

A. CONTINENT

Velia Naer and the Miers | A Contested Nomenclature: For centuries, the Faen have referred to the continent as Velia Naer. However, with the arrival of the Empire and the subsequent establishment of colonial settlements, the newcomers referred to the continent as the Miers. This divergence in nomenclature has led to significant distinctions in how the land is perceived and delineated by each. When the Faen speak of Velia Naer, they encompass the entirety of the continent in their reference. In contrast, colonists use the term Velia Naer to denote only those regions of the continent that remain unequivocally under Faen dominion. Consequently, maps produced by colonial cartographers can be readily identified by this nuanced distinction in territorial terminology.

Neropol: The name is a bastardization of Ngaver Pollumi, High Elven for “Crested City.” The city reveals only the tallest of its towers above the tree line, resting deep within an Elven-made caldera. From the surface, it presents a mere glimpse of its true vastness, akin to the tip of an iceberg.

Verse Translated from High Elven

*High elves go where twilight falls,
Northward bound 'neath the Red Spine's wall.
There the Necropolis of undeparted echo's call,
Life and death held in thrall.
No roads lead to Neropol.*

Neropol is constructed around an ancient high elven cemetery. Apart from the grand mausoleums of the very wealthy, no graveyards exist throughout the Miers/Velia Naer. This is necessitated by the presence of the fungus leshy, creatures that respect no boundaries save for impenetrable stone walls. These beings have no qualms about traversing six feet of soil to reach their prey, rendering conventional burial practices futile.

B. GLOSSARIES & PRONOUNCEATIONS

Ag Rahdak: (AG rah-DAHK) See Appendix M: “*The Legend of the Sands.*”

Arcane power, the: See Appendix E.

Arafeldem: (AHR-uh-fel-duhm) An ancient dyasma. Also referred to as the Blood Fog, the Red Mist.

Avidyae: (uh-VID-yai) Those who have succumbed to Arafeldem’s influence.

Bard: Songfinder chosen by one of the muses as their champion.

Beastkin: Humanoid species or race that possesses animal-like traits or characteristics. These traits can include physical features such as fur, claws, tails, ears, or even faces resembling those of animals.

Bleakest Fields: Initial destination of mortal souls upon death. From here, if a soul is worthy they are sent to the afterlife of their chosen deity.

Blood Fog, the: Epithet for Arafeldem.

Changeling: A type of shifter born with the ability to mimic any mortal likeness.

Chaos: See Appendix J: Ratheswynne the Enigmatic, “*Order and Chaos.*”

Colony: Term applies to settlements of the mortal races that require a demense to keep the Green from taking back the land.

Coven: A collective of witches led by a Matron.

Coldark: Home of the Erro’ka tribe. Aptly named for its long cold winters and with little sunlight. The cold dark.

Crown: See Appendix H.

Cryphiss: (KRIF-iss) Chameleon-like lizards, roughly the size of coyote, that hunt in packs.

Dame Videki: (DAYM VID-E-chi) Also referred to as the Dame, she was a famous performer and playwright. See Appendices I & J.

Dark Year, the: See Appendix M.

Dead Silence, the: Described as a vacuum of sound heard by songfinders when they listen deeply to a being’s anthem at the moment of their death.

Deluvan Guild, the: Crafting guild known for producing the finest instruments in the Miers.

Delver: A practitioner whose talents are focused on mind reading. They are named for their ability to not just read surface emotions or thoughts, but forcefully ‘delve’ into the memories of others.

Demense: (duh-MEN-sss) A boundary usually established by colonies to keep the Green at bay.

These are magical barriers usually created by an Arcane Practitioners, especially for colonies or major roads.

Denias Melodic: (deh-NYE-uh muh-LOD-ik) A vinous, green ambrosia originating from the divine realms, known for its variable effects, which are somewhat predictable based on the species of the one consuming it. While its influence can range from blessings to more enigmatic outcomes, each species tends to experience a consistent range of effects.

Divine power, the: See Appendix E.

Diviner: Not to be confused with the Divine power, a Diviner is a practitioner who has some talent for gaining insight into future or past events, without having witnessed them physically. This might

involve interpreting signs, omens, or visions, using tools such as crystal balls, cards, runes, bones, etc.

Dominus: Standing army and navy of the Magisterium, See Appendix D.

Driftwitch: Also referred to as a stray; a witch without a coven.

Druid: Practitioners of the second tradition, they draw on the Primal in order to cast their spells and take the form of beasts. A shapeshifter, but not a therianthrope. Another name for druid is “earhtender” or “landmender” depending on their role.

