DARKPLANE

A Campaign Setting

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FOREWORD

Within the pages of this book sits a universe. It's not complete—it never is—and it's not idle. The nations, histories, characters, and plot hooks are alive and waiting for creative minds to explore them. You can do so through games, stories, visual art, or any other platform you can think of. Darkplane *is as much yours now as it is mine.*

The first decades of the 21st century have been, so far, the Age of the Franchise. Serial television is king again, sequels and reboots are dominating the American film industry more than ever before, and every new novel seems to fit somewhere in the middle of one series or another. Even a single book within that series is now routinely adapted into two or three films. It appears we're all thirsting for a setting, not just a story. And why not? There's something profoundly gratifying about a narrative that reaches beyond its own beginning and end.

I began working on the Darkplane *universe at a very young age, but I didn't know it at the time. Like a lot of imaginative kids, I spent all my time (awake or not) spinning stories. There are now a thousand ways to be a storyteller, and a thousand artistic media in which storytellers can find their unique voice. My own stories took many of these forms: writing, music, art, performance, games, and more. I don't claim it was any good. Not, at least, until I'd been at it for a while.*

At some point—it must have been at 17, the age of indefatigable optimism—I undertook the conscious creation of the Darkplane *universe by gluing together places, events, and characters from my various writings. I wanted to form a cohesive web, something wilder and more satisfying than the sum of its parts. In doing this I found the themes getting darker and more cynical as I grew older, the characters increasingly mutilated by the world they lived in. Despite this bleak bent, the stories themselves often spoke in defense of the spiritual (but not necessarily the religious).*

As I pieced it all together, Vinramar began to take shape as a world where the simple honor and optimism of its youth had descended into a confusing and alien night. Of course, this is something like the journey every child takes as he or she grows up. It's also the journey we've experienced as a collective human race. Nothing is simple anymore, and no one is free of scars.

This book is the first offering of the Darkplane *universe, and I hope it won't be the last. Use it however suits your purpose. Play roleplaying games set in it, write stories and novels from it, sketch and paint and sculpt it into a tangible existence. I have for more than 12 years now, and it's been a constant source of joy.*

Graham Ward
July 2017

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INTRODUCTION

God is dead, and the world's been bloody hell ever since. Her son Daemoth slew Her and made Vinramar the stage for battle against his brother Jharus. Over the ages, both her sons filled Vinramar with their children, each eager for agents and captains that could overpower his rival. The children of Jharus became zealous defenders of life, while Daemoth's demonic brood fathered bestial abominations with the captive spirits of the earth. The ranks of both gods swelled until nearly every creature in creation stood for one side or the other.

One thousand three-hundred fifty years ago, another stroke was made—for one side or another—and Jharus' holy empire New Ardon disappeared from the face of the earth. Now all is dark and hush. Daemoth worship spreads unchecked across the world, brought by human colonists who enslave the other races, and hunt Jharus' followers like beasts. The Jharethil, sons of Jharus who once guarded Vinramar from Daemoth, are gone now—murdered, captured, or vanished with their sacred cities. If Jharus has abandoned this world to its fate, it's little wonder.

The very rock of Vinramar groans under a wicked burden. These are the Annoloth, Years of Woe, the last age of this world. Its doom will soon be decided.

—Blood from Heaven by Dorrett Shaw

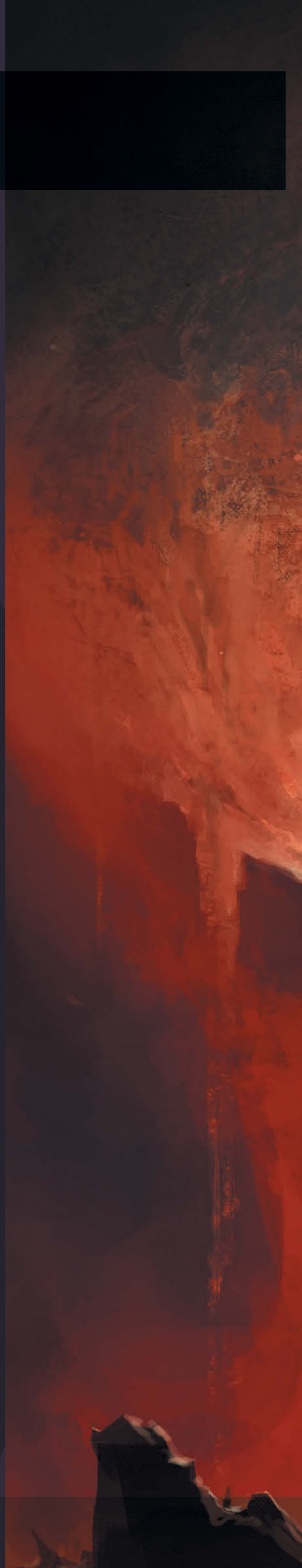
* * *

The Darkplane universe is a setting that blends Gothic horror and weird tales with a rich, culturally diverse history. Whether you're interested in the stories of its people, nations, and religions (which reach back tens of thousands of years), or you want to create its next chapter for yourself, this book is your window into a grisly and compelling world.

Vinramar, the mortal world, can be a perilous place, whether you're leading witch-hunts in Trentsmund's colonial provinces, searching forgotten ruins for the secrets of the cosmos, or taking desperate flight from the cannibal-infested wastelands that were once the kingdoms of Welluxia and Barlom Schoe. Powerful and venerable religions dominate the cultures of the earth, but in a manner closer to the Ancient World than the Medieval one. Not all gods are benevolent, and not all of their priests are pious.

Religious and cultural conflict are central to the Darkplane setting. This is a place where peoples and ideologies a world apart are meeting for the first time. Not since the Elder Days have empires spanned entire continents, or explorers crossed oceans and returned to tell of it. The Western world brings development to other lands, but it also brings oppression and death. In turn, the colonial powers find that the wild holds its own terrors, memories from a time when empires older and more blasphemous possessed the land.

This is not your typical high fantasy setting. Most magic is dangerous and rare, seen as a black art. Humans, who make up the vast majority of the world's population, don't look lightly on the uncanny or the supernatural. The elves, dwarves, halflings, and orcs you find in this book are anything but traditional. The intent of this setting is to challenge the clichés of fantasy roleplaying—but above all, it's meant to frighten and delight you.



The Darkplane Universe

Darkplane is weird fiction. That means its stories rely on an overarching, seductive sense of dread and mystery. It's about cults, hauntings, twisted monsters, and breaking away from moral simplicity. While there are elements of high fantasy, it won't take you long to see that this is not a setting modeled on Medieval Europe. It pulls from the mythologies and folklore of many different cultures in an attempt to support a wide array of horror stories.

This book assumes you're playing the fifth edition of the world's greatest roleplaying game. Here are a few ways that the Darkplane setting will change the core assumptions of your campaign.

The World Appears Mundane. To the everyday inhabitants of Vinramar, magic is only a dark legend. Half-believed traditions of the supernatural prevail among commoners—whispers of spirits, strange magic, and unexplained terrors—but few people come in contact with such things. Darkplane campaigns focus on those special few.

Perilous Horrors Hide Under Every Stone. Beneath the facade of the everyday world lies a nightmare realm, the true reality that would drive common folk to madness. Magic is rare and dangerous. Vengeful abominations creep into the natural world from other dimensions, sowing chaos and fear. Frightful vestiges of pre-human civilizations lie hidden in the earth, and some of their undying denizens live unseen among mortals. When such supernatural forces come in contact with average people, the scars they leave are deep and troubling.

God is Dead. Shortly following the creation, the supreme goddess Sowm was killed by Her son Daemoth, plunging the Heavens into an endless war. The key players in this conflict are unfathomable gods who rarely visit the mortal realm, but their followers are all too eager to drag the world through millennia of bloodshed and carnage. These priests might be showmen, sages, or warmongering vipers, but if their faith is sufficient they can channel powerful wonders.

Industrial Revolution Has Created Wide Technology Gaps. Some cultures resort to ancient practices like hunting and gathering to survive, while others have developed specialized crafts like printing and glass blowing. In Trentsmund, steam power has irrevocably changed the kingdom's infrastructure. Traffic between these societies is still limited enough to preserve the technological disparity.

The Darkplane Encompasses All. The four worlds are surrounded by an endless void beyond natural reality, called the Darkplane. The Darkplane is populated and ruled by mysterious aberrant powers so unnatural that their comprehension is almost beyond mortal minds. Daemoth's slow conquest of the Darkplane has driven these alien horrors into the four worlds, where their presence infects and twists natural creatures into unspeakable aberrations.

WHAT FOLLOWS

This book contains the basic information you need to run a roleplaying game set in the Darkplane universe, and, let's be honest, a little more on top of that. Read the chapters in whichever order suits your interest. If you want to take a look at the new races, classes, and other system options right away, start at the top. If you're more interested in the lore of the Darkplane setting, then you may prefer to start with *Appendix A: The Jhareth Myths*.

Chapter One

RACES

The word of God suggests that mankind was brought into this world as its intended heir. From the first moment of creation, the gods directed the elements to rise and build a home, but for what purpose? Who would dwell there? The children of God had their time as caretakers, and squandered it in petty war. The runt-creatures born of Ethis had, there is reason to believe, a period of rule in the West. The dragon-spawn next claimed it, until the Great Winter of Lachmarum froze their blood and cast them out. Last of all, we the children of the children of God, the imperious light of truth and civilization, the last and greatest of all races, we have become mortal heirs of the immortal earth. This was God's design, to make mankind the inheritor of all he has, and at last bestow upon him eternal life; and even the crown of deity. Shall we shrink from such an end, or graciously rise to our destiny, and to the enacting of God's own will?

—Discourses of Radnoliore Tancini, 84th Nianto of the Urrothic Church

* * *

This setting weaves a detailed tapestry of war, mystery, and horror. Understanding the world requires an understanding of its inhabitants and their relationships. This chapter, discussing the races of Vinramar, is a good place to start.

Many of the races in this chapter are new takes on familiar fantasy creatures. If there's a race that isn't presented here, that doesn't necessarily mean that it doesn't exist in the setting. Maybe creatures of that type are just extremely rare. The important thing is that the GM and player are comfortable with the choices made at character creation.

The new race options presented in the following pages play an important role in the history and character of Vinramar. They're divided into six broad groups: the Afflicted, the Elder Kindreds, the Fey Kindreds, Humans, the Maahisites, and the Spawn of Lakhi. Most of these groups include both playable races and monsters, but the races presented in this chapter (with the possible exception of vampires) are all playable races.

Bear in mind that humans are the most populous race. They dominate most of the world with diverse cultures that look on those different from them with revulsion and distrust. These racial tensions can create lots of interesting conflict at the table, but don't let them kill the fun. As a GM, make sure you and your players are on the same page about the consequences of choosing a given race.

Common Races

Vinramar is made up of many intelligent creatures, including a host of obscure cultures and monsters. This section focuses more on the common races available to player characters—mimessarchs, vorruqun, werekin, daemons, jharethil, elves, humans, gugrum, heathfolk, sarrow, telmatra, and dragonborn.

Almost half of these races (elves, humans, sarrow, telmatra, and dragonborn) have traits that can be found in other rulebooks. The information in this chapter focuses on how those races are molded to fit the Darkplane setting. For the new races, you'll find full descriptions including backgrounds, traits, and subraces.

To give an impression of the relations and power dynamics between the various common races, the Common Races table on page 12 categorizes them in the following ways.

Common Regions

This category lists the regions in which a given race is most commonly found. See the map below for a visualization of settlement patterns circa 1350 *Annoloth*.

Rarity

To provide a general sense of how its people fit into the larger picture of cultural relations, each race has one or more of the following descriptors. Races listed as common are found in large numbers in several regions. Uncommon races are found in large numbers within their native regions. A rare race is so secluded or dispersed that few folk have ever come in contact with them. Hidden races often disguise themselves as human, successfully enough that their true numbers can only be guessed at.

Status

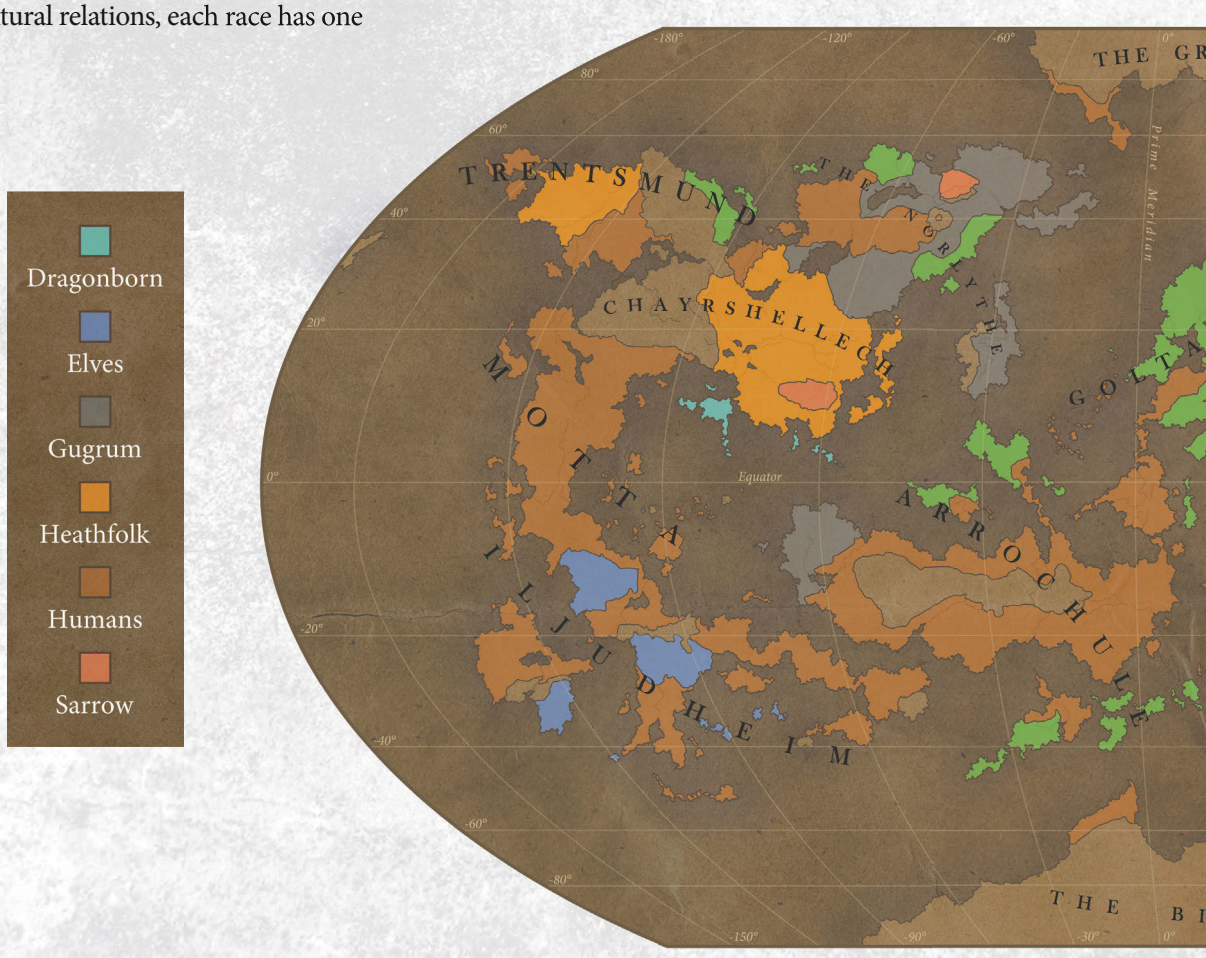
Every race is described by one or more of the following statuses, defining how its people fit in the larger picture of cultural relations.

Dominant: Races that are dominant are seen owning slaves, colonizing other lands, and exercising authority over other cultures.

Dwindling: These races are diminishing in numbers over time, whether because of pestilence, war, or subjugation.

Enslaved: These races are in captivity or servitude to others on a wide scale.

Thriving: Races that are thriving are increasing their population at an above-average rate. Their borders are expanding as they settle new areas.



Common Races

Race	Common Region	Rarity	Status
The Afflicted			
Mimessarchs	—	Hidden	Unknown
Vorruqun	Perrith Gorr, Wellusk	Hidden	Thriving
Werekin	Arwest	Uncommon	Thriving
Elder Kindreds			
Daemons	—	Hidden	Unknown
Jharethil	—	Hidden	Dwindling
Fey Kindreds			
Elves	Arwest, Iljudheim	Rare	Dwindling
Half-elves	Arwest, Iljudheim	Rare	Unknown
Humans	All		
Ansë	Iljudheim	Common	Thriving
Drael	Motta, Trentsmund	Common	Dominant, Thriving
Forroth	Arrochule, Goltaraim	Common	Dominant, Thriving
Omhatra	Arwest, Perrith Gorr, Syrikhal, Wellusk	Common	Dwindling, Enslaved
Quitzál	Motta, the Norlythe	Common	Dwindling, Enslaved
Maahisites			
Gugrum	Chayrshellech, Motta, the Norlythe	Common	Enslaved, Thriving
Heathfolk	Chayrshellech, Trentsmund	Common	Dominant, Thriving
Sarrow	Chayrshellech, the Norlythe, Trentsmund	Uncommon	Dwindling, Enslaved
Telmatra	Arrochule, Goltaraim, the Norlythe	Common	Thriving
Spawn of Lakhi			
Dragonborn	Chayrshellech, Syrikhal	Rare	Dwindling, Enslaved

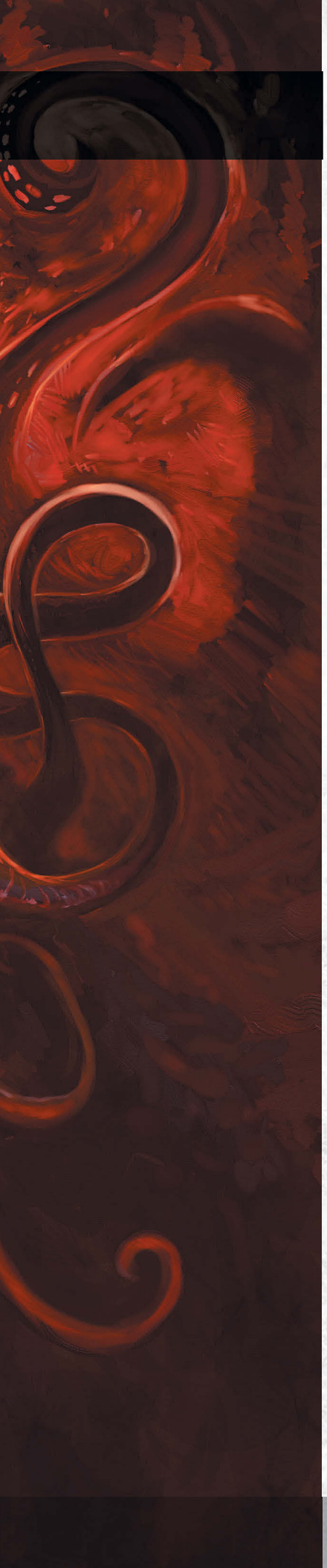
Mimessarch

The looming threat of the Darkplane is an ever-present reality for these creatures, who natural form is mutated by contact with aberrations. Some develop their aberrant qualities through contact with the unnatural climes of the Darkplane or its native creatures. Others experience sudden physiological changes only to discover that an aberrant taint has lain dormant in their bloodline. Whatever the cause, mimessarchs manifest a powerful deformity while maintaining the at times vague appearance of their born race.

Mimessarchs know that they can't escape their fate. The unnatural deformity remains as a permanent mark of the Darkplane's influence over them. Many attempt to regain a semblance of normal life, hiding the deformity and the abilities it grants. Others throw caution to the wind and embrace the fear their alien features inspire.

Mimessarchs always give birth to mimessarchs, though the natural race may prevail until later in the child's life. Communities have been discovered that span several generations of hereditary mimessarchs. Such families cover a wide spectrum of deformity, from those who have not changed at all to those that are distorted beyond recognition. The deformity of the child nearly always matches that of the parent.

Whether reclusive or bold, a mimessarch is defined by his or her relationship to the aberrant. Some worship and revere powerful Darkplane entities. Others despise and fight against their heritage.



Twisted in Body and Mind

In many instances, the unnatural metamorphosis of a mimessarch has drastic psychological ramifications, ranging from self-loathing to schizophrenia and anti-social behavior. Those who don't shrink from society by their own choice are often shunned or driven away.

The Darkplane may deform mimessarchs, but it compensates them with flashes of genius. The touch of madness brings an eccentric brilliance that can make a mimessarch a valuable ally. Ironically these moments of genius are interspersed with strange compulsions that can confuse and offend those who associate with the mimessarch. Phobias, addictions, obsessions, and odd speech patterns are the everyday fare of these unfortunate creatures.

Most mimessarchs develop a cynical philosophy. They disbelieve in moral strictures, dismiss religion, and spurn offers of spiritual redemption, particularly those that come from organized groups. Their pursuit of greatness is most often motivated by a desire to conquer, harness, or minimize their aberrant nature. Some do so through studying psionics or arcane magic, others through physical training.

Degenerative Deformity

A mimessarch's appearance depends entirely on two factors: her natural race and the type of Darkplane deformity she carries. Sarrow and other small creatures that become tainted retain their diminutive size, while more physically imposing races maintain that stature.

Even individual cases of the same deformity manifest in different ways, however. Tentacles may be of different colors, and aberrant countenances may have wildly different features. Common to most Darkplane deformities are tuberous extrusions, a slimy mucus coating over the skin, and the presence of anomalous orifices.

When properly disguised, a mimessarch can pass as a normal member of his or her natural race. Such a disguise can be challenging to pull off, especially when the deformity covers large portions of the body or face. At best the mimessarch looks awkward but natural. Many make no effort at disguise whatsoever.

Status As a Means of Protection

Shunned and gawked at by others, mimessarchs are forced to distinguish themselves as deserving of respect. Unlike other races that hide their true nature, they don't necessarily depend on anonymity for survival. Though they do what they can to hide their deformity, mimessarchs are more likely to protect themselves through status. Whatever the method, it's common for these outcasts to obsessively seek to prove to the world that they're more than freaks. Often this manifests as a pursuit of power and station, which defends them from derision.

This isn't always difficult for mimessarchs to achieve. The experience of staring the mad cosmos in the face leaves them with a glimpse of knowledge beyond mortal reach and makes them prone to flashes of incredible genius. Such preternatural insight, however, can burden the mind with spurts of psychosis. The particular conditions differ, as does their severity. Many mimessarchs manage to conceal their madness well enough to achieve great things.

Hidden Communes

It is rare that a mimessarch assimilates seamlessly into mainstream society. Some seek the sequestered work of a farmer or laborer, while others rob and raid for their living. It's common for mimessarchs to have dealings and connections in underground communities such as organized crime networks or hidden arcane cabals.

There are households, colonies, even entire villages where mimessarchs gather for refuge. Most are run by a family or individual whose bloodline is irreversibly tainted. A few are organized by chapters of Senfaerist monks who are familiar with the terrors of the Darkplane threat.

Mimessarch havens range from communal and benevolent to abhorrent and brutal. Most are unsanitary; all can be frightening to the average person. Few of them are appealing to those inexperienced with the aberrant, or bothered by mental illness.

Climbing the Ladder

Because the background of each mimessarch is so unique, they can be found in a variety of roles in the adventuring world. If they haven't retired from public view, they chase pursuits connected to hierarchy, such as membership in adventurer guilds. Achievement and recognition help them forget the repulsiveness to which the Darkplane has consigned them.

Mimessarch Names

Mimessarchs generally keep their given name. See the examples of names provided in the description of the race you choose as your Natural Heritage.

Mimessarch Traits

Your mimessarch character gains a variety of unique traits stemming from his or her Darkplane deformity.

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

Age. The Darkplane infection kills many living things outright, and mimessarchs have been known to die early of biological complications resulting from their deformities. There are also those whose changing bodies remain living far beyond what would be expected of their natural race. It is yours to decide which you are.

Alignment. There isn't much room in a mimessarch's life for moral certainty. Having the insight they do into the alien cosmos tends to shake their confidence in virtue or principle. That being so, mimessarchs gravitate toward neutral alignments.

Size. Your size is determined by the race you choose as your Natural Heritage.

Speed. Your speed is determined by the race you choose as your Natural Heritage.

Aberration. You are considered an aberration as well as a humanoid. You have advantage when making Intelligence checks related to knowledge of aberrations and the Darkplane.

Horrifying. You have proficiency in the Intimidation skill. As an action, you can attempt to horrify one creature that can see you that isn't an aberration, undead, or construct. Make a Charisma (Intimidation) check contested by the creature's Wisdom. If you win, it is frightened of you until the end of its next turn.

Unless you're wearing a suitable disguise (at your GM's discretion), you add your proficiency bonus to the DC of any Charisma (Performance) or Charisma (Persuasion) check you make.

Natural Heritage. Choose a race other than mimessarch. You are also considered a member of that race. You gain the size, speed, and languages of the race you choose as your Natural Heritage.

Languages. You speak the languages of the race you choose as your Natural Heritage.

Darkplane Deformity. Your body has been twisted in a way that enhances your biological capabilities. The deformed area might be easily hidden, such as the back or abdomen, or it might be in a glaring place like the face. Decide with your GM which one of the following deformities you have and where it is.

Aberrant Visage

Your face is a twisted, alien monstrosity. Maybe your eyes are huge and repulsive, or maybe you have a slopping, slimy maw in place of a mouth. Perhaps feelers or long fangs protrude from your face. Whatever the form, it likely affects your voice and mannerisms—and enhances your brain and respiratory system. From the shoulders down, however, you might pass as your natural heritage.

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution and Intelligence scores increase by 1.

Beyond Sustenance. You do not need to breathe. This doesn't protect you against poisons or hazards unless they explicitly must be inhaled to take effect.

Darkvision. Your aberrant eyes allow you to see better in limited light. You have darkvision up to a distance of 60 feet.

Stark Raving Terror. Your proficiency bonus is doubled when making a Charisma (Intimidation) check to horrify a creature with your appearance. You likewise double your proficiency bonus when adding it to the DC of Charisma (Performance) and Charisma (Persuasion) checks. With your GM's approval, you can use a suitable disguise to temporarily ignore this trait.

Additional Eyes

You have extra eyes bubbling from irregularly located orifices. There might be one extra eye or thirty—either way, they grant you heightened perception, including the ability to see in absolute dark.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 2.

All Eyes. You have advantage when making Wisdom (Perception) checks, and you cannot be surprised.

Perfect Darkvision. Your aberrant eyes allow you to see better in complete darkness. You can see in darkness and dim light as if it were bright light, up to a distance of 60 feet. This vision is as detailed and effective as your normal vision.

Amorphous Limbs

Your arms and legs are elastic to a moderate degree. They flex oddly and give you a shambling gait, but allow you to move quite fast when occasion requires . You can get into narrow and hard-to-reach places, and can elongate your appendages several feet. The limbs themselves might look slimy, scaly, or swollen.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 2.

Elasticity. Your speed is 40 feet. Your melee reach increases to 10 feet, and if you aren't wearing armor you can reach your limbs into a space as small as three inches wide without squeezing.

Sensory Spindles

Your body is partly covered in six-inch, fibrous spindles. They might extend from your hands, arms, legs, face, or other areas. When the spindles touch a surface, they can read vibrations to give you a clear idea of other moving objects that touch the same surface. If you're in water, this means you can sense other creatures in the water. If underground, you can sense vibrations in the stone that tell you what other creatures might lurk about.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 2.

Tremorsense. You have the ability to "see" creatures and objects within 20 feet, even if they are hidden, obscured, or invisible. Both you and the creature or object must be touching the same object or surface (the ground, water, a wall, etc.).

Tentacles

You have one or more tentacles, up to 4 feet in length, that sprout from anywhere on your body—perhaps your arms, legs, or abdomen. Their coordination is somewhat limited, but they make you very fast in water. They can be used to apply force to objects, but cannot hold items.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 2.

Cephalopod. You have a swim speed of 50 feet. Your unarmed attacks deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage, and creatures grappled by your tentacles have disadvantage on saving throws to escape.

The Afflicted

Though not entirely composed of kindred races, the Afflicted is a racial group composed of those whose origins are connected to the supernatural. Whether through divine malediction, powerful elemental magic, or infection, individuals of these races have been fundamentally changed from what they once were. Most of them are self-propagating—they can bear children, and those children maintain the changed nature of the parent.

Vampires, vorruqun, and the werekin are cousin races. The **vampires** are cursed descendants of Iarmov the Maimed, who was unwillingly transformed into the first undead being by Ulmhasa, primordial goddess of shadow. Iarmov's offspring were all cursed with undeath, that is until Fimbuleth, a powerful vampire and sorcerer, used primal magic to remove the malediction from himself and his children. His curse changed from vampirism to lycanthropy, and he thus became the father of the **werekin**.

The **vorruqun** are those mortals who have been infected by the blighted lands where the vampires dwell. Their blood becomes cold to the touch, and their appetites turn wild, causing them to feed on the flesh of other mortals. After the Desolation of Wellusk, the wide lands of the East were overrun with vorruqun, who continue to prowl the wastelands in packs. Their lust for human flesh will follow them to the grave.

Mimessarchs are not akin to the other four Afflicted, except that their physiology has been permanently altered by unnatural forces. They are the victims of Darkplane infection, and thus have developed alien appendages and senses. Most mimessarchs hide themselves away, but in some areas of the world there are small settlements, no larger than villages, where mimessarchs gather.

Vampire

Ancient as the world itself, the vampire civilization descends from Iarmov the Maimed, one of the four sons of Daemoth the Creator. After Iarmov was cursed with undeath, he fled to the East of Vinramar, where his children live to this day. Their empire Perrith Gorr has emerged from terrible decline into a new golden age, thanks to the apotheosis of their dead emperor Volgothyde.

There are five ruling families among the vampires: Bromraw, Calchoth, Carachun, Ferrialum, and Mannen. Each of these houses has a unique culture and dialect, making unity among the vampires more of a show than reality. The ruling families harbor thousand-year-old grudges against one another, but are willing to work together for the good of the empire, especially now that their former liege has returned to rule them as a god.

Those vampires that leave Perrith Gorr do so for various reasons. There are plenty of dishonorable motives—greed for blood not least—but some have a genuine objection to the horrors of vampire decadence. These exiles can control their appearance enough to blend in well with humans.

If you're interested in playing a vampire as a player character, see page 141, which discusses characters with the Vampire Bloodline Sorcerous Origin.

Ageless Death

Vampires are tall and lean, with red eyes and a deathly pale complexion that makes them look like fresh corpses. Because they can manipulate their form to some degree, vampires can maintain a youthful cast indefinitely. This isn't always practiced, however, since vampires take pride in their age. The older one looks, the more respect she commands among her own. Many vampires sacrifice beauty for the pride of looking decrepit.

Without mortal blood to drink, vampires experience profound hunger. To alleviate the pain, they import a steady flow of blood chattel, mortals who are corralled and fed by drops to the vampires that own them. Eventually, each captive is infected and becomes a vorruc, at which point the master discards them. Traditionally, hunting parties would set out monthly to collect enough chattel for each estate, but since the Desolation of Wellusk their stores have been filled to overflowing.

A Crumbling Aristocracy

The lower and middle classes of vampire society have long since dissolved into nothing. Those who remain are a class of nobles unable to support any type of social infrastructure. They live in the remote northeast, bringing slaves and blood chattel into their crumbling ruins to play the unenviable part of the vampires' subjects. This paper-thin charade is maintained only because the slaves are kept too weak and terrified to revolt.

Because all vampires are part of this decadent aristocracy, they tend to be extraordinarily arrogant. Solitary privilege has defined their existence for thousands upon thousands of years. When dealing with mortals, vampires are dismissive and self-serving, but diabolically patient.

Vampires' longevity causes them to further lose touch with the mortal world, where the cultural landscape changes so quickly they can't keep up. This makes even the most cutting-edge vampire seem old-fashioned. To deal with the rapid passing of generations, vampires take to treating an entire bloodline as one individual, holding the heir of a family responsible for the actions of an ancestor centuries-dead. More than one human has found himself unaccountably assailed for grievances long past.

Vampire Names

Vampires take great delight in the invention of names. Few names of theirs are reused, since to them naming a child is as important as the conception itself. In addition to a given name, a vampire takes the name of her closest ruling family.

Male Names: Amuris, Ankath, Drunath, Gonkhamath, Honad, Incarna, Mhelsiath, Osarath, Ramhethath, Thyan, Unvoliath, Vemhed, Volsiath, Zomhad

Female Names: Adha, Apankha, Ezmhelta, Ghata, Gonthera, Imhezra, Nyamhi, Olamhet, Pamhul, Romhelsa, Simha, Sombentara, Sut, Tiankh, Zolthep

Family Names: Bromraw, Calchoth, Carachun, Ferrialum, Mannen

Vampire Traits

The following traits provide cultural information about vampire characters.

Alignment. Few vampires feel compassion for the mortals they feed on. The majority of their kind find great pleasure in the taste of blood, tipping them toward neutral and evil alignments. A vampire can survive without the taste of blood, or by feeding on animals, but to them the taste is putrid. It takes a truly noble soul to forswear the good stuff.

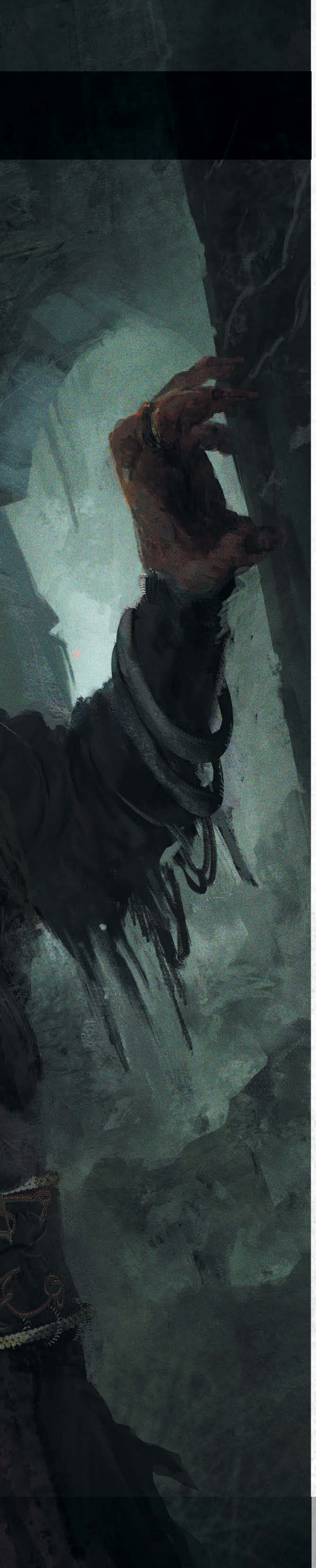
Languages. Vampires traditionally speak their own language, called Mhelthep. It has rolling r's and smooth-sounding vowels.

Vorruc

Victims of a tainted land, the vorruqun are a form of quasi-vampire who become dependent on consuming living flesh to stay alive. The infection usually enters their body through food. Crops grown in the blighted earth of Perrith Gorr, and even animals fed on those crops, can carry the plague that transforms the eater gradually into a vorruc. For the thousands of humans imported to the vampire lands as blood chattel and slave labor, the vorruc infection is a death sentence, since during captivity they'll eat nothing but corrupted food. Once defiled themselves, they're cast off into the blighted wild to starve for want of flesh.

Only undead in the strictest sense, vorruqun maintain a considerable intelligence once infected. In most circumstances, they're indistinguishable from the people they were before succumbing to the blight. It's only once they become hungry that the inner beast in unleashed.

Most of the vorruqun that find themselves in settled areas make an effort to hide their infection, feeding in secret, and maybe even avoiding the flesh of intelligent creatures. In Wellusk, however, where the survivors of the Desolation hide among the ruins, the vorruqun lure their former friends into dark places and consume them without remorse.



Blood Is Thicker Than Water

Vorruqun are largely ruled by their need to feed, making them somewhat more short-sighted than true vampires. There isn't much they won't do in exchange for sustenance. Some prefer blood, others flesh, but none can live without one or the other. Infected meat, they soon learn, does them no good. Only living, natural creatures can sustain them. Somewhat surprisingly, their indifference to one another as food causes the vorruqun to gather in codependent, semi-nomadic packs.

Pack life can be dull between feedings, but strong ties develop among the bonded vorruqun. For most, the pack is the only family they will ever have. Instinct and circumstance make this union of utmost importance to them. A vorruc values it above all else, and will sacrifice almost anything to maintain it. Those rare packs that are comprised of blood relatives infected together are unrivaled in their mutual devotion.

The Devil's Grin

When vorruqun haven't fed on fresh blood or live meat in several days, they begin to look pale and grey-eyed. Their blood rushes into their lips, cheeks, gums, and tongue, causing the entire mouth to swell like a snout, and their teeth to slide outward into prominent fangs. The "devil's grin," as it's called, is truly frightening.

When well fed, new vorruqun will look almost exactly like natural creatures. This camouflage is a valuable asset to those who wish to ensnare the living, or to resume their former life. By and large, the vorruqun are infected humans, since the vampires keep a full stock for labor and food. It's almost unheard of to encounter a vorruc who once belonged to any other race.

There are some vorruqun, especially those that last to an older age, whose bodies fall apart under the strain of the disease. Their face becomes mask-like as it sags and rots from the mouth outward. Bruised growths develop on their skin, and their pores weep a black ooze. The sight can be incomparably grotesque.

Kill in Secret

Feeding on flesh isn't taken well by the living. A vorruc in most circumstances will never reveal his or her infection except to other vorruqun. Fortunately, they can sense each other, making it easy to know who's undead and who's alive. Those vorruqun who regularly come in contact with the living are forced to live a double life. The most successful become adept at navigating multiple identities and perpetuating elaborate lies in order to survive, never quite letting anyone get to know them. Trust is a luxury they can't afford.

Strength in Numbers

Of course, vorruqun make up for their aloofness within the pack, where there are no secrets. Their den becomes sacrosanct, a place where their family feasts as one. In the wastelands of Wellusk, the central hotbed of vorruc hunting, packs take shelter in whatever naturally secluded areas present themselves. In the city, however, they can take their time to build the family a true temple. Often urban dens are lavish, cleverly hidden in plain sight.

Procreation is not possible for vorruqun, and so they increase their numbers by exchanging blood with select victims. This practice provides steady food and allows the victim to eventually join the clan as a vorruc.

Stranger danger

When choosing a race from the Afflicted racial group, bear in mind that they have a sinister reputation among common folk, which is why their settlement pattern is extremely cohesive. All of them can be dangerous, especially those who have unconventional appetites. Likely, your best tactic will be to pass yourself off as a human or other more commonly accepted race. Then, when you trust certain individuals not to kill you upon learning your true nature, you might feel comfortable telling them the truth.

One of the most difficult struggles for members of Afflicted races is learning to overcome the often negative influence of their cultural background. Werekin notoriously hunt humans, and think of them in the way that humans themselves think of animals. Learning to cooperate with and even trust a human can be a fun roleplaying challenge.

The vorruqun, on the other hand, will never be rid of their hunger for living flesh. Animals will only satisfy them for so long. Be careful that your character deals with this hunger in ways that enhance everyone's enjoyment of the game. Don't wantonly try to eat other player characters.

Without hope for continuing a family in any other way, blood exchanges have become something of a sacred rite to them.

Those vorruqun that make their way to civilization find feeding easy, provided they can cover their tracks. In a city teeming with living flesh, a united network of feeders can put off their inevitable death for many years. Needless to say, those that haven't joined a pack will search tirelessly for one.

Eternal Hunters

Almost all vorruqun are adventurers by strict definition. If they survive for any significant time, they see a lot of action. Of course, few keep close company with the living, but vorruqun with a gift for deceit can manage to earn human trust when they need to. Such infiltrators don't mind rubbing shoulders with their meals before eating. Whether stalking through desolate woods or elegant drawing rooms, vorruqun are peerless hunters.

Vorruc Names

Some vorruqun may use the given name from their former life, but most invent an array of new identities for dealing with the living. Within the pack, they bestow sacred hunting names upon one another. These names have no particular conventions, since they're drawn from circumstance, history, myth, or simply invented.

Vorruc Traits

You have a number of special traits as a result of the vorruc infection.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity, Constitution, and Wisdom scores each increase by 1.

Age. While possessed of an unnatural vitality, the vorruqun are prone to early death from want of living flesh. Most of them have been afflicted for less than 10 years, although the age at which the infection set into their flesh varies greatly. You decide whether you're old or young.

Alignment. Obviously, there are many neutral and evil vorruqun—the appetite for flesh can shake even the most virtuous souls. There are those who painstakingly maintain their morals, feeding on animals and resisting the urge to kill. It can be done, but it's a lonely road that often ends in a quick death.

Size. Vorruqun retain their previous human stature. Your size is Medium.

Speed. 30 feet.

Blood Frenzy. When you see a creature that bleeds take damage, you gain temporary hit points equal to your Wisdom modifier, and you can use your reaction to move 10 feet, provoking no opportunity attacks.

Darkvision. Your senses were heightened as the vorruc blight spread through your body, and you've only honed the sharpness of your vision. You have darkvision up to a distance of 60 feet.

Vampiric Corruption. You are considered a vampire and undead in addition to being a humanoid. While an undead creature is within 30 feet of you, you sense that it is undead.

After you eat live flesh or drink fresh blood, add double your Constitution modifier when spending hit dice to heal during your next short rest before sunset. You cannot use this ability again until after you finish a long rest.

For every 5 days you go without eating live flesh or drinking fresh blood, your Constitution and Charisma scores are reduced by 2 points. When your Constitution score reaches 0, you die. Once you do consume flesh or blood, your Constitution and Charisma scores immediately restore to their true value.

Predator. You have advantage on ability checks to track or spot creatures.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write one regional language and one extra language of your choice.

Vorruqun and Vampires

The existence of the vorruqun raises the question of how they differ from vampires. Both are intelligent, both are undead, and both can pass as human. The distinction lies in the unnatural vitality of vampires. Although they thirst for blood, they aren't capable of dying unless destroyed by one of a handful of methods.

Vorruqun, on the other hand, must continue to eat and drink as other mortals. The hunger for flesh is added to their regular sustenance, and neglect of either can kill them. They also age, tire, and can die from natural causes such as disease or exposure. They're only considered undead because their bodies are infected with a vampiric blight.

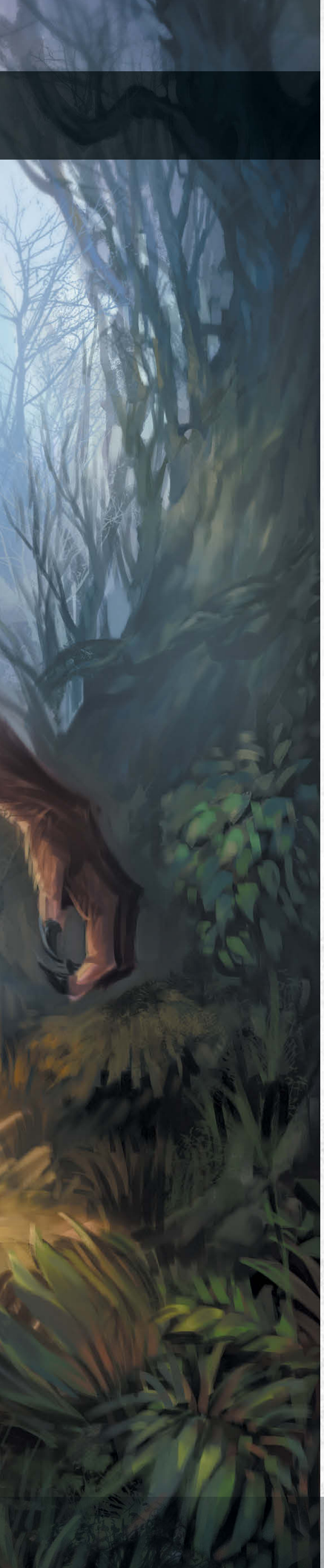
From a cosmetic perspective, you can usually distinguish between vorruqun and vampires by how repulsive they are. Vorruqun (especially the old ones) are plagued and hideous. Vampires have control over their features, often appearing lovelier than they truly are.

Werekin

Most shudder when they hear stories of the bloodthirsty lycanthropes, men and women cursed to transform into raging beasts and kill their loved ones. But the truth about the werekin is that they come from an ancient and proud civilization. These primal creatures have control over their animal form, and don't view the change as a curse. For them it's a pivotal part of their connection to nature.

Each werekin is born with a spiritual connection to a specific totem animal, which it can shapechange into at will. Family members usually share the same animal form, grouping into clans of similar species. Though they usually remain in a humanoid form in the company of other races, werekin often prefer to treat with one another in a hybrid form, blending human and animal features together. The werekin of Arwest consider this shape nature's crowning achievement.

The totem animals of the werekin are diverse. The most common—bears, boars, great cats, jackals, rats, ravens, spiders, and wolves—are included in this section. If you have a hankering to play something rarer (like a weregiraffe, for example), work with your GM to decide which totem animal to use as a model, and how to customize the traits to the particular creature you prefer.



The Best of Beast and Man

The werekin can live as humans or as animals if they choose, but to them there is no greater treasure than to bring the best parts of each into one form. Humans have opposable thumbs, refined speech, and can maintain a high standard of hygiene. Animals are connected to the earth, free of material bonds, and have an incredible physique. For werekin it's possible to embody all of these traits in one form.

One of the werekin's highest values is freedom. Whether subjected to the will of an outsider or trapped in a confined space, werekin who feel their liberty restricted will respond like a cornered wolf. They can be harsh and savage when pursuing something they want, but when given respect and space, the werekin are wise and honorable.

Hybrid Animals

The totem animal of a werekin defines its forms. As humanoids, they tend to be thick-haired and have a semblance of the animal's coloration. In that form they can pass easily as human. In animal form they're indistinguishable from any other of the species, although at times their uncanny intelligence gives them away.

Werekin's third and greatest form is a hybrid of the previous two. They maintain an upright, bipedal posture as well as dexterous fingers that can use tools and weapons. Their hands, legs, and face, however, shift in the direction of the animal, perhaps growing claws, fangs, snouts, and elongated ears. Hair or feathers commonly cover the entire body, and some sprout wings, a tail, or extra legs, depending on the totem animal. Whichever breed they're born into, the werekin's hybrid form is to be respected and feared.

Know Your Place

As apex predators, werekin have the rule of the animal kingdom. In their homeland, they commonly keep beasts of all kinds living among their offspring as a part of the clan. Being smarter and stronger than the animals they can communicate with creates a unique relationship, in which their pets are treated more as children. Even among werekin family members, there's a strong hierarchy of dominance that everyone learns to respect. Knowing one's spot in the pecking order chain can make the difference between survival and exile.

This attitude carries over into the life of any werekin that leaves home. They tend to act entitled to leadership, an attitude that stems from years of topping the food chain. When others threaten their dominance or infringe on their territory, they react aggressively. But if another is proven stronger or more capable, they'll fall in line quickly and quietly.

The Kinlands

The whole island of Arwest is divided among the various clans of werekin. Some settle in permanent dwellings while others roam, but each clan staked its hunting grounds many centuries ago, and they've grown used to the arrangement. Outsiders are treated with minimal tolerance, and unless they present a serious challenge, the werekin will attempt to drive them out quickly.

Where are the lycanthropes?

In Darkplane, werekin are by far the most common type of lycanthropes. The traditional varieties presented elsewhere still exist, including their characteristic weapon immunities. These werekin are predatory champions, annointed by the Anuli priests of Fimbuleth. Once consecrated, the champion's bite brings the "blessing" of lycanthropy to its victims.

When a werekin character is cursed with lycanthropy, it becomes the type of lycanthrope that corresponds to its totem animal, not the type corresponding to the lycanthrope that cursed it. When your GM determines that your lycanthropy causes you to shapechange, your ability scores remain the same but your lycanthrope traits temporarily replace all of your other racial traits for the duration of the change.

The five clans are, in order of dominance: Anul (jackalweres), Kanari (werecats), Hessaria (werewolves), Morum (wereravens), Hissicah (werespiders), and Tomai (wererats). Each has a different internal pecking order, uses different building methods, and has a unique form of cultural dress.

Outside of the kinlands, some scattered werekin settlements exist. The local humans treat these outsiders with disgust, and the werekin return the sentiment. A history of war between their peoples exacerbates this tension, so the werekin prefer to inhabit secluded havens on the outskirts of Syserach, Syservol, and other eastern nations. Though wilderness-dwellers, they often adopt the dress and language of humans neighbors. These errant werekin have lukewarm relations with their relatives in the Kinlands, who consider them weak and culturally tainted.

Frontier Freedom

The free spirit of the werekin makes them accomplished hunters, trackers, and warriors, especially on their wild home turf. Those that brave the strange urban world beyond the kinlands are often appalled at developed societies and their irreverence toward nature. They excel in pursuits that capitalize on their senses and a connection to the land.

Werekin Names

There are three naming ceremonies that werekin undergo during their lives. The first is at birth, where the whole litter is simply given a diminutive form of its mother's name (such as Jahampat or Jahami, if the mother's name is Jaham).

At the werekin's first hunt, she receives a predator name. These names are usually associated with the werekin's attributes as a hunter, like Mitbarak (stray-seeker), Urig (swift), or Koldakhma (powerful in her steadiness).

The third and final name, given only to females, is chosen by the werekin herself at the naming of her first litter. This self-given name is shared between the mother and each of her children until they receive their own predator names, a practice meant to emphasize the shared destiny and honor of the family. Males usually use their predator name until death.

All of these names are derived from the rich Khivmat language, which doesn't distinguish gender.

Khivmat Names: Akavhun, Althai, Ankham, Arak, Berhud, Bitmarah, Daar, Durah, Dulminak, Eken, Enkhulu, Etorah, Ezarham, Guthai, Himsun, Idartma, Jaham, Jodvah, Koldakma, Kuhud, Mitbarak, Mokh, Nonhah, Omkat, Otmarkai, Pondakmah, Tukotah, Ualmah, Urig, Vigvai, Zaktah

Werekin Traits

Because of your ancestral connection to beasts, you have a number of unique capabilities, including the power to shapechange into a particular totem animal.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

Age. Werekin live a ferocious lifestyle, often dying on the hunt or in ritual bloodsport. These incidents aside, however, they live a similar lifespan to humans. The clans both fear and revere their own mortality, one of the chief distinctions between them and their distant cousins the vampires.

Alignment. Although they tend to respect proven authority figures, werekin are suspicious of anything that might restrict their freedom. Most prefer chaotic alignments. There are examples, though, of strong lawful figures in their society.

Size. Some werekin shift in size, depending on the form they assume. Your size is Medium in your humanoid form. Unless a change is noted under your Shapechanger trait, your size remains the same in your other forms.

Speed. 30 feet.

Animal Senses. You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that require hearing or smell.

Languages. You can speak Khivmat and one regional language. Whether you can read or write is up to you and the GM. Khivmat is a growling language that has no written alphabet, but a rich history of oral poetry.

Subrace. Your werekin has a particular totem animal that determines the nature of its animal and hybrid forms, and it might determine some of your personality traits or cultural heritage. Common totem animals are listed on the following pages.

Bear

Few werebears associate with the other werekin. They have no clan and no allies, perhaps because of their fiercely territorial nature. Some live in huts, others in the naked forests.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 2.

Kindred Spirits. You have advantage when making Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks dealing with bears, including black bears, brown bears, and polar bears.

Shapechanger. You can use an action to polymorph into one of three forms: a bear form, a humanoid form, or a bear-humanoid hybrid form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. While in bear or hybrid form, your size is Large, you gain a climb speed of 30 feet, and you can only speak with bears. Your other statistics remain the same. Your bear form cannot hold items or cast spells.

Bite. While in bear or hybrid form, you can make a Bite attack, which is a melee weapon attack. You have proficiency with your Bite attacks, and deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

Claw. While you have an empty hand in bear or hybrid form, you can make a Claw attack, which is a melee weapon attack. Your claws are considered finesse weapons, and deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

Boar

Like the werebears, wereboars are clanless renegades living apart from their kin. Hiding out in swamps and the densest forests, they hunt even their fellow werekin.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength and Constitution scores increase by 1.

Kindred Spirits. You have advantage when making Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks dealing with pigs, including boars and dire boars.

Shapechanger. You can use an action to polymorph into one of three forms: a boar form, a humanoid form, or a boar-humanoid hybrid form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. While in boar or hybrid form, you can only speak with pigs, and you can take the Disengage action using a bonus action. Your other statistics remain the same. Your boar form cannot hold items or cast spells.

Tusk. While in boar or hybrid form, you can make a Tusk attack, which is a melee weapon attack. You have proficiency with your Tusk attacks, and deal 1d6 piercing damage on a hit.

Great Cat

The werecats are members of the clan Kanari, called Razorclaw by humans. Their totem beasts are great cats such as lions, tigers, and panthers. The werecats maintain log dwellings, but hunt across hundreds of miles.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength and Dexterity scores increase by 1.

Kindred Spirits. You have advantage when making Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks dealing with cats, including lions, panthers, tigers, and other great cats.

Shapechanger. You can use an action to polymorph into one of three forms: a great cat form, a humanoid form, or a cat-humanoid hybrid form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. While in great cat form or hybrid form, your speed becomes 40 feet and you can only speak with cats. Your other statistics remain the same. Your great cat form cannot hold items or cast spells.

During character creation, choose a great cat form: lion, panther, tiger, or another form you and your GM agree on. You cannot change which great cat form is associated with this feature.

Bite. While in great cat or hybrid form, you can make a Bite attack, which is a melee weapon attack. You have proficiency with your Bite attacks, and deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

Claw. While you have an empty hand in animal or hybrid form, you can make a Claw attack, which is a melee weapon attack. Your claws are considered finesse weapons, and deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

Jackal

Highest in authority, clan Anul raises its jackalwere young to believe in their natural superiority. They live more settled lives, building stone cities and devoting themselves to the worship of Fimbuleth.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 2.

Kindred Spirits. You have advantage when making Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks dealing with dogs, including hyenas, jackals, and mastiffs.

Shapechanger. You can use an action to polymorph into one of three forms: a jackal form, a humanoid form, or a jackal-humanoid hybrid form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. While in jackal or hybrid form, your speed becomes 40 feet and you can only speak with dogs. Your other statistics remain the same. Your jackal form cannot hold items or cast spells.

Bite. While in jackal or hybrid form, you can make a Bite attack, which is a melee weapon attack. You have proficiency with your Bite attacks, and deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

Rat

Wererats are the most nomadic of the werekin. They hunt in organized parties, and sleep in small tents that double as robes during the day.

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence and Dexterity scores increase by 1.

Darkvision. While in giant rat or hybrid form you have darkvision within 60 feet.

Kindred Spirits. You have advantage when making Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks dealing with rodents, including mice, rats, rat swarms, and giant rats.

Shapechanger. You can use an action to polymorph into one of three forms: a giant rat form, a humanoid form, or a rat-humanoid hybrid form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. While in giant rat form, your size becomes Small and you can only speak with rodents. Your other statistics remain the same. Your giant rat form cannot hold items or cast spells.

Bite. While in giant rat or hybrid form, you can make a Bite attack, which is a melee weapon attack. You have proficiency with your Bite attacks, and deal 1d6 piercing damage on a hit.

Claw. While you have an empty hand in giant rat or hybrid form, you can make a Claw attack, which is a melee weapon attack. Your claws are considered finesse weapons, and deal 1d6 slashing damage on a hit.

Raven

Impressive flyers, the wereravens of clan Morum are the most reclusive of the werekin, building elaborate eyries in the mountains south of the Hessawood. In the rock tunnels beneath these eyries, they sacrifice the best of their hunted game by casting it into pools of molten gold.

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence and Wisdom scores increase by 1.

Darkvision. While in giant raven form you have darkvision within 60 feet.

Kindred Spirits. You have advantage when making Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks dealing with carrion birds, including crows, eagles, ravens, and vultures.

Shapechanger. You can use an action to polymorph into one of three forms: a giant raven form, a humanoid form, or a raven-humanoid hybrid form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. Your giant raven form resembles a raven about the size of an eagle. While in this form, your size becomes Small, your walking speed is 10 feet, and you gain a fly speed of 60 feet. Your talons can hold one item that weighs no more than your Strength score (in pounds). You cannot cast spells in this form.

Your hybrid form has both arms and wings, allowing you to use your hands normally. While in hybrid form, your fly speed is 30 feet, but you retain your usual walking speed. In either of your winged forms, you cannot fly more than 60 feet off the ground and you can only speak with birds. Your other statistics remain the same.

Peck. While in giant raven or hybrid form, you can make a Peck attack, which is a melee weapon attack. You have proficiency with your Peck attacks, and deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

Talon. While not carrying anything in animal or hybrid form, you can make a Talon attack, which is a melee weapon attack. Your talons are considered finesse weapons, and deal 1d4 slashing damage on a hit.

Spider

The werespiders of clan Hissicah inhabit abandoned adobes, ruins left behind from a time when long-dead humans conquered the Arwest region. They are intensely loyal to other werespiders, but suspicious of those outside the clan.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity and Charisma scores increase by 1.

Kindred Spirits. You have advantage when making Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks dealing with spiders, including giant spiders and spider swarms.

Shapechanger. You can use an action to polymorph into one of three forms: a giant spider form, a humanoid form, or a spider-humanoid hybrid form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. While in giant spider or hybrid form, you gain a climb speed of 30 feet and can only speak with spiders. Your other statistics remain the same. You cannot hold objects or cast spells in giant spider form.

You can spend an action while in giant spider or hybrid form to create 1 foot of webbing. Each subsequent action you spend extends the length of the webbing by 1 foot. This webbing acts as a rope, but can stick to a surface well enough to require 2 damage or a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to break it or pull it off.

While touching webbing, rope, or another length of fibrous material, you have tremorsense within 30 feet, allowing you to see creatures that are touching that material, even if they're hidden, obscured, or invisible.

Bite. While in giant spider or hybrid form, you can make a Bite attack, which is a melee weapon attack. You have proficiency with your Bite attacks, and deal 1d4 piercing damage on a hit.

Wolf

The werewolves make up clan Hessaria, the most warlike of the werekin. Their wrath is feared everywhere in Arwest, but most of all in the grasslands west of Faerras.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength and Constitution scores increase by 1.

Kindred Spirits. You have advantage when making Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks dealing with wolves, including coyotes and dire wolves.

Shapechanger. You can use an action to polymorph into one of three forms: a wolf form, a humanoid form, or a wolf-humanoid hybrid form. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying isn't transformed. While in wolf or hybrid form, your speed becomes 40 feet and you can only speak with wolves. Your wolf form cannot hold items or cast spells.

Bite. While in wolf or hybrid form, you can make a Bite attack, which is a melee weapon attack. You have proficiency with your Bite attacks, and deal 1d8 piercing damage on a hit.

Claw. While you have an empty hand in wolf or hybrid form, you can make a Claw attack, which is a melee weapon attack. Your claws are considered finesse weapons, and deal 1d8 slashing damage on a hit.

Daemon

Daemons are the human embodiments of demonic spirits from an ancient empire, sent to the material world as agents of Daemoth. Daemons are born to a human mother by entering the womb, driving out the spirit of the true child and taking its place. When they first enter the mortal body, they lose the memory of their former life, which is only regained through disciplined meditation. As a result, many daemons forge a new path as they mature, consciously or unconsciously shirking their original purpose.

That purpose is for daemons to keep a strict eye on world affairs without their presence being sensed as a threat. The degree to which the demonic powers are actually in contact with these agents, however, varies greatly.

With practice, daemons can enter a powerful state that hearkens back to their ancient glory. In this elder form their presence becomes commanding, and they glow with an unholy light. Most of the time, however, daemons remain in human guise, hoping that no one discovers their true names (the knowledge of which is enough to control them).

A Fateful Choice

Sometime before a daemon's sixth birthday, he or she is contacted in secret by a herald of Daemoth, usually a demonic being sent to protect and preside over the child. In this first visitation, the dark herald reveals the daemon's fiendish legacy and speaks its true name.

A daemon's reaction to this revelation is life-changing. If daemons submit to their dark herald's tutelage, they are trained physically and spiritually to serve Daemoth. The herald returns now and then, and may even take the child elsewhere for short periods of instruction. Some parents are distressed by the mysterious comings and goings—others take pride in having borne a child of God.

Daemons are often drawn to religious devotion, groomed in their training as leaders within one of the Daemothite religious sects. Some might prepare for political or academic careers, where their influence will have the greatest reach. Whatever their specific mission, daemons who comply with their demonic purpose are prepared for a life of devoted service to Daemoth.

Many daemons don't comply with their intended masters, even at such a young age. A refusal to submit to God's will is taken as rebellion, and daemons that disregard or reject their tutelage make bitter enemies of the dark powers. After such a choice, a daemon dissenter might go into hiding in hopes of being forgotten, or be forced to keep on the move.

The Weapon of Anonymity

Daemons live in any human society, hidden among the population either as demonic agents or fugitives from Daemoth's vengeance. If hunted, a daemon might seek shelter and redemption among religious communities that worship Jharus. Whatever their circumstances, daemons usually manage to operate alone or with a very small group of trusted allies.

The ability to seem human can hide a daemon's identity, allegiance, and motives. Most leave their true race a closely guarded secret, and keep careful record of who knows it. They will only use the elder form when a situation is desperate. Daemons value their anonymity as one of their greatest advantages, and a means to access resources and connections that might otherwise be unavailable.

Hidden Demonic Glory

When in human form, daemons look like their human parents just as any other child would. No sign can distinguish them from humans except an unholy birthmark on the crown of the head, which appears around age three. The birthmark is shaped to form a seal or insignia of the daemon's dark herald. Many keep this proof of their true race hidden beneath long hair.

All daemons can learn to change their human body into the elder form. They still resemble the human form while shapechanged, but their skin and eyes become a deathly, glowing white, and their facial features become sharper and more imperious.

Calculating Every Move

Many daemons have a talent for strategy and analytical thinking, perhaps a byproduct of their eternal war on the jharethil. This almost mathematical ability to anticipate the actions of others manifests at a young age, resulting in a tendency to make complex plans based on such predictions. Daemons tend to prize intelligence above all other virtues.

In addition to their shrewd minds, daemons often have good manners. They're fond of formality and tradition, using social ceremony to keep others at a distance. The risk of detection causes them to avoid creating strong ties with others.

Depending on their loyalties, daemons might espouse a variety of beliefs or priorities. Those that embrace their heritage find that doors open for them everywhere they turn, as if fate itself were favoring them. The others are hounded until the day they die by servants of their intended master, especially if they join the enemy and aid Jharus' cause.

The Best or Nothing

Religious or otherwise, daemons are ambitious adventurers. They set their sights high, seeking the best training available in their field. Some channel their divine gifts into powerful religious magic, while others abandon the path of divinity altogether in favor of arcane secrets. No matter their course, daemons have the instinct of centuries and the unconscious experience of multiple lives at their beck.

Daemon Names

The humans that raise a daemon will use their own naming conventions, but the child also learns its true name at the first visitation of the dark herald. As with other fiends, knowledge of a daemon's true name can grant significant power over him or her. Though the human body acts as a shield against summoning, those who speak a daemon's true name can easily influence him or her. These true names are unique, each with its own life and history.

Daemon Traits

In connection with your demonic origin, you have the following racial traits.

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence score increases by 2.

Age. Daemons age like humans, since their biology is virtually unchanged. Especially in the first half of their lives, daemons tend to seem wiser than their years.

Alignment. Because they don't remember their true history, daemons of every alignment can be found throughout Vinramar, even those that use their otherworldly powers for noble causes. Of course, the lure of supernatural power is strong enough to pull many of them inevitably toward their intended destiny, but the six formative years before the dark herald's appearance can make all the difference.

Size. Although you might appear taller while in elder form, your height and build is likely affected by those of your parents. In either case, your size is Medium.

Speed. 30 feet.

Demonic Changeling. You are considered a fiend (demon) as well as a human. If a creature speaks your true name, you must succeed on a Charisma saving throw with a DC equal to the creature's Charisma score or be charmed by it as long as it remains in your sight.

You can repeat the saving throw at the end of each minute. Once you succeed on a saving throw of this kind, the creature who spoke your true name cannot charm you in this way for 24 hours.

Elder Form. You can use a bonus action to polymorph into the elder form or return to your human form. While in elder form, you have advantage on Strength checks, and your body sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

While in elder form your grasp can stop others quaking in their tracks. As an action, make a melee spell attack with an empty hand against one beast or humanoid. On a hit, the target is incapacitated until the end of its next turn. Your spellcasting ability for this attack is Charisma.

Those who see you in elder form can identify you as a daemon with an Intelligence (Religion) or Intelligence (History) check of DC 10. Daemons and characters with proficiency in History or Religion pass this check automatically. If you become unconscious while in elder form, you remain in elder form until you can spend an action to return to human form.

Stone Will. You have advantage on saving throws to avoid being charmed or frightened.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write one regional language and one extra language of your choice. Daemons speak the languages of their human parents. If they accept the tutelage of the dark herald, their second language is often Zhoroch, spoken by demons and the inhabitants of the ancient daemon empire.

Allegiance. Your reaction to the discovery that you are a daemon changed your life forever. Choose whether you became a herald's pupil or went into hiding as a daemon dissenter.

Daemon Dissenter

At a young age, you rejected the dark herald and chose to forge your own path. This choice has put you and your loved ones in great danger throughout your life, but you've developed the talents to survive it.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Watchful Eye. You have proficiency in the Insight skill.

Herald's Pupil

By accepting the tutelage from the dark herald, these daemons accessed the training and culture of Mohtra, the ancient daemon civilization. Perhaps they still serve Daemoth, or perhaps they dissented after their training was complete.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 1.

Religious Lore. You have proficiency in the Religion skill.

Serve or be Hunted

Daemons give up the right to religious neutrality from birth. The deal is to serve Daemoth or be hunted by him. Those faced with this predicament may hate religion or be steeped in it, but they'll find it difficult to be ambivalent. Zealotry and single-minded devotion to Daemoth are common among his children, while those who rebel gravitate toward spiritual disillusionment and cynicism.

The Elder Kindreds

There was a time, before history, when two gods lived in an empty world. Daemoth and Jharus formed their own children, who in time spread to the four corners of Vinramar. For millennia upon millennia, they raised up temples and cities, eventually falling into discord and war.

The war has become eternal. Daemoth and Jharus engage in an intricate game of chess for control of Vinramar. In the early ages it took place on battlefields, but the political landscape has shifted dramatically. Human nations blanket most regions of the world, and the Elder Kindreds' conflict has been forced into the shadows. This was a sore blow to the jharethil, for whom deceit does not come naturally. To this day, they live lonely lives hidden among the humans, hoping that each day will keep the servants of Daemoth from discovering them.

Because daemons and jharethil disguise themselves as human, they manage to find their way into positions of prominence. They're the rooks, bishops, and knights of the chess game, moving human pawns in front of them as suits their purpose. Whether the war will ever truly end is yet to be seen.

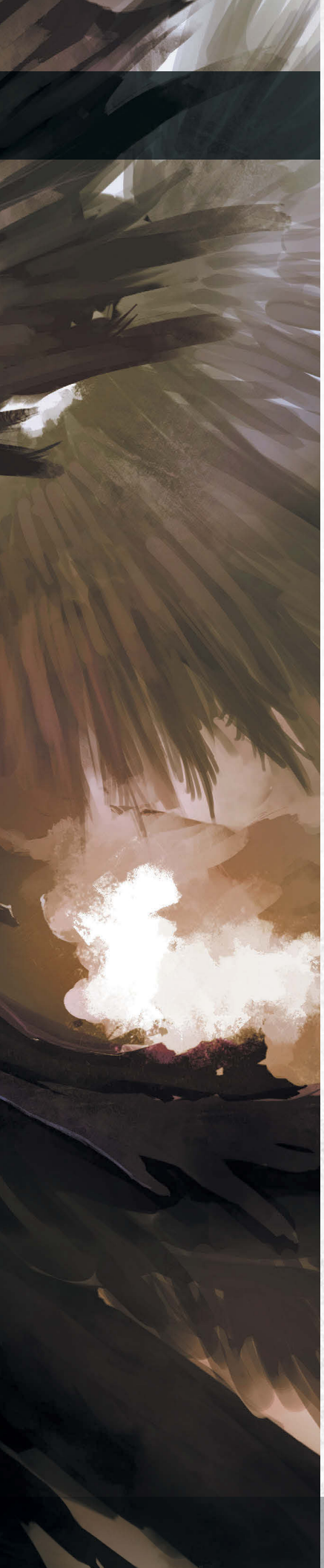
Jhareth

Before Daemoth created the daemons, Jharus' own progeny settled southern Vinramar. Once a proud civilization, the jharethil now struggle just to stay alive. They're hunted mercilessly by the Eitharmos, an occult sect of militant Daemothites whose goal is to keep the common folk living in fear of the winged heretics.

The truth is that the jharethil were once the protectors of Vinramar, a symbol of honor and justice. When their final empire fell, Jharus took its cities into the heavens and sealed their gates against the unworthy. These hidden metropolises still hover in invisible space above the tainted world.

As celestial heirs of Jharus, the jharethil do not grow old with the passing years. They can be killed or become ill, but rarely die of natural causes. Death and the conscious taking of life are terrifying occurrences to them.

Like the daemons, jharethil can cloak their elder form, making them appear human. When viewed in all their true glory, they have feathered wings and a striking presence that can inspire either courage or fear.



Anonymous Virtue

Throughout the world there are many organizations that defame, abuse, and hunt the jharethil. Those who could reach out to help them often remain silent for fear of being persecuted themselves. A jhareth quickly learns that only the closest of companions can be trusted with such a delicate secret. Those who impetuously confide in others may find themselves at the end of a rope before dawn. These are new times, when subtlety and cunning are a better defense than courage.

In the face of such persecution, individual jharethil react differently. Some become reclusive or lose their commitment to their people's moral code, others are motivated to change the world for the better. Feeling a need to care for those who hate or despise them is one of the great inner struggles of their people. Whatever they do, they must do it in secret if they want to live long.

It's common for young jharethil to be unused to opposing philosophies or religions. They may be offended or confused by the practices of the outside world. Despite the value they place in patience, many will respond to betrayal of trust with sudden and unexpected anger.

Earthy and Imposing

Jharethil look very much like humans, especially when not in elder form. In general, they're tall and broad, but this is by no means universal. They have golden brown or dark hair, and skin that's bronze or earthy brown. Their features are hard and defined, like cut stone.

When in their secret cities, or among trusted friends, a jhareth may enter the elder form, which makes her skin and eyes shine with a golden light. In this form, some have broad, feathered wings the color of their hair. Enemies confronted with a jhareth in elder form are likely to flee, unless they're followers of Daemoth, in which case they might redouble the attack in a religious frenzy.

Stoic but Nurturing

Jharethil are often patient and quiet. They believe that silence is the most respectable way to endure hardship, and they do it well. Although they may appear distant at first, jharethil are often intensely aware of the needs of others, and can be very nurturing, especially to those they consider weak or less capable. Overt competition is considered offensive in jhareth culture.

When the world was young, the jharethil were set over Vinramar as protectors. This sense of duty and self-sacrifice is deeply ingrained in their society. Even those who are raised outside the hidden cities are taught that true heroism doesn't look for a reward.

Those jharethil that live in the Fallen World, as they call it, often do so to learn the value of peace through hardship. They may work as laborers, gain training in worldly skills, or seek ways to alleviate the downtrodden. Others are cast out of the secret cities for disobedience. Any jhareth raised outside the secret cities might have a wildly different worldview from others, causing them to resent or doubt their divine birthright.

Hidden Cities

Only the secretsworn can perceive the presence of a jhareth secret city before entering it. The mystical bridges that enter them are located on the highest mountains or in the most secluded canyons. Their inhabitants are under oath never to reveal the location of these bridges, lest the Eitharmos discover their home and attack with greater force than can be withstood.

The creation and replenishment of life is of the highest importance to the jharethil, and most have many, many children. Because the jhareth women continue to bear as long as they live, it's known for some to rear hundreds over one immortal lifetime.

According to tradition, before a jhareth child turns 100, he or she will traditionally leave the shelter of the hidden city and experience the woe of the outside world. This fall from grace is a rite of passage, called a *marachel*, or Journey of Heartbreak. Sometimes the journey includes a vow of silence.

Though the experience is often bitter and dangerous, jharethil take the *marachel* very seriously. It's through this journey that each jhareth learns to appreciate peace by experiencing what horrors exist in the world outside. The sojourn is intended to last 20 years, a mere moment to the immortals. Often, however, the woes of life prolong it, and some never return. Those who remain permanently in the Fallen World, whether for love, learning, adventure, or because of corrupting influences, are known as Outliers. They adapt to mortal life rather than return home.

Forever the Outsider

Whether jharethil are on *marachel* or were raised as an outlier, they are likely to be in constant danger. The hunters of the Eitharmos, the Eithalim, are on constant search for the blood of the firstborn. Jharethil often resort to martial training or divine favor as a means of self-defense. However they survive, their greatest shield is obscurity.

Jhareth Names

Names in jhareth culture don't carry much significance. A jhareth might use four or five different names, depending on the occasion or his or her stage of life. Titles and names seem to blend together for them. Family names are rare for them.

Male Names: Alchin, Amanias, Fastus, Gaeloch, Girthonnach, Icholloth, Ichorthor, Ingaelin, Jastron, Lenrodel, Rothengal, Ulthoroch, Wainrussor

Female Names: Anzora, Avrolcha, Belzana, Charozia, Elyndridan, Ezrachi, Forlaza, Ingria, Mozralchi, Mordolchi, Niravari, Onaya, Remozra, Sunbala, Uola

Jhareth Traits

You have the following abilities derived from your celestial heritage.

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by 2.

Age. The jharethil mature very slowly. There are three periods of physical development (at the approximate ages of 10, 50, and 90). They reach full maturity around age 100, and rarely die of old age. Despite their long lives and many children, the jharethil are a dwindling race, hunted at great cost by the Eitharmos.

Alignment. Many jharethil are raised to believe in *mahat*, a jhareth concept representing balance, justice, life, purity, and truth. Others adopt new philosophies as their understanding of the world grows and moral complexities begin to disillusion them. The majority, however, are good-natured and law-abiding when they can afford to be.

Size. Although their height is usually on the tall side of the human range, many jharethil seem to grow taller while in the elder form. Your size is Medium.

Speed. 30 feet.

Immortal Lineage. You are considered a celestial and a shapechanger in addition to being a humanoid.

Elder Form. You can use a bonus action to enter the elder form or return to your polymorphed human form. While in elder form, you have advantage on Charisma checks, and your body sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet. When a fiend or undead begins its turn in the bright light of your elder form, it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or become blinded until the beginning of its next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Wisdom modifier + your proficiency bonus.

Those who see you in elder form can identify you as a jhareth with an Intelligence (Religion) or Intelligence (History) check of DC 10. Jharethil and characters with proficiency in History or Religion pass this check automatically. If you become unconscious while in elder form, you remain in elder form until you can spend an action to return to human form.

You can spend 1 minute concentrating while in elder form to sprout feathered wings, or reverse the change. While your wings are manifested, you have a fly speed of 30 feet. If your clothing or gear isn't made to accommodate your wings, you take 20 bludgeoning damage and ruin the obstructing equipment when you make this change.

Stone Will. You have advantage when making saving throws to avoid being charmed or frightened.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write one regional language and one extra language of your choice. For many jharethil, the additional language is the Hallowed Tongue, native to the world of Salvendum. It is a language as old as creation, with a lofty, imperious intonation.

Upbringing. Your upbringing determines how connected you have been to your people's hidden cities during your life. Choose whether you are an outlier living in exile or one of the secretsworn, privileged to be trained in a jhareth metropolis.

Outlier

Outliers are jhareth exiles that grew up outside the majesty of the secret cities. These poor souls have braved the dangerous mortal world for a long time, perhaps making some trusted friends along the way.

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Friend to the Friendless. You have proficiency in the Persuasion skill.

Secretsworn

Used to the peace and isolation of their fabled cities, the secretsworn are the more sheltered of the jharethil, but also the best trained in the ways of their people.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Jhareth Weapon Training. You have proficiency with the greatsword and longsword.

Touched by the Sublime

Most jharethil do what they can to further the cause of their father Jharus, but some become embittered toward religion when thrust into the rigors of mortal life. They might look into other faiths, but more often they abandon religion for what they see as a more pragmatic way to survive.

Even these, however, know that much of their power comes as a divine boon. It is difficult to give up spirituality as a jhareth. They know their lineage, which is often enough to ensure they hold at least a distant respect for the gods. In most cases, jharethil have a treasured memory or two associated with their people and the divinity that flows through them.

Elf

A diverse and peculiar race, the elves of Darkplane are the benighted descendants of the Fey, an entire species driven simultaneously mad in the earliest histories. Their bodies are attuned to the spirit of the land in a way that mortals don't understand. This connection, along with the demented influence of their ancestors, makes the elves ethereal, uncouth, and dangerous.

In their home world of Iltallach, fey creatures have learned to sense the unseen after living for centuries beside disembodied spirits. They see material things as mere distortions of the spiritual, and therefore of little value. This sentiment lingers among the elves, who reject the basic idea of ownership over material possessions.

Mortals, especially the humans that live in Iljudheim, seem to be at constant odds with the elves, whose spiritual connection to nature seems an awful lot like black magic to them. Elves often return the humans' hatred in spades, raiding and mischievously playing on their fear of magic.

Living in Two Worlds

The spiritual senses of the elves are often mistaken for madness. Their fey ancestors were outright lunatics—as are many of the other fey races to this day—but the elves have stabilized somewhat in the thousands of years since they were marooned in Vinramar. They know they can see what others can't, and they're learning to interpret between reality and their ghostly visions.

Having one foot in the Material Realm and another in the Spirit Realm is difficult for elves. Some lose track of what's real and what isn't, confusing mortals for spirits or their own dreams for reality. Unlike elves in other settings, the elves of Darkplane aren't often scholarly, unless you consider their quest for personal spiritual understanding an academic pursuit.

Wild and Ethereal

Slender and graceful, the elves have an odd bearing, as if they're not fully focused on what's before them. Their eyes seem distant, and their bodies almost disobey physical laws. The spirit of an elf is at times capable of accomplishing what the body should. When they walk, it isn't always their legs that carry them forward. When they speak, it isn't always with their mouths. These may not be considered superhuman abilities, but they certainly operate in a way that can be eerie to closed-minded mortals.

When elves wear clothes (an infrequent practice adopted only for the comfort of other races) they wear animal furs or simply paint their bodies with plant pigments and cover sensitive areas with bones and feathers. They might wrap their legs in leaves or bloody skins. The result is usually an eerily poor imitation of humanity that elicits more shock than it dispels.

Cruel to Be Kind

Elves are proud and given to thinking their philosophies are truer than those of other cultures. In elf society, to be wrong is taboo, so many elves will consider their arguments deeply before voicing them. When they do voice them, elves can be blunt and harsh, but rarely mean-spirited. They see their correctness as giving them the right to demand compliance. In elf culture, the offering of unpleasant truth is considered kind and polite.

Of course, other races don't take this very well. They might think that an elf is refusing to see an issue from another perspective, when in reality the elf has already considered and rejected that view. Most elves that venture into other cultures learn in time to soften their unsympathetic nature.

Scattered Tribes

Two Fey Gates connect the elf homeworld to Arwest and Iljudheim, so most of their settlements are in these regions. Consistently strained contact with the neighboring races has made the elves more and more distrustful—even cruel—toward outsiders. There are many different cultures within the elf race: high elves, moon elves, wood elves, the mysterious dark elves, and more. Most consider Vinramar home, but there are some who look forward to the day they can return to Iltallach.

High elves are the rarest and most frightening to humans, who largely hear of them in whispered stories. Displaying a higher level of spirituality and supernatural senses, they're the least dependent on material things of all elf cultures. They generally don't wear clothing, and prefer to stay in deeply secluded areas of natural beauty. High elves' hair and eyes range from

Dark Elves

According to elven mythology, the dark elves are fey spirits that Forlortha has exiled from the afterlife in Iltallach. Although their sin is unknown, they are reincarnated in Vinramar each time they die until they atone for it. Both elves and half-elves of any subrace can give birth to a dark elf, and there's no way to predict which children may be born with grey skin and the tell-tale black eyes.

Elf tradition dictates that after a dark elf is born, it be taken to a ceremonial barrow and discarded, a practice which only causes the shamed spirit to be reborn again to different parents. Historically, this tradition was enforced with fervor, fey societies believing that the presence of a dark elf invoked terrible misfortune on the community. In those times, the rare survivors of the sacrificial barrow inspired fear and loathing among elves and humans. Some dedicated themselves to saving other dark elf children, others became wicked hermits and highwaymen in a desperate attempt to survive their exile.

About 7,500 years ago, a group of dark elf survivors founded a city-state called Theidhas on the eastern coast of Arwest. For 300 years it dominated the frigid steppes of the region, until a werekin war party razed it to the ground in year 1428 of the Wild Age.

Since the sack of Theidhas, dark elves in Arwest have become insular, forming fringe colonies on unsettled land just beyond sight of elf territory. Most of these communities are simple farms and mining camps. Other elves seldom visit, making the acquisition of manufactured goods difficult. The result is that most dark elves live in extreme poverty.

At some point early in their history, the dark elves began to worship Jukai, the deformed god of stone. His unyielding bitterness toward beauty resonates with them, and they believe that he will accept them after death, when no other god will. Their hope is to give up their bodies to the very rock of Vinramar, and live as spirits in the deep shadows of the world.

amber to white. These mysterious creatures are respected greatly among all elves, and their kingdom Oruna (called *Hunderspol*, "lower-than-hell," by humans) is the center of Forlortha's worship in Vinramar.

Moon elves, also called boat-elves, interact the most with their human neighbors. They have adopted some cultural practices that offend the other elves—wearing cloth robes, for example. Their name derives from their worship of Baturach, the primordial goddess of the moon, death, and the tides. Moon elves have pale skin and hair that has a hint of silver or blue. They're most commonly seen in Arwest.

The wood elves are by far the most populous subrace. They erect portable dwellings throughout the forests of Erolost and Hemiliadh in southern Iljudheim. Their skin and hair range from flaxen gold tones to dark brown.

Though not a self-propagating race, the dark elves are a separate culture among elf-kind. They are called the *ildanun* among the Fey Kindreds, who considered them cursed by mad Forlortha. The name comes from this supposed curse, not necessarily from their coloration. Dark elves tend to have coarse, grey skin, with hair colors ranging between white, silver, and black. Their ears are longer than usual, and their eyes are completely black, making them seem even more distant than most elves. Though the other fey races consider the dark elves to be grotesque, they are not objectively ugly. Many have an entrancing beauty.

Elf Traits

The following traits provide cultural information about elf characters.

Alignment. All elves are looked on with suspicion by their human neighbors, but the reputation is not wholly undeserved. Centuries of dealings have proven the elves to be cold and unsympathetic. But this doesn't mean that they're not good at heart. Their tendency to prioritize the needs of nature above those of other people places them comfortably in neutral alignments.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Sylvandrae and one additional language of your choice. Sylvandrae is a bastardized form of Losandrae, the language native to Iltallach. The two are barely comparable anymore, but the wisest elves might speak both.

Additional Subraces

When creating an elf character, you may choose any of the available subraces, including the additional options below.

Dark Elf (Ildanun)

Mysteriously different from their parents, the ildanun are reincarnated fey spirits sent back to the mortal world for unknown crimes. They're commonly culled from elf society and placed in colonies where they won't bring ill omens on their people. Because of their spiritual deadening, they have a resistance to magic that sets them apart from other elves.

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by 1.

Dead to Magic. You have advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against spell effects.

Nature's Veil. You can use the Hide action even if you are only lightly obscured, as long as it is by fog, snow, rainfall, vegetation, or another effect of nature.

Moon Elf

Unlike most elves, the moon elves deal closely with humans. They have a practical side to their culture that isn't seen among most of their kin, and they are far more comfortable in water. They often worship Baturach, the unknowable goddess of the tides and moon.

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Nature's Veil. You can use the Hide action even if you are only lightly obscured, as long as it is by fog, snow, rainfall, vegetation, or another effect of nature.

Watercraft. You have proficiency with waterborne vehicles, and you have advantage when making ability checks involving rope—repairing it, splicing it, and tying or untying knots.

Half-Elves

Half-elves have always been at the center of the human hatred toward the Fey. Humans are often devastated when their people choose to leave them for the love of an elf, and the eventual children of such unions have borne almost as much suspicion and intolerance as their fey parents.

With the expansion of the Ansë kingdoms in Iljudheim in the last few hundred years, the number of half-elves in that region has soared. Elves and humans are in closer contact than ever, which has only bred more hostility between them. The half-elves among both cultures tend to bear the brunt of this conflict.

The elf-strain might last long in a family line. Once a human bears an elf's child, her children might sire half-elves for hundreds of years without so much as another look at the fey people. In these cases "half-elf" is obviously a loose term.

