

# GAT 315

## 3D Game Design I

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- TBD



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### Spatial Archetypes

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- Introduction to Spatial Archetypes
- Example Games



# SPATIAL ARCHETYPES

*Introduction to the Archetypal Forms of Space*

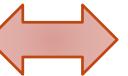
# Spatial Archetypes



The Plain



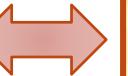
The Wall



The Crevice



The Pillar



The Pit



The Cliff



The Hill



The Depression



The Mountain



The Valley



The Bluff



The Hollow



The Ramp



The Outcrop



The Alcove



The Tunnel



The Maze



The Path



The Opening



The Chamber



The Door



The Window



The Bridge



# THE PLAIN

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Plain

## Definition

**A plain is any large, topologically “flat” space that functions as the basic starting point for most environments.**

- Exterior: Often a plain, a mesa top, desert, grassland, ocean, etc.
- Interior: Vast open room, massive underground cavern, etc.

## Purpose

- Default building block
- Clear line of sight
- Accentuate other spatial archetypes by surrounding them with a plain
- Metaphorically represents possibility, endlessness, loneliness, or even hopelessness



# Plain Example – Journey



Near the Beginning

# Plain Example – Skyrim



Central plains between Whiterun & Rorikstead



# Plain Example – Assassin's Creed IV



Caribbean Sea



# THE WALL

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Wall

## Definition

A wall is any broad barrier that restricts movement in one direction. A wall can be solid or perforated, short or tall, and can have an open or closed top.

- A perforated wall, such as a fence, allows you to foreshadow things through the wall.
- Exterior: Dense line of trees, a defensive line, or a palisade
- Interior: Border for a chamber, partition a space like a man-made wall or a cavern curtain of stalactites, etc.

## Purpose

- Constrain travel in a direction
- Restrict sight lines
- Metaphorically represents division, safety, or danger
- If open, top can also function as a bridge/path