Dryad: See Appendix L.

Dyasma: A peculiar term, known by very few, the definition of which is not easily found in any dictionary or Appendices, including this one.

Elf: See Appendix L.

Emergence: Like a birth; in specific contexts this describes the creation of a new celestial being.

Erro'ka: (AIR-oh-ka) Translates to Snow Elk. Refers to a tribe of goblins from the Coldark.

Evening Ball, the: Afterlife for worshippers of Neuillya.

Faen: (FAY-en) See Appendix L.

Faen Allies: In general, those who sided with the Faen during the Spirit Wars, or those who would work against the Magisterium in the event of a third war.

Familiar: A creature or spirit that serves as a companion and/or assistant to a practitioner of one of the three traditions. Not to be confused with a pet.

Fungalops: See Letalis.

Glyd, House of: The House of Bashobi Glyd (buh-SHOH-bee GLID), a master engineer whose inventions are used throughout the Miers.

GlydShot: A powerful bow that utilizes clockwork engineering, named after its inventor, Bashobi Glyd.

Gray Man, the: A Sulinaoth that Renly once encountered.

Green, the: (aka the Lost Green): Forest that covers most of the continent. Unsafe for most mortals to enter with a dryad.

Green-cursed: Derogatory term for Therianthrope.

Guardian hounds: Statues placed near ancient burial grounds to guard against grave robbers.

Haven: A therianthrope, changeling, beastkin, or goblin settlement within the Green. They settlements do not require a demense as its inhabitants are not trespassers.

High elf: One of two categories of elf, see Appendix L.

Kiir: Name of the world.

Kiiran: A being from Kiir.

J'tori: (juh-TOH-ree) A clan of orcs.

Leshy: See Appendix L.

Letalis: (LAY-talis) Species of fungus that spores inside corpses, slowly reanimating the body and taking it for its own.

Letalis Spores: Tiny reproductive units produced by the Letalis fungi to spread to new corpses.

Ley line: Pathway of concentrated Arcane power.

Leyus: (LAY-us) That which allows beings to draw on the Arcane power.

Lucal: Also referred to as a Moon cat, a species of jungle cat so rare that many believe them mythical.

Lyxium: (LIK-see-uhm) An alchemical reagent of considerable expense. Disinfects and preserves delicate organic artifacts without damaging them.

Magisterium, the: See Appendix D.

Medicus: A formally trained and recognized doctor.

Melodic: (muh-LOD-ik) Short for Denias Melodic.

Mender: General term for an informally trained doctor.

Miers, the: See Appendix A: “Velia Naer and the Miers: A Contested Nomenclature.”

Mud Vesps: Species of hive insect. Dangerous. Some components harvested from Mud Vesps and their nests are used as alchemy ingredients.

Muse: One of the celestial daughters of Neuillya.

Nalbinder: Craftsperson who uses a form of single-needle knitting to create items like hats, socks, and mittens, typically from wool.

Nocmus: (NOK-muhs): Specific type of therianthrope. Were-mouse.

Oath of Truth, the: A Divine spell often used by Gilded Flame Inquisitors to compel a subject to speak the truth.

Order: See Appendix J: Ratheswynne the Enigmatic, “*Order and Chaos.*”

Excerpt from the transcribed lectures

Orc: See Appendix L.

Patron: Depending on context, this often refers to a sponsor who supports a person or organization in some way, most commonly financially. However, if the term is used by a practitioner of one of the traditions the meaning is more specific. See Appendix E.

Pawn: See Appendix H.

Primal power, the: See Appendix E.

Rom Fhearn: (ROM FEER-n) A Goblin Haven

Rom Feift: (ROM FIE-ft): A Goblin Haven

Rook: See Appendix H.

Red Mist, the: A name for an entity loosely based on the Blood Fog that comes from

River Stix, the: A river of souls that flows through Bleakest Fields.

Sear: Street name for warming ethers. See Appendix K.

Sear addicts: Those addicted to warming ethers. See Appendix K.

Shapeshifter: Therianthropes, Changelings, and to a lesser extent druids.

Shifter: A derogatory shorthand for shapeshifter.

Shine Stone: A colloquialism for demon bone. People who refer to it as ‘Shine Stone’ are usually unaware of its true origin, often assuming it another rare gemstone. It resembles volcanic glass, but is far rarer, far more resilient, and lacks any brownish imperfections.

Spirit Wars, the: See Appendix M.

Source Knotting: Interference between types of magical sources, caused when two or more different sources are forced to overlap.

Songfinder: Mainly a term for individuals who can hear the song at another being’s center.