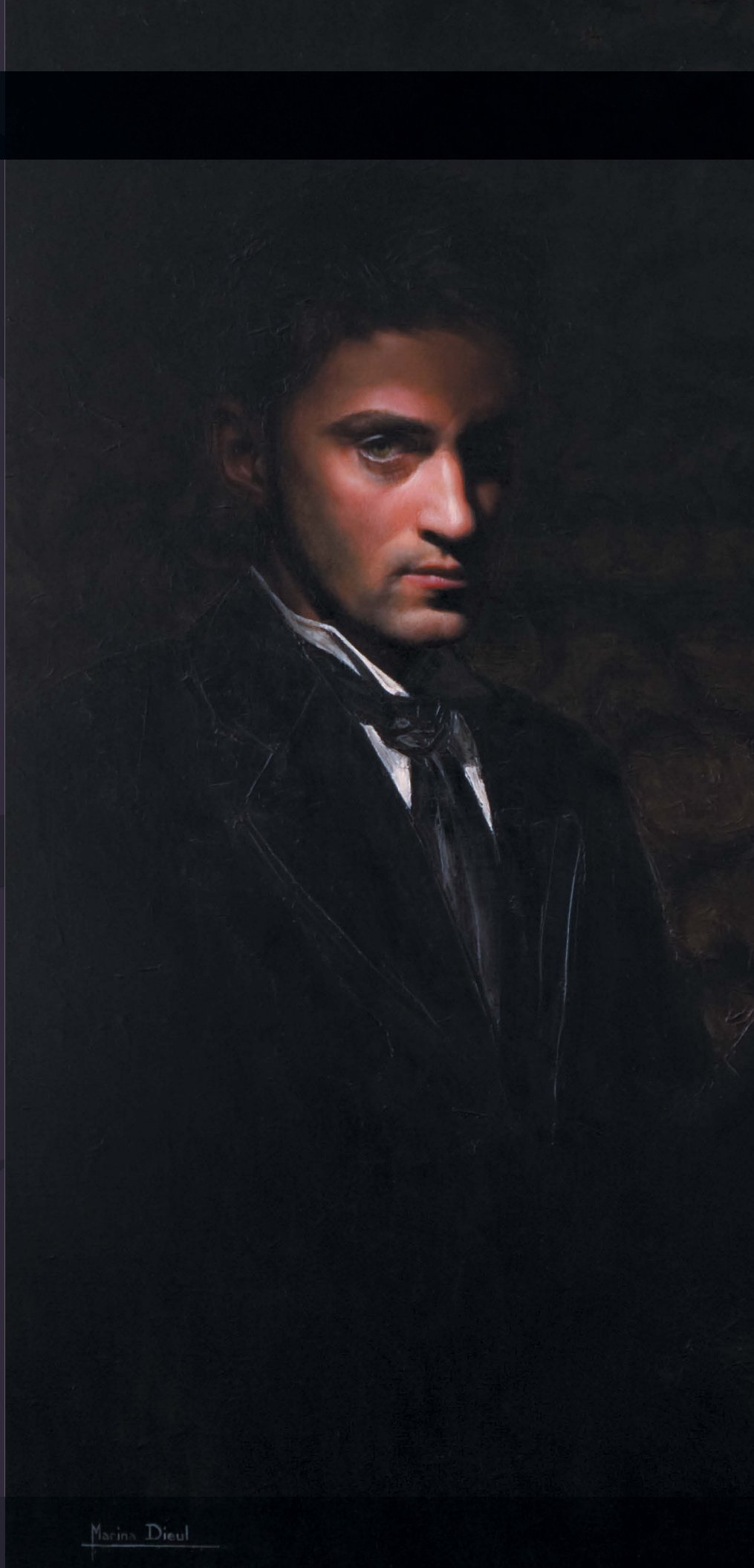
While they do tend to group together when possible, half-elves don't have their own political bodies. Often a city district or village will draw a small community of half-elves, which becomes a gathering point for them. Of course, the most dense areas of half-elf population are where the other fey kindreds live in abundance, specifically in Iljudheim and the islands off the west coast of Arwest.

Human

Human settlements are to be found in every corner of Vinramar, often built over the ruins of previous civilizations. As in most settings, humans have incredible variety, both physically and culturally. Whether their communities are urban, rural, industrial, tribal, militant, peaceful, or colonial, humans find their diversity is a blessing and a curse. It makes them innovative and adaptable, but it also provides more opportunities for their characteristic intolerance to manifest. Anyone with a different appearance, culture, or religion is likely to be reviled by neighboring humans, unless—like the heathfolk, for example—they prove themselves useful.

Despite the fact that the first humans were bred as slave-runts to the daemons, slavery remains pervasive in most human societies. In Trentsmund sarrow slaves are a mark of status, and in Motta captive gugrum are the backbone of the empire's economy. It's also common for human households to retain other humans as slaves, either captured in battle or as punishment for crimes.

Humans have historically recognized Daemoth as the most powerful of the gods, and their progenitor. During their first diaspora from Mohtra, they brought the Etholchan Church to the four corners of Vinramar, embedding the daemon beliefs and rituals deep within the world's most powerful civilizations. Today, many continue the tradition, though not all.



Children of the Children of God

Humans first appeared during the early years of the Elder Dark, when the daemon empire Mohtra was beginning its longest period of expansion. The daemons were to the last bred from a single being: Atiakha, the captive daughter of the moon. When these infertile creatures made their own arrogant attempt at fathering children, humans were the result—malformed weaklings kept only for their use as expendable slaves. In this capacity, they thrived, proving themselves intelligent and passionate, though at times intractable. Several millennia of revolts and mass escapes culminated in the human slaves conquering Mohtra and transforming it into their own empire, Motta, which has existed, at least in name, for more than 8,000 years.

From the latter part of the Elder Dark to the present, human colonies have cropped up in every region of the world, where they continue to form distinct cultures and traditions. The number and diversity of these human ethnic groups is nearly endless. For the purposes of categorization, however, the human cultures are here broadly gathered into five groups based on cultural similarity and regions of origin: the Ansë, the Drael, the Forroth, the Omhatra, and the Quitzál.

The humans that make up these categories likely identify themselves as belonging to a local culture, nation, or ethnic group over any broad subrace, but these groupings serve as useful distinctions in describing how such diverse peoples relate to one another.

The Ansë

Found mainly in Iljudheim, the Ansë cultures have a strong connection to their homeland, which is wild and beautiful. Their physical isolation has contributed to the rise of unique folklore and religious tradition among them. Few Ansë societies worship the gods of other lands. Perhaps this is the cause of their disdain for foreigners, or perhaps it's a result. Either way, they share a love of storytelling and song, which has populated their sagas with a rich pantheon of gods and heroes. The collected legends of the Ansë are called the *Bjorvinlad*, or "family-truth." They tell of adventures and wars, revealing the nature of the world and man's place in it.

Despite their cultural range, the Ansë kingdoms are among the only truly feudal societies in Vinramar. Divided by the rivalries of kinship and fealty, their land has been locked in a cycle of petty war for centuries. One man's traitor is another's captain, and outsiders often find themselves confused by the politics of the Ansë, who agree only on their collective hatred for the elf tribes scattered about their lands.

The further south one travels in Iljudheim, the fairer its people become. Blond or red hair is common in the remote southern fjords, where the cold land forces the Ansë to wrap themselves in fur cloaks, pants, coats, and hats. Those who live higher north on the peninsula might wear simple linen shirts or robes, especially if they trade with Motta. Many Ansë cultures wear their hair and beards long, with decorative braids and knots.

Although their castles and fortresses are constructed with clever masonry, the Ansë build most dwellings with logs and thatched roofs. The few large cities they've built are tightly gathered within and around the castles of local kings. Most of their people subsist on fishing, farming, and livestock. Favored Ansë weapons include handaxes, longswords, longbows, and spears. They often go into battle wearing leather armor or chainmail.

The Drael

Also called simply Westerners, the Drael are a particularly prominent group, thanks to their large nations, Motta and Trentsmund. These powerful colonial states alone account for nearly one-fifth of the world population. They settle and assimilate many other cultures across the globe, human or otherwise. Their chief export is Daemoth worship, which they gleefully embed in most colonial establishments.

Geographical happenstance and a cultivated passion for innovation have placed the Drael among the most technologically advanced cultures in Vinramar. In Trentsmund, industrialization is in full gear. Steam engines are beginning to birth the first railroads and steamboats, only furthering the self-important imperialists in their quest to "bring the light of knowledge" to the rest of the world. The unfortunate truth is that these colonial acquisitions tend to pay dearly for the Drael's excesses. More often than not, the imperialists act as conquerors and oppressors.

The Drael love to build in granite, marble, and brick when they can afford it. The men wear linen shirts with cravats, wool suits, frock coats, and felt hats. Women are often seen in corseted dresses with elaborate ornamentation. It's common for the Drael to drape extravagant robes over all this clothing as a flourish. Drael skin, hair, and eyes cover the entire range of human coloring.

The Forroth

Among the first humans to gain independence from the daemons, the Forroth peoples are the stalwart inhabitants of Arrochule. Since the jhareth cities disappeared from their home, Forroth humans have reclaimed control of the region, setting up a coastal empire that skirts the edges of the Holthirien Jungle.

Before the Great Forsaking, the nations of the Forroth had reached an impressive level of sophistication and architectural achievement. After the jhareth departure, however, it became clear that the jungle itself would suffer no civilization to possess the land. It advanced against the Forroth cities and roads, swallowing them in tangled vegetation with alarming speed. Commerce slowed, settlements became isolated, and the empire regressed into a loose dominion bound by little more than military might. Burdened with battling the land, most Forroth societies could scarcely spare the attention required for cultural progress.

Most of the Forroth have a deep umber complexion, with dark hair and rich, brown skin of varying shades. Silk is dear to them, and a primary export of most Forroth cities. Their people tend to favor bright-colored robes accented with fur and leather. Among some cultures, the hair is styled in sophisticated braids or dreadlocks, while others shave or pluck it into a variety of patterns. The Forroth build mainly from stone, being fortunate enough to have prolific mines and quarries dotting the areas that yet lie unclaimed by the Holthirien Jungle.

Human Settlement

The Omhatra

No human cultures have spread farther or grown more diverse than the Omhatra. From the far southeast, their small city-states and shogunates launched a number of influential explorers from the region of Syrikhal, who would settle lands as distant as Arwest and Goltaraim. Over the next thousand years, these distant colonies grew into dense nations, and their inhabitants developed diverse physical features and cultural practices.

The Omhatra of Syrikhal remain largely confined to isolated cities ruled by local generals (sometimes called shoguns). Dense rainforests separate the city-states, making ships the quickest method of transportation and preserving the separate traditions found in each area. Senfaerism is the most common religion in this region, and since it teaches the importance of simplicity, the Omhatra of Syrikhal undertake all things with a reserved asceticism.

Between 1340 and 1345 *Annoloth*, the thriving Omhatra nations in Wellusk were wiped from the face of the earth by legions of vampires. Living for many years in the shadow of Perrith Gorr, these humans had become accustomed to slave-raids and border skirmishes, but the Desolation of Wellusk was as absolute and sudden a genocide as the world has ever seen. The Omhatra's rich Welluskan culture was all but snuffed out in the space of a single year, leaving ragged survivors scattered about the neighboring regions. With the vorruc blight spreading slowly across the continent, the Omhatra people in Wellusk face a bleak future.

The Arwest region is home to Omhatra cultures that live in sparsely populated homesteads, making their living as trappers, shepherds, and foresters. With werekin and vampires settled so close, they keep to themselves and fiercely guard their kin. In Goltaraim, the Omhatra have generally assimilated with the telmatra, although there are places further out from the heartlands where tension between the two races runs deep.

The Quitzál

Dwelling scattered throughout the West, the Quitzál peoples may at first seem archaic or undeveloped, having clung to their earliest traditions over the last thousand years. Though their technology makes less use of steel and coal, Quitzál cultures are sophisticated in their industry and infrastructure. Most of their societies value living off the land, some in nomadic tribes and some in permanent settlements.

The most prominent Quitzál societies are found in and around the densely forested parts of the Norlythe, but there are also many living around the Sea of Lorelannon, most notably the Ocalatnoloset tribes off the eastern coast of Motta.

Northern Quitzál cultures commonly pay homage to Sarnoss, the god of beasts and the wild. Their elders appoint a High Chief to act as both spiritual and political leader for the community. Others might rely on matriarchal leaders like Clan Mothers to resolve disputes and manage political affairs.

Furs, beads, feathers, and gold are common adornments of Quitzál dress. Their most settled cultures farm kale, corn, beans, or root vegetables, supplemented by prodigious hunting. More nomadic tribes typically hunt and gather, or commute between a temporary dwelling and separate orchards or gardens.

Gugrum

Though descended from the ancient maahiset people, the gugrum have developed a far larger stature. The powerful network of kingdoms once ruled by their civilization now lies in tatters, a casualty of civil war. In the wake of this collapse, humans entered their wasted lands and shipped the gugrum to Motta as slaves, ending any chance of greatness for the gugrum.

Bearing mournful memories of their bygone golden age, the gugrum have dwindled into a quiet and subdued people, despite their imposing stature. Those that have eluded captivity draw close to the earth in matriarchal communities. Though capable warriors when they need to be, pacifism and nonviolence have become their chief values.

Many thousands still languish as slaves and servants in Motta. Those who escape or are freed might remain there, where the population is racially diverse, but more likely relocate to lands where they will not be mistaken for property.

Thoughtful and Private

Although formal education isn't a part of most gugrum cultures, they are a perceptive and conscientious people. This reputation for being gentle giants may explain why they've been victimized in recent history. Exceptions can be found, but it's unusual to see a gugrum engage in outwardly violent or aggressive behavior. Though they no doubt feel these emotions, they've usually been taught from birth to hide anger and selfishness.

These strong cultural taboos result in a tendency for gugrum to be quiet company. Even their large gatherings and celebrations seem hushed compared to those of other cultures. They admire silence and see it as a sign of intelligence, while impulsive chatter is disdained as attention-seeking and disruptive. When foreigners visit a gugrum city, they often turn heads with the volume of their conversation.

Grey Giants

The gugrum are generally taller than most other races, with a heavy musculature and thick, strong hands. This makes them not only physically imposing compared to humans, but also talented miners, athletes, and soldiers. Ironically, these vocations are uncommon in their society—but enslaved gugrum are all too familiar with such work.

The skin of the gugrum is a pale slate color. Their blood is a deep blue that shows clearly through the skin, giving it a lightning or tree-branch patterning. Every gugrum's unique vein-pattern shows differently, which they use as an easy method of identification. A few gugrum grow thin hair in varying shades of grey, but most are nearly hairless. Their eyes trend toward warm colors like yellow, amber, or pink.

A History of Violence

The gugrum were once the most numerous of the races descended from the maahiset. Their civilization occupied the vast grasslands known today as the Forlorn Marches. Around 2,400 years ago, rampant civil war ignited among them, and within a century nothing was left but ruined towers and fields of bones. The few refugees that escaped this bloodbath were herded south as slaves, or else went north to settle the woodlands of Chayrshellech and the Norlythe.

Today gugrum culture is largely matriarchal. Women are considered intellectually superior among them, often governing as philosopher-chiefs while the men act primarily as laborers and artisans. When the gugrum raised in patriarchal captivity encounter their free kinfolk, gender tension can become a serious point of conflict.

A cannibalistic society of gugrum called the Saethym live a nomadic existence in lands east of the River Oulearan. The Saethym are heavily male-dominated, which prevents them from integrating well with other gugrum cultures. According to their legends, their practice of blood magic stems from secrets taught to them by the dragonborn in a forgotten era.

Born in Chains

The majority of gugrum are raised in bondage to humans. They live in estates and on plantations owned by their masters, and very rarely leave the grounds. This harsh life is a heavy burden to the gugrum, many of whom dream of freedom. Those fortunate enough to escape might search out their free northern relatives.

The largest gugrum societies build cities in a formation of interconnected stone towers. Most communities, however, are tribal, building longhouses or large tents camped near their hunting grounds. Daily life there centers around family, food, and the greater good of the tribe.

Hired Muscle

Gugrum can be found adventuring in many places. Most who escape slavery enter the wide world without meaningful skills. These characters rely on their strength and keen intuition to get by on dangerous work. They might end up as mercenaries, trackers, or outlaws. Whatever their vocation, they tend to do it without complaint.

Gugrum Names

Lacking any memory of their ancestral language, gugrum usually use names from their oral tradition, or simply adapt the names of whichever culture's language they've appropriated. In slavery, the gugrum are often named by their masters, and so can have what seem like ill-suited names. Below are examples of unique gugrum names.

Male Names: Adun, A'umo, Banga, Dul, Etumo, Gha'uro, Hibanma, Jo'al, Mhahad, Mustalig, Oba'i, Roda'im, Tiba

Female Names: Asaba, Bindi, Dan-duro, Eballa, Ema, Gangos, Genta, Jalba, Mo'emad, Nandu, Olbara, Ya'aur, Zidfa

Gugrum Traits

Gugrum characters begin with the following racial traits as a result of their physique and shared tradition.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 2.

Age. Gugrum have a lifespan similar to that of humans, but they tend to grow to adult stature around age 13, years before they've mentally matured.

Alignment. Because family and the greater good are so important to the gugrum, they often have lawful alignments. Those gugrum that have been slaves, however, value their freedom highly. Fear of tyranny may pull them toward neutral or chaotic.

Size. Most gugrum stand between 7 and 8 feet tall. Your size is Medium.

Speed. 30 feet.

Brute Hands. You have advantage on ability checks and saving throws related to your physical grasp of objects or creatures. This extends to grappling, climbing, and attempts to avoid dropping or releasing such things as rope, weapons, or terrain features.

Iron Thews. Whenever you take bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage, reduce the amount taken by 1.

Peak Physique. You have proficiency in the Athletics skill.

Languages. You can speak one regional language. Whether you can read or write it depends on your background. Consult with your GM and decide. Gugrum only have traces of their own language, so they speak whatever their neighbors or masters speak. Their speech, however, is often adapted and blended with remnants of ancient Gugrum, giving them idioms and phraseology that may seem strange to other speakers. Because of their limited opportunities for education, few gugrum can read or write.

Subrace. Gugrum can come from very different worlds. Some were raised in the wilderness, learning the secrets of the land and sharpening their senses. Others were raised in the midst of human culture.

Ba'areth

These are the typical gugrum living in their own communities. Raised in remote areas, they tend to be more comfortable away from civilization, where there's space to breathe and worship their chosen god in peace. The meaning of the name Ba'areth was lost with the memory of the ancient Gugrum tongue.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Bred in the Wild. You have advantage when making ability checks to forage for food and water in the wilderness, and to recall information about beasts and plants.

Gugrum Weapon Training. You have proficiency with the blowgun, club, great club, net, sling, and spear.

Saethym

The cannibalistic Saethym live in the wilderness of northern Chayrshellech. Smaller and more lithe than other gugrum, they likely bear an ever-so-slight resemblance to their diminutive ancestors. Secret black arts have been passed down among them for thousands of years, making them clever and dangerous enemies.

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Hunter-Sorcerer. You know one cantrip of your choice from the sorcerer spell list.

At 3rd level, choose one of the following spells: *entangle, fog cloud, healing word,* or *unseen servant*. You can cast it once per day as a 1st level spell. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

Slave-Born

Like many gugrum, those born into slavery are tough. Their natural physique has been fortified by a life of back-breaking labor. The strongest might survive, but only the lucky see freedom.

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by 1.

Work It Off. After completing a short rest, you regain a number of hit points equal to half your proficiency bonus (rounded up), and you reduce your exhaustion level by one.

Maahisites

Settling from Chayrshellech to the highlands north of present-day Trentsmund, the mysterious little people called the maahiset flourished as one of the great pre-human civilizations. During the height of their power, the demon-legions of Mohtra ravaged the lands of the maahiset, causing them to scatter far across the West and flee into the mountains.

Four thousand years later their descendants the Maahisites began to emerge: the gugrum, heathfolk, sarrow, and telmatra. While sealed off, each Maahisite race had grown apart from the others, developing different physical and cultural attributes.

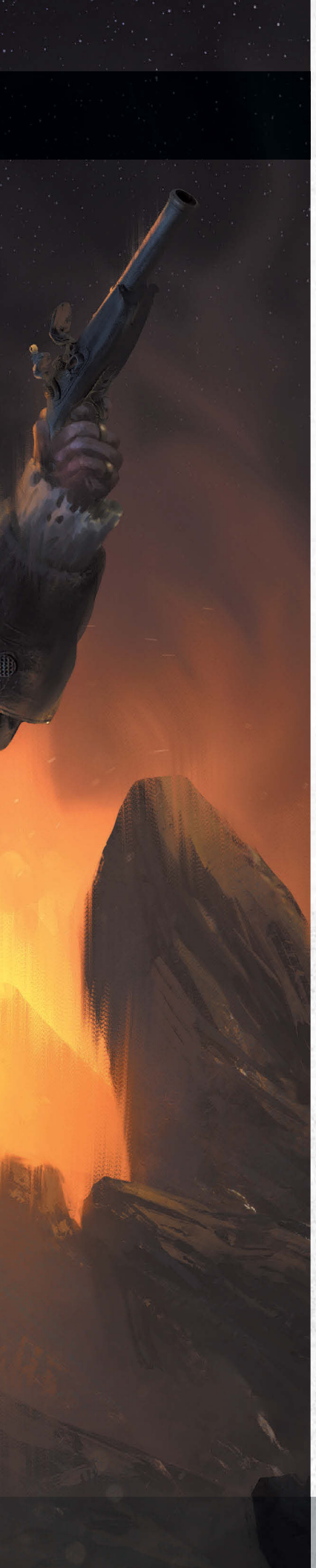
Along with humans, Maahisites have spread to become a large and diverse set of civilizations. Thousands of years of separation have estranged these four races, and it's doubtful that any kindred loyalty remains between them.

Heathfolk

The heathfolk are a technologically advanced race native to the moors and highlands that once belonged to their maahiset forefathers. They're descended from the original maahiset aristocracy who, when the demon-spawn attacked, elected to flee into mountain sanctuaries rather than live underground.

As the highland settlers prospered, these sanctuaries developed into vast cities perched on remote precipices. They grew taller, hardier, more scientific, and their numbers swelled. Today the heathfolk continue to thrive as a result of their political neutrality and characteristic charm. Most have a love of learning and art instilled in them from a young age.

Folk magic is a fundamental part of heathfolk culture. With the exception of the Yaelcar kindred, most of them treasure the arcane as part of their heritage. Their universities are the only formal institutions for magical instruction in the world.



Artistic and Open-Minded

Among the heathfolk, enlightenment is everything. Children are assigned personal tutors at age four, and their education continues until they come of age at 22. Most heathfolk are inculcated with an open mind and a passion for art and learning. Their high literacy rate and quality of life set them apart from other cultures.

Heathfolk often practice simple forms of arcane magic, which perhaps contributes to their fascination with that which they don't yet understand. While most cultures are eternally suspicious of the arcane, heathfolk tradition embraces it as both a science and an art. The handing down of ancient folk magic practices defines traditional heathfolk society. Indeed, Ruethas—their racial deity—is a patron of arcane secrets.

Marks and Manes

Heathfolk usually stand just shorter than humans, and their natural build is slim above the waist. They tend to have muscular legs, and heathfolk women are often curvy with petite shoulders. Green and brown eyes are common among them, but some have eyes of amber or dark grey.

A heathfolk's face has earth-toned markings, often centered on the eyes like a raccoon. This trait is genetic—usually children's marks resemble those of their parents, but each is as unique as a fingerprint. They can be light or dark, intricate or subtle. These markings commonly appear in muted hues of green, grey, brown, yellow, red, and blue. The heathfolk usually have an olive or light brown skin tone.

Heathfolk have very thick, bushy hair that grows long. The men have lion-like manes that surround their heads. The mane grows in one mass, covering the entire head, neck, shoulders, and upper chest, leaving only the face visible. They have high foreheads, and their facial hair stops at the corners of the mouth, the lack of mustache further suggesting the appearance of a lion. Females grow strong, thick hair commonly worn past the waist, but theirs doesn't grow from the shoulders and chest. Heathfolk hair colors tend to be shades of red and brown. Black hair is particularly predominant among the separatist heathfolk of Yarcarrach, causing neighboring humans to nickname them the Black Heathens.

These secular dissidents call themselves the Yaelcar. Their men have a strict cultural practice of shaving their manes below the ears, giving them a more distinctly human look. For both men and women, the hair on the top of the head is often braided or beaded, but never cut. Their clothes are made of plain black cloth, covering the wearer from the wrists to the ankles.

Noblesse Oblige

Self-centered thinking is a mark of ignorance to most heathfolk, while cultural awareness and an open mind are the marks of nobility and intelligence. It's common for them to travel the world, not only to become cultured, but to share that enlightenment with those they meet. This love of travel is greatly facilitated by their unique talent for learning languages. Paradoxically, many heathfolk believe they are superior to other races because they think themselves the least self-interested. They love playing the role of mentor, and they love to be the only heathfolk in a crowd.

Remote Universities

All three heathfolk political bodies are bound together in an Imperial Order, which only truly exists in name. In reality these nations interact very little. Each is governed by a council of political academics called fellows who preside over the government while maintaining positions at their respective educational institutions. Three post-graduate degrees are required to sit on the governing councils, and many of their members have far more than that.

At the center of most heathfolk communities is at least one university. Life in these remote cliff-cities revolves around such institutions, and few heathfolk live beyond the city walls. Most subsist on fruit, fish, and sheep, though more luxurious food is imported for those who can afford it. The Yaelcar live along the verdent southern coast of the Chayrshellech region, where they can farm and herd in communities less cramped than those of their northern kin.

Enlightened Adventurers

Heathfolk characters are likely to be pleasant in an adventuring party. They may be dismissive of those they consider ignorant, but are quick to follow a good leader. When fortune falls on them, they are usually more than willing to assume command.

Every land in Vinramar has seen heathfolk travelers, usually speaking the local language. Their pursuit of enlightenment draws them on extensive voyages through foreign countries, which helps their amicable relationships with neighboring races. Though most heathfolk prove to be quite versatile, the northern kin have traditionally preferred vocations that involve the arcane. The Black Heathens of course avoid such pursuits at all costs.

Heathfolk Names

A heathfolk has a given name, usually taken from the mother's family history, and a clan name, usually the father's. Genealogy is very important to the heathfolk, and their clan allegiance comes before almost any other.

Male Names: Aillourath, Archolloch, Bretham, Chuyrdash, Fayruch, Garaym, Jennam, Laithscael, Lothanser, Nassach, Pollas, Siorash, Shouthan

Female Names: Antayleach, Bureas, Ciaynhain, Dassacha, Hanlayr, Hulmara, Ishath, Kenshayloch, Maralash, Roshalya, Sheleach, Seairsha, Yessas

Clan Names: Athelshoth, Barrobayrn, Beal, Falbonnach, Iulainn, Margeynnach, Mararchtach, Marenchella, Obaech, Umiurthar

Heathfolk Traits

The heathfolk share an array of traits that reflect their education and cultural aptitudes.

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence score increases by 2.

Age. Heathfolk have a lifespan just longer than that of humans. They commonly live to 100, but rarely 120.

Alignment. Moderation goes hand in hand with enlightenment, and the heathfolk value their ability to ride the middle of the road. Neutrality is often a compelling alignment choice for them.

Size. Most heathfolk have a height around 5 feet, with a particularly short individual dipping to as low as 4 feet, and a very tall heathfolk reaching 6 feet. Your size is Medium.

Speed. 30 feet.

Heathfolk Weapon Training. You have proficiency with the flintlock pistol, longsword, and rapier.

Incidental Knowledge. If you miss an ability check's DC by a margin of 1, you still succeed. This trait does not apply to saving throws or attack rolls, but it does allow you to win contests that result in a tie.

Less Sleep. When taking a long rest, you only need to spend 4 of the 8 hours sleeping. You can spend a week concentrating on a single downtime activity during the remaining 4 hours of each long rest. After a week, you gain the benefit of 1 day engaged in that activity.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Roccurish and two extra languages of your choice. If your Intelligence score is 13 or higher, you learn another additional language. Roccurish is the native language of the heathfolk. It has many unique sounds that can be difficult for other cultures to learn. It's a whispery, smooth-sounding language thought to be closely related to that spoken by the ancient maahiset.

Subrace. Choose a subrace. Two are described here: black heathen and northern kin.

Black Heathen

The Black Heathens, also called the Yaelcar, separated from the heathfolk nation of Chayrshellech several millennia ago. They are vehemently secularist, denying the usefulness of both magic and religion. To outsiders, the black heathens seem somber and plain-thinking, but they have all the intelligence and tenacity of their northern kin.

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Secular Training. You gain one of the following:

(a) proficiency in two tools or weapons of your choice

(b) proficiency in one additional skill from your class's skill list

Northern Kin

The northern kin are the traditionalists among the heathfolk, representing the majority in their culture. They're often raised around the use of simple folk magic, but not all of them go on to study arcane practices in depth.

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Folk Magic. You learn two cantrips from the following list: *blade ward*, *dancing lights*, *light*, *mending*, *message*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, or *true strike*.

The Company of Fools

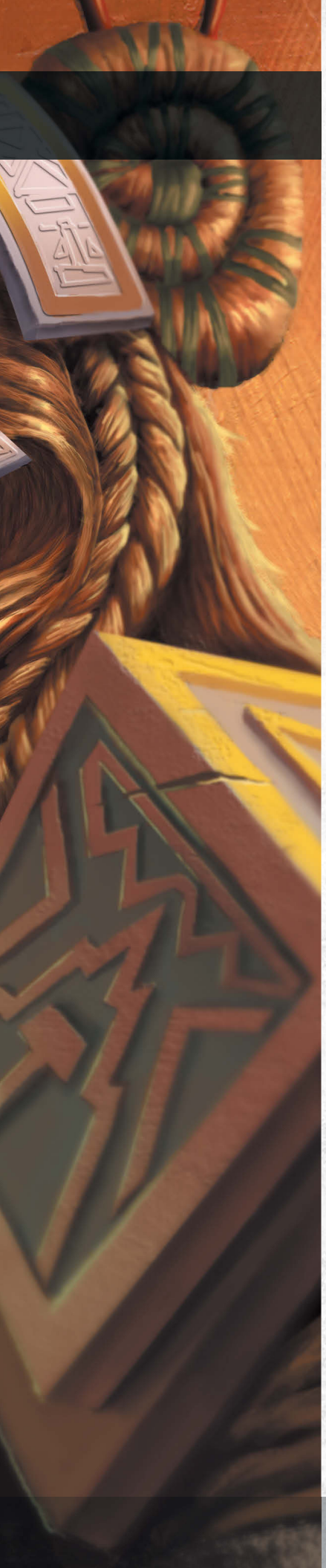
It's common for heathfolk to look down on religion, especially large churches that devote themselves to one god. For the northern kin, this is because they believe in the superiority of arcane magic—though many of them casually worship Ruethas, the patron god of time and spells. For the Black Heathens of the south, it's because of their strict secularist beliefs. In the company of religious characters, a heathfolk might have a terrific time making light of their zealotry.

Sarrow

From their earliest history, the sarrow have been subjects of voracious persecution. Still enslaved by humans throughout the world, they are embittered and very slow to trust. Those free from bondage live in the most remote parts of Vinramar, understandably eager to avoid contact with other races.

More than any other Maahisite race, the sarrow still resemble their ancestors, who were likewise about half the height of a human. They descend from a group of maahiset that delved deep under the mountains to escape the onslaught of Mohtra, and were first to emerge once the enemy left their land. If they had known what lay in store for their people, they might have preferred to stay underground.

Sarrow continue to be bred in slavery to humans. Any evidence of their culture has been wiped from their native lands in the Trentsmund region by human settlers. Only two places in the world are home to free sarrow communities—one an isolated desert tribe and the other a colony of escaped slaves.



Freethinking Futurists

Widely uneducated, the sarrow nevertheless have an uncanny intuition. They learn well by watching—probably far better than their masters give them credit for—and that talent makes them dangerous slaves to keep. Indeed, the sarrow are always bristling under the yoke of their captivity. Almost yearly, large bands of slaves revolt and buy their freedom with blood.

Those who escape often find their way to Ykhel, the commune of free sarrow in the remotest mountains of the Norlythe region. There they can receive education, raise families, and help build a brighter future for their people. Past evils force them to look forward. Many sarrow disparage tradition, since little of their own has survived. They place higher value on innovation and progress.

Scapegoats and Slaves

The sarrow have terse relations with other races. They've suffered—and continue to suffer—every injustice imaginable at the hands of humans, and tend to assume that the other races would do the same if given the chance. Even a free sarrow lives in constant fear of being treated like an animal.

Perhaps the other Maahisite races stand a fair chance of winning a sarrow's trust, but even then it's hard-earned. A number of sarrow live among the heathfolk, working as paid servants or itinerant laborers. Although the arrangement has an echo of slavery, the sarrow endure it, willing to do what's necessary to taste freedom.

Ways to Skin a Dwarf

The sarrow are a fusion of dwarves and halflings with a few new flavors thrown in the recipe. They can be represented mechanically by either race, but they're "reskinned" to fit the tone of the Darkplane setting. You can use the subraces provided on the next page, or you can use the ones found elsewhere.

The sarrow stand between two and five feet tall. They can be stout or slim, round- or sharp-featured, and their coloration has a wide range. If you're interested in differentiating the sarrow from typical fantasy dwarves, try some of the following tips.

Shave off 30 lbs. Like any race, the sarrow have a variety of body types. Remember, they range from halfling to dwarf in size, so try making your sarrow of a build other than a four-foot hulk.

Lose the beard. Sarrow aren't as attached to facial hair as dwarves. Those that live among the heathfolk often shear their mustaches to blend in, so consider trying some variety.

Wear clothes that aren't armor. Who says all dwarves have to load up on metal wardrobe? The sarrow seldom wear plate armor, even in combat.

There are a lot of clichés associated with fantasy dwarves. Challenge yourself to turn them on their heads when playing a sarrow. This is your chance to play a dwarf that isn't comedic relief, who doesn't always have an axe in hand, or who might even be female. Let yourself loose in challenging other players' assumptions.

What about Halflings?

Why combine dwarves and halflings? The halflings I love are strongly connected to Tolkien's Middle-Earth, which has become the model for most high fantasy worlds. But Darkplane isn't high fantasy. It purposefully steers away from Tolkien and more toward the Victorian and pulp writers that preceded him.

In my opinion, one unique and diverse diminutive race is better than two races that have any significant crossover. Rather than spend a lot of time to shoehorn halflings into the setting, I chose to fold them into the sarrow. If you love halflings, by all means make one for your sarrow character.

Salvaging a Lost Culture

Ykhel, the city of free sarrow, lies nestled precariously against the wall of an isolated gorge. Established by a band of escaped slaves, it's a hidden symbol of perseverance, the one light of hope for a people that have been treated with continual cruelty. In the 73 years since ground was broken there, only sarrow have been allowed to enter. Rather than preserve the past, the Ykhelesians seek to create a new, forward-thinking culture, free of the memories of oppression that have been seared into their collective consciousness.

Although called a city, Ykhel is really a group of nine segregated socialist communes, each composed of 60 to 200 sarrow. As members of a syndicalist society, Ykhelesians each have assigned roles relating to their skills and livelihood. All material goods are shared in a system of common ownership. Religion and other faction-based institutions are prohibited within the communes.

In the region of Chayrshellech, there is a network of sarrow tribes living in the heart of the Waelslayg Desert. Their culture has preserved elements of sarrow tradition that predate their enslavement. Almost entirely unaware of the wider world, these desert sarrow live harsh and simple lives.

All sarrow culture places great importance on females, who have final authority in the family. This cultural idiosyncracy is likely a vestige of the Ethis fertility cults that were once practiced among their maahiset ancestors.

Pariahs in Every Land

Most sarrow adventurers dream of one day reaching Ykhel, which they imagine as a utopia. There are those that reach the city, however, only to grow tired of communal living and shared property. These sarrow might trek out to other lands in search of a change. Unfortunately for them, the outside world can be unforgiving. Sarrow characters had better steel themselves for trouble when visiting other lands, especially if the locals own sarrow slaves.

Sarrow Traits

The following traits provide cultural information about sarrow characters.

Alignment. The sarrow are a philosophically diverse group, owing largely to the fact that most of them live as captive laborers. They have an indomitable desire to be free, which in some cases might translate into a chaotic alignment.

Languages. You can speak Dyraneff and one additional language of your choice. Dyraneff is the traditional sarrow language, descended from the tongue spoken by the ancient maahiset.

Optional Subraces

When creating a sarrow character, use the dwarf or halfling race. You can choose a subrace from among the following optional alternatives.

Desert Sarrow

Born in the unyielding lands of the Waelslayg Desert, these sarrow have to be tough or die. They're used to sweltering heat, daily hunting, and going hungry more often than not.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength and Wisdom scores increase by 1.

Nomad's Endurance. Double your Constitution modifier when determining how long you can go without food or water before taking levels of exhaustion. If you eat half the amount of required food in a day, you can count that as the full amount.

Sarrow Slave

Whether in a household, a mine, or a field, many sarrow are raised in servitude. What they lack in education, they make up for with a wealth of insight into the lives of the aristocracy that bought and sold them. Former slaves tend to be the most passionate and perceptive of the sarrow.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength and Charisma scores increase by 1.

My Turn to Choose. You have proficiency in the Persuasion skill.

Ykhelesian

Well educated and forward-thinking, the Ykhelesian sarrow are particularly slow to trust those of other races. They have learned that all people deserve respect, and often defend the downtrodden in any society.

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

Syndicate Training. Choose one skill or tool you're proficient in. When making ability checks that involve the use of that skill or tool, double your proficiency bonus.

Secrets of the Ancients

At its height, the maahiset empire covered much of the regions of Trentsmund, Chayrshellech, the Norlythe, and Goltaraim. Though their monumental cities have been buried and ground into dust, there are still artifacts, ruins, and places of power to be found in these regions—remnants of the runemages' forgotten art. But those who can discover the secrets of the forbidden relics may live to regret it.

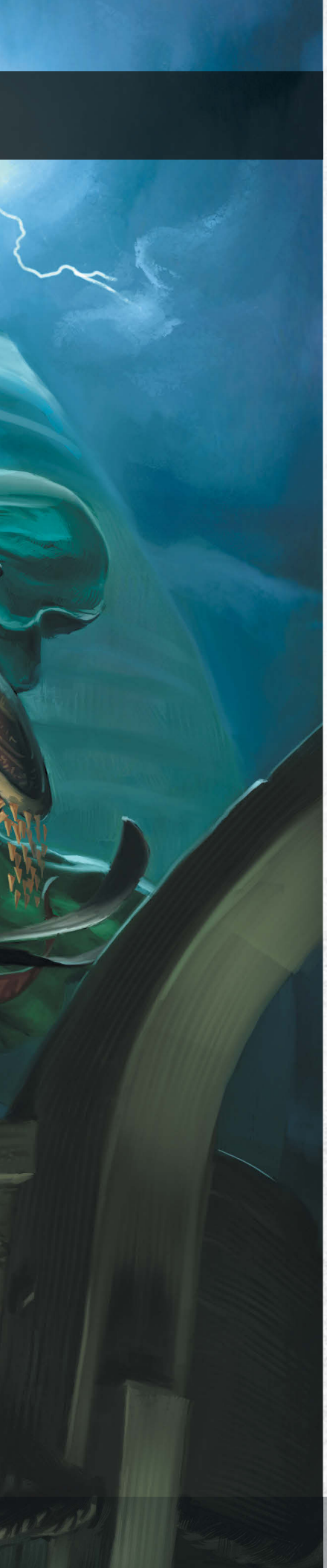
Today, the Maahisite races have little memory of their ancestors. They take for granted the folklore, nursery rhymes, and symbols of power that survive from that era. Even the heathfolk, who inherited a tradition of simple rune magic from the maahiset, know very little of the ancient practices. Time swallows secrets, and the mysteries of the maahiset are no exception.

Telmatra

When the maahiset fled the advance of the daemons, some built ships and crossed the Ocean of the Northern Veil toward present-day Goltaraim. There they settled, and became the seafaring race called the telmatra.

The telmatra occupy lands that conveniently serve as a bridge between the East and West. The trade traffic that passes through has caused their society to develop rapidly in urban areas, but left the more remote communities behind. The conflict between traditionally xenophobic telmatra tribes and the progressive mercantile states is emblematic of what it means to be a telmatra in the industrial world. Each must choose between tradition and modernity, two ways of life that cannot coexist.

Telmatra tribes are built around warrior reverence. The more people a male has killed, for example, the more concubines he is awarded. These sorts of practices are what put tribal communities at odds with those who subscribe to more equitable customs. Most telmatra feel torn over this cultural conflict. Even those who detest the ancient traditions may have a more emotionally complex relationship with them than they would ever admit.



Open for Business

With a male-dominated warrior culture in their past, telmatra are often extreme, impatient, and dismissive. This short attention span actually serves them well in the world of trade and business, where quick, tense interactions play to their strengths. For the same reason, many telmatra enjoy gambling. This all-business demeanor is balanced by a general respect for those they trust. Telmatra are very loyal allies.

Race wars nearly destroyed the telmatra when human settlers first arrived from Syrikhal. After centuries of bloodshed, the two cultures eventually settled into a tolerant peace. Many intermarried over the course of time, resulting in a gradual and balanced assimilation that has all but eliminated racial inequality in Goltaraim. Telmatra are usually eager to see that everyone has a fair shot in life, regardless of birth or religion. They also share a general distaste for Western imperialism, which to them represents the worst that humankind has brought upon the world.

Beyond the Tribe

Interacting regularly with the various peoples of Vinramar, telmatra living in developed areas have a well-rounded knowledge of foreign cultures. Their home is a meeting place for almost every race, creed, and social order on the planet. Most telmatra have learned to delight in the differences that define all people. Those steeped in tribal tradition, however, have not, going so far as to lead war parties against foreign peoples that trespass on lands they have claimed.

Most telmatra are eager to prove that they aren't barbarians, perhaps all the more so because their tribal cousins continue to raid along the coasts and islands of central Vinramar. To prove their sophistication, the city-dwellers rely on displays of wealth as marks of cultural and economic progress. They wear lavish clothing and jewelry, build grandiose dwellings, and employ hundreds of servants. Of course, the tribes have their own signs of status. Bones of fallen enemies are worn around the neck and pierced through the ears, nose, and cheeks. Tattoos adorn their bodies, listing their acts of valor. Such marks of accomplishment mean everything to tribal telmatra.

Not Your Typical Orcs

Darkplane replaces orcs with the telmatra, who were once tribal and warlike, not very different from the sort of orcs we're used to seeing. In areas where the telmatra have made significant technological advances, however, they don't resemble the typical fantasy orc. If you want to make a more barbaric, orc-like telmatra, use the half-orc race. Otherwise, you can use the optional subrace provided on the next page. No distinction is made here between orcs and half-orcs, since most of the telmatra have partial human ancestry.

The telmatra are often taller than the average human, with coloring that ranges in dark tones of grey, green, brown, red, or even deep ebony. Their tongues, lips, gums, fingernails, and prominent teeth tend to be darkly colored as well.

The Triune Fathers

Most telmatra are casual with regard to religion, and many are openly atheistic. They have their own three traditional gods: Bekjhal, Duhulatt, and Hodramesh. Traditionally, tribes and families have a particular member of the Triune Fathers pantheon that they look to as a patron.

Worship of Daemoth and Gallister is often seen among city-bred telmatra, but it's also mingled with imagery and superstitions from traditional telmatra religions. The Etholchan temples in Goltaraim are commonly adorned with the images of insects, spears, and autumn leaves. Rural telmatra communities might even turn to Hodramesh rather than Daemoth when in danger of a meager harvest.

Lucrative Plutocracies

The densest telmatra settlements are in Goltaraim, where they've lived side-by-side with humans for more than a thousand years. In cases of mixed blood, which is common, the telmatra ancestry is usually dominant. The tribes don't generally approve of intermarriage with other races, but it isn't unheard of among them.

The nations of Goltaraim are generally run by powerful families or merchant guilds. Wealth goes a long way in these places, and a telmatra can climb the social ladder with ease if she knows how to turn a profit. Who you know can be far more important than your birth, and many of the ruling telmatra families are eager for fresh meat to run errands and smooth out their operations.

Quick on the Uptake

Although telmatra tribal culture produces many warriors, there's a wealth of opportunity to break the stereotype. A telmatra might pick up a little of everything as he crosses paths with many different cultures. Whatever they apply themselves to, telmatra tend to have a no-nonsense approach that makes them adept learners once committed.

Telmatra Names

With names, as in every other part of life, the telmatra are polarized. Many simply use the naming conventions of the land they live in, ignoring their racial tradition. In the tribes, telmatra gain a new name at three important life events.

First is a spirit name, given at birth. The mother smokes *monhassel* root while she bears the child, and a name comes to her in a vision at the moment the birth is complete. This name usually corresponds to a particular virtue inherent in the telmatra child's spirit. The second name is a nickname given relating to something distinctive about the child. This is received at age seven. The "true name" is received at coming of age, and is chosen by the telmatra child itself, often identifying a personal goal or value.

In addition to the three given names, traditional telmatra go by family names passed from the father. These names are constructed by putting the root "got by" (*Ta-*) before the father's true name, or by simply using its possessive form (adding *U-* before it).

Given Names: Alabar, Betra, Dahsi, Dukal, Hekhta, Huni, Ifsakh, Jandu, Jhokmai, Magha, Nunmarai, Talsoh, Usod, Zemohna

Family Names: Ta-alhaga, Ta-ahuk, Ta-brakhma, Ta-elosai, Ta-jubal, Ta-musal, Ta-noranda, Ta-zakhib, U-bengai, U-fasod, U-kuzul, U-muhokai

Variant: Cosmopolitan Telmatra

To create a telmatra character who was born and raised in civilization, build a half-orc as you would in any other setting, keeping Darkvision and Savage Attacks, but replacing the rest of the traits with those below.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 2, and your Constitution and Charisma scores increase by 1.

Alignment. No races are inherently evil in Darkplane. Telmatra, therefore, should display as much variety in alignment as any other group. Sure, some of them are evil. So are some elves. The tribal telmatra will tend to be more chaotic, while those that live in developed nations tend to be lawful.

Heard It All. You have advantage when making Intelligence checks to appraise the value of an item or to determine if you've heard a particular rumor, tidbit, or piece of lore.

Savvy. You have proficiency in the Deception skill.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Salohusaid and one regional language of your choice. Salohusaid is the telmatra racial tongue, spoken in the tribes or by city-dwellers interested in telmatra tradition. It has a clipping, rhythmic sound.

Dragonborn

Heirs to a forgotten bloodline, the dragonborn have withdrawn from the outside world. Their appearance causes other races to fear and despise them, especially those whose history remembers a time when the dragon-children marched a terrifying onslaught across the West. But that was ages ago, when the world was young.

Today, the dragon-children have been swept off the lands that briefly belonged to them, forced to watch them fall into the hands of younger races. Their clans huddle in far-off jungles and islands, spending more and more time in water, where the dry-hides never go. This solitude spares them from having to deal with land-dwellers, but also excites bitter resentment over their people's long-lost glory.

The dragonborn have sunk low indeed. Where they once built towering cities to house their thousand young, they now inhabit ragged camps along the coasts with only a handful of children. Each day the dry-hides and their technologies encroach further on these meager lands. It's little wonder the dragonborn react with violence.

Bitter and Proud

To the dragonborn, the world has turned away from its proper fate. They raise their young on stories of a time when dragons ruled the land, the seas, and the skies—stories that one day the stolen world would be returned to its rightful masters. To them, the races that now occupy it are fundamentally strange. For this reason, many dragonborn have an air of detachment, as though they see life so differently from others that trying to find common ground is pointless. They're proud, not taking insult lightly, but once they've warmed up to someone, the bond is ironclad.

Shut Out the World

Interactions with the other races of Vinramar have seldom ended well for the dragonborn. Two thousand years ago, they were slaughtered wholesale by colonists from Motta who wished to settle the coastlands they occupy, and some dragonborn can still be found among the slaves of human households. Given this history, the dragonborn keep close to home. Those that adventure beyond the borders are often met with shock and disgust.

In the eastern jungles, some dragonborn tribes have survived for millennia, since before human settlers ever arrived. These are the most reclusive and ascetic devotees of the mysterious beings that lie at the heart of the rainforest. Their devotion to those beings is dearer to them than life.

Divided Clans

The dragonborn settlements are scattered and out of touch. For the most part they live in small tribes of thirty or less, but two larger clans exist on the islands off the south coast of Chayrshellech. The more dangerous of these is called Kaiervol. These dragonborn do little in the way of hunting or fishing, preferring instead to raid ships that dare to pass through their waters. The Kaiervol clan inhabits Mount Fayrlin, the ancient seat of the Daragoch Empire. The Medeghar clan is taller and spends more time on land than the other dragonborn. Their island lies just east of Mount Fayrlin. Some farming is practiced among them, but this is a relatively recent development.

The dragonborn place great value on physical prowess and endurance. Hunting and swimming are essential for their survival, and those who perform best in these activities command the most respect. Their tradition of determining clan leaders through tournament combat explains why particularly large dragonborn often act entitled to take charge.

Mammals Descended from Dragons

In the Darkplane setting, dragonborn are less lizardlike. Their mixed blood has given them a wide range of appearance. Some, like the standard dragonborn you're familiar with, are land-dwellers. Many, however, are amphibious. To create dragonborn characters for the Darkplane setting, use the traits provided on the following pages. If these aren't to your taste, then feel free to make your character with the original dragonborn race as usual.

More slippery than scaly, the dragonborn of Vinramar have skin like a seal or fish. Their mouths look more human, with short snouts that are barely perceptible. Their eyes are set farther apart than other races, and their heads might be bald or adorned with scaled protrusions like tentacles or fins. Their coloring ranges across all the typical dragon types.

Spawn of Lakhi

Lakhi has spawned legions of children since she became the primordial mistress of the sea. First she bore the Three—nameless godlike dragons that dwelt with her beneath the ocean. Second came the Ten, a brood of land-dwelling dragons, powerful blood mages that were terrifying to behold. As the millennia passed, she continued to birth drakes, serpents, the great lizards, lizardmen, troglodytes, and all the creatures in the sea. These descendants likewise bore children, until the oceans, seas, rivers, and lakes of Vinramar were overflowing with the Spawn of Lakhi.

Not all of the sea-goddess's young were intelligent creatures, but those that were began to covet the empires they found on land. About 16,000 years ago, they gathered at Mount Fayrlin and established the Empire of Daragoch. Little is known about the dragon-empire, but some legends hint that it was ruled by the nameless Three. Hordes of dragon-kin began to spill across Vinramar, claiming many lands from East to West. The maahiset, daemons, and jharethil all fought bitterly in their turn against the Spawn of Lakhi. At last, the dragons were stopped only by the Great Winter, which froze their blood and sent them back to the depths of the sea.

Today, hardly a hint of Daragoch remains. Mount Fayrlin is a hive of its degenerate descendants, the dragonborn. Their clans gather along the islands and coasts of southern Chayrshellech, and in Syrikhal's jungles.

Walking Marvels

It isn't unheard of for a dragonborn to brave the unknown and leave its clan, although there would need to be a strong reason for doing so. It's beyond rare to see such creatures in the wide world. Anyone meeting a dragonborn is likely doing so for the first and last time. Their shock at the experience will usually irritate—but not surprise—the dragonborn itself.

Because of this burdened experience, dragonborn adventurers might end up as mercenaries, pirates, trackers, gladiators, or any other career that will keep them away from densely populated areas. They might also practice blood magic or runecasting for a fee if it can put food on the table.

Dragonborn Names

Dragonborn use descriptive phrases as names. These phrases might relate to a circumstance surrounding the child's birth, an expectation for the child on the part of the parents, or an attribute the dragonborn displays later in life. A dragonborn's name often changes, but not at any set point. It simply evolves as the individual's identity and reputation evolve. Sometimes these names are shortened to nicknames, but not always.

Daraghun Names: Araike hoka haj, Abbajwa fike, Bhatia bhutu, Dawagh da hote, Hrud hruji, Jokh toko, Khas kheli dogh naphai, Lohana kugwu, Magha wa pagha, Mekhul tulu, Nadkhali khajai, Patoli jukaw, Samma akh samma, Shar take hake, Sirk ik baju, Zardar ip amdar

Dragonborn Traits

As a spawn of the dragon-mistress of the sea, your dragonborn character has the traits listed below.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 2.

Age. Vinramar's dragonborn age a little more slowly than humans in their first few years. They reach the size of a human 5-year-old by age 10, and thereafter grow very quickly, catching up to human size by age 12. Being mammals, they don't hatch from eggs, but their diminutive stature in the first decade of life makes dragonborn very protective of their vulnerable young.

Dragon Cults

The traditional draconic gods are Lakhi, Imbakhao, and Maruma'e, all ancient primordials that may take the form of dragons. The Kaiervol worship Imbakhao, the black dragon, while the Medeghar worship Lakhi. Rivalry between the two groups has ended in bloodshed on more than one occasion. The dragonborn who worship Maruma'e, the mad concubine of Daemoth, often find themselves developing aberrant features such as tentacles and extra eyes. Many dragonborn cults have preserved knowledge of certain powerful runes that were shown them by the maahiset, and these might figure prominently in their different forms of worship.

While it has never been clear just what the dragonborn of the eastern jungles worship, legends hint at colossal beasts that rule the deepest parts of the jungle. Whatever these beings might be, they are the object of the eastern dragonborn's zealous and secret devotion.

Alignment. Being a diverse race, dragonborn might be of any alignment. The Kaiervol lean more toward chaos and evil, while the Medeghar value honor and goodness. Other groups might embrace any number of philosophies.

Size. An average dragonborn is long and thin, standing between 6 and 7 feet tall. Your size is Medium.

Speed. 30 feet.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Daraghun and one regional language of your choice. Daraghun is a degenerated form of the ancient dragon speech, and its name is also the origin of the word *dragon*. It employs heavy use of rhyme and alliteration in constructing phrases.

Subrace. Choose a subrace. Two are described here: bog lurker and dragonborn diver.

Bog Lurker

In the dense rainforests of Syrikhal, mysterious tribes prowl the deepest rivers and marshes. Few outsiders have managed to make contact with them, but the stories tell that these dragonborn serve something ancient and alien that lies in the blackest murk of the swamp—godlike lizards that can peer into the minds of lesser beings. They and their scions can smell fear, or conjure terrifying visions in an intruder's mind.

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

Psychic Stirring. You can use an action to send frightening images through the minds of your enemies. When you use this ability, creatures in a 15-foot cone must succeed on an Intelligence saving throw or become frightened until the end of their next turn. The DC for the saving throw equals 8 + your Intelligence modifier + your proficiency bonus.

Smell Fear. You can sense frightened creatures within 25 feet of you, and they cannot become hidden from you while within this range. This sense is blocked by any barrier that would obstruct your sense of smell.

Sound Mind. You have resistance to psychic damage, and when you make a saving throw to avoid being frightened, you have advantage.

Dragonborn Diver

The most common type of dragonborn in Vinramar, these descendants of Lakhi have incredible skill at maneuvering underwater. They often live in stone villages hewn into cliffs that overlook the sea. Their lungs can clamp shut for up to an hour while their small gills pull oxygen from water. Their hands and feet have subtle webbing that helps propel them with ease when swimming.

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

Amphibious. You can breathe both air and water, and have a swim speed of 30 feet. While you're grappling a creature underwater, it is also restrained by you.

Deep Swimmer. You have resistance to cold damage.

Marine Affinity. You have advantage on ability checks to influence, befriend, or train water-dwelling creatures.

A Dragon's Young

Like many descendants of Lakhi, the dragonborn have dwindled to a size comparable to the other humanoid races of Vinramar. To some extent their physiology must be amphibious or reptilian (depending on subrace), but they seem to be predominantly mammalian, as opposed to their distant cousins the lizardmen, who are reptiles. Whatever their characteristics might be, the dragonborn are feared and hated more than any other common race.

Most dragonborn feel kinship with sea creatures and reptiles, and they look to the dragons as their ancestors and gods. Their mythology, however, is largely based on oral tradition, and very few have any real knowledge of their people's long-past golden age. They tend to reject the worship of humanoid gods, considering it the height of narcissism to assume that the gods bear resemblance to mere mortals.

Chapter Two

VINRAMAR

Then dauntless Rephel went unto Iarmuto in the furthest west with the strength of his nine legions, and the prophet Tantoruch stood before the gates to meet him; and Rephel ascended with Tantoruch to the highest chamber of the temple, that he might look upon the world.

And Rephel looked north and beheld the snow-dipped forests of the Norlythe, where men ride stags like horses; and he beheld the furious industry of Trentsmund, its mills and factories and smoke; and in the tops of the mountains he beheld the sorcerers of Chayrshellech, who wear runes upon their faces.

And Rephel looked east and beheld the black-toothed hunters depart from the desert and settle the coasts of Goltaraim; and he beheld the wilderness of Arwest, where men walk in the skin of beasts beneath the eaves; and he beheld the parched earth where Iarmov's young lap the blood of children from their chargers in Perrith Gorr.

And Rephel looked south and beheld the warmongers of Iljudheim and the forest-grown empire of Arrochule, and the pagodas of Syrikhal like forlorn islands in a sea of jungle.

And last of all Rephel looked to Wellusk, where a desolation descended unlooked for upon the living and the dead.

—The Book of Rephel 12:3-7

* * *

Vinramar is a diverse world. Its lands and nations are as varied as our own. In this chapter, you'll find information on the tribes, city-states, oligarchies, republics, kingdoms, and empires that populate the world in the year 1350 *Annoloth*, as well as their respective languages.

Vinramar's days, years, climate, geology, atmosphere, magnetic field, and force of gravity are equivalent to Earth's. It has a moon that's comparable to ours. The equator of Vinramar is approximately 8,800 miles in circumference, making it roughly a third the size of Earth. If a ship could sail straight around it without stopping, it would finish the journey in about a hundred days.

Most plant and animal species we're familiar with exist somewhere in Vinramar, as well as many unique species. The global population of intelligent races is around 600 million, having had significant booms in the last few centuries. There are 79 known nations across seven continents and larger islands, separated by seven oceans.

The map on pages 68 and 69 depicts the nations of Vinramar, grouped into 11 world regions: Arrochule, Arwest, Chayrshellech, Goltaraim, Motta, the Norlythe, Perrith Gorr, Syrikhal, Trentsmund, and Wellusk. These regions each contain several nations, cultures, and races, acting like a set of interconnected campaign settings. You might run an entire campaign in Trentsmund, for example, and have plenty of scope for a year or more of play. Alternatively, you could begin with a series of adventures in the wilderness of the Norlythe, move the action to the densely populated region of Motta for a few levels, then take the final tier of the campaign to the vampire wastelands in Perrith Gorr.

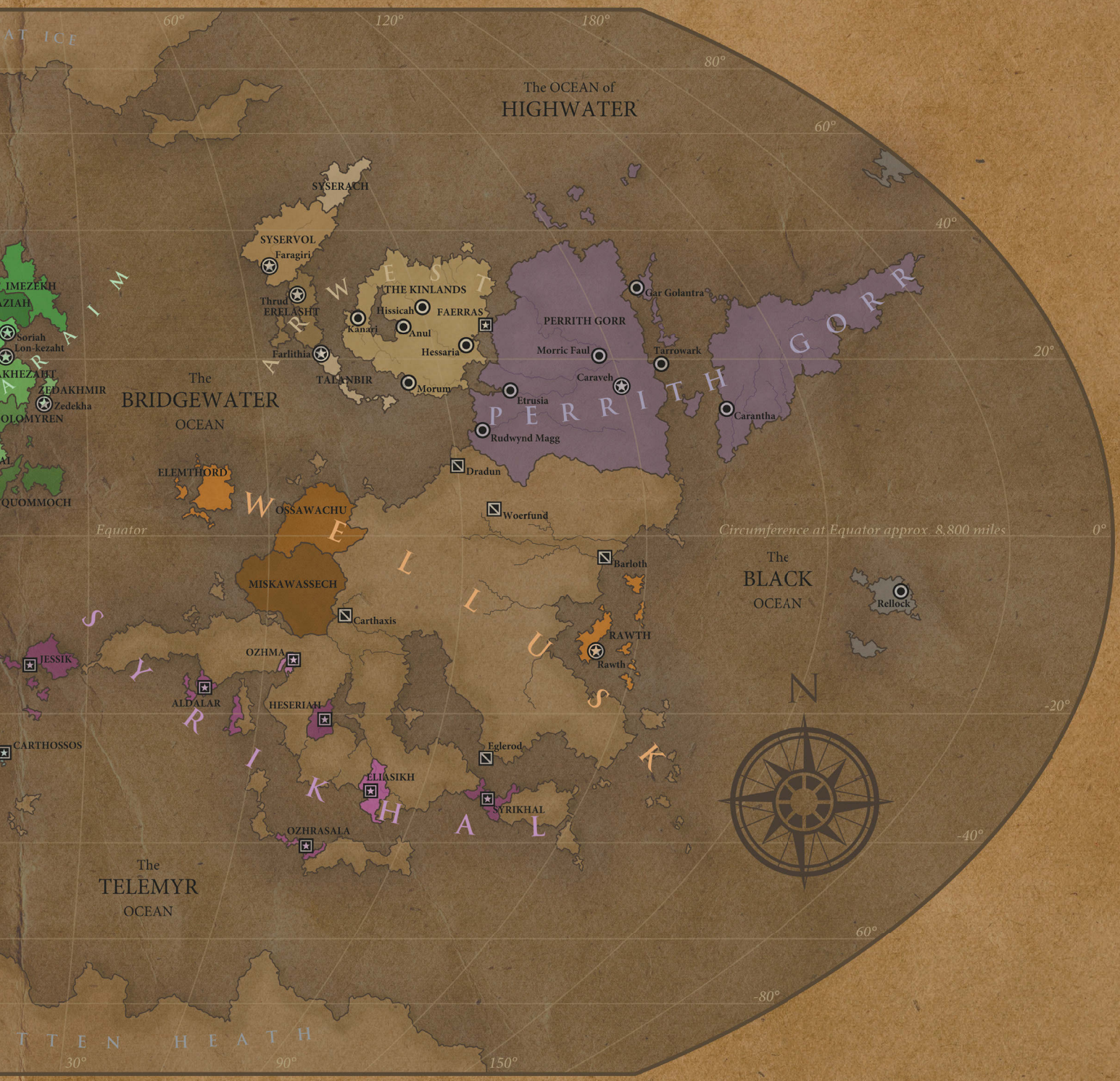
The Known Nations of

VINRAMAR

This map prepared by Joulson Foster, 1350 Annoloth

MILES

250	500	750	1,000	1,000	2,000	3,000



LEGEND

Wilderness | NATION | CITY-STATE | Capital | City | Ruin

Arrochule

There is a vengeance in the earth. Until 1,500 years ago this land was called Ardon, the seat of hope, a home for the hated sons of Jharus, built on the first cradle of their civilization. Then its emperor was murdered, and the twelve cities of the jharethil were taken up into the heavens. Now the land itself mourns, ruined and overgrown with a jungle that slowly swallows the remaining provinces. These inhabitants have given it a new name: Arrochule, which by interpretation is Temple of Arrochimeir, the son of Daemoth. Only time will tell if the region will permit another nation to possess it for long.

—Ashannai Josman, *Letters and Lectures*

Common Races: Human, telmatra
Regional Language: Arroch
Nations: Carthossos, D'arthel, the Empire of Arrochule, Esgoth, Issos, Ord'essos, Quoda'en
Places of Interest: The Ba'areth Mountains, Dark Athiktos, the Library of Arosedium, the Shrine of Onaya, Tuhr, Vitollos

Known History

This region has always been colored by its legacy as the homeland of the jharethil. They dwelt here in the earliest ages of the world, building a powerful empire called Ardon that would rise and fall throughout Vinramar's history. During the Elder Dark, the land was conquered by the Mohtran Empire and given the name Arrochule, after Daemoth's second son. Under the rule of the daemons, the jharethil were scattered and persecuted, but broken Ardon struggled to keep a foothold in the region. During the Wild Age, the jharethil reappeared to find Arrochule home to a collection of diverse civilizations.

The Ichoroth

The 12th and 13th centuries saw the jharethil regain large areas of the continent, but it was humans who sabotaged their expansion. The elder kindred had taken in many human refugees and escaped slaves fleeing the West. Legend tells that twelve such humans, envious of jhareth immortality, struck a bargain with Gauren in a crooked bid for power. In exchange for exterminating the jharethil, Gauren granted the humans eternal life and the rule of Arrochule. History remembers them as the Ichoroth, the Twelve Traitors.

Their reign didn't last long. A fierce plague descended on the Ichoroth Empire, rotting the people's flesh and turning them white as death. The Witchplague, as it came to be called, killed hundreds—but it couldn't kill the Ichoroth. It was then that Gauren's duplicity was revealed, for though their spirits could not separate from their bodies, neither could they heal or remain young. Condemned to waste away for eternity until their flesh was dust, the Ichoroth were deposed. Even now, after thousands of years, some claim to see the Ichoroth from time to time, wandering the wild lands of Arrochule like vagrant corpses.

New Ardon and the Great Forsaking

At the end of the Wild Age, a jhareth named Ardoth Intillanum united what survived of his people and marched on Arrochule. The continent quickly fell under the banner of New Ardon, an empire which Intillanum personally ruled for more than 2,500 years. But New Ardon too was doomed to fall.

Gauren, ever eager to win his father's approval, seduced a second coven of humans into his service. These he taught terrifying truths about the nature of the universe, truths that robbed them of their sanity and granted them fearsome power. Mad in their worship of the Darkplane, they became the Order of Illiantri, a cloistered cult which orchestrated the assassination of Ardoth Intillanum. Stories claim that Gauren's part in this plot won him a seat at Daemoth's court.

At Intillanum's death, the twelve chief cities of the jharethil suddenly vanished from the land without a trace. Many believe that the god Jharus had finally washed his hands of the world, taking his children up into his presence once and for all. Others contend that the disappearance must have been part of Gauren's attack on the empire. It's been 1,350 years now, and no definite answer has ever emerged.

In the centuries after the Great Forsaking, jungle sprang up over New Ardon's ruined foundations. The humans formed the Empire of Arrochule in hopes of returning political stability to the region, but each year the wilderness seems to spread faster and faster, swallowing their settlements in dense overgrowth. The earth itself wages war on the empire, subsuming Arrochule's cities with unnatural speed.

Vengeful Jungle

To survive in Arrochule means battling the land, whether farming, foresting, mining, or simply trying to stem the jungle's aggressive advance. The industrious imperial citizens are better equipped for this fight than others, but it's little comfort. With each buried settlement, the region's cities become more isolated from one another as the wild steadily overthrows them.

Despite such losses, the Empire of Arrochule has steadily conquered most neighboring territories. The people that inhabit them often lack the numbers and tools to carve a proper living from the earth. Bitter poverty has descended on these fringe societies in the last hundred years, starving the fight out of them and sweetening the prospect of joining the empire. Those that still resist often turn to raiding imperial settlements for provisions and tools, for which the empire brands them as barbarians.

Humans, predominantly of Forroth descent, are by far the most common race in Arrochule, but telmatra are found abundantly in the islands surrounding the mainland. Some gugrum tribes live a nomadic existence along the northern coast, particularly in the Ba'areth Mountains. The humans and gugrum speak dialects of Arroch—as do many local telmatra, in addition to their racial tongue Salohusaid.

Arrochulis often dress in stitched animal hides draped with linen robes or togas. In the imperial cities, where fine linen and Syrikhali silk are more accessible, the robes are opulent and lavishly embroidered. Wealthy citizens pay highly for imported glass, steel, wine, and wool, none of which are easy to obtain locally. Within the empire, builders work mainly in Arrochule's characteristic golden mottled slate, but in the outlands it's more common to see structures made of wood or earth.

Human Heirs of an Ancient Land

Arrochule raises strong people: Holthirien elephant hunters, back-breaking quarriers, Carthossian whalers, and doughty soldiers. An iron will is the key to survival here—even in the imperial court, where a courtier who speaks the wrong word can wind up dead. Characters might be searching jhareth ruins for elder secrets, exploring the ever-evolving jungle, or hunting down evidence of the fabled Ichoroth.

The various human cultures that make up the Forroth subrace are found both in and out of the empire. While tending to get along well with humans from abroad, their relations among one another have always been somewhat strained. They favor the worship of Daemoth and Gallister.

Despite the jhareth cities' disappearance from Arrochule in the Great Forsaking, many of their people were left behind. They might have been deemed unworthy to reenter Jharus' presence, or perhaps they were absent when their emperor fell and the cities were taken up. Outliers like these might spend hundreds of years searching for answers as to what exactly happened, and Arrochule is the first place to start.

Nations of Arrochule

The city-state of **Carthossos** occupies two small islands in the easternmost waters of the Impeldium Sea. It is a sparsely populated republic, largely comprised of fishermen, whalers, and artisans.

D'arthel is a tribal polity strewn about the coasts of D'arthel Island. Its jungle sierras were first settled by the ancestors of the telmatra, but now lie largely untouched.

The Empire of Arrochule forms the mainland of this region, despite significant dissidence by the various human and gugrum peoples within its borders. The Empress of Arrochule, Tarberan II, wages war to unite all Arrochulis beneath her banner.

Esgoth is the only mainland nation stable enough to maintain its sovereignty in the face of imperial aggression. While less developed than the empire, its feudal hierarchy enables the kingdom to field an impressive military force.

A lesser territory held by an aging warlord, **Issos** is on the verge of war, small as it is. The gugrum general Jongu Vulmeros has ruled the lowlands north of Ni'atara for 62 years, and when he dies, his captains will make Issos into hell before relinquishing their claims.

The city-state of **Ord'essos** has spread its dominion over several large islands just south of the mainland. While it holds these lands in name, the vast majority of the Ord'essian populace resides within the city walls.

Quoda'en, once called Cordain, was recently conquered by the Goltari League in response to its war on Sudurikhal. The rich nation remains under martial law until the League can come to an agreement on how to divvy it among the oligarchies of the telmatra.

Places of Interest

The Ba'areth Mountains, named for the network of gugrum tribes that inhabit them, are the most remote locale on the continent. Reaching up to 5,000 feet along the northwest coast of Arrochule, the peaks are an imposing refuge for pirates, thieves, cults, and sorcerers. Their reputation for hauntings is also well known.

The city of **Dark Athiktos** has been whispered of for decades—how it was dragged from another world to Vinramar through the Darkplane by the ancient hag Vexxin Goghob. Since that forbidden journey, its denizens and alleyways have become twisted mockeries of what they once were. Fools that visit often find that they too are changed by the Darkplane energies.

The Library of Arosedium is an impressive collection of texts kept in the city of the same name. Those looking for any sort of information will probably find answers here—that is, if they can convince its curator to open the palace door for anyone but royalty.

The Shrine of Onaya is one of many jhareth ruins that dot the continent of Arrochule. Couched against a bald peak in the western reach of the Holthirien Jungle, it's a colossal statue of a woman, with the name Onaya engraved at its base. Her arms and head are lifted to the sky, but both hands and the surface of her face have broken away. Little is remembered of the shrine's history, but tales tell that it once held the foundation of one of the vanished jhareth cities. According to the legend, the city is still there, and those who discover its secret can open a stair to the invisible gate from atop the shrine.

Tuhr was the chief city of Ancient Ardon, built in the mountains at the heart of Arrochule. In a day long ago, the mountain stood up and crawled across the land, toppling its towers and killing most of the inhabitants. The city's enchanted ruins continue to crawl each night, and no one knows where the mountain will rest at dawn. Three famous sites are housed in Tuhr: the Oracle Wall, the fountain of Culadh Hayotha, and the Bronze Sybil, a statue said to grant visions.

Vitollos is Arrochule's largest and most dangerous ruin, a crater where the throne of Jharus himself once stood. Before its destruction, it was a thriving metropolis, a cyclopean tower where the jharethil dwelt at the feet of their god. When Daemoth felled the tower with a stone cast from the Darkplane, thousands of jharethil perished. Now buried deep within the jungle, the crater has become a place of terror, mystery, and extraordinary power.

Adventuring in Arrochule

This region is a repository of lost history. Campaigns set here can use those elements to add texture and appeal. As one of the cradles of civilization, Arrochule has seen countless cultures, wars, and tragedies. The memory of such events lies heavy on the land, and fills every location and prop with riddles.

Arrochule's cities are built on the ruins of previous settlements. Each one can tell a unique story as adventurers descend into hidden passageways, catacombs, and temples that have far outlived the empires that built them. Such places might contain forgotten prophecies, sacred sites of power, or clues to the identity of jharethil hiding in plain sight among the people. Perhaps a village lives day in and day out with an artifact of immense significance beneath their nose, unnoticed. Others might realize the relic's usefulness and develop an entire way of life around it.

This region isn't just the home of the jharethil—it's also the birthplace of the Eitharmos, a militant order sworn to hunt down those with ties to Jharus. Sometimes a lone crusader wanders through town on the trail of a jhareth fugitive, other times a full battalion will appear from nowhere and burn a heretical village to the ground. When the hunt is called, it's best to keep your head down.

In addition to local adventures, Arrochule is a good launching point for a broader-scale campaign. Hundreds of merchant vessels come in and out of the region's ports each day, bound for lands as far as Trentsmund or Arwest. If you wish to introduce your players to many different cultures, putting them on a ship out of Arrochule is a great first step.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Arrochule region:

A small unit of imperial soldiers retreats into the Holthirien Jungle, where winged phantoms appear and show them the day they will all die in battle. The apparitions permit them to repeatedly live that day until each one can escape death.

A professor and his team search Arrochule for Tuhr, the crawling city, in order to ask the Oracle Wall where the jhareth cities fled during the Great Forsaking.

A crew's ship is held at Carthossos until the Eitharmos can determine which of them is secretly a jhareth. Can the passengers find out which one of them it is? Once they do, will they protect or betray her?

Arwest

Four fathers have been dead since our land was returned to us from the vampires. We claimed Arwest when it was young. Like the wolf we walked its breadth and built our dens, warning strange peoples that only we would possess it while one werekin lived. Then blood-hunters came from the East to challenge us, and with the cunning of the spider we trapped them until our webs became full and many of our folk were lost. Like the persistent rat we survived to make war once more, but the Kinlands seem sapped of strength. Under the reign of Anul we may see it rise or fall for the final time.

—Dictated by King Omkat of clan Anul

Common Races: Elf, human, werekin
Language: Welluskud
Nations: Erelasht, Faerras, the Kinlands, Syserach, Syservol, Talanbir
Places of Interest: Castle Brekta, the Fey Gate, Hessawood, the Pyramid of Yutashu, Sorminka

Known History

In ancient days, Arwest was empty but for the elves, who dwelt close to the Fey Gate near Farlithia. By the second millennium of the Wild Age—almost 8,000 years ago—human settlers were wandering into the region's western islands, telling myths of a feral tribe living in the Hessawood who were neither man nor beast. The werekin, as the creatures came to be called, soon expanded their hunting grounds across the entire island, from the Straits of Warakh to the shores of the Wolkwine Sea. Their packs soon developed into semi-nomadic clans, fiercely tied to the land they defended.

The Sack of Theidhas

Located on the site of present-day Faerras, the city of Theidhas was established in the 14th century of the Wild Age by dark elves fleeing oppression in Talanbir. The rumors began to spread in 1418: whispers of the sorcerer-god Fimbuleth and his beast-children. Werekin sightings became common.

In 1428, the dark elves sent an armed expedition into the Hessawood to uncover the mystery of Fimbuleth, and the werekin lashed out. Hostilities erupted into intense territorial warfare, and in less than a year Theidhas was sacked, a symbol of rising werekin dominance in the region. Since that time, Arwest's elves have seldom trespassed beyond the southern islands.

Rise and Fall

The werekin reached the height of their power during the *Intiliaros*, an age marked by the rise of the first human kingdoms. Werekin clans formalized into kingdoms and began to build a few scattered cities—inspired, historians suppose, by what they saw of the elf city Theidhas. These kingdoms began expanding across the Straits of Warakh into Perrith Gorr, which prompted retribution by the vampires in 1602. Volgothyde, the emperor of Perrith Gorr, waged a genocidal war on the werekin, thinning their packs and ransacking their cities for 30 years before abandoning the assault.

The eastern werekin lands were left open to human immigrants, who poured in from their own nations across the Wolkwine Sea. As they settled and developed, the humans slowly filled their prison camps with werekin strays. Confinement bred hatred, and in 1661 there was a rash of escapes. The prisoners seized the camps one by one, scattering and slaying most of the human settlers.

With the eastern island under their control once more, the werekin established the Kinlands, a territorial alliance based on common totem animals. Their clans keep vigilant watch for intruding humans from Erelasht, Syserach, or Syservol.

Primeval Enmity

Arwest is a region intensely segregated by race. Humans and werekin are the two largest groups, and each has learned from long, hard experience to deal with the other as little as possible. The local elves have been slowly dwindling for centuries, and likewise keep to themselves. Suspicion and racial enmity reign supreme, making each civilization in Arwest more culturally insular than is common in other parts of the world.

As the most xenophobic, werekin have maintained a great degree of cultural isolation over the thousands of years since their emergence. The clans all have unique traditions and philosophies, though their common language (and common enemies) have encouraged frequent contact among them. Most tend to be hunter-gatherers, but clan Anul is notable for its architectural and agricultural achievements. Shared among all werekin cultures is a distinctive combination of self-domestication and territorial herd behavior.

Despite the imposing wilds of Arwest, its human communities have developed significantly over the centuries, growing from sparse settlements into thriving cities and kingdoms. Predominantly from Omhatra cultures, they speak Welluskud as their first language. Most forms of subsistence can be found among them, but in the human kingdoms of Bazamir Island, fishing is king.

Humans' dark history with both elves and werekin in this region has not only populated their folklore with elaborate characters and tales, but has shaped them into a particularly superstitious people. Strict rules of conduct and social taboos make dealing with the Erelashti and Syservoli peoples a precarious affair for outsiders. For example, they consider it good luck to speak pessimistically of the future, a practice that bewilders visitors.

The islands southeast of Erelasht are called the Talanbir, or the Fey Isles, inhabited mostly by moon elves. Though separated by thousands of miles, they're culturally similar to the elves of Iljudheim: distant, highly spiritual, and unimpressed by material possessions. They most commonly worship Baturach, the primordial goddess of the moon, but there are those of them who remember their divine mother, the mad Forlortha.

Arwest is one of the nothernmost regions of Vinramar and remains snow-covered for a significant portion of the year. The elves and humans tend to dress appropriately—hats, thick furs, and woolens are common. The werekin are more likely to shift into a fur-covered form than to don more clothing, so during winter their people often go about in beast or hybrid form. In the cool summers, they'll usually look more human.

Unlikely Sanctuary

Dauntless and skillful, the races of Arwest have been trained by the land to live simply and to value ties of blood. Family is extremely important to them, whether human, werekin, or elf. Despite their many differences, the Syservoli merchants, Erelashti jewelers, and werewolf prowlers of clan Hessaria all have two goals in common—put food on the table and pass your traditions on to your children.

The brevity of Arwest's history as a developed region has made it a gathering place for adventurers of every kind. For hundreds of years, it drew those fleeing civilization: convicts, escaped slaves, fortune-hunters, trappers, and prospectors. More recently, communities established by these early homesteaders have grown into busy cities housing folk of every kind. It's a good place to start a new life, or to escape an old one.

Nations of Arwest

Erelasht is a small kingdom occupying the mountainous southern cape of Bazamir Island. The Erelashti people are simple folk, known for their tradition of fine gem-cutting.

The city-state of **Faerras** straddles the uppermost Strait of Warakh, with one foot in Arwest and one foot in the ashlands of Perrith Gorr. With lycanthrope settlements 50 miles to the west and vampire holdings 10 miles to the east, the people of Faerras have always lived in the shadow of fear. Only the wealth of the city can account for the substantial number of immigrants that flock yearly to its streets.

The Kinlands make up the curious confederacy of werekin clans that rule the island of Arwest. Each tribe is fiercely territorial, only working together out of a sense of loyalty to the werekin race.

The territory called **Syserach** sits in the northern tundra of Bazamir Island, an area largely deserted. A chieftain named Ruvanif commands the loyalty of the mountain-folk, most of whom make their living herding reindeer and hunting seals.

Syservol is the center of human settlement in Arwest. Its towns and villages dot the hills and riverbanks between Faragiri and Mount Alarod. Traffic is always bustling along the Sindhanya River Valley. The resulting trade forms the backbone of human commerce in this region.

Talanbir is one of the few nations established by the elves. As the first to settle this region many ages ago, they have borne witness to the fall of their own civilization. In Farlithia, Talanbir's capital city, many elves still live who were abandoned in Vinramar when the Fey Kindreds fled to Iltallach during the Great Winter. Unlike Oruna, most of the elves of Talanbir are moon elves, who happily trade with humans.

Places of Interest

Castle Brekta, a secluded fortress in northern Syservol, lies atop a gargantuan complex of marble caves. Strange stories surround the history of the castle's long-dead owners, the Andelomov family, and few have ventured in for fear of the disfigured squatters who have taken up residence in the ruins.

Farlithia's **Fey Gate** is one of two portals from Vinramar to the fey world Iltallach. It was erected in the earliest history by Forlortha herself to provide her children with a path into the fey world. Its secrets were lost long ago, when the Great Winter caused thousands of elves to flee Vinramar and seal the portal behind them. Now the enormous stone gate stands ruined at the center of the elf city, an unfeeling reminder that the golden age of their civilization is forever gone.

The **Hessawood** is a dense forest that covers a range of mountains in southern Arwest. To the werekin, this ground is their sacred birthplace, and the dwelling of their mysterious god Fimbuleth. Few if any outsiders ever see within its eaves, but the tales of the rituals that transpire there are ominous enough to curdle the blood.

The **Pyramid of Yutashu** was built during the Wild Age by the jackalwere king Odhuris, who used it as both a temple to Fimbuleth and a burial chamber for his dynasty. The largest pyramid in the world, its very construction is a mystery and a wonder. Hundreds of werekin kings and chieftains are interred within beside millennia of riches. On clear days, the pyramid can be seen from the shore of Syservol, and some nights the humans whisper of an odd spectral light at its peak.

Sorminka is an area of southern Erelasht covered in wide salt flats, where dark elves once settled. Like most ancient dark elf sites, Sorminka is littered with barrows, both hidden and visible. Many have been looted over the centuries, but every now and then an intrepid explorer will uncover a hoard of magical artifacts buried beneath the white dunes.

Adventuring in Arwest

Conflict between humans, werekin, and elves is at its peak in Arwest. Thousands of years of warfare, mistreatment, and misunderstanding complicate any interaction between them, and any spot here could become the setting for sudden, violent confrontation. Your players might focus on either preventing or winning such a conflict.

A campaign set in Arwest might take place in an urban environment or the wilderness. Some combination of the two is also a natural fit, since both are present here in close proximity. There is plenty of both here in close proximity. Getting to know the werekin clan cultures and their politics can add a thread of intrigue or exploration.

Werekin characters are used to depending on one another as members of a pack. These family relationships can define and guide them in ways that say a lot about who they are as individuals. If one of your players is playing a werekin, consider bringing them to Arwest so the party can see that character in a new light. How do they respond to authority within their clan? Do they assert dominance or accept the status of the alpha? Fish out of water stories can be fun, but since Arwest is the only region where their people live in large numbers, it's the best place for werekin to explore themes of family and responsibility.

The city of Faerras is also particularly well suited as a starting point for any game. Being a human settlement within short distance of brutal wilderness, werekin territory, and the vampire homeland, it can serve as a base for many different sorts of adventures. It's also a place where refugees and immigrants have gathered from most parts of the world, allowing you to get a taste of many cultures without going very far. The city has such a diverse populace that on any given day there is often some group's religious festival or other cultural event.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Arwest region:

A werecat chieftain's best hunters venture into the frozen wild to track their lord's murderer—a vampire vagabond starved for blood.

The city of Faerras is thrown into upheaval as the spirits of the dark elves who were slaughtered there ages ago return for vengeance.

Castle Brekta's squatters have been causing trouble in the surrounding villages, and a local lawman gathers a group of volunteers and mercenaries to sort them out. When they discover the squatters in the middle of a strange ritual, each of the mercenaries is suddenly marked with a number, which counts down over the following days. What will happen when it reaches zero?

Chayrshellech

In the hands of the heathfolk, Chayrshellech has become the world's epicenter of culture and learning. Less than 3,000 years ago it was an assembly of inhospitable deserts, mountains, and canyons—now it is an area of great trade and travel where the wise seek out the wise. What was wild is now wealthy, and what was feared is now famed. Such transformation comes not by effacing the land, but by embracing it. Its seclusion imbues reflection, and its relentlessness breeds tenacity.

—Abouchman Thairn, Foreword to *Throne of a New World*

Common Races: Dragonborn, heathfolk, sarrow
Language: Roccurish
Nations: Chayrshellech, Ithacol, Kaiervol, Medeghar, Yarcarrach
Places of Interest: Abríanach University, the College of Sonnactfel, The Forlorn Marches, the Wyrm's Eyrie, Waelslayg Desert

Known History

In Chayrshellech's earliest memory, it was the seat of several pre-human civilizations. The maahiset settled here first, finding refuge in its isolated deserts. But when Daemoth traversed the region in his search for hidden knowledge, primordial beasts came in his wake, driving many of the maahiset back north and turning Chayrshellech into a land of dread. It wasn't until the formation of Daragoch, the empire of the dragon-spawn, that the region regained stability. When Daragoch fell and the maahiset fled, Chayrshellech remained uninhabited for several thousand years.

It was the region's seclusion, no doubt, that enticed a branch of the maahiset to remain hidden in the mountains on Chayrshellech's eastern coast. History tells that these were the descendants of the maahiset aristocracy, too proud to caravan north or delve beneath the earth for safety. They built refuges along the cliff faces of the Waelslayg Mountains, where they dwelt in hiding for more than 6,000 years. When they descended toward the end of the Wild Age, they had become the heathfolk—a race tough as nails, but with the souls of poets. As other civilizations came into contact with them, the heathfolk began to call their collection of mountain sanctuaries Chayrshellech, the heart of the world.

The Departure of Yarcarrach

Not long after the establishment of Chayrshellech as a heathfolk nation, a group of secular separatists opposed to the use of folk magic rose up against the democratic government in a bloody civil war. After years of bloodshed, the Yaelcar (as they were known) migrated south to form their own nation, Yarcarrach, along the southern coasts of the region. To this day, the heathfolk of Yarcarrach wear black clothing and abstain from cutting their hair. They maintain contact with the nation of Chayshellech, but the two societies are somewhat estranged.

Slaves and Farms

Apart from the Yaelcaric insurgence, the heathfolk's history in Chayrshellech is remarkably stable. The enslavement of dragonborn clans from the southwest islands, largely abandoned after the civil war, has surged back into practice in the last three hundred years. Slavers caravanning from Motta once again raid Medeghar and Kyrvol for laborers. These dragonborn slaves are often carried out of the region to estates and labor camps in northern Motta.

More recently, the heathfolk of Chayrshellech have been credited with bringing farming and mercantilism to the nomadic tribes in the north. Benefiting from the close proximity of heathfolk port cities, the tribal nations of Ithacol, Maricuälatán, and Caraquetularác have flourished under the guidance of their magnanimous neighbors.

Multicultural Wilderness

The heathfolk have a vested interest in keeping the land beyond their walls wild and untamed. While developed nations like Motta and Trentsmund vie to establish colonies far from home, some of the world's most abundant riches lie obscured in the heart of Chayrshellech. The heathfolk employ their traditional folk magic to harvest the wealth and resources hidden in the desert. Their high standard of living can largely be attributed to the exclusive access such practices provide to these abundant treasures.

As geniocracies, the heathfolk nations are ruled by fellowship societies whose members are appointed from universities based on academic achievement, problem solving, and creative intelligence. Members of these governing bodies—called fellows—exercise collective authority, legislating and sitting in judgment over the people until they reach an age of respectable retirement, usually around 60.

