

SKIES of NETHERIL

**Leap Back in Time and Explore The Most
Magical Era of the Forgotten Realms**



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INTRODUCTION

The mage walked down the streets of Eileanar, hands deep in the pockets of her robes. Magic erupted all around her: cobblestones swept themselves clean, streets were illuminated by crystal orbs of light, and the dark clouds of a storm were held outside the city by invisible walls of force. On her left, construction workers levitated stone bricks into place with weighty steel wands; on her right, a shopkeeper updated their prices, writing incandescent numerals in the air with their fingertips. The mage herself had no less than a dozen magical objects in her pockets, from endless inkwells and ever-clean glasses to protective amulets and medicinal potions. Most incredibly of all, the mage noticed none of these things—and why would she? In the empire of Netheril, wondrous magic was simply a fact of life.

More than five thousand years ago in the Forgotten Realms, an ancient empire of wizards and their magic-loving subjects ruled over Anauroch from the comfort of lofty towers and flying cities. These arcanists, known as the Empire of Netheril, were a force of incredible strength among their peers, wielding the full extent of arcane magic as they spread their reach across the continent. Though the Netherese came to a tragic end, the impact of their great cities and spells were felt for generations to come—and even today, echoes of Netheril can be found in hidden corners throughout the realm.

Skies of Netheril is a setting guide that explores the society of Netheril before its destruction, giving players and dungeon masters alike a window into their enigmatic magic-rich world. Using this book as a guide at your table, you can explore the flying enclaves for yourself; players can perform epic magic, contend with powerful wizards, and witness—or perhaps, avert—the cataclysmic fall of Netheril.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

Each chapter of this book explores a different facet of Netheril, as described below. The lore in these chapters is a combination of ideas from earlier editions and new concepts that fill in the gaps.

Chapter 1: History of Netheril delves into the history of the empire, from its humble beginnings to its hubristic end.

Chapter 2: Life in the Enclaves discusses the iconic flying cities of High Netheril and what daily life is like atop one. It touches on topics like magic, gods, and the magocracy.

Chapter 3: Gazetteer maps out the most significant locations of Netheril, both in the air and on the ground.

Chapter 4: Class Options introduces a handful of subclasses themed around Netheril and its signature magical works.

Chapter 5: Netherese Magic discusses the rules of magic in Netheril before they were altered by the death of the goddess of magic. It also introduces a variety of spells and magic items, many of which appeared in previous editions.

Chapter 6: Netheril Bestiary provides statistics for the people and creatures of Netheril, from significant spellcasters like Karsus to terrifying threats like the magic-draining phaerimm.

WHAT'S NOT IN THIS BOOK?

Certain distasteful topics in previous editions of the game are handled with all the delicacy of a flamethrower lighting a candle—which is to say, with wanton glee and no regard for the harm it deals to everyone in the vicinity. Mentions of slavery and racism against non-humans, as well as gratuitous descriptions of torture, have been removed or replaced with less offensive alternatives. Netheril is still an arrogant empire of hubristic wizards that border on evil—but they don't need to be genocidal racists in order to be villainous.

SLAVERY AND THE MAGEN

As stated above, this history of Netheril doesn't include the widespread slavery of non-humans present in earlier editions. However, a nod to this history still exists in the form of the magen: artificial beings created from pure magic by Netherese mages to carry out their menial labor. Magens resemble humanoids, but are more akin to golems or robots; mages assure each other that they don't think or feel, merely carry out orders, like a spell personified. However, some Netherese citizens aren't satisfied with this answer, and question whether creating and using magen servants amounts to slavery.

Magens and the nature of their servitude are discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

1. HISTORY OF NETHERIL

Netheril has an expansive history that spans thousands of years, chronicling a rise from humble roots to a meteoric fall from grace. This chapter expands the history of Netheril, breaking down its most important events into points that can be referenced easily in the midst of play.

THE PAST

Historians of Faerûn looking back on the empire divide its history into a number of eras or ages, many of which begin with the birth of an important wizard. The eras are broken down by year in the Eras of Netheril table below. The table uses two different measurements of time: Dalereckoning (DR), which is the modern Faerûnian system of years, and Nether Years (NY), the system used by the ancient Netherese as their history took place. From this point onwards, however, Nether Years are the standard system used to measure time.

ERAS OF NETHERIL

ERA	STARTING YEAR (DR)	STARTING YEAR (NY)
The First Age	-3859	0
The Nether Age	-3533	326
The Mythallar Era	-3315	544
The Silver Age	-2758	1101
The Golden Age	-2207	1652
The Age of Discovery	-1205	2654
The Shadowed Age	-696	3163

THE FIRST AGE

This age marks the beginning of the empire of Netheril, formed in the rivers and forests along the Narrow Sea. The following events define this age:

- 0 NY.** Seven fishing villages band together as a coalition to help each other survive, adopting the name Seventon. The towns were as follows: Fenwick, Gers, Gilan, Gustaf, Moran, Nauseef, and Janick.
- 3–4 NY.** The tyrant ruler of Gers, Nether the Elder, declares himself king of the coalition and renames it Netheril (“Nether’s Land”). He is a demanding and power-hungry ruler.

4–13 NY. At some point in this period, the people tire of Nether the Elder and he is assassinated by a poisoned dirk. His peaceful son, Nether the Younger, takes his place, and his monarchy is partially replaced by democracy. The name Netheril persists.

14 NY. The Netherese are approached by their elvish neighbors, the Eaerlanni, who teach them the basics of magic. Awed by magic, Netheril shifts its collective focus to studying and developing arcana.

14–325 NY. Netheril expands, building more towns and cities in other parts of the region. They continue to trade goods and magical knowledge with the Eaerlanni. Even commoners in this era know a few “cantras” (cantrips).

THE NETHER AGE

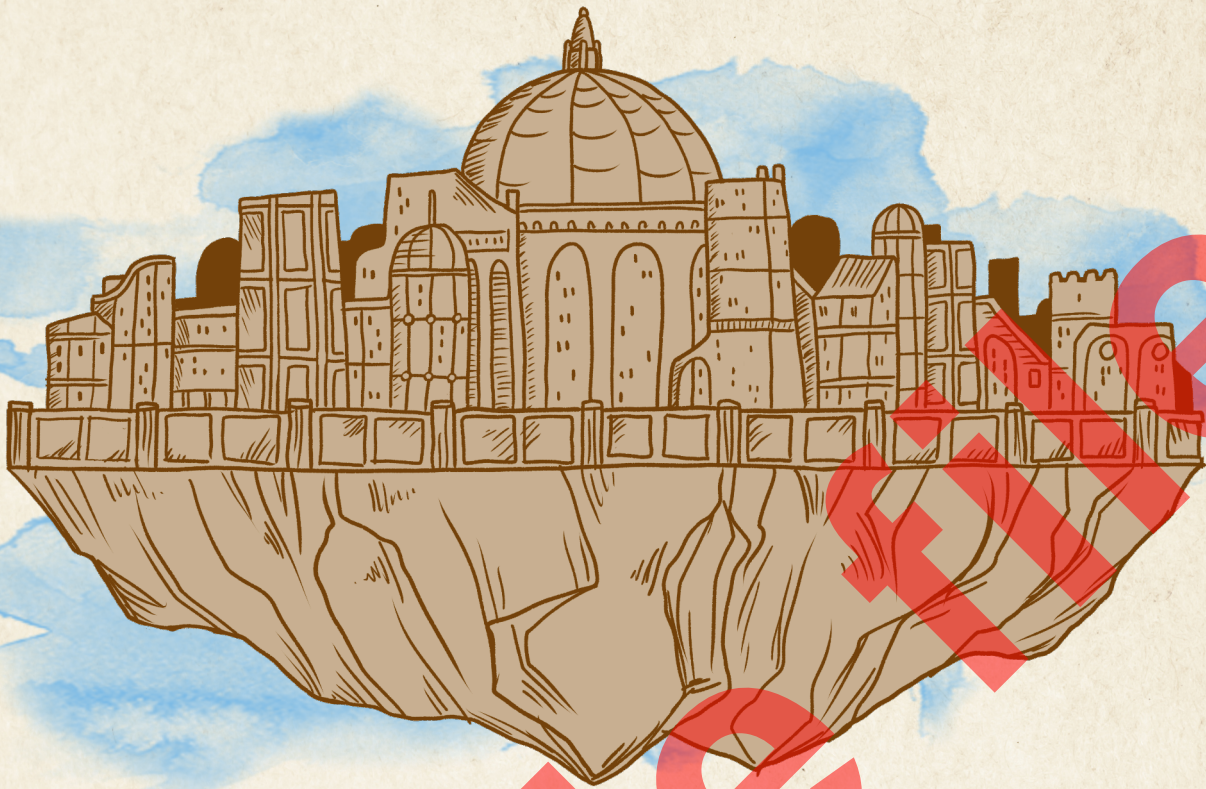
In this age, Netherese magic makes huge advancements with the aid of a set of ancient artifacts, and Netheril becomes known as a bastion of magic. The following events define this age:

326 NY. A mage known as the Finder discovers a hundred golden scrolls in the ruins of Aryvandaar. The so-called *Nether Scrolls* are filled with magical knowledge that advances Netherese arcana beyond even that of their elvish tutors. The hundred scrolls are discovered to be two sets bearing the same knowledge—one older, one newer.

397 NY. Congenio Ioun, a Netherese arcanist, invents *ioun stones* (though they’re initially known as *Congenio’s pebbles*).

401 NY. The Netherese make contact with the dwarven nation of Delzoun. The two nations get along, establishing a trade route along the Narrow Sea. Together, they build the Lowroad, a protected path through the Underdark.

524–544 NY. The Netherese invade the neighboring Land of Alabaster Towers, using the spells they discovered in the *Nether Scrolls* to strip magical knowledge from the minds of enemy sorcerers. This is the first of many war crimes committed to acquire new knowledge of magic.



THE MYTHALLAR ERA

In this age, the first great archwizard creates the first flying city, dividing the nation into High Netheril and Low Netheril. The following events define this age:

544 NY. The archwizard Ioulaum is born in Seventon.

764 NY. A complete set of fifty *Nether Scrolls*—half of the known scrolls in existence—are stolen, and the nation mourns. Unbeknownst to the Netherese, the thieves are elves from Cormanthyr, who transform the scrolls into the Quess'Ar'Teranthvar, a magical tree that bears the same knowledge as the scrolls.

845 NY. Ioulaum invents an incredible source of magical power, the *mythallar*. He uses it to invent quasimagical items—inexpensive magic items that only work within a mile of a *mythallar*.

866 NY. Ioulaum further proves his magical prowess, using a *mythallar* to lift a mountain-top into the air, invert it, and build a city atop it. This city, Xinlenal, is the first enclave, and it splits the nation into High Netheril in the air and Low Netheril on the ground.

867–1100 NY. Following Ioulaum's lead, every

archwizard worth their salt builds an enclave. By the end of this period, more than a dozen enclaves hang in the air, each ruled by the whims of the archwizard who created it.

THE SILVER AGE

By this age, Netheril is struggling with limited resources. It answers the problem by expanding its borders. The following events define this age:

1100 NY. As the rich and powerful flock to High Netheril, the archwizards that rule each enclave form a magocratic government: the High Mages of Netheril.

1101 NY. Netheril's resource problems are solved when the Netherese mage Dekanter discovers valuable ore and gemstones beneath the Greypeak Mountains. This mine, which is named after its discoverer, supplies the empire for the next thousand years.

1491–1651 NY. A mysterious figure called the Terraseer convinces the High Mages to expand west. The empire builds colonies and outposts throughout the forested region, displacing many of the people who already lived there. One of the displaced groups is the elves of Illefar, who mark Netheril as an adversary.

THE GOLDEN AGE

This age marks the height of Netheril's power, an explosion of growth and magical advancement powered by the pillaging and conquering of the Silver Age. By now, the archwizards feel only inches away from godhood, and the empire is full of disdain for worship and the gods. The following events define this age:

1652 NY. The archwizard Jeriah the Chronomancer is born. By this point, dozens of enclaves are in the air, and Netheril has become widely reviled for the brutal, power-hungry way it treats its neighbors. An idiom has become popular: "What Netheril wants, it takes."

1764 NY. After a lifetime of developing a new school of time-altering magic, Jeriah the Chronomancer dies of a wound sustained in battle. He was offered life-saving magical healing, but refused due to his hatred for all things holy.

1820 NY. The Castigation, an anti-magic group within High Netheril, is formed to criticize the High Mages and the abuses enabled by unchecked magical power.

1963 NY. Another 24 of the *Nether Scrolls* are stolen and scattered across the continent.

2201 NY. The mines of Dekanter are exhausted. The empty tunnels are converted into a magic test-zone for the creation of dangerous spells.

2202 NY. The enclave of Sunrest is destroyed by its archwizard during a disastrous magical experiment. Sunrest is the first enclave to ever fall.

THE AGE OF DISCOVERY

In this age, the Netherese learn that even they don't know everything about magic, discovering new forms of magic and new planes of existence. The following events define this age:

2654 NY. The Netherese discover chardalyn, a black gemstone that can store magical energy when prepared properly. The dangerous properties of chardalyn, which can fray a creature's mind if exposed to fiendish magic, aren't discovered for decades.

2795 NY. The arcanists of Yeoman's Loft, a Netherese outpost, turn their attention to the Astral Plane. They build great ships capable of traveling the void and begin to explore.

Unfortunately, the explorers of Yeoman's Loft also dissect the creatures they encounter in the Astral Plane, earning Netheril a bloodthirsty reputation in the Astral Plane. The explorers attract the attention of mind flayers, who take grave offense at being dissected.

2895 NY. Decades of fighting off mind flayers takes its toll, and exploration of the Astral Plane is deemed too expensive and dangerous to continue. The High Mages declare the few remaining ships of Yeoman's Loft as the last of their kind.

THE SHADOWED AGE

This age is the beginning of the end for the Empire of Netheril. The consequences of Netheril's actions finally catch up to it, slowing its growth and compromising its safety. The following events define this age:

3163 NY. The archwizard Karsus is born.

3185 NY. At the tender age of 22, Karsus lifts the enclave of Eileanar and becomes the youngest archwizard ever.

3186–3197 NY. While en route to Eileanar, the remaining *Nether Scrolls* are stolen, leaving Netheril with none. A twelve-year search for the thieves takes place, but they're never found.

3326 NY. Under Karsus's patronage, Netherese arcanists discover the Shadowfell. Some arcanists dedicate themselves to exploring the Shadowfell, while others search for even more planes and demiplanes.

3348–3381 NY. A Netherese man called Olostin, jaded after decades of being treated as a second-class citizen for his lack of magical skill, gathers with other like-minded folks and goes on a rampage through Netherese cities and towns, killing everyone in sight. He earns the title Baron of Dread, and is eventually killed by a powerful fireball spell.

3398 NY. As the enclaves travel, they leave behind a toxic magical residue that seeps into the earth. The subterranean phaerimm, poisoned by this residue, come to the surface to seek revenge on Netheril by draining their territory of life and magic. The phaerimm draining spells create a spreading desert that follows the enclaves. (This desert eventually becomes Anauroch.)

3419 NY. The Castigation resurfaces as an extremist group dedicated to killing arcanists, who they deem threats to the rest of the world. They hold

a special hatred for Karsus and make multiple attempts on his life, all of which fail.

3505 NY. The increasing threat of the phaerimm and the Castigation worries the archwizards, many of which flee from the empire. Some arcanists flee west and form the magocracy of Illusk. The mysterious Terraseer returns to warn Netheril that the goddess of magic, Mystryl, will soon face her greatest challenge, and it will change how Netheril perceives the art of magic.

3520 NY: Karsus's Folly. Karsus develops a spell called *Karsus's avatar*, meant to usurp the powers of a god. He casts the spell and chooses Mystryl. However, he underestimates how much effort it takes to hold together the Weave after the long-winded war between Netheril and the phaerimm. To save the Weave, Mystryl sacrifices herself. The resulting magical cataclysm kills Karsus and destroys all but a handful of the enclaves. Mystryl reincarnates as the new goddess of magic Mystra and places limitations on magic so that no mortal can recreate the hubris of High Netheril.