# Wall Example - WoW



Arathi Highlands – Thoradin's Wall



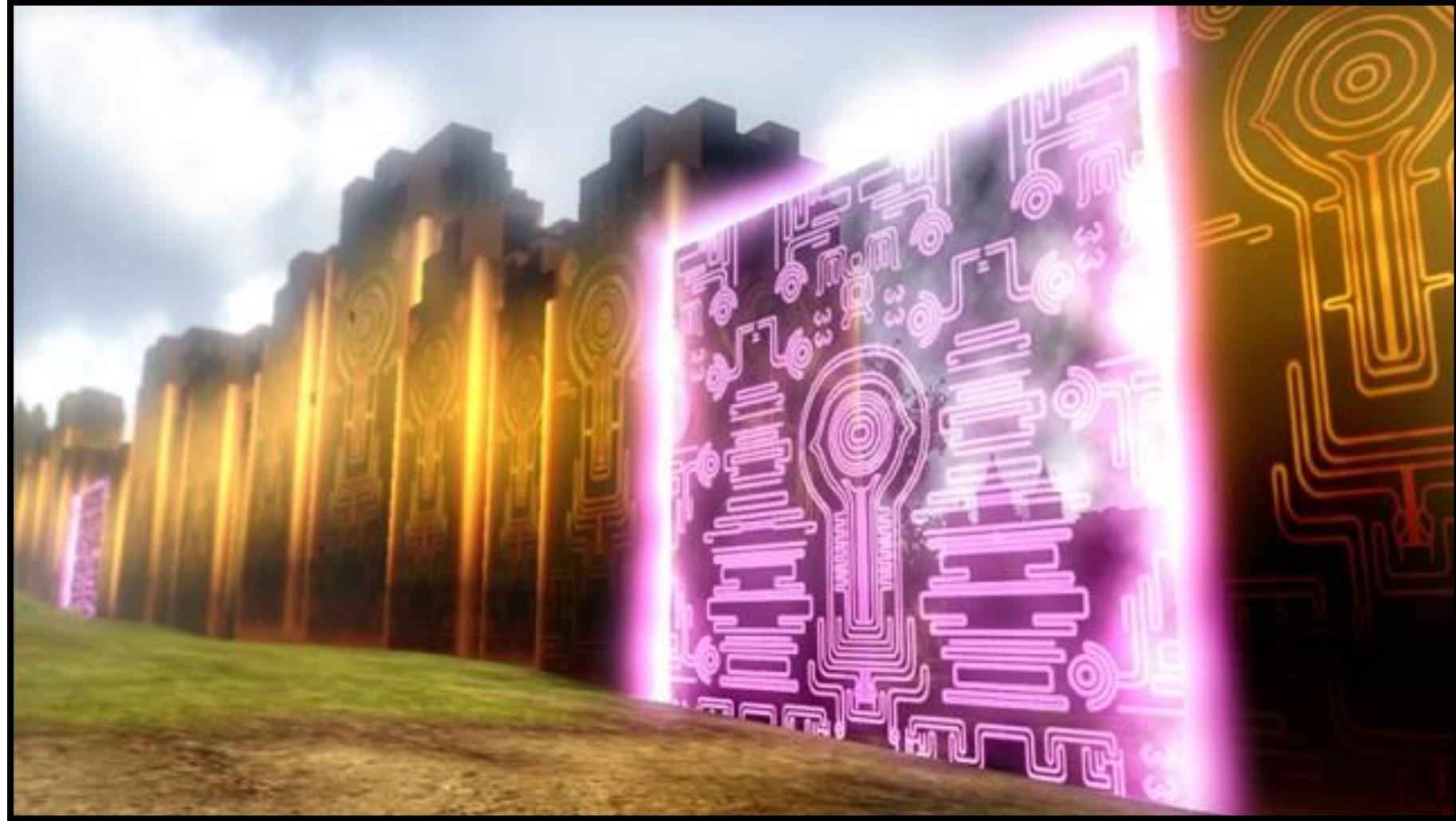
# Wall Example – Shadow of Mordor



The Black Gate of Mordor



# Wall Example – Hyrule Warriors





# THE CREVICE

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Crevice

## Definition

A crevice is a broad barrier that restricts movement in one direction but does not restrict sight. Can be bottomless or have a path along the bottom.

- Exterior: Rocky cleft or a ravine, deep trench, moat, river
- Interior: Bottomless chasm, or overlook a space that acts as a path

## Purpose

- Constrain travel in a direction without restricting sight lines
- Imply danger lurking in the unknown below
- Metaphorically represents division or denial, path into danger





