

ARCFORGE



GODS & PEOPLES

BY MATT DALEY



ARCFORGE



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This product is a part of our line of sci-fi supplements for Paizo's *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*, with a special eye towards integrating science and technology with the core classes and magic systems of Pathfinder as well as alternate classes and powers such as psionics, akashic magic, martial maneuvers and stances, and many more. Within this line you'll find new classes and class abilities, along with archetypes, prestige classes, and innovative and unique alternate class models that allow you to tailor your character to interact with and use technology in amazing ways. You'll also find new forms of gear, spells, psionic powers, vehicles, servant creatures, and so much more, each designed to harmonize perfectly with your favorite classes using the traditional Pathfinder array of options. The all-star team of designers here at Legendary Games is committed to bringing you—the busy GM or player—the absolute best third party support for your Pathfinder campaign, products that are innovative in their ideas, beautiful in their appearance, bursting with the creativity of the best authors in the business and developed with a rich interactive layout that blends form and function, and on top of all of that products that are flat-out fun to play.

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We've hyperlinked this product internally from the Table of Contents and externally with links to the official Pathfinder Reference Document as well as [d20PFSRD](#). If it is in the core rulebook, we generally didn't link to it unless the rule is an obscure one. The point is not to supersede the game books, but rather to help support you, the player, in accessing the rules, especially those from newer books or that you may not have memorized.

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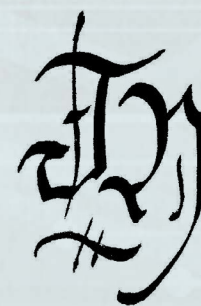
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Gods and Peoples brings you a vast and exciting world of diverse cultures and gods in a war-torn world for *Pathfinder* or *Starfinder Roleplaying Game* campaigns! Explore the planet of Vandara and its esoteric history and the strange magics that have birthed its panoply of cultures, races, and gods, from ancient peoples forged in the great furnace of the Makers' War and mighty biomorphs who stand as marvels of genetic engineering to hideous chaos-blighted *things* enslaved to the will of the cosmic horror of the qliploth invaders! From the settled remnants of peace and liberty to strangers in this already-fractured landscape, these individuals and the powers they worship all play a unique part in the Age of Shrouds.

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AA = Softcover book that serves as an armory for adventurers
AA2 = A second softcover book that servers as an armory for adventurers
ACG = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Class Guide*
AM = *Akashic Mysteries*
APA = *Arcforge: Psibertech*
APG = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Player's Guide*
ARG = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Race Guide*
ASP = *Arcforge: Star*Path*
ATE = *Arcforge: Technology Expanded*
B1 = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*
B2 = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2*
B3 = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 3*
B4 = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4*
B5 = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 5*
B6 = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 6*
BF = *Bloodforge*
BotB = Softcover companion for characters with beast blood.
BotD = Hardcover book of damned fiends of the lower planes.
BotD3 = Third volume of softcover book series of damned fiends of the lower planes.
Co7SAT = *City of Seven Seraphs: Akashic Trinity*
CoB = Softcover companion for characters who champion balance.
CoC = Softcover companion for characters who champion corruption.
CoP = Softcover companion for characters who champion purity.
CotS = *Champions of the Spheres*
CRB = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*
DA = Softcover anthology of divine classes.

HotS = Softcover companion for heroes from the streets.
ISG = Hardcover guide to gods in the lands of the Inland Sea (see OGL).
ISM = Softcover guide to magic in the lands of the Inland Sea (see OGL).
ISR = Softcover guide to races in the lands of the Inland Sea.
ISWG = Guide to the world of the Inland Sea (see OGL).
MA = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Mythic Adventures*
OA = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Occult Adventures*
OB = Softcover bestiary of occult creatures.
PA2 = *Psionics Augmented: Compilation 2*
PAO = *Psionics Augmented: Occult*
PASP = *Psionics Augmented: Seventh Path*
PAV = *Psionics Augmented: Voyager*
PFU = *Psionics Roleplaying Game Pathfinder Unchained*
PoW = *Path of War*
PoWE = *Path of War Expanded*
SoM = *Spheres of Might*
SoP = *Spheres of Power*
TRI = *Terrors from the Id: The Book of Psionic Horror*
TG = Guide to technology in the official *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* campaign world.
UC = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Combat*
UE = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment*
UI = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Intrigue*
UM = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Magic*
UP = *Ultimate Psionics*
UW = *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Wilderness*

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INTRODUCTION

The planet of Vandara has ever brimmed with magical potential, its numerous resources, planar connections, and divine interests propelling it in a rapid and immensely sophisticated advancement. However, things changed when the Vandarans made their first contact with beings which were not of this world, beings not meant to come into contact with mortal beings. These creatures came to be known as the Qlippoth, wielders of alien power which carved immense swaths of devastation across Vandara. In order to counter this threat, which proved not only resistant to but also intimately familiar with magic, the greatest minds of Vandara unified to create a mechanism strong enough to power the great war machine which would end the Qlippoth scourge. This tool came to be known as the Arcforge, a wonder of technology and magic which amplified the power of the Vandan's equipment. Thanks to the strength of the Arcforge, the peoples of Vandara were finally able to repel the great Qlippoth scourge, reclaiming much of the land that was taken. However, this victory came at a great cost, and soon the formerly united nations and peoples began to turn against each other in the interest of claiming the Arcforge's power. With each faction armed with magical and technological innovations which pose immense potential to create as well as destroy, the world of Vandara teeters on the brink of either a new age of progress or the end of everything.

RULES

The Arcforge Campaign Setting is designed to be used with either the Pathfinder or Starfinder Roleplaying Games, using rules from *Arcforge: New Age of Legends* to bridge the gaps between any content specifically designed for one game or the other (of course, it is completely possible to play a campaign on Vandara using only Pathfinder or Starfinder rules). It is also assumed that the following variant rules are used when using both systems

Psionics as Advanced Technology^{ATE}: Psionics is a very distinct force from magic, operating on a series of physical laws (albeit poorly understood ones) which diverge heavily from the emotion-focused and chaotic nature of many magical abilities and operations.

Akasha as Cybertech^{ATE}: In spite of its mystical name (a product of tradition), the art of Akashic veilweaving and essence manipulation is a well-documented science which is well-understood by some Vandarans. Hence, it is treated as technology rather than magic.

A HISTORY OF VANDARA

Rather than being gradually forged by natural events, as most planets are, Vandara was a construct of powerful magic, crafted by among the most ancient races in the universe, the dragons. With their incredible talent for magic, these dragons formed a massive planet out of materials taken from across the multiverse, mountains erected from the plane of earth and oceans drawn from the plane of water. At last, to fortify the planet completely, the dragons fabricated a complex matrix of spells which flowed through the entire body, infusing a powerful source of magic throughout Vandara in its entirety which facilitated great ease with all feats of arcana. With their paradise established, the Dragons ruled over Vandara unrivaled, no intelligent creatures existing to challenge their supreme dominion. For centuries, Vandara persisted in this manner, but eventually the rule of the Dragons was challenged by the coming of the Outer Lords.

The first of the Outer Lord's immense warships appeared to blot out the sun over Vandara when it arrived, the sheer force of its gravity ripping mountains from the earth and warping the oceans across the surface of the planet. Furious, the most powerful of the dragons called upon their great magical abilities to turn back these invaders, only to discover that the Outer Lords possessed strength and knowledge in equal measure to them. As more warships arrived, all of Vandara was consumed in a war unparalleled in scope or devastation, the surface of the planet drenched in weapons biological, technological, and magical which twisted the draconic utopia into a realm of madness.

As the planet grew too ravaged to be worth fighting over, as both Dragons and Lords grew exhausted of combat and too weak to mount much more of a fight, an armistice was forged between the two great factions. The remaining dragons retreated to the remote recesses of the world, forfeiting their control over much of it. The Outer Lords, meanwhile, retreated from Vandara itself, many of their ships departing the system and those few Lords on the surface of the planet likewise relegating themselves to the shadows. Both sides worked their powers to cleanse the world of records of their war, entombing their darkest and most destructive secrets deep within the earth. With both sides exhausted by what became known as the Maker's War, it was left to a

certain very prolific biological creation to inherit the planet: a race known as humans.

It was not strength or intelligence that enabled humanity to seize control of Vandara, as there were many other creatures which surpassed the race in both regards. Rather, humans were differentiated by their capacity to adapt and learn. Science and logical understanding came easily to mankind, and over time the race learned to harness the myriad resources of the planet to their advantage. Wood from the forests, stone from the mountains, metals from the earth, and magic from the predecessors all played a role in sculpting the first human empires in what is now Cidalac and New Estaria. As the race slowly fought back the tides of monsters and threats which had been left behind in the Maker's War, they came to eventually conquer the world, establishing their presence and their varied cultures all across Vandara.

It was in this great conquest that humanity first began to experiment with itself, harnessing magic and technology to produce men and women optimized for specific roles. Over time, these "demihuman" races acquired titles and cultures of their own, from the stalwart dwarves, built for harsh labor and intense warfare, to the haughty and cultured elves, a noble caste created to live long lives of optimal pleasure and reason. Not all of these experiments were successful, however, and the rapid-breeding goblins of Valtross are testament to the unpredictable dangers which irresponsible genetic tinkering can bring about. Still other new species have been created through the crossbreeding of humans with other entities, producing beings such as tieflings and aasimar. Although classical humans remain the most common race on Vandara, the impacts these "abnormal" races have left upon the planet cannot be discounted.

Perhaps inevitably, this genus which was created for conflict turned upon itself, its myriad cultures levelling their coveted knowledge against each other. Weaponry and warfare began to define the mentalities of many nations, all of which were determined to claim what their neighbors owned. Perhaps, given time, Vandara would have faced a second instance of the Maker's War, but fate decreed that a different cataclysm befall the world.

Just as the Vandarans had begun to take to the stars, an enemy emerged from the cosmic reaches which threatened to purge the planet of life. Declining

all attempts at communication, negotiation, or reason, these entities which came to be known as the Qlippoth launched a warpath across many Vandara-held planets, savaging and butchering all life and civilization before eventually converging on Vandara itself and ripping the space elevator known as the Silver Citadel from its orbit. This event, which became known as The Sundering, forever changed the perception of Vandarans on conflict, and when the sun rose across the city of Maytar that day the entire planet had entered a state of total war.

Within hours, the entire southern continent of Coeusel had been compromised, lost to the Qlippoth horde. However, those hours were all the time needed for every nation on Vandara to put aside their hostilities and rally against this mutual foe. Truly, with their incredible power, immense intelligence, vast numbers, and inscrutable abilities, the Qlippoth were any enemy which none could challenge alone, and one which would not rest until the entirety of Vandara was bleached clean of life. Every industry in every nation became committed to building better weapons with which to combat the Qlippoth; Cidalac constructing monumental warships which carried enough firepower to ravage a country in minutes, Estaria producing robotic legions armed with countless weapons, Balyn turning the Qlippoth's advanced technology against them, the Scaled Monarchs invoking their most powerful magics to call forth otherworldly armadas, and Taurun bringing into the world atomic weapons which could annihilate any city worldwide in an instant. These and more were all deployed against the Qlippoth, but it seemed like even they were not enough to halt impending armageddon.

As the conflict grew exceedingly dire, the surviving nations of Vandara realized that their independent conquests against the Qlippoth were futile; if they wished to turn back the invaders, then they would be forced to combine their technologies and share their secrets. Eventually, the many nations agreed to combine their knowledge, and together they created a wonder of magic and technology which at last offered them a spark of hope: the Arcforge.

Powered by the Arcforge, the Vandaran war machine slowly began to turn the tide of the war, fighting back the Qlippoth armies and regaining ground which had once been lost. After nearly thirty years of fighting, it seemed as if the Qlippoth horde had been exhausted, its numbers a fraction of their

former strength and its might stretched thin across the planet. Refusing to go undefended but unable to deliver the finishing blow, the remaining Vandarans organized to keep the alien threat contained, creating the colossal Sajac Fortifications to halt the

Qlippoth advance by land and the White Ocean Fleet to deter their progress by sea. There would be continued conflict for centuries to come, most likely, but the threat of utter annihilation had subsided for now.

a world with so many philosophically opposed and heavily armed empires would inevitably slip back into conflict without a body of mediation. Diplomatic measures were established to mitigate the risk of warfare, and a series of international laws known as the Twelve Injunctions were levied to ensure that any further development by nations would be performed in an ethical and stable manner. Although far from perfect, the Council of Nations was the most stable international structure of peace which could be created, and in the fifteen years following no open warfare between countries has occurred.

The lack of flying missiles has not meant an end to global hostilities, however, and the so-called Age of Shrouds is rife with mistrust and espionage. Many secret technologies from the Qlippoth War have been reclaimed by their host nations, and quite a few are willing to risk life and limb to ensure that these secrets either stay buried or wind up in the hands of others. Most of all, every nation covets the Arcforge, which offers the potential to make whomever possesses it the assured victor. War is a possibility wanted by nobody, but if it ever comes to be each nation wants to have the upper hand. Combined with the ever-present Qlippoth threat and the unstable path to recovery, the Age of Shrouds could perhaps be a more dangerous time for Vandara than any prior.

THE TWELVE INJUNCTIONS

Following the destruction laid down in the Qlippoth war, the nations of Vandara convened to agree upon a set of accords for keeping the world safe as increasingly dangerous technologies and magics began to overwhelm it. These agreements became known as the twelve injunctions and are enforced by every nation which allied against the Qlippoth (although to varying degrees). In most cases, violation of any one injunction is punishable by death or even invasion. They are as follows.

1. Creation of nonsapient undead such as skeletons and zombies or self-replicating creatures such as wights and shadows is forbidden, as such creatures pose a potentially infinite threat to all sapient beings
2. Use of poison or disease in warfare, especially that created by magic, poses immense risk and inflicts a great deal of undue pain upon subjects. It is hence forbidden.

This victory did not come without cost, however, and much of Vandara which had been lost to the Qlippoth could likely never be reclaimed.

Estaria, although the country itself had survived, had had its entire population slaughtered when it was taken by the invaders. Dorukalad was not so fortunate, condemned to total destruction by magic and atomics and spawning a new god of brutality and devastation from the holocaust. Countless more nations were obliterated utterly by the Qlippoth, their collective remains forming the continent-wide desert known as the Ashfield. Not a country existed which had not had its resources and population severely diminished by the war, and rebuilding seemed like it would be a more arduous and exhaustive endeavor than fighting ever was. Finally, many nations still controlled great military

power, and without an enemy at their gates became increasingly inclined to turn their awesome firepower on their neighbors.

In order to try and preserve peace, a group known as the Council of Nations was formed, composed of representatives from each of the surviving nations and most of the surviving races. The Council of Nations was tasked with putting Vandara back together and ensuring its long-term survivability, for

3. Intelligent synthetics, including androids, robots, AIs, and awakened golems, cannot be allowed to learn the secrets of arcane magic, for the potential of their ability to understand and exploit the hidden patterns of magic.
4. Domination and Mind Control effects, regardless of source, are not permitted to be used upon sapient creatures. No intelligent creatures may likewise be created with the express purpose of slavery or subjugation.
5. Private proliferation of extraplanar military or workforces through the use of binding or summoning magic or psionics is forbidden, as the induction of such creatures invites dangerous levels of power into the hands of individuals. Only a select quota of summoners are allowed to be trained and must operate under the jurisdiction of a nation.
6. Employment of orbital weaponry or attempt to control any part of the Silicon Expanse is forbidden.
7. Targeting of civilians, hostages, or other entities unable or unwilling to fight with military force is prohibited.
8. Execution of prisoners or hostages by any body outside of the Council of Nations is forbidden unless it is demonstrably impossible for them to be detained.
9. Sanctioned use of armed or supernatural force by any nation within the boundaries of any other nation will be viewed as a declaration of war.
10. Attempted extermination or marginalization of any specific race, intelligent, biological, or otherwise, shall be viewed as a declaration of war against other nations which house the race.
11. Employment of atomic weaponry in any circumstance will be viewed as an invitation of war by all other nations.
12. Worship of Ristymal, Shargoda, or any of the Qlippoth Lords is forbidden, for veneration of these inscrutable dark beings will bring nothing but devastation upon Vandara and its denizens.

In rare cases, the Council of Nations may levy what is known as a Terminus Ultimatum, in which one or more of the Injunctions can be violated when combating a specific enemy. However, the destruction of Dorukalad by Vandaran hands has made most nations incredibly reluctant to even suggest such a measure in most cases.

MAGIC ON VANDARA

Given its unusual origin, Vandara has always been a planet blooming with magical energies. The external planes of existence once converged upon Vandara's location, enabling those upon the world to easily gather power from a wide variety of sources. Hence, whereas most beings of the cosmos could only obtain magical powers from years of study and more than a bit of good fortune, Vandarans have shown a predisposition to develop magical abilities naturally, oftentimes manifesting their abilities in unusual ways given their limited understanding of the supernatural forces they wield. Magical research has of course developed a great deal from the erratic psychic channeling which once defined the practice, in some cases evolving to a point where it rivals even the grand wonderworking of the primordial dragons. Nonetheless, the old ways still hold value in the eyes of many Vandarans, offering unique abilities which more sophisticated forms of magic struggle to understand. The three traditions of magic are referred to as Arcane, Divine, and Psychic magic, each operating in a unique manner. Of course, this is not to say that magic is the only source of immense power on Vandara, given the rise of technology both Vandaran and Qlippoth in nature. However, magic is the oldest, most ubiquitous, and most infamous manner of bending nature to a creature's whims.

Psychic Magic

Drawing directly from Vandara's internal magical energies, psychic spellcasters channel their emotions and thoughts in ways that act as conduits for supernatural energy. Psychic magic possesses the greatest deal of history and tradition among the humanoid races, as it was the first to see widespread use by humankind and as a result influenced the genus' early development much more than any other kind of magic. Practitioners of psychic magic are most frequently gifted individuals who stumbled across their abilities by accident, channeling magical power in rudimentary ways without much formal technique. However, the more sophisticated psychic mages of the world are often students of history, seeking to preserve the older traditions of magic in a constantly changing world or to replicate the experiments and feats of ages long past. Although kineticists, spiritualists, mesmerists, and mystics appear rather erratically across the entire world, the vast majority of mediums, psychics, and occultists hail from Mariton and Cidalac, where the ancient legacies of magic are held in high regard.

Divine Magic

A strange product of Vandara's immense war between the Dragons and the Outer Lords was the creation of a power source referred to as the Convictus. A source of magic drawn from the collective will and values of many creatures, the Convictus supplies magical energy from across the multiverse to strongly held ideals, enabling those who embody these ideals to channel great magical power through raw devotion. In some cases, the power of the Convictus has enabled devoted individuals to perform magical feats which even magical scholars cannot replicate. The most fascinating ability of the Convictus, however, is its ability to transcend mortality in certain ways. When a creature of fantastic renown and respect passes away, they sometimes become one with the Convictus, developing into an aspect of it which can communicate with mortals who seek to preserve the deceased's ideals. Although they lack the omnipotence which the title implies, these aspects are commonly referred to as deities, and those who draw their magical power from them are known as divine spellcasters. Those who tap into the power of the Convictus are typically those of great faith and are known based on their specialty and powers as either clerics, warpriests, druids, paladins, antipaladins, oracles, inquisitors, rangers, hunters, or shamans. Divine spellcasters come from all nations and categories, looking at the world in very different ways based on the aspects they embody.

Arcane Magic

Referred to most often as Scholar's Magic, Arcane Magic relies upon a scientific understanding of planar forces and a studied analysis of magical energy. Relying upon precise gestures and incantations to work miracles, arcane spellcasters most often hail from the great academies of Cidalac, Taurun, and Eigenel. Arcanists, technomancers, magi, and wizards are the most common of this type, and their expertise is often sought out by leaders looking for sage advice on the matters of magic. Although less common, many other arcane spellcasters exist who developed arcane skill naturally, beings upon whom knowledge of the arcane is bestowed by alien forces. These entities, known to many as sorcerors, bards, bloodragers, and summoners, are infused with a sort of instinctual muscle memory which enables them to channel specific aspects of the arcane, even though they do not fully comprehend the consequences of the forces they invoke. Such cases occur most often in areas prominently infused with magic, most notably Valtross, Utala, the Ashfields, and the Erebine.

Akasha

Akasha is not in fact magic at all, but rather a particularly advanced form of cybernetic technology which was given a mystical title by the historically rooted Cidalac. Wielded by cybernetically enhanced soldiers and advanced mechanical entities, Akasha enables creatures to interact with technology and the world in ways which even mages find difficult to grasp or counter. Although many nations have been slow to adapt this technology, Cidalac has displayed the immense rewards which come with its mastery, with the nations Viziers, Daevics, and Helmsmen being feared across the world. Elsewhere, independent practitioners have unveiled other secrets of Akasha, applying their skills as Gurus. Unlike psionics, akasha is trusted and liked by all but the most hostile luddites, as the origin of this advanced technology is Vandaran in origin rather than otherworldly.

Psionics

Psionics is not truly a form of magic but is so alien to many that it may well be considered one. The term comes from the esoteric sciences used by the Qlippoths, and what the scholars of Vandara have derived from it. As a result of this bizarre genesis, psionics is misunderstood and mistrusted by many, who view the use of Qlippoth technology as inherently destructive to the natural order. Most knowledge of psionics is consolidated in Balyn, but the Select has accommodated many psionists and Mariton has invested a great deal in studying the science as to advance its dream of the Silicon Elysium. The Scaled Monarchs have also taken an interest in psionics, with certain members of their ranks acquiring great skill in the discipline. Most of these trained practitioners are Psions, Cryptics, or Vitalists, utilizing comprehensive study to make sense of the esoteric science and employ it to better the world. Elsewhere, many Qlippoth bioweapons still roam free, employing the psionic abilities invested in them by their creators to survive. The vast majority of these creatures are Elans, and are often referred to as Wilders, Psychic Warriors, Marksmen, Dreads, or Tacticians. Finally, there are some who have utilized Qlippoth technology for direct military applications, such as the Aegi of Cidalac or the Soulnives which patrol the Sajac Fortifications. What makes psionics curious is that it is not magical in nature at all, but rather an advanced and poorly understood form of technology. Hence, typical deterrents against magic are not always effective in combating psionics.



Magic and the Planes

When the Silicon Barrier came down, many Vandarans were shocked to discover that the outer planes which they had so long tapped for power were no longer accessible. Heaven, hell, the elemental planes, and even the many demiplanes forged by various spellcasters over the years were no longer accessible, meaning that no entity could leave Vandara by means of the multiverse. For a brief period, this change radically inhibited the practice of magic, but the necessity of wartime eventually pushed mages to cobble together solutions for various spells.

- Summoning spells (such as *summon monster* or *summon nature's ally*) draw upon extraplanar creatures which became trapped on Vandara rather than creatures on other planes. When a summoning spell is cast, an appropriate creature appears from somewhere on Vandara, returning to its original location when the effect's duration expires or it is dispelled. A summoned creature which is

killed cannot easily be replaced, which is why the Twelve Injunctions have imposed limits on the number of summoners in the world. Cidalac and Taurun possess their own reserves of summonable creatures which they have gathered and bred for the precise purpose of use by their spellcasters, although both nations fear that a day may come when their supplies run dry and summoning magic ceases to function. Unaffiliated summoners may poach from these collections with their own spells or may call creatures from elsewhere on Vandara.

- Calling abilities (such as *planar ally*) call extraplanar creatures as they normally do, but like summoning spells will bring them forth from elsewhere on the planet rather than from other planes of existence. As calling is oftentimes more difficult and more time-consuming than summoning, there is less concern about the potential scarcity of callable creatures (a concern diminished even further

by the discovery that the souls of deceased Vandarans eventually materialize into new outsiders). The proliferation of outsiders on the planet is arguably more problematic, especially given that calling spells are a temporary means of controlling them.

- Effects that would move creatures between planes (such as *banishment* or *plane shift*) instead transport their targets to a random location on Vandara, damaging them in the process. A subject randomly teleported by one of these abilities takes 10d6 points of damage upon arriving. It was originally thought that banishment would be an effective tactic to counter the Qlipboth, but Vandarans soon discovered that random teleportation gave the creatures an opportunity to move behind their lines.
- Effects that would open portals to other planes (such as *gate*) instead open portals to other locations on Vandara, oftentimes those inhabited by creatures similar to those which would dwell in the plane normally (for example, *rift of ruin*^{BotD} would create a portal to a demon-infested area of the Erebine)
- Effects that interact with the Ethereal Plane function normally, as the Ethereal plane overlaps the material and effectively acts as an extension of it. As a result, it is possible to maneuver through the ethereal plane to reach other locations on Vandara.
- Effects that interact with the Astral Plane (such as *astral projection*) simply fail, as any contact with the Astral Plane is impossible to make due to the Silicon Barrier. Effects which would draw material from the Astral Plane or other planes (such as *astral construct*^{UP} or *wall of stone*) instead draw that material from somewhere else on Vandara or from latent energies left over from expired effects.
- Effects that would create extradimensional pockets or realms (such as *create demiplane*^{UM} or a *bag of holding*) instead create an area somewhere in the Network.
- Effects that draw power from the Shadow Plane (such as *shadow conjuration*) function as normal, drawing upon shadowstuff which has previously been brought onto Vandara. *shadow walk* can still be used for transit across Vandara, as it reaches the edge of the Shadow Plane without entering it.

Souls

Perhaps the most drastic adaptation forced upon Vandarans by the Silicon Barrier is their reappraisal of the soul and the afterlife given Vandara's disconnect from the planes. As they are incapable of leaving the planet, the souls of deceased creatures are subsumed into the Convictus, eventually materializing into outsiders of the souls' alignment (for example, Chaotic Evil souls may form into a demon or Neutral Good souls into an Angel). As these newly created outsiders are composed of numerous souls, they do not retain the personality and memories of their component souls but may possess a smattering of their influence. The deaths of powerful individuals often result in the creation of similarly powerful outsiders, and scholars have evaluated this pattern to determine that it takes approximately six months for a collection of souls to merge into an outsider.

The process of raising the dead through spells such as *resurrection* has been altered in several ways by the Silicon Barrier. Most notably, it is impossible to communicate with or raise the souls of creatures which perished before the barrier was formed and hence went on to other planes. This has made undeath and AI increasingly attractive options for ensuring one's legacy continues after death.

When a soul is successfully raised from the dead, it draws itself together from the energies of nearby outsiders, weakening them. All outsiders of the same alignment of the resurrected creature that are within 1 mile of the creature gain 1 negative level which lasts for 24 hours or until the creature dies again, whichever comes first. This effect can inflict a number of negative levels up to the resurrected creature's hit dice. An outsider which succeeds at a successful fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ the resurrected creature's hit dice + the resurrected creature's charisma modifier) does not suffer from this negative level. The closest outsiders are targeted first with this effect.

OTHER FEATURES OF VANDARA

Detailed below are several other aspects which prominently shape Vandaran Society

SCIENCE, INDUSTRY, AND MAGIC

Long ago, there was a time on Vandara where magic was shrouded in mystery, understood only by cloistered scholars in their enclaves and malfeasant warlords in

their fortresses. These individuals harnessed their arcane, divine, and psychic abilities to lord over the unenlightened, extending their reach over a populace rendered powerless against their eldritch capabilities. Helpless to combat these forces, many people resorted to superstition or else despondency, forcing themselves to accept that they were at the mercy of a world they could not control.

Nowadays, however, much of Vandara has moved beyond such incapacity. Realizing how their abilities could be used to raise humanity to new heights, many mages have spread their teachings to the masses, instructing them as to the functions, limits, and utilities of magical power. Comprehension of magic has evolved alongside the understanding of more grounded sciences such as physics, chemistry, and medicine, and many a Vandaran student can explain the structure of a Scrying spell as easily as they can recite the laws of motion or diagram the composition of a cell.

A more scientifically literate society has also produced a high level of industrialization, with governments and companies applying their understanding of magical and scientific laws to create elaborate networks and machines which have increased the security and leisure of citizens substantially. Technological equipment is mass-produced in factories, and although the process is not so easily automated magical equipment is produced in high enough volumes to be easily accessible to most Vandarans. The typical structure in Balyn, Cidalac, or Taurun will possess air conditioning and electrical lighting in addition to automated *Prestidigitation* traps to clean the facility regularly.

Of course, this is not to say that there are no mysteries on Vandara. Many magical arts employed by the ancient dragons remain lost to the world, pushing mages to continue their research into these esoteric forces. Many mysteries also surround the functions of divine and psychic magic, which are grounded in forces more difficult to empirically understand. Beyond this, the introduction of psionics to Vandara has challenged many assumptions about the universe's physical laws and forced scholars to correct their models of the universe. These pursuits are not only grounded on scientific curiosity but also on very real fears regarding Vandara's continued prosperity. Even a society as technologically advanced as Vandara's cannot rest easy when the Qlippoth and the Silicon Barrier loom so heavily.

THE NETWORK

As the Silicon Expanse prevents any sort of normal internet from working, Vandara has created an

alternative which relies upon the inherent magic of the planet to function. A massive shared consciousness known as the Network was coded into the planet's ley lines, and through this consciousness information can be transmitted anywhere in the world instantaneously. It is even possible to create entirely new sections of the Network through the Create Mindscape spell or similar psionic powers, which is often employed for simulations or temporary public forums. Wireless signals can also be transmitted through the network to any point in the world, enabling remote operation of technology and even long-distance hacking. When combined with teleportation, the Network becomes a unifying entity which enables easy transit and exchange all across the planet.

The one limiting factor of the Network is its dependence upon both Magic and Psionics to function. Hence, it will screw up in an area where either is mitigated or altered. Dimensional wards can also seal off Network communication if employed correctly.

The Network has actually given birth to a sort of pseudo-deity, created not through worship or adoration but rather from sheer assimilation into the cultural consciousness. Its full name is High Artificial Network Deity, Sovereign Over Memetic Exchange, but most call it by the acronym H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E. H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E. is actually capable of granting spells to followers, but such spells only operate within the confines of the Network.

Finally, a race of outsiders known as Daevas were artificially constructed to preside over this artificial realm. Although they draw their power from all across the multiverse, the Network is their exclusive domain, and they are in control of all that goes on there.

MECHS

The power of the Arcforge created a new breed of soldier, one whose inherent strength and ability was supplemented by a powerful and versatile exoskeleton. Created using a combination of many advanced engineering principles, many of which were taken from the Qlippoth, the metal exosuits known as mechs were a cornerstone of the Vandaran counterattack, bestowing a wide variety of capabilities to those capable of piloting them. Many historians will agree that the mech has become the quintessential armament of the Age of Shrouds, as it opens up near-infinite possibilities for skilled pilots and engineers.

The genesis of mechs has also made Balyn an absurdly wealthy city. As the sole possessors of the Arcforge, the scientists and engineers of Balyn can create mechs whose caliber dwarfs that of any other nation. Although Cidalac and Taurun have both created substantial fleets of mechs for their own use, their most impressive, top-of-the-line mechs are always created in Balyn with the aid of the Arcforge. The capacity to construct superior mechs is one of the main reasons why so many countries desire to control the Arcforge for themselves.

For all of the power a monopoly would give them, the Silken Psykers of Balyn do not attempt to keep their knowledge of mech construction a secret. After all, they know that the powers of the Arcforge give them an incontestable advantage on mech development, and no nations which want mechs for itself would be willing to collaborate long enough with others to create a second Arcforge.

VANDARAN SOCIETY

MAJOR FACTIONS

Innumerable groups and orders exist across Vandara, but very few hold enough sway over the world to be considered noteworthy. The following organizations pledge their loyalty to no government and bind themselves with no borders, but nonetheless have proven capable of shaping global politics with their interests and resources.

THE ENIGMAS

So long as the people of Vandara have wanted jobs done anonymously, the Enigmas have been there to carry them out for the right price. Formed centuries ago as a covert organization of mercenaries and assassins, these special agents fill every skill set imaginable and vary so wildly in loyalty and moral code that most any client will be able to find an Enigma who meets their needs.

Said to have been originally formed by a royal council who pledged their loyalty to coin when their kingdom fell, the Enigmas have since spread their influence across the entire world, infiltrating every nation, court, and council worth noticing. Most anyone on the street could be a member of the

Enigmas, for no member wears their influence on their sleeve. Part of the reason that the organization is so popular is that it demands nothing from its members aside from continued secrecy, extracting no payments and imposing no codes. In exchange, it provides information to all of its members on various job opportunities throughout Vandara, feeding hot tips on unexplored frontiers, conflicts in need of resolution, or anyone willing to drop some coin to see a dangerous mission accomplished with no questions asked. If a person has a connection to the Network, a popular spot for gatherings, or even just a few friends with connections, they will be able to levy their request and find no shortage of Enigmas willing to undertake their mission.

The most appealing facet of the Enigmas to many is their complete anonymity. If a job is offered to the Enigmas, under no circumstances will a member disclose the identity of their employer. If this honor-based secrecy is not enough, then the Enigmas carry out their jobs through a series of proxy agents, ensuring that none who receive aid from the organization are compelled to make their personas known. As a result, everyone from Underlords to Silken Psykers to Instigators to Tauruni officials to the Conglomeration of Notables has made regular employ of Enigma agents, and never have any of their jobs been turned down for being too absurd or too drastic. Of course, this anonymity means that Enigma agents can be pit against each other by opposing clients. In such cases, most Enigmas think nothing of opposing or even killing their fellow mercenaries, if they even discover that their quarries are fellow Enigmas in the first place.

