

Perilous Deeps



Dungeons
for *Dungeon World*



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Introduction

How do dungeons work in *Dungeon World*? Ask that question of this book, and you'll get six different answers.

More than the mechanics in most RPGs, *Dungeon World* mechanics lend themselves to personalization by players and GM. In that spirit, the diggers of these dark places were asked to contribute personal interpretations of the dungeon creation guidelines laid out in *The Perilous Wilds*.

Each “Deep” herein has been conceived and written according to the unique sensibility of its author. Think of them as six different suggestions for ways in which you yourself might write up a dungeon. If you plan to run one of these at your own table, make sure to read it over at least once, in order to get a handle on the author’s approach. That being said, a few commonalities exist:

Any word that appear in **SMALLCAPS** is either a reference to an entry elsewhere in the adventure, or an entry heading.

Impressions are suggestions for sensory details that can be used to describe the area in question.

Connections are ways to reach other areas or locales from the area being described.

Common areas are parts of the adventure site that are likely to recur as the place is explored.

Unique areas are places that only occur once in the adventure.

Discoveries are anything the party finds that is interesting, but not immediately threatening.

Dangers are anything which pose a real threat to the characters, including things like traps and monsters.

Mapping a Deep

None of the sites described herein include maps in the traditional sense. Mostly they are lists of rooms and their potential contents, for you to arrange and connect on a map drawn for the first time at the table, as the places are explored. This means you’re free to tailor the physical form of each dungeon to the fiction, your play group, and your personal approach to running an adventure.

By spelling out some of the contents ahead of time, we step away from the wholly improvised nature of orthodox *Dungeon World*, trading some of that edge for a level of detail and atmosphere usually only achievable via some degree of prep. There’s still plenty of room to wing it—these places are more playgrounds than railroads—but by putting the cartography in your hands we hope to do two things: maintain that sense of “playing to find out what happens” that’s so central to *Dungeon World*, and encourage you to personalize each Deep by deciding for yourself how its various parts fit together.

Our interpretation of the GM Principle “Draw maps, leave blanks” in this context is loose: each of these Deeps lays out a “map” of descriptive components, while the “blanks” are the undefined spaces between those components, waiting to be filled in, during your prep and/or at the table.

In other words: here are the building blocks; make each Deep your own.

—Jason

Uncertain Reflections

by Joe Banner • Illustrated by Niels Burger

Introduction

This is a story about what happens when those with mortal desires and failures are given the power of a god.

The Magus did not go insane. It was insane from the start, as so many of us are. What happened was the Magus found a way to cope with the madness it perceived around it.

It wanted to return to the pristine purity it had been raised on. It wanted a retreat from a world of sand and grit and blood and sickness.

It went into the Iron Marches. Oh, how the yellow salt afflicted its senses! But it went into the desert. And in the desert it made a shining castle. It burned the sand into glass. It made the glass into peaks and walls and vaulted ceilings and a crystal throne. And there it sat, and there for a time it found peace.

But acolytes came, filled with dirt and sin. They promised to serve, they wished for redemption. They would not leave. It hated them. So it promised them what they wanted. Then took from them everything. (They served it better as drones than devoted.)

And there the wives' tales end... Except you found the citadel, after days or years of search, or none at all. You stand at the mirrored gates and all is still in the desert sun. Your rivals pursue you, black dots on the horizon.

What will you do next, I wonder?

Questions

- * Who are your rivals?
- * How do your rivals communicate with each other?
- * Do you want to serve the Magus? Destroy it? Or something else?
- * What dangers and discoveries did you find in the desert?



The Iron Marches

Torrid, Arid Desert, Barren, Perilous, Chaotic

Connections

- * **West of Umberto**, called “the Fortunate City” by some
- * **South of Mahima D’utari**, the borderlands of Mirkasa
- * **North of the Malachite Mines**, source of the caliph’s vast wealth

Impressions

- * By day: relentless sun, endless dunes, wavering dots on the horizon (friend or foe?)
- * By night: a full, alabaster moon; flickering witchlights; the whispers of *djinni* and *hashshashin*
- * Savage sandstorms
- * Clear blue skies
- * Circling carrion birds
- * The occasional mesa, and the shelter it may offer
- * Eroded ruins, of ancient sandstone

Discoveries

A lush oasis, safe but coveted by all travellers. How long do you dare stay here? What claim from another party is already embedded in the soft earth?

A soft place, where the sand is deadly and the dunes seemingly endless. What lies beneath the sand layer for those that fall through it? What time-spanned souls have been wandering the soft places helplessly for centuries?

A mile-wide crop of cactus, each plant several feet tall.

When you *attempt to work your way safely through the field*, roll +DEX: on a 10+, your clothing is torn, but nothing of value is lost; on a 7-9, something important is hooked—leave it behind or spend the necessary time to free it.

When you *travel around the field instead*, you risk wasting time and drawing unwanted attention.

A desert ironwood, maybe a thousand years old or more. What answers might a druid learn from it? What marks of distant conflict scar it’s ancient bark? What is said to happen when the ironwood blooms? Is it blooming now?

An outpost of foreigners, perhaps a Chalcedoni legion or grove of Green-scar Godsworn. What might the foreigners want in exchange for shelter or safe passage?

