

WRAITH

Memories permeate the air down here. Memories of what was and memories of what could come to pass but never did. Thin wisps fluttering like gossamer and colder than winter's breath. They flow under the ruined archways and through the cracks in the stones that once stood proudly as bastion of knowledge and power. Now overrun by hungry beasts of these depths, their claws scraping the surfaces. Eventually the stones will turn into dust and that dust will whirl into yet another memory. As I glide over the ruined remains, I feel the memories cling to me, weaving into my very being. The memories are full of anguish and rage and so my ethereal hands take shape of claws and my eyes burn with the fury of the wronged and the forgotten.

I am the keeper of the memories long lost, a silent sentinel of these halls born of the traces of the mighty enchantments that once infused the vast labyrinths, their very purpose shrouded by the veil of time. I feel the life force of the new occupants of these caverns ebb and flow as they scuttle over the glorious remnants of the magnificence of the ancient times. Sickening and aimless, little more than parasites swarming over the corpse of a giant. Those that venture too deep into the ruins' heart must have their miserable lives snuffed out. The memories demand it and I obey, ever faithful, ever watchful.

The first time they see me manifest they freeze. Fear courses through them in those moments as they tremble, unable to move, mesmerized and terrified by my form. Some try to fight, piercing my ethereal shape with their useless rusty weaponry. They lack the means to truly harm me as they have no connection to the memories that form my being, only blind animal rage. Ending their existence is pacifying. I feel the relief of the voices of the past, as for a brief instant the death makes them feel avenged, the transgressions against them paid for in blood. The memories swirl around me then, grateful, graceful, tranquil. The elation is all too brief as the anguish returns and my grim vigil continues.

As I traverse these depths, spurred ever onward by the vengeful whispers of the voiceless, no creature is safe from the deathly cold of my touch. I feel yet another presence, its breathing a mockery to the dead. I feel his spirit is strong, his will forged in the fires of many battles. He has in his possession a relic of the ancients. A worthy opponent – while the relic is with him, his connection with the past is strong and the danger he poses is real. Wisps surround my bone-white claws as they emerge from the flowing folds of my black robe. Such transgression cannot be allowed. Soon his essence will be extinguished and for a brief moment the memories will be at peace once more.