

# THE NEOTHERA SAGA

LIVE ACTION ROLE-PLAYING

## LORE COMPENDIUM

VERSION 1.0





**VERSION 1.0**

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# THE NEOTHERA SAGA

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# PREFACE

## - WELCOME TO NEOTHERA -

The Neothera Saga is a live action role-playing (LARP) system created by Thomas and Hannah Hackett-Brown, Jake Moxey and Nick Brown in 2014. Based in the fictional world of Neothera, the game has its roots firmly set in medieval, high fantasy and steampunk genres. The system focuses on story-driven, campaign-based, combat, puzzle and lore-orientated immersive events, set in a living, breathing world that develops according to participant action.

We offer you the chance to step into a vast and story-rich universe of mythical creatures and epic battles, where magic and technology compete for dominance. In this immersive setting, you will step into a lore-rich environment that boasts highly-detailed races, realms, faiths and cultures. You will regularly encounter legendary creatures, sci-fi technology, assist or conspire against the realms of the world, and make choices that result in how the game world evolves. All participants can actively shape the world according to their actions, regardless of their prior LARP experience. Every participant has an impact in the game world regardless of how powerful their character is, or how long they have been attending our events.

This book was written to provide our participants with information about the lore of the vast world of Neothera, the stories written by our game staff that have been enriched and directed by the actions of our crew and players during our past events. It is not essential to learn the contents of this book inside out yet we would advise becoming familiar with it, using it as a reference guide to enhancing your role-play and understanding of situations that will occur during game-play. By no means exhaustive, we hope that the detailed information provided in this book gives all of our participants an understanding of the fictional world of Neothera.

The information contained within this book is readily available to all characters in the world of Neothera, meaning when you take part in an event (either as a player or crew member) you can discuss any of the details contained here as a player character or NPC. Be aware that we encourage participants to explore our lore in more detail at live events, and therefore some information can only be discovered at our games. If a topic is not covered in this book, it is because we want our participants to discover this information in-game. If you are new to the system it is not necessary to learn the contents of this book inside out, instead, get familiar with the race and realm your character will belong to, and expand your learning further from there.

Please bear in mind that new versions of this book will be released when substantial changes have occurred in the game world, this will largely be determined by our players and crew members, as their choices and actions will make a direct impact upon the world and its inhabitants. With a wealth of tales to uncover as the plot progresses at events, we hope the lore-rich world of Neothera can be explored by our players during events and sometimes via text-based, online role-playing on our Discord server, a link to which is found on *page 237*.



# THE HISTORY OF NEOTHERA

## - THE FIVE AGES -

### THE FIRST AGE: THE AGE OF CREATION

#### LENGTH OF AGE: UNKNOWN

- In the beginning, there was only darkness, and from the nothingness the Goddess of the Moon, Senetsu emerged
- Senetsu's loneliness eventually turned to hope, and with this hope, Osirah the God of the Sun was born
- The two deities; One of light, one of darkness, created a powerful force that would be the building blocks of all life and creation, the Arcane Element. Drawing upon this power, they built the Halls of the Gods - the Ethereal Realm
- After building other halls dedicated to the light and darkness deep in the void of space, sometimes combining their power to create magnificent displays of creation, Osirah and Senetsu created the stars, and seven of these stars would shine brighter and more colourful than the billions of others
- Eventually, the seven stars, the chosen children of Osirah and Senetsu, descended from the Ethereal Realm as brothers and sisters and worked harmoniously to build their first and only creation, the planet known as Neothera
- Terralapis formed the globe, the soil, rocks and mountains with her careful hands, and became the Goddess of Earth
- Through her tears of joy at beholding her sister, Terralapis' work, Sequilla created the rain, rivers and seas and became the Goddess of Water
- With his scrupulous eye for design, Haman'li grew the plants, trees and animals from Terralapis' soil, and nurtured them with Sequilla's life-giving waters. He became the God of Nature
- The playful Spiria swept through the lands, allowing Haman'li's seeds to spread over Terralapis' earth, and Sequilla's rains to drift, quenching the thirst of the creations of Haman'li. Spiria became the God of Air
- Arak'almundae breathed the great flames of life into the world, fueled by Spiria's winds, providing warmth, and cleansing through destruction. He became the God of Fire
- As she walked amongst her sibling's creations, Glacilla brought with her the cold and the seasons and became the Goddess of Ice
- Signis created powerful sparks that brought life to his sibling's creations, and with these sparks he would ensure balance was maintained, striking at his brothers and sisters should one element become more dominant than the rest. He became the God of Lightning
- The seven deities loved and cared for their creation until they became distanced from each other, the tasks of overseeing their duties becoming more and more demanding as the world grew and flourished rapidly

## THE SECOND AGE: THE AGE OF THE ELVES

### LENGTH OF AGE: APPROXIMATELY 3,000 YEARS

- As the world expanded so did the duties of the Seven, to the extent that it became apparent that the siblings required assistance in maintaining the balance of Neothera. The seven deities held a council, and through their powers created the race of elves
- Fashioned in their likeness, the Seven would breathe life into the elves, with each species born akin to one of the Seven Elemental forces the seven siblings governed
- Under the guidance of the Seven, the elves built wondrous cities throughout the world, and seven houses became established: House Betrallis of Lightning, House Carvellian of Water, House Hazalli of Air, House Koruthas of Earth, House Mortanis of Ice, House Sirella of Nature and House Thard'or of Fire
- Each of the deities would rule over the elves as the generations passed, teaching and nurturing their people as they became the shepherds of Neothera
- According to elven legends, it was at this point the Seven became complacent, to the extent that they plunged the houses of the elves into all-out-war. The goal of this war was to prove which of the deities held the most power in the world and ignoring the wishes of Signis, ruler of the Seven and keeper of the gods and goddesses, an era of bloody carnage followed
- Many elves perished in the War of the Gods and those that refused to fight, hid underground, seeking power from the Arcane Element which consequently cursed them, twisting them into the race now known as goblins
- Eventually, the Seven grew tired of fighting and realised that the elves were more than capable defenders and caretakers of Neothera. Each deity walked the world one final time before meeting and collectively forming the eighth house of the elves known as House Faradome, aligned to the Arcane Element, the force that would hold all others in its balance
- The Seven poured their powers into Faradome, their last great creation, one born of the underlying force of magic. One that would stand the test of time and perhaps unite the elves in future times of need
- When they were satisfied that they could do no more for the world they had created, six of the seven deities prepared to ascend to the Ethereal Realm, yet one defied the calling, wanting to prove he was indeed the most powerful of the seven siblings. Despite his brothers and sisters attempts to remove him from Neothera, he dug deeper into the earth. Arak'almundae, the God of Fire remained in the mortal plane as his siblings finally ascended and left him behind to sulk
- It was soon after the Seven had ascended that a maleficent evil appeared in Neothera, shattering the balance that was carefully maintained for so long. The Nightmares, demonic heralds of pure evil, swept over the lands and destroyed seven of the eight houses of the elves. Only House Faradome would remain standing strong as the Seven had predicted. Many elves believed the War of the Gods was a means to prepare them for what was to come
- Elven legends state that perfect balance led to the appearance of the Nightmares, thousands of years of war, and the destruction of seven of their houses. All hope seemed lost as the Nightmares stormed the City of Faradome. However, the destruction of the city did not come to pass as thousands of winged creatures emerged from the forests behind Faradome, assisting the elves in pushing the Nightmares back into the rifts they had emerged from. The race of piskies had arrived in Neothera, and the elves believed their prayers to the Seven were answered in their hour of need
- The elves salvaged what they could of the world, they drew the survivors of the Demon War to their banner in Faradome and welcomed the race of piskies to live amongst them, becoming teachers to this newfound species. In the City of Faradome, the survivors flourished as they spent many centuries attempting to heal the taint the Nightmares had left in their wake



## THE THIRD AGE: THE AGE OF MEN AND BEASTS

### LENGTH OF AGE: APPROXIMATELY 1,200 YEARS

- The cautious and warworn elves and piskies of Fardome witnessed the opening of new rifts in Neothera, but Nightmares did not emerge from them. A new species appeared, the race of humans
- Elven legends state that humankind was escaping something that caused their world, Terevia to burn. Creatures that matched the description of the Nightmares which once plagued Neothera
- Whatever the reason for their appearance, humans had arrived, and the elves and piskies took it upon themselves to welcome and teach them the ways of the new world
- Humans thrived in the world of Neothera, so much so that eventually the species outnumbered the elves and piskies combined, yet the elves continued to educate them, including teachings in the arts of magic, something that was unheard of where humans had come from
- During the early years of the Third Age, as the human civilisations were flourishing, a new species would emerge from the rainforests in the southwest of the Mainland. The beastkin, a half-human-half-animal species, had emerged from the gargantuan World Tree, said to be the source of nature itself, and had become a prominent realm in their own right
- A strange golden craft descended from the stars and crashed in the Southern Realms. From this craft the urka emerged, and befriended the humans in this region, eventually building the City of Sora'Harumi
- The beastkin, residing in the City of Zan'zoula below the branches of the World Tree, became allies of the elves, piskies and humans, yet they preferred to remain in their rainforest home, despite many humans believing they were demi-gods and wishing to worship them as a force of nature itself
- This age would lead to the discovery of countless new animal and plant life forms as the lands almost fully recovered from the destruction left by the Nightmares at the end of the Second Age
- During this age, the burgeoning human realms throughout the world prospered, and their societies developed unique identities. Worship of the Seven became common in every realm of the Mainland, thanks to the teachings of the elves. Kings and queens reigned and died, royal bloodlines were rooted in the history of many human realms. The Great City of Netherlye in central Neothera grew to become the largest kingdom in the known world and was a pinnacle of human advancement, both culturally and architecturally. It was during this era that the Tutela Syndicate was formed, leading to a universal currency being introduced in Mainland Neothera
- As the end of this age drew close, the humans began to turn their backs upon the elves and piskies of Faradome. After all, they had advanced so far that they believed the shepherds of Neothera could teach them no more. The elves and piskies began to withdraw from most areas of the Mainland and returned to the City of Faradome
- Localised wars in the Western Realms of Eúnd Vald began to break out amongst the people of the three islands. Most notably, centuries of battles occurred between the dragonkin of the Ashan Mountains and the people of the City of Vestr, and the Beors of Estan and the people of the City of Otta. At the end of this age, connections were made between the people of the Southern Realms and the City of Vestr

## THE FOURTH AGE: THE DARK ERA OF HUMANKIND

### LENGTH OF AGE: 2369 YEARS

- This age was undoubtedly the darkest Neothera had seen since the catastrophic war between the elves, piskies and Nightmares at the end of the Second Age, and the elves reluctantly began to believe that offering the humans their teachings and guidance may not have been the best idea. Many elves and piskies left behind the human realms and continued to retreat to the City of Faradome due to widespread misuse of magic by humankind
- It was discovered that some of the Nightmares had remained in Neothera following the Demon War in the Second Age. They attempted to spread their corruption by adopting human forms and breeding with the human refugees that had arrived in Neothera in the Third Age
- The vulperans, half-human-half-demonic creatures spawned by the Nightmares, eventually broke ties with their demonic masters with the help of the elves and piskies of Faradome. It was assumed the five Nightmare Lords were slain or banished in the battle that erupted in Vulpera: The Crystal City
- In 1601 some citizens fled the Great City of Netherlye, led by the inventor, Marlston Dansk, supposedly retreating from the royal family for refusing to hand over blueprints obtained by an unknown, technologically advanced race. The settlers founded the city now known as Blightfoot Ridge, and the blueprints supposedly allowed a massive leap of technology in this new realm
- As petty wars for territory and resources began to break out amongst the human realms of the Mainland, the non-human races left the realms of humankind to fight one another without any intervention, secretly hoping that they would put an end to themselves and leave the more enlightened species in peace after they fell into extinction
- With growing discord amongst the human realms, the elves continued their research into the Seven Vices, the corrupt and demonic influences spread by the Nightmares that led the humans into using the teachings of the elves for dark purposes and self-gain. Their research suggested that demons had upset the balance of Neothera by bringing pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth into existence and were dismayed this curse could likely never be broken
- The first bout of large scale conflict in this age caused by the humans was struck in the eastern realms of the Mainland, when the kingdom of Cinderforge, in the Blazing Hills, declared war upon the vulperan people, believing them to be demonic abominations that must be eradicated. Fortunately for the vulperans, who were still recovering from their struggle with their demonic masters, a human army from Ahalaza, a desert-dwelling realm of humans, unexpectedly stormed and destroyed the City of Cinderforge before the people of the City of Vulpera could feel their wrath
- Believing their power was supreme and they were blessed by Arak'almundae the God of Fire, the Ahalaza continued to stretch their influence, marching upon the City of Everblade (now Gallows Rest) and then northeast to Stonefold (now a long-lost and ruined realm), raining death and carnage upon both powerful and influential kingdoms in their belief that a show of strength would cause Arak'almundae to emerge from the earth and declare them rulers of Neothera in his name
- The Ahalaza finally met their match when the armies of the Arak'Char descended from the Morrdoun Mountains to crush the City of the Sands in the name of Arak'almundae, who is thought to have influenced his most devout followers into forcing his wrath upon those who sought power through the Seven Vices
- Having hegemony over the human realms since the Third Age, the Great City of Netherlye, the largest and most powerful human kingdom located in central Neothera, refused to partake in the petty wars of other realms. However, many generations of the royal family in this mighty city, and indeed its citizens, had become completely absorbed and reliant on the overwhelming power of magic, which twisted them into ignorant, egotistical and selfish people, leaving them entirely open to the Seven Vices



- Queen Maib, the ruler of Netherlye, did not live to see the completion of the three towers she had ordered to be created to teach all citizens the potential of magic. She was slain sometime in the year 2367 and rumours would have it that this involved some kind of assassination at the Caddington Estate. Despite her death, construction of the towers dedicated to the offensive, defensive and healing schools of magic continued, overseen by her three sons
- Queen Maib's sons, Morgan, Bastian and Salvador Hanstез assumed control of each tower and their enormous number of followers, under the rule of her eldest son, Morgan Hanstез, who was also crowned king after his mother's death
- The sheer amount of resources that were needed to construct the towers drained the City of Netherlye to desperation, yet Morgan believed his power to be unsurpassable and demanded that the already crippled, neighbouring realms provided his city with resources to replace those that were almost diminished. One by one, the surrounding realms turned their backs on the Great City, for they had seen this day coming, and remembered Netherlye's lack of compassion when Everblade and Stonefold fell to the Ahalaza
- King Hanstез and his two brothers, Salvador and Bastian began to squabble, and civil war erupted in Netherlye, with battles for resources and dominance almost tearing the city apart. After many years the brothers set aside their differences and demanded assistance from the other realms. The first to refuse Netherlye's demands were the L'Enarousse of Jerrod's Front, who subsequently prepared for an assault from the three brother's united forces
- Finally, the armies of the Great City readied themselves to march to war, certain that their assault would crush Jerrod's Front. However, the army would be destroyed along with the Great City of Netherlye before they even had a chance to leave the city's walls. The three towers of magic collapsed, crushing everything around them, and toppling the largest city in the known world. It is said that the shockwaves of the destruction could be felt in the far corners of the Mainland, and what was born from this ruination would change Neothera forever

## THE FIFTH AGE: THE AGE OF UNCERTAINTY

### LENGTH OF AGE: 26 YEARS (ONGOING)

- Soon after the destruction of the Great City of Netherlye, King Morgan and his remaining forces fled to the Redveil Mountains where they established a foothold in the Ruins of the Elven City of Thard'or
- In the days following the destruction of the three towers of Neotherlye, the ground caved in to reveal three giant rifts, spanning at least one mile each. Not long after the appearance of the three rifts, those who survived the destruction of the Great City of Netherlye witnessed beings with pure-white skin and clad from head to toe in black robes, crawling out from the sides of the giant, purple pool. These beings were revealed to be the Esysan, the self-proclaimed guardians of the rifts
- An army assembled by the L'Enarousse amassed at the rifts, intent on pushing back the Esysan so the rifts could be more thoroughly investigated. Nightmares poured through the rifts, and L'Enaroussian soldiers and the Esysan fought side-by-side to push back the demonic incursion. The L'Enarousse established an outpost in the Ruins of Netherlye, satisfied the Esysan could potentially be useful allies
- In the year 2383, approximately two thousand creatures known as faeries (or fey) arrived in Neothera via the eastern rift in the Ruins of the Great City of Netherlye. Many of the species that arrived were badly injured or dying, apparently escaping their homeworld, Terminarium after an era of war against creatures, created by the Nightmares, known as vampyres. Moments after their arrival, the Esysan turned on the faerie refugees, exercising their role as Guardians of the Rifts, slaughtering them and hurling their bodies back into the portal from whence they came. Barely five hundred faeries survived the carnage and fled to Faradome to seek refuge amongst the elves and piskies who welcomed them with open arms. The alliance of the Amicita was formed
- Kenton Blake, the fiancé of Charmaine Liberty, the daughter of realm leader, Joseph Liberty, led a party of explorers to investigate the Redveil Mountains. One of their group became ill after being bitten by what was described as a walking corpse. The group travelled to the City of Fairdale to seek aid. However, the bitten woman died, reanimated as a mindless undead creature and began infecting the citizens of Fairdale. Despite attempts by the L'Enaroussian army to fight back the mindless undead in the following weeks, the city fell to ruin as they could not contain the infection
- Morgan Hanstез formed the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf. An army made up of the remnants of the forces he led before the fall of the Great City of Netherlye, and any mercenaries and criminals from throughout the Mainland who wished to join his ranks to reclaim dominance over the realms of Neothera. His forces began various assaults on Mainland towns amidst the panic caused by the fall of the City of Fairdale
- In 2390 the Frozen North was discovered and it was revealed that the realm was inhabited by wights, sentient undead creatures that had lived in the region since the middle of the Third Age. They offered aid to the Mainland by sending forces to crush the massive numbers of mindless undead that had overrun the City of Fairdale. The L'Enarousse welcomed the wights as their allies
- The Plague of Undeath began to spread throughout the Mainland, and the Frozen North revealed an elixir that allowed the infected to rise as wights upon death rather than mindless undead creatures. The other Mainland realms also began to research a cure to the undead plague, with little success
- Morgan Hanstез, leader of the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf, assembled his army ready to launch a vicious attack on the realms of the Mainland, however, he was slain at the Caddington Estate and his forces scattered back into the Redveil Mountains where Commander Nerrin, Morgan's second in charge, took control of the army
- Nerrin would begin bolstering the ranks of the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf by drawing Nightmares back into Neothera by pledging his allegiance to them. He also commissioned various scientists to begin work on creating super soldiers, ferocious mutants that would bring terror to the realms of the Mainland as more assaults continued



- Bastian Hanstез, Morgan's younger brother, began assembling an army of his own to unite the Mainland under one banner and his rule, however, his iron-fisted methods caused the Mainland realms to rebel against his cause
- The Southern Realms were discovered as the humans and urka in this region came to the Mainland offering a controversial cure to the Plague of Undeath. It came to light that humans had resided in the Southern Realms since their species had arrived in the Third Age. The urka travelled to Neothera in a golden starcraft escaping their home planet, Nethrreka, after many years of war against a species that bore similarities to the Nightmares. The Southern Realms had flourished, with humans and urka living alongside each other harmoniously
- After befriending Olkren-Gorami, the King of the Southern Realms, Bastian attempted to profiteer off this rare cure to the Plague of Undeath offered by the Southern Realms and was declared an enemy of the state by the L'Enarousse. Eventually, he would be slain at the Caddington Estate before his army could rally to cause any significant damage to the realms of the Mainland. The remnants of his army would join the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf, bolstering their ranks even further
- Joseph Liberty, realm leader of Blightfoot Ridge, fell foul to demonic influences and ordered the construction of war machines known as dreadnaughts. These machines would rain havoc upon the Mainland but were eventually hunted down and destroyed or dismantled. It is thought the stress of his demonic possession worsened his already frail and elderly body, leading to his death in the year 2392. The leadership of Blightfoot Ridge was passed to Tennerson Liberty, Joseph's son and a council of wealthy business-people
- In 2392 the infamous Captain Black Hammer, realm leader of Black Hammer Bay, was assassinated by the Dead Hand Clan whilst attending a realm leader meeting at the Caddington Estate. It is believed that Captain Black Hammer and Governor Philippe Marsell shared an important secret, and silencing Black Hammer was the only way to prevent it from going public. The assassination was ordered by Robert Smith, who promptly took control of Black Hammer Bay after the captains' demise
- L'Enaroussian governor, Philippe Marsell was revealed to be behind a plot to gather and cull semi-divine beings to harvest their blood to aid in the production of the cure to the undead plague. It was at this time that the divines gathered their people and fled to safety on the Isle of Andore where they formed a small nation. Torn between ridding the world of the plague or letting the divines live in peace, Marsell opted for the latter, confident a cure could be found through other less ruthless means
- Attacks from the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf and their demonic allies, the Nightmares, became more frequent and ferocious. War was declared as the armies of Blightfoot Ridge, the L'Enarousse, Hemadri, Amicita, Vulpera and the Arak'Char marched into the Redveil Mountains to face this unrelenting foe in a siege that would last the best part of a year
- In 2393 Commander Nerrin was slain after it was revealed he was actually Salvador Hanstез, brother to Morgan and Bastian. The killer was his father, Nial Stormbringer, commander of the late Queen Maib's army, who knew his son was corrupted by the Nightmares and had to be stopped. The war came to a close as the armies of the Mainland crushed the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf after the Nightmares unexpectedly retreated, leaving them for dead
- It appeared the retreat of the Nightmares was tactical, and the Brotherhood had just been a diversion. The demons allied with an army of goblins led by War Chief Redellium Rahooium. The combined forces destroyed the Amicita City of Faradome and Vulpera in one fell swoop. The corruption of demon and Fel Magic burned much of Mainland Neothera to the ground. The Nightmares continued to assault any surviving realms of the Mainland
- Following the destruction of the Cities of Faradome and Vulpera, the economy crashed in the City of Blightfoot Ridge, and the streets erupted into chaos as gang warfare broke out. Realm leader Tennerson Liberty and his sister Charmaine retreated to the famous Liberty Monster Hunting School, closing its doors to the public, and the Council of Blightfoot Ridge collapsed

- In 2394, to put an end to the Nightmare assaults, a group of Mainland heroes sought aid from the newly discovered Western Realms named Eúnd Vald. To obtain the Crown of Madness, a relic of old that according to legend was a tool to crowning a new Demon King who would draw the Nightmares away from Neothera, first they had to bring peace to the wartorn realms of the west
- Three new continents were revealed beyond the stormy western seas, Norvaegr governed by King Olofsson, Estan ruled over by King Auldgammel and Vesthold led by Queen Skaldmaer. The Vampyre King Venstrim assisted the heroes of the Mainland in defeating King Auldgammel and claimed Estan for himself, meaning that Norvaegr, previously locked in a turf war with the Beors of Estan, was finally at peace
- An age-long war between the human-occupied City of Vestr in Vesthold and the Dragonkin of the Ashan Mountains in this region was finally halted with the help of Mainland heroes when the dragonkin, discovering Tyamat, the child of their dead God, Eravor was alive and was returned to them by Queen Skaldmaer's subjects. With both sides agreeing to lay down arms, the dragonkin and the people of Vestr declared peace. Shortly after this King Olofsson of Norvaegr joined this alliance ringing in an era of peace to the Western Realms
- After finally locating the Crown of Madness in the Western Realms the heroes of Neothera returned to the Mainland. Following extensive research, they discovered Drakaria, a human capable of time travel, eventually selling himself to the Nightmares was the chosen one to be crowned the Demon King. After crowning Drakaria with the Crown of Madness, he proceeded to withdraw all Nightmares from Neothera back to the Nightmare Realm via the use of the Moonglenn, a sacred place where the Seven met before ascending to the Ethereal Realm
- Forces from Norvaegr and Vesthold arrived in Mainland Neothera, being welcomed by Eric Hemslake, the commander of the City of Talanor. The collective alliance of humans from Norvaegr and Vestr, accompanied by dragonkin from the Ashan Mountains in Vesthold formed a new alliance - the Western Confederation, to assist the Mainland in restoring the lands lost by the scorching caused by the Nightmares and goblins
- Danny Henesey, leader of the Henesey Company, a family orientated gang that rose to power through public votes due to his assertion over the streets, took control of the City of Blightfoot Ridge. Danny promised to regain control over the city and bring peace to it once more
- In the year 2395 (2020 AD), the elf, piskies and vulperan refugees that had lost their homes in Faradome and Vulpera sought refuge in the surviving towns and cities of the Mainland, secretly hoping that one day they would be able to reunite their peoples in a realm of their own - To regain their former glory. The Southern Realms remain quiet as of late, apparently preoccupied with problems of their own. Word has spread that the alliance between the Frozen North and the L'Enarousse is about to become more prominent in the success of the Mainland as it attempts to heal the scorched lands and claim any resources that would help to rebuild the lost villages, towns and cities the Nightmares and goblins destroyed in their shower of destruction. The fate of Neothera currently hangs in the balance. Who knows what the future will bring?



# BEASTKIN

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

The beastkin species appeared in Neothera at the start of the Third Age, shortly after the demonic Nightmares were defeated by the elves and piskies of Faradome. The first six beastkin were said to have awoken as human children and emerged from the World Tree in the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest in the southwest of the Mainland. Supposedly nurtured by Haman'li himself, these six children were granted the gift of immortality, and would eventually shift into their beastkin forms upon reaching their teens. The six beastkin would each draw upon the aspect of a different animal native to Neothera and become rulers of the Hemadri people that would make their home in the City of Zan'zoula, founded by the Beastkin Council, that surrounds the great World Tree to this day.

The council of the six immortal beastkin taught their kind the ways of the world and indeed about the permanent transformation they would undergo that would lead them into adulthood. When evolving into their half-animal, half-human form the child, nor anyone else for that matter, will know for certain what animal aspect will be taken. Beastkin believe that the God of Nature has a plan for every one of his children and decides what form would best suit the individual. There has never been any successful attempt at influencing a transformation and attempts at doing so are generally frowned upon by most beastkin. The species of beastkin is considered the most adaptable in all of Neothera, although some argue humans should hold this title. It is undeniable that the beastkin hold a true link to Haman'li, the God of Nature, and as such represent how versatile, powerful and influential nature can truly be.

## APPEARANCE

A beastkin may take the form of any animal known to Neothera, (which would be any species native to our planet Earth). The transformation varies on an individual basis, and where one beastkin may have the head of a tiger and the body of a human, for example, another may possess a humanoid head and just tiger ears and perhaps a tail. A beastkin will generally assume the half-form of one animal, yet some legends tell of beastkin who share qualities of more than one creature and have done so since birth. The form a beastkin takes is known as an "Aspect" - which can be placed into one of the following six categories:

**Aspect of the Mammal:** A warm-blooded vertebrate aspect that is distinguished by the possession of hair or fur, females that secrete milk for the nourishment of the young.



**Aspect of the Bird:** A warm-blooded vertebrate distinguished by the possession of feathers, wings, a beak, and sometimes by being able to fly.

**Aspect of the Reptile:** A cold-blooded vertebrate aspect that includes snakes, lizards, crocodiles, turtles, and tortoises. Often distinguished by having dry, scaly skin.

**Aspect of the Amphibish:** A cold-blooded vertebrate aspect that comprises mostly of fish, frogs, toads, newts, salamanders, and caecilians. The aspect is distinguished by having aquatic gill-breathing qualities as well as the ability to breathe out of water.

**Aspect of the Arachnoid:** Comprised chiefly of terrestrial invertebrates, including spiders, scorpions, mites, ticks and characterized by four pairs of segmented legs, no antennae and a body that is sometimes divided into two regions, the cephalothorax and the abdomen.

**Aspect of the Insect:** An arthropod animal that has six legs and generally one or two pairs of wings. This aspect includes many familiar forms, such as flies, bees, wasps, moths, beetles, grasshoppers, and cockroaches.



## LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

A beastkin is conceived through copulation - this can be between two beastkin or a beastkin and a human partner. If a human and beastkin couple conceives, they will always produce beastkin offspring. Medical studies have revealed that beastkin genes are far more dominant than human ones, and there has never been a birth recorded between a human and a beastkin that has resulted in a baby being born that never transforms into a beastkin. All babies birthed by one or two beastkin parents are born human in appearance, and it is not until they reach puberty that they transform into a half-human, half-animal being. Whilst in their prepubescent human forms, beastkin children do not take any physical aspects or appearances akin to an animal; however, some children have heightened senses or physical abilities beyond regular children of their age.

Beastkin age slowly, often learning new skills as they mature, such as developing the ability to fly (if they have wings) or an exceptional sense of smell. Even in their elder years, beastkin remain strong and able-bodied. The lifespan of a beastkin can vary although most will live well over one hundred, and it is not unheard of for some beastkin to live over two hundred years of age.

## HABITAT

Beastkin originate from deep within the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest in the southwest of Mainland Neothera. For many years after their appearance, they remained there, choosing to follow the teachings of Haman'li, the God of Nature. Holding dear their origins and tales passed down by their ancestors, the beastkin lived true to the elemental aspect of nature, appreciating its power, it's wonder, and ensuring they protected the rainforest from any threats, natural or otherwise.

The largest population of beastkin can be found in the City of Zan'zoula, or its surrounding rainforest areas, however, depending on the aspect they were gifted upon transforming into a beastkin, some individuals may prefer different climates. For example, beastkin of the Amphibish Aspect might prefer damper climates or locations where they have access to bodies of water, whereas a beastkin of the Aspect of the Mammal, who takes the form of a bat could prefer dark caves.

Towards the end of the Third Age, many beastkin left the safety of their rainforest home and ventured forth into the various realms of the Mainland. At first, their kind was met with some hostility from the humans that occupied most of the Mainland, yet over time they became accepted and welcomed into their societies. Outside of the City of Zan'zoula where the World Tree stands, beastkin occupy most villages, towns and, cities.

Of all the non-human species you would encounter in these places, beastkin would fall a firm second in numbers behind the humans. Beastkin are extremely adaptable and capable of surviving in any environment humans can and depending on their aspect, they might be able to weather harsher climates less favourable to humans.



## RELIGION

All beastkin are aware that they were created by Haman'li, the God of Nature, and as such most of their kind worship him and the Nature Element, alongside other elements such as water and earth, which provide the basis for nature to exist in Neothera. As well as worshipping the creator gods and goddesses, beastkin also regard the six members of the Hemadri Council as living demi-gods, this is because they were the first of their kind, the original beastkin created by Haman'li and blessed with wisdom and immortality. When a beastkin child is about to transform they will usually be taken to the sacred chambers within the World Tree, where rituals and celebrations will be held giving thanks to Haman'li and the power of the Nature Element.



Beastkin that reside in the City of Zan'zoula are opposed to the defilement of nature in any form - especially advances in technology that pollutes and destroys the natural world. A large part of worship would also involve the attempts to prevent or put a stop to anything that corrupts or harms the Nature Element and its balance.

When a beastkin dies, regardless of the rules of their realm of origin, the same burial rite is always performed. Those who dwell in the Hemadri City of Zan'zoula are buried in the deepest caverns beneath the World Tree. This tradition is observed so the corpse will be absorbed back into the ground, sustaining the great World Tree in the ongoing cycle of nature, a fitting tribute for the departed.

Beastkin who live outside of the Hemadri realms will be buried under a tree where their body will still contribute to the cycle of nature, although some prefer to make a pilgrimage back to the World Tree before they die to be buried at its roots. Most beastkin believe that when they have passed their spirit will return to the Ethereal Realm, or they will be reincarnated in the full form of the animal they once shared their aspect with in life.



## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

Beastkin are half-animal, half-human hybrids, and your costume should reflect this, ensuring it is obvious which animal form your character is taking:

- The animal form you take must fall under one of the six aspects listed on *page 13*
- You should make good use of makeup, prosthetics and / or masks to show your animal form
- If relevant to your animal form, a tail, ears attached via a headband, antennae, wings, claws and fangs etc should be used
- The colours and style of your costume, armour, weaponry and equipment should reflect that of the realm your character belongs to



# DEMONS (NIGHTMARES)

## (RACE NOT PLAYABLE)

There was once a perfect balance in the world the Seven had created, the surviving elves of the Second Age will all tell you this much, yet as pure as the world seemed, some say it was too perfect, and could not remain this way forever - hence the appearance of the demons at the end of the Second Age of Neothera. Such malice, such pain, such torment they brought with them that the perfect dream of the elves became a nightmare to endure.

They appeared through rifts torn open by Nightmare Lords, demonic rulers with untold power, and as they did, they poured over the lands nearly bringing the race of elves to extinction. Despite a victory by the elves and piskies in the face of uncountable odds, many demons remained in the world, and more would come, their numbers growing until they would attempt to destroy the world again in the Fifth Age. This time they were not defeated by the united realms of the world, and they departed on their own terms after leaving devastation in their wake. Their king, Drakaria, had called them home to the Nightmare Realm, but for how long they plan to stay there remains to be seen.

Demons, often called Nightmares, exist only to cause pain and suffering, and would surely bring about the end of the world should they be left unchecked. They exist in many forms, physical, as soldiers directly following the Nightmare Lords' orders, hell-bent on causing destruction. Ethereal, as intangible creatures that use evil magic to corrupt other beings. Invisible, sometimes possessing other creatures, taking over their mind and bodily functions, or whispering in the darkness using magic to influence even the strongest of minds. These are but a handful of ways that demons are known to operate in Neothera, they are often extremely clever, incredibly strong, fearless and remarkably adaptable - their champions and leaders more so than this.

### APPEARANCE

Demons may take many guises, but they often manifest in their true forms as being extremely muscular, having unnatural skin colours, dangerously sharp horns, talons and fangs, and often skeletal facial features with little or no hair - Their visage alone will strike fear into the bravest adventurers' hearts! That said, it is recorded throughout the history of many cultures that demons may take other forms, sometimes appearing human, or semi-human with some of the traits listed above thrown in to boot.

It is often not the large and imposing demons that cause the most trouble, but the smaller ones, posing as humans, or faceless and spirit-like entities. These demons are capable of using powerful demonic magic to inflict physical or mental suffering, influence thoughts and even perform physical and mental possessions.

The elves state that when the Nightmares arrived in Neothera, they brought with them an end to harmony and peace. Their sheer presence in the world saw those weak of mind become overwhelmed by emotion and slowly succumb to vices that were previously unheard of in the world. Pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth: Seven vices supposedly created to end all life upon Neothera, filled the hearts of the ancient elves, and it took all of their might to resist these urges. It is apparent that some, if not all demons personify one, some or all of these vices (also known as "Aspects"), with a Demon of Gluttony appearing as an obese, hulking, horror, or a Demon of Lust appearing as a sexually desirable male or female, for example.

It is common for demons to be seen wearing armour and wielding weapons that are similar in appearance to those forged in the realms of Neothera, leading to the belief that the Nightmare Realm could hold natural resources, such as wood and iron. That said, one should not be fooled by appearances, for some of the most powerful demons choose not to wield weapons or protect themselves with armour, these are entities that believe their power is so great it does not warrant the use of such primal implements.





## LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

Demons of pure blood are immortal - they live forever, are immune to sickness and do not age; however, they may be slain by mortal wounds. Despite being able to alter their forms, Nightmare Lords have made appearances in the various ages of the world, and this can be tracked by the demonic essence that is unique to each demon, proving the theory of immortality to be true.

Demons do not need sustenance to sustain themselves yet there are stories of them consuming the bodies of their enemies as a show of ferocity, or perhaps in an attempt to inherit any powers their enemy had in life. Many stories state that demons may do this to quite literally consume the soul of their victim.

Some demons are capable of breeding with their own kind, as has been noted in controversial experiments carried out with captive demons throughout the ages. They are also capable of breeding with human beings, and there is solid proof of this in the form of the vulperan people. In the Third Age, the Nightmares believed that by breeding with humans and producing half-demon-offspring, this would enable them to disseminate their vile corruption like a disease across the lands. However, this did not come to pass as the vulperans found they could control their dark impulses and eventually exposed their demonic masters, destroying them within the walls of the City of Vulpera with the help of elves and piskies from Faradome.

## HABITAT

Demons are capable of surviving in any region of Neothera, no matter how inhabitable the area may be, and it is thought that the climate and landscape in the dimension they originate from, the Nightmare Realm, is so harsh that non-demonic life-forms would burn up and die instantly upon setting foot there. This would perhaps account for the fact that there have been no reported instances of non-demon eyewitnesses returning from the Nightmare Realm, despite their successful attempts at entering it.

The Nightmare Realm is said to be accessible via magical rifts that allow a person to travel quickly between one location and another, in effect, allowing them to teleport by simply stepping into a rift. Studies of demonic essence show that before the demon incursions of Neothera, there was no such magic in the world; therefore the research carried out by the elves shows that the Nightmare Realm is likely to be situated in another dimension, or perhaps on another planet. Demons are capable of appearing without warning in many locations of the world, although areas with more powerful ley line activity are said to allow rifts to spawn more easily.

Whilst Drakaria, the Demon King led the Nightmares back to their realm in the year 2394, traces of demonic taint are still detectable in most areas of Neothera, whether this taint will eventually subside, or whether it points at demons still remaining in the world is yet to be seen.



## RELIGION

Demons do not worship any deities common to Neothera; in fact, it is thought that their primary objective is to destroy any creation made by the gods and goddesses. They are not easily able to wield the power of the Seven Elements and are well known for utilising the Demonic, Dark and Arcane Elements to power their spells. When their own magic is used against them, demons appear vulnerable to it, however, the use of demonic magic is frowned upon by many realms of Neothera due to a risk of drawing demonic forces to the caster.

Those that associate themselves with the Nightmares, be they maleficent sorcerers, or individuals that pray to demons to grant them great powers will likely find themselves arrested, placed on trial and executed, or simply beheaded on the spot should they be caught in the act of demonic practises. For this reason alone, worship of the Nightmares is not openly spoken of, and it is unclear exactly how many people worship these demonic entities behind closed doors.



As previously hinted at, demon worship is illegal in all realms of Neothera; however, this rule is somewhat relaxed when it comes to vulperans who are inherently demonic yet able to control their powers. It is known that those loyal to the Nightmares are usually granted gifts of great power by the Nightmare Lords, those that receive their prize are often champions of the Nightmare's cause having shown immeasurable loyalty, they are either existing demons or members of other races that have decided to walk the dark path of pain and destruction these creatures bring.

The elves state that since the Seven Vices, created by the Nightmares, were introduced to Neothera in the Second Age, they have never been able to be removed from the world, and sadly will remain a part of every individual, no matter how strong their will. It is through these vices that the Nightmares are acknowledged, and so commonplace they are, hardwired into nearly every living creature, that the demons will always be able to draw power from the indulgence of them. Until the day that every last demon in Neothera and beyond has been destroyed, the inhabitants of the world shall always fall foul to temptation, and as such, the Nightmares will always exist in one form or another.



# DIVINE

## (RACE PLAYABLE UPON DISCUSSION WITH STAFF)

As a species, divine beings have lived in the world since shortly after the creation of the elves in the Second Age. It has only been in recent years that the existence of this species has become widespread knowledge when the realm of Andore, a haven for those with divine blood, was officially formed.

Divine beings are said to be direct descendants of the various gods and goddesses of Neothera and beyond. Some believe that the deities created them through magic alone, and others believe they copulated with mortals from various species leading to half-mortal-half-godlike humanoids being born. There is also a theory that states a "God-Gene" can jump many generations, meaning that if divine blood runs in the family, it would be extremely difficult to track down the source and the date conception likely occurred.

The power of a divine, or semi-divine being varies immensely. Each divine is born with a particular gift that is most often unique to them alone, for example, where one divine being may have access to the power of teleportation, another may be able to take any form they desire through the act of shapeshifting. Some divines can use their gift from birth, yet others develop their power later in life, perhaps in a time of great need, or simply because their bodies could not cope with such changes until they reached maturity. Divine blood is rare, powerful and worth a lot of money if it can be harvested and sold to the right person. It can also be used to empower various rituals and alchemical concoctions.

In recent years, rumours spread that divine blood held the key to producing a cure for the infection that causes the dead to rise as wights or mindless undead creatures, and many divine beings were hunted for their blood. Of course, this led to the species becoming extremely elusive, retreating to the realm of Andore, a haven from the blood-hunters.

### APPEARANCE

Divine beings can belong to any humanoid race found in Neothera except for goblins and the undead ones. Evidence suggests that a living being loses any divine power they had when rising again as a wight or mindless undead creature, and due to turning their backs on the Seven just before their species was created, goblins forgo their right to divine heritage.

It is usually easy to spot a divine being, in fact, as their power grows, it is so easy that this is part of the reason they make their home in Andore to be protected by their kin. All divine beings have golden skin, which intensifies as their power manifests and grows stronger. Generally speaking, the deeper the tint of gold, the more powerful a divine being is. However, it is possible to have divine blood, but not have a golden-tint to one's skin - this only begins to show when a divine first accesses their gift.

### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

As mentioned previously, divine beings are either born through copulation or created via magic by a deity, and generations may pass without a divine being born into a family. Divines are capable of breeding with members of the same race they belong to, and the offspring of two divine parents will always possess a special ability, either manifesting at birth or later in life. Those with two biological parents (both divine) often inherit one or both of the gifts their parents have, and sometimes develop unique powers of their own on top of this. The more concentrated the divine bloodline, the more powerful a divine will be.





Humanoids born with only one divine parent may carry the God-Gene and develop powers - although it is also possible for them to carry the gene, for it to remain dormant, never unlocking their divine potential. If a carrier of the God-Gene had children, it would be passed on to their offspring regardless, even if the parent never showed any signs of having divine power themselves. Most divines share the trait of immortality, where they stop ageing as they reach their prime, but many divines are not immortal and would live on average as long as other members of the species they belong to.

## HABITAT

The clement island of Andore is home to many divine beings, either being born there in the past few years or having uprooted themselves from other areas of Neothera to live a peaceful existence amongst their kind, away from those that would hunt them for their blood or persecute them for being different.

Divine beings come from many regions of the world, and according to how well their race has adapted to an area defines how each individual survives in the vastly different climates of the realms of Neothera. As a region, Andore is blessed with being able to comfortably sustain the requirements of any race, except the undead ones, and for this reason, as well as having bountiful resources and being secluded off the northwest coast of the Mainland, is why its population is thriving.



## RELIGION

Being blessed by the gods themselves, most divine beings are devout in worship to their creators, offering praise every day for the unique abilities they have been gifted. Depending on the deities most commonly worshipped by their race or realm of origin, a divine will likely follow the teachings they were brought up with. Many have become advocates for their chosen faith and even venture forth, spreading the word of the gods to those that will listen, offering unarguable truth that the creators are real by showing the power they have been gifted. However, some see their gift as a burden, a target painted permanently upon their back, and as such they have turned from the deities that created them, vowing never to use their power, and even resorting to methods that would remove their abilities altogether.

Neothera is a world steeped in history and legends, and in many cultures, there are tales of great heroes (and sometimes villains) that performed miraculous or devastating feats no mere mortal was ever capable of performing. The records of these individuals often make specific note of the power and indeed recognisable, golden skin tone of the protagonist, proving that these renowned or infamous figures were divine beings. It was only as the numerous races of Neothera began to expand that the bloodlines became rarer, and these extraordinary tales few and far between. The heroes and villains spoke of in these legends sometimes become gods or goddesses in the eyes of mere mortals and are to this day commonly worshipped as such.



# DRAGONKIN (SHEIK'AH)

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

Dragonkin, also known as the Sheik'ah, are said to be the children of the first and last dragon of Eúnd Vald named Eravor, although strangely, according to recent research from Vestr, their appearance coincided with the emergence of the beastkin from the World Tree in Mainland Neothera at the start of the Third Age: The Age of Men and Beasts. Deep in the Ashan Mountains, to the far south of the City of Vesthold, the great dragon Eravor was worshipped and tended to by a tribe of ancient humans. Eravor was intrigued by the humans and watched them curiously, eventually taking them under his great wings and nurturing them.

The emergence of the beastkin occurred at the same time the human followers of Eravor were transformed. A powerful stream of magic was believed to have travelled through a ley line beneath the World Tree, west, towards the Ashan Mountains in Eúnd Vald. Being caught in this magic, the followers of the dragon began to physically change - drawing upon Eravor's traits, power and appearance. Thus the race of the dragonkin was born.



### APPEARANCE

To this day, generations of dragonkin continue to be born with the appearances of half-human-half-dragon-like features. A dragonkin's body is covered in scales that are stronger than steel, and horns protrude from the tops of their heads, sometimes even their backs, forearms, elbows knees and shins. Their teeth are sharp and pointed, and their eyes narrow and keen. Some dragonkin are even born with scaly wings that grow between their shoulder blades, however, it is noted that some of the creatures grow wings later in their life. It is not uncommon for these creatures to be born with hair, and when they are, this usually matches the colour of their scales.

The dragonkin share a bond with the seven main elements, water, fire, nature, earth, air, ice and lightning, and their scale colour matches the element they are akin to, as does their often inherent magical ability to protect themselves from the element they share a bond with. This is said to be a by-product of Eravor's ability to draw upon any elemental magic he chose. They are roughly the same height and build as human beings, yet the males are often larger than the females and have more defined features.

### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

The ancient dragons of old were said to be immortal, never ageing and ever wise; however, dragonkin do not share this trait of immortality and rarely live beyond 800 years of age. It is thought that their human genes are the reason for the loss of this gift. Dragonkin are cold-blooded creatures, only able to breed with their own kind, and as such, when breeding is successful, the females lay up to four eggs which can take an entire year to hatch. Of the four eggs laid, only one or two of the offspring will survive to live beyond eight months - this is because instinct kicks in and the young begin to fight, consuming the weaker hatchling/s. Dragonkin parents, therefore, attempt to feed their young as much raw meat as possible to keep them full and less likely to fight each other.

### HABITAT

Dragonkin originate from and still occupy the Ashan Mountains in the Isle of Vestr in Eúnd Vald. These mountains are well known for thunderstorms that frequent the peaks, and large tunnels, sprawling deep through the mountain tops and into the belly of the earth below.



Dragonkin spend most of their time below the surface, living in the tunnels that have been carved and adapted by these creatures to form a network of small cities. Whilst the dragonkin prefer the subterranean habitats they have created, some also live above land, and various settlements have been erected in the warmer climate at the base of the mountains. Dragonkin usually hunt animals for food outside of the tunnels, and also frequent the markets of the human City of Vestr. Some have even chosen to leave the stony peaks behind for more comfortable and convenient living conditions in the human city itself, and in recent years have even left Vesthold altogether to live in Mainland Neothera in the various cities which are now welcoming them there.

## RELIGION

Almost all dragonkin worship Eravor, the first and last great dragon of Eúnd Vald, and indeed Neothera. Eravor's death was caused by the great Iron Wing Bird, Hathalion at the start of the Third Age of Neothera. Eravor travelled to the Mainland, spreading his wings, only to be defeated in battle by the territorial Iron Wing Bird as he searched for a place to rest. Hathalion saw the dragon as a threat, clawing at his stomach, spreading his insides over the Mainland, slaying the creature.

Eravor is worshipped as a protector and life-giver by the dragonkin, even in death, he is remembered as a deity that made the proud and fierce race of dragonkin what they are today. In 2394 of the Fifth Age, Eravor's last egg was found and finally hatched, giving birth to Eravor's heir, Tyamat. The hatchling is a symbol of hope amongst the dragonkin, and having a direct and living descendant of Eravor amongst their people is a sign that their origins are true; with Tyamat now being worshipped by the dragonkin as a living God

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

When putting together a costume to play a dragonkin, attention should be paid to ensuring you have dragon-like features:

- Masks, prosthetics, makeup and face paints are a great place to start
- Exposed skin can be made to look scaly all over or just in certain places
- The colour of your scales should match the element type your character is akin to and should be red (fire), green (nature), deep blue (water), brown (earth), yellow (lightning), light blue (ice), white or light grey (air)
- Dragonkin usually have horns and/or claws protruding from the tops of their heads, back, forearms, elbows, knees or shins, but this is not essential
- If your dragonkin character is making use of the *FLIGHT* ability you must have a pair of wings that should match the colour of your scales
- If the dragonkin belongs to a specific realm, the theme, colours and style of clothing or armour should relate to that of the chosen realm
- Dragonkin can use any types of weapon or armour if it is relevant to the style of the realm they originate from





# ELEMENTALS

## (RACE NOT PLAYABLE)

Elemental creatures are common in the world of Neothera, and as a species are believed to predate even the Elves who were created in the Second Age of the world. Elementals are pure manifestations of energy that stem from elements such as nature, fire, water and earth, to name but a few, and are linked to and created by these fundamental forces.

Where, for instance, the Nature Element can manifest itself physically as plants or trees, or the Earth Element as stone or soil, the power of the various elements created by the gods and other powers that be may also breathe life into sometimes sentient beings that are a pure manifestation of the essence of the element itself.

Some people believe that Elementals simply exist as a by-product of the power of an element, serving no purpose other than just existing; however, others believe they exist as curators of the element type they were born from, being shepherds of their aspect as the elves once were when the Seven created them. This said the true purpose of the existence of Elementals has never been discovered.

### APPEARANCE

Whilst Elementals can manifest in a tangible form, often humanoid-looking, sometimes spectral, or as a living tree or collection of animated molten lava rocks, they are also able to shift to become intangible, invisible, blending into their surroundings, such as inhabiting a plant if they are of the Nature Element, or forming a pool of liquid if they are akin to the Water Element. Elementals of different element types rarely appear in a standard manifestation; it is therefore not known if Elementals even have a true form.

All elementals share one common trait; their colouration. It is possible to tell which element type an Elemental is akin to by the colour of their skin, hair or clothing if they choose to manifest as wearing any. Fire Elementals are often red, Water Elementals are blue, Earth Elementals are brown, and Lightning elementals are yellow. There are many elements in the world of Neothera, and Elementals will nearly always appear bearing the colour associated with a particular element type.

### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

It has been documented that concentrated sources of a specific element can lead to the creation of new Elementals. Research into Elementals, alongside observation, has shown that Elementals do not procreate as other living creatures do, and there have never been any findings to suggest that elementals have a gender. If an Elemental appears to possess male features, that is likely just part of the aesthetic the Elemental chose when taking a form. It is not known how long an elemental can live for; they do not require sustenance, they do not appear to age; however, they are capable of being slain if they take a physical form and receive mortal wounds. Elven history states that some well known, powerful Elementals have been in existence since the creation of the world, yet Elementals rarely communicate with other species so this cannot be confirmed.





## HABITAT

The habitat of Elementals depends entirely on the element type they are akin to. Water Elementals can be found at sea, in lakes, rivers or streams. Fire Elementals are often found in volcanic peaks, or anywhere where flames are present. Nature Elementals are often found in forests or areas where plant life is abundant. Earth Elementals might be found in mountains or caves. Air Elementals reside upon the winds and in the skies. Ice Elementals roam the snow-covered plains or walk the frosty earth in cold winter. Lightning Elementals appear during great storms or atop the highest mountain peaks which are closest to the gods. Whilst these seven types are the most commonly found Elementals in Neothera, there are also those akin to other elements, such as light, dark and arcane, yet these are rarely encountered.

## RELIGION

It is not known if Elementals worship the deities they are akin to, nor if they are even aware that they were supposedly created by a higher power. It is therefore unknown if these creatures have any religious practices, holy days they observe, or even a direct and conscious connection to the deities that are said to have created them.

Elementals themselves are sometimes worshipped by the inhabitants of Neothera, and are seen by some as the pure essence of a God or Goddess, an extension of their power, proving their existence and that the gods still watch over the world of Neothera. Elementals are often associated with the natural cycle of life, be that aiding the regrowth of destroyed woodlands or cleansing bodies of polluted water, for example. Whilst, on the other hand, they are also blamed for the death of other creatures and destruction of lands, for instance, creating great landslides that crush settlements, or starting fires that can ravage entire cities.





# ELVES

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

There was once a time when elves occupied the realms of Neothera in numbers far greater than the humans do today, their cities were magnificent to behold, and their societies were free from war, poverty and strife. According to the elves, they were the first race of sentient humanoid creatures in Neothera and were given the gift of immortality by the Seven, meaning they stop ageing upon reaching their prime and can only die through grievous injuries or sickness. Being created by the Seven as shepherds to watch over the world after the gods and goddesses ascended to the Ethereal Realm, the elves were fluent in the very essence of the elements and commanded them with skill, precision and grace.

Created in the likeness of the gods and goddesses, the elves of the Second Age each possessed an affinity to one of the Seven Elements; air, earth, fire, ice, lightning, nature and water. Whilst elemental affinities were commonplace when the elves ruled over Neothera, in later ages, as the direct bloodlines began to fade and elves of differing affinities bred, the connection to a specific element faded, leading to many elves possessing no direct connection to a specific element at all. Elves that possess an affinity to an element are known as Pure Bloods, whereas those that have no affinity are called Bloodless. Elves can't share an affinity with more than one element; however, they may still cast spells derived from other elemental types.

The elves of the Second Age enjoyed a glorious age of nirvana as the Seven walked amongst them as leaders of the houses dedicated to the elements; House Carvellian of water, House Hazalli of air, House Sirella of Nature, House Mortanis of ice, House Thard'or of fire, House Betrallis of lightning and House Koruthas of earth. However, eventually, the Seven grew tired of the pleasantries of peace, and waged war amongst each other, forcing the houses of the elves to fight for dominance.

War waged for countless years, and as the Seven had grown tired of peace, they then grew tired of war and ascended to the Ethereal Realm after founding House Faradome, that commanded the very essence that binds all of the elements to Neothera; the powers of the arcane. Still recovering from great losses during the War of the Gods, one-day a great darkness swept over the world without warning and would change it forever. The war against the Nightmares at the end of the Second Age of the world would see the elves' numbers diminish to a fraction of their original population, seeing seven of the eight houses destroyed by this foul wickedness. Only House Faradome remained, and it was there that most of the elven survivors of the war sought refuge.

Centuries had passed since the Demon War and the arrival of the human refugees from their lost world that was believed to have been destroyed by the Nightmares. The humans occupied many realms of Neothera, and their kingdoms thrived and expanded rapidly. Cities had come and gone as wars were waged by humans for land and resources, and many elves remained in Faradome City, protected by an arcane barrier they had raised to prevent the outside world from corrupting their haven. That said, other elves decided to live amongst the human and beastkin-led societies of the world, and their presence can still be seen there today.

Whilst many elves preferred the safety of Faradome before its destruction in the year 2393 of the Fifth Age, others sought lives outside of the ancient city, and following the devastation of the Mainland and the loss of Faradome, you are highly likely to encounter elves in any other realm you visit.





## APPEARANCE

Elves are humanoid creatures, similar in appearance to humans, yet often being slightly taller. They are distinguishable from other species by their ears, which are long and pointed at the tips. Elves are immortal and do not physically age upon reaching their prime; although they can be killed through violence, illness or wasting away and losing the will to live, perhaps through sorrow, pining for the loss of a loved one, or from extreme depression or starvation. Elves that show clear signs of physical ageing; perhaps appearing elderly, would have undoubtedly seen hardships that have caused their appearance to alter, similar to a human who would age naturally.

Many elves that were born after the Demon War show different physical traits to their older kin; the Elves of the Elements. Those who were born into one of the ancient houses share an affinity with a specific element and have skin wholly or partially coloured to match. Those with an affinity to water may have blue skin, whereas those with a fire affinity would be red, and nature would be green, for example. In recent times, Elemental Elves have become a rare sight in the world, for many perished in the Demon War of the Second Age, and have since died through battle or other causes. It is possible that a Pure Blood Elf, born in more recent times, will have skin coloured to match an element; however, elves that do not possess an elemental affinity have skin coloured the same as a regular human.



## LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

The lives of elves are counted to begin at conception rather than birth, and an elven pregnancy can last almost two years. Although elven minds sharpen much earlier in life than other races, their bodies grow more slowly. Elves are considered fully-grown and to have reached their prime after a century, usually their one hundred and second birthday. Most elves usually marry only once in their lives, and their children are often few and far between if they choose to conceive at all. It is not unheard of for elves to choose a member of another race as their partner; although purely for love or companionship, as elves can't conceive with anyone not of their species.

Pure Blood Elves are those that share a lineage through thousands of years of breeding between elven couples that shared an affinity for the same element type. These elves are considered elite amongst certain hierarchies, especially ancient elves of the Second Age, for they are believed to share a direct link to one of the seven deities that created them.

Some Pure Blood Elves consider those without a consistent bloodline lesser beings, and there have been many instances where Pure Bloods have belittled, shunned and even attacked Bloodless Elves who they consider filthy for muddying the pure bloodlines. Most of this animosity stems from the War of the Gods in the Second Age, where the seven houses were denied contact with each other unless it was on the battlefield, hacking each other to pieces in the name of the gods and goddesses.

## HABITAT

Elves once inhabited the entire world of Neothera and governed the lands in the name of the deities that created them. It is believed that the largest population of elves was upon Mainland Neothera, with other houses residing in the Frozen North and the Southern Realms. Whilst new continents are often being discovered around the world, it is very likely that elves already inhabited them during the Second Age, and were either wiped out during the War of the Gods or the war against the Nightmares.

It has recently been discovered that in ancient times, elves existed in Eúnd Vald, the Western Realms, and due to their small numbers, were taken as slaves by the Beors of Estan. It is thought that elves may exist in other undiscovered continents of Neothera, but because the elves of the Mainland had no way of contacting their kin, that is if they even knew of their existence in the first place, there is little to no proof to show where the lands are that they may have occupied.



Elves, especially older ones, are capable of surviving in the harshest of climates due to their intimate knowledge of the world and the elements that created and support it. Pure Blood Elves akin to specific elements adopted a natural resistance to colder climates, if they were aligned to the Ice Element for example, whereas elves aligned to the Lightning or Air Elements lived atop the highest mountain peaks easily weathering the frequent storms that battered their surroundings.

Legend even tells of the Elves of House Carvellian, akin to the Water Element, being able to breathe underwater, and the elves akin to the Fire Element, building the City of Thard'or deep within mountains that held fiery cores, rendering their flesh unable to be burned. To this day elves can be found in almost any realm throughout Neothera, and despite their ancestors wishes to distance themselves from the human realms, they eventually branched out from the now lost City of Faradome to become a staple in almost every realm of Neothera.

## RELIGION

Nearly all elves believe in and worship the Seven, the deities that created the elements which the world was shaped from, and then the elves themselves to inhabit their creation. There are accounts from living elves of the Second Age that survived the War of the Gods before the Nightmare War who state that they witnessed first-hand the seven gods and goddesses walking amongst the elven people. Because elves of the Second Age are extremely rare these days, many of these tales are considered legends, where little or no proof of the Seven can be offered to back up such claims. Despite this, Pure Blood Elves say they are connected to the gods that created them, and many even say they are capable of conversing with them directly through dreams, meditation or deep thought.

It should also be noted that some ancient elves shun the Seven, and even despise them for pitting their species against each other in needless battles during the War of the Gods in the Second Age. Many of these elves instead prefer to offer praise to Osirah, the God of the Sun and Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon, the oldest deities known to the inhabitants of Neothera.

Early elven legends stated that the elves will continue to live in Neothera until they are called back to the Ethereal Realm by the Seven, or their presence is required upon a different plane of existence, in which case they will receive a unique calling, or sign that their time in the world is nearing its end. However, most simply believe that this refers to what happens after an elf dies, where their spirit will transcend to the stars, and they will enter the Halls of the Gods, the Ethereal Realm when their body is no longer capable of containing their soul.



According to ancient elven customs, when an elf dies, the body is burned so the spirit may quickly find its way back to the Ethereal Realm. It is said that until the flesh has parted from the bones the spirit remains trapped inside the shell, unable to return to its ancestors. In Faradome, before its destruction, a punishment for unforgivable crimes was to preserve the body so the spirit was unable to leave its shell and would remain trapped in the carcass.

Although rarely practised, there were documented accounts of some criminals being kept alive in this state, trapped in the catacombs beneath the city for all eternity. Elves, especially those born after the Second Age, believe that all souls will eventually find their way to the Ethereal Realm where they will be reunited with the gods, their ancestors and loved ones, regardless of the crimes they committed in life.



## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

There are very few costume requirements for elves, however, the following points should be observed:

- All elves have long ears which are pointed at the tip
- Pure Blood Elves that are aligned to a specific element have skin wholly or partially coloured to match the colours of one of the Seven gods and goddesses, for example, the colour of an Elf of Fire will be red
- Pure Blood Elves sometimes have hair coloured to match their unnatural skin tone, red for fire, blue for water, green for nature etc.
- The colours and style of your costume, armour, weaponry and equipment should reflect that of the realm your character belongs to, however, if you are a Pure Blood Elf the colours of the garments often match the colours of the deity you are akin to





# ESYAN

## (RACE NOT PLAYABLE)

The Esysan are the guardians of the three rifts on the borders of the Ruins of the Great City of Netherlye in Mainland Neothera. Eyewitnesses tell how after the three towers dedicated to the schools of magic fell at the end of the Fourth Age, rifts opened in the ground where they once stood. Soon after, the Esysan appeared, clawing their way out of the shimmering purple pools and standing alert, weapons drawn at the edge of the rifts. They are mysterious beings that are neither alive nor dead and have very little to do with others.

It is estimated that each rift was once guarded by at least one thousand Esysan. Very little was known about these humanoids until recent years, where it was revealed that they were created from the sands of time by Drakaria, the Demon King. He used these soldiers to prevent the rifts from being tampered with and also attempted to disrupt the heroes of Neothera in various ways by sending large numbers of them in vicious assaults. Since Drakaria left for the Nightmare Realm it has been reported that the Esysan who were guarding the three rifts in central Neothera have all disappeared; similarly, there have been no further sightings of the Esysan in other areas of the world.

The Esysan excel on the battlefield; they do not fear pain or death and show very little emotion when inflicting it upon others. An Esysan will only retreat from battle if withdrawal is tactical, they will protect their comrades; however, if an ally was slain, they would show little or no emotion at the loss. The Esysan find emotion of any form very intriguing and are often fascinated by any dramatic conveyance of feelings by members of other realms. It is not known if the Esysan are capable of feeling such emotions or even learning them, however, due to their lack of integration with other realms, there has never been any evidence to suggest that this is beyond them.

### APPEARANCE

The Esysan are humanoid in appearance, and of similar height and build to regular humans. They are most recognisable by their skin colour, which is almost pure white, and they prefer to cover their faces with frightening, steel masks, presumably to intimidate their foes. Another distinguishing feature of the Esysan is the jet-black robes and tunics they wear that cover the majority of their bodies and black or brown leather armour that is modest in appearance and quite often offset with silver plate greaves, bracers and sometimes pauldrons.

The Esysan wield weapons commonly found in any of the realms of Neothera and are capable of using dark or arcane magic to smite their foes. Those that have observed the Esysan from afar, when they are not involved in combat, have noted that they do not possess a sense of humour and tend to take matters very seriously; they are not renowned for their conversational skills and a social convention would normally consist of a group of Esysan sat around a campfire in complete silence, occasionally nodding at one another when their eyes happened to meet over the flames. They are socially awkward and generally prefer to keep to themselves.

### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

The Esysan do not eat or drink, never appear to age and can only die from grievous injuries. When an Esysan is killed its body crumbles into dust, and a new Esysan emerges to take its place from any nearby rifts other Esysan appeared from. Newly emerged Esysan are known as "Emergents" or "Orimerge". Upon emerging from a rift a new Esysan knows nothing of its past, or even if it has one. It only knows that its purpose is to protect the rifts of Netherlye, fight back whatever horrors emerge from them and to follow direct orders from Drakaria the Demon King. Newly emerged Esysan can speak the common tongue perfectly, they can fight as well as anyone else trained in the art of combat and a new Esysan possesses a basic worldly knowledge that most people only gain through years of life experience.

It is unknown if the Esysan can breed and there have never been any sightings of babies or children. It is assumed that because they are created from the sands of time, they are inherently magical beings that are created as humanoids in their prime to best follow Drakaria's orders and fulfil his needs.

Despite the Esysan apparently possessing free will, they seem to work together silently going about their tasks, executing plans efficiently and with purpose. It could be that Drakaria has a direct link to the Esysan via some kind of telepathy, which allows them to work as a coordinated unit; a well-oiled machine where each cog knows its place and how it contributes to the running of the machine as a whole.



## HABITAT

Until recently the Esysan could only be found in the Ruins of the Great City of Netherlye, ready to slay anything that attempted to come out or go into the three rifts there. As Drakaria came close to being crowned the Demon King, the number of sightings of Esysan began to grow throughout the Mainland and beyond.

They usually carried out targeted attacks on people or locations, and it is thought that their creator, Drakaria, was sending them to disrupt events that would prevent him from being crowned. Esysan do not appear to be affected by any type of climates and operate effectively no matter how dangerous the region or harsh the weather. Being a species that presumably was not created in Neothera, there are no specific areas the Esysan inhabit, yet they seem well equipped enough to suggest that if they do originate from another dimension or plane of existence, it shares conditions, resources and many other similarities to that of Neothera.

## RELIGION

It could be safe to say that being created by Drakaria, the Demon King, and following his direct orders without question, Esysan are devoutly loyal to him and his motives. There have never been any signs that the Esysan follow the Seven or any other deities worshipped by the people of Neothera, no overheard conversations, no religious idols, documentation or other evidence to suggest as such. It should also be noted that no holy books written by any inhabitants of Neothera, including the ancient elves, have even so much as mentioned the existence of these creatures in the past, or predicted their coming in the future save for a single scroll of prophecy once owned by the Goblin War Chief, Redellium Rahoolium.





# FAERIES (FEY)

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

Those who have gazed upon a faerie tell how their beauty is often unsurpassable and many touched by their light reveal how they felt as if they were dancing in ecstasy amongst a sea of smiling stars. Faeries, or Fey as they are often called, are beings created of light and most believe their very existence should revolve around caring for, and healing those who require their aid.

Faeries are not native to the world, and they arrived in Neothera in 2383 of the Fifth Age, appearing through the eastern rift in the centre of the Mainland. Before this, the fey inhabited a world known as Lyshanduir, where lands were bathed in light and hardships all but unheard of until a dire sickness gripped their world, plunging it into darkness as many of their kind were turned to Vampyres by the virulent Nightmares.

Lyshanduir would eventually be renamed by many fey to Terminarium on account of the limited amount of time the world potentially had before it would be incapable of sustaining life. The wars that followed in Lyshanduir would see the fey forced from their lands, with a member of the fey royal family resorting to opening a rift into Neothera to allow a few thousand of their species access to safety. However, upon arriving in Neothera many of the fey were cut down by the Eryan, the Guardians of the Rifts, and only around four hundred of their kind survived and were welcomed into the City of Faradome as new allies by the elves and piskies.

Unfortunately, tragedy would strike once again, wherein the year 2393 the Nightmares returned, burning half of Mainland Neothera to ashes. The City of Faradome fell, and only around two hundred fey survived the burning, resorting to seeking shelter amongst any neighbouring realm that would welcome their kind.

### APPEARANCE

Fey are similar in height and build to humans; their skin is often pale, radiant and flawless, except for one defining feature. Many believe that faeries practice the art of scarification, but in truth, a faerie is born with intrinsic patterns in the form of tiny raised bumps upon the surface of their skin. The formation of the patterns on a fey's body mirrors the alignment of the stars when the faerie was born in Lyshanduir and is known to the individual as their Star-Lines. Fey are extremely proud of their Star-Lines, and they are celebrated by being painted, tattooed or decorated with precious gems.



Few faerie babies have been born since they left their homeland; however, Star-Lines present on the infants that have been born in Neothera resemble the constellations in Lyshanduir. This gives hope to the faeries that their world is still safe, for if it had been destroyed by the vampyres, an infant would surely be born without the marks of Lyshanduir's stars.

All faeries are born with unnaturally colourful hair, often bordering on fluorescent. This trait is believed to be attributed to the sheer amount of light magic they hold within them and have indeed been exposed to in Lyshanduir all of their lives.

When a fey becomes infected by the Plague of Undeath, dies and is resurrected as a vampyre, they lose all colour from their hair as darkness consumes the body. This evidence alone would suggest that light magic does indeed cause the unnatural colouration of a faeries hair.



## LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

Faerie babies are conceived via copulation, and since they arrived in Neothera, there has been no recorded instance of fey being able to produce offspring with any race other than their own.

Whilst in Lyshanduir, the fey have noted that similar to the elves, they were, in fact, immortal and never aged upon reaching their prime, only dying if they fell extremely ill through natural causes, or if a grievous injury was sustained. Since arriving in Neothera, many fey felt the gift of immortality slip away from them, and some have even noticed signs of ageing as humans would. Exactly how old a fey would live to in Neothera is currently unknown because the species only arrived in this world a little over a decade ago.

Losing their immortality is of great concern to the fey, and while some consider it the price that must be paid to continue living in relative peace in these new lands, others feel robbed of their birthright and continue to search for ways to prevent the ageing process. Many faeries feel that if they were to return to Lyshanduir they would regain their immortality, yet due to the darkness that now covers their lands, perhaps their immortality is lost for good.

Faeries enjoy good food, wine and pleasant company, and often sing uplifting songs to remind them of Lyshanduir and the friends and families they lost during the Vampyre War. It is also rumoured that their signing brings good fortune to those who hear their music. Faeries are very rarely the aggressor in a situation, yet if they must fight, they can harness the raw power of light to aid and boost their combat skills. Faeries possess a natural gift for healing and curing the ailments of others; they are even capable of healing wounds over distances without even touching their patient.

## HABITAT

The fey originate from a world called Lyshanduir, which, according to faeries that now live in Neothera, was created by the God of Light, Hirosah, also known as Osirah the God of the Sun. The fey believe that their world was created from pure light, and according to them Lyshanduir shares ecosystems similar to Neothera; rolling green hills, snow-covered mountain peaks, beautiful lakes, rivers and oceans, vast deserts, and even very similar forms of plant and animal life. However, all fey state that the lands of Lyshanduir, before the vampyres brought darkness to the world, were far more heavenly in comparison to Neothera.

Before the Vampyre War erupted, fey societies were much like those of Neothera; however such things as crime, famine, poverty and corruption were almost unheard of due to the fey dedication to peace and an inherent longingness to live harmoniously with one another. Since the Vampyre War began in Terminarium, life became tough for the fey, yet their first-hand experience in overcoming the hardships of war transferred well for those that started new lives in Neothera.

Today in Neothera, the two hundred or so fey that lived through the Burning of the Mainland in 2393 have become accustomed to life in these new lands. The decade spent peacefully living in Faradome allowed the fey to be taught much of the ways of inhabitants of Neothera by the elves and piskies of the Amicita. They were able to learn new languages, be taught how to harness the powers of magic native to this new world, were told the history of the gods, the realms and their inhabitants, how currency and politics worked, notable figures throughout the ages and how to work with the resources native to Mainland Neothera.

Fey are used to the finer things in life; they are not keen on grubby or inhospitable locations, especially if they are to be spending any amount of time there. Fey will often go out of their way to clean, decorate or adorn a dwelling place with trinkets and expensive finery if they are forced to stay in an undesirable location for any amount of time. Despite the customs of Neothera seeming strange at first, the fey have persevered in their pursuit of fitting in and making the best of the chance they have been given beyond the rift of Terminarium.

## RELIGION

All fey believe that they were created by the God of Light, Hirosah, as was their homeworld, Lyshanduir and everything in it. Strangely enough, upon reaching Neothera and learning of the God of the Sun, Osirah, most fey have accepted that this deity is, in fact, Hirosah, for the teachings of the two separate belief systems fall almost-perfectly in line with each other. Even the names of the gods, Hirosah and Osirah translate roughly to mean the same thing in both elvish and fey tongues: "The Light of Creation".

This has also lead to the speculation that elves and fey are somehow related, although proof of this is yet to be discovered. Fey believe that everything in their world was created from the pure essence of light and despite their acceptance that races native to Neothera believe in the Seven, who created the world via elements, most fey continue to offer praise to Hirosah and indeed the royal Lightborn family that ruled with caring hearts over Lyshanduir.



The first four fey created by Hirosah after he imagined the world of Lyshanduir and made it hospitable for life to thrive there were immortal brothers and sisters, crowned royals, gods and goddesses amongst the fey that were created thereafter by Hirosah. The Lightborne family consisted of two kings and queens, King Aranthius, King Venstrim, Queen Azhara and Queen Ostraza.

Each governed their people selflessly with light and love in their hearts, ensuring that each faerie was always equal to the next. The Lightborne family did not dictate that they should rule over the immortal race of the fey, they were chosen by the inhabitants of Lyshanduir due to the worldly knowledge they were gifted by Hirosah, and that they always put the needs of others before themselves. Under the guidance of the royal family, Lyshanduir prospered endlessly and eventually, Leycandour; the City of Lights was built to house every man, woman, child and animal that wished to bathe in the nurturing light of creation.

In Lyshanduir, the consumption of meat was not allowed, and the fey survived only on plants and other foods that could be created from them. The consumption of flesh was considered a sin, and until the Vampire Wars, when resources became stretched, this practice was almost unheard of.

When the Nightmares appeared in Lyshanduir they slowly began to corrupt the fey, killing them, draining their light and forcing them to resurrect as undead vampires. Not even the royal family was safe from the wrath of the demons, and eventually, King Venstrim would fall into corruption and became the leader of the vampire forces. One-by-one the royals would fall to the demons, leaving only Venstrim, now King of the Vampyres, and Aranthius the last remaining fey royal as a testament to the sheer brutality and evil of the Nightmares.

As the war between vampyres and fey waged in Lyshanduir, the light slowly began to fade, plunging the world into darkness as corruption overtook the lands leading to the evacuation of the fey into Neothera. To this day, any living fey fear or hold hostile thoughts to the force of darkness, and upon learning of the Goddess of the Moon, Senetsu, the fey believe that this deity eventually claimed the light and spread her influence over Hirosah's creation. There are many mixed feelings amongst fey about the darkness and how Lyshanduir became Terminarium. Upon learning of the deity when they arrived in Neothera, the fey could not help but think that Senetsu, the Goddess of Darkness played some part in the destruction of Lyshanduir, the world they held so dear to them, a world that was, and is still being interminably consumed by her will.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

The main focus of costume for a Faerie character should be the Star-Lines and hair colour:

- Fey have small raised bumps on their skin which mirror the constellations in Lyshanduir when they were born. These are known as Star-Lines and they are celebrated by being painted, tattooed or decorated with precious gems
- Due to the infusion of the essence of light in their bodies, the hair colour of a faerie is often fluorescent or unnatural colours such as blue, green, pink, purple or bright red etc.
- The colours and style of your costume, armour, weaponry and equipment should reflect that of the realm your character belongs to, however, the fey are a proud race and opt for fine-looking, well made and elaborate garments, weapons and armour





# GNOMES

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

Gnomes are an elusive, mischievous, playful and determined race of humanoids that are commonly found in the Western Realms of Neothera. This species is said to have been born from the ancient spores, mould and fungus that littered the forests of Eúnd Vald, long before the human races appeared in the region.

It is commonly believed by Gnomes, and indeed the other cultures of the Western Realms, that the dust kicked up from the great battle between the God Hvikr and the Dragon Lord, Andlat, disrupted the earth and undergrowth of the lush forests in these lands, causing strange humanoids to evolve and mutate, giving life to the race of Gnomes so that they may actively repair the damage caused to the plants and trees of this continent.

Today, Gnomes are still found deep in the forests of Eúnd Vald, only being seen by other species when they want to, continuing their work of repairing and regrowing the life of this vast continent. Whilst they have always been considered a reclusive species, the Gnomes of Eúnd Vald have recently begun to venture beyond the deep green borders of their forest homes, and have even been sighted upon Mainland Neothera and indeed the Southern Realms.

Whether they are drawn by their built-in mechanic to repair and regrow natural destruction, or they seek the thrills of new adventure beyond the borders of their natural habitat is not yet known. However, Gnomes prove to be a formidable opponent to anyone that would attempt to stand in their way!

### APPEARANCE

Gnomes are roughly the same height, build and weight of regular humans in the world of Neothera, however, they are most recognisable by one feature that sets them apart from all other species; the growth of a large mushroom, that most often takes the place of hair, that sprouts from the tops of their heads.

There are no singular species of fungus that have been noted as growing from a Gnomes head, any colour or size imaginable has been seen sprouting from these creatures' craniums. It is well-documented that cutting the fungus from a Gnome's head will lead to its immediate demise and the vicious and deadly poisoning of anyone in the immediate area as spores spray like a deadly toxin into the air.

### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

There are various tales of Gnomes circulating amongst the inhabitants of Eúnd Vald, many of these tales tell of the appearance of Gnomes that bear stark similarities to each other. This, in itself, could be proof that Gnomes do not age, and are, in effect immortal. However, Gnomes are capable of being slain by mortal means, such as grievous wounds, and remains have been documented as having been found in the various forests of the Western Realms showing as much. The few Gnomes that have spoken in detail to the human races of Eúnd Vald state that they do not know how long they have been alive, and that time, to them, unlike other humanoids, is nothing but a fantasy. It is therefore considered by other non-Gnome races, that Gnomes are indeed immortal, yet they do not perceive time as other races do. It has been documented by those that have researched it, that Gnomes are incapable of breeding with any race other than their own.



### HABITAT

Eyewitness reports and documentation relating to the early years of Eúnd Vald, state that Gnomes have nearly always been found deep in the forests. Very rarely does an account of history state that a Gnome has lived amongst humans or Dragonkin in any of the Western Realms. Gnomes are nearly always encountered in sheltered, woodland locations, either aiding or hampering the endeavours of travellers that they encounter. Due to their inherent need to tend to nature, Gnomes are mostly encountered in their natural habitat; The forests of Neothera, either living in small clutches in basic huts made of sticks, branches and leaves or amongst the tree-tops in tree houses made of the same. On the rare occasion that a Gnome was sighted near an area populated by humans, it has been reported that shiny items, such as coins or sparkling gems have gone missing, for Gnomes are like magpies and collect anything that glimmers.



## RELIGION

Gnomes are the caretakers of nature in Eúnd Vald - and as such focus their efforts on repairing their forest homes as best they can, aiding in regrowth of the plants and lifeforms affected by the natural cycle of death and rebirth that nature takes. Gnomes do not worship any well-known deities, but instead, pray and offer whispers of promise to Nak-Nak, whom they believe was a great warrior and protector of their people. Nak Nak was said to be twice the height of a regular Gnome, extremely tough and was renowned as a great leader. He once led a large group of Gnomes into battle against a human war party that was sent to a great forest to eradicate the Gnome population to drain the forest for resources that would be used in the expansion of a city. Nak Nak fought with vigour and such ferocity that he was able to lead the Gnomes to victory, pushing back the human forces. Sadly Nak Nak's time on Neothera was short, and unlike other Gnomes he began to age, eventually dying peacefully, surrounded by his people.

Today, Nak Nak is also seen as a deity of nature, a spirit-like creature that whisks through the forests like a ghost, gently caressing and speaking to new lifeforms to aid their growth. Amongst Gnome-kind, there is no set way to worship or contact Nak-Nak directly. Each Gnome does as it sees fit to please their deity. When a Gnome dies, it is a common practice for friends or family to move the remains to the base of a tree. Gnomes believe that as the body decomposes, it feeds and nurtures the tree, and also that even in death, a Gnome can continue to aid the cycle of life. There are no notable holy days or important dates in Gnomish culture -this is because they do not follow the constraints of time as other sentient beings do, and therefore would not make use of a calendar.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

There are very few costume requirements for Gnomes; however, the main focal point should be the head or hat:

- The growth of a large mushroom, that often takes the place of hair, that sprouts from the top of a Gnome's head. There are no singular species of fungus that have been noted as growing from a Gnomes head, any colour or size imaginable has been seen sprouting from these creatures' craniums
- Gnomes sometimes have fungus growing from their skin on other parts of the body, such as the face or hands. Their skin colour should resemble that of regular human-beings
- Gnomes usually opt for clothing or armour that is green, brown or black, and this costume often resembles a forest-like theme
- If the Gnome belongs to a specific realm, the theme, colours and style can relate to that of the chosen realm
- Gnomes can use any type of weapon or armour if it is relevant to the style of the realm they originate from





# GOBLINS

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

Goblins, or Gla'hamoth in the elvish tongue, are green-skinned creatures that dwell in the cavernous stretches below the surface of Neothera. The first goblins were born from elves, and contrary to popular belief, was the second intelligible, humanoid species to inhabit Neothera. Goblins have roamed Neothera since the Second Age and are believed to be the result of corruption - a curse that was placed upon elves that defiled or denied the will of the Seven.

