

Fallen Throne

The Throne fell in the night, cast down by unfathomable immortal means, for incomprehensible immortal reasons; a silver star streaking the night sky. In the thunder of landing a third of the town was destroyed, but when the dust and fire waned, the Grand Basilica was crushed, and The Throne stood, a monument of celestial beauty, unsullied by its transit from the heavens.

The next day the terrors began with the chime of perfect bells and chants of sublime beauty. The Celestials crept from the Throne, greeted by the devout, the curious and venal seekers of miracle alike. These mortals learned the horrible truth of the Celestial Throne's searing beauty, and suffered because that beauty allows no rival. The touch of the Celestials tore the voices of singers from their throats, ripped the eyes of artists leaving only puddles of scabbed flesh, and the twisted the winsome into horrible ungainly shapes. Now only these broken souls remain in the deserted town, driven violently mad.

The Throne still sits in the ruins of the Grand Basilica white stone steaming with dew. Thousands of citizens have lost any fragment of splendor or glory they once were to the Celestials, and clump in small gangs (1D6 each – as *ghouls*) about the Throne, but will coalesce around any commotion at a rate of 1D4 per round. Barely human now, starving, mad and horrible, the touch of these **Broken** is so revolting it stuns, these men and women are dangerous now and may attack on a whim. Careful observers of the Throne have a cumulative 1 in 10 chance each hour of witnessing either 2D4 Choir or 1 **Ophanim** exit the Throne to search the town for objects of beauty.

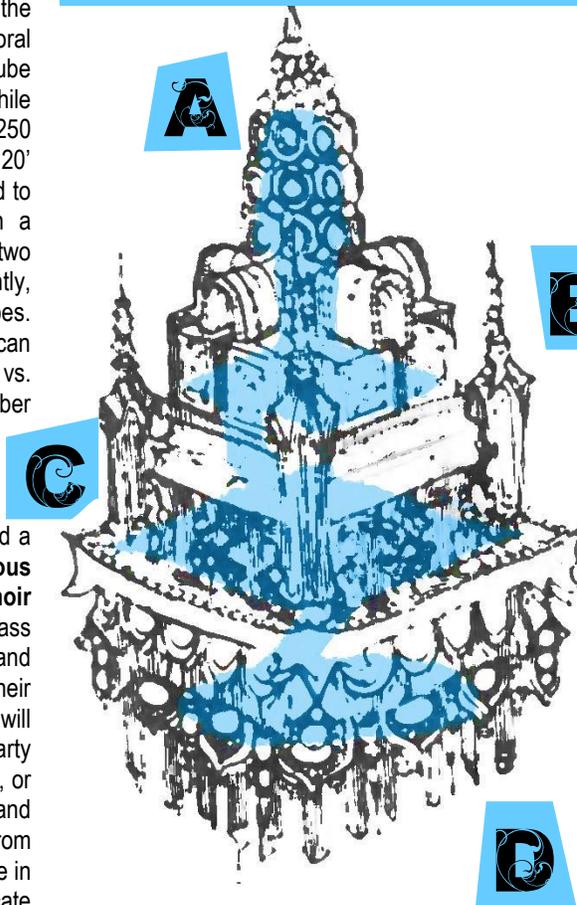
Celestials – A species of outsider devoted to order and harmony above all, making them contemptuous and hateful to the disorderly mortal world. Despite their strange variety of forms, all celestials are achingly beautiful and to attack one requires rare will (WIS check per attack). Like most outsiders, Celestials are also immune to: poison, mind altering spells, lightning and cold, but take ½ damage from fire. Celestials also drain beauty (grace, comeliness or wit) doing 1D6/2 points of CHR damage per attack. This loss is permanent until the Celestial attacker dies and a *remove curse* is cast on the victim. At 2 or less CHR the character will become a hideous, stupid, unpredictable mockery of humanity – one of the **Broken**.

A) The Crystal Gate – A columned maze at the Throne's base, ornate carvings in strange shapes casting odd shadows on the blasted ground. At the center of the maze is a circular walled chamber, carved to mimic thousands of tiny feathers and containing a stair of glass leading upward to AREA B. Incautious mortals walking within the maze (stealth or other precautions will prevent attack) will be stalked by the four **Ophanim** that patrol the maze. Each is a huge marble wheel within a larger golden treaded wheel (2,000 GP each) will burst from one of the stair chamber's many openings to crush invaders beneath their wheel or petrify them with the sweet smelling light that emanates from their spinning hub (As *Gorgons*).

B) Choral Hall – A vaulted hall, stepped along its sides are tiers of white marble to accommodate the **Gracious Choir** in Area C. Along the steps are forty ornate silver choral stands, short lecterns of wire and tube that provide the **Choir** dignity while singing the glories of the Throne (250 GP each). At the end of the hall a 20' shaft of smooth stone leads upward to **AREA C**. The Hall is filled with a sublime melody, the song that two members of the **Choir** sing constantly, amplified through special pipes. Mortals in in the chamber who can hear the **Choir's** song must save vs. spells every turn while in the chamber or collapse weeping and transfixed.

C) Cells of the Gracious – A hive of tiny round 8'x8' cells around a central stair are home to the **Gracious Choir**. Two members of the **Choir** stand singing into a strange brass apparatus studded with pearls and jade (4,000 GP worth) that pipes their song below. The two **Choir** will continue singing, but if the party attacks them, disturbs the machine, or lingers in area they will cry out and 2D6 **Choir** (As *Harpies*) will pour from their cells each round until all 40 are in combat. The **Choir** all sport delicate

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crystal wings, but are otherwise motley – many resemble opal eyed infants, but others are lizards, dolls, rabbits or flurries of fur and light.

In the **Choir's** cells of porcelain the imps have collected items of beauty from the ruined town: paintings, icons, jewelry and the flayed faces of the comely worth 2D6x10 GP rest on the floor of each cell.

D) The Throne of Dancing Echoes – Up the narrow twisting stair of translucent alabaster (1,000 GP if disassembled) is a vaulted chamber, pierced with numerous round windows, each centered with flickering animated eye of rippling glass. In the center of the room is the **Throne of Dancing Echoes**, a serpentine celestial over 40' long (As *Very Old Blue Dragon* – automatically casts *mirror image* each round of combat) and seemingly made of gold veined white marble. It winds statue still around a white marble column at the center of the room, watching the vileness of the terrestrial world through the windows' eyes. When this **Throne** is destroyed the edifice of its home will start to crumble into fine dust, dissipating in 2d12 turns.

The **Throne** is open to negotiation as alone among the Celestials, it can restrain its disgust. In return for aid in return the **Throne** to the heavens it is willing to trade blessings (statistic bonuses), boons (magical equipment) and wealth (it can magically create gems). It seeks large amounts of beautiful artifacts, the hearts of devils, or especially talented or beautiful mortals.