The sarrow that live in the region descend from obscure tribes that were never enslaved like their cousins in neighboring lands. Some still survive in the harsh deserts and canyons surrounding the Waelslayg Mountains, but most have assimilated into heathfolk culture as an indentured labor population.

Nomadic gugrum tribes roam throughout the unpopulated areas of Chayrshellech. Most commonly they trade with travelers and graze herds along the northern coast, occasionally settling down to farm in isolated communities. The Forlorn Marches, a wide area between the Dontare and the Taelya, was once the gugrum ancestral home. Civil war long ago reduced it to a valley of bones.

The area east of the River Oulearan is called Saethym, after the gugrum tribe that roams there. Infamous for their black magic pacts, they hunt and eat all living things that trespass on their lands, including humans, heathfolk, and even other gugrum.

The heathfolk, gugrum, and sarrow share this region with the dragonborn—mammalian descendants of the ancient dragon empire. Dragonborn settlements are secluded and mysterious to outsiders. Along the southern coasts their clans build partially submerged complexes from hexagonal megaliths. In Kaiervol and Medeghar, where their clans are most populous, life revolves around the worship of primordial deities like Lakhi, Imbakhao, and Marumaʾe.

Knowledge is Power

Heathfolk cultural dominance in Chayrshellech has placed power in the hands of the educated. Those with access to heathfolk universities learn skills taught nowhere else in the world. Wide gaps between the learned and the unlearned assure that this arrangement won't be changing soon. Whether they study marksmanship, fencing, or the arcane arts, adventurers from Chayrshellech have training that can't be rivaled.

High-minded academia notwithstanding, the unsettled parts of the region provide an intense training ground for explorers and adventurers. When the dignitaries and scientists of En Fallad need to travel to another island of civilization, they must either hone their survival skills or hire a guide who has.

Institutional religion hasn't reached Chayrshellech. The heathfolk and sarrow have a vague reverence for Ruethas the primordial strategist, but it means little to them beyond awaiting the next festival day. The dragonborn are the only exception. Their sea-cults look feverishly to the water, praying for the great gods to arise from unseen depths and take the dry land back from its usurpers.

Nations of Chayrshellech

Chayrshellech is the dominant political body for which the region is named. Its cliffside cities are the settlements most typical of the heathfolk.

The tribal nation of **Ithacol** occupies the delta north Remmish and the Schothred Sea. The Quitzál humans that dwell here worship Lakhi, the primordial goddess of dragons and the sea.

Kaiervol is a clan of dragonborn that live on the island of the same name, just west of Medeghar. The Kaiervol have a reputation as raiders, living almost exclusively off the spoils of their pillage. They've tunneled Mount Fayrlin extensively over the centuries, turning the island peak it into a hive or nest.

Medeghar lies just off the western shore of Yarcarrach. Its dragonborn tribe is better adapted to life on land than the Kaiervol, having even taken up the practice of farming in recent centuries. Despite their shared ancestry, the Medeghar suffer greatly at the hands of the Kaiervol, whose marauders pester their shores.

The rich coastland of **Yarcarrach** was settled by the Yaelcar after their separation from Chayrshellech. Though perhaps even more fixated on education and literacy than their northern kin, the Yaelcar disparage the practice of magic and religion.

Places of Interest

Abríanach University is the most prestigious of Athelshoth's three academies, dominating the city grounds with its towering observatory and famed six-story library. The wealthiest and best connected families vie for placement at Abríanach, studying under the most formidable minds in the West.

The **College of Sonnactfel** lies perched atop the western cliff-face of Onderrich, looking across the strait toward the Wealslayg mountains. Its famed fountains fall hundreds of feet from the college grounds to the Siriyne Sea. Scholars come to Sonnactfel to pursue many fields, but its Arcane Academy is reputed to providing the world's best formal magical instruction.

The Forlorn Marches, an enormous stretch of barren land west of the River Taelya, was once the cradle of gugrum civilization. Archaeologists and adventurers occasionally traverse the ruins, hoping to find treasures or hidden knowledge beneath a sea of unburied bones. Few of them return.

The **Waelslayg Desert** stretches along the southern spur of the mountain range that shares its name. Considered the least hospitable area of Chayrshellech, it is nonetheless home to sparse tribes of sarrow and dragonborn who manage to share the parched sand dunes with great lizards. Exotic game hunters often come to Waelslayg to kill or tame these tremendous beasts.

The **Wyrm's Eyrie** rests on Mount Fayrlin, a tall-peaked island off the southern coast of Chayrshellech. As the ancient throne of the dragon emperors, the Wyrm's Eyrie is a site of great significance to the dragonborn clan Kaiervol, which infest the island both above and below water. Ships are seldom allowed to pass near Mount Fayrlin. Frightened survivors of the Kaiervol raids have muttered tales about the Lady's Silent Serpent, a primordial colossus that sleeps beneath the dragon-warrens and will awaken at Lakhi's call.

Adventuring in Chayrshellech

If you're interested in a high-magic campaign, Chayrshellech is a perfect region to set it in. Here the practice of arcane arts is a part of daily life, and the risk of being reviled for it is low—but that doesn't mean the skills come easily or without consequences.

Your party might begin as students studying magic at Sonnactfel, or a band of streetwise sorcerers looking to prove themselves after being rejected from the academy. Even if your PCs aren't magically inclined, a campaign in Chayrshellech featuring these elements will give it a different feel from other regions of Vinramar.

Of course, the arid wilderness that engulfs the heathfolk cities is a landscape that's metaphorically lush with adventure possibilities. An expedition to negotiate with native tribes would give ample opportunity for exploration, intrigue, and battle. You might give the dragonborn center stage in your adventure, encouraging players to look at the world from the point of view of a fiercely religious warrior society living in a harsh land.

Because the heathfolk use magic in conjunction with technology, adventures in Chayrshellech might border on the science fantasy genre. Be creative about how a society could harness mysterious magic to accomplish daily tasks and provide public services.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Chayrshellech region:

After several costly raids on their ships, Yarcarrach is invading Medeghar—but first their intrepid scouts need to find where on the island the dragonborn clan lives.

Students from the Arcane Academy brave forgotten ruins, searching for a method to exorcise the malignant ghost that possesses their professor's body.

Heathfolk wizards desperately race to reinforce the boundaries of time and reality as an aberrant god from forgotten eons hurtles hungrily toward Vinramar from the past.

Goltaraim

In the days of thy infancy, I herded thee and shewed thee my deep places, and drew up water for thee from beneath my parched earth. When thou wast a child, I taught thee the stars and lifted thy hand to build boats, and thou didst traverse the sea and subdue the leviathan. As a man thou strungest thy bow and tamed the wild beasts, and builded high towers to replace their dens.

In thy twilight years the infidel hath lain thee in a sepulchre and sapped thy strength. Upon a dead staff thou leanest; for riches thou hast mixed thy blood with pale heathens and sullied me who bore you.

—The Kaifamundu 38:2-3

Common Races: Human, telmatra
Language: Goltalaid
Nations: Deltalamir, Far-Alaid, Golomyren, Imezekh, Lonakhezaht, Myr Soriah, Quommoch, Qur-Dolakh, Sar Kaziah, Sudurikhal, Zedakhmir
Places of Interest: The Caves of Heja Afhaan, the Gardens at Aladekh Zair, Monahuttat, Onkhid's Temple, the Pool of Qel-Yusim

Known History

Goltaraim has long been called Ethis' Estate, a land perfectly suited to the primordial goddess. No record tells how long she combed its sand with her toes, or frolicked naked and beautiful under the relentless sun. Perhaps it is her witchcraft that lurks beneath the desert and hangs in the breeze like palpable doom, or maybe it's the dread of the maahiset wanderers that sheltered here during the Elder Dark.

Driven to the seas by invading daemons, the maahiset ancestors of the telmatra race were scattered about the Sea of Lorelannon and the Ocean of the Northern Veil. The largest group landed in Qur Dolakh and quickly littered the region's scorched dunes with arcane relics and trapped genies.

By the time the humans arrived in Goltaraim 8,000 years later, the telmatra had forgotten their sorcerous traditions. The Omhatra explorer Onkhid brought news of his discovery to Eliasikh, and within a year a great wave of human raiders and colonists fell on Goltaraim's shores, sowing 500 years of bloodshed and strife.

The Goltari League

The telmatra warrior culture thrived on the conflict with Omhatra settlers, resisting their influence for centuries. In that time, however, the humans and telmatra gradually assimilated until the war simply faded away. Many traditional telmatra tribes still exist in Arrochule, the Norlythe, and even Trentsmund, but in Goltaraim there are few who are distinctively telmatra or human. Most are somewhere in between.

When the fighting began to slow, warlords who had fattened their tribes on battle settled down and established territories across the region: Sudurikhal, Deltalamir, Myr Soriah, and others. Decades passed, hostilities cooled, and trade became more profitable than war. The warlords' children reinvented themselves as plutocrats, overseeing the merchant vessels and caravans that now buzzed about the coasts and deserts.

In 661 *Annoloth*, this gradual peace was officially recognized with the establishment of the Goltari League, an alliance of convenience between the oligarchies. Despite occasional armed friction, the merchant families that rule the Goltari League represent every nation in the region, with one exception: Far-Alaid, the human kingdom that occupies the southwestern archipelago.

The Tariff War

Eight years ago, antagonized by exorbitant tariffs in Goltaraim, the fleets of Issos allied with the neighboring kingdom of Cordain and attacked Sudurikhal across the Strait of Imokh. Drawn into a tense war with the island nations, the entire Goltari League continues to bicker over support of Sudurikhal.

Since the beginning of the Tariff War, as it is called, Cordain and Crommos have fallen to the League and been renamed Quoda'en and Quommoch. In four years the Goltaris have not reached an agreement as to how these spoils are to be divided. Deltalamir, the best-armed of the oligarchies, frequently threatens to leave the alliance if its allies don't cater to its caprices. War, it seems, will never truly die—even when replaced with a greedy peace.

Global Crossroads

Goltaraim lies on a critical juncture between East and West. Thousands of vessels travel through the Strait of Imokh every year, bringing news and foreign goods to the region. Not letting such an advantage go to waste, the Goltaris have built vibrant ports and markets around the strait, drawing even more travelers and traders. Merchant life, and the economic stability provided by the Goltari League, is the backbone of culture in this region.

But the prosperity that the League brings has a dark side. As its influence has grown, so has the power and ruthlessness of the oligarchs that command it. A local caravan leader that does a little too well might go missing without explanation. More and more, trade families use enforcers to solicit "protection money" from merchants and artisans. Guilds that spring up to protect the burgeoning middle class fall silent just as quickly, and dangerous black markets outnumber the legitimate ones. Many Goltaris migrate south to enemy nations rather than endure this cutthroat climate.

Here more than most world regions, human influence is weak. Racism, religious persecution, and other cultural ills that commonly follow human settlement are largely absent in Goltaraim. Tolerance and celebration of a diverse society, which have enriched the Goltaris for centuries, continue to characterize the region as a place where anyone can rise to influence.

For the telmatra in Goltaraim, the influence of their tribal heritage is a constant presence. Some see it as a wellspring of wisdom and tradition from a simpler age, when mysticism and connection to the earth were more important than material wealth. Most, however, consider their tribal kin as backward barbarians clinging to misogynistic practices that were rightly done away with.

As desert-dwellers, the Goltaris build with clay, and wear loose robes capable of protecting the body from sun and sand. The more traditional telmatra prefer sparse animal skins and intricate bone-jewelry. Some wear whole carcasses, believing that spirits will imbue their bodies with the senses and abilities of the animal. Common cultural weapons include the scimitar and longbow.

Money Talks

Ironically, Goltari culture has become so accepting that it is largely homogeneous. Human and telmatra have lived together in tolerance for so long that their differences have essentially evaporated. Goltaris everywhere know, from the sand sailors of Lonakhezaht to the shipwrights of Soriah and the hill-shepherds of Imezekh, that anyone can make a mark on the world if they have coin and cunning.

This is a land of swashbucklers and clever heroes. Characters who use their brains and their heart survive longer, whether wheeling and dealing in the plutocrat's court or challenging a mad efreeti on the treacherous dunes. Many in Goltaraim have risen from humble beginnings to extravagant wealth by wits alone. But even the best-got treasure can bring danger and doom.

Those tied to traditional telmatra culture tend to be devoutly spiritual, worshipping their warrior ancestors or the telmatra pantheon of Bekhjal, Duhulatt, and Hodramesh. Animists such as these might become druids or totem warriors that serve one of the Triune Fathers. For Goltaris not fond of telmatra tribal practices, religion seems to offer little.

Nations of Goltaraim

Deltalamir has a reputation for aggression. Its armies have always been valuable to the League, though even in times of peace they've been as much a threat as an ally.

Far-Alaid is the last vestige of a human culture that predates the arrival of the telmatra to Goltaraim. Their island clans practice a unique form of animal worship.

Golomyren is one of the oldest oligarchies in the League, historically governed by the human descendants of Onkhid and his Syrikhali settlers.

Imezekh remains an area of windy highlands, where shepherds and farmers work on land lent from rich families in other nations.

The deserts of **Lonakhezaht**, once ruled by telmatra chieftains, are now home to breeders of horse and camel.

Myr Soriah is a densely populated oligarchy situated along the northern coast of the Sea of Hazakh. Its cities Soriah and Aladekh Zair are the home of many famous man-made wonders.

The islands now known as **Quommoch** were taken in the Tariff War as punishment for their neighbor's invasion of Sudurikhal. Still largely populated by humans, Quommoch remains unclaimed by its conquerors until they can agree on how to fairly divide its lands.

Qur Dolakh thrives on its two chief exports: minerals and slaves. It controls the Sea of Hazakh's western waters, making it an important player in the region.

Sar Kaziah is situated in the woodlands and foothills north of Myr Soriah. Much of its economy supports caravan trade with the port cities on the shore of Hazakh.

Sudurikhal is a minor oligarchy, most noted for its recent role as defendant in the Tariff War.

Zedakhmir has traditionally been an important stop on the journey between East and West, but since the Desolation of Wellusk at the hands of Perrith Gorr, traffice to the island nation has been in steep decline.

Places of Interest

The Caves of Heja Afhaan lie a few days' journey north of Soriah, but the exact location is never quite the same. Travelers who have stumbled upon the caves describe them as extensive tunnels made of a dripping wax-like stone. Stories don't seem to agree on just what their vaulted chambers contain—unimaginable riches, pools that lead to other worlds, or a bustling society of living wax statues. Perhaps it is different for each traveler.

The Gardens at Aladekh Zair are an entire city unto themselves, covering an area of seven square miles on the eastern edge of the seaside metropolis. Their reputation for resplendence is matched by the wild debauchery contained within, for by royal decree the gardens are free from the rule of law. Visitors feast, duel, thieve, and whore in every shade of depravity for an entire day, but when the sun sets each night, the doors are locked and none within are seen again. Some whisper about the oligarch's deformed vizier and his thirst for mortal souls, but the rumors don't daunt the frenzied revelers from flocking to the garden in droves.

Monahuttat is a colossal dome protruding from a secluded patch of desert in central Deltalamir. Its spongy surface is pale and veined, and when viewed from the high-ridged dunes that surround it, it seems to be the eye of an unimaginably large creature, now a cyclopean carcass, buried beneath the sand. Anyone mad enough to touch it is said to learn the fate of dead gods—and die themselves from the revelation.

Onkhid's Temple sits on the coast of Golomyren. Its door opens beneath a gargantuan stone ship, built from megaliths shortly after the arrival of Onkhid, the first human to discovered Goltaraim. The temple has been said to be haunted by telmatra spirits for centuries. Those that enter become ravenous and see the ghosts of telmatra feasting on a bounty of human corpses. More than one pilgrim has been found wandering the temple eating his own flesh.

The Pool of Qel-Yusim marks the center of a sprawling ruin in Qur Dolakh. Locals believe the ruin is all that remains of a maahiset palace from the early part of the Elder Dark. In a broken ring of standing stones, the unreflecting water lies stagnant, waiting for the curious to bathe in it. Legend tells that its touch rewrites one thread of the bather's life, but just which aspect of their story—a spouse, an injury, or even the bather's sex—cannot be guessed.

Adventuring in Goltaraim

The shifting sands of Goltaraim hide terrible wonders. Hurried merchants scramble like mice to hoard their banal coin, while the strange and the forgotten lie buried beneath their feet. These sites of primordial power are fantastic places to amaze and surprise your players.

The most thrilling adventures in Goltaraim play on the contrast between the humdrum, matter-of-fact city life and the wild terrors of the uncharted desert. A chance discovery or encounter can transform a character's life in sublime and horrific ways.

An adventuring party could begin as pilgrims accompanying a trade caravan, a band of doughty thieves sailing a stolen ship, or somber archaeologists searching for knowledge of the maahiset. Any of these groups might happen upon a buried palace, sea of spirits, or a cursed flute that tells its listeners' deepest secrets.

The Goltaris are also a people quietly at war. Humans in Quoda'en and Quommoch resist occupation by telmatra armies. Military and pirate vessels play a deadly game of cat and mouse on the high seas, making passage between ports as perilous as the desert. The Sea of Jassaid and the Bridgewater Ocean are both thrilling backdrops for an adventure full of corsairs, smugglers, and military intrigue.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Goltaraim region:

Anchored off the shore of a small island near Far-Alaid, a pack of merchant sailors discover odd, many-eyed fish swimming in the shoals. To their surprise, the fish speak to them telepathically, offering carnal illusions in exchange for killing the island's apes that hunt them.

A pirate, a street urchin, and a branded adulterer vow to avenge the deaths of their loved ones at the hands of the sorcerous oligarch of Deltalamir.

A mercenary's camel stumbles on what seems to be a tiny, detailed model of a palace sitting half-buried in the desert. Suddenly, a djinni appears, cursing the travelers for crushing his home. He shrinks them to insect size and tosses them in the tiny palace's labyrinth.

Iljudheim

When will the war-winds be once more silent
And the raven-feast its raging tempest
Satiate and cease? This saga is
Our first and final woe. From Formungardr
To unconquered Ulfyrstock,
Each mother's son has sipped the raven-toast's cup.

In Dorgard is the discord rankest,
In Fyrenvol no feud is halted.
The black call bursts in Brangard's meadows,
And ghoulish games are in Grettgard played
With eager blades, where the bodies burn always.

The Alfyr we assailed, and armed ourselves
To drive them deep into the dusky forest.
Now sickly spells and siren's torment
Haunt our home, harrow our blood-kin.

When will the war-winds be once more silent
And the raven-feast its rage surcease?

—*Ljudahrorrek*, the Lament of Ljud

Common Races: Elf, human
Language: Iljerkr
Nations: Bjuthilgard, Brangard, Dorgard, Éosade, Erolost, Errolheim, Formungard, Fyrenvol, Gilgard, Grettgard, Haggwine, Hemiliadh, Holtolluth, Menvolad, Modgard, Oruna, Riljad, Silnorod, Svilden, Telgard, Ulfyrstock, Vilvolad, Yrivor
Places of Interest: Alfyrstock, Brennunsvid (the Crackling Glades), the Fey Gate, Mundjarric, Wøgensgrunn

Known History

The lands of Iljudheim were first settled by Feiren and Culfirith, the first of the Fey Children. From early on, their people were hounded by demonic creatures that wandered aimless in the North during Daemoth's exile. The harrowing of the Fey culminated in the death of their goddess Forlortha, who fled to the world Iltallach as a mad spirit. Claiming Iltallach for her Fey Children, Forlortha opened a dimensional rift allowing passage between that world and present-day Oruna.

For some time, the Fey came and went from Iljudheim as though it were part of Iltallach. Their lack of interest in geographic expansion allowed for a period of relative peace while the daemons and jharethil warred over the Stones of Daemoth.

Telwyn and the High Apostasy

During the Great Winter that brought the Epoch of Daragoch to a close, ice caps from the south spread across many Fey lands, rendering them inhospitable throughout the following centuries. The archfey Telwyn swayed thousands of his people to flee through the Fey Gate en masse. In their zeal to renounce their ancestral lands, the apostates sealed the portals, leaving many hundreds of their people stranded in Iljudheim and Arwest. In time, these unfortunate laggards became the elves: a wild, callous folk that prowl the hidden lands of Iljudheim.

The Ansë

Humans first appeared in Iljudheim about 5,000 years ago, trailing south from Motta. It took some time for them to slowly become aware that they shared the region's apparently virgin forests with the remains of a frightening pre-human civilization. When the elves caught sight of the rough-looking humans, they called them *ansei*, meaning "unclean." Some time later the humans adopted the slur and began to call themselves the Ansë.

From the beginning, the elves frightened the Ansë. The guarded humans populated their legendry with fearful warnings and superstitions about dealing with such beings, not all of which were unwarranted. Minor skirmishes across the region escalated tensions until there was widespread war in Iljudheim. Over the millennia, the elves have receded deeper and deeper into the wild. Alfyrstock, Hemiliadh, and Oruna remain the last strongholds of their culture in this region.

Ansë camps and villages now dot the lands once held sacred by the elves. Many have developed into small cities, ruled by chieftains and kings that wage petty wars among themselves.

The Warring Elite

Life in Iljudheim is shrouded in the grim mist of war. Its rulers spill honest men's blood on solemn fields to gain trifles, and everywhere carrion birds patiently lurk. Battle is a treasured pastime for the Ansë. Their children learn to use an axe for killing before chopping wood, and when grown their greatest wish is to die in combat.

Social structure among the Ansë is simple. Slaves—procured almost exclusively in battle—make up the lowest class of society, working as laborers, servants, and in other thankless roles vital to the community. A diverse class of peasant landowners, most of them farmers, form the bulk of the population. The nobility are those of privileged birth or heroic reputation who inherit titles, land, and wealth—often leveraging it to wield political power as warlords and kings.

Despite this common class system, laws and customs in Iljudheim vary widely from place to place. Cities follow the unique practices of their *heðbearas*, or ruling family, and the villages scattered outside the city walls often catch visitors off guard with unexpected observances. These smaller communities are commonly composed of a single multi-generational family, and contact with even the closest cities is limited.

The Ansë and the elves have even fewer dealings. The human cultures in this region often blame unexplained occurrences, tragic losses, and sudden changes on the fey folk. To them, plagues are caused by an elf's breath, madness or misfortune is the result of an elf's curse, and anyone missing or inexplicably dead is thought to have been slain, stolen, or seduced by elves.

Such superstition isn't always far from the truth. The elf-courts of Alfyrstock, Hemiliadh, and Oruna—cleverly hidden in the wilderness—have long made an elaborate game of interfering in human society, especially when it might have drastic consequences for the mortals involved. Just how these tribal aristocracies operate is a mystery to most outsiders, but elves insist there is an intricate ceremony in all that they do.

Whatever animosity may exist between the fey and human inhabitants of Iljudheim, the two races have had an enormous influence on one another over the centuries. The moon elf merchant vessels learned their craft from mortal fishermen in the Wild Age, and there are anthropologists who trace the origin of Ansë religious practices to certain obscure elf cults. Despite such ties, a reserved distrust prevails between them.

Among the chief industries of Iljudheim are fishing and lumber, drawing on two of the region's most reliable resources. The Ansë excel in woodcraft, building most of their halls and houses from great oaks. Their other token art is the knitting of chainmail, for which neighboring peoples pay them handsomely.

Voyage and Conquer

Iljudheim is a tumultuous region, where the fierce and cunning snatch what they desire from the jaws of fate. The most celebrated figures here are those who are tricked, betrayed, or spurned and go on to achieve greatness through their own courage or ingenuity. From Dorgardr mercenaries to Fyrenvolyr spirit-singers and the arctic miners of Bjuthilgard, the people of Iljudheim have a reputation for boldly facing death in the name of glory.

Although martial careers bring significant prestige in Ansë cultures, there are plenty of opportunities for characters in Iljudheim to study more mystical arts. Seidhr is a tradition that uses runes, rituals, and sex to shape material reality. Women are considered more gifted in the practice than men, and even the superstitious Ansë appeal to such cunning folk for guidance, medical advice, and the diagnosis of magical ills.

The humans of Iljudheim have their own pantheon called the Vjornil. These deities ask little and offer less. Far from rendering adoration or gratitude to the Vjornil, the Ansë sacrifice to them as a pragmatic recognition of their unchanging existence. To neglect these obeisances under the gods' terms is to invite infinite sorts of misfortune.

Nations of Iljudheim

Bjuthilgard, is a remote freehold covering the archipelago south of Yrivor. The hardy folk who live along these frozen shoals make a rich living from the dragon carcass that forms much of the archipelago.

Brangard, **Haggwine**, **Riljad**, **Silnorod**, and **Ulfyrstock** are lordships of House Skolgradn. Their position across the border from Pirotolon gives them an economic advantage, since trade with the states in Motta is uninterrupted. Rivalry between the five houses, however, runs deep.

Dorgard has a rich history in the region, its ruling family House Doryn being among the first humans to settle Iljudheim. At this crucial junction, the mountains and the sea collide in a beautiful landscape bedecked with golden-roofed townships.

Eosade, **Erolost**, **Errolheim**, and **Holtolluth** belong to the House of Eidr, united in their determination to control naval traffic through the Girthfolost Sea. Probably due to their proximity to two elf holdings, the four Eidr kingdoms agonize over the threat these hidden domains pose to humankind.

Formungard, **Menvolad**, and **Modgard** are the domains of House Mundinn, whose border wars with Grettgard and Gilgard have continued for more than a century. Rumors tell that the Mundinns will only abate the attacks when all the southeastern peninsula is theirs.

Fyrenvol, **Gilgard**, **Grettgard**, and **Svilden** contain the estates that once formed the kingdom of Geillund, which fell into civil war and fractured some centuries past.

Hemiliadh and **Oruna** are two separate elf domains surrounded by human settlement. Few humans who trespass these woodlands return.

Telgard is a kingdom ruled by the House of Teljud, who brutally swept the elves of Oruna from the shores of the Fyren Sea some 200 years ago.

Vilvolad is a prosperous freehold positioned between Iljudheim and Arrochule.

Yrivor belongs to House Hurskoll, which hires its armies out to Houses Eidr and Geillund for rich payment.

Places of Interest

Alfyrstock, the elf-wood, sits silent and dour in the wilderness between Brangard, Dorgard, and Silnorod. This labyrinthine forest contains the remains of an ancient elf civilization that, according to tales told among the elves, was annihilated by a mysterious plague during the first century of the Wild Age. Still, travelers bold enough to enter the forest claim to have encountered figures among the ruins who, despite their ghoulish presence, seem to go about their business as though nothing were amiss.

Brennunsvid, the Crackling Glades, are made up of patchy woodlands scattered about the feet of the Ansyrod Mountains. This dense, temperate rainforest is broken up by large stretches of scorched earth—vestiges of an inferno that consumed most of the forest in some bygone age. But the trees that now grow here haven't forgotten. In the eternal dark that lies beneath their canopy, many report hearing the roar of invisible fires. Where the ashes lie undisturbed, ill-fated travelers have been ensnared by clinging fungi that immobilize creatures before slowly dissolving them for nutrients.

The **Fey Gate** in Oruna is sister to the ruined portal in the Arwest region, erected by Forlortha during the Stonewar as a gateway to her world. It was used by Telwyn and his apostates to flee the Great Winter, and has lain cruelly inoperable since they sealed it from the other side. Unlike the Arwest gate, Iljudheim's is found in a remote swamp, and though the stone gate itself cannot be activated, rifts between Vinramar and Iltallach are known to suddenly appear for miles around the ruin.

Towering over the River Girðfjord, **Mundjarric** is a lone mountain, shaped into a great throne as if by the hands of a god. Pilgrims from across Iljudheim ascend its treacherous paths to stand on the crown and look out over the region. To the northwest stretch the Ansyrod Mountains, Dorgard, and Alfyrstock. To the east lies the Ocean of Dorchros and the peninsula kingdoms. To the south sit the elf territories Erolost and Hemiliadh, and their human neighbors beyond.

Of the sites the Ansë consider to be sacred, Mundjarric eclipses all others. According to them, it's a place of profound magic, where the terrifying secrets

of the unseen world are laid mercilessly bare to mortal minds. The wind-worn ruins that flock upon its slopes hint that the Ansë are not the first to tell such stories.

Wøgensgrunn, the Dragon's Shoal, is an aptly named waterway weaving among the chain of islands that make up western Bjuthilgard. True to the name, the islands within Wøgensgrunn are actually skeletal remnants of a colossal serpent or sea-dragon rising up from the deep. The shoals have been settled by the Bjuthilgardyr, who mine the cyclopean bones for strange and valuable materials. Wøgensgrunn yields such treasures at a terrible cost, however. Its porous caves are infested with nightmarish creatures never meant to see the light of day.

Adventuring in Iljudheim

Campaigns set in Iljudheim can draw endlessly on the overarching conflict between the mortal domain and the perilous, inexplicable realm of the elves. Both worlds have innumerable facets, manifested in the different sites, creatures, and pursuits that pertain to each. Elves surround themselves with other creatures and forces of the supernatural world that defy mortal understanding, just as humans personify that which can be observed, measured, and defined. Whether you're exploring direct conflict between their societies or investigating the features of one in particular, your adventures in Iljudheim will be enriched by forcing one to confront the other.

Players might take on the role of explorers, raiders, or homesteaders foraying into the wild unknown, or perhaps members of a peregrine elf-cult seeking human lovers to entice away from their homes. Discovering the order and operation of the unknown domain can provide many levels of exciting play. When framing such strange and magical elements, be careful not to over-define them. Their appeal lies in creating doubt and surprise in the players.

Iljudheim's widespread technological inferiority presents an opportunity to set adventures of sword and sorcery here. Few other regions offer such a large canvas for barbarians and cutthroats to struggle against terrors they can't possibly comprehend. Some campaigns set here might not include much magic at all, leaving brazen adventurers to flout and plunder and conquer outside the reach of more sophisticated lands.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Iljudheim region:

A recently buried woman appears in the local jarl's hall to feast and drink as if she had never died, and the dismayed leader calls a party of warriors and magic experts to investigate the restless lady's barrow.

In glacial waters far south, a raiding party run aground on what appears to be the battlement of an extensive sunken castle filled with cursed riches.

A small village of elves find their sacred grove desecrated and animal companions sacrificed by drunken human brutes. Their matriarch, a druid of the Solace, sends an embassy into Hostyr to petition the barbarians for redress.

Motta

Thou art the branch of this tree. If a branch be severed, it cannot blossom, but will wither and be broken underfoot. Does the branch say to the root what need have I for thee? What fruit shalt thou bear without root or trunk to feed thee?

This Holy Empire stands firm upon the ancient ground where once our Lord Lachmarum built his throne. Ye have slain his servants and wounded his armies, but more than this ye have built up kingdoms to rival God's and spurned Him. Retribution shall be His, and when it comes your flesh will run from off your bones like water and the branches that scorned the tree will be gathered and burned.

And on that day shall God smile.

—Bernilio Ducco, 971st Horrom of the Etholchan Church

Common Races: Gugrum, human
Language: Motare
Nations: Emelduron, Erecald, the Empire of Motta, Ittador, Omasala, Peraton, Pirotolon
Places of Interest: Bryffaze, Manta du Lon, Necropolises, the Priory of Occsilana, Silfana au Ittador

Known History

Motta has always been a land of religious fervor ruled by the merciless. The *Homam Telberzah*, holy writ of the Etholchan Church, names the city of Motta itself as the ancient site of Maromutalcoth, where for millennia the god Daemoth held court with his monstrosities. Since that forgotten age, the region has become a holy land for crusaders and pilgrims of every Daemothite sect, ruled by a diverse and steadfast empire.

Mohtra and the Daemons

Much has been written of Maromutalcoth before its destruction, and the terrors that adorned it. The only reliable accounts begin when the site was rebuilt by the daemon civilization during the Stonewar. Their holy empire Mohtra spread from the center of the region, harrowing nearby lands and dominating much of Vinramar's history.

Mohtra fended off countless invasions throughout the Stonewar, the Imperial Age, and the Epoch of Daragoch, maintaining its seemingly impossible longevity at great cost. During the Epoch of Daragoch, dragon-spawn and their god-kings conquered much of Mohtra and humbled its proud emperors. The daemons were nearly stamped out when the Great Winter descended, forcing the dragons to withdraw their campaign and sparing Mohtra from annihilation.

Daelgorog in the Elder Dark

In the centuries following the Great Winter and the collapse of the dragon conquest, many of Vinramar's pre-human civilizations fell into turmoil and in-fighting. The daemons saw that the time was ripe for an aggressive resurgence. While Mohtra lay largely in ruins, daemon armies spent centuries advancing across the continents and placing puppet monarchs on the thrones of the vanquished.

Beneath Mohtra the puppet states formed an alliance called the Confederacy of Daelgorog, with each nation and its king swearing devotion to Daemoth. All over the West, oppressed cultures bewailed the advent of Daelgorog as they slipped into dilapidation and decay. Most refer to this age as the Elder Dark, a time that saw the near-extinction of many ancient cultures, as well as the birth of Vinramar's most pervasive parasite—the human race.

In all Mohtran territories, human populations soared as the daemons bred them for slavery. By the end of the Elder Dark they far outnumbered their creator-captors, and with this shift came the cry for freedom. Mass riots swept over the known world and the humans eventually deposed the daemons, dismantled Daelgorog, and replaced Mohtra with Motta, a new empire under mortal control.

A Splintered Holy Land

Despite their ancient revolt against the daemons, many humans in Motta remain faithful to Daemoth. The most powerful Daemothite sect in this region is the Etholchan Church, which wields as much political power as Motta's own imperial government. The Etholchans demand strict observance of ancient daemon teachings and rituals, carefully preserved over the centuries. The influence of the Etholchan clergy has made Motta a hotbed of religious zealotry.

Such staunch traditionalism has shaped the social and economic development of this region. Daemoth worship permeates every facet of life, from art and culture to commerce and industry. Mottans can be suspicious of technology, preferring to operate by methods they consider tried and true. Though the richest or most curious may import artifacts from Trentsmund, advanced machinery isn't an object of mainstream Mottan interest.

With the exception of the empire's heartland, Motta as a region is composed of agrarian societies with a thriving middle class of merchants and artisans. Nobles inherit vast estates, providing land to tenant farmers, business for trade companies, and steady work for artists and craftsmen. In the cities, wealth disparity is more severe, causing districts to be divided between the rich and the destitute. The emperorship remains a position of absolute privilege, largely removed from the actual governance of the nation.

In just the last twenty years, the Empire of Motta has suffered considerable blows to its control of the region. Until the Mottan Rebellions of 1334 *Annoloth*, the nations surrounding the empire were provinces ruled by the emperor's appointed governors. But centuries of decadence within the capital weakened its hold on these territories, and when the populace rose up the empire could do little to keep the reins.

Mottans are traditionally humans of the Drael subrace, but the region's centrality and imperial infrastructure make its citizenry the most diverse in the world. Beneath the veneer of healthy prosperity, however, lurks the canker of slavery. Gugrum captives comprise a large portion of the population. Carefully bred in servitude, they are the scarred back upon which the empire stands.

Mottan fashion is renowned across Vinramar, incorporating the world's most lavish materials and styles: bombasted satin doublets, wasp-waist skirts and jerkins, slashed and puffed dresses held up by elaborate farthingales, all ornamented with rolled wings, wisks, pokes, furs, and feathers. Swords are considered among the most important accessories for both men and women. The smiths of Motta specialize in ornate rapiers, which are as practical as they are vogue.

Scoundrels and Iconoclasts

Whether farming in Iarmuto's river valley, scribing in the imperial courts, or eking a living among the shoals of Ocalatnoloset, the Mottan way of life is a forced dependence on community. Without significant wilderness anywhere in the region, Mottans are connected in a way that's rare in Vinramar. At times this creates a sense of cooperation and belonging, but more often it means sectarian competition and ostentatious hauteur.

As with any society built around a dominant religion, Motta's people are polarized. The Etholchans' devotion and self-approval is balanced by a swarming counter-culture of rakes, libertines, and criminals disillusioned by what they see as an oppressive cult.

Gugrum slavery is a part of everyday life in Motta. It is a burden that cripples some, and launches others (especially those who escape) into a life of adventure. Former slaves might become hermits, outlaws, crusaders, or rulers, but the one thing they'll always prize is freedom.

Nations of Motta

Emelduron eagerly fought for independence during the rebellions of 1334. Since its victory, the pastoral kingdom has found an ally in the king of Achald and begun to shed the trappings of the Etholchan Church that bind its culture to that of the empire.

Erecald's physical distance was always a challenge for imperial rulers seeking to keep a stranglehold on the populace. Deep cultural differences kept the two peoples somewhat estranged throughout much of the empire's history. Now that it has its sovereignty, however, Erecald struggles to draw in vital resources the empire provided.

Ittador is a small kingdom occupying the mountains along the western shores of the Sea Carillon. It is credited with the both inciting the Mottan Rebellions of 1334 and the founding of the Silfana au Ittador, a cult of self-flagellating wanderers that worship Silphenor, the Lord of Chaos.

Despite its losses, the **Empire of Motta** remains a formidable center of trade and culture. From the Tuluro Highlands to the sprawling archipelago that spans the Gulf of Tatalun, it governs the region's most vital roads, rivers, and ports.

The island of **Omasala** lies just off the coasts of Emelduron and Ittador. Throughout the last millennium, the highly-contested island has been occupied in turns by Achald, Motta, and Trentsmund. Its current independence is disputed by all three.

Peraton is a sparsely populated archipelago in the Sea of Ulfolost. Though it overthrew imperial rule in 1334 *Annoloth*, the empire recently resumed occupation of the island province, holding it as a protectorate until its nobles can regain the loyalty of the masses.

Pirotolon straddles the two mouths of the Morola Panata, the river that runs through the empire's heartlands. The small kingdom still has strong imperial ties. Trade between Motta and the northern cities of Iljudheim has made the Pirotolonians quite rich.

Places of Interest

The dread isle **Bryffaze** peeks up from the seas at the northern edge of the archipelago Ocalatnoloset. Above the highest drift lines of its white beaches, bones have been scattered and piled for miles, marking the edge of a dense forest. What people or beasts live in those woods remains a mystery. Hundreds of foolhardy sailors and at least a dozen expeditions have passed beneath its eaves, never to return.

Manta du Lon is a village in the eastern frontier of Erecald, less than a day's journey from the Forlorn Marches. Though once an important border fortress, few now remember just where Manta du Lon lies, but many have heard whispers of what transpires there at night.

According to folklore, when the sun sets in Manta du Lon, its citizens are possessed by restless spirits and forced to reenact the ancient battle that left the fortress forever diminished. If the stories are to be believed, those descended from the original combatants awake in theirs beds at sunrise, unharmed. Others aren't so lucky.

Motta's **necropolises** remain among the region's most curious features. The countryside is dotted with mausoleums dedicated to the burial of the dead, but in heavily populated areas these charnel cities are truly enormous. Mottans place great emphasis on the housing of the dead, usually spending more on their estates within the necropolises than on the property where they live. Not everyone visits the necropolis on a regular basis, but—perhaps unsurprisingly—their streets and mansions are always teeming with uninvited guests.

The Priory of Occsilana is seen as something of a heretical headquarters by most Daemothite sects. Sometimes called New Eden, the city was originally founded as a monastery to honor the Jharric goddess Iala. Its widespread reputation as a refuge from Etholchan dogmatism has drawn thousands to shelter within its walls, transforming the small Jharric community into a thriving symbol of hope and justice.

The **Silfana au Ittador** may seem like a parochial carnival troupe compared to the lavish Etholchan temples that command Motta's landscape, but its strange caravan preachers have managed to turn the West upside down with Silphenor's doctrine of purification by pain. Launching from this humble chapel, the Anotrossi have inducted thousands into their cult, traveling to distant and unknown lands with the gospel of chaos in their mouths and the lash of absolution in their hands.

Adventuring in Motta

Motta is a vibrant and diverse backdrop. It lends itself well to campaigns that revolve around intrigue, infiltration, and urban adventure. Powerful religious factions are at constant odds with the empire, its dissident neighbors, and each other. If your players want to wage holy war, civil war, or just skulk around in the shadows cast by these conflicts, Motta is the place.

To capitalize on the themes inherent in such struggles, you might have your players choose a single religious or political faction with which they're all associated. Or perhaps, given Motta's rich diversity, they'd rather play a band of adventurers with wildly different beliefs, backgrounds, and interests. They might be a party of secularists or members of fringe religions fighting against a ring of corruption in the Etholchan Church.

There are so many interests at play in the cosmopolitan heartlands of the Mottan Empire that pulling together a web of intrigue is easy. Every world faction has a presence here, and the pie is big enough to tempt even the most reclusive and secretive groups. The more chances your players have to make friends and enemies among these powers, the more vivid and gripping your campaign will be.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the region of Motta:

A local grave investigator calls in a group of occult experts to hear the demented opera sung by the corpses entombed in the Du Petra Necropolis.

Four street urchins embark on their first job as a thieves' guild, vying to wrest Zoracol's streets from the control of Atulio Moretti's crime ring.

A series of murders in the town of Esparato point the local militia to evidence that the Etholchan Church is covering up the existence of a bloodthirsty werewolf.

The Norlythe

There's a devil lurking in the wood
And he's hungry and crippled and wears a hood
And his throat is raw and his back is sore
And he's blind and sick and dirty and poor.

There's a devil lurking in the wood
And he's crawling and thrashing, for if he could
He'd place his mark on you and me,
And turn our eyes black so he alone could see.

There's a devil lurking in the wood
Beyond the wall of what is good
Where the feathered men chant and drum and hiss
And whisper dark prayers to the trebled mist.

—Colonial nursery rhyme

Common Races: Gugrum, human, sarrow
Language: Quitzál
Nations: Antalumme, Caraquetularác, Haracuraquét, Maricuälatán, Saethym, Sundered Valley, Ykhel
Places of Interest: Axanitlacoa, Bister Mountain, Enga Mubata, Sundered Valley, Terratorumme University

Known History

The Norlythe derives its name from the boreal forest that carpets the highlands and sierras between the River Ení and the region's eastern coast. Quitzál humans native to the forest call it Olmeníhue, but the Trentsmin name Norlythe has wider usage.

The Norlythe as a region has never been particularly stable or safe. Its mountainous woodlands harbor foul and dangerous creatures, not all of them native to this world. When the heathfolk first began mapping the forest less than a hundred years ago, they found small populations of humans and gugrum fiercely defending tribal lands from the dangers of the forest. Though its history remains unknown, the last century has seen the Norlythe become a prize land coveted by many peoples.

Ykhel and the Colonial Incursion

In the year 1277 *Annoloth*, the Trentsmunder slave ship *Vaunted* was hijacked by a large band of sarrow escapees. The humans followed them to the frozen tundra of the Norlythe, where they found a burgeoning sarrow commune, composed mostly of other escaped slaves. The commune, called Ykhel by its citizens, has been the subject of international controversy as it has grown into a stable, if solitary, city-state.

Before the discovery of Ykhel, developed nations had little interest in the Norlythe, except for a few heathfolk explorers from Chayrshellech. News of a virgin wilderness to the east began to stir Trentsmund into hysteria. Slave traders swarmed its waterways, rounding up human and gugrum slaves. Religious and political dissidents one by one fled to camps and trading posts along the western coast of the region. Relations with the local tribes were tense, and it wasn't long before violence broke out.

In 1311, Trentsmund mounted a full-scale invasion, and in a few years held most of the Norlythe's western grasslands. The High Chief of Maricuälatán and four other tribal rulers swore a blood oath to repel the colonists, but their doomed resistance failed to gain traction. Slowly the land settled into an uneasy peace that has left the human and gugrum natives embittered.

Tributary Clans

While dark and unpredictable, the forest of Olmeníhue is home to various Quitzál and gugrum cultures. These city-based clans each contain a hierarchy of tribute, with conquered cities paying their subjugators in goods and labor. Despite having nominal power over their network of tributary cities and villages, clan chieftains rarely exert authority over affairs outside their own city walls. Such clan networks can be found in various sizes throughout the region.

The largest clans are those ruled by Maricuälatán and Caraquetularác. Each city commands one of the sister seas of the Norlythe, controlling access to the waterways that are the lifeblood of Norlythian commerce. Two nautical highways sustain the spread of wealth, culture, and information on which these clans are built: one extending along the River Toltihtotma and the coasts of Ghen-Ghen Maw, and the other from the mouth of the River Ení into the Sea of Satherlaer and the borders of Chayrshellech.

The waterways of the Norlythe provide several means of survival—drawing game, irrigating limited farmland, and providing a seemingly inexhaustible supply of freshwater fish. The tribes mine a bit in the mountains, but their technology is not yet sufficient to support advanced industry. The colonists from Trentsmund eye such resources greedily as they consider how best to expand their holdings beyond the western coast.

In Antalumme, the colonists quarry stone and mine for amethyst, gold, iron, and lead. Terratorumme produces clay and brick, in addition to being the primary colonial port. These important resources have allowed the Trentsmunders to conduct a sustainable industry in the region, sending a clear message that they mean to stick around.

The largest communities of gugrum in the Norlythe have extensive stone architecture, their steep pyramids and stone tenements usually visible from a considerable distance. The gugrum tend to settle clear areas where trees are sparse and stone can be gathered with relative ease. The cities Caraquetularác and Haracuraqué are both predominantly gugrum, and exemplify this sort of large-scale stone architecture.

The commune of Ykhel represents the only significant political body established by the sarrow since humans all but annihilated their mining provinces in the Summer's War. Their thousand-year subjugation left indelible impressions on the founding sarrow of Ykhel, and they chose to turn from the fertility cult that once stood at the center of their culture. In its place they embraced a purely secular way of life, in which property is portioned out by the commune and citizens are drafted into careers by vocational syndicates.

Ykhelesians produce a thick, silky yarn called *magkra*, which they knit and thread into gorgeous cloth. The sarrow wear it proudly and seldom trade it, causing enterprising (and unscrupulous) souls to seize the *magkra* violently so they can sell it to colonial royalty for astronomical prices. Such affronts to Ykhel's cherished isolation only intensify their enmity toward humans, and Trentsmunders most of all.

Hunters and Homesteaders

Because it was so long dismissed as inhospitable by the great nations of the West, the Norlythe is something of a repository for unique cultures and creatures. The wars and religions of the outside world mean little to Quitzál kale farmers and the pack huntresses of Caraquetularác. They're preoccupied with survival, appeasing the forest's primordial lurkers with celebration and sacrifice.

The Ykhelesians and human colonists bring the doctrines and industries of the outside world into the Norlythe, settling whatever land is empty in hopes that more will come. Their Western eyes look on local practices as vile and heretical. Native Norlythians largely worship the Irvallath, especially Sarnoss, the Black Lion, whose servitors embody the savagery and rancor of the wild. Some humans and gugrum have begun to incorporate philosophies and motifs from local telmatra tribes, whose Triune Fathers match the ferocity of Sarnoss.

Nations of the Norlythe

Antalumme is a small mining city established by the Colonial Army of Trentsmund in 1326 *Annoloth* as an attempt to claim territory deeper within the Norlythe. The discovery of Antalumme by native clans prompted several of the bloodiest exchanges in Trentsmund's invasion.

The city of **Caraquetularác** lies on the southern shore of Ghen-Ghen Maw. Oral histories report that the gugrum founded the city several centuries ago. Since that time, it has assimilated a large number of humans and become fairly diverse for the region. Most of the northern reaches of the forest are considered tributary to Caraquetularác.

Separated from the mainland by the Sea of Caskalle, **Haracuraqué**t is largely cut off from the rest of the Norlythe. This gugrum city controls the Bori'ga River Valley and much of the island's northern cape.

Maricuälatán is the human city most at odds with the colonists from Trentsmund by virtue of its proximity to the western plains. The High Chief's pyramid overlooks the mouth of the River Ení where it joins the Sea of Satherlaer, a position made more defensible by a natural headwall and several smaller rivers that surround the outer districts like a moat.

The territory of **Saethym** has an evil reputation, due to the headhunting gugrum that prowl its desert canyons. These tribes are known to dabble in dark arts, using necromancy, blood magic, and warlock pacts to become fearsome magicians and hunters.

Sundered Valley, called Iquetzalarátl in the Quitzál language, is a shielded recess in the Cascál Mountains, where a village of peculiar and distrustful humans live in relative isolation. They claim to have fled Trentsmund centuries ago in the company of an evangelist who prophesied the complete corruption of human civilization. The people still forbid one another to use their leader's name, referring to him or her only as the Judge. The few outsiders who visit Sundered Valley speak of their austere ceremonies, during which the Judge ascends the sky in fiery glory to purify those present.

The sarrow commune **Ykhel** has limited relations with the other cities of the Norlythe. Its seclusion is both a curse and a blessing, providing defense at the cost of commerce.

Places of Interest

Whispers of **Axanitlacoa** have circulated the forest since the first expeditions from En Fallad ventured near the southern spur of the Cascál Mountains. Rumors among the foothill villages tell of a religious citadel where mortals could speak with primordial beings. The jaguar priests still deny its existence, but every so often an explorer will dare the wooded cliffs where Axanitlacoa is said to perch.

Bister Mountain is the highest peak in the range that encircles the colonial city Antalumme. On a bluff above the mines hangs a weathered gallows, where witches and heretics have swung in scores. Below the bluff, the mountain's wrinkled niches hide a particular vein of amethyst whose clusters bear unique marks, like hideous faces gasping for breath. Perhaps the witches hanged on Bister Mountain haven't gone as far as the people thought.

Enga Mubata stands at the lowest point of the Bori'ga River Valley, a timeworn complex of hexagonal megaliths thought to be the remains of a dragon eyrie. Only a few days upriver from Haracuraqué**t**, the cyclopean ruins are elaborate enough to have housed more than a hundred dragons and their young. They likely date back to Daragoch, the empire of the dragon-spawn, which once controlled most lands bordering on the Siriyne Sea and the Sea of Caskalle.

What most people don't know is that Enga Mubata has extensive underground levels inhabited by Avan operatives. The Enga Mubata enclave is one of the largest and most active sites for Jharric worshippers, as well as the refugees and escaped slaves they shelter.

One of the Norlythe's most influential factions, **Terratorumme University** is an educational institution that has garnered considerable power since it was founded thirty years ago. It now employs its own standing army, and has embedded itself deeply in the colonial government. The governor recently signed a provision allowing the university to deny entry to military and law enforcement officials, allowing it to operate as a sort of miniature city-state within the colony of Terratorumme.

Adventuring in the Norlythe

The wonder and peril of the frontier is the heart of any story set in the Nolythe. Whether your players prefer to be colonists encroaching on the dark forest or members of the mysterious tribes that have sworn to defend it, adventures here reveal the horrors of both nature and civilization. Mortals who draw close to the earth and its elemental origins often transform to embody the callous brutality and infinite strangeness of the wild. At the same time, those who place their confidence in technology grow as cold and automated as the very machines they revere. Your players will quickly learn to fear all paths.

Consider using adventures in this region to explore themes common in the American Gothic subgenre: sacrificing one's humanity to gain knowledge, the human desire to separate oneself from what one considers grotesque or foreign, and the horror of discovering that you've become that which you loathe. The nightmarish wilderness and the industrial technology of the colonists fit nicely into the imagery of such stories.

As you begin adventuring in the Norlythe, think about the cultural and ideological backgrounds of your characters. Do they worship bizarre primordial gods in local cults, or do they bring with them the hellfire and brimstone of more organized religions? Is it easy or difficult for them to trust in government and order? The stronger the choices your players make, the easier it will be to challenge and stretch their characters.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Norlythe region:

After his sister is executed as a Jharric heretic, a local priest of Daemoth begins reciting strange mysteries from his pulpit, prompting an investigation by a group of Etholchan agents.

Canal workers in Antalumme discover the entrance to a tomb seemingly made for colossal beings long forgotten. Before they can venture in, cultists from a nearby tribe steal into the city, hold the governor hostage, and demand that the tomb be sealed and the canal abandoned.

In order to cure their matriarch, the gugrum clans must unite to obtain the hearts of ten great predators, including the elusive behir of Ykhel.

Perrith Gorr

Look, ye contemptible wretches, upon the glory of Volgothyde. I will show ye the Master whose hand built wonders, who bestrode the nations of the East and cast them in His image; He who beat the earth into white ruin and fashioned from its corpse a throne unending; He whose eyes saw doom and whose body fell from undeath into oblivion, and rose again in immortality.

Cast your gaze upon His works; see the broken stables that housed thy brats and the fields that filled thy offal and fattened thee for my table. They are ground to nothing. These are My works. Look on them and know ye are unmade.

—Inscription left after Volgothyde's sack of Carthaxis

Common Races: Human, vampire, vorruc
Language: Mhelthep
Nations: Perrith Gorr
Places of Interest: Amerov, the Ash Downs, Caraveh, the Isle of Muloch, the Muted Forest

Known History

The Empire of Perrith Gorr predates all human contact in the East. When the humans settled Wellusk, the vampires were already a highly developed civilization at war with their werekin neighbors. According to Mohtran tradition, the first vampire, Iarmov the Maimed, claimed the lands north of the River Ferrialum upon his return from exile during the Stonewar. He called the land Parothgaur, the Blood of My Throat, and set his palace in the Hills of Caraveh while his offspring filled the wide lowlands.

Volgothyde

The most infamous name associated with Perrith Gorr is that of its legendary emperor Volgothyde, who ruled throughout most of the *Intiliaros*. He ascended to power at a time when vampire isolation kept their numbers desperately small. Against the objections of the pureblood vampire aristocracy, Volgothyde popularized the spread of vampirism to Perrith Gorr's animal population both as a defensive tactic and for use in his invasion of Arwest. With a small army leading hordes of vampiric beasts, the emperor laid waste to the werekin kingdoms. His actions, however, had more far-reaching consequences than even the vampires might have realized.

As the vampire-curse spread through the animal kingdom, Perrith Gorr's entire ecosystem slowly succumbed to undeath. The trees, the grass, even the soil itself turned pale and withered. The gradual corruption of the earth in this region has continued for millennia, twisting the land itself into a horrid mimicry of the monsters that inhabit it.

The War on the Fells

When the ancestors of the Omhatra humans settled the far shore of the River Ferrialum, the vampires soon learned that they preferred the blood of intelligent creatures to that of the apes and lions they had grown accustomed to drinking. Once Volgothyde had tasted human blood, a southward incursion was inevitable.

The War on the Fells, as it was called, lasted far longer than any would have predicted. After just over 50 years, the humans south of Ferrialum finally laid down their swords and submitted to vampire rule, becoming serfs to be bred and hunted in the lowlands like beasts. With such a significant increase in their provender, the vampires briefly surged into greater numbers than ever before.

The next year, Volgothyde was destroyed amid mysterious circumstances. Whispers attribute the death to the famed assassin Arhuzimel, though why he was in Perrith Gorr, and what motive he may have had to slay the legendary vampire is anyone's guess.

Recession and the Dark Atonement

Since the fall of its last great emperor, Perrith Gorr has fallen into civil war and decay. The kindreds of the old aristocracy bicker over the land, even as their curse on it has ended any hope of agriculture or industry here.

According to the priests of the Volgothic Cult, the disembodied spirit of Volgothyde reconciled the vampire bloodline with his progenitor Daemoth in return for a seat at Daemoth's court. In the year 1340 *Annoloth*, he returned to the seat of Caraveh to rule Perrith Gorr as a god.

With Volgothyde's rebirth, vampires known to have been vanquished began to reappear in the thousands. Perrith Gorr's borders swelled with undead, and in the brief winter of 1345 launched the largest-scale invasion in recent history, reducing the entire region of Wellusk to a crumbling ash-heap. With its old enemy obliterated, the vampire armies retreated north. Whatever Volgothyde's next move may be, his return marks a new dawn for Perrith Gorr.

The Shell of an Empire

Tradition and heritage are central to the vampire way of life. They hold the ancient days of their people in high esteem, so much so that many seem to exist in a chimeric delusion that their empire is at the height of its majesty and glory. Pureblood vampires will go to extreme lengths to perpetuate this illusion, even when the obvious reality is that their nation and estates are in barren ruin.

The central props of this illusion are the mortal captives that serve, labor, and feed the vampires. These unfortunate souls live out their brief lives as unwilling subjects to the vampires, who see themselves as magnanimous aristocrats far above the human ken. A typical slave in Perrith Gorr is captured in a raid, worked to exhaustion, and fed on vorruc-infected food. After a few years at most, these captives succumb to the vorruc disease, at which point they're cast out onto the empty moors to starve.

Though their ancient feuds tend to limit them politically, the five vampire kindreds (Bromraw, Carachun, Calchoth, Ferrialum, and Mannen) are newly unified by the apotheosis of Volgothyde. Even the weakest houses within each kindred vie for the favor of the Twice-Born Emperor. But these are new times. As at his ascension of old, Volgothyde put an end to old ways and purged the weak from his empire.

Rumors fly across the East of a new order within Perrith Gorr—a cult that places Volgothyde and his resurrected pontiffs at its head. With the advent of the Volgothic Cult, the kindreds and their petty squabbles represent an age eclipsed.

Purebloods and Fisher Kings

The inhabitants of Perrith Gorr are as wounded and cursed as the land itself, whether by their undead bloodline or the vorruc plague that seems to swallow up all life in this region. The noble vampires (especially those of the Calchoth and Ferrialum kindreds) trace their lineage directly back to Iarmov, the first vampire. In their crumbling, mirrorless mansions they brood, obsessing over pedigree and the forgotten traditions of their houses. Their ageless beauty stands in stark contrast to the vorruqun—hideous flesh-eaters hidden about the moors, where the bleak wilderness reflects the vampiric blight at work in their bodies.

Ancient power is readily available to those who adventure here, so long as they're willing to pay its awful price. Some Perrith Gorrines court the favor of those who can bestow vampirism upon them, while others (notably Senfaerists, agents of Mozralchi, and other monster hunters) are drawn to the region with the express goal of destroying such creatures. Those who revere the undeath of the vampires might be drawn into the worship of Volgothyde.

To be born in Perrith Gorr and live into adulthood, one must be either cunningly resourceful or a vampire. Human adults are usually brought here as slaves. If they can free themselves in the first year or two, they aren't necessarily doomed to become vorruqun. Once changed, however, they will need to employ every ounce of fortitude to survive. Conventional wisdom warns against crossing anyone who has emerged from that crucible.

Places of Interest

Amerov, called "the Unborn" by eastern sailors, is a small island within swimming distance of the lowest Strait of Warakh, nicknamed "the Midwife." Though it might have been made an advantageous outpost for anyone wishing to control passage through the strait, Amerov's evil reputation sends sailors and swimmers as close to the western shore as possible. Old sea tales speak of a hermit who once lived there, a transmuter who left strange and dangerous experiments littered about the island and its currents.

The Ash Downs stretch across the northern reaches of the continent, where the vorruc blight is severest. Here the hills dwindle into dunes of white dust, their dry flakes dancing about in the chalky air. There's hardly a living thing to be seen so far north, but the savage hunters of the Bromraw Kindred linger in toppled citadels, nearly drowning in slag and soot.

As the ancient seat of power in Perrith Gorr, **Caraveh** is a city with the most dreaded of legacies. Through its early days as the abode of Iarmov the Maimed, its golden age under Volgothyde, and the disrepair of recent centuries, Caraveh has accumulated layers of secrets as only the epicenter of vampire abomination could. Since Volgothyde's return, it has burst into a new frenzy of sleepless armament. The undead scheme within its windowless corridors by day, and swarm about it like wasps in a nest by night.

Few travelers have heard of the **Isle of Muloch**, situated as it is in the center of a small, nameless lake on the southern spur of the Hills of Caraveh. On particularly clear evenings, those who stand on the shore of the lake at sunset might chance to see Muloch's dim shape out on the water—but only if the gazer has crossed the veil into the afterlife. To simple folk who have never had a brush with death, the island's tempting shores remain invisible.

The **Muted Forest** is a wooded stretch that forms the eastern arm of the Tolgun Wilds. The Carachun Kindred shun the trees here, which are devoid of any sound. The leaves, the brooks, even the wildlife are hushed as if kept silent by some oppressive presence.

Adventuring in Perrith Gorr

While most of Vinramar's horrors lie beneath a thin facade of normalcy, Perrith Gorr represents the most significant breach in that veneer. This is a land churning in terror, where society is peopled with literal monsters and the earth has abandoned all resistance to the corruption of the millennia. You explore its nightmares at great cost.

It's up to you and your players whether they want to fight the malignancy of the undead empire or work to gain prominence within it. Their characters might be a cabal of novice vampire hunters, a haul of slave-chattel from nearby lands, or even vampires from a lesser bloodline looking to make a name for themselves. Campaigns set in Perrith Gorr can take advantage of its ruins, wilderness, and treacherous intrigue.

Vampires are mighty and cruel enemies. Their relative power may seem to exclude lower level characters from campaigns set within vampire society, but don't be fooled. Here are a couple suggestions if you're starting at level 1.

Focus early play on infiltration and interaction. The party may not cherish their vampire overlords, but during the first few levels you can guide them toward forming alliances and discovering hidden resources that will pay off once they've risen in the ranks a bit. Encourage them to value survival more than whatever moral outrage their characters feel in the presence of vampires.

Keep combat isolated. Have NPCs send them out into the waste on tasks that put them in the path of animal swarms, vorruc packs, and crazed villagers. Reveal enemies at court that, while dangerous, don't

wield significant influence. Malicious slaves and vampire spawn might plot against the party, presenting obstacles but leaving little risk of intervention from the more powerful undead. Smaller threats can build tension and hint at how the evil of the vampire culture has polluted everything within its influence.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Perrith Gorr region:

After setting sail from Dradun, the cargo ship the Rally was lost at sea for six years. Now its weary sailors drop anchor on the ashen shores of Perrith Gorr, desperate for food but doomed to become it.

Three blood slaves in Etrusia convince the troubled son of the vampire baron to cut their chains and accompany them to the free city of Faerras.

Mozralchi's prophetess commissions a band of assassins and demonologists to infiltrate Caraveh and determine the god-emperor's next move.

Syrikhal

Do you also feel it: the falsehood, the counterfeit of physical creation? Do you know in your heart's center that these inanimate walls are not truly there? All my life my mind has lain imprisoned within this flesh, wounding others in my confinement, wounding myself in restless chafing. Materiality is a box, a coffin in which our souls are buried alive from the first breath. To escape you must first journey inward, align the body, make it the instrument of the soul. Then you will see the fissures in the dream, the patches where illusion cannot sustain itself, and nightmare is reality.

I am no prophet, nor king, nor savior. I am as a star in the night. I am awake.

—Wei-Tzuhael, Scion of Senfaer

Common Races: Dragonborn, human
Language: Syriod
Nations: Aldalar, Eliasikh, Heseriah, Jessik, Ozhma, Ozhrasala, Syrikhal
Places of Interest: The Bridges of Heseriah, Juraktai, Kurophtu, Tsyandesh, Wayfarer Temple

Known History

Though Syrikhal was among the first regions settled by humans, its inland reaches are still buried in jungle, where the straggling remains of pre-human abhorrence linger undiscovered. The dragonborn clans that populate the tropical forests descend from the Empire of Daragoch, which crossed the Black Ocean and claimed present-day Syrikhal before humans even set foot here. Unlike the western clans in Chayrshellech, these dragon-kin worship "living gods," mysterious beings supposedly connected to particular sacred sites deep within the jungle.

Human Migration to Syrenos

The shogunate of Syrenos was established in the year 223 of the Wild Age as a refuge for human slaves escaping from Motta across the Black Ocean. The settlement commanded a narrow bridge of land dividing the bare end of the peninsula from the wild jungle about the feet of the Golgul Heights. Over time its advantageous position helped it blossom into the port city Syrikhal, whose naval foothold paved the way for city-states all along the southern coast of the region.

Instrumental to safely navigating the coasts of Syrikhal was the growth of Senfaer worship among the local Omhatra peoples. Ships began hiring monks and priests to protect them from the aberration-infested waters. Temples to the primordial god of order and psionics sprung up throughout the city-states, and Senfaerism became firmly rooted in Syrikhali culture. Though they're by no means the only people to worship Senfaer in the world, the lack of competing religions in this region makes it the spiritual center of Senfaerist traditions in Vinramar.

Okatatu and the Dragon-Children

In the 18th century of the Wild Age, Aldalar was ruled by a shogun named Torikh Fusei, whose most trusted vizier was a deformed man named Okatatu. When Okatatu was caught in the act of murdering the shogun's heir, witnesses learned that his supposed deformity was actually evidence of his dragonborn parentage.

Stealing into the wilderness of Harato, Okatatu rallied the dragonborn clans to war against Aldalar and Ozhma. It was then that the humans learned to truly fear the jungle. Over the course of a decade, the monks and bushi battled dragonborn clans along the hilly coasts and woods that separate the two cities. Sorties into the forest brought back horrifying tales of colossal reptiles and serpents, whose size was dwarfed by their wicked intellect. Aldalar was able to fight Okatatu to a peace, but to this day, stories of a pervasive psionic presence in the jungle lend credence to the belief that god-like reptiles sleep fitfully within the dense swamps.

Islands in a Sea of Madness

For the humans of Syrikhal, survival has always been synonymous with unity. Their isolated city-states—the only developed settlements of this region—are engulfed in perilous wilderness. Traffic between them is limited mainly to the seas and rivers. Shipwrights, fishermen, whalers, sailors, and maritime merchants drive most of the business on which Syrikhal and its sister colonies thrive. Without trade, the region's natural resources would be buried too deep beneath the dangers of the jungle to allow for significant growth.

Still, Syrikhal's isolation can be unnerving. For those who don't venture out to sea, the city-states seem confined and beleaguered by primeval forces just beyond perception. To them, the jungles symbolize a world without order, where their god Senfaer holds little sway. Its brutality challenges their most fundamental beliefs.

Cautionary tales about those who do step into the wild abound. Aberrant threats lurk hungrily in the shadows, only held back by the dedicated monks who have sworn to keep them at bay. It's never been clear which came to Syrikhal first, the Senfaerists or the horrors from the stars. The monks have spent centuries in a desperate dance to preserve humanity from the abominations of the Darkplane. In this region the need for a disciplined mind and a strong hand is real.

Each city-state is governed by a hereditary general called a shogun, whose household and lands are defended by bushi, swordsmen sworn to his family's service. While the shoguns have nominal authority over their cities, each appoints a number of advisors, ministers, and viziers to assist in the daily responsibilities of rule. The balance of the population is made up of smaller noble houses, merchants, and peasants whose labor and fealty are the engine upon which the city-states run.

Although these communities are stable and successful, populations remain relatively low. Each Syrikhali city-state supports between 8,000 and 15,000 people, with Syrikhal itself being the largest. At the center of each city is a heavily fortified estate, occupied by the shogun and his court. Districts surrounding the shogun's estate are organized by class and occupation. Unlike many Western cities, Syrikhali temples and shrines are often placed outside city walls.

Despite their proximity to the fallen nations of Wellusk, only the city of Syrikhal has ever been significantly influenced by the culture of their northern cousins. But after Wellusk was laid to ruin by Volgothyde's legions in the last decade, the vampiric curse that wasted the land northward has spread in the direction of Syrikhal's city-states. Little by little, vorruc packs have entered the region, keeping Senfaer's guardians busy with efforts to stem the spread of the undead plague.

Enlightenment by Deprivation

Restraint, discipline, and mutual trust are the most important values in Syrikhali society. They are the central principles of Senfaerism, which promotes the renunciation of material wealth in the pursuit of moral clarity. The people often disapprove of garishness, preferring simple furnishings and clothing.

They don't always have a choice, though. Poverty is rampant in the city-states, even among those who don't choose it. Hemmed in by the dangerous jungle and lacking an abundance of arable land, the people of Syrikhal go without as often as not. Their need, however, often teaches them to be humble and accepting, traits that are rare enough in this world.

Despite the lack of competing local religions, Syrikhal enjoys a fair amount of diversity, in large part because of its position beside the Black Ocean. Travelers from Motta, Trentsmund, and Iljudheim dock in the city-states on their way to eastern lands. The waterfront districts can be seedy, full of strange faces and shady business.

Nations of Syrikhal

Unlike it neighbors, **Aldalar** is built upon the remains of a previous civilization. When humans arrived on Cape Myokku, they settled the ruins of Palucadium, one of the first cradles of jhareth settlement.

Eliasikh occupies the flatlands west of Golgul Heights, an essential and lucrative position where the River Goksaya meets the Sea of Betha-zedor.

Heseriah stretches along a patch of clear country on the edge of Tsyandesh. Once the intermediary between the regions of Syrikhal and Wellusk, the city now faces an influx of refugees, and the vorruc plague that inevitably follows in their wake.

Far along the western peninsula, **Jessik** is a settlement with close ties to the Arrochuli nations of Esgoth and Carthossos. Its luxurious beaches belie the horrors that lurk further inland.

Ozhma began as a colony from Aldalar, meant to guard the convergence of the mountains of Harato and the Talazera Hills. It has since become the region's foremost exporter of stone and other precious minerals.

Ozhrasala is a small city in the archipelago south of the Betha-zedor, considered barbaric and backward by the other Syrikhali settlements.

The city-state of **Syrikhal** commands the isthmus east of Golgul Heights with its ample armada.

Places of Interest

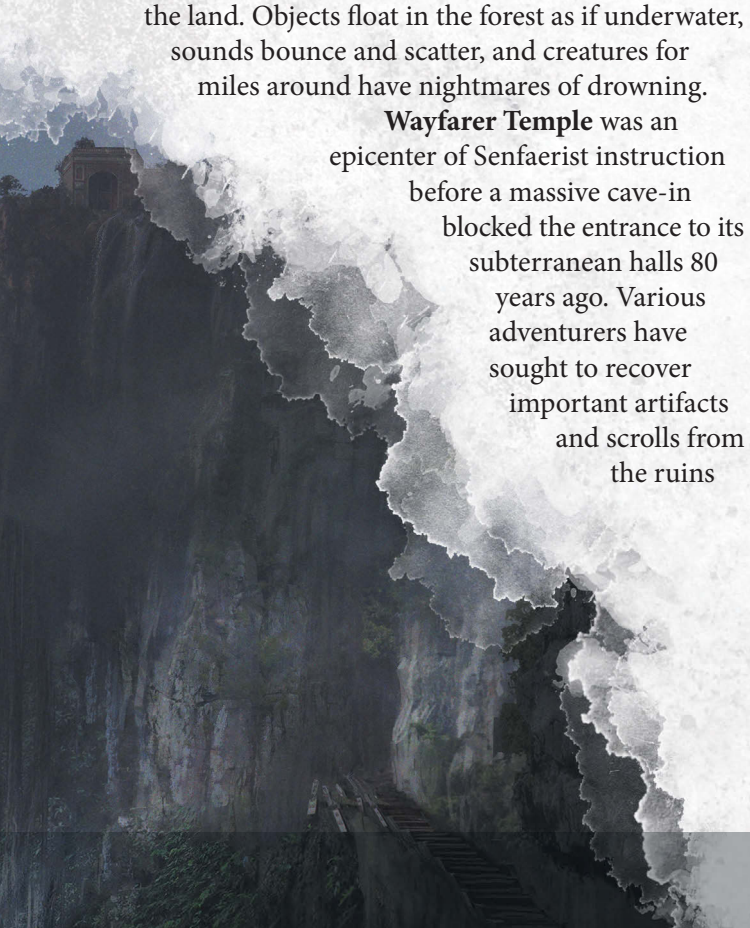
The **Bridges of Heseriah** span a 10-mile stretch of the Betso River south of the city-state Heseriah. Originally conceived as a way to expand the city without clearing the heavily forested riverbanks, the bridges and workers were plagued by mischance throughout

the construction. After years of strange stories and accidents, the ninety-person crew of laborers vanished entirely one night without explanation. The structure remains unfinished 130 years later, amid rumors of hauntings and dark dealings. Its extensive walkways and platforms hang eerily above the river, disquieting boaters on the final stretch into Heseriah.

The volcanic island of **Juraktai** lies near the city of Jessik, a steaming height riddled with fumaroles and hot springs. Its heavy canopy encloses poisonous vapors and clouds of ash within the jungle, making the air stifling and dank. Those who dwell there have learned to navigate the dangerous plant life, and domesticate the prehistoric reptiles that inhabit the undergrowth.

Kurophtu, the Scholar's Folly, is a labyrinthine city said to be buried within the wilderness near the Golgul Heights. Explorers glimpse hints of the city's history in sudden visions that seize them while navigating the twisting ruins. What they see is not encouraging. Something hideous lies at the center of Kurophtu, an orb that taught the builders abhorrent technological secrets. Conflict within the city over the use of such knowledge conjured some final catastrophe that left its streets disjointed and maze-like, trapping the madmen inside until nothing was left but an overgrown maze.

The cursed swamps of **Tsyandesh** encircle the Sea of Horikh with gnarled and half-sunken trees. According to the dragonborn tribes, an ageless being was drowned in the sea back when the world was young. The amphibious creatures of the swamps worship its rotting corpse, which has gravely altered the land. Objects float in the forest as if underwater, sounds bounce and scatter, and creatures for miles around have nightmares of drowning.



Wayfarer Temple was an epicenter of Senfaerist instruction before a massive cave-in blocked the entrance to its subterranean halls 80 years ago. Various adventurers have sought to recover important artifacts and scrolls from the ruins over the decades. Stories of ghastly metaphysical experiments conducted by the monks have reached the surface, adding a sordid note to the temple's calamity.

Adventuring in Syrikhal

Campaigns in Syrikhal revolve around the struggle between order and chaos, erudition and degeneracy. The Senfaerists are the symbol of discipline and enlightenment, pitting their strength and honor against the living anathemas within the jungle. A campaign that highlights this conflict can borrow trappings from the chanbara and wuxia genres, highlighting martial arts, swordplay, and codes of honor. That's not to say that Syrikhal should just be an Orientalist parody. As with other details inspired by real-world cultures, these elements are intended to be incorporated in a way that doesn't patronize or exoticize the source material.

Your adventuring party might be a secret society of criminals fighting against an unjust ruler, travelers whose ship has stopped over in Eliasikh, or a band of monks and ronin preparing an excursion into dragonborn territory. Whatever ties unite your heroes, consider their reputation, ideals, and relationship to authority. These traits will illuminate how they interact with Syrikhali society, and how that society interacts with them.

You may wish to feature reptilian and amphibious races such as the dragonborn, lizardfolk, and troglodytes, who inhabit Syrikhal's jungles. These small clans are defined by their territorial and religious wars with one another, but the malice they bear toward humans will sometimes be enough to unite them. Though such occasions may make them seem formidable, such foes are nothing compared to the greater spawn of Lakhi and Maruma'e that thunder in the wild—dinosaurs, couatls, basilisks, aboleths, even dragons and krakens.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Syrikhal region:

A bushi, a diplomat, and a Senfaerist monk are sent as emmissaries to a war-like tribe of dragonborn. Their mission: convince the dragonborn to share their knowledge of taming pteranodons as beasts of burden.

A linguist and his hired muscle sail to Ozhma on a jungle expedition, seeking a bilingual inscription that might lead to a better understanding of the Daraghun language. What they find instead is madness and doom.

The humans are settling a new spot beside the swamps of Tsyandesh. Since they began desecrating the grave of the Drowned One, terrible visions have afflicted the local dragonborn tribes, and rumors are spreading of a colossal creature prowling the swamp, the very sight of which is death. Now a young war-band must convince the human homesteaders to depart—by force if necessary.

Trentsmund

Greatness is seized, not bestowed. How are we to bring the light of invention to every corner of this world unless we paint the continents Trentsmunder black? Had I wings and a banner, I would fly east and west, fly to the coldest north, fly with sweaty haste to Bitten Heath and plant it. I would dress my children in the Black of the Dans and march them over the walls of every petty king in Vinramar. I would not stop until all nations flew our flag and sang Old Winter. Then I would take to the heavens, to those stars above us. If I could, I would colonize the planets.

—Aden Buffard, 1344 *Annoloth*

Common Races: Heathfolk, human, sarrow
Language: Trentsmin
Nations: Achald, the Kingdom of Trentsmund, Layarshoth
Places of Interest: The Gridiron, the Harrincroft Steamrail, the Isle of Thandre, Murachba, Punt Maard

Known History

From its humble beginnings as the northern province of Mohtra to the rise of the world-choking empire that is its namesake, Trenstmund's history is an emblem of unlikely greatness—and a warning of the perditious corruption such greatness can bring. Though largely dismissed throughout the ages of the world, the region now enjoys a position of global prominence due to its overwhelming technological supremacy.

Vunhaeg and the Maahiset

The first to settle Trentsmund was a daemon sorcerer called Hilutos, who established the colony Vunhaeg in present-day Ordramar. It was in Vunhaeg that the curse of Ethis gave birth to the maahiset, the stocky race of rune masters whose empire would one day stretch from this region to the far shores of Chayrshellech.

Despised by the cursed daemons who gave birth to them, the maahiset drove Hilutos and his people out of Vunhaeg and founded their own civilization in the Coron's Run Mountains. From there they migrated across Wyrgoth and into Chayrshellech, which became the seat of their civilization. Trentsmund remained the home of several important maahiset communities during the Imperial Age, but wide-scale invasions (by first the dragonborn and then the daemons) eventually drove them across the sea or into subterranean exile, leaving the region in a harrowing quiet for about 4,000 years.

It wasn't until the Wild Age—with daemon influence largely erased—that the sarrow, descendants of the maahiset, came forth from their hiding places. Unwilling to battle the gugrum for lands in Chayrshellech, the sarrow drifted northward with several heathfolk clans, where they found their ancestral home in Coron's Run empty and ready to be reclaimed.

Trentsmund and the Summer's War

With the spread of the Drael humans across the Gridiron in the first century of the *Annoloth*, tensions between them and the sarrow quickly escalated. Human writings at the time reveal that their racism toward the sarrow began early, engendering bitter persecution toward the little people. In the year 98, that ill-will caused several lords in Achald to mount a series of bloody massacres in sarrow territory, which historians glibly call the Summer's War. Achald claimed the territory and brought thousands of sarrow slaves home as spoils.

The Summer's War effectively annihilated sarrow culture. The centuries of oppression that followed transformed them from a thriving and spirited people into little more than beasts of burden. Traditions disappeared, honored families became estranged, and suffering embittered the sarrow beyond endurance.

In time, the highland territory seized from the sarrow became the sovereign Kingdom of Trentsmund, which quickly secured the heartland of the region from Coron's Run to Ordramar. By the end of the 10th century, Trentsmund had earned a reputation as the modernist capital of the world, its foremost scientific minds hitting a stunning series of technological breakthroughs that would launch the kingdom into industrial revolution.

Steam-Powered Empire

To the Kingdom of Trentsmund, machinery is a symbol of life. Automation and steam power are now the fuel that runs the engine of its economy. Transportation, manufacturing, and access to raw materials are all in a state of revolution as industrial technology continues to become more available. The visual landscape is most changed in Trentsmund's cities, where improved technology and the influx of factory workers have made living conditions quite poor.

Outside these urban centers, agriculture and husbandry are still the most common means of subsistence. While the lower classes disappear into city factories, the farms are newly fitted with sarrow slaves. Their existence as a commodity of the aristocracy extends to the neighboring kingdom of Achald, whose fields, orchards, and vineyards feed much of the region. The extent to which the Achaldean economy depends on slave labor is worrisome. Mass emigrations to Trentsmund, extreme dips in trade traffic, and comparatively low productivity have all conspired to reinforce their economy's reliance on captive sarrow.

The ills of empire have, however, gathered diverse cultural influences to the region from far-off parts of the world. Trentsmund's cities are filled with people from every region and background, though those who don't fit the pattern of the genteel, rational Westerner are often exploited and abused. There is no doubt that in Trentsmund the power is in the hands of scheming aristocrats and rapacious industrial tycoons.

North of the Saeraietha River, the heathfolk of Layarshoth watch such developments with a wary eye. Unlike their kindred in Chayrshellech, the Layarshoth heathfolk have abandoned the practice of cliff-dwelling, adapting to the pastoral valleys south of Coving Heights. Their shepherds and miners still manage to thrive by selling high-quality wool and iron ore to Achald and Trentsmund. Some might call them complicit in their neighbors' depravity, but they, of course, would deny it.

Few people trek east of the Coron's Run Mountains into the land Trentsmunders call Wyrgoth. Some malignancy grips that country, sending those who visit it into fits and bringing them fiendish nightmares. Local

folklore attributes it to the lingering memory of ancient empires or primordial deities. Whatever the cause, common wisdom holds that only the maddest and cruelest creatures have remained in Wyrgoth: bugbears, goblins, giants, ogres, and worse. Travelers who can't afford a ship's passage avoid this area by crossing the Gridiron in Ordramar and heading south through the colonial holdings west of the River Dontare.

Patronizing Secularists

Trentsmunders that worship Daemoth tend to belong to the Urrothic Sect, which began as a Humanist offshoot of the Etholchan Church. Trentsmund's culture has been greatly shaped by this movement, causing its people to dismiss discussion of doctrine and the supernatural. Material, secular pursuits are their foremost concern, a value system in harmony with Daemoth's chief virtues of strength, competition, and subordination. Indeed, Trentsmund's aggressive colonial expansion has its roots in the Urrothic admonition to assert and intrude in the name of self-empowerment.

The true heroes of Trentsmund are seldom recognized because they fight invisible threats that would chill the blood of prosaic folk. Some investigate hauntings and paranormal threats, others walk in the circles of the demimonde—the underground community of criminals, hedonists, and libertines. Common to such company is an interest in the dark arts, a pursuit too preposterous (or perhaps too dangerous) for prudent minds.

Nations of Trentsmund

Achald makes up for its technological inferiority by investing heavily in agriculture and slave labor. It is known for its fine cuisine and its wine, cider, and distilled beverages. Achaldean brandy is renowned.

The Kingdom of Trentsmund has long been the dominant power in this region. Its colonies extend from the Norlythe to the far island of Rellock in the Black Ocean.

The heathfolk nation of **Layarshoth** closely resembles northern Chayrshellech in its culture, especially where the use of folk magic is concerned. Its ruling fellows are careful to remain useful and unobstructive to the neighboring humans.

Places of Interest

The Gridiron is the name of the strait that separates Trentsmund from its colonial holdings within the empty lands west of Chayrshellech. The city of Ordramar straddles this ribbon of sea and connects the kingdom to its colony on the opposite shore. The Gridiron is one of the most critical holdings in Trentsmund, controlling access to both the Sea of Ordramar and the roads south.

Hailed as the crowning achievement of steam technology, **the Harrincroft Steamrail** is the first (and thus far, only) steam-powered railroad in the world. Beginning in the far northern city of Nattleburgh, it crawls along the banks of the River Gateway through Marverid, climbs the foothills of the Coron's Run Mountains, and at last crosses the Gridiron to its final stop in the southernmost burgh of Ordramar. The deafening sounds of the engine and its whistle have earned it the nickname "Screamrail." Among its strongest selling points is the strict confidentiality of any items shipped.

The **Isle of Thandre** lies a few miles off the coast of Layarshoth. To uninquiring souls it might appear overgrown and deserted, but its stone buildings shelter a community of simple folk that farm the land and tend to keep their heads down. If one asks about the sound of childish laughter on the cold wind, they grow quiet. None have the heart to tell of how two children washed ashore many years ago, how those churlish children never grew older, and how their vampiric thirst now keeps the town silent and enslaved.

Legends of **Murachba** have been told for centuries. Supposedly built more than 14,000 years ago, the subterranean city once protected the maahiset from the onslaught of the daemon empire. When the daemons eventually found Murachba and slaughtered the maahiset, they discovered something in its deepest pit—something so unspeakably powerful that they sealed up the twisting tunnels to prevent anyone from unearthing it. In time, the location of the seal was lost.

Several hundred years ago, a well known archaeologist from Trentsmund led a voyage into Wyrgoth to find Murachba. Only one returned: the crew's young Quitzál guide. According to stories, whatever she saw in the pits drove her mad. For the rest of her long life, she muttered about halls of solid gold, and something she called the Final Sin.

Punt Maard is a smoky city nestled in the Maardon Canyon, once a deeply-delved sarrow fortress. In Dyraneff its name means the Town in the Crevice. Trentsmunders built Punt Maard over the visible levels of the original structure, and—adding insult to injury—put the sarrow slaves that once lived there to work in the mines, quarries, and foundries. No expedition has successfully mapped the endless levels of the sarrow complex, which some evidence indicates may predate even the oldest known civilizations.

Adventuring in Trentsmund

The presence of highly developed technology makes Trentsmund a truly unique region to use as the backdrop for your campaign. Rather than resembling a pre-industrial society, as most areas of Vinramar do, this region blends in trappings of the Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian eras to create an environment that matches the gaslamp fantasy subgenre.

This combination of historical periods might initially make Trentsmund seem anachronistic, but if you imagine the printing press, the steam engine, and coal-gas suddenly appearing in a Medieval society, it's easy to imagine how they might transform it in the space of a few decades. The firearm, invented in the East some 30 years ago, hasn't yet managed to enter the mainstream consciousness. Those who know of their existence enthusiastically patronize the illegal underground markets, but the Kingdom of Trentsmund joins the rest of the world in withholding knowledge of what they see as a dangerous and unnatural piece of machinery.

Your players' investigations might lead them through the narrow cobblestone streets of a factory district, the streetlamps straining to penetrate the smoke from the coal-fires, or into the parlor of a psychic cult or vampire blood-den. Behind every door and around every corner wait horrors in human clothing.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Trentsmund region:

When patients in Bainbrook Mental Hospital began having shared dreams, they learned to enter the dreamscape and seize control of their doctors' minds. Now an opposing group of patients hatch a plan to end the psychic torture.

Four children have gone missing near Leighton's Lake. Local authorities suspect an abductor, but a retired monster hunter instead recognizes the work of an old enemy.

Five Achaldean soldiers return from war to find their village empty. When they reach the baronet's secluded estate to inquire after their families, a chorus of inhuman groans echoes from within the walls, and they reluctantly grasp where the village folk have gone.

Wellusk

And when their mouths sagged down like the castoff shell of some fleshy beetle, I knew the child would not live till dusk. As the red sun alighted on the broken parapet across the temple steps, two shrill, contorted utterances pronounced the death of Metti Falfexit.

Turning to me, the figures hesitated for what was both the longest and briefest terror of my life. Their rueful gaze bent on me, considering, no doubt, how easily they might pursue if I dashed off into the ruins. With a nearly imperceptible shake of the head, the glassy-eyed one forbade them to advance on me, and the pilgrims shambled off into the amber glow of the sunset with Metti's limp carcass in tow.