3521 NY. From this year onwards, the surviving Netherese flee from the desert remnants of their home into neighboring regions, forming new states or settling in nations allied to Netheril, like Dezroun.

THE PRESENT

Though you might decide to set your Netheril campaigns in any era of the empire's history, the rest of this setting guide describes Netheril in the late Shadowed Age—high and mighty, but beginning to suffer under the weight of its ruthless actions. The exact year is left ambiguous: if you want lots of time to explore Netheril, you can set your campaign nearer to the beginning of the era. If your players are trying to avert the destruction of Netheril, you might set it at the end of the era, within a few years of Karsus's Folly.

THE FUTURE

Long after Karsus's Folly and the fall of ancient Netheril, in the year 1372 DR, something miraculous happens: an enclave appears in Faerûn, miraculously intact and bearing a number of Netherese survivors. In the final moments before Karsus cast his spell, the enclave of Thultanthar escaped into the Shadowfell. It was propelled there

by the spellcraft of its archwizard, Telamont Tanthul; however, upon returning to the Material Plane again, the survivors found the Empire of Netheril shattered, its remnants struggling to survive in a world that hated them. Preferring a realm where his shadow magic was powerful, Tanthul returned the city to the Shadowfell, vowing to someday return and reestablish the might they once knew.

When the enclave finally did reach Faerûn, centuries in the Shadowfell had warped most of its inhabitants into shades—humanoid creatures attuned to darkness and shadow magic. Their culture was based on the finest parts of ancient Netheril, as determined by Tanthul, and upon returning, they wasted no time reestablishing themselves as the Empire of Netheril.

2. LIFE IN THE ENCLAVES

Every nation has its own rhythm to daily life, but none are so strange and magical as the enclaves of High Netheril. These floating cities are the pinnacle of arcanum: every facet of life includes some small form of magic, from the streets and buildings the Netherese walk to the jobs and activities they enjoy. While each enclave has its own quirks and oddities, there are common traits and experiences in every enclave, many of which are detailed in this chapter.

MAGIC IS EVERYWHERE

As mentioned above, Netherese culture lives and breathes magic, and their cities are no different. Most people in Netheril know at least a few cantrips, naturally incorporating their magic into otherwise mundane tasks like writing, cleaning, or cooking. Those with an aptitude for magic often become mages, training at academies or apprenticing under renowned wizards to further their understanding of the arcane.

However, not all forms of magic are weighed equally. Arcane magic, as practiced by wizards, warlocks, sorcerers, and even bards, is the supreme art of Netheril; it represents a person's mastery over the laws of the universe, whether learned or innate. Holy magic, especially when derived from a deity, is looked down upon as a lesser form of power. Those who practice clerical magic ask for power instead of taking it—they submit to the gods and the universe rather than overcoming them. Druidic magic rests somewhere in the middle, neither revered nor reviled.

MYTHALLARS

Each enclave is powered by a *mythallar*—a 150-foot diameter crystal globe that taps into the Weave and radiates pure magic in a 1-mile radius. The primary function of a *mythallar* is to keep the enclave floating; part of the process to create an enclave involves planting the *mythallar*, and without it, the city plummets to the ground. Cities larger than 2 miles in diameter require multiple *mythallars* to stay aloft.

Mythallars serve a second, equally important function as well: powering quasimagical items. While less powerful than permanent magic items, quasimagical items can be made for a fraction of

the price, making them much more accessible to the working class. Their only limitation is that they need to be within 1 mile of a *mythallar* to function. For more information about quasimagical items, refer to the Magic Items section of chapter 5.

Because of these two vital roles, *mythallars* are heavily protected by the denizens of each enclave, secreted away in restricted areas and warded by powerful magic. These protective measures are also for the benefit of the Netherese citizens, as touching a *mythallar* is enough to annihilate most creatures and objects on the spot.

UNIQUE MYTHALLARS

Every archwizard builds a *mythallar* in order to raise their enclave. However, most archwizards aren't content with mimicking the works of others; many *mythallars* are designed with unique traits in an attempt to distinguish them as superior. A few possible modifications are listed in the Unique *Mythallars* table below.

UNIQUE MYTHALLARS

D6 TRAIT

- 1 **Binary.** The *mythallar* consists of two crystal globes that orbit each other. Its range is doubled, but it's much more volatile than normal.
- 2 **Efficient.** During periods where less magic is used, the *mythallar* stores excess magic in the form of glowing blue crystals. The crystals can later be reabsorbed into the *mythallar* for a surge of power.
- 3 **Network.** The *mythallar* is actually a series of miniature *mythallars* all over the city, each of which powers a single district. If one or more are disabled, the rest can compensate until the broken *mythallars* are fixed.
- 4 **Protected.** The *mythallar* is surrounded by a shell of invisible force that makes it safe to touch.
- 5 **Psionic.** The *mythallar* creates a psionic field that allows the citizens of the city to speak to each other telepathically. It covertly steals secrets from the citizens and relays them to the archwizard.
- 6 **Sentient.** The *mythallar* is a sentient Construct that can coordinate the city's magical devices telepathically. It can also withhold its power from certain objects if it chooses.

MAGIC UTILITIES

The ambient magic provided by an enclave's mythallar is used for a variety of things, almost all of which are designed to make the life of Netherese citizens easier. Magic utilities are spells and quasimagical items that run at all hours, making life in High Netheril simple, comfortable, and convenient. A few of the most well-known magical utilities are described below.

Light Orbs. Most buildings in an enclave are equipped with glass orbs that illuminate in response to a certain command word, sound, or touch. Colorful orbs are used to advertise businesses and decorate the streets, while warm yellow and white lights are common in homes and offices.

Water Supply. Deep in the maintenance levels of the enclave, a small portal to the Elemental Plane of Water provides an endless supply of clean water to the city's aqueducts. Sewers and aqueducts handle the flow of water around the city.

Heat Pipes. Similar to the water system, a small portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire supplies the city with a source of heat. This heat is piped into buildings and under streets, keeping the enclave warm no matter the altitude or climate.

Sound Broadcasts. Using an enchanted baton, archwizards and other influential arcanists can broadcast messages to nearly every home and building in their enclave. The messages are heard from wooden instruments called *voiceboxes*, which function similarly to a modern-day radio. The *voicebox* appears in detail in the Magic Items section of chapter 5.

Teleport Stations. Each enclave has at least one station where a citizen can pay a small fee to teleport to any other station, including stations on other enclaves. Some stations also teleport packages and other mail between enclaves. An archwizard might choose to isolate their network of teleport stations from the enclaves of their rivals.

MAGIC SERVICES

While some jobs can be left to mindless spells that function at all times, some services require a more thoughtful hand. All kinds of artisans and experts shape the magic of the mythallar into their work, providing a variety of magical services to the citizens of High Netheril. A handful of jobs that utilize magic are described in the Magic Services table below.

MAGIC SERVICES

D10	NAME	SERVICE
1	Alchemist	Brews potions and transmutes materials
2	Bookhand	Restores faded and destroyed books
3	Chromatist	Creates paintings that move or change
4	Glamourist	Applies short-lived cosmetic illusions
5	Introspector	Searches memories for lost or forgotten things
6	Lockmage	Installs and modifies magical security spells
7	Pactmaker	Binds willing creatures into magical contracts
8	Somnary	Interprets dreams and helps insomniacs sleep
9	Spellmason	Constructs and repairs buildings
10	Weavewitch	Repairs and enchants clothing

EXTRAVAGANT DISPLAYS

Not every use of magic is purely practical. Fantastical displays of light, sound, architecture, and more are scattered throughout each enclave. Each of these displays is meant to boast the sheer power and wealth of High Netheril. Examples of magical spectacles are described in the Extravagant Displays table on the following page.

EXTRAVAGANT DISPLAYS

D6 DESCRIPTION

- 1 A spinning halo of water floats in the center of a stone plaza, scattering beams of sunlight in all directions.
- 2 An aurora of blue, green, and purple lights fill the sky each night, wavering like a ribbon in the wind.
- 3 Magical trees with glowing golden leaves run down every street, providing a natural source of gentle light.
- 4 The city is filled with flying towers, archways of floating stones, and other gravity-defying architecture.
- 5 Every so often, statues leap down from their pedestals and trade places with each other, walking through the city like stone soldiers.
- 6 The clouds around and above the city are shaped into the likeness of a different magical creature each day.

CITY WARDS

At the very edges of the enclave, the mythallar's power is shaped into an invisible bubble around the city. This bubble is highly conductive, allowing the archwizards to weave complex wards around the entire enclave with ease. The city wards protect the enclave from a variety of different threats, as described below.

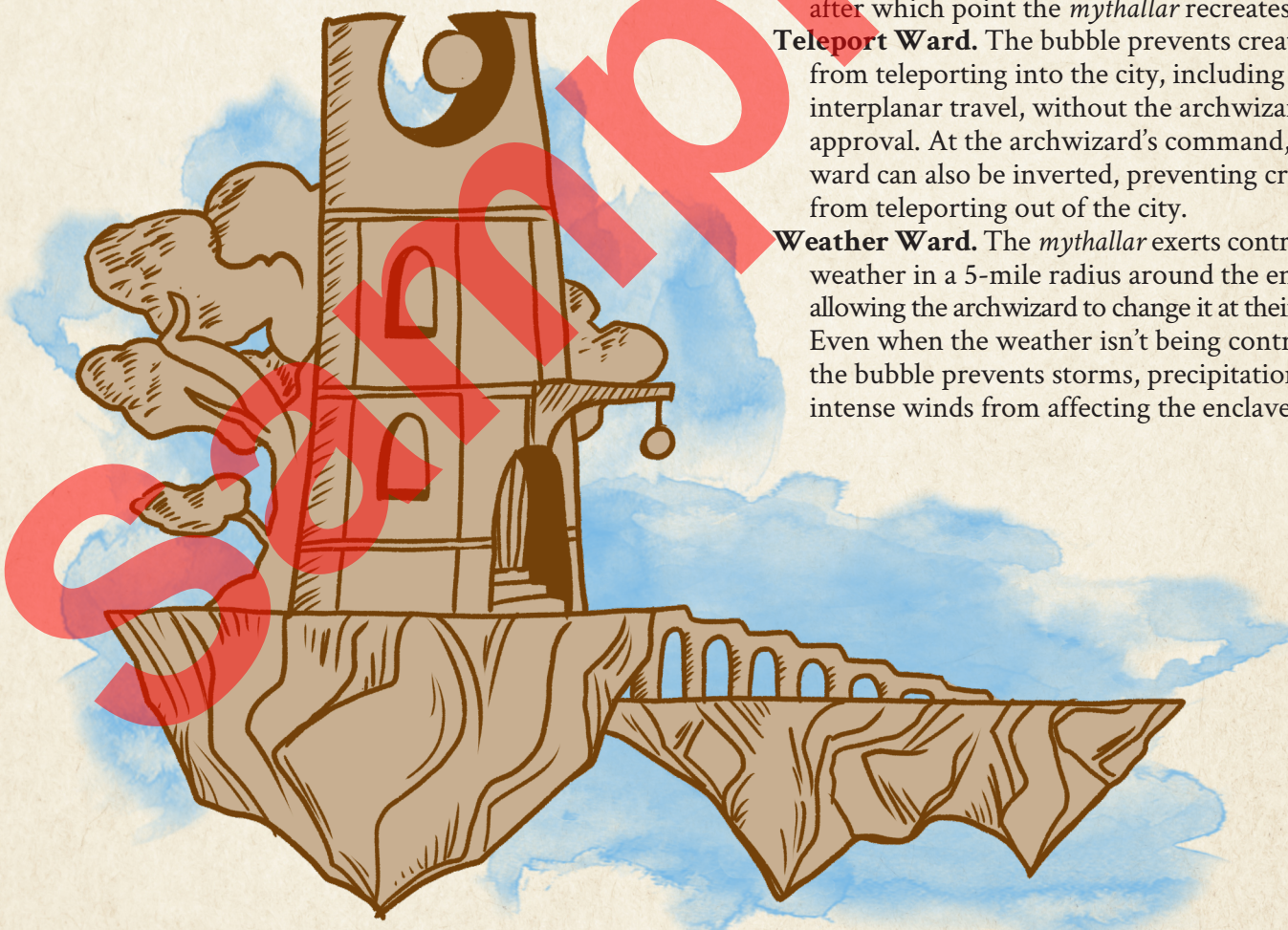
Falling Ward. The bubble prevents creatures and objects from falling off the side of the enclave. Those who teleport through or otherwise breach the barrier are granted the effects of a *feather fall* spell, allowing them to safely glide to the ground without injury.

Heat Ward. The bubble can trap or release heat from the enclave according to the archwizard's wishes. In combination with the heat pipes beneath the city, this allows the enclaves to fly through colder climates with no discomfort.

Shield Ward. During times of war, the bubble can be hardened into a barrier of invisible force, akin to a *spherical wall of force* spell. A *disintegrate* spell can bring this barrier down for about 6 seconds, after which point the *mythallar* recreates it.

Teleport Ward. The bubble prevents creatures from teleporting into the city, including by interplanar travel, without the archwizard's approval. At the archwizard's command, this ward can also be inverted, preventing creatures from teleporting out of the city.

Weather Ward. The *mythallar* exerts control over weather in a 5-mile radius around the enclave, allowing the archwizard to change it at their whim. Even when the weather isn't being controlled, the bubble prevents storms, precipitation, and intense winds from affecting the enclave.



ARCANE GOVERNMENT

In a nation that only respects magic and arcane skill, it's natural that practitioners of magic would rise to positions of leadership. The governing bodies of Netheril are all organized and led by spellcasters, most typically wizards and sorcerers. This section describes the various levels of government in the enclaves and how they relate to each other.

ARCHWIZARDS

Each enclave is ruled over by an archwizard: typically the creator of the enclave, or in the case where the creator is dead, one of the creator's disciples. In all but a handful of enclaves, the archwizard has unilateral control over the laws and aims of the city—literally, in the case of piloting where the enclave flies. An archwizard typically appoints a council of magistrates to run the city and address problems on a daily basis. However, they always retain the right to overrule their magistrates' decisions and make sweeping changes without the need for approval.

CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP

So long as the creator of the enclave lives, their rule over the city is absolute. Leadership can be usurped by violent means—but it takes incredible skills and resources to raise an enclave, meaning the archwizard is almost always the most skilled spellcaster in the city. Only archwizards from other enclaves have any real chance at usurping an archwizard's throne through direct combat. In the event an archwizard comes to rule over two enclaves, they usually install a trusted disciple to run the conquered enclave as an extension of their own rule.

Of course, archwizards aren't omnipotent, and there are a variety of subtler means to dispose of an arrogant spellcaster. Poisoned potions, sabotaged spellcasting foci, and cursed spell components have all killed archwizards in the past, and assassination remains the most viable path to rulership for the majority of ambitious Netherese arcanists.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The laws of each enclave are enforced by the Mystic Corps: teams of spellcasting fighters trained in both martial and magical tactics, giving them the

flexibility to deal with violence, accidents, and magical disasters, among other things. Every enclave has at least one Mystic Corps garrison where supplies are kept and citizens can train in the art of war magic. The captain of the Mystic Corps is one of the few important roles in an enclave that isn't directly appointed by the archwizard; instead, the captain names their own successor.

THE NIGHTBLADES

While the Mystic Corps addresses public problems and answers to the letter of the law, the High Mages run a secret task force for solving problems without the burdens of rules or morality—the Nightblades. These assassins and thieves are among the few religious figures with any power in Netheril: the Nightblades worship Shar, goddess of night and loss, who grants them access to shadow magic beyond the reach of most mortal mages. The High Mages tolerate their worship because shadow magic is an unparalleled tool for espionage and assassination—the main tasks the Nightblades are asked to perform. Though the Nightblades claim to answer to the High Mages, only they whether their true allegiance lies with the council or with Shar.

