



# TOWERS OF HIGH SORCERY

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# Chapter One

## WIZARDS OF ANSALON

**T**HERE are none upon Krynn who have the power to harm me. Certainly not you, apprentice. But you are brave. You have courage. ● Often you have stood beside me in the laboratory, facing those I have dragged from the planes of existence. You knew that if I but drew a breath at the wrong time, they would rip the living hearts from our bodies and devour them while we writhed before them in torment.”

“It was my privilege,” Dalamar murmured.

“Yes,” Raistlin replied absently, his thoughts distracted. Then he raised an eyebrow. “And you knew, didn’t you, that if such an event occurred, I would save myself but not you?”

“● Of course, Shalafi,” Dalamar answered steadily. “I understand and I take the risk”—the dark elf’s eyes glowed, fears forgotten as he sat forward eagerly in his chair—“no, Shalafi, I invite the risks. I would sacrifice anything for the sake of—”

“The magic,” Raistlin finished.

“Yes! The sake of the magic!” Dalamar cried.

Raistlin & Dalamar, *Time of the Twins*  
by Margaret Weis &  
Tracy Hickman

### THE GIFT OF MAGIC

In boldest terms, magic is the power to manipulate the very fabric of creation itself. An intrinsic part of the universe, designed and shaped by the gods themselves, magic may be used as a tool for good and the betterment of the world—or it can be brandished as a weapon capable of laying whole nations low. And while many view a force of such extraordinary magnitude as too potent a power to be wielded by merely mortal hands, it is mortals to whom magic is ultimately bound. The arcane power of Krynn is refined and explored over generations by those with the talent, the courage, and the fortitude to wield it.

Arcane magic deals with forces so potent that it took the guiding hands of the Gods of Magic to instruct mortals in its proper use, and the Art of High Sorcery is the lasting legacy of this divine instruction. The Gods of Magic bestowed upon the world the methods of tapping, manipulating, and, most importantly, harnessing raw arcane energy, using formulas and exacting rituals designed to keep the manifestation of arcane power out of rash and careless hands. It is this gift of magic that has become the dominion of wizards throughout Krynn, and it is their duty, both to the Orders of High Sorcery and the Gods of Magic.

### LIFE PATH OF A MAGE

The life of a wizard is one of exploration, evolution, and a greater understanding—both of the Art of High Sorcery and the hand that wields it. When the prospective wizard is young, her life is often dulled by a sense of longing for something more than the world alone can offer; a feeling that some indescribable, tangible force lies just out of reach.

For some, this feeling fades as they become increasingly shackled by the demands of day-to-day life. But those few who are able to escape a mundane existence can be educated in the Art of High Sorcery. Learning the Art is often a process of long years’ slow advance through the fundamentals of arcane lore, a wizard quenching her thirst for knowledge through ever-more advanced education and study. And then comes a day when she is considered skilled enough to journey to the Towers of High Sorcery to take the Test—a gateway to the ranks of the Orders of High Sorcery, but one through which not all wizarding hopefuls will pass alive.

During the Test, wizards are not only challenged to demonstrate their full knowledge of magic but to look deep inside themselves—an assessment made not only of the power within, but of the potential toward which they must strive. For those who survive, the Test creates new self-awareness. Their horizons are widened as new vistas of magic and insight are opened up to them.

For each individual wizard, the path of life and magic is different. Some become stagnant in their learning (falling to the wayside of magic’s petty and less noble uses), while others continue on to great things, growing ever more powerful in the service of the Art. Some will serve faithfully from far beyond the walls of the arcane towers, while others will immerse themselves in the structure and orthodoxy at the Orders’ very heart. But in the end, all that the Gods of Magic can hope for is to have every wizard strive for the continued development of High Sorcery, working always to keep the evolution of the Art alive.

### DISCOVERY OF MAGICAL TALENT

Despite popular belief, not all wizards grow up as outcasts with a talent for telling the future, nor must they have had childhoods in which strange events follow them wherever they go. Many children who will one day become wizards lead comparatively normal lives, with ambitions



and dreams like any other — dreams which often include no thought of becoming a wizard at all.

