

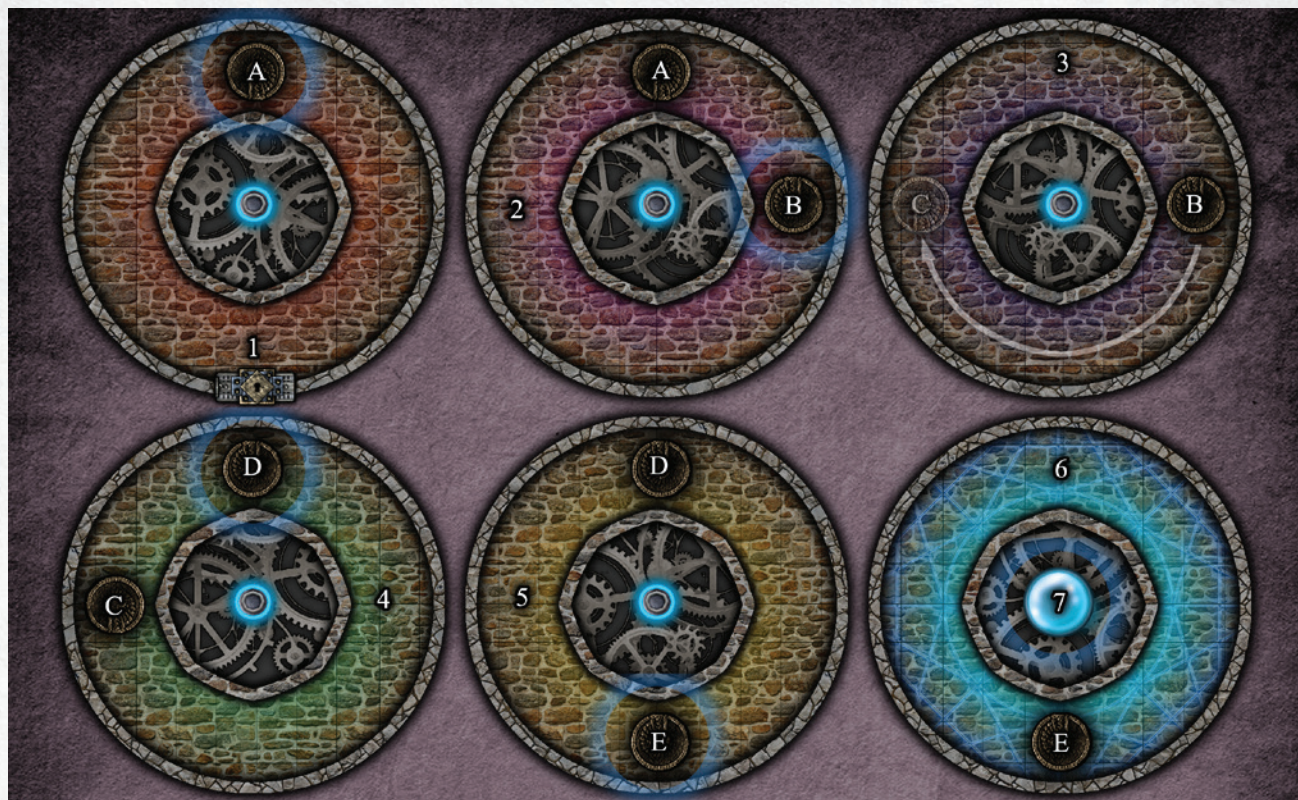


Mini-Dungeon Collection

THE TEMPORAL CLOCK TOWER
BY JUSTIN ANDREW MASON



HMD-005



The Temporal Clock Tower

JUSTIN ANDREW MASON

A mysterious obsidian obelisk has appeared on the outskirts of the kingdom, and in its wake unusual temporal effects have begun to affect the surrounding countryside and nearby villages. Pockets of “increased time passage” have been accelerating the aging process of creatures and structures. Sometimes those affected age only by a few years, and other times they are aged to ruin, decay, and dust. The range of the effects seem to be expanding, and panic among the locals has prompted mass migrations as villagers flee from the tower’s curse.

The adventurers have been conscripted by local authorities to investigate the tower and put an end to the weird effects surrounding it. As

reward, they are offered both 50,000 gp and deeded ownership of a five-mile swath of land that surround the tower’s location.