# Crevice Example – MYST



Intro Sequence



# Crevice Example – Uru



Entrance to Gahreesen



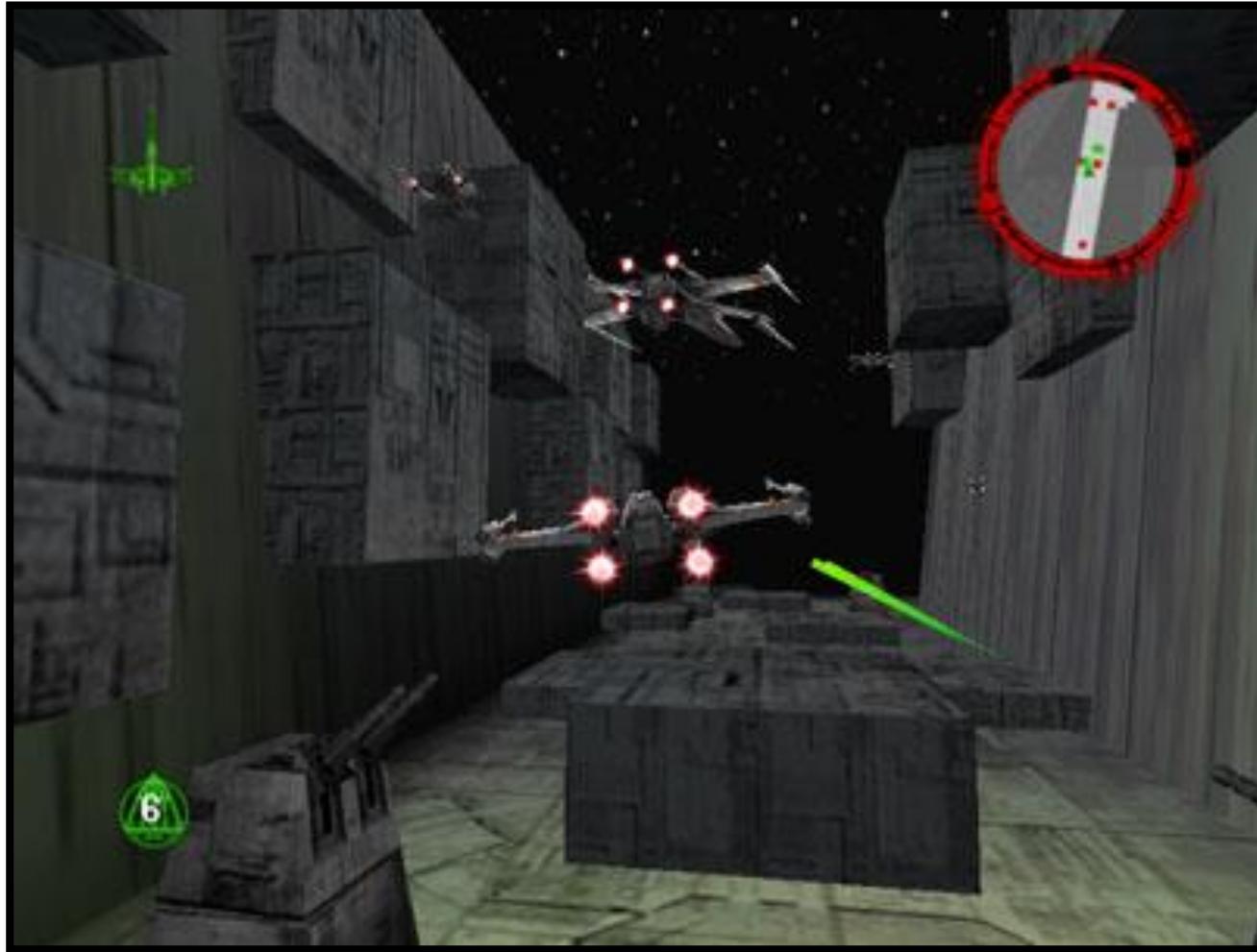
# Crevice Example – Skyrim



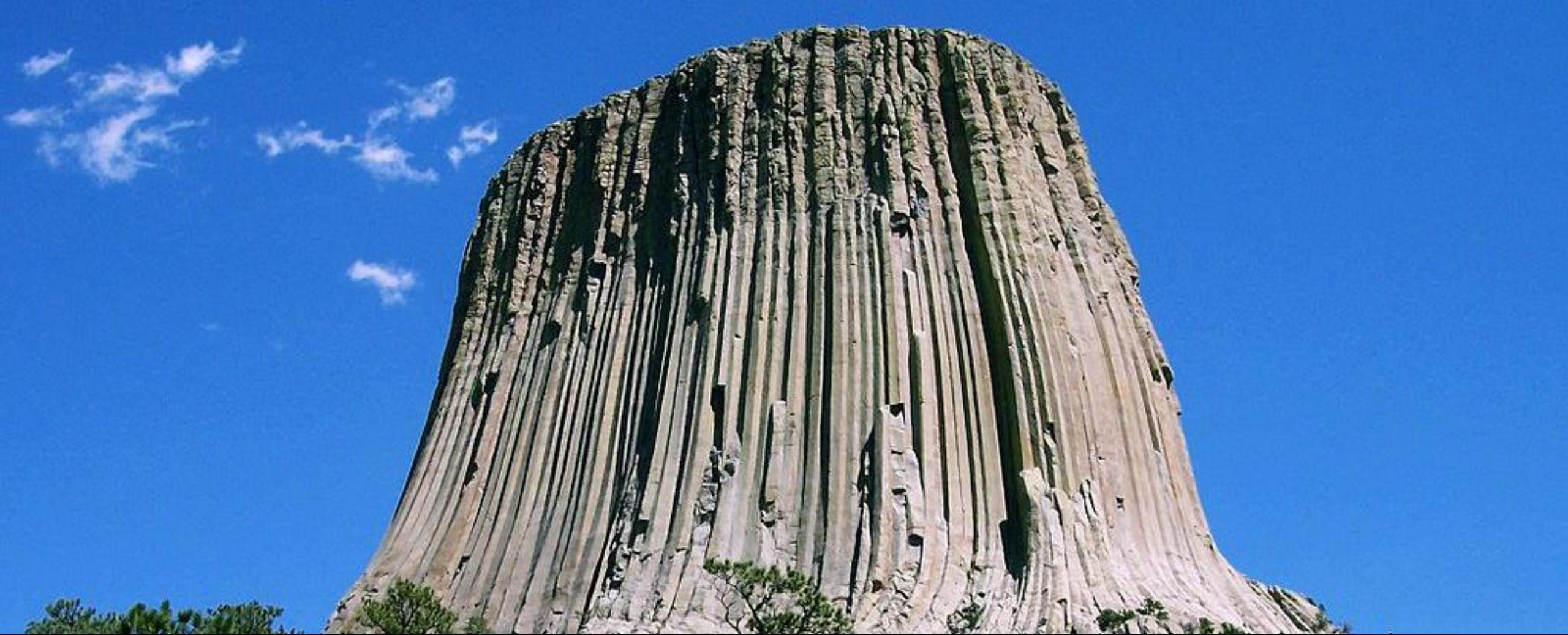
Forgotten Vale – Glacial Crevice



# Crevice Example – Rogue Squadron



Death Star Trench Run



# THE PILLAR

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Pillar

## Definition

A pillar is a large vertical column and can appear in a variety of sizes and often serves as a landmark or point of reference when large enough.

