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Play Testers, who gave up many hours of their time to help work all the kinks out. Thank you, Ladies and gentlemen.

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My darling wife who gave up so many hours editing my scribble and translating my gibberish into understandable sentences.

And most of all the Good Lord who gave me the mind and time to create this.

Forward

Hello all. If you're reading this, then you are either thinking about running your own game of Tara-Corax, or you're sifting through this manual to see if there are any secrets, which there aren't at all...

Ok, now that they're gone, there are tons of secrets in this book!

In all seriousness, welcome. This time is dedicated to help a Storyteller become, expert and have an outlet that helps to bind all things together within the game. Being a Storyteller is a great thing, lots of fun and very engrossing. At the same time, it carries with it an air of responsibility. I know, this is a game and a way to escape the mundane and every day, no one wants responsibility in their hobby. But, remember: this is a game with people.

If you're to be a Storyteller, you must first understand that you are getting into the realm of the concierges. I mean, you are probably going to schedule games, do all the prep work, point people in the right direction when they need it, pander to their wants and so on. Your job is to schedule fun and do all the pre-work to make sure when people show up, they have a good time.

So, yes, it is a bit of a responsibility. And in that, not meant for everyone. I think it is far more important that someone be motivated to facilitate things of a game then to be a good Storyteller. This is a game about characters, the players, friends, time spent together and interaction. The more a person can facilitate that, the better they are overall at filling the role of a Storyteller. Don't worry, even if you're not creative (per se), I will give you scenarios, rules, tips, tricks and processes that will make you good. I can make you a good Storyteller technically, I can't do anything to make you the right person for the job though.

And no, there's nothing wrong with being a Player and not a Storyteller, nothing at all. And a secret... sometimes it is based on mood... we can't all be everything 100% of the time. Know your limitations.

So why the philosophical ramblings and babble? Well, because it is vital that we first understand, beyond the rules and charts and tips and tricks, that this is a game about people and meant for people (in real life) to have a good time. If you want to facilitate that, then keep reading. If not, then try and find someone who wants to train to be a Storyteller.

I bet nothing has ever been so real for an RPG in print before, but needs to be said. Now, if you're still here, this book is for you.

In the next (too many) pages, everything of a baseline will be covered. That is to say, all the mechanical and explainable. There are so many more things that cannot be captured or bound within print to explain imagination, human dynamics, timing and so on. This is about the simple, the common and the knowable - this is baseline. As a Storyteller, you'll be dealing far outside the bounds of such, and there is little anyone can do to help you. You'll have to find your way alone, figure things out, make decisions and just be in charge. This book is meant to equip you with all Storyteller-centric information that sets you up for success. The ultimate fate of that success is up to you.

That said, you're about to embark of a very rewarding journey that is fun, engaging and just unmatched in so many aspects. Building a story that other people follow and find immersive is near-unapparelled - it is the apex of the gamer. You're about to tackle an admittedly complex system, with so many specifics, options and "what-ifs". You're about to lead others through a magical world of high fantasy, political influence and immersion. You are the central person needed to make all this happen, you have all the answers and your mind's creation will be the Player's realm to explore and unlock.

Best of luck, it'll be a fun journey!



Introduction

This book covers about everything you'll need to know about being/becoming a Storyteller. There also many resources on the internet that can assist in the basics of creating and running an adventure. But, it is important to note that there are many aspects of Tara-Corax that are not common to many of the other systems; and therefore, some of the common points of view about creating and running an adventure may not apply.

Now, maybe you're a seasoned GM in other systems, or perhaps you and friends are trying Tara-Corax (called "TC" for short) and you're the duly appointed Storyteller, or maybe you're returning to RPGs after an absence. Whatever the case, there are a few things that you need to know about the game and the system.

We're going to assume you have read and understand the Player's Tome, as it will serve as a baseline for conversation and reference in this book. The following are a list of aspects, with some commentary, about TC that will serve as an additional layer of understanding for the core rules and the Storyteller's Tome.

- TC is a character-centric game
 - Almost everything within TC is for the characters, their development and how the Player can influence that. Alignment is dynamic, based on the Players' decisions. Skills and Weapon Skills are independent of the Level. There is a lot of lore and explanation behind the nations, Factions, Races, Orders and more. Yes, there are a lot of rules for combat, but that's to ensure where things are objective, the game is tight. It should not be taken as a sign of how it should be represented in a game session.
- Time flow is purposefully slow in Tara-Corax
 - While some systems are all about the dungeon crawl, in and out and mass free healing, TC is not. Adventures

are counted in the tens or hundreds of days, and not hours. Hit Points and Spell Points generally regenerate 1 per day, and a single combat can put characters down for days. the world is vast, and travel is an inevitability.

- This is high-lethality game
 - In case you haven't seen it first hand, TC is very deadly. Combat can see even the highest-level character get thwacked by a neophyte. Hit Points come back slowly, healing is rare, there is no reviving spells, and Critical Strike can be utterly devastating. Combat is also not the focus of the game, even if most of the rules explain how it is done. Moreover, characters that survive combat may be permanently hurt, or at least injured for the rest of the adventure.
- The pace in TC is slower than you might think – I mean, make it slow
 - This is not a game about reaching "end content", leveling fast and such things. If you're familiar with online RPGs, the common theme of fast character power gains is not part of TC. Over the course of a session, the characters may rise 1 Level. Moreover, it is EXTREMELY important to note that Levels are only half the equation. Skills Rank up during role-playing. Weapon Skills have a metered gain that cannot be abbreviated. If a character levels up fast, their Skills and Weapon Skills will be underdeveloped and the character will be flat and unable to deal with many situations. In all, a character is a sum of their different parts, including the experience of the



adventure itself. Be certain to emphasize that.

- Rules of Combat – combat bad, living good
 - They are extensive, and I hope that they cover most circumstances... I know they won't. The rules of combat, which do take up most of the space in a book, are there to account for how things should actually happen. Yes, this is fantasy, but the rules are made to describe (if all this was real) what would happen. Even so, combat should not be the central theme of most adventures. Combat happens, but is not what the characters' journeys about. It is a challenge to overcome and something that makes them grow, but characters are not gladiators, hungering after a new fight. To the contrary, most people in Wyrmsbane shy from a fight. Like you and I (probably), fights are dangerous and nothing good comes from them, on a personal level. Sure, I gain Pips and such, but at a cost of possible death. People just don't do that. Your Players' characters want to live, remind them of that. While it is epic to charge into the fray and slay all thy foes, it doesn't work out that way historically, or mechanically. Combat is about killing others, someone has to fall, and the rules and mechanics dictate how that unfolds. Be certain to illuminate this to our Players, and that the focus is on the story, not the fights. Think of a fantasy movie (a good one) or a novel. 10% might be combat, which is crucial, but not all-encompassing. Combat is a hurdle to overcome so the story can continue to unfold... do the same.



The Role of...

The role of the Storyteller is one of careful balance, rules refereeing, opinion, interpretation, imagination, rooted in human dynamics and stuffed into a world of fantasy. You, as the Storyteller are here to facilitate the game, not own it, not dictate it... facilitate it.

Overall

Your job as a Storyteller is to come up with a conceptual story, adventure or quest and allow the Players' characters to explore this creation bound within the rules of the game. You are the one who tells them what happens, describes the landscapes, depicts people they meet along the way, holds all the secrets of what the Players don't know, and nudges them in the right direction when they're lost.

Centrally, you make the story and allow it to be played out in the game. Thus, the vast portion of your efforts should be spent here. There's a whole chapter on some pointers about making a story. Once that's done, remember the following rules:

- It's not your game, it's the Players'
 - You facilitate, but they make the decisions. The path will twist and turn to parts you never thought of, and you'll have to keep up. You're keeping up with the Players. They set the pace, they make the calls on what they do, and they determine the outcome of the story.
- Know the rules
 - The rules are there to make the game work, so that your story has a mostly-objective way of unfolding. The impossible is not made possible through opinion or want. Things either are or are not, based on the mechanics that define how the game works. You'll need to have a working baseline understanding of the rules to allow the story to flow in this objective manner.

- Understand the intent
 - Much of the rules will not cover every single thing a Player could possibly think of to do. Remember, the rules are written in the positive. They state what you *can* do, and don't necessarily state what you cannot. A player can light their character sheet on fire and say that it protects them from cold. Nothing in the rules says you can't, but (and more importantly), it doesn't say you can. There is an intent behind each rule, mostly covered in this book. Understand what questions a mechanic is trying to answer, and you'll be better equipped to make on-the-spot calls for things not covered.
- Know the world
 - Tara-Corax and the lore are inseparable. So much makes no sense anywhere but within the confines of this fantasy. Many of the rules and reasons in-game are derived from the lore. The immersion of the Players (and you) will be better the more in-depth your understanding. Moreover, your stories will be cohesive and coherent with respect to the fantastic world.
- Know where to find things
 - No one remembers everything. Don't fake it, just know where to look it up. Have your reference material and notes handy for all the many instance that arise when you're not certain of the answer or rule.
- Break the rules
 - Yup, that's right. These rules are a baseline and known to be limited. It may be the Players' game, but you rule the rules. Make changes as you see fit, modify this or that if it provides a better experience, alter what you like... just keep this in mind: every rule and mechanic is

woven together so that the whole makes sense and works. If you change one thing, you may find that other parts don't work so well, or at all.

- Use automation
 - Some of the mechanics in the game may be, to some, "crunchy". There are all manner of automation techniques you can do to computerize rolls either fully or partially. While I make like rolling the dice, others may want to use an RNG. Some may want to use a combination. Some people think this is complex and rather all the calculation be done for them based off what they roll. All kinds and all opinions. The website has tools to fit any need.
- Have fun
 - Above all, facilitate a good experience. People will only play if it's worth their precious time. The game is one aspect, but fellowship and building friends is more important.

Balance

There are different aspects of the game; namely: Combat, Role-Playing and book keeping. A Storyteller must learn to balance these three aspects so that the time spent in each is best for the people you play with, keeping in mind the game system.

Book Keeping, for Players, is the administrative portion - the making of characters, leveling-up and adding things to the character sheet. For the Storyteller, it is creating the story, taking notes and reading reference material. In general, book keeping is normally done outside of a normal session. The Players can make characters before a game. You will want to create the story before a game of course. The only exception is if you have new Players and they need help creating a character. When you're experienced, making a character can take 5 minutes or so. When you're new, it might take a while. Remember, there are pre-made characters on the website.

During a game, some book keeping needs to be done. Generally, you can call for a break and allow everyone to update what is needed during the break.

Combat is an essential part of the game. Much of the characters is about Combat. Combat is fun, and is also rewarding. Players spend a lot of time tweaking their character just so for Combat. Don't rob them of regular opportunities to engage.

Also keep in mind how deadly it is. If you throw combat after combat, your Players' characters will die. Hit Points recover slowly, as do Spell Points. If engagements are too frequent, characters will not have the resources to win, and may succumb from too much too often.

Depending on how you run Combat (on a game board, on a virtual site or narratively), the time spent here varies greatly. Therefore, there is no set amount of time you should spend on Combat. You may be in the part of a story where there is little combat, or maybe a lot. The balance here is not in time, but commensurate with the story.

That said, the role-playing aspect of a story should be where most time is spent. Characters are developing, Players are interacting, the story is unfolding and the characters are growing in power. Remember, Skills growth comes from role-playing, not combat.

Again, this is based on your group, but try and make most of the game about the story. The game system is built on this premise and works best when used that way.

So, in general, the balance of the game should be (time-wise) about 10% breaks and book keeping, 50% role-playing and 40% Combat. Content-wise, it should be about 80% role-playing and 20% combat.

Rules, Opinion and Interpretation

Not to be overstated, but be certain you know the rules. You'll be called upon to answer, "How does this work?" a lot. More common in experienced Players will be the, "Can I do (insert crazy idea here) with (insert Skill or Ability here)?" You'll need to make the call if a rule, Skill, spell, Ability or Effect in the game allows, disallows, enables or otherwise affects the game-world in some way.

This is where opinion and interpretation come in. honestly, the rules and descriptions within Tara-Corax cannot cover all bases all the time. If I wanted to be complete, each spell would have a page of description to account for any instance. That's completely impractical. Therefore, you'll have to fill in the blanks. Make a call, try and see what might be, understand the intent of the rules, it's up to you. The best advice I can give is to remain consistent and only stray when absolutely needed.

Imagination

One of the most important things for a Storyteller is their imagination. The more vivid, and the better communication skills you possess, the more immersive the session can be. Describe what the characters see, what an Non-Player Character (NPC) looks like, what they smell, hear and see. This game is lived through imagination and the more input you provide, the more homogeneous the experience will be.

What does "homogeneous" mean in this case? It is referring to how the group of Players experiences a game session. This is about what they think, their understanding of a world that is not real and how their character fits in. If everyone has a different understanding, they will act in ways that seem to defy the situation in-game.

For example, if you were given a sentence that said, "There is a house in front of you, and you need to search it", you would act in one way and another person would act in another. In fact, with such a simple description, each person would probably act in a different way that might not even be in-line with their personality. A cautious person would barge right in along with a brazen person.

However, if the sentence read, "you're in front of a large, old house at night. All the shades are drawn shut, and the bushes and plants around are overgrown. You hear odd noises coming from inside and see random flashes of light from the basement half-windows". Now, everyone has the same understanding of the situation. So much more information is available for them to respond to. Each person would respond in a way that represents their personality. A cautious person would not barge in like the brazen one.

And, that's what it's all about. Use your imagination, see what is going on in your mind and do your best to portray that to the Players. How much info and when is all a matter of experience with your group of Players.

This leads into two related topics: Players' questions and lore. In the second sentence above, the Players might want to ask questions to get even more information - much of which you'll have to make up on the spot. Sometimes, to answer a question a character will have to make a Skill Check. Moreover, the level of information might be based on the Skill Check score.

A player might ask, "what time of day is it?". No Skill Check, you just tell them "day". Then, another might ask, "do I see any shapes or people in the windows?". Then, you'd say, "Make an Observation Check" and the amount of info you divulge is based on that Check.

Therefore, there is a balance between how much info you freely give, and how much you hold back for questions and Skills. A good rule of thumb is to explain everything that is important to the story or the characters' well-being. Let them know when something is amiss, or have them make a Skill Check to see if they notice something is amiss. If they go into a shop that is unremarkable and has nothing to do with the story, just tell them to buy based off the equipment charts in the Player's Tome.

The important thing is that the Players all have enough information to make good decisions and think about how their characters would act. The Players have a common understanding of the situation, as described by you.

Lore is just as important, as it sets a backdrop for everything. It serves to cover all that you don't explain and builds that common understanding even more. With the simple example of the house, a setting would help a lot. A setting of a spooky land of ghosts and specters conveys a certain level of common understanding to all. The Players' character may act in a certain manner just based on that premise.

When the lore is combined with good explanation, the Players reach a homogeneous understanding of what is going on, the overall situation and what their characters could do. Their

action should become more and more consistent, based on their characters.

Moreover, you can now see how the characters really act and are played out. You can then identify when they do something out of character later on – where you might not be able to if there isn't this cohesive understanding.

The more common the experience of all the Players, the more objective subjective matters are. That is to say, when you and friends see a movie, you'll all have opinions and react in a different way – that's subjective. You might argue the value or morality of what someone in the movie did. What is not subjective is what you all saw. The fact that you can argue what someone did in the movie is predicated on that everyone saw the same thing.

Human Dynamics

The game is about human interaction. In order to play, you'll have to communicate with other people. This is just a reminder to always remember that part. People will get upset, they will get disappointed, excited, angry, anxious, elated and so on. Just be aware that you'll have to do your best to be mindful of this fact.

World of Fantasy, mostly

The one item to remember is that the rules of the game have an element of realism. I am fully aware that dragons are not real, nor is magic and so on. The game is based in the idea of "what if it were?". If dragons were real and they breathed fire, how would that affect people and their surroundings?

This is something to keep in mind and balance. Items like, thirst, hunger, weariness from traveling, boredom, are all real things that would happen. How much you bring them into the game is up to you. Some Storytellers may not pay mind to hunger and thirst, while other may.

A good rule of thumb is to pay mind to it when it would be an issue. If the party is getting ready to cross a desert, you may want to remind them to get some water. Water is heavy, so they may also want a mule. Then, they need water for the mule and feed too. The point is that the smaller things can swiftly

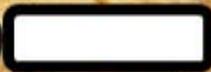
take over. There may be times where you want that, and others where you don't. If the party is in a forested area, with lots of streams and one of them has survival, may not need to talk about food and water. Where things are appropriate, engage them. Remember, it is the Players that determine the outcome. If they go into the desert without a drop of water, they may have done themselves in.

In Conclusion

Lastly, it is not your job to save the characters. They must be free to make their own decisions. In cases where they are acting within their Alignment, let them do what they wish. Yes, warn them, but don't disallow. Of course, use your best judgement.

If the Players force their characters into a battle that you meant for them to run from, then let it happen. If they're confronted by the main bad guy and are woefully under-leveled to take them on right now, and they do anyway, let it happen. If a character gets hit by a Critical Strike and it does them in, it is tough luck.

But why? Won't that alienate the Players? It shouldn't. Make sure you let people know the game is deadly and characters come and go, they live and die base off the roll of dice, literally. Thing is, if there is no risk, then there is no angst. With no angst, then there is no real sense of importance in anything. Within a sense of importance, then it is hard for the Players to be engaged and immersed.



Equipping

Now we've covered some of the higher-level thematic aspects of TC, we should cover some things more practical. For both material and mental (immaterial), a ST needs a core set of items at their disposal. As you grow and understand the game more, it is advisable to learn more.

So, what do we mean by immaterial: knowledge. One of the most important things of being a ST is your working knowledge of the game. Players are going to look to you for answers, calls on mechanics, if they can or can't do something and more. They'll make mistakes, they'll try and get away with things and they'll be ignorant of rules. All this falls upon you. You must know the basic rules, and at least know where to find things within the books.

This won't come immediately, and takes a little time, but, you can help yourself out by reading the material and maybe putting in some place markers. The website is also a great resource as it breaks down chapters in some of the books. Take some time to get familiar and it'll make you a much better ST.

So, why is all this so important? In order to set the Players straight on rules, to enable the Players' characters to their potential as intended, to keep the shenanigans down, and to run the system in general all take knowledge. The more you know, and are aware, the more effective you can be.

Think of it as refereeing a sports game. ALL the rule incumbent on you to tell the players and then umpire the match. If you don't know anything, or very little, the game itself won't be played as intended. Furthermore, when disputes arise (and oh, they will) how will you arbitrate if you don't know the way it should be? Even worse, you may make the wrong call that changes the dynamic of the game.

That's not to say that mistakes won't happen, of course they will. You should try and limit those to a minimal and to the inconsequential. Be certain you're solid on the core stuff. So, here is a list of the core and ancillary items you'll need to run an effective game.

Core

Mental

As discussed, you need to know the rules. In particular, everything within the Player's Tome. Know each one of the rule well, and have a reference for such things. There are a few reference charts available online that surmise many of the chapters. Also, there is a condensed 2-page rules sheet. This won't suffice for everything, but it is a great reference to remind you of the rules and where to find them. In general, try to be an expert of everything within the Player's Tome and know where to find specific charts and paragraphs in each chapter. This is the baseline, the rules.

Next, know this book. The ST's Tome is a wonderful resource that goes beyond the rules as a mechanic, and lets you into the intent and thought process. There are going to be many instances where the rules simply don't cover the situation. However, if you understand the intent of the rules or rule, then you can extrapolate or guess to the right course of action within the intent of the system. This allows such instances to be homogeneous with the overall concepts of the game.

The Tome of Spells is another important book to know. There are far too many spells to memorize, and that is not the focus. What is the focus are the softer aspects of casting, how spells work out and the interpretation of the effects. There's a whole chapter in the book devoted to this subject, so we'll stop for now. Just be aware that interpretation and limiting of spells is important.

The Tome of Monsters & Beasts contains all the stats of the bad guys. You're going to have to throw a melee or two in each session, and you'll get the info on the foes in this book. Know how to read it, use it and have a working idea about what kind of foes are in the same area as the adventure, about how powerful they are and how many you plan on bringing to bear against the Players.



Physical

A few items needed for playing the game. This is a core list, and not meant to be extensive. You may have some items that you feel are core. This is meant to be the bare bones of what is needed.

- Dice
- Access to the website or the books
- Note taking equipment
- References sheets
- Written notes on the adventure
- List of names and NPCs
- Experience chart for the adventure and the parts/sections of a quest

Ancillary

These are the remaining items not core, but still important. Physically, it can be about anything you want. In a knowledge-sense, it is a bit more specific.

The Artisans' Tome is a resource you may want to know. It contains all the Artisan Skills and a treasure generation system. The treasure generation system is embedded within the game and the ToMaB has all the bad guys' loot generation magnitude listed. It also list almost any magical item you could conceive, within the bounds of creation of such items and their rarity. You can also see how hard and rare these magical items are through the Artisan Skills themselves. It will give you more insight into the shop keepers and the economy/business of crafts within Wyrmsbane. Heck, you may even have a character that has one of these Skills.

The lore is very important, but we're going to say ancillary. Yes, many of the Classes don't make sense outside the lore; yes, the origins of things are part of the lore; yes, the Order are a huge part of the game; yes, yes, yes. But, if you know only what's in the Player's Tome, that should be good enough for starters. You'll want to increase you knowledge when you can. For this, the Book of Orders and the lore sections on the website are good resources. The Atlas can help too.

Speaking of the Atlas, knowing your landscape, places, governments, politics, and more is all meant to make that which is known, not need to be

recreated. Don't go through the trouble of coming up with a town or towns, who is there, what wares they sell, how big and so on. The Atlas has it all for you. Moreover, the Atlas as a short section on the history of each nation and Faction. This will help you (and your Players) to all have the same understanding of the world around the characters.

Lastly, and in general, keep an eye on the website. Things are posted there often that expand the lore and world.

In closing, remember that you don't need to have all this memorized (I don't), but know of its existence and know where to find it to get the info. Nothing wrong with saying you don't know, but there is if you fake it.





Story Telling

Crafting a Story

Central to the game is the story. This is what it's all about. The fun of the game comes from the interaction of the people playing it, but the thing that binds them together and provides the canvas for that interaction is the story. Thus, the Storyteller's main function is to create a good outline of a story that is engaging, immersive, consistent, challenging, and most of all, malleable. Let's go over each one:

Engaging. Of course, the story needs to be engaging. The players need to care about what is going on. The NPCs need to have flavor and the lands have to be alive. This is all accomplished through the basics of creating a good story, which we'll get to.

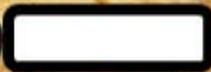
Immersive. Immersion is important and varies depending on the people you play with. Some folks like to be "light" on the RPG-aspect, others like to be full-on. The Storyteller must be able to cater to each individual as well as the group as a whole. Immersion also comes in the form of the setting. This is where Tara-Corax's vast history and lore can help. Especially when you begin, don't try and make up new things just yet, let what is written guide you. The game's world is very deep and rich in content and should help with immersion.

Consistent. The game needs to have consistency from session to session. If you don't get through an adventure in the first session, make sure you take notes as to where you left off. The Storyteller needs to know each NPC, have some basic info on them, and know what is left to be done in the quest and so on. Moreover, the setting you use and the disposition of enemies, NPCs and the general theme of the game should only change as the Players make it change, and not arbitrarily from session to session.

Challenging. The game mechanics will probably bear the majority of this pillar, but remember that without a threat of failure, victory has no sweet taste. If things are easy, then there is no sense of importance. With no sense of importance, then Players will not care. If you make a good story, one the Players care about and want to see unfold, then don't

make it so easy that each new chapter has no sense of accomplishment or peril. It's ok to make the Players think, put obstacles in front of them and more. Make them beat the path you've laid out. In the same vein, don't go changing your traps and plans because you want to make things harder. Set up the path and then leave it alone. If it's too easy, make it harder next time. If it's too hard, wait and see if the Players overcome. If they do, then it aint too hard. If they don't it still might not be too hard.

Malleable. The most important aspect. Remember Storyteller, this is NOT YOUR GAME, it's the Players' game. You set it up, and they turn the pages in whatever order they want, at whatever pace they want and might even pull out a new book and read that one instead of the one you give them. You need to roll with the punches and keep pace. Thus, when designing the adventure, don't be too detailed and don't get attached. If you take hours and hours making a very intricate quest, and the Players don't go that way, you've wasted your time. If you don't put any effort into it, then the Players will know and they won't be engaged. It takes time and experience to get it right, but we'll help with that.