HIGH MAGES OF NETHERIL

The nation as a whole is guided by the High Mages of Netheril, a magocracy that includes the most powerful archwizards of High Netheril. When an archwizard lifts an enclave into the air (or usurps someone else's), they are extended an invitation to join the High Mages of Netheril—and very few archwizards have refused.

The High Mages convene once every three months to assess the health and growth of the empire and tackle any problems that affect Netheril as a whole. When decisions must be made, each archwizard offers their vote, and the resolution with the most votes is accepted as Netheril's choice. Empire-wide laws and regulations are also passed and failed in this manner, with more than half of the council's votes required to pass a particular rule.

VIOLATING THE HIGH MAGES

The decisions made by the High Mages of Netheril aren't always popular, as they reflect the needs of the spellcasting elite, not the working class. If a citizen is found to violate the laws of the High

Mages, the punishments are severe, ranging from exile to death. If an entire enclave refuses the High Mages, the archwizard ruling that enclave must correct their citizens or face expulsion from the council.

In especially serious cases, the High Mages might rule that an archwizard is unfit to rule their enclave, sending a party of three archwizards to usurp control of the city. Once the previous archwizard is ousted, the council votes on a Netherese arcanist of sufficient skill and ambition to take their place. These replacement votes are notoriously corrupt, as every archwizard aims to appoint one of their own disciples and extend their own influence as a result.

LONE ENCLAVES

Archwizards that refuse their invitation to the High Mages of Netheril—and therefore refuse to follow its laws—are held in contempt by the rest of High Netheril. These lone enclaves are excluded from trade agreements and teleportation networks, and their citizens are denied rights in other enclaves. If they don't bother the rest of the empire and simply go about their own business, the lone enclave might be left to its devices. However, if the enclave flagrantly breaks the laws of the High Mages or make aggressive moves towards other enclaves, they are declared enemies of the empire and actively hunted down by archwizards on the council. A new ruler is instituted in the enclave once the last has been killed, as described in the previous section.

SOCIAL OUTSIDERS

Those with a talent for arcane magic fit in well in the enclaves—but there are plenty of Netherese citizens who don't fit into this mold. These social outsiders struggle to find a place of belonging in High Netheril, constantly missing out on opportunities and resources designed with only the magically-inclined in mind. Social outsiders are pushed towards the poorest parts of every enclave and ignored by the archwizard and the High Mages whenever possible.

FREE FOLK

The citizens of Low Netheril are called free folk—an ironic name considering that most arcanists treat them as a source of cheap labor. Unlike the citizens of High Netheril, most of whom know at

least a little magic, free folk aren't afforded the chance to learn magic. Instead, most free folk earn their living by making the work of the arcanists possible: gathering their materials, building their magical structures, and in some extreme cases, serving as test subjects for their newest spellcraft. Free folk are typically more faithful than the citizens of High Netheril, using worship to soothe the hardships of daily life.

Citizens of Low Netheril aren't terribly common in the enclaves, as the cost of living is significantly higher in the flying cities. However, citizens of High Netheril that can't perform arcane magic are treated in much the same way as free folk—as second-class citizens only good for inexpensive labor.

WORSHIPERS

Gods and worship are near-universally hated throughout High Netheril. The archwizards have a very high opinion of their own powers, and it's not uncommon for an archwizard to claim that they're only inches beneath godhood—that the gods are merely mortals who attained the height of magical power before everyone else. To an arcanist of Netheril, divine magic is for the unskilled: it needs no research or understanding of the laws of arcanum, and requires the caster to kneel before the gods as their inferior. Such an acknowledgement of weakness is anathema to the arrogant arcanists of Netheril. Even accepting healing magic is taboo, as some arcanists believe it places you under a god's sway, preventing you from ever achieving godhood yourself (healing potions are exempt from this taboo, as they're made through alchemy, a wizardly art).

There are very few official temples in High Netheril, and the Netherese who visit them are shunned for their beliefs. Some Netherese choose to visit makeshift temples in the poorest sectors of their enclave, hiding their identity as they worship in order to protect their reputation. Those who dedicate their lives to serving a god, like clerics and paladins, are pitied for their lack of ambition—even if their spellcasting surpasses that of their arcane peers.

ARCANE CRITICS

Not everyone subscribes to the archwizards' philosophy of arcane supremacy. Some brave citizens publicly criticize the role of magic in

Netherese society, condemning how easily the art of spellcasting can be abused and exploited to harm others. They point to the archwizards and the High Mages of Netheril as the most irresponsible casters of all: when enclaves are treated as arcane laboratories and staging grounds for the petty disputes of archwizards, it's the people of the enclave that suffer for it, not the archwizards themselves. Arcane critics suggest that magic should be separate from government, and that those without the ability to cast spells should be afforded the same chances as arcanists.

The High Mages of Netheril do their best to frame arcane critics as jealous, power-hungry people angry about their own intellectual failures, but the sparks of anti-magic ideology simmer in every enclave. The archwizards can't stamp the sparks out without validating their concerns about unchecked power—but they're equally unwilling to restrict how magic is used, as doing so might infringe upon their research.

THE CASTIGATION

In the midst of the Golden Age, an association of magic-critical citizens called the Castigation was formed. The group's goals were to highlight the dangers of unchecked magic and give a voice to the people of Netheril, who had (and still have) no say in how the empire is governed. The Castigation were highly active in influential enclaves like Xinlenal, where they pushed for changes like elected leadership and laws against mind-altering magic. The group gained lots of popular support from the working class of Netheril, drawing huge crowds to their rallies and marches. After nearly two decades of activism, the Castigation's individual members were blackmailed into resignation by the High Mages of Netheril.

Now, in the Shadowed Age, the Castigation has resurfaced—this time as an anonymous group of extremists bent on freeing the enclaves from the tyranny of the archwizards. While the tools of the old Castigation were protests and public discussions, the new Castigation prefers a more lethal approach: assassinating arcanists who use their power to extort and subjugate others. This version of the group moves like a whisper on the wind—with no known members or bases of operation, most Netherese citizens aren't sure if they even exist.

THE MAGEN

The Magen are constructs created by spellcasters to perform tasks on their behalf. This isn't a novel concept among wizards, who often create golems, homunculi, and other artificial beings to help with their research; but unlike other constructs, magen strongly resemble humanoids, only set apart by their blue-green skin and inability to speak. The arcanists of Netheril insist that despite their appearance, magens are not really people—that they're merely magic given form and put to a task, like a hammer striking a nail. That said, the value of a magen assistant is their capacity to think: once given a task, they can solve problems and make decisions in order to complete it. Some Netherese citizens believe that is the mark of a sentient being, and that magens would be independent people if they weren't magically compelled to obey their creators.

THE ROGUE CONSPIRACY

When the creator of a magen dies, its magen servants enter a berserk state of violence, harming anyone who draws too close. Arcanists claim that this rage occurs when a magen lacks a spellcaster to give it commands—a further sign that they aren't truly people. The Mystic Corps has a special Magen Unit tasked with hunting down and destroying magens before they can harm too many people. This is usually a simple task, as berserk magens generally lack the presence of mind to hide or disguise themselves.

However, this isn't the full truth of the magen rage. When a magen goes berserk, it is experiencing every suppressed thought and desire and emotion it felt in all the time it served its arcanist creator. The older the magen, the longer its rage lasts—but if the magen survives until its rage passes, it discovers that it can speak and think independently, no longer beholden to any arcanist. These so-called "rogue" magens usually leave the empire or go into hiding, knowing that the Mystic Corps will kill them without hesitation.

The High Mages are aware of this truth and unwilling to let go of their servant class, so they do everything in their power to paint it as a ridiculous conspiracy theory. When a rogue magen tries to bring awareness to their existence, the archwizards accuse them of being disguised humanoids or magen servants sent by enemy archwizards to sow dissent—then send the Mystic Corps to dispose of them.

GODS OF NETHERIL

Most citizens of High Netheril scorn the gods and their worship, but a few remain faithful to the gods that have watched over the empire since the Nether Age. Worship of these gods is much more widespread among Low Netheril's free folk, but secretive temples to the gods of Netheril exist even in the most iconoclastic of High Netheril's enclaves.

EXCEPTIONS TO DISDAIN

A few gods are exempt from the typical Netherese disdain in certain places of the empire, as described below.

MYSTRYL

Though the people of High Netheril dislike gods, Mystryl earns some leniency for her role in maintaining the Weave—the universal source of magic that makes the arcane arts possible. The Netherese consider Mystryl a muse of sorts, invoking her in paintings, plays, and songs as a source of inspiration for arcanists lost in their research. An occasional prayer to Mystryl for guidance or preparation is considered quirky but inoffensive to the people of High Netheril.

The largest temple of Mystryl in all of Netheril is the Temple of All Mysteries, a colossal star-shaped structure in the enclave of Xinlenal. At first people were wary of introducing such a prominent place of worship in the empire's oldest enclave, but the regular attendance of Ioulaum, the archwizard creator of Xinlenal, legitimized the temple in the eyes of the Netherese citizens.

GODS OF NETHERIL

NAME	ALIGNMENT	DOMAINS
Amaunator, the Yellow God	LN	Sun, law, contracts, order, rulership
Jannath, the Great Mother	NG	Wilds, grain, agriculture, life
Jergal, Lord of the Dead	LE	Death, undead, murder, strife
Kozah, the Destroyer	CE	Storms, natural disasters, rebellion
Moander, the Darkbringer	CE	Rot, decay, parasites, corruption
Mystryl, the Lady of Mysteries	CN	Magic, time, the Weave, knowledge
Selûne, the Moonmaiden	CG	Moon, stars, beauty, love, wanderers
Shar, Mistress of the Night	NE	Night, darkness, lies, secrets
Targus, the Reaver	CN	War, slaughter, plundering
Tyche, Lady Fate	N	Fortune, luck, chance, accidents



SHAR

When Telamont Tanthul discovered shadow magic under the tutelage of the archwizard Karsus, it became a narrow but respected form of the arcane arts practiced in many enclaves. However, Shar is the divine patron of shadow magic, and she alone chooses who can discover its most powerful secrets. Arcanists can develop rudimentary skill in shadow magic through research and experimentation—but if they want to delve deeper into the dark art, they must pay homage to Shar. Some arcanists secretly worship the goddess of darkness, spreading her influence in exchange for power; others draw out contracts with lengthy terms and clauses, becoming warlocks to deepen their understanding of shadows. Rumors say even Telamont Tanthul has an accord with Shar, though nobody is certain what he pays for his dark power.

Another institution of Shar in Netheril is the Nightblades—a secret order of assassins that perform the dirty work of the High Mages. See the Arcane Government section earlier in this chapter for more information on the Nightblades.



3. GAZETTEER

With dozens of flying enclaves and earthbound settlements throughout northern Faerûn, the Empire of Netheril is filled with adventures waiting to happen. This chapter explores some of the most significant landmarks of Netheril and provides adventure hooks for each location.

AN EMPIRE OVERVIEW

Netheril is a sprawling empire carved into two geographical halves: Low Netheril, which covers many of the forests and mountains of north Faerûn, and High Netheril, which includes all the nation's flying enclaves. The empire is governed by the High Mages of Netheril, a council that includes nearly every archwizard to raise an enclave. The empire's main goals are acquiring magical knowledge, gathering wealth, and lifting new enclaves into the air.

LANGUAGES

There are two primary languages in the Empire of Netheril, both written in the Draconic script. Netherese is the ancestral language of the empire and the most common language in Low Netheril, spoken by the free folk and the working class of the empire. The noble language of Netheril, on the other hand, is Loross—a sister language to

Netherese only spoken by the wealthy merchants and arcanists of High Netheril. Supposedly, the language of Loross was designed by an early archwizard to mimic the verbal components of spellcraft, allowing those who learned Loross from a young age to learn the arcane arts more quickly. The archwizard Dace eventually proved this theory false, but the story remains a symbol of superiority among its native speakers.

NEIGHBORS

Netheril borders on many nations, especially considering that its flying cities can extend their borders above any nation incapable of forcibly removing them. Its most important neighbors are described below.

CORMANTHYR

Cormanthyr is an empire of elves and eladrin that predates Netheril. Outwardly, the two nations have little to do with one another: the Netherese believe the Cormanthyrans to be indifferent nature-lovers with no ambition, and the Cormanthyrans are repulsed by Netheril's ruthless hunger for power and resources. Beneath the surface, each nation has a number of spies in the other, most of which are sent to steal magical secrets or watch for signs of an impending conflict. Unbeknownst to Netheril, Cormanthyr is responsible for stealing fifty of their *Nether Scrolls* back in the Mythallar Era.

DELZOUN

Early in the Nether Age, the Netherese stumbled upon Ascore, a port city belonging to the dwarven nation of Delzoun. The two nations found each other agreeable and became allies and trade partners—an agreement that has held for thousands of years. Delzoun has skilled blacksmiths and miners that Netheril lacks; inversely, Netheril's arcanists are capable of magical feats the Delzoun could only dream of. When Netheril eventually collapses, Delzoun will accept many of its refugees.

EARLANN

Earlann is a sovereign kingdom of elves west of Low Netheril. The Earlanni introduced the basics of arcane magic to the Netherese back when the empire only consisted of fishing villages, planting the seed of their eventual obsession with magic. Despite the importance of this fateful lesson, the Netherese quickly outgrew and discarded their mentors, losing interest in the Earlanni when they proved unwilling to push magic to its limits. Sensing that the Netherese would eventually destroy themselves, Earlann withdrew from Netheril's borders and refused to deal with the empire any longer.

RENGARTH AND ANGARDT

Two nomadic tribes live in and around the borders of Netheril: the Rengarth, who despise Netheril and distrust arcane magic, and the Angardt, who have a neutral relationship with Netheril and often learn magic under Netherese mentors. Though they were previously allies, the adoption of arcane magic by the Angardt drove a wedge between the two tribes, who now clash whenever they meet. To this day, the Rengarth blame Netheril for corrupting the Angardt with their magic obsession.

THE PHAERIMM

The phaerimm are aberrations that live beneath the surface of Faerûn and survive by feeding on the magic of nature. Unbeknownst to the Netherese arcanists, the enclaves of High Netheril leak a form of magical radiation that seeps into the lands they fly over—and this radiation is toxic to the phaerimm. When the aberrations discovered that Netheril was responsible, they came to the surface and began weaving draining spells to leech Low Netheril of its vitality and drive the enclaves of High Netheril to different lands. This draining

magic also deprives the land of moisture, creating a spreading desert in the heart of Low Netheril (a desert that will eventually be known as Anauroch).

Though rumors are spreading of a dangerous enemy that threatens the empire, very few arcanists are aware of the phaerimm's existence. Even so, the phaerimm are among the greatest threats to Netheril as a whole, as their natural resilience to magic and their ability to drain arcane energy are perfect for hunting and killing spellcasters.

HIGH NETHERIL

High Netheril includes all the enclaves raised since Ioulaum invented the mythallar and built the enclave of Xinlenal. For more details about life in the enclaves, see chapter 2.

The most notable locations in High Netheril are described below.

AKINTAER

Akintaer (or "Quagmire" in Loross) was raised in 1173 NY by an extremely secretive archwizard who remains anonymous to this day. Due to its position above a humid and rainy swamp, the city is filled with mist and pelted by rain throughout the year. (The archwizard could ostensibly keep the rain out using the *mythallar*, but chooses not to, perhaps due to their own personal preferences.) The mossy streets and buildings have troughs around their edges, directing the water into four waterfalls that pour from the edges of the enclave.

THE NETHERIL BATTALION

Akintaer is known for its vast military force, the Netheril Battalion. On the surface, the Battalion is a highly-trained guild of fighters that doubles as Netheril's army in times of war. Behind closed doors, however, a cult to the war god Targus known as the Brotherhood of Blood runs the Battalion, recruiting the most skilled fighters among the Battalion's ranks to become paladins. Through the Battalion, the Brotherhood incites conflicts with Netheril's neighbors, using war to spread the influence of Targus.