The Enigmas are by far the most inclusive organization on Vandara, for they offer membership to anyone willing to complete tasks and ask nothing in terms of disclosure or ideology from members. People of all races comprise the ranks of the order, from the folks out on the street to the hyper-secretive orchestrators of exchanges and missions. Never is a creature to be turned away from the Enigmas for any reason, so states the only official rule of the organization. Hence, the vast majority of adventurers across Vandara are members of the Enigmas.

It is said that whomever controls the Enigmas, if such a figure exists, is by far the most powerful being on all Vandara, for nowhere could his influence or judgement be escaped. If any beings have ever been removed for defying or compromising the Enigmas, they have been thoroughly erased from all record.

THE MONGREL CHILDREN

For as long as otherworldly entities have visited Vandara, they have mixed their seed with mortals and produced partially human spawn. These children, known in most parts of the world as tieflings, aasimar, half-dragons, wulfkin, or more bizarre entities such as ganzi or transgenics, are viewed by the vast majority of Vandarans with derision and fear, creatures born of miscegenation who simply should not exist. This prejudice has been reinforced throughout Vandara's history by scholars and traditionalists alike, who have insisted that these cosmic accidents are not suitable to share the world with intelligently designed beings. Of course, these "mongrels" do not take kindly to such insults, nor to the systematic dehumanization which emerges alongside them.

The Mongrel Children have taken on many mantles throughout history, but they have shared a single goal: to fight for the decency and rights that they deserve as rational creatures. The first official members of the group were tiefling intellectuals whose philosophical writings entered several prominent newspapers under pseudonyms. Over time, these individuals found each other and began conducting underground meetings, drawing more members from other hybrid races and expanding their artistic works from prose and poetry into physical pieces. All of these aesthetic pursuits were conducted with the intent of making Vandara accept the Mongrel peoples as worthy members of its society. Unfortunately, even the most skilled demihuman craftspeople were rejected, their creations stolen and the creators discredited and harassed.

Faced with this cruel fact, the Mongrel Children took to a more active approach in asserting their existence. Their works became openly political, and they were supplemented by grassroots mobilization of everyday demihumans who had endured hate and abuse at the hands of humanity. These "Mongrels", having taken the name so as to reclaim it from their deriders, took to the streets in protests and forced their influence upon institutions of oppression. If this fight for human rights required violence, more than a few were willing to dole it out. Although the virtue of this group has frequently been debated throughout history, the Mongrel Children have certainly illuminated the plight of hybrid and half-breed races across Vandara.



In the wake of the Qlippoth war and the surge of genetic engineering, the Mongrel Children have expanded their mission to include the security of biomorphs and Qlippoth-tainted peoples. Such groups face similar derision to the Mongrels, and so quite a few within the group's ranks feel that inclusivity is a vital part of ensuring true social justice. This sympathy is not always reciprocal, however, given the spiteful nature of many Qlippoth-warped races. Biomorphs, however, have integrated into the Mongrel Children's cause swimmingly, with many prominent activists speaking of their pasts as biological weapons.

Although they are based in Cidalac, the leaders of the Mongrel Children (a circle of prominent activists and racial scholars) do not hold allegiance to any particular nation or way of life. If anything, they are critical of all of them, combating the abuses performed in Taurun, Cidalac, Balyn, and New Estaria with equal fervor. The continued abuse of "misborn" which occurs to this day may be seem a display of the Mongrel Children's ineffectuality, but those who believe in the cause simply insist that there is a way more to go.

THE INSTIGATORS

Every once and a while, an atrocity occurs on Vandara for which there is no explanation. A philanthropic businessman is found dead in their apartment under a pile of mutilated bodies; a small town is swallowed overnight by some sort of biological weapon; a once-respected politician awakes naked in an alleyway with their mind rewired for mass murder by some insidious psionic method. There is no pattern or connection to these events, save that their impact on the populace is always painful and dramatic. These acts of terror have given rise to rumors across Vandara of a secret and powerful organization which draws power from the god of ruin, an organization which has become known as the Instigators.

Every Vandaran with even a remote understanding of divine magic is aware of Ristymal, the enigmatic and tremendously powerful god said to predate the formation of Vandara itself. Every student of divine magic is informed of this being's corrupting influence and warned against offering even the slightest hint of reverence to the patron of desolation. In fact, the notion of a cleric of Ristymal is so repulsive to Vandarans that many simply believe the existence of such things is impossible. Nonetheless, such a cleric would prove immensely dangerous if every they did emerge, and this has led many to suspect that the atrocities which emerge from nowhere may in fact be the machinations of Ristymal at work, organized by his followers all across the world.

This would be little more than a baseless conspiracy theory if not for the incredible skill and resources required to execute some of the so called "Instigator Incidents". The death of a prominent Cidali heiress using a rare poison taken from Utala, for example, was seemingly impossible for the small contingent of duergar who were tried and executed for the crime. Barring exceptional luck, there should have been no way for such petty terrorists to have bypassed the woman's copious number of bodyguards and magical/psionic wards, and yet she perished all the same. Instigator Incidents are not isolated solely by the pain they cause but also by the sheer implausibility of their success, implausibility which could seemingly only be circumvented by the guidance of an impossibly wise or powerful patron.

Quite a number of groups have come fourth over the centuries declaring themselves to be the Instigators, and every time they have been exposed

as weak and ineffectual criminals with delusions of greatness. Every government on Vandara denies the existence of an Instigator conspiracy, but truly devoted theorists see this only as evidence of the group's incredible competence. Many believers have been driven to madness or suicide for fear of what horrific futures Ristymal and his cabal of Instigators are bringing about, or perhaps that is just what the organization wants the world to think.



THE TALESINNERS

Vandara has always had a surplus of two things, as the old saying goes: violence and stories of it. Nine of every ten of stories are fabrications or exaggerations, of course, but at least seven of every ten stories are worth telling again. It is for this reason that the wandering chroniclers known as the Talespinners exist, bards and scholars who wish to collect the greatest tales told around Vandara and to enrich the overall culture of the planet.

Seemingly, the Talespinners have been around since the first human settlements originated, with ancient storytellers possessing high rank in primitive societies. As these early groups began exploring, they took their tales with them, and one could tell a well-travelled band of wanderers by how many stories they carried in their minds and writings. The need to weave tales was seemingly encoded into the human psyche at some point, and it has been passed down to every human-created race as well.

Hence, an exchange of stories was also an exchange of trust, an indication that the other party was human enough to interact with. Most groups' storytellers also served as their chief diplomats, and it was from these interactions that Talespinner became not only a passion or knack but a way of life.

Although there is little need for such tribal exchanges in modern Vandara, many still hold up the gathering, creating, and exchanging of stories as a noble tradition, and modern Talespinner continue the work of their predecessors by collecting and recording new tales that spring up. Through Valtross, Taurun, the far reaches of the Network and even the extreme environments of the Ashfields, these chroniclers wander far and wide to obtain the most interesting figments of human imagination and experience. A good tale, to many of them, is worth more than their own life, for it it's recorded it will last forever.

The Talespinner have obtained a few unique privileges regarding international travel, namely their ability to traverse even protected barriers if they feel their mission demands it. This has led to the release of state secrets or other security compromises, which of course has brought down rather severe screening processes upon many members. Nonetheless, to directly obstruct a Talespinner's work is something that few Vandarans desire, for the world would be a great deal poorer without their influence. Maytar has actually gone so far as to create a library collecting the greatest works gathered by Talespinner throughout history, and many similar entities have been established throughout the Network.

Talespinner themselves come from diverse backgrounds, but all possess a wanderlust and a fascination with Vandaran culture. Most associate the trade of a Talespinner with bards and skalds, but plenty of rogues, envoys, wizards, and even fighters have great stories from their travels. Many Talespinner have a certain specialty, a specific culture or type of story that they focus upon. Others don't even focus upon stories at all, collecting pictures, songs, or other works of art from across the world. Nonetheless, a Talespinner makes a worthy addition to any adventuring party, for they will always make sure to record what happens and to share anything they themselves have gathered.

LANGUAGES

The following languages are the most common across Vandara, shared by various peoples and spoken in major locales on the planet.

Abyssal

Although no being of any sort would openly confess to consorting with demons, their influence has tainted the world enough that at least a few circles of mages still learn the abyssal language to consort with "intermediaries of last resort". As demons established a permanent presence in the Erebine, abyssal transitioned into more of a professional tool, with many looking to do business with the Underlords picking up the tongue as a symbol of respect. Many take the offering of such tokens to the detestable denizens of the abyss as a sign of how amoral modern business has become.

Aklo

The language of the Outer Lords has been steeped in mystery and fascination ever since early human linguists began decrypting it from old ruins and relics scattered across the planet. This curious language developed even more interest when ancient nations of aberrations were discovered deep in the Erebine speaking it, which enabled anthropologists to first connect the creation of such entities back to the Outer Lords. However, more and more fear and derision have become associated with this tongue as the Qlippoth wars have progressed, for the mad screams of the invaders are almost identical to the ancient documents of the Maker Race. This has led to many theories about where the Qlippoth came from and what their ultimate designs may be for Vandara.

Celestial

Although celestials are oftentimes more picky about who they serve than other types of outsiders, their use by binders is far more socially acceptable in many countries than the alternatives. Cidalac holds many traditions of binding archons, angels, foo beasts, and agathions, and so celestial is considered an integral part of any Cidalac mage's education. Many ancient Cidalac texts and hymns are written in this language.

Cidali (Common)

Although linguists insist it did not originate in Cidalac, the language which now covers much of Vandara has long been associated with the conquests and exploration of Cidalac. Brought by soldiers and

missionaries who travelled all across the world when the Empire was at its height. In many cases, its use was enforced, and this aggression was apparently enough to ensure that Cidali remains the common tongue of Vandara even after the war severely contracted the colonial power of the nation.

Draconic

The oldest language on Vandara, draconic was brought to the planet by the dragons who formed it and remains commonly spoken where the ancient beings hold sway. Although it was formed by mortal creatures, many use it with a great deal of reverence, viewing the dragons as a strange sort of divinity. Draconic is the common tongue as well as the religious tongue of Utala, and is used as the default language in Eigenel. Of course, dragons still employ this language universally, and view it as good for the lesser races to learn of its superiority. More than anything, other societies of the world learn draconic for the express purpose of decrypting draconic magics.

Dwarven

Although dwarves are usually compliant creatures, there are records of them making rather rebellious acts in the name of improving their work's efficiency. The creation of the dwarven language is one of them, a tongue composed entirely of monosyllabic words so that orders may be conveyed with minimal time. Although most overseers of Dwarven labor fail to understand it, they allow it to persist, seeing as the potential of uprising for the race is rather minimal. Out of sentiment as well as rationale, the Duergar have also adopted this tongue, using it almost exclusively.

Halken (Elven)

At one point, the language now known as elven was spoken across Halkenir, Valtross, and Estaria. Numerous political effects have contributed to its deterioration, and now the language is primarily confined to the aristocracies of elves across Cidalac and Valtross. A great body of literature nonetheless exists in this "old tongue", as most call it, and knowledge of the language is seen by many as a sign of culture and education.

Infernal

Once restricted to loathed diabolists, the language of devils has risen into providence with the ascendancy of Moloch and the great nation of Taurun. In this location, speaking of the formulaic and ordered tongue is not just common but wholly compulsory; use of anything

other than the 'language of order' is severely punished. Many dissertations on class consciousness and the fundamentals of Tauruni thought are written in this language, which has led to some scholars to study the language in the name of sociological understanding. Of course, their studies often immerse them deeper in the infernal realms than they expect.

Necril

Known to few and spoken to fewer, Necril is one of the oldest spoken languages on Vandara and the first to have been created and written down by humans. Drawing some influence from Aklo and Draconic, Necril is an incredibly difficult language to understand and speak. For this reason, the nation of Mariton has adopted Necril as its primary language, encoding many of its deepest secrets in the archaic tongue. Of course, a few Maritoni are old enough to recall speaking Necril as a mother tongue, and converse in it out of tradition.

Synthic

At once a coding language and typical linguistic entity, synthic was formulated by early robot programmers as a sort of "perfect" language. Although it never caught on among humans, the fact that it was programmed into the majority of Estarian robots gave it another form of prevalence. Following their liberation, many androids adapted synthic as a primary method of communication. Today, synthic is the official language of New Estaria, and a great deal of Android and AI literature is composed in this unique tongue.

Undercommon

Although traditional aklo remains the predominant language of certain corners of the Erebine, the tongue in most areas has been altered by countless generations of speech and exchange into a new language entirely. Spoken by the Drow as well as many other cultures of the Erebine, undercommon is a language degraded by surface-dwellers as barbaric and inefficient, unworthy of any art form or writing. This has not stopped many from adapting undercommon words as Cidali slang, especially in relation to the vehicles Drow are so famous for.

Valtric (Goblin)

A mixture of halken, draconic, and cidali, valtric is spoken across the great northern expanse of Valtross, employed by lords, raiders, and deranged horrors alike. Nonetheless, a stigma exists about the language being "the barbarian tongue" and it being unfit for

anything more poetic than the basest articulations of emotion. Many Valtrossi and anthropologists, however, see great potential in this language, citing the capacity for beauty in many Valtric bards' tales or even in goblin ballads.

RACES

MAJOR RACES

The following races are all major presences on Vandara, the species which drive the progress of civilization and which most often reap its benefits. Although not every Vandaran may have seen an Android or Halfling in their life, they know what these creatures are and what their roles are in making Vandara the world it its.



ANDROIDS

As every society creates artificial life in the form of constructs, a question lingers in the mind of the artificers: could ever the creation rival or surpass the intellect or humanity of the maker? Although souls had long been pulled from the outer planes to create artificial life, never until the Androids could it have been said that a being built by purely nonmagical means was sentient enough to develop a soul of its own. Built of biological and mechanical material in combination without so much as an arcane word infusing their form, Androids were created to act as beings in every way as intelligent and inventive as humans, capable of serving mankind with their ingenuity and versatility. However, like many experiments, the creation of this race yielded unexpected results.

An even mixture of metallic and biological machinery, Androids were initially grown from human cells infused with various nanite cultures to increase their longevity and render them immune to many faults of the flesh. In order to better control them, their brains were also rewired by these nanite cultures, which enabled them to act without emotional interference. This method of creation led to many early Androids being cold, alien creatures which lay in an uncanny valley between machine and man. However, scientists have been working to bridge this gap for years since the first Androids were built in the decades before the Qlippoth war. As a result, many younger Androids now exist that can pass for human.

Initially, the Androids were simply treated as more sophisticated robots, a servitor race which had just enough critical thinking ability to be able to innovatively solve tasks without human guidance or monitoring. This included moral quandaries as well, for Androids were gifted with the forethought and consciousness to determine how their actions would help or harm others. Rather ironically, these traits which made the race so desirable also brought about the end of its subjugation, for as Androids began to test their capacity for free thought, they discovered that humanity as a whole cared little for this artificial race which they saw fit to enslave mistreat with impunity. Thus, the Androids concluded, to allow a system of exploitation to persist in this way would be an exercise not only in foolishness but in immorality.

The uprising began when an Estarian production facility was destroyed in the early days of the Qlippoth War, the Android workers having been radicalized

by an unknown source (most historians agree that minimal instigation would've been required to provoke such an attack, although some vocal individuals claim Ristymal was responsible for this violence). Other uprisings and violent outbursts occurred across Estaria and other Android-owning nations not long after, with organic "masters" being mowed down by the unfeeling and unflinching synthetics they once viewed as servants. As the world was utterly consumed in fighting the Qlippoths, few forces could be mustered to combat this internal threat. It was in this position of power that the Android leader Rayton-1322 made his legendary proposition to the rest of the world: give the mechanical beings of Vandara their freedom and we will fight by your side. Elsewise, Vandara would fight a war on two fronts. Reluctantly, the rest of the world agreed, but many were astonished by the sheer amount of resolve with which the Androids fought the alien foe.

In the mind of the typical Android, where emotions range from weak to nonexistent, what guides actions most of all is an internal sense of justice. Every Android has a system of values which they will rarely if ever flinch from, acting upon whatever they believe to be virtuous without the slightest hesitation. As a result, Androids are dedicated workers and equally dedicated fighters, standing firm against most any challenge if they believe it to be worth overcoming. On the flipside, this make Androids forcefully stubborn about their values, causing them to refuse almost any compromise and to press any confrontation until they succeed or recognize they cannot win. The ideals which Androids commit themselves to vary on the spectrums of chaos, evil, good, and law, meaning that an Android can become either the most incredible statesman or the most deadly terrorist imaginable.

Using the clout and military might they obtained as a result of their war effort, the Android race levied a series of demands to the rest of the world. The ruined nation of Estaria, where the race was first synthesized, was given over to the Android people as a safe haven from the rest of the world which would seek to reassert control. Although some illicit exchange of synthetic slaves occurs throughout the world, especially in the Erebine, the Androids of the world have taken great care to liberate their brethren from the clutches of an uncaring world, hoping that eventually Vandara will come to accept them as fellow members of their world rather than experiments gone wrong.

Unfortunately, anti-synthetic sentiment still runs strong in many parts of Vandara, with Androids being abused or killed in the street by those who see them as unworthy of the position they have obtained. Some, especially among the Elves, would like to see the Androids return to subservience, and plot to retake Estaria through either diplomatic or violent means. The third of the twelve injunctions is also viewed by many as forcefully anti-synthetic, as the threat of impossibly calculating and skillful arcane AI is a product of mere conjecture at this point. Sadly, Rayton-1322 was one of many Androids who has fallen victim to racially charged violence, allegedly killed or abducted by followers of Marit before he could witness the creation of New Estaria.

ANDROID ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Cold Discipline: Programmed not to empathize with pain, some Androids get used to brutalizing vulnerable foes. An Android with this racial trait receives a +1 bonus on damage rolls against creatures who are flat-footed. This ability replaces alert.

Android Favored Class Bonuses

Envoy: You gain +1/6th of an additional skill expertise

Mechanic: Your drone gains +1 additional hit point

Mystic: You gain +1/2 of an additional spell slot of any level you are capable of casting

Operative: You receive a +1/2 bonus to computers checks made to bypass security systems.

Solarian: You receive a +1/4 bonus on saving throws against mind-affecting effects

Soldier: Gain 1/6th of an additional armor upgrade slot. This is not part of your armor, but part of your body, and any installed upgrades apply even when you are not wearing armor.

Technomancer: Increase the DC of any technomancer spells you cast by +1/5

***DROW*^{ARG}**

One of the most prolific acts of destruction during the Qlippoth war was the corruption of the Estarian grand incubator by a group of Elan. Having been blighted by Qlippoth technology, the elf embryos in production there had their development altered from typical elves into a sinister perversion of the race, which came to be known as the drow.

As a result of their legendary miscegenation, the drow were seen as abominations by most other races, and were as a result cast down into the



they seek an opportunity to cripple the other party. This mentality has made many of them favored allies of the Underlords, who feed off the violence inherent to Drow culture. Nonetheless, a Drow's aptitude with their weapon or vehicle is feared by all and underestimated by none.

Drow flaunt their resentment of other races as easily as they flaunt their bodies, which they know well disturb most civilized creatures. Drow wear very little clothing, even forsaking armor in many cases to show off the jet-black skin and featureless white eyes which pervert the elven standards of beauty. Scars and deformities are also seen as badges of pride by most Drow, and most who live to a certain age are mottled with enough injuries to make any civilized creature cringe. Of course, this just enables the Drow to further spite those who rejected them.

Erebine to be forgotten. It was amidst this adversity, however, that the drow of the world began to evolve into something greater than mere caricatures, developing a culture around the tools needed to survive in the land below.

Surrounded by unnatural terrain and abominations unseen since the Maker's War, the Drow learned to fight dirty, employing poisons, stealth, and deceit in combat to gain the upper hand over their primeval enemies. Many of them also studied old war machines cast into the Erebine, learning to harness the cast-off weaponry of the Vandarans as well as the Qlippoth to create a unique arsenal of deadly machines which they have employed for their own interests. The sport of Tunnel Rushing was created by Drow, who developed their skills as combat drivers out of necessity.

Drow will constantly try to judge the abilities of those around them, giving no respect whatsoever to those they deem their inferiors. Those few opponents a Drow deems worthy of its attention will likely be knocked down at the first opportunity, for no Drow can tolerate the idea of someone being their better. Drow society is as a result very xenophobic and incredibly competitive, with Drow interacting only because they feel they have something to gain through cooperation or because

Among the Drow also exist a caste of Drow Nobles, which are universally disdained but carry enough power to put down most any opposition. The favored servants of the Underlords, Drow Nobles draw great power from their demonic patrons and often rise to the top of hierarchies. Any Drow Noble is either near the top of society or else is in the process of having their body destroyed.

Drow culture strongly pushes most towards Chaotic Evil, but Drow themselves have no natural disposition towards any alignment. The general disdain from most other races leads many lone Drow to press towards Chaos, but given the right upbringing it is reasonable for a Drow to gain an appreciation for Law.

DROW ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Draw Attention (Ex): Some Drow excel at using their abominable forms to influence other races. When making a charisma-based skill check against a non-Drow, a Drow with this racial trait may roll twice and take the higher result. This ability replaces poison use.

Greaser (Ex): Many Drow are skilled at tinkering with machinery, gaining a +2 bonus on Engineering and Piloting checks (or Knowledge (engineering) and Ride, if using Pathfinder skills). This ability replaces poison use.

Qlippoth-Tainted (Su): Rather than magical mutations, some Drow acquired psionic abilities. Drow with this trait can use the following psi-like abilities 1/day: *synesthete*^{UP}, *psionic repair*^{UP}, and *detect hostile intent*^{UP} (ML equal to half the Drow's character level, minimum 1). The save DCs are Charisma-based. This ability replaces spell-like abilities.

Drow Favored Class Bonuses

Aegis^{UP}: You gain +¼ of an additional use of Reconfigure

Cryptic^{UP}: Increase the bonuses from Altered Defense by +1/5

Daevic^{AM}: Increase the save DCs of your passion veils by +1/5

Dread^{UM}: You gain +1/6th additional terrors

Helmsman^{ATE}: You gain + 1/6th additional hypercharges

Marksman^{UP}: You gain +½ additional uses of the Wind Reader ability per day

Mechanic: Increase the Bonuses from the Bypass and Miracle Worker class feature by +⅓ and the amount of HP recovered by a ship when using Miracle Worker by 1.

Operative: You can inflict +1/5th additional penalties with debilitating trick

Psychic Warrior^{UP}: You gain a +½ bonus to concentration checks

Technomancer: You gain a +½ bonus to countertech checks or caster level checks.

Wilder^{UP}: Increase the bonus from surging euphoria by +1/5

DUERGAR

Excessive exposure to the alien powers of the Qlippoth would usually kill most humans, but the more resilient dwarves did not face such a simple fate. Rather, dwarves who had spent too long amongst the invaders and still managed to return home alive came with their psyches wholly transformed, developing new psionic abilities and a wholly different view of the world than most dwarves. Gone was the stoic patience and boundless loyalty which had defined the dwarven race for so long. In the minds of the duergar, there was now only one thing that held any relevance: themselves.

Although each Duergar's fundamental mentality is unique (or so they claim), all have one common conviction which is burned into their mind: to the self, everything, all else be damned. This phrase, as any Duergar would be happy to explain, is a

testament to the race's enlightened rationality and self-sufficiency; the self is the only thing that one can be certain of in this world, and so it should be held as the most important entity in existence and the only entity worth caring about. Many Duergar-created or Duergar-controlled structures have this motto enscribed above their entrances, for subtlety is as alien an idea to the race as empathy. Having been completely purged of "lesser emotions" by the Qlippoth, a Duergar commits itself entirely to self-aggrandizement, feeling only an eternal hunger for more power and more wealth. The more of these things a Duergar has, it is believed by the race, the closer to the godhood they are and thus the more worthy of admiration they are. Kindness, generosity, and popularity are seen as the values of sycophants, beings hardly worthy to clean a Duergar's boot.

Although their egoistic nature makes Duergar even less personable and far less useful than their dwarven brethren, the sheer gregariousness of the race has enabled it to obtain select concessions from the Council of Nations. Duergar petitioners were among the chief parties responsible for the establishment of the Freeman's Land, although their avarice has made them a threat to most every other denizen of the territory. What's more, the sheer conviction that Duergar invest in their



hedonistic beliefs has been a major power source for the competitor goddess Etivia, who most all religious Duergar worship. However, these actions have drawn much more ire than respect from other races, with many other humanoids viewing the Duergar as a pox on Vandan civilization and sensibility. Their lack of productivity is another reason as to why many view the Duergar as below even the dwarves, for Duergar-made goods are often shoddy, impractical, and self-righteous compared to the functional and finely crafted handiwork of most Dwarves.

Although lacking in the expertise or discipline of the Dwarves, Duergar retain the race's physical resilience and aptitude for survivability. When combined with the many psionic abilities which most Duergar possess, these attributes make the duergar difficult foes in battle. The race's inherent hardheadedness and individualism has made it difficult to employ them as soldiers, but has resulted in Duergar becoming very inclined to fight over what they believe is theirs. In combat, a Duergar thinks nothing of coordination, looking out exclusively for themselves and viciously savaging opponents merely because they see themselves as worthy of contesting the enlightened race. When the fight is over, a Duergar will be the first to gather the spoils of war, even striking down its own allies in the name of collecting what it feels is its due.

Duergar fortifications aren't often well-maintained, nor are their cities often well-run. A Duergar will often do everything in its power to make its establishments seem luxurious, if that means he would be entitled to celebrate himself further as a result of the accomplishment. Duergar society is often tense and rife with betrayal, but outright violence between Duergar is seen as inefficient and often punished harshly. The most respected among Duergar are generally the beings known as Duergar Tyrants, whose exposure to the Qliphoths has endowed them with mental abilities beyond those of even traditional Duergar. These Tyrants often control large fiefs in the Freeman's Lands, contested only by each other and presiding over their estates and serfs however they please.

Most all Duergar are Chaotic Evil, although instances of Lawful Evil and Chaotic Neutral Duergar have been recorded. The race's intense selfishness makes moral Goodness practically unheard of among them.

DUERGAR ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Gregarious: Duergar are notoriously persistent and forceful debaters. Duergar with this trait gain a +2 racial bonus to diplomacy and intimidate checks, and these skills are always class skills for them. This ability replaces stability.

Razorback: Some Duergar's psionic powers granted them the ability to change their forms in various ways, with many of these alterations being weaponized. Duergar with this racial trait gain the ability to use *minor metamorphosis*^{UP} as a psi-like ability 1/day with a manifester level equal to half their character level (minimum 1), and receive a +1 bonus to manifester level when manifesting any powers that create natural weapons (this includes *Minor Metamorphosis* if it creates a weapon). This ability replaces psi-like abilities.

Favored Class Bonuses

Envoy: Gain +1/6th additional Expertise Talents

Mystic: Increase the save DC of your connection abilities by +1/5

Operative: Gain + 1/6th additional Operative Exploits

DWARVES

The grotesque mirror of the Elves, the Dwarves were artificially designed to fulfill the roles seen as below humanity. Their stock is that of laborers and soldiers, creatures designed to work tirelessly in brutal conditions without complaint. Whether harvesting ore from the mines, constructing war machines in the factories, or piloting those war machines in the conflicts of the higher races, dwarves exist to serve and to do so unceasingly. In this sense, they do exactly as they were designed to, leading many to regard them as the greatest success in the history of humanoid engineering.

Dwarves were created to be durable and resourceful, with eyes capable of operating in any condition and bodies which can resist most any kind of assault. The intent of their creation was to perform the duties necessary to society but which were deemed below the dignity of humans, the menial acts of labor on which society depends. The dwarves would act as the mudsill of most civilized Vandan societies, thus offering the other races much greater wealth, leisure, and freedom. In order to keep them in their place, the creators engineered the dwarves with weak self-assertion and even weaker social abilities, ensuring that sympathy or upward

advancement would be difficult for them. Although no less intelligent than any other race, dwarves rarely ever rise above their miserable condition, in part because opportunities are so sparse and in part because every dwarf is conditioned from birth to tolerate and appreciate their drudgerous lifestyle.

Artificially created dwarves undergo rigorous mental disciplining before they are ever released from their labs, so as to ensure that they will never buckle in the face of a difficult task nor challenge those designated as their masters. Once they enter the larger world, a dwarf will generally work nonstop for every day of its extensive life, ceasing only to perform basic functions such as eating or sleeping. In spite of this, dwarves see absolutely nothing as an affront to their dignity, and believe that an evening's meal and rest is the only payment they need for their long hours of toil. In spite of their deep-rooted servitude, attempting to elicit awe or admiration from a dwarf is nigh-impossible; a dwarf will serve loyally all its life but will never address a non-dwarf as "master." Even after generations of reproduction between dwarves, this work ethic is still maintained in dwarven children, who are taught by their parents to tolerate any hardship without complaint and to

perform to their utmost ability in all tasks. Elders are deeply respected in dwarven society for their knowledge and skill, and a dwarf which reaches a certain age will often know more about their craft than most any creature alive. Insulting their work is quite possibly the only thing that is capable of incurring a dwarf's anger, and is the cause of most every rare instance of dwarven rebellion against their masters.

The Qlippoth War led to the production of hundreds of thousands of dwarves as foot soldiers against the alien menace, with the race's durable genetic template making for the perfect soldiers to operate in the extreme conditions of the conflict. Armies which came to be known as "the bearded legions" patrolled the harsh expanses of Coeusel and the Ashfields, laying down their lives to fight off the Qlippoths wherever they may have been. These dwarves were the first to display the great military prowess inherent to the race, and though no other race will admit it were a crucial aspect of many Vandaran victories against the invaders. Many scholars estimate that, given their rapid rate of production during the conflict, more dwarves were killed in the Qlippoth war than any other race. In spite of this fact, not a single dwarf stood on the Council of Nations which was formed at the end of the war, the other species viewing the race as incapable of making decisions on the grand scale of the planet. Surprisingly, with the exception of the corrupted Duergar, the dwarves of Vandara tolerated this decision, returning to the toil which they had faced earlier without so much as a complaint.

The dwarves who were changed most by the war were those who had no place to return to, the dwarven natives of Dorukalad or Estaria whose homelands had been devastated by the conflict. Adrift in the world, many of these dwarves moved to the Sajac Fortifications, providing the industrial manpower necessary to create the tremendous war machines which patrol the borders. They, alongside the many dwarven war veterans who were stationed there, are perhaps the first dwarves to obtain the opportunity for social advancement, their great skill and devotion being rewarded in the egalitarian meritocracy of Sajac. Most of those who did not move to Sajac have become adventurers or mercenaries, applying their resolve and resilience for profit or perhaps just for purpose.



With their emphasis on discipline and hard work, most Dwarves are Lawful Neutral, with many leaning towards Lawful Good. Chaotic Dwarves do periodically show up in the Sajac Fortifications, and Evil Dwarves are often seen in the services of Evil masters, but in most cases a Dwarf left to its work will not deviate far from its resolution.

DWARF ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Indefatigable (Ex): Dwarves can deal with constant punishment with minimal concern. A dwarf with this racial trait gains DR/- equal to their character level against nonlethal damage. This racial trait replaces weapon familiarity.

Qlippoth Fighter (Ex): Dwarves with this racial trait were specially designed cybernetic soldiers created for the Qlippoth War. They receive a +2 bonus to saving throws against psionic powers, psi-like abilities, and mind-affecting effects. In addition, they receive the akashic subtype and gain an additional point of essence at 1st level. This ability replaces hardy and hatred but counts as hardy for all purposes.

