

Clockwork Invasion: Uraniborg!

A One Page Dungeon Adventure by Justin Colussy-Estes
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In the late 16th century, the astronomer Tycho Brahe built the world's most precise and comprehensive scientific observatory, library, and alchemical laboratory rolled into one. It was the castle Uraniborg, built on the Isle of Hveen, and accessible by boat from Copenhagen. In 1601, the castle was destroyed. The players are here to find out why...

Setting: The smouldering remains of the Uraniborg laboratory castle, and the nearby underground observatory Sjerneborg, are located on the Isle of Hveen off the coast of Copenhagen. Historically, they were destroyed by fire in 1601. For the sake of this adventure, this fire was due to experiments in Astronomy and Alchemy, which led to an explosion that ripped a hole between this world and the world of the Clockwork King. He is now attempting to send his army of automata through the rip. As a Clockpunk adventure, it is suitable for transposing to a fantasy world, or a science-fiction-y, real-world 16th c. setting.

Isle of Hveen—There is a market, but no other gathering place. Farmers who live on the island keep to themselves. They hate the astronomers of Uraniborg; they were serfs to Brahe. However, recent events have spooked them. Reaction to outsiders (d6): 1-3—Hostility; 4—Distrust; 5—Wary, but will talk (1 rumor for money); 6—Guarded Friendliness (2 rumors or other information)

Rumors: 1) "The devil has made his home in the castle!" 2) "The astronomers have made clocks that run amok in the gardens of Uraniborg." 3) "There is an underground donjon where they torture people, and worse." 4) "At night, spirits roam the island." 5) "The astronomers bespelled visiting kings and royalty." 6) "God destroyed the castle to punish them!"

Sjerneborg— On the road to Uraniborg lies this underground observatory.

• **Castle Grounds (2b):** The surrounding wall is 5' high. The astronomical instruments and statuary above ground have been transformed into automata. Getting within 1 square of any of the markers on the map elicits an attack.

• **Castle Interior (2a):** The 5 roofs to the crypts are removable for night sky viewing and calculations.

a. **Entrance:** Stairs going down.

b. **Main Room:** A hypocaustum, or heated room to prepare observations and study results. The automata have turned it into a lab for transforming living creatures into clockwork minions.

c. & d. **Small Amphitheaters:** These crypts house various astronomical devices, surrounded by seating for observation.

e. **Celestial Globe:** This room houses the largest map of the heavens constructed to date. Over a thousand stars, planets, galaxies and comets are detailed with exact precision on the silver and brass globe. This instrument is worth a small fortune.

f. **Large Amphitheater:** The biggest crypt houses an enormous equatorial armillary sphere made of steel and brass. 3 astronomers cower here in complete darkness, having barricaded themselves within. The groundskeeper is with them, and has been driven mad. He believes that the explosion and subsequent invasion is an assault from hell, and he plots to sacrifice someone on the armillary sphere in hopes to appease the spirits.

g. **Mid-Sized Amphitheater:** The 4 people barricaded in the (f.) **Large Amphitheater** have access to this room as well. The side room is a pantry and storage room.

Uraniborg Castle—During the day, automata are focused on preparing for the oncoming army, but at night they roam the island to transform the living into clockwork minions. Those transformed by Clockwork are like zombies with metal gears and brass fixtures attached to them. They have limited purpose (servant, soldier, etc), and resist distraction.

• **Castle Grounds (1a):** The 10x10ft. *Gatehouses*, located North & South, are entryways to the castle grounds. Their upper floors house guard dogs with clockwork appendages for standing and wielding weapons. The East structure is *Servants Quarters*. Three transformed clockwork servants remain. They will ignore any who enter, but will "scream," releasing a small cuckoo bird from their mouths if interrupted from their duties. The cuckoo will sound the alarm, bringing 1d6 soldier automata. The West structure is a *Printing House*, currently being dismantled for parts by 10 small insectoid automata. There are 4 *Gazebos* (NW, NE, SW, and SE corners) which have been transformed into windmills. Various automata run in and out—these windmills harness power for the automata—destroying these cuts them off from their power supply. The inner gardens are a maze of alchemical and medicinal herbs and flowers. There is a 1 in 6 chance that any given geometric patch of garden holds some kind of clockwork: A hive of transformed clockwork mice, a vampiric clockwork plant, a host of tiny flying automata, etc.

• **The Ruins (1b.)**— The roof is gone. Everything stands exposed from above. The walls are burned, but brick. The Western tower is nearly destroyed, but rubble blocks all entry to the castle except through doors a. or c. Any heavy weight or violent action within Uraniborg castle has a 1 in 6 chance of collapsing the wall or floor.

a. **Entryway:** Piles of scientific instruments and scrap metal lie here.

b. **Hallway:** A dozen rabbit-sized automata prepare the hallway to support the anticipated army and its supplies.

c. **Rear Entryway:** See (a.) **Entryway**

d. **Master Bedroom:** Stairs in the NE corner go up. A pantry-sized door leads to steps to **Downstairs**. A secret door leads to a passage between the library and the outer hallway.

e. **Guest Bedroom:** 13 transformed clockwork crows, messengers for the Clockwork King, stand silently around the room.

f. **Guest Bedroom:** A little girl hides under the bed. She won't let go of a very shiny object—a brass and crystal compass (the circle-drawing tool). It keeps her invisible to all automata, and can be used against them as a weapon.

g. **Dining Room:** An enormous brass sextant from the floor above has fallen. 2 diners lay dead, crushed beneath it.

h. **Library:** Approximately 1 foot of the floor's outer edge remains, the rest is a gaping hole. All who fall through end up in the alchemy lab (see **Downstairs**). The secret door leads to the outer observatory hallway and the Master Bedroom (d.).

