

# *Magical Wonders of Netheril*

## *Netheril*

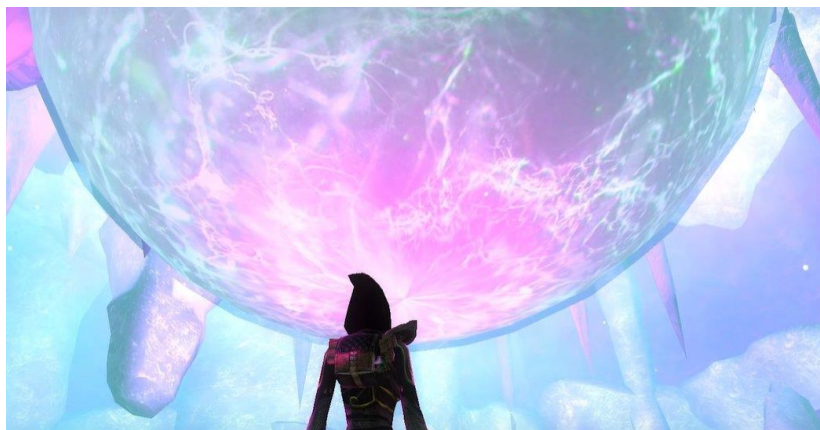
The influence of the empire of Netheril has been felt for thousands of years. Its people live in a strict hierarchy: the nobles of High Netheril, whose people—mages and scholars of the highest calibre—live in flying enclaves miles above the land (the great city of Ythryn being one such example), and the commoners who live on and work the land below. The Empire spreads across large swathes of Faerun.

The crowning glory of the Netherese Empire are the great flying cities, places of ancient magic where powerful archmages delve deep into the secrets of the arcane arts. Places where the impossible becomes possible and where magic can be found with every step. The Netherese don't just rely on magic: their cities are also marvels of engineering. In the interviews contained within this book, the archmages discuss their studies of ancient elven magic and how this knowledge had been used to create the mythallar. They talk of the challenges they faced in constructing these devices, and the sacrifices that were made in the pursuit of their creation.

## *The Mythallar*

The mythallar are devices of incredible power, capable of channelling great amounts of raw magic. A mythallar is a complex and intricate device, requiring the most skilled and knowledgeable of mages to create. The archmages of Netheril have spent decades perfecting the creation of these devices and the exact process is kept secret. The interviews reveal the devastating power of the mythallar, and the otherworldly feats that were accomplished through its use. From levitating entire cities, to controlling the very elements themselves, the mythallar is a device of limitless potential.

For anyone interested in the history and power of magic, the interviews contained within this book provide a fascinating insight into the inner workings of Netherese cities and the incredible magical wonders that make the Netherese empire the leading innovator in the fields of the arcane.



## *Wizards in the Hollow*

As the three wizards stood at the edge of the Hollow, the wind howled around them, sending their dark robes flapping wildly in the gusts. The Hollow was a place of great power, a nexus of magical energy, the very centre of the Weave.

Galen, the eldest of the three, looked out over the vast expanse before them. "This is where it all began," he said softly. "The source of the arcane."

Beside him, Kaela nodded, her pale face set in a look of determination. "And this is where we will cement our place in history," she said, her voice barely audible above the roar of the wind.

The third wizard, a young man named Taran, stepped forward eagerly. "I am ready," he declared. "Ready to face Mystra itself."

Galen placed a hand on Taran's shoulder. "You have much to learn, young one," he said gently. "We will not face Mystra, we will become it."

Together, the three stepped into the Hollow, their minds focused on the magic that surrounded them.

## *Ajamar's Guide to the Phantastic*

I sat cross-legged on the floor of my study, surrounded by stacks of dusty tomes and parchment scrolls. My eyes were fixed on a single page, my finger tracing the lines of text as I muttered under my breath.

"Ah, yes," I murmured, a smile playing at the corners of my mouth. "That's it. That's the key."

I reached for a quill and a fresh sheet of parchment, my hand moving swiftly as I began to jot down my latest revelation. This is a breakthrough, something that will change the way illusion magic was practiced for generations to come.