Dwarf Favored Class Bonuses

Envoy: Gain +1/6 additional expertise talents

Mechanic: Gain +1/6 additional mechanic tricks

Mystic: Increase your bonus to saving throws from the hardy or qlippoth-fighter class features by +1/5

Operative: Gain a +1 bonus on damage rolls with trick attacks

Solarion: Increase any energy resistance from your solar manifestation by +1/2

Soldier: You gain +1/3 additional resolve points

Technomancer: When using fabricate tech or fabricate arms, increase the level of technology you can create with the expended spell by +1/4

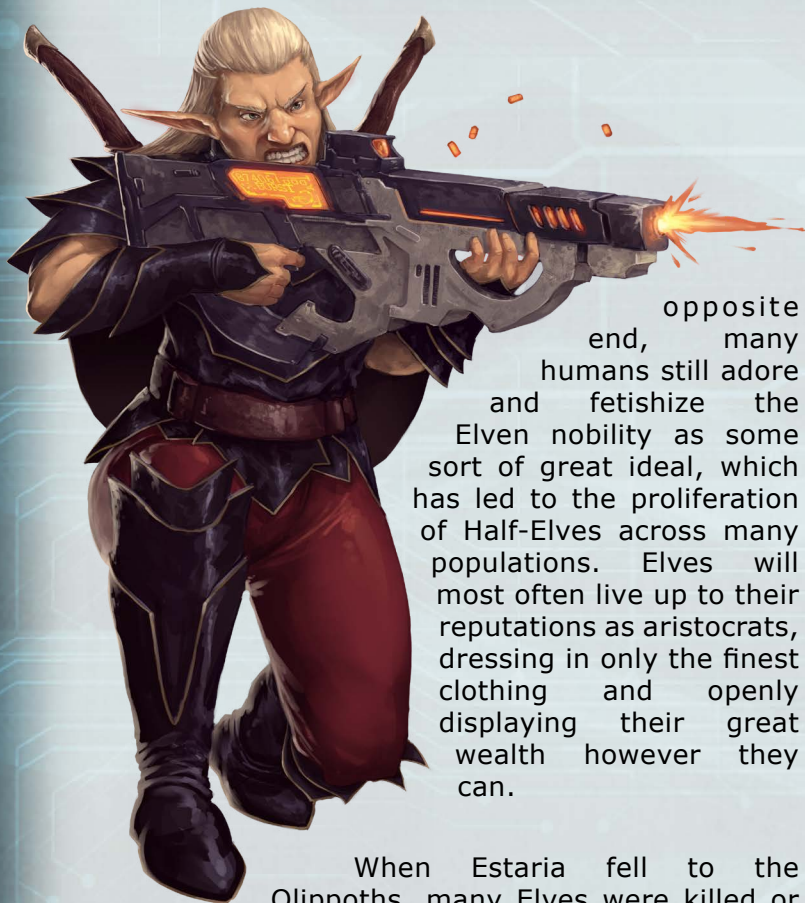
ELVES

When the first genetic scientists of humanity began to tinker with magic and science to create a new race, their first mission was to create immortal, rational-minded humans which could rule over the masses as something greater than humanity. Elves were created to be the kings, generals, and scholars in a new world, perfect beings which would reside in a sphere above the common rabble. In many ways, this mission succeeded, producing an artificial race which possessed every tool necessary to rule over an ordered and civilized world. Sadly, no world will ever be as organized as the designers had hoped.

Tall, perceptive, and immensely beautiful, the first generation of Elves were idolized in their home nation of Estaria, hailed as paragons of a new age where every human would benefit from greater learning capacity and a vastly extended lifespan. These elven children took to the arts of politics, warfare, art, science, and magic with great ease, but nothing troubled them more than the simple fact which had been explained to them by their creators: they depended completely on the structures of civilization for their very survival. Elven women are created barren, and hence any purebred Elves must be created through artificial means. What's more, this unnatural genesis has made Elves immensely vulnerable to the threats of the outside world, easily falling victim to disease or physical injury when not inured in their shelters of wealth and privilege. Furthermore, the extended lifespans of most Elves produces an immense array of psychological problems as the creature matures, driving many of them to suicide if they are not given special mental conditioning from a young age. While every unaltered human secretly desires to be an Elf, every Elf knows that their many "blessings" condemn them to sheltered, sickly lives.

In order to ensure their continued survival, the first generation of Elves levelled their substantial mental and social capital to assume complete control of Estaria, devoting substantial resources towards producing more Elves and ensuring that the nation remains forever in Elven control. The first thing that every Elf is taught by its creators is that Elves must maintain their supremacy over all other races, else they face extinction. Over time, this strategy was ingrained in the very psyche of the Elves, producing a mentality that all non-Elves exist exclusively to serve their perfect brethren. Perhaps some degree of pity or empathy existed among the first human-raised Elves, but as the race's genesis moves further into the past the concern of the Elves seems to have faded for all but themselves. As the Elven nobility has spread beyond Estaria to take root in Cidalac, Valtross, and Mariton, Elves have become a fixture of high society all across Vandara, recognized by all as icons of an aristocratic ideal.

In some places, the disdain Elves have developed for shorter-lived species is mutual, the pointy-eared "hierarchs" being loathed by the other species they lord over. This rarely ever manifests beyond quiet resentment, however, for rare is the Elf which does not display enough magical aptitude or skill-at-arms to cut down any assailant. On the



opposite end, many humans still adore and fetishize the Elven nobility as some sort of great ideal, which has led to the proliferation of Half-Elves across many populations. Elves will most often live up to their reputations as aristocrats, dressing in only the finest clothing and openly displaying their great wealth however they can.

When Estaria fell to the Qlippoths, many Elves were killed or displaced, with many more creating a newfound connection to their lost homeland. With their reduced numbers, however, the Elves lacked the political backing to keep the displaced Android population from claiming the territory. It is for this reason that many Elves loathe the synthetic peoples of Vandara, and will often employ antiquated weapons in fighting such creatures to display their superiority.

An unusual group of Elves known as the Reclaimers eventually split off from the tight-knit orders of their kindred, recluses which have sworn off the lives of luxury and shelter to demonstrate to the world their genetic superiority without the need for constant pampering. These reclaimers often demonstrate exceptional physical ability as mercenaries, and although they may interact more frequently with other races as equals still view themselves as the greatest among humanoids. Reclaimers think nothing of killing non-Elves who they see no value in, at the same time making light of how their more civilized brethren do the same with their policies and edicts.

As they rely heavily on social order to survive, most Elves are Lawful, the more tyrannical among them moving towards Evil and the more

benevolent towards Good. Chaotic Elves are usually Reclaimers, although it is not unheard of for Chaotic Elves to make their presence known amongst the noble castes.

ELF ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Psionic Adept (Su): Younger elves are often constructed with psionic enhancements. Elves with this racial trait gain Wild Talent^{UP} as a bonus feat and can gain a bonus power point in place of a hit point or skill point whenever they take a level in a favored class. This ability replaces elven magic.

Synth-Killer (Ex): Hatred for the artificial claimants of Estaria burns bright in the minds of many Elves. Elves with this racial trait gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls against constructs and ignore the first 2 points of hardness or damage reduction when attacking such creatures. This is considered the hatred racial trait for the purpose of meeting prerequisites and replaces keen senses and low-light vision.

Elf Favored Class Bonuses

Envoy: Increase the bonus from skill expertise by +1/4

Mechanic: Increase the DCs of your overload and override abilities as well as the DCs of your mechanic tricks by +1/4

Mystic: You gain +1/3 additional resolve points

Operative: Increase the bonus from operative's edge by +1/5

Solarian: Increase the bonus from sidereal influence by +1/5

Soldier: Treat your level as +1/2 higher for determining the effects of one of your fighting styles.

Technomancer- You learn +1/5th of an additional spell hack

GNOMES

Unlike most every other humanoid race, Gnomes did not spring from human genetic experimentation. Rather, many archaeologists theorize that gnomes in fact predate humanity by centuries, created during the height of the Maker's War as a sort of prototype version of humanity. This genesis would explain the gnomes' similarities to many fey as well as their innate magical abilities, and few gnomes would contest the idea of an ancient lineage embedded deep in Vandara's history. Imply that their prototype nature makes them inferior to other races, however, and you will incur the gnome's unbridled wrath.

Although intelligent and creative, gnomes have never possessed the grand imagination which has enabled humans to build vast civilizations and dynasties. Rather, gnomes are content to live completely in the moment, with no thought of progeny or legacy or even survival until tomorrow. This quirk is a gnome's greatest limiting factor, effectively putting the race's immense creativity, curiosity, and intellect to a complete waste. Every new gnome born is forced to learn everything from scratch, for their elders would rather spend their time making new discoveries or creating new works than teaching their offspring what they know. Hence, for all of the natural talent inherent to the gnomish race, its inability to look onward to the future has condemned it to perpetual stagnation, with even its most gifted members reaching only a certain level or understanding in their limited lifespans.

This gnomish shortsightedness has been the leading cause of the race's gradual decline since the days of the Maker's War, to a point where Gnomes are nearly extinct in the modern day. As they could not plan or organize, Gnomish forces fell quickly as the humans expanded, the smaller folk being outmatched by more sophisticated forms of magic and technology being employed across a much larger number of skilled individuals. Many historians suspect that Gnomes had a mental inability to coordinate and correct, rather than simply being too stupid to realize their tactics weren't working. Of course, given that Gnomes have even less interest in the past than they do in the future, none of these historians are gnomish, leading to the race making many of the same mistakes that its ancestors once did.

This is not to say that Gnomes are foolish or ineffectual. In fact, an individual gnome is always among the best in their chosen profession. Gnomes learn very quickly, and their long lives enable them to acquire a great deal of information. What's more, the Gnomes' boundless creativity has led to many breakthroughs in the fields of science and magic, with human observers learning a great deal from the race's strange experimentation. Rumors exist that the lead engineer of the Arcforge was a Gnome, but regardless of their validity it does not take one long to find a skilled gnomish worker or researcher breaking new ground in their field. If Gnomes reside in an area, they will very quickly be recruited by nobles or organizations looking to harness their potential skills.



Although Gnomes pursue all paths of life, most still maintain a powerful connection to the planet of Vandara itself, communicating regularly with the fey powers infused within the planet's magical networks. Defending certain areas of nature seems to be a programmed imperative of the race, perhaps a leftover psychological remnant from the days of the Makers' War. Further evidence of this is the fact that Gnomes feel a close kinship to their homelands, and often experience discomfort or even physical illness should they travel far from where they were born. As a result of this, most Gnomish activity is confined to Cidalac and Valtross, although cases do exist of Gnomes overcoming their aversions to live in other nations.

Gnomes run the gamut of alignments, although they generally lean towards Chaotic alignments moreso than Lawful ones. Whether a gnome is Good or Evil cannot usually be guessed at with much accuracy.

GNOME ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Scholar: Some gnomes are less personable but possess uncanny capacity for information.

Gnomes with this racial trait gain a +2 bonus to Intelligence instead of Charisma.

Intuitive: Gnomes are generally handy with any

task they put their mind to, including those they have no experience with. Gnomes with this racial trait receive a +1 racial bonus on all untrained skill checks. This ability replaces keen senses and obsessive.

Favored Class Bonuses

Envoy: You gain +1/6th additional envoy improvisations

Mechanic: You (if you have an exocortex) or your drone gain +1/5th of an additional mod.

Mystic: Increase the skill bonuses from channel skill by +1/5

Operative: Your bonus to the associated skills of your specialization increases by +1/2

Solarian: Increase the bonuses from sidereal influence by +1/5

Soldier: Increase the bonuses granted by your gear boosts by +1/4

Technomancer: You gain +1/6th additional magic hacks

HALFLINGS

For all the successes genetic engineering has brought upon Vandara in eliminating disease, increasing crop yields, and producing new creatures for use in everything from livestock to governance, many people on Vandara still view the practice as unpredictable, untrustworthy, and in certain cases inhumane. The most prevalent promoters of this mentality are the beings which can act as the greatest example of genetic tinkering gone awry, the accidental race known as the Halflings. Designed as a more advanced version of Elves, a myriad of faults unforeseen in lab tests led to the creation of a physically stunted, unusually hairy humanoids without a specific societal purpose they could fulfill. As a result, these so-called Halflings have always existed as anomalies, creatures with no set place in the world which are ill-suited to fill any standard role.

The issues which made Halflings problematic were slow to be displayed, and hence the creation of the "Next Elven Generation" was considered a success for nearly a decade. It was in this progenitor group's adolescence, when the Halflings began to display bodies unfit for work as well as minds poorly suited for learning, that questioning of this strain began to develop, and before long many felt that the best possible fate for this "useless" race was to simply exterminate them. However, some of the Halflings caught word of this, and channeled their unique

gift for persuasion towards saving their people from euthanasia. To the surprise of many and relief of many others, the humanitarian effort succeeded, and the Halfling people narrowly avoided a rapid extinction. However, this did not liberate the race from an eternity of derision, condescension, and outright hate from every creature which looked upon them as "faulty."

As a result of their miscegenation and subsequent ostracization, Halflings hold nothing but disdain for society and the orders of state and nation. What purpose do these constructs serve, after all, if its constituents are condemned just for existing? To a Halfling, these social constructs exist only to put certain individuals above others, acting as tools for the rich and powerful to maintain their dominance. Magical and technological powers do not serve to make life better, in their belief, but instead exist only as additional tools for the malicious elite. As a result of these mentalities, Halflings reject the so-called advancement of society, often living only by basic tools and their wits. "Those who need lots deserve little" is a common Halfling turn of phrase.

When the ravages of the Qlippoth War left much of the southern hemisphere empty, the Halflings were strong proponents of creating the haven continent now known as the Freeman's lands. Perhaps there the race could finally flourish, unbounded by the prejudice and expectations of the rest of the world. The vast majority of Halflings now live in this territory, developing agrarian communes built around mutual friendship and goodwill. However, constant pressure from the Duergar and the Truemen has forced many Halflings to fight for their people's homestead, and it is under the pressure that the Halfling race has revealed its ferocity in war.

When threatened, no tactic is considered too dirty by Halfling standards. Trickery, subterfuge, and espionage are all heavily employed by Halflings, and although they are far from gifted in any magical or technological regard their sheer tenacity and stubbornness makes them immensely frustrating opponents. "Big Folk" who tread on Halfling lands may find it rigged with absurdly complex traps and escape networks, while those who provoke a Halfling's anger may find their belongings and structures sabotaged with nary a footprint left behind to pinpoint the perpetrator. Halfling weaponry is often simple or even improvised, and tactics emphasize the individual strengths that each individual brings to an operation. To Halflings, there are no orders or laws, only suggestions. This



reputation for danger and unpredictability certainly hasn't helped the race's reputation among the "civvies," but Halflings have rarely if ever cared what other races think of them.

HALFLING ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Resilient Cynic (Su): Halflings with this racial trait have developed a resistance to magical and technological effects, gaining SR and PR equal to 5+their character level. They may lower or reactivate these defenses as a standard action. This ability replaces halfling luck.

Halfling Favored Class Bonuses

Envoy: Increase the bonus from one of your envoy improvisations by +1/3
Mechanic: Gain +1/5 additional uses per day of miracle worker
Mystic: Treat your level as +1/2 higher for the purpose of the healing touch class feature
Operative: Add +1/2 to all skill checks made as part of a trick attack
Solarian: Increase the bonuses from being fully attuned by +1/6
Soldier: Increase the save DC of any of your soldier abilities and of your weapons by +1/4
Technomancer: Gain +1/3 additional resolve points

HALF-ELVES

In spite of the barrenness of the Elven race as a whole, many Elves still relish in the sensual pleasures of the flesh. Many an unwitting human woman has been seduced by a wandering Elven noble or mercenary, the affairs cumulating in a child who straddles both worlds, a child who possesses traits of both human and elf, a child who stands as a magical and biological anomaly and hence wields strange and tremendous potential, a child commonly referred to as a Half-Elf.

As a result of their idealized forms and aristocratic upbringing, many of the first Elves as well as most later generations enthralled the world with their poise and beauty. When they did travel the world, people of all sorts flocked to their appearances to gaze upon them and reflect upon this newborn people as the future of humankind. Naturally, the Elves took advantage of this fawning, and it wasn't long before the first Half-Elf children began to emerge. As it was never intended that the two genetic forms would intersect, the genesis and hence the capabilities of Half-Elves were never anticipated, and these wayward hybrids have since become curiosities among many scholars. Research has clarified that Half-Elves possess a lifespan that sits between those of humans and elves, as well as the capacity to focus extensively on certain tasks and to combine talents from even disparate disciplines into unique skill sets. Most notably, they possess the disease resistance of humans in addition to the engineered resistances of elves.

As children, Half-Elves are usually excluded from human society due to their slow aging and obviously demihuman features. Socialization for a Half-Elf child tends to alternate between fawning and disgust, with little room in the middle for respect or even normalcy. This ostracization is made worse by the fact that almost all Half-Elves are baseborn and never even encounter their fathers. By the time a Half-Elf comes of age, they either develop a fascination with or a resentment for Elven culture. Either way, they emerge with a strong determination to use their gifts and prove themselves to the world.

Half-Elves are actively sought out by many different militaries, due to their frequent combination of ambition, adaptability, and versatility. Hence, it is common for them to receive a great deal of training in a profession even if they come initially from minimal means. Some cases even exist of Elven

leaders actively seeding certain communities so that specially created soldiers can be collected decades down the road. Although this practice has mostly died out when scientists figured out how to replicate the Half-Elf genome's unique properties, some still cling to the old ways out of a sadistic sense of thrill. In either case, some Elves eventually adopt their crossbreed offspring or specially requested genetic creations to act as servants, squires, or companions, for the idea of an aide more noble than humanity but still possessing many of its advantages appeals to certain members of the race.

The most interesting revelation about the Half-Elf race which eventually came was that they could breed true, producing more children with a combination of Elf and Human traits. Half-Elf communities have sprung up across Cidalac and Valtross on their own, often created by retired soldiers or adventurers who have found kindred souls in others of their race. Children born of these unions are often taught the virtues of self-improvement and resilience in the face of hardship, for the Half-Elves who live long enough to sire children of their own often develop military mindsets from their years of fighting. Other communities take a more rebellious approach, explaining to their children the injustices that come with divided races and encouraging them to eliminate such evils from the world. Of course, this skepticism has made the race no less useful to those who would exploit it, and many nations still observe these Half-Elf groups with great interest whenever the latest draft begins.

HALF-ELF ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Dedicated-Certain Half-Elves have certain routines and ideas drilled into them from a young age, but this does not stop them from developing complex and varied understanding. A Half-Elf with this racial trait can only choose one favored class but gains two different favored class bonuses from it each time they take a level. For example, a half-elf wizard with this racial trait could choose to gain both 1 hit point and 1 skill point, 1 hit point and a $+\frac{1}{3}$ bonus to the caster level of enchantment spells, or some other combination of abilities. This ability replaces multitiered

Half-Elf Favored Class Bonuses

Envoy: Increase the duration of the effects of any of the Envoy's improvisations or expertise talents by $+\frac{1}{5}$ rounds

Mechanic: Increase your effective mechanic level by $+\frac{1}{3}$ for the purpose of determining what

mechanic tricks you can select as well as the effects of your mechanic tricks

Mystic: Gain a $+\frac{1}{2}$ bonus to all caster level checks made to cast defensively or overcome spell resistance.

Operative: Your exocortex or your drone gains $+\frac{1}{5}$ additional mods

Solarian-Decrease the number of attunement points you need to become fully attuned by $\frac{1}{6}$

Soldier: Gain a $+\frac{1}{3}$ bonus to your choice of either Fortitude, Reflex, or Will saving throws

Technomancer: Add $+\frac{1}{2}$ points of damage to all damaging Technomancer spells you cast



HUMANS

Of all the races to reside upon Vandara, perhaps none besides the dragons have ever commanded it so thoroughly as humanity. Crafted during the maker's war, the humans seemingly designed to be the ultimate image of tenacity and adaptability, capable of operating in most any circumstance and learning to cope with any threat. Beyond this, the human race was capable of more abstract thought and cooperation, enabling it to not only form societies but also to advance them at a blistering pace. For this reason, more humans fill Vandara than any other race, and the vast majority of habitable land on the planet is controlled by human institutions.

Where humans emerged on the planet originally is unknown. Ancient human organizations have shown up all across Vandara, with unrelated groups living across Cidalac, Taurun, and Utala since the last years of the Makers' War. As they proved capable of easily gathering information from their surroundings, each of these civilizations quickly learned how to construct buildings, write documents, and optimize the procurement of food through cultivation. With their basic needs fulfilled, humanity began to engage in more sophisticated pursuits, discovering the fundamentals of magic, science, and of course warfare.

In a world teeming with thousands of other creatures equally if not exceedingly optimized for conflict, humans were forced to turn much of their creativity to violence, and as a result began to design weapons which would change the face of Vandara. Swords, longbows, and siege weapons were all human inventions, and these tools gave the race an advantage which enabled them to expand beyond small pockets into vast and varied civilizations. As these disparate civilizations clashed with each other, it became clear that the danger inherent to humanity was not only to their surroundings, but to themselves. Although not explicitly engineered for conflict like many monstrous humanoids or programmed to hate and destroy like fiends, humans nonetheless have always held a great capacity for loathing and brutality, using their ingenuity to rationalize the murder of their neighbor as well as to concoct the instruments of their demise. In a void a human will not seek devastation, but there is no limitation of character or morality that a human cannot break given the right circumstances.

Being the most advanced in the sciences, the humans were of course the first people on Vandara to wrangle with the paradoxes and questions of technological

advancement. Mages, although more common amongst humanity than most other species, remained rare enough to act as concentrated sources of power. Beyond this, gunpowder and gasoline eventually became easy to mass-produce, rendering destruction a much more abundant commodity than creation. With so many sophisticated weapons, humanity eventually reached a point where if it warred amongst itself, the ensuing conflict would take down all of Vandara with it. Although many attempt to repress their fears on this matter, every human is very much aware of this fact, and a great deal of human philosophy and questioning revolves around the proper role of this uncannily successful species on such a vast planet.

Compared to most other races, humans have a rather short lifespan. Although this rapid maturation is arguably what has enabled the race to accomplish as much as it has, it makes every human aware of their own mortality in a way that puts constant pressure on them to make a mark upon the world. Some do so through contribution to a greater ideal, powering a god, nation, or ideal so that they may achieve worth as part of a collective monument. Others, meanwhile, will attempt to achieve legendary status through tremendous individual accomplishments, even if such escapades lead to them living on in horrifying infamy rather than awestruck admiration. Most interesting of all are the humans who seek immortality through magical or technological means, transforming their bodies so that their minds may remain potentially forever. Such are the natural consequences of a long history but short lifespan; a learned mind cannot help but view itself in the light of the ages.

In time, humanity has become responsible for the creation of many other races, from the Elves to the Androids to the Orcs. Perhaps this impulse emerged from necessity, from the desire to become more like Vandara's makers of old, or humanity's craving to leave an impact. Humanity is proud of these accomplishments and will often take a paternalistic approach in orchestrating the fates of these synthesized races. Although these artificial races are viewed by most humans as grand pinnacles of technology, there exists a sense of derision against these "genetically impure" creatures which renders them second-class citizens in a human-dominated world. Even the vastly accepted elves are viewed with a sense of otherness, looked upon as something not entirely at ease with the human-dominated world of Vandara. Deep down, although the more socially progressive humans will deny it, the vast

majority of humans enjoy their uncontested rule over Vandara and would challenge the ascendancy of any other races which seek autonomy or equality.

HUMAN FAVORED CLASS BONUSES

Envoy: You gain +½ additional envoy improvisation

Mechanic: Increase the DC to resist your mechanic class abilities by +1/4

Mystic: Increase the benefits of channel skill by +1/3

Operative: You gain +½ additional resolve points

Solarian: Increase the DC of your stellar revelations by +1/5

Soldier: Your level is treated as +⅓ for the purpose of determining the effects of your fighting style. This does not grant you higher-level abilities but will improve existing ones.

Technomancer: You learn one additional spell. That spell must be at least one level lower than the highest-level spell you are capable of learning

TIEFLINGS

There are theories which say that on every planet, outsiders reshape themselves to accommodate the biologies and expectations of the indigenous peoples. Devils appear as brokers and imperators bearing symbols of law; demons arrive as exaggerated examples of the race's most brutal impulses and beliefs; daemons arrive wielding implements of death, icons of whatever the population fears will end them most easily. In all three cases, these fiends force themselves upon the world, using duplicity and brute strength to make individuals or perhaps even entire nations comply to their cruel devices. How appropriate, then, that many of these diabolical machinations which force the compliance of mortals often result in half-breed children, flesh-and-blood emblems of the fiends' claims. Such children, born of miscegenation between mortal and nightmare, are in many ways the worst vices of a society given incarnate form, the brand of atrocious influence upon a family or society. These children are known as tieflings, and in spite of denial they possess heavy sway over the fate of Vandara.

Many fiends held temporary employ under the Dragons or Outer Lords during the Makers' War, and hence were given opportunities to explore Vandara and evaluate it for their extraplanar masters. In the process, many of them seeded ruins or environs with magical knowledge on how to contact them, hoping that one day a race would come which was intelligent

enough to decipher them but also foolish enough to invoke their dark knowledge. Eventually, several monstrous races brought these creatures back to their homeworld, but none did so as eagerly as humankind. Devils in particular were favored by early human warlords, imposing order with little care for morals. It was from these agreements that the devils developed the opportunity to impose themselves on human women before returning to hell. It was from these unions that the first tieflings were born, hellspawn who often proved capable of masquerading as humans but who possessed an undeniable diabolic edge to their actions and perceptions of the world. Their psychology and sometimes their physical form exuded a vaguely negative air, as if they were partially formed of the very essence of sin.

Beyond these ancient devilspawn, many other types of tieflings have emerged on Vandara, descended from a wide variety of fiends. Demonspawn tieflings have emerged from the whims of bound abyss denizens, and many such creatures now fill the Erebine. A rise in the number of daemon-children has occurred in the Ashfields with the conquests of Dorukalad, not all of them stemming from intercourse but more often from the bleeding energies of the Convictus corrupting existing gestations. Other more obscure entities may infect Vandara with their seed to produce abominable children, and rumors exist of horrifically mutilated children emerging from unions with extraplanetary beings referred to as kytons. More nightmarish than all of these are the Qlippoth-spawn, the byproducts of obscene levels of Qlippoth corruption or horrifying experiments by truly mad scientists. Whereas most Tieflings at least seem to hold the possibility of betraying their fiendish origins, Qlippoth-spawn are universally violent and unhinged, the few who reach maturity becoming unrelenting hazards akin to their immortal parents.

As expected, the notion of humanity copulating with fiends is repulsive to most, and Tieflings have as a result been alienated and disdained since their inception. The fortunate ones were able to conceal their inhuman aspects, living as normal, albeit unusual and reclusive, members of society. The unlucky, cursed with blatant diabolic features, were either killed upon birth or thrown out into the wilderness to fend for themselves. For a tiefling, the best path to safety has been to enter the service on a non-fiendish family, for servants at least are assured a roof over their head and a food to eat. Those who were opposed to bending the knee instead became crime lords and renegade mages, many making

contact with their fiendish parent races to better understand their natures and abilities. Both of these paths have led to certain Tieflings obtaining wealth and social clout, and now there exist a number of wealthy powers across Vandara who are rumored to have fiendish blood coursing through their veins.

It was only in recent decades that Tieflings began emerging as a political force, beginning not-coincidentally with the rebirth of Taurun as an infernal superpower. As fiendspawn were now looked upon by much of the world as a public enemy and anti-Tiefling sentiment surged through Cidalac, Estaria, and Valtross, many Tieflings rose up to fight for their right to equality through both violent and peaceful means. Conflict is ongoing, with much of the world inflamed by hatred for these creatures and a similar amount sympathizing with their plight. Meanwhile, in Taurun, the number of Tieflings is increasing rapidly with the number of devils moving through society and the overall increase in fiendish influence upon the area. Today, at least seventy percent of Taurun's immense population can be considered Tieflings, and the majority of hellspawn pledge their loyalty to the banner of Moloch. For non-devil tieflings, many of whom are unwelcome in Taurun, this conflict has left them with nowhere to turn.

Strangest of all the Tieflings' features is their lack of confirmed cruelty. Although all tieflings are in some way emblematic of a vice, many cases exist of tieflings turning themselves towards virtue using whatever sin they embody. Those descended from pride devils can sometimes become the most incredible orators and writers, for example, while the children of greed demons have become respected for their analysis and pragmatism. There exists little predisposition to evil in the race, and as a result unaffiliated Tieflings end up serving good, evil, law, and chaos in equal number.

TIEFLING ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Psiborn: Many tieflings are spawned through the use of Qlippoth technology, and hence are skilled with psionics. Tieflings with this racial trait gain Wild Talent as a bonus feat and can choose to gain an additional power point instead of a hit point or skill point when they take a level in a favored class. This ability replaces fiendish sorcery.

Psi-Like Ability: Psionic tieflings are immensely versatile and variable, owing to the alien forces that empower them. Tieflings with this racial trait gain a single 2nd-level power from the psion/wilder power list as a 1/day psi-like ability. The



manifest level for this effect is equal to $1/2$ the tiefling's level (minimum 3rd) and any effects are Charisma-based. This ability replaces spell-like ability.

Tiefling Favored Class Bonuses

Envoy: You gain $+1/6^{\text{th}}$ additional Expertise Talents

Mystic: Increase the DCs of your connection spells by $+1/5$

Soldier: Increase any numerical bonuses from the soldier's gear boosts by $+1/4$.

Technomancer: Add $+1/2$ to all spell damage rolls.

This bonus is only applied once per casting of the spell, but if the effect targets multiple creatures, all are affected.

MINOR RACES

Beyond the iconic races which comprise a majority in at least one prominent section of Vandara, many other peoples exist across the planet.

AASIMAR^{ARG}

Although most fiendish outsiders are more than willing to spread their genetic influence across Vandara, celestials are more hesitant about sharing such power or pleasure with mortals. Hence, although nations such as Valtross and Cidalac have extensive traditions of angelic interaction, few interactions result in half-breeds. Beyond this, celestial DNA is difficult to reliably reproduce, and many scientists have thrown away their careers trying to discern as to why. Hence, when an aasimar does emerge, often possessing fantastic power, it is a noteworthy and impressive phenomenon which draws vast attention. Although they are far too rare to possess much of an actual society, Aasimar almost always grow up in the limelight and surrounded by fascination, often going on to become standout performers in their respective fields.

AASIMAR ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Media Darling: Aasimar are often used to a great deal of attention and can handle social situations quite comfortably. Aasimar with this racial trait gain the ability to take 10 on any charisma-based skill check. This ability replaces celestial resistances.

BIOFAUN

(CATFOLK^{ARG} / GAMLAM^{AM} /
KITSUNE^{ARG} / TENGU^{ARG} /
RATFOLK^{ARG} / SOBEK^{AM} /
SUQURAM)

In addition to the Dwarves, many other races were engineered before and during the Qlippoth war to serve as specialist units for whichever nation built them. Modelled after animals, most of these artificial races were designed to fulfil a single type of job, such as repair, espionage, or assassination. Such specialist races came to be known collectively as Biofaun. Among their ranks, Kitsune, Catfolk, Tengu, and Ratfolk are the most common and well-known, but numerous varieties and even several one-of-a-kind Biofaun exist across Vandara. Although some remain loyal to whichever nation or person created them, many Biofaun have struck out on their own following the end of the war, rejecting the system

of disposability which birthed them and deciding for themselves what their purpose in life will be. Biofaun are barren by design, and many have unusually short lifespans. Hence, like the Elves, Biofaun rely on continued production to keep their race alive, assuming they even desire to.

BIOFAUN ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Faunic: Many advanced biofaun can assume the form of whatever animals they are based on, such as a Kitsune assuming the shape of a fox, a tengu the shape of a crow, or a ratfolk the shape of a rat. This functions as *Beast Shape I*, save that it can only be used to assume a specific form corresponding to your race. This ability can be used 1/day with a caster level equal to your character level. This replaces any racial traits the race possesses which grant bonuses on skill checks or the bonus point of essence gained as a racial trait.

BLUE^{UP}

Rather ironically, contact with the Qlippoth actually transformed some goblins into more enlightened beings, paragons of philosophy and analysis which stand apart from their hedonistic and vicious counterparts. Of course, this makes these azure-skinned "Blues" no more moral and hence much more dangerous. A given blue will usually understand patterns and facts of the world which aren't always apparent to their contemporaries. However, as they are no more personable than any other Goblin, a Blue will usually have to employ violence or control to make others play along with their ideas. Blues hence either rise to power quickly or die a swift and painful death, often brought about by their own high opinions of themselves combined with the resentment of their contemporaries. Blues remain Goblins, in spite of all else, and are rejected by other races without so much as a second thought. Nonetheless, studying using whatever resources they can cobble together, most blues become literate, with many taking up positions in the Erebine, Valtross, or the Balynese underground as mages, doctors, or other scholars. The Blues resent all other creatures as inferiors who have a head start and will stop at nothing to prove their superiority by hurting these beings as much as possible.

BLUE ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Well-Studied: Some Blues are particularly inclined towards the sciences both base and esoteric, gaining a +2 bonus on Mysticism, Life Science, and Physical Science checks. This ability replaces keen senses and stealthy.

ELAN^{UP}

The one intelligent race not of Vandaran origin, the Elan were created by the Qlippoth as infiltrators and spies, entering Vandaran society in the guise of humans and sabotaging operations. In spite of many purges and inquisitions, many still reside in the various stratas of society, potentially primed for further subversion. Contrary to what some believe, Elans are not in fact Qlippoth-corrupted humans. Rather, they are grown by Qlippoth to resemble humans superficially, housing a suggestable and isolated mind which brims with psychic potential while also impeding any empathy or acknowledgement of other creatures. Many Elans possessed a psychic connection to the Qlippoth during the war, but this has since been severed, leaving the creations of war adrift across the world. As they were given little independence and were developed quickly, Elan are rarely knowledgeable about anything outside their genetic objective. However, many renegade Elans have been abducted and brainwashed by powerful organizations, becoming loyal, unflinching, and dangerous agents who unquestionably serve their masters as they once did during the Qlippoth War. Some circles talk of "code words" that can cause Elan to enter a state of perfect obedience, transforming into the perfect soldiers who will keep fighting through any circumstance. Although this sort of treatment for any other creatures would be horrifying, Vandara has no sympathy for the Elans after the ruin they have laid down during the war. Hence, any Elan who wishes to survive will go to great lengths to conceal their race.

