

CLASSES

Classes broadly represent a character's lifestyle, race (if something other than human), and abilities. Most classes are self-explanatory, but a few warrant further description.

Adept
Artisan
Artist
Automaton
Criminal
Noble
Priest
Sage

Sea Guardian
Servant
Strange
Tailor
Them
Traveler
Undying
Warrior

Child: In addition to literal children, this includes those who have never truly grown up at heart. Many have a unique rapport with *Them* that adults have lost.

Demon Hunter: Mercenaries that specialize in hunting and slaying the Strange. Quite a few are equally willing to hunt and slay Weavers.

ORGANIZATIONS



THE HOLY CHURCH

*Praise be to God
Who created us all
Praise be to God*

*Praise be to God
Who protects us from the Void
Praise be to God*

Ah, praise be to God alone

—One of the Psalms

Headquartered in the Holy Capital, but with dioceses and churches in the majority of kingdoms and cities, the Holy Church is the Left Land's dominant religion. Their teachings fill every part of life and are all but inescapable, nor would many people even think of escaping them. The Holy Church has existed since the very first days of humanity, and they are simply considered a natural part of life, as natural as belief in God and the Ways which She bestows.

There are kingdoms which do not follow the Holy Church or preach heresies, but they are exceptionally rare. Although mostly small, there are a few large ones. But even in these places, it is hard to remain unaware of the Holy Church's teachings. Its influence simply reaches everywhere.

THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY CHURCH

According to the gospel of the Holy Church itself, it was founded 500 years ago by seven great sages who sought to assist all who lived in fulfilling the Ways bestowed upon them, and thus ease their lives. This remains their stated mission to the present day.

During the Dark Age, the Holy Church was filled with corruption and vice, exemplified by the Hollow "Mudblood" Caligula who reigned as a tyrant over the Holy Capital. After some time, Caligula was toppled by a revolution, and the Holy Church was reborn under the leadership of Zarastro Eternal Beshimmt.

Ever since it began, eighty years ago, Zarastro has secretly worked against the Weaver Hunt. Suspected heterics who once would have been burned at the stake were instead exiled to the northern kingdoms. But when the "Day of the Black Spot" occurred 13 years ago, fear of Weavers spread throughout the world and the Weaver Hunt resumed, with many Weavers being burned at the stake.

Like the criminal organizations, the Holy Church are strongly involved in the Southern War.

PRIESTS

The rank and file clergy of the Holy Church are known as priests.

The head of the Holy Church is the Archpriest, while those who report directly to him are known as Bishops, and all others are known as Priests. Normally, only pure humans with unquestionable faith in the teachings of the Church can become priests. There are many priests with the blood of Adepts flowing in their veins, but they do not call upon it. Only on rare occasions have Automatons, *Them*, and other species been known to become priests.

While Priests all have their own specialties, they generally learn how to preach the teachings of the Church to distant lands as well as how to defend themselves from those who would do them harm. Many priests are wide-ranging travelers who seek to bring the teachings of the Church to all living things through sleet, rain and snow.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHER BELIEFS

The Holy Book of the Church states that "God created everything" and so the Holy Church takes a dim view of faith in other gods, such as earth gods.

For this reason, they tirelessly proselytize to the few kingdoms in which such beliefs exist, attempting to spread their influence worldwide. They are often directly supported in this by the local or neighboring governments.

Even to Automatons, who were created by human hands, they preach "God granted humankind the power to create you, and so you must worship Her."

THE TWO FACTIONS

The Holy Church is currently divided into two factions; the moderate faction lead by the Archpriest Zarastro and the hard-liners lead by Rovel, the Head Inquisitor. At the heart of this division is the question of the Weavers.

The moderate faction believes that Weavers are a manifestation of God's will that humans should be able to combat the threat of the Strange and heal the damage they do, while the hard-liners hold that they are foul aberrations born of the Void, just as the Strange are.

Ever since the "Day of Screams" spoken of in legends, distrust of Weavers has been high and so dissatisfaction with the Archpriest's position has steadily grown, resulting in an influential faction opposing him within the Holy Church itself.

This particular disagreement is generally kept well hidden. Open conflict between the two factions of the Holy Church is exceptionally rare.

However, there are many other matters of theology about which disagreement exists within the church; such as whether God is omnipotent, whether Ways are always benevolent, and whether Warped Ways created by the Strange are always evil. The two major factions generally take up opposing positions on these questions as a matter of principle. As a result, reconciliation is likely impossible at this point, but the two factions continue to work together out of necessity.

THE CHURCH AND THE UNDYING

The Holy Church views the state of being Undying as a blessing from God—a reward for those who zealously follow the Ways in both deed and mind for their entire lives, leading to Her granting them the gift of eternal life.

As a result, the Church extends a guarantee of protection to all of the Undying and treats them as living saints.

THE APOSTLES OF TWILIGHT

Headquartered In: Unknown

Leader: "She of the Evening Calm" Escha B. Jestamente

An organization formed by the Tailors who willingly supported She of the Evening Calm in her insane actions on the Night of Screams. Their members are called "Apostles," and the majority of them are Hollows who share in She of the Evening Calm's mad delusions.

The current whereabouts of She of the Evening Calm are unknown, but in order to create the "beautiful world" that she desired, the Apostles operate secretly to create Warped Ways (and thus Strange) throughout the world. They have even engineered the fall of kingdoms.

It is only recently that the Holy Church and the Tailors' Guild have come to recognize the threat that the Apostles of Twilight pose. This is largely because the Apostles were spurred into fervent activity by the reappearance of their leader during the Day of the Black Spot.

THE BLUE EYES

Headquartered In: On the shore of the Baths

Leader: "The Happy Prince" Oscar Wilde

An organization of Demon Hunters formed with the objective of destroying all Strange. Its ranks include Weavers, non-Weavers, and all kinds of races such as Automatons and *Them*.

Although it is highly decentralized, it stays a unified organization under the leadership of Oscar Wilde, who is an inspiration to all. In contrast to many Demon Hunters, who as a whole tend to view Weavers and Strange as one and the same, its members are generally friendly towards Weavers as fellow enemies of the Strange. "So long as Strange exist, Weavers must too" is a common saying among the Blue Eyes.

Though a fragile organization held together mainly by mutual respect and the need to share information, the Blue Eyes are inarguably a force for good in the world.

THE BRAZEN BELLS

Headquartered In: The Merchants' Kingdom, 24th Ward

Leader: "Macavity" Plato

A criminal organization with its headquarters in the most dangerous area in the Merchants' Kingdom, the 24th Ward. From here, it directs all its branches. The organization's power in the Merchants' Kingdom, as well as the underworld of most kingdoms, is almost immeasurable. The current head of the council, Ell C. Dottore, is little more than a puppet of theirs.

The headquarters and each branch possesses a rusted bell that will not ring. This is proof of Plato's faith in them, as well as a reminder that organization pledges to carry out their work in complete secrecy and silence, like their bells that never ring.

The organization is involved in countless criminal enterprises worldwide, from petty theft to smuggling to human trafficking and war profiteering.

ORDER OF THE DIVINE HAMMER

Headquartered In: The Holy Church

Leader: "The Grim Inquisitor" Rovellev Hopkins

A faction of the church which seeks to root out heresy and visit punishment upon those who make light of God. It is also known as the Inquisition. Under the leadership of the current Head Inquisitor, Rovellev, its ranks have swelled with the faithful and become a large thorn in the side of the moderates in the church, whom they despise passionately.

Originally, the Inquisition was formed to set right those within the Holy Church itself who deviated from the teachings of the Holy Book. But beneath Rovellev, its mission has expanded to fight against all heretics and enemies of the Church, no matter where they may be.

The prime manner in which this is carried out, of course, is the Weaver Hunt. Thanks to the Inquisition, Weavers are once again tried and executed upon discovery, repeating the tragedies of the past.

ORDER OF GOD'S HAND

Headquartered In: The Holy Church

Leader: Zarastro Eternal Bestimmt

A military organization of pious Weavers set up by Archpriest Zarastro. Its existence is kept secret from the public. The mission of the Order of God's Hand is to set right God's Ways when they have been Warped, and at times take distortions into their own hands and use their power to work miracles in order to further God's glory. This is, of course, all an euphemism for the powers of the Weavers.

Most, even within the Church itself, believe that the Order of God's Hand is simply Zarastro's personal army of handpicked mercenaries. It is kept secret that he uses them to support the operations of the Tailors' Guild and to keep the radical factions of the Church in check.

The radicals, especially the Inquisition, naturally see them as enemies, but with Zarastro backing them can do little to overtly act against them.

THE PRANCING HORSE

Headquartered In: The Merchants' Kingdom, 15th Ward

Leader: Cyrano C. Abeldito

The largest courier organization on the Left Land. They have branches in a vast number of kingdoms, through which their even vaster number of couriers circulate. Their motto is "Anytime, anywhere. Swiftly." They will accept even the most dangerous delivery requests to just about any place imaginable. The image of a courier journeying across the world despite the countless hardships they face has become a source of admiration and envy for many young people.

However, the couriers themselves do not romanticize their jobs. Being a courier means staying constantly wary of highwaymen and thieves, being prepared to encounter ferocious beasts and sinister Them, and undergoing all the hardships of nature imaginable. A courier is one step short of death far too often for comfort.

THE SHORES OF DAWN

Headquartered In: The Peaceful Kingdom

Leader: "The New God" Nietzsche Superbo

A cult of Tailors present in the South, drawn together by the magnetic personality of one of the original Tailors, Nietzsche.

Their creed is: "God is dead. We Weavers, who are free from the confines of the Ways, are the chosen ones who shall succeed her and usher in a new world." They gather new recruits disillusioned by warfare every day, and with them they work to oppose the Ways and increase the power of Weavers in the world.

The Shores of Dawn seek to destroy both the Ardent Kingdom and the Salt Kingdom, which are devoted to the Ways, and establish what they claim will be a land of peace in the South ruled by the Weavers. To this end, they have gathered an army of Strange. However, as a result of their opposition to the Ways, many Unravelings have formed in the South.

THE TAILORS' GUILD

Headquartered In: The Merchants' Kingdom, 17th Ward

Leader: "Queen of the Night" Aria B. Cororatura

An organization of Weavers who fight to undo the Warped Ways created by the Strange. Its headquarters is the "Sewing Box" in the 17th Ward of the Merchants' Kingdom, a compound secretly built underneath the textile store "Weavers' Palace".

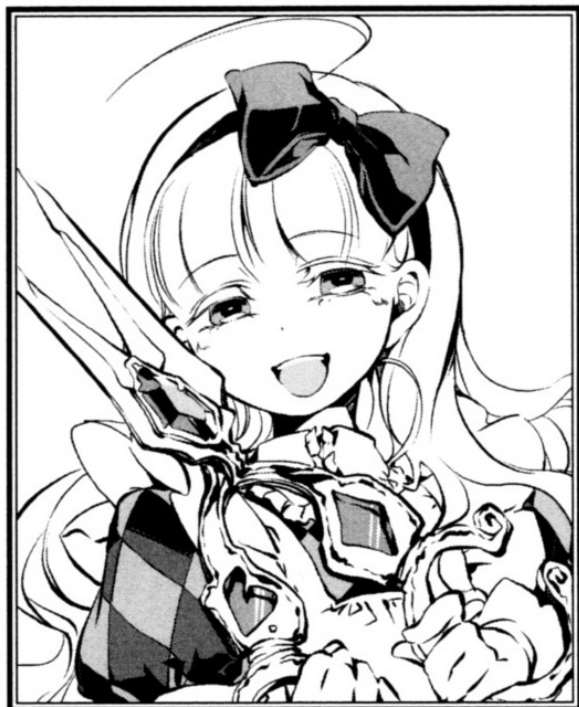
It has small branches in many kingdoms concealed in clothes and textile stores, from which its members work to investigate incidents suspected to be caused by the Strange. Whenever they find them, they do battle with terrifying Hollows and destroy their Warped Ways.

The Inquisition of the Holy Church considers the Tailors' Guild their mortal enemy, but conversely, the moderate faction lead by Zarastro secretly works to support them. However, that which they can do without revealing their duplicity to the Inquisition is limited.

PEOPLE

ALICE

"Sweet dreams? I don't need those. I'm not a child anymore!"



APOSTLE OF TWILIGHT

Classes: Strange/Tailor/Child

Sex: Female

Age: 11

Hair: Gold

Eyes: Blue

Skin: White

A member of the Apostles of Twilight, who always travels with a white rabbit in her company. When her parents both became Hollows, and in accordance with a Warped Way buried her alive in a rabbit hole, she fell victim to a delusion that all Ways were no more than her own daydreams.

Her goal now is to destroy "her own dreams", or in other words, all Ways and if necessary reality itself. As a result, she has an addiction to killing and destruction. However, if she meets someone who intrigues her, she'll spare their life and be exceptionally sweet to them. Her weapon is a huge pair of scissors.

Under orders from her organization, she is currently searching for a former member of theirs who betrayed them, known as the "Hatter." In the meantime, she kills and kills again, believing that through murder she can destroy the dream-world she thinks she is trapped in and wake up from her long slumber.

AMPHITRITE

"I wish to protect the peace of this sea."