However, each songfinder may have a range of other talents associated with this ability.

Swarm Druid: A druid with the gift of commanding insects.

Sulinaoth: Translated from Elven to Alman, this means ‘the lost.’ Sulinaoth are a breed of undead created by a disease that uniquely afflicts elves. Once infected, a slow-moving corruption distorts the victim’s body and mind. Turns them into things that hide in the dark and prey on the easiest victims.

Stray: Also referred to as a driftwitch, a witch without a coven.

Teurig, the: (TUR-ig) The traveling company of performers founded by Renly’s ancestors.

Therianthrope: An individual who possesses the ability to transform into an animal hybrid. This concept includes creatures such as werewolves, werebears, and weremice, among others, which undergo physical changes between their mortal and animal forms.

Velia Naer: See Appendix A: “Velia Naer and the Miers: A Contested Nomenclature.”

Velt: Sex worker.

Warming Ethers: See Appendix K.

Wending Wrath, the: A river that flows through the forests of the First World.

Whiskey List, the: Renly’s personal list of mysteries that he hopes to one day answer. The name comes from WSICEY which is an acronym for Weird-Shit-I-Can’t-Explain-Yet.

Wildling: One of two categories of elf, see Appendix L.

Wildspawn: A derogatory term for Beastkin.

Wolfrun: A children’s game, similar to tag.

C. IDIOMS, SLANG, COLLOQUIALISMS

Blood of Kiir: Said about a person who is humble, dependable, honest, and good-hearted. *Examples:* “Blood of Kiir, that fellow.”

Dram: Common expletive, used in various contexts to convey strong emotions. *Examples:* “I don’t give a dram.” “Dram and bones, this is bad.”

Elven hair: (or an elf’s hair) An undefinably small, thin, or fine unit of measurement. *Example:* “I came within an elf’s hair of murder.”

Gods’ blood: A mildly blasphemous exclamation used to express a strong reaction of surprise, fear, frustration, annoyance, or anger. *Example:* “Gods’ blood, who could know a thing like that?”

Go mark a trail: To relieve one’s bladder.

Glik-Glik Nerum Scro: Erro’ka idiom of exasperation, in Alman it translates to ‘Elder Glik’s frozen balls.’ *Equivalent to* “Well, isn’t this some horseshit?”

Phek: The most versatile of Kiir’s expletives. More vulgar than ‘dram’, this term is used to express anger, frustration, or surprise, equivalent to the F-word in Colonial Standard English. *Example:* “Phek the phekking phekbag.”

Priv: Short for privy, chamber pot, outhouse. More commonly used as a derogatory that implies one is dirty as a used chamber pot.

Shluck: Often misused to mean bad luck or irony. Shluck is originally a J’tori word that got absorbed into Alman, means misfortune from being in the wrong place at the wrong time by no fault of your own.” *Example:* “The timing of the child’s birth was pure shluck.”

Spill the tavern’s secrets: To vomit, usually from excessive drinking. *Example:* “He stepped out back to spill the tavern’s secrets.”

Stepped in it: Made a big mistake. *Example:* “Ahhh, I’ve really stepped in it this time.”

Tent-sod: Derogatory implies one is undesirable, or low-status.

Tit’s Ass: A somewhat dated derogatory that implies one is fun to look at but ultimately useless.

Tossed to the dark: (or tossed him/her/them to the dark) Sent to a life long prison sentence in the Pit. *Example:* “I’ll not stand by and see him tossed to the dark.”

GODS AND CELESTIALS

Fates, the: Feminine, the three daughters of Ymdevir.

Gaow: (GOW, rhymes with cow) Masculine, the Rage God of the J’tori ancestors.

Kami: (KAH-mee) Usually feminine. Not a name, but a type of lesser land god. These gods were tethered to one of the lands of Kiir by the Goddess Merekus and charged with maintaining the balance of nature inside their respective territories. Kami is also a term with an invariant form.

Layra: (LAY-ruh) Feminine, daughter of Neuillya, one of the nine muses

Lysandre: (lie-SAN-druh) Feminine, Lysandean Goddess of Luck and the Sea. Predominately, but not exclusively, worshipped by the Lysandreans.

Merekus: (MARE-eh-kyoos) Feminine, Goddess of Nature

Neuillya: (Nay-you-EE-lee-ya) Feminine, mother of muses, Goddess of the arts and the artist. Goddess of what can be.

Tetulinok: (teh-TOO-lih-nok) Feminine, daughter of Neuillya, one of the nine muses.