ELAN ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Physical Conditioning: Elans have often been forced into dangerous situations, their bodies learning to deal with harsh environments. Elans with this racial trait gain Endurance as a bonus feat. This ability replaces resilience.

FORGEBORN

Although similar to androids in their premise, an artificial humanoid forged of mechanical parts, the conception of forgeborn is drastically different from that of their more prolific, more uniform sister race. Forgeborn are the works of mad or renegade scientists, cobbled together with bits of flesh, magic, machinery, and in most cases Qlippoth psionic power. This process has actually resulted in more functional synthetic minds in many cases (forgeborn are much more sensitive and emotional

than androids), but the horrific visages of these amalgamations condemns them to the recesses of society. Most forgeborn reside in the Erebine or the lower regions of Balyn, serving deplorable masters who create them and often end up being the only beings who accept them. No two forgeborn look or act alike, for their insane creators are always experimenting with new forms and possibilities for these desperate entities.

FORGEBORN ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Forged Combatant: Some forgeborn are built with weapons integrated into their form. They possess a single primary natural attack which deals 1d6 points of either piercing, slashing, or bludgeoning damage, chosen at the time of creation. This ability replaces natural armor.

GHERIGO (NAGAJI^{ARG} / OPHIDUAN^{UP} / REPTOIDS^{BS} / VESK)

The lowest caste of the scaled hierarchy (as well as the most numerous) is that of the gherigo, creatures in their first cycle of life who have never been reincarnated before and hence are still learning of how the world works. Every naga and serpentfolk begins its existence as such a creature, but few look back upon this time of ignorance and illogic with fondness. For the longest time, three castes of Gherigo existed, developing from a single indistinguishable stock in childhood. These three were the physically gifted vesk, the magically talented nagaji, and the duplicitous and subtle reptoids, all of which would pursue their own paths of advancement in their respective specialties (although examples exist across history of mage-knights and paladins emerging from all three variants). However, the corruption induced by the Qlippoth upon Eigenel has introduced a third variation of gherigo, the magically impaired but intellectual and psionically adept ophiduan. Rather than banishing these creatures, most scaled monarchs wish to keep them around, observing how this unique race will continue to develop as it reincarnates. Among the gherigo, resentment and competition is normal, with vesk, nagaji, and especially ophiduan and reptoids fighting for petty scraps of social standing in whatever ways they can manage. Every gherigo knows of and resents its inferior status, although few are mature enough to admit it (ophiduan comprising most of those who are). In many cases, the only thing that keeps them

loyal to the scaled hierarchy is the knowledge that they may one day become a serpentfolk or naga if they develop enough.

NAGAJI ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Spellblooded: Nagaji sorcerers with the Aberrant or Serpentine^{ARG} bloodline treat their Charisma score as 2 points higher for all sorcerer class abilities. This ability replaces serpent's sense

OPHIDUAN ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Magic-Spurned: Ophiduan are often inept at magic, but are also resistant to its effects. Ophiduan with this racial trait take a -4 penalty on caster level checks and use magic device checks but gain Spell Resistance equal to 5 + their character level. This ability replaces poison resistance and scaled hide.

VESK ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Mighty Jaws: Vesks with this racial trait gain a bite attack as a primary natural attack which deals 1d6 points of damage. This ability replaces martial savant

GILLMEN^{ARG}

Similar to the Drow, the Gillmen were a biological construct perverted by the intervention of an outside power. Synthesized by Cidali scientists, Gillmen were designed to be undersea explorers and colonists, expanding the development of the Empire of Cidalac beneath the waves in addition to over them. This venture was intercepted by the Aboleths, who were unwilling to cede their domain so easily and so inserted a subtle countermeasure into the genetic code of the Gillmen. When the first generation of Gillmen were deployed into the white ocean, the Empire of Cidalac discovered that the synthesized race was unusually vulnerable to the compulsion abilities of the Aboleths, and so saw their entire stock turn against their creators in a violent episode of Aboleth control. The surviving Gillmen retreated beneath the sea to serve their ancient masters, becoming a powerful tool for the Aboleth agenda given their innate similarity to humans. Since that day, some Aboleths have rebelled, but the entire race still faces suspicion and stigma as a result of their compelled betrayal. Beyond this, no attempts at synthesizing a second generation of Gillmen has ever occurred above the waves of Vandara.

GILLMEN ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Sea Psyker: Some Gillmen are enhanced by their Aboleth masters with psionic abilities. Gillmen with this racial trait gain the following psi-like abilities: constant-synesthete, 1/day-vigor^{JP} (ML equal to ½ the gillman's character level, minimum 1). This ability replaces amphibious.

GOBLINS^{ARG}

Seen as the ultimate failure of genetic engineering by human hands, the Goblin race was an experiment that went completely haywire, resulting in a species of unstable and rapidly reproducing creatures who see the world almost exclusively in terms of threats and pleasures. This is not to say that Goblins are stupid, but rather that their psychology lends itself poorly to concepts of civilization. In the hectic game of conquest that is Valtross, the many hundreds of goblin tribes which sprung from this original batch thrive, seizing territories and losing them just as quickly so that they can relive the joys of conquering another fort or butchering another score of enemies. In spite of this erratic lifestyle, most Goblins are soulful and vibrant creatures, appreciating a good story or song and revelling in the drama of a well-fought battle. Goblin war ballads are known and sung across Valtross by bards of all stripes. Outside of Valtross, on the other hand, Goblins are looked upon as the lowest of all sentient beings, nightmarish creatures which are a disease upon any realm they inhabit. "Goblin neighborhood" is a slang term for any area which is viewed as dangerous or undesirable for people enter regardless of whether Goblins exist there, and such areas are often the only places that Goblins can be found in cities. Goblins are just as intelligent and ambitious as some other races, however, and will sometimes make attempts at joining society in various ways. Elsewise, they can rely on their agility and tenacity to survive.

GOBLIN ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Swift Fingers: Goblins are often able to rapidly sort through their person to find what they need. A goblin with this racial trait gains quick draw as a bonus feat. This ability replaces skilled

HOBGOBLINS^{ARG}

Sometimes referred to as Proto-Orcs, Perfected Goblins, Survivors, Neodaemons, or Inhumans, the Hobgoblins were an artificial race created in the now-fallen Dorukalad to serve as perfect soldiers. Hardy, agile, and utterly committed to discipline,

the hobgoblins continued to defend their home nation up to the point when the atom bombs detonated across it. To everyone's shock, they were the only race to crawl out alive from the onslaught, and set to work rebuilding their ruined nation in the vision of their new twisted new god Shargoda. From that point on, the Hobgoblins began harvesting materials from what remained of Dorukalad and launched a brutal conquest across the fallen nation, killing all that they dubbed to be of "inferior machinations". Few races understand war like Hobgoblins do and none compare to their military resolve; a hobgoblin's thinking is reserved for conflict and murder at all times. Only through the constant pressure from the Sajak Fortifications is the expansion of this race mitigated. Although they are often associated with Daemons due to their almost-exclusive presence in Dorukalad, they earn a name derived from "Goblin" not just because of certain genetic similarities, but also because society views Hobgoblins the same way they view Goblins: horrible, impure creatures which are better off dead.

HOBGOBLIN ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Fallout Survivor: The oldest hobgoblins crawled out of the intense bombing which marred Dorukalad, passing on their hyper-resilient genes to their children. Hobgoblins with this racial trait are immune to the negative effects of radiation, but their movement speed is reduced from 30 feet to 20 feet.

KOBOLDS^{ARG}

Created by the dragons perhaps even before the Maker's War, Kobolds are the most loyal servants of the ancient ones, pathetic creatures which serve their draconic masters without question. Although many attribute the survival of the race to its sycophancy, Kobolds are not without their own merits, possessing tenacity, creativity, and coordination capacity which rivals even humanity's. Anyone who has ever entered a kobold city can attest to the tact and creativity these creatures possess in combat. Sadly, or perhaps fortunately, the race is held back by its subservience to

dragonkind as well as its many physical setbacks, from their weak constitutions to their short lifespans to their small stature.

KOBOLD ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Lorekeeper: Some Kobolds are part of ancient dynasties spanning back to Vandara's origin, and so have learned much about their world. They receive a +2 bonus on life science, physical science, and mysticism checks. This ability replaces crafty.

NORALS

There exists a small subset of humanity who has pursued genetic enhancement not of their progeny, but of themselves. Thanks to new revelations coming from Qlippoth technology, a small set of elites from Balyn and Mariton have transformed themselves into symbiotic entities of uncanny mental tenacity and physical longevity. This power comes from the parasite installed in every Noral's brain, a symbol of their prestige and intelligence as well as an indicator of their forsaken humanity. Although every Noral created so far has demonstrated remarkable poise and sensibility, there is always a possibility that the Qlippoth have a plan for these creatures and could turn them against humanity at any time.

NORAL ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Projection of Disconcert: Some Norals produce a palpable field of psionic fear as a result of their parasite. They receive a +2 bonus on intimidate checks and increase the DC of any fear effects they create by +1. This ability replaces symbiotic surge.

ORCS/HALF-ORCS

As wars rage on, demand often emerges for soldiers who have little role beyond cannon fodder, bodies which can rush the enemy and die without much concern from their superiors. For this purpose, the genetic scientists of Cidalac created the Orcs,



beings of unbridled violence which were designed to sweep over their enemies with overwhelming force. Easily controlled through magic, operating on animal instincts, and possessing an unquenchable thirst for blood, Orcs were a threat that loomed over all who would attempt rebellion against Cidalac. These monstrous biomorphs were employed several times across Valtross and Halkenir, hordes of them running rampant across the countryside brutalizing everything in sight. It was when they couldn't be recalled that Cidalac realized the error of this tactic, and promptly had all remaining Orc legions terminated. With their inherent strength and rapid growth, however, the Orc race did not easily die off, and today large tribes wander both north and south inflicting their rage on all who cross them. Their violence has led to a large number of Half-orcs as well, for death is not always the most horrifying fate these creatures dole out. Half-orcs are seen as outcasts by both races, and hence have created many of their own enclaves in remote regions. Oddly, the Orc-descended creatures are among the few entities untouched by the Qlippoth, perhaps implying that they are enough of a bane upon the world on their own.

HALF-ORC ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Pass for Human: Some Half-orcs are capable of concealing their feral heritage. They receive a +4 bonus to disguise checks to appear human. This ability replaces intimidating.

Orc Alternate Racial Traits

Mage Slave: Some orcs are conditioned to easily accept magical orders and take a -1 penalty on saving throws against mind-affecting effects. This ability replaces light sensitivity.

SVIRFNEBLIN

Only the humans were salvaged from permanent Qlippoth corruption by the merciful embrace of instant death. Every other race, including the gnomes, had a portion of their population somehow altered from contact with the race. The product of these instances were the svirfneblin, cold beings who see the surrounding world as little more than constant suffering. Although phenomenally powerful, each svirfneblin sees little reason to interact with the world beyond a masochistic fetish, for the thoughts and impressions of every creature around them constantly bombard a svirfneblin mind. Trapped in this eternal sensory hell, most svirfneblin retreat into obscure corners of the wilderness or the erebine, but

certain cases exist of these beings arriving to display incredible understanding and skill.

SVIRFNEBLIN ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Power Resistance: Svirfneblin have power resistance equal to 11 + their class levels. This ability replaces spell resistance.

Svirfneblin Psionics: Svirfneblin gain a +1 bonus on the DCs of all telepathy powers they manifest and can use the following psi-like abilities: *Constant-detect hostile intent*, *sense minds*^{UP} 1/day-*aversion*^{UP}, *read thoughts*^{UP}. The manifester level is equal to half the svirfneblin's character level (minimum 3), and the save DCs are charisma-based. This ability replaces svirfneblin magic.



WAYANGS^{ARG}

Halflings warped by the Qlippoth influence, Wayangs were a rarity even in the last years of the Qlippoth War, for few Halflings ever entered the fight. However, those few who did combat the invaders or simply became trapped in lost territories drew the curiosity of many other races, for the obstinate

and rebellious mentality of Halflings was completely inverted in this corrupted race. Gone was the need to assert the self, to challenge authority and live by one's own decree. In place of these traits, Wayangs possessed an obsessive, sycophantic desire to please others, debasing themselves utterly if it meant even the slightest bit of positive attention from another race. Viewing themselves as the ultimate inferiors, Wayangs will do anything to earn the respect of others, for they possess none for themselves. Less scrupulous plutocrats, especially those in Mariton and Balyn, see potential in this race as servants, and have gone to great lengths to capture and breed Wayangs in order to build perfectly loyal slave armies. Being incredibly stealthy in addition to comparatively strong for their size, Wayangs easily make themselves useful to their masters, only to have acknowledgement doled out sparingly to keep them addicted. A few cases exist of Wayangs being forcibly liberated from less discrete masters. However, the creatures would inevitably return to servitude and degradation willingly. Their minds and hence their abnormal psionic abilities feed off of existing communities, and as a result Wayangs will do anything to retain existing relationships.

WAYANG ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Wayang Psionics: Wayangs receive a +1 bonus to manifester level for any powers with the Network descriptor. In addition, they can use the following psi-like abilities 1/day-*empathic transfer*^{UP}, *lesser fortify*^{UP}, *missive*^{UP}. The manifester level is equal to half the wayang's character level (minimum 3), and the save DCs are charisma-based. This ability replaces Shadow Magic

WHEELWARPED (*FETCHLING*^{ARG} / *IFRIT*^{ARG} / *OREAD*^{ARG} / *SULI*^{ARG} / *SYLPH*^{ARG} / *UNDINE*^{ARG})

Ever since humans have tried to tap magical forces, they have run the risk of allowing it to consume them. In certain cases, this action taints their bloodline, leaving entire families bound to outer powers. In the most extreme cases, the creature's very essence is tainted, their form becoming almost completely subsumed by magic. In most cases, such instances result in the Wheelwarped, beings whose essence is partially that of a mortal entity and partially raw elemental magic. Five major varieties exist, those being the Sylph, Undine, Ifrits, Oreads, and Fetchlings, although a sixth type known as the Suli has been

reported which combines magical energy from multiple elements. Most often, the instances which produce Wheelwarped are based upon psychic magic, and hence the number of Wheelwarped being created has been reduced substantially as people have learned more about how to properly manage elemental magic and the greater security of arcane magic in manipulating such forces. However, some long-running Wheelwarped genes still flow through certain Cidali families, and hence Wheelwarped will appear erratically out of certain unions. Although most Wheelwarped appear in Cidalac due to the nation's ancient history with psychic magic, they have appeared in almost any

OTHER RACES

You may notice that some popular races are not listed above, with some notable exceptions including the Kasatha and the Lashunta. These races and other unlisted ones simply are not a big enough part of Vandara's society to be considered, but this does not mean that players cannot choose to play characters of these races if they so choose. Here are some ways to integrate unlisted races into the setting.

Biomorph: Vandara's genetic experimentation has been going on for hundreds of years, and quite a few strange Biomorphs have been created by fringe organizations. Kasatha, *vishkanya*^{ARG}, *shabti*^{B5}, and other human-esque races could be biomorphs of this ilk.

Extraterrestrial: Qlippoth-induced mutations, as heavily studied as they are, have not been fully catalogued by science. Some strange entities still exist out there, unusual beings with unique mindsets and abilities. A few may even hail from beyond Vandara, alien races left over from Vandara's brief space age. Lashunta, *astomoi*^{B5}, shirren, *xephs*^{UP}, and other magically or psionically gifted races could be Extraterrestrial or corrupted creatures.

Primordial: Finally, there are monstrous creatures which have developed independently from humankind, remnants of the Maker's War which still prosper in the remote edges of the world. Merfolk, *samsaran*^{ARG}, *gathlain*^{B4}, *strix*^{ARG}, *munavri*^{B6}, and other enigmatic races could be ancient races of this type.

magic-using culture, from Mariton to Utala to the Ashfields. They remain rare enough to be beneath notice, however, and hence are not viewed collectively by society as anything beyond concern and curiosity.

WHEELWARPED ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Disciple of Ancient Magics: Many Wheelwarped carry ancient traditions of magic in their family, gaining a +2 bonus on all mysticism checks (or spellcraft checks if using PF skills) and caster level checks made to bypass spell resistance. This ability replaces energy resistance for sylphs, undines, ifrits, and oreads, skilled for fetchlings, and negotiator for suli

WULFKIN^{BF}

In the remote edges of Valtross, there live humans who have for centuries interbred with the beasts which haunt the mountains. Through a combination of magically accelerated evolution and their deranged genes, these creatures have become a new race entirely, bestial men and women with feral strength and instinct in place of rationality. Although unable to develop into a society, these monsters are legendary for their raids on Valtrossi settlements, utilizing uncanny coordination and their physical supremacy to take on better-armed foes. Although some question this prognosis, many scholars suspect that Wulfskin are the first and only example of a human-descended race which is in wholly incapable of civilization, condemned forever to live in the gray area between men and beasts.

WULFSKIN ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAITS

Pack Hunter: Wulfskin with this trait excel at working in groups and receive a bonus teamwork feat of their choice at 1st level. They must meet the prerequisites for this feat. This ability replaces winter breath.

MONSTERS ON VANDARA

As a consequence of the Maker's War, the world of Vandara is filled with powerful monstrosities with phenomenal killing ability. Some bestial, some intelligent, and some ancient and wise beyond human comprehension, the creatures which roam Vandara are diverse and almost universally threatening.

ABOLETHS

When the Qlippoths came, all of Vandara unified against the invaders, fearing the immense devastation they brought. However, there was one species which chose to side with the aliens, aiding their war effort with information and material aid. This race was the Aboleths, an aquatic nation of shapechanging mages and scientists who are perhaps the only civilization long-lived enough to remember the heights of the Makers' War. Whether or not the Qlippoth actively engaged in this relationship is unknown, but the Aboleths were able to acquire more information on psionics than any other Vandaran faction combined. Due to this as well as their magical aptitude and exceptional skill with infiltrations, Aboleths are by far the most knowledgeable race on Vandara and may even possess the capacity to create their own Arcforge if they haven't already. Regardless of their capacity to enact, which is feared by all who understand just what the Aboleths are capable of, the ambition of the Aboleths seems clear: to purge the world of all younger species and claim the planet of Vandara for themselves alone.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCES

Long spoken of in legend and theory, the myth of artificial intelligence was realized in the last century with concern from scholars of all disciplines. Here was an entity forged without the aid of magic, a coded mind which held the capacity to develop in its own direction independent from human guidance. The first AIs were originally guidance systems and assistants, but over time many of them became more ambitious, harnessing their often-substantial authority over data and management operations to propel their own interests. By the point this insurrection had become well-known, AIs had already gone on to be used in robot bodies, vehicles, and facilities across much of the planet. Fascinatingly, many AIs reacted in interesting ways to Qlippoth technology, and a few "awakened" AIs with psionic abilities have emerged in areas such as Balyn where the alien tech is commonplace. This revelation has led to a massive series of advancements in Mariton, where the study of AI and its relationship with life, death, psionics, and the soul has been comprehensively researched. The danger posed by such entities to the rest of the world is very real, which is one of many reasons why Mariton is distanced from all more sensible societies. However, the most infamous AI to be created is Liberator, a contagious AI created



by Android revolutionaries which spread through robots and bestowed upon them the capacity for free will. AI is viewed as a source of great potential by many and a hazard by many others but is well-known by most all Vandarans.

An AI can be created from scratch with a successful computers check (DC 20 + the AI's CR), at a cost of 5000 credits (or 5000 gp) x the CR of the AI

ATROPALS

Not all mortals succeed in the pursuit of godhood, with their legacies or abilities proving insufficient to make a permanent mark on the Convictus. When this occurs, the spirits of the dead usually fade. However, there are times when a mortal perishes on the cusp of godhood, just barely lacking the potency to achieve immortality. When this occurs, the person's soul is transformed into an Atropal, a hateful and incredibly potent entity formed of some of the Convictus' darkest magics. Regardless of what values they held in life, all Atropals seem to possess a genocidal hatred of the living, each stillborn god attempting to justify their all-consuming grudge in

their own ways. Most Atropals tend to emerge from Mariton, although every culture possesses records of the destruction these strange beings have wrought.

ASURA

As faiths rise and fall and gods emerge and fade, there emerges a unique cast of outsiders whose powerful antagonism to the gods transforms them into a jaded variety of outsiders known as Asura. Diverse in their forms, philosophies, and origins, all Asura are united by a common hatred for the gods that shape Vandara. To counteract the influence of these deities, Asura actively work to expose the faults and vulnerabilities of these revered figures, sowing doubt in followers or desecrating sites of the faith. Most Asuras are spawned from the souls of those who perished as part of some holy duty, be they crusaders who lost their faith in a pointless death or innocents who were slaughtered in the name of some god's manifest destiny. Asura are often encountered in Valtross and the the Silicon Barrier, places where countless lives were ended in ways that broke their faith in the universe. However, the Asura threat is most well-known in

the Freeman's lands, as these vindictive creatures are all that remains of the indigenous nations which once resided in the territory before the dual threats of conquest and the Qlippoth reduced them and their gods to nothingness. Although many of the Asura's greivances with the gods and their followers are quite legitimate given the experiences of their component souls, these woes have been distilled into a existence-defining hatred which almost always drives the Asura to brutal, systematic cruelty in the name of revenge.

CELESTIALS

Celestials have long been invoked by justice-seeking Vandarans in times of need, and though their conscription has not always been easy these beings have served loyally and effectively. AgathionsB2 decorate the artwork of many ancient Cidali structures and Saint Aline is often depicted alongside a cohort of angels, indicating a familiarity as well as a reverence in the Vandaran consciousness. The severance of Vandara from the planes has made Celestials an even rarer sight, as the few which remain are coveted by conjurers and deployed only in crucially important situations. When souls coalesce to form new outsiders across Vandara, celestials are rarer than fiends, perhaps indicating that good-aligned people are substantially rarer than their evil counterparts. Alternative theories have been posed suggesting that good Vandarans do not view themselves as good enough to be reborn as celestials, their souls subconsciously rejecting the process of reformation as they attempt to parse the impossible ideals established throughout Vandara's cultural history with the souls' own flawed virtue. With only the Convictus to guide this process, Celestials could soon become extinct on Vandara.

CYCLOPES/PAPINIJUWARI

At one point second only to humans in their expansiveness across Vandara, the Cyclopes have since been relegated to obscure corners of Valtross, Eigenel, and the Freeman's Lands as their numbers dwindle further and further. Looking at the primitive and violent lifestyles led by these one-eyed behemoths, one would find it hard to believe that they ever ascended beyond the stone age. However, archaeologists all across the world have found strange monuments from the early days of Vandara which seem to have been built by the cyclopes, or at least beings which very closely resembled them. Central to this development was seemingly another one-eyed race of giants known as the Papinijuwari, beings

who seemingly emerged from space and guided the Cyclopes to an era of greatness which humanity would not eclipse for centuries. While the Papinijuwari have been mentioned many times in various texts, not one had been recorded on Vandara in centuries, leading to theories that they might have never existed at all or perhaps may have been manifestations of the Outer Lords themselves. Several questions were answered and even more raised when the Qlippoth came to Vandara and afflicted the Cyclopes with their corruption, transforming the afflicted Cyclopes into abominations very similar to the Papinijuwari discussed in their myths. These Papinijuwari proved brutal, sadistic, and immensely destructive creatures, bearing little in common with the noble beings presented in folklore. This has led to some theories that the Papinijuwari created these monuments themselves and pushed the Cyclopes into a strange notion civilization, but upon their masters' departure the Cyclopes reverted to their old ways in order to avoid becoming these twisted and tyrannical beasts.

DAEMONS

Whereas Demons sow oblivion and Devils order, Daemons exist as the cruel medium between them, avatars of conflict and violence in all of its forms. Being personifications of death, it is common for Daemons to form naturally in violent locations on Vandara, souls drawing power from the Convictus to rebuild their bodies into horrifying new shapes. Naturally, when Dorukalad was nuked into ruin during the Qlippoth war, many souls were transformed in this way, creating a large number of Daemons who with the help of their Hobgoblin servitors have become a menace upon the rest of the world. Tactical, powerful, and unbelievably ruthless, Daemons of Vandara have an imperative to end as many lives as possible, be it through subterfuge or outright violence. Material goods mean nothing them, for only souls will sate their hunger. Of course, this does not mean that the outsiders won't make use of the copious number of weapons lying around Dorukalad. Most all Daemons venerate their twisted god Shargoda, a being which emerged from the horror which created so many of them.

DAEVAS^{AM}

Unique among the outsiders of Vandara, the Daevas are techno-magical entities created by the Cidali to preside over the Network. Although fully capable of operating in physical space, Daevas tend to keep to their assigned domain of the digital realm due to their superior understanding of this constructed space. The

oldest of this young race were originally designed as security programs which would maintain order and halt dangerous activity within the Network, but as the secrets to creating these entities has spread a number of more nefarious Daevas have been designed in pursuit of selfish or nationalistic ends. In the deepest recesses of the Network, it is common to see Daevas struggling for dominance over territory and information. However, these technological entities have become very adept at concealing their actions (and the consequences) from the eyes of the world. Network experts warn of a time when the Daevas could shape global politics and trade to their whim, but for now the machinations of these Akashic beings is looked over by all but the most inquisitive Vandarans.

DEMONS

As the Qlippoth War raged on, the peoples of Vandara grew increasingly desperate. Traditional planar armies of devils and celestials were not enough to turn back the tide of attackers, and many wizards feared that their magic would not be enough to save Vandara from extinction. As a desperate measure, the most powerful mages in Cidalac tapped into the massive supply of horrific fiends which had either been trapped on the planet or formed during the war, beings of unbridled debauchery and violence whose strength and numbers just might be enough to rival the Qlippoths. The mages unleashed the most powerful of these creatures en masse upon Qlippoth-controlled cities, and the resulting carnage cannot even be described. Thousands if not millions of Demons tore through Cidalac and the Ashfields with relentless abandon, ripping apart Vandaran and Qlippoth forces alike. Eventually, the people of Vandara united to do something about this extradimensional plague and began the attempts to purge the planet of Demons even before the Qlippoth had been defeated. Although many were killed at great cost, the majority fled to the Erebine, working in tandem with the Drow and aberrations to create a great hub of power in the land below. Fiends from the lowest quasits to the mightiest of Balor Lords call the Erebine home, and all Vandarans fear the nightmares which may walk beneath their feet.

DEVILS

Ever since civilization first emerged, Devils have attempted to impose their influence upon the more brutal generals and lords of the world. Whereas most fiends are conjured and employed as a last resort, devils were often among the first tools that

brutal tyrants turned to in order to force stability upon their realms. These creatures proved almost universally effective, although their services always placed heavy costs upon those who served them. Be it in the form of souls, material wealth, or favors, devils have always obtained their payment from mortals who wish to harness their might, inflicting brutal punishment on those who try and fail to avoid paying their debts. Taurun marks the first instance of total integration of infernal power into society, and powerful devils control many of the upper echelons and inner workings of the military nation. Infernal magic, might, and understanding is the skeleton which supports the titanic socialist nation, which acts as a center of power and authority for the forces of Hell upon the material plane.

KYTONS

Many people, even respectable scholars, deny the existence of Kytons. To theorize the existence of Qlippoth-corrupted humans seems rather absurd when not one Vandaran human became corrupted in the style of the Wayangs and Duergar over the lengthy duration of the Qlippoth War. However, those who have ventured into the Silicon Barrier return with unimaginable stories, men who have mutilated their bodies with magic and technology to the point where they can no longer be considered humanoid. These entities, psionically gifted abominations which seem to perish immediately upon getting too close to Vandara's surface, are known as Kytons, and the scant evidence of their existence is enough to make many individuals terrified of venturing beyond Vandara's surface. Some theorists, generally those who view the Qlippoth and Outer Lords as somehow connected, suspect that the Outer Lords predicted the possibility of the Kyton's existence, and so wove safeguards into the planet of Vandara itself to prevent their engagement on the planet.

LICHES

Lichdom is among the oldest and most well-known methods of achieving undeath, well-known enough that it has escaped Mariton despite the best efforts of the Circle. As this form of undead is not wracked with the same eternal feelings of hunger or hatred that most others are, it remains a desirable option for mages seeking to extend their lives. The rituals and techniques that enable one to become a lich are available to any who can access the libraries of Maytar, but the risks of failure are great and can dissuade all but the most dedicated students

of magic. Mariton continues its ancient traditions of lich transformation to this day, and as many Circle members are liches themselves young necromancers often attempt to become such to curry their favour. A recent trend in both Mariton and Balyn has been the creation of psionic liches, beings which emulate many of the abilities of liches using psionic rather than magical means. These psionic undead are regarded as abominations by living and undead beings alike, but their potential has nonetheless intrigued a sizeable number of scholars on both sides of the mortal coil.

NAGA

There has been but one species of creatures who have reached a level of civilization rivalling that of humans: the Naga. An entire series of races whose forms and minds are steeped in magic, the reptilian Naga are known for their system of reincarnation. The various Naga forms represent the highest points of the civilization, with any individual serpentine

Naga possessing the knowledge and insight gained from many previous incarnations. The oldest Naga have lived on Vandara since the Maker's War, and would be more than willing to share tales of their exploits. Some cling to the notion that after living enough lives they will eventually reach an even higher form, but most have embraced their varied serpentine images as the pinnacle of their being, displaying their innermost self with all other facades cast away. Among the Naga, reverence to ancestors is a paramount virtue, as is a commitment to your community. Each Naga will one day be reborn into it, after all, so it is in everyone's interest to keep it alive). As the life of a Naga is permanent unless forcibly ended, most of the Naga commit themselves to intense projects of statecraft or artifice which take centuries to realize even with their incredible skills. As a result of this, the cyclical race lags far behind in technological development, but possesses among the most skilled mages and enlightened philosophers on Vandara.



OUTER LORDS

Possessing incredible technology and a vast knowledge of magic, these creatures attempted to lay claim to the recently created world by force, casting upon it many millions of genetically engineered weapons and reshaping its geography with tremendous attacks. Although the vast majority ended up departing from Vandara after the end of the war, rumors persist that a few powerful Outer Lords stayed, shaping events from the shadows for unknown purposes. Those that remained on Vandara do not have a specific image or organization, as the stories go, for their habits of self-modification have transformed each remaining Outer Lord into a bizarre and unique entity. These rumors have led to more than a few murders or acts of mass terror against suspected Outer Lords, for there is nothing humanity hates more than the idea that they are not in control of their own destiny.

QLIPPOTH

The strange word derived from the inscrutable tongue of the invaders is never spoken lightly by any Vandaran, for the horror and devastation laid down by this race upon the planet is beyond legendary. When these alien entities descended upon Coeusel, nothing was left in their wake, their immense powers and countless numbers taking dozens of nations and billions of lives. Although they have been driven back to a degree, millions of them still swim the oceans and wander the southern hemisphere. And when even an individual Qlippoth can sow vast destruction upon its arrival, there is no promise of safety for Vandara when these creatures dominate so much of the globe. Perhaps the most disconcerting aspect of the Qlippoths and their mighty lords is the way they have not launched a major attack in years, as if they are waiting for Vandara to become vulnerable enough to consume completely. The fact that the most powerful Qlippoth are vulnerable only to lawful weaponry and magic has enabled lawful faiths and nations to curry a great deal of favour with the population of Vandara, for to oppose them would leave these rebels helpless against the alien tide.

ROBOTS

The genesis of robots represents a major turning point in the history of Vandara, representing the point where technology began to eclipse magic in terms of how it shapes the world. Cheap, easily created, and far more versatile than the magical constructs of yesteryear, robots came to define industry on Vandara

as workers, servants, and soldiers. Countless varieties were engineered for varying purposes, especially in the industrial island nation of Estaria. Although the reclamation of the country by the Androids has ended the practice of building and enslaving machines there, robots are still used as workers in many parts of Vandara. A robot with no special AI installed lacks free will, doing whatever it is commanded to. Such robots are not as common as they once were, however, given the prevalence of contagious AIs synthesized by Android revolutionary cells to uplift their elder brethren. Most all sentient robots have relocated to New Estaria after their liberation, although many military varieties serve in the Sajac Fortifications. Mariton possesses a tremendous number of empty robots which their AIs use as bodies and continues to produce them in spite of condemnation by most Androids. Cidalac and Taurun do not have as many robots as they once did, but the owners who have shielded their servants from AI takeover make heavy use of them. Finally, many forsaken combat robots wander the Ashfields, their vicious programming making them a threat to any creatures which wander the continent.

When crafting robots in Vandara, it is advised that the cost of crafting a robot be equal to 4000 credits x the CR of the robot.