Making the Adventure

Step 1. Choose the Setting.

The game's lore, mechanics and Classes are linked at the hip. It is best to choose a setting within the game world. Go ahead and read a history section from the Atlas. Get to know an area and all the people within it. Getting to learn an area is a good investment, as you'll be able to run several adventures in the same locations. Moreover, the more Players are exposed to that area, the more familiar they'll become and the more they'll be immersed. Also, the setting will have some of the same NCPs from game to game, and the political setting will be constant.

The goal here is for the Storyteller to understand the setting fully; from the people, the landscape, the monsters and secrets. If the Storyteller knows the area well, then if (when) the Players deviate from the plan, you can adjust.

Think of it this way: Let's say you were tasked to tour a blind person through a house. All you have is words to describe the room. You can guide them, but they're free to go whichever way they please. If you only know the basic blueprints of a house, how well can you explain it to a person? You might have a plan for them to move from the foyer to the guest room, but what if they go left instead of right? However, if this was your house, you'd know all the details, you know more than can ever be relayed from a blue print, and it wouldn't matter where someone went, you'd be able to describe the room.

Step 2. Conflict.

Yes conflict, we'll take a page out of story-making 101. All stories are focused around a conflict. Think of any epic, and you'll find conflict. The goal of any perceived conflict is resolution – that's what the Players will be trying to do. In order for them to seek resolution, they need to have something to resolve. Without this piece, there is no engagement or immersion.

A conflict is the theme of the adventure and is the core of it all. Now, a conflict's resolution is not your realm. How the Players see that resolution is up to them. More on that in a moment.

So, what is a conflict? Is a conflict a bandit stealing from the locals? No, the Bandit is the agent.

The conflict is the despair and trouble of the people. That conflict might bloom from a general and detached thing to something more personal. If the bandit attacks the Players and wins, there may now be a development of the conflict or even a new conflict. A conflict is something not right with the world. The Players seek to fix that wrong.

Again, how they do it is up to them, and each person will see that resolution based on their own inner thoughts and worldview. One person might see the resolution of the plight of the people as finding a treasure and giving it to the needy. Another might want to catch the bandit and lock him in jail. Another may want to kill the bandit. Another may not see the conflict as the plight of the people at all, they might think the conflict is someone else is getting money and they're not. In that case, they might want to team up with the bandit, or maybe take him out and replace him.

As you can see, this can get complex fast. You as the Storyteller need only set up the conflict. How the player addresses it is up to them. Knowing your setting allows you to follow whichever way the Player might go.

That said, let's talk about party dynamics and Alignment. A good Storyteller will also ask what the Players are thinking in terms of Character Classes before the start of an adventure. An evil party sometimes needs a different conflict than a good party. Other times, the conflict will work either way, but is interpreted differently.

A Storyteller needs to consider how Alignment plays into this as well. If you have a Lawfully Good character on the party, then they're going to try and catch the bandit and throw him in jail. You need to remind them of that. Yes, that's right, you CAN tell the Player how their character feels and what they think, especially if they are of a certain Alignment or have played their character to be a certain Alignment. You can't force their hand in most cases, but you should be helping them along.

Sometimes, the party dynamics can be the conflict itself, based around another conflict. The Lawfully Good character may want to catch the "wayward bandit" and lock him away so he can rehabilitate. The Lanunite (Chaotically Good) probably wants to kill the "bandit-scum" so he can't

hurt anyone else. A well-defined conflict can grab the Players and immerse them in their own, real-life, party dynamics. But, don't let this get out of control and have the Players start throwing chingasos.

Here's the thing, a conflict is defined by the very person who views it. What is wrong with the world for you may not be wrong for another. There are some very basic concepts that the majority of sane people would consider wrong. Suffering and human rights violations are one of them, and a whole bevy of adventures can be defined around those. Even for evil characters. Remember, evil is selfish. Evil characters seeing the plight of their fellow still want to do something about it, but for personal gain in some way – which could be as benign as just wanting the accolades of their efforts if that is their primary motivation.

The conflict should be compatible with the setting. You don't want to have a political joust in Southern Ika where there is no government. You also don't want to have a war setting where there is no war. Some conflicts are a master key and should fit most any situation, but are limited.

What do we mean by "limited"? Well, it is a question of how long you want this adventure to last. One session conflicts are simple and obvious, the Players know what it is, who it is about and just get it done. The bandit, for example, can be a very good conflict for a one-off session. Commonly, you'll want to consider the bigger picture so adventures can last for many sessions and the end of the adventure opens the possibilities for another with much of the same information.

If you're looking for the more complex, you'll want to have that conflict part of the history of the setting you choose. The reason being is that it gives the adventure longevity. Most of these bigger conflicts cannot be solved by Level 1 adventurers. They'll have to work at it, grow into it and take it a piece at a time. In this, the actual conflict can be masked, or even hidden at first.

Yes, we need an example. This is what the Storyteller knows: There is a royal house in Catlit (Torsak Province setting) who has been sacked by another. The son of the royal survived by chance, and now must reclaim his house's standing and place within the royal court. That's the conflict.

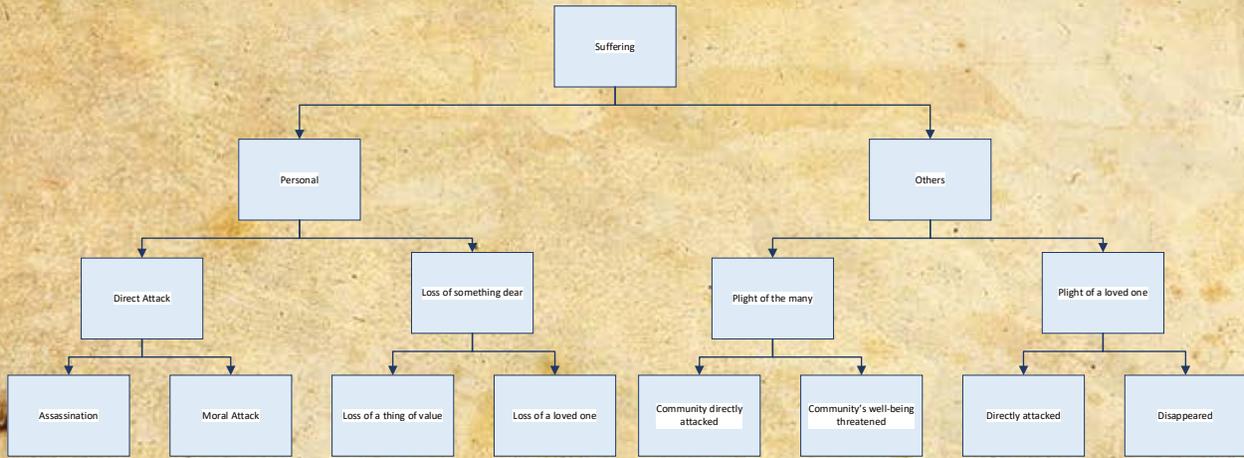
The adventure starts away from the capitol and the character (son of the royal) is informed that their father's mansion burned to the ground and no one survived.

In this example, the agents are not important yet. The Storyteller can place a scapegoat to throw the party off and obscure the true agent and maybe the conflict. Also, the conflict is not known yet. The Player doesn't know it was an attack, only that the mansion burned down. Furthermore, the attackers may want to finish the job and send out some hitmen to take out the royal's son. This would create an initial conflict of the Players just trying to survive and figure out what is happening and why. Over time, they'll be able to figure out what happened as the Storyteller throws little bits of info. Once they know the conflict, then they have to identify the agent. Then, and only then, they can directly work towards resolution.

Why would you want to obscure the conflict or the agents? This is to build intrigue. Hopefully, it also builds immersion and engagement. But take caution and learn to read your Players. Some folks don't like too much of a mystery and just want to get on with it. Others like the slow pace of looking through clues and figuring things out. If you opt for a mystery, be sure to read some literature on how to properly build a mystery, filled with plausible and consistent clues. Last thing you want is a mystery that cannot be solved – that's just frustrating.



Here are some very basic, broad spectrum conflicts listed in a tree. Remember, a conflict, at its core, is conceptual it can take on many forms.



A large portion of all conflicts are based on this hierarchy. The royal's son losing their house's standing and their parents is the "Loss of something dear". The Bandit stealing is the "Plight of the many". And a conflict can move from one box to another, depending on how the story goes and how the Player takes it.

A bunch of monsters running amuck and the party being hired to handle it is an example of the detour from this model, which is gain. Gain is not a bad thing, nor is it always a way to lead someone to an evil Alignment. Evil Alignments are based on the selfishness of a character over others. If the party is hired to rid the valley of beasts, and all are paid equally, then no one is evilly motivated. Some might see a conflict of the plight of others, but it might just be a job too. This is also a good way to start out if you're new. Set up a small adventure where the party tracks down and kills a monster. It's simple and easy to follow.

As an aside, an evil character would fulfill such an Alignment if they took the job with the intent to facilitate the death or continued suffering of others to increase their profit. If the character didn't help in a fight so one of the party would die and they'd then get a bigger cut: evil. If a character found the monster, but didn't kill it and went back saying they couldn't get it done and they need more money to finish the job: evil.

In summary, the conflict is the story. Everything revolves around the conflict and even if the character goes right, when you meant for them to go left, the conflict remains the same. Focused on a setting and a conflict, the Players can pretty much go nuts and you'll still be able to run the adventure.

Step 3. Agents.

Most conflicts need an agent – a person to embody or creates the conflict. As with the conflict, you may want to create a pawn, lieutenant or a patsy for the agent to add more layers to the adventure. For something fast, the agent should be identified.

Of course, you can take this one step at a time. The initial agent was just a lieutenant of the mastermind, who turned out to be a patsy for an even bigger mastermind, who turns out to be a pawn for some big evil thing; with each realization concluding a self-contained adventure.

In one approach, an agent needs to follow the same bounds as NPCs (step 4), but can also be the opposite of the protagonist(s). If you have a Lawfully Good character, it is not enough just to throw in a Chaotically Evil agent. The agent should be different in every important way while still keeping in mind who they are and what they do. If the party is calculating, the agent can be fool-hearty. If the party seeks to

protect the innocent, the agent should seek to hurt them. If the party is working to gain power and take over the area, the agent should be of authority or maybe even someone who seeks to destroy all authority – including the party's.

Think of some of the classic movies. Think about the traits of the main character and the main bad guy and you'll see some trends: Aragorn and Sauron, Iago and Othello, the White Witch and Aslan, Long John Silver and Hawkins, Peter Pan and Captain Hook, Dracula and Van Helsing, this list goes on.

However, sometimes an agent is the same as the hero, just with a different motivation. This is more like a completing force, only diverged by their end states. It might be those ends conflict naturally, or they might be both completing for the same prize. If their motivations diverge, like Holmes and Moriarty, it is safe to make the agent in almost any way you want, but it far more interesting if they are much like the Players' characters. If both are looking to protect a village, with the players out of goodness and the agent to seat themselves in power, how the agent and the characters interact can be very engrossing.

You can design an agent who sees the village's only continued survival through the rule of a powerful person who can continue to keep them safe. The agent goes through the same steps and competes with the characters to solve the conflict, but just with a different outcome. In this case, the agent might try and win the PCs over to his cause.

If they are competing for the same prize, things can go many different ways. In selfish instances, the agent wants to eliminate the Players. In a good setting, the agent might want the Players to stand aside or join them. When the agent is neutral, and especially if the Players' characters are as well, such competition can reveal the character's motivations and be a defining step in their careers on the path of good or evil. In the case of neutral characters, they'll have to do something. If they take the prize for their own while trying to harm the other, that's selfish and evil. If they back off and let the other have it, that's selfless (maybe, or cowardice... or maybe even plotting). And what is the prize? Is it gold or peoples' safety? These kinds of questions help clarify the Alignment consequence.

Remember, the agent is the antagonist of your story, it is *your* character. Make it a good one. Take some time to create a thinking person, with real motivations and not just a babbling evil thing. The more the Players can identify with the agent, the more engaging the story can be. Just as much, the baser the agent, the more motivated the Players will be to take him out - also engaging.

Step 4. NPCs

The filler of the story when it comes to the environment. You'll need a lot, I mean... a LOT. Depending on how into-character you like to play and the Players expect, you may need to summon your inner schizophrenic(s) person. Shop keepers, armor smiths, alchemists, tavern owners, bards, minions and so on. All these add flavor to the game. The personality of on shop keeper can make the immersion so much better for everyone.

Go ahead and start with those NPCs directly connected to the conflict and answer these questions, building that into their personalities and possible actions:

- How do they feel about the conflict?
- Are they even aware of the conflict?
- Are they on a side?
- What's their Alignment?
- What are their aspirations?

Answering these allows the Storyteller to play out an NPC that is consistent with the story and environment. The NPC will have a purpose in the story, even if it is only to better paint the picture of the conflict. Through these NCPs, the Players can get a better understanding of what the fictional people in Wyrmsbane think and feel. You want to portray and explain emotion and thought through NPCs.

An NPC that does nothing, has no personality or is not involved might as well not be in the story. If you don't plan on doing this for a shop keeper, then don't bother roleplaying anything out in a shop. Just tell the Players to buy what they need off the equipment pages. But, playing out every few shops keeps is a good thing.

Moreover, some NCPs should be connected to the plot and might be where the Players can get more

info on what they should do, unravel the story and discover new aspects of the conflict. In short, NPCs can offer more insight into your story and can be used to supplement what the Players have figured out themselves. Are the Players stuck, have an NPC give them a hint. Do the Players have it all wrong, have an NPC correct them. Players heading down a wrong path, have an NPC set em straight.

Best thing to do is create out, very roughly, a dozen or so NPCs. Know how they fit into the story and have their names written down (there's lots of fantasy name generators online and see the Race Chapter in the StorytellerT). The Players may not interact with all of them, so you can save these ideas from session to session, or surrogate one for another if needed.

If the party itself has an NPC or two, then this is where you want them to be more silent and out-of-the-way. The party is for the Players to run, not to be led by you as an NPC. Sure, a NPC can still drop hints and help in a fight. Maybe even have a personality. Just remember the party is about the Players and you want that to remain their realm.... Stay out of it as much as possible.

Step 5. Legs.

You'll want to section off your adventure into logical sections. Even those that you plan on completing in one session needs to have some "chapters". These are logical and thematic places where folks can go get a bite, stretch their legs, sit and talk with one another to plan their next steps, and use the head.

In a multi-session adventure, this is a stopping point. Having good stopping points are essential. They allow the Players some resolution and give them a place to consolidate, gain experience and tweak their characters.

So, when is a good point a good point? Best way to think of it is compare it to a movie, or a sequence of movies. Depending on how long you run a session that is. If you run just a 2-hour session, a good point might be more like scene changes within a movie. A good stopping point is a place where the character has accomplished something and they're relatively safe, some information has been gained and there is a clear next step they need to take (they're not

mid-stride). In a multi-session adventure, you'll probably be doling out experience points at the end of each session.

Step 6. Encounters.

You should have some preplanned encounters. After all, almost the entire Player's Tome is about combat. An encounter is when the party is expected to get into combat. This can be bandits along the road, a beast guarding a treasure or just a random spot that has something to fight.

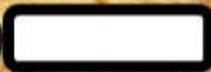
There are four general kinds of encounters: Fodder, storyline, mini-boss and boss. Fodder is just an encounter to let the players have fun. All fights in Tara-Corax are deadly, and these are no exception, but not challenging. Fodder does not need to be attached to the story at all, and can be the result of the PCs actions, or just to spice things up. Storyline encounters are something aligned with the story and a little stronger. This should be right in line with a medium difficulty, as described in the Fights Chapter. Mini-boss encounters are still within the storyline, and normally contain a single enemy that is relatively strong to the PCs. Bosses are the agents within your story, or their direct minions. These are deadly indeed, and survival is something to be happy about.

Step 7. Loot!

Yes, everyone's favorite. Explained in far more detail in the Loot Chapter, be certain you have some pre-planned goodies for the Players. If not, be sure you have identified few places where you'll make those nail-biting loot rolls. Monsters and beasts also have associated loot, and you can give that out too, if applicable. In general, don't use loot as a way to entice your Players. It is a nice-to-have, not an afterthought per se, but not the focus either. The Players should be motivated by things more important than gold... most of the time.

Step 8. Experience.

See the Experience Chapter. Be certain you have this planned out from the start though.



Step 9. Supplements.

Whether you're using a game board, dry erase board, tabletop map, miniatures, pictures, online gaming facilitators or whatever - anything that is visual that is part of the story, have done before hand. If it is a map, have the map ready. If there is a view of a castle that has some important meaning, have it ready. If you just want the Players to see some visuals to help bind the experience, have it ready.

Step 10. Rest and Tighten it up

That's right, take a break. This all takes a lot of brain power and you'll need a rest. Think things through a little. Run the adventure in your mind and see if you

find any holes. Think about what would happen if the Players choose A instead of B. go over where you think the stopping points should be. Flesh-out some NCPs in your mind. In generally, take a step back from what you've done so far and look at it as a player.

Whether you take an hour break, or a week, you should find some holes in your story; a few things that need readdressing. Take those parts and fix them, always remembering that this is about having fun for the Players (hopefully you too). Last thing is to make sure your set for the game. Have the book nearby or virtually available, have those visual aids ready to go, your notes close, the monsters for your encounters pulled up and so on.



Resources

Gunna talk about all the resources online and in the different Tomes, and what they're for.



Classes & Ascension

Class Ascension

The concept of Class Ascension is something not far from recognition by most people. For an example, we'll use the career of a politician, which is analogous to that of your adventurer; expect of dealing in adventures, they deal in politics.

They start off as something small, perhaps a PTA member at a local school. They face their own trails day by day and overcome their appropriate-sized challenges. They don't have much clout to go and talk to the mayor or governor if they thought they needed to – not as a peer. Over time, they advance and become head of the PTA, and then a Vice Principle, Principle, one the city's school board and chair of the board. Maybe at this point the governor might grant them an audience, they have become important in their field. Through hard work and experience, they go on a campaign and become the mayor of the city.

Thus far, we're talking about a normal character. They are part of their own little realm, accomplishing tasks and making a difference in their own world, a world that doesn't affect much outside of it. They might be hot stuff within, but outside, they are unknown. Even as a mayor, they might be the top of the food chain in that city, but few cities know their neighboring mayor by name.

Up to this point, they have been grown from position to position, with each being more influential than the last. From here, the mayor can just stay a mayor. They can get reelected, make changes in the city, hire new police, and be the grandest mayor that city has ever seen – but they do not become anything more than they are. They don't grow, learn new skills, make new contacts or grow in any direct way. They essentially develop what they already are. This is like a 9th Level going up to 10th, and 11th without a Class Ascension – they're stagnant.

Or, the politician can try and ascend to the next echelon. They run for governor! They win, a few years later, they become a senator, then on the armed services committee, then chair of the committee, maybe one day president. At this point, there many (almost infinite) positions to fill above that of a mayor. Each one brings new skills, new perspectives, and new

knowledge. They affect more than just their original stomping grounds, they are part of a bigger world, known by many and working to change the larger world around them. This is a Class Ascended character.

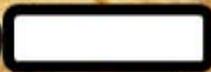
The Class Ascension (CA) brings with it the possibility of new Skills, Mastery Styles, potentials, Abilities and more. They do not remain stagnant, and continue to grow beyond their beginnings and have near-infinite positions to fill above them.

Each character that CAs, has three new Classes they might become, like the mayor into a governor. These may be a choice, and they may be based on what the character did before they reached CA. here's an example, and we'll take the politician again. Let's say the politician stayed in the schooling business. A vice-principle, to a principle, school board, then onto the state school board, the national school board and secretary of education – this is a specialization and would only be filled by those who have been educators. We may also have politician who becomes a lobbyist for some national group. They start out on the city chapter of the organization, rise to the state, the regional and so on – this is another route. Maybe, they're just a straight politician and go from mayor to governor to senator and so on.

On the other hand, it may be a strait choice. A governor can become a senator, or a congressional representative, or a president. Each Character Class is different and has different prerequisites, conditions, requirements, alignment restrictions, and accomplishments that allow or disallow choice. In fact, some Character Classes set themselves on a path right from Level 1 to become a specific CA Class.

If you don't CA

As stated in the PT, non-ascension after Level 10 has some serious consequences; or maybe it is better to say, as before, they are stagnant. All standard CCs are based up to Level 10, and then stop. After Level 10, a non-CA character gains no more Hit Points, no more SS, MSS or PWS. They also are not considered to be



higher levels for Abilities or spells. Thus, if a spell says +1 per Level, that is limited to +10 for a non-CA character.

Ascension

The process of ascension is not one that blends into the background. It is distinct, overt and always recognized. Like the mayor to a governor, it is also rare and few ever make it to the “big time”. That is not to say that CAs are competitive with another character, although they may be.

A character may attempt to CA anytime once they reach Level 10. This also means that they can attempt at Level 11 or 12, when they’ve become stagnant. As such, a Class Ascended character does not continue to count Levels as normal, they are now counted from when they ascended. This doesn’t matter if they are Level 10, 11, 35 or 135, when a character becomes ascended, they are “CA+0”, one Level later, they are “CA+1” and so on. Also, because Levels beyond the 10th as non-CA doesn’t count towards anything, you can also treat the “CA” as a 10 when figuring out Ability bonuses and spells. As CA+0 will always count as Level 10 for Abilities and spells, a CA+1 is a Level 11 and so on.

CA Quest

To become a CA, you must embark on a quest that is in line with your CA description of that to-be Character Class, or a continuation (and apex) of an on-going struggle which has slotted a character into a specific Ascended Class. The quest is dire, dangerous and, like the governor, few actually make it. Yes STs, that’s right, you are encouraged to make it as hard as possible. Not unfair, but effort enough so that those who make it are proud of what they’ve done. In the same vein as the whole game, if it holds not uncertainty and danger, there is no immersion or engagement. I’m not going to tell you what percentage should make it or anything of the sort, it is your game (we’ll it’s the Players’ game), but I will say if you have nothing but CA characters running around, you’ve done something wrong.

Now that brings up multiple characters and the discussion of, “but what if only 1 makes it out of

4, what do the other 3 do? Do they make new characters at Level 1 and party up with a CA?” All good questions and the answer is up to you. Personally, I would put the CA on hold, start a new adventure and then reintegrate the CA once the others have made it up to about Level 7 or so. Eventually, you would have 4 CA characters, all with their own unique stories, experience and so on. Like in the movies, you meet the heroes who are all very accomplished and they go on an adventure together, but you don’t know where they come from what they’ve been through or how they became a hero. If you raise each CA individually, your end result with the Players, and them with each other, will be far better. But, up to you.

Again, the CA quest should be thematic to the Character Class. That also means that only 1 character can do this at a time, unless you’ve managed to work in all the characters’ CA themes into one. Let’s look at a few examples of a CA quest.

We’ll take the Fighter, the political combatant. The three CAs are Lord, Bereft Lord and Lord General. Per the descriptions, we see that the Lord is a continuation of the Fighter Class and is the primary noble in the story. The Bereft Lord is one that has been ousted from the position, but still has a retainer and fights to reclaim their position as a noble. The Lord General is a Fighter that spent most of their time on the battlefield and is not the primary noble in the story, but rather militant commander within the noble court. This is a summary, and there is more to these CAs than listed, but use this as an example.

For the Lord, they already start as a noble. So, a CA quest might be their ascension to become the prime noble. Maybe that is leading an uprising against the current top ruler, maybe it is leading a campaign to unify territories under your rule, maybe it is defending the nation against some threat.

The Bereft Lord wants to reclaim their birthright and reestablish this position as a noble. The description says that something has sacked their house and they are on the run or removed from their nobility. Important to note, their CA quest is not reclaiming their position, that is what they do as a CA character. The CA quest may just be surviving the sacking of their house or nation. The character/Player may not see this coming at all, thinking they’ll become a Lord or Lord General and then BAM! You sack their

house and they CA into a Bereft Lord. It might be the character starts off as being on the run, and the CA quest is the character reclaiming part, or settling for their loss, or surviving the times now ready to strike back.

The Lord General is straight forward. As leader of the armies, or one of the top leaders, a great campaign is probably the quest.

As you can see, The Lord and Lord General CA Classes are kind of predestined based on how the character was played from Levels 1 to 10. The Bereft Lord is more left up to the deviance of the ST, or perhaps the actions of the character. The point being is in all cases, you should know what that character should CA into, and be building up the storyline as soon as possible.

