

In the midst of a seemingly endless desert stands a colossal tower, large enough to hold several cities stacked atop each other. Over the years, this tower has become home to a variety of different peoples, with their own cultures and languages. However, these people stand isolated, whether by choice or simply unfortunate circumstances.

However, at the entrance to the tower, a mysterious hooded figure awakens from a sarcophagus. Armed only with a notebook, curiosity, and a natural affinity for learning new languages, this traveler may be just the catalyst needed to finally unite the tower.

You enter the tower shortly before this stranger awakens. Whether you aid them, interfere, or allow them to go about their business is for you to decide. You receive 1000 Babel Points to spend as you please.

Floor & Culture

Here you decide what floor you start on, what culture you belong to, and what language you speak. Choose age & gender freely.

Tower Entrance [Traveler] - +100BP

Like the stranger soon to unite the Tower, your origins are a mystery. You start this Jump at the entrance of the tower. This is the Drop-In option, leaving you with no connections and no knowledge of the cultures within the tower, including any of the languages they use.

First Floor [Devotees] - +100BP

A pious yet meek culture. They followed the call of God to the tower to escape the drought that caused their flora to wither and die. Even in this holy land, the Warriors bar them from ascending the tower to meet God, and the relentless sun causes their plants to wither once more.

On paper, the Devotees adhere to a strict hierarchy: regular people < devotees < warriors < God. In execution, most Devotees are laid-back people that take their faith seriously, but don't mind setting aside time for more frivolous pursuits like games, music, and especially gardening.

Second Floor [Warriors] - FREE

A hardy culture of fighters. They patiently wait for those they call the "Chosen Ones" to come down to them, while protecting them from any "Impure Ones" who seek to ascend the tower. It is possible that this was due to the Warriors misunderstanding the Chosen Ones who sought their help to slay a monster that barred their own access to higher floors.

The warriors view the concept of "Duty" with religious relevance. Their language lacks any words for "you" or "me". Every warrior is defined solely by their occupation. The warriors don't fear death and adore music despite being unable or unwilling to create it themselves.

Third Floor [Bards/Idiots] - FREE / +100BP

A vain people who devote themselves to Beauty in all forms. The gateway between the third and fourth floors are blocked by a terrible monster, but their contentment with their own lifestyle leaves most Bards to see climbing up or down the tower as an inherently foolish desire.

The third floor is broken up into two social classes. The Bards who wear smiling masks simply waste the day away partying or indulging artistic pursuits. Their lavish lifestyle is sustained by an underappreciated and frequently mocked worker underclass who wear frowning masks. These workers are simply called "Idiots" by the Bards. You can receive 100 BP to start this Jump as part of this underclass.

Fourth Floor [Alchemists] - 100BP

A culture fully devoted to the pursuit of science, or as they call it "Transformation". Their technology is on a level far above the lower floors, and they can concoct formulas to create marvels of bioengineering. Despite vastly different temperaments, they actually share common ancestry with the Bards.

However, their mindless pursuit of progress can at times have disastrous results, such as when one experiment transformed one of their own into a hideous monster that threatens the Alchemists and Bards alike. A threat they are far too scared to face.

Fifth Floor [Anchorites] - 100BP

Called "Fairies" by the Alchemists, the Anchorites are the initial builders of the tower. When various cultures came to reside in the tower, they initially welcomed them, and sought to help bridge the language barrier between them. However, this proved fruitless. In shame, they sealed off their floor, and spent their days plugged into a virtual reality world maintained by their advanced AI, aptly named Exile.

Little is known about their culture. However, their isolation has left many of them in a deep depression, with most mindlessly playing Exile's games until their bodies waste away. The Stranger who awoke outside the tower is actually an automaton created by one of the Anchorites in the hope of shutting down Exile and uniting the languages of the tower.

Traveler Perks

100 BP perks free and others half-off to Travelers.

Hide - 100BP

The tribes of the Tower all have a distinct look, but you somehow manage to conceal yourself. You have a naturally weak presence that makes it easy for you to sneak around or blend into a crowd. Just don't go thinking you're actually invisible, especially while in hostile territory.

Toss - 100BP

You have a good throwing arm and a natural talent for tossing small items with pinpoint precision (at least within a few meters of yourself). In addition, whenever you need to sneak by someone, you'll almost always find small piles of rocks or similar debris within reach.

Recall - 200BP

Whenever you witness or experience an interaction you deem important, you can leave behind a "marker" in that location. Interacting with this will cause you to witness a perfect phantom reenactment of the event as many times as you please. Only you can perceive any of this.