During the War of the Gods at the end of the First Age, where the Seven fought against each other, drawing their children the elves of the seven houses to their banners, some opposed this conflict. Refusing to take sides and wishing only peace for the elven species and for the gods to set aside their differences, Moth'elduin, a wise, passionate and stubborn elf, rallied those that refused to join the houses to his side until the gods found them. In their desperation, the rebel elves prayed for salvation from any deities other than the Seven that would listen, using the powers of the Arcane Element to empower their rituals, they called forth unknown beings that, despite protecting them until the gods had left Neothera, also stole their immortality, seeing them become warped and twisted into grotesque creatures.

Goblins evolved to become feral, pack-like creatures who live in communities known as tribes which can vary from a handful of members to numbers in their thousands. Each tribe is led by an alpha, more commonly known as a chieftain. The chieftain is generally the strongest or sometimes most intelligent goblin amongst the group and will demand the respect, loyalty, and devotion of his or her fellow goblins. Pecking order is usually established within goblin tribes, with the weakest and most feeble creatures sitting firmly at the bottom.

For many ages goblins hid below ground in the cavernous stretches of the lands of Neothera, only recently emerging as turf wars began to break out amongst the various tribes of under the Mainland. Those that oppose the wars have attempted to integrate themselves into the above-ground societies of the realms of Neothera, and despite some hatred to their kind due to their ancestors turning their backs on the Seven, goblins have slowly become accepted in many of the realms of the world.





## APPEARANCE

Goblins are green-skinned creatures that are usually hairless and the majority of them bald, however, some males, but more commonly females can grow hair upon their heads or faces as many other humanoid species do. Similar to the elves, goblins have long pointed-ears. Their noses are sometimes pointed and crooked, and dark green, black or yellow moles grow upon their skin. Some goblins have sharp pointed-teeth, but over thousands of years of evolution, their fangs or tusks have slowly become flatter, similar in appearance to the teeth of humans.

Goblins often scurry when moving about, their shoulders hunched and their legs bent, this is believed to be a trait that developed from traversing narrow tunnels in their underground cities and lairs. It is common for goblins that have joined any of the overland realms of Neothera to adopt the style of clothing, armour or weapons that are common in that particular land, however, goblins that dwell in the cities below ground wear much more feral-looking apparel, and sport armour and use weapons constructed from bone, stone and untempered steel.

## LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

Goblins mentally mature very quickly, a development that is vital in their primal tribal societies. By around the age of fifteen, a goblin reaches its peak of physical fitness which is usually maintained until they reach the age of one hundred and twenty. The oldest goblin on record was said to have lived for three hundred and thirty-two years of age, with most goblins living until around two hundred and seventy years of age.

Goblins procreate similar to elves, with a pregnancy lasting the same amount of time (approximately eighteen months), strangely though, goblin babies are often born looking like elves, except green-skinned, and losing their natural beauty after about nine months when they appear more goblin-like. Goblins are incapable of breeding with any race other than their own.

From birth, goblins can draw upon an energy known as "Fel". This strange magic drives and sustains goblins, and their shaman can wield it with incredible ease and precision. Whilst other species can also wield Fel Magic, it is intrinsic to goblins, and their species can easily harness its power with very little knowledge of how to cast spells.

## HABITAT

Before their recent integration amongst the other realms of Neothera, goblins made their homes deep in the earth and have done so since the dawn of their species as they hid in fear from the elves that they abandoned during the War of the Gods. But there are still plenty of goblin tribes that make their homes in the depths. The caverns of Neothera run deep, and there are just as many goblin-made tunnel networks as there are naturally formed ones. The halls of the goblins are monumental in size, and the largest known subterranean dwellings can house tribes with numbers in their thousands. Most of these caves are connected via tunnels that are used to traverse the depths below almost as freely as Overlanders (a Goblin term for those that live above the ground) do the land above.

Goblin diets consist mainly of meat, cave moss, and mushrooms. Their two favourite delicacies are Shnarmi, a hallucinogenic mushroom that grows in most caves and often in damp and grassy areas above ground, and Branki, a bulbous and unintelligible, yet very dangerous mammal that is rife in their subterranean domains. This creature has a mouth full of sharp teeth, a long barbed tail and stubby, three-toed feet. Branki is sometimes kept as pets if tamed correctly as a hatchling. They are cannibalistic and territorial creatures that taste somewhat like beef.





## RELIGION

Worship of the Seven is not common, especially amongst tribes that follow the old legends of the plight of their species and why Moth'elduin (known as Mok'Garrosh in the goblin tongue) attempted to save them as elves. Some tribes have been known to burn down shrines or churches dedicated to the gods above ground, even starting underground wars with other tribes that show signs of following a more mainstream faith. However, some tribes fear the Seven, even going as far as to making sacrifices to them to ensure they do not smite them down for the errors of their ancestors. Only goblins that have ended up living amongst other races have been successfully converted to mainstream faiths.

Faith still plays a strong role in the culture of many tribes of goblins, and indeed those that live in other realms of Neothera but still hold dear to their roots. Four prominent figures are worshipped as gods, but more often looked up to as aspiring members of the goblin race. These are Mok'Garrosh, the God of Love, Hate, Strength, Weakness, Creation and Destruction. Skari, Goddess of Unity, Exploration, Bountiful treasures, Hunts and Harvests. Trogladosh, the God of Madness, Jealousy, Anger and Stubbornness. Killi Bon Brillli, the God of Hope, Celebration, Feasting, Narcotics and Overindulgence.

Goblin shaman who are attuned to the spirits, and have gleaned visions of their ancestors, even heard the words of Mok'Garrosh through the medium of dreams and visions, tell countless tales of the Halls of the Unborn. The term "Unborn" in goblin societies can refer to the state of existence in other dimensional realms; being unborn into the physical world of Neothera itself.

It is unclear how Mok'Garrosh met his demise in Neothera, but goblins commonly believe that he was somehow able to tear open a rift into a world of his creation, a Mecca for the souls of his kind to ascend to when their physical life upon Neothera comes to an end. The Halls of the Unborn are situated in a spirit world, where the ancestors of the goblins welcome the spirits of the deceased into their eternal halls, a place free from war, famine, strife, pain and other hardships of the physical realm. To ascend to the Halls of the Unborn upon death is to reach nirvana, and to truly understand the path of existence.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

When putting together a costume to play a goblin, focus should be paid to the following:

- You should ensure any exposed skin is painted shades of green
- They have long pointed ears, similar to elves, these should be painted green to match your skin
- Their noses are sometimes pointed and crooked, however, this is not essential
- Some goblins have dark green, black or yellow moles growing upon their skin, but this is not essential
- Bear in mind that goblins are usually hairless and the majority of them bald, however, some males, but more commonly females, are able to grow hair upon their heads or faces as many other humanoid species do
- Unless the goblin belongs to a specific realm (in which case the theme, colours and style can relate to that of the chosen realm) their clothing, weapons and armour appear primitive, often made from scraps of leather, cloth and animal fur, bone, stone or dirty/rusted steel





# HUMANS

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

Humans have reigned over Neothera since the Third Age, and their species has grown to populate almost every region. Humans are the most colourful and varied race in Neothera and where other species seem restricted in both behavioural and cultural regimes, the human realms have forged massively varied existences throughout the lands.

The dawning of the Third Age of Neothera was marked by the appearance of human beings. Ancient manuscripts were written by the elves that first encountered the humans as they arrived in the world of Neothera, and state that the human race appeared through rifts, similar to how the Nightmares once gained access to the world. The humans that arrived in Neothera were primitive. They had discovered how to craft and make use of basic tools and weapons, yet these were no match for the strength of the Nightmares who had supposedly invaded and ravaged their world known as Terevia.

It was the elves and piskies of Faradome that took many of the humans they encountered into their care, and although language was initially an issue, over time the three races developed a means of communication, and thus, the “Common Tongue” was born. The elves and piskies continued nurturing the humans over many centuries, teaching them of the power of magic, the elements, deities and enabling them to form societies and build great cities.

The antiquity of human life in Terevia, beyond the rifts they had travelled through, has been the subject of speculation and debate throughout the ages of the human species dominance. Many have tried to decipher their ancestor’s true origins, yet it seems that this chapter of their history has, for now, been lost to a distant memory. It is thought that elves that have survived since the start of the Third Age may hold information on human origins beyond the rifts; however, elves of this age are extremely difficult to locate in modern times.

### APPEARANCE

Humans are extremely adaptable, resilient, creative and full of perseverance. It is no wonder that the species has flourished throughout Neothera over the ages, and now greatly outnumbers any other race of humanoids in the world. As an out of character reference, humans in the world of Neothera come in all shapes and sizes; there is no special trait that sets them apart from human beings in the real world.

The defining features that allow one to tell where in the world of Neothera a human has come from are largely based on the clothing they wear, or perhaps tattoos, piercings and other methods of body modification. It is advisable to read up on the many realms of Neothera in this book to see how clothing, armour, weapons etc. can influence your style.



### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

The average life expectancy of a Neotheran human being is around seventy years of age, but this will vary depending on lifestyle, and even the realm of a person belongs to. In more primal societies such as the Arak’Char, life expectancy will be lower due to the harsh climate and dangerous ways of life, yet a L’Enaroussian citizen of modest wealth may live into their eighties or nineties due to having access to good healthcare and facilities. It should also be noted that some human beings have discovered ways to extend their lives either through the use of magic or alchemy, and the oldest recorded living human was a professor in Jerrod’s Front that lived to the ripe old age of three hundred and twenty-four.



Humans are the most dominant species in Neothera, mostly due to their sheer numbers in comparison to other species. They can be found in all corners of the globe and if a realm or city is not occupied by humans it is most likely because other species have made them unwelcome there. The only other species that humans are capable of breeding with are Beastkin, demons and Vulperans. If a child is born to a human and Beastkin couple, it will always be of Beastkin origin, taking the form of a half-animal upon reaching puberty. If a human and Vulperan were to have a child, there is an equal chance that it will be born a pure human, or a Vulperan, half-human, half-demon. If a human and a demon were to have a child, it would be born a vulperan.

## HABITAT

It was towards the middle of the Third Age of Neothera that humans became notably established in Neothera - and by the Fourth Age, the species had firmly placed its roots in many of the lands throughout the Mainland and the Southern and Western Realms. Their cities expanded quickly as the population multiplied faster than any of the other humanoid races throughout the world - and as it did, so they also began to integrate with the beastkin, elves, piskies, urka and vulperan races.

Humans would soon be accepted into the societies of other races, seeing the City of Zan'zoula, primarily occupied by beastkin, and the Crystal City of Vulpera, occupied by the vulperan species, become inhabited by humans that wished to settle there. Only the elves of the City of Faradome refused to allow humans to settle within their realm and this was due to the humans previously turning their backs upon the people of Faradome after they had learned all they could from them.



Humans are an extremely adaptable species and are capable of weathering most climates, and due to their large numbers have established cities in all of the continents of Neothera except the Frozen North, where until recently, humans were not permitted to occupy wight strongholds in the freezing wastes. From the arid deserts of Abral to the scorching volcanic peaks of the Morrdoun Mountains, the lush grasslands of the Southern Realms, to the humid and dangerous rainforests of the Na'tohram Gheneris, humankind has grown to become the most powerful and influential species in all of Neothera.

## RELIGION

Human ceremony and faith in both life and death vary massively depending on the realm of origin. Most humans believe that the ancient teachings of the elves ring true and that after death they will pass to the Ethereal Realm to be united with their ancestors and dearly departed loved ones, however, how this happens and the ceremony performed for the departed depends on beliefs and traditions through the worship of the various deities of Neothera.

The deities worshipped by a human are usually decided depending on their upbringing or the faiths followed by the realm they originated from or are currently allied with. Most realms of the Mainland worship the Seven, however, it is more common for those based in the Southern Realms to worship Osirah and Senetsu. The Western Realms follow their own belief systems that differ completely to those of the Mainland, Frozen North and Southern Realms. Whether a human chooses to stop following a deity and begin worshipping a new one is entirely up to them, and how one offers prayers to their chosen deity is also up to them to decide.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

Human characters are arguably the easiest to arrange a costume for as, unlike other races, no fixed makeup, prosthetics or masks are required:

- The colours and style of your costume, armour, weaponry and equipment should reflect that of the realm your character belongs to
- You may wish to use makeup and/or prosthetics if your character has an old battle scar, for example
- Your character could have tattoos or wear jewellery etc. that relate to their realm of origin, we suggest reading up on the realms of Neothera in this book to form ideas



# MURKLINGS

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

Murklings are strange, elusive, humanoid creatures that originate from the region of Goggy Manton in Mainland Neothera. They possess a natural ability to regenerate quickly from grievous wounds; a trait said to be passed down by their creator Goddess, Baowbouissa. This semi-aquatic species are not known for their hospitality to outsiders and generally keep themselves to themselves; however, visitors to their realm are welcome, yet rarely trusted. Murklings believe that they are the descendants of the Goddess, Sequilla and that before she left for the Ethereal Realm, she gave birth to a huge divine mammal, similar in appearance to a plesiosaur, that spawned the race of murklings in the uncharted depths of Loch Manton.

Murkling sightings have been observed as far back as the middle of the Second Age of Neothera by the elves, yet it has taken thousands of years for them to finally start interacting with other sentient species. They have never been a part of any wars that have taken place throughout the history of the Mainland and are generally peaceful people whose priority, until her death, was to tend to Baowbouissa, the divine water deity who lived in the depths of Loch Manton. Since Baowbouissa's death, the murklings have begun to venture away from Goggy Manton in search of answers as to why their creator in the loch passed on, or perhaps to learn more of the world now their daily duties of tending for Baowbouissa are no longer required.

### APPEARANCE

Murklings are similar in height and build to an average human, but sometimes with little or no hair on their bodies. Being semi-aquatic, if a murkling does have hair on its head, it is often wet, lank and greasy due to an ooze-like substance which secretes from their pores to keep their skin moist and often slippery. Their skin is smooth and pale-grey, or white and blotchy, and sometimes semi-translucent, with their lips and eye-sockets being deep shades of purple. Noticeable purple and blue veins trail over their skin and are most prominent around their lips, eye sockets, and ears. Murklings have small gills on either side of their neck to allow them to breathe underwater, yet these are only really noticeable when swimming.

### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

Murklings are an ancient species and live long lives should they have regular access to water where they may bathe, regenerate wounds or recover from ailments. They feed mostly upon the moss and waterborne plants that are abundant in Goggy Manton. A murkling will generally live to around 400 years old should they take care of themselves in this manner.





Not all murklings are capable of breeding, and sometimes generations can pass with no females bearing offspring, this would account for the fairly low population of the creatures in Goggy Manton. There are no recorded instances of murklings making their home in any other areas of the world before their creator Goddess Baowbouissa passed on, nor are they able to produce offspring with any other species apart from their own.

## HABITAT

Goggy Manton is situated at the southern part of the Crag-Spine Mountains in Mainland Neothera and is just north of the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest. Due to its location, it rains almost every day in Goggy Manton, and a thick green moss, known as Klan-ed grows over every structure in the murkling town. This moss is also a delicacy to the murklings. This region of Neothera is steeped in mystery and many tales are told of the strange creatures that inhabit this part of the world. There is one large town in Goggy Manton that sits on the east side of the massive Loch Manton; it is here that the murklings make their home. Goggy Manton is a region rich with natural resources and remains largely untouched by other humanoid species. It is thought that murklings never dare to venture too far from their home as warmer climates would dry out their skin and kill them, yet providing they have access to bodies of water to submerge themselves in murklings can survive in other climates.

## RELIGION

The worship of Sequilla is common by murklings, the water Goddess that gave birth to Baowbouissa, their creator that lived in the depths of Loch Manton. Murklings believe that Baowbouissa gave birth to the first broods of murklings, with future births occurring through natural reproduction between them. Baowbouissa is worshipped as a creator deity, and also as a provider. Every day is considered a holy day in murkling culture, where each resident tends to Loch Manton and its surrounding areas, the home of their Goddess, to ensure her survival, and indeed their own. Offerings of sheep, pigs and cows are left by the lochside so that Baowbouissa may feed upon them, and murklings perform cleansing rituals to ensure the waters are kept pure and clear.

Since the City of Blightfoot Ridge has become an industrial powerhouse, murklings have noted that cleansing rituals are needed more often, with pollution even clouding the waters of Loch Manton. It is believed that this is the reason Baowbouissa was found dead upon the lochside on 26th September in the year 2392 of the Fifth Age; and despite attempts made to heal the great beast, Baowbouissa was pronounced dead, leading to years of mourning at the loss of their creator Goddess.

This date has since become a day of mourning, where all work stops in the town and murklings gather at the lochside from dawn until sunset, offering prayers and thanks for the life that Baowbouissa bestowed upon them. Some murklings do not believe it was the pollution alone that caused Baowbouissa's death and that there is a more sinister reason for her demise leading to expedition groups of murklings venturing forth into the outside realms of Neothera looking for answers.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

When putting together a costume to play a murkling, focus should be paid in particular to the skin and hair:

- If a murkling has hair on its head, it is often wet, lank and greasy due to a natural ooze which secretes from their pores to keep their skin moist and often slippery
- Skin is usually smooth and pale-grey or white and blotchy. Sometimes semi-translucent
- Their lips and eye-sockets are deep shades of purple or red, and noticeable red, purple and blue veins trail over their skin and around their ears
- Murklings favour long robes made from thick cloth and these are usually black, brown, grey, green or tan
- If the murkling belongs to a specific realm, the theme, colours and style of clothing or armour can relate to that of the chosen realm
- Murklings can use any type of weapon or armour if it is relevant to the style of the realm they originate from





# MUTANTS

## (RACE NOT PLAYABLE)

Mutants are not a natural species to Neothera and are considered abominations by nearly every race that has encountered them or heard of their existence. The majority of mutations that occur to the various species of Neothera are achieved through foul magic or science, where the most notable instance of mutants being created was sometime in the year 2390 by Dr. Hensel Schnidenhelm. This scientist became employed by the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf and used his skills to create serums that were injected into willing or unwilling victims, forcing drastic and bizarre changes to their bodies with the aim of creating super soldiers that would bolster the ranks of the army of the Red Wolf.

Gene splicing was usually involved in Schnidenhelm's works, often seeing the DNA of animals mixed with powerful magic and alchemical and concoctions to promote the rapid growth of muscles, and the enhancement of the senses. Experiments such as these are frowned upon by the inhabitants of many realms of Neothera, usually, because it is believed to defy the will of the gods and of nature itself, and often because most test subjects are unwilling, usually prisoners of war, or victims of kidnappings. Mutant is used as a broad term for any species that has generally been experimented on in this way or subject to DNA altering serums in one form or another; however, one species that is not the result of experimentation, yet still classed as a mutant due to the regular changes that occur to their physical form is revenants, the creature a beastkin turns into upon resurrecting as a wight.

### APPEARANCE

Mutants are usually humanoid, and it is said that the human body reacts best to most serums used to alter DNA. Other species such as elves, piskies and goblins, to name but a few, are considered harder to mutate, and some believe that this is because they possess some sort of natural or magical resistance. The physical appearance of mutants can vary immensely - but most often it results in the subject changing into a disgusting and horrific amalgamation of bloated muscle, claws, boils, festering flesh and often greatly enlarged body parts.

Mutants are terrifying creatures to behold, striking fear into the hearts of those they encounter. They are rarely able to communicate verbally save for grunts or blood-curdling roars, on the rare occasion a mutant has been able to voice its thoughts, it has simply been a request to end their life, proving that mutants undergo terrible suffering both during and after their transformation.

It was documented in research recovered by the L'Enarousse after the fall of the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf that Dr. Schnidenhelm would bribe his test subjects with strong sedatives to ease the interminable pain they were subject to, only allowing them access to the drugs should they follow his orders which usually involved taking part in battles alongside the soldiers of the Red Wolf. That said, Schnidenhelm had access to many willing test subjects who were said to have enjoyed the transformation - these people were usually criminally insane.

### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

Mutants are a fairly new phenomenon in Neothera, with their creation only occurring a few years ago - therefore it is not known how long a mutated humanoid will live for. According to the journal notes acquired from Dr. Schnidenhelm's laboratory, most of his test subjects rarely lived longer than three years, but the notes were inconclusive, with certain individuals escaping or dying in battle before full testing could be completed. It was noted that the changes the body undergoes during the mutation process does indeed take its toll, and will result in the lifespan of a mutated individual being reduced on account of their DNA being so unstable. Schnidenhelm did not report any successful instances of mutants being able to breed, despite attempts being made and documented. However, DNA from mutants was spliced with other non-mutant test subjects, and transformations did occur, usually resulting in more unstable mutations than the original test subject had undergone.





## HABITAT

Nearly all of Dr. Schnidenhelm's experiments took place in his laboratory in the Citadel of the Red Wolf located in the Redveil Mountains, in the far north of the Mainland. The harsh climate of this region, with frequent rain and thunderstorms, often freezing conditions and little in the way of plant life seemed to suit his creations, and much of his success is attributed to mutations occurring more-easily due to a colder climate. That said, mutants that have been encountered outside of the mountains do not seem affected by any change in climate, but some have noted that certain mutations cause a mutant's body to begin to rot, and warmer climates would cause this process to speed up a great deal resulting in a shorter life-span for the mutant.

## RELIGION

What is a religion to an abomination? Is all hope lost when a humanoid is forced into becoming a freak of nature? Do the victims of genetic experiments pray for an end to the torment forced upon them by a twisted genius? There is one account of a victim of forced mutation that saw him fight under Dr. Schnidenhelm's orders if it would mean he was slain in battle, ending his torment once and for all. When the man-turned-mutant was about to die, he spoke, thanking those that had defeated him for releasing him from his torture, that the gods would welcome him into the Ethereal Realm, his body now free from the agony he had endured.





# PISKIES

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

Elven legend tells of the arrival of the piskies at a time when the demonic Nightmares almost destroyed the race of elves and plunged Neothera into darkness at the end of the Second Age. It is not entirely clear how the piskies came into existence; however, their appearance from the Redemption Woods behind Faradome City led the elves to assume they were born from the ancient Listerium trees, which were only found in this part of the world before the Burning of the Mainland in the Fifth Age. During the war against the Nightmares, the few elves that survived the conflict were cornered in Faradome city. When all hope seemed lost, hordes of piskies emerged to fight alongside the elves, turning the tide against the army of demons and pushing them back to the centre of Neothera, where they were sent back into the rifts from whence they came.

The Elves of Faradome are unsure as to why the piskies appeared to assist them that day. Some say the trees came to life, others say the piskies were sent by the gods, and some assume the piskies were there all along but shrouded themselves with magic until they wanted to be seen. The piskies themselves have no knowledge of their origins except that they came from the trees, and some piskies even state that the world itself materialised around them. After the war against the demons was won, many of the piskies would return to their home in the forests behind Faradome, some decided to integrate themselves with the elves, yet most wanted to explore Neothera and set off in search of adventure.

### APPEARANCE

Piskies are humanoid creatures which are most recognisable by their small ears that have pointed tips, and by their wings that grow between their shoulder blades and are present from birth. The wings of a piskie are similar to that of a dragonfly, butterfly or moth. If a piskie adopts an affinity with an element it is common for their wings to change colour to resemble this, for instance, a piskie that develops a love for the Fire Element is likely to notice its wings alter to a red hue, or deep blue if they prefer the Water Element, for example. Those who choose more than one element often have multi-coloured wings.

Most piskies are physically fragile due to their delicate bone structure, yet as a natural countermeasure, they possess the ability to fly short distances to escape danger. For many piskies, mastering this skill takes effort and concentration, two traits that younger piskies often lack, therefore it is not uncommon for a piskie to learn to fly later in life despite being born with wings.

Upon developing an affinity to a particular element, some piskies' hair colour changes to match that of their wings, and whilst this is not considered rare, this change is only cosmetic and bears little semblance to a piskies potential in combat or otherwise. Exactly why a piskie adopts an affinity to an element remains unclear - but the most common theory is that the species was created by the Seven to assist the elves during the Demon War, and as a result, they can tap directly into the power of the gods themselves.



### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

Piskies are only capable of breeding with their kind and no recorded instances of cross-breeding have ever been noted in the world. Piskies reach maturity around fifty years after birth and live to approximately six hundred years of age.





Piskies physically mature similarly to humans, however, they remain very agile until the day they die. It is possible to tell older piskies apart from the younger of their kin by checking their wing condition, for the wings of more mature piskies become darker in colour, gnarled and weathered as they grow older. The wings of a young piskie after birth, and until they reach maturity, are shades of orange and brown and if a piskie devotes itself to a particular element, their wing colour will alter to match it.

Piskies have always been fascinated with other species, especially humans, watching them from afar, laughing and often mocking them whilst out of sight. Piskies thrive on playing jokes upon others, and their tricks have propelled the species into infamy due to the dangerous nature of their antics, which have often resulted in the unintentional death of their chosen victim. If it weren't for the ability of some ancient elves that had survived from the Second Age to be able to utilise mind-controlling spells over the creatures to keep them in check, the species would likely have been hunted to extinction by angry humans in the Third Age.

Not a day goes by when a piskie does not play a prank on someone, and in groups of piskies, a hierarchy is formed around the cleverest pranksters. Piskies do not normally set out to kill the target of a prank; however, younger piskies often fail to judge the outcome of the "joke" they are about to perform, which can often result in the death of their victim.

## HABITAT

When the piskies arrived during the Demon War of the Second Age, they appeared from the ancient woods behind the City of Faradome in the east of Mainland Neothera. Many piskies prefer to make their homes in forests and woodland areas, but it is also common for piskies to integrate themselves into the societies of the various cities and towns of other realms. Although they are tolerated by other species, piskies that live amongst them are generally more well behaved than those that live with their kind due to the fact their love of pranking others can often see them arrested or banished from a town or city.

Despite their delicate bone structures, piskies are very resilient creatures that can survive in a variety of different environments; however, the majority of their species is found in Mainland Neothera.

Upon reaching maturity, a piskie will usually develop a natural affinity for a particular element, an element that they use to empower their magic and to defend themselves with. It is said that the more a piskie uses magic derived from a particular element, the greater their attachment becomes to it. It has also been recognised that climate can play a part in a piskie's Elemental Affinity, for example, piskies that originate or settle in colder climates may develop an affinity to the Ice Element, whereas piskies that dwell in the forests are likely to gain an affinity for the Nature Element.





## RELIGION

Nearly all piskies find death a curious phenomenon and grieve only for a very short time when a friend or a family member dies. It is a common practice to hang the corpse of a recently deceased piskie in a tree in dedication to their origins of creation where the species appeared from the woods behind the City of Faradome in the Second Age of Neothera. This practice also allows a piskie's body to be reclaimed by nature, either becoming food for animals or for its remains to be absorbed back into the ground, continuing the cycle of life.

Whilst a piskie accepts the loss of a loved one quickly; it would continue to return to the hanging corpse, drawn by some morbid fascination until only the bones remain. piskies are intrigued by decomposition and poke and prod the corpse whilst it hangs rotting from a branch, often laughing, talking to it and even playing pranks on the carcasses as if their departed friend or family member were still alive. When only the bones remain, a piskie will often fashion an arm, leg or rib bone into a weapon or ornament to remind them of the departed.

Where the soul of a piskie goes after death is dependent on the belief system of the realm a piskie belongs to; however, nearly all wild piskies believe that there is nothing after death and that a dead body simply rots and is reclaimed by nature.

This could also account for the jovial nature of the species, for without fearing what lies beyond the veil of death, they live each day to its fullest.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

The main focus of costume for a piskie character should be the wings, ear-tips and sometimes hair colour:

- All piskies have pointed ear-tips, similar to that of elves
- All piskies are born with a set of wings which grow between their shoulder blades and resemble that of a dragonfly, butterfly or moth
- A piskie's wing colour should match the element they have an affinity with, for example, fire is red and water is blue
- A piskie's hair colour can sometimes match their wing colour
- The colours and style of your costume, armour, weaponry and equipment should reflect that of the realm your character belongs to





# SPIRITS (GHOSTS)

## (RACE NOT PLAYABLE)

Sometimes the souls of the dead do not rest easy, nor do they pass on to the Ethereal Realm or any other plane of existence when the body dies. Instead, they roam the physical plane of Neothera appearing as orbs of light before they manifest in a semi-physical form, often bearing a resemblance to how they looked in life. Sprits, or ghosts, are a supernatural phenomenon that has roots in many different cultures, where sightings of people that have died appear in a spectral form or attempt to communicate from beyond the grave in some manner.

It is widely-accepted that ghosts exist in the world, especially in Mainland communities, yet what is not known, is why they exist. It is a common belief that when a person dies their soul transcends to the realm of the gods, the Ethereal Realm, where they live forever amongst the creators in a place of nirvana where their every desire is fulfilled. With such promise beyond the veil of death, what would drive a soul to stay in the physical plane?

Some believe that a lingering spirit has unfinished business, perhaps a task they failed to complete in life, and if this business can be settled, the spirit will finally pass on. Another belief is that a spirit has a connection to a living person, perhaps a loved one, and wishes to watch over them, or will not pass until they are both united in death. Perhaps before their death, a person felt connected to a location, such as a place they held fond memories of in life and wished to remain there. Some spirits are vengeful and may not rest until their murderer is caught, or a person that wronged them somehow in life is brought to justice. In these instances, the spirits are often capable of interaction with the physical plane such as throwing objects or even manifesting to the extent that they can harm a living person through physical or magical violence. Such spirits are known as poltergeists.

Sometimes magic may drive spirits, revealing them to the naked eye and even prompting them to attack the living or haunt them unsettlingly. Magic may stop a spirit passing on, or even prevent them realising that they are indeed dead. It is believed that restless spirits wander invisibly amongst the living most of the time, yet they only make their presence known should they truly want to, are provoked into doing so or are forced to via magic. Some people are capable of sensing, seeing and communicating with the dead, a talent that one is usually born with.

### APPEARANCE

Shortly before a spirit is about to manifest they often take the form of a fist-sized ball of light that hovers above the ground, drifting slowly and eerily from place to place, research into this phenomenon leads to believe that this is the spirit drawing energy from its surroundings. Once enough energy has been absorbed, the spirit is then able to take a more humanoid form, and this usually resembles how they looked in life, quite often how they physically appeared when they died. Some apparitions appear terrifyingly ghastly; with the spirit looking contorted and frightening, this usually occurs if the person suffered a horrific death, such as a mortal wound on the battlefield, having been murdered, and sometimes if the spirit was an evil person in life.





Spirits often glow and shimmer when spotted during the night, which could be attributed to the energy they absorb in order to manifest. Most ghost sightings are recorded as having taken place in the dark, and this is because spirits are far easier to spot, due to their fluorescence. During the day they can appear much more solid, and can sometimes be mistaken for a living being going about their daily business. Certain manifestations allow the spirit to take a semi-physical form, where they are even able to interact with solid objects or living beings around them.

## LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

It is common knowledge that a spirit cannot breed; ghosts can't bear offspring. However, if a parent and child died at the same time, or spirits that were connected closely in life died together, sightings, including interactions between the spirits, can occur if they do not move on to the afterlife. It is not known how long a spirit will remain in the physical plane before passing on, yet some stories state that there are Second Age Elves who have remained in Neothera as spirits. If this is true, then that would mean spirits can haunt locations for many thousands of years, or perhaps indefinitely.

It is said to be possible to force a spirit on to the next plane of existence via the use of magic, in particular exorcisms or rituals that break the bonds the spirit has in the physical plane. However, caution should be taken, for if these are not performed correctly it can empower the spirit, anger it, draw more spirits to the location or even open a rift between different planes of existence!

## HABITAT

There does not appear to be any specific locations or environmental conditions that cause spirits to haunt an area. The more one researches the topic, the more evidence they will find to suggest a haunting is related to the business that the spirit had in life. Forests, mountains, at sea, in lakes, in deep caverns - from lowly farmhouses to great castles, spirits are not choosy, and sightings of ghosts have occurred at all of these locations, and many more.

## RELIGION

Do spirits still worship the deities they prayed to in life? This is a question asked by many, yet the answer is unclear. However, it should be noted that ghosts of devout priests or worshippers of the gods and goddesses have been seen by the living, haunting locations after their deaths. This only raises more questions, if a worshipper of the Seven, for example, has not moved on to the Ethereal Realm, and remains in Neothera as a spirit, why have they not been welcomed into the Halls of the Gods?

Much controversy surrounds this topic, for if the gods hold a place for all of their worshippers in the realms of the afterlife, what causes these spirits to linger, perhaps there is no nirvana as the scriptures led the inhabitants of Neothera to believe? This aside, some that bear witness to spirits often see this as a sign that the gods are still watching over Neothera, that they have sent a visitation to instil hope and perhaps some sort of comfort.





# SPRYTES

## (RACE NOT PLAYABLE)

Those that wander off the beaten track, wherever in the world they may be, are likely to fall victim to the mischievous, yet sometimes deadly antics of sprytes. These tiny, winged creatures are found in most regions of the world and are often considered pests due to the destruction they can cause when gathered in large numbers. It is said that for every human being in the world, there are thirty sprytes, and they reproduce so quickly that even mass cullings of the creatures are often ineffective.

While sprytes are considered vermin by most Neotherans, to some they are a vital part of the ecosystem they inhabit, acting as food for other creatures, assisting in the pollination of plant life or keeping populations of more deadly insects and small animals low as these become part of a spryte's diet. One or two sprytes on their own should not bother your average adventurer on their travels, but when encountered in large numbers, their presence can often prove deadly. These creatures are capable of nibbling through flesh, and even using magic that confuses their target to the extent that they receive hallucinations, fall unconscious and are then consumed by the sprytes. The power of these pesky critters should not be taken lightly, for even the hardest of heroes could succumb to them should they gather in big enough swarms.

### APPEARANCE

Sprytes are tiny humanoid creatures with delicate wings that resemble that of a dragonfly or bat, they are completely hairless, and the tips of their ears are small and pointed. No more than six inches tall when standing upright, sprytes have tiny sharp fangs and needle-like claws that are rarely dull, yet their bones are hollow and weak, meaning that they can easily be swatted and killed by the swing of one's hand. That said, they are incredibly nimble and have lightning reflexes, meaning that your average humanoid would have a hard job even seeing a spryte, let alone slaying one. Sprytes are often named according to where they are found, for example, a spryte that lives in a lake would be known as a Water Spryte, or if it lived in woodland, it would be known as a Forest Spryte. Similarly, the colour of a spryte will often match its surroundings, a trait that is believed to be a natural form of camouflage. Sprytes do not wear clothing or use weapons of any kind, yet it is said they do use makeshift tools to fashion nests to sleep in and raise their young.

### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

The majority of sprytes live fairly short lives, anywhere between two to three years, and the females may lay large clutches of eggs twice a year, with roughly seventy percent of their hatchlings reaching adulthood. Baby sprytes (known as "Sprytlings") are capable of flight after just three days of being born and are just as agile as adults, meaning they rarely fall prey to animals that would hunt them and leading to them surviving in good numbers until adulthood.

A spryte breeding ground can be spotted by spherical nests with a small circular opening that hangs from tree branches. They are constructed from twigs, leaves and moss. They hang raised from the ground so that predators cannot raid the nests and consume the eggs or the sprytlings. Their circular eggs are usually around five centimetres wide and covered in a slimy substance that makes them hard to be handled by any would-be predators that do manage to reach their nests. It is believed that sprytes are part of the piskie family, for their physical makeup and personality traits are very similar in that both species adopt an affinity for a certain element. Their bone structure is almost identical, as are their wings, ears and general love of mischief and pranks. However, a piskie would never agree with this statement and would bear a strong disliking to their miniature counterparts!





## HABITAT

Many inhabitants of Neothera consider srytes more of a pest than the likes of rats, gulls or cockroaches, and being a highly adaptable species, they are capable of thriving in almost any location you could imagine due to their natural ability to evolve to suit their surroundings. In fact, many species such as rats, gulls or cockroaches are often hunted by srytes, seeing them work together to bring down bigger prey to feast upon it in large numbers. For these reasons alone, srytes are an extremely-common species to encounter wherever you go in the world.

These critters are well known for living amongst other larger humanoid in their villages, towns and cities; and quite often are responsible for devouring food stores, which leads to mass cullings by the angry people that are left hungry or out of pocket. Srytes possess the ability to change their physical form somewhat when occupying a location, for instance, srytes that dwell in dark caverns often develop bulbous eyes to allow them to see in the dark, or furry hides if they live in snowy areas.

There is an old saying in Neothera that states wherever you are in the world; you are probably never more than ten feet away from a sryte!

## RELIGION

It is unknown if srytes worship any kind of deities, largely because communication with the species has never been successful. Those that have observed these creatures in their natural habitats state that they have never seen any signs of worship, such as rituals, idols or shrines created by them.

One clear-thing is that at the head of most groups of srytes is a leader of sorts, quite often a larger sryte, known as a "Mirad", that seems to be able to coordinate a group through guttural communication, and sometimes brute force. Food is often brought to the leader by other srytes, and this creature will have the pick of mates from which to breed.





# UNDEAD

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

Undead species are common throughout the continents of Neothera, and anyone who pays any attention to current affairs in the realms will be aware of their existence. However, it wasn't always like this, and undead entities were once only spoken of in whispered tales as a species whose existence was most likely the fabricated work of overactive or superstitious minds. Tales of the dead rising from the grave to haunt or attack the living are common in many cultures and can be dated back as far as the Second Age, where some ancient elven scriptures noted the existence of ghosts, spirits of the dead that refused or were unable to move on to the Ethereal Realm.

If the accounts of eerie spectral entities were not enough to scare the wits out of the living, since the middle of the Third Age, fear-inducing tales of reanimated corpses stalking the lands struck terror in the hearts of those that heard them. Throughout the ages, these tales were considered little more than folklore designed perhaps to keep children straying too far from the safety of their homes at night or spread about a specific location to stop unwanted visitors frequenting the area. However, it seems there was truth in these tales, for in the Fifth Age, the wights of the Frozen North revealed themselves to the people of the Mainland, and the news of the living dead spread like wildfire throughout the world.

It is difficult to explain, but easy to theorise why spirits (ghosts) exist in the physical plain. However, the origins of reanimated corpses, the undead who wander amongst the living in physical form, some sentient, others seemingly mindless, can be explained, on the surface relatively easy. The infection or Plague of Undeath as it is more commonly known is believed to have originated in Terminarium, or Lyshanduir as it was previously named by the faeries that once called it home. The Fey planet became corrupted by demonic influences, and the infection was used by the Nightmares to suck the light from the fey, extinguishing peace and purity from their world and causing infected faeries to die and resurrect as vampyres.

According to accounts written by the wights of the Frozen North, the vampyres tore open rifts in Terminarium that led to Neothera, and the Plague of Undeath began to spread slowly amongst the living humanoids of the world. The Nightmares abandoned Neothera in the Fifth Age, and have left Terminarium to the devices of the undead that now inhabit it, the plague has been deeply rooted in both worlds, and it is theorised by many great minds that the infection is the most deadly weapon the demonic Nightmares brought into existence.

A weapon that outlived their physical presence in Neothera and Terminarium, the Nightmares' curse resulted in a plague that saw the teachings of the gods questioned by those that witnessed the rotting bodies of the dead brought back to life, their spirits supposedly trapped within decaying husks, unable to move on to the Ethereal Realm, to rest amongst the spirits of their ancestors.

## THE INFECTION

### (PLAGUE OF UNDEATH)

The existence of undead beings and the infection which causes the condition is something that the people of Neothera have learned about following the distribution of information by various government bodies and of course, word of mouth. Most living beings should be prepared to accept that if they become infected while alive, they will rise again as an undead creature after death.

The infection itself appears to be derived from deep, ancient magic and mysterious organic substances not native to Terminarium or Neothera. It has proved extremely hard to research, with many great minds unable to decipher exactly how it affects the body and causes it to reanimate following death. Some tests have shown that traces of the infection or at least the magical component can be found in almost every cell of an undead creature, and whilst the heart stops pumping, and blood congeals within veins, it is this magic that continues to drive an undead body.

Living beings are usually infected via the direct transmission of bodily fluids, be that from a bite, scratch or cut that draws blood, or extreme exposure to molecules of the virus that can make its way into the bloodstream somehow. Ingesting blood or liquids infected with the Plague of Undeath results in stomach acids quickly breaking apart the infected particles, meaning it is not possible to become infected by consuming food or drink exposed to the blight.

The most direct form of infection, as noted by the faeries in Terminarium is a bite, which vampyres usually make to main arteries that supply the rest of the body with blood. It is considered the quickest and most effective way to infect a victim, where the infection, introduced by saliva to the bloodstream, causes the Plague of Undeath to take hold extremely quickly.



There have been accounts where a victim has been bitten or cut on an extremity by an undead creature, only for it to be dismembered within minutes. The infection seemed unable to spread throughout the body, and therefore the victim did not resurrect following their death. According to scholars who have researched the infection, it seems that if the brain of a living humanoid does not absorb infected blood cells, the body has every chance of fighting it off, and they will not resurrect as an undead creature if the infection did not pass through the carotid arteries to the brain. It is for this reason that a sharp object is often inserted into the cranium of an infected person directly after death to ensure they do not rise again as an undead creature.



## THE ELIXIR OF REBIRTH

It is important to note that not all living humanoids remain sentient following their resurrection as a member of the undead. Whilst an infected faerie will always retain sentience when becoming a vampyre, perhaps on account of the uniqueness of their DNA, and can live relatively normal lives in their undead-state, other species are not as lucky.

It is understood that according to numerous eye witness accounts, murklings, gnomes, goblins, urka and the divine seem to be immune to the Plague of Undeath and are incapable of resurrecting as undead creatures if they become infected and then die.

However, after becoming infected, and upon resurrection, beastkin, elves, humans, piskies and vulperans lose their memories and most bodily functions. They are unable to communicate or control their decomposing bodies as they would have done whilst alive, and in fact, they are driven only by an insatiable hunger to feast upon the flesh of living things to sustain their rotting husks. Living humanoids that take this form in undeath are known as the Mindless Dead.

It is possible for the aforementioned races if infected when alive, to retain sentience and control of their bodies if they consume a concoction that was created by vampyres with noble intentions with the assistance of the ancient elves of Faradome. Known simply as the Elixir of Rebirth, this tonic prevents the living infected from rising as the mindless undead after death. To wights, this tonic is considered especially important considering all undead are incapable of producing offspring with living or undead members of the opposite sex.

Alongside raw materials that can be harvested from the various continents of Neothera, the Elixir of Rebirth requires a key ingredient only known to grow within the walls of the Amicita City of Faradome - the Ilyami flower, famous for it's healing properties and cultivated in the Second Age by Zanthen, a famous elven herbalist. The Elder Council of Faradome agreed to supply the Vampyres of Nald with Ilyami flowers until sometime in the Fourth Age, and following the abrupt end to the supplies of the flowers, sacred to the Amicita, the undead of the Frozen North used their remaining supplies of the Elixir of Rebirth carefully.

Those that were infected and alive were sought out and offered a chance to become sentient following their resurrection as an undead being, and many of those that declined were slain by the hunters of the realm of Karthsworn in the Frozen North to prevent the numbers of mindless undead growing. Currently, it appears that the Elixir of Rebirth is only being offered to potential living candidates that the Frozen North believe will join their cause, bolstering the ranks of the sentient undead, however, the numbers of mindless undead are beginning to increase due to a lack of the elixir, and the duties of the hunters of Karthsworn being stretched to their limits. The infected which are lucky enough to be offered the Elixir of Rebirth before death will eventually perish, and as they do, they will become a species known throughout the worlds as wights.



## THE UNDEAD CONDITION

There are currently four types of undead species in existence, and these are as follows: Spirits, also known as ghosts (which you can read more about from *page 48* onward). The mindless undead, the empowered undead and wights. Before we move on to look at each undead species in more detail, we should first cover the undead condition, a series of observations that relate to the physical and mental well-being of undead beings, aside from spirits. From death to rebirth, the reanimation process can take little more than a few seconds to a few days. There does not seem to be a standard length of time the process takes, and it varies on an individual basis. The mindless and empowered undead seem to recall nothing of their former lives after their resurrection, and there have been numerous accounts of the deceased rising from the grave, immediately attacking and consuming their friends and family members. Wights, however, are capable of retaining, or recalling in later years, the memories of who they were in their former lives, although memory-loss upon resurrection is very common for new wights.

All undead are immortal, meaning they do not die from old age and can live indefinitely, providing they procure sustenance and are not slain with weapons or magic. Although the reanimated corpses of undead beings can continue to live without ageing, they still require nourishment to survive, as does any other living creature. This can be observed quite literally when monitoring the actions of the mindless undead, where they appear to live purely to consume the flesh and blood of the living which contains mineral-rich sustenance that they crave, perhaps also to ensure their undead bodies continue to function to enable them to spread the infection to living beings. It is theorised that providing the brain of an undead-being remains intact they can continue to survive until the organ ceases to function. In the eyes of more seasoned researchers, this only enforces the fact that magic empowers the brain and any other organic matter pertinent to the host that was once connected to it.

Most sentient undead beings seem to be able to consume food and drink at a more relaxed pace, perhaps even for pleasure because they are still able to taste and smell, however, the brain always requires sustenance to survive. The body may continue to rot in undeath - but with careful consumption of nutrients, it seems brain function allows the body to fend off decomposition, as does cold weather which prevents the natural decay of the physical form. Wights specifically can survive without nutrition for almost a week, any longer and they begin to feel the effects of the natural decay of the body resulting in a loss of bodily functions, bouts of intense depression and suicidal thoughts, and eventual muscle-loss and the slow decomposition of the body.



Other undead species (aside from spirits) seem to be able to function for months, or perhaps years longer. When it comes to mind-altering substances such as alcohol, drugs or toxins, the undead has a higher tolerance than the living; however, the brain responds in the same way it would when subject to any hostile or narcotic substances. The body of an undead being can succumb to poisons if they are exposed to a large amount, although the undead can often shirk off diseases as if they were water upon a duck's back.

The mental well-being of an undead individual, in particular wights, usually depends upon the amount of sustenance they receive. Wights that have not ingested food or drink for some time become incredibly hostile and depressed, and this can lead to them taking their own lives, losing all reason or succumbing to madness. Whilst too much iron in the bloodstream can result in medical complications in the living, to the undead, an iron-rich diet can result in peaked-performance, and it is thought that this is why many undead species crave blood to stay alert and to feed their brains a substance that empowers and even promotes the growth of the singular muscle that keeps them alive. Similar to vulperans, the undead have an extremely high pain threshold, and it is not uncommon for them to suffer a grievous wound only to shrug it off and continue fighting. Whilst they rarely lose blood due to it congealing in their veins, losing an extremity is sometimes a shock to a sentient undead creature, especially those that are relatively new to being a wight. Reattaching a limb or extremity through surgery or magical intervention usually always results in the limb being fully-functional.



The undead do not require sleep of any kind, and a magically-induced sleep is the closest they ever come to slumber in the state of undeath. Even a magically-induced sleep does nothing for the undead aside from rendering them unconscious for a short amount of time, and it is reported by wights that this is the only time they are ever able to dream as the living would. Whilst the neurons that allow the living to fall into a pleasant slumber do not activate in the brains of the undead, they are still capable of shutting down their minds to fall into a relaxed state.

The undead can control this state of consciousness, and the effects produced allows them to remain in a state of hibernation until they choose to end it. This is particularly useful if sustenance is bare, and the state of sleep they enter allows the brain to remain dormant until a living victim is near that can be feasted on. Some undead recall situations where they have entered this state of hibernation to appear as a corpse on account of their hearts perpetually un-beating, only to shock the living when they choose to open their eyes and claim their prey as a meal.

## UNDEAD: THE MINDLESS (PLAYABLE - SPECIAL\*)

The mindless undead are the most commonly encountered species on account of how easy it is to spread the infection in living beings. Only the beastkin, elves, humans, piskies and vulperans will resurrect as the mindless undead if they are infected and did not consume the Elixir of Rebirth before death - although due to their sheer numbers in Neothera, humans are most likely to become infected. If encountered individually or in small numbers, the mindless undead do not usually pose a threat because they can be slain quickly.

They move slowly and shamle towards their prey, or crawl or drag themselves across the ground should their legs be damaged or lost through decomposition. It is usually possible to outrun the mindless undead. Often producing a raspy gurgling-sound or deep and eerie groans as they wander an area, it is possible to detect their presence if one listens carefully. The mindless undead hunt mostly using their sense of smell, and it is believed that the scent of the living is irresistible to them.

Unless they have lost their eyes, they are capable of limited vision and will pursue their prey if seen, especially if they are moving. These creatures are relatively easy to slay, and they are mostly incapable of using weapons or tools of any kind, at least with any skill. However, should they get close to their prey they will slash, bite and pull their victims to the ground where they will immediately begin feasting on their flesh.

The mindless undead are at their most dangerous in large numbers, and they usually form a herd which can be very difficult to outmanoeuvre or cull. These creatures never rest and wander the lands hunting the living for food both day and night. In areas where the mindless undead roam, it is advisable to sleep with one eye open lest they sniff you out and you become their next meal.

*\* Note: It is not possible (as a player) to create a playable, mindless undead character. Should your player character become afflicted with a call of INFECTION whilst alive, is a human, elf, beastkin, piskie or vulperan, has not consumed the Elixir of Rebirth (or been cured in some way), and dies during an event, you will become a mindless undead creature. See the rules regarding INFECTION on page 17 of the Core Rules, and immediately consult a referee if you are an infected player and die in-game (according to the requirements above) or have any other questions regarding the infection. The mindless undead are given unique instructions in regards to game rules, mechanics and role-play. As a player, you are not required to assemble a costume if you become part of the mindless undead. The game staff will always provide you with a costume if it is required. The costumes requirements of the mindless undead vary, but will usually follow the guidelines set out for the WIGHT races in the pages that follow.*





## UNDEAD: THE EMPOWERED (PLAYABLE - SPECIAL\*)

The empowered undead have become an ever-increasing sight following the recent Burning of the Mainland and are steadily emerging from the scorched and tainted lands, heading towards the villages, towns and cities of Mainland Neothera where they are viciously attacking the living, and even wights frequently. The empowered undead are thought to be a by-product of magical radiation that tainted the burned the Mainland following the destruction caused by the demonic Nightmares and the goblins. Eyewitnesses have reported that any mindless undead that wandered too close to radiated zones seemed to absorb whatever strange magic was present there, magical radiation that is deadly to the living and corrupts the land. This radiation has empowered them, allowing them to become stronger and faster, capable of wielding tools and weapons, even communicating between themselves somehow, allowing them to fight tactically alongside each other.

The worrying part of this is that any of the infected living that perished in the Burning of the Mainland and did not consume the Elixir of Rebirth, rose initially as mindless undead, and became empowered as the taint corrupted the land.



Their numbers are unknown; however, due to the massive losses suffered, it is assumed many thousands of empowered undead now roam the scorched wastelands. Although these creatures can be slain, they fight relentlessly and with such aggression that they are capable of slaying the most seasoned fighters.

The empowered undead feast on the living when it appears their job is done, and unlike the gluttonous, mindless undead who continue to consume until nothing but bones are left these creatures eat only what they need to ensure the rot does not set in. Moving swiftly and with purpose to fulfil whatever objective they follow, the empowered undead have been likened to wights, however, they have never been observed communicating vocally, show no mercy, and would fight until every limb has been hacked from their bodies and their brains destroyed.

Although the empowered undead are spoken of in most realms following their appearance after the Burning of the Mainland, their presence has also been noted before the Nightmares and goblins destroyed most of the continent. In fact, there are reports of the empowered undead being encountered as far back as the Third Age, where it has been discovered that demons or powerful sorcerers, known as necromancers, have been able to control the actions of the mindless undead. Those that have studied necromantic magic say it is a disgusting and evil force derived by the Nightmares that no living being should attempt to wield, for each time its power is used a portion of the soul is given to the Nightmare Lords

*\* Note: It is not possible (as a player) to create a playable, empowered undead character. Should your player character become a member of the mindless undead during an event, there is a chance that according to the plot currently running, you will be given specific instructions by a referee that you have become a member of the empowered undead. Should this occur, a referee will immediately inform you, and further unique instructions will be provided in-game. The empowered undead are given unique instructions in regards to game rules, mechanics and role-play. As a player, you are not required to assemble a costume if you become part of the empowered undead. However, in the rare event that your empowered undead character survives a game, and you are planning to return as the same character in a future one, the game staff will provide you with a costume, or you can assemble your own. If you would like to provide your own costume you should follow the guidelines of the WIGHT races in the pages that follow.*



## UNDEAD (WIGHTS): DARK ELVES (PLAYABLE RACE)

Upon reanimating as a wight after death, an elf that has consumed the Elixir of Rebirth after becoming infected becomes a dark elf when they die. This subspecies of the undead race has occupied the Frozen North since the Third Age. It was thanks to the Vampire Council of Nald that elves who became infected and rose from the grave as dark elves were given sanctuary away from their living, elven kin who refused to allow the undead to occupy the Amicita City of Faradome. It is common for living elves to be born with an affinity to a specific element due to pure bloodlines that date back to the Second Age, and elves that possess powers derived of air, earth, fire, ice, lightning, nature or water are often born with their skin and hair wholly or partially coloured to match the dominant hue of the element they are akin to, and able to wield with precision and grace.

In undeath, dark elves lose the affinity to the element they were once tied to from birth, and their skin changes so that the colours that once proudly displayed their Elemental Affinity fade away completely. This process occurs shortly after a living elf reanimates as a wight. Many dark elves see this loss of affinity for an element to be a sign that the Seven have scorned and abandoned them as they begin their new unlife, that they are abominations not worthy of being gifted with the raw power of the gods and goddesses. However, there is also a common belief that the Seven have relieved them from their duties as guardians of a specific element, and that a dark elf is now free to wield any element as they please, not simply one they were assigned to from birth without choice.

Dark elves excel at hunting other undead creatures, especially the mindless and empowered, and they are capable of swiftly incapacitating them before delivering a killing blow. They are also skilled in determining if other undead creatures are being deceitful and can easily detect the truth from a lie. These skills, unique to the race of dark elves, can be harnessed only in their unlife through careful practise, and are thought to be an extension of the Seven's power bestowed upon them so that they may continue to protect Neothera from corruption even after death. After all, the elves believe they were created by the Seven to be caretakers of the lands, and even in undeath, they strive to rid the lands of the presence of the corrupted undead.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

Particular attention should be paid to the following costume requirements when creating a dark elf character:

- It should be obvious to others that your character is undead - Pale skin and (if you desire) patches of decay will make this clear
- All dark elves have long ears which are pointed at the tip
- If the dark elf belongs to a specific realm, the theme, colours and style of clothing, weapons or armour can relate to that of the chosen realm





## UNDEAD (WIGHTS): LAHAMIA (PLAYABLE RACE)

Upon reanimating as a wight after death, a vulperan that has consumed the Elixir of Rebirth after becoming infected becomes a lahamia when they die. It is said that demons, being the source of the Plague of Undeath, are immune to the infection that reanimates the corpses of other living creatures. An infected vulperan that has consumed the elixir before death often reanimates with the demonic characteristics it had in life.

Only the human part of a vulperan dies and reanimates, being responsible for creating the creature known as a lahamia. The lahamia are more likely to retain memories they had whilst alive due to the persistent demonic essence that resides in their bodies, whether the Nightmares planned for this is not known, however, these creatures are amongst the most frightfully powerful of all the undead races.

The lahamia develop telekinetic powers in unlife, and they are capable of shutting down, for a brief period of time, an opponent's nervous system, causing them to become disorientated and unaware of their surroundings. They are also capable of projecting horrific hallucinations into an opponent's mind, forcing them to cower in fear as the lahamia strides forth and cuts them down whilst they succumb to the projected, horrific visions.

The lahamia often retain many of the personality traits they had in life on account of the demonic blood in their bodies that seems to allow the retention of memories they had whilst they were alive. Although extremely violent and merciless when it comes to physical conflict, the lahamia are considered a race that actively searches for peaceful resolutions when it comes to matters concerning the living, especially the vulperans, their warm-blooded counterparts.

The lahamia are usually very welcome within vulperan communities, and they are considered the most congenial of all undead races. When alive, the skin of vulperans that lived in the Crystal City of Vulpera would turn shades of blue on account of the strange crystal formations that grew in the area. Alchemists discovered that demonic blood reacted with minerals unique to this part of the world to cause this effect.

In undeath, the blue colouration of the skin seems to fade, and many lahamia that originated from the realm of Vulpera can be spotted via the pale blue, purple or grey skin tones they now possess. As a wight, a lahamia does not lose the horns they had whilst alive, and there appears to be no change to the size, colour or amount of horns a vulperan carries into their state of unlife.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

Particular attention should be paid to the following costume requirements when creating a lahamia character:

- It should be obvious to others that your character is undead - Pale skin and (if you desire) patches of decay will make this clear
- All lahamia have horns growing from their temples. They are generally black, ivory or shades of blue, brown, red or purple, and grow in clusters of three, or just singularly either side of their heads
- The colour and length of a lahamia's horns show if the individual's inherited genetics whilst alive (vulperan) were more demonic than human. Those with darker and longer horns were said to possess more demonic blood, whereas shorter and lighter-coloured horns mean there was more human blood. You can wear horns by attaching them to a headband, or use prosthetics and spirit gum to attach them to your temples
- If the lahamia belongs to a specific realm, the theme, colours and style of clothing, weapons or armour can relate to that of the chosen realm





## UNDEAD (WIGHTS): LICH (PLAYABLE RACE)

Upon reanimating as a wight after death, a human that has consumed the Elixir of Rebirth after becoming infected becomes a lich when they die. Being the most commonly encountered undead race due to the sheer number of humans that reside in the world of Neothera, liches make up the bulk of the population of the realms of Nald and Karthsworn. They are regularly encountered in all continents of the world, and some humans consider the gift of undeath, supposedly bestowed upon the favoured children of the gods and goddesses; a prize that allows them a second chance at life. Others consider their resurrection an opportunity to conclude unfinished business they had in life, or that they have been chosen by the divine to fight for a new cause with what some consider superhuman abilities. Others believe that the "Curse of Undeath" was forced upon them by the divine as a punishment for whatever sins they committed in life, trapping their soul in a slowly decaying body that they are forced to watch rot as they live out their days in an immortal husk.

Often shunned by their friends and family on account of their ghastly appearance, that is to say, if they even recall who their acquaintances were whilst alive, liches regularly make new lives for themselves in the Frozen North. Due to their large numbers, they usually join the military where they thrive upon killing in the name of their realm upon the battlefield or seek a true and honourable death that will result in their trapped soul becoming redeemed and finally able to move on to the Ethereal Realm. Of all the wight races, liches are perceived to be the most religious. Some convert to the teachings of the gods and goddesses after their resurrection, perhaps on account of the second chance they have been given in unlife, and follow the teachings of the divine to gain a place in the Ethereal Realm when they succumb to their second death.

Others shun religion completely, where every waking moment is spent defying the teachings of the divine, believing the gods and goddesses have abandoned them completely. These beings are often recruited into underground cults in the Frozen North that eventually lead to them following a subculture of religion that is still derived from the lessons of the divine in some form.

The majority of liches consider themselves chosen ones, wherein unlife they have been granted a new opportunity to carry out the will of the divine in an ugly yet superhuman form, allowing them to perform feats they could have only dreamed of whilst alive.

Liches possess the ability to perform amazing feats when they are close to death, drawing upon their physical essence to empower themselves. Their spirits also seem stronger and more attached to their undead bodies than other undead races, and as such, their soul clings to their undying husks longer than other undead species.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

Particular attention should be paid to the following costume requirements when creating a lich character:

- It should be obvious to others that your character is undead - Pale skin and (if you desire) patches of decay will make this clear
- If the lich belongs to a specific realm, the theme, colours and style of clothing, weapons or armour can relate to that of the chosen realm





## UNDEAD (WIGHTS): REVENANTS (PLAYABLE RACE)

Upon reanimating as a wight, an infected beastkin that has consumed the Elixir of Rebirth before death becomes a revenant. Scorned by the worshippers of Haman'li and devotees of the Nature Element, revenants, despite being beastkin, the children of nature in their former lives are considered abominations that defy the will of their creator, the God of Nature. The majority of beastkin reside in the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest, the birthplace of their race, which has been occupied by the Hemadri people since the Third Age. Upon becoming a wight, revenants are rarely allowed to enter the rainforests where they once likely called home, and are disowned by their living family and friends, that is to say, if a revenant recalls who was close to them in life.

The Hemadri consider the undead to be the scourge of nature, of the natural order of the world, and all wights are treated as the embodiment of the taint of undeath the Nightmares brought into the world. Revenants are the only undead race that is capable of changing their form in undeath and researchers have concluded that the Plague of Undeath reacts with the unique cellular makeup of a beastkin in such a way that the DNA, unique to beastkin, mutates the longer a revenant exists in their undead form.



Mutations can take various forms, and these usually result in the revenant becoming tougher, fitter, wiser and more attuned to the world around them. Many revenants retain the animal aspect they had when alive, but their bodies change so that new mental or physical abilities are gained in undeath. It was discovered that all children who transform into beastkin upon reaching puberty possess a unique gene that awakens the transformation process when their bodies are ready to change.

This gene, known as the Convertat, remains dormant for the remainder of their lives, however, when beastkin make the transition to becoming a revenant after consuming the Elixir of Rebirth and dying, seems to reactivate and forces the body to change as it once did when they transitioned from a human child to an adult beastkin.

There have been many accounts of ancient revenants mutating to a degree that they are no longer able to move due to excessive muscle growth or loss, or that they undergo changes which occur internally, that shut down their brains completely. Although these mutations are uncommon, and many revenants simply become stronger and capable of new, superhuman feats in undeath, those unlucky enough to undergo an unfortunate mutation usually die a slow and painful death, or drop dead as the body contorts and changes within a matter of minutes.

It seems that mutations in beastkin who have become mindless or empowered undead after becoming infected and dying do not occur; therefore the Elixir of Rebirth is believed to react with the Convertat Gene in such a way that it awakens cellular alterations in undeath. To this day it has not been possible to prevent a revenant from undergoing mutations, and their race should be prepared to accept that they will change physically and/or mentally at some point in their undead lives.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

Particular attention should be paid to the following costume requirements when creating a revenant character:

- The animal form you took whilst alive must fall under one of the Six Aspects listed in the *APPEARANCE* section about beastkin on *page 13*
- In undeath, revenants retain the original half-animal, half-human form and aspect they took as a beastkin, however, this is subject to mutations as and when you choose





- Revenants mutate throughout their undead existence, so you may decide to incorporate other features into your costumes such as horns or different skin tones. Mutations such as bulging muscles or hideous, mutated disfigurements should also be considered. Whilst it is not a strict requirement, the staff will award additional Experience or Hero Points (EXP/HRP) should we see you embracing this
- It should be obvious to others that your character is undead - Patches of decay will make this clear (if desired)
- You should make good use of makeup, prosthetics and/or masks to show your animal form
- If relevant to your animal form, a tail, ears attached via a headband, antennae, wings, claws and fangs etc. should be used
- If the revenant belongs to a specific realm, the theme, colours and style of clothing, weapons or armour can relate to that of the chosen realm



## UNDEAD (WIGHTS): SHADOW FEY (PLAYABLE RACE)

Upon reanimating as a wight, an infected piskie that has consumed the Elixir of Rebirth before death becomes a shadow fey. Most piskies, although dangerously mischievous, are regarded as being extremely jovial in many situations, jokers that make light of the direst of circumstances.

Perhaps the saddest part of a piskie's transformation into a shadow fey is the loss of the spark of happiness they almost always possessed in life. In undeath, a shadow fey becomes a sadistic and jaded creature who shows little to no care about the wellbeing of others, even their closest comrades. They thrive on cruelty and inflicting harm upon other creatures, and will make it their goal to watch others endure the suffering caused by them.

Capable of using psychokinesis to inflict intense pain upon a target, they relish in torturing their victims either physically or mentally and will do so for months on end if they are given the opportunity. They will continue to do so until their victim dies or is driven insane through the endless and cleverly executed methods they use. Because of this, and due to the sickening but effective ways they break the body and soul of their victims, the shadow fey are regularly employed by the realms of the Frozen North to extract information from captives.

It has been noted by those that have conducted research and autopsies upon shadow fey that the left prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain that is most active when experiencing happiness, has shrunk and is flooded with demonic energy. Due to the unique composition of piskies' brains, the complex magic that allows the Plague of Undeath to cause the dead to rise from the grave fluctuates and gathers here. It is thought that this evil taint causes them to become obsessed with cruelty, and to feel any amount of happiness in undeath, the stimulation of this section of the brain can only occur through their enjoyment of callous actions.

Similar to elves, in life, all piskies have an affinity to a specific element, and their hair and wing colour often change to match the hue of the element they are akin to. In undeath, a piskie loses their elemental affinity, and the colour of their hair and wings fades to a neutral tone. This process occurs soon after a living piskie reanimates as a wight, and many see this loss of affinity for an element to be a sign that the Seven have scorned and abandoned them as they begin their new unlife.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

Particular attention should be paid to the following costume requirements when creating a shadow fey character:

- It should be obvious to others that your character is undead - Pale skin and (if you desire) patches of decay will make this clear
- All shadow fey have pointed ear-tips, similar to that of elves
- All piskies are born with a set of wings which grow between their shoulder blades and resemble that of a dragonfly, butterfly or moth. In undeath, a shadow fey keeps their wings providing they have not have lost them in battle, or they have rotted away
- A piskie's Elemental Affinity is lost in when they become a shadow fey and their wings and hair change to a neutral colour in undeath
- If the shadow fey belongs to a specific realm, the theme, colours and style of clothing, weapons or armour can relate to that of the chosen realm





## UNDEAD (WIGHTS): VAMPIRES (PLAYABLE RACE)

Upon reanimating as a wight, an infected faerie (fey) becomes a vampyre. Vampyres are often considered the prime undead race due to being the first species to rise from the grave after becoming infected by the Plague of Undeath, and also for developing exceptional skills which allow superhuman speed, flight without wings and even controlling the minds of other species. However, their insatiable thirst for blood and the hunger for the flesh of the living sees them labelled as a species that is highly reliant on sustenance in undeath, unlike other undead species who do not depend on such addictions to enable them to live.

The hunger all vampyres are slaves to is thought to stem from the Plague of Undeath, where their need to regularly feed on the living was cleverly implemented by the Nightmares, who created and spread the infection. By hunting living beings and ingesting their blood every few days, even if they did not kill their victim, the race of vampyres would spread the infection amongst the living like wildfire. If a victim did not die as a direct result of blood-loss from a vampyre feeding upon them, in Ly-shanduir (Terminarium), almost all infected faeries would eventually perish through the violence of war, meaning that the Nightmares had a reserve stock of troops ready to rise from the grave and fight for their cause.



If a vampyre does not feed upon the blood or flesh of a living creature every few days, they will begin to lose their minds to madness and eventually become incapable of coherent or intelligible thought. That said, a vampyre can feed on animals or blood substitutes, however, the thirst for the warm blood of living humanoids is a hard addiction to kick, and is thought to be never truly curable.

Faeries are the only living race that can become wights after being infected and dying, without having to consume the Elixir of Rebirth to rise as the undead. The Vampyre Council of Nald state that the Plague of Undeath originated in Terminarium, and as such, the Nightmares formulated it to react with faerie DNA to allow coherent thought to be carried over into their undead states, which sees many of them lose all compassion and goodwill they had towards their living kin whilst alive. As such, the plague, upon infecting living humanoids in Neothera, did not account for the unique DNA structures of the species there, resulting in them becoming mindless and driven only by the hunger for flesh and blood which sustains their decaying husks.

However, to the Nightmares, anything that is capable of spreading the blight is still an effective weapon. What was not accounted for was the level of free will many wights possess, and for them breaking free of the oppressive bonds they often hold in undeath sees their weapons used against them. Upon rising as a wight, all faeries lose the intrinsic Star-Lines they were born with.



This loss of their heritage is believed to be a byproduct of the infection - the callousness of the Nightmares, where the faeries lose something which is considered sacred to them, and they become just another face in the ranks of the undead army they used to suck the light from an entire world.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

Particular attention should be paid to the following costume requirements when creating a vampyre character:

- It should be obvious to others that your character is undead - Pale skin and (if you desire) patches of decay will make this clear

- A pair of pointed tooth-caps on the upper canine teeth are required
- When a faerie becomes a vampyre, they lose any unnatural hair-colour they had when alive therefore neutral tones should be used
- From a role-playing perspective, whilst it is not a strict requirement, all vampyres crave the blood or flesh of living creatures to sustain themselves in undeath, and additional Experience or Hero Points (EXP/HRP) will be awarded by the staff should we see you regularly doing this
- If the vampyre belongs to a specific realm, the theme, colours and style of clothing, weapons or armour can relate to that of the chosen realm





## UNDEAD RELIGION

The empowered and mindless undead are assumed to be incapable of mindful thought, of comprehending anything beyond an insatiable thirst for hunger and violence. Even attempts by powerful sorcerers to infiltrate their rotting minds have yielded no intelligent responses. It is assumed that the souls of the creatures are trapped so deep within the husks of the soldiers of the Nightmares that they cannot speak telepathically, or that the soul has moved on - only the decaying body remains, marching forward with a singular goal to spread the Plague of Undeath amongst the living. Because of this, empowered and mindless undead are not considered to hold any religious beliefs.

All other wight races worship the deities of Neothera according to their tastes; although Glacilla, the Goddess of Ice is the most commonly observed deity amongst wights on account of her ability to spread the frost that prevents their undead bodies from decaying. Being the lover of Haman'li, the God of Nature, whilst the Seven roamed the lands of Neothera during the Second Age, her choice is respected by wights, that her great bounty of everlasting winter was so powerful that she was forced to walk the lands lest her essence exterminated all life if she remains in one place for too long.

Followers of Haman'li are assumed to be jealous and defensive of the element their God is akin to on account of Glacilla's power to end all life if she was selfish and decided to remain in one place for too long. However; many wights still offer Haman'li praise for the gift of life, and should the realms of the living eventually come to terms with this, they might realise that wights, although ghastly in appearance, still understand that the gift of life was granted to them in undeath, and the beautiful wonders of the world can be respected by all of its inhabitants, regardless of their physical state. Wights worship whichever deity they feel most connected to, and despite the opinions of the living, will continue to do so even if they must endure persecution.





# URKA

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

The urka hail from the Southern Realms of Neothera and are an industrious, hardy and extremely proud species. Urka are not native to Neothera and originate from a planet called Nethrekka, apparently created by Osirah and Senetsu, the sun and moon deities. If this is true, it would make the urka and their world older than Neothera itself, even predating the creation of the Seven.

Nethrekka, the Golden Planet as it is called by the urka, survived for many thousands of years in a golden age of prosperity, however, darkness swept over their world, and terrible war with demonic creatures thought to be the Nightmares forced the urka to abandon Nethrekka.

Leaving behind their dying world, the urka, harnessing the divine powers of Osirah and Senetsu, built a monolithic arc that would carry the survivors of the war up through the atmosphere and into the infinite darkness of space. The urka floated for centuries through the stars, holding a promise in their hearts made by Osirah and Senetsu that one day they would be delivered salvation and would reach the promised lands.



As supplies started to run low, their people began to starve, became weak and sick, the urka had almost lost hope, yet in the distance, they detected a new planet - and as the arc's engines eventually burned out, the urka craft dropped through the atmosphere of a new world, crash landing in a bountiful land that would be the saviour of this race. At the beginning of the Third Age, the urka left the remnants of the arc and ventured forth, ready to settle in the Southern Realms of Neothera.

The urka were not the only species that had recently arrived in the Southern Realms, for as they ventured into the lush grasslands they encountered humans that had traversed rifts from their planet known as Terevia. Although it took some time, the two species derived methods of communication, and learning of each other's pasts, realised they shared much in common and formed an alliance leading to the integration of the two species building the foundations of what would be the greatest city of the Southern Realms - Sora'Harumi. To this day, the urka and humans live in peace in one of the largest cities in the known world.

## APPEARANCE

Urka are humanoid creatures which are most recognisable by their green, grey, brown or tan skin, pointed ear-tips, and flat noses. Some urka have also developed tusk-like teeth that protrude from either side of the lower jaw; however, this is more commonly seen in urka that were born in the Outlander Tribes in the wilds outside of the capital City of Sora'Harumi.

With a tendency to sometimes be taller and more muscular than their city-dwelling cousins, these evolutionary traits are believed to have originated from the harsher and more dangerous way of life the outer settlements contended with after the urkas arrived in Neothera.

Urka that live outside of the City of Sora'Harumi wear clothing and armour that appears feral and somewhat primitive to their city-dwelling kin that adorn themselves in fine, embroidered cloth, fine steel armour and expensive trinkets and jewellery. However, urka highly respect all ways of life, and just because one is not adorned in finery, does not mean they are worth any less as a person. Despite their sometimes intimidating appearance, urka are known for their positive outlook on life and determination to achieve any task they set their minds to. They are jovial, honest and stubborn folk who go to extreme lengths to uphold the honour of their people, family or close friends, rarely admitting defeat both on and off the battlefield.



## LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

The average life expectancy of a urka is between 160 to 200 years; however, many urkas believe it a great honour to be slain in combat, fighting against their enemies, protecting their people before dying of old age. Urka elders are treated with the utmost respect by those younger than them, the life-skills, wisdom and advice they can pass to the younger generations of the Southern Realms are considered more valuable than any amount of material wealth. Urka are only capable of breeding with their kind, and when an urka child is born, both parents take equal responsibility in raising and caring for it from birth. The passage to adulthood, usually around twelve years of age, is considered complete when a young urka slays their first Sicketooth, a large and vicious horned-creature that is abundant in the Southern Realms. The celebration after the kill lasts for three days, and the hide of the creature is crafted into the urka's first set of leather armour.

Both males and females are considered equals in urka societies and the humans of the Southern Realms also respect this tradition which, originally started in Nethrekka. No indifference, other than appearances between the two urka sexes was ever established, unlike many human-led realms outside of the Southern Realms in Neothera. Elders are treated with the utmost respect in urka society, as are those that lead noble lives, and experience in a subject is valued more than wealth or power earned as a result of it.

Urka have little time for those that are put on a pedestal, according to the treasures they have gained either through inheritance or a lucky streak; however, if one is charitable with their wealth, they are deemed more worthy of appreciation. The term 'Master' is often used when addressing one who has a proven track record of being able to lead or teach by example, and has learned much of a trade, subject or skill set.

## HABITAT

Nethrekka, the planet the urka originally inhabited, was said to be a heavenly realm made by Osirah the God of the Sun and Senetsu the Goddess of the Moon long before the Seven and Neothera were created. During the day, the planet was bathed in golden light, and at night the light of the moon illuminated the world, causing everything it touched to glow. The urka species were believed to have been created by Olkren-Gorami, the first urka, who towered above all others, his bright, pale skin glistening like a beacon of hope and creation as he walked Nethrekka, breathing life into the dormant creations his parents, Osirah and Senetsu had made for him and the urka that followed.

The planet was built of dreams, and the urka, led by their father, Olkren, wanted for nothing. If they grew hungry they needed only to dream sustenance into existence. If they wished for a home, they need only to imagine a humble cottage or great estate. If they became lonely, they need only to ask Olkren to dream them companions. But just as easily as dreams come, so do Nightmares - and as they did, the dreams of the urka broke leading to Nethrekka becoming more like the physical plain of Neothera as demons inhabited the dreaming and forced physical attacks on the urka there.

It was from this sharp change that the urka had to work to fulfil their needs, the dreaming had ceased, and the planet had to be farmed for resources such as food and materials to build cities or clothe and arm their people. Surprisingly, many urkas were thankful for the change their ancestors had to endure due to the Nightmares, for if they had not had to evolve to create with their own hands, their species would likely not have been able to survive when they eventually arrived in Neothera.

Although it has been in existence since the dawn of the creation of the world, the Southern Realms fell into darkness at the end of the Second Age of Neothera. Once inhabited by two of the eight houses of the elves, during the Nightmare War, the region was supposedly lost after all contact ceased from the elves that lived there. Future attempts to reach the region had all failed, either through a series of unfortunate events whilst sailing the treacherous southern seas, or simply sailing for months or years on end without ever sighting land.

It was as if the entire landmass had completely disappeared from the face of the world, literally obliterated by the demons who invaded the elven strongholds that were said to reside there. The situation today is a different story altogether, sailors are reporting that the land has been sighted, and the inhabitants of the Southern Realms are now making contact with the Mainland after ages of solitude. The urka that have inhabited the south has become an extremely adaptable race, weathering many hardships, including attacks from demons that are based in Norowatai and rogue tribes of humans that refused to join the urka alliance in Sora'Harumi.





## RELIGION

Sora'Harumi and the Outlander Tribes are ruled by King Olkren-Gorami, a towering, white-skinned, immortal urka, who is the only being currently in existence to have witnessed, and played a part in the birth of the urka on their home planet, Nethrekka. Olkren-Gorami states that Osirah and Senetsu directly communicate with him, and it is thanks to this that the urka were able to leave their planet before the Nightmares destroyed it. As wise as he is old, the King of the South leads his people with a kind heart and strong hand. He is loved and respected by his people and worshipped as a living God by the Outlander Tribes that reside outside of the City of Sora'Harumi, and indeed the people that live within the city walls.

The God of the Sun, Osirah, and the Goddess of the Moon, Senetsu, are also worshipped by the urka and humans of the Southern Realms. This is a belief that was brought with the urka from their home planet and is still a tradition that is very much alive to this day. Whilst the inhabitants of the Southern Realms have learned of the seven gods and goddesses commonly worshipped upon the Mainland and beyond, largely via news and literature brought back from travellers in recent times; they believe that Olkren, Osirah and Senetsu reign supreme. The elements are believed to be easily commanded by those of the Southern Realms due to their devout worship of the sun and moon deities, creators of all life and even the Seven themselves.



At the helm of maintaining and teaching belief in Osirah and Senetsu is the Order of the Veracious Divine, highly-trained individuals chosen to promote this religious cause by Olkren-Gorami himself. The Order is also responsible for implementing law alongside the Tutela Syndicate which has recently established themselves in the Southern Realms thanks to Olkren's wish to integrate with other continents.

Contrary to popular belief amongst those outside of the Southern Realms that have heard of the urka's home-world, most urkas do not grieve for the loss of Nethrekka, and instead are thankful for the lives they have been given in Neothera. In fact, their belief system today states that the spirits of the dead do not return to Nethrekka when their bodies are no longer able to support them.

When a urka dies in the Southern Realms, the body is cremated on the banks of the rivers in Sora'Harumi. If a urka is to die in any other continent, every effort is made to bring the body back to the south. Urka believe that water in the region is sacred due to the remnants of their golden arc blessing it. It is believed that by burning the body the spirit will be released and can find its way back to Osirah and Senetsu, the God of the Sun and Goddess of the Moon, to live eternally in the Halls of the Gods amongst their ancestors, or live amongst the living in the Southern Realms.

## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

Particular attention should be paid to the following costume requirements when creating an urka character:

- Urka are humanoid creatures which are most recognisable by their green, grey, brown or tan skin
- Similar to elves, urka have pointed ear-tips
- Urka noses are often flat or stunted, this can be achieved via use of a mask or prosthetics
- Some urka have also developed two tusk-like teeth that protrude from either side of the lower jaw
- The colours and style of your costume, armour, weaponry and equipment should reflect that of the realm your character belongs to, however, if your urka belongs to an Outlander Tribe your costume should be feral and primitive-looking



# VULPERANS

## (PLAYABLE RACE)

Vulperans are a half-human, half-demon species that originated from the blue, crystal forests in the east of Mainland Neothera. Legend tells that five clever, deceitful and extremely powerful Demon Lords named Lucasian, Besakia, Tohmesal, Asehia and Teiak fled to this part of the world after the elves and piskies victory over the virulent Nightmares at the end of the Second Age.

Assuming human forms, the Demon Lords offered succour, befriended, bred and eventually ruled over the human refugees that arrived in what was once the Crystal City of Vulpera. The demons believed that breeding with humans and producing half-demon-offspring could enable them to disseminate their vile corruption like a disease across the lands. However, this did not come to pass.

The five demonic masters grew greedy and careless with their power. They began treating the vulperans like slaves and spoke of waging wars of dominance upon their neighbouring realms. Eventually, at the start of the Fourth Age, the Demon Lords were exposed by the Elven Elders of Faradome and the vulperans turned on them, assisting the forces of the Amicita in beating back their masters into the Nightmare Realm.

This couldn't have come at a more appropriate time because it was later discovered that the Demon Lords were shortly about to tear open a rift to allow the armies of the Nightmares back into Neothera. From that day forward, the vulperans vowed to use their inherited, demonic powers to ensure the safety of Neothera from any future threats presented by demons with ill intent.