- Exterior: Large tree, tower, light house, giant statue, or a butte
- Interior: Column, high pedestal, etc.

## Purpose

- Provides a landmark or point of reference
- Provides a goal to be achieved (what's on top?)
- Metaphorically represents aspiration



# Pillar Example - LotRO



Orthanc Tower



# Pillar Example – Skyrim



Dragonsreach Mead Hall

# Pillar Example – Half Life 2

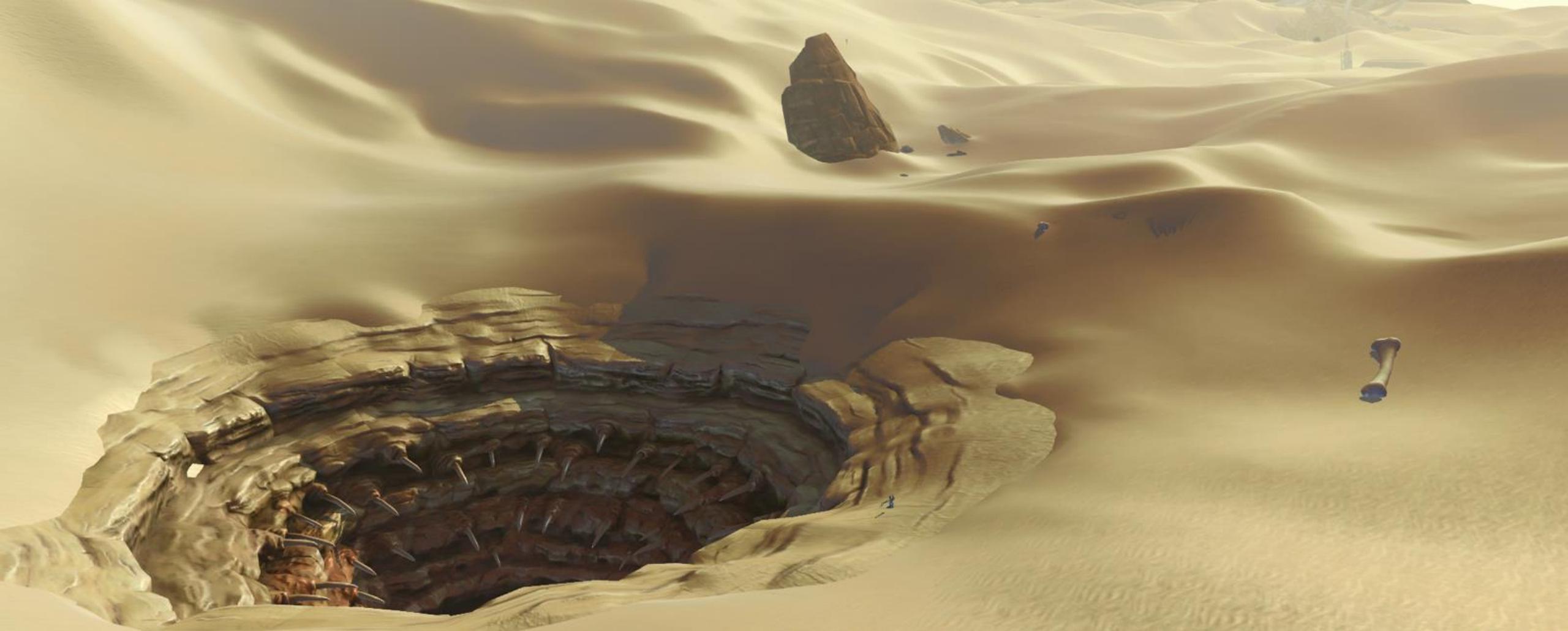


Citadel

# Pillar Example – Assassin's Creed IV



Windmill in Kingston



<http://starwars.wikia.com/wiki/Sarlacc>

## THE PIT

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Pit

## Definition

A pit is the inverse of a pillar and can appear in a variety of sizes. Pits often represent danger.