SEA GUARDIAN

Classes: Sea Guardian/Sage

Sex: Female

Age: 18

Hair: Sea Blue

Eyes: Blue

Skin: White

A Sea Guardian from the Sea of Plenty located in the Burning Desert. Although many Sea Guardians in the south are hostile to other beings, she is uncommonly friendly to those that visit her Sea. She has a straightforward, earnest and gentle personality.

When she was young, she lived in a kingdom that was primarily human, and was invited to the Sea of Plenty. Ever since then, she has worked tirelessly to

improve relations between Sea Guardians and the other races. Thanks to her efforts, they have reached a level of mutual respect and trust unseen since before the Dark Ages.

The Sea of Plenty is a paradise where Sea Guardians live together with other beings in peace and prosperity, but it is dangerously close to the Ardent Kingdom and the Salt Kingdom, where humans and Sea Guardians will both stop at nothing to exterminate each other. Amphitrite is all too aware her work is not done yet.

ANGELICA IGINIA

"Oh, that incident? I've already been looking into it!"



NOVICE PRIESTESS

Classes: Priest

Sex: Female

Hair: Flaxen

Skin: White

Age: 17

Eyes: Silver

A novice in the Holy Church. Zarastro personally saved her from a Strange on the Day of the Black Spot, and out of gratitude towards him, she works as an agent of the Order of God's Hand.

As she was the daughter of a noble house, she is well versed in the ways of high society. She also has a knack for sorting the wheat from the chaff when it comes to information, and although she is not a Weaver, she's very effective when

supporting them. She works closely with the Weavers in the Order of God's Hand to alert them to the presence of Strange and Warped Ways and prepare them for the dangers they will face.

She's currently searching for weaknesses in Zarastro's rival organization within the Church, the Order of the Divine Hammer. If you want to know anything about the Inquisition, she's the one to ask.

"QUEEN OF THE NIGHT" ARIA B. CORORATURA

"Our guild spans the world... and that is why we need you."



TAILORS' GUILD LEADER

Classes: Tailor/Adept/Sage

Sex: Female

Age: 28

Hair: Black

Eyes: Green

Skin: White

The youthful leader of all Tailors worldwide. With a coquettish smile becoming of her enchanting beauty, she administers the daily affairs of the Tailors' Guild in order to continue the war against the Strange.

Though she was once herself a first-class Weaver, in recent years she has fallen victim to a curse and had to retire from the battlefield. Frustrated by her inability to fight, she came to the Sewing

Box and threw herself into administrative work. She is determined to find talented Tailors who can succeed her before the curse puts her in the grave.

At the time she was elected as the leader of the Tailors' Guild, seven years ago, the scope of the Holy Church's corps of Weavers—the Order of God's Hand—also vastly expanded. Due to this, it is rumored that she has some kind of secret relation with Zarastro of the Holy Church.

"WITCH OF WISDOM" CASSANDRA ETERNAL

"I wonder what tale you'll weave for me from now on."



UNDYING WITCH

Classes: Undying/Sage

Sex: Female

Age: Unknown

Hair: Dark Grey

Eyes: Jade

Skin: White

An Undying who is kept in an underground jail beneath the ancient palace in the heart of the Holy Capital. She possesses vast knowledge and wisdom about things old and new, near and far. She is a fount of truth kept hidden from the world.

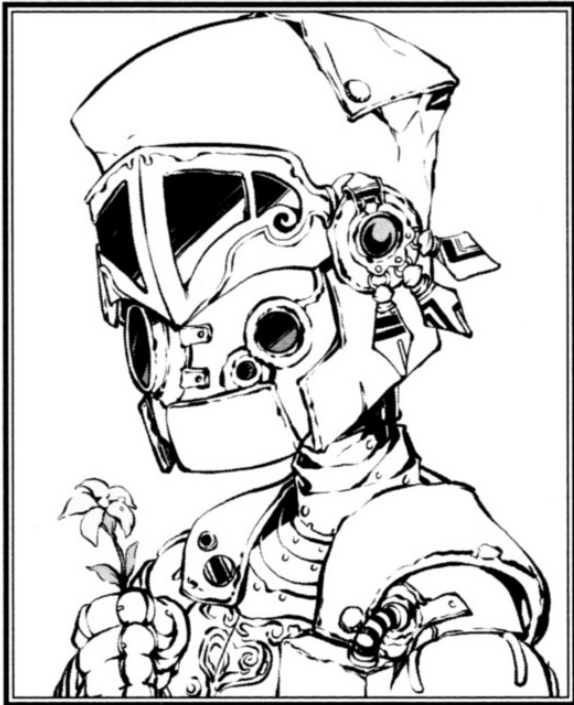
During the Dark Age, when Caligula carried out his reign of terror and his underlings committed countless atrocities, she worked tirelessly for the

sake of others—or so she says. At first, she offered people an escape from their worries, giving them the advice that they needed. But in time, although the advice she offered seemed wise, it proved to be no more than a whim of hers. Those who put too much faith in her words often came to regret it.

At present, though some believe she is the world's only hope to avoid the doom prophesied by She of the Evening Calm, Cassandra shows little interest in anything except tea and afternoon sweets.

"SCREW-LOOSE" CHARIOT

"The way to the Council Hall! Uh... where was that again...?"



MASS-PRODUCED AUTOMATON

Classes: Automaton

Sex: -

Age: 3

Hair: -

Eyes: -

Skin: Tin

An automaton mass-produced in the Artisans' Kingdom. It has 339 older siblings and the number of younger ones increases every day. Although it is a type of war Automaton known as a "tank," due to the high failure rate of its parts, the army of the Artisans' Kingdom have sold many of them off. After changing hands several times, Chariot ended up belonging to the police force of the Merchants' Kingdom.

Chariot has a friendly and kind personality, as well as a tendency to pour smoke from its head. It is affectionately called "Screw-Loose" by the people of the town and is well liked in the Merchants' Kingdom, where it attempts to guide travelers to their destinations with varying degrees of success. It has the hobby of gardening and owns a small flower garden on the roof of a warehouse. When attending to the flowers, even though its tin face is expressionless, it very much seems to be smiling.

"BLUE BIRD" COGITO

"I wonder if we shall be able to grasp your story."



THEM WHICH REBELS AGAINST THE WAYS

Classes: *Them*

Sex: Unknown

Hair: Black

Skin: White

Age: Unknown

Eyes: Gold

One of *Them* who helps people to overcome their Ways. Its true form resembles a blue bird, but it often appears in the shape of an androgynous child. It has begun appearing far more often in recent years, claiming that the only way for the world to survive the danger facing it is for the number of Weavers to increase. But to become a Weaver by escaping the Ways, one must first defy them and become estranged.

As a result, the Inquisition holds that Cogito is an evil *Them* who attempts to turn people into Strange, and in pursuit of it. Anyone they know it's made contact with is likely to be burned at the stake just in case they've become estranged.

Cogito will not elaborate about what exactly "the danger that faces the world" is. "You do not need to know" is all it will say upon the matter. But still, to those who desire the strength to stand against a Warped Way, Cogito is inarguably a beacon of hope.

COPPELIUS VII

"To overcome this crisis, we need the skills of the Weavers!"



PRESIDENT OF THE ARTISANS' KINGDOM

Classes: Craftsman/Automaton

Sex: Female

Age: 24

Hair: Brown

Eyes: Orange

Skin: Yellow

The president of the Artisans' Kingdom. A woman with an open and friendly manner of speaking unbecoming of the gravitas of her position, she still lives an active life, marked by an insatiable thirst for new knowledge that will be of benefit to her people.

Known to possess great knowledge and skill herself, she is a master artisan who dismisses superstition and blind faith with naught but a laugh. It is

because of this that she refuses to have her kingdom participate in the Weaver Hunt and has taken steps to actively oppose it.

The successor of the legendary Automaton craftsman Coppelius, she is famous for designing a steam locomotive at the age of ten, while in recent years she has pioneered the development of "Automaton Prosthetics" and expanded the field of Automaton technology beyond the creation of mechanical servants.

In the pursuit of her research, she has replaced half of her own body with Automaton parts. Despite her willingness to embrace innovation, she is close friends with the leader of the conservative faction in the kingdom.

"SHE OF THE EVENING CALM" ESCHA B. JESTAMENTE

"And so the beautiful world shall spread further..."



Classes: Undying/Tailor/Sage

Sex: Female

Age: 170

Hair: Rusty

Eyes: Red

Skin: White

One of the Three Undying Sages who long ago journeyed to the Right Land to parlay with God Herself, as well as the founder of the Tailors' Guild. She was once celebrated along with her fellow Tailors as one of the heroes who brought an end to the Dark Age, but on the Night of Screams, she (and all Weavers) were henceforth seen as evildoers.

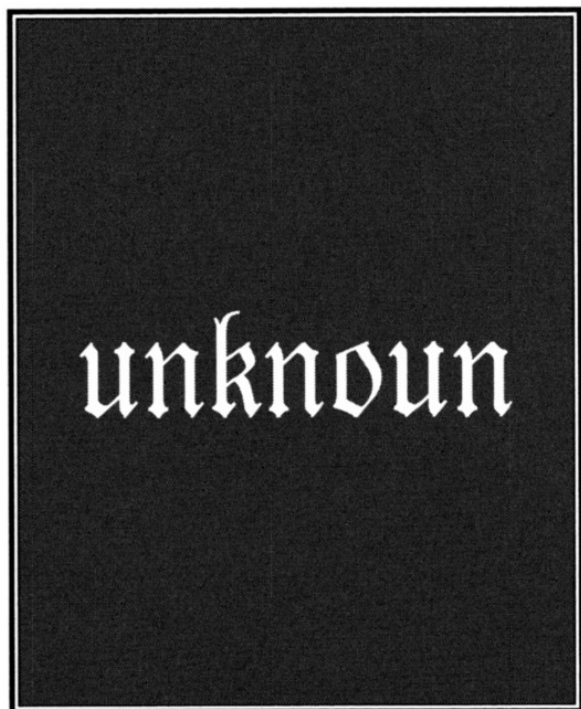
TAILORS' GUILD FOUNDER

Thirteen years ago, on the Night of the Black Spot, she wove a Way that prophesied the destruction of the world. It became evident that she was both a Hollow and the world's most terrifying witch.

Many see her as a murderer. But, to the organization of weavers known as the "Apostles of Twilight" that commit terrorist acts throughout the world, she is viewed as a hero that sought to liberate everyone from the tyranny of the Ways and grant them true freedom. The current Tailors' Guild dismisses this as nonsense and desires to bring Escha to justice for her crimes.

GOD

"May light shine upon the story of your life." —The Holy Book



CREATOR OF THE WORLD

Classes: Unknown

Sex: Female

Hair: Gold

Skin: White

Age: Unknown

Eyes: Rainbow

The creator of the world. She is typically depicted by the Holy Church as a beautiful woman with golden hair and rainbow-colored eyes. From Her hair springs life, Her eyes see all, Her voice gives rise to the wind, and the rain is Her tears showering blessings upon us all. Her hands craft the four seasons, and She bestows the Ways upon us all; to Her most beloved children, She gives the gift of eternal life.

About 200 years ago, God first became angered by the pride of humans, and without Her protection, the Void began to invade the world. The Three Undying Sages journeyed to meet with Her, and God in Her mercy permitted all humans a single chance to be forgiven and to save the world from destruction. Such are the teachings of the Holy Church.

When the Warped Ways arose once again, many feared that it was because God's wrath had again befallen the world.

"PAPER PLAYER" INGANNO

"Take a look! I've got such wonderful new treats for you!"



MEMBER OF THE BRAZEN BELLS

Classes: Criminal/Adept

Sex: Female

Age: 26

Hair: Silver

Eyes: Silver

Skin: Yellow

A member of the Brazen Bells. She is a criminal mastermind who travels from place to place as the organization requires. She poses as a low-class harlot with her face always covered by a mask.

Closely connected to the organization's drug-smuggling network, she specializes in seducing nobles and other people of interest into trying the 'sweets' she sells. Although she prefers to rely on her womanly charms, there is not

a technique too underhanded for Inganno to make use of, and she will use brute force if necessary. Of course, once her mark is addicted, manipulating them to do as she wishes is a simple matter.

Unlike Macavity, it is said that she uses the Strange and the Hollows to her own ends, but there is no proof of this—nor is there proof against it.

ISAAC ETERNAL ENDSCHROSSEN

"Your genius is proof of God's love for you. Take pride in it."



HEADMASTER OF THE SAGES' WINGS

Classes: Undying/Sage

Sex: Male

Age: 98

Hair: Black

Eyes: Yellow

Skin: White

The headmaster of the Sages' Wings, the academy for the Undying located in the Holy Capital. Although he does not look the part, he is an Undying and one of the Seven Sages; it is rumoured that his brain is the part of him that has become rainbow-colored. He has personally realized several keystone advances in science, leading to it being said of him that "Even God Herself could not refute his theorems."

He believes fervently in God and the blessing of the Undying, and this passion fuels him. A lover of dark and cramped places, even after becoming the headmaster he prefers to lock himself in underground storerooms and secret laboratories, where he works on his next dissertation in private. He is also known to personally assist some lucky students in their studies when the whim strikes him.

The Academy has had to establish a volunteer student organization, the "Headmaster Search Team," in order to locate him when his presence is required.

"THE KING OF THE WASTES"

"Uh... a, ah..."



