

An underwater photograph of a statue standing on a rocky seabed. The statue is covered in coral and marine life. The water is clear and blue, with sunlight filtering down from the surface. The statue is the central focus, standing upright on a base of coral. The seabed is covered in small rocks and coral fragments. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and ancient.

ORICHALCUM

a tabletop roleplaying map game for 1-5 players

JUSTIN QUIRIT

Long ago, the **Empire** sat upon valleys of a magical substance called **Orichalcum**. It could produce miracles, and it fueled the **Empire's** reign over our people, the **Exiles**. They were pushed to the fringes of the **Empire** and away from the **Orichalcum**, up onto the mountains.



The **Empire** knew its digging would bring about a great storm, but this portent did not forestall its greed. It continued to dig, and the storm came. The valleys became seas, and the inhospitable mountaintops the **Exiles** were forced upon became lush islands. Although devastated by the deluge, they eventually recovered and rebuilt.



Today, we are lost islanders. We were at sea when a storm swept us into the depths. The remaining **Orichalcum** we find keeps us alive, but the terrain is unfamiliar. To find our way home, we must sift through the ruins and our memories of the **Empire**. But in our remembering, we must not forget what we have created for ourselves.

Materials

To play, you will need the following materials:

- ❖ A flat play space
- ❖ Drawing utensils for each player
- ❖ **Exile** tiles *or* twenty-five (25) index cards
- ❖ **Pillar** tiles *or* an index card for each player

Safety

Any game may contain or produce sensitive content that could ruin a player's experience.

There are many safety tools that can help us advocate for our boundaries and create a safe play space for everybody. Not all of these will be useful to every group, so I instead ask that you find the toolset best suited for you.

Additionally, I ask that you treat your fellow players with respect and compassion. Keep channels of communication open, be honest, and listen. Playing a game, adhering to rules, or constructing a desired narrative should never take precedence over the wellbeing of another. Be mindful of yourself and each other. Your game will be all the better for it.

Flow of Play

1. Choose an **Exile** tile
2. Shuffle **Pillar** tiles and draw five
3. Place a **Pillar** tile
4. Draw the **Pillar**
5. **Remember**
6. Draw island details
7. Repeat steps 3-6 until the **Empire** is done
8. Place **Exile** tile

Choose Your Exiles

The **Exiles** each **Remember** the **Empire** through a unique lens. Choose an **Exile** tile to describe your people or make your own. On the back of the tile, draw a rough outline of your island home. Leave enough room to add in additional details, such as terrain and features.



Draw Pillars

The ocean floor is littered with ruins of the **Empire** called **Pillars**. They have remained discarded under the waves since the cataclysm, but we have not forgotten them.

Shuffle the stack of **Pillar** tiles. Draw five tiles.
(Note: You will only play three during the game.)

Explore the Empire

Take turns placing **Pillar** tiles to build out a map of the ocean floor. When you place a tile, sketch the ruins on the **Pillar** tile, place it adjacent to any other **Pillar** tiles in play, and **Remember**.

To **Remember**, ask one player to describe the role of the **Pillar** within the **Empire**. Then, the player who placed the tile draws a feature on their island related to that **Pillar** and explains how it shows they are different from the **Empire**.

(Note: If you are not the current player, you may still draw a related feature on your island.)



For your first tile, provide both physical and historical details of the **Pillar**. This will give you an opportunity to introduce the nature of your people to the other players. For the second and third tiles, have the players on your left and right, respectively, share the histories of those **Pillars**. Once everyone has placed three tiles, **Go Home**.

Go Home

Once you have fully explored the ruins of the **Empire**, you recall the path to your island. Place your **Exile** tile on the map island-side up.

Relax. Breathe.

Describe what it feels like to be back home.

Example Exiles

Here are some example **Exiles** and their relationships with the **Empire**.

The Architects

The **Empire** built an inadequate foundation.
We filled in the gaps.

The Exemplars

The **Empire** coveted our gifts.
We prospered despite them.

The Resplendent

The **Empire** could not contain us.
We were too loud.

The Trailblazers

The **Empire** stumbled in darkness.
We brought them the light.

The Wardens

The **Empire** dug deep.
Our roots dug deeper.

The Pillars

If you don't have the **Pillar** tiles printed out, you can use index cards instead and refer to this list.

- ❖ The Amphitheater – how we entertain ourselves
- ❖ The Battlefield – how we fight our enemies
- ❖ The Bridge – how we connect our people
- ❖ The Cemetery – how we treat the dead
- ❖ The Creche – how we raise our young
- ❖ The Dungeon – how we punish lawbreakers
- ❖ The Field – how we handle freedom
- ❖ The Fortress – how we defend our home
- ❖ The Garden – how we curate nature
- ❖ The Gate – how we welcome others
- ❖ The Hospital – how we heal the sick and wounded
- ❖ The Library – how we archive information
- ❖ The Longhouse – how we feed the hungry
- ❖ The Market – how we trade goods
- ❖ The Mine – how we strip the earth
- ❖ The Monument – how we honor our heroes
- ❖ The Port – how we explore the unknown
- ❖ The Road – how we navigate the land
- ❖ The School – how we distribute knowledge

- ❖ The Shrine – how we revere the divine
- ❖ The Spring – how we clean our bodies
- ❖ The Treasury – how we seal our bounty
- ❖ The Throne – how we rule our people
- ❖ The Wall – how we deny outsiders
- ❖ The Well – how we share water

Acknowledgments

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