south ascending to the floor above. Against the interior wall next to the door are three large black cabinets each with dozens of square slots built into the faces.

The cabinets are locked exactly the same way the doors are. A Dinzer with the proper credentials need only to touch the center of a square slot and a bar slides out. The bar is two feet long and four inches wide and tall. There are six three-inch diameter balls made of dull green crystal fit into slots on each bar. In total, each cabinet holds 270 of the balls.

Each ball stores hundreds of hours of recordings. To access the recordings, a creature needs only to hold the crystal ball and say a command word—the ball then creates an illusion of the events held within its memory in a space within 15 feet of its user. The wielder can then use additional command words to pause, fast forward, rewind, or jump ahead to any point in the recorded illusion. Most of the illusions show the Dinzer inhabitants of the tower centuries ago recording their findings into the crystal balls. The majority of the information is dull and not useful.

However, a creature who spends 1 hour viewing the contents of the crystal balls can make an Intelligence (Arcana) check. Depending on the result of the roll, they learn one or more pieces of lore about the tower. Each piece of lore is cumulative. So if a character rolls a 16 for their Intelligence (Arcana) check they learn the lore for both the 10-15 results as well as 16-20.

TOWER OF BURSHAI RECORDS

Result Cumulative lore learned

9 or less Nothing important learned

10–15 The Tower of Burshai was being converted into an arcane beacon. The Dinzer researchers who worked there planned to use it to cast some sort of massive illusion spell that would affect most of Central Omeria. They seemed to have trouble getting it to work.

16–20 In addition to the beacon, the tower was a research facility. The Dinzers researched fey, ettercap, and elves. They ran many experiments, especially on elves, exposing them to emerald Odonburgite.

21+ Oxon eventually came to the tower and took control of operations. Many of the researchers were nervous around the former Eye and believed that he was planning to stop the research.

14 - SEVENTH FLOOR

This 30-foot diameter room has four large columns at its center. All four of the columns emit soft, green light from bands carved into them. Stairs leading to the floor below and the floor above are in the southern and western walls. There is another door that exits to the east.

A careful search of a column—a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check—reveals small trap doors in each. A Dinzer with the proper credentials can touch the trap door to open it. Inside is a single, plum-sized hunk of emerald Odonburgite. The Odonburgite is worth 750 gp when sold. Removing both powers down the station as detailed in General Features.

15 - LANDING PAD

When the characters step outside, read the following:

You step through the door and immediately you're hit with cold mountain air. It appears that you are on a large, exterior platform that is 50-feet wide on either side. It lacks a railing of any sort. You can see for miles around you. At the far side of the platform, a large, wrinkled mass clumps against the platform.

Originally, this was a landing pad for Dinzer transport ships.

The black mass was once one of those ships. Long ago, something destroyed it, melting it into a mass of black, highly-radioactive rock. Any creature that starts their turn within 15 feet of the mass must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature takes 13 (3d8) radiant damage and is poisoned. While the creature remains poisoned, it cannot regain hit points except through magical means and its hit point maximum decreases by 9 (2d8) for every 24 hours that elapse. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw takes half the amount of radiant damage and

isn't poisoned.

16 - PASSAGE

The stairs continue around the bend. At the center of the landing is a secret door. Finding the door requires a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. It does not operate the same way that the other doors within the complex do, so the only way to open it is with a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check.

17 - CORE ROOM

When the characters enter, read:

This room is dark except for a pale, white light that comes from the western side of the room, some 15-feet from you. It appears that this room was once some sort of laboratory. All around are alchemical vials, beakers, and potion bottles. In addition to the other alchemist's supplies, there are seemingly hundreds of dull green gems kept in steel boxes.

On the west wall are four two-foot tall steel pedestals topped with three-foot cylindrical glass cases. All but one of the glass cases are empty. The white light in the room comes from the occupied case.

The case contains a **will-o-wisp**. The case's glass is specially treated to prevent it from using its incorporeal movement to escape. If released, the wisp immediately turns invisible and flees by the fastest possible route. The glass case has an AC 13 and 5 hp. It is immune to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons, as well as poison and psychic damage.