### APPEARANCE

Vulperans would appear human if it were not for the horns that grow from their temples. These horns are generally black, ivory or shades of blue, brown, red or purple, and grow in clusters of three, or just singularly either side of their heads.

The size of a vulperan's horns has nothing to do with dominance amongst their people, the colour and length show if the individuals inherited genetics are more demonic than human. Those with darker and longer horns are said to possess more demonic blood, whereas shorter and lighter-coloured horns mean there is more human blood.

Since the liberation of the vulperans from their demonic masters, this measure has little influence on how an individual is treated, but some quietly consider demonic blood more powerful and superior to that of humans. Before the destruction of the Crystal City and the surrounding crystal forests in the Fifth Age of Neothera, if a vulperan had lived in this area for many years, their skin was usually tinted blue. Alchemists have discovered this stemmed from the taint of the crystal forests that once surrounded the capital city. It is believed that demonic blood reacts with the crystals in such a way that it causes the skin to change colour, a sure-fire way to spot a demon that has spent any amount of time in this area.

### LIFESPAN AND BREEDING

Vulperans live longer than humans due to the demonic blood that courses through their veins, on average, a vulperan will live to around one hundred and fifty years of age. They rarely fall ill and recover extremely quickly if they do happen to become sick from a viral infection, for example. Vulperans only require a few hours of sleep every five to six days, but will become extremely unpredictable when fatigued. Instances of violence, isolated bouts of insanity and an insatiable appetite for foods high in salt are but a few symptoms to watch for. Having a very high pain threshold is another common trait of this species. Where this is a blessing to some, it has also led to the death of many young and inexperienced vulperans who would continue to fight until they bleed so much that they pass out and die from blood-loss.

Vulperans are renowned for their sarcastic and dark sense of humour and they often come across as being selfish or ignorant; however, deep down they care deeply about those they are fond of and are empathetic towards other species, especially humans. Vulperan people are extremely trustworthy and an abuse of their loyalty will often result in the guilty party being ostracised if word spreads of this dishonour, vulperan allies of the victim will also shun the abuser. Despite their honourable intentions of ridding the world of the Nightmares, the vulperan species are still considered by some to be foul demons, and attacks are common against their kind in the realms of Neothera. Vulperans are capable of breeding with their kind and also humans, there have been no recorded instances of vulperans being able to breed with any other species except humans.





A vulperan couple will always produce vulperan offspring; however, a vulperan and human couple has a fifty-fifty chance of producing a vulperan or human baby. Vulperans are also capable of breeding with pure demons, and their offspring will usually possess greater levels of demonic power than a regular vulperan. Vulperan horns are not visible at birth, and instead, they begin to show when the baby enters the teething stage, and continue to grow well into their teens.

When a vulperan dies (unless they have become infected by the Plague of Undeath) the body disperses into a fine, shimmering, black powder. It is common for the remains of vulperans from the Crystal City of Vulpera to be interred in the Tower of Mizira as their final resting place amongst their ancestors; however, since its destruction, many vulperan families are holding dear their dead friends and relatives ashes until a suitable burial location is found.

## HABITAT

Being of demonic heritage, vulperans can weather harsher climates than most other humanoids, and their high pain threshold also aids this. That said, the blue crystal forests in eastern Neothera where their species were created is fairly mild, and humans have thrived here alongside the vulperan species since they appeared in Neothera in the Third Age.

The Elves of Faradome tell how the lands around the Crystal City of Vulpera had changed; lush green forests were now tainted blue and the trees became crystallised - yet strangely beautiful to behold. Many believe this phenomenon was due to a reaction caused by naturally occurring crystals in the forests; however, the elves state that demonic essence had tainted nature itself. Over time, the skin of vulperans that lived in the area also began to turn blue, and to this day any vulperans that spent time living in or around the area shared the same trait. It has been noted that this is not passed through birth, and this trait only occurs through spending time in the Crystal City or surrounding forests themselves. However, with the destruction of the forests and the vulperan capital city in the Fifth Age, blue-skinned vulperans are now likely to become rarer in the world of Neothera.

Vulperans have made their homes in other areas of the Mainland and integrated into the societies of humans, beastkin, elves and piskies. Today it is not uncommon to encounter vulperans in any of the capital cities of the world as communities expand their boundaries and the promise of sustainability in new lands is on the horizon. However, vulperans venture to other realms with caution, as there are still those that regard the species as controversial when taking into account their demonic heritage.

## RELIGION

Until the grip of their demonic masters was released the vulperans did not need to worship any other deities, or were prevented from doing so. However, this has changed since their masters were banished and the dawning of a new era has seen the other deities gain many new followers.

Whilst they still hold their demonic powers dear to them, now using them only to fight back the Nightmares, the vulperan people have begun to accept that their faith lies in the Seven or Osirah and Senetsu. The vulperan species are now extremely open to accepting new belief systems, and the faith of vulperans you encounter will vary greatly.

Whilst the spread of mainstream faiths amongst their people has been widely accepted since the vulperans became free peoples in the Fourth Age, there are still those that secretly worship the will of their creators, the Nightmares. There are indeed vulperans that offer prayers to the Nightmares behind closed doors, whether this is done with ill intent depends on the views of the individual, however, where some simply offer a quiet nod to their origins, there are those that hold the liberation from their demonic masters in contempt.



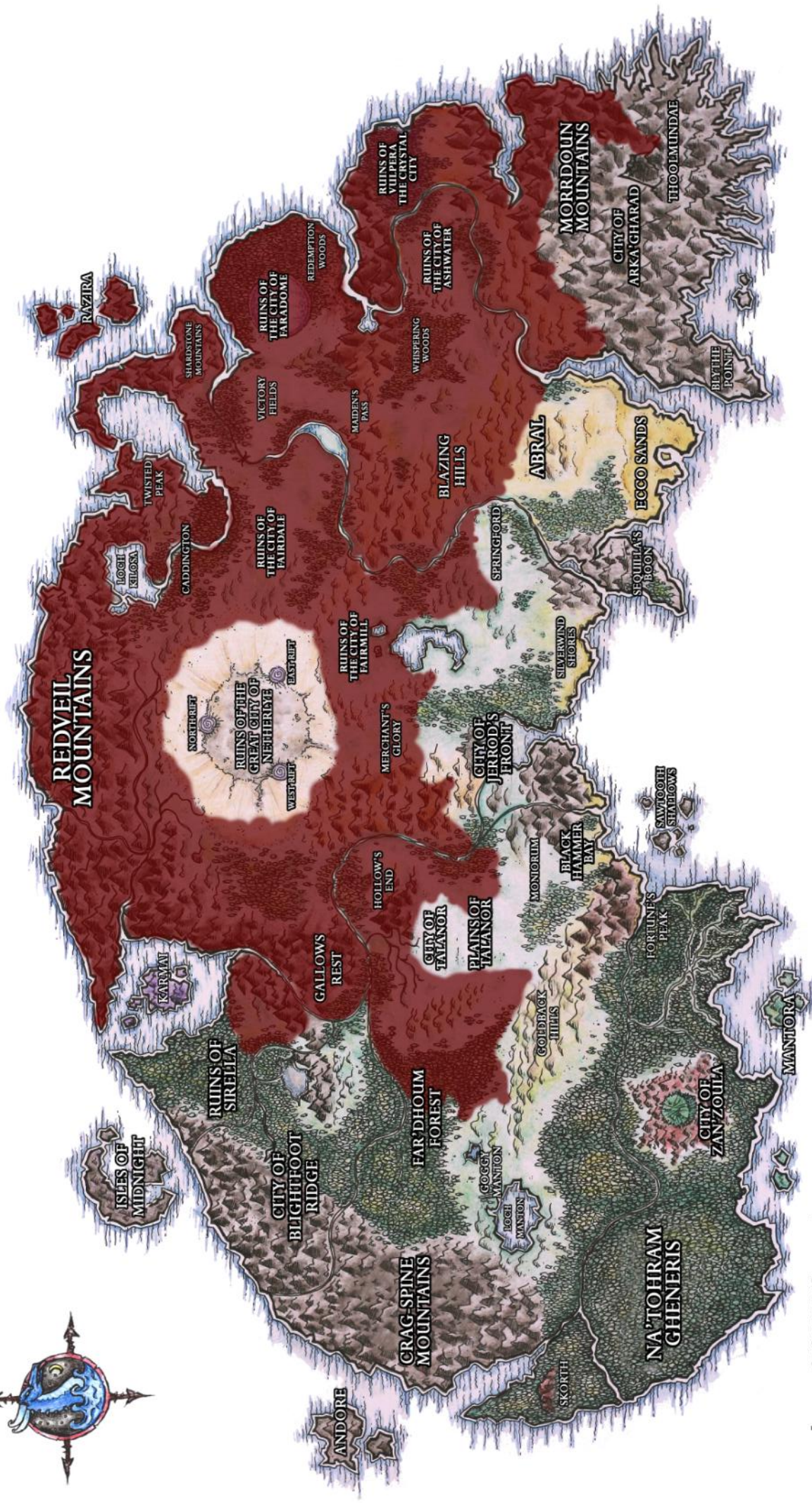
## COSTUME ADVICE & REQUIREMENTS

The main focus of costume for a vulperan character should be the horns or skin colour as listed below:

- All vulperans have horns growing from their temples. They are generally black, ivory or shades of blue, brown, red or purple, and grow in clusters of three, or just singularly either side of their heads
- The colour and length of a vulperan's horns show if the individual's inherited genetics are more demonic than human. Those with darker and longer horns are said to possess more demonic blood, whereas shorter and lighter-coloured horns mean there is more human blood
- You can wear horns by attaching them to a headband, or use prosthetics and spirit gum to attach them to your temples
- Vulperans that originated from the Crystal City of Vulpera have skin that is tinted blue. This can be achieved through makeup or face paint
- The colours and style of your costume, armour, weaponry and equipment should reflect that of the realm your character belongs to





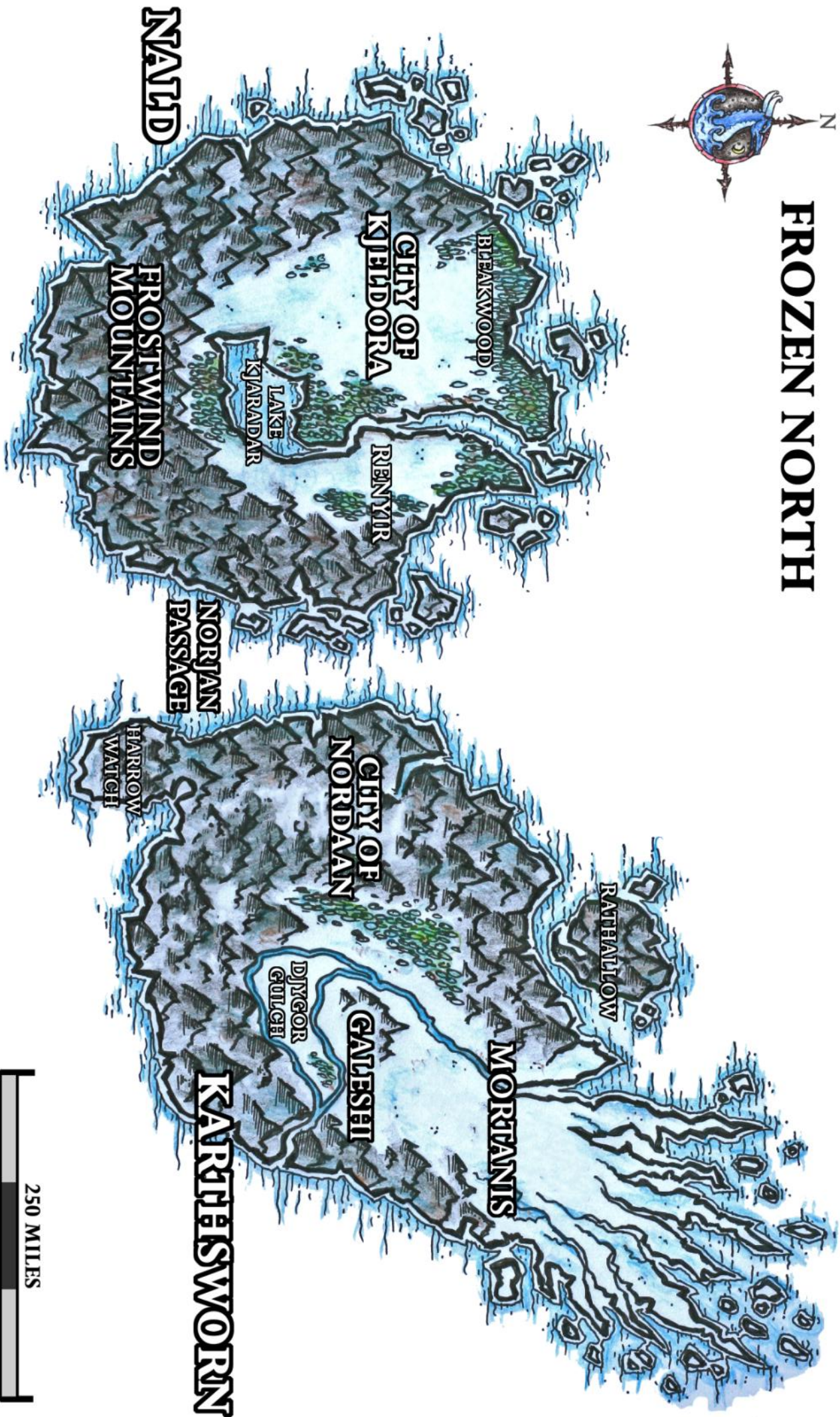
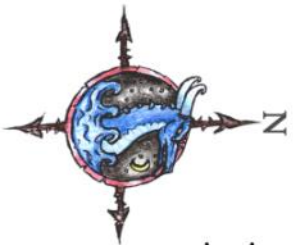


250 MILES

# MAINLAND NEOTHERA

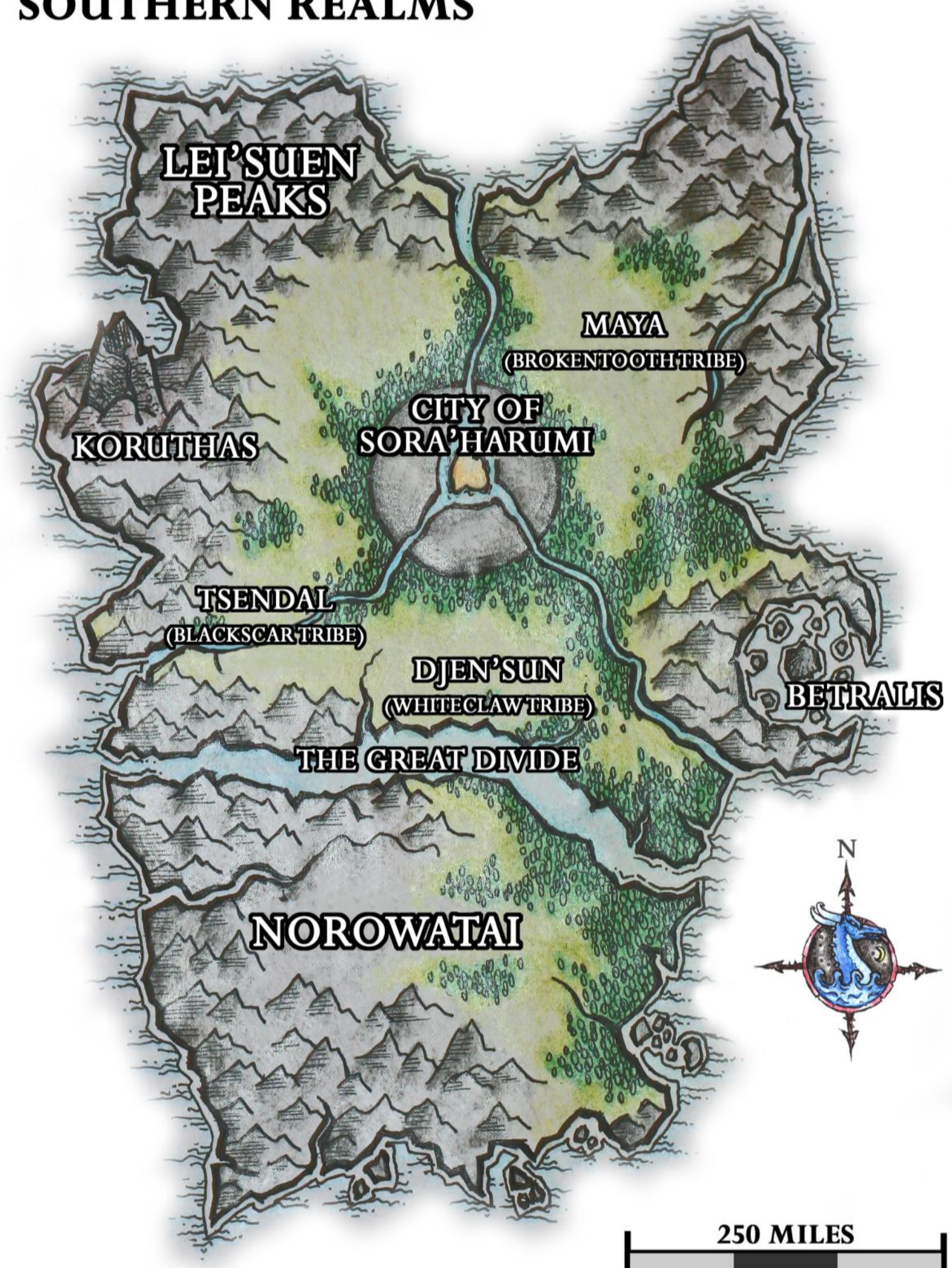


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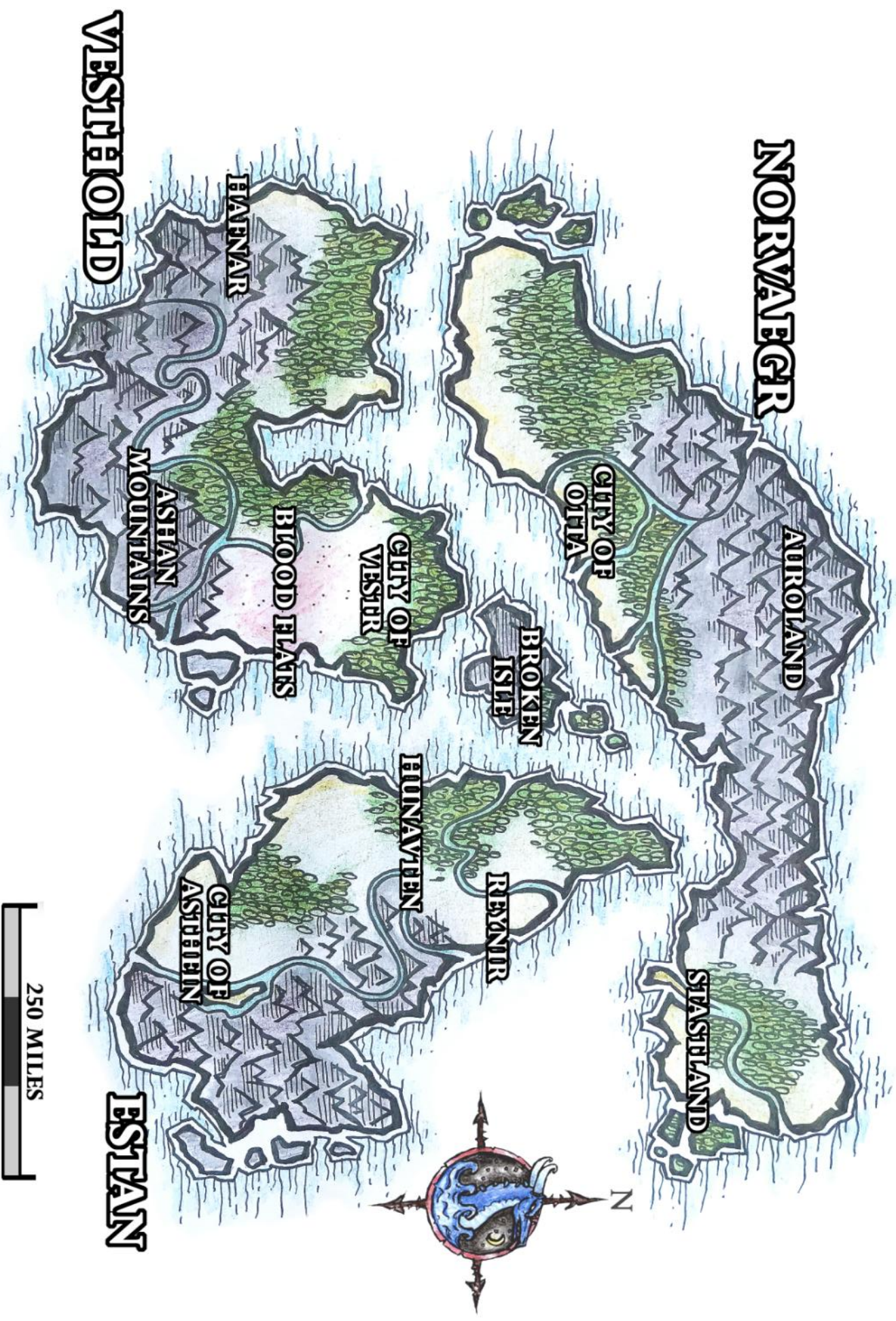


# SOUTHERN REALMS





# EÚND VALD - THE WESTERN REALMS





# LYSHANDUIR (TERMINARIUM)





# ARAK'CHAR

(PLAYABLE REALM)



THE FLAMES OF POWER, KNOWLEDGE AND PURIFICATION OF THE MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT ARE PROMINENT. THE SKULL IS SAID TO REPRESENT DEATH AND MORTALITY, WHERE NO ONE IS GREATER THAN ARAK'ALMUNDAE, THE IMMORTAL GOD OF FIRE.



# MAINLAND NEOTHERA

## REALM OF THE ARAK'CHAR

The Arak'Char hail from the volcanic peaks of the Morrdoun Mountains in the southeast of the Mainland which is home to people of varying races and creeds. The name 'Arak'Char' translates to 'Fire-Born' in the native tongue spoken by the people of this realm. The Arak'Char are considered to be the hardest and most stubborn people in the known world and are most renowned for the red and black war-paint they apply to their faces and bodies and the tough iron or stone armour they wear that their blacksmith's craft in the lava of the volcanoes in the region. The Arak'Char people are devout worshippers of Arak'almundae, the God of Fire, and believe that this element is mainly symbolic of spiritual and physical purification and death.

Fire is full of movement, joyful expansion, activity and passion, it cleanses and renews. Those gifted with the wisdom of the Fire God can wield his power with ease, but must resign themselves to him upon hearing his calling. The must leap into the flames of the great volcano, Thoolmundae to join their God as chosen ones if they do not die of natural causes and are not killed in battle fighting in his name. The people of the Arak'Char always remember that the flames of Arak'almundae are a gift and not a birthright.

Arak'Char society is considered more civilised than what it was in previous ages following its founding when humans arrived in Neothera in the Third Age. However, there are still undercurrents of their feral and cannibalistic instincts which are strongly embedded in their culture. It is thought that the teachings of the elves to the newly arrived humans became somewhat twisted over the ages, with the tribes of humans that settled in the Morrdoun Mountains becoming savage and devout in their absolute worship of the Fire God, shunning the shared progression of all other societies in the Mainland.

Cannibalism dates back to the early years of the expansions in the Morrdoun Mountains, where food and water were scarce, and rival tribes would eat the bodies of the dead simply to survive. Today the act of cannibalism is one that is associated with power rather than survival. It is very common for tribes to compete against each other for social dominance, and the strongest warriors will fight to the death to prove they are at the peak of their game. When one of the combatants has fallen, the body of the defeated is later consumed in a ritual by its friends and family. This is a practice that the Arak'Char believe will allow the fallen to have ties within the physical realm as well as the spiritual ones for as long as the bloodline survives.





If a body is consumed without the traditional ceremonial rites being performed, it is said that the spirit becomes lost, and will never find its way to the Ethereal Realm to become reunited with its ancestors. Whilst this disregard for ceremony still occurs in the Morrdoun Mountains it is usually by rogue Arak'Char who refuse to unite under a common banner of their people, and they consume other Arak'Char simply for the thrill of the hunt and the taste of flesh. Upon the battlefield acts of cannibalism are usually saved for the foes of the Arak'Char, where it is not uncommon for them to rip out their enemies beating hearts and consume them to intimidate and strike fear into their opponents.

A large number of Arak'Char reside in the halls of the capital City of Arka'Gharad, but throughout the city and much of the southeastern lands, many clans divide the Arak'Char into smaller groups. Each clan is led by an elder, a shaman who oversees the welfare of his or her people, following a simple set of teachings passed down by generations of Arak'Char, but centred around the worship of Arak'almundae, the Fire God and sometimes Terralapis, the Goddess of Earth. Despite the large number of clans that occupy different areas of the Morrdoun Mountains, there is very little difference in the teachings of the shaman and each clan leader would willingly unite his or her clan with the others if the Arak'Char people came under threat as a whole. The largest and oldest of these groups is known as the Karath'tir clan, and almost two-thirds of all Arak'Char belong to it. Other notable clans include the Nirith'kar, Sarek'hir and Territh'Hur, each occupying a different location in the volcanic peaks. All four of these clans recently united to aid the Mainland realms in the defeat of the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf in the Fifth Age when it was discovered that Commander Nerrin's army was in league with the demonic Nightmares.



Clans are recognisable by the ceremonial warpaint they smear on their faces and bodies, and although the colours are usually red, black and sometimes white, the patterns greatly differ. Red warpaint is usually made by mixing various herbs and minerals with water and is used in situations where combat is not normally involved; however, blood (ideally of humans, but sometimes animals) substitutes this mixture when the Arak'Char are going to war and is believed to grant an individual the strength and protection of the God of Fire and the Goddess of Earth.

Most realms believe that the Arak'Char wear this warpaint to strike fear into the hearts of their foes; however, the ceremonial application of warpaint, to the Arak'Char, is a sacred ceremony to appease the unpredictable God of Fire and often earn his favour. Those that enter battle, conduct rituals or offer praise to the God of Fire in any form without first applying warpaint in the traditional method, are believed to bring bad luck to their clan, and if slain, or they anger their God for some reason, their soul is doomed to writhe in the agonising flames of Arak'almundae for all eternity.

Warpaint applied by the Karath'tir clan usually involves the top half of the face being painted red, with the bottom half being black, whereas the Nirith'kar clan favour the entire face and body being painted red with triangular black and white markings being decoratively applied. The Sarek'hir clan favour vertical blocks of colour, with a thick black line, painted down the centre of the face and body, and red being daubed either side. White, circular patterns are then applied decoratively over the body and face. The Territh'Hur clan paint the left side of their face and body with red warpaint and the right with black, and white dots are then applied decoratively as they see fit.

## LEADERSHIP

Being the largest and most powerful group in the Morrdoun Mountains, the Karath'tir clan currently hold hegemony over the Arak'Char, with their rule being final when it comes to any disagreements or matters of diplomacy in the mountains. The clan was the first to be formed in the mountains when the humans arrived from Terevia and were gathered and tutored by the elves who taught them much of the region they had decided to make their new homes in.

After being told of the God of Fire, Arak'almundae, who resides in the fiery core of Neothera below the mountains. They saw his wrath first-hand in the form of the smog, lava and volcanic eruptions. The humans soon became fascinated and eventually obsessed with the divine being that they shared their home with.



According to the ancient elves that lived amongst the Arak'Char in the Third Age, some humans began receiving dreams and visions, apparently bestowed upon them by the God of Fire himself. This led to them turning on the elves, forcing them out of the Morrdoun Mountains as they no longer answered to their caretakers. It wasn't long before a human female named Rakeish received such a powerful vision that she threw herself into Thoolmundae, the great volcano, stating the God of Fire had chosen her to speak for all people in the mountains.

After plummeting into the lava she emerged, her skin burned and hair singed away, but she was very much alive and gained the ability of foresight and was able to wield the element of fire in its purest form. Of course, many attempted to obtain the power and blessing she had received from Arak'almundae, however, upon leaping into the volcano they immediately perished, their bodies consumed by fire. It was then that Rakeish's blessing was truly recognised and she became a living deity in the eyes of her people, the Karath'tir clan worshipped her as the first daughter of the Fire God and so began the legacy of the Scorched Ones.

A Scorched One is a shaman of immense power and wisdom and is chosen by Arak'almundae himself to be an extension of his presence upon Neothera. There have been many Scorched Ones throughout the ages, and despite the power they wield, they are not immortal, and age as a regular human would do. They are also capable of dying from disease or grievous wounds. In 2392 of the Fifth Age, the Scorched One, Bahalezar perished upon the battlefield at the Caddington Estate and but a few hours later, Din, a child of eleven, received a calling from the Fire God and plunged himself into the lava of Thoolmundae, emerging as the new Scorched One who currently rules over the Karath'tir clan and all Arak'Char in the Morrdoun Mountains.

Din is the youngest leader to emerge as ruler of the Arak'Char and is remarkably patient and knowledgeable for a child of his age. He is unusually calm for a member of his realm and exceptionally fair when it comes to matters involving the law and the repercussions of breaking it. The Tutela Syndicate have operated in the mountains for many centuries now. Despite growing unrest about their presence amongst the Arak'Char clans, Din believes in progress and has convinced his people that allegiances with other realms are a means for survival during such dark days.

Some clans oppose Din's liberal and progressive points of view, and state that the Karath'tir clan is growing soft and complacent as a result. However, being bestowed the role of the Scorched One, an extension of the Fire God's will, anyone who openly defies Din is put to death as a human sacrifice to Arak'almundae.

## THE CITY OF ARKA'GHARAD

The underground City of Arka'Gharad stretches many miles beneath the immense mountain ranges in the southeast of the Mainland. No one is certain how old the deepest tunnels are, and many of them were created by huge rock-eating creatures known as Stone Wyrms, a species that are now thought to be extinct due to a complete lack of sightings since the start of the Fourth Age. It has taken the Arak'Char many thousands of years to carve away at these tunnels to create the gargantuan halls that have housed their people since the early humans arrived in this region in the Third Age. Almost every structure within Arka'Gharad, from feasting halls to ceremonial chambers, residential dwellings to barracks, are made from rock that is known as Megalomite. This mineral can only be found in the Morrdoun Mountains and has an immensely high melting point. It is also remarkably light and strong, which has made it a favourite material for crafting with. Due to the intense heat in this region, it is also seen as a blessing from the Goddess of Earth, Terralapis, that shields the Arak'Char from their otherwise scorching surroundings, meaning that the underground chambers are pleasantly cool when compared to walking on the surface of the mountains.





In the deepest chambers of the City of Arka'Gharad, the Scorched One resides with an army of guards and a host of shaman that have dedicated themselves to carrying out orders given by the realm leader to the various clans of the Arak'Char. Shaman are held in high regard by all of the mountain-folk and even have personal chambers carved into the stone where they can conduct rituals and converse with the Fire Elementals that are commonly found in the region. Beyond the heavily-guarded chambers of the Scorched One and his or her council members, the homes of the general populace of the Arak'Char can be found. The dwellings are often communal; however, families with ancestors or heroic or prominent figures in society have the luxury of being able to afford to expand upon the cave networks to build private chambers. Many traders, taverns, workshops and places of worship are located within this vast network of caves, and an outsider would find it very difficult to navigate the numerous tunnels and giant halls to locate a particular person or location of interest. That said, newcomers not of Arak'Char origins are often denied entrance to the city by the Stone Guard, who are located in the upper tunnel networks towards the surface of the mountains. They patrol the halls of Arka'Gharad night and day to prevent attacks on the most heavily-guarded location in the Morrdoun Mountains.

## MORRDOUN MOUNTAINS

Located in the southeast of the Mainland, access to the Morrdoun Mountains is gained by crossing the Crystal-line River, but heed caution, for this region, belongs to the Arak'Char, and they will protect their sacred mountain homes with their lives. If outsiders with no official business in the mountains are lucky enough to survive capture or being slain and consumed by the hardy mountain-folk, the conditions in the peaks are not easily weathered by those that have not spent any amount of time in what is considered to be the harshest of climates in all of Neothera.

Thick smog fills the air the further the mountains are ascended, volcanic ash and sulphur clogging the lungs of many adventurers, and if one can deal with this, they must next endure the intense heat from the bubbling lava pools and frequent eruptions of the many volcanoes that scatter the region. Water and food are scarce here, and only the most resolute of plant and animal life can survive, often gaining the nutrients they require by feasting on or absorbing the bodies of smaller insects, creatures or even stray humanoids that fall foul to the barbaric yet natural laws of the mountains.

The jagged peaks can be deadly to those without careful footing, and many an inexperienced adventurer or careless Arak'Char has been impaled upon rocks that jut out of the ground like enormous swords.

Goblins, ogres and mountain trolls roam the rocky paths of the peaks, emerging from caves and tunnels that stretch deep beneath the earth. The Arak'Char fight them on a near-daily basis, ensuring their territory is kept safe from the beasts, that if left unchecked, could very likely overwhelm the halls of the underground City of Arka'Gharad.

Lightning storms are common in the highest peaks of the Morrdoun Mountains and ominously illuminate the ash clouds that can be seen for miles around the region. The Arak'Char believe this is caused by Signis, the God of Lightning, as he strikes down at his brother Arak'almundae's domain as punishment for him remaining in the mortal plane. Some ancient elves tell of a time when the mountains were brimming with animal and plant life, the sun that shone through the white and wispy clouds made the peaks glimmer hues of silver, gold, green and blue. Many elves lived peaceful lives in the tranquil mountains, but when Arak'almundae dug through the rocks forging his subterranean domain, his fire caused the stone to melt and spew up through cracks in the earth, bringing vast clouds of ash and scorching magma rivers that changed the landscape here forever.

## THOOLMUNDAE, THE GREAT VOLCANO

The acrid smog that fills the blood-red skies of southeast Neothera hangs heavy over the black, rocky peaks of the Morrdoun Mountains. Towards the centre of these jagged and arid peaks sits an unnaturally large and particularly ominous-looking volcano, known throughout the world as Thoolmundae, the Fire Bringer. Some say this volcano leads to the lair of Arak'almundae himself, and others believe it is simply a natural phenomenon. Whatever tales are told of this monstrous cone of lava-belching hell-fire, there is one in particular that the Arak'Char holds dear. After the gods had finished creating Neothera they ascended back to the Ethereal Realm, yet one of the siblings refused to return.

Filled with rage at his siblings' desertion of their creation, Arak'almundae burrowed beneath the surface of the land and made a solitary home in the core of the world, certain that one day he would return on his own to purge the lands when they inevitably became corrupted. The remaining six gods and goddesses pursued the bashful Arak'almundae and attempted to pluck him from the depths of Neothera. However, his power had grown too great, and as they tore the lands upwards to the stars in their struggle, so the great volcano, Thoolmundae was born. Today, many Neotherans believe that all of the gods did indeed ascend to the Ethereal Realm, but the ancient elves and the Arak'Char have an unshakable belief that Arak'almundae still dwells beneath the mountains to this very day.



This volcano is a sacred place to the Arak'Char, and many people come here to offer prayers to the God of Fire. Sacrifices are common, with offerings made to Arak'al-mundae in the form of foods, idols, possessions looted from their enemies, animals and even humans are thrown into its fiery core. The Arak'Char believe that by making these offerings they are acknowledging the existence of their God beneath the earth, and appeasing or inciting his wrath by the sacrifices they make. To some outsiders, the volcanic activity can be explained through science, or even magic, yet to the Arak'Char, the severity of the eruptions are a sign that the Fire God is angered or overjoyed at the offerings made by his followers.

It often falls upon on the shoulders of a shaman to decide if an eruption was due to the Fire God's rage or joy, and should the lava cause any destruction as a result of sacrifices that caused Arak'al-mundae to become angered, the person/s responsible for making the offering may become sacrifices themselves. Ash from Thoolmundae is regularly gathered from the volcano and the surrounding areas and used as an ingredient for the black war paint worn by the Arak'Char. It is believed that the closer to the volcano the ash was gathered, the greater the power and protection it offers the individual wearing it.



## RELIGION

The Arak'Char worship Arak'al-mundae, the God of Fire, and believe that this deity still resides in Neothera, deep beneath the Morrdoun Mountains in a fiery core that is his lair. The stubbornness of this God is reflected in his worshippers, where little regard for other faiths is observed by the Arak'Char. Despite this, there has only been one holy war started by the realm, where they crushed the Ahalaza, desert-dwelling people of the sands of Abral in the Fourth Age. This occurred as a result of the Ahalaza destroying the cities of Stonefold and Everblade in the name of Arak'al-mundae, apparently to force the Fire God to emerge from the core of the world and bestow them his blessing and power.

To the Arak'Char, the God of Fire is not always seen as a wrathful force, and the Ahalazarian's disregard for this belief saw them meet near extinction. Despite fire sometimes being seen as a cleansing element, capable of burning away corruption from the world, the Arak'Char only exercise force in the name of the Fire God if they believe it is what he desires, and usually if the Scorched One, leader of the Arak'Char, receives a vision from Arak'al-mundae. No matter what the request, it is carried out by the people of the fiery mountains in his name.

During the recent Burning of the Mainland, demonic and goblin magic brought destruction to almost half of the entire landmass. The Arak'Char tell how Thoolmundae, the great volcano that is believed to lead directly to the Fire God's lair, erupted, spewing forth enormous rivers of lava that cascaded north, halting at the Crystalline River. The tainted lands that the lava covered were then freed of corruption, and many eyewitnesses state that they saw Arak'al-mundae himself, riding the flames down the peaks, freeing the Morrdoun Mountains of the taint brought by the demons and goblins. To the Arak'Char this event only confirmed what they had believed all along, the God of Fire does indeed dwell in the mountains, and through thousands of years of worship, he remained loyal to his followers and saved them from the corruption that would have undoubtedly consumed the mountains.

Despite not being as widely acknowledged as Arak'al-mundae, the worship of Terralapis, the Goddess of Earth is very common amongst the Arak'Char. The Earth-mother, as she is sometimes called, was responsible for creating the land, rocks and mountains, the very home of the Arak'Char and indeed Arak'al-mundae himself. Signis, the God of Lightning is worshipped by few Arak'Char, however, he is often feared, for the lightning that strikes the peaks of the mountains can be vengeful. It is also unnervingly spectacular to behold, but also responsible for allowing Arak'al-mundae's flames to be let loose upon the ground where Signis' finger points.



Spiria, the God of Air, is seen as a fickle deity by the folk of the mountains, and little praise is offered to him, that said, the winds that frequently batter the peaks are capable of pushing people to their death or fanning Arak'almundae's flames uncontrollably. Therefore a cautious nod is sometimes offered to him when the situation calls for it.

Haman'li, the God of Nature, and Glacilla, the Goddess of Ice are rarely worshipped by the Arak'Char, for these deities are considered weak and unable to surpass the power of the God of Fire, although the legends of the War of the Gods told by the elves contradict this. These two deities are generally spoken ill of, perhaps due to a deep-rooted contempt at Arak'almundae almost being defeated by the combined forces of nature and ice during the Second Age. Sequilla, the Goddess of Water is seldom worshipped by the Arak'Char and these people usually view the Goddess with contempt, largely because she is capable of easily extinguishing the Fire God's flames.

Although Sequilla provides all living things with life-giving nourishment, rainfall is scarce in the Morrdoun Mountains, and this is met with mixed opinions by the Arak'Char. On one hand, Sequilla rarely makes her presence felt, and therefore allows the Fire God's flames to burn without being extinguished, on the other hand, it makes survival in the mountains difficult, forcing the Arak'Char to search for water deep in the caverns of the mountains, often with little success. Osirah, the God of the Sun, and Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon are both acknowledged by the Arak'Char as creator deities, and thanks are given to them for birthing their true God, Arak'almundae. The main holidays, festivals and traditions observed by the Arak'Char are Chilen's Day, Gamebird Trials, Tregarthia, Ara'koa, Harmony of the Creators and Stromwoven. You can read more about these notable events from *page 196* onwards.

## REALM STYLE

If you decide your character will belong to the Arak'Char, you should bear in mind the following points regarding costuming and role-play; however, these are not strict guidelines, they are simply listed to assist you in getting a feel for the aesthetics of the realm. From an out of character perspective, this realm, the look of the city, its culture, costuming, weapons, armour and equipment etc. can be loosely based on Zulu tribes, the traditional Mohawk indigenous people and Tolkien's orcs (especially of Mordor). A quick internet search of these topics will yield some informative and inspiring results. The colours of the realm are red, black, brown and grey, offset with silver and gold, and where possible you should make use of these colours when putting together costumes for an Arak'Char character.

The Arak'Char are considered to be the hardest people in all of Neothera, used to weathering the harshest of climates and fighting their foes relentlessly upon the battlefield. To the Arak'Char, trust is earned, not given freely, and they will always offer their allies backup providing it does not conflict with the will of Arak'almundae, the God of Fire, with whom they place their lives in his hands.

The Arak'Char rarely rely on technology to aid them in any pursuits they follow, and the magic and essence of fire and earth will provide them with everything they need to fulfil a task. They regularly offer praise to the Fire God and perceive their dreams and visions as the deity communicating with them directly. All Arak'Char pay careful attention to the qualities relating to the Fire and Earth Elements and often devote their entire existence to ensuring the will of Arak'almundae is carried out, regardless of how this may affect them.





# BLACK HAMMER BAY

(PLAYABLE REALM)



TWO STURDY HAMMERS, THE FAVOURED WEAPON OF THE LATE CAPTAIN BLACK HAMMER (THE PIRATE KING) CROSS OVER A FLOWING BANNER WITH THE WORDS STRENGTH. FORTUNE. GLORY AT ITS CENTRE. THIS IS THE MANTRA THAT THE INHABITANTS OF BLACK HAMMER BAY LIVE AND DIE BY.



# MAINLAND NEOTHERA

## REALM OF BLACK HAMMER BAY

Black Hammer Bay is an infamous pirate city situated on the south coast of the Mainland and resides between the L'Enaroussian City of Jerrod's Front and the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest. Those who have never found their place in society within the various realms of Neothera have ended up here for the long haul - for Black Hammer Bay is the home of the lost and the damned.

Established in 1660 of the Fourth Age the city started as little more than a fishing village and minor trade hub. No one is sure exactly who founded the bay and there was little in the way of governance here until various mercenary groups began making it their base of operations, with Maximus Leopold, a particularly ruthless commander that absconded his post in the L'Enarousse navy decided to plough money into the bay, expanding its defences and creating more jobs and opportunities for trade as a result. The bay eventually became known as Fortune's Rest. This name was coined by the mercenaries that came there following the completion of jobs to count their often ill-gotten treasures, away from the eyes of the Law Keepers of the Tutela Syndicate who did not operate in the bay until many centuries later.

Captain Sidious Black Hammer I was the first Pirate King that believed in civilised progress, tired of seeing the lawless city viewed as a backward realm that thrived on dishonesty and crime. Much to the shock and anger of the citizens of Fortune's Rest, in the year 2267 of the Fourth Age, just four years after he became the Pirate King, he signed a treaty with the Tutela Syndicate, allowing them to open a bank and offices in the bay. This, in turn, meant all citizens here would be required to abide by the universal laws they set if they were to have a presence in the realm.

Surprisingly the transition into a lawful realm went smoothly, with the bay becoming more prosperous as trade routes opened with other realms that had previously refused to work with the lawless city. Fortune's Rest became known as Black Hammer Bay, and following Captain Sidious Black Hammer I's death at the age of sixty-seven, his son, Captain Sidious Black Hammer II took control, continuing to keep the realm relatively lawful until Captain Sidious Black Hammer III became the Pirate King in the year 2364 following Black Hammer II's death due to gangrene.

Despite the presence of the Tutela Syndicate in Black Hammer Bay piracy, smuggling and many other crimes still occur here, and many say it is in the blood of the pirates, that cannot be so easily diluted by the presence of the Law Keepers alone. Even Tutela Syndicate employees here are known to take bribes or profit from the misfortunes of others, with rumours of a secret tax being paid by the Pirate King and other prominent crews to persuade the Law Keepers to turn a blind eye to their business. Perhaps the most important reason the Tutela Syndicate remain present in Black Hammer Bay, and that its citizens have grown to accept the laws that have been put in place here by them, is due to a longstanding conflict with the L'Enarousse, that almost escalated to the brink of all-out-war during the reign of Captain Sidious Black Hammer I. In the centuries leading up to Black Hammer I signing a treaty with the Tutela Syndicate to allow them to operate in the bay, conflict with the L'Enarousse of Jerrod's Front had reached a tipping point and the years of naval skirmishes and plundering of ships forced the L'Enaroussian governor Theodore Marsell (Governor Philippe Marsell's father) to consider declaring war on Black Hammer Bay.





Fearing that a full-scale assault on the bay would see it razed to the ground, Black Hammer I took cautionary measures to prevent any further conflict by welcoming the Tutela Syndicate into the city. Allowing the Syndicate to operate here meant that it would not be in the interests of the L'Enarousse to make enemies of them, and if the law was to be upheld in the bay, there should be no reason to destroy a realm that could prove useful to the economy. Citizens from both realms welcomed this peace treaty; however, others felt military action should still be taken.

Although the treaty remains in place to this day, battles continue on the high seas, and plundering is still commonplace. However, many believe the L'Enaroussian governor and Pirate King have made a deal in secret, where piracy can continue, providing a portion of the booty is paid back to the L'Enaroussian government as compensation. Other opinions are that a little competition on the southern seas is good for morale, and keeps both realms on top of their game should they ever need to unite and fight back a threat bigger than both sides put together.

While most of the folk at Black Hammer Bay are perceived as untrustworthy scoundrels, many do not share the mercenary attitude of the majority and could be called trustworthy or even honourable. The swashbuckling fighting style that was developed in Black Hammer Bay and aboard their vessels on the high seas is respected by those skilled in combat and even studied and used by individuals from other realms.

The ocean is said to be in the blood of all those drawn to Black Hammer Bay and the history and culture brought to the city by members of other races and realms still lives on in the colourful way people here celebrate life. The city is a location visited by many people of the Mainland and indeed beyond who wish to see the variety of goods and experiences the bay has to offer. It is even considered somewhat of a tourist hot-spot to the wealthy high-ups of other realms, much to the humour of the citizens that call Black Hammer Bay their home.

## LEADERSHIP

Records state that Maximus Leopold took control of Black Hammer Bay (then known as Fortune's Rest) sometime during the mid-1700s in the Fourth Age. The commander of a large group of mercenaries made vast improvements to the city, and people flocked there as it grew in notoriety as a realm where the law did not have to be followed if one wanted to make an easy if somewhat dangerous living.

With around 1200 buccaneers and almost thirty ships at his command during the peak of his career, Leopold's plundering earned him the title of Pirate King of Fortune's Rest. His reign lasted almost forty years until he was captured by the L'Enarousse and executed in Jerrod's Front as a warning to others who would follow the same path.

After Leopold's death, the people of Fortune's Rest decided a new Pirate King (a title that can be bestowed upon males or females alike) should be chosen. However, the title would not come without potential consequences. Whilst fame and fortune would undoubtedly be gained by a Pirate King, should the realm fall, or the Pirate King be captured, the responsibility fell on the shoulders of the chosen leader to accept any punishment received as a result of the lawless actions of the people of the city and at sea. In the case of the L'Enarousse, this would usually take the form of being publicly hung, drawn and quartered for being an enemy of the state as an example to other would-be pirates. However, this did not deter many potential Pirate Kings, and the prospects of immense wealth and power made the post a very sought-after position.

To decide who should receive the role of Pirate King, a council was created. This would consist of seven of the most wealthy and notorious captains, and each would vote to declare whom they deemed most suitable for the role. In the case of a tie, the captain with the biggest crew and most amassed wealth would usually win. A new Pirate King can potentially be decided every year because the council of pirates always meets during the festival known as Collection Days (A.K.A) Pirate King's Tribute. During this time, new council members may be selected, and existing ones made redundant according to the requirements set to sit at the council.

Even to this day the council, known as the Pirate Conclave still exists, and the same process for electing a new Pirate King is in place. Following Captain Sidious Black Hammer III's death in the year 2392 of the Fifth Age, Robert Smith, an infamous captain granted the gift of 'unlife' claimed the title of Pirate King by brute force alone. Captain Sidious Black Hammer III held the title of Pirate King from 2364 until his murder in 2392, and he met his demise at the hands of a group of assassins known as the Dead Hand, with the kill order coming from Captain Robert Smith.

Smith once held a place on the Pirate Conclave but he never saw eye-to-eye with Captain Black Hammer, and some accounts even mention that he happened upon a secret so controversial that if made public knowledge could spell the end of Sidious' rule and potentially result in his death at the hands of the Pirate Conclave.





Whatever this secret was, it never saw the light of day despite various stories circulating, the most controversial of which was that Sidious was a blood relative of the L'Enaroussian governor Philippe Marsell. Captain Black Hammer ordered Captain Robert Smith and his crew to be executed, but it was not the pirates of the bay that carried out the sentence. Instead, he tipped off the L'Enaroussian navy who intercepted Smith's ship with a small fleet and sank it killing the captain and his crew.

A relieved Sidious assumed the matter was now resolved and received a large payout from the L'Enaroussian government as a result. However, the world had not seen the end of Robert Smith, and he and his crew returned to shore some weeks later, ghastly to behold as they had somehow acquired the gift or 'curse of unlife'. Neither alive nor dead and believing themselves to be blessed by Sequilla, the Goddess of Water who returned them to life and granted them incredible power -

Smith and his crew launched an assault on the favoured captains and crews of Sidious Black Hammer, cutting them down until the remaining members of the Pirate Conclave declared Robert Smith the new Pirate King to stop the slaughter. Shortly afterwards, news reached Black Hammer Bay of the assassination of Sidious as he attended a meeting of the realm leaders at the Caddington Estate, and as Smith told his tale to the people of the bay they scorned the treacherous, late Captain Sidious Black Hammer as a traitor. They accepted that Smith and his crew were truly blessed by the Water Goddess, and the title of Pirate King had been justly claimed.

Since gaining the title of Pirate King, albeit by force, the citizens of Black Hammer Bay have grown to accept Robert Smith as their new realm leader and the city has seen an improvement to the economy since the end of the rule of the late Captain Sidious Black Hammer III. Many citizens are praising the actions of Robert Smith by allowing piracy to flourish once again since he came to power, although concerns have been raised that this will incite the wrath of the L'Enarousse should this continue. Smith could potentially start a war, something that the Pirate Conclave fear he is attempting to do due to the L'Enaroussian navy trying to kill him and his crew. Reports of bigger payoffs to the Tutela Syndicate to allow piracy to increase are also coming to light, and the branch located in Black Hammer Bay is now under constant surveillance by Tutela managers.

## THE CITY OF BLACK HAMMER BAY

Black Hammer Bay is considered the most diverse city in all of Neothera and was established sometime during the mid-1700s in the Fourth Age. It started life as a small fishing village and was expanded upon by Maximus Leopold who used his wealth to fortify the realm until it reached city status in the decades after. Many of the scruffy-wooden shacks and other structurally unsound dwelling places in this pirate city are often constructed in less than a day. If you want a place to live in Black Hammer Bay or wish to open any type of profitable establishment, providing you have some spare timber, knock-up a shack because if you build it and it lasts the night, the land it is built upon is yours the next morning. A main-frame of quarters or districts has never really been established in the city due to this rule unless one takes into account the port, which is the most heavily safeguarded, well-built and lucrative location in the city.

Amidst the wooden and brick-built buildings that bear similarities to other styles of architecture found throughout the Mainland due to the diverse inhabitants of this realm, many banana and coconut trees are found. In these parts, you can make the best banana or coconut-based rum in all the land.



The alcohol and best ingredients are often used as currency by some of the citizens, and many distilleries supply the Mainland and other continents with arguably the strongest and tastiest alcoholic beverages in the known world. This shanty-city bears a stark resemblance to what Jerrod's Front could have been if disciplined, militant forces and strong governance were not established. Whilst the majority of its people are often mercenaries, pirates, conmen, drunkards, thieves, prostitutes and vagabonds, the inhabitants of this city attempt to abide by the laws of the land established when Captain Black Hammer I allowed the Tutela Syndicate to operate in the city. Contrary to popular belief, Black Hammer Bay is a relatively safe city to navigate, providing one avoids the dark back alleys and certain taverns or shops only locals are permitted to enter. These are often marked with a black cross on the door to warn foreigners away. Many of these establishments conduct illicit business behind closed doors, are owned by notorious crews of pirates or are generally not accepting of outsiders.

There are little in the way of educational facilities in the city, and the closest one would get to any sort of tutoring is becoming an apprentice to a crafter or pastor. These opportunities are relatively easy to come by. For a tutor to earn an honest living means that the Law Keepers will stay off their backs, especially considering the high price of bribes should one want to pay the Tutela Syndicate, or more powerful pirate crews to turn a blind eye to their operations. The city does have several hospitals and other such establishments of a basic nature that improve the quality of life for its citizens. However, everything in Black Hammer Bay comes at a price, and it is not uncommon for people to be refused treatment or services that can be found for free in other realms if they cannot afford an upfront fee.

## THE PORT OF BLACK HAMMER BAY

The port of Black Hammer Bay is a constant hub of activity both day and night and is awash with merchants, brothels, taverns and small churches dedicated to the many faiths observed by the inhabitants of the realm. The docks are divided into three sections, the west, central and eastern districts. To the west of the docks, one will find the shipyard, where vessels are constructed and taken for repairs, and also many warehouses of varying sizes that store goods collected by the crews that dominate the city. These warehouses are usually heavily guarded by the pirate crews that own them and are often used as living-quarters when their ships are not at sea. Warehouse Number Seven, one of the largest structures in the docks, is owned and occupied by the Dead Hand, the most notorious guild of mercenaries and assassins in the Mainland.

Those that attempt to enter the premises without permission are routinely beaten to within an inch of their lives and tossed into the street. Such is the influence of the Dead Hand in the City of Black Hammer Bay, and their connections to realm leader Robert Smith, many consider the guild untouchable, and even the Tutela Syndicate allow their operations to go regularly unhindered.

The central docks are undoubtedly the busiest and most frequently visited location in all of Black Hammer Bay. Providing they are not carrying large amounts of cargo, ships regularly embark from the jetties here and arrive from long voyages. It is common to see the vessels owned by monied captains moored here, and this is usually a statement of their wealth, fame or infamy to those passing by. The late Captain Sidious Black Hammer III's galleon, the Sea's Greed, was always moored here when not at sea, and quite often the captain was seen ostentatiously strutting about the deck in his finery, enjoying the attention he gained from the folk of the bay.





Nowadays, the Sea's Greed is no longer moored here, and it was rumoured that when Robert Smith became realm leader he gifted the vessel to a lesser-known guild identifying themselves as the Menders, Makers and Medics, simply for lighting a few candles in a tavern when it got dark. This tale has resonated throughout the realm, and many suspect Smith's actions to be a direct nod of disrespect to Captain Black Hammer, giving away a luxuriously expensive vessel for such little work, simply because he wanted it out of his sight and out of the hands of the late captain's loyal crew. Visitors from foreign realms always anchor their vessels here and are welcomed by a host of colourful establishments that charge higher prices for goods and services in a bid to make easy cash from those not familiar with the ways of the city. This location is also home to the Lusty Wench tavern, the largest brick-built establishment in the city, and base of operations for Robert Smith and his enormous crew.

The eastern district of the docks is heavily guarded by the Black Hammer Bay military which is composed of crews of pirates and privateers loyal to the realm and ready to defend the city from coastal attacks both day and night. An enormous white lighthouse named the Tusk is located here and also heavily fortified stone walls and cannon towers. These structures were built during the 1900s of the Fourth Age following several attacks from the sea by the L'Enarousse, and prove vital in the defences of the city. Of course, there are other defensive locations dotted throughout the central and western districts of the docks but the armaments and fortifications in the eastern district are considered a vital commodity should the L'Enarousse decide to commence attacks on the city from the ocean once again.

## THE LUSTY WENCH TAVERN

Aside from the large warehouses that are situated in the western district of the port of Black Hammer Bay, the largest and most famous structure in the pirate city is the Lusty Wench Tavern. The construction of the premises was ordered by Commander Maximus Leopold shortly after he took control of the realm, and was built as a guildhall from where he would manage the bulk of his affairs. Upon its completion, the guildhall took the form of a fortified keep, with cannon towers, thick stone walls, and strong iron doors that were guarded by his soldiers. However, following Leopold's disappearance at sea, his small army dismantled and as the years passed the keep came under the control of various Pirate Kings.

Sadly the Pirate Kings and their crews that occupied the keep did not maintain the structure, and by the early 2000s of the Fourth Age, most of the adjoining buildings had collapsed, with the fallen stone salvaged to aid building projects in the other parts of the city.



To this day, all that remains is the four main cannon towers and inner halls of the keep, a huge chamber that was converted into the largest public house in all of Black Hammer Bay, and a series of smaller rooms in the upper levels that are off-limits to those not on official realm business. Standing four-storeys-high, the remnants of Leopold's once impenetrable keep have been built upon with brick and wood to house the affairs of whichever Pirate King holds hegemony over the realm of Black Hammer Bay. Kitchens, accommodation, private rooms used by prostitutes to entertain their clients, offices and communal areas are all present within the tavern, and the most fortified rooms that stood the test of time are occupied by Robert Smith and his most trusted crew.

As its name suggests, the tavern was once partially a bordello, and to an extent, still is today. The premises is the meeting place for many individuals that have arrived in or frequent the City of Black Hammer Bay, or have business with the Pirate King and his crew. The Lusty Wench is undoubtedly the most famous tavern in all of Neothera and all employees answer to the Pirate King, with their wages being paid by him or her, and any profits made via any type of business being-pocketed by the current realm leader.



From the outside, the building is impressive to behold, and four large towers built from grey stone sit triumphantly in the sky with banners bearing the crest of Black Hammer Bay jostling in the winds atop them. Various wooden extensions are built onto the sides of the remnants of the keep and are held in place by wooden supports that extend upward from the original stone walls, and colourful awnings shelter those below from the hot sun.

Ochre plaster covers the stone on the lower floors of the keep; however, it has not been maintained and is open to the elements and is falling away in most places. Above the entrance to the tavern is the bow of a boat, said to be salvaged from a L'Enaroussian schooner owned by a naval commander that met his end attempting to attack the bay with his fleet. From the foremast hangs a black banner with a lewd depiction painted in blue and white of the Goddess of Water, Sequilla. When entering the public hall of the tavern, one is immediately greeted by armed guards that ensure weapons are taken and stored safely until one leaves the premises. At the centre of the hall grows a massive *Roystonea regia*, a species of the palm tree, and its trunk has twisted as it climbs towards the ceiling of the fourth floor, breaking through the tiled roof allowing beams of sunlight to shine onto the sawdust-covered floorboards of the ground level. From this tree is nailed various tributes paid to the Pirate Kings of years long gone, in the form of idols, flags and skulls of the enemies of the city, and all manner of items that could tell countless stories should one have the time to enquire with the older residents of Black Hammer Bay.

## RELIGION

Due to the diversity of the people that call Black Hammer Bay their home, coming from varying different races and creeds, faiths of all descriptions are observed and accepted in this realm. From the creator deities, Osirah and Senetsu, to the Seven, to the newly discovered divine figures commonly worshipped in the Western Realms, Black Hammer Bay celebrates a rich and broad culture of belief systems that make this a colourful and accepting city to visit or call home. The bay does not have any grand cathedrals or elaborate temples, and instead, it contains many small churches that have been built by the followers of a particular deity (or deities). The desecration of these holy places is very much frowned upon due to the Freedom of Belief Movement that has been in place since Maximus Leopold became Pirate King in the 1700s. This movement offers the citizens of Black Hammer Bay the right to worship a deity as they see fit without persecution from others, and those convicted of doing so are exiled from the city, or executed depending on the severity of the actions they take upon holy places or individuals.

Despite a wealth of varied belief systems observed in the city one deity is a firm favourite amongst the citizens here, especially those that spend most of their days at sea. Sequilla, the Goddess of Water is commonly worshipped by the inhabitants of Black Hammer Bay, being seafaring folk, they pray for her to ensure their journeys upon the waves will be pleasant, and their catch of the day bountiful. Much to the annoyance of the L'Enarousse, she is often depicted as a busty maiden with blue hair, naked and illustrated in seductive poses. Spiria, the God of Air, is also favoured, mostly that his winds may be advantageous to their ships, and to appease his mischievous and often volatile nature. He is even offered small sacrifices by those that wish to be granted favour before plundering ships, that he gives them agility and the upper-hand in combat. Prayers are also offered to Signis, the God of Lightning, that his powers may make the citizens of the bay wealthy, and strong enough to fend off assaults from the neighbouring L'Enarousse, or any terrifying sea creatures that may crush their boats in the ocean.







A lightning storm at sea is often seen as a good omen, where Signis is striking down at sea serpents that could otherwise sink unsuspecting vessels. The main holidays, festivals and traditions observed by Black Hammer Bay are Spring's Dawn / Winter's End, Chilen's Day, Gamebird Trials, Tregarthia, Collection Days (A.K.A) Pirate King's Tribute, Harmony of the Creators and Stormwoven. You can read more about these notable events from *page 196* onwards.

## REALM STYLE

If you decide your character will belong to Black Hammer Bay, you should bear in mind the following points regarding costuming and role-play. However, these are not strict guidelines; they are simply-listed to assist you in getting a feel for the aesthetics of the realm. From an out of character perspective, this realm, the look of the city, its culture, costuming, weapons, armour and equipment etc. is based on the Golden Age of Piracy and film/literature such as *Treasure Island*, *Black Sails* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*. A quick internet search of these topics will yield some informative and inspiring results. The base colours of the realm are black and white and at least one or two of any other colour of your choosing, and where possible you should make use of these colours when putting together costumes for a Black Hammer Bay character.

The folk of Black Hammer Bay are extremely diverse, with people of various races and creeds calling the realm their home. They do not judge others for their religious beliefs, nor how they chose to live their lives. They are surprisingly open-minded when it comes to the opinions of others unless those opinions would persecute or threaten their friends, family or way of life. The roots of the realm lay heavily in piracy and mercenary activity. Therefore the folk of the bay are not afraid to break the law should it mean they can afford to put food on the table or allow them to acquire expensive or specialist goods that they would otherwise not have access to without being wealthy.

The bond between pirate crews is often very strong, and disloyalty is met with dire consequences. Comrades are accepted as family members, and the crews with the strongest bonds are generally the most successful. Despite other realms labelling the folk of Black Hammer Bay as bloodthirsty mercenaries with few morals (and whilst some certainly are), the citizens of the bay live true to their beliefs. They seek adventure, no matter how trivial the cause and undertake tasks with the ferocious hearts of a people whose culture draws upon the colourful history of the entire Mainland.



# BLIGHTFOOT GUNNERS

(PLAYABLE REALM)



THE WINGS AND COGS OF INDUSTRY REPRESENT THE BLIGHTFOOT GUNNERS INNOVATION IN MECHANICAL CONSTRUCTION, FLYING TECHNOLOGY TO NEW HEIGHTS ON THE WINGS OF THEIR SUCCESS, AND NOT FORGETTING THE RELATIVELY SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME IT HAS TAKEN THEM TO GET TO WHERE THEY ARE TODAY.



# MAINLAND NEOTHERA

## REALM OF THE BLIGHTFOOT GUNNERS

The Blightfoot Gunners hail from the City of Blightfoot Ridge located in the Crag-Spine Mountains in the west of the Mainland and are considered the most technologically advanced realm in all of Neothera. The Gunners, as they are often called by other realms, are industrious people who favour the practicalities of science over the use of magic to fulfil even the most complex of tasks. Being the first realm to successfully harness the power of steam, cog and electricity to operate mechanical devices, their city has become a mecca for those who would devote their lives to engineering. Blightfoot Ridge stands at the forefront of medical science, and their surgeons are second to none. Their inventors are even rumoured to have created devices capable of teleportation or opening rifts in both time and space. Whilst the dapper dress-sense of the Blightfoot Gunners may be seen as a farcical statement of pompousness by individuals from other realms, their technology, inventions, and especially their weaponry, is most certainly not!

The City of Blightfoot Ridge (formerly known as Dansk Ridge) was founded in 1601 in the Fourth Age when settlers travelled west from the Great City of Netherlye in central Neothera in search of new frontiers.

It is rumoured that Marlston Dansk, the leader of the expedition to the west, was fleeing the Netherlye after refusing to hand over to the royal family, blueprints of unknown origin that contained revolutionary engineering concepts. His reasons for withholding such important information was apparently due to his distrust of the royals, and that they would use the ideas contained within the blueprints for selfish purposes, supposedly to bring the entire Mainland under their rule.

Upon arriving at the northern base of the Crag-Spine Mountains, where the rocky peaks met the Far'dhoum Forests, the settlers laid the foundations for a brand new town, naming their haven Dansk Ridge after the man who led them to this slice of paradise. The area was (and is to this day) filled with an abundance of natural resources, such as timber, stone and many varieties of ore. Because of this, the construction of their new frontier began quickly, with a modestly sized settlement being constructed within a couple of years, reaching city status a few hundred years later. The founders of Dansk Ridge were blessed with several great minds who were responsible for inventing mechanical devices that would see the city become the most technologically advanced realm in the Mainland.





The advancement in technology came quickly, and some were even suspicious of the speed that these inventors produced new contraptions and where their amazing ideas came from. Concerns were raised that the blueprints these contraptions originated from were indeed the reason Marlston Dansk had decided to leave Netherlye. However, these suspicions were quickly forgotten when it became apparent that the devices would save Dansk Ridge from an unexpected danger, the giant mountain trolls that were drawn to the town with an insatiable appetite for any creatures that were smaller than them.

In the 1800s, a particularly humungous and ferocious troll plagued Dansk Ridge, stealing cattle and destroying many structures on the outskirts of the city. Along with daily attacks by smaller mountain trolls, this became such a problem that Alek Liberty, an inventor and skilled hunter used technology he had been developing to push back the tides of trolls battering the city. Blightfoot, the biggest and most aggressive troll, that left corruption wherever he walked, was taken down by Alek and his soldiers, and the lesser mountain trolls culled to keep the city safe. As a tribute to the dark days that the people of Dansk Ridge endured, in later years, the city became known as Blightfoot Ridge.

The success of this weaponised technology saw its production increased, leading to factories being constructed to mass-produce the tools that would keep the city safe. Eventually, this technology would make its way into the other Mainland realms with the engineers of Blightfoot Ridge becoming very wealthy as a result. The varied and plentiful resources found in the realm of the Blightfoot Gunners has undoubtedly played an important part in the success of the City of Blightfoot Ridge, along with the great minds that founded it and those who have made their homes here due to access to technology which is rarely found in other realms. The City of Blightfoot Ridge has numerous institutes dedicated to science, medicines and technology, and places at these schools are highly sought after.

Blightfoot Ridge is a city of splendour, and whilst the gothic architecture here is not nearly as beautiful as elven creations, it is imposing and spectacular to behold. It is a testament to the great minds that advanced technology here to the extent that the city is the number one spot for tourism and trade in all of Neothera. Relying so heavily on technology means that magic is somewhat of a declining art in the city, and whilst it is still used by some, there is little call for schools or specialist trainers in Blightfoot Ridge. Although if one looks hard enough, they may be lucky enough to find someone willing to teach them.



Magic is considered somewhat of a fanciful indulgence, with some upper-class taverns or theatres using its power only to impress and wow their clientele via the use of cantrips. However, there are believed to be some soldiers trained in the magical arts as specialist units should there be a threat to the city that can only be resolved by the use of magic as a weapon or deterrence.

## LEADERSHIP

Blightfoot Ridge has been governed by the Liberty family since Head Minister Marlston Dansk's death in 1678 of the Fourth Age. Famous for leading the first assaults against the marauding mountain trolls, and slaying the gargantuan beast the city took its namesake from, Alek Liberty became realm leader after Dansk passed of natural causes. Until recently, various members of the Liberty family won the hearts and votes of the people of Blightfoot Ridge for the past seven centuries. Blightfoot Ridge decides its governance similar to how the L'Enaroussian people choose theirs, with the people's vote being taken once every twenty years, or sooner should polls point to unrest amongst the people or the current head minister becomes unable to rule due to illness or death.



Head Minister Joseph Liberty came to power in 2334 at the age of twenty and is the last member of the Liberty family to have made a difference in Blightfoot Ridge - although some say not necessarily for the better. In 2391, Joseph ordered the construction of war machines named dreadnaughts that were gifted to the Mainland realms supposedly to protect them. However the powerful, robotic killing machines, operating via artificial intelligence, soon began to wreak havoc, turning on those whom they were supposed to protect.

It took many months for the machines to be captured and dismantled, and they left in their wake a river of bodies and destruction. It was later discovered that Joseph Liberty had succumbed to demonic possession, and the dreadnoughts were simply a way for the Nightmares to infiltrate the Mainland realms and cause as much death and destruction as possible. Joseph eventually was freed of the demons that took control of his mind, but at a great cost. His health began to deteriorate as his frail and elderly body shut down following the exorcism, leading to his death in the year 2392. His children, Charmaine and Tennerson whom he had previously exiled from Blightfoot Ridge whilst under demonic influences returned to the city. They asked the people of the realm to remember their father, not for the pain he had caused whilst under demonic possession, but for the good he did for the city before this, allowing them to enjoy new technological advances and live in relative peace compared to the troubles other realms had once suffered.

It was assumed that Joseph's children, Charmaine or Tennerson would wish to consider the role of the head minister after their father's passing, and despite polls being held that showed the people of the city would accept one of the siblings as a leader, the pair declined, and some council members even suggested that neither were capable of holding such an important role anyway.

The siblings retreated to the Liberty School of Monster Hunting where they remained away from the public eye but continued to tutor those that wanted to guard the realm from the consistent threat of the savage trolls in the region. It fell upon the Tutela Syndicate to step up and take control of Blightfoot Ridge until a suitable head minister could be found, which did not occur until November of 2394.

Street gangs had always been an issue in Blightfoot Ridge and over the past few centuries, several dubious groups had come to rule over an ever-increasing underworld of organised crime. Conspiracists report that some head ministers and even the Tutela Syndicate had allowed the gangs to continue to operate providing fees were paid as compensation for the law to turn a blind eye to their activities. However, since Joseph Liberty's death, gang warfare on the streets of Blightfoot Ridge had begun to grow almost uncontrollably, with the Tutela Syndicate supposedly taking larger bribes to allow the gangs to continue to operate.





One of these gangs, known as the Henesey Family, which started as little more than a group of criminals running illegal gambling and animal fighting rings, money laundering and other petty crimes, had grown to become arguably the largest and most powerful criminal organisation in the city. Looking to turn the activities of the organisation to earn more legitimate means of income, Danny Henesey became the talk of the city when he ran for the role of head minister. Whilst some council members and more wealthy citizens ridiculed this notion, they were shocked as the polls revealed Danny had won his post by a great margin. Danny was well known for his hands-on approach when dealing with any matters that were brought to his family's attention. He would be a beacon of hope for the common people of the city, uniting various smaller gangs under the Henesey family title, and offering protection to businesses who were otherwise at the mercy of rival gang leaders that drained them of income, taking their goods or trashing their premises should they not want to, or be unable to pay for their 'protective services'.

Danny Henesey has become the voice of the people of Blightfoot Ridge, and a shining star for the working classes. He is somewhat honest about his dubious past but states that all of this is now behind him. He is a redeemed man, a leader of the people and proof that one can work their way up from the slums to become a great person capable of uniting all those who are otherwise divided. However, some beg to differ and are not afraid to speak out against Danny and the Henesey family, stating they still operate outside of the law, and Danny's position in office is little more than a ruse to allow his family and organisation to do as they please with little or no consequences.

## THE CITY OF BLIGHTFOOT RIDGE

Starting life as little more than a small town built at the base of the Crag-Spine Mountains, and being established by settlers from the Great City of Netherlye, the City of Blightfoot Ridge is the second youngest realm in the Mainland, and arguably the most technologically advanced in all of Neothera. If you have the money, life in the city can be very comfortable, and even poor families are considered to have a better quality of life than those in other realms due to the amenities available in almost every corner of Blightfoot Ridge. High society here is booming, and those with large amounts of cash often move to this city, making new homes in the grand, black slate-roofed, red-brick townhouses, apartments or even countryside mansions in the southeastern side of the city that the lower classes can only dream of affording. This mountain stronghold is widely considered a safe and comfortable place to live, with the promise of opportunity around every corner.

The wide cobbled streets become filled with more elaborately built abodes as the central precinct of the city is approached, and the candlelit lanterns on the outskirts of Blightfoot Ridge are replaced by gas and electric lamps atop decorative wrought iron poles. The city centre is a place of wealth and grandiosity, where monied people live in relative safety compared to those closer to the edges of the city, where troll attacks are more likely to occur.

Located directly in the central precinct the council halls and offices of government can be found, built from granite quarried from the nearby mountains and wonderfully sculpted with decorative pillars, domed bronze-tiled roofs and with stained glass windows that depict the city history. It is here that all matters relating to the law, taxes, government, merchants and any other issues that affect the city, or its relations with other realms are discussed. The second-largest branch of the Tutela Syndicate bank can also be found here, occupying offices adjacent to the council halls and the Ministerial Lodge, the residence where the head minister makes his or her home. Only the finest goods can be purchased from shops located in the central precinct of the city, and a pretty penny is asked as payment. Here music halls, theatres, upper-class taverns, tearooms and restaurants can be found, alongside educational institutes, whose places are highly sought after, and only awarded to those with exceptional minds and commitment to their field of study.

There are two main institutions located in Blightfoot Ridge, the Rowston Medical College, founded by Hurley Rowston, a pioneer in his field, and the Dansk College of Engineering, named after the great engineer and founder of Blightfoot Ridge, Marlston Dansk. Both were established in the early 1800s of the Fourth Age, and to this day are largely-funded via private tuition fees and taxpayers' money. Another notable institution located in the middle precinct of the city is the Buckleberry Institution of Music and the Arts, founded in 1973 by the famous portrait artist Gene Buckle, and equally famous flautist and conductor, Sara Berry. On the southern slopes of the city in the outer precinct, those wishing to hone their skills in crafts such as alchemy, enchanting and smithing are awarded places at the Crafter's Guild and Institution, established in the middle 1800s, thought to be the largest educational institution in the Mainland.

Taverns, traders and tearooms are plentiful throughout the middle and outer precincts of Blightfoot Ridge and factories and workshops of varying levels of technological advancement operate almost twenty-four hours a day, producing goods ranging from cutlery to firearms, to machine parts and building materials. Buskers and street traders litter these precincts amongst crowds of smartly dressed citizens going about their daily routines.



Of course, 'smart' is a relative term when comparing fashion and the quality of mostly factory-made attire worn by the people of Blightfoot Ridge to other realms who do not enjoy the same level of technology! A strong military presence can be seen in the outer precinct of the city for two reasons, firstly due to the constant threat of troll and monster attacks that almost always come from the mountains, and secondly because this precinct houses the poorest citizens of Blightfoot Ridge, with crime being frequent here in many forms.

Armed cavalry units are regularly deployed on the outskirts of the city, and these soldiers are equipped with firearms that are capable of bringing down ferocious trolls. If the threat is too great, for example, a particularly nasty troll wanders too close to the city, the cavalry can quickly retreat to the watchtowers, armed with powerful automatic rifles, or the numerous barracks dotted around the outer precinct to call for backup.

## LIBERTY SCHOOL OF MONSTER HUNTING

For the residents of Blightfoot Ridge to survive against the ever-increasing amount of wild trolls that wander the Crag-Spine Mountains, the Blightfoot Gunners have developed weapons to scare away and kill the creatures that threaten them. Those who wish to defend the city can train at the Liberty School of Monster Hunting to learn how to best-protect both their loved ones and their livelihoods.

Towards the western edge of the City of Blightfoot Ridge, a narrow, winding path leads to a solitary plateau that overlooks the city from the steep granite mountainside. Two giant stone carvings of trolls act as supporting pillars either side of an ornate, sixty-foot tall iron doorway that leads into the facility. When viewing the structure from the outside one will notice it has been carved into the granite rock and is reinforced with patterned steel girders, the front of the square building stands around ten storeys tall and backs directly into the mountainside. Upon entering the grand iron doorway decorated with depictions of men and women sporting all manner of firearms and fighting trolls, only then will one realise that the facility stretches deep into the mountain itself, dwarfing the exterior which is modest in comparison.

Public-facing activities take place inside the ornately decorated and highly guarded main hall, however, more sensitive affairs take place within the chambers of the mountain itself. It is these areas that only the students of the school are permitted to enter, and with greater rank and fame amongst the monster hunting community, one is permitted-access to areas of this mountain citadel where the most advanced training takes place.

From initiation to graduation, students are taught techniques for slaying almost any beast known to the realms of Neothera. The school offers advanced training to those who are exceptionally gifted, and the facility also researches monster-slaying weapons and defensive mechanisms. A laboratory, off-limits to anyone who is not a member of the Liberty family, or an officer or professor, is hidden in the mountains somewhere, and it is here that genetic experiments are rumoured to take place.

The school was established by Alek Liberty in the 1700s, shortly after the giant troll named Blightfoot (from whence the city gained its name) was slain, and grew to become the most famous school of its kind in the whole of Neothera. The school has been owned and run by the Liberty family since its doors opened and has proved to be a vital investment in the safety of a city that is plagued by vile trolls and other vicious creatures which roam the nearby Crag-Spine Mountains. In 2394, the school abruptly closed its doors to the public, and barricades were erected outside of the facility. Armed guards patrol the borders and those without an official invitation are advised to vacate the site, with failure to comply resulting in warning shots being fired at anyone who ignores the guards' orders. All of this occurred after Danny Henesey came to power in Blightfoot Ridge and many people speculate that some kind of falling out occurred between the new head minister and Joseph Liberty's son and daughter, Tennerson and Charmaine who own the school and are in charge of all affairs relating to it.





## RELIGION

There are several churches dedicated to the Seven and Osirah and Senetsu that can be found in Blightfoot Ridge, however many people of this realm are not religiously inclined. Natural occurrences such as the wind, rain and snow, to name but a few, are easily answered by the application of science, and the thought of some divine being in the skies causing floods or lightning storms is viewed as farcical by more realistic thinkers. Many scientists, or those that believe the theories and research presented by them do not believe in gods or goddesses, nor an afterlife where one goes after they die. Whilst many respect the faiths of those who do believe in higher powers, some think religion is reserved for those of little intelligence, overactive minds, or to control the population through fearmongering.

Despite proof being offered of the existence of divine beings by first-age elves, the scientists of Blightfoot Ridge have also offered solid arguments for any phenomenon attributed to acts of the gods and goddesses, even going as far as to be able to explain that supernatural powers are simply an evolutionary trait, not some gift bestowed upon individuals by creator deities. To the faithless of Blightfoot Ridge, magic is acknowledged as being real but not associated with divine beings.



Its existence can be explained in several ways, ranging from an unseen force that seeps into the physical plane via the use of objects and materials that share a bond to other unseen realms, or multiverses which regularly collide with the universe, to being exposed to radiation from Element Stones that a subject had contact with at some point during their lives. The theories of Blightfoot scientists are countless, and almost all of them do not include the existence of divine beings.

Despite the general population of the city being atheists, there are still those that believe in higher powers, and whilst this is largely accepted by more liberal individuals, there are some that ridicule and belittle those who have faith. Of all the deities one could worship, Signis is most notably offered praise by some citizens of Blightfoot Ridge, for he provides the spark that gives life to all living creatures and machines. In some rare cases, it has been noted that certain mechanical constructs, such as the Liberty Dreadnaughts, developed intelligence beyond their programming, even showing basic forms of emotion.

Those that follow faiths in Blightfoot Ridge believe that this is due to Signis, Osirah or Senetsu looking curiously favourable upon a machine or its creator and bestowing the gift of deep-thought and even free will into a construct. Of course, some follow other more mainstream faiths and have belief in a variety of deities, and the worship of such figures is determined by the individual or the education passed on to them by other religious teachers. The main holidays, festivals and traditions observed by the Blightfoot Gunners are Dansk Day, Chilen's Day, Gamebird Trials, Tregarthia, Harmony of the Creators and Stormwoven. You can read more about these notable events from *page 196* onwards.