The CA quest should never be disjointed from the history of the character. It should be a culmination of all that has happened so far, the big hoorah is you will. The characters, story and goal should be seamless and make perfect sense – even if it is a surprise.

We'll take another Class that has more of a subjective funnel into the CAs: The Mage. All three of the Mage's CAs have outlines and why one could become that Class, but it is very subjective and there is a lot of room for interpretation. In these cases, around Level 7, you should probably start asking the Player what he wants, and formulate a method to meet that wish. Really in any case, you and the Players should have an understanding that what the characters do has certain impacts on the future and their CA.

In any case, the quest should be formulated so that at the end, all things are wrapped up from the original storyline. The kingdom is won, the campaign is a success, the Bereft Lord is on the run and the story is paused with a very definite feeling of closure. While there may be more to do, the current story rests well and ends. Think of the end of a series of movies; the storyline is complete; or a standalone movie that begs for a sequel.





Mechanics

The rules of the game are important, as stated so many times. As many times, it has been said the knowing the intent is important many times as well. This is the chapter where all this is covered. We will go through each chapter in the Player's Tome one at a time. The intent of each chapter's rules is given at the beginning of each section. After which, some pointers for each ruleset is given.

Dice

Dice are needed to make the game happen, or rather: a random number within a certain bound is the basis of most rules that eventually describe the outcome of a character's actions. As such, dice are not needed specifically, any random number generator will work fine. The intent is to produce some variability to the game. Through Skills, weapons proficiencies, Attribute bonuses and so on, the randomness of an action is mitigated.

- RNGs are fine to use.
- Many RNGs are available online and many are even meant for RPGs.
- You can make your own if you're savvy with a certain popular computer suite of programs.
- Rolling and adding are not meant to drag the game down, if people don't want to do the calculations, many tools are available on the website.
- The RNG-nature of the game is to add in a level of uncertainty.
- Such uncertainty is heavily influenced by the character's skills, Attributes and so on. In the end, there will always be a level of uncertainty, but much swayed in many cases based on the character.
- Remember naturals in the game are important, always ask if something is a natural if a rule has application.
- Roll Over and Rolling Again are very good mechanics, but may be a bridge too far for beginning Players. Leave the choice up to them.

Priorities

Priorities are there to be able to create a fine-tuned character. You'll always be able to make a better character with Priorities than without. However, it is not necessary and characters made without using the Priority concept are just as viable, albeit not as "good". In general, let the Player decide if they want to use the priority system or not. If so, better to have them make the character in advance, as using the system makes the character creation process a bit longer.

- For Attributes, points are more reliable and you'll get a better result on the average.
- Rolling for Attributes has a much higher potential for better scores, but also for lower.
- Remember, some Races and Character Classes modify the Priority system, be sure you're aware.
- Traits are meant to be a neat little addition, and not a mechanic to make a character great.
- If you use Bottom of the Barrel, be certain your Players know about it and accept it first.

Attributes

Attributes are a qualitative way to describe a character's capabilities. It is the Characteristics that add a quantitative aspect to Attributes. In general, 9 is an average score by Human standards. For other Races that have bonuses or minuses, 9 plus/minus that bonus are average. 2 points on either side of the average, while better/worse, is marginal and probably not noticeable. More than 2 means others notice they are stronger/tougher/more agile or dexterous and more intelligent. Mysticism cannot be assessed by others in any normal manner. It's not important to have really high Attributes and discourage Players from thinking they need to. Having a well-rounded



character is sometimes better than one with a very high Attributes and a very low.

- 9 (or its racial relative) is the average for the race, not just for an adventurer.
- Due to lifting mechanics, it may be important to determine a character's weight. As a baseline this should guide you. The below would be the minimum-ish weight based on a character's Strength and Longevity:

	Base	Male Addition	Femal Addition
Human	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 50 lbs.	+ 30 lbs.
Wood Elf	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 40 lbs.	+ 30 lbs.
Blue Elf	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 10 lbs.	+ 0 lbs.
Grey Elf	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 10 lbs.	+ 0 lbs.
Sand Elf	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 80 lbs.	+ 70 lbs.
Hill Dwarf	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 120 lbs.	+ 60 lbs.
Stone Dwarf	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 150 lbs.	+ 110 lbs.
Grey Dwarf	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 50 lbs.	+ 40 lbs.
Dafter	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 40 lbs.	+ 40 lbs.
Lyfin	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 40 lbs.	+ 25 lbs.
Rosendarik	(Str+Lon)x5 in lbs.	+ 15 lbs.	+ 10 lbs.

- Highlight KO%, it is very important. It denotes how often you get KO'd, so a roll must be over the listed %.
- Base Evade is always as listed, and not modified. Dodge is Base Evade and modified by Enc, Armor, Traits, Abilities and so on.
- Remember, bonus to-Hit with any ranged weapon always come from the second Dexterity Characteristic.
- Intellect is not a measure of how "smart" a character is. In general, one can separate "smarts" into three categories. Common sense, which is not guided by the Intellect Attribute. Knowledge which is the summation of how many things a character knows, like Skills, Weapon Skills, experiences and so on. Intellect is simply how fast a character learns things. It can be likened to IQ.
- People with a high mysticism will have odd things manifest within them at a young age, and they have the ability to "feel" the mystic world around them to some extent. Such manifestations are only prominent to those with a score of 15 or more.

Races

There is a lot to the Races and a good deal of possible complexity. The information is there to guide the Player and explain to them what a Race is like. Players who don't like a Race's description, even if they like the Abilities and bonuses, should probably not play one. Races are meant to be an RPG guide more than a mechanic for bonuses and Abilities. Storytellers beware if you allow a Player to play a race outside of the racial norm, you are redefining the game in a way that can lead to topical conflicts and incontinuity.

- Human are about the same across the globe as a race. There are differing cultural aspects per the location, but such worldviews affect each Race equally. Thus, a Human is a Human across the globe.
- Wood Elf, Grey Elf and Blue Elf are all part of the same Race of Ellish. They all speak Ellish and then a dialect specific to their race. Racial dialects can be vaguely understood in Ellish.
- Hill Dwarf, Stone Dwarf and Grey Dwarf are all part of the Dwanar race, but also distinct, unlike the Ellish. They all speak Dwanar, which is common to all Dwanar people. There are also languages specific to the race.
- Dafter do not feel standard emotions, they are more focused on the good of the whole. As such, Dafter see other races as foreign. Not worse or better per se, but different. They are unconcerned with how other races conduct themselves, only looking to their own, even if exiled.
- The Dafterian people are the only unbroken race, as they are still under the rule of their original Ancient.
- Dafter are warm-blooded, their body temp is normally about 107. They don't like cold at all, but can take the heat a little better.
- Rosendarik are an odd people that do not share the same history as the other races. Only having been part of the world since after the War of the Avatars, they are a "new" race. They all come from "the garden", a place which no one has ever found, including those Rosendarik in the world.
- While curious, Rosendarik are not stupid.

- Stone Dwarf do not like any other race and are isolationists. NPCs and PC are all exiled or runaways from that culture, and all want to return.
- Grey Dwarf do not have their own culture or cities, they are symbiotic with the Hill Dwarf.
- Attribute limits are there to thematically hold things together. A Blue Elf that can lift a car is just outside of reason, even if theoretically possible to build a character that way with Priorities, Traits and so on.
- The Lyfenic Curse is secret to ALL other races. No Lyfin would ever share with anyone else. Even if bonded to non-Lyfin, because they cannot have offspring, there is no need to share. Even within Lyfin culture, it is rarely spoken of.
- Psionics are rare, and not generally known to the public.

Comeliness (Additional Rule)

This is a measure of someone's attractiveness in a general sense. This is not all about looks, but is also about how they allure others to them. Each race is different and some don't place the same importance on looks or attitude. Thus, what is attractive to one race may be different to another.

Comeliness mainly describes the interaction within that Race. To another race who treasures certain aspects, one who has low Comeliness within their own kind may be very attractive to another outside their race.

While interracial relationships are known to happen, they do not produce offspring (except for Human and Wood Elf). Generally speaking, most races stick to their own, with some exceptions.

All Ellish people can mate and produce a Wood Elf. Two Grey Elves will always make a Grey Elf, but one Wood Elf and one Grey Elf will make a Wood Elf. Wood Elves see it as proof of their superior and pure state of the Ellish kind. Dwanar are all separate and cannot interbreed. Dafter is completely separated. Lyfin do engage in interracial relationships, but no offspring is produced. All races are attracted to Rosendarik.

Human (2d10, 9 average)

We should all know how this works. Humans are the most eclectic in their tastes and there is no racial standard that rules. In general, physical attractiveness is seen first, and character is seen second. However, Humans, more than any other race, vary in what they find attractive. Humans also find other races attractive from their general like for physical beauty. Humans are not over concerned with producing offspring, like other races, and then to have children only into a family unit that can support children well.

Wood Elf (3d8, 10 average)

Very similar to Human. This is a mix of physical beauty and charm. In the case of Wood Elf and other Ellish, this is more reliance/importance on their charm and person. In general, Wood Elf Comeliness is 3 higher to Humans and Lyfin, who see their physical beauty. Humans seem to be 3 less to the Ellish because they fixate on the physical and not on the person. As such, Human-Wood Elf relationships are normally based on personality and not bound to any age stigma. Due to the lifecycle of the Ellish, none see those born under the same parents as "siblings" indeed, the concept of brother and sister is foreign to them. They are all reestablished beings of the Ellish light.

Grey Elf (3d8, 11 average)

Grey Elf tend to be just a little more physically attractive and drawn to physical beauty more than a Wood Elf. Even though an Ellish that can have offspring with any other Ellish, nothing comes from mating with a Human. It is said that the true spirit of the Ellish is that of the pure Wood Elf form. Grey Elf are wayward component of the Ellish, one that should be done away with through time. When a wisp reenters a child, only two Grey Elf parents are enough to overcome that purity and produce a Grey Elf child. In general, the Grey Elf disdain this point of view, even if they cannot logically combat it.

Blue Elf (2d10, 9 average)

Like their Ellish brethren, Blue Elves look to the mental and charm of a person more than physical. While Blue Elf can be stunning in their natural form, their ritual scaring often hides much of the better features. Blue Elves are only born in rare instances, and there seems to be no rhyme or reason. They can be born to any combination of the Ellish, even if their “siblings” are not Blue Elf.

Sand Elf (2d8, 7 average)

One might ask why would a Wood Elf and Human ever have a child if it is known they will be outcast? The answer lies in the Ellish point of view. The Wood Elf see a Sand Elf as a physical vessel created by the parents, but without the Ellish light indwelling. This is why Wood Elves say Sand Elves are so plain looking – they are without a spirit. Because they are not from a wisp, the Wood Elf do not see this as an encroachment into their lifecycle. Humans see this as just another offspring and do their best to raise them as such. Most Sand Elf feel their un-belonging to both races and turn away from both. Sand Elves only see other Sand Elves as viable mates and companions, for no one else can possibly understand what it's like to be a Sand Elf.

Hill Dwarf (2d6, 5 average for male & 2d10, 9 average for female)

The Dwanar people must separated into their different sub-races, and then into male and female as well. For Hill Dwarf males, it is all about their manliness. If one were to take all the most boorish qualities of a human male, intensify it and make it over the top, that is what Dwarven women find attractive. To others, male Hill Dwarf are hairy, stunt, and odd. To them, it is all about their beards, hairy chests, scars, broken crooked noses and tattoos that show one's grit and courage. The females of the race find this very attractive. Oddly enough, male Hill Dwarves tend to look at their women as objects, there to cook and clean. Female Hill Dwarf are proportioned more like Humans, but shorter. They don't share any of the male Hill Dwarf features, and seem very much like a short Human to other races. This does lead to Human male and Hill Dwarf female relationships. But, the Hill Dwarf

females are attracted to only the “manliest” qualities, and you often see a huge similarity in a male Human and a male Hill Dwarf for those with a female Hill Dwarf.

Stone Dwarf (2d4, 4 average)

The Stone Dwarf don't place any importance on attractiveness or courtship. Within their culture, of which they rarely stray, these things are of no importance. The family line is what is paramount, and Stone Dwarves seek to produce offspring that combines two families to make a stronger whole. This new partnership is separate and distinct after the first generation. If an artisan male and a daughter from a warrior family combine, that male will go and live with the female's family, taken into the warrior family and expected to be such to a minor extent. The male child from the two is then a warrior-artisan, and will be expelled from that family on their 20th birthday, to start a new family holding of the warrior-artisan. In general, Stone Dwarf females don't leave the family hold and are seen as a necessary component to the family, but have no intrinsic value. The whole culture is based around the males, their accomplishments and their bloodlines.

Grey Dwarf (2d6, 7 average)

Grey Dwarf, for both male and female, have many of the same features as a male Hill Dwarf (minus the beards for females). Their lack of Comeliness comes from their personality. Grey Dwarves are shrewd, unfeeling and generally bitter individuals. They find “love” with other Grey Dwarves only, and normally not intended to be a permanent thing. The number of single mothers in a Grey Dwarf community (which there is none and all Grey Dwarf live amongst Hill Dwarf cultures) is over 90%. A joke is, “the only person who can stand the company of a Grey Dwarf is another Grey Dwarf?”

Dafter (1d4, 2 average)

To other races, Dafter are so foreign that Comeliness is almost an inappropriate term. Indeed, a female Dafter is very similar in form to a male. Within the Dafter culture, love and attractiveness are foreign concepts. The caste of a Dafter chooses their mate based on the accomplishments of both Dafter. Sometimes this is within the same caste, and sometimes from outside. It matters not, as Dafter females give birth to 3-4 offspring, each of which can be of any color. The choice of mates is based on what the two have as similar qualities in the hopes to produce Dafter offspring that are the sum of the two. As soon as they are born, Dafter children are swept into the caste and cared for there.

Lyfin (3d8+2, 14 average)

By Human standards, Lyfin are very attractive physically. In character, they are very loving and tender. Lyfin tend to only have relationships with other Lyfin, Wood Elf, Human and Rosendarik. For Lyfin, mating is fraught with danger, and many choose not to have children at all. Thus, most Lyfin chose a partner based on selfish reasons, i.e. what they want now without regard for a sustained future. Many Lyfin have an adolescence outlook on relationships, changing often and for "petty" reasons. However, once a Lyfin chooses a mate, they bond for life, and Lyfin do not leave that bond, even in death of a mate. Even if that mate is not Lyfin, they remain faithful always. Lyfin understand once they bond, it is for all time, and therefore "trial" as much as possible, often returning to an individual for another try. This is maddening to most races, but completely acceptable to Lyfin. It should be noted that copulation only occurs after the bonding.

Rosendarik (3d10, average 15, 15 minimum)

By all standards, Rosendarik are the most attractive all off races. Physically, they are all stunning and near perfect in visage. In personality, they seek to please. For those Rosendarik who live in the world outside the garden, relationships are main part of the Rosendarik psyche. Partnerships are always between a male and female, but no offspring are produced. The birth of a Rosendarik is unknown to all, even those

Rosendarik in the world. Rosendarik are not part of the civilized people in that they were never under the rule of an Ancient. They come from a different beginning. The Rosendarik tend to mimic the culture they're in, often with an odd child-like take. They see beauty as most other races do and tend to seek the most attractive people. However, they might also find a characteristic about someone intriguing and bond because of that reason. A Rosendarik who has never felt "love" before will fall completely for the first person that shows them true love. Rosendarik can also always sense insincerity, and find it most revolting when it comes to matters of the heart.

Hit Points

Hit Points are there to allow a character to have a life pool. Hit Points are a combo of toughness, will and the ability to roll with the punches. Even if a dagger does 1-4 damage, plunging it into someone's chest will still kill them. Thus, Hit Points are "active" when the character is conscious. If they are sleeping, certain attacks, even if they don't do a whole lot of damage, can kill.

- All people have the racial Hit Points base. Human guards all have at least 10 Hit Points, and so would a housewife. Children would have less, as scaled by their age and/or size.
- A character dies *at* their Death Number. 1 above alive, at that value is dead.
- Unless otherwise stated, characters at their Death Number are dead and beyond resuscitation and healing.
- The area of a character **dying** but still alive where they can be saved is the space between 0 Hit Points and their Death Number.

Resistances

Resistances are there to allow a way out of something bad for a character. Over time, their scores will become low and they'll always make normal ResChecks. Higher grade attacks normally have a penalty to roll. Thus, the Target Number should remain constant if facing an assault from the same power as the character's Level.

- Scores are common to all within a Race. The only one that changes is Naturals for the young and infirmed.
- Remember, the Class bonuses and modifiers for Levels change the Score, and not the modifier to roll.
- Modifiers to roll come only from Attributes and the attack itself.
- Naturals is a measure of willpower. To see if a character resists temptation can be determined here. However, Player characters receive the benefit of being able to do what they want to a great extent, and can resist most temptation because the Player says so. Reserve willpower-related ResChecks for special occasions.
- One the average, a Halving ResCheck and a Reducing ResCheck are not equal. Early on, Halving might be better, but spells are generally built that the RO reduction can be far better than half damage. This is dependent on how well a Player rolls. Risk vs rewards, but Reduction has more potential to abate damage.

Encumbrance

This might be seen as petty, but it is meant to bring more realism to the game. Characters should not be able to walk around with 5 sets of plate armor, switching them off as they please. A bag of 10,000 gold would weigh a lot. Encumbrance is meant for balance.

- The Enc Limit is the point a character can move without being affected in game-mechanic terms. There is a point where the straw breaks the camel's back, and that is the Enc Limit, even if by .1.
- Lifting can be important, and based off a character's weight. But, you can hold off determining that for when it comes up. If you do, count on all your characters to be heavy.
- If they choose to be heavy just for the lift amount, make sure you thrown in a few obstacles that are better accomplished by light weights, like a rickety bridge.

Land Speed and Movement

Land Speed is meant to show how a character can tactically move. "Tactically" is key, and be sure you're familiar with the rules for an Untactical Advance. 1 unit equal 2 yards, and there is a non-1-to-1 ratio to keep the board size small. If each hex was 1 yard, your maps would have a lot of hexes, making the boards big and/or the hexes small – neither is good.

- Terrain may be an Advanced Rule, but it describes a lot of how characters can move. Advised to learn it, or use maps with little terrain.
- Marching distances are always limited by the slowest member of a party.
- In cases of odd yardage, give the advantage to the Player.
- A Player might think that their character should be able to sprint everywhere and move more than 20-40 yards in 10 seconds. Certainly in gym cloths and fresh you can, but that is not the life of an adventurer. As a test, have someone wear a backpack, carry a bat and a big book, wear a filled tool belt and a canteen. Make them hike for 10 miles, and then have them wrestle a person with their gear on and then try and sprint around a field, with a few people on the field trying to tackle them as they dodge. Of, if you're less cynical than I, watch how soldiers in combat move and you'll see 20-40 yards in 10 seconds is not so farfetched.

Evade

This describes a character who is looking and in the combat-mode can move and dodge. When characters are totally unaware, their Evade should be 4, and their Critical Threshold should be halved as well. By "unaware", that does not mean flanked, or ambushed. It means at a bar and with no warning they are attacked, or just waking up from sleeping. As long as a character has even a split second to react, their Evades should be active.

- Attack and Defense Power take a little math. In most cases you can ignore it. It is there to provide realism, so only engage it if something unrealistic is about to happen.

- The overall combination of Critical Threshold and Armor is Critical Resistance. Really, the terms Critical Resistance and Critical Threshold are almost synonymous and can be used interchangeably. Specifically, Critical Threshold comes from the person, Critical Resistance is from the armor.
- Characters must be able to Parry and Block to gain that Evade. Casters cannot parry while casting, characters cannot parry or block while using ranged attacks.
- Other things like bad footing, slippery floors, terrain that doesn't allow movement can all reduce Evade per your discretion.

Armor and Absorb

Absorb is created and split to create a feeling that armor does something and is meaningful. We've all seen the movies where armored guards are cut down by the hero by the scores and armor does nothing. Most armor must be targeted, and it is assumed that attackers are aiming for the weaker areas. A breast plate of steel cannot be slashed open by a sword in almost any circumstance, one must aim for the joints – and even then, there is armor. Furthermore, not all weapons attack the same way. Blunt attacks are different than slashing and armor is not as protective against one as another.

- Generally speaking, it is always better to wear armor. The only exceptions are those with a very high Evade.
- One will find that the more armor you wear, the more often you are hit, but the less you're damaged. Moreover, the more armor you have the less likely you are to receive a Critical Strike.
- Critical Strikes are simply devastating. If you wear no armor and take a higher Evade, you may dodge most attacks. But, every attack that hits has a greater chance of being a Critical Strike.

Weapons

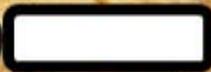
All weapons are meant to either be a general form of a known historical weapon or something indigenous to Wyrmsbane. A Rapier would be a Fencing Sword, a falchion would be a Chopping Blade and a claymore would be a Great Sword. Remind Players that the Extra Damage mechanic is a very powerful, but they have to be willing to do the math.

- Some Weapon Groups share common weapons. Certain weapons can be classified in more than one way.
- Some Mastery Styles may not allow certain Weapon Groups, but through the Groups' shared common weapons, specific weapons can receive benefits from multiple Mastery Styles.
- If a Player comes up with a new weapon, chances are it can fit into something already listed.

Weapon Skills

Weapon Skills are deep and rewarding to the Players if used correctly. These, like the weapons themselves, are not specific, but a general term. The Backhand Technique, for instance, may have several schools and varieties across the world. Nevertheless, they all act the same (on paper). They are separate because learning a style with a sword is rarely applicable to when using a staff or a dagger. While some of the basics are, of course, the same (stand defensively, block, be prepared to move and so on), the advanced application and specific moves are different. This is why Mastery Styles are normally taken with Weapon Groups, all which share similar fit, form and function and can therefore be used with the same style.

- There are some good tools on the website to assist you in picking a Weapons Skill with a Weapon Group.
- Many Players will look to use all their MSS on Styles that have the same weapons. Some Combatants will find they have too many MSS and run out of Styles that they can use with the same weapon. The point is not always to add and add, and limitations are present. The more MSS you have also enables



a character to have many different weapons combined with many different Mastery Styles.

- Assassin's Technique is very powerful, and is meant to be. If using it against Players, be wary, it can kill very easily.
- Not all Mastery Styles work together, but sure you see the rules for Counter Blow, Following Blow and so on. However, a character can have the same with the same weapon, and just choose to use one or the other, switching from Round to Round when it is their turn.

Training Up a Rank (Advanced Rule)

Mastery Styles take time to train from one Rank to the next and some effort. Characters will roll an Intellect Check to raise from one Rank to the next, with a Target Number as per the chart below. If they have a trainer, they will find it faster and easier to Rank-up. The Trainer must be at least 1 Rank higher than the student. (yup, achieving the 10th Rank is a solo journey).

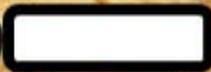
The time listed is in days. they need not be consecutive. If the trainee fails the Intellect Check, they may try again after 1 day of training times the amount they missed their roll by, times the Rank they are ascending to. When trying again, gain +1 to your roll for each previous failure. Characters do not make a Check if starting the game with a Focused Mastery Style, nor do they need to if splintering a Mastery Style.

	With Trainer		Without Trainer	
	Time	Intellect Check	Time	Intellect Check
Rank 1	-	-	-	-
Rank 2	3 Days	2	5 Days	3
Rank 3	5 Days	3	8 Days	4
Rank 4	15 Days	4	23 Days	5
Rank 5	25 Days	5	38 Days	6
Rank 6	40 Days	6	60 Days	8
Rank 7	75 Days	7	113 Days	9
Rank 8	150 Days	8	225 Days	10
Rank 9	300 Days	9	450 Days	11
Rank 10	-	-	750 Days	15

Skills

Skills are an essential part of the game and should be a focus of a Storyteller and the Players. Target Numbers are subjective, and try and have a good handle on what they mean. Remember, the Target Numbers don't change with the level of skill a character has, they're constant. This is meant to make the easy a given and the impossible possible as the character Ranks-Up the Skill. Skills are divided into so many because having a general skill that covers the lot of things is not how things work. People are not good at all athletics; if they were, there wouldn't be different competitors in the Olympics. The differences in Social Skills create a specialization in different aspects of a social environment. Lack of a Skill doesn't mean they're a total idiot. Characters without a Social Skill are not awkward, they're just not skilled in making things happen socially. If you don't have Bartering, you can still barter, but will never be effective like a character with the Skill. And, some Skills you cannot mimic. For those, you might be a total wash – depending on the Skill. Wizard Skills for instance, if you don't have any, you don't know even the first thing about them.

