



PUBLIC LIBRARY

MAP DESCRIPTIONS

ENTRANCE HALL AND READING ROOM

As you push open the heavy oak doors, you enter a large hall filled with reading tables neatly arranged down the centre of the room. The floor is covered in polished marble tiles that reflect light from leaded windows, illuminating the room with natural light. Along the walls are tall bookcases reaching from floor to ceiling, filled with thousands of leather-bound books of every colour and thickness. In the centre of the room is a large desk with a stern-looking woman sitting behind it. A few people sit quietly at the tables, studying books, scrolls and parchments from the collections within the library.

REFERENCE HALL

Behind the Reading Hall is a large room with vaulted ceilings that houses the main Reference Section of the library. At the centre of the Reference hall sits a mechanical orrery, a device made from brass, copper and other metals, that simulates the movement of heavenly bodies. Bays of books line up down the length of the room, at the far end, large windows let in muted light. Off to the left and right are archways leading to other reference sections. It seems the more obscure collections can be found there.

COLLECTION ROOMS

Off from the main halls are Collection rooms. These contain specially curated collections of books, scrolls and tablets from across the known and unknown worlds.

- **Private Collection/Reading Rooms:** The two rooms attached to the Reading Hall contain speciality books. Rare and unique materials not available to the general public. These rooms can only be used by appointment and are guarded by old but formidable looking Library staff.
- **Scroll Collection Room:** Entering the room you have to stifle an urge to sneeze, dust hangs in the air, along with a distinct smell of mildew. Every available corner is filled with scrolls, seemingly stored randomly, although handwritten labels and wooden plaques attempt to delineate sections within the chaos.
- **Ancient Writings Collection Room:** This room has a dry earthy smell to it, with a hint of spice you can't quite place. It contains a number of cabinets and drawers filled with unique artefacts collected from around the world. There are stone tablets carved with indecipherable runes, ropes knotted down their length with precious stones and feathers woven into them. Delicate scrolls made from reeds and animal skins are stored within the drawers, keeping them out of direct sunlight.

NOTES AND TIPS

- **30x45 Grid Map**
- This could be a Library within a University or a Public Library in a major city or large town. It could be part of an estate, used by a lord and their staff.
- The rear hall and rear rooms have high ceilings with two metal spiral staircases at the back leading to wooden walkways to the upper collection rooms.
- **Library lore:** Libraries mainly consist of Reading Rooms, Sec-

tions and Collections.

- **Reading Rooms:** These are areas where the general public, students and scholars can access study materials within the library. They can often be within different sections of the Library.
- **Fiction/Non-fiction sections:** These are organised by author or by topic. Novels for fiction, and things like Biographies, Histories and How-tos for non-fiction.
- **Reference sections:** These books are not meant to be read from front to back, they have specific bits of knowledge to be looked up. They might have knowledge of ancient languages (Dictionaries), monster anatomy, or plant identification.
- **Periodicals section:** These are newspapers, journals, and magazines. In a fantasy setting, they'll most likely be newspapers, or journals written for specific professions, such as for a magical university.
- **A Roost to Reference:** A new set of books has been donated to the Library, they have come from an old wizard tower and some are magically contaminated. They are now animated and wreaking havoc in the Library. They are roosting on the upper floors and within the vaulted ceiling. They act like birds or bats and attack with paper cuts, slamming their pages together and if they contain magical spells, may even use those.
- **Librarian of the Dead:** The Librarian seems to be dead but is still coming to work. The patrons of the Library are complaining about the smell but no one wants to confront the issue. Turns out she has been possessed by an ancient spirit after she deciphered a scroll in the upper Collection rooms. She has been recruiting Library patrons into her undead cabal.
- **A Mini Armageddon:** The Orrery (Model Solar System) is actually a to-scale replica of a Doomsday Machine (see my Doomsday Machine battle map). At some point, it is activated, and although not as devastating as the full-scale machine it does create mayhem for all present. Lightning bolts, teleporting creatures into the library and creating a small portal to the nine hells for example. Has the machine already been activated? Will your party need to fight their way in to switch it off? Or are they witness to it being switched on, maybe by a visiting lecturer who wants to prove their fringe ideas by activating it?

VARIANTS

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