Hear - 200BP

An inexplicable linguistic ability. Somehow or another, you are able to instantly translate between written and spoken words. When you see a word, you'll instantly know how it sounds when spoken, and when you hear a word, you'll instantly know how it looks when written.

Epiphany - 400BP

Whenever you find yourself about 90% of the way to a major breakthrough in unravelling any kind of code or mystery, you will receive inexplicable flashes of insight. You will subconsciously draft the connections between the remaining 10%, and once all the proper dots are connected (even if only through trial-and-error) you will then and there know that these connections are objectively correct. See Notes for examples.

Friends - 400BP

Should you find yourself under some kind of psychic attack or illusion, reminders and manifestations of the bonds you've forged will manifest and give you the means to escape or fight back. Whether it be the voices of your friends trying to snap you out of hypnosis, trusted shadows shielding you from nightmarish monsters, or reminders of the good you've done forming a literal gate out of an illusionary prison.

Devotee Perks

100 BP perks free and others half-off to Devotees.

Gardner - 100BP

Perhaps due to their gentle demeanor, the Devotees tend to get along well with animals, and their love of plants is well-documented. You similarly have a natural talent for getting along with and caring for plants and animals. You can't work miracles, but you can still try to help.

Beggar - 100BP

Much like a beggar, you have a way of blending into the background. In addition, you have an odd luck for being in the right place or the right time to notice important events, like a preacher hiding a key in a specific pot or moving statues in a peculiar way to open a secret door.

Dispel - 200BP

All things considered; the Warriors did not need much convincing that the Devotees weren't as "impure" as they had been raised to believe. Similarly, you are able to dispel prejudices against you and your kind with shocking ease, as long as these biases are truly baseless.

Preacher - 200BP

It would seem there's a new preacher in the tower, or whatever the closest equivalent would be. This provides you with natural charisma and aura that makes others look to you for guidance. You'll find it significantly easier to rise into similar religious positions in future Jumps.

Seer - 400BP

It is said that the Devotees received a premonition from God that led them to the tower. Whenever you find yourself and those you consider your people suffering from some kind of natural disaster, you'll receive a vague premonition from an unknown higher power. This will point you in the general direction of the solution to your problem. Whether it be a new land to call home, or some means to deal with the initial disaster.

Peace - 400BP

The Devotees have nothing. Not the Warriors' strength, the Bards' talent, the Alchemists' brilliance, nor the Anchorites' technology. In spite of that, the other tribes don't mind treating them as equals once they get to know them. Similarly, you'll find it bizarrely easy to form alliances with others, even if you don't appear to have anything tangible to offer the other party. Perhaps you provide a more abstract service.

Warrior Perks

100 BP perks free and others half-off to Warriors.

Vessel - 100BP

Before they came to the Tower, the Warriors were a seafaring civilization. Even grounded, they never lost these skills. You have all the skills one would need for life on the sea, from sailing, to rationing food, dealing with mutinies, to even reading the stars for navigation.

Strong - 100BP

They aren't called "Warriors" without reason. You've been trained from birth in combat, particularly with a sword or spear. Your strength, speed, and durability may not be superhuman, but they're head and shoulders above anyone else in the Tower, aside from other Warriors.

Labor - 200BP

The Warriors take pride in having built the very fortress they protect. You similarly have the knowledge needed to construct massive stone fortresses. Now, whether you have the raw material or manpower to put this knowledge to use is another factor entirely.

Fearless - 200BP

The Warriors do not fear death. You can recognize when you are in danger, but no amount of moral peril is able to cloud your judgment or force you to back down. You fight to your last breath. You can even instill this irreverence towards death into others, with enough training.

United - 400BP

There is no "you" or "I" in the Warrior language. Your duty is your entire identity. You have the ability to instill this ideal into any who fight for or alongside you. At first, people will just find themselves working harder than before, in a couple years all but the most cynical individuals will see their duty as a source of pride. Give it a decade or two, and people will be so obsessed with their duty that it becomes their entire identity.

Weapon - 400BP

The Warriors have had no worthy foes since arriving at the Tower, but the passage of time has far from dulled their blades. You are able to provide training that renders actual experience unnecessary. Veterans who have known peace for decades will be no less lethal the second that peace ends. Even if your soldiers have never known real battle, the quality of your training is equal to a lifetime of real battle.