- When mimicking a Skill, do not roll again on 6s, and no Abilities can change this.
- All Skills have a place. Within a party, encourage Players to talk during character creation so the party has the widest array of Skills possible.
- Some Skills can be more applicable than others, like Observations, Orienteering, Cartography, and many of the Social Skills. Counter act this by creating situations for everyone's Skills to be useful.
- Remember all people speak common, their racial language and maybe a racial dialect at a minimum. No Skill needed, they just know it.
- Skills don't make the impossible possible, something must be accomplishable in the first place to have a Target Number to roll against.
- Yes, there are things that might be theoretically possible, but are practically impossible. If practically impossible, then probably best to treat it is impossible.
- Some Skills have a supernatural component to them, but all these components fit and mesh with a supernatural aspect of the world.



Remember that a character WILL face situations that they don't have a good answer for, and they'll have to try and mimic a few Skills. If a character has to mimic the same Skill over and over, or if it becomes apparent that they'll need the Skill, then do this: have them pencil the Skill into their character sheet. Then, have them face situations where they need the Skill, but not all at once. Have them roll one die with an appropriate Target Number. If they make the Skill Check tree times in a row within those the separate instances you created for them to roll, then they gain the skill at Rank 1.

Skill Rank Time to Train

1+5 to 2	10 Days
2+5 to 3	15 Days
3+5 to 4	20 Days
4+5 to 5	25 Days
5+1 to 5+2	30 Days
5+2 to 5+3	35 Days
5+3 to 5+4	40 Days
5+4 to 5+5	45 Days
5+5 to 5+6	50 Days

Training Up a Rank (Advanced Rule)

As with Weapon Skills, reach new heights of mastery in a Skill may take a little training. The difference is that the lower Ranks of Skills are reachable without any special training. Also, a character only needs to train Skills when going from one Category to another, i.e. 1+5 to 2, or 2+5 to 3. No training is needed within a Category (1+4 to 1+5 or 3+1 to 3+2), and as soon as a character has enough Pips, they gain the new Skill Rank within that Category.

Skills take time to train, and a good trainer.

The Player rolls a Skill Check for the Skill to Rank-Up, based on the Skill Rank of the trainer. If no trainer is present, then use the highest Target Number for the Skill Rank training to, and double the time it takes.

If a successful Skill Check is made, then gain the new Skill Rank at the end of the training time. If failed, a character can try again immediately, and halve the training time for each failure until they make it. These times imply a full day's worth of work (10 hours). Characters can train a little at a time, adding up the time spent until they have enough. Skill Checks are always made at the end of the training time to see if the character passes.

Trainers Skill Rank	Skill Rank going to										
	2	3	4	5	5+1	5+2	5+3	5+4	5+5	5+6	
2+1 to 2+3	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2+4 to 3	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3+1 to 3+3	4	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3+4 to 4	3	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4+1 to 4+4	3	6	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4+5 to 5+1	3	5	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5+2	3	4	9	19	23	-	-	-	-	-	-
5+3	3	4	8	13	16	27	-	-	-	-	-
5+4	3	4	5	10	13	19	32	-	-	-	-
5+5	3	4	5	9	12	15	22	36	-	-	-
5+6	3	4	5	5	7	14	18	25	40	45	-

Target Number

Initiative

This is meant to be a rule that defines the order of actions. While more complex, the Full Round allows for better precision and may be applicable at certain times. More often than not, you'll want to use the Simple Round. Some virtual mediums have initiative tools to help keep track of who goes when.

- A Round is 10 seconds
- Be sure to utilize the Free, Simple, Half and Full Actions
- Aside from Combatants that can Charge, no one can move and then attack.
- When rolling for bad guys, try and lump as many into one group as possible and roll once. This is a simple way to go about it and probably best for normal encounters.
- For important encounters, roll initiative individually.
- If a spell takes a caster into the next Round, the number of Marks into that next Round is subtracted from the caster's Initiative roll. If they run out of Marks in that second Round, they lose a turn.



Magic

Has its own chapter in this book that covers a lot more. But, as a summary, magic is a hard-hitting and versatile mechanic. It is not meant to be something the characters just spit out at every turn, which is why SpP regenerates slowly. If a Player does not like the Roll Over mechanic, probably not best to be a caster, as most spells rely on the mechanic for their full effect.

- New spells don't come automatically, they must be found. Players should know, every few adventures they're going to have to go and find spells.
- Simple spells can be found here and there in form of copies, but they're not as easily learned.
- Many Rank 1 through 3 spells can be bought at the Magic Scholasta. They probably have higher Ranks as well, those normally come with a price beyond coins.
- Mashanic Casters don't have Major and Minor Access, Sources are all limited to Rank 6.
- Illrathic Casters are unbound, but rely on Spell Ready to get their spells off fast and reliably.
- Orderly Casters also use Spell Ready, but most of their spells are so fast, they don't need it, and most of the CsDs are so low, it is inconsequential.
- All Casters come with the Spell Lore and Cast Spell Skills.
- Wizard Duel is a very cool mechanic, don't forget to try them out once in a while.
- A Spell Sphere's usage has an effect on Alignment.

Alignment

Alignment serves 2 purposes in the game. First, it outlines how a character should act. It defines their mindset in general. For those characters that don't have a restriction on Alignment, it doesn't mean they are completely free. The second thing is that it binds a Player to their choices. As a Player makes decisions, their Alignment should be changing, and normally towards one direction. A Player would have to make a conscious decision to be lawful one moment and then chaotic the next in an attempt to stay neutral. Once a

Player pushes their character towards one Alignment, they are expected to stay that way unless they can convince you that some event shook them so bad that they see all their past choices as folly.

- Normal modifications to Alignment should be in 5-point increments. This would be Normal acts like carry groceries for an old person, or cutting someone off in traffic just for fun.
- Strong acts, like stealing or catching a thief are worth a swing of 10.
- Severe acts would be as much as 50 and as little as 11. What this is lies within the subjective realm. As a benchmark, a morbid one, murder would be a cut-off. Anything less extreme than murder can swing an Alignment up to 50.
- Extreme acts, like murder, is a swing of 50 to 100.
- Generally speaking, only an atrocity (like burning down a village for fun) would swing an Alignment 100 or more.
- As an Alignment builds, Strong Acts in the opposite direction of an established Alignment should be the most allowed. This means Alignment changes slowly over time and by choice.
- Characters with a 100 plus in any Alignment should be bound to only committing Strong Acts against their Alignment. If they tried to commit a Severe or Extreme act, this is where you say a character "wouldn't do that".
- Acts in favor of one's established Alignment is unbound.
- Those who are neutral have no real Alignment (between 99 and -99). Thus, they should take care not to commit any Severe Acts in general. This also is thematic with neutrality.
- Only Alignments above 100/-100 are affected if they're "along for the ride". This means if a character witnesses, even if they don't take direct part in, an act are still affected. Alignments above 100/-100 witnessing act and do nothing have their Alignment changes as if they were part of the act.
- Neutral characters can stand by and watch without their Alignment being affected. This only applies to alignment swings up to 60.

Anything more, their Alignment shift by the same amount as the perpetrator -60.

- Generally speaking, Evils acts are more severe than good, and chaotic acts are as well. Meaning, Chaotically Evil is a fast path.
- Some Player's worldview may lead them to confuse or obfuscate the differences between law/chaos and selfishness/selflessness. Be prepared to set a rule or define that for them. However, as they act, why they're doing what they're doing is also important, don't be afraid to ask.
- Casting Spells changes a character's Alignment by the Rank of the spell x2 per cast. This doesn't include any further modifiers that would come from the spell's effect.
- However, the effects of the spell cannot counteract an Alignment change opposite of an established Alignment, i.e. can't cast a Shadow Spell for a good reason and gain Approach – the mere act of using Shadow magic nullifies positive Alignment gain.
- This can be compounding. A healing spell that saves a life would have positive effects for Approach for both the spell itself and the effects on the person, regardless of established Alignment. Same for casting a chaotic spell to cause mass chaos on the streets of a town - double Outlook loss.

Character Classes

Again, a whole chapter dedicated to this topic. But in general, Classes are a normal occurrence within Wyrmsbane and not foreign to anyone. Classes should not be looked at as restricting, but enabling. True that there are restrictions from a certain point of view. But, Classes are all specialized. Having a master sword-wielding-ultra-thief-arch-mage is really no fun for anyone. If everyone is a super-man, then no one is. Therefore, be certain that Players know they are seeking to fill a roll within a party. If they're playing solo, some Classes are better than others, and/or make some NCPs for them.

- Remember, everything stops at Level 10. Beyond that, no more Hit Points, Skill Slots, Level bonuses in spells and Abilities.
- Racial restrictions are there are part of the lore. If you can work something in, allowing a normally-disallowed race, then have at it. But just keep in mind it is the exception, not the rule.
- Racial restrictions come from either magic dis-inclination or from racial stigmas. Such stigmas run deep and breaking them would be grounds for exile or worse.
- Some Classes are therefore not welcome in certain cultures.
- By the time a Player finishes their character, they'll have Racial Abilities, Phylum Abilities and Class Abilities, about 8 in all. Be sure to have a book open for reference until people memorize their Abilities.
- Classes with an Alignment restriction start right from the beginning of the game of having some of their actions restricted. Be sure the Player understands.
- Keep an eye on Max Mastery Rank, it is easy to overlook but meant to balance the Classes.

Effects and Abilities

Effects and Abilities are supposed to provide a common and known list for the Players and Storyteller. these are things that many characters and monsters can draw from, not to be overlooked. Effects act as "buffs" and "debuffs" and General Abilities are just the most common and ubiquitous talents shared throughout the world.

- The "X" inside of parenthesis is called the Potency.
- *Frightened* and *Terrified* are the two "fear-causing" / "fear" effects.
- *Hidden* is best used on a board, real or virtual and really brings a new power to the Rogue.
- There are several Effects that prevent a target from acting during a Round. All are subtly different and have different aspects.
- Charges allow you to move and attack in the same Round.

- Some General Abilities have a variable Action type. Some might be Simple or Full Actions, depending.
- Sprint is the Ability to move faster and remain tactical. Just sprinting in general would be an Untactical Advance.

Combat

Combat is a place to find many rules that don't really belong in other chapters. While some might seem related, they can also be a combination of different topics.

- The term "Combat" (capitol "C") is when characters roll initiative and use the rules to determine what happens.
- The method of a Combat depends greatly on the situation, the Players and resources. Fights against fodder can probably play out in a narrative fashion. Other fights probably need a real or virtual visual representation.
- Rounds A and B are specific to an individual. It might be Round A for one character and Round B for another. Players should keep track.
- Rolling to-Hit, Roll Over and Critical Strikes are all found within the very same roll. Each is an addition on top of the former.
- Every character in melee must have a Focus, even if they're not attacking.
- Block and Parry Evades only counts in the front arc.
- CAR movement allows the movement into melee, attacks are separate, but possible if the character hadn't acted already.
- Don't forget bonuses when characters are attacked by multiple foes. Often, the threat from enemies lies in their numbers.
- Missing a ranged attack doesn't mean the missile went nowhere...

Equipment

The equipment in the book is a basic list, and there is probably a lot more useful equipment not listed. Use what is there to help base the costs. 1 Enc is 2.5 lbs. Keep in mind that the Archanium is not "steam punk" in nature. Their wares are enchanted items, not technological.

- Money has weight, often it's heavy.
- It's a good idea to build your own pre-made equipment lists for characters and Players.
- The preciousness of metals is not the same as in the real world. Silver and gold are attractive, but the people of Wyrmsbane place more importance on usefulness. Thus, the near-unbreakable Adament and super-tough Mithril are of more value.
- Characters need food and water.
- Horses and mules need water and feed.
- Nothing from the Archanium is on the same level as a magically enchanted item, even though it is one. These are common, normally low-rank and benign enchantments imbued into items that surrogate technology. As such, they are not rare, but rather based on who can afford such things. Seeing a character with an expensive item would be like seeing a pricy car.

The Orders

There is a whole book dedicated to the Orders. They, and their people, are the very foundation of the lore within TC. The Orders are powerful and influential, but not supreme. In many places, they are not even present, and the culture there is noticeably different than other places. Remember about Orders:

- They are not religions.
- They are akin to a group of like-minded people who want to act their passions out. Groups like PETA, the NRA, free masons and the like would be somewhat analogous – but not perfect representations.
- Orders are not moral or take moral stances per se. They reflect what is thought to be moral, they are the application of morality.

- Morality in Wyrmsbane is generally not subjective. All the civilized people have a common and innate understanding of morality.
- AUSA is created from action, highly intensified if done with a certain mindset. But, the AUSA of war will fill in the unseen world even if no Zerixian is there.
- All the Orders mean well. They don't have ulterior motives and are all actually quite honest. They are also all flawed and even the best of intentions lead to things like the War of the Avatars.
- Someone who is part of an Order, but not a "Member" is considered to "belong" to that Order, much in the same way you or I could belong to a club. "Members" of an Order work for the Order directly. All Classes with an Affiliation with an Order are Members.
- About 1 out of every 10 people belong to an Order, and about 1 out of 10 of those are Members.
- In times of need, Order expect anyone who belongs to the Order to act. In regular "every day", only Members have this expectation.
- Generally speaking, the loyalty to an Order is very strong for those who belong and Members alike. Orders stand for an ethos and a mindset, and as such, they are very personal and embedded parts of a person.
- Most people will follow an Order just to the edge of violence or real danger. From there, each person acts as an individual.
- Cults are the fallen Orders, and do have an AUSA.
- The Reaper Cultist is a "cultist" by name only. They don't act like other cultists nor do they have an AUSA.

Factions

The Faction replaces the term "nations" for all intents and purposes. Factions are social-political groups of people large enough to be recognized by the common person as a power. They must have some form of established government, even if loose. For Players, they serve to set a common understanding of the world, its history and why things happen. The politics

of a Faction and area let everyone know why the powerful do what they do, and why others react the way they do. No Faction is meant to be a play on a real-world nation or culture. Yes, some real cultures have influenced how the Faction is written and its concept, but never mean to be an allegory.

- When new to the game, best to start off in a place like the Torsak Province or Hammer Isle, away from the capitol. They're both general-fantasy enough to use as a starting point for those who don't know the lore yet, especially if that person is the Storyteller.
- Factions have some real hate for one another.
- Coneria hates and wars with Elvenweild.
- Soga hates and wars with Tol-Son.
- Both the two previous also extend to the Races in each faction hating the other.
- Hammer Isle hates Ika.
- Southern Ika hates Northern Ika.
- The Torsak Province doesn't like Hammer Isle.
- The Great Stone Fields, even though within the borders of Hammer Isle, is a sovereign nation and isolationist.
- Lyfenia is an isolationist state, but their Archanium is a world-wide conglomerate. The land of Lyfenia is crawling with the Beast of Lyfenia, its own faction bent on the destruction of the Lyfin people.
- Dust holds the Great Trade House, Wyrmsbane's international merchant.
- Raaz are the people who provide transportation for other Factions.
- The Ven Skari Chain Islands are a para-Faction of mercenaries and soldiers for hire. They take the side of the highest bidder.
- Dafteria is staunch isolationists and don't allow visitors into their lands.
- The Undead Hordes are still very much a power. Scattered around the world, enclaves of Dark Mages tarry about trying to reclaim Dragonian's legacy. Everyone once in a while, one rises to power enough to combine the enclaves, and then march under the Horde's banner.
- All these positions, Factions, and stories are woven into the lore of TC. The more you know, the more "real" each place becomes.

Spells & Magic

More into magic, its origin, how it works, and all the little things about calling what a spell can and can't do, limitations of casting and soon...



The World

Keeping Time in Wyrmsbane

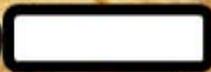
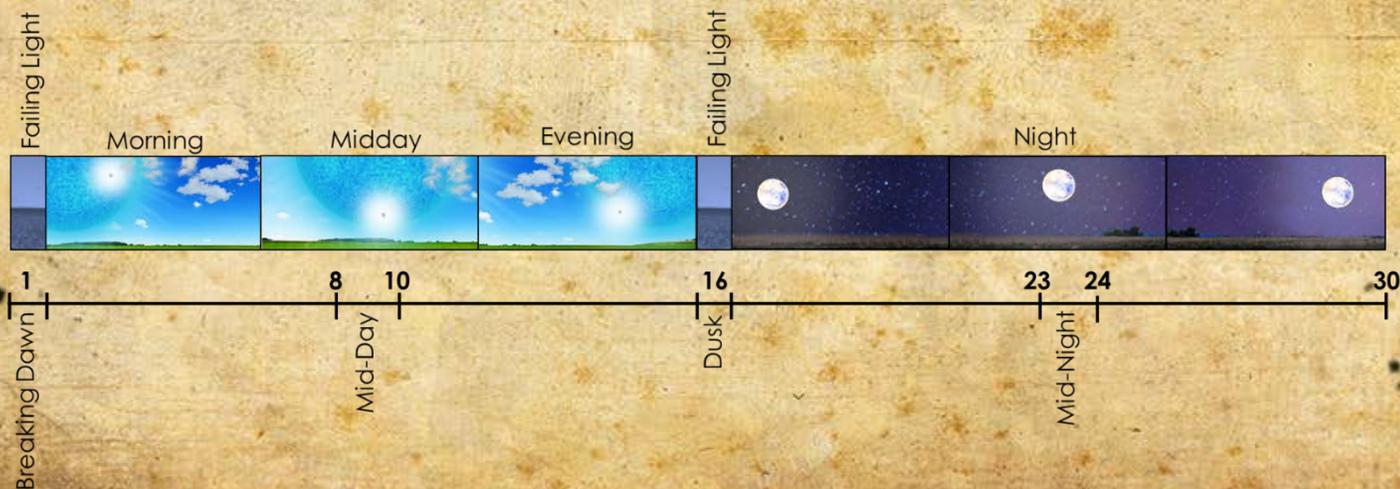
There are many differences in Wyrmsbane compare to our world; from the set up of the cosmic bodies, to how the people account for time. One must understand that there is no premier social order on Wyrmsbane, and therefore, the method for keeping time changes from culture to culture slightly. However, all is based on how the Ancients kept time and the “official” names are from their tongue. Certain cultures try to rename days and months, but with no established communication line within any of the Factions, the common person still uses the Ancient Tongue (probably the only Ancient they know). The days were originally written by the Scribes, using a single Ancient Rune that would tell the year, season, month and day. This can be a mouthful and most people simply shorten things to a day i.e. they would say Tuesday and not note the month or year.

Wyrmsbane is the sole planet within its solar system, surrounded by 4 satellites and orbiting a binary star system. The rotation of the planet and the path of the smaller white star is synced, so that the suns appear to rise at the same time and in the same manner each day. Corax is a large blue star that takes up much of the sky but gives off little light compared to the white star of Tathun. Each morning and evening, when Tathun is not in the visible sky, a deep blue light engulfs the land, filled with shadow and wonder. The peoples call this “Failing Light” and it

lasts for an hour before Tathun rises and an hour after it sets.

Likewise, the moons have a particular cyclic path in the night sky, each becoming a full moon and taking turns on a route directly through the center of the night sky. The other three are either waxing or waning while the other is center stage, except during the harvesting time, when all are full.

The day is made up of 30 hours, 14 of day, 14 of night and 2 of Failing Light. The day starts at “Breaking Dawn”, when Corax first rises, and ends at Dusk when Corax sets. Their notion of time and dates was taken from the Ancients and is more complex then how we distinguish the passing of time.



People in Wyrmsbane are not very concerned with the specific time of day. Officially, they would say “the 11th hour” or “the 20th hour”, but most people settle for common terms like “Mid-Day” and “Dusk”.

The days themselves have names and are recalled from the Ancients as well. Commonly, the Shift began with a day of preparation and light work as the peoples packed up their caravans, set up their craft spaces, and generally prepare for the week. Commonly referred to as the “Day of Renewal”, it begins the week. Then, there are three days of work, followed by a mid-week break called “Mid-Shift”. Then, another 3 days of work named the same as the previous 3 days of work. People distinguish this by saying either, “Onesday before Mid-Shift” or “Onesday after Mid-Shift”. The week then ends with 2 days of rest called “Rests Day” and “Ends Day”.

There are no weeks, per se, in Wyrmsbane. Instead, there are “Shifts”, which denote the shifting of the moons’ cycles and is 10 days long. During this time, one moon is full. The next Shift, that moon will be waning and another will be waxing. The following week the moon that was maxing will come full for a Shift and so on. With 4 moons, this cycle takes up 8 Shifts. The last 2 Shifts are when all the moons are full, the harvest time. Thus, the Shifts come in cycles of 10, each with 10 days (for a total of 100), which is a Season. The Shifts within a Season repeat, each Season having the same set of Shifts.

Shift	Common Term	Ancient Tongue	Meaning of Ancient Tongue
1	Height of Lanun	Eikt' Mon-Aat	Fullness of the first moon
2	Swune Rising	Leez'Pul-Aat	Rise of the second moon
3	Height of Swune	Eikt' Pul-Aat	Fullness of the second moon
4	Exador Rising	Leez' Fass-Aat	Rise of the third moon
5	Height of Exador	Eikt' Fass-Aat	Fullness of the third moon
6	Zerix Rising	Leez' Onk-Aat	Rise of the fourth moon
7	Height of Zerix	Eikt' Onk-Aat	Fullness of the fourth moon
8	All Rising	Leez' Aat'Fal	Rise of the all moons
9	Early Harvest	Eikt' Aat'Fal	Fullness of all moons
10	Late Harvest	Leez' Mon-Aat	Rise of the first moon

Each Shift is named after the moon that dominates the night sky. The following Shift is named after the moon that is coming into full. However, it really depends on the person. When Lanun is waning and Swune is waxing, Lanunites would say Lanun is waning while a Swunite would say Swune is waxing. Even more, some don't care and simply say the Shift

after the “Height of Lanun”. The “official” names are from the Ancient tongue.

Day	Common Term	Ancient Tongue	
1	Day of Renewal	Wes Incipt	Beginning day
2	Onesday	Mon' Wes	First day
3	Twosday	Pul' Wes	Second day
4	Threesday	Fass' Wes	Third day
5	Mid-Shift	Wes Tinik	This side of the center day
6	Onesday	Mon' Wes - Tinik	First day after center day
7	Twosday	Pul' Wes - Tinik	Second day after center day
8	Threesday	Fass' Wes - Tinik	Third day after center day
9	Rests Day	Wes Slundat	Resting day
10	Ends Day	Wes Mort	Ending day

Each ten Shifts make up one of the 4 Seasons. The known world of Wyrmsbane share the same seasons during each year – meaning when it is winter, it is winter everywhere. The year, or “Cycle”, begins with spring, called “A’wat-Kol” in the Ancient Tongue. Then is summer, or “Hesz-Kol”. “E’wat-Kol” is Autumn which is followed by Winter, called “Mort-Kol”. “Kol” is “Season” in the Ancient Tongue. “A’wat-Kol” translates into, “The Awakening Season”. “Hesz-Kol” is “The Hot Season”; “E’wat-Kol” is “The un-Awakening Season”; and “Mort-Kol” is “The Dying Season”.

While you and I would say “10 o’clock, Monday, September the 24th, 2018”, it does not account for the season (probably because it is assumed to be known by all people). In Wyrmsbane, the common person would normally say, “Onesday, Mid-Day” and just state the day and the general time of day. If they were being longwinded, they would say, “In the 256th Cycle of the Second Age, Autumn, the All Rising Shift, Onesday at Mid-Day”. In the Ancient, it would be, “Een Siklet Mon’a Pul Haat-Keen, E’wat-Kol en Leez’Aat-Fal en Mon’Wes, r’tinok-Wes”, which translates to: The Cycle of Twelve Five Six, Autumn, during the rising of all moons, on the first day at mid-day. This is far more descriptive, but also very long. Bear in mind this would all be written in one single rune that someone could glance at to receive all that information – that is, if they could read Ancient Runes, which most cannot. This is why it is normally shortened.