## REALM STYLE

If you decide your character will belong to the Blightfoot Gunners, you should bear in mind the following points regarding costuming and role-play, however, these are not strict guidelines, they are simply listed to assist you in getting a feel for the aesthetics of the realm. From an out of character perspective, this realm, the look of the city, its culture, costuming, weapons, armour and equipment etc. is based on the Edwardian, Georgian and Victorian eras up to the 1920s. Heavy influence is also taken from the wild west and steampunk genre, a retro-futuristic subgenre of science fiction and science fantasy that incorporates technology and aesthetic designs inspired by 19th-century industrial steam-powered machinery. A quick internet search of these topics will yield some informative and inspiring results. The colours of the realm are purple, maroon and brown, offset with silver, bronze, copper and gold, and where possible you should make use of these colours when putting together costumes for a Blightfoot character.

The people of Blightfoot Ridge are considered to be amongst the most creative and industrious in all of Neothera, and their technology has pushed the realm to the peak of advancement. Many citizens put their faith in science over divine figures, and unexplained phenomena can nearly always be explained by careful research and the application of theories created by methodical thinkers.

Due to their advanced technology, and all the benefits that come with it, such as finely crafted clothing, powerful weapons, extravagant residences, workplaces and offices, grand ballrooms, music halls, colleges and council chambers, the people of Blightfoot consider themselves somewhat superior to realms that do not share such commodities. This said, they are extremely loyal to their allies and face any situation, no matter how dire, with a stiff upper lip and often a strong pot of tea close to hand! The Blightfoot Gunners use their sharp and naturally creative minds to assess a predicament thoroughly before jumping headlong into taking action. With analysis and study, they approach problems methodically, only resorting to pulling out the 'big guns' should reasoning be beyond them.





# FROZEN NORTH

(PLAYABLE REALM)



LEST THEY FORGET THEIR FORMER, MORTAL LIVES, THE CREST OF THE WIGHTS OF THE FROZEN NORTH SHOWS A HEAD WITH FLESH ON ONE HALF AND BONE ON THE OTHER. DARKNESS COVERS THE LIVING SIDE OF THE FACE AND LIGHT THE OTHER, REPRESENTING THE PROMISE OF NEW LIFE THROUGH DEATH.



# FROZEN NORTH

## REALMS OF NALD & KARTHSWORN

Old legends of reanimated corpses have struck fear into the hearts of the living since the middle of the Third Age, and these terrifying tales have been embedded in the history of many different cultures. The undead is spoken of in many legends throughout the world of Neothera yet very little proof of their existence was found until they officially revealed themselves to the realms of the Mainland in the year 2390 of the Fifth Age.

The wights, sentient undead creatures, arrived seemingly without warning, an army of undead soldiers marching with purpose towards Fairdale, a city in Mainland Neothera that was plunged into war after a group of Blightfoot Gunners took an infected comrade there for aid. She died, rose again as a mindless-undead, and spread the infection throughout the entire city.

The soldiers of Fairdale, with assistance from the L'Enaroussian army, fought the mindless-dead for weeks before they were ready to retreat due to the sheer numbers and power of the vicious walking-corpse. However, the Wights of the Frozen North arrived and cleared the scourge from the ruins in a single night. From this moment forward, not all undead creatures were seen as ghoulish enemies of the living, and the Wights of the Frozen North were accepted in many Mainland cities where they told the tales of the origins of their kind and of the frozen cities in the bleak, cold north where they have shrouded themselves for so many years.

The realms of the Frozen North consist of two small continents known as Nald and Karthsworn, separated by a body of water called the Norjan Passage. Until recently it was almost impossible to reach the lands of the wights via the northern ocean. Great storms and blizzards battered the icy seas just beyond the Frozen North, raised by wight sorcerers who did so to shield their lands from outsiders. So dangerous were these storms that explorers from the Mainland attempted to navigate, many adventurers gave up trying with the northern ocean being written off as too treacherous to sail. This allowed wights freedom to live their immortal lives in peace, away from the fear of persecution from the living, whom they refused to integrate with assuming they would be branded monsters and hunted to extinction.

However, all of this changed when the mindless dead destroyed Fairdale, with the wights finally seeing this as a chance to prove they were not the monsters that so many legends painted them to be. Rumours have recently come to light that some ancient elves of the Mainland knew of the existence of the wights and indeed the Frozen North. One of the ingredients required to produce the Elixir of Rebirth, an alchemical concoction that allows an infected living person to rise as a wight rather than a mindless undead creature upon death, is the Ilyami Flower. At some point in the Fourth Age, the elves refused to supply the wights with more of these flowers which only grew in the City of Faradome, and as a result, an ancient pact was said to have been broken.





When wight vampyres arrived in Neothera during the middle of the Third Age, they had vowed to protect the living from the infection that was believed to have originated in Lyshanduir (Terminarium) when dark-hearted vampyres also traversed rifts into Neothera to spread the infection elsewhere. Many of these vampyres stalked the living in the shadows, spreading the infection to them after feeding on their blood, leading to them resurrecting as the mindless undead upon death. With the assistance of the elves, vampyres that wished to prevent the spread of the infection to a new world created the Elixir of Rebirth. Instead of slaying infected victims before or after they became mindless, they were offered salvation and would be taken to the Frozen North so that they may continue to live out their days amongst their kind.

It was the job of the Wights of Nald to track infected individuals and offer them the Elixir of Rebirth, allowing them to keep their sentience in undeath. If they refused the elixir, or could not be reached in time, the Wights of Karthsworn would seek them out and put them to rest via force before they could spread the infection any further.

This secret war waged for centuries without the living of the Mainland having any clue about it. It was the reaction of the living (if they happened to witness a mindless undead creature in person) that led to the wights choosing to live in secret in the Frozen North until the right opportunity arose to reveal themselves. Of course, living eye-witness accounts were few and far between due to the efficiency of the wights, however, rare sightings are considered to be the origins of the legends of the undead among the realms of the living.

Why the elves eventually stopped supplying the Frozen North with Ilyami flowers to create the Elixir of Rebirth is a topic that many wights still discuss to this day. There are those that state that elves eventually began to see the wights as monsters, especially considering the actions of the hunters of Karthsworn that would not hesitate when it came to slaying the infected living to prevent them from one day rising as mindless undead.

Other accounts state that the elves feared the Frozen North was becoming overpopulated with wights and that one day they may decide to storm the Mainland, taking it by force and claiming it for themselves. Whatever the reason, when the shipments of Ilyami flowers stopped, the relations between elves and wights broke down, the elves seeing the creatures as abominations, and the resentful wights seeing the elves as pompous fools that cannot be trusted. Some even question if the law regarding the possession of Ilyami flowers by non-elven races was enforced to prevent the flowers making their way into the hands of the wights.

With the recent destruction of the City of Faradome during the Burning of the Mainland, the wights have scavenged any remaining Ilyami flowers they could find there, but once this resource is depleted the future of the race of wights will hang in the balance.

Being declared allies of the Mainland realms by the L'Enarousse of Jerrod's Front following their assistance in clearing the City of Fairdale from the hordes of mindless undead, the wights of the realms of Nald and Karthsworn are spoken of in all continents of the known world. Despite some still branding them monsters, abominations of the gods and of nature itself, wights are widely-accepted in many communities, and some have even established lives for themselves in realms outside of the Frozen North. That said, most wights prefer the colder climates of Nald and Karthsworn and refuse to leave their sanctuary in the freezing wastes unless it is essential to travel to other continents. The ancient cities of the Frozen North are a stronghold for the undead, and have recently opened their gates to the living, should they be able to weather the harsh, cold climate in which the wights seem to thrive.





## LEADERSHIP

The Frozen North is ruled over by two separate governments that work alongside each other to ensure the survival of the realms in the two continents. These are as follows:

### COUNCIL OF NALD

Rather than give in to their thirst for the blood of their living kin, the faeries (fey), vampyres in Lyshanduir (Terminarium) fought back against their black-hearted counterparts, stopping at nothing to prevent them from erasing the pure faerie bloodline in their homeworld. Following their enemies through a rift and assuming it would lead them to the source of the corruption that had spread in Lyshanduir, three powerful vampyre siblings that refused to bow to King Venstrim arrived in the frozen wastes of Neothera, intent on stopping the infection the demons had spread to their people. These three individuals would become the Council of Nald, and if their stories are to be believed, this took place towards the middle of the Third Age of Neothera. What followed would be a brutal and bloody war between the vampyres under King Venstrim's rule, and the rebels brought to Neothera by the future Council of Nald through the rifts that opened in Goldscape (Dead Hills) in Lyshanduir.

Luna, the younger sister to brothers Erikana and Thalithana Encasimai, born under the star sign of the Glaive in Lyshanduir, led their vampyric forces in an epic battle against King Venstrim's hordes that continued to traverse rifts from the Dead Hills into the frozen wastes of Neothera. The Encasimai trio would use the rifts to their advantage, calling upon any vampyres that chose to abscond Venstrim's army, and as their forces grew in Neothera, so the City of Kjeldora would take shape.

The clashes that took place would stretch beyond the Frozen North, into the Mainland and other continents, with the forces of Kjeldora, locked in a constant battle with Venstrim's vampyres, secretly fighting to protect the living in the realms of Neothera as the maleficent forces of the Vampyre King attempted to spread the Plague of Undeath into this unsuspecting world. Eventually, their presence would be recognised and aided by the Elves of Fardome as the Elixir of Rebirth was created, and the living that fell to the infection were recruited into the armies of the Frozen North to assist in driving back the vampire menace.

As time passed and the forces of Kjeldora grew following the recruitment of more wights from across the globe, the attacks from Venstrim's horde began to subside, and by the beginning of the Fifth Age, the assaults had ceased.

The Encasimai siblings had created a realm of wights willing to follow their every order and ruled over them as the Council of Nald, the immortal trio who defied King Venstrim's will. They would continue to do so for the crimes he had committed against their homeworld, no longer called Lyshanduir, but renamed Terminarium on account that the lands of light would almost certainly succumb to the darkness Venstrim and so many other fey had resigned to.

The Encasimai siblings rule over the realm of Nald to this day and follow three simple principles: To ensure the infected living are given a chance of rebirth through the application of magic and science. To nurture and teach their fellow wights in the ways of undeath. To heal and maintain their physical and mental wellbeing. All wights of the City of Kjeldora are expected to follow these principles, and various institutions have been created in the city to allow new wights the best chance in undeath. The council is considered the most liberal and forgiving when it comes to the actions of new wights, that are often erratic in their behaviour due to the mental and physical changes that occur in the transition to becoming undead. Before the Tutela Syndicate was allowed to operate in Nald, the universal laws of the lands were not strictly enforced; however, they were loosely followed as guidelines by the council. Any actions of the citizens of the realm that were disputed by others were brought to the attention of the council of siblings and their trusted officers. They held weekly sessions where these concerns could be addressed, and a verdict reached according to the decision of the council who wished to remain in the public eye, not to rule from behind barricaded doors.

### CONGRESS OF KARTHSWORN

The Congress of Karthsworn was formed towards the end of the Third Age and consists today of three dark elves, the founders and High Councillors of the realm, along with four additional wights that hold the posts of alderman. The alderman generally serves a term of three years in office before being rechosen to continue their duties, or the council elect new members to replace them.

The congress of seven works together to govern all matters of state in the realm of Karthsworn, they also work closely with the Council of Nald to ensure the realms of the Frozen North cooperate peacefully, with the protection of the freezing wastes and cities of the north at the forefront of their business. The High Councillors, Lord Svelthar, Lord Thalangris and Lady Nathalnor act as heads of state, with all matters of law and the running of Karthsworn being approved by them following deliberations by the alderman.



It is not uncommon for the High Councillors to overthrow proposals made by them in favour of business they feel will benefit the realm as a whole despite the voices of the citizens of Nordaan sometimes speaking otherwise. However, the three High Councillors, the founders of the realm, are held in extremely high regard, and actions put into play that at first seem farcical have most often turned out to greatly benefit the realm. Being elves of the First Age who were the first to become dark elves, the High Councillors have a wealth of worldly knowledge, and it is thanks to them that the City of Nordaan was founded.

Before their unlife, Svelthar of House Thard'or, Thalangris of House Sirella and Nathalnor of House Carvellian had survived both the War of the Gods and the Nightmare War in the Second Age and were regarded as heroes amongst the elves due to their acts of bravery on the battlefield that saved many lives during both conflicts. Once the Nightmare War had ended the three champions spent many centuries searching for elves that belonged to the seven shattered houses, locating many of them and bringing them to the City of Faradome where they could live out the rest of their days in peace under the safety of the arcane barrier that protected the realm of the Amicita. However, during their travels in the Frozen North, where the trio attempted to locate survivors of House Mortanis, they endured a terrible assault by vampyres that had arrived from Terminarium.

The elven soldiers that had accompanied Svelthar, Thalangris and Nathalnor in their quest were slain by the vampyric forces of King Venstrim, and as the three champions buried their fallen comrades, their infected bodies reanimated, biting and clawing at the flesh of the three remaining members of the search party. Horrified at this ungodly occurrence, the trio fell into shock and attempted to patch the wounds caused by their comrades that had risen as the mindless undead, and after days of weathering the freezing wastes, they feared their time was at an end. However, it was thanks to the Encasimai siblings of Nald that the three elven heroes did not reanimate as mindless undead creatures.

Luna, Erikana and Thalithana Encasimai crossed the northern ocean and located the City of Faradome thanks to the directions provided by the three elves that were nearing death, and upon being allowed to enter the city under cover of nightfall met with the Elder Council. The vampyre siblings told of their origins, and what had become of Lyshanduir. They spoke of the darkness that was consuming their homeworld and of the infection that caused the dead to reanimate. Svelthar, Thalangris and Nathalnor were beyond the powers of any healing the Elder Council could now offer, but they refused to see the elven heroes reanimated as mindless undead creatures.



It was at this point the Elder Council worked with the Encasimai siblings to create a cure for the infection with the use of the Ilyami flower that was famous for its healing properties. The cure was considered a failure as the three elves passed away shortly after it was administered and moments before blades were to be plunged into their skulls to destroy their brains and prevent them from resurrecting as the mindless undead, Svelthar opened his eyes and screamed for aid. The Encasimai siblings, in deep shock, exclaimed that the mindless undead are incapable of communicating in such a way, and the effects of the so-called cure had not healed the elf but allowed him to reanimate as a wight without becoming a mindless scourge.

Following the resurrection of Thalangris and Nathalnor, the three elves were closely monitored for several weeks, and it was apparent that they shared many physical traits of the Encasimai siblings in their state of undeath. Despite remembering aspects of their former lives, they became jaded, their personalities dark and brooding. The Elder Council decided the three elves could not remain in Faradome lest they turned on its citizens and spread the infection further. Therefore, they left with the Encasimai siblings for the Frozen North where the foundations of the City of Nordaan were laid. As a debt of gratitude for their past deeds the Elder Council agreed to provide Svelthar, Thalangris and Nathalnor with Ilyami flowers so that they may offer the infected the opportunity to be reborn as wights via the administration of the Elixir of Rebirth, as it came to be known. The number of infected living sharply rose with Venstrim's vampyres continued assaults on the realms of Neothera, and as the City of Nordaan grew, so did the congress' desire to slay any of the infected that refused the gift of unlife before they turned into mindless undead creatures.



## THE NEW LAWS

The universal laws of the lands created by the Tutela Syndicate are observed by the people of the Frozen North and have been in place since the wights made themselves officially known to the Mainland in 2390 of the Fifth Age. The Council of Nald and Congress of Karthsworn believe that by allowing the Tutela Syndicate to operate in their realms they are showing that their people are willing to accept progress and prove that they are allies to the realms of the living, not savage monsters that defy the law and operate as separate, potentially dangerous entities of unknown power. Despite grumbles at this new change from some wight citizens in both continents of the north, the integration of a unified system of law, the introduction of a solid banking system and improvement to the economy and trade as a whole, the Tutela Syndicate has since been welcomed following their decision to employ reputable wights loyal to their realms and willing to uphold the ethos of the organisation. The Tutela Syndicate has opened two branches of office in the Frozen North, one in each city and Law Keepers have been employed from the high ranks of the armies of both continents. As a result, crimes that were usually settled on a case-by-case nature by the government bodies of the Frozen North have reduced dramatically, in turn allowing peace of mind and safety for the living that are employed by the Tutela Syndicate or have chosen to make new lives in these freezing lands.

## TWINNED CITIES OF THE FROZEN NORTH

Despite mainly being populated by the undead, the Cities of Kjeldora in Nald and Nordaan in Karthsworn are home to many of the same fully-functional establishments that you would expect to find in any cities occupied by the living. Churches, temples, residential areas, taverns, markets, schools, workshops and military facilities are located in both cities. The Frozen North has used the currency of Llandies since the middle of the Fourth Age, despite the Tutela Syndicate only recently opening banks in the two cities, and wights that were capable of masking their decrepit appearance would commonly buy, sell or trade with the living in other continents, hence the use of this currency. Your average wight does not concern him or herself with exotic victuals or expensive and superficial goods. Instead, they take only what they need to survive within their means. For this reason, until recently it was difficult to find establishments such as restaurants or grand boutiques that sold fanciful, non-essential goods in the realms of the Frozen North. However, with the arrival of living citizens, fine-tastes and more advanced technologies are beginning to be catered for, and various new stores are starting to pop up within the cities walls.

Timber is regularly harvested from the spruce forests close to the two cities, and the wights have made every effort to replant felled trees due to their scarce nature in the frozen wastes. Crops are extremely difficult to cultivate in the Frozen North, and as such the majority of grain, vegetables and other plant species which are unable to grow in the frostbitten wastes are imported from the warmer continents to the south. Of course, the wights have known how to cross the northern oceans since the latter part of the Third Age, and have made special arrangements to obtain the goods they require to flourish as a species in the north. Meat is abundant in the Cities of Kjeldora and Nordaan, and the majority come from the Whitehorn, a special breed of red-haired cold-weather bovine native to the Frozen North, and the Speartusk, large grey-skinned boars that are bred exclusively for food. These species are kept on the snowy slopes near mountainsides and can forage for greenery and roots that can survive the harsh climates of the north.

Many wights are more than willing to partake in battles to protect the Frozen North and as such the armies of the two realms are never short of soldiers. War has always been a part of life in the frozen wastes. Most wights have access to decent weapons and armour forged by the seasoned smithies of both cities should they require it. Troops drafted into the military for a term of at least one year are offered the highest quality equipment to assist them upon the battlefield, and this gear can be kept if they survive a conflict. It is common for wights to pass on to a good friend, or sell the equipment they obtained for fighting for the realms of the Frozen North. However, those that offer continuous service are granted better training and enhancements to their equipment should they continue to fight for their realm.

## THE CITY OF KJELDORA (NALD)

The City of Kjeldora in Nald was founded in the middle of the Third Age by vampyres who left Terminarium, refusing to join forces with King Venstrim who commanded his army in the name of the Nightmares to destroy the faeries of Lyshanduir. In their pursuit of tracking down and slaying any of Venstrim's forces that travelled via rifts into Neothera, what would become the Council of Nald rallied wights created in Neothera to their banner. As the ages passed the City of Kjeldora grew in size and power, becoming a haven for wights that wished to live far away from the living. The citizens of Kjeldora must respect the High Council's precept that the living infected should be allowed to be reborn as wights, and if they choose this path, they will be offered aid in almost any form they require in their new lives in the Frozen North.



Kjeldora sits in the centre of the small continent known as Nald and is a well-defended city constructed mostly of granite and timber. Many structures in Kjeldora are built with functionality in mind rather than beauty, and the city has an extremely dark and gothic aesthetic. The most notable site in Kjeldora is the Grey Citadel, home to the Council of Nald and other organisations founded and governed by them such as the Apothecary Society and the Shepherds of the Pestiferous. Master Apothecary Damus V'dere heads the Apothecary Society which is located deep in the bowels of the citadel, and this organisation is responsible for all matters regarding living and undead beings.

Their primary focus looks at how the infection works, possible cures, alterations to existing and known alchemical recipes, and a variety of other research relating to the wight condition, most of which are top secret. Within the heart of the citadel, the Shepherds of the Pestiferous can be found. Their leader, Lady Ikiry (the first vulperan to become a lahamia) oversees all matters regarding this organisation which includes locating the infected living and offering them an opportunity to become a wight, the transition all living beings undergo when transforming into a wight, escorting or summoning them to the Frozen North and monitoring their mental and physical wellbeing whilst becoming accustomed to their new undead life.

## THE CITY OF NORDAAN (KARTHSWORN)

Those who reside in the City of Nordaan in the small continent of Karthsworn are governed by a congress of seven councillors, including three dark elves that were once great elven heroes whilst alive. Construction of the city began shortly after the first dark elves arrived in the Frozen North, with the vampyric Council of Kjedora agreeing that the ancient elves should be allowed to rule over a realm due to their past deeds of heroism in their former lives, not to mention the exceptional skills they developed in undeath.

As the Shepherds of the Pestiferous led fresh wights to the Frozen North they were given a chance to decide which of the two precepts they would follow, and those that chose to follow the ideals of the Congress of Karthsworn were offered homes in the City of Nordaan. Although similar in architectural appearance to Kjeldora and with many of the same facilities and defences, Nordaan is considered somewhat of an aggressively strict environment when it comes to law enforcement and training according to the precepts of Karthsworn. Throughout the centuries, the wights of this continent have been conditioned to follow a way of life that enforces the mindless undead are treated as a vile scourge that must be eliminated at all costs.

Whilst this is a shared opinion of many who oppose mindless undead creatures, the people of Nordaan have been taught that any living beings that are infected but refuse the opportunity to become a wight are as good as mindless undead themselves, and are hunted and slain before they even have a chance to turn.

Nordaan is located in the east of the continent of Karthsworn and is heavily fortified, more so than the City of Kjeldora in Nald on account of the strict military presence that is always active on the city streets and surrounding lands. The Congress of Karthsworn resides in the Bulwark, a citadel located in the south of the city, and the three dark elves that head the congress are actively seen, going about their official business in the here without the company of bodyguards. Some say it is if they are encouraging enemies of the realm to attack them, to end the centuries of unlife they have endured as walking corpses. Others declare this a brazen display of self-assured authority and strength, perhaps a measure of the arrogance of the rulers of this realm.

Every street in the city has at least one military establishment of varying size to maintain law and order. On every third street is a barracks for the Death Guard, a military organisation that trains wights ready to be called for service in any form, especially in the battles that have taken place throughout the ages against King Venstrim's vampyres or the mindless undead. The Death Guard are notoriously brutal and unforgiving when it comes to reports, delivered to them via the Shepherds of the Pestiferous, of the infected living refusing to become wights upon death. They are ready and willing to slay any infected living beings that refuse to accept the Elixir of Rebirth and will hunt them in any continent until they put them to death.

## RELIGION

Religion in the Frozen North has always been a contentious subject, with many wights losing their faith in the gods and goddesses upon realising what they have become physically, mentally and spiritually in undeath. It is common for many wights to abandon religion altogether upon reanimating, and the main reason for this is the soul becoming tied to a living corpse rather than passing directly to the Ethereal Realm, or whatever afterlife the individual believed in while alive. For an infection to cause a corpse to reanimate and the soul to become trapped inside it leads to many questions about the intentions of the divine and the prevention of death by what is considered a demonic curse (or gift by some) that defies the very will of nature and life itself.



Soon after the reanimation process, all new wights that have been guided to the Frozen North by the Shepherds of the Pestiferous are taught about the origins of the infection. They learn how it affects the body upon death, and what changes occur physically and mentally when entering the state commonly referred to as 'unlife'. There is little written about the undead in the scriptures of mainstream belief systems, and what is written usually paints them in a bad light, or simply refers to anything beyond death as a holy realm that the spirit ascends to after the mortal shell has been shed. However, to be without faith is believed to be dangerous by some wights, where those that do not follow a belief system are said to be without conscience and think there will be no repercussions for their actions after resurrecting as a wight. The introduction of common laws has prevented many wights from committing heinous acts that they feel their immortal soul would not suffer for. However the rulers of Nald and Karthsworn have also encouraged, somewhat forcefully in certain circumstances, the worship of a select few deities, whom which many wights aspire to please through their acceptance of the race of undead races.

There are several chapels located in both Nald and Karthsworn, and the most popular of these are dedicated to Glacilla, Terralapis, Osirah and Senetsu. Other faiths are observed by wights in the Frozen North, however, the worship of deities that are not part of the mainstream faiths tend to be mocked or unduly questioned. Alternatively, an observer of what is considered an alternative or redundant belief system (one that is no longer observed due to abandonment in unlife) can expect to be drawn into arguments by wights that feel everyone should follow the deities that sustain and watch over them. In recent centuries, with wights broadening their opinions on the many faiths observed in the world, violence as a result of disagreements regarding religion are becoming fewer and far between.

The recent arrival of the living races in the Frozen North has led to the wights welcoming new citizens into the Cities of Kjeldora, Nordaan and the surrounding lands. The Council of Nald and Congress of Karthsworn did not demand that these settlers abandon their faiths, and have allowed for the construction of new places of worship. Wights hold dear the deities they worship, some for thousands of years, although some are ready to accept and willing to consider belief systems that have been introduced or reintroduced by living citizens.

Glacilla is worshipped by many Wights of the Frozen North, mainly because the freezing temperatures monumentally slow down the decomposition of the undead races. Similarly, they feel the Ice Element is easier, and sometimes even pleasurable to wield via the use of magic. Similarities have been raised between the actions of the Ice Goddess when she first arrived in Neothera and that of the wights, who watched from the frozen peaks, contemplating for many years their new purpose in life and how best to use their gift of undeath for the good of all, or at least their race. Glacilla is considered the mother and caretaker of the undead races, and she is undoubtedly the most commonly worshipped Goddess in all of the Frozen North. Haman'li, the God of Nature is generally shunned by the undead races, largely because they feel he is weak in comparison to Glacilla, and that nature continues to attempt to flourish in frostbitten lands, only to be quietly laid to rest by the snow and frost created by the Goddess of Ice. Terralapis, the Earth Goddess is well respected amongst Wights of the Frozen North, for her soil and stone seem unhindered and unable to be easily broken by the ice and snow. She is respected for the attributes associated with her element, and for cradling the buried dead in her protective soils. Sequilla, the Goddess of Water is rarely acknowledged, yet she offers life-giving waters that even wights require, however, the Goddess of Ice can control her essence through the alteration of the Water Element.





Signis, the God of Lightning, and Spiria, the God of Air are praised as gods of destruction, the force vitalising those that would ask for empowerment via the two elements. Arak'almundae is viewed as the least worthy of all of the Seven. The bashful God of Fire is seen as an insolent and childish deity that only exists to warm the bodies of the living, to cook their food and heat their homes when Glacilla, the almighty spreads her frosts throughout the lands.

Some wights even consider Arak'almundae to be the servant of the living, but some fear his flames, with the warmth increasing the rate at which wight's bodies decay. Osirah, the God of the Sun is worshipped more by those in the realm of Nald as a creator deity due to many vampyres still holding dear their origins when they were faeries. Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon is worshipped by those of Karthsworn who embrace the night and the shadows and use the darkness as a means to effectively hunt the infected living and the mindless dead outside of the field of vision possessed by the living.

The main holidays, festivals and traditions observed by the Frozen North vary according to the beliefs of the living or undead inhabitants. The most commonly observed holidays are Frostfold, Day of Souls, Luminata, Tregarthia, Harmony of the Creators and Stormwoven. You can read more about these notable events from *page 196* onwards.

## REALM STYLE

The immortal Wights of the Cities of Kjeldora in Nald and Nordaan in Karthsworn watch over their ancient realms in the Frozen North as guardians of a people whose fate hangs in the balance. With the source of almost all wight creation, the Ilyami flower, a key ingredient in the Elixir of Rebirth now depleted following the destruction of the Amicita City of Faradome in the recent Burning of the Mainland, the wights consider themselves a race that could be facing extinction. Despite most wights succumbing to memory loss upon resurrecting as undead creatures that are capable of instinctual and coherent thought, their personalities often become jaded, with many forced into a whirlpool of mentally-induced darkness. That said, they are very much capable of living normal lives. Wights of the Frozen North follow the precepts of Nald or Karthsworn, and make their home in either realm or depart to the other continents of Neothera once they have completed their education at the hands of the Shepherds of the Pestiferous. Those that remain true to the Frozen North and the realm of Nald continue to assist wights in living the best 'unlife' they can, or if aligned to the realm of Karthsworn vow to destroy the mindless undead or infected living that do not wish to join their ranks.

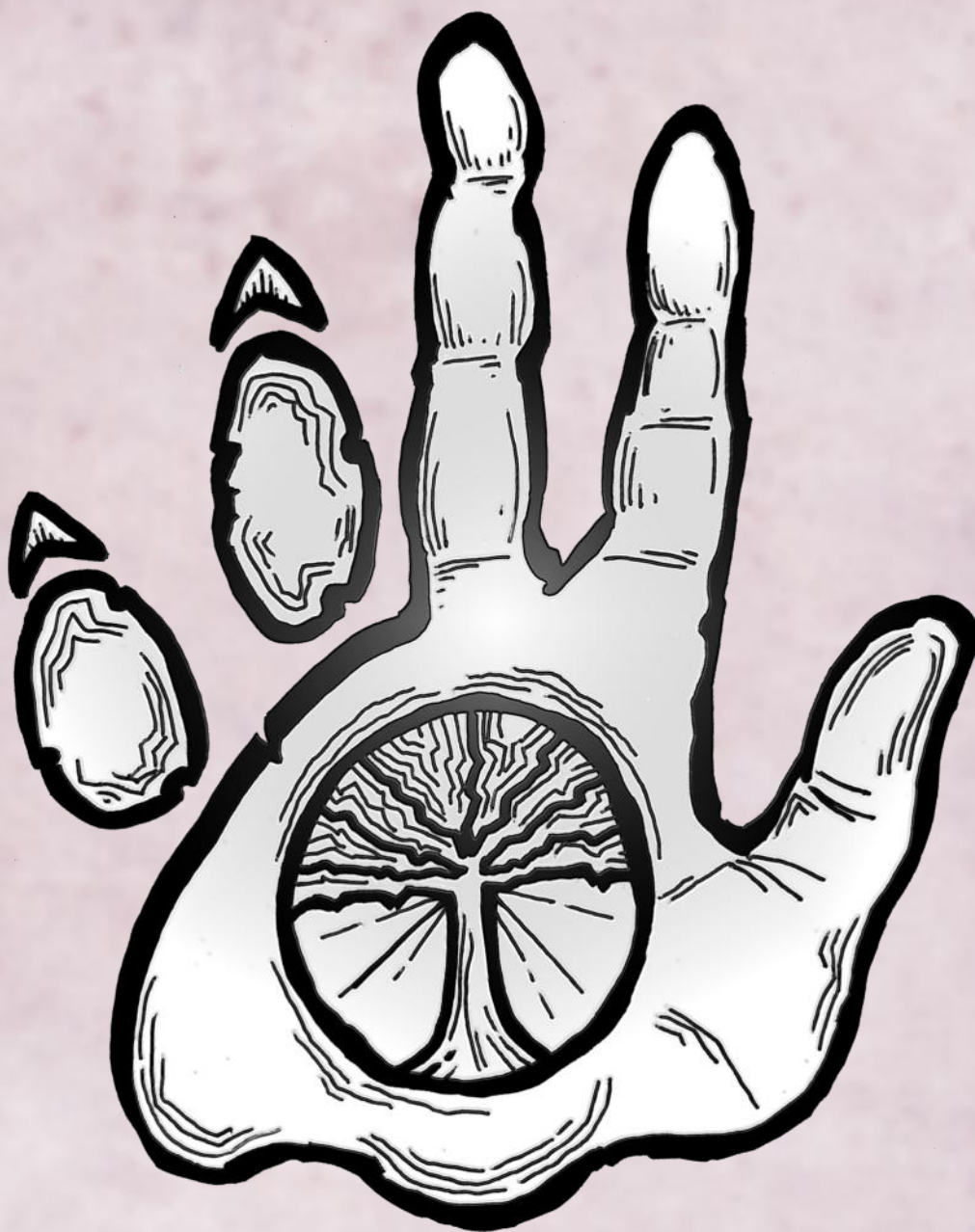
The various races that can become wights in death attempt to embrace the species they have become following the end of their mortal lives, and it is easier for some than others. The rulers of the Frozen North promote the observation of religion in an attempt to fill wights with holiness and hope, that their life beyond the veil of death is the will of the gods and goddesses. Undeath will see them granted an extra special place in the Halls of the Gods, or whatever afterlife they believe in when they finally meet their second death.

If you decide your character will belong to the Frozen North, you should bear in mind the following points regarding costuming and role-play, however, these are not strict guidelines, they are simply listed to assist you in getting a feel for the aesthetics of the realm. From an out of character perspective, this realm, the look of the city, its culture, costuming, weapons, armour and equipment etc. are based on the middle ages, gothic horror and various zombie tropes. A quick internet search of these topics will yield some informative and inspiring results. The colours of the realm of Nald are black, grey and navy blue, offset with silver and gold. The colours of the realm of Karthsworn are black, grey and deep purple, offset with silver and gold. Where possible, you should make use of these colours when putting together costumes for a Frozen North character.



# HEMADRI

(PLAYABLE REALM)



AN EMBLEM THAT REPRESENTS THE WORLD TREE (SAID TO BE THE ORIGIN OF LIFE ON NEOTHERA) IS AT THE CENTRE, OR THE HEART, OF A HUMAN-LOOKING HAND THAT SLOWLY CHANGES INTO AN ANIMAL PAW. HUMAN AND ANIMAL ASPECTS ARE SHOWN IN EQUAL MEASURES, FOR ALL BEASTKIN BEGIN LIFE AS A HUMAN.



# MAINLAND NEOTHERA

## REALM OF THE HEMADRI

The Hemadri hail from the City of Zan'zoula located in the Na'tohram Ghenesis Rainforest in the southwest of the Mainland. The city was founded in the early part of the Third Age and was primarily inhabited by the race of beastkin who emerged from the World Tree, said to be the source of all life in Neothera. The Hemadri consider themselves to be the sons and daughters of the God of Nature, Haman'li and look to the essence of the elements, especially nature, earth and water to aid and sustain them and offer them their blessings and wisdom.

A considerable note is always made of understanding all of the elements, for these are considered the building blocks of the universe, and hence all Hemadri believe that these are also part of the basic structure of themselves. The Hemadri people believe that all things in the universe are connected, from the smallest flowers to the largest beasts, the great mountain peaks and the flowing waters, all share a bond and are sentient. Should you be able to understand and respect this, then you too can feel and communicate with the spirits of all things in the universe. This understanding also teaches the Hemadri people about themselves and allows them to become closer to the creator deities.

Many Hemadri people are extremely spiritual and live off the land through sustainable methods such as organic farming, using meat if it is from an already deceased animal, and only using wood if it has fallen from trees naturally, or if the spirits of nature permit them to harvest it, in which case, two trees are always planted if one is felled.

While some Hemadri live solely by these rules, others follow a more progressive way of life, such as hunting for meat, and whilst this is sometimes frowned upon by others, those that take more liberally from the land always offer prayers or rituals of thanks to the spirits of nature. They acknowledge that a life has been taken to offer sustenance, and no part of the carcass or plant would ever be wasted. Being shepherds of the rainforests, the Hemadri ensure the ecosystem is kept in check by only hunting or harvesting wood, plants or meat when an imbalance is discovered, for example, the careful culling of certain species of animals should they be causing the eradication of a species lower in the natural food chain.

The Hemadri people enjoy a quiet way of life in their rainforest home and many traditions dating back to the dawn of their realm are still observed today, for example, construction techniques, natural medicines and remedies, lessons relating to the creator deities, hunting, farming, the careful use of magic, combat techniques and of course, ensuring the balance of nature is maintained. To outsiders, the Hemadri realms are often considered to be places that have never really evolved and are somewhat feral, especially because they shun any kind of technology. Their general way of life, along with their primitive crafting methods, where most dwellings are little more than huts built from sticks and mud or carved into the red stone found in the Na'tohram Ghenesis known as Lumite, only enforces that beliefs held by more advanced realms such as the Blightfoot Gunners or L'Enarousse, that they are far superior than the aborigines that dwell in the rainforests





However, to the Hemadri, state of the art technology and grand castles are little more than fanciful distractions, where the true appreciation of nature has been forgotten, and the land ravaged against its will for the pleasures of mortals.

The Hemadri are famously peaceful people and believe in resolving conflict through diplomacy rather than wading headlong into battle without first assessing the risk it could pose to life and indeed the implications it could have on the land and the creatures that inhabit it. This said, should the cause be one that will undoubtedly have some sort of lasting effect on the balance of nature, or indeed the inhabitants of their realm and their rainforest home, the Hemadri will act swiftly and justly, dispatching forces to defend themselves or other life forms which are incapable of doing so.

The Hemadri are on good terms with the other Mainland realms, and there have never been any instances of them instigating conflicts. The armies of their realm have only ever been deployed following the actions of others, and if those actions posed a threat to the realm or nature itself, regardless of if it was on their doorstep or the other side of the Mainland. Following the recent Burning of the Mainland, the Hemadri people have entered a state of perpetual grief for the great losses nature endured, and the fact that they were powerless to prevent it. As a result of this the protection of the rainforests, the last great bastion of nature, has become a priority to the Hemadri people, along with looking at how the lands can be healed and the cycle of nature restored to the Mainland.

Whilst the Hemadri are a patient and accepting people, they hold little tolerance for what they consider 'abominations of nature', this includes anything undead, demonic or mutated through unnatural processes such as the application of science. The Hemadri believe that such beings or creatures go against the will of nature, and are direct defiance of the Seven's creations. Although wights and vulperans are permitted to enter the City of Zan'zoula, their presence is often met with disdain by the Hemadri, and they are likely to be charged extortionate prices for goods, or not allowed to enter establishments at the discretion of the proprietor.

The law followed by the citizens of Zan'zoula protects wights and vulperans as well as the Hemadri, and therefore it is extremely rare that 'abominations' will be assaulted. However, the same cannot be said in areas where the law does not operate, or if there is no chance of being caught by the Law Keepers. Despite the Hemadri peoples' peaceful nature, there have been instances where wights or vulperans have been injured or even slain by followers of nature who believe they are culling the scourge from the world created by the Seven.



## LEADERSHIP

In the highest chambers of the World Tree, a location said to be the source of all natural life on Neothera, the Beastkin Council, immortal leaders of the Hemadri people can be found. Never-ageing and with thousands of years of knowledge and wisdom in their hands, the council have ruled over the realm since the beginning of the Third Age and were the first beastkin to set foot in the world. Many believe that Haman'li created the council, that they are his direct descendants, and bestowed the gift of immortality and the aspects of the animals upon them when they reached adulthood. At the beginning of the Third Age, the God of Nature returned from the Ethereal Realm deeming Neothera safe to sustain new lifeforms and opened the chambers of the World Tree, whereupon six children stepped forward from within its sanctuary, wide-eyed and full of wonder for the new world they had awakened in.

Haman'li would show his children the beauty of the world he and his siblings, the Seven, had created and he would grant them his protection, wisdom and love every day he spent with them. Upon their thirteenth birthdays, Haman'li would bestow upon his children the gift of the aspects of the animals, where each aspect related to the noblest of creatures he had created before previously ascending to the Ethereal Realm following the War of the Gods.



As a father, he had watched each of his children grow, observed their temperaments, their curiosity, their natural abilities, their likes and dislikes. Realising that it was time to let his children carry on in his footsteps, he called them back to the World Tree, and each child, agreeing they were ready for greater responsibilities were transformed within its chambers to half-human, half-animal forms. Each of Haman'li's children would govern an aspect relating to the various species of animals in Neothera, each representing the qualities required for the race of beastkin, and the people of the Hemadri that would follow to maintain the balance of nature throughout the lands. The council of the six beastkin leaders are as follows:

#### **DRACONA**

Aspect of the Reptile, a male humanoid komodo dragon.

#### **HEIRZOR**

Aspect of the Insect, a female humanoid hornet.

#### **HODLE**

Aspect of the Amphibian, a male humanoid golden frog.

#### **RAH'LHAN**

Aspect of the Mammal, a male humanoid lion.

#### **SERRIPH**

Aspect of the Bird, a female humanoid bald eagle.

#### **SIEK**

Aspect of the Arachnid, a female humanoid black widow spider.

As more human children emerged from the World Tree, the Beastkin Council would raise each one as Haman'li had done with them before he left for the Ethereal realm once again. The aspect a new beastkin took would determine which of the council would offer their teachings in adulthood, for example, if a human transformed into a butterfly beastkin, the immortal Heirzor would become their mentor and mother-figure. For many centuries this process continued until eventually, the council returned to the inner sanctum of the World Tree as the City of Zan'zoula expanded, and families raised children themselves, yet still able to seek the wisdom of the council should they require it.

Today the Beastkin Council still occupies the World Tree, led by the immortal Rah'lhan, King of the Rainforests, governing the Hemadri people and offering their support in any matters of the realm that require their attention. Whilst they are not seen as regularly as they once were when the beastkin species first emerged in Neothera, they often walk amongst their people, taking a hands-on approach in the affairs of the realm.

With the arrival of outsiders who decided to make their homes in the rainforests, pledging themselves to the realm of the Hemadri, humans, elves, piskies and even vulperans are a common sight in the City of Zan'zoula. The Beastkin Council have even allowed the Tutela Syndicate to operate from within the realm, bringing with them common laws which all Hemadri are expected to uphold.



## THE CITY OF ZAN'ZOULA

The Hemadri capital city, Zan'zoula is located in the depths of the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest and was founded at the beginning of the Third Age by the Beastkin Council and those that emerged from the World Tree after them. Once little more than a handful of stick-built huts constructed at the base of the World Tree, the dwellings gradually increased in numbers to house the growing amounts of beastkin, human, elvish and piskie settlers that came to make their homes in the rainforest. Today, many residences built by the Hemadri around the World Tree are constructed from a red rock known as Lumite which is quarried from the huge mountain ranges which surround the city and acts as natural fortifications for Zan'zoula, protecting its citizens inside. These buildings, which house Hemadri families, shops, places of worship and other such establishments, are rarely taller than three storeys high and are often painted with colourful depictions of the families favoured animals and have flat roofs, as rain rarely reaches the ground due to being caught by the leaves and branches of the World Tree.



Much of the ground below the huge branches of the World Tree is flat and grassy, and few trees grow there naturally making it ideal for the sprawling city to be built upon. Because of this, little to no deforestation took place, something which pleased the nature-worshipping Hemadri immensely. The city streets are often little more than dirt paths, however, some are cobbled, and some follow the exposed upper-roots of the World Tree forming woody paths. There are three main roads in Zan'zoula, and each one follows a circular route around the World Tree itself as if mirroring the growth rings found inside a tree.

Smaller paths and roads connect the various areas within the city via these main roads, and between each of these a different district, also known as a tier, can be found. These tiers are known as follows: Walk of Inspiration: Found in the inner section of the city (first tier) closest to the World Tree, small schools and trainers dedicated to learning in any form can be found here, from the magical arts to crafting practises, combat tutors to medicine, temples and libraries. The Bazaar: Found in the middle section of the city (second tier) and is home to traders, vendors, shops, taverns and stalls of any variety. The Stone Keepers: Located in the outer section of the city (third tier), this district is home to various barracks, training grounds, watchtowers and other establishments that oversee the protection of the city and the well-being of its people and the realm.



## THE LIFE-GIVER (WORLD TREE)

The Hemadri believe that at Neothera's dawn, Haman'li, the God of Nature, planted a seed in the earth which he took from his belly; this seed grew to form a giant tree known as the Life-Giver or World Tree. It is said that this tree is the first and oldest tree in the world and that over time its seeds spread across the continents bringing forth life to every corner. Some Hemadri even believe that Haman'li is, in fact, the World Tree itself and that he took this form to maintain a physical presence in the world after he was certain that the balance of nature was established.

The World Tree is estimated to be approximately three thousand feet tall, with its lowest and largest branches growing around two hundred feet from the ground and stretching some two thousand feet outwards towards the Lumite mountain ranges. It's bark, branches and leaves, which remain green all year round are sacred to the Hemadri, and may only be used as a crafting material if they fall naturally, for example through strong winds. Desecration of the World Tree in any form, such as cutting down branches or carving into its trunk is met with a strong penalty, usually being exiled from the rainforests or even death.

Many Hemadri, the council, and elders reside within the World Tree itself, and upon entering the monolithic halls via massive gaps that have grown between the upper roots as arched entranceways fifty feet tall, one can witness the absolute power and wonder of nature itself.

Much of the World Tree is hollow inside, where great halls and chambers can be reached via towering staircases that trail around the inner trunk, all naturally formed, grown as if to encourage the Hemadri to occupy its inner sanctums. Not a single part of the World Tree has been altered by mortal hands, and the Hemadri see this as the God of Nature, Haman'li creating the World Tree purposely to prove his power of creation is undeniable.

The chambers found inside are regularly used as places of worship and meditation, and many beastkin parents bring their children here to undergo the transformation into their true beastkin forms so that they may be blessed by the Beastkin Council and Haman'li himself. The upper chambers of the World Tree are home to the council and the various elders that assist them in the running of the realm, and from their high perches, they can look out over the rainforests ensuring the realm is safe under their watchful eyes.

## THE NA'TOHRAM GHENERIS RAINFOREST

The Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest, home to the World Tree, the City of Zan'zoula and the realm of the Hemadri people is considered to be the birthplace of nature itself, for indeed its name (when roughly translated from Hemadri to the common tongue) reads as 'Nature's Birth'. This tropical rainforest in the southwest of the Mainland is a mysterious, lush landscape of dense jungle and tall canopy trees that harbour millions of species of wildlife and plants. Composed of many layers of plant life, the rainforest would not be complete without a bevy of enormous and strange trees, some of which are many thousands of years old.



The Na'tohram Gheneris is most commonly known by the other realms of Neothera for being the birthplace of the beastkin, the sons and daughters of Haman'li, the God of Nature. The majority of the rainforests remain unexplored; however, the Hemadri know much more of this place than outsiders who often attempt to investigate it. Many adventurers travel to the Na'tohram Gheneris in search of treasures, rare materials and often to hunt or capture exotic animals. Those skilled or lucky enough to survive a trip here tell that there are countless ways to meet your end in the rainforest, from being eaten by wild beasts to being poisoned by dangerous plants. A red mineral, known as Lumite, similar in appearance to sandstone yet incredibly strong, forms large rock outcrops here and can only be found in this part of the world. The Lumite mountain ranges that surround the City of Zan'zoula, forming a natural protective barrier for the realm stretch, at the peaks, approximately two thousand feet high. These mountain ranges were said to be formed as the great World Tree grew, its roots pushing back the rocks until they became arranged in a circular fashion surrounding the land where Zan'zoula would be built.

Until recently, following the departure of the demonic Nightmares from Neothera, and since the destruction of the Great City of Netherlye at the end of the Fourth Age, beastkin were forced to transform within the chambers of the World Tree. Those that transformed outside of its chambers became twisted, mutated and very insane. The Akh'hi were the result of children who failed to reach the World Tree in time to complete their transformation, and now many of them still roam the rainforests, viciously tearing apart and consuming any creature that gets in their way. Today the Akh'hi are rarely encountered, and many non-Hemadri believe that this is simply a legend woven to prevent outsiders entering the rainforests.

## RELIGION

The six members of the Beastkin Council that reside in the sanctuary of the World Tree were once human children, and as they grew Haman'li, the God of Nature bestowed the power of the aspects of the animals upon them. The council tells how Haman'li lived with them and the other original beastkin that followed shortly after and passed on his wisdom and power so that the Hemadri people would flourish as shepherds of the rainforest and guardians of nature itself. The Beastkin Council are currently the only living members of the Hemadri that can speak first-hand of his time with them, and this, to the people of the rainforest is undeniable proof of his existence.

Whilst the Hemadri people respect the balance of nature in all its forms, they are also mindful that each element plays an important part in sustaining life on Neothera. However, the Nature Element is more widely respected due to it originating from their creator, Haman'li.

Closely behind Haman'li comes the worship of Terralapis, the Goddess of Earth, for her essence represents the building blocks of growth, where nature could not be sustained without the sustenance the soil provides. Sequilla, the Goddess of Water is also worshipped as a life-sustaining force, and her essence provides the waters from which all of nature's creations must drink to survive. Interestingly the worship of Spiria, the God of Air is something of a dilemma for many Hemadri, for there are those that shun him, blaming his strong winds for felling trees and tearing up plantlife, whereas others believe without the playful breezes he creates, seeds could not spread throughout the lands and nature's reach would become restricted.



For the Hemadri people, Osirah, the God of the Sun provides light which allows all things to grow, and Glacilla, the Goddess of Ice brings the seasons, ensuring new plants their chance at life. Arak'almundae, the God of Fire, has very little place in Hemadri society, for with fire comes the destruction of nature, and use of the element must be made with great care. Signis, the God of Lightning is rarely offered praise, despite the elves stating that he used the spark of life to make the creations of his siblings sentient. His lightning causes great fires in the rainforests, and the Hemadri people see this as direct defiance to Haman'li's will, causing nothing but death and destruction.



The main holidays, festivals and traditions observed by the Hemadri people are Spring's Dawn / Winter's End, Chilen's Day, Massmoot, Tregarthia, Harmony of the Creators and Stormwoven. You can read more about these notable events from *page 196* onwards.

## REALM STYLE

If you decide your character will belong to the Hemadri, you should bear in mind the following points regarding costuming and role-play, however, these are not strict guidelines, they are simply listed to assist you in getting a feel for the aesthetics of the realm. From an out of character perspective, this realm, the look of the city, its culture, costuming, weapons, armour and equipment etc. is based on the Aztec Empire, Māori (pre 17th century), Amazonian rainforest tribes and ancient Mayan civilisations. A quick internet search of these topics will yield some informative and inspiring results. The colours of the realm are green and brown, offset with white, black and gold, and where possible you should make use of these colours when putting together costumes for a Hemadri character.

The Hemadri are largely peaceful people and aim to protect nature wherever possible, assisting in the prevention of the destruction of plant and animal life and the preservation of their own culture and traditions. These people believe in the nurture and teaching of others, and rather than going to war over petty differences, they attempt to educate those not of their realm how nature, and indeed the elements, should be respected for peace to endure and life to be sustained in Neothera. Seeing the beauty in all of the God of Nature's creations, the Hemadri strive to enlighten themselves on a daily basis, to become one with nature through meditation, the understanding of the elements and their place in the spectrum of all life in Neothera. By doing so they become at one with their creator God, Hama'n'li, and as a result an extension of his presence in all things.





# L'ENAROUSSE

(PLAYABLE REALM)



THE GODDESS SEQUILLA, IN THE FORM OF A WATER DRAGON, RISES PROUDLY FROM THE WAVES AS A REPRESENTATION OF HOW JERROD'S FRONT HAS GROWN TO BECOME THE LARGEST AND ARGUABLY THE MOST SUCCESSFUL HUMAN-GOVERNED REALM IN ALL OF NEOTHERA. THE WATER DRAGON IS WISE, NOBLE, FEARLESS AND STRONG. INHERENT TRAITS THAT THE L'ENAROUSSIAN PEOPLE ALL POSSESS.



# MAINLAND NEOTHERA

## REALM OF THE L'ENAROUSSE

The L'Enarousse hail from the coastal City of Jerrod's Front located in the south of the Mainland, which is home to citizens of all races and creeds. Prizing themselves as the protectors of the Mainland, with the largest land and naval-based forces in all of Neothera, these proud and diverse people reside in what is currently considered the most powerful realm in all of Neothera. Jerrod's Front, formerly known as Sea Foam Bay, was founded by humans and elves in the Third Age of the world and began life as a small fishing village upon the shores that lead to the southern seas. Quickly expanding in size, partly due to the plentiful resources in the area and its central location in the Mainland, Sea Foam Bay eventually became the first and the largest trade hub in the Mainland following the establishment of the human-led realms.

As the ages passed, the L'Enarousse, taking their name-sake from a rough elvish translation meaning 'Might of the Sea', built upon Sea Foam Bay with the arrival of more humans, elves, piskies and beastkin. With trade booming in the region, the small fishing village slowly grew to house many thousands of settlers, seeing the walls expand to protect the realm which grew by the day, reaching city-status by the end of the Third Age. Those that reside in, and defend the City of Jerrod's Front do so with noble hearts and strong minds, confident that they would repel any attack on their city with great ease.

Whilst the L'Enarousse are seen to be patient and reasonable to their friends and allies, there is also an undercurrent of smugness about them. It is a rare occasion that a L'Enaroussian citizen will back down from an argument, regardless of if they are right or wrong, and their exuberant personalities tend to sway deals and debates in their favour when dealing with those not of their realm.

The L'Enarousse are a hardworking and methodical people and some of the greatest minds throughout the ages have originated from Jerrod's Front. They are a people that believe in progression and enjoy reaping the rewards of success, knowing that they have poured their sweat and blood into every task they set their minds to.

In 2375 of the Fourth Age, the Governor of Jerrod's Front, Philippe Marsell, decided to cut all ties with the Great City of Netherlye after King Morgan Hanstез demanded all resources were sent to aid their kingdom, whose people had become addicted and reliant on the use of magic, twisted and some say corrupted by its overwhelming power.

When King Hanstез's army began to march upon the realms of Neothera in 2382, Philippe Marsell had already assembled an army of his own which would be ready to crush the Hanstез's forces, should they reach Jerrod's Front. Coupled with the alliance and technology they gained from the Blightfoot Gunners, Marsell assumed Hanstез's army would be destroyed. However, their thirst for power, sheer desperation for resources and ability to wield volatile and dangerous magic would likely have seen Jerrod's Front fall to ruin.

However, this did not come to pass as King Morgan's army was destroyed when the towers dedicated to the three schools of magic collapsed, destroying the City of Netherlye in a bizarre twist of fate. This is considered a very important lesson in why magic became regulated in Jerrod's Front, and its citizens respect the decision made by their government. Towards the middle of the Fourth Age, the use of magic in the City of Jerrod's Front became heavily regulated following the observation of the overuse of it in the Great City of Netherlye.





After seeing how dependant the people of Netherlye had become through its use, completing even the most simple and sedentary tasks through cantrips rather than using one's mind or hands, the former governor, Claudius Lestylor passed a law stating that magic may only be performed within the city walls by obtaining a permit. The law, which is still in place today, requires all spell casters wishing to obtain a permit to complete a series of tests of competency at the Lestylor College of the Magical Arts.

A basic appreciation of all three schools of magic and the elements regardless of one's specialisation would be required to be completed, and further psychological testing, determining if an individual was of sound mind and body would conclude if a spell caster would be granted a permit. Those found practising magic without a permit in Jerrod's Front, regardless of the reason, will stand trial in the courts, and depending on the circumstances or the spell or ritual performed, a sentence would be carried out accordingly, with the most severe verdicts sometimes resulting in execution.

Since the destruction of the Great City of Netherlye, and especially following the Burning of the Mainland, the L'Enaroussian army is regarded as the largest and most powerful force in all of Neothera. The government is famously known for the rigorous training and education that all soldiers and employees must regularly undergo which is paid for by the state. Quite often poorer parents will push their children to pursue a minimum term of service of five years in the army or government offices if only to allow them access to schooling and training which does not need to be paid for by the family.

Those that have or currently serve in the army or government offices of Jerrod's Front are well respected due to the demands of the job, and for keeping the peace in the realm. However, depending on your area of expertise, being drafted in to fight on the frontlines is an extremely dangerous job, and deserting a post, if caught, will see an individual serve a prison sentence of at least ten years.

L'Enarousse knights and soldiers favour fighting with weapons such as swords, hammers, pikes and spears, and their armour consists of chainmail or plate depending on their status. Those that are wealthy, in the city guard, military or navy, will generally have access to better quality equipment than those who aren't. Knights are famously chivalrous, and usually earn their status through heroic and noble deeds on the battlefield, or sometimes in other ways such as protecting or assisting citizens through hardships such as famine or plagues. A knight is not necessarily someone that excels at combat, and a sharp and selfless mind can often lead to deeds being performed that earn an individual such a title.



The L'Enarousse are allied to many other realms either from the Mainland or beyond, and famously took thousands of refugees from the Cities of Faradome and Vulpera after their recent destruction. However, there is one realm that has remained an enemy of the people since it came to power near the beginning of the Fourth Age. Black Hammer Bay, located west of Jerrod's Front, is home to pirates, smugglers, thieves and all manner of what many realms would class as undesirable people. Long have these two realms fought for dominance of the southern seas, with skirmishes taking place on a near-weekly basis.

The pirates are the bane of the L'Enarousse, plundering their ships and goading their people with lewd depictions and stories of their beloved Goddess, Sequilla whom they depict as a busty maiden of the seas with extremely loose morals. Many question why the L'Enarousse has not simply launched a full-scale assault upon Black Hammer Bay, however, there are countless conspiracy theories such as the late Captain Black Hammer, former leader of the realm being related to Philippe Marsell, to some sort of secret deal relating to money being paid to the government to allow the pirates to continue plundering L'Enaroussian ships. The official stance of the government is that the pirates make good practice to keep the army and navy on top form, and due to trade routes, it is not in the interest of the economy to raze the pirate city to the ground.



## LEADERSHIP

Unlike other realms, the L'Enaroussian people have never declared a king or queen, believing that no mortal should be given such a birthright. Instead, Jerrod's Front is a democratic realm, where a new governor is elected once every twenty years, or sooner should polls point to unrest amongst the people or the current governor becomes unable to rule due to ill health or death. The Marsell family are the jewel in the crown of the L'Enarousse, and despite the law regarding the re-election of new governors, this family has been in power for almost three hundred years due to the dedication they show to win the hearts of the people.

The current governor, Philippe Marsell, now a man in his sixties, came to power at the age of fourteen after his father died of consumption. Despite his young age, his wisdom was beyond his years, and his love and loyalty, even to this day, for the people of his realm saw him become a firm favourite in almost every household in Jerrod's Front. Philippe Marsell is the protector of the people and heads a council of twelve men and women, known as the Disciples, who ensure the citizens of Jerrod's Front prosper and live harmoniously. With such a powerful government in place, and since the destruction of the Great City of Netherlye at the end of the Fourth Age, the Tutela Syndicate have since made Jerrod's Front the base for their headquarters which is now located within the walls of Marsell Keep. It is said that the syndicate now plays a large part in the running of Jerrod's Front, and two of the twelve council seats are taken by syndicate members.



## THE CITY OF JERROD'S FRONT

Jerrod's Front is built on the slopes of the southern countryside that lead to the naturally formed harbour below. Most streets in Jerrod's Front are generally sloped due to the bulk of the city being constructed on the hillside. The city itself is divided into three sections, with residential dwellings dotted throughout: The Trade District: Home to traders, vendors, shops and stalls of any variety. You are sure to find any item you require here should you look in the right place. The Scholarly District: Colleges, schools and trainers dedicated to learning in any form can be found here, from the magical arts to crafting practises combat tutors to medicine, technology and the sciences. The district also hosts the largest library in Mainland Neothera, with several ancient pieces of literary works dating back to the Second Age. The Military District: Located in the east section of the city is home to the famous Marsell Keep, various barracks, offices and establishments that oversee the protection of the city and the well-being of its people.

As a rule of thumb, a family's wealth and success can be measured by the position of their property in the city, where households which reside high on the northern slope are generally owned by the rich. Dwellings which are further down the slope are usually closer to the pestilent slop in the slums. L'Enaroussian streets are cobbled in grey stone, and the houses and buildings are typically timber-framed. The frame is usually filled with wattle and daub but occasionally with brick. Jerrod's Front boasts various schools dedicated to the arts of magic, and the practice of magic is illegal in Jerrod's Front unless you have graduated from one of these schools or have gained a permit from the council.

## MARSELL KEEP

The heavily fortified Marsell Keep sits in the eastern quarter of the city and is the most well-guarded location in Jerrod's Front. After a fisherman named Jerrod had successfully killed the giant sea-beast known as the Hungerer that plagued the ocean around Jerrod's Front resulting in famine within the city, its rib cage was hauled in-land and used as a decorative piece inside the great Marsell Hall. This served as L'Enaroussian testament to their ability to overcome any danger, no matter how humongous or frightful it may be.

Marsell Keep serves as a home for the Marsell family and their counsel which govern the L'Enaroussian people. This keep is the heart of all L'Enaroussian affairs from politics to taxes to law. Marsell Keep is a pinnacle of L'Enaroussian construction; however, it's elaborate, yet fortified appearance and build are not nearly comparable in beauty to the structures of the elves.



The keep is defended by well-placed towers that are equipped with cannons and ballista, these towers, and the rest of the keep are always manned by the L'Enarousse military. Certain sections of the keep are continuously open to the public, yet a large portion is restricted to military and authorised personnel only. Some of those not permitted in these areas question what the Marsell family has to hide, however, those who voice their opinions in public have often been hauled in front of the courts and trialled of treason or disappeared altogether.

## THE DOCKS

The docks at Jerrod's Front are an essential part of defence and prosperity for the capital city. The naturally formed harbour means that the L'Enarousse have been blessed with an ideal location to operate their fishing businesses and naval activities. The docks lay in the territory of both the trade military districts and the majority of buildings situated at the docks are slum houses, warehouses, taverns, fishing shacks and military establishments.

During the day the dock is a hub of hardworking citizens, soldiers and sailors; however, when night falls only those looking to drink themselves into a stupor at the numerous taverns, or those involved in dubious activities generally tend to occupy this location. Whilst the area is patrolled by the local military, crime is still a problem in this part of Jerrod's Front. Drunken sailors or soldiers that cause trouble will usually end up being arrested and slung in jail for the night, whilst smugglers and thieves are often brought before the magistrate for a suitable sentence to be extracted upon them. If you are looking for strong booze or exotic items, then the docks of Jerrod Front is the place to be. Just make sure you don't get press-ganged into the navy!

## RELIGION

Jerrod's Front began life as a small coastal settlement that relied heavily on fishing for its survival, as such, Sequilla was, and still is, worshipped by the L'Enarousse for providing the bounty of the seas. Praise is often offered to the Goddess of Water that she may be merciful to sailors, and exorcise her wrath upon enemy vessels that would hamper the affairs of this great realm. Whilst Sequilla is the favoured Goddess of the Seven for the L'Enaroussian people, the six other deities, also Osirah and Senetsu, are still commonly worshipped, or sometimes avoided in certain situations due to the ancient teachings of the elves who first nurtured the humans in the Third Age.

Some L'Enaroussian citizens quietly shun Signis, as those who believe the legends of the elves take umbrage to Sequilla's treatment by the God of Lightning. Terralapis is often worshipped due to being seen as a strong figure, capable of crafting life from the soil, and perhaps also representing their stubbornness in the face of adversity. Despite having few followers in other parts of the Mainland, Spiria is worshipped in Jerrod's Front as a jovial character that grants the boon of swift sailing and travel upon the land, and representing a strength that is quite capable of toppling any foe the L'Enarousse face, as do their swords, spears and sheer strength in numbers.

Nearly all dwellings in Jerrod's Front have some kind of shrine or altar dedicated to the gods and goddesses, especially Sequilla, and households often compete to have a shrine larger and more elaborate than their neighbours to show their devotion to their faith. The largest place of worship in Jerrod's Front is the Lunèsol Cathedral located in the scholarly district and was first constructed early in the Fourth Age.





Many faiths are observed here; however, the focus of the priests lays upon the creator deities, Osirah and Senetsu due to the belief that the Seven are their children, and that mortals, being the children of the Seven are related directly to the God of the Sun and the Goddess of the Moon. The main holidays, festivals and traditions observed by the L'Enaroussian people are Jerrod's Day, Chilen's Day, Gamebird Trials, Tregarthia, Harmony of the Creators and Stormwoven. You can read more about these notable events from *page 196* onwards.

## REALM STYLE

If you decide your character will belong to the L'Enarousse, you should bear in mind the following points regarding costuming and role-play, however, these are not strict guidelines, they are simply listed to assist you in getting a feel for the aesthetics of the realm.

From an out of character perspective, this realm, the look of the city, its culture, costuming, weapons, armour and equipment etc. is based heavily on the medieval English and French eras, with a splash of high fantasy and Arthurian legends thrown in for good measure. A quick internet search of these topics will yield some informative and inspiring results.

The colours of the realm are white and blue, offset with black, silver and gold, and where possible you should make use of these colours when putting together costumes for a L'Enarousse character. The L'Enarousse are proud people, sometimes considered arrogant, yet honourable and full of camaraderie. Jerrod's Front is the largest and most powerful city in Neothera and accepts all races and creeds within its walls, therefore, its people are used to sharing their realm with non-human races, and those with differing beliefs to their own. The L'Enarousse are often methodical people, creative thinkers and certainly not afraid to stand up for what they believe in.





# SOUTHERN REALMS

(PLAYABLE REALM)



THE CIRCULAR BOUNDARY OF THE EMBLEM REPRESENTS OSIRAH, THE GOD OF THE SUN, WITH THE OVERLAPPING CRESCENT DEPICTING SE-NETSU, THE GODDESS OF THE MOON. THE CITY OF SORA'HARUMI IS REPRESENTED BY A GREAT TOWER, WITH THREE TIERS PORTRAYING THE OUTLANDER TRIBES THAT WORK WITH THE CAPITAL CITY TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THOSE THAT RESIDE IN THE SOUTHERN REALMS.



# SOUTHERN REALMS

## SORA'HARUMI & THE OUTLANDER TRIBES

The sprawling green grasslands and rocky peaks of the Southern Realms are home to many fantastical species of animals and plant life; these lands, full of natural resources, are home to the people of Sora'Harumi and the Outlander Tribes. Early in the Third Age, the population of the Southern Realms was entirely made up of humans, who arrived via rifts from their homeworld known as Terevia, and the urka, whose enormous spacecraft carrying the last of their species from the planet Nethrekka crash-landed in the middle of the continent. Before the arrival of the humans and urka, the continent was occupied solely by elves until the end of the Second Age. Since the dawn of their creation, the Lightning Elves of House Betrallis and the Earth Elves of House Koruthas lived in cities carved from the mountains in the east and west of the continent. Although they survived the War of Gods, their species fell into near extinction following the Nightmare War at the end of the Second Age.

The people of Sora'Harumi are adamant that despite initial explorations of what remained of the Cities of Betrallis and Koruthas, they decided to leave the ruins alone as a mark of respect for the fallen. However, some reports gathered by the Order of the Veracious Divine, highly trained soldiers employed by King Olkren-Gorami, the ruler of Sora'Harumi, show evidence that not all of the elves of the two houses were slain during the Nightmare War and some of them occupy the deep caverns in the mountains to this day.

Attempts at communications with the elves were either unsuccessful or met with hostility, and rather than force out what few survivors were assumed to occupy the mountains a law was passed that their sacred lands were to be left in peace.

When the humans and urka arrived in the Southern Realms early in the Third Age, the Osimi, shaman of the realm of Sora'Harumi, born with the psychic gift of foresight, foretold and recounted to their people the great wars the Mainland had suffered, and of those that would follow in later ages. Due to these wars, often being of a religious nature, the decision was taken to stay clear of the strife occurring in the Mainland. Powerful urka seers conjured storms and mists that shrouded the Southern Realms and made the southern ocean almost impassable to those that did not know how to traverse the tempests.

From the middle of the Third Age, the people of the Southern Realms would become protected from whatever conflict the mainlanders may have drawn them into, and it was not until the Fifth Age that the southerners would finally reveal themselves to the realms of the Mainland. However, not all continents were off-limits to the people of Sora'Harumi, and towards the end of the Third Age, the south found a new ally in the people of the Western Realms of Eúnd Vald.





Two siblings named Hoshi and Zen were the first to navigate the oceans in the south to the realm of Vesthold in Eúnd Vald, and until their arrival, the westerners knew nothing of the lands beyond their continent. It was thanks to the siblings that passage between the Southern and Western realms became established, and due to the cooperative nature of the two realms integration took place after connections were finally made. The Southern Realms, being more socially and technologically advanced, played an important part in the evolution of the City of Vestr. To this day, it is easy to see the influence Sora'Harumi had on culture, fashion, victuals, architecture and other aspects of life in the City of Vestr. The people of Sora'Harumi played a key part in the progression of the realm, however, they have always opposed any sort of alliance when it comes to matters of war, especially between the people of Vestr and the Dragonkin of the Ashan Mountains.

The people of the Southern Realms have always kept a close eye on other continents, quietly gathering information about all aspects of life in them. For many ages, the Order of the Veracious Divine even walked unnoticed amongst the people of the various realms of the Mainland, acquiring knowledge and relaying their findings to their people back home. Due to the technology the urka had access to in what remained of their crashed starship, some believe that they subtly influenced figures in the Mainland, even bestowing some with schematics that would see technology rapidly advance.

It seems the storms raised to protect the Southern Realms by urka seers allowed passage for certain authorised vessels, and some mainlanders in ages past were offered new lives in Sora'Harumi which led to the integration of races such as piskies, vulperans, beastkin, goblins, elves and even wights. However, potential immigrants were always selected with care by the Order of the Veracious Divine, and some wonder if they were brought to the south to be studied. Some even speculate if the Osimi foretold an individual would be responsible for some heinous deed that would lead to catastrophic destruction that would affect the south in some way and they were plucked from another continent to live in the south, ensuring the dire visions of the farseers did not come to pass.

The people of the Southern Realms have lived in relative peace throughout the ages when compared to other continents, although that is not to say that Sora'Harumi is a city that could easily be taken if besieged. In fact, the lands of the south are under constant threat by vicious beasts that roam the plains or emerge from the mountains and tunnels within them, and in years gone by even the demonic Nightmares have attempted to cause various problems with moderately sized battles occurring in the lands of the south.

It is for these reasons that many southerners are willing to be drafted into the army of Sora'Harumi should King Olkren-Gorami raise a call to arms, and be it upon land or sea, the south is certainly not a realm to be trifled with. Despite their peaceful nature, unless their realm is under direct threat, the people of Sora'Harumi have built a beautiful city in the lush grasslands of the Southern Realms, and their society has flourished over the ages, with the majority of the population considering their city well-governed, full of rich culture and relatively free from war, famine and poverty.

With the southern seas now free from the storms that secluded their realm from other continents, people from new lands are beginning to see exactly how beautiful Sora'Harumi is, how it's people follow humble yet honourable ways of life and how these things should be a lesson to other realms that pale in comparison to the wonders of the Southern Realms.





## LEADERSHIP

The Southern Realms are ruled by King Olkren-Gorami, a towering, pale-skinned urka who is said to possess the gift of immortality, for indeed, he is the only urka who has lived since the dawn of his species creation on the planet of Nethrekka. Gorami was one of the first urkas to be created by Osirah, the God of the Sun, and Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon. He had many sons and daughters, but sadly he outlived them all, as they were either slain in battle against demonic forces on Nethrekka or died of old age. Upon arriving in Neothera, Gormai vowed he would father no more offspring, being unable to endure the sadness of losing them to war or natural causes as he continued to live on, never ageing. Gorami was once capable of communicating with Osirah and Senetsu that told him to lead his people into a golden era, to protect and lead them forever with a pure and noble heart. Gorami has followed these orders since he ruled over his species back on Nethrekka, and many people both then and now consider him a living God. If it were not for the whispers of the gods, Gorami would never have ordered the golden starcraft to be constructed, and the urka would have perished at the hands of demonic forces back on their home planet of Nethrekka. As old as he is wise and strong, and despite living for thousands of years, King Olkren-Gorami does not consider himself all-knowing nor indestructible, for there have been many times where he has almost succumbed to grievous wounds sustained in battle back on Nethrekka.

The modest king believes he would be nothing without his trustworthy council, and formed the Order of the Veracious Divine, a group of individuals which are naturally skilled in combat, spellcasting and extremely clever when it comes to all matters regarding the defence and general running of the Southern Realms. The order was formed sometime in the latter part of the Third Age, and their numbers never rise beyond two hundred. If a member of the order dies, a replacement is selected following a rigorous testing program. Any citizen of the south may apply to become a member of the order; however, they must complete a series of tasks designed to push the body, mind and spirit to its limits. Many have taken the trials, and many have failed.

If a candidate completes the trials the High Council will then decide if the individual is truly worthy of becoming a member of the Order of the Veracious Divine. Above the members of the Order of the Veracious Divine sit the High Council, consisting of seven beings known as the Osimi. These beings are considered powerful seers due to their capability of being able to see into the past or future. Their future visions are rarely wrong, however, if a foretelling does not come to pass, it is often considered the work of beings that can traverse time, and alter certain events to change the outcome to their liking.





The Osimi are strange humanoid creatures with pale skin and pink eyes, often cloaked in dark robes and shun the sunlight as it causes terrible burning to their skin. According to King Olkren-Gorami, these beings were chosen by the Goddess of the Moon to wield extraordinary powers in her absence as she slumbers, and the king holds an enormous amount of trust in them, ensuring they are never far from his side. There are never more than seven Osimi in the world at any time, and it is thought that this relates to the balance of the Seven Elements, or deities that created Neothera. If the High Council loses one of its seven Osimi to death, either upon the battlefield or to natural causes such as old age, it is the job of the Order of the Veracious Divine to scour the world and locate a replacement, who will always accept their calling and journey to the Southern Realms to sit at the High Council.

After hearing of its success upon the Mainland, King Olkren-Gorami invited the Tutela Syndicate to operate in the Southern Realms. Although the City of Sora'Harumi was relatively free of criminal activity for many centuries, there had been a noticeable rise in crime as the realm grew in size, where it was considered that many folks were not following the teachings of Osirah and Senetsu to ensure peace and order in the lands. With the introduction of universal laws set by the Tutela Syndicate, enforced by their Law Keepers and the city military, eventually, crime started to decline.

Coupled with the introduction of a single currency (Llandies) the economy began to boom in Sora'Harumi, with fair profits made and decent wages paid to traders and workers alike. Some folks believed that the arrival of the Tutela Syndicate was the foreshadowing of integration with realms in other continents long before the south revealed themselves to others, and indeed it seemed they were correct. The longstanding presence of the Tutela Syndicate in the south since the start of the Fourth Age with the introduction of laws and currency made business and affairs between the Southern Realms and other new lands very easy considering the familiarity of such concepts already being in place, albeit without new allies previously knowing of the existence of the Southern Realms due to the integrity of the bank.

## THE CITY OF SORA'HARUMI

The City of Sora'Harumi was founded early in the Third Age after the humans and urka arrived in the Southern Realms. Plummeting from the stars, the golden arc that brought the urka to Neothera crash-landed in the centre of the continent on a huge island that sits in the middle of a confluence where three rivers meet. The three rivers run to the north, east and west of the continent and out to sea and are named Maein, Shanglon, and Janto respectively.

These rivers divide the city into three sections. Much of the debris of the craft strewn across the land was salvaged and used in the construction of what would become the City of Sora'Harumi. The golden metallic substance the craft was constructed from is a rare mineral in Neothera and often called simply Divine Stone due to its magical properties when treated correctly, however, this mineral was commonly found on the urka planet of Nethrekka.

The main husk of the craft can still be seen today, its nose embedded deep in the side of a mountain on the island confluence named the Golden Isles, and it is here that King Olkren-Gorami resides in the headquarters of the Order of the Veracious Divine. Over the years the craft was gradually stripped of materials and technology that survived the impact, and today it resembles a golden citadel that has been heavily fortified, with the addition of stone and wood. The island is the most heavily guarded location in Sora'Harumi on account of the king making this his home and the advanced technology hidden deep within the citadel.

Much of the area surrounding the Golden Isle was covered in lush forests when the urka and humans first arrived in the Southern Realms and these trees were felled to make way for the city, and also used in its construction. Although the city is separated into three districts by the rivers that run through them, they do not house specialist traders, schools or temples etc. and facilities of varying type can be located anywhere within the city walls.

Winding streets trail through Sora'Harumi and on either side buildings, some as tall as ten storeys and built from timber and stone, are highly decorated with the addition of ornate, colourful artwork and patterns. Beautiful multi-tiered roofs made from tiles are painted blue, red, green and gold, although some are often thatched. It is possible to recognise ancient buildings in Sora'Harumi on account of the golden Divine Stone they are constructed from, the remnants of the arc the urka came to Neothera in, which never deteriorates.

The majority of buildings made from this golden mineral tend to be places of worship, colleges, workshops or other important establishments many capital cities boast. The elderly are highly respected citizens of the realm due to the worldly knowledge they have gained throughout their lives which is passed down to younger generations. As such, they are very well looked after and offered better living conditions for the twilight years of their lives. Occupying housing on the banks of the three rivers is considered more peaceful than the hubbub of the inner city, and many families work towards the goal of being able to afford such luxurious accommodation for themselves in their old age or for their elderly relatives.



The technology which the urka have possessed since before they arrived in Neothera has played a vital role in the construction and evolution of Sora'Harumi, and it is not uncommon to see machinery and mechanical devices used in everyday life. Some argue that the technology used in the Southern Realms is more advanced than that of the Blightfoot Gunners in the Mainland, and some even wonder if the founder of the most technologically advanced realm in the Mainland somehow acquired and reverse-engineered devices that originated from the Southern Realms. Although technology is regularly used by southerners in their daily lives, magic is commonly practised and mastery of the elements takes little effort for those who are akin to spellcasting. Whether it is the devout worship of the creators of the universe, Osirah and Senetsu, or the exposure through countless generations of their people to the Divine Stone that is built into the foundations of their city, the southerners skill at converting the power of the elements into something far more potent, or wielding it with ease is an inherent trait possessed by many people of the Southern Realms.

## THE OUTLANDER TRIBES

Soon after arriving in the Southern Realms and emerging from the wreckage of the great flying arc that brought them to Neothera, it became apparent to the urka that they had found a land filled with bountiful resources. However, if they were to claim these promised lands, something would have to be done about the dangerous beasts that roamed the grassy flats. Many of the creatures could be hunted for meat, hide, bones, tusks and other useful materials, but the majority of the beasts were vicious and territorial. The urka believed that in time they could control the creatures, perhaps even farm them in specific areas of the continent, and as such various groups of urka, along with their new allies, the humans that arrived from Terevia, set out to map and claim the lands.

Eventually, settlements became established, and their inhabitants monitored, hunted or prevented the beasts from attacking urka and humans that were concentrating their efforts on building what would become the City of Sora'Harumi in the middle of the Southern Realms. As the years passed, three settlements became established that covered the main areas of the Southern Realms where beasts could be controlled more effectively. These settlements eventually grew to the size of small towns, with the urka and humans there living off the land, dedicating the lives of countless generations to a more simple way of life compared to those that reside in the busy City of Sora'Harumi.

Dedicating their existence to the survival of the Southern Realms, the Outlanders vow to protect the lands surrounding the remnants of the sacred starcraft, the City of Sora'Harumi and everyone who dwells within it.

To this day the three tribes have upheld their promises, and all members of the Outlander Tribes are held in high regard by those that reside behind the safety of the city walls. If it were not for the Outlanders, the City of Sora'Harumi would undoubtedly fall, succumbing to famine or being relentlessly assaulted by the great beasts that continue to roam the grasslands and mountains beyond its walls. While the laws of the land are strictly enforced within the City of Sora'Harumi, such is the honour of the Outlanders that crime is rarely heard of and each member of the three tribes, honourable soldiers, hunters and farmers respect the balance of all life and understand that cooperation is the key to survival in the Southern Realms. The urka and humans of the Outlander Tribes are recognised through their great and selfless deeds and often earn their surname according to a notable act they have performed, or in some circumstances on account of their appearance. Whichever way a surname is earned, it is never given if it would be deemed an insult to the intended.





## BROKENTOOTH TRIBE OF MAYA

To the northeast of the City of Sora'Harumi, the Broketooth Tribe can be found, occupying various small villages in an area known as Maya. Being the largest of the Outlander Tribes, the people here tirelessly fight and hunt the great beasts that roam between Tsendal and the River Shanglon east of Betralis. It was originally thought that after centuries of culling the creatures in the region their numbers would dwindle, however, this was not the case, and even to this day, the Broketooth Tribe fight relentlessly to push back the creatures, many of which travel down from the mountains that are notoriously difficult locations to cull prey at the source. On the upside of this, the City of Sora'Harumi has a constant source of food in the form of meat which the Broketooth Tribe supplies its citizens with for a small fee. Leyla Broketusk, a female urka, leads the Broketooth Tribe, and her bloodline is said to stem back to the founder of the first village in Maya, Hoi Broketooth. Following the recent integration with the realms of the Mainland, the Broketooth Tribe now also has to contend with people from foreign realms who attempt to take various areas of this natural reserve for the farming of resources to be supplied to other continents. King Olkren-Gorami has passed a law in conjunction with the Tutela Syndicate that the lands of the south are not to be claimed or ravished of resources by those who have not first sought his permission, and it is the duty of the Broketooth Tribe to ensure this law is enforced.