Bard / Idiot Perks

100 BP perks free and others half-off to Bards / Idiots.

Artist - 100BP

You have skills in a variety of artistic disciplines, from painting to music to acting. If you happen to be an Idiot or more laborious sort, this skill is likely more focused on practical creations like carpentry or mending. Still, the ability to create is something to be admired.

Bold - 100BP

Bards are often narcissistic, rude, ignorant, and often mean-spirited. But that doesn't seem to bother the Warriors or Alchemists. You'll find that being completely obnoxious has a negligible impact on your ability to form meaningful bonds, as long as it doesn't cross the line into cruelty.

Need - 200BP

If only the Bards knew how helpless they'd be without their slaves. You have the ability to make others grow dependent on you. While this can be frustrating, the more they burden you, the less burden they can bear themselves, leaving them completely helpless, should you abandon them.

Maze - 200BP

You have a natural talent for crafting and navigating mazes. Whether it's weaving through the Bards' confusing sewer system or creating a structure like the maze separating the third and fourth floors that fools the mind to feel like the space bends in impossible ways.

Free - 400BP

For the Bards' slaves, escaping servitude really was as simple as just packing up and walking away. You'll find that arranging strikes, slave revolts, and similar revolutions is far easier than it has any right to be. The have-nots will be uncharacteristically bold, while the haves will be surprisingly unprepared to actually do anything to stop them. Though, if they catch wind of these plans far in advance, that's another story.

Tame - 400BP

Like the Bards, you have a talent for… persuaded servitude. In other words, slavery. Forcing someone to submit so thoroughly to your superiority that they're bloodline still serves you generations after the fact, even if you have no actual means to actively enforce this. You could use this in a more humanitarian way, like training animals to do tricks for fruit. But is a person really that different from an animal?

Alchemist Perks

100 BP perks free and others half-off to Alchemists.

Numbers - 100BP

The Alchemists are the only tribe with words for individual numbers, and by extension, the only ones with a sense of time. You have a natural talent for all but the most needlessly complex mental math, not to mention an almost flawless internal clock to keep you on-schedule.

Polite - 100BP

Unlike their relatives the Bards, the Alchemists are quite welcoming to others. You have a knack for leaving an excellent first impression, and generally instilling a desire to cooperate in others. One wouldn't want interpersonal drama to crop up amidst a dangerous experiment.

Research - 200BP

Dull as it may sound, you are a master of research. When entering a library, it rarely takes you more than a few minutes to find a book that suits your needs. This even extends to experiments, as you always seem to know what tests are needed to answer the questions you have.

Machines - 200BP

Alchemy isn't the only science practiced on the fifth floor. You have an intuitive mastery of the mechanical engineering used on the fourth floor. Whether it's elevators, automatic ore processing, cable cars, cranes, etc. Any machine the Alchemists can build, so can you.

Restore - 400BP

The Alchemists created a monster out of one of their own. Even after the terror it spread, their top priority was to save it. With enough research, you are able to find a way to reverse genetic mutations induced as a result of science. The time and difficulty of this scales with the extent of the mutations. A few tumors from radiation exposure would likely take months, while reversing a full-body transformation could take years.

Change - 600BP

The namesake of the Alchemists. You have fully mastered the science between their biological engineering and chemical formulas that border on magic. From concoctions that allow plants to survive in even the most inhospitable environments, or transform a man into a deformed monster, or synthesize complex alloys. As long as you have a sufficient supply of gold, silver, copper, and carbon, you can create miracles of science.

Anchorite Perks

100 BP perks free and others half-off to Anchorites.

Sacrifice - 100BP

Almost every Anchorite has fully submitted to Exile's escapism, but not you. You have the willpower to hold out hope, even when everything seems hopeless. Like the Anchorite that toiled away for years, isolated, to find a way to fight Exile, all while resisting the paradise Exile offered.

Fairy - 100BP

In the legends of the Alchemists, they called the Anchorites "Fairies". Their impact was so profound it was mistaken for magic. You have a similar effect. Stories of you are often exaggerated, or framed in a mythical or divine fashion, leaving you with a legacy full of reverence.

Builder - 200BP

While climbing the Tower, it's easy to forget how massive it is. You have the architectural mastery to build similarly absurd structures. Towers the size of multiple cities, mazes spanning a country, and similar implausible feats. Of course, assuming you have the manpower to build them.

Healthy - 200BP

The Anchorites likely hadn't needed to move in generations thanks to their hover-chairs. It's a miracle they still have working limbs. Similarly, you don't appear to suffer from muscle atrophy. Your body parts may become slightly weaker from disuse, but never outright unusable.

