

SHATTERED

A GRIMDARK RPG



SHATTERED

BY

INDE
IT'S NEVER DARK ENOUGH

SHATTERED CORE V1.1.0

INDE

ITS NEVER DARK ENOUGH

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DEDICATION

We at INDE (pronounced "indie") would like to take a minute to thank a few people that helped make Shattered possible. There have been so many people outside of our team that helped and inspired us to create this game. But first and foremost, we would like to thank our families who have put up with this obsession of ours. To the many friends that we've made, The crew at Midnight Zombie Marathon, Imp House, Grenade Punch Games, everyone at the #RPGNET IRC channel, and everyone over at TAPM Systems.

Cody would like to send a shoutout to his brother, Ean Johnson, Bruh.

INFLUENCES

Shattered was not created in a void. There have been a countless number of books, films, musicians that we have been inspired by. We're not going to give an exhaustive list, but instead, we'll name a few that are very close to our hearts.

MUSIC

John Williams, Devil Driver, Protomen, Demon Hunter, Magic Sword,
Dimitri Vegas, Thrive, Disturbed, Project 86, Coheed & Cambria

FILM

Star Wars, Watchmen, Pulp Fiction, The Dark Knight, Indiana Jones,
Blade Runner, Mad Max, Pan's Labyrinth, Ghost in the Shell, The Void

FICTION

Steven Erikson & Ian C. Esslemont, George Orwell, H.P. Lovecraft,
William Gibson, Robert Jordan, Brent Weeks, Jim Butcher, James S.A.
Corey, Robert A. Heinlein

TABLETOP

Battle Cattle, Pathfinder, Star Wars Saga Edition, D&D 3.5, Eclipse
Phase, Iron Kingdoms, Warhammer 40,000, Cthulhutech

THANK YOU

Encapsulated in those two words are overwhelming feelings of exuberance, joy, and elation that simply cannot be put on a page. As we write this we recall the day we hit our Kickstarter goal, and the feelings each of us had then. We wanted to hug each and every one of you, and tell you everything we had planned! Cemented firmly in our memory is how thrilled everyone was during our Skype call afterward, how pumped we were to charge forward with a virtual army at our backs. After months and years of work, we finally had a support group to talk to, people who were as intrigued about Feneryss as we were. People who, having been fed the slimmest scraps of our vision of this strange world, were willing to put money in our hands to bring it to life. Your passion and eagerness have been invigorating. Each piece of fan art, every beta game, and every question has been fuel to our fire to deliver on our promise and more.

It is a clichéd phrase, but Shattered quite simply would not exist without you. You asked us the hard questions. You gave insightful suggestions. You created monsters that made us laugh or filled us with awe. You have been there with us and for us every step of the way, and we are brimming with gratitude because you are making our dream a reality.

With Heartfelt Sincerity,
Josh, James, Cody, Philip, Cory & Alex
It's Never Dark Enough

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That said, while we at INDE are very protective of what we've created, we are very open and love community and fan creations. If you want to use parts of this book, fiction or system, all you have to do is ask. Feel free to send us an email at:

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO SHATTERED

Welcome to **Shattered**, a grimdark roleplaying game filled to the brim with fantasy, horror, and steampunk elements. Nearly 3,000 years ago, a cult gathered to summon their god from another realm. Their failure tore the world apart and the remaining shards of humanity have only just begun to pick themselves up. Civilization is comprised of a handful of city-states that are bastions against the chaos and desolation of the outside world, where eldritch horrors roam. A roiling mass of these horrors, the Undead Tide, roves across the continent and consumes every living thing in its path.

Technology is an odd mash-up of ancient, advanced machines, and discoveries equivalent to the feudal age. Swords and crossbows are the most prevalent tools of war, but humanity has recently rediscovered gunpowder. By marrying technology and magic, men and women have taken to the skies aboard airships. Magic, known as arkāna, has permeated and warped everything, including humanity. It is now split into seven distinct races: Humans, Alypse, Drones, Rekindled, Shades, Vampires, and Wretched. An eighth, the Florvana, are fungal colonies that only recently gained sentience and joined the ranks of Feneryss.

Who are you? Who will you be? Will you subject yourself to grotesque biological modification to achieve physical superiority? Will you plunder and pillage your fellow Feneryans as a pirate sailing the clouds aboard your airship? Perhaps you will master the untold secrets of arkāna to usurp the status quo with destructive, primal forces. Wherever your adventures take you, the choices are yours, and your fate rests in your hands.

WHAT IS A TABLETOP ROLEPLAYING GAME?

Shattered is classified as a tabletop roleplaying game (RPG). So what exactly does that mean? The name comes from the fact that this kind of roleplaying is usually played by a handful of friends gathered around a table. Tabletop games differ from video games in that your imagination is used instead of a computer or game console.

So, how does that work? In **Shattered**, you and a group will create player characters (PCs) that will undertake various adventures throughout Feneryss. It is much like your favorite movie or book, except this time you are in control of your favorite character. Imagine being able to step into those shoes, see the world through their eyes, and make choices which alter the course of the story. That is the power of an RPG.

One player must be designated as the Game Master (GM). Make sure they are aware of how critical this role is because it is very different from being a player. Don't misunderstand, being Game Master can be incredibly fun and rewarding, but it's not for everyone. The GM will manage the story's many elements: the setting, narrative, conflicts, and characters (known as non-player characters or NPCs) and have the final say in any rulings. Ultimately, their job is to work with the players to provide a rewarding and interesting experience for everyone at the table.

HOW DO YOU PLAY?

First, you need players. You can play a campaign (another term for a story in an RPG) with as many people as you like, but you must have a GM. As for players, we recommend three to five. Having fewer players doesn't feel as exciting, and more players will slow the pace of the game. In the end, though, it is up to you and your fellow players to make that decision.

Next, everyone needs to create their characters. The GM should take this time to read up on the Game Mastery section if they haven't already (page 194). While your first urge might be to make an all-powerful arkānist or infamous airship pirate, characters begin as slightly above-average people. At least to start, these characters should have a few skills that set them apart and little to no reputation. Those things come with time and progressing to that point is part of the fun of the game. To organize your character's information, you can use our printable Character Sheets in the Sheets chapter starting on page 275.

Throughout gameplay, a player's primary concern should be their PC: keeping them alive, pursuing their goals, and achieving their dreams. If you really want to commit, consider more advanced roleplaying. Speak the way you imagine your character speaks, give them quirks that help them stand out, and try to keep their actions true to the character's beliefs and intentions. It's also important to remember that roleplaying is a group activity. Work together to ensure the game is fun for everyone involved.

DICE



The last thing you need is dice. For **Shattered**, you will need the following: 1d4, 1d6, 1d8 and 1-to-5d10. If you don't have these dice, you may purchase them online, or at your local game store. The rules to using your dice are further explained in the Multi-Die System (MDS) Section (page 81).

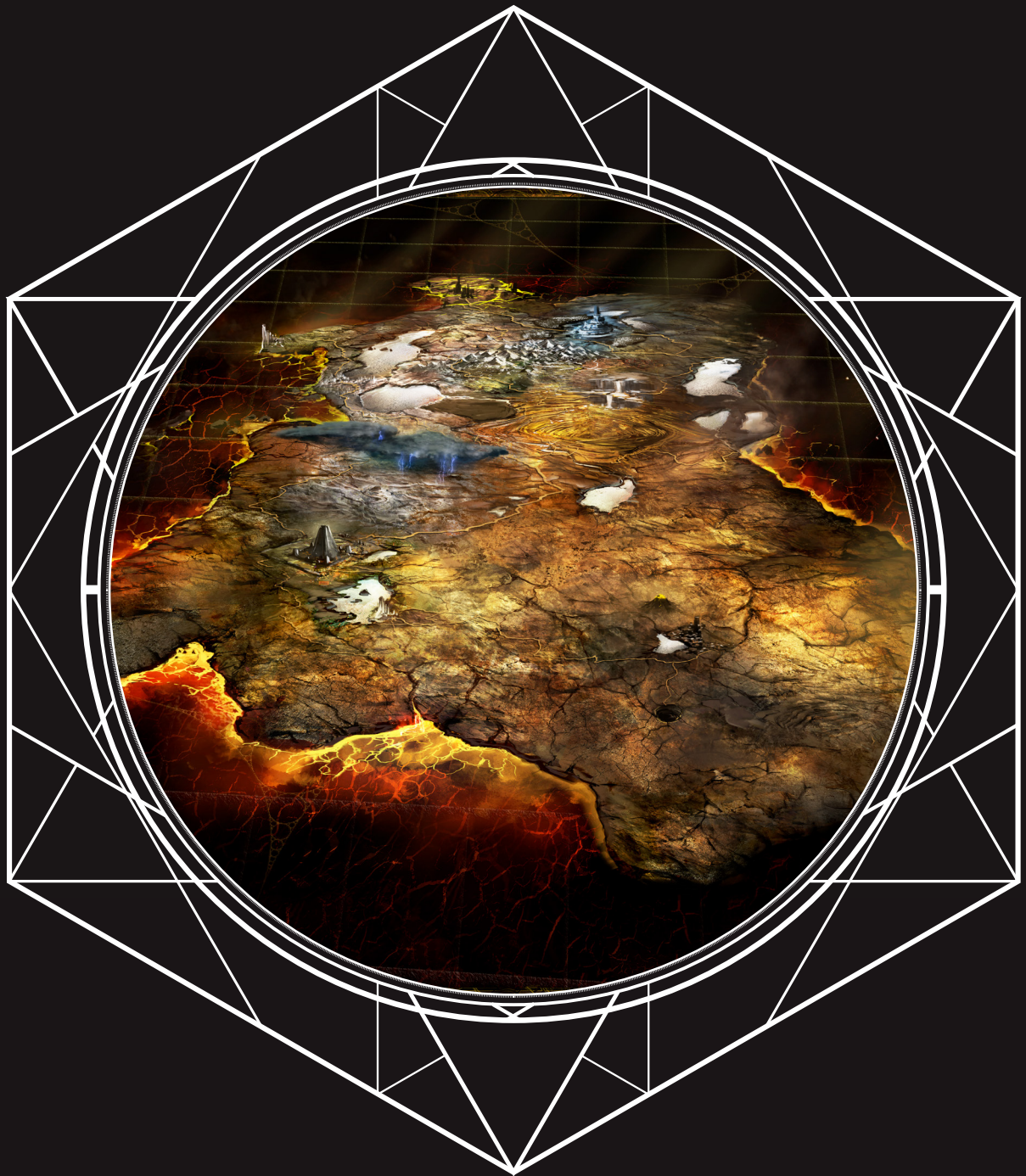
USEFUL VOCABULARY

Throughout the book, you may find that certain words are Capitalized, **bolded**, or *italicized*. These words are either key pieces to the game mechanics of **Shattered** or the world of Feneryss. We have included the Lexicon at the end of this book, starting on page 268, which directs you to the pages that explain them in greater detail.