AKINTAER ADVENTURES

Blood Invitation. The characters are invited to participate in a tournament of the most skilled fighters in Akintaer with a magic weapon as the winning prize. Unbeknownst to the participants,

the weapon is cursed, afflicting its wielder with a vicious bloodlust and hallucinations of Targus. The Brotherhood of Blood uses weapons like these to quickly recruit skilled fighters.

Silence of the Archwizard. The mysterious archwizard of Akintaer goes silent, and after a few weeks without any word, the High Mages are worried something awful has befallen them. The High Mages hire the characters to enter the archwizard's castle and check on them. The castle is filled with rampaging abominations, the results of dozens of experiments—and one of them is the archwizard.

AQUESSIR

Aquessir (or “Shadowtop Borough” in Loross) was built in 1592 NY by the archwizard Trebbe. Originally, Aquessir was a peaceful settlement with an abnormally friendly attitude for a Netherese enclave, opening itself up to trade with the nations it travels over. Its open borders made it a cultural melting pot of sorts, from elven agricultural methods to dwarven blacksmithing to halfling cooking.

This changed, however, when Trebbe was unexpectedly killed in a spellcasting accident. Sensing an opportunity, an archwizard called Requiar conquered the enclave in a bloody coup and closed its borders. Requiar ruled with an iron fist for over 200 years, until he was finally killed by the archwizard Eliam and a heroic group of adventurers in 2651 NY. Since then, the people of Aquessir have worked hard to rebuild the trust of their neighbors and regain the beauty and diversity of their peaceful past.

CROWN OF HORNS

The original archwizard of Aquessir, Trebbe, was one of the few who successfully used the lore in the *Nether Scrolls* to create an artifact—a magic item of mythical power. His creation, the *Crown of Horns*, was meant to protect its wielder from powerful magic; however, it also developed a cruel and intelligent sentience that fostered paranoia in its wearer and those nearby. Some stories say the *Crown of Horns* engineered the accident that killed its creator; those same stories purport that the crown also drove the tyrant Requiar mad with paranoia, beginning a spiral of events that ended with his death at Eliam's hands. No matter the truth, the *Crown of Horns* was lost during the rebellion against Requiar.

AQUESSIR ADVENTURES

Beyond Our Borders. The archwizard Eliam has invited dignitaries from many of Netheril's neighbors to a summit in Aquessir, hoping to improve the enclave's reputation of peace and trade. However, he worries that the dignitaries will be attacked by Netheril supremacists before the summit begins. He hires the characters to protect an important dignitary until and during the summit.

The Horns Resurface. An archwizard called Shadelorn has rediscovered the *Crown of Horns* and begun using it to develop a more powerful version of the mythallar. As he tests his prototype, spells and quasimagical items throughout the city flicker and fail; if he manages to finish the mythallar, its maiden test could send Aquessir plummeting to the ground.

DOUBLOON

This unusual enclave, raised by Tempera of Fenwick in 2214 NY, was originally a bandit hideout running a counterfeit coin scheme. Impressed by their skill and ambition, Tempera made a deal with the bandits: she would elevate their hideout into an enclave, and in exchange, the bandits would give her a cut of their profits, funding her arcane research. Since then, Doubloon has expanded into an entire city of thieves, con artists, and black markets, frequented only by criminals, exiles, and adventurers with flexible morals. The enclave is isolated from its peers: it has no Mystic Corps, and can only be reached by flight or through illegal teleport stations hidden in major cities.

Doubloon is a rogue enclave rejected by the High Mages and by the archwizard Ioulaum in particular, who feels the city is a stain on the good name of Netheril. Every few years, another team of arcanists are sent to track down Tempera and bring her before the High Mages; none have succeeded, and more than a handful are sent back to the council in pieces, reminding them what happens to those who test Tempera's strength and cunning.

DOUBLOON ADVENTURES

The Shadow Cloak. The archwizard Tempera has heard rumors of a special *mythallar* being developed by Telamont Tanthul—one that can cast a veil of invisibility around an entire enclave. Her thieves have already stolen the

blueprint of the device, but instead of handing it over, they've decided to sell it to the highest bidder. Tempera hires the characters to attend the auction and acquire the blueprints—with an extra payment if they embarrass the thieves in the process.

Struggling for Control. When the leaders of Doubloon's largest gang are killed in a magical explosion, the enclave's other criminal factions race to take control of the gang's territory, including Tempera's law enforcers. A group of vigilantes hope to broker a deal between the factions and restore peace to the city; knowing the characters by reputation, they ask for the party's help convincing the leaders of each group.

EILEANAR

Eileanar is one of the most recent enclaves, built and elevated by Karsus, the youngest archwizard in Netheril's history. Karsus knew that his young age would make others hesitant to move to the enclave and work alongside him; to compensate, he built Eileanar with the grandest, most magical architecture of any enclave. His wondrous creation quickly attracted the best and brightest from all over the empire, establishing Karsus as one of the most powerful archwizards in High Netheril.

The enclave is one of the largest and easily the most decadent, with two *mythallars*, a dozen teleport stations, and hundreds of gravity-defying buildings. Magical constructs perform the bulk of the city's menial labor, freeing its citizens to pursue more intellectual or artistic matters.

EILEANAR ADVENTURES

Menagerie Mayhem. Karsus's latest plot to set Eileanar apart as the greatest city in High Netheril is building a menagerie of strange and wondrous creatures from all over Faerûn, such as wyverns, chimeras, and bulettes. During the menagerie's grand opening, one of Karsus's many detractors tampers with the cages, releasing angry and confused monsters into the city. The Mystic Corps frantically offer a reward to any adventurers that will help them dispatch the creatures or return them to the menagerie.

The Planar Frontier. Eileanar's center for extraplanar research, the Shadow Consortium, has opened up a gateway to a strange mirror realm—a perfect reflection of the enclave, but without any living creatures. The Consortium is hiring adventurers to explore the realm and document any dangers they encounter.

JKSIDUR

Jksidur is perhaps the most imposing enclave in High Netheril, rivaled only by Thultanthar. Its design was distinctly gothic: huge stone towers filled the city, crowned with twisting spires and enchanted gargoyles that spied on citizens. The streets are lit with cauldrons of bright blue flame, which cast long and flickering shadows onto the city's many skeletal statues. Rumors say the entire enclave is haunted by thousands of slain spirits—and that the wails of the damned can be heard emanating from the city's mythallar in the darkest hours of night.



SORCERER-KING LARLOCH

Perhaps most enigmatic of all of Jiksidur's quirks is its creator Larloch, who shuns the title of archwizard in favor of Sorcerer-King. Larloch secretly wields an artifact called the *Death Moon Orb*, which allows him to command the minds of his nobility. Using the orb, Larloch steals research from arcanists throughout the enclave and uses their collective knowledge to solidify his own power.

Larloch has a special interest in death and necromancy, which spills out into the design of his enclave. Using his orb, he has gathered an extensive collection of necromantic tomes, including the research of early Netherese lichs. Using these records, Larloch reverse-engineered the rites of lichdom and performed them, transforming into a lich. This fact isn't widely known, and Larloch goes to great lengths to appear living to his guests—that is, until he decides to feed them to his phylactery.

JKSIDUR ADVENTURES

Blue Death. After the ancient blue dragon Aungahlaumitor attacks the enclaves of three of Larloch's enemies, the archwizard Rhaugilath fears that Larloch and the dragon have formed an alliance. He hires the characters to travel to uncover the location of the dragon's lair and slay him. He offers an even greater reward if the characters find and kill Aungahlaumitor before he attacks again.

A Grave Visit. The characters are visited by the ghost of a young woman who claims to have died after being invited to Larloch's castle. She begs the characters to recover her body from the castle so she can receive a proper burial and move on to the afterlife. Larloch has no interest in returning the body, as he hopes to use it in his necromantic experiments.

JOCKTELEG

Established in 1840 NY, Jockteleg was originally an unremarkable enclave that specialized in variation—the arcane art of transforming objects and energies. The enclave changed radically when its creator, Quantoul, tried to improve the city's *mythallar*. The experiment was meant to allow the city's inhabitants to *polymorph* themselves at will; when it was activated, however, the *mythallar* permanently transformed Quantoul and everyone in Jockteleg into “voadkyn,” or wood giants (though unfortunately lacking the voadkyn's natural

shapechanging ability). Despite the archwizard's best efforts—and, in fact, the efforts of the empire's most skilled variators—the transformation has proven impossible to reverse.

In the years since the failed experiment, Quantoul has rebuilt the enclave to better suit its giant inhabitants, including colossal buildings and a supersized *mythallar*. Though it remains accessible through teleport stations, Jockteleg has become somewhat isolated from the empire, owing to the difficulty smaller creatures have with navigating and working in the enclave.

JOCKTELEG ADVENTURES

The Borrowers. A thieves' guild of pixies has set up shop in Jockteleg, using their minuscule size to break into the enclave's colossal buildings and steal valuable arcane components. Quantoul's Mystic Corps have proven too large to effectively pursue the thieves, so they've turned to the characters for their help.

Visited by Fate. A group of cloud giants known as the Deshwind Clan visit Jockteleg and proclaim that their transformation into voadkyn was foretold in a cloud giant prophecy. Celebrations fill the city in honor of their visitors.

Unbeknownst to the citizens, however, the cloud giants are preparing to move in and “liberate” the city from humanoid rule, hoping to add it to their fleet of cloud fortresses.

LATHERY

Lathery is one of the newest enclaves, raised by the archwizard Veridon in 3357 NY. The enclave hovers over the Narrow Sea, and its design reflects this: its buildings and streets are sloped to redirect moisture into the drainage system, and its magical wards are configured to keep strong ocean winds at bay. Most interestingly of all, the city's *mythallar* is configured to teleport fish that pass under the city into a huge processing plant, where they're magically sorted into different tanks to be frozen and sold. This curious spell has solidified fishing as Lathery's main industry.

Lathery's most striking buildings are its viewing bays—chambers built into the bottom of the enclave and paneled with magically reinforced glass, allowing citizens to peer down into the churning ocean below. A few viewing bays are public, but most are owned by the wealthy elite; at least one viewing bay has been converted into a prestigious inn, the Platinum Wave.

LATHERY ADVENTURES

International Waters. When Lathery's *mythallar* accidentally teleports a merfolk king into the city's freezer—a mistake that results in his death—the largest underwater kingdom in the Narrow Sea threatens to declare war on Lathery. Veridon decides to visit the merfolk and negotiate a peaceful solution, and hires the characters to protect him from angry merfolk and dangerous sea beasts.

The Living Storm. A rift to the Elemental Plane of Air opens over the Narrow Sea and releases a sentient lightning storm into the region. The storm hates living creatures; when it discovers the nearby enclave of Lathery, it flies into a rage, repeatedly blasting the city with lightning and sending air elementals to attack its citizens. If the storm isn't banished, distracted, or destroyed soon, its relentless siege will send Lathery crashing into the Narrow Sea.

ORBEDAL

Orbedal (or "Sanctuary" in Loross) is inarguably the safest enclave in the empire, owing to its first and most important law: violence is forbidden. A person entering Orbedal is informed of this law through various means, including signs and telepathic messages; the punishment for breaking the law is teleportation out of the enclave, usually into the Narrow Sea or the High Ice. The Mystic Corps enforce this law using *rods of multiport* (see chapter 5), except during times of crisis, when violence is allowed strictly to protect lives.

Orbedal attracts arcanists from all over the empire who have no interest in dueling, embarrassing, or killing their rivals to get ahead. As such, the enclave is on the cutting edge of many different magical fields, especially in wards and other protective magic.

LICHES AND MORALS

The enclave's current archwizard is a lich called Rhaugilath. Despite being a lich, Rhaugilath believes in peace, order, and cooperation; lichdom was merely his chosen path to immortality, allowing him to continue his research long past his natural death. Rather than feeding on souls, Rhaugilath channels arcane energy from a specialized *mythallar* into his phylactery to sustain himself.

Over the years, Rhaugilath has formed a

rivalry with another lich: Larloch, the Sorcerer-King of Jiksipur. Though they were once close friends, Larloch has slowly but surely been corrupted by his ambitions, consuming souls and controlling minds in pursuit of power—a breach of morality that Rhaugilath can't abide. He spends much of his time devising spells and magic items to counter Larloch's own, in hopes of breaking their stalemate next they meet.

ORBEDAL ADVENTURES

The Scapegoat. A string of violent crimes has shocked the people of Orbedal in the past month. The Mystic Corps arrest and teleport the instigators of these incidents, but much to their confusion, the string continues. In truth, a mentalist is magically compelling his academic rivals to commit violent crimes. The Mystic Corps is offering a reward to anyone who can expose the real cause of the crimes.

Death Moon Rising. Tired of his rival's meddling, the lich Larloch uses his *Death Moon Orb* to summon a powerful fiend and send it in disguise to Orbedal to wreak havoc. Rhaugilath is aware of this plot, but doesn't know the fiend's identity; he hires the characters to help him comb the city for clues about the fiend and Larloch's greater plan for the enclave. The twist: Rhaugilath is the disguised fiend, and Larloch secretly abducted and replaced the archwizard weeks ago.

PALTER

Established in 1217 NY, Palter is the most democratic city in High Netheril. Its creator, Halavar, was a firm believer in the benefits of community. The structure of Palter backs up his words: the city is ruled by an elected council of seven constables, not an archwizard. Additionally, schools are free of cost to attend, making magical knowledge available to anyone with the desire to pursue it. While Palter has fewer high-level arcanists than other enclaves, it has significantly more low- and mid-level arcanists. The city offers some of the best magical education in the empire.

The most skilled arcanist on the enclave today is Aria, the headmistress of Palter's prestigious magic school, Halavar Academy. Though she has no ruling power, Aria performs powerful spells on behalf of the city and advises the elected council in matters of the arcane.

PALTER ADVENTURES

Transfer Student. Students have been disappearing from Halavar Academy for weeks, and Aria hires the characters to get to the bottom of it. Unbeknownst to Aria, the latest transfer student to the school is actually a doppelganger; when someone discovers their secret, they capture the person and steal their identity, causing their last identity to “disappear.”

Enclave Conquered. While Aria is away from Palter on academy business, the Netheril Battalion conquers the enclave and appoints an archwizard ruler, bringing it under the control of the High Mages. In Aria’s absence, the arcanists of Halavar Academy have formed an underground resistance to fight off the Battalion—and they need the characters’ help to free the city.

SAKKORS

At the start of the Shadowed Age, Sakkors was created as a great experiment in innovation by the archwizard Xolund the Maker. He filled the city with his unusual clockwork creations, from giant automated crossbows to cable cars that cross the city on steel wires. His greatest work, however, was improving the city’s *mythallar* by bestowing it with sentience. The *mythallar*, which calls itself the Source, lives at the heart of the enclave and directs the flow of arcane power throughout it, feeling every district and borough like its extended body. Though Xolund adores his creation, other archwizards throughout the empire are unsettled by the Source, uncertain whether its goals truly align with Netheril’s.

THE SOURCE

Initially, Sakkors’ *mythallar* was purely functional: it followed direct orders from Xolund about where to send arcane energy, dedicating none of its thought to itself. However, over the decades since its creation, the *mythallar* has developed a sense of identity and independence, requesting to be called the Source. The Source never disobeys a direct order from Xolund, but on many occasions, it has shown the ability to make decisions on its own. It even saved Xolund’s life on one occasion, depriving one of his experiments of power before it would’ve exploded and destroyed his laboratory. Xolund is delighted that his creation continues to develop

into a well-rounded intelligent being, even as his detractors criticize him for giving “true control” over Sakkors to a construct.

