






82.2.13 The latest Ink formulation has proven a failure. Even when writing in my most promising Books I obtain only the barest glimmer of a connection. It is frustrating to expend so much effort creating a blank Book, only to end up destroying it when it doesn't work! There are days when the lab is uncomfortably warm from the flames of these failed attempts. The further I refine each element - the formulations of the inks and papers, the physical dimensions of the Books - the more I realize that the list of potential combinations is nearly infinite. It is during moments like these that I despair: without access to D'ni, my long term goals may never be accomplished. Nevertheless, there are avenues of research which remain to be explored.

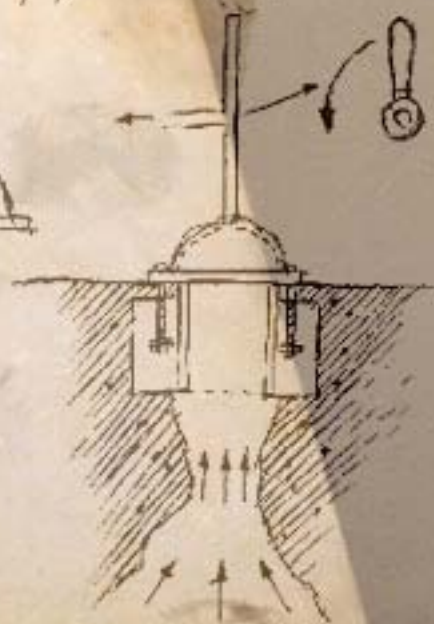
82.5.8 I am discontinuing regular observations of the stars beneath the Fissure. Although I've been able to track the dark cloud-like formations that migrate through the starfield and have proven that their paths are cyclical, without proper instrumentation it is pointless to continue. My general theory concerning the nature of the Fissure has remained unaltered since it first appeared. It seems that the fabric of this Age has been breached in a way that permits matter to be hospitably exchanged between two discreet but overlapping spaces - much like a Link, but the apparent physical contradictions surrounding this juncture defy logical reason: the great column of wind that was formed



when the Fissure first appeared suggests a vacuum as one might expect in space, yet my early experimentations revealed the presence of a breathable atmosphere. That Astruc and Catherine threw themselves into the void is further evidence that it might be safe to travel, but without knowing its true nature I cannot take the risk myself. It is also difficult to say what would happen if I were to reopen it after so long - but it is likely that the results would be catastrophic, given the changes that have occurred in this Age since that time.

Maintenance on the steam vent caps completed
- 83.2.10. I am extremely pleased with the continued success of this system; I believe the

construction to have been true to the D'ni designs of
my memory - another example of the superiority of
the D'ni technology. It's ironic that Atrus and
Catherine unwittingly provided me with such a
convenient source of power.

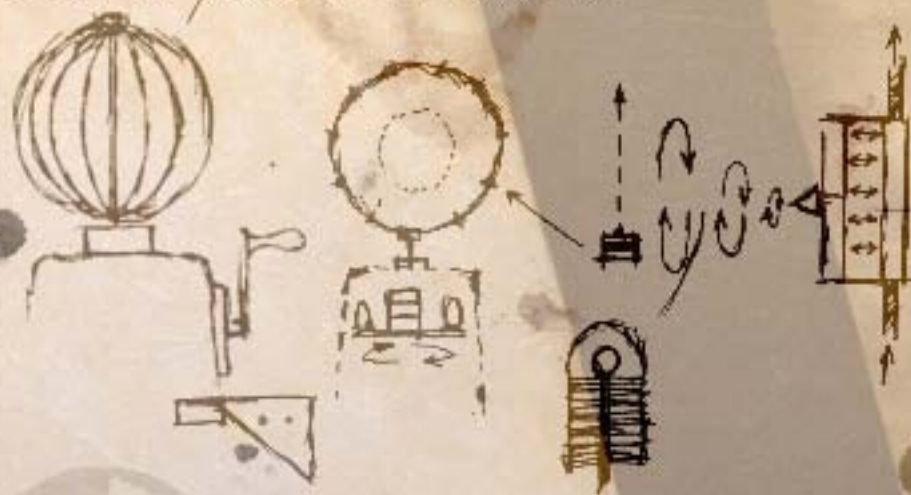


As with many of my views over the years, my thoughts regarding the origin of the Fissure have changed - I have recently begun to wonder whether it was actually an unexpected by-product of the changes Catherine and Atrius wrote into this Age during their escape. Certainly by casting their Linking Book into the void they trapped me here quite effectively, but I do not believe that Atrius intended the Book to be lost in this manner: much better to destroy it than to risk the possibility of its falling into unknown hands. Also, had they foreseen the creation of the Fissure, they would surely have thought that the vacuum it created would eventually consume the atmosphere of this planet, a fate which Catherine undoubtedly would have deemed unacceptable

for her home world. If I had not been there to supervise the construction of the seal this is most certainly what would have happened, for the villagers were far too frightened to even approach the vortex without my urging. I hold onto the belief that it was an unintended consequence of their writing for another reason as well: I prefer to think that my son had meant for this Age to be merely a prison for me, rather than a death sentence.