Throughout the ages, the Conclave of Wizards, which governs the Orders of High Sorcery, has sent its agents through all lands in search of new arcane talent. Traveling from town to town, these scouts use interviews, information gathering, and quiet observation in their attempts to single out young minds with a penchant for the Art of High Sorcery. Those who display an interest are given preliminary assessments to determine their relative knowledge and magical potential, and once an individual's aptitude for magic has been determined, he's encouraged to join a wizarding school or to find a mentor for further instruction.

In elven communities, these tests are standard, and any child showing promise is given instruction if desired. In the non-elven realms, though, the Art is feared far more often than it is embraced, and those who seek for it in others, like those who feel its calling in themselves, must sometimes be cautious in how they proceed.

The talent for High Sorcery can be cultivated in many individuals in whom the aptitude for magic is a natural skill. In some cases, the ability to wield arcane power is passed down through bloodlines; in others, fate simply sees them born to the Art. Regardless of its source, finding proper training and an outlet for the gift of arcane power is vital. Members of the Orders know countless tales of poor souls who attempted to deny their nature, suppressing the Art from fear and ridicule as their untrained power consumed them from within.

In most lands, stigma and prejudice attach themselves to the wizard, and as a result, a number of would-be spellcasters remain unmotivated to receive instruction until relatively late in life. Indeed, many spellcasters have well-established careers and skills outside of magic prior to their instruction in High Sorcery. Those who discover the gift can come from nearly any background and, over countless generations, the Orders of High Sorcery's ranks have been filled with warrior and merchant, noble and peasant.

### EARLY EDUCATION

The greater the force of any tide, the greater the strength of the barrier that must contain it, and the arcane force of magic is no exception. To control energies as potent as those they wield, wizards are required to master a number of unique skills, often to excruciating standards. Alchemical chemistry, illogical mathematics, unscientific physics, structured linguistics, and the memorization of complex patterns and symbols are the merest beginnings of the skills required to truly understand a spell and cast it safely. And beyond the spells themselves, the many factors which can influence magic — the nuances of the seasons, the aspects of the day, the positions of the planets and

(especially) the moons — all become a part of a complex learning process.

For some, these abilities will become second nature seemingly overnight; for others, the Art will take years to master. In either case, there are two main routes that the study of magic can take. Hopeful students can sometimes take up an apprenticeship with an elder wizard, serving while they live under a master's tutelage, an arrangement that tends to make learning magic more personal but not always more structured. More commonly, students will attend a school for wizards, established by the Conclave for the express purpose of filling the ranks of the Orders of High Sorcery. In either case, students are given enough instruction to start them on the path to arcane power and, with guidance and determination, to pass the Test beyond which destruction or greatness lies.

### RAISTLIN MAJERE, APPRENTICE

Male human Wiz 1: CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d4-1; hp 3; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +0; Grp -1; Atk/Full Atk -1 melee (1d3-1/x2/nonlethal, unarmed strike); SA spells; AL N; SV Fort -1, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 9, Dex 16, Con 9, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 10; Height 5 ft. 8 in.; Weight 125 lb.

**Skills and Feats:** Concentration +3, Decipher Script +4, Heal +3, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (history) +4, Perform (magic tricks) +2, Sleight of Hand +5, Spellcraft +9; Magical Aptitude, Scribe Scroll, Spellcasting Prodigy.

**Languages:** Common, Elven, Magius.

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (3/2; save DC 14 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, read magic* (2); 1st—*comprehend languages, identify*.

**Spellbook:** 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, detect poison, light, mage hand, mending, message, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic*; 1st—*burning hands, comprehend languages, floating disk, identify*.

**Possessions:** Wizard robes (white), spellbook, parchment (5 sheets), ink vial, inkpen.

**Notes:** As a 16-year-old student, Raistlin does not yet possess his full allotment of 0-level spells or bonus languages. His Perform (magic tricks) skill is used when Raistlin attempts to entertain others with his repertoire of non-magical tricks and illusions. He may earn money (in steel pieces) for doing so (see Perform, page 79 in the *Player's Handbook*).

### "THEY ALL WILL LEARN"

*Being a letter discovered among the possessions of the wizard Antimodes of Balifor, whose possessions were donated to the Tower of High Sorcery at Wayreth upon his death. Date on the letter reads "4th day of Autumn Harvest, 342."*



## ANTIMODES OF BALIFOR, ARCHMAGUS

### DEAR MASTER,

As you have been kind enough to graciously take an interest in me, my teacher, Master Theobold, suggests that I write to you reporting on my progress in school, especially now that I have reached my sixteenth year of life.