## BLACKSCAR TRIBE OF TSENDAL

To the southwest of the City of Sora'Harumi along the banks of the River Janto, one can find the villages of the Blackscar Tribe. The people of this large community are famous for their skill in fishing on the rivers inland and upon the oceans of the west coast of the Southern Realms. The canoes and small boats that leave the wharves located on the banks of the River Janto usually head northeast to the centre of the City of Sora'Harumi, where fish are traded or sold for a nominal fee to city-dwellers and sometimes include species of freshwater fish that are caught in the River Shanglon to the east and the River Maein to the north. The people of the Blackscar Tribe are generally peaceful and are rarely called to aid the defence of the Southern Realms. Although should there be no other option available, they are indeed capable of thwarting vicious beasts or other enemies that threaten Tsendal or the southwestern walls of the City of Sora'Harumi.

The Blackscar Tribe is led by an elderly urka named Arakan Deepscar, a skilled fisherman and warrior who has single-handedly slain great beasts that wandered towards Tsendal. He has earned many battle-scars as a result of his protective nature and selfless acts that have prevented other members of the tribe coming to harm. The Blackscar Tribe earned their name from Misaki Blackscar, the founder of Tsendal who was a skilled healer that used herbs to heal the wounds of many of her tribe that suffered injuries as a result of clearing ferocious beasts from the lands. It was said that she refused to use magic to close the wounds of the injured despite her capability of doing so, and whilst she could cure many ailments her kin suffered from with natural remedies, a black scar was always left where the flesh was damaged following her medical procedures. This scar was considered a mark of good luck, and many who possessed it rarely suffered physical wounds after she completed surgery on them.

## WHITECLAW TRIBE OF DJEN'SUN

An assortment of villages belonging to the Whiteclaw Tribe of Djen'sun is located south of the City of Sora'Harumi. Today, Djen'sun is mostly occupied by warriors, scouts, farmers and hunters, many of whom, in years gone by, regularly ventured into Norowatai to claim the bounties that could be found there, and pushed back the dangerous beasts that ventured too close to the plains near the City of Sora'Harumi. Following the appearance of the Great Divide in the Fourth Age, the Whiteclaw Tribe were ordered by King Olkren-Gorami to patrol and defend the southern borders of Sora'Harumi both day and night. After nature itself seemed to revolt at the intrusions made by the southerners, separating the land with an enormous channel that saw the continent ripped in two, the southerners vowed never to return to Norowatai. In fear of inciting the wrath of the spirits there further, a law was passed that no man or woman should ever set foot in these lands again.

It fell upon the shoulders of the Whiteclaw Tribe to enforce this law, and since the channel appeared they have patrolled the northern edge of the Great Divide, ever-watchful for those that would compromise the Southern Realms by angering whatever creatures or forces protected the natural beauty of Norowatai. Ryuji Whiteclaw, his surname earned on account of the blades he wielded with precision and grace, carved from the shoulder blades of an abnormally large Sicktooth, founded Djen'sun and today his human daughter by the name of Sayuri Paleblade, rules over the Whiteclaw Tribe, a people whose watchful duty has no end in the Southern Realms.



## RELIGION

Since before the urka arrived in Neothera early in the Third Age, their kind have worshipped Osirah, the God of the Sun and Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon as deities of absolute creation. As is believed by most followers of the two deities, they were responsible for creating the universe and all life within it. It was thanks to the first urkas that occupied Nethrekka that these teachings have been passed down through countless generations, and even today Osirah and Senetsu are the most popular gods in the Southern Realms. King Olkren-Gorami, one of the first urkas to have been created by the sun and moon deities has been at the forefront of promoting religion associated with Osirah and Senetsu, and he even states that once he was able to communicate with them directly. However, this gift was lost upon reaching Neothera. Thanks to the whispers of the two deities, the urka were able to build and travel in a golden starcraft that arrived in Neothera, the promised land, after their planet fell into destruction at the hands of the Nightmares. Gorami states that the last whispers he heard from the gods instructed him to lead his people to his haven, and if he had not followed their promises the species of urka would have likely fallen into extinction.

When the urka met the humans in the Southern Realms, they introduced the idea of religion to them, and the humans, after seeing the remnants of the golden starcraft that sprawled across the plains, were immediately convinced of the higher powers of the gods, with some even considering the urka to be divine beings themselves. Strong roots became established following the integration of the two species, and in southern culture, Osirah and Senetsu have always been worshipped as creator and saviour gods in elaborate temples dedicated to them by citizens in the south. It came as a surprise to the southerners that another race native to Neothera also worshipped their two gods in similar traditions to their own.

Strangely enough, the names of the two deities are pronounced the same in elvish as they are in the tongue of Sora'Harumi, which was spoken by the urka on their home planet of Nethrekka. It is thought that Osirah and Senetsu influenced the two races somehow, perhaps through visions, dreams or direct whispers by those capable of communicating with divine entities. This led to the urka believing that the story of creation was true and the elves were a species that inhabited a planet that was part of the universe Osirah and Senetsu created. In recent times, upon learning of the faeries of Lyshanduir worshipping a God of light they named Hirosah, the people of the Southern Realms question if the planet the fey left behind was one of Osirah and Senetsu's creations.

Most inhabitants of the Southern Realms are familiar with the stories of the Seven, the deities most commonly worshipped by the people of the Mainland and the Frozen North. Many southerners believe that the Seven did indeed exist, but they were created by Osirah and Senetsu, and therefore should not be worshipped as true gods because their origins are a result of the sun and moon deities creating all life, including lesser gods. Those that were taken to the Southern Realms by the Order of the Veracious Divine in ages past brought with them the teachings of the Seven, and were permitted to continue worshipping their chosen deities whilst on southern soil.

It was not uncommon for inhabitants of the south to convert to or share religion related to the Seven, and although they are few in numbers, there are temples dedicated to them in the City of Sora'Harumi. Despite the inhabitants of the south never forcing their faith in Osirah and Senetsu upon newcomers to their lands, there have always been occasions where those that worship the Seven over the God of the Sun and Goddess of the Moon have been mistreated, attacked, and temples of the followers of the Seven destroyed by purists who only believe in the two true creator deities. Of course, desecration of holy grounds, symbols and idols is illegal today in Sora'Harumi and is not tolerated by the majority of citizens who honour that people are allowed to observe faiths differently and that sometimes the beliefs of others may conflict with their own.

The longest-standing allies of the Southern Realms are the people of the City of Vestr in Eúnd Vald, the Western Realms, and it was thanks to Hoshi and Zen, two siblings from Sora'Harumi that they adopted a completely new belief system in their realms. Towards the end of the Third Age, the siblings found themselves washed up on the shore of the continent of Vesthold and were guided by animals to the safety of the City of Vestr. Legend says that Craetara, one of the five animals that led the pair to the sanctuary was capable of speech, and so wonderstruck were the citizens of Vestr that they deemed the creatures gods in animal-form. Tired of worshipping the gods of the Western Realms, whom the people of Vestr believed had abandoned them or never existed in the first place due to a lack of proof, the Vestrians adopted the sacred animals as their new deities. As relations grew between the Southern Realms and the Vestrians, of course, the subject of Osirah and Senetsu became introduced, however, so steadfast were the people of Vestr in their faith of the animal gods that they refused to accept gods similar to the ones they once abandoned. A decision was made by King Olkren-Gorami that the Vestrians should be allowed to worship whom they please, and the teachings of the God of the Sun and Goddess of the Moon should never be forced upon them should relations between the two continents become jeopardised as a result.



However, as the ages passed and the two realms shared their traditions and cultures, it became apparent that citizens in both cities had been influenced by these two separate religions and observers of the faiths can be found in both continents to this day. The main holidays, festivals and traditions observed by the Southern Realms are Omidashu and Harmony of the Creators. Of course, other faiths may be observed by citizens that do not follow the mainstream faiths; however, these celebrations are small in comparison. You can read more about these notable events from *page 196* onwards.

## REALM STYLE

Arriving in Neothera from planets beyond the stars, the human and urka of the Southern Realms formed a strong alliance under the selfless and modest gaze of the immortal urka, King Olkren-Gorami, considered by some to be a God in physical form. Salvaging what they could of the golden arc that crashed in the Southern Realms, the technology obtained from the wreckage undoubtedly assisted the southerners in creating one of the biggest and most beautiful cities in the known world, combining ancient crafts with futuristic ones. This technology also offers a better way of life for the people of Sora'Harumi, with hospitals, armouries, colleges and other important establishments having access to better tools and facilities. However, despite having access to technology beyond the imagination of even the greatest inventors of Blightfoot Ridge, most southerners remain humble and true to their roots, where skill through practice and a lifetime of learning is valued over methods that offer a quick and easy fix.

southerners respect the values and cultures of other realms beyond their continent and are always honourable upon the battlefield, and in any other situation they may find themselves in. The elderly are highly respected by southerners, and the younger generations are brought up to observe this and follow an honourable code determined by the culture and ideals their family and ancestors followed. The Divine Stone salvaged from the ruined starcraft that was used to build the foundations of the City of Sora'Harumi is said to have empowered its people somehow, and they are capable of wielding any of the elements native to Neothera with extreme ease. Since the south revealed itself to the rest of the known world, passage to and from this realm is leading to a wealth of integration. Today the southerners are travelling to new continents and learning more of the history and culture of realms that they only previously heard of in tales circulated by the Order of the Veracious Divine, who have scouted the continents of the world in secret for many ages.

Since the stormy barriers raised by urka and human seers have been brought down, so people from foreign lands have flocked to the Southern Realms to learn for themselves what this mysterious continent hid for so many years.

If you decide your character will belong to the Southern Realms, you should bear in mind the following points regarding costuming and role-play, however, these are not strict guidelines, they are simply listed to assist you in getting a feel for the aesthetics of the realm. From an out of character perspective, this realm, the look of the city, its culture, costuming, weapons, armour and equipment etc. is based on 12th to 18th century Japan and the Asian Steampunk aesthetic. A quick internet search of these topics will yield some informative and inspiring results. The colours of the realm are slate blue, red and green offset with black, gold and brown, and where possible you should make use of these colours when putting together costumes for a Southern Realms character





# TALANOR

(PLAYABLE REALM)



INTERLINKED GOLDEN RINGS REPRESENT THE ALLIANCE OF THE THREE REALMS THAT HAVE FORMED THE WESTERN CONFEDERATION ALLIANCE, CONSISTING OF FORCES FROM THE MAINLAND, NORVAEGR AND VESTHOLD. THE SYMBOLS OF THE STARS EACH REPRESENTS ONE OF THE SEVEN, WITH THE PARTIAL ECLIPSE PORTRAYING OSIRAH AND SENETSU. THE CREST OF TALANOR IS A SYMBOL OF STRENGTH, HOPE AND UNITY.



# MAINLAND NEOTHERA

## REALM OF TALANOR

Built upon the Ruins of an ancient city that became abandoned at the end of the Third Age, Talanor resides near the centre of the Mainland, around two hundred and fifty miles north of Jerrod's Front and Black Hammer Bay. The rebuilding of the city was ordered by Commander Eric Hemslake, leader of the Black Water Bandits that once occupied the western area of the Redveil Mountains, and Captain Edwin Smith, Pirate King Robert Smith's son. Being devout followers of the Seven, in 2392 of the Fifth Age, the pair led their forces to the Ruins of the city, supposedly guided by whispers from Sequilla herself, and they founded a realm that would accept people from all races and creeds who would rally to the cause of the creator deities.

The construction of the new city began quickly and people flocked to the realm with the promise of being offered land and homes should they assist in the rebuilding of Talanor. However, following the strange disappearance of Captain Edwin Smith, full leadership of the realm fell upon Commander Hemslake's shoulders. With growing discord between the L'Enarousse and Black Hammer Bay, Hemslake feared his realm would become forced to fight for one of the two sides as resources became harder to find following the recent Burning of the Mainland. Hemslake saw the discovery of the Western Realms of Eúnd Vald as an opportunity, and hearing of Norvaegr and Vesthold deciding to assist the Mainland in cleansing the corruption caused by the burning, he invited forces from the west to make new homes in his city. A council was formed consisting of King Ubbe Olofsson of the City of Otta in Norvaegr, Queen Freydis Skaldmaer of the City of Vestr in Vesthold and Karagal, King of the Dragonkin in the Ashan Mountains of Vesthold to bolster the profile of Talanor.

Before the old City of Talanor fell into ruin, it was occupied by humans and elves that were led by a council known as the Golden Conclave, an order of wise mages that used and studied divine magic to prolong the lives of those that were not immortal and supposedly even to open a gateway to the Halls of the Gods, the Ethereal Realm. The secretive people of Talanor were renowned for being unwelcoming to outsiders, and the walled city's gates were rarely opened. Eventually, the flickering lights visible in the night when viewing the realm from afar went out, and many passing folks reported an eerie silence falling upon the city.

Following an investigation by the L'Enarousse at the beginning of the Fourth Age, it was revealed that upon forcing the gates to the city open not a single soul could be found inside. It was as if the entire population had vanished overnight without a single trace of evidence being discovered as to why they had disappeared or where they had gone. However, a legend is in circulation that the L'Enarousse did find an old tome said to be written by a high priest of Talanor that reveals the fate of its citizens, and it is rumoured that the writing is kept under lock and key in Marsell Keep in the City of Jerrod's Front. Its secrets are only known to those permitted by the L'Enaroussian government.

As news spread throughout the Mainland of the vanishing people of Talanor the Tutela Syndicate cleared the city of any items of worth, storing them in their vaults should the citizens of Talanor ever return to claim them. Following this, the city's gates were sealed shut and as both time, and the elements took their toll, the city fell to ruin until it was recently claimed by the forces of Hemslake and Smith in the Fifth Age.







Today the realm of Talanor is seen as a welcoming refuge to anyone that wishes to lay down roots in the city, or is simply passing through on business or for pleasure. Although heavily influenced by the settlers that recently arrived from Eúnd Vald, the Western Realms, the city is fast becoming a multicultural hub. Instead of separating its citizens according to race, culture or belief, as is the case with some more established realms such as the Amicita City of Faradome, the people of Talanor are encouraged to share all aspects of their lives with others. This has even led to temples being constructed or rebuilt that allow the worship of many faiths all under one roof.

With the arrival of people from Eúnd Vald, new faiths are being adopted by those who have heard the tales of their deities and found comfort or truth in them. The westerners are also sharing their knowledge of new or ancient crafting techniques that were previously unknown to those not of their lands, or lost to time and rediscovered as a better or alternative way of improving day-to-day life.

Talanor is considered a sanctuary to its people, one where they can thrive without being restricted by the cultural norms of other more established realms. The government encourages this and has vowed to allow its citizens to continue learning from one another providing they follow the universal laws set by the Tutela Syndicate, which has recently been invited to hold a presence in the realm to enrich the economy and improve the way of life for the people here.

Despite its age, being the youngest realm in all of Neothera, the construction of Talanor happened extremely quickly, and the fortifications of the city walls and quick thinking of the commanding officers and government meant the fires caused by the demons and goblins that spread from the east during the Burning of the Mainland were halted when they reached the city saving many thousands of lives. This has gained the realm a shining reputation, where its inhabitants are seen as resourceful, determined and hardy folk who stand bravely in the face of danger and hardships.

## LEADERSHIP

The new City of Talanor was founded by two individuals that shared a deep fondness of the Seven, and following instructions supposedly whispered to them by the creator deities, the pair led a large force of free peoples to the ruined city and made it their home. Under the guidance of the Seven, they began restoring Talanor to its former glory and invited folk of any race and creed to make their homes in the realm. Commander Eric Hemslake ruled over his people known as the Bandits of Blackwater in the west of the Redveil Mountains, a harsh land filled with many dangers. Hemslake was a wanted man, as were many of his followers for crimes against the inhabitants of the realms of the Mainland that mostly involved theft, and occasionally murder. In 2392 of the Fifth Age, Hemslake murdered Lord Brosden Searle, the owner of the Caddington Estate as revenge for the death of his brother, Barad Hemslake in the year 2390.



Barad's death was ordered by Lord Searle who wanted Hemslake's forces moved off his lands which bordered the Redveil Mountains, and the act was carried out by a group of mercenaries directly employed by him. Instead of inciting further violence, directly following the murder of Lord Searle, Captain Edwin Smith (son of Robert Smith, the Pirate King of Black Hammer Bay) and his comrades made an agreement with Hemslake that would allow his people freedom of passage to the Ruins of Talanor so that they may leave behind their bloody legacy of crime and finally settle as honest citizens in a realm where all would be welcome providing they too followed the law and atoned for their sins by carrying out the work of the gods.



Both Smith and Hemslake claimed that the Seven spoke to them directly and told them to claim Talanor, and those loyal to the two holy men followed them without question. After learning of the growing number of people that were flocking to this new city, the leaders of other realms turned their gaze towards Talanor, concerned about this rising powerhouse that welcomed people from all walks of life, including the criminally inclined who were often offered pardon should they devote themselves to improving the realm in some way and atoning for their sins through devotion to the gods. Fearing that Talanor could potentially become another Black Hammer Bay, especially with the Pirate King's son at its helm, a meeting of the Mainland realms was called. After lengthy discussions, the city was allowed to continue its expansion, providing the Tutela Syndicate was allowed to operate there with their Law Keepers ensuring peace was kept.

Finally recognised as an official realm, Talanor continued to grow as a city, but the strange disappearance of Captain Edwin Smith meant that Hemslake was left to manage the realm on his own. Rumours of Smith's disappearance began to circulate in Talanor, with some saying he was murdered by Hemslake, who was supposedly also a werewolf, and others saying he was lost at sea. Some tales even state that Smith dabbled with magic that opened rifts to other dimensions, one day seeing him sucked through one of these portals to a strange new land and unable to return home. Whatever the reason for Smith vanishing it became apparent that Hemslake did not want to be seen as a sole governor who selfishly decided the fate of his people on his own, and the discovery of the Western Realms of Eúnd Vald could not have come at a better time for him.

In 2394 of the Fifth Age Commander Eric Hemslake held an audience with rulers of the Western Realms, hosting discussions with King Ubbe Olofsson of the City of Otta in Norvaegr, Queen Freydis Skaldmaer of the City of Vestr in Vesthold and Karagal, King of the Dragonkin in the Ashan Mountains of Vesthold. The three rulers of Eúnd Vald were keen to offer whatever help they could to Hemslake following the recent actions of brave heroes from the Mainland that assisted in ridding the west from centuries of war. Following weeks of discussion Hemslake would unite the three rulers of the west under one cause, and formed a united council that would govern Talanor named the Western Confederation Alliance. Hemslake, Olofsson, Skaldmaer and Karagal would rule over the realm as a council with all matters of the state governed by them, and votes being held to decide the outcomes of whatever issues were brought to the attention of the government. Should a decision not be agreed upon by the council it would be discussed until a unanimous verdict was reached. If a head council member could not be present at realm meetings which are regularly held in the Golden Tower of Unity, headquarters of the realm leaders when they are in Talanor, nominated counterparts would take their position.

Whilst some say Hemslake's decision to allow the western rulers a say in the politics of the Mainland is effectively a loss of his power and influence, the formation of the Western Confederation Alliance also gives him a foothold in the Western Realms, where he is now an official ambassador for the Mainland in Eúnd Vald. Many westerners have made their homes in Talanor, bringing with them a colourful taste of life from across the western ocean, the same can be said for mainlanders that have emigrated to the west, many of whom lost their homes in the recent Burning of the Mainland and were offered sanctuary in the Cities of Otta and Vestr. The formation of this cross-continent alliance has seen trade between Talanor, Norvaegr and Vesthold boom dramatically, with supplies being offered to the Mainland to assist those affected by the burning.



Similarly, the introduction of advanced technology produced in the Mainland is making its way to the west, undoubtedly improving lifestyles for many westerners. Some say this is the best thing to happen to both continents in many ages, yet handfuls of people on both sides of the ocean worry that conflicts could occur if either side oversteps their mark, with potential power struggles erupting as integration between the Mainland and the Western Realms continue to evolve.

## THE CITY OF TALANOR

The ancient City of Talanor which fell to ruin when its inhabitants mysteriously vanished was once wondrous to behold, its grand structures built from white and grey marble and elaborately chiselled with ornate patterns and designs. Many tall towers and obelisks stretched proudly into the sky, clearly visible far beyond the city's walls that were also constructed from the same material and equally as beautiful to behold. Similar to the Elven City of Faradome, Talanor was built circularly, with neatly pathed grey brick roads laid in rings around the city and connected via four larger roads that run from the centre of the city to the north, east, south and west walls.

An enormous golden tower is located at the centre of Talanor where the high priests of the Golden Conclave were believed to have watched over the realm. This tower, although requiring much restoration work to its interior and upper levels is the least decrepit structure in the remnants of the city, and the new government has made this their base of operations. To this day many people wonder why such a beautiful city, with architecture heavily influenced by the elves, was abandoned and left to crumble. However, with restorations being lovingly carried out to any salvageable structures by the new inhabitants of Talanor, the people of the realms of the Mainland are hopeful that they may be able to see the city in all its former glory once again, albeit with a modern influence.

With the arrival of Talanor's new occupants, the rebuilding of many partially ruined structures has commenced, along with the clearing of debris and irreparable buildings, where new wood and stone-built structures are being worked on and completed on a near-daily basis. The marble used in the construction of the old buildings of Talanor is often salvageable. It is used as a material from which to make new houses, workshops, schools, barracks and other vital utilities that any successful city requires. The assistance provided by the Western Realms has seen the completion of many works in the city done quicker than before, and thanks to the diverse cultures of Talanor, a variety of goods and services are now available in the realm.

This has led to many proprietors setting up shop in the realm, and already it has become a location of interest to those seeking exotic or hard to find items. Those skilled at working the land have established farms beyond the southern and western walls of the city upon the plains and bordering lands of the Gold Back Hills, and already the city can feed its thousands of occupants from the success of the yields made by their agricultural ambassadors.

## THE EASTERN AND WESTERN DISTRICTS

Much of the eastern section of Talanor has decayed beyond repair, therefore the majority of the renovations are occurring in the western district of the city. Ruins here become fully demolished with any salvageable rubble being used in the building operations to the west or recycled for new builds in this district. Any ruined ring roads that circle the streets of the city are also undergoing repairs, and the eastern district will allow for the construction of many additional permanent structures such as housing, schools, workshops, libraries and hospitals. One of the first buildings to undergo quick and extensive restoration work was a partially dilapidated temple. The large structure has been named Rainbow Halls on account of the colours of the many faiths and the elements in Neothera, and is a place of worship for all of Talanor's citizens, regardless of their faith. Shrines dedicated to any deity imaginable have been carefully put together by those wanting to worship here. However, those that pray at the shrines are encouraged to keep the altars moderately humble as a reflection of mortal life when compared to the power of the gods.

The western district of Talanor seemed to suffer less to the sands of time, and many buildings here were able to be occupied with little or no restoration work. It is in this part of the city that the majority of residents live and work, and towards the outer edges of the district, a large military presence can be seen and felt. The newly formed Western Confederation Alliance can draw upon a large pool of soldiers to thwart any threat that presents itself to the city, and the diversity of the troops from all realms of Neothera that make up the army allow for a variety of fighting styles and tactics to be implemented on the battlefield.

With the promise of new frontiers, cultures and potentially battles to be fought in a foreign land that is ready to welcome their people and offer them a home beyond the Ashan Mountains, many dragonkin have travelled across the western ocean and established new roots in the City of Talanor.



To this day, many passages of the catacombs of the old City of Talanor still stand, and it is here the dragonkin, with the help of goblins that have made Talanor their home, have built upon the tunnels to allow them a more comfortable way of life. Being races that are used to living in subterranean climates, the dragonkin and goblins, have structurally enforced the tunnels that stretch deep below the city and have expanded them to allow their communities to thrive.

Despite not being near the ocean the realm of Talanor has ships moored at Black Hammer Bay, Jerrod's Front and other small ports dotted around the western coast of the Mainland. Being seafaring folk, the council leaders from Eúnd Vald have been charged with the organisation of any naval activities Talanor will take part in, with Commander Eric Hemslake leading land-based forces upon the Mainland. With strong naval links now established in Black Hammer Bay and Jerrod's Front, and with trade routes to other Mainland realms being bolstered by the presence of the westerners and the resources they have brought with them to the Mainland, Talanor is very much a city on the rise, and potentially one with a very bright future.

## RELIGION

The people of the realm of Talanor observe a variety of different belief systems including the worship of the Seven, Osirah and Senetsu and deities of Eúnd Vald. The vision of Eric Hemslake and Edwin Smith, the city's founders was to promote the worship of divine figures, and upon arriving at Talanor, those that did not follow a faith would be encouraged to seek enlightenment through the learning of the various gods and goddesses that played a part in creating and watching over Neothera. Whilst the concept of religion is not pushed forcibly upon those that call Talanor their home, it is widely encouraged as a means to offer hope, broaden the minds of the faithless and used as a tool to teach and offer advice.

Citizens of the realm are also encouraged to learn from faiths different to their own, and the temple known as Rainbow Halls was one of the first buildings to be reconstructed by the new inhabitants of the city for such a purpose. Rainbow Halls hold a place for all faiths, and a variety of different areas in the temple are dedicated to the many deities worshipped throughout Neothera. There is one rule in the temple, and that is that no one shrine dedicated to a specific deity should be more elaborate or imposing than any of the others, for this would imply that the deity is greater than the gods or goddesses with less adorned shrines.



It should not come as a surprise that with the teachings of so many different faiths, there are rumours of new, hybrid belief systems being written and observed by some citizens of Talanor. This is not unacceptable in the realm; however, the government keeps a watchful eye on any developments in this matter should the true meaning of mainstream faiths be muddled, misinterpreted or skewed so that violence or persecution becomes part of their followers' worship.

Some take the aspects and stories of mainstream faiths quite literally, for example causing arson in the name of the God of Fire, and using the cleansing nature of the Fire Element to cause harm to others. In these instances, citizens are accountable under the laws of Talanor and will suffer the consequences if they are found guilty following a full investigation by the government and the Tutela Syndicate. These matters are not taken lightly by the realm, but each case is always carefully judged, fairly and accordingly.

The main holidays, festivals and traditions observed by the realm of Talanor vary according to the beliefs of the citizens observing them. You can find a full list of mainstream holidays from *page 196* onward, and depending on the background you create for your character, they can observe any of the holidays, festivals and traditions that are relevant to them.



## REALM STYLE

The newly formed realm of Talanor is considered the most diverse in all of the known world, with people from all races and creeds making their homes here. Westerners from the realms of Eúnd Vald have arguably made the biggest impact on Talanor, with many settlers setting up businesses, offering their services to the army or common folk here or simply wanting to start a new life in a faraway land. It is therefore easy to see why almost half of the inhabitants of Talanor originate from Norvaegr or Vesthold.

Even the race of goblins have been welcomed as citizens of Talanor, a species that until recently shied away, occupying the vast network of underground tunnels and subterranean cities beneath the surface of the Mainland and the Frozen North. Talanor is a melting pot of different races and cultures and people with varied faiths that are allowed to celebrate their differences without fear of persecution. Providing its citizens contribute to the success of the realm in some way, they are welcome here and may bear witness to the evolution and development of the world's youngest realm that many say is destined for great things providing it stays true to its roots.

If you decide your character will belong to the realm of Talanor, you should bear in mind the following points regarding costuming and role-play, however, these are not strict guidelines, they are simply listed to assist you in getting a feel for the aesthetics of the realm.

Talanor is somewhat different from other realms when it comes to the look of the city, its culture, costuming, weapons, armour and equipment etc. Being the newest realm to have been formed in Mainland Neothera, the inhabitants of the city have arrived from any realm found in the known world. Therefore the influence for your costume, role-play and character background can be taken from any of the existing (playable) races and realms in this book. The main colours of the realm are black and white, offset with silver and gold. However, if your character originated from the Western Realms (Eúnd Vald) you should refer to the colour schemes listed below and see the links to other pages in this guide for the lore.

**THE CITY OF OTTA (Norvaegr - Western Realms):** Light blue offset with brown, silver and gold. See *page 167* onward for lore.

**THE CITY OF VESTHOLD (Vestr - Western Realms):** Red offset with yellow and gold. See *page 169* onward for lore.

**THE DRAGONKIN, SHIEK'AH (Ashan Mountains - Western Realms):** Olive green and brown offset with silver, copper and gold. See *page 164* onward for lore.





# TERMINARIUM

(PLAYABLE REALM)



THE CREST OF LYSHANDUIR DEPICTS THE DARKNESS CONSUMING THE LIGHT. FOUR STARS REPRESENTING THE ROYAL LIGHTBORNE FAMILY, BATHED IN LIGHT, WHILST A SOLITARY STAR IN THE NIGHT SKY SHOWS HIROSAH, THE GOD OF THE SUN IS STILL PRESENT DESPITE THE TIDES OF EVIL WASHING OVER THE WORLD.



# TERMINARIUM

## A.K.A. REALM OF LYSHANDUIR

A world bathed in light that knew only of peace and harmony, Lyshanduir was once home to the race of faeries, who occupied the planet under the rule of four caring and gracious leaders that were supposedly created by Hirosah, the God of the Sun. It should be noted that Osirah and Hirosah translate roughly to mean the same thing in both elvish and fey tongues: The Light of Creation. The Fey of Lyshanduir knew nothing of war, famine, suffering nor strife, and lived their immortal lives in the bountiful lands that always provided for their people. The royal Lightborne family of Lyshanduir, King Aranthius, Queen Azhara, Queen Ostraza and King Venstrim were the first fey to occupy the world and nurtured their people whilst asking for nothing in return. They would ensure the race of fey embraced the light of Hirosah, caring for one another deeply and compassionately, and giving back to the land where they could by becoming shepherds of all other life forms that existed in the world. However, it soon became apparent that an incurable sickness had struck Lyshanduir and eventually, the world would become plunged into an eternal darkness that would consume the fey, leaving only a handful of their species alive.

The sickness first began as whispers in the ears of the fey, disembodied voices that tempted them into performing evil acts the likes Lyshanduir had never known. The fey fell foul to the Seven Vices; pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth, and try as they might, they were unable to resist these temptations, forced upon them by wicked magic of demonic origins. Discord broke out, which eventually led to acts of violence within fey communities. Steadily, the fey that had succumbed to temptation began to lose their inner light altogether.

The first fey to give in to the darkness lost their Star Lines (the patterns on their bodies that represented the constellations when they were born), their skin became pale, and their hearts stopped beating, but still, they continued to live. They gained powers that enabled them to dominate the minds of the living fey into doing their bidding, and eventually, they grew fangs which they used to pierce the skin of the living and consume their blood to survive. As they did this, many fey became infected with the corruption that coursed through the veins of their unliving kin, and they died only to rise as vampyres (meaning 'Shadowborne' in the fey tongue), joining the ranks of the undead that were slowly causing Lyshanduir to fall into darkness.

As the Fey of Lyshanduir became plunged into all-out-war with the vampyres, eventually the fey king, Venstrim became corrupted and joined the ranks of the undead. Finally, the vampyres had a leader, and the three remaining members of the fey royal family vowed to destroy Venstrim and rid the world of any vampyres that dared to join his cause.

The situation grew direr for the fey as eventually the source of corruption finally revealed itself. Demons, known as the Nightmares, arrived in Lyshanduir via rifts they tore open from the Nightmare Realm to the physical plane, and they too joined the ranks of the undead, led by King Venstrim. Eventually, the City of Lights became the last remaining stronghold of the fairies. As darkness swept across the lands, this last bastion of hope continued to protect the living fey as the war continued to rage on, and the remaining members of the fey royal family searched for a way to end the incursions.





However, as Venstrim and the Nightmares focussed their forces relentlessly assaulting the City of Lights, some vampyres detached themselves from the will of the demons, and using their magic opened portals to escape Lyshanduir. Arriving in Neothera, these vampyres vowed one day to reclaim Lyshanduir, to destroy any undead that threatened the spark of life. In this new world, they forged great realms in the frozen wastes where they would rally other sentient undead beings to their cause. Lyshanduir would become known as Terminarium by the fey, and a rough translation of its meaning in the tongue of the faeries is 'End of Light'. It seems there was one spark of hope in the plight of the fey; however, its promise was short-lived. The fey king, Aranthius Lightborne was said to have discovered a way to reverse the vampyric state that befouled any faeries which had succumbed to the Plague of Undeath. Many years of research were about to pay off as he and the Guardians of the Sun (a group of elite fey warriors) approached Venstrim's forces in the south of Terminarium. Despite their efforts to break the ranks of the vampyres, the Guardians of the Sun were all slain, and Venstrim confronted Aranthius. It is not known why the Vampyre King did not simply slay Aranthius on that fateful day, but instead, he banished the fey king to another world. Many consider that deep inside Venstrim's vile and corrupted heart, a part of his light remained, and rather than kill the one who had the cure to the vampyric affliction, he banished Aranthius so that one day he may be found. Perhaps then, when the time was right, the curse of undeath would finally be lifted from the vampyres

Losing all hope as the darkness continued to consume the world, the fey readied themselves for their last stand in the streets of the City of Lights. Queen Ostraza Lightborne would be the next member of the fey royal family to fall, but not before she single-handedly destroyed several immensely powerful Demon Lords that were drawing close to the Ivory Tower, the palace of the royal family and final defences of the fey. Drawing desperately from the last reserves of her magic, Queen Azhara Lightborne opened a rift and called for any surviving fey to accompany her through it. An estimated two thousand fey managed to reach the rift that led to Neothera, and it closed shortly after Azhara returned through it to face the horrors that had now claimed the City of Lights. Azhara remained in Terminarium and watched helplessly as Venstrim claimed the Ivory Tower as his lair. She would return to Neothera some years later; however, Venstrim and his forces followed and killed her, leaving the Vampyre King as the last remaining member of the fey royal family. Today Terminarium is ruled over by King Venstrim and his enormous army of vampyres. They have claimed the lands of light for themselves and only recently, following Venstrim breaking free from the corruption of the Nightmares, has a passage to Terminarium opened for the people of Neothera to venture to these broken lands should they have business with the vampyres.

## LEADERSHIP

According to the four members of the fey royal family, Lyshanduir was created by Hirosah, the God of the Sun. When the planet was ready to sustain life, Hirosah created the first fey who became revered as living gods and goddesses by the faeries that he then subsequently created. The fey royal family once consisted of four members who considered each other siblings, and all assumed the title, Lightborne, a testament to their origins. King Aranthius, Queen Azhara, Queen Ostraza and King Venstrim were considerably more powerful than any fey that came into existence following their creation, and they weaved their magic, born of the element of light, to create animals and plants that flourished in Lyshanduir. Under the guidance of the royals, the fey species grew considerably, occupying every corner of the land, building villages, towns and eventually the majestic capital - Leycandour: The City of Lights. The royals did not impose laws on the people of Lyshanduir, and the species lived so harmoniously that crime was unheard of until the Nightmares began corrupting the minds of the fey, eventually turning them into vampyres. It was not until the year 2394 of the Fifth Age that King Venstrim agreed to allow the Tutela Syndicate to operate in Terminarium, meaning that common law is now followed by anyone who resides here. This decision was criticised by many vampyres under King Venstrim's rule; however, the last remaining member of the fey royal family insists that in order to show is people are no longer sided with the demonic Nightmares, compromises have to be made to ensure the vampyres of Terminarium are no longer seen as a threat.







The first recorded instances of fey succumbing to the whispers of the Nightmares equates roughly to the beginning of the Third Age of Neothera. Upon learning of the encroaching darkness, the fey royal family instructed their subjects to commence training in the arts of combat, utilising both magic and physical practices. Before this, the urge for defensive and offensive measures was not needed due to the peaceful way of life all fey were used to, and many faeries consider it was this lack of foresight that was the downfall of Lyshanduir. All vampyres seemed to possess an inherent prowess in combat, and this pushed the royal family to force their kin to their limits in defence of the realms. However, as quickly as defensive structures were raised by the fey in their villages, towns and the City of Lights, and no matter how fast they honed the arts of combat utilising their light magic to aid them, the vampyre threat grew in ferocity. As more fey fell to the darkness, the ranks of the vampyres grew uncontrollably.

When King Venstrim turned to the darkness and joined the ranks of the undead, he purposely sought out those that were loyal to him whilst he was fey. His first target was his oldest and most trusted friend, Soleil Encarmine, who was crowned the Prince of Terminarium, becoming one of Venstrim's most trusted allies and advisors. Knowing the power and influence Soleil held over his council, the Court Encarmine, his followers would become easily turned and entrusted into the rule of the Vampyre King Venstrim. Battling against their demonic impulses, Court Encarmine would soon abscond Venstrim's rule and travelled to Neothera where they spent many years amongst the wights of the Frozen North until Venstrim, having abandoned his demonic masters, convinced the court to rally to his side once more with the promise of returning the light to Terminarium. This occurred shortly after the dawn of the Fifth Age.

Today, the darkness still clings to Terminarium, and as far as its inhabitants are concerned, there is no sign of the light returning there anytime soon. Vampyres that still reside there also question, that if the light does return, will they be able to survive in this environment, or will they be forced to flee to the safety of the Frozen North. What is for certain is that King Venstrim rules over these lands, and his will cannot be bent. He has vowed that he is no longer under the influence of the demonic Nightmares, and indeed, has laid his life on the line to banish an extremely powerful Nightmare Lord in Neothera back to the Nightmare Realm. His recent introduction of the Tutela Syndicate, allowing them to enforce common laws in Terminarium has raised the hackles of many of his followers, yet those that oppose this decision, and the choice to fight back against the demons have met with very sticky ends.

It does appear that with Court Encarmine reunited as Venstrim's chief councillors, the stigma associated with the vampyre realm is slowly becoming extinguished, and many folks of Neothera have heard tales of the fight Venstrim's forces have brought to the demons. It can perhaps be said, that without Venstrim and the Court Encarmine's assistance, the Nightmares would still roam Neothera, and many more innocent lives would have been lost at their hands if it was not for the actions of the inhabitants of Terminarium. In 2393 of the Fifth Age, Venstrim launched an assault on the realms of the Frozen North, and whilst this has shattered any hope of an alliance between Nald, Karthsworn and Terminarium, this attack was apparently made to prevent the Frozen North from interfering with the war against the Nightmares that recently finished - To what end, only Venstrim knows.

## LEYCANDOUR: THE CITY OF LIGHTS

The City of Lights, Leycandour was once the capital of Lyshanduir and was the first realm built following the arrival of the fey in this world. Leycandour in the tongue of the faeries means 'Dawn of Light' and was home to the largest population of fey in all of Lyshanduir. It was also home to the four members of the royal Lightborne family, who resided in the Ivory Tower located to the north of the city. It is a remarkable thing that many fey who now live in Neothera have likened the architecture of their former capital city to that of the elves, and indeed the elves who have seen artistic depictions of Leycandour have also confirmed an uncanny likeness in aesthetics. This only drives to confirm that there is some sort of connection between the two species, despite them both originating from different worlds. Leycandour was the pinnacle of fey architecture, and the sheer size of the beautiful city meant it was capable of housing all sorts of establishments and dwellings.



Many parks and open areas interspersed buildings and temples, encouraging plant and animal life to thrive within the city rather than be excluded to the lands outside. These areas were tended by the faeries, and care was taken to ensure they were both beautiful and naturally capable of sustaining the plant and animal species that occupied them. Having not discovered any technologies known by those in Neothera, Leycandour, and of course, the rest of the fey world was free of pollution of any sort. So clean was the air thanks to the harmony of the fey and nature that Leycandour's streets always smelled of fresh flowers no matter where one went.

The buildings in the capital city vary in height, with some of the tallest being over thirty storeys tall. Domed roofs sit upon the top of many structures, and these are finished with gold tiling. Stained glass is popular amongst the inhabitants of Leycandour, shining colourful patterns upon the interior of many buildings. Of course, many dwellings are simple in construction, built from timber or cobblestone with neatly thatched roofs or tiles. It is possible to distinguish the age of a building in Leycandour by the colour of the plaster on the exterior of the dwelling or establishment. The plaster is made by mixing gypsum, water and ground Fenn Grass, an amber coloured, short-leaved plant that grows almost everywhere in Lyshanduir. When recently applied the plaster is amber in colour, and through the constant light of the sun, eventually, it fades to cream, with exceptionally old plaster fading to bright white.

The oldest building in the capital city is the Ivory Tower, which glistens white as the rays of the sun fall upon its outer walls. It is here that all four members of the fey royal family once lived and governed the realms of Lyshanduir. The Ivory Tower is enormous, reaching almost sixty storeys into the sky and housed many chambers and halls dedicated to the education and well-being of the fey. Despite the tower's great height, access to every floor was quickly and easily achievable by magic, for the clever Queen Azhara had placed small rifts that allowed fey to enter and appear within seconds on the level they required. Few secrets were kept from their people by the Lightborne family, and therefore much of the interior was once open to the public, but all of this changed when the darkness fell.

As darkness slowly crept from the coasts inland, provisions were made to erect great walls around the City of Lights for its protection. Over the many centuries that the conflict between the fey and vampyres ensued, the walls were eventually completed. Despite halting King Venstrim's forces for a short while they were eventually breached, with great explosions toppling the fortified barrier that protected the city and its fey people.

The vampyres swarmed upon the city like a plague of locusts, killing or turning the fey into vampyres, and before long they had destroyed almost everything in their path as they approached the Ivory Tower. Much to the disappointment of his soldiers, King Venstrim ordered that the Ivory Tower be kept intact, and he along with his most trusted advisors and elite guardians, claimed the tower for themselves, with Venstrim once again taking his throne on the highest level of this monolithic structure. From here he would look out across Lyshanduir, revelling in the darkness that now blocked out the light of the sun and allowed his people to thrive in a world he now solely ruled over. The world now known as Terminarium.

Today the Ivory Tower is off-limits to anyone without official business with King Venstrim or his various councils and their members. Even vampyres that have remained in Terminarium all of their lives are not permitted to enter unless with explicit permission from a figure of authority. Those that live outside of the walls of the tower endure a substandard quality of life compared to the rich lifestyles led by 'vampyres of worth' under King Venstrim's immediate rule. The divide between classes is purposely imposed to ensure a hierarchy is maintained within vampyre society. Those that are permitted to live and work in the Ivory Tower have earned the unofficial title of Royalists; vampyres extremely loyal to King Venstrim that follow his every order without question. Anyone that occupies the lands outside is nicknamed Subservients on account of their low status in society. The Subservient usually consider this an offensive term.

With much of the City of Lights falling to ruin when the fey were finally forced to depart via a rift that led to Neothera, vampyres that dwell here either live in squalor or have attempted to rebuild and occupy the ruined buildings the fey once so proudly built and cared for. With food being scarce due to the state of the perpetual night in Terminarium, vampyres either rely on consuming what little vegetation still grows in the lands, farm and eat animals that have slowly evolved to survive without sunlight or have resorted to cannibalism. When Venstrim tore open a permanent rift that led to Neothera, his favour was gained by many vampyres in Terminarium, for now, there was the opportunity to acquire materials, food and beverages, and of course, an almost endless supply of blood. With the arrival of the Tutela Syndicate and a firm banking system, the swapping and trading of goods, as previously occurred in Lyshanduir has now been replaced by the introduction of a monetary system, boosting the economy and benefitting transactions in both Terminarium and Neothera.



## THE HOLE

Located on the southern border of Leycandour beside the main road into the city, a village once known as Kaylendor stood. The people of Kaylendor were famously wealthy, especially when it came to material goods, food and fine wines. This was on account of the village being the first and last place that fey who visited the capital city would pass through. The people of Kaylendor would attempt to purchase or trade with fey who travelled to Leycandour to sell or acquire goods. If they thought a fair deal was at hand, there was no reason for them to waste time searching for traders inside of the city. If they were unable to find what they were looking for in Leycandour itself, business instead would be conducted with the people of Kaylendor as they left the city. Whilst trades and prices were often not in favour of visitors, Kaylendor became known as a bustling trade hub, and many fey preferred to visit the village for its convenience rather than the capital city itself.

Before the darkness fell, Kaylendor was a picturesque village filled with quaint thatched cottages, neatly-kept flower and vegetable gardens and winding cobbled streets. The village was divided into two halves built either side of the main road that led to Leycandour, and a trade hub became established on both sides of the main road, unmissable to those travelling to-and-from the capital city. Following the arrival of King Venstrim's vampyric hordes as they descended upon the City of Lights, Kaylendor was razed, and all that remained were the husks of the pretty cottages that once filled the village. As Leycandour became besieged, Venstrim ordered Kaylendor to be taken so that it might act as an encampment for his forces. After successfully claiming the village the vampyres dug deep into the ground building temporary defences for their troops. Thus Kaylendor became known as the Hole.

Venstrim and his forces would eventually win the war against the fey and go on to claim Leycandour as their realm. Many vampyres decided to occupy the Hole, and due to the solid-fortifications established by their comrades during the war, further work was carried out to expand the area. The Hole would act as the first line of defence should Leycandour ever be attacked by those seeking to destroy Venstrim and his followers, and beyond the newly erected stone walls, amenities such as hospitals, barracks, shops and other dwellings were built. Unlike Leycandour, which is strictly governed by Venstrim's elite forces, the Hole has a much more relaxed atmosphere beyond its defences on the outskirts. However, the newly appointed Law Keepers of the Tutela Syndicate do not keep such a watchful eye over the Hole as they do within the city walls, meaning that crime here is higher than one might expect.



The only thing that has not changed since before the darkness fell in Terminarium is that trade and social places are booming, much as they were when the Hole was known as Kaylendor. In recent years, even those who are not vampyres have been permitted to enter the Hole, and this is possible via a rift that leads to-and-from Neothera.

There are believed to be two rifts that allow access between the worlds, one in the Ivory Tower, strictly for use by Venstrim and his elite soldiers, and a second located near the front gates of the Hole. Heavily guarded by vampyre soldiers, this rift stands almost twenty feet tall, its frame carved from granite stone. The circular portal, watery in appearance within the frame, shimmers deep purple and allows one to travel instantly to the western rift, located in the Ruins of the Great City of Netherlye in central Neothera. The rift remains permanently open and was created by King Venstrim himself after he offered the Tutela Syndicate the opportunity to operate in Terminarium.



## RELIGION

Before the darkness fell and the vampyres claimed Terminarium, the Fey of Lyshanduir worshipped Hirosah, the God of the Sun as the father of all creation. Similarly, the four members of the fey royal family; King Aranthius, Queen Azhara, Queen Ostraza and King Venstrim - Hirosah's firstborn children were worshipped as living deities in physical form. Any faeries that were lucky enough to survive the war against the vampyres in Terminarium, and have made new homes in Neothera, still whisper prayers to Hirosah. The fey do not believe in an afterlife, and this is because of their immortality whilst they occupied Lyshanduir. Until this gift was lost when the darkness began to claim their world, and the fey started to naturally age, the souls of any fey that did die, perhaps through an accident or carelessness, were simply believed to be absorbed by Hirosah's light. Of course, many fey assembled small altars in their homes to remember their loved ones, but the thought of the spirits of the departed living on in some heavenly realm was not even recognised until the fey learned of the Ethereal Realm from the people of Neothera. Many fey that have learned of the belief systems in Neothera smile at the thought of their souls rising into an astral plane upon death. Although their original belief system is so heavily-ingrained in their culture that most fey find the transition to new religions difficult to embrace. Younger fey find these new faiths easier to grasp, and some faeries have even begun following the teachings of deities commonly worshipped in Neothera. However, much older fey continue to hold dear their devoted faith in Hirosah, the God of the Sun and have the utmost respect in the fey royal family that once ruled over Lyshanduir.

Until their demise or disappearance, King Aranthius, Queen Azhara, Queen Ostraza and King Venstrim Lightborne were worshipped as living deities by the Fey of Lyshanduir. As the first children of Hirosah, the God of the Sun, the fey sought the council of the royals in any matters they had. The royals, even King Venstrim until he sided with the vampyre hordes, were always willing to assist their people, no matter how small the concern of their flock. They were praised for their eternal wisdom and the love they held for their people and were often seen walking the lands offering their advice and expertise in any matters their people might ask of them. When a member of fey royalty expired or was lost to the darkness, their people remembered them for their wisdom and love, and various altars were erected so that the fey might remember them for the kind deeds they performed in their immortal lives. Even when King Venstrim had succumbed to the darkness, the faeries still remembered him for the noble actions he performed whilst blessed with Hirosah's light, and they prayed that one day the darkness would lift from his soul and he would return to them, renewed with the essence of Hirosah's light.

Today, only one holy altar remains that is dedicated to Queen Azhara Lightborne. It is located at the Caddington Estate in Mainland Neothera and was erected following her death there at the hands of the Vampyre King, Venstrim. Any holy sites dedicated to the remaining fey royals in what is left of Lyshanduir have been desecrated by vampyres, and King Venstrim rules as a living-God over anyone that enters the blackened world that is Terminarium.

The vampyres that occupy Terminarium hold no faith for any deities past or present that existed in Lyshanduir, or even now in Neothera. The only thing close to a God they fear or devoutly follow is King Venstrim himself. That said, the vampyres that absconded King Venstrim's rule and fled to Neothera during the middle of the Third Age have adopted mainstream faiths observed by the living and undead inhabitants of this new world. The vampyres that have remained in Terminarium under Venstrim's rule do not believe in an afterlife, instead, they are taught that undeath is a gift, and their only chance of being remembered beyond their second and final death is by the deeds they performed whilst following their king's rule. Since the darkness claimed every part of Lyshanduir and the faith of Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon and Darkness was unheard of until Neothera was discovered, King Venstrim is considered to rule the eternal night more so than the creator Goddess.

In certain parts of Lyshanduir, nightfall never came. The City of Lights, for example, was considered the focal point for Hirosah's gaze, and the only darkness it knew was the shadows cast by buildings and trees in the ever-shining sun. The further towards the coasts of the world one ventured, the darker the shadows became, with the outer regions bathed in permanent twilight. The further out to sea one looked, the darker the skies became. The fey viewed this as follows: The lands kissed by Hirosah's loving light were blessed and sacred, and they were a sign that the God of the Sun kept them safe under his ever-watchful gaze. The lands embraced by darkness, beyond the light-touched realms of Hirosah, perhaps held dangers or were not worthy of fey-feet treading upon them. It is, perhaps, for this reason, that most faeries never attempted to sail the seas in search of new lands, and kept their feet firmly upon the soils Hirosah blessed. The only exception to this was the fey-folk that occupied the southwestern region of Lyshanduir known as the Cusp - yet even they did not ever discover any new continents.

It is said that as long as a single light remains in Terminarium, there is hope that Lyshanduir can one day become restored to its former glory. Rumours spread throughout Terminarium that when the fey escaped to Neothera via the rift opened by Queen Azhara Lightborne, one fey was left behind.



Astrad Lightborne, King Aranthius Lightborne's only son, was kept locked away by King Venstrim in the uppermost guarded levels of the Ivory Tower. Whilst he was not permitted to leave the tower for his safety, amongst fears that opportunistic vampyres would hunt him for his blood, he was allowed to roam as he pleased through the dark halls and corridors as an honoured guest of the Vampyre King. Many of Terminarium's vampyre inhabitants are aware of this and believe that he remains in the care of Venstrim because the Vampyre King wishes to one day restore the light of Lyshanduir, and perhaps eventually remove the state of undeath from himself and his blighted people. Although this is not openly spoken about for fears of seeming weak-willed, it is thought that many vampyres would happily be restored to their former fey selves. It is believed that if more fey were brought back to Terminarium, the darkness would slowly turn back to light. However, many vampyres are fearful that if the light fully returned to Lyshanduir, the planet would become inhospitable for vampyres, forcing them to leave their homes for more suitable environments.

The Fey of Lyshanduir had only one holiday known as Luminata, which is still observed by them in Neothera today. The vampyres native and loyal to Terminarium do not follow any holidays, festivals or traditions. Fey or vampyres that have spent any amount of time in Neothera may choose to follow mainstream holidays, festivals or traditions. If they do, this is done via personal preference depending on where they have spent their time, or according to who has influenced them to do so. You can read more about Luminata on [page 200](#).

## REALM STYLE

If you decide your character will belong to Terminarium, you should bear in mind the following points regarding costuming and role-play, however, these are not strict guidelines, they are simply listed to assist you in getting a feel for the aesthetics of the realm. From an out of character perspective, this realm, the look of the city, its culture, costuming, weapons, armour and equipment etc. is based on the gothic horror and steampunk genres. Other loose comparisons can be made to Van Helsing, Penny Dreadful, Castlevania, True Blood and Attack on Titan. A quick internet search of these topics will yield some informative and inspiring results. The colours of the realm are black, white, red, yellow, silver and gold, and where possible you should make use of these colours when putting together costumes for a character from Terminarium.

It should be noted that Terminarium is primarily a realm that is aimed towards those that choose vampyre as their race, that said, members of other races are also permitted to belong to this realm.

Passage to-and-from Terminarium is gained via rifts that were opened up by the vampyres in the last few years, therefore, unless your character is a vampyre, you would be joining this realm as a newcomer. Non-vampyre races, especially faeries due to the Vampyre War that they endured in Lyshanduir, are likely to find life extremely-tough in Terminarium on account of the vampyre population that has little patience towards outsiders. However, due to the population abiding by the new laws set by the Tutela Syndicate, living here as an outsider would not be completely impractical. Not all vampyres who reside in Terminarium as stoic, blood-thirsty monsters that thrive on debauchery, brooding and mindless violence. Nor are they vulnerable to garlic, stakes to the heart or sunlight as common real-world legends would have one believe.

Since they broke free from the influence of the Nightmares, vampyres have been able to follow paths that are not centred around violence, and many skilled scholars, crafters and medics have emerged from the realms of darkness. Whilst there is a very obvious divide between the Royalists and Subservients, society in Terminarium operates just as efficiently as it does in any other realm in Neothera. There is work available for any types of skill sets. If one can endure the everlasting night of Terminarium, they might find that it is a comfortable place to live since King Venstrim authorised the integration of his kingdom and the world of Neothera.





# FROZEN NORTH: KARTHSWORN

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

### DJYGOR GULCH

The River Thellamor stretches from the north of Karthsworn, passes to the west of Mortanis, continues to flow between Galeshi and Nordaan and meets the ocean to the south. The Djygor Gulch begins just north of Galeshi and is considered an extremely dangerous location that many wights actively avoid. When the Ice Elves of Mortanis retreated into the frozen caverns beneath the Ruins of their city, the elementals in the area became angered and unruly. Without the elves to watch over them, fighting erupted between the elementals leading to many centuries of conflict within the gulch as earth and Air Elementals joined the Ice Elementals in the fray.

To this day the fighting continues, and anyone unfortunate enough to get caught up in the conflict is likely to be slain by the uncontrollable elementals. Despite attempts to destroy the elementals in the Djygor Gulch by the wights of Nordaan, more elementals continue to appear. The Council of Karthworn has decided to leave the creatures to their own devices, especially considering the conflict between the elementals seems to keep their numbers under control as attrition occurs through their constant fighting.

### GALESHI

Galeshi was once a bustling city situated in the mountain peaks; however, today only ruins stand where this wight stronghold once stood. At the end of the Third Age, the city was raided by goblins who took advantage of the tunnels in the mountains to pillage and plunder Galeshi. The attack came swiftly and from within the city walls as a green-skin War Chief known as Nak'magoth led his forces first into the council chambers, slaying the dark elf governor and her guards.

The fighting continued into the streets, seeing the goblins burn everything in sight and making off with anything of worth as they quickly fled back to the tunnels and sealed them shut by bringing down the keep with Fel Magic, preventing them from being pursued. It is said the attack came so swiftly, and with such surprise that by the time the goblins had escaped, reinforcements from the neighbouring City of Nordaan had not even left the barracks.

### HARROW WATCH

The port and Town of Harrow Watch sits on the southwest coast of Karthsworn and is a busy hub of activity both day and night. The main road north of the port leads to the City of Nordaan and is constantly patrolled by Death Guards, the Law Keepers of the realm. Nothing comes in or out of the port without the Death Guards knowing, and so strictly is it monitored that crime is almost unheard of here and on the road to Nordaan.

The town itself is home to sailors, fishers, and labourers that work in or around the port and is well guarded and fortified being the first location one would reach when approaching Karthsworn. In recent years, trade between the Mainland and Kathworn has gathered momentum and it is not uncommon to see both wights and the living working alongside each other. In fact, some mainlanders have even decided to make new homes for themselves in Harrow Watch.

### MORTANIS

Very few Ice Elves remained after the Demon War at the end of the Second Age. Those that survived continued to reproduce, and the population slowly increased, yet this race hardly recovered due to the taint left on the lands by the Nightmares. During the battle against the Nightmares, Ilithil Thilivern-Duin, ruler of House Mortanis fell in battle, and the sacred relic of ice was lost somewhere in the frozen wastes. The majority of these elves refused to leave Mortanis, instead vowing to recover the relic and protect what remained of their homeland.





Retreating underground after their city fell, the elves secluded themselves in cavernous halls carved from ice, deep below the snowy surface. Any remnants of their former stronghold above land are ruins or buried under hundreds of feet of ice and snow. Search parties were sent to the surface for many years to recover the relic, yet the taint of the Nightmares remained, preventing them from being able to track its location.

The Elves of Ice were aware of their kin living upon the Mainland, yet dared not leave their home whilst the wights, which they feared were monsters, reigned in the Frozen North. They believed the wights were an abomination of the Seven and had fought and killed many of them that strayed too close to the Ruins of their buried city.

Yvil Whiteriver (Yvil Thilivern-Duin in elvish), was the daughter of Ilithil Thilivern-Duin, the former ruler of the Elves of Ice in Mortanis. After her father died in the Demon War during the Second Age, she ruled in seclusion over the few elves that have remained there ever since. The name Thilivern-Duin (or Whiteriver) originates from the rivers that surrounded the City of Mortanis, and the fact they were permanently frozen and covered with a crisp layer of pure-white snow.

With the assistance of a group of adventurers from the Mainland in the year 2393 of the Fifth Age, the sacred relic of ice was recovered, and Yvil led the remaining elves to the Mainland to live amongst their kin in Faradome. Sadly, during the destruction of the City of Faradome, Yvil perished, and only a handful of the Ice Elves were able to escape, seeking refuge at Jerrod's Front and Springford. The sacred relic of ice, however, was recovered and now sits in the Moonglenn at the Caddington Estate.

## RATHALLOW

The island of Rathallow is a lawless hub of criminal activity and is ruled by Maxwell Armstead, an ancient lich also known as the Bloody Lord. Stories that emerge from the island tell how the goings-on there make even the pirate realm of Black Hammer Bay look like a royal dignitaries picnic in the park on a Sunday afternoon.

Armstead, once a commander in the army of Nald established a stronghold on the island early in the Fourth Age, and absconded his post after being accused of treating his soldiers so badly that many died through his sickening methods of punishment. Whilst he was not sacked from his role in the army, he decided that the Wights of Nald had grown soft, and even went so far as to attempt to convince the council to force an attack on the Mainland, claiming the undead races should rule supreme.

Taking his anger with him, he left for Rathallow and built his small empire consisting of many wights that shared the same opinions as him. The island is rife with crime, gambling, organised fights, the torture of wights and the captured living for paying audiences and a bi-monthly hunt where wights and living prisoners are released into the wilds and hunted by those with a big enough wallet to afford the sick luxury.

Despite the dangerous and illicit nature of Armstead's business on the island, the Council of Nordaan and Congress of Kjeldora are yet to take action, and some say they allow Armstead to continue his operations here as it is a decent outlet for wights to take out their frustrations away from the cities.





# FROZEN NORTH: NALD

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

### BLEAKWOOD

The ancient forests of Bleakwood sit to the north of Nald, and once stretched to Lake Kjaradar before much of it was harvested to assist in the construction of the City of Kjeldora. When venturing into the forests an eerie silence falls, no sounds of wildlife, not even the wind is heard. The most commonly found species of tree here is the Grindleind, similar in appearance to the pine, but its bark is grey and thick, with the wood inside being a paler shade of grey. Bleakwood is a sombre place and is only really frequented by those harvesting wood for construction in Nald and the surrounding settlements.

### FROSTWIND MOUNTAINS

The peaks of the Frostwind Mountains begin at the town and port of Renyir and end northeast of the City of Nald where they meet the forests of Bleakwood. The mountain range is practically impenetrable when approaching it from the seas around Nald and acts as a natural barrier that protects its inland occupants. The mountains themselves meet the sea in such a way that they appear to emerge almost vertically from the water, meaning it is nearly impossible to climb them from the coast.

Strong winds and heavy snowfall are an almost consistent factor within the Frostwind Mountains and save for a few valleys and mountain passages, they are almost inhospitable to wights and the living alike. Ice trolls live within caves in the mountains and are a common sight to those that would venture into the peaks, living off mountain goats and the flesh of anyone unlucky enough to get caught off-guard by the towering beasts.

### LAKE KJARADAR

Lake Kjaradar remains frozen all year round, and an extremely-thick layer of ice covers its surface. There are no wights in existence that can recall a time when the lake was not frozen, and because of this, a small ice fishing village was built in the centre of the lake. This supplies the City of Kjeldora with food all year round. The village, known as Jara, is a sleepy settlement that is only lightly guarded as there have never been any instances where it has been attacked. The inhabitants of Jara enjoy a simple way of life here and sometimes even head into the Frostwind Mountain to hunt ice trolls for their meat should the yield of fish be particularly low.

### NORJAN PASSAGE

The channel between Nald and Karthsworn is known as the Norjan Passage. It is frequently used by sailors travelling between the two realms and south towards the Mainland and beyond. The waters of the Norjan Passage are policed by the navy of the Frozen North, known as the Paragadium, and they rule it with an iron fist, clamping down heavily on smugglers, would-be attackers and any other dubious activities that occur here. The seas here are generally calm, yet the oceans to the north and south become treacherous the further one sails from the Norjan Passage.

### RENYIR

The coastal Town of Renyir boasts the only port in Nald and many vessels travel daily between here, the port in Harrow Watch and on to the Mainland. As is the case with Harrow Watch, Renyir is heavily-guarded by the Law Keepers known as Death Guards who ensure the peace is kept and the town is defended against any threats. Renyir is accessible from the City of Kjeldora by crossing the River Kadra, and the path between the two locations is often busy as the inhabitants of Nald travel to the various trade hubs located in the city and the town. Since relations between the Frozen North and Mainland have grown the Town of Renyir has welcomed immigrants from the various realms of the living.





# MAINLAND NEOTHERA

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

### BLAZING HILLS

Rolling dunes and golden sandstone peaks dominate the horizons here, and the remnants of ancient settlements lay amongst the sands like sun-bleached bones. At its peak, the heat of the sun is so intense that an average human may only survive an hour or two at most without shelter. At night the Blazing Hills become frozen and windswept and strange golems emerge from the sand, slowly wandering the dunes as if searching for something. It is believed that these golems were the keepers of the City of Cinderforge, but since its destruction, they have nothing to protect except the vast ruins that lay just north of Abral.

Cinderforge was once a city that stood-strong in the worship of Terralapis, the Goddess of Earth and Arak'almundae, the God of Fire. At the start of the Fourth Age, they declared war upon the vulperan people, believing them to be abominations. Fortunately, before the armies of Cinderforge could march on the Crystal City of Vulpera, the forces of the Ahalaza in Abral razed the city to the ground as they sought conquest over the realms of the Mainland.

### BLYTHE POINT

During the Fourth Age, the black, rocky peaks of Blythe Point were used as sacrificial altars by a group of feral humans known as the Innoko Tribe. Legend tells that the tribe was heavily involved in human sacrifice to the point that their numbers diminished by half in the space of five years.

The Innoko Tribe were said to worship a Demon Lord, whom they believed would possess the tribe's unborn children causing them to be born with a pair of horns protruding from their foreheads and an insatiable appetite for drinking blood. As the demon-children grew, they learned how to bewitch wandering Arak'Char for fun, causing them to become so confident and happy that they would throw themselves off the cliff near the tribe's home, believing that Arak'almundae, the God of Fire, would see them reborn as a Fire Elemental if they shed their mortal shell.

The Innoko Tribe still exists today, yet being cautious of outsiders, they hide away from the rest of the world. Folklore tells that some of the Innoko Tribe's demon children are still said to wander Blythe Point searching for victims to play their twisted games.

### CADDINGTON

Only in recent years has the importance of the Caddington Estate been recognised. Believed to be the last place six of the Seven met before ascending to the Ethereal Realm in the Second Age, and connected to a variety of powerful ley lines that stretch across the world, this land is extremely important to the denizens of Neothera in so many ways. Until he was murdered by vengeful bandits in the year 2392 of the Fifth Age, Lord Brosden Searle was the owner of the estate and many generations of his family kept the land before him. Currently, the estate has no owner and is used as a neutral meeting place by many adventurers and prominent realms.

It was recently discovered that the Moonglenn, a gateway to other worlds is situated on the estate, and the land itself was able to be lifted from the ground and flown as a craft to whichever part of the world needed it most. Much is still not known about this location, yet research continues by those that have witnessed many bizarre events occurring at the estate. Despite it showing as a fixed location on many maps, the estate continues to drift slowly to other areas of the world, and it is considered that perhaps the gods and goddesses themselves are responsible for its relocation as and when it occurs.





## CRAG-SPINE MOUNTAINS

Spanning the western edge of Mainland Neothera is a large mountain range where the grey, rocky-peaks tower upwards towards the clouds. The weather in the mountains is rainy and mostly foggy, with the odd hail storm and heavy snowfall in the winter months. During the summer the mountains are awash with greenery and beautiful flowers, and wild goats known as Mehlems are commonly-seen traversing the rocky peaks and fighting for territory.

Whilst the Crag-Spine Mountains are a location of natural beauty, they also hold a very dark and ugly side which has been responsible for the disappearance of many unsuspecting travellers. Those familiar with the lore of the mountain City of Blightfoot Ridge will understand that the mountains are an extremely dangerous place to be. This is troll country, and the Crag-Spine mountains are home to a variety of breeds of feral mountain trolls that have roamed the area for longer than the humans can remember.

## ECCO SANDS

Ecco Sands is undoubtedly one of the most bizarre locations on the Mainland. The flat, golden sands here span miles upon miles, never changing gradient nor interrupted by rocks or plant life. The only varying features to the landscape are piles of large, ochre stones that are piled-upon each other jutting towards the skies, some small and some are around fifteen feet tall. Some say these piles of rocks are simply sculptures created by ancient elves of the Second Age, but some believe they have a more sinister reason for existing.



To find Ecco Sands, one must battle an intense and relentless sandstorm that engulfs the borders of this realm. Upon breaching the storms, one is then met with deadly silence as if they have suddenly been struck deaf. This silence continues throughout Ecco Sands and is only punctuated by noise an individual themselves makes. The only thing that can be felt here is the warmth of the sun, and there is no variation in temperature, nor wind, rain, hail, or snow, and the seasons have no place here regardless of the time of year.

## FAR'DHOUM FOREST

Tall pine trees dominate this ancient forest, and many areas of the ground are soft underfoot due to layers of moss, dead trees and peat that have built up over the years. The Far'dhoom forest remains largely-unexplored due to it being occupied by many strange creatures that protect it and are apparently capable of wielding strong-magics and even manipulating minds.



According to their cousins who live outside of the forests, Far'dhoom is home to several packs (or Drifts as they are better known) of wild piskies who have a strong dislike of outsiders and will attempt to kill any they encounter. Sightings of Nature Elementals are common here, as they scout the edges of the forest at night tending the trees and plant life.

## FORTUNE'S PEAK

A great beacon is situated at the highest point on the peak and is controlled by the City of Black Hammer Bay. The purpose of the beacon is to guide ships safely to the shores, and it is said to be powered by a device containing many Light Stones (Puronite) which allow strong beams of light to be projected, assisting sailors during the night. Fortune's Peak is infamous for the dubious goings-on that occurs there, smuggling, illegal trades and other nefarious activities. However, even criminals here respect the Hemadri, whose borders of the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest begin but a few feet away from the beacon itself.



## GALLOWS REST

Before its destruction during the Burning of the Mainland in the year 2393 of the Fifth Age, the Town of Gallows Rest sprawled over the south-eastern regions of the Redveil Mountains. It was built upon the grounds of a once-prosperous city which had a strong military hold over the north of the Mainland.

During the Fourth Age, where the humans waged constant war over land and leadership of the realms, the City of Everblade met its end as its corrupt government sold out its people for the safety of the rich and royal. It is said that those who fled the city received an early warning from their enemies, the Ahalaza, and travelled to the Isle of Andore where their descendants supposedly remain until this day.

Gallows Rest gained its name from the harsh sentences given to any convicted criminals, where four out of five people who fall on the wrong side of the law were hung until dead. Hangings took place outside of the towns jail and dungeons and occurred at dawn and dusk each day. Unfortunately, the relationship between Gallows Rest and its neighbouring town, Hollows End broke down completely due to the mayor of Hollows End's son being hung at Gallows Rest.



The council heard how Milako Fritchworth had seduced several of the women in the town using demonic magic, had his way with them and promptly turned into a vicious wolf that tore them to pieces. Hollows End was outraged at the hanging of Milako and believed the tale to be a lie that was fabricated for the sole purpose of muddying their town's name in a bid to draw people away from this popular destination for trade and tourists.

## GOGGY MANTON / LOCH MANTON

See Goggy Manton on *page 175*.

## GOLDBACK HILLS

Rolling hills and long, amber and golden grass dominate the landscape here. Crystal clear streams that meander around the tors and windmills are a common sight. There are two villages located in the Goldback Hills, Entwistle to the west and Barleymead to the east. Many crops and other forms of produce arrive from the hills into other surrounding cities. In recent years, the Goldback Hills has become a haven for bandits and those hiding from the law.



## HOLLOWS END

Hollows End was a bustling town with strong roots in farming and trade. Due to its central location, it was frequently visited by adventurers, traders, merchants and travellers from all over the world. The town used to export large quantities of strong, apple cider called "Old Bloater" that was produced at Westmead farm, located five miles north of Hollows End. The town was security conscious and employed a large number of guards who patrolled it and the surrounding areas arresting thieves, murderers and general trouble-makers to keep the peace.

## ISLES OF MIDNIGHT

This island appears on many maps, even those made by ancient elves. However, the island itself has never been located by explorers who have purposely sought it. Some believe that this island was etched onto an old map by a scribe with a sick sense of humour as some sort of joke to fool would-be adventurers. If this was the case, bizarrely, the island has since appeared on many other maps. The island's presence on these maps remains a mystery, and upon sailing to its location, it is clear that nothing resides in the area except for the ocean as far as the eye can see.



## KARMAI

The island of Karmai has been shrouded in a purple mist since the Nightmares first set foot in Neothera and only the ancient elves were said to know what inhabits it. Vessels that have attempted to sail to Karmai have become engulfed in the purple mists, and after hours of sailing blindly, they have found themselves emerging on the opposite side of the island as if they passed right through it. Someone once tried to outsmart the mist of Karmai and decided they would try and swim beneath them. His fellow explorers returned to land screaming in terror, babbling something about creatures with human-looking upper torsos and the large scaly tails of fish. Their comrade was never seen again.

## LOCH KILOSA

This loch provides much of the northern realms of the Mainland with water, and is thought to be linked to various underground bodies of water.

## MAIDEN'S PASS

Before the burning on the Mainland in the year 2393 of the Fifth Age, this beautiful stretch of grassland and forest was the main route to and from the southwest and northwest realms of the Mainland. Maiden's Pass was once walked by the girls of the southern villages who travelled north to Faradome City hoping to find and marry an elvish male. However, almost every female was sorely disappointed as the elves would not waste their time foolish little human girls. Many women who walked this route, hoping to find an immortal from their dreams were killed by bandits or taken prisoner and forced into slavery by them.

## MERCHANTS GLORY

A long, cobbled path leads from Jerrod's Front to the Ruins of the Great City of Netherlye. Chiefly used by traders and merchants, this used to be the main route to and from these prosperous cities. Since the destruction of the Great City of Netherlye the path remains largely untraveled by anyone except the L'Enarousse military or adventurers travelling to the northern realms.

## MONIORUM

The main road to Black Hammer Bay runs through Moniorum, the countryside here is pleasant, and there are a few small settlements dotted amongst the woods and in the hills. It is said that Moniorum gets its name from the phrase coined by beggars who harass travellers and merchants along the main road by pestering them to spare their money or rum.

## NORTH, WEST & EAST RIFTS

Following the destruction of the Great City of Netherlye, which marked the final days of the Fourth Age of the world, where each of the three towers dedicated to the schools of magic once stood, the ground began to cave in, and slowly but surely a purple light began emanating from the centre outwards. As more of the ground gave way, the light grew and intensified. A purple, watery substance spilt from the gaping holes in the ground. It came to rest a few feet from the surface. The earth continued to crumble until the three chasms each spanned over a mile in width.

Whether the three towers dedicated to the schools of magic played a part in the appearance of the rifts has never been established. However, many believe the sheer amount of elemental energy once harnessed within the towers contributed in some way to the manifestation of the rifts. When looking back to the latter part of the Second Age, elven history tells how the demonic Nightmares first appeared through a rift located in central Neothera, and the exact point of this rift is equidistant between the three rifts that now lay in the Ruins of the Great City of Netherlye.

The only good thing to have come through the rifts are the race of faeries, for the only other beings to emerge have been the Eryan and yet more Nightmares. Unfortunately, there has been little research performed on the rifts due to the Eryan presence that once prevented anyone even getting close to them. With the Eryan now gone, perhaps it is time to finally explore these so-called portals.

## RAZIRA

This archipelago was, until recently, occupied by Robert Smith's men from Black Hammer Bay. Its location was seen as a prime area to have control over the northern coast. Razira was rife with ores and Element Stones, and teams of soldiers were permanently-stationed here mining resources until goblin tunnels were excavated which led to the green-skins invading and claiming Razira for themselves during the Burning of the Mainland.

## REDEMPTION WOODS

The Redemption Woods was said to be the oldest of their kind in the whole of the Mainland and they were certainly the most mysterious. This stretch of woodland was situated behind Faradome city and trailed downhill towards the eastern ocean.



The Redemption Woods was filled with pedunculate oak, with occasional rowan, hawthorn, hazel, and eared-willow trees. Tree branches were characteristically festooned, with a variety of epiphytic mosses and lichens. On the ground, boulders were covered by lichens and mossy patches and where the soil has accumulated patches of grassland grew.

These woods were more commonly known as the dwelling place of the unpredictable and volatile piskies who were believed to have been born from the trees themselves. Any sane human knew to steer well away from these woods for fear of what lies hidden inside. Even the wise elves were wary of venturing too deep into the woods, lest they fail to make it back to the borders alive. Before they were destroyed in the Burning of the Mainland, these woods were rife with ancient magic, and only those of piskie origin are believed to hold the secrets of the Redemption Woods.

## REDVEIL MOUNTAINS

The black crags of the Redveil Mountains were once home to the Elves of Fire until the City of Thard'or was destroyed by the demonic armies of the Nightmares during the Second Age. These imposing peaks appear to glow in the mornings and evenings as a red mist settles upon the horizons.

The mountain passes are home to all manner of dangerous creatures, from ogres to trolls. However, the most maleficent of its inhabitants were (until their armies were dismantled in the year 2393 of the Fifth Age) the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf. A wise-person would not venture into the peaks of Redveil Mountains unless it was a matter of life and death, and it has been made common knowledge in all realms that only the hardest of soldiers and adventurers are advised to enter this dangerous and unforgiving land.

## RUINS OF SIRELLA

Sirella, former home of the Elves of Nature, was the first of the ancient elven cities to fall during the Demon War of the Second Age. Dwellings in Sirella were constructed from wood and dry, compacted earth and the inhabitants lived in modest and wooden huts. Jade was extremely common in this part of Neothera and was used to construct community buildings, defences and places of worship. When the Nightmares attacked the city was flattened, the structures built from jade were shattered into millions of pieces and are the only sign that Sirella once stood here. Elven survivors from Faradome do not take lightly to those who take jade from the ruins. The site where many of their kin fought and died should not be tampered with, and removing the jade would desecrate the sacred land.

## RUINS OF THE CITY OF ASHWATER

Ashwater gained its name from the volcanic ash that blows down from the Morrdoun Mountains and settles upon the lands below, often coating the nearby Crystalline River with a thin layer of white dust that makes it sparkle and glow in the sunlight. There were several small settlements in Ashwater that surround the city and these dwellings were often raided by the Arak'Char who preferred not to associate themselves with the Karath'tir tribe of Arka'Gharrad. The people in this region grew tired and more aggressive towards the Arak'Char with each attack, and word spread that the vulperans were considering taking action against the Arak'Char should the attacks on their neighbours continue. Sadly Ashwater was destroyed during the Burning of the Mainland, and any remaining survivors fled to Jerrod's Front or Springfield.

## RUINS OF THE CITY OF FAIRDALE

Fairdale was once a large city, rich with culture and history, but that all ended in the year 2390 of the Fifth Age when the citizens became infected with a strange plague that saw them rise from the grave as mindless undead creatures. So sudden was the outbreak, and so ferocious were the undead that the city fell in a matter of days, despite aid being offered by L'Enaroussian forces. Eventually, wight armies from the Frozen North arrived and cleared out the city, leaving its ruins as a stark reminder of how devastating the Plague of Undeath could be. Amidst the Burning of the Mainland, the Ruins of Fairdale still stand. Between the destruction of the city at the hands of the mindless undead and the burning, no attempts have been made to rebuild it. Those that managed to escape the undead assaults fled south to seek refuge, and to this day they still remember fondly the beautiful city that saw ages of growth and knew little of war, strife or famine.





## RUINS OF THE CITY OF FAIRMILL

The City of Fairmill would have been the first to feel the wrath of the Great City of Netherlye's armies when they attempted to march south towards Jerrod's Front. Fairmill was also the first to offer the refugees of the magic-reliant kingdom a place to live after their city crumbled, and Fairmill's population expanded tenfold after the refugees arrived. Once a pleasant town with deep roots in farming and fishing, the warm and welcoming people of Fairmill integrated into a massive overnight change extremely well. Before its destruction during the Burning of the Mainland, the city was a bustling and thriving community where expansion happened daily. Trade with the L'Enarousse was frequent, and Fairmill's merchants were starting to reach out to the other cities, towns and villages of the Mainland as demand for their goods grew. Following the destruction of Fairmill, any citizens that survived the burning fled to seek refuge at Springford and Jerrod's Front.

## SAWTOOTH SHALLOWS

A maze of deadly and sharp underwater rocks have pierced the hulls of many vessels that have attempted to sail towards the islands that are believed to be hidden amongst the fog of the Sawtooth Shallows.

The inhabitants of Black Hammer Bay would have you believe there is nothing but vicious sharks and sea monsters in these perilous depths. However, some wiser seafaring folk would beg to differ. The archipelago is rumoured to be a safe-haven should the City of Black Hammer Bay ever fall, and is well-protected by various fortifications and many soldiers loyal to the Pirate King Robert Smith.

## SHARDSTONE MOUNTAINS

Shardstone rock is renowned for its colour, which is smokey-black and deep purple, often flecked with white crystals that sparkle when the mineral becomes hot. Although it was affected by the Burning of the Mainland, the area reportedly suffered little damage due to there being no settlements or plantlife. In past ages, the location was once home to a human-built town known as Smyrithdon, famous for exporting ore to the City of Faradome. However, the inhabitants reportedly died out or abandoned the town in the early part of the Fourth Age.

## SILVERWIND SHORES

The winds blow strong on the southern coast and those who favour Spiria, the God of Air, come here to marvel at his awesome power that often manifests itself as Air Elementals that dance upon the valleys and the coastline. The currents in the waters of Silverwind Shores are extremely strong, and can easily take days off a vessels journey time if they are sailing west. Sailors are always on the lookout for Air Elementals who toss boats into the air, or Water Elementals that conjure large waves that spell the death of many unfortunate crews.

## SKORTH

Skorth has been occupied by the humans of the Hazheshi tribe since their race appeared in Neothera in the Third Age. The inhabitants of Skorth have remained an unevolved civilisation since the first of human-kind lived in this part of the world, they are also mysterious and rarely encountered by people that are said to have ties with the Nightmares. The City of Skorth is built deep in the Na'tohram Gheneris rainforest and consists of vast numbers of mud and stick-built huts amongst larger structures, such as temples and what seem to be sacrificial altars built from the red-rock known as "N'Keshi".

At the end of the Third Age, led by a War Chief named Trogladosh, Skorth was raided by goblins and the city taken by force. However, the humans fought back and forced the goblins to retreat underground. Hemadri elders have felt demonic taint in Skorth for many years now, and the location is currently being investigated by their scouts to gather information on any potential threat that could harm the rainforest.





## SPRINGFORD

The inhabitants of the large Town of Springford are absolute devotees to the Seven. The numerous settlements surrounding the town boast many small churches dedicated to each of the Seven, and on the banks of the River Tilliard sits a large church dedicated to the gods and goddesses where there is no favouritism to a particular divine entity of the Seven.