Call - 400BP

Both the Devotees and the Warriors have tails of a mysterious "call" that brought them to the tower. You are able to exert a similar "call". You can choose how far this extends, up to the size of a country. This manifests as a subconscious compulsion that makes others obsessed with reaching you by any means, without knowing why. The desperate and nomadic are exceptionally sensitive to this call.

Think - 600BP

You have mastered the advanced technology of the Anchorites. Everything from advanced AI, antigravity, robots, virtual reality, to even automatons indistinguishable from a human being like the Traveler. You could even build your own Exile with this. The only knowledge this doesn't grant is the teleportation technology within the terminals found throughout the tower. I suppose you missed that lesson.

General Purchases

Terminals - Free, This Jump Only

In various secluded areas throughout the Tower, you will find strange terminals left by the Anchorites. These terminals can be used for wireless communication between floors (assuming there's a middleman to translate). Most notably, these have a mechanism that allows users to physically teleport between terminals they've previously accessed.

Vision - Free

In future Jumps, you can freely superimpose the artstyle and/or soundtrack of Chants of Sennarr onto your own perception.

Clothing - Free / 100BP

You receive a set of clothing appropriate for your background. Travelers receive a long hooded robe that obscures your face, while everyone else receives clothing matching the style of your floor. You can pay extra to receive one set of clothes for each of these six clothing styles.

Ally - 100BP Per

With each purchase, you may create, import, or export a companion. Created or imported companions receive 600BP to spend as they please. Alternatively, you receive an empty slot that can be used to recruit a native of this world as a companion, with their consent.

Speech - 100BP Per

By taking this, you receive your own custom language. It is composed of only a few dozen glyphs, but somehow has the bare minimum words needed to communicate almost anything you would want to in day-to-day life. Your companions automatically receive knowledge of this language.

The particular quirks of this language may have a subtle impact on the culture of those who use it. For instance, a language without individual pronouns would naturally be less individualistic, while one that prioritizes flowery sentence structure would likely make its users place greater emphasis on aesthetics. You can take this multiple times for different languages. Perhaps one language just doesn't have enough complexity, or perhaps each language is designed for a different social context.

Traveler Items

100 BP Item free and others half-off to Travelers.

Book - 100BP

A notebook that never runs out of pages and a pencil that never dulls. Whenever you use this, you will find your hands working unnaturally fast, able to fill a page with lifelike sketches in just a few seconds.

Tablets - 200BP

In future worlds, you will frequently come across ancient stone tablets. These often contain subtle hints to lost aspects of that world' s history, like ancient battles, the existence of a forgotten treasure, or interactions between two civilizations thought to be completely unrelated.

Friend - 400BP

Once or twice a Jump, a friendly young boy who will show up with no explanation. They' re no good in a fight, but they always seem to know a secret path or two whenever you need to get in or out of somewhere. If you find yourself trapped within some kind of illusion or mental prison, a figment of them will appear in your mind to help you escape.

Devotee Items

100 BP Item free and others half-off to Devotees.

Shop - 100BP

Your own cozy little shop that inserts itself in a location of your choosing each Jump. It doesn't have any special properties other than that, but all the paperwork is in order, so it'll at least help you make a living.

Abbey - 200BP

A large abbey to serve as a gathering ground for any who follow your faith. It contains a small garden, church, and graveyard. It inserts itself into a location of your choosing each Jump. You may choose whether only the faithful can enter, or all may come and go as they please.

Potion - 400BP

An infinitely replenishing bottle of the formula graciously created by the Alchemists. When introduced to a plant, it will cure it of all but the most unnatural diseases, and make it far harder, allowing it to survive even in the middle of a desert with barren soil and barely any available water.

Warrior Items

100 BP Item free and others half-off to Warriors.

Bottle - 100BP

A bottle full of the Warriors' alcoholic beverage of choice. The bottle seems to refill itself as soon as one drinks from it. You're likely to get along swimmingly with the Bellman if you bring this with you.

Armory - 200BP

A Warrior can only do so much without a weapon to wield. In your warehouse, you receive an armory that is fully stocked with a variety of weapons and armor made by the Warriors of the Tower. It never seems to run out, so feel free to armor all of your companions if you wish.