WHAT'S NEXT?

If you want to learn more about the history of the world, modern culture, and important places, then continue onto the next page. If you're ready to start building a character immediately, jump ahead to page 48. If you came for the airships, fly to page 173.

CHAPTER 1: THE WORLD OF SHATTERED



WORLD OF SHATTERED 1

OLD WORLD

600ow ▶ **THE OLD WORLD**
Pre-Reckoning civilization reaches its peak.

244ow ▶ **CULT OF THE ALYPSE**
The first Temple of Alypse is established.

~0ow ▶ **THE RECKONING**
The Alypse, which have grown large enough to form their own nation, commit a ritual mass suicide in an attempt to tear a hole in reality and unleash Ragnarok. The Reckoning warps the world, spills magic into Feneryss, and spawns the first Rekindled.

POST-RECKONING

~0pr ▶ **DIASPORA**
The remnants of humanity seek safe havens to eke out a meager existence. Some amass at the precipice of the Maw during this unnatural winter; others plumb the depths; still, others huddle around machines of the Old World. Everyone is gradually shaped by the new world.

5pr ▶ **SYLVAN HOLLOW**
Towers of the Old World prop up overturned soil to form a shelter for those lucky enough to live around them. This settlement develops rapidly in isolation.

17pr ▶ **LANIS**
A handful of people, having accepted their fate, work tirelessly to build a monument to humanity. They would eventually prosper and establish a city-state.

484pr ▶ **PULSE**
The Iron Ring implements its Mandates, and names their city in the hopes that it will be the heart of Feneryan life.

THE RECKONING

"The ground rumbled as the cultists' chanting rose in pitch. The sacrifices screamed as their souls were torn through the blasphemous glyphs carved into their flesh. The earth split and crumbled away into nothingness as the profane falsetto reached its highest note, painting the horizon a horrifying crimson. Thunder boomed in the distance, and the sky rained fire as the flesh of the sacrificed began to burn with unholy conflagration. Their screams were silenced as the cries of the innocents reached the ears of the fallen, and as the last victims cried themselves hoarse, the world died."

Three millennia ago, **Feneryss** was a world once densely populated by a rich diversity of plant and animal life and dominated by a thriving mankind on the precipice of great technological progress. A new age was dawning, one of prosperity never before experienced by the civilized world. Then came the **Reckoning**.

Most of humanity, preoccupied with their technological and societal achievements, were wholly unaware of the dark god **Ragnarok**. He had established a massive cult and worked them into a zealous frenzy over several centuries. During this time, the **Alypse** cult swelled large enough to establish an independent theocracy. At the height of its power, the entire nation committed mass suicide with the intent to tear a hole in reality, thus allowing Ragnarok to cross over into the world and begin his indefinite reign.

Though the ritual failed, the dark energies it released still ravaged the planet. Untold billions were snuffed out, and the world was left desolate. Those Alypse that survived the Reckoning were left horribly scared and disfigured, permanently branded as members of the religion that broke the world. Many were mortified upon realizing what they had done under Ragnarok's yoke; some threw themselves into the **Maw** out of shame, while others spent the rest of their days atoning for the countless souls they had slaughtered. The rest, with eyes unopened by the consequences of their actions, continued their worship of the dark god they had failed, seeking repentance.

From that fissure in the world came many things. Unimaginable beings crossed the threshold and now freely roam the continent. Magic, known as **arkäna**, bled into the world and now permeates everything.

Feneryss and its few remaining inhabitants had been forever changed. The sun was lost, swallowed by clouds of choking ash that encircled the globe. If one were lucky enough to see through the ashen cloud and bear witness to the sky itself, one would see only a crimson reflection of the molten rock that had replaced the once magnificent oceans. Mankind stood on the precipice of extinction, flailing desperately to keep its balance.

The unlucky survivors balanced on life's mortal edge. Many took residence near the fiery oceans to endure the unnatural chill; some descended into the earth; others found refuge huddled around the great generators of that previous, lost age. Many believed the world had rebuked mankind for meddling in affairs that were none of its concern. This led to many witch hunts, where practitioners of the dark arts were hunted or banished from settlements to die in the frozen wastes that had once been fertile farms.

PRECIPICE OF EXTINCTION

To survive the cataclysmic events, mankind sought refuge in a number of places. Some settled in underground shelters and bunkers, which had been constructed for extreme situations. On the surface, the under-

prepared soon fled their homes and flooded places of authority and safety: military installations, government establishments, and hospitals, to name a few. Many of these facilities were compromised by the overwhelming hordes of refugees and soon collapsed under the needs of their occupants. While some managed to instill order and rationing, many devolved into lawless madhouses. Few lasted more than a couple generations.

Survival for humanity's remnants was due to some combination of four key factors: shelter sufficient to endure the tempests and eldritch beings that beset Feneryss; stores of foodstuffs and survival equipment; proximity to water sources and flora hardy enough to endure the Reckoning; and access to long-term production technologies (i.e. hydroponics).

For approximately five hundred years following the Reckoning, mankind could focus on little beyond its survival. Storms of acid rain, powerful blizzards, and wildfires ravaged the struggling soil. Earthquakes tested the fortitude of every man-made structure. Ultraviolet lightning and spontaneous wildfires wrought witless havoc. They endured the brutal new climate, abided the warpings of reality, and suffered the host of mutations their new world bestowed upon them. And over the centuries, the wild storms abated. Their bodies adapted. The settlements still standing developed societies. The survivors learned to face the dangers of the new world. Armed with new tools and fresh confidence, men and women ventured out to rediscover their home. It was a rebirth for Humanity— a **Second Genesis**.

CIVILIZATION & INDUSTRY

The largest and most successful settlements of Feneryss are also some of the oldest. Sylvan Hollow was established by the Reckoning itself when tectonic activity thrust a great earthen formation into the air, which quickly collapsed under its own weight. It formed a massive cavern buttressed by **Old World** structures that have shielded its inhabitants ever since. Lanis was initially intended to stand as a monument to humanity in the wake of its estimated extinction. After spending nearly two decades preparing for its demise, the populace saw that fighting for survival was much more appealing. Pulse was next to gain prominence thanks to its unique wall, inclusive culture, and active recruitment efforts, circa 484 PR. Nath'Kaartu, established in 702 PR, was arguably the swiftest developing city-state, but as they say, "*The sweetest fruit is shortest lived,*" and would not stand long.

With time, these disarrayed settlements became proper city-states. They each developed unique laws, commerce, and cultures. Ultimately, each was their society's answer to the question, "*How do we turn surviving into living?*" In Pulse, it was conformity and obedience to the Mandate. The population was kept in step to the beat of an iron fist, and industry surged. In contrast, the Lanisian culture was constructed around seeking perfection; the most valuable citizens were the most skilled in their area of expertise. Residents of Sylvan Hollow revered the Old World technology that had seen them through the horrors post-Reckoning and studied them fiercely in an effort to maintain them, whereas the holy orders seated in Nath'Kaartu erected a social framework around the worship of a single deity. Each was successful in their own way, and each came with various shortfalls.

THE FLAMES OF INDUSTRY

Finding strength in numbers, humanity's descendants were driven to innovate and improve the world around them. As Old World technologies fell into disrepair, they were forced to substitute or relearn old ways. In this regard, **Lanis** and **Pulse** were particularly successful. The former was the first to reclaim animal husbandry, crop rotation, and many

" I LIVED WITH MY FAMILY IN WHAT WAS THEN THE CAPITOL CITY IN THE DOMINION OF KOSH. WE HAD A SMALL APARTMENT BUILT ONTO THE SIDE OF A DIRIGIBLE HANGAR. I REMEMBER RUSHING TO GET OUT, GRABBING KEEPSAKES AT THE LAST MINUTE.

I COULD HEAR DEAFENING EXPLOSIONS AND BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAMS IN THE DISTANCE. I GRABBED MY GRANDFATHER'S ANTIQUE POCKET WATCH FROM MY ROOM AND RAN OUT THE DOOR INTO THE HANGAR.

AS I DID, A MASSIVE TREMOR SHOOK THE AREA AND THE APARTMENT THAT I HAD CALLED HOME FOR MOST OF MY LIFE, SEPARATED FROM THE HANGAR AND FELL HUNDREDS OF FEET TO THE DARK UNDERBELLY OF THE CITY, CAUSING UNTOLD HAVOC BELOW. I RAN ALONG UNSTABLE WALKWAYS AND SWAYING CATWALKS TOWARDS MY FATHER'S SHIP AND DOVE INTO THE CREW ENTRANCE AS WE MADE OUR ESCAPE.

THE LAST THING I REMEMBER SEEING WAS THE SILHOUETTES OF OTHER SHIPS, MUCH LIKE OUR OWN, RISING INTO THE DARKENING SKY AS WE LOOKED ON HELPLESSLY WHILE FENERYSS SHATTERED. "

— ACCOUNT OF THE RECKONING UNKNOWN SOURCE

- 1666PR** ► **FLIGHT**
A small engineering firm constructs the first dirigible in Lanis.
- 1921PR** ► **THE WAR OF DUEL LAKE**
Pulse and Lanis interact for the first time as city-states.
- 2374PR** ► **KALLOGORRYN EMPIRE**
Worship of the god Kaartu'ghal has been spreading rapidly in the northwestern region. An empire is established in his name, and the city of Nath'Kaartu becomes the capital.
- 2433PR** ► **THE QUEST**
A new discovery spurs the previously sedentary Wretched to venture in search of their true home buried beneath the ashes.
- 2575PR** ► **NEROTH**
The Tripartite of Rydriect, Advaeja, and Norvet establishes a logging colony. They name it after the axe that made the first swing.
- 2602PR** ► **THE COUNTERTIDE**
The Undead Tide trudged its way across Feneryss counter to its expected path, instead engulfing the southern cities before making its way to Neroth.
- 2611PR** ► **THE CHAOTIC NORTH**
With the passing of Alesia Rydriect, Neroth descends into constant conflict.
- 2686PR** ► **TAE'K'S CRUSADE**
Struck with the loss of his wife and child, a marshal of Life makes a call to arms and declares war against Death.
- 2688PR** ► **BATTLE OF DEATH'S DOOR**
Tae'k confronts death itself at the outskirts of Hel and subsequently causes the collapse of the **Kallogorryn Empire**. The Undead Horde is strengthened by the banishment of Kaartu'ghal.
- 2689PR** ► **HEL**
The ruins of Nath'Kaartu become a haven for outcasts and exiles, especially necromancers. They rename it Hel.
- 2700PR** ► **LOKORAN**
An outpost is established at the mouth of the Snapspine Caverns after the discovery of an underground route that drastically shortens travel to and from Neroth.

crucial agricultural skills, while the latter was a trailblazer for systematic production, design, and manufacturing. Unfortunately, the pair did not officially interact in any meaningful way for nearly 1500 years despite their relatively close proximity. Each suffered for this in various aspects, but all suffered greatest in the areas of transportation and communication.

