

The Eternal Construction Site

For over twenty years the work on the town hall has been frozen in perpetuity. Each dawn whatever progress has been made vanishes away, and the toil of never tiring golem workers begins anew. So far, all attempts to investigate the mystery have ended in a series of eerie mishaps – will the adventurers fare better than their predecessors and be able to break the enchantment laying upon this place?

Prelude

Oh fleeting moment, linger on, for thou art so fair!

It was a late summer evening when Haldûn Sunstone, the architect charged with overseeing the construction of the town hall was taking his daily stroll along its premises. The sounds of wooden mallets, saws, trowels, shovels, buckets and ropes were filling his ears. The work – possibly his life's work – was going well. The main hall was approaching completion. Soon, perhaps even before the end of the year, the first clerks would be able to take up office there. Wistfully, Haldûn looked at the silhouette of the clock tower against the setting sun, and wished that he never had to return to his mountain home, an austere room below ground where no one was waiting for him. He shook off the thought: 'Ach. Constructia, have pity on this old fool.'

And, unbeknown to Haldûn, she did.

Story

The goddess of renovation and infrastructure, Constructia never rests. In fact, even her statues portray her with rings under her eyes. No building withstands its use indefinitely, and no project lasts long without repairs. Work is never really complete. To believe otherwise is a delusion, and Constructia knows not to delude herself. Instead, the goddess takes pride in all labor and in every laborer.

When Constructia happened to overhear Haldûn, she granted the architect his wish, placing a spell on the premises of the town hall that reverts time and repeats the same day again and again, unending. At dawn, anything that was built is unmade, and anything broken is made whole again. (This does not include adventurers unfortunate enough to die here.) The spell also purges the day from the memory of any living being that spends a night on the site.

For the townsfolk outside, the spell did not pass unnoticed, of course. The town administration, Haldûn's commissioners, were the first to attempt to enter the site and speak with the architect. Constructia intervened subtly, and the confused and irritated officials were forced to leave after narrowly avoiding a wooden beam falling off the roof and blocking their way inside. Many bands of hired helpers followed suit,

but were repelled by the goddess in a similar fashion. Since then, most townsfolk began avoiding the site, believing it to be haunted. Constructia meanwhile keeps vigil over the premises and her dwarven ward, sure to turn away anyone who would disturb him.

Locations

1: Street crossing. The construction site occupies a corner between two large city streets. Patches of grass grow between the cobblestones and withered warning posters can be spotted on the sidewalks nearby. Except for the golem guarding the front gate, the streets are empty of passersby.

2: Front gate. This passage is wide enough to let a wagon through. The iron gate is shut and locked. A clay golem holding the keys is standing guard, preventing anyone from entering. The golem will attempt to escort any passersby off the site, but will not use lethal force, and, if attacked, only aim to subdue the attackers.

Cement Mixer.

The machine directly behind the gate will spring to life as soon as it is approached and spew out quickly drying cement that will immobilize anyone caught in it. If left alone here, an adventurer will catch the interest of the ooze living under the fountain. The mixer can also be used to immobilize any golem without seriously damaging it.

3: The Wall. A brick wall, roughly ten feet in height. The bricks are meticulously put together, making climbing over it a difficult endeavor. It is possible to make use of the scaffolding, but not under the watch of the golem guard.

4: Shrine to Constructia. A modest shrine to the goddess is built into the wall. If an offering is made here,

Constructia will spare the adventurers and not injure them any more than necessary to make them reconsider further investigation. Reckless acts of vandalism on the other hand will make her obstacles progressively more severe.

5: Building Crane. Currently inoperative. Inside the treadwheel is a clockwork donkey that will refuse to move, kicking and braying. The donkey is a magic automaton and can be re-programmed by a tech-savvy adventurer.

6: Sewer Grate. Can be opened to descend into the sewers running underneath the streets. From here a small tunnel leads to the basement of the future town hall.

7: Inner Yard. The yard has not yet been paved over, and the ground is a mixture of dirt and patches of yellowed grass. In the middle of the yard is a disconnected fountain; throwing coins in it will improve Constructia's disposition towards the adventurers. Two golems are transporting bricks from the wagons to a small crane mounted on the first floor of the main hall. The golems are preoccupied with their work, but will try to stop anyone from accessing the building.

Tool Shed.

Various tools can be found here, some of which are actually inert animated objects that can be activated with a command word. Also stored here are metal work helmets; any character wearing such a helmet will sustain considerably less damage from falling debris.

9: Brick wagons. As soon as the adventurers approach the door to the tower, Constructia will break the axle of the nearest wagon. The bricks will fall towards the adventurers, and the wagon will become immovable, blocking the door.

10: Basement. The basement level of the town hall currently serves no function, but can be used to access the stairs to the ground floor and above. Metal and earthenware pipes lay strewn on the floor, yet to be connected to the water supply. A large ooze has found its way here through the sewers and now claims the room under the fountain as its home.

11: Main Hall. This future administration building is near completion. The ground floor consists of several unfurnished rooms, the upper floor though is still missing walls, and the roof is yet to be tiled. The front door is not locked.

Suspended platform. As soon as an adventurer approaches the door to the main hall, the rope suspending the platform in the air will snap, and the bricks will come crashing down.

Animated Tools. On the upper floor, enchanted wooden hammers work on the roof beams while likewise enchanted trowels assist a golem laying the wall bricks. Like other workers, the golem will not allow adventurers to continue further, and the animated tools will come to its defense.

12: Clock tower. The only finished building on the site, this tower is used by Haldûn for monitoring the work progress.

Crumbling Stairs. The steps begin to fall down as the adventurers climb towards the top of the tower. Quick reflexes might help avoiding the fall.

13: The Architect's Study. A two-storey turret attached to the clock tower. Haldûn's plans and notes are kept on the shelves here. Examining them reveals the control words for the animated instruments and the golems, along with instructions for their use. On the upper floor, Haldûn is currently working on the designs of the house interior.



Haldûn Sunstone, dwarf architect. Haldûn grew up in a distant cliffside citadel where he studied masonry and stonework under many renowned elders. While the least accomplished among his peers, he was ever the most diligent. When time came to work on his own without supervision, Haldûn chose to leave his home and search employment in growing human townships, where he has spent most of his years.

Since Constructia placed her spell on the site, each dawn Haldûn wakes up and forgets all that occurred the day before. The Architect is lost in his work and entirely oblivious of the outside world, unnoticeably growing old in contentment.

Conclusion

If the adventurers reach Haldûn and inform him of the situation, the shocked architect will pray to the goddess to set everything right, and Constructia will lift her spell. Within a year the work on the town hall will be completed.

If harm befalls Haldûn, Constructia's wrath will level the site, and, should the adventurers be able to escape, will follow them in every town or city they visit.