83.5.14 The construction of the imagers has proceeded without fault. It is interesting to see how easily I've been able to adapt the D'ni technology to mimic that of the Amad; in some ways the similarities between the two cultures was striking.

I wonder if perhaps there had been communication or commerce between the two cultures in earlier times; maybe Keta's people were even descendants of the D'mi. It pleases me to think so.



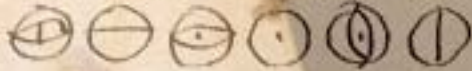
Note: it's possible that if I were somehow able to supply the books with a power source of sufficient magnitude, I could suppress the variance enough to

facilitate a solid link. It is doubtful that the geothermal cap generators could provide such an enormous surge - perhaps I could adapt the fire-marbles -

I have been cataloging the "natural" elements of this Age for nearly thirty years now, yet still I continue to find evidence of the D'ni's preoccupation with Five. As a boy, it was very clear to me that the number five had a special significance to the D'ni society - from the ancient heraldic emblems of the ruling elite to the humble homes of the commoners, it was ubiquitous. Its presence here is obviously a direct reflection of the minds that designed the texts that I used to compose this Age - further proof

that through their Art the D'ni Masters were indeed creating the marvelous worlds they wrote, and not, as many have mistakenly thought, merely building links to preexisting worlds.

While most of my constructions have been based on D'ni designs, I see now that the ones that I have imbued with the power of Five are clearly the most beautiful, the most perfect. And, I believe, the most structurally sound.

I am still attempting to determine how the D'ni color symbology reflects this superior design principle. Although superficially it is based on a six color system, I am convinced that there has to be a deeper connection to Five. I will continue to investigate.  .

83.9.11 I've finally made a breakthrough. I have succeeded in modifying the Fire-marbles to generate enough power to hold a Descriptive Linking Book in a stable matrix: I have linked to a new world! It is a harsh and desolate Age - but is nonetheless well suited for my purposes, and so I have designated it my "IIIrd". By studying it closely I believe I will eventually be able to create a more appropriate

Age for us to resettle on. For now, I will build an office and set up my living quarters there, in order that I may conduct my experiments in safety and without distraction.

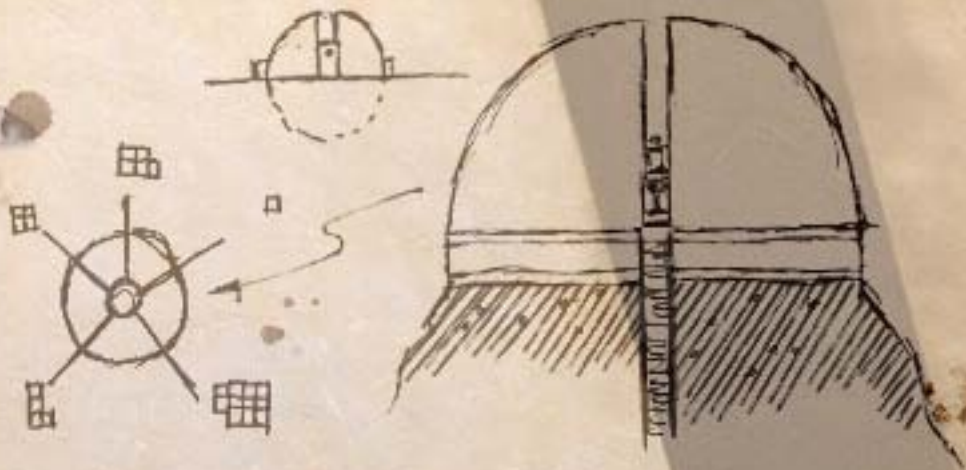


I must admit that I am proud of my work - to think, that in such primitive conditions I have accomplished in 29 years what it took the original D'ni centuries to achieve.

(Note: repair outer wear for work on this world; the goggles may need to be redesigned altogether.)

84.4.13 I have begun construction on a series of Link sites for each island that will connect Riven with my new office on ~~HKI~~. The Surrey Guild has finally completed the site location for each island - according to my exact specifications - and installation of the domes is underway at last.

Work on the central power source got off to a bit of a bad start I'm afraid - but the pace has picked up considerably since then and I anticipate no further delays. I'm looking forward to finally having a civilized mode of transportation.