UNDYING STRANGE

Classes: Undying/Strange/Sage

Sex: Male?

Age: Unknown

Hair: White

Eyes: Black

Skin: Rainbow

An Undying Strange present in the "Empty Wastes" that occur a vast swath of the Northeastern Left Land. He has decayed to the point that he is no longer able to move. Since arising in the midst of the Dark Age, he has kept court in the heart of the Empty Wastes.

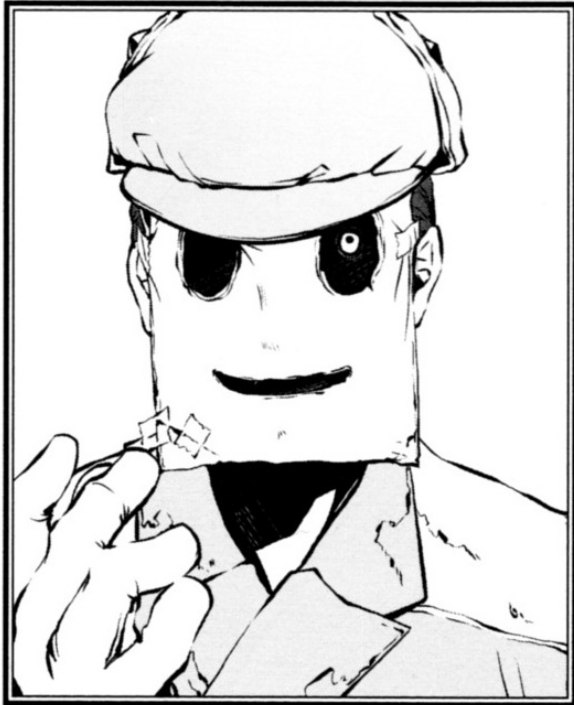
Though no light shines from his pitch-black eyes and his body is choked and twisted with vines, he is still an Undying, and lives on at a point where

most Strange would have long since returned to the Void. On the Threshold Days, his body becomes vast, consumes everything else in the Wastes, and is said to be reborn again through this act. On those days, he casts a shadow longer than those of even the Verdant Mountains.

On days with a strong wind, his melancholy wails can be heard in places as far afield as the Baths.

THE LIEMONGER

"Shall I sell you a lie? Merely give me a truth in exchange..."



Classes: *Them/Adept/Warrior*

Sex: Male

Age: Unknown

Hair: Black

Eyes: White

Skin: Green

One of *Them* who travels the Left Land offering lies for sale. Upon his face is a sheet of paper on which a face is drawn, and in his left hand he carries a suitcase full of his lies, while his right typically bears a large hatchet. To those who desire to purchase his lies, he accepts payment in the form of a single one of those peoples' truths.

THEM WHO SEEKS TRUTH

In the case that a lie conflicts with one of someone's Ways, it will not protect them from becoming estranged. The Liemonger himself isn't concerned by this. He's merely a businessman. He lives by two rules alone: all must pay for his services, and none must see his true face. Those who break his rules die by the hatchet in his hand.

Can one ever recover the truths they sell to the Liemonger? What does he do with those truths? By the time anyone thinks to ask those questions, the Liemonger is usually far away, in search of others who desire to purchase his lies.

LORD OF THE STAINED WATERS

"It is my duty to protect this kingdom from malevolent humans."



RULER OF THE SALT KINGDOM

Classes: Sea Guardian/Adept

Sex: Male

Age: 14

Hair: Ashen

Eyes: Blue

Skin: Brown

The young lord of the Salt Kingdom. After the previous ruler and his father, the Lord of the Roaring Sea, was assassinated by humans seven years ago, he formed a contract with the master of the Deep Sea and assumed the throne.

The youngest child of nine, he has been raised with an affectionate but firm hand by his mother and eight elder sisters. They have assisted him with ruling since his early accession to the throne, until he finally became ready and able to assume the full responsibilities of lordship himself.

Due to the violent history between their races, and the death of his father at the hands of human assassins, his hatred for humans runs deep. With the pride of his race instilled in him from the moment of his birth, he carries on the war against humankind to this day.

MARY SUE

"I shall become a princess, for that is every girl's dream!"



DREAMING HOLLOW

Way she has written for herself, again and again. Thanks to her selfishness, she became a Hollow, and those around her died as her kingdom perished.. and that was only the beginning of her story.

Mary Sue now journeys from kingdom to kingdom, searching for new stories that she can become the heroine of.

Classes: Child/Traveler/Strange

Sex: Female

Age: 17

Hair: Bone White

Eyes: Purple

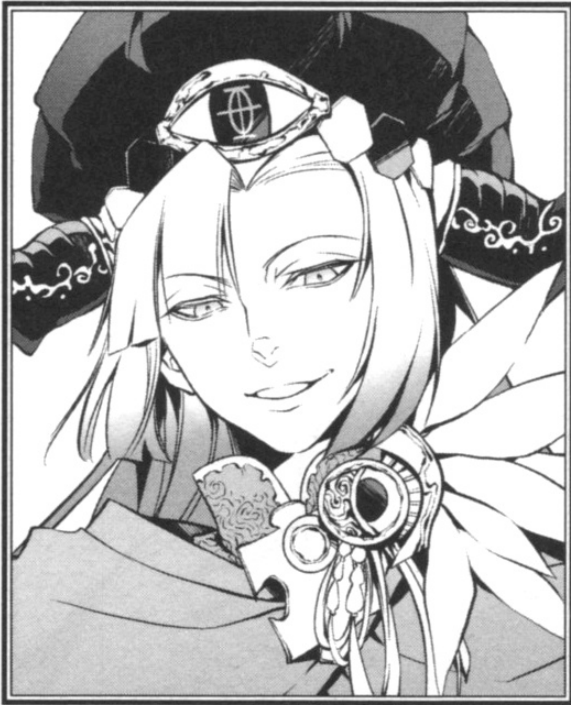
Skin: White

Mary Sue was originally a humble farmer's daughter from a small, peaceful kingdom in the Interior. However, when her passionate emotions grew fervent enough to forge a new Way, her fate was forever changed.

Mary Sue is the heroine of every story. She is always a princess. She shall always be saved from the monster by a dashing prince or young hero, and live happily ever after with them. That is the

"THE NEW GOD" NIETZSCHE SUPERBO

"God is dead. Believe in me instead! In the future I shall weave!"



LEADER OF THE SHORES OF DAWN

known as "The Peaceful Kingdom." Thanks to his cunning leadership and astute emotional manipulation of those disillusioned by war, he has gained many followers.

Presently, he is vying for control of the South against the Holy Church and the Tailors' Guild. He is secretly gathering an army of Strange, making his kingdom and ambitions anything but peaceful.

Classes: Undying/Sage/Criminal

Sex: Male

Age: 207

Hair: White/Green

Eyes: Silver

Skin: White

The man who some decades ago rebelled against the Tailors' Guild and created the organization of renegade Weavers known as the Shores of Dawn.

He is a charismatic man who favors eloquent speech. He declares that God has died, and the world is now the dominion of those who can act free from the confines of the Ways. He has named himself "The New God" and set up operations in a kingdom in the South

"THE HAPPY PRINCE" OSCAR WILDE

"This eye of mine sees all the evil and tragedy in the world."



LEADER OF THE BLUE EYES

Classes: Demon Hunter/Child/Adept

Sex: Male

Age: 24

Hair: Gold

Eyes: Blue

Skin: Yellow

The leader of the demon hunters' organization "The Blue Eyes," which does battle with the Strange. Once the prince of a small country in the Interior known as "The Fortunate Kingdom", he worked tirelessly to help its people, distributing his wealth to the poor and even offering his own eye to a witch that had lost her own. However, his kingdom was destroyed by a Warped Way, and he became a Demon Hunter in order to

fight against the Strange.

Despite knowing well all the evil in the world, he lives as a child would, inspiring people with his love of life. He is not a Weaver, for he believes that by following the Ways and defeating the Strange, everyone can find happiness. There is nothing that can shake his conviction.

"MACAVITY" PLATO

"I only respect one law... and that's that Strange need to die."



BOSS OF THE BRAZEN BELLS

Classes: Criminal/Warrior/Adept

Sex: Male

Age: 27

Hair: Red

Eyes: Gold

Skin: Yellow

The boss of the criminal organization "The Brazen Bells." He is known to be outwardly considerate of his comrades, chivalrous, and generous to the poor; yet this is merely a facade over his amoral nature.

He is feared and respected for his utterly composed demeanour at all times, even when personally murdering a rival or obstacle. He has committed crimes in countless kingdoms and the bounties on

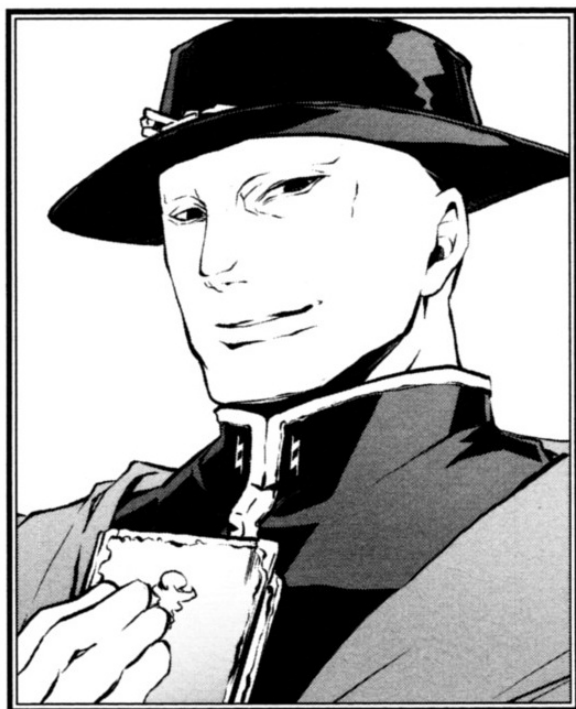
his head, if collected, could buy you a kingdom of your own.

Though he doesn't allow himself to be controlled by what few emotions he has, Plato is distinguished by his hatred of the Strange. He will not suffer their presence, and will destroy people who he suspects to be estranged. It is rumoured that someone important to him perished due to a Warped Way created by one of the Strange.

"THE GRIM INQUISITOR"

ROVELLE HOPKINS

"This is the end you have earned, you foolish heretics."



HEAD OF THE INQUISITION

Weavers and Strange from this world can salvation be found. He has received a Way instructing him of this, giving him the assurance that he carries out the very will of God.

As the head of the hardline faction of the Church, he is angered by Zarastro's moderate policies and continually works to undermine his authority. It is rumoured that he hopes one day to topple Zarastro from power entirely and succeed him as Archpriest.

Classes: Priest/Warrior

Sex: Male

Age: 33

Hair: Black

Eyes: Black

Skin: White

The Head Inquisitor of the Order of the Divine Hammer, also known as the Inquisition. He is a giant of a man, known for his courteous manner and the smile always upon his face.

Ever since he became an Inquisitor 13 years ago, he has advocated for the Church to take far harsher measures against Weavers. A person with unshakeable faith in God and the Church, he holds that only through cleansing all

SCAR

"I only use this power when it's necessary to help people."



TRAVELING WEAVER

Classes: Tailor/Adept

Sex: Female

Age: 15

Hair: Black

Eyes: Orange

Skin: Yellow

A Tailor who travels the Left Land. She uses her magic to save people in need from those that oppress them, making her similar to a chivalrous thief.

Her entire body is covered in an innumerable number of scars and burns, and she has a needle stabbed deep into her chest. Her origins and her real name are unknown.

She dislikes authority and bears a hatred for the Inquisition and Weaver hunters. But since she usually has an intellectual and soft-spoken demeanour, her anger doesn't often show.

Scar does not hesitate to use her power as a Tailor in order to help others. As a result of her passionate desire to do good, she has often placed her own life and safety at risk by revealing herself. Every person she saves means another scar as she escapes the Inquisition seeking to bring her to justice as a heretic.

"THE RED BOOKMARK" SEN

"Is this the book you were looking for?"



BOOKMARKESS

names of all those travelers whom she meets and loves listening to their stories. Though she earnestly helps people find what they are searching for, the tales of princesses that she has heard have given rise to her dream of someday leaving the Book Kingdom for a place where she can grow flowers and keep a cute pet.

Classes: *Them/Sage*

Sex: Female

Age: 9

Hair: Red

Eyes: Red

Skin: Yellow

A Bookmarkess who lives near the entrance of the Book Kingdom and welcomes travelers from other kingdoms. Due to the distinctive red tassel on her head, she has come to be known as the Red Bookmark.

Many of the more malicious Bookmarkesses set deadly traps in their portions of the labyrinth, and people rely on Sen to guide them safely through it.

She has a perfect memory for the

SHAPIRO

"Yo! Got a package for you!"



DELIVERY BOY

Classes: Child

Sex: Male

Age: 12

Hair: Red

Eyes: Red

Skin: Yellow

A new courier for the international post organization "The Prancing Horse." Even in the depths of night, he's on the road, traveling between kingdoms. Though inexperienced, he is passionate about his job.

A boy who felt trapped in the remote kingdom he called home, he admired the couriers that occasionally visited his hometown to make deliveries. He thus set off on a journey to join The

Prancing Horse and become a courier himself.