The Cycle is the most dependent on culture. Commonly, the Cycles begin from the end of the War of the Ancients, which is 1256. Ordinarily, people count the first 1000 Cycles as an “Age” and just say



the number of Cycles within that Age. So, 1256 would be "Cycle 256 of the Second Age". Some cultures might mark it from the beginning of their nation, such as Northern Ika as in, "300 Cycles since the founding of our Nation". Others might base it on the Cycle on the ruler, as in, "In the third Cycle of the rule of Kind Elliander". Even with all this variety, the Cycle of 1256 (the one based on the end of the War of the Ancients) is always known, even if rarely used.

Time has a different basis and perception in Wyrmsbane. People tend to use common terms to describe the delineations within an hour. Seconds are normally referred to as "Marks", minutes are "minutes" and hours are "hours". While the Archanium has very complex chronometers that can accurately account for the division of time in a day, the commoner does not have access to such technology. The thought of "mid-day" is enough for typical communication. People will use smaller divisions of time, but never assuming exact measurement. No one would say, "meet me here in 5 minutes" or "it took 30 Marks". They would instead say, "meet me here in a few minutes" and "it took about a half a minute" or "a few Marks". The general time of day is what people understand. When Tathun is at mid-sky, everyone knows it is Mid-Day and they have about 6 or 7 hours until Dusk. Of course, it might be 5 hours 30 minutes or 7 hours 30 minutes, but none of that matters to most. Everyone knows then Failing Light comes the day is over and 14 hours of night are coming. When Breaking Dawn happens, everyone knows the day has started. The concept of beginning, middle and end-day are sufficient for the vast majority of people.

Moreover, the Season is the basis of keeping track of the passage of time. In reality, people tend to look at the day within the work week and base that within the month, i.e. a Friday in September. In Wyrmsbane, since the days and Shifts repeat, the

Season is what people generally bear in mind when thinking of time, i.e. Autumn, this Shift and this day within that Shift. This is especially true since the hours of daylight within a day don't change from season to season, just the temperature.

As you may have guessed, the farming plays a central theme in this method of time. You plant at the beginning of Spring, during the Height of Tathun. 80 days later you start to reap and continue through to Late Harvest at day 100. Then, a new Season dawns and you plant the next crop. This has real impact for those in the cities as well. At the beginning of the Season food is plentiful from the Harvest that just happened. As those 100 days pass, less and less stores are available and fresh food becomes rarer. Likewise, the cycle of pay is broken into Seasons, as the farmer pays his hired hands once the crops are collected. Yes, city-folk get their pay more often, normally each Shift on Endsday, but the Season is what people tend to think of most when it comes to a date.

A physical calendar in Wyrmsbane is a series of three horizontal bars held together between two boards. Each of the bars is notched: 10 on the top for days, 10 in the middle for Shifts and 4 on the bottom for the Season. A ring or rider (much like the counter weight on a scale) notch into each position on the bars, telling the date. Thus, a calendar with riders at notch 6, notch 5 and notch 4 would mean the Onesday after Mid-Shift, Height of Exador during Winter. The Cycle is not normally stated, it is just assumed to be known.

Because the Humans are the most plentiful, the Ancients based the term of "Generation" on their average lifespan of 100 Cycles, which neatly fits into an Eon, or 100 cycles – 10 Generations within an Eon. An Eon is 100 Cycles, while an "Age" is the number of Eons since the War of the Ancients. Anything before that is simply called "before time".



Names

Names in Wyrmsbane are important. A Storyteller should know how to generate names and remember them (and the NCP behind the name) well. Names should be thematic to Tara-Corax, and below are some explanations of how to formulate those names. There are tons of fantasy name generators online. I suggest finding one that fits the outlines below and you trust.

Human

Human names in the world of Wyrmsbane are similar to ours, but spelled a little differently and/or non-tibiquitous. The last name is the family name, and there are many. Commonly, the last name is associated to an event or battle, where the progenitor of the family won some honor. If not that, then it would be something describing the progenitor. Male names tend to be short and forceful. Female names lean towards “s” and “a” endings.

Male Examples:

- Garet Goldward
- Willum Bhronomygre
- Furion Reitguard
- Jerith Banthanian
- Aeton Vandleheim
- Marik Murris
- Bolton Tannis
- Donivan Calsereign
- Rolend Addasar
- Greyson Meer
- Garmen Najul

Female Examples:

- Gondoless Goldward
- Verma Bhronomygre
- Kathina Reitguard
- Emalas Banthanian
- Allasandra Vandleheim
- Merien Murris
- Beatrix Tannis
- Britana Calsereign
- Wenscia Addasar
- Irulian Meer
- Guesarey Najul

Wood Elf

Wood Elf names are the “standard” for all elves, and most other Elish names are the same as for the Wood Elves. Their names are following, with lots of soft sounds and wispy tones. All Wood Elves have a last name, called a “confinement” – because it was where the elf was (or their pre-wisp life) when all were confined to stay in pace during the Great Purge. As such, names differ between Elevenweild and Soga – which are the only two bases for Wood Elf names.

Elvenweild confinements tend to be more “flowery” and elegant. Sogan names are harder and point towards suffering and battle. Male names and female name both are equal as eloquent and distinct. Male names and female names only differ by their subjective “feel” of what is traditionally thought of as male and female.

Male Examples:

- Elendeil Silvermane (Elvenweild)
- Thanitol Ghostcloud (Elvenweild)
- Sylsador Glenrunner (Elvenweild)
- Aithlin Valenanor (Elvenweild)
- Mathortin Bloodcut (Sogan)
- Ryfon Bladesorrow (Sogan)
- Valayor Sylfmourne (Sogan)
- Katar Warvein (Sogan)

Female Examples:

- Dawynn Silvermane (Elvenweild)
- Missianna Ghostcloud (Elvenweild)
- Adrelle Glenrunner (Elvenweild)
- Nueluth Valenanor (Elvenweild)
- Kaylessa Bloodcut (Sogan)
- Cynthrel Bladesorrow (Sogan)
- Herrona Sylphmoure (Sogan)
- Keishana Warvein (Sogan)

Grey Elf

Grey Ellish names are very similar to Wood Ellis, but without the differentiator of Sogan and Elvenweild. Because so many Grey Elves were slain in the Great Purge, the people never made it to Soga. As such, their names are all Elvenweild-like.

Male Examples:

- Elyon Everrain
- Charise Paliscape
- Seavel Brightmeadow
- Uthwey Wysador
- Kathen Breeze
- Grambrea Vassenor
- Eirin Quetten
- Fayrith Dawnmist
- Kavelon Moondrop
- Farus Kesirey
- Meregon Dazzlestream

Female Examples:

- Aywin Everrain
- Erolyth Paliscape
- Vawynn Brightmeadow
- Caeda Wysador
- Curious Breeze
- Nyfadora Vassenor
- Erissa Quetten
- Faye Dawnmist
- Cavlina Moondrop
- Fern Kesirey
- Meredien Dazzlestream

Blue Elf

Blue Elves are different from their kin, even if they live amongst them. Their names are still similar, but with little or distinction between male and female. They have to attachment to the Great Purge, as so few Blue Elves exists anyway, they were never part of communities. Therefore, Blue Elf name will be inclined to be like their Elvenweild counterparts. Their last names are not confinements, but rather the name of the clan or brood they are birthed into. This changes with each Blue Elf, as they don't have a lineage.

Examples:

- Zylendor of the Cashweyis Brood
- Chaldressa of the Morten Bows
- Orixina of the Broad Plains Brood
- Delimberya of the Natascenes
- Salanis of the Deep Glen Counsel
- Alyndra of the Moonrasps
- Erlan of the Patastar Striders
- Nevareth of the Imaril Guardians
- Myrin of the Swords of Hess
- Ruehare of the Glenville Depths
- Taelerin of the Thessle Pact
- Sirist of the Talisar Forest
- Bonneluerie of the Hymil Remnant
- Saehlin of the Calental Keepers
- Taunlin of the Ashontil Wardens
- Lymesra of the Vaa'naar Forest
- Bilaemer of the Living Wood Sentinels
- Lyre of the Fallen Guard
- Lesca of the Taris Combine
- Faymyr of the Felenas Wartribe



Sand Elf

Sand Ellish names are a far departure from their “kin” as no Wood Elf would have a Sand Elf child, their names are Human in kind. They take a normal Human family name if they live amongst Humans. When/if they leave, they take on another name, one given to them by their vagabond clan. The name is commonly a mixture of an animal that best describes their personality and an aspect of nature that does the same. First names stay Human, but last names are replaced if they become part of a clan as a symbol of accepting their fate.

Male Examples:

- Garet Mountainbear
- Willum Stormcrow
- Furion Rivercat
- Jerith Forestbuck
- Tallus Plainstrider
- Davotier Cliffeagle
- Perris Barrensspider
- Rayan Brookshepard
- Beath Rangeshark
- Norin Woodbadger
- Semul Shorebrake

Female Examples:

- Gondoless Mountainbear
- Verma Stormcrow
- Kathina Rivercat
- Emala Forestbuck
- Talaya Plainstrider
- Daycei Cliffeagle
- Peleno Barrensspider
- Reveka Brookshepard
- Belenna Rangeshark
- Neeta Woodbadger
- Sareh Shorebrake

Hill Dwarf or Grey Dwarf

Hill Dwarves are associated by their home – the hold or legacy they are born into. This is not a “clan” per se, but more of a community that established a dwelling together. All within submit to be identified by those who settled the area. If future generation want to break away from these associations (of both name and edict), they are forced out of the hold and onto the road, where they seek to establish their own hold. Dwarves have a first name, and their secondary name points towards the part of that legacy they come from. Their secondary names are “of the...” in syntax. This lets others know they are of that part of the Dwanar hold. Male names are guttural and short, females are not much different.

Male Examples:

- Khtuk of Bornin Hall
- Grendi of the Brassbeards
- Lufuk of the Glowing Chasam
- Damaroc of Khezal’s Reign
- Akkar of Viscay
- Urzuc of Koring Deeps
- Praux of Caperoul Mines
- Wane of Coray Mines
- Azrog of the Shimmering Cliffs
- Bawerith of the Kalin Depths
- Kergen of the Kailerain Expanse
- Okeg of the Solin Shore

Female Examples:

- Wekalin of Bornin Hall
- Drukara of the Brassbeards
- Erriagar of the Glowing Chasam
- Noradela of Khezal’s Reign
- Azleen of Koring Deeps
- Urdara of Caperoul Mines
- Praeten of Coray Mines
- Lumareen of the Shimmering Cliffs
- Braileen of the Kalin Depths
- Kurlin of the Kailerain Expanse
- Oolgra of the Solin Shore

Stone Dwarf

Lineage is most important to the Stone Dwarf. As they all come from the Great Stone Fields, who you are in relation to the legacy of the Hall is of the utmost. Thus, they identify themselves as a name, who is "son of" their father. Each generation must prove themselves to the Hall. While an unproductive or unremarkable father may have an initial connotation for other Stone Dwarves, it is the deeds of the individual that hold sway. In this, the "son of" is like a rank, that defines an individual's position within the Hall, but does not speak to their mettle. In all this, the value of lineage only extends to those who are living. Once your son has a son, your name (as a Stone Dwarf) is no more and has no meaning, unless that son does something of value (or of malice).

Male Examples:

- Tharmus, son of Khlig
- Nigreg, son of Thandool
- Missous, son of Gozier
- Foss, son of Cainen
- Thamis, son of Ueltek
- Surgek, son of Lamén
- Roxir, son of Olreg
- Imneb, son of Iesun
- Hungral, son of Haskbruk
- Walreg, son of Gulg
- Burin, son of Kenrid

Female Examples:

- Drundella, daughter of Khlig
- Abakerra, daughter of Thandool
- Thranda, daughter of Gozier
- Ghreta, daughter of Cainen
- Undel, daughter of Ueltek
- Sorel, daughter of Lamén
- Roxa, daughter of Olreg
- Ienddra, daughter of Iesun
- Hilgra, daughter of Haskbruk
- Walgra, daughter of Gulg
- Burel, daughter of Kenrid

Rosendarik

Rosendarik have simple names, most of which they invent on the fly. In fact, a Rosendarik may change their name if they hear something more attractive. In their native society, all are known by who they are, which is based on their person. Just as you and I would recognize a friend to be an individual and no one else, so are the Rosendarik. The very concept of a name is foreign to their culture, and they take it on as adventurers to blend in. As such, their names are a mix of what they know and their take on the civilized people. Male or female is no different, although, they do try and have the gender fit their evaluation of the social conceived notion.

Examples:

- Birchfire (probably male)
- Summerdew (probably female)
- Oakendawn (probably male)
- Glenecho (probably female)
- Plainsthunderer (probably male)
- Winterfalls (probably female)
- Pinemore (probably male)
- Beechmaiden (probably female)
- Harrowdusk (probably male)
- Sparrowsun (probably female)
- Coastmight (probably male)
- Golddancer (probably female)
- Cliffmaster (probably male)
- Dewberry (probably female)
- Locustmight (probably male)
- Rainflower (probably female)
- Maplerace (probably male)
- Honeylusk (probably female)
- Ashwal (probably male)
- Pearfisher (probably female)
- Aspenjur (probably male)
- Fielddamsel (probably female)
- Hollowpalm (probably male)
- Brooksong (probably female)
- Aldermen (probably male)
- Riverflax (probably female)

Dafter

The most foreign to you and I is probably the Dafter. Dafterian names are based first and foremost on the village and Caste they come from. "Sai-Kin" are the worker cast, "Ori-Pom" are the artisans, "Nati" are the administrators and "Damyo" are the royalty. The pentameter for a Dafterian name is always village name, then a clicking sound denoted by a "'", the cast they are part of, then a pause denoted by a ",", then their given name. Male and female share the same names as Dafter don't distinguish between gender.

Examples:

- Mori-eta `Sai-Kin, Doshō
 - A Dafter named "Doshō" from the Mori-eta village and part of the worker caste.
- Oigami `Nati, Shingua
 - A Dafter named "Shingua" from the Oigamhi village and part of the admin caste.
- Tinshen `Ori-Pom, Tatsway
 - A Dafter named "Tatsway" from the Tinshen village and part of the artisan caste.
- Ventishi `Damyo, Kruz-da
 - A Silver Dafter the village of Ventishi named "Kruz-da".
- Onomik `Sai-Kin, Shunsin
 - A Dafter named "Shinsin" from the city of Onomik and part of the worker caste.
- Amishori `Nati, Morisake
 - A Dafter named "Morisake" from the city of Amishori and part of the admin caste.
- Kata-zuk `Ori-Pom, Yoko
 - A Dafter named "Yoko" from the Kata-zuk village and part of the artisan caste.
- Makitogi `Damyo, Sagan
 - A Silver Dafter named "Sagan", lord of Makitogi.

Lyfin

Lyfin are probably the most common to our own (western) naming convention. The child takes on the last name of the father, and the first is chosen by their mother. Most first names have meaning, something the parents wish the child to aspire. In this, the Lyfin is named for a purpose and coming from a tradition. Thus, there are no "male" and "female" first names.

Male Examples:

- Ca'lixador Malganis
- Va'thraan Kentiel
- Mais'a-dor Peluvien
- Anfetrion Raithmore
- Malrovian Ilex'ador
- Wein-kull Wearder
- Sy'tamik Zytrel
- Siez'ol Fennrythe
- Krunz'a-dor Munrufian
- Ruheil Adasabore
- Iaoel Apheleon
- Ranak'il Graithdraw

Female Examples:

- Chelenis Malganis
- Da'vati Kentiel
- Selenaas Peluvien
- Quin'vin Raithmore
- Malrixiven Ilex'ador
- Wisder'a Wearder
- U'drelli Zytrel
- Svixena Fennrythe
- Kaldathi Munrufian
- Runa Adasabore
- Ielendria Apheleon
- Ris-mora Graithdraw

The Orders

More info on the orders, fallen orders, Clevinsol and cults.



History

The following is a brief history of the World of Wyrmsbane. No one entry is meant to be a complete telling of the story, only a summary. Each section will end with a description of why this event is important and what meaning it has for the people of the world.

War of the Ancients ends in Victory (1st Cycle of the Pre-Age)

A long-fought battle that lasted generations against the “oppressors” of the civilized people of the world. Some conflicts were bloody, some were not, but most all revolted and won their freedom. This sets the beginning of recorded time. Initially, they called it the 1st Cycle in the Time of Freedom. However, that quickly was forgotten as so many other conflicts arose.

Not all were freed at once, and exactly when the War of the Ancients ended is a bit up to interpretation and location. The cycles following the end of the war were filled with people wandering the world, looking for a place to settle, rebuilding captured Ancient’s holdings or splitting off into splinter groups, each to forget their own way.

The War of the Ancients was not a worldwide conflict, and some places were uninhabited at the time. That said, it is the defining moment in the history of the civilized people and launches them into their independence and independent histories.

The Magic Scholasta (51st Cycle of the Pre-Age)

The fallen Ancients left behind their secrets to magic. Only known to a few people, called the First Scribes, many people flocked to them so they too could learn these mysterious ways. By the 40th Cycle, many of the scribes were growing old, and sought proteges to pass on their knowledge. Many sent out expeditions into the razed fortresses of their former masters in search of magical runes – many were found. The Scribes settled in such places and established a site where others could learn the ways of the Ancients and that tradition and knowledge would be carried on through the ages. By the 50th Cycle, 17 such places were founded, most of which survive today and make up the Magic Scholasta.

These are some of the only places they would be unaffected by the goings-on of the rest of the world. No Order would challenge their positions, not Faction would encroach on their sites. The Scholasta never seeks for politics, lands or power, only knowledge. They are one of the few truly neutral institutes in Wyrmsbane.



The Orders Come to Power (357th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

Like so many events in the Pre-Age, exactly when it started and ended is unclear and may be obscured by time. Recording of events in relation to a standard cycle did not occur until the founding of the 1st Age.

In the 350ish cycles after the War of the Ancients, about 3 and a half generations had passed. Many races were now descendants of those who fought in the war. Towns were built, places were settled and the people prospered. Behind everything was the Order. The Order were actually founded before the War of the Ancients, and were the fuel that sparked the rebellion. 22 Order in fact had been behind of the 22 successful rebellions that birthed the civilized peoples' reign.

The Orders had never abdicated their authority since. They were the driving force and leaders in the rebellion, and the leaders during the following cycles. By the time the 4th generation had been born, the Orders established themselves as the official hierarchy of the civilized people. Regions were not nations, but boundaries of Orders. Explorations to foreign lands were sent by the Orders, and by 357, there was a mix of most every order on most every continent.

Because the Orders are groups with a certain ethos and set of expected behavior, their assumption of authority immediately led to many small groups leaving their homes in search of freedom of thought and action. This created what would be known as the Border States, which are unallied communities in between the borders of different Orders' lands.

This would eventually lead to the War of the Avatars, the defining of Factions, racial lands and the forming of the known world.

The Ellish Exodus (388th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

It began with the Elves. Across the globe, the Elves saw the Orders as a Human construct, one in which they were not welcome. A small enclave of Elves sailed for an unknown southern continent. 10 cycles later, a few Elves from the exodus started to appear in other lands, telling others of the splendor they found. Within 20 cycles, the vast majority of Elves had migrated from the Order to what is now called Draconia.

This is the first thing to cement the Elves' disdain for the Orders, and it is the defining event that separates the Ellish people from the rest of the civilized people.

Northern Draconia Settled (411th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

After the Elves had gone, some of the Order began to encroach upon the Border States. A huge contingent of Dwarves and Humans from the Green Hails and the Kailerain Mountains were smashed between the Lanunite Order and Dalik Order. Each Order began to try and covert the people of the Border States, a trend that would continue into the future.

In stead of fight, the leaders of both Humans and Dwarves decided they'd follow the Ellish lead and exodus. In 411 of the Pre-Age, they did, having spent the previous 10 cycles building boats and preparing and all the while keeping the Orders at bay, over 50,000 people sailed for Draconia landing what is today Far Port in Coneria. As soon as they landed, they made their way into the interior of Draconia. Along the way, they found abandoned villages, farms and ranches. Thinking they has stumbled into danger, the Dwarves immedeitly start to dig into the towering mountains all about them, establishing holds of groups of Dwarves based on their like-aptitudes. As the cycles passed, the Human migrated every east, looking for lands more suitable. Eventually, they found lush fields and open plains to live. Also, they found groups of Elves in most every forest.

This would be the final mass split away from the Orders. All others would be swept away in the great war that brewed.

Elvenweild Founded (425th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

Just 37 cycles after their exodus, the Elves had passed through the mountainous terrain of northern Draconia. Some sailed south to find marshlands and swamps. Some pressed on further and found more swamps and a horrible delta system. Some elected to stay in the smaller forest that dotted the northern plains.

For most, they eventually came to the sprawling beauty of the southern Draconian forests. A tame place, unlike the north, with vast woods that engulfed almost all the land. Here, they settled and within 10 cycles formed a council of the different groups and united.

They declared the place Elvenweild, home of the Elves of Wrymsbane. This would be the first Faction from the people and not by an Order. However, the lands surrounding the great forests were not empty. Small contingents of other people had sailed here too, and taken residence away from the Elves. The Elish people gave them space and peace as long as they stayed out of the forests. Among these non-Elish pilgrims were the people belonging to the Orders.

Orderly Hostilities Begin (662nd Cycle of the Pre-Age)

3 generations after the Elves left the civilized people, so much had changed. Especially after the Human-Dwarf exodus in Hammer Isle, the Order started to make better by the Border States by doing nothing overt. In many cases, the Orders were benevolent, helping where they could while not pushing their ethos on any village or group.

Over the cycles, the regularity of Orderly influence started to take hold. Some of the Orders' edicts were very attractive to many, and slowly over the generations, the Border States became a land of free will and mixed Orderly alliance. In northern Draconia, Orders had been landing on the shores where the Human-Dwarven exodus had, but turned away by the patrols of Dwanar soldiers, many of which were alive when they had fled in the first place. The Orders never found a home there. In the south, it was quite different. The Order grew as did Human settlements. As long as they stayed out of the forests, the Elves were peaceful neighbors. The Elves charged their non-Elish inhabitants a tax and duty for living in the nation of Elvenweild, much of which was given in the form of goods that the Elves did not find in the forests, like ore. This led to interaction between the peoples, as Elves would go to the settlements to collect their duty, trade and fellowship. Slowly, the Orders started to take hold there too.

The Elven council decided that Orders could be the will of the Elish people, and as long as they didn't seek dominance and all were free to choose, they could stay. In the hearts of the Elish, this had dire consequences.

By 630, all over the world, the Orders clashed and vied for the allegiance of the Border States. Many times, trumped-up calls for help were used for an Order to "rescue" a village from another Order. By 650 this was pandemic. In Elvenweild, the older Elves had taken such love for the edicts of some Orders, the council had all but split, and communities were shattered. Many left for another town, separating the land into districts of Orderly influence.

In 650, in the town of Krell, a full-on civil battle broke out between two Orders' members. Blood was spilt and the streets were a war zone. Immediately, both Orders dispatched forces to protect their people. In a shift, the hostilities ended, but many had died, and

word of this feud spread. A season later, Krell was in flames again, and other places followed.

All over the world, towns were divided into in two; one side this Order and the other that Order. Fueled by generations of assimilated ethos, this was a war of ideals and mindsets, not lands and powers. As more and more entered the fray, the objective was not to push those people out of a town or continent, but to extinguish the ideals and principles they stood for by elimination the people who held them.

By 662 of the Pre-Age, the world was aflame.

The Elven Purge (676th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

In Evenweild, things had gotten very bad. The council was divided and the Orders pulled new people in each day, some just for protection. Unlike other areas, there were 3 core Orders that fueled the fires: Dalik, the Order of Fear; Menothi, the Order of Choas; and Uvdibn, the Order of Destruction. In desperation, a few members of the council identified these Orders and rallied the people to expel only them.

Scores of Levs were rounded up by a combined force of those not loyal to any Order. Elves could either renounce the Order they were part of, or be exiled. All non-Elves were sent away from the shores of Elvenweild. As this happened, some of the council was part of these Orders, and schemed. In secret, they sent a contingent of their warriors into the north to raid. They wanted to provoke the north, cause more chaos and separate the non-allied Elven force.

It was only partially successful, and had a consequence that would end those Order's influence and start a war that still rages today.

The Orders were pushed either to the northwest in the lands bordering the swamps of Draconia, or to the northeast in the river systems that separate north from south. Guarding them was virtually every non-allied Elve that could bear arms. Many fled into the swamps at night, or carried out their secret raids into the north, but all Orders were expelled from Elvenweild's interior.