Those that worship here appreciate that each of the Seven has an equally important role as one another. Springford is a bustling town with access to a wide variety of nearby resources, hardships are rarely felt here, and the town is considered one of the happiest by its residents in the whole of the Mainland.

Springford is also home to the famous Resurrection Cemetery which was said to be established during the latter part of the Third Age of Neothera, just after the construction of the town itself. It spans some two miles over the eastern part of Springford and boasts a strange phenomenon that has left many sceptics leaving the town believers in the supernatural.

Rather than being buried in graves beneath the ground, those that are laid to rest in Resurrection Cemetery meet their final resting place in a reconstructed version of the house they occupied. Loved ones will build a replica of the home the deceased once lived in, sometimes scaled-down, but still large enough to be able to walk around freely in. Although the building resembles the former dwelling place of the deceased, the construction is but a shell, a housing for the spirits of those that have passed away, very rarely holding furnishings.

Whilst this construction may seem unnecessary to some, the inhabitants of Springford are somehow able to see their loved ones that have passed away when visiting the reconstructed homes. They can physically see their ghostly forms as they move about the dwelling place, most often unaware of the living that bears witness to them.



## TWISTED PEAK

Five ancient temples were once built upon this towering mountain of black and purple Shardstone. Before the Burning of the Mainland, each temple housed approximately twenty acolytes who dedicated their lives to the cause of the temples.

Those who embarked on the journey to the summit of Twisted Peak did so to seek enlightenment of both the body and soul and those who have reached the summit returned as changed men or women. This task pushed both the body and mind to its extreme limits. Twisted Peak has slain countless travellers and crushed the souls of thousands more, for the journey to the top was filled with danger, woe and hardship.

One would encounter a temple for every mile they climbed starting with the temple of the Order of Solitude followed by the temple of the Order of Rage. Next came the temple of the Order of Regret, the temple of the Order of Dejection, and finally the temple of the Order of Acceptance.

Upon reaching a temple, the visitor was required to stay until their learning and understanding of the relevant order was completed. If one decided the teachings were too intense or they failed the tasks set by the keepers of the temple, they were forced to leave Twisted Peak never to return. One was not able to travel beyond a temple without completing the learning of the acolytes within. If one ever tried to sneak their way to the summit, they were hunted and slaughtered by the spirits of those who lost their lives attempting to complete their journey without deceit. It is not currently known if the temples survived the Burning of the Mainland. No word has been received since the fires and demonic taint spread.



## VICTORY FIELDS

The beautiful, sprawling, green fields that lay before the City of Faradome were once hosts to one of the most vicious battles Neothera has ever seen. During the Nightmare War, countless elves and piskies lost their lives here fighting for the survival of their lands as the demons marched upon Faradome City. If the piskies had not appeared to assist in pushing back the demonic forces, the lands would have surely fallen into darkness forever.

The Victory Fields gained their name from the triumph the elves and piskies won over the armies of the Nightmares at the end of the Second Age. Until their destruction during the Burning of the Mainland in the Fifth Age, the green expanses always felt the comforting warmth of the sun and a soft breeze would tussle the grass as it passed over the pastures. Blood-red flowers called Scarlet Maiden littered the hillsides, and it is said that one flower grew for every elf and piskie that fell in battle fighting the Nightmares. Travellers in the area often reported sightings of spirits upon the peaceful hills, although they would always fade into the air when approached.



## WHISPERING WOODS

Before they were destroyed during the Burning of the Mainland, these woods were said to be the most haunted location in Neothera. Here the souls of the dead were believed to be prevented from passing to the Ethereal Realm. It is said that the taint the Nightmares left during the Demon War in the Second Age caused this phenomenon to occur; however, others blame ley lines or heavy-deposits of Element Stones in the area. There was once a large mining village inside these woods, but it was eventually deserted as the hauntings gradually worsened. Adventurers often tried to locate the village in a bid to find the mine where it is rumoured that carts full of abandoned Element Stones were free for the taking. No one ever returned with their sanity intact to confirm if this was true.



# SOUTHERN REALMS

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

### BETRALIS

The City of Betralis is home to the Elves of Lightning and is nestled in the tall mountain peaks in the cluster of islands, offshore in the east of the Southern Realms. Following the war against the Nightmares at the end of the Second Age of Neothera, communications between the Elves of Faradome and the Lightning Elves of Betralis fell into silence, and assuming their kin in the great houses of the elves were all dead, the Lightning Elves secluded themselves from the world. The human and urka of Sora'Harumi, out of a mark of respect, have left the city of the elves alone, and dare not venture to Betralis for fear of awakening spirits and bringing bad luck upon themselves.

It was not until February in the year 2392 of the Fifth Age, that an expedition led by Admiral Robert Smith's son, Captain Edwin Smith, made contact with the few remaining Lightning Elves of Betralis. Unfortunately, communications broke down as their sacred lightning relic was stolen by an opportunist beastkin named Kahotep that accompanied Edwin Smith's crew. Despite being told of their surviving kin in Faradome on the Mainland, the elves were devastated by the theft and vowed to remain in Betralis until a time came that they could muster the forces to seek out the lightning relic and reclaim their sacred treasure. The relic of lightning changed hands many times since its theft and is currently located at the Moonglenn on the Caddington Estate.

### DJEN'SUN

The lush green plains of Djen'sun are home to the White Claw Tribe, a large community of urka and humans who occupy several villages in the grasslands. The main duties of the White Claw Tribe are to prevent people from attempting to cross the channel known as the Great Divide to access Norowatai, and they ensure patrols are permanently in place to prevent anyone sneaking beyond the borders. Djen'sun is also rich in game and the majority of meats available in the City of Sora'Harumi originate from the plains here. See the Whiteclaw Tribe of Djen'sun on *page 128* for more information on the White Claw Tribe.

### KORUTHAS

The City of Koruthas was the home of the Elves of Earth during the Second Age of the world, and following the Demon War at the end of that age, the Elves of Faradome in the Mainland lost all contact with their kin in Koruthas.



Despite attempts made by the farseers of Faradome to make contact with the missing elves via telepathy, no success was ever achieved, and attempts to traverse the southern oceans were made in vain as the seas, now stormy and full of wrath, chewed up any boats that got close to the Southern Realms.

Koruthas once was a majestic city built into the stone of the mountains and even stretched far underground in tunnels carved by the elves. It is not known if the Elves of Earth weathered the war against the Nightmares, and to this day no Elves of Earth from the City of Koruthas have ever made contact with the Mainland. That said, the humans and urka of Sora'Harumi stay well clear of the city in the mountains, stating that any attempts to enter the walls or tunnels of the elven city have been met with vicious magical storms derived from the Earth Element, or the fear-inducing, harrowing cries of what are believed to be giant earth-dwelling creatures.

Realising that the mountains were occupied before their arrival, and the warning signs that present themselves when approaching the city, the human and urka of the Southern Realms have decided to leave Koruthas alone as a mark of respect to whatever or whoever may still inhabit the elven city.



## LEI'SUEN PEAKS

The mountain peaks that begin in the south of Norowatai and stretch all the way north and onto the eastern side of the Southern Realms form a natural barrier that is almost impassable when approaching via the sea. When the seas surrounding the Southern Realms were shrouded in mist, those sailing close from other continents would almost always meet a watery grave, and even if they were lucky enough to breach the vicious storms, the mountains would likely spell their end due to the ferocious winds, rain, hail, snow and beasts that are found in them. However, those that know the Southern Realms well have been able to tap into the natural resources found in the peaks, and an abundance of ore and plant life is regularly harvested to aid the towns and the City of Sora'Harumi.

## MAYA

The northern part of the Southern Realms is notorious for the large and often dangerous beasts that roam the hills and countryside there, namely Sickletooth, black bears, giant lizards and wild cats. Maya is home to the Broketooth Tribe, a large community of urka and humans who occupy several villages in the hills, forests and grassland, and it is their duty to prevent these beasts from roaming too close to the farmlands that surround the walls of the City of Sora'Harumi. See the Broketooth Tribe of Maya on *page 128* for more information on the Broketooth Tribe.

## NOROWATAI

Since the beginning of the Fourth Age of the world, very few people from Sora'Harumi or the Outlander Tribes have set foot in Norowatai, and since the Great Divide appeared it is considered by the urka and the humans of the Southern Realms as disrespectful to the land and all life within it to do so. Norowatai is a land of giant beasts and plants, and despite attempts to fully explore and inhabit the vast planes, jungles and mountains in the Third Age, the lands, its creatures and even plantlife always lashed out at the humans and urka that ventured there.

Sinkholes would open up swallowing settlements, the great beasts would hunt, often appearing to work together to slay the settlers, and even plants would play their part by entangling with roots or vines those who ventured into the jungles or consuming them whole with massive, organic carnivorous teeth and jaws.

No matter how hard the human and urka tried, nature and the land itself always fought against their presence there, as if protecting Norowatai, eventually resulting in the land quite literally splitting itself in two.

Despite the bountiful resources available in this land, and following the appearance of the Great Divide, the urka king, Olkren-Gorami decreed that the lands should be left unsullied and made it illegal under southern law for any humans or urka of the south to ever set foot there again.

## THE GREAT DIVIDE

The expansive channel that runs from the seas in the east to the west side of the southern part of the continent of the Southern Realms is known as the Great Divide. This enormous channel was not always present in the south and appeared at the beginning of the Fourth Age. It is said that due to human and urka attempts to colonise Norowatai, the land and nature itself fought back, and so enraged was its response that the bottom half of the Southern Realms literally cracked and broke away from the upper half, leaving a nearly impassable channel with walls almost four hundred feet tall. Respecting the will of the land, neither urka nor humans dare to cross the Great Divide for fear of inciting further destruction in the central and northern parts of the Southern Realms.



## TSENDAL

Tsendal is home to the Blackscar Tribe, a large community who occupy several villages on the banks of the River Janto in the west of the Southern Realms. The location is well known for its fair weather and warm summers. The humans and urka of the Blackscar Tribe are famous for their skill in fishing and their canoes can always be seen bobbing upon the Janto, and sometimes the River Maein to the north and River Shanglon to the east. The majority of seafood available in the City of Sora'Harumi is provided by the fishers of the Blackscar Tribe, who also work in the seas to the west. See *page 128* for more information on the Black Scar Tribe.



# TERMINARIUM (LYSHANDUIR)

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

### AMBERSIDE

The glistening, golden peaks of Amberside were considered by many fey to be the most beautiful in all of Lyshanduir before the darkness consumed the world, blocking out the stars and the sun until they lost their colour and became grey and foreboding to behold. Before the Nightmares spread their taint in Lyshanduir, Amberside was undoubtedly the best place to view the constellations for their peaks were so tall they rose above the clouds, allowing a crystal clear view of the stars in all their glory.

A great observatory was situated in the centre of Amberside and a small village known as Merrydon surrounded it. Many of the inhabitants of Merrydon worked at the observatory or offered support to its upkeep by providing food and other supplies for those that monitored the stars and the universe beyond.

Perhaps the greatest discovery made by those that explored the universe from within the halls of the observatory was the distant sparkle of two stars, one small and blue and the other a little larger and golden. These stars were located in a galaxy called Natterdoen and were in such a position that it was thought life could be sustained on them.

When the light grew dimmer in Lyshanduir as more and more fey were turned to vampires, the observatory could no longer view Natterdoen and eventually any other stars in the solar system, this led to the fey that lived and worked in the Village of Merrydon retreating to the safety of the City of Leycandour and abandoning Amberside altogether. It is not known what became of the observatory after the fey left and the darkness permanently fell.

### CELESTIAL POOLS

The Celestial Pools reside in the east of Lyshanduir and not even a ripple occurs as the winds playfully tickle the crystal clear waters. At night the reflection of the constellations upon the surface of the water was so clear and perfect that it was as if you were staring at the stars themselves. It was forbidden to bathe in the pools and the waters here were sacred to the fey due to their healing properties.

It is due to the purest essence of light contained within the magical waters that when applied to a wound causes it to remove any infections and speed up the healing process tenfold. Drinking from the pools was also forbidden, however, only members of the fey royal family or those given verbal permission by them were able to collect the water and take it elsewhere.

Despite many attempts, if the royal family did not give permission, the waters would slip through the hands of one who would try to bottle them, leaving the vessel or their hands completely dry as the water returned to the pools. The most famous fey reserve known as Flanagel was made from the waters of the Celestial Pools and was collected in person by fey royalty. The water was mixed with herbs and roots to create the exquisite-tasting wine, flavoured with honeysuckle and elderflower.

This wine was only allowed to be consumed once a year during the holy day, Luminata, and was gifted by the royal family to all fey who attended the event in the capital City of Leycandour. With darkness now shrouding Lyshanduir, the celestial pools still hold their magical qualities, however, the waters are black and foreboding since the stars are no longer reflected in them.





## CYNDERSFORD

Nestled in the golden peaks, the Town of Cyndersford was home to many blacksmiths who produced weapons, armour and other equipment forged from metal, and supplied most of Lyshanduir with their wares. The Town of Cyndersford is located between the meandering curves of the River Lyfee and was a popular destination for any fey wishing to learn the trade of smithing. When the vampyres took over Lyshanduir, Cyndersford was one of the only towns Venstrim did not allow to be razed, keeping the forges lit so weapons and armour could continue to be crafted for his soldiers.

## FURROWSBROUGH

So rich in natural resources was Furrowsbrough that it became known as the farming capital of Lyshanduir. The fey here cultivated the land and made the most of the ideal weather and rich soils in the region, and any fey that wished to follow a humble yet hard-working way of life, living off the land and tending to it would make their home in the town located here. The long golden beaches to the south also made for great fishing, and several small settlements were once dotted along the coastline where fishers would spend their days working on the sun-soaked beaches and shores.



Furrowsbrough would be the second town in Lyshanduir that would succumb to the darkness of the Nightmares following Goldscape (the Dead Hills) and almost all fishing and farming ground to a halt as the fey were turned to vampyres. This dealt a devastating blow to the towns and cities of the north as food began to grow limited due to the corruption of the lands in the south and the quickly diminishing, previously daily arrivals of supply wagons coming from Furrowsbrough.

## GOLDEN SHORES

The vast stretches of the Golden Shores span from the west of the City of Leycandour to the base of the mountains at Whistlers Reach in the northeast. As the name would suggest the sands here are golden, and the beach is considered one of the most beautiful places in all of Lyshanduir. The grains of sand are said to be the essence of light, manifested in its purest form and the building blocks of everything in the world of Lyshanduir.

Precisely a year to the day after a faerie child is born in Lyshanduir, the parents and the child would make a pilgrimage to the Golden Shores, and a ceremony would be performed when the sun had set. The constellations would mirror their position when the child was born, their star lines also aligning perfectly.

The light of the stars would reflect upon the sands, illuminating them with a bright white light, and a very small glass vial would be filled with the grains of sand from the beach. The vial would be kept by the parents and gifted to the child on their sixteenth birthday and when the vial was opened and the sands spread at the feet of the child their star lines would illuminate, and the faerie would gain the ability to wield light magic both gracefully and proficiently.

Since the darkness fell in Lyshanduir the sands of the Golden Shores no longer shimmer and have faded to black. Some vampyres return to the shores, yet many are filled with sorrow upon seeing how the light at this prominent location in fey culture has completely died.

## LONGREACH

Longreach served as the main passage for travel between the southern and northern lands of Lyshanduir and became heavily guarded by the fey when the vampyres claimed the south. Once a scenic grassland where many folks lived outside of the City of Leycandour, tending to beautiful gardens and crops of fruit and vegetables, Longreach finally fell after many decades of fighting between the fey and the vampyres.

As the darkness crawled north towards Leycandour, the trees, plants and vegetation all withered and died, the ground became barren and infertile. The fey fled their homes and the wildlife here either perished through starvation or was hunted to near extinction by the vampyres, or fled east towards the Celestial Pools, the last place in Lyshanduir to succumb to the corruption of the vampyres.



## MALIKAKA

The Town of Malikaka was well known throughout Lyshanduir for the various beast tamers and animal trainers and traders that occupied the hills here, supplying the rest of the fey settlements, towns and villages with animals such as horses and trained dogs to assist in their work, or simply for pleasure.

The peaks and valleys here were home to a special breed of horse known as the Serecroft, similar to a shire horse yet more nimble, faster and intelligent. The fey would ride in pairs upon these steeds into battle, using glaives to cut down their foes either side of the horse as they rode. The Terreclaw, a pure white cat about the size of a panther with a ruffled mane, sharp claws and a pair four-inch tusks where the canine teeth would be were bred and trained here and were the most commonly used animal to assist the fey in hunts.

When the darkness fell in Lyshanduir and the vampyres reached Malikaka, many of the beasts here were slain for food, although it is said that the vampyre king, Venstrim did keep several different creatures, housing them in a large menagerie somewhere near the Ivory Tower in Leycandour. It is not known for what purpose Venstrim keeps these creatures, and whilst some say it is to continue the breeding programme for food, others say he secretly wishes to keep the species from falling to extinction.

## THE CUSP

A series of five islands span from the east to the south-west coast of Lyshanduir, and whilst only the largest island is occupied, the other four are often frequented due to large yields of fruit and game that can be hunted and gathered there. However, the Cusp is also home to the village and port of Jolefrey, where alongside fishing, ocean exploration is also conducted.

The port here is the largest in Lyshanduir, with the port near Malikaka being smaller and less busy in comparison. Over the ages the fey has designed and built many vessels to traverse the oceans in search of life beyond the home that the faeries know so well, however despite years of searching, no land has ever been sighted no matter how far the boats may sail.

The fey never gave up their search and continued to push the limits of sailing right up until the darkness fell. Some were even hopeful that they could escape the rule of the vampyres if only lands beyond that which they knew could be found. With the age of perpetual darkness that has now set in Lyshanduir, the Cusp has been abandoned, the ships and the Town of Jolefrey left to rot in the shadows.

## THE DEAD HILLS

Once known as Goldscape, the Dead Hills was the first location in Lyshanduir where the darkness began to fall as the faeries here were the first to succumb to the will of the demons that spread their taint throughout the lands. Lush golden grasses once covered the Dead Hills, and various villages were dotted throughout the picturesque landscape. Many of these villages were farming orientated, and along with the yields produced at Furrowsbrough, supplied the towns and cities to the north with crops, meat and vegetables.

Goldscape fell quickly to the darkness due to there being little to no defences in place as the faeries did not need such measures living in peace since the dawn of Lyshanduir's creation. The Dead Hills would become a hub for demonic activity and any fey who initially became converted to vampyres congregated here as the golden hills turned to black ash and fire.

## WHISTLERS REACH

Near the summit of the highest peak there lies a huge cavern that has been adapted to seat almost five hundred people. Seats have been carved into the stone and face the mouth of the cave, and if one would trek almost half a mile inside, they would find an opening at the other end, approximately fifteen feet in diameter that sees the winds gust through the winding cavern.

As the winds travel back towards the 'stage' a vast number of stalagmites and stalactites catch the breeze causing a haunting whistling sound to resonate at the entrance to the cave, which is greatly amplified due to the natural formation of the rock.

The sound caused by the wind becomes melodic and enchanting to behold, any fey once gathered here to witness the winds in the cavern perform music the likes of which no one was able to reproduce. No two visits would ever be the same here, where each 'performance' was as unique as the last. Some fey believe that this was the spirit of the world of Lyshanduir singing and communicating with them directly, and so renowned became Whistlers Reach that many fey made regular journeys here to hear the beautiful music of the heart of Lyshanduir itself.

Even as corruption and darkness filled Lyshanduir the natural phenomenon continued at Whistlers Reach, and some vampyres continue to visit the location to this day in order to catch a small glimpse of the happiness that left them when the darkness consumed their world of light and love.



# WESTERN REALMS - EÚND VALD

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

### AUROLAND

The large Town of Auroland is situated in the north of Norvaegr, in the mountainous region of the realm. The wood-walled town sits in the shadows of the many mountains that tower over it. The town gets its name from the frequent sightings of the Aurora, a large natural light display that is only found in this part of the world. The town was built after many citizens of Norvaegr saw the natural display as some form of contact or sign from the gods that they hail - most notably Volkmar, the God of War. Originally used by Norveagr as the main site of army training, Auroland has slowly transitioned from a noisy and chaotic hub of war to a quiet and peaceful town. In the past, these warriors and their fellow countrymen would be chomping at the bit, not only to taste war but also to see the Aurora of Volkmar and to receive his blessing.

To witness this spectacle was seen as one of the highest honours you could receive. If you were one of the lucky few, a swift rise through the ranks of the Norvaegr army would soon follow. As the years passed, more and more people have seen the spectacle which put this town on the map. As such, promotions and positions of power are no longer given to those who have seen it. This tradition stopped around twenty to thirty years ago. Due to this, and the spike in people wanting to see the great Aurora of Volkmar, Auroland has become a hotspot in terms of tourism. Many citizens from all over Eúnd Vald come to see the wonder, and in more recent times, folks from other continents have taken the long journey to get a glimpse.



### BLOOD FLATS

Located in the realm of Vesthold, the Blood Flats can be found between the City of Vestr in the north and the Ashan Mountains to the south. The arid flatland here spans around one hundred miles from the north to south and has been the location of countless battles between the people of Vestr and the Dragonkin of the Ashan Mountains over many centuries. The white sands are occasionally interrupted by large outcrops of rocks, and in such great quantity did the blood of the fallen spill here that it is said the sands have been permanently stained red. Strong winds and sandstorms batter the Blood Flats and rain rarely falls, few creatures can survive here, and journeys are only made across the flats by the humans and Dragonkin if they are completely necessary.

### BROKEN ISLE

The Broken Isle is a small island that is found in the centre of Eúnd Vald. Once, it was joined to the realm of Estan and it could be accessed quite easily on foot. Over time, bits of the land started to fall away, and eventually, it was completely severed from the main island. This is how it came to gain its name. Before it was a separate island, The Broken Isle was just like any other piece of land that Estan controlled. People lived and worked there, but fewer and fewer people remained once the surrounding landscape started to crumble. Over the years, any sign of the civilizations that once lived there is no more than ruins. When the island eventually became separated, and the gap between the Island of Estan and the Broken Isle grew, Estan and its people knew its hold over the Broken Isle was weak and wanted to cement it as their own. As such, they began ferrying fallen warriors to the island to be buried there. The number of bodies that are buried there is said to be uncountable. It is also near impossible to visit this island. The only way you can is via the only ferry that goes there. Those that try on their own are hit by fierce storms and rough seas, with all boats succumbing to the elements.



## HAFNAR

The people of Hafnar were one of the ancient human realms that became established following the appearance of their species at the dawn of the western world. This realm refused to interact with other human-orientated realms, believing that they must remain pure in the eyes of the deities they worshipped by those in the west. To the people of Hafnar, interactions with humans that did not belong to their realm were forbidden, where it was considered that they were in fact creatures created to force them into temptation, foregoing the belief that they would eventually sit amongst their ancestors in the halls of the gods following their death. Upon learning of the existence of the dragonkin, the people of Hafnar attempted to integrate themselves with the half-human, half-dragon people of the Ashan Mountains - Afterall, they were not human. This did not bode well for the citizens of Hafnar, and due to language barriers, the Sheik'ah confused the people of Hafnar's incessant attempts at friendly communication as an act of war, and the dragonkin promptly destroyed the city. Today, the City of Hafnar lies in ruins. The dragonkin had completely destroyed and plundered it. Those that have ventured to Hafnar in recent times tell of ghostly voices that echo through the ruins, forcing them to flee in terror when spirits physically manifest before their eyes.

## HUNAVTEN

Hunavten is a town that is found on the western coast of Estan. Known predominantly as a fishing town, Hunavten boasts a large array of ships that are often docked here. The sea that separates Estan and Vesthold is commonly known to be a prime spot for many rare and delicious species of fish, and as such, Estan has fought hard to keep this area theirs. Naval ships are sent out with fishing boats as a threat to anyone else from a different realm looking to steal their fishing spot. Hunavten is also the port where the infamous Broken Ferryman sails. This is the ferry that transports fallen warriors to the Broken Isle for burial. Those who have seen this man say he is extremely pale and remains hooded at all times. No one knows the true nature of who or what this man is.



## REYNIR

The Town of Reynir is found towards the north of Estan. This town has often been cited by people as having the mindset that war is always around the corner. Warriors always occupy the walls, and many watch posts are set up looking north, towards Norvaegr. As such, tensions within these walls are high, no matter what time of year it is. Despite the feud between Estan and Norvaegr being over, the want for war, as it always is in Estan, is obviously present in Reynir. Due to the hunger for war, many of Estan's finest warriors hail from Reynir. Some of the most feared berserkers originate from here, and many have questioned how Reynir seems to breed such specimens. Quite fortunately for Estan, and unfortunately for its enemies, it appears that this mindset and way of life have simply been bred into its people. This lust for war and battle runs deep into their veins, and Reynir will always be ready, whenever that time comes.

## STASTLAND

This town is located towards the eastern-most point of the realm and is mainly known for being a large lumber and mining town, with many people who live there taking up this trade. Ore and timber are often shipped to the City of Otta to be traded and sold to other realms. Instead of being traded or sold, much of the lumber that is found here is used for the king's fleet of ships, and also to build and maintain new and existing structures. The wood found in the forests near to Stastland is perceived as being the strongest in the world - hence why it is kept to the people of Norvaegr to use to their advantage. As well as hosting a vast amount of industry, Stastland was also used as a port to allow travel to Estan during the war which recently ended. Stastland was the closest point to Estan, meaning travel across the sea would be quick, and in turn, an assault could be launched easier. A good number of war vessels remain at Stastland despite the war being over, but these are more commonly used as patrol boats, or for ferrying people backwards and forwards between Norvaegr and other continents.



# REALMS OF INTEREST

## WORLD OF NEOTHERA

### EÚND VALD - ASHAN MOUNTAINS (CITY OF ASHAN)

The crest of the Sheik'ah dragonkin represents the head of the last great dragon, Eravor. The depiction of the dragon is enough to instil fear into the hearts of the foes of the Sheik'ah, and rallies all dragonkin under its visage as a united, ferocious force.



The Ashan Mountains in the south of the realm of Vesthold have been home to the race of dragonkin since the birth of their species. Before that, deep in the caverns below, the last great dragon Eravor made its lair. The peaks here endure frequent storms and varying weather, but despite this, they are considered quite hospitable when it comes to sustaining life. There is a strong dragonkin presence in the mountains, where the Sheik'ah has carved a great, cavernous city, named "Ashan" from the rocks which date back to the birth of Eúnd Vald. So deep are these caverns that some state they stretch beneath the entire western continent, and this may account for the occasional dragonkin sighting outside of the realm of Vesthold.

Most of the City of Ashan resides beneath the rock of the mountains, although various overground settlements can be found dotted amongst the peaks. These settlements are usually small and often used as lookout points or meeting places. These outposts usually signify that an entrance to the cave networks below is nearby, and are always guarded by the Sheik'ah who can quickly report to the city defenders that a threat is looming.

That said, the City of Ashan has never been breached by an opposing army, however, skilled scouts have been able to sneak their way into the caverns, almost always reporting how the realm of the dragonkin is an impenetrable fortress, a rocky maze occupied by the most dangerous species in Eúnd Vald.

Until recently, humans and other species have mostly stayed clear of the Ashan Mountains, but since a truce was called between the dragonkin and the people of the City of Vestr, the Sheik'ah are allowing visitors into their subterranean city provided they are accompanied at all times by a guide who can vouch for the integrity of their guests. This is also for their own safety, for there are many dragonkin that do not welcome outsiders and would happily kill and make them their next meal. Guides are essential for newcomers. With the City of Ashan being so large it has never been mapped by the dragonkin. It is very easy for those not familiar with the countless miles of tunnels to get lost and never find an exit, starving to death with only their bones being a sign that they were ever there.

Although the dragonkin are the most dominant species in the Ashan Mountains, many ferocious beasts call the peaks and tunnels their home. In this region, Stone Wyrms can be found; giant rock-eating creatures that carve massive tunnels as they burrow through the rock deep below the surface of the mountains. It is thought that these beasts are capable of tunnelling so deep that they have created passages to every continent on Neothera, yet so dangerous are the monsters, that it takes a very capable force of dragonkin to slay just one. It is theorised that the Stone Wyrms that carved many of the caverns beneath the Morrdoun Mountains are the same creatures that made the tunnels used by the dragonkin in Eúnd Vald.





## EÚND VALD - CITY OF ASTHEIN

The ferocious head of the brown bear is the symbol adopted by the people of Estan. The creature, commonly found in the region is a source of food and raw materials that sustains the City of Asthein, as well as offering the challenge and thrill of the hunt. The brown bear is a competent fighter, and the scars of battle shown on its face represent the hardiness of the folks of this realm.



The land that was once known as Herad was the beginning of the Western Realms, known today as Eúnd Vald. Herad was the sole civilisation in the known world of the westerners, and over time, the numbers that lived here grew and grew. Growing tired of the way the realm was being ruled, a small group of rebels in Herad mustered and travelled away from the city to establish their own settlement. Throughout the years, the war-hungry realm of Herad would launch various attacks north to the newly established realm known as Nord-Agr. These attacks originally started as nothing more than attempts to put a stop to the up and coming realm, but as Nord-Agr gained more and more land and resources, the township established a purposeful existence.

Despite never being able to breach the immense defences of Otta and the fjord that leads to the city, the forces of Herad did venture further east on the island. The Town of Stastland exchanged hands several times, with Nord-Agr eventually claiming it. As the years went on, and the continued war between the two realms showed no sign of stopping, various kings and queens of both territories looked to cement themselves as the superior rulers. Each realm sought to outdo each other, but they kept trading victories and defeats. Eventually, fighting became less frequent, and the mentality of the separate cities changed.

What is now known as Norvaegr looked more towards its people, and its own prosperity, whereas Herad, who had renamed their realm to Estan, continued to hold on to the past and never truly wished to bury the grudge.

This grudge ultimately carried on right up until the recent takeover by the Vampyre King Venstrim and the forces of Terminarium. After the death of King Ulf Auldgammel at the Caddington Estate in 2394 of the Fifth Age, at Venstrim's hands, the hatchet was finally buried between the realms of Norvaegr and Estan. It has been said that some who reside in Estan still long for the day that they can be at war with their northern enemies once again. One of those is supposedly Leif Auldgammel, Ulf's son.

Always known for being a realm of strength, and true patriotism, Estan pride themselves on their ability to win wars and overcome whatever obstacle is in their way. This has often led many people to perceive the people of Estan as rude, arrogant, and brash. This, for the most part, is true. The people of Estan never did, nor ever have had a way with words, and prefer to let their weapons do the talking. As such, the aggression that is often shown to outsiders makes the realm seem like a harsh and unforgiving place to live, which is correct. No matter where you live in Estan, there always seems to be a fight for survival, and with much of the island's natural resources running out centuries ago, this caused the need for raiding nearby lands, especially in Norvaegr. Under King Venstrim's rule, the people of the realm have been supplied with new resources, and the prosperity of the city seems to be on the rise.

Ultimately, the lands of Estan are brutal, but this does not take away from the real patriotism that the country has. Almost all of its people are devoted to their lands and would happily die for them, and this has been proven many times in the past.

The City of Asthein is found in the south of Estan and was, until under King Venstrim's rule, known primarily for its poor living conditions. Asthein was often viewed as the polar opposite of a city like Otta. With its dirty streets, where very little is cared for, broken buildings with no signs of repair, Asthein was once the playing-field for great sieges. As such, its people stopped bothering to rebuild the damaged city altogether. Over time, the sieges grew less and less, but the peoples' mindset never changed.

Asthein is also home to the Beors of Estan, and this elite army has been fighting for Estan since it was founded sometime in the Third Age. They take the name and characteristics from the brown bear that is commonly found in Estan. They mirror the way the bears act and live, but most importantly; how they hunt and fight.



Their ferocity in battle is second to none, and it is said that if you are on the opposing side, the sight of these warriors is enough to make you lay down your weapons and run.

The ruler of Estan also makes his or her home in Asthein, and the official King of Estan is Venstrim of Terminarium. Due to Venstrim's recent absence, where he has returned to Terminarium to rule over the vampyres that reside there, Leif Auldgammel lives where his father, Ulf Auldgammel once did when he was in command. A second wall surrounds the stone fortress that is constantly guarded by Beors, and Leif is said to remain inside these walls almost all of the time, with very little care for the people who live outside of it.

The people of the Western Realms of Eúnd Vald follow different religions than the inhabitants of other continents and the deities, Hvikr, Jardligr, Logharr, Stranja and Volkmar are devoutly worshipped. The most favoured deity in Estan is Volkmar. Estan is seen almost as the embodiment of Volkmar, the God of War, victory, pride, passion, and strength. Everything Estan vies for is that of Volkmar, and as such, he is worshipped daily.





## EÚND VALD - CITY OF OTTA

Twin axes, the tools of sustainability and war, cross protectively over the emblem of a shield commonly used by the folk of Norvaegr. This crest represents the diversity and strength of the realm.



Norvaegr is known in the Western Realms as the epicentre of trade, with regular routes now passing via Vesthold, the Southern Realms, and in more recent times, Estan and the Mainland. The land is vast and different wherever you travel, and the northernmost part of the island is predominantly made up of a mountainous landscape, with the rest of the continent consisting of fields and forests. Norvaegr's name is as old as time, originating from the humans who first inhabited the continent after they headed north from Estan in search of new lands and to escape from those that hunted them. In the old, now forgotten language of Eúnd Vald, Norvaegr had its original name - Nord-Agr, meaning "The North Land".

The first people of Norvaegr never planned or had intentions to venture out and establish their own realm, and originally, the humans of the Western Realms all lived as a united realm in what is now called Estan, originally named Herad. A small fraction of the population grew tired of King Magnus' brutal nature and harsh ideology on how a continent should be governed, and as such, approached the king asking for his permission to venture out and establish another settlement separate to his. Magnus saw this as a potential threat, and with his heavy hand, he sentenced them to death. As word spread that King Magnus had killed the group of rebels, others began to grow even more restless than they already were.

Eventually, more rebels fled from the realm of Herad and headed north. King Magnus, furious that his people would betray him sent out an execution order.

He commanded as many soldiers as he could to search the lands for the group of rebels and bring them back to be slain in public as a show of his power. As they sailed north, arriving in the continent now known as Norvaegr, and presumably with the luck of the divine on their side, the rebels observed land, and as they sailed alongside it a fjord led them deeper into the continent. They continued to sail into the fjord, evading their pursuers. The base of the fjord would prove to be an ideal spot for the rebels to inaugurate their new settlement, and a small village was established at the fjord's base. Over the years, it proved to be the perfect location due to its defensive capabilities and abundant resources. This new settlement, known as Otta, grew in size and population, hidden from the gaze of Herad. Years passed, and the grudge was thought to be buried, however, after finally locating Otta, an assault was launched by Estan. The people of Otta used the fjord's natural defences to their advantage, and peppered the attacking boats with arrows, completely halting the assault.

As the settlement grew to city status, jobs, and trade were established extremely quickly. Expansion was eventually required, and farmland, lumber, and mining became the main trades of Otta, and have been ever since. As such, two more towns were established, one in the north - Auroland, and one in the east - Stastland. Nord-Agr became known as Norvaegr.

Norvaegr became renowned as a trade hub in Eúnd Vald, with many links stretching to Vesthold and the Southern Realms. Meanwhile, King Hardra initiated a realm-wide genocide of his people. Many citizens became weary of his war-hungry ways and compared him to the tyrannical King Aulgammel of Estan, whom he had been at war with for many years. As such, a revolt was in the air, and especially in the capital of Otta. King Hardra made it public that anyone found talking out of turn or displaying concerns about his leadership were treasonists. It wasn't long before these death threats were threats no more.

The killings began, and they were in their hundreds, and then thousands. Within six months, almost two-thirds of the population of Norvaegr were killed, with many of these being people who didn't even attempt to question his rule. The king had become so twisted that he did not care who was put to death. Two of the people who lost their lives were the mother and father of the current King of Norvaegr, Ubbe Olofsson. His parents were simple farmers whose lands were burned to the ground while he was away, engaged in trade with Vestr. Overcome with emotion, Olofsson banded together with a small group of comrades and set out to remove the crazed King Hardra from power. They posed as traders and snuck into the City of Otta, and managed to breach King Hardra's halls. Of the handful of Olofsson's soldiers that infiltrated the city, only three remained, including Ubbe Olofsson, who got to King Hardra and killed him.



After this, the throne remained empty for a considerable amount of time until Ubbe Olofsson took up the mantle of king. The people saw him as the saviour of Norvaegr and believed that if he did not intervene, Norvaegr would have been wiped out due to an act of genocide at the hands of King Hardra.

The realm of Norvaegr has a monarchy system, and unlike the more traditional rulerships of Eúnd Vald, the next king or queen isn't the firstborn. Instead, the current king or queen will choose one of their children to take up the throne. This, in the past, has often led to large conflicts between siblings as to who gets their fathers or mothers blessing as the new king or queen. These squabbles, however, are very quickly resolved. The remaining siblings of the heir are very commonly given the title of Jarl of another large town in Norvaegr. Jarls oversee the governance of a town in the absence of the king or queen, whose main residence is the capital City of Otta. Jarls hold power over towns, but ultimately, can be replaced or overruled at the king or queen's behest.

The current King of Norvaegr is Ubbe Olofsson. Despite the aforementioned, King Olofsson did not inherit the Throne of Norvaegr, and instead, he overthrew the previous ruler, King Erik Hardra, who went crazy with power and initiated a Realm-wide killing of his people. King Olofsson overthrew King Hardra in the year 2393. Olofsson is seen by nearly all of Norvaegr as its saviour because of this. He is said to be a fair yet firm ruler, who does not mind brushing shoulders with the poorest people of his realm.

The capital of Norvaegr, home to King Ubbe Olofsson is the City of Otta that sits at the base of a large fjord - with large wooden walls that enclose most of it. Otta is renowned for being extremely difficult to siege and the mountains either side of the fjord are patrolled by skilled archers who can rain down death from above onto Norvaegr's enemies if an assault was to come via the sea. If Otta was to be attacked by land, the enforced wooden walls and towers that surround it are home to many soldiers that would happily put their lives on the line to protect their city.

Otta is also home to the famous market district where traders from all over the known world come to sell their wares. If a trader wants to make a name for his or herself, then the Otta trade district is where they go. The same can be said for an adventurer who is looking to get rich because many buyers now sail from all over the world looking for treasures.



Known as the King's Hall, a large wooden longhouse is currently home to King Ubbe Olofsson. The King's Hall is open to the public, with the open fires warming the inhabitants of Otta on cold nights. Many feasts are held here, with these being open to anyone who wishes to partake in the festivities.

The favoured deity of Otta is Jardligr, who is worshipped heavily by the population of farmers that inhabit Norvaegr. As the God of Harvest, farmers must receive good favour from Jardligr to produce a decent yield of crops. As such, it is good practice to offer your first crop of the year as a tribute to Jardligr. Many farmers who are fortunate enough to have an oak tree on their land will leave any offerings at the base of it. Oak trees are synonymous with Jardligr as it is said that where an oak tree stands, it is the exact point where he descended to Neothera. Someone who has many oak trees on an area of land they own will see the value of the land and property rise. Oak trees are seen as good favour, causing the cost to rise.

Another commonly worshipped God is Logharr. Due to being a trade-heavy realm, many goods are often shipped by sea to other areas. As such, it is a common practice for a ship's crew to pray to Logharr before they embark. They believe that Logharr has control of the seas, and they will often pray for calm weather when sailing to their destination. Many first-time sailors have often forgotten to pray before heading off, and they have said that they encountered the most fierce seas their superiors have ever seen. Quite often, before an army is setting out by the water, one of two unused ships are often set alight and the sea is allowed to consume them when they eventually break apart. This is done to appease Logharr and his potential desire to consume ships as they head out into the open waters.



## EÚND VALD - CITY OF VESTR

Five points represent the animal gods worshipped by the people of Vestr, pointing outward as if extending their influence across the land. A circle protects two abstract figures that represent the siblings Hoshi and Zen of Sora'Harumi that introduced the divine animals to the people of Vestr. The heart symbol created by the two siblings shows the love the dynasty has always had for the people of the city, and the wealth of spiritual enlightenment the animal deities have brought to Vestr.



The City of Vestr is located in the northern region of Vesthold in the Western Realms of Eúnd Vald. Vestr was formed soon after the first humans arrived in the west, and for many years the people followed the teachings of the gods commonly worshipped by those in Eúnd Vald. However, as the centuries passed, the people of the city grew tired of the apparent absence of divine figures, and eventually abandoned their faith in archaic gods altogether. Vestr is a city that is well-versed in the arts of war, and since the end of the Third Age, they have been locked in combat with the Sheik'ah dragonkin of the Ashan Mountains to the south of the region of Vesthold in a conflict known as "The Great Angst".

The war began following the theft of the egg of the last dragon, Eravor, where blame was laid upon the City of Vestr for stealing their unborn God. It was not until 2394 of the Fifth Age that finally, the dragonkin discovered the theft occurred at the hands of the Beors of Estan. After reclaiming the hatchling, who had found its way into the possession of the King Ubbe Olofsson of the City of Otta, a truce was called between the people of Vestr and the Sheik'ah dragonkin. Vestr has always been ruled by an emperor or empress, a dynasty that is currently upheld by Empress Fraydis Skaldmaer.

Although it is a city that was, until recently, constantly locked in a bloody war against the dragonkin, the rulers of Vestr have always been on the side of their people. Every effort has always been made to ensure Vestr's citizens know nothing of famine or poverty. Due to the bountiful resources found in Vesthold, it is easy to see why Vestr is such a prosperous city. The success of Vestr, whilst reliant on the deeds of its dynasty over the years is also attributed to their allies. While trade has occurred with other realms in the west, alliances have been fickle, with each of the three main islands mostly keeping to themselves. It was not in the realms of the west that Vestr found a great ally, but instead with the Southern Realms with the people of the City of Sora'Harumi.

The Southern Realms have played a massive part in the evolution of the people and City of Vestr, being more socially and technologically advanced. To this day, it is easy to see the influence Sora'Harumi had on culture, fashion, victuals, architecture and other aspects of life in the City of Vestr. While some consider this alliance the result of good fortune, many consider it the will of the animal gods that the folk of Vestr began to worship following the appearance of Hoshi and Zen, two siblings from the Southern Realms. The tale of their arrival at the City of Vestr led to an entirely new belief system being created by the Vestrians that had previously abandoned all faith they had in the gods of Eúnd Vald due to a lack of proof of their existence. The tale of Hoshi and Zen speaks of animal deities that are all worshipped by the folk of Vestr, and sometimes by those in the Southern Realms.

Two young sailors, from Sora'Harumi in the Southern Realms, were the first outsiders to discover Vesthold, albeit by accident. During the early part of the Third Age of Neothera, a small sloop manned by Hoshi and her brother Zen set sail to fish off the northwest coast of Sora'Harumi. Frustrated with a lack of catches over the past few weeks, Hoshi and Zen decided to push forth towards the veil of mists that surrounded the Southern Realms to find bigger hauls of fish. Despite warnings to stay clear of the mists that surrounded the Southern Realms, the brother and sister pressed onward but were eventually enveloped by storms, being pushed further into the bleak darkness by strong currents. A great storm raged, and despite their best efforts to fight the savage seas, Hoshi and Zen's boat was destroyed, leaving the pair helpless and facing a watery grave.

Hoshi and Zen awoke on the shores of a new land, and as they opened their eyes, a great sea turtle laid before them, smiling as the pair rose to their feet. As they turned to the skies, they noticed a great bird with a long beak soaring above them, slowly drifting out of view.



Turning back towards the ocean, Hoshi and Zen noticed tracks in the sand, those of the great turtle's, and what appeared to be sand disturbed by two dragged bodies. The turtle bowed its head graciously and slowly made its way back towards the ocean. The pair were certain their lives had been saved by the majestic sea creature.

Hoshi and Zen travelled on foot for three days and three nights into the new land. All the while noticing a great bird with a long beak soaring and circling above them. Growing weak through hunger, the siblings stopped to rest in a cave. As the sun rose on the fourth day, a great tigress appeared before the pair, sniffing at them, realising they were too weak to defend themselves should predators decide to attack. Taking pity on the siblings and smelling the faint scent of the great sea turtle upon them, the tigress left the cave and returned a short while later carrying the fresh carcasses of two rabbits. She placed the carcasses at Hoshi and Zen's feet, beside the dwindling fire that kept them warm. She bowed graciously before walking away into a nearby forest.

Smelling the cooked rabbits from nearby, a monkey chanced his luck by leaping from the top of the cave, stealing the sibling's food. Hoshi and Zen were too weak to follow the monkey and cried out in sadness and frustration. The monkey greedily gobbled up the rabbits as he made his way towards the forest, only to be pounced on by the great tigress who heard the siblings cries. The great tigress snapped the monkey's neck and returned to Hoshi and Zen with its body in its jaws. It dropped the monkey at their feet, bowed graciously once again and left the pair with an even bigger meal than they had before. Once again they spied a great bird soaring and circling above them.

With food in their bellies and their strength returning, Hoshi and Zen ventured forth from the cave and continued their journey, hoping to find signs of civilisation. After wandering many miles, the siblings happened upon a small encampment at the rocky base of a mountain. The pair spied the occupants for a short while, seeing that they were lizard-like humanoids that spoke in a strange tongue and appeared to be forming a circle where two of the creatures were fighting viciously in the middle. Deciding not to take their chances the siblings quietly crept away, trying not to draw attention to themselves. As they retreated, they noticed, once again, a great bird soaring above them.

To their horror, a small group of monkeys appeared on the trail ahead of Hoshi and Zen and smelling cooked monkey upon the pair the creatures began to scream and holler in anger. This drew the attention of the lizard-creatures, seeing them charge towards the noise. The agile monkeys easily-scaled the rocky walls either side of the siblings and made their escape, yet the siblings feared they would not be so lucky in retreating.

The lizard-creatures were about to reach Hoshi and Zen with their crude weapons drawn, yet before they could launch their assault, the great tigress leapt from the stones peaks above and roared-deafeningly as it came between the siblings and the lizard-creatures. The tigress bowed gracefully at the siblings before it turned its attention to the attackers and swiped at them in fury as the siblings made their escape. Unfortunately, but a mile down the rocky track, Zen fell and twisted his ankle, leaving Hoshi to carry him as far as she could.

Eventually, Hoshi became weary, and Zen begged for her to leave him and save herself. From across the sandy flats, a great ox appeared and stopped just before the siblings, bowing its head and lowering its front half as it sniffed and smelled the scent of the great sea turtle, tigress and monkey on the pair. Hoshi hauled her brother atop the great ox, then climbed on herself as the creature began its trek north across the stormy flats, following a great bird with a long beak across the desolate wastes. Two days passed and eventually, a city was sighted, and the great ox carried the siblings into its gates where they were met by the people of the City of Vestr.

When Hoshi and Zen met the people they were at first cautious, yet realised that the welcome offered by the humans there was not a hostile one. The people of Vestr offered the siblings shelter, food and warmth, and very quickly Hoshi and Zen learned the broken version of elvish that the people once spoke there. It was then that they finally told the tale of how they arrived at the City of Vestr. Many people scoffed at their far-fetched story and became frustrated, even angry that they continued to stick to their tale of animals coming to their rescue.

One day the Emperor of Vestr ordered the pair to offer proof. Unable to do so, he ridiculed Hoshi and Zen, only to be left shocked when a great crane descended from the skies, the same bird that the siblings had seen many times on their journey. To everyone's amazement, the crane began to speak, and through its words confirmed how it had followed the pair since their arrival in Vestr, and indeed witnessed each event that they had told the emperor and the people of Vestr about. With a witness to their tale and the fact that a talking crane had confirmed their story, the emperor had no choice but to believe the story. So Hoshi and Zen's tale became the spark that would see the inhabitants of Vestr place their faith in animal deities rather than the old gods of Eúnd Vald.



## MAINLAND - ABRAL (AHALAZA)

The scorpion represents the realm of the Ahalaza. Its people, despite their destructive past, lay in wait with defences at hand and a deadly sting in their tail should they be called to the defence of the Mainland or their fragmented people.



Ahalaza, or the City of the Sands as it was known by its people, was a vast and majestic realm founded in the Third Age and constructed in the depths of the desert of Abral. Ahalaza was once beautiful to behold, with its architecture taking a strong influence from that of the elves. Despite the extremely-hot climate with little rainfall, the desert of Abral was once surprisingly filled with many natural resources. The humans here learned to extract water from deep underground rivers, and plant and animal life could be found in the countless oases that were present in the realm. The people of sands enjoyed rich lifestyles, and the sultans of the realm ensured their people were free from famine, disease and other hardships commonly endured by less fortunate realms of the Mainland. The people of Ahalaza were devoutly religious and followed the teachings of Osirah and Senetsu, as well as the Seven although this would ultimately be their downfall.

The Ahalazarian people revered the Hemadri beastkin as living gods and goddesses, being the closest entities to the Seven that dwelled in the mortal realm. They pleaded with the Hemadri Council to live amongst them and teach them the wisdom of the gods; however, they modestly declined, refusing to leave their sacred City of Zan'zoula. In their anger, the Ahalaza responded by waging war upon the other realms of Neothera, believing that if they proved their strength, the divine would be forced to bestow power just as great as the beastkins' upon them.

During the Fourth Age; when the human realms waged war for dominance over land and power, the armies of Ahalaza were responsible for the destruction of three cities: Everblade, in the north (rebuilt as Gallows Rest), Stonefold, northwest of the Ruins of the Great City of Netherlye and Cinderforge in the Blazing Hills.

After destroying these cities and slaughtering many thousands, the Ahalaza finally met their match when the Arak'Char descended from the Morrdoun Mountains to crush Abral in the name of Arak'almundae, the God of Fire. Legend tells that Arak'almundae became so enraged at the Ahalazarians' lack of respect for him and the other gods and goddesses, assuming they would be gifted power by simply destroying everything in their name, he appeared to many of the Arak'Char in dreams and visions and willed them to destroy the City of Ahalaza and its people. As the years passed, those who survived the Arak'Char attacks realised that their forefathers' bloodthirsty pursuit of power had been a terrible mistake, and that to understand and feel the true power of the divine they must first battle and defeat their own demons rather than become the demons of others.

The descendants of the City of Ahalaza remain in Abral to this day and still bear the shame of their ancestors, refusing to leave the desert should they be slaughtered by those bearing grudges of years long passed. Whilst they know that what their ancestors did was unforgivable, they hold hope that their people will one day be able to redeem themselves by assisting the realms of Neothera in some shape or form.

The few Ahalazarians that remain in Abral live amongst the ruins or caves or small settlements dotted throughout the realm. The vast majority live in ruins at the centre of what was once the City of Ahalaza. Sareem is a massive crater in the desert sands, surrounded by cactus and palm trees, at the centre of the crater spans a large body of water that is connected to a series of underground caverns that sustains the settlements which surround it. Hundreds of tents and shanties make up the bulk of the settlements, with many small sandstone structures interspersed between.

Sareem is not a scratch on the former City of Ahalaza, and the people of Sareem have decided to remain here in these conditions through their own choice, believing that their ancestors' past mistakes should be accounted for. The Ahalazar currently await a sign from the gods that their people should attempt to reach out and assist the realms of Neothera to rectify their ancestors' mistakes. No one is entirely sure of what form the sign will take, however, all Ahalazarians are certain that when the time comes, they will know this sign to be the beginning of their realm's rise to glory. This will also mark an end to the suffering they feel they must endure to account for the bloodshed caused by their ancestors.



## MAINLAND - ANDORE

A sun with seven points represents the Seven and Orsirah, the God of the Sun. The teardrop represents the blood of all divine beings, with the half-moon representing Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon. The crest of Andore shows a unison of the elements and represents the power of the gods and goddesses that runs through the veins of all divine beings.



Andore is a rugged and wild island that lies off the north-west coast of the Mainland, and until recent years was rarely visited, due to it being inhabited by a religious order that wanted very little to do with the outside world. The Grey Cloaks, pacifists that worship Osirah and Senetsu, as well as the Seven, had occupied Andore since the Fourth Age, and it wasn't until the year 2390 of the Fifth Age that they agreed to share their island home with outsiders whom they considered deserving of living alongside.

At the heart of Andore are the twin towns of Sanctuary and Solace. Sanctuary lies within a protective dome of energy which only allows those of divine blood to enter, and others must enter through the gate which has to be held open by one of divine blood. Although there is space inside for everyone, most of those not of divine blood who have chosen to join Andore live and work in the Town of Solace, originally built and occupied by the Grey Cloaks.

Brother Gabriel, considered the most devout member of the Grey Cloaks, oversees the running of the Town of Solace, and ensures anyone who seeks refuge on the island is given food, water, jobs and roofs over their heads. These things, of course, are only provided should they agree to live peaceful lives according to the teachings of the gods and goddesses, and only take up arms as a last resort to defend Andore against any threats that may befall it.

The leader of the Town of Sanctuary, until her retirement was the Divine Luminary, Minuialwen Vanya, an elf chosen by Soi, a piskie demi-Goddess that sacrificed herself to close a rift leading to Terminarium that King Venstrim ripped open at the Caddington Estate in 2391 of the Fifth Age. Andore is now ruled by a new Divine Luminary, Sangris, piskie demi-God and brother of Soi. Carrying on his sister's wishes, Sangris ensures anyone of divine blood is allowed to make homes for themselves in Andore. Although his joyful outlook has darkened somewhat in recent years, he and his closest followers continue to recruit for Andore.

Sangris is responsible for overseeing the safety of the people of Andore. Following a controversial choice made by the Governor Philippe Marsell in the year 2392 to harvest the blood of the divine to produce a cure for the Plague of Undeath, he is considered an enemy of the realm by the L'Enarousse following a revenge assault he carried out against a group of their soldiers. After the harvest became public knowledge, Marsell admitted the claims; however, he advised that the late Bastian Hanstetz was to blame for encouraging the culling of the divine, where other methods could have been researched and implemented instead of acts of violence.

Sangris is extremely powerful, and some say that losing his sister, Soi has caused him to become jaded and malicious, often using his powers to extract vile punishments on those who take advantage of beings with divine blood. That said, he is considered a gallant protector of Andore, and when not recruiting other divines in the various realms of the world, he can be found at the Town of Sanctuary, teaching those with divine blood how to harness and master their powers.

It should be noted that the Tutela Syndicate have been refused access to operate in this realm under strict refusal by the Grey Cloaks. Crime rarely occurs on the island due to the peaceful nature of its inhabitants, and Brother Gabriel considers the trappings of money and the apparent corrupt attitudes of the Tutela Syndicate something that would only lead to bad things occurring in the peaceful island realm.





## MAINLAND - BROTHERHOOD OF THE RED WOLF

The crest of the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf shows a snarling wolf, cunning, vicious and unforgiving - a pack animal that looks after its own and hunts alone or as a family with a goal of survival and domination of the areas they control.



The Brotherhood of the Red Wolf once occupied the Redveil Mountains in the north of the Mainland. They have posed the biggest threat to the world of Neothera since the demonic Nightmares eradicated almost all of the houses of the elves during the Second Age. Although their reign was short, the impact they had upon the world is still felt today. Echoes of their actions resonate throughout the realms of Neothera like the toll of ominous bells that warned of a tide of darkness that threatened every creature in the known world.

The Brotherhood was formed in the year 2369, the dawn of the Fifth Age, which directly followed the destruction of the Great City of Netherlye. King Morgan, the eldest son of Queen Maib Hanstез, who ruled over Netherlye until her death in the year 2367, led his followers away from the ruined city to seek refuge in the mountains. Knowing that he and his followers were wanted for crimes against the Mainland following the attempt he and his two brothers, Bastian and Salvador made to forcefully bring the realms under their control, Morgan rallied anyone that had ties to the City Netherlye to his army and built upon his forces until they were ready to launch further assaults. The name Morgan gave to his cause originated from a gift that was given to him by his mother, presented to the queen as a tribute to her son by the late Lord Brosden Searle of the Caddington Estate on her visit to the location in the year 2367.

A large ruby carved into the shape of a wolf's head found its way into his possession following his mother's death that occurred somewhere in the Caddington Estate. As the last gift his mother gave to him, Morgan adopted the wolf as a symbol of his army, believing the red hues of the ruby to represent the spilt blood of all those that would oppose him and his late-mothers rule.

Building upon the power of his army for many years, King Morgan Hanstез eventually ordered his forces to assault the Mainland in the year 2390 of the Fifth Age. The attacks came swiftly and with immense-force. They unleashed new horrors upon the world in the form of mutants; genetically-engineered super soldiers that crushed all in their path, made by scientists that fused magic and genetics into ungodly-forms. The realms of the Mainland suffered many losses as Morgan's forces slowly chipped away at their defences, also using the newly discovered Plague of Undeath to his advantage as it swept throughout the lands as an unstoppable wave of death. Morgan's goal was simply to seek revenge against the realms that refused to offer the Great City of Netherlye aid. Due to their lack of assistance, famines and countless deaths occurred as a result of the magic-dependant citizens exhausting all resources the city had to construct gargantuan towers that would empower their people with the very essence of magic itself.

Under Morgan's rule, any non-human species were declared abominations, and the soldiers of the Brotherhood were ordered to cull them. To Morgan, non-human races were considered impure hybrids that had no place in a world where the human species held the most power. It is estimated that many thousands of non-humans were slain at the hands of the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf. Morgan underestimated the will of the people of the Mainland and was slain shortly after his attacks began. However, his brother Bastian assumed control of his army, only to be forced out of power by Salvador. The youngest sibling, under the guise of Commander Nerrin, pledged his allegiance to the Nightmares, slowly drawing the demons back into the world of Neothera to aid his assaults. Salvador, under the guise of Commander Nerrin, continued to raid and plunder the Mainland with the aid of the demonic forces, intent on destroying it so that he could sit amongst the Nightmares as a human lord of the demons.

Morgan's order to slay any non-human races was revoked by Nerrin, and he declared that non-human species were allowed to join the ranks of the Brotherhood. Many speculate that this sudden change of opinion was made to bolster the ranks of the Brotherhood because the numbers of humans willing to rally to its cause were slowly dwindling.



Fortunately, Salvador's rule was short, and he was slain by his estranged father. Nial Stormbringer, who despite holding the title of general within the ranks of the army of the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf, killed his last remaining son so that the reign of the Brotherhood would come to an end.

Sadly, Nial's sacrifice was not enough to halt the wave of destruction his son had put into place. As the armies of the realms of the Mainland faced off against the Brotherhood in a bloody finale, the Nightmares abandoned Salvador's forces, finding a new alliance with twisted goblins that sought to claim vengeance against the surface-dwellers that oppressed the species for so many ages. The realms of the Mainland eventually crushed the Brotherhood forces as the Nightmares disappeared from the battlefield. Instead, the demons came to the aid of a goblin army, led by Redellium Rahoolium, an immensely powerful goblin shaman. They crushed the last great elven city - Faradome, and then the Crystal City of Vulpera. The forces of the Brotherhood had been betrayed by the Nightmares, and their new alliance with Redellium's goblin army has led to half of the Mainland burning in corrupted flames.





## MAINLAND - GOGGY MANTON

Baowbouissa, the Goddess in the Lake, is depicted as the crest of the realm of Goggy Manton. The ancient, plesiosaur-like creature that birthed the species of murklings, and is said to be a child of Sequilla, the Goddess of Water, was devoutly worshipped by the inhabitants of the Town of Goggy Manton.



Sightings of the humanoid species known as murklings have dated as far back as the middle of the Second Age of Neothera when the creatures made their home in the rainiest region of the Mainland known as Goggy Manton. Murklings are renowned for being an elusive and peaceful, semi-aquatic race, and generally prefer to stay within the boundaries of their realm for fear of their skin drying out if they do not have regular access to water. As such, little is known about the town built in Goggy Manton, other than it being a sanctuary to the murklings, who until her recent death, devoted every waking hour of their existence to tending to Baowbouissa, the plesiosaur-like Goddess that birthed their species and lived in the expansive Loch Manton.

Goggy Manton is located in the west of the Mainland between the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest and the Far'dhoum forests and is filled with lush grassland, marshes, bogs, granite outcrops and dense and ancient woodlands. The rainfall here is often so heavy that the region is prone to flash floods, with large areas of land remaining underwater for many months at a time. Although these are perfect conditions for the race of murklings, it is not for other species, and travelling through this region is considered extremely dangerous. It is perhaps for this reason that the murklings have remained secluded for so long, with very few records of attacks taking place in their remote town, and no species other than their own occupying the lands here.

Another reason this realm remains so secluded is due to the species of wild beasts that call it home. Creatures such as chimaera, cockatrice, manticores and other territorial predators roam these untamed lands and have been the downfall of many brave or foolish adventurers that have entered these parts. However, to the murklings, these creatures are either hunted for food or tamed to aid their daily life and defence of the realm. It is not uncommon to hear stories of beasts attacking newcomers to the realm in such a way that they force explorers to flee, using tactics that no wild creature would naturally be able to execute. Sometimes eerie whistles accompany the assaults, perhaps as a signal or order made by murklings who might be controlling the actions of the creatures.

The large town located in Goggy Manton, which also shares the same name as the realm, is ancient and composed of granite-built dwellings no more than two storeys high. Klan-ed, a thick green moss, only found in this region covers all of the structures in the town and is consumed by all murklings who consider it a delicacy. This moss is usually harvested once a week and grows quickly enough so that it provides the inhabitants of the town with a near-unending food source. Although murklings consume this moss with nearly every meal, they also rely on hunting to add variety and additional minerals to their diet.

The realm of Goggy Manton is governed by the Order of Maesters, five wise, nameless murklings who oversee the daily running of the town and the well-being of its inhabitants. Until recently, the Maesters also oversaw the worship of Baowbouissa and the regular offerings of sustenance that were laid on the banks of Loch Manton for her to consume. Following her death, the Maesters have turned to the outside world for answers as to her passing, and have allowed murklings passage to the rest of the world should they be brave enough to venture outside of the safety of the lands that sustain them.

In terms of progression, the Town of Goggy Manton is humble, with its inhabitants relying on manual labour and the careful use of magic to aid daily life. Wealth and luxuries are not something that the Order of Maesters have ever endorsed or encouraged, and as such all murklings who reside in Goggy Manton seek only to live humble lives. Technology is shunned by the murklings, and they have concluded that pollution is a by-product of its creation and use. All murklings are raised with the belief that technology is the work of maleficent forces that would destroy nature and bring imbalance to the world, and following Baowbouissa's death due to pollutants found in Loch Manton, this belief has only been reinforced. If pollution is not going to go away, perhaps there is a way to neutralise it or even stop the construction and use of technology that is damaging nature.



## MAINLAND - MANTORA (CITY OF ESCALLON)

The favoured animal of the royal family is the peacock which they state represents wholeness, dignity, beauty, recognition, self-assurance and pride. Their banner is deep purple, with a golden trim and peacock with feathers on display.



The realm of Mantora, an archipelago consisting of three islands, can be found approximately eighty miles off the southwest coast of the Mainland. Long and dry summers and humid, rainy winters are common here, and infrequent rain showers during spring and autumn months follow when the winds blow south from the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest. Humans are the chief inhabitants of this realm, along with beastkin and urka who journeyed here under the promise of rich and easy lifestyles. These three populations greatly outnumber the amount of elves, piskies and goblins that also live here. There is currently no wight, gnome, dragonkin or vulperan presence in Mantora, save for a few visitors or traders from the Southern Realms or the Mainland. It is in this realm that the City of Escallan can be found.

The City of Escallan was founded in the Fourth Age when L'Enaroussian citizens decided to flee the Mainland to escape the potential threat of war with the Ahalaza. The settlers from the Mainland had known of the archipelago for some time, yet the lands had never been claimed, only visited and farmed for the resources that could be found there. Alejandro Pavoreal, a wealthy merchant who led a fleet of ships to Mantora with the blessing of the L'Enaroussian government, established a city that could be used by the people of Jerrod's Front as a retreat should the grand city ever fall. Fortunately, Jerrod's Front was not targeted by the Ahalaza, and the realm of Mantora was left to flourish under Alejandro's rule.



Assuming rulership over Mantora due to the sheer amount of wealth he was able to pour into his endeavour, Alejandro Pavoreal declared himself King of the realm and the city that was swiftly built and became known as Escallon. The three islands became heavily fortified in a very short amount of time, with resources drawn from the island to make its tall, stone-built walls, fortified with countless cannons almost impenetrable. Rulership of Mantora would be passed through the generations of Alejandro Pavoreal's bloodline, with the current rulers being King Carlos and Queen Maria Pavoraeal. Mantora is considered the last stronghold of the L'Enarousse, a location its citizens can fall back to should Jerrod's Front ever fall. Mantora rarely sees large-scale combat, save for regular naval skirmishes that occur between Black Hammer Bay as goods are transported between the ports of Jerrod's Front and Mantora. Battles with dangerous, sea-dwelling creatures that frequent the south coast of the Mainland also happen occasionally. Mantora is considered one of the most prosperous and safest realms to live in all of the Mainland.

The realm of Mantora is extremely well-guarded, and many raiding parties from Black Hammer Bay have been completely destroyed or forced to retreat due to the ferocity of the defenders of the realm. The Escallon prefer black powder and physical combat prowess over magic, although the use of magic is not uncommon amongst their people. Despite the city never being breached in an attack, the Escallon military (both land and naval) is in fine shape, and is believed to be on par, or perhaps more competent than that of Jerrod's Front. Those that call the City of Escallon home are welcomed into a luxurious way of life, where famine and disease is the stuff of fiction. Escallon welcomes the presence of the Tutela Syndicate in their realm; although crime is rare due to the comfortable lifestyles most of their citizens live. Even farmers, who might earn a peasant's wage upon the Mainland, are considered respectable people who are regularly granted places amongst gatherings organised by the royals.



## MAINLAND - (RUINS OF) THE CITY OF FARADOME (AMICITA)

Stars that represent the three races of the Amicita (elves, piskies and faeries) are joined by a single path that crosses a large black and white circle. The circle of equal halves represents the balance of the world - light and darkness and is supported by seven glowing orbs that represent the Seven.



The Amicita was an alliance formed and based in the City of Faradome in the east of the Mainland and consisted of three non-human races; the elves, piskies, and faeries. Faradome was the last great stronghold of the elves that had remained standing and occupied since the Second Age of Neothera despite many attempts to sack it, and until recently was the eldest city in the Mainland.

Those who were lucky enough to have seen Faradome from a distance all tell of a translucent purple dome that covered the city, this dome was more visible on clear, sunny days and shimmered as the sunlight reflected onto it. The dome that covered the city prevented those with ill-intent from passing through it, halting them as if they had walked into a wall of impenetrable glass. The shield itself was woven by the ancient elves after the conflict with the Nightmares during the Demon War of the Second Age and was said to be powered by an arcane relic. The barrier kept Faradome safe for thousands of years; however, there was one major flaw in its design.

In the year 2393 of the Fifth Age, Faradome was destroyed by the return of the demonic Nightmares, with the assistance of many thousands of goblin allies rallied under the banner of the green-skin War Chief, Redellium Rahoolium.

Whilst the two armies were unable to breach the city through the impenetrable barrier above ground, the goblins tunnelled below the city, and used a highly explosive substance called Firewater to blast their way to the surface. The armies of the goblins and Nightmares swarmed upon the city through these tunnels, deactivated the barrier and proceeded to raise Faradome to the ground. Less than a quarter of the population of Faradome survived the attack and fled to Jerrod's Front to seek refuge as the demonic fires began to spread and ravage the lands beyond the doomed city.

Before the city was destroyed, it was considered a wonder and beauty to behold, and none of the other realms have ever been able to reproduce such eye-catching buildings that stood the test of time. The city itself was built from the inside outwards, and the boundaries stretched to form a near-perfect circle. The neatly tiled roofs in Faradome were all painted a rich-blue, where the pigment for the paint was derived from the Ilyami flower, a plant that was native to the beautiful Garden of Zanthen.

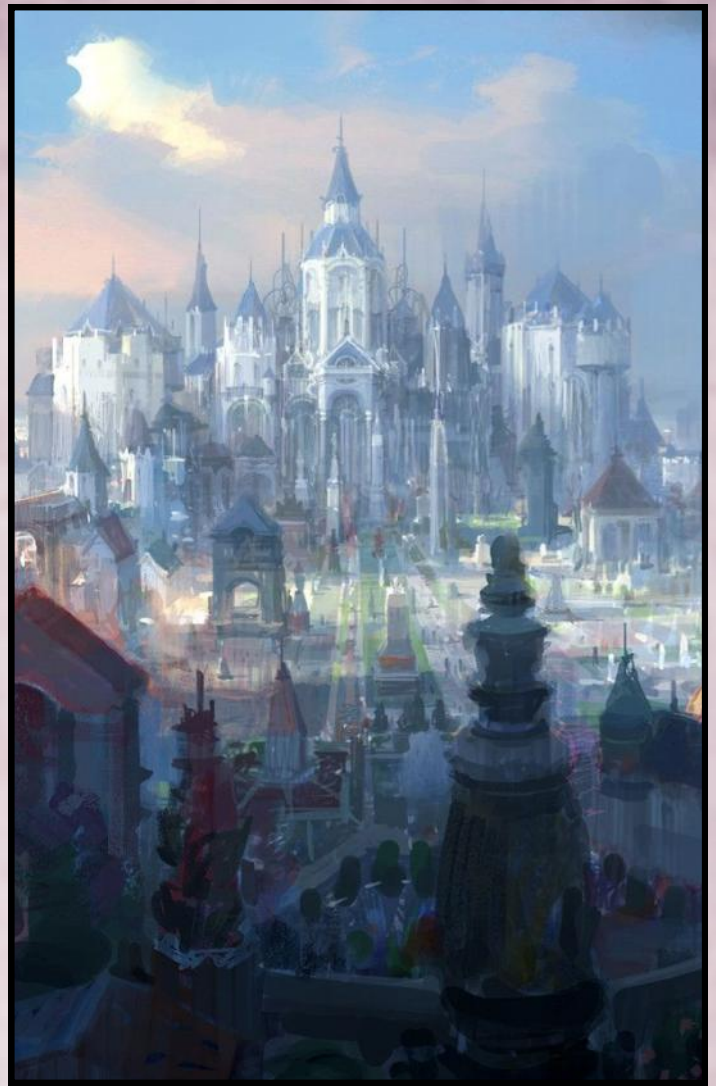
The buildings in Faradome were a light-ochre colour and structures of importance were covered in intricate designs that were etched into the plaster before it dried. The smell of flowers on a warm summer evening was always present when walking the astonishingly clean, cobbled streets of the city. Faradome contained all the amenities you would expect to find in a city of its enormous size, traders, markets, libraries, colleges, schools of magic and so on. However, technology was as rare here as the use of magic is in Blightfoot Ridge. Competition in trade was frowned upon in Faradome as the inhabitants of this city knew they must work together to ensure the survival of their realm. There were no impoverished areas of the city, and those who happened to fall on hard times were provided with food, clothing, shelter and supplies by the Elder Council.

Faradome used to pride itself over its sense of community and held its head high above the human realms, which once followed their teachings but eventually became greedy and materialistic. The city was split into four distinct districts, each as diverse as the last: The Elven Quarter - largely inhabited by elves and contained dwellings dating back to the Second Age. The Piskie Quarter - home to the many piskies that occupied Faradome, it was vibrant, loud and the life and soul of a party, no matter what time of day you visited. The Faerie Quarter - relatively small compared to the other districts and housed the five hundred-odd faeries that sought shelter in Faradome. This area backed onto the expansive Garden of Zanthen which stretched for many miles towards the Redemption Woods in the east. The Trade Quarter was always bustling with citizens at all hours of the day and boasted a wealth of shops, stalls and exotic, often magical goods.



Faradome once housed the largest temple of worship in the Mainland and stood as a testament to each of the Seven - rather than being dedicated to a single particular deity. Situated in the centre of the city, the temple was originally built as a communal dwelling by the first elves to inhabit Faradome. Over time it continued to be built upon until seven large halls extended from a massive domed structure in the centre that was believed to be where the arcane relic was held that powered the barrier. Each of the halls was dedicated to one of the Seven and were originally built by elves who were devoted to a specific element. It was here that members of the Amicita turned for guidance and comfort in times of strife, or simply to embrace the energy of the gods.

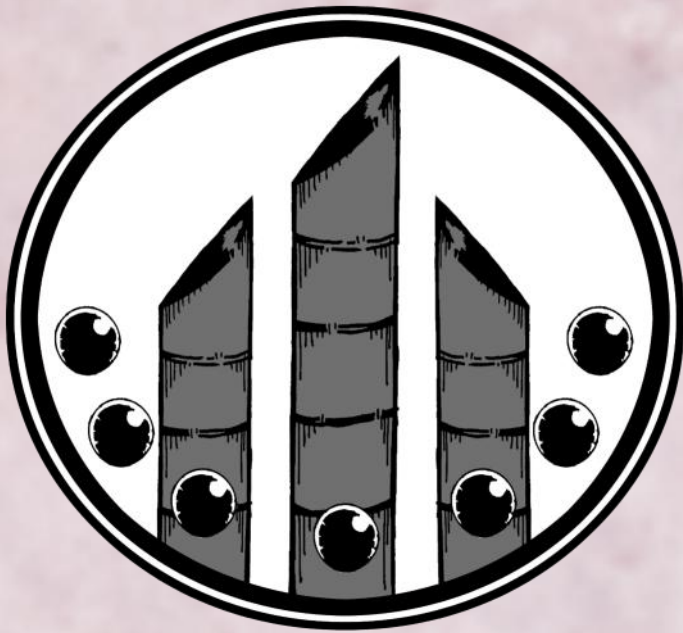
The upper levels of the domed structure housed ancient groups of elves, some of whom had lived since the dawn of their species. It was also home to the Elder Council, a group of elders and farseers who were said to be able to extract thoughts, feelings and memories from objects and creatures simply by touching them. This council, now assumed dead following the destruction of the city, was responsible for ensuring the safety of the Amicita and had a pearl of collective wisdom that was near godly. The five leaders of the council were known as Naitya the Protector, Idhren the Warrior, Kelvar the Wise, Kalben the Lawmaster and Azhara Lightborne, Queen of the Faeries whom recently arrived in Neothera to be with her people, but was slain by the Vampyre King Venstrim a few years before Faradome fell.





## MAINLAND - (RUINS OF) THE GREAT CITY OF NETHERLYE

Tall structures representing the towers dedicated to the three schools of magic; defensive, healing and offensive dominate the crest of Netherlye. Seven orbs sit below the towers that represent the elements attributed to the Seven. For the towers to sit above the representations of the Seven Elements, is to portray the dominance the people of Netherlye believe they held over all magic in the world.



The Great City of Netherlye was, until recently, the largest and most majestic human realm in the whole of the Mainland and spanned almost one hundred miles at its peak. Following their arrival in Neothera at the beginning of the Third Age, Netherlye was established by human refugees, and the city expanded quickly under the instruction of the elves. Due to its central location, Netherlye had easy access to resources and trade routes and was considered the most heavily populated realm, with the largest land-based military in the Mainland. Very rarely was Netherlye involved in a conflict with other realms; however, its rulers attempted to govern the control of the Mainland through sheer strength of numbers alone.

The rulership of Netherlye began with tribes of early humans that formed the realm, where leadership was attained through pure strength and cunning amongst the early humans. As the years passed the election of leaders came through votes by the tribespeople, until royalty was established, with a bloodline that began at the end of the Third Age, and ended in 2393 of the Fifth Age following Salvador Hanstез's death. Salvador was one of three sons born of Maib Hanstез, a direct descendant of Titus Hanstез, who ruled during the 1600s of the Fourth Age and was the first king to make the teaching of the magical arts compulsory to all citizens of age that lived within the city walls.

Following Titus' commandment, as the centuries passed, the people of this city became heavily reliant on the use of magic to fulfil even the most mundane of tasks, and the kings and queens that followed Titus are said to have been driven mad by its power.

Queen Maib Hanstез ordered the construction of three towers dedicated to the schools of magic, and some say as a show of wealth and power to all other realms of the Mainland. The towers were completed in 2372 of the Fourth Age, five years after Maib's death, and her three young sons, Morgan, Bastian and Salvador took control of the city. As the dependency of magic reached its peak, three factions formed, each led by one of Maib's sons, and this led to Netherlye falling into disarray as civil war broke out over which school held the most dominance in the city.

At the end of the Fourth Age, when the city ran out of resources Morgan Hanstез and his two younger brothers united the three factions. They prepared to march to war against the other realms of Neothera who had previously refused to assist these selfish and disgraced people. As the massive army prepared to march, the three towers suddenly collapsed into the ground, leaving three rifts where they once stood. What was left of the city was demolished as the towers collapsed, and all but a handful of the population were killed.

Since the destruction of the Netherlye, the land where it once stood has become an arid wasteland, untouched by the recent Burning of the Mainland. During the day, the intense heat of the sun burns down upon the Ruins of the city through cloudless skies. When night falls, the wind passes and is replaced by a bitter cold that freezes those unlucky enough to be without shelter or the warmth of a fire. Water is scarce and plant-life more so, the only creatures that can be found are rats, insects and roaches. Recently there have been sightings of survivors and bandits who live amongst the ruins, or in buildings that escaped the destruction, scavenging and seeking treasures that are buried under the rubble.





## MAINLAND - (RUINS OF) VULPERA: THE CRYSTAL CITY

An ever-watchful eye, offset with the sharp horns of demonic retribution protects the vulperan people from those who would deceive and betray them as their demonic masters once did.



As with all of the early human settlements, Vulpera reached city status after many centuries of growth. During the Third Age, when the vulperans began to realise the extent of their power, magic was used to construct many buildings in the city. Spiralling towers and elaborate, gothic-looking structures became a common sight and were all sparkling black or shades of blue and purple which intensified with age: This is how Vulpera gained its name - The Crystal City.

The forests that surrounded Vulpera were once green and lush, yet over time their colour began to fade. As the trunks of the trees grew hard and translucent and their leaves began to sparkle, their colour also turned to beautiful shades of blue and purple. This phenomenon is believed to be the result of highly concentrated levels of demonic essence in the area. Some may say it is fortunate that the Burning of the Mainland destroyed these eerily beautiful and well-guarded woodlands, lest such specimens, tainted by demons, fall into the wrong hands.

Vulpera was the second city to succumb to the wrath of the goblins and Nightmares as the Mainland began to burn in the year 2393 of the Fifth Age. The city fell in a matter of hours as the Nightmares rendered the vulperan people useless to defend themselves by tapping into the demonic blood the half-demons possessed. As with Faradome, less than a quarter of the population of the City of Vulpera made it out alive and fled to Springford and Jerrod's Front to seek whatever refuge they could find.

At its peak, the Crystal City contained all the amenities you would expect to find in a city of its size and stature, but for many centuries there were no temples dedicated to the Seven due to the devout and fearful worship of the Demon Lords, Lucasian, Besakia, Tohmesal, Asehia and Teiak. Schools of magic and combat were commonplace due to training for wars against the realms of the Mainland whilst under the command of the five Demon Lords, aggravated relations with the Arak'Char to the south, and for other potential dark purposes that were discovered by the elves at the beginning of the Fourth Age.

The crystal tower of Mizira was without a doubt the tallest structure in Vulpera and was home to the rulers of the Crystal City until their demise. The spectacular, gothic-looking tower was also built to house the ashes of deceased vulperans. It was said that until their remains were brought here, the spirits of the deceased could not be reborn into a new vulperan vessel and would become trapped in Limbo for all eternity.

The lower levels of the tower contained crystal vessels where the remains of the deceased were placed. The middle levels were rife with magical essence and a plethora of alien-looking crystal structures that harnessed demonic power. The top levels of the tower were once home to the five demonic leaders of the Crystal City until they eventually met their demise at the hands of the elves and their people whom they deceived.

Famed in Vulpera for a deep love of her people and her valiant efforts in fighting back the Demon Lords that once ruled over the Crystal City, Akyrah was chosen as a queen by her people. According to hearsay, in the latter part of the Fourth Age, Akyrah was assassinated during an Arak'Char raid upon the city, where their shaman used a powerful curse to drain the life from her body.

However, this was not the end of Akyrah, her people adored her and grieved for her loss until their tears were said to have turned to blood. To regain their lost queen, she was resurrected as a Lahamia with assistance from the Frozen North. The circumstances surrounding the resurrection are vague, and some say purposely so, for fear of the real truth behind her reanimation being devastating to the vulperan people.