- Exterior: Sinkhole, crater, caldera, large creature burrow, whirlpool, black hole, wormhole
- Interior: Underground chasm, trap, elevator or mine shaft

## Purpose

- Provides a goal to be achieved (what's at the bottom?)
- Can function as a one way portal
- Psychologically requires a leap into the unknown
- Metaphorically represents danger, imprisonment, punishment, or portal to a bad place

# Pit Example – AC: Brotherhood



Sequence 09 Leap of Faith into Pit (near end of game)



# Pit Example – Destiny



Hellmouth



# THE HILL

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Hill

## Definition

**A hill is any significant rise above the surrounding area that can be approached from any direction.**

- Exterior: Hill, large dune, large building, a ship's crow's nest
- Interior: Platform, dais, or raised area

## Purpose

- Draws attention to anything on top and acts as a goal to be achieved
- Obscures the view beyond to build anticipation
- Provides a view point for another goal in the distance
- Metaphorically represents an upcoming challenge or an accomplishment



# Hill Example – LotRO



Weathertop



# Hill Example – AC: Brotherhood



Rome – Colosseum



# THE DEPRESSION

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Depression

## Definition

A depression is the inverse of the hill. Unlike the hill which places anything on top on display, the depression and things in it can be overlooked or missed entirely.

- Exterior: Gully, quarry, oasis, lake when filled with water
- Interior: Room lowered in the floor of a larger chamber, pool of water

## Purpose

- Semi-secret location
- Method of hiding something in a plain that would otherwise be quite visible
- Blocks sight from within, but doesn't from the outside
- Provides a difference in kind from the hill where the experience here is about descending and lowering
- Metaphorically represents an area of safety or a region of danger



# Depression Example – WoW



Arathi Highlands – Refuge Pointe



# THE MOUNTAIN

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Mountain

## Definition

A mountain is a lofty peak, especially one that stands alone. Serves as a major, long-term landmark.

- Archetypally, this should be a mountain distinctive from other mountains in a typical range in either scope, character, or detail
- Exterior: Mountain, world tree, flying city, etc.
- Interior: Due to its size, this rarely takes other forms or is indoors (while still feeling “indoors”)

## Purpose

- Provide a long-term goal
- Psychologically draws the player onward and upward or presents the world below for the player to enter
- Metaphorically represents the unachievable, the aspirational, or the inevitable



# Mountain Example – Skyrim



High Hrothgar Mountain



# Mountain Example – Journey



The Mountain that draws you through the game



# THE VALLEY

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Valley

## Definition

**The opposite of a mountain, a valley is a broad area surrounded by higher terrain.**

- A valley can either be completely enclosed, open at one end, or open at both ends to create a path.
- Exterior: Valley surrounded by peaks, river valley, desert valley of erosion (Valley of Kings, Egypt)
- Interior: Doesn't usually appear as an interior space due to its size (and still feel like it's "indoors")

## Purpose

- Place to recharge, resupply, or recruit companions
- Point the way to other areas (plains)
- Act as a path to guide the player
- Metaphorically represents safety, seclusion, and inward focus