Observatory - 400BP

As a former naval culture, the Warriors have a surprisingly advanced grasp of astronomy. You receive a large observatory. Rarely, by gazing through this, the stars will show you subtle hints relevant to your current predicament, like forming the combination to a door blocking you, or pointing you towards the cure to a rampant plague.

Bard / Idiot Items

100 BP Item free and others half-off to Bards / Idiots.
All the below items can take one of two forms or be purchased twice for both. Discounts only apply to the first purchase.

Tools - 100BP

An assortment of tools. This can either be a variety of artistic tools like paints and brushes like those used by Bards, or carpentry tools like hammers and saws, such as those used by the "Idiots".

Troupe - 200BP

An assortment of about a dozen individuals. These could either be Bards, ready to join you in any artistic endeavor on a moment's notice, or Idiots, who silently perform even the most demeaning job without expectation for thanks or a word of complaint (at least not to your face).

Labyrinth - 400BP

A maze-like structure inserted into a location of your choosing each Jump. This could either be a small temple where space and direction change in impossible ways that make traversal impossible without a guide, or a massive winding labyrinth that allows one to quickly reach any major point in a city, again, assuming one knows the way.

Alchemist Items

100 BP Item free and others half-off to Alchemists.

Laboratory - 100BP

Your own small science lab containing all the scientific tools any self-respecting Alchemist could need. Perhaps primitive by the standards of other worlds, but certainly cutting-edge for the Tower.

Library - 200BP

A massive library containing a large assortment of books. It contains books on just about any subjects from alchemy to engineering to history and even mythology. The library is finite in size, but the quality of the information will be improved by the knowledge of each world you Enter.

Mines - 600BP

Despite their scientific and industrial brilliance, the Alchemists only felt the need to name four elements: gold, silver, copper, and carbon. You now have access to four mines, one for each element. If you strip these dry, you' d have enough raw material to build a small town of solid metal. Harvested ores replenish each Jump, and you can choose the location of the mines each Jump, even if it makes no logical sense.

Anchorite Items

100 BP Item free and others half-off to Anchorites.

Chair - 100BP

Anchorites have long-since given up on using their legs. Instead, they spend their whole lives riding around in levitating chairs. A special charging station for this chair has been installed in your warehouse.

Translator - 200BP

This terminal contains a program to create puzzles designed to guide someone to learn entirely new languages, even if they have no prior knowledge of said language and you only have partial knowledge of theirs. Complex languages can be taught in days, simple ones in hours.

Window - 600BP

These notes contain the blueprints behind arguably the Anchorite' s most impressive invention, the Terminals. These terminals allow for wireless communication. More impressively, they seem to somehow allow for those who use them to physically teleport between terminals they' ve previously interacted with. Of course, you need to build and install these terminals yourself if you wish to create such a system.

Scenario

Requires Silence.

How ironic that a being with no voice of their own would unite the voices of the Tower. Your goal is to unite the tower in a manner of your choosing. At minimum, you must personally reach the top of the Tower through whatever means you see fit. Everything else is irrelevant.

As long as you achieve this, you will have completed the scenario. A door to the Tower will be added in the Warehouse, allowing you to return in future Jumps. However, this would be something of an anticlimax.

Should you take this further, an additional reward awaits. This requires you to truly unite the Tower both physically and culturally. Whatever methods you use to achieve this, by the end of this Jump, all the tribes of the Tower must be capable of freely traversing the different floors. In addition, you must bring them together in a more abstract sense. Even if the doors are all physically open, it won't matter if the inhabitants of the tower still refuse to interact or cooperate with each other.

Uniting the languages would be the most relatively straightforward approach to this, but if you have some method in mind to unite them without acting as translator, all that matters is the end result.

Should you achieve all this, the tower will be fully revived, and a peculiar three-dimensional symbol will manifest at the top. This is a fusion, or perhaps the original root of the core principles of each tribe. It is the Devotees' "God", the Warriors' "Duty", the Bards' "Beauty", the Alchemists' "Transformation", and the Anchorites' "Exile".

To sum it up in a single word, it means "Unity".

This symbol is the ultimate muse for any seeking wisdom regarding these six concepts. Simply standing in its presence can allow for epiphanies or sudden strokes of brilliance.

Whether it's a holy man experiencing a crisis of faith (God), a soldier seeking the bravery to put their life on the line for their loved ones (Duty), an artist seeking inspiration for their magnum opus (Beauty), scientist on the verge of a world-changing discovery (Transformation), a hermit seeking the strength to continue their training (Exile), or arch-enemies seeking the wisdom to finally make amends (Unity).

