

TOWER OF THE TIME WIZARD

An Adventure by Andrew Harshman

Despite having the rather silly title of time wizard, Naven Mag was a well-respected and rather famous spellcaster. Early in her career, she made a major discovery, parallel time casting. This finding allowed chronomancers to effectively cast two spells at once. The rest of Naven's career was spent chasing the next big discovery, but she was never able to match her first breakthrough. It was this pursuit that led to her death.

One hundred years ago, the chronomancer was performing a highly experimental and dangerous spell trial from her wizard tower. The exact nature of the experiment is unknown, but the disastrous outcome was very apparent. The accident occurred at dusk, when a low, sustained rumbling was heard throughout the land. Witnesses often described it as a great tearing noise. The emission sustained itself for roughly an hour. The source could not be pinpointed.

What followed can best be described as mass déjà vu. The day seemingly restarted. The noise fell just after sunset and in an instant the whole of the population found themselves back at the start of the day. Everyone within 50 miles was aware of this reset phenomenon and officials were alerted. They discovered that the wizard's tower had been partially destroyed. At dusk, the noise returned, but the day did not loop as before. Time continued and the tower disappeared.

Legend has it that the tower periodically rematerializes in one piece. Mag was well off and had a sizable fortune, making the tower a target for treasure seekers. Through some means of derring-do, the characters have obtained the necessary arcane information to predict when the tower will reemerge.

THE DUNGEON

As calculated by the adventuring party, the tower materializes in the wilderness at dusk. Its appearance is not accompanied by any arcane fanfare, it simply appears in the blink of an eye.

Architecturally, it is a mismatch of styles spanning the ages, both ancient and contemporary. The tower is constructed primarily of stone, each floor has 20' high ceilings, and all are magically lit with bright light. Stairs connect each level. As a result of the failed chronomancy experiment, each story has suffered a magical side effect.

FIRST FLOOR: Slowed Time Perception (2) Statues

The 10' entrance appears to have been forced open, presumably by tomb robbers. The player characters immediately recognize the Slowed Time Perception effect. Everything here appears to be in slow motion. This includes movement and speech. Encourage roleplaying this effect.

This area served as an entry room. Abandoned plinths and bare walls suggest this space once housed fine art and many statues. Two statues remain in the middle of the room, they show clear signs of combat damage. These figures will animate when the party approaches and warn them to not come any closer. The statues attack if any character cross to their half of the room. If the party has a particularly logical or clever means of tricking or avoiding the statues, allow them to do so, otherwise combat begins.

The Slowed Time Perception has the following combat mechanics: For each round of combat, each player gets 2 full sets of actions (attack twice and move twice, for example). The statues do not perceive time in the same way and do not gain this benefit.

SECOND FLOOR: Accelerated Time Perception (4) Skeletons

This level contains a combination kitchen and dining room. Characters realize the magical time effect here, everything that happens on this floor seems to occur in fast forward. Seated at a table are the decrepit remains of 4 former adventurers who have been trapped in the tower.

They are laden with treasure plundered from the previous room worth 500 gold pieces. If the treasure is retrieved or the bodies disturbed in any way, the 5 skeletal adventurers arise and attack. These skeletons still think they are alive, roleplay them accordingly. Having retained some of their intelligence, they can be negotiated with. They do not recall the specifics of their dungeon delve.

In the event of combat, treat the Accelerated Time Perception effect with these combat mechanics: For every 2 combat rounds, each player only gets 1 set of combat actions. As a benefit of their undeath, the skeletons do not suffer this penalty.

THIRD FLOOR: Time Loop

The wizard tower houses an alchemy lab on this level. It contains a bevy of tables, alchemical bottles, and barrels. A sturdy iron gate blocks the stairs leading to the top floor.

The alchemy lab is stuck replaying the events immediately following the chronomancer's disastrous experiment. At the end of the

time loop, everything in the room resets, including the party. Upon reset, the characters appear back at the entrance to the third floor. If anyone was killed inside the room, they are restored. All spent and damaged equipment is also reset. The challenge is to learn the pattern, react accordingly, and pass the room. The timeline proceeds as follows:

- The room shakes and the tearing noise starts.
- Near instantly, the entire ceiling catches fire.
- A glowing crystal is set ablaze, burning with a light that blinds all those without their eyes shut. It goes out a second later.
- A large red barrel starts producing a hissing sound as its flammable gas contents escapes from a newly formed crack.
- Vials all over the lab begin to explode, inflicting damage on anyone who is not behind or under cover.
- The gas leaking from the red barrel ignites, fire streaks towards the barrel. It blows up, killing or maiming everyone in the room. If the crack is sealed or otherwise dealt with, it does not explode.
- A chunk of the ceiling falls, smashing open a massive steel vat of acid. The acid bursts out, quickly melting the iron gate, granting momentary access to the next level.
- The room resets shortly thereafter.

Again, logic and cleverness will win the day in this room. The gamemaster should be open to out of the box thinking. Each piece of the timeline should be clearly detailed. The countermeasures players use to deal with each part of the timeline will vary from group to group.

FOURTH FLOOR: Back Through Time (2) Naven Mags

The fourth floor looks much newer than it should. The level is actually in the past, at the time of the chronomancer's fatal spell experiment. Standing across from the characters is none other than Naven Mag. If Mag is allowed to complete this ritual, the characters have good reason to believe they will be killed in the aftermath.

Naven Mag is not beyond persuasion. If a convincing appeal is made to her greatness as a famed time mage, she may back down. If diplomacy is failed or not attempted, combat is initiated. Naven Mag is a spellcaster of moderate level and is able to cast two spells at a time.

At the start of combat or at the end of successful negotiations, a tearing noise and flash of light ushers in the appearance of another Naven Mag. The future version of Naven Mag has traversed the borders of space and time to kill her past self. Her exact motives are unclear, there is some mention of terrible, reality shattering revelations perpetrated by the past Naven Mag.

The original Naven Mag appears to have been expecting this. It is intimated that the chronomancer's failed spell test was a measure to stop her future self from coming back and killing her. This entire interaction is confusing and not well explained by either Naven Mag.

Depending on how the player characters react, the fight is either against the past or future chronomancer. Both carry powerful magic items as determined by the gamemaster. Regardless of the outcome, the party appears outside with whatever treasure they have collected. Once again, the tower has vanished.