If each of the cases are inspected, the characters find that there are small slots below each of them. The three empty cases have a dull hunk of emerald Odonburgite that no longer glows. Meanwhile, the fourth case has a "charged" hunk of emerald Odonburgite inside it that still has a faint glow. If the Odonburgite is removed, the wisp begins to act erratically, as if was suffocating.

The dim Odonburgite is worth 100 gp. Meanwhile, all of the dull, un-charged Odonburgite gems are useless, worth no more than 1gp all together (there are 350 pieces in all).

18 - NINTH FLOOR

This area appears to be two 20-foot wide circular rooms connected together like a figure eight. At the north end of the room are two staircases, one down to the floor below and one up to the next floor. There is a door in the south wall.

Two columns at the center of the circular rooms. The northernmost column has grooves cut into it. A trapdoor of some sort at the center of the column has been flung over. It appears that the cubby behind the trapdoor once held something—but whatever it is looks like it's now gone.

The southernmost column is carved to look like a strange clock. The clock has seven hands.

The clock is a much smaller version of the Amazing Clock in Castlegrasp. In addition to telling time, it denotes days on the calendar, as well as the weather. It has a final eighth hand

that remains invisible, only appearing just before a major catastrophe occurs. Throughout the five-hundred-year history of the Amazing Clock, the eighth hand has appeared seven times. It's believed that when it appears the eighth time, the world will end. This event is referred to as "The Hand of the Eight."

A ladder on the floor on the southwestern wall leads down to Area 20.

Encounter. A remote traveler 1015-R guards this room. It uses the stats of a **shield guardian** with a lightning bolt spell stored in it and it can use its shield reaction on itself. Also, it is being actively piloted, so its Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores are the same as a **mage**. Like the other remote travelers, its pilot is over 1,000 miles away and will command the traveler to fight until it is destroyed.

19 - REMOTE TRAVELER LANDING PAD

This landing pad was created for smaller flyers, such as flying remote travelers, to land on. The panels are constantly heated to prevent ice from building up on the pad. It offers views of the southwestern side of the mountain and the lands beyond.

20 - TRAVELER PASSAGE

The two doors in this chamber are open but can be shut manually by a properly credentialed Dinzer. A remote traveler 721 stands at the end of the hall. It is not currently being piloted, so it is in its default mode, acting as animated armor. It attacks the characters on sight.

21 - REMOTE TRAVELER BARRACKS

This small, cramped room has a 20-foot-tall "shelf" with seven remote traveler 721s placed on individual shelves, almost like they're lying on beds. Each of their "beds" exudes a dull green glow.

The travelers are currently charging and are not being piloted. As such, they are simply empty cases of armor.

If either of the power cells in the columns in Area 14 were removed, the charging stations do not function.

22 - REMOTE TRAVELER REPAIR ROOM

This small room has a number of mechanical arms set into the wall. At the center, hung by its armpits on two hooks, is a remote traveler 751. Like the remote traveler, the mechanical arms can be piloted from Odonburg. Currently, the remote traveler and the arms are not in operation.

23 - TELEPORTATION CHAMBER

This 30-foot-wide circular chamber apparently has no exit. At the northeastern corner of a room, a short flight of stairs leads up to a raised stone dais.

The stone dais is a transporter. Stepping onto the transporter and saying "Up" transports the user to transporters counterpart in Area 24.

Encounter. Covering the floor are hundreds of nano-engineers. As a unit, they are remote-controlled by a Dinzer pilot 1,000 miles away. They are still experimental, so their response time is poor (they make initiative checks with disadvantage). Regardless, while they fly around the room, the transporter will not function. Treat the nano-engineers as four **swarms of wasps** that are constructs and are immune to poison and psychic damage.

24 - CONTROL TOWER ENTRY

After the characters activate the transporter dais in Area 23 read or paraphrase the following:

For a moment, everything turns green and the world around you vanishes. Then, what feels like a second later, the green washes away and the world returns. You appear to be in a different, much larger room than the one you left. The room has an elliptical shape and is nearly 55 feet wide from corner to corner. From where you stand to the next wall, it's 25-feet across. There are two doors in the opposite wall, each spaced roughly 10-15 feet from the corners of the room. Finally, a spiral staircase ascends up from the center of the far wall.