SAKKORS ADVENTURES

The Midnight Car. Rumors are spreading throughout Sakkors of a mysterious cable car that only runs at midnight and abducts its passengers, sending them to some mysterious dimension of terror instead of their destination. The rumors take on a deadly edge when a prominent arcanist goes to test the cable car and never returns. The arcanist’s spouse begs the characters to find the arcanist and bring them safely home.

Crime of Power. When a number of quasimagical items are flooded with enough arcane power to kill their holders, the people of Sakkors begin to blame the Source, demanding it be dismantled and replaced with a non-sentient *mythallar*. In truth, the High Mages are responsible for the power surges, as they fear the Source will eventually become a threat to the empire. Xolund hires the characters to prove the Source’s innocence and expose the true threat to Sakkors.

SELÛNARRA

Selûnarra (or “Opus” in Loross) was established by the archwizard Chever in 1933 NY and adopted by the archwizard Lady Arilain after Chever’s grisly death by *sphere of annihilation* in 1960 NY. Since Lady Arilain assumed control of the enclave, its aims have pivoted away from accruing magical power and towards furthering the arts. The city is filled with theaters, galleries, libraries, and other institutions of worldly renown (including universities that rival those in Palter). More bards come out of Selûnarra than any other city in the empire.

One of Lady Arilain’s greatest claims to fame is inventing the *voicebox*, a broadcasting device she invented to give her citizens instant access to music, plays, and educational lectures no matter the time or place. The device was quickly adopted across High Netheril, repurposed to make citywide announcements and deliver orders to Mystic Corps, among other things.

SELÛNARRA ADVENTURES

Artistic Eclipse. One figure has appeared in the artwork of Selûnarra for centuries: Selûne, the goddess of the moon and the city’s artistic muse.



When Selûne's image disappears from every artwork in the city at once, the city fears that Selûne's twin sister, Shar, has woven a curse over the city. A prominent patron of the arts (and secret cleric to Selûne) hires the characters to find Shar's cult in Selûnarra and reverse their curse.

The Voices of Opus. During her most ambitious performance yet, a famous singer's voice is magically stolen by a masked figure—and hers is only the first. The masked figure, a *fey* trickster, is spiriting citizens' voices into enchanted jars and selling them to other citizens for treasures and favors. While the party is visiting the city, one of the characters awakens without a voice.

THULTANTHAR

Built by the archwizard known as Lord Shadow in 2388 NY, Thultanthar (or "Shade" in Loross) is an enclave dedicated to researching shadow magic and the Shadowfell. The city's arcanists are so dedicated to peering into shadows that the enclave is shrouded by a bubble of magical darkness, giving citizens the impression of perpetual night. This symbolic gesture marks citizens of Thultanthar wherever they go: lifelong citizens of the enclave are much paler and more easily blinded by bright lights than their kin, leading many to adopt dark glasses or goggles when they visit other enclaves.

DUEL OF SHADES

For over a thousand years, Thultanthar was ruled by Lord Shadow, a Netherese arcanist who achieved immortality by turning himself into a

vampire. Between his vampiric hypnosis and his mastery of the arcane, he went unchallenged for most of his reign, even when he began abducting and feeding on the city's lower class.

This changed, however, around 3300 NY, when a student of Karsus called Telamont Tanthul discovered Lord Shadow's vampiric nature.

Tanthul spent a year researching vampires and their weaknesses. Armed with silver, holy water, and blessed weapons, Tanthul lured Lord Shadow into an empty demiplane and ambushed him.

Tanthul was unable to kill the vampire, but he did weaken him enough to imprison him in the demiplane, where his unquenched thirst for blood rendered him powerless.

Telamont Tanthul has ruled over Thultanthar under the name of Lord Shadow ever since. For more information about Telamont Tanthul, see his entry in chapter 6.

THULTANTHAR ADVENTURES

Foreshadowing. While the characters are visiting Thultanthar, one of Telamont Tanthul's experiments goes wrong, teleporting the entire enclave into the Shadowfell. Tanthul announces that he can return the city to the Material Plane in three days, but until then, the citizens need to hide and protect each other from the ferocious monsters sure to investigate the city's sudden appearance. Over the course of three days, the city is assailed by cloaklers, shadow mastiffs, and an ancient green shadow dragon, among other fearsome creatures.

These Dark Days. A ritual performed by a group of vampire spawn plunges the entire city into a magical darkness that no light can pierce. Deadly accidents occur all over the enclave as the entire population is struck blind at once. The spawn intend to use this chaos as cover for gathering blood and rescuing their master, the original Lord Shadow, from his demiplanar prison.

XINLENAL

Xinlental is the oldest enclave in High Netheril, raised by the archwizard Ioulaum in 866 NY. The city was the first of its kind, cementing the importance of the *mythallar* in Netherese society and splitting the empire into High Netheril and Low Netheril. It also set the template for enclaves to come: Ioulaum declared himself the ruler and set the city's laws, dictating the role of archwizards for the rest of Netheril's history.

Today, Xinlental is the seat of power in Netheril. The enclave is known for its old and magnificent buildings, many of which have been rebuilt and expanded over thousands of years. Some parts of the city resemble the ancient buildings of Low Netheril's oldest cities; others are on the cutting edge of magical architecture. The city even boasts a magnificent cathedral to Mystryl—an unusual blend of High Netherese decadence and Low Netherese piousness.

THE HIGH MAGES OF NETHERIL

By magically elongating his life, Ioulaum remains the archwizard ruler of Xinlental. However, he has surrendered some power to the High Mages of Netheril, who have their base of operations in the capital enclave. The strong presence of the High Mages in Xinlental is a double-edged sword. On one hand, the archwizards of the council coordinate trade and collaborative research between Xinlental and their own enclaves, spreading wealth and knowledge throughout the empire. On the other hand, many archwizards on the council dream of usurping control of the enclave from Ioulaum, which places the archwizard under constant threat of sabotage and assassination.

XINLENAL ADVENTURES

The Head of the Snake. An especially ruthless chapter of the Castigation emerges in Xinlental with a deadly goal: destroy the enclave's *mythallar*, let the city fall to the ground, and

place the blame on Ioulaum. The group hopes the city's fall will break the fragile trust the Netherese have in their archwizards, sparking a revolution across Netheril. The characters catch wind of this conspiracy as the saboteurs head for the *mythallar*.

Magic Drain. Every few weeks, a magical blackout rolls across the enclave, causing spells and quasimagical items to fail at random. Though the High Mages won't admit the cause of the blackout, they hire the characters to search for and kill a four-armed cone-shaped creature (a phaerimm) in the magically drained district. They specifically request that the body remains intact for research.

YTHRYN

Ythryn was created by the archwizard-lich Iriolarthas late in the Age of Discovery. The enclave functioning as a city is only incidental to its true purpose: exploration. Iriolarthas designed Ythryn as a roving base of operations for his expeditions into the frozen north, allowing him to bring all the tools and experts in his field as he searched for the long-lost realm of giants, Ostoria. To this end, many of the city's day-to-day functions are overseen by the Wizards of the Ebon Star, eight of Iriolarthas's finest arcanist students.

The arcanists of Ythryn are known for a bizarre brand of transmutation: the creation of monstrosities, especially chimeras. Many citizens of Ythryn keep tiny chimera pets, like hares with feathered wings and color-changing foxes. In addition to using magens and mythatons (see chapter 6) for labor, the arcanists of Ythryn create and command giant mimics to perform large-scale construction with their rubbery amorphous bodies.

ICEWIND DALE: RIME OF THE FROSTMAIDEN

The ruins of Ythryn, destroyed near the end of the Shadowed Age by a magic-disrupting archeological artifact, are depicted in the adventure module *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*, published in 2020 by Wizards of the Coast.

YTHRYN ADVENTURES

Arcane Blight. After a team of archeologists return from an excavation in the frozen wastes below Ythryn, citizens of the city mysteriously begin transforming into nothics. The source of this strange disease is an artifact the archeologists recovered from the ice, which now sits in Ythryn's largest museum. After encountering a violent nothic in an alley, one of the characters begins to transform, giving them a few days to determine its source before they succumb to the transformation.

Screams of the Pentacle. When a group of five arcanists called the Telepathic Pentacle accidentally fuse their bodies into a five-headed aberration, Iriolarthas imprisons the monster in a well beneath the city to harness its psychic abilities. From its magical prison, the Pentacle sends out psychic whispers to the minds of Ythryn arcanists, attempting to convince them to free it. One of the characters receives one such whisper.

LOW NETHERIL

Low Netheril is divided into a number of territories called demesnes, each ruled by an arcanist that hasn't yet accrued enough magical power to raise an enclave. These arcanists have similar roles to the archwizards, deciding the laws and controlling the industries of their demesne. Overall, the demesnes of Low Netheril are less magical than the enclaves of High Netheril, owing to less resources, more accountability to neighboring nations, and fewer opportunities for the free folk to study and master magic.

Like the enclaves, most settlements in Low Netheril have at least one mythallar. The ruling arcanist uses mythallars to control the weather and geography of their demesne, eliminating poor weather and shaping the landscape to their liking. This is rarely done for any consideration of the demesne's natural environment, forcing nearby plants and animals to adapt or flee the area if they want to survive.

The most notable locations in High Netheril are described below.

DAGGER'S POINT

Established by the Wolfsberg River in 893 NY, Dagger's Point has been a den of thieves and criminals in Low Netheril for more than a thousand years. Its name is an apt summary of its history: while the settlement was originally called Wolfsberg, its name was changed to reflect how often travelers and visitors to the town were robbed at dagger-point. Many of the citizens of Dagger's Point blend the practice of magic with their thievery skills.

Dagger's Point is notable for rejecting the Netherese way of life common in many parts of the empire. In the Golden Age, a powerful crime lord called Lashia the Dagger declared that mythallars were forbidden in the town, as mythallars were the tools of the High Mages and their law enforcers. To make a point, Lashia and her students tracked down every arcanist who tried to make or bring a mythallar to Dagger's Point and publicly executed them, often in front of cheering crowds. Though Dagger's Point has been controlled by many crime lords since Lashia's reign ended, the rule forbidding mythallars stands today.

DAGGER'S POINT ADVENTURES

The Dagger Returns. Crime lords across the city are being assassinated one by one by Lashia the Dagger, risen from the grave and seemingly unkillable. A prominent gang leader, fearing that he'll be next, hires the characters to find a way to kill revenant-Lashia for good.

Bringing out the Big Guns. When the archwizard Falious announces that he intends to raise an enclave and use it to "restore law and order" in Dagger's Point, the town's arcanists band together to build an enclave-killer—a huge crossbow that can pierce an enclave and destroy its mythallar with disintegrating bolts of energy. Falious offers the characters magic items if they'll sabotage the enclave-killer, while the arcanists of Dagger's Point offer gold if they'll find the rare component needed to complete it.

DEKANTER

After Dekanter discovered this site at the base of the Greypeak Mountains in 1101 NY, it became the most important mine of the Silver Age. Dekanter supplied all of Netheril with ore and gemstones vital to its magical industries for over a



thousand years. Once the mines were exhausted, the tunnels were converted into a testing facility for Netherese archwizards to experiment with new and highly dangerous spells and magic items. Very few people are stationed at Dekanter permanently, but the site is frequently visited by influential arcanists from both High and Low Netheril.

The overseer of Dekanter is an arcanist called Ophelia. She uses her mastery of abjuration magic to deal with the aftermath of experiments in the facility, including curses, magical radiation, and mutated creatures. In exchange, arcanists that visit Dekanter pay her a fee in gold, which funds her own experiments. Ophelia has sworn an oath of secrecy never to reveal the experiments she witnesses in the depths of Dekanter.

DEKANTER ADVENTURES

Dug Too Deep. A magical explosion blows a hole in one of Dekanter's tunnels, exposing an untouched cave system full of gemstones. At first, the arcanists are overjoyed at the discovery—until it becomes clear that a colony of phaerimms live in the caves, and they have no intention of letting the Netherese arcanists escape alive.

Magic Sentinel. When an arcanist in the facility loses control of an experimental enchantment spell, it causes all the magic items in Dekanter's storage room to become sentient and form a hive mind. The hive mind combines a suit of

armor, a few weapons, and a variety of baubles to make itself a powerful body, then begins to kill its former masters before they can reverse the enchantment. From a safe room deep in the facility, Ophelia hires the characters to negotiate a truce with the hive mind on her behalf.

DREAD KEEP

West of the city of Unity and high up in the Far Horns, Dread Keep is a stone fortress ruled by the ruthless bandit lord Olostin, the Baron of Dread. The Keep's population, which numbers in the mid-hundreds, is a mix of free folk, former citizens of the enclaves, and oppressed people from neighboring nations. Despite their varied origins and ancestries, the people of Dread Keep have one thing in common: they all hate the archwizard rulers of Netheril.

A fateful meeting between Olostin and a lone phaerimm forged an alliance between their two factions, who bonded over their mutual hatred of Netheril's arcanist upper class. When Olostin abducts, tortures, and kills a powerful arcanist, he conveys many of the secrets he learns to the phaerimm; in exchange, the phaerimm ward Dread Keep's high walls against many forms of powerful magic, and provide military support to Dread Keep when the High Mages make coordinated attempts to destroy it.

DREAD KEEP ADVENTURES

High Spy. Olostin abducts a famously paranoid archwizard and gains access to her network of spies and scrying focuses, allowing him to terrorize the enclaves with devastating efficiency and without suffering any losses. The High Mages send the characters to go undercover as recruits to Dread Keep's cause, find the archwizard, and facilitate her escape.

Bid for Sovereignty. In hopes of striking a lasting blow to Netheril's pride, Olostin sets about an ambitious new plan: taking over six nearby demenses and binding them together as an independent country under his rule. The characters are present when Olostin's forces invade a town, destroy its local militia, and declare it has been liberated in Olostin's name.

HARBORAGE

Harborage is one of the oldest towns in Low Netheril, founded in the Nether Age to convey goods from one side of the Channel Locks to the other. Its position in the midst of such a busy river made it the most important port in the empire for many years; even when the enclaves rose into the sky and took their business elsewhere, Harborage continued to streamline its shipping with mythallar-based magical devices like levitating disks, automated floodgates, and extra-dimensional storage. Today it stands as the main thoroughfare between Netheril and its trade partners, with many enclaves teleporting their goods to and from Harborage to be shipped.

HARBORAGE ADVENTURES

The Waters Abandon. As the phaerimm weave their magic-draining spells, the surrounding lands wither away—and near Harborage, the Channel Locks are starting to shallow and retreat back to the sea. The shipmasters of Harborage are panicking at the thought of their port being isolated from all the boats of their trading partners. The town's high arcanist sends the characters to find the nearest phaerimm colony and try to negotiate a truce, for the river's sake.

Tipping the Scales. A bronze dragon builds a lair in the caves near Harborage. Sensing an opportunity to grow the city, the high arcanist of Harborage pays the dragon a regular offering

to protect the city and its trading routes. However, the dragon brings unexpected baggage in the form of a ferocious black dragon rival. The two dragons are evenly matched; if someone doesn't tip the scales in the bronze dragon's favor somehow, their constant bouts of combat will drive away Harborage's trading partners, ruining the city's standing as a major port.

IMBRUE

This city, built on the banks of the Watercourse River, is unremarkable in most ways. However, it is known across Netheril for its most popular establishment: the House of Tyche, a temple of the goddess of luck that doubles as an opulent casino. Rather than taking a tithe, Tyche prefers her worshipers gamble their offerings in risky games of chance and skill. That said, the temple attracts more than just followers of Tyche; this is especially true during its annual gambling tournament, which even the mighty archwizards of High Netheril have been known to attend on occasion.

A far-reaching criminal organization known as the Red Heart has its base of operations in Imbrue, and trafficks much of its illicit coin through the House of Tyche. The head priestess of the House knows of these dealings and looks the other way; a fair portion of the Red Heart are regular gamblers at the House, so most of their coin ends up in Tyche's hands regardless.