—Revi Witkaw, *The Pilgrims of Fallen Carthaxis*

Common Races: Human, vorruc
Language: Welluskud
Nations: Elemthord, Miskawassech, Ossawachu, Rawth
Places of Interest: Carthaxis, Dradun, the Hickorog Plateau, Jaskow Island, the Swill

Known History

The vast wasteland of Wellusk was once a hotbed of human culture, where two of the largest, most vibrant nations in Vinramar lived in the shadow of Perrith Gorr. Although that shadow eventually deepened into night, there are those who remember a time when the stable human kingdoms drew mystics, traders, artisans, and learned men from many regions.

Welluxian Protectorates

Humans first arrived in the tropical islands of Rawth to the far southeast, where they built the first clay cities that became a model for later settlements along the Black Coast. More peoples trickled into the region throughout the Wild Age, fleeing Motta and Arrochule (then the jhareth empire Ardon) or migrating north from Syrikhal. These human groups came to be called the Omhatra, forming the root of the subrace now associated with Wellusk, Syrikhal, Arwest, and Goltaraim.

As the disparate Omhatra polities warred for control of the Black Coast in the following age, a civilization from the Wethrawn River Valley rose to prominence, establishing temple cities along the shores of the Nornazias. In year 1021 of the *Intiliaros*, the Wethrawn people crowned their first queen, Danmirat, who slowly conquered the Black Coast. Rather than assimilate them, Danmirat left the Black Coast kings to rule their lands as protectorates under her standard. Danmirat's state came to be called the Queenship of Welluxia, her title passing through centuries of female heirs before religious revolution ended her dynasty in the year 1895 of that age.

Throughout the Queenship's final centuries, the undead emperor Volgothyde continuously plundered the protectorates for blood-chattel. Harrowed all their lives by the threat of the Northern Hunt, the Welluxians despaired of relief. Some say that despair gave rise to a wild plan to end the terror of Caraveh. In the twilight of Welluxian power, Volgothyde was assassinated. The peace brought by his death was sullied, however, as the protectorates fell back into 2,000 years of rivalry and cultural segregation.

The Invention of the Firearm

In the year 1294 *Annoloth*, mining engineers in Carthaxis developed the first known recipe for blasting powder, and in a few short years had manufactured crude cannons. Handheld firearms were an obvious next step. In 1322, the military attempted the first artillery assault—too soon, it proved. Vijeck Mare's prototype gun infamously exploded on the first firing, killing the queen of Wellusk and many of the gunners operating it. Public fear and outrage drowned the endeavor, and the firearm was strictly outlawed. Despite an underground interest in the technology, the events of the following decades ensured that the art of gunsmithing remained obscure.

Final Desolation

The recent horrors that have beset Wellusk can hardly be fathomed. Amidst rumors of Volgothyde's rise to godhood, vengeful legions of vampires began pouring into the young nation of Barlom Schoe in 1340 *Annoloth*, razing every city, town, and cottage into smoking rubble. The staggering loss of life was worsened by a blight on the earth—the same vampiric canker festering across Perrith Gorr now spreads southward. All that roots in and feeds on the land eventually grows pale as it transforms under the vorruc infection.

A Wasteland of Memory

Its proud cities now in ashes, Wellusk is an expansive ruin inhabited mainly by the bloodthirsty quasi-vampires that have succumbed to the vorruc blight. These packs of ravenous hunters band together, often mimicking the uninfected in pursuit of living flesh and blood to eat. Humans who have survived the desolation find they must stay out of sight, scavenge what sanitary food they can, and cling to the faint hope that they will one day escape or rebuild.

Some say the effort to cleanse the region has already begun, as the widowed and orphaned take shelter in ruined sanctuaries, forming new bonds in new communities. Old grudges have been done away. Now there are only the living, the dead, and those in between. To the homeless and forsworn, more than ever before, the true enemy is clear.

But that enemy hasn't shown its face in five years. Since the vampire host withdrew back under its cerement, not a hint of activity has come from Perrith Gorr. It's possible the vampires are readying another blow, this time against their foes to the west. Perhaps, fed to bursting in their triumph, they simply slumber. Whatever the answer, it's clear that Volgothyde never intended to rule Wellusk. He was content to unmake it, and leave the rest of Vinramar to ponder what terrible wonders will follow.

Word of this tragedy traveled fast. Desperate refugees have carried the news to the four corners of the world. Those who actually set eyes on the infinite wreckage of Wellusk, though, are left startled and overwhelmed. The thoroughness with which her markets, palaces, and temples were laid low remains a chilling reminder of a vampire's revenge.

The island kingdoms of Rawth and Elemthord lie far enough asea to have escaped the atrophy that grips the mainland. They are the last unchanged remnants of Welluskan culture, now marooned from all civilization, beset with exiles and castaways. In the absence of their chief trade partners they scrape together what provisions they can, but the toll on their economies has been heavy. Every month more and more of their native citizens set sail to start anew elsewhere.

Nomadic Scavengers

Fortune seems to be all that saved the lives of some scant thousands that call Wellusk home. In a land where death or worse can strike at any moment, the bold, the cautious, the quick, and the hardy all have equal odds of survival. The most successful coteries are those formed between survivors with diverse skill sets. Velawni smiths, gunslingers from Hickorog, Schovie courtesans, Black Coast pirates—such scavenger packs endure the brutal wastes better when they pool their capabilities, remembering that the fact they've stayed alive this long is no promise of what tomorrow will bring.

Disaster might unearth the worst in people, but it can also bring out more worthy qualities. Those who once were selfish or private have been forced to learn cooperation and compassion, or die. For some, regard for the gods has become a stultifying joke, while others perhaps look more fervently to Senfaer, Iala, or even darker gods that might protect them.

Nations of Wellusk

Elemthord, once a minor kingdom cut off from the richest traffic of the region, survived the destruction of Wellusk to become the most powerful nation left. Its people live in a state of defensive isolation, fearing what may become of them if they draw the attention of Perrith Gorr.

Miskawassech is a tribal nation bordering on the ruins of Welluxia. The nomadic hunters retreated into the jungle at the appearance of the vampire legions, and thus escaped the worst of the undead onslaught. Now, however, packs of vorruqun prowl the borders of their ancestral hunting grounds. Little more than caution stands between them and the plague that could wipe the name Miskawassech from history.

The tribe of **Ossawachu** is closely related to its neighbor Miskawassech. Unlike the nomads, however, the Ossawachu build sedentary dwellings from branches, skins, and clay. Since the appearance of the vorruc, this tribe has built towering walls of the same material to block the vampires and vorruqun from entering their stretch of jungle. So far, it has worked.

The island kingdom of **Rawth** has lost nearly half of its citizens as they flee to the safety of other lands. Crops rot in the field, shops have been stripped and deserted, and the lords that once prospered now waste away in hiding. Only those most dedicated to the land remain, hoping beyond hope that the region will flower again some day.

Places of Interest

Carthaxis was once the longest-standing city in Wellusk, now reduced to a treacherous quagmire of collapsed and overgrown stonework. Its Hundred Minarets lie toppled, home only to predators in human carapace. Those who survived the assault on the city have spread rumors that an order of mystics escaped the devastation through the use of dark arts, and that even now they gather survivors into a secret haven within the leveled city.

The northern port of **Dradun** was among the first cities to fall to Volgothyde's legions. At the sight of the Gotti Temple burning, ships fled the crowded harbor with such reckless dread that they collided, sinking dozens of vessels and killing hundreds. Dradun's ruins are a popular site for salvage as barrels and crates still drift ashore from time to time.

The Hickorog Plateau was barren long before the vorruc blight colored its soil a ghostly beryl. The wide, flat mesa rises like a mountainous shelf in the heart of Wellusk, its crown and sides built of dry, flaking rock. Here and there, narrow canyons and gulches open in the high country like splitting seams. While Hickorog was considered a lifeless waste before the Desolation, it now seems a lush paradise amid the blight. The high ground here is ruthlessly defended by those truly desperate to stay alive.

Jaskow Island hovers in the upper thrust of the Nornazias Sea, a site baffling to scholars and scientists. Its polypous surface is spongy and wet, and the entire mass pulsates gently like the beating of a colossal, arrhythmic heart. Skeptics insist it must be a formation of sea anemones or coral, like a huge, fleshy reef in the middle of the sea. Whatever such scholars claim, the nearby dragonborn clans revere Jaskow as a living god.

Culwot's Oculus, a site better known by its nickname **the Swill**, is an unexplained phenomenon in the Black Ocean, just a few days east of Cape Druvidi. Sailors are careful to go far around it, knowing too well how many wayward ships it swallows each year. Out there, in the middle of the roughest waters in Vinramar, lies a sudden, round hole in the ocean where the water drops over some invisible precipice to fall as far down as the light will reach. The younger lads balk at the stories, but each time a Black Ocean voyage fails to return, the older folk grow quiet, and every soul imagines the panic of a vessel tipping into the oculus and disappearing into black oblivion.

Adventuring in Wellusk

Ruins feature as prominent locations in many regions of Vinramar, but Wellusk is a virtual continent of ruined settlements. This post-apocalyptic milieu defines every moment a character spends here. Life revolves around finding food, shelter, and community—for the vorruqun as well as the human survivors.

It's not exactly a zombie survival scenario, though. The vorruqun are anything but mindless. Their savage appetite is focused and tempered by the wiles of the hunter. Since they can easily look and speak like humans, their traps are as elaborate as their prey is paranoid—and their disguise grows more convincing the more often they feast.

Parties adventuring (or surviving) in Wellusk tend to have one of two goals: adapt or escape. Those who refuse to abandon their home find nesting a difficult proposition, but if they can obtain allies, supplies, and a defensible shelter, they just might have a chance. Many can last for some time in such circumstances. Escape, on the other hand, sounds far easier than it is. With ships shunning the region and nearby settlements all flooded with refugees, survivors need every ounce of cunning and determination to put this devastation in their past.

While circumstances seem to dictate an exploration-based campaign, consider playing against that expectation. You might make apocalyptic survival the backdrop for a heist, a small-scale military campaign, or life-and-death intrigue among a colony of refugees. Remember that players want something concrete to fight for, and investing them in characters is the surest way to provide that.

Here are three campaign hooks based in the Wellusk region:

A half-elf and her companions lead a large caravan of survivors to Dradun in hopes of salvaging a small ship and sailing to her elven father's sanctuary in Talanbir.

Two respected leaders of a refuge have a falling out, which threatens to turn their sewer-based haven into a war zone.

A team of paranormal researchers from throughout Vinramar have landed on the shores of Wellusk to investigate the infected earth and pursue rumors of dragonborn immunity. But as their provisions quickly run low, they realize someone on the team is sabotaging the mission.

Languages of Vinramar

Of the hundreds of languages spoken throughout Vinramar, eighteen of the most common are listed on the Languages of Vinramar chart. Beside each language is listed its type, typical speakers, and script. Racial languages are those exclusive to the communities of a particular race, while regional languages are the various lingua francas (the equivalent of Common) used in Vinramar's world regions.

Some races, such as the gugrum and humans, don't have a unique language listed below. Characters belonging to these races might speak an obscure local dialect or simply use a regional language.

When creating characters for the Darkplane setting, be sure to substitute a regional language of your choice for Common. You should similarly substitute Sylvandrae for Elvish, Dyraneff for Dwarvish or Halfling, Daraghun for Draconic, Salohusaid for Orcish, Hallowed Tongue for Supernal, and Zhoroch for Abyssal.

The following section describes the nine scripts mentioned on the chart.

Racial Scripts

Baeltor Script

According to Etholchan scripture, Arrochimeir son of Daemoth stole several words of power from Loragg before the numbering of years. Over the ages, the fiends used these stolen characters to develop their own corrupted hieroglyphs. The Baeltor script is the descendant of that early abyssal language, used prominently throughout the reign of Mohtra. Daemons learn to write it in their early tutelage, and a variation is still used in Mhelthep, the vampire tongue.

Languages: Mhelthep, Zhoroch

Elannin Script

Fey creatures' love of art and language brought many artifacts to Vinramar that bore their letters. The Elannin script is a reminder of that lost world. It survives in common use as the alphabet of Sylvandrae, the language spoken by most elves. Travellers in Iljudheim or Arwest that come upon elf camps might find the flowing runes left behind on the trees and stone.

Languages: Losandrae, Sylvandrae

Konikhlun Script

When the ancient maahiset first taught the dragonborn to speak, the two tribal societies flourished until war and enmity drove them apart. The dragonborn soon devised their own letters in imitation of the Maahivek runes. The Konikhlun script was developed for convenient writing in dirt or sand, and so each letter uses the thumb-claw to make a point, then the other claws to draw lines beside it.

Languages: Daraghun

Maahivek Script

The maahiset race learned the power of geometry and symbols from the goddess Ethis. Their runes allowed them to contact other planes, increasing their might and learning. The letters of the Maahivek script are corrupted descendants of those first runes, used by some of the maahiset's descendants.

Languages: Dyraneff, Salohusaid

Mardellom Script

Loragg himself created the letters of the Hallowed Tongue, called the Mardellom in reference to his father's palace Mardelthwaide. This sacred script was used to scribe the writings of the jhareth elders, which reach back more than 100,000 years. Their power has faded, but the jharethil still use them.

Languages: Hallowed Tongue

Yaelchalas Script

The words of the heathfolk are as sacred to them as any holy site or relic. Developed during their isolation in the Wild Age, the Yaelchalas script is known for hiding complex significance in every subtlety of its spidery letters. Students come from near and far to learn the language from the heathfolk themselves.

Languages: Roccurish

Regional Scripts

Arroch Script

During the Wild Age, the Forroth humans developed a system of writing quite separate from those of other human groups. Having more in common with the Mardellom letters than Syriod or Mottan, the Arroch script has proved to have considerable longevity.

Languages: Arroch

Olmeníhuec Script

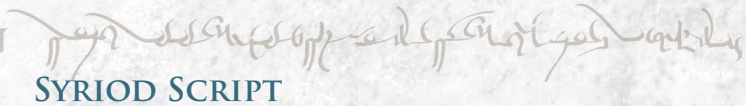
The Quitzál language, spoken by humans and gugrum in the Norlythe, is written using a distinct set of pictograms called the Olmeníhue. Since the Quitzál cultures keep few written records, their symbols are more often carved into the stone of monuments and temples.

Languages: Quitzál

Mottan Script

The cultures of the West derive their written language from the humans of Mohtra, who developed the use of crude characters that eventually became the Mottan script. Today, this alphabet is used by the majority of the literate West.

Languages: Iljerkr, Motare, Trentsmin



Syriod Script

The letters of the Syriod script reflect the detail and finesse that is characteristic of early Omhatra painting. Their calligraphic alphabet surged into popularity across the East as Syrikhali settlers spread to Wellusk and Goltaraim.

Languages: Goltalaid, Syriod, Welluskud

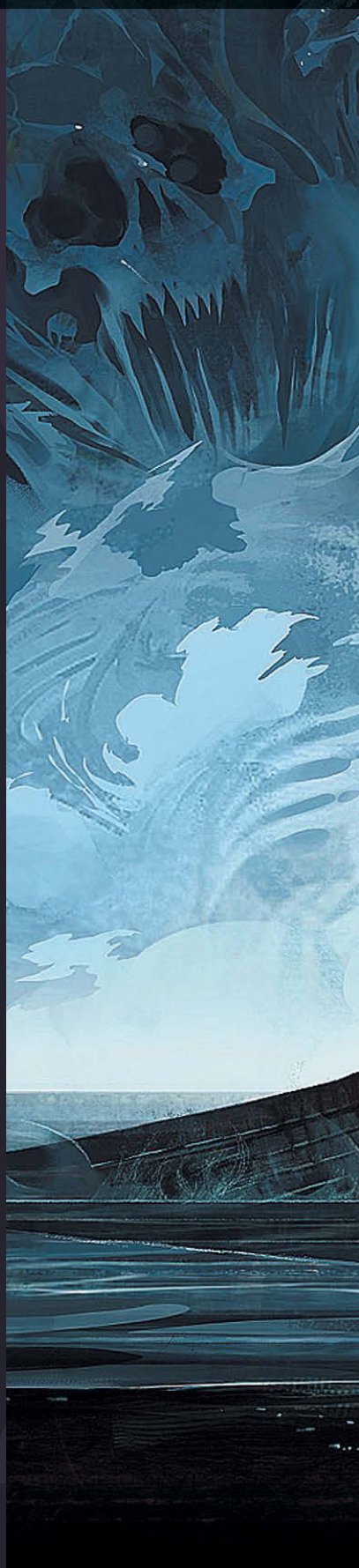
Languages of Vinramar

Language	Type	Typical Speakers	Script
Arroch	Regional language	Natives of Arrochule	Arroch
Daraghun	Racial language	Dragonborn, dragons, kobolds, and other Spawn of Lakhi	Konikhlun
Dyraneff	Racial language	Sarrow	Maahivek
Goltalaid	Regional language	Natives of Goltaraim	Syriod
Hallowed Tongue*	Racial language	Jharethil, natives of Salvendum	Mardellom
Iljerkr	Regional language	Natives of Iljudheim	Mottan
Khivmat	Racial language	Werekin	None
Losandrae*	Racial language	Fey creatures, natives of Iltallach	Elannin
Mhelthep	Racial and regional language	Vampires and their slaves, natives of Perrith Gorr	Baeltor
Motare	Regional language	Natives of Motta	Mottan
Quitzál	Regional language	Natives of the Norlythe	Olmeníhuec
Roccurish	Racial and regional language	Heathfolk, natives of Chayrshellech	Yaelchalas
Salohusaid	Racial language	Telmatra	Maahivek
Sylvandrae	Racial language	Elves	Elannin
Syriod	Regional language	Natives of Syrikhal	Syriod
Trentsmin	Regional language	Natives of Trentsmund	Mottan
Welluskud	Regional language	Natives of Arwest and Wellusk	Syriod
Zhoroch*	Racial language	Demons, devils, natives of the Abyssal Throne	Baeltor

**These languages, though spoken by inhabitants of Vinramar, are native to the other world listed*

Chapter Three

Darkplane Campaigns



The thing stalks me day and night. I see it in the mirror, hovering over my shoulder, and in the corner of my eye. It chitters and slops, always just out of sight. The gugrum call it Mandababanua—the tenebrous centurion. No other sees it; nothing stops it. It has somehow marked me, and when I sleep I feel my bones tug at the flesh, pulling away to join it.

—From the journal of Dr. Cashian Dole, found butchered in D'arthel

* * *

The success of a Darkplane story doesn't depend much on the presence of particular characters or locations. While this book has plenty of both, the themes and tone that color them are generally more pivotal. Most of the mechanical elements that will help your game achieve a Darkplane feel can be found in this chapter, including backgrounds, classes and features, items, factions, monsters, and system options.

Most important to creating stories in this universe is the use and treatment of the supernatural. Balancing the presence of cosmic horrors with a sense of realism isn't always easy. On one hand, if your characters only deal with the mundane, the setting loses its flair. But on the other, if magic, gods, and aliens become commonplace it cheapens their dramatic impact.

To maximize the wonder and dread of the supernatural, Darkplane stories should be grounded in dark realism. Introduce paranormal occurrences as anomalies in the characters' experiences. Artifacts, spells, and monsters are most thrilling when used sparingly at the climax of an adventure. If you leave your players craving more, you can build tension and awe across an entire campaign.

This sense of wonder is most difficult to achieve when a particular monster or scenario becomes predictable, such as when every player at the table is familiar with it. Feel free to make subtle changes to the nature or behavior of common threats in order to keep them just beyond the players' understanding. When they realize that the game won't necessarily operate the way they expect, they'll feel the rush of discovery, and more easily immerse themselves in the mysteries of the campaign.

Such unanswered questions fuel the story's momentum and keep us coming back. Heroes in a Darkplane campaign should be pursuing understanding, whether by investigating murders, chasing personal agendas, or exploring the vast world around them. We as players experience everything through the discoveries of these relatable characters. Real people have secrets, they contradict themselves, they do unexpected things, and sometimes their motives are mystifying or ugly. Gather a few of these personalities, weave the strands together, and you've instantly got a tangled web for the player characters to unravel. And if they discover something new about themselves, if they change irreversibly in the process, you've told a story worth experiencing.

New Backgrounds

The following backgrounds provide additional options for character creation.

Cultist

Sometime before adulthood, you became involved with an obscure religious sect that demands strict obedience. There are many unusual deities or ideals that you might embrace. Such followings may not be evil, but they are usually secretive about their unusual beliefs and off-putting practices. Sometimes your leaders plan illegal or taboo acts for you to commit that further the cult's agenda. These plans may or may not cause harm to others, but sometimes they make members of the cult uncomfortable—not that they'd ever admit it.

Skill Proficiencies: Persuasion, Religion
Tools: Disguise kit
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: Common clothes, ritual robes, a small cult idol (holy symbol), a book of teachings, and a belt pouch containing 15 gp

Unorthodox Belief

The exact nature of your cult's worship depends on its beliefs, and which god, entity, or philosophy you embrace. Your cult could be a radical sect of an existing religion, or it might worship a strange god.

d8	Belief
1	**The Black Lotus.** Consciousness and the material world are illusions.
2	**Cult of Sowm.** Sowm, the First Mother, isn't dead, but lives in hiding from her murderous son Daemoth.
3	**Fundamentalist.** If I follow my radical sect, death will grant me godhood.
4	**The Hollow Crown.** All the gods were killed centuries ago, and now the religions of the world only seek to maintain their false power.
5	**Order of the Emptied Chalice.** The Black Arcane arts are gifts from the gods.
6	**Primordial Cult.** The world was stolen from the primordial gods, and one day they're going to get their due.
7	**Racial Cult.** There is only one race the gods approve of. The rest are abominations.
8	**The Yáloin.** Aberration is the ideal form. and mutation brings mortals one step closer to deity.

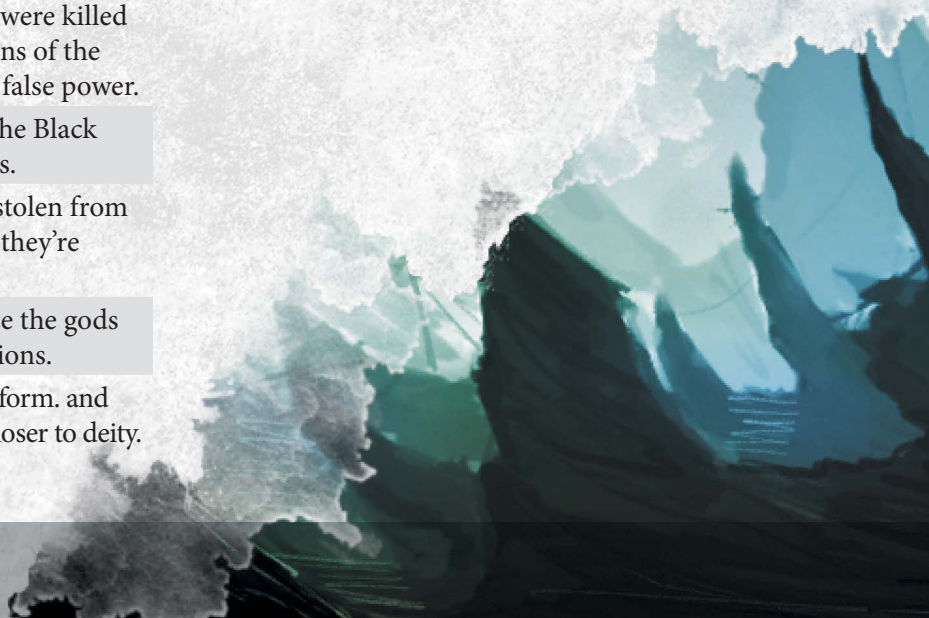
Feature: Inner Circle

When your cult's leader teaches or pronounces an edict, you're privy to the information. You know what rites or tasks your brethren and sisters of the inner circle have planned, and you have some sway with the cult's leader. You can usually lodge with fellow cultists if need be, and they may keep you fed and supplied in return for performing tasks and following the cult's strictures, which you and your GM should define.

Suggested Characteristics

Cults are often driven by the charisma and manipulation of a single leader. Trust in that leader is essential for the believers to continue faithfully within the group. Often the death of the leader jars the members of a cult to their senses. Consider who the leader of your cult is, what your relationship is, and determine how secure you are in the beliefs you've been taught.

d8	Personality Trait
1	No one can shake my faith, even with proof.
2	I don't hold an attachment to worldly things, since I'm destined to inherit much better.
3	My sanity is slipping after years of seeing things not meant for mortal eyes.
4	I defend brothers and sisters of the order with my life.
5	My face is always an expressionless mask lacking empathy or feeling.
6	I indulge in worldly pleasures to drive away the guilt of partcipating in disturbing rituals.
7	I use religion to justify hurting my enemies.
8	I've always believed I was special or chosen.



d6	Ideal
1	**Faith.** I long for the day when all my beliefs will be vindicated. (Good)
2	**Ministry.** Anyone and everyone is a possible convert, if I can get them to trust me first. (Neutral)
3	**Power.** This cult is a lie, but I can use it to influence others and get what I want. (Evil)
4	**Obedience.** I support my leaders. Even when they cause me pain I know it's for my own good. (Lawful)
5	**Safety.** I comply with this nightmare of a religion just to stay alive. (Neutral)
6	**Vengeance.** The cult harmed me and now I stay involved to sabotage its goals. (Chaotic)

d6	Bond
1	It started with seeking approval, but now I've fallen in love with my cult's leader.
2	My best friend was sacrificed or hurt by my brothers and sisters in the cult.
3	My parents raised me to believe in this, and they still watch my devotion like hawks.
4	I've come into possession of something that disproves my cult's beliefs.
5	My leader has entrusted me with a secret quest that the other members can't know about.
6	I fell in with the cult's enemies, and now I feed them information on our activities.

d6	Flaw
1	I like to reference obscure scripture and teach others what they should believe.
2	The most casual happenstance might be a sign from my god.
3	I'll sacrifice anything to further my cult's agenda: friendships, possessions, even your life.
4	I have a secret sin or practice that would brand me as a hypocrite.
5	Sometimes the letter of the law causes me to violate the spirit of the law.
6	I'm intolerant and disparaging to those who look or behave differently.

Doctor

As a trained medic, surgeon, or physician, you've seen all sorts of injuries and illness. You've learned how to handle common medical situations without breaking a sweat, and your familiarity with important cases and treatments comes in handy.

Skill Proficiencies: Medicine, Persuasion
Languages: Two of your choice
Equipment: A healer's kit, a vial of antitoxin, a hacksaw, an anatomy sketchbook, fine clothes, a magnifying glass, and a belt pouch containing 20 gp

Feature: Medical Practice

You have a place of practice where you commonly see patients, and where you can get clean water, linens, ointments, and other items useful to treating the sick. At your practice you have records of local and famous medical cases, references for diagnosing rare illness, and contact information for other medical professionals that you can ask for assistance. In times of war or pestilence, you may be called on to treat the injured or infirm.

Suggested Characteristics

An infirmary can be a shocking place, and many doctors practically live there. There isn't much that can faze them—even non-medical situations that strike others as odd or uncomfortable rarely cause a doctor to bat an eye. For some, however, the constant presence of death and malady can make them neurotic and overprotective.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I listen patiently to the complaints of others.
2	I'm used to having an assistant when performing intense tasks, and at times expect others to fill that role.
3	I'm uncomfortable with emotional intimacy
4	I take my downtime very seriously, and resent things that pull me away from relaxation.
5	People always complain about my long-winded and patronizing explanations.
6	I deflect stress and difficulties with humor.
7	My job is to worry about others' health, not my own.
8	I have terrible bedside manner. When something's wrong, I vocalize it.

d6	Ideal
1	**Charity.** As a trained medical professional it's my responsibility to care for the sick. (Good)
2	**Science.** My top priority is the enlightenment of the medical community. (Neutral)
3	**Wealth.** It pays to be the only one with the antidote, and that's who I want to be. (Chaotic)
4	**Connections.** I have a professional reputation to maintain among the nobility. (Lawful)
5	**Immortality.** I went into medicine to pursue my obsession with curing death. (Neutral)
6	**Sadism.** A part of me really likes inflicting pain on others. (Evil)

d6	Bond
1	The cure for a particular ailment is out there. I'll find it to save myself or a loved one.
2	As a medic for the military, it's my duty to care for wounded and sick soldiers.
3	Hospital administration is breathing down my neck about the odd methods I employ.
4	I'm a country doctor. I've acted as midwife, veterinarian, surgeon, and coroner to most of the families in these parts.
5	I have a hobby that requires me to buy cadavers from body snatchers.
6	Since the time I saw a flesh golem created, I've been conducting experimental procedures trying to replicate it.

d6	Flaw
1	Whether helping a patient or setting up camp, I've always got a routine that I insist on.
2	I take out my anger by being condescending towards others.
3	I can keep a strong stomach during surgery, but I'm a coward in battle.
4	I spend nights conducting strange experiments that draw suspicion and leave me exhausted.
5	I'm impatient with people expressing pain.
6	I'm addicted to one of the medications I give to my patients.

Lawyer

You have studied law, qualifying you for legal services in a particular jurisdiction. This understanding has sharpened your verbal skills and taught you how to use narratives to influence people. Language is one of your greatest tools. Your career in law might garner you respect or derision, depending on your history and prevailing cultural attitudes toward lawyers.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Persuasion
Languages: Two of your choice
Equipment: A book of legal theory and case histories, a pen and bottle of black ink, 3 sheets of paper, fine robes befitting your legal station, a letter from someone in the area desperately pleading for legal help, and a belt pouch containing 15 gp

Feature: Legal Training

With your GM, choose a nation or legal system in which you have jurisdiction. You are familiar enough with the law and courtroom procedures of that area to litigate, draw binding contracts, or competently plead a case before a judge or magistrate. With sufficient ability checks, you can also forge legal documents. In your downtime, you might earn a living as a barrister, judge, proctor, or solicitor.

d4	Law Specialty
1	**Barrister.** An orator and law expert, you plead cases before a judge on behalf of others.
2	**Judge.** You hold court and decide the outcome of legal proceedings as a judiciary authority.
3	**Proctor.** Your authority is over church law within a specific religious organization.
4	**Solicitor.** You represent the legal interests of others outside of the courtroom, handling contracts and giving legal advice.

Suggested Characteristics

Lawyers come from many backgrounds and personality types. You might be a purehearted advocate for the downtrodden, or just an amoral sleaze looking for a break. Whatever your angle, you can usually talk yourself out of a tight spot.

d8	Personality Trait
1	When I get nervous, I talk. A lot.
2	I've always got my nose in a book or three.
3	I speak in flowery language, especially when I'm lying.
4	When something important is happening, I lecture or give emotionally charged speeches.
5	I'm a pathological liar.
6	I have one word or gesture that I use repeatedly.
7	Sometimes I argue just to entertain myself.
8	I choose my battles carefully.

d6	Ideal
1	**Mercy.** Everyone deserves second chances, even people who don't appreciate them. (Good)
2	**Truth.** I can never tell a lie. (Good)
3	**Wealth.** Gold is my oldest friend, motivator, and confidant. (Neutral)
4	**Exactitude.** Anything that isn't correct or in order is a thorn in my side. (Lawful)
5	**Justice.** Rules exist to protect people, and I don't tolerate those who violate them. (Lawful)
6	**Influence.** If I can pat the right backs, they'll pat mine. (Any)

d6	Bond
1	I refused to give someone legal help, and now that person's life is ruined.
2	My closest friend began as my client. Now we're inseparable.
3	I recently got out of law after a high-profile case.
4	My area of expertise tends to bring me clients from near and far.
5	I've signed more forged documents than genuine ones in my career.
6	A mysterious person is blackmailing me.

d6	Flaw
1	I'll do or say anything to "win."
2	My cushy lifestyle is everything to me.
3	I'm incapable of letting an argument go, especially when I'm correcting someone.
4	My knowledge of the law is encyclopedic, but I have terrible people skills.
5	I get upset when people don't treat me with respect and formality.
6	I can and do make every conversation about me.

Medium

You have somehow learned to tap into the Spirit Realm, allowing you to communicate with spirits that linger at the edge of the veil between their world and the Material Realm. The contact is never earth-shattering, but you use it often in small ways, including to make a living. Whether you gather others at a table to contact their dead, or seek out haunted locales to placate angry spirits, people tend to look to you for help with the occult.

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana, Performance
Tools: Disguise kit, one type of gaming set or musical instrument
Equipment: A holy symbol or spellcasting focus (arcane, druidic, or psionic), strange robes, a large tome on demonology and the Spirit Realm, a flask of holy water, a bundle of twelve candles, a tinderbox, a vial of exotic perfume, a small bell, and a belt pouch containing 10 gp

Feature: Séance

You can receive messages from nearby spirits through your holy symbol or spellcasting focus. Sometimes this puts you into a trance in which you can only speak simple phrases or answer yes-or-no questions on behalf of the spirit. More often the contact is subtle and difficult to sense. You might hear a simple message to a loved one, gain knowledge of details from the ghost's life, or elicit a small demonstration of its presence (such as flickering lights or knocking sounds).

You can't be sure of the accuracy of the communications, or if the spirit you're speaking to is even who it purports to be. There are many devious ghosts who entertain themselves by tricking sensitive mortals. When you seek to contact a spirit, specify whom, if anyone, you'd like to speak with. Your GM then rolls secretly on the following table to determine the result.

d12	Séance Result
1	None
2	A violent ghost that attacks anyone present
3	The spirit of an arbitrary dead plant or animal
4	The spirit of an arbitrary plant or animal that died in your current location.
5	An arbitrary unborn spirit
6	An arbitrary spirit from ancient history
7	An arbitrary spirit that recently died
8	An arbitrary spirit that died in your current location
9	A well known spirit from ancient history
10	A well known spirit that recently died
11	A spirit whose identity you specified
12	You enter a trance and become stunned for 1 minute. While in the trance, the specified spirit controls your body. The trance ends if anyone touches you.

Suggested Characteristics

Gifts such as yours don't leave a person unchanged. You might manage to appear well adjusted, but as with your interactions with the spirits, nothing is as it seems. You might have the air of always being distracted, or perhaps you stare deep into others' eyes as if you see into their souls. Maybe you seem weary, or are suspicious of everyone. Whatever effect the spirits leave on you, they have taught you not to take anything for granted.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I act haughtily with those who don't believe in spiritualism.
2	I give a lot of well-meaning advice.
3	My etiquette is impeccable.
4	Everyone is a friend, or potential friend.
5	Despite my gift, I've always been a serious skeptic.
6	I rarely speak. At any moment the spirits might tell me a critically important message.
7	My cosmic perspective makes me seem distant.
8	I startle very easily.

d6	Ideal
1	**Kindness.** There are souls in anguish, living or dead, and I can help them. (Good)
2	**Love.** I lost someone close to me and I'm determined to stay close to their spirit. (Neutral)
3	**Knowledge.** This gift will one day teach me something truly profound if I perfect it. (Neutral)
4	**Fame.** This gift is my ticket to celebrity. (Neutral)
5	**Duty.** I have a responsibility to bring many people important messages from the Spirit Realm. (Lawful)
6	**Dominion.** While I decide what their dead loved ones say, I have complete control over others. (Evil)

d6	Bond
1	No matter what I do, I can't speak with the spirit that's most important to me.
2	Someone powerful got an answer they didn't like, blamed me, and destroyed my life.
3	There's one mysterious spirit that torments me, and I know there's a reason.
4	I learned a profound secret about myself or the afterlife, and it's tearing me apart.
5	A spirit told me the remote location of its hidden treasure.
6	I have a wealthy patron who gets me into the highest circles.

d6	Flaw
1	I bluntly speak the truth without regard for people's feelings.
2	When it comes down to it, I trust the dead more than the living.
3	Showmanship is more important than honesty.
4	The dead terrify me.
5	I believe that no one can or will understand my burdens.
6	I'm convinced that nothing really matters in the grand scheme of things. Death is the great equalizer.

Prisoner

You've spent a portion of your life imprisoned for a crime. Perhaps you were guilty, perhaps you weren't, but your life has been forever changed by the penalty you paid. While you languished in a cell, the world outside kept moving, eventually forgetting about you entirely. Your friends and family no longer speak of you, and might even fail to recognize you if you showed up on their doorstep. What you choose to make of yourself with such a blank slate is up to you.

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Sleight of Hand
Tools: One type of gaming set or musical instrument
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: An iron ball and chain (you can use it as a flail, but add the heavy and two-handed properties), ragged clothes, a journal you kept in prison, a memento given to you by a loved one before your imprisonment, and a trinket entrusted to you by another prisoner on your release

Feature: Forgotten

No one remembers or recognizes you, including your friends and family. Local authorities dismiss you as a destitute beggar, and all records of your dealings have been buried or lost. You may have picked up a useful piece of information in prison, such as a cellmate's confession, the hidden location of a valuable item, or a secret that no one would believe.

Suggested Characteristics

Those who have survived the crucible of confinement are haunted by what they experienced. Hunger, deprivation, filth, and mistreatment may have embittered them to all those who walk free, or perhaps given them a fresh appreciation for the beauty of the outside world.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I always give others the benefit of the doubt.
2	My fair speech and manner reveals that I was not always a beggar in rags.
3	Sometimes I say what I really think under my breath as if no one is there to hear it.
4	I'm eager to prove my innocence whenever it's questioned.
5	Something I saw in prison left me with a stutter.
6	I keep the memento of my lost love on my person at all times to remind me of what I lost.
7	When I eat, I scarf the food down before someone takes it away.
8	The only hints others see of my terrible past are the violent nightmares that keep me awake.

d6	Ideal
1	**Liberty.** No one should suffer what I've suffered. (Good)
2	**Peace.** If I can make peace with those I've wronged, I'll be able to rest easy. (Good)
3	**Adventure.** My former life will only bring me pain. Time to make a new one. (Neutral)
4	**Legacy.** I want to leave something of myself behind so my life wasn't wasted. (Neutral)
5	**Revenge.** My enemies will pay for imprisoning me. (Chaotic)
6	**Reform.** I have learned that crime is a plague, and I will never tolerate it again. (Lawful)

d6	Bond
1	My dearest loved one forgot me and moved on, but I can't do the same.
2	Another prisoner told me wild tales about hidden treasure in the wilderness.
3	I had a close companion in prison who was executed, and I promised to settle his affairs.
4	I converted to a new religion while imprisoned and decided to make a sacred pilgrimage.
5	The enemies that put me away are still in power.
6	A cellmate told me a terrible truth about the nature of reality, and I can't look at the world the same.

d6	Flaw
1	When I see someone's freedoms taken away, I go into a blind rage.
2	Prison gave me a taste for killing.
3	The law never did me a lick of good, so why abide by it?
4	I'm having a hard time severing my connection to the crime world.
5	I can't abide the sight of luxury.
6	Someone I'm close to has begun to suspect who I once was.

Psychologist

Despite the vile practices that often pass as mental health treatment, your expertise in the rehabilitation of the psyche has helped many overcome madness and its effects. You're trained in counseling, diagnosing, and treating those who suffer mental illness. You might be working out your own disturbed issues, or perhaps you have a supernatural insight into the minds of your patients. Likely, you work or once worked in a sanitarium, where you saw and heard things that may never leave you.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Persuasion
Tools: Herbalism kit
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: A morphine case, a book on the interpretation of dreams, a volume describing psychoses and their associated treatments, a straitjacket, an ice pick and mallet, fine clothes, and a belt pouch containing 20 gp

Feature: Psychoanalysis

You can spend time with those who have developed a form of madness to counteract its effects. You know the most effective methods for preserving sanity, and which respected professionals to approach with questions. While in your presence, characters can ignore the effects of one form of short-term or long-term madness. You can spend 100 collective hours of downtime with a character to cure them of one form of indefinite madness.

Suggested Characteristics

While some psychologists have a soothing manner, others might be manipulative sadists dealing with their own lunacy. You've likely seen the extraordinary power of the mind in action, but when reason seems to fail, perhaps your instincts tend to search for the most rational explanation.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I like to know as many details as possible before I choose my course.
2	I read deeply into all my social interactions.
3	I tend to look for flaws in everything.
4	My manner is always perfectly calm.
5	I have an endless reservoir of quotes from the great minds of art and science.
6	Just because I'm good with people doesn't mean I'm smart. Or qualified, frankly.
7	I have an obsessive fixation that creeps into every conversation.
8	Everything reminds me of an old case.

d6	Ideal
1	**Healing.** The world is made up of two kinds of people: those who heal and those who hurt. (Good)
2	**Ego.** I see most things as a chance to prove my superiority. (Neutral)
3	**Sanity.** There has to be a rational explanation. I won't accept any other interpretation. (Neutral)
4	**Understanding.** There's something about myself or someone else that I'm determined to explain. (Neutral)
5	**Comfort.** More than anything, people need to feel at ease. Why make a fuss? (Chaotic)
6	**Appetite.** When I treat the insane, I'm actually grooming them as victims for my secret depravity. (Evil)

d6	Bond
1	I have a contact among the local authorities who calls me to consult on criminal cases.
2	My last romance was with someone who might as well have been my patient.
3	I witnessed awful things at the sanitarium, but one in particular could get me into trouble.
4	I will discover the truth about myself, and the strange things that happen around me.
5	One of my former patients is a famous psychopath.
6	The local graveyard is filled with victims of my failed lobotomies.

d6	Flaw
1	Nothing is quite good enough for me.
2	Talking about a problem is much more fun than solving it.
3	I'm constantly telling others to calm down.
4	Strangers seem to just plain dislike me.
5	I often project my own issues onto those who seek my help.
6	I always seem to get tangled in my own manipulative webs.

Reporter

In some developed nations, the common people find news and current affairs in written or printed publications rather than by word of mouth. In such societies, the reporter wields significant influence. Sifting, investigating, and at times controlling the flow of information, you've got an ear to the ground and you know how to hold your own when things get rough.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Insight
Tools: Disguise kit
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: A set of common clothes, a stack of calling cards with your residence and contact information, a pocket watch, an ink pen, a bottle of ink, a small notebook containing notes on the movers and shakers of your locale, and a belt pouch containing 10 gp

Feature: Off the Record

You have a way of getting people to feel comfortable sharing their private affairs, or the affairs of others. As a result, your notebook is full of dirt, leverage, and winning stories. Most of the important people in cities have small secrets they'd like to keep out of the press. How you use your knowledge depends on how sympathetic you are to their plight, and how juicy the story is.

Suggested Characteristics

No one knows how to rile up readers better than a good reporter. Whether you're writing for a tabloid, sketching the events of a trial, or handwriting your own propaganda, you probably have a bold streak that can get you in and out of trouble. The best reporters are dauntless, risking life and reputation for the common folk's right to know (or their right to be entertained).

d8	Personality Trait
1	Others rarely see the real me.
2	People fascinate me, and I go to absurd lengths to investigate activity that piques my interest.
3	I'm starting to feel too old for this dangerous work, and I usually mention it before walking into peril.
4	When negotiations begin, I grit my teeth and hold my ground.
5	I know every joke ever told, and I often share them.
6	Truth is relative. So are honor, pride, and bravery for that matter.
7	I'm often taken with whatever's new and current.
8	I carefully weigh risks before acting.

d6	Ideal
1	**Honesty.** I get indignant when people lie to me, especially those in authority. (Good)
2	**Accountability.** No one is above the people's right to know. (Neutral)
3	**Fairness.** The best things usually present themselves over time. It does no good to judge rashly. (Neutral)
4	**Precision.** I'm meticulous in whatever I do, whether it's checking up on a story or buying goods and services. (Lawful)
5	**Attention.** Getting noticed is the first step to getting ahead. What are a few lies among friends? (Evil)
6	**Action.** You're likely to find me wherever the fight is hardest. (Any)

d6	Bond
1	I have an anonymous contact feeding me the story of a lifetime, piece by piece.
2	I spent time in prison for libel, and collected a few enemies along the way.
3	I'm working on a charged exposé about a particular organization.
4	While investigating an old crime, I found evidence that the convicted party is innocent.
5	Someone higher up on the food chain has me in her pocket, and now I only report what she tells me to.
6	Despite some hard-hitting stories a few years ago, people seem to think I've lost my game.

d6	Flaw
1	I decry every event as a catastrophe.
2	In a dispute, I twist meaning and put words in people's mouths.
3	My brutal honesty has cost me a lot of friends.
4	I arrive late, and always a mess.
5	Danger doesn't hold me back from chasing what I want.
6	If the story's good, I treat it as true.

Slave

Much of your life has been spent in forced servitude to another family, culture, or species. You might have been abducted, defeated in battle, or born to enslaved parents. It's likely your master kept you restrained or even beaten. Whether you're still in captivity is up to you. Maybe you escaped or bought your freedom, or perhaps your master has entrusted you with an errand. You could even be the slave of another member of your party.

Skill Proficiencies: Survival; your choice of Animal Handling, Athletics, or Performance
Tools: Your choice of vehicles (land) or one type of artisan's tools connected to your duties
Languages: One language spoken by your master
Equipment: A set of rags or traveler's clothes, a set of artisan's tools (one of your choice), a coded map to a refuge for escaped slaves, and a pouch containing 2 gp

Feature: Blend In

Because of your race, features, or a slave brand, people in the society that enslaved you tend to take little notice of your presence. You're familiar with the sort of households or camps in which you've served, and you can often blend in with groups of slaves there. People of high status might even do things in your presence that they would usually reserve for when they are alone.

d4	Duties
1	Cooking, personal attendance, or menial household tasks
2	Herding, grooming, or carriage driving
3	Hard labor or crafting
4	Fighting in battle or gladiatorial combat

Suggested Characteristics

Slaves react to their captivity in a variety of ways. You might be quiet, defiant, embittered, humble, angry, kind, petty, strong-willed, or a complex combination of such qualities. If your master is gentle, you may have learned to trust one another and even be friends, but such relationships are uncommon.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I never speak a word of complaint.
2	My dream is to escape and travel the world.
3	I defiantly look everyone in the eye.
4	I lost my family, so I gather friends where I can.
5	No one will ever order me around again.
6	I hold onto trinkets as if they were prized riches.
7	Compliance is usually rewarded, so I bow.
8	I will always resent my master's society.

d6	Ideal
1	**Compassion.** I pity my captors. The anguish of captivity is nothing to match the anguish of an avaricious soul. (Good)
2	**Penance.** I'm a slave because I need to atone for a great wrong I did. (Neutral)
3	**Vengeance.** My master and his family will pay dearly for the blood they've spilt. (Neutral)
4	**Formality.** The customs of great households have become very important to me. (Lawful)
5	**Freedom.** I object to all forms of bondage. No one should wear a chain. (Chaotic)
6	**Piety.** As much pain as my captivity has brought me, it drove me to a religious awakening that made me who I am. (Any)

d6	Bond
1	I have a close (perhaps intimate) relationship with someone who isn't a slave.
2	My family is out there somewhere, and I will meet them again.
3	I'm involved in an underground railroad that illegally escorts slaves to freedom.
4	I witnessed someone do something incriminating, and they silenced me by selling me into slavery.
5	I've been given a particularly grievous slave brand that causes others to hate or befriend me.
6	As a final act, my master entrusted me with a vital secret and a solemn task.

d6	Flaw
1	There's a rage inside of me that comes out when I'm backed into a corner. It can't be controlled.
2	I'm not comfortable with speaking to others.
3	My escape has left me a high-profile fugitive, and I'm not good at staying out of sight.
4	I hoard possessions now that I have them.
5	I've been punished for telling the truth, so now I usually lie.
6	I have no compassion toward those who are suffering. They cannot know my own pain.

Variant Guild Artisan: Mechanic

Your craft is the building and maintenance of machinery. Your experience might involve gunsmithing, steam engines, gas lamps, blast furnaces, printing presses, threshing machines, or industrial mills, drills, and pumps. With the right resources, you can build and maintain these types of industrial machinery. Your hands are strong and careful, and you have plenty of experience getting them dirty.

Rather than a guild, you belong to a union dedicated to technological progress. Such societies are the rivals of artisan guilds, whose members tend to be displaced by industrial machinery. Perhaps you're a factory inspector, railway engineer, or a firearm manufacturer.

Choose tinker's tools, carpenter's tools, or smith's tools for your artisan's tools. Your skill proficiencies are Investigation and Perception, and you may replace your additional language with proficiency with vehicles (land), vehicles (water), or firearms.

Variant Noble: Politician

In a constitutional society, the influence of politicians rivals that of the aristocracy. Though many are of high birth, just as many seem to come from more humble roots. The most successful are shrewd and cunning leaders. Perhaps you are the prefect of a small city who rose to political prominence, or a calculating senator poisoning your way to the top of the food chain.

If you wish, you can replace your feature with the People Person feature below. A good number of politicians began their careers with an interest in law, so you might also choose the lawyer's feature Legal Training, especially if your political position involves legislation.

Feature: People Person

You have a natural aptitude for remembering people. If you've met someone in person, however briefly, there's a good chance you recall significant details about them. Maybe you never forget names, retain a clear memory of something they explained to you, or perhaps you notice details about their appearance that no one else would focus on. Even years later, these details stay with you.

Suggested Characteristics

Your nation of origin will determine a lot about your experience and temperament. In Trentsmund, for example, where the monarchy is more symbolic, politicians are the true rulers of the kingdom. Their position comes with prestige, power, and often corruption. In Goltaraim and Arrochule, politicians report and advise, hoping to influence the monarchs and oligarchs without wearing out their usefulness.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I get excited when I'm in the public eye or given attention.
2	I'm flirtatious with most people, and it seems to get me places.
3	My words are calculated carefully, especially when a group of people is listening.
4	There's only one life to live. Why should I waste it in meetings and ceremonies?
5	Government is meant to protect the simple pleasures of life, like drinking and wenching.
6	I've got all the answers.
7	I take sole responsibility for my actions, and I hold others to the same level of accountability.
8	Enough talk. My attitude is "let's roll up our sleeves and do something about it."

d6	Ideal
1	**Protection.** Power and authority exist to defend the weak and downtrodden. (Good)
2	**Influence.** I'm always looking for opportunities to do a favor, and get one in return. (Neutral)
3	**Obedience.** The law is the law is the law. To be civilized is to follow rules to the letter. (Lawful)
4	**Might.** It makes right, and I prefer to have the bigger stick. (Evil)
5	**Accountability.** The world is full of people in high places hiding their mistakes. (Chaotic)
6	**Liberty.** No one tells me how to live my life. (Chaotic)

d6	Bond
1	My political career was backed by an influential organization, and now I can't get free of their control.
2	I managed to book a meeting with one of the most important people in the nation. Now what do I say to them?
3	No one knows it yet, but I have the answer to a widely misunderstood political issue.
4	People from my hometown or constituency won't stop coming to me with their problems.
5	I recently lost incriminating evidence that someone might use against me.
6	I have a valuable connection in espionage or private detective circles.

d6	Flaw
1	Everyone has a vice, right? Well, I've got them all.
2	Crime pays. Weekly, in fact, if I turn a blind eye.
3	I always say what I think I'm expected to say.
4	When it comes right down to it, I'm apathetic about most parts of my life.
5	The better part of valor is making a deal with the enemy. I can always save my friends later.
6	Beneath all the speeches and rhetoric, I'm a dimwitted bully.

Variant Outlander: Explorer

Some wander the wilds in order to civilize them. They make and map trails, develop relations with native cultures, and bring evidence of these achievements back to their homeland. Many of the same skills are shared between explorers and other outlanders, but their goals tend to be quite different. You might have set out to prove a geographical hypothesis, been hired to create a trail between two distant cities, or perhaps you're looking for a mythical site rumored to be hidden in the wilderness.

Instead of a musical instrument, you're proficient with vehicles (land), vehicles (water), or navigator's tools. You can replace one skill proficiency with either the History or Nature skill. If you wish, you can replace your feature with Local Guide.

Feature: Local Guide

Your connections with the local inhabitants of a wild region provide you with a guide who knows the roads you mean to take. He or she warns you of the dangerous aspects of the journey, advises you on the best ways to forage for food and water, and can bring you to key landmarks in the area. If you pay a modest fee, the local guide might even agree to carry your equipment and hunt for you.

Variant Outlander: Hunter

Not every wilderness-dweller is concerned with the lay of the land. Hunters focus on the creatures that live in the outlands, using the senses and skills of a predator to track their game. While their motives vary, the best hunters share a deep respect for the majesty and power of nature and its beasts. You might be the last true hunter of your tribe, a lone archer living off the land, or a hired gun who keeps the bears and wolves from hampering an expensive expedition.

If you wish to be a hunter, you may swap your musical instrument proficiency for proficiency with the poisoner's kit. You gain the Tracker feature below to replace the outlander's.

Feature: Tracker

You know what beasts are native to an area, and you can identify their movements well enough to find one of a given type by tracking for 3 hours of downtime. You can't use this feature to guarantee finding a particular creature, but you can discover likely dens and hunting patterns of local beasts within half a day's journey of your camp.

Variant Sage: Professor

You have chosen to dedicate yourself to formal research and instruction in a chosen field. As part of an institution for higher learning, you've read most of what there is worth reading in your area of specialty. Prospective students who have heard your name come to you with questions and favors. When you choose this background, choose a field to determine which skill proficiencies will replace the sage's, or roll a d20 and consult the following table.

d20	Academic Field	Skill Proficiencies
1	Anthropology	History, Religion
2	Arcane Studies	Arcana, History
3	Archaeology	History, Investigation
4	Architecture	History, Investigation
5	Art History	History, Religion
6	Astronomy	Arcana, Religion
7	Biology	Nature, Survival
8	Chemistry	Medicine, Nature
9	Economics	History, Investigation
10	Engineering	Investigation, Perception
11	Government	History, Insight
12	History	History, Insight
13	Literature	History, Insight
14	Languages	History, plus two additional languages of your choice
15	Mathematics	Investigation, Perception
16	Medicine	Medicine, Survival
17	Mythology	History, Performance
18	Philosophy	Insight, Persuasion
19	Psychology	Insight, Persuasion
20	Theology	History, Religion

Variant Sage: Scientist

Scientists study nature, hoping to solve its puzzles one by one and form a better understanding of the physical world. True scientists know, however, that every question answered brings two more to light. Whether privileged thinkers in the public eye or secretive madmen, scientists live on the cutting edge of progress, hoping curiosity will lead them to the next great discovery.

Roll on the table below or choose from the options listed to determine your proficiencies. Add the corresponding tools to your starting equipment as well.

d6	Field	Skill Proficiencies	Tools	Languages
1	Astronomy	Investigation, Religion	Navigator's tools	One of your choice
2	Biology	Nature, Survival	Herbalism kit, poisoner's kit	None
3	Chemistry	Medicine, Nature	Alchemist's supplies, poisoner's kit	None
4	Engineering	History, Investigation	Tinker's tools	None
5	Geology	History, Nature	Mason's tools	One of your choice
6	Physics	History, Perception	None	Two of your choice

Classes in Vinramar

Look here for information on customizing the classes to the world of Vinramar, including factions and subclasses unique to the Darkplane setting.

Barbarian

Among Vinramar's many tribal cultures are barbarians whose ferocity is fueled either by battle-rage or by the influence of some otherworldly power. These primal manifestations are usually connected to the Irvallath, primordial laborers who shaped the world in its infancy. Sarnoss, the Black Lion, is thought to endow worthy worshippers with his own savagery when they fight in defense of the wild. The wood elves that worship Emriel keep the skulls of their ancestors about their waist so that in battle, the spirits will take control of their bodies and tear the enemy asunder.

Lurking out of the sight of human civilization, the dragonborn of clans Kaiervol and Medeghar have nurtured the tradition they call *Jindi at Khuf*, the Sting of Teeth in Darkness. Students of this training practice triggering their rage through physical initiation techniques, like breath exercises, gutteral shouts, or even cutting their skin. *Jindi at Khuf* is often mistaken by outsiders as a religious movement, but it's more of a martial art than a form of worship.

The telmatra access their barbarian rage in less formalized ways. Traditional telmatra tribes living at the fringes of developed nations are known to exalt their *ghazatra*, warriors whose actions in combat displayed a complete lack of restraint. Originally such barbarians became chieftains and tribal leaders, receiving concubines for their victories. In the recent centuries since human assimilation, however, the term *ghazantra* has taken on an almost religious connotation as the telmatra tribes crusade against their neighbors in the cause of ethnic purity.

There are many gugrum, human, sarrow, and werekin cultures that also favor the path of the barbarian. Such peoples have diverse customs that might take any form you imagine.

Bard

The power of bards in the Darkplane setting doesn't truly come from their music or the level to which their performances entertain viewers. Bards in Vinramar derive their magic from the language of creation: the Primordial Speech.

When the Irvallath awoke from the Void and spoke to one another, they did so with more than words. As pure souls without physical form, they spoke through the expression of art and creation, playing with the fabric of reality, contriving the elements and the stars and the beasts. The power of this communication has never dimmed—only the memory of it, which lingers dream-like in the art forms inherited by every culture in Vinramar.

The term Primordial Speech is a misnomer because it isn't limited to oral communication. It's a language also comprised of movement, thoughts, memory, desire, and truth. Dance, music, and poetry express such things and so carry the smallest hint of the Primordial Speech's power, but when a bard enunciates with the language of creation, every aspect of her soul is laid bare in sacred clarity.

In many forgotten places, remnants of the Primordial Speech can be discovered, and mastered with painstaking study. The body learns a new bearing, the mind feasts on truth, and the mortal mouth forms sounds it was never meant to utter. How exactly you obtain this knowledge is up to you and your GM. Perhaps you're the student of a tribal elder, a skald piecing together lost histories, or a daring grave robber who scours the land for hidden words of power.

All primordial magic is perilous to attempt, and the Primordial Speech is no different. Its articulation leaves the speaker with a light head and a putrid taste on the lips. Those who witness the Primordial Speech are surprised that they comprehend everything communicated—far more, in fact, than they wish they did.

Option: Forbidden Speech

To convey the dangerous nature of bard magic, the GM can apply the following optional rule:

At any time when a character casts a bard spell of 1st-level or higher that has a verbal or somatic component, the GM may require every creature that hears it, including the caster, to succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or gain a short-term madness. The DC is 8 + the spell's level.

Cleric

The abilities bestowed on clerics are as diverse as the deities they worship. The following descriptions offer additional domain options for clerics who worship aberrations, primordials, and other darker gods.

Divine Domain: Aberration

There are few known gods whose influence extends beyond the territory of the four worlds. That alien abyss is the dominion of mad, twisted beings whose powers defy the fundamental assumptions of nature. Of the handful of gods who have ventured into the Darkplane, only Daemoth, Maruma'e, and Senfaer have brought aberrant secrets back to their servants.

These acolytes of aberration understand only infinitessimal glimpses of the horror that lies beyond the natural worlds, but this is enough to tear the sanity of their enemies apart. To them nature is heretical and the faiths that fight aberrant influence are infidels.

Aberration Domain Spells

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	*hideous laughter, silent image*
3rd	*darkvision, detect thoughts*
5th	*fear, major image*
7th	*confusion, phantasmal killer*
9th	*dream, geas*

Bonus Proficiency

When you choose this domain at 1st level, you become proficient in the Arcana skill.

Telepathy

At 1st level, you can use your bonus action to open a telepathic connection with a creature within 60 feet that knows at least one language. While the creature is in range, you can speak to each other telepathically. You do not need to share a language to understand each other. You can end the connection whenever you choose. You can only have one telepathic connection open at once.

Channel Divinity: Fortify Sanity

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to erect a psionic shield. When you or a creature within 60 feet of you gains a temporary madness or takes psychic damage, you can spend a reaction to grant it resistance to psychic damage and immunity to short-term madness for 1 minute.

Group Telepathy

Starting at 6th level, you can maintain multiple telepathic connections at once. A single bonus action can target up to six creatures. If you break this connection with one creature, you break it with every creature you targeted with the same action.

Terrifying Strike

At 8th level, you gain the ability to endow your weapon strikes with psionic energy. Once per turn, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can deal an extra 1d8 psychic damage. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

Channel Divinity: Darkplane Ascension

At 17th level, you can use your Channel Divinity to open a portal into the Darkplane.

You may spend an action to create a 15-foot cone extending from your holy symbol. The base of the cone becomes a portal facing you, and creatures and objects within the cone are pulled through the portal into the Darkplane unless they weigh 500 pounds or more, or succeed on a Strength saving throw. Once created, the portal stays open for 1 minute, or until you use an action to close it.

Divine Domain: Blood

To some faiths, the power of divinity is closely linked to blood, which holds the energy of the soul. Gods connected to primordial power such as Baturach, Daemoth, Emriel, Lakhi, Maruma'e, and Volgothyde are willing to teach these macabre secrets to their priests in exchange for devotion and worship. Simililar to the abilities harnessed by blood mages, blood domain powers are often related to binding and mind control.

Clerics of blood might hoard blood samples from many victims, experimenting and crafting powerful religious relics in hidden temples. The particular goals of these clerics depend on their chosen deity, but often they're concerned more with the sanctity of blood than the sanctity of life.

Blood Domain Spells

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	*bane, false life*
3rd	*hold person, levitate*
5th	*fly, vampiric touch*
7th	*banishment, locate creature*
9th	*dominate person, planar binding*

Unnatural Recovery

When you choose this domain at 1st level, you learn to cut primordial symbols into your flesh in order to regain some of your magical reserves. Upon finishing a short rest, you can spend a number of hit dice equal to the combined level of the spell slots you wish to recover. All recovered spell slots must be of 5th level or below. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

Channel Divinity: Blood Siphon

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to draw power from your bleeding wounds.

When you take damage, you can use a reaction to set aside one damage die rolled against you. You take no damage from that die, and before the end of your next turn you can roll it and add the result to one of your attack or damage rolls.

Channel Divinity: Bloodmark

Starting at 6th level, you can use your Channel Divinity to charm an enemy and use its mind as a scrying tool.

As an action, make a melee spell attack against a creature. This attack automatically misses if the creature is immune to being charmed. If the attack hits, you rub your blood on it, searing a branded mark onto its body that remains as long as the effect is in place. The creature is charmed by you for 1 hour, and in addition to your own sight you can see what it sees. You cannot control what the creature is looking at or any of its actions, though while charmed it regards you as a trusted friend. The effect ends if the creature takes damage or if you hit another creature with this attack.

Biting Strike

At 8th level, you gain the ability to endow your weapon strikes with primordial energy. Once per turn, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you deal an extra 1d8 necrotic damage. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

Improved Bloodmark

Starting at 17th level, when you hit a creature with Bloodmark you create a telepathic link with the target. This telepathic link lasts as long as the creature is charmed, and you can use it to issue one-word commands, which it does its best to obey. The effect lasts up to 8 hours, or as long as you maintain concentration.

Divine Domain: Darkness

When the sun sets, the priests of darkness venture into the night like living shadows. Their presence is not always felt as they call the Void forth, nor are their hidden altars seen by mortal eyes. They worship gods like Imbakhao, Ulmhasa, and Daemoth, who use fear to inspire reverence, whose very presence is living emptiness.

The clerics of the darkness domain know how to harness the material of the Shadow Realm to pass unseen, to call shadow creatures to their side, and to twist the dreams and memory of other mortals. Their motives differ from god to god. Some fight shadow with shadow, while others look forward to a day when material life will be consumed by darkness.

Darkvision
When you choose this domain at 1st level, your eyes see through darkness into the shadow essence of all around you. You gain darkvision within 60 feet, and have advantage when making Wisdom (Perception) checks to spot hidden creatures within that distance.

Darkness Domain Spells

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	*sleep, unseen servant*
3rd	*darkness, misty step*
5th	*phantom steed, spirit guardians*
7th	*dimension door, greater invisibility*
9th	*dream, modify memory*

Channel Divinity: Shadowblade
Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to create a weapon out of shadow essence.

As a bonus action, you can form a dark, shadowy blade in your free hand. The blade is similar in size and shape to a scimitar, and you have proficiency with it. It lasts for 1 minute, or as long as you maintain concentration. If you let go of the blade, it disappears, but as long as your concentration isn't broken you can form the blade again as a bonus action.

You can use your action to make a melee spell attack with the shadowblade. On a hit, the target takes 2d6 necrotic damage.

Channel Divinity: Shadow Mantle
Starting at 6th level, you can use your Channel Divinity to disappear into the darkness. As an action, you become invisible until the end of your next turn. If you attack or cast a spell, you become visible again.

Twin Shadows
Beginning at 8th level, when you use Shadowblade, you form one shadowblade in each hand. When you take an action to attack with one shadowblade, you can use a bonus action to attack with the second one.

When you reach 14th level, you add your Wisdom modifier to the first shadowblade attack you make on your turn. If you have the fighting style Two-Weapon Fighting, you gain the benefit of it when making a second shadowblade attack.

Truth in Darkness
Starting at 17th level, you can slip through the bounds of the Material Realm to peer into the souls and minds of others. You can use an action to gain truesight within 30 feet for 1 minute. While this effect is in place, you can see into the Primordial Realm, the Shadow Realm, and the Spirit Realm.

Divine Domain: Pestilence
Many of the gods authorize their servants to call plagues and tempests on the unfaithful, but those whose domain is pestilence find pleasure in the poisoning and corruption of mortals. Deities like Imbakhao, Silphenor, and Fimbuleth teach their servants to strike fear into the hearts of the believers with ominous signs and threatening wonders. These clerics blight their enemies with blindness, hideous diseases, and swarms of beasts and insects.

Pestilence Domain Spells

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	*detect poison and disease, inflict wounds*
3rd	*blindness/deafness, ray of enfeeblement*
5th	*conjure animals, stinking cloud*
7th	*blight, dominate beast*
9th	*contagion, insect plague*

Bonus Cantrip
When you choose this domain at 1st level, you gain the *thaumaturgy* cantrip if you don't already know it.

Disease Resistance
Beginning at 1st level, you have advantage on saving throws against the effects of disease and poison.

Channel Divinity: Signs of the Times
Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to call powerful wonders, signs, or omens down from the heavens. When you cast the thaumaturgy cantrip, you can expend a use of Channel Divinity to enhance it in one of the following ways.

- Add two additional effects from the spell's description.
- Cast the spell with no components.
- Extend the spell's duration a number of days equal to your cleric level.
- Extend the spell's range as far as you can see.
- Frighten creatures who see the spell effect and fail a Wisdom saving throw. The frightened condition ends if the spell ends, or if the creature is attacked. If a creature succeeds on this saving throw, it is immune to this effect for 24 hours.
- The chosen effect cannot be dispelled.

Channel Divinity: Consumption
Starting at 6th level, you can use your Channel Divinity to sap the physical stamina of natural creatures. Spend a bonus action when you deal necrotic damage to a beast, fey, humanoid, or plant to force it to make a Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the target gains a level of exhaustion.

Withering Strike

At 8th level, you gain the ability to endow your weapon strikes with corrosive energy. Once per turn, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you deal an extra 1d8 necrotic damage. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

Crippling Consumption

At 17th level, your ability to exhaust enemies becomes cruelly powerful. When you use Consumption on a target with a challenge rating of 4 or lower, you can also target any other beasts, fey, humanoids, or plants within 15 feet of it that have a challenge rating of 4 or lower. On a failed saving throw, these targets take three levels of exhaustion instead of one.

Divine Domain: Stone

The primordial power to shape stone into liquid fire and back to stone is the oldest and finest craft in the four worlds. With it Ethis formed the first mountains and deserts. Her step were hounded by the hunchback Jukai, who marred the work in his lumbering quest to win her love. These two deities still inhabit hidden sites of power, teaching their secrets to hermits and madmen.

The clerics of stone look to the mountains as the first artisanry of the gods. Through sheer force of will, they twist and shape stone. Some seek spiritual peace by becoming one with the earth, while others use their fiery talents to reap mischief and chaos. Most clerics of the stone domain become leaders of tribal cults seeking the patronage of one primordial or the other.

Stone Domain Spells

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	*mage armor, thunderwave*
3rd	*heat metal, protection from poison*
5th	*erupting earth, meld into stone*
7th	*stone shape, stoneskin*
9th	*conjure elemental, wall of stone*

Bonus Proficiency

When you choose this domain at 1st level, you gain proficiency with martial weapons and light armor.

Burden of Jukai

Also at 1st level, you can use an action to create or dismiss one of the following effects in an area of dirt, sand, or stone you can see within 30 feet. The affected area is no larger than a 5-foot cube, and the effect lasts for 1 hour.

- Create a pattern, shape, or words on the area's surface.
- Change the shape of the dirt, sand, or stone.
- Change difficult terrain to normal terrain, or vice versa.

- Move the area up to 5 feet, either through the air or along the ground, leaving a hole or empty space where it originally stood. This movement isn't forceful enough to damage creatures or objects.

Channel Divinity: Heartless Stone

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to return an opponent's attack with the power of unyielding stone.

When you take bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage from a melee attack, you can use your reaction to force the attacking creature to make a Strength saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes the same damage it dealt you. Fail or succeed, the target is knocked prone.

Channel Divinity: Immutable

Starting at 6th level, you can use your Channel Divinity to counter the effects of certain magic. Use an action to remove the effects of one enchantment, illusion, or transmutation spell from yourself or a creature you touch. You can use this ability on unwilling creatures with a successful melee spell attack. The spell you counter must be of a level equal to or less than your highest remaining spell slot.

Magma Strike

At 8th level, you gain the ability to endow your weapon strikes with bursts of liquid magma. Once per turn, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you deal an extra 1d8 fire damage. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

Stone's Endurance

At 17th level, when you would perform a Strength or Constitution saving throw, you can use your reaction to make a Wisdom saving throw instead.

Divine Domain: Water

The seas teem with strange creatures, some elegant and noble, others terrifying and malignant. The deities that created them take many forms. Lakhi, the mother of serpents, appears as a blue aquatic dragon. Maruma'e has a form so unnatural and repulsive that to look on it means death. Their mother Baturach controls the tides from her palace on the moon, ominous and elusive. Shamans and witch doctors have passed down these gods' cults since prehistory.

It is uncommon to see clerics of the water domain. Those who have pledged themselves to these primordial mistresses fight amongst one other for control of the sea. Whether dragonborn clan leaders or healers of the Jharric goddess Iala, clerics of the water domain seek after the secrets beneath the tide. They look on water as a bringer of both life and death.

Water Domain Spells

Cleric Level	Spells
1st	*create or destroy water, grease*
3rd	*darkvision, pass without trace*
5th	*water breathing, water walk*
7th	*conjure minor elementals, control water*
9th	*conjure elemental, maelstrom*

Baturach's Call

At 1st level, you can use an action to create or dismiss one of the following effects in an area of water you can see within 30 feet. The affected area is no larger than a 5-foot cube, and the effect lasts for 1 hour.

- Freeze water in the area. Creatures occupying the area aren't damaged or restrained by this effect.
- Change the opacity or color of all water in the area.
- Move or change the flow of water in the area up to 5 feet, either through the air or through the water's current. Any fluid within the area is moved with it.
- Form the water into basic shapes that move as you direct them.

Tidal Pull

At 1st level, you can move through calm water without having to seriously exert yourself. You have a swim speed of 20 feet. You can allow the current to pull you if sufficiently strong, but you don't need to make Strength (Athletics) checks to swim, no matter how rough conditions are.

Channel Divinity: Direct Current

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to manipulate the current in a body of water.

While touching the water in a sea, lake, river, or stream, you can spend 10 minutes to change the current's direction or strength in a 120-foot sphere. Swimmers and waterborne vehicles moving with the current you set double their speed while in the affected area. Those travelling against the current treat it as difficult terrain. Alternatively, you can choose to make all water in the area normal or difficult terrain.

These conditions follow you in a sphere for 8 hours, or as long as you maintain concentration and remain touching the water. If you lose physical contact with the water, the effect ends and conditions return to normal after 1 minute.

Channel Divinity: Primordial Charm

Starting at 6th level, you can use your Channel Divinity to hypnotize primordial creatures.

As an action, you present your holy symbol and speak ancient words of elemental power. Each elemental within 30 feet of you that can see or hear you

must make a Wisdom saving throw. If the creature fails its saving throw, it is charmed by you for 1 minute or until it takes any damage. While charmed, the creature cannot move within 10 feet of you. If you move within 10 feet of it, the charmed creature is incapacitated until you move back to a distance of 10 feet, or until its charmed condition ends.

Cold of the Deep

At 8th level your weapon attacks begin to bite and freeze. Once per turn, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you deal an extra 1d8 cold damage. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

Wellspring

Beginning at 17th level, you become a living vessel of holy water, and fire holds no fear for you. Whenever you take fire damage, reduce it by 30.

Druid

The Divine Domains described above under Cleric account for characters who serve particular deities of an element or sphere. By contrast, druids are animists. Their power lies in their ability to contact the souls and spirits of living things, although this power is often granted or focused by a particular personage connected to nature, such as Sarnoss, Jukai, or Zhohau. Through this contact, druids command the birds, beasts, even the earth itself.

Although they exert such influence, not all druids are devoted protectors of nature. There are those who exploit this power for their own self-aggrandizement. Others forsake speaking things for the company of simpler life forms. Distrust and skepticism have driven plenty of both camps into the dark corners of civilization, where druidic practices warped into disparate cults.

Fighter

It can be argued that most adventurers embark with little more than determination and a strong arm. Fighters represent that universal skill set, and can be customized to represent bold people of action from any culture. Some players aren't interested in magic, and their first kernel of a character concept is a career or background rather than a roleplaying class. If you find yourself in this situation, the fighter class can keep your character's skill set centered in the mundane without forcing you to rationalize or explain away magical features.

A fighter might be a trained mercenary, street thug, tribal warrior, or an aristocratic duelist. Anyone who can handle themselves in a physical confrontation qualifies, making it one of the most flexible classes. Below are three additional fighting styles available to fighters to help expand the class's versatility.

Boxing

When determining the damage of your unarmed attacks against creatures that aren't wearing armor, double your Strength modifier. When you use the Dodge action while one hand is empty, you can, as a reaction, make an unarmed attack against one enemy that missed you with a melee attack before the beginning of your next turn.

Careful Stance

While you are not wearing any armor or using a shield, your Armor Class is equal to 10 + your Dexterity modifier + your Intelligence modifier if you have ever seen the attacker take the Attack action.

Marksmanship

You have proficiency with firearms.

Monk

Those in Vinramar with the discipline to pursue an ascetic life have many options to choose from. The most common monastic orders are headquartered in the region of Syrikhal, with temple networks branching through Arrochule, Arwest, Motta, and Trentsmund. These organizations tend to reflect the outlook and philosophy of their particular leaders. Even those pursuing the same path of purification might differ drastically as culture, religion, and ideology all take a hand in shaping the monk's rituals and teachings.

The largest and most mainstream centers of monastic study are connected to Senfaer, the primordial god of order. Their deity's role as star-traveler and defender of the four worlds from Darkplane aberrations has long imbued the Senfaerists with an emphasis on martial arts and the exploration of psionic talent.

The so-called 36 Methods of Liung Do are the basis of most Senfaerist martial arts. Each of the 36 combat techniques connects to a philosophy, teaching, or principle embraced by the order, such as discipline, modesty, and mutual trust. Meditation and rigorous physical training are the hallmarks of Senfaerist orders.

Hundreds of lesser-known traditions produce monks in every corner of Vinramar. The Black Lotus preserves Ulmhasa's world-spanning shadow dancing techniques, the Order of Illiantri transforms its impressionable zealots into living weapons of fear, and the Disciples of the Living Gods train dragonborn warriors to infuse their hand-to-hand combat with the fury of the elements. Orders like these provide a path toward discovering the latent power within the body and soul. Many attach spiritual and moral truths to the pursuit, but some are more concerned with furthering a particular agenda on the world stage.

Monastic Tradition: Way of the Wandering Stars

The following monastic tradition supplements those described elsewhere to help you create a monk whose power incorporates natural psionic abilities.

Psionic Awakening

Beginning at 3rd level, you can use your ki to mimic the effects of particular spells. As an action, you can spend 2 ki points to cast *calm emotions, detect thoughts, misty step,* or *shatter* as a 2nd-level psionic spell without providing material components.

In addition, you can use a bonus action to open a telepathic connection with one creature within 60 feet. While the creature is in range, you can speak to each other telepathically. You do not need to share a language, but the creature must speak at least one language to understand you. You can end the connection whenever you choose. You can only have one telepathic connection open at once.

Mind Thrust

At 6th level, your intrusion into the minds of others opens up sanity-tearing vistas of the universe beyond natural reality. As an action, you can spend up to 3 ki points to force a creature within 60 feet to make an Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 2d6 psychic damage per ki point spent.

Hunter of Aberrations

Starting at 11th level, your contact with Darkplane forces makes you especially resilient to its denizens. You have resistance to psychic damage and you add your proficiency bonus (if you haven't already) to Wisdom (Survival) checks to track an aberration. Additionally, when you are charmed or frightened by an aberration, or when you gain a form of madness, you can spend 3 ki points to avoid that effect altogether.

Channel to the Stars

At 17th level, your soul forges an unbreakable bond with the Darkplane, allowing you to journey through the void and to banish its denizens back to the stars. You can spend 6 ki points to cast *plane shift* without material components, but you must choose a destination that moves the targets to or from the Darkplane.

Paladin

Vinramar's oath-bound champions devote themselves to powerful ideals, often connected to the cause of a particular deity. While the abilities they manifest may not differ greatly, the tenets of their oaths do. In some cases, these vows enjoin them to eliminate those whose religious devotion leans another way.

Not all oaths are beneficent. Paladins of Daemoth, Gallister, Volgothyde, or any of the primordials in the Irvallath pantheon are known to uphold tenets that would be repugnant to the uninitiated. Such champions often swear to cast out the weak, exterminate rival races, and invite perilous beings into the mortal world. If you're interested in playing a paladin whose oath itself is morally grey, you might use some of the following options.

Alternate Tenets

Particular dogmas and philosophies vary among the different factions that embrace paladin oaths. Below are a few additional tenets that you can swap in for the tenets usually associated with your sacred oath. In addition to these options, look at the tenets listed under particular deities in Chapter 3 for more ideas.

Defeat is just another path to victory. When my cause suffers a loss, it is my duty to redouble my commitment. All is possible if the gods will it.

Doubt is weakness. Moderation and tolerance are repugnant to my order. I'm willing to sacrifice all that I am for the cause.

The ends justify the means. No one can tell me that my course is wrong if the destination is worthy.

If you're not with us, you're against us. All things are either for the cause or in opposition to it. Anyone who claims neutrality is lying.

Madness is truth; truth is madness. Natural reality is offensive to the true order of the universe. Insanity brings us one step closer to the gods.

Now is the time to act. There is a divine plan for my cause, and its final stage has arrived. These are the end days when all who believe must stand and be rewarded.

The rightful rulers have been deposed. It is my responsibility to restore them to power and eliminate those who would obstruct their reign.

Submission is worse than death. To surrender or compromise is a betrayal of all that I stand for, and will earn me eternal disgrace.

Alternate Enemies

If your oath is connected to a deity with a more questionable outlook, you might feel that certain creature types mentioned in your class features don't quite fit. With your GM's permission, you can permanently change the following terms when they appear in the descriptions of your class features (but not your spells). You must make this change in every instance.

Undead. If your character and deity have no particular qualms about the undead, you can change this creature type to **aberration** or **monstrosity** whenever it appears in your class features. Paladins in the service of Lakhi, Senfaer, and even some Mozralchic agents might find this change appropriate.

Fey and Fiend. Some paladins, especially those associated with Daemoth, Gallister, and Gauren, are friendlier with fiends than they are with most otherworldly creatures. Some of the Irvallath or Jharric Gods might not object to fey creatures either. If you feel this applies to your character, change the fiend or fey type to one of these options: **celestial**, **dragon**, or **elemental**.

Ranger

Wandering the forests and deserts of Vinramar, rangers form a connection to the natural wild that is less ritual-based than that of the druids. Often they see themselves as warriors and scouts whose respect for living things elevates their combat and survival skills. Still, their magic is often rooted in fey or primordial traditions that either they learned themselves through isolated communion with nature, or that they were taught by the cunning folk who practice such arts.

As consummate hunters, rangers of some form or another exist in most cultures. Their techniques are usually suited to the land in which they roam, whether they're hunter-gatherer sarrow striving to stay alive in the Waelslayg Desert or elven stalkers working for the Solace. Often rangers are human trackers and scouts who renounce more populated lands for the simplicity of an unfettered life.

Inevitably, those who settle the wilderness bring knowledge and relics from civilization, whether they mean to or not. One such artifact is the firearm, which has become a divisive presence among those few rangers who witness its reckless power. Some disdain it as unnatural, while others admire or covet its efficiency, and the terror it can evoke in a skirmish. If you wish to play a ranger who embraces the rare wonder of firearms, you can add the following fighting style to the usual list of options.

Marksmanship

You have proficiency with firearms.

Rogue

Along with the fighter, the rogue is among the most common character classes in a Darkplane campaign. These clever agents wield diverse talents and skills, suiting them perfectly to the unending faction warfare that rages all across Vinramar. Your rogue might be hired out by religious orders for jobs that are too risky or high-profile to get caught at, or a private investigator known for solving cases that baffle others. You might even play a budding crime boss looking to expand the family's turf into the nearest big city.

Rather than thieves' guilds, most rogue networks in Vinramar's cities are connected through family-based crime organizations. Much like the aristocracy, these mafias and cartels run on a system of sworn loyalty, with elaborate rules governing territory, etiquette, and the resolution of conflict. Most operate in the pursuit of wealth through rackets, black market business, and illegal services. Not all of these activities are immoral or illicit. Some crime families do what they can to protect the people from an oppressive government.

Each city, nation, and region has criminal factions unique to them. The richest and boldest of these organizations, especially racial mafias, operate across the borders of various nations, but most keep the business small and manageable.

Sorcerer

The sudden appearance of magic can end a person's life. For those sad souls who are surprised to discover they have natural arcane talent, the fight to keep it secret is of utmost importance. Hundreds of children are executed in local witch trials every year across Vinramar, often without much evidence to convict them. Those sorcerers who live long enough to see adulthood manifest diverse powers from a variety of sources.

Sorcerous Origin: Blood Magic

Within your veins lies the darkest and most dangerous form of magic. Blood is a powerful arcane channeler. Only the foolish or the very wise tamper with it as a component, and those who do often suffer as much as they excel. As a blood sorcerer, you substitute self-mutilation for study. You may not be as well read as some spellcasters, but the path you've chosen taxes the body, not the mind.

Many blood sorcerers discover these occult secrets in ancient grimoires, learning to carve hideous but powerful symbols in their flesh. Others enter the apprenticeship of a vile mentor who personally instructs them. Whether you use blood magic to help others or to serve your own ambitions, it is a practice that will leave you scarred, literally and figuratively.

Blood Blight

When you select this origin at 1st level, your blood manifests occult properties that enhance your magic and leave you in pain. You can use blood as a replacement for the material components for any sorcerer spell you cast, including those with a cost listed. Any components mentioned in the body of the spell description are still required.

Additionally, the temperature of your blood becomes intolerably high. Objects and creatures that touch your blood take 1 fire damage. You are immune to damage caused by your own blood, but you live in a constant state of physical agitation and discomfort.

You might find yourself going to extreme lengths to sooth it, such as refusing to set foot in a room where a fire is lit, or fleeing the sight of hot food or drink. You have odd physical tics that others find eccentric or off-putting because of the eternal fire raging in your veins.

Occult Recovery

At 6th level, your ability to manipulate the magic produced by your spells increases, allowing you to spend hit points to recover sorcery points. As an action, declare the number of sorcery points you're recovering and expend that many hit dice. Roll the expended dice and take piercing or slashing damage equal to the total.

Primordial Surge

Beginning at 14th level, your darkest spells become fortified with unnatural power. When you cast an enchantment, illusion, or necromancy spell using your own blood as a material component, your spell save DC increases by 2.

Wounded Vigor

At 18th level pain becomes a source of strength to you. When you take piercing or slashing damage, you can use your reaction to gain temporary hit points equal to the damage taken.

Sorcerous Origin: Runetouched

Some scholars know that at the dawn of time, life began as a geometric pattern. It shifted and twirled in the empty space until eventually it struck a powerful form which unlocked massive amounts of primordial energy. This was the first rune, a shape of such staggering cosmic significance that gods were spawned from its subtle curves and angles.

The runetouched are those mortals gifted to see the forms of primordial runes that hide within all matter. Often their powers come from astrological phenomena or manifest in the purest descendents of the maahiset people, whose ancient empire ran on this sort of magic.

Sorcerers with the runetouched origin are familiar with the subtle shapes of power. Some are artists who discover unique insights into the power behind certain forms, while others are gifted to actually see the world around them in a buzzing string of runic code. Runetouched sorcerers must train diligently to see meaning in these combinations of primordial geometry. By manipulating the lines and curves, they gain access to powerful black magic that once was known only to the elemental deities that spawned from it.

Artist and Artisan

When you choose this origin at 1st level, you gain proficiency with calligrapher's supplies and two other sets of artisan's tools.

Runeseeker

At 1st level, you naturally sense the geometrical patterns of magic. You learn the *detect magic* and *identify* spells if you don't already know them, and they don't count against your spells known.

Additionally, when you witness a spell being cast, you can use a reaction to make a Wisdom (Insight) check. The DC for this check is 14 + the spell's level. On a success, you can treat that spell as though it were on the sorcerer spell list whenever you choose new spells.

Inscribe Runes

Starting at 6th level, your understanding of rune magic is enough to shape and craft objects with the geometry of creation. You can spend downtime to adorn nonmagical objects with mystical shapes or symbols that correspond to one of your spells.

When you begin inscribing, choose a 1st-level abjuration, enchantment, or divination spell that you know. You spend 8 hours painting, carving, engraving, or otherwise decorating the object with a powerful rune. Once the inscription is complete, you designate a keyword or phrase that will activate the spell.

The completed rune occupies your highest-level spell slot as long as it remains intact, preventing you from using that slot for any other purpose, including spellcasting. You cannot have more than one spell slot occupied at once, and if for any reason all your highest-level spell slots are expended or unavailable, you cannot inscribe a rune. An occupied spell slot cannot be regained during a rest.

For a number of hours equal to your sorcerer level, anyone who touches the rune can cast the inscribed spell as a 1st-level spell without material or somatic components. They simply spend the casting time to speak the keyword or phrase you designated as a verbal component. The spell immediately ends if the creature loses physical contact with the rune, and if this occuse before the casting time is complete, the spell fails.

After the appropriate time has expired, or when the rune is physically defaced in any way, it immediately loses its power, and the spell slot it occupied is expended. It likewise loses its power if you drop to 0 hit points.

Embellished Inscription

Beginning at 14th level, you can inscribe multiple objects with runes. For every 8 hours you spend, you inscribe two objects, their runes occupying your two highest-level spell slots. You can inscribe each with an abjuration, enchantment, or divination spell of 1st or 2nd level.