Due to the rebels' continued disturbances, I've decided to install a coded access system into all of the domes -

85.6.7 I caught one of my assistants looking over this journal today; I'm glad I've chosen to write it in a language they can not decipher.

Note: discuss security with each Guild Master - no problems expected from the Maintainers, Educators, and Surveyors; question the Bookmakers and Builders more closely -

86.10.24 Today I heard several more reports of 'spirit' sightings by some of the villagers. It seems that under Catherine's leadership, the rebels (or 'The Black Moiety' as the villagers obstinately insist on referring to them) have attained a new level of sophistication in their terror tactics, and have renewed their campaign to intimidate the villagers into joining them, playing upon their shared superstitions. The villagers are certainly susceptible to this form of coercion - especially given of late the rebels' increasing acts of vandalism and theft.

87.1.15 The ytram traps have been steadily fruitful this year: apparently the breakup of the islands has not adversely affected the subterranean ecosystems. Unfortunately, I imagine the rebels are experiencing a similarly generous harvest - no shortage of poison for their darts this season. Such morbid issues aside, the sudden availability has allowed me to refine a particularly pleasant extract for my pipe, one that is smoother than any of the others from recent years.

87.3.29 Chemical analysis of one of the rebel knives has yielded curious results: its composition contains elements that are unlike anything I've encountered on the islands. It appears they have access to a resource of which I am unaware; perhaps a

mine, or an uncharted island.



Note: most of the knives have been found on the south side of the village. This is the same area in which there have been reports of people 'mysteriously disappearing.' I think a closer inspection of the area is warranted.

The fact that they leave these distinctive knives as a sign of their presence concerns me: they're growing more bold, and seem to no longer fear discovery of their hideout.

87.6.27 The latest measurements indicate that the recent trend has continued: the movement of the islands has slowed tremendously. My previous estimates predicted a total collapse in approximately three months, but with the new figures I am uncertain. I have nearly finished writing the 'IIIth' Age, and I have every faith that it will indeed be a safe place for us to relocate to; yet it would be helpful to know what has caused the halt in this Age's breakup. Is it possible that it's stable after all? If so, I must discover how this Age differs from my less successful attempts - my examinations of the 'IIIrd' Age have thus far proven inconclusive.

Or perhaps someone is repairing the damage to the Fifth Age? If so, it would almost certainly be Atrius' doing.

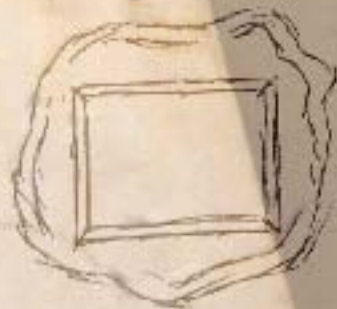
I have reluctantly decided to abandon my experiments into the behavior of the water of this age, as there are more pressing matters on which I must now concentrate, leaving me little time for such speculative research. For future reference, however, my investigations up to this point have revealed the following:

I believe the remarkable properties of the water to be caused by a life form that resides in it - specifically, a type of bacteria. I am imagining a

motile unicellular organism, but one with structures capable of holding bits of water, whose combined effect (via surface tension? a stronger force?) causes the composite body of water to move in response to heat. Prolonged exposure to extreme heat - for example, a period of extended boiling - seems to kill the bacteria - which would explain its dramatic aversion to heat sources. Unfortunately, these theories are still not fully tested, and I remain ignorant both of its deeper nature and its possible uses.

87.7.6 An exciting development: Last night, a squad of Maintainers stumbled upon a lone rebel scout and obtained from him a most incredible device - it is a crystal that somehow 'powers' these flawed Linking Books, much as my own system does, but with an obvious advantage: it is small and weighs only a few pounds, making it completely portable. Catherine must have fabricated the device before I captured her, obviously with an explicit D'ni schematic she must have brought with her to this Age. If only I'd had access to such a document all these years! Regardless, I can now concentrate solely on the writing of Ages, and need no longer worry about building elaborate power supplies for each new book I write. This is a sobering reminder however

that I must continue to seek an avenue to D'ni -
regaining access to the resources there may be crucial
to the completion of my mission.



87.7.28

Last week, while monitoring the situation of the villagers from the scope in my survey room, I observed one of the natives swim out to a small object that appeared to be floating, but anchored, near the entrance to the bay. I ordered the object removed from the water for inspection. Several days later, however, I was surprised to see another floating there; the missing object had apparently, and quite mysteriously, been replaced with a new one overnight. I've long been aware of the existence of similar artifacts on the villagers' island, but have paid them little notice until now. Tomorrow I shall send surveyors to catalog the others.