Until 1666 PR, all travel was on foot, dellback, cart, or carriage. Even with carriages, distance was often limited by the lack of roads beyond city limits. The rough terrain covering most of Feneryss, when coupled with the danger of its many roaming predators, prevented much travel. But in 1666 PR, a collection of Lanisian scientists reverse-engineered a dirigible of the Old World, and successfully launched it. Spurred by success, they rapidly developed a fleet. With it they patrolled the surrounding area, culling predatory beasts and establishing an area of influence.

NEMZUL'S NOTE

Dells are one of Feneryss's three domesticated creatures, although the phrase "domesticated dell" can rarely be said with confidence. They are six- or eight-legged creatures that grow up to two yards tall at the shoulder and three yards in length. They are very easily startled, agitated, and upset, so blinders are a necessity when using them for any task. The six-legged dellsit is typically used for a lone rider, while the eight-legged dellet is more commonly seen pulling carriages or laden with goods.

It was on one such patrol that they encountered and killed a host of Pulse fishermen, which led to the **War of Duel Lake**. While the war itself was atrocious, the discovery of one another generated an irresistible need for progress. Engineers and arkänists conspired to produce steam and combustion engines; blacksmiths discovered complex alloys to supply the needs of budding civilizations. It was a great awakening, each advance a source of inspiration and wonder.

While not everyone was willing to rush into the arms of this industrial revolution, labor was a problem soon overcome as easily as any other. Where the promise of safety and secure food sources failed to entice volunteers, a slave trade blossomed to fill in the gaps. Those that could be subjugated were conscripted as farmers and manual laborers most often. The most valuable slaves had been cursed with a unique modification that turned their bodies into literal power plants. To this day, those with bioreactors are still used to fuel various machines and vehicles as primary or auxiliary sources.

The fires of industry had been lit. Soon, the first foundries and production lines were established to meet the demand. Industrial factories and warehouses belched forth great plumes of smoke as they raced at full speed to supply Feneryans with their every need. Gone were the days of simply scratching out a life between the planet's fits of fury that plagued them. Gone were the days spent toiling in futility on the land only to have the fruits of their labor snatched away by their miserly home world. Finally, mankind could earn a living and keep it.

WAR OF DUEL LAKE

The War of Duel Lake was a turning point in the history of Feneryss. It was the first time two independent societies were strong and secure enough to commit resources to war. Fear and misunderstanding were the primary drivers with each side believing the other intended to utterly destroy them.

It began in 1921 PR in the month of Deadtide, approximately 250 years after Lanis had constructed its first dirigible. Without warning, a Lanisian dirigible pulverized a small fleet of Pulse's fishing trawlers. The

reasoning behind the first attack has been lost to history, but there are two prevailing arguments: the first says the Lanisians mistook the ships for waterborne monsters; the second suggests that the Lanisians assumed the Pulse citizens were members of a lesser hamlet and were asserting a territorial claim to the waters.

Rumors of flying boats that rained fire upon the fishermen and inaction of the city leaders, the Iron Ring, sowed the seeds of unrest in Pulse. A young military commander named Brecht seized this moment of chaos to not only oust the Iron Ring but restore order and neutralize the citizen's panic. Having stabilized the city, Brecht launched a campaign to build the Pulse military all while seeking out the unknown attackers.

Lanis was on the brink of a similar civil war when the Pulse ships were encountered on the lake. The leaders of the various factions saw an opportunity to turn this event in their favor. They manipulated public media to convince the people that a new band of raiders, larger than any they had ever known, had set its sights on their home. By the time any contrary information got out, anger toward Pulse was sufficient enough to override any concerns about the truth. Any "diplomacy" attempted by either side was a farce, used to stoke the fires of war by framing the other city-state as a villain for their citizens.

The ultimate battle began in early Lentem (the month of Innehlven on the standardized calendar) when a number of Lanisian airships, loaded with explosives, dive-bombed Pulse's wall. The explosion blew a hole in the wall so large that the scars of the damage can still be seen to this day near the great wall's southern gate. Lanis sent a large detachment of troops to march on the opening, pillaging much of Downtrod in the process. As Pulse reacted to defend the vulnerability, a second force struck the north side of the city, creating another wound in Pulse's wall and launching a second ground assault.

Split between two separate intrusions, each of which were desperate battles to protect the inner city, the Pulse military struggled to hold the line. Lanis on the other hand, was swelling with pride at the result of two successful attacks. It would be a long battle to the heart of Pulse, but the commanders of the Lanisian military expected victory. After their initial gains, however, their effort stalled out for two long months.

Hubris was Lanis's undoing. Despite warnings of the Undead Tide approaching, military leadership ordered their soldiers to press the advantage. When the Undead Tide arrived, Lanisian fighters were pinned between the swarming undead and the staunch Pulse military: the hammer and the anvil. Cut off from the supply lines, the attackers were quickly slaughtered. Pulse retook the wall and shored up the gaps before any undead could stage their own invasion. There are stories of soldiers outside, pleading for sanctuary or offering their allegiance in exchange for rescue. All pleas fell on numbed ears.

With Pulse nearly destroyed and Lanis lacking an army, the war came to an unofficial stalemate and has never seen true resolution since. The tensions between the two cities remain to this day, fuel ready for fresh sparks of conflict. It is well understood that if war ever revisits Feneryss, Pulse and Lanis will duel once more.

BLOOD & BELIEF

Faith in Feneryss has seen the rise and fall of many deities. While little to no information on pre-Reckoning beliefs remains, the Alypse faith has retained most of its rituals in obeisance to Ragnarok. That said, a sizable portion of Alypse no longer worship the failed god.

In the wake of Reckoning, various minor deities came and went. Few were able to inspire faith for long. The most successful was easily **Kaartu'ghal**. He was strong enough to bind people together in the theocratic **Kallogorryn Empire**, established in 2374 PR. This dark god's reign emanated from the city of **Nath'Kaartu** on the northwestern corner of Feneryss. Built upon the remains of a pre-Reckoning bastion, and after it was destroyed during the Battle at Death's Door, the crypt-like city of

Hel sprouted from its ruins to shelter outcasts and exiles.

Crusades to convert or kill all non-believers led to a rapid expansion during the empire's first five decades. At the height of its power, the empire claimed all the lands from its northwestern peninsula to the Glass Forest in the south and budding Neroth in the east.

Kaartu'ghal's power stemmed from his followers; they bound their souls to him, and in exchange were able to perform great miracles and feats of arkana. Little did they know this power came from themselves: each spell cast and every miracle performed drew from their souls. When spread across all those citizens, it was so little as to have almost no effect, and thus went unnoticed.

The empire's growth, and therefore the deity's power, were stymied by the rapid mechanical and arkānik development of the other city-states and was ultimately decimated by **Tae'k's Crusade**.

Modern faith in Feneryss is largely dominated by the reverence of nature's myriad dualities: fire and water, love and hate, and peace and war are only a few of a much larger pantheon. Each element is referred to as an **aspect**. Worshipers most often direct their rituals toward an aspect's **Avatar**. Some Avatars are represented by a symbol or image (e.g. Earth's aspect, Obelisk, is represented by a massive stone pillar with an etched eye gazing upward). Others are embodied by legendary figures. Tae'k for example, in one of history's greatest ironies, is the current Avatar of Death. While some Feneryans fixate on one particular aspect, most pay their respects to each depending on the circumstance. Airship crews regularly pay tribute to the Air aspect prior to departure, and many births take place in temples of Life.

Anyone can raise a temple to their chosen Avatar, or grant themselves lofty titles, like "bishop." However, a select few individuals are handpicked by an Avatar to become **marshals**. Each is clearly marked by an **omen**, which is a physical manifestation of an Avatar's blessing. For example, the skin of Earth marshals is rough and cracked, and marshals of Air sprout small, intangible wings. These chosen few are highly regarded by all members of society, regardless of their preferred aspect. As such, there are many potential roles for a marshal. Some wander, meting out justice as they see fit. Some raise temples and provide guidance to their congregation. Many commit themselves to shielding denizens from the roving beasts and undead of Feneryss. Others have devoted themselves to the effort of weeding out fanaticism and extremists who would see the balance of the world upset.

TAE'K'S CRUSADE

By and large, the faithful are capable of peaceful interaction. For some, fervor blinds them to rationality. The most infamous example is marshal Tae'k, born 2653 PR. Life's Avatar marked him during his teenage years, but he remained quite aloof, finding little interest in his position. He nevertheless served his community well by aiding the ill and other charitable deeds. He grew into a model citizen and follower of his aspect, until the loss of his wife and son during the latter's birth. He cursed his Avatar and lamented his loss in isolation for several years. When Tae'k finally emerged from his self-induced hermitage, he brought with him a disturbing zealotry. It was so unsettling that the congregation he had ever known exiled him. He departed graciously and formed his own cult, founded upon the wisdom he had obtained in solitude. That wisdom was utterly simple: life is the ultimate good; death is the ultimate evil. To spread the greatest amount of good, evil must be eliminated.

Marshal Tae'k channeled his charisma and unbridled grief to rally believers. Two and a half centuries later, his cult is still the largest recorded multi-aspect union in Feneryan history. In 2686 PR, this unified force of aggrieved marshals and common folk began wholesale slaughter of Death's faithful and their allies. Thus began **Tae'k's Crusade**, which lasted two turbulent years.

Opponents were murdered in their beds, whole settlements were poisoned, and great battles were fought atop the graven wastes of the ashen dead. Wave after wave of his followers clashed with the forces of Death only to die in droves. Tae'k oversaw every battle, every

2717PR ► **VAMPIRES SURFACE**
Vampires arise from their caverns, and make first contact with the other races.

2719PR ► **VAMPIRE HUNTS**
After discovering the strength obtained from feeding, many Vampires go wild. The hunted races retaliate with the Vampire Hunts. Vampires disperse in all directions. Covens are developed to find security in numbers.

2720PR ► **VAMPIRE HUNTS CEASE**
Self-regulating covens negotiate an uneasy peace approximately a year and a half after the bloody conflict erupts. Although the Vampire Hunts are officially called off, animosity lingers among most of the “clean-bloods.”

2746PR ► **ARKÄNIK DRIVE**
An unknown researcher unveils the arkänik drive. This spurs rapid development of industry and trade between the city-states.