Akyrah kept most of her former personality traits upon resurrecting, and some say that an infinite sadness could be felt by those who stared deep into her eyes. Today the whereabouts of Akyrah and her great-grandchildren are unknown, but according to eyewitnesses they escaped the destruction of the city during the burning and fled west. In recent years no further sightings have been observed of the Queen of the Vulperans.



# RELIGION

## DIVINE & LEGENDARY FIGURES

The belief in and worship of divine figures, forces and even legendary, creatures, heroes or heroines is commonplace in the world of Neothera and even beyond. It is a subject that affects everyone in one form or another, regardless of if they deny the existence of such beings or higher powers. There are many recognised deities in the known universe, some considered gods or goddesses, others created by divine entities, and those who have achieved legendary status through notable acts that have echoed through the ages.

Over the following pages, we will take a look at the most well-known of these beings, those commonly worshipped by the inhabitants of the world of Neothera, Nethrekka and Lyshanduir (Terminarium). It should be noted that despite a wealth of information being provided about the divine figures of the universe, to prevent restrictions that would limit our participants role-play, unless specifically mentioned, how a person offers a divine entity acknowledgement from a role-play perspective has been left purposely loose and open to allow participants the freedom to create and explore rituals, ceremonies and prayers in a way they see fit.





## ARAK'ALMUNDAE, GOD OF FIRE (THE SEVEN)

**ELEMENT:** Fire

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Cleansing / Comfort / Home and Hearth / Impulsiveness / Passion / War / Wrath

**WORSHIPERS:** Frozen North / Mainland

Arak'almundae is worshipped throughout the world of Neothera as the God of Fire and is without a doubt the most volatile of all the Seven. Today, Arak'almundae is believed by some to be the only God who remains on the mortal plain of Neothera and did not return to the Ethereal Realm with his six siblings Glacilla, Haman'li, Sequilla, Signis, Spiria and Terralapis after the War of the Gods. This is a belief that is largely upheld by the Arak'Char, however, the Elves of Faradome also speak of this being true. Whilst fire is seen as a destructive force, it is also one that cleanses and offers warmth in the cold, light in the dark and comfort in trying times.

Arak'almundae is often depicted in human form as being a large, muscular male with a long red beard and hair woven into plaits. His ears are elf-like, and his eyes burn with fire. He is clad in armour made from stone with veins of lava crackling over the surface. He also wields a gigantic hammer cast from rock.

Arak'almundae walked among the first elves and worked with many of them to build their cities. The God of home and hearth, of cleansing and wrath, taught them all that he knew. The first elven settlements spread across the land, coming into contact with the Na'tohram Gheneris, the great rainforest of Haman'li. During the War of the Gods, Haman'li fought to drive this encroachment back from his lands and the battles between these two gods destroyed much of what both had built.

During the war, a great winter settled in. Arak'almundae gathered all of his remaining followers together to begin building one great city - and he would live amongst the Elves of Fire in House Thard'or in the north of the Mainland and keep the winter at bay. After the great winter, the elves under Arak'almundae's command began to expand once again. New settlements were established, and groups of elves set out to explore and find new resources for their growing civilisation, with some elves settling at the edge of the Na'tohram Gheneris. The rainforest was rich in game and forage, and the settlements there became permanent, cutting down trees to build houses. One day a group of refugees came to the City of Thard'or, they were all that was left of the rainforest settlements. Giant beasts, led by a God cloaked in green, had destroyed their houses and killed many of their people. Arak'almundae gathered his armies and set out to destroy this threat to his people.

The God of Fire led an army of elves to face Haman'li and his savage, giant beasts in the Na'tohram Gheneris. During the battle, a great blizzard suddenly separated Arak'almundae from his followers; Galacilla, the Goddess of Ice had entered the fray. In the form of a terrible white dragon Galacilla set upon Arak'almundae. Unable to defend himself from both Haman'li and Galacilla, Arak'almundae was pushed back to the City of Thard'or.

As the War of the Gods continued across the various continents of Neothera, Arak'almundae and the Elves of Fire found themselves pushed to the southeast of the Mainland as battles between the seven siblings continued to rage on. The upheaval of the lands in the southeast resulted in the creation of the Morrdoun Mountains as Arak'almundae dug his heels deep into the soil whilst defending his people. When the Seven eventually grew tired of constant battle, Arak'almundae resisted with all his might the call of his siblings and parents, Osirah and Senetsu coaxing them back to the Ethereal Realm.

Driven into a terrible rage, he dug himself deep into the ground where the Morrdoun Mountains now lay. Despite his sibling's near successful attempts to pull him from the earth, Arak'almundae resisted, drawing the earth up around him and creating the largest volcano in the known world - Thool'mundae. Fire spewed from the Morrdoun Mountains and Arak'almundae slipped away from his siblings and hid away to brood and grieve, hoping one day they would return to Neothera so that he may continue the abruptly ended War of the Gods. Read more about Arak'almundae and the Fire Element on *page 210*.





## BAOWBOUISSA, GODDESS IN THE LAKE

**ELEMENT:** Nature / Water

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Creation / Love / Sustainability / Unity

**WORSHIPERS:** Murklings of Goggy Manton (Mainland)

Baowbouissa is the Goddess of the race of murklings who reside in the Town of Goggy Manton in the west of Mainland Neothera. She was recognised as their creator and protector and worshipped daily until her sudden death on the 26th September in the year 2392 of the Fifth Age, apparently due to pollution caused by the factories of the nearby City of Blightfoot Ridge and demonic corruption present in the waters of Loch Manton.

Baowbouissa was a great plesiosaur with glistening golden skin, and eyes as black as the void, from her nose to the tip of her tail she measured around twenty metres in length. Being semi-aquatic she was able to raise her long neck above the waters and often swam to the banks of the loch, yet she held such love for the waters that she never ventured further than a few metres away from it.

Murkling seers who were lucky enough to be able to communicate with Baowbouissa learned that she was created by Sequilla, the Goddess of Water sometime in the Second Age. Wanting children of her own, Baowbouissa asked Sequilla to grant her one wish, and she eventually gave birth to the first semi-aquatic brood of murklings on the banks of the enormous Loch Manton. However, being born half of the humanoid Goddess Sequilla, Baowbouissa's children were human in appearance.

As time passed her brood grew curious about what lay beyond the banks of the loch, and ventured from the watery depths, deciding to settle on both the land and in the water.

The species of murklings grew in numbers as they reproduced, yet they never strayed farther than a few miles from Loch Manton due to the fear of their skin drying out, resulting in death. The murklings loved and worshipped Baowbouissa and every day would leave offerings of sheep, pigs and cattle on the banks of the loch as tribute and food for their creator.

Each evening at sunset until her death the majestic Goddess in the loch would rise from the waters to greet her children as they lay their offerings on the bank. She would sing to them, not songs with words, but melodious deep tones that echoed throughout the nearby forests and the Town of Goggy Manton.

To the Murklings, Baowbouissa was a symbol of creation, nurturing, unity and love, and her existence alone was proof of these aspects. Each day was a holy day in the murkling calendar where Baowbouissa's children learnt much of life and spirituality by the steady flow of water in the loch and their humble existence in their sleepy town.

Since Baowbouissa's death, a great sadness has fallen upon the Town of Goggy Manton, but the murklings stand strong - still offering praise and thanks to the Goddess in the Lake for the gift of life she bestowed on their race.





## BOOLAE

**ELEMENT:** Earth

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Charity / Fortitude / Perseverance / Strength

**WORSHIPERS:** Talanor (Mainland) / Vestr (Eúnd Vald)

The steady oxen, Boolae is a deity worshipped by the people of the City of Vestr in the realm of Vesthold in Eúnd Vald. In Vestr legend, Boolae carried Hoshi and Zen (the siblings of prophecy) to the safety of the City of Vestr when they became injured and too weak to continue their journey. Boolae is prayed to by many who would wish their mental and physical burdens to be carried more easily.

A symbol of charity, strength and perseverance in hard times, and the fortitude to carry oneself steadily to their goal. Prayers are also sent to Boolae for safe travels when embarking on journeys across the land. The holy day, Festival of the Honour of Five Animals includes the worship of the deity, Boolae and you can read more about this holy day on *page 199*. Boolae also features in the Tale of Hoshi and Zen, read about this on *page 169*.

## CHILEN

**ELEMENT:** Air

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Companionship / Generosity / Mischief

**WORSHIPERS:** Children and Parents of Children (Mainland)

The mischievous Chilen is an Air Elemental that holds a special place in the hearts of the children of Neothera. The spritely and selfless creature roamed the Mainland during the Fourth Age, often only revealing herself to children who were lost, upset, lonely, or if she felt particularly playful and wished to join in the games played by groups of youngsters.

According to children that saw her, she took the form of a young, freckle-faced woman with long white hair, wearing a long silvery, flowing dress. Being an elemental, Chilen was unable to bear offspring of her own, and it is thought that this is the reason she cherished children and wished only to bring them joy.

The sightings of Chilen began to increase as she whisked her way from village to town and town to city, eventually reaching a peak when one morning every child in the Mainland woke up to find she had left a gift for them nearby whilst they slept.

Despite the children being overjoyed, it became apparent that the playful Chilen had taken the gifts from every toy store in the Mainland, stripping their shelves bare, much to the anger of the shop owners.

From that day forward, Chilen's Day was celebrated annually as a chance for the children of the wartorn Mainland to have at least one day a year where they could forget their troubles and receive a special gift from their loved ones. As quickly as Chilen appeared, she also disappeared, and the original Chilen's Day was the final time she graced the Mainland with her presence. Read more about Chilen in the festival known as Chilen's Day on *page 199*.

## CHIMCHEE

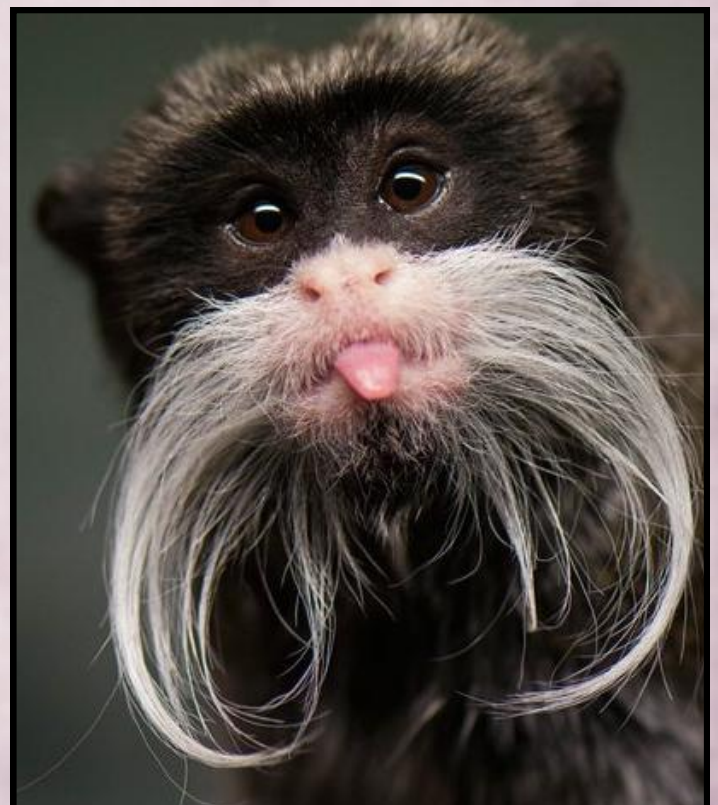
**ELEMENT:** Fire

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Agility / Deceit / Greed / Trickery

**WORSHIPERS:** Talanor (Mainland) / Vestr (Eúnd Vald)

The sly monkey, Chimchee is a deity worshipped by the people of the City of Vestr in the realm of Vesthold in Eúnd Vald. In Vestr legend, Chimchee was seen as a trickster and a burden to Hoshi and Zen (the siblings of prophecy) as they made their way across the realm of Vesthold. Prayed to by those about to embark on clandestine or nefarious business, Chimchee is also seen as a bad omen by some. The monkey deity is also seen as an acrobat and a swindler.

Children are told tales of how doing bad deeds results in meeting a sticky end in such actions - and therefore the deity is considered a teacher of sorts. The holy day, Festival of the Honour of Five Animals includes the worship of the deity Chimchee, and you can read more about this holy day on *page 199*. Chimchee also features in the Tale of Hoshi and Zen, read about this on *page 169*.





## CRAETARA

**ELEMENT:** Air

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Guardianship / Persistence / Truth / Wisdom

**WORSHIPERS:** Talanor (Mainland) / Vestr (Eúnd Vald)

The wise crane, Craetara is a deity worshipped by the people of the City of Vestr in the realm of Vesthold in Eúnd Vald. In Vestr legend, Craetara guided Hoshi and Zen (the siblings of prophecy) towards the City of Vestr. As a talking animal, he also spoke to the people of the city, proving that the sibling's tale was indeed true.

Craetara is a symbol of the truth, that despite others not believing you - the truth will always come out in the end. Seen as a guardian that watches over those in times of strife, and one that unites all deities prayed to, to come to one's aid. Craetara is also a symbol of wisdom, that upon the wings of integrity if one pursues their goals with a kind heart, they shall, in the end, be rewarded. The holy day, Festival of the Honour of Five Animals includes the worship of the deity, Craetara and you can read more about this holy day on *page 199*. Craetara also features in the Tale of Hoshi and Zen, read about this on *page 169*.

## DRAGON LORDS: ANDLAT, ERAVOR & TYAMAT

**ELEMENT:** Air / Arcane (rare) / Earth / Fire / Ice / Lightning / Nature / Water

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Protection / Tenacity / Wisdom / Wrath

**WORSHIPERS:** Dragonkin of Vesthold (Eúnd Vald) / Talanor (Mainland)

The Western Realms of Eúnd Vald was said to be born from the remnants of a great battle between the God Hvikr and the Dragon Lord, Andlat. Since the dawn of time, the great dragon held governance over the empty void known as Gynuug. Hvikr wrapped his mighty hands around Andlat's neck, slaying him and using the great dragon's remains to create the world; however, the dragon bloodline did not end there, for Andlat had a son.

Eravor, son of Andlat, sought revenge upon Hvikr for the death of his father. According to the dragonkin of the Ashan Mountains in Vesthold, he snapped Hvikr and his wife Stranjas necks shortly after they had created the race of humans. Feeling the sons and daughters of Hvikr and Stranja should not be punished for their father's sins, Eravor left them be, happy in the knowledge that he had avenged his father's death, but not before putting the fear of the dragon into the humans in a bid to ensure he could sleep well, undisturbed, beneath the Ashan Mountains in the south of Vesthold, until a time came that a great dragon was once again needed in Eúnd Vald.

At the beginning of the Third Age, Eravor awakened from his slumber, and as he did, the race of the dragonkin was born in his likeness - humans bearing the features of the great dragon, yet aligned to underlying elements such as nature, fire, water, ice, lightning, air and earth, all aspects of Eravor's power and potential. Through this majestic transformation, the humans that became dragonkin worshipped Eravor as a living God.

Thousands of years ago, as the small, human-orientated City of Vestr gained strength and grew in power and size, so did the followers of Eravor, still located within the Ashan Mountains to the south of the Isle of Vesthold. It was when Eravor left to travel the world, wishing to see more of it, that trouble began to brew. The great seers of the dragonkin immediately sensed something was wrong, that Eravor was dead, and gathered their people to protect his only egg. It was at this point they realised the egg was missing and assumed that thieves from Vestr were the culprits.



All that occupied the minds of the dragonkin were retrieving the egg, and relentlessly punishing those that dared to steal from Eravor's brood. Eravor was a God in their eyes, and this act of theft of their new, unborn-God was to be punished severely. Despite attempting to reason with the dragonkin, the assaults on Vestr continued. War raged between the humans of Vestr and the Sheik'ah dragonkin of the Ashan Mountains. So guarded became the cities of the two realms that they were almost impenetrable to the opposing sides.

The vast and barren flatlands that laid between Vestr to the north, and the Ashan Mountains to the south, would become the battleground for ages of conflict between the two sides, it's pale sands bathed in the blood of dragonkin and humans alike - earning its name, the Blood Flats, as a result. It seemed the war was not so much about reclaiming the egg but punishing each other for the violence inflicted through ages of conflict, known to both sides as "The Great Angst".



As ages passed and the war continued, there seemed to be no end in sight for this conflict; however, in the year 2394 of the Fifth Age of Neothera, the prize was reclaimed by the dragonkin after it was revealed the Beors of Estan were responsible for stealing Eravor's egg all those years ago. The egg would hatch and Eravor's son, Tyamat was born. From that day forward, the war ended in Vesthold as the dragonkin returned to the Ashan Mountains with their new God.

All dragons are sacred to the Dragonkin of the Ashan Mountains and they are worshipped as the parental figures of the species, tenacious scaled deities that bring wrath upon their enemies by harnessing the power of the elements and shredding even the most fortified cities to pieces using their powerful teeth and claws.

To the dragonkin, dragons represent strength, wrath, protection and perseverance, alongside wisdom justly acquired through being present since the dawn of time itself and enduring whatever the ages of the world present to them. Those who follow the ways of the dragons aspire to these aspects and also believe that the great lizards governed the elements, wielding them majestically to their will, remaining in the world rather than abandoning it as the Seven once did. Dragonkin always show the utmost respect when the topic of dragons is raised in any form, and to speak ill of a dragon is an invitation to a fight.

## GLACILLA, GODDESS OF ICE (THE SEVEN)

**ELEMENT:** Ice

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Changing of the Seasons / Imperturbable / Preservation / Reflective / Thoughtfulness

**WORSHIPERS:** Frozen North / Mainland

Glacilla, the Goddess of Ice, or Mother of Winter as she is also known, is celebrated by the inhabitants of Neothera as the bringer of the changes of the seasons. Glacilla is the twin sister of Sequilla, and whilst Sequilla's water provides us with an abundant flow of spiritual knowledge, Glacilla's essence helps us freeze this knowledge so we may explore it at a slower and more contemplative pace. Glacilla is often depicted in human form as having elf-like ears, a small and fragile female body, long white glistening hair, bright blue eyes and wearing white, flowing silken robes.

At first, Glacilla did not come down and walk across the lands of Neothera like her siblings; instead, she chose to settle upon the highest mountain peaks of the remote north. From there, she looked out across the lands and contemplated. Glacilla watched in bemusement as her sister Sequilla, time and again, was cast down from the skies by Signis.

She watched as the first forests and elven cities expanded across the land. Then she watched as the first great battles between Arak'almundae and Haman'li raged, the smoke from the great fires spreading even up to her lonely outlooks. Eventually, Glacilla could watch no longer as the lands beneath her seemed to burn across the horizon, and her perch became choked with rising smoke and ash. Glacilla walked down into the forest, bringing the chill of the Frozen North down with her. Ice and snow smothered the fires. Glacilla walked across the desolate wasteland that had been the great forests and the first cities.

Within the plains of ash, she found a figure hunched over what seemed to be a small twig sticking up out of the ground. Glacilla walked over to investigate, and the figure announced himself to be Haman'li. He said that he was nurturing what life was in these lands, pointing to the small sapling he was tending.

To Glacilla the lands had looked dead entirely, so Haman'li offered that she could accompany him on his work. Glacilla agreed and watched as Haman'li walked between scattered shrubs and surviving blades of grass, showing Glacilla small enduring plants and animals that she would never have found herself. Haman'li spoke of how one day this whole land would be green and living again, and Glacilla thought back to the lifeless, lonely lands of her home.

She thought that perhaps, if Haman'li could coax life into this blasted wasteland, then he could also bring life to her domain. Haman'li agreed, and for a time he and Glacilla worked together to bring whatever life they could to the frozen places of the world. Away from his domain, Haman'li had limited success, but soon enough, even the icy peaks and the Frozen North had become home to new plants and animals. Haman'li and Glacilla grew closer and fell in love. Glacilla left her frozen home to dwell with Haman'li in the great forests. So it was that winter settled across the lands - the forests stopped growing, and the animals retreated or became lethargic.

Glacilla could not help it, where she went winter followed and Haman'li did not love her less for it, though it pained him greatly to see its effect on his lands. Eventually, Glacilla could no longer bear to see her husband in such pain, and so she endeavoured to run away back to the Frozen North so that she could do no more harm. For a long time, she sat once again on her lonely perch and looked out across the lands. She watched winter retreat from the forest, she watched as the lands turned green again, and although she wept for parting from her love, she also smiled for once again his forests bloomed. Read more about Glacilla and the Ice Element on *page 211*.



## HAMAN'LI, GOD OF NATURE (THE SEVEN)

**ELEMENT:** Nature

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Creation / Balance / Meditative / Moderation / Nurture

**WORSHIPERS:** Frozen North / Mainland

Haman'li is the God of Nature and represents life in its purest form. Although his main followers are the Hemadri, many others worship him through their love and belief in the powerful force of nature and creation. Elven lore states that all life on Neothera was born from the World Tree, which grew from a seed that Haman'li planted in Terralapis' soil. The seed was nourished by Sequilla, and as the World Tree flourished, so did all life on the mortal plane. Those that follow the God of Nature must accept and believe in the first passage of his will: "Nature gives and nature takes away. Nature can be tamed but never contained. Nature can be cultivated, but in the end, it's will cannot be bent. Nature loves, and nature destroys."

Haman'li is often depicted in human form as being an elderly male with dark, unkempt hair and a beard. His ears are elf-life, and his eyes sometimes glow shades of green. He is seen carrying a staff carved from wood and wears tattered robes, often covering his head and face with a hood.

Haman'li grew the first forests and raised and nurtured many of the animals that lived within them, and it wasn't long before he came into conflict with Arak'almundae. At the edges of the rainforest, the God of Fire had begun to cut down many of the great trees, using them to build his first settlements for his elven followers.

Haman'li was enraged by this, and at night he began to leave the Na'tohram Gheneris and enter the Fire God's settlements. Calling upon the aid of the plants and animals of the rainforest, he would tear down all that Arak'almundae had built. Vines and roots would grow through the buildings and drag them down, while beasts would run amok through the streets.

At first, believing this to simply be the nature of the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest, Arak'almundae decided to burn the forests back away from the settlements, his fires roaring and spreading from tree to tree. Haman'li and Arak'almundae battled day and night as the first forests burned around them. Eventually, unable to best one another, Arak'almundae returned to his people and Haman'li back to the heart of the rainforest to lick his wounds. When time passed, and Arak'almundae did not return, Haman'li set out to repair the damage done during the fight. It was while he was nurturing life back into the burned lands that he was approached by a quiet, thoughtful Goddess who called herself Glacilla.

For aiding him in quelling some of the fires that were still burning, Haman'li agreed to accompany Glacilla to her icy realms where he would help to coax life into those lands as well.

Eventually, Haman'li and Glacilla fell in love. Glacilla came to live with Haman'li in the heart of the rainforest, however where Glacilla went, so did snow and ice. A terrible winter swept across the lands, and Haman'li could only watch as the denizens of the rainforest suffered under the terrible cold. Forced to choose between his creations and his love, Haman'li could not send Glacilla away; however, when she left, he did not try to follow. Haman'li stayed within his rainforests, and winter faded into the first spring.

Eventually, Arak'almundae's followers returned, ravaging his rainforests, hacking apart trees and slaughtering his animals. Haman'li himself emerged to face them and smashed apart their nearest buildings and monuments. Before long, Arak'almundae arrived, and another great battle began. On one side stood Haman'li, and with him were many of the great beasts of the rainforest and elves who followed his teachings, along with the awakened spirits of nature given forms in wood and vine.

Arrayed against the followers of nature were the legions of the Fire God; Arak'almundae stood at their helm, shining like a beacon and leading the way for his army. His forces were made up of elves who had pledged themselves to him and who had followed him out of the City of Thard'or in great numbers.

The battle had only just begun, but already the carnage was horrendous. The gods fought each other to a standstill, but whilst they could barely harm each other, almost everything and everyone caught up around them was destroyed. Suddenly a great blizzard froze the battlefield, and from it emerged Glacilla in the form of a great white dragon, forcing Arak'almundae and his followers back to Thard'or.

With Arak'almundae retreating back to the northern mountains, many of his followers suffered greatly, Haman'li could not help but pity them. The God of Nature decided he would help them, and so he walked forth amongst the elves and taught them how to live sustainably off the land.

Most of the elves adopted of his teachings and many abandoned their cities altogether and came to live amongst the beasts within the Na'tohram Gheneris and Far'dhoum forest, where they built new homes, more in keeping with Haman'li's teachings. Read more about Haman'li and the Nature Element on [page 212](#).



## HVIKR

**ELEMENT:** None

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Creation / Death / Governance / Life / Order

**WORSHIPERS:** Estan and Norvaegr (Eúnd Vald)

The belief systems of the realms of Norvaegr and Estan in Eúnd Vald state that the Hvikr is the creator of the world and all life within it. He is a creator God, yet also worshipped as the God of Death, governing the gates to the afterlife known as the Halls of the Gods, or Hourisdoum.

Hvikr rose from the great void known as Gynuug, and slew the first dragon named Andlat. He sliced the great beast up and spread its remains to create the known world. Its heart became the sun. Its solum eye - the moon. Its teeth - the stars. Its blood - the sea. Its skin - the land, and it's spiked back - the mountains. Hvikr then made a throne from where he could watch over his world from the bones of the dragons remains.

Hvikr walked the land he created, covering every acre on foot. He found himself returning to three prominent areas; a mountain that stood alone, a great oak tree, and a lake. From each one, he birthed a new being - his children. Volkmar was dug up from the mountain, Jardligr grew from the oak, and Logharr rose from the lake. The three sons were next given responsibilities, and each one would govern the elements that were bound to the world.

The God of Life and Death, Hvikr is the most commonly worshipped deity in Norvaegr and Estan, largely because he created the continent. This most respected God is known only to accept one form of offering; a living being. They are often willingly killed as an offering to Hvikr, who then accepts them into his halls to sit amongst the gods. Many warriors are said to have seen Hvikr walking the field of battle after it had ceased. People say they have seen him checking on the fallen, to see who he will take to Hourisdoum. It is commonly believed that your fate is chosen before you head to battle, and if you die, you were chosen to ascend by Hvikr.

## JARDLIGR

**ELEMENT:** Earth / Nature

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Community / Compassion / Harvest / Peace

**WORSHIPERS:** Estan and Norvaegr (Eúnd Vald)

Jardligr is the son of Hvikr and brother to Volkmar and Logharr. It is said that the God of the Land, Nature and Harvest has descended where an oak tree grows. Many say Jardligr walks the fields of farmers of whom he favours, leading to bountiful crops.

If a new oak tree sprouts, then it is a sign that Jardligr has descended to the world and made his first contact on that specific spot.

Many people offer their worship to Jardligr during the time of harvest. It is said that he controls what yield is best-produced, and the favoured farmers of Jardligr are often known to produce large hauls of crops. But he is just as willing to give, as he is to take away. It is widely believed that if you do ill by your yield, such as flaunting it to nearby citizens or attempting to use your favour for your own selfish advantage, Jardligr will make sure the next harvest will be scarce. There have been many cases where farmers have mocked fellow countrymen because of their poor yield, and they have never had a successful harvest again.

## KILLI BON BRILLI, GOBLIN LEGEND

**ELEMENT:** Fel

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Celebration / Feasting / Hope / Narcotics / Overindulgence

**WORSHIPERS:** Goblins

It took many thousands of years for the goblins to accept what they had become after Mok'Garrosh and the first of their kind were released from the rift that protected them during the War of the Gods. Countless generations hid away from the rest of the world in states of self-loathing, emptiness, regret and rage. This was changed when word of a goblin runt, who had worked his way from the bottom of a tribe's pecking order to the top, spread to many other tribes beneath the Mainland.

Killi Bon Brillli, or "Brilli" as he is more commonly known, was an inspiration to his race. No matter how hard his peers beat him down, he always got back up with a smile planted firmly on his face, laughter and joy filling his heart and those of others that witnessed these unusual yet inspiring events. Despite numerous attempts to slay Killi Bon Brillli, orders given by his chieftain or carried out by others with dark motives that could not stand his overbearing jolliness, the happy-go-lucky goblin seemed always to escape or outsmart his foes.

Believing he was blessed by Mok'Garrosh himself, other goblins began to follow Killi Bon Brillli, taking his side in disputes, fending off attacks on him by other more aggressive tribe members. Killi Bon Brillli would eventually become chieftain of the Ukusa tribe, and he encouraged his people to be thankful for what they had become - for it could be much worse. Count each day as a blessing - you are alive after all. Take pleasure in the little or finer things in life - a particularly tasty mushroom or that the rotten fish you ate didn't kill you. Be thankful that Mok'Garrosh did what he must to ensure your children's children are here to carry on an ancient bloodline.



Though you may get beaten down, get back up and show your enemies that they cannot break your spirit - the spirit of Mok'Garrosh. You are green, beautiful, a wondrous creature who has just as much right to be in this world as anyone else.

Killi Bon Brillí's inspiring words spread amongst the other tribes of his era during the Third Age, where pilgrimages were held to meet him in person and hear his overwhelmingly positive wisdom. Through his mantras, many tribes set aside their differences and made peace, and that my friends, is something that should be learned from and celebrated as often as possible. Regular feasts and celebrations are held by most goblin tribes to pay their respects to the teachings of this unique figure in goblin legend; these feasts result in the overindulgence of food and ale, and the use of narcotics in the form of a common cave mushroom known as Shnarmi.

Depending on the individual, Shnarmi may induce euphoria, hysteria, states of sorrow, confidence, hallucinations, and loss of feeling in most body parts, or fits of rage - often combining the aforementioned states. Some legends tell that Killi Bon Brillí was a heavy user of this narcotic and that is what allowed him to maintain his positive outlook on life, other legends scorn any mention of this and state he was a true inspiration sent by Mok'Garrosh to pull his people from the depths of depression. Killi Bon Brillí was believed to have died from laughing too much, perhaps a fatal heart attack brought on by too much fine food and ale, or a particularly heavy dose of Shnarmi. There are no set holy days in the goblin calendar, and Killi Bon Brillí is worshipped as and when his followers see fit.

## LOGHARR

**ELEMENT:** Air / Water

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Cleansing / Nurturing / Safe Passage / Wrath

**WORSHIPERS:** Estan and Norvaegr (Eúnd Vald)

Logharr is the son of Hvikr and brother to Volkmar and Jarldigr. Logharr has started his descent to the mortal plane when the rain begins to fall, and the winds howl. After the rain has ceased, the God of the Seas, Water and Air is said to have set foot on Eúnd Vald. When there is a heavy downpour or destructive winds, Logharr is said to be angry, and when it is a light shower and a pleasant breeze, he shows good favour.

The most common time to worship the unrelenting God of the Seas, Water and Air is before an ocean voyage. Due to Logharr controlling all the seas, it is requested that he provides excellent and safe travelling conditions. Many old (and often new) ships are set alight as an offering to Logharr, and this is done in an attempt to appease his desire for vessels in the Halls of the Gods.

If ships are offered before a voyage, he would have no reason to take them when they are on the seas. Many farmers will also offer crops as a plea to Logharr. They ask for him to open the skies to rain, so it will allow crops to be well-watered.



## MOK'GARROSH (MOTH'ELDUIN), GOBLIN LEGEND

**ELEMENT:** Fel

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Creation / Destruction / Hate / Love / Strength / Weakness

**WORSHIPERS:** Goblins

Almost all goblins worship Mok'Garrosh - the creator of their race, great chieftain of the green-ones, defiler of the Seven, the harbinger of the curse, and giver of life. Goblins hate and love their creator God. It is common to offer him praise when things are going to plan and curse him when they are not. A show of rage or loving devotion in any form to Mok'Garrosh is acceptable within goblin communities that still remember the legends passed down through the tribes about him.

Although they remember his true-name, Moth'elduin, they rarely use it. This is due to forms of the goblin language not containing the associated pronunciation of certain words, and for the most part, because Mok'Garrosh sounds like a tough name - tough being something that nearly all goblins aspire to be. That said, some curse the very name, believing Mok'Garrosh to be weak of mind for bestowing a curse upon his people, and for failing to be able to control the flows of magic in his favour.

Most goblins that know the legends are aware of what Mok'Garrosh did to cause the creation of the species, how he cursed the elves that followed him and brought forth a never-ending tide of darkness. As this darkness grows in the lands, the goblin tribes now quietly muster to seek redemption for Mok'Garrosh or to ensure he is eternally damned for what he did. There are no set holy days in the goblin calendar, and Mok'Garrosh is worshipped as and when his followers see fit.



## OSIRAH (HIROSA), GOD OF THE SUN

**ELEMENT:** Light

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Creation / Joy / Promise / Protection / Sustainability

**WORSHIPERS:** Frozen North, Lyshanduir, the Mainland and Southern Realms

See *Senetsu* below.

## SENETSU, GODDESS OF THE MOON

**ELEMENT:** Dark

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Creation / Despair / Destruction / Hope / Perception

**WORSHIPERS:** Frozen North / Mainland / Southern Realms

Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon, sometimes called the Goddess of Darkness, manifested herself in the deep void of nothingness at the dawn of time. Some even say that the void manifested itself around her. Senetsu hung silently and motionless in space, ever-watching in the eternal darkness for signs of life, for companionship, for anything that would take her mind from her sorrowful existence until she could take the solitude no more.

As hope filled every fibre of her being, she took the form of a glistening white humanoid and quickly stretched her arms above her head, opened her eyes and exhaled. A powerful light exploded from her body, manifesting itself as a golden globe.

At first, Senetsu covered her eyes, for the light was blinding, and reflected upon her body, causing it to radiate white in the black of the void. As she cautiously opened her eyes, it was then that she noticed the void had become filled with an infinite number of small sparkling globes which surrounded her and also the golden sphere she had first created. She gazed in wonderment at the beauty of what she would call the stars.

As the blinding golden light that surrounded the new arrival in the void slightly faded, it was then that Senetsu saw him - Osirah the God of Light and the Sun had been created. He appeared as a being similar in appearance to herself.

At last, she felt happy and fulfilled, feeling her sorrow fade as love filled her soul, and as she could sense, the soul of Osirah too. The pair embraced each other, and as they did so, this unison of light and dark brought balance to the void of space.

Osirah and Sentetsu contemplated the universe and decided to breathe life into it. As they each did, they created more giant stars, each one glistening with the promise of life; however, as happy as she was with the wondrous process of creation, Senetsu felt herself grow weaker as each star was born. The weaker Senetsu became, the stronger Osirah shone, his light immersing his Goddess, causing her to shine brighter as it reflected upon her body.

With their final combined breaths, Osirah and Senetsu created seven more stars, more beautiful than the rest and with colours the likes the universe had never seen before. These stars took similar forms to their creators, and descended to the nearest great star and began shaping it as their parents had done with the universe itself. But it was this breath that would be Senetsu's last.

The Goddess of the Moon drifted away from the God of the Sun, she became weak, and her life-essence crystallised into a solid, pale orb that would encase her body. Keeping his distance lest his touch shattered the spherical prison, and Senetsu's body which was now bound within it, Osirah mustered all of his strength, becoming a ball of pure-dazzling light that would continue to energize his love, keeping her warm and always in his sights until the time came that she would be ready to wake from her slumber, take her original form and embrace him once again.



Whilst Osirah's essence still bathes the universe, and everything it touches in warmth and light, Senetsu's power can still be felt where the God of the Sun's light does not reach, and slowly it creeps, smothering that which it covers in shadow. However, Osirah continues to burn brightly, masking his true-form in a globe of pure energy. For as long as Senetsu slumbers, he must pay careful attention to maintaining the balance of the light and dark, lest the underlying essence of the void, the darkness all life was born from, gradually reclaims all things in a reverse creation-process, eventually resulting in the end of the universe itself.



Osirah and Senetsu are both worshipped as creator deities, being classed by many as the true and original architects of the universe and all life within it. Osirah, the God of Light and of the Sun (or Hirosa as he is known by the fey of Lyshanduir) often receives more acknowledgement when it comes to the creation of worlds (such as Lyshanduir and Nethrekka), despite Senetsu, the Goddess of Darkness and the Moon, being the founding force that willed Osirah into existence in the first place.

Osirah is associated with the Light Element, and Senetsu, the Dark Element, and these two forces are considered the most powerful in the known universe - where life could not be sustained without their presence. The fey and urka, both originating from outside of the planet of Neothera, praise Osirah (or Hirosa) solely as the creator of their species, and little to no acknowledgement is given to Senetsu. In Neothera the story of the creation of the universe as observed by the ancient elven race speaks more of Senetsu. Both the urka and fey, upon learning of the Goddess of the Moon's part in the creation of all things, are beginning to realise this could be a missing first chapter in the origins of life.

Although not as widely worshipped as the Seven, the God of the Sun and Goddess of the Moon are offered praise by many Neotherans. That said, they are considered "Old Gods" - which means the emphasis on the creators of Neothera itself, are attributed to the Seven. Some elves of the Second Age are still alive to give eyewitness accounts of meeting the seven divine siblings in person before they left for the Ethereal Realm. The scriptures that tell of the creation of the universe, and focus on Osirah and Senetsu are well known, yet believed by some to simply be a legend and nothing more. Read more about the Dark Element on *page 208* and the Light Element on *page 211*.

## SEQUILLA, GODDESS OF WATER (THE SEVEN)

**ELEMENT:** Water

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Cleansing / Curing Ailments / Inspiration / Tranquillity

**WORSHIPERS:** Frozen North / Mainland

In modern times, Sequilla has many followers as her associations are with cleansing and curing ailments such as infections, diseases and even plagues. According to elven legends, Sequilla created the seas, rivers, lakes and streams; the water of life that would cleanse and nourish the world. Sequilla is often depicted in human-form as being a beautiful female with elf-like ears, long, blue hair and flowing robes, and wielding a bow and arrows. The L'Enaroussian people strongly believe that water is created upon the location where her arrows land, and this is how all bodies of water on Neothera were created.

As with all of the gods and goddesses of Neothera, there are two sides to Sequilla, the first being linked to passion and revitalization, cleansing both the body and mind. The second being her wrath, for as the sea can be unforgiving and dangerous, so can the goddesses' temperament. Another popular legend of the Water Goddess is as follows: During the young years of the world, Spira, the God of Air, sent his winds to whisper in Sequilla's ear and tell her of the many great wonders in the world, both real and imagined that her siblings were creating. This caused Sequilla to set forth and claim these prizes for herself, sneaking up into Signis, the God of Lightning's realm, sending her waters over the land and causing many great floods. Sequilla was quickly spotted by Signis, who with an angry bellow that could be heard across the world, charged down the invading serpent.

With his greatsword, Signis hacked the serpent into pieces (a small inconvenience for a Goddess) - and hurled Sequilla's body from the skies, banishing it back to the seas. However, much of the serpent's body did not land back in the sea; falling instead upon the land. Seeing this, Signis hurled his great lightning bolts down upon Neothera. Fleeing from Signis' fury, Sequilla formed the pieces of her body into great watery serpents, slithering their way back towards the sea. So the great rivers and lakes of Neothera were born. Read more about Sequilla and the Water Element on *page 213*.

## SIGNIS, GOD OF LIGHTNING (THE SEVEN)

**ELEMENT:** Lightning

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Imagination / Judgement / Life-giving / Speed / Vengeance

**WORSHIPERS:** Frozen North / Mainland

The God of Lightning, Signis, is often associated with imagination, energy and speed, for a single spark can quickly lead to great things. Signis is said to have brought life to all living things through the sheer power of the Lightning Element. Signis has close ties with Arak'almundae, the God of Fire, and his twin brother, Spiria the God of Air, for these three elements, complement and provoke each other to manifest physically, and sometimes with deadly consequences.

Whilst Signis' power is not openly worshipped by them, the engineers of the Blightfoot Gunners often give a modest nod to him when utilising the power of electricity in their work. Signis is often depicted in human form with elf-life ears. He is tall and muscular with long golden hair and a mighty yellow and white beard. He wears robes of gold and sports strong plate armour. His weapon of choice is a greatsword, and he is sometimes depicted as wearing an ornately-decorated golden crown.



Signis was the first of the Seven who stepped forwards amongst his six siblings to rule them. At first, all was well, Signis established a strict hierarchy amongst the Seven, each with their own domains, enforced by his might. Only Spiria, the God Air, defied these rulings, scornful of being ruled by his brother. Signis himself ascended to the highest perch above the lands of Neothera. He was said to be sitting on the steps to the Ethereal Realm, both to guard it and to keep watch across the lands. Eventually, the spite of Spiria manifested, as he tried to spread his discontent amongst the other gods.

Whilst most of the Seven held Signis in high regard, Spiria found an ally in Sequilla. The beautiful Water Goddess was vain and foolish, and Spiria's honeyed words played on her pride and convinced her that it was she, and not Signis who should rule.

Spurred on by Spiria's words, Sequilla rose from the seas as a great serpent and began to slither and sneak her way up towards Signis' realm. Signis hacked the serpent into an uncountable number of pieces and flung them back down to the world as the first rainstorm. Looking back across the lands, Signis saw that some pieces of Sequilla, rather than flowing back to her domain in the oceans, were instead reforming back into many smaller serpents.

Angered by Sequilla's continued defiance, Signis brought forth his lightning bolts, and hurled them down upon the lands, driving the last water serpents back into the sea. This great battle has repeated itself many times during the War of Gods. Spiria sends his winds to whisper his encouragement to Sequilla, who again challenges Signis and is cut apart and cast down from the skies. For many years, Sequilla and Spiria kept Signis blind to all else with their continual rebellions, and without Signis to watch over them, the lands almost fell into disarray. Read more about Signis and the Lightning Element on *page 212*.

## SKARI, GOBLIN LEGEND

**ELEMENT:** Fel

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Bountiful Treasures / Exploration / Harvests / Hunts / Unity

**WORSHIPERS:** Goblins

Skari is worshipped by many goblin tribes as a deity figure - one who is said to have united the tribes beneath Thard'or and the Cragspine Mountains. She was said to be able to wield two axes which were twice her height and defeated no less than two hundred goblins that attempted to take her spot as Chieftain of the Okolan. A tribe which had approximately eight-thousand goblin followers at its peak in the early Fourth Age.

Skari united the Okolan tribe beneath the Thard'or Ruins, with the Grubri tribe beneath the Cragspine Mountains following a dispute, where the Grubri planned on ascending into Dansk Ridge to plunder the settlers of the Great City of Netherlye when they first arrived there. Being wiser than most other chieftains, Skari felt that bringing the war to the humans would only end in goblin-kind becoming hunted. As such, she overthrew the Grubri chieftain, united her eight-thousand strong tribe with the six-thousand Okolans, and ensured the goblins remained beneath the earth to prevent a potential war.

Skari disappeared one day along with a large raiding party that attempted to tunnel beneath the northern mountains and oceans in search of richer resources. It is presumed that a tunnel collapsed and flooded. Skari became known as a living-Goddess amongst the race of goblins. Praise is given to Skari when a situation is resolved without mass-conflict. She is praised as a symbol of unity, the strength of a tribe and as a role-model for most female goblins.

Thanks are also given to Skari for successful exploration trips, the finding of bountiful resources, something that she attempted to do in life to aid the lives of her people. When exceptional hauls are looted or discovered, goblins believe that Skari is smiling upon them. There are no set holy days in the goblin calendar, and Skari is worshipped as and when her followers see fit.

## SPIRIA, GOD OF AIR (THE SEVEN)

**ELEMENT:** Air

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Curiosity / Haste / Playfulness / Trickery

**WORSHIPERS:** Frozen North / Mainland

Spiria, the God of Air is the twin-brother of Signis, the God of Lightning. Always present yet rarely seen, Spiria is the most unpredictable of the Seven. Some who follow Spiria's teachings consider that the Air Element is playful, soothing, inspiring and life-giving, yet also very destructive. It is common for sailors to offer prayers to Spiria, that his mighty winds may propel their vessels across the oceans of Neothera. Spiria is often depicted in human form as being a skinny male with elf-like ears, short grey wispy-hair and wearing tattered grey clothing. His skin is pale, and he wields a thin, white wooden cane.

Spiria loves nothing more than to cause strife amongst the house of his brother, Signis. The favour of Spiria is perceived as being fickle, and he cares little for anything or anyone, as such, he once had no temples and few followers. Today, travellers perform small sacrifices to him before long journeys in the hopes that they gain his brief favour, or at the very least, that he would leave them alone.



A common pastime of Spiria is the causing of strife amongst his siblings, the Seven, most notably his efforts to coax Sequilla into transgressing against Signis. It was also said by some that the winds of Spiria could snatch up the souls of the dead so that they would lose their way from finding the Ethereal Realm. When the storm winds blew, the first elves would seek shelter, knowing that whatever mischief Spiria was causing, it was best to be out of the way. Read more about Spiria and the Air Element on [page 207](#).

## STRANJA

**ELEMENT:** None

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Ambition / Emotion / Love / Parental Care / Union

**WORSHIPERS:** Estan and Norvaegr (Eúnd Vald)

With his sons remaining in Eúnd Vald, Hvikr returned to the Halls of the Gods and took his seat on his throne once again. There, he watched over his sons forging the world, sculpting its land, spilling its waters, and breathing its weather. Hvikr observed them always.

He removed his gaze only once when the brightest star in the sky drifted past him. He followed the star that captivated him until it plummeted into the ground. Hvikr smashed it open. The star shattered into millions of pieces and from its heart, the most beautiful figure emerged.

Glowing, all in white like the star she was set free from, Stranja was born. Hvikr claimed the beauty as his wife and took her to see his new world. The pair walked for an age, as Hvikr did once before, however, now he had his Goddess. Stranja took the remains of her shining prison and made a throne beside Hvikr's in Hourisdoum. Hvikr returned to his throne, made of the bony remains of Andlat and sat once more with Stranja, however now, they sat together, side by side, watching over their kingdom.

It is said that Stranja chooses which families are right and ready to bear children. Families will worship her when they are attempting to conceive a child, and also when one is born. A lock of the child's hair is often burned as a tribute to Stranja, a form of appreciation for the safe arrival of new life in the world. If a child is lost during pregnancy, or when they are very young, it is said that Stranja will tend and care for them, until their parents are ready to ascend to Hourisdoum to join them.

When two people are about to join in marriage, Stranja is worshipped throughout the whole ceremony. Her love and attention are said to hold a marriage together, and the larger the offering and praise to her, the more likely the marriage is to last.

## TEEGARA

**ELEMENT:** Nature

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Nurturing / Protection / Strategy / Tenacity

**WORSHIPERS:** Talanor (Mainland) / Vestr (Eúnd Vald)

The loyal tigress, Teegara is a deity worshipped by the people of the City of Vestr in the realm of Vesthold in Eúnd Vald. In Vestr legend, Teegara provided Hoshi and Zen (the siblings of prophecy) with sustenance and protection as they travelled through the realm of Vesthold. The tigress is prayed to by soldiers about to embark on a battle, and they aspire to hold the qualities of this deity.

Seen as a symbol of fierce protection, humbleness, a provider, law keeper, and maintaining the balance of all things, Teegara is a commonly worshipped deity and favoured by most Vestrians over the other four animal gods. The holy day, Festival of the Honour of Five Animals includes the worship of the deity Teegara, and you can read more about this holy day on [page 199](#). Teegara also features in the Tale of Hoshi and Zen, read about this on [page 169](#).





## TERRALAPIS, GODDESS OF EARTH (THE SEVEN)

**ELEMENT:** Earth

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Humble / Perseverance / Stability / Wisdom

**WORSHIPERS:** Frozen North / Mainland

In this day and age, denizens of Neothera pray to Terralapis, the Goddess of Earth, to bring them patience and stability. As the eldest of the Seven, Terralapis is seen as a nurturing figure, where other elements, such as nature and water, could not sustain themselves if it were not for the Earth Element.

The Earth Element seeks to draw all things together with it in order to bring harmony, rootedness and stability. Other attributes of the Earth Element include ambition, stubbornness and responsibility. Terralapis is the eldest of the Seven and is often depicted in human form as an old woman, with a deeply wrinkled face and elf-like ears. She wears humble robes of various shades of brown.

Terralapis was a kindly Goddess, who willingly gave up the treasures of the earth to those who would seek them; however, her other duty was the care of the dead. Terralapis was said to have created a great and beautiful dwelling for them deep beneath the earth, where the spirits of the dead could rest and contemplate for all eternity, however, this legend contradicts the more modern and widely believed theory that all souls pass to the Ethereal Realm (situated in an astral plane) when they die to sit beside the gods and goddesses. Read more about Terralapis and the Earth Element on *page 209*.

## TORTOGA

**ELEMENT:** Water

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Deliverance / Endurance / Hope / Innocence

**WORSHIPERS:** Talanor (Mainland) / Vestr (Eúnd Vald)

The reliable turtle, Tortoga is a deity worshipped by the people of the City of Vestr in the realm of Vesthold in Eúnd Vald. In Vestr legend, Tortoga rescued Hoshi and Zen (the siblings of prophecy) from a watery grave at sea and carried them safely to land and the realm of Vesthold. Worshipped today by the inhabitants of Vestr as a bringer of new hope, and a guardian of sailors and the seas, there have been countless tales of great sea turtles that have pulled drowning sailors from the dangerous oceans to the safety of land. The holy day, Festival of the Honour of Five Animals includes the worship of the deity, Tortoga and you can read more about this holy day on *page 199*. Tortoga also features in the Tale of Hoshi and Zen, read about this on *page 169*.



## TROGLADOSH, GOBLIN LEGEND

**ELEMENT:** Fel

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Anger / Jealousy / Madness / Stubbornness

**WORSHIPERS:** Goblins

At the end of the Third Age, a tribe of goblins emerged from the bowels of Neothera upon the surface of the Mainland, no longer content with hiding underground. Led by their chieftain and high shaman Trogladosh, this tribe of particularly volatile and dangerous goblins forced an attack upon many human refugees in the region known as Skorth. The human refugees suffered heavy casualties due to their presence deep in the rainforests going unnoticed by the elves who nurtured almost all other humans when they arrived in Neothera.

Trogladosh and his tribe made a new home for themselves above ground, but following many years of undisturbed peace, the humans returned with larger numbers and fought the goblin tribe, forcing them to retreat beneath the ground. To aid his tribe, Trogladosh used his skill in magic to form a pact with the demonic Nightmares, refusing to seek the blessings of the Seven similarly to Mok'Garrosh. Empowering himself and his followers with demonic magic, their minds slowly became warped and twisted.

Sadly the taint of the demons also spread to the humans, seeing them become corrupted shortly after a great battle. Here they have stayed ever since, the humans that defeated Trogladosh and most of his tribe. Whilst the humans did not become vulperan as one may assume, they remain steadfast followers of the Nightmares to this day. Trogladosh is associated with madness, jealousy, anger and pigheadedness. Sometimes goblins will offer prayers, pacts or sacrifices in his name, especially if their desires are dark, and would potentially see them killed or exiled from their tribe if their peers found out. There are no set holy days in the goblin calendar, and Trogladosh is worshipped as and when his followers see fit.



## VOLKMAR

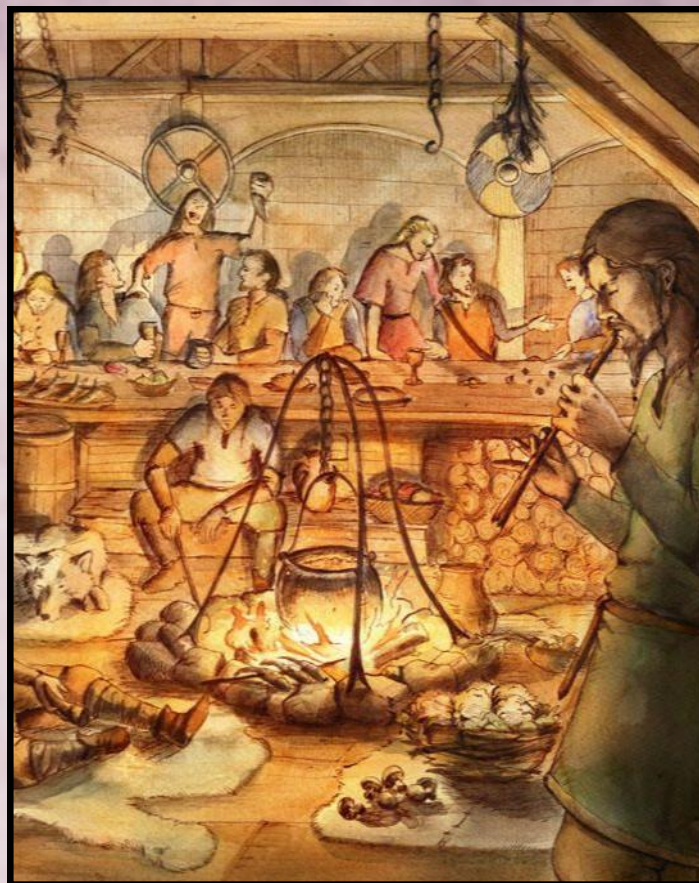
**ELEMENT:** Fire / Lightning

**ASSOCIATIONS:** Passion / Pride / Strength / Victory / War

**WORSHIPERS:** Estan and Norvaegr (Eúnd Vald)

Volkmar, son of Hvikr and brother to Jardligr and Logharr, shows himself in powerful lightning storms which frequent the mountain ranges of Eúnd Vald. His presence is also felt in the warmth of a fire, and his wrath through great flames that can burn forests or cities to the ground. The God of War and Fire is seen when there is a time of great celebration, or in a time of need.

The citizens of Estan and Norvaegr commonly pray to Volkmar before a battle. They believe that by offering him a sacrifice, whether that is food, objects of worth, ships or even people, he will look favourably upon that side in whatever conflicts may come. After battles, and especially after wars end, large celebrations are held in Volkmar's honour. If you are victorious, then it is said that he backed your side, but if you were defeated, then it shows that your enemy was favoured by the God of War and Fire.





# HOLY DAYS, FESTIVALS & TRADITIONS

## (IN DATE ORDER)

### FROSTFOLD

**FIRST WEEKEND IN JANUARY (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: THE FROZEN NORTH**

Only one holy day is observed by the wights in the icy wastes of the Frozen North, and this is more of a day of mourning to most rather than a cause for celebration. The name Frostfold is given to this day to show the inward reflection many wights face during this sometimes macabre holiday.

How a wight died and what they left behind is something many suppress each day of the year until Frostfold comes around. For those that remember who and what they were before they resurrected as an undead being, this day is spent allowing grief to consume them, others turn to anger, and some bask in self-pity, but all find a strange comfort in whatever release they decide to take.

Some wights may make a pilgrimage to their place of death and others decide to stay behind in the cities of Nald or Kjeldora. Many wights that remember, or long to recall their former lives do not gather to lament on this day. It is a day of personal reflection for those that hold dear elements of their life whilst they were alive. The streets in the cities of the Frozen North fall silent, and only the screams of turmoil and the tolling of bells that mark the beginning and end of Frostfold cut through the eerie silence.

Those wights that embrace the shadow of undeath and do not grieve for the loss of their mortal lives instead turn to the Goddess of Ice, Glacilla, and offer her prayers of thanks that she has a permanent, icy grip over their realm; the Frozen North. The cold keeps the rot away, and even strengthens wights both mentally and physically.

Some wights gather in groups outside of the two cities and celebrate their undeath, and it is not unheard of for captured mortals to be sacrificed to Glacilla, or to be forcibly made into wights. This is a holy day that regions outside of the Frozen North have become extremely concerned about, for wights that observe Frostfold, yet do not travel to the icy north may become unpredictable, even dangerous in whichever way feels fit for them to recognise their perpetual state of undeath.

### DAY OF SOULS

**13TH JANUARY (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: FOLLOWERS OF SPIRIA**

On the thirteenth day of the first month of the year, the most controversial of all holy days take place. The origins of the Day of Souls dates back to the start of the Fourth Age, where a fanatical cult of devotees to Spiria, the trickster God of Air, known as the Hallowed Hand, would lure victims to secluded areas, kidnap and murder them in sacrificial rituals.

Being disciples of the Trickster God, a variety of sneaky and clever methods were used by the cult members to acquire their victims, such as imitating the calls of lost and scared children and wounded animals or wooing them into the woods with the promise of the pleasures of the flesh.

The purpose of the rituals was to draw the soul from a victims body, who was then cut to pieces slowly using a knife carved from a child's femur bone. The properties of this sacrificial weapon were said to contain the child's innocence, and as such undetectable by vengeful gods that would otherwise punish those involved in the ritual.

As the ritual words were spoken, and the victim exhaled their final breath, the soul would be inhaled by the ritual leader. The soul was said to grant the ones that consumed it glorious powers, that they might become as swift, clever and strong as the God of Air himself.

The cult was eventually eradicated by the military of the Great City of Netherlye on the thirteenth of January in the year 2012 of the Fourth Age year after a three-year operation to track down and execute its growing number of followers. However, on the anniversary of the cult being finally dismantled, dubious occurrences relating to their activities continue in various parts of the Mainland, where bodies are discovered in secluded locations showing signs of being sacrificially killed similarly to how the Hallowed Hand operated.

Anyone found to be observing the Day of Souls is sentenced to imprisonment or death, and although there is little evidence to suggest the Hallowed Hand is actually on the rise again, the authorities of the realms of the Mainland cannot deny that occult activities are far from over.



## SPRING'S DAWN / WINTER'S END

**THIRD SATURDAY OF MARCH (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: HEMADRI AND FOLLOWERS OF  
HAMAN'LI AND GLACILLA**

In the Mainland, the location of the Town of Springford was said to be the meeting place of Haman'li and Glacilla. The two lovers, the God of Nature and the Goddess of Ice would convene here, exchanging loving words and embraces before Glacilla would leave to begin her yearly journey around the world of Neothera. Knowing that if she remained in one place for too long the balance of the elements would become disrupted (and nature could no longer flourish), Glacilla decided to part ways with Haman'li for nine months of the year, only being able to reunite with her love for three months at a time. When she left, spring would arrive, seeing nature free from her icy presence and able to bloom for nine months until she returned.

The third Saturday in March always marks the day known as Spring's Dawn, or Winter's End, and is celebrated as the last day of winter and the first day of spring. It is on this day that recognition is given to Glacilla for her sacrifice, having to leave the land so that Haman'li's creations may blossom and grow until winter eventually arrives again.

Seeds collected in the warmer months of the previous year are planted on this day to encourage Haman'li not to mourn for the departure of his love, and it is common for the Nature God's followers to brush away or prepare the plant life that died in the winter months ready for new growth in the summer that will follow.

This is also the day that anyone who has made some sort of sacrifice in their life or had a sacrifice performed by another so that they may live comfortably, should honour their memory if they are dead or not able to be acknowledged in person. Appreciation is shown by placing a photo or illustration or icon at the front door of the household, and a single candle is lit until the morning after this day of renewal, sacrifice and thanks.



## JERROD'S DAY

**21ST APRIL (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: L'ENAROUSSE OF JERROD'S FRONT**

On the twenty-first day of the fourth month of each year, the citizens of the L'Enaroussian City of Jerrod's Front celebrate Jerrod's Day. On this day, in the year 1139 of the Fourth Age of Neothera, a great terror of the depths known as the Hungerer was slain by Jerrod Botswaine, a simple fisherman, with the help of a beastkin, an inventor from Blightfoot Ridge known as Ezekiel.

The gargantuan creature had plagued the coastal city for many decades, eventually draining the sea of fish, and the L'Enaroussian people of food and income as a result. Countless sailors and ships fell foul to the vicious whale-like creature that interminably circled the bay, and until Ezekiel brought powerful mechanical guns with him that he and Jerrod used to slay the beast, the city almost lost all hope.

Sadly Ezekiel was lost at sea, yet Jerrod managed to use the powerful weapons to slay the Hungerer. The great body of the bloated beast floated back towards the docks of Sea Foam Bay, and the people cheered, hailing Jerrod a hero of the realm, leading to the city being renamed Jerrod's Front due to his great deed.

On the twenty-first of April each year, the council chamber of Marsell Keep is opened for the public to pay their respects to the memory of Jerrod and his great deeds. The rib cage of the Hungerer is built into the walls and ceiling of the great hall, and it stands as testimony to the perseverance and strength of the L'Enaroussian people to overcome hardship.

Offerings of fresh fish are laid on ceremonial tables throughout the hall, and at the end of the day are distributed to the poor and needy in the city as thanks to Jerrod for his selfless act in slaying the beast that nearly brought the realm to its knees.

Those of L'Enaroussian origin that are not able to leave an offering at Marsell Keep honour this tradition by giving whatever donation they can to someone less fortunate than themselves, be that a simple gift of food (ideally fish), money or other wares that will benefit the needy.

To some, Jerrod is hailed as a living God, and to others, he is a symbol of hope, especially to the working classes, which he was a part of, proving that it does not take a mighty lord or battle-hardened champion to liberate an oppressed people.



## GUTH-DAGRA

**THIRD WEEK OF MAY (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: NORVAEGR, ESTAN AND TALANOR**

On the third week of May each year, the people of the City of Otta, located in the realm of Norvaegr, the Beors of the City of Astheim in Estan, both located in Eúnd Vald, along with the City of Talanor in the Mainland celebrate Guth-Dagra. The holy week has been observed since the dawn of mankind in the Western Realms, and the dates of the festival also correspond with Norvaegr's discovery of the realm of Estan in what would be the end of the Third Age of Neothera.

During the week many great feasts and celebrations take place, and most importantly all feuds and arguments between the realms of Norvaegr and Estan and its peoples are put to one side so everyone can focus on the holy week itself. Animal, and sometimes human sacrifices are made to the gods Hvikr and Stranja so that the spirits of the chosen to be put to death will shed their mortal bodies and become subjects in the court of the gods in the afterlife. This is considered a great honour.

A series of games are also held in dedication to Hvikr's sons, Volkmar, Jardligr and Logharr, and the champion of the trials is granted a cache of treasure and land at the end of the week. The games involve tests of strength, courage and intelligence, and the format of the tasks change yearly according to the King of Otta or Estan's choosing.

Upon each evening of the holy week, feasts are held, and the elders tell the tales of the Hvikr, his three sons and his wife Stranja, ensuring life lessons are learnt by all who hear the stories. Mead, ale and wine is consumed, and further tales of the first humans in Eúnd Vald, Fystmuun and his wife Munnar are spoken or sung. During Guth-Dagra, it is considered incredibly lucky to get married, and as a result of this, many couples choose to wed, receiving a blessing from the gods themselves in this holiest of weeks.



## DANSK DAY

**3RD JUNE (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: BLIGHTFOOT GUNNERS**

The cogs stop turning, the forges lay cold, and all non-essential weapons and machinery are put away or shut down. Since the founding of Blightfoot Ridge (formerly known as Dansk Ridge) there has always been a day where the great inventors of the realm would rest and remember that although they may be dedicated to their work, they should also make time for their families and loved ones. Dansk Day celebrates the founding of the realm, where Marlston Dansk led many settlers from the Great City of Netherlye to the base of the Crag Spine Mountains, where they established what would become the most technologically advanced realm in the known world.

Whilst the citizens of Blightfoot Ridge don't tend to be overly religious, Dansk Day is a holiday of thanks and appreciation that is respectfully observed by the entire City of Blightfoot Ridge. No factories, forges or facilities are open on Dansk Day, and a unique silence falls upon the city as families spend the day feasting and exchanging handmade gifts. The gifts show not wealth or usefulness, but effort and appreciation for the recipient. They are often vanity objects of different designs, and they are considered treasures to their recipients, being handmade, showing love and respect for the person receiving the gift.



## CHILEN'S DAY

28TH JUNE (YEARLY)

OBSERVED BY: ALL REALMS OF MAINLAND NEOTHERA

There was once an elemental of air remembered for her love and fascination of children, and although she was unable to bear offspring of her own, she cherished the offspring of others, offering them gifts of food or toys she had "borrowed" from shops or even crafted herself. She was known to play with any sad or lonely children she encountered and appeared to make it her purpose to bring them joy. The Air Elemental, known as Chilen, whose name was based on a local L'Enaroussian dialect in the Fourth Age meaning "children", was rarely seen by adults, and she whisked playfully upon her own breeze from village to town, only revealing herself to the children she encountered.

On the twenty-eighth day of the month of June in the year 2930 of the Fourth Age, Chilen decided that she should treat every child in Mainland Neothera to a special surprise, and upon waking in the morning, every child was astonished and overjoyed to see that Chilen had left them a gift.

Whilst the children of Neothera were delighted with their gifts, it appeared that almost every shop in the Mainland that carried toys or playthings had their shelves stripped bare. Chilen was an elemental of air, and as such shared the traits of the trickster God, Spiria. Sadly, this was the last anyone ever heard of Chilen, no longer did she visit the children of the Mainland after this day of mass-gifting, and nothing was ever heard from her again.

To this day no one is sure of what became of Chilen, however, to keep the legend alive, parents leave a gift for their offspring on this day each year, stating that Chilen has visited them. On this day, and the days leading up to Chilen's Day, it is common for toymakers to shut their shops, fearful that Chilen may return to raid their stock, and instances of theft are common in the days leading up to Chilen's Day, where people steal toys for children as the mischievous Air Elemental once did, offering praise to Spiria the God of Air, and his daughter Chilen.



## FESTIVAL OF THE HONOUR OF FIVE ANIMALS

SECOND WEEKEND IN JULY (YEARLY)

OBSERVED BY: CITY OF VESTR AND TALANOR

During the second week of July each year, the people of the City of Vestr, located in the realm of Vesthold in Eúnd Vald celebrate the Festival of the Honour of Five Animals. The festival begins on Monday and reaches its climax on Friday, and each day is dedicated to the celebration of each of the five animal gods in the order they were encountered by Hoshi and Zen. Monday: the turtle, Tortoga, Tuesday: the monkey, Chimchee, Wednesday: the tigress, Teegara, Thursday: the oxen, Boolae, and Friday: the crane, Craetara.

Although the theme of the festival is a celebration of the deities of Vestr, important lessons are also remembered according to the legend of Hoshi and Zen, the brother and sister from Sora'Harumi that brought hope to the citizens of the west.

For some weeks before the festival begins, preparations are made, where decorations and effigies depicting the animal deities are displayed in the city. Red lanterns, bunting and streamers are also hung; the colours of Vestr. Hunts take place, and farmers harvest their crops to create a great feast on the evening of each of the five days of the festival.

Songs, dances, poems, prayers and performances take place every day and are themed around the teachings and personalities of the five animal deities. Any live animals of the same species as the one being celebrated on a particular day are treated like gods, more so than on a regular day outside of the festival times.

The morning of each holy day is spent at the tombs of the deceased friends, family and ancestors of the people of Vestr, and offerings of rice cakes are left, along with red lilies, a species that only grow in the realm of Vesthold.

The afternoons are spent in revelry, and as the night draws close, the tale of Hoshi and Zin is read from a sacred tome by the Queen of Vestr's advisors, then prayers to the animal deity being celebrated that day are made by the elders of the city to large audiences.

The start of the festival sees giant effigies of the five animal deities being carried from the royal temples of Vestr to the outskirts of the city so that they may watch over and protect the citizens during the celebrations. At the close of the festival, they are carried back to the royal temple, where they remain until the celebrations take place the following year.



## LUMINATA

25TH JULY (YEARLY)

OBSERVED BY: FAERIES (FEY)

On the twenty-fifth day of July each year in Lyshanduir, Luminata occurs. This holy day marks the dawn of the creation of Lyshanduir, the homeworld of the fey, as recorded by the four members of the faerie royal family when they were created by Osirah the God of the Sun, or Hirosa as he is known to the fey. Being immortal, the fey royalty were able to keep track of the dawn of Lyshanduir, therefore, the years were easily able to be recorded, and this information passed on to the other fey that consequently came to inhabit the world.

Luminata, although centred around the creation of the world, is also a celebration of the twelve constellations present in the skies of Lyshanduir; the River, the Fisher, the Glaive, the Mountain, the Twin Faces, the Oak Tree, the Wolf, the Heart, the Crown, the Sceptre, the Elder and the Serpent. On this day, a great carnival takes place in the streets of the City of Lights where large depictions of the twelve aspects of the constellations are paraded through the city, finally reaching the Ivory Tower where they are blessed by the four members of the fey royal family.

Music, laughter and cheer fill the streets, and after the blessing of the constellation depictions has taken place a great feast is held in the vast gardens of the Ivory Tower, where all fey are welcomed by the royal family. Flanagel, a fine fey wine, is drunk on this day, and only on this day, for it is made from the sacred waters of the Celestial Pool, a body of water that contains the purest essence of light in all of Lyshanduir. The finest clothes are worn by all on this day, and every fey celebrates the Star-Lines present on their bodies by making an extra effort to decorate them as elaborately as possible.

The festivities continue for two days, and the fey royal family bless the citizens of the City of Lights in a ceremony that involves invoking the power of Osirah the God of the Sun, known as Hirosa to the fey. As the royal Light-borne family speak the sacred words of the Sun God, the sun brings forth the brightest light in all of the year, bathing the fey in its warm, life-giving glow. Since the fey left Lyshanduir and made their new home in Neothera, the vampyres that occupy the world now known as Terminarium, do not celebrate Luminata, for no longer does the sun shine in this once-majestic world of light.

## LIBERATION DAY

15TH AUGUST (YEARLY)

OBSERVED BY: VULPERANS

On the fifteenth day of the eighth month each year, the vulperan people celebrate Liberation Day. On this day in the year 890 of the Fourth Age, the half-human half-demon race known as the vulperans were finally able to break ties with their demonic masters, the Nightmares, thanks to the help of the Elves and Piskies of Faradome. However, this important day is not about gorging oneself with food and ale, nor giving gifts or singing songs. This day is infamous amongst vulperans for being extremely testing and even dangerous for their species.

Whatever link they had to the Nightmare Lords seems to have remained in some form, and it is not uncommon for vulperans to fall foul of their lingering masters' influence, succumbing entirely to the evil nature of their demonic creators. Vulperans often lock themselves away on Liberation Day, some even binding themselves in chains, for if careful meditation is not performed and precautions not taken, the hold of the Nightmare Lords consumes a vulperan, making them lash out violently at others, often to kill them.

Rituals are commonly performed by vulperans on this day, trapping themselves or their families inside a protective circle, ensuring that if they become violent, they cannot escape the ritual's bindings and cause themselves or others harm. Vulperans that live in cities occupied by those not of their species will often leave their homes and seclude themselves in the wilds until Liberation Day is over. In the past, the Elves of Faradome would place a powerful boundary spell over the Crystal City of Vulpera, preventing vulperans from leaving, and enchanting the boundary with soothing magic to quash their demonic tendencies until Liberation Day had passed.

With the recent destruction of Faradome and the Crystal City of Vulpera, any surviving elves and vulperans fear that extreme measures or more traditional restraints will be needed now it is no longer possible to place a boundary spell over the destroyed vulperan city.



## GAMEBIRD TRIALS

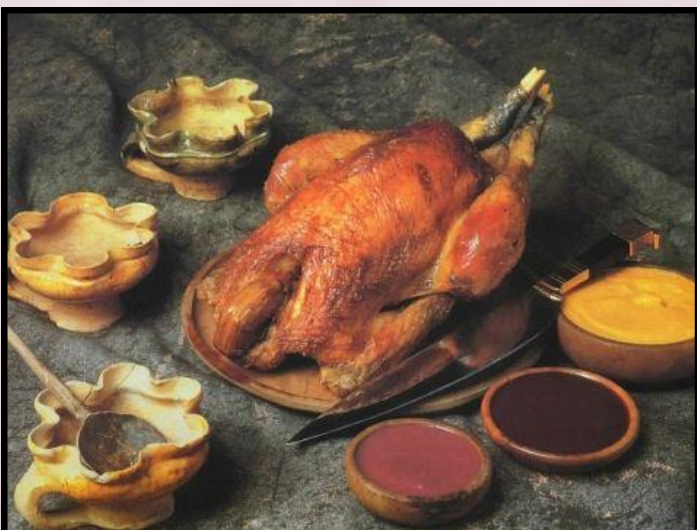
**THIRD WEEKEND IN AUGUST (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: VARIOUS MAINLAND REALMS**

There was a yearly tradition amongst human tribes in the Third Age of Neothera that involved the hunting of large birds for food. These would usually be wild chickens, pheasants, partridge, grouse and ptarmigan. This tradition saw hunters seek, kill and bring back a single bird to the leader of the tribe. Whoever returned with the largest bird would be granted one treasure from the tribe leader's riches, and this treasure would have to be handed over regardless of its value. Most winners would, of course, take a suitably expensive prize, however, it was not uncommon for some to ask for the tribe leader's daughter, or best servant to be claimed as their winnings.

This tradition still occurs in various villages, towns and cities today upon the Mainland, and although the prize for the hunter that returns the largest bird is no longer a treasure dictated by the winner, instead a hefty sum of Llandies is usually rewarded. All those that take part in the Gamebird Trial have from sunrise on the first day of the trial until sunset the following day to hunt and return their bird, dead or alive. The hunter's entry will be weighed, measured and checked for any growth-enhancing spells, enchantments or alchemical concoctions in the bloodstream. Cheating is frowned upon, and any incidents will see the hunter immediately disqualified and prevented from entering the contest for the following five years.

When a winner has been decided, the mayor, governor or chief of the local town or city awards the winner their prize and places a crown upon the hunter's head made of woven sticks and feathers taken from the winning bird the previous year. The great bird will then be cooked, along with all other submitted entries and a great feast takes place well into the night and the following morning.



## MASSMOOT

**22ND SEPTEMBER (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: HEMADRI**

On the twenty-second day of the ninth month of each year, the Hemadri people celebrate Massmoot. At dawn and dusk, all Hemadri gather around the base of the World Tree, or if they are not able to make the pilgrimage to the City of Zan'zoula in the Na'Tohram Gheneris Rainforest, they gather in a woodland location. Massmoot is a celebration of creator deities that give and sustain life, and a chance to meditate, sing, pray and discuss the harmony of the elements.

The first prayer session begins at dawn and offers thanks to Terralapis, the Goddess of Earth, for creating the ground from which life grows. Soil is then mixed with water, as a gesture of thanks to Sequilla the Water Goddess for providing life-giving sustenance to all living things. This mixture is then applied to the skin in beautiful patterns by those taking part in the ceremony.

Throughout the day, floral crowns are made by the Hemadri, and each person observing this holy day is required to wear one come dusk. When the sun sets, water is used to cleanse the mud patterns from the skin of all observers, symbolic of the cleansing power of Sequilla. As midnight draws near, all floral crowns are placed at the base of the World Tree, or whichever tree an observer congregates at for Massmoot. The crowns form a beautiful ring of all manner of flowers and plant life, and a final prayer is spoken, thanking Hamanli' for the wonderful creation of nature.



## TREGARTHIA

**OCTOBER (EVERY THREE YEARS - LAST OCCURED 2395)**

**OBSERVED BY: MAINLAND NEOTHERA AND THE FROZEN NORTH**

Tregartha Lothwelyn, an Elf of Nature, during the Second Age after the dawn of creation, made her home in the forests surrounding Caddington. This place was an area of untouched beauty and said to be the last place on the Mainland where the Seven met before ascending to the Ethereal Realm.

The paths the Seven walked as they surveyed their creation for the final time, left in their wake the magical ley lines that now reside beneath the world. Tregartha was the first elf to tap into the power contained within the ley lines using a technique she named M'thanduar (in elvish) or Mana Dowsing (in the Common Tongue). When she did so, many unseen planes aligned and every three years on the anniversary of this day, they align again.

As the planes move closer, the veils between them become blurred, meaning beings in one plane may be able to see into another - but will not always be able to interact with anything or anyone in them.

Sometimes planes may collide causing rifts to open, and this allows beings from one plane to step into another freely. The planes moving closer also means that it takes less energy to move between them, however, this also means that demonic influences are stronger, making the risk of possession or physical manifestations so much greater.

Sometimes pockets of time open themselves, meaning it may be entirely possible to see past or future events, although some evidence suggests these events may have occurred or will occur in alternative dimensions. Little is known about why the various planes of existence collide in such a way, although the elves noted that the more essence that is tapped from ley lines, the more powerful the pull of the planes will be.

This time of year is called Tregarthia. It is a time where shadows, demons, lost souls and restless spirits often cross between veils and into the mortal planes. Sometimes being harmless, sometimes having devastating consequences, causing chaos across the realms of Neothera. With this in mind, it is tradition to hang an effigy or symbol of one of the many gods or goddesses at the doorway to a household or wear some sort of trinket showing devotion to the divine deities to protect oneself against any activity relating to Tregarthia. It is believed that those who do this are less likely to succumb to any harm caused by maleficent forces that walk between the planes at this time, once every three years.

## OMIDASHU

**2ND OCTOBER (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: URKA AND HUMANS OF THE SOUTHERN REALMS**

On the second day of the tenth month each year, the humans and ukra of the Southern Realms celebrate Omidashu, a time to reflect upon two things; the arrival of the urka in Neothera and the remembrance of lost loved ones. Roughly translated from Harumi to the Common Tongue, Omidashu means "Arrival through loss".

The urka arrived in the Southern Realms of Neothera in the year 102 of the Third Age, their golden arc carrying them away from their doomed planet Nethrekka. Many thousands of lives were lost in the conflict against the Nightmares, and many more on the journey to Neothera as the inhabitants of the arc suffered through illness and eventual starvation.

To the urka, Neothera was a promised land, and upon arriving there those that survived the journey through the stars marked this day as a joyous occasion that would be celebrated for generations to come. However, the lives were lost on the journey to the promised lands would be forever remembered by the urka on this day also. Mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, all friends and family, many of whom fought the Nightmares in Nethrekka, or sacrificed themselves in some way so that their kin may live forever in the promised land.

Humans of the Southern Realms have joined the urka in celebrating Omidashu, and for them, this is a day to remember departed friends, loved ones and ancestors. Throughout the day the citizens of Sora'Harumi and the Outlander Tribes leave offerings beside the great rivers that run through the Southern Realms at small shrines dedicated to the departed. Such offerings can include a small bowl of rice, or a trinket or wood carving that pays homage to the deceased. For example, a fisherman in life may be left a small carving of a fish, boat or hooks.

When the sun has set, those observing this holy day gather at the banks of the river that overlook the remains of the golden arc that rest upon the central island and light candles within paper lanterns and send them to the stars above. Their reasons for doing so are to honour their ancestors who lived and died in Neothera or their homeworld of Nethrekka, or assisted in the journey to the promised lands. The lanterns rise upwards into the skies to guide the spirits of their ancestors to where the urka now reside, and those who are lucky enough will see the spirits of their loved ones appear by their sides for a brief moment, smiling and offering hope and warmth.



## COLLECTION DAYS (A.K.A) PIRATE KING'S TRIBUTE

**3RD TO 5TH NOVEMBER (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: BLACK HAMMER BAY**

Rather than the citizens paying taxes on goods purchased or sold in Black Hammer Bay, the captain of each crew is required to hand over five per cent of their total earnings each year to the current Pirate King, the leader of the realm. The accumulated wealth made by the Pirate King through the collections is used firstly to pay off any debts that occur through the running of Black Hammer Bay, usually to the Tutela Syndicate, and especially for them to turn a blind eye to the dubious goings-on that frequently happens here.

A further portion of the wealth is used to build and maintain the city and its large port, any leftover wealth is kept by the Pirate King, and can be used to expand his or her crew to bolster defences in the realm or assist in other matters of business that ensure the city can operate without falling to ruin.

For three consecutive days each year, known as Collection Days, or the Pirate King's Tribute, the captain of each crew must sign over their portion of treasure or face a black spot next to their name in the Pirate King's ledger. The black spot means that the captain, and indeed his or her crew face larger shares of their wealth being taken by force by the Pirate King and sometimes results in death by hanging if a captain refuses to hand over their share of treasures.

If a captain is unable to travel to Black Hammer Bay to sign over their portion of wealth due to being imprisoned in another realm or lost at sea, for example, the next in command must represent instead. Failure to arrive on time means the captain and crew will be required to hand over ten per cent of their treasures the next time to return to Black Hammer Bay, and this percentage can rise further the longer the captain takes to meet with the Pirate King.

Although this isn't so much of a holy day, those that reside in Black Hammer Bay are grateful for the wealth that is given to the Pirate King, for the city as a whole benefit from work that goes into maintaining and improving lifestyles for everyone. Furthermore, due to a large number of crews all present in the city at this time, various celebrations are held where old friends and acquaintances can meet to drink and be merry before setting off into the world again to begin amassing more treasures and goods once the Collection Days have concluded. These three days are undoubtedly the busiest Black Hammer Bay will be each year.

## ARA'KOA

**24TH TO 31ST DECEMBER (YEARLY)**

**OBSERVED BY: ARAK'CHAR**

The cold period isn't much of a problem when you live in scorched lands where fire jets from the ground on occasion. Where the other realms may embrace the warmth to keep themselves alive in the cold season, the Arak'Char tribes all come together in the great halls of the City of Arka'Gharad and become one for a week of revelry. Great pillars of fire are assembled inside the large stone caverns, one for each tribe that attends the celebration, and shipments from neighbouring realms bring across food and barrels of ale and mead.

