

**Session/Game:** Rampage/Shieldlands #24

**Date:** February 18th, 2024

**The Shieldlands Episode 24: The Tower of Aetherium**

**Campaign Date:** April 1st CY 577

**Characters:**

**Bardhun Staghide**, High Elf, Magic User (Travis)

**Arturo Dethstyn**, Human Fighter (NPC)

**Sir Raymond Giles**, Human Fighter (NPC)

**Jakolos**, Pixie Jack (David C)

**Stumgor** Dwarf Fighter (NPC)

**Edward the Holy**, Human Cleric (NPC)

**Medic Von Weevil**, Human Jack (NPC)

**Petrichor Silverleaf**, Half-Elf Cleric-Spiritual (Quinton)

**Stanfred the Poacher**, Human Jack (NPC)

**Green Gordo**, Human Jack (NPC)

**Rowan**, Sprite Magic User (NPC)

**Harry Wiseman**, Human Jack (NPC)

**Roofman Joe**, Human Jack (NPC)

**Soaking Gnomie**, Gnome Magic User (NPC)

**South Side Knobulous**, Gnome Jack (NPC)

**Fustimento**, Human Fighter/Jack/MU/CM (NPC)

**William Snow**, Trollson Fighter / Mage (Craig)

**Freddie Spunkmeyer**, Human Jack (NPC)

**Friar Biggins**, Human Cleric (NPC)

**Judge:** Andrew

**Prolog:**

In the heart of Petestone Barony, shrouded in mystery and arcane enchantments, stands the fabled Wizard's Tower of Aetherium. This towering structure, constructed centuries ago by the enigmatic wizard known only as Thalador the Arcanist, is said to possess the ability to materialize and vanish at will, as well as to magically appear in a cloud of fog with its magical mobility.

Thalador was a master of the arcane arts from the late second century of the common era, renowned for his insatiable thirst for knowledge and his unparalleled prowess in the realms of magic. He was a figure of both awe and fear among the denizens of Petestone Barony, for his tower stood as a testament to his unmatched power and intellect. However his madness and his solitary paranoia eventually consumed him.

Legend tells of how Thalador constructed his tower through a combination of ancient rituals, arcane craftsmanship, and boundless willpower. He channeled the raw energies of the cosmos, shaping them into the form of his towering abode through sheer force of magic.

However, as the centuries passed, Thalador's obsession with power and knowledge consumed him. He delved ever deeper into forbidden magics and dark rituals, seeking to unlock the ultimate secrets of the universe. In his hubris, he overreached, unleashing forces beyond his control.

And so, the Tower of Aetherium remains a tantalizing enigma, appearing and disappearing from view at the whims of fate, its secrets hidden away within its labyrinthine levels, waiting for those brave enough to uncover them.

### **Log:**

*April 1st, CY 577*

On the first day of April, the day of fools, the party is visited by Sivart the drunkard. Once again, he trades a scroll of Ice Bolt for alcoholic beverages that are "not beer." Petrichor trades for two portions of Owlbear Punch. The heroes follow Sivart out toward a tall tower sitting just yards from Tramphollow poking high out of a thick cloud of fog. Four of the Heroes of One-Thousand Bones enter along with their hirelings, to find an entrance hall. It is a mess, filled with empty drinking vessels of all kinds and strewn with the mess of Sivart who apparently has lived here for months. On the walls, there are portraits of a mighty spellcaster identified as Thalador the Arcanist. Barduhn knows that this wizard hasn't been seen or heard from since the founding of Petestone Barony around 170 CY.

The heroes find a stairway going up, and a secret door hiding a descending passage. They head downstairs. There they find an empty room with a floor describing a map of Oearth and its ley lines. Near Petestone on the map, a model of a wizard's tower stands. William Snow attempts to slide the tower along the ley lines, but is unable to do so as he is not a scion of the tower. Further, the magic is interpreted to be that the tower will actually engage the life force of the scion to move the tower along these lines, risking their essence in the process. The party descends another set of stairs.

