

GEARS OF DISSOLUTION

The Sunken Citadel of Veridium is a sprawling, subterranean complex choked with the stench of rust and decay, its once-polished brass corridors now riddled with gaping holes and shifting pathways. Groaning gears, remnants of the Chronomaul's slumber, grind incessantly, while shimmering Resonance Fields warp the architecture and age everything within their influence, turning solid stone to crumbling dust.

HOOKS & RUMORS

- A frantic clockwork raven, partially disassembled and covered in crimson rust, was recovered near the Hall of Echoes. It carries a single, cryptic gear fragment and whispers of the Mechanists' Remnant's experiments.
- The dwarven clan of Stoneheart claims the Resonance Fields are accelerating the collapse of their ancestral forge, and they suspect a deliberate sabotage orchestrated by the Remnant seeking unstable materials.
- A young scholar, Elias Vance, seeks adventurers to retrieve a deactivated automaton – a 'Guardian' – trapped in a particularly potent Resonance Field, believing its knowledge could halt the Chronomaul.
- Scavengers report finding perfectly preserved, yet rapidly decaying, maps depicting a hidden chamber beneath the Grand Gearworks, potentially containing the Chronomaul's activation key.
- Whispers circulate amongst the remaining Mechanists' Remnant about a ritual requiring specific metal alloys to fully stabilize a Resonance Field, promising immense power – if the dungeon doesn't collapse first.

RANDOM EVENTS (D6)

1	Temporal Echoes	Echoing Concourse: A brief flash of the dungeon's past replays itself, showing a glimpse of the Chronomaul's construction. The echo fades, revealing a hidden alcove containing a minor healing potion.
2	Gearshift	Gearmouth's Maw: The colossal gear suddenly shifts position, creating a landslide of rusted debris that blocks a section of the staircase. Opportunity: Utilize the debris to create a makeshift bridge...
3	Resonance Surge	Resonance Chamber: The crystal core pulses violently, unleashing a wave of temporal distortion that momentarily freezes all movement within the room. Tactical advantage: Utilize the frozen moment...
4	Lost Surveyor	Echoing Concourse: A lone Mechanist's Remnant surveyor, Elias, stumbles into the corridor, disoriented and suffering from temporal sickness. He offers a cryptic warning about the dangers ahead.
5	Dust Storm	Echoing Concourse: A sudden, intense dust storm engulfs the corridor, reducing visibility to near zero and triggering a series of collapsing floor tiles.
6	Chronal Slip	Resonance Chamber: A localized temporal anomaly causes the players to briefly experience fragmented memories from the Chronomaul's slumber – terrifying visions of destruction and chaos.

LOCATIONS

The Gearmouth's Maw

A vast, circular chamber dominated by a colossal, rusted gear nearly thirty feet in diameter...

Echoing Concourse

Damp, echoing corridors lined with fragmented brass plaques depicting the Chronomaul's initial co...

Resonance Chamber

A hexagonal room dominated by a massive, pulsating crystal core emitting a visible shimmer.

Chronomaul's Nexus

The chamber pulses with an oppressive, shimmering Resonance Field, distorting the architecture an...

ENCOUNTERS (D6)

1	Gearmouth's Maw	A swarm of rusted clockwork beetles emerges from the gear's crevices, attacking anyone within 10 feet. They are vulnerable to fire but difficult to target due to their erratic movements. Tactical consideration: Utilize the collapsed wall for cover while maneuvering around the pressure plate.
2	Echoing Concourse	Two Mechanists' Remnant surveyors, Silas and Wren, patrol the corridor, obsessed with documenting the decay. They are armed with chronometric pistols and will attack anyone they perceive as a threat to their research. Strategic advantage: Stealth is recommended; they are susceptible to sonic dampening effects.
3	Resonance Chamber	A malfunctioning Resonance Field causes sections of the floor to rapidly age and crumble, creating a treacherous maze. The core pulses with energy, attracting metallic debris that floats and collides with players. Escape route: A hidden doorway behind a shattered plaque reveals a stable passage.
4	Silas & Wren	Silas, a gaunt, obsessive engineer, demands the party retrieve a specific gear component from the Gearmouth's Maw – a key to unlocking a faster decay rate. Wren, his cynical assistant, constantly monitors the party's movements and prepares countermeasures. Negotiation: Offer a rare mineral sample in exchange for information about the dungeon's l...
5	Chronometric Guardian	A partially activated Automaton, a hulking construct clad in segmented armor, defends the crystal core. It cycles through different attack patterns based on the Resonance Field's intensity. Tactical advantage: Utilize the pillars for cover and exploit the Automaton's slow turning speed.
6	Remnant Ambush	Three Mechanists' Remnant operatives, led by Kaelen the Warden, attempt to ambush the party as they traverse the corridor. They utilize smoke bombs and chronometric grenades to disorient and disable their foes. Strategic consideration: Maintain situational awareness and utilize the pillars for cover.

NPCS

Kaelen the Warden: A former guard who was left behind when the faction retreated. He knows the secret passages but demands the party help him escape. He's paranoid and checks over his shoulder constantly. Can be bribed with food or convinced through shared stories of betrayal. Will turn on the party if he thinks they're working with the faction.

Silas (Remnant Surveyor): A gaunt, obsessive engineer consumed by the belief that the Chronomaul's decay is a necessary step toward a "perfected" reality. He's fascinated by the dungeon's deterioration and meticulously documents every detail. He seeks to accelerate the process and can provide valuable information about the dungeon's mechanisms.

Wren (Remnant Surveyor): Silas's cynical assistant, Wren is pragmatic and distrustful of outsiders. She's primarily interested in collecting data and ensuring the Remnants' research is protected. She's resourceful and can provide technical assistance.

Lyra, the Echo: A spectral projection formed from the residual memories trapped within the Echoing Concourse. She speaks in fragmented whispers, offering cryptic warnings and hints about the dungeon's dangers. She cannot be directly interacted with but her words can be interpreted.

Master Theron (Key Figure): A brilliant but deranged artificer, Theron was the Chronomaul's primary architect. He's trapped within a temporal loop in the Climax Room, endlessly repeating the final stages of the titan's activation.

PLOT RESOLUTIONS

The adventurers could attempt to disable the Resonance Fields entirely, sacrificing valuable time and risking trigger...

The adventurers might choose to side with the dwarven clan of Stoneheart, aiding them in reinforcing the forge and di...

The adventurers could seek out Master Theron, trapped in a temporal loop, to learn the Chronomaul's activation sequen...

The adventurers might prioritize retrieving the "Gear of Restoration" to directly combat the Resonance Fields, allowi...

The adventurers could betray Elias Vance, stealing the deactivated automaton and utilizing its knowledge to accelerat...

TREASURE

Chronometric Shard — A fragment of the Chronomaul's core, pulsing with unstable temporal energy. It can be used to briefly accelerate or decelerate time in a small area. *Dangerous side effect*