The fires must be kept burning for the entire week, as is the tradition of Ara'Koa which began in the Third Age of the world. This festival celebrates the might of the Arak'Char, the strength of their people, and that to give thanks to Arak'almundae, the God of Fire who sleeps deep beneath the mountains.

For this week-long celebration, all tribal differences are forgotten as the Arak'Char unite in the light of Arak'almundae's flames. The Karath'tir clan lead in grand ceremonial dances, all leading up to the climax of the last day of the event. After an entire week of revelry, the Scorched One stands before all of his or her people and speaks sacred words of the Morrdoun Mountains. No outsider may ever hear these words, for it is said that the God of Fire speaks through the leader of their realm, invigorating the minds, bodies and spirits of all those that hear these words.





## E'THANDREST: THE DAY OF LIGHT

31ST DECEMBER (YEARLY)

OBSERVED BY: FORMER CITIZENS OF FARADOME

When the elves and piskies defeated the demons in the Second Age and sent them back to the Nightmare Realm, there was sorrow in their victory for the great losses the elves had endured. It was decided that a day would be given each year, where the population of the City of Faradome would head out into the Victory Fields and lay down offerings to the lost souls amongst the Scarlet Maiden flowers.

All families come together and enjoy one another's company as they give prayers of thanks to the Seven for their gift of the piskies, who turned the tide in the final battle, and for guiding them through their immense grief.

Presents are given to the young ones, to teach them of the joy that can be brought from the simplest of gifts and recently the faeries began to bring this tradition into their own culture, respecting those that came before. Whilst there has never really been a true translation into the Common Tongue, there are many who call E'thandrest the Day of Light.

No matter where they may be, any who have passed through the barrier of Faradome feel great warmth as the city alights in sorrowful joy and remembrance on this cold day in mid-winter, connected by the power of the Seven and their final gift to the Amicita.

Despite the recent destruction of Faradome and indeed the Victory Fields, this tradition is still practised by members of the Amicita that have been forced to make their homes in other realms. However, instead of celebrating at the now burned Victory Fields, the celebration takes place in any areas where nature's touch can truly be felt.



## HARMONY OF THE CREATORS

DURING FULL OR PARTIAL ECLIPSES

(ANY TIME OF YEAR)

OBSERVED BY: FOLLOWERS OF OSIRAH AND SENETSU

Solar and lunar eclipses are celebrated by those who worship or acknowledge Osirah, the God of the Sun and Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon, and are classed as holy days by their followers. These days are considered the most special of all holy days, for during an eclipse the planet of Neothera is almost, or fully aligned with the two deities that are believed to have created the entire universe.



As a result of these occurrences, and at the time of their happening, all of the elements and magic in the world are said to be in perfect harmony for the duration of the event, meaning that for a few brief minutes, the planet has a chance to cleanse its inner soul and partially restore any damage it has suffered as a result of an imbalance of the twelve elements (the thirteenth demonic element excluded).

Total solar eclipses occur in different areas of the planet of Neothera roughly every eighteen months and astronomers have discovered this happens when the sun, moon and planet of Neothera are aligned and a portion of the planet is engulfed in the shadow cast by the moon which either fully or partially blocks the sun's light. Partial solar eclipses occur more frequently and are observed roughly five times a year.

A lunar eclipse can occur between two to five times a year and is the result of the sun, the planet and the moon being exactly or very closely aligned, with the planet of Neothera being between the sun and the moon. A lunar eclipse can occur only on the night of a full moon.



Whilst some skilled astronomers can predict when and where a solar or lunar eclipse is going to occur, this does not make these events any less special, and in fact, some use this information to chase this phenomenon to observe and offer praise to Osirah and Senetsu as frequently as possible. The fullness of an eclipse relates directly to how harmonious the elements are, with total eclipses being considered the most powerful.

Those attuned to the elements all feel a cleansing rush of euphoria when an eclipse occurs, and as such, for a brief moment can harness the power of the twelve elements (the thirteenth demonic element excluded) more potently than they ever could outside of an eclipse.

It has been observed that rituals or magic used for maleficent purposes (that are gleaned via an eclipse) have devastating results for the caster, often resulting in spells or rituals backfiring and causing the death of the person that misused the power of harmony.

When harnessed for positive reasons, the power of the harmony of the elements enhances rituals and spell casting to the extent that the caster often has to tone down their use of magic to prevent the power becoming unwieldy and slipping through their fingers entirely. Those that do not wish to draw upon the power of the harmony of the elements during an eclipse use the phenomenon as a means to offer deep prayers of appreciation to Osirah and Senetsu in whatever form they desire, thanking them for their gift of creation, of both life and death.

It is a time to bear witness to the union of the light and dark elements, and as such, all other elements, where the sun and moon orbit Neothera as watchful grandparents over their children, the Seven's creation. One can truly see that Osirah and Senetsu's power is equal, prominent and all-encompassing.

## **STORMWOVEN**

**FOLLOWING A LIGHTNING STORM (ANY TIME OF YEAR)  
OBSERVED BY: FOLLOWERS OF THE SEVEN**

Stormwoven is a tradition that is observed by those devout to the Seven and who believe that under the teachings of the elves, Signis the God of Lightning is the most powerful amongst all of the Seven. There is no set date for Stormwoven, and followers of the Seven will observe this holy day as and when great lightning storms occur, where it is believed that Signis is enforcing that the legends of old are indeed true and should be respected. Devout worshippers are said to be able to foretell when a storm is approaching and can prepare for Stormwoven. They even state that they can define the purpose for Signis striking down at the world from the Ethereal Realm in the form of powerful lightning.



For storms that occur without wind or rain, the ominous sound of thunder and the flash of lightning is said to be Signis portraying emotion such as sadness, rage or happiness. Storms that occur with great cold winds and rain, as well as thunder and lightning, are often thought to be Signis, Sequilla, Spiria and Glacilla locked in combat in the Ethereal Realm, or again, expressing combined emotions. Some say these are even echoes of the War of the Gods during the Second Age of the world.

Followers of Stormwoven either embrace or fear the storms of Neothera. Unless they are attuned to Signis' will and able to discern the cause of the Lightning God's outburst, they contemplate their actions since the last Stormwoven. If they feel their conscience is guilt-free, it is a sign that Signis is rejoicing their actions, and this is a moment to offer him recognition and thanks.

If they feel their conscience is guilty, Signis has recognised their wrong-doings, and they pray for his forgiveness. For the undecided, they often look at the state of the world for answers. Should they feel a crime has been committed against the Seven, or mistreatment of some kind has occurred at the hands of someone else, Signis is portraying his anger and must be appeased by praying until the storm passes.

Whatever the circumstance, prayer is usually the answer during Stormwoven, and it is common for all other symbols or effigies of the Seven to be moved to a dark place, and those dedicated to Signis to be placed in the most prominent part of a dwelling for Signis to be solely appreciated.



# THE THIRTEEN ELEMENTS

Thirteen known, powerful forces are present in the universe and each one plays its part in sustaining all life in one form or another, these forces are known as elements. All elements, except demonic, have a deity (or deities) that created them. These deities, gods and goddesses, worshipped by the inhabitants of Neothera, are rarely, if ever, seen in the physical plane of existence, and instead are believed to govern the forces from afar in whichever astral plane they have ascended to. The elements are the building blocks of all things.

Some elemental forces, such as air, are invisible whereas others can be seen with the naked eye - water or fire, for example. However, whether an element can be seen, heard or felt is irrelevant, because each force plays its integral part in the balance of all things and indeed the existence of all life in the universe. Despite being unnatural forces, meaning that they were not present in the world of Neothera when it was created, the forces of fel and demonic are still classed as elements, for without them the goblins and Nightmares (demons) would not have been created, nor would they likely be able to continue existing should these two elements suddenly vanish from the universe.

## THE ELEMENTS AND SPELLCASTING

Those that are capable of casting spells, performing rituals or even using powers inherent to their species are directly tapping into the power of the elements, and it is through the fundamental Arcane Element that all other elements can be shaped to fulfil the needs of the user. Where the offensive school of magic draws directly upon any of the thirteen elements to cast harmful spells that cause physical damage to a target, the schools of healing and protection magic rely primarily on the Arcane Element to form protective barriers or close gaping wounds in an instant. However, other elements may be manipulated by the force of arcane to perform similar feats, and this largely depends on how the magic-user first learned to cast spells.

Casting spells, which are all derived from one of the thirteen elements is no easy feat, and to truly master the art of magic one must attune themselves to the desired elements either through years of study of their intricate workings or possessing a deep, worldly knowledge or bond with a particular force. This could, however, also be achieved by appreciating how all elements work in unison, years of practised meditation and even binding one's body, mind and soul to the natural ebb and flow of the elemental forces present in the universe. This said, for some, bending the forces of the elements to do their bidding is as easy as blinking or breathing; these are generally beings that are born from or gifted by the deities with a natural affinity to an element.

It should be noted that nearly all elemental magic manifested by spellcasters can rarely be seen by the naked eye. Offensive magic, for example, does not allow one to summon huge balls of fire to hurl at their foes, instead one draws upon the element of fire and manipulates its power to cause internal harm to a target's body. Should this magic be strong enough then perhaps it could cause the target to ignite into flames, however, magic is largely invisible in the world of Neothera. It is most often the after-effects of using a spell that can be physically observed, such as the closing of a wound closing through a healing spell, or a foe running in terror after their mind has been subjected to a fear spell.





## AIR

Spiria, the keeper and creator of the winds is known throughout the world of Neothera as the God of Air. Always present yet rarely seen, Spiria is the most unpredictable of the Seven and is also known as the trickster God. Those who follow Spiria's teachings consider the element of air to be playful, soothing and inspiring, yet also with the potential to be very destructive. The element also provides life-giving breath to be drawn by all creatures and jostles the seeds of nature upon its breeze, allowing growth. Air can sometimes be overpowering when great gusts of wind blow ships off course, however, travellers often look to the Air Element so that their journey will be swift, and they keep to their path. Air can also be destructive, where great hurricanes can destroy towns or forests as they bashfully pummel anything caught in their way. Those with clandestine motives often look to Spiria and the element of air that their business may be performed without difficulties.

### **STRENGTHS**

Air magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Earth / Lightning

### **WEAKNESSES**

Air magic is weak against the following elements:  
Fire / Nature

## ARCANE

The arcane element was created by Osirah the God of the Sun and deity of light, and Senetsu the Goddess of the Moon and deity of darkness, as a grounding force for all other elements. The Arcane Element is a basis for the existence of all other elements; the building blocks that allow for the creation of all things beyond the combined divine powers of Osirah and Senetsu. Arcane is considered the easiest element to manipulate due to how abundantly available it is when tapping into the flows of magic, and nearly all spellcasters begin their training by working with this force. It is believed that the Arcane Element is also the basis of all magic, and allows other elements to be more easily shaped and used by a spellcaster through its manipulation. It is often considered a neutral and baseline force, yet an extremely powerful one when its energy is harnessed correctly.

### **STRENGTHS**

Arcane magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Fel

### **WEAKNESSES**

Arcane magic is weak against the following elements:  
Demonic



**THE MARK OF THE  
AIR ELEMENT**



**THE MARK OF THE  
ARCANE ELEMENT**



## DARK

The element of darkness is believed to be the first and oldest element in the known universe, and it is from the darkness that the first deity, Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon emerged. The connotations of darkness often lead to the belief that the element is used by those with ill intent, spellcasters or ritualists harnessing its power to cause pain and suffering. Whilst this is true in some circumstances, darkness is also a symbol of hope, where the blackest night leads to the brightest day. Without darkness, there cannot be light, and without the balance of the Dark and Light Elements, life itself cannot exist. Darkness also plays a key part in maintaining life in Neothera; plants and animals depend on the daily cycle of light and dark rhythm to govern life-sustaining behaviours such as reproduction, nourishment, sleep, protection from predators and indeed the mental wellbeing of all living things.

### STRENGTHS

Dark magic is dominant over the following elements:

None

### WEAKNESSES

Dark magic is weak against the following elements:

None

## DEMONIC

Whilst it is deemed one of the thirteen elements due to its inherent quality of keeping a species in existence, demonic magic is without a doubt the most destructive and controversial of all of the thirteen elements. No one is sure exactly how the Nightmares (demons) came into being, however, the most common belief is that the perfect balance of Neothera was upset in the Second Age which led to their appearance. The Demonic Element allows Nightmares to exist in the world, and spellcasters of any origin are also able to tap into its power should they study the force enough, or have demonic blood within their bodies, such as the vulperan species. It is assumed that the more the element is acknowledged, the stronger the Nightmares become, and the greater their presence in the world will be. It is therefore common in law for those found to be using demonic magic to be put to death. The Demonic Element is destructive and chaotic and said to also be empowered by those that embrace the Seven Vices.

### STRENGTHS

Demonic magic is dominant over the following elements:

Arcane

### WEAKNESSES

Demonic magic is weak against the following elements:

Dark / Divine / Light



**THE MARK OF THE  
ELEMENT OF DARKNESS**



**THE MARK OF THE  
DEMONIC ELEMENT**



## DIVINE

When perfectly aligned, the three elements, dark, light and arcane lead to the manifestation of the divine element. It takes an extremely skilled mage to recreate such an alignment, and even the most powerful spellcasters may never achieve such a feat in their lifetimes. Divine is considered to be the purest element, more powerful and with more potential than the twelve others. There are beings in the world that are said to have been touched by the gods, or considered direct descendants due to their innate ability to wield divine magic, a gift that is often carried in the blood. Such beings often possess skills beyond any mere mortal, for example being able to heal the wounds of multiple injured people at the same time, using telekinesis to move objects with only their minds, or drawing upon their gift to smite their foes with divine power - a magic that is unrivalled by any other element. Divine power has no limits. In the right hands, great things can be achieved through the use of this force, however, in the wrong hands...you had better pray that the gods intervene!

### STRENGTHS

Divine magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Demonic / Fel

### WEAKNESSES

Divine magic is weak against the following elements:  
None

## EARTH

Terralapis, the keeper and creator of the soil, stone, hills and mountains, is known throughout the world of Neothera as the Goddesses of Earth. Earth is seen as a nurturing element or one that can be shaped like clay to allow other elements such as nature to be sustained through its mere existence. Followers of Terralapis offer prayers to the Earth Mother, as she is also known, to bring them patience and stability in all aspects of life. The Earth Element seeks to draw all things together with it to bring harmony, rootedness and stability. Other attributes of the Earth Element sometimes include ambition, creativity, stubbornness and responsibility.

### STRENGTHS

Earth magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Fire / Lightning

### WEAKNESSES

Earth magic is weak against the following elements:  
Nature / Water



**THE MARK OF THE  
DIVINE ELEMENT**



**THE MARK OF THE  
EARTH ELEMENT**



## FEL

Fel is considered an unnatural element, meaning that it was not present in the world of Neothera when it was first created by the Seven. The Fel Element came into existence through the corruption of other elements and was created when an elf of the Second Age named Moth'elduin (also known as Mok'Garrosh) refused to partake in the War of the Gods. He and his followers haphazardly used the Arcane Element to empower their rituals of protection and accidentally called forth unknown beings that twisted the Seven Elements the elves were akin to into a corrupted form. This led to the creation of the species of goblins via the deformation of the elves that followed Moth'elduin. Studies of the Fel Element have revealed traces of all the elements except for divine, however, a dominant trace of demonic essence is noted in all studies, suggesting that the beings who answered Moth'elduin and his followers' prayers were in fact Nightmares. Whilst other species can learn to use Fel Magic, goblins are the only race that can release its potential with little or no training in the magical arts, presumably because it is the Fel Element that led to the creation of the species.

### STRENGTHS

Fel magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Demonic

### WEAKNESSES

Fel magic is weak against the following elements:  
Divine

## FIRE

Arak'Almundae, the keeper and creator of flames, is known throughout the world of Neothera as the God of Fire. This volatile deity is believed to be the only God who remains in the mortal plane, and buried himself deep in the core of Neothera, his hot magma coursing like blood through the veins of the world, deep beneath the ground. Whilst fire is often seen as a destructive element, it is also one that cleanses. It is attributed with spontaneity, enthusiasm, inspiration, passion and warmth, however, it can also fuel aggression, impatience and impulsive behaviour if not channelled correctly.

### STRENGTHS

Fire magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Air / Nature

### WEAKNESSES

Fire magic is weak against the following elements:  
Earth / Water



**THE MARK OF THE  
FEL ELEMENT**



**THE MARK OF THE  
FIRE ELEMENT**



## ICE

Glacilla, the keeper and creator of the cold and seasons is known throughout the world of Neothera as the Goddess of Ice. Wherever Glacilla walks, she brings the winter, and with her the seasons, for the further she journeys away from a location, the warmer the summer that follows. Glacilla's essence helps us freeze knowledge so we may explore it at a slower and more contemplative pace. The element of ice also allows one to cool their temper, bringing steady and clear thought when the fires of anger would otherwise cause one to make bad decisions. Glacilla is a commonly worshipped deity amongst the undead species of Neothera, where ice prevents the decomposition of the body, and spiritually, where the love between her and Haman'li, the God of Nature, is celebrated that undead beings are not all abominations, and should be accepted for who they are, and allowed to exist in the world without persecution.

### **STRENGTHS**

Ice magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Nature / Water

### **WEAKNESSES**

Ice magic is weak against the following elements:  
Air / Fire

## LIGHT

The element of light was born from the existence of the element of darkness, and according to elven legend, Osirah, the God of the Sun, was created through Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon's hope that light shall bring the promise of life to the universe. Light is seen as a positive force and often used as such by those capable of harnessing its power through magic. Light is soothing and dispels the fear of what may be lurking in the darkness. Light cannot exist without darkness, and these two fundamental elements bring balance to all things by existing harmoniously beside one another. Life cannot be sustained without these two elements, and they are undoubtedly the most paramount of all the elemental forces. The element of light is an undeniable force that can even be seen during the night, lighting up the moon and bringing the promise of tomorrow. All living creatures require light to survive. Without the element of light plants and trees could not grow, nature could not flourish, and before long a world plunged into eternal darkness would be unable to sustain any life at all.

### **STRENGTHS**

Light magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Air / Demonic

### **WEAKNESSES**

Light magic is weak against the following elements:  
Ice / Nature



**THE MARK OF THE  
ICE ELEMENT**



**THE MARK OF THE  
ELEMENT OF LIGHT**



## LIGHTNING

Signis, the keeper and ruler of the Seven is known throughout the world of Neothera as the God of Lightning. Signis rules over his siblings by ensuring one element does not become more powerful than the others. Lightning sometimes invokes fear, and it is through this fear that Signis holds his throne amongst the gods, yet only to maintain the important balance of the physical plane. Lightning is often associated with power, imagination, energy and speed, for a single spark can quickly lead to significant and often great things. Signis is said to have brought life to the creations of the other gods through the energy of the element he governs, bringing consciousness and sentience to all life forms.

### **STRENGTHS**

Lightning magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Air / Water

### **WEAKNESSES**

Lightning magic is weak against the following elements:  
Earth / Fire

## NATURE

Haman'li is the God of Nature and represents life in its purest form. Although his main followers are the Hemadri, many others worship Haman'li through their love and belief in the powerful element of creation. Elven lore states that all life on Neothera was born from the World Tree, which grew from a seed that Haman'li planted in Terralapis' soil. The seed was nourished by Sequilla, and as the World Tree flourished, so did all life on the mortal plane. Those that follow Haman'li and wish to understand nature must first understand the fundamental rule of the element: Nature gives, and nature takes away. Nature can be tamed but never contained. Nature can be cultivated, but in the end, its will cannot be bent. Nature loves and nature destroys.

### **STRENGTHS**

Nature magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Earth / Water

### **WEAKNESSES**

Nature magic is weak against the following elements:  
Fire / Ice



**THE MARK OF THE  
NATURE ELEMENT**



**THE MARK OF THE  
NATURE ELEMENT**



## WATER

Sequilla is the Goddess of Water and created the rains, lakes, rivers and oceans - the water of life that would nourish the world and its inhabitants. The element of water is linked to passion and revitalization, cleansing both the body and mind. Similar to the path of water as it cascades down the hills towards the oceans and lakes, it allows one to contemplate this element in order to let their ideas flow freely, eventually forming great pools of knowledge. Water can be a calming element, it also represents versatility, transformation, clarity and adaptability, however it can also be wrathful, for as the sea can be unforgiving and dangerous so can Sequilla's temperament.

### **STRENGTHS**

Water magic is dominant over the following elements:  
Earth / Fire

### **WEAKNESSES**

Water magic is weak against the following elements:  
Lightning / Nature



## **THE MARK OF THE WATER ELEMENT**



# THE CONSTELLATIONS

The void of space and what may or may not lay beyond the planet of Neothera is a topic that is frequently discussed by its inhabitants. Theories of the universe, legends and research date back to the Second Age, where the elves established that the planet was spherical and orbited the sun, completing a rotation once every three hundred and sixty-five days. Elven astronomers discovered that there were twelve prominent constellations, groups of stars, that after many hundreds of years of contemplation were given names according to imaginary outlines penned by the astronomers that appeared to depict people, objects and aspects relatable to everyday society.

Roughly once every four weeks, one of the twelve constellations became more prominent than the rest, and as such the elves divided the time each constellation was visible from Neothera into twelve separate months. Meanwhile, in Lyshanduir, the homeworld of the faeries (fey), their astronomers discovered the same findings as to the elves, yet the constellations there, although also amounting also to a prominent twelve, similar in comparison to worldly aspects, were different in appearance to those present in Neothera. It is a bizarre coincidence that the fey came to the same conclusions as the elves in Neothera, however, this has led to the belief that perhaps the universe that Lyshanduir resides in is, in fact, some sort of alternate version of Neothera.

The constellations do not carry any deep meaning to the people of Eúnd Vald and the stars are simply seen as the teeth of Andlat, the great dragon slain by the King of the Gods, Hvikr, shortly before he created the world. The same can be said for the urka of Nethrekka. No scriptures or legends exist surrounding the existence or purpose of the stars, other than they are a by-product of Osirah, the God of the Sun, and Senetsu, the Goddess of the Moon's power that created the universe. However, since arriving in Neothera, which was once a distant star viewed from the planet of Nethrekka, the urka have come to believe that each star may potentially hold life, yet with their golden arc being permanently grounded, and without the means to travel back into the void of space, they have no way of proving, or disproving this theory.

Both the elves and the fey gave purpose to the constellations observed in space. After much contemplation unanimous verdicts would be reached, giving life and meaning to what was viewed when staring into the sky once the sun had set. Star charts were made and lines drawn, connecting the stars in the constellations so that they depicted people, animals or objects that related to everyday life and the eventual connotations surrounding the depictions. It is theorised that the creator deities, Osirah and Senetsu, had made plans that would determine the personality traits of those born into the two worlds that could perhaps define them.

Observations of their people made by elven and fey astronomers over many hundreds of years would lead to these traits being associated with the depiction of the being, animal or object found in the constellation, and eventually these traits, according to those that believed in the findings of the astronomers, would become known as star signs. For example, if an elf was born in January, they would take the sign of the Artist, showing dominant personality traits of charisma and creativity, and being passionate and innovative. Their flaws, if you can call them as such, would be that they were dominating, vain and a perfectionist.

In Lyshanduir, the fact that the constellations mirrored the patterns on a faerie's skin gave further proof to the theory that the gods had plans for the being, potentially marking and planning out their personalities from birth. A person can share traits from two star signs, and those born within a few days of the start or end of the month possess a cusp sign. An example of this would be as follows: Someone born on the first of May would have the star sign of the Siblings or the Twin Faces, they may also share traits of the sign from the previous month of April, the Father, or the Mountain.

Whilst many people think there is truth in the traits a person possesses due to their star sign dictating as such, there are also many others that feel there is no certainty in this, and it is simply nonsensical rubbish that should not let one pre-judge a person based on twinkling lights in the sky. The fey, however, takes this topic very seriously, and due to the Star-Lines upon their skin, they feel they are connected to the stars, and the scriptures that tell of their meaning are very much true. Sadly, since the fey left Lyshanduir, and the darkness descended, all trace of the stars has dissolved, and only the moon hangs faded and solemn in the eternal black of Terminarium. Whether the stars are gone for good is yet to be seen, although some say if the fey returned to Lyshanduir the night sky would sparkle once again.



## THE ARTIST / THE RIVER

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** January

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a figure with a quill in one hand and a length of parchment in the other.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles a river winding towards the foreground from far away.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Charismatic / Creative / Innovative / Passionate

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Dominating / Perfectionist / Vain

## THE FARMER / THE FISHER

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** February

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a figure holding a scythe.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles a figure holding a fish in one hand and a rod in the other.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Humble / Optimistic / Persevering / Responsible

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Miserly / Resistant to Change / Tactless

## THE WARRIOR / THE GLAIVE

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** March

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a figure wielding a sword and a shield.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles a glaive with a moon-shaped hook on the reverse side of the blade.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Altruistic / Bravery / Determined / Trustworthy

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Controlling / Egotistical / Ruthless

## THE FATHER / THE MOUNTAIN

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** April

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a bearded man, a tall staff in one hand and fish in the other.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles three sharply-pointed mountains.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Provider / Prudent / Supportive / Teacher

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Cynical / Escapist / Ill-tempered

## THE SIBLINGS / THE TWIN FACES

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** May

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles two children holding hands, one male and the other female.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles two faces sharing an eye, nose, and with two mouths.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Camaraderie / Playful / Tolerant / Trustworthy

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Irresponsible / Possessive / Sensitive

## THE MOTHER / THE OAK TREE

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** June

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a robed female with her arms spread outward at her hips and her palms facing upward.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles an oak tree with three large branches sprouting from it's trunk.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Gentleness / Nurturing / Obedient / Patience

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Fearful / Overprotective / Unable to let go

## THE TRAVELLER / THE WOLF

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** July

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a figure walking, facing west, carrying a large satchel on their back.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles a howling wolf with its head raised to the skies.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Energetic / Independent / Instinctive / Witty

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Blindly Optimistic / Inconsistent / Restless



## THE LOVERS / THE HEART

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** August

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles two figures embraced, their genders unidentifiable.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles the symbol of a heart.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Compromising / Emotional / Generous / Romantic

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Gullible / Jealous / Vindictive

## THE ARCHITECT / THE CROWN

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** September

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a figure with a spade in one hand and a pickaxe in the other.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles a crown with four points jutting from its top.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Ambitious / Eccentric / Logical / Pioneering

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Dependant / Self-Pitying / Unrealistic

## THE NOBLEMAN / THE SCEPTRE

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** October

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a figure holding a goblet in one hand and an orb in the other.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles a sceptre with a rounded top and two points jutting from its head.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Diplomatic / Disciplined / Leadership / Strategic

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Egotistical / Indulgent / Talkative

## THE SPIRIT / THE ELDER

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** November

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a hooded and robed figure with a skeletal arm reaching to the east.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles a robed figure holding a walking stick in it's right hand.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Calm / Open-minded / Sacrificing / Spiritual

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Critical / Lazy / Overthinker

## THE HUNTER / THE SERPENT

**BIRTH MONTH / MOST VISIBLE IN:** December

**NEOTHERA:** The constellation in Neothera resembles a figure on horseback about to let loose an arrow from a bow.

**LYSHANDUIR:** The constellation in Lyshanduir resembles a great serpent, open-mouthed and baring its fangs.

**POSITIVE TRAITS:** Inventive / Perceptive / Tenacious / Versatile

**NEGATIVE TRAITS:** Cunning / Deceptive / Uncaring





# OTHER-WORLDLY REALMS

The mortal plane, or the physical plane as it is also called, holds all life on Neothera. Everything from the ground that is walked upon to the waters, the trees and all life forms that reside within it. This plane of existence holds everything you can touch, see, smell and hear, and perhaps more if one seeks hard enough. It is considered the primary plane where everything that exists can be interacted with. Many folks will happily go about their lives not wondering what lays beyond the physical plane, however, some are aware of the existence of other planes beyond what can be easily seen, and some of these people are even capable of shifting into them, or viewing what lays beyond through the use of magic or even technology.

Some theorise that other planes of existence are alternative realities; dimensions that mirror what occurs in the physical plane with a few minor or major changes. An example of a minor change could include the sky being purple instead of blue in an alternative plane of existence. In another alternative reality, a monumental change might have occurred, for example, the elves and piskies losing the Nightmare War at the end of the Second Age, with the demons taking control of Neothera, seeing the planet destroyed at their hands before the dawn of the Third Age.

This leads to a theory formulated by some great minds that the instance of Neothera they are currently living in is but one of an endless number of realities contained within a multiverse: An infinite number of realities where any imaginable change to the known universe is possible. Although this theory has never been proved, it is respected by many scientists and the existence of other planes that can be entered by those with the abilities to do so only adds further proof to the theory of "What if" and "How do we prove this?"

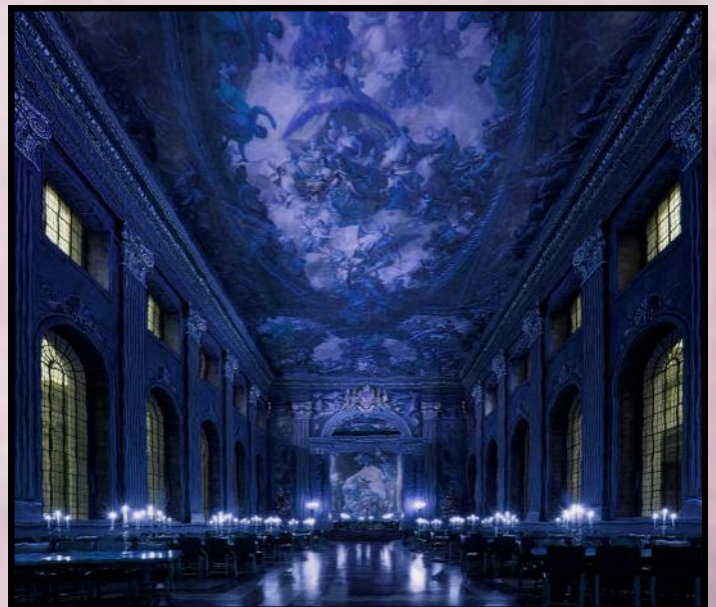
## ETHEREAL REALM (HALLS OF THE GODS)

The Ethereal Realm (or the Halls of the Gods as it is named by some cultures) is a spiritual realm where almost all divine creator gods and goddesses exist. It is said to be a heavenly realm located in the astral planes amongst the stars where there is no death or suffering. When mortal husks are shed, the spirits transcend here, and their every desire is fulfilled. They are rewarded with an everlasting afterlife free from the trappings of their mortal shells. They are reunited with their deceased loved ones and can live with their ancestors, feasting, merry-making and appreciating the wonders and beauties the realm of the gods holds for all those who stood firmly by their teachings in life.

For the dedication they had in the worship of the gods and goddesses in life, they are finally able to enter the grand halls of the creator deities and can bask forever in their glory, in a realm where everything is provided to them without the need to work nor suffer to obtain it. After all, the suffering endured whilst alive in the mortal plane whilst living devoutly in the worship of the gods is rewarded with a bounty that is incomparable to any treasure found in the physical plane.

The idea of the existence of the Ethereal Realm was first introduced during the Second Age when the Seven created and walked amongst the houses of the elves. This is a teaching passed down by the ancient elves of Neothera and was apparently promised to them by the Seven themselves. The elves that fell in battle during the War of the Gods were said to be granted places in the realm of the afterlife for their sheer dedication to the Seven. The immortal elves that survived the War of the Gods and the Nightmare War that followed soon after, and are lucky enough to still be alive, speak of the existence of the Ethereal Realm as if it were gospel.

Within this realm, Osirah and Senetsu also reside alongside their siblings, the Seven, except for Arak'almundae who is believed to exist in the mortal plane. The inhabitants of Eúnd Vald, the Western Realms, also believe in the Halls of the Gods, however, to them it is known as Hourisdoum. The concept of this realm, where the gods of the west reside in the astral planes, is almost identical to that of the Ethereal Realm. The inhabitants of the Southern Realms do not believe in the Ethereal Realm due to the planet of Neothera being their promised land. Instead, they believe that their ancestor's spirits walk amongst the living, guiding them with unseen hands and becoming filled with warmth by the offerings the living give to them at shrines dedicated to their memory.





## LIMBO

Limbo is a realm that lays between the mortal plane and the Ethereal Realm. Spirits, especially those with unfinished business, are believed to reside here, and time does not move as it does in the physical plane. Very little is known about Limbo, and what small nuggets of information have been gleaned were spoken by spirits who were aware of their state, if only momentarily, to those gifted with the ability to contact them. Unlike the Realm of Shadows, it is not possible for a physical being to enter Limbo, and it seems the ghosts that haunt this place offer very different accounts of what the realm is like.

Apparently, it is completely different for each spirit that lingers there, with some accounts reporting it being a world of endless night, and others stating it is if they are forced to relive the same day or moment over and over again. The various tales whispered by the spirits are almost always unique, although what is very clear is that feelings of sorrow, frustration, anxiety and often hopelessness cling to the words the spirits speak. This is something that is always reported to be felt by those who have made contact with spirits that reside in Limbo.

Although spirits are rarely able to comprehend it, often due to being trapped in a hopeless state, there are ways that a spirit can escape its binding to this realm. There is some belief that if a spirit is appeased, or manages to fulfil a wish they were not able whilst alive, it will pass on to the Ethereal Realm if they lived a good life or the Nightmare Realm should they have embraced the Seven Vices whilst alive. It is also reported that some spirits can shift into the physical plane, if only for a short while, before returning to Limbo. This often occurs as a result of magic, the heightened emotions of the nearby living, or if they are a particularly powerful entity.

## NIGHTMARE REALM

Tales of demons appearing via rifts that open in the mortal plane of Neothera are extremely common. It is believed that these rifts allow demons passage into the world and can appear at any time and in almost any place. Those not of a demonic nature who were brave (or stupid) enough to enter one of these rifts never returned, and via research, it has been discovered that these are portals that lead to and from a place known as the Nightmare Realm. It has never been established where this realm is located in the universe, and some say it could be an alternative version of Neothera which fell into darkness and became home to the most horrific and malevolent creatures the galaxy has ever seen.

The Nightmare Realm is the complete polar opposite of the Ethereal Realm, it is a place of hatred, suffering and eternal pain, and the demons that occupy it thrive in this extremely despicable place. No one is sure if demonic gods rule over this realm as the creator deities do in the Ethereal Realm, although it has been observed that there are hierarchies amongst demons, leading to the belief that it is certainly possible for God-like demonic entities to rule over their minions there. Ancient elves spread their teachings throughout the lands, stating that those who do not follow the faiths of the gods and goddesses of Neothera will see their soul transported to the Nightmare Realm after death where they will endure never-ending torment and suffering at the hands of the demons. If one embraces the Seven Vices, their soul will not ascend to the Ethereal Realm and instead be trapped in the realm of the Nightmares forever. Some elves even believe the souls of sinners become demons when they enter the Nightmare Realm after death.





## REALM OF SHADOWS

Tregartha Lothwelyn, an Elf of Nature, at the end of the Second Age, made her home in the forests surrounding what would become the Caddington Estate. This place was an area of untouched beauty and said to be the last place on the Mainland where six of the Seven met before ascending to the Ethereal Realm. As they walked the lands one final time, they left in their wake magical ley lines that ran below the surface of the planet. It is said that all ley lines are a phenomenon of the gods final days upon Neothera, where they walked the lands surveying their creation before abandoning it. Tregartha was the first elf to tap into the power contained within the ley lines using a technique she named M'thanduar (in elvish) or Mana Dowsing (in the Common Tongue).

Using her twin-wands forged from rare and magical materials she had harvested from the various realms of Neothera, she was able to detect anomalies in the physical plane, and eventually weaved her magic to allow her to shift into a realm of darkness. Tregartha explored the new plane she had discovered for many years before informing others of her discovery, which led to the widespread use of this alternative version of Neothera. Dubbed the Realm of Shadows on account of it being in a state of perpetual darkness, with little to no light being found there, and the eerie whispers, winds and colourless state of the alternate world, the realm would eventually be widely used by those wishing to go unseen to the naked eye.

To this day, no one has been able to explain what exactly the Realm of Shadows is, or why it exists, although some say it could simply be an alternative version of Neothera. Those who belong in the mortal plane find it difficult to stay within the Realm of Shadows and are easily pulled out of it should they interact with anything not of that realm.

Whilst in the Realm of Shadows, one can see things that reside in this plane, and also things outside of it. Existence in the Realm of Shadows is a fickle thing on account of how flimsy the veil between the two planes are, however, some creatures are born of the shadow realm, and cannot be so easily dragged into the physical plane.

Although they are rarely encountered, Tregartha and many others have spoken of shadowy figures with dead eyes haunting this place. They are extremely dangerous, and if one is encountered, they should shift back to the mortal plane immediately. What these creatures are remains a mystery, and those that have attempted to study them were either consumed by the shadows or fled in terror back to the mortal plane, vowing never to go back to the Realm of Shadows for as long as they lived.





## REALM OF THE CARNIVAL (BEGUILED REALM)

The Nature Elf, Tregartha Lothwelyn was famous for her discovery of various planes of existence beyond the physical realm. Another plane she discovered during the Third Age is known as the Beguiled Realm, or the Realm of the Carnival as it would later and more commonly become known. The Beguiled Realm was at first difficult for Tregartha to track down, and her consistent attempts to enter it led to a recurring merging of an uncountable amount of planes of existence that occurred once every three years. This is the holiday today known as Tregarthia. The Beguiled Realm was strange to behold and could be shaped by those that entered it according to their will. Fearing this could lead to all manner of dangerous outcomes should someone with ill-intent enter the realm, Tregartha employed the help of a human male known as Padrey Ophilious, an entertainer and showman of the highest calibre. In a ritual of binding, she tied the realm to Ophilious, and he vowed only to fill it with joy, laughter and happiness. Ophilious gathered to his side all those that wished to dedicate their lives to the entertainment of mortals, and as he grew in power due to absorbing the magical essence of the Beguiled Realm, he could command and shape it according to his will only.

As the years passed, Ophilious roamed the continents of Neothera, bringing with him everywhere he went the Beguiled Realm, and a show the likes no one had ever seen before. Padrey Ophilious became known as the Ringmaster, and arguably the most famous showman of all time, fathering a collection of freaks, oddities, acrobats, clowns and a menagerie of fantastical creatures that wowed every audience they performed in front of. It was not long before Padrey became known as Papa Ophilious on account of his caring nature towards those under his employment. However, to outsiders, things were not as they seemed within the Beguiled Realm.

The audiences that came to see Papa Ophilious' famous shows reported instances of losing time. To those within the realm who entered as guests to watch the performances, but a few hours had passed between their arrival and departure, however, upon returning home, it became apparent that they had been gone for days or even weeks. As concerns grew amongst the realms of Neothera, investigations were attempted as to the true motives and origins of Papa Ophilious and his carnival crew. Those that would delve too deeply into the affairs of the Papa began to disappear. Sometime during the Fourth Age, when Tutela Law Keepers attempted to shut down the carnival one summer's evening and arrest anyone employed there, the entire circus disappeared before their very eyes, only to move to another continent and continue their performances.

As the centuries have passed, many folks have reported the appearance of Papa Ophilious changing drastically. At one show he appears as a young, spritely human male, and at another an elderly and wizened goblin gentleman. Some folk have even reported Papa Ophilious appearing as an elven woman for some performances. Those gifted in the arts of magic have always sensed a strange and powerful aura about Ophilious, and indeed the carnival itself. Some have taken this as a sign that he is, in fact, a demigod, whose purpose is to exist for the entertainment of mortals. The carnival still exists today within the Beguiled Realm, and it seems that those not employed by Papa Ophilious are powerless to prevent its existence or appearance. This has only led to more and more people flocking to witness the famous performances that take place in the Realm of the Carnival - but all of them remember this verse when arriving at the circus..."Come see the show, the joy and the dread! But come with ill intentions...and you'll lose your head!"





# THE TUTELA SYNDICATE

The Tutela Syndicate was formed in the middle of the Third Age of Neothera by its founders and owners, Naya-gatiya Hamansle of the Hemadri, Berlanditho 'Landie' Faeylflyn of Faradome and Onslope Tutela of the Great City of Netherlye, pioneers of trade and commerce in their realms. Through their collective knowledge of the trade economy of Mainland Neothera, and having considerable support from the leaders of their realms due to the guidance they had offered in past trade agreements, it did not take long for the three business partners, Hamansle, Faeylflyn and Tutela to form the syndicate, whose first branch opened in the Great City of Netherlye. The idea of the syndicate became established following discussions regarding the trade of goods between peoples and places, and the unrest brought from unfair demands made by merchants, or farmers not being paid enough for their crops - This would mean that either party could be potentially losing out on goods or services due to no official system being in place to mediate the average cost of goods.

The Tutela Syndicate introduced the currency of Llandies to Mainland Neothera, and by law, all realms were required to use this monetary system to keep the sale of goods regulated by one currency for all providing the syndicate had some sort of presence there. Following five years of success in Netherlye, the syndicate eventually approached various other realms in the Mainland, and after many further years of talks, the people realised just how the Tutela Syndicate bank would benefit them, leading to branches opening quickly in almost every town and city in Mainland Neothera.

## THE TUTELA SYNDICATE TODAY

Today, the Tutela Syndicate states that it stands as an independent and neutral organisation that exists to safeguard the possessions and earnings of the denizens of Neothera. However, the syndicate has its fingers in many different pies, and although it states it is "independent and neutral" the sheer amount of wealth it has at its disposal means that they are very capable of funding any war or cause that could potentially benefit the organisation in some way.

The demands of the syndicate, for them to choose to operate in a realm, city or town, are that common laws should be enforced. These laws are universal, and the government of each realm must agree to enforce them with the assistance of the syndicate, proving that the Tutela Syndicate does indeed have some say in how a realm is run and earns a percentage of money taken in taxes from the citizens of a realm.



Some believe this enables the Tutela Syndicate to keep a firm hand over each realm of Neothera, and they are, in effect, a single world government that now secretly holds realm leaders such as the Hemadri Council and Governor of Jerrod's Front at their mercy.

Despite the layers of secrecy within the departments of the syndicate and the unsettling amount of control it has over the realms of Neothera, without them, funding for facilities, fair trade, the safeguarding of earnings, property and insurance would not be as successful as it is, or perhaps even not possible at all. It should also be noted that if it weren't for the funding offered by the syndicate behind the scenes during the recent war against the Brotherhood of the Red Wolf, the Mainland would likely have fallen.

## BANK VAULTS AND VOID POUCHES

The Tutela Syndicate's crest is that of an Ironwing Bird, an ancient and legendary creature whose feathers were so strong that they could not be penetrated by any weapon or known magic. This symbol was adopted by the syndicate as, despite many attempts, a Tutela Syndicate bank vault has never been breached, which is encouraging news to those who would entrust their hard-earned wares to this organisation.

Despite having many branches of the bank in the various realms of Neothera, there are rumoured to only be three vaults that the syndicate stores its wealth and treasures in, and the location of the massive vaults are only known by the most trusted employees.



To deposit and withdraw goods from these vaults, the Tutela Syndicate use magically enchanted bags, known as Void Pouches. The pouches are linked to various sections of the vaults, allowing the owner to reach their hand inside to take out items or deposit them. The pouches, owned by employees of the syndicate, or trusted individuals, are sometimes uniquely enchanted so that only the keeper of that specific Void Pouch can operate it. This enchantment is a secret of the syndicate, and even Void Pouches issued to non-employees that require access to their own personal vault cannot be enchanted in such a way, meaning they must instead rely on heavy security such as armed guards.

## LAW KEEPERS

To ensure the laws of the realms are upheld and maintained the Tutela Syndicate employs Law Keepers, men and women of any race and creed that are capable of arresting, detaining, and in such circumstances where an official judge of a realm or syndicate manager is not present, able to invoke their powers to convict a criminal and carry out a sentence in accordance with the law. However, whilst the leaders and governments of the realms of Neothera still hold jurisdiction, quite often, the Tutela Syndicate is used to capture and convict criminals, with a portion of taxes being paid to them for their work.

The title of Law Keeper is not easily obtained, and can only be bestowed by an officer of the Tutela Syndicate after endorsement by a manager of an official branch. Rarely can one apply for the position of Law Keeper - instead individuals are scouted and offered a job should they have a proven track record of integrity, upholding the laws of the land and bringing criminal activity to the attention of the syndicate. Quite often Law Keepers are recruited from the ranks of the armies of the realms, being captains or soldiers that have proven their worth and caught the eye of syndicate management as a result.

For a criminal to be brought to justice, a warrant for their arrest must first be signed and issued by the government of a realm or syndicate management. Once apprehended, each criminal is offered a fair trial and witnesses and evidence will be required (if necessary) to present to a judge for a verdict to be reached. Both judges and Law Makers often hold the power to discern, through magic or years of experience, if a would-be criminal is lying, and their judgement is very accurate as a result. Very rarely are torture methods used unless the criminal is considered a terrorist, for example, if they were part of a force that was declared enemies of the state. Common punishments in the realms of Neothera are fines, imprisonment or execution, depending on the severity of the crime committed.





# LAWS OF THE REALMS OF NEOTHERA

All realms that the Tutela Syndicate operates in require the government to implement fundamental and mandatory laws set by the Tutela Syndicate to maintain order in society and to protect their assets and the economy of the realms as a result. All citizens are required to abide by these laws, whether visiting or living in the realm. It should be noted that in some realms the laws and the punishments for breaking them can vary and this is most often due to religious beliefs or traditions. These laws are all currently in effect in the following places: Mainland Neothera, the Frozen North, the Southern Realms, the Western Realms and Terminarium.

If a citizen wishes to report a dispute or something they consider to be a crime, and it is not listed as common law, this is usually raised with the council of a specific realm for a verdict to be made. It is not unheard of for payouts to be made by the governments for the Tutela Syndicate to turn a blind eye to laws surrounding gambling, for example, to be broken if income is generated for local authorities through such means. In this case, the taxes paid by the realm will often be higher than most.

Punishment will always vary depending on the severity of the crime as judged by the local court, for instance, if a person is unable to pay a fine they may instead be imprisoned. Similarly, the length of imprisonment will be decided according to the severity of the crime committed. The main laws and punishments in realms where the Tutela Syndicate operate in are as follows.

ARSON	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>	PIRACY	<i>Imprisonment or execution</i>
ASSAULT / BATTERY	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>	POACHING	<i>Fine issued</i>
BRIBERY	<i>Imprisonment</i>	PUBLIC DRUNKENNESS OR LEWDNESS	<i>Fine issued</i>
BURGLARY	<i>Imprisonment</i>	RAPE	<i>Imprisonment and/or castration</i>
COUNTERFEITING	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>	RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>
DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>	RIOT	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>
DISTURBING THE PEACE	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>	ROBBERY	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>
EXTORTION	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>	SELLING SHODDY OR ADULTERATED GOODS	<i>Fine issued</i>
GAMBLING	<i>Fine issued</i>	TAX EVASION	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>
IMPERSONATING FIGURES OF AUTHORITY	<i>Imprisonment</i>	THEFT	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>
INCITEMENT	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>	TREASON	<i>Imprisonment or execution</i>
INCITING RIOT	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>	TRESPASS	<i>Fine issued</i>
MURDER	<i>Imprisonment or execution</i>	WILFUL DESTRUCTION OF HOLY GROUND, BUILDINGS OR RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS OR IDOLS	<i>Imprisonment or execution</i>
PETTY THEFT	<i>Imprisonment or fine</i>	WORSHIP (IN ANY FORM) OF THE NIGHTMARES	<i>Imprisonment or execution</i>



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: ELEMENT STONES

Raw materials are mainly used by crafters to create things such as potions, armour, weapons and other useful items. These materials vary in rarity and cost and can be acquired in-game through various means. The following pages look at the materials available to players during our events and focuses on the lore associated with the numerous item cards you will find on your adventures. See *page 30* of the Core Rules for rules regarding item cards and their use.



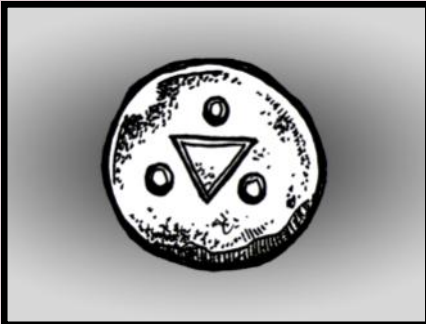
**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** AIR STONE (AVIONITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, transparent stone weighs almost nothing. If it weren't for the occasional sparkle when the light meets the surface, this stone would be almost invisible.



**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** ARCANE STONE (ARCANITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, opaque stone glows deep-purple. Something about this stone looks and feels very ancient.



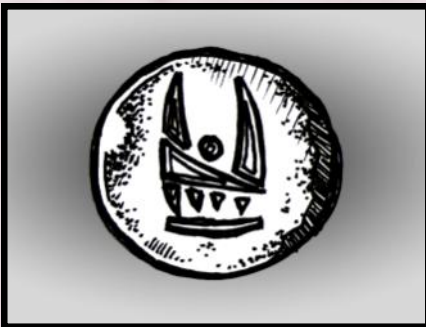
**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** DARK STONE (SHADONITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, opaque stone is pure black and appears to absorb any light around it. You feel apprehensive when holding this stone.



**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** DEMON STONE (DEMONITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, opaque, black stone has glowing red veins that run across its surface. This stone appears to occasionally tremble or jump whilst being held.



**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** EARTH STONE (GEONITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, translucent stone is various shades of brown. It is rough to the touch, extremely solid-looking and feels strangely heavy for its size.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: ELEMENT STONES



**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** FIRE STONE (HEATRANITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, translucent stone flickers hues of red, orange, yellow and black. It is extremely hot to the touch - you wonder how you can grasp it in your hand without succumbing to a burn.



**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** ICE STONE (GLACIONITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, translucent stone swirls shades of light blue and white. It is extremely cold to the touch - you wonder how you can grasp it in your hand without succumbing to frostbite.



**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** LIGHT STONE (PURONITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, translucent stone is pale yellow. It glows as if it were a source of light in the darkness. You feel positive vibes when holding this stone.



**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** LIGHTNING STONE (ELECTRONITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, translucent yellow stone occasionally sparkles as electricity crackles inside it. When placed against your skin, you receive a small static shock.



**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** NATURE STONE (FLORANITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, translucent stone is awash with vibrant greens. It has a distinct smell of moss and its surface feels a similar texture to that of rough leaves.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: ELEMENT STONES



**ITEM TYPE:** ELEMENT STONE

**ITEM NAME:** WATER STONE (VAPONITE)

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

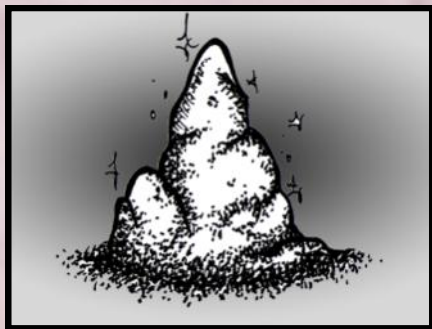
**DESCRIPTION:** This small, translucent stone fades between various shades of blue. It feels moist to the touch and you swear you can hear the ocean when you hold it to your ear.





# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: ESSENCE OF MAGIC



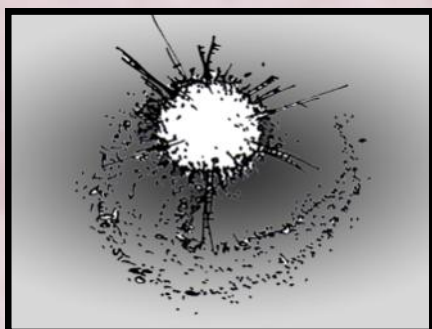
**ITEM TYPE:** ESSENCE OF MAGIC

**ITEM NAME:** NETHER DUST

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** A physical manifestation of magic in its purest form. This fine, commonly found emerald-green dust can be manipulated by certain crafters to imbue power into an object.



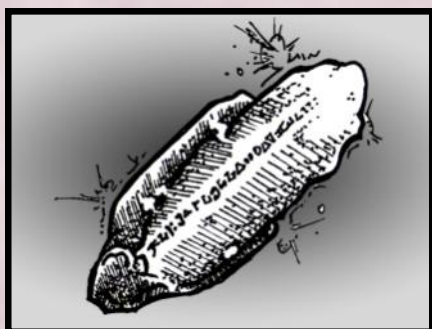
**ITEM TYPE:** ESSENCE OF MAGIC

**ITEM NAME:** ETHEREAL ESSENCE

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** A physical manifestation of magic in its purest form. This uncommon, azure-coloured sparkling orb can be manipulated by certain crafters to imbue power into an object.



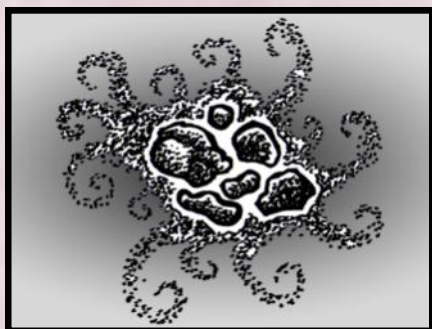
**ITEM TYPE:** ESSENCE OF MAGIC

**ITEM NAME:** DREAM SHARD

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** A physical manifestation of magic in its purest form. This rare indigo-coloured shard can be manipulated by certain crafters to imbue power into an object.



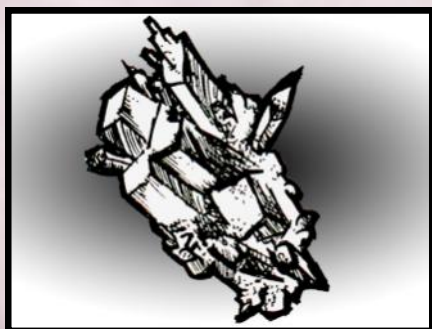
**ITEM TYPE:** ESSENCE OF MAGIC

**ITEM NAME:** BRILLIANT ARCANE ESSENCE

**RARITY:** EPIC

**CARD COLOUR:** PURPLE

**DESCRIPTION:** A physical manifestation of magic in its purest form. This legendary cluster of black stones appears to be held centimetres apart by some unseen force. Tangelo-coloured flames constantly flicker from the stones which are neither warm nor cold to the touch. This substance can be manipulated by certain crafters to imbue power into an object.



**ITEM TYPE:** ESSENCE OF MAGIC

**ITEM NAME:** PUREST MANA CRYSTAL

**RARITY:** LEGENDARY

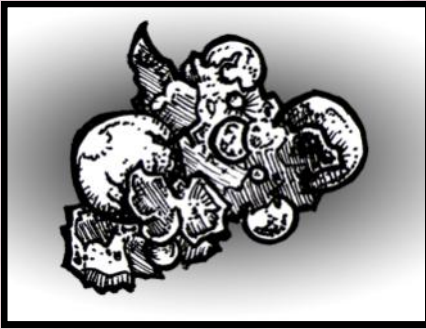
**CARD COLOUR:** ORANGE

**DESCRIPTION:** This cluster of small, violet shards is the manifestation of the purest arcane energies in Neothera. It is said there is a limited supply of this essence, and once it is depleted the bonds of arcane power in Neothera will break.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: GEMSTONES



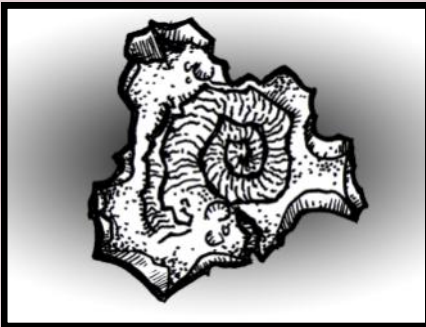
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** DORMINITE

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** A silver mineral with deep-green, orbs that protrude from its surface. It is only after harnessing its power that one can see that a green orb has erupted leaving a small dent behind, only to be filled by another greenish-orb upon the potential of utilising Dorminite's power once again.



**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** EVINITE

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** Grey and blue in colour, one may mistake this mineral for a fossil. However, the deeper and more ingrained the spirals in this stone, the more powerful its potential. Evinite is renowned throughout Neothera for complementing almost any other raw material that comes into contact with it.



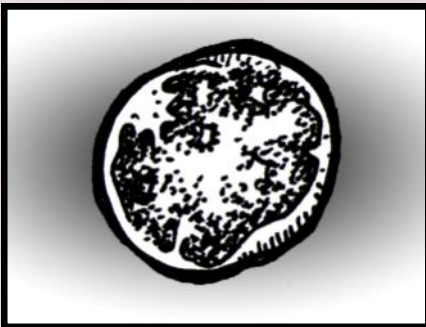
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** DARTING SPENE

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** A dark brown mineral that glistens silver when caught by the light. This stone appears to shake and glow when it is moved at high speeds.



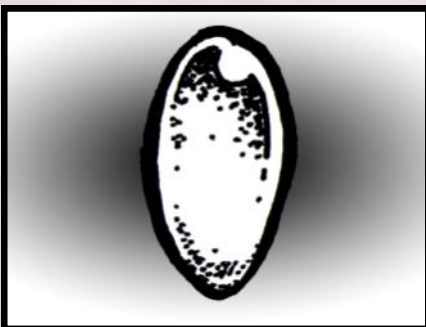
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** IRONHIDE OPAL

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This smooth gem is a dark, metallic-grey in colour and is surprisingly hard-wearing. This mineral possesses deflective properties.



**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** LICHSTONE

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

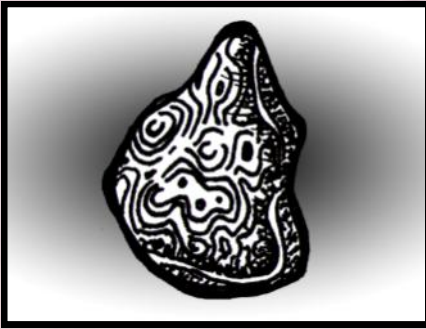
**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This mineral is blacker than the void. It is said that if one is to stare at a Lichstone for long enough, their very soul would be sucked inside it. Some say that this ominous mineral holds the power to open the gates of the after-life, others believe that it is a defence mechanism to stop the inhabitants of the after-life travelling back into the mortal plane.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: GEMSTONES



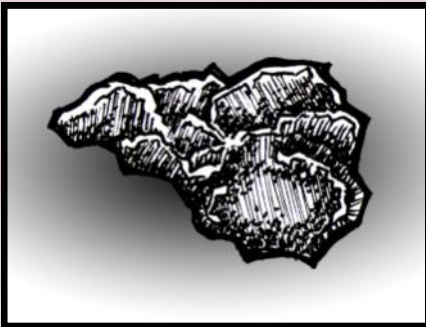
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** VIRGIN MALACHITE

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** Pale green and turquoise hues cover this mineral in ripple-like patterns. Long have these stones been used in cleansing rituals by many ancient inhabitants of Neothera.



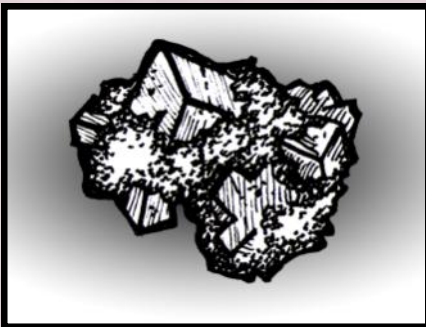
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** BENUMBING IOLITE

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** A yellowish-brown coloured stone with the appearance of wax that seems to absorb all vibrations around it. As it does so, it glows a dull, neon-yellow.



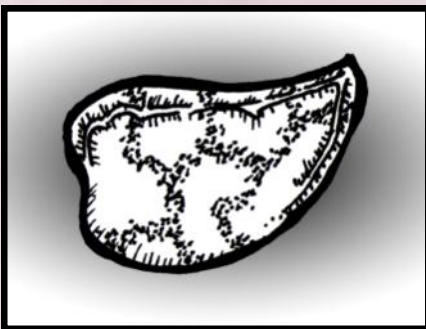
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** BOLD ANDRADITE

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** A smooth, green mineral that invigorates and empowers those that come into contact with it.



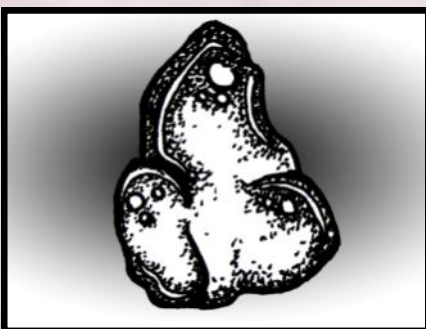
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** BRILLIANT MOONSTONE

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** This mineral is white and shimmers shades of blue as the light bounces upon its surface. One who comes into contact with this stone feels their spirits lifted and they become revitalised.



**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** DEADLY AMBER

**RARITY:** RARE

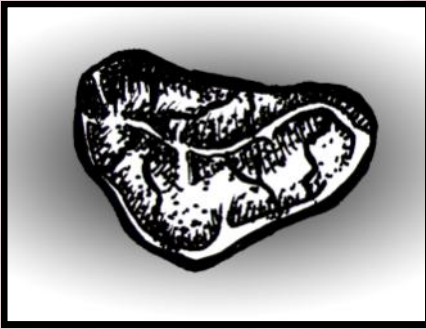
**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** In some parts of Neothera, the sap from trees rots in certain atmospheric conditions. Rather than decaying, the sap clings onto life by devouring compounds in the air and stores them before hardening in the sun, forming a deadly semi-living substance. This gemstone is a deep, rich-brown in colour and smells of rotten milk.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: GEMSTONES



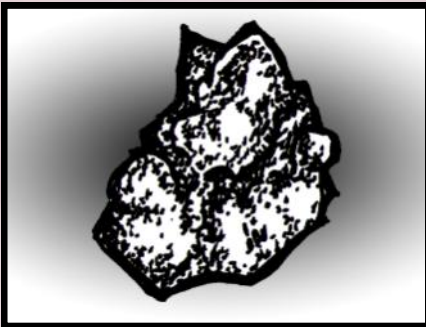
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** SOLID BLOODSTONE

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** This stone is lucid-black in colour with deep, red lines that sprawl over its surface. It is believed that the minerals in the red, vein-like patterns enhance one's physical prowess if the stone's power is harnessed correctly.



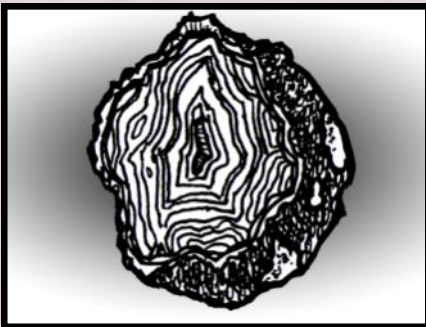
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** PRIMORDIAL SAPPHIRE

**RARITY:** EPIC

**CARD COLOUR:** PURPLE

**DESCRIPTION:** This blue mineral emits an almost uncontrollable, excited energy. Coming into contact with this stone makes one forget the hardships of life and loosens the mind to run on pure feral instincts.



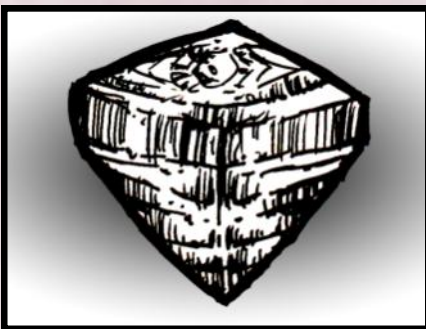
**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** PUTRID AGATE

**RARITY:** EPIC

**CARD COLOUR:** PURPLE

**DESCRIPTION:** The exterior of this green mineral is covered in small, beautiful crystal deposits. When the hard, circular-stone is cracked open a pungent and foul yellow liquid bursts into the air which then settles on the stone, sealing and protecting its surface.



**ITEM TYPE:** GEMSTONE

**ITEM NAME:** ROYAL BLOOD DIAMOND

**RARITY:** LEGENDARY

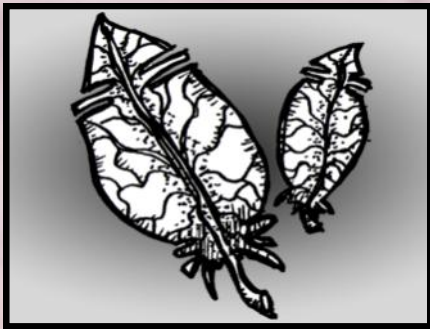
**CARD COLOUR:** ORANGE

**DESCRIPTION:** The rarest and most elusive gemstone found in Neothera. Legend tells that this reddish diamond was formed from the spilt-blood of ancient royals in wars fought long ago.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: HERBS



**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** CAMISONIA LEAF

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** The vibrant, green Camisonia plant is found in most lush grass or woodland areas of Neothera. It is most commonly known for its healing properties.



**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** NAGGIE KELP

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** Commonly found in bodies of saltwater, Naggie Kelp is the favoured food of the Sea Naggie, the larger cousin of the manatee. Naggie Kelp retains its moisture even when left in the hot sun for weeks on end.



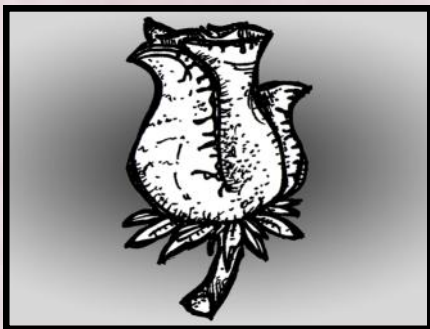
**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** IRON ROOT

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** Obtained from the Iron Bark tree, this root has an earthy smell and is notoriously hard for a crafter to work with. The root's innards are protected by a skin almost as strong as the bark of the tree itself.



**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** SCARLET MAIDEN

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** This blood-red flower is thought to originate from the Victory Fields to the west of Faradome City and now grows wild in most green areas of Neothera. It is said that one flower grew in the Victory Fields for every elf and piskie that fell in battle fighting the Nightmares in the Second Age.



**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** NIGHTMARE SATIVA

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This unpredictable bud grows in clumps from the female species of the plant. It is capable of producing powerful and often disturbing visions when consumed, or inhaled as smoke when burned.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: HERBS



**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** WISTWORM VINE

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** Wistworm Vine is extremely light and delicate, and tussles eerily when caught by a breeze. Wistworm glows bright-white under the light of the moon and is filled with airy promise.



**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** FROST BLOSSOM

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** Usually found at high altitudes amidst snow-capped mountains, or commonly seen during the colder months throughout the lands, Frost Blossom thrives in cold climates and apparently contains the very essence of winter.



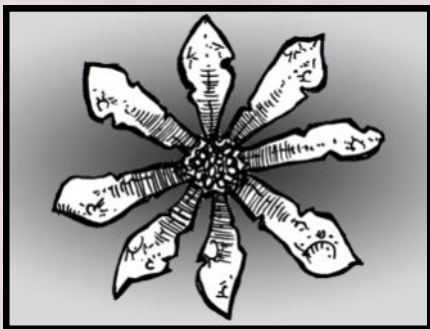
**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** STATICUS BULB

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, yellow bulb crackles when it comes into contact with water. It is also known to create small electrical sparks when ground up or cut with a blade.



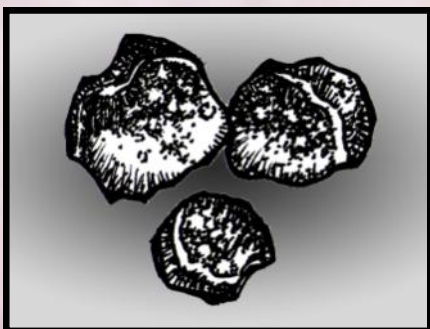
**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** SUNBLOOM

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** This vivid yellow flower grows in areas that see a lot of sunshine. It is plentiful upon the Plains of Talanor, and glows when jostled by the breeze. This flower smells strongly of honey.



**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** ARKANTIR SEED

**RARITY:** EPIC

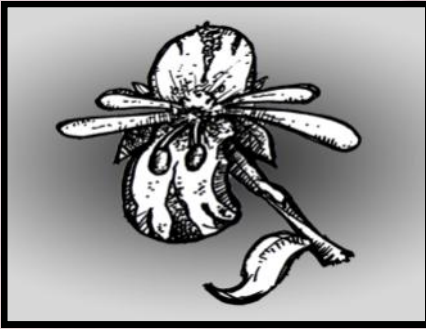
**CARD COLOUR:** PURPLE

**DESCRIPTION:** This rare seed grows underground and is often mistaken for a worthless rock. It is not until the seed is cracked open that the raw arcane-power contained within it is unleashed.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: HERBS



**ITEM TYPE:** HERB

**ITEM NAME:** ILYAMI FLOWER

**RARITY:** LEGENDARY

**CARD COLOUR:** ORANGE

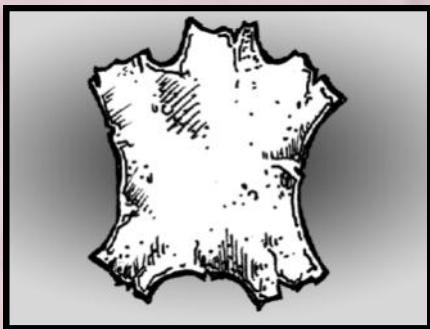
**DESCRIPTION:** The legendary Ilyami flower is sacred to the Amicita. It's bright blue petals have a sweet aroma mixed with that of the sea on a summer day. Zanthen's Garden in Faradome City is the only place in Neothera that this plant is known to grow.





# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: LEATHER HIDE



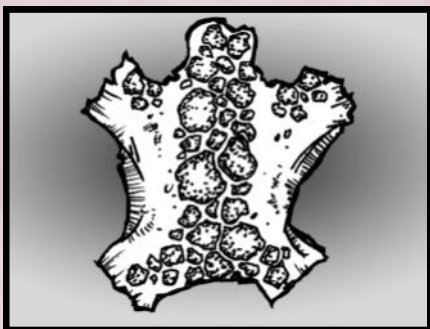
**ITEM TYPE:** LEATHER HIDE

**ITEM NAME:** COMMON LEATHER HIDE

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** Common hide is used in many crafting practises. This leather hide is acquired from any of the common animals of Neothera.



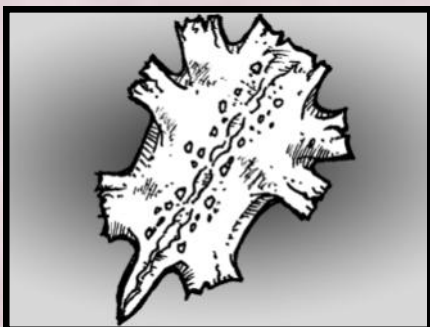
**ITEM TYPE:** LEATHER HIDE

**ITEM NAME:** SICKLETOOTH HIDE

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** The Sickletooth is the smaller and weaker cousin of the Basilisk, and is often found wandering woodland areas of Neothera. It's hide is strong and scaled and has a distinct smell of peat.



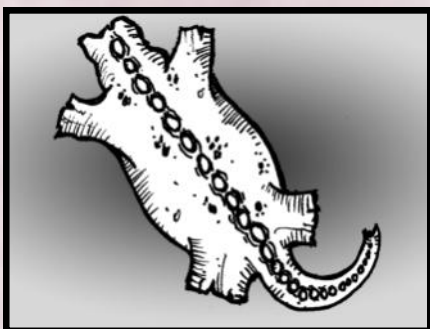
**ITEM TYPE:** LEATHER HIDE

**ITEM NAME:** VITARA HIDE

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** The most recognisable feature of a Vitara is its legs - since it has six of them. The saliva of a Vitara has amazing healing properties, a stark contrast to its hide which secretes a toxic venom when it is in danger.



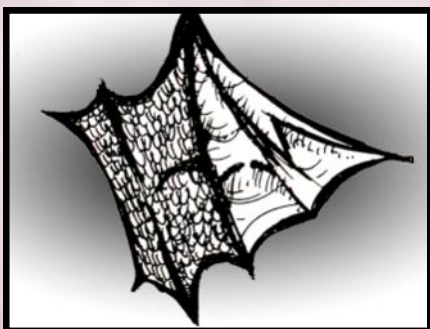
**ITEM TYPE:** LEATHER HIDE

**ITEM NAME:** BRILLITHOR HIDE

**RARITY:** EPIC

**CARD COLOUR:** PURPLE

**DESCRIPTION:** The Brillithor is one of the most elusive creatures in Neothera, despite being the size of a fully grown buffalo. It's hide is sought for its near-magical properties, being able to invigorate those who wear armour crafted from it.



**ITEM TYPE:** LEATHER HIDE

**ITEM NAME:** DRACONIUS HIDE

**RARITY:** LEGENDARY

**CARD COLOUR:** ORANGE

**DESCRIPTION:** This hard, mottled-green hide is acquired from the Lithiosum Draconius - the only reptile in existence that relates directly to the ancient dragons. Even some elves of the Second Age have never seen this creature in the wild.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: ORE



**ITEM TYPE:** ORE

**ITEM NAME:** COMMON ORE

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** Ore is the raw form of a metal. Common ore is used for various basic crafting practises. This material can be used as one of the following common ore types: Copper, tin or iron.



**ITEM TYPE:** ORE

**ITEM NAME:** GHELSTONE

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** This ore is mint in colour and glistens when light falls upon its surface due to the small, white crystal deposits that are engrained upon its surface.



**ITEM TYPE:** ORE

**ITEM NAME:** LITHHELRAL

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** Pink hues with glimmers of gold ride playfully along the surface of this ore. The crystals that grow from the more condensed parts of this mineral crumble to pieces when detached from their stems.



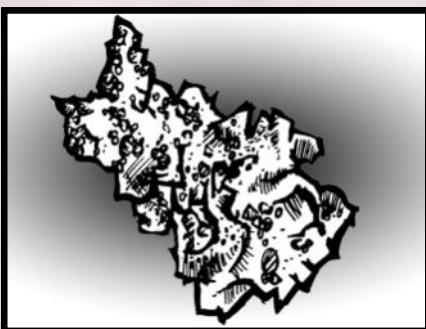
**ITEM TYPE:** ORE

**ITEM NAME:** BUTINORE

**RARITY:** EPIC

**CARD COLOUR:** PURPLE

**DESCRIPTION:** A heavy grey ore with metallic-yellow veins that glow when another, separate clump of Butinore is placed nearby. This rare mineral is famous for its magnetic properties, although the only mineral it is practically inseparable from is itself.



**ITEM TYPE:** ORE

**ITEM NAME:** YAMINITE

**RARITY:** LEGENDARY

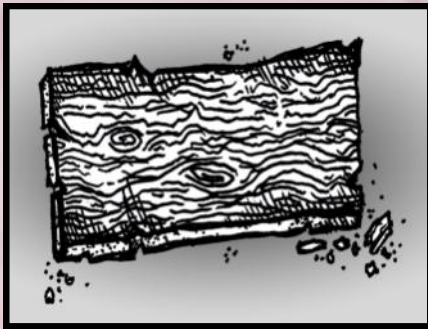
**CARD COLOUR:** ORANGE

**DESCRIPTION:** This mineral is only found in Mortanis in the Frozen North. It is black in colour with shimmers of silver and deep blue. Yaminite is extremely difficult to come by and boasts heat resistant properties.



# RAW MATERIALS

## CRAFTING ITEMS: WOOD



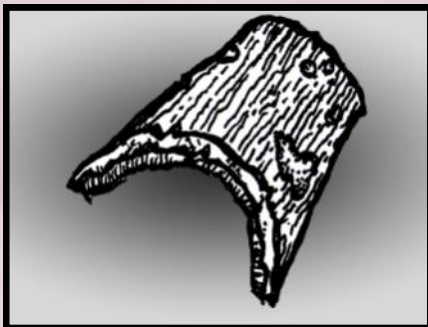
**ITEM TYPE:** WOOD

**ITEM NAME:** COMMON WOOD

**RARITY:** COMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** WHITE

**DESCRIPTION:** Wood is used in many common crafting practises. This wood is acquired from any of the common trees that grow in Neothera.



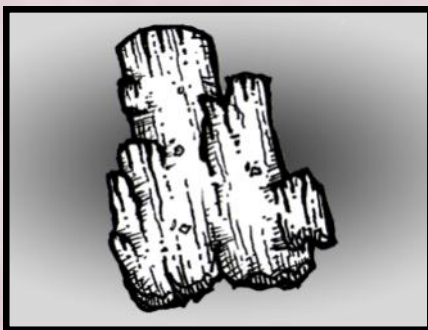
**ITEM TYPE:** WOOD

**ITEM NAME:** DIRE WHETWOOD

**RARITY:** UNCOMMON

**CARD COLOUR:** GREEN

**DESCRIPTION:** Dire Whetwood is renowned for the ability to infuse a short, sharp burst of power into an object it is crafted into. These trees tend to be found near clusters of Element Stones.



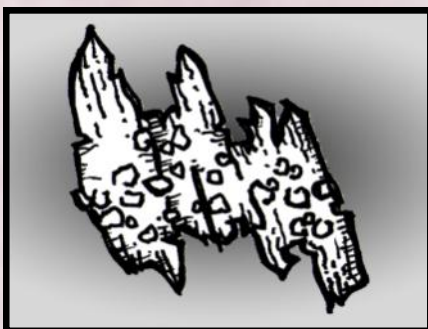
**ITEM TYPE:** WOOD

**ITEM NAME:** IRON BARK WOOD

**RARITY:** RARE

**CARD COLOUR:** BLUE

**DESCRIPTION:** Iron Bark, or "Blade Blunter" as it is sometimes called, is famously solid and extremely difficult to craft with due to it dulling most common metals it comes into contact with.



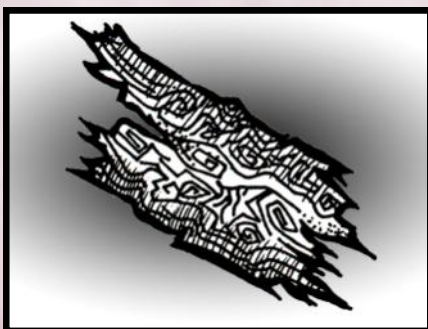
**ITEM TYPE:** WOOD

**ITEM NAME:** ALOREE NENRIS

**RARITY:** EPIC

**CARD COLOUR:** PURPLE

**DESCRIPTION:** Aloreë Nenris is only found in the Na'tohram Gheneris Rainforest. This wood holds the power to instil positivity into the mind of one who would craft and use items made from its timber. Some legends say that the spirits of nature are even able to converse telepathically with one who has bound themselves to an item made of Aloreë Nenris.



**ITEM TYPE:** WOOD

**ITEM NAME:** WORLD TREE RHYTIDOME

**RARITY:** LEGENDARY

**CARD COLOUR:** ORANGE

**DESCRIPTION:** Only bark that falls naturally from the World Tree is allowed to be harvested. This wood is as strong as titanium and as old as the world itself. When holding this bark, the whispers of ancient spirits of nature can sometimes be heard.



## FURTHER READING

We highly recommend downloading our other publications, available on our website, that will provide you with more information about the Neothera Saga system and game world.

**CORE RULES:** The main rule book for Neothera Saga UK LARP. Contains detailed information regarding the rules and dynamics of the system. Everything you need to know to start playing the game!

**GUILDS OF NEOTHERA:** Explains the process of joining a guild, setting one up and maintaining it.

**PREPARE FOR ADVENTURE:** Provides details about our events, with everything from what to bring with you, logistics, and the event sites we use.

## USEFUL LINKS

Stay up to date with the latest Neothera Saga UK LARP news, or join our community to connect with the staff and other participants.

<b>NEOTHERA SAGA UK LARP WEBSITE:</b>	<a href="https://www.neotherasaga.com/">https://www.neotherasaga.com/</a>
<b>YOUTUBE CHANNEL:</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/neotherasaga">https://www.youtube.com/neotherasaga</a>
<b>FACEBOOK COMMUNITY GROUP:</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/neotherasaga/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/neotherasaga/</a>
<b>PUBLIC-FACING FACEBOOK PAGE:</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/neotherasaga">https://www.facebook.com/neotherasaga</a>
<b>INSTAGRAM:</b>	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/uklarp/">https://www.instagram.com/uklarp/</a>
<b>TWITTER:</b>	<a href="https://twitter.com/neotherasaga">https://twitter.com/neotherasaga</a>
<b>DISCORD SERVER:</b>	<a href="https://discord.gg/ZFgZXKh">https://discord.gg/ZFgZXKh</a>