He is friends with many of *Them*, and can from time to time be seen soaring through the sky on their backs, delivering messages and packages to a distant land.

Shapiro has no real interest in politics or current events, and pays little attention to the situation around the world. As a result, he tends to unthinkingly wander into dangerous situations and often requires the help of Weavers.

TATTER

"All that is beautiful shall someday be lost."



VETERAN DEVOURER

Classes: *Them*/Warrior

Sex: Male

Age: 34

Hair: -

Eyes: Green

Skin: White

A wandering *Them* who is a veteran warrior. He is one of the variety of *Them* known as "Devourers" who eat the Strange.

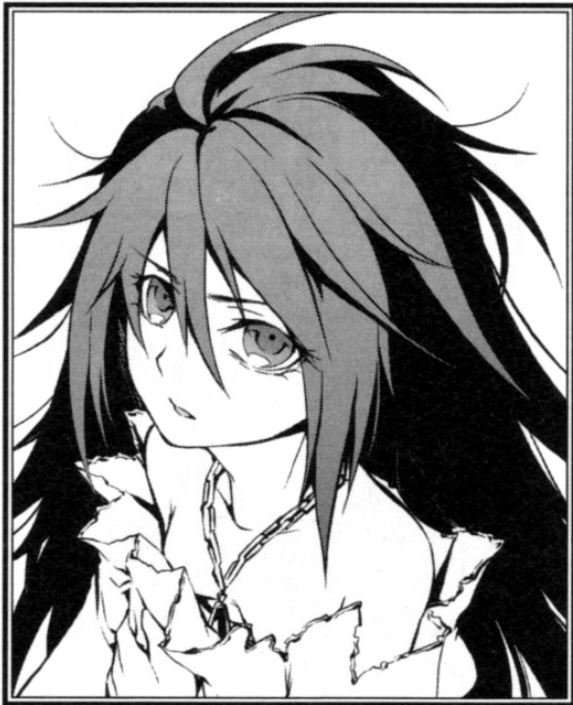
He is heavily scarred on the right side of his face, and his ear on that side is tattered. For a Devourer, he is already quite elderly. Yet his strength is still without compare, and those who have witnessed him battle a Strange never forget the sight.

It is said he received his scars thirteen years ago, when he was caught up in the destruction of the Lost City. To this day, he revisits it on occasion, listening to the strange cries and endless tolling of bells that emanate from it while pondering something known only to himself.

Although he has a taciturn demeanour that makes him seem difficult to approach, he is not unfriendly. He is always willing to offer advice and support to those new and inexperienced in the arts of war.

THERESE DARANBELL

"I will survive... that is the only thing I can believe any longer."



WAR ORPHAN

become stronger than many men. She is unable to trust anyone or anything, and is skeptical of even the Ways themselves, a point of view exceptionally rare among humans in the Left Land. However, she is aware of the fate that could befall her if she failed to obey them, and does so reluctantly.

Wrapped around her neck is a chain which has been there since she was a child; it is enchanted so that neither she nor anyone else can take it off. When she at last discovers the purpose of this chain, perhaps her journey will come to an end.

Classes: Warrior/Child/Traveler

Sex: Female

Age: 16

Hair: Red

Eyes: Black

Skin: White

An orphan and refugee from the Southern War. As the Ways plunged the region into unending warfare, she spent most of her life as a slave to the soldiers of a local army. Two years ago, she finally saw the opportunity to kill the soldier watching her and escape, and took it without hesitation.

Since then, she has wandered the South. Honing her skills with the blade all the while in order to survive, she has

TRECORDE AMADEUS

"Just look what that filthy God of yours has done to me...!"



ESTRANGED COMPOSER

Classes: Strange/Artist

Sex: Male

Age: 18

Hair: Purple

Eyes: Purple

Skin: Yellow

A genius composer who has become estranged. He despises God and the Holy Capital and is a narcissist who cares about little besides himself.

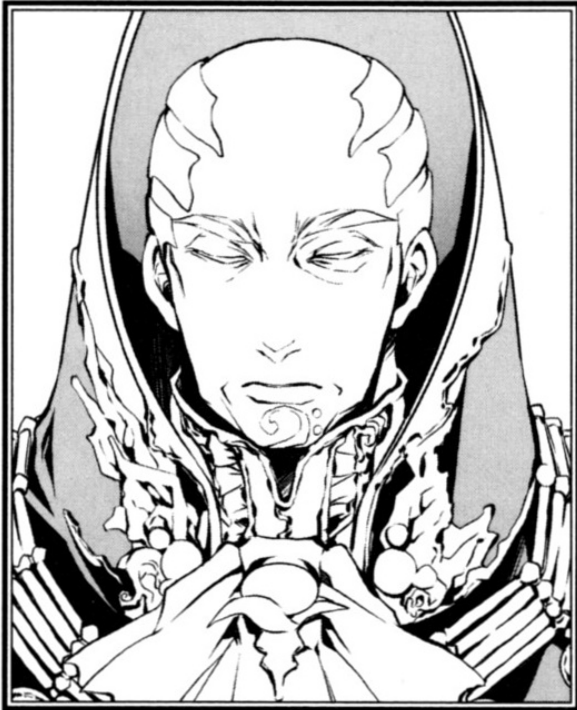
Known as one of the finest living composers throughout the world, his hubris led him to declare that he could write finer melodies than God Himself. This immediately brought him under suspicion of being a Hollow from the Holy Church, and he barely escaped from

them with his life. His misguided actions soon lead to him becoming estranged, and his songs now summon calamities.

Tre corde sees the Holy Church as an enemy. If you are allied with them, he will view you as an enemy, too. Conversely, if he believes you might be able to assist him in recovering from being estranged somehow, he will try to make use of you. But either way, the utmost caution is warranted around him.

ZARASTRO ETERNAL BESTIMMT

"God, bestow guidance upon me..."



ARCHPRIEST OF THE HOLY CHURCH

heretical Weavers to the North rather than burn them at the stake. He also commands the Order of God's Hand, a brigade of pious Weavers, which is the front line in the war against the Strange.

However, since the Day of the Black Spot, Zarastro's influence has been eroded by the hardliners that oppose his policies. Yet even as forces within the church work against him, he strives to bring God's blessings to the people of the Left Land.

Classes: Undying/Adept/Priest

Sex: Male

Age: 186

Hair: Ashen

Eyes: Rainbow

Skin: Yellow

The Archpriest of the Holy Church and one of the Seven Sages who runs the Holy City. An Undying who lived through the Dark Age, he has a calm and solemn demeanour. As it is evident that peace and the welfare of the common people are always at the forefront of his mind, the populace has great faith in him.

He is the leader of the moderate faction within the Holy Church, and has long sought to have those under him exile

ZERO

"I shall teach you the truth of all things! Won't you listen?"



RUST LIZARD

Classes: *Them/Sage*

Sex: Male

Age: 16

Hair: -

Eyes: Green

Skin: Rusty

A young Rust Lizard who lives near the Cliffs of Delight. Driven by insatiable curiosity, he has journeyed to many of the nearby kingdoms in search of knowledge. He delights in sharing his wisdom, and though it's far from a certain thing that those around him will find it of any use, he has helped many people.

As he loves to run his mouth and will reveal sensitive information written on the Next Lithograph without a second thought, the other Rust Lizards and the Holy Church keep a close eye on him. He does not deliberately expose secrets, but is merely so earnest in his desire to help people that he forgets himself constantly.

Some people say that his tendency for his tongue to always stick out a little is his charm point.

PLACES

聖都

七つの丘には 我らの栄華
万古の果てから 未来の先まで
我らの輝き 衰えることなし
我らの安寧 潰えることなし
——聖都の歌

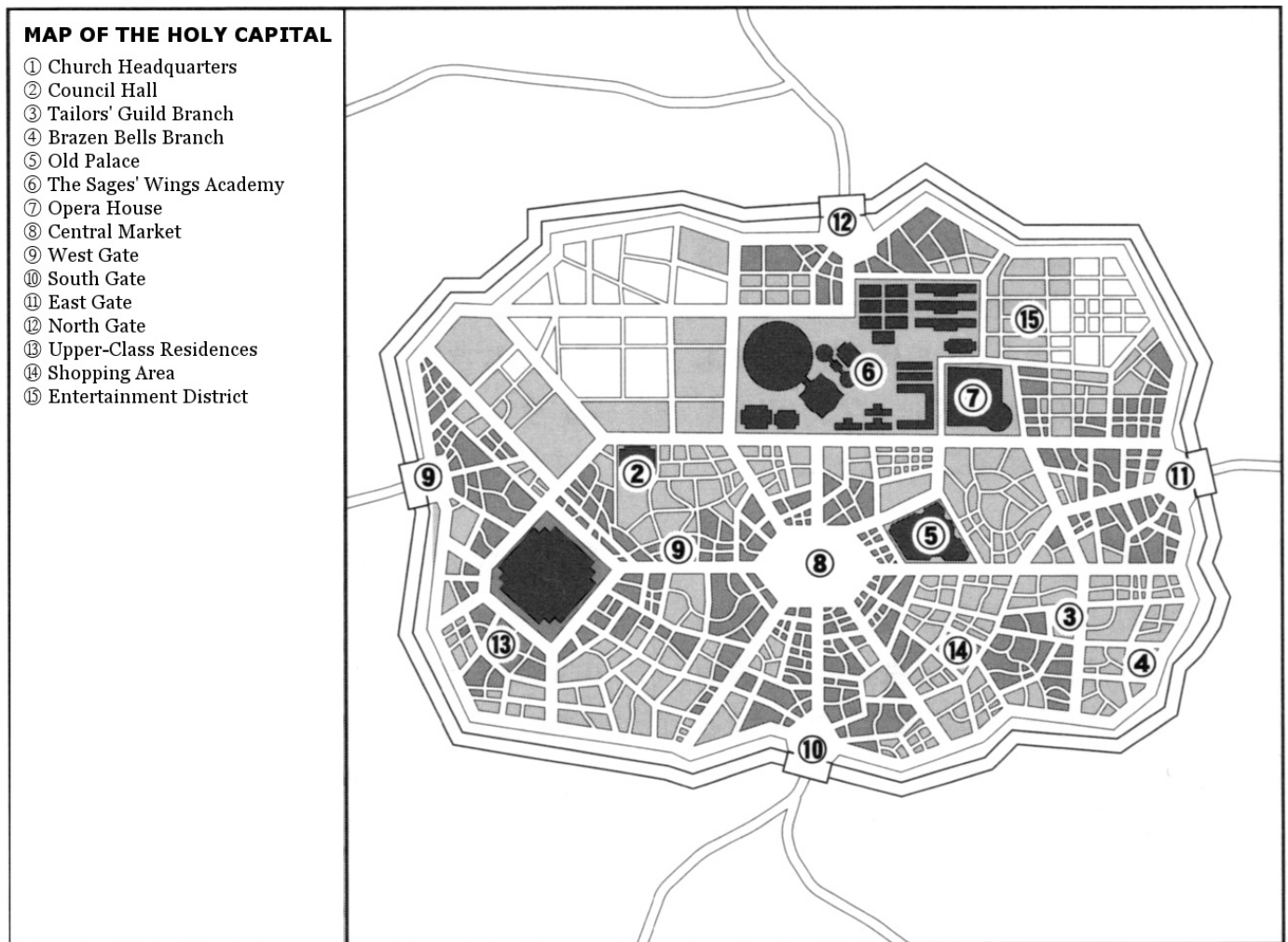


THE HOLY CAPITAL

*Upon these seven hills stands our glory
From ages past to ages yonder
Never shall the lustre of our city be lost
Never the peace of our city disturbed*

—A song from the Holy Capital

Nestled amongst the gentle plains of the Interior lies the Holy Capital, a city-state devoted first and foremost to the worship of God. The birthplace of the Holy Church, it is a place in which those touched by the sacred blessing of the Undying gather.



The Holy Capital is surrounded by grand walls, and its wide streets are paved with beautiful white stones. It is the center of commerce, intrigue, faith and culture in the Left Land. It is widely believed that no matter how poor a resident of the Holy Capital is, their lives are incomparably more rich compared to anyone in a outlying region of the world.

THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY CAPITAL

About 500 years before the present, as the Old Capitals waged an unending war amongst each other, one sage from each of the seven lands came together to found the Holy Church and build the Holy Capital. At this time, the capital was governed by the chosen successor of these sages, the Holy King.

After a time, God visited her wrath upon the world, and most of its kingdoms and cities fell during the Dark Age; the Holy Capital was no exception.

More than one hundred and twenty years ago, the Holy Capital was conquered by an invader from the surrounding lands: Bruscamente Caligula.

A former noble from the Holy Capital who had become under suspicion of being estranged and exiled from the city after a heresy trial, he gathered an army to invade it, consisting mainly of monstrous *Them*. He overran the city with ease, took the daughter of the former Holy King as his bride and declared himself Holy King.

He then reigned as a tyrant, oppressing the people of the Holy Capital and acting according to his own mad whims, the culmination of his insanity being when he accused his own wife of being a Strange and had her burned at the stake.

As they suffered under his rule, people feared that Caligula's excesses would bring God's wrath down upon the city, just as it had the Old Capital of Pride.

