

Phenomenon Portal Header

As you enter, you instantly notice a shimmering portal at the far side of the chamber, glimmering within the boundaries of a black alcove of rune-etched stones. Before the portal stands an old hag in brown tattered robes, whose hair appears to have never been washed. The remaining half of her yellow, crooked teeth draws your attention as she grins, followed by a fit of coughing. After a few moments, she regains control of herself and wipes her mouth with the back of a wart-plagued hand.

"You look so delicious, so young and healthy," she croaks, cackling with delight. "Have you come to play my game, or challenge my right as the master of this portal? I assure you, if you have come to challenge me for mastery over the Phenomenon Portal, you have made a grave error." The grinding sound of sudden chortling fills the air, sending an unnatural shiver down your spine. Before you can respond, she raises a gnarled finger, her eyes brightening mischievously. "But," she continues with an enthusiastic, crooked grin, "if you have come to be tested, I will oblige you happily."

The portal suddenly shimmers and bends, as if struggling to free itself from the alcove, as if attempting break to free of the rune-etched stones of the portal and flow into the chamber. In annoyance, the old hag shoos it back into place, as if warding off an obnoxious child, who needs to go outside and play.

"Hrmph! Fulfill the measure of your creation. You are not needed elsewhere!" Quickly, the shimmering portal returns to normal. "Ah, that's better -- thank you." A look of kindness fills her eyes as she grins without parting her lips. Recalling that you stand near, watching, her eyes dart your way as she yet faces the portal. Slowly the bent woman turns back to you, the smile fading to a look of annoyance.

"Well?" Glancing at the portal, then back at you, the old crone's mouth splits into a sickening smile once again.

"What lies beyond it, you wish to know. The question is always the same. I won't tell you that, but I will tell you that many things happen to those who enter, yes, many things!" Without waiting for your response, she points dramatically at the portal and begins what seems to be a well rehearsed rhyme. As she chants, the very air about you comes to life with a terrible energy.

"They who enter through this gate, risk wealth and life and limb,
For yonder lies the Test of Fate, test granted at my whim."

The hag cackles with laughter, interrupted by a fit of coughing. Regaining control, she continues . . .

"Complete the test and you shall earn, reward when you are done.
Speak with me once you return, collect the prize you've won!"

As she finishes the rhyme, she throws both hands into the air. In response, the portal abruptly comes to life, glittering as if a thousand stars from the night sky have gathered into the archway in a splendor of magnificent brilliance. To avoid being blinded by the portal's radiance, you quickly raise a hand to shield your eyes. Even so, the glory and splendor within the gate temporarily renders you sightless. As your vision returns, you see the woman smiling brightly your way. Her countenance is quite disturbing.

"Take the Test of Fate, what say you?" The old hag waits for your decision.

If you choose to go through the portal, roll on the "**Portal Trials**".

Notes:

Players can choose not to enter the Phenomenon Portal, or pass on this chamber if they so choose. Once players depart from this chamber, it will vanish. The Phenomenon Chamber can be discovered again.

If the Old Hag is attacked, a fight to the death will ensue, and the Chamber will be sealed shut (the normal way of escaping will not be possible). If the Old Hag is defeated, the Chamber will open back up, and players will be free to leave. Once defeated, the Old Hag can never be encountered again (thus thwarting the Phenomenon Portal).