The tower is actually a mechanism created by an extradimensional alien scientist that calls itself O’hi’nitynra. The machine, powered by the *Eye of Philochronorastaris*, is actively consuming the fabric of spacetime in this world to power itself for the alien’s unknown motives. The alien is indifferent to the destruction it is causing, seeing this world and the creatures who inhabit it as nothing more than resources to be consumed.

THE EYE OF PHILOCHRONORASTARIS*Wondrous item, artifact*

When the elder God of Time, Philochronorastaris, was felled by a rival deity, his right eye was plucked from his dying body. In a failed attempt to preserve his life-force, Philochronorastaris impregnated his eye with his essence to be reborn, but was unable to complete the process before death. Now the artifact binds the last vestiges of his ancient power.

This perfect luminescent crystalline orb suspends what appears to be a humanoid fetus with its umbilical cord attached to a pulsating blue light within its core. The sphere is warm to the touch, and the creature inside can be observed breathing and occasionally moving its limbs.

When the artifact's effect is activated, the fetus's eyelids open briefly and reveal a blindingly bright blue light emanating from its eye sockets.

Eye of Philochronorastaris has three charges. It regains 1d3 charges daily at dawn.

If you hold and concentrate upon the *Eye of Philochronorastaris* (as if concentrating on a spell), you can spend two charges to cast *time stop* as an action. If you spend three charges, you can cast the spell upon any target within 60 feet. An unwilling target can make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw, avoiding the effect on a success.

DESTRUCTION

The *Eye of Philochronorastaris* can be destroyed if it is buried for 30 days in the grave of a warrior permanently slain upon the Fields of Ida on the plane of Ysgard. When so buried, the fetus within the globe slowly shrivels until it vanishes, the blue glow goes dormant, and only a useless non-magical crystal sphere remains.

THE CLOCKWORK MECHANISMS

The central core of the tower is made up entirely of whirring, clicking, and spinning clockwork mechanisms. Though the intricate gears and sprockets that make up the central mechanism of the clock tower are plainly visible, they generate an impenetrable warped spacetime barrier. Any object or force penetrating the central column is diverted and reflected with equal force in a mirrored direction. The only point in which the mechanisms can be directly accessed is at the top of the tower where the *Eye of Philochronorastaris* has been installed.

THE TEMPORAL FLUX

The mechanisms in the clock tower cause waves of temporal flux to radiate throughout the dungeon. Since this effect is directly attuned to the specific moment that the adventurers enter, it goes unnoticed until they are encountered by the denizens of the watchtower.

During any encounter within the Tower, have the PCs and the monsters both roll 1d20. If one side rolls higher than the other by 5 or more, the side with the lower roll is surprised at the beginning of combat.

This effect appears to the adventures as if the enemy is suddenly speeding up or moving in slow-motion. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence check determines that this effect is actually caused by the varying temporal realities experienced by both parties. A character who succeeds on the check also realizes that they are experiencing time slower and their opponents aren't actually speeding up.

The clock tower exists on the prime material plane, but due to the flux in spacetime contained within the dungeon, the interior is considered its own pocket dimension. Any attempt to teleport into or out of the location results in failure; this effect also prevents planar travel within the tower. Summoning spells function normally, but



when the summoned creature returns to its plane of origin it returns to a point in time relative to passage of time outside the clock tower.

TEMPORAL CLOCK TOWER

The walls and floors of the temporal clock tower are two feet thick and constructed of a strange otherworldly marble-like material that has a hardness ten times that of adamantine. The veins in the black material glow with a pulsating cerulean light. The ceiling of each level is 30 feet high. The material fades from existence in 3d10 hours if the temporal flux effect of the tower is negated.

With the exception of the third floor, the spiral stairway leading up from each floor to the next are encased in an impenetrable force field that can only be negated by defeating the mechanical guardians that inhabit that floor.