Glyph of Eternity

At 18th level, your runes retain their magical properties for longer. When you complete the inscription, you can spend sorcery points to increase the runes' duration by 1 hour for each point spent.

Sorcerous Origin: Shadowbound

In the void that separates the body, spirit, and soul, there are terrible powers that drown the light with pure shadow. All things, living or otherwise, are composed of light and dark: the material and the void. Some sorcerers gain their powers through an unnatural connection to this shadowy wellspring.

Spells cast through shadow can be twisted and manipulated in ways unattainable through other methods. Shadowbound sorcerers may be limited in daylight, but in the absence of light their magic is as potent as it is foul.

Darkvision

When you choose this sorcerous origin at 1st level, you gain darkvision within 60 feet.

Dark Spells

Sorcerers with this origin receive magical power in an uninterrupted flow of shadow energy, as long as there isn't enough light to disrupt the connection. Beginning at 1st level, when you cast a sorcerer spell while in dim light or darkness, you can cast it without using material components, including those with a cost listed. Material components mentioned in the body of the spell description are still required.

After casting a spell with a range of 5 or more feet while in dim light, you can use a bonus action to turn dim light into darkness within the spell's range. Once you do so, you must finish a long rest to regain use of this feature.

Shadow Step

At 6th level, you learn to step through the void that connects all shadows. When you are in an area of dim light or darkness, you can use a bonus action to teleport to an unoccupied space you can see within 60 feet that is also in dim light or darkness.

True Shadow

Beginning at 14th level, you can spend 2 sorcery points while in dim light or darkness to become invisible for 1 minute. Anything you're wearing or carrying is also invisible as long as you're in contact with it.

Fade Level	Effect
1	You can take the Hide action as a bonus action.
2	While in direct sunlight, you have disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that require sight.
3	You are immune to being paralyzed, petrified, or poisoned.
4	You can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. If you end your turn inside an object, you take 5 force damage.
5	You have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons.
6	You have resistance to acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder, necrotic, and poison damage.

Fade

Starting at 18th level, your spells begin to affect your grasp on the material world. When you cast a sorcerer spell of 1st level or higher, you can spend 2 sorcery point to gain a fade level as you slip further into the Shadow Realm. Each fade level has a cumulative effect, described on the previous page.

If you end one of your turns without having spent sorcery points in connection with this feature, you lose one fade level unless you spend 1 sorcery point to remain at your current fade level. Once your fade level returns to 0, you must finish a short rest before you can use this feature again.

Sorcerous Origin: Vampire Bloodline

Not all vampires are made. Some are born, inheriting the abhorrent curse of their undead parentage. Vampires bear children only rarely over the centuries, more often rendering the honor to the wretched mortals upon whom they prey. The young resulting from such a union aren't always evil, but they inevitably manifest certain insidious powers of the vampire.

Such creatures often display behavior typical of vampires. You might sleep during the day, basking in the desecrated soil of your homeland; or perhaps shun the symbols of sacred deity. Sorcerers with the vampire bloodline face a harrowing choice: channel their inner darkness into a worthy cause as penance for the sins of millennia, or give in to the exhilarant predator within.

Vampire Weaknesses

When you choose this origin at 1st level, you gain the following susceptibilities.

- You're physically incapable of entering an inhabited residence unless one of the occupants invites you in.
- You have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks while in sunlight.
- If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into your heart while you're incapacitated, you become paralyzed until the stake is removed.

Spider Climb

When you choose this origin at 1st level, you can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Undead Ferocity

Starting when you choose this origin at 1st level, your unarmed attacks deal 1d6 damage. You may choose to bite with your unarmed attack to deal piercing damage instead of bludgeoning.

You also have natural armor, making your AC equal to 13 + your Dexterity modifier while you're not wearing armor.

Option: Pureblood Vampire

The vampire bloodline origin provides a way to play a character who is deeply changed by the influence of the vampire, usually because of a single vampire ancestor. If you instead would like to play a character whose ancestry is entirely vampiric, a descendant of Iarmov himself, you can use the optional traits below in place of choosing a race.

This option doesn't replicate the vampire stat block. If a character is transformed into a vampire (rather than born as one), the GM should simply follow the usual guidelines for such occurrences.

The traits below allow you to play a young vampire whose powers have not yet reached their full potential. They should only be used along with the features of the vampire bloodline origin. Together, these traits and features provide a way for a vampire PC to grow into his or her dark powers.

At your GM's discretion, you may undertake a particular quest or initiation rite to replace all the below traits and your vampire bloodline features with the traits and actions of a true vampire. This will greatly increase the character's effectiveness, and so GMs are warned to consider the ramifications of allowing a player to reach full vampire potential. Such a change usually alters the vampire's alignment to lawful evil.

Pureblood Vampire Traits

As a true creature of darkness, you have inherited the following vampiric traits.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength, Constitution, and Charisma scores each increase by 2.

Vampire Weaknesses. In addition to the weaknesses you gained with your Sorcerous Origin, you take 20 acid damage if you end your turn in running water, and you take 20 radiant damage when you start your turn in sunlight.

Darkvision. Your undead heritage grants you darkvision within 120 feet.

Form of the Bat. You can use an action to polymorph into a Tiny bat or back into your true form. While in bat form, you can't speak or cast spells, your walking speed becomes 5 feet, you have a flying speed of 30 feet, and the only attacks you can make are bite attacks. Your other statistics remain unchanged. Anything you are wearing polymorphs with you, but nothing that you are carrying does. If you die while polymorphed, you revert to your true form.

Undeath. You are undead. You do not require air, and your body does not age.

Lifeblood

At 6th level, your taste for blood becomes insatiable, but the surge of power it grants is even more alluring. When you deal damage with a bite attack against a creature that is incapacitated, restrained, or that you have grappled, you can spend 2 sorcery points to deal an additional 1d6 necrotic damage. You regain hit points equal to the necrotic damage taken. You can spend up to 6 points this way on a single bite, adding 1d6 necrotic damage (and hit points regained) for every 2 sorcery points spent. When you bite a creature that is charmed by you, it doesn't end the charmed condition.

Children of the Night

Starting at 14th level, you can call upon the creatures of darkness to do your bidding. As an action, you spend 3 sorcery points and call 2d4 swarms of bats or rats if the sun isn't up. If you're outdoors, you can choose to call 3d6 wolves instead. The creatures take 1d4 rounds to arrive and remain for 1 hour, or until you are reduced to 0 hit points. During that time, you can dictate their actions with verbal commands or dismiss them as a bonus action. You cannot use this feature again until you take a long rest.

Immortal Corpse

Beginning at 18th level, you have resistance to necrotic damage, and bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons. Your body no longer ages with the passage of time.

Warlock

The warlocks of Vinramar have unearthed forbidden knowledge since the earliest ages of the world. These foolhardy mortals pledge themselves into the service of powerful patrons, whose origins and motives are as diverse as creation itself.

Archfey Patrons

The world of Iltallach is home to many beings whose influence extends into Vinramar, often through phenomena connected to the spirit of the land. These fey potentates mystify mortals with their twisted games and terrifying caprice. Warlocks in Vinramar might contact an archfey patron through the surviving magic of elf artifacts and ruins, by wandering into Iltallach through fey rifts, or as a changeling stolen by a fey creature and harbored in its world for days, even years.

Some of the best known archfey patrons are Barbeliadh of the Twenty Thousand Corsairs; the Child Below, an impish ruler who entices the young into service by offering to kill their parents; Fanheilith, the Empress of Five Favors; Megieron, Prince of the Southern Sunset; Rauserom, the Laughter beneath the Reeds; and Tingrim Hurcassit, the Merchant of Forgotten Dreams.

Fiend Patrons

Devils and demons are all too eager to have mortals enter their service, finding them easy to manipulate. Daemons often seek out such favor by invoking ancient laws and allegiances forged in previous lives. These kincallers serve their demonic cousins in return for lost arcane secrets.

The dismembered god Gauren is the ringleader of infernal contracts, overseeing an intricate web of devil-sworn thralls. Promises of glory, fortune, and unnatural gifts lure many souls into performing inhuman acts for Gauren's brokers and surrogates. The most proactive of these patrons include Ancuorag the Purblind Weeper; Churgeron, the infernal advocate known to Daemothites as God's Purulent Weal; Daelgorog, the long-dead emperor of Ancient Mohtra; Girioch, a demon that takes the form of a silver cat; Hulcarnoth, the Ward of Umbrage; Lothangor, Sower of Woe; and Varuchea of the Murdered Memory, who often appears to those pleading for a loved one to return from death.

Great Old One Patrons

The Darkplane is the ultimate unknown. The shallowest fathom of its infectious expanse is filled with nightmarish beings that have always been. Warlocks usually learn of the great old ones on a hunt for cosmic truth, but rarely know what they're getting themselves into. The cost of their servitude is often their own sanity.

There is no end to the aberrations that populate the unspeakable worlds within the void, but some of the following have been known to teach horrid truths to the hapless and callow: Burda, the Window into All Regret; Dromisaj, the Poet in Nothingness; Igundadosh, the True Mother; Maruma'e, the Mutant Bride; and Yofkolkar the Setting of all Suns.

Pact of the Chain Options

If your patron is a great old one and you have the Pact of the Chain feature, you can choose a hrildovolk (page 172) as a special form for your familiar.

Undying Patrons

Although the powers they command are truly unholy, undying patrons often began as mortals themselves, cheating mortality through unholy rituals that transition them into undeath. They might be mummified emperors, vampire lords, or black magicians who discovered the path to hideous immortality. In exchange for complete devotion, they teach their minions to play the dangerous odds between life and death.

Undying patrons include Volgothyde, the god of vampirism; Iarmov the Maimed, whose undeath continues as a disembodied spirit; Sirivus the Awakener; Halkhunti the Forgotten Pharaoh, and Tormadnon, the lich who dwells at the heart of Vitollos.

Pact of the Chain Options

If your patron is undying and you have the Pact of the Chain feature, you can choose a skeleton, spectre, or zombie as a special form for your familiar.

Patron: The Primordial

Your patron is a primordial being formed before the worlds were created. Most have no bodies or spirits, and manifest only as elemental anomalies such as tornados, volcanic eruptions, or sentient terrain. The most powerful primordials have managed to form bizarre bodies from sand, stone, or twisted flesh.

Primordials despise humanoids—only out of idle fancy or desperation do they teach such weaklings to manipulate soul essence. They're often motivated by the desire to lash out against rival entities (primordial or otherwise), and mortals occasionally serve as useful pawns that can work unnoticed by powerful enemies.

The Irvallath, a pantheon of god-like primordial beings, are known to teach secrets to their priests in exchange for lifelong devotion. Most warlocks, however, pact with renegade primordials such as Fuatunu of Five Agonies; Itoro Che-banwa, the Living Tempest; Ghemakta-tep, the Lady of Endless Winter; and Magdu, Our Hidden Voice.

Expanded Spell List

The Primordial lets you choose from an expanded list of spells when you learn a warlock spell. The following spells are added to the warlock spell list for you.

Spell Level	Spells
1st	*false life, sleep*
2nd	*gust of wind, flaming sphere*
3rd	*sleet storm, slow*
4th	*conjure minor elementals, polymorph*
5th	*conjure elemental, planar binding*

Elemental Escape

When you choose this patron at 1st level, you learn to empower your body with the enduring resilience of the elements. When making saving throws against being grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, or restrained, add your Charisma modifier.

Pact of the Chain Options

If you choose the Pact of the Chain feature when you reach 3rd level, you can choose one of the following special forms for your familiar: giant fire beetle, mephit, shadow, or twig blight.

Soul Warp

Starting at 6th level, with some effort you can phase through solid, inanimate material. When you use the Disengage action, you can move unhindered by difficult terrain, walls, or physical objects for the rest of your turn. You cannot move through creatures. If you end your movement inside an object or creature, you are reduced to 0 hit points.

Primeval Resilience

At 10th level, you gain resistance to poison damage and one of the following damage types appropriate to your patron: cold, fire, lightning, or thunder.

Blood Bond

Beginning at 14th level, you can use an action to bind your soul to an ally, pooling your senses and energy into a common well. You touch the blood of a willing creature, and for 1 hour both of you can see, hear, taste, smell, and feel through each other's body, including the effects of special senses like darkvision, as long as you're on the same plane.

Additionally, you can exchange hit points freely. As a reaction, one of you loses a number of hit points, and the other instantly gains that many, up to its hit point maximum. Both of you must be willing for the exchange to occur, and any hit points lost this way do not count as damage taken.

The effect of this bond ends early if one of you is reduced to 0 hit points or leaves the Material Plane.

Wizard

While most arcane arts are dangerous to those who learn them, there are some magical methods that can be employed with a reliable level of safety. Depending on their arcane tradition and favored spells, a wizard's magic might carry less risk than a warlock's or sorcerer's.

In Vinramar, wizards are closely associated with the folk magic tradition of the heathfolk, whose arcane universities provide formal magical instruction for those with the necessary talent. A wizard might be a student, graduate, or professor at the College of Sonnactfel, Abríanach University, or any of the many arcane institutes founded by the heathfolk.

Outside these schools, a wizard is likely to be self-taught through research and risky experimentation. Such practitioners of magic often make mistakes at the cost of their lives, or the lives of others, contributing to the strong taboos that surround the arcane. The most intelligent, however, can come to match a trained wizard, especially if they surround themselves with like-minded magicians that can collaborate in the pursuit of artifacts and tomes that will open up forbidden paths for their art.

Arcane Tradition: School of Chronomancy

As a student of the School of Chronomancy, you have learned to feel the passage of time like a constant stream running past you. Its four-dimensional patterns weave about all things like a great fabric that you can tug and twist. Some chronomancers dedicate their lives to repairing the inevitable rifts and wrinkles that such manipulation leaves in this fabric. They accept the responsibility of such power with grim obligation. Others plunge headlong into the strange, unknown world outside of linear time, plundering its secrets for their own ends.

Chronomancy Savant

Beginning when you select this tradition at 2nd level, the gold and time you must spend to copy a chronomancy spell into your spellbook is halved.

Versant Preparation

Starting at 2nd level, you learn the *hourglass* cantrip if you don't already know it. You also gain the ability to assist your past self in preparing the most useful spells. When you finish a short rest, you can swap out up to three spells you have prepared for spells you didn't prepare, so long as you haven't cast them since you prepared them. You can't use this feature again until you take a long rest.

Chronal Control

At 6th level, your mastery over the flow of time increases, allowing you to send your consciousness back in time while your body lingers in the present. This capability is represented by special dice called chronal dice. Using these dice, you assist your past self and improve the effectiveness of your actions. The catch is that when you gain the benefit of chronal control in the present, you must then take time in the future to cause it.

Your chronal dice are d6s, and you have a number of them equal to half your wizard level, rounded down. By expending a die and using your reaction, you can create one of the following effects.

- After you roll an attack, ability check, or saving throw, roll the chronal die and add the result to your previous roll.
- Roll the chronal die and add the result to the DC of the next saving throw made against a spell you cast.
- You immediately move a distance up to your speed without provoking opportunity attacks.
- Cancel the effects of surprise on yourself. You may also choose to cry out, preventing every creature that can hear you from being surprised.

When you end a turn during which you used this feature, you become paralyzed until the end of your next turn while you reverse time long enough to cause the above effect. You can delay becoming paralyzed by expending additional chronal dice when you use this feature. For every additional die you spend, you delay the paralyzed condition for 2 additional turns. At any time before the designated turn ends, you can choose to become paralyzed early in order to end this requirement.

While paralyzed, your consciousness travels a few moments back in time to help your past self. If you are reduced to 0 hit points before the condition ends, or if you should become paralyzed from this feature while already incapacitated for any reason, you enter a causal anomaly.

When you enter a causal anomaly, you drop anything you were holding, vanish from existence, and begin making death saving throws. If you stabilize, your body appears unconscious in the space it previously occupied along with the gear you were wearing. If you fail three death saving throws while in a causal anomaly, you cease to exist, along with whatever objects were on your person.

You regain all your expended chronal dice when you finish a long rest.

Closed Timelike Loop

When you reach 10th level, you add the *timelike curve* spell to your spellbook if it is not there already. You always have this spell prepared, and it doesn't count against the number of spells you prepare each day.

In addition, whenever you cast a spell that interacts with another dimension or plane (such as *banishment*, *contact other plane*, *gate*, or *plane shift*), you can instead substitute a place in the timestream that matches the description, interacting with that temporal point as if it were a plane of existence. The point in time you choose cannot exceed a number of years ahead or behind you equal to 10 × your wizard level. At 10th level, for example, you might use the *banishment* spell to cast a creature 100 years backward in time.

When you cast a spell this way, it is considered a chronomancy spell for that casting in addition to its usual school.

Tailored Relativity

Beginning at 14th level, you can expend a chronal die to take one additional action or bonus action. You can use that action to cast a spell, regardless of any other spells you've cast this turn.

Additionally, instead of gaining the benefit yourself, you can apply the chosen effect of a chronal die you expend to any creature within 30 feet of you. You still become paralyzed once the die is expended, as normal.

Chronomancy Spells

Cantrips
Accelerate/Decelerate
Compressed Oration
Hourglass

1st Level
Chronal Shift
Delay
Expeditious Retreat*
Longstrider*
Scan Timethread

2nd Level
Blur*
Specious Relativity
Temporal Barrier
Time Dilation

3rd Level
Cosmic String
Convergent Strike
Haste*
Slow*

4th Level
Temporal Tether
Timelike Curve
Precipitous Relativity

5th Level
Chronomantic Eye
Despair of Infinite Agency
Folds of Time

6th Level
Contingency*
Temporal Winch

7th Level
Consecutive Loop

8th Level
Axis of Eternity
Existential Paradox

9th Level
Chronal Exile
Time Stop*

**Versions of these spells exist that belong to the school of chronomancy. If not cast as a chronomancy spell, they belong to their usual schools. Spell descriptions for these spells are not found in this section.*

The School of Chronomancy

Chronomancy spells interact with the fabric of time. Often they slow or speed up the passage of linear events by twisting the timestream in unnatural directions. Because the practice of chronomancy is so closely guarded, the spells described in this section are added to the wizard spell list only.

Accelerate/Decelerate

Chronomancy cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 round

You make a minor change to the way time interacts with a single creature or object within range. Until the end of your next turn, the target's speed is reduced or increased by 10 feet. Likewise, if the creature falls 20 feet or less before the spell ends, it lands on its feet and has resistance to any falling damage it takes.

Axis of Eternity

8th-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (the powdered bones of a celestial, which the spell consumes)
Duration: Concentration, up to 24 hours

From your hand you blow the dust of a celestial's bones, which becomes a whirling globe of crackling light in a 15-foot radius around you. Inside the globe, time does not exist. It is immobile and lasts for the duration. Creatures within the globe do not age, are immune to poison damage and the poisoned condition, cannot take levels of exhaustion, and do not need to sleep, eat, or breathe. They cannot benefit from a short or long rest while inside the globe.

From inside, creatures can see into the present time, watching events transpire there. If any creature enters or exits the globe, the spell ends.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell at 9th level, the duration becomes 1 month.

Chronal Exile

9th-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S, M (an ornate spinning top crafted in a mold made by Ruethas himself, worth at least 200 gp per Hit Die of the target)
Duration: Life of the caster

With a glimmer, you activate a large spinning top which whirls in front of you in the air. When you speak the name of a creature within range, it must succeed on a Charisma saving throw or be sent howling into the riptide outside of linear time. It ceases to exist for the duration. If it is on its native plane, it has advantage on this saving throw.

If the target succeeds on its saving throw, the spell ends with no effect and the creature is immune to this spell if you cast it again. When you cast this spell, any previous casting of it ends, meaning that you can only exile one creature at a time.

Chronal Shift

1st-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 feet
Components: V, S, M (a pinch of sand)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

By dropping a few grains of sand, you manipulate the degree to which time physically affects one creature or object you can see within range. Its aging, growth, metabolism, and deterioration are either slowed or accelerated.

If you slow the stamp of time on the target, it is protected from the effects of time while it remains within range until the spell ends. It does not appear to age or wear at all, and it has advantage on death saving throws, as well as saving throws against poison effects. It cannot benefit from a short or long rest while the spell lasts.

If you choose to speed up time's effects on the target, it appears to age or wear down at twice the normal rate. For every level of exhaustion it gains, it gains one more. If an effect causes the target to make a saving throw on each of its turns, it instead makes a saving throw at the beginning and end of each turn.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, you can maintain concentration on the spell for up to 1 hour, plus one additional hour for each slot level above 2nd.

Chronomantic Eye

5th-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (a veil woven with cloth of gold worth at least 1,000 gp)
Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes

You conjure visions of the past or future, which you can watch in real time. Choose a location you've seen before, and a time up to 24 hours in the past or future. If you choose a time more than 1 hour from the present, you must make an Intelligence (Arcana) check to successfully reach it. The DC for this check is 15. On a failed check, you reach a number of hours, forward or backward, equal to the result you rolled.

On a success, you create an invisible sensor in the chosen time and place, through which you can see and hear for the duration as if you were there. The sensor cannot move and appears to creatures that can see invisible objects as a tiny, dark orb with cat-like pupils.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6th level or higher, you can increase the distance you send the sensor in time by 24 hours for each slot level above 5th.

Compressed Oration

Chronomancy cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V
Duration: Instantaneous

With lightning speed, you spurt a string of high-pitched syllables at a creature within range that can hear you. The clipped, percussive sound only lasts a few moments, and sounds like bizarre gibberish to everyone in hearing other than the target. The chosen creature, on the other hand, hears it as an extensive communication, up to 10 minutes of normal speech.

Consecutive Loop

7th-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 feet
Components: V, S, M (a timepiece worth at least 800 gp)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

A creature you can see within range must succeed on an Intelligence saving throw or become trapped in a single moment of time. Until the spell ends, the creature spends each of its turns repeating whatever actions it took on its last turn in exact detail. If it used the Attack action, it does so again, targeting the same space it attacked previously. If it cast a spell and has a similar slot available, it likewise repeats that action targeting the same space (or a creature within the same space) as it did on the repeating turn. If any condition interferes with the action, the target stubbornly attempts to perform it in vain.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 8th level, you can maintain concentration on the spell for up to 1 hour. At 9th level, you can maintain concentration on the spell for up to 3 days.

Cosmic String

3rd-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: 200 feet
Components: S, M (a thread or length of yarn)
Duration: Instantaneous

You touch a creature or object, and it is instantly slung along a perfectly horizontal line of concentrated time fabric to a point you choose within range. This distance is reduced by 1 foot for each pound the target weighs.

Convergent Strike

3rd-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous

With a fierce incantation you slow the passage of time to a torpid pace, just long enough to execute your next attack with deadly accuracy. You have advantage on the next attack roll you make before the end of your turn. If the result of this attack is 20 or higher, it is a critical hit.

Delay

1st-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 reaction, which you take when you see a creature within 30 feet of you get hit by a weapon or spell attack, or fail a saving throw
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 round

You hold your hand up with the palm facing the creature that triggered your reaction, and place a chronal ward on that creature. Until the spell ends, any damage, condition, or other effect caused by the triggering event fails to occur. When the spell does end, however, the target is immediately affected as if the triggering event has just been completed.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, you can maintain your concentration on the spell for one additional round for each slot level above 1st.

Despair of Infinite Agency

5th-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S, M (a hand mirror worth 250 gp, which shatters as the spell consumes it)
Duration: Instantaneous

One creature you can see and which can see you makes a Wisdom saving throw as you confront it with a mind-rending awareness of every possible timeline which belongs to it. Visions of the infinite choices it could have made during every moment of its life flash through the creature's mind. On a failed save it takes 8d10 psychic damage, or half as much damage on a success.

Existential Paradox

8th-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous

When you cast this spell, you focus on a creature you can see within range. The creature must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or have its consciousness thrust back in time to a moment before it existed. The existential shock of the experience causes it to take 20d10 psychic damage. If this damage reduces it to 0 hit points, the creature ceases to exist. Whether the save fails or succeeds, the creature gains a form of indefinite madness.

Folds of Time

5th-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M (a large cloth or cloak)
Duration: 1 round

You draw a length of cloth across a creature, burying it in a fold of the timestream. It becomes invisible and hidden from all creatures until the end of your next turn. This spell ends if the target attacks or casts a spell.

Hourglass

Chronomancy cantrip

Casting Time: 1 reaction, which you take when you observe something that intrigues you
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (an hourglass, jar, or other vessel)
Duration: 10 minutes

With a verbal command and a simple gesture, you capture a mental imprint of what you personally saw during the 6 seconds directly preceding the casting of this spell. A moving image of the imprint appears inside an empty vessel you are holding. Until the spell ends, you can play the imprinted sight in real time, reverse, or slow motion at will. It is visible to anyone close enough to see it.

Precipitous Relativity

4th-level chronomancy (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: V, S, M (three strings of yarn, each tied to one of your fingers)
Duration: 1 minute

You drastically accelerate or reverse the aging of one beast, dragon, humanoid, or plant you can see within range. Most crops and flowers are automatically killed by this spell, or transformed into a seed. Mature perennial plants may either change size by one category or have little visible effect, according to the GM's discretion.

Creatures must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or grow 5d10 years older or younger (your choice). If its age is decreased below 0, the creature becomes an infant. It doesn't die if aged beyond its typical life span.

By default, creatures are considered adults (for humans, ages 18-39), but your GM may choose to modify the effects of this spell based on the particular circumstance. An elderly cult leader may already be

aged, or a young commoner just 10 years old, making it an adolescent. In such examples, the creature changes only enough to represent the difference between its starting age category and its new one.

Many creatures age differently from humans. In these cases, the GM makes a ruling based on available information on the lifespan of the targeted creature. If an adult dragon's age were reduced from 140 years to 90 years, for example, your GM might simply swap its stat block for a young dragon of the same color. Starting age should be determined before you roll the dice.

This spell has no effect on monster types other than beasts, dragons, humanoids, and plants, but your GM may apply an exception if the creature is capable of aging.

The following effects come into play when a creature's age category changes.

Infant. The creature's ability scores all become 2, its maximum hit points drop to 1, its speed is reduced to 5 feet, its size is Tiny, it loses all benefits of its race, class, and background, and it is prone and stunned for the duration. Everything it was wearing or holding when the spell was cast drops to the ground around it. Humans up to age 3 belong to this category.

Child. The creature's ability scores take a -8 penalty (minimum of 2), its maximum hit points drop to 3 + its Constitution modifier, and its speed is halved for the duration. Everything it was wearing when the spell was cast, as well as Heavy objects it was holding, drop to the ground around it. Humans aged 4-9 are children.

Adolescent. The creature receives a -2 penalty to its Wisdom, Strength, and Charisma scores, its maximum hit points are lowered by 3 for each of its Hit Dice, and its speed is reduced by 5 feet for the duration. Humans fall into this category from ages 10-17.

Middle-aged. The creature receives a +2 bonus to its Intelligence and Wisdom scores, a -2 penalty to its Constitution, and has disadvantage on Strength (Athletics) and Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks for the duration. A human between 40 and 65 is middle-aged.

Aged. The creature receives a +2 bonus to its Wisdom score, a -2 penalty to its Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence, and Charisma scores, its maximum hit points are lowered by 20 (to a minimum of 3 + its Constitution modifier), all terrain is considered difficult terrain, attack rolls against it have advantage, and it automatically fails Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws for the duration. Between the ages of 66 and 100, humans are considered aged.

Ancient. The creature's ability scores are all reduced to 4 and it is stunned for the duration, in addition to all the effects listed under aged. It drops everything it was holding when the spell was cast. Any creature past the upper limit of its life span is ancient.

Scan Timethread

1st-level chronomancy (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M (a single hair and a teardrop from the creature whose timethread you are scanning)
Duration: Instantaneous

Passing your hands in intricate gestures around a prostrate creature, you extend your vision into its past and present. You learn its exact age and see its happiest memory, as well as one grim moment from its future, determined by your GM. If the creature is older than 1,000 years, you take 2d10 psychic damage.

Specious Relativity

2nd-level chronomancy (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 feet
Components: S, M (a silver bell worth at least 50 gp)
Duration: 1 hour

You ring a bell, causing one creature that can hear it within range to lose all sense of time. As minutes and hours pass, the target's internal clock is so disoriented that it cannot tell the span of one moment relative to another. For the duration, years seem like seconds and vice versa.

When the spell ends, an accurate memory of events slowly returns to the target over 1d10 days.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the duration increases by 1 hour for each slot level above 2nd.

Temporal Barrier

2nd-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 90 feet
Components: V, S, M (a 3-foot strip of woven cloth)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You distort spacetime in an invisible wall that floats in any orientation at a point you choose within range. It lasts for the spell's duration. You can form it into a sphere or hemispherical dome with a radius of up to 15 feet, or you can shape a flat surface made up of ten 10-foot-square panels. Each panel must be contiguous with another panel. In any form, the wall is 1 inch thick.

When the wall first comes into existence, each creature within its area must make a Strength saving throw, which it can choose to fail. On a failed save, a creature is incapacitated until the end of its turn. While incapacitated, creatures have their speed reduced to 5

feet and are immune to falling damage. Any creature that touches or passes through the wall must likewise make this saving throw.

Temporal Tether

4th-level chronomancy (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M (a rosemary blossom, a vial of red Liquor Hepatis, and 5 feet of flax rope)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

Your axis in the fabric of time is temporarily tethered to that of an object or creature you touch. Until the spell ends, when a chronal control effect or a chronomancy spell of 3rd-level or lower targets you or your tether (but doesn't target you both), you can choose whether it affects both of you or neither of you. A wizard using a chronal control effect can expend two additional chronal dice to override your use of this spell. If both you and the target are affected by the spell or chronal control effect, you cannot prevent it.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher, its effects apply to any spell whose level is less than the level of the spell slot you used.

Temporal Winch

6th-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (the string of a fiddle, harp, or other instrument)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

The timestream around you is restricted or expanded, affecting nearby creatures' perception of time. You create a 30-foot sphere centered on yourself, within which time appears to either slow or accelerate.

If you choose to slow the manifestation of time, all creatures within the sphere can take an additional action or bonus action on their turn while the spell lasts. If instead you choose to accelerate it, the affected creatures can only take one bonus action and move a distance of half their speed (in whatever order they choose), after which their turn ends.

Time Dilation

2nd-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

When you cast this spell, you stretch the timestream toward yourself, experiencing events a little slower than those around you, and enabling you to react quickly to what occurs. For the duration, you have advantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

At any point before the spell ends, you can shift your place in the initiative order to the present—though you can't take another turn until after the end of the current round. Your turn remains there in the initiative order until you move it again as part of this spell.

Timelike Curve

4th-level chronomancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (a tail feather of a young robin, and the egg from which it hatched)
Duration: Instantaneous

You tug at the fabric of time and create a sphere extending 15 feet from you in each direction, causing events within that area to be undone. No change is apparent to observers outside the sphere, but those within it see a blur of motion as the actions and movement of the last few moments play out in reverse. The current round starts over at the top of the initiative order as if none of it had occurred.

Everything outside the sphere must progress exactly as it did previously, including the actions and die results of creatures not within the sphere. Characters within the sphere, however, can alter their actions and perform new rolls based on knowledge of what originally happened.

On their turns, characters affected by the spell perform whichever actions they choose, rolling new results. They might use this opportunity to get another chance at an attack that missed, to take the Dodge action, or to end their movement in a different space, avoiding some unpleasant hazard. When the initiative order reaches a creature outside the sphere, it must act exactly as it did before the spell was cast, and keep whatever die results were originally rolled.

Because the events outside this spell's reach are now predetermined, the new actions may interact with them differently. Creatures that used a ranged attack or spell on a particular character may find that there's a different target in the space they originally chose, or that a barrier of some kind has gotten in the way.

If an action from outside the spell's area of effect is obstructed or foiled, the GM determines how the new timeline resolves. Targets inside the sphere may now have cover or be obscured, changing the outcome of the attack. Likewise, an attack from outside may now have advantage or disadvantage. In such cases, count the original roll as the first, then make a second roll.

New Class: Psychic

In a dark parlor, a silent figure renders intruding thugs unconscious without moving a muscle. Charging skeletons explode one by one into a hail of inanimate bones as a courtly woman struts deeper into the ruined mausoleum. Two shadowed beggars lock eyes in an invisible battle as perilous as dueling rapiers.

Psychics have been gifted with extraordinary mental powers that give them frightening control over the material world around them. These mental powers might resemble magic, but unlike the wizard's arcane energy or the cleric's divine domain, a psychic's abilities come from deep within.

Mind over Matter

Though some spend a lifetime studying and pursuing psionic talent, it is most often the path that chooses the traveler and not the reverse. A few enthusiasts have been known to develop psionic awareness through study, but the vast majority of psychics are gifted at birth, in near-death experiences, or through other circumstances outside their control.

Psionic abilities interact with the substance of the mind—the energy or matter projected by thoughts, desires, intentions, or memories. While arcane spellcasting might create visual effects such as beams of light or shimmering sigils, a psychic's spells rarely manifest this way. The effects of psionic spells are subtle, more likely to be accompanied by a sense of dread and wrongness than a shower of glowing energy.

Devoted to the Unseen

Those most experienced with psychic practices know that such work can open up a terrifying new perspective of reality. To them, material existence becomes one piece in a larger cosmic puzzle as their senses are flooded with outside emotions, memories, and cries for help. In meditation they learn to sort through the irrelevant, the useful, and the dangerous.

Some individuals, or paranormal organizations like the Sounding, reach out to those they discover with psionic gifts to offer formal training and mentorship. Psychics instructed this way might have an easier adjustment period, or become more familiar with the ins and outs of the invisible world, but it isn't a science. Nothing about psychics is entirely explainable.

Creating a Psychic

As you create a psychic, think about when your psionic awareness began and how it influenced your life from that point. Were you born with the gift? Did it arise from a traumatic experience or contact with other psychics? Perhaps a brush with something alien and unnatural opened your mind to a new set of senses that mortals weren't meant to have, or a mysterious organization used a blasphemous procedure to alter your brain.

How did you learn to harness this new awareness? Were you found and trained by another psychic, or did you have to teach yourself to focus your unique abilities? What about your gift makes life difficult or different, and how has that affected your goals and motives? How do you cope with the chatter of extra senses?

Quick Build

You can make a psychic quickly by following these suggestions. First, make Intelligence your highest ability score, followed by Wisdom. Second, choose the medium background. Third, choose the *message*, *minor illusion*, and *resistance* cantrips, along with the 1st-level spells *command*, *sleep*, and *unseen servant*.

Class Features

As a psychic, you gain the following class features.

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d6 per psychic level
Hit Points at 1st Level: 6 + your Constitution modifier
Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d6 (or 4) + your Constitution modifier per psychic level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: None
Weapons: All simple weapons
Tools: Herbalism kit

Saving Throws: Intelligence, Wisdom
Skills: Choose two from Arcana, Deception, History, Insight, Medicine, Persuasion, and Religion.

Equipment

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (*a*) a shortbow and 20 arrows or (*b*) any simple weapon
- (*a*) a component pouch or (*b*) a psionic focus
- (*a*) an entertainer's pack or (*b*) a scholar's pack
- An herbalism kit and a dagger

Devotion Points

Starting at 1st level, you can access a reservoir of mental focus that fuels your psychic abilities. This focus is represented by devotion points. The number of devotion points you have is based on your psychic level, as shown in the Devotion Points column of the Psychic table.

If you spend 30 or more devotion points at one time, you gain a level of exhaustion.

The Psychic

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	Devotion Points	Max Spell Level
1st	+2	Devotion Points, Spellcasting, Contact, Ego Whip, Thought Shield	3	3	6	1st
2nd	+2	Psychic Devotion	3	4	10	1st
3rd	+2	Psychic Discipline	3	5	15	2nd
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	3	6	21	2nd
5th	+3	—	4	7	28	3rd
6th	+3	Mind Thrust, Intellect Fortress	4	8	36	3rd
7th	+3	Psychic Devotion	4	9	44	4th
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	4	10	53	4th
9th	+4	—	5	11	62	5th
10th	+4	Psychic Devotion	5	11	71	5th
11th	+4	Discipline Feature	5	12	83	6th
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	5	12	83	6th
13th	+5	—	6	13	93	7th
14th	+5	Psionic Barrier	6	13	93	7th
15th	+5	Psychic Devotion	6	14	103	8th
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	6	14	103	8th
17th	+6	—	6	15	114	9th
18th	+6	Psychic Devotion	6	15	114	9th
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	6	15	125	9th
20th	+6	Meditative Focus	6	15	135	9th

Devotion Point Cost

Spell Level	Point Cost	Spell Level	Point Cost
1st	3	5th	17
2nd	5	6th	23
3rd	8	7th	30
4th	12	8th	38
		9th	40

Spellcasting

You have unlocked the hidden prescience of your mind, enabling you to create spell effects with no more than a thought. Unlike other spellcasting classes, your spells are psionic in nature. Their effects come through discipline and inward reflection.

To cast a psychic spell, declare the spell you wish to cast, then expend a number of devotion points that correspond to the spell's level, as listed on the Devotion Point Cost table. You can't reduce your devotion point total to less than 0. You regain all spent devotion points when you finish a long rest. Cantrips have no spell level and therefore don't cost devotion points.

When a creature with the Intellect Fortress feature makes a saving throw or is targeted by an attack as a result of your spells, it can first make an Intelligence saving throw. On a successful save, the spell fails.

Cantrips

At 1st level, you know three cantrips of your choice from the psychic spell list. You learn additional cantrips of your choice at higher levels, as shown in the Cantrips Known column of the Psychic table.

Spells of 1st-Level and Higher

At 1st level, you know any three 1st-level spells from the psychic spell list. These are the spells your mind has mastered, and you can spend devotion points to cast them without material components.

The Spells Known column of the Psychic table shows when you learn more spells of your choice. You cannot learn spells of a higher level than your max spell level, as listed on the Psychic Table. For example, when you reach 5th level in this class, you can learn one new spell of 1st, 2nd, or 3rd level.

Spellcasting Ability

Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for your psychic spells and devotions, since your magical effects are psionic in nature. You use your Intelligence whenever a spell description refers to your spellcasting ability. You likewise use your Intelligence modifier when making an attack roll or setting the saving throw DC for your psychic spells and devotions.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

Ritual Casting

You can cast a psychic spell you know as a ritual if it has the ritual tag. If you use the material components listed in the spell's description, the ritual's devotion point cost is halved.

Spellcasting Focus

You can use a psionic focus as a spellcasting focus for your psychic spells. It might take the form of tea leaves, rune-etched bones, a deck of tarot cards, or another significant item that carries and channels psychic power.

Contact

At 1st level, you can concentrate for 1 minute to locate all creatures within 60 of you that have an Intelligence score of 4 or higher. Creatures with the Thought Shield feature and those that can cast psionic spells cannot be located this way unless they choose to allow it. You cannot use this feature to locate constructs.

Without spending an action, you can initiate psychic contact with any creature located with this feature, or any already visible to you. This connection lasts until you choose to end it or until the contacted creature is no longer within 60 feet of you.

A creature can choose to resist your psychic contact. If this occurs, you must use a bonus action to force it to make a Wisdom saving throw. On a successful saving throw, your psychic contact fails.

While the contact lasts, you and the creature can speak with one another telepathically even if you don't share a language, and you sense strong emotions from one another. If you choose, any creatures you're in psychic contact with can speak to one another as well.

Ego Whip

Beginning at 1st level, you can make surface swipes at an enemy's mind. As an action, make a ranged spell attack against a creature within 60 feet. The target uses its Intelligence score in place of its AC against this attack, and it gains no benefit from cover. You don't need to see the creature if you have located it with the Contact feature.

On a hit, the target takes 1d8 psychic damage and has disadvantage on its next saving throw to resist your psychic contact. This ability doesn't cost devotion points, but you must have at least 2 devotion points remaining in order to use it.

Psychic Spell List

Cantrips
Light
Mending
Message
Minor Illusion
Prestidigitation
Produce Flame
Resistance

1st Level
Bane
Charm Person
Command
Comprehend Languages
Detect Magic
Detect Poison and Disease
Disguise Self
Expeditious Retreat
False Life
Healing Word
Heroism
Identify
Jump
Longstrider
Shield
Silent Image
Sleep
Speak with Animals
Unseen Servant

2nd Level
Aid
Alter Self
Augury
Barkskin
Blur
Calm Emotions
Darkvision
Detect Thoughts
Enhance Ability
Enlarge/Reduce
Enthrall
Heat Metal
Hold Person
Invisibility
Lesser Restoration
Levitate
Misty Step
Protection from Poison
See Invisibility
Shatter
Suggestion
Zone of Truth

3rd Level
Blink
Clairvoyance
Fear
Fly
Haste
Mass Healing Word
Nondetection
Sending
Slow
Tongues
Vampiric Touch
Water Breathing
Water Walk
Wind Wall

4th Level
Banishment
Confusion
Dimension Door
Divination
Dominate Beast
Freedom of Movement
Greater Invisibility
Hallucinatory Terrain
Locate Creature
Phantasmal Killer
Polymorph
Stoneskin

5th Level
Animate Objects
Antilife Shell
Awaken
Contact Other Plane
Dominate Person
Dream
Geas
Greater Restoration
Hold Monster
Mislead
Modify Memory
Planar Binding
Scrying
Telekinesis
Wall of Force

6th Level
Disintegrate
Globe of Invulnerability
Magic Jar
Mass Suggestion
True Seeing
Word of Recall

7th Level
Etherealness
Forcecage
Mirage Arcane
Plane Shift
Project Image
Regenerate
Sequester
Teleport

8th Level
Antipathy/Sympathy
Dominate Monster
Feeblemind
Glibness
Power Word Stun
Mind Blank

9th Level
Astral Projection
Foresight
Gate
Mass Heal
Time Stop
True Polymorph
Weird

Thought Shield

At 1st level, your mind is able to resist unwanted intrusion. You cannot be located or psychically contacted with the Contact feature unless you choose to allow it. In addition, if any creature attempts to communicate with you telepathically, you can spend a number of devotion points equal to its Intelligence modifier (minimum of 1) to block this communication for 1 minute.

Psychic Devotion

When you reach 2nd level, you gain the use of one psychic devotion from the options listed at the end of the class description. Your choice of devotion is not restricted by your psychic discipline.

You gain an additional psychic devotion at 5th, 7th, 10th, 15th, and 18th levels.

Psychic Discipline

At 3rd level, you choose a psychic discipline that reflects which path you focus your talents on: Clairsentient, Psychokinetic, Psychometabolist, or Telepath, detailed under Psychic Disciplines. Your discipline choice grants you features at 3rd level and 11th level.

Mind Thrust

Beginning at 6th level, you can cause deeper mental trauma when you attack a creature's psyche. When you use Ego Whip to attack a creature, you may spend up to 3 devotion points before making the attack. You deal an extra 1d8 psychic damage for each devotion point spent. In addition, when you use the Contact feature, creatures don't benefit from the Thought Shield feature unless they also have the Psionic Barrier feature.

Whenever you deal psychic damage to a creature, you can cause it to lose that many devotion points (or an equivalent number of psionic spells slots) instead.

Intellect Fortress

At 6th level, your psyche is bolstered against intrusion. You gain proficiency in Charisma saving throws.

Psionic Barrier

Beginning at 14th level, you can draw an impenetrable curtain across your mind and those of nearby allies to stop others from damaging or tampering with them. You have resistance to psychic damage, and you can use a bonus action to stop any telepathic communication to yourself or a creature you are in psychic contact with.

In addition, when a creature forces someone within 30 feet of you to make a saving throw to avoid being charmed, dominated, or psychically contacted, you can make the saving throw for them using your Intelligence save. If a creature forces you to make a saving throw against any of these effects, you can spend a number of devotion points equal to the creature's Intelligence score to succeed automatically.

Meditative Focus

At 20th level, when you finish a short rest you may regain a number of devotion points equal to your Intelligence score. You cannot use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

Psychic Disciplines

A gifted psychic manifests a wide array of powers, but with experience even the most versatile mentalists focus and develop their natural abilities into a specialty. Known as disciplines, these signature talents manifest only once their possessor spends the time necessary to hone them.

Clairsentient

As masters of the unknown, many clairsentients refer to their psychic powers as if they were a separate entity imparting knowledge. They might ask a dead loved one to show them visions of the past or future, read hidden secrets in tarot cards and tea leaves, or call upon "the spirits" to project their consciousness to far away places. Although they treat such knowledge as a gift, they know their own prescient minds allow them access to it.

When clairsentient abilities manifest, it often compensates for a psychic's physical limitations. A blind woman might see only spiritual auras, or a young cripple could learn to project his consciousness beyond his mortal body. Whether able-bodied or not, clairsentients often value knowledge over physical prowess.

Truth Seer

When you choose this discipline at 3rd level, you automatically succeed on Intelligence (Investigation) checks to see through illusions. You also learn one of the following spells, which doesn't count against your spells known: *augury*, *darkvision*, or *see invisibility*.

Tremors in Reality

At 11th level, you gain access to the 50-point level of your clairsentient devotions. You learn the spell *detect magic* and you don't have to spend devotion points to cast it.

Psychokinetic

The ability to manipulate physical matter without touching it may not be unique to psychokinetics, but they do it better than most. Rather than projecting their consciousness, they send out powerful bursts of semi-permeable force from their minds. It's common for psychokinetics to be impulsive and emotionally volatile. Whether this makes them dangerous or valuable as allies, no one can dispute their raw power.

Flow of Force

Beginning when you choose this discipline at 3rd level, when you use Ego Whip, you can choose to deal force damage instead of psychic. You learn one of the following spells, which doesn't count against your spells known: *hold person*, *levitate*, or *shatter*.

Telekinetic Leap

At 11th level, you gain access to the 50-point level of your psychokinetic devotions. You learn the spell *jump* and you don't have to spend devotion points to cast it.

Psychometabolist

Psychometabolists are complete masters over their own bodies, controlling their shape and functions like a chameleon. Their powers often activate instinctively, allowing them to shift and augment their physical form.

Not every psychometabolist is thrilled with the changes they can create within themselves. Some gravitate toward amplifying their natural bodies, feeling most comfortable in their own skin. Others are more risky, preferring to explore new and strange forms.

Metahumanoid

Starting when you choose this discipline at 3rd level, you add your Intelligence modifier to your initiative rolls. You learn one of the following spells, which doesn't count against your spells known: *alter self*, *enhance ability*, or *lesser restoration*.

Skinchanger

At 11th level, you gain access to the 50-point level of your psychometabolic devotions. You learn the spell *disguise self* and you don't have to spend devotion points to cast it as a 1st-level spell.

Telepath

As a telepath, you're familiar with the tortuous alleys of the subconscious. You can navigate the metaphysical workings of the mind with the skill of a hunter.

Telepaths are often empathetic, seeing the broader motivations and context that inform others' actions. There are those, however, who see the world more cynically after perceiving the dark thoughts that lurk behind every smile.

Reaching Mind

When you choose the Telepath discipline at 3rd level, you can psychically contact and use Ego Whip on creatures within 120 feet. You also learn one of the following spells, which doesn't count against your spells known: *calm emotions*, *detect thoughts*, or *suggestion*.

Mind Trick

At 11th level, you gain access to the 50-point level of your telepathic devotions. You learn the spell *command* and you don't have to spend devotion points to cast it as a 1st-level spell.

Psychic Devotions

Your spells represent your basic access to mental influence, but your strongest capabilities come in the form of psychic devotions. Devotions are powerful effects, often connected to the wielder's psychic discipline, that can't be dispelled. The potency of a psychic devotion depends on the number of devotion points you spend when you use it. Each devotion has three levels of effect: an effect that costs 5 devotion points, one that costs 20, and one that costs 50. You can only access the 50-point level of a devotion if it falls under your psychic discipline.

Absorption

Psychometabolic devotion

When you learn this devotion, you become capable of absorbing energy and forces that would otherwise damage your body.

5 Devotion Points: When you take force, lightning, radiant, or thunder damage, you can use this devotion as a reaction to reduce the damage you take by an amount equal to your Intelligence modifier.

20 Devotion Points: You can also reduce acid, cold, fire, and poison damage with this devotion, and the damage is reduced by an amount equal to your Intelligence score.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by psychometabolists): You can also reduce bludgeoning, necrotic, piercing, and slashing damage with this devotion, and the damage is reduced by 50.

Animate

Psychokinetic devotion

You can project a physical force from your mind dexterous enough to perform detailed tasks.

5 Devotion Points: You can use this devotion as an action to manipulate objects with your mind as if both your hands were touching them. The force you project to perform this manipulation has a reach of 15 feet, meaning that you can only touch objects within that range. For example, you could swing a shortsword, pick a lock, or use a healing kit to stabilize a fallen ally.

You can only perform one action with the objects before they drop from your telekinetic grasp. If your use of this devotion requires you to make a roll to which you would normally apply your Dexterity, apply your Intelligence instead.

20 Devotion Points: The range of your telekinetic grasp increases to 50 feet, and you gain the equivalent of two more hands. You can maintain the projected force until the end of your next turn, and you can use a bonus action and a reaction with it in addition to the initial action you take. Before the effect ends, you can spend another 20 devotion points to extend its duration by one turn and continue a prolonged task, such as puppeteering a suit of armor to walk convincingly, playing two instruments in the air at once, or searching a room with rapid precision.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by psychokinetics): Your animating projection has a range of 200 feet (although it still requires you to see the objects you're manipulating), and the equivalent of six more hands (a total of 10). Your telekinetic grasp can now perform two actions, bonus actions, and reactions each turn that you maintain it.

You can give up the use of all your actions, bonus actions, and reactions to force a creature your telekinetic force has grappled to make a Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) saving throw contested by your Intelligence. If it fails, you can move the creature with enough precision to choose what physical action it takes on its turn.

Alternatively, you can use this devotion as an action to apply your telekinesis to up to two mundane objects (such as a suit of armor or a rug), turning them into animated versions of those objects. You can use this initial action and any subsequent actions to command the animated objects to act. If you use the devotion in this manner, you don't gain additional actions or reactions as described above. The effect lasts until the end of your next turn. You can spend another 25 devotion points before it ends to extend its duration by one turn.

Force Projection

Psychokinetic devotion

If the Animate devotion manifests as intricate articulation, Force Projection turns your psychokinesis into brute strength.

5 Devotion Points: You can use this devotion as an action to apply blunt force to an object or creature within 15 feet of you. Make a ranged spell attack roll against the target, dealing 1d10 force damage on a hit and knocking it prone. On a miss, targets take half damage and remain standing.

Alternatively, you can use the projected force within 15 feet to take an action that would normally call for the use of your Strength, such as moving a heavy object, bashing through a barrier, or jumping over a chasm. When taking this action, you can use your Intelligence in place of Strength.

20 Devotion Points: Your force projection becomes a 15-foot line, cone, cube, sphere, or cylinder that collides heavily with objects and creatures it strikes. Choose its point of origin, within 30 feet of you. Fragile objects in the area are destroyed if they are nonmagical. Creatures within the area must succeed on a Strength saving throw or take 6d6 force damage and fall prone. Creatures that succeed take half damage and remain standing.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by psychokinetics): The line, cone, cube, sphere, or cylinder you create increases to 25 feet, with a point of origin within 100 feet of you. Damage on a failed saving throw increases to 12d6 force damage.

You can instead use an action to shape your projection into a barrier like that described in the *wall of force* spell. It must remain within 100 feet of you, and lasts until the end of your next turn. You can spend another 25 devotion points before that time to extend the duration by one turn.

Hypnosis

Telepathic devotion

The Hypnosis devotion allows you to lull a creature into a trance and assert control over its mind.

5 Devotion Points: Use this devotion as an action to draw a creature into a trance. One creature within 30 feet of you that you've made psychic contact with must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or become charmed by you. At the end of each of its turns, it can repeat the saving throw. If it succeeds on the save or takes damage, the condition ends. The creature can choose to automatically fail.

While the creature is charmed, it only speaks the truth, and can access memories of every experience it has had, including those erased through supernatural means and even recollections of past lives. When the hypnosis ends, the target regains hit points equal to your psychic level and has no memory of the hypnosis.

20 Devotion Points: In addition to the above effects, the charmed creature cannot repeat the saving throw until 1 minute has passed. If you concentrate for 1 minute while the target is charmed, you can remove one form of madness or one of the following conditions from it: blinded, deafened, frightened, incapacitated, poisoned, or unconscious. Alternatively, you can inflict one of the above conditions. When the target is no longer charmed, any condition imposed by your hypnosis also ends.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by telepaths): In addition to the above effects, the charmed creature cannot repeat the saving throw until 10 minutes have passed. While it is charmed, you determine the actions the creature takes, but you cannot command it to hurt itself.

You can also concentrate for up to 10 minutes while the target is charmed to modify its memory of an

event that it experienced in the last 6 days as if it were affected by a *modify memory* spell. For each additional minute you concentrate, the modified event can extend another 6 days into the past.

You can also concentrate the same way to permanently restore a modified memory or one from a past life. Once restored, this memory is crystal clear, and cannot be changed again.

Matter Manipulation

Psychokinetic devotion

When you learn this devotion, you gain the ability to sense and shape the composition of physical matter.

5 Devotion Points: You can use this devotion as an action to determine the chemical makeup of an object. You know in detail what materials it's made from, how long ago it was formed into its present state, and what special properties it has. Some common uses of this devotion are to detect poison, date artifacts, or identify magic items.

20 Devotion Points: You can use this devotion to concentrate for 10 minutes, making changes to the form or chemical makeup of an inanimate, nonmagical object. For every 10 minutes of concentration, you create one of the following effects in an area of 3 square inches.

- Heat an object to 300 degrees Fahrenheit
- Cool an object to 0 degrees Fahrenheit
- Change an object's shape
- Change the material an object is made from
- Create a nonmagical object from matter in the air

If you're attempting to replicate a specific design or shape, you must make an Intelligence check to see how closely it matches your intended result. The result of your roll becomes the DC for creatures making a Wisdom (Perception) check to spot the fake. If your result is less than 10, the object doesn't function according to your intended design.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by psychokinetics): The area you can affect increases to 20 square feet per hour of concentration. You can extend your concentration for another hour by spending 25 more devotion points.

Mental Projection

Clairsentient devotion

You gain the ability to project your sensory consciousness out of your body and through space.

5 Devotion Points: Choose sight, hearing, touch, taste, or smell. You can use your action to project this faculty up to 30 feet, allowing you to use it as if you were physically moving along the chosen route. Until the end of your next turn you can perceive anything with that one sense that would be perceptible if you were there.

The new location of your projected sense replaces that faculty's perception in your actual location. You can't, for example, see from your physical eyes while looking through sight projection. It can travel through walls or other barriers as you choose, but can't move more than 30 feet.

20 Devotion Points: You may choose one additional sense to project along the same path, and the distance they can travel increases to 1 mile. While you maintain concentration, the senses can remain projected for up to 10 minutes. During that time you can use an action to move them 30 feet.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by clairsentients): You can project all five senses to any location you've visited or seen on your current plane, or into the dreams of an unconscious creature you've made psychic contact with. If you choose, an image of your physical body appears where your senses travel, and you can speak through it.

Metabolic Shift

Psychometabolic devotion

This devotion allows you to kick your body into overdrive, speeding up its functions with a boost of adrenaline.

5 Devotion Points: You can use a bonus action on your turn to gain advantage on your next ability check or to take the Dash, Disengage, or Dodge action.

20 Devotion Points: In addition to the above effect, you can take a second action at the end of your turn.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by psychometabolists): In addition to the above effect, you immediately gain a number of temporary hit points equal to your psychic level + your Intelligence score.

Alternatively, you can use this devotion at a cost of 50 devotion points to spend 1 hour of concentration permanently aging your body forward or backward a single year. You can concentrate for an additional hour, aging or rejuvenating another year, by spending 25 devotion points before the first hour ends.

Metamorphosis

Psychometabolic devotion

This devotion twists the matter of your body to change its nature and shape.

5 Devotion Points: Choose your arm, leg, head, or other body part. You can use this devotion as an action to alter that part for 1 minute in one of the following ways.

- Change its size by one category (Medium to Small, Medium to Large, etc.)
- Change its shape or appearance
- Change the material it's made of (and treat it as an improvised weapon)

- Make it a source of light comparable to a torch
- Make it invisible

The body part remains the same in every way except for the effect you choose, which is isolated to the area you designate (no larger than a single appendage).

20 Devotion Points: You can choose two effects from the above list, and they can apply to two areas of your body or a single area roughly twice the size. For example, you could change your head and shoulders into those of a minotaur, or you could change the shape and material of both your arms so they become a sword and shield.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by psychometabolists): You can choose up to two effects from the above list and apply them to your entire body for up to an hour. You can extend this duration an hour by spending 25 devotion points before the first hour is up.

Alternatively, you can use this devotion as an action to transform into another creature or object you've seen for up to 1 hour, or until you drop to 0 hit points. All of your game statistics, except for your Intelligence and psychic traits, are replaced by those of the chosen form. Any gear you're carrying does not transform with you.

You assume the hit points of your new form. When you revert to your normal form, you return to the number of hit points you had before you metamorphosed. If you revert as a result of dropping to 0 hit points, any excess damage carries over to your normal form. As long as the excess damage doesn't reduce your normal form to 0 hit points, you aren't knocked unconscious.

While in this form, you're limited to your psychic class traits and the actions of that creature or object.

Precognition

Clairsentient devotion

Your awareness can extend to different points in time, either past or future.

5 Devotion Points: You can use this devotion to cancel the effects of being surprised, or as a reaction to gain advantage on an attack roll or saving throw.

20 Devotion Points: At the end of your turn, you can use this devotion to go back to the instant your turn began and start again. Everything that occurred on your turn no longer happened, on the condition that you change your course of action. If you take an action that matches one you took before, events return to the way you "foresaw" them the first time, including the results of dice rolls and character responses. Your GM has the final say on whether your second try is sufficiently different from your first.

Alternatively, you can use this devotion as a bonus action to look up to 12 seconds into the past, seeing and hearing what happened in your precise location at that time.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by clairsentients): You can use this devotion to project your consciousness into a different point in time, seeing and hearing what occurred in your precise location up to 10 years in the past or future.

You must concentrate, in complete stillness, 1 minute for each day of time you wish to pass through. You are considered paralyzed during this time, and can only perceive the passing of the timestream until you have concentrated for the required duration. If you are moved or take damage, your concentration ends and you immediately regain consciousness in the present.

Once you have completed the required time for concentration, you can see and hear events as they transpired (or will transpire) in real time. During this experience, you're invisible and cannot interact with the events you witness. After an hour has passed, you regain consciousness in the present unless you spend another 50 devotion points to extend your time projection another hour.

Note for GMs: This devotion can make your job difficult. Be cautious about how you frame scenes in the future, especially when they involve player characters. Be sure to keep track of what is seen and heard, and enlist your players to give input on their character's future actions. It's up to you whether or not these events are able to be changed.

Psychic Impressions

Clairsentient devotion

When you learn this devotion, you gain the ability to read the psionic energy imbued in objects and creatures.

5 Devotion Points: You can use this devotion as an action to detect a creature's general emotions, either on their person or left on an object or location. You can sense broad feelings like agony, anger, confusion, excitement, fear, gratitude, happiness, malice, sadness, or temptation. If sensed on a creature, you know which emotions belong to which creature. If on an object or location, you can't be sure.

20 Devotion Points: You also sense an aura of the creature's type, alignment at the time the impressions were left, plane of origin, and its relative toughness (challenge rating or character level).

50 Devotion Points (only usable by clairsentients): In addition to the above effects, you can ask the GM for two pieces of information about a creature that left the impressions you're reading. The

information can be general or specific, relating to its past, future, motivations, or secrets. Your GM can ask you to choose a different question if he or she deems yours unsuitable. At any point before getting your first answer, you can retract the request and pay 20 devotion points instead of 50.

Psychic Journey

Telepathic devotion

When you use this devotion, your consciousness can travel deep into a creature's mind and manipulate its innermost workings.

5 Devotion Points: You can use this devotion to concentrate on a creature you touch for 1 minute. While concentrating, you enter a mindscape representing the target's psyche. If it has an Intelligence score of 3 or lower, the creature is unaffected.

The mindscape is a dreamlike dimension that appears to be made of physical matter. Its nature reflects the target's personality and mental state. Some have natural land formations, while others might be made entirely of steel or glass. A more intelligent mind often involves winding paths or corridors with a large number of doors. Less intelligent minds are laid out simply.

While you journey through the mindscape, your body remains unconscious. If at any time your body takes damage, you return to it and regain consciousness. If you're in a creature's mindscape while it becomes the target of a *mind blank* spell, the integrity of your surroundings begins to collapse into oblivion. You must immediately make an Intelligence check contested by the Intelligence of the creature whose mind you're exploring. If you succeed, you regain consciousness in the Material Realm. On a failure, you return to your body, but drop to 0 hit points.

You can appraise the target's mental state by exploring the mindscape. As an action, contest your Intelligence with the creature's. If it's willing, you can add the target's Wisdom modifier as a bonus to your roll. If you win the contest, you open a new path in the mindscape and learn one fact or secret about the creature, chosen by your GM.

The mindscape is often populated with metaphorical characters, monsters, and hazards. Your GM may determine that certain areas or bits of information can only be accessed once you've completed a quest or objective of some sort. All damage you take in the mindscape becomes psychic damage.

20 Devotion Points: When you enter the mindscape, you can bring up to five creatures with whom you have psychic contact. Like yours, the bodies of all these psychic travelers remain unconscious in the Material World as described above. Additionally, as an action you can make an Intelligence check contested by the Intelligence score of the creature whose mind you are exploring. If you succeed, you can summon the creature's consciousness to your presence. This consciousness takes a form similar to the creature's physical appearance.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by telepaths): You can concentrate up to an hour, remaining in the mindscape for the duration. In addition, you can use an action to contest Intelligence with the creature in order to alter conditions in its mindscape as though you were in the Primordial Realm. These alterations create lasting effects on the target's personality, at your GM's discretion.

Examples of such effects might be an alignment shift, removing or inflicting a form of madness, or a change in traits, bonds, or flaws. Work with your GM to determine appropriate effects of your alteration to the mindscape.

Telepathic Field

Telepathic devotion

This devotion creates a field of psychic energy that can bolster the awareness of your allies and drain the mental stamina of your enemies.

5 Devotion Points: You can use this devotion to automatically make psychic contact with a creature within 10 feet of you. If the creature is unwilling, you do not need to spend a bonus action and it does not get a saving throw to resist. While in contact with this creature, it has disadvantage when contesting Intelligence with you. As an action, you can give the creature temporary hit points equal to your Intelligence modifier.

20 Devotion Points: When you use this devotion to automatically make psychic contact with a creature, you can choose an additional number of targets equal to your Intelligence modifier. The targets must be within 20 feet of you when you initiate contact with them. When a creature you're in contact with makes an ability check or saving throw within 20 feet of you, you can choose to give it advantage or disadvantage on that roll.

50 Devotion Points (only usable by telepaths): In addition to the above effects, when you automatically make psychic contact, you can do so with all creatures within 50 feet of you. While contact lasts with these creatures, you can allow any of them to take the Dodge action as a bonus action.

Alternatively, you can use this devotion at a cost of 50 points to end all psychic contact within 50 feet of you for 1 minute. During that time, psionic spells cast by or targeting creatures in that range automatically fail. If you spend an additional 25 devotion points before the minute ends, you extend the duration of this effect by 1 minute.

Items and Equipment

Adventuring Gear

The following items have special qualities that may prove useful to those who can obtain them.

Ammunition. These four forms of ammunition are used by firearms. Exploding rounds deal an extra 1d6 fire damage on a hit, and pellet shot can be loaded into a blunderbuss or hand cannon to target a 15-foot cone when fired. Creatures in the cone must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d6 piercing damage.

Cane Sword. This seemingly ordinary cane conceals a rapier. While sheathed, creatures that do not succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check or Intelligence (Investigation) check consider it harmless.

Coke. This coal-based fuel is burned in engines, furnaces, and stoves. Iron warships, steamboats, and train engines require 15 tons of coke to operate for 24 hours.

Diving Suit. This leather suit is fitted with a round brass helmet, weighted boots, and a hose connected to an airline. While enclosed in the suit, a diver is protected from the dangers of deep underwater environments.

Hacksaw. You can spend 1 minute to cut through 4 inches of most immobile mundane objects, including wood, bone, and metal.

Adventuring Gear

Item	Cost	Weight
Ammunition		
Exploding rounds (20)	50 gp	4 lb.
Lead ball (20)	10 gp	5 lb.
Pellet shot (20)	8 gp	1 lb.
Steam canister (10)	90 gp	4 lb.
Cane sword	50 gp	2 lb.
Cigars (25)	10 gp	—
Clock	140 gp	4 lb.
Coke (1 ton)	4 gp	2,000 lb.
Diving suit	600 gp	150 lb.
Hacksaw	10 gp	1 lb.
Holster	15 gp	1 lb.
Morphine case	50 gp	1 lb.
Music box	25 gp	1 lb.
Pocket watch	175 gp	—
Psionic focus		
Rune-etched bones	—	—
Tarot cards	5 sp	—
Tea leaves	—	—
Trinket	—	—

Holster. Characters wearing a holster can both draw and stow a one-handed firearm from it as part of their action.

Morphine Case. In this small leather case is a syringe and a bottle of morphine containing 6 doses. A Medium-sized creature who is administered 1 dose gains 10 temporary hit points and becomes poisoned. A creature receiving 2 doses within 10 minutes also falls unconscious. For each size category below Medium, treat the dosage as if it were doubled. For each category above Medium, treat it as if it were halved.

Every time a creature is administered at least 1 dose of morphine, it makes a Constitution saving throw to avoid becoming addicted. The DC for this save is 8 + the number of times the character has made this saving throw in the last month.

Tools

Add the following tools to the list of those available to player characters.

Gaming Set. Some of the most popular games from around Vinramar include King's Caroms, a cue sport played with 3-inch diameter ivory balls; Masks of Ruethas, a high-stakes card game using the traditional heathfolk deck; Obelisk, a Syservoli war game played around the steps of a pyramid-shaped board; and Twelve Traitors, the elaborate Arrochuli bluffing game.

Musical Instrument. There are countless instruments among the various cultures of Vinramar, but perhaps the best known are the Jessiki bleakbells, heathfolk fiddle, Goltari guitar, and Mottan ottavino (a lap harpsichord that can be carried like a backpack).

Tools

Item	Cost	Weight
Gaming set		
King's Caroms	1 gp	10 lb.
Masks of Ruethas	5 sp	—
Obelisk	3 gp	2 lb.
Twelve Traitors	5 sp	1 lb.
Musical instrument		
Accordion	30 gp	4 lb.
Bleakbells	2 gp	1 lb.
Fiddle	30 gp	1 lb.
Guitar	35 gp	3 lb.
Mandolin	20 gp	1 lb.
Ottavino	35 gp	5 lb.
Printing press	420 gp	60 lb.

Printing Press. Those proficient with the printing press can mass-print books, newspapers, and pamphlets. Character that choose proficiency with one type of artisan's tools can instead gain proficiency with the printing press.

Firearms

The invention of gunpowder is perhaps the most chilling innovation spawned by industrialization. When the first experiments with firearms proved disastrous, authorities quickly hid them from the public awareness. Though their existence remains unknown to most of the world, firearms and their paraphernalia are sold to obsessive enthusiasts on the black market.

Each of these weapons has a lock (the firing mechanism), a stock (where the gun is held), and a barrel through which explosive force launches the ammunition.

Ammunition

Most firearms fire simple lead balls, often melted into the proper shape and caliber in a handheld mold. Steam guns instead use pressurized steam canisters that load into a complex contraption strapped to the wielder's back. A hose connects the cannister bay to the butt of the gun, allowing it to release a scalding spray of steam when the trigger is pulled. One steam cannister is expended after 10 shots.

Firearm ammunition can never be recovered after it has been expended.

Proficiency

Firearms have a weapon proficiency category of their own. Heathfolk characters have proficiency with the flintlock pistol, while fighters and rangers can gain proficiency with all firearms by taking the marksmanship fighting style. If you wish, you can allow your players to gain proficiency with firearms in other ways, such as spending downtime or taking the Gunslinger feat below.

Proficiency with firearms allows a character to add his or her proficiency bonus when making ability checks to craft firearm ammunition.

Characters who don't have proficiency with a firearm must spend an action to load it.

Feat: Gunslinger

You have training in the use and maintenance of firearms. You gain the following benefits:

- You gain proficiency with firearms.
- When you use the Attack action with the flintlock pistol, dagger pistol, or gunsword, you can use a bonus action to attack with another flintlock pistol, dagger pistol, or gunsword in your other hand, adding your proficiency bonus to the damage of the second attack.

Properties

Some firearms have special properties, described below.

Knockdown. A weapon with the knockdown property has a chance to knock prone any creature that takes piercing damage from it. When one or more of the weapon's damage dice rolls the highest possible result, the damaged creature is knocked prone.

Loading. Some firearms with the loading property can load multiple pieces of ammunition as part of the Attack action. The number is indicated in parentheses.

Melee Versatile. When you make a melee attack with a weapon that has the melee versatile property, you use it as the melee weapon specified in parentheses, not an improvised weapon.

Modifications

The following modifications can be added to any firearm with the use of smith's tools or tinker's tools, granting it special properties as described below.

Bayonet. A bayonet is an 8-inch blade that can attach and detach from the muzzle of a gun, turning it into an effective thrusting weapon. Two-handed firearms with a bayonet gain the property melee versatile (spear). The DC for applying this modification is 10.

Cased Stock. The stock of the firearm is banded or studded to make it more effective as a blunt weapon in close quarters. Firearms with a cased stock gain the property melee versatile (mace). The DC for applying this modification is 10.

Double Barrel. A firearm with this modification gains an additional lock, barrel, and trigger, allowing it to be fired up to twice per turn if a feature allows you to make more than one weapon attack. The DC for applying this modification is 15. The steam gun cannot be modified in this way.

Rifled Barrel. Rifling is the arrangement of spiral grooves on the inside of a gun's barrel, which causes the ammunition to spin, increasing its range. A firearm with a rifled barrel doubles its normal and maximum range. This modification can only be applied to firearms with the two-handed property, and requires the firearm to use special lead balls called minié balls. Minié balls cost 1 gp each. The DC for applying this modification is 18. The steam gun cannot be modified in this way.

Sight. A sight is an adjustable aiming device that can be fixed to the lock of a two-handed firearm, improving the shooter's accuracy. You can spend a bonus action to use a firearm's sight, allowing you to attack beyond its normal range this turn without disadvantage. The DC for applying this modification is 10.

Six-Gun Cylinder. This revolving component fits the firearm to use a spinning cylinder set with six ammunition chambers. The firearm gains the property loading 6. The DC for applying this modification is 18. The steam gun cannot be modified in this way.

Firearms

Name	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Ranged Weapons (Firearms)				
Arquebus	420 gp	1d10 piercing	8 lb.	Ammunition (range 50/100), loading, two-handed
Blunderbuss	500 gp	1d12 piercing	10 lb.	Ammunition (range 40/120), loading, two-handed
Dagger pistol	400 gp	1d10 piercing	4 lb.	Ammunition (range 30/90), loading, melee versatile (dagger)
Doglock	300 gp	2d4 piercing	7 lb.	Ammunition (range 40/90), loading, two-handed
Flintlock pistol	275 gp	1d10 piercing	3 lb.	Ammunition (range 30/90), loading
Gunsword	600 gp	1d10 piercing	8 lb.	Ammunition (range 30/90), loading, melee versatile (longsword), two-handed
Hand cannon	450 gp	2d6 piercing	4 lb.	Ammunition (range 20/60), knockdown, loading (1)
Kalthoff	1,200 gp	1d10 piercing	13 lb.	Ammunition (range 50/100), heavy, loading (20), two-handed
Steam gun	700 gp	1d10 fire	20 lb.	Ammunition, heavy, loading (10)
Volleygun	500 gp	4d4 piercing	10 lb.	Ammunition (range 40/120), heavy, knockdown, loading (1), melee versatile (greatclub), two-handed
Modifications				
Bayonet	10 gp	—	2 lb.	Melee versatile (spear)
Cased stock	20 gp	—	1 lb.	Melee versatile (mace)
Double barrel	300 gp	—	4 lb.	Special
Rifled barrel	80 gp	—	—	Special
Sight	10 gp	—	—	Special
Six-Gun cylinder	1,000 gp	—	1 lb.	Loading (6)

Artillery Weapons

The following artillery weapons may be known to characters familiar with the firearm black market.

Bombard

Large object

Armor Class: 18
Hit Points: 80
Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

Bombards are squat, large-caliber mortars made to fire stone balls. Their ability to blast masonry to bits makes them valuable in a siege, but they are also deadly to foot soldiers. To fire a bombard, it must first be loaded and aimed. It takes one action to load it, two actions to aim it, and one action to fire it.

Bombardment. The bombard fires on a 30-foot sphere centered on a point 600 feet of it. It can't fire at an area closer than 100 feet. Objects and structures within the sphere take 44 (8d10) bludgeoning damage, and creatures must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage. On a successful save, the creatures take half damage.

Jingal

Large object

Armor Class: 16
Hit Points: 60
Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

A jingal is a heavy musket mounted on a swivel for a balance of mobility and firepower. To fire the jingal, it must first be loaded. It takes one action to load it and one action to fire it. When a jingal fires from a wall or window, it can be loaded with a bonus action.

Gunfire. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 120/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) piercing damage.

Long Gun

Large object

Armor Class: 19
Hit Points: 70
Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

The long gun is among the most formidable and accurate pieces of artillery on the battlefield. Built like a cannon with an elongated barrel, it can fire its cast iron balls astounding distances compared to other weapons on the field. Long gun rounds are usually 9 inches in diameter.

Where they are available, long guns can fire explosive shells instead of cannonballs, which burst into fiery shrapnel upon impact. Shells are useful for striking enemy soldiers behind cover. To fire the long gun, it must first be loaded and aimed. It takes one action to load it, one action to aim it, and one action to fire it.

Cannonball. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 2,000/5,000 ft., one target. *Hit:* 44 (8d10) bludgeoning damage.

Shell. The long gun fires in a straight line toward a point within 2,000 feet, affecting a 15-foot-radius sphere centered on that point. Objects, structures, and creatures within that sphere take 11 (2d10) piercing damage and 11 (2d10) fire damage. Creatures must also succeed a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take double damage, with no benefit from half-cover or three-quarters cover.

Ribauldequin

Large object

Armor Class: 14
Hit Points: 30
Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

A ribauldequin is a lightweight artillery weapon fitted with twelve iron barrels built upon a two-wheeled handcart. Each time it fires, the ribauldequin spreads bullet fire across the battlefield, making it a useful weapon against infantry. To fire the weapon, it must first be loaded and aimed. It takes one action to load a ribauldequin, one action to aim it, and one action to fire it.

Volley. The ribauldequin fires on a 30-foot cube within 400 feet of it. Each creature in the cube must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 11 (2d10) piercing damage.

Vehicles

Since the advent of industrial technology, the world has seen incredible machinery emerge. The following vehicles are extremely rare, but may be encountered by characters adventuring in Chayrshellech, Trentsmund, or Wellusk.

Boneshaker. This bicycle-like vehicle has between two and four wheels, and is propelled as the rider's feet turn its pedals. The name boneshaker arose from the way the rigid frame and iron-banded wheels rattle the rider.

Iron Warship. Powered by steam engines and reinforced with a metal hull, iron warships strike fear into the hearts of those that oppose them. Virtually indestructible compared to their contemporaries, these brutes can operate for 24 hours on 15 tons of coke.

Steamboat. These mid-sized ships utilize steam power to move themselves through the water, often by means of a propeller or paddlewheel. Most steamboats are furnished for ferrying passengers and light cargo.

Steam Car. Though flashy as a novelty, these self-powered carriages are extremely rare and largely impractical. Their engines run on lamp oil, 48 pints of which can fuel a single car for 1 hour at a speed of 60 mph. While heavy and expensive, steam cars can carry much more weight than a horse.

Steam Wagon. Like their sister the steam car, steam wagons are slow and steady. They're outfitted to fit 12 passengers along four rows of cushioned seats.

Train Engine. Also called locomotives, these steam-powered vehicles are the fastest and most powerful way to travel. They hitch dozens of freight cars, passenger cars, or tanker cars behind them to form a long convoy that hurtles noisily down the track.

Vehicles

Vehicle	Cost	Speed	Crew	Passengers	Cargo	AC	HP	Damage Threshold
Land Vehicles								
Boneshaker	30 gp	8 mph	—	—	50 lb.	10	10	—
Steam car*	40,000 gp	60 mph	—	3	1 ton	12	80	—
Steam wagon*	50,000 gp	30 mph	—	12	3 tons	12	120	—
Railroad Vehicles								
Handcar	300 gp	10 mph	—	6	500 lb.	12	100	10
Train engine*	1,200 gp	100 mph	2	2	5 tons	19	300	50
Freight car	30 gp	—	—	—	50 tons		400	50
Passenger car	80 gp	—	—	80	—		300	40
Tanker car	50 gp	—	—	—	6,000 gallons	16	200	20
Waterborne Vehicles								
Iron warship*	150,000 gp	3 mph	60	60	200 tons	18	500	40
Steamboat*	80,000 gp	2 mph	20	200	100 tons	15	300	10

**When this vehicle is reduced to 0 hit points, it explodes. Creatures within 20 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 4d6 fire damage and be knocked prone.*

World Factions

Throughout Vinramar, there are organizations whose power and influence extends into most regions of the world. These factions pursue goals connected to a particular philosophy, deity, or agenda, and likely have a presence in any region where you choose to set a campaign.

Avan Enclaves

Once a sacred order of knights-errant, Avan enclaves have become a secretive and widely misunderstood group. Their operatives valiantly combat slavery and injustice from the shadows, running underground communities where escaped slaves and Jharric worshippers can live a relatively peaceful existence.

Members of this faction espouse the ideals of Ava, goddess of love and courage. They condemn slavery and swear themselves to the protection of life and innocence. Where either are threatened, they bring deliverance, justice, and healing.

Avans cleverly hide their enclaves in secluded, defensible locations—forests, ruins, or caves—where enemies are unlikely to investigate. The location of each hideout is a closely guarded secret, revealed only to a Devout whom the Seneschal, or enclave leader, has approved. Those liberated by the enclave are offered a place to live among the Avans, but they must come and go blindfolded with an escort until they prove themselves worthy of the rank of Devout. Most enclaves consist of living quarters, a shrine or chapel, and an orphanage where members care for rescued children.

Once operatives advance beyond the initiatory ranks, they join one of two affiliations within the enclave: the Order of the Rose, which oversees and defends the enclave, or the Order of the Thorn, which conducts missions outside it. It is common for enclaves to include operatives devoted to other Jharric deities, especially Iala, the goddess of light and healing.

The highest ranking and most senior member of the enclave is named Seneschal and entrusted with the oversight of all business, direction over ritual observances, and the locations of the other Avan enclaves. The female Seneschal with the highest renown is named Matriarch, and charged with coordinating the actions of the many enclaves.

At times Ava herself reincarnates to lead the faith personally as a mortal of a given race. At such times she chooses a male husband to lead alongside her, known as the Consort of the Mother. Such a man commands unrivaled status among Avan devotees.

Typical Quests. Common Avan enclave efforts include seizing the supplies of a local tyrant to support the poor, protecting a jhareth from the Eitharmos, returning a stolen child to her parents, and escorting escaped slaves to freedom through a trail of hideaways and safe houses.

Ranks of the Avan Enclaves

Rank	Prerequisites
Initiatory Ranks	
Ardent	Renown of 1, sanction of an Avan operative
Devout	Renown of 3, sanction of the Seneschal
Operative	Renown of 5, save a life
Order of the Rose	
Reverent	Renown of 10, proficiency in Medicine
Rose Heart	Renown of 25, 1 year as a Reverent
Order of the Thorn	
Knight	Renown of 10, proficiency with one martial weapon
Cimeter	Renown of 25, 1 year as a Knight
Seneschal	Senior Rose Heart or Cimeter within an enclave
Matriarch, or Consort of the Mother	Highest renown of all Avans

The Black Dans

The King's Army and Navy of Trentsmund is the foremost military force in the world. Its soldiers, known as the Black Dans for their iconic sable uniforms, can be found stationed across Vinramar fighting for the glory of Trentsmund—and the occasional spoils of war.

As a military outfit, the Black Dans are highly structured around a central command. From the capital at Forteth, the King of Trentsmund commands his forces through military councils, but the true power of the Black Dans lies with the company and field officers themselves. To the extent they keep their superiors happy, these characters live above the law in foreign lands, pursuing what action and renown they can within the bounds of military hierarchy.

The Black Dans accept any and all recruits. In addition to providing them a poor lifestyle, the King offers 1 silver penny's pay (sp) per month to those who don the Black of the Dans. If they join the Army, they become privates. If the Navy, they become seamen.

Ranks of the Black Dans

Army Rank	Renown	Command
Sergeant	1	Squad (10 privates)
Lieutenant	3	Section (3 squads)
Captain	5	Company (3-6 sections)
Major	7	Lieutenant Colonel's second-in-command
Lieutenant Colonel	10	Battalion (3-5 companies)
Colonel	15	Regiment (1-4 battalions)
Brigadier General	25	Brigade (3-6 battalions)
Major General	35	Division (3-8 brigades)
General	50	All units in one region

Navy Rank	Renown	Command
Master-at-arms	1	Ship discipline
Midshipman	3	Commander's apprentice
Lieutenant	5	Combat leader (1-6 lieutenants per ship)
Commander	7	Captain's second-in-command
Captain	10	1 ship
Commodore	15	Squadron (2-12 ships)
Rear Admiral	25	Squadron (2-12 ships) or fleet (5-30 ships)
Vice Admiral	35	Fleet (5-30 ships)
Admiral	50	All ships in one region

A private or seaman earning 1 renown is elevated to the position of sergeant or master-at-arms. Pay increases to 1 gold dollar (gp) per month, then doubles each time he or she moves up a rank, to a total of 256 gp per month for a general. With enough distinction, a doughty soldier can make a fine living. But getting those promotions takes grit and daring. Many die in their pursuit.

Alternatively, a character of sufficient means and reputation can purchase a commission in the Black Dans by paying the equivalent of 25 years' pay at the desired rank. A Captain's commission, for example, costs 1,200 gp, while a Colonel's reaches 9,600 gp. This practice has occasionally put brainless dandies at the head of a column, it's true. Such fools die quickly on the field, and too often take many others with them.

Each military rank comes with an assigned command, a number of privates, ships, or other duties in the officer's charge. These appointments are made by ranking officers, and may or may not be favorable. Some soldiers are green or unruly, and some ships are cursed.

Intelligence Officers

Position	Required Rank	Command
Spy	Lieutenant	Undertakes missions to gather, manipulate, or disrupt intelligence
Operations Officer	Captain	Plans operations, handling 2-5 spies
Field Officer	Major	Manages operations, undertakes most dangerous missions
Chief Intelligence Officer	Major General	Coordinates large-scale spy efforts in an entire region

The exact duties of an officer depend not only on rank, but on the objectives of the engagement and his or her particular assignment. Intelligence officers and elite unit officers get the greatest share of adventure as they trek beyond enemy lines for tactical missions and espionage. Elite units are usually made up of a small detachment of privates hand-picked for specialized objectives like diplomacy, reconnaissance, science operations, or guerilla maneuvers. These are the daring men and women who win wars.

Some officers might pursue appointment to an intelligence position, chasing agents and manipulating the flow of information to gain the King an advantage on the field. Each position has a required rank, allowing a promising spy to eventually command a network of operatives in all manner of subterfuge.

Service in the Navy is more insular than the Army, with seamen generally confined to one vessel and captain. Officers in the King's Navy are personally chosen by their captains, who frequently promote friends and allies. Rivalries aboard a navy vessel can be bitter, all the more so when the ship is alone at sea for months.

Typical Quests. Standard quests in the Black Dans include capturing a strategic fort or town, negotiating an alliance with local factions, gathering critical materials or information on enemy movements, and piloting a blockade run.

The Eitharmos

The Eitharmos is the last vestige of an ancient crusader cult sworn to purge the world of the jharethil and those who associate with them. Its warriors are called forth from time to time, mustering from the fabled city of Rhûminos like spectral hunters arrayed for war. The old tales rehearse the pursuit and slaughter of the heretics with fascination and dread.

The truth of the Eitharmos myths lies in the forgotten past. Etholchan teachings hint that Arrochimeir, eldest son of Daemoth, was slain with seven wounds in a cataclysmic battle now only half-remembered. In reverence to him, the hunters of the Eitharmos are inducted by the Wounding Rite, in which seven deadly cuts are made in the novitiate's flesh. By the dark blessing of Arrochimeir, these Seven Wounds suspend the hunter from aging.

Crusaders are drawn into the Eitharmos by this promise of eternal life through religious war. Unlike other Daemothites, the hunters concern themselves deeply with questions of purity and absolution. Their overarching goal to cleanse Vinramar of those they consider heretical is a twisted reflection of their need to be accepted by divinity.

Once a novitiate undergoes the Wounding Rite, he or she ascends through four ranks of military and religious training to become an Otu'lesk, one of the elite commanders overseeing 500 Arui each. The Otu'leskim are permitted for the first time to meet the Ouleithirim, the circle of seven supreme judges, and take instruction directly from them. With every mission, every kill, their devotion grows. In time, this demonic obeisance becomes indelible.

While the most radical among the Eitharmos carefully amass power over hundreds of years, weak and disaffected hunters are punished as savagely as the heretics they stalk. Hundreds of deserters from the order live throughout Vinramar, lingering in a half-waking perpetuity for as long as it takes the Eitharmos to root them out. Deathless exile gnaws at them with torturous questions about right and wrong. When given a chance at redemption, these forsworn crusaders often rise to the occasion.

Typical Quests. Typical Eitharmos quests include tracking a fleeing jhareth, sifting clues to the location of a hidden Jharric chapter house, negotiating with a reluctant informant, and gathering novitiates from the four corners of Vinramar.

Ranks of the Eitharmos

Rank	Prerequisites
Novitiate	Cleric, fighter, paladin, or rogue; renown of 1
Aru	Level 3, undergo the Wounding Rite
Aru'tur	Renown of 3
Otu'ne	Renown of 5
Otu'ra	Renown of 10
Otu'lesk	Renown of 25
Ouleithir	Renown of 50, nomination by an Ouleithir

The Etholchan Church

The more orthodox followers of Daemoth belong to the Etholchan Church. This sect preserves many of the religious traditions of Ancient Mohtra, including ceremonial dress, child sacrifice, and a code of fraternity that encourages loyalty to the Church above all else.

