



A GATHERING OF WITCHES

***FIND THE FORBIDDEN RITUAL ROOM
AND ENTER THE REALM OF DREAMS***

TORCHLIGHT
PRESS



A GATHERING OF WITCHES



written by *Addison Short*
maps by *Venatus Maps*



Credits

Cover Illustration: Quico Vicens Picatto

Maps: Venatus Maps, Cze and Peku

Story and Mechanics: Torchlight Press

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RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

To run this adventure, you need the Fifth Edition core rulebooks.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

The core 5th Edition monster book contains stat blocks for most of the creatures found in this adventure. Monster stat blocks created specifically for this adventure will be included at the end. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block in the core monster book. If the monster is not included in the core monster book, it will be included in the appendices of the adventure.

Adjusting Encounters

This adventure contains advice for adjusting encounters based on the number of characters in the party. You are empowered to modify the number of enemies in an encounter and their hit point totals as you see fit. If you need to adjust the difficulty of an encounter during combat, you can alter hit point totals without the player characters ever knowing and have enemies retreat or reinforcements arrive as needed.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout this adventure:

hp	hit points
AC	Armor Class
DC	Difficulty Class
XP	experience points
pp	platinum piece(s)
gp	gold piece(s)
ep	electrum piece(s)
sp	silver piece(s)
cp	copper piece(s)
NPC	nonplayer character
LG	Lawful Good
NG	Neutral Good
LN	Lawful Neutral
N	Neutral
CN	Chaotic Neutral
LE	Lawful Evil
CE	Chaotic Evil
NE	Neutral Evil



A Gathering of Witches

A Gathering of Witches is a Fifth Edition adventure for 3 to 7 characters, optimized for a party of 5 characters of 3rd level.

The characters learn about a student cohort that's planning to hold a summoning circle in the dead of night at the library. Some of the other students are worried that the magic is too dangerous, but are too afraid to confront the cohort directly. Will the characters rise to the occasion to protect their fellow students from themselves?

BACKGROUND

The school library is home to ancient magic and knowledge. Throughout the centuries it has served many scholars with its information, but a select few are aware of its more occult offerings. Beneath the central dias is a secret chamber that houses large fragments of an otherworldly crystal. The crystal is a powerful conduit of magic, allowing those that know how to use it to cast magic well beyond their individual capacity.

A knowledge-hungry merfolk student named Anemone learned about the hidden chamber from Omh'odhri, the aberrant dean of conjuration, due to a clumsy slip of the tongue. It took a few months, but eventually Anemone figured out how to open the secret chamber. Unable to let the information go unused, she's roped her cohort into helping her perform a magic ritual in the secret chamber of the library.

ADVENTURE ACTS

This module has three maps, each corresponding to a different stage of the adventure.

Act 1

As the characters arrive at the library, they witness a staircase leading into the central dias magically seal. Unable to force their way through, the characters will need to help jog Spindle's memory to open the staircase leading into the secret ritual chamber before it's too late.

Act 2

Once the characters have successfully re-opened the stairs in the central dias, they enter the secret ritual chamber and discover that the ritual has already gotten out of hand — the students are laying unconscious on the ground and the crystals are pulsating a vibrant purple light.

Act 3

In the final act of the adventure, the characters enter the magical dreamscape created by the ritual. Anemone, overtaken by a fey spirit named Citron, demands the characters bow to her power and assails them. After the spirit is expelled or tricked into leaving, the characters and the students are ejected from the dreamscape and wake up back in the library.



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following characters are important to this adventure.

Citron Honeybriar

Citron is a malicious fey spirit that's been searching for a vessel to enter the material plane through. She was banished from the feywild and has been trapped in an incorporeal form drifting in a dream-plane for thousands of years. Time has frayed her mind and made her desperate.

Student Cohort

Anemone and her cohort are responsible for the drama that kicks off this adventure. The cohort consists of the following individuals:

- **Anemone**, a knowledge-hungry lizardfolk with a strong personality. She was the one that learned about the secret ritual chamber and pushed the rest of her cohort to help her find it.
- **Rustle**, a flamboyant birdfolk that loves to play the drums loudly. She was reluctant to join Anemone but wanted to impress her.
- **Kapral**, an easy-going and happy ettercap that just wants everybody to get along.

GETTING THE ADVENTURE

The characters are approached late in the night in the dorms by an **awakened shrub** named Spindle.

Read the following:

A small shrub with two stubby legs of vine punching through the bottom of a clay vase wobbles forward. Two deep recesses placed in the shrub's bulk like eyes glow from within. It speaks falteringly as it asks "can... can you help?"