Two, large, metallic dogs spring to life the moment they notice you. Both rush to attack.

Encounter. Both of the "dogs" are remote traveler 1043-H models that have the crude appearance of large, metallic dogs. Treat the travelers as **hell hounds**, except they are constructs with immunity to poison and psychic damage and have the Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores of a mage. The travelers are being piloted by Dinzers over 1,000-miles away.

25 - CONTROL ROOM

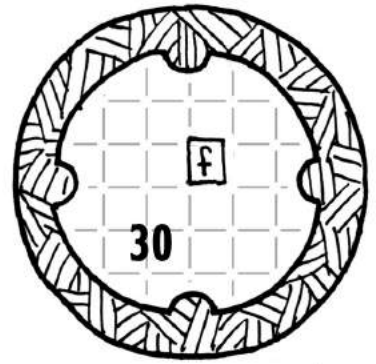
This unusually shaped room is roughly 30-foot across and 15-foot wide at its mid-point. There are two doors exiting the room, one on its longest wall and one at the head of its narrowest point. On one wall, seven large cabinets beset with glyphs that glow-green busily hum. Another wall has a map of Omeria on it. Pinpoints of green light mark various locations on the map. The majority of the points are in the Desolation of Ditimaya and near the mountain hold of Von Doral.

The controls operate the illusion device at the top of the tower (see The Fantastic Lie below). Destroying the cabinets (each of the cabinets has AC 15, 18 hp, and immunity to poison and psychic damage) shuts down the illusion. Also, if the power sources were removed from both of the columns in Area 14, the cabinets will be running on their individual backup sources. At the foot of each cabinet is a small trap door. Detecting the trap door requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Inside each trap door, a piece of emerald Odonburgite the size of a gold coin is held in place. Removing the mineral shuts down the cabinet (so long as the main power sources were already shut off). Each of the small pieces of emerald Odonburgite are worth 150 gp.

Encounter. A remote traveler 945-S watches over the control panel. This traveler is designed for manual dexterity and has four arms, each with different fingers, tools, and clamps. It uses the suit of **animated armor** stat block except that it has the Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores of a **mage**. Furthermore, it can make four melee attacks with its Multiattack feature, instead of two. It is CR 2.

This machine does not attack right away. Instead, its focus is on keeping the controls working.