2758PR ► **THE WAR OF FOOLS**
Tensions flare between Pulse and Lanis over rights to Lokoran’s water supply. Fearing loss of access, Neroth enters the feud shortly thereafter.

2759PR ► **SHADES**
First contact is made with residents of the Glass Forest. Tentative trade begins.

2760PR ► **THE WAR OF FOOLS ENDS**
When Lokoran threatens to detonate explosives at the mouth of the water source, conflict abruptly halts. Diplomacy is renewed.

ARKÄNIK ERA

2762PR / **1AE** ► **THE CISTERN ACCORDS**
The major powers recognize the sovereignty of Lokoran and establish a uniform calendar and currency. They are signed on the first day of the new year. This begins the **Arkänik Era (AE)**.

4AE ► **REBEL’S RUN**
Former Lanisian captain Abel Beller moves to Pulse. He builds a warship, hires his old crew, and attacks Pulse. He is why Forge hours are more strictly regulated.

42AE ► **FLORVANA**
Sentient fungi emerge from the aquifer beneath Lokoran and quickly assimilate into the culture.

100AE ► **THE PRESENT DAY**
Welcome to Shattered.

assassination, and every sabotage, watching his enemies and allies alike fall to dust. He never wavered in his belief that Death itself must eventually succumb to his righteous army. Yet each needless death, each trampled body, each bloody slaughter seemed to ignite something within Tae’k, something dark and uncontrollable.

His campaign cut a swathe of terror and destruction stretching from Duel Lake to the seat of the Kallogorryn Empire in what is now known as Hel, with most battles waged in the Wastelands and **Alecian Plains**.

The ultimate conflict, **The Battle at Death’s Door**, was a grueling four-day affair of blood, steel, and arkäne horrors that smothered the outskirts of Nath’Kaartu with corpses. In his army’s darkest hour it is said Tae’k waded into the crux of the fighting. There was a hateful fire in his eyes, and Death seemed to flutter in his wake like a malignant cloak. It was a shadow, cold and corrosive, that dredged corpses out of the muck to assail the marshal. Though he fought valiantly, he eventually succumbed to the relentless numbers pressing in from all directions. Decaying, hungry mouths tore at Tae’k. He let loose his final cry of defiance, cursing every god of the old and the new in tongues unknown. He continued to rage and curse as this putrid, writhing chrysalis descended into the depths of the planet. The site of this battle is now known as **The Bonefields of Agorra**.

Tae’k’s quest to rid the world of Death had twisted him, and in his final moments, the marshal crossed a forbidden mortal threshold. Unable to die and unable to live, Tae’k had ascended to the status of Death’s Avatar.

TAE’K’S CURSE

While the zombie hordes were present prior to the Battle at Death’s Door, the eradication of the Kaartu’ghal’s followers and his subsequent disappearance seemed to boost the size of the Undead Tide exponentially. This unfortunate consequence is commonly referred to as Tae’k’s Curse, although the phrase is may also refer to the Undead Tide itself. The horde of undead circle the continent following a fairly regular pattern, and would become the basis for the unified calendar established by the Cistern Accords nearly 75 years later.

THE MENDERS LEGION

Tae’k’s Crusade was a calamitous reminder to Feneryss of the dangers of unchecked zealotry. Moreover, it showed them that marshals were still people, susceptible to corruption and flawed behavior. To ensure such a thing never happened again, a great number of marshals gathered to form the **Menders Legion**. They distinguish themselves from the average marshal by adhering to the **Mender’s Codex**. Practice and study of these four tenets, the Legion believes, will lead to a balance among the **aspects** and a more stable environment across the continent.

The Legion quickly acquired popularity among both the faithful and nonbelievers in the wake of Tae’k’s Crusade. In the time since its establishment, membership to the Legion has become a compulsion for marshals that desire a place in Feneryss’s upper echelon. Marshals pledged to the Legion can expect greater degrees of respect and influence across Feneryss. Conversely, those who eschew the Legion frequently find themselves denied upward social movement, although pockets of like-minded folks are scattered across the continent.

To join the ranks of the Menders Legion, they must pass a number of trials under the supervision of a preexisting mender. The exact number and requirements of these tests vary from one aspect to another, and even between Menders of the same aspect. There have been drug-induced spiritual journeys, quests to slay fearsome beasts, duels, and even explicit orgies. The cost of failure is also fluid. In most cases, the aspirant only needs to make another attempt in the future, but in some rare cases, they are banned from entry permanently. Some perish in the attempt.

Successful candidates are cloistered for a period of time, during which they endure rigorous study and mental exercises that focus on the intricacies of the seemingly straightforward Codex. Some decades ago, around the year 60AE, the menders supplemented this study with **Astrum’s Chronicle**. It contains a collection of adjudications issued by highly revered marshals throughout her career. Each neophyte’s

time spent in the cloister depends entirely on how quickly they can comprehend and debate the Codex. After proving themselves, these new menders are set loose on the world to do with their newfound status as they wish— Codex permitting.

THE MENDER'S CODEX

Feneryss is a complex system of powers natural and arkäne. Equilibrium is a necessity. To attain and maintain this harmony, we adhere to these basic tenets: Balance of the aspects is essential to order and prosperity; marshals must lead by example and the Faithful must be taught reverence of Divine Harmony; Imbalance must be righted, and zealotry must be denounced.

THE VASTNESS OF FAITH

It is important to note that while two individuals may worship the same aspect, they may not share a common creed. This is because there is no proven record of an Avatar issuing decrees on proper worship, although countless claims exist to the contrary. In light of this, many sects coexist peacefully while others squabble incessantly. Within each aspect, there is a wealth of diversity in their beliefs. For example, many temples of Life preach that all life, regardless of origin, has inherent value and insist that all must be preserved. Others find that the value of Life varies over time, and practice ritual sacrifices to 'preserve' creatures at their peak. Cults of Death also exhibit this multiplicity: a few are known to actively seek the creation of zombies to enhance Death's hold on Feneryss. Another cult finds that the pinnacle of death's power is reached through longevity: the later one dies, the more powerful the death.

As if this wasn't complex enough, there is also the ongoing tension between Menders and **Aspers**. This is a term coined by Menders that refers to marshals who refuse the Mender's Codex. While the Menders Legion teaches its members to recruit Aspers, not all heed this request. Many naturally assume that Aspers deny the Codex out of a desire for personal power. This is true for some Aspers, but not all. Interactions between Menders and Aspers are usually strained, but peaceful. However, violence is not uncommon.

WHY BE AN ASPER?

Most that abstain from the Legion do so out of the belief that they are beholden solely to their Avatar-- for that is the source of their miracles. Others desire personal power or success and aren't concerned with what it might cost others. Another, simpler reason might be that the marshal is a hermit and has cast off all ties to modern society.

THE ARKÄNIK DRIVE

As the various settlements discovered or were discovered, by one another, the preeminent struggle of their age was logistics. As previously mentioned, land travel was arduous and often lethal. So they turned to their dirigibles. The world's violent weather patterns and the issue of resupplying quickly proved to be monumental obstructions. To combat them, cities and towns constructed port towers along common routes. This, conveniently, also led to the construction of roads. These roads are still frequently utilized in modern Feneryss, although maintenance in rural areas is often lacking. An additional benefit of these roads is that they served as guiding arrows for sailors during their travels. Unfortunately, weather continued to be a problem. Sailors were helpless

against gales and ultraviolet lightning. Travel by dirigible was terribly unreliable and trade remained weak; Feneryss needed something better.

One thousand and eighty years after the first dirigible took flight, in the year 2746 PR, Feneryss was given the **arkänik drive (ark-drive for short)**. This device that supports its own gravitational field while counteracting that of the planet's, allowing for the illusion of flight. Surprisingly, the actual inventor of the ark-drive (which is easily the greatest invention since the Reckoning) is unknown. Many scientists and arkänists have attempted to claim it as their own, only to stumble in their own folly when pressed for details. Feneryans now refer to the unknown inventor as the **Mad Mechanik** and have developed quite a legend for him. Regardless of who first created this indispensable device, it is a priceless contribution to the world. It had several important effects: it led to the production of airships, stabilized intercity commerce and communication, and started a second industrial expansion.

Airships are faster, sturdier, less volatile, and more versatile than dirigibles. The port towers were quickly left to rot and dirigibles were made obsolete in a meager half century. Trade, travel, and communication boomed with these new vehicles. Feneryss's scattered cities and towns could finally interact meaningfully and consistently. Every merchant, businessman, and person of wealth desired an airship, prompting a second flurry of vivacious industry ensued.

As with all great advances, there came the opportunity for abuse. It was only a few decades since their inception that the first pirate airship claimed a victim. Weapons became ubiquitous aboard airships; sailors were equipped with sabers and sidearms; great cannons were mounted on the ships themselves. When the military potential of these great vessels dawned on the city-states there came a race to develop the most powerful airship in the skies. It is a race that persists to this day, and one that Pulse is likely winning.

THE PURE

Despite the ubiquity of arkäna in society, there are some groups who abhor magic in all of its forms. This is especially true for the Pure, who are at the forefront of this movement. They firmly believe that the manipulation of arkäna is directly responsible for the undead hordes that ravage the world. Purists accuse primaltheurgists and necromancers of upsetting the natural order with their meddling. Some Purists go so far as to add psykics to the list of perpetrators. Their primary orator at the base of this belief is a Wretched named Morekt Vanaal. Lanis has labeled him a criminal born of insanity and issued a warrant for his arrest for the deaths of several Logerra mages. Nevertheless, he is hailed by the Pure as a visionary and a hero.

WAR OF FOOLS

Administered by **Warden Ralm Kalev**, the people of Lokoran lived in relative peace and comfort. As some loreweavers would say, fate had other plans for the small settlement. The pure water aquifer was a source of great jealousy and anxiety for the other city-states, each of whom was intent on securing access. The tension was especially obvious in Pulse and Lanis, who have been amassing their militaries since their mutual stalemate over 800 years ago.

It began pleasantly enough, with Pulse and Lanis both trying to ply historical leverage over Ralm Kalev. The administrator's history was a unique one. Ralm was born in the Arkänus district of Lanis to a small

THE CISTERN ACCORDS

IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH A SUSTAINABLE AND FAIR MEANS OF LIVING FOR ALL FENERYANS, WE, THE RECOGNIZED GOVERNORS OF LOKORAN, PULSE, LANIS, NEROETH, AND SYLVAN HOLLOW HEREBY AGREE TO RECOGNIZE AND UPHOLD THESE ACCORDS.

ARTICLE 1

LOKORAN IS AN INDEPENDENT STATE, ENTITLED TO ITS LAND AND THE RESOURCES THEREIN.