However, 103 years ago, the current Archpriest Zarastro Eternal Bersimmt and the hero Henry E. Bertuft lead a revolution which successfully toppled Caligula from power, whereupon he was publicly executed. It is said by some that Bertuft was a Weaver, but the truth of the matter is unknown, as he disappeared long ago.

Caligula's reign of terror left many scars upon the Holy Capital. In order to ensure that his despotic rule would never again be repeated, the post of the Holy King was deliberately left vacant, and remains so to this day.

The mad Holy King's most visible legacy is his grand palace built of ash-grey stone in the city center. Once home to the Undying who served as his minions, it is now a hulking ruin, inhabited only by the "Witch of Wisdom" Cassandra who is secretly imprisoned beneath.

GOVERNMENT

As a result of the lessons of Caligula's reign, the Holy Capital is no longer ruled by a lone monarch. Instead, the city is governed a council of seven drawn from the Undying, the nobility, and the clergy. These are known as the Seven Sages, in honor of the original seven founders of the city. They direct all matters in the city-state, large and small, from around their round table in the Council Hall.

The Sages' Council also has many observers, known as Elders; these people are capable nobles and skilled craftsmen chosen by the Sages themselves. The Sages often call upon them for expert advice in specialized matters.

FAITH

The Holy Capital is home to the largest religion in the Left Land, the Holy Church. It has been a city established upon faith since the first of its stones were laid.

Those of the Holy Church see the worship of other deities, such as the earth gods still followed in the north, as heresy. To allow this worship in their own capital would be a grave humiliation. As a result, any sign of deviation from the true faith is harshly punished with death.

Though it has come under some criticism, this policy has recently been vindicated when a composer that was accused of heresy transformed into a Hollow and escaped his execution.

After the Day of the Black Spot, the hardline faction of the Church has grown in power, and they have argued that omens of Strangeness must be acted upon far more harshly. Heresy trials in the Holy Capital are now a near-daily event. Zarastro and his moderate faction have worked to preserve a semblance of justice, but they can do only so much.

MILITARY

The Holy City's standing army is known as the Silver Knights, and is a brigade of elite warriors drawn from the nobility that has hundreds of years of glorious history. They possess the finest arms and armour enchanted to surpass mere metal, as well as winged steeds capable of flight.

However, the Silver Knights alone would be insufficient to protect the Holy Capital and its surrounding regions. As a result, there is also a citizen militia known as the Crimson Knights. Though its soldiers are all commoners, the affluence of the Holy Capital ensures that the Crimson Knights are abundantly equipped with muskets and cannons, making them one of the strongest military forces in the Left Land.

Those of the Silver Knights and Crimson Knights are notorious for their low regard of each other. However, they cooperate when necessary to defend the city.

The Holy Capital also has a police force that sees to its internal affairs; they possess the authority to arrest anyone except the clergy and nobility. They have come to work closely with the Inquisition in recent years, as heresy trials are within their jurisdiction.

ART IN THE HOLY CAPITAL

The Holy Capital has a vibrant artistic scene, as the Holy Church holds that works of pious art enhance the glory of God. In particular, its opera is renowned as home to the finest musicians in the world, and many throughout the Left Land dream of standing upon its stage some day.

However, the Holy Church is conservative in which subjects for art they permit. Recently, they have cracked down on art which they claim glorifies the reign of Caligula and celebrates his bloodshed and debauchery. This, naturally, only makes the works upon such themes that remain more prestigious and valuable.

DAILY LIFE

Enfolded safely within its grand walls, the Holy Capital's beautiful streets are wide and paved with white stones. Canals run amongst them, allowing all its people to stay clean and draw fresh water. Undying, nobles, the rich, craftspeople and commoners all live in equal measure within the city. As a result of the many people from other kingdoms who make pilgrimages to the Holy Capital to view its beauty and make homage to the Undying there, it is an affluent city.

Although the rich citizens of the city enjoy its beauty and luxury to the fullest extent, the poor are not treated particularly well and live hard lives. As those above them see it, living in the Holy Capital is blessing enough that its common citizens should bear all other hardships without complaint.

THE LIBERATION FESTIVAL

Every ten years, a grand celebration known as the Liberation Festival is held for three days to honor the revolution that ended Caligula's tyranny.

The Opera stages performances of works telling the story of the revolution, there is a grand parade of knights, and artists and merchants flock to the Holy Capital from around the world. The normally white capital is, for these three days, dyed a rainbow of colors.

The square in which Caligula was executed has a festive tradition of setting up a guillotine to which people bring watermelons to be split.

THE SAGES' WINGS

The Sages' Wings is an academy located in cluster of buildings on the north side of the Holy City. It is there that the next generation of Undying are prepared for their important duties. The academy admits only those who have been recognized as possessing worth enough to be granted eternal lives. Within its walls, their talents are cultivated until they are finally worthy of being Undying, or so it is said.

The teachers in the academy are mainly drawn the local Undying and nobility who live within the city; it is known for its harsh curriculum, from which few graduate. Even those who were unable to become Undying, but spent time within the Sages' Wings, are revered as geniuses.

Throughout the Left Land, the Sages' Wings is considered to be the greatest community of intellectuals there is, and under the leadership of its current headmaster Isaac Eternal Endsachsen, its subjects of study have grown far more diverse than ever before. It is no exaggeration to refer to it as the intellectual and cultural capital of the world.

職工の国

鋼鉄は錆び 螺子は朽ちる
滑車は外れ 槌は碎ける
不滅なるものは ただ神なり
そして 我らの手業なり
——城門に刻まれた格言

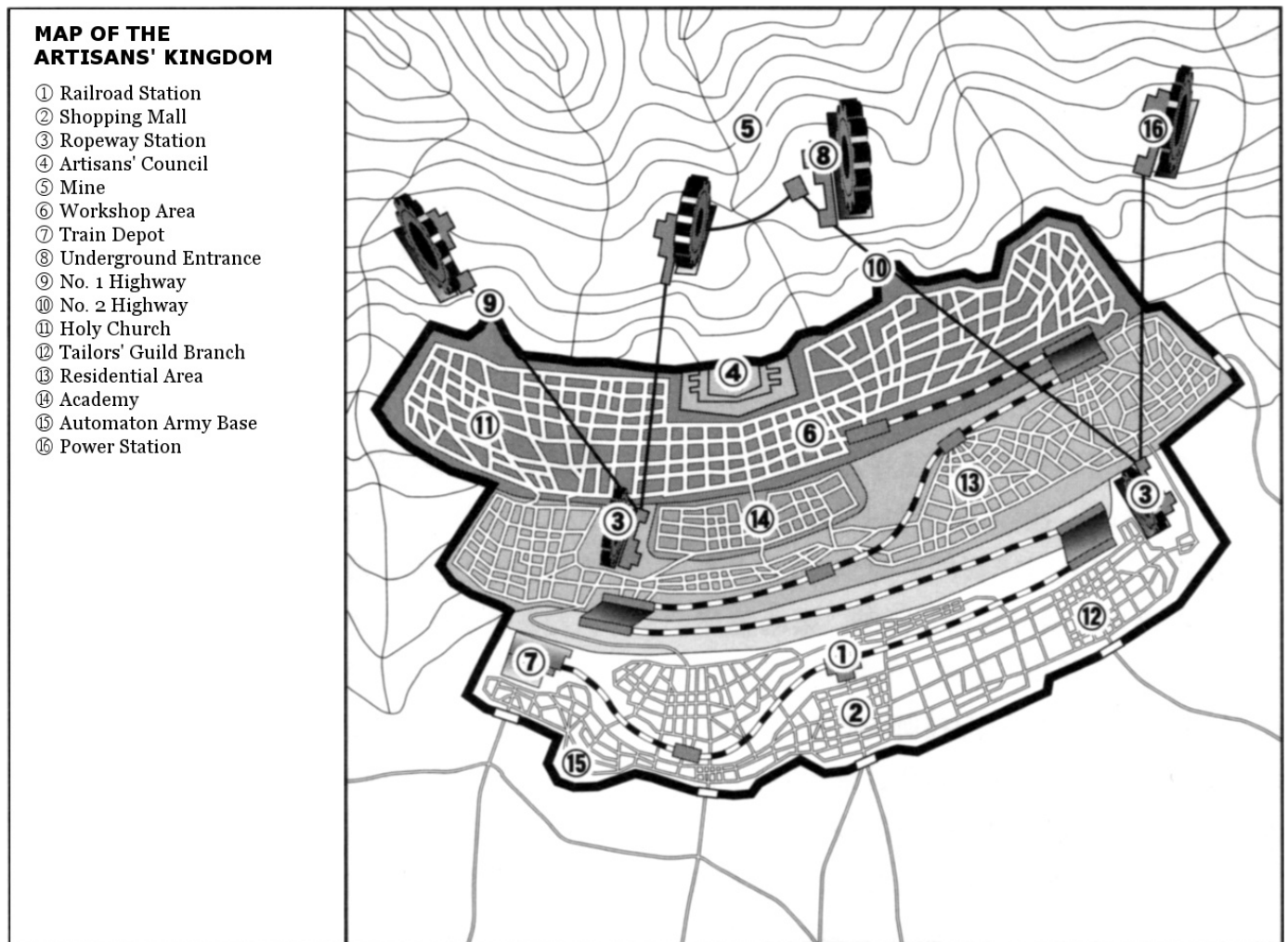


THE ARTISANS' KINGDOM

*Steel rusts, screws snap, gears slip, hammers shatter.
The only thing which will never break is God Herself.
That is why we practice our craft.*

—Words engraved upon the kingdom gate

Amongst the Silverpeaks in the North lies the Artisans' Kingdom, in which the discipline of Automaton crafting and countless other inventions were created. Crafters of all sorts gather there, seeking to hone their skills to ever greater heights.



Located in a valley, it has repurposed many disused mines in the area as part of its infrastructure. Recently, steam engines have become a common sight in the kingdom, and it is now filled with boilers and gears that never stop moving.

One of the kingdom's most distinctive landmarks are the huge, ancient gears standing upright in its vicinity that no modern technology could replicate. They revolve endlessly in place, powered by no known force, but themselves easily harnessed for power. They are said to be the legacy of the Old Race of Con Brio.

Automaton production is one of the kingdom's major industries; approximately two-thirds of all Automatons in the Left Land were built in the Artisans' Kingdom. They are also known for their precision machine parts, such as gears, and those machines themselves.

THE HISTORY OF THE ARTISANS' KINGDOM

Long ago, before the Dark Age, the Artisans' Kingdom—not yet known as the Artisans' Kingdom at the time—was no more than a modestly sized town whose people earned their livelihood through mining. Only a few Automaton crafters resided there, making a meager living through the limited industrial purposes that early Automatons could be used for.

But that changed with the birth of Coppelius, the genius who revolutionized the art of Automaton craftsmanship. He at first intended to pass his discoveries down only to his own pupils, as has always been traditional among artisans, but later—after meeting many people who dismissed his creations as no more than useless toys—decided to share them with the world and prove those people wrong.

Thanks to the advances pioneered by Coppelius, Automaton craftsmanship advanced rapidly in the Artisans' Kingdom and their Automatons became the most sophisticated in the world. Other local industries sprung up to support the Automaton craftsmen, such as smithing, woodworking, and accounting, and the Artisans' Kingdom soon grew into a burgeoning city-state. It also became known as the greatest center of learning in the Left Land aside from the Sages' Wings in the Holy Capital.

That reputation remains today, with the Artisans' Kingdom leading the way in technological innovation worldwide. Though he is long dead, Coppelius would surely be pleased to see the grand kingdom his hometown has grown into.

GOVERNMENT

A council of thirteen respected craftsmen known as the Chiefs runs the Artisans' Kingdom, with one of them chosen to be the President, the supreme authority in the kingdom. The Chiefs meet daily in committee to manage all affairs that require their attention.

These Chiefs are traditionally the guildmasters of the guilds representing each major industry in the kingdom; masonry, smithing, steam engineering, medicine, dyeing, baking, milling, cobbling, leatherworking, clockmaking, tailoring, and finally Automaton crafting. The President more often than not tends to be the master of the Guild of Automaton Crafting, as this is the most prestigious of the guilds.

Smaller guilds are permitted to have observers upon the council, but they have no decision-making power. They must bargain with one of the thirteen great guilds for favors.

The current President, Coppelius VII, is a young artisan who is also head of the innovative political party known as the Progressives. Their policy is that of pursuing new knowledge, techniques and inventions, such as the President's own specialty of Automaton Prosthetics, which seeks to repair and replace parts of the human body with Automaton technology.

However, there are venerable craftsmen who oppose this point of view; they are generally known as "Conservatives." Their position is that the human body is a gift from God, while Automatons are a pitiful attempt to aspire to that; indeed, for humans to build Automatons at all is an affront against God. As might be expected, the relationship between the two parties is not a friendly one.

FAITH

Like many of the northern kingdoms, faith in local gods runs strong in the Artisans' Kingdom, including those who worship *Them* as Gods. Alongside the Holy Church, there exist those who pay homage to such divinities as the "Little Ones of the Workshop," "The White King," and a variety of other fairies and earth gods.

The Ways bestowed upon the Artisans' Kingdom generally relate to invention and craftsmanship, allowing them to continue performing research and advancing technology.

MILITARY

The Artisans' Kingdom has a volunteer army. They are well known for their advanced weaponry, which few other kingdoms can match. In particular, their mighty cannons deter hostile actions against all kingdoms under their protection. But they must also maintain capable soldiers in order to combat the Strange and hostile *Them*.