Master Theobold tells me that I am doing quite well in my study of the art of magic. According to him, I am one of his top pupils, and in fact, he urges me not to work so hard, but to spend more time enjoying life. I fear I cannot agree with him in his assessment of me.

While it is true to say that I am the best student in his school (it would be false modesty in me to say otherwise), I feel I must point out that his other students are poltroons who have no serious interest in the art. Thus, to claim that I am smarter than my fellows is to preen myself for being smarter than a gully dwarf! I look at my work and I see serious flaws that need to be corrected if I am ever to achieve my dream of (dare I even say it!) someday being invited by the great mages such as yourself to take the Test in the Tower of High Sorcery at Wayreth.

Master Theobold considers me adept in my pronunciation of the language of magic. (Perhaps this is because he himself is so sloppy at it.) (Meaning no disrespect.) I speak the words and I know how they are supposed to sound and yet I cannot say them. It is frustrating to me to hear them coming from my mouth in ways that I do not intend! And, as I tell Master Theobold, this is so very important, because a single mispronunciation can cost a mage his life! Master Theobold scoffs when I tell him this and says that since I will be using my magic in "modest pursuits," it is not likely I will ever be placed in such a dire situation.

"Modest pursuits!" He means me to be a prattling old has-been like himself, using his magic to rid his home of spiders. Has the magic ever burned in his blood as it burns in mine — so that he cannot sleep at night for the sheer torment and ecstasy of it? I very much doubt it. I believe the closest he has ever

come was that time he tried to cast Burning Hands and accidentally set himself on fire.

But I digress. Master Theobold tells me that I may begin to copy spells into my book. But what is the good of that? I want to know the spells in my heart and in my head. I want to be able to say them in my sleep and then wake up and repeat them backward! I do not want

to have to be constantly referring to some wretched book. The man is a dolt. He simply does not understand! But then, no one around here understands. Not really.

And as for my spending more time with my peers, I have come to the conclusion that my peers are idiots. My brother Caramon is a perfect example. He thinks only of two things — food and girls.

If a serious thought ever did manage to limp into his brain, it would be immediately beaten senseless by the other two.

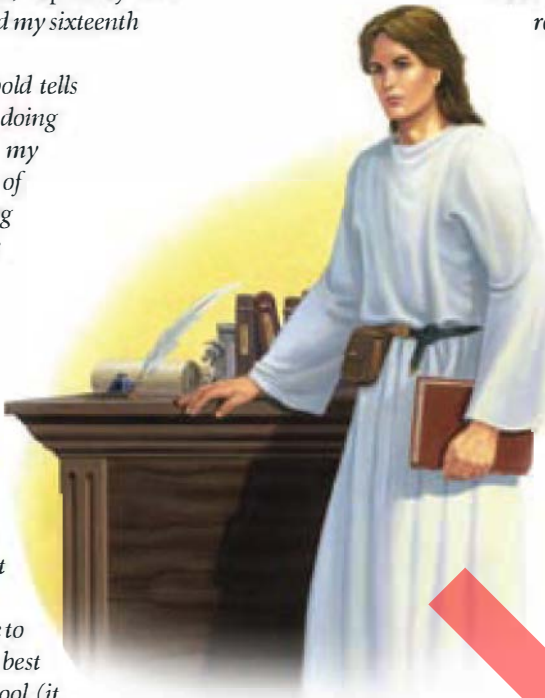
When I try to point out to him that life is difficult and hard and that we must prepare ourselves to face it — and that this will not be done by stuffing oneself with spiced potatoes and giggling in the hayloft with some wench — he only laughs and tells me I don't know what I am missing. He will learn his lesson one day. They all will learn. And then we will see who is laughing.

I hope you are well, sir. My own health is marginal. Master Theobold blames my weakness on spending too much time reading my books and practicing my art when I should be outdoors in the sunshine. He says I am to "run around" with the others, playing at such silly games as goblin ball, a sport at which my brother excels. What good goblin ball will do me (or any of us) is beyond my ability to fathom!

It has been some time since you have visited us, sir. I know the journey is a long one and tedious, but I hope you will be able to undertake it sometime soon. It would be good to talk to someone with some sense for a change.

