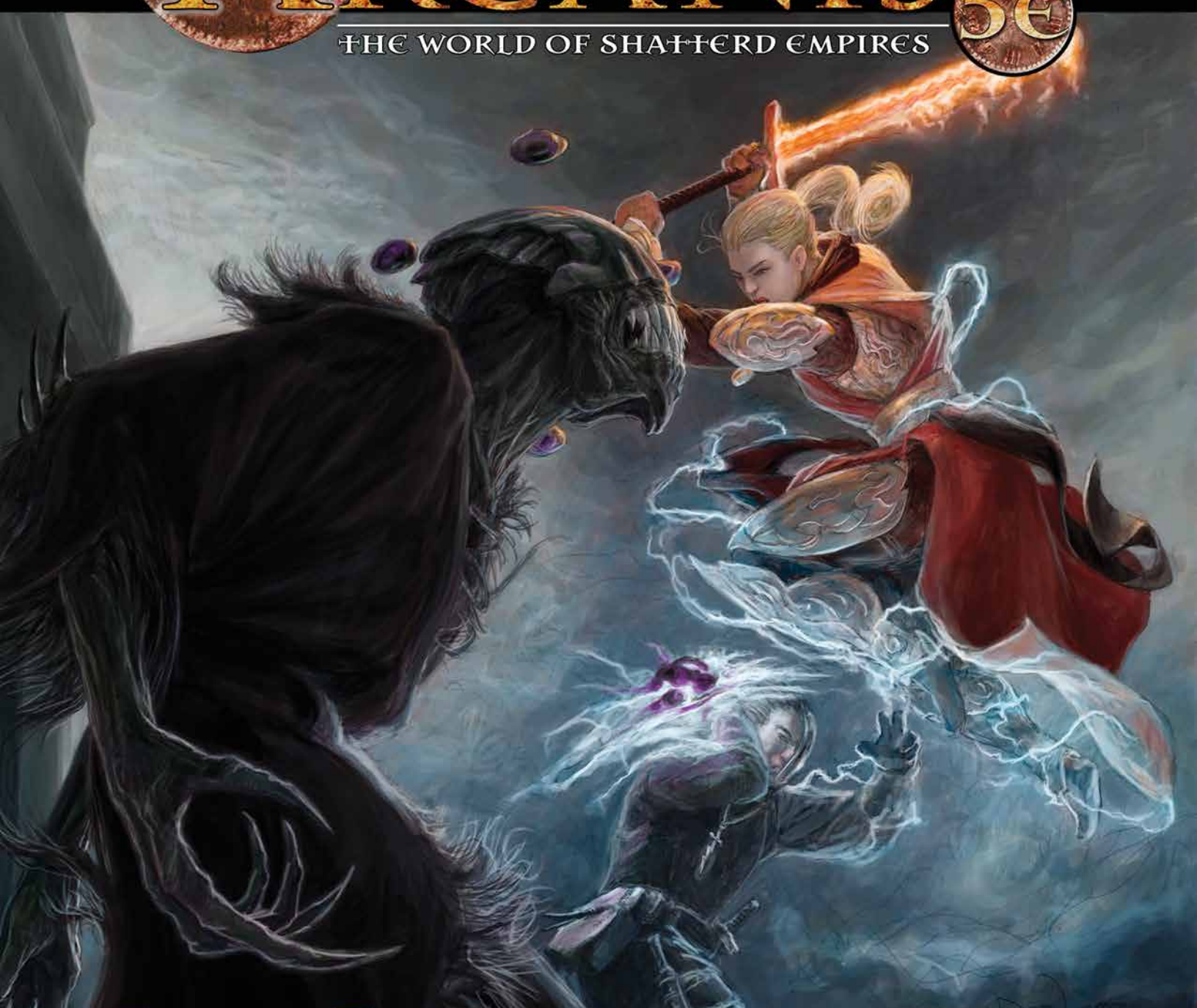




# ARCANIS



THE WORLD OF SHATTERED EMPIRES



## 5TH EDITION PRIMER





# ARCANIS

THE WORLD OF SHATTERED EMPIRES

# RULES PRIMER

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# AN INTRODUCTION

*Welcome to the Arcanis, the World of the Shattered Empires!*

*Arcanis, like many other fantasy RPG settings, embraces certain fantasy tropes common to many other games and novels; various human and non-human sentient races, gods that make their presence known in some manner, whether actually manifesting or granting their followers powers or “gifts”, ancient crypts and ruins filled with treasure guarded by creatures borne out of nightmare and of course, magic.*

*Arcanis takes many of these tropes and gives them a unique twist. The dwarves were once Celestial Giants that once transgressed against the Gods and were cursed to their smaller stature and forced to live underground. Our “elves”, known as elorii, were created as a servitor race, infused with elemental energy to serve their merciless master, the reptilian Ssethric race. Gnomes are twisted and malformed, a result of a union between a dwarf and a human, and so on.*

*Rather than the standard “good” and “evil” deities, there is the Pantheon of Man, a group of twelve immensely powerful divine beings who are beyond the concept of good and evil; each with a number of different aspects that are revered by the various churches in the Known Lands. It is in the manner, as well as which aspects these temples worship the Gods that the concept of good and evil are finally distilled. Of course, it all depends on your point of view. No one considers themselves the villains in their own mind.*

*Which leads to another of the unique features of playing in Arcanis: There are no perfect heroes or completely despicable villains. Much as in our own world, everyone lies on a spectrum somewhere between the two extremes; in essence, some shade of gray.*

*While you will find your characters (the Heroes) involved in epic and world shaping events, battling malevolent creatures and foul, inhuman agencies, more often than not, your adversary will be quite human. Not the black hearted knave who carves out orphans’ hearts for fun type of adversary, but someone who believes in their goal and will do anything to achieve them. It just so happens, that goal is at cross-purposes with yours or your patron. You may even sympathize with them once you learn their story and that’s when the true fun begins: is your cause as just or more so than theirs? How well do your convictions hold up in light of the opposition’s side of the story? The best Arcanis adventures have this question at their heart. You may find that you do stand on the side of angels and have no doubt as to the righteousness of your cause, while at other times, doubt begins to stir behind your words and you quietly ask yourself, “Are we working for the right person or doing the right thing? Of course, not every adventure is (or needs to be) an angst fueled slug-fest. Many times the adventures are straight forward, where things are exactly as they appear to be, but in the back of your mind you hear the stirrings of uncertainty and a whisper that says, “This is Arcanis. Are you sure?”*

*While the world of Arcanis, and in fact the continent of Onara, is immense, you’ll start your adventures in an area called the Known Lands, which encompasses the Coryani Empire and many of its breakaway provinces, the dwarven enclaves, the Bright Nations of the Elorii, the Blessed Lands, and other regions filled with exotic mysteries and epic adventure.*

*Prepare to leave your mark upon the Shattered Empires!*



*The Streets of Almeric*

# OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONS & PEOPLES OF THE KNOWN LANDS

On the following pages you'll find a short write up of some of the peoples, regions and nations of the Known Lands. These are by no means an exhaustive examination of these areas, as those are best discovered through the eyes of your characters as they forge their legends across Arcanis!

The Known Lands encompasses a large swath of the lands located on the eastern coast of the Onaran continent. Millennia ago, the Imperium of Man ruled most of the region and stretched out to encompass other Realms as well. Like all things, it too fell to ruin and a number of successor states eventually rose in its place. The two largest are the Khitani Empire and the Coryani Empire. The Coryani Empire once controlled almost all the Known Lands, but over time, has splintered into various nations and autonomous regions.

The following are small overviews of these nations and peoples to give you a taste of exotic peoples and lands that await you as you adventure across Arcanis.

## ALMERIC, THE FREE CITY-STATES OF

Until recently, the noble val'Tensen family was torn in twain. Once loyal citizens of the Coryani Empire, the inept rule of the emperor during the Second Coryani-Khitani War forced the family to make a decision – remain within the empire or side with the secessionist movement griping the province of Milandir. Eventually, Milandir rebelled and became its own sovereign kingdom, but this caused a seemingly irrevocable split within the val'Tensen.

For generations, one side of the family remained loyal to the empire and ruled the province of Ulfilia, while the other was granted the Duchy of Moratavia to rule at the Milandisian king's behest. Tensions remained high and often flared into outright hostilities until it was discovered that the family

was cursed to dwell in the threshold of the Cauldron, never allowed to go before the judgment of Nier, never to know one's final reward, good or ill. Instead they were doomed to wander mindlessly through the endless mists - barred from eternal rest forever more.

Unless...

Unless the two sides of the family were rejoined and their oaths to both the Coryani Emperor and the Milandisian Crown could be reconciled.

After the Coryani-Civil War, the Coryani Emperor and the Milandisian King managed to put aside their differences and broker a deal to unite the val'Tensen lands as its own sovereign nation and act as a buffer between their territories. Plans were quickly set into motion to unify both sides of the family, with the leader of each side of the family would stand before the various elders and attempt to garner the most support. Both leaders agreed to abide by the results and swear fealty to the new king.

Sadly, this would never come to pass. Before the gathering of elders could be accomplished, both contenders to the throne were assassinated within days of each other.

Accusations flew furiously and the few cool heads that remained were shouted down. As these two men were the only ones all could agree had a legitimate right to take on the royal mantle, every nobleman, patrician, knight-commander or burger of a major city began to put forth their claim to the throne. Some tried diplomacy and negotiation to garner support of their fellows, but the majority took up arms to force said support.

Within months, Almeric was reduced to a group of city-states, each claiming their own small piece of territory as their personal fiefdom.

Even after a dozen years of almost constant warfare, there still has not emerged a figure to unite the

desperate factions of Almeric. The once rolling, lush hills are now muddy fields of death, with crops irrigated by blood rather than cleansing water. Those suffering the most, the common villager, has little hope for an alleviation of these dire conditions, unless someone, through force of arms or a legitimate claim can finally unite the free city-states of Almeric and bring to an end the endless cycle of bloodshed and misery.

## ALTHERIA, THE REPUBLIC OF

The Wise, as the Altherians are called, live in what could be called a paradise on Arcanis, if it were not for the constant threat of having their land being overrun by the scaled monsters from the surrounding swamps. Perched atop a plateau mountain top high above the Kraldjur Morass, their shining city gleams like a jewel tempting the reptilian ssethric empire far below. Complicating matters is the fact that the eggs of these ssethrics is a critical ingredient of the blastpowder manufactured exclusively by the Altherians.

The Republic of Altheria is ruled by the Council of Wisdom from its seat of power in the capital city of New Althré. The council consists of seven members who are elected from the populace at large. Naturally, this political system has spawned a huge bureaucracy to support itself. While cumbersome, the government of Altheria is the only true representative regime in the Known Lands, so it is only fitting that the most enlightened and divinely blessed people are the ones to enjoy its benefits.

The val'Abebi of Altheria hold a monopoly on the production of the alchemical mixture known as blastpowder, as well as crafting flintlock pistols and other types of firearms. Outside of the Altherian Shining Patrol, these very stylized weapons are illegal in the hands of anyone other than the nobility; possession by anyone else is punishable by enslavement, maiming or death.

Generally speaking, Altherians are intelligent, thoughtful and artistic. They are collectors of information, master craftsmen, inventors and scholars. They are quick to investigate and exploit any new technology and are the first to offer words of wisdom to any they deem worthy. However, these pearls of wisdom are occasionally unwelcome, and many Altherians are met with suspicion or resentment despite their best intentions. Altherians are an extroverted people and they will trek to any destination to seek obscure or lost knowledge. Trade is the lifeblood of Altheria, and most foreigners are welcome within its borders as long as they respect Altherian laws and religious practices. Ss'ressen are typically viewed with suspicion, due to the Republic's past history and near-constant state of war with the Ssethregoran Empire.





## BLESSED LANDS

It can certainly be argued that the Blessed Lands is the focus of, and so important to, the nations and people of the Known Lands because it sits in the geographic center of the continent, but the truth is not so simple.

The birthplace to no less than four separate and mighty empires, the First City and the Blessed Lands has been known by many names and has appeared quite differently throughout the many epochs in which it has served as the center of great and hoary civilizations. The Ssethregoran Empire, the elorii, the Coryani and the Khitani all believe without any reservations that the Plateau and the region that lies about it is their birthright and that no effort should be spared in the reclaiming of that territory. It is only in the Modern Age that this sacred land, battered by countless wars and shaken by disasters, both natural and arcane, has become a shadow of its former self. No longer controlling vast areas and innumerable sentient people, the Blessed Lands is now squabbled over by successor states that pale in comparison to those that came before.

But such a place, having drunk deeply of the lifeblood of countless invaders and defenders, holy men and heretics, tyrants and liberators; cradle to ancient civilizations and home to mighty champions, will once again be home to a new and vibrant empire that reaches out and makes all about it tremble in its wake, or so whispered Saint Alrameus Vernico on his deathbed.

## CANCERI, THE THEOCRACY OF

*“Everything wicked comes from Canceri” – Milandisian proverb.*

Ruled by the three val families through their apparatus of choice, the Church of the Dark Triumvirate, the theocracy is ruled with an iron fist. Outsiders gaze upon it with a mixed measure of trepidation and disgust, seeing only a land ruled by flame worshipping berserkers, necromancers and their armies of undead, and black sorcerers who truck with unclean Infernals. While there is some truth to this, the reality is far more complex.

The lands of Canceri are harsh and unforgiving. Canceri was once the largest Coryani province and, at the same time, its least populated. Arid plains of dry, hard earth and rocky badlands dominate the landscape. Summers on the plains are oppressively hot and winters are bitterly cold. There is precious little to recommend most of the nation as a comfortable place to live.

The faithful are ruled by three val families – the val'Mehan, val'Mordane and val'Virdan. As Canceri is a theocracy, the usual titles of nobility are subsumed by those more indicative of the clergy, such as priest, high priest and apostate.

Northern Canceri is dominated by Nier's Spine, a rugged mountain range of active volcanoes. Here live the warlike Nierites, the adherents of the god Nier, Lord of War, Destruction and Fire and are ruled by the val'Virdan family.

The south of Canceri, a desolate land dominated by the Cold Plains, an unforgiving landscape with extremely limited agricultural potential. This is the land of the Nerothians, a grim and humorless people, who are ruled by the equally grim val'Mordane. The priests of this region pay homage to Neroth, the God of the dead and the Risen. Sentient undead



are the Blessed of Neroth, those who have been granted life beyond life at the cost of ever entering the heavenly Paradise of the Gods. Intelligent undead are beings of pure intellect, as their souls are destroyed as the catalyst that raises the dead back to a semblance of life.

Central and eastern Canceri are the most hospitable regions, where the Tenges and Niechau rivers provide ample water for agriculture and help temper the climate. This is the home of the urbane val'Mehan family who worship Sarish, the God of the Arcane, Oaths and Binder of Infernals. Outwardly the most friendly and accommodating group of Cancerimen, their civil discourse and pleasant manner conceal a deadly wit and calculating nature.

## THE CORYANI EMPIRE

The vast and mighty Coryani Empire covers an enormous body of land. From the high peaks of Corlathian Mountains that form its northern border to the swamps and deserts that border the former province of Toranesta, now known as the Abessian Dominion; to the verdant plains of Balantica, and the wind-swept cliffs of Annonica, the Empire is like a world unto itself.

To the citizens of the Empire, there are some self-evident truths: Coryan is the inheritor of the greatness that was the ancient Imperium of Man and that it is their duty to spread the light of civilization to the benighted barbarians that roam Arcanis. The average Coryani considers himself to be a part of the greatest nation in the world. Cosmopolitan in outlook, the Coryani are tolerant of the customs of others, often drawing parallels between a foreign behavior and some facet of their own culture.

While trade and the blessings of civilization propels the influence of the empire far and wide, it is the might of its legions that projects the strength of the emperor, and of course the senate, across the Known Lands. Few nations could withstand a full and concentrated assault by the Coryani legions and it is only the political infighting as well as the ennui of the aged Emperor Scipio val'Assanté that propels the empire on a downward spiral of self-destruction.

Each province of the Empire is like a nation unto itself. The people of a particular locality are as distinct from their fellow citizens in distant regions of the Empire as they are from the peoples of other countries.

Those from Balantica differ the most from the common Coryani as it is the matriarchal val'Dellenov that holds sway over that portion of the Empire. Known as the breadbasket of the Empire, this province is one of the reasons why the average Coryani lives such a comfortable life – the abundance of food – all of which comes almost exclusively from this province.

The swarthy and charismatic Cafelans are also quite hot-blooded and intemperate. As the saying goes: "Illonia is the Empire's heart, but Cafela is its passion." They are given to jealousy and possessiveness, and are quick to anger over insults. These ardent people are ruled by the val'Sheem, fervent worshippers of Larissa, the Divine Harlot, Goddess of Love, Hedonistic Pleasure and Prophecy.

Illonia is the true heart of the Empire, both geographically and politically and as such, Illonians, and especially the ruling val'Assanté, tend to act as the privileged core of this great society. All but the poorest Illonians enjoy some sort of education, be it a rudimentary one. Wealthy Illonians have access to private tutors (the truly wealthy hire Altherian scholars to instruct their children). Illonians are also the most cosmopolitan of the Coryani as, quite literally, all roads lead to the capital city, Grand Coryan, thanks to the tireless efforts of the Followers of the Azure Way.

Salantians and Annonicans best reflect the traditional Coryani attitude. Provincial and tolerant, they generally shake their heads at those who commit a social faux pas and are not likely to take offense unless it is blatantly and deliberately offered.

Salantis' coastal region is ruled by the val'Ossan family. While Milandisians point to the fact that their val'Ossan family holds the crown, thus making them the dominant branch of the val'Ossan family, the Salantian val pay little mind to such trifles. They have greater concerns, such as Devil Fish raiders and the Lurkers Beneath the Waves.

The people of Annonica are a taciturn and grim lot, ruled by the val'Borda family. Adherents of Cadic, the God of Shadows, Assassins and Music, the val'Borda are viewed with wary suspicion. None, it is said, can be a more loyal friend or deadlier nemesis than they. Their stronghold is provincial capital of Plexus, situated at the mouth of the Corvis River. Known as the Gateway to the Western Lands, Plexus is a rich city serving as a convenient point of departure or entry to and from the Empire. With the League of Princes so conveniently located across a narrow portion of the Gulf of Coryan, trade between it and the Western Lands is brisk and highly lucrative.

Valentians are grim and determined; the history of their region is filled with gruesome and terrible wars and vicious pogroms inflicted upon the population by mad rulers. The capital, Enpebyn also known as the City of Weeping Souls, is rife with ghosts of ages past. The province is rich in iron and is home to the greatest foundries in the world, which work night and day to supply the Empire (and nearly every other nation) with metalwork. As a result, the air of Valentia smells of smoke and the land is covered with soot. Combined with the naturally dreary weather, a deep depression is common among the populace. A posting to this province is often used as punishment for inept or disfavored servants of the Empire.

The newest province in the Empire is not a newly conquered area, but rather a partition of an existing one. The western reaches of modern day Balantica was not traditionally part of that province. It existed as a separate and quite prosperous area known as Cormata until the blight of heretical Infernal cults turned that fertile land into a barren wasteland. Its major population centers were torn down and the ground salted to ensure the perverse and infected people of the region never again made use of the area – no one can ever say that the Nierites are not thorough in carrying out their duties.

Ironically, it is the Nierites, specifically the val'Viridan family who either renounced the tenants of the Church of the Dark Triumvirate of Canceri or those who worshipped the Lord of Flames in secret since His adoration was prohibited centuries before, who have been granted the right to administer this remote region. Now known as Nova Cormata, the Nierites have their work cut out for themselves if they wish to

bring prosperity to their new home.

## THE DWARVEN ENCLAVES

From a human-centric view, dwarves are generally thought of as one people, but each of the Dwarven Enclaves are distinct in culture and history. Thousands of years ago, the dwarves were not at all as they are today, rather they were separate kingdoms of celestial giants, united only in their genocidal war with dragons – a war that they were losing. Illiir, Lord of the Pantheon of Man, made a bargain with the celestial giants that He would send the Valinoric Hosts, the divine servants of the Gods, to destroy the dragons, but only if the giants would take on the burden of stewardship of humanity as the Fall of the Imperium was imminent. Faced with extinction, the giants readily accepted.

True to Illiir's word, the Valinor destroyed or bound the dragons, sometimes at great sacrifice to themselves. The celestial giants in turn traveled from their lands in the far north and settled in different pockets of human habitation. However, in less than a human generation, some of the celestial clans, chief among them the Solani and Betoqi, began to see themselves more as the masters of mankind than as its protectors. The Bealaki and Encali warned their cousins that they would only anger the Gods of Man by breaking their bargain.





The giants of Bealak Gempor turned their prayers to Illiir, telling Him of the betrayal of others and begging His mercy. Illiir did not grant mercy. Instead, He cursed the giants by proclaiming that, “Those that sought the heavens would forevermore dwell beneath the earth and those that lorded over man with their might and size would forevermore be dwarfed by all.” Illiir’s wrath made no distinction between those giants that betrayed Him and those that were faithful to their oath.

The Enclaves were thrown into despair. Many of the former giants took their own lives, which revealed an even more terrible aspect of Illiir’s Curse: the dwarves were barred from the Afterlife. Their souls could not pass into Beltine’s Cauldron. Into this misery came Sarish with a bargain. If any dwarf were to make the Perfect Item, the curse would be lifted. This has led to the one trait common to all but one of the remaining Enclaves: the compulsive drive to create.

The Solani and the Betoqi, those nations most at fault in drawing Illiir’s ire, are today the most penitent. Taking it upon themselves to reclaim the charge that they had previously neglected in their foolishness – to preserve mankind – these

Enclaves try to act in all ways for the betterment of man.

Of the other enclaves, the mystic Tultipetan dwarves are strange, even to other dwarves. Influenced heavily by many Khitani philosophies and skilled in the art of prophecy. Unfortunately, during the last months of the Coryani Civil War, a group of adventurers

discovered an ancient ruin, far in the north, where a dragon was held prisoner over the millennia. For reasons not yet understood, this most deadly of creatures was loosed upon the world. One of its first actions was to track down the descendants of those who had imprisoned it and deliver its vengeance. These descendants were the Tultipetan dwarves, and their Enclave, along with almost the entirety of their clan, was wiped off the face of Arcanis. Of the handful that still exist upon the world, many have done away with their attempts to see the future, (since to them, there is no future left), and some have even replaced prophecy with seeking vengeance upon mankind.