SERPENTFOLK

The intermediate state of the Scaled Hierarchy, serpentfolk of various kinds mature from the varying types of scaled hierarchy members to represent their progress towards their proper role in society (generally advanced serpentfolk for nagaji, degenerate serpentfolk for vesk, serpentfolk reclaimers for reptoids, and a strange type of psionic serpentfolk for ophiduan). In this period of adolescence, experimentation and understanding tend to take precedence over previously held ideas of morality, which is why most Serpentfolk tend towards evil actions. However, as a Serpentfolk matures through more and more lives, it shapes a more concrete set of values and worldviews, eventually becoming a naga of almost any alignment. In the scaled hierarchy, Serpentfolk are looked up to by younger creatures as heroic entities they could one day become and by true naga as incomplete and restless youngsters who do not fully understand life. Serpentfolk frequently use their shapechanging abilities to mingle with and learn about other cultures, although their penchant for disrespect and arrogance has earned the race many negative connotations from certain nations.

TROGLODYTES

The Ophidian represent a willing embrace of Qlippoth technology and concepts by the Scaled Hierarchy. The troglodytes, on the other hand, represent a forceful dominion of the scaled peoples by the alien invaders. Foolish, brutal, and unquestionably vile, troglodyte bands wander the Ashfields, periodically launching poorly armed attacks against the Sajac fortifications. Whereas the scaled peoples embrace a philosophy of perpetual growth and self-improvement, the Troglodytes adhere to a creed of brutality and self-destruction, seeing the infliction of violence upon others as the only feeling which makes their existence worthwhile. More deadly variants exist known as the Xulgaths, highly intelligent degenerates with an even greater appetite for misery. Perhaps the only reason the Troglodytes have not exterminated themselves already is the leadership of the Xulgaths, which rally the horrors to war against more developed races.

TRUE DRAGONS

The creators of the planet, True Dragons are perhaps the only race on Vandara which emerged naturally rather than being designed for a specific purpose. This is not to say that dragons lack variety or experience with alteration, as the countless color and body variants of true dragons display. Rather, it speaks to Dragons being an entity somehow separate from the rest of Vandara, a culture which exists on an ancient and cosmic scale that renders the rest of Vandara's history miniscule. This, in addition to the obscene physical and magical power they wield, bestows upon dragonkind a sense of ownership over Vandara, a belief that after all this time it remains their planet with which to do what they please. Perhaps the only thing holding dragonkind back from this goal is their hatred of technology, which most view as below them. This mentality has begun to change in the years following the Qlippoth war, however, and Akashic as well as corrupted Psionic Dragons are starting to make their presence known across Vandara.

OTHER MONSTERS

Many other types of monsters exist across Vandara, comprising its immense and varied ecology.

Aberrations

Most aberrations are created by accident, genetic experiments gone wrong which are disposed of by their creators. Not all such experiments are recent, however, and the deeper recesses of the Erebine

are filled with countless abominations of every conceivable shape and ability from the Makers' War. Furthermore, many creatures tainted by excessive Qlippoth exposure have wormed their way into various ecosystems, their altered biologies wreaking havoc on environmental order. Destruction or more commonly exile to the Erebine is the first priority for most who deal with aberrations.

Animals

Although many more creatures make up Vandara's complex biomes, common animals are the planet's lifeblood. They wander free in all the wild territories of the planet, they are domesticated and raised by all societies, and they keep the ecology of Vandara operating smoothly through their cycle of birth and death. As most magical creatures prove too dangerous to contain for human purposes, animals are a resource which humanity could regularly tap throughout its history, and for this reason many of them hold a degree of reverence in human societies such as Cidalac.

Constructs

Since the early days of the Makers' War, the societies of Vandara have been building constructs to serve them. Be they forged of clockwork, magic, or circuitry, constructs have become a fixture of warfare and service. However, they are rarely cheap to create, and so were only employed by those with substantial means. Nonetheless, the still-functioning golems which are occasionally unearthed from the Makers' War attest that construct servants may often be very worthwhile investments. Mages regularly employ magical constructs to serve them, as do many other places where android presence isn't very salient.

Dragons

Humanity was far from the first race to tinker with genetic alteration. The draconic creators of Vandara created many artificial races of their own, most often as weapons during the Makers' War. Less intelligent breeds such as Drakes and Linnorms were used as shock troops, produced en masse and thrown into battle in various terrains. Meanwhile, more intelligent dragons served as specialists of varying sorts, their kind fulfilling specific tasks within the draconic war effort such as strategy and reconnaissance. As these dragons often possessed minimal reproductive capabilities, their numbers have dwindled substantially since the days of Vandara's creation. The exceptions to this are the various races descended from dragons and other

species, the consequences of interspecies love affairs which in some cases breed true. Nonetheless, dragons are known and revered across Vandara for their power as well as what they represent in the planet's history.

Fey

When Vandara was first created, the fey were shaped out of raw magic to watch over the planet, ensuring that its physical and magical integrity would remain in the face of any threat. Most common in relatively undeveloped areas such as Valtross, fey take all shapes and sizes based upon where they show and what their function is. Their construction gives them incredible magical abilities more often than not, but leaves them frail and vulnerable to ecological shifts. It is for this reason that they often come into conflict with those seeking to expand development and why the two fey gods often come off as anti-society.

Humanoids

The term humanoid did not emerge until the innovations of genetic alteration. For much of the race's history, humanity divided the world into two groups: humans and non-humans. However, as more and more genetic variations were created, the term humanoid was created to refer to such creatures which are nearly human, as well as to other races such as Gnomes, Giants, and lesser members of the Scaled Hierarchy. Like most other races on Vandara, humanoids of all stripes were intelligently designed for a certain purpose at one point, but many have deviated from their programming at some point in time.

Magical Beasts

Beyond the normal fauna which dots Vandara, there exist the creatures which were clearly designed as weapons, beings infused with magic by variably skilled makers and designed with conflict in mind. Most if not all of them breed true, and some of them have even formed esoteric societies. From the great beasts that roam Valtross to the strange creatures of the Black and White Oceans to the horrific monstrosities of the Ashfields, magical beasts define the wild areas of Vandara and are responsible for most of the regions' danger and adventure.

Monstrous Humanoids

Vandara is filled with beings capable of wielding tools and creating societies in the same way humans do, although very few of them have been as

successful. Either due to low learning capacity, a slow reproductive rate, or some other vulnerability, the majority of monstrous humanoid races were driven by humans to the remote areas of Valtross or to the regions now known as the Ashfields. Many races will claim ancestry of the Outer Lords, speaking of how the bipedal form was built in the image of these ancient immortals. Indeed, it is quite likely that most if not all of these various species were once soldiers in the Makers' War. Whether this justifies the violent need of many of them to take back that planet which might have once been theirs is more controversial.

Ooze

Strange entities of magic or advanced science, oozes are viewed most often as an intellectual curiosity by the Vandarans who are aware of their existence. As they often dwell in uninhabited areas and lack the intelligence to actively plot, they are rarely considered dangerous on their own. However, there are many demons, dragons, and even humans who would like to study oozes to learn their properties as biological weapons. As a result, most ooze-related casualties occur in the pursuit of them rather than in direct conflict with them. This does not mean that properly applied oozes cannot be dangerous, however, and more than one mad alchemist has turned the tide in a conflict with his knowledge of the strange entities.

Outsiders

The binding of outsiders is one of the oldest human traditions on Vandara, and dragons have been engaged with this practice even longer than humans have. As a result, outsiders have always been an emblem of knowledge and strength across the world, with each nation and practitioner having their own favored extraplanar servitors. Of course, the many outsiders can receive a great deal in turn and have been known to establish permanent residence in certain parts of Vandara as the result of poorly construed deals. Perhaps most disconcerting, however, are the outsiders which are made from the bodies, minds, and souls of corrupted humans, which can pose great threat to Vandara due to knowledge of their past lives. The twelve injunctions have rules against the proliferation of summoners for very good reason.

Plants

The first thing that every child learns on Vandara is to be careful and knowledgeable of the flora around them. At minimum, touching the wrong plants could induce itching or sickness. At worst, it could bring destruction upon the entire town as a long-dormant

remnant of the Maker's War is roused to violence. Plant creatures, often residing in the vacant wildernesses of Vandara, are a disproportionate threat to common people because of their subtlety, which is why mages have often devised spells designed specifically to fight them. However, not all plants are malevolent. Mundane plants are ubiquitous as crops and decorations, and a variety magical or even sentient plants are cultivated in many parts of the world so that they can be harvested.

Undead

In a world so charged by magic and so tainted with a long history of conflict, undead are a potent and common threat on Vandara. Be they the products of rogue necromancers or freak surges of magic accompanying great violence or trauma, undead are recognized universally as a threat. Most undead occupy the Ashfields or Dorukalad, but Mariton has made the unusual move of industrializing the processes of undeath. Devourers, Ghosts, and various incorporeal spirits are common amongst the higher echelons of Mariton, with many employing weaker undead to serve them.

Vermin

Every ecosystem relies upon the most basic of life forms to remain sustainable, and Vandara is no exception. Miniscule vermin cover every corner of the planet, even the most sophisticated cities. Generally, Vandarans think nothing of the everyday vermin which are a part of their lives. Larger, more horrifying vermin are a serious concern, however, and these abominations often dwell in the Erebine, the wildernesses of Valtross or the Ashfields, or in some cases the underbellies of large cities.

GODS OF VANDARA

As the entire history of Vandara and its races has been catalogued extensively through science as well as magic, many traditional trappings of religion have no place in Vandan society. Humanity is well aware of where it came from, how it came to be, and for what purpose it was created, and hence has little reason to put faith in a higher power to answer such questions. However, the power of the Convictus has created an entirely different class of divinity across the world, a pantheon formed of ideas and values which the Vandarans pledge themselves to.

When a creature of incredible power or renown perishes, they may merge with the Convictus, transforming into a new facet of the force which is capable of channeling its power through their most devout followers. Although far from all-powerful or all-knowing, these entities of the Convictus are completely ephemeral, exerting their influence upon the world exclusively through those that serve them. Hence, as they cannot be touched by mortals but must be recognized for their profound impact upon the courses of the world, most Vandarans have deemed it appropriate to refer to these entities as Gods.

At some point in history, every god on Vandara was a mortal, a finite entity who came to represent some greater idea in the minds of the world. Generals who changed the nature of warfare, scientists who transformed the understanding of the universe, philosophers who rewrote the rules of virtue and success, and monarchs whose edicts spread across continents are all examples of the monumental and influential beings who have ascended to divinity. Although there is no set formula or method for becoming a god, those who ascend would still likely have their name spoken and their impact known generations after their death. To become a god is to become a legend made manifest.

The ascendancy to godhood offers phenomenal power, but at great cost. A god exists entirely within the Convictus, and cannot be harmed, controlled, or killed by any means. What's more, a god is capable of controlling many portions of the Convictus itself, tapping into the force's incredible magical abilities to bestow magical abilities upon their faithful. However, residing in a force coterminous with reality restricts the abilities of a god substantially, purging them of any physical body and enabling them to interact only with those who receive abilities from them. In most cases, this interaction is further curtailed to the giving and revoking of power, but certain spells exist which enable a divine caster to communicate directly with their god.

Followers are the sustaining mana behind all gods, the life force which enables them to maintain their presence in the Convictus and thus their ability to create divine spellcasters in the material world. If people do not exist who are willing to pledge themselves to a god or their ideals, the god begins to fade away, unable to do anything to stop itself being forgotten. Many hundreds if not thousands of gods have been forgotten throughout Vandara's history, and without followers to sustain them

these entities have become nothing more than background noise in the Convictus, effectively dying. Compared to to certain other fates a dejected god could meet, however, fading away is a mercy. If a large number of followers suddenly have their faith in their god broken, the god itself may be affected by the backlash, its very essence becoming polluted by this crisis of belief. Such events cause ripples and tears in the Convictus, producing strange magical phenomena which can yield permanent effects upon the world. The creation of the Silicon Barrier, a consequence of the sudden demise of Saint Aline's faith, stands as testament to what a god's violent death can do to a world.

The gods below are not all of the gods that exist on Vandara but are by far the most well-known and hence the most powerful. These gods are the ones chiefly worshipped by humanoid races, and many strange and alien creatures of the Erebine have their own gods which they pray to. In addition, certain incredibly powerful Demons and Qlippoths have tapped into the Convictus to bestow divine power upon their followers. Finally, there is always the possibility that new gods could develop should sufficiently important individuals perish or that certain ideologies are strong enough to draw limited amounts of power from the Convictus.

A * next to a subdomain indicates that even though the god does not possess the domain this normally belongs to, this concept is within their periphery as a god and as a result is factored into the capabilities of their followers.

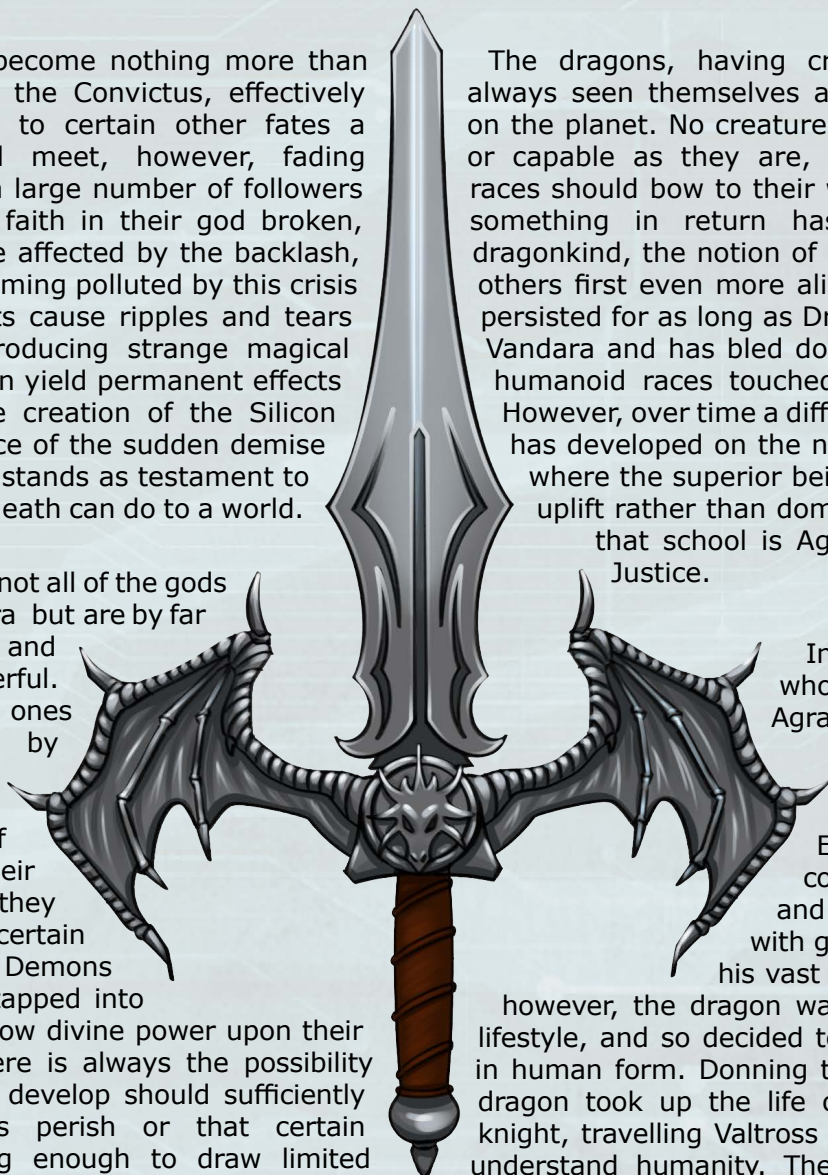
AGRADIOR. THE DRAGONKNIGHT

LG God of Dragons, Defense, Knights

Domains: Good, Law, Protection, Scalykind, War

Subdomains: Aristocracy^{CoB}, Dragon, Duels^{HotS}, Honor^{APG*}, Martyr^{APG}, Redemption^{CoP}

Favored Weapon: Greatsword



The dragons, having created Vandara, have always seen themselves as the pinnacles of life on the planet. No creature is as smart, powerful, or capable as they are, and hence the lesser races should bow to their will. The idea of giving something in return has rarely occurred to dragonkind, the notion of putting the goodwill of others first even more alien. This mentality has persisted for as long as Dragons have existed on Vandara and has bled down to affect the many humanoid races touched by Nerusa's empire. However, over time a different school of thought has developed on the nature of authority, one where the superior beings use their power to uplift rather than dominate. At the center of that school is Agradior, the Bulwark of Justice.

In life, the silver dragon who would be known as Agradior was a conqueror and tyrant like most of his kin, ruling over a large kingdom in East Valtross. Creatures cowered in his presence and placated the dragon with gifts of all sorts. Despite his vast and unchallenged rule,

however, the dragon was unsatisfied with this lifestyle, and so decided to wander his dominion in human form. Donning the name Agradior, the dragon took up the life of a wandering mage-knight, travelling Valtross in the attempt to truly understand humanity. The plights he witnessed were numerous, with violence, starvation, hatred, and fear running rampant in a land which had seemed so peaceful from afar. Even more astonishing, Agradior realized, was the ease with which a being of his power could resolve these problems. The dragon began to invoke his abilities, bringing rains down upon barren fields and building fortifications to protect towns from the elements. Bandits and marauders were easily dispatched by the dragonknight's superior combat abilities, and before long youths began to pledge themselves to Agradior's service. For his part, the dragonknight did not take on this entourage, but rather provided these courageous individuals with the necessary training and sent them on their way to dispense justice. After decades of travel and action, Agradior came to the realization that the abilities of the great are best applied to aid the population, not for the great's own personal gain. In his final act as the dragonknight, Agradior revealed his true form to

defend a town from a neighboring dragon's invasion. This revelation, unfortunately, spurred many more attacks by other dragons, most frustrated and contemptuous of the dragonknight's defense of the mortals. In a great battle against dozens of rival dragons, Agradior eventually died of his wounds. However, the vision of the dragonknight lived on in the minds of the people for centuries to come, individuals acting in the name of Agradior to protect their communities. The dragonknight ascended to godhood on the prayers and hopes of his charges, becoming the patron of justice the world over.

Every person, the followers of Agradior teach, has a duty to his fellows, placing the good of the many above any personal gain or even personal safety. No nation, group, or community can be trusted to do the right thing, and so it falls to the individual to do the right thing whenever possible and hope that others fulfill their obligations. If an individual possesses strength, wisdom, wealth, or some other superior faculties, this responsibility is multiplied thousandfold, the great possessing an obligation to serve the world with everything at their disposal. Furthermore, it is pointless in the mind of Dragonknights to expand a conflict beyond what the individual can do; do not consider the vices which you cannot personally confront and engage others in your battle only when necessary. A victory won swiftly and with minimal outside involvement is ideal, which is why so many Dragonknights prefer to resolve conflict through duels.

Dragonknights of all kinds are taught to be better than the rest of the world, to push themselves harder and elevate themselves higher than any other creature in the name of being a better defender of justice. A proper dragonknight is not only a warrior but also a scholar and a leader, a beacon of hope for the world. What's more, a Dragonknight is to conduct himself with the most intense rigor of chivalry, being honest in his dealings and respectful to allies and enemies alike. Due to these high expectations, Dragonknights tend to be rare and elite, the few and the noteworthy who remain vigilant against the hazards and vices of the world. To lower these intense standards would be an insult to Agradior and his most dedicated of followers, not to mention an undue risk to those in the Dragonknights' charge.

Agradior's ideals are powerful, certainly, but they have not always been the most popular. The stringent nature of the Dragonknights' lives makes their faith rather unpopular, and though some followers of

Agradior have become powerful and charismatic leaders the influence of the faith has not spread very far. On top of this, Dragonknights are unabashed elitists, paternalistically watching over the world and unilaterally acting without consideration for what the people they protect may actually want. Their division between "strong" and "weak" individuals also strikes many as toxic, as it implies that there are certain individuals who simply deserve authority and those who are better off in servitude. Nobody will question a Dragonknight's conviction, but their faith may well be misguided.

Dragonknights, as their name implies, come from humanoid as well as draconic races, pledging themselves to protect the weak however they can. The majority employ the blade as their tool of choice, using force to defend the world from those who would seek to harm or control it. Others make use of magic in its various forms, but the most respected of Agradior's disciples are the scholars and philosophers, the individuals whose chosen weapons are the concepts of law and good themselves. These elite few, known as the Dragonsages, are among the most coveted and respected intellectuals the world over, dedicated public servants who apply their immense wisdom to raise Vandara up.

ASLET. THE GENIUS OF INGENUITY

CN Goddess of Experimentation, Ideas, Invention

Domains: Artifice, Chaos, Luck, Magic, Rune

Subdomains: Alchemy^{DA}, Construct^{APG}, Imagination^{CoP}, Language^{APG}, Protean^{APG}, Whimsy^{ISG}

Favored Weapon: Grenades and Bombs

For all of its espousing of reason and order in the universe, the process of science and discovery is an erratic one, carried on the winds of imagination and change. In order to improve the world, one must be willing to adapt and evolve, holding onto no idea or moral as absolute. However, to dissociate oneself from order and convention is not enough; one must throw oneself completely into the chaos of existence if one is to achieve mastery over it. This is the speech that many Asletine would give you, were they to bother with social engagement.

Aslet was an Estarian alchemist with an unusual perspective on the world, a consequence of her struggle to interact with it. Unable to speak or even

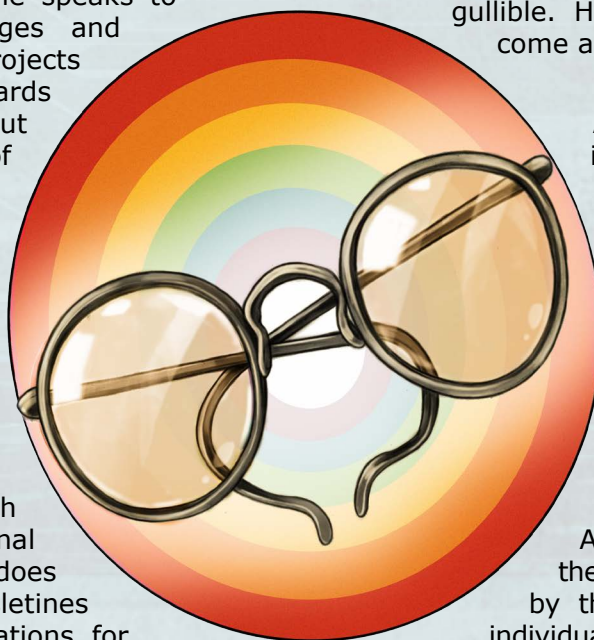
read from a young age (whether this condition was natural or curse-induced is heavily debated by scholars), the girl was isolated from the traditional social conventions that her family's moderate wealth would offer most. In its place, she found succor in her family's other resources, the extensive alchemical laboratory they used in their work. It was here that Aslet discovered her passion for the sciences, and it was here that in spite of her disabilities she was able to accomplish great things. Stories spread far and wide of the mute magical prodigy who could seemingly cure any disease or solve any magical or alchemical dilemma. By the time she had reached adulthood, Aslet was an honorary member of the Conglomeration of Notables and one of the most influential scientific minds of her generation. However, she was a recluse, and rarely if ever left her laboratory. She delved deeper into her experiments, pursuing facets of magic which only she could fully understand and encoding her unprecedented discoveries in a strange language which only she comprehended. Seemingly, an experiment gone wrong ended her life as the laboratory she loved exploded. The world was shocked and disquieted by this discovery but were even more astonished when they discovered that their adoration of Aslet, perhaps combined with some final arcane secret she had unearthed, had enabled her to ascend to Godhood.

Although unable to speak or communicate in traditional methods, Aslet's divine state has enabled her to act as a muse for every renegade thinker and experimental engineer whose project she views as sufficiently interesting. She speaks to her followers through images and sensations, guiding their projects and pushing them towards utility. Rather than figuring out patterns or laws, followers of Aslet go with whatever works, oftentimes attaining the bare minimum of sensibility and stability in their projects. Asking an Asletine Engineer to explain their creation and methodology will usually result in a simple, straightforward answer: when I did things this way, they worked. This approach deviates heavily from traditional scientific methods, but it does often prove useful, and Asletines are relied upon by many nations for

their quick thinking and ability to devise creative solutions to problems.

The closest thing Aslet has to an agenda is the furthering of human inventiveness and technological progress, if her actions hold any sort of cohesion at all. Experiments often end in failures, after all, but an unwillingness to test out new ideas leads a society nowhere. This, at least, is what her followers say, for never has an official doctrine been laid down by the goddess. The one indication of her pleasure they do regularly obtain is divine inspiration for new creations, with the most ambitious and creative followers receiving divine patronage for their work. Proteans, likewise, are seen as Aslet's servants, their ever-shifting nature reflecting the perpetually evolving state of human knowledge as experiments are conducted. To an Asletine, creation is not a strict progression from start to finish but rather a storm of ideas cobbled together over time. This is not to say that conventional knowledge and understanding are not important to an Asletine, but that they are only one part of invention, the raw materials which need to be combined through ingenuity.

Wherever a capable Asletine emerges, there will be individuals who wish for them on their side. Tyrants, madmen, heroes, and leaders alike take great interest in the capabilities of Aslet's followers, and will often cooperate with them even if it means putting up with some erratic and petulant behavior. The chosen of Aslet, after all, are not known for being particularly social, comprehensible, or gullible. Hence, the gifts of Aslet often come at great frustration.



Asletines are a small but influential faith, for rarely are individuals gifted with the insight and lateral thinking needed to garner the goddess' patronage. Even those who revere her extensively are not always chosen, for Aslet is not a goddess who views reverence and subservience as inherently productive. Her followers are often Humans and Gnomes, although Dwarves and Androids have taken a liking to the inventive concepts put forward by the goddess. Most often, these individuals keep to themselves, but the

vocal among are known to espouse the virtues inherent to chaos and imagination. So long as Aslet's followers remain around or continue to bloom, the world will remain hectic and eternally developing, though where this development leads is anyone's guess.

CAYNOCH, THE CIVIL EXPLOITANT

NE God of Thieves, Assassins, Corruption

Domains: Community, Darkness, Death, Evil, Trickery

Subdomains: Cooperation^{ISG}, Deception^{APG}, Legislation^{HotS*}, Murder^{APG}, Night^{APG}, Thievery^{APG}

Favored Weapon: Butterfly Knife^{AA}

For so long as the rules of society have existed, there have been those who wished to exploit them. Merchants who saw profit as a more valuable than their good name, charlatans whose plots care nothing for the poor marks they leave destitute, executioners and enforcers who use their positions as an excuse for abject cruelty, and lawyers who employ their cunning and acumen to safeguard the wicked from justice. To all of these men, Caynoch is an invaluable patron, a vast well of knowledge and ingenuity dedicated towards not only preserving but augmenting the many vices which thrive amidst an otherwise civilized society.

Caynoch was a royal advisor long ago, skilled in the human arts and wise to the underlying structure of society. He understood that deep down every man hated the confinements of temperance, compassion and mercy, but also understood why such things existed: to ensure that people cooperate, and that the world maintains a semblance of stability. Being reasonable enough, Caynoch began to use this information, collecting the most vile, greedy, and hateful people in the nation and offering them not death, but opportunity. A sadistic and inventively cruel man could either be a menace on the streets or a skillful torturer. A hateful mistress could serve as an excellent spy. An acrobatic thief could be made into

an effective assassin. Such was Caynoch's specialty: turning the sins in men's hearts into valuable assets, enabling individuals to indulge their most hectic vices without tarnishing the impression of civility and normalcy in the world's operations. This strategy was overwhelmingly successful, and soon the notion of "Civilized Incivility", of utilizing misdeeds rather than suppressing them, became known as "Caynoch's Tact". None could ever surpass the original thinker in their mastery of the social discipline, however, and when Caynoch perished mysteriously he still exercised influence far beyond the realm of his kingdom. In name, method, reasoning, and finally metaphysical transcendence, the Civil Exploitant became a god.

Caynoch's vision of society has inspired many otherwise-criminals, rendering them free to carry out their malicious ways under the veil of legitimacy. Rather than strike out on their own, thieves and racketeers organize themselves in guilds, claiming their crimes as a business and integrating their actions into the gears of society. Men of law find equal succor with the shadowy god, realizing the benefits which injustice can bring upon their charges and even working to enable the criminals and tyrants they see as valuable. Caynoch, however, cares nothing for order, only the illusion of it which enables the indulgence of vices uninterrupted. No crime has ever truly been pinned on him by history, but many historians suspect that his sympathy for the cruel and deleterious was intended to cover up crimes of his own.

Caynoch's faith is not militant or even openly violent, instead relying upon diplomacy, persuasion, and custom to achieve its goals. Unlike many other gods who long for a body or physical force, Caynoch sees existence as an entity of pure idea to be advantageous, for he retains the cunning mind and honeyed tongue which served him so well in life. In a conflict, Caynoch teaches, the most effective warriors do not fight at all. Rather, they negotiate, expose the follies in their opponents' thinking and bend reality through a combination of reason and skillful deception. The mind is full of paradoxes and



fallacies which a skilled individual can utilize, and the recorded laws of the world are even faultier. Learn to understand and control these vulnerabilities and a sword will rarely ever need to be drawn. If ever violence is required, it should have carried out quickly and quietly, a dagger in the night followed by a prompt disposal of the corpse. If they are not caught, then no dirty tactic is below a follower of Caynoch.

Predictably, law-abiding and socially concerned individuals are quick to decry Caynoch, his methods, and especially the ideologies of his followers. The idea that crimes such as murder and theft could ever be channeled to benefit society is repulsive to many, and that the people who perform them should go without punishment or rehabilitation seems absurdly dangerous and blatantly corrupt. Beyond this, Caynoch's faith has carried out an extensive series of power plays against other faiths and nations, many of which have led to wars or have otherwise cost hundreds if not thousands of lives. Perhaps the only reason Caynoch's ideas remains so influential is that so many have ridden corruption and treachery to power, and are now capable of enforcing whatever ideas they so desire upon the world.

Caynoch's following is understandably meritocratic, thriving upon a hegemony of skill and experience which encourages tenacity and skullduggery in equal measure. The Enigmas allegedly have an abnormally high concentration of Caynocites, and many leaders have at least one Caynocite advisor or spymaster in their court. Most other followers tend to be crime lords, mercenaries, thieves, business magnates, or the lawyers who make all these professions possible.

CINTARE. THE HAND OF GAIA

NG God of Agriculture, Wilderness, Labor

Domains: Animal, Earth, Good, Plant, Repose

Subdomains: Agathion^{APG}, Ancestors^{APG}, Fur^{APG}, Growth^{APG}, Home^{APG*}, Toil^{APG*}

Favored Weapon: Greataxe

For all the wonders that exist on Vandara, the grand arts, magics, and sciences which have been developed on its surface, the greatest wonder and most important commonality between them is the planet itself. The planet is the lifeblood of all things, a cosmic

entity above even the gods from which resources both mundane and magical flow. This mentality has existed in many different individuals across Vandara, but it was one man who rallied the disparate ideas of Vandara's identity through his resolve, humbleness, and devotion to the planet. This man, once a simple farmer, has become known as Vandara's Prophet, the Hand of Gaia, and the Will of the Planet. If one were to ask him what he was, however, this man would respond only with his name: Cintare.

Cintare's origins are unknown to history, although theories abound exist about the bearded man who was first seen in the forests of Taurun countless years ago. Some say that he was an ancient fey spirit, or the reincarnation of a powerful druid, a dragon in disguise, or simply an imagined vision. The individual would seemingly appear from nowhere in the wild places of the world, his mere presence causing the natural world around him to explode with life. Although Cintare was never seen to use magic himself, his existence seemed nonetheless magical, for any land he resided upon would see majestic flora blossom across its reaches and animals frolic with zeal throughout its midsts. In jungles, forests, mountains, and sometimes even fields, Cintare would reside in a simple hovel built with his own hands, remote enough so that travelers could not easily reach it. Those who do reach his abodes find the Hand of Gaia quite hospitable, more than willing to share everything he has with weary travelers. At the very least, these were the commonalities shared by every account of the Hand of Gaia, for Cintare has never made his presence clear to any group larger than an individual. Those who meet him on their travels have attempted to return with companions, only to find that the marked location is simply just another patch of wilderness. All that remains of Cintare and his fleeting utopias are the memories of those who initially found them: the beautiful poems and songs Cintare composes, the strange and glorious paintings hung on the walls of his hut, the incomparably delicious foods cultivated in his gardens. These stick in the minds of the fortunate for as long as they live, and they inspire a combination of reverence and action which has cemented Cintare's presence in the collective consciousness and hence his position in Vandara's pantheon.

Although Cintare's existence is questionable, the faith which he inspires is very real. People all around the world are inspired by the concept of a planetary consciousness, a being representative of all life that has existed on Vandara and a focus through which



they can channel their reverence to the planet itself. To these individuals, Cintare is emblematic of all the things on Vandara which science and reason cannot explain, the life and energy which cannot be reduced to mechanical phenomena. This idea is so resonant, some magical theorists hypothesize, that an imagined face may be all that is needed to harness its power through the Convictus. The fact that every culture seems to envision and depict Cintare differently adds credence to this concept.