ARTICLE 2

TRADE SHALL BE STANDARDIZED ACROSS ALL REGIONS IN THE FORM OF THE PROMISSORY BANK NOTE (ABBREVIATED NT). ITS VALUE SHALL BE INSURED BY PURE WATER AND ENFORCED BY ALL MEMBER STATES AND THEIR TRADE AFFILIATES.

ARTICLE 3

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR UNITY, WE RATIFY THE TIDE CALENDAR AND RECOGNIZE THIS AS THE BEGINNING OF THE ARKĀNIK ERA. ALL BUSINESS WILL HENCEFORTH BE PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE MEASURES.

forgehouse, which established him by blood as a citizen of Lanis, but he spent his early adulthood as a low-ranking officer of the Pulse military after being naturalized. Each city-state felt their claim gave them rights to the water. Tensions rapidly escalated as Ralm repeatedly refused any agreements with either city-state. Diplomatic visits soon became excuses for military posturing.

Who fired the first volley is mired in so much controversy as to be moot. The only certain thing is that early in 2758 PR, Pulse and Lanis came to blows once more. Skirmishes broke out mere miles from the gates of Lokoran. The city found itself effectively blockaded from trade with its southern trade partners. Without many of these critical supplies, Ralm was forced to make expensive deals with the Lodges of Neroth, nearly bankrupting the city.

It wasn't long before Neroth also made itself known in the vicinity of Lokoran. Its forces abstained from most engagements, content with picking off stragglers and looting the wreckage of the greater armadas.

After two and a half years of feuding, Ralm's people were on the brink of being extinguished. In a final act of desperation, he ordered saboteurs to line the mouth of the aquifer with powerful explosives. He then issued a simple ultimatum to Pulse and Lanis: immediately cease all hostility and pay reparations to the citizens of Lokoran, or nobody gets the Cistern.

Pulse and Lanis scoffed at the threats. The Warden detonated a single explosive towards the back of the aquifer, forcing Pulse and Lanis to take the threat seriously. He requested a ceasefire and reopening of diplomacy, to which the warring states agreed. Saboteurs, disguised as city representatives, met with the diplomats. The ultimatum was issued once more and was flatly rejected once more. The saboteurs detonated explosives that they had hidden beneath their clothes, killing everyone present at the meeting.

With a heavy heart, Ralm issued the ultimatum one last time. He also promised much more death if his offer was refused. Reluctantly, they agreed. A second round of diplomacy occurred. The War of Fools officially ended with the signing of the **Cistern Accords**, which are also called "The Treaty of Fools." In addition to resolving the issue of claims to the Cistern, it established new trade regulations, a standardized currency, and a uniform calendar.

BANK NOTES

With the conclusion of the War of Fools, the discussion of the treaty of Lokoran commenced. Much was discussed between representatives of each city and many of Lokoran's demands were met with little hesitation. That is until, Lokoran broached the topic of currency, who sought to unify the cities under a single monetary system. Pulse and Lanis, each refused initially but eventually agreed when access to Lokoran's water was threatened.

Once the treaty was ratified, Lokoran established the Central Bank of Feneryss and began printing Notes (𐌆) using machines constructed in the forges of Pulse, textiles manufactured from Neroth, and ink from Lanis. This collaborative manufacturing effort helped to standardize trade across much of the known world.

TIDE CALENDAR

With no means to track the stars or the sun, nor even awareness of the vastness beyond until recently, Feneryans have come to track long passages of time by the movements of the Undead Tide. It is not an exact measurement, but the margin of error is six days. Thus the calendar is organized into spans of six days, and five spans makes a month. Three months form a season.

NORS'HOLLOW SEASON OF RAIN AND ROT

The nickname, season of rain and rot, comes from the drastic increase in precipitation and rising temperatures; perfect for growing, but also perfect for decay and decomposition. The farmers of the Plains beseech the Squall for bountiful rain that their crops might thrive. The residents of Neroth, on the other hand, clamor desperately for dry ground for their upcoming fight with the Undead Tide. The Undead Tide departs the Grave City during **Deadtide**, the season's first month, and Helian vampires rejoice. They mark the occasion with the **Red Fête**, where they feast upon their lessers and revel in the greatly diminished undead presence. In the final week of **Deadtide** or the first week of **Skog**, Nerothis scurries in the mud with gritted teeth and grim determination to repel the horde.

With the exception of the Countertide of 2602PR, the Tide continues past Neroth and turns south toward Lokoran, with some stragglers peeling off to die in the frigid northeastern emptiness. At first sighting, Lokori guardsmen seal the gates on the northern side of the Snapspine Mountain range. After escorting anyone lingering in the subterranean passage into the city proper, the gates of the Precipice are also sealed. While the lodges gear up to fight, food is provided free of charge and there is a parade around the city. The festive stupor wears off and the infighting resumes around the start of the month of **Leid**.

Once past Lokoran, the horde would progress directly through the heart of the Alecian Plains, but are intercepted by Lokori soldiers, volunteers from other city-states, and even the **Gravekeepers**. Together they fight tirelessly to steer the Tide to the southwest, into the Untarnished Steppe and the Wastes of Galaam for the majority of the month of Leid. Their efforts are crucial to Feneryss's preservation, as Leid is also when the harvest begins for most crops. As they are pushed south toward the Steppe, it is common for clusters of undead to slip by and find their way into the Heartwood and Gammetra.

SULNA'GORST SEASON OF FEAST OR FAMINE

Both the month and holiday of **Messanah** begin around the same time the Undead Tide radiates south across the Wastes of Galaam and southwest toward Lanis. Lokoran and the Alecian Plains rejoice in another year of safe harbor and harvest with brightly colored costumes and hourly Raisings. The southern cities are another matter. Pulse revels like a soldier making one final toast before he dies; Lanisian custom is to 'hide' from the undead by draping themselves in dark clothing masks until the Tide's arrival. Of course, no one actually believes they can hide from the undead: it is a tradition steeped in old folktales.

Lanians pronounce their courage and fortitude with the arrival of **Savenholt**, the fifth month, by flinging off their grim attire in the main avenues and preparing defenses with ardent fervor. Savenholt's beginning roughly aligns with the first sightings of the undead. Corpses will harry the Shining City as they envelope the **Aleppa Mountains** and city walls. To date, sturdy fortifications and the liberal application of arkāna has been sufficient in repelling their efforts. Meanwhile, the Bogdoran Syndicate mobilizes its distributors to ship the fresh harvests throughout the month, primarily to Neroth and Hel. Supplemental deliveries also make their way to the besieged southern cities by airship.

Innehlven opens with the Tide banging on Pulse's gates and terrorizing the Downtrod. After all the conflicts at previous settlements and nature's brutal treatment, Pulse has little trouble repulsing the diminished Tide. UV lightning storms also see a tremendous uptick during the sixth month of the year, especially in the Ashlands and western Alecian Plains. This often continues into and through much of the season of Fren'Tella.

FREN'TELLA SEASON OF COLD AND CALM

Spurned by the stalwart defenders of the great forge, the Tide continues west, trampling over the rooftops of Sylvan Hollow. The town is ready: any undead that somehow slip into the winding tunnels are greeted with lengthy drops into hand-carved caverns designed to collect them for incineration after the horde has passed.

While the undead rise from the south, a heavy cold front drifts down from the north and drags a thick blanket of snow with it. By the end of **Brespeak**, Shades have spotted the Tide on one flank and velvety flakes of snow on the other. The blizzards typically reach as far as Lokoran, the northern edge of the Alecian Plains, and a portion of the Glass Forest. In more extreme years, even the northern Ashlands and Gammetra will see snow in moderate amounts.

When the undead are first spotted on the horizon by the Shade scouts of the Glass Forest, the indigenous peoples start their solemn **Ephraalun** preparation. Warriors are painted with white wards to stave off the arkāne evil that turns the living into the undead as well as nightmare spirits that haunt warriors with vivid images of battles since past. The portion of the Tide that washes into the Glass Forest rarely makes it more than a couple miles. Those not eradicated by the Shades fall prey to other vicious hunters or are cut to pieces by the jagged environ.

The few stragglers that survive a trip through the dark daggers reunite with the severely worn undead that trekked through the Ashlands. **Vinskry** arrives and brings with it a supremely unnatural stillness. The winds die, rain and snow cease, and even earthquakes have not been recorded during this time. In the wake of Brespeak's massive precipitation, the stagnant air gives the realm an eerie, frozen visage. The respite is greatly appreciated by all Feneryans, who take this time to recoup any losses. The Wretched believe this is the period of slumber for the gods. The clans take advantage of this calm to stake the banner and call the Covenant. Before uprooting the banner, they conclude their gathering with the infamous twelve-day series of skirmishes known as **Adalgar**.

Mannaor is the twelfth and final month of the year. In its midst, the minuscule remainder of the Tide descends upon Hel. The chill of Brespeak and Vinskry is dispelled by warm winds. All of Feneryss takes a breath of relief, and looks toward the new year with a mixture of hope and dread. The last day of Mannaor is a minor holiday observed by all of Feneryss. One last chance to revel in the relative peace before the Undead Tide begins its foreboding march.



SECOND GENESIS

CHILDREN OF THE NEW WORLD

HUMANS

“They may look weak, my son, but there are some things you should know about Humans: they are not bound together by honor; they lack strength; and they possess an unparalleled greed... But there is one thing, one single thing, son, that those stupid mammalian parasites keep for themselves: an incredible, immutable fraternity. And that’s what makes them so dangerous.”

—An ancient **Alypse** to his youngest disciple

Humans are the predecessors of each race that exists today, save for the Florvana. After surviving the Reckoning, and subsequently giving birth to the new races, much of Humanity champions itself as a kind of savior. It can commonly be heard by radical pro-Human preachers that mankind is a favored child of the elements. A vast majority of Humans view all other races as subordinate, and have subsequently given them their common names in addition to a broader appellation: “**The Lesser Ones.**” As such, many Humans deal with the other races with a sense of condescension and pity.

Despite their natural tendency towards prejudice and racism, Humans possess a great capacity for radical thought and change. A movement

recently has taken root, primarily in urban centers, which hinges on equality of all races. This topic, in particular, has been quite polarizing and has spurred riots and even violent uprisings in many cities across Feneryss.

Humans are a heavily social, celebratory species; observing milestones and historical events through revelry holds great value. One of the most important Human celebrations is a child’s passage into adulthood. This event, called a **Wend**, is typically observed when a child nears 16 years of age and involves several days of feasting.

Once a child has reached adulthood, they are expected to find their own personal way of contributing to Humanity to “leave their mark.” This expectation is purposefully open-ended, allowing individuals to pursue any number of enterprises. Unlike some of the other races, marriage is not among these noble endeavors. While monogamy is a common social practice, Humans are encouraged to keep a diverse selection of partners in order to maintain the strength of the species.