Gratefully,  
RAISTLIN MAJERE

PS. I send this letter by way of a merchant sailor who anticipates a voyage to Flotsam. It may therefore be some months before you receive it (if ever!).





PS 2. ● *On rereading this letter, I am of two minds whether to send it to you or not, sir. I am afraid you will be shocked by it (as I am certain Master Theobold would be if he were to see it!). I believe, however, that you alone understand me. And, since I have gone to the trouble and expense of penning it, I think I will send it to you. In any case, writing it has to some extent relieved my pent-up feelings.*

PS 3. *If you have the time to write back to me, I would be deeply honored. (And if you know of a new spell you might care to share with me, I would be eternally in your debt!)*

YOURS IN MAGIC, RM

## MENTORS

Once the more traditional method of arcane instruction, mentoring has fallen in popularity since the rise of the wizarding schools. But in those locations where instruction in an arcane school is impractical (or where there are reasons for a wizarding hopeful to want to avoid the attention that attendance at a school might bring), wizards experienced in the Art of High Sorcery may sometimes agree to take on an assistant who will live with and serve them, performing various tasks in exchange for instruction in the art. For the mentor, the long process of training is not about gaining prestige or additional power, but about the continuation of magical traditions and instilling a loyalty to magic in another generation.

Lessons under a mentor are seldom standardized, as each wizard has his own style of teaching and experiences to draw from. Usually, hopeful apprentices take up mentorship with wizards of similar outlook and temperament, but even so, some mentors are harsh teachers. Many demand strict obedience and exact even stricter punishments for failure, for they know that if they fail to supply the proper instruction, the Test will take the life of their charge. Other mentors are more lax, allowing students to move at their own pace and doling out lessons only when the student indicates they are ready to advance.

As a means of developing discipline, obedience and restraint, menial tasks are everyday parts of an apprentice's life. Sweeping laboratories, washing beakers, dusting bookshelves, collecting spell components, grinding herbs, and making meals are among some of the errands an apprentice can look forward to. Along with the more mundane chores, a number of unconventional tasks are handed out as well; counting cobblestones in a garden path or colored tiles in a mosaic to increase one's skill of memorization, or reciting the history of magic while dodging staff blows to improve concentration, or sorting through a sack of silk thread for all pieces exactly three inches in length to teach patience and determination.

Mentorship can take anywhere from five years to twenty-five, depending on the student and the master. Over this period, the student should gain enough knowledge to read and write magic, to understand the basic mechanics of magic, and to begin casting minor spells. As well, under a mentor, the student may gain additional understanding specific to the educational environment — neophyte elven wizards picking up a greater knowledge of the magic of nature, for example, or an apprentice of a sea wizard gaining skills relating to a sailor's life.

Regardless of the particulars of each apprenticeship, though, each student of magic will emerge at the end of training with not only a solid grounding in magical instruction, but (in most cases, at least) a stalwart companion who may be turned to in times of need. This connection between the old masters of magic and the new is perhaps the most important aspect of the mentoring tradition.

## SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

Though mentoring in magic is a time-honored custom, the Orders of High Sorcery long ago recognized the relative slowness of the apprenticeship process and the lack of standards in training from one wizard to the next. So the first wizard schools were created, monitored, and regulated by the Conclave where they began to spring up across Ansalon. Standard tests and guidelines were established in an effort to train prospective wizards in the ways of magic in groups, rather than one or two at a time. Many of these schools were established within the vicinity of the Towers of High Sorcery, with notable academies rising in Daltigoth, Wayreth, Palanthas, Istar, and the stone city of Losarcum — centers of magical learning that came to serve all Ansalon.

But then the Kingpriest of Istar declared war on the Wizards of High Sorcery, with devastating effect. In Istar and Palanthas, schools were abandoned or put to the torch. In Daltigoth and Losarcum, schools were destroyed when the towers fell. In the aftermath of the Fall of Istar, the Conclave strove to establish new academies, but safe locations and the dedicated wizards necessary to run them were scarce, and in the time since, the handful of schools in operation cast only a shadow of their former glory.

All schools operating under the watchful eye of the Conclave are in session for eight months, from autumn to spring. Most offer room and board for students, and are often separated into separate girls' and boys' institutions, in the belief that a lack of distracting social interaction will allow students to focus more on their studies. Fees for room, board, and instruction must be paid at the beginning of the school year unless other arrangements have been made. If the child is under