LEVEL 13



LEVEL 12

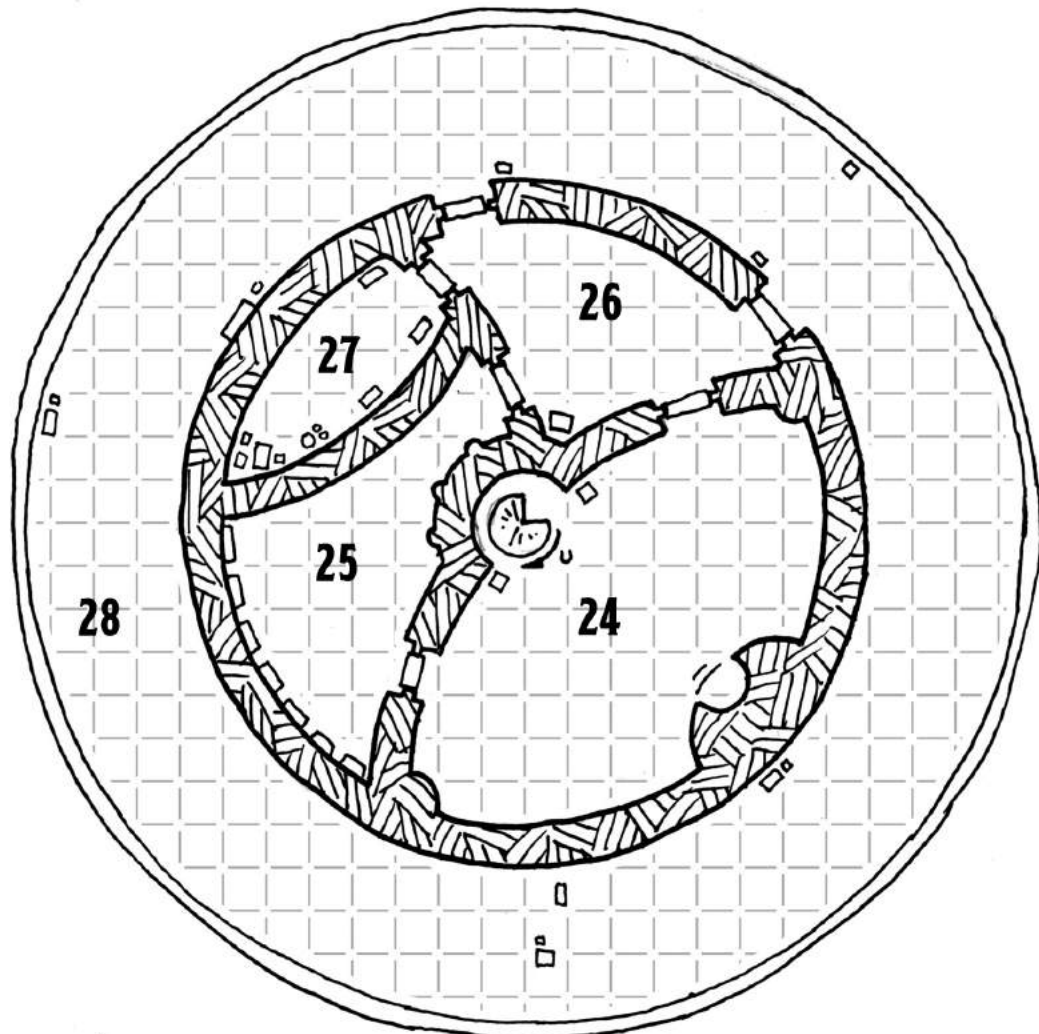


TOWER OF BURSHAI

LEVELS 11-13



LEVEL 11



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

26 - VIEWING ROOM

This triangular room is 20-feet long on its two shortest sides and 35-feet long on its longest side. There are five doors exiting the room: two on its long side, two on one of its short sides, and one on the last short side.

At the center of the long side, a large, black piece of glass floats five feet off the ground.

When the emergency announcement comes on, the characters can view it in this room (see *The Fantastic Lie* below).

27 - OXON'S CHAMBER

This narrow room is 15-feet wide at its widest point and 25-feet long from where you stand to the point where the opposite walls meet at a point. On either side of the room are four seven-foot-tall black cylinders against the walls. Each cylinder has a small, rectangular glass window, allowing you to look inside it. All but one appear to be empty.

These sleeping sarcophagi are slightly thicker than the others. In addition to providing the same benefits of the other sleeping sarcophagi found in Areas 6 and 7, these sarcophagi also act as suspended animation capsules. Any creature that steps into one can cast *sequester* targeting themselves. Another creature outside of the sarcophagus can dispel the *sequester* early by using the control glyphs on its side. Understanding the function of the control glyphs requires a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

OXON OF ODOBURG

The occupied sarcophagus contains the suspended form of Oxon of Odonburg (CG male Dinzer human **archmage**). Oxon has been inside the chamber of nearly 500 years. He was placed within the capsule by his brother following a fight in the tower (hence all the damage). If Omnaweahl is with the party, she immediately recognizes him and is starstruck. Oxon was rumored to have died in a fatal flyer crash five centuries ago. Almost no one living knows that he is still alive.

Having adopted a vow of silence 500 years ago after he witnessed Kongradol in the Wallingmiotta and saw the future of Omeria, Oxon does not speak. Instead, he speaks with sign language. Creatures with Intelligence scores of 12 or higher will be able to easily understand his intentions from the sign language as will any creature that understands Thieves' Cant. Otherwise, a creature must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence check to understand what Oxon is saying.

Once released, Oxon gets his bearings, then starts looking for his brother. When it becomes obvious that Odon is not in the Tower, he then heads for the control room (Area 25) to finish what he started 500-years ago. See *The Fantastic Lie* below for details.

28 - OBSERVATION DECK

When the characters first step into this area, paraphrase or read the following:

This huge observation deck surrounds the tower on all sides. It is 18-feet wide from the tower to the railing. From where you stand, you can see for hundreds of miles in every direction.

Likely, this is where the characters encounter the remote traveler alpha-class as detailed in *The Fantastic Lie* below.