Humans frequently view death with a sense of optimistic melancholy, always wishing for more time to accomplish or achieve greatness while also looking back on successful lives with a sense of pride. Due to many of the afflictions that Humans endure in their later years, a typical funeral is a joyous event, celebrating the end of suffering. Death rituals vary greatly across Feneryss. However, cremation is preferred by an overwhelming majority. Much of Humanity does not give credence to the resurrection of the dead as Rekindled and often consider them to be unique and unrelated individuals.

If there is any one advantage that Humanity truly has over the other races of the world, it is their belief that a single individual can change the course of the world. They become relentless and even reckless while in pursuit of an objective. This emotional state makes them irrational and at times, violent; but it is this very quality that has made mankind the largest and most influential race in the world.

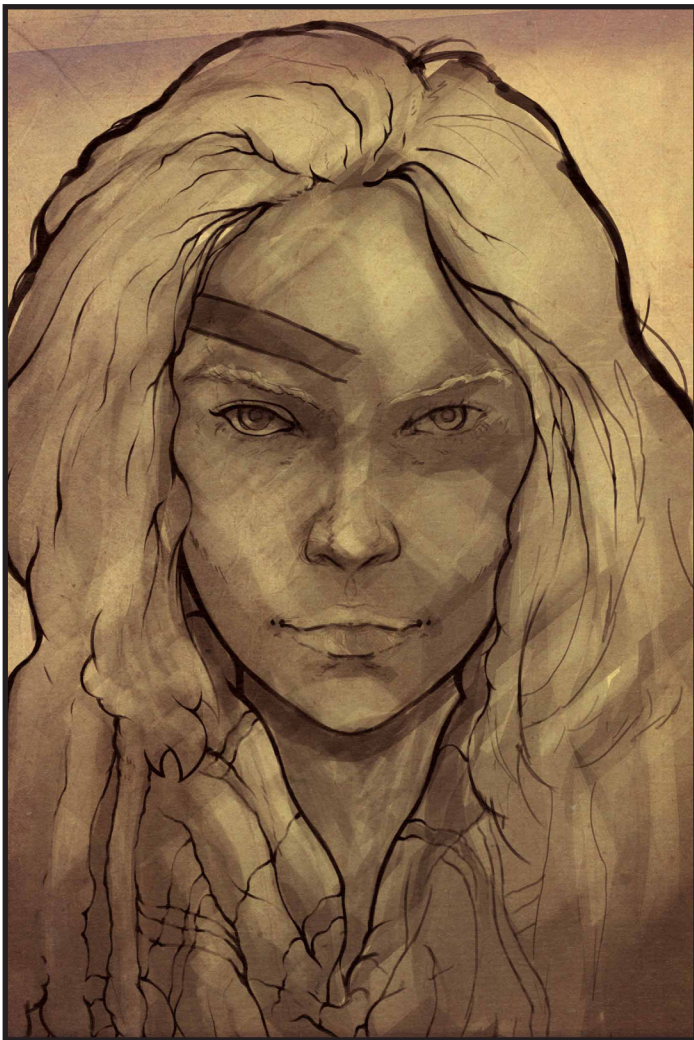
ALYPSE

“Shaped from my bone. Born of my blood. You walk to meet the sky. Name in the leaves, new branch outstretched, you have taken up the mantle.”
—“**Unnamed,**” **Alypse Rite of Passage**

The **Alypse** were once a death cult of formidable size, its members having spread to every corner of Feneryss. In truth, while spread out across the face of the planet like a ravenous pestilence, their numbers were significant enough to form an independent nation. They were indoctrinated with the belief that they could bring about their ultimate salvation by committing a mass ritual suicide.

Despite the botched attempt, Ragnarok’s will and force of being left a lasting impression. His worshippers were permanently transformed, molded in his own image, and their minds snapped beneath the weight of his colossal consciousness. Both malady and madness persist to this day. Modern **Alypse** cultural writings speak of this madness as a birthright.

The **Alypse** are a people that place high value on lineage, called a **Pedigrist**. This plays a pivotal role in their social structure and is determined by tracing maternal lines back to the Reckoning. These lines are referred to by their ordinal number (first, second, third, etc.) and are a common tattoo for many **Alypse**. Individuals with lower **Pedigrist**s typically find themselves groomed for leadership, with each subsequent line falling into lesser positioning. In spite of this social hierarchy, all **Alypse** are brought up and openly encouraged to test the words of their superiors with the intention of separating truth from madness. This banter



between the Aल्पse has created a meticulous political system where the balance of power can change in a heartbeat.

One of the few parts of Aल्पse culture not influenced by the Pedigrist is procreation, which is almost the sole responsibility of Aल्पse women. From early childhood, they are taught by their elders how to recognize the precursors of madness. This knowledge is passed on in the hope that she will seek out mentally “stable” males that can pass on said stability to their offspring. After choosing a mate, Aल्पse form contracts with one another called **Hemopacts** which usually dictate a number of offspring to be born before the contract is fulfilled. The ritual surrounding a Hemopact typically requires the individuals involved to be bled and then anointed with a mixture of the blood

Interacting with the rest of the world is a constant struggle. Numerous legends mention the Aल्पse’s involvement in the Reckoning, resulting in the massive discrimination they experience in modern Feneryss. Known Aल्पse are often hunted down and beaten or murdered, with little response from the authorities. To mitigate this, age-old rituals are performed at birth to imbue the child with the shadows of Ragnarok’s power. These rituals create what is known as a **flesh mask**, which is a psychic ability that allows the Aल्पse to disguise themselves as Humans. Children are kept hidden, isolated from the outside world until they can properly form their flesh mask. In the upper echelons of society, this can be easily explained away via suspicious illnesses or private tutoring. However, in the lower parts of society, it is much more difficult to hide an Aल्पse child. Between crowded housing and extra mouths to feed, many Aल्पse refrain from reproducing within cities, instead traveling abroad to have a child in secret, only to return to society when the child is old enough. Those few children who cannot or will not use a flesh mask are often killed or exiled in order to keep up the Human facade.

Because children are hidden from public view until they display proficiency with the flesh mask, they begin daily training and testing with their parents and elders at around nine years old, and will continue until their skills are considered satisfactory. Once a child has mastered the use of the flesh mask they are considered adults and are sent away from their home with naught but a few meager belongings and their Pedigrist to establish their own independence. Aल्पse who have made it to this point in their lives are often said to have, “*taken up the mantle*,” referring to the impending insanity imposed upon all Aल्पse by Ragnarok. Any who fail to master the use of the flesh mask eventually find themselves ejected from their homes and are effectively shorn from their mother’s lineage. In these cases, many commit suicide in their shame, but a slim minority dare to brave the outside world alone and exposed.

Over many generations, the Aल्पse have embraced their curse with so much gusto that their culture is built upon it. The perpetual debate among the Aल्पse forge brilliant liars and even better politicians. They are a people as fractured as the planet they inhabit, but this has also become their greatest advantage.

ACOLYTES OF THE ENDER

Despite the monumental failure of the Reckoning, there are still followers of Ragnarok living on Feneryss today. They remain highly secretive due to the persecution of the Aल्पse for their ties to the Reckoning, but members come from all races and walks of life. What little is known circulates among brothels and back alleys. Stories suggest that the leadership of this cult is comprised of fiercely devoted descendants of the founding members of the pre-Reckoning Aल्पse. Their ultimate goal is to finish what had initially begun and fully release Ragnarok into the world. A number of sects have been found dead, with each corpse missing their eyes. Unfortunately, the purpose of this culling remains a mystery.

DRONES

“Gods— beings of nigh impossible power— exist. It is only rational then that we pursue our own ascension. To that aim, we must overcome our frailties. We must be rid of these weak shells to ensure survival... to guarantee dominance.” —Fulton Langley, the First Convert

Long before the Reckoning, mankind achieved great technological progress and in doing so dethroned gods. Built upon the ruins of these fallen pantheons was an altar consecrated by science to worship man’s transcendence of himself. On the cutting edge of this upheaval was the **Transhumanist Union**, which strove with every advancement to eliminate the line between man and machine. Their ultimate end was to extricate their fellow men and women from the restraints of flawed biology, leaving them free to chart their own course.

The members of the Union worked tirelessly to pioneer new avenues of self-modification, replacing the need for blood, food, and air until all that remained of their Humanity was neuron and synapse. At the apex of their influence, the Union stored the sum of its collected knowledge and resources in a vast manufactory, the **Transept**. The culmination of their efforts was the **Manumitter**: A series of automatons, much like an assembly line, for the sole purpose of freeing men and women from the bonds of their flesh to join the ranks of the immortal and ever-changing.

When the Reckoning came, many sought refuge within the Transept, the faithful flocking to their temple and praying for their god’s superbly engineered protection. Their faith was well founded: its infrastructure endured devastating earthquakes and its walls shielded them from the unbearable heat of volcanic eruptions. That is not to say the Union or its



members survived unscathed. Many perished in the tumult caused by the Reckoning, and their loss was honored with gratitude: the stores would not have sustained all of them. The surviving members shored up the structure then closed themselves in for the long winter to come. There was a silver lining to the apocalypse. It isolated the **transhumanists** and permitted them time to delve deeper in their studies and prepare for the inevitable day when they would reenter the world.

Unfortunately, their isolation and its length came at a great cost. Without access to the outside world, the only ways to preserve their knowledge and history of the Old World was by word of mouth or electronic datastores. But memory is faulty and machines eventually fail. Every life and server bank lost was a harsh blow to the Drones' intellectual wealth. It is impossible to estimate just how much history and Old World technology could have been preserved if every bit of data had been maintained properly.

Humans gave them their label, **Drones**, due to their robotic, seemingly apathetic demeanor. Drones find the noise of larger crowds and machinery comforting and prefer the claustrophobic corridors of cities to the open air of smaller settlements. They are welcome in many cities due to their technical acumen but are often kept at a distance because they tend to be imperceptive of social cues.

Drones of today are split into two primary concerns: those that wish to study the designs and motivations of the rest of Humanity and those that seek to further their own advancements through iteration without outside influence. The former lovingly called Uplifts, have come to see Humanity as a complex biological machine that should be studied. The latter are called Augments and hold to the old tenets of the Transhumanist movement, seeing biology as an obsolete form of evolution on a fast track to irrelevance.

These "metalmen" have gained a collective infamy for rumors of kidnapping helpless people or purchasing slaves to serve as subjects for experimentation and study. Such rumors are unverified and will remain so until the day Drones allow others to enter their hallowed capital.

It is confirmed that they experiment with bio-mechanical reproduction asexually, sexually, and synthetically. Their offspring vary drastically in their rate of maturity, biological-synthetic ratio, and various other factors. While this makes it hard to mark the entry into adulthood, the concept of dividing themselves according to age is not a concept they understand. Drones evaluate each other primarily on the basis of the skills, knowledge, and experience they have to offer.