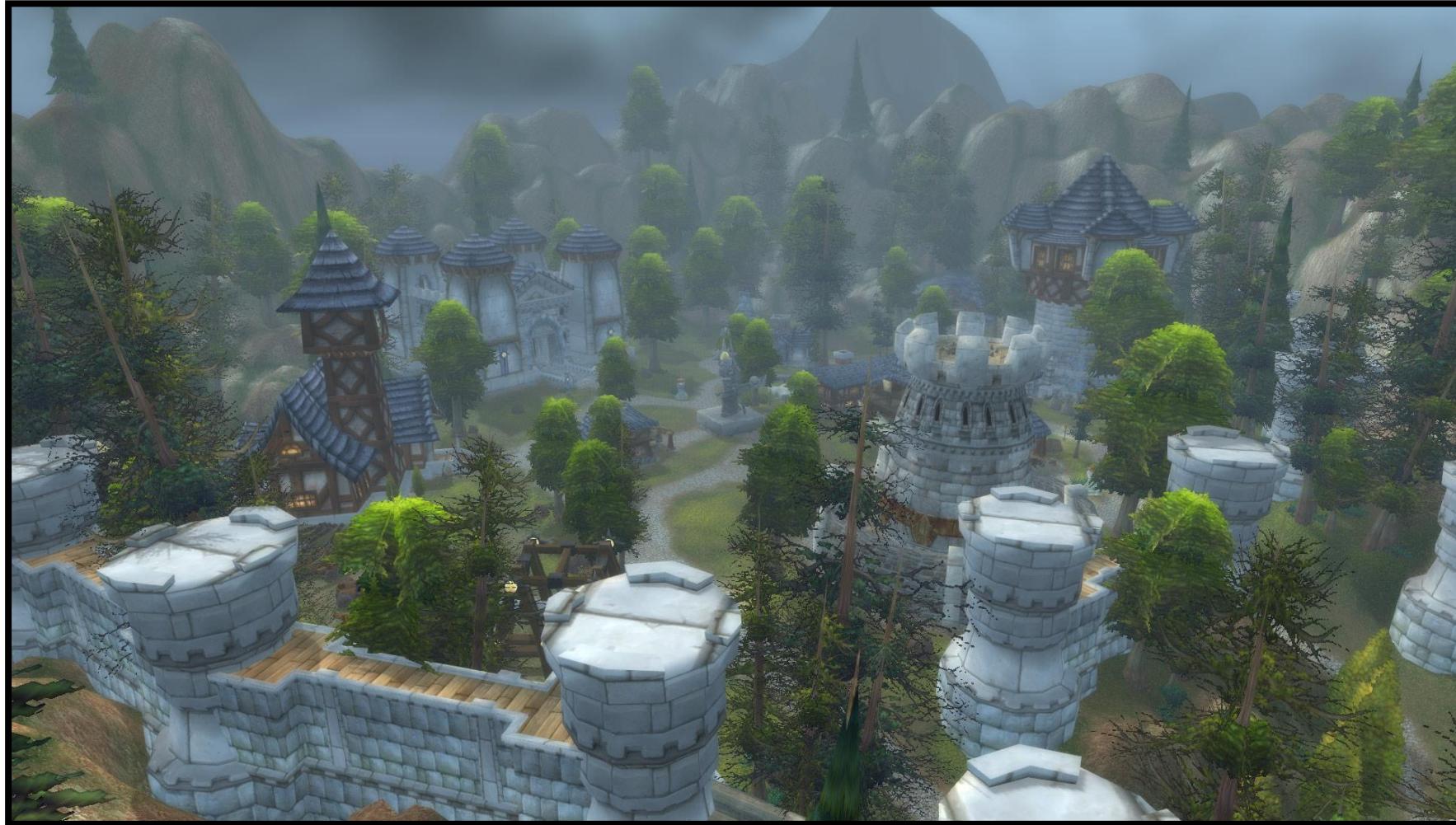
# Valley Example - LotRO



Rivendell



# Valley Example - WoW



Western Plaguelands - Hearthglen



# THE RAMP

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Ramp

## Definition

A ramp is any broad or tall method of ascending or descending. The size of this sets it apart from simple ramps or stairs that you might find in a typical environment.

- Exterior: Ramp entering a city, stairs up to a monument, ascending ledge up a cliff face, causeway
- Interior: Approach to a point of interest such as a throne, descent into a dungeon entrance, etc.

## Purpose

- Traverses differences in elevation
- Can feel sheltered (walls on either side) or exposed (an open causeway)
- Metaphorically represents anticipation, ascension, and progress when leading up; dread, encroaching danger, entering the unknown, or descent when leading down.

# Ramp Example - LotRO



Durin's Threshold - Moria

# Ramp Example - WoW



Aerie Peak



# THE CLIFF

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Cliff

## Definition

A cliff functions much like a wall from one direction or an overlook from the other direction.

- Exterior: Cliff, large building roof, water fall, world edge
- Interior: Chamber with an inaccessible lower level, edge of an abyss

## Purpose

- Divides a region in two
- Barrier at a region edge
- Can display a prominent goal like a hill or hide what's at the top
- Metaphorically represents a barrier or a major challenge



# Cliff Example – LotRO



Cliff overlooking the plains of Rohan



# THE BLUFF

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Bluff

## Definition

A bluff is really a big, broad ramp/wedge that goes nowhere. Approached from the sides, it looks wedge-like with a rising cliff and is very defensible.

- Exterior: Bluff, large building roof that is only accessible from one side
- Interior: Higher level overlooking a lower level in a large chamber with a ramp from the lower level to the higher level

## Purpose

- Can act like a “chamber” with one wall missing
- Approach from below can display a goal to be achieved
- Ideal location for a castle, tower, etc.
- Metaphorically represents something that will soon be available, or a preview of things to come shortly. Provides a moment of calm to establish a goal

# Bluff Example – WoW



Hillsbrad Foothills

# Bluff Example – LotRO



Bluff overlooking Bree



# THE HOLLOW

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Hollow

## Definition

A hollow is the spatial inverse of a bluff. Commonly has a cave or entrance into an underground area at the back of the hollow.