The Nol Dappan Enclave is built within an ancient dormant volcano, known as the Forge. Living in such an environment, along with the influence of the nearby Nierite Erdukeen has impelled the dwarves of Nol Dappa to worship of Nier.

The Encali dwarves are a nation that feels betrayed, betrayed by their fellow celestial giants in the years before the Great Curse, betrayed by the Bealaki who told Illiir of the other enclaves’ perfidy, and betrayed by Illiir when He cursed them along with those who were actually guilty. As a result, the Encali are largely a one-religion Enclave. Sarish offered them a path out of Illiir’s curse, and in return, the Encali worship Him as the only member of the Pantheon worthy of respect. They are the only Enclave that still has some access to Arcanum, but only if they follow the path of the Sorcerer-Priests of Sarish are able to wield that power.

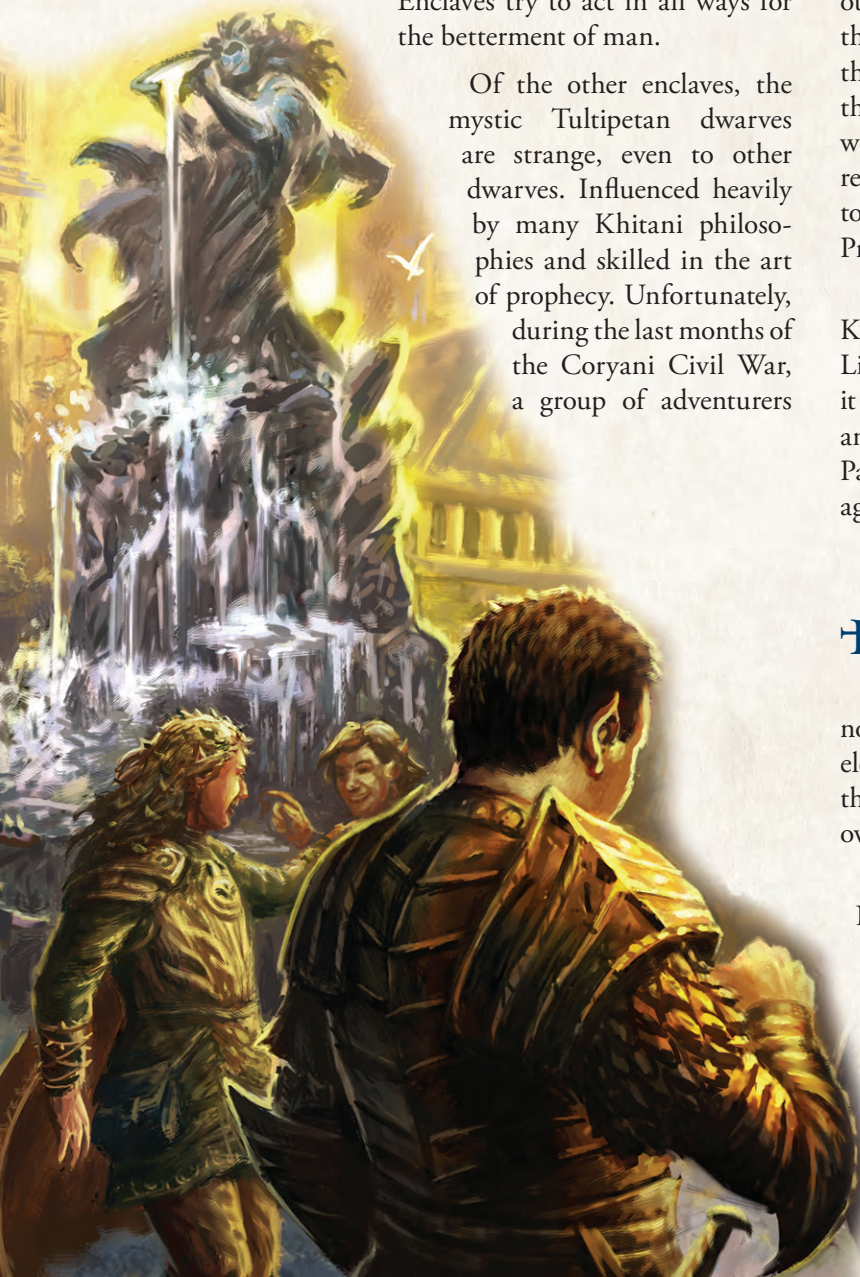
Little is known of the Deneki, other than the Sorcerer-King of Ymandragore somehow forced them into slavery. Likewise, the Reavers of Bealak Gempor are an enigma, but it is well known that they are anathema to the other Enclaves and their human charges. Of the eighth Enclave – Corrett Palas - nothing at all is known, as they disappeared millennia ago.

## THE ELORII NATIONS

Outsiders think of the elorii as a monolithic culture, but nothing could be further from the truth. Each of the three elorii nations is distinct in purpose and outlook. Even within the individual nations, each of the bloodlines draws into its own distinct group as well.

The largest nation by far is Elonbé in the Vastwood. Nearly eight-tenths of the elorii population can be found within that massive forest. Isolationist and conservative, the great distance (both temporal and physical) from any human contact has shaped the outlook of these people.

The ruling council of Elonbe’ understands that their isolation is detrimental to their nation – the unknown being the greatest possible enemy a people can



have. To counter this, the Council of Etheleos sent scouts with instructions to interact with mankind, learn as much as possible about the current situation in the outside world, and determine who the elorii of Elonbe' can call friend or foe. Called the Laerestri, these young, curious elorii travel the world working with (and for) humans to learn their customs and the nature and capabilities of their armies. Curiously, some Laerestri have confided that they are strictly forbidden from traveling directly to Elonbe' and are ordered to travel no farther than Efesias, the southernmost outpost of the elorii and their point of contact with the Bright Nation.

Malfia is less of a nation than a gigantic army camp. The diametric opposite of Elonbé, Malfelan elorii are skilled and experienced warriors, who have continued their ages long war against humanity – along with just about every other sentient race as well.

Entaris is the second largest nation and the most cosmopolitan. The elorii of Entaris have chosen to interact with the nearby human and inhuman nations that border their lands. As a result, they have become skilled merchants and diplomats, and have even built a trade city that allows others to live within its walls, albeit in a separate foreign quarter.

There are five elorii subraces, four of which are partially infused with elemental energy, with the fifth are said to be direct children of Belisarda, the Life Goddess.

The Ardakene are normally nurturing, thoughtful, free-spirited, and curious. In the elorii social order, the Ardakene normally hold the position of spiritual leaders; one would assume this is due to the fact only their patron goddess survived the decide that destroyed the rest of the Elemental Lords.

The Marokene are stoic and traditionalistic, like the earth essence they embody. Though they hold old prejudices with great obduracy, once they are convinced to adjust their viewpoint, they will adamantly advocate that new position as if it had been what they believed all along. They are much like the mountain: unmoving most of the time, but an unstoppable avalanche when they do decide to shift. The Marokene are the guardians of the elorii people and their society.

Conversely, the Berokene view change as the natural order of things. Calm and collected in the absence of opposition, they can explode into furious action when presented with an obstacle. Like the water element they embody, they will look for alternate paths whenever blocked, regardless of the endeavor. They are not opposed to compromise, and even small concessions by others will satisfy them for a time. A complete absence of visible options will often enrage a Berokene and rash action sometimes follows. Due to their strong passions and sensitive nature, the Berokene occupy the social niche of artists, builders and political opposition orators in the eloran society.

The Osalikene are often nonplussed when change happens, but they can also shift their own positions when presented with a solid argument. Though they are highly curious, they also tend to have a short attention span, as befits the air elorii. The Osalikene serve as the political leaders of the eloran society.

Lastly, the Kelekene Elorii are intense and violent. Force is an easy solution to any problem and the destruction of an obstacle, be it a living thing or simple barrier, is a small matter. The cost of such actions is rarely considered, leaving other elorii to regard Kelekene as shortsighted. Like the flame that permeates their souls, they are a potent force when harnessed and a great threat when uncontrolled. With the eloran society, the Kelekene act as the scholars and masters of the arcane.

## THE HINTERLANDS

The Hinterlands is a contradiction in terms, being at once vibrant with life with its wide open plains as well as foreboding deserts, filled with deadly predators and a hazardous environment for the unwary. The Hinterlands is not a nation, but rather a region inhabited by a several nomadic tribes and city-states.

The major indigenous people are the Yhing hir, known as the Horse Lords. They occupy much of the southern and eastern portions of the region, though they travel throughout the entire region and beyond. Some scholars believe them to be an offshoot of the Khitani Empire from the time of the raising of the Godswall, although the truth of their origins is shrouded in mystery. The Yhing hir are divided into five major tribes, the Vanomir, the Hurkomir, the Takomir, the Skohir and the Khur Gi.

The single most valuable possession of any Yhing hir – in truth, more like a brother than a beast – is his horse.



In addition to the noble and beautiful animal's obvious virtues as a faithful steed, fierce war companion, and tireless laborer, the horse is considered a divine gift, test of manhood, and measure of material worth all rolled up in one. Indeed, most Yhing hir will not even deign to speak with a man who does not own a horse, and the purchase of a horse is often the only way an "outlander" can begin to mitigate the scorn and derision that the Yhing hir treat outsiders.

The mighty Free City of Censure, Jewel of the Coast, began its life some eight hundred years ago as a penal colony for undesirables, as well as those the Coryani Empire wished to punish. The citizens of Censure eventually staged a coup and the Six Houses that arose from the ashes of that conflagration still rule the city today. Censure is a thriving city and serves as a center of commerce and trade for many nations, though legends tell of deeper and darker things that yet fester in the sewers and caverns beneath its streets.

The merchants of Sicaris, situated at the center of many caravan routes, are legendary for their bargaining savvy, and indeed a man who cannot drive a hard bargain in Sicaris is not considered a man at all. The lifestyle of Sicaris is lush and luxurious, with the gladiatorial games commanding much of the city's attention and passion. The port city of Joppa is a Skohir stronghold close to the Tir Betoqi Wall, that serves as a clearing house for those enterprising people of the Pirate

Isles who wish to relieve themselves of ill-gotten goods without any questions asked.

Finally, the Erdukeen dwell within their volcanic city of Erduk, birthplace of the Swords of Nier and home to the mighty Enclave of Nol Dappa.

## MILANDIR, THE KINGDOM OF

The Kingdom of Milandir was once a province of the Coryani Empire, but broke off years ago to become a nation founded on honor and obligation to others. Power is largely decentralized, and is held in the hands of the four great lords: the dukes of Naeraanth, Sylvania, and Tralia, and in the Margraf of Eastmarch. The Duke of Naeraanth is Gerhardt val'Ossan, or as he is more commonly known, King Gerhardt III. He holds the loyalty of the other lords. Each duke draws his power from the nobles below him, and ultimately from his citizens. There are no 'subjects' in Milandir as every man has rights, even in the face of his lord, duke, or king.

On the whole, Milandisians are honest, charitable, forthright and are quick to render aid to others in need. Milandir is the first to answer the call to a crusade, the first to march to fight a great menace, and the first to offer charity to others. With few exceptions, Milandisians are a stoic people whose hot passions are held in tight check. Trade is the lifeblood of Naeraanth and Tralia, and foreigners are made to feel welcome in those regions. Strangers are not well received in the more isolated parts of Sylvania as even other Milandisians are sometimes uncomfortable when visiting.

In the Duchy of Tralia, the val'Holryn have a constituency like no other in the Kingdom – the fealty of the Black Talon ss'ressen. These ssethrics are unlike any other subject of the Ssethregoran Empire in that they have turned from the mindless obedience of their foul masters by following a vision from their Matriarch of a noble god known as the Fire Dragon. This vision guided them through their harrowing escape from the Kraldjur Morass north into the unknown. As the colder months began to set in and their faith began to falter, the Fire Dragon



led them unerringly to the Sulfur Marsh in the Tralian Duchy of Milandir.

Upon discovering the appearance of well over a thousand Ssethrics upon his lands, the Duke spoke with the Matriarch of the Egg Clutch and quickly came to a mutually satisfying agreement. In exchange for granting the ss'ressen dominion over the Marsh (a useless plot of land, if truth be told), the Black Talons would swear fealty to the Duke and Kingdom of Milandir. Since that day, none have ever doubted the bravery nor the sincerity of the ss'ressens' oath.

## THE PIRATE ISLES

A series of islands lying off the Bleak Coast of the Hinterlands have a notoriety of being a safe haven for every type of individualist, miscreant, malcontent, deviant and villain even Canceri couldn't stomach.

Known in the Modern Age as the Pirate Isles, practically every island is claimed by a different group, organization or people, be it the Crimson Slavers of Garundi, the Pirate Stronghold of Magra, the Naori Fire Worshipers, or the Harvesters of Ymandragore. An uneasy peace and even limited trade has sprung up between some of these factions, but the overriding law of the land has been the same for centuries – 'Stay Out of My Business!' Adherence to that creed has kept the people from warring upon one another and continued the flow of gold.

## SSETHREGORAN EMPIRE

One of the eldest races upon Arcanis are the ssethrics of the Ssethregoran Empire. They are made up of a myriad of different species though all reptilian in nature. While there are a wide variety of ssethrics, the dominant species in their empire are the naga, the ssanu, the ss'ressen, and the salamankas. While other reptilian species either exists within or are allied with the Empire, it is these four groups that form the bedrock upon which all else rests.

Once masters of the entire continent, the ssethrics created the elorii to serve them, but were eventually betrayed by their servants and forced to dwell in a small corner of the continent. Here was founded the Ssethregoran Empire and has for millennia bedeviled the various peoples of Arcanis.

## YMANDRAGORE: THE ISLES OF FEARS

Ymandragore - one can hardly utter the word without muttering the Sorcerer-King in the same breath, so intertwined are the two concepts in the minds of the people of the Known Lands.

Utter those words to any continental, and a visible shiver seems to take them as they hunch their shoulders and speak in conspiratorial tones. Invariably, they will whisper horrific tales of an isle populated by dread magi under the tutelage of the self-appointed Sorcerer-King, enacting barbaric rituals and the blackest of magics. They will speak of a group called the Harvesters that scour the mainland for any and all people who have the "Gift", the ability to wield arcane power. The most learned of them will tell how the Sorcerer-King unleashed the greatest scourge Arcanis has ever known, the Time of Terror. Like all parables, a germ of truth lies within, but Ymandragore is so much more.





LOW RES - FOR THE FINAL MAP CURRENTLY IN DEVELOPMENT

THE BLESSED LANDS

MILANDIR

CORYANI EMPIRE

ALTHERIAN REPUBLIC

SSETHREGORAN EMPIRE

FELLGLADE

LEAGUE OF PRINCES

Fervidus Hills

Aqtau Mountains

Khatau Mountains

Corlathian Mountains

Lhauzyr Mountains

Vastwoods

CANCERI

HINTERLANDS

Forsaken Wastes

Fellglade

Kraldjur Morass

ISLE OF TEARS

Ventaka

Stanivel

Pearlspar

Kielmun

Vulgast

Mil Takra

Blighted Mire

Tares R.

Niechau R.

Pricklespur Forest

Vosewalden

Ashvan

Tralia

Vulg R.

Tultipet

Mount Dagha

The First City

Lustia

Paerthian Mnts.

Treslau

Faerdwalden

Faerdlau

Savartes R.

Naeraanth

Yarrvek

Saluwan R.

Eslau R.

Nardau River

Boskwitz

Nevanne

Gulf of Yaris

Solanos Mor

Savona

Encali

Preis R.

Enpebyn

Corvis R.

Joriz R.

Grand Coryan

Sulpecci

Althre

Gafre

PLAINS OF JHAUT

DAR ZHAN VOI

Peladorr River

Corvis R.

Joriz R.

Grand Coryan

CORYANI EMPIRE

Forsaken Wastes

Abessios

Semar

Persis River

Corvis R.

Golden Boughs of Saluwe

Forgot Arkos

Abessios

Semar

Blackwand

Aliegis

Paldaris

Panari

Forgot Arkos

Abessios

Semar

Quebo R.

Liveh

Heckakel Woods

Corvis River

Forgot Arkos

Abessios

Semar

Grokha

Metra

Plexus

Corvis River

Forgot Arkos

Abessios

Semar

Whon

Eejho

Vareos River

Corvis River

Forgot Arkos

Abessios

Semar

Lhauveris R.

Mhun

Plexus

Corvis River

Forgot Arkos

Abessios

Semar

Lhosk

Whalka

Quoon

Mhyr

Forgot Arkos

Abessios

Semar

Mhyr

Whalka

Quoon

Mhyr

Forgot Arkos

Abessios

Semar

Maalioch

Whalka

Quoon

Mhyr

Forgot Arkos

Abessios

Semar

Lauriol Sea

Gulf of Coryan

Sseth Lake of Quesselan

Ymandragore

The Pale Sea

Sea of Anterns

Lanzhou Island

Lake of Milk

# RELIGION

Religion touches upon almost every facet of everyday life in Arcanis. To an outsider, this may seem odd, as the Gods have not physically manifested to their followers since time immemorial. Rarely, if ever, has a miracle been positively ascribed as an intervention of the Gods as other explanations have always been available. In fact, there is an underground movement of people known as the Mourners in Silence, who believe that the Gods, if they ever existed, are dead or gone, uncaring as to the actions of man or any other sentient beings upon Arcanis.

Yet the Mother Church of Coryan becomes more popular and powerful with each passing generation. The Church of the Dark Triumvirate, despite the fact its oppressive theocracy threatens to crush the Cancerese people under its harsh rule, enjoys the devotion of almost the entire population. To the people of Arcanis, they have no need to see their deities roam the streets, nor do they need to commune directly with the Gods to know of their existence. They have faith that they do and that is enough.

## THE MOTHER CHURCH OF CORYAN

Heir to the First Imperium's Pantheistic Orthodoxy, the Mother Church of Coryan was formed just after the founding of the Coryani Empire. After the fall of the First Imperium and the subsequent Theocracy of the Cleansing Flame, the individual cities, towns and cities that made up that great empire lost all connection from each other and become isolated islands of civilizations amidst a sea of barbarism and chaos.

As the ages passed, the patron deity of a settlement became the central focus of the population; the rituals, beliefs and even existence of the other deities slowly passed from memory. After countless generations and the rise and fall of empires, the worship of the entire Pantheon as a whole and integrated religion fled from human memory.

Not until the city-state of Coryan rallied the other independent settlements, repelled the Infernal invasion and forged the fledgling Coryani Empire did mankind begin to realize that more than just their own patron deity existed. During the crusade to repel the demonic forces of the Time of Terror, an Illiirite high priest began reconstructing the rites and rituals of the various Gods into a holy text known as the Canticle of the Pantheon. After the founding of the Coryani Empire, the Emperor appointed this priest as the first Patriarch of the Mother Church and tasked him with reestablishing the ancient religion as it was during the Imperium.

So many centuries had passed that a truly integrated church, as it was during the Imperium, was impossible

to recreate, so a compromise was reached. Each of the high priests from the twelve recognized deities would continue to worship their deity as always, but they were forced to recognize the other Gods as equally divine as part of a greater pantheon. This ecclesiastic treaty was signed during the first Convocation of the Divine and established the dominance of the Mother Church of Coryan, forbade any aggression between temples within the Church, and established the position of the patriarch, pyrmen, arch-prelates and prelates as superior positions within the Church with authority over the individual temples.



## THE CHURCH OF THE DARK TRIUMVIRATE

The Church of the Dark Triumvirate, the unquestioned authority of the Dark Apostate, and the infallibility of their teachings form the spine of Cancerese culture. The Church penetrates the lives of its people entirely, so much so that the government and the church are indistinguishable. As a theocracy, the edicts from the church are law. There is no debate, no question, and no argument. The Church's proclamations define reality for all Canceri.

The Church of the Dark Triumvirate emerged from the corrupted teachings of the prophet Becherek, who spoke against the Mother Church's ban and restrictions on certain practices of three faiths: Nier, Neroth and Sarish. He believed the Mother Church to be a flawed vessel for the teachings of the Gods if it forbade observances integral to the worship of these deities, regardless of how offensive it might be to the sensibilities of others. He called for the restoration of these tenets and the full recognition of those following these rites as members of the Mother Church.

However, Becherek's message was inflammatory and provoked unscrupulous and ambitious priests to further demand power in the apparatus the Mother Church, and that a Cancerese priest be appointed Patriarch. The fact that this priest was undead, which offended the imperial values held in Coryan, Milandir and most other lands, only further turned the populace against them. After Becherek's execution, the Apostles of Becherek, who claimed to understand the message of the Prophet, used the murder to press their agenda and form the Church of the Dark Triumvirate.

## THE MILANDRIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

Like the Church of the Dark Triumvirate, the Milandric Orthodox Church, or simply the Milandric Church, is a sect that has split off from the Mother Church of Coryan. Following the announcement that newly discovered ancient texts known as the Revelations of Illiir were to amend or supplant the millennia old interpretation of the Canticles of the Pantheon, the Arch-Prelate of Milandir, the aging but still vibrant Sabinus val'Assante', adamantly and eloquently argued for a spiritual separation to finally catch up with Milandir's political secession from the Coryani Empire.

Sabinus, a close advisor to the King of Milandir, explained there were examples in living memory of the Coryani usurping the careful plans of the Pantheon, which ultimately resulted in the death of tens of thousands of the faithful. He also pointed out that for as long as the Milandisian people

bowed to the Mother Church in the south, they would forever be at the mercy of the Coryan's endless plotting and political manipulations. "For the sake of your people's souls," he argued to the King, "you must sever all ties with these corrupt people and their institutions!"

Within weeks of the King's agreement, all of the clerisy that did not convert to the new, or as many called it, the original worship of the Pantheon, were banished back to the Coryani Empire. Sabinus himself, once the leading spiritual representative of the Mother Church in Milandir, recanted and converted in a huge public spectacle, whereby he was anointed by the King as the first Primach of the Milandric Orthodox Church. With this ceremony, the King gained the power to influence the major ecclesiastical appointments within his own realm.

In the short time that the Milandric Church has been in existence, Sabinus has made certain small, yet significant changes to the Church's views. For example, though the gods Nier, Neroth and Sarish are indeed part of the Pantheon, they are obviously subservient to the greater powers, such as Illiir, Saluwé, Yarris and Hurrian. He went further to suggest that they were minor gods, to be appeased to keep their attention elsewhere, rather than openly worshipped, and not draw their baleful eyes upon the pious people of Milandir. "For we need look no further than our neighbor Canceri," he would say as he pointed north, "to see what happens when these fearsome Gods are openly supplicated."