Of each of the races of Feneryss, history might consider the Drones to be the only true survivors of the Reckoning. They did not suffer helplessly at the hands of arbitrary mutation but took on only traits they found favorable. This selective adaptation may perhaps be their greatest strength, and it stands to reason that it is why they exist to this day. Some whisper that there may come a day when all that remains of Humanity is twisted flesh and metal.

FLORVANA

"When I regained consciousness, I found my thigh had been expertly bandaged by a three-fingered stranger whose face hid beneath a wide-brimmed hat. It was only after she lifted her eyes to meet mine that I realized it was no hat: she was Florvana and it her mushroom cap, styled after a wanderer's wide-brimmed headpiece. With a wooden smile she rose to her feet and helped me to mine. After politely declining my profuse offers to repay her, she went on her silent way to save the next poor soul."

—Excerpt From 'Tales of Lady Greenseed.'

Roughly 50 years after the discovery of the Shade, deep within the vast freshwater caverns beneath Lokoran, sentient life spawned from fungal spore colonies. When they emerged, many of Lokoran's citizens panicked, thinking monsters had infested the city. Instead, they were met with peaceful and friendly beings, and most witnesses could only muster

a stunned silence. Establishing themselves as dependable and dutiful denizens was a relatively easy affair, after which they studied the lay of the land. While Lokoran was indeed lush with flora, and even the Alecian Plains were fruitful, the image beyond left them horror-struck. Thus many swore a crusade to restore the planet to its former glory, cultivating crops, and aiding the infirm.

Each **Florvana** is a cluster of sentient fungal colonies, the collective efforts of which comprise a type of hive mind. Somewhere within their form is the Heart, which is the home of their memory. It is shielded by a thicker compound called **ironbark**, and is capable of growing a new body should it ever be separated from its original colony.

The forms a Florvana colony may take are as varied as the other Feneryans; in fact, Florvana actively attempt to mimic the other races during development. Some strive to emulate every feature verbatim, substituting eyes with mushroom caps or growing thick moss and lichen to replicate facial hair. Others are more minimalist, imitating their shape, but lacking the particulars. Due to the difficulty of directing specific growth within the colony, all Florvana tend to have irregular proportions or exaggerated physical features, sometimes comically so. Unlike the other races, Florvana are a sterile race and cannot reproduce. The only known location from which Florvana appear is deep within the aquifer beneath the city of Lokoran. How they come into existence is still a mystery and is a closely guarded secret of the Florvana.

Combat is something most Florvana endeavor to avoid. They would much rather heal than harm, but they will not shy away from defending the defenseless (extending to local flora and fauna) or fighting for a just cause. As part of their goal to rejuvenate the world, they work tirelessly to foster new growth and maintain what precious little already exists.

While the majority of Florvana hold to the idea that all life is precious, a pervasive question has sprouted among many of the cultures around Feneryss: Is humanity one more part of the natural world that is worth protecting, or are they elements of destruction and should thus be destroyed themselves? Most Florvana find themselves in between each potential extreme.

The Florvan love of life and experience lead many to be medics, marshals, and explorers. The stereotypical Florvana is a wanderer, sowing seeds, helping the needy, and pursuing the good things in life. But others have taken root in cities and towns to help others via professions that provide a service—merchants, trappers, and mediators, to name a few popular options. They abhor craftsmen and others that work wood and steel and accuse them of destroying and mutilating Feneryss.

Their sensitivity to the state of their world has led Florvana to despise the Drones for their artificial forms. Contrarily, they generally hold the Shade in higher esteem for their simple lifestyle, living quietly off the land—a few distasteful tools are easily ignored. Rekindled have found a special place and plenty of pity in their ironbark hearts. It is easy to find Florvana going out of their way to help a Rekindled find peace and come to terms with their second life. They are also eager to aid the Vampires, but lacking blood makes them poor donors for the fanged folk.

The other races are met with mixed feelings: on the one hand, the Alypse's ancestors destroyed the world, and the descendants are doing surprisingly little to rectify the situation. On the other hand, it is a commonly held belief that the magic of the Reckoning is what fueled their rapid ascendancy to sentience and that they, therefore, should be grateful. Many Florvana take this as a sign of providence that they were meant to exist on Feneryss to propagate its renewal.

REKINDLED

“My sons, don’t you ever regret my death. There is no regret for something that will never really happen. Since the murder of your beloved mother, my life was nothing more than rain on a cold stone. Could you tell me the color of rain, my children? Mine is the color of hate. And hate will bring me back. You will not recognize me, other than my face. But I will return to avenge your mother. Don’t you ever regret my death, because death will never catch me. The color of my rain is red. I will ever love you.”
—Letter dropped by a traveling Rekindled

There is power in the will of man, a largely untapped power at that. There are a few, however, that manage to manipulate this force upon their dying breath. Often they find themselves holding onto a final wish or purpose so overwhelming that they cannot relinquish their mortal coil. These individuals, through force of pure will, create new bodies in which to inhabit. Beings that have achieved this are referred to as Rekindled.

Creating their new body is an imperfect process, but it always includes pieces of their former selves, and it often includes distinct features, such as tattoos or disfigurements. Gaps between the reclaimed pieces are tethered by visible tendrils of arkāna. Some rebuild everything: skeleton, muscle, and skin, but most are only partial recreations. This unsettling appearance occasionally gets them confused with the undead, but the visible arkāne forces are a feature unique to this race.

Most Rekindled retain a handful of fragments from their previous life. Common elements include their name or cause of death, but other memories might also linger. Others suffer total amnesia and return with only an unshakable feeling of rage or melancholy, an echo of the emotions that drove them to their rekindling.

There is little culture to speak of among the resurrected amnesiacs. Rekindled are little more than outcasts bound together by external forces and bigotry. Their ghettos and hamlets are referred to as **Graves**, and other races avoid them by default.

Children conceptually don’t exist among Rekindled, but they do draw a distinction between Rekindled who have come to terms with their new existence and those who wallow in the loss of their former life. It is never an easy transition and many Rekindled leave their Graves on a quest to find scraps of their old lives or purpose for their new one. It is called the **Rite of Self**, and this venture can last for several decades. Regardless of success or failure, a grand celebration is thrown upon their return. It concludes with tales of the Rekindled’s adventure, and any wisdom they have discovered.

Some Rekindled falter in their journey by either becoming disillusioned or angry at their new form, and rapidly descend into madness to become **Pariahs**. A Rekindled in this state is dangerous and must be eliminated. This task falls to a group called the **Grizmati**, whose sole purpose is to blot out the blemish of Pariahs. They are composed primarily of Rekindled, but the other races also hold membership.

Regardless of their new purpose or chosen way of life, the Rekindled are not always met positively by the other races of Feneryss and are often seen as abominations or oracles of death. The only exception being the Shade, who through their wardens of the dead, the Noc’Shala, are able to discern what the Rekindled are, what they were, and occasionally some small details of their past.

SHADES

“When Dragon howls, from Glass we fall, spears of death, lights of steel, slayers many, warriors all.”
—Shade Hunting Song, Conversion by Bardic Nemzul

The Shade are a mute, tribal people who have made their home in the Glass Forest. For the past several hundred years, they have made their living luring Dragons into the forest, trapping them with nets and

harpoons, then impaling them upon the obsidian spikes that earned the land its name. Those Dragons served as food and a source of raw materials for tools, shelter, and clothing. While every Shade is taught how to lure and kill Dragons, women are usually the hunters and men are often craftsmen and builders. Some might even say they were too successful. Dragon sightings and encounters have plummeted drastically in recent decades to the point where many sedentary folk believe they exist purely in the realm of legend. But the Shade know those leviathans still lurk in the murky skies, and airship captains still grow anxious in proximity of the Glass Forest and Dragonskeep.

Since their discovery, rumors of the Shade’s astounding skills rapidly spread and fostered a powerful reputation. It wasn’t long before captains of commercial and military vessels alike begged for their protection when traveling. The **Matriarchs**, the leaders of the Shade, made a shrewd offer: they will protect any ship in exchange for a percentage of the cargo. The sudden influx of excess resources spurred a golden age for the Shade, who studied the techniques and materials of the outsiders to further perfect their crafts. Young Shades, eager to explore the world, took advantage of these encounters to join or stowaway onto airships passing through. Before long, Shades were common crew-members, typically serving as liaisons to their people and advisers when flying through Dragon-threatened areas.

This chain of events, however, did not significantly impact their culture. The Matriarchs continued to govern their families, known as **Cabals**, and spent a great deal of time and effort to ensure their children’s isolation from the outside world until their coming of age. Every Cabal has its own school with the purpose of teaching the children history, dragon hunting, and use of their **vox**. At age 10, the Shade is considered an adult who must decide upon their future. For many males, that’s usually pursuing a vocation or leaving to see the outside world, while most females set their sights on the Matriarchy, and delve into Shade education and politics, or else hone their skills as premier huntresses.

Since they cannot physically speak, a Shade’s vox is their ability to communicate. It is a psychic ability that allows them to “talk” to everyone nearby, or specific individuals of the Shade’s choosing. This ability is popular with employers who have secrets that need to be discreetly delivered.

Approximately one in every 500 Shades are born without a vox and light gray or ash-white skin. They are known as **Noc’Shala**, and their place in Shade culture is to commune with friendly spirits and protect the Cabals from any vengeful ones — especially dragons they have slain.

Because of their unique skills and geographic location, the Shade have become a necessity. No sane airship captain leaves port without one on board. That said, they are not always trusted. The same telepathic ability that makes them perfect couriers of sensitive information can also be used to disseminate such information without anyone the wiser. Coupled with their racial history, they have established a reputation as both skilled and mysterious.

EPHRAALUN

In the Glass Forest, the Shade celebrate Ephraalun between the last week of Brespeak and the first week of Vinskry. The Noc’Shala commune with the spirits and transcribe their predictions for the coming battle with the Undead Tide. The warriors are then painted with white runes, called ephraal, to ward off reanimation and the horrors that plague a warrior’s mind long after battle.

VAMPIRES

“What shall we do with her?” asked the male Vampire.

The young girl tried to get up, reaching for her sword. It was then she realized her arm had been severed. She gave a spiteful look to the female Vampire and spat.

“It seems that this kitten wants to roar...”

“Monsters! I will destroy each of you, one by one, one by...”

Her throat felt suddenly like a bowl of sand. The male Vampire wore a malicious grin as he licked the stump of her detached arm like a dreadful lollipop.

“We don’t argue with food, my dear.” —Hunters and their prey

In the midst of the Reckoning, many denizens of the Old World sought safety in the deep, winding caverns that make up much of the planet’s crust. Taking with them most of their resources and material wealth, these survivors managed to live in relative comfort for several millennia.