For years, I, Ajamar the Illusionist, had studied the art of illusion, poring over ancient tomes and experimenting with spells until I had become one of the most skilled practitioners in all of Netheril, earned my title and a seat on the conclave. And now, with my Guide to the Phantastic, I am sharing my knowledge with a new generation of young wizards.

This book is filled with new ways to trick the eye and dazzle the mind, intertwined with anecdotes of real-life events that either inspired creation of new spells or utilized existent ones in cunning and inventive ways. Even the youngest of wizards should find some new knowledge and entertainment within.

## *The Unfettered Mind*

Signed under the name 'Veneranda', the pages of this book are filled with rambling, nonsensical passages, interspersed with strange diagrams and sketches. One of the more comprehensible passages speaks of a way to exist solely as a disembodied brain.

"I fully believe that our bodies are preventing us from godhood. If we could preserve our brains, the nexuses of our thought, we would transcend the limitations of the physical world. We would become pure, immortal thought."

"Firstly, we need a medium that would allow for thought to travel and would keep brain matter from succumbing to decay. I propose imbuing the water from Elysium with strong abjuration magic. Potential additives would have to be experimentally tested, but the lack of volunteers prevents me from executing such tests at the moment. Theoretically, though, Elysium's life energy should prevent decay while abjuration spells reinforce the concoction's resistance to the elements."

"Next, one would have to find a place where their brain could rest undisturbed. With no bodily limitations, one would not be confined to one place, however, keeping the brain intact would be paramount."

Later chapters detail a successful transformation:

"Through an eldritch ritual combining alchemy, necromancy, and surgical precision, the brain of a mortal being is encased in a glass jar...the brain is rendered immortal and imbued with psionic powers so that it can spend eternity plotting and executing its desires.

And a warning:

"The longer a brain spends divorced from its body, the more likely some form of insanity will take over it...A brain in a jar is particularly susceptible to dementia, schizophrenia, and paranoia."

## *Lost Scrolls of Sabreyl*

When we think of cloud giants today, we acknowledge their magical prowess. But latest findings indicate that their magic might not be as innate as we thought. We found eight scrolls dating back to Ostoria, written apparently by a sun elf by the name of Sabreyl. They claim they spent decades teaching cloud giants how to harness and master the arcane.

The first scroll details the Cloud Palace under Nicias' rule. The second scroll explains the symbiotic relationship between the cloud giants and the sun elf tribes with the focus on the giant's fascination with elven magical abilities. The third scroll is the longest and includes several iterations of the curriculum Sabreyl prepared for the giants. The fourth scroll lists several generations of Sabreyl's students and evaluates their progress in mastering magic.

The fifth focuses on a specific group of disciples who were chosen by Sabreyl to continue their work—we speculate these might be the first of the smiling ones, perhaps linking the masks to elven visage. The sixth and seventh scroll are more akin to a journal with several personal recordings of events, including an explicit sexual encounter with a giantess. The eighth and last scroll is an unfinished treatise on Cloud Palace's architecture that Sabreyl seemed to write in their free time over the years.

*From Shadow, Substance*  
*A Comprehensive Criticism of Illusion Realism*

In contrast to most other schools of magic, aim of Illusion isn't to change reality but instead to alter one's perception of it. Recently, however, a group of Illusionist's led by Iriolarthas the Arcane started a new movement within the Illusionist circle, one we might call Illusion Realism. This new school stands in stark contrast to the whimsical illusion magic championed by Ajamar, and I firmly believe it to be the start of a dangerous endeavour.

According to Iriolarthas, illusions are not merely tricks of the mind, but rather manifestations of the Weave itself. By carefully manipulating the threads of magic that make up an illusion, one could coax it into becoming a physical reality. As any semi-competent wizard would recognize, this is one of the main tenants of transmutation magic, with the object of transmutation being the Weave itself. Therefore I would argue that while theoretically possible, Iriolarthas's ideas do not fall under the realm of Illusion magic and are not nearly as revolutionary as the Illusion Realists would have you believe.