The size of the army is usually about three hundred, but during times of conflict the reserves are called in to boost it by another hundred or two, and if necessary citizens may be conscripted into service. When the kingdom is at peace, the soldiers serve as a local police force.

Of course, the largest portion of the army of the Artisans' Kingdom is not composed of citizens, but of Automatons. Fiercely loyal to the kingdom, they are a powerful fighting force that will fight to the death to protect it.

CURRENT EVENTS

Recently, as the Inquisition has redoubled the fervour of the Weaver Hunt, the Artisans' Kingdom has become known as a safe haven for Weavers. When Coppelius VII first came to power three years ago, she promptly declared that to call the power of Weavers a heresy—the only power that could alter the Way of destruction that had been prophesied—was an act of folly that would lead to the doom of the world.

This was a natural position to take in the Artisans' Kingdom, which as a whole prizes rational thought. Though the Ways had been benevolent to them, the Artisans' Kingdom had experienced its own share of conflicts with Strange and Hollows, and valued the Weavers as the only ones capable of fighting against them.

However, to the Holy Church—particularly the Order of the Divine Hammer—this position was anathema. They would have likely fomented open military conflict if not for the fact that the advanced armaments and Automaton technology possessed by the Artisans' Kingdom made it quite obvious they could hold their own against any attacker. As it is, there is a cold war brewing between the Church and the Artisans' Kingdom, with the former stamping out heresy zealously in neighboring lands to the extent that they can.

Nor is the Artisans' Kingdom itself free from internal dissent. A fierce political rivalry has arisen between the Progressive and Conservative parties, with the matter of whether the Weavers should be given sanctuary being one of the key talking points of both sides. This debate shows no signs of being resolved anytime soon.

DAILY LIFE

Though the northern mountains are covered in snow during the winter, the steam engines which incessantly belch smoke dissuade the fall of the snow upon the Artisans' Kingdom. Workshops and mines continue their labours throughout the winter, filling the air with smog. Instead of snow, a rain of ash often falls upon the kingdom.

As a result of the poor air quality, people frequently fall sick and die even at a young age. It is also common for people to wear cloth masks, which as of late have come to be highly decorated, a part of local fashion as well as a necessity.



商いの国

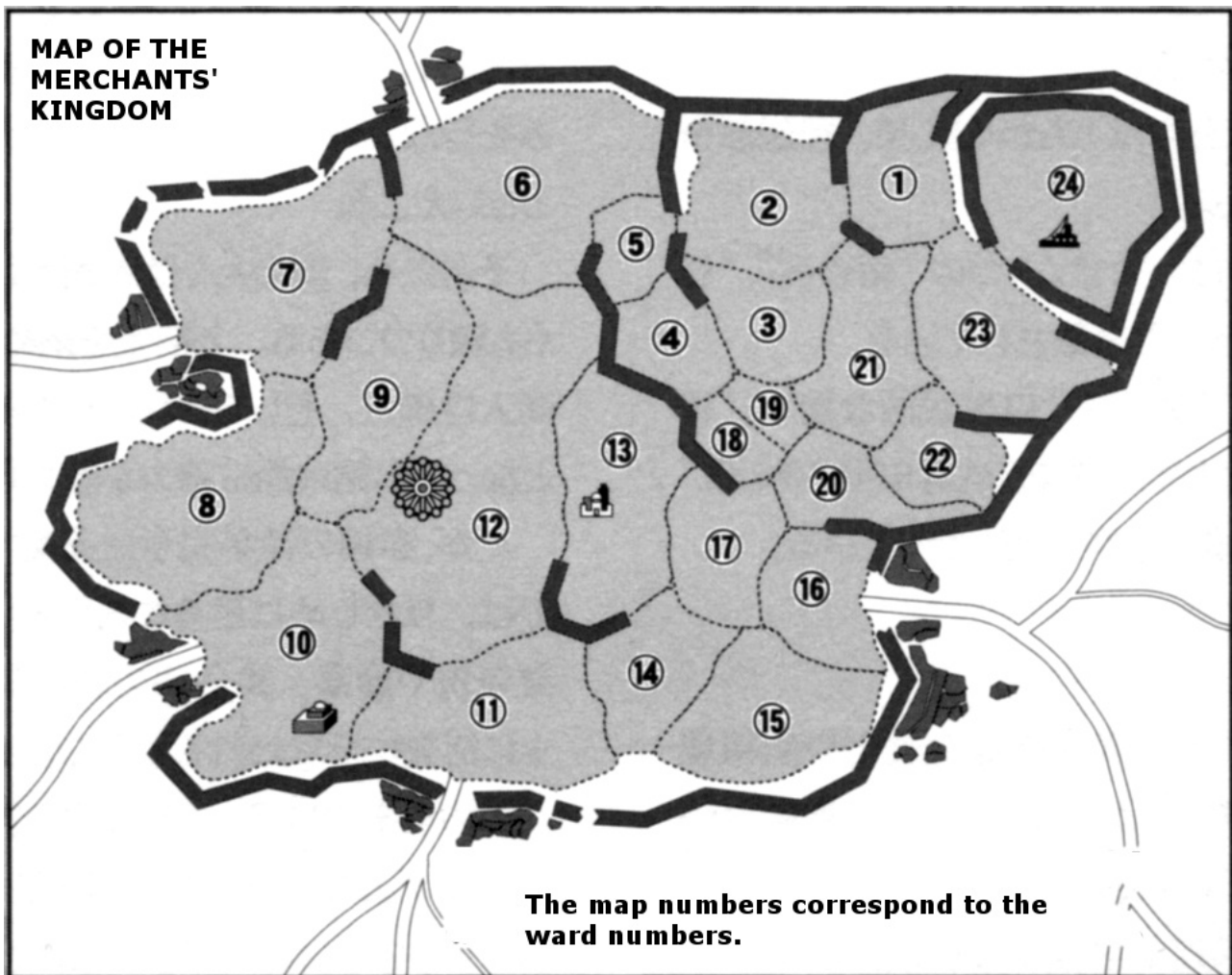
世のことごとで 債権にならぬものなし
人の思いで 投資できぬものなし
——ある大商人の墓碑銘

THE MERCHANTS' KINGDOM

*All that is of this world is borrowed on credit.
But memories are investments.*

—A great merchant's epitaph

To the south of the Holy Capital stands the prosperous Merchants' Kingdom. After the Dark Age, many merchants gathered and set up markets in the ruins of the Old Capital of Greed, and it was through their efforts that the Merchants' Kingdom came to be.



It trades in daily necessities, treasures, foodstuffs, art from throughout the Left Land, and even such black-market goods such as magical items and strange creatures. Traders from all around the world come to the Merchants' Kingdom to sell their most rare and valuable goods.

In addition to the merchants themselves, many investigators and spies use it as their base of operations. It is relatively ethnically and religiously diverse compared to most cities in the Interior.

The Tailors' Guild and the Brazen Bells are headquartered in the Merchants' Kingdom, and many organizations have a significant presence there.

THE 24 WARDS

The Merchants' Kingdom is separated into 24 wards, all of which are separated from each other by grand stone walls. These 24 wards are broadly classified into groups known as the "Wards of Dawn", "Wards of Midday," and "Wards of Dusk." The goods sold in each ward, as well as their general safety, differ among these divisions.

The Wards of Dawn typically deal in necessities and foodstuffs. If all you want to do is live a normal life, you'll rarely need to venture outside them.

The Wards of Midday specialize in entertainment. They contain everything from high-class courtesans' establishments to dive bars, as well as merchants of the fine and not-so-fine arts. Although the local guard patrols most of this area, danger can befall those who turn into the wrong alley.

The Wards of Dusk are home to the black markets and all manner of other illegal goings-on. This area is considered exceptionally dangerous, but sometimes it's the only place to find the rarity you're searching for.

In addition to the 24 wards, there's rumoured to be a hidden "Ward in the Seams" populated by *Them*, which other beings have a difficult time entering.

GOVERNMENT

Every four years, the citizens of each of the 24 Wards elects a local representative, and these representatives meet in council to rule the Merchants' Kingdom.

The 13th Ward is the seat of government, in which the council hall is built. The homes and workplaces of many officials and people of importance are there, and so the area is heavily guarded. Most common people steer clear of the area unless necessary, but bounty hunters from the Wards of Dusk and brazen citizens from the Wards of Midday are known to pass through the ward.

Currently, the criminal organization known as the Brazen Bells has established a great deal of control over the city by having many representatives in their pocket, including the current head of the council, Ell C. Dottore. They extort protection money from merchants in even the Wards of Dawn and Midday, and openly conduct a great deal of illegal business. If the Brazen Bells eliminate all their political rivals, it's feared that the kingdom's economy may grind to a halt.

However, the Brazen Bells have had positive effects upon the city as well. They take a dim view of criminals not affiliated with them, and crimes such as burglary have greatly decreased under their watch, particularly among merchants who pay them protection money. They are considered to, in general, have a sense of chivalry. For this reason, the people of the kingdom have come to view them as intimidating but trustworthy and tolerate their presence.

In the Wards of Dusk, ruled entirely by the Brazen Bells, murder and other crimes have become commonplace and human trafficking, smuggling and the drug trade are rampant. But those who live elsewhere would rather forget this part of the kingdom exists.

There are those who fear that it's merely a matter of time until the Brazen Bells completely dominate the kingdom. The Holy Church have for some years attempted to work with various other organizations to break their stranglehold over the city, but have had little success.

MILITARY

The Merchants' Kingdom has an army of conscripts, its role purely one of self-defense; there are always soldiers stationed upon its outer walls. As sufficiently affluent people can easily avoid being conscripted through bribery, it is mainly composed of the lower classes.

This policy of conscription has benefited the Brazen Bells, as many young soldiers discharged from the army without any professional skills have been recruited by them as muscle. The Brazen Bells, in a sense, now have an army of their very own that they use to further their illegal activities.

DAILY LIFE

The buildings of the Merchants' Kingdom are built of solid brick and densely packed. Due to the high population density, wooden buildings are generally not permitted in order to reduce the risk of large fires.

The majority of the population works in professions related to craftsmanship or trade; many streets serve as bazaars in which merchants ply their goods. The main exception is those in the poverty-filled Wards of Dusk, where many people live on subsistence agriculture, keeping gardens and fields on their rooftops or in empty lots and abandoned buildings. The poor are often forced to resort to petty crime in order to stay alive.

Canals run through the entire kingdom, and wells are abundant. Even in the poorest areas of the Merchants' Kingdom, procuring clean water is never a problem.

塩の国と南部紛争地帯

人類種は敵である

それ以上の定義は不要である

——塩の国

あれは異形である

海守りは我々の正当な富を奪ったのだ

——激昂の国

THE SALT KINGDOM

Humankind is our enemy.

We need no greater cause for war than that.

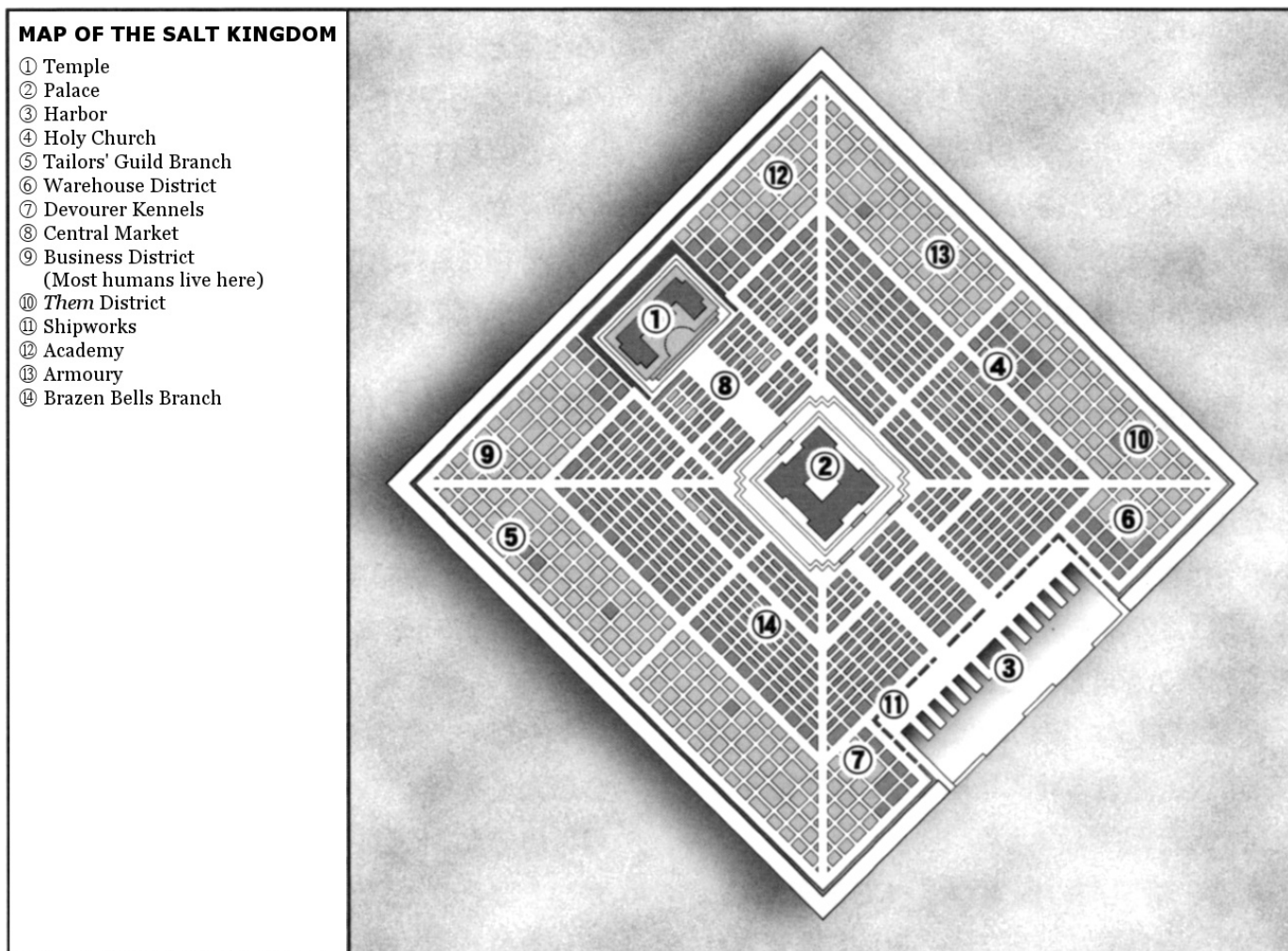
—The Salt Kingdom

Those Strange must be destroyed.