## BELISARDA AND THE FOUR ELEMENTAL LORDS

The worship of Belisarda and the four Elemental Lords is one of the most ancient religions on Arcanis, preceded only by the hoary cults of the reptilian ssethrics. Worshipped as their creators, the Four Elemental Lords and Belisarda, the Life Giver, enjoyed a special bond with Their children, although why the ssethrics were allowed to enslave Them is a question the elorii have never been able to answer to their satisfaction.

After the overthrow of their oppressors' empire, the elorii controlled vast tracts of the Onaran continent and enjoyed millennia of peace and prosperity until the coming of man and their Pantheon. Quickly afterwards, the elorii went from being the rulers of an empire to refugees taking shelter in the vast forests of the land. To make matters worse, four of their Elemental Lords, Keleos, Beröe, Mârok and Osalian were destroyed; absorbed by four of the Gods of Man.

Since that time, the temples of the four Elemental Lords remain largely empty and silent. All but the most fanatical of elorii pay no more than lip service to Them. The vast majority

flock to the only one of their deities which remains: Belisarda the Life Giver. Only Her priests are still able to cast divine miracles and heal the injured and infirm. Thus, even those elorii who stubbornly maintain that the other Elemental Lords will return must pray to Belisarda for power and divine gifts.

## THE MATRIARCHY OF THE FIRE DRAGON

A relatively new organization relative to other religious institutions upon Arcanis, the Church of the Fire Dragon, also known as the Matriarchy, had its auspicious beginnings less than four hundred years ago. In those dark times, the faithless and despondent ss'ressen Black Talon Egg Clutch was teetering on the edge of collapse. The Black Talons had begun to question the morality of their actions, and rebelled against the corrupt and decadent government of Ssethregore. Looking for guidance, the Black Talons turned to an aged matriarch who spouted prophecies of a new god and better life for them outside the bounds of the Empire. Rallying to her visions, the Black Talons fled and established themselves in the Sulphur Marsh far to the north. Under the strict but gentle guidance of the priestesses of the Fire Dragon, the society prospered and the Matriarchy was born.

Formed by the visionary Matriarch Mother Scaphiopus, the Matriarchy has risen to prominence in the last few centuries, providing an exceptional level of stability to the Black Talon culture. The Matriarchy's word is law; it governs all aspects of ss'ressen life, from the placement of eggs near the hatching fire to determine the gender and intelligence of the hatchling, to the roles of warriors, the selection of those worthy of mating, and the governing of the society as a whole.

## ELEMENTAL WORSHIP AND ANIMISM

One of the earliest and most fundamental religious traditions to exist upon Arcanis is that of worshipping the primordial nature spirits that reside within all things. These spirits helped guide the early tribes of man to live harmoniously with the world around them and gather the bounty of the earth.

Some of these ancient human tribes existed on the edges of the Ssethregoran Empire long before their cousins from beyond across the Eastern Ocean arrived on the continent of Onara. They stayed well away from the reptilian overlords and eventually, when the Ssethregorans were overthrown, made peace with the elorii who supplanted them.

Worship of these ancient and ethereal beings exists primarily in the Hinterlands, on the isle of Naori where the

tribesmen sacrifice to the volcano god Ghord, as well as the other far reaches of the world where 'civilization' has not yet extended its grasp.

## THE PANTHEON OF MAN



### ALTHARES

Althares is said to be the most enlightened and intellectual of all the gods of the Pantheon. The patron deity of sages, wise men, and those who seek lost secrets and knowledge, Althares favors those using their minds rather than their brawn. This is not to say warriors do not pray to Him for wisdom or guidance. Generals and other tacticians regularly sacrifice to Althares for wisdom and clarity of mind before launching critical military campaigns or battles.



### ANSHAR

Anshar is the well known throughout Arcanis; Her most popular aspects being that of the Far Traveler, the Suffering Martyr, the Weeping Goddess, and the Guardian of Outcasts. Anshar looks after the destitute, the oppressed and the outcast, regardless of the reason why the person finds themselves in such a situation. Because of this, a large number of dark-kin and gnomes find themselves worshipping Her.



### BELTINE

Warden of the Afterlife, Keeper of the Gates to Paradise, Mistress of the Cauldron of the Underworld, Nurturer of the Spirit, and Forger of Souls; the goddess Beltine holds all these titles and distinctions with pride. The Shrouded Goddess's realm is that of the Underworld, a place where the spirits of the dead travel to await their final judgment.

While this goddess is generally viewed as one of the more gentle and benevolent of the Pantheon due to Her domains of caring for the souls in the Afterlife and the healing of the wounded and infirm, She also has certain aspects that are neither wholesome nor kind. Some of these darker aspects tell of Beltine as the Gray Crone, who stalks the night to rip out the souls of living for Her ever-hungry Cauldron.





## CADIC

Cadic holds the title of the Dark Hand of Illiir, performing those tasks that are necessary but distasteful to the Lord of the Gods. He also acts as the patron deity to thieves, spies and assassins as well as to musicians, bards and artisans. Many outsiders view this as incongruous, as these domains have little to do with one another, yet Cadic's adherents see them as merely two sides of the same coin. In a world of darkness and cold efficiency, the soul must be nurtured and given respite or else madness will surely take them over the edge of the abyss.

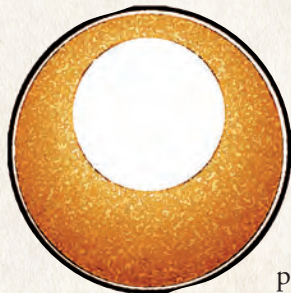


## HURRIAN

Considered the most honorable and caring of the Pantheon, Hurrian is the Defender of Man, the Champion of Honor, the General of the Gods and the grim Storm Lord.

Hurrian is called the Reluctant Warrior, for though He is a god of combat and is the patron deity of warriors everywhere, He and His followers do not revel in battle as the adherents of Nier do. Hurrian lifts His sword only when there is no other choice, and only then for the most honorable and just of reasons. His warriors do not shed blood for the glory of battle, nor do they find joy in the misery of the conquered. Yet when marauding bands of villainy appear on the horizon, seeking to burn, rape and pillage one's home and family, ever will the Blades of Hurrian rise up and defend all they hold dear.

It may seem contradictory that a deity known for his calm and reason would have under His domain the turbulent power of lightning and storms. This power was assumed by Him during the Gods War when His father, Illiir, commanded Him to do battle with the Air Elemental Lord of the elorii and absorb its power. Though still portrayed as a caring deity, some in the higher echelons of the priesthood feel this power corrupted Hurrian, as well as the other three deities that did take unto themselves the power of the Elemental Lords, and He is at times as grim and violent as the tempests He commands.



## ILLIIR

Illiir holds the position of Head of the Pantheon and serves as the patron deity of emperors, kings, lords and others that enjoy positions of power. Due to His station, most worshippers of the Pantheon give Him praise and offer sacrifices on His holy days. According to

dogma, Illiir led the rest of the Pantheon against the Other, Its befouled progeny and corrupted minions during the Gods' War. Though He did not participate in the destruction of the elorii Elemental Lords, He did order it done. At the end of the Gods' War, it was Illiir who declared that all the lands of the elorii were now the domain of humanity and proclaimed the creation of the First Imperium of Man.

Illiir is also credited with saving all of humanity by raising the Godswall, ending a generation of brutal combat against the Infernal Horde, during the Time of Terror. This act also marks the founding of the Coryani Empire and the subsequent rise of the Mother Church of Coryan.

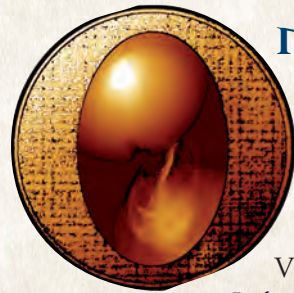


## LARISSA

The Oracle of the Gods, Lady Luck, Mistress of Forbidden Pleasures, Temptress of the Pure, Divine Harlot of the Sixty-Seven Acts of Debauchery, Larissa has been called all these things and more. Originally depicted as a demure, young virgin, Larissa used Her ability to see in the future during the Gods' War with deadly accuracy. Her powers were crucial in the defeat of the Other and in foretelling the eventual triumph of man over the elorii.

Afterwards, She became obsessed in the protection of Her children and searched further and further into the future, cataloguing every pitfall or catastrophe. At one point, She parted the furthest veil and saw what was not meant to be seen, even by a god. Driven mad by the vision, Larissa dove headlong into an orgy of hedonistic pleasures, each indulgence greater than the last, anything to burn the image of what was to come from Her mind and soul.

Philosophers wonder if the decadence that eventually spelled the doom of the First Imperium was caused by the Divine Seeress's fall into madness, or whether the events on the Mortal Plane were mirrored above in the Heavens. Regardless, this chaotic divergence in Her personality and powers caused a rift in Her followers, one which is slowly reaching the boiling point that will one day explode into a bloody schism.



## NIER

Offerings of blood, fiery death and the wailings of the defeated are what pleases mighty Nier, the Lord of Flaming Devastation, the Master of Burning Ruin, the Reveler in Violence, the Ultimate Warrior and the Judgment of the Gods. Portrayed as a raving warrior, blood drenched and covered in gore with the bodies

of His enemies piled high before Him, Nier is the embodiment of war. He is the relentless storm of chaos which burns clean that what was before, allowing for something new and different to take its place.

Paradoxically, Nier is also the implacable Defender of the Pantheon and stands as the Left Hand of Illiir, ready to destroy that which would threaten the Ruler of the Gods' plans. His Valinor stand in judgment of souls; all mortals must one day stand before Him and learn their ultimate fate: entry into the Paradise of the Gods or a virtual eternity in the boiling Cauldron of Beltine.

The worship of Nier has ever been a two-edged sword in the history of Arcanis. While Nierites have been instrumental in preserving civilization, they have been as quick to turn and topple the greatest of empires. It was the legions of Leonydes val'Virdan, arguably the most devoted servant of Nier, who destroyed the vast Imperium of Man and precipitated the millennia spanning Shadowed Age.



## NEROTH

Most feared of all the Gods due to His duties, Neroth rules below the earth in the worm-infested recesses of the catacombs and barrows that riddle the Known Lands. Neroth Death-bringer also has dominion over plagues, as well as the body and mind of the dead.

The Nerothian priests site the Librium Sacrum Mortis, written during the dawn of the Imperium, which relates a conversation between a holy man and Neroth Himself. In it, Neroth explains that the state humanity calls life is just one phase of existence, much like the stage when one is in a mother's womb. This fetus is born into this state called life through blood and pain. Death is merely a second rebirth, also usually heralded by blood and pain, where one may transcend this life and become immortal. It is His gift to those who are faithful to Him and His teachings.

Those faithful who do not transcend are seen as unworthy of Neroth's gift, their bodies suitable only as tools for necromancers or food for the worms of the earth. Those that receive the Death Lord's Kiss continue onto their next level of existence with their knowledge and memories intact. The price for this gift, however, is their soul, which is consumed during the metamorphosis.



## SALUWÉ

Saluwé is venerated as the patron deity of women, in all their phases of life, as well as the caretaker of all things that grow upon or below the earth as well as the beasts of the world. As the wife of Illiir, Saluwé receives accolades as the Empress of the Heavens and libations to Illiir are also offered to Her.

Women in all the Known Lands pray to Her for everything from happiness, to finding a mate, fertility to protection from brutality at the hands of men. During the Gods' War, Saluwé was instructed by Her husband to devour the Earth Elemental Lord of the elorii. This act added new aspects to the goddess, giving Her dominion over those things below the earth as well as that which grows upon it.



## SARISH

Binder of Demons and Devils, the Oath Maker, Master of the Arcane, He Who Strides the Planes, the Blood God, these titles and more have been ascribed to Sarish, one of the more complex and intriguing deities of the Pantheon. Most look at Him with trepidation, for tales abound of His priests summoning Infernal creatures to do their dark biddings, but when these same fiends appear, Sarishan priests are the first to be called upon to deal with the matter.



## YARRIS

Ancient is Yarris, some say older than the other Gods of the Pantheon itself, though this is considered the talk of heretics and madmen. Some say Yarris rules the oceans, while others cite scripture that alludes to Yarris being the ocean itself, with every drop, every fish, every frothing white cap but an extension of His being.

Yarris is normally a deity one prays to in the hopes of averting disaster rather than for the granting desires. Sailors say Yarris only grants one of two things: safe passage through His realm or a one-way trip down to the bottom, where the unlucky sailor is conscripted to man one of the many doomed ships that sail under the dead full moon of Aperio.

Like the other Gods, Yarris has His benevolent aspects such as the Calmer of Storms, the Master of the Flood Plains (specifically to the farmers who till near the Corvus River), and the Lord of the Placid Oceans. His darker aspects include that of the Uncaring Ruler of the Ocean, the Black Hand of the Tempest (oddly enough represented as a female aspect), Admiral of the Damned Fleet and, a heretical aspect not recognized by the Mother Church and which led to the Yarric Heresy, The Lord of the Ancient Deep.

# OTHER GODS

## BELISARDA



Last of the Elemental Lords of the elorii, Belisarda is known as the Life Mother to Her children. Elorii do not write their history down on flimsy scrolls or tomes. Instead Mârokene crystalancers create pure orbs of crystal that can retain hours of information. Light and airy like the soap bubbles they resemble, the orbs are able to verbally recount tales, myths, or even simple instructions, as well as display images within its surface. In the most ancient of these relics, Telas, one of the most revered and elder elorii, recounts the tale of how each of the Elemental Lords gave of their own essence to create five of the elorii sub-races. It is Belisarda alone, however, who breathes life into all five.

With the destruction of the other four Lords, only Belisarda remains to shepherd the elorii race, teaching it the difficult lessons of patience and forgiveness. Priests still maintain the sacred fires in the temples to Keleos or the cool pools of the temples to Beröe, but those gods remain silent and grant neither gift nor counsel. It is Belisarda who allows these priests to channel divine power for their rituals. Most of these priests have accepted that the four Lords are gone, and have instead turned their devotion solely to Belisarda. A few stubbornly refuse to believe their Lords are gone forever and still cling to the belief they will return once more.



## FIRE DRAGON

The Fire Dragon, The Blazing Wyrn, The Fiery One, Lord of the Inferno, in all these aspects and more does the Fire Dragon exist, a guardian to his chosen people and a deadly adversary to his foes. To his chosen, the Black Talon ss'ressen, the Fire Dragon is considered a noble and unwavering god. He watches over his people, but rarely intervenes, preferring that his children learn their lessons the hard way and thereby grow stronger in the aftermath.

Followers of the Fire Dragon consider life a series of trials, where success in your endeavors leads to betterment of yourself and prosperity for the entire clutch. The Fire Dragon is revered by the Black Talons; they consider him everything Kassegore is not. To them, the Fire Dragon represents loyalty, honor, bravery, and compassion, sentiments absent from the majority of Ssethregoran society. Through the teachings of their Lord, the Black Talons seek to better themselves, both physically and spiritually, determined never again sink into the mire of hate and destruction that was their way in the Ssethregoran Empire. Those who follow the Fire Dragon hold the community over all else, and consider protection of the hatching fires a sacred duty borne by all Black Talons.

# SECRET SOCIETIES

Wherever men gather, whether to do good or ill, there will be those who will conspire in secret, creating cabals of like-minded individuals to promote their own agendas. Sometimes these secret societies operate openly, believing that it is often wise to hide in plain sight, to better conceal their true purpose. Others operate so covertly, that even after hundreds of years they remain the subject of myth and legend.

The civilizations of Arcanis have given birth to countless secret societies, some which have vanished unfulfilled, while others continue to work achieve their plans hidden in shadows. Below you will find a small selection of secret societies that your Heroes may join, but be wary, even the most benevolent of thee may hide a dark secret that only those in the inner circle are aware of.

## THE CHAMPIONS OF THE SILVER CHALICE

After the death of Osric IV of Milandir, King Gerhardt val'Ossan, founded a society as a tribute to his father. Osric believed that only the deeds of good and virtuous men and women were capable of standing against that black tide that seemed to permeate every corner of Arcanis.

“What is needed,” Gerhardt believed, “is an organization that brings together the best and purest of heart to champion the cause my father felt so strongly about, not just within these borders, but throughout the Known Lands and Beyond.”

**Goals:** The ultimate goal of the organization is to rid the world of tyranny, needless deaths due to wars for a leader's aggrandizement or wealth, piracy, slavery and the corrosive influence of the baser instincts of man. They are to act as the living embodiment of the eight virtues espoused by the organization – courage, faith, generosity, honesty, hope, humility, justice and mercy – in their every word and deed.

## EMERALD SOCIETY

Founded because of the ignorance that befell mankind during the Shadowed Age and the Time of Terror, the Emerald Society came into being for one purpose; unearthing the secrets of the past to enlighten the present.

**Goals:** The Emerald Society has a very simple mandate; unearth and discover whatever is possible of the past for the betterment of present and future generations.



Obviously some of these artifacts, be they mundane or magical, may be inherently dangerous and must be analyzed and studied by the experts of the Society before they can be reintroduced into the general populace.

## THE FEATHER MEN

*"...for their touch is as light as a feather."*

The Feather Men is an organization for those players who do not wish to have their Heroes entangled in causes, ideologies or any other type of dogma. It exists for those who wish to participate in all the intrigue their fellow players are enjoying as part of a Secret Society, but without committing to a far-reaching goal.

The Feather Men organization allows the Hero take on very small and innocuous missions for a monetary reward. Obviously, the greater the risk taken, the greater the reward, but usually the missions start off modestly; such as dropping off a letter at a particular office or knocking over a glass of ale into someone's lap. These objectives will rarely put the agent's life at risk, and, for the mercenary-minded Hero, the extra coin for such a small action is worthwhile.

## FOLLOWERS OF THE AZURE WAY

The Followers of the Azure Way, under the guise a Masons' Guild, purport to be a group of selfless engineers who have undertaken the enormous task of rebuilding the ancient roadways and byways that connected the vast empire known as the Imperium of Man.

The Imperium was the perfect vessel embodying the Rule of Man as decreed by the Gods. For millennia, those who were citizens of the Imperium lived during a glorious Golden Age not seen since. Corruption, strife and eternal war is all that Mankind can now look forward to, having fallen so far from that vision.

**Goals:** To establish the Second Imperium as foretold by prophecy and to bring all into a new Golden Age under the Rule of Man.

## THE MOURNERS IN SILENCE

The members of this faction believe that the Gods have died or are no longer interested in the fate of Man. The Silence of the Gods will eventually result in an apocalypse of a sort - the death of the old society and the beginning of a new and more enlightened one, free from the shackles of religion.

**Goals:** In short, the Mourners wish to free mankind from the oppression of the Church and the vals by exposing the charade that is organized religion. They insist that a man should rely only on himself, not on the authority or power of

an uncaring or nonexistent Pantheon.

## THE ORTHODOXY

During the Imperium, all the Gods were worshipped equally as a united Pantheon. Then, unlike now, there were not individual priests of each God, but a single Pantheistic priesthood. Today, the Mother Church still pays obeisance to the Pantheon, but as fragments of the whole. Each God has its own separate priesthood answering to the Patriarch of the Mother Church. Members of this faction do not believe this is the way the Gods intended for humans to worship Them and may be the reason They have all but stopped speaking directly to Man.

**Goals:** The reintegration of the 12 priesthoods of all nations back into a true Pantheistic Church and the elimination of all heretical worship.

## THE SANCTORUM OF THE ARCANES (THE "HAWK & SHIELD")

The Sanctorum of the Arcanes came into being as a reaction to the Ymandrake Harvesters who travel across the Known Lands seeking those with the ability to wield arcane power. The young or the willing are allowed to join Ymandrake society, while those too old or intransigent to see the wisdom of bowing their heads to the Sorcerer-King are sold into slavery or worse.

The Sanctorum became safe houses, a place where mages could practice their art without fear of being ambushed by Harvesters. Eventually these safe houses were identifiable to members by an emblem of a hawk in flight upon a shield. In this atmosphere of brotherhood, the mages of the Known Lands flourished, learning their craft and rescuing others targeted by the Harvesters.

**Goals:** The goal of the Sanctum ever remains to save and protect arcane practitioners from the predations of the Harvesters. Whenever possible, they also eliminate Harvesters and act to counter the machinations of the Sorcerer-King.



## NEW MATERIAL

Throughout this document, new spells will be marked with an \* and can be found on page 33. New equipment can be found on page 36.

# RACES

## DARK-KIN

These tainted souls are the inheritors of an infernal legacy from the Time of Terror, thousands of years ago. Somewhere in their ancestry lurks an infernal, casting its shadow over their entire family tree. Hidden in the blood, the infernal taint is nearly impossible to remove no matter how many generations go by. Scorned by most people, the majority of dark-kin

### A WORD ON LITERACY

Among the human, dark-kin, gnomes, and the Ss'ressen populace literacy is not a given... in fact it's a rarity

For more information on literacy see backgrounds page 27

simply try their best to make their way in the world. Some fight against their infernal heritage while others embrace the darkness within.

### Dark-kin Traits

**Ability Score Increases:** Your Strength score increases by 1 and your Constitution score increases by 2.

**Age:** Dark-kin mature at the same rate as humans, with similar life spans.

**Size:** Dark-kin are about the same size and build as humans. Your size is Medium.

**Speed:** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Darkvision:** Your infernal blood grants you vision beyond that of normal humans. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray

**Unnatural Aura:** You gain proficiency in the Intimidation skill but all Wisdom (Animal Handling) skill checks to control or calm beasts are made with disadvantage.

**Languages:** You can speak your national language (see p. 36) and you also learn a number of extra languages of your choice equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier. You are not automatically literate unless your chosen background grants

literacy or you sacrifice one of your extra languages.

**Infernal Resistance:** Choose one of the following damage types: acid, fire, cold, or lightning. You gain resistance to that damage type.

### Infernal Heritage

In addition to the normal dark-kin traits, choose two special abilities from the list below to reflect the specific effects of your tainted blood. Unless otherwise specified, no specific ability may be taken more than once.

- **Bestial Hide:** You possess scaly, metallic, rubbery, or otherwise tough hide. When you aren't wearing armor, your AC equals 12 + your Dexterity modifier.
- **Blood of My Brother:** You possess the ability to sense others of your kind. This functions as the paladin Divine Sense ability but only detects infernals, dark-kin, and other tainted beings, as well as objects and places with significant infernal taint. You have unlimited uses of this ability.
- **Fiendish Mind:** Your mind is more fiendish than human. You gain advantage on all saving throws against being charmed or dominated and against any spells that attempt to put you to sleep.
- **Massive Horns:** Thick horns sprout from your skull. You are proficient with your horns and they deal 1d8 + Strength piercing damage. When you use the Dash action during your turn, you can make a melee attack or shove with your horns as a bonus action.