- Exterior: Box canyon, pirate's cove
- Interior: Area between two stairs leading to a higher level

## Purpose

- Defensible area
- Change of flora and fauna from the surrounding area
- Guide people toward a door or cave
- Metaphorically represents secrecy, safety, or danger

# Hollow Example – LotRO



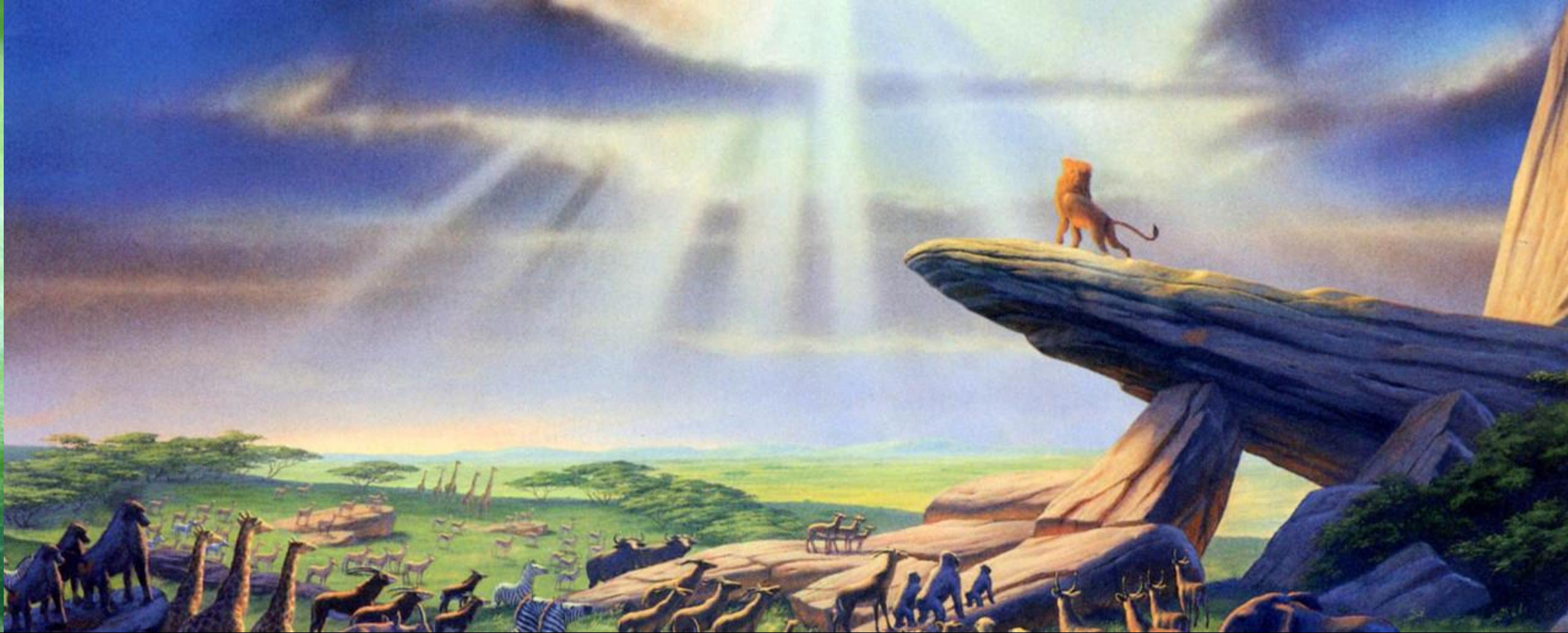
Brigand's hollow outside Bree



# Hollow Example – Assassin's Creed IV



Isla Providencia



# THE OUTCROP

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Outcrop

## Definition

An outcrop is any out-jutting overlook that is fairly small but is large enough to be perceived as its own space.

- Exterior this is often a cliff outcrop, balcony, rock rise on a hill side, etc.
- Interior this could be a balcony, overhead beam, or something like Cerebro from X-Men.

## Purpose

- Draws attention to something
- Provides a vista for a new goal
- Elevates you psychologically over those below
- Visual payoff for an accomplishment