29 - ACCESS LEVEL

The stairs continue to ascend to the highest point of the tower. In this in-between level, four 500-year-old banners of Odonburg hang at all four points of the compass.

30 - TOWER'S DOME

This 30-foot wide room has a domed ceiling. Unless the cabinets were destroyed or shut down, streaks of green energy move through grooves on the wall, disappearing into the tower's cone.

The illusion spell created by the tower emits from this area. See *The Fantastic Lie* below for details.

THE FANTASTIC LIE

As the characters are traveling through the upper reaches of the Tower of Burshai (levels 11+) and they have started to unravel the mysteries of the tower, reinforcements arrive to protect the tower's secrets. A Dinzer **remote traveler alpha-class** (either the same as before if it wasn't destroyed or its replacement) lands on the observation deck (Area 28). Wherever the characters are, the machine approaches them with hands raised in surrender:

The machine raises its hands in a human-like way as if to suggest it does not wish to fight. It tactfully keeps its distance, too. After a moment, its form begins to shimmer as an illusion comes over it. Although it's still obviously the construct, its face has been replaced with an illusion that makes it look exactly like Ophiar, the owner of the Tall Ghost book shop in Orbea and Omnaweahl's brother.

If Omnaweahl is still with the party, it's obvious that she is shocked. Already discouraged by the condor attack and everything she has seen in the Tower, the stress she's feeling is starting to reach critical levels.

"Please. I haven't come to fight," says Ophiar. "I'm sorry about everything so far. You must understand: I have a duty to my country and my Emperor. You've all become tangled in something that is beyond your reach and you are putting the entire world in jeopardy just by being here. That's why we've had to make certain preparations. Please—follow me."

Ophiar's remote traveler carefully walks towards Area 26 keeping his hands in the air. If he's attacked, he casts a stored *resilient sphere* spell on himself and uses the minute to convince the characters to go into Area 26 to watch the viewing screen there.

Once the characters are in Area 26, he speaks a command word to turn the screen on.

The black pane of glass begins to glow, clearly under the effects of some sort of illusion spell. On it, a two-dimension image appears—it is the face of Holy Evadimus Emporer of Odonburg. He stands an office surrounded by five of the Seven Eyes of Odonburg as well as members of his council. On the wall behind you can see the red and blue banner of Odonburg.

"My fellow Omerians. This illusory broadcast is being sent out to all major broadcasting panels in Omeria. And as we speak, messengers with transcripts are arriving in cities and villages throughout our great continent.

"It is with a heavy heart that I come to you today to announce the arrival of a threat to our very way of living. Recently, it's come to my attention that an anti-Dinzer terrorist organization operating in Central and Northern America has begun a dastardly operation to strike at our friends and allies across the great continent of Omeria."

The image of Evadimus and his colleagues is momentarily replaced by images of the characters and (if she's still there) Omnaweahl. He mentions each of the characters by name as well as the party's name. If they haven't given themselves a name, he instead refers to them as 'The Ivory Oath.'

"We first learned of this organization after multiple terrorist attacks in Omeria starting with piracy off the Weysevain Coast."

Images of The Ghost Holm appear on the screen.

"Then, they destroyed a Dinzer transport blimp in the ruined town of Qola in the Desolation of Ditimaya, killing six patriots."

Images of the ship crashing into the Hole in Qola appear on the screen.

"Shortly after that, the terrorists fireballed The Long Shadow casino in the town of Orbea."

An image of The Long Shadow comes on the screen. The entire building is burning and in ruins; likely in far worse condition that the characters remember leaving it.

"This time, there were hundreds of deaths including the casino's beloved owner Prayer in the Morning."

Prayer's image comes on the screen with the caption "Deceased." After lingering on Prayer's face for a moment, the image returns to Evadimus and the other Dinzers. Even if she survived the battle at the Long Shadow, she's still declared dead.

"Now I've been given word that the terrorists are operating north of the Basilisk's Spine Mountains. The news that I am about to tell you is not easy for me to share. But what they are planning could spell doom for us all."

Evadimus hesitates, visibly distraught.

"The terrorists have taken hold of an ancient tower in the Basilisk's Spine Mountains. We've sent Dinzer troops to stop them—"

The image on the screen shows the characters fighting remote travelers in the Tower, except the scene has been altered—instead of constructs, it looks like the characters are fighting and killing humanoids.