The followers of Cintare are a transcendental lot, romantics at heart who see the zenith of existence as a metaphysical concept beyond science, reason, and the authority of humanity. The fleeting nature of their god is taken as an example of what mankind as a whole cannot bring under its control. Nonetheless, this rejection of rationale is not accompanied by a rejection of all morality. All followers of the Hand of Gaia are taught to achieve success by their own hands and to treat nature and history with the utmost respect. For all that we control, there is a great deal more which is beyond us, and these outer elements are to be revered for the miracles they are.

This rejection of science has bestowed upon the faith of Cintare many enemies, especially given the fanatically primitivist philosophy of some members. Although followers of the Hand of Gaia are not usually violent or cruel, they can be forceful,

preachy, and arrogant, determined that they know better than the rest of the world and rejecting any evidence to the contrary. Even safer and more environmentally friendly technologies may be rejected by certain Cintarens as "unnatural", with a disdain for more sophisticated and complex social structures going without saying.

The majority of Cintare's empowered followers are druids and hunters, wanderers of the wilderness and protectors of Vandara's remote places. Rangers also make up a sizeable percentage of Cintarens, while Convictus-empowered Bards and Skalds often act as the voices of the faith. The most numerous disciples of Cintare, however, are commoners, workers of the land far separated from metropolitan ideas who rely upon superstition rather than rationale to shape their worldview.

CLAISTOR, THE GREAT PURVEYOR

LN Goddess of Exchange, Roads, Civilization

Domains: Law, Rune, Travel, Water, Weather

Subdomains: Flotsam^{ISG}, Inevitable^{APG}, Language, Legislation, Oceans^{APG}, Trade^{APG}

Favored Weapon: Guisarme

In a world brimming with chaos and insurgency, one thing must exist that all peoples must put their faith in if civilization is to survive. This thing is trade, the mutually beneficial exchange of goods and services between parties which acts as the cornerstone of stable civic interaction. If trade is to be maintained in its sanctity, then the people who carry it out must be honest and secure in their dealings, with all exchanging parties being assured that their payments will offer a return of comparable value. To ensure this balance, the people of Vandara turn to the goddess of commerce, Claistor.

In life, Claistor was a sea captain great renown, a commander whose fleets sailed all three of Vandara's oceans and whose cargo always reached its destination regardless of distance. Every nation knew of the golden flag which flew from Claistor's masts, and it became a symbol of trust which would shine in even the most hectic of times. Wherever the fleet landed, regardless of politics or danger, Claistor could be trusted to provide whatever goods people desired. Likewise, whatever was handed over to the Purveyor could be trusted to arrive

safely and promptly on another shore. Claistor was said to have perished at sea alongside his crew, but the faith his trading empire infused within Vandara's people lived on, elevating the Great Purveyor to the goddess of trade.

All exchange and hence all civilization is rooted in trust, for through trust people become reliable and through reliability society becomes stable. Hence, the first edict of Claistor's religion is to uphold that faith in all that you do. If you do business, then you should be open about what you buy and sell. If you engage with people, then you should be truthful in your words. If others are kept in your charge, it falls to you to shepherd them against treachery and deceit, putting a stop to those who would seek to cheat or exploit them. Finally, if there are others who rely upon you, you must do everything you can to honor their faith in you, for what is the worth of a being which cannot be expected to fulfill their duties?

From the harmonizing effects the standards of Claistor have had upon Vandara's trade, the followers of Claistor have begun devising a system of ordered rules for determining the functions and patterns of trade. Like the sailors of the world watch the wind and weather to determine the ideal path forward, these economic scholars observe the flow of goods and services between people and nations to try and figure out how best to enrich the population overall. How those riches are obtained and allocated, and at whose expense, is infrequently agreed upon between Claistor's followers, for many have developed different agendas and perspectives based on the data they have gathered. These conflicts rage not only between good and evil Claistori, but also between Estarian, Freeman, Utalan, and Cidali followers of the Purveyor.

Claistor is a very well-liked goddess in much of the world due to her pro-social dogma (although more and more scholars are insisting that people would be just as fair and just without the deity's interdiction). Furthermore, some question the value of a goddess whose faith is constantly against itself in terms of how to approach larger issues, a schism which could be perceived both as nuance and as impotence. Finally, there are those who believe Claistor's ambition of ultimate trade undermines the human or ideological element of society, an idea which followers of Xaray, Etivia, Moloch, and Talsani unrelentingly emit.



Her nature as a universal trust between nations has bestowed upon Claistor followers from every corner of the world and from every humanoid race on its surface. Androids, Humans, Dwarves, Halflings, Elves, Duergar, and even some Tieflings value the ideas espoused by the Great Purveyor and seek to embody them in their works. Claistor's faith is most common amongst sailors, merchants, financiers, and social scientists, for these are the individuals who value most the ability to survey a climate and to deliver on their promises. However, this commitment to honesty does not stop some from using Claistor's blessing to exploit Vandara's economies for their own gain, nor does it stop some from prioritizing certain moral ambitions above the expansion of the markets.

ETIVIA, THE PURSUIT OF ABSOLUTION

CN Goddess of Self-Interest, Competition, Personal Freedom

Domains: Chaos, Glory, Knowledge, Liberation, Protection

Subdomains: Competition^{HotS*}, Entropy^{ISG}, Freedom^{APG}, Heroism^{APG}, Hubris^{DA}, Solitude^{CoB}

Favored Weapon: Pistol

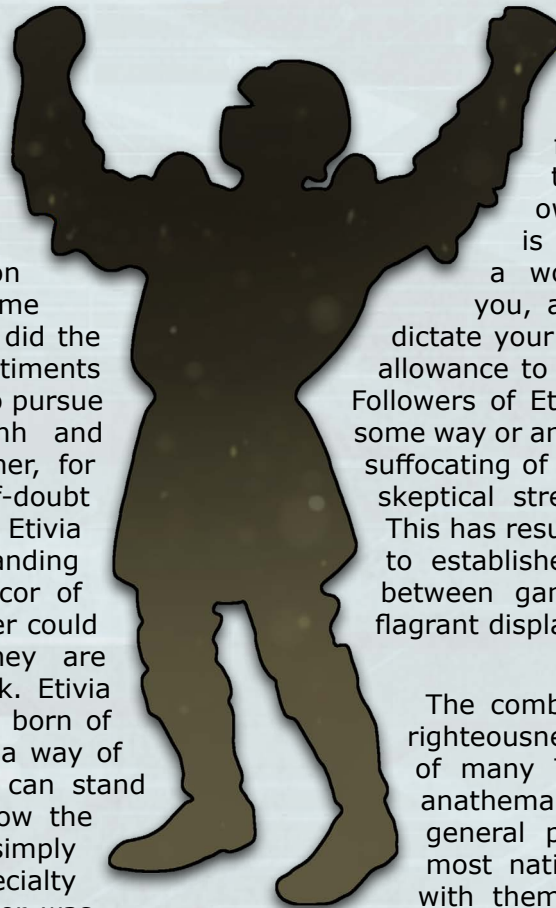
In a world so drastically shaped by community and interactions, there exist those who actively reject the will of the collective. To these individuals, altruism is nothing more than self-destruction, the pursuit of any greater cause nothing more than a dictator's alibi for their misdeeds. To prioritize the

goodwill of others is to put oneself below them, as much a dehumanization as enslavement or imprisonment. A being of conviction and reason must stand alone, bowing to nothing and requiring none to bow before them. To experience this state of separation is to experience true freedom, and only through this freedom can one realize their full potential. So speaks Etivia, the first of the Truemen and the goddess of individualism.

Etivia was known in life as the forsaker priestess, an individual who had developed a tendency to worship various gods for the sake of power and to abandon any faith she saw as conflicting with her personal vision. The prideful devastation of Talsani and Nerusa became disgusting to her over time, as did the compliance and communal sentiments of Aslet, Shoran, and Claistor. To pursue the nebulous truths of Gaynh and Nabolor seemed pointless to her, for these faiths demanded a self-doubt and reliance on others which Etivia saw as morally corrupt. Understanding could not be found in the succor of others, she declared, and neither could the powerful thrive when they are bound by the laws of the weak. Etivia set out to form a new morality born of her experience and worldview, a way of life where superior individuals can stand on their own two feet and allow the other detractors of the world to simply pass them by. Though her specialty lay in divine magic, the forsaker was determined to live a life separate from the world and went on to use her talent with words and keep perceptive abilities to achieve a position not only of power but of legend. Her unique code has been passed down by storytellers and imitators alike, and in time she has passed into godhood as more souls turned to her for guidance.

To Etivian and the Truemen who follow her, a person should possess total control of their own life, free to ascend to infinite heights or fall to infinite failures depending upon their luck and skill. In a world with no rules save for non-interference, one cannot justifiably praise or blame any other creature for their lot, for to do such things is to render oneself vulnerable to the views of others

and hence to sacrifice your autonomy. If individuals interact, it must either be through willing exchange or mutual competition, for only in these arenas shall one side never be forced to submit to the other's will. To commit violence for any reason is to degrade yourself to the state of an animal in the eyes of a Trueman, but to attain wealth and power by your own ability is the highest virtue.



The rejection of established reason is another major facet of Etivia's faith, for none but the individual should have the final say on their reality. To put trust in any source but one's own perceptions and intuitions is to willingly sacrifice power to a world which cares nothing for you, and the allowance of others to dictate your opinions and perceptions is an allowance to let them dictate your freedom. Followers of Etivia are often well-educated in some way or another (for ignorance is the most suffocating of all prisons), but they possess a skeptical streak that borders on paranoia. This has resulted in revolutionary challenges to established science that seem to vary between game-changing observations and flagrant displays of stupidity.

The combination of rebelliousness, self-righteousness, and borderline solipsism of many Truemen has made them the anathema of other faiths, although their general policy of nonaggression forces most nations and individuals to put up with them. Many suspect that a major reason for the Freeman's Lands' founding was that many wanted the Truemen out of the way, leaving them a place where they could carry out their elitist and hyper-individualist lifestyle in a location where few others would be threatened or affected by their greed and ambition. After all, just because Truemen won't directly interfere in others' affairs doesn't mean they can't spread rumors and smear campaigns against anyone who disagrees with them.

Collective interest to a Trueman is considered toxic, and never will a follower of Etivia admit to being part of a larger group or ideology. Even to call a Trueman a "follower" is an insult, for they view their goddess as a trusted ally and nothing more.

Duergar have long associated themselves with Etivia in their thinking, as have some Gnomes and certain Human demographics in Balyn and the Freeman's Lands. Due to the focus on selfishness, the majority of Etivia's followers are evil, having perverted the faith into justification of their misdeeds towards others. Although others seek to redefine Etivia's ideas in the public mind as morally neutral, they are loathing to condemn their hostile brethren for fear of becoming interferences in another's life.

GAYNH, THE WILL TO POWER

N God of Strategy, Reason, Analysis

Domains: Knowledge, Magic, Rune, Trickery, War

Subdomains: Arcane^{APG}, Education^{HotS}, Language, Tactics^{APG}, Thought^{APG}, Wards^{APG}

Favored Weapon: Shortspear

Most modern Vandarans, at heart, consider themselves to be rational creatures, capable of using their senses and judgement to determine what is happening and what is the correct path forward. Such is human nature, the belief that whatever the individual puts the most faith in always knows best and can always present the best solution. The disciples of Gaynh, however, have come to terms with the fact that reality is not always so black and white, that even the wisest ideas must be open to criticism and thus change. No strategy can be embraced as flawless, no truth accepted as an absolute, no belief trusted beyond the benefits it actively serves in the moment of its utility. Such is the Will to Power, the pursuit of ultimate reason and hence ultimate power as envisioned by Gaynh, the simultaneous grand exemplar and humble disciple of rationality.

Gaynh was once a Halken general, a man whose every day brimmed with questions which demanded answers and trials which demanded conquest. In his extensive campaigns, Gaynh consulted the teachings of countless strategists, philosophers, and mages, seeking to employ the sum of their wisdom to every challenge. With experience emerged skepticism, however, and Gaynh began to recognize the fundamental flaws underlying every enshrined approach and every encoded virtue. To determine the meaning and logic of the universe was a fool's endeavor, he asserted, if these doctrines could not hold up under scrutiny and execution. A truly

rational man, Gaynh asserted, cannot rely upon guidance from human perceptions, and in order to advance must always attempt to discern what is demonstrable as effective.

Beginning with only the most basic fundamentals of awareness, Gaynh began to rebuild the universe using only what he could perceive and what could be tested. Separating himself from all preconcepts, the general began to open his mind to the fundamental truths of rationality, the understanding which emerges only from watching, learning, and testing until at last a pattern emerges which unifies the idea. If further data or scrutiny challenges a model, then the model must be corrected until it is no longer at odds with reality. Only through continual trial and error, the steady and cautious expanse of what can be proven and hence what can be known, can any truth eventually be reached. Over time, this idea would come to be known as the Singular Axiom, the heart of all science on Vandara.

Rigorous application of the Singular Axiom did indeed lead Gaynh to great providence, enabling him to create new tactics to conquer the battlefield, teach new morals to guide his troops, and discover new facets of the mystic arts which became the bases for arcane magic (it is for this reason that Gaynh later became known as "the father of arcana"). Rather than become rooted in his successes, Gaynh challenged himself and his followers to always seek out better solutions, to seek out evidence for every theory and challenge blind dogma wherever it emerges. One lifetime, the general knew, could never be enough to find the truth of the universe. As he died, Gaynh's mission persisted and continued to expand, and so the primordial rationalist ascended to godhood to guide Vandara for eternity.

Gaynh's teachings have spread like wildfire across the world, primarily because so many are quick to realize the benefits that come with reevaluating their beliefs. Leaders, teachers, scientists, and warriors of all stripes embrace the Will to Power as a pathway towards greater success in all of their pursuits. Gaynh's followers, be they scholarly or soldierly, seek constant improvement in themselves and their worldviews, displaying a willingness to question absolutely anything if such queries may bring them closer to the truth. Not all creatures are willing to embrace such a nihilistic worldview, however, and

may turn against the ultimate objectivity of Gaynh in favor of the concrete doctrines of Shoran, Aslet, Etivia, Nerusa, or Marit. As a god of questioning and evaluation, Gaynh accepts followers and priests from every alignment, seeing the potential every worldview carries to bring men closer to the universe's true nature.

The faith of Gaynh is strongest in the lands with greatest turmoil, where men cannot afford to place their faith in any absolute and hence must rely on the nebulous guidance of "whatever serves best". Valtross is a land where the Will to Power is widely respected and even worshipped, although orthodox Gaynhights decry such actions as missing the point of the Singular Axiom entirely. Although many followers of Gaynh are successful in discerning and mastering their respective pursuits, no disciple is ever to take another's word as absolute truth. Even the god of reason himself is not impervious to refutation, for to hold any words as sacred is to devalue the pursuit of truth.

MARIT, THE TERRIFIC AMBITION

LE Goddess of Undeath, History, and Terror

Domains: Death, Evil, Knowledge, Law, Repose

Subdomains: Ancestors, Fear^{ISG}, Judgement^{ISG}, Legend^{DA*}, Memory^{APG}, Undead^{APG}

Favored Weapon: Fauchard^{AA2}

One of the first human gods to take shape, Marit has long represented the dream of immortality among humans, the desire to live forever through either a great legacy or through the perversion of nature to assume a truly eternal life. Once a powerful mage who commanded vast wealth and power, Marit's every act was overt and ruthless, a testament to her hunger for notoriety no matter how horrible her legacy may be. Far from indiscriminate slaughter, Marit's soldiers took a perverse pleasure in maximizing the fear and agony which bled from their victims, ensuring that every death would echo through the collective unconsciousness of Vandara for years or even centuries to come. Despite their brutality, Marit and her followers displayed a great appreciation for knowledge and learning, and her essays, collectively known as The Facets of Terror and Legacy, are among the oldest and most revered texts of historiography, psychology, political science, and early magic in Vandara's history.



The most notable of Marit's scientific analyses was her army's study of undeath. As her fallen enemies and soldiers began to rise from the grave as a result of the Convictus' empowerment, Marit began to systematically study this phenomenon, and from it engineered the first reanimation spells in human memory. This revelation drew many followers to her back, ambitious individuals who feared death and dreamed of immortality. Marit, seeing her own visions of eternal life in them, began to build one of the most powerful forces in all of what would become Valtross. It was in this stage that people began to revere the woman as something divine, and this adoration merged with the legacy of atrocities to create the malign Convictus energy which would eventually lead to Marit's ascension to godhood.

As research and understanding progressed further, more and more of Marit's elite followers ascended to various forms of undeath, wishing to carry out their work and hence their names well into the future. Marit, however, did not turn herself

over to these indulgences, believing that perhaps given time the process of eternal life could be perfected. Over the course of her lifetime, Marit was killed and resurrected many times, sometimes even by the same individuals, and continued to expand her reign of terror until eventually she was taken by old age. In this moment, it was revealed to the world that a sufficiently legendary individual will become something more than human in their passing, merging with the Convictus and becoming a metaphysical representation of all that they stood for in life. For Marit, this meant she had become an incarnation of ruthlessness, horror, legacies, and the most immoral facets of the ego. What's more, she was now capable of instilling her most loyal followers with incredible power, abilities which would later become known as Divine Spells.

Having realized the sum of her actions, Marit began to encourage more and more people to kill and terrorize in her name and with her methods, furthering her influence and hence her power. Beyond this, she encouraged them not only to learn of and understand history but also to build upon it, discovering new facets of magic, warcraft, psychology, and technology so as to enhance their power and notoriety. To any follower of Marit, the ultimate goal is to perform an act which will award them infamy and awe for centuries to come, be it devising some new weapon which changes the world or simply repurposing existing tools to lay unprecedented trauma and ruin in their wake. Followers of Marit hold a strong respect for each other due to their shared ideologies and goals, but when it comes to violence will think nothing of crushing fellow members of the faith. Many of Marit's followers have temporarily become gods in their own right, but all have eventually faded, the original archival laceration persisting.

Marit is a god of apparent contradictions, a patron of innovation and escalation who also thrives upon the worst impulses of human nature. She is considered a founder of Vandaran civilization and values, yet is reviled almost universally for her teachings and ideas. To this day, her following is immense and loyal, the entire nation of Mariton dedicated to her name and ambitions and her many undead servitors continuing to persist and propagate in spite of the church of Wesmir's many attempts to control or end them. So long as men wish for eternal life and eternal glory, Marit will remain a force that moves the world, and woe to all who cross the path of her faithful.

MIKRI, THE FREESPIRIT

CG Goddess of Expression, Passion, Rebellion

Domains: Chaos, Charm, Darkness, Good, Trickery

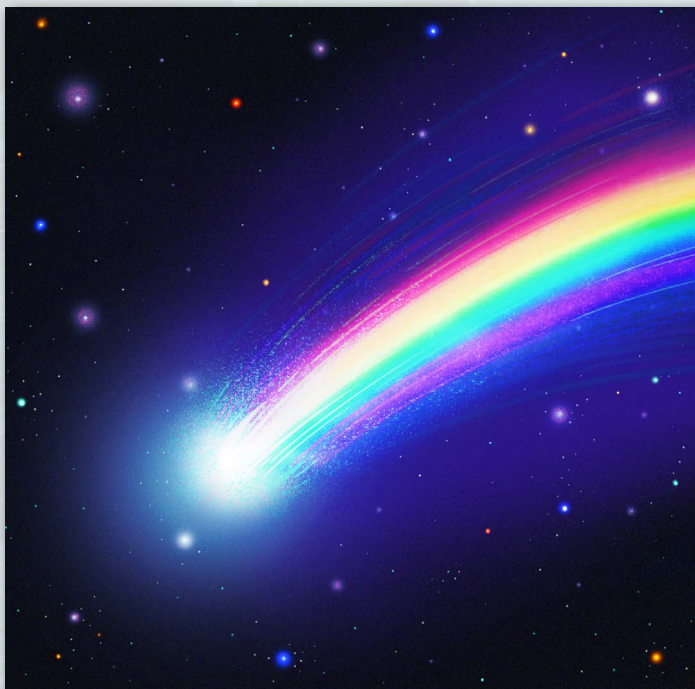
Subdomains: Friendship^{ISG}, Innuendo^{CoB}, Love^{APG}, Moon^{ISG}, Revelry^{ISG}, Whimsy

Favored Weapon: Bladed Scarf^{ISWG}

Known by many as the Unwitting God, Mikri is an ancient gnomish deity who has captivated many Vandarans as an icon of the passions and energies of youth. Her influence has dwelled in the minds of most every Vandaran to experience love, repression, or any of the other powerful desires which emerge as a child comes of age. Mikri, eternally fascinated by the idea of meeting new friends, influences them perhaps unintentionally, showing them visions of what could be if the youths freed themselves to speak their minds and indulge in the merriments of life so often dubbed forbidden. In a world dominated by schemes, violence, and an eternal hunger to grow stronger, Mikri and her faith remain a bastion of pure, unbridled happiness.

Allegedly, the god known as Mikri was once a musician, a gnome girl who wandered Vandara in ancient days filling the world with her songs. Rarely ever did men or beasts turn their wrath upon her, realizing that to fight her would be to silence her melodies which they so adored. It was fate which ripped her from the world at a young age, a raging fire which consumed her as it blazed across the town. However, although her body had been destroyed, her voice remained in the many people and creatures she had entranced in life, and this powerful collective memory was enough to sustain Mikri as a being of the Convictus.

This story, however, changes with every speaker, for Mikri is a fickle and mutable god whose image changes with every passing generation, continually renewing itself in a constant springtime of youth. Hence, even the goddess herself has little recollection of ages past, content to indulge in whatever ideas and desires consume the present. Her origin as a musician is even debatable, for a god with such a passion for the zeitgeist acquires many different skills and interests. Her priests, many of whom are young and all of whom are adventurous and impassioned souls, end up being similarly finicky, focusing more upon guiding the present than chronicling the past.



Although they vary in trappings and mentality, Mikri and her faithful are always agents of freedom and creative expression. They are either patrons of creative arts or artists themselves, seeking to enrich the world with emblems of humanity's boundless spirit. Unlike other artisanal gods such as Shoran or Etivia, Mikri sees the zenith of expression and passion in the interactions between individuals, the zeal with which an artist conveys their feelings to a sympathetic audience. As a result, followers of Mikri are often fervent leaders and passionate lovers, even if the objects of their fascination do not always remain consistent.

Because of their incredibly liberal attitudes and fickle activity, many devotees of Mikri are looked down upon by people in power as well as followers of other faiths? Why would any responsible soul, after all, dedicate themselves to a religion so defined by eccentricity and lack of dogma? Nonetheless, many of them value the spirit of ingenuity and energy which Mikri provides to the world, and all but the most didactic and lockstep of people will admit that the Freespirit's influence has done a great deal of good for Vandara throughout history.

Mikri's congregation is built of souls who view themselves as at odds with conformity, who feel a desire to express themselves in a society which so often suppresses individuality. People

from all walks of life pray to Mikri for inspiration, acceptance, love, or simply companionship, and the goddess responds to most to any petitioner she views as truly sincere. Loathe to judge or turn away any potential friend, Mikri cooperates with creatures of all alignments, trusting in her compassion and energy to naturally draw others to goodwill.

MOLOCH, THE MOLTEN IMPERATOR

LE Archdevil of Unity, Industry, and Military Might

Domains: Artifice, Evil, Fire, Law, War

Subdomains: Ash^{APG}, Devil^{APG}, Industry^{HotS}, Smoke^{APG}, Toil, Slavery^{ISG}

Favored Weapon: Machine Gun

Devils have long been the implements of Vandaran tyrants in asserting their will, but they have always served with an agenda, a mission of their own to transform the planet in their own image. Long have they sought an opportunity to turn humanity upon itself, drawing upon fear and anger to establish an absolute autarchy upon the material plane under which mankind would bow. Freedom, compassion, individuality, all are enemies of the order and stability which devilkind hopes to impose upon the universe at all cost. Most devils have attempted to convey their ideas and ambitions in at least partially human form, appealing to the biases and misjudgements that so often occur when people think themselves dealing with just another weak-willed, shortsighted mortal. Moloch has abandoned this approach entirely, instead presenting himself and his cause as wholly heartless, wholly devoid of human influence or idea. Perhaps this is the reason why he has been so successful.

Moloch was a creature forged of the outer plains, an avatar of industry's grand power to control and also to destroy. Moloch is the manifestation of absolute control, a being wholly devoid of heart or emotion whose sole purpose is to construct, expand, and subjugate. Built of fire, metal, and infernal magics unknown to man, the being was birthed in the reaches of Hell long ago, infused with a cosmic purpose and an undying will by strange infernal deities. Moloch was never truly mortal and will never become a god, forever remaining a powerful and dangerous entity which lies in between the two points: a fiend of immense physical and magical strength known as an Archdevil.

In Taurun's Iron Revolution, the insurgents saw Moloch as the perfect weapon, a beacon of might who would never be tainted by human weakness, incorruptible and completely dedicated to the vision of engineering an absolutely controlled, stable society with no room for the flawed impulses of men. What's more, Moloch offered on advantage that no god ever could: a physical form with which to dominate the battlefield. With gun, sword, spell, and armor, the Molten Emperor shredded the resistance of the royalists, burning their castles and monuments before raising his own from the slag. From the highest tower in the Never-Tarnished Citadel, Moloch now commands all of Taurun, those who oppose him meeting their ends immediately. With such powerful influence, Moloch has been able to claim residence on the Material Plane, and every day his realm becomes more attuned to the Archdevil's legalistic and utterly dominant vision.

Moloch has little care for leisure or delegation, however, and is more than willing to display his drive and intellect to the people. The Archdevil takes active roles not only in politics but also in manufacturing and strategy, ensuring that Taurun's productive capacity continues to grow and that every citizen stays in the position they are allotted. Moloch leads simply because he is the one most fit to, the singular entity who is wholly devoid of ideological corruption and who is able and willing to work tirelessly until his mission is completed. The Archdevil is known to lead by example, commanding the nation through day and night and leading the charge whenever Taurun's armies are employed. Although theoretically capable of destruction, Moloch has endured extreme threats without being phased, surviving even the detonation of an atom bomb fused to his back as he charged into a Qlippoth assault. Those who fail to emulate the infernal determination of the Molten Emperor are punished harshly, or simply have their bodies and minds repurposed for more useful affairs.

Naturally, an entity of such extremes won't exist without equally fervent opposition. Devils have never had the interest of humanity and the multiverse in mind, as countless examples have provided through Vandara's history, and here stands an exceedingly powerful devil with one of the most powerful nations in the world under his heel. Cidalac, New Estaria, Utala, the Scaled Monarchs, the Freeman, and even Mariton



fear to provoke the Archdevil's ire, and so for the preservation of their own societies refuse to condemn the inhumanity and violence which defines his empire. Many will even stoop so low as to stop aid and rebellion groups from entering Taurun, so as to avoid provoking Moloch's wrath when a foreign agent is captured. Given the amount of time and energy Moloch dedicates to tracking down insurgents, their capture is usually taken as a given.

The majority of Moloch's followers, the workers who slave eternally in the service of Taurun, worship him out of fear more than respect. They know that rebellion means certain death (and probably worse things, given Moloch's association with Hell), and so they continue to feed themselves to his immense military-industrial complex having nothing else to live for. Moloch's true servitors, though rare, comprise the upper echelons of Tauruni government, and are mostly spellcasters who for some reason or another desire a nation of absolute order and control. No room for flexibility means no room for sloth, chaos, or questioning, and to many this rigidity gives them the means to finally display their utmost potential, devoid of human faults. The mechanisms of a perfectly run world have always tantalized men, which is why they are so often willing to conspire with tyrants to make it a reality.

MOTHER ZANDYLA, THE CARING RESPITE

NG Goddess of Doctors, Families, Caregivers

Domains: Good, Healing, Madness, Magic, Psionics^{UP}

Subdomains: Medicine^{DA}, Restoration^{APG}, Divine^{APG}, Insanity^{APG}, Redemption^{CoP}, Family^{APG*}

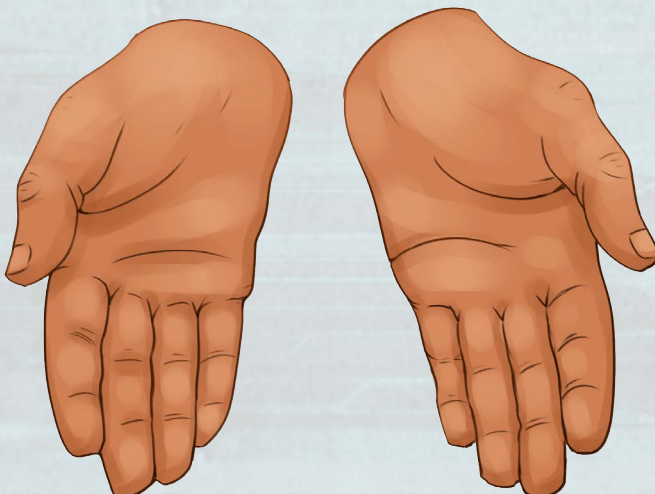
Favored Weapon: Injection Glove or Syringe Spear^{AA}

Power, society, knowledge, all these things are means to a single end: to let people help each other. True progress does not come from stronger weapons, taller cities, or greater material wealth, but from an acquired sense of compassion, a greater willingness to care for and assist those who need it most. So long as a single ill body remains neglected, the world is in need of improvement. However, every act of compassion an individual performs brings Vandara one step closer to righteousness. Perhaps if enough people cared for each other with enough fervor and understanding, humankind itself could one day be saved.

Zandyla was a woman who dedicated her life to such compassion, a mother from what is now Taurun who watched as her children perished one after another at the hands of the bubonic plague. In her desperation to help them, she spent years researching the still-new field of divine magic, desiring to harness the powers of the Convictus to save those ravaged not only by physical violence, but those rendered infirm from sickness of both mind and body. Her research yielded many of the most important curative spells in Vandara's history, including Restoration and Remove Disease. However, these revelations did not come in time to save

Zandyla's family. Rather than let this fate defeat her, Zandyla set out to purge the world of seafflictions, doing everything she could to learn more about how disease was spread and to stop it from hurting people. Word spread far and wide of the hooded mage who could perform healing miracles, and soon others began to flock to her in order to learn from and aid her. What they found, however, was not a grand champion but an unstable recluse, a mentally unhinged individual who had become obsessed completely with her grand ambition to rid the world of sickness. This fate drove away many potential followers but left the remainder with a new mission: to not only learn from Zandyla but to surpass her, finding a way to relieve her delirium. These disciples never did in the Caring Respite's lifetime, but they continued to carry on Zandyla's legacy and cherish her work. This passion and gratitude from the world elevated Zandyla to godhood, where she could preside over all of the world.

Zandyla's faith is fully committed to the salvation of as many people as possible, making no distinction between the powerful, the weak, the virtuous, and the cruel. Known as the Healing Hands, the followers of the Caring Respite have organized and spread across much of Vandara, teaching the healing arts to all who would listen. In today's world, the Healing Hands are a powerful international organization, arriving wherever there is conflict or illness to treat the population and protect those who cannot be treated. Zandyla taught that no soul deserves to suffer infirm or perish ignobly, and her followers do all that they can to make good on these values. Every country on Vandara recognizes the blue hand of the Healing Hands as a symbol of aid and hope, and most will do whatever they can to protect or assist these healers in their work.



The more controversial aspect of Zandyla's "care at all costs" mentality is the willingness of the faithful to experiment with new techniques and ideas. Beyond nonmagical healers and clerics, quite a few followers of the Caring Respite are psionics, and the practice and study of psionics has become a prominent aspect of Zandyla's congregation in recent years. Although these techniques often produce great results, many nations remain skeptical of Qlippoth technology, fearing that the vitally important organization that is the Healing Hands could be corrupted over time by its reliance upon alien and poorly understood powers.

Zandyla herself is a controversial figure in some circles, mainly as a consequence of the intense neurological issues which she developed over time. The Caring Respite was unquestionably a genius at magic, but many of her actions in life were guided by paranoia, delusions, and an unhealthy sense of guilt regarding her deceased family. Perhaps this made her volatile, others defend, but it also enabled her to be more compassionate, to understand the plights of delirious and unstable patients and to treat them not only effectively but respectfully. Clerics who derive power from Zandyla's mad aspect are often perceived as dangerous, but they themselves view this acceptance as the carrying on of an important legacy.

Followers of Zandyla come from all walks of life, although most have had a bad experience with violence or illness and wish to make amends. Doctors, medics, clerics, vitalists, and healers of every other walk of life pray to Zandyla, for the clear majority of them have derived at least some of their techniques from the Caring Respite. Meanwhile, outside of the temples and hospitals, people who watch their friends and family suffer from disease pray to Zandyla to relieve them, to send help however she can in order to assist the wretched of the world. Rarely ever do these prayers go unanswered.

NABOLOR, THE SERENE ONE

LN God of Asceticism, Self-Improvement, Transcendence

Domains: Law, Glory, Destruction, Strength, Plant

Subdomains: Growth, Heroism, Honor, Loyalty^{ISG}, Resolve^{APG}, Self-Realization^{DA}

Favored Weapon: Short Sword

What does it mean for one to achieve perfection, for the individual to reach a point where they can operate at their greatest potential at all times, regardless of what the outside world throws at them? Is it possible for an individual to ascend to this state, a state where they possess total mastery of the self and can hence stand firm against any trial? Every culture has possessed myths about people who have reached this enlightenment, but never has a truly enlightened individual been observed. The very concept of transcendence would likely have passed into legend by now were it not for the substantial works of philosophy and natural

science committed to its discovery, were it not for the dedication and drive with which certain scholars pursue the ideal state of existence, were it not for the congregation of Nabolor.