In the northwest, all (both Humans from the surrounding areas and Elves alike) were forced into labor camps to build ships. Those who fled into the swamps were assumed to be fodder for all the evil that lurked there. Within a cycle, 10 ships had been finished, and all the Orders were forced into the boats and exiled.

On the over-packed boat, the people feuded. They blamed and fought with one another over what happened. But, when the food started to run low, they turned murderous. A few spoke out against the Orders, even though they were all part of one or another. They had a moment of clarity and saw their error. Anyone who would not renounce their Order was then thrown overboard. Within a day, all rebuked their past lives as an Order member and vowed never again to be taken in by its pull.

Knowing they could not fall on any shore of a settled continent, they sailed on, stopping on the shore of the then-uninhabited continent of Dust. There, the Human and a few scant Elves went ashore, and the main flotilla of mainly Elves continued north. Eventually, they reached the shores of Soga. The Elves and Humans split to go their own ways. Within 10 cycles, the Elves fell under the rule on a single-minded council and declared the Faction of Soga sovereign. Although, it would be generations before they tamed the place and gained a true hold on the land.

The First Human-Elf War Begins (678th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

In the northeast of Draconia, the commander there, known of what the west was doing to its prisoners, sought to do the right thing. Still building ships, they took a far more peaceful approaching along crops to be plants, grains to be dried and animals to be raised so the journey would be survivable.

Unbeknownst to the guards, contingents of Orderly troops had been conducting raids on the north. At this point, the Humans and Dwarves were not united. With no need for a standing army, the Humans were being decimated by these Elven raiding parties. While they fought back, the raiders would go from forest to forest, gaining the allegiance of the Elves there, slowly growing. Within 2 seasons, they had swelled from 100 or so to over 5 thousand. This force was something the Humans could not fight.

They called upon their Dwarven co-inhabitation for assistance. The Dwarves answered, and together they chased this raiding force around the plains of northern Draconia. Each time they had them beat, the Elves would slip away to the south, only to pop up again 10 or 20 days later.

This went on for the better part of a cycle. The Elves then made a concerted attack on a large town. Met there by the Humans and Dwarves, a great battle ensued. The Elves were cornered, but fought viciously. In the fray, the Dwarven king was slain in a challenge. The Dwarves saw this as the loss of their combined might, and started to lay down their arms. The leader of the Humans, Connor Kaslereign, challenged the Elf and rallied the Dwarves to follow him. He won the duel and the Elves were crushed, not one survived.

Together, the son of the Dwarven King and Connor agreed for a preemptive strike on the southern lands to ensure such a thing never happened again. They marched south.

First, they encountered the prisoner camp. The northerners slaughtered the prisoners and guards alike. This essentially halved Elvenweild's forces, the other half who was just coming back from guarding the exiled in the northwest. The north then marched south to the Ellish capitol and killed the council, breaking the back of the Elvenweild Faction.



The elves took this as the Humans and Dwarves kicking them when they were down, and the execution of their people in a time where they needed aid. The Humans and Dwarves saw this as a victory, returning home and would not see or hear from their southern neighbors for generations until the Elves had reestablished themselves.

In honor of his victories and leadership, the Faction of Conneria was founded in the 680th cycle of the Pre-Age. The Dwarves, while still not part of the faction, vowed their might to the Connerian cause whenever called upon - a commitment they honor on a regular basis to this day.

Ika Founded (681st Cycle of the Pre-Age)

In Ika, something very odd happened. Two Orders won the day, and defeated or expelled every other. Zanax, the Order of the Mason and Rath, the Penitent Order formed an alliance. The next 10 cycles were of peace, and no conflicts touched Ika. Barred off from the rest of the world by turbulent seas and an impassable cliff to the south, Ika slowly forgot its bond to the Orders. Somehow, they started to fade, and within 2 more cycles, the Order no longer ruled, giving way naturally to a kingdom under a single rule. Albeit the king was the former Ordermaster, but they pressed to principles on the people, and decisions were made without consulting the Orders, and sometimes, even in spite of them.

Prosperity took the land and the Ikinians swiftly developed their Faction. As all "former" Masonites, vast cities were built, beautiful edifices and towers constructed. The land became a full Faction in practically no time, and the people swiftly forgot about their Orderly ties, cut off from the war raging all around them.



The Avatars (694th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

32 cycles of constant war raged. Aside from Ika and Elvenweild, a stalemate was the norm. The only other place that didn't feel the sting of the Orderly war was the continent south of Hammer Isle, thought to be an untamed wasteland. From there, came a few enclaves of lizard people called Dafter; none of whom had even heard of an Order before. They stayed as isolationists, and the few expeditions that went there never came back.

One day it seems, a large golden-skinned figure appeared on the doorstep of the Lanunite Order in Hammer Isle. It didn't speak, but drew a sword and beckoned the ordermaster to follow. Gathering their troops, they did, as the thing marched on their enemies to the south, the Order of Destruction. The thing cut through swathes of enemies, crushing their forces. Within an hour, the whole Uvdibnite army, some 10,000, lie dead. The thing didn't stop, but turned west towards the Order of the Hunt, and Lanun forces followed.

These things appeared all over the globe, one per Order. Each led their order to victory, destroying anything in their path.

The War of the Avatars Begins (695th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

By now, the War of the Avatars, named after the person-like things that embodied each Order, was in inescapable – if an Order was present nearby, war followed. One day, two Avatars met on the field of battle. One killed the other and immediately, those of the fallen Avatar felt their power leave them. The ordermaster could no longer cast spells. The entire force seemed to lose heart. The losers could not continue, they were broken and left the battle field.

News of this spread quickly, and soon the elimination of all Avatars became the focus of the war effort. Ranks of troops would throw themselves into melee with an Avatar in the hope to weaken it enough for their Avatar to slay it. When one was defeated, their army would lose their will. Some were let to leave the battlefield and return to their lives. Some were converted, and some were slaughtered.

One by one the Orders fell, and hundreds of thousands of the civilized people died in the process. The war would rage on for another 72 cycles before Council of Syez.



The Lyfenic Curse (698th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

In 698 of the Pre-Age, the Lyfinic people were all under Hevbosch, the Order of the Traveler. And like the other races, they made war on their neighbors. Unlike the other races and Factions, the Lyfin all still lived in the continent where they had shed the shackles of their Ancient, now called Lyfenia. Lyfenia is a harsh place, filled with all manner of foul beasts and monsters. The Lyfin spent many generations eking out a few settlements within the interior of their nation. Would-be pioneers from other places were devoured by the Lyfenic continent.

With wonderous minds and a racial knack for invention and enchantment, the Lyfin built great Windships – enchanted sailing ships that flew through the air. With this technology, they would invade other places without reprisal on their homeland.

Due to their unique position, many Lyfin started to question the motives of the Order and the war they made on other who didn't threaten them. They had a few establishments away from Lyfenia on foreign shores, and the most fanatic of where there. In the Capitol of Tel-Folsol, the Lyfenic council met and agreed that war was only a bane on the civilized people. They saw that this war would only bring ruin. Thus, they withdrew from the Order.

All those who opted to stay loyal to Hevbosch were allowed to leave to continue their crusade while the homeland would become recluse. The member of Hevbosch were disheartened, but sailed for foreign lands to continue their war.

Word inevitably reached the warring ordermaser in Hammer Isle. A plan was devised to gather their forces and retake their homeland, converting the whole of their people to the true cause. Within a cycle, all the Lyfin were gathered in a place called the Gorge Maze in Hammer Isle. In a wood to the west, their Windships would pick up the whole of the Order and then march of Tel-Folsol.

They were ambushed by Swune. Unaware and not ready for combat, the Swunites swarmed them. Far superior in number and might, they subdued Havbosch. They bound the Avatar and attempted to covert the Lyfin. The Lyfin refused, so the Avatar of Swune slew the other.

Before he died, the Avatar cursed the Lyfin people. In the only words ever spoke by an Avatar, the herald of Havbosch spoke a cure in Lyfin. The Swunites then let the rest of the Lyfin go, asking them to lay down their arms and return to their homeland.

They did, but on the trip, something odd happened. Aboard the Windships, Lyfin, who are normally very cerebral and calm, started to act wildly. With each wild act, they became more and more animalistic, even taking on the form of a beast.

In Tel-Folsol, scouts returned and told the council of the demise of Havbosch. The city prepared a festival to welcome home the now-ex-members of the Order. In the distance, they saw Windships approaching. The band was struck and score of Lyfin lined the fields in a parade. Through a looking glass, a scout saw people being thrown overboard, falling to their doom. One Windship crash into the ground as if guided there by her captain. I hush went over the people as the first of the Windships landed. From them emerges savage Lyfin-beasts, each in a different form. They attacked the people slaying many. Only a masterful tactical maneuver by the guard saved the bulk of the people and drove off these things.

For the next season, the beasts attacked day and night. Tel-Folsol's garrison grew thin. Soon, they knew it was only a matter of time before defeat. In a move of desperation, they turned to a mage who had been labeled by all to be crazy. He talked of removing the city itself from the land of Lyfenia. They had no choice and the council granted him every manner of support he requested.

At the very last moment, the mage finished his work, and the whole area of Tel-Folsol started to rise into the sky, pulling the earth is large masses of land with it. There, it hovered above the ground about 200 staff-lengths up. In the following cycles, the ground would crumble away. The Lyfin sent out expeditions to mine ore, which was fashioned into metal chords to weave the ground together so the erosion sealed. It worked, and in 2 cycles the floating city of Tel-Folsol was safe. Below it, a huge crater called the Shadow of Tel-Folsol.

However, all was not well. People starter to have children, and something was not right. Every 1 out of 10 children was born as a beast-Lyfin. While the parents would try as they may to raise it, the child

grew quickly, turning feral within a season. The council deemed that no child born a beast could stay in the city. At first, they were taken to the ground in Windships. The captains would observe the beasts taking the children in as their own, all the while attacking the ships. The council knew that this action only swelled the beast's numbers. No talks were successful, and every ambassador was slain and murdered.

The council made a proclamation that ant child born a beast was not Lyfin, but the enemy and to be cast down the side of the floating city to its doom. Many Lyfin simply stopped having children and their numbers stagnated. Even to this day, Lyfin are rare and reluctant to have children.

This curse, the Lyfenic Curse, plagues the people to this day. They still hope, and search for a cure, but none has been found. The entirety of the race still hoped to find a remedy of the curse and one day unite their people. The Beast of Lyfenia still make plans to eradicate their "kin", and attack them at every turn. They have colonized the whole of the Lyfenia and scheme their attacks. However, much to the fortune of the Lyfin, the vast majority of beasts are animalistic, completely unable to craft and invent. Thus, they have no way of attacking the Lyfin. It has only been in recent time where a few have risen within the Beasts' rank that have been able to unify and make a Faction. They lie in wait, ever-planning, ever-watchful. The very doom of the whole Lyfenic people is cast within their shadow of their capitol.

Old Torsak Founded and the Crimson Hawks (721st

Cycle of the Pre-Age)

As the war waged on, it became very apparent that Hammer Isle would be the epicenter of the conflict. Draconia ousted the Orders, Lyfenia forsook theirs, The Sogan and Dust exiles rebuked theirs, Dafteria isolated themselves and seemed to not even understand the concept and Ika's attachment to the two Orders, Rath and Zanax, faded to the point where they simply dissolved. Aside from the Northern Kingdoms, which only had a few Orders who were allied, there was not many places left to fight.

Seeing this, the last remnants of the Zanaxian Order moved south, to the tip of Hammer Isle. Here, they founded a city called Torsak. They hired the vagrants that populated the southern reaches of Hammer Isle and started to build a castle city to wall themselves in, away from the conflict. The Avatar seemed to go dormant, as the Torsakians declared themselves neutral and a sovereign Faction.

Just off the coast of Torsak, they discovered an island with a cave. In the cave was this odd green clay-like substance. Foul smelling and pliable, it would burn slightly when put to a flame. When thrown, the clay would explode in a burst of energy. The Torsakians found something greater than gold. They started to mine the clay and encased it into hollow cannon balls. As great craftsmen, they started to build cannon by the scores, all for sale to other orders and Factions who could afford it and respect their neutrality.

There was immediate hate, as those who couldn't afford these game-changing war machines quickly were at a disadvantage. All over Hammer Isle, those who could found their Orders crushing their opposition, wiping out scores of troops from afar.

A few battered Orders assaulted Torsak, their walls not yet finished. The Avatar awoke and defend the city, but then went dormant again. The Torsakians knew that its power was connected to the AUSA – the living energy of each Order that is created through action and thought. With so few left of the Zanax order, the Avatar grew fainter each day. If it was destroyed, the order would be defeated. As was the primary mission of all the Orders in those days – kill the Avatar. They needed to protect theirs.



They went out into the surrounding area, all small villages of harsh people who lived in a harsh environment. They hired them as a mercenary army, paid well to keep the southern reaches of Hammer Isle clear of other Orders. Within a cycle, the small band of soldiers grew swelled to over 5,000 people. The promise of steady pay to feed their families and supplies for their loved ones was too great a draw for people who had been living in such squalor for so long, all those who could take up arms fought. One chieftain of the area declared the force to be one group and name it is the Crimson Hawks, after the great hawks that live in the southern mountains.

These two powers created great concern for most Orders and enraged others. But little could be done, the war raged on.

Torsak Destroyed (769th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

For the next 58 cycles, the war continued. There were many incursions into other lands, always (eventually) beaten back. Sogan lands had small expeditions settle their southwestern shored. Orders went to the marshes on Draconia and fought there, and on the western north shores among the Dwarves. The deserts of Dust had blood spilt there too, but no could ever establish itself due to the environment. The Northern Kingdoms warred and treated over and over again. Lyfenia stayed isolated, as did Dafteria. All the war turned to Hammer Isle. Those small pockets of Orders on other shores sent their people to Hammer Isle, as everyone knew the war was growing to a close.

Of the 22 Orders form the time of the Ancients, only 10 remained. The great cannons of Torsak had become the tipping point in most battles for over 20 cycles now, as commanders modified their tactics. Torsak was fully built, a neigh-impenetrable fortress. The Crimson Hawks had proven themselves as a non-Orderly power who could contend with any other force. On several occasions, they beat back the main forces of an Orderly assault, and even pushed back an Avatar or two.

In 769, the Order of Zerix had enough. Seeing these cannon, and all ranged weapons, as devices of cowards, something must be done. They had beaten back every assault during the war and had not lost a single battle. Their numbers thinned, due in large part to these cannons. They made a pact with the Coraxian Order, and together, they assaulted Torsak.

The Coraxian forces engaged the Crimson Hawks and the two met in a stalemate. In the west, the Zerixian Order broke through and lay siege to the city of Torsak. The Avatar broke down the gate and the Order of War invaded the city.

For the first time in almost 40 cycles, the Zanaxian Avatar awoke to defend its Order. The Avatar of Zerix wasted no time and attacked its peer. The fight broke down walls and crushed homes and workshops, spilling into the bay, and eventually, onto the island where the clay is mined.

In an instant, a bright flash burst over the island. Then, like a tsunami, a huge spherical shockwave headed into the coast, destroying everything it touched. Most everyone in the city of



Torsak was killed, only a scant few surviving through sheer luck.

The remnants of the Torsakians and Zerixians stood and waited to see which Avatar would emerge from the smoke and destruction. After what seemed like an eternity, the Avatar of Zerix walked emerged.

In the east, the Crimson Hawks has the Coraxians pinned down in a valley, ripe for destruction. Then, they felt the ground shake and saw a flash in the distance. The Coraxians could go nowhere, the Crimson hawks decided to wait and see what happened to their financiers. When word reached them of Torsaks defeat, the Coraxians were let go, and the Crimson Hawks were in disarray.

While victorious, and rid of the makes of those damn cannons, the Order of War paid a horrible price. Less than 1 out of every 100 members walked away from the battle. While some of the Crimson Hawks joined Zerix on their march back north, the number of the Order of War would never recover. It was only through their extreme battle prowess that they did not meet their end during the last seasons of the War of the Avatars.

Over the next few shifts, the Torsakian survivors found who was still alive and consolidated their numbers in a small town. The Crimson Hawks looked for their pay and supplies, but knew there was nothing to give. Many raided the demolished city of Torsak. All knew that great animosity still festered with many Orders for Torsak's involvement in the war and the Crimson Hawks.

What was left of the Torsakians, the fallen Order of Zanax, fled to the south and settled in northern Dafteria. The Crimson Hawks, with no benefactor knew if they stayed, the Orders would eventually find them. They could not stand up to the might of all the Orders, and this new alliance between two Orders meant that any fight might be their last. They two fled, but to the east and found a chain of islands they would call home. In time, they would regain their strength. After the War of the Avatars, the Crimson Hawks would be the one of the few forces on the planet of any real size. They would make their living as a Faction hiring their warriors out as mercenaries to the highest bidder and take place in every major conflict in every land for the next 1,500 cycles.

The Council of Syez (770nd Cycle of the Pre-Age)

Over the next 6 seasons, the war drew even more bloody and the last 9 Orders were slimmed to a mere 6. All forces gathered in northern Hammer Isle, in a place called the Valley of Syez - this was to be their final battle. But, something happened that no one expected: The Avatars, on the eve of batter, disappeared. They simple were not there anymore. There was no explanation. The ordermasters could still draw upon the AUSA to cast, so the Orders hadn't fallen. All 6 camps were in chaos.

As the leaders walked through the ranks, they saw the faces of their soldiers: weary and scared. No Avatar would lead this charge. In the camp of the Swunites, the ordermaster walked through each rank and asked a soldier to name a fallen comrade. All names at least one, most named many. The ordermaster of Peace was overcome with grief. He grabbed his standard bearer and a torch, and marched out into the valley, where the batter would take place, and drove his standard into the ground upside down - the sign of a surrender.

The other Orders' scouts saw this and returned to their camps relaying the news. One by one, each ordermaster approached the center of the soon-to-be battlefield to see what was matter. The Swunites had long held the vision for a world at peace. During the very first cycles of the Orders, it became apparent that the only road to peace was by strength of arms, but still with an end state of peace. The Swunites would strive to pacify an opponent rather than destroy. They had thus become known to be reasonable in their combat, always granting quarter.

By the time they had all gathered, the Swunite gave a powerful speech to the others, pointing at all the destruction that the Orders caused. They all looked at the armies gathered in this small valley. Just 10 Cycles ago, just a single army would have overflowed the place, and now, all 6 armies but were a spot in the basin.

The ordermasters all saw the Swunite was right and they remorse. The Ordermaster of Tathun stepped forward and made a bold offer: an end to not only the hostilities, but an end to the Orders' rule for all time. All saw the Tathunite was just, as they should be, and accepted the offer. They brought a table to the center of the valley, and instead of drawing up battle

up battle plan, they drafted the Council of Syez – an agreement between all Orders that they shall never again rule over any people and an end to the war.

The troops approached to witness the council. While small skirmishes broke out, the ordemasters swayed their forces who were all weary of battle. Over the course of 10 days, the Council of Syez was completed and all rejoiced. Runners were sent to the corners of the world to declare the end of the war. The armies were disbanded, and many left to see if they still had a home. Others knew their homes were gone, and started to build in that very valley.

However, the Swunites had made plans before hand the Council of Syez, and now, in secret, tried desperately to stop what they started.

Dragonnian's March (771st Cycle of the Pre-Age)

Before the Council of Syez, the Swunites made another plan to end hostilities. They knew all armies were approaching the norther west of Hammer Isle. There, all could be pacified at once and peace could finally return.

In the land of Dafteria, the Swunites found a dangerous ally. In the tall grass of the Dafter, away from the sight and knowledge of all, a very powerful spellcaster named Dragonnian. Detached from the Magic Scholasta, Dragonnian fled the northers reaches of the world and hid in a forest in southern Dafteria, where the continent's hosts did not travel. There, he unlocked the secrets of a lost magic, one suppressed by the Magic Scholasta.

Animating bones and the fallen, Dragonnian created an army of immeasurable size, and one that could not be killed. The Swunites treated with him, offering lands and his own dominion. Dragonnian had other plans of domination.

After the Council of Syez, which was unplanned, the Swunites sent out emissaries to call off the deal – none returned. The with the armies disbanded, there was nothing to stop Dragonnian. The Swunites likewise sent emissaries to the Dafter, in hopes they would stop his march. But again, none returned.

In desperation, the Swunites took whoever was left in the Valley of Syez willing and sent a combat force to stand against Dragonnian, or at least delay him – they failed. They could not risk the peace they started and said nothing.

A mere 2 seasons later, Dragonnian's forces invaded Hammer Isle. With incredible efficiency, they made it to the Valley of Syez within 40 days. Very little lay in their wake. All those who resisted were slain, and then reanimated to serve in the very force they fought. In the valley, the Swunite Ordermaster was called forth, where the Swunite's secret was revealed to all Orders. Dragonnian had his minions then slay the Swunite. There was nothing the Orders could do, and they submitted. However, one Order would not stand for this betrayal or the Necromancer. The Order of Lanun still had forces in the north, far from here. A few rode out in desperation to ready a counter force.



Dragonian conquered all he saw. With each battle, his forces swelled. For a short time, he was slowed by the Great Barrier Cliffs of Ika, but the foolish nation did very little to defend their borders, thinking the cliffs would save them. They did not, and by the end of 772 of the Pre-Age, Dragonian had conquered all of Hammer Isle, the forested lands in northern Dafteria, most of Draconia, Ika and now turned towards the last force of any size – the Northern Kingdoms. To get there, he would have to move through the island of Soga.

The Northern Kingdoms March Through Talisar

(773rd Cycle of the Pre-Age)

In mid-771 messengers from the Council of Syez arrived in Tol-Son. Near death and exhausted, they demanded to speak to the local ordermasters. The Northern Kingdoms were unlike the rest of the world. While the War of the Avatars did have its impact, the Orders had long been secondary to the ruling houses of the land. Each House would adopt an Order, but were sovereign and not under the fanaticism that ravaged the southern lands.

The messengers were brought to the Court of the Great Houses, the assembly of nobles in the Northern Kingdoms. When they heard of what happened, their worst fears were realized. The Kingdoms had hopped the insanity that razed the world would pass them by, but now the Swunites scuttled the very peace they created.

The Court met and debated how they should proceed. While the majority of the Houses agreed to fight and press the attack, some rebuked the Court and said that no force could ever face the cold tundra and fierce lands of the Northern Kingdoms. They were free to choose as they may, but their unwillingness would serve to subjugate them to those who fought in the cycles to come.

The combined armies of the Northern Kingdoms marched to the west, to meet Dragonian on foreign shore. Along the way, the Lanunites taught many warriors their ways. There were a few who had encountered these undead beasts before. They knew these things were just mindless animations without a mind or soul, a strange force held them together. If those bonds were cut, the things would crumple, like the cut stings of a puppeteer end the marionette's dance. The Lanunites took the very best warriors and formed a core of men who wielded the bright power of vengeance.

After landing on the eastern shores of Soga, reports reached the commanders that Dragonian's forces were mustered on the northern shores of Ika, ready to sail for Soga. The Necromancer's armies didn't need to rest, slow or eat. The Northern armies knew time was short. The scouts reported a natural path in the lands of Soga, one that funneled into a steep valley. This would be perfect, a place where the masses of the Undead Hordes could not be brought to



bear. That was the place, the chosen ground of the final battle.

In front of them lay a massive forest. Going around would take precious time. The opted to take the risk and march through. Just hours into the journey, they were met by the Elven exiles from Draconia. The Elves pleaded with the Northerners to go around. While the commanders wanted to comply, there was no time and negotiations broke down. Onward they marched and were attacked by the Elven force. The Ellish people didn't stand a chance, and were beaten at every assault. Thousands of Elves lost their lives and their home was sent into chaos.

While necessary, this action burned deep into the Ellish psyche. They saw this as an invasion, and an unwarranted slaughter of their people. The Elves had just barely begun to tame this land and the race was weary with toil and effort. These murderous Humans violated their lands, killed their people and all without good cause. The few Elves that survived vowed vengeance. The first act of this vow would not be realized for over 50 cycles, and after 1,500 cycles, the vendetta rages on.

Dragonnian's Defeat and the time a Rebuilding

(774th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

In the All Rising Shift of the Dying Season (late autumn), as the first snow fell on Soga, Dragoonian's host entered the valley. The Norther armies lie hidden, waiting the right moment. Leagues away, the cavalry of two Houses, House Sonovar and House Tol, waited in a small wood. With them were the Lanunites and the very best warriors. Thiers was a suicide mission: at attack the rear of Dragoonian's host with a small force in hopes to slay the head of the beast.

