

Pangea

Deck The Halls

Sidebar

Some Curran officers built prisons in all sorts of places. Most of these were constructed under the order of one of the monarchs, however, sometimes high ranking figures would construct ‘private’ prisons for personal research.

The group scans the prison, one hundred or more cells lining the spiral building. Eryk lets out a grunt. Not one of concern or disapproval, but one of recognition. Allura, still regaining her breath, summons a small mote of light on the end of her staff.

“This is truly horrifying,” Allura says with a rasp. “Who could build something like this?”

Vik adjusts his glasses, his gaze flitting to and fro over each cell that he can see. “Someone with time, resources, and a vendetta. We should be cautious. There may be more traps like the first room.”

Eryk takes point as the group begins the long walk down the spiral, passing by cell after cell of emptiness. “Book Boy. What do you think was kept here? Seems too hard to get to for just bandits.”

“It’s hard to say. There could be other entries we haven’t seen yet. Not to mention we don’t know who built this prison in the first place. For all we know, the owner of the puzzle cube was an Inquisitor, be it for Cur or some other powerful faction.” Vik pauses to look inside one of the cells, idly glancing around. “They don’t appear to be very accommodating, but then, which prisons are?”

“I see something,” Allura says, aiming her staff down the path. “Is that...?”

Omara moves forward, gingerly picking up the object. “Feathers?”

Vik nods, letting out a quiet ‘hmm’. “Perhaps this was less of a prison and more of a zoo. Intriguing ever more.”

Several minutes pass and the group reaches the bottom. The spiral tapers inward, resulting in a narrower low point than high point. At the bottom, however, is several doors.

“Anyone else getting tower flashbacks?” Eryk asks, shuddering in an exaggerated manner.

Vik eyes the doors, looking for clues as to where he and his friends are. “No signage, unfortunately. I assume we have to trial and error our way through this.”

Eryk scoffs. “Definitely like the tower.”

Omara walks up to a door at random, and as she reaches for the handle to open it, she pauses. “Does anyone else hear that? It sounds like... humming?”

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“Humming?” Vik asks, ever the more interested. “Like a machine, or a song?”

“Listen for yourself.” Omara moves away from the door to give Vik room.

Vik leans in, his ear nearly touching the old wood. Beyond the passage is most certainly something humming in a methodical tune. Something, or more likely, someone is in there!

Eryk readies his hammer. “I swear to Dane, if I don’t get to smash something soon, I’m gonna pop.”

Omara reaches for the handle, slowly pulling the door open. “Be on your guard.”

The door opens, revealing a hallway. The humming is clearer now, coming from down the way. As the group enters, the dark stone walls seem to absorb more light, making the walk that much more imposing. Our heroes continue for a bit, the methodical humming growing louder until it almost sounds like a song. At the end of the hall lies a door, one of solid stone and iron, carved from the belly of the earth to house something dark and sinister.

Omara nods and opens the door.

“What ho?! What have we here?!” Shouts a nasally voice from inside the room.

As the group enters, they see a figure clad in destitute rags resembling once grand noble attire. The figure adorned in such ancient cloth is wizened beyond reason, more of a corpse than a man. Gold armlets and other fanciful jewelry adorn the figure’s form, tarnished by time immemorial. His eyes, nothing more than pinpoints of purple flame, stare at the people invading his home, his prison.

“How long has it been since someone walked my halls, hmm?” He asks no one in particular. “Tell me, flesh puppets. What news does the outside world bring to my humble chambers?”

As Omara steps closer, Vik stops her. “Wait. Do you sense that? There is powerful magic here.”

The rotted figure taps where his nose would be. “Nasty little snoozer you have there, boy. What do you see, hmm?”

Vik scans the room, his eyes looking for anything out of place. Surrounding the figure is a circle of runes carved into pock-marked black metal. “The floor is salted iron, or something similar. And the runes are ancient. Curran, perhaps? It looks like a containing spell.”

The figure claps a slow round of applause. “Good little flesh eye you have, puppet. This is my home, my prison, my bane. Has been for just a little while now. Ever since that ornery old bat decided I knew too much.

“Who are you?” Allura asks, breaking her silence. “This place reeks of evil.”

“Another nasty little nose you flesh puppets have, heh. I was once a very important person. Surely, you’ve heard of me. The great and powerful... Halafalala.”



PANGEAN OCEAN