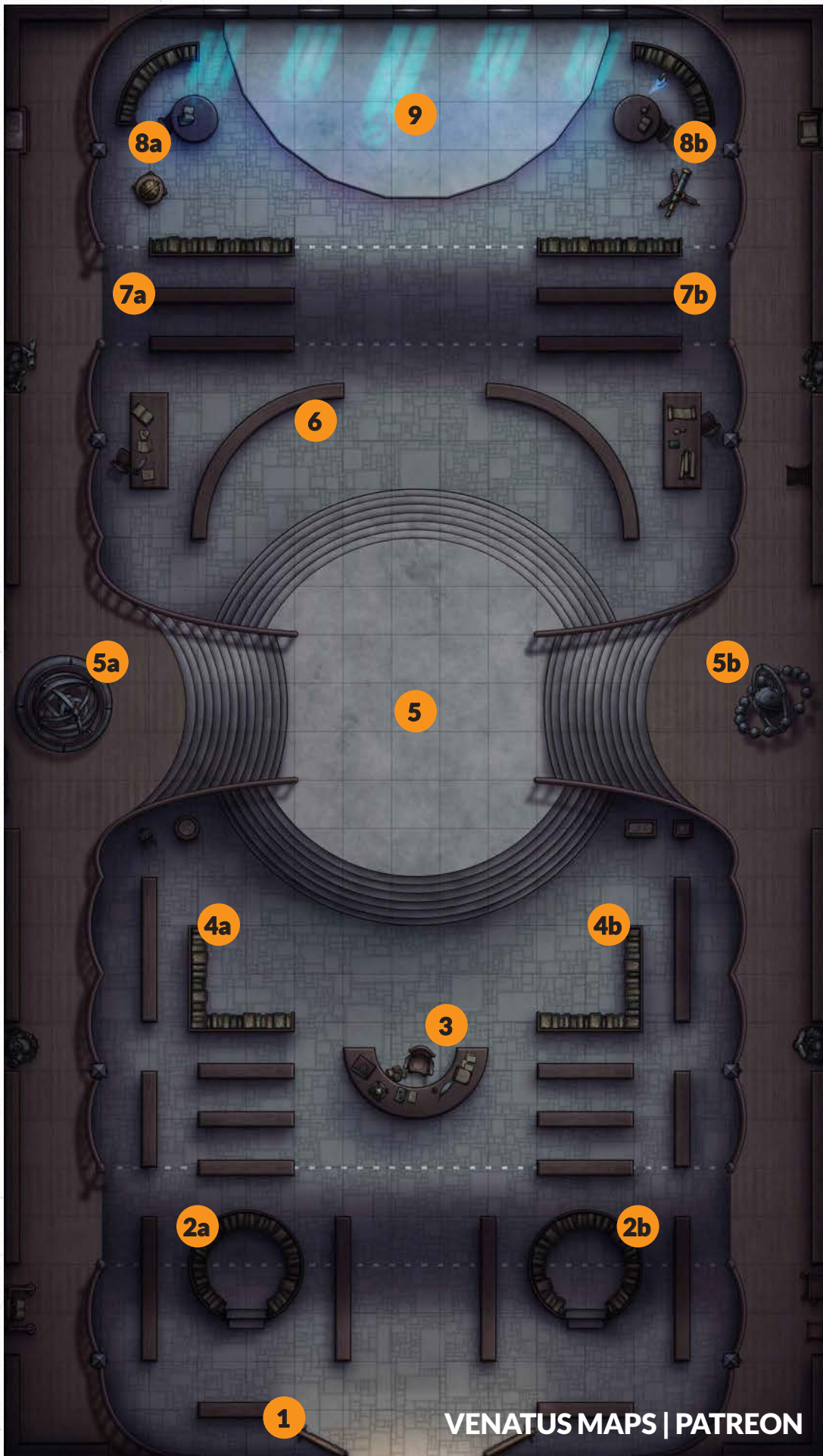
Spindle can relay the following series of events:

- Spindle was idling in the hall when they saw Anemone, Rustle, and Kapral sneaking away from the dorms.
- Spindle followed the trio to the library and saw them enter a magical stairwell in the floor. When Spindle got close, there was a burst of purple light and the trio fell unconscious.

Spindle urges the characters to come to the library immediately to help the trio. If the characters want to find a dean or teaching assistant instead, Spindle complains that it will take too long and starts to get stressed out.

When the characters are ready, proceed to The Arched Repository.





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THE ARCHED REPOSITORY

The following locations are keyed to the provided map of The Arched Repository.

General Features

Unless otherwise noted, locations in The Arched Repository have the following features.

Ceilings and Floors. This two-story room has 30-foot-high stone ceilings. The first floor is made of square stone bricks and the second floor is made of wood.

Dimensions. The Arched Repository is 150 feet long and 85 feet wide.

Lighting. During the day, the library is brightly lit by natural daylight that cascades through the windows. At night, the library is dimly lit by moonlight.