Etholchan priests are respected throughout the West as a symbol of pre-human heritage and ambassadors of the most powerful religious organization in the world. Though most don't openly wield divine magic, a priest who does display the miraculous power of Daemoth becomes a treasured—or sometimes hated—figure among Daemothites.

The core Etholchan philosophy is that Daemoth (to them the supreme Creator) requires nothing but obedience to his authority. Rather than a set of commandments or a code of behavioral expectations, the

Church rewards those who follow the specific instructions of their god, as voiced by church leaders. The phrase "it is God's to sacrifice" is a common adage among Etholchans, implying that Daemoth doesn't care how you live, so long as you act when he or his representatives call.

While they hold obedience to be the highest virtue, Etholchans consider weakness the deadliest of sins. To show frailty, fail, or fall behind is to become unworthy. This doctrine has been championed by the Etholchan Inquisition over the centuries, justifying (in their minds) the systematic execution of heretics, including the jharethil and Jharric followers. To most Etholchans, the punishment of weakness is a law of nature.

All of the Etholchan hierarchy answers to the Hohram, a divine seer that is the sect's central figurehead. Commanding the absolute obedience of every Etholchan in Vinramar, the Hohram is perhaps the most powerful person in the world.

Follower and priest alike wear the ritual dress of the Etholchans whenever in public, as a symbol of Daemoth's constant hold over the life of the wearer. The dress consists of a tunic that laces up the front, worn with a wide purple girdle trimmed in black. Both are often worn in conjunction with other clothing, but are required public dress for believers in good standing.

Typical Quests. Common quests in the Etholchan Church include investigating a person's claim to be a daemon, rescuing holy writings or sacred ground from being defiled by Jharric believers, running the election campaign of an Etholchan political candidate, and establishing an Etholchan mission in the outlands.

Ranks of the Etholchan Church

Rank	Prerequisites
Abject	None
Disciple	Renown of 1
Eshret	Renown of 3
Nephurah	Renown of 10
Maerog	Renown of 25
Vaeduah	Renown of 50
Hohram	Renown of 90

Humenhi Wayfarers

As the most prominent network of Senfaerist temples, the Humenhi Wayfarers perform their Sacred Mysteries throughout Vinramar. Each of these doctrines corresponds to one of the 36 Methods of Liung Do, an array of martial arts techniques developed by Humenhi, the founder of the discipline. A wayfarer's training begins with the simple virtues of restraint, discipline, modesty, and mutual trust.

Ranks of Humenhi Wayfarers

Rank	Prerequisites
Peregrine	Renown of 1
Sojourner	Level 1 monk, renown of 3
Wayfarer	Level 3 monk, renown of 5
Peripatetic	Level 5 monk, renown of 7
Monk	Level 7 monk, renown of 10
Champion	Renown of 15, 2 years as a Monk
Master	Level 10 monk, renown of 25, 2 years as a Champion
Grand Master	Level 15 monk, renown of 50, 2 years as a Master
Scion of Senfaer	Most senior and highest-level Grand Master at a temple

The headquarters of Humenhi Senfaerism is the Liung Do Temple in Aldalar. From its secluded monasteries—and smaller temples scattered across the world—rise highly capable monks of every order. These enlightened warriors uphold Senfaer's charge to protect the four worlds from threats beyond the stars.

To join a temple and become a Peregrine, aspiring wayfarers need only prove their earnest determination to receive training. This is often done through an initiation quest such as delivering a message to a faraway monastery, caring for monks mutated by aberrations, or learning the first four Methods of Liung Do. Once the quest is complete, the aspirant takes the Humenhi vow and dons the robe of the wayfarer. The vow includes a promise to refrain from indulgence, deceit, intoxication, sensuality, and flippancy.

A wayfarer advances within the temple where he or she is accepted. Time, experience, and rigorous training all factor into this progression. With each rank are taught additional Methods of Liung Do and their corresponding Mysteries, through ritual, martial arts drills, and practical application. It's common for some to find the higher-level doctrines bizarre or distressing.

Typical Quests. Common Wayfarer quests include closing dangerous portals, hunting intrusive aberrations, harvesting ingredients to cure a plague, and erecting waypoints for others traversing the Darkplane.

The Infernossos

The Infernossos is a network of covenanted signatories—damned souls who have contracted their services to the archdevil Gauren. Most signatories are clerics and warlocks looking for unholy power, but there are also rogues who serve the archdevil as spies and assassins.

With written covenants serving as the basis for all service within the Infernossos, the organization uses

complex bylaws to enforce fealty, encourage patronage, and strengthen its interests throughout the world. Its operation often resembles a crime ring dependent on reciprocity of services. Authority over the Infernossos resides with a system of courts, whose Provosts and Prelates exact the terms of each signatory's pact.

Precise goals and duties within the Infernossos depend largely on the agenda of the individual devils to whom a signatory has sworn service. Often they involve the wielding of political, economic, or social influence in a manner beneficial to others within the network. Control over mortal affairs is endlessly appealing to the fiends that hold sway over the infernal courts, but above all, the Infernossos seeks recruits. To that end, signatories that reach the rank of Notary are charged with headhunting new members.

Typical Quests. Common quests within the Infernossos include stealing or replacing official documents, assassinating disruptive individuals, punishing other signatories for disloyalty, and gaining the favor of an influential politician or merchant.

Ranks of the Infernossos

Rank	Prerequisites
Signatory	Cleric, rogue, or warlock (fiend patron); renown of 1
Aedile	Renown of 3
Notary	Renown of 5
Provost	Renown of 10
Prelate	Renown of 15
Notary Grand Prelate	Renown of 25
Consul General of the Infernal Body	Renown of 50

The Jharric Faith

Historically, the Jharric Faith was a highly organized religious tradition with strong connections to the ancient jharethil. Millennia of persecution have reduced their congregations to small groups that pray together at hidden mountain shrines. Secrecy is all that stands between them and execution by the Eitharmos.

The Jharric gods are Jharus, Loragg, Ava, and Iala. Three of these four are served by a single religious hierarchy which mediates between the gods and the Faithful that revere them. Ava, however, is represented by her own operatives within the Avan Enclaves, somewhat apart from the other Jharric gods. Within the Jharric Faith, priests that earn 10 renown pledge themselves to one deity, whether as Ensigns of Jharus, Abbots of Loragg, Ialhalil of Iala, or by joining a local Avan Enclave.

In the secret cities of the jharethil, hidden from the sorrows of the world, the church is still organized as it was of old. The reigning king or queen serves as High Priest or Priestess over the city, heading both a political and a religious council. A Lansarus sits on the religious council with all others of that rank, and the Elders each govern one congregation of the Faithful, called a chapter. These congregations meet in their own chapter houses, and employ a number of Priests and Votives relative to the size of the congregation.

The Faithful are deeply concerned with the principle of *mahat*, which represents the five keys of the natural universe: balance, justice, life, purity, and truth. *Mahat* is both a concept and a force. According to the teachings of the Jharric Faith, it is what protects the four worlds and all natural life from the infectious influence of the Darkplane. It emanates from Salvendum, sowing life and ordering matter by natural laws.

Members of the Jharric Faith are expected to preserve *mahat* by embodying its five keys: maintaining personal balance, sustaining order and justice, preserving life, encouraging moral rectitude, and speaking only truth. Of course, this is far easier said than done, especially since much of the world treats the Faithful as unclean heretics.

Priests of Jharus. Among the priests of the Faith, those that serve Jharus are the quickest to action. The elite of their order, the Ensigns, train in both combat and the channeling of divine magic. Those who follow Jharus are expected to uphold his tenets and succor the weak. Though they embrace all five keys of *mahat*, Ensigns tend to place more emphasis on justice than life, and consider sin or oppression sufficient justification for capital punishment.

Ranks of the Jharric Faith

Rank	Prerequisites
Votive	Renown of 1
Priest	Renown of 3
Elder	Renown of 5
Ialhala	Renown of 10, cleric or paladin of Iala
Ensign	Renown of 10, cleric or paladin of Jharus
Abbot	Renown of 10, cleric or paladin of Loragg
Head Abbot	1 year as an Abbot, renown of 25
Lansarus	Renown of 25
High Priest or High Priestess	Renown of 50, king or queen of a jhareth city

Priests of Loragg. Abbots oversee the preservation of religious and historical records, as well as the defense of sacred relics. Their work often requires seclusion, prompting the building of separate abbeys where they can organize, translate, and transcribe the sacred writings of the jharethil. The largest abbeys house hundreds of Abbots, Priests, and Votives, all in the sacred charge of the Head Abbot. Abbeys are rare outside jhareth cities, with the Abbots instead acting as wandering scribes and scholars.

Priests of Ava. In many ways, Ava is a goddess apart from the other three, but a priest of the Jharric Faith can use renown gained from that organization to advance within an Avan Enclave.

Priests of Iala. Iala's shrines are often arranged beside those of Jharus, since light and purity are precursors to life and justice. Priests who focus their faith toward Iala are promised virtue, clarity, and health. To the Ialhalil, nothing is more important than the capacity to forgive and mend.

Typical Quests. Quests typical among the Faithful include performing healings in a plague-infested village, smuggling holy relics out of an Etholchan city, interrupting a demonic ritual, and cleansing a desecrated temple to Jharus.

The Mozralchic Order

The Mozralchic Order is a circle of agents specializing in witch-hunts, slaying monsters, and protection against the dark arts.

Mozralchic agents train dutifully to combat evil and unnatural influences through investigation, diplomacy, and subterfuge. Aberrations, monstrosities, primordials, and undead are their primary targets, though they are often consulted in the detection of fiends and dark magic. Perhaps because they consider themselves to serve a greater good beyond the rivalries of nations, agents of Mozralchi have a history of acting as unofficial advisors and ambassadors between polities. To formalize their role as diplomats, members of the order dress in white and wear the Hamzara, a ring or amulet engraved with Mozralchi's protective sigil.

In their ambition to cleanse Vinramar of all that is unnatural, the Mozralchic Order dabble in the very practices that they combat, including those traditionally forbidden by most societies. Fighting fire with fire, so to speak, is a tactic the order considers heroic. Agents tempted by the seductive power of such perilous endeavors often meet a woeful end. The order isn't delicate about punishing those who abuse the arcane arts.

In many regions, rulers at least begrudgingly respect the Mozralchic agents for their skill in interpreting signs of witchcraft. But the Etholchan Church and nations traditionally under its influence are highly disdainful of the order, disrupting their operations and imprisoning or executing them with the least excuse. For this cause the agents learn the Raven's Speech, using the birds as messengers that can't be intercepted or interrogated.

The newest initiates of the order are simply called Brother or Sister. After a period of trial as an Agent and receiving the ceremonial vestment as a Scapular, the novice is accepted as a fully gazetted member. The order is governed by the 13 most senior Hallowed Intercessors, called the Council of Thirteen.

Typical Quests. Standard quests of Mozralchic agents include infiltrating a coven of witches, tracking the movements of a vampire, interrogating a necromancer, negotiating terms of surrender from one ruler to another, and coordinating a nationwide response to an onslaught of primordials.

Ranks of the Mozralchic Order

Rank	Prerequisites
Serving Brother or Sister	Renown of 1
Agent	Renown of 3
Scapular	Renown of 5
Sanctified Ambassador	Renown of 10
Justice of the Hamzara	Renown of 25
Hallowed Intercessor	Renown of 50

Nusalmatma

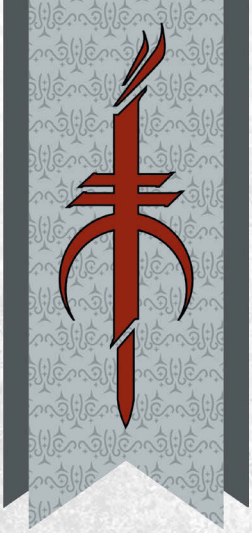
No mercenaries command so fearsome a name as the Goltari soldiers known as the Nusalmatma. Under the banner of the shedu (a winged bull with the head of a telmatra) they hire out their services as scouts, bodyguards, law enforcement, and elite military units.

The sheer number of Nusalmatma mercenaries is a testament to the organization's legacy and stability. Satellite camps across Arrochule, Arwest, Syrikhal, and the Norlythe function as recruitment and deployment centers, shipping out hundreds of Nusalmatma to quell rebellions, rout levied troops, and keep the peace across Vinramar. It's a life of discipline and prestige.

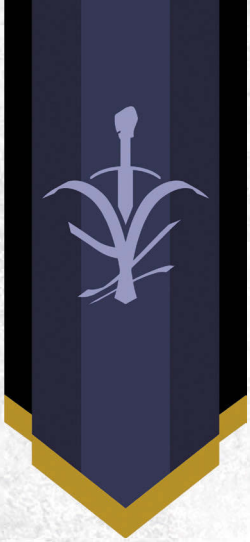
These mercenary practices are rooted in the traditional telmatra warrior culture of the fifth century. The name Nusalmatma originates from the caste of slave soldiers called *nusalham-atra* (literally, *the people of the chain and sword*) which seized power over the telmatra in the wake of the humans' arrival in Goltaraim. Mercenaries track their kills—even those they're not proud of—with trophies from the bodies, and are paid a corresponding commission. With the wrong temperaments present, this system can easily turn a peacekeeping force into a death squad.

Avan Enclaves

The Black Dans



The Eitharmos



The Etholchan Church

As might be expected, the foremost concern of a mercenary is cash. The most coveted posts are those that pay handsomely, such as working as a household guard for a wealthy patron. But not even the richest noble can match the commissions brought by a genuine war.

The organization as a whole, however, does place value on the good of common folk. When a job demands the Nusalmatma take a stand on behalf of decent, ordinary people, its soldiers truly shine in their duty. Captains take notice of this sort of honor, fostering and promoting recruits who display it.

Typical Quests. Typical Nusalmatma quests include defending a food store from bandits, training a force of levied farmers to fight as a column, suppressing riots, and setting up a constabulary in a frontier city.

Ranks of the Nusalmatma

Rank	Prerequisites
Qu-raftu	Renown of 1, proficiency with a martial weapon
Mumal-ak	Renown of 5
Rashisari	Renown of 10
U-khuzabai	Renown of 25
Khuzabai Lamassiq	Renown of 50

The Order of Illiantri

This monastic sect is a rare branch of Daemoth worship, considered mysterious even to other groups that revere Daemoth. It is led by a small, elite circle of priests, and the worshippers themselves—the Illiantri—live within sequestered monasteries in less populated lands.

The Illiantri are most often called upon for missions that require expertise in the forbidden arts. They are the only vested servants of Daemoth that are privileged to wield the aberrant power of the Darkplane itself. Through the Rite of Silence, the priests seal their dedication to the order by removing the tongue and sewing the mouth shut. In return for this self-mutilating gesture, they are granted the ability to communicate in short, telepathic bursts.

Like all sects of Daemoth worship, the Order of Illiantri looks down upon the feeble as unworthy. Each Illiantros is a living symbol of fortitude and devotion to Daemoth. Insular to the point of fanaticism, the sect implements strict rituals in many aspects of daily life. Even the other Daemothites find them peculiar, and are reluctant to deal with them.

Typical Quests. Quests common within the Order of Illiantri might include investigating Darkplane incursions into Vinramar, performing experiments on individuals with raw psionic ability, recovering prehistoric artifacts associated with Daemoth, and vying with other Daemothite sects for control of holy sites.

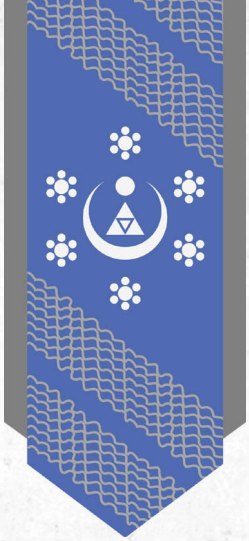
Ranks of the Illiantri

Rank	Prerequisites
Hittiri	Cleric (Aberration, Darkness, Death, Pestilence, or War), renown of 1
Vilam	Renown of 5
Ashcur	Renown of 10
Midhior	Renown of 25

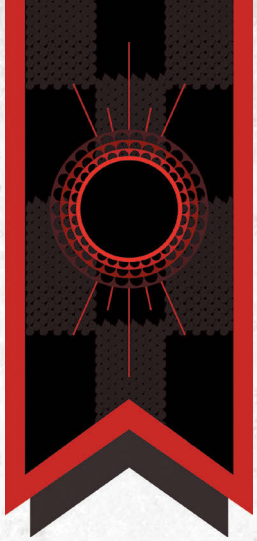
The Patriarchy

The knightly societies that worship Sterianon are known collectively as the Patriarchy. Although diverse in their social status and level of orthodoxy, these fraternal orders place emphasis on chivalry, justice, and learning. Male leaders called Patriarchs speak directly with their god Sterianon and promote justice for the common people.

In nations where Sterianon's priests still serve as mediators, counsellors, and judges, the Patriarchy maintains at least a symbolic social authority. Although

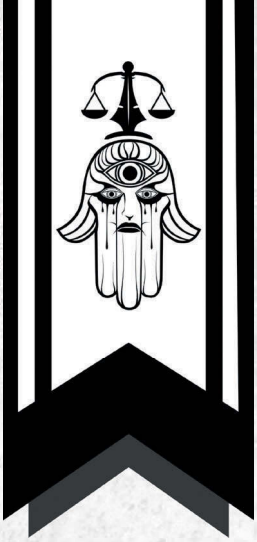


Humenhi Wayfarers



The Infernossos

The Jharric Faith



The Mozralchic Order

leaders insist the order is impartial regarding other world religions, the credibility of such a claim is suspect in the eyes Daemoth worshippers, who consider it an irrelevant tradition clinging to heretical ideals. Concern for the persecuted and downtrodden often places the knights at odds with the Etholchan Church.

Typical Quests. Standard Patriarchy quests include bringing relief to the victims of war, prosecuting corrupt landowners, protecting the identity of a jhareth fleeing Etholchan punishment, and investigating strange occurrences in a far-off area of the kingdom.

Ranks of the Patriarchy

Rank	Prerequisites
Attendant	Male cleric, fighter, or paladin, renown of 1
Squire	Renown of 3
Knight	Renown of 5
Judge	Renown of 10
Patriarch	Renown of 25

Silfana au Ittador

The worship of Silphenor, god of chaos, has arisen seemingly from nowhere within the last few hundred years. The center of the cult is the *Silfana au Ittador*, a monastic palace established by the first priests of Silphenor in the thirteenth century of the *Annoloth*.

Thousands of religious caravans called *bithrodori* embark from the *Silfana*, preaching Silphenor's message of purification by pain. Each *bithrodorus* is driven by a traveling priest of Silphenor, called an Anotros. The nation of Ittador and the greater region of Motta have become the heart of the Silphenite cult, flooding the Western continent with *bithrodori* and challenging the Etholchan Church's status as the dominant religion.

Silphenites focus their belief on the dance between pleasure and pain, prosperity and pestilence. To them, pain is the proof of reality that purifies and reinforces the existence of anything it touches. They cleanse themselves and one another through corporal punishment, using a wide variety of torture implements. As the Anotrossi preach in the streets, they call converts to the stage of the *bithrodorus* to be made clean through pain.

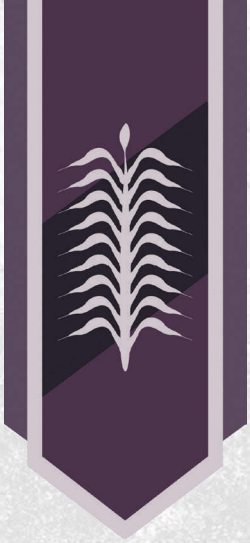
While the central hierarchy of the *Silfana* is strong, the Anotrossi are given the broad responsibility of carrying the message of purification to individual believers, who practice the faith however they see fit. The particulars of the doctrine vary depending on the preacher and his converts, but preparation to enter Dolodiri, the Lord of Havoc's domain, is fundamental to all Silphenite practices.

Typical Quests. Typical *Silfana au Ittador* quests include converting a figure of local prominence, establishing a settlement for Silphenite worship, recovering blood magic artifacts, and performing painful rituals on an individual the *Silfana* considers impure.

Ranks of the Silfana au Ittador

Rank	Prerequisites
Annealed	Renown of 1
Consanct	Renown of 3
Anotros	Renown of 5
Scourge	Renown of 10
Vindicator	Renown of 25
Holy Redresser	Renown of 50

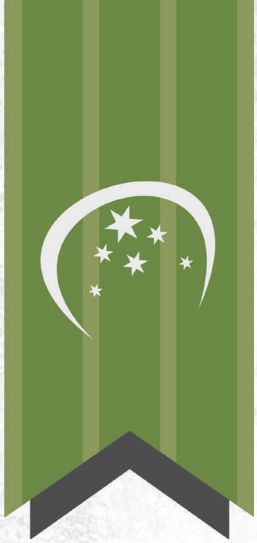
Nusalmatma



The Order of Illiantri

The Patriarchy

Silfana au Ittador



The Solace

The Solace

The Solace is a circle of holy women that serve the mad goddess Forlortha. Members of the Solace consider their deity the supreme intermediary between intelligent life and the sacred wild. Despite her residence in and patronage of the world Iltallach, Forlortha has many worshippers in Vinramar, most of them elves and fey creatures.

Six rings, or levels of authority, make up the hierarchy of the Solace. Many hundreds of priestesses belong to the sixth and lowest ring, while the first is composed of the six highest-ranking members of the order. Forlortha tolerates the prayers of men, but allows only women to serve her as part of the Solace.

The priestesses of the Solace keep shrines in the most remote areas of the fey lands. Worshippers flock to these places for important rituals such as births, marriages, and initiations. The Ladies of the Solace hold councils and training ceremonies there as well.

All members of the Solace choose one of three paths, or divisions, to follow within the order. A priestess's path charges her with a particular set of values and responsibilities, as described below. Members of the three paths work together within each ring of the Solace's hierarchy, but occasionally disagree over philosophies and methods. When one path is dominant in a given ring, it can greatly affect the action of the order as a whole.

Ansamyra Path. As nurturers and healers, the Ansamyra priestesses are tasked with seeking out and caring for the afflicted. Their knowledge of medicine and herbalism aids them in defending living creatures and the land itself from injury and pestilence. Their totem animals are deer and falcons.

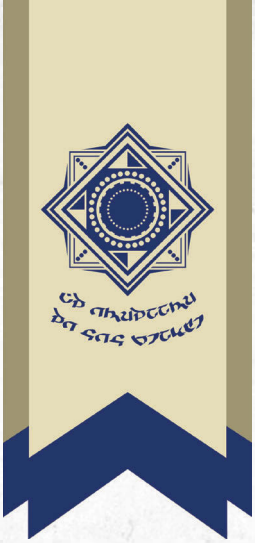
Emelsa Path. Dedicated to diplomacy and peace among all living things, the Emelsa priestesses act as spokeswomen and peacemakers. Their dedication to balance, neutrality, and understanding among all natural forces is unwavering. Emelsa priestesses often serve as diplomats between fey kingdoms, but rarely parley with those who disrespect or misunderstand their motives. The totem animals of the Emelsa path are eagles, nightingales, and wolves.

Irith Path. These priestesses concentrate their training on combat and the hunt. They look with intolerance on those who take advantage of nature, or disrespect its offerings. As warriors and soldiers, the Irith priestesses of Forlortha wield many weapons, but perhaps the most fearsome of these is their grim determination to protect the sanctity of the wild. Their totem animals are the bear and the panther.

Typical Quests. Common quests of the Solace include tracking and driving off a party intruding on fey lands, reopening a collapsed portal to Iltallach, obtaining knowledge from a land spirit, and mapping ley lines.

Ranks of the Solace

Rank	Prerequisites
Sixth Circle	Female Barbarian, Cleric, Druid, Fighter, Paladin, or Ranger, renown of 1
Fifth Circle	Renown of 3, initiation to one of the three paths
Fourth Circle	Renown of 5
Third Circle	Renown of 10
Second Circle	Renown of 25
First Circle	One of six members with the highest renown



The Sounding

Twilight Apostates

Volgothic Cults

The Yáloin

The Sounding

Originating in Trentsmund, the Sounding has grown to become an international society of futurists and paranormal researchers. Their interests lie in advanced technology, as well as spiritual, magical, and aberrant phenomena. Wherever the laws of nature don't seem to add up, the Sounding is sure to be there.

Employing a diverse assembly of scientists, engineers, mystics, and psychics from around the world, the Sounding has an iron in almost every fire. Its agents are often those whose lives have been irrevocably changed by the extraordinary experiences that led them to join the society in the first place. Most are nursing a deeply personal agenda that drives them to seek out the horrific and unnatural.

Members of the Sounding are divided geographically into Associations, which consist of any and all local investigators. The resources available to an Association depend on its particular members, but most are hosted by a wealthy patron, whose home functions as a headquarters. Other common figures within the organization are ghost-hunters, psychics, mimessarchs, experimental surgeons, and steam engineers.

Typical Quests. Quests typical of the Sounding include the purchase and sale of aberrant cadavers, uncovering knowledge of pre-human civilizations, contacting spirits and other extraplanar entities, and stealing advanced weaponry from its inventor.

Ranks of the Sounding

Rank	Prerequisites
Agent	Renown of 1
Investigator	Renown of 3
Patron	Renown of 3, net worth of 200,000 gp
Deputy	Renown of 10
Director	Renown of 25

Twilight Apostates

Daemons who find themselves hunted by their intended masters often find refuge with the Twilight Apostates, a hidden network of daemons who rejected their fiendish heritage. These poor souls look out for one another, forming an adoptive family that survives in isolation. The faction's network extends to most large cities in Vinramar, providing members with food, shelter, employment, and a set of secret phrases and tokens that help them identify one another.

In order to support its members, each refuge operates a collection of enterprises and front businesses, much like an organized crime ring. Although the activity isn't always illegal, it often rubs elbows with the black market, whose interests rely as much on secrecy as those of the Twilight Apostates. Survival is everything to the daemons that comprise this faction, but some find that doing good for others lightens the burden of a life on the run from demonic powers.

Typical Quests. Standard quests among the Twilight Apostates include recruiting or rescuing renegade daemons, sabotaging the hunt of the Eitharmos, installing an authority figure sympathetic to the Apostates, and performing enforcement duties for an allied mob organization.

Ranks of the Twilight Apostates

Rank	Prerequisites
Kid	Daemon, renown of 1
Bright Kid	Renown of 3
Rook	Renown of 5
Honorable	Renown of 10
Second	Renown of 25
Booster	Renown of 50

Volgothic Cults

The inhabitants of the once great empire Perrith Gorr worship blood, and their divine emperor whose hand provides it. Vampires, barbarians, and blood sorcerers of every kind have found their way to the ashen wastes to sit at the feet of the Master and bathe in mortal blood.

Volgothyde's ascension to the status of god sparked great controversy among the vampires. Some swore into his service without hesitation, while his ancient rivals of Houses Mannen and Carachun allow old wounds to divide their loyalty. Most, however, look to the Twice-Born Emperor as a savior come to propel them into a new golden age. Through his influence over the force of undeath, Volgothyde has made possible the resurrection of other destroyed vampires, and promises that when Vinramar is his, every vampire that ever walked the earth will rise.

The Volgothic Cults take different forms, depending on their proximity to their god. The highest ranking priests are all undead, whether by blood, ritual, or infection. More obscure affiliates conduct unauthorized worship among mortal congregations, teaching necromantic arts and admiring the monsters that would tear them apart like hungry wolves. Such outsiders are largely ignored by vampires of the respected kindreds.

Since the cult is newly established in Vinramar, little is known about its inner workings, but investigations by the Mozralchic order hint at research into new forms of blood magic and necromancy. If the cultists' atrocities in Wellusk are any indication, their ambitions lie well beyond the ancestral lands of the vampires. Vinramar had better prepare for bloodshed.

Typical Quests. Common quests within the Volgothic Cult include gathering components necessary for necromantic rituals, searching the wastelands for spies and vampire hunters, courting the favor of influential vampires or demons, and scouting holy ground to desecrate in the name of Volgothyde.

Ranks of the Volgothic Cults

Rank	Prerequisites
Bloodless	Renown of 1
Dusk Caller	Renown of 3, ability to cast one necromancy spell
Eidolon of the Animate	Renown of 10, ability to cast *animate dead*
Redeemed of the Sycophant	Renown of 25, undead
Gascon of the Butchered Pledge	Renown of 50, undead or fiend

The Yáloin

For hundreds of years, the Yáloin have gathered those touched by the Darkplane into the service of Maruma'e, the mutant bride of Daemoth. Worshipping her in Dameoth's name, the mimessarchs, psionic talents, and madmen of the order seek out aberration as a means of transcendence.

The Yáloin are beyond secretive, keeping knowledge of their dealings carefully controlled through memory modification. Rumor has it that the order is led by a powerful psychic that strictly controls the minds of his agents, turning their bodies into appendages of his own will. The Mozralchic agents believe this leader to be Ditrio Mantese, former Hohram of the Etholchan Church. Others balk at the suggestion, since Mantese has been dead for over 200 years.

Initiates to the order of the Yáloin operate separately from their higher-ranking associates, often housed in humble quarters disguised as infirmaries, slaughterhouses, or abandoned fisheries. Once these Dregs and Shivers prove useful, they are raised to the station of Hollow Harbinger and allowed into the underwater temples in which the most foul practices of the order are revealed to them.

Several strange phenomena have been connected with the Yáloin over the years, including the Nemelethe, an aggressive sickness that attacks the mind and memories of the victim. Mass abductions and sacrifices are common in areas where the order holds power. Their seafloor temples are reputedly filled with tortured and mutated victims, brought closer to the "perfect" form of Maruma'e through unspeakable rituals.

Typical Quests. Quests typical of the Yáloin include making a deal to absorb a mimessarch colony as members of the order, capturing powerful creatures for sacrifice, investigating manifestations of psionic energy, and negotiating alliances with aberrations.

Ranks of the Yáloin

Rank	Prerequisites
Dreg	Renown of 1
Shiver	Renown of 3
Hollow Harbinger	Renown of 10
Anemnestic	Renown of 25
Astral Host	Renown of 50

Monsters in Vinramar

Most inhabitants of the world only hear of monsters and magic in half-believed legends. Such things hide beneath the mundane surface of life, coming into contact with mortals who dig too far in their search for knowledge. In forgotten forests, deserted slums, and buried ruins, the unnatural threats that populate this hidden world fester and thrive.

Origins

There are three broad categories of creature in the Darkplane universe: primordial descendants, children of the goddess Sowm, and aberrations native to the Darkplane. Most life forms can trace their ancestry, even distantly, to one of these three sources.

Beasts, dragons, elementals, giants, oozes, and some humanoids (including the dragonborn, gugrum, heathfolk, sarrow, telmatra, and goblinoid races) were spawned or created by the Irvallath, the uncomely primordial deities that labored to shape the four worlds. Many monstrosities and constructs likewise owe their existence to primordials and the dark arts they practice.

Celestials, fey, fiends, and some undead are the product of Sowm and her sons, whose godly forms more closely resembled their humanoid creations: elves, daemons, humans, and the jharethil. These races are often called the Children of Sowm, tracing their roots back to Jharus and Daemoth.

Many world regions have strong associations with a particular creature type. In Syrikhal, for example, dragons and the reptilian humanoids that descend from them nest throughout the mountainous jungle. Goltaraim's connections to the ancient maahiset people make its deserts a playground for elemental creatures. Motta and Arrochule are both regions whose history is steeped in the endless conflict between celestials and fiends. These associations aren't meant to be restrictive, but can help you populate your adventures with creatures that are thematically appropriate.

Adapting Keywords

Certain keywords and tags presented in this book have mechanical equivalents elsewhere. Orc, for example, is synonymous with the telmatra race. Any game material that references orcs can also be applied to telmatra, and vice versa. Likewise, the sarrow are interchangeable with both dwarves and halflings. Unlike these above examples, however, werekin are not interchangeable with lycanthropes.

New Monsters

Austere Tutelar

Few Darkplane entities have communicated with mortals as often as the *tholgar*, commonly called austere tutelars. These powerful psionic creatures have bodies shaped like a clam or beak, about the size of a large dog. Though naturally invisible, they can usually be seen because of the lumpy sludge that pours out of the orifice on the crown of the beak. This acid-like substance is visible, giving a vague suggestion of the austere tutelar's shape and size as it runs off the creature's hovering form onto the ground below.

Voyeurs of Mortal Dreams. From unseen recesses, austere tutelars watch and shape the dreams of living things, learning their most intimate secrets while navigating the mindscape. Normally they are content to idly watch the visions unfold without alerting the dreamer to their presence. Sometimes, however, their need to mold and create turns these dream incursions into something more.

Alien Poets. Despite their repulsive appearance, austere tutelars have deeply artistic souls. They consider dream shaping a creative endeavor, composing potent, complex narratives that leave the dreamer forever changed. Austere tutelars often form a profoundly intimate understanding of those that they observe. This bond, however, should not be mistaken for affection. To them, mortals minds are merely an artistic medium through which the austere tutelar's virtuosity can be expressed.

Terrifying Truth. The exact motives of the austere tutelars remain mysterious, but this voyeuristic urge to shape dreams and learn secrets means they often harbor vast reservoirs of cosmic lore. Such forbidden knowledge has a tendency to leak into their dealings with mortals, causing hideous reactions and damaging the fragile sanity of those that begin to grasp the truth.

Austere Tutelar

Medium aberration, unaligned

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 212 (22d8 + 113)
Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	11 (+0)	20 (+5)	23 (+6)	18 (+4)	25 (+7)

Saving Throws Wis +8, Cha +11
Skills Deception +11, Performance +15
Damage Resistances radiant
Damage Immunities acid, cold
Condition Immunities charmed, prone
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Dreamweaver. The austere tutelar can shape the dreams of all unconscious creatures within 10 miles. It can exercise complete control over what they dream, even if the austere tutelar itself is unconscious, and learns their deepest secrets after 8 hours of utilizing this control.

Dripping Sludge. Creatures that touch the austere tutelar, begin a turn grappled by it, or hit it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it take 27 (6d8) acid damage. If the austere tutelar has one or more levels of exhaustion, is poisoned, or its current hit points are below half its hit point maximum, it loses this trait.

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The austere tutelar's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *charm person, dancing lights, detect thoughts, fog cloud, major image, poison spray, prestidigitation, vicious mockery*
2/day each: *hallucinatory terrain, hypnotic pattern, locate creature, phantasmal killer, suggestion*
1/day each: *plane shift, telekinesis, wall of force*

Invisibility. The austere tutelar is always invisible, but it can be seen because of the visible sludge that oozes from the outlet at the crown of its beak. If the austere tutelar takes a level of exhaustion, becomes poisoned, or its current hit points are below half its hit point maximum, the orifice stops emitting the sludge, making the austere tutelar invisible at the end of 1d4 rounds. This invisibility lasts for 1 minute, or as long as the condition persists.

Magic Resistance. The austere tutelar has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Stench. Any creature other than an austere tutelar that starts its turn within 5 feet of the austere tutelar must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of the creature's next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the stench of all austere tutelars for 1 hour.

Actions

Clamp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d8) bludgeoning damage plus 27 (6d8) acid damage. The target is grappled (escape DC 16).

Caprice of Ethis

Gargantuan elemental, unaligned

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 220 (11d20 + 104)
Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	3 (-4)	24 (+7)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Str +19
Skills Arcana +5, History +5
Damage Vulnerabilities cold, thunder
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities fire, poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, unconscious
Senses darkvision 600 ft., tremorsense 600 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Primordial
Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Elemental Flesh. Most of the caprice of Ethis's mass can be damaged or destroyed without reducing the creature's current hit points. To effectively reduce its current hit points, it must take damage to its crystal vein.

Seismic Susceptibility. The caprice of Ethis can be targeted with the *earthquake* spell. If it is, it takes 5d6 thunder damage at the beginning of its turn as long as the spell lasts.

Siege Monster. The caprice of Ethis deals double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Lumber. The caprice of Ethis spends this turn and its next two turns moving. During that time, all creatures in its space must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or tumble across the shifting landscape, taking 18 (5d6) bludgeoning damage and landing prone 3d100 feet from where they stood. Creatures that roll a 1 fall off the caprice of Ethis onto the nearby terrain. At the end of the third turn, the caprice of Ethis moves 80 feet, and all creatures and nonmagical objects in the space it entered are automatically destroyed. The caprice of Ethis leaves gaping craters in spaces it once occupied.

Volcanic Geysers. Each creature in the caprice of Ethis's space must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 18 (5d6) fire damage.

Caprice of Ethis

Few living souls remember the last time the caprices of Ethis rampaged across Vinramar. Once, these mountains of churning magma dominated the world, riving the landscape with every thundering step. In war, Ethis was known to conjure them from the raw intelligence of the Primordial Realm as titanic champions that none but the gods could subdue.

Lumbering Volcanoes. A caprice of Ethis measures between 2,000 and 5,000 feet across. Its body is made of jagged rock, shards of hot glass, and half-submerged magma rivers. The creature's sole internal organ is a crystal vein that runs through the center of its elemental flesh. This mineral formation, measuring 10 feet at its narrowest and as much as 60 feet at its widest, runs from the creature's rear to its front, but never emerges on the surface of its stone body. It is the only area where enemies can harm the caprice of Ethis.

To reach the crystal vein, creatures must either rend the very rock from which the primordial is made, or traverse the tortuous passages of the caprice of Ethis's body until they reach its buried heart. Often the terrain includes narrow crevasses and blistering volcanic rivers. The entire space it occupies is difficult terrain, and may require players to make Strength (Athletics) checks or Dexterity saving throws to climb, jump, or escape the hazards of its shifting passageways.

The blood-red crystal in the vein is razor-sharp and hotter even than the magma that surrounds it. Those who have been able to salvage the material find it light, sturdy, and well suited as a component for weapons, armor, and fire-based enchantments. In its natural state, however, the crystal vein is the only vulnerable spot on the caprice of Ethis. When damaged, the crystal violently trembles and shatters.

Hrildovolk

The origin of the hrildovolk, or forbidden watchers, lies far beyond the memory of even the gods themselves. Similar to golems, they were somehow fashioned from the waste and scoria of aberrant creatures long extinct. The hrildvolk are able to capture light in a way that both sustains their horrific bodies and preserves within them a perfect record of all that they see.

Alien Hybrids. A hrildovolk's body consists of a hulking mass of limbs, tentacles, claws, and other appendages fitted together in complete disorder. At the crest of this agglomeration hovers a 5-foot eyeball with six to twelve lobes, each facing a different direction. Although fearsome to behold, these aberrant constructs are relatively weak and clumsy.

Sentinels of the Darkplane. The eye of a hrildovolk absorbs all light that passes through its retina, giving energy to its limbs and storing a perfect imprint of every sight it beholds. The creature itself remembers, in exact detail, everything it has ever seen. This capability makes hrildovolk uncommonly useful as sentries and watchdogs, though their combat ability is limited. Some claim to have discovered a way to transfer a hrildovolk's past sights to another creature in vision, but such stories are often dismissed.

Hrildovolk

Large aberration, unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 16 (2d10 + 5)
Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)

Skills Perception +10
Damage Immunities radiant
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages all, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Light Absorption. While the hrildovolk is in bright light, its armor class increases by 2 and it gains a +5 bonus to initiative rolls. If blinded, it can use its action to automatically end the condition. If the hrildovolk remains in darkness for 5 days, it dies.

Star Mongrel. The hrildovolk is considered a construct as well as an aberration. It is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Actions

Multiattack. If it is in bright light, the hrildovolk makes two anomalous limbs attacks.

Anomalous Limbs. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) damage. Roll a d6 to randomly determine the damage type: 1 is bludgeoning, 2 is piercing, 3 is slashing, 4 is acid, 5 is cold, and 6 is necrotic.

Kierkani

In the coldest reaches of the Darkplane, the kierkani sing their mind-melodies amidst the starless void. These serpentine aberrations nest in nothingness, requiring only an occasional feast to fuel their massive bodies. Although their wrath in greater numbers is terrible to behold, the kierkani usually dwell alone or with a mate, unless they have pledged their destructive capabilities to the service of a greater aberration.

Flying Battering Rams. Measuring around a thousand feet long, the kierkani are among the most colossal beings in the universe. Their iron-tough exoskeletons protect them during flight from weapons, blunt force, and environmental vicissitudes. In combat, this protective organ is equal parts armor and weapon, allowing a kierkani to mow down most things in its path.

Vessel to the Stars. Protruding from the sides of the exoskeleton are dozens of tentacles, more than 30 feet in length and several feet in diameter. A kierkani's head is reinforced by the thickest armor, and like its other orifices, the beak-like mouth is airtight when closed. This physiology makes the kierkani uniquely suited to transporting other life forms through the Darkplane, assuming their digestive acids can be neutralized.

World Breakers. Kierkani are often called the Cyclopean Disciples because of how many aberrations and demigods have utilized them as living vehicles and engines of destruction. Stories of their implacable wrath have trickled back to Vinramar from the unfortunate worlds destroyed at their hands. While such a threat has not yet descended on the four worlds, it's only a matter of time until the cosmos aligns and the Cyclopean Disciples feast on natural reality.

Kierkani

Gargantuan aberration, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 270 (12d20 + 144)
Speed 0 ft., burrow 30 ft., fly 100 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	5 (-3)	28 (+9)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +17, Con +14
Skills Athletics +17
Damage Immunities cold, radiant
Condition Immunities prone
Senses darkvision 1,000 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Deep Speech, telepathy 1 mile
Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Exoskeleton. Creatures inside the kierkani's body can attack it as though its armor class were 14. It takes double damage from attacks that target its internal organs.

Ramming Flight. The kierkani can move through creatures and objects, which take 20d10 bludgeoning damage and are pushed 20 feet, falling prone. When this damage is rolled, any die results of 10 are also dealt to the kierkani as bludgeoning damage. Creatures it moves through can make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to either escape being damaged or to take half damage and cling to the kierkani's body. Creatures clinging to the kierkani move with it, and can climb 10d100 feet into its mouth and become swallowed (see the swallow action below).

Siege Monster. The kierkani deals double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Multiattack. The kierkani makes four tentacle attacks and one bite attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 23 (3d10 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the kierkani can't bite another target.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature and is within 15 feet of the kierkani, it is grappled (escape DC 19).

Swallow. The kierkani makes one bite attack against a Huge or smaller creature it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target takes the bite's damage, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends.

While swallowed, the creature is considered prone, its speed is reduced to 5 feet, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the kierkani, and it takes 35 (10d6) acid damage at the start of each of the kierkani's turns. A swallowed creature can crawl out of the kierkani's mouth (a distance of 10d100 feet, determined separately for each swallowed creature).

Olkyari

Syrikhali folk legends tell that olkyaris are the rotting pits of dead stars, left too long in the fetid heavens before they were cast down to Vinramar. The jharethil called them the Unnameable Casket-Bearers—sentient receptacles for some long-misplaced relic from the Darkplane. Their original charge forgotten, they crop up now and then, hunting for creatures to imprison in their extradimensional innards.

Living Wormholes. An olkyari is an orb of absolute darkness about the size of a fist. It might be easy to miss one in a shadowed alleyway, but those who do see the olkyari never forget the dread of it, nor the absolute stillness with which the patient spot stares at them like a hole in the fabric of reality.

Olkyaris each contain a demiplane into which they can absorb other creatures. The size and complexity of the demiplane depends on the age of the olkyari and how many creatures currently reside in it. A younger olkyari's innards are the size of a small room, but the demiplane of an olkyari that has absorbed thousands of creatures over eons is essentially infinite.

Hunters in Shadow. Even those encompassed by an olkyari never truly understand its motives. Their blasphemous perception of reality is likely so foreign to the understanding of natural creatures that to know its mind would be death.

Still, olkyaris are not the most intelligent of creatures, and their behavior seems to emulate that of a simple apex predator. It hovers menacingly in dark areas, waiting for unsuspecting creatures to approach. When its chance comes, the olkyari projects a long, barbed tendril from the dark orb, snagging victims one by one. Once they are worn down, these unfortunate souls are absorbed into the olkyari's extradimensional gullet.

Bearers of Hidden Worlds. The creatures that live within the olkyari's extradimensional gullet quickly settle into organized societies. They are deeply convinced that their lives are normal, that the olkyari is their divine benefactor, and that only hard work will make them happy. This is convenient for their host, which is fed and invigorated by any energy expended within the demiplane. The more populous and active its prisoners, the stronger and more potent the olkyari becomes.

The physical nature of the olkyari's demiplane is as varied as the absorbed creatures that inhabit it. The environment and terrain tend to reflect the olkyari's mood, if such an incomprehensible creature can be described as having moods. Indeed, it can use its actions to innately cast the *control weather*, *mirage arcane*, and *project image* spells at will to target any area within its demiplane—although it can't concentrate on more than one at a time, and it can't perceive what's happening within itself without the use of *project image*. Some olkyari aggressively police their demiplanes.

Olkyari

Tiny aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 100 (24d4 + 40)
Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Stealth +5
Condition Immunities prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Deep Speech, telepathy 20 ft.
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Death Burst. When the olkyari dies, it vomits every creature it has ever absorbed in a heap (see Extradimensional Gullet below to determine the number of unconscious creatures that are released). Each creature within 10 feet of the olkyari must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d4 bludgeoning damage.

Extradimensional Gullet. Inside the olkyari's tiny body is an extradimensional space, the size of which depends on the number of creatures it has absorbed. An olkyari has absorbed 1d10 creatures, each of which is charmed by it. To determine the size of the extradimensional gullet, begin with a 10-foot cube and double its size for each creature the olkyari has absorbed.

While charmed, the creatures living in the gullet believe with all sincerity that they must remain busy and work hard to be happy. A creature that enters the olkyari's gullet by planar travel isn't charmed by it, and can make a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check to end the charm on another creature there. The olkyari can't be attacked or damaged from inside its gullet.

Regeneration. The olkyari regains 3 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and if there is at least one creature that remains absorbed.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the olkyari can take the Hide action as a bonus action if it isn't grappling a creature.

Actions

Barbed Tendril. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (3d8 + 8) piercing damage. If the target is medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 14).

Absorb. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature grappled by the olkyari. *Hit:* 26 (4d8 + 8) force damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pulled 10 feet toward the olkyari. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, it is absorbed into the extradimensional space inside the olkyari. Creatures absorbed this way are returned to their maximum hit point value and are charmed by the olkyari as long as they remain inside it, as described under Extradimensional Gullet.

Although an olkyari isn't automatically aware of what's happening inside it, it can sense a relative drop or rise in energy. If the demiplane's population shifts up or down by one-third, the olkyari will know. Similarly, the creatures within its gullet can't suddenly cease working without their host feeling it.

Despite occasionally bizarre conditions, the societies that form among creatures absorbed into the olkyari are industrious. They often find ingenious and absurd ways to employ scant natural resources and found objects to support life in the demiplane. The charm over these creatures has them completely convinced that life couldn't be better (as long as they stay busy).

An olkyari with no creatures absorbed is theorized to have a demiplane measuring 10 feet in each dimension. This cube doubles in size each time a creature is absorbed, making it about 1 cubic mile at 10 occupants, 31 miles at 15 occupants, and more than 1 trillion miles at 50 occupants. After absorbing 70 creatures, the demiplane is the size of a large galaxy. Once it reaches 100 occupants, it is basically limitless. At such a vast size, the olkyari's demiplane might contain its own stars, planets, and galaxies.

This logic has led some metaphysicists to the notion that all existence is in fact the gullet of an unimaginably ancient olkyari whose demiplane is so infinite that it has lost touch with the minds of its occupants. If true, such an epiphany would be of little comfort.

Elder Olkyari

Follow these instructions to alter the basic olkyari on page 174 into a more mid-range version (raising its challenge rating to 10).

- Double the olkyari's hit points and speed.
- Add a +2 bonus to its AC, attack rolls, saving throw DCs, and its Dexterity and Constitution modifiers.
- Make its regeneration 10 hit points per turn.
- Increase the number of creatures it has absorbed to 5d100.
- Change its death burst to deal an additional 2d4 bludgeoning damage for every 100 creatures that are vomited when it dies.
- Change the damage dealt by its Barbed Tendril to 35 (6d8 + 8) and the damage dealt by Absorb to 53 (10d8 + 8).

Immemorial Olkyari

Tiny aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 275 (62d4 + 120)
Speed 60 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	25 (+7)	14 (+2)	4 (-3)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)

Skills Deception +9, Stealth +14
Condition Immunities prone
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Deep Speech, telepathy 20 ft.
Challenge 18 (20,000 XP)

Death Burst. When the immemorial olkyari dies, it vomits every creature it has ever absorbed in a heap (see Extradimensional Gullet below to determine the number of unconscious creatures that are released). Each creature within 10 feet of the immemorial olkyari must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d4 bludgeoning damage, plus an additional 2d4 for every 100 creatures that burst out.

Extradimensional Gullet. Inside the immemorial olkyari's tiny body is an extradimensional space, the size of which depends on the number of creatures it has absorbed. An immemorial okyari has absorbed 25d100 creatures, each of which is charmed by it. To determine the size of the extradimensional gullet, begin with a 10-foot cube and double its size for each creature the immemorial olkyari has absorbed.

While charmed, the creatures living in the gullet believe with all sincerity that the immemorial olkyari is a god that created their world and deserves to be worshipped. They believe with all their might that they must remain busy and work hard to be happy. A creature that enters the immemorial olkyari's gullet by planar travel isn't charmed by it, and can make a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check to end the charm on another creature there. The immemorial olkyari can't be attacked or damaged from inside its gullet.

Regeneration. The immemorial olkyari regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and if there is at least one creature that remains absorbed.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the immemorial olkyari can take the Hide action as a bonus action if it isn't grappling a creature.

Actions

Barbed Tendril. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 62 (12d8 + 8) piercing damage. If the target is medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 18).

Absorb. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature grappled by the immemorial olkyari. *Hit:* 98 (20d8 + 8) force damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be pulled 10 feet toward the immemorial olkyari. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, it is absorbed into the extradimensional space inside the immemorial olkyari. Creatures absorbed this way are returned to their maximum hit point value and are charmed by the immemorial olkyari as long as they remain inside it, as described above under Extradimensional Gullet.

Panacorum

Formless and incomprehensible, the panacorum is a sentient plague that passes through all matter like a yellow-hued shadow. Once used to wipe out a world's native organisms in preparation for colonization, panacora have drifted into obscurity and near-extinction. But at rare times, the living contagion emerges to spread its horror from world to world.

Living Contagion. Rather than move through three-dimensional space, a panacorum moves along the surface of objects, creatures, and terrain like light or shadow. All that remains in its two-dimensional grasp becomes putrid and jaundiced, acquiring the distinctive, indescribable reek of the panacorum. Creatures least resistant to the plague may lose control of their bodies as the living contagion transforms them into maniacal puppets. These victims glow yellow, gain the ability to levitate, and vomit new panacora every day.

Chromatic Form. The mysterious nature of the panacorum makes it difficult to harm. To hurt it, one must either attack the creatures or objects that are shrouded by its two-dimensional form, or else find a way to damage it through psychic assault. Anything that is purple in color remains unchanged and unaffected by the panacorum, and weapons that are purple seem to do it the most harm. When it flies, a panacorum appears like a yellow mist or luminescence in the air.

Panacorum

Gargantuan aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 50 (2d20 + 29)
Speed 80 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +5
Skills Stealth +7
Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, poison, radiant, thunder
Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't purple in color
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned, prone
Senses blindsight 20 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Chromatic Aberration. The panacorum has advantage on attacks, ability checks, and saving throws against anything that is colored yellow. It likewise has disadvantage on these rolls against anything that is colored purple.

Damage Transfer. The panacorum can be targeted normally as long as the action doesn't require physical interaction. To target it physically (including attacks that deal damage other than psychic), creatures must instead target a creature or object within its area. Any damage dealt to such a target is also dealt to the panacorum.

Relentless (1/Day). If the panacorum takes 10 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

Two-Dimensional. The panacorum can't move in three-dimensional space like a creature normally would. It moves along the surface of objects and creatures within a 50-foot sphere. Any creature or object within the panacorum's space is magically colored in shades of sickly yellow, with one exception: any part of a creature or object that is purple remains unchanged.

The panacorum can move along the surface of creatures and objects, and can end its turn in the same space as them, but cannot move through anything that would obstruct light, such as solid walls or enclosed spaces. If the panacorum's entire 50-foot sphere remains in darkness for 30 days, it dies.

Actions

Blood Boil. All creatures within the panacorum's space must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (1d12) poison damage.

Possession. All creatures in the panacorum's space must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or become poisoned for 1 hour or until the panacorum dies. If a target fails its saving throw by 5 or more, it is possessed by the panacorum, losing control over its body. The panacorum controls the bodies of all possessed creatures while they remain in its space, and can act through them on its own initiative. This doesn't deprive the targets of awareness or grant the panacorum additional actions.

While possessed by the panacorum, a creature gains a fly speed of 30 feet (hover), and immunity to being charmed and frightened. Its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores become those of the panacorum. It sheds dim light for 10 feet in a sickly yellow hue. Every sunset, the creature vomits a yellow bile that soaks into anything it touches and becomes a new panacorum after 1 hour if it doesn't take psychic damage before that time passes.

The possession lasts until the creature drops to 0 hit points, leaves the panacorum's space, or the panacorum is turned or forced out by an effect like the *banishment*, *dispel evil and good*, or *plane shift* spells. When the possession ends, the target remains poisoned for 1 hour, but is immune to this panacorum's possession for 24 hours.

Puppeteer. Up to five creatures possessed by the panacorum each take an action.

Slonavald

Gargantuan aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 100 (6d20 + 47)
Speed 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	8 (-1)	22 (+6)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)

Skills Perception +5
Damage Vulnerabilities cold, fire
Damage Immunities poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Condition Immunities poisoned, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages —
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Collection. Two slonavalds that touch one another become a single creature, fusing all memories and sentience into one consciousness. The size of the resulting creature is equal to the combined mass of both.

Crawling Sower. The slonavald leaves a trail of spores on every surface, object, and creature it touches. Surfaces and objects affected by the spores become difficult terrain after 1 minute as 2-foot stalks spring from them like fast-growing plants in a density of one stalk per square foot. A creature that touches the slonavald or hits it with a melee attack must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw to avoid being affected by the spores for 24 hours. Creatures with resistance to poison damage or immunity to the poisoned condition have advantage on this saving throw. If the creature fails, it is poisoned for 1 hour and 2d6 stalks spring from its body. The stalks fully emerge after 1 minute, at which time the creature's speed is reduced by half.

Once the slonavald's stalks have fully emerged, if they remain unmoved for 1 hour they begin to seed. Stationary surfaces and objects (including buildings and terrain) within 1 mile of a seeding stalk will grow their own stalks after 10 days. Once per month, each stalk secretes a proto-slonavald that matures to full size after 20 days.

A slonavald's stalk dies if it takes 10 damage or is subject to an effect that harms plants.

Living Lake. A slonavald cannot be pushed or pulled. It can move past other creatures without impediment and through a space as small as an inch wide without squeezing. A single, full-grown slonavald forms a pool measuring 30 square feet.

Soluble. When a slonavald is completely submerged in any liquid, it dissolves and is killed. The liquid it dissolves into becomes poisonous, dealing 3d10 poison damage to any creature that drinks it on a failed Constitution saving throw (DC 16).

Actions

Ego Strain. Creatures within 5 feet of the slonavald must succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence saving throw or take 24 (3d12 + 3) psychic damage.

Host Body (Recharge 6). One creature in the same space as the slonavald that it has poisoned, and that has blood, must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become the slonavald's host as it seeps into the creature's veins and replaces its blood. While hosted by the creature, the slonavald controls its actions with the exception of its speech. The slonavald remains in the creature's veins for 1 hour. After this time has passed, the host can repeat the saving throw. If it succeeds, the slonavald drains out of its orifices and coalesces on a surface beneath it. A creature that succeeds on this saving throw is immune to the slonavald's host body action for 24 hours.

A slonavald can maintain one host body for each 15-square-foot area it covers. While the host body lasts, it loses that much of its size for each host it controls.

Slonavald

In the remote villages of Syserach, common folk all know the tale of the slonavald, a living lake that drifts slug-like through the countryside. In its wake grow eerie, drooping stalks whose seed-pods produce more of the silvery, sentient liquid. Entire settlements are said to have been swallowed up by the slonavald and its offspring.

Herald of the Darkplane Gods. In the legendry of the jharethil, the slonavald is known as the Unction of Four Oblivions. It is considered a scout or herald of the deities that lurk in the lightless abyss beyond the four worlds. The elders write that it is sent to a world in order to cleanse and subdue the planet in preparation for the descent of these unfathomable aberrations.

Exponential Growth. The spores that a slonavald leaves behind take root in any solid material it touches—terrain, surfaces, objects, even creatures. Plant-like stalks grow from wherever the spores have nested, covering a creature, a building, or an entire countryside in a veritable grove of slonavald stalks, each one tipped with a seed-pod that can give birth to new slonavalds.

With each seed-pod laid by a slonavald secreting a proto-slonavald once every month, the potential for this liquid aberration to envelop large areas is staggering. Fully grown slonavalds often meld together, combining their consciousness, memories, and size into a single fluid body. After two months of undisturbed seeding, a single slonavald can fuse with its offspring to become miles wide.

When a slonavald's spores take root in the body of a creature that has blood, the slonavald's liquid form can seep into the host's veins, replacing its blood. While the slonavald occupies the creature's veins, it can manipulate the body like a puppet, controlling how it moves and acts. The host retains its ability to speak, but is otherwise under the control of the aberration for an hour or more.

Tenebrous Centurion

The very nature of the tenebrous centurions remains a mystery to those who have encountered them. Their naturally obscured form and tendency to hunt living creatures has earned them many names in many mythologies. Whatever they are called in local folklore, tenebrous centurions are skulking nesters that fixate on a particular prey, stalking it for days or weeks before pouncing.

A Hundred Eyes, a Hundred Legs, a Hundred Mouths. Those who have faced a tenebrous centurion in open combat have some idea of their size and shape, but no clear record has ever been preserved. The most obvious reason is that a tenebrous centurion is invisible to any creature looking directly at it. Most often it is spied in the corner of the eye or through a reflection. Such glimpses are brief and terrifying, since the tenebrous centurion's anatomy is composed of hundreds of eyes, fanged mouths, and fearsome, tentacular legs.

Cosmic Soldiers. Many of the legends surrounding the tenebrous centurions paint them as warriors, either originating in a cruel, isolated world within the Darkplane, or else molded by Darkplane deities as the perfect soldier species. Survivor accounts seem to confirm this narrative, but always describe the actions of a single creature rather than an organized force. Perhaps most tenebrous centurions that reach Vinramar are deserters, as anxious to stay alive as those they hunt.

Bone-Built Nests. Tenebrous centurions build nests in dark and deserted places, often constructed from the bones of humanoid creatures. Most of their hunting occurs during the nesting period, which can last up to a year. Once a sizeable roost is formed (between 30 and 50 feet in diameter), the tenebrous centurion hunts every 30 days or so, ranging many miles from its nest in search of nourishing meat.

How these cunning aberrations pick their prey is not known, but the criteria are specific enough that a tenebrous centurion will refuse other offerings until its target is dead. Once its quarry is selected, it stalks the creature until it can corner it alone. If desperate, the tenebrous centurion might begin to pick any stubborn companions off one by one, killing them quickly and quietly so it can feast in solitude upon the one it has chosen.

While nesting, a tenebrous centurion might leave all of the carcass behind but the bones, which it adds to the ringed structure where it dwells. In contrast, when the monster hunts for meat, it will likely discard the stripped skeleton, savoring every fleshy morsel it can find on the bones. These carcasses are often found covered in raking wounds from the devourer's hundreds of teeth, and the ground around them churned by the passing of a hundred heavy legs.

Tenebrous Centurion

Large aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 107 (10d10 + 52)
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover), swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)

Skills Investigation +4, Perception +9, Stealth +6, Survival +9
Damage Resistances radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities cold, fire, lightning, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned, prone
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Deep Speech
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Unseen Hunter. The tenebrous centurion is invisible to any creature looking directly at it. Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes at the start of its turn, allowing it to use its peripheral vision or a reflective surface to see the tenebrous centurion until the start of its next turn. The creature is still effectively blinded with respect to the tenebrous centurion during that time, however, since it cannot look directly at it. This trait remains in effect even after the tenebrous centurion is dead.

A Hundred Eyes. The tenebrous centurion cannot be surprised, and has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

A Hundred Legs. At the start of each of the tenebrous centurion's turns, each creature within 5 feet of it takes 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. A creature that touches the tenebrous centurion or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The tenebrous centurion makes three melee attacks.

A Hundred Mouths. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Threnody

Gargantuan elemental, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 180 (8d12 + 128)
Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	7 (-2)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +7, Cha +6
Skills Arcana +7
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, unconscious
Senses truesight 100 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Primordial
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Inanimate Body. Most of the threnody's mass can be damaged or destroyed without reducing the creature's current hit points. To effectively reduce its current hit points, it must take damage to its temporal core. A creature in the threnody's space can burrow through the trash by expending 10 feet of speed for every 1 foot of movement.

Temporal Core. A creature touching the 5-foot sphere at the center of the threnody's space can use an action to transport itself and anything it is touching (including the threnody) up to 100 years into the past or future, appearing in the same space at the time it mentally designates. This sphere retains its magic for one use after the threnody is destroyed.

Treasure Trove. A creature in the threnody's space can roll on the Junk table once per turn to discover an object within reach.

Actions

Lumber. The threnody spends this turn and its next two turns moving 25 feet each turn. While it is moving, all creatures in the threnody's space must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a creature becomes buried in junk, taking 18 (5d6) bludgeoning damage and becoming restrained. The creature can use its action to make a Strength (Athletics) check with a DC of 16, ending the restrained condition on a success.

Temporal Flicker. One creature in the threnody's space must make a DC 16 Intelligence saving throw. If it fails, it takes 28 (5d10) force damage and vanishes until the end of its next turn, at which point it reappears in the space it previously occupied. If that space is now occupied by a creature or object other than the threnody, the creature takes 6 (1d10) force damage and appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet.

Time Shift (1/Day). The threnody disappears, dragging all creatures it has restrained and every loose object within 20 feet of it through a time portal. Restrained creatures that succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw can avoid the pull of the time portal and remain behind. Everything else affected by the time shift is taken 1d100 years into the past or future, as the GM chooses.

Threnody

A threnody is a primordial soul embodied within a temporal anomaly, allowing it to travel back and forth in time. Since a threnody bonds with nearby objects as it moves through the timestream, most appear like mountainous junkpiles, carrying the refuse of forgotten civilizations across the centuries.

Chronal Prisoners. During the captivity of the primordials, most elemental beings were barred from leaving their own one-dimensional realm. Under the direction of Ruethas, the primordial god of time, many of these beings experimented with ways to slip between two points in time as a means of escaping their dimensional prison. Thousands broke through the bounds of reality and simply ceased to exist, but some of the more successful intelligences encased themselves in temporal cores that could safely traverse the timestream.

Hoards of Ageless Relics. As creatures of pure soul essence, threnodies do not grow old, but the thousands of objects that form their bodies accumulate over time into a staggering size. The smallest span no less than 20 feet, while the largest are hundreds of feet in breadth. This material is a trove of eclectic items from the past, present, and future—futuristic tools, ancient artifacts, and a plethora of ordinary junk from every era of history. As the GM, you have final say on what might be found amongst the threnody's junkpile, using the Junk table as a guide.

Junk

d100	Injury
1-20	Nothing functional or remarkable
21-35	An item from the Tools list
36-50	An item from the Adventuring Gear list
50-55	An item from the Armor list
56-57	An item from the Weapons list
58-59	An item from the Firearms list
60-66	An item from the Firearms list under Futuristic Items
67-69	An item from the Waterborne Vehicles list
70-72	An item from the Tack, Harness, and Drawn Vehicles list
72-80	An item from the Trinkets table
81-85	An item from the Poisons list
86-90	An item from the Explosives list
91-94	A gemstone
95-96	An art object from a lost civilization
97	An art object from a contemporary civilization
98	A cursed magic item
99	A common or uncommon magic item
00	A rare or very rare magic item

Vimbaba

Many people have seen human shapes in a dark street or hallway, only to realize they were a trick of the light playing across perfectly normal objects. But sometimes the form that limps or stares from a shadowed corner is an intelligent form, furtively hoping to be mistaken for a crate, an armchair, or a passerby. Vimbabas are malformed aberrations that can twist their bodies into a variety of shapes, hiding among mortals long enough to lay their spawn.

Piles of Wriggling Tendrils. A vimbaba's body is made of a gooey mass of twisted string resembling wet pasta. Their silvery flesh is entirely prehensile, allowing them to move quite fast, despite a clumsy gait. Portions of their form can be pinched off into 1- or 2-foot tendrils, which continue to move freely once severed from the main body.

When one of these silver tendrils senses a breathing creature nearby, it leaps toward the air movement and tries to lodge itself in the mouth or other respiratory orifice. Once there, the tendril immediately extends the needle-like quills nested in its flesh, injecting the creature with a poison that causes it to fall unconscious. Meanwhile, the tendril engorges itself on any moisture it can absorb, usually swelling to fill the throat of the unconscious creature.

Swamp-Dwelling Shapeshifters. Vimbabas commonly burrow and nest in damp climates, such as swamps, catacombs, or wet caverns. Occasionally, however, they choose to live in more populated areas, where their ability to adjust their shape provides a clever means of avoiding detection. More than once, a watchman has approached a drunken figure in the dark, only to discover the clothes filled with writhing tendrils.

Repulsive Mimicry. Insightful observation helps a vimbaba to successfully pass unnoticed as a particular creature it has seen. It imitates the movements and patterns it sees in creatures around it, attempting to blend in among large numbers. Perhaps it covers itself in wool and passes as part of a flock of sheep. The boldest or most ingenious manage to assume an identity in human society.

Locals might mistake such creatures for a diseased old hermit or a distant relative—that is, until they get a good look. Though it can form an approximate Small or Medium shape with its mass of tendrils, the vimbaba cannot actually change its physical appearance.

Moon Worms. Some refer to these fibrous aberrations as the Bodkin of the White Goddess, since they are said to have long infested the surface of the moon. Baturach's celestial body was burrowed through with vimbabas until she plucked them out and cast them down toward Vinramar in the days of prehistory.

Vimbaba

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 28 (4d8 + 7)
Speed 40 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +5, Cha +4
Skills Deception +5
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Deep Speech
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The vimbaba's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *Detect thoughts*
1/day: *Barkskin, hold person, inflict wounds, phantasmal force*

Shapechanger. The vimbaba can use its action to take the rough physical shape of a small or medium creature it has seen, or return to its natural form. While disguised or lightly obscured, the vimbaba strongly resembles the creature, but on closer inspection its features are clearly a gooey mass of twisting string.

Actions

Multiattack. The vimbaba makes one attack with its engorged tentacles. If the attack hits, the vimbaba makes a second engorged tentacles attack against a different creature.

Engorged Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) acid damage.

Silver Tendrils (Recharge 5-6). The vimbaba pinches off two silver tendrils, which become tiny aberrations with 1 hit point, an AC of 10, and a speed of 10 ft. The tendril can make a long jump up to 10 ft.

Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of one of the vimbaba's silver tendrils must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall unconscious as the tendril slips into its mouth and down its throat, swelling to several inches in diameter. If the character succeeds, the tendril drops to the ground at its feet.

Creatures that fail the Dexterity save begin to noticeably suffocate. After a number of minutes equal to its Constitution modifier, the character dies and the tendril emerges to seek a new victim. Another creature can use its action to make a DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check or Strength (Athletics) check to remove the tendril.

Void-Cradle

Native to some infinitely distant world, the *khulmaruk*, or void-cradle, is a heartless sycophant that hunts living creatures for their souls. When the void-cradle digests a creature it has eaten, it rapidly grows a new tentacle, with the victim's consciousness hovering at the tip of the appendage in the form of a dark flame.

Spidery Behemoths. Void-cradles have a bulbous underbelly with four long, bowed legs protruding from the top of the thorax in a cross pattern. A large eye is nestled in the soft flesh between each leg, allowing it to see in four directions, and where the four legs meet on its crown sits a gaping, toothless maw. A number of tentacles extend from the underbelly, each tipped with a fanged mouth.

Soul-Trapping Sorcerers. Those void-cradles that have feasted well might have six, ten, even fifteen tentacles, the mouths of which all cradle an orb of black fire. When it casts a spell, one of these orbs is consumed, destroying the consciousness of the creature whose soul was trapped within it. If a void-cradle is killed with all its tentacles intact, the orbs of dark flame remain lit, preserving the consciousness inside. Perhaps some vile loremaster still knows the forbidden method of extracting the soul from the dark flame so it can be reincarnated within a new body.

Void-Cradle

Huge aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 108 (12d12 + 30)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	6 (-2)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +2
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Deep Speech, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Anima Thief. The void-cradle has four soul-bearing tentacles that each represent one spell use. Whenever it takes 25 or more damage in a single turn, it loses one of its tentacles, along with the spell use associated with that tentacle. If all its tentacles die, the void-cradle dies.

At the beginning of the void-cradle's turn, it grows a new soul-bearing tentacle for each creature whose maximum hit points it reduced to 0 on its last turn (see Soul Drain below). For each tentacle grown this way, it regains 20 hit points. Constructs or undead reduced to 0 hit points do not cause a tentacle to grow.

Innate Spellcasting. The void-cradle's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14). It can cast a total number of spells each day equal to the number of soul-bearing tentacles it has. Each time it grows a new tentacle, it gains a new spell use. The void-cradle can expend a spell use to cast any of the following 2nd-level spells, requiring no components:

Darkness, detect thoughts, phantasmal force, shatter

Actions

Multiattack. The void-cradle makes as many soul drain attacks as it has tentacles.

Soul Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d10) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.

Yuriph

In the dark gaps between dimensions swim the yuriphim, deformed celestials who wield the supernal signs of planar travel. Wherever beings traverse the boundaries of reality, these sentinels watch in vigilant silence. Their existence in the Darkplane has left the yuriphim with a haunting appearance: sallow skin, misshapen faces, and eight twisted arms.

Servitors of the Ivory Keys. During the creation, these creatures were imbued with the light of the Ivory Keys, celestial artifacts that reinforce natural reality and can open or close passages between the planes. As bound minions of any who holds the keys, the yuriphim can transport themselves and others anywhere in existence with a simple gesture.

The yuriphim seldom appear alone. In groups, they can easily overpower most planar threats, though they are always beholden to the Keys (and whoever controls them) as the source of their power.

Celestial Captives. Sowm first created the yuriphim as celestial guardians of the planes, sentinels tasked to ensure that all living things remain in their proper dimensions. When Gallister wrested the Ivory Keys from Loragg, however, he carried the yuriphim into the Darkplane, after which they became known as the Pinioned Keepers—merciless aberrations pressed into Gallister's service.

Wardens of Planar Travel. The yuriphim continue to carry out their duty as cosmic gatekeepers. Creatures that travel between the Realms of Existence are often observed or escorted by these stoic figures (whether they know it or not), and those that threaten the laws of dimensional integrity should expect swift and stern reprisals.

Yuriph

Medium celestial, lawful neutral

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 125 (22d8 + 26)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +7
Damage Resistances radiant
Damage Immunities cold
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages all (see Innate Spellcasting below)
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Aberrant Gatekeeper. The yuriph is considered an aberration as well as a celestial.

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The yuriph's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no verbal or material components:

At will: *gate, levitate, light, telepathy*

Actions

Multiattack. The yuriph makes eight fist attacks.

Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 5 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Superior Invisibility. The yuriph turns invisible until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the yuriph wears or carries is invisible with it.

Void Stare. The yuriph targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. If the target can see the yuriph, it must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or take 28 (5d10) psychic damage and become stunned until the end of the yuriph's next turn.

System Options

This section contains optional rules to aid in creating an atmosphere of danger, fear, and mystery in your campaigns.

Vorruc Infection

If your characters spend any significant time in Wellusk or Perrith Gorr, they're likely to come into contact with the vorruc infection, a disease that transforms its victims into quasi-vampiric cannibals. It targets animals, humanoids, and most other living creatures.

Once per day, when a creature ingests organic material that is tainted by the vorruc infection, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC equal to 1 plus the number of times that character has previously made this saving throw in the last month. On a failure, the creature contracts the vorruc infection at stage 1.

The effects of each stage are cumulative. Once a creature has advanced to the next stage, add that stage's effects to those above it.

Stage 1. Every dawn, the infected creature makes a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. After a number of failures equal to 3 × its Constitution modifier (minimum of 1), it advances to the next stage.

Stage 2. The creature wakes up once an hour while sleeping, requiring it to rest for 4 additional hours to gain the benefit of a long rest.

Stage 3. When the creature eats food uninfected by the vorruc disease, it becomes poisoned for 1 hour.

Stage 4. Each dawn, if the creature hasn't eaten live flesh or drunk fresh blood, it takes a level of exhaustion.

Stage 5. The creature becomes unnaturally aggressive, and its alignment changes to chaotic good, chaotic neutral, or chaotic evil.

Stage 6. The effects of the previous stages end, and the creature gains all the traits of the vorruc race, with the exception of the ability score increase.

Darkplane Mutation

A brush with the distorted abyss beyond natural reality can have far-reaching consequences in the life of an adventurer. This option drives home the infectious nature of the Darkplane, teaching your players to truly fear the beings that dwell there.

When a character spends at least 1 minute in close contact with an aberration, you can call for that character to make a Constitution saving throw. The DC for this save is the challenge rating of the aberration. On a failure, the character must roll on the Darkplane Mutation table.

For the purposes of this option, close contact is defined as being within 5 feet of the aberration, being with an aberration in an enclosed space no larger than a 20-foot sphere, or ingesting or touching an open wound with material from the aberration's body.

You can also call for this saving throw when a character is affected by a psionic spell cast by an aberration (using 8 + the spell level as the save DC) and once every day that a character spends in the Darkplane. In the latter case, the save DC is 15.

As the GM, you determine what mechanical changes to implement on a character that gains a Darkplane mutation. Some will have no noticeable effect, while others might require small adjustments, or perhaps even change the character's race to mimessarch.

Darkplane Mutation

d100	Mutation
1-2	Your body grows one or more slimy stalks.
3-4	The crown of your head elongates and grows bony spurs or a crustaceous carapace.
5-6	Your hair becomes prehensile, with a Strength score of 1. Cutting it is tremendously painful.
7-8	Your eyes begin to swell, glow, or take on the appearance of an animal or monster.
9-10	One or more additional eyes emerge from somewhere on your body.
11-12	The flesh of your face becomes transparent.
13-14	Your breath begins to carry a putrid odor.
15-16	One or more additional mouths open up somewhere on your body.
17-18	You grow insectoid or cephalopod mouthparts.
19-20	Your tongue becomes forked, barbed, or strangely long.
21-22	Your mouth, neck, or limbs grow a radula.
23-24	Your hair grows at an accelerated rate.
25-26	Your hair falls out or changes to a strange color.
27-28	You grow glands that give you a foul stench.
29-30	Your skin produces a slime or mucus that's left on everything you touch.
31-32	Your skin changes to a strange color.
33-34	Your skin gains a new texture in places, such as scales, tentilla, an exoskeleton, or stony plates.
35-36	Your skin hangs loosely from your body, giving you a wrinkled, sagging appearance.
37-38	You shed your skin once a month.
39-40	Your body becomes emaciated.
41-43	Boils and sores spread across your body.
44-45	You grow a fin, flap, or gills.
46-47	Your back arches violently, leaving you with a large hump.
48-49	You grow an extra arm, leg, or head.
50-51	You grow one or more tentacles. They may replace an existing limb or emerge from somewhere else.
52-53	You grow one or more insectoid limbs. They may replace an existing limb or emerge from somewhere else.
54-55	You grow a prehensile tail.
56-57	You grow extra fingers or toes.
58-59	Your limbs or digits become webbed.
60-61	Your digits elongate into sharp claws.
62-63	You grow a frill or set of horns, spikes, or plates somewhere on your body.
64-65	Your body develops one or more extra joints.
66-67	One or more extra orifices opens somewhere on your body.
68-69	One of your limbs or extremities gains a full 360-degree range of motion.
70-71	One of your limbs withers, falls off, or recedes into your body.
72-73	Your gait becomes shambling and unnatural.
74-75	Your interior organs mutate until they are unrecognizable.
76-77	You gain a frighteningly unnatural beauty.
78-79	You regress in age, looking much younger than you are.
80-81	You accelerate in age, looking much older than you are.
82-83	Your blood is replaced by an odd or vile substance.
84-85	Your saliva is replaced by an odd or vile substance.
86-87	You excrete ink, acid, or bile on yourself when you're scared, nervous, or surprised.
88-89	You always know the exact time.
90-91	Your body is wracked with constant pain.
92-93	You vomit uncontrollably every hour.
94-95	When you touch gold, iron, silver, or steel, you become poisoned for 1 minute.
96-97	Wherever you go, all vegetation within 5 feet of you withers and dies.
98-99	Your flesh peels away to reveal an oozing mass of mouths and eyes. You become a gibbering mouther. All of your statistics are replaced by the gibbering mouther's, including your alignment.
00	Your body swells and mutates into a large, tentacled amphibian. You become an aboleth. All of your statistics are replaced by the aboleth's, including your alignment.

Dynamic Critical Hits

This section outlines an alternate method for resolving critical hits, called Dynamic Critical Hits. The intent of this option is make combat more frightening and unpredictable in a way that's appropriate to the setting's tone. Under this system, critical hits are capable of inflicting serious wounds, making their consequences reach beyond the battlefield and into the story of the adventure.

Because combat is slightly more dangerous for creatures on the receiving end of Dynamic Critical Hits, you probably want to avoid making it available just to the player characters. It's only fair if their enemies have the same edge. That being said, you should discuss with your players before implementing this option. If the instant death effect seems too extreme, consider replacing it with the target simply dropping to 0 hit points.

Using the Crit Chart

When a player rolls a critical hit, immediately roll a d10 and a d20 and consult the Dynamic Critical Hits chart. The d10 will determine the affected area of the critical hit, and the d20 will determine the critical effects.

The affected areas on the chart account for humanoids, beasts, and other creatures. The critical hit might affect a wing, limb, appendage, or other body part, depending on the nature of the creature. Remember that you as the GM have final say. If it makes more sense for the critical hit to strike a different area, you can choose a result rather than have the player roll it.

The critical effects are cumulative, meaning that whatever result the player rolls includes all the effects for lower rolls as well. The higher the roll, the more critical effects there are. The effects are as follows.

1-5: Roll damage dice twice. This effect is identical to the normal effect of a critical hit.

6-10: Knock target prone. In addition to the extra damage, the target is knocked over.

11-14: Target's speed is 0 until end of its next turn. In addition to the previous two effects, the target's speed is reduced to 0, which prevents it from standing up or crawling until its speed is restored at the end of its next turn.

15-16: Target stunned until end of its next turn. To all of the above is added the stunned condition, preventing the target from acting effectively and making it vulnerable to attacks and environmental hazards.

17: Area gains an injury. In addition to all of the above effects, the attacker rolls on the Injury chart and applies the result to the victim. As the GM, you decide what additional effects might come into play once the area is injured, such as disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks after losing an eye.

18: Roll damage dice a third time. Instead of rolling damage dice twice before adding modifiers, roll the dice three times.

19: Target cannot regain hit points until it recuperates. Record the number of hit points the target has remaining after the damage from the critical hit is applied. That number becomes the creatures hit point maximum (at a minimum of 1 hit point) until it spends three days recuperating as per the rules for downtime activity. The target can, however, gain temporary hit points.

In addition to this effect, the lingering injury inflicted becomes permanent. The GM determines any specific flavor surrounding the injury—if the area is severed, crushed, gored, melted, frozen, or whatever terrible fate makes the most sense.

20: Instant death. This effect operates as if the target took damage that dropped it to 0 hit points, and the remaining damage was equal to its maximum hit point value. It dies instantly. You can ignore the affected area roll and simply have the player who rolled the critical hit narrate their kill.

For example, if Culathra rolls a natural 20 while attacking a succubus, she rolls a d10 for the affected area (a result of 4) then a d20 for the effect (a 17). The affected area 4 could either be the succubus's right arm or its right wing. Together with Culathra's player, the GM determines that the critical hit struck the succubus in the right wing.

The effect roll of 17 means the succubus's wing is injured until a long rest. The GM interprets this to mean that it loses its fly speed for the near future. In addition to that effect, the succubus is knocked prone, stunned, and its speed is reduced to 0 until the end of its next turn. Culathra rolls her damage dice twice before adding the modifiers. Her longsword normally deals 1d8+2 slashing damage (2 being her Strength modifier), so her critical damage in this example is 2d8+2 slashing damage.

Injuries

The Injuries chart can be used in connection with the Dynamic Critical Hits option, or on its own. You might bestow an injury after a creature falls a long distance, takes damage from one source equal to half its hit point maximum, or drops to 0 hit points without being killed outright. You can roll an affected area on the Dynamic Critical Hits chart or choose one that makes sense.

Dynamic Critical Hits

d10	Affected Area
1	Tail, left leg, or lower left area
2	Tail, right leg, or lower right area
3	Left arm, wing, or flank
4	Right arm, wing, or flank
5-6	Abdomen or middle area
7-8	Chest or middle area
9	Throat or upper area
10	Head, face, or upper area

d20	Critical Effects
1-5	Roll damage dice twice
6-10	Knock target prone
11-14	Target's speed is 0 until end of its next turn
15-16	Target stunned until end of its next turn
17	Area gains an injury
18	Roll damage dice a third time
19	Target cannot regain hit points
20	Instant death

Injuries can be healed with a *regenerate* spell, or a number of successful Wisdom (Medicine) checks equal to the d20 result you rolled when determining the injury. Each of these Wisdom (Medicine) checks has a DC of 15. The injured character must take a long rest between each check. If more than 30 hours pass between checks, or if the administering character fails a check, the process must start over from the beginning.

Injured Player Characters

While the prospect of having limbs and organs torn from their bodies may not seem immediately appealing, remember that receiving injuries is a great opportunity to roleplay and heighten the stakes of the adventure. As the GM, don't force an injured player to sit out or feel useless. Find a way to help them continue to participate in the action. Perhaps there's a trap or hazard they notice that must be dealt with, or an NPC looking for a verbal confrontation rather than a physical one.

Be sure to frame follow-up scenes that emphasize the story ramifications of the player character's injury. Who tends to his or her wounds? How does this affect their relationship? How does the injury change the party's plans? Answering these questions through roleplay will enhance the adventure and player investment.

Player character injuries are also a great hook for future adventures. Your wizard lost an eye in a fight with a zombie? Time to make plans for a new one—maybe a magical crystal that can peer into other planes of existence. Your fighter's leg is lame? Begin a search for the best surgeon in the kingdom, perhaps even one depraved enough to graft an ape's leg or kraken's tentacle in its place. Losing a body part may close one or two doors, but it's your job as the GM to make sure it opens far more.

Injuries

d20	Injury
1-4	**Stinging Wound.** Lose 1 hit die.
5-6	**Scar.** Lose 1 hit die. Once the injury is healed, it leaves a scar.
7-9	**Debilitating Wound.** Your total number of hit dice drops to 0. It goes up by 1 at the end of each long rest until it returns to normal.
10-12	**Hideous Scar.** You gain a Debilitating Wound (above). Once the injury heals, it leaves a gruesome scar that, when visible, imposes disadvantage on your Charisma (Persuasion) and Charisma (Performance) checks.
13-14	**Putrefying Wound.** Your hit point maximum is reduced by 1 at the end of each long rest. When it reaches 0, you die.
15-16	**Broken Bone.** You have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that require the use of the affected area. If such an action causes you to deal bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage, you immediately take the same amount and type of damage you dealt.
17	**Internal Bleeding.** Before you take an action that requires the affected area, you must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. If you fail, you lose the action.
18	**Crippled.** The affected area loses its function or mobility. You cannot perform actions that require it. This injury cannot be healed with Wisdom (Medicine) checks.
19	**Maimed.** The affected area is destroyed. It cannot be healed with Wisdom (Medicine) checks.
20	**Grave Injury.** Roll on the table twice, rerolling results of 20, and gain both injuries.

Trauma

Many adventures include sights, experiences, and revelations that assault the mind and weaken its hold on what is real. You can use the following optional rules to determine when and how your players handle trauma in a Darkplane campaign.

Madness grips characters who face a sudden and unexpected blow to their understanding of reality. They might stumble into a den of terrifying aberrations, suffer a psionic attack that damages their psyche, or learn a hideous truth about the nature of the universe. Such traumas have a chance of eroding a character's sanity.

When a character experiences a trauma, you can call for a Wisdom (or Sanity) saving throw. The DC depends on the level of trauma and the character's current mental state. There are 5 levels of trauma, ranging from slight to severe. The Trauma chart lists examples of each level of trauma, and what effects they might have on a character.

If a character rolls a 1 or fails a saving throw against the effects of trauma by a margin of 10 or more, the effect of the trauma increases to the next level.

Only certain types of monsters or spells constitute trauma. If a character sees, touches, or speaks with an aberration, elemental, fiend, or undead, the DC for the Wisdom (or Sanity) saving throw is equal to 5 + the monster's challenge rating. Likewise, if a character witnesses, casts, or is targeted by a sorcerer or warlock spell, a spell of the necromancy school, or one that used blood as a material component, the DC is equal to 8 + the spell's level. The effect of a failed save occurs after the spell's casting is complete.

Constructs, plants, and oozes cannot experience trauma, nor do creatures experience trauma if they encounter a monster with which they share a type.

Trauma

Level	Save DC	Examples	Effect
Slight	10, spell level + 8, or monster CR + 5	A haunting, witnessing black arcane magic, seeing a corpse without mental preparation, hearing Deep Speech, or encountering a monster of CR 1-9	Frightened until the end of your next turn
Minor	15, spell level + 8, or monster CR + 5	A fear effect, gaining the frightened condition, taking 40 or less psychic damage, casting or being targeted by black arcane magic, forbidden lore epiphany, or encountering a monster of CR 10-14	Short-term madness that lasts only 1d4 rounds
Moderate	20 or monster CR + 5	Taking more than 40 psychic damage, being tortured for several hours, witnessing intense butchery or depravity, or encountering a monster of CR 15-19	Short-term madness
Serious	25 or monster CR + 5	Being tortured for days, participating in intense butchery or depravity, being isolated for several months, seeing into the Darkplane, or encountering a monster of CR 20-24	Long-term madness
Severe	30 or monster CR + 5	Being isolated for 10 or more years, experiencing a Darkplane mutation, prolonged or intimate contact with an aberration, being raised from the dead, entering the Darkplane, or encountering a monster of CR 25 or higher	Indefinite madness

Spell Failure

This option deals with the truly dangerous effects of arcane magic, and the ghastly repercussions of using or misusing it. Whenever a character fails a Concentration check on a sorcerer, warlock, or wizard spell, or when one of these spells fails to cast for any reason, you can call for the spellcaster to make a saving throw with its spellcasting ability. The DC for this save is 8 + the spell's level. A natural 1 on this save always counts as a failure. When the spellcaster fails, he or she rolls a d20, adds the spell's level, and suffers the corresponding effect on the Spell Failure table.