## DWARF

Dwarves were once celestial giants, great beings who swore an oath to protect humanity, the children of the Gods. They violated this oath and commanded humans worship them as gods. As punishment for their transgressions, Illiir, the Ruler of the Pantheon of Man, cursed these giants. Forever would they stand shorter than humans, forever would they be barred from the afterlife and the cycle of rebirth, and forever would their souls be tied to the Heart Stone that rests in the statue of each enclave's founder. However, Sarish took pity on the fallen giants and offered them a way to lift the curse. If an enclave manages to craft the "perfect item," that one enclave's curse will be lifted.

### Common Dwarf Traits

**Ability Score Increase:** Your Constitution score increases by 2.

**Age:** Dwarves mature at the same rate as humans, but are not considered adults until the age of 50. On average, dwarves live about 350 years.

**Size:** Dwarves stand between 4 and 5 feet tall and average 150 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Speed:** Your base walking speed is 25 feet. Your speed is not reduced by wearing heavy armor.

**Darkvision:** Accustomed to life underground, you have superior vision in dark and dim conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Dwarven Resilience:** You have advantage on all saving throws against poison and have resistance to poison damage.

**Stonecunning:** Whenever you make an Intelligence (History) check related to the origin of stonework you are considered proficient in the History skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check.

**Weight of the Curse:** Dwarven souls are barred from the afterlife. When dwarves die, their souls are transferred to an artifact they carry called a soul shard.

As long as the soul shard remains in one piece, in contact with the dwarf's skin, and the body is returned to perfect condition (maximum hit points) the dwarf's soul is pulled back to its body. Healing of the body must be performed with healing spells or special abilities such as the holy champion's Lay on Hands ability; healing



potions and skill uses are not sufficient. Being returned to their body in this way is very traumatic, granting the dwarf two levels of exhaustion until they complete a long rest.

If the soul is not returned to the body within 24 hours of the dwarf's death, the soul is trapped in their soul shard forever. If the soul shard is destroyed and the dwarf killed, they may not be returned to life by any means.

**Mystical Limitations:** You can only gain access to the Arcanum (Spellcasting feature) through the cleric or holy champion, or Paladin classes unless otherwise noted.

**Languages:** You can speak, read and write Low Coryani and Udor. The Udor language is one shared with the giants due to their hundreds of years of enslavement by the dwarves. You also learn a number of extra languages of your choice equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier.

**Subrace:** There are four dwarven cultures (for game purposes, treat as subraces), one for each enclave. Here we provide two dwarven nations, Solanos Mor, and Encali, to choose from. The Tir Betoq and Nol Dappa dwarves will appear in the forthcoming Arcanis 5E RPG.

## SOLANI DWARF

The dwarves of Solanos Mor have a reputation of being the noblest and pious among the dwarves. They travel throughout the lands of man protecting, advising, and, when necessary, giving their lives for humanity. They are easily identified from other dwarves by their immaculately groomed beards.

**Ability Score Increase:** Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Religious Training:** Every Solani dwarf is taught both the Canticle of the Pantheon and the newer Revelations of Illiir. You gain proficiency in Religion.

**Noble Heart:** You gain advantage on all Wisdom (Insight) skill checks and you also gain advantage on all saving throws when directly acting in the honest defense of defenseless humans, gnomes, val, or dark kin.

**Enclave Specialization:** You gain advantage with smith's tools.

## ENCALI DWARF

Like most worshipers of Sarish, Encali dwarves have a reputation for being unscrupulous and untrustworthy. These dwarves travel through the lands of man preying on the short-sighted, striking bargains that sometimes come due generations later. Encali dwarves are usually a bit shorter in stature than other dwarves and they are easily recognized by their unique style of beard. Usually dyed pitch black, the beard is braided into two forks and capped on each end with a sinister-looking ornate crown.

**Ability Score Increase:** Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

**Arcane Training:** You know two cantrips of your choice from the wizard's spell list, using Intelligence as your spellcasting ability score. Also, unlike other dwarves, you may gain access to the Arcanum (Spellcasting feature) from a class which casts arcane spells (such as wizard or sorcerer) or any archetype which grants arcane spell casting, such as Eldritch Knight. Additionally, you gain advantage on all Intelligence (Arcana) skill checks.

**Innate distrust:** Encali have a general distrust of anyone who is not Encali. You gain advantage on all Wisdom (Insight) skill checks.

**Enclave Specialization:** You gain advantage with jeweler's tools.

## DWARVEN SOUL SHARDS

All dwarves are given a soul shard in a solemn ceremony shortly after birth. These crystals resonate with a weak psionic aura and become harder to crack as the dwarf who is bonded to it advances in age. Soul shards possess one-half the dwarf's hit points and have resistance to slashing, piercing, and bludgeoning damage. They are also immune to all cold, disease, fire, poison, or sonic damage.

If a dwarf loses their soul shard or has their soul shard shattered the dwarf becomes shaken to the core, suffering disadvantage to all attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws until they are reunited with or create a new soul shard, as they are aware that death now means an eternity existing as a disembodied spirit. The dwarf may acquire another soul shard by traveling to their enclave and requesting a new one. They must then spend a week in seclusion attuning themselves to the new soul shard. Should a dwarf die when they are not in possession of a soul shard, or if the soul shard has been destroyed, the soul of the dwarf is lost to oblivion and fades away to nothingness. The corpse then becomes very susceptible to necromantic energies, a unique situation which delights nefarious necromancers to no end.



# ELORII

The elorii were created as a servitor race for the reptilian empire known as Yahssremore. The Archmagi Ss'koreth summoned forth vast and powerful elemental beings and, through a process lost to the ages, infused their power with that of the Life Goddess, Belisarda, to create the elorii race. The elorii served their scaly masters for untold years as cold and efficient soldiers, enforcing their cruel will upon conquered lands and slaughtering entire races. Over time, they began to chafe against the yoke of slavery

Finally, the elorii overthrew their overlords in a bloody rebellion. The Elorii Empire that rose from the ashes reigned for nearly two thousand years. Then came Man and his Gods, destroying the sacred Elemental Lords and forcing the elorii to retreat to the forests of the Known Lands. Since that time, the elorii have been waiting, and have begun to send out emissaries known as Laerestri, to engage with humanity in preparation for the prophesied War of Vengeance, where the slaughter of their elemental deities will be avenged.



## Common Elorii Traits

**Age:** Elorii reach physical maturity in ten years but intellectually mature within the first three to five years of life. Every thousand years of life they grow a couple of inches and the eldest elorii approach 10 feet tall. Elorii cannot die from natural aging.

**Size:** Elorii stand between 5 and a half to 6 feet tall and average 165 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Speed:** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Elorii Bloodline:** You gain an additional ability modifier, your Blood Rank, which represents the effects of the elemental power coursing through your veins. Once you reach 2nd level, you gain your first point of Blood Rank and may select a Bloodline Power to go with it. You may increase your Blood Rank by 1 instead of taking an Ability Score Improvement at levels 4, 8, 12, 16, or 19, up to a maximum of Blood Rank 5. You add your Blood Rank to all Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with other elorii.

If a Bloodline Power grants the use of a spell, your Blood Rank acts as your primary casting ability.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Blood Rank

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Blood Rank

Spells granted by Bloodline Powers only require verbal components to activate and are always considered cast with a spell slot equal to your Blood Rank.

**Elemental Ancestry:** Due to your elemental nature, you have Advantage on saving throws to resist non-magical diseases.

**Elorii Weapon Training:** All elorii train constantly in preparation for the coming war of vengeance. As a result, you have proficiency with the longbow, longsword, and shortsword.

**Strong Minds:** Once slaves themselves, the elorii have advantage on all saving throws against charm effects or any other effect which would make you act against your will.

**Languages:** You can speak, read, and write Eloran. Eloran is an ancient tongue based on Ssethric, the language of their former reptilian masters; the elorii have adapted it to match their culture so that it flows from their lips like poetry. You also learn a number of extra languages of your choice equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier.

**Subrace:** There are five elorii subraces: here we have provided you with the Ardakene and Kelelene Elorii. Choose one of these subraces as your elorii bloodline. The Mârokene, Osalikene, and Berokene will appear in the forthcoming Arcanis 5E RPG.

## ARDAKENE (LIFE) ELORII

Unlike the other elorii, Ardakene were created solely from the essence of the Goddess of Life, Belisarda. Ardakene lack the physical prowess of most elorii but they make up for this shortcoming with their insight and force of personality. Their hair is usually one of many shades of brown and they have green or hazel colored eyes. Ardakene tend to be thoughtful and cautious, their actions calculated and methodical. They have fierce convictions, a healthy respect for life, and a strong connection with nature. Ardakene are frequently found among the leaders and Lifewardens of the elorii nations but many others busy themselves with less visible occupations such as scholars, farmers, hunters, or architects. Because of their connection to nature, Ardakene have designed and built some of the most beautiful architectural wonders on the face of Onara, structures that exist in harmony with their natural surroundings instead of dominating them.

**Ability Score Increase:** Your Wisdom score increases by 1 and your Charisma score increases by 2.

**Skill Advantage:** You gain advantage on all Medicine skill checks.

**Arcanum Focus:** You are considered to be holding a spellcasting focus when casting spells that heal hit points or remove conditions.

### ARDAKENE: BLOODLINE OF LIFE

#### Rank 1: The Goddess' Voice

You may speak the soothing words of your goddess. This refreshes your allies, allowing them to fight on.

- You learn the cantrip spare the dying.
- You may cast healing word at a spell level equal to your Blood Rank. You regain the use of this ability after completing a short rest.

#### Rank 2: The Life Well

You are infused with the very essence of life, a blessing the dead cannot surpass.

- Your Wisdom or Charisma score increases by 1, to a maximum of 20. You must choose which score to increase when you gain this Bloodline Power.
- You gain resistance to necrotic damage

## KELEKENE (FIRE) ELORII

The Kelekene were created from the essence of Keleos, the Fire God. These elorii have hair ranging from golden to reddish-brown and their eyes range from dark violet to a reddish orange. Passionate and vengeful, Kelekene are perfectionists who rarely hide their feelings and prefer to speak their minds at all times. They have sharp intellects making them some of the finest magi among the elorii. Kelekene usually

prefer professions that allow them to work with their hands, often becoming smiths, artisans, sculptors, or carpenters. These elorii are also uniquely qualified to become excellent wizards and more wizards are found among the Kelekene than any other type of elorii.

**Ability Score Increase:** Your Dexterity score increases by 1 and your Intelligence score increases by 2.

**Skill Advantage:** You have advantage on all Intimidate checks.

**Arcanum Focus:** You are considered to be holding a spellcasting focus when casting spells that manipulate fire or deal fire damage.

### KELEKENE: BLOODLINE OF FIRE

#### Rank 1: The Fire Within

You possess a metaphysical fire in your heart.

- You learn the fire bolt cantrip
- You gain resistance to fire damage.

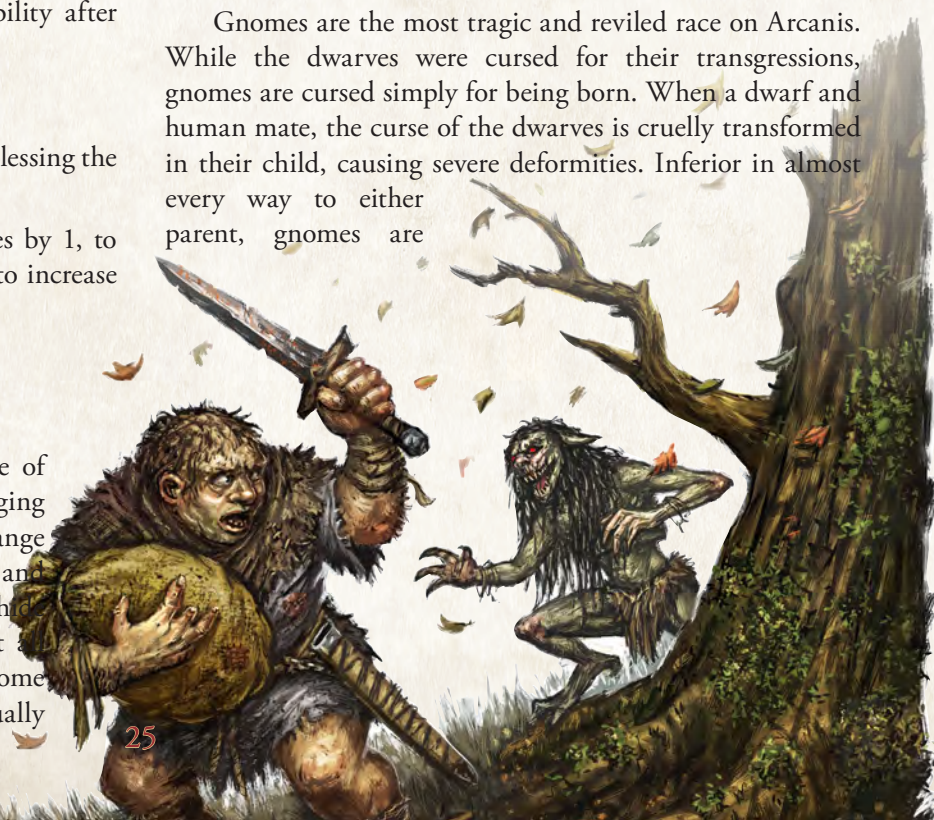
#### Rank 2: To Dance within the Flames

You move with the speed of a wildfire in a parched forest.

- Your Dexterity or Intelligence score increases by 1, to a maximum of 20. You must choose which score to increase when you gain this power.
- You may, as a bonus action, Dash, perform a single weapon attack, or cast fire bolt. You may use this ability a number of times equal to your Blood Rank, recovering all uses after completing a long rest.

## GNOME

Gnomes are the most tragic and reviled race on Arcanis. While the dwarves were cursed for their transgressions, gnomes are cursed simply for being born. When a dwarf and human mate, the curse of the dwarves is cruelly transformed in their child, causing severe deformities. Inferior in almost every way to either parent, gnomes are



sad, twisted, and pitiable creatures. However, what they lack in looks or stamina, gnomes make up for in tenacity. They have become tough through abuse, clever through necessity, and survivors by choice.

**Ability Scores Increases:** Your Constitution score increases by 2, and your Intelligence score increases by 1.

**Age:** Gnomes mature at the same rate as humans, with similar potential life spans. Alas, due to their hard lives, gnomes' lives have a habit of ending prematurely.

**Size:** Gnomes stand between 4 and 5 feet tall with grotesquely twisted forms. Your size is Medium.

**Speed:** Your base walking speed is 25 feet.

**Darkvision:** The heritage of your dwarven parent has granted you a measure of their ability to see in the dark. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray

**Concentration Advantage:** Any time you suffer damage you may use your reaction to gain advantage on any check required for you to concentrate on a task, such as a retaining concentrating on a spell.

**Resilient:** Your hit point maximum increases by 1, and it increases by 1 every time you gain a level. You also add 1 to the result anytime you spend Hit Dice to regain hit points.

**Acquired Trades:** You gain proficiency in two skills or tools of your choice.

**Social Outcast:** Gnomes are reviled by many; even those willing to give the individual a fair shake must consciously overcome deep-seated prejudice. You have disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) and Charisma (Perform) skill checks.

**Misbegotten:** You are hampered in performing strenuous activity for extended periods of time due to your physical deformities. After every continuous half-hour of brisk activity (e.g. hiking, riding, jogging, etc.), or after ten consecutive rounds of strenuous physical activity (e.g. combat, sprinting, swimming, etc.), you must rest for one minute or attempt a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. If you fail, you suffer 1 level of exhaustion.

**Home Nation:** Dwarves see gnomes as the embodiment of shame and thus are rarely seen in any of the enclaves. Because of this, you cannot take any of the Dwarven Enclaves as your starting nation.

**Languages:** You start with your national languages (see p. 36). You also learn a number of extra languages of your choice equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier. You are not automatically literate unless your chosen background grants literacy or you sacrifice one of your extra languages.

## HUMAN



Humans came to Onara in ancient times, supplanting the great Elorii Empire and quickly proving themselves tenacious and adaptable. With the exceptions of the Elorii Nations, the Dwarven Enclaves, and the Ssethregoran Empire, humans are the majority in every other region of the Known Lands. Since the human population is so widespread, they have a near infinite variation in their motivations and personalities.

**Ability Score Increase:** Two different ability scores of your choice increase by 1.

**Age:** Humans reach adulthood in their late teens and live less than a century.

**Size:** Humans vary widely in height and build, from barely 5 feet to well over 6 feet tall. Regardless of your position in that range, your size is Medium.

**Speed:** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Bonus Feat:** You gain one feat of your choice.

**Skill Versatility:** You gain proficiency in one skill of your choice in addition to your national skill (see p.

37).

**Mundane Blood:** With the exception of the Sarishan Sorcerer-Priest sorcerous origin, humans cannot take levels in the sorcerer class.

**Language:** You can speak your national language (see p. 36) and you also learn a number of extra languages of your choice equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier. You are not automatically literate unless your chosen background grants literacy or you sacrifice one of your extra languages.

# SS'RESSEN

Ss'ressen, or lizardfolk, are the shocktroopers of Ssethregore, the name of the current reptilian empire. The number of the different ss'ressen egg clutches allows the Ssethregorans to bring various abilities and tactics onto the battlefield, causing uncertainty in the enemy as they are always uncertain of what they will be facing in combat.

One of the deadliest tribes of ss'ressen, known as the Black Talon egg clutch, rankled under the decadent evils of the empire and fled their lands, settling in the Sulphur Marsh in the north.

Theirs is a matriarchal society with females holding positions of political and spiritual leadership – as well as controlling breeding rights – while the males are bred as workers, hunters, and warriors of the Clutch.

## Common Ss'ressen Traits

**Age:** Ss'ressen mature much faster than humans, but have been known to live as long as two centuries.

**Size:** Ss'ressen vary greatly in size and shape, depending on their egg clutch. Most average between 5 and 8 feet in height. Your size is Medium

**Speed:** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Cold Susceptibility:** Though not a coldblooded species, ss'ressen do not function optimally when in colder weather. When exposed to temperatures below 40 °F for more than 1 minute you suffer disadvantage on all Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution ability checks and saving throws until you spend 1 minute in warmer temperatures.

**Darkvision:** Your race has a wider range of vision than most others. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray

**Natural Weapon:** Ss'ressen possess sharp claws that can be used as natural weapons. You gain proficiency with your claws which are finesse and light weapons that deal 1d4 slashing damage. Upon reaching 6th level your claws deal 1d6 damage.

**Saurian Tail:** While making an Strength (Athletics) skill check to swim, you are considered proficient in Athletics. If you are already proficient in Athletics your proficiency bonus is doubled.

**Ss'ressen Frenzy:** Any time you come within 30 feet of another ss'ressen from a different and unrelated egg clutch you must succeed in a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or fly to an uncontrollable Rage (as if you were a 1st level barbarian). Upon a successful save you find that you are able to control yourself, for now. For the next hour you find you can resist the maddening scent of that particular egg clutch, but only that egg clutch. If you come across ss'ressen of a different

egg clutch, or are in proximity of the same egg clutch for more than one hour, you must make a new save, or fly into a rage. Upon a failed save, if you wish, you may attempt a new Wisdom saving throw at the end of each turn to regain control of yourself. This rage ends upon a successful saving throw or when there are no ss'ressen of an unrelated egg clutch within 30 feet.

While enraged you suffer disadvantage on any attack roll or skill check which is not part of an attack upon the ss'ressen who triggered your rage.

This rage does not count towards a barbarian's normal number of rages.

**Class Restrictions:** Because of their unique anatomy, only female ss'ressen can become bards, sorcerers (only of the Draconic or Ssanu Bloodline) or wizards. Similarly, due to their matriarchal society, only female ss'ressen may become clerics. Both sexes may be druids but must be disciples of Jeggal Sag.

**Languages:** You can speak your national language (see p. 36) and Ssethric. You also learn a number of extra languages of your choice equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier. You are not automatically literate unless your chosen background grants literacy or you sacrifice one of your extra languages.

**Subrace:** There are two playable ss'ressen egg clutches (subraces), the Black Talon and the Ghost Scale. Here we have provided you with the Black Talon Ss'ressen. The Ghost Scale Ss'ressen will appear in a future product.

## BLACK TALON ("THULLUSS") EGG CLUTCH

**Ability Score Increases:** If you are male, your Strength score increases by 2, and your Dexterity score increases by 1. If you are female, your Dexterity score increases by 2, and your Wisdom score increases by 1.



**Natural Armor:** When you aren't wearing armor, your AC equals 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

**Exceptional Balance:** Your tail provides you with increased balance and support. Whenever you make an Acrobatics or Athletics check related to balancing and jumping you are considered proficient in the applicable skill. If you are already proficient in Acrobatics or Athletics your proficiency bonus is doubled when making such checks.

## VAL

Sometime after the God's War, the Pantheon of Man sent their Valinor, angelic servitors of the Gods, to infuse their essence with some of their most faithful human families. This was the origin of a race of beings touched by divine essence, the val. With powers from the gods that pass down through the generations, the val are tasked with the leadership and protection of humanity.

**Personality:** At their core, val are as adaptable and diverse as humans, though their bloodline has a heavy influence. However, their unique place in society means most val tend to be aristocratic in bearing, often expecting positions of leadership or respect due to their heritage rather than through merit. This is not to say val are incompetent; on the contrary, a lifetime of training to fulfill their destiny makes most val quite capable leaders (though vanity remains an issue). Among adventurers, however, there is a

growing number of val who reject the noble aspirations of their cousins, calling for a return to their original purpose –nurturing and protecting humanity rather than ruling it. While these val are just as likely to seek positions of leadership, it is out of a sincere desire to serve humanity rather than the belief that they deserve such titles.

**Physical Description:** Val look very much like normal humans but they do not share the boundless variety of traits. Members of a given val bloodline look much alike. Distantly related val, so distant that humans wouldn't consider them related, look like family. Adult male val range from 5 to just over 6 feet in height. Adults usually weigh between 170 and 230 pounds. As with most races, females are usually shorter and weigh less. Val hair color and other characteristics vary depending upon which bloodline they are from (see below for details on val family traits). The only sure way to tell a val from a human is the color of their eyes which are always a shade of gray so pure it almost appears to be silver. When a val becomes psionically awakened, the color of their iris drains away until all that remains is a dark pupil surrounded by a white orb. A val typically reaches maturity by age 16, and typically live as long as normal humans.