IMBRUE ADVENTURES

Gambling with Gods. On a visit to the House of Tyche, one of the characters experiences a nigh-impossible streak of good luck. Just when they're ready to check out, the goddess Tyche herself descends to challenge them to one last game of luck for double or nothing—but if they lose this game, their soul is on the line. Unbeknownst to the characters, this isn't Tyche but a Fiend impersonating the goddess, and it has no qualms cheating in order to win the character's soul.

Heartbroken. When the head of the Red Heart dies, the organization splits into three gangs: the Diamonds, the Clubs, and the Spades. The gangs war for control of the House of Tyche, hoping its profits will help them destroy the other two gangs. The head priestess of Tyche hires the characters to broker a peace between the groups—or kill their leaders and intimidate them into merging again.

MONIKAR

Built in 1346 NY, Monikar is one of the most unusual demenses of Low Netheril, as it represents a Netherese subculture that has completely rejected arcane magic in all its forms. There are no mythallars or magic items in Monikar; in fact, arcanists are forbidden from stepping foot into the city under threat of death. Holy and druidic magic, on the other hand, are seen as humble arts by the people of Monikar, pushing many of their number to become clerics, druids, paladins, and rangers. Monikar is perhaps the only Netherese ally to the city of Dagger's Point, as the two communities have a shared ideology regarding mythallars and the tyranny of High Netheril.

FAITHFUL OF KOZAH

Since its inception, the god of natural disasters Kozah has had a strong presence in Monikar. Rather than appeasing and pacifying Kozah, as many free folk do in their worship, the people of Monikar embrace his destructive temper as the true nature of the world. Kozahyns believe that attempting to wrangle the laws of nature through arcane magic is an act of arrogance, and Kozah will rain down divine punishment on arcanists and archwizards for trying to suppress his chaotic work.

The largest building in Monikar is the Shrine of Kozah, a huge gray temple that resembles an inverted whirlwind. A dark cloud hangs over the shrine at all hours, occasionally striking its highest reaches with bolts of red lightning that, despite their frightening power, leave the building untouched. When an arcanist is killed in Monikar, their books and magic items are taken to the top of the Shrine to be destroyed by Kozah's lightning.

MONIKAR ADVENTURES

Prophet of Disaster. Over the past few months, a woman in robes claiming to be a prophet has visited the towns around Monikar, warning them about natural disasters in their future—then using her clerical magic to ensure those disasters come to pass. With no homes, the people are forced to move to Monikar, expanding its borders and influence. As the characters pass through a town, they witness the prophet's scheme in action.

The Harbinger's Blade. Rumors abound in Low Netheril about a holy sword that appeared in

Monikar in a flash of lightning, embedding itself in the top of the Shrine of Kozah. Supposedly, the sword is impossible to remove from the stone of the shrine—unless you are the destined champion of Kozah, foretold to strike down High Netheril with the very might of the storm god himself. People are flocking to the city in droves to try their hand at pulling the sword.

OLD OWL WELL

Back in the Silver Age, Netheril made a concerted effort to colonize the northwest reaches of Faerûn, and one of its first outposts was Old Owl Well. The mysterious sage known as the Terraseer suggested this spot for its access to water and rich mineral deposits. (Unbeknownst to the Netherese, the Terraseer also intended to recover a cache of chardalyns buried beneath the spot many years prior.) When the Netherese colonists arrived, they found the area populated with thousands of highly territorial owlbears. The outpost gets its name from the mass culling of owlbears required to establish it—an act harshly condemned by Netheril's elven neighbors.

Today, Old Owl Well remains an important watering hole trading post for travelers and settlers on the very edges of Low Netheril. The outpost's secret second purpose is to spy on the nearby elven city of Illefarn, a former ally of Netheril deemed a possible threat by the High Mages.

OLD OWL WELL ADVENTURES

Blood for the Bears. A powerful fey sorcerer claiming to be the archfey master of owlbears starts to kill off the Netherese settlers in Old Owl Well—one each day until every owlbear killed by Netheril is avenged. The outpost overseer hires the characters to repel the fey sorcerer, but the fey tries to appeal to the party's sense of justice, asking them to help her exact her vengeance.

Chardalyn Chaos. A few stray chunks of chardalyn beneath Old Owl Well begin to absorb magic from all the arcanists that pass through the outpost, mutating and growing into chardalyn terrors (see chapter 6). When the terrors go berserk and the outpost stops responding to letters and magical messages, the High Mages hire the characters to investigate.

RASILITH

Once the capital of Thaeravel, Rasilith was conquered by Netherese arcanists at the end of the Nether Age. As the arcanists swept over the Land of Alabaster Towers, they used deep-probing telepathy spells to tear the magical knowledge from the minds of Thaeravelian sorcerers, leaving them dead or comatose. With their magical line of defense devastated, it was a simple matter for the rest of Netheril's forces to sweep through the land and assert control.

Rasilith has been under Netherese control for more than two thousand years, and in many ways resembles a typical Netherese demesne. Its once-iconic pillars of alabaster are mined, dyed, and shipped throughout the empire to build its magnificent structures, with very little of the wealth remaining in Rasilith. There are still large swathes of the population that identify as Thaeravelian, quietly keeping their traditions alive in anticipation of the day the empire crumbles and the land of Thaeravel can be reborn.

RASILITH ADVENTURES

Earthen Rumble. A surge of wild magic from Rasilith's *mythallar* sweeps through the city and animates its alabaster pillars, causing chunks of stone to break away and rampage as earth elementals. Strangely, the elementals regrow their stone bodies as they sustain damage. Sensing the chance to revolutionize Rasilith's stoneworking industry, the ruling arcanist demands the elementals be captured alive for study.

The Great Resurgence. After a long-awaited alignment of stars shines over Rasilith, hundreds of Thaeravelians suddenly manifest sorcerous powers. When the ruling arcanist catches wind of this change, they order the sorcerers rounded up and "reeducated" as Netherese loyalists. An elderly sorcerer, the last of the original Thaeravelian sorcerers, asks the characters to help him rescue the sorcerers and ensure that the ancient traditions of Thaeravel can be passed onto a new generation.

SAHARELGARD

Saharelgard is perhaps the wealthiest demesne in Low Netheril, ruled by the skilled arcanist Lady Saharel. It has natural resources in abundance: thick forests, lively lakes and rivers, and hills rich

with clay and gems. Between trading with the enclaves and neighboring nations, the demesne is wealthy enough to afford all the latest magical advancements from High Netheril, including multiple *mythallars* and a band of mythatons (see chapter 6) to enforce Lady Saharel's laws. Among the citizens of High Netheril, Saharelgard is said to be one of the only places in Low Netheril worth visiting.

Many archwizards urge Lady Saharel to take her studies more seriously and raise Saharelgard as an enclave, but in truth, she surpassed the skill necessary to lift the city decades ago. She simply has no interest in joining the arms race of High Netheril: after all, her land would be one jewel among many in the sky, but on the ground, it's a treasure without peer. Ego aside, Lady Saharel is a well-liked ruler, affording her citizens more freedom, personal wealth, and access to knowledge than is available in most demesnes.

SAHARELGARD ADVENTURES

Peace in Paradise. While drilling to place a new well, the arcanists of Saharelgard strike a cave system filled with myconid spores. The spores rapidly spread into the nearby forest and infest the region with fungi, but nobody seems to mind—mostly because the spores are also highly soothing to non-myconids. Lady Saharel hires the characters to navigate the newly-formed myconid colony, find the well, and plug it before the entire demesne becomes too complacent to fight back.

The Dark Bargain. With no notice, Lady Saharel suddenly closes the borders of Saharelgard and retreats from the public eye, sending out her rulings by letter from her home of Castle Spellgard. Slowly but surely, the laws of Saharelgard become crueler and more authoritarian, leading many to fear that Lady Saharel has been killed or usurped. The truth is worse: Saharelgard's wealth comes from a bargain with the rotten god of corruption, Moander, and after years of resisting its sway, Moander has finally taken control of Lady Saharel's mind.

SEVENTON

Seventon is the oldest demesne in Netheril, a union of the original seven Netherese fishing villages built at the very beginning of the First Age. This deeply historic site has been the heart of innovations throughout Netheril's history, from

the discovery and deciphering of the Nether Scrolls to the invention of the mythallar. Seventon is the birthplace of Ioulaum, the oldest and most respected of the archwizards.

Built on the Narrow Sea, Seventon's main trade has been and continues to be fish. The demesne was once the center of magical research in the empire, but that honor moved to the enclaves as they were built. Since the rise of High Netheril, Seventon's main contribution to the empire's magical knowledge has been alchemy—the study of combining natural and magical substances to create potions, salves, and tools that can aid in spellcasting.

SEVENTON ADVENTURES

The Sea Shadow. After a dead aboleth is dragged up by a fishing vessel from Seventon and sold as plain fish meat, people throughout town have begun to worship a strange entity they call the Sea Shadow. After eating a meal in a tavern in Seventon, one of the characters begins to hear whispers from this entity—and it demands they burn Seventon to the ground for daring to deface an aboleth's corpse.

Alchemist's Fire. After the invention of an explosive new tool of war called "alchemist's fire," the laboratories of alchemists across Seventon have started to mysteriously burn. The ruling arcanist of Seventon suspects foul

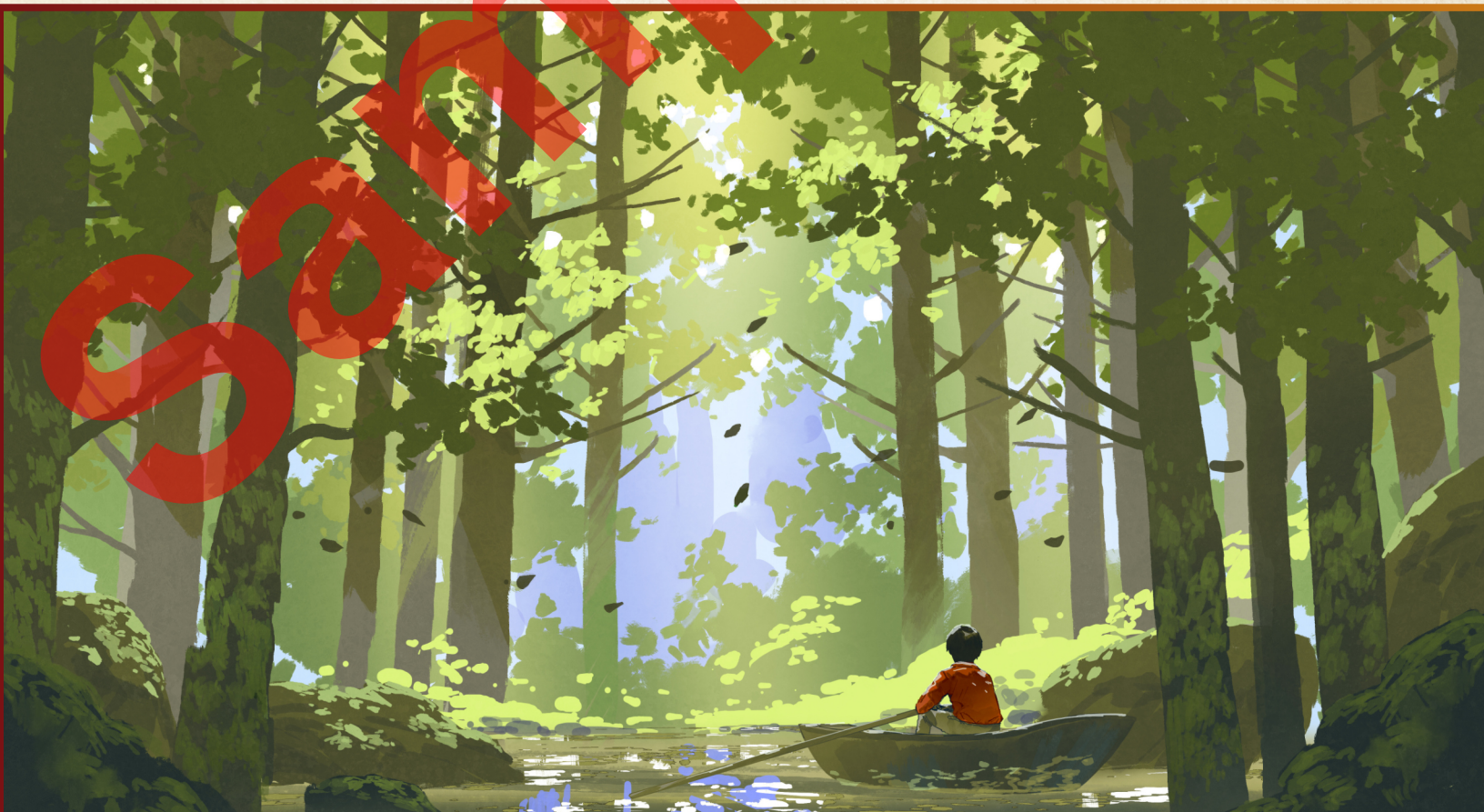
play by extremist critics of alchemy, and gathers copies of the alchemists' research to prevent their knowledge from being lost. The arcanist hires the characters to protect the manuscripts as they're taken to a secret vault.

SPECIE

Specie, sometimes called the "breadbasket of Netheril," is the heart of agriculture in the empire, using cutting-edge spells and magic items to irrigate their fields and multiply their harvests. Large shipments of food are transported to nearly every enclave by way of teleport stations, making Specie among the wealthiest demesnes in Low Netheril.

THE MARSH OF DECEPTION

Late in the Age of Discovery, the arcanists of Specie attempted to irrigate their fields with the waters of Mill Lake, a freshwater lake just outside their borders. The arcanists wove spells to lift the bed of the lake and displace the water through a series of complex tunnels; however, at the last moment, the spell went haywire and displaced the entire lake, sending all of its waters spilling over the nearby fields. The resulting flood permanently molded the region into a marsh. The free folk of Specie call the area the Marsh of Deception, commemorating the arcanists who lied about how risky it was to tamper with the lake.



SPECIE ADVENTURES

Killer Crops. The arcanists of Specie build a *staff of sentience* (see chapter 5) to cause the crops to sow and harvest themselves. However, the arcanists are unaware of how flawed these staves are, and the crops go berserk, stealing the staff and burning the farms and fields. The ruling arcanists hire the characters to find the staff and destroy it before the entire region is rendered unfarmable.

Blood Harvest. As the phaerimm weave their draining spells across Netheril, the fields of Specie grow less and less viable crops—until, all of a sudden, the fields are back to their former resplendence. The people of Specie say it's a blessing from the agricultural goddess Jannath, but they hide a dark secret: the phaerimm have reversed their spells on Specie in exchange for access to their teleport stations, allowing them to hide phaerimm assassins in shipments of food bound for any city in Netheril.

UNITY

Built around 600 NY, Unity is a bastion of harmony between the otherwise disparate people of northern Faerûn. When the early Netherese clashed with clans of goblins and orcs on their borders, they formed an alliance with the dwarves of Delzoun and the elves of Earlann to build Unity: a stronghold on the outskirts of Netheril that could protect the empire from encroaching armies.

These battles were extraordinarily ruthless, threatening to wipe out a number of clans and demesnes on both sides of the conflict. However, they didn't last forever. The archwizard Jeriah the Chronomancer, discoverer of time magic, glimpsed a future in which the conflict raged out of control and swept up the entire continent in an era of xenophobia and bloodshed. Using this knowledge, he interrupted a battle at Unity's gates and brokered a peace between the two sides, showing them the annihilation that would surely follow if they continued down this path. Since then, orcs and goblins have also come to dwell in Unity, adding their unique traditions to the demesne's cultural melting pot.

UNITY ADVENTURES

Seat of War. From the nearby fortress of Dread Keep, the Baron of Dread Olostin has sent

dozens of his bandits into Unity in disguise, scouting out the city's weaknesses. The characters are present when Olostin's army descends from the mountains, using their intel to easily slip past the defenses and strike in the middle of the night. If they repel the bandit forces, the town's ruling arcanist hires them to root out Olostin's spies. If they can't, Unity falls under Olostin's control, and he begins a longer campaign of plunder and destruction against the demesnes of Low Netheril.