This is just a shape and cannot provide any direct answers. What it can do is provide the inspiration that one needs to reach the answer they were looking for all on their own.

One must stand directly in front of this glyph at the top of the tower. Simply seeing a picture of the glyph will have no such effect.

Should you fail to unite the Tower during your time in this Jump, this glyph will fail to manifest, even if you unite the Tower after this Jump.

Drawbacks

No Drawback cap.

Lost - +0BP / +100BP

You start this Jump stranded on the wrong floor. Most floors are relatively friendly to strangers, so you won't receive points for this unless you pick the second or fifth floor. Even if you're a Bard or Warrior, the Warriors will assume you're just an Impure one in disguise.

Addicted - +100BP

Like the lonely bellman of the second floor, you suffer from some kind of addiction. This could be alcohol, gambling, smoking, etc. No matter what this addiction is, it has reached the point that it is detrimental to your health and has made you the subject of mockery in your community.

Culture - +100BP

You seem to embody all the worst aspects of your culture.

- Travelers have no discernable personality to speak of.
- Devotees are meek yet blindly obsessed with their faith.
- Warriors are violent and incapable of any creative pursuits.
- Bards are assholes while Idiots are spineless.
- Alchemists are obsessed with the pursuit of knowledge to the point it blinds them to any danger or immorality in their experiments.
- Anchorites are trapped in a deep depression that leaves them unwilling to face reality for more than a few minutes.

Clumsy - +200BP

You aren't the most graceful thing in the tower. You drop items into drains, you walk over unstable flooring, and your aim leaves much to be desired. This won't make sneaking around or anything like that outright impossible, just very, very difficult.

Silenced - +200BP

Not only are you unable to speak the language of the other floors, you are unable to speak any languages. You are completely mute, and any efforts to express ideas to others in writing will be unnaturally difficult. Oddly, this doesn't apply when directly translating the words of another.

Dry - +200BP

For some reason, you are incapable of entering any amount of water. Even if it's a simple puddle, your body will outright refuse to step into or over it, as if there's an invisible and immutable wall. Luckily, the Tower is in a desert, so this won't be that common of an issue.

Monster - +300BP

Through a poorly planned Alchemist experiment, you have been mutated into a hideous monster. This makes you inhumanly strong but also degrades your intelligence to that of a feral beast and causes your skin to burn in contact with any light, natural or otherwise. The Alchemists seek to cure you and will soon contact the Warriors to help in capturing you. You must prevent this, as being "cured" will count as death, ending your Chain. If you survive, you may retain this as an altform post-Jump, minus the mental degradation.

Exiled - +300BP

The AI known as Exile has trapped you within their virtual world. From your perspective, it will appear as if the Jump is progressing as normal. The further along you go, the more "glitches" you will face. You will eventually find the path to escape the simulation, but the closer you get to escape, the more directly Exile will influence reality to stop you, like summoning monsters to chase you, locking doors, flipping gravity. They can't do anything that would make escape outright impossible, just exceptionally difficult. Dying in the simulation will send you back to the start. Failing to escape before the end of the Jump will count as Chainfail.

Ending

What comes next?

Go Home

Conclude your Chain and return to your home world.

Stay Here

Conclude your Chain and remain in this world.

Move On

Continue your Chain and enter a new world.

Notes

Jump by Gene.

I don't mind people reposting my Jumps, but I post almost all my completed Jumps onto the /tg/ drive. If you can't access the link to one of my Jumps, check there before trying to contact me directly.

The capstones of the Alchemist and Anchorites origins being more expensive than the others is intentional.

Regarding Lost:

Here's my reasoning for why I'm singling out the second and fifth floor:

- Floors 1, 3, 4 - Generally friendly to strangers. Even if the Bards are assholes, the worst they'll do is insult and prank you.
- Floor 2 - The warriors will kill anyone they don't recognize on-sight.
- Floor 5 - Technically not dangerous, but it's implied the door can only be opened from the outside. So you'll be spending the time it takes the Traveler to reach you surrounded by depressed and borderline suicidal Anchorites. Not pleasant.

Regarding Epiphany:

In-game, the way translating works is that once you've heard enough words and seen them used in a wide enough context, the player character will sketch out various drawings correlating to the meaning of different words you know. Even if you're relying purely on trial-and-error, once you've associated all the drawings on a page with the right words, the game will lock those in, confirming you guessed correctly.

This perk just takes that principle and allows you to apply it to contexts other than language, like investigating a murder.