Ubel: (YOO-buhl) Masculine, God worshipped by the Gilded Flame

Vuun Pol: (VOON pohl) Feminine, J'tori Goddess of Wisdom

Ymdevir: (IM-duh-veer) Masculine, the White Hand of Fate, God of Death and Destiny, the Hand that Draws the Veil. God of what is.

PRONOUNCEMENTS

Additional pronunciations not listed above or in the other appendices:

Coyle: KOYL, same as Coil

Drodomiyu: Droh-doh-mee-oh

Gorza: GOR-zuh

Keiz: KEYS

Kelora: kuh-LOHR-uh

Nyanna: nie-AN-nuh

Renly: REN-lee

Tyban: TIE-buhn

Vionnette: Va-I-uh-net

Vureiec: Vur-RAY-ic

D. MAGISTERIUM, THE

Three centuries ago, The Empire embarked on its colonization of the Miers, entrusting the task to a branch of the imperial authority known as the Magisterium. At present, the Magisterium has remained firmly entrenched as the ruling hand of the colonies. In essence, the Magisterium serves as the long-standing arm of the Empire's control, maintaining its authoritative presence throughout the colonial territories.

HIERARCHY

High Magister: Oversees the Council of the Grand Magisters.

Council of Grand Magisters: Composed of the Grand Magisters, each of whom oversees an arm of government.

ARMS OF THE MAGISTERIUM

(IN ALPABETICAL ORDER)

Arcanus: Regulation of magic, and magical education. Provides War Mages to the Dominus.

Divinica (dih-VIN-ih-kuh): Regulates law Enforcement via The Gilded Flame. Regulates Emergency Responders via The Shining Souls. Acts as community builders through the House of the Weavers, the state church. Worships the Weaver, the god of hearth and (Church sanctioned) stories. Their Tenders (priests) perform weddings, birth rights, and lead community gatherings.

Dominus (DOM-ih-nuhs): Standing army and navy.

Politis (POLL-it-tis): Is made up of three branches. (1) The Aerium regulates commerce, manages guilds, and executes tax collection. (2) The Canom provides lawmakers & judges. (3) The Unum handles diplomacy & messaging (propaganda).

Tenebrous (TEN-uh-bruhs): Intelligence and Counterintelligence. While listed, there is no official arm. They are a network of spies, shadow enforcers, and clandestine operations. Their Grand Magister does not attend meetings of the Council of Grand Magisters but reports exclusively to the High Magister.

E. MAGIC, THE THREE TRADITIONS OF

The source crafting traditions are named for their source of magic, not for how a practitioner accesses that source. (see Patrons below). Depending on the teacher, source crafting might be considered an art, a path to follow, a school of study, or a bit of all these things.

Arcane Tradition, the: [Source: Ley/The Arcane] Power drawn from the physical world via energy conversion or in larger quantities through Ley Lines. This tradition is mentioned in book one, but is not directly witnessed. Typically, the tradition of mages.

Divine Tradition, the: [Source: Celestial Being] Granted primary through faith, bestowed on mortals by celestial beings unable to take physical form on the Material Plane. Typically, the tradition of healers and holy warriors.

Primal Tradition, the: [Source: Natural world] Power most commonly granted by the kami of the land* or drawn directly from nature. Typically, the tradition of druids and witches.

*Orcs lack the ability to manipulate this source directly.

**Exceptions exist | Extra Planar: power siphoned from the Faen Home Plane (The First World)

Patrons: (Also referred to as Proxy/Sponsored/Arbitor) When this term is used in regard to the three sources of power, it describes an acquired (not innate or trained) means of accessing one of three sources. Access to power is granted through some form of intermediary. Generally, the patron is not another mortal.

F. LANGUAGES

Autonym: A name used by an ethnic, racial, or social group to refer to themselves or their language

Alman (AL-muhn): Also referred to as Human/Trade/Common/Miers/Colony Tongue.

Dwarven: The Dwarven Tongue (autonym | Durvinen).

Draconic: The Dragon Tongue (autonym | Kiir-ssitk).

Elven: (autonym | Illiae) The Elven Tongue.

Erro'ka: Archaic form of Goblin spoken by the Snow Elk Tribe of the Coldark.

Faen: (autonym | Sylf) The Elven Tongue.

Goblin: (no autonym) The Goblin Tongue.

G. CALENDAR

The Dawning Era began the first day of Comson (see months) that followed the end of the Dark Year.