Here they find a jail in which three dwarf corpses lie. From their early state of decay, it seems like they haven't been dead for more than a few days. The heroes descend a third set of stairs and find a magically darkened room. Inside, two iron golems defend their master, now left as only a corpse.

After defeating the golems, the party finds a sickening sight. The corpse of Thalador himself, weakened from the fasting and effort of summoning and trying to imprison a deity lies. Despite the fact that Thalador himself disappeared centuries ago, his body still looks days old since his demise. His chest is torn through in a spiral pattern. It is here that a powerful avatar of the deity

Tharizdun was to be imprisoned. A magical device, the Urn of Curses still holds the sinister ability to trap and contain a deity. As the heroes leave this level, they realize that Deathstyn and Jackolos are charmed by a Geas to continue through Petestone Keep to confront the avatar of Tharizdun who plots there now.

The heroes return to the entrance level and then begin to climb the stairs up the tower. They find several levels with magical wonders. On the next level up they find an arcane kitchen with Invisible Chuggins servants. Next, they find the Mistresses' quarters. These fancy chambers are meant for a feminine occupant. It shows signs of being left and unused. On the next level, they find a library that houses an extensive collection of regular tomes. The arcane librarian here is a helpful lich named Barboon. On the next floor above, they find the scroll library. Petrichor is given the key to access the scrolls and the rooms above after telling Barboon that he is in fact the "scion" of Thalador and his name is "Thaddeus Stephens."

Above the scroll library is an alchemy library. This room contains various ingredients and equipment for potion-making and magical experiments. At least enough materials for up to 5,000gp worth of potion making supplies. Next, a magical observatory features telescopes and magical instruments for studying celestial phenomena. Several of these devices are magical in nature and pricey, perhaps bringing a small fortune in Admundfort. Other instruments like an astrolabe are used to explore the mysteries of the astral plane and other dimensions.

A level that is used as a magical botanical garden is above the observatory. Here, the tower's invisible servants have planted rare magical plants and herbs for potion ingredients. One could cultivate and raise 1K worth of ingredients necessary for potion making per month here. Above that is an Enchantment Chamber. This room is dedicated to imbuing objects with magical properties. This place shows signs of being trashed. The forge is cracked and the items are ruined.

The armory features an iron golem named Artemis who mans this place. It is outfitted with racks for twelve sets of magical arms, but only seven remain: +1 heavy crossbow, +1 arming sword, +1 buckler, quench plate armor. Above is a nest of eight arrow slits, each with an immobile magazine of crossbow bolts.

Above the armory is the Wand Gallery. This room was Thalador's personal armory. Here they locate some powerful magical wands, as well as a powerful staff and protective cloak. Finally, the heroes reach the living quarters of Thalador the Arcanist. This room included a study, bedroom, and other amenities. All are trashed and covered in spiral symbols and mad scribblings of Thalador as he descended into madness; The treasure would have also been located here, long ago emptied in pursuit of power.

The final level is the Zenith of the Archmage. At the tower's top floor lay Thalador's private sanctum where he conducted his most potent rituals and communed with the very fabric of reality. Here, a weapon that would be powered by the captured Tharizdun could be directed to deliver destruction on Thalador's real or perceived enemies.

The heroes return to Sivart and learn that he is able to control the most basic functions of the tower using an amulet that hangs around his neck. The heroes walk him out of the tower, taking the amulet for themselves. Although Petrichor is not actually a scion of Thalador the Arcanist, they quickly realize that because the amulet reacts to John of Gerk in a similar way it does to Sivart that the Captain of Wudchester is also a long-lost relative of the famed mage.

### **Epilog:**

“What is the doom clock?” Petrichor asks the undead master of the Arcanist’s library. Barboon muses that it is simply a metaphor for the oncoming march of time which brings all good things to an end. However, Baboon goes on to posit that it could be an actual apocalyptic device which will signal the release of a force beyond the ken of mortals from the masters of the Horned Society as they sweep away the current order in blood and fire once it strikes the number thirteen. Or maybe twenty-one. Or seven?

**DOOM CLOCK: 9**