By default, the outpost is *Poor*, *Shrinking*, *Guard*, *Need* (supplies), *Oath* (its parent nation). Also, choose or roll one:

1d12 DETAIL

- 1-3 ☐ The foreigners are despised by the locals, and harried at every opportunity: +*Blight* (nomads)
- 4-5 ☐ Built on the site of an ancient curse: +*Blight* (cursed earth), +*Need* (exorcists), -*Population*
- 6-7 ☐ Formerly a town, captured and fortified by the foreigners, its former residents enslaved: +*Population*, +*Safe*, +*Defences*, +*Blight* (would-be rescuers)
- 8-10 ☐ The outpost was a prison for exiled criminals: +*Lawless*
- 11-12 ☐ The outpost is home to more esoteric foreigners: (choose one) +*Elves*, +*Dwarves*, +*Antfolk* (etc.)



Citadel of Glass

SORCERER'S SECLUSIUM
Size Small

GM Notes

Use the “See What They Find” move from *The Perilous Wilds* as the party explores the Citadel.

When you **need a theme, common area, or unique area**, choose or roll from the lists on this page.

When you **need a Discovery**, invent one or roll one up.

When you **need a Danger**, choose one from the entries on page 7, invent one, or roll one up.

Themes

1d12 THEME

- 1-4 Madness ○○○
- 5-8 Forbidden Knowledge ○○
- 9-12 Elements (Sand and Fire) ○○

Common Areas

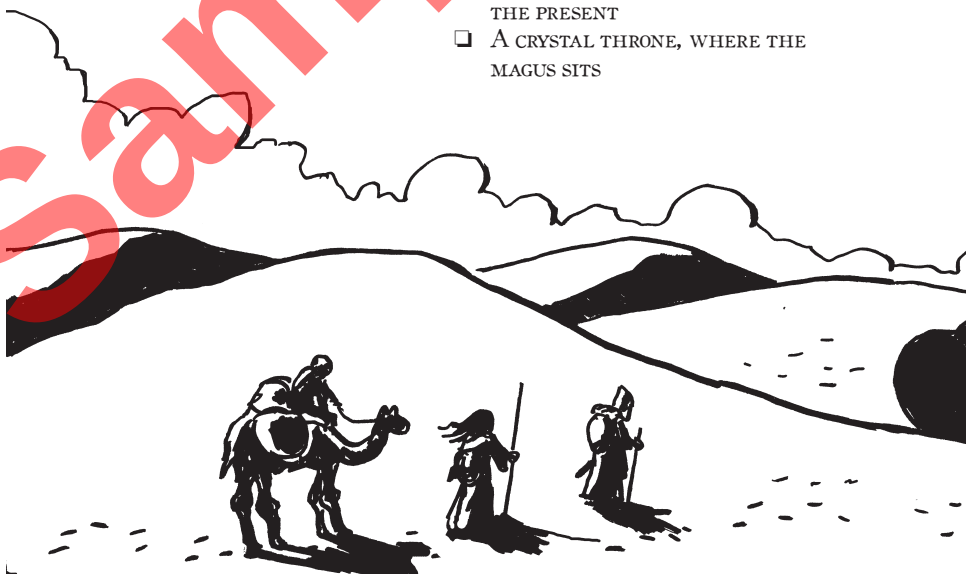
The Citadel has five **floors**: basement (-1), ground (0), first (+1), second (+2), and third (+3). When they come across a new common area, have them roll +floor:

2d6+floor COMMON AREA

- 1-3 NATURAL CAVERN
- 4-7 INTACT ROOM
- 8-10 SHATTERED ROOM
- 11-13 STUDY
- 14+ BALCONY

Unique Areas

- ☐ A KILN, WHERE GLASS AND MEN ARE FIRED
- ☐ A GREENHOUSE, ABUNDANT WITH LIFE
- ☐ A POOL, FROM WHICH TO SCRY THE PRESENT
- ☐ A CRYSTAL THRONE, WHERE THE MAGUS SITS



Common Areas

Add exits, stairs, ramps as you see fit.

NATURAL CAVERN

Rocky walls, floors of fine sand, piles of particularly fine sand piled up in places. It may be possible to dig through to the surface through some areas.

The Citadel's foundations, where the first sand was collected and forged. Fragments of THE MAGUS' past lie embedded in the living rock, open to interpretation.

INTACT ROOM

A chamber of yellow glass.

GM move

- * The walls, floor, and/or ceiling begins to crack, turning this place into a SHATTERED ROOM

SHATTERED ROOM

Time, entropy, or the rage of Magus has taken its toll on this chamber of cracked, fissured, and broken glass.

GM moves

- * The ceiling gives way, showering them with shards of glass
- * The floor collapses, forcing them to Defy Danger to grab a hold of something or survive the fall

STUDY

A laboratory and/or library of THE MAGUS. It might not have been touched in decades, yet there is not a speck of dust anywhere to be found.

BALCONY

An exterior area, complete with airlock-like seal to stop dirt entering. Made by THE MAGUS in its weaker moments, wistfully thinking of home.

All balconies face towards Umberto, the city of silks and fortune. On a clear night, you can just about see it—a single twinkling light on the horizon.