Spell Failure

d20	Effect
1-4	**Compulsion.** For 1 week, the caster gains the urge to eat or bathe in something strange, such as dirt, blood, or rotting flesh.
5-8	**Arcane Feedback.** The caster takes 1d6 psychic damage.
9-10	**Trauma.** The caster and all creatures within 60 feet must make a saving throw as if encountering a Moderate trauma.
11-12	**Nausea.** The caster becomes poisoned for 2d4 rounds.
13-14	**Blinded.** If the caster is not in darkness, he or she is blinded for 1d4 rounds.
15-16	**Dimensional Rift.** A portal to a random plane opens within 5 feet of the caster.
17	**Prescient Surge.** All creatures within 60 feet of the caster gain telepathy in a range of 120 feet. It lasts 6d6 hours.
18	**Wild Magic Surge.** A wild magic surge occurs.
19	**Rage.** The caster flies into a wanton rage, attacking whatever creature is closest for 1d6 minutes.
20-22	**Unholy Possession.** A number of ghosts equal to the spell's level appear beside the caster and attack any creatures in sight. The caster is targeted by a Possession attack.
23-26	**Darkplane Mutation.** The caster experiences an effect on the Darkplane Mutation table.
27-29	**Abomination.** The caster is permanently transformed into an elemental or fiend with a CR equal to or greater than the spell's level. All of his or her statistics are replaced by those of the demon, including alignment.

Skill Options

With elements of advanced technology and the occult assuming a position of importance in this setting, you may wish to play a character whose expertise extends into these areas. You can use the following skill options to represent such specialties.

Engineering

You might call on players to make an Intelligence (Engineering) check when dealing with any sort of machinery. Characters proficient in this skill are adept enough with mechanical devices to repair, design, and fabricate anything from wooden looms to steam engines. Engineering is useful in the crafting of vehicles, clocks, siege equipment, and even firearms.

Characters that choose proficiency in Arcana, History, or Investigation may instead gain proficiency in Engineering.

Forbidden Lore

A character's Intelligence (Forbidden Lore) check covers their knowledge of the dark arts. While Arcana focuses on general magical understanding, Forbidden Lore deals with dangerous knowledge that has been hidden from those who would abuse it. It includes the secrets of necromancy, blood magic, rune magic, fiends, aberrations, and primordials.

Such understanding doesn't come without cost, however. At your discretion, when a character with proficiency succeeds on an Intelligence (Forbidden Lore) check, you might impose disadvantage on saving throws to avoid the effects of trauma for 1 hour.

Characters that choose proficiency in Arcana, History, or Religion may instead gain proficiency in Forbidden Lore.

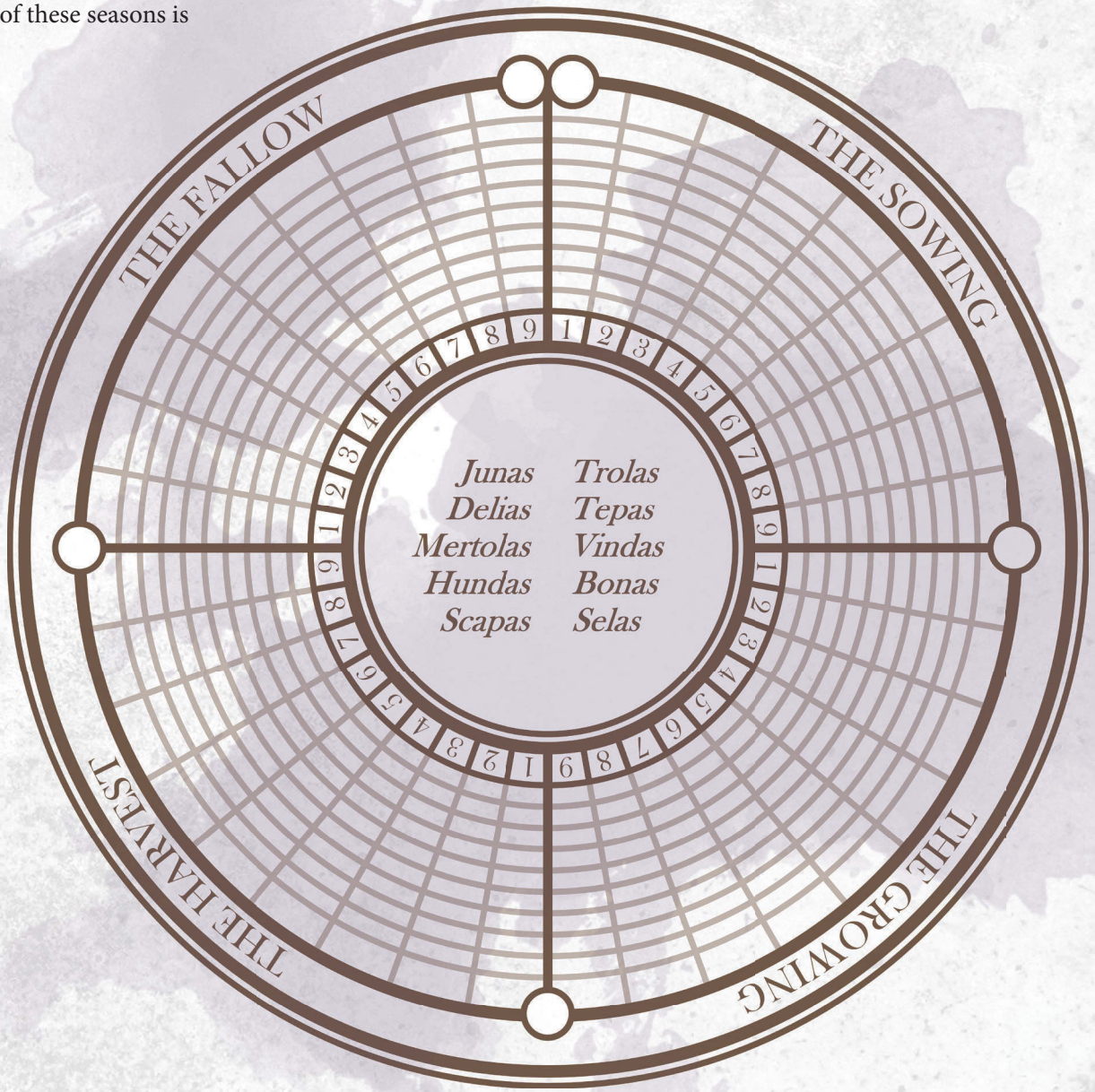
Measuring Time

Across the world of Vinramar, different cultures use many methods to measure the passage of time. Some, like the jharethil of old, keep exhaustive written records with complex seasons, years, and dates. Others, such as the werekin clans of Arwest, simply watch the patterns of predictable natural phenomena.

The most common calendar in Vinramar was developed in the early years of the Mottan Empire. Called the Renizian calendar, or the Mortal Reckoning, it was officially implemented in Motta by Emperor Renizi II, and has been widely adopted throughout the West, as well as in the Empire of Arrochule and the nations of the Goltari League.

In the Renizian calendar, the year is composed of 365 days divided into four seasons: the Sowing, the Growing, the Harvest, and the Fallow. Each of these seasons is comprised of nine *watches*, or 10-day periods, a term referencing the 10-day rotation customary for castle watchmen in early Motta. When a soldier had completed a *watch*, he had been posted at each of the 10 stations over the course of 10 nights. The 10 days of each watch are named (in order) *Junas*, *Delias*, *Mertolas*, *Hundas*, *Scapas*, *Trolas*, *Tepas*, *Vindas*, *Bonas*, and *Selas*.

In addition to the 36 watches of the year, the Renizian calendar preserves five festival days, which are not assigned to a particular season. Between the last day of one season and the first day of another, these high days mark the transition with frenzied revelry. Between the end of the Fallow and the beginning of the Sowing, the new year is ushered in with two days of uninterrupted merriment: *Ochi etAndocculos*, the Closing and the Opening.



Chapter Four

THE COSMOS

First there was an ocean, a vast concourse of water that grew and stretched the bounds of all existence. The jharethil call it Norahaltath, which by interpretation is the Sea in the Void. There was no air, no land, no life; just the endless churning of a drowned universe.

In time the whirlpool lurched and Norahaltath divided at its heart. The water steamed and became a roaring hurricane thrashing out from the center and encircling the sea. Where the pressure from the tempest was great enough, the sea froze solid and became earth. The air wrapped the sea, the sea wrapped the earth, and in the center of the earth was lit the first light.

The sacred flame seared the slag and detritus, sparking it into life and consciousness, burning and yet not consuming. In the heart of the wreckage loomed Salvendum, Source of our Joy and Sorrow, the First of Four Worlds. About Her girdle swirled the other three worlds, orbs of reckless dross hurtling through the tenebrous abyss. Between and around these orbs is a void, the gap of nothingness that the jhareth elders name Nieshalar, which by interpretation is called the Darkplane.

As the ashes plunged into the seas of the four worlds and cooled, they awoke. Many remained below, but nine rose into the light and, marveling, were refined into living souls. They are called Irvallath, the Primordial Laborers. When Salvendum saw the Nine had awoken, she spoke through the Darkplane so that all could hear and feel her thought.

She said: I am Sowm; from the heart of the Fire I command the winds and the seas and the earth. Ye have your being through me; I command you to rise and build.

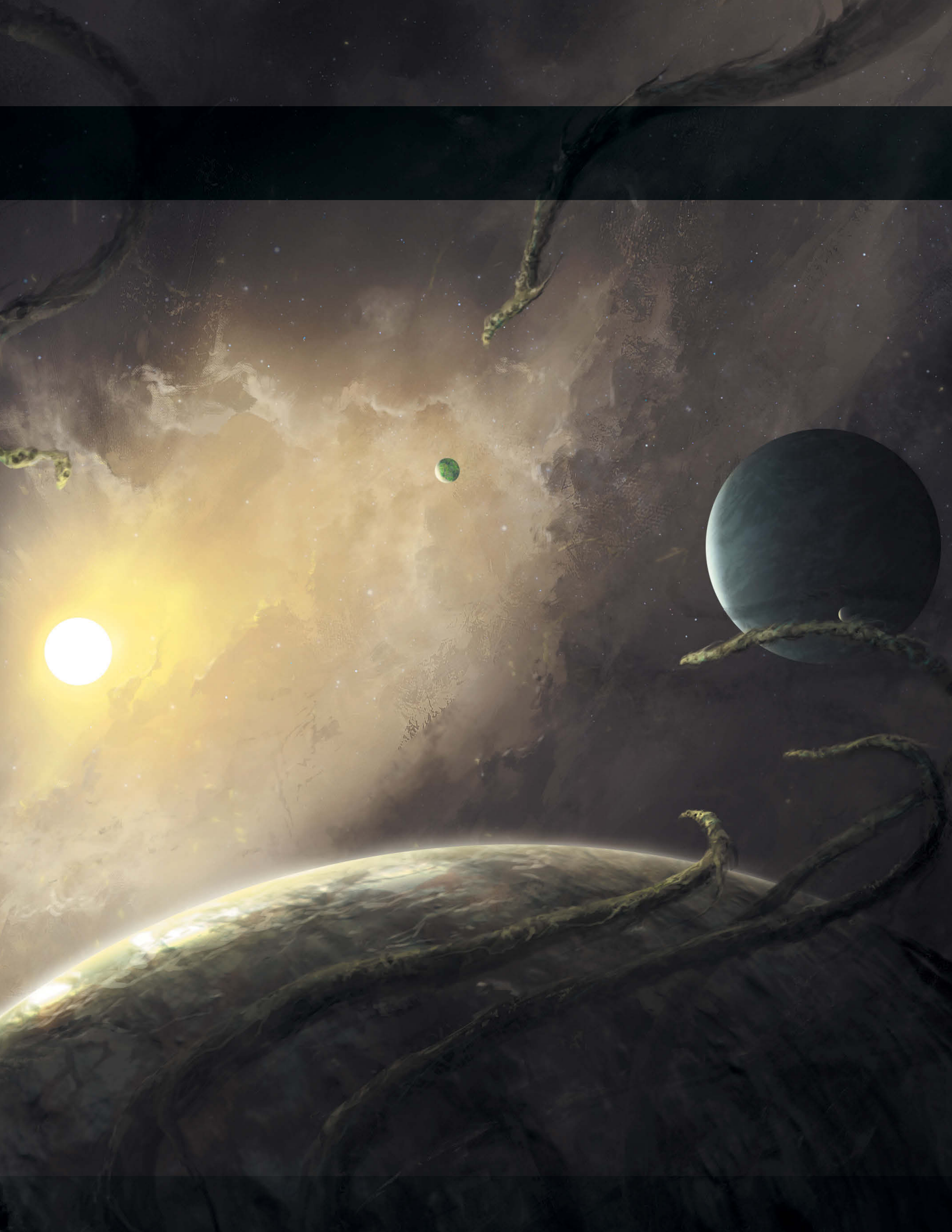
—The Labors of the Irvallath by Bram Genning

* * *

Vinramar represents the center of the known cosmos in the Darkplane setting. It is itself one of the four worlds, a cluster of spheroidal planets that contain most of natural reality. Beyond the surface of these worlds lies the Darkplane itself, a fathomless abyss that mocks the delicate understanding of mortals.

Three of the worlds follow an elliptical orbit around Salvendum, the fourth and largest planet. The light of Salvendum, called *mahat* by the jharethil, radiates across the Darkplane, protecting the four worlds from its infectious touch and making natural life possible. Closest to Salvendum is Iltallach, the world of the Fey Kindreds and their mad queen. Next spins Vinramar, the mortal world, followed by Morvugol, where the light of Salvendum is faintest and shadows gather through the ravenous eons.

This chapter discusses the cosmology of the Darkplane universe, including various worlds, planes of existence, and the deities that rule them. What is presented here is only the beginning of the strange diversity of the cosmos. Many gods, real and imagined, are worshipped throughout the four worlds. Those described in this chapter are only the most prominent.



The Four Worlds

All of the four worlds shelter unique life forms, creatures whose origins are connected to the history of their given home. The environments they dwell in surpass the diversity of Vinramar, reaching into the splendid and horrific realm of the supernatural. Gods and monsters rule these places directly, making them perilous for mortals to enter.

Salvendum

The central world, Salvendum, is native to the celestials. Though few remember it, Salvendum is the sun itself, a massive planet whose radiant glory can be seen from anywhere in the four worlds. The most pure beings dwell here, including the dead that have been judged worthy to enter the presence of the Jharric Gods. Various areas of Salvendum might correspond to one of upper planes, such as Elysium.

All things in Salvendum shine with an overpowering light. Non-celestial creatures that enter this world take 20 radiant damage every minute unless they carry sacred tokens of protection, or are under the effect of one of the following spells: *resistance*, *sanctuary*, or *shield of faith*. Those who remain for 100 days or more gain the Elder Form trait, as described on page 36.

Salvendum contains Athalun, Ithaldun, and Mardelthwaide, the dominions of the Jharric Gods.

Athalun

Iala, goddess of light and healing, makes her abode in Athalun, the Valley of Four Hundred Rivers. There the waters run clear and sweet, and the light of her healing is free for all to enjoy. With her dwell the Ialhalil, whose sacred hands heal all maladies and bind all wounds.

Ithaldun

The island city of Ithaldun is home to Ava and her consorts. Set in the golden sea of Meira, the island's shores extend their reach wider as Ava's power grows. With her dwell the souls of mothers, orphans, and those who die young, making Ithaldun largely a city of children. Travelers here are often surprised by the wit and wisdom of its cherubic denizens.

Mardelthwaide

The palace of Jharus is not a single structure, but an arrangement of gigantic, free-standing columns suspended high above the surface of the world. Each of these towers floats in complex harmony with the others, their windows and doors passing alongside one another in an endless dance of shifting rooms.

In Mardelthwaide dwell Jharus, Loragg, their descendant Altrear (patron god of the jharethil), and those celestials that serve them. Jharus himself is bound to the throne of Salvendum, forbidden to move, lest the light of Salvendum extinguish and *mahat* be lost from the four worlds.

Iltallach

The planet that orbits closest to Salvendum is Iltallach, the world of the eternal sunset, sometimes called the plane of Faerie. Its vast lands are the haunts of fey, centaurs, giants, gnomes, goblinoids, and other creatures that followed mad Forlortha there in the dawn of history. Of the four worlds, Iltallach is the most mysterious and perilous.

Forlortha's madness has long poisoned Iltallach, thinning the boundaries between its dimensions and locking its inhabitants in a mercurial cycle of mania, wantonness, and melancholia. Mortals that come here find all their experiences dream-like, and those that greet them always on the edge of laughter, tears, or bitter rage. Because the dimensions weave in and out of one another, the operation of time and physical space is erratic and unclear. Upon coming home, they often find the journey to have lasted far shorter or longer than they had supposed. Few return unchanged.

Hundreds of fey courts hold sway in Iltallach, including that of Nanbaladhui, the immense tree that contains the spirit of Forlortha herself. The bizarre politics of the fey courts confound mortals, seeming both petty and magnanimous in turns.

Nanbaladhui

At the heart of the world, Forlortha's consciousness lives within a great tree, larger than the mightiest castle. Burrowed within its trunk and perched upon its branches are thousands of fey dwellings. This is Nanbaladhui, the Court of the Deranged. Here Forlortha's closest children wade in madness while the weeping of their captives resounds from root to bough.

Rising from the mountainous roots of Nanbaladhui are two stone rings whose apertures were once dimensional gates into Vinramar. Though in Vinramar their companion portals rest half a world from one another, the two Fey Gates sit nearly side by side in Iltallach. Long ago, the Fey Kindreds could enter Vinramar by the east or west gate, but after the passages were sealed during the High Apostasy, the Fey Gates fell into disrepair in both worlds. Still, residual crossings between the worlds are known to open, even hundred of miles from the ruined stone rings.

Vinramar

The third world, Vinramar, orbits Salvendum just beyond Iltallach. Natural creatures and mortal life forms are native here. Perhaps by happenstance, Vinramar became the stage of the battle between the Creators and the primordials after the creation, and has continued to witness divine conflict throughout its history.

Several gods dwell in Vinramar, including Sterianon, Volgothyde, and most of the Irvallath.

Caraveh

Little can be told of Volgothyde's seat of power, Caraveh. The titanic fortress sits on the eastern coast of Perrith Gorr, where once the Lord of Bloodthirst ruled his people as an undead emperor. Its windowless bulwarks stare impassively down upon the ashen wastes, while deep within, the malice of ages plots its revenge upon old enemies.

Toluratha

This tower, likewise hidden within the Eternal Realm of Vinramar, is the throne of Sterianon, god of nobility and justice. From the high promontory of Toluratha, he surveys the nations of Vinramar, advising the leaders of the Patriarchy by direct visitation.

Morvugol

Morvugol, the Plane of Shadow, is a bleak world, eternally darkened as a result of its distance from Salvendum and the barrier created by its seven large moons. This dearth of light forced all living things that developed in Morvugol to draw sustenance from hair-thin fractures between the Material and Shadow Realms. The resulting creatures and vegetation bear an uncanny connection to the substance of shadow.

For much of Morvugol's history, the world was lush with inky-black vegetation and semi-ethereal creatures that worshipped Ulmhasa, primordial goddess of dreams and shadow. Some 2,000 years ago, however, the disembodied consciousness of Volgothyde found its way to Morvugol and seized control. Using the distant world as a foothold in which to amass new power, Volgothyde transformed Morvugol into a wasteland and populated it with hordes of the undead.

Under the rule of the undead emperor, the creatures native to Morvugol were brought nearly to extinction. Two shadowborn races—the humanoid Amikhad and the insectoid Hana—survived as slaves and blood chattel for two millennia. At Volgothyde's ascension to godhood, he abandoned Morvugol, ending the dark age with a chaotic power struggle that continues to this day.

Ekhmarai

According to the legends of the shadowborn, Ulmhasa sleeps, bound beneath the ruined city of Ekhmarai. There the Amikhad that outlived their captivity gather, hoping to be present at her waking.

Haroth

Mozralchi, the goddess of cunning, dwells in a hidden ziggurat called Haroth, located on one of the seven moons of Morvugol. Tales speak of its sparse halls, untended grounds, and libraries bursting with forbidden arcane knowledge.

Bruhdath

Bruhdath is the unassailable fortress of Gallister, god of war—the largest of Morvugol's moons. Peopled by dead crusaders and the mutated celestials called the yuriphim, it serves as an orbiting watchtower for Daemoth.

The Elements of Being

At its most fundamental level, the universe is made of four types of matter called the Elements of Being. All living things are composed of one or more of these elements: *soul*, *spirit*, *body*, and *deity*.

The Elements of Being interact as components of all living things, existing simultaneously in the same space, but on different planes of existence. Often a creature's soul is housed within its spirit, the spirit within its body, and (if it is a god or demigod) the body within its deity.

A being's soul is its life force, the raw intelligence that animates it and creates consciousness. This element isn't limited to creatures. Plants, fungi, and other life forms not considered sentient still contain souls of varying intelligence. The one-dimensional matter of which a soul is formed exists in the Primordial Realm, making it imperceptible to mortal eyes.

Spirit is a two-dimensional element that allows a being to take a visible form, which often reflects its inward nature. Some spirits are comely and wholesome, others horrific and grisly. Since it exists in the Spirit Realm, a spirit's matter is intangible to creatures with a body.

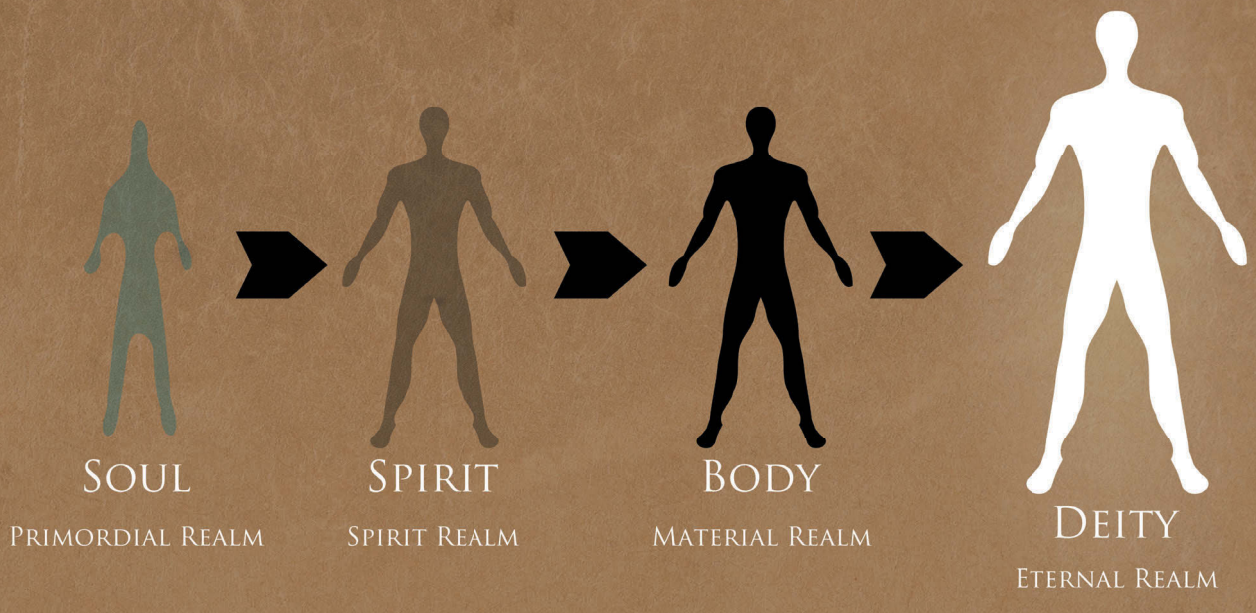
Bodies are made of material substance, allowing them to interact physically with the three-dimensional elements of the Material Realm. They grow through natural means, attaching themselves to a soul and spirit through the process of birth. At death, the soul and spirit are separated from the body, causing it to lose that which kept it living and to become as the inanimate dust once more.

The fourth element, deity, is developed over the course of millennia through hidden and supernal means. It allows a being to manipulate reality on the fourth dimension by controlling the expression of the other Elements of Being. Relatively few individuals have gained deity over the course of history, and among those who have, only the most prominent are worshipped as actual gods. Scholars postulate that the fourth-dimensional expression of a deity in the High Realm warps its experience of time so that it is eternally present through all points of time as an unchangeable being.

While the average humanoid consists of a soul, spirit, and body connected across the Primordial, Spirit, and Material Realms, there are some beings that exist without one or more of these elements. Many undead creatures, for example, are soulless, their spirits or bodies animated instead by negative energy. Ghosts, banshees, and other ethereal creatures lack a body, while the souls of primordials inhabit inorganic matter in crude imitation of a body.

There is a fifth fundamental force in the four worlds, known simply as *shadow*. Though metaphysicists recognize it as intrinsically present in everything in the universe—living and nonliving—they likewise propose that shadow by its very nature is the absence of matter. In other words, it is the energy that exists in the absolute nothingness between the Elements of Being.

Four Elements of Being



Realms of Existence

The planes of the Darkplane universe are infinite, encompassing every conceivable form of reality. Some appear as separate planets, hovering within the Darkplane itself, while others are alternate dimensions that overlap one another and occupy the same physical space. The five planes most fundamental to the operation of natural life are known as the Realms of Existence: the Primordial Realm, the Spirit Realm, the Material Realm, the Eternal Realm, and the Shadow Realm.

Within the four worlds, these realms operate as layers or reflections of reality, each one corresponding to one of the Elements of Being that make up everything in existence. Through magical means, characters can perceive or travel between the realms, opening their eyes to invisible forces that operate in the world around them.

Primordial Realm

The Primordial Realm is made up of energy and intelligence, the forces that power the world and allow its creatures to experience consciousness. Memories, dreams, and thoughts float in the infinite ether, warping in and out of literal or metaphorical forms. You might watch a creature's dream unfold in a series of bizarre flashes, or pluck an object out of your own memory to examine it.

Those who enter the Primordial Realm see it as a shifting panorama of surreal imagery. Paths may consist of translucent ribbons that encircle pulsing, gelatinous orbs, or stepping stones made of forgotten ideas. When a creature casts the *astral projection* spell, this is the realm they appear in. As in the Astral Plane, color pools dot the Primordial Realm and psychic winds tear across the protean firmament.

Everything that exists within the Primordial Realm is made of soul matter, meaning that it is all, to some degree or another, conscious. The landscape, its pliable forms and visions, as well as any structures or objects that might be found there, are really subjugated souls being shaped into such features by more dominant intelligences. By that token, characters in the Primordial Realm, as in the plane of Limbo, can use the power of the mind to move and alter such objects that aren't being worn or carried.

Primordial Power

The labor of Sowm's Creation was performed by powerful primordial beings made of pure soul essence. When these raw intelligences realized they weren't meant to inherit the work of their hands, they rebelled, and Sowm confined them to the Primordial Realm. Here their disembodied souls joined the dross of creation, and over eons nursed a fiery hatred for Sowm and Her children.

The Primordial Realm remains the home of such beings, whose presence in other realms causes elemental phenomena such as fire storms, tornadoes, and earthquakes. Black Arcane magic manipulates the sentient matter of the Primordial Realm to alter other realms' reality in unnatural ways. Primordial beings nearly always have some knowledge of this practice, and even teach it to those mortals they can seduce into their service.

The Black Arcane

The primordials offer followers access to the latent power within the soul. Necromancy, blood magic, rune magic, and shadow magic are all forms of primordial power, collectively called the Black Arcane. All come at serious cost to the practitioner, and are met with extreme prejudice by both the religious and the secular.

The Black Arcane should be terrifying, even to its practitioners. Not all its manifestations are downright evil, but they are dangerous, and come at a price too dear for most. Wizards and sorcerers should bear permanent, tangible marks of their work that stand as witness to the burden of their power, such as madness, deformities, compulsions, curses, or plagues. Such devices can be subtle, but when used they differentiate a Darkplane story from generic fantasy.

To that same end, it's also effective to keep displays of arcane magic bizarre, unpredictable, or enigmatic. Spells should have flavorful side-effects, differing from caster to caster, that amp up the feeling of surreal dread. Visions, odors, and other unsettling imagery go a long way toward preventing the use of magic from being a non-event. Consequences and mystery are your two best friends when establishing the fearsome nature of the Black Arcane.

Spirit Realm

The Spirit Realm is the dwelling of ethereal creatures, most of them awaiting birth or recently deceased. Reality here has more visual integrity than in the surreal expanse of the Primordial Realm, meaning that places in the Spirit Realm correspond to physical locations within the Material Realm. The hazy landscape resembles that of the physical world, but is perpetually swarming with ethereal personages.

Only spiritual beings exist in the Spirit Realm. Objects and structures are rare, leaving the land empty but for the spirits themselves. Everywhere the dead and unborn wander about between the spirits tethered to material bodies. Sometimes unbound spirits influence those connected to the Material Realm, whispering messages and temptations, bolstering strength, or making themselves visible to the physical plane. Such interactions manifest as magical phenomena in the Material Realm, where clerics, paladins, druids, and some wizards channel the help of the spirits for specific spells and effects.

The Spirit Realm is equivalent to the Ethereal Plane, including the presence of ether cyclones and use of the *etherealness* spell.

The Dead and Unborn

Creatures dwelling on the ethereal plane are often awaiting mortal birth or recently deceased. Some undead creatures, such as ghosts, specters, and wraiths, are spirits trapped in this realm by forces beyond their control. It is rare for the dead to remain in the Spirit Realm forever. In time, their souls are claimed by one of the gods, and they must enter whatever afterlife this judgment appoints for them.

There are rare examples of reincarnation within the Darkplane universe. In such cases, the spirit of the creature usually awaits its rebirth in the Spirit Realm.

Material Realm

The Material Realm is the dimension built of physical matter. Bodies of mortals and immortals alike exist in this realm. Unless specified otherwise, most of a campaign takes place here. Since the Material Realm is more a state of being than a physical location, every place in the universe has a Material Realm reflection. The term Material Realm rarely refers only to the world of Vinramar.

Eternal Realm

The Eternal Realm is a fourth-dimensional reality in which all points of time exist simultaneously. While in this realm, beings made of the element of deity can move freely through time as though it were physical space. Likewise, divine beings can access and manipulate all Realms of Existence and Elements of Being from here. For lesser life forms that cannot interpret the sensory cacophony around them, the Eternal Realm is disorienting, resembling the plane of Pandemonium.

This realm is more a state of being than a physical place. Gods, demigods, their exarchs, and other chosen servants operate in this dimension—ordering the universe, pursuing divine agendas, and waging wars across time and reality. Those whose minds are opened to the Eternal Realm's higher level of consciousness often slip away from mortal concerns, discovering harrowing secrets about the nature of existence and godhood.

Sanctuaries and Hidden Cities

Deities have been known to usher lesser creatures in and out of the Eternal Realm, opening their understanding to the sublime dance of fourth-dimensional reality. Often these guests are protected from certain knowledge or senses in order to maintain their sanity. The secret cities of the jharethil, taken away from Vinramar during the Great Forsaking, are believed to now occupy such a sanctuary within the Eternal Realm, where the mortals pledged to destroy them cannot enter.

Shadow Realm

Just as the light of the sun casts a shadow behind all things it illuminates, the substance of materiality creates a dimensional shadow composed of complete void. The Shadow Realm is this cosmic shadow, a layer of reality in which the nothingness is so absolute that it can exert force on other forms of matter. While in this dimension, material creatures fade into intangibility, their bodies vanishing from perception in the Material Realm.

Light is anathema to the Shadow Realm, unable to enter this plane at all. Those who come here find that it is darker than they imagined was possible. Its landscape is a dim reflection of the Material Realm, where the dimensional shadows of all living things ripple in the nothingness. Creatures with darkvision can see up to 60 feet into the Material Realm with truesight.

Few creatures are native to the Shadow Realm. The primordial goddess Ulmhasa, her son Imbakhao, and their attendants are rumored to sleep there, buried under the ruined city of Ekhmarai.

Shadow Energy

The Shadow Realm is an infinite pool of dormant energy that can be tapped to create powerful magic. Its influence is clearest on the world of Morvugol, where fractures in the bounds between dimensions cause the energy of the void to spill into the Material Realm. Life forms imbued with that energy emerged early on in its history, while the surge of shadow essence often forms terrifying visions that play out in the twilit wastes.

Little is known about this power source. It carries with it the same peril as any other Black Arcane magic. Mistakes can result in madness, death, or worse. Those who frequently delve its secrets find their bodies slipping more and more readily into the intangibility of the Shadow Realm.

Other Dimensions

Beyond the five Realms of Existence are infinite dimensions more foreign to the inhabitants of Vinramar. Some may never come into contact with the four worlds, while others await a time when the cosmic alignment will allow them to descend on the succulent mortal world like wolves.

Some demiplanes are nested within other realms, especially those connected to the mind and senses. These "scapes" are not fully part of any other dimension, yet strongly tied to activity in one of the Realms of Existence.

Dreamscapes

Dream shapers and illusionists are intimately familiar with dreamscapes: the nonsensical realities in which the dreams of living creatures are confined. Usually the entrance to a dreamscape opens within the Primordial Realm as a sentient being dreams. Creatures present at the threshold of the dreamscape can enter it like passing through a veil, at which point they become dreamwalkers—outsiders aware that they are in a dream. Within the dreamscape, images and events seen by the dreamer play out vividly.

The aspects of a dreamscape, called shades, change from moment to moment depending on the dreamer's state of mind. Objects, locations, people, and other sensory illusions appear or disappear in an instant, interacting with or ignoring the dreamwalkers in turns. The dreamer and its shades are usually charmed by the dreamscape itself, believing in the reality of the dream.

The more often a shade appears in a dreamscape, the more permanence it gains. Shades representing creatures can end their charmed condition with time, becoming aware of their figmentary nature—and perhaps seek to escape. There have been cases of a shade exiting a dreamscape and becoming, essentially, a sentient illusion that cannot be dispelled.

Ley Lines

The movements of certain powerful points through the cosmos create ley lines: intricate paths drawn between locations of geometric and primordial significance. Closely associated with rune magic, ley lines can be used to travel long distances in a few steps.

Mindscapes

Psychics have been known to venture into another creature's psyche, where their mind forms an environment similar to a dreamscape. Rather than a direct embodiment of thought, a mindscape is a metaphorical representation of the psyche, its nature and terrain organized according to the creature's particular identity, memories, and impulses.

Locations within a mindscape correspond to pieces of the creature's identity. Simple minds are reflected by straightforward or sparse terrain. Intelligent or troubled minds are more likely to involve meandering paths, intricate layouts, and sealed rooms.

A mindscape cannot be entered physically. It is a transference of one psyche to another, during which the bodies of the respective creatures remain unconscious in the Material Realm. A creature using the *astral projection* spell can, with effort, find another creature's mindscape within the Primordial Realm, entering it psychically as an action.

Mirrorscapes

A mirrorscape is a demiplane that exists within a reflective surface. Glass, water, and polished metal are ideal doors into such dimensions for those who know the secrets of planar travel. A *gate* or *plane shift* spell can carry a creature from one side of the reflection into the mirrorscape behind it, provided the caster can see the reflection of the mirror.

Each reflection contains its own mirrorscape, a series of crystalline alleys and caverns. Every small surface of these corridors connects to a different mirror or reflection somewhere in the universe. From here, travelers can peer into and access every reflective surface in existence.

Journeying between locations in a mirrorscape is extremely dangerous, however. Most of this labyrinthine demiplane is uncharted and unpredictable. Entire tunnels and passages wink out of existence when their assigned reflections no longer exist, and new passages open when a new reflection is made or one is broken into pieces.

Creatures within a mirrorscape when it collapses take 25d6 force damage and appears at the location connected to the closest reflection in the mirrorscape. If this damage reduces a creature to 0 hit points, it simply ceases to exist.

Girutze
(Senfaer)
The Abyssal Throne
(Daemoth)
Hiyorugh
(Gauren)
Dolodiri
(Silphenor)
The Darkplane
Moons of Morvugol
Bruhdath
(Gallister)
Haroth
(Mozralchi)
Eternal Realm
Material Realm
Spirit Realm
Shadow Realm
Primordial Realm
Ekhmarai
(Ulmhasa, Imbakhao)
Morvugol
(The Plane of Shadow)
The Moon of Vinramar
(Baturach)
Mt. Fayrlin
(Lakhi)
Toluratha
(Sterianon)
Caraveh
(Volgothyde)
Vinramar
(The Material Realm)
Nanbaladhui
(Forlortha)
Iltallach
(Faerie)
The Four Worlds
Mardelthwaide
(Jharus, Loragg, Altrear)
Salvendum
Ithaldun
(Ava)
Athalun
(Iala)

The Darkplane

In the abyss beyond the four worlds, alien horrors reign. This is the Darkplane, the vast space that surrounds natural reality. It's populated and ruled by mysterious aberrant powers so unnatural that their full comprehension is beyond mortal minds. Darkplane influence is always connected with madness, physical anomalies, and the overarching fear that the universe's true nature is malignant and alien.

There are several deities connected to the Darkplane, most notably Daemoth, his mutant bride Maruma'e, Senfaer, and the unknowable horror Igundadosh, sometimes called the True Mother. All four have dealings both in and outside the four worlds. This perilous traffic to and from the Darkplane brings aberrant life forms to the mortal world, where they infect, distort, or otherwise threaten the very integrity of reality.

Mimessarchs—mortal beings that have been physically and mentally twisted by the infectious influence of the Darkplane—can be found scattered about Vinramar. Their alien deformities bear witness to the fate of unfortunate souls who enter the Darkplane or cross paths with its denizens.

Several locations within the Darkplane have entered into Vinramar's legendarium, such as Dolodiri, the chaos-nebula, and Daemoth's Abyssal Throne. Little is told of such places, but those who dwell there are known to occasionally influence events in the four worlds.

Darkplane Imagery

In a campaign driven by mystery and exploration, the realization that humanity and its domain are anomalies in a universe of nightmares has terrifying potential. This concept provides the canopy of inevitable dread that overshadows every aspect of the setting. Illustrating it through encounters and imagery is the best way to make a Darkplane campaign stand out.

Monsters, locales, and effects connected to the Darkplane defy our fundamental assumptions about nature. Creatures have sense organs and methods of communication that natural creatures would never dream existed, and their bodies disobey the laws of physics in unsettling ways. When dealing with Darkplane imagery, it may be helpful to look for inspiration in the works of H.P. Lovecraft, China Miéville, Caitlín R. Kiernan, Lord Dunsany, Arthur Machen, and Clark Ashton Smith, all of whom have contributed to the weird fiction genre.

The Abyssal Throne

Daemoth's abode is a banished world called the Abyssal Throne. It exists between the universe and the Outer Realms, wholly enveloped by the Darkplane. Here the fiends, monstrosities, aberrations, and countless slaves of Daemoth carouse and wallow in the filth of eternity. It is a place of unimaginable misery and grueling dark, where pleasure can only be found in depravity and contempt for what is wholesome.

Areas of the Abyssal Throne might resemble some of the Lower Planes, such as Hades or the Abyss.

Dolodiri

The god Silphenor dwells in Dolodiri, a tumultuous nebula deep within the Darkplane. This domain is also called Limbo, the Dross, or the Reap of the Unwanted. It is the resting place of the unclaimed dead, whose life and loyalty were unworthy of another god's domain.

Girutze

Girutze, the wandering star, is home to Senfaer, the primordial god of order. His followers depict Girutze as a great silver horse, on which Senfaer wanders the universe in search of truth and hidden mysteries. From this mobile domain, he places stars within the Darkplane, waypoints that protect natural creatures from the oppressive void.

Hiyorugh

Once a great orb that powered the sun and housed Sowm's spirit, the Hiyorugh became a desecrated vessel for the soul of Daemoth after he killed the Mother that Was. It now lies in the possession of Gauren, Daemoth's prodigal child. Using the Hiyorugh as a titanic body, Gauren steers the planet through the Darkplane, exploring the Outer Realms and serving Daemoth's pleasure.

Devils and their minions live on the surface of the Hiyorugh, eternally plotting to seize control of it from their infernal progenitor. This plane is equivalent to the Nine Hells.

The Outer Realms

Daemoth's explorations in the Darkplane have revealed the presence of many worlds and planes far beyond the reach of mortal conception, which seem to house aberrations of infinite variety. Daemoth has slowly conquered vast stretches of these Outer Realms, and thus introduced many aberrant life forms to the four worlds. Gods, slaves, and refugees from the Outer Realms have poured into some areas of Vinramar, inciting horror and madness wherever they appear.

Deities

The word *god* can invoke many different concepts. In the Darkplane universe, gods are beings that have achieved a higher level of awareness. Some resemble classical gods, with bodies that can take various forms. Others are powerful spirits, visible only when they wish to be. Still others manifest as elemental forces. What these beings have in common is incredible intelligence and the ability to perceive all forms of matter at once, including much not seen by mortals.

Vinramar, the mortal world, has become the battleground for many divine conflicts. Mortals can thus find themselves in the service of various gods through religious organizations, personal spirituality, or occasionally by force. The gods rarely manifest themselves openly, even to those who serve them, but you can make their presence felt in any story through the actions and agendas of their followers. Maybe a priest with ulterior motives becomes the party's employer, or perhaps player characters become the quarry of zealots looking for souls to feed to their god's graven image.

Some religions worship real beings and channel real divine magic. Others can turn out to be a sham. Look through the popular religious factions in Chapter Three for inspiration when incorporating gods and their servitors in your campaigns. Such sects can be an endless source of mystery and conflict.

Pantheons

The gods and deities of Vinramar are numerous. This chapter classifies them in pantheons based on their origin and level of influence over the universe.

The Four Creators

Supreme among the gods are the Four Creators, Sowm and her three heirs. Before the Creation, Sowm was the embodiment of all existence, and the gods shaped by Her power—Daemoth, Jharus, and Loragg—are unmatched in their ability to create, destroy, and warp reality. Since Her apparent death, Sowm has remained absent from all affairs tied to Vinramar, but there are those who continue to worship Her.

All of the Four Creators, with the exception of Daemoth, have complete control over their physical and spiritual forms, appearing however they wish. In their limited interactions with mortals, they tend to take humanoid shapes. Such occurrences are rare, however, since the Four Creators are also the most distant of the gods. Their actions remain unseen and misunderstood by most inhabitants of Vinramar.

The Ascended

This pantheon is predominantly composed of gods in humanoid form who once lived in the four worlds. Some time in their history, each experienced a moment of apotheosis in which they ascended to godhood. Ascended deities are known for their constant meddling in mortal affairs, and their investment in those who worship them.

The Irvallath

The Irvallath are primordial deities not descended from Sowm. Though they sprung from her to perform the labor of the Creation, these elemental beings rebelled against the Four Creators and were bound in the Primordial Realm for an age.

Now almost all the Irvallath have escaped, and are thought to roam the more deserted parts of the world, where mortals enticed into their service form cults and covens in exchange for primordial power. There is little humanoid about these deities. The physical forms that compose their bodies are diverse and bizarre.

Racial Gods

Many lesser deities exist that are worshipped exclusively by one race or culture. These Racial Gods are well known to neighboring settlements, but their power over the world pales in comparison to other deities. Some may not even exist at all.

Divine Allegiances

The deities of the Darkplane setting have a web of intertwining loyalties that form a hierarchy of allegiance, servitude, and rivalry among them. Most gods have at least one sworn enemy, and many participate in one of the following divine factions.

The Court of Daemoth

Sowm's murder began a chain of cosmic events that divided the gods into two factions: those who sided with Daemoth, and those who pledged themselves to Jharus. The Court of Daemoth includes Gallister, Gauren, Maruma'e, and Volgothyde. These insidious deities benefit greatly from their allegiance to Daemoth, whose worship remains the dominant religion in most regions of Vinramar.

The Jharric Gods

Those deities that sided against Daemoth in the War of Eternity are known as the Jharric Gods: Jharus, Loragg, Ava, and Iala. Their worship (with the exception of Ava) is united in a single religious

organization, called the Jharric Faith. Although powerful in their own right, the Jharric Gods are seldom worshipped in large numbers, due to the persecution they receive for embracing the Old Faith.

The Vjornil

A faction of deities worshipped by the Ansë humans of Iljudheim, the Vjornil are cold gods of war. They are Guddrek, Hjotra, Ingvidr, Skjarlunn, and Thrandull. Each is a patron of a different facet of life in the tumultuous southern peninsula. The Vjornil are rarely worshipped outside the region of Iljudheim.

The Triune Fathers

The Triune Fathers are telmatra deities, worshipped in areas where the traditional tribal practices of the pre-human telmatra culture are observed.

Divine Servitude

The primary function of deities in a roleplaying game is to provide some characters with a religion and a sense of reverence for something greater than themselves. Not all characters need this, but if you want to play a cleric, druid, paladin, or warlock, you may be interested in the belief system associated with the source of your power.

Whether you represent one of the gods as a vested servant or simply revere its persona, commitment to a deity or religion can help define your character's philosophy and temperament. Your GM can help you determine what code or responsibilities accompany this decision. Most deity descriptions in this chapter list the god's associated religious factions. Many of these factions are detailed in Chapter Three.

The religions of Vinramar exhibit a wide range of philosophies and cultural trappings. They might be orthodox in their beliefs, with worshippers displaying little flexibility of interpretation, or they might have a liberal approach in which the teachings and practices of congregations vary. Some religious sects are strictly monastic, their practitioners cloistering themselves in like-minded communities. Others forms of worship may have no administrative structure at all, treating the most devout members as elders or teachers.

A religion's culture is often determined by its source of truth. Dogmatic belief systems emphasize written scripture and divine laws, while more personal faiths might allow adherents to determine for themselves just what the gods desire of them. Communal and tribal religions find power in the bonds formed within small religious societies, while militant orders employ strength of arms to prove their faith. Using the information in this chapter, you can decide how your character interprets his or her religious expression.

The Four Creators

Deity	Alignment	Suggested Domains	Symbols
Daemoth, god of politics, revenge, and winter	Lawful Evil	Aberration, Blood, Darkness, Death, Knowledge, War	Bound wheat, caverns, snow, stone
Jharus, god of artisanry, bravery, and justice	Chaotic good	Life, Light, War	Eagles, precious stones, the sun, swords
Loragg, god of records, shelter, and travel	Neutral good	Knowledge, Trickery	Boots, parchment, quills, ruins
Sowm, goddess of life, sky, and wind	Lawful good	No clerics	Candles, mountains, the color white

The Ascended

Deity	Alignment	Suggested Domains	Symbols
Ava, goddess of freedom, love, and nurturing	Chaotic good	Life, War	Birch trees, swords, thorned roses
Forlortha, goddess of fertility and night	Chaotic neutral	Life, Nature, War	Beasts, mistletoe, the moon, stars
Gallister, god of planar gates, slavery, and war	Chaotic evil	Death, War	Elephants, hammers, keys, the color red
Gauren, god of covenants, devils, and fate	Lawful evil	Knowledge, Trickery	Eyes, horns, solar eclipses, tomes
Iala, goddess of forgiveness, healing, and light	Neutral good	Life, Light, Water	Auroras, sunrise, springs, waterfalls
Mozralchi, goddess of cunning and diplomacy	Neutral good	Darkness, Trickery, War	Eyes, maps, staves, the color black
Silphenor, god of chaos, purification, and war	Chaotic neutral	Light, Pestilence, Tempest	Fire, harvest, storms, whips
Sterianon, god of judgment, loyalty and truth	Lawful good	Knowledge, Life	Crowns, gavels, orbs, scepters
Volgothyde, god of the hunt and the undead	Chaotic evil	Blood, Death, War	Bats, blood, bones, soil

The Irvallath (Primordials)

Deity	Alignment	Suggested Domains	Symbols
Baturach, mistress of death and the moon	Neutral	Blood, Death, Water	Glaciers, the moon, rain, skulls
Ethis, mistress of deceit, runes, and volcanoes	Chaotic neutral	Light, Stone, Trickery	Deserts, igneous rock, masks, runes
Imbakhao, master of poison and slavery	Neutral evil	Darkness, Pestilence	Chains, serpents, shadows, venom
Jukai, master of stone and the grotesque	Neutral	Stone	Dark elves, standing stones
Lakhi, mistress of blood magic and the sea	Lawful neutral	Blood, Water	Blue dragons, fish, seaweed, silver
Marumaʾe, mistress of madness and deformity	Chaotic evil	Aberration, Tempest	Aberrations, pearls, slime, tentacles
Rinshari, mistress of fire and tarnished beauty	Neutral	Blood, Light	Dance, flames, harps, songbirds
Ruethas, master of lore, strategy, and time	Neutral	Knowledge, Trickery	Carnival masks, hourglasses, wool
Sarnoss, master of beasts and the wild	Chaotic neutral	Nature	Lions, wolves, spears, trees
Senfaer, master of order and the stars	Lawful neutral	Aberration, Knowledge	Crystal, diamond, hands, horses, stars
Ulmhasa, mistress of shadow and dreams	Neutral evil	Darkness	Black lotus blossoms, nightmares
Zho-hau, mistress of birds, carrion, and storms	Neutral	Nature, Tempest	Bones, drums, lightning, wind

Other Deities

Deity	Alignment	Suggested Domains	Symbols
Emriel, elf god of hunting, music, and venom	Chaotic neutral	Nature, Pestilence	Antlers, drums, red arrows, thorns
Guddrek, human god of fate, fire, and runes	Neutral	Light, War	Axes, holly bushes, phoenixes
Hjotra, human goddess of fertility and harvest	Neutral	Life, War	Apples, oxen, wheat
Ingvidr, human god of industry and night	Lawful neutral	Darkness, War	Anvils, bears, stars
Skjarlunn, human goddess of magic and wind	Neutral	Knowledge, Tempest	Flutes, horses, ravens
Thrandull, human god of hunting and trickery	Chaotic neutral	Trickery, War	Serpents, spears, wolves
Altrear, jhareth god of ancestors and valor	Neutral good	Tempest, War	Crowns, stags, swords, thunder
Bekjhal, telmatra god of artisans and merchants	Neutral	Light Knowledge	Runes, sickles, the sun
Duhulatt, telmatra god of clan rule and travel	Lawful neutral	Nature, Trickery	Insects, springtime
Hodramesh, telmatra god of storms and winter	Neutral evil	Tempest, War	Axes, coins, and ships
Fimbuleth, werekin god of bloodsport	Neutral evil	Nature, Pestilence	Bones, swamplands, wolves
The True Mother, supreme entity of aberration	Unaligned	Aberration	A black circle

The Four Creators

Daemoth

God of creation, politics, revenge, and winter

Alignment: Lawful evil
Suggested Domains: Aberration, Blood, Darkness, Death, Knowledge, War
Symbols: Bound wheat, caverns, snow, stone
Titles: Daemoth, Lachmarum, Lord of the Fallow, Lord of the Hills of Vinramar, Lord of Winter
Abode: The Abyssal Throne
Enemies: Jharus
Allegiance: The Court of Daemoth (Gallister, Gauren, Maruma'e, Volgothyde)
Religious Factions: The Eitharmos, Etholchan Church, Order of Illiantri, and Urrothic Church

Daemoth is the greatest of the living gods, an avaricious tyrant and resentful heir of creation. His will commands the winds and snows, and in ancient days he taught mortals vengeance, deception, and the arts of oration. Like the frost, he kills the weak and keeps hidden that which is strong. His followers entrust their salvation to the clergy, often unaware that their blood sacrifices are performed in worship of monstrosity.

When Sowm, the supreme Creator, saw the finished work of Her primordial laborers, She was pleased. Her two sons She fashioned with air and clay wrapped around sparks from Salvendum's flame. These sons descended to the four worlds as emissaries to treat with the primordials on Sowm's behalf. Daemoth was proud and charming then, a master of forms and words. But even in his immortal infancy, obsession and ambition ruled him, eventually driving him to murder his mother Sowm.

Since his exile from the four worlds, Daemoth has become mutilated and engorged with Darkplane energy. Pustules composed of mortal souls bulge from his eternal flesh, and wisps of dark mist enshroud him like eon-spanning tendrils. His eyes are cold and his hands clawed with cruelty.

Daemoth has tried time and again to subdue the world to his will. After many failed conquests, he has resorted to more subtle means and found success. Though his Abyssal Throne resides far from Vinramar, the Lord of Winter's servants have accompanied the expansion of human civilization and dotted the land with temples to him. Daemoth worship is now the most common religion in Vinramar. Through its influence, his servants rise to power, extending his hidden reach like a canker beneath the world's skin.

In the midst of the first war against the primordials, Daemoth imprisoned Rinshari, the most beautiful of the elemental laborers, in the Vice of Winter. By force she conceived his most powerful sons, the arch-demons Gauren, Iarmov, and Arrochimeir. From these three spawned the legions of fiends and monstrosities that populated the West of Vinramar in its infancy. Last of all, Daemoth fathered the daemons with Atiakha, the daughter of the moon. Their empire Mohtra became the longest-reigning nation in Vinramar's history before it fell into ignominy.

The Court of Daemoth is attended by many of the foulest gods in the four worlds: Gauren the Dismembered Son, Maruma'e the Mutant Bride, Gallister the fallen jhareth, and Volgothyde the Twice-Born Emperor all serve him. His other great attendants are demon-lords such as Murthos, Tacigon, and Hepthades, elsewhere called Envy, Reason, and Silence.

Daemoth is associated with the Fallow season, his presence presaged with heavy snow. The Etholchan temples to Daemoth are adorned with onyx, and their holy symbol is a bound stalk of wheat cleft in two by a sword. The Illiantri, on the other hand, brandish the Night Heralds as their holy symbols: onyx morningstars passed down within the order for centuries.

Jharus

God of artisanry, bravery, creation, and justice

Alignment: Chaotic good
Suggested Domains: Life, Light, War
Symbols: Eagles, precious stones, the sun, swords
Titles: The Artisan, the Eagle Helm, the Host Lord, Lord of Mardelthwaide, the Sword of Life, Ureleth
Abode: Mardelthwaide (Salvendum)
Enemies: Daemoth
Allegiance: The Jharric Gods (Ava, Iala, Loragg)
Religious Factions: The Jharric Faith

Jharus is the younger of the Sons of Sowm. Though a powerful warrior and cunning strategist, his dominion has declined with the centuries, forcing him further and further into shadow and obscurity. Where once he was depicted as a soldier in his vernal youth, Jharus is now more often cast as a war-wounded king bound to a broken throne.

Known as the Eagle Helm and the Host Lord, Jharus commands the dwindling legions of the celestials, whom he shelters in the shadow of his great golden wings. His armor is resplendent, and while he wears it he himself is redoubtable, invincible. To the jharethil, he is Ureleth, their First Father—a master of tactics, a peerless engineer and artisan. To Daemothites he is the Oathbreaker, a predator and sire of heretics.

Before the histories were written Jharus joined Daemoth in subduing the primordials, and built his citadel Anarthos in the highest peaks of present-day Arrochule. When Daemoth murdered Sowm, Her body, the sun, was extinguished. Jharus and his son Loragg ascended the dark heavens with a great stone to craft the sun anew. In order to give life and light to it, Jharus joined himself to the stone and became Salvendum, the source of all light and natural life.

Mardelthwaide, the Hall where Jharus sits bound, lies at the center of creation and can be seen from all the four worlds. There dwells his son Loragg, last of the Creators, and the celestials that remain in their service. Most notable among these are Altrear, Jardothus, and Ulthoroch, whose names translate as Triumph, Majesty, and Vigilance. Near Mardelthwaide lie Athalun and Ithaldun, the sister domains of the Jharric goddesses Iala and Ava.

As the liege lord and namesake of the Jharric Faith, Jharus is a symbol of the old world, one in which the worshippers of Daemoth held less sway, and human civilization had not yet infested Vinramar. Those who cling to his ways believe in altruism, harmony, and self-purification. They look to Jharus as the source of *mahat*, that which sustains balance, justice, life, purity, and truth. They call on him to throw down tyranny and corruption. Jharus values followers who are bold and ambitious, a quality that at times strains their relationship with the other Jharric orders.

Eagles are the indelible symbol of Jharus. They accompany his influence and have been said to speak as if from his own mouth. He named and planted the precious stones and metals beneath the earth before all recollection. The mystery of shaping them, and of swordcraft, is his art.

Loragg

God of creation, records, shelter, and travel

Alignment: Neutral good
Suggested Domains: Knowledge, Trickery
Symbols: Boots, parchment, quills, and ruins
Titles: The First Word, the Great Rover, the Lord of Records, the Pilgrim, the Roofless Sage
Abode: None
Enemies: Silphenor
Allegiance: The Jharric Gods (Ava, Iala, Jharus)
Religious Factions: The Jharric Faith

Loragg is the masterwork of Jharus, created in his father's image as a son and heir. The jharethil, his literal descendants, describe him as a weatherworn traveler clad in a wide-brimmed hat and grey coat. As the Great Rover, Loragg knows all roads and has trodden all paths. The ancients called to him in places where three roads met. Untiring in the pursuit of knowledge and eternally vigilant in its preservation, he vests his servants as prophets, scholars, and record keepers.

Loragg was the first being in the four worlds who wasn't created by Sowm. After Jharus formed him, he yearned for companionship—for balance between the masculine and feminine. Inspired by the Mother of Creation, Loragg formed Forlortha from the fallen dust of the stars, and the two became lovers.

For ages, Loragg and Forlortha dwelt together: she sowing, he cataloguing the things of creation and naming them. When the fallen paladin Silphenor attacked their dominion, Forlortha was driven mad and her disembodied spirit fled Vinramar. Estranged from his love, Loragg became a wanderer and speaker of ill omens.

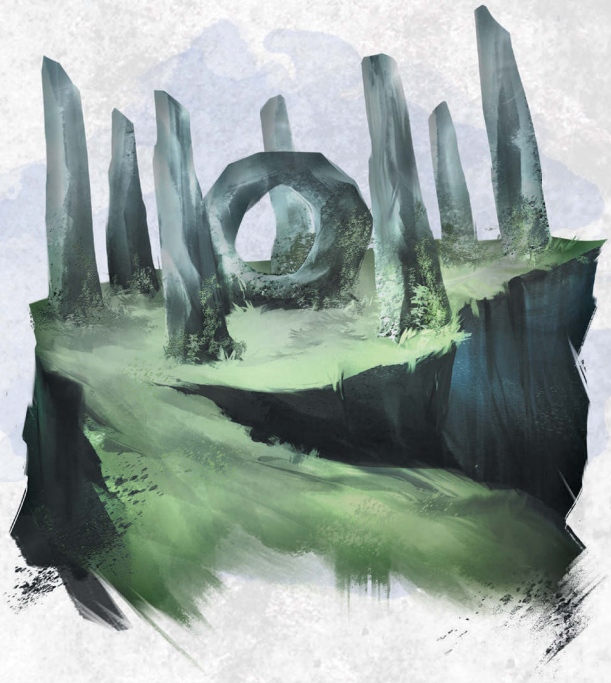
Loragg remains tightly bound to his father Jharus. Together they fought Daemoth in the earliest memory of creation. They withstood the treachery of Silphenor, guided the empire of Ardon, and continue to direct their children of the Jharric Faith.

Loragg's favor is with the hermit, the sage, and all who seek shelter. He holds no court and compels no creature to obey him. Those priests that volunteer their service to Loragg carry runestones and staves etched with words of power. Historically these priests built majestic abbeys to house their writings, but such sites were one by one destroyed or put to other use. Their ruins are still found in many nations, and the records themselves preserved in hidden enclaves.

Sowm

Goddess of creation, life, sky, and the wind

Alignment: Lawful good
Symbols: Candles, mountains, the color white
Titles: The Mother that Was, the Mother of Creation, the Lost Creator
Abode: Unknown
Status: Dead
Religious Factions: Cults of Sowm



Sowm was the Mother of Creation, the first known soul in existence. By Her will, the elements and worlds were assembled. With the sun itself as Her physical body, She personified majesty, perfection, omnipotence, and balance. But such light, it seems, was not meant for the four worlds.

Before the first records were inscribed, Sowm was slain. What ultimate fate has befallen the Mother that Was remains a mystery. Unlike other gods killed in the history of the four worlds, Sowm left no spirit or consciousness behind. In death, She simply vanished, leaving Her great cosmic plans to unravel in the hands of lesser gods.

Some theosophists claim that Sowm, having created or discovered new elements of being, is now too powerful to be housed by a spiritual or material form. Far from absent, they believe her existence and influence over the universe has expanded beyond even the gods' comprehension. The authenticity of such beliefs has scarcely been explored, but most scholars agree that Sowm's death rendered Her either unwilling or incapable of vesting her worshippers with divine power.

Though the Daemothites forbid anyone to write of her, the secret image of Sowm is worshipped by veiled sibyls in forgotten mountain shrines. These cult worshippers believe that She watches the four worlds from a higher existence, and will one day return. Their priests are celibate men, symbolically married to the Mother that Was.

Each of the cults is unique in structure and practice. The most radical of them employ strange rites and sacrifices, believing that early death is a doorway to higher consciousness. Others stick to ceremonies that closely resemble those of the Jharric Faith. Most Jharric leaders disavow the Cults of Sowm, but it would be naive to claim that no overlap exists between the two religions. Even high-ranking Jharric clergy have been disgraced as their hidden ties to a Cult of Sowm were revealed.

Contact with the Cults of Sowm is often colored by suspicion, hostility, and unsettling discoveries. Their candlelit sanctums are almost always encircled by standing stones carved with weathered, leering faces and festooned with ghastly oddments. Though their rituals may attempt to contact the Lost Creator, the cults deny that Sowm might ever actually visit them. For them, Her traditional symbols must suffice: white veils, candles, and towering stone mountains.

The Ascended

Ava

Goddess of freedom, love, motherhood, and nurturing

Alignment: Chaotic good
Suggested Domains: Life, War
Symbols: Birch trees, crossed swords, pregnant women, thorned roses
Titles: Our Lady of the Rose, Sacred Mother, Thornmaiden
Abode: Ithaldun (Salvendum)
Enemies: Daemoth, Gallister, Imbakhao
Allegiance: The Jharric Gods (Iala, Jharus, Loragg)
Religious Factions: Avan Enclaves, the Jharric Faith

First goddess of the Jharric Faith, Ava is the patron of love and a fierce defender of freedom. Her influence extends over romance, chivalry, and familial bonds. She is a protector of children and a liberator of slaves, often depicted as a beautiful, dark-skinned woman with green eyes. At times she is represented with child, her swollen belly girded in fine armor.

Followers of Ava seek her aid in finding and sustaining love, bearing children, and treating illness. They operate from hidden enclaves, fighting slavery and defending the weak. Her servants value life above all else, regularly laboring beside priests of Iala for its preservation. They call her Our Lady of the Rose, whose lips are petals and whose swords are thorns. There are likewise those who associate Ava with Sowm, calling her the Mother Reborn, but there is no evidence that she has ever affirmed the claim.

Ava was the first human to ascend to godhood. During her mortal life she escaped slavery and led the rebellions that toppled the empire of the daemons. While freeing the Captive Mothers—whose rape had perpetuated that demonic civilization for thousands of years—Ava died, heroic and selfless.

Since her apotheosis, the Sacred Mother is believed to have frequently reincarnated herself as a mortal of one race or another. In this diminished form, she often marries and raises children who, along with her mortal husband, join her in Ithaldun as celebrated exarchs.

Sterianon, the Great Father, has loved Ava since first he saw her. His archangels have borne proposal after proposal to her throughout the millennia—but since they are contingent upon her forsaking Ithaldun and her mortal consorts, Ava remains silent and will not answer his affections.

Birch and aspen groves are considered sacred to the Avans. It is there that Ava herself is most likely to give sanctuary or seal a marriage vow with divine approval.

Forlortha

Goddess of fertility, the fey, Iltallach, medicine, and night

Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Suggested Domains: Life, Nature, War
Symbols: Mistletoe, the moon, stars, woodland beasts
Titles: The Fey Queen, the Green Maiden, the Lady of Tempering, Oakheart, the Star Matron
Abode: Nanbaladhui (Iltallach)
Enemies: Volgothyde
Allegiance: None
Relgious Factions: The Solace

Forlortha is the Fey Queen, a perfect embodiment of the unique brand of madness shared by all fey creatures. Her arm is over the mysterious and forgotten lands that once housed her children: ancient woodlands, echoing valleys, and abandoned isles. In these places, the memory of Forlortha and her children haunts the land, sometimes piercing the veil between Vinramar and Iltallach, where her spirit inhabits the titanic tree called Nanbaladhui.

Like many of the fey, Forlortha is said to be by turns bitterly sad and perilously merry. Her moods are as changeable as the drifting fog in Iltallach. She is a giver of fertility and hider of nature's secrets. At times she takes the form of a doe or songbird to roam her lands unmarked, while at others she appears openly as a lovely maiden with green eyes, hair, or skin. According to tales, her greatest delight is to play with mortal children, whom she often forgets to return to their homes.

Before written history, Forlortha was created by Loragg to be his perfect mate, but theirs was a doomed union. Upon the onslaught of Silphenor, the young goddess tempered the murderer's madness with her own sanity. Both she and Silphenor were sent raving from Vinramar, forever changed.

It was then, the jhareth elders write, that Forlortha came to dwell in Iltallach in the form of a great oak. Around her sprung a forest of rowans, in which she set two Fey Gates to lead her children to her. One by one they came, nesting a magnificent city in her roots and branches. A remnant of Silphenor's forbidden magic remained within her, and Forlortha became a brooding font of disquiet, her melancholy only allayed by flashes of giddy cruelty.

Those that worship Forlortha pray to the stars and the wind and the wood. Their druidic cult, the Solace, maintains an intricately structured hierarchy within its female membership. Driven to protect the domain of the Ancients, the Ladies of the Solace eagerly defend the sacred wild. Many animals and plants have symbolic significance within the Solace, but none so much as mistletoe, whose poisonous white berries are an omen of both life and death.

Gallister

God of courage, planar gates, slavery, and war

Alignment: Chaotic evil
Suggested Domains: Death, War
Symbols: Elephants, hammers, keys, the color red
Titles: The Archwarrior, the Gatekeeper, the Lord of Battle, the Red Hand, Winebane
Abode: Bruhdath (Morvugol)
Enemies: Altrear, Ava
Allegiance: The Court of Daemoth (Daemoth, Gauren, Maruma'e, Volgothyde)
Religious Factions: The Gallister Cults

Gallister is the right hand of Daemoth. He is the Lord of Battle, a dread sovereign over those who conquer by strength of arms, whether singly or in numbers. Slaves won in war are his currency, and the red-iron maul Guhara his constant companion. His icons bear the shape of a titanic soldier armored in crimson, white-bearded, with muscles knotted like cords across his stout body.

In life Gallister was a jhareth emperor, an infamous tyrant whose prowess on the field won him power and scorn. He succeeded Mozralchi, whom he murdered, to the throne of Irrachos during the first age of recorded history in Vinramar. His exploits won him thrones and slaves beyond count, as well as several of the Stones of Daemoth. Their influence led him on a heinous quest for immortality in the twilight of his rule. When at last he performed the death ritual that granted him godhood, he left the known world in a dark age that lasted nearly 2,000 years.

Shortly after the Great Forsaking—when the cities of the jharethil were taken up into the Eternal Realm—it is believed Gallister succeeded in wresting the Ivory Keys from Loragg's keeping. The Keys command all planar gates between the four worlds and their realms, granting Gallister control over magical travel across physical space and between dimensions. The wardens of these paths are the yuriphim, mutated celestials now under Gallister's dominion. None can pass between worlds or planes without their knowledge, including those who enter or depart a jhareth city. No greater blow has been struck in all the War of Eternity.

Gallister's followers look to him in preparation for war, as well as in times of revelry. He fortifies the failing heart, strengthens the burdened back, and delights in the destruction of his peoples' enemies. Above all, he exalts those who laugh at death. Soldiers of many different nations are known to keep votive idols of Gallister, each set with a red candle. Before embarking for battle, these warriors light the candle so that the Archwarrior will keep them alive as long as it remains lit. Once they return from the field, such worshippers begin their revels by dramatically extinguishing the candle in token of victory.

The Cults of Gallister are as varied in practice as any other religion in Vinramar. His chaplains aren't ordained or sanctioned by any system of leadership. Those who choose the path of the Red Hand simply don the crimson robes and volunteer to serve under one banner or another, fighting alongside men and helping them to live or die as Gallister sees fit. Like the Daemothites, these chaplains preach against compassion for the weak.

The rampaging elephant is associated with Gallister, and the largest bands of his chaplains might carry medical camps from battle to battle on the backs of such beasts.

Gauren

God of covenants, devils, fate, and perversion

Alignment: Lawful evil
Suggested Domains: Knowledge, Trickery
Symbols: Eyes, horns, solar eclipses, tomes
Titles: The Archdevil, the Eternal Eye, the Forsaken, the Hellheart, the Infernal Wanderer
Abode: Unknown
Enemies: Gallister, Iala
Allegiance: The Court of Daemoth (Daemoth, Gallister, Maruma'e, Volgothyde)
Religious Factions: The Infernossos

Born into abomination, Gauren is the master of the Hidden Hells and a collector of souls. As a formless spirit he has wandered the darkest corners of the known universe, gathering any who will pledge their obedience to him in return for the pleasures, praises, and riches of the four worlds. He is a shaper of doom, twisting the fates of living creatures to suit his schemes. Gauren's servants discover their darkest desires within reach, and enemies of his cause are drawn toward foul ends. It is said that death is merciful for one who crosses the Eternal Eye.

Gauren's allegiance has shifted several times since the creation of the four worlds. Though a son of Daemoth, he was separated from his kin during their father's exile in the Darkplane. At Daemoth's return, resentment became betrayal as Gauren turned on his father in order to obtain possession of Atiakha, the daughter of the moon. For this treachery he was dismembered and cast down, but his miserable spirit resisted annihilation. Searching the Darkplane for the remains of the Hiyorugh, the great stone which once housed the spirit of Daemoth himself, Gauren harnessed the unholy rock as a body. To this day, the Hiyorugh appears in the Heavens from time to time, a living moon possessed with the soul of the Infernal Wanderer himself.

After founding the Order of Illiantri and engineering the fall of New Ardon, Gauren was returned to Daemoth's good graces, but not without creating enmity between him and the rest of the Court. Gallister in particular remains a bitter rival of the Archdevil.

Those that bargain their souls to Gauren are collectively known as the Infernossos, a diabolic cult of signatories that gather in covens to hear the will of their spectral master through the mouth of a goat, bull, or other horned beast. As holy symbols they bear pendants fashioned with the emblem of the darkened sun. Tales of the signatories' perverse rites have become legend among the people of Motta and Arrochule.

Iala

Goddess of forgiveness, healing, light, and water

Alignment: Neutral good
Suggested Domains: Life, Light, Water
Symbols: Auroras, sunrise, springs, waterfalls
Titles: The Chalice, Dawn-Maiden, the Lady of Healing, Nivani, the Pureheart, the Vessel
Abode: Athalun (Salvendum)
Enemies: Daemoth, Gallister
Allegiance: The Jharric Gods (Ava, Jharus, Loragg)
Religious Factions: Avan Enclaves, the Jharric Faith

The second and younger goddess of the Jharric deities, Iala is a patroness of healing and purity. The dawn itself is formed by the radiance of her crown, and all streams she touches run with healing water. She visits the afflicted and dying to shelter them beneath her wings. It is said that when the final battle between Jharus and Daemoth is concluded, Iala will command the grave to yield up the spirits of the virtuous dead and guide them to Athalun. In the iconography of the jharethil, Iala is depicted as a white- or copper-haired jhareth woman, wearing the blazing sunrise as her headdress.

Iala's mortal life before her ascension was well recorded. Born in exile and raised in a Loraggite monastery, she gained fame in her youth for her healing hands. After the death of Ardoth Intillanum in the great Battle of Noremium, she made a pilgrimage to Rhuminos where his body was held, raised the emperor from the dead, and won the undying love of her people.

After a brief betrothal to the emperor, Iala gave her heart to a mysterious man whom history remembers only as the Vagrant. A reformed crusader, the Vagrant had once hunted the jharethil as a member of the Eitharmos. With his identity exposed, the Vagrant was captured and brought to trial for his past murders. Iala, invoking ancient laws of atonement, consigned herself to execution on his behalf.

None predicted that Iala's indomitable spirit would return to her body and give it life once more. Exalted through her act of selfless mercy, Iala became a goddess and was admitted among the Jharric Gods as the Lady of Healing.

Iala's indomitable belief in forgiveness and mercy, and her selfless death for that principle, has inspired generations of the Jharric Church. She is favored by those who believe in repentance and healing above all else. Her servants, who bear crowns and staves adorned with the image of the rising sun, teach that even in the darkest of hearts can be found a spark of salvation.

Mozralchi

Goddess of arcana, cunning, diplomacy, and politics

Alignment: Neutral good
Suggested Domains: Darkness, Trickery, War
Symbols: Eyes, maps, staves, the color black
Titles: Hamzara, the Pale Eye, the Ravenwife, the Spymaster, the White Widow
Abode: Ithaldun (Salvendum)
Enemies: Daemoth, Gauren, Maruma'e, Ulmhasa, Volgothyde
Allegiance: None
Religious Factions: The Mozralchic Order

Mozralchi is an enigmatic figure among the gods. Often called the Ravenwife, she is a negotiator and collector of lore and a delver into hidden places. Many arcane and forbidden secrets sleep safely in her keeping. Despite dabbling in the dark arts, retribution against the unnatural forces that besiege Vinramar is Mozralchi's utmost obsession. Her image is often embodied in one of four likenesses: the assassin, the demonologist, the diplomat, and the spy. Whichever form she takes, Mozralchi's image always bears her fair skin, black hair, and a symbolic third eye.

Haroth, Mozralchi's frigid abode, lies hidden on one of Morvugol's seven moons. About the shrouded ziggurat hang the dismembered witches and abominations of 20,000 years, evidence of the goddess's hatred for otherworldly interlopers and their servants. Haroth itself houses immortal agents and scholars who have pledged themselves to the destruction of such beings.

As an ascended goddess, Mozralchi is a Pale Eye in the heavens, restlessly opposing those that threaten the natural order. This single-minded concern makes her participation in divine conflicts sporadic and unreliable. While she is a former queen of the jharethil, credited with having dealt serious blows to Daemoth's power, she is not numbered among the Jharric Gods.

Those who seek Mozralchi's favor pray for her cunning, scholarship, and discernment to be with them. The most devoted join the Mozralchic Order, a widespread hierarchy of agents pledged to defeat unnatural threats. Priests within the order act as emissaries, investigators, and warriors, often using their specialized knowledge to deal with monsters and practitioners of the Black Arcane. The Hamzara, a seal bearing the likeness of Mozralchi herself, is their sigil.

Mozralchi is often associated with ravens, and the tradition of learning the Ravens' Speech is still maintained within the order. The aviaries of the Mozralchic sanctums keep scores of these intelligent creatures, who make useful messengers and spies.

Silphenor

God of chaos, madness, opportunism, purification, and war

Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Suggested Domains: Light, Pestilence, Tempest
Symbols: Fire, the harvest, storms, whips
Titles: The Culler, the Lord of Havoc, the Refiner, the Smiter, the Tempest Lord
Abode: Dolodiri
Enemies: Loragg, Senfaer
Allegiance: None
Religious Factions: *Silfana au Ittador*

Silphenor is the ruler of the unclaimed dead. As the patron of pestilence, he commands the storm and plague. Locusts obey him, sparing or devouring according to his whims. Those that pray to Silphenor do so in fear of his wrath, and a lost harvest. His favor is with the outcast beggar and the repentant criminal, whom he delights to purify by pain. The Lord of Havoc is depicted as a throned corpse wearing furs and crowned with autumn leaves. In his right hand he holds Yali, the tempest lash, and in his left he bears a garland of cypress.

In the years before recorded history, Silphenor was a devoted paladin of Jharus. When he came into possession of the Stones of Daemoth, he was driven into a mad rage. Besieging the tower Anarthos, Silphenor defeated Loragg and slew countless jharethil. In a final, desperate struggle, Forlortha sacrificed her own sanity to wrest a portion of the stones' power to herself, pacifying Silphenor's bloodlust and rending both their minds in two. The fallen paladin went into hiding to bide his time and amass new strength.

Silphenor seems to fall out of Vinramar's history entirely until the last century, when preachers began to emerge in Ittador practicing strange rites. The Anotrossi, as they call themselves, venerate the name of Silphenor. Their wagon caravans set out from the *Silfana au Ittador* to roam the known world in search of the abject and downtrodden, whom they purify through pain. Bloodletting, branding, and thumbscrewing are common methods for sanctifying the penitent, but none is so relished as whipping with the tempest lash, the Silphenites' holy symbol. Whether these sadistic public rituals are for entertainment or enlightenment is not wholly clear.

The *Silfana* teaches that Silphenor's abode Dolodiri lies beyond the four worlds. There the dead that are claimed by no other god join the eternal storm.

Sterianon

God of fatherhood, judgment, loyalty, and truth

Alignment: Lawful good
Suggested Domains: Knowledge, Life
Symbols: Crowns, gavels, orbs, scepters
Titles: The Archon of Crowns, Helundus, Holy Judge, Majestic Father, the Martyr Above All
Abode: Toluratha (Vinramar)
Enemies: None
Allegiance: None
Religious Factions: The Patriarchy

Impartial and aloof, Sterianon is the embodiment of paternal wisdom. Deceit and ornamentation dissolve beneath his penetrating insight. No lie can cloud his understanding. In his tower Toluratha, the Archon of Crowns sits in earnest judgment over mortal lives, discerning all truth and preparing for the final confrontation between the gods. He is depicted as a white-bearded king in lavish blue robes.

In the spring of his godhood, Sterianon went forth to every court and high seat in the four worlds—visiting, advising, and grooming the leaders of mortal kingdoms. The elders of the jharethil tell that he was convinced a common kinship could be achieved among their peoples. This hope is regarded as the only folly of Sterianon's divine reign, if folly it was. Division and misjudgment seem to inevitably plague all mortals.

Once the mediator of all divines, Sterianon's respect and status among the Ascended crumbled as Daemoth's Court rose to power in recent millennia. Now he is mocked, ignored, flouted, and disdained by many nations, and his Patriarchs have been reduced to figureheads, where previously they held great prestige.

Volgothyde

God of bloodthirst, the hunt, murder, and the undead

Alignment: Chaotic evil
Suggested Domains: Blood, Death, War
Symbols: Bats, blood, bones, soil
Titles: The Immortal Hunter, the Lord of Bloodthirst, the Lord of Caraveh, the Untold One
Abode: Caraveh (Vinramar)
Enemies: Forlortha, Gauren, Mozralchi
Allegiance: The Court of Daemoth (Daemoth, Gallister, Gauren, Maruma'e)
Religious Factions: The Volgothic Cult

Mysterious and fearful, Volgothyde is the Lord of Bloodthirst, a powerful embodiment of undeath and corruption. Spectral lights and a chorus of agonies accompany his presence. He himself is depicted as a winged vampire whose pale wounds flow like limitless fountains of blood. He makes his abode in Caraveh, the ancient capital of Perrith Gorr. Although believed to have ascended to godhood just ten years ago, in that brief time Volgothyde has changed the face of Vinramar forever.

In life, Volgothyde was the most dreadful vampire ever to plague the earth. He ruled Perrith Gorr some 7,000 years ago, until he was destroyed and his vile spirit driven to Morvugol. In that dim world, Volgothyde amassed new strength, building a necromantic empire that paved his way to godhood. When he returned to Vinramar, words scarcely describe the horrors he brought. Vampire armies swept through Wellusk, leaving the entire region in ashen ruin as payment for the killing stroke they dealt him.

With Volgothyde's resurgence, whispers abound of the Dark Atonement, a reconciliation between the vampire bloodlines and their demonic forefathers. Daemoth, they say, has admitted the Lord of Bloodthirst into his unholy court. Only time will tell what miseries such an alliance might bring to the mortal world.

The Irvallath

Baturach

Mistress of death, ice, the moon, rain, and tides

Alignment: Neutral
Suggested Domains: Blood, Death, Water
Symbols: Glaciers, the moon, rain, skulls
Enemies: Lakhi, Maruma'e, Rinshari
Allies: Senfaer

Mistress of age and death, Baturach sits above the earth in the great white throne of the moon. Her light both restores life and takes it away. As the moon waxes, her power over mortals grows. It is her gaze that causes them to age, weaken, and die.

Baturach's reach is long. She controls the rain and the tides, regularly replenishing the waters of Vinramar so that Ethis' fires do not scorch the earth too deeply. Though Baturach does not control the cold itself as Ulmhasa does, she can transform rain into snow, and the rivers and seas to ice. She is often blamed for the Great Winter that buried so much of Vinramar beneath titanic glaciers.

Baturach's daughter was Atiakha, the second most beautiful of the Irvallath. When Atiakha was trapped by Daemoth and torn into two beings, Baturach turned on her daughter and swore to destroy boh Lakhi and Maruma'e. Apart from her rivalry with the two halves of her daughter, Baturach has largely kept out of the great affairs of the four worlds. She is shy and private much of the month, hiding her skull-emblazoned throne in darkness.

Those who seek Baturach's favor become inured to the ebbing life of all creatures. They sense the nearness of death, and seek to bring peace to those it claims, though they rarely live in the company of others. With headdresses and fetishes fashioned of mortal remains, they conduct unsettling rituals in swamps, caves, and other deserted lands. When folk trespass within these fearful lairs desiring the restoration of life, the boon can be far more hideous than death itself.

Ethis

Mistress of deceit, rune magic, sexuality, and volcanoes

Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Suggested Domains: Light, Stone, Trickery
Symbols: Deserts, igneous rock, masks, runes
Enemies: Rinshari, Sarnoss
Allies: Senfaer

A shapeshifter and trickster, Ethis is embodied in the shifting sands of the desert and twisting eruptions of magma. She has a colorful history with many of the gods, among whom she has found lovers and enemies, but Ethis has always feuded most with her mother Rinshari. Perhaps her most lasting mark on the four worlds was to teach mortals the ways of rune magic.

When the primordials escaped from their captivity, Ethis bore many children in the following centuries. The maahiset—ancestors of the heathfolk, gugrum, sarrow, and telmatra—were among her earliest litters. Expertise in rune magic led the maahiset civilization to great heights and unutterable blasphemies. Many magical creatures were likewise born of Ethis, such as the giants, goblins, phoenixes, and some of the unseelie fey.

At times Ethis has intervened in mortal affairs, particularly when there is an opportunity to explore shapes she has not yet taken. Her favored forms vary dramatically in the mythology, from living geysers to fiery beasts or humanoids. However she appears, it is with a mind to make mischief.

Imbakhao

Master of poison, rage, sickness, slavery, and war

Alignment: Neutral evil
Suggested Domains: Darkness, Pestilence
Symbols: Barbs, chains, serpents, shadows, venom
Enemies: Lakhi, Sarnoss
Allies: Ulmhasa

Imbakhao is the drowned serpent, a son of Ulmhasa. Though his history is closely connected to the world of Morvugol, he is worshipped by the name of Rimgorgh among some dragonborn clans. He is an avatar of pestilence, battle, and slavery. For ages he has lain quiet beside his mother in the sunken city of Ekhmarai, in the form of a colossal, black snake.

Poisons and venom came into being as a manifestation of Imbakhao's hatred. He is considered the father of all serpents, snakes, vipers, and monstrosities such as the basilisk, behir, and purple worm. His cults call on him to bind their enemies, spread plagues, and wither fields and woodlands.

Ulmhasa, the primordial goddess of dreams and shadow, gave birth to Imbakhao in Morvugol's primeval infancy. When she became imprisoned within the Shadow Realm of that world, Imbakhao laid himself beside her as a watchman and protector. In time, the shadow-touched inhabitants of Morvugol built a formidable city over their resting place, known today as Ekhamarai.

From the well of sleep where they lie waiting, Imbakhao and his mother traverse the dreams of mortal creatures, calling to those who might serve them, preparing for the time when they will again take physical form and unleash shadowy horrors on the mortal realm.

Jukai

Master of deformity, the grotesque, solitude, and stone

Alignment: Neutral
Suggested Domains: Stone
Symbols: Dark elves, hunchbacks, standing stones
Enemies: Ethis, Forlortha, Rinshari
Allies: Lakhi, Senfaer

When Ethis seduced Sarnoss, Lord of Beasts, in the dawn of creation, she conceived and bore Jukai the Malformed. Not wanting a child, she dashed him against the rocks and left him a cripple. He takes the form of a jagged, sentient mountain whose crags and foothills ripple with weary dejection.

Jukai's disfigurement misshapes all he touches. All the works of his hands lurch and crumble into grotesque ruin. Outcasts and reprobates revere him as a symbol of the despised and misused things of the world. Over the millennia, dark elves became fascinated with Jukai, worshipping him in preference to Forlortha. Under his hand they found solace in the unyielding stone.

As his mother draws magma from beneath the earth, Jukai hardens it into immutable rock. Much of her work in the creation was thus spoiled. None can tell whether Jukai takes pleasure in his marring touch or weeps for the ruin he has wrought on so many pretty things.

Lakhi

Mistress of blood magic, dragons, the sea, and self-rule

Alignment: Lawful neutral
Suggested Domains: Blood, Water
Symbols: Blue dragons, fish, moss, seaweed, silver
Enemies: Baturach, Maruma'e, Rinshari
Allies: Jukai, Senfaer

When the soul of Atiakha was rent in two, the daughter of the moon became two separate beings, the sister goddesses of the sea Lakhi and Maruma'e. Lakhi remained below and took the form of a titanic blue leviathan. Nesting in the heart of Mount Fayrlin, she rules the deepest waters and their inhabitants. The secrets of blood magic were always her domain, though this birthright was stolen by mortals long ago.

Like the ocean-depths that are her domain, Lakhi is a wellspring of life, eternally laying eggs in her wake. She is credited as the mother of all fish, serpents, and dragonkind. By virgin birth, she hatched the Three: colossal monstrosities whose might and intellect nearly rivaled her own. The Three remain nameless within the legendarium, but are often depicted as the whale, the crocodile, and the kraken, or else as three great sea-dragons. The Ten were born to Lakhi by Imbakhao, father of serpents. These mythic dragons of varying colors and codes would become the forefathers of metallic and chromatic dragons.