"I realize that this imagery is graphic and may disturb some viewers and I apologize. From those brave soldiers who gave their lives, we learned the ghastly intentions of these dangerous terrorists. From the tower, they wish to cast a malicious conjuration spell on the land—magic not seen since the Unlimited Eruption. If they are successful, it will change the very landscape of our world. It will poison the land and the sky and place dangerous minerals in the ground. Those minerals will emit high levels of energy which will harm anyone that comes near them.

"Already, we have begun preparations to combat the fallout from this terrorist attack. And we've deployed are greatest soldiers to the tower. We are optimistic that the terrorists will be stopped before they can carry out their attack. But it is my duty as your Holy Emperor to inform you of the danger at hand.

"I don't know what the future brings, my fellow Omerians. But know that by the wisdom of Odon and Oxon, whatever comes of this unfortunate event, we will persevere. Good luck. And good night."

Evadimus is replaced with text explaining how to prepare for the coming emergency.

Ophiar's remote traveler speaks up again, his hands still in the air.

"Five hundred years ago, when Duda Weysevain trekked south through the Lost Dragon Pass, he discovered huge fields of glowing, green ore.

"At the time, the ore was protected by a tribe of people known as the Ditimayans. Of course, they were somewhat primitive, not like the peoples north of the Basilisk's Spine or our people. They didn't understand what they possessed. Weysevain shared this information with a pair of brothers: Odon and Oxon, the founders of our great nation.

"They learned that the mineral that the Ditimayans called 'The Life of the Land'—what we now call emerald Odonburgite—emitted high levels of evocation magic. When applied to a magic item, the magic item instantly recovered all of its charges. The value was incredible. Within just a few years, Dinzer technology increased at exponential levels. Every magic item, every piece of technology that we have we owe to the discovery of the emerald Odonburgite.

"But it was dangerous, too. Certain types of energy—when applied to the mineral—caused catastrophic results. The Hole in Qola is the worst occurrence so far from Odonburgite becoming unstable.

"In time, our enemies learned of Odonburgite. Wars were fought. Thousands died. There was too much of the Odonburgite to easily protect and our allies proved uncooperative. They were taken by the allure of the gems. So Odon made a difficult decision: we would hide the Odonburgite from the world.

"Under the leadership of the wizard Burshai, this tower was erected to broadcast a powerful spell. First, it would cast *hallucinatory terrain* over the land. Any creature who saw the Odonburgite would not realize it was there. Instead, they would see nothing more than desert sands and wasteland. This is how the 'Desolation of Ditimaya' came to be. Second, the tower modified the memories of nearly every living creature on the continent. Not only would they forget the Odonburgite fields existed in the first place, but they would see nothing unusual about our use of the material.

"What you've learned here today—the world can't know. Our ancestors spent the last five centuries hiding the presence of the mineral emerald Odonburgite. It is our Holy mission to protect its secrets—if our enemies knew where to find it, they could use it against us. Everything we've worked for—our way of life—would vanish in an instant.

"Peace, liberty, happiness—in a flash, all of that would be gone. The world would fall into chaos once more. Is that what you truly want?"

Give the characters time to react to the revelations. Ophiar is a zealot; very little can change his mind from the cause. He will listen to their protests and logic and eventually make an offer.

Until then, the characters may have other questions concerning the conspiracy. Here are common questions with Ophiar's answers. Any other questions that the characters have, Ophiar either does not know or is not willing to share.

Who else knows? "Only the Emporer, the Seven Eyes, and the top agents of Odonburg. And now all of you."

Why are the elves dying? "We discovered that as the levels of Odonburgite diminish, fey and creatures with fey ancestry such as elves begin to become sick. It is an unfortunate side effect."

What are the Dinzer pylons? "The pylons draw energy directly from a cache of Odonburgite and transmit the energy through air streams back to Odonburg."

Is the Desolation of Ditimaya truly a desert? "It is a desert. But some of the more dangerous parts—such as Dreadfields—are actually large caches of Odonburgite which we protect."