Current Date | 1539 D (Dawning)

EIGHT DAYS OF THE WEEK

1. Raugdyn
2. Marshdyn
3. Zandyn
4. Triassdyn
5. Hymnsdyn
6. Bronsdyn (Equivalent of Friday)
7. Lorsdyn
8. Ellierdyn

TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR

Spring

1. Comson
2. Troubson
3. Warkson - Equinox

Summer

1. Glaster
2. Renaster
3. Kreppeter- Solstice

Fall

1. Homaswen
2. Dentewen
3. Fruwen - Equinox

Winter

1. Svetus
2. Marstus
3. Ramstus – Solstice

H. CURRENCY

“Coin” is a term with an invariant form and is a general reference to money. Types include:

1. Pawn | Smallest unit. (Kiir equivalent of a penny)
2. Rook | 100 Pawns
3. Crown | 100 Rooks
4. Dragon | 100 Crowns

I. QUOTED TEXTS, STAGE PLAYS, & LECTURES

Amaleth | *Dame Videki* (aka The Dame): A dark comedic tragedy, and one of Renly's favorite stage plays. See Appendix J.

Paper Miller, The | *Dame Videki* (aka The Dame) One of Dame Videki's lesser-known stage plays, and in Renly's opinion underrated, comedies. Tender Mollen quotes a line from a wizened old minstrel, spoken to the titular Paper Miller.

“Wisdom lies not in risk taking, but in discerning a choice worth making.”

Prayers of the Divine | *Oliss the Speaker*: Actually, a collection of writings from several authors, though Oliss the Speaker is the only author mentioned in Book 1. The collection is the source of a commonly held Kieran creation mythos.

“Let not the vessel of charity be turned away, for in the humblest gifts, the divine grace may flow.”

Remlac's 5th edition Alman Dictionary | *Remlac*: A dictionary compiled by the Dwarf Remlac. Renly's sister Chloe often references this text.

Revelations of the Fire | *Ubel*: The Gilded Flame hold this text to have been divinely inspired. In truth the origins are nebulous, some suggesting it is over seven thousand years old, and written by His Grace, Emperor Nalov in the age when the gods walked the mortal plane. It is said to be a recounting of when Ubel came down from Godhome to walk with the emperor for three days and three nights, over which he revealed the way of the Gilded Flame.

“The grasping of hands is the first plank on a bridge between two journeys. Once built, a bridge should not be sundered, as it forever shortens the distance between souls.”

“Let not the divine blaze be deceived by ash in the wind. For the unclean conceal their strengths, and without diligence in discernment, thou shalt find thyself vanquished by the corruptors hand.”

Tales of Finlan Redsword, The | *Jarlan Rainkael* (compiler) Chloe references: Finlan Redsword's delving of the Molen Caverns.

Thesis on the Divine Realms | *Sovias Hemb*: A mortal scholar who was blessed/cursed with the task of traveling the planes and recording them for mortals. They called the place Bleakest Fields because the longer a living mortal stays, the less able to find joy they are. Things look infinitely bleak. They said, “never in my years of wandering had I felt such a despair so close to the core of my being that it threatened to envelope my world entirely.”

“Freed of the flesh, mortal souls return to the hoard, falling upon endless plains of bone.”

Bleakest Fields. Where Death's palace stands. They come to the Great Hoarder of Souls, the White Hand of Fate... Ymdevir. God of what is."

Transcribed Lectures, The | *Ratheswynne the Enigmatic* (RATH-uh-swin): See Appendix J. "Order and Chaos" & "Divine Visages and Soul Perception."

Vanir Chronicles, the | *Vanir*: Kiir's pseudo equivalent of The Brothers Grim. The Vanir Chronicles aren't called Fairy Tales (Faen tales). Temeth refers to the chronicles as bedtime stories whose histories were sanitized to be appropriate for children. So... Vanir is kinda like Disney. Includes: The Red Mist, The Knocmen

Memoir of Zephrameer Hinks | *Zephrameer Hinks* (ZEF-ruh-meer HINKS): A long-forgotten delver's memoir. Renly notes he found references to the *Nocturna parasitus* (more commonly, dream eaters, dream eeches) within its pages.

J. EXTENDED CITATIONS

Authorship debated, Poem | The Lost Lady's Lands

*A lost lady's land,
Since Chaos did knock.*

*She'd turned him away,
But he'd broken her clock.*

*And so, the ring ticks,
And so, the wars tock.*

*Yet never to three,
Would hands ever clock.*

*A lost lady's land,
Since Chaos did knock.*

Dame Videki | Amaleth

A sermon given by the character Tender Fray

Dear brothers and sisters, we gather here today in memory of the Dark Year. That pivotal moment of our history, so many centuries past, when the demon lord corrupted the Great Seal, and his legions surged forth from the depths of the Solan Sea.