Lakhi is said to be locked in continual war with her sister Maruma'e, whose connection to the Darkplane brought the first aberrations to Vinramar. To her ardent followers, and the dragonborn most of all, Lakhi is a symbol of clarity and freedom from the slavers and tyrants that rule the land.

Maruma'e

Mistress of deformity, madness, the sea, and strong drink

Alignment: Chaotic evil
Suggested Domains: Aberration, Tempest
Symbols: Aberrations, pearls, slime, tentacles
Enemies: Baturach, Lakhi, Rinshari, Senfaer
Allies: Daemoth

The most sinister of all the Irvallath is Maruma'e, the Horror that Should Not Have Been. She is the half of Atiakha's soul that was carried by Daemoth into the Darkplane, where as his lover she became a twisted echo of her former beauty. A queen of madness and revulsion, Maruma'e treasures nothing but the form and likeness of aberration.

On her return to Vinramar, Maruma'e ushered countless unnatural and abominable things into the mortal world. Beings whose very shape defies physical law crept into shadowed places. In the darkest depths of the waters, entire civilizations thrived under the nurture of Maruma'e. The Spawn of Lakhi began to disappear in the Deep, or emerge with mysterious wounds and mutations. Before long, it was war.

The shambling priests that worship Maruma'e in ocean-floor temples believe that nature is the true aberration in the universe. In terrible rites they mutate their captive sacrifices beyond recognition, "cleansing" them to gain favor with the Mutant Bride. These devotees of aberration prize fermented and distilled drinks as a path to making their minds one with madness.

Rinshari

Mistress of art, beauty, fire, jealousy, and music

Alignment: Neutral
Suggested Domains: Blood, Light
Symbols: Dance, flames, harps, songbirds
Enemies: Baturach, Ethis, Lakhi, Maruma'e, Jukai
Allies: None

Once Rinshari was celebrated as the most beautiful being in all of creation. She disdained all others, spurning their fellowship and deeming them unworthy of her concern. Then Daemoth captured her in the Vice of Winter, and while the Irvallath were bound in the Primordial Realm for time immemorial, Rinshari was forced to bear children to Daemoth.

When at last she was released, Rinshari wandered the four worlds, begging relief. But all things remembered her proud words to them in the dawn of creation. The Irvallath revisited her malice upon her own head, putting out her eyes in vengeance. Since that time she has remained a broken vagabond hated by all—herself most of all.

As an embodiment of fire, passion, and beauty, Rinshari taught the first creatures of the four worlds to make music. Poets and painters invoke her name as a patron of all art, and the avatar of sorrow. In many places, tears are still called the Rain of Rinshari.

The children Rinshari conceived with Daemoth were the first fiends, creatures that went on to sire demons, devils, vampires, and werekin. Estranged from both father and children, Rinshari finds no solace, even with those that worship and entreat her, truly earning her the title Inconsolable.

Ruethas

Master of lore, memory, strategy, and time

Alignment: Neutral
Suggested Domains: Knowledge, Trickery
Symbols: Carnival masks, hourglasses, wool
Enemies: None
Allies: Senfaer

Best known as the patron deity of the heathfolk, Ruethas is the primordial god of time and strategy. Little is known of him. To the knowledge of the loremasters, he has claimed no domain and takes no physical form. The heathfolk represent him with an image of a carnival mask and a feathered hat, but even the chronomancers deepest in his counsel claim no knowledge of where in the fabric of time he can be found. Despite this enigmatic relationship, Ruethas has had an enormous influence on heathfolk culture.

When the maahiset were abandoned by Ethis and driven into hiding, Ruethas took the most educated of the creatures under his wing. As a bodiless voice from the center of all time, he kept the tradition of magic alive among them. Today, the values and practices of their culture reflect this close tutelage. Many festivals openly celebrate Ruethas as the ultimate artist, scholar, and tactician, a hidden benefactor to his chosen people.

Ruethas is a steward of the timestream, but the myths also portray him as a rake, using clever tricks to get what he desires. Often his own ends conflict with those of the other gods, but he has also been known to come to their aid when it suits him. Alliances mean little to the master of time, and he honors or dismisses such obligations without shame.

Sarnoss

Master of beasts, strength, and the wild

Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Suggested Domains: Nature
Symbols: Lions, wolves, spears, trees
Enemies: Altrear, Ethis, Imbakhao, Volgothyde
Allies: Forlortha, Senfaer

Sarnoss is the father of beasts and guardian of the wild. He stalks the untamed lands beyond civilization in the form of a great black lion. Animals of the forest, desert, mountain, and plain obey him, and the very trees bow as he passes. Most sacred to Sarnoss and his followers are those places that remain unseen by civilized creatures. Such sanctuaries hold great power for them.

Though born to Ulmhasa in the shadows of Morvugol, Sarnoss quickly departed for greener pastures. When he came to Vinramar, he filled the lands with beasts of every variety. During this early work, Sarnoss was seduced by Ethis. When in her passion she unmasked herself, Sarnoss was repulsed by her plainness, and his hatred for her endures even now. When their child Jukai was born, Ethis discarded him and he was left estranged from both parents.

Sarnoss is said to be brutal and unforgiving in his defense of the living things of the earth. To him, those who spoil the land without recompense are usurpers worthy of death. His worshippers, most commonly human and gugrum tribes, perform elaborate rites at the taking of any animal or plant life. THrough these penitent displays, they seek to escape the wrath of the black lion. The High Chief of Sarnoss leads such tribes as a religious and political head.

Senfaer

Master of balance, discipline, order, psionics, and the stars

Alignment: Lawful neutral
Suggested Domains: Aberration, Knowledge
Symbols: Crystal, diamond, hands, horses, stars
Enemies: Maruma'e
Allies: Many

From the distant stars, Senfaer watches over Vinramar. He is the lord of order, and a patron of the psionic arts. He dwells far beyond the bounds of the four worlds, ploughing through the abyss on his silver steed Girutze.

During the creation Senfaer oversaw the labor of the Irvallath, planting the stars as waypoints in the Darkplane, protective beacons between which he could pass in a single step. When aberrant powers interfere with the four worlds, he and his wayfarer monks wage war for the defense of reality.

In fulfillment of his oath to expel all aberration from the four worlds, Senfaer's monks care for those who have been corrupted by the Darkplane, fortifying their minds and bodies against the spread of the unnatural. Hermitages lie scattered throughout Vinramar, where the Silver Hand is all that stands between the mimessarchs and aberrant deformity.

The worship of Senfaer has given birth to some of the greatest philosophers of Vinramar's history, including Humenhi and We-Tzuhael. Such monks traditionally dwell in monasteries, training to use the latent energy of existence to combat threats from the Darkplane.

Ulmhasa

Mistress of dreams, fear, Morvugol, and shadow magic

Alignment: Neutral evil
Suggested Domains: Darkness
Symbols: Black lotus blossoms, nightmares, vultures
Enemies: Sarnoss
Allies: Imbakhao

Deep within the earth of Morvugol sleeps the goddess of dreams and shadow, Ulmhasa. Her tomb is beneath the ruined city Ekhmarai, built by her devotees the Amikhad. There she slumbers, confined to that part of the Primordial Realm where the dreams of all living things congregate in horrid, primal splendor.

Ulmhasa's influence lies over these dreams in silent malice. According to legend, she traverses the infinite night-visions unchecked, hunting those whose hidden thoughts most delight her. Nightmares plague her victims, sometimes for years, until at last their very souls are consumed by the mistress of shadow.

Before her eternal sleep began Ulmhasa possessed one of the stones of Daemoth, a powerful fragment of the stone that once housed the creator's spirit. Wielding the stone, she shaped every dream in Morvugol, torturing the Amikhad into submission.

Some claim that Ulmhasa's reign ended with an invasion from the Darkplane, the mistress of shadow sacrificing herself to protect her people. Others contend that Maurathel daughter of Mozralchi ventured into Morvugol to depose her. A few even hold that the shadow beneath the foundation of Ekhmarai sapped her strength until she yielded to eternal sleep. Whichever version is true, Ulmhasa diminished into a figment of dreams, faceless and without the strength to rule the world she shaped.

Zho-hau

Mistress of birds, carrion, fury, and the storm

Alignment: Neutral
Suggested Domains: Nature, Tempest
Symbols: Bones, drums, feathers, lightning, the wind
Enemies: Imbakhao, Rinshari
Allies: Sarnoss

Born of Sarnoss and Lakhi long after the creation, Zho-hau is the tyrant of the winds. Her wings stir the stormclouds and her diving talons are the lightning. The skies of the four worlds belong to her alone, but no mortal can tell where her eyrie lies. Manifesting the qualities of her two primordial parents, Zho-hau is both nursing mother and bird of prey.

Long had Zho-hau gestated in the Primordial Realm, held within an egg that Lakhi laid in the height of her power. It is said that Loragg found it, warm and trembling, and took the egg to carry in his wanderings. When Zho-hau hatched, a violent tempest erupted from the broken shell, carrying her feeble, serpentine form toward the distant earth. Loragg reached out his hand and gave her feathered wings to sail above the torrent.

Zho-hau keeps no companions. In her youth, she populated the mountains of Vinramar with winged creatures of every size and shape: the griffon, the harpy, the roc, the sphinx, and all varieties of birds. She herself is depicted as a three-headed white eagle, feasting on fallen soldiers. In some legends, she and her eldest children take the form of imperious sphinxes guarding primordial secrets.

Other Deities

Emriel

Elf god of hunting, music, venom, the wild, and woodcraft

Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Suggested Domains: Nature, Pestilence
Symbols: Antlers, drums, red arrows, thorns, toads

Unknown to much of the wider world, Emriel is an elk-headed woodland spirit worshipped by many wild elves throughout Vinramar. Believed to be an archfey launched into godhood by his followers' faith, Emriel is a master of bargains. Many unseelie fey are in his service, including several powerful hag covens.

The Vjornil

Human pantheon worshipped in Iljudheim

***Guddrek**, god of fate, fire, and runes*
***Hjotra**, goddess of fertility and the harvest*
***Ingvidr**, god of industry and night*
***Skjarlunn**, goddess of magic and wind*
***Thrandull**, god of hunting and trickery*

The Vjornil pantheon, favored among the Ansë humans, is considered primitive and inferior to the other gods of Vinramar. Many loremasters believe they are fictitious, or else based on bare memories of older gods. All are great patrons of war in addition to any other areas of influence. More information on the Vjornil can be found on the Other Deities table on page 211.

Altrear

Jhareth god of ancestors, thunder, and valor

Alignment: Neutral Good
Suggested Domains: Tempest, War
Symbols: Crowns, stags, swords, thunder

Altrear is worshipped as an ancestral deity by certain jharethil, predominantly outliers from the hidden cities. In history, Altrear was a powerful jhareth emperor, the son of Sterianon. Worship of him began after the Schism of Ardon, when the Jharric Faith was rife with corruption and the jharethil looked elsewhere for divine help. As an explorer and tamer of beasts, Altrear symbolizes the subjugation of the wild and the intrepid spirit of adventure.

The cults of Altrear do not look to vested priests for guidance. Any may worship the images of the jhareth father, which are carved into ceremonial wooden masks.

The Triune Fathers

Telmatra pantheon worshipped among traditional tribes

***Bekjhal**, god of artisans, merchants, summer*
***Duhulatt**, god of clan rule, couriers, springtime, and travel*
***Hodramesh**, god of profit, storms, and winter*

The Triune Fathers are a pantheon connected to the traditional patriarchal warrior culture of the telmatra. Each personifies one of the three traditional seasons of the telmatra tribes: spring, summer, and winter. Though they form a single pantheon, Hodramesh is considered an enemy to Bekjhal and Duhulatt. More information on the Triune Fathers can be found on the Other Deities table on page 211.

Fimbuleth

Werekin god of bloodsport, the hunt, and lycanthropy

Alignment: Neutral evil
Suggested Domains: Nature, Pestilence
Symbols: Bones, swamplands, wolves

According to legends, Fimbuleth dwells at the heart of the Hessawood, a terrible avatar of the hunt, and the source of all lycanthropy. Some say he takes the form of a great male lamia, while others describe his face as a fleshless wolf skull. The terror of the Sorcerer in the Wood still lingers among the humans of the region, some 9,000 years later. Nowhere do the stories evoke more horror than in the city-state of Faerras, which lies scant miles from the Hessawood.

The True Mother

Supreme entity of aberration

Alignment: Unaligned
Suggested Domains: Aberration
Symbol: A simple, black ring

No deity represents a greater threat than the cosmic entity that is called the True Mother. Originating in some eldritch profundity of the Darkplane, her nature and form are utterly unfathomable. While those that worship her pretend to grasp the nebulous enmity she holds for the natural universe, their profane, hedonistic rituals are merely the crude attempts of mortal minds to comprehend that which in every way exists outside of sanity or apprehension.

APPENDIX A: THE JHARETH MYTHS

First there was an ocean, a vast concourse of water that grew and stretched the bounds of all existence. The jharethil call it Norahaltath, which by interpretation is the Sea in the Void. There was no air, no land, no life; just the endless churning of a drowned universe.

In time the whirlpool lurched and Norahaltath divided at its heart. The water steamed and became a roaring hurricane thrashing out from the center and encircling the sea. Where the pressure from the tempest was great enough, the sea froze solid and became earth. The air wrapped the sea, the sea wrapped the earth, and in the center of the earth was lit the first light.

The light burst through the earth and sea and storm, sending showers of flame and ash into the naked cosmos. All things bathed and were purified in the light of creation, which the jharethil call Mahat. The sacred flame seared the slag and detritus, sparking it into life and consciousness, burning and yet not consuming. In the heart of the wreckage loomed Salvendum, Source of our Joy and Sorrow, the First of Four Worlds.

About Her girdle swirled the other three worlds, orbs of reckless dross hurtling through the tenebrous abyss. The closest world is called Iltallach, or Nearest Fire, by the jharethil. The second they call Vinramar, Bones Beneath the Heavens. The third is Morvugol, Farthest Sight. Between and around these orbs is a void, the gap of nothingness that the jhareth elders name Nieshalar, which by interpretation is called the Darkplane.

As the ashes plunged into the seas of the four worlds and cooled, they awoke. Many remained below, but nine rose into the light and, marveling, were refined into living souls. They are called Irvallath, the Primordial Laborers. When Salvendum saw the Nine had awoken, she spoke through the Darkplane so that all could hear and feel her thought.

She said: I am Sowm; from the heart of the Fire I command the winds and the seas and the earth. Ye have your being through me; I command you to rise and build.

* * *

The Nine laborers of the creation were Rinshari, Ethis, Ulmhasa, Sarnoss, Imbakhao, Jukai, Baturach, Ruethas, and Senfaer.

Rinshari was the first to rise, an orb of beautiful flame that swept in the youthful air and boiled the sea. Of all the Irvallath, Rinshari was the most beautiful, and the quickest to employ others on her behalf. She first labored in Iltallach, where her fiery passion fueled the spirit of the earth and made it hungry.

The second to rise was Ethis, who is the daughter of Rinshari, a wanderer and trickster. When Rinshari boiled the sea so that bulwarks of stone were exposed above the tide, Ethis delved deep into the earth, where her stony flesh melted into dripping fire. She burst holes in many places along the world's skin, sending showers of magma into the air. Rinshari ran about to contain the showers of Ethis, but her fires only further scorched the land, leaving Iltallach warped and charred. In time, Rinshari caught Ethis and brought her to Vinramar where they continued their labors.

Ulmhasa was the third eldest of the Irvallath. She sank deep into the waters of Morvugol, and did not rise to hear the call of Sowm until much later. Shrouded from Salvendum's light, Morvugol was a dark world, and Ulmhasa cooled almost to death as she slept submerged in the sea.

Her son Sarnoss bathed with her in the shape of a black lion until the call of Sowm came, and then he rose to the surface and began to drink the waters of Morvugol. When he had drunk his fill, Sarnoss plunged his great paws into the earth, and sent forth seeds and roots to tend the ground and give it strength. But as he raised forests and gardens his dreams were tormented with the shadow of his mother, and all his labors turned to darkness and night.

When at last she woke, Ulmhasa rose from the bottom of the inky sea to find a lush land full of rich, black trees and midnight flowers. Sarnoss was wroth that his labors had been thus tarnished, and departed for Vinramar.

The fifth of the Irvallath was Imbakhao, Ulmhasa's second child whom she bore after the departure of Sarnoss. Imbakhao is a vast serpent, made of the black magma of Morvugol. Ulmhasa gorged him on her own creations and the remaining dross that fell to Morvugol from Salvendum.

When Sarnoss came to Vinramar, he found Ethis burrowing and shaping the stone into soft, elegant forms. Her face was like the flame of creation itself, and her beauty infatuated him. Entranced, he approached her, but while they lay with one another Ethis shed her mask, and the coarse plainness of the sand was revealed in her true countenance. Then Sarnoss knew she had not the beauty of her mother, only masks and false shapes she could wear. He departed into other lands of Vinramar, where he built jungles and palaces in the trees.

Ethis conceived and bore Jukai, the sixth of the Irvallath. Not desiring to raise a son, Ethis dashed Jukai against the rocks and left him a cripple. From that time his back was hunched and twisted, his face cloven in two. As he grew, he too learned to shape the earth, but his stone was clumsier and tougher than that of his mother.

Seeking his mother's affection Jukai followed Ethis across the land, but everywhere his path roughened her elegant magma, turning the mountains of Vinramar into crags of immutable rock. When Ethis saw how her work was spoiled she returned to Iltallach, where she perfected her craft and wrought her greatest works, safe from the marring of Jukai.

The seventh of the Irvallath was Baturach, the lady of death, who dwelt in the sky as a white light to Vinramar. The moon is her throne. Her work was to replenish the waters of Norahaltath. When Sarnoss drank from them, she caused the seas to rise again toward her. When Rinshari boiled the seas and rivers, Baturach sent rain upon the face of the earth to fill them again.

Baturach was always the shyest of the Irvallath, loathe to speak or be spoken to. When Salvendum's light strikes Vinramar, Baturach counters to the farther side and hides so that none can call to her. At night she peeks out from behind the black of the Darkplane, growing bolder with each setting of the sun. When she is full, her hideous face can be seen in the light of the moon's throne like an emblazoned skull until she again creeps into shadow.

Ruethas was the eighth of the Irvallath to rise. Angered that he had not risen sooner, he wrenched the worlds to a halt and finished his work while all else stood still. Once done, he hid and watched the other laborers toil in their work.

As Ethis danced alone in Iltallach, Ruethas stole one of her masks and wooed her in disguise, but she would not give herself to him. The two danced and dueled across Iltallach until the rest of the Irvallath finished their work. Iltallach was thus left incomplete at the final call of Sowm, and was—until the coming of Forlortha—a barren land of strange rocks and fires.

The ninth of the Irvallath is Senfaer, the greatest in power. His breath drove the winds until they encircled the four worlds in protection from the void. He was appointed by Sowm to oversee the others' work, and to delve into the Darkplane in search of all unreachable knowledge. He was Her messenger and steward to the Irvallath. He placed the stars in the midst of the Darkplane as waypoints to guide his servants safely through the Abyss.

—The Labors of the Irvallath
by Bram Genning

When Sowm saw the finished work of Her primordial laborers, She was pleased. Two sons She fashioned with sparks from Salvendum's flame, wrapped in air and clay: Daemoth and Jharus. These two descended to the four worlds as emissaries to treat with the primordials on Sowm's behalf.

Daemoth was proud and charming then, a master of forms and words. But even in his immortal infancy, obsession and ambition ruled him, eventually driving him to bloody deeds. Jharus matched his elder brother in dignity and ostentation, a magnanimous lordling who brooked no dissent from the will of Sowm.

The sons of Sowm were powerful beyond the imagining of the Irvallath. Descending upon the work of the elementals, they declared themselves lords of the four worlds and began to build themselves dominions. The Irvallath, angered that Sowm had given the fruit of their labor to others, made war on the young gods.

For time incomprehensible, battle raged between Sowm's children and the nine Irvallath. The war has since been named Gulthim ach Mirvallath, which has been translated as both "the restraining of the Irvallath" and "the crippling of the elements." The beasts and elements that had sprung from the labor of the Irvallath gathered in great numbers to challenge Jharus and Daemoth.

Little is told of the Gulthim ach Mirvallath, but this much is known: in the midst of the conflict Daemoth imprisoned Rinshari, the most beautiful of the primordials, in the Vice of Winter. By force she bore him powerful sons, the arch-demons Gauren, Iarmov, and Arrochimeir.

When at last the Sons of Sowm were victorious they cast the Irvallath into the Primordial Realm, where their souls were made naked. Jharus, in symbol of victory, fashioned a son and heir to aid in the flowering of the four worlds. He named his creation Loragg, Son of Victory. The Creators were now four: Sowm, Daemoth, Jharus, and Loragg.

* * *

In the eons after the Creation, Jharus settled in Anarthos and the surrounding mountains. There the young god and his son designed thrones, walls, towers, and cities, forges and workshops in which the crafts of civilization were born. Jharus' hand was skilled above all in the shaping of metal and precious stones. Anarthos radiated with the light of his workmanship.

While Jharus delighted in craft, his son Loragg desired most to emulate the beauty of Mother Sowm by creating life. From the earth he shaped a woman and called her Forlortha. At her creation Forlortha was more beautiful than Rinshari and wise as Loragg himself.

Together Loragg and Forlortha bore children. Jhareth the firstborn took his sister Erelatha to wife. Their children became the jharethil, radiant souls that settled the valleys and woods at the feet of Anarthos. Culfirith married his sister Feiren, who bore the Fey Kindreds that crossed the Sea of Tacarros into Orucolantra.

In the time that Loragg and Forlortha first bore their own children, the Irvallath began to escape their confinement in the Primordial Realm. Fire, floods, winds, and rending of the earth accompanied their liberation, wreaking havoc in the lands north and east of Anarthos. Baturach's ascension captivated the children of Forlortha as the pale beauty of her throne was lit again for the first time in eons. With her emerged Atiakha, born to Baturach in the primordial depths.

Daemoth set his throne Maromutalcoth in the highlands of Tuluro in the farthest West. From his high seat flowed two rivers: Zedcaramul and Cildcothach, which are now called Panata and Zoltari. From the height of Maromutalcoth, Daemoth was already filling the western valleys with bestial corruptions born of captive Rinshari.

One day it chanced that Atiakha passed by Maromutalcoth in the form of a great flood. When Daemoth witnessed the might of the storm approaching his land, he reached out and caught the primordial maiden as he had Rinshari. Frozen in the Vice of Winter, Atiakha bore Daemoth's second brood: the white-faced daemons. The firstborn of these was Omuel, pale as the moon and cold as frost.

It was Forlortha who first discovered Daemoth's rape of the primordials. Leading a concourse of her daughters across the River Zedcaramul and past Maromutalcoth, she witnessed the salacious corruptions braying on the riverbanks.

When word of this reached Jharus, he traveled to Maromutalcoth and entreated his brother to leave the primordial offspring and live with him in Anarthos. Daemoth smiled sweetly, but instead of avowing exodus, he called his brood to war.

From the lowest gates of Maromutalcoth, thousands of unspeakable things issued forth and engulfed Jharus while Daemoth and his eldest children fled with the captive Rinshari and Atiakha into the North. Jharus alone slew the vile army and returned to Anarthos, enraged by his brother's rebellion.

It wasn't long before Atiakha's daemon-spawn were seen in the South and the East, where Daemoth sent them wandering in a hungry rage. As they fell on the fey settlements and burrowed into the feet of the mountains around Anarthos, Jharus began a great work of armament among the jharethil, forging swords and lances for the hunting of Daemoth's brood.

With each passing year the assailing creatures grew more hideous. The fey children took the brunt of the assault, having no protection from the North. Many of them crossed the Sea of Ivorlost to the island now called Telgard for escape. In time, however, the brood of Daemoth learned to fare the waters, and besieged all the South.

When the raids became unbearable, Jharus and Loragg mounted a great legion of their children to put an end to Daemoth's blasphemous craft. Jharus' host drove the demons back to Maromutalcoth, where he and Loragg found Daemoth's high seat empty. The sky above went dark, the light of Salvendum extinguished. A rain of immortal blood fell across the worlds, and Jharus knew that Sowm had been slain.

At Maromutalcoth, Jharus and Loragg awaited the return of the godslayer. The colossal stone of Salvendum, its heart and core that was now without light, descended toward Vinramar. Above it hovered Daemoth, engorged from feasting on the body of Sowm Herself. His flesh had grown bulbous and putrid. Jharus and Loragg fought Daemoth with all the might of their deity, and at last forced his very soul into the stone of Salvendum as a prison. Jharus and Loragg rolled the stone, now called the Hiyorugh, into the far abyss of the Darkplane, where Daemoth would lie imprisoned for time unmeasured.

* * *

The years following Daemoth's banishment are not recorded. The elders of Irrachos speak vaguely of the Days of Stars, when the heavens stood absent of the sun and unwelcome things came to dwell on Vinramar. Sowm's death, they write, irrevocably tarnished her creations and fated the remaining worlds to ruin.

But Jharus, hoping to salvage what survived, formed a new world to replace Salvendum and set it in the heavens. The elders tell that he bound himself eternally to the High Seat there so that its light would never dim again; the jharethil he tasked to protect Vinramar in his absence. With their father in exile, Daemoth's sons divided his dominions, establishing tribes and kingdoms to rival the jharethil's.

Daemoth remained imprisoned for years unnumbered. During this time his sons and their fiendish offspring dispersed across the four worlds, bringing misery and avarice in their wake.

Gauren and Iarmov, his eldest sons, sojourned in Morvugol, the planet farthest from the new-made sun. There the shadow-children of Ulmhasa dwelt in black jungles. Gauren disappeared on obscure paths through the wilderness, while Iarmov became a hidden terror to the sunless beasts as he hunted and raped them from his stronghold Throlugaur. By the falling of the stones of Daemoth, the shadow-dwellers that first inhabited Morvugol were mostly gone, displaced by the unspeakable fruit of Iarmov's loins.

It was at this time that, far off in the Darkplane, the great rock that held Daemoth's imprisoned spirit collided with something and sent a hail of stones plummeting to the surface of the four worlds. The Stones of Daemoth held terrible power, sowing chaos and bloodshed in their wake.

Two of these shards landed on Morvugol. The first struck ground in the jungles near Throlugaur, and the second plummeted into Ulmhasa's stronghold Ekhmarai, blasting the great city at its center and carving a deep pit at its heart. From this tunnel the pure shadow that brooded beneath Morvugol's surface erupted and awakened the primordial goddess of shadow from her wrathful sleep. When Ulmhasa claimed the Stone of Daemoth, her power over the Primordial Realm was magnified. The dreams of all living things were shadowed by a great malice, and many souls across the four worlds turned from fitful sleep to waking death as Ulmhasa devoured their minds.

Sensing the great power that had arisen beyond his lands, Iarmov bore his own stone to the foundation of Ekhmarai. The black magma sat in steaming pools where it had erupted from the pit. Marveling at the scene, Iarmov was set upon by Imbakhao son of Ulmhasa, who slithered around his throat and caught him in a deadly grip.

Fat with her supper, Ulmhasa rose from the pit and tortured Iarmov, dipping him in the raw, black magma until his body was shriveled and his flesh covered in weeping sores. Iarmov's metamorphosis left him maimed, but not powerless. The elders do not record how, but the Stone of Daemoth itself became a part of Iarmov's putrid form, and his power was only amplified.

A desperate duel laid waste to much of Morvugol as Ulmhasa and Iarmov struggled for control of the remaining stone. In the end, the second son of Daemoth was driven from Morvugol into the Darkplane, where his connection to the stone guided him to the Hiyorugh and a reunion with his father. Upon discovering Daemoth's prison, Iarmov set to work drawing out his father's essence.

* * *

The earliest recorded histories remember a jhareth named Silphenor who rose to prominence as a high priest among his people. While traveling westward Silphenor came upon the ruined tower of Maromutalcoth, its valleys blanketed in the bones of the second brood of Daemoth. Whether by design or chance it is not known, but in the moment that Silphenor

approached the tower, eight Stones of Daemoth fell to the ruins about him and overthrew his mind.

Silphenor returned to Anarthos in a tempest of murder. Hearing of the oathbreaker's bloody work, Loragg hastened there to find him in battle with Forlortha and many hundreds of the jharethil. In a haunting echo of Jharus slaying the brood of Daemoth at Maromutalcoth, Silphenor alone besieged Anarthos, massacring its people in a thirty-year siege. In all those years he never ate or rested. He alone butchered its armies and scattered the jharethil to the coasts of present-day Arrochule.

The siege ended with a desperate struggle in the highest chamber of deserted Anarthos. Loragg was slain and cast bodiless back to Mardelthwaide, leaving Forlortha alone to withstand Silphenor. Seeing no other hope, she wrenched a part of the stones' influence to her own mind. With its will divided, Daemoth's enmity dissolved from the stones, but the fracture drove both Forlortha and Silphenor mad.

In deranged flight from the ruins, Silphenor let fall the eight stones of Daemoth and they were scattered across the West. Little is told of him from that time, but some whispers hint that he fled into the Darkplane, where his madness was seen as wisdom.

Forlortha fled formless to the world Iltallach, which she now claimed as a refuge for herself and her children. A great tree sprang from the rocky desert to house her spirit, and beside it she raised two gates to Vinramar—one opening in Orucolantra and another in Talanbir. Over the following centuries the fey children migrated to Iltallach in droves, where they tended the obstinate stone until water and life filled the deserted world.

The madness of Forlortha estranged her from her husband Loragg, who searched Iltallach for her in vain, not perceiving that the deranged malice within the tree was his wife's own spirit. This malice began at once to poison the land of Iltallach itself, making its people wanton and cruel. Elsewhere are told many tales of the mad elves and their dealings with the mortals of Vinramar.

* * *

The records of the elders tell that 7,000 years after the sack of Anarthos, the jharethil saw the sun darken and knew the Hiyorugh had returned. The colossal stone plummeted toward Vinramar and the heart of their empire. All that remained of Anarthos was obliterated, never to be rebuilt. Many thousands of jharethil were slain at its fall, and the wave of destruction tore across half the world. Nothing was left where Jharus once dwelt but a barren crater, which today men call Vitollos.

The fall of the Hiyorugh was only a herald of the vengeance with which Daemoth now descended on Vinramar. Fetid aberrations followed him and infested the waters and deep places. The jharethil and their fey cousins were all but obliterated in a rancorous vortex as the souls of countless living things were dragged howling from their bodies into the void. Daemoth's victory would have been absolute but for the betrayal of his eldest son.

At his father's onslaught, Gauren emerged from the jungles of Morvugol and fought alongside him. He brought no armies of his own, but had learned in his exile to bind the souls of the dead into his service, thereby turning fallen enemies into soldiers. When the initial incursion was done and all the lands near Anarthos stood in smoking ruin, Gauren demanded Daemoth grant him a boon for his service. He coveted Atiakha, the daughter of the moon, who by force had borne Omuel and the daemons. As condition for his service, Gauren demanded Daemoth free the primordial and grant him her hand.

Daemoth was enraged at the request. He opened his maws to consume his insolent son, but Gauren and his bound souls resisted. When at last the traitor was taken, Daemoth's wrath was turned from Vinramar and he abandoned his conquest. Gauren was carried to the ruins of Maromutalcoth and dismembered in punishment for his insolence.

—The Stonewar: An Assembled History
by Bram Genning

It has been told that Ethis deceived Sarnoss and later bore Jukai. After the Irvallath escaped from their imprisonment in the Primordial Realm, she frolicked in the open North of Vinramar, where Ruethas returned to again try his suit with her. In her wanton mood she accepted, she wearing the shape of fire and him the shape of water.

Ethis conceived and bore the first genies in the mountains north of Vunhaeg. Enamored of her power of creation, she bore hundreds more of Ruethas' young in a hundred different forms. The remnants of their brood are still to be found scattered about the wilder regions of Vinramar, but the djinn she hid within the Primordial Realm so that Ruethas could not claim them.

But Ethis wished more and more to make children after the manner of the Sons of Sowm—an intelligent offspring like the daemons that were settled nearby. Leaving Ruethas in secret she came to Vunhaeg, where she found the king's harem, composed of his own daughters. Using her mask to

take the form of the daemon king Hilutos, she lay with each of his daughters and departed. But in her haste she left behind the mask.

Each of the daughters of Hilutos bore a child from Ethis, stocky and fire-eyed with bright runes that burned beneath their skin. These stunted creatures were raised among the kindred of Hilutos, but were shunned and mocked. Their mothers called the litter Maehisath: the charred ones.

After lying with Ethis, the daughters of Hilutos conceived only her children, no matter the father of the child. Within 50 years the maehisath, outnumbering their cruel kindred, turned the sword on the daemons and drove them from Vunhaeg. Bereft of his station and offspring, Hilutos departed into the wild as a vagabond, carrying only the mask of Ethis.

By this time Ethis had lost interest in her children, and the Maehisath called upon her for succor in vain. But after some years Ethis chanced to pass Vunhaeg again, and there found a thriving body of her children, who now called themselves the maahiset. Her arrival was trumpeted from the walls of the city, and she walked with the maahiset again, teaching them powerful runes both for speech and for primordial magic. Though Ethis gloried in her children, her mischief and cunning soon embittered the maahiset. She dwelt in Vunhaeg for a short time before tiring of them and departing.

* * *

Settling the mountains north of present-day Trentsmund, the maahiset flourished as one of the great ancient civilizations. During the height of their power, the demon-legions of Mohtra ravaged the maahiset lands, causing them to scatter far across the West and flee into the mountains.

Four thousand years later their descendants, called Maahisites, began to emerge: the heathfolk, sarrow, gugrum, and telmatra. While sealed off, each Maahisite race had grown apart from the others, developing different physical and cultural attributes. The sarrow, for instance, remained short like their ancestors, while the gugrum grew much taller. The heathfolk preserved some of the maahiset's arcane traditions, and the telmatra became able seafarers.

Along with humans, Maahisites have become one of the largest and most diverse racial groups. Thousands of years of separation have estranged these four races, and it's doubtful that any kindred loyalty remains between them.

At its height, the maahiset empire covered much of the regions of Trentsmund, Chayrshellech, the Norlythe, and Goltaraim. Though their monumental cities have been buried and ground into dust, there are still artifacts, ruins, and places of power to be found in these regions—remnants of the runemages' forgotten art. But those who can discover the secrets of the forbidden relics may live to regret it.

Today, the Maahisite races have little memory of their ancestors. They take for granted the folklore, nursery rhymes, and symbols of power that survive from that era. Even the heathfolk, who inherited a tradition of simple rune magic from the maahiset, know very little of the ancient practices. Time swallows secrets, and the mysteries of the maahiset are no exception.

* * *

Daemoth's influence in Vinramar was particularly distant at this time. His energies were focused on the shaping of his dominion in the Darkplane, a mockery of the worlds born of Sowm. Gallister, the newly deified lieutenant of the Abyssal Throne, ruled in Vinramar on behalf of the Lord of Winter. He was a warmaker, an iron hammer in Daemoth's hand. The Sons of Daemoth took it hard that they were now subservient to a former jhareth. Gallister's power kept them quelled, but did nothing to relieve their jealousy.

Omuel held his mother Rinshari and cousin Atiakha in captivity at Mohtra, where for millennia they languished in the Vice of Winter. Gauren, who had pitted himself against his father and brothers for possession of Atiakha, was now a formless spirit, but his obsession with her was greater than his fear of Gallister's wrath. During the Imperial Age, when the vigilance of Mohtra was weakened by failing wars against the jharethil, Gauren took possession of Atiakha's elemental body so that it was shared between their two spirits. Together they broke the bonds of ice and fled Mohtra, but left Rinshari captive.

Gallister and Omuel prepared a vicious pursuit, and in the cliff-coasts of northern Chayrshellech they and their hunters overtook him. Omuel, driven begrudgingly by the lash of his father's lieutenant, dueled Gauren—who had control of Atiakha's powerful primordial body. In the midst of the combat, Daemoth appeared and bitterly chastened his children for bickering over his possessions. Gauren was again dispersed, and Omuel sent smarting back to Mohtra. Daemoth seized Atiakha to return her to the Abyssal Throne, but her will was set to stay.

Bending all her strength to remain, Atiakha contested Daemoth's hand and was divided in two. One half of her plunged into the sea, disgraced and terrified, taking the shape of a white serpent to hide in the water's foam. This part of her was after called Lakhi. The other half was drawn with Daemoth into the black unknown of the Darkplane. It is called Maruma'e, the Horror that Should Not Have Been.

The release of their mother Atiakha was a death-knell for the daemons of Mohtra. Every one of them for hundreds of generations had been born by her. Without the moon-daughter as vessel for their unholy spawn, no daemon would be born for more than 7,500 years.

When Daemoth claimed Maruma'e, he cast Rinshari out of the Winter's Vice in the heart of Mohtra, her beauty extinguished. Starving and in ruin, the goddess of beauty wandered Vinramar in search of shelter and sustenance. She visited each of the Irvallath, begging to be given some regard, but as she approached, her brothers and sisters remembered her haughty and vain words when first she traversed the young worlds. For one hurt or another she had done each of them, Rinshari was turned away by all the Irvallath. To this day she remains a broken vagabond searching the four worlds for comfort.

Lakhi was sheltered in the deepest rifts of the seafloor by Jukai. While in the embrace of his underwater canyons, she conceived and laid eggs. Her children are the beasts of the waters: fish, whales, and sharks. The dragons she bore to Imbakhao, the serpent son of Ulmhasa. Twelve great dragons she nursed in the depths of the sea, who would later rule the empire Daragoch.

As the dragons multiplied over the centuries, they diminished by generation until the youngest of the brood of Lakhi were closer to the size of the jharethil. They ruled the waters of Vinramar, and in time emerged into present-day Chayrshellech and Syrikhal.

Of Maruma'e little is known until her return from the Abyssal Throne many years later. Her time in the Darkplane had twisted her form and mind into hideousness. The vaguest accounts of her shape are horrifying—tentacles, eyes, fibrous spindles protruding from her flesh. The waters where she descended are called the Black Ocean in most tongues for the vile ink she left behind there.

It was later known that Maruma'e returned to nurse her spawn in the waters of Vinramar. They were likewise beasts of the sea, but unnatural and alien to the brood of her sister Lakhi: octopi, great squids, aboleths, and aberrations bearing many eyes and tendrils. Maruma'e's return began a bitter war in the ocean. The natural brood of Lakhi assail Maruma'e and her aberrant spawn at every turn. At the end of the Imperial Age, Vinramar's waters seemed to be divided between them.

—The Labors of the Irvallath
by Bram Genning

APPENDIX B: HISTORY OF VINRAMAR

THE CREATION TO THE SACK OF ANARTHOS (Years Unnumbered)

THE STONEWAR (13,049 Years)

117 ST	Forlortha opens the Feywild Gates (AW, IL)
7000 ST	The Fall of the Hiyorugh
	Gauren dismembered and cast down
7004 ST	Iarmov settles in Parothgaur (PG)
9395 ST	The Maahiset born in Vunhaeg (TR)
9663 ST	Sterianon slain by the daemon Hilutos
10,202 ST	Mozralchi slain by Gallister
11,347 ST	Gallister enacts death rite, ascends to godhood
12,996 ST	Sterianon and Mozralchi ascend to godhood
13,049 ST	Jardothus unites the jharethil

THE IMPERIAL AGE (8,495 Years)

1 IA	Ardon established (AR)
3405 IA	Ulmhasa imprisoned by Maurathel
5004 IA	Daragoch established (CH)
7893 IA	Atiakha split into Lakhi and Maruma'e
7929 IA	Altrear ascends to godhood
8492 IA	Girthonnach Dendoros rules Ardon
	Dendoros unleashes war on all fronts (AR)
8495 IA	The Schism of Ardon (AR)

THE EPOCH OF DAROGOCH (2,012 Years)

50 ED	Ardon Kingdoms besieged by Daragoch
583 ED	Mohtra besieged by Daragoch
905 ED	Maahiset besieged by Daragoch
1693 ED	The Great Winter Begins
1998 ED	The Great Winter Ends
	The Maahiset make a final march on Daragoch
2012 ED	The Fall of Daragoch

THE ELDER DARK (4,933 Years)

290 EL	Mohtra marches on Ardon Kingdoms
887 EL	Telwyn and his apostates abandon the elves
1426 EL	Confederacy of Daelgorog established (MT)
	The Maahiset go into hiding
1490 EL	Humans first appear
1677 EL	Ancestors of telmatra settle Qur Dolakh (GO)
2355 EL	Widespread human revolts
4933 EL	Ava leads the sack of Motta
	The Confederacy of Daelgorog falls (MT)
	Daemon Mohtra becomes human Motta

THE WILD AGE (5,510 Years)

4 WA	Ava ascends to godhood
	First Daemon changeling birth
223 WA	Syrenos established in early Syrikhal
520 WA	Sarrow settle the Waelslayg desert (CH)
688 WA	Sarrow exodus to Coron's Run Mountains (TR)
932 WA	Gugrum settle the Forlorn Marches (CH)
1007 WA	The human Ansë arrive in Iljudheim
1153 WA	The jharethil reemerge in ruined Ardon
1418 WA	Fimbuleth begets the werekin in Arwest
1428 WA	Theidhas razed to the ground (AW)
1790 WA	Gauren brokers the Covenant of Ichoroth
	Ichoroth Empire established
1802 WA	The Witchplague appears
1804 WA	The Ichoroth driven into hiding.
2272 WA	Werekin organize into kingdoms
2273 WA	Fimbuleth ascends to godhood
3144 WA	Heathfolk discovered in Chayrshellech

THE INTILIAROS (2,531 Years)

1 IN	Ardoth Intillanum crowned in New Ardon
994 IN	Chayrshellech established (CH)
1019 IN	Yarcarrach established (CH)
1021 IN	First Queen of Welluxia crowned (WE)
1396 IN	Civil war ignites among the gugrum (CH)
1602 IN	Volgothyde lays waste to Arwest
1637 IN	Humans occupy Arwest, imprison werekin
1654 IN	The War on the Fells begins (PG)
1661 IN	Werekin overthrow humans (AR)
1663 IN	Kinlands established in Arwest
1705 IN	Volgothyde takes the Fells (PG)
1706 IN	Volgothyde slain by Arhuzimel (PG)
1895 IN	Rule of Welluxia falls to Welluxian Republic
2531 IN	Gauren organizes the Order of Illiantri
	Ardoth Intillanum betrayed, New Ardon falls

THE ANNOLOTH (1,350 Years)

1 AN	The Great Forsaking
	Gauren readmitted into Daemoth's court
47 AN	Empire of Arrochule established
98 AN	The Summer's War kills countless sarrow (TR)
144 AN	Onkhid lands in Goltaraim
145 AN	First colony from Syrikhal in Goltaraim
182 AN	Sudurikhal established (GO)
189 AN	Myr Soriah established (GO)
225 AN	Trentsmund established (TR)
380 AN	Gallister wrests the Ivory Keys from Loragg
661 AN	The Goltari League brings peace to Goltaraim
1002 AN	Dragonborn slave trade resumed
1222 AN	Silphenor emerges as a god
1253 AN	First trappers and explorers enter the Norlythe
1277 AN	Ykhel established (NO)
1281 AN	Holtolluth established (IL)
1294 AN	Gunpowder invented in Wellusk
1311 AN	Trentsmunder colonists arrive in the Norlythe
1322 AN	The Mare firearm invented and soon outlawed
1325 AN	Terratorumme colony established (NO)
1330 AN	Peace between Maricuälatán and Terratorumme
1334 AN	Sundered Valley settled by humans (NO)
	Etholchan Council reestablishes Daelgorog
	Motta occupies Talatún and nearby islands
	Motta occupies Onderrich (CH)
	Mottan rebellions
	Sovereignty established in Pirotolon, Emelduron, Ittador, Erecald, and Peraton (MT)
1340 AN	Volgothyde's Dark Atonement and ascension
	Vampire legions enter Barlom Schoe (WE)
1345 AN	Desolation of Wellusk complete

AR: Arrochule CH: Chayrshellech IL: Iljudheim NO: The Norlythe SY: Syrikhal WE: Wellusk
AW: Arwest GO: Goltaraim MT: Motta PG: Perrith Gorr TR: Trentsmund

The Stonewar

Vinramar's written history begins with *Foltrussor's Account of the First War*, a chronicle recording the events between Forlortha's flight to the world of Iltallach and the establishment of the jhareth empire Ardon (a period believed to be 13,049 years). This first age of recorded history is referred to as the Stonewar.

More than ever before, the Stonewar was a time of divine absence. Jharus was bound upon his new throne, and Daemoth off staking his claim within the Darkplane. For the first time since the creation, the world was left to its own devices.

This age saw five cradles of civilization thrive amidst the brutal wilderness of Vinramar. Each race was mired in tribal conflict. Clans and families wrestled one another for dominance as daemons, jharethil, and vampires slew their own. Little contact was made between peoples until the latter half of the Stonewar.

The daemons thrived in the West. Their society sprawled around the ruins of Maromutalcoth, where Omuel, youngest son of Daemoth, founded the realm of Mohtra on the bones of his dissident children. With bloodshed growing in the heartlands, many daemon settlers trekked north and south to escape the callous rule of their father. A colony called Ilithia formed along the southern peninsula. In present-day Trentsmund, another company established the settlement of Vunhaeg.

Iarmov the Maimed abandoned his fortress Throlugaur and returned to the world of Vinramar, settling in the farthest northeast, which he called Parothgaur. Arrochimeir, eldest son of Daemoth, delved secretly in the earth and fell out of knowledge until the Elder Dark.

The jharethil, regrouping at Anarthos after Silphenor's bloody siege, remained at the tower until the year 7000, when the Hiyorugh fell from the Darkplane and turned the land of their birthright into a desolate crater. Spreading northward, they founded the kingdoms of Bheirvos (on the northern coast of present-day Arrochule), Llôg (present-day Sea of Hazakh), and Palucadium (present-day Aldalar).

Sterianon, the grandson of Jhareth himself, ruled his 3,000 descendants in the river valley south of ruined Anarthos. With the eldest generation dead at Silphenor's hands and the people bitterly divided along lines of kinship, Sterianon named himself High Priest of all the jharethil, a claim which he was forced to vindicate in battle. His kingdom Irrachos fought bitterly with the others to remain the cultural center of jhareth civilization.

Tensions broke out into full-scale war when the king of Llôg arrived on the field wielding the Celdommoth, a powerful artifact thought to be one of the stones of Daemoth scattered in Silphenor's flight. The war for control of the Celdommoth gives this period its name. It began in earnest in the year 8721 and continued until the stone was lost in 11,347.

The Stonewar saw the reign of several important jhareth kings: Sterianon, who would later ascend to godhood as the Great Patriarch; Mozralchi, unrivaled in lore and destined to become the goddess of cunning; and Gallister, the fallen jhareth whose suicidal death rite earned him a throne of darkness at the right hand of Daemoth.

Stonewar Settlement

The Imperial Age

At the close of the Stonewar, the jharethil were scattered. The progeny of Sterianon were taken into slavery, and his heirs (Mozralchi's children) went into hiding. Gallister's inner circle maintained control over the jhareth kingdoms for nearly 2,000 years before Jardothus, grandson of Mozralchi, emerged from the jungles of the East to claim both the throne and the Celdommoth stone. His crowning in Irrachos marks the beginning of the Imperial Age.

During the rule of Jardothus, all the lands of the jharethil were united under a single banner—the kingdom of Ardon. Two lines of kings, the Oridians and the Axillerunds, ruled Ardon throughout what has come to be considered the golden age of jhareth culture. Under the rule of these monarchs, Ardon grew into a centerpiece of law, philosophy, art, and science. It was during this nearly 8,500-year period that a communal sense of jhareth society developed, with many of its most iconic cultural and religious features taking shape. The kingdom became remarkably multicultural, as jharethil from many disparate areas were incorporated one by one.

Meanwhile, the daemons' empire continued to swell. The wide western lands claimed by Mohtra, which had remained unsettled during the Stonewar, were now cultivated by the descendants of Omuel. Hostile encounters forced some maahiset communities north and east, where both races came into contact with the fourth of the great pre-human civilizations.

It was during the Imperial Age that the dragons first appeared in Vinramar. Their dominion began in the heart of the Sea of Lorelannon and eventually spread across its coasts and even further inland. The jharethil called this dragon empire Daragoch, though it would be some 3,500 years before the two powers would clash in earnest. For most of the Imperial Age, the dragon-spawn feuded with the maahiset in Chayrshellech.

Ardon's golden age under Axillerund rule came to an ignominious end with the succession of Girthonnach Dendoros in 8492. The foster son of Fastus Axillerund, Dendoros employed draconian policies to dramatically expand the borders of Ardon. Leveraging widespread public approval from his early military victories, the young king went unchallenged as he repudiated jhareth traditions of tolerance and inclusivity. His reign was marked by rampant slavery, war, and religious hypocrisy among the jharethil.

In stretching every resource of the kingdom past its extremity, Dendoros lost control of the Ardon territories. In 8495, the kingdom fractured as cultural and religious factions renounced the rule of Dendoros. This Schism of Ardon, as it is now called, marks the end of the Imperial Age.

The Epoch of Daragoch

The dragon-spawn's conquest is corroborated by most of the ancient records in Vinramar, but little is told of their reign. Whatever records the dragons themselves might have made remain lost. What began as a surprise invasion on jhareth lands expanded to become a 2,000-year occupation of the western world.

Fifty years after the Schism of Ardon, its estranged kingdoms were beset on several fronts by the Spawn of Lakhi. Reptilian and amphibious armies appeared seemingly from nowhere. To the jharethil they appeared grotesque and blasphemous. The numbers of the dragon-kin were enough to pour through the jhareth lines like water through a sieve.

Before long, the daemons and maahiset were also driven far back from their established borders. Corpses lay heaped across the land, and for two millennia the doom of Vinramar was decided from the Wyrm's Eyrie on Mount Fayrlin.

It is written that in the year 1693 of that age, the Great Winter began. Merciless cold brought glaciers and ice sheets deep into the territory claimed by the dragons. Worshippers of Daemoth welcomed it as a cleansing from the Lord of Winter himself. Others regarded the change as a curse sent by Baturach to freeze the waters and drive the sea-spawn of Lakhi from the earth.

Whatever the cause or intent of the Great Winter, it slowly took the lives of more than half the world population and irrevocably weakened Daragoch, so that when the hardy maahiset marched on them, only a pathetic echo of the dragons' forces was left. They were soon driven back into the deep. The Epoch of Daragoch ended as strangely and suddenly as it began.

The Elder Dark

Perhaps the least affected by the Great Winter, the daemons of Mohtra were perfectly positioned to make a conquering sweep across the lands that had been under dragonborn control. Marching forth from warmer climes in the heartland of Mohtra, they seized the opportunity to rule the West for a turn.

First the Fey Kindreds were overthrown. At Mohtra's assault, the archfey Telwyn led many apostates back to Iltallach through the two Fey Gates. Once through, Telwyn's followers sealed the gates, abandoning thousands of the elves to hide from the daemon forces in the woods of present-day Iljudheim.

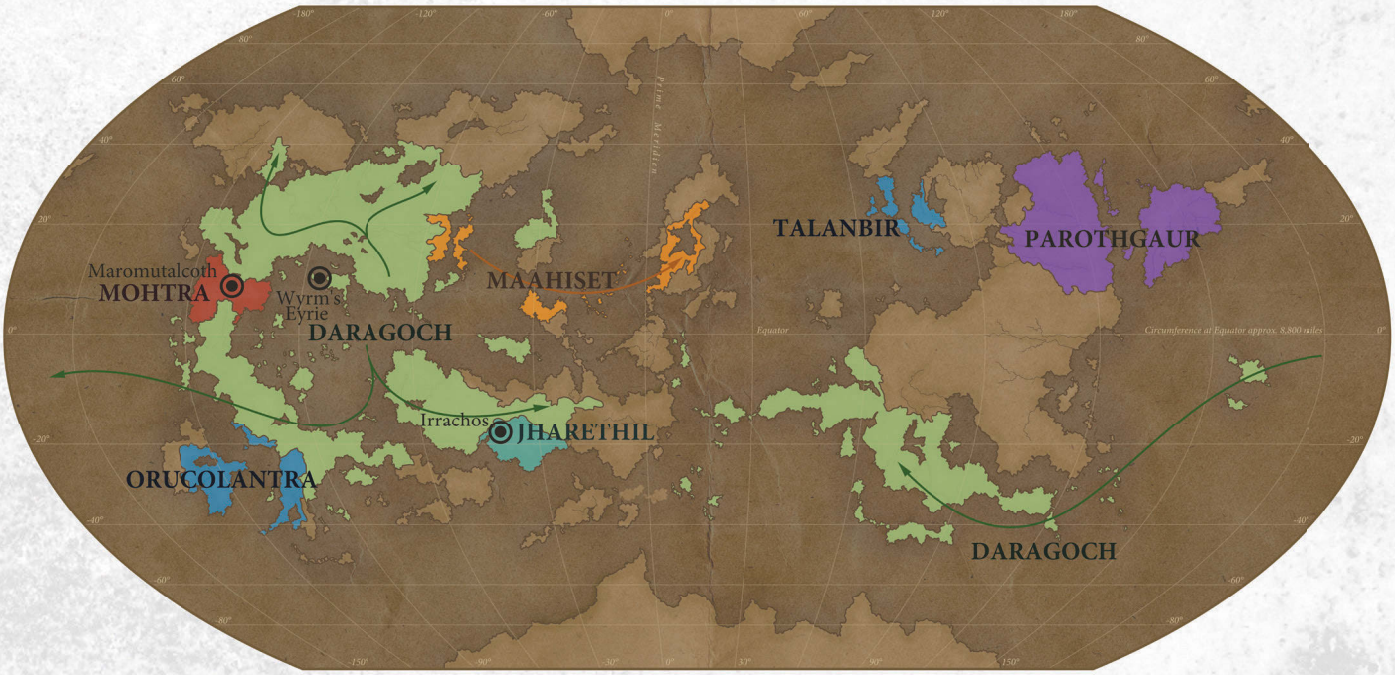
After conquering much of the South, the daemons swept westward and threw down the kingdoms of the jharethil, divided and weakened since the Schism of Ardon. In the North, the maahiset vanished. The daemon emperor Daelgorog established a confederacy of puppet kingdoms across his conquered lands, all pledged to the worship of Daemoth and subservience to his heirs.

For nearly 5,000 years the daemons ruled the West and Midlands of Vinramar, a dark age infamous for its technological regression and dramatic disparity of wealth between Mohtra and its ancillary kingdoms. The jhareth lands were organized into a kingdom their oppressors called Arrochule. There Daelgorog's own brother ruled by the lash, branding the jhareth "heretics" and working them nearly to extinction.

It was during this time that the first humans were born, mongrel children of the daemons who lacked their creators' unholy power, but were gifted with unquenchable spirit. Though some believe a few human specimens may have existed previously, it wasn't until the Elder Dark that the daemons first begot humans on a large scale. The particular vile method by which the short-lived humans were born is not remembered. Most likely it was a failed attempt to produce new offspring thousands of years after losing their own method of reproduction. In any event, once the humans existed in sufficient numbers, they were bred throughout the empire as disposable slaves. It was on their sweat and bones that Mohtra's golden age was built.

Imperial Age Settlement

Epoch of Daragoch Settlement



Daelgorog underestimated the indomitable heart of humankind. Beginning in 2355, widespread human revolts forced the Confederacy into decline. After losing lands to humans and other so-called barbarous creatures beyond their borders, travel and communication within the Confederacy became expensive and dangerous. Daelgorog's only living son, Quycholog, proved incapable of ruling an insubordinate world. In the year 4933, an army of escaped human slaves marched on Mohtra and put an end to the paltry remnants of the daemon empire.

The Wild Age

With Vinramar's third great empire toppled almost overnight and no civilization strong enough to take up rule over the empty lands, wealth and technological progress stagnated, then regressed. New forests overwhelmed the ruins of three fallen empires, and the world forgot them.

To later historians, this era would be considered the transition point between the elder world and the new. All three pre-human races vanished just as human cultures came into their own. Disillusioned with the worship of both Daemoth and Jharus, many people turned to cruder gods: primordials, dragons, and images carved in insensate stone. Sarnoss, Lakhi, and Jukai rose to become important figures in the Wild Age, turning much of Vinramar back to its primeval roots.

It was during this period that the children of the maahiset emerged, greatly changed during their exile. The first to be seen were the sarrow: stocky and stalwart, clever in stone-lore. Second were the gugrum: strapping athletes, their slate skin patterned with blue veins. Fourth to appear were the heathfolk, who dwelt in high cities built along the faces of cliffs. Last found were the telmatra, brutish and warlike. They settled the islands around Arrochule and present-day Goltaraim.

Humans, bred in Mohtran territories all across Vinramar, now took up the lands of their fallen masters. Small tribes and kingdoms arose in present-day Iljudheim, Trentsmund, Wellusk, Arwest, and Arrochule, but the greatest seat of human power was at the heart of their former slavery. Mohtra had fallen, but in its ashes the conquering humans established the empire of Motta, which stood alone as a bastion of light and civilization.

Jhareth culture began the Wild Age in gravest peril. Reduced to desperately low numbers, and those splintered into rival factions, many of the jharethil took refuge from the Etholchan inquisition in the deepest wilderness. Scattered in woodland camps, they turned to strange gods and ancestor worship.

This age likewise saw the rise of the werekin, bestial shapechangers descended from the sorcerer-god Fimbuleth. Their hunting grounds encircled the Hessawood in Arwest, where no human has ever set foot. In 1428, the werekin sacked the dark elf city of Theidhas, solidifying their claim to those lands.

The year 5510 saw the rise of perhaps the greatest leader of the jharethil in written history. Ardoth Intillanum rallied the dwindling jharethil, overturned the daemon king Levidian, and restored his people to power under the Empire of New Ardon. The establishment of a jhareth nation ended the Wild Age and marked the beginning of what is called the *Intiliaros*.

The Intiliaros

Ardoth Intillanum reigned in New Ardon for 2,531 years. New Ardon became a dominant world power, though its borders never reached their former extent during the Imperial Age. The *Intiliaros* is nonetheless considered a time of enlightenment and great technological progress.

In the East, the vampires crowned an emperor whose villainy would outshine the glory of New Ardon. Volgothyde's reign of terror bathed the East in blood and dusted it with the ashes of all living things. He slaughtered werekin, elf, and human alike in his feckless pursuit of vampire supremacy. The Black Coast of Welluxia grew dense with human settlements, placing the piteous mortals on a path that would eventually lead them to destruction at the hands of the undead predators in the north.

From east to west, humans continued to expand and establish small sovereignties. In the southwestern lands, the Ansë peoples settled the region of Iljudheim. These doughty humans pressed deeper into the sacred forests of the elves, where they began to experience the full cruelty of the fey hunters. It was in this age that the first seeds of hatred between these two races were planted.

After more than two millennia in power, Ardoth Intillanum fell to treachery. In a bold scheme to regain favor with his father Daemoth, Gauren organized the Order of Illiantri, whose terrible first act was to slay the immortal emperor. In recompense, Daemoth indeed readmitted Gauren to his court and gave him the great Hiyorugh stone as a vessel for his errant spirit.

At the death of Intillanum, the jhareth cities of New Ardon fled the face of Vinramar. There are those who believe Jharus took them into his presence as a last defense against the faithless world he had so long defended. Others claim the 12 cities simply ceased to exist with the death of the last jhareth emperor. Whatever its cause, the Great Forsaking marks the end of the *Intiliaros* and the beginning of the *Annoloth*.

The Annoloth

If the *Intiliaros* taught humans just how feeble they were in comparison to the ancient races, the era following it assured them of their own greatness. Fourteen centuries of unchecked proliferation, war, and subjugation have carried this hubris to climactic heights. Few have managed to challenge the spread of human cultural dominance. The speed with which their industrious civilizations mapped and settled the world of Vinramar during this age has caused historians to refer to it as the Age of Man, but the jharethil and their Faithful have always called it the *Annoloth*, or Years of Woe.

The price of progress was never steeper than in the case of the human race. Their intolerance toward other peoples forced many wondrous things into the shadows. Elves and their fey ancestors all but fled the waking daylight. The jharethil and daemons became myths, even as mortals inherited the lands where their forgotten cities once stood.

Because the daemons left a more lasting imprint on the world, or perhaps because humans owed their very existence to them, the young race clung to Daemothite philosophies and religious imagery. The human diaspora during the end of the *Intiliaros* and early centuries of the *Annoloth* carried the Etholchan Church and its traditions to the four corners of Vinramar.

The first century of this age ended with the Summer's War, which saw Drael humans spread northward and slaughter the sarrow wholesale. Once clear of their native peoples, the lands surrounding the Coron's Run mountains became important human holdings, including fiefdoms that would eventually develop into the Kingdom of Trentsmund. To the south, the old daemon empire was renamed Motta under a human emperor, though little of its culture or policy changed. In the following millennium, Motta and Trentsmund would rise as transcontinental colonial powers, casting long shadows across the rest of the world.

In the East, the Omhatra humans thrived after the death of the vampire emperor Volgothyde. From strong ports in Wellusk and Syrikhal, their navigators brought settlers to both Arwest and Goltaraim. With the establishment of the Goltari League in 661, they seemed prepared to rival Motta's own trade empire. Their influence, however, would prove short-lived. In 1340, Volgothyde reappeared as a god-king to wreak vengeance on the human race.

Wellusk was plunged into five years of horror. With unexpected war advancing southward from Perrith Gorr, the people hardly had time to gasp before their homes were drowned in the bloodshed of the vampire legions. Many were slaughtered and others captured. Those lucky enough to escape the death-squads found the very earth beneath them corrupted by the vorruc blight.

In 1345 the desolation ended as suddenly as it had begun. Five years of carnage turned into five years of hellish quiet as the blight crept ever southward and the vorruqun ferret the living out from blasted city ruins. But from Perrith Gorr comes only tense silence. Few know what broods within the vampire wastes, nor where Volgothyde's next blow may strike.

The West has seen dramatic developments in technology during the *Annoloth*. Though inventions such as the clock, printing press, and steam engine have revolutionized the industry of Trentsmund and its closest trade partners, these innovations haven't yet become available to the rest of the world. This disparity enables Trentsmund (and, to a lesser extent, Motta) to preserve its grip on the world with little challenge. Production, armament, and the speed of transportation and communication have reached levels hitherto unimaginable.

Ironically, the invention that might have most radically changed the world remains a well-kept secret. Gunpowder was invented almost by accident in 1294, in the hands of Carthaxian mining excavators. When the first royal demonstration of the "arm-fired cannon," or "firearm," resulted in the queen of Welluxia's death, development of these weapons was banned.

Underground markets continued to research firearm technology, however. Several models were developed after 1322, particularly among heathfolk artificers. Still, the expense and labor required to produce them, combined with a virulent social stigma, keep firearms sequestered to the black markets. After the Desolation of Wellusk, the number of living gunsmiths might only be counted on one hand.

It has now been 1,350 years since the Great Forsaking. The jharethil, dragonborn, elves, gugrum, and sarrow are dwindling beneath the tide of humanity. Demonic spirits possess the bodies of unborn humans to sow thorns among the wheat and enact the will of a merciless god. Beneath it all lurk primordial and aberrant horrors that would swallow up the mortal world without a second thought. For now, history moves forward like a blind man, and only time will reveal where it ends.

Appendix C: Non-Player Characters

What follows is a list of non-player characters that you can inject into a Darkplane campaign. Some use a combination of features and traits like a player character, while others simply add racial traits to one of the NPC stat blocks. Special thanks go out to our Kickstarter community that backed at Tenebrous Centurion level or above for creating many of the characters found in this appendix.

Non-Player Characters

Name	Stat Block	Backstory
Aindriú Coileain	Heathfolk enchanter	As the College of Sonnactfel's Professor of Arcane Folklore and Historical Practices of Magic, Aindriú Coileain is much sought after for his knowledge of forgotten arcana. His efforts to piece together the true history of Vinramar by recovering lost artifacts and manuscripts have become his life's work. Fiercely opinionated and with little regard for policy or procedure, Professor Coileain has been entangled in more than one dangerous plot. In such circumstances, his training in swordplay and marksmanship make the difference between life and death.
Arassius Ocaros	Human warlock of the fiend	General Arassius Ocaros had been left to die on the battlefield when his life was spared by a demon calling herself Histallach of the Broken Crown. Believing her to be an avatar of the One True God, he embarked on a quest to destroy all other fiends and heretics.
Ashinatos	Human war priest	Ashinatos, High Inquisitor of Daemoth and Ouleithir of the Eitharmos, is known to the inhabitants of Arrochule as a fanatical religious judge and crusader. He commands the Eithalim of that region to hunt, torture, and execute the jharethil without mercy. Among his many delusions is the belief that Daemoth has chosen him, and that his exaltation is already assured.
Ashran Firebrand	Daemon, 3rd-level cleric (arcana domain)	Ashran Firebrand venerates Ruethas, the forgemaster and keeper of arcane secrets. As a young daemon, he enraged his father by turning down the Dark Herald's tutelage, and has spent the rest of his life on the run from both family and demonic powers. He currently occupies himself by tending his forge, relying on illusions and wards to keep out of harm's way, and imagining the day he can take revenge on his father.
Avindar	Human necromancer	In an attempt to bring his lost love Maldia back from death, Avindar reached beyond his arcane instruction to terrible results. Maldia's body and soul were split, both trapped in the boundary between life and death. Since that day, her body has pursued him as a soulless revenant by day, and her spirit haunts his dreams by night. Perhaps by reuniting the two halves and destroying the combined creature, Avindar and Maldia could be freed from their torment, but such a solution has not occurred to him. He only knows that she is always chasing him.
Balthazar Thames	Human spy	A devious merchant with a reputation for fulfilling contracts to the letter of the law, Balthazar Thames is a master of getting what he wants no matter the cost, and his clients never seem to receive exactly what they bargained for.
Banga	Gugrum gladiator (Spells known: *true strike*, *blade ward*)	Raised in the pit arenas of Motta, Banga first killed at age six. In time he won enough in the pit fights to purchase his freedom and rejoin the hunter-sorcerers of the Saethym tribe. But his language and manners were foreign to them, and he was soon driven off. Now he wanders the West, belonging to no one and doing what he has always done best—kill for money.
Bastioth	Mimessarch, 5th-level cleric (aberration domain)	As the ruthless leader of a cult that worships aberrant entities, Bastioth has wormed his way into becoming the vizier of Myr Soriah. Seeking to purge the court elite of those he deems unfit for transcendence, his followers are hidden among influential families and willing to do almost anything to increase the cult's standing. With their weak leadership in the palm of his hand, he expects to earn himself an apotheosis to the Darkplane itself. *Illustrated on page 131.*
Betra U-fasod	Telmatra commoner	Betra U-fasod is an itinerant merchant whose single wagon of wares always seems to hold exactly what a visitor wants. She sells such items eagerly, and grins at the wonder on her customers' faces. According to rumors, patrons maddened by Betra's uncanny shop have killed her many times over the years, but she always reappears to sell her mysterious goods.

Name	Stat Block	Backstory
Bram Kaulter	Human necromancer	Bram Kaulter is a power-hungry necromancer who seeks to understand and control the power of the Primordial Realm for personal gain. Despite this, his closest friends know that he fears what the gods of that domain might do if they broke through to the mortal world. In such an event, Bram believes his knowledge of dark magic could be used to defend Vinramar.
Caitlyn	Human commoner	Daughter to King Fergjur's master mason, Caitlyn is an excitable young girl whose best friend in the world is her pet bunny Lord Pufheind. She knows most of what transpires in the city of Jorgund, but is deathly shy with men.
Cinlase Ibrecht	Heathfolk enchanter	A renowned glassblower and artificer, Cinlase Ibrecht is known for the beauty of her stained glass, but the most wondrous of her creations are light-projecting devices. From her curiosity shop in Remmish, she sells emerald swords, lamps that illuminate hidden aberrations, blunderbusses that produce brilliant purple flashes, and a dozen other strange gadgets.
Clement Maelstrom	Human warlock of the great old one	Clement Maelstrom considers himself a seeker of lost knowledge, though that which he has learned may have best been left hidden. In the service of a mysterious being that communicates with him through a fallen meteor, he is routinely asked to perform unsavory acts in exchange for hideous secrets.
Count Meinrad XII	Daemon noble	As the king's Minister of Justice, the twelfth Count of Meinrad holds a position of extraordinary political influence in Trentsmund. He resides primarily in Ordramar, where his influence all but invisibly commands the affairs of the city. With strict anonymity, his dealings expand the power of the Etholchan Church and lead him to research and expeditions that might uncover eldritch mysteries buried by time.
Daemos Magen	Daemon, warlock of the fiend	It's been years since the Dark Herald visited Daemos Magen as a child and tutored him in the dark arts. Working as an assassin in the service of the Infernossos, he spends the intervals between missions obsessing over old tomes in a tower ruin east of Arosedium.
The Demise Bereft of Visage	Mimessarch assassin	In the dark alleys of Motta, the urchins whisper about the near-mythical assassin they call *Sagliero vin Ance*, the Demise Bereft of Visage. The few that have had dealings with this killer are never sure of his or her exact nature, but their nightmares are seldom free of that loathly, haunting face.
Dusan Milutin	Human swashbuckler	Once a rakish ne'er-do-well with a penchant for swordplay and an interest in the occult, Dusan Milutin was the lone survivor of a Syrikhali expedition. He returned a changed man. Now periodic fits send him into manic ravings of cyclopean temples in the umbrous jungle recesses, and of the grisly rituals he claims were conducted by their builders.
Frank Hart	Human blackguard	Frank Hart was once a Knight of the Thorn serving the goddess Ava. Succumbing to wrath and forswearing his oath to preserve life, Hart fell from Ava's grace and became a broken man. He travels aimlessly through Trentsmund, misguided by poor judgement and harsh reactions.
Golka Hachiwara	Human champion	Golka Hachiwara is a famous ronin from Syrikhal. As a young man, he made a name for himself by killing the corrupt bushi of Jessik. Refusing training, he went into the shadows and legends of that region. He sometimes appears to cause trouble or spoil some opportunity for those he opposes, then disappears into the night.
The Harbinger	Unknown	The Harbinger is the name for a figure often seen in and around the jungles of Syrikhal. It comes in the form of a child, happy and carefree, but those who tell the stories ramble incoherently of nightmares, arcane power, and its otherworldly eyes. Such visitations from this emissary of woe are becoming more common. What they signify is still anyone's guess.
Harkin Alberon	Human transmuter	Harkin Alberon, by some called "the Cure," is a human alchemist, often seen dressed in a plague doctor's attire. An adventurer who obsessively seeks a universal cure to all aliments, Alberon is willing to sacrifice anything in the pursuit of that elusive goal.
I'nehpt	Mimessarch mage	I'nehpt was a middle-aged man living with his mother, working for (and enrolled in) a mail-a-date service. When he received a letter from the woman of his dreams, he took his chances and attended an initiation ceremony for the odd cult where she worshipped. To his horror, he discovered that the initiation involved summoning aberrations from the Darkplane, and in his case sprouting tentacles from the mouth. Upon returning to the mail-a-date establishment, I'nehpt entered the back room in search of his beloved's address, where he found only a small army of underpaid imps writing false love letters for suckers like him. *Illustrated on page 14.*

Name	Stat Block	Backstory
Inglebard Quasimodo	Gnome, 8th-level rogue (arcane trickster)	Inglebard Quasimodo is a gnome illusionist and con artist who traversed hidden paths from Iltallach into Vinramar many years ago. Long past his adventuring prime, he makes a living doing tricks for gullible marks in taverns along the docks of Imsund.
The Lord of Prosperous Suffering	Human scout	Many have heard of the odd hermit that lives in an abandoned jungle monastery north of Eliasikh. Few guess, however, that he is the man known in the black market as the Lord of Prosperous Suffering, an arms dealer and one of less than 30 living people who know the art of gunsmithing. His mine, smelter, and workshop are cleverly hidden among the ruins.
Malcolm Averus	Tiefling, 3rd-level sorcerer (wild magic)	Descended from an ancient house of Daemoth worshippers, Malcolm Averus inherited a striking, fiendish appearance as a result of a pact his ancestors made with the Archdevil Gauren. Two horns protrude straight back from the crown of his head, and his eyes are solid black. Though Malcolm is impatient and hot-headed, he has gathered a small following of acolytes who believe him to be a sacred scion of the Infernal Wanderer.
Mezzo	Sarrow commoner	Boarded up in a small hermitage north of Aldalar, Mezzo is a young sarrow whose unconscious body was found floating in the Darkplane itself. Since the monks of Senfaer revived him, he won't or can't speak of how he came there, or the horrors he witnessed before mercifully fainting.
Miming	Human tribal warrior	The infamous headhunters of Ossawachu are led by a towering female chief known to the outside world as Ming. In Welluxia, where her reputation for slaughtering trespassing settlers has gained her notoriety, she was often called Empress Ming. Few know that her true name is Miming, and that despite her fearsome persona, she harbors deep affection for a young Carthaxian noble. Since the Desolation of Wellusk her heart has become torn between protecting her people and investigating the fate of her distant love.
Munhro Euward	Human, 6th-level rogue (mastermind)	Once the most celebrated scholar of Carthaxis, Munhro Euward was badly wounded in the Desolation of Wellusk. He survives in the wasteland, thanks to steam-powered machinery—provided by his contacts in the Sounding—which acts as both life support and weaponized prosthetic. Munhro spends his days braving the surrounding desolation in search of artifacts and manuscripts that hint at the origins of undeath and the vampire blight that descended upon his people.

Name	Stat Block	Backstory
The Nighdenners	Human spies and commoners	Notorious in the east country of Trentsmund, the Nighdenners are a band of roving traders and fortune-tellers that make their home in the wilds of Wyrgoth. Often they emerge to treat with the more civilized folk across the border. Rumor tells that the Nighdenner family was once among the most powerful noble houses in Trentsmund, but that must have been centuries ago. More than most of his family, Luke Nighdenner and his wife Becky have a hospitable reputation. Their children Isabelle, Lily, Nicholas, and cousin Alberto are frequent visitors in Nattleburgh. *Illustrated on page 244.*
Nishaa	Half-elf sorcerer (blood magic)	Cast out as the bastard half-elf child of a noble family, Nishaa spent 12 years as a slave in an underground pleasure palace for the rich and decadent. Scarred and broken, she turned to blood magic to exact her revenge and slaughter the overseers. Cutting out a place for herself in the underworld over the following years, Nishaa became a powerful information broker in the city of Thrud. While her time in captivity has left her detached and hedonistic, Nishaa has found a confidant in Vóreia Asteron, whose child-like innocence chips away at the jaded sorcerer's guarded persona and heightens her struggle between corruption and redemption. *Illustrated on page 139.*
Nivani Revcallath	Jhareth, 8th-level paladin (oath of devotion)	Raised in the libraries of a secluded abbey, Nivani knew from a young age that she was different. In the century before she reached adulthood, the priests of Loragg taught her theology and medicine from the best books. After leaving the abbey, she was quickly initiated into the Avan Enclaves. As a Reverant of the Order of the Rose, she leads missions to liberate slaves and escort them to freedom. Above all, Nivani believes in mercy and redemption for those whose hearts can be changed. *Illustrated below.*
Nomedd	Human mage	The wizard known as Nomedd, a telmatra word for "idiot," can be found traveling the coasts of Hazakh in Goltaraim. The locals see him as a raving fool, but there are those who catch a glimmer of genius in his eyes.
Olivia Penderghast	Human, 3rd-level rogue (mastermind), 1st-level paladin	A special investigator for paranormal crimes, Olivia Penderghast comes from a long line of heroic stalwarts. Over time, the darkness has tainted her and she has become more Machiavellian in her pursuits. She believes what she does is for the greater good, but there are those who are troubled by her inflexible interpretation of justice. Her black hair is accented by golden eyes, which blaze from staring into the souls of creatures no mortal should see.

Name	Stat Block	Backstory
The Prince of Pigeons	Human, 5th-level psychic (clairsentient)	Leader of a mysterious collective of beggars and paupers in the city of Forteth, the Prince of Pigeons is rumored to have psychic gifts that help him shield his identity and ensure the compliance of his flock.
Relnor Belasum	Human, 3rd-level ranger (hunter), 2nd-level rogue	Relnor Belasum is an agent of the Mozralchic Order, specializing in the tracking and apprehension of witches practicing the Black Arcane. Though driven by a sense of honour, he has a taste for drink and an eye for women.
Ravennia Carachun	Human sorcerer (vampire bloodline)	Born to a human concubine within the empire of Perrith Gorr, Ravennia has lived in fear of her heritage for as long she can remember. When her father Unvoliath left their ancestral homeland to hide himself among the living, she followed, swearing to protect the streets from his malice.
The Soul Collector	Dark elf archmage (favored spells: *ray of sickness, witch bolt, create undead, finger of death*)	His real name unknown, the immensely powerful necromancer known as the Soul Collector is an imperious dark elf said to have mastered the arts of necromancy and evocation. Rumor has it that the Soul Collector has a heroic heart, though his willingness to commit atrocities in the fight against evil has made him bitter enemies on all sides.
Talaman	Moon elf swashbuckler	Raised in the islands south of Arwest, Talaman shipped out to sea when he was a young elf. As a privateer, he has sailed the Wolkwine Sea for many generations of men, building a reputation as a rake and a goldhunter. At times, though, his heart of gold shines through.
Tiberius Cecil	Human veteran	Tiberius Cecil is a retired mercenary and current keeper of Ordramar's shrine to Baturach. Kind, giving, and just a little eccentric, he's not afraid to get his hands dirty to help those in need.
Tobias Orindel	Human, 12th-level psychic (telepath)	One of the few humans privileged to live among the heathfolk of Athelshoth, Tobias Orindel is a powerful psychic interested in astronomical phenomena and the hidden paths of the universe. His research led him and his wife Lyda through many dangers before eventually causing her imprisonment and death at the hands of the Yáloin. Now he has forsaken high-minded pursuits and begun a perilous descent into the most dangerous reaches of the mind and cosmos to enact revenge. *Illustrated on page 151.*
Tristan Capri	Vampire lord	The last of a venerable vampire family, Tristan Capri's encounter with a succubus resulted in the two creatures sharing minds for a time. Both of them were changed forever. Dedicating himself to honor and virtue, Tristan became a hunter of his own kind, eventually succeeding in ending his family once and for all. In the hundreds of years since, he has become a noble cavalier, traveling the East in search of souls in need.

Name	Stat Block	Backstory
Travis Baxton III	Human, 3rd-level cleric (death domain)	As a young man, Travis Baxton was seen throwing himself from Mile Bridge after the murder of his wife. Fifteen years later, he's back, having been sighted on the Steamrail in Trentsmund. The rumor goes that Travis was saved from death by a tribal priest. Living as a hermit in the swamps of Wyrgoth, he converted to the worship of Baturach, whose cold light commands the living and the dead. *Illustrated on page 246.*
Tuoch Fayrth	Mimessarch assassin	Born in the Darkplane itself to two Senfaerist monks, Tuoch Fayrth was never truly of this world. His aberrant physiology (tentacles, masses of eyes, and a layer of silvery mucus o his skin) made him a target for the Yáloin, who soon caught him and imprisoned his mind. The 20 years Tuoch spent as an assassin under their control were a phantasmic nightmare of depravity. In time he managed to escape, but what little sanity remained in him had long ago been deformed by the dreadful things he was forced to do. He wanders the West, searching for a way to salvage his broken mind.

Name	Stat Block	Backstory
Twilah	Jhareth, 2nd-level paladin	Twilah, the One that Watches, is an Avan paladin who stands guard over the secluded mimessarch commune that once saved her life. As a jhareth on *marachel*, she was brutally wounded by Daemoth worshippers and left for dead. When the mimessarchs took her in and healed her, she witnessed their mistreatment by the outside world and vowed to protect the malformed hermits from further persecution.
The Vagrant	Unknown	Legends of the Vagrant are told in every corner of the world. He roams the forgotten paths of Vinramar, they say, as a robed vagabond. In some versions of the legend he is a kindly wizard, or a wicked sorcerer, but the most compelling tale claims he is a forgotten god who, if his name is discovered and invoked, will bring about the destruction of the world.
Vergad Mergulle	Human priest	A traveling minister of the Jharric Faith, Vergad Mergulle has seen things no mortal ever dreamed. His powers of deduction have saved lives and rooted out horrors from the shadows. Schooled in both science and religion, he is nonetheless a humble man that disapproves of superstition and believes that the natural world of Sowm's creation will triumph over the forces that seek to overthrow it.
Vóreia Asteron	Wood elf martial arts adept	As a member of the Solace, Vóreia Asteron has always seen males of all races as troublesome and limited in use. Nevertheless, she has a reputation for altruism that often finds her sacrificing her needs for the sake of others. Her unlikely bond with Nishaa the blood mage has led her many times into danger for the sake of honor and friendship.
Xoco	Human warlord	Xoco is the *mitzoloya*, or Chosen of the Lion. Raised in an influential Quitzál family that had converted to the worship of the telmatra god Duhulatt, Xoco embarked on a spirit quest that culminated in her ascension as ruler of Maricuälatán. As High Chief of the Cult of Sarnoss, she speaks with the primordial beast in dreams, and seeks to unite all of the Norlythe under the banner of the black lion. *Illustrated on page 45.*
Yurda Szgol	Mimessarch spy	Within the mimessarch colony west of Thrud, Yurda Szgol is a figure of influence. While most consider her a helpless victim of her deformity, she has learned to sense vibrations through the needles that grow from her skin, a useful skill in her efforts to infiltrate the strange cult whose rituals first caused her mutation. *Illustrated above.*

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The BLACK OCEAN
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TRENTSMUND
THE NORTHLANDS
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MOTTA
ILLJUDHEIM
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LAYARSHOTH
TRENTSMUND
ACHALD
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OMASALA
ERECALD
CHAYRSHELLECH
ITTADOR
KAIERVOL
MEDEGHAR
YARCARRACH
PERATON
PIROTOLON
ULFYRSTOCK
HAGGWINE
RIIJAD
SIENORD
BRANGARD
FYRENVOL
DORGARD
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GRETTGARD
TELGARD
EROLOST
MODGARD
GILGARD
EOSADE
FORMUNGARD
ORUNA
HOLTOLUTH
ERROLHEIM
YRIVOR
MENVOLAD
BIUTHILGARD
VILVOLOST
D'ARTHEL
FAR ALAID
ISSOS
QUODA'EN
ESGOTH
ARROCHULE
ORD'ESSOS
CARTHOSSOS
FORMUNGARD
IMEZEKH
SAR KAZIAH
MYR SORIAH
LONAKHEZAHT
ZEDAKHMIR
QUR-DOLAKH
GOLOMYREN
DEL TALAMIR
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SYSERACH
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THE KINLANDS
TALANBIR
FAERRAS
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ELEMTHORD
OSSAWACHU
MISKAWASSECH
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RAWTH
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Vitollos
Arosedium
Noremium
Arrador
Ord'essos
Forthurgost
Cipillem
Ordramar
Maryerid
Arrmor
Punt-Maard
Trentsmund Colonial Holdings
Capitol Sea
Terratorumme
Antalumme
Bitter Mt.
YKHEL
CARAQUE LLARAC
SUNDERED VALLEY
MARICUALATAN
Axantilsson
Remmish
En Fallad
Ondrerich
Athelsholh
Waelslayre Mountains
Siriyne Sea
Sea of Caskalle
Enga Mubata
HARACURAQUÉT
Sea of Ghan
Issos Pass
Dark Athiktos
Sea of Alaid
Sea of Jassaid
Sea of Ni'atara
Sea of Da'lunna
Sea of Laursedes
Thorumedas March
March of Ni'atara
March of Tacarros
Holthirian Jungle
Shrine of Chara
Bay of Holthirier
Sea of Tacarros
Orcham Bay
Impeldium Sea
Jander Pass
Sea of Dorq'ual
Bay of Maw-Goradma
Sea of Olmennath
Sea of Hakari
Wolkwine Sea
Sea of Elemthord
Sea of Harakh
Bridges of Hesenah
Sea of Betha-zedor
Nornazias Sea
Pass of Culc'oros
Hareth Hills
Hasswel Valz
Tohuk Hills
Black Coast
Bay of Throats
Bay of Ochma
Dread Coast
Calchoth Kindred
Ferrialum Kindred
Brumraw Kindred
Mannen Kindred
Ash Downs Kindred
Wadeg Kindred
Ellyn Mirrach Kindred
Ellyn Mirrach
Ferrialum
Calchoth
Brumraw
Mannen
Wadeg
Ash Downs
Tipanessan Mountains
Hisscah
Anul
Farlithin
Thrud
Kanari
Hessariah
Morric Faul
Caravch
Etrusia
Morum
Rudwyrd Magg
Dradun
Woerfund
Carthaxis
Iskow Tuind
Rawth
Rellock
Barloth
Eglerod
Kurophtu
TheSwill
SYRIKHAL
EHASIKH
OZHRASALA
HESERIAH
ALDALAR
OZHMA
MISKAWASSECH
OSSAWACHU
ELEMTHORD
Gar Golan'tra
Calchoth Sea
Wolkwine Sea
Sea of Hakari
Sea of Elemthord
Sea of Harakh
Nornazias Sea
Sea of Betha-zedor
Bay of Throats
Bay of Ochma
Black Coast
Tohuk Hills
Hareth Hills
Hasswel Valz
Pass of Culc'oros
Jessik
Ixtaxi
Warfarer Temple
Braethos
Jeddim
Soronandos
Dulunum
Arochos
Iprades
Issoch
Vitollos
Arosedium
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Holthirian Jungle
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Sea of Tacarros
Orcham Bay
Impeldium Sea
Jander Pass
Sea of Dorq'ual
Bay of Maw-Goradma
Sea of Olmennath
Colony of Cole
Firehorn Coast
Coyote Heights
Isle of Thandre
The Hickswood
Bay of Saeratetha
Wyrgarth Woods
Harrincroft Steamrail
Sea of Sturgh
The Gridiron
Forteth
Ordramar
Sea of Satherlaer
Ellyn Mirrach
Ellyn Mirrach Kindred
Ellyn Mirrach Forest
Ellyn Mirrach Hills
Ellyn Mirrach Mountains
Ellyn Mirrach Pass
Ellyn Mirrach Plateau
Ellyn Mirrach Valley
Ellyn Mirrach Woods
Ellyn Mirrach Kindred