How is the Obsidian Plain connected? "There were many creatures who were unaffected by the spell, particularly descendants of the Striped Conjurors of Karmithyash and the few living conjurers themselves. Over the years, they've tried to rise up and take control of the Odonburgite. The worst of those events, the Unlimited Eruption, led to the creation of the Obsidian Plain."

What are krigs? "Krigs are naturally immune to the radiant effects of raw emerald Odonburgite. We use them in the fields, quarries, and the mines."

How much Odonburgite is there? "We estimate that there are 1.1 trillion tonnes of emerald Odonburgite in the world."

"Now that you know what we know, you have two choices. You can reveal what you've learned here to the world and be labeled as criminals forever. Already, the world is ready for this 'disaster' to occur. And already, the full might of Odonburg is ready to handle the situation and save the world from your act of terrorism. Or, you can surrender quietly. I can escort you back to Odonburg and we can modify your memory. Because of these events, you will have to serve some time, but we can make arrangements to have you sequestered by the Stonearms in Castlegrasp. Once you've served your sentence, you're free to live your lives as you see fit."

It's likely that the characters reject this offer. Once they make the choice to reveal the nature of the tower to the world, Ophiar attacks. From there, the scene could play out a few different ways.

If the characters defeat Ophiar's remote traveler alpha-class, they must then destroy the control cabinets in Area 25. Doing so removes the illusion (see The Hand of the Eight below).

If the characters accept Ophiar's offer and Omnaweahl and/or Oxon is with the party, or if the characters fight Ophiar and Ophiar looks as if he's close to winning, this is what happens:

"Stop," says [Omnaweahl/Oxon]. In [his/her] hand is a apple-sized hunk of glowing emerald Odonburgite.

Ophiar's remote traveler looks shocked. "What are you doing?"

If it's Omnaweahl holding the Odonburgite, she looks distraught. Everything that she's learned has caused her to lose all faith in her nation, her people, and even herself as she realizes she's been implicit in the conspiracy.

If it's Oxon, he is finally completing what he set out to do 500 years ago.

"Run," says [Omnaweahl/Oxon] to you. [His/her] hand begins to glow with black, negative energy.

Ophiar screams, "No! What are you doing! You'll kill us all!"

As the emerald Odonburgite absorbs the necrotic damage it begins to destabilize. It should be obvious that the characters need to flee or be destroyed. Below is a round-by-round break down of what happens.

ROUND 1

The gem begins to destabilize. Ophiar watches in horror as [Omnaweahl/Oxon]'s form starts to disintegrate along with it.

ROUND 2

As the gem starts to break open, high-levels of radiant energy spill out. Each creature that starts its turn this round within 20 feet of [Omnaweahl/Oxon] must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 14 (4d6) radiant damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one.

ROUND 3

Finally, the gem shatters exploding outward for only a moment before it retracts and implodes inward. [Omnaweahl/Oxon] is instantly destroyed as is anything within 20 feet of [him/her]. The implosion sends out a shockwave of radiant energy. Any creature within 100 feet of [Omnaweahl/Oxon] when this occurs must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 35 (10d6) radiant damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one.

ROUND 4

A tear in the fabric of reality opens up and begins to expand rapidly. Loose objects are pulled into the hole. At first, the objects are small: a few tools, rocks, random trinkets. Then larger objects start to drift towards the hole.

ROUND 5

Areas 24 through 28 are absorbed into the tear. Any creatures and objects in those areas are immediately destroyed (no save). The upper tower Area 29 and 30 is blown 100 feet into the air. Any creatures inside those areas must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be thrown against a wall, taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage as a result.

ROUND 6

The top of the tower falls back down and into the tear. All creatures and objects in Areas 29 and 30 are immediately and irrevocably destroyed. Meanwhile, the tear in reality starts to absorb the ninth and tenth levels. Any creatures in Areas 18, 19, and 23 must succeed on DC 15 Strength saving throws or be pulled into the tear in reality and are immediately and irrevocably destroyed. Creatures in Area 23 make this saving throw with advantage.

ROUND 7

The absorption of the tower accelerates as levels six, seven, and eight are pulled into the tear in reality. A creature in Areas 12-17 and 20-22 must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pulled into the tear in reality where they are immediately and irrevocably destroyed. Creatures in Areas 12a, 12b, and 13 make this saving throw with advantage.