Climate. The library is kept at precisely 68 degrees fahrenheit (20 degrees celsius) with a humidity of 25 percent year-round by magical enchantments.

Enchanted Books. The books of The Arched Repository are enchanted with a homing mechanism to be returned to their shelves. When the command “return to shelf” is issued to a book, a blue light envelopes the book and it floats back to its place on the shelves.

1 - Library Entrance

Two grand doors standing 20 feet tall offer entrance to the library. The doors have been left ajar, letting light from the hall drift into the dim room.

2 - Abjuration and Conjunction Shelves

2a. Abjuration. The following books can be found on these shelves:

d4	Book Title
1	I'm Rubber, You're Glue: A Guide to Basic Abjuration Spells
2	How to Deflect Blame As Well As You Can Deflect Magic
3	Can't Touch This — a book that deals 1d4 lightning damage when touched
4	Dissertation on the Practical Applications of Running Away

2b. Conjunction. The following books can be found on these shelves:

d4	Book Title
1	Tome of Extraplanar Creatures
2	How I Tricked a Devil
3	Spectacular Celestia
4	Escaping the Shadow Plane

3 - Circulation Desk

This semi-circular desk faces toward the entrance. The desk is cluttered with loose parchment, a quill, a metal bell, and a notebook.

Treasure: Desk. There are two locked desk drawers, one on the east side of the desk and the other on the west. Each drawer has AC 15, 5 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A drawer can be forced open by succeeding on a DC 17 Strength check. A creature that is proficient with thieves' tools can pick a locked door with a successful DC 14 Dexterity check.

If the characters give up after failing on their checks, Spindle will start smashing the drawer with a heavy book until the lock breaks.

Inside the east drawer is a thick logbook containing the names of students and teachers with overdue books and fines. Several of the student names are crossed out even though their debts are not marked paid.

Inside of the west drawer is a *wand of detect magic*.

4 - Divination and Enchantment Shelves

4a. Divination. The following books can be found on these shelves:

d4	Book Title
1	Perceiving the Future
2	How To Cope With Seeing Your Future
3	Should You Tell Your Friend How They Will Die?
4	Theven's Dream Journal — Theven was an elven man that recorded his dreams for nearly 2,000 years

4b. Enchantment. The following books can be found on these shelves:

d4	Book Title
1	Enchantments: An Introduction to Mind Control
2	Treatise on the Ethics Violations of Enchantment
3	A Rebuttal: Treatise on the Ethics Violations of Enchantment and Why We Don't Care
4	Beginner's Guide to Hypnosis



5 - Central Dias

The central dias is made of completely smooth grey stone.

Spindle. If present, Spindle is distraught at the absence of the stairwell that was here earlier. If the characters are unsure how to proceed, Spindle can offer a few hints:

- Spindle may notice a thrum of magic coming from the invisible inscription around the dias. They can tell the characters that something is hidden there and that they remember seeing words on the ground.
- Spindle remembers that the library keeps a *wand of detect magic* in the circulation desk and goes to look for it. However, the desk is locked.
- Spindle may start fidgeting with either the armillary or the orrery

Secret: Detect Magic. If the characters cast detect magic* or use similar magic near the dias, the inscription “align the stars in the full moon’s light” illuminates on the ground in the orange glow of transmutation magic. This inscription is only detectable at night.

Secret: Stairwell. There is a magically concealed stairwell leading to a secret ritual chamber hidden in plain sight. To access it, creatures must align the armillary with the stars in the night sky and the orrery must be aligned to the current phase of the moon over the school. When one of the devices is correctly aligned, the glowing inscription pulses once and hums. Once both of the devices are aligned, the entrance to a spiral staircase descending into the stone dias appears.

When the characters enter, proceed to the map of the Secret Ritual Chamber.

5a. Armillary. This metal sphere models the positions of many objects in the sky. Adjusting any one ring results in rotations that cascade through the entire model, keeping all of the objects synchronized. A character that succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check can correctly configure the armillary to represent the current night’s sky in under 5 minutes. On a failure, it takes over an hour of grueling trial and error to align.

5b. Orrery. This metal orrery models the phases of the moon around the planet. The rings are free-floating and can be spun around the planet’s model. A character that succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check can correctly align the orrery to reflect the current state of the moon and planet in under 5 minutes. On a failure, it takes 30 minutes of trial and error.

