

## THE SPINDLE

There is a tower that is high and mad as it extends into the sky. The ground cannot be seen from the window at the top of its sandstone heights. One cannot even see the window from the ground. So if one were to stand outside of the thin tower, one would say that the tower has no windows. And that is a lie. But there are more lies inside the tower than one could possibly imagine.

The Spindle is a library like no other. Perched on the edge of Haark, it is a simple cylindrical tower, unimaginably tall. The high outer door of the tower is worked with spidery patterns of hammered steel, and its inner surface, once revealed, shimmers with the reflected lights of the crystal lamps that punctuate the interior

walls at regular intervals. The inside of the door itself is flawless mirrored glass.

If you are among those rare individuals who happen to find cause to see the inside of the Spindle, you will of course first notice the central column, rising as high as the tower itself. It is covered with shelves cut into the stone, tightly packed with books and ledgers and scrolls and diaries and journals. Their contents? Falsehoods, erroneous histories, and charms of stealth—lies as told by thieves and stories woven by exalted grifters. The secrets of lovers and murderers are found here, hidden among the writs of assassins and the broken oaths of priests. Here too you will find evidence of things that are not allowed to be, nay, cannot be by any understanding of the seven folk. The only honest thing that dwells here are



the hungry parchments/ flies that dine to plump excess on the multitudinous deceptions.

Next of course, you will spot the librarians in their gray and yellow robes. Exactly thirty in number, they speak very little, their nose and mouth covered in sallow scarves. When they do talk, it is to each other, and in hushed tones. The librarians have but three duties: the organization of the texts, the care of those texts, and the appraisal of newly-submitted works.

A person desiring to access the Spindle's library of lies must donate a written falsehood, supposedly one of equivalent value to the document they seek. This odd calculus used by the librarians to determine the value of lie is a craft known only to them. Some say it has something to do with the size of the falsehood. Others say it is the precision of the lie. One former librarian, who was executed for poisoning guests at the inn where he later worked, claimed that the value of a submitted fiction is gauged by the cruelty of the heartbreak that it elicits. Whatever it be, the librarians accept no other currency

or offerings. Those who attempt bribery are escorted from the tower. Those who threaten with acts of violence never leave the tower. The law of the tower is absolute.

The thing that no visitor will ever notice? There has never been an instance when a petitioner has found that their requested information has been unavailable. When asked about this tale, the librarians will only chuckle softly (or perhaps sharply exhale.) They are not concerned with sense. Only lies.

Records of the tower's origins and its anomalous reality are rarely a subject preferred by logical and rational academics. Even trying to find the tower is an endeavor best left to drunken Haarkeen reciting poetry. Or an old riddle-telling woman on Zenith. An oracle exiled from Veile. Or the Haarkeen pilgrims lost and burning beneath the empty sky of Nova. The mad and desperate can always find the Spindle, as if it were a dream they have been having all their lives. More pragmatic beings must find communion with such a blasted soul if they wish to access the Spindle themselves.