ROUND 8

The entire bottom portion of the tower is absorbed as the tear devours all five levels. Any creature in Areas 2-11 must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pulled into the tear in reality where they are immediately and irrevocably destroyed. Creatures in Areas 2 and 3 make this saving throw with advantage.

ROUND 9

Snow and stone from the side of the mountain is absorbed into the rift. Each creature within 100 feet of where the tower once stood (which is now erased from reality) must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pulled 50 feet towards the rift. A creature pulled into the rift is immediately and irrevocably destroyed. A creature that passes its Strength saving throw can use its reaction to make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw in order to catch a creature that fails its Strength saving throw, stopping them on a success.

ROUND 10

More snow and stone fly towards the rift creating blizzard-like conditions. Any creatures within 500 feet of where the tower once stood must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, a creature takes 5d6 bludgeoning damage and is blinded. The must also make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature is pulled 100-feet towards the rift. A creature pulled into the rift is immediately and irrevocably destroyed. A creature that passes its initial Constitution saving throw can use its reaction to make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw in order to catch a creature that fails its Strength saving throw, stopping them on a success.

If a creature passes its initial Constitution saving throw, it takes half as much damage, isn't blinded, and doesn't have to make a Strength saving throw to avoid being pulled into the rift.

ROUND 11

The rift stabilizes. A huge, black hole measuring 100-feet across floats 200 feet in the air above the mountain. It no longer absorbs matter into it, although, it will still destroy anything that touches it.

ESCAPING THE TOWER

There is not a lot of time to escape the tower. The characters will need to find an exit and fast. The best way to escape is to leap through one of the holes in the wall to snow below. Thanks to the angle and the snow itself, falls are not nearly as dangerous. Reference the table below for the damage the characters take if they leap from levels of the tower. Once a character hits the snow, they slide 30-feet down the mountain from where they land.

Before a character leaps, they can make a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. On a successful check, the character only takes half damage from the fall.

ESCAPING THE TOWER

Tower Level	Exposed Areas	Falling Damage
1st	—	—
2nd	—	—
3rd	—	1d6
4th	9a, 9b	2d6
5th	11	3d6
6th	—	3d6
7th	15	3d6
8th	—	4d6
9th	19	4d6
10th	—	4d6
11th	28	5d6
12th	—	5d6
13th	—	6d6

THE HAND OF THE EIGHT

With the tower destroyed, the illusion ends and the

Desolation of Ditimaya reveals its true nature. The entirety of the desert emits a constant green glow visible for thousands of miles. Fields upon fields of huge, exposed deposits of emerald Odonburgite are now visible. The Dinzer pylons, thought to be defunct, glow with radiant energy. Trails of green energy fill the sky, streaming southward. Secret Dinzer bases near the quarries, mines, and deposits appear, no longer invisible. Hundreds of remote travelers and never-before-seen-krigs toil in these areas. Millions of Central Omerians are in shock.

A few moments after the destruction of the Tower of Burshai and the dispelling of the mass *hallucinatory terrain* spell that hid the emerald Odonburgite from the Omerians, in the south section of the Orchard Park in the city of Castlegrasp, cries of fear fill the air. Hundreds of terrified Castlegraspians gather around the Amazing Clock.

Khan Hayyan-Harrak—surrounded by his Granite Nine security force—moves past his people in order to see what they see.

The Amazing Clock's eighth hand has appeared, thus signaling the final catastrophe.

"So it begins," whispers the Khan. "The Hand of the Eight."

ADVENTURE CONCLUSION

This is the end of the first part of the Hand of the Eight adventure path series. If the characters survived the destruction of the Tower of Burshai, they likely find themselves stranded on the side of Trenrock Mountain. Already, the Dinzers cast them as terrorists, applying the blame for the sudden appearance of Odonburgite on them. With hardly any allies—as it's likely that Omnaweahl, Oxon, or both died in the implosion; and as it was made clear in Evadimus' illusory broadcast, Prayer is also dead—and no clear direction, they find themselves in serious trouble.

Of course, this is only the beginning.

The *Hand of the Eight* adventure path returns with *Part 2: Chapter 7. The Summer Land*.