In an instant, the very balance as we knew it shifted. Our world faced annihilation. But our great ancestors did not lose hope, for they were the blood of Kiir.

United not only by our bonds as mortals, but by the grace and guidance of the gods, Kiirans stood together, hand in hand, shield to shield, and faced that evil. And after an unrelenting year of war, it was our faith and our determination that saw the Leviathan banished back to the void.

This was not just a victory of our strength, nor was it merely a manifestation of our devoted faith in the divine, but a testament to the divine's faith in us. You and I, my brothers and sisters...

Let us trust in the power and wisdom of the gods. For they will always guide us. Let us vow to stand together, no matter what obstacles may come our way.

For today, we are the blood of Kiir...

Mayanin of the Teurig | Contests with the Dark

*Late of night, the candle sputters,
In his bed, the child shudders,
For a toothless stare, for a hollow bark,*

For a fear of contests, with the dark.

*But a time comes, and so it seems,
The man tires of daunted dreams.
Snuffing flame, he calls the dark,
Daring shadows, to test his heart.*

Ratheswynne the Enigmatic | Order and Chaos

Excerpt from the transcribed lectures

Sages often speak of the mortal mind's willingness to humor a lie to glimpse a truth. How we understand our own creation is a prime example. You're all familiar with the myth as it is laid out by Oliss the Speaker in Prayers of the Divine.

In the beginning there was only Chaos. A vast ocean of formlessness occupied solely by the primordials, who were as formless as the very Chaos they inhabited.

Then came Order. What many call the Spark. Order, we're told, manifested from a thought. In a flash of understanding, one of the primordials saw a distinction between themself and Chaos. This consciousness of self, led to a desire for self-preservation. "I am" led to "I must continue to be."

This desire did not bring the Spark—but was the Spark. The primordial, who was and wished to continue to be, was the epicenter of an explosion of Order. It spread and brought change to everything it touched. Other primordials who had never imagined such a thing as "self" were suddenly caught in the blast.

Those closest to the Spark's origin became the first gods of Order.

Those furthest away, the first gods of Chaos.

Powerful as it was, the Spark could not consume the entirety of that infinite ocean of Chaos.

Likewise, though it tried, Chaos could not reclaim all of that which had been changed by Order.

In the aftermath, an equilibrium settled over all that was—a gradient between the points of purest Order and Chaos. The opposing forces resisting one another in an eternal tug of war.

In the space equidistant from each extreme, the material plane, the mortal realm, our world, Kiir, came to be. Where mortal life's persistence depends on the balance between Chaos and Order.

We've all heard this myth. We all know it is not to be taken as the truth. It is a story we tell—a lie that lets us glimpse truth's shadow. Yet it is important because it reminds us of two things.

Chaos and Order are neither good nor evil.

But while it is the nature of Order to maintain Order, it is the nature of Chaos to spread to all things.

Ratheswynne the Enigmatic | Divine Visages and Soul Perception

Excerpt from the transcribed lectures

Shol Q'Tu (SHOL kyoo-TOO), a high elf priest of Ymdevir, once said, "The soul, crafted by Father Dragon, is a finely hewed gem, clear as the air, with the true name etched perfectly upon its

facets. Gifted by the Divine Spark, each soul is a prism through which the Spark may be seen, though no two souls perceive it the same way. What a blessed and holy gift to be granted this piece of creation.”

What was Shol Q’Tu referring to?

Mortal perceptions of the gods are infinitely diverse. One might gaze upon Ubel and see a young warrior, while another sees a wizened sage, and yet another witnesses a brilliant pillar of fire. In fact, it is quite rare for any two mortals to look upon a god and perceive the same form. When this does occur, it is generally because the god has willed it to be so.

This phenomenon is a result of what we term the “Soul Lens.” The term is derived from the understanding that each god can be likened to a unique ray of light, and every mortal’s soul can be compared to a unique lens. While the ray of light remains constant, each lens filters it according to its individual nature.

The concept of the Soul Lens extends not only to the gods but also to the divine scions. Consider the nine muses as a prime example. Much like mortal siblings who share certain resemblances while possessing distinctive qualities, the muses share commonalities due to their shared mother. Continuing with the metaphor, the divine scions each represent a unique ray, but there are limits to how far each can deviate from their creator. Consequently, when observing the muses through the same Soul Lens, the similarities are as discernible as those between mortal siblings.