**Relations:** Val enjoy a certain air of nobility among the common populace. As a result, most val have a tendency to be very diplomatic and mix well with most of the other races of Arcanis. While most have no more love of dark-kin and gnomes than the rest of humanity, those who feel the need to return to their original purpose will normally go out of their way to uplift such beleaguered spirits. Elorii, in general, do not care for val, as they are the physical representations of the despised human gods. This dislike, however, is not widely returned – at least not publicly.

**Val Lands:** Val dwell wherever there are humans, most often as the ruling class. However, certain regions (such as the Hinterlands and the Pirate Isles) do not have an abundance of val within their leadership. Although certain families are known to inhabit traditional regions, the families have dispersed over the centuries. Val may come from any region within the nations of Abbasios, Almeric, Altheria, the Blessed Lands, Canceri, the Coryani Empire, the Hinterlands, Milandir, or the Pirate Isles.



**Religion:** Since their very nature marks them as chosen by the gods, val tend to be very pious. The divine power flowing in their veins means that few val ever abandon the worship of the Pantheon of Man as they, above any other race save perhaps the Ardakene elorii, are spiritually connected to their patron deities. Though val of all families can be found in each temple, they usually worship the god whose Valinor founded their line. Thus, most val'Assanté priests are found in the Temple of Illiir, most val'Tensen priests in the Temple of Hurrian, and so forth.

### Val Racial Traits

**Age:** Val mature as normal humans and share their lifespan.

**Ability Score Increases:** Your Charisma score increases by 1.

**Size:** Val possess the same range of height as common humans, ranging from 5' to well over 6' tall. Your size is Medium.

**Speed:** You base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Languages:** You can speak your national language (see p. 36). You also learn a number of extra languages of your choice equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier.

**Val Bloodline:** You gain an additional ability modifier, called your Blood Rank, which represents the strength of your ability to access the Valinoric blessings inherited by your family. You gain your first point of Blood Rank at 1st level and an additional Blood Rank at 3rd level. You may increase your Blood Rank by 1 instead of taking an Ability Score Improvement at levels 8, 12, 16, or 19, up to a maximum of Blood Rank 5. Every time you gain a point of Blood Rank you must select a new Bloodline Power. Additionally, you add your Blood Rank to all Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with humans, val, dark-kin, gnomes, and other beings with human heritage.

**Subrace:** Each val is born into one of the families found millenia ago by the Valinor. Your val family gives you additional ability score increases and skill proficiencies. With each new Blood Rank, you may choose a new Bloodline Power from your family's list.

If a Bloodline Power grants the use of a spell, your Blood Rank acts as your primary casting ability.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Blood Rank

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Blood Rank

Spells granted by Bloodline Powers are always considered cast with a spell slot equal to your Blood Rank. Val bloodline powers are activated through pure thought and willpower and may be used as long as you are not incapacitated.

## VAL'ASSANTÉ

The val'Assanté family is traditionally viewed as the pre-eminent clan of all the vals. They are famous for their oratory and leadership skills as well as their overwhelming force of personality.

**Patron Deity:** Illiir

**Ancestral Home:** The Coryani Empire, primarily the province of Ilonia.

**Ability Score Increase:** Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Skill:** You gain proficiency in either Insight or Persuasion

**Arcanum Focus:** You are considered to be holding a spellcasting focus when casting spells that create bright light or deal radiant damage.

### VAL'ASSANTÉ BLOODLINE POWERS

#### Illiir Lights My Way

Illiir is always with his children. Always...

- You gain resistance to necrotic damage.
- As a bonus action, you may create a ball of light that orbits you at head-level. As a separate bonus action you may mentally maneuver the light to any point within 20 feet of you. If you ever move farther than 20 feet away from it the orb snaps back to hover near you. This orb sheds light equivalent to the light cantrip and lasts a number of hours equal to your Blood Rank. The orb may be dismissed at any time.

#### The Searing Light of Illiir's Glory

**Prerequisite:** Blood Rank 2 or higher

As the sun's gift is light and warmth, so too can it be a curse. The children of Illiir know this well.

- You learn the sacred flame cantrip.
- You may cast scorching radiance\* as if using a spell slot equal to your Blood Rank, regaining the ability to do so after completing a long rest.

## VAL'MEHAN

Known for their great skill in diplomacy, the val'Mehan are a silver-tongued people and have a reputation as master manipulators throughout the lands of Arcanis. The general populace treats the val'Mehan with fearful respect due to their ability to summon Infernals.

**Patron Deity:** Sarish

**Ancestral Home:** Nishanpur in Canceri, but val'Mehan are widely traveled so branches of the family are found almost everywhere.

**Ability Score Increases:** Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

**Skill:** You gain proficiency in either Deception or Persuasion.

**Arcanum Focus:** You are considered to be holding a spellcasting focus when casting spells gained from the sorcerer, warlock, or wizard lists.

## UAL'MEHAN BLOODLINE POWERS

### Sarish is Known to His Chosen

As the Master of the Arcanum, Sarish's children have an instinctual ability to cast spells, even without proper training.

- You gain the ability to cast wizard rituals. You learn the spell Sarishan Oath as well as an additional number of 1st level wizard spells with the ritual tag equal to your Blood Rank. Any time you increase your Blood Rank you learn an additional wizard spell with the ritual tag which must be of a spell level less than or equal to half your character level (rounded up).
- When you cast find familiar you always summon an infernal familiar.

### Our Master Bids You Obey

**Prerequisite:** Blood Rank 2 or higher

The Binder of Demons and Devils demands servitude and respect from the infernal hordes. A small piece of that deference and fear is passed on to His children.

- You learn a wizard or warlock cantrip of your choice.
- You may cast bindings of Sarish\* as if using a spell slot equal to your Blood Rank regaining the ability to do so after completing a long rest.

## UAL'SHEEM

The val'Sheem are a hedonistic and passionate people. Extroverted to the extreme, they are famous for their quick wits, winning smile, and unsurpassed endurance while imbibing.

**Patron Deity:** Larissa

**Ancestral Home:** The city of Savonna, in the Coryani province of Cafela.

**Ability Score Increases:** Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

**Skill:** You gain proficiency in either Insight or Persuasion.

**Arcanum Focus:** You are considered to be holding a spellcasting focus when casting enchantment spells.

## UAL'SHEEM BLOODLINE POWERS

### Fortune Favors the Bold

Larissa is a fickle mistress, but She favors those who make their own fortune.

- When you roll a 1 on an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, you can reroll the die and you must use the new roll.

### The Temptations of the Flesh

**Prerequisite:** Blood Rank 2 or higher

The Divine Harlot blesses Her children with beauty and charisma capable of wooing even the most modest knights of Milandir.

- Your Charisma or Dexterity score increases by 1 to a maximum of 20. You must choose which ability score to increase when you gain this Bloodline Power and you cannot change it afterwards.



- You gain double your proficiency bonus on Charisma (Persuasion) skill checks.
- You have advantage when making Charisma (Persuasion) rolls against those who would find you sexually attractive.

## VAL'TENSEN

This noble family has a reputation for not suffering fools lightly. It is a rare sight indeed to see a val'Tensen laugh heartily as these somber people value stoicisms above all. The val'Tensen once tended to be very slow to anger, but since The Storm and the release of the Rage of Hurrian, they are more like a living tempest; smoldering and ready to release their passions.

**Patron Deity:** Hurrian

**Ancestral Home:** The ancestral home of the val'Tensen is split amongst the various city-states of the embattled kingdom of Almeric.

**Ability Score Increases:** Your Constitution score increases by 1.

**Skill:** You gain proficiency in either Athletics or Perception.

**Arcanum Focus:** You are considered to be holding a spellcasting focus when casting spells that manipulate air or deal lightning or thunder damage.

## VAL'TENSEN BLOODLINE POWERS

### The Reluctant Warrior

The true strength of Hurrian lies in His ability to protect others.

- You learn the cantrip shocking grasp.
- You gain a +1 bonus to your AC and saving throws as long as you are acting in the defense of one or more innocent or helpless beings. Some examples of this sort of protection include defending a farmstead from raiders, holding the walls of a city under siege, shielding a child from harm, or standing over a fallen comrade. The activation of this power does not take any action but the GM will tell you when it applies. (Don't go into town to find someone to walk around with just so they can be "defended" later).

## Reluctant No More

**Prerequisite:** Blood Rank 2 or higher

Though Hurrian is known as the Reluctant Warrior, woe unto those who enrage him; his inner fury outmatches even the fires of Nier. Boiling within every val'Tensen is a focused rage that erupts with incredible fury.

- Your Constitution score increases by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You gain the ability to Rage as a barbarian equal to your Blood Rank, even in heavy armor. You may only rage again after completing a long rest.







# CLASSES

All the core classes found in the 5th Edition Core Rules can be found in Arcanis, though some have unique changes and certain archetypes may not be available.

## BARBARIAN

There are no national or racial restrictions on Heroes who wish to take the Path of the Berserker. However, the Path of the Totem Warrior is only taken by barbarians from tribal societies like the Hinterlands or the areas outside cities in the Blessed Lands.

## BARD

All Bards gain the “Hunted by Ymandragore” trait (see sidebar), owing to the Sorcerer-King’s desire to hunt down all people capable of casting arcane spells.

## CLERIC

The clerics of Arcanis not only worship their chosen god but choose an aspect of their deity to embody. In Arcanis, all deities possess multiple aspects and while these aspects usually share a common theme, some deities do have seemingly opposed aspects. The gods of Arcanis are beyond any mortal conceptions of morality or alignment.

In the forthcoming Arcanis 5E RPG, each deity will have unique domains that illustrate their nature as well as provide creeds and tenets of each aspect.

For now, you may use the domains found in the core rules. Any deity may grant the War domain but only Althares grants the Knowledge domain. Belisarda and Saluwé both grant the Life and Nature domains, Illiir grants the Light domain, Hurrian grants the Tempest domain and Cadic grants the Trickery domain. These six domains are not granted by any other deity.

Additionally, clergy of Illiir are always Male while clerics of Saluwe and the Fire Dragon are always Female.

Below we have provided a sample of some unique domains; Hurrian: The Defender of Man and Saluwé: The Primal Huntress.

## HURRIAN: THE DEFENDER OF MAN

Those priests who venerate Hurrian's aspect as the Defender of Man seek to protect the innocent from the wicked by being both shield and sword. Their code closely resembles many of the knightly virtues held in such high regard by the nobility of Milandir.

**Creeds of the Faith:** Though there are many tenets set out by the words of Hurrian, clerics who strive to embody this aspect share these in particular.

*Always defend the weak and defenseless for they are your charge.*

*The protection of one life is as valuable as the protection of the many, the loss of even one innocent is unacceptable if it could have been avoided.*

*Always seek out and put an end to the corruptive influence of Infernals. For as long as they walk upon Onara man will ever be at risk.*

*Seek and punish the wicked and those who would use their strength to oppress their fellow men.*

*Be a beacon and an inspiration, for any man with the strength and will to protect those who cannot protect themselves walks in Harran's grace.*

THE DEFENDER OF MAN	
Cleric Level	Spells
1 <sup>st</sup>	Protection from Good and Evil, Compelled Duel
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Aid, Protection from Poison
5 <sup>th</sup>	Protection from Energy, Beacon of Hope
7 <sup>th</sup>	Guardian of Faith, Locate Creature
9 <sup>th</sup>	Circle of Power, Mass Cure Wounds

**Bonus Proficiency:** When you choose this domain at 1st level, you gain proficiency with heavy armor and longsword.

**Wall of Iron.** At 1st level, when you use the Dodge action in combat you may add your proficiency bonus to your AC.

**Channel Divinity: I Shall Be Your Shield.** Starting at 2nd level you can use Channel Divinity to protect those around you. Any time an ally within 10 feet of you is attacked by a targeted effect, you may, as a reaction, interpose yourself between them and their attacker. You move adjacent to your ally and force the attacker to perform their attack against you instead of their designated target.

**Fortress of Iron.** Once you reach 6th level you may cast shield upon yourself or any ally within 10 feet. You regain the use of this ability after a short rest. You may combine this action with Channel Divinity: I Shall Be Your Shield, using a single reaction for both effects.

**Divine Strike.** At 8th level, you gain the ability to infuse your weapon strikes with electrical energy. Once on each of

your turns, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack you can cause the attack to deal an extra 1d8 lightning damage. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

**Bastion of Iron.** Starting at 17th level, any time you are struck by a critical hit you gain resistance against that attack. Also, any time you are successfully struck in melee you may use your reaction to bash your attacker with your shield if they are within reach. If you successfully strike your opponent, you deal 3d8 thunder damage and can attempt a Shove.

## SALUWÉ: THE PRIMAL HUNTRESS

Priestesses of the Primal Huntress live to embody Saluwé's more savage nature, delighting in the glory of the hunt and sometimes giving into the seductive moment of the kill. As stalkers, they are only rivaled by the blessed of Cadic, and as warriors, they possess enough fury to earn the respect of a Nierite. These priestesses constantly strive to sharpen their skills in order to take down the most dangerous of prey, either in the service of the church, by the word of their ruler, or sometimes for the pure joy of it.

### Creeds of the Faith

Though there are many tenets set out by the words of Saluwé, clerics who strive to embody this aspect share these ones in particular.

*The hunt is ritual; within the hunt we feel the power of Saluwé beating in our heart.*

*Forgo claws of iron and shells of steel, Saluwé provides all you shall need for the hunt.*

*Be it infernal, wicked men, beast, or abomination seek the greatest of prey, the most cunning of mark. Always test yourself.*

*The blood of your fellows is sacred. Let only the wicked and cruel feel the agony of your claws.*

*Never hunt for sport. Eat what you kill so as to honor Saluwé and all her gifts.*

SALUWÉ, THE PRIMAL HUNTRESS	
Cleric Level	Spells
1 <sup>st</sup>	Hunter's Mark, Longstrider
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Beast Sense, Pass without Trace
5 <sup>th</sup>	Bestial Form, Nondetection
7 <sup>th</sup>	Freedom of Movement, Locate Creature
9 <sup>th</sup>	Crushing Weight, Commune with Nature

**Tenets of Faith** Only females may be Clergy of Saluwé and those who follow the aspect of The Primal Huntress are barred from wearing armor made of metal. They also refuse to use any weapon with the exception of the spear, bow, wooden weapons (like the club and quarterstaff) and their own claws.

**Bonus Proficiencies.** Clerics who follow the aspect of The Primal Huntress gain proficiency with Stealth and Survival.

**Hands of Our Mother.** At 1st Level, you gain the ability to extend your nails into wickedly sharp claws as a bonus action. You are proficient with your claws, which are light and finesse weapon that deal 1d4 slashing damage. If you already possess the ability to produce claws you may extend and attack with them when performing an opportunity attack. Retracting your claws also requires a bonus action.

**Channel Divinity: Flurry of Claws.** Starting at 2nd level, you use Channel Divinity to attack twice with the Attack action as long as you are using natural weapons such as claws gained through Hands of Our Mother or other natural weapons gained through a spell or a class feature like Wild Shape.

**Wild Shape.** Starting at 6nd level you may Wild Shape as a druid equal to your cleric level.

**Divine Strike.** At 8th level, you gain the ability to infuse your weapon strikes with deadly poison. Once on each of your turns when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can cause the attack to deal an extra 1d8 poison damage. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

**Unbridled Savagery .** At 17th level while engaged in battle you gain resistance to piercing, bludgeoning, and slashing damage against natural attacks and non-magical weapons.

## DRUID

Calling upon primal sources of power, druids form a middle ground between arcane and divine magic. Some worship specific deities such as ss'ressen druids who follow Jeggal Sag (a demigod figure known as the Master of Beasts). Others like the Pengik shamans follow "The Old Ways" and call upon spirits or primal energies of Onara to do their bidding.

## FIGHTER

There are no major changes or restriction on fighters in Arcanis. Eldritch Knights gain the "Hunted by Ymandragore" trait (see sidebar), owing to the Sorcerer-King's desire to hunt down all people capable of casting arcane spells.

## New Combat Styles

These combat styles are available to all fighters:

**Defensive Duelist.** When using a one-handed weapon while leaving your off hand completely free (not holding a shield), you gain a +1 bonus to your AC.

**Knife Fighter.** Any time you are fighting with daggers or knives you deal +2 damage. Additionally, if you have a hand free you may draw a dagger as part of any attack.

**Canny Defense.** While not wearing armor, your AC equals 10 + your Dexterity modifier + your Intelligence modifier. You can use shields and still gain this benefit.

**Pugilist.** Your unarmed strike now deals 1d4 bludgeoning damage. While taking an Attack action you may make an unarmed attack as a bonus action. If you take the Tavern Brawler feat your unarmed strikes deal 1d6 damage.

## FIGHTER ARCHETYPE:

### THE TACTICIAN

*The Coryani general, surrounded by his officers, leaned over the map of the area. "Licenius, your century will take the center of the line. I want you to bloody the Malfelans' noses, but not press the attack. I need for you to slowly, give ground. Slowly. I need you to draw them in, so that our flanks can roll up theirs. I'll then signal the cavalry to attack from the rear, surrounding them on all sides. But it is imperative that your men hold the line, Licenius. If not, that bastard Aicos will tear our forces in half and grind us up beneath their immortal boots."*

*As the officers left to relay the general's orders, his legate leaned over. "I've not seen that maneuver before general. Where did you learn it?"*

*Smiling, the general said, "From these same elorii we're fighting. They used it on us twenty years ago."*

General, commander, centurion, warlord; these are but some of the titles granted to the Tactician. Possessing keen minds, strategic vision, and powerful personalities these students of military history utilize their knowledge of military engagements, maneuvers, and experience to dictate the terms of battle. Compelling in word and action, these leaders rally their allies, call out key positions, and suggest tactical maneuvers which leave their opponents at a calculated disadvantage.

Many Tacticians are influenced by their culture, such as Ying Hir Horse Lords favoring fast moving skirmishes and the Coryani centurion favoring strong defensive lines to shatter enemy formations. However, predicting a specific stratagem based on an opponent's nationality can be a deadly mistake. Tacticians study other cultures in order to learn how to counter foreign stratagems and adopting new tactics when necessary.

## COMMAND DICE

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You have a particularly sharp mind for tactics, possessing the ability to quickly adapt your stratagem to the flow of battle. With this insight you can guide your allies, allowing them to position themselves and gain advantage where once there was none.

During combat, as a reaction, you may suggest a tactic to an ally that can hear and see you within 60 feet. If your ally follows your suggested strategy give them a Command Die, a d6, which must be spent when performing that action. A suggested tactic may be something like 'shove that creature', 'cast a spell at that s'sressen', 'withdraw from melee', or even simply 'attack this target'. For example, if you suggest that a fellow player knock a guard down prone, they must follow your suggestion to receive the die.

This die may be added to any attack roll, ability check, skill check, or damage roll made in pursuit of your suggested tactic. If no such roll is required, allies may instead spend the die to gain advantage on a single saving throw before the end of their next turn.

You possess a number of Command Dice equal to your Intelligence modifier (a minimum of 1). You regain all Command Dice when you finish a long rest.

Your Command Die changes when you reach certain levels in the fighter class. The die becomes a d8 at 5th level, a d10 at 10th level, and a d12 at 15th level.

## STUDENT OF HISTORY

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Once you reach 3rd level you gain proficiency in the History skill; if you are already proficient with History, you instead gain double your proficiency bonus on all Intelligence (History) skill checks.

## TACTICAL POINTS

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Upon reaching 3rd level you gain 3 tactical points to spend on Tactical Maneuvers. You gain an additional tactical point upon reaching 7th, 10th, and 15th level in the fighter class. You regain all Tactical Points after completing a long rest

## TACTICAL MANEUVERS

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Upon reaching 3rd level you learn 3 Tactical Maneuvers and you learn an additional maneuver when you reach 7th, 10th, and 15th level. Tactical Maneuvers are powered through the use of tactical points. Additionally, anytime you gain a fighter level you may switch one of your Tactical Maneuvers for another. See the end of this entry for a list of Tactical Maneuvers.

If any of your Tactical Maneuvers requires a saving throw, that saving throw is equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + either your Charisma or Intelligence modifier (your choice).

## CRY HAUOC

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Upon reaching 10th level, when rolling initiative, you may spend 1 tactical point to grant all allies who can see or hear you within 60 feet advantage on their initiative roll. Once this ability is used it may not be used again until you complete a long rest.

## DISCIPLINE OF STEEL

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Once you reach 15th level any time you score a critical hit you instantly regain a Command Die or 1 tactical point (your choice).

## TACTICAL AWARENESS

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Upon reaching 18th level if you start combat with no Command Die or tactical points you instantly recover one of each.

## TACTICAL MANEUVERS

Tactical maneuvers are presented below in alphabetical order.

### Brutal Ambush

*When you and your allies catch an enemy by surprise the results are simply devastating.*

When attacking surprised opponents, you may spend 1 tactical point to grant all allies within 30 feet who can hear or see you advantage on their next attack roll.

### Distracting Strike

*With an attack you draw a creature's attention, allowing your allies to disengage safely.*

When you successfully strike an opponent in melee combat you may spend 1 tactical point to prevent your opponent from taking reactions until the end of your next turn.

### Hammer and anvil

*You set up a combined attack, trapping your opponent between you and your allies.*

As part of an attack action, you may spend 1 tactical point to force an adjacent creature to make a Wisdom saving throw. If they fail, your target immediately provokes an opportunity attack from any ally within melee range, as long as your ally can see your target.

### Knight's Move

*You position yourself and an ally into an advantageous position.*

After taking an opportunity attack you may spend 1 tactical point to allow a single ally within 30 feet who can hear and see you to instantly move 10 feet.

## On My Mark

*Sometimes it's best to lead by example.*

As part of an attack action, you may spend 1 tactical point to grant any ally within 30 feet who can hear and see you advantage on their next attack roll against the creature you attack. If your ally successfully hits with this attack they deal an additional 1d6 damage. This damage increases by 2d6 when you reach 5th level, 11th level becomes 3d6 and finally, 4d6 at 17th level.

## Rallying Cry

*You call upon your allies and inspire them to greater acts of heroism.*

As an action, you may spend 1 tactical point to grant all allies within 60 feet who can hear or see you 1d10 + Charisma bonus temporary hitpoints. These temporary hit points fade away after 1 minute.