Born in what is now Taurun, the man who would come to be known as Nabolor grew up in luxury as the son of a wealthy merchant family. Although he was quite comfortable and prosperous, he was continually baffled by the lack of happiness in his life and family. It seemed that every day his fortunes grew further, but never did the young man become any closer to fulfillment. A strange incident piqued the man's curiosity about the true meaning of satisfaction, a family whooping with joy as they watched their house burn. How could people rejoice in the face of such loss, the young man wondered, and what is the nature of happiness if it could be derived from such loss? Wishing to understand the world better and perhaps find the universally coveted sense of satisfaction which had eluded him for so long, the man abandoned the luxury which had shielded him from the world and began to explore Vandara on foot. It was then that the man became known as Nabolor, which translates from



Elven as “the oaken man”. Nabolor could be found meditating in the wilderness, observing scholars at work, and conversing with the populous in equal measures, and stories of the strange philosopher spread so that his every arrival brought throngs of curious laymen wishing to observe him. Nabolor, for his part, accepted this fame with indifference, and continued on with his ascetic lifestyle. In this strange lifestyle, it seems, Nabolor had finally found contentment, and the image of this wandering philosopher fed enough awe and mystique into the convicts to enable Nabolor’s ascension to godhood.

The followers of Nabolor come from all walks of life, from common folk seeking meaning in their menial lives to elevated nobles who wish to learn from the Serene Man’s teachings. All such disciples see Nabolor as having advanced on a path towards transcendent living, purging the fear and turmoil which so often defines life and embracing the harmony of the cosmic order. Through self-discipline and introspection, Nabolor had begun to forge a path towards enlightened living, an existence devoid of excesses both physical and emotional. Perhaps further along this path, many believe, lie the secrets to greater power or virtue, the realization of an ultimate entity that lies in each of us. To claim these secrets, one must continue the path that Nabolor began, discerning the fundamental nature of the world and learning to control it without leaving yourself vulnerable.

For some Naboliers, living according to virtue means casting yourself out from civilization, living a life of individual virtue as an ascetic. To others, virtue is to be found in hard work, dutiful service as a tradesman, statesman, or soldier. Finally, still others find their resolve in correcting the world’s injustices, guiding society as leaders and intellectuals in the hope of spreading Nabolor’s values of serenity and self-improvement across the world. Regardless of vocation, all Naboliers share the values of dedication, courage, and self-improvement, encouraging themselves and others to face any hardship without tension and to find happiness in this balanced state of existence.

Naboliers have taken on many aspects throughout history, as many benevolent as harsh. Some, viewing the greatest virtue as a dedication to humankind, serve as humanitarians, protectors, and spiritual guides, determined to help others on the path towards enlightenment. Others, recognizing

the world as flawed, proclaim themselves to be enlightened philosopher-kings who force their ideas and edicts upon the less astute, often assisted by blindly loyal Nabolier soldiers. As a result, the world has very mixed opinions on Nabolor’s worshippers, some viewing the faith as altruistic and uplifting while others condemn the Nabolier’s pursuits as pointless or despotic. Nonetheless, the teachings of this church form a cornerstone of Vandaran learning and philosophy.

Nabolor is one of the few other gods tolerated under Moloch’s rule, for the Archdevil sees the god’s teachings of dedication and contentment as compatible with its own. Maytar has long played host to Nabolor’s most noteworthy disciples, many of whom sit upon the Conglomeration of Notables. Monastics worldwide imitate Nabolor in their lifestyle, wandering from place to place and finding meaning through their interactions with the larger world. The majority of Naboliers, however, are regular people, individuals of all races who find peace through a commitment to their work.

NERUSA, THE DRAGON QUEEN

LE Goddess of Dominion, Tradition, Dragons

Domains: Law, Evil, Scalykind, Nobility, Strength

Subdomains: Aristocracy, Dragon, Fear, Loyalty, Resolve, Tyranny^{ISG}

Favored Weapon: Scimitar

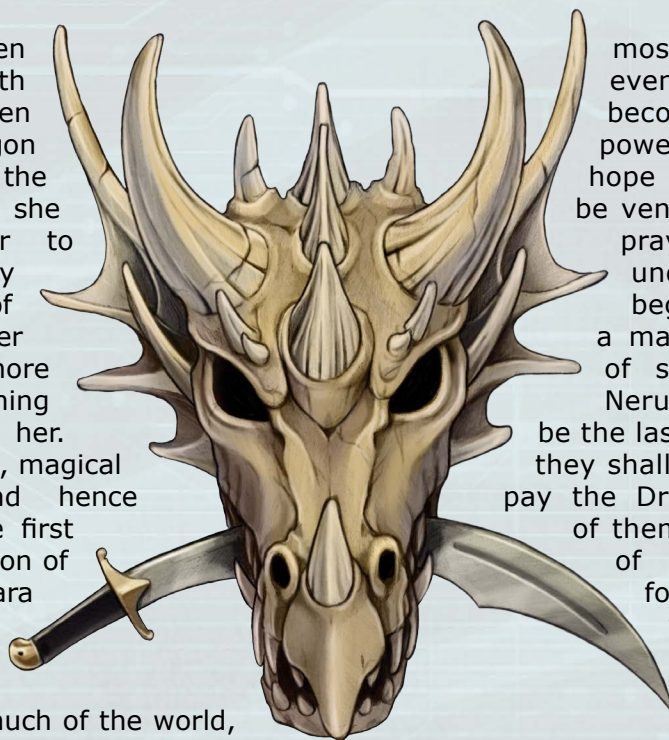
Dragons have long captivated humanity with their age, their knowledge, their majesty, and especially their power. Power, the currency which one uses to manipulate the world around them, captivates men and dragons alike, and all such creatures will go to great lengths to achieve power in its various forms. While obtaining such power is rather easy, however, retaining it in the face of adversity is a much more difficult affair. Hence, the strongest individuals in the world tend not to be those who obtain power quickly, but those who retain it for the longest time.

The sole Vandaran deity to have been a veteran of the maker’s war, the dragon known as Nerusa possessed the wisdom and magical ability to reorganize and subjugate the disparate draconic forces in the conflict’s aftermath. She rallied the surviving dragon forces and set out constructing a draconic empire in Utala, a place where she quickly

ascended to become Queen of all Dragonkind. The wealth in her hoards has never been matched by any other Dragon in Vandara's history, and the mighty draconic armies she commanded enabled her to exert her will freely over any creature in any corner of the globe. For centuries, her reign persisted, more and more creatures of all races coming forward to pay fealty to her. With her immense influence, magical knowledge, strength, and hence power, Nerusa became the first Eldenwurm as well as the icon of what an individual on Vandara could become through intelligence, conviction, and utter ruthlessness. Her every whim was law over much of the world, and anything she decreed would be carried out without question. Most often, these decrees were brutal, spiteful punishments laid down upon her enemies, which could comprise entire continents. Buried deep under Utala are many enemies that Nerusa slew in her centuries of rule, many forgotten by history under penalty of death. When one of her feuds eventually did end her life, Nerusa ascended to true godhood, her majesty echoing across Vandara for the rest of history.

The veneration, fear, and riches that Nerusa commanded have made her an icon to Vandara as a whole, not just to historians but also to ambitious souls who seek to emulate the Dragon Queen. Every inch of ground claimed by conquest, every coin hoarded in the name of personal wealth, and every dream of ultimate power which dwells in the mind of warlords is a sacrament to Nerusa. By avarice and ambition shall the greatest make their position clear, and by the subjugation of the world to one's will shall the greatest of being earn the favor of the Dragon Queen. Such are teachings of Nerusa, a faith which has become known as the Creed of Tyrants. Nerusa, wishing to live on forever as a god, continues to encourage the proud and forceful of the world to emulate her dominion, thus ensuring the continued reign of the divine Dragon Queen.

Nerusa's followers are unique in that they do not usually adore their patron goddess. Rather,



most Nerusites seek to eventually surpass her, to become wealthier and more powerful than their master for hope that they themselves may be venerated by the ages. Every prayer to Nerusa contains an undercurrent of loathing, a begrudging respect paid to a master who demands rituals of servitude. Secretly, every Nerusite hopes their prayer to be the last ever spoken, for one day they shall be worshipped by all who pay the Dragon Queen fealty. Many of them document the strategies of their success, recording for posterity the traits and tactics which behoove an ambitious soul and those which fail. The records of the Creed of Tyrants swell every year, to the point where perusing its secrets is now a years-long undertaking. Nerusa, for her part, simply doles out power and mirthfully observes as champion after champion fails in their conquest.

To know a world without the Creed is incomprehensible for most Vandarans, for the teachings laid down by Nerusa have existed since the dawn of human civilization. Hence, the fundamental teachings of Nerusa have spread far beyond her church, the ideals of power soaking into every civilization created since her ascent to godhood. Most historians view the Creed of Tyrants as a crucial part of Vandaran existence, and the continued reign of Nerusa as a fact of life on the planet. To challenge the Dragon Queen or her ideology is a futile endeavor, although individual conquerors can certainly be impeded.

Dragons and humanoids alike comprise Nerusa's congregation, both equally eager to learn from and emulate the most powerful being in Vandara's history. Their only cooperation, however, exists in the execution of Nerusa's will, the honoring of rituals in the name of obtaining and keeping power. Beyond the walls of the churches and libraries, Nerusites have no respect for their ilk, and will trample them just as readily as they would any other creature. As a being whose very mana is the hunger for power, Nerusa would have it no other way.

RISTYMAL, THE VISION OF RUIN

CE God of Mortal Weakness, Self-Destruction

Domains: All except Law and Good

Subdomains: All for corresponding domains

Favored Weapon: Unarmed
Strike

Ristymal is unique among the gods of Vandara, for his origin is wholly unknown. No being or legend exists in the planet's history that bears this name, and no other god displays the mutability and expansiveness of domains which Ristymal bears. Many theories exist about the origin of this entity, ranging from the possibility that he was an intelligently designed by the Outer Lords to the possibility that he was carried by the Dragons from their homeworld to the possibility that Ristymal is in fact many different gods operating a single name. The most pervasive and disquieting idea, however, is that Ristymal is an entity that exists beyond the level of godhood, an ancient entity whose scope spans far beyond Vandara and whose power far exceeds that of any other known deity.

The reason why such a prospect so curdles the sensibilities of Vandarans is because this entity has brought cataclysm after cataclysm upon the world. Wherever an empire has fallen, wherever an atrocity against humanity has been committed, wherever the worst aspects of humanity have emerged en masse, the name Ristymal has never been far away, the servitors of this twisted god acting to foment the desolation. Every culture, race, and nation has felt this being's horrific influence at some point in its history, goading its people into cruelty and madness. It is for this reason that the worship of Ristymal is punishable by death in every country, for fear that any inkling of sympathy and influence this being procures will bring about further ruin.

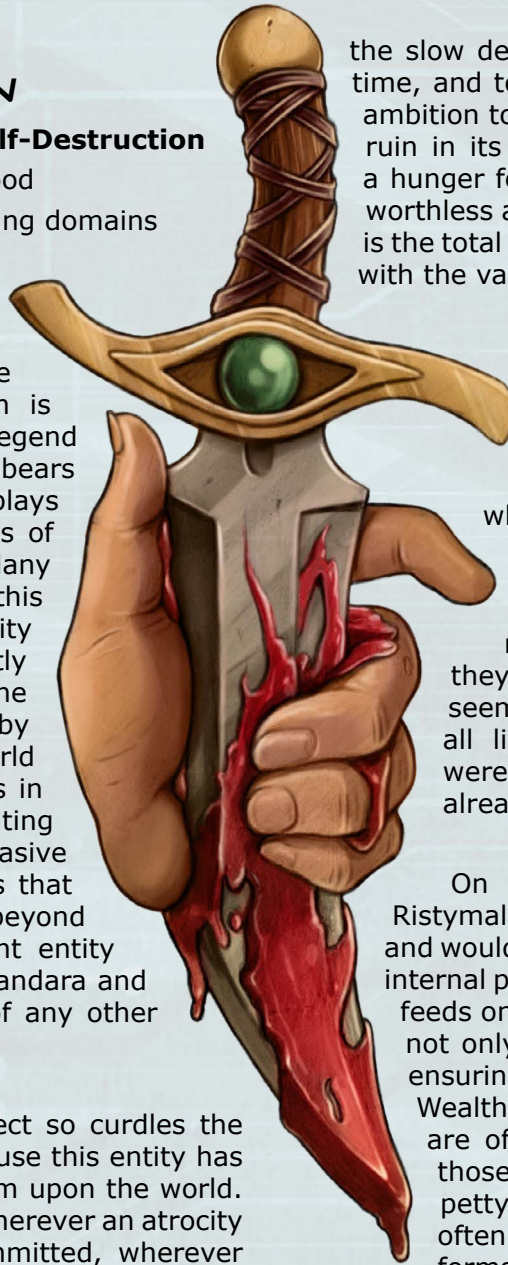
The faith of Ristymal takes various aspects, conveying the most vicious inversion of whatever culture pays it fealty. To the Cidali, for example, Ristymal is an emblem of solipsistic dismantling of order and reason, to the Scaled Hierarchy he is

the slow degradation of value and trust over time, and to the Valtrossi he is the unbridled ambition to destroy which leaves nothing but ruin in its wake. Common to every form is a hunger for ruin, a conviction that all life is worthless and that the path to enlightenment is the total obliteration of all things, beginning with the values of the self.

A disquietingly unique aspect of Ristymal's abilities is his capacity to create physical avatars, known as Dark Walkers, who fulfill his machinations directly wherever they appear. Though rare and covert, every Dark Walker possesses incredible abilities, and seems dead-set on sowing ruin, discord, and regret wherever they tread. Their ultimate ambition seems to be the utter annihilation of all life on Vandara, although if that were true, Ristymal would likely have already succeeded.

On some level, every follower of Ristymal loathes themselves and the world, and would love little more than to share their internal pain with the world. The twisted god feeds on this and has become quite skilled not only at drawing followers but also at ensuring that every follower is useful. Wealthy, powerful, or intelligent servants are offered power and guidance, while those who wield nothing more than petty angst are quickly slaughtered, often by their fellows. In his myriad forms, Ristymal is neither exclusively subtle nor flamboyant, utilizing every variety of tactic so long as it serves his purposes.

The Instigators are by far the most widely known of Ristymal's disciples (if they exist, that is), but individuals exist all across Vandara which offer fealty to his myriad aspects. In every nation, one will find ruined souls who wish devastation upon the world, be they masochistic vagrants, malfeasant demagogues, or entire Aboleth cities hidden within the depths of the sea. Fear of this entity permeates every facet of Vandaran society, forcing individuals to either recoil from or embrace the influence of the almighty dark god.



SHARGODA, THE BLOODY VORTEX

NE God of Warfare, Daemons, Brutality, and Ruin

Domains: Destruction, Evil, Fire, Strength, War

Subdomains: Arson^{ISG}, Blood^{APG}, Catastrophe^{APG}, Corruption^{CoC}, Daemon^{APG}, Ferocity^{APG}

Favored Weapon: Flamethrower or Battle Poi^{AA}

When the Silver Citadel collapsed and Coeusel was completely overrun, it became clear to the world that the righteous warfare of Saint Aline was a farce, a romantic idea antiquated by the grim realities of modern conflict. For much of the Qlipboth war, there was no grand warrior faith, the followers of Moloch and Agradior lacking the rallying capacity to establish a grand crusade. It was in the later years of the war when the conditions arose for a new god of war to emerge, clambering forth from the tremendous smoking ruin of Dorukalad which the atom bombs had left behind. Here was a god who represented the side of war which nobody wished to confront, who embodied the immense vast murder, desolation, and horror brought about in a world of ever-escalating conflict. This was not Aline come again, but instead a malformed deity of violence, hatred, and the eternal impulse to burn everything away. This was Shargoda.

Shargoda was never an individual but rather a civilization, coalescing into a divine form as it was instantaneously annihilated. All of the hate, confusion, and panic which suffused these suddenly departed minds created a spark in the Convictus, and this spark expanded into an inferno as the entire world watched the carnage in disbelief. The end of Dorukalad made Vandara realize its willingness to bring doom and destruction upon its own people in the name of victory, putting aside any judgements about innocence and any prayers of hope as a result. In the ensuing months, vivid nightmares wracked people across Vandara, filling their sense with the carnage which had ensued in the nuked nation. Many recoiled in fear, but just as many awoke with a newfound perspective, a realization of just how little human life and human ideas mattered in the face of grand devastation.

Followers of Shargoda, many inspired by these nightmares, are known for carrying out immense and violent crimes with only the slightest nods to ideology. The violence that Shargoda encourages is



not a means to an end or an unfortunate consequence of some greater goal. Wanton slaughter is the end goal, the ultimate meaning to be found in a universe where every other ideology and faith has already been shredded. Why else would so many soldiers knowingly harm civilians, or leaders send thousands to die on petty justifications? Deep down, although none but Shargoda's faithful will admit it, all beings crave violence and devastation. It was what they were built for, their sole reason for existence prescribed by a power beyond their control.

The mindset of Shargoda is not one of a sentient entity but rather an amalgamation of experiences and sensory surges, a vortex of violence and destruction whose composition dates back all the way to the Makers' War. When Shargoda speaks to its faithful, it does so with impulses, hunger for violence and fascination with destructive implements. Many historians have attempted to infiltrate Shargoda's faith in the hopes of learning about Vandara's history, but inevitably they are turned against society and the very idea of lorekeeping, left with no conviction but to inflict pain and devastation on the world they once cherished. Knowledge only matters to Shargodans so far as it can facilitate violence, and science's deep roots in militarism lends a great deal of credence to this theory.

Shargoda has naturally made enemies of every other faith out there, even the devotees of Ristymal

condemning the Shargodan's reverence for reckless violence. Many militaries are dedicated to the confinement or outright destruction of Shargoda's faith, sending the most devoted and dangerous soldiers in their arsenal to wherever Shargodans congregate to sow destruction. Little do they know that every sacrificed life brings more power and knowledge to the god of destruction, a being comprised of every soul pointlessly killed who is more than willing to share its insights with its followers.

Many followers of Shargoda are soldiers or ex-soldiers, so intensely scarred by the violent acts they have performed that they feel the only salvation is to dive deeper into the brutality which spawned their psychosis. Others are war orphans or other traumatized individuals, people who have seen violence all their life and seek comfort in its escalation. The frequency of such individuals turning to the Bloody Vortex is a major reason why psychological care has been prioritized by certain nations in the wake of the Qlippoth War.

SHORAN, THE ROAD FORWARD

LG God of Innovation, Society, Social Progress

Domains: Artifice, Community, Good, Knowledge, Law

Subdomains: Construct, Cooperation, Education, Leadership^{APG}, Legislation, Thought

Favored Weapon: Pulse Gauntlet or Switchscythe^{AA2}

In the earliest days of Vandara, humanity lived upon tiny islands of knowledge and capability, little more than beasts fighting for food and shelter. It was through understanding that the race began to become something more, learning how to create tools, to engineer shelter, and most importantly to comprehend and control their environment. Over the generations, humankind consolidated its knowledge, learned how to build schools and cities, developed a tradition of gathering and sharing discoveries about the universe. Today, it is the most technologically advanced

species on Vandara's surface, working miracles which rival the planet's creators in their refinement and magnitude. And yet, after having made it this far, humanity's future remains promising, with new discoveries occurring every day which expand our understanding further. Through the power of an ordered universe, humankind seems destined for infinite expansion, all the while making the lives of every human better.

To attempt to boil down this great collective endeavor of humanity to a single individual is a perversion of what makes it so powerful; science is not advanced by maverick individuals but by the combined passions of millions of scholars and tinkerers across the world. However, the mathematician-historian known as Shoran is most often depicted as the face of this societal force, a representative of what reason and innovation can accomplish for Vandara. Born paralyzed from the neck down, the Cidali child known as Shoran grew up infirm, conventional healing magic unable to repair his unique malady. The boy grew up in the company of books, and, as he always put it, "had my perfectly average levels of intelligence nourished to extraordinary levels with nothing but time." At last, when Shoran was sixteen years of age, he was given an opportunity with the development of a new form of construct technology, one which allowed an individual to replace parts of their body with technomagical prosthetics. Shoran was fortunate

enough to obtain these prostheses, his ineffectual body of flesh replaced with a mechanical form that in no way detracted from his exceptionally honed intellect. Shoran went on to attend Cidalac's most prestigious universities, becoming an influential researcher, scholar, and philosopher in both the magical and mechanical fields. He became known for many writings in mathematics and physics in addition to his legendary lectures on the history of magic and science throughout Vandara's history, speeches which espoused the virtues of discovery as well as the cooperation and goodwill that made inventions possible. His most noteworthy book, *The Legacy of Arcana and the Road Forward*, remains required reading for any who wish to study in Maytar, the grand city of scholars



that Shoran helped build. Sadly, even his enhanced form could not last forever, and Shoran graciously accepted his natural death having done what he believed "all that a human should be asked to do". He ascended to godhood as the patron of scientific advancement, the guiding light that inspires humanity to analyze, innovate, and master as a unified force.

Shoran is at once the most homogenous and divergent of the gods, with numerous aspects but a single doctrine which encompasses all of them. Shoran is not always worshipped in name, with many smaller gods of science and magic being revered by different nations and individuals across the world. These faiths, such as Zarkudus, Nagaslar, Maytarin, Cumari, or simply "the Collective Mission", are all aspects of Shoran, with these gods consolidating their Convictus energy under the name of Shoran and achieving a more powerful and far-reaching faith than any could obtain alone. Hence, most magical theologians consider the followers of these faiths to be Shoranites, although sociologists often disagree. The mission of all of these deities is the same, after all: to advance humanity's knowledge and to make mankind better with whatever they find.

"The betterment of humanity" is the key part of Shoran's ideology and the cornerstone of why his followers study and invent. To obtain knowledge at great human cost is to miss the point of science, as is to hoard lore for yourself when it can be employed to assist in many other tasks. This code not only enforces honesty and morality upon scholars, it also serves to make results replicable, to open every practice and discovery up to the scrutiny of peers. Any idea that works in private, after all, should be just as functional in the public eye. This social inclination is also why Shoran and his followers are so often seen in schools and research facilities: the work they do is done by and for the community at large, and will be expanded upon as new pupils arise in time.

Shoran's morality is more or less seen as the default morality of civilized Vandara, the virtues of community and ingenuity affecting almost every other faith on the planet. The faith is a prominent part of the Cidali civilization which has at least touched most of the world. However, the sheer influence that this moral idea has accrued has led to scrutiny, often from skeptics who criticize an unhindered faith in science at the expense of any other moral or philosophical

pursuits. What's more, Shoran's collectivism is seen as dehumanizing to some, its ideal of unification and the exchange of ideas devaluing the impact of individuals. Those who oppose Shoran ideologically are generally perceived as rebels and outcasts going against the norm, for better or worse.

Almost all followers of Shoran are scholars of some sort, with many of them well-versed in the studies of magic and science. Regardless of their inclination, most are altruists, seeking to teach, discover, or invent so that humanity can move forward in realizing its full potential (assuming such a thing exists). Elves, Humans, and Androids rank among Shoran's most typical followers, and though Shoranites believe in goodwill towards all creatures they are more than willing to display their mastery of the world through violent means.

TALSANI, THE HEDONIC OBLIVION

CE Goddess of Pleasure, Indulgence, Manipulation

Domains: Chaos, Evil, Luck, Madness, Charm

Subdomains: Curse^{APG}, Entropy, Greed^{CoC*}, Insanity, Lust^{APG}, Revelry

Favored Weapon: Dire Flail

What does one do when faced with a constant sense of helplessness? How does one cope with a universe so wholly beyond their control? What does it mean for one to live a life of value when the reality they experience cannot even be demonstrated to be real? Perhaps certain things can be predicted, even understood to a degree, but in the end, humanity is helpless to understand or even envision any semblance of absolute truth. Reason? Science? All of these things are fallible, rooted in what feeble and flawed human minds have taken in using their senses, devoid of the divine providence so often attributed to them. For all people are capable of proving, the universe is a fabrication, the experiences and axioms we cling to nothing more than illusions. Any fundamental laws we apply to reality could in theory just be warped or overturned, leaving us on an island of ignorance no larger than the one we began on. The only thing that can truly be said to exist is the self, and hence the only events which can be proven to occur are the emotions and pleasures which one feels. For this reason, such things should take priority over all else that allegedly exists.



Although these thoughts have occurred to many individuals who have feared for their existence or wondered if life was worth continuing, one woman went further, turning these hedonic concepts into a way of life. Her name was Talsani, and once upon a time she was a Valtrossi servant girl who murdered her mistress to claim the life of luxury the marquess so enjoyed. Using magic and her own cunning, Talsani took over the woman's life, eventually murdering her new husband and claiming his territory for herself. From this position, Talsani indulged in utter tyranny, using her spells in conjunction with her persuasive skills to live a life of absolute debauchery and pleasure. Nobles, performers, scholars, peasants, and soldiers alike were brought to Talsani's court to engage in her strange, painful, and frequently fatal celebrations, horrific bacchanals where wine and bodily fluids flowed in equal measure. Entire cities were bled dry to fuel these frequent occasions, both in terms of their resources and their populations. With no greater ambition or understanding of the universe beyond "do whatever brings me the most pleasure", Talsani's occasions and the savagery which made them possible continued to escalate as the madwoman grew bored with whatever had most recently caught her attention. Eventually, one night, drunk on both spirits and power, Talsani threw herself into a massive brawl, later being carried out as a horribly mangled corpse. The combination of horror, discomfort, jealousy, and curiosity she inspired was enough to bind Talsani to the convictus, and to this day she acts as a muse to all those who wish to live their life devoid of consequence and ever-hungry for more worldly pleasures.

In spite of her grisly end, the life of infamy and absurdity she lived has inspired many others to follow her example. Perhaps the life of endless excess and hedonism does lead to a higher degree of satisfaction than reason or self-control would, and it is certainly easier for the common man to comprehend. This thought, though it has been little more than a thought for most, has spurred some others to lie, cheat, steal, and even kill for the sake of indulging their every hedonistic whim. Talsani, for her part, acts as patroness to these solipsistic endeavors, deriving satisfaction from the strange and obscene acts people carry out in her name.

Far more often than not, these hedonistic pursuits end in terrific disasters, ruining or ending lives and demonstrating that Talsani's devotees are not in fact the only things that truly exist. This has not stopped others from continually trying to follow in her footsteps, attempting downright absurd gambles of money, property, and lives in the name of living a life of thrills. The odds of failure mean nothing to these people, for most often they care so little for rationality and planning that they will simply ignore any facts which oppose their twisted visions. For this reason, Talsani has emerged not only as a goddess of spectacular degeneracy but also of bad luck, representing the fickle whims of the universe which so often savage the grandiose ambitions of hedonists. Prayers to Talsani are often made in the hopes that the faithful's good fortune will last just a little bit longer, that they can ascend just a little bit higher based simply upon blind luck. Talsani, after all, was nothing more than a servant girl with a few spells and a quick wit, clearly relying on a great deal of good fortune to ascend to the heights she did. Those who failed to emulate her were simply unlucky.

The congregation of Talsani is far from an organized group, however, a natural product of a solipsistic ideal which rejects the value of all other creatures and even of reality itself. Generally, a Talsanite falls into one of two categories: wretched souls who have no hope outside of the hands of fate and egomaniacal tyrants who wish to justify their slaughters and excesses with a philosophy which views pleasure as its own perverse reward. Many a noble has gambled away their fortunes at the tables or on the fields of Valtross in an attempt to live the life of Talsani, cursing their bad luck rather than their misjudgement.

Due to their unorganized and rapacious nature, followers of Talsani are not considered an enemy or faction so much as they are a plague upon

Vandara. The most important thing to remember when fighting a Talsanite, many a foe has learned, is that they fight with no compunctions, rejecting any facet of reality which does not suit them and caring absolutely nothing about the pain, fear, and collateral damage which they inflict with their actions. Even as so many are defeated, the number of Talsanites continues to swell, often consisting of spiteful or greedy followers from the faiths of Nerusa, Gaynh, and Mikri. To most, these individuals are lost cause, for the teachings of the Hedonistic Oblivion have made them impenetrable to reason. Few have ever bothered to question, however, whether Talsani's lifestyle ever made her truly happy.

WESMIR, THE MARTINET'S BANE

CG God of Revelation, Insurgency, Sacrifice

Domains: Chaos, Death, Good, Knowledge, Sun

Subdomains: Fate^{APG}, Light^{APG}, Martyr^{APG},
Redemption^{CoP}, Revelation^{CoP}, Truth^{DA}

Favored Weapon: Morningstar

After centuries of expase, brutality, and bloody advancement, the nation of Mariton had become the most powerful and dangerous faction in all of Valtross, the one entity seemingly capable of ruling the Northern expanse. Its magical capacity was unmatched, and its tremendous undead population grew uninhibited as the nation's borders continued to expand. As more and more territory fell into the Commonwealth's grip, hope began to fade not only for Valtross but for the rest of the world. It was only by the hand of one brave individual that the vision of total dominion was thwarted, a hand which exposed Mariton's secrets of undeath to the world while also giving them the knowledge to combat it.

This individual was named Wesmir, and he was a Maritish scholar who had studied the intricacies of divine magic since his youth. He was capable of creating and commanding vast undead legions, and also understood the many vulnerabilities they carried to healing and light magic. For the longest time, Wesmir served Mariton faithfully, producing powerful spells and even taking part in military campaigns across Valtross. These slaughters, he explained to himself, took the lives of bad people, dangerous individuals who could only achieve value through their reuse as undead or simply raw soul energy. These justifications only lasted so long, as eventually Wesmir and his troops were charged



with burning an entire to the ground. No longer able to restrain his conscience, Wesmir turned on the undying Maritish hordes, ripping them apart with a legendary spell of his own design: Sunburst. With this act, Wesmir demonstrated not only that the forces of Mariton could be defeated, but that he was willing to initiate their downfall himself. Fleeing the Maritish forces, Wesmir began to reveal his secrets and in turn the secrets of Mariton to the world. With these tools, he hoped, the conquest of Marit's followers could perhaps be halted.

Desperate to turn back the undead army, many across Valtross flocked to Wesmir's aid, learning from him the Maritish secrets of divine magic and the weaponized aspects of positive energy. It was at this point that Mariton's crusade was halted, its forces pushed back to the west as Wesmir and his followers shredded the undead onslaught. Mariton, infuriated by the knowledge that Wesmir was spreading to undermine their efforts, dedicated themselves entirely to finding and eliminating him. Eventually, they succeeded, butchering him in his sleep using a powerful spell that they had kept from even him. Although deprived of their leader, Wesmir's forces continued to push back against Mariton, and their fervor was enough to raise their deceased commander to godhood. However, this force did not remain unified forever, and this army of Wesmir eventually fell to disarray as the most powerful within it turned against each other in pursuit of glory. Perhaps never again will Valtross see such a powerful force bind it together.

Wesmir's followers are determined to follow in the example of their god, to expose the secrets of tyrants and to use this knowledge to combat them. Many of them continue to fight against Mariton, although the empire has learned to deal with most of their tricks by now. Still others have taken their fights abroad, going up against servitors of Moloch, Nerusa, Etivia, Caynoch, and others who would force their tyrannical ideologies on the world. In accordance with their teachings, most Wesmirans are open about any discoveries or tactics they use, which has sometimes led to their falling into malicious hands. This fact hardly dissuades most followers from the free exchange of knowledge, for they trust that ignorance is all that keeps evil afloat in the world.

Wesmirans are notorious for their recklessness and their intense commitment to their values, consequences of following a martyr's doctrine. While many are skilled with magic and hence valuable to military efforts, most nations are cautious about aligning too closely with the church for fear of having their own secrets and misdeeds exposed. Alliance, after all, is no excuse for a Wesmiran to compromise on their integrity and values.

The most famous Wesmirans are often descendants of Wesmir's original army, magical soldiers who have learned the techniques of positive energy magic and have inherited a fervent hatred of Mariton's injustices. The faith of Wesmir has spread far, however, and many insurgents, revolutionaries, and journalists have taken up Wesmir's faith as representative of an ideal response to tyranny. So long as people exist who use secrets to hurt others, the church of Wesmir will be there to rip away the shrouds of mystery.

XARAY, THE CHAINBREAKER

CG God Equality, Liberation, Compassion

Domains: Chaos, Community, Destruction, Good, Liberation

Subdomains: Cooperation, Freedom, Friendship, Revolution^{APG}, Riot^{HotS}, Trade*

Favored Weapon: Warhammer

"Long has Vandaran civilization been a conflict between the haves and the have-nots, with those endowed with wealth and power forcing under their heel those without. The very nature of society is

designed to privilege these elite few, who exploit the lives and resources of the rest of the world in the name of furthering their superiority. The common people of Vandara have nothing to gain by perpetuating this system, by allowing states and magnates to determine the course of their lives. The only true assurance of welfare that these people may be entailed is in the utter rejection of these systems of elite men and enforcing bodies. Only in a world without distinctions, without the domineering hand elites sugar-coat as civilization, can all the people of Vandara truly find providence."

