



Keys of Wonder

RECLAMATION OF THE SKY TOWER

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KEYS OF WONDER LORE GUIDE

RECLAMATION OF THE SKY TOWER is a thrilling adventure that tasks the party with traveling to a floating tower that has been overtaken by Raxis, a deranged sorcerer of immense power. He aims to permanently disconnect the rest of the world below from the ability to use magic. To defeat him, the party will need to navigate the many perils Raxis has magically-imbued inside, and make a final stand against the chaos sorcerer before his twisted vision becomes reality!

The Sky Tower of Akrhadim

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"Power is inherently corrupting. Perception of power is wherein power lies. Therefore, the perception of power is corrupting. When a ruler has their subjects' gaze cast upon them, the ruler may make a different decision than they may otherwise, if only using their best, sincere discernment. Those who truly seek the best

for all of civilization will strive to make their decisions outside of this cloud of scrutiny and judgment - some place free of influence, some place beyond such perception."

— an excerpt from The High Teachings of
Akrhadim, Chapter I

Nearly four centuries ago, followers of Akrhadim - a god of civilization and community - organized the massive undertaking of building the Sky Tower. It would sit so high that it was not visible from any point back in the Greenwold, even the highest mountains. It would be a place that embodied the core tenants of their patron: to set differences aside in the name of collective progress. Skilled mages spent years using their spellcraft to set each stone in place, aided by the Griffonts of Mount Faust (see sidebar). All the while, no one from the world below knew of the Tower's existence - nor of the motivations for those building it. This was part of the plan, in adherence to Akrhadim's principles.

► KEYS OF WONDER ◄ RECLAMATION OF THE SKY TOWER

For more information on this adventure, the Greenwold, and the rest of the Dungeon in a Box campaign, check out our site:

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The Sky Tower would be a meeting place where rulers from all lands and organizations could meet in peace - to set aside their differences, old grudges, and pressure from various influences back on the surface. It became just that. As many decades passed, the Griffons of the Mount Faust would ferry individuals to the Tower to attend the meetings, which were moderated by the Conclave, and progress was made - often in areas where they hadn't in many years. Certainly, many discussions were spirited - even heated - at times, but no weapons were drawn, no threats were issued. The legacy of Akhradim soldiered on.

In the time between formal meetings, the Tower also became a place of extremely-advanced arcane study - beyond the scope of even the most prestigious magic orders of the world below. Magical experiments were conducted here, but monitored under the watchful eye of archmages of the Conclave, such as Elezar, who also serves on the council at the Alabaster Academy. Little could any of the Enclave have known that this would pave the way for the Tower - and its mission's - near-destruction.

The Rise and Fall of Raxis

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Jaran Raxis was born into poverty in the city of Thile. He was orphaned, and spent his youth bouncing around under the adopted care of a motley of groups: mummers, scribes, merchants, and so on. His eclectic adolescence came with little consistency. However, there was a constant in Jaran's life during those years: his natural gift for practicing magic. As a young teen, he could master spells that most struggled to learn in a lifetime. When he was seventeen, he was discovered by Archmage Elezar using illusory magic to assist a guild of thieves based in Thile.

The archmage was immediately struck by the magic adept prodigy, and offered him mentorship at the Alabaster Academy. Jaran took him up on the offer, and spent the next four years training there. However, as gifted as Jaran was at spellcraft, he was equally ungifted

The Griffons of Mount Faust

At the peak of the Highland Reaches, there rests a stonework arch some fifteen feet high, built into the natural stone. A small statuette of a griffon with outstretched wings rests atop it - appearing mid-flight against the usually-overcast sky. This is the entrance to Mount Faust, the ancestral home to a flock of majestic griffons. They are larger and stronger, on average, than other griffons found elsewhere in the realm. And they are fiercely loyal to those who share their lawful-good principles of order, and protection of one's homeland. Statistically, a Griffon of Mount Faust has the following changes to their stat block:

- +1 to AC
- +2 to Strength score
- Add 20 to their maximum hit points
- Add the following trait: **Loyal Mount.**
When its rider takes damage from a single source that did not also target the griffon, the griffon may use its reaction to halve the damage. The griffon takes the other half of the damage total.