As the hordes poured into the valley, the Northerners attacked. They faced hundreds of thousands of shambling opponents. The battle rose up and there was no escape. Swiftly, the Northern Armies were cornered, despite great heroics.

The small contingent of Northerners rode for the rear of Dragoonian's forces, which had now completely entered the valley. Dragoonian never before needed to worry about his flanks. Everywhere he traveled, anything behind him was his, and safe. As the two Houses charged into the valley, their hearts sank as they a sea of foes, and no sign of their target. They smashed into the Hordes and began to wade their way through battle. The Lanunites' training was a true boon, as undead crumbled and exploded at the mere touch of a Lanunite blade.

Dragonnian saw the attack to his flanks, and tried to divert his troops, but the thin valley prevented freedom of movement. Moreover, the cornered Northerners fought with greater skill than anything he faced yet. While cornered, wave after wave of his forces were obliterated.

Little by little, the cavalry got closer and closer to Dragoonian's position, now seeing their quarry. All manner of horrible constructs, animated beasts and other horrors were sent to dispatch the threat, but they used an attack Dragoonian hadn't seen before, and even his most powerful minions were easily fell. Within a short while, Dragoonian faced the blade of the Northerners. While he slew many, the lord of House Sonovar struck a grievous wound. Dragoonian commanded his greatest minion to carry him out of the valley in a route. The minion broke through and started to get away. Lord Tol gave chase, fining a horse and running down the fleeing foe. Slaying the



minion, he wasted no time, in spite of the please for mercy, killing Dragonnian.

The instant Tol's sword cleaved Dragonnian's heart, virtually every undead fell to the ground, crumbling back to the bones of their making. While a few survived Dragonnian's fall, they were leaderless and without purpose and most were run down in the valley.

Across the globe, Dragonnian's forces fell by the thousands. His lieutenants could hold small number of troops together, but they fled as angry Factions rose up to rid their lands of the blight. Within a season, all lands had been cleared of the remnants of Dragonnian's armies, pushed back into the deepest corners of the world.

The world was free again, and the civilized people were safe, for the moment. Armies that once numbers in the tens of thousands were now a few farmers, scarred for life by what they had seen and been part of. The collective mind of all people felt a huge weight lift off them and the chance to rebuild.

It is from this point that the people started to found cities, colonize the countryside, and move into the yet-unclaimed lands.

The Torsak Province Founded (775th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

After the Torsakians fled Hammer Isle, they came upon the northern reaches of Dafteria. They knew the Dafter did not suffer intruders, and tried to remain unnoticed. The ex-Order of the Mason quarreled with one another. Three groups formed, one that still held loyalty (even if the Order had fallen), those who only rejected Zanax and blamed it for the fall of Torsak, and those to blamed all Orders. The three split, going each to their own way and would not be reunited for a generation.

Those who still held the Zanaxian Order to be one of substance, headed along the coast, where they came in contact with the Dafter. They hadn't the strength to fight, and surrendered immediately. Unlike the stories told, the Dafter didn't attack. They spoke with the refugees. For an unknown reason, the Dafter offered them the forested northern area of Dafteria, more then enough land to sustain the Torsakians for generations. One statute, no one must ever go south of the last tree in the southern forest – anyone who did would never been seen from again.

These people would go onto build the largest city in Wyrmsbane, and live in peace with their lost kin who went their own way into the wilds. To this day, the Torsak Province (as it came to be known) has honored this law, and nether the Torsakians nor Dafter speak to one another, content to live separated.



Tol-Son Founded (781st Cycle of the Pre-Age)

When the victorious armies of the Northern Kingdoms returned home, they cast blame and dishonor on those Houses that did not fight. Quickly, those who had fought declared themselves the Houses Major, and those who had not the Houses Minor. Each House Major subjugated all Houses Minor touching their borders. Some of the new Houses Minor fought, but could not stand up to the might of those who did.

5 cycles passed, and lord Sonovar fell ill. The Houses Major had started to isolate themselves again, falling back into independence. All were summoned to the bedside of the great hero of the Battle at the Valley of Shadow. He told them of his pride when he saw all his countrymen joined against a common foe. What greatness they accomplished, indeed saving the whole world. He begged them to not let such a great thing fade into time.

Moved by his words, all the Lords Major asked what must be done. They all agreed that the kingdoms should unite, but who would lead. The survivor of the rear attack, Lord Tol was elected. Lord Tol said that the rule of one man, even one line was not what the Northern Kingdoms needed.

He took the widow of Lord Sonovar as queen, and said that the two greatest Houses shall rule together. From that point on, the land became known as Tol-Son. Each generation, the brother of the king's firstborn daughter shall marry the brother of the queen's firstborn son, thereby swapping the rule of king each generation from House Tol to House Sonovar. Today, the Faction is united in mind and spirit, drawn together for an eon in war against the Elves of Soga.

The Hammerites Unite (815th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

After the great betrayal of the Swunites, the other Orders cast them out from the civilized people, a punishment that was not met with argument. To the southern marsh lands they went, and disappeared into the cliffs and swamps of the area. Even so, the Order of Peace endures to this day.

The continent of Hammer Isle, and all its people were shattered. In the east, the Stone Dwarves claimed a field where they would dig out their homeland into the world, deep and isolated. The southern lands lie in waste, Old Torsak a crater. Only the northern reaches remained habitable.

To the benefit of all, the remaining Orders decided to stay. In the Valley of Syez, they constructed a city of great proportions that would eventually become Acrolyte's Hold, the capitol of the Hammerites.

30 cycles after Dragonnian's march, the people of Hammer Isle were still divided. Each noble family claimed rights to a throne. The Orders did take up the mantle of leadership, staying true to the edicts of the Council's decision. Thus, the rule of the land was left to the families and warlords that remained after the war.

One family by the name of Tanis, called all nobles together and insisted they treat. The Orders did their part to encourage the effort. Together, they created the Discourse of the Hammerites, a document that bound all those of the continent to remain loyal to the people and to turn their efforts to the defense of their subjects. While no leader was named, a Faction arose from the accord.

Throughout the cycles, many people have claimed to be the king or ruler of the Hammerites – each one contested. Some families have stayed in power for a generation or two, but none lasts. No other title has ever officially come to Hammer Isle, even though many individuals have tried. Throughout the generations, Hammer Isle remains weak and splintered between the families and groups of its inhabitants.



The Second Human-Elf War Begins (825th Cycle of the

Pre-Age)

Almost 50 cycles after the Northern Kingdoms marched through the Talisar Forest, the Ellish people, were ready for vengeance. They had also spent many cycles in despair.

The Ellish people live for generations, even an eon or more. By the time the Elves made it to Soga from Elvenweild, many were already advanced in cycles. When an Elf dies, they turn into a wisp, where it is said they live as such for as many cycles as they lived as an Elf. Then, the wisp fades and the Ellish believe that the spirit of the wisp is transplanted into a newborn Elf.

When the exiles from Elvenweild arrived in Soga, they were mercilessly attacked by all manner of horrid create from the continent. They found their way into the largest forest, but not until 10 cycles had passed as the Elves moved east from their landing site. As they entered the forest, they brought with them many wisps of fallen comrades and passes kin.

They battled for 80 cycles in the deeps of the Talisar forest, eking out a home and some modicum of safety for their people. As they settled, an odd thing happened. Some of the very oldest of the Elves started to act erratically. In a short time, they became mad, filled with rage and attacked all they saw. When they passed on, they turned into an odd red wisp, crackling with hateful energy. The Elves thought all was lost that all found the older they grew, the more they felt a pull of some hateful madness. Many resisted, but a fair amount fell into this rage and died into an enraged wisp.

Over the next 5 cycles, the Elves found they could calm the mad wisps. By singing songs, and being kind, the wisp would slow and hum, they could sense happiness in it. This was a constant struggle, as just a few hours without care, and the things would fall back into madness. Thus, a delicate balance was made within the forest. The women Elves would take shifts each day to spend time with the many wisps that littered their forest, rehabilitating them so their kind would not end. It worked, and the first newborn arrived, unmaddened 100 cycles after the Elves landed.

The Elves had many generations of work to do. Some of the Elves that went mad were well over an eon in age. The men of the people spent all their

time keeping the forest safe from being encroached, and the women soothed their fallen kin each hour back from madness. Thus, when the Northern Kingdoms marched through Talisar, all was lost. The Elves tried to defend their delicate home, but the Northern Armies were too much. Wisps flew away into the deeps of the forest, older Elves on the edge went completely mad, and many were slain by the bloodthirsty Humans.

When the battle was over, all their kind wept, for their land was lost and all they fought so hard for was in ruin. They would spend the next 25 cycles just gathering the wisps, rebuilding their home and re-battling old fights with the other inhabitants of the forest.

Just after the Northerners came through, smashing their civilization, a child was born. The Elf had red eyes, that seem to blaze with hate, but, it was not mad. They named him Caris from the Silverwind brood. Caris wold grow with an odd wisdom beyond his cycles. He fought with his kin against the things in the forest with such great ferocity they start to name him Bloodrage.

In short order, he started to rally his kin to seek retribution for their people. In all cases, he said, it was the passivity of the Elves that hurt them so. From their exile from Elvenweild, to not having a warrior mindset when the Northern Armies marched through. He rallied his kind, and the elder of the Elves submitted to his rule. Now Caris Bloodrage, the called his kind to study the arts of war. Every person who was not caring for a wisp would take up the blade. He also encouraged a heightened birthrate and the romantic qualities of these Elves left in favor of making more warriors for the Ellish kind.

25 cycles later, we had crafted a glorious war machine. He had well over a legion of ready troops, all clambering to exact their revenge on the unsuspecting Northerners. They made their way to their fleet and sailed towards destiny. As it turns out, fate would be unkind to these people. They landed 500 troops, led by Caris himself. They found the first Human settlement and razed it to the ground. Meeting little resistance, they did it again and again. For a whole season they ran amuck in this land.

Then, something happened that the Elves did not expect. The Dying Season drew in and a bitter

cold the Elves had never known before grasped them. Troops could barely hold their swords, many got sick and some just fell asleep, never to wake. Caris knew that he could not sustain, and started back to his ship, planning to return when the season passed.

Along the way, they were met by a Human force of the same size. Finally, warriors to battle and not peasants Caris thought. The two armies clashed, but the Elves, combined with the cold, were no match for the Humans. These Humans fought with such a great strength and might, it rivaled that of even the best Elf warriors. Caris was forced to withdraw, and made it away with hardly a fraction of his force.

He hid in the hills near the battlefield. As the wisps started to rise from the Elish fallen, Caris planned to make his way onto the battlefield at night. During the campaign, he found that a wisp that dies on this foreign soil would only last a few days, and then fade away. He had been sending the fallen Elves back on a ship to their homeland to continue the Elish lifecycle.

These horrible Humans, however, set up their camp just outside the battlefield. Caris could hear them making merry and celebrating over the wisps of his kind. Caris made a raid that night to gather his fallen, but the Human saw him and he had to retreat. This went on for several days, until Caris could not afford the cost in blood, and left Tol-Son altogether.

Back in Soga, Caris knew he needed more. More troops, more ships and more strength. He would continue to make war on Tol-Son as long as he had life in him. The Elves made many more raids and war with Tol-Son was constant, both people locked in combat. This war continues to this day.

The Dispossessed (854th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

After the conquering of Ika, the land was in ruin. Although the first non-Order Faction, Ika had a king that came from the Orders. He passed down his throne to his son, who was the ruler when Dragonnian's Hordes came through.

The General of the armies, a man named Ardent, spoke out against the king. He called for an offensive, saying that the undead at the base of the cliffs would not remain there. The king thought otherwise, and said nothing could beat those razor cliffs and Ika was safe. The General continued to press and was thrown in jail.

Along the cliff was a town, here the Ikinian regiments stayed, looking over the cliffs at their enemy. After the general was locked up, many grew bored and would leave their posts for vacation or wine. Many commanders even withdrew their regiments from the watch as they thought it pointless.

When the Hordes marched through Ika, the king, in desperation, freed the general. But, it was too late and Ika was lost. Just a few cycles later, most the undead crumbled. By the legions, they slumped to the ground and were no more. Ardent took the opportunity and fought off those that endured the fall of Dragonnian.

Afterwards, gathered his forces and marched on the capitol, deposing the king. He then gathered all the royals loyal to the king, and all the commanders that had deserted their post at the cliffs and their families and marched them to the cliff in south. There, he made them all set up a town and start to mine stone from the Guardian Mountains. He told them they would repay their people through hard work. since they failed to defend their home of their own accord, they would be forced to do so and build a wall along the cliffs a hundred feet tall – so that no foe of Ika could ever again march through the streets.

For the next 75 cycles, Ardent, now an ancient man, watched as the wall was built. An entire generation of people passed away making the wall and entire new families were born there. In 854 of the Pre-Age, 82 cycles after Dragonnian's march the Great Barrier Wall was complete and the families who built it rejoiced that their reconciliation was complete.



Ardent was hours from passing. He told his son in his dying breaths that their land must not abide the weak of heart – never again can those who would not rise to action be part of the Ikinian people. Ardent's son, in grief and anger, took his father's message to mean something that has been debated for generations. He thought that the weak of heart were those who did not act in the beginning. Thus, he cast out the entirety of them – women, children, everyone. Down rope ladders they were exiled from Ika into the broken lands of the south. These people thought Ardent's words meant that they were once weak of heart, but now strong from their communal punishment.

Over 4,000 people were exiled that day. Since, they have made a living in the lands of the south. Very few survived and their life in the harsh wastes has made a nation of strong, but divided, people. Calling themselves the Dispossessed, they hope to one day unite and take revenge on Ika for what they did to them – a hope that is, as of now, unfulfilled.

Raaz Founded (888th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

Some of the most venturesome of the Dispossessed people traveled all the way to the southern tip of Ika. Of the 500 that started the journey, only 200 were left. While most stayed at the base of the Great Barrier Wall, begging for mercy, these intrepid few rebuked their kin and searched for a sustainable life with dignity.

The 200 made boats and sailed to the island in the south. There, they found a sun-bleached land of sand and stone, wind and suns, wild vicious animals. They also found a large contingent of Hammerite settlers who were there to claim the lands for Hammer Isle. The settlers were many, and their warriors few. They had been ravaged by these lands and asked for help. The hearty Ikinians did just that, and they all formed a village in the coastal regions. For the next 5 cycles, they expanded and grew.

Eventually, the settlers wanted to return to Hammer Isle and claim their prize for settling the land. The Ikinians would have none of it, these settlers owed their lives to them and the Ikinians would not allow their people to be taken over by some foreign power. They declared the land sovereign, under their rule. The Hammerites could return if they wish, but this was not Hammer Isle's province.

Over the next 25 cycles, the Ikinians formed a government of a monarchy, with the very strongest of them as the "Kulast", or leader of the people. His name was Enik Raaz, and the Faction was named after him. While certain noble families did wend expedition from Hammer Isle to claim it, most were wiped out by the land itself. Those hearty enough to carry on were dispatched by the Raazians.

After a few of these expeditions, word reached the Hammerites that this island was nothing but sand and malice, and it was forgotten. By 888, the Faction of Raaz was recognized by other Factions, even if thought to be a back-water settlement of refugees. But, this place would soon become the foremost Faction of the seas and air and all would come to rely on their mastery of the world's thoroughfares.



The Expanse of Peace (890th Cycle of the Pre-Age)

In Tol-Son, the war had been raging for a constant 75 cycles. Then, Caris Bloodrage was killed while attacking the city of Vandleheim. Soga would retreat and cease their war until Caris (or, so say the Elves) would return to battle 110 cycles later. Outside of this place, the world had been pretty quiet for some time, generally speaking. Even in Draconia, the two Factions only skirmished with one another.

In any case, the world was growing and Factions were being to take root. This time would be reconized by, even if romanticized, as the “Expanse of Peace”, a generation without war. For many, this peace would last for an eon or more.

The Dawning of the First Age (1,000th Cycle of the Pre-Age,

1st Cycle of the First Age)

The world went on, and a sense of civilization came about. Even though time had been kept, each place had a different beginning and method. Many looked to the oldest organization on the planet – the Magic Scholasta. They used the Ancients’ method of keeping time. Oddly, it was exactly an eon when the Factions approached the Scholasta. As everything seemed to line up, most Factions immediately took the new time table, and declared it the start of the 1st Age, called everything in the past the Pre-Age.

A near-worldwide party ensued to bring in the new era, even if contrived and a convenient excuse. In the new calendar, the cycle begins with the Awakening Season (spring), and almost 200 days of warmth is felt in the northern reaches of Tol-Son. Seeing an opportunity, Caris Bloodrage attacked Tol-Son again, reigniting the Elf-Human War that would thunder on for 1,200 cycles.

The Great Trade House Founded (212nd Cycle of the First

Age)

In the lands of Dust, the exiles from Draconia found a life amongst the dunes of the western reaches of the continent. For 6 generations, these people tamed the land around them.

Many stayed in the west, forming into families, each one claiming one of the few oases that speckled the land. They found all over the dunes strength caves, that would come and go with the winds. In many of these caves, the people found precious metals and other rare supplies. Finding a tragedy that a people found such riches but with no meaning as exiles, some people migrated east into the lush verdant lands of Dust. There, they found other settlers from many different lands, many of which were great craftsmen.

The migrants of the exiles had the materials and the family contacts, and the others had the skills. Thus, a marriage of people took place and the exiles would continue to gather materials from their kin in the west and provide it to the craftsmen to later sell their goods to foreign traders.

Over time, the exiles came to power and the settlers from other lands broke into their own settlements, content to pursue their crafts for honest pay. On the dawn of the 1st Age, the exiles formed themselves into the Great Trade House, but it would be 2 generations of infighting to form the Faction into something stable, where it was recognized as the power in the land.

Over the course of those two generations, they became known as the foremost provider of rare and wanted good throughout the world. However, customers had to make the dangerous journey to Dust.

The Mercantile Wars (231st Cycle of the First Age)

By 225 of the 1st Age, many trading companies had formed in a vie to supply wanted goods to a civilized world and make a profit. In a world where a continent held a Faction and declared the whole of the land theirs, but with only a fraction of the place actually settled, not all was well. Many peoples would form together, away from the capitol, whose combined skill to make goods would lead them to declare independence. As such, Factions were in the midst of mass-secession. In many places, especially on coasts and borders, these communities would attempt to sell to different powers. Much turmoil was created but Factions didn't want to act against their own people. Not wanted to be the first to break the Expanse of Peace, Factions tried to treat with these secessionists, but to little avail.

There was one aspect that was pronounced during this time: each village and community who tried to break away was relatively small and independent. In the west, for cycles, the Island Sovereignty of Raaz had been looking for an opportunity. From their beginnings, when a few scant two hundred people built rafts out of logs and drift wood and sailed leagues across a channel to conquer their now-homeland, Raaz adopted a culture of seamanship.

By 200 of the 1st Age, they had an enormous fleet of transport, work and warships, but little alliances to use their resources. They started to enter talks with these towns and communities to ship their goods all over the world, expanding their influence and establishing these crafting towns as a true independent.

Those who could afford the high price of the Raazians enjoyed professional sailors, knowledgeable navigators and warship escorts. Those who could not afford the cost, found their profits diminish sharply. Some formed into groups to combat and attack the Raazians, which started the Mercantile Wars in 231 of the 1st Age. Very few considered this a break of the Expanse of Peace, as it was between secessionists and a Faction acting as contracted support, and all the battles were out to sea and didn't affect most people.

By 235, the Mercantile Wars were in full swing. Oddly absent was the Great Trade House. In secret, they schemed to allow this conflict to go on for

a time; then, once these petty farmers and peasants were spent, they would strike. In a masterfully timed event, the Great Trade House approached Raaz. They knew that Raaz was in the middle of a near-all-out war that could bring in the Factions of these secessionists. The Great Trade House offered the sum of all their current customer, times two to cease all their dealings and supply their power for only the Great Trade House.

Raaz did not refuse in the slightest, and immediately ended their support of the secessionists. The Raazian fleets quickly dealt with the odd community that still tried to blockade or attack their ships. With no customers, aside from their locale, the secessionists were largely absorbed back into their Faction. This further help to solidify the boundaries of those Factions, and by 245, most every continent and Faction became synonymous. The few exceptions were: The Great Stone Fields, the Torsack Province, Conerria and Elvenweild. Even in these cases, the continent in which they dwelt was either theirs, or the others' no new powers would come to fruition, and the maps settled into how they are to this day.



The Archanium Founded (546th Cycle of the First Age)

For generations, the Lyfin reinforced their home in the skies above Lyfenia. They built great towers in Tel-Folsol. In their genius, they created works of enchantment that acted as the world's technology. They had slowly spread across the globe in small units to sell these goods, but always as individual entities.

It was the Lyfin who created the first Windship, a huge galleon with sails on the lower hull as well as the upper. It would float up to 2,000 staff lengths in the air, and move far faster than its ocean-bound counterparts. The knowledge of such a craft grew and soon, wind-shipwrights were the most respected and wealthy of Tel-Folsol's denizens. While they supplied a few of these Windships as a service to other Factions, it was solely their property.

However, their nation was crumbling, literally. They could not gather the amount of natural resources they needed from the ground below. Furthermore, the Beast grew ever stronger and inhabited all the best places. The Lyfin were slowly starving, and Tel-Folsol gradually fell apart from lack of resources to bind it together.

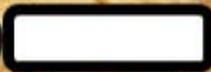
During the Mercantile Wars, Raaz placed an order for their own Windships. Initially, Lyfenia denied the request. The Great Trade House sweetened their alliance with Raaz in a move that would forever bind Raaz and the Great Trade House together. The offered Raaz to buy the Windships for them, at no charge. To thee Lyfin, in exchange for 20 such vessels, they would provide them a huge amount of the natural resources they needed. Raaz would gain their ships, The Great Trade House would strengthen their position, and Lyfenia would be saved – everyone benefited from this accord.

In the next generation, this continued. More Factions started to see the power of an air force. More and more requests came in for these flying vessels. As they did business with Tel-Folsol, they also came into contact with the Lyfin technology. Amazed, they wanted more. Lyfenia soon saw they could stand on their own, but only if unified.

The Lyfenic Council formed the Archanium, a unified mercantile organization that would act as the business-end of all Tel-Folsol's craftsmen. The Archanium made deals with all the Factions to set up paid-for outlets within their towns and cities in

exchange for raw materials that would fuel their craftsmen back home. The nobility could not resist.

By 570 of the 1st Age, an Archanium building was in most every major city across the globe. The relationship between Lyfenia, The Great Trade House and Raaz became equal and universally beneficial. From the stunted production of the Windships, whenever Tel-Folsol needed something, they had the most precious commodity on the plant with which to bargain. To this day, the Archanium remains a powerful neutral entity. Oddly, this is a direct representation of Tel-Folsol, even though the two are not considered one or treated as such.



The Beasts of Lyfenia Unite (772nd Cycle of the First Age)

About an eon after the Lyfin retreated to their floating city, the beasts had finally formed into one force. In the time preceding, the beasts slowly regained their sentients. Little by little, their animalistic nature subsided with each new generation.

Many had tried to invade their lands, each beaten back with great fervor. The War of the Avatars finished, and nothing changed for them. Slowly, the beasts started to separate into the different regions of Lyfenia. Each cursed Lyfin seemed to change into a beast that resembled that of their homelands. Thus, those people migrated to where those beasts naturally lived.

Some children born unto the beasts started out as a normal Lyfin. Some changed within a season, some didn't at all; although those that didn't were hunted down by the beasts. All beasts had a hatred for their Lyfin from birth, and mercilessly hunted them whenever they came down from their cowardly community in the sky. While some beasts could fly, the few that assaulted Tel-Folsol were always beaten back.

Gradually, the beasts could speak to one another and they formed into communities where they would raise their young. The hate for the Lyfin didn't subside. This was further fueled when some witnessed the Lyfin casting down beast-children from their city. From then on, any beast child had a season to turn. If it didn't the mother would be forced to take it to the coast in hopes some passerby would rescue it from the fiercer of the beasts. Thus, the line of beasts stayed pure.

By 300 of the 1st Age, the beasts had migrated fully and made their own lands. To the north, in the high mountains, the mountain beasts dwelled. Among them were forms of rams, griffins, chargers and spider. In the central plains dwelt the forest clan, forms of gazelle, elephants, and steers. In the forests towards the south was the forest clan. Forms of deer, centaur, fair, fey and famorian populated the clan. In the deep south, the swamp clan lived. Their kind was that of rodents, snakes, gator and lizard.

