

97.9.15 I am always surprised
by how good it feels to return home
after one of my journeys. In the
day, heat shimmers off the cliffs,
bathing me in unexpected warmth.
At night gentle breezes stir the
lake, and I often hear Catherine
singing to Yeesha. The
sound of their voices
fills me with such
joy. I find myself
wondering why
I ever left.

Perhaps I am more aware of
this tonight, having spent so much
time alone in Rime. The trip was
unavoidable. It has been weeks since
I viewed Sirrus and Achenar's
prison Ages, and I needed to be
assured of their safety. The crystal
viewer did not show much, so I
began considering how I might im-
prove it. I am now fairly certain I
can achieve a tighter image if I
redesign the mechanism itself.

I have got to tell Catherine

of these plans. I do not wish to raise her hopes prematurely.

97.9.22 After far too brief a visit with my family, I have returned to Rime to conduct preliminary tests. The frigid temperatures in this Age are vital for the crystals to function, yet I find it increasingly difficult to work in the cold. Perhaps I can find a way to simulate extreme temperatures inside the viewer itself, so that I

can install it in Tomahna when ready.

Cooling Unit



Blank
Linking Book

Crystal
Selector

Crystal containment
holders

97.101 Tonight I set aside experimentation for a few hours to watch the lights illuminate Rime's sky. Their beauty has not dimmed since first I saw them. I could not fully enjoy the show, however, for it put me in mind of Sirrus and Achenar, and the months we spent here constructing the towers. Soon, what had been a happy memory for me was mired in regrets.

I doubt I will ever know what caused my sons to become so

greedy. I only know that when they looked at the Ages described in my library -- fantastic worlds one could travel to easily, simply by touching a Book's linking panel -- they saw only dreams of wealth and power. They devised a plan. An evil plan. When my back was turned, they linked to my Ages, plundered, and destroyed them.

I know Sirrus and Achenar must pay a price for these crimes, yet it brings me no joy to picture

them stranded on the two uninhabited Ages I wrote to protect my library from thieves. I only hope that my sons will someday reject their wicked yearnings and find it in their hearts to reform.

97.10.27 After experimenting with several liquid gases, I have found a pressure variable that should allow the crystal viewer to function in Tomahna. Tomorrow I link to Releeshahn to enlist help

from the Guild of Machinists.

98.1.10 Catherine was unusually subdued when I showed her the new blueprints. She trusts that the viewer will work, but wishes we could visit our sons in person. I would like that as well, but until I am convinced of remorse I cannot risk their escaping.

98.4.7 I was fairly certain the evaporator coils would work and

indeed, I was able to achieve a blurry image of Spire within the new viewer's blank book. Unfortunately, a more powerful suppressor is needed to stabilize the image.

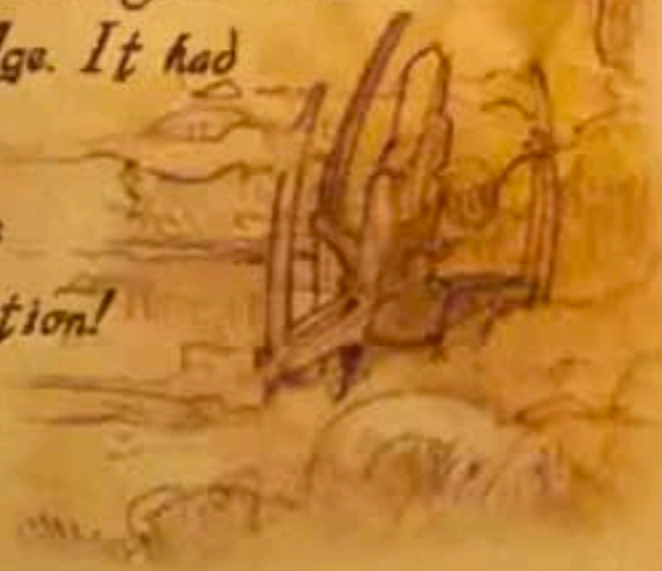
Guildmaster Andritus suggested that I install several geodes inside the roof of the Observatory, then use an antenna to focus them. This should amplify the clean frequency enough so that the crystal viewer can work.



98.6.29 Success! Not only was I able to view both Spire and Haven, but I also saw my laboratory on Rime quite clearly. The crystal code for Rime was difficult to remember, having not had much reason to use it previously. I must make a full list of codes soon, but for now I will keep Rime's close at hand.



98.10.9 I always knew my sons had great potential, but today I saw something that truly amazed me. Sirrus is harnessing electricity! At least, that is what I assume, for the viewer caught a brief glimpse of something I have never before seen in his Age. It had to be a man-made construction!



A burst of interference destabilized the image before I could study the device properly, but its existence offers proof that at least one of my sons is making the most of his confinement, rather than wallowing in despair.

98.10.15 The interference effect is curious. It has disrupted my viewing of Ages on more than one occasion. Although I first assumed it to be a problem with the geodes,

I now believe it to be subsonic in origin. I think the roof antenna is picking up wave fluctuations emitted by one or more Ages. If this is true, I might be able to use the fluctuations to hear what is occurring in an Age. I shall have to think on this carefully.

99.4.26 It has been an exciting two weeks. Catherine, Yeasha, and I have just returned from Releeshahn where I spent most of my time in

conversations with various
Guildmasters.

I am now convinced that the
shape and color of the crystals
gives them individual resonance
signatures. By combining the
resonances of five crystals together
I can discover a global pattern of
emissions -- a sound signature, as it
were -- that is unique to the Age
being viewed. Guildmaster Andritus
assisted me in drawing up plans for
a filtration panel that will enable

the antenna to hone in on whatever
wave fluctuations I want. I truly
will be able to listen in on an Age!



Tomorrow I begin building
the panel. I have decided to use

Rime as its preset configuration,
since that is the Age which first
enabled me to construct a crystal
viewer.

99.7.21 The panel is finished. I
am too tired to test it tonight.

100.1.2 Catherine tried to hide
it, but the sounds we heard coming
from Achenar's prison Age nearly
brought her to tears. Once again I
had to reassure her of his safety.

My words eventually convinced
her, but I know she longs for more
substantive proof.

I fear she may
take matters
into her own
hands soon.

I must confess,



I, too, long for more information than the viewer is currently providing. Tomorrow I shall link to Rime. I have an idea for an attachment -- something akin to a "moving eye" -- that will allow me to change points of view while using the crystal viewer. If it works, I may finally be able to see if my sons have reformed.