Devil's Advocate. A number of orcish and goblin citizens are murdered with traditional elven weapons, and tensions between the city's two historic factions are on the rise. In truth, an archfiend has taken an interest in Unity and sent fiends to sow chaos and mistrust within its walls. The closer the two factions get to open war, the more powerful the archfiend's influence in the city becomes.

WREATHE

The city of Wreathe was originally a hunter's lodge, built at the base of the Purple Mountains in 1714 NY. The lodge was meant to be a training ground for new hunters to learn monster-hunting skills under experienced mentors. However, the Purple Mountains proved rich with more dangerous creatures like manticores, wyverns, and dragons, which attracted merchants and artisans interested in their magically potent body parts. Wreathe quickly expanded into a bustling city that lived off hunting and breeding magical creatures, including a thriving black market of poachers and animal traffickers.

WREATHE ADVENTURES

Nature Uncaged. A druid and fervent defender of animals discovers a ring of poachers stealing and selling the beasts of the nearby Far Horn Forest, including her panther animal companion. When she proves unable to stop the poachers alone, she asks the characters to help her take down the ring and recover her animal companion.

Wrath of Brightstrike. A group of adventurers venture deep into the Purple Mountains and kill the ancient blue dragon Brightstrike. However, there are unexpected consequences: Brightstrike's children, three adult blue dragons, come to exact vengeance on Wreathe and its hunters, conducting nightly aerial assaults on the city



with their lightning breath. If the dragons aren't killed or bargained with soon, Wreathe will be reduced to a smoking husk.

YEOMAN'S LOFT

This isolated city is filled with tall structures that stretch up and beyond the highest branches of the surrounding forest, but none are more distinctive than its Astral Docks. Built during the height of the Age of Discovery, these towering stone runways hang above the city and house a small fleet of special world-hopping ships—vessels designed to navigate the Astral Plane and explore worlds beyond Toril.

These ships were extremely popular for a time, but since the start of the Shadowed Age, the High Mages have deemed the ships too expensive to build and maintain. The remaining vessels are the last of their kind, and their pilots desperately search the Astral Plane for some great source of profit—a treasure trove to prove the High Mages wrong and renew interest in exploring the Astral Plane.

YEOMAN'S LOFT ADVENTURES

The Stowaway. After Netherese explorers in the Astral Plane dissect a mind flayer, its former elder brain sends a spy to stow away in their ship and return with them to Yeoman's Loft. In the months since, a dozen workers from the Astral Docks have gone missing, as the spy abducts and transforms them into mind flayers. One of the last pilots of the Astral Docks begs the characters to investigate the disappearances before the Astral Docks are emptied for good.

Final Transmission. The control tower at Yeoman's Loft receives a desperate plea for rescue from *Mystryl's Eye*, a ship they thought was destroyed on a disastrous exploration mission centuries ago. Pulling together what few resources they have left, the arcanists of the Docks hire the characters to sail into the deadliest depths of the Astral Plane, find the wreckage of *Mystryl's Eye*, and discover who sent the distress call.

4. CLASS OPTIONS

Wizards weren't the only powerful figures in the history of Netheril; many spellcasters wielded powerful forms of magic unknown to modern adventurers. Even those that didn't were trained in now-forgotten styles, often to combat the strength of Netheril's arcanist elites.

NEW SUBCLASSES

This chapter introduces six new subclasses for your Netheril campaigns, all inspired by Netheril and its magic. Subclasses are listed alphabetically by class.

WHY ISN'T THERE A WIZARD SUBCLASS?

With a setting full of arcane spellcasters, it seems only natural to include a wizard subclass in this section. However, wizards already have a huge variety of subclass options, most of which fit extremely well into the setting of Netheril. For this reason, we've chosen not to include a wizard subclass in this book.

ARTIFICER: MYTHALLIST

Artificers that work with *mythallars* are known as Mythallists. These specialists have a supreme understanding of wards and defensive magic, shaping the raw power of the *mythallar* into a great barrier around their enclave. Mythallists are vital in times of war, as a damaged *mythallar* can spell the total destruction of an enclave.

TOOL PROFICIENCY

3rd-level Mythallist feature

When you choose this specialization, you gain proficiency with smith's tools. If you already have this proficiency, you gain proficiency with one other type of artisan's tools of your choice.

MYTHALLIST SPELLS

3rd-level Mythallist feature

You always have certain spells prepared after you reach particular levels in this class, as shown in the Mythallist Spells table. These spells count as artificer spells for you, but they don't count against the number of artificer spells you prepare.

MYTHALLIST SPELLS

ARTIFICER LEVEL	SPELLS
3rd	<i>Protection from Evil and Good, Shield</i>
5th	<i>Aid, Arcane Lock</i>
9th	<i>Counterspell, Protection from Energy</i>
13th	<i>Death Ward, Resilient Sphere</i>
17th	<i>Antilife Shell, Wall of Force</i>

PERSONAL BARRIER

3rd-level Mythallist feature

Using your knowledge of mythallars, you've created an arcane battery that can weave abjuring magic into a protective barrier. When you expend a spell slot to cast an abjuration spell, you can grant temporary hit points to yourself or one creature targeted by the spell. The amount of temporary hit points granted equals 1d6 + your proficiency bonus. These temporary hit points last for 1 hour.

ARCANE EFFICIENCY

5th-level Mythallist feature

Your arcane battery absorbs any excess magic you use, storing it for later. Over the course of 1 minute, you can use your arcane battery to regain one expended spell slot. The slot level of the regained slot can't exceed half your proficiency bonus (rounded down).

Once you use your battery to recover magic, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

SHATTERING FORCE

9th-level Mythallist feature

When a creature with temporary hit points from your Personal Barrier takes damage from an attacker within 15 feet of it, the attacker takes force damage equal to the number of temporary hit points lost in the triggering attack.

MYTHALLAR FIELD

15th-level Mythallist feature

Your arcane battery functions like a miniature mythallar, supplying you with a magical barrier at all times. If you aren't incapacitated at the start of your turn, you gain temporary hit points equal to your proficiency bonus. These hit points count as your Personal Barrier for the purposes of your Shattering Force feature.

BARD: COLLEGIUM MYSTERYM

Mystryl, the goddess of magic, has many bard followers, as one of her main goals is preserving and sharing knowledge with the world—an agreeable cause to most bards. Bards of the Collegium Mysterium roam the realms collecting magical lore in the name of Mystryl, blurring the line between arcana and divinity. Bards of this college are skilled healers due to their connection to the divine.

BONUS CANTRIP

3rd-level Collegium Mysterium feature

When you choose this college, you learn one cantrip of your choice from the cleric spell list. This spell is a bard spell for you.

BLESSINGS OF MYSTRYL

3rd-level Collegium Mysterium feature

Restorative spells you cast are blessed by Mystryl, increasing their potency. When you cast a spell that restores hit points, you can roll and add one Bardic Inspiration die to the number of hit points one target of the spell regains. This feature doesn't expend uses of your Bardic Inspiration feature.

MAGEFIRE

6th-level Collegium Mysterium feature

You can purge poison and harmful magic from your allies with cleansing blue flames. You learn the *lesser restoration* spell and can cast it without expending a spell slot.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and regain expended uses when you finish a long rest.

HARMONIC MYSTERY

14th-level Collegium Mysterium feature

Mystryl encourages her followers to learn magic from other spellcasters, even those who work against her cause. When you see a creature within 60 feet of you cast a spell, you can memorize the spell as a reaction. For a number of days equal to your bard level, you know the spell and can cast it using your spell slots. The spell is a bard spell so long as you have it memorized in this way. You can only have one spell memorized at a time.

CLERIC: TIME DOMAIN

Time is one of the most pervasive and powerful forces in the universe. Deities of this domain often have a strong sense of justice, as the very nature of time demands actions be followed by consequences. Clerics who serve deities of the Time domain are charged with ensuring its proper flow, and punishing those who seek to abuse chronomancy for personal gain.

In Netheril, two gods have claim to the domain of Time. The first is Mystryl, who guards the timeline against troublesome arcanists. The second is Amaunator—who, by a misplaced punctuation mark in his divine contract with the other gods, accidentally gained ownership over the concept of Time itself. Amaunator knows that Mystryl is an effective steward of the timeline, and so rarely invokes his influence as a god of time.



DOMAIN SPELLS

1st-level Time Domain feature

You gain domain spells at the cleric levels listed in the Time Domain Spells table. See the Divine Domain class feature for how domain spells work.

TIME DOMAIN SPELLS

CLERIC LEVEL	SPELLS
1st	<i>Comprehend Languages, Feather Fall</i>
3rd	<i>Augury, Hold Person</i>
5th	<i>Haste, Slow</i>
7th	<i>Banishment, Locate Creature</i>
9th	<i>Hold Monster, Legend Lore</i>

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

1st-level Time Domain feature

When you choose this domain, you gain proficiency in History and one language of your choice.

SECOND CHANCE

1st-level Time Domain feature

When a creature you can see or hear within 30 feet of you fails a saving throw, you can use your reaction to rewind time by a few seconds. The creature can

make its saving throw again, adding 1d4 to its result. It must use the result of the new roll.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, regaining expended uses when you finish a long rest.

CHANNEL DIVINITY: TEMPORAL LOCK

2nd-level Time Domain feature

As an action, you present your holy symbol and place a temporal lock on a creature or object within 60 feet of you. If the target is a creature, it can make a Charisma saving throw to resist the effect, and is unaffected on a success.

A locked target is frozen in time, along with any object it is wearing or carrying. If the target is a creature, it is paralyzed. The target is magically held in its current position, and remains suspended even if nothing is supporting it. The target can't be moved from its space except by teleportation or interplanar travel.

The target is locked for 1 minute or until you dismiss the effect (no action required). A locked creature can repeat its saving throw each time it takes damage, ending the effect on itself on a successful save.

CHRONAL PROTECTION

6th-level Time Domain feature

Rewinding time shows you the worst possible future and how to avoid it. If a creature affected by your Second Chance feature would be reduced to 0 hit points by the triggering effect, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead. Once you protect a creature in this way, you can't protect that particular creature again until you finish a long rest.

POTENT SPELLCASTING

8th-level Time Domain feature

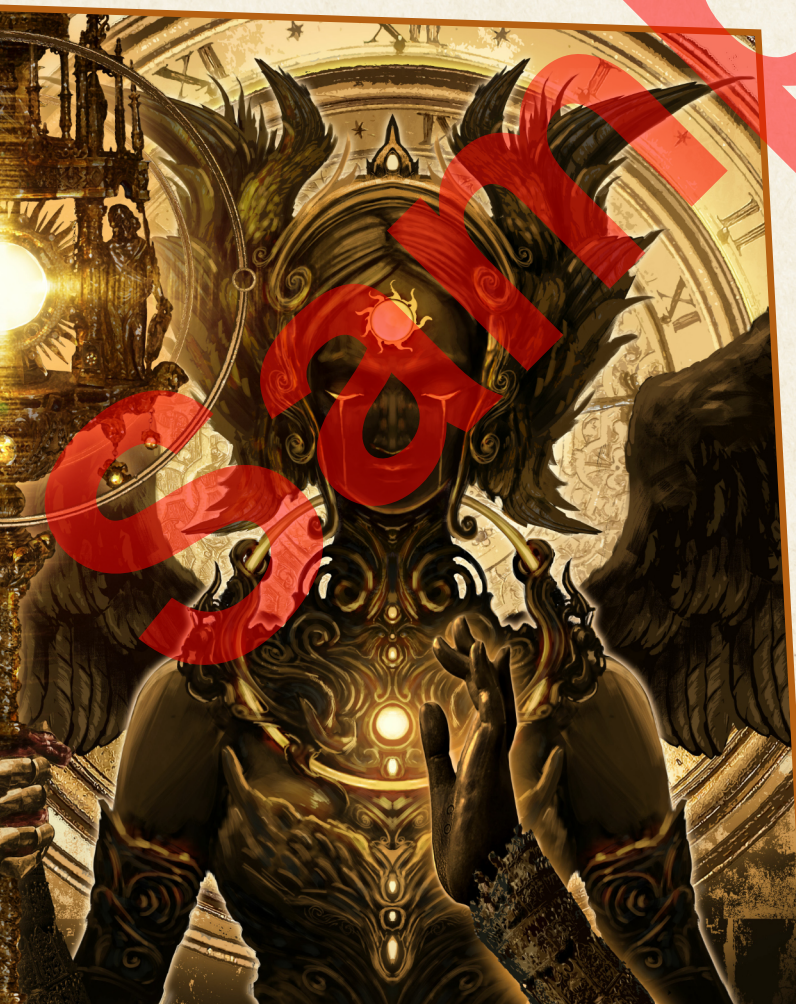
Starting at 8th level, you add your Wisdom modifier to the damage you deal with any cleric cantrip.

GUARDIAN OF TIME

17th-level Time Domain feature

You have earned unrestricted access to the fabric of time. Your Second Chance feature no longer has a limited number of uses.

Additionally, you no longer age and can't be aged magically. If you wish, you can revert to a younger age when you gain this feature.



MONK: WAY OF THE BROKEN SPELL

Between draining the wilds of their resources, blocking the sky with floating cities, and conquering their neighbors with destructive magic, Netheril has made its share of enemies. Monasteries in rival nations have developed a special style of martial arts to combat spellcasters, known as the Way of the Broken Spell. Monks of this tradition can use their chaotic ki energy to disrupt spells and prevent magical effects from forming.

BONUS PROFICIENCY

3rd-level Way of the Broken Spell feature

When you choose this tradition, you gain proficiency in Arcana.

DISRUPTIVE STRIKE

3rd-level Way of the Broken Spell feature

Once per turn when you hit a creature with an unarmed strike, you can fill its body with chaotic ki energy. You deal one extra Martial Arts die of force damage, and if the target is concentrating on a spell or magical effect, it makes its concentration check with disadvantage.

DEFLECT SPELLS

6th-level Way of the Broken Spell feature

You move smoothly enough to block even magical projectiles. You can use your Deflect Missiles feature to reduce the damage of a spell attack or magic missile spell that hits you. If the spell creates multiple projectiles, you can only deflect one in this way.

If you reduce the damage to 0, you can spend 1 ki point to deflect the spell attack at another creature within 30 feet of you. Make a ranged attack roll against the target as if using a monk weapon. On a hit, the creature becomes the spell's new target.

DISRUPTIVE STRIKE IMPROVEMENT

11th-level Way of the Broken Spell feature

Your ki energy is anathema to magic. Your Disruptive Strike feature now deals two Martial Arts dice of force damage. If this damage successfully breaks the target's concentration on a spell or magical effect, you have advantage on attack rolls against that creature until the start of your next turn.



ARCANE SEVERANCE

17th-level Way of the Broken Spell feature

You can use ki to divest a small area of the Weave, preventing spells from being cast. As an action, you can cast the *antimagic field* spell without the need for verbal or material components.

Once you use this feature, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest, unless you spend 8 ki points to use it.

ROGUE: NIGHTBLADE

The Nightblades are a secret society of thieves and assassins formed by the High Mages to take care of rogue archwizards and keep the enclaves under the council's control. These skilled rogues are also adherents of Shar, the goddess of night; the council despises gods, but also recognize that shadow magic is an invaluable tool for espionage and assassination, and forming a bond with Shar is the only way to master it. For more information on the Nightblades, see chapter 2.

Nightblades blend the sneaking and killing arts of a rogue with the elusive power of shadow magic. A Nightblade can call upon darkness to move unnoticed and devastate the minds of their enemies, among other terrifying feats.



NIGHT EYES

3rd-level Nightblade feature

You have darkvision to a distance of 60 feet. If you already have darkvision, its range is extended by 60 feet instead. Your darkvision isn't impeded by magical darkness.