## Stand your Ground

*With a shout, you call your allies to brace for impact.*

As a reaction, you may spend 1 tactical point to grant a single ally within 30 feet who can hear and see you the ability to use their reaction to gain resistance against non-magical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage until the beginning of their next turn.

## Strategic Maneuver

*In battle, positioning is everything.*

As a bonus action, you may spend 1 tactical point to let an ally within 60 feet who can hear or see you use their reaction to take the Dash action.

## Strike the Rod

*You put the fear of the rod into your allies, forcing them to regain their composure.*

As a reaction, you may spend 1 tactical point you grant all allies within 60 feet who can hear or see you a new saving throw to shake off any effect which has resulted in the frightened condition. If the effect that granted the frightened condition does not grant a saving throw your allies must make a Charisma saving throw against your Tactical Maneuver DC to remove the frightened condition.

## Tempting Target

*By making yourself a target for an attack you force your opponent to overextend, leaving a perfect opening for your allies.*

As part of an attack action, you may spend 1 tactical point to force a creature you are in engaged in melee with to make a Wisdom saving throw. If your target fails it's saving throw, all allies who saw the attack gain advantage on their next attack roll against your target.

Regardless of the result of the saving throw your target must attack you, either as a reaction or upon its next turn.

## Warning Shout

*You constantly watch out for yourself and your allies.*

As a reaction, when an ally within 60 feet who can hear and see you is the target of a spell, you may spend 1 tactical point to grant that ally the ability to use their reaction to gain advantage on their saving throw against that spell. If the spell has no save your ally gains resistance against that spell's damage instead.

# MONK

There are no major changes or restriction on monks in the Arcanis setting. All monk orders are known to be associated with one religious faction or another on the continent of Onara. The Way of the Open Hand is followed by all races. Monks who follow the Path of Shadow can only be found in any church that venerates Cadic and only the elorii take the Way of the Four Elements.

# RANGER

Rangers gain access to all the new fighting styles presented under the fighter above. Rangers are considered to be Primal casters.

# ROGUE

There are no major changes or restriction on rogues in the Arcanis setting. Arcane Tricksters gain the "Hunted by Ymandragore" trait, owing to the Sorcerer-King's desire to hunt down all people capable of casting arcane spells.

# PALADINS

In Arcanis, paladins are considered a version of the holy champion (see the new class below) and are usually found in service to a temple or shrine not large enough to be served by a holy champion.

In Arcanis, you must worship a deity to be a paladin and this affects what Oaths you may take. With the exception of Saluwé and Cadic, paladins of any deity may take the Oath of Devotion. The Oath of the Ancients is only taken by paladins in service to Saluwé, Beltine, or Belisarda and the Oath of Vengeance is only taken by paladins who worship Belisarda, Cadic, Hurrian, or Nier.

Additionally, paladins gain access to the Defensive Duelist and Canny Defense fighting styles presented under fighter.

# SORCERER

Unlike wizards, who must study the Arcanum to gain a true understanding of its magic, sorcerers encompass arcane casters who pull upon their natural magical heritage or individuals who have somehow been touched by a force which gives them the sorcerous 'spark'.

Beyond the origins provided below, the forthcoming Arcanis 5E RPG will present several unique origins, three more elorii bloodlines, and the Sorcerer-Priests of Sarish. Of the core origins only the Draconic Bloodline is available in Arcanis, and it is limited to female ss'ressen. Sorcerers gain the "Hunted by Ymandragore" trait, owing to the Sorcerer-King's desire to hunt down all people capable of casting arcane spells.

## SORCEROUS ORIGIN: THE ELORII ELEMENTALIST

Created through a combination of ssanu technomancy and arcane elemental magic before being infused with the essence of the Goddess of Life, elorii possess a unique elemental resonance. Some became masters of the Arcanum and practitioners of the complex and demanding Elder Tradition, it was only a matter of time before the elorii started to experiment with their own elemental nature. And like a master musician finding the right note, they learned to modify and focus that resonance, amplifying it tenfold.

**Races:** Only elorii may take the Elementalist origin.

**Practitioners of the Elder Arcanum:** All elorii arcane casters, even sorcerers, are trained in the fundamentals of the Elder Tradition. You gain the ability to cast spells with the ritual tag, but require twice as long to cast them (20 minutes, instead of 10). If you gain the ability to cast rituals through another class or a feat, you may perform rituals in half the time required (5 minutes)

As you gain levels in the sorcerer class you must choose the elemental powers pertaining to your sub-race.

### BLOOD OF FIRE (KELEKENE)

You embody the elemental power of fire, burning in your soul and driving you to action. But the inferno is unpredictable and inspires unrelenting terror in those that gaze upon it.

### SOUL OF FLAME

From 1st level, you possess the ability to change the damage type of any spell you cast to fire damage for 1 sorcery point. Also, any time you cast a spell which deals fire damage you increase the amount dealt by your Charisma modifier. If a spell has multiple targets, this bonus damage may only be applied to a single target. The damage is applied to all targets affected by area of effect spells.

### ELEMENTAL NATURE

At 6th level you gain the ability to tap into your elemental nature to empower your spells. You may use your Blood Rank in place of your Charisma modifier when determining your spell attack modifier and spell save DC. This does not change any other ability of the sorcerer class that relies on Charisma (such as Metamagic). Also, as an action, you may spend 2 sorcery points to gain immunity to fire damage for 1 hour.

### SCORCHED EARTH

At 14th level you constantly radiate an aura of heat, allowing you to remain comfortable in temperatures down to -40 Fahrenheit. Also, any time you are struck with a melee attack you may use your reaction to force your attacker to make a Dexterity saving throw or suffer 2d8 fire damage. You may utilize 1 sorcery point to increase the damage to a number of d8s equal to your Blood Rank.

### THE FIRE STORM

Starting at 18th level, you gain the ability to embody your elemental nature and use it to empower your spells. For 10 sorcery points, you may, as a bonus action, change into a fire elemental, as if you cast shapechange. Unlike the spell, you retain your ability to cast spells and use Bloodline Powers and all damage dealing spells cast by you during the duration deal fire damage instead of the spell's regular damage type.



## WARLOCK

Usually met with disdain and outright violence, warlocks are commonly hunted down and killed, especially in the lands of Almeric, Coryan, and Milandir. It is only within the Abessian Dominion and Canceri that warlocks find a level of acceptance, while in the Unsealed Lands, warlocks of the Fiend commonly find themselves in positions of power.

Due to the nature of Arcanis' cosmology and the disposition of the various beings which would grant such powers, warlock patrons of the Fiend and the Great Old One are not available for players. The Archfey patron is referred to as the Spirits (as there are no true fey in Arcanis) and warlocks who receive the Pact of the Chain boon are required to choose a beast with a challenge rating up to 1/4 as their familiar.

Warlocks bound to the Spirits, such as the Ehtzara, are almost entirely found among tribal societies such as the Yhing Hir of the Hinterlands. Though not always hunted by authorities, those bound to the Spirits are often targeted for discrimination when in 'civilized' lands.

Warlocks bound to either the Fiend or Great Old One are actively hunted by countless organizations including both the Mother Church of Coryan and the Milandisian Church, as well as the elorii and most of the Dwarven Enclaves.

### HUNTED BY YMANDRAGORE

As an arcane caster you may be targeted by harvesters of Ymandragore. Any time you openly cast spells in public there is a chance that you will be spotted by harvester agents or informants. Once you are known to the harvesters you will be targeted by these agents of Ymandragore; it is not a question of IF they will come for you but WHEN.

See the 'Casting Spells with Subtlety' side bar for rules about concealing your magic.

## WIZARD

Arcane magic in Arcanis is divided into three distinct traditions. The Eldritch Tradition is practiced by the short-lived races and is an exercise in brute force, sacrificing precision for power. The older races practice the Elder Tradition, a demanding process which requires time but grants unparalleled precision. And lastly psionics, the ability to shape magic with one's force of will, is a power only the val possess.

None of the wizard traditions found in the core rules are available for play in Arcanis. Wizards must follow either the Elder or the Eldritch Tradition. Psionics will be presented in the forthcoming Arcanis 5E RPG.

Of course, all wizards gain the "Hunted by Ymandragore" trait, owing to the Sorcerer-King's desire to hunt down all people capable of casting arcane spells.

## ELDER TRADITION

The Elder Tradition is the magic practiced by the elder races of Arcanis, such as the ssanu, Il'Huan, and the elorii. Elder arcanum tends to be methodical and precise, befitting races that are so long lived that a decade is a reasonable amount of time to have a discussion.

Arcane magic taps into the residual energy of Creation to achieve miraculous and often mind-bending effects. This gives these ancient practitioners mastery over such exotic effects as creating an object out of thin air, changing the very essence of one thing to another, or tapping directly into the raw building blocks of reality (such as the Elemental Planes).

What differentiates elder magic from the eldritch arcanum practiced by the younger races (such as humanity) is the methodical and precise nature in which the raw energy is manipulated. Though this assiduous attention to detail makes elder magic potent, it is much slower to cast than its eldritch counterpart.

Many wise and intelligent humans have tried to master the Elder Tradition but those that came near to successfully do so have been driven mad. Many speculate that the human mind lacks the structure of the elder races and men are thus incapable of mastering this tradition.

**Racial Requirement:** Elorii

## ELDER SPELL CASTER

Those who practice the Elder Tradition are undeniably masters of ritual magic. When you cast spells as a ritual, you can empower them by taking additional time in their casting. If you take 15 minutes to cast a ritual spell, you may choose to either double the duration of the spell or cast it at one level higher than normal.

## SCULPT SPELLS

Elder magic is about precision and control. Beginning at 2nd level, you can create pockets of relative safety within the effects of your evocation spells. When you cast an evocation spell that affects other creatures you can see, you can choose a number of them equal to 1 + the spell's level. The chosen creatures automatically succeed on their saving throws against the spell and they take no damage if they would normally take half damage on a successful save.

## ARCANE PRECISION

Starting at 6th level, you may spend a bonus action to grant yourself advantage on your next spell attack roll. You may use this feature a number of times per day equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of one). You regain all expended uses of this feature when you finish a long rest.

## ELDER EFFICIENCY

Beginning at 10th level, any time you cast a 3rd level or higher spell at a higher spell level you recover one first level spell slot.

## SPELL MASTERY

Elder casters develop an uncanny mastery over a small number of spells. Starting at 14th level, you may choose a number of spells of 2nd level or less equal to your Intelligence bonus. Any time you cast these spells, you cast them at one level higher without spending a higher level spell slot.

## ELDRITCH TRADITION

The Eldritch Tradition is the magic used by most of the younger races of Arcanis, such as humanity and s'sressen. Like the Elder Tradition, the wizard takes the residual power of Creation and funnels that power through themselves, channeling it to perform a desired effect through sheer force of will.

To illuminate the differences, masters of the Eldritch Tradition explain to their students that elder wizards are able to form and maintain a long equation, manipulate it, and even complete it, all without the help of paper and stylus. A human wizard can formulate the equation in their mind, manipulate it up to a point, but then has to make a "guesstimation" about the answer. Eldritch magic will never be as elegant and beautiful as the Elder Tradition but it is just as deadly.

**Racial Requirement:** Dark-kin, dwarf (Encali only), gnome, human, s'sressen (female only), val.

## ELDRITCH SPELL CASTER

You have developed several shortcuts which allow you to cast complex rituals utilizing a form of arcane shorthand. You only require 5 minutes to cast a ritual spell.

## RAPID EMPOWERMENT

Eldritch casters learn how to cannibalize active spells to empower their spellcasting. Starting at 2nd level you may, as a bonus action, end an active 1st level or greater spell which requires concentration. This allows you to boost the efficiency of any spell you cast in the same round. Spells augmented in such a way allow you to reroll a number of damage dice equal to your Intelligence modifier. You must use the result of your reroll even if the result is lower.

## POTENT CANTRIP

Starting at 6th level, your damaging cantrips affect even creatures that avoid the brunt of the effect. When a creature succeeds on a saving throw against your cantrip, the creature takes half the cantrip's damage (if any) but suffers no additional effect from the cantrip.

## RAPID CASTING

Beginning at 10th level, you may cast a cantrip as a bonus action immediately after casting any spell utilizing a spell slot higher than the spell's level. You may use this feature a number of times per day equal to your intelligence modifier (a minimum of once). You regain all expanded uses when you finish a long rest.

### Overchannel

Starting at 14th level, you can increase the power of your simpler spells. When you cast a wizard spell of 5th level or lower that deals damage, you can deal maximum damage with that spell. This ability has no effect on cantrips.

The first time you do so, you suffer no adverse effect. If you use this feature again before you finish a long rest, you take 2d12 necrotic damage for each spell slot level used to cast the spell, immediately after you cast it. Each time you use this feature again before finishing a long rest, the necrotic damage per spell level increases by 1d12. This damage ignores resistance and immunity.

## CASTING SPELLS WITH SUBTLETY

Spell casting is a clearly noticeable act under normal circumstances; even manifesting psionic powers, a purely mental exercise, creates visual effects that clearly betray the caster. In fact, psionics is perhaps the most difficult Arcanum to disguise.

When casting a spell, you may attempt to conceal its casting though the use of the Stealth skill using your primary casting attribute in place of your Dexterity. The DC is equal to 12+ the spell level slot utilized in the casting of the spell. You gain advantage when attempting to conceal any spell which only possesses a verbal component and has no obvious visual effect. You have disadvantage on any attempt to manifest a psionic spell with subtlety.

If you succeed, you successfully cast the spell with none the wiser. Failure means that any onlookers, active or passive, know that you cast your spell.

Bonuses and penalties are at the GM's discretion. In a dark room, hiding the creation of a flaming sword would be impossible, while forming a dagger with manipulation of shadow would be significantly easier.

Many spells are simply impossible to cast without notice; an explosion of fire or lightning bolts flying from outstretched hands tend to draw attention. rules about concealing your magic.



# THE HOLY CHAMPION

Each of the different temples of Arcanis venerate a particular deity, usually focusing on a specific aspect and its associated tenets. Many of these temples may sponsor an order of holy warriors to further spread their doctrine and influence.

Below are examples of some of the Orders of holy champions that operate throughout the Known Lands of Arcanis. This is by no means an exhaustive list as there are many other orders, large and small, that spread the beliefs of the temples.

All holy champions share many base class abilities.

## Class Features

As a Holy Champion, you gain the following class features

### Hit Points

**Hit Dice:** 1d10 per holy champion level

**Hit Points at 1st Level:** 10 + your Constitution Modifier

**Hit Points at Higher Levels:** d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per holy champion level after 1st.

### Proficiencies

**Armor:** As per your Chosen Deity

**Weapons:** As per your Chosen Deity

**Tools:** none

**Saving Throws:** Wisdom, Charisma

**Skills:** Choose two from Athletics, Insight, Intimidation, Persuasion, and Religion

## Equipment

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- The weapon of your Chosen Deity (see cleric) and any one simple weapon. (a) If you possess light armor proficiency you start with a suit of studded leather or (b) if you possess medium or heavy armor proficiency you start with a suit of chain mail or (c) if you do not possess proficiency in any armor you start with a bag of 10 gold coins.
- A holy symbol and either (a) a priest's pack or (b) an explorer's pack
- (a) 5 javelins or (b) a shortbow (10 arrows) or (c) a crossbow (10 bolts)

## AURA OF PROTECTION, ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENTS, DIVINE SMITE, EXTRA ATTACK, AND SPELLCASTING

These abilities all function per the paladin ability of the same name. Holy champions use the same base spell list as the paladin class.

## LAY ON HANDS

You possess a healing pool equal to 5 times your holy champion level, regaining these hit points after completing a long rest. As an action, you may draw upon this pool to heal a number of hit points to yourself or a creature you touch, up to a maximum amount of the hit points remaining in your healing pool. Different Orders grant alternative uses for this healing pool. This feature has no effect on undead or constructs.



## THE HOLY CHAMPION

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Spell Slots per Spell Level				
			1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1	+2	Rigorous Training, Lay on Hands, Chosen Deity	--	--	--	--	--
2	+2	Deity Combat Style, Spell Casting, Divine Smite	2	--	--	--	--
3	+2	Holy Champion Order	3	--	--	--	--
4	+2	Ability Score Improvement	3	--	--	--	--
5	+3	Extra Attack	4	1	--	--	--
6	+3	Aura of Protection	4	1	--	--	--
7	+3	Holy Champion Order Feature	4	2	--	--	--
8	+3	Ability Score Improvement	4	2	--	--	--
9	+4	--	4	3	1	--	--
10	+4	Aura of Faith	4	3	1	--	--
11	+4	Improved Divine Smite	4	3	2	--	--
12	+4	Ability Score Improvement	4	3	2	--	--
13	+5	--	4	3	3	1	--
14	+5	Unshakable Dogma	4	3	3	1	--
15	+5	Holy Champion Order Feature	4	3	3	2	--
16	+5	Ability Score Improvement	4	3	3	2	--
17	+6	--	4	3	3	3	1
18	+6	Aura Improvements	4	3	3	3	1
19	+6	Ability Score Improvement	4	3	3	3	2
20	+6	Holy Champion Order Feature	4	3	3	3	2

### RIGOROUS TRAINING

Every holy champion goes through intense training to hone their skills. Choose a skill or tool proficiency gained through your Chosen Deity feature; you gain double your proficiency bonus to all ability checks when utilizing that skill.

### CHOSEN DEITY

At 1st level you must choose your patron deity. This choice grants you additional armor, weapon, tools, and skill proficiencies to match the nature of your deity's dogma. If you choose a deity from the Pantheon of Man you must also choose between the Mother Church of Coryan or the Milandric Orthodox Church. If your character is Cancereuse you may also choose to follow The Church of the Dark Triumvirate.

Here are a sample of two deities: Belisarda, the Lifemother of the Elorii, and Neroth, The Deathbringer.

#### Belisarda

As a follower of Belisarda, you gain the following additional proficiencies

**Armor:** All armor and shields

**Weapons:** Simple and marital Weapons

**Tools:** Herbalism kit and 1 musical instrument

**Skills:** None

#### Neroth

As a follower of Neroth your character gains the following additional Proficiencies

**Armor:** All armor and shields

**Weapons:** Simple weapons, battleaxe, great axe

**Tools:** Healing Kit

**Skills:** None

### DEITY COMBAT STYLE

At 2nd level, you adopt a style of fighting common among followers of your own deity and focused around their preferred holy weapons. You must choose one of the fighting styles of your Chosen Deity and this choice cannot be changed.

DEITY	FIGHTING STYLE
Belisarda	Archery, Canny Defense, Dueling, Protection
Neroth	Dueling, Great Weapon Fighting

### HOLY CHAMPION ORDER

Once you reach 3rd level, you are inducted into the Holy Champion Order of your deity. Up until this point, you have been a foot soldier for your church but are now one of the elite warriors dedicated to them. Your Order will grant you specific features at 3rd level and again at 7th, 15th, and 20th levels. These features will include specific spells and the Channel Divinity feature. Spells for Holy Champion Orders function

like Oath Spells for paladins; they are spells gained at specific levels that don't count against your prepared spells each day. Likewise, Channel Divinity functions the same as the paladin ability but each Holy Champion Order gives different options for its use. See below for the specific features granted by each Order.

### AURA OF FAITH

Starting at 10th level, all members of your temple within 15 feet of you can't be frightened. At 18th level, this ability reaches out to 50 feet.

### UNSHAKABLE DOGMA

Once you reach 14th level, you gain advantage on all saving throws against spells cast by a divine caster of a Church other than your own. Also as a reaction, you may extend this protection to a member of your church within 15 feet.

## HOLY CHAMPION ORDERS

### BELISARDA - ORDER OF THE TWELVE OAKS

Dating back to the time of the Great Betrayal, the Order of the Twelve Oaks is a small group, self-tasked with using the lessons of the past to ensure the future of the elorii. They believe that the elorii have both dealt and suffered terrible atrocities, but that these were only fires to temper them for

their yet-unknown true purpose. They feel that many elorii have grown arrogant and withdrawn over the intervening millennia, and fear that they have forgotten the terrible actions of their own past, to the extent that now they see only vengeance and not forgiveness.

Thus, the members of the Order have tasked themselves with three goals. First, it is their duty to remember the devastation caused by their own people and to take responsibility for these actions. In penance, all members of the Order are pledged to the ancient ways and shall greet anyone they encounter with compassion and friendship, lending aid to any in need, be they elorii, human, Val, or even ss'ressen. However, they have been betrayed before, and have sworn never again to

allow their people to be slaughtered by those they thought were friends. Thus, the Order's second duty is to remain ever vigilant, examining closely those they have welcomed as friends and ensuring that they do not pose a threat to the elorii people. Finally, the Order recognizes that the elorii will be whole again only when the Elemental gods walk amongst them once more. Thus, the Order's last duty is to prepare the way for the events that will return their gods to their rightful places.

**Races:** Only elorii may join this Order.

### ORDER SPELLS

You gain the following spells at the level listed

HOLY CHAMPION LEVEL	SPELLS GRANTED
3rd	Bless, protection from evil and good
5th	Calm emotions, warding bond
9th	Create food and water, elemental weapon
13th	Death ward, locate creature
17th	Conjure elemental, dispel evil and good



## CHANNEL DIVINITY

When you reach 3rd level you gain the following Channel Divinity options:

- **Oath of Reprisal:** You may designate one ally within 30' as your ward; any time your chosen ward is attacked you may, as a reaction, use your Channel Divinity to swear an oath of reprisal. For 1 minute you gain advantage on all attack rolls against the creature that attacked your chosen ward. To activate this ability, you must have witnessed the attack or know the identity of the attacker (being told the attacker's name and description by your chosen ward qualifies).

- **Turn Undead:** You can use the Turn Undead option of the cleric class.

## IMPROVED LAY ON HANDS

Upon reaching 3rd level, when utilizing your Lay on Hands ability you may opt to remove the charmed condition from an ally for 10 points from your healing pool.

## SPECIALIZED MOUNT

Anytime you cast find steed you may only summon forth a great elk (see p. 51).

## ONE OF MANY

Beginning at 7th level you project an aura of fellowship between you and any allies within a 10 foot radius. When an ally within this effect's radius is attacked, you may use a reaction to grant them resistance against that attack. However, you suffer damage equal to the damage taken by that ally after applying resistance. This damage is the same type as the damage that affected your ally and your own resistances and immunities apply.

At 18th level, the range of this aura increases to 30 feet.

## THE TRUTH IS REVEALED

Starting at 15th level, you may cast true seeing without the need of costly spell components. You regain the use of this ability after a long rest.