What factors might influence the nature of a soul’s perception? While this topic lies beyond the scope of this lecture, heuristic observations suggest certain variables exhibit higher rates of consistency. For instance, mortals who share a common culture tend to exhibit more overlap in their perceptions of divine visage. Men and women, the young and the old—the devout worshipper and the layperson—tend to exhibit semi-predictable differences. Suffice it to say, at times, a divine visage can reveal as much about the observed god as the observing soul.

K. PLANTS & REAGENTS

Not an exhaustive list. Only includes ingredients referenced thus far.

¹. Hagsbane (aka Somnistems)

². Lawdanium leaf

³. Mud Vesps

⁴. Lyxium

BANNED SUBSTANCES

Red Leaf: Red leaf is a spindly fern, red in color except for a dark green stem. Ground or pressed, the plant has an earthy, light herbal smell. A very mild “high” can be experienced, though weaker and shorter than tobacco. Its primary use is in blocking divination magic on the user and stabilizing the physical form of natural shapeshifters. Users either chew the leaf or grind it in a paste and rub it on the gums, with the latter falling out of favor because of its reduced effectiveness.

Warming Ethers: (Street Names: Sear) Originally used as an anesthetic, a sour smelling liquid that vaporizes at human temperatures. It causes sedation, euphoria, numbness, and vasodilation. Users note having extremely vivid, joyous dreams, though the memories of them are vague. Addiction after the first dose is rare, though continued use can become addictive. Those who use the drug to their detriment are called *sleepers*, and can be detected by atrophied muscles, slow speech, and a blue tint to the eyes. Frequent users eventually struggle with ether flashbacks, a waking dream that can make them prone to hallucinations, which can eventually lead to confusion or psychotic breaks.

L. RACES

DRYAD: A stoic race of forest dwelling beings, in appearance they are a hybrid of various tree species and the mortal races. Guides, they are the only Faen Allies allowed act to take colonist into the Lost Green.

DWARVES: Debate is a sport in Dwarven Society. Starting an argument with a dwarf over a pint is seen as a great way to make a lifelong friend. Renly doesn't encounter any dwarves in book one, hence this entry is very light.

ELVES (High Elves & Wildlings):

High elves: Known also as the Undying, high elves live for centuries, followed by a shift into undeath. Locked out of the afterlife, high elves do anything in their power to preserve their souls on the Material Plane, going as far as placing themselves in deathlike slumbers until awoken by a preset event. High elven cities are home to the "Soul Banks," well-guarded vaults containing the souls of elves either awaiting their Calling, or elves who have no physical form to inhabit. Long ago, by elven standards, the high elves sacrificed their mortality in pursuit of unmatched Arcane prowess. High elven cities have a dualistic appearance. Tall gleaming towers mix with squat, dark tomb houses. Since the only way to increase their population is for other elves to undergo the Severing, high elf cities typically have a very small central district, devoted to their own kind, surrounded by districts of foreign races. Most of a high elf's life is spent studying either the Arcane or the physical world. This is referred to as their Calling, something an elf dedicates decades of their life to at the abandonment of any other pursuit. High elf met outside of their cities tend to be apprentices of more prestigious elves, sent to broaden their own knowledge for the sake of the cloister to which they belong.

Wildling: Wildlings serve the kami of the land they occupy. They are a kami's a standing army if her territory is threatened. This sometimes means being turned to Beastkin in defense of that land. They are reincarnated after each life. Reborn as another wildling. Their memory of past lives is not clear.

FAEN: Also known as fae. Despite having come to the Miers long before the colonists, the mortal races still think of the Faen as aliens from the First World. To call one Faen means their ancestry traces back to the First World. A Faen may have been created in the First World, or Kiir, and either would still be considered Faen. However, Faen created in Kiir are considered inferior by those brought to life in the First World.

Natural Faen: The equivalent of Faen animals. These are creatures of Faen lineage that lack sufficient sentience to be classified as one of mortal races.

Noble Faen: Persons of Faen lineage possessing sentience equivalent or greater than other mortal races.

Faen Hierarchies of Authority: Generalized, there are those who rule the Faen Courts and those who serve it. Within the Faen courts themselves, the highest ruling members are more likely to be Noble Faen created in the First World.

LESHY, FUNGUS: Carrion scavengers, often resembling different species of club and sac fungi species. Frequently asymmetrically, they stand about the same height as a seven-year-old child, and may possess any number of mouths, eyes, hands, and tentacle-like legs. Often found near the dead or dying, they do not respect demense boundaries when feeding. They won't harm the living unless provoked, preferring to wait for death to take its course. They are the reason that few graveyards exist throughout the Miers, as tightly fit stone walls are required to keep them out.