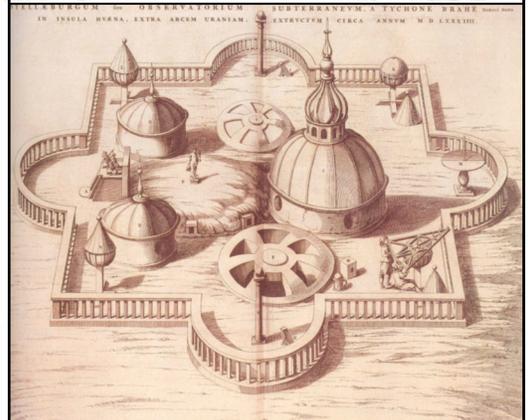
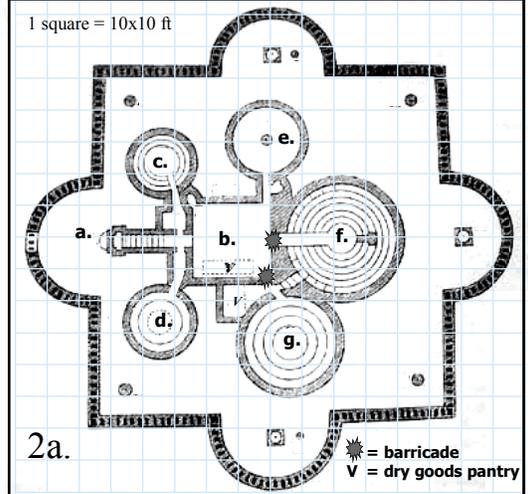
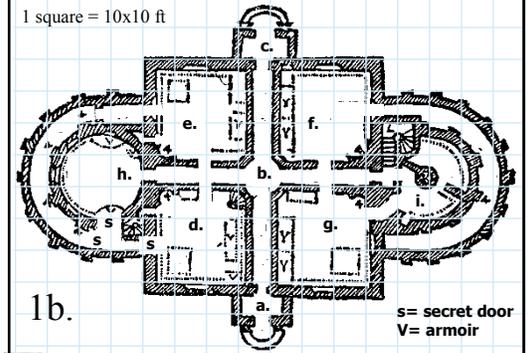
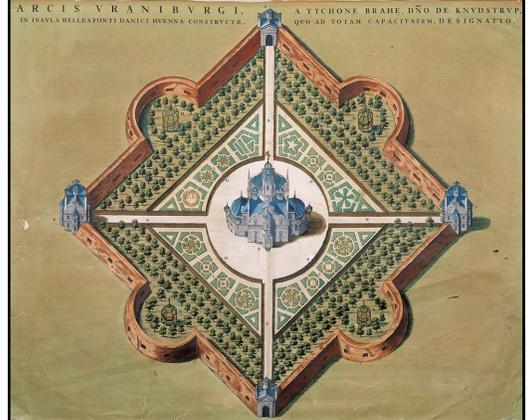
i. **Kitchen:** Stairs lead up (see **Upstairs**) and down. Below is a 2x2 pantry basement filled with food and stores. Additionally, there are many herbs, poultices, and plants gathered from the gardens that have medicinal and alchemical uses. A door in the western wall leads to the alchemy lab (see **Downstairs**).

Upstairs: Rare astronomical instruments, precariously balanced on the remains of the 2nd floor, are visible from the main floor below. Automata teem over their surface, stripping them for material or transforming them into more automata.

Downstairs: Stairs from d. lead to remains of the alchemy lab (3x3) below. This is the source of the explosion. Nothing much of the lab remains except a growing tear in space. Longomontanus, the astronomer who caused the explosion, sits below the tear. He is the epicenter of the rupture, and his life is tied to its existence. If he dies, the gap collapses, the Clockwork King's army cannot get through, and all automata in this world are trapped. The 13th Pneumatica of the Clockwork King, a powerful silver automata with the head of a gyroscope, attempts to maintain and enlarge the rupture; he spends most of his energy keeping Longomontanus alive, as well as cajoling his automata minions into bringing him material to expand the gap and give the army access to this world. He still has enough energy and attention to attack intruders, however.

List of illustrations*:

- 1a. Uraniborg and environs before explosion
- 1b. Map of Uraniborg's ground floor, after explosion
- 2a. Map of Sjerneborg, or "Star Castle," Observatory
- 2b. Sjerneborg underground observatory as seen approaching from the West. (note: illustrated person not to scale)



* A note on the maps: These are actual maps and illustrations of Uraniborg and Sjerneborg dating back to the 17th century. They are in the public domain, and copyright free. Here are links to them, should you want to see them before my tweaks: [Uraniborg illustration](#), [Uraniborg map](#), [Sjerneborg map](#), and the [Sjerneborg illustration](#), although I kept as much the same as possible. Also, [here's a link to the isle of Hveen](#) you might find additionally useful. Finally, here's a few links for some fun historical bits if you want to drag [Brahe](#), [Kepler](#) and [the gang](#) into your adventure.