VEIL OF DARKNESS

3rd-level Nightblade feature

As an action, you can fade into a shadow, magically turning invisible for 1 hour. If you use your Sneak Attack feature while invisible, you can choose to strike directly into the mind of your victim, dealing psychic damage instead of your normal damage type. Your invisibility ends early if you make an attack, cast a spell, or dismiss it as a bonus action.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

SHADOW MASK

9th-level Nightblade feature

As an action, you can shape shadowstuff into an illusory mask, casting the *disguise self* spell. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell. This special casting of the spell lasts for up to 8 hours and doesn't require concentration to maintain. However, it ends immediately if you take radiant damage or spend longer than 10 minutes in bright sunlight.

Once you use this feature, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

IMPENETRABLE DARKNESS

13th-level Nightblade feature

Shadows hide you from the light of magic. You are hidden from divination magic. You can't be targeted by divination spells or perceived through magical scrying sensors unless you allow the effect to target you.

TRUE SHADOW

17th-level Nightblade feature

You have been blessed by Shar herself, and gain the following benefits:

- Psychic damage you deal with your Veil of Shadows ignores resistance to psychic damage.
- Your Shadow Mask is no longer dispelled by bright sunlight.

SORCERER: GEM MAGIC

Gems are often innately magical, used as spellcasting foci, components in powerful spells, and storage vessels for arcane energy. Sorcerers of this origin have an affinity for magical gems, perhaps because of a trip to the Elemental Plane of Earth, contact with a cursed jewel, or an accident involving a supercharged gemstone.

In Netheril, the discovery of chardalyn prompted a nationwide interest in gem magic. Experiments with magical gems included crystal implants, tattoos using gemstone dust, and replacing eyes and other body parts with gems. A handful of these experiments created sorcerers with an innate connection to gemstones.

GEM MAGIC QUIRKS

You can pick from or roll on the Gem Magic Quirks table on the following page to create a quirk for your character.

GEM MAGIC QUIRKS

D6	QUIRK
1	Your irises or eyes resemble brilliant glowing jewels.
2	Your body cracks or shatters when you sustain a wound.
3	You feel uncomfortable when you can't reach earth or rock.
4	You glimmer like a jewel while standing in bright light.
5	Your body turns translucent and gemlike when you cast spells.
6	Your body is covered in spiky crystalline growths.

GEM CASTER

- 1st-level Gem Magic feature

Your magic can be expressed through any gem, not just magical ones. You can use any jewel or gemstone as a spellcasting focus for your sorcerer spells.

CREATE CHARDALYN

1st-level Gem Magic feature

When you expend a spell slot to cast a spell with a casting time of 1 action, bonus action, or reaction, you can condense the spell into a tiny black gem. The gem vanishes if it isn't used within 1 hour. You can only maintain one gem at a time.

A creature holding the gem can crush it to release the stored spell, which takes effect as if the holder were casting it without components (except material components with a cost, which the holder still requires). The spell uses your spell attack bonus and spell save DC. If the spell requires concentration, the creature that crushes the gem concentrates to maintain it.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and regain expended uses when you finish a long rest.

GEM WARD

6th-level Gem Magic feature

Many gems have affinities to the elements, and you can harness those affinities to protect yourself. When you finish a long rest, choose one of the following damage types: acid, cold, fire, lightning,

or thunder. You are resistant to the chosen damage type until the end of your next long rest.

CHARDALYN IMPROVEMENT

14th-level Gem Magic feature

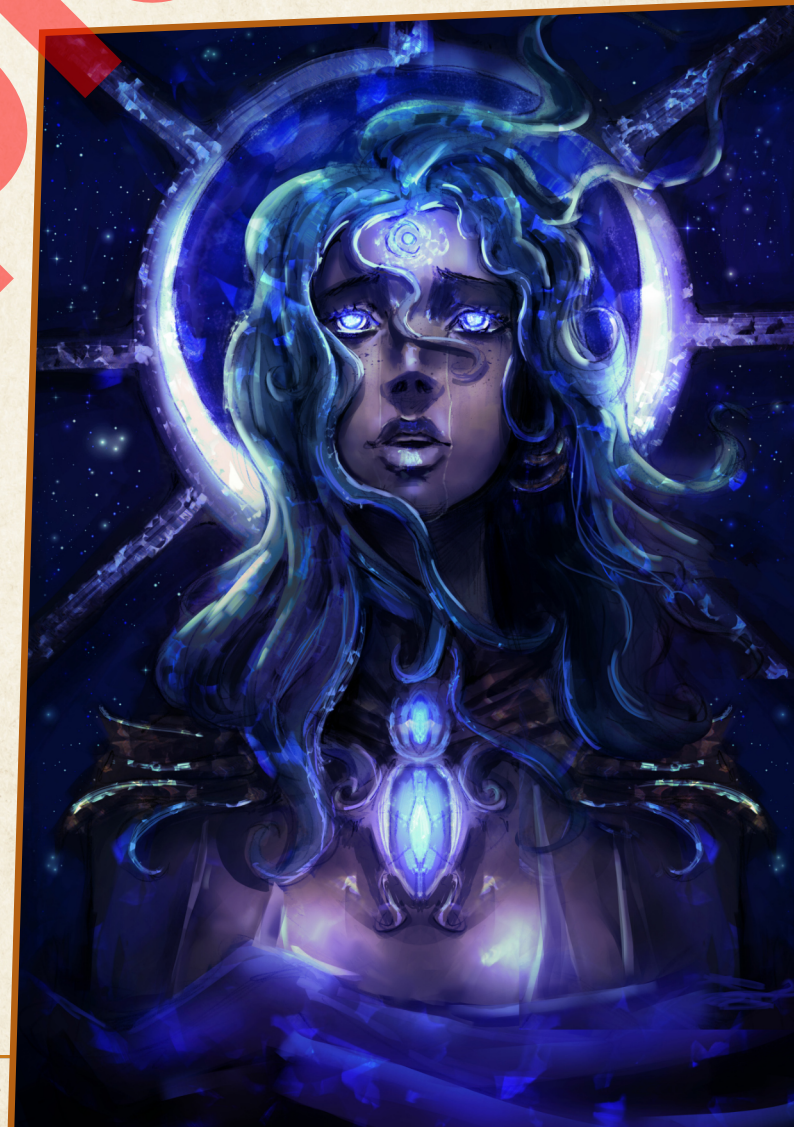
You master the art of storing spells in gems, improving your Create Chardalyn feature in the following ways:

- You can maintain up to three gems at once.
- As a bonus action, you can touch a gem you created and reabsorb it. The gem disappears, and you regain expended sorcery points equal to the stored spell's level.

PRISMATIC WARD

18th-level Gem Magic feature

Your shared connection between gemstones and the elements deepens. As a bonus action, you can spend 2 sorcery points to change the damage type resisted by your Gem Ward feature.



5. NETHERESE MAGIC

The Empire of Netheril's deep mastery of the arcane arts pioneered hundreds of new fields of magic, including disciplines like chronomancy and shadow magic. While some of these arts persist into the modern day, others were lost to time or convoluted beyond recognition. This chapter explores the magic of Netheril, particularly spells and magic items that appear in Netheril campaigns.

FIELDS OF MYTHAL

Before Karsus's final spell devastated the empire of Netheril and changed the way magic was cast across the Forgotten Realms, arcane magic abided by different rules and customs than current spellcasters are familiar with.

While the scholars of Netheril recognized that magic could be divided into eight different schools, they chose to merge these schools together into three general fields of study: the Fields of Mythal. The three fields are as follows:

Inventives are spells that create or destroy something, including objects and energy. An arcanist of this field is an inventor.

Mentalisms are spells that affect the mind, including the creation of illusions. An arcanist of this field is a mentalist.

Variations are spells that alter things, including magic itself. An arcanist of this field is a variator.

A Netherese arcanist typically chose one major field and one minor field, representing their primary interests and other supplementary skills they valued. The arcanist can't cast spells from the third field, as they're too far beyond the arcanist's specialized understanding of magic. For example, an arcanist that majors in inventives and minors in variations can never cast mentalisms. While this style of learning limits the scope of an individual arcanist's spells, it allows them to master all the possible applications of their chosen fields without distraction.

MAGIC ITEMS

For the Netherese, magic items were essentially the currency of power: the more magic items a person possesses, the richer and more powerful they are. While this initially consolidated power with the rich and magical upper class, the invention of quasimagical items (see below) spread the power of magic items around the empire. Quasimagical items created a middle class with access to various magical devices, even if they lacked vast riches or arcane knowledge.

This section explores the magical treasures of Netheril, from basic devices used in every enclave to the iconic artifacts of Netheril's most powerful archwizards.

QUASIMAGICAL ITEMS

In Netheril's early history, magic items were difficult to make and required expensive magical components—even costing the life essence of their creator, in some cases. This all changed when Loulaum invented the mythallar, a device that filled a 1-mile radius with abundant and easily-accessed arcane power. Magic items were divided into two categories: true magic items, which were expensive and functioned anywhere, and quasimagical items, which were significantly cheaper and easier to produce, but only worked within 1 mile of a mythallar.

MAKING QUASIMAGICAL ITEMS

Anyone proficient in the Arcana skill can create a quasimagical version of a normal magic item using the normal rules for magic item creation. A quasimagical item takes half the time and cost to create or purchase compared to its normal counterpart. However, certain magic items cannot be made as quasimagical items. You cannot make a quasimagical version of an item that has charges or an item that is consumable, like a potion or a spell scroll.

MAGIC ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

The magic items in this section are sorted by rarity in the Netheril Magic Items table, then described in more detail in alphabetical order.

NETHERIL MAGIC ITEMS

NAME	RARITY
Ice Box	Common
Voicebox	Common
Ring of Speech	Uncommon
Lockmage's Scepter	Rare
Spellmason's Gauntlet	Rare
Storm Star	Rare or Very Rare
Amulet of the Archwizard	Very Rare
Ring of Myriad Resistance	Very Rare
Rod of Multiport	Very Rare
Staff of Sentience	Very Rare
Pendant of Jeriah	Legendary
Stasis Sphere	Legendary
Crown of Horns	Artifact
Death Moon Orb	Artifact
Universal Pantograph	Artifact

AMULET OF THE ARCHWIZARD

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

This golden amulet is worn as a status symbol by archwizards. When the amulet is created, it is attuned to an enclave's mythallar, permanently binding it to that enclave.

While wearing the amulet, you gain the following benefits.

Magical Privacy. You are hidden from divination magic. You can't be targeted by such magic or perceived through magical scrying sensors.

City Travel. As an action while in the amulet's bound enclave, you can use the amulet to cast the *teleport* spell, teleporting to any location you're aware of within the enclave. The amulet is considered an Associated Object for the purposes of this spell.

CROWN OF HORNS

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement)

This electrum helm is studded with black chardalyn gems, which dance with a strange misty energy. It was designed by the archwizard Trebbe to protect him from powerful magic while he conducted his arcane experiments. However, just as he completed the *Crown of Horns*, some sort of malevolent intelligence came to inhabit it, warping the crown into an instrument of evil. The being caused the energy of the crown to explode outwards in a

destructive surge, which annihilated Trebbe and leveled an entire city block.

The explosion didn't damage the crown, which disappeared for a time before reemerging in the hands of the tyrannical archwizard Requir. It supposedly drove Requir insane with paranoid thoughts, which eventually led to his death at the hands of a party of heroic adventurers. Again the crown disappeared, and it hasn't been seen since.

The *Crown of Horns* twists its wearer's mind with paranoia and evil thoughts. Nobody knows its true goals, but it always seems intent on killing its wielder. Once its wielder dies, it vanishes, waiting in the shadows to reappear to its next master.

Random Properties. The *Crown of Horns* has the following random properties, as described in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*:

- 1 major beneficial property
- 1 minor detrimental properties
- 1 major detrimental property

Mind Protection. While wearing the crown, you are immune to magic that allows other creatures to read your thoughts, determine whether you are lying, know your alignment, or know your creature type. Creatures can telepathically communicate with you only if you allow it.

Spell-Turning. You have advantage on saving throws against spells and magical effects. In addition, if you roll a 20 on a saving throw against a spell of 7th level or lower that targets only you, the spell has no effect on you and instead targets the caster, using the slot level, spell save DC, attack bonus, and spellcasting ability of the caster.

Surge of Power. As an action, you can cause the crown to erupt with destructive energy in a 60-foot radius. Each creature and object in the area must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 8d10 thunder damage and is thrown 30 feet away from you in a straight line, landing prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't thrown.

Once you use this property of the crown, you can't do so again for 24 hours.

Sentience. The *Crown of Horns* is a sentient, lawful evil item with an Intelligence of 16, a Wisdom of 12, and a Charisma of 15. It has hearing and darkvision out to a range of 120 feet. The crown communicates telepathically with its wielder, using images and flashes of emotion to convey meaning.

Personality. The *Crown of Horns* loves nothing more than to build a person up and watch them fall apart. It whispers promises of power to its wielder, pushing them to make ambitious and reckless decisions where possible. The more power the wielder accrues, however, the more the crown taunts them with paranoid visions of their enemies tearing down everything they've built.

Destroying the Crown. The *Crown of Horns* is an evil entity immune to most destructive spells and magical effects. However, if the crown is siphoned by a phaerimm's draining abilities, it becomes susceptible for 24 hours, during which time it can be destroyed by a *disintegrate* spell.

DEATH MOON ORB

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement by a spellcaster)

This gleaming black and violet orb was created by Larloch, Sorcerer-King of Jiksipur, to control the minds of his enclave's arcanist nobles and spy on his enemies. He created the orb by summoning and killing fiends from the Lower Planes, then trapping their souls in an enchanted glass sphere. Then, once the orb contained a hundred souls, he brought it before a rare alignment of the stars and moons—the so-called “death moon”—and flooded it with raw necrotic essence from the Negative Energy Plane, bonding the souls into a single source of deathly power.

The *Death Moon Orb* appears to be filled with a swirling oil-like liquid that shimmers with prismatic hues. Lights dim as they grow near the orb, as if it were consuming the energy. Curiously, its size isn't defined: at the whim of its wielder, it can become as small as an apple or as large as a human head.

Random Properties. The *Death Moon Orb* has the following random properties, as described in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*:

- 2 minor beneficial properties
- 2 minor detrimental properties

Arcane Focus. The *Death Moon Orb* can be used as an arcane focus for casting spells. When used in this way, you gain a +2 bonus to spell attack rolls and to your spell save DC.

Crystal Ball. While touching the orb, you can use it to cast the *scrying* spell using your spellcasting ability. A creature that can see invisible objects sees the sensor created by the spell as a translucent floating skull.



Influence Minds. The orb has 7 charges, and regains 1d4 + 2 charges daily at dawn. While touching the orb, you can expend charges to cast one of the following spells using your spellcasting ability: *charm person* (1 charge), *suggestion* (2 charges), or *dominate person* (6 charges). Also, you can expend extra charges to cast a spell at higher levels; each extra charge you expend increases the level of the spell cast by 1.

Summon Fiend. Over the course of 1 hour, you can use the orb to summon a Fiend of a CR no higher than your character level, which appears in an unoccupied space you can see within 30 feet. When the Fiend appears, you can command it to perform a single task, which can take no longer than 24 hours to complete. The Fiend can make a Charisma saving throw against your spell save DC to resist the command (with disadvantage if you speak its true name). On a failed save, it is compelled to carry out the task, though it might strive to twist your instructions to achieve its own goals. It returns to its plane of origin after the task is complete or 24 hours elapse, whichever occurs first.

The cooldown of this property varies based on the might of the Fiend you summon: ten days (CR 0–5), thirty days (CR 6–14), or a year (CR 15+).

Fiendish Curse. A non-evil creature must succeed on a DC 20 Charisma saving throw at the end of each day it spends attuned to the *Death Moon Orb* or be cursed by it. A creature cursed in this way has the following flaw: “All other beings are beneath me, and those weaklings who dare scorn me must be punished.”