LYSANDREANS: They go by many names. If you're fond of them you might call them the Oceanborne, or the Lucky Ones. If you're not so fond of them, halflings or pirates. If you're indifferent, the little folk. They're a superstitious lot with a fondness for swearing and the sea.

ORCS: large, humanoid beings with skin tones ranging from deep green to ashen grey, typically paired with black hair. Their large tusks tend to impact their speech. While those decedent from the J'tori desert clan are regarded as fierce warriors, highly educated orcs are renowned for their intellect, particularly in clockwrite engineering. Notably, they are the only mortal race unable to access Arcane power, significantly limiting their engagement with this tradition of magic. See Appendix M: "The Legend of the Sands."

M. HISTORICAL EVENTS

Dark Year, the: A year from legend, in which it is said that one of the greater seals of Kiir was corrupted allowing one of the Primordial Chaos Lords to set foot upon the mortal plane. Aside from waging war on the mortal races, its presence caused such an imbalance between Order and Chaos that the laws of nature became unreliable. In some regions of Kiir, this caused a darkening of the sky, as though the sun had ceased to exist, this is attributed as the main reason this period came to be called The Dark Year.

Legend of the Sands, the: A part of J'tori living history. The tale of Gaow, the God of Rage, is centered on a paradoxical gift to the orc clans—his “rage blessing.” This blessing granted them unparalleled strength while binding them through addiction. As Gaow’s influence grew, so did turmoil among the orc clans. Suspicion and paranoia festered, giving rise to a relentless cycle of violence. Vuun Pol, the Goddess of Wisdom, implored Ymdevir, the oldest god and Hoarder of Souls, to intervene. Refusing to act publicly, Ymdevir allegedly entrusted the task to his three daughters—the Fates. Their subtlety and finesse in manipulating destiny left it unclear to most mortal scholars whether their interference had indeed occurred at all. At the heart of this legend lies the enigma of Gedki Kedim, a figure who emerged as a beacon of unity among the orc clans. His actions united the clans against Gaow, paving the way for a clandestine effort to slay the God of Rage through the design of a devastating weapon that combined both engineering and Arcane magics. Different accounts offer varying insights into the role of the gods, the orc clans, and the enigmatic weapon that ultimately killed Gaow. The weapon’s true nature and ultimate fate remain shrouded in the sands of time. However, Gaow’s demise was not without consequence. Upon his death, the weapon ripped the Rage God to shreds upon the Sands of Ag Rahdak, the J’tori homeland. Thousands of years have passed, and still nothing grows in Ag Rahdak, it is considered the most inhospitable place in all of Kiir. Of greatest consequence to the J’tori; Gaow’s final act as he was being torn apart by the weapon was to strip the leyus from the race of orcs. Ever since, all orcs and their descendants have been incapable of manipulating the Arcane power.

Spirit Wars, the: Two wars have taken place on the continent. Both were sparked over the encroachment of the Magisterium as they colonized deeper into the Green. In a broad sense, both conflicts saw the mortal races of the colonizers on one side and the Faen and their allies on the other. Both wars ended at a stalemate, where the loss of lives led to an armistice where colonies and their demenses could remain in place within their current boundaries, but any further encroachment into the Green would be seen by the Faen as a new act of war. At the end of the Second Spirit War, open bloodshed had ceased, but the hatred remained, creating a generational animosity toward the Faen, shifters, Beastkin, witches, and their sympathizers amongst the colonists. They’re considered enemies to the Empire.

Vanishing of the Valuri, the: (VAL-er-I, like “valor-eye”) In essence, the Valuri is a celestial phenomenon believed to have occurred simultaneously with the onset of corruption of the great

seal that heralded the Dark Year. This fateful hour was marked by the tragic fall of the warden entrusted with guarding the Great Seal and its subsequent shattering. The defining feature of the Valuri is the temporary disappearance of a single star from the night sky. Specifically, the third star within the constellation of the Weaver's Loom. Once every ten years, this enigmatic star vanishes from sight for approximately an hour. Legend has it that being born during that hour is a foreboding omen, casting a dark shadow over the individual's destiny.

N. ENGINEERING

Clockwright: An accomplished engineer possessing and extensive knowledge in one or more of the following fields:

1. Steamworks
2. Gearsmithing
3. Chemistry
4. Alchemy

Master Clockwright | an esteemed clockwright who generally owns an impressive collection of patents of their own design.

Enchanting: Artificers one who can infuse/transfer power from one of the source traditions into/out of an object to give it magical properties or strip it of said properties.