The so-called Sea Guardians have stolen the prosperity that is rightfully ours.

—The Ardent Kingdom

The most prominent of the southern kingdoms is known as the Salt Kingdom. It is one of the very few kingdoms ruled by the Sea Guardians.



As the highways of the Left Land continue south from the Interior, they gradually disappear. Beyond them lies only an endless plain of white, to the horizon and beyond, and in the midst of that plain lies the Salt Kingdom. Pillars embedded in the salt mark the outer borders of the kingdom, while the city proper within is surrounded by sturdy walls.

The only means of entry to the Salt Kingdom is known as the Harbor. It is no ordinary harbor; the ships that sail into it are those that sail through the Plains of Salt.

The streets of the Sand Kingdom's crown city are paved with white stone, and in its center is built the Lord's Palace. It is said to contain the last remaining waters of the True Sea.

Though many seek to infiltrate the fiercely isolationist Salt Kingdom, they have had great difficulty doing so, as the only way to enter the kingdom is by propeller ship. The kingdom uses the *Them* known as Devourers as perimeter guards, and even has magic users which patrol the sky keeping watch for aerial invaders. It is impenetrable to the average outsider.

THE PLAINS OF SALT

The Plains of Salt are, as their name suggests, a massive white expanse of salt located in the South. Their western terminus is the edge of the Everdark Forest, their eastern one is the Burning Desert, and it is unknown how far south they extends. They are said to be the remains of the "True Sea," and occasionally when excavation is performed, the skeletons of gigantic fish several tens of feet in length are discovered buried deep within the salt.

On days with clear weather, many propeller ships from the Salt Kingdom are visible sailing through the salt from its northern edge, which is as close as most people can get.

The salt from the Plains of Salt is considered to be among the purest there is and has been prized throughout the world for ages. However, in recent years, the Salt Kingdom has strictly controlled access to the Plains of Salt, and those who attempt to gather salt from it do so at a great risk to themselves. Most people in the Left Land must make do with less pure salt mined elsewhere in the world.

After the Dark Age ended, though the Sea Guardians of the Salt Kingdom always enjoyed a monopoly over the Plains of Salt, they exported it in abundance and had an amiable trading relationship with the surrounding kingdoms despite the mutual tensions between their races. However, in the autumn seven years ago, the Southern War broke out and all their exports to other kingdoms were halted.

Access to the Plains of Salt is forbidden, with most who try to sneak in or poach salt killed by the Devourers who patrol the outskirts. There are no small number of human corpses and skeletons half-buried in the salt. However, once in a while, a person does manage to successfully infiltrate the kingdom.

THE HISTORY OF THE SALT KINGDOM

As the remains of the True Sea, the Plains of Salt are holy ground to the Sea Guardians. Since long ago, the Sea Guardians and those humans with the blood of the Finne in their veins have lived together in the surrounding countries.

The Plains of Salt are, unsurprisingly, one of the easiest places to gather salt in the Left Land. Rock salt is rare, and salt from the walls of the Seas is comparatively difficult to reach. The Salt Kingdom has long profited handsomely off selling their salt to the other kingdoms of the Left Land.

Prior to the Dark Age, the Salt Kingdom had no walls or borders, and was simply a peaceful village in which the salt-gatherers and traders plied their trade.

However, the coming with the Dark Age changed that, as many Sea Guardians around the world were killed under suspicion that they were Strange. Many of those who survive fled to the Plains of Salt, their ancestral homeland and a place in which this rumour had no traction--the locals had lived in peace with the Sea Guardians for far too long. Anticipating the need to defend themselves from foreign incursions, they built a crown city with mighty walls in the Plains of Salt.

Meanwhile, the other nations in the South collapsed, fracturing into smaller and smaller nations which waged war against each other while the common people lived in poverty. They looked to the Sea Guardians in hope of salvation--and were ignored. Naturally, the Sea Guardians would have little compassion for those whom only a few years earlier had attempted to exterminate their race.

The Salt Kingdom closed its borders, allowing none into the Plains of Salt. They received the Way "Those of the Salt Kingdom defeated all invaders and protected their land happily ever after," allowing them to act in full righteousness.

FAITH

Those of the Salt Kingdom predominantly pay homage to the Two of the Dragon Palace, great fish said to dwell in the Deep Sea within the palace. They are thus considered to be worshippers of earth gods.

The Sea Guardians have long been persecuted by the rest of the Left Land under the suspicion of being Strange. For that reason, despite the Holy Church having a presence in the kingdom, most of them fiercely reject its teachings and follow their own religion as a matter of pride.

MILITARY

The Salt Kingdom has a citizen militia. Although Sea Guardians are marine creatures, they are also extremely capable fighters on land, the strongest of them said to be able to fend off tens of human soldiers with ease. As they all believe strongly in the Salt Kingdom and the need to protect it from invaders, morale is always high.

In addition to the Salt Kingdom's own troops, they possess several skilled engineers invited from the Artisans' Kingdom, who have constructed a navy of steam-powered dreadnought propeller ships. With a full complement of magical cannons operated by Sea Guardian Adepts, these ships are believed capable of repelling any incursion into the Plains of Salt that their enemies are capable of mustering.

The people of the Salt Kingdom have also bred the *Them* known as "Devourers" for generations. They are loyal to the Salt Kingdom and serve as its first line of defense, and are quite capable of dealing with the average incursion on their own.

The Salt Kingdom's military has little in the way of rank or hierarchy. Squad leaders are appointed directly by the Lord and squads are formed beneath them. They fight according to their own discretion. Though this lack of structure makes it difficult to plan battle tactics, thus far the superiority of the army has compensated for its organizational flaws.

DAILY LIFE

Due to the ongoing war and the interruption of trade, the quality of life in the Salt Kingdom has decreased as it has become necessary to ration essentials. As it is located on the barren Plains of Salt, raising meat and vegetables for food is extremely difficult in the Salt Kingdom. Though such foodstuffs are not vital for Sea Guardians, the humans of the country suffer greatly without them.

The country's sole food supply is the bounty of the Deep Sea, the last remaining portion of the True Sea, which is nominally for its Lord's exclusive use. Artificial springs are set up in various parts of the city with their water drawn from the True Sea. The Sea Guardians drink from these, but humans cannot survive on the salt water and must siphon and distill it before they have water to drink.

Currently, the majority of the country's resources are spent on its military, and the common people live an austere life.

CURRENT EVENTS

The Salt Kingdom is currently engaged in a large-scale war with multiple other southern kingdoms lead by the Ardent Kingdom. The brutality of this war rages unchecked.

Due to their lack of military hierarchy, unless specifically ordered otherwise by their squad leader or the Lord himself, the soldiers of the Salt Kingdom have full discretion to harm and kill even innocent bystanders, and do this regularly. By and large, they consider human lives to have no value.

THE ARDENT KINGDOM

Government: Monarchy

Location: The South

A kingdom formed for the sole purpose of destroying the Salt Kingdom; in their words, "Those who defile the Seas with their greed and pollute them with the presence of the Strange." Its people believe the old, long-discredited myth that the Sea Guardians are Strange and are jealous of the Salt Kingdom's prosperity. They possess a Way instructing them to destroy their enemies, and under the command of their brilliant general Bonaparte E. Adirato they have been overrunning and ravaging the smaller kingdoms nearby, one by one.

Their military-centered government, supported by their Way, has made them exceptionally efficient warmongers. Some fear that any army which comes into conflict with the Ardent Kingdom, even that of the Salt Kingdom, is doomed.

THE BATHS/THE SHELL KINGDOM

Government: Ruled by the Dragon King

Location: The Interior, northeasterly

The Baths is a large lake to the northeast of the Holy Capital. It is placid despite its size, and is filled with fish and seafood prized throughout the Left Land. The small Shell Kingdom located upon its shores trades in these items extensively.

In the very center of the Baths stands a 5-meter-tall black pillar, known as the "Monolith-to-Be."

A particularly mighty one of *Them*, the Dragon King, is said to live within the depths of the lake. The people of the Shell Kingdom revere him as a local god and pray to him to grant them the water's bounty.

THE BLACK SEA

Government: None

Location: The Silverpeaks, westerly

A small Sea nestled in the western Silverpeaks, about 1,500 feet long on each side. The Sea is dark enough that the bottom of it cannot be seen, and no one knows what lies within. It is said, though, that sometimes huge eyes can be seen staring up out of the water.

The Sea Guardians protecting this Sea are unusually hostile towards humans, and all whom approach--whether man or woman, adult or child--run the risk of being pulled in and drowned by them.

The color of the Sea has darkened further in recent years, and those who live nearby fear that this is an omen of the Strange.

THE BOOK KINGDOM

Government: Ruled by the Queen of the Labyrinth

Location: The Interior, at a road crossing

The Book Kingdom is an underground labyrinth located a short distance from a road junction. It is a large collection of books overseen by one of *Them* who calls herself the "Queen of the Labyrinth."

The countless shelves of books are overseen by the *Them* known as Bookmarkesses. Normally, it is forbidden to take or copy the books, but if you make the treacherous journey to the lowest floor to meet the Queen herself, it is said she may permit you to borrow them.

The denizens of the Book Kingdom gather information on the outside world by listening to the stories of travelers, which they record in books. It is suspected that this enterprise of theirs is related to an unknown Way of some kind. Weavers are particularly intrigued, believing the Book Kingdom may hold the key to unraveling the secrets of the Ways.

THE CROSSROADS

Government: City Council

Location: The Interior, at a road crossing

A town located at the intersection of two major roads near the Merchants' Kingdom. As many travelers stay there, it has grown into a thriving inn town on par with many small kingdoms in size.

As a place where adventurers and travelers gather, it has accumulated professional talent for hire, who are employed by those journeying to unsafe places. It is also one of the Left Land's prime information exchanges.

The people of the Crossroads do not pry into the circumstances of others. As a result, many Weavers—and even Hollows and Strange—find it a relatively welcoming place for their kind. So long as they don't plan to stay for too long.

THE DEAD SEA

Government: None

Location: The Verdant Mountains

A structure amongst the foothills of the Verdant Mountains. It is what remains of a Sea which ceased to be a sea during the Dark Age.

Now entirely devoid of water, visible through its walls are the corpses of huge sea creatures, which put out a vile stench and seem to form amongst themselves a jungle of bones. A huge and nigh-bottomless lake of mud thought to have been formed by the former water of the Sea lies next to its walls, known as the "Drunkard's Mud Puddle."

The ruins of the Old Capital of Gluttony are rumoured to lie at the bottom of this mud lake.

THE DESERT CROSSERS

Government: Tribal

Location: The Burning Desert

A diverse group of peoples who live by crossing the harsh environs of the Burning Desert, journeying from oasis to oasis, while raising what animals they can. Their traditional livelihoods include hunting, and dredging salt from the seas, which they place in the sunlight so that it dries into solid blocks and then carve fine crafts from.

While fundamentally nomadic, to think of them as incapable of putting down roots is a prejudice, and some tribes are far more sedentary than others.

Their Ways generally encourage them to find their own individual philosophy in life, and so Weavers are tolerated among them.

THE EVERDARK FOREST

Government: None?

Location: The West

A vast forest in the western part of the Left Land, in which no trace of human habitation is evident. It is unknown when (or if) it ends.

The forest gains its name from the fact that even at high noon, when you take a few steps inside the forest, you will be plunged into darkness. It is home to a vast number of *Them*, who reshape the forest to their liking, causing its boundaries to slowly change throughout the ages.

Long ago, the Old Capital of Wrath was located in the region that the Everdark Forest now occupies. At the advent of the dark age, the people of the capital built a massive superweapon known as the "Tomb-to-Be," intending to destroy all the Strange in one fell swoop. However, when they activated it, the Everdark Forest suddenly appeared in the vicinity of the capital, swallowing it without a trace.