When Akhradim's followers met with them centuries ago, they made a pact with Auroven, the "speaker" of their flock. The title is no misnomer, as - unlike other griffons - Auroven can actually speak many languages, including the Common tongue. Their agreement was to protect one another for time eternal. The soon-to-be Enclave would help ward the Griffons' lands from attacks and extreme weather, and in exchange, the Griffons would fly visitors up to the tower, once they made the trek up to Mount Faust.

at getting along with others. The young mage's reclusiveness and brilliance often made it difficult for him to navigate social situations. Elezar, aware of the brewing darkness within Jaran - and the potential danger such power could produce if unguided, made an unprecedented move. He revealed the secret of the Sky Tower

to Jaran, and invited him live there as a scholar in residence, and to be a guest attendee of the Conclave meetings. There, Elezar reasoned, Jaran could avoid the tumultuous conflict that living in close proximity to others had caused, and be granted free reign to expand his arcane abilities and ideas.

Jaran once again took his mentor (the only figure he had grown to truly trust in his life) up on the offer. Over the next seven years, Jaran impressed the Enclave, as he had done with Elezar, with his incredibly deep understanding of the arcane. He solved a number of complex mysteries in various fields of study, authored numerous theories, and even created a number of new spells and rituals (see sidebar). However, boredom began to fester in Jaran. His sheer mastery of the formal study of magic led him to experiment with more volatile forms of magic - including chaos sorcery. In time, Jaran's fascination with the concept of chaos grew to obsession. As he began employing it, and stretching its practice to the outer limits, he began to transform himself as well. He insisted others call him "Raxis," and fancied himself a harbinger of chaos - as one so powerful that he could control the very thing that had control over all else.

During the Enclave meetings, it was impossible not to notice the change in behavior. Raxis pushed for increasingly radical ideas. Even with Elezar's vouching, the council was forced to curb the already-expert sorcerer's proposals: one of which was to ensure that magic could only be practiced by those "worthy" of it - by those who could understand it by a standard Raxis deemed adequate. Raxis argued that it would prevent magical abuses of power. Others argued that his plan amounted to no more than banning all musicians and bards from playing unless they were demonstrable virtuosos. A fiercely-heated exchange echoed throughout the Sky Tower's stone walls. Elezar ultimately sided with his fellow Enclave Councilors. That act would be seen as the ultimate treachery by Raxis - and would sadly be the spark of the sorcerer's true descent into madness and evil.

In the days before the events of the adventure, Raxis has overtaken the tower, slaughtered

the Enclave and guards, imprisoned Elezar, and spent the intervening time constructing a number of new defensive measures so that his "progress" will not be halted. The most sinister of his creations is the Severing Construct - a device imbued with the power to complete Raxis's rejection vision: to make him the realm's lone magic user.

NOT FULLY DESTROYED

The GM may allow a player character to acquire this optional cursed item after the adventure's final encounter with Raxis. The item may also have been inadvertently wound up in their possession.

FRAGMENT OF THE SEVERING CONSTRUCT

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement)

This piece of twisted metal is imbued with a remnant of the magic-suppressing energy that the Severing Construct once held. Once attuned, the wielder of the artifact gains the following benefits while they hold the fragment in a hand.

- 1/day, you may spend an action to cast antimagic field without expending any spell slot or material components, centered on you or any area within 20 ft. of you, but with the duration of 1 minute (instead of 1 hour).
- 1/day, use may cast counterspell at 4th-level, as a reaction without expending any spell slot or material components. If you do, and a spell was successfully countered, the individual attempting to cast the spell takes 5d8 (22) necrotic damage, and you regain half that amount of hit points.

Curse. This item is cursed. Each time you use either of its abilities, you gain an indefinite madness (DMG, pg. 258-260). The only cure to remove any accumulated madness is to unattune to the fragment. However, the attuned wielder of the fragment will angrily chastise anyone who suggests they do so, and use violence to prevent anyone from forcibly attempting to remove the fragment from their possession.