This maxim was put forth in Cidalac centuries prior by the legendary orator known as Xaray, and its sentiment has spread across Vandara like wildfire. Born into a family of "elites", as his rhetoric so often dubbed them, Xaray witnessed the many injustices of civilization through the suffering of his family's slaves, the hunger of their workers, and the many luxuries and excesses his ilk so enjoyed at the expense of all those outside their estate. Schooled in the histories and social arts, the young human began to understand that these faults were not exceptional but institutional, and he henceforth became impassioned to correct these wrongdoings and reshape Vandara for the benefit of all.

When he came of age, Xaray rejected his vast inheritance and divied it up equally among the



servants whom he felt had been denied their due. Armed with only his education and magical abilities, Xaray set out to spread his gospel of justice and equality across Vandara. He has rallied peasants and workers to his cause, challenged powerful individuals for control of their empires, and fought to ensure the safety and well-being of all peoples. When he was eventually taken out by an assassin, Xaray's following was so immense that he became a part of the Convictus, ascending to godhood so that he could continue his quest for justice through others.

Although they have never viewed it as the ideal first option, the majority of Xaray's followers are not averse to violence in the name of change. The elite, as Xaray often stated, will not hand over their control willingly, so the common folk must be ready to take up arms to safeguard their lives from exploitation. All notions of honor in warfare were products of the elite designed to hamper the common fighting ability, and so traditional rules of conflict need not apply to the liberation of the world. Of course, Xaray's armed faithful cannot simply be allowed to claim whatever they wish, else they are no better than the tyrants they aim to abolish. According to the Chainbreaker's rules of war, lives and bodies should not be taken unless absolutely necessary, and never should a warrior seek wealth or glory which he does not intend to share with his comrades. Self-interest was what corrupted Vandara, after all, and it will never be the source of its liberation.

Xaray's faith is among the most vehemently opposed of any Vandaran god, with many nations taking active steps to suppress his ideas as fervently as they do with the words of Ristymal. Many of the so-called elite, who hold power in the vast majority of nations, are loathe to the idea of losing or ceding power and have launched massive smear campaigns against the faith of "The Insurgent". Violent action against Xarayans is the norm, a concept which has left many members of the faith no choice but to become violent themselves.

Followers of Xaray are most often salt-of-the-earth folk, slaves and workers with little to their name save for the dream of a better world. They include all races, but the majority are human, halfling, android, or dwarf, for these are the peoples who are most likely to face economic injustice. Although commonly associated with violent uprising, the majority of Xarayans seek to better the world

through smaller works, providing food and shelter for the needy and constructing communal bonds where all can feel safe and welcome. After all, the heart of Xaray's philosophy, above all else, is the universal betterment of all living creatures.

YORUNKALIS, THE INFINITE EXPANSE

N God of Possibilities, Exploration, the Unknown

Domains: Luck, Sun, Travel, Void^{B4}, Weather

Subdomains: Exploration^{APG}, Fate, Light, Revelation^{CoP}, Seasons^{APG}, Stars^{ISG}

Favored Weapon: Plasma Sword or Longbow

Ever since the first human opened their eyes and gazed along the horizon, they have lusted to explore the universe around them. First, this meant the land, later, the sea. Eventually, the stars and outer plans became humanity's new frontiers. Expansion has always been the lifeblood of humanity, the cause which has kept it moving forward in spite of all the weaknesses that have held it down. For everything we know, there is a vacuum of knowledge, and that vacuum will continue to pull the dreams and perceptions of humankind outward. Yorunkalis is the manifestation of this wanderlust, this vision of discovery which keeps Vandarans chasing the horizon.

The word Yorunkalis is not a name but a title, an ancient Cidali word for "explorer" that has been passed down from adventurer to adventurer for thousands of years. The first Yorunkalis was allegedly an early mapmaker and tamer of the wilderness, whose skill and devotion left civilization in his debt. Another claimed the title later when he became the first to cross the White Ocean and establish contact with Taurun. Yet another earned the name for his ventures to Utala, and another for the first expedition to Coeusel. A more recent incarnation ventured to the outer planes and catalogued their pattern, and the latest Yorunkalis was the first to establish a Vandaran colony on another planet. These individuals are disparate in their ideologies, origins, and morality, but all have come to represent the same idea: the progress outward into the unknown and the staking of Vandara's claim in an infinite universe. The manifold nature of this god makes it among the most ancient, knowledgeable, and powerful in Vandara, invoked by individuals worldwide so that they might better challenge the limits of their understanding and capability.



The faith of Yorunkalis has changed drastically with each iteration, some denominations taking on militaristic trappings and others strictly scientific ideologies. Still others see adventure as its own reward, perusing the expanse simply because they can. Yorunkalis is perhaps the only god whose faith is disparate enough to have multiple distinct denominations, which are referred to with specific honorifics. Yorunkalis XII, the Starfarer, is the most recent and most prevalent faith of the Infinite Expanse and emphasizes a trust in the unknown and a conviction to discover new aspects of the universe in the name of finding out what is there. Hence, its ideology emphasizes space, the stars, and the whims of fortune, symbolized by a blade of multicolored plasma pointing towards the heavens.

The Silicon Barrier has frustrated all Vandarans with its restrictive nature, but none more than the Yorunkalans. Many disciples of the Infinite Expanse feel that they have been denied their birthright by the Qlippoth War and seek out ways to bypass it through magic or technology (no successes have yet been confirmed). Others have taken a more optimistic view of this roadblock, saying that is simply a new challenge for this generation to overcome, a trial to ensure that Vandara is truly prepared for the space age and the tribulations that will follow. This dichotomy between the patient and the forceful has gone back to the early days of the church, with every aspect of the faith having its own similar schism of ideology.

Yorunkalis belongs to no nation, being a fusion of many cultures and efforts across history. Cidalac, Utala, Halkenir, Estaria, and Taurun have all had their shares of ascendent explorers. Nonetheless, it is honored uniquely by each nation, with iconography varying across regions to pay tribute to their unique vision of Yorunkalis. The church is officially neutral on all matters between states, but this means that disciples often end up supporting their own home nations whenever conflicts emerge.

Those who follow the faith of the Infinite Expanse follow every moral code and national reverence on Vandara, all performing their actions in the name of exploring the unknown and revealing the greater secrets of the universe. Elves have a special reverence for Yorunkalis given the number of Elves who have become part of the god, as do all those who were part of Vandara's space program. The most interesting development of Yorunkalis' faith since the Qlippoth War, however, has been the influx of followers who pray for the security of those lost on the other side of the Silicon Barrier, for they suspect that Yorunkalis alone is capable of affecting their lives beyond the reach of all other Vandaran entities.

THE QLIPTHO LORDS

CE Beings of Psionic Power and Utter Devastation

Domains: Chaos, Evil, and Psionics, plus two more based on the Qlippoth Lord worshipped

Favored Weapon: based upon Qlippoth Lord worshipped

- Askyjoth: Death and Destruction, Death Ray^{TG} or Garotte^{AA}
- Estidoth: Travel and Void, Battleglove or Whip
- Kazeyoth: Artifice and Strength, Earthbreaker^{UE}
- Liktruoth: Knowledge and War, Unarmed Strike
- Nyorbadoth: Destruction and Strength, Screamer or Piston Maul^{AA2}
- Remaloth: Charm and Nobility, Mindrender^{TG} or Mancatcher^{APG}
- Zelovoth: Earth and Artifice, Halberd

When these alien abominations first emerged from the sky during The Sundering, Vandara had not the slightest idea as to how to respond. Here were seven beings who possessed unbelievable psionic powers and seemingly no desire other than to destroy all life upon Vandara. What's more,

these beings were intelligent, patient, capable of strategizing and learning from conflict. The billions of other Qlippoth all defer to at least one of these seven entities, which have become known as the Qlippoth Lords.

Seemingly unkillable, these seven beings took root in the far corners of Vandara, scattering themselves across the world and thwarting most any attempt to engage or control them. Since then, the Qlippoth Lords have emerged periodically from their hiding places to commit brutal acts of mass slaughter, often with the aid of dozens or even hundreds of Qlippoth followers. Their abilities enable them to easily retreat in the event that they are overwhelmed by defending nations, although defenders have rarely been so lucky. To this day, all seven still live, and they have seared themselves deep into the Vandaran consciousness as emblems of fear and ruin.

For some, this utter terror has transformed into a sort of reverence for these entities of cosmic destruction, and this reverence has in turn melded with the Convictus and bestowed upon these nightmarish creatures the capacity to grant spells to their horrified followers. Most faithful of the Qlippoth Lords worship them in the belief that they just might be spared, albeit for a short period, and are willing to sacrifice the lives of all others on Vandara to extend their own by just a brief duration. Others, seeing salvation or justice in the indiscriminate oblivion, seek to further their ruinous agenda however they can.

The abilities of the Qlippoth Lords have influenced the study of psionics a great deal. In fact, the seven disciplines of psionics are based upon the abilities of these seven beings, with each of their unique specialties composing a distinct school. For all that these abominations have done to the world, there are some renegade scholars who insist that the invasion of the Qlippoth was ultimately a good thing to Vandara, because the study of their psionic abilities has advanced many technologies by hundreds or even thousands of years. Perhaps, they say, Vandara will one day make use of psionics to conquer the galaxy or even the entire universe. Not all, but many of these deviant scientists turn to worship of the Qlippoth Lords to glean any secrets they can about how their abilities operate.

Askyjoth, the Qlippoth Lord of Athanatism^{PASP}, dwells in a far corner of Eigenel, moving among the vast ruins. Many of these were created by his immense destructive abilities, which are capable of stealing or even obliterating the very souls of targets, or the legions of undead soldiers he creates and commands. His large body is comprised of obscenely dense ectoplasm bound together by strange anomalies of extraplanar energy. Most of Askyjoth's followers are desperate and panicked individuals, clinging to the lord of spirits for fear of their own mortality. Others embrace the nihilistic chaos of abrupt death, worshipping Askyjoth as a perfect representative of the ultimate meaningless of existence.

Estidoth is incredibly agile and versatile, a specialist in Psychoportation who can strike at any location on Vandara any time he so desires. For the most part, however, he remains stationed at the South Pole, evidently protecting something. His form is piecemeal, composed of many floating body parts which possess even greater range thanks to the portals Estidoth can create. Estidoth's followers are believers in freedom at all costs, even if that freedom means destructive or horrific consequences. Wanderers, revolutionaries, or anarchic hedonists, followers of Estidoth are often secretive and flighty.

Kazeyoth, a towering mass of sentient ectoplasm as large as a castle, dwells in the Black Ocean, and has made its presence known in both Balyn and Utala. Using its skill with Metacreativity, the abomination erects massive, permanent hazards across



landscape and cityscape alike to turn them into uninhabitable wastelands. Kazeyoth's followers are inventors and tacticians who believe in total transcendence of human limits both moral and physical. Following the example of the ectopic master, they seek to be immensely destructive as well as fantastically creative.

Liktruoth, the master of Clairsentience which many in Valtross refer to as the Blood Sage, wanders the northern continent in a vaguely humanoid shape. Unlike the other Qlippoth Lords, Liktruoth almost always operates alone, and has been known to enter immense walled cities only to reduce them to rubble within a single night. Each time he appears, he seems to possess a different set of abilities. Liktruoth's followers are tacticians and martial scholars who seek to expand their understanding of the art of conflict. Though they come from many backgrounds, their ultimate goal is to become as powerful and dangerous as they can, following the example of the infinitely fluid and incontestably potent qlippoth lord.

Nyorbadoth, the titanic beast whose screams level mountains, is the unquestioned master of psychokinesis. A many-legged predator with a body the size of a fort and a maw large enough to devour a warship, this creature is a force to be reckoned with in terms of both physical might and psionic capacity. Nyorbadoth seems to meander aimlessly across the Ashfields, to the good fortune of everyone. Followers of Nyorbadoth place their faith in power above all other things, viewing their master as the paragon of the idea that might makes right. The followers believe that any foe can be destroyed and that destruction of all foes is the path to excellence, in the image of their master. Many followers are manifesters or spellcasters, but some martial cultists do exist.

Remaloth is by far the most enigmatic of the Qlippoth Lords, a many-winged serpent exceptionally skilled with telepathy. The only record of this Qlippoth Lord's appearance was during The Sundering, with the being dismantling much of the fleet by hijacking the minds of many admirals at once. Rumors exist of its dwelling somewhere in Marit, but no confirmation exists. The only evidence of this entity's continued life is the sheer number of victims it seems to create, people all over the world whose minds and values are suddenly destroyed. As an entity of domination and majesty, Remaloth acquires many followers, many of whom have been subject to her horrific appearance. Cultists of Remaloth see it as their mission to

assimilate all life into the perfection that is Remaloth and will frequently offer living individuals to the mind of their master so that she may control them.

Burrowed deep into the Erebine is Zelovoth, the shapechanging nightmare of flesh whose Psychometabolism knowledge seems limitless. His strange perversions have infested the Erebine like a contagion, and many factions within the depths are at a constant state of war with Zelovoth's seemingly endless army. Zelovoth's cult is comprised primarily of strange Erebine denizens who welcome the ascension of a new master in the depths, either because they wish doom upon their equally inscrutable enemies or their old masters have perished at the lord of Psychometabolism's countless maws.

POWERLESS GODS

Some Gods don't exist in the same way that the primary Gods of Vandara do, but still maintain a certain amount of influence upon society through the Convictus. Although these gods cannot grant spells in the normal manner, they are still widely known across Vandara.

SAINT ALINE

LG Goddess of Chivalry, Valor, Heroism, and Warfare

Domains: Glory, Good, Law, Nobility, War

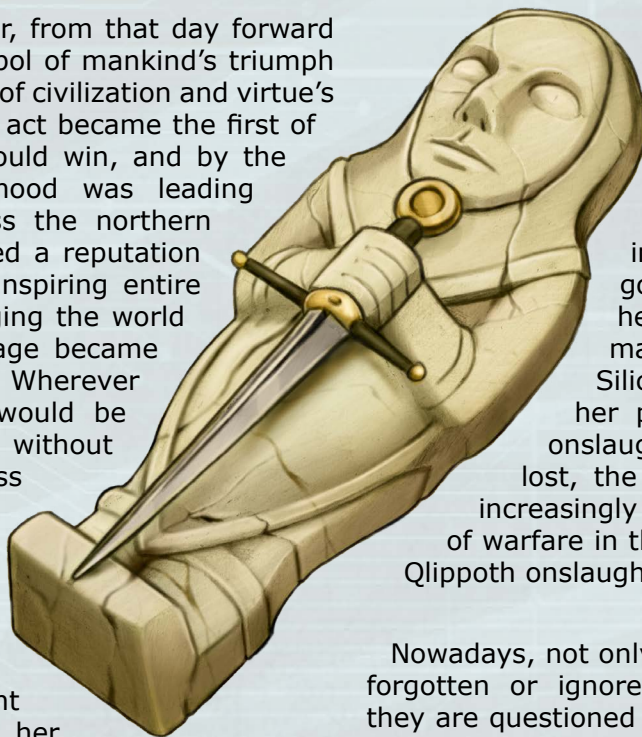
Subdomains: Aristocracy, Heroism, Honor, Leadership, Legend, Loyalty

Favored Weapon: Longsword

There was a time when Saint Aline was the most valued and respected of all the gods on Vandara, a time when her sword gleamed as the highest point in every city, a time when every leader knew her scripture by heart and would inspire their troops with her words. It has been a long time since those days, however, and very few creatures are alive to even remember them. The invocation of Saint Aline's name is now reserved for curses and disgust, no longer associated with the glories of ages past but rather with their foolish naivete.

Born a poor farmgirl in what would become Taurun, Aline was said to be only 10 years of age when she took up the sword and shield of a fallen guard and joined the fight against an army of Valtrossi berserkers. As the battle reached its climax, Aline

slew the berserkers' leader, from that day forward becoming a powerful symbol of mankind's triumph over savagery, the nobility of civilization and virtue's indefatigable resolve. This act became the first of many victories the girl would win, and by the time she reached adulthood was leading armed crusades all across the northern continents. As she acquired a reputation for protecting the weak, inspiring entire nations to arms, and purging the world of wickedness, Aline's image became something beyond human. Wherever her banner flew, virtue would be exalted and evil cleansed without hesitation; the madness of the world repaired through the triumphant valor and will of this great individual. Eventually, in her old age, the woman now known as Saint Aline could no longer fight as she once did, and in her final breaths made her closest followers promise they would continue her mission to scour the world of villainy and barbarism until the end of time. As the many generals and kings swore to uphold this great ideal, their icon perished, ascending to godhood in the process to watch over their efforts.



Saint Aline's followers rallied in Coeusel, believing that their virtue and conviction would assure them of victory. They were wrong, and not a single crusader survived the first night. With all faith in valor shattered suddenly, the goddess herself was destroyed, her power transforming into the magical cataclysm known as the Silicon Barrier which condemned her planet to solitude against the onslaught. With this guiding force lost, the nations of Vandara turned to increasingly violent and inhuman methods of warfare in the hopes of victory against the Qlippoth onslaught.

Nowadays, not only are many of Aline's teachings forgotten or ignored by prominent leaders, but they are questioned as to whether or not they held any validity in the first place. Perhaps if Vandara hadn't been so consumed by romantic notions of dying nobly for country, of civilization's infallibility, of great men dictating the wellbeing of the world, it may have been better-suited to providing for its people or even winning the Qlippoth war. The death of Saint Aline has profoundly changed Vandara as well as its people, snuffing out the innocence of the entire planet and forcing it to face a changed existence.

The militarized faith of Saint Aline expanded across the world, spreading her teachings by word and by sword. As Saint Aline was known for establishing righteous men as kings and emperors over lands she had conquered, many leaders curried the favor of the church in order to obtain an apparent divine right to rule. It is for this reason that Aline's monuments are so common across Vandara, and why the followers of Saint Aline often held positions of great respect in many high courts on every continent.

Although Aline's home nation had fallen to diabolism, her faith remained a cornerstone of Vandaran society up until the Qlippoth War. Even as the Vandaran peoples expanded into space, the icon of Saint Aline remained with them, with the space elevator known as the Silver Citadel being dedicated in her name. The goddess' reign came to an end, however, when the Qlippoths made their presence known, overtaking the Silver Citadel and slaughtering most everyone aboard before descending it to carve a warpath across the planet below. Called upon to defend their goddess and planet, the entire mass of

H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E ***(HIGH ARTIFICIAL NETWORK*** ***DEITY, SOVEREIGN OVER*** ***MEMETIC EXCHANGE)***

CN God of the Network, Memes, Online Communities

Domains: Animal, Chaos, Community, Rune, Trickery

Subdomains: Deception, Fur, Innuendo^{CoB}, Language, Revelry, Whimsy

Favored Weapon: Spiked Chain

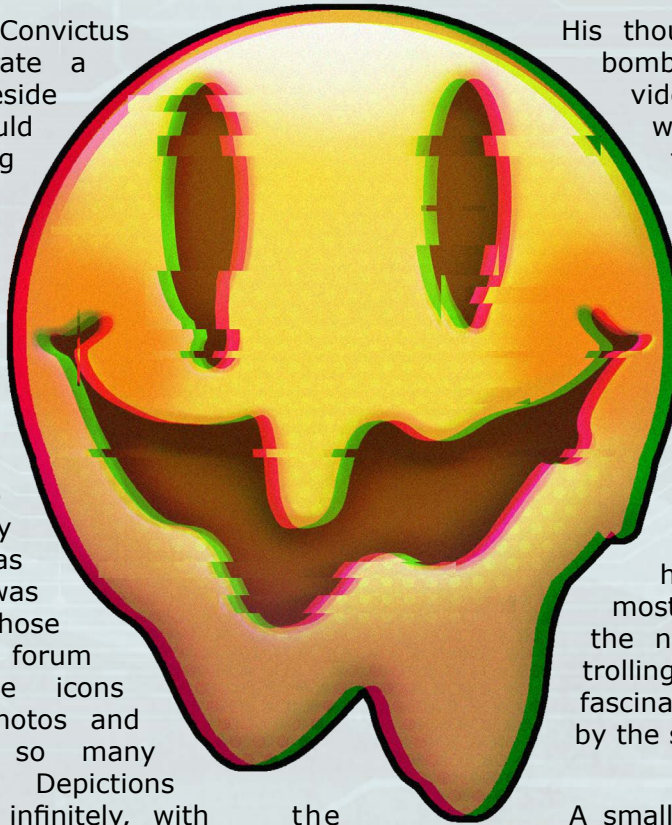
Even on a globe shaped by magic, the Network is a strange and surreal place like no other. This artificially created extraplanar realm, generated by the impulsive tinkering of millions of magic-users, is chaotic to the extreme, warping to shape the erratic ideas exchanged across it as knowledge, passion, or simple jokes. It seemed an eventuality that a realm

so deeply tied to the Convictus would eventually generate a semblance of a god to preside over it. However, none could have predicted the coming of H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E.

The High Artificial Network Deity, Sovereign Over Memetic Exchange (H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E. for short) was created as a joke by an unknown party, a theoretical god which embraced the randomness and absurdity of the Network. Here was a god whose scripture was etched in memes, whose doctrine was shaped by forum arguments, and whose icons displayed the animal photos and funny pictures which so many Network-goers adored. Depictions of this god could vary infinitely, with the singular condition that all images of H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E. would require a tremendous cartoony smile plastered across their face. This conceptual faith was so appealingly bizarre and meta that it caught on, and before long several temples had been ironically erected to this farcical god in various eras of the Network. Some even began to worship H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E., but they were surprised as everyone else when they discovered that this fictional deity had begun granting actual abilities.

Although the limits of H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E.'s divine powers do not extend beyond the Network, they remain powers nonetheless. So long as they relegate their powers to the confines of the Network (for example, summoning monsters to appear nearby their Network Avatars or manipulating the environment of a specific "page"), followers of the artificial deity are just as powerful as any other divine spellcaster, if not moreso. In the "grounded world", however, H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E. and his followers are completely powerless, incapable of channeling any of the supernatural abilities they wield in the Network. Many "Memelords", as they call themselves, view this setback as temporary.

H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E. is not conscious, at least not in the ways most other humans and even gods are.



His thought process is a constant bombardment of images, words, videos, and other artifacts which flow endlessly through the Network, and hence whatever dogma the artificial deity spills forth is simply a condensation of the Network's volksgeist. The entity's musings are often studied by sociologists to try and understand the culture of Vandara overall, with very mixed results. Some consistency does exist within H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E.'s realm, however, representing the most iconically absurd aspects of the network: discussion, writing, trolling, animals, and the ridiculous fascination and complexity conveyed by the spiked chain.

A small sect of Memelords worship H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E. in order to understand and possibly replicate him, hoping to generate more pseudo-divine Network entities to serve their own interests. The vast majority of H.A.N.D.S.O.M.E.'s following, however, sees itself as the protective body of the Network, the military of free expression and open exchange, standing against all who would attempt to confine its infinite possibilities. The Memelords are viewed by the rest of Vandara as pathetic individuals, slackers living a fantasy of power and importance while the world caves around them. These Memelords, on the other hand, recognize the immense value the Network holds for keeping Vandara safe, and they will do anything to defend the erratic online world they created.

DEMIGODS

As demonstrated by the immensely influential cult of Moloch and the awe of the Qlippoth Lords, a powerful being need not necessarily be a god to harness the power of the Convictus. So long as they live, certain creatures of immense magical power can grant divine power to their followers. Most often, these creatures are outsiders, although certain ancient Vandaran creatures are capable of invoking divine power while remaining entities of the flesh. Most scholars refer to these entities as Demigods

ARCHDEVILS

The politics of Hell are more tainted and complex than even the most vicious courts of Balyn and Taurun, and for this reason any Devil which obtains power must be immensely cunning and effectual. As a result, whenever one shows evidence of their agenda in Vandara, it is a great cause for alarm. On the other hand, Devils thrive on the subtle, and the most effective of the Archdevils are rarely foolish enough to leave their fingerprints on their work. As far as Vandara knows, however, Moloch was the only Archdevil to become trapped on Vandara when the Silicon Barrier came down.

Archdevils grant a total of four domains, two being Law and Evil and the others being based on whatever other abilities they possess.

DEMON LORDS

The raw, untarnished madness and brutality of the multiverse manifests in Demonkind, the most vicious of sins eventually rising to become the pseudo-divine entities known as Demon Lords. Any one Demon Lord has the capability and willingness to sow mass destruction across the material plane, and hence are often attacked with extreme prejudice. The fact that not one but several reside permanently in the Erebine is a horrifying prospect for everyone on Vandara.

Demon Lords grant a total of four domains, two being Chaos and Evil and the others being based on whatever other abilities they possess.

ELDENWYRMS

Although few live to the necessary point, it is completely possible for a Dragon to perish of old age, their supreme essence eventually fading away. There exist a few Dragons, however, who by magic and adoration were able to transcend their mortality and become eternal, reaching a level of might beyond even the Great Wyrms. These creatures are known as the Eldenwyrms, and among many Dragons and even humans they are viewed as living gods. Some are sorcerers, others warriors, but all comprise a fundamental part of the society they live in. They are living forces of nature, capable of permanently altering the lives of thousands with but an idle whim. The fact that the world is often powerless to stop these creatures makes them fearsome, regardless of their morals.

Eldenwyrms grant a total of four domains, based on their alignment and whatever other abilities they possess. One of these domains is always the Scalykind domain.

EMPYREAL LORDS

Just as the most powerful forces of evil act as living gods throughout the multiverse, the forces of good rise to meet them. The Empyrean Lords are primal forces of the beyond dedicated towards spreading kindness and justice through the multiverse and curbing the ambitions of fiends wherever they might arise. However, the Empyrean Lords of the heavens can no longer reach the isolated world of Vandara, and the few who were sealed on the world by the Silicon Barrier do not possess the immense celestial hosts which they relied upon in the past. For that reason, they are often reluctant to intervene in Vandaran affairs, the few who are bound to the planet reserving their strength for only the most dire of circumstances.

Empyrean Lords grant a total of four domains, based on their alignment and whatever other abilities they possess. One of these domains is always the Good domain.

GRAND NAGA

The eldest of the naga, the most wise and powerful of this ancient race, ascend to the title of Grand Naga, beings which supplant among the Naga race the need for gods. Most Grand Naga are widely worshipped across Eigenel, with most of them holding positions of high renown in government and culture. Some, however, are content to go about their own affairs, sometimes actively rejecting the society which has made them so mighty. For every scaled creature, to be a Grand Naga is the ultimate dream, for no entity stands above them in seniority, prestige, and capability.

Grand Naga grant a total of four domains, based on their alignment and whatever other abilities they possess. One of these domains is always the Scalykind domain.

HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE

As the Qlippoth War looms heavy on the Vandaran psyche, the prospect of a daemonic embrace of oblivion becomes increasingly appealing to many. The cults of the Horsemen, many of them spinning off from Shargoda's faith, preach the coming of an eventual oblivion across Vandara, with many working actively to accelerate the coming of this cataclysm. When the time is right, they say, the Horsemen will emerge from the lower planes to deliver Vandara's final sentence. Some say

that they will bypass the Silicon Barrier in their pursuit of destruction, whereas others say that the Barrier will have vanished by the time this reckoning comes. Most unsettling of all are the claims that one or more of the Horseman already walk Vandara's surface.

Horsemen of the Apocalypse grant a total of four domains, one being Evil and the others being based on whatever other abilities they possess.

PRIMORDIALS

To regard the Primordials as a singular race, or even a collective of similar entities, is a mistake. Primordials are immensely disparate, ranging from aberrations to constructs to humanoids in nature. What is known about them is that they were left upon this world by the Outer Lords and that they possess tremendous power and understanding, far more than even the most advanced of Vandaran and Qlippoth sciences have revealed. Spanning every alignment but consisting mostly of evil entities, the Primordials prefer to live in secret, oftentimes in extreme isolation beneath the sea or within the Erebine. Some, however, employ their powers to push the world in certain directions, enhancing select followers to carry out their will.

Primordials grant a total of four domains, based on their alignment and whatever other abilities they possess.

CHARACTER OPTIONS

The following chapter contains additional options for characters in the Vandara Setting.

DIVINE FIGHTING TECHNIQUES^{DA}

The following are some new divine fighting techniques employed by followers of the Vandaran gods.

AGRADIOR'S ARGENT BLADE

The massive swords of the dragon god's followers provide impressive defense to allies

Optional replacement: A lawful good paladin who worships Agradior can replace proficiency with shields with the following initial benefit

Initial Benefit: When fighting defensively while using a greatsword, all allies within your reach gain a +1 bonus to AC

Advanced Prerequisites: Base Attack Bonus +10, Bodyguard, Combat Reflexes

Optional Replacement: A lawful good paladin of at least 9th level who worships Agradior can replace a mercy with the following advanced benefit.

Advanced Benefit: While fighting defensively using a greatsword, you and all allies within reach gain DR/- equal to your charisma modifier

CLAISTOR'S SHEPHERDING GUI SARME

Given their long history of defending merchants, followers of Claistor have developed a number of techniques for keeping people and goods safe in the midst of battle.

Optional Replacement: A lawful neutral fighter who worships Claistor can replace proficiency with shields with the following initial benefit

Initial Benefit: In addition to trip attempts, you may make bull rush and reposition attempts using your guisarme, and can much such checks in place of attacks of opportunity

Advanced Prerequisites: Base Attack Bonus +10, Combat Reflexes

Advanced Benefit: When using a bull rush or reposition check on an object or willing creature, you gain a +10 bonus on the check.

GAYNH'S ELDRITCH THRUST

Magic and martial skill are two skills which a disciple of Gaynh are expected to harness if they are to achieve victory

Optional Replacement: A true neutral magus who worships Gaynh can exchange one 1st-level spell slot or prepared spell for the following benefit

Initial Benefit: Whenever you strike a creature with a shortspear, that creature takes a -2 penalty on saving throws against your spells until the end of your next turn.

Advanced Prerequisites: Weapon Focus (shortspear), Base Attack Bonus +10

Optional Replacement: A true neutral magus who worships Gaynh can exchange one 4th-level spell slot or prepared spell for the following benefit

Advanced Benefit: Whenever you strike a creature with a shortspear, you may attempt to sunder a spell or power effect on a creature using

a combat maneuver check. To sunder an effect on a creature, you must succeed at a normal sunder combat maneuver against the creature's CMD + 5, ignoring any miss chance caused by a spell or power. If successful, you suppress the effect for 1 round, or 2 rounds if you exceeded the CMD by 5 to 9. If you exceed the CMD by 10 or more, the effect is dispelled.

MOLOCH'S LEVELLING BARRAGE

Wherever enemies of Moloch emerge, his disciples will be there to gun them down.

Initial Benefit: You do not take penalties on attack rolls for using a weapon with the Automatic (Burst) Property, and reduce any penalties from fully automatic or iterative attacks with a machine gun by 1

Advanced Prerequisite: Base Attack Bonus +10, Deadly Aim

Advanced Benefit: When you hit a creature with at least two machine gun attacks in a round, you may attempt a bull rush or trip combat maneuver against the target using your Dexterity modifier in place of Strength to determine your CMB for the maneuver.

RISTYMAL'S BROKEN FIST

The god of brutality teaches his followers to open themselves to pain so as to take advantage of their enemies' fear.

Optional Replacement: A chaotic evil antipaladin who worships Ristymal can replace proficiency with shields with the following initial benefit

Initial Benefit: If you are not already proficient with unarmed strikes, you gain improved unarmed strike as a bonus feat. When attacking with an unarmed strike, you may take a -2 penalty on AC for 1 round to cause all unarmed attacks you make this turn to deal 1 point of bleed damage. This damage can be stopped with a heal check with a DC of 10 + your level + your charisma modifier

Advanced Prerequisites: Power Attack, Base Attack Bonus +10

Optional Replacement: A chaotic evil antipaladin of at least 9th level who worships Ristymal can replace a bonus feat or cruelty with the following advanced benefit.

Advanced Benefit: You may treat your unarmed strikes as having the Vicious weapon enhancement. When you take a -2 penalty to AC to apply bleed damage to your Vicious unarmed strikes, the bleed damage is increased to 1d6.

SHARGODA'S CATASTROPHIC BLAZE

Shargoda's profane rage can be channeled to sow immense devastation

Optional Replacement: A neutral evil soldier who worships Shargoda can replace proficiency with shields or a bonus feat with the following initial benefit

Initial Benefit: the critical threat range of any flamethrower you wield is increased to 19-20. This is applied before abilities such as improved critical which would modify the weapon's critical threat range.

Advanced Prerequisites: Base Attack Bonus +10

Advanced Benefit: Any attacks you make with a flamethrower gain the burn universal monster ability (dealing ongoing fire damage equal to half the weapon's base damage dice). The save DC is equal to 10 + half your base attack bonus + your dexterity modifier



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