# Outcrop Example – LotRO



Outcrop overlooking the Plains of Rohan



# Outcrop Example – Skyrim



High Hrothgar



# Outcrop Example – Assassin's Creed



Synchronization Towers



# THE ALCOVE

*Spatial Archetype*



# The Alcove

## Definition

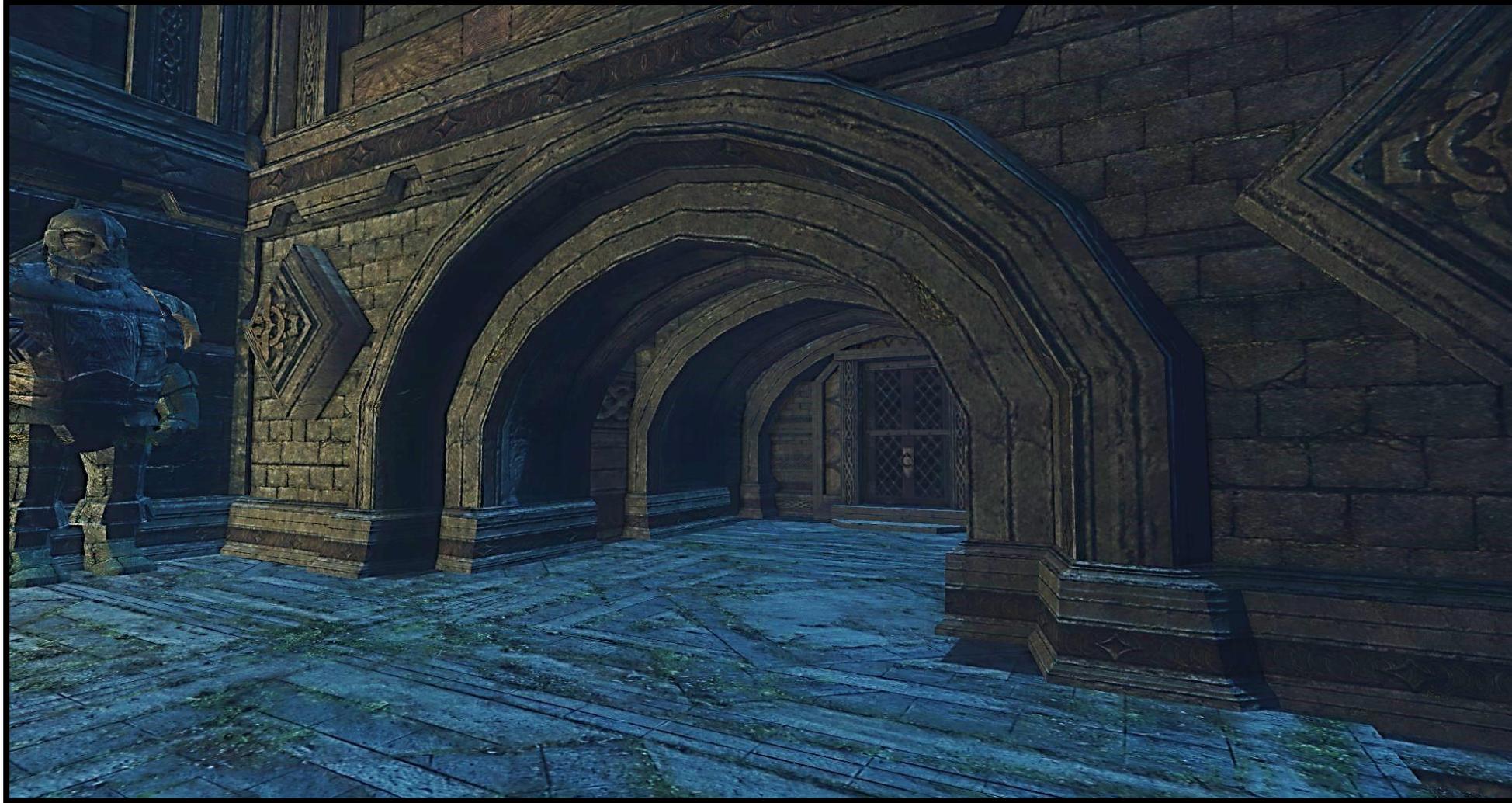
**An alcove is the inverse of an outcrop, an inward “dent” in a wall or cliff.**

- Exterior: Shallow cave, porch under a large balcony
- Interior: Apse, semi-room attached to a main room

## Purpose

- Area that provides a feeling of protection or safety
- Provides cover or a place to hide
- Can represent danger if shrouded in darkness
- Metaphorically represents a place of protection or unknown, or a semi-safe place where you can take a brief rest

# Alcove Example - LotRO



Alcove in Moria

# Alcove Example – Assassin's Creed IV

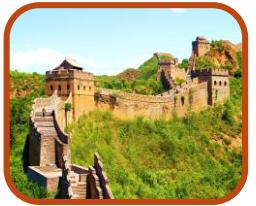


Sunken Ship Refuge Alcove

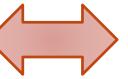
# Spatial Archetypes



The Plain



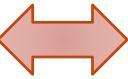
The Wall



The Crevice



The Pillar



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The Cliff



The Hill



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The Mountain



The Valley



The Bluff



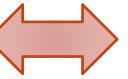
The Hollow



The Ramp



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The Opening



The Chamber



The Door



The Window



The Bridge



See You Next Time