1. The door leading into the clock tower is crafted of the same material as its walls, and can be opened by disabling its complex mechanical lock, which requires a successful DC 20 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Intelligence check notices that the lock resembles a calendar of sorts, and can be unlocked by setting its dials precisely to the current date and time. Dwarves, gnomes, and other PCs knowledgeable in technology or engineering have advantage on this check. When unlocked, the door slides up to grant passage. It automatically closes and locks again after one minute. The lock is accessible from inside as well, but due to the temporal flux, it is impossible for the adventures to know the precise date and time outside the tower and they cannot set the dials properly.

1. Guardians: 10 security robots (use the statistics for **animated armor**)

2. Guardians: 1 torturer robot (use the statistics of a **flesh golem**) and hundreds of tiny arachnid robots (use the statistics of a **swarm of insects**)

3. Winding Widdershins: The level has only the stairwell used by the adventurers to enter, which continues until it terminates at the ceiling. No other passage is immediately apparent. A character who succeeds on a DC 25 Perception check notices that if the wall is pushed, the floor (and stairwell) rotate. To progress, stairwell B must be pushed into the position of stairwell C. If the room is rotated clockwise, then nothing else happens and the adventurers may continue once the stairwells align. If the room is rotated counterclockwise, it triggers an area-wide aging effect. Every creature in the room that is not undead or a construct must roll 1d20 and consult the following table:

WIDDERSHINS AGING EFFECT

1D20	RESULTS
1-5	The creature instantly becomes 1d8 + 1 years younger.
6-10	The creature instantly becomes 1d4 + 1 years younger.
11-19	The creature instantly ages 1d8 + 1 years.
20	The creature instantly ages 3d6 + 1 years.

4. Guardians: 6 soldier robots (use the statistics of a **rug of smothering**)

5. Guardians: 2 myrmidon robots (use the statistics of a **chull**)

6. The Mechanical Eye: The towering core of clockwork mechanisms ends on the floor connected to a massive gyrating astrolabe-like machine. At its center levitates the *Eye of Philochronorastaris*. The alien scientist, O'hi'nitynra (use the statistics of a **qwyllion**), is connected to the machine via an array of 50 glowing blue wires. If the PCs attack the wires

directly, each point of damage they inflict severs 1 wire. As long as at least one of the wires is connected to O'hi'nitynra, the Constitution saving throw DC for the alien's Nauseating Aura ability is 16 instead of 14.

If the PCs attack the alien directly, it uses a *ring of telekinesis* to try and cast the adventurers into the wiring rings of the mechanism.

The mechanical eye takes up a 25-foot space in the center of this floor. Any creature that enters the area or ends its turn within it must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 1d12 points of bludgeoning damage when struck by one of the spinning rings. The mechanism has 500 hp, and if its spinning rings strikes a creature, the mechanism takes damage equal to the damage the ring deals. The *Eye of Philochronorastaris* is protected by the spacetime barrier until the machine is destroyed. When the machine is destroyed the temporal flux effect ceases.

TIME GOES ON... AND ON... AND ON...

When the adventurers leave the tower, they discover that the strange temporal effect has had a greater impact on their perception of time than expected. Altered by the temporal flux within the clock

tower, they experience time differently within the structure than without.

At the beginning of every round spent inside the tower secretly roll 1d100 to determine the passage of time outside of the clock tower. This passage of time goes unnoticed until the adventurers exit the dungeon, and discover that they haven't aged in tandem with the outside world.

1d100	RESULTS
1-30	1 Hour
31-50	1 Day
51-75	1 Week
76-95	1 Month
95-99	1 Year
100	5 Years

GM Note: Depending on how much time has passed outside of the clock tower, the world the adventurers emerge to may be very different than the one they left behind. Generations may have passed, and tales of the cursed tower might have become codified in local lore.

ALTERNATIVE: The method above assumes most GMs are going to utilize the time dilation effect as they see fit in their own settings. The underlying concept of the theme is a "reset," much the way that modern cultures imbue power to New Years' resolutions. The method provides the GM with a flexible means to logically reboot their story via leaping

the adventurers into the future to a point long after the consequences of their actions have come the fruition and the world is a different place.

A GM who finds the table above too time-intensive or is just seeking a simpler method of tracking the changes outside the tower can just roll once on the following table as the PCs leave:

1d100	RESULTS
1-30	1d4 Weeks
31-50	1d4 Months
51-75	3d4 Months
76-95	1d4 Years
96-99	1d4 Decades
100	1d4 Centuries

