

HOPES LOST - LOWER LEVEL

Accessed by a pair of long, steep, granite-brick-lined stairwells from areas 17 on the Upper Level of the Hopes Lost complex (detailed by a separate Atlas map), this is a smaller, lower extension of that complex set deep within the Granite Platform that lies before the entrance to the Upper Level. The walls and ceilings here, unless noted otherwise, are also faced with large-brick-shaped slabs of granite, and all the floors are of black-and-white marble tiles, each around 2.5 feet square (75 centimetres), laid chequerboard fashion with their points towards the cardinal directions in a diamond pattern. Where not mentioned, all the ceilings are flat and roughly 10 ft high (3 metres) in the passages and rooms. All the doors here are of iron-faced and reinforced wood, around 9 ft tall (2.7 m).

The map layout was derived from a modified design of an Inkwell Ideas Dungeonmorph Die in the Trailblazer set, with part of the details taken or adapted from the accompanying book for this dice set, the "Dungeonmorph Book of Modular Encounters: Delver, Trailblazer, & Voyager Edition", also by Inkwell Ideas.

At the foot of the stairs is a long north-south corridor. Its north end curves east to a door into the Lecture Hall, while its south end terminates in a door to the **Storeroom**. This is a small, cupboard-like room containing a variety of supplies (including dried foodstuffs and bottles of non-alcoholic drinks), spare materials and equipment for use on this Level and the Upper Level sometimes. A large set of shelves covers the southern wall, which provides a well-concealed cover for the secret door into the side passage that links into the Elemental Grand Mage's Quarters and the Great Elemental Portal & Scrying Chamber. Both secret doors off this southern passageway are not secret from the passage side, and each is about 3 ft wide by 4 ft high (1 m by 1.2 m) in their respective stone walls. A separate doorway in the wooden shelving that conceals each must also be opened to allow access.

The **Elemental Grand Mage's Quarters** is a finely-appointed study chamber, work- and living-room for the leading Elemental Mage at the complex, only one step in seniority below that of the Archmage (whose quarters are on the Upper Level). The Grand Mage is responsible for maintaining the security of this Level, and also teaching younger mages at times in both the Portal & Scrying Chamber and the Lecture Hall. A large wardrobe conceals the secret door to the southern passageway, and there are bookshelves, a desk and chair, a couple of rugs, a large chest with personal items and more clothing in, as well as a large, double-sized, four-poster bed. With the bed's curtains drawn shut, the Grand Mage is magically secure from all intrusions here. An ordinary door connects into the western extension of the Portal & Scrying Chamber to the north. Lighting is provided by a lamp normally kept on the desk, or by command of one or both of the two magical ceiling panels. Items on the bookshelves and desk concern histories of the complex and nearby areas, the elemental planes, control of elementals, and similar related items, such as works on geology, herbals, weather phenomena and chemistry/alchemy.

In the northern part of this Level, the **Lecture Hall** is a chamber where teaching and demonstrations by any of the mages in the complex may take place, and the room is often in use, when it is lit from the ceiling on magical command. A large cupboard and two sets of bookshelves stand along the north wall, with six chairs along the south, either side of the short passage with a door leading into the western extension of the main Portal & Scrying Chamber. A large table-workbench stands by the east wall, and much of the floor is occupied by four pew-like seating benches for students, facing east. The smaller bookcase conceals the secret door into the northern passageway that links into the eastern part of the Portal & Scrying Chamber. Both bookcase and wall pivot into the corridor to provide access, although opening it from the Lecture Hall side requires knowledge of exactly how to do so. Access from the passageway is much more straightforward, and the door is not classed as concealed from that side.

Largest of the chambers on this Level is the **Great Elemental Portal & Scrying Chamber**. Its ceiling is 15 ft high throughout (4.5 m), and is of plaster over the usual granite brickwork, painted white. In the eastern wall, a small semicircular alcove contains a metal sphere attached to the back wall by a metal arm, and which continually sheds magical light throughout the chamber, at a level which can be adjusted on command by any of the six leading mages in the complex only. Heavy black curtains along the full height of the curving western, northern and southern straight walls of the Chamber's main part, dampen any echoes, and also serve to conceal the openings to the northern and southern corridors leading off this section of the room. At the opening to the narrower western extension of the Chamber, against the north and south walls, stand two tall cabinets, each containing shelves of suitably-sealed containers that hold safely and securely materials from a wide variety of elemental planes, including things such as rock, smoke, waters, sparks, etc. The floor is dominated by four large, pool-like areas, each surrounded by low, white marble walls raised around a foot (30 cm) above the floor level. Westernmost of these pools, in the narrower extension, is the circular Air Pool, containing endlessly swirling, pearly, opaque mist. In the main part of the Chamber, northernmost of the three oval pools is the Water Pool, containing clear water that allows the white-marble tiled base of the pool to be seen easily. The southern pool is the Fire Pool, containing bubbling hot magma, although only a very mild warmth can be noticed by anyone standing near it, so long as they do not bend over this pool, while the third contains thick mud, the Earth Pool. Magical commands by any of the leading mages here (only) can be used to make the surface of a pool shimmer and show scenes from any part of their

relevant planes, including specific places there, and further commands will allow the use of the pool as a gateway portal to and from that planar location. Each pool has an elemental guardian to prevent attempts at unauthorised access, elementals that are known to, and relatively friendly with the leading mages here familiar enough with their own plane (so far as such "friendship" is possible). The guardians reside in their own pool, and cannot leave this Chamber further into Nibirum.