As with the rest of Humanity, these survivors also fell victim to the influence of their environment. In the depths of the planet, they were subjected to latent magics and a plethora of toxins, eventually adapting to conquer them. Their blood soon reflected the toxicity of their surroundings, which made these survivors particularly resistant to disease. This heartiness came at a cost however as their blood was also incredibly reactive to ultraviolet radiation, and would turn to acid within minutes of full exposure.

Their bodies underwent a plethora of changes that extended far beyond their toxic blood. For example, their eyes appear very much human,

but only present red, orange, or yellow irises. While most can identify Vampires by their porcelain pale skin and slender physiques, a Vampire’s fangs are a dead giveaway.

Because their ancestral homes had limited resources, much of the Vampire culture revolves around the oral retelling of history, most of which lie deeply rooted in mythology and superstition. Unlike many civilizations, who dream up vast pantheons of deities who can be more or less benevolent, the Vampires constructed a hierarchy of demons. Chief among these tormentors were **Absolox** (page 258), the demon of exile and abandonment, and **Maldraan**, the demon of miasma and the world above. These two, along with a pantheon of other fiends and hellions, have led the Vampires to develop an indelible fear of both the surface and their pitch-black, subterranean homes.

This fear eventually bred a deep-seated rage among many of the Vampires, leading them to lash out, both at each other and the unknown. It was during this tumultuous time that the descendants of those who had sought refuge underground found themselves seeking refuge at the surface. When they arrived, Maldraan claimed what was hers, gorging herself on those first adventurers. Afterward, others tanned the hides of those fallen kin to wear as camouflage, believing the wrathful demoness would not strike again those she had already drained.

The first interactions between Vampires and the established races occurred in 2717 PR. Predictably, these refugees, clad in the skin of their brethren, found themselves shunned in many settlements that they encountered. More often than not they were treated like lepers, forced to live on the fringes of society and eke out a living on the scraps of civilization. Cast off and forgotten, many Vampires found great success by settling on the outskirts of these burgeoning towns and cities, feeding on their cast-offs and unwanted.

For a time, this life was enough for the Vampires. Their close-knit familial communities, which they called **covens**, were well fed and protected from Maldraan’s grasp. Some of these covens had even worked out agreements with the neighboring boroughs to take their criminals, and in doing so had become considerably wealthy. In this time of plenty, it was not long before a myriad of Vampires found themselves dissatisfied with their table scraps and instead sought to take what they wanted.

Many of those living in cities, who had been complicit in offering up the worst of themselves to the Vampires now had reason to fear for their own lives, and so fear would once again change the course of history. People banded together and went on campaigns to root out the Vampires. These so-called Vampire Hunts devastated the Vampire population, as homes were razed and their occupants were beaten to death, dismembered, or worse. These hunts raged on for more than a year, and the Vampires once again found themselves forced into exile. The survivors did what they could to blend into society. They exchanged their traditional leather for heavy robes and traded cannibalism for true vampirism. With this paradigm shift, both murders and abductions perpetrated by the Vampires subsided, and the Vampire Hunts gradually died out.

The old familial covens were reestablished but now lay along ideological lines. Each became a self-governing organization whose purpose was to protect their members and advance their interests. It wasn’t long before there was a coven in every city-state and region on Feneryss, each one varying in size, clout, and governance with the exception of Dronus which does not allow outsiders. Sylvan Hollow is unique in this regard as it is home to a single coven, Einhandd’r, whose sole member exists as an oracle of secret knowledge and little else.

The races as a whole hold disdain and fear for the Vampires. Although they no longer tan the hides of their brethren, the image of skin-clad cannibals still weighs heavily in the public psyche. As for the Vampire’s perspective, they see the other races as cattle to be corralled. Drones and Florvana are the exceptions, both being entirely bloodless beings, they serve little purpose to the Vampires.



WRETCHED

“The Banner had been staked. Word spread to all corners of the Ashlands, and from all corners came waves upon waves of the nomadic Wretched. They bartered their goods; they swapped their stories; but most importantly, they spilled blood.

That day Andrathas Worthless was tested: kill or be killed. His opponent lay face-up, sprawled limbs akimbo on the hot sands. The desert was calm. His clan was in a delighted, bloodthirsty uproar. He took a deep breath, steeling his nerves for the conclusion.

He heaved his hammer toward the sky, and brought it crashing down.”
—Somewhere, Ashlands

The Wretched are a nomadic people and are the most heavily mutated survivors of the Reckoning. As the world died, many survivors gathered to huddle around the slowly depleting power sources of bygone eras, many of which still stand in spite of considerable decay and erosion. Despite the seemingly fortunate accommodations, the leaking energies that fueled the fires slowly warped their forms and exponentially increased their susceptibility to mutation. These changes tend to be so physically extreme, it is rare to confuse two Wretched with each other. Fate, however, seems to smile upon them; a minuscule few succumb to their afflictions. More often than not the Wretched are able to turn a profit from their physiology.

With time, their legs grew restless and death lost its fearful edge. Reforged in more resilient bodies, they struck out from the embers of history to gather relics and trinkets of the past.



For generations, the Wretched were believed to be true mutants by Humans and other Lesser Ones. They were said to be so biologically unstable that they would grow new organs or limbs at random. As it tends to do, the advancement of the modern sciences sheds fresh perspective on ancient notions, and has yielded a great deal of knowledge about the Wretched. While they do have a propensity toward mutation, many scholars now view this in a positive light. Their bodies are walking arks of untapped, vestigial power. Evidence presented typically includes their secondary eyelids and the blood-cleansing organ called a vassilis that is exceptional in counteracting foreign bodies.

Their tribal culture revolves around trade and combat prowess. Each clan is led by whoever proves themselves to be the strongest. For this reason, Wretched clans are in constant flux, with old ones dying off and new ones being formed in rapid succession.

Every year the clans gather under a banner of peace, called the **Covenant**, to trade goods, educate the young through tales and traditions, and cull the weakest members. Members considered to be the weakest are put into a trade pool and are forced to fight each other to the death. Genealogy and gender are of no value to the Wretched; every man and woman must prove their worth. This winnowing of the weak leaves the strongest survivors available for sale to anyone who saw potential.

This process comes with one exception. Wretched with bioreactors are not forced into the arena, but often bought, sold, and traded like cattle, to be used as a power source for airships and other mechanical contraptions. However, many Wretched with bioreactors will often sell themselves into slavery simply to avoid the hassle and make some cash on the side. Once the Covenant has concluded, the clans return to their quest for riches and the search for their home.

There is a legend dating back to the Reckoning itself that speaks of a city buried and preserved by the unending sand and ash. A number of Wretched believe the discovery of **Bravjegaad** is their ultimate salvation and that within this lost metropolis lies the key to unparalleled strength which will allow them to eradicate the weak races of the world and reign supreme.

ADALGAR

After the Covenant ends and the weak are culled, the Wretched immediately begin Adalgar, a holiday named after a fighter of legend.

Legend has it that he was offered up to the Covenant as his clan's weakest member, he only bested his peers and his betters for twelve straight days, resulting in the loss of roughly a quarter of the Wretched population.

On the 13th day, the leader of each clan descended into the arena themselves to take full measure of this titan of combat. Adalgar finally fell before the day met its end but would never be forgotten.

To commemorate Adalgar's incredible feat, the Wretched hold a twelve-day no-holds-barred gladiatorial arena in the Ashlands. Participants tattoo the Gnarltongue word for 13 on their necks and gain the honor to keep it and the surrounding flesh if they are victorious.



HEL

DRAGONSKEEP

**SNAPSPINE
MOUNTAINS**

GLASS FOREST

SYLVAN HOLLOW

ASHLANDS

PULSE

LANIS

DUEL LAKE

NEROTH

LOKORAN

**ALECIAN
PLAINS**

**UNTARNISHED
STEPPE**

MUDDLE LAKE

DRONUS

WASTES OF GALAAM

DEMON'S WALK



PULSE

THE GREAT FORGE



HISTORY

When the early explorers would pass through the struggling encampments and outposts of the past, they would often speak of a living metal spire that stretched beyond the ash-clouded sky. For hundreds and hundreds of years, it was believed to be a myth, explained away as a story to excite young children and inspire a sense of wonder and adventure.

Years passed, and the horrors of the wastes took their toll. With raids by bands of cave-dwelling cannibals, children stolen from their beds, and rumors of settlements being devoured whole, it wasn't long before the old explorers' stories turned into a hope for a brighter future. Doves of survivors stepped out into the wastes for the first time in centuries to seek the fabled spire and build a new home.

In the days before it earned its moniker, **the Great Forge**, Pulse was governed by a small circle of influential individuals whose primary task was the defense of the fledgling city. They called themselves the **Iron Ring**. They dubbed their home Pulse, with an unflinching belief that this city would be the vibrant heart of Feneryss.

After designing a blueprint for the future, the Iron Ring began to methodically craft a set of rules to which each citizen of Pulse was bound and responsible to uphold. This **Mandate** called for each citizen to maintain a skilled trade from which the city could benefit as a whole.

Many found a renewed purpose for living in this inspiring culture, and its excitement was infectious. Word rapidly spread across the known world that anyone with a willingness to work had a place within the shelter of the Iron Ring. A torrent of immigrants flooded the city gates; Pulse grew at an astonishing rate, and industry boomed. The forges were raging infernos for hundreds of years, great war machines were

constructed and an army was raised that was unlike any the world had seen since the Reckoning.

The true test for Pulse's leadership began when a fishing vessel in the neighboring lake was raided in 1921 PR. The few haggard survivors spouted madness about men on flying ships striking from the sky. Skepticism saw the men discharged from the service and forgotten until another ship was attacked. With no proactive efforts from the Iron Ring, the terrified citizens of Pulse became restless and eventually rioted. Rising above this chaos was a young officer named **Brecht**, who led a coup d'état. Brecht was a charismatic young man, who had a knack for strategy and politics; skills that he used to great advantage. The deed was so swift and sure that in addition to ousting the previous rulers, Brecht formed a new governing body in a mere month's time.

Despite his revolt, Brecht maintained a deep love of Pulse's traditions. So much so that he based his new government on the original Iron Ring Mandates. Using his new authority, he established the city districts and military branches which divide the city today. Each was placed under the supervision of an **Iron Lord**. Once accounts had been settled inside the city, Brecht turned his eyes to the water, seeking both vengeance and understanding.

What followed were a series of missions with the goal of capturing one of the mysterious vessels. When success finally came, Pulse ironworkers and engineers strove day and night to unravel the mystery of the foreign craft. The rest of the Pulse geared up for the **War of Duel Lake** with its yet unidentified neighbor on the far shore of the eponymous body of water.