THE FROG FOREST

Government: Ruled by the Lord of the Frog Forest

Location: Everywhere in the world

A forest, composed of the *Them* known as "Frog-grass," which appears in various places in the world like a mirage. The entire forest is thought to be a single living creature.

It is ruled by an Undying known as the Lord of the Frog Forest, who from time to time lures humans into the forest in order to chat with them. A selfish and eccentric being, if he takes any dislike to those who have entered his forest, he will mercilessly turn them into decorations for his demesne.

A young boy and girl from a world-space known as Synapse once entered the forest, and in order to keep themselves in the Lord's good graces, they allowed him to use Synapse as a stepping-stone to transport his dominion any place in the world that he desires.

THE GREAT TREE

Government: Ruled by the Shamans

Location: The Silverpeaks

A kingdom inside a giant tree that is said to have stood amongst the Silverpeaks since the very beginning of creation. It is ruled by a tribe of people known as the Shamans of the Tree.

A key component of their economy is based on providing wood and other components for Automaton crafting. They are one of the few places in the largely barren Silverpeaks with a climate suitable for agriculture.

They have friendly relations with the Rice Country and regularly exchange new agricultural techniques with them.

Recently, the Tailors' Guild assisted them in undoing a Warped Way which promised the destruction of the Great Tree. As a result of that, and their close trade relationship with the Artisans' Kingdom, they are very friendly to Weavers.

THE HOSPITABLE KINGDOM

Government: Monarchy

Location: The Interior, northerly

A kingdom along the road from the Holy Capital to the Merchants' Kingdom, from which many side roads branch off. Since olden days its people have received a Way instructing them to be hospitable to travelers, and the kingdom has come to find that as their source of pride.

Inns in the Hospitable Kingdom are luxurious and provide food and medical care to travelers free of charge. As such, the appeal of the country to travelers is considerable.

However, there are currently almost no travelers who stop in the Hospitable Kingdom. That is because it is said the current Way bestowed upon the kingdom instructs its citizens to kill all travelers who partake of their hospitality. As full of smiles as ever, the people of the Hospitable Kingdom wait for the few travelers who have not heard the news.

THE LITHOGRAPH-TO-BE

Government: None

Location: The Cliffs of Delight

A large wall-like structure of black stone buried in the face of one of the Cliffs of Delight. It is inscribed with finely written characters in an ancient tongue, which glow with a faint light from time to time. Mysteriously, the writing has been observed to change with the passing of the days.

Only the Rust Lizards who live around the Cliffs of Delight know how to read the writing on the lithograph. They claim that the contents of the lithograph are revelations from God, and even those from the Holy Church have been known to consult them in search of prophecy and guidance.

Weavers, believing that the mysteries of this lithograph may hold some sort of secret about the Ways, have taken an interest in it as well.

THE LOST CITY

Government: None

Location: Along a road in the Interior

The Lost City is actually the ruins of the Old Capital of Pride. It was a place where scholars of history gathered to exchange knowledge and perform research concerning the time prior to the Dark Age.

However, after the Day of the Black Spot, many of its inhabitants instantly became estranged and opened huge Unravelings, allowing the Void to consume much of the city. The priests of the Holy Church placed a magical seal upon those parts that remained, and entry has been forbidden since.

It is unknown what has happened to the people who once lived in the Lost City, as no one dares to find out. It seems something is still living there today, as those soldiers who keep watch from the walls report movement within, and sound comes from the streets still; strange, inhuman howls, and the endless tolling of the church bells that continues to this very day.

THE RELICS-TO-BE

Government: None

Location: Many places

Throughout the Left Land, many building-like structures beyond the comprehension of humankind dot the landscape. They include towering castles built of glass-like materials, forests growing within transparent orbs, and strange triangular monoliths. Scholars classify all of these, as well as the Seas, as types of "the Relics-to-Be."

It is said that they were creations of the Old Race of Diwott from before the Dark Age, using lost technology inscrutable to latter-day beings. After decades of research, most have simply come to accept that only the next era of civilization will be able to penetrate the secrets of these places. That is why they have come to be referred to as "the Relics-to-Be."

Coppelius VII and her Progressive Party are particularly interested in these ruins and are currently investigating them anew.

THE RICE KINGDOM

Government: Monarchy

Location: The Interior, northerly

A kingdom a few days' journey north of the Merchants' Kingdom. As its name might suggest, it is an agricultural land favored by fine weather and Ways that always promise a prosperous harvest. As a result, it is one of the key breadbaskets of the Left Land. It's often said that if not for the Rice Kingdom the world would starve.

The government is a monarchy, though traditionally the royal family does not spend more time than necessary in the castle, but labours in the fields alongside their countrymen.

Though the Rice Kingdom seems a blessed place, the machinations of the Strange and the conflict around the Weavers have not left it untouched. Many within the country fear that its peace and prosperity will not last forever.

THE SEAM EXPRESS

Government: None?

Location: The world's seams

A railroad built by *Them* upon ties laid down on the seams of the world itself. Its trains are attended to by wooden dolls and creatures that resemble cats serve as its conductors.

Trains on the Seam Express appear out of nowhere and vanish into nowhere. Sometimes, they travel through the solid earth and the sky as if it were natural.

Stations on the line include "Eternal Paradise", "The Frog Forest", "The Graveyard of Dreams", "The Bottom of the Sea," and many other such places that are impossible to reach by normal means.

A few people have sought to travel to the Right Land itself on the Seam Express, but none have ever returned.

THE SUNKEN SEA

Government: None

Location: The Verdant Mountains

A Sea in the western part of the Verdant Mountains. It differs from all other known Seas by being sunken into the earth, allowing one to simply walk up to its shores.

The local Sea Guardians are not aggressive in defending it, and so it is one of the few seas that humans can enjoy the fresh bounty of. Many merchants and fishermen make their livelihood from this Sea.

However, the Sea Guardians have become concerned that humans are exploiting the Sea too aggressively, and recently disputes have arisen between them and the local people.

THE TOWN OF THUNDER

Government: Earldom

Location: In the North, near the Silverpeaks

A small town adjacent to the Wounded Rift, situated precariously on the edge of the great chasm. It is actually a remnant of the Old Capital of Lust, which was largely consumed by the Unraveling that birthed the Wounded Rift, and consists of grand buildings that date from before the Dark Ages. Though the techniques used to erect these buildings have been lost, they have not crumbled, and people continue to inhabit them.

The local lord claims to be descended directly from the Earls of old, but the truth of this is unknown. The populace have constructed a bridge over the Wounded Rift, and much of their livelihood is based upon the toll charged for its use and providing a place to stay for travelers.

As Strange are known to crawl out of the Wounded Rift on occasion, the people here are friendly and welcoming to Weavers.

THE WOUNDED RIFT

Government: None

Location: In the North, near the Silverpeaks

The Wounded Rift is a gaping chasm in the earth near the Silverpeaks, a scar left upon the earth at the advent of the Dark Age.

Prior to the Dark Age, it was the location of the Old Capital of Lust, which was swallowed by a giant Unraveling. The Unraveling was not fully mended until nearly a hundred years later. Traces of the Void still lurk in the Rift's deepest recesses, and anything which falls into them vanishes. But there are also said to be treasures from the Old Capital hidden within, and many a treasure hunter hopes to strike it rich in the Wounded Rift.

The kingdoms adjacent to the Wounded Rift use it as a place for disposal of garbage of all sorts, notably corpses that they refuse to give a proper burial. This is despite warnings that a Strange may someday arise as a result of this practice.

THE WOVEN KINGDOM

Government: Parliament

Location: Northwestern Silverpeaks

A kingdom located in the Silverpeaks to the northwest of the Artisans' Kingdom. It is a barren place in which few plants grow and the ground is covered in snow for over half the year. It is inhabited by the descendants of heretics and refugees, including no small amount of Weavers.

Currently the Inquisition has set their sights upon this kingdom, due to the many Weavers openly living there. However, they are unable to act against them, as the Artisans' Kingdom has extended the smaller kingdom their protection. Nevertheless, the Woven Kingdom is in a precarious situation where any change in the political situation could lead to it being crushed.

THEM

BOOKMARKESS

A *Them* in the shape of a young girl which lives in libraries and archives. They see to the books' condition, keeping them clean of insects that might eat the paper and other such hazards. They also know the title and a general outline of the contents of every book contained in their home. They fear and hate fire in all its forms.

Bookmarkesses love books, and love those who love books. When one becomes the beloved of someone who is also the target of a Bookmarkess' affections, they may find themselves befallen by a foul curse.

The Academy and various schools of magic have been known to employ Bookmarkesses as instructors; quite frequently, in fact.

DEVOURER

A type of *Them* which eats the Strange. They tend to have the stature of a mid-sized dog, but this varies from individual to individual. They're often used as guard dogs on kingdoms where Strange are common, and are bred and sold in many places.

They are born from buds of a sort. At a young age they grow a ball at the end of their tail, which grows larger as they grow older. This ball eventually splits open like the shell of an egg, revealing a newborn Devourer.

They are born fully mature, ready to fight Strange from the very moment of their birth.

EYELING

A fluorescent-colored *Them* with four large eyes on stalks. Occasionally, one might see a juvenile Eyeling with only one small eye; there are also those with mouths instead of eyes.

It is said that they were created for a purpose; to observe all that lives in the Left Land. After Devourers, they are one of the most commonly sighted kinds of *Them*. When they encounter other beings, their most common reaction is to flee instantly while letting a coarse laugh out of their mouth.

The reason for this behaviour is unknown, but in the North, it is believed to be an omen of ill luck.

FROG-GRASS

A grass-like *Them* which lives in forested areas. When blown by the wind, it emits a hollow keening sound that profoundly unsettles all who hear it.

When gathered and rolled into balls, it can be used as a tool for divination or curses, and also as a foodstuff if necessary. It tastes like chicken. However, eating it has a side effect; those who consume it will lose their most precious memories.

Frog-grass is said to be illicitly grown in cities by criminal organizations; its keening drives members of such organizations further into madness.

GAPPER

A *Them* in the shape of a tiny girl carrying a small trunk and a stuffed animal.

They dwell in houses and buildings, living in small crannies and other empty spaces useless to all beings larger than they are. They generally do no harm and pose no inconvenience to anyone.

However, if one doesn't mind them being around, they should take care not to speak to them, as Gappers understand speech only as a demand to leave and will flee and never return if ever spoken to directly.

GUIDING WOLF

A *Them* that appears to be a pale white wolf. It appears before those lost in the forest or the mountains and shows them the way back to the road.

While their role in the world is to help guide people to safety, they also possess the the temperament and pride of the earth gods. After they help someone, they will expect a gift or some kind as a reward for their service. If you seem ungrateful or fail to satisfy them with your reward, you may be killed and eaten.

POINTER

A *Them* which resembles a single white glove attached to a boot. They have suction pads on their soles, allowing them to cling to walls. Pointers with left gloves are male, while those with right gloves are female. They live in towns and buildings, and with energetic gestures guide people wherever they need to go.

Pointers are considered useful and thus welcomed and taken good care of wherever they are found. If a town that sees many travelers were to lose all of its Pointers, it would not remain popular among travelers for long.

RUST LIZARD

A large lizard-like variety of *Them* which lives near rocky cliffs. As they age, they become covered with rust, and eventually they become rust entirely and are often indistinguishable from the cliff's natural landscape.

The Rust Lizards which live at the Cliffs of Delight are capable of understanding human speech, and have accumulated much wisdom which they have passed down through the ages. For this reason, they are known by the nearby townspeople as the "Sages of the Cliffs."

It is said that the Sages of the Cliffs were personally blessed by God so that they could use their knowledge to help people.

SHADOWLING

A child-sized *Them* that appears to be a muscular being composed entirely of shadow.

As evening comes and the shadows lengthen, they appear with sinister grins on their faces and steal the shadows of those they meet. Those who have their shadows stolen often become estranged as a result. There are also "Colorlings" who steal the color of those they meet.

Strictly speaking, Shadowlings and Colorlings are not merely *Them*, but an unusual variety of Strange.

SPARKER

A *Them* which resembles a ball of dead grass. They roll when blown in the wind, naturally forming into packs of their own kind.

When they are hit, they briefly light aflame in self-defense, and are commonly used by people to start fires; they can be found for sale in any market, and are used as lights and for various industrial purposes.

Signs such as "Please do not touch the Sparker" and "Please don't let your children play with these" are common sights around any town.

TEN-MONTHER

A *Them* with the face of a woman, the neck of a bird, and the lower body of a horse. They appear upon roads on rainy nights, and with a screech, will attempt to touch any human they see. Any human they touch will die suddenly ten months hence, as with that one touch, their soul was sucked away.

Many heroes have sought to exterminate Ten-Monthers from the world, but often underestimate their swiftness and fall victim to them.

It is rumoured that occasionally a Ten-Monther will fall in love with another manner of being and grant them the blessing of the Undying.

WORRY FLOWER

A plant-type *Them* which grows by feeding upon the worries of living things. It takes root in the body of those who have many worries. As they continue to worry, it will sprout and grow leaves; however, if at any time they are able to resolve their anxiety, it will wither and die.

If they continue to worry, the worry flower will grow buds and blossom. The amount and intensity of the blooms depends on the depth of the person's worries. After all of its blossoms fall, the Worry Flower will wither and die.

At this time, its host will also fall into an eternal slumber and soon perish.