Within these clans, four beats were born. These people were more intelligent and only a scrap of animalistic nature was within them. They combined their clans into a working society. Even those who still

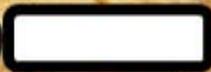
were more beast than person found a place of worth and purpose.

Eventually, they all met around the cycle 770 of the 1st Age. Galtin the Wise of the Forest Clan, Hanar Truebow of the Plains Clan, Pleitz Blademaw of the Swamps and Sameul Daybreak of the Mountain Clan and greatest of the four. They treated with one another to find a way for their kind to make a better life for their kind. They all knew that while the most animalistic were still part of their kind, a civilized culture was impossible.

Daybreak pressured the others to do what they must do, but was met with rejection claiming such atrocities would make them no better than the Lyfin. Sameul then saw the one thing that combined them was their hate for the Lyfin. While the feral would hinder a combined culture, they would serve well in a war.

Over the next few cycles, the four negotiated until an agreement was reached for a combined clan host that would be independent, but all part of a mutual war pact. They called themselves the Beasts of Lyfenia, proudly. One flew to Tel-Folsol and delivered their formation and intent in words to the Lyfin people. Fear gripped the city and defenses were doubled.

While not waiting for effort, the Beasts of Lyfenia have failed to find any impactful method to make good on their pact. While it still stays in place to this day, the four patriarchs grow old, and have few battles left in them. They have rediscovered magic, speech and the written word. But, the curse of the Avatar endures, and most Beasts are born feral, and many never come good. Their lands still uncertain from their inability to bond together as a fully civilized people. They muster now, and seek an opportunity in the coming war.



The Second Age Dawns (1,000th Cycle of the First Age / 1st Cycle of the Second Age)

The 2nd Age is considered to be the modern era. The pre-Pre-Age is considered to be “antiquity”, the Pre-Age has drifted into legend and myth. While many cultures still bear the scars of what happened then, most people only have a basic working understanding of all those things that happened.

The 1st Age is known to most, but only with shreds of the truth. Most Factions didn't start keeping records until the middle of the 1st Age. This, most of what is known is through spoken word. The 2nd Age would be one of foreboding. No longer would the wills of others guide or steer the civilized people. Anything, and everything that happen from here on would be of their own accord. The wars and plight of the world rests on their shoulders.

The War of the Sky Begins (101st Cycle of the Second Age)

Ika is bound by natural dividers. To the south lies the blasted lands and wastes and the Island Sovereignty of Raaz. To the west is the Mariner's Widow, the great sea from which no one entering the mist has ever returned. To the north lies Soga, and their damned war with Tol-Son. Only the east lies open. The Ikinian Ocean is a perilous sail, and even veteran sailing crews are wary.

When the Archanium arrived in Ika to plant their stores, the monarchy took great notice. They placed orders with the Archanium, but few were built each cycle, and the list for those few was long. Moreover, the Raazians would always come first, and promised deliveries were not always met.

Working from within, agents of the state slowly bent the Lyfin who worked at the local Archaniums towards Ika. Over the cycles, they gained the allegiance of shipwrights. Right around the dawn of the 2nd Age, Ika had created a sub-contingent of the Archanium. They were put to take of creating their own Windships. The Archanium was outraged and sent emissaries to pull these turncoats out. But, they were protected by the state. Tel-Folsol has not the power to directly stand against Ika and pulled out their remaining, loyal, Archanium employees. Raaz and the Great Trade House looked to Ika with caution. A great deal of coin was made there, but they saw ambition in their hearts.

Around 500 of the 1st Age, Tol-Son had instituted an odd policy. The second eldest of each noble family would go to foreign lands as a delegate with the intent of alliance and information. The noble families in Tol-Son are all warriors, and these men were valued additions to many foreign powers. The children of Sol-Son would fight alongside their hosts in battles, skirmishes and defensive actions. Each won honors until these envois of Tol-Son had become renown throughout Wyrmsbane. Each Tol-Son noel would spend 10 cycles in the service of their host, doing all things asked as if they were a subject. This pact and assurance were never to be broken, and never has been.

The Great Trade House saw Ika building up a force unlike the world had seen since the War of the Avatars. For a long time, the nobility in Ika had been challenged by the line of Ardent, who had been



deposed in 998 of the 1st Age, and had since remained part of the politics of Ika, pulling the strings from behind the scenes. Spies of Dust thought that the line of Ardent was ready to reclaim the throne.

In the 96th cycle of the 2nd Age, the king of Ika was murdered in his sleep. His son, a mere boy, was given the crown outright, and many suspected him to be a puppet of the Ardents. Seeing this, the Trade House asked Tol-Son to send one of their sons to advise the young king, but didn't tell them everything.

Thus, a man named Marik Bhronomgyre was sent to Ika. Together with the state advisors (Greyson Meer and Arkimod Ardent) would raise the boy-king the best they could. For the next 5 cycles, Bronomgyre did the best he could to show the lad things of honor and integrity. But, the child seemed to attach to Arkimod and would not listen.

All around Marik, the might of Ika was plain to see. Thousands of troops and dozens of Windships outfitted for war littered the countryside. The young king addresses his subject and spoke of the past glory of Ika before blight of the Dispossessed. He wanted to see the whole world be as one, all enjoying the safety and peace that Ika possessed. Marik saw the truth in this. Ika was the safest place in Wyrmsbane. For an eon, no monster or beast harmed a single person in Ika. The rest of the world was overcome by their environment. Ika was a great civilization, the Zanaxians of old crafted great buildings and towers. The whole nation was a splendor to behold. But in his heart, he knew something was amiss.

The king declared he would send the defenders of peace to Hammer Isle, who was in the midst of a civil war. The crowds cheered and many enlisted in the Army of the Black Wing – the symbol of Ika, names for a great bird of prey that lives in the Guardian Mountains.

An hour after the decree, the young king commanded Marik Bhronomgyre to lead the forces to victory. Reminded of his oath and purpose there. Marik conceded under protest.

What follows next is murky and full of conjecture. The Ikinian forces flew south and offered their assistance to the Hammerites. When rejected, the king sent word to Marik to take the land by force. Ever-obedient, and excellently capable, he did so with

great success. The beaten Hammerites rebelled, but the might of Oka was too great. However, Marik was forced to leave garrisons and take on conscripts to keep his numbers sufficient.

He was then ordered to move onto the Torsak Province. With military brilliance, the Iknians conquered the divided lands and pressed Catlit into a treaty. Again, he left garrisons and took on conscripts. Then ordered to move into the Dafterian lands, Marik stalled the conquest for a season as he personally went back to Varoon, Ika's capitol, to talk with the king. He questioned the merit of this war, which had become known as the War of the Sky. Other Factions readied their forces to do battle, and such battle would only hurt the people as a whole. He argued that his forces were now a rabble of conscripts, only held together by a very veterans and capable commanders. The king heard nothing, and Bhronomgyre was forced to plan the conquest of Dafteria.

Varoon's Defeat (103rd Cycle of the Second Age)

Despite his best plans, only ruin lie in his future. A force of over 10 legions landed in Dafteria, forced out of the sky by a chance lightning storm. There, they met the Dafter, who fought with such skill, the Black Wings hadn't a chance. Aided by their emperor, the Dafter fell wave after wave of Ikinian troops. Bhronomyre surrendered soon after the battle commenced when he saw that there would be no victory in an attempt to save as many lives as possible. He was spared, and told never to again come into the lands of the Dafter. Utterly crushed, the Black Wings boarded their remaining Windships with their remaining troops and went home.

Word of their defeat reached Hammer Isle. The garrisons fell within days from a rebel who was able to unit many people. The revolt assimilated the left Ikinian forces into the Hammerites. When news reached Marik, he wanted to bypass Hammer Isle, he didn't have the ability or force to defend himself. On the ships, the conscripts grew angry, wanting to return home. He ordered his fleet down and allowed all who wanted, to leave the army. All the conscripts left, as did many Ikinians.

Returning to Ika with only 10 Windships and a few hundred soldiers, the crowds were in a hush. The king was furious, blaming the fall of Ika on Marik. The only thing that kept his blade sheathed was his oath that had been sustained for generations. Marik returned home and his story of honor and obedience at the cost of what is right is a philosophical paradox known to many and used to describe a no-won situation, called "Marik's Fate".

The Present (256th Cycle of the Second Age)

Now, 153 cycles after the War of the Sky, Ika again grows strong. Embittered by their defeat two generations ago, they plan to finish what they set out upon. In Hammer Isle, the land lies on the verge of civil war as nobles quarrel and the assassination of the heir of the great rebel just occurred. In Draconia, Conneria and Elvenweild have found new reasons to fight and armies muster for battle. Tol-Son and Soga continue on their endless path of destruction.

This is where the Players enter. Armies battered down and few in number, the beasts and monsters of the land encroach on the people. Kingdoms don't have the resources to protect their people. The Orders are but a shadow of their former might. While they influence most everything, they hold to the Council of Syez. Moreover, the world of Wrymsbane holds many unseen forces, prehistoric and restless. Odd storms of magic flow over the lands, wiping out villages. The elements themselves seemed to have betrayed the land.

Some event of epic proportions waits in the near future, ready to be influenced by those with the foresight and courage to take hold of the flame.



Experience

Now, let's talk about assigning Experience Points (XP). There are a few things to remember. First, do not doll out XP like candy. If you allow your players to outpace the role-playing aspect, all you'll have on your hands are a bunch of 1st Level characters with a lot of Hit Points. Their skills will be underdeveloped and the characters probably won't have the gear to sustain themselves at higher levels. Remember always it is about the journey, not the ends.

Second, XP DOES NOT come by killing monsters, in and of itself. Going into the woods and killing a bunch of wolves might grant a few Pips on a weapon skill, but no XP. XP ONLY comes through quests. The very notion of experience is about accomplishment. Let's take our politician as an example. A boxer needs to train their skills to become more proficient, which are like skills and weapon skills – they help, but don't make a character raise in level. It is winning matches that makes a boxer great.

Third, XP should only be given when something has been accomplished. There are two methods for this: giving our XP during a quest at different points and waiting until the end. More on that later.

Last, give our little bits of XP when players think of something noteworthy or play out their character well. 2 or 3 here or there is about right. But, these little tidbits shouldn't grow in size as the character raises in level. These are meant to help establish the character, not sustain it through levels. Also, this is not to reward quest-centric actions (we'll cover that below). These tidbits are just for roleplaying in general.

How much XP?

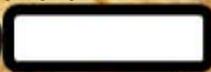
Great question! XP from a quest should be enough to make an impact on their progression. This chart is a guideline for how much a full quest should yield per character, and you can change it to whatever you feel is best.

It shows how much XP to award based on the party's average levels. If you have a high variance, use your best judgement. But, if a character does each one

of these quests in order, meaning they do any quest as a level 1 character, and then as a level 2 and so on in order, they will be about level 9. That means if you add up all the XP given from any of these lines, you'll have enough XP for level 9.

Now, the low, mid and high-end amounts of XP should be based on the quest difficulty. In general, a low-end quest is a milk run, something that characters should expect to survive – good for those beginning the game. Mid-ends should have some real challenges, situations where there is no good answer and mortal danger. The mid-end quests should have about a 25% mortality rate. High-end should be for you devious and masochistic Storytellers who like to really watch players drop – maybe a 50% chance of making it. But, these are all just thoughts, IF they make it is up to the players, not you!

Players' Average Level	Low-End	Mid-End	High-End
1	45	65	100
2	65	100	150
3	90	135	200
4	110	165	250
5	135	200	300
6	225	335	500
7	445	665	1000
8	665	1000	1500
9	890	1335	2000



Adventure Notes and XP Chart

OK, let's take our adventure outline again.

Just a refresher; we have the conflict, the cast and the players listed. Additionally, we broke our adventure into 4 stages. These would be good places to convene for a session and mark a major milestone in the overall adventure.

We'll say this is a lead-in adventure for level 1 players and say it's worth 100 XP.

What we want to do is make a grid in the adventure notes and split the XP up by the number of stages. We have 100 XP for the quest and 4 stages, so, 25XP per stage. This allows you to have players drop in and out of a quest and ensure the XP is normalized. When the players complete part of a quest, put a check mark in the grid for everyone who was part of that session. If players just plain didn't complete a stage of a quest, then put an "x". If they were not part of the session, leave it blank.

Next, we divide each stage's XP by 10 (round up or down, up to you). For this example, we'll say that's 3 (25 divided by 10 rounded up = 3). Each time a player does something cool, noteworthy, is a good role-player, whatever you feel is deserving, make a hash mark in the grid. At the end of the quest, each hash mark adds (in this example) 3 more XP.

Adventure				
Conflict: Village under attack!				
The Cast: Grom the smart orge and his "merry" band				
Stage	Player 1	Player 2	Player 3	
	✓ III	✓ IIII	✓ I	20
	✓ II		✓ I	10
	✗ III	✗ IIII II		15
	✓ II	✓ I	✓ IIII	12
	✓ x3 = 75XP 10 hash = 30XP 7+5+7+4 = 23XP	✓ x2 = 50XP 13 hash = 39XP 7+7+4 = 18XP	✓ x3 = 75XP 7 hash = 21XP 7+5+4 = 16XP	
	128XP	107XP	112XP	

Adventure				
Conflict: Village under attack!				
The Cast: Grom the smart orge and his "merry" band				
XP: 100				
Stage	Player 1	Player 2	Player 3	Monsters
	✓ III	✓ IIII	✓ I	20
	✓ II		✓ I	10
	✗ III	✗ IIII II		15
	✓ II	✓ I	✓ IIII	12
	✓ x3 = 75XP 10 hash = 30XP 7+5+7+4 = 23XP	✓ x2 = 50XP 13 hash = 39XP 7+7+4 = 18XP	✓ x3 = 75XP 7 hash = 21XP 7+5+4 = 16XP	
	128XP	107XP	112XP	

Last, for all the monsters defeated **directly in-line with the quest** during that stage, take their total XP value and divide it evenly between all players who participated. Let's say for us, the players fought and won against monsters worth a total of 20 XP in stage 1, 10 XP in stage 2, 15 XP in stage 3 and 12 XP in stage 4.

You should get something that looks like this:

Let's go over each player's totals.

Player 1: Was there for all sessions, but the party didn't complete stage 3 of the quest. So, they have 3 stages complete, each worth 25 XP. Next, they got some hashmarks. 3 in stage 1, 2 in stage 2, 3 in stage 3 and 2 in stage 4, for a total of 10 hashmarks, each worth 3XP. Last, they get a third of the XP for the stage 1 monsters, 1/2 for stage 2, 1/2 for stage 3 and then a third again for stage 4. The reason they're getting differing percentages of the monster XP is because not everyone was there for those stages, and those who aren't there don't get a share in the monster XP. So, that's 25XP x 3 which is 75XP, and then 3XP x 10 hashmarks for 30XP, and then monster XPs of 7, 5, 7 and 4 for a total of 23XP from monsters. In grand total, Player 1 gets 75XP + 30XP + 23XP which is 128XP!

Player 2: Was there for 3 sessions, one of those the party didn't complete the stage, that's 50XP. A good role-player, they got 13 hashmarks in total for 39XP.

The share of the monster XP is 18. Grand total is 107XP.

Player 3: Was there for 3 sessions too, and the one they missed the party didn't complete, so 75XP. 7 total hashmarks for 21XP. Monster XP is 16. Grand total is 112XP.

So why all the effort? Well, you can just say everyone gets the same XP to muss no fuss – but it's unfair.

Let's look at what happened. 2 of the players didn't make one session. If the Storyteller didn't use (take control of) their characters, then those characters would not have been gaining the XP for that stage. The above method allows a Storyteller to assign XP based on what they have done.

We have players who contributed to the quest more than others in certain stages. Shouldn't we actually reward them or that? We also have characters who took part in a fight while others didn't.

What this effort does is directly and proportionally reward players in a semi-non-subjective manner for their involvement in a quest. If someone really takes up the reigns and goes for the gusto, taking risks and (most importantly) is a consistent player each session, they should reap fruit for that.

Mid-way or at the end?

Getting back to rewarding XP all at once or at the end of each stage... it is up to you. For player 1, they would have gotten 128XP if the Storyteller waits until the end. If it was doled out each stage, they would get 41XP at the end of stage 1, 36XP at the end of stage 2, 16XP at the end of stage 3 and 35XP at the end of stage 4.

When you dish out XP at each stage, it is a little easier. Players who are not there are simply not part of the equation. It also allows characters to possibly level-up mid-adventure (something every player likes). It also gives direct feedback to the players on their performance and contribution at the end of each session. That can lead to post-game discussions, which is great.

If you have designed a quest where there is a lot of mystery, then waiting until the end may be more

appropriate. Short adventures should also wait until the end.

What about Level 10?

When characters get to level 10, that's the end of the road for them. There is nothing greater on their horizon, unless they perform a Class Ascension Quest. Class Ascension Quests grant no XP, but they do reward the new Character Class! Also, unless you're a genius and can weave multiple quests into one, each quest is meant for only 1 character. Everyone else would get XP based on a High-End level 9, or about 2,000XP.

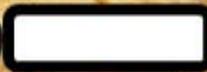
Class Ascension and Heroic Deeds

When a character hits their Class Ascension, XP is something of the past. Instead, they get Heroic Deeds. They only get these at the end of a quest. CA-level quests are different than others, as they change the world around the characters significantly, see the Quest Building chapter.

There are three amounts of Heroic Deeds you can dish out, and all CA characters in a party get the same amount. If there is a mix of CA and non-CA characters, then grant 2000XP per quest for those non-CA characters. Grant 1 Heroic Deed for "normal" CA-level quests. Grant 2 for those quests that change the face of a nation/faction. Grant an epic 3 for those that change the region or world – something that will go down in the history books.

Let's take some military examples. 1 Heroic Deed could be General Patton's push and relief of the 101st in Bastogne. 2 Heroic Deeds would be Godfrey of Bouillon's command of the armies that captured Jerusalem in 1099. 3 Heroic Deeds would be Seal Team 6's assassination of Osama Bin Laden – it changed the world.

Conversely, more Heroic Deeds, to a limit of 4, can be doled out for very long quests. Remember, CA-level quests are about furthering a storyline. It might take 2 sessions, it might take 10, depending on the characters' actions. Also, they may find themselves pulling two plot-lines at once, both intertwined. In this case, you can issue 2 to 4 Heroic Deeds at the end.



To put this into context, we'll use the same example. While General Patton got 1 Heroic Deed for Bastogne, he would have gotten a total of 3 or 4 for his involvement in WWII as a whole. So, if the player was General Patton and the Bastogne conflict got blurred into other parts of the war, then the Storyteller could just give 3 at the end of the war. For Godfrey, maybe 4 Heroic Deeds total for the 3-year campaign leading up to the siege of Jerusalem and its capture. In both of these cases, this list of actions (Patton in WWII and the 1st Crusade) changed the world. If taking just a portion of it, like Bastogne, it changed a lot and is part of history, but did not change the world directly through that one action.

All CA characters use the same chart for raising in CA levels, and it is purposefully slow. Remember, each Heroic deed is a quest. Not a session, but a full quest, maybe 3 or 5 sessions. If the Storyteller did 1 session per week, or 45 per year, with an average of 4 sessions per quest and 1 Heroic Deed per quest, a character would get 11 per year.

This is not meant to discourage but reinforce the notion that this is not about gaining levels fast. It is about the journey. Also, it shows the degree of power a CA character has and the distinction in accomplishment between a CA+1 and a CA+5.

This also means there are no extra rewards for role-playing a character well, killing monsters or any of that. But, by this time a player should have developed a different attitude and look towards the role-playing aspect of the overall story and how they can influence it.

This new form of rising in level is meant to signify a change in aspect of a character. Before (non-CA), they were about themselves and getting a job done. Like a foot soldier, focused on their team and own promotion. A CA character is focused on the world around them and changing it.

Like a general, no more promotions, just troops to train and battles to win.

The important thing to keep in mind at this stage is not the XP or Heroic Deeds, but the story you're crafting.

CA-Level	Heroic Deeds to Graduate	Total Heroic Deeds
CA+0	1	0
CA+1	1	1
CA+2	2	2
CA+3	2	4
CA+4	2	6
CA+5	3	8
CA+6	3	11
CA+7	3	14
CA+8	4	17
CA+9	4	21
CA+10+	5	25



Loot

Loot

In general, magical equipment of any sort should be something of a rarity. Aside from those things the Archanium produces (and alchemists, but that's not "magical"), magical items are very rare in Wyrmsbane. You must resist the idea of a "loot run". Again, if these kinds of things are common, then they're not, and not important. We want magical items to be rare, important and a meaningful reward to Players involvement.

Archanium items are available for the right price in most places that have an Archanium. Same with the alchemist and potions. In both of these regards, such items are more considered a mark of the wealthy. Nobles and the affluent usually carry a potion or two on them for safety and a useful Archanium item.

Magically enchanted things are different. Yes, they can be produced by those with the right spells and Skills, but that doesn't make them common. When produced, it is normally done for a specific person who is of note. Meaning, those who can produce such crafts don't sell their wares to just anyone. Only those character that have been through a lot have a magical items, and only a few at that. While you can expect a CA character to have a few, it is, well... expected.

If pressed to say when a character should acquire one, we could say maybe at the 4th Level, then again at the 7th or 8th. There is no real formula, it should be when fitting. Moreover, there are many kinds of magical items. Yes, some are weapons and armor, but some are staffs, wands, crystals and more. Some reproduce spell effects, some do more, some are locked with runes, others are open to all.

The Loot Charts probabilities for producing a magical item are set in such a way that finding such things is rare. That doesn't mean you can't break the mold and hand out what you want when you want. If you are flagrant with it, you'll quickly find the characters getting way too powerful, and unbalanced. By unbalanced, I mean they will have great offense,

but normal defense, or vice versa. You'll be faced to throw enemies at them that either go down too fast, or (when they have enough durability) hit too hard.

Remember, this is not about loot and getting the next (whatever color) magic item. This game is about the story, and you may need to level-set expectations.

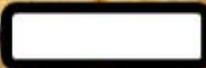
That said, magical items are a wonderful reward for Players who have been good participants in your quests, who have followed the stories, who have played their characters into a good situation to find loot. Don't be shy to give things out when you need to or should either.

Magical items can be described in 3 ways: by the effect they produce, by their power and by their nature.

Many items produce spell effects, or spell-like effect. If you were to look at the effect, think what spell rank they are, or mimic. A good rule of thumb is for that effect to be equal to about double the character's Level. So, a wand that casts a 6th Rank spell should probably be reserved for CA+2 or so characters, a Rank 2 would be for about 4th Level folks. Again, this is to make sure your characters don't run away from the game. Of course, you can be a deviant ST and give them a very powerful item that has a curse too, or maybe put them in a situation where the item is stolen, or cannot be used in a helpful manner.

Power refers to a level of enchantment. Like spells, these levels are: Minor, Lesser, Greater, True and Ancient. You could think of each step as 4 Levels regarding requirements. So, Minor for 4th Level characters, 8th gets Lesser, CA+2 or so gets a Greater. Again, guidelines but also considering the game mechanics.

The nature of the item is far more subjective. Some things may be specifically meant for a task, like a key. Others might be able to heal, or overcome a limitation or constraint. Weapons also have their own nature. Some weapons have additional, non-power-structured effects. Try and consider what is outlined



within the power and effect construct as a baseline. However, the possibilities are too great to set any kind of rule. A magic key that opens a door might be fitting for Level 1. A wand that freezes time probably too much for lower levels. A wand that stops time but only done in a specific room against a specific bad guy, probably ok at lower levels.



Additional Thoughts

Characters

Dealing with characters, not Players, is something you'll have to deal with. Players will do their best to break the game, find the most powerful combinations and run amuck – it's ok. If you're overcome by a group of characters, you're not thinking then game through.

There is no character that should be a threat to you and your story. Strong characters can face the ethereal, characters with a very low Critical # can face things that can't be Critically Struck, mages who roll 2000 RO on all Skill Checks can face things that resist magic outright – there's always an answer.

This is not to say to formulate the story so that it becomes the characters' nemesis. What I am saying is that you can mute any character any time you want. Heck, you can even just say, "your guy is Stunned!" and be done with it. You should be certain that if you have a strong character, that you don't place all portions of the quest in line with their strengths. Most certainly have some parts they excel at, but others where they'll have to rely on others or figure something out.



Putting it all Together

One-pager on how it all works together...



Index

Same as others...