If anyone is still convinced by Illusion Realism, let me detail more practical problems with it. Firstly, one would need to delve heavily into both illusion and transmutation runework to stabilise the illusion and focus enough transmutation energy on it. Secondly, the wizard performing the ritual would have to be at least somewhat familiar with the real counterpart of the illusion. This would lead to heavily varying results and low chances of successful transmutation. With the added instability of the Weave, the transmutation would likely also not be permanent, fading with time and distance from the caster.

Iriolarthas's ego overrides his training and the centuries of knowledge we have amassed. He treads on dangerous ground, and his obsession with this so-called 'Dark Power' lead us down a similar path to that which felled Ventatost. Indeed I would suggest Iriolarthas the Arcane would better be named Iriolarthas *the Insane*: he should and must be stopped.

## *Here Lies the King*

The sun had long since set over the kingdom of Eldoria, casting the land into a cool darkness. In the grand castle at the heart of the city, a hush had fallen over the halls as the last of the servants retired for the night. All was quiet, save for the soft footsteps of a solitary figure as he made his way towards the throne room.

The figure was no ordinary man - he was an illusionist, with a talent for deception that bordered on the supernatural. For the past sixty-one years, he had ruled Eldoria with an iron hand, posing as the prince who had been believed dead for decades. He had taken the throne from the true king, an act of treason that would have seen him executed if anyone had discovered his true identity.

But the illusionist was far too clever to be caught. He had used his magic to create an elaborate façade, convincing the people of Eldoria that he was the long-lost prince come to reclaim his rightful place. And they had believed him, their loyalty to the royal family blinding them to the truth.

As he approached the throne room, the illusionist felt a pang of regret. He had grown old over the years, and his once-mighty powers were beginning to wane. He knew that he could not keep up the charade forever - sooner or later, someone would discover his secret, and his reign would come to a bloody end.

But he was not ready to give up his throne just yet. Not when he had worked so hard to obtain it, and not when he had so much left to accomplish. With a deep breath, he stepped into the throne room, his eyes scanning the dimly-lit space for any signs of danger.

For a moment, he stood there, alone in the darkness, lost in thought. Then, with a flick of his wrist, he conjured a ball of light, illuminating the room in a soft glow. And as he sat down on the throne, he knew that he would do whatever it took to hold onto his power, even if it meant faking his own death. For here, in Eldoria, he was king - and no one would take that away from him.

## *The Fall of Ventatost*

The old man's eyes were distant as he spoke, his voice low and heavy with emotion. "I was there, you know," he said, his words barely more than a whisper. "In Ventatost, when it all came crashing down."

The young scribe leaned forward, her quill poised over a fresh sheet of parchment. "Please, tell me what you remember," she urged, her tone gentle.

The old man closed his eyes, lost in memory. "It was a beautiful city," he said, his voice thick with nostalgia. "We had built it to soar above the clouds, and it was a sight to behold. The streets were paved with gold, and the buildings were tall and grand. And the magic...oh, the magic was like nothing I had ever seen."

He paused, his eyes opening to fix on the scribe's face. "But it was all a lie," he said, his voice bitter. "We were arrogant, selfish, and power-hungry. We thought they could do anything with magic, that we were invincible. But we were wrong."

The scribe's quill scratched furiously as the old man spoke, capturing every word. She knew that what he was saying was dangerous, that there were those who would kill to keep the truth from coming out. But she also knew that the world needed to know what had happened in Ventatost, even if it meant risking her own life.

"The end came quickly," the old man continued, his voice growing fainter. "One moment, we were soaring above the clouds, and the next, we were plummeting towards the ground. The magic that held the city aloft had failed, and there was nothing anyone could do to save it. It disintegrated as it fell, and all that was left was ash and ruin." He fell silent then, lost in thought. The scribe waited patiently, knowing that he would continue when he was ready.

"I survived," he said at last, his voice barely audible. "But I lost everything. My home, my family, my way of life. And for what? The hubris of the Netherese, the belief that we were above the laws of nature."