## AVATAR OF LIFE

At 20th level, as an action, you may become the living embodiment of your goddess' power. For 1 minute you gain the following benefits. Once this feature is used you may not use it again until you complete a long rest.

- At the start of every round, you or any ally any within 10 feet is healed 10 hit points.
- At the start of every round, any undead within 10 feet of you suffers 10 points of radiant damage.
- You and all allies within 10 feet gain immunity to necrotic damage.

## THE DEATHBRINGERS OF NEROETH

They travel through the night, drawing stares of scorn or fear from those they are sworn to protect. Evil was inadvertently unleashed upon the world by their Lord and they have been tasked to find it and send it screaming back to the Crucible of Sins. Evil will always exist in a world where man has free will, but there are times when these petty evils grow and become overwhelming. That is when the Deathbringers arrive; to deal with those so corrupted that their removal from this world is necessary.

With Illiir's death during the Mythic Age, all the Evils of the world were released upon the world. Seeing mankind besieged as darkness encroached from every side, Neroth anointed four of the bravest and noblest of humanity as His champions. He crafted for them heavy axes which he called

"Little Deaths" and sent them forth to turn the tide and inspire their fellows to acts of heroism. In the present age, Deathbringers hunt down the evils that were loosed upon Arcanis during the Mythic Age. Wherever the corrupters of mankind appear and acts of extreme lust, greed, hatred, or pride crush the innocent or those too weak to defend themselves, a Deathbringer will appear to challenge it. Some say that Deathbringers can smell evil upon the wind due to their uncanny ability to appear where they are most needed.

Races: Val and humans make up the majority of the Deathbringers, with val'Mordane being the most predominant due to their affinity with the Lord of the Tombs. Dark-kin, dwarves, and gnomes are able to join this holy order, but these are so rare as to be almost unknown. Due to their strongly-held and dramatically different religious beliefs, elorii and ss'ressen never join this order.

## ORDER SPELLS

You gain the following spells at the level listed

HOLY CHAMPION LEVEL	SPELLS GRANTED
3rd	Bless, false life
5th	Shroud of oblivion*, spiritual weapon
9th	Return to thy rest*, vampiric touch
13th	Death ward, phantasmal killer
17th	Call revenant *, destructive wave

## CHANNEL DIVINITY

When you reach the 3rd level you gain the following Channel Divinity options:

- **Neroth's Grasp:** As an action, you may use your Channel Divinity to imbue one weapon you are wielding with your Lord's unyielding hunger. For 1 minute your weapon deals an additional 1d4 necrotic damage. If your weapon is not magical it is considered magical for the duration. You may

end this effect as part of any action. This effect ends if you fall unconscious or if you are no longer holding or carrying your imbued weapon.

• **Turn Undead:** You may use your Channel Divinity to turn undead as a cleric.

### **SENSE THE UNCLEAN**

At 3rd level you gain the ability to sense the presence of aberrations and undead within 60 feet of you that are not behind total cover. Such creatures in disguise (such as polymorphed or shape changed) receive a Charisma saving throw to remain undetected. You know the type (aberration or undead) of any being whose presence you sense, but not its identity. Within the same radius, you also detect the presence of any place or object that has been desecrated.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier. When you finish a long rest, you regain all expended uses.

### **UNDYING MOUNT**

Anytime you cast find steed you may only summon forth an undead warhorse. Use the base stats for the warhorse but change its type to undead. This mount is clearly undead but the details of its appearance are up to you

### **AURA OF FEAR**

Beginning at 7th level you begin to radiate an aura of fear. At the beginning of your turn, all enemies within 10 feet of you must make a Wisdom saving throw or suffer disadvantage on all attacks against you for 1 minute. Anyone who makes this saving throw is immune to this ability for 24 hours. Creatures immune to the frightened condition are immune to this effect.

At 18th level, you may use an action to temporarily extend this aura to 30 feet forcing all enemies within that aura to make a Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the beginning of your next turn.

### **DEATH'S HAND**

Upon reaching 15th level you can look into a creature's soul and judge that it is their time to die. When making an attack, you may choose to call down the power of your Lord. Roll a number of d6s equal to your level. If the result is higher than your targets current hit points that target is dead. You regain the use of this ability after completing a long rest.

### **NEROTH'S GIFT**

Upon reaching 20th level you receive the holiest blessing of Neroth.

- You become undead, gaining resistance to necrotic damage and vulnerability to radiant damage.
- You no longer need to eat, sleep, or breathe.
- You become immune to poison damage and the poisoned condition.
- You gain advantage on all saving throws against being turned or spells and effects which impart the frightened condition.





## PLAYER'S OPTIONS

## MULTICLASSING

Multiclassing is allowed in Arcanis with some caveats due to the nature of magic in Arcanis. In Arcanis, magic is referred to as the Arcanum and there are three types: arcane - magic gained through manipulation of the energy of Creation; divine - magic granted by worship of gods; and primal - magic gained by channeling the power of nature and spirits. No character can have access to more than one of the Arcanum. Divine casters are not allowed to multiclass with arcane or primal casters and vice versa. This includes archetypes that grant spells such as the Eldritch Knight archetype of the fighter class.

- **Arcane Spellcasters:** Bard, Sorcerer, Warlock (Fiend or Great Old one patron), Wizard
- **Divine Spellcasters:** Cleric, Holy Champion\*, Paladin
- **Primal Spellcasters:** Druid, Ranger, Warlock (Spirits patron)

In order to multiclass into the holy champion class you must have either a Strength or Dexterity of 13 and Charisma of 13. In addition, you must be proficient with simple weapons, and your chosen deity's armor and weapons or have Martial Arts Training in the case of holy champions of Anshar.

## FEATS

Of the core feats, there are two that require special attention to be compatible with the nature of magic in Arcanis.

If you are a spell caster you may not utilize either the Magic Initiate or Ritual Caster feat to learn spells from an opposed Arcanum (arcane, divine, or primal) of magic. For example, if you are a wizard you cannot take Ritual Caster to learn divine rituals.

Choosing these feats also restricts your multiclass options. If you choose to learn a divine spell and cantrips though the Magic Initiate feat you are no longer able to multiclass into any arcane spellcasting class or take an archetype which grants arcane spell casting.

### New Feat Attributes

**School:** These feats are different methods of fighting developed across the Known Lands. You cannot benefit from or utilize the feat unless you are both proficient in and wielding the specified weapons.

**Stance:** You may only utilize one stance feat at a time. You must use a bonus action to enter a stance and you can switch stances as a bonus action.

The following core feats are now treated as (stance) feats:

- Dual Wielder
- Great Weapon Master
- Polearm Master
- Shield Master
- Sentinel

**Tier:** Some feats possess more than one rank of abilities (initiate, journeyman, and master). When you first take a tiered feat you learn the initial abilities. You may take the feat a second and then third time to learn the journeyman and master level abilities.

## NEW FEATS

### †W‡IN BLADES “DIMACHAERUS PRIMUS” (SCHOOL, STANCE, †IER)

Originally developed by gladiators in the arena, dimachaerus (“bearing two knives”) is often used today by officers of the Legions of Coryan. Since they do not normally carry a shield, it gives them an edge in cutting their way free of a fight and returning to command their troops.

**Prerequisite:** Former Slave (Gladiator), Legionnaire, or Dexterity of 13+

**Preferred Weapons:** Dimachaerus Primus utilizes twin daggers, gladii, short swords or any combination thereof.

#### Initiate

- Any time you draw a weapon you may draw two weapons instead.
- If you are dressed in light or no armor and are wielding two weapons, you gain a +1 bonus to your AC.
- Many opponents will see your lack of a shield as a disadvantage, commonly leading to reckless attacks that leave them overextended. While in this stance, any time you are missed with a melee attack you may, as a reaction, take an opportunity attack against the creature that missed you as long as they are within reach. You may perform this maneuver a number of times equal to your Dexterity bonus, regaining all uses of this ability after completing a long or short rest.

#### Journeyman

• Your off-hand weapon is as much for defense as offense. When performing an Attack action, you may use a bonus action to increase your AC by +2 until the beginning of your next turn.

• In both the arena and the battlefield sometimes you need to trade blood for blood. While performing an Attack

action, you may lower your AC by 2 to gain a +1 bonus to hit and damage.

## POWERFUL PRAYER

**Prerequisite:** Access to the divine Arcanum

There is one particular prayer you have come to cherish. When you recite it you feel the power of the words and channel them with righteous intent.

Choose one spell you can cast of 1st level or higher. Once this spell is chosen you may not change it.

- Your spell becomes more difficult to counter, requiring the caster of counterspell to make an ability check regardless of the spell’s level.
- When casting your chosen spell you may use your bonus action to select a number of targets equal to the spell slot used to cast your chosen spell. The targets must be within 30 feet of you and members of your church. Those targets are under the effects of a bless spell until the end of your next turn. You may not use this ability again until you complete a short rest.

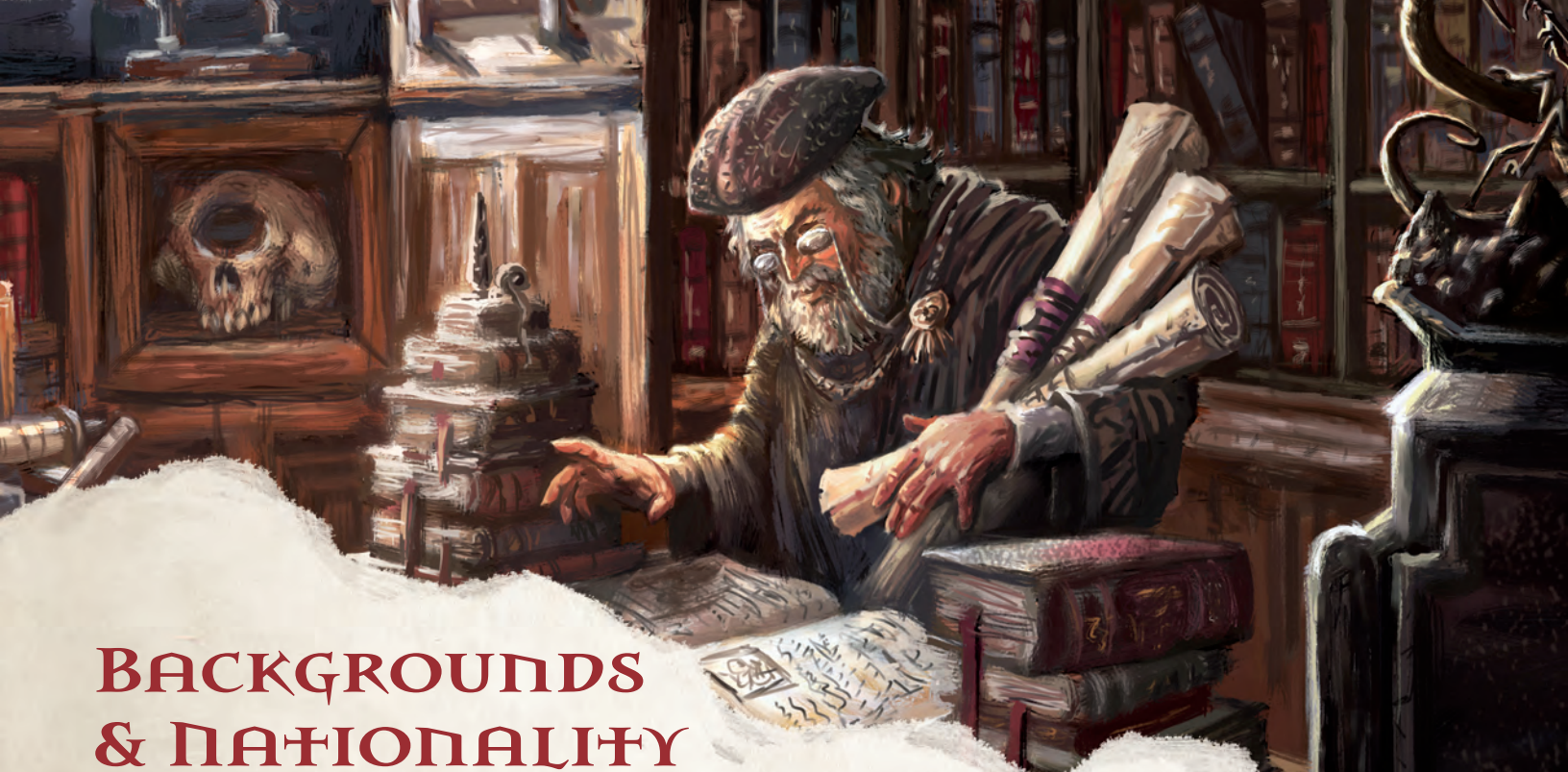
## SPELL AFFINITY

**Prerequisite:** Access to the arcane or primal Arcanum

You have mastered a particular spell above all others, allowing you to slightly alter it in the casting.

Choose one spell you can cast of 1st level or higher. When you cast this spell it is difficult to counter, requiring the caster of counterspell to make an ability check regardless of the spell’s level. Also, when you cast this spell you may use your bonus action to gain one of the following benefits. Once an option is used you may not use it again until you complete a short rest.

- Cast as if using a spell slot one level higher.
- Gain advantage on your spell attack roll.
- Surround your target in aura of dim magical light for 1 minute, the description of which is up to you.



# BACKGROUNDS & NATIONALITY

All the core backgrounds are available in Arcanis with some modifications. Any specific rule (such as languages or starting equipment) overrides the original.

**Regional & Racial Requirements:** Some backgrounds are only available to specific races or particular regions.

**Literacy:** Among the human populace literacy is not a given. In fact, for the majority of the populace “knowing your letters” is a rarity. It is not uncommon for someone to be able to speak many languages and simply be unable to read or write in any of them. As such literacy has become a soft social meter which displays either tutoring or noble blood.

There are three ways to gain literacy; race, background or giving up a known language. Both dwarves and elorii have strong traditions of education and gain literacy through their racial heritage. Some backgrounds grant literacy and if you choose a background which does not grant literacy you may become literate by giving up one of your known languages.

Gaining literacy makes you literate in all your known languages.

## ACOLYTE

With a few exceptions the acolyte remains unchanged.

**Additional Proficiencies:** If you are a val you gain proficiency with flintlocks.

**Languages:** You learn an additional language depending upon which pantheon your character served while in the church. Altharin (Pantheon of Man), Ssethric (Ssethric pantheon), or Eloran (Elorii pantheon)

**Literacy:** You gain literacy in your known languages.

## UARIANT: THE TEMPLE GUARD

Unlike most acolytes, you received only the most basic religious instruction. Instead, you were chosen to be one of the elite guards which protect the interest and secrets of your given faith.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Instead of Religion, you gain proficiency in Athletics.

## CHARLATAN

**Literacy:** Unless your scam involves literacy (such as a document forger) you are not literate.

## CRIMINAL

**Literacy:** Unless your specialty requires literacy (such as blackmailer) you are not literate.

## ENTERTAINER

**Literacy:** You gain literacy in your known languages.

## UARIANT: COURTESAN

You know how to please those who come to you, be it with stimulating conversation or your practiced touch. Whether you worked as a “street-level” Larissan priestess with a courtesan guild, such as the Nine Sisters of Tender Mercy, or as a pampered companion of nobility, you now find yourself outside of that protective and pleasant environment. The reason for this is your own, but one thing is certain - silk pillows and scented water are not in your immediate future.



## Feature: Cultured

Although you are no longer a courtesan you can easily fit in among the nobility, almost as if you were one of their own. And once you become familiar with the local power structure you find that although you do not possess the power of a noble, you do have their ear.

## FOLK HERO

**Literacy:** You are not literate.

## GUILD ARTISAN

**Additional Proficiencies:** If you are a val you gain proficiency with flintlocks.

**Literacy:** You gain literacy in your known languages.

## HERMIT

**Literacy:** You gain literacy in your known languages.

## NOBLE

**Flintlock Permit:** You gain the legal right to bear flintlock weapons and purchase blast powder, even if you are not a val.

**Literacy:** You gain literacy in your known languages.

**Additional Proficiencies:** You gain proficiency with flintlocks.

## VARIANT: PATRICIAN

As a noble of the Coryani Empire, you live a life of luxury far beyond that enjoyed by nobles of other nations. Yet such luxury comes with hidden costs; the Imperial Court is oft times deadlier than the bloodiest of battlefields.

**Feature:** Instead of the Position of Privilege feature, you may select a single slave per the Retainers variant feature. This slave can perform mundane tasks for you, but they do not fight for you and will not follow you into obviously dangerous areas, such as dungeons.

## OUTLANDER

**Literacy:** You are not literate.

## SAGE

**Additional Proficiencies:** If you are a val you gain proficiency with flintlocks.

## SAILOR

**Literacy:** You gain literacy in your known languages.

## SOLDIER

**Literacy:** You are not literate.

**Additional Proficiencies:** If you are a val you gain proficiency with flintlocks.

**Military Training:** As a soldier you were trained in the use of specific weapons; if you do not possess proficiency in a weapon favored your nation's military you gain proficiency with that weapon.

Nation	Weapon
Almeric	Gladius* or longsword
Altheria	Scimitar
Coryani Empire	Gladius or spear
Dwarven Enclaves	Battleaxe or shortsword
Elorii Nations	Longsword
Hinterlands	Spear
League of Princes	Shortsword
Milandir	Longsword
Pirate Isles	Cutlass*

## VARIANT: FORMER LEGIONNAIRE

You served in the Legions of the Coryani Empire and are granted all the rights, privileges, and obligations of your association with the Legions. You have been branded with the symbol of your specific Legion on one arm and the tattoo of the Symbol of the Empire on the other.

**Equipment:** You gain the following equipment in place of any melee weapons or armor you may acquire. Ranged weapons granted though your class (if any) are not affected.

**Melee weapons:** gladius, dagger (pugio), and a spear.

**Armor:** If you possess medium or heavy armor proficiency you start play with a suit of lorica squamata (chain mail). If you only possess light armor proficiency you start with a suit of lorica musculata (studded mail). If you are also proficient with shields you gain a shield.

**Starting Pack:** Regardless of your class you gain a soldier's kit.

**Legion:** Choose your legion. You have been branded with its symbol.

### Some Known Legions

Legion of Avenging Thunder	Legion of Blazing Judgment
Legion of Heaven's Blade	Legion of Honorable Accord
Legio Lex Talionis	Legion of Sweet Sorrow
Legion of the Defiant Shield	Legion of the Mighty Oak
Legion of the Reluctant Warrior	Legion of the Watchful Hunter

### Common Languages Trees and Their Alphabets

Language	Alphabet	Typical Speakers
<i>“The Tongues of Man”</i>		
Altherian	Altherin	Spoken by Altherians & Scholars; Also referred to as Ancient Imperial
Coryani, High	Coryani	Educated and Scholarly people of eastern and southern Onara
Coryani, Low	Coryani	The trade Language spoken by many of the people of eastern and southern Onara
Milandisian	Coryani	Dialect common to the peoples of Milandir
Cancerese	Coryani	Dialect common to the peoples of Canceri
Erdukene	Altherin	Nierites of the Northern Hinterlands
Khitani, High	Khitani	Educated / Scholarly people of the Khitani Empire
Auxunite	Khitani	Nomads that roam the wastes of the Unsealed Lands.
Khitani, Low	Khitani	Common people of the Khitani Empire
Yhing Hir	Khitani	Dialect common to the Yhing Hir
<i>“The Tongues of the Serpent”</i>		
Ssethric	Ssethric	Ssethregorans
Eloran	Ssethric	Dialect common to the Elorii people
Ss’ressen	Ssethric	Dialect common to the Ss’ressen
<i>“The Tongues of the Sky People”</i>		
Kio	Kio	Kio
Harnen	Kio	Dialect common to the Harns
<i>“The Unique Tongues”</i>		
Infernal	Infernal	Infernals of the hells
Myrantian	Myrantian	Nobles of the Abbessian Dominion
Udor	Udor	Dwarves, Giants
Unden	None	Dialect common to the Undir, written in a local alphabet, usually Coryani or Kio
Ymandrake	Ymandrake	Ymandrakes

*\*Many other races, ancient and modern, have their own languages and alphabets; these are both numerous, and beyond the scope of this book*

#### ⚔️ VARIANT: SHINING PATROL

The Shining Patrol is the armed forces of the Republic of Altheria and is made up of soldiers from every known nation in the east of Onara.

**Writ of Ownership:** You gain the legal right to bear flintlock weapons and purchase blast powder, even if you are not a val.

#### ⚔️ VARIANT: VETERAN OF THE WALL

When the mountain range known as the Wall of the Gods fell, the dwarves of Tir Betoq constructed a giant wall of worked stone to keep the Infernal Horde from invading all the Known Lands. Through their efforts and the help of brave adventurers, the wall is now complete. You are one of the few who have stood watch on the massive rampart and helped repel endless incursions of the foul creatures. But very few have the fortitude to stand guard here for too long. You have done your duty - now it's time to refresh your soul before you become one of the Tainted.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Instead of Intimidation you gain proficiency in Arcana.

#### ⚔️ VARIANT: FORMER ROYAL MARINE

Milandir prides itself on its navy. Their ships are powerful enough to face down the black ships of Ymandragore (at least defensively), or chase down the pirates of the Northern Seas.

You are proud to have once counted yourself amongst their number!

**Tool Proficiencies:** Instead of Vehicles (land) you gain proficiency in Vehicles (water).

### THE NOBLE VAL

Val from certain backgrounds are usually of noble birth. These backgrounds include Acolyte, Guild Artisan, Noble, Sage, and Soldier as well as the new background Diplomat. Variants of these backgrounds are also eligible for noble birth.

Val'Sheem may be of noble birth when choosing the Courtesan variant of the Entertainer background, while val'Ossan may be of noble birth if they come from the Sailor background.

Being of noble birth allows you to swap out your background's feature with the Noble background feature. You also possess the legal right to carry a flintlock and add a personalized adorned flintlock pistol and 10 shots of blast powder to your starting equipment.

## URCHIN

**Literacy:** You are not literate.

## NEW BACKGROUNDS

### FORMER SLAVE

Through guile, wit, or luck you have won your freedom. Maybe your master died and gave you your liberty with a small amount of coin, or maybe you were just smart enough to buy your own freedom. But unlike some, your will was never broken.

You begin your adventuring career with enough money to live modestly but securely for at least 10 days, left over from the money you had on hand when your freedom was secured.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Insight and one gained from your specialty

**Tool Proficiencies:** One type of tools of your choice.

**Equipment:** A dagger, a set of common clothes, a document showing your status as a freeman, and a belt pouch containing 10 gp.