Master of Spells

These spells were created by Raxis during the course of his residency in the Sky Tower. The GM may present these spells as additional options the players can learn as they advance in their class, and/or found as scrolls inside the Sky Tower as additional loot rewards.

RAXIS'S CHAOS BOLT BARRAGE

3rd level evocation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 ft.

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

Classes: Sorcerer

You create three rays of undulating, warbling masses of chaotic energy and hurl them at targets within range. You can hurl them at one target or several. Make a ranged spell attack for each ray. On a hit, the target takes $2d8 + 1d6$ damage. Choose one of the d8s. The number rolled on that die determines the attack's damage type, as shown below.

1D8 RESULT	DAMAGE TYPE
1	Acid
2	Cold
3	Fire
4	Force
5	Lightning
6	Poison
7	Psychic
8	Thunder

If you roll the same number on both d8s for any of the rays, that ray deals double the amount of damage. If all of the rays hit and have matching d8s, the caster may immediately choose one effect on the Wild Magic surge table (PHB, pg. 104), and have it occur as a free action.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, you may create one additional ray for each slot level above 3rd.

SIPHON SIGHT

4th level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: One creature within 30 ft.

Components: S

Duration: Immediate

Classes: Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

You extend a hand and overpower the perception of a creature within range. They make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, they take $4d10$ psychic damage, you are invisible to that target (and that target only), and you gain truesight until the end of your next turn. On a successful save, they take half damage and no secondary effects occur.

At higher levels: You can target an additional target within range for each level above 4th used to cast the spell.

UPROOT TREE

6th level conjuration (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 ft.

Components: V, S, M (a piece of tree bark)

Duration: Permanent

Classes: Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard

Immediately after expending a spell slot to cast this spell, you must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, or suffer two levels of exhaustion. If cast as a ritual, no Constitution saving throw is required. Choose a point on the ground within range. A large oak tree covered in branches rises upward centered on the point and remains there. It is a $15 \text{ ft} \times 15 \text{ ft} \times 100 \text{ ft}$ cylinder. Any creatures in the tree's space must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take $5d12$ bludgeoning damage, or half as much damage on a successful save. All creatures are pushed to a space not occupied by the tree. Any inorganic objects, including walls and ceilings, automatically take this damage, and are vulnerable to it. The tree has the statistics of a **treant**, but without any sentience - including the ability to take any actions. The tree can be climbed with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check.

ALTERNATE PLOT

HOOK

If you are using the **KEYS OF WONDER** campaign setting, you may use this plot hook in conjunction with those found in the adventure booklet. The party will have been tasked with seeking out Archmage Elezar, to inquire about a Lost Key of Wonder item in his possession. However, the party finds that Elezar is missing, as introduced in the adventure.

The plot hook can occur when the party has revisited Maestro Hewert at his tower, or it may be modified to be presented as a visit from the Maestro during their travels, or as a flashback. Read the following aloud:

Maestro Hewert runs a comb through his bushy sideburns, which are overgrown into mutton chops. "My goodness," he says with one eye squinted. "You really have gone through some dangerous and incredible adventures in order to recover some of the Lost Keys!" He holds up a mirror, smiling with contentment with his grooming, then turns to you.

"But I have good news! This one is a simple matter. I have no doubt you are familiar with the Alabaster Academy. Well, one of the most esteemed archmages there, Elezar, happens to be an old friend of mine. He has let me know that he has an item in his possession with one of the lost notes, you see! A rare and ancient artifact - a simply fantastic piece! Now, all you'll need to do is meet with him and retrieve it! After all, you deserve an easy task for once!"

If the party succeeds in the adventure, in addition to their normal rewards, Archmage Elezar invites them back to the Academy and gifts them the scarab of protection (DMG, pg. 199). As promised, the tuning fork reveals a wonderful harmonious sound imbued within it. Maestro Hewert is overjoyed to hear it, and also happy to eat his words about this task being an easy or simple one.