6 - Illusion Books

The following books can be found on these shelves:

d4	Book Title
1	Illusions 101: Now You See Me, Now You See a Leopard
2	Befuddling Your Enemies
3	Ethics of Making Others Question Reality
4	Parlor Tricks and More



7 - Evocation and Necromancy Shelves

7a. Evocation. The following books can be found on these shelves:

d4	Book Title
1	Evocation 101: How to — the rest of the title is burned off
2	Mastery of Setting Things On Fire
3	50 Problems That Fireball Can Solve
4	Channeling the Elemental Planes

7b. Necromancy. The following books can be found on these shelves:

d4	Book Title
1	Necromancy for Beginners: Novel Uses for Dead Bodies
2	Tsue Jandrut's Memoir — memoir written by a priest that was risen again as a sentient undead
3	Have You Or a Loved One Experienced Undeath?
4	An Examination of Liches

8 - Transmutation and Botany Shelves

8a. Transmutation. The following books can be found on these shelves:

d4	Book Title
1	1,000 Uses for Prestidigitation
2	Spells for Fun and Profit
3	Fool's Gold: How to Print Money
4	Transmutation Magic for Humanitarian Aid

8b. Botany. The following books can be found on these shelves:

d4	Book Title
1	Gardening for Everyone
2	100 Plants That Will Eat You
3	How to Raise Screaming Vegetable Children
4	Please, Stop Awakening Plants

9 - Stage

This large semi-circular stone platform is elevated 1 foot off the ground. The stage is used for author talks and guest lectures.





SECRET RITUAL CHAMBER

The following locations are keyed to the provided map of Secret Ritual Chamber.

General Features

Unless otherwise noted, locations in the Secret Ritual Chamber have the following features.

Lighting. This room is dimly lit by a glowing arcane glyph and purple crystals.

Wards. This chamber is protected by the *forbiddance* spell.

1 - Ritual Chamber

Anemone, Rustle, and Kapral are lying unconscious in a circle on the ground with their hands clasped together. Rustle and Kapral are mumbling with their mouths closed, as if unable to speak; Anemone seems to be mouthing nonsensical words.

Spindle. Spindle races down the stairs, falls down the last few steps, and rushes to wake up Kapral — falling unconscious as soon as they touch her.

Hazard: Ritual. A character that touches the glowing glyph or any of the unconscious creatures falls unconscious immediately and is shunted into a dreamscape — place them on area 1 of the map of the Realm of Dreams.

A *detect magic* spell or similar magic reveals an aura of necromancy. A creature that examines the glowing glyph and spends 10 minutes examining the glyph or succeeds on a DC 19 Intelligence (Arcana) check discerns that the ritual is a modified form of *astral projection* that is keyed to a plane of dreams rather than the ethereal plane.

A creature that examines Anemone more carefully and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check realizes that she's speaking an older form of elvish. A creature that knows elvish or sylvan has advantage on this check.

Crystal Shards. These medium-to-large crystal shards glow a faint purple color. The air in the center of them vibrates with magical energy, giving any creature standing in the space a headache after 5 minutes.





REALM OF DREAMS

The following locations are keyed to the provided map of Realm of Dreams.

General Features

Unless otherwise noted, locations in the Realm of Dreams has the following features.

Lighting. The realm is dark, but the objects and creatures within it glow at their edges, allowing everything to be perceived sharply. Treat the realm of dreams as if it is brightly lit.

Death in the Dreamscape. Death in the realm of dreams is not permanent. A creature that dies here or is shoved into the void beyond the platform wakes up in the ritual chamber (see “Secret Ritual Chamber”). They cannot return to the plane of dreams for 24 hours. If they die here, they no longer experience any dreams when they go to sleep.

1 - Floating Platform

Anemone, Kapral, Rustle, and likely Spindle are trapped in the periphery of the platform, restrained by the plane itself, which is being warped by a fey ghost floating overhead.

Encounter: Citron Honeybrair the Fey Ghost. Floating 15 feet in the air is the ghost of a fey elf. Citron longs to return to the material plane and is willing to go to great lengths to get what she wants.

If the characters lack brevity, Citron is quick to presume hostile intentions, but she is willing to speak at first. As a ghost, she requires a host to return to the material plane.

One possible way to satisfy her so that she’ll let Anemone and the others go is to allow her to share one of the character’s bodies. If a character agrees to this, Citron and the character’s souls become intertwined — they cannot be separated by any means except for *wish* and the two take 12-hour turns in the body, which no longer requires sleep.

If Citron cannot be satisfied, she will begin attacking the characters to get them out of the dreamscape. She knows that throwing them from the platform is just as effective as killing them.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the party defeats Citron, everybody is ejected from the realm of dreams and wakes up alive and unchanged.

If the party fails to fight Citron and finds themselves ejected from the realm of dreams, Citron is able to successfully bind herself to Anemone. Now bound in one body, which can only be undone by *wish*, she and Anemone wake up, as do the rest of the students. Citron is smart enough to remain dormant for now and Anemone seems normal. Anemone, Kapral, nor Rustle can remember any of the events that transpired inside the realm of dreams.

Eventually, once she believes the danger of being exposed has passed, Citron will begin using Anemone’s body at night to learn more about the school and her surroundings.



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