**Literacy:** Unless you are a tutor, you are not literate

**Specialty:** As a slave, you were called to fulfill a particular role in your owner's household. Roll a d6 or choose from the options in the table below to determine your specialty.

D6	Specialty	Skill
1	Laborer	Athletics
2	Pleasure-slave	Performance
3	Household slave	Persuasion
4	Groom or horse slave	Animal Handling
5	Artisan's slave	Any one tool proficiency
6	Tutor	History

### Feature: Secret Ways

As a slave, you were always seen but never acknowledged. To facilitate your invisibility, you became familiar with all the back ways into and out of your estate and how not to draw attention to yourself. When in situations where you are attempting to locate a means of ingress you know where to find the slave's entrance if one exists. Additionally, you gain advantage on all rolls made with other slaves or similar individuals for information.

## Suggested Characteristics

The lives of slaves are shaped by how they came to be in their bondage. Once freed, they are often driven to accomplish something with their freedom that they could not have previously attained. However, some—especially those who were abused during their slavery—come out of their bondage angry and wishing vengeance on those who had mistreated them.

D8	Personality Trait
1	Sometimes I still find myself unable or unwilling to take the initiative. Unless I'm told to do something, I will simply not do it.
2	I find it hard to trust; those with the widest smiles are sometimes the cruelest masters.
3	I have the habit of listening into everyone's conversations. I'm a horrible gossip.
4	I have become callous to the most extreme social situations. In such a setting, nothing makes me uncomfortable.
5	Now that I am free I revel in it, doing some things simply because I can.
6	I'm naive about many things.
7	I do not part with my possessions easily.
8	I keep my eyes down when dealing with anyone of a higher social standing; some habits are hard to break.

D6	Ideal
1	Cruel: I take joy in having power over others and make the most of every opportunity to enforce my will.
2	Callus: I honestly don't care about the plights of others. Life is hard and unfair, deal with it.
3	Guilty: I left friends behind and I will do what I can to free them.
4	Compassionate: I can't stand to see the suffering of innocents.
5	Retributive: Cruel slave masters need a taste of the whip and the longing for freedom.
6	Aspirational: I'm going to live a full life, a life of my own choosing.

D6	Bond
1	I was separated from my family when I was young and seek them out to this day.
2	I still respect my master and their family. Though I am free I still come by to visit and I find I am welcome.
3	I left someone I love behind and I will do what I can to buy their freedom.
4	I owe my freedom to another slave whose actions resulted in my freedom.
5	I was set free after my master's death. In his will I was granted freedom and the curious trinket he always kept with him.
6	I witnessed something or know a secret, something my old master or his associates would kill me for.

D6	Flaw
1	I'm filled with blind hate for the people who enslaved me.
2	I have no respect for those who willingly become slaves.
3	Even now, I still flinch from a raised hand.
4	I can't stand the sight of a slave being treated badly.
5	I feel guilty when I find enjoyment in indulging myself.
6	I am selfish; now that I'm free the only person I look out for is myself.

### UARIANT: ESCAPED SLAVE

You escaped your slavery through illegal means; maybe you simply escaped or maybe you killed your master or one of their guards. Regardless of how you escaped, you are now free, on the run, and always looking over your shoulder.

## SLAVERY IN ARCANIS

Many nations practice some form of slavery, and while the treatment of slaves varies from master to master, there are also cultural differences. In the Coryani Empire slaves are expensive commodities and treated as such, while in Canceri slaves are beaten or killed for the slightest infraction.

There are many ways one becomes a slave. In the Coryani Empire many willingly submit themselves to slavery to pay off debts or to simply have a roof over their heads while others are taken as spoils of war. In Altheria some willingly become slaves to pay off a blood debt owed by themselves or their family or to enter into the servitude of a great scribe. In Canceri and the Pirate isles slaves are simply taken however and whenever they can.

**Additional Language:** Choose a nation to which you escaped. You gain that nation's language.

**Equipment:** A dagger, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing 15 gp.

### Additional Feature: Fugitive

Regardless of how you escaped, you may very well be arrested or even killed when in your nation of origin if your status as an escaped slave was ever discovered.

Your old master or their family may or may not be actively looking for you depending on your method of departure.

### UARIANT: FORMER GLADIATOR

You can still hear the roar of the crowd as they called out your name. The blood you spilled was for their pleasure and for your own freedom. Maybe you joined a ludi to pay off your debts, or maybe you were bought by a lanistae seeking to improve his stock. Nevertheless, you have won your freedom and are now master of your own destiny!

**Skill Proficiencies:** You may choose between Athletics or Acrobatics for your specialty proficiency

**Feature:** in lieu of the Secret Ways feature, you gain the By Popular Demand feature of the Entertainer Background.

# NATIONAL SKILLS

With the exception of humans (who get their national skill as a bonus skill), during character creation, you may swap out one skill granted by your background with an appropriate national skill.

Nation	Region	Skill (upper class)	Skill (lower class)
<b>Coryani Empire</b>			
	Annonica	History	Religion
	Balantica	Nature	Animal Handling
	Cafela	Deception	Sleight of Hand
	Illonia	History	Persuasion
	Salantis	Religion	History
	Valentia	Insight	Survival
<b>Dwarven Enclaves</b>			
	Encali	Arcana	Insight
	Nol Dappa	Intimidation	Survival
	Solanos Mor	Religion	Persuasion
	Tir Betoq	Investigation	Insight
<b>Elorii Nations</b>			
	Elonbé	Religion	Nature
	Entaris	Persuasion	Insight
<b>Free City-States of Almeric</b>			
	Moratavia	History	Persuasion
	Ulfia	Nature	Animal Handling
<b>Hinterlands</b>			
	Censure	Insight	Deception
	Erduk	Religion	Nature
	Nomad	Athletics	Animal Handling
	Pengik Peninsula	Nature	Survival
	Sicaris	Persuasion	Performance
<b>Milandir</b>			
	Eastmarch	History	Animal Handling
	Mil Takara	Religion	Survival
	Naeraanth	Persuasion	Insight
	Sulfur Marsh	Athletics	Survival
	Sylvania	Nature	Animal Handling
	Tralia	Investigation	Persuasion
<b>Republic of Altheria</b>		Arcana	History



## NEW SPELLS

**Secret Spells:** Secret spells may only be learned by listed religions, bloodlines, or organizations. Bards or other classes which may learn spells from another class may not learn these spells unless they are one of the groups listed

### BESTIAL FORM

*3rd-level transmutation*

**Secret Spell:** Faithful of Saluwé or val'Dellenov bloodline

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 hour

With mere whispers you can transform yourself into a primal humanoid, summoning forth the aspects of several beasts and incorporating them into your physical form.

You gain several bestial traits. You may grow claws, fangs, spines, horns, or a different natural weapon of your choice and you gain proficiency with whatever you choose. Your natural weapons are magical and deal 1d6 slashing, bludgeoning or piercing damage. You must choose the type of damage dealt when you cast this spell and you cannot change it unless you cast this spell again. During the duration you gain advantage on all concentration checks. When you cast this you spell, you gain one of the following traits

- **Eyes of the Eagle:** You gain advantage on all Wisdom (Perception) skill checks when using sight.
- **Ferocity of the Tiger:** When you use the Attack action to attack with your natural weapon you may make an extra attack as a bonus action.

- **Hide of the Boar:**

When not wearing any other armor, your AC is equal to 12 + proficiency bonus + your Dexterity modifier.

- **Might of the Bear:** You gain 20 temporary hit points, which are lost when the spell ends.

- **Nose of the Wolf:** You gain advantage on all Wisdom (Perception) skill checks when using scent.

- **Swiftness of the Cat:** Your base movement increases by 10 feet. Additionally, add your Dexterity modifier to any running jump distances.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, you may choose an additional trait for each level slot above 3rd level.

### BINDINGS OF SARISH

*4th-level enchantment*

**Secret Spell:** Faithful of Sarish or val'Mehan bloodline

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, 1 minute

Calling upon the contracts of Sarish, you bind a fiend to your will.

You attempt to bind an infernal that you can see within range; your target instantly becomes aware of the spell and

its purpose and will do what it can to stop you. The infernal must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by you for the duration. If you or creatures that are friendly to you are fighting it, it has advantage on the saving throw.

While the infernal is charmed you may issue basic verbal commands as a bonus action (such as “attack that creature”, “fly up there”, “fetch that object”). If you are unable to communicate with your bound infernal, or give it no other commands, it will simply protect you, attempting to kill anyone who dares attack you.

You can use your action to take total and precise control of the infernal. Until the end of your next turn, it takes only the actions you choose and doesn't do anything that you don't allow it to do. During this time, you can also cause the infernal to use a reaction, but this requires you to use your own reaction as well. Each time the infernal takes damage, it makes a new Wisdom saving throw against the spell. If the saving throw succeeds, the spell ends.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell with a 5th-level spell slot, the duration is concentration, up to 10 minutes. When you use a 6th-level spell slot, the duration is concentration, up to 1 hour. When you use a spell slot of 7th level or higher, the duration is concentration, up to 8 hours.

## CALL REVENANT†

*5th-level necromancy*

**Secret Spell:** Faithful of Neroth

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (a pair of 50gp silver bracers put on the body's wrists and are not consumed by the casting of the spell.)

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You touch a freshly murdered body and utter an oath of vengeance, empowering the being's discarded intellect and infusing it with your lord's power.

When cast upon the body of an intelligent creature murdered within the last 10 hours, you raise them as a revenant intent on seeking out and killing the person who caused their death. If the once-living creature was aware of the attack and either saw their attacker's face or knows their name, the revenant will hunt them down. Otherwise, the revenant will look to you for guidance.

The revenant has a number of days equal to your caster level to find and kill their murderer. Once the time has elapsed the revenant will instantly decay, leaving only a pile of rotted meat, some clothing and the bracers used to cast the spell. In some cases, such as when the revenant's murderer dies before the revenant can exact justice, the revenant can choose to end this spell before the duration elapses. See page 51 for the revenant's abilities.

## CRUSHING WEIGHT†

5th-level evocation

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, M (A polished lodestone worth 50gp.)

**Duration:** Concentration, 1 minute

You may only cast this spell when you and your target are upon solid earth (the ground, in a stone building, on a stone wall). Make a melee spell attack against the target. Upon a successful attack the creature is rooted in place and suffers 10d6 points of bludgeoning damage. For the spell's duration, at the start of creatures turn it must make Strength saving throw or be restrained until the beginning of its next turn.

**At Higher Levels:** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6th level or higher, the damage increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 5th.

## RETURN TO THY REST†

*3rd-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self (30')

**Components:** V, S, M

**Duration:** Instantaneous

All undead within range must make a Charisma saving throw; they suffer 4d6 radiant damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful one. Additionally, all undead in the area must also make a Wisdom saving throw or be stunned until the end of their next turn.

- **Unique Effect (Beltine):** All undead with the Incorporeal Movement or Etherealness abilities within the spell's area suffer disadvantage on their Wisdom saving throw to resist being stunned.
- **Unique Effect (Neroth):** All undead that don't have the Incorporeal Movement or Etherealness abilities within the spell's area suffer disadvantage on their Wisdom saving throw to resist being stunned.
- **Unique Effect (Belisarda):** All undead suffer disadvantage on their Charisma saving throw.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the damage increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 3rd level.

## SARISHAN OATH

*1st-level enchantment (ritual)*

**Secret Spell:** Faithful of Sarish or val'Mehan

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** 30-feet

**Components:** V

**Duration:** Permanent until discharged

With this spell, you place a magical seal upon a contract.

For the contract to be binding, several considerations must be met. First, all parties to the contract must be willing participants. Second, all parties to the contract must be able to understand each other and the terms of the contract. Third, all parties to the contract must be present for the casting of this spell. And finally, all parties to the contract must agree to all terms of the contract.

Contracts can range from the simple to the complex, but they must contain terms and conditions that can be reasonably met (up to the GM's discretion). Time conditions may be included in the contract; if they are, they reduce the duration of this spell to the duration of the time conditions specified in the contract. Once the conditions of the contract are agreed

### CURSE OF THE OATH BREAKER

The first time the creature disobeys the contract they are given a friendly reminder. They must make a Wisdom saving throw or suffer 1d10 psychic damage. If this damage would kill the creature it knocks them unconscious instead. The next day, if the creature is still working in violation of the contract they suffer 1 level of exhaustion and will continue to gain levels of exhaustion each day, to a maximum of 3 levels, until they are in accordance with the contract. These levels of exhaustion cannot be healed or recovered unless the creature actively resumes obeying the conditions of the contract; doing so removes all levels of exhaustion within 24 hours.

If the contact is broken in a way that cannot be rectified, the creature in question retains all 3 levels of exhaustion permanently. These levels of exhaustion can only be removed with the removal of the Curse of the Oath Breaker. The Curse can only be removed by either the creator of the original contract or a willing Sarishan Sorcerer-Priest willing to remove the curse, which is not an easy task. Once convinced, the curse may be removed with a successful casting of dispel magic followed by remove curse.

Should a good faith effort be made but there simply is no way to complete the contact, a symbol of Sarish visible only to a Sarishan Sorcerer-Priest or val'Mehan appears on the forehead of the person/s affected by this spell. When seen by any priest of the order they will automatically remove the spell without penalty or payment.

upon and the other conditions of this spell are met, this spell may be used to seal the contract.

Once sealed, all parties to the contract must follow the contract to the best of their ability. If any party violates the contract (GM's discretion), that individual immediately suffers the Curse of the Oath Breaker.

## SCORCHING RADIANCE

*3rd-level evocation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You simply look at a target within range and, with a word, ignite their life force, burning them from the inside.

Choose one creature within range; that creature must make a Charisma saving throw. That target suffers 7d6 radiant damage on a failed save and half as much on a successful one. Additionally, if there is an area of darkness created by a spell within 10 feet of your chosen target, the spell that create it is instantly dispelled.

**At Higher Levels:** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the damage increases by 1d6 for each level above 3rd.

## SHROUD OF OBLIVION

*3rd-level necromancy (ritual)*

**Secret Spell:** Faithful of Neroth

**Casting Time:** 1 Action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (A corpse, which is the target of the spell)

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You wrap a body with your cloak, instantly accelerating its decomposition. Within seconds, nothing but dust remains.

When you cast this spell upon a dead body, it is reduced to nothing but dust, leaving all equipment unmolested. If the deceased is willing to be brought back from the dead or is destined to become undead (whether through a curse, monstrous ability, spells, or divine intervention) the target may make a Charisma saving throw to resist this spell's effect. If resisted this spell cannot be cast on the body for 24 hours. Undead are immune to this spell's effects.



# EQUIPMENT

NEW WEAPONS				
Weapons	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Simple Melee Weapons				
Cestus	3gp	1d4 bludgeoning	2lb	Worn, Special
Martial Melee Weapons				
Gladius	40gp	1d6 piercing	3lb	Finesse, Light, Versatile Damage (Slashing)
War Scythe	30gp	1d12 Slashing	8lb	Heavy, Two-Handed
Tralian Hammer	70gp	1d12 bludgeoning	10lb	Heavy, Two-Handed, Versatile Damage (Piercing)
Firearms				
Athenian Flintlock Pistol	300gp	1d10 piercing	5 lb	Ammunition (range 50/300), loading, melee use: as Club, Penetrating, Special
Athenian Flintlock Rifle	500gp	2d6 piercing	10 lbs	Ammunition (range 100/500), Two-Handed, loading, melee use: as Greatclub, Penetrating, Special
*Ammunition: Shot and Blast Powder (10) 25gp				

NEW ARMOR					
Armor	Cost	Armor Class	Strength	Stealth	Weight
Lorica Segmentata	900gp	15 + Dex Modifier (Max 2)	-	-	40 lb

## NEW WEAPON PROPERTIES

**Melee Use:** Due to their construction and balance some ranged weapons act as the listed weapon in melee, rather than as improvised weapons. You can enhance either the ranged or melee aspects of such a weapon independently.

**Penetrating:** Some ranged weapons are particularly effective against armored opponents at close range. Weapons with the penetrating property grant advantage on attack rolls when used against armored opponents within 15 feet. This ability is ineffective against abilities that increase AC but are not armor such as the monk's Unarmored Defense.

**Versatile Damage:** Weapons with this quality have both a primary and a secondary damage type. Your weapon will always do the primary damage type unless you declare otherwise before you roll damage.

**Worn:** Worn weapons augment your unarmed attack damage and may not be disarmed. Putting on or removing a worn weapon takes an action.

## WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

**Flintlocks:** Altheria may be a center of knowledge and learning, but it is the power of blast powder that has kept the nation of Altheria safe for many years.. The Altherians' advanced understanding of blast powder and its explosive potential has aided them in the design of flintlock weapons.

Altherian flintlocks are designed to take advantage of specific amounts of blast powder for every shot, leading to the

creation of blast powder rounds – small paper or cloth packets of blast power pre-measured to gain the most efficient and accurate shot. Therefore, these fine weapons are usually easier, safer, and faster to reload and fire.

Altherian characters may purchase flintlocks at half the listed price, and are allowed to carry them regardless of their rank or race.

**Special:** You do not have disadvantage when making a ranged attack with a flintlock while prone.

**Gladius:** The gladius has a double-edged blade and a strengthened tip. The grip is made of wood, bone, or ivory, and is topped with a rounded pommel. The entire weapon is roughly 26” to 30” in length. The gladius is the standard blade of the Coryani Legions. Though this weapon has been in service for well over a thousand years, constant refinement has kept it amongst the best swords available.

**Tralian Hammer:** Designed to overcome exceedingly tough armor, the Tralian hammer combines both the standard bludgeoning head of a hammer and the piercing, beak-like spike of a heavy pick. The entire thing is mounted on the end of a metal-shod, six-foot long shaft. While this has allowed for an extremely effective method of taking down heavily armored knights, it has also made the weapon a little too unwieldy for all but those who dedicate themselves to its mastery.

**Cestus:** Popular in the arenas and tavernas of Coryan, this reinforced leather glove consists of a series of leather thongs that are tied over the hand; the thongs secure a set of metal plates, one over the knuckles and the other along the back of the hand. There are two variants of this weapon – the myrmex (or “limb-piercer”), and the sphairai, which has thin leather thongs with cutting blades. The myrmex has versatile damage (piercing) while the sphairai has versatile damage (slashing).

**War Scythe:** A modified version of the agricultural scythe, this polearm consists of a 4’ long curved blade upon a 5’ to 6’ long staff. A rare weapon, it is most commonly found in the hands of those devoted to Neroth.

## THE FLINTLOCK IN SOCIETY

The flintlock – or more specifically, the adorned flintlock – holds a special place within the cultural traditions of the Shattered Empires; the closest analogy is the reverence and power associated with the ownership of a katana in feudal Japan. As such, adorned flintlocks are a sign of high station, one that commoners quickly acknowledge. In some nations, such as Canceri, this respect is offered out of fear, whereas in Milandir it is given out of respect, and in the case of Coryan, a little of both.

When a noble comes of age, they are presented with an adorned flintlock pistol blessed by a monk of Althares. Each is as unique as the noble who bears it. The weapon is engraved with blessings of wisdom to guide the young noble. There are also rare instances of nobles being granted adorned rifles, especially after performing some great deed, either for Altheria or the good of all; these rifles hold a greater place of honor and often become family heirlooms. Although elaborately decorated and personalized, functionally these pistols are weapons of good quality.

While carrying a non-adorned flintlock is the right of every Altherian and priest of Althares, even amongst their own people possession of an adorned flintlock is limited to those of noble blood.

Any non-noble found in possession of an adorned flintlock is arrested and severely punished; the sentence is typically death. Anyone who is not Altherian, a noble, or a priest of Althares found in possession of any flintlock finds the weapon confiscated (whereupon it is promptly returned to Altheria), and the offender is typically jailed or worse.

## ARMOR

**Lorica Segmentata:** The standard armor of the Coryani Legionnaire consists of steel plates bent and molded around the chest and shoulders, then linked together with mail worn beneath. Steel arm and leg greaves complete the kit. This armor is built for maximum protection and maneuverability. All suits of lorica also come with a helm (galea) and officers often have the affixed with elaborate crests of horsehair.

## ARMOR AND WEAPON EQUIVALENTS

Armor equivalents are only relevant to cost, armor class, and other statistics, not the armor’s appearance or method of construction. You should choose starting armor and weapons appropriate to your nation.

ARMOR EQUIVALENTS	
5e SRD	Arcanis Equivalents
<b>Light Armor</b>	
Leather	Boiled leather
Studded leather	Gladiatorial armor, lorica musculata, Milandisian leather cuirass
<b>Medium Armor</b>	
Chain shirt	Lorica hamata
Breastplate	Kio hauberk
Half-plate	Coryani lorica musculata
<b>Heavy Armor</b>	
Chain mail	Lorica squamata, Milandisian chain mail hauberk
Splint	Brigandine, Milandisian gothic cuirass
Plate	Milandisian Andrean Plate, Cancere Gothic plate, cataphractos segmentata

## NEW EQUIPMENT PACKS

**Solders’ Kit (11 gp):** Includes a backpack, bedroll, a hammer, mess-kit (consisting of a knife, plate, and bowl), 10 pitons, 10 torches, a tinderbox, tent, 10 days of rations, and a waterskin. The pack also has 50 feet of hempen rope strapped to the side of it.

## NEW MONSTERS

Use the following stats for the great elk summoned by the Order of the Twelve Oaks and the revenant created by the spell call revenant.

### GREAT ELK

*Large beast, unaligned*

**Armor Class:** 11

**Hit Points:** 19 (3d10+3)

**Speed:** 50 feet

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	12(+1)	13(+1)	2(-4)	12(+1)	6(-2)

**Senses:** passive Perception 11

**Languages:** --

**Challenge:** ½ (100xp)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Charge:** If the elk moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

#### ACTIONS

**Ram:** Melee weapon attack +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, one target  
Hit: 6 (1d6+3) bludgeoning damage

**Hooves:** Melee weapon attack +5 to hit, reach 5 feet, one target  
Hit: 8 (2d4+3) bludgeoning damage

### REVENANT

*Medium undead, neutral*

**Armor Class:** 15 (natural)

**Hit Points:** 82 (11d8+13)

**Speed:** 30 feet

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	16(+3)	16(+3)	11(+0)	10(+0)	12(+1)

**Saving Throws:** Dex +6, Wis +3

**Skills:** Perception +3, Stealth +6

**Damage Resistances:** necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses:** darkvision 60 feet, passive Perception 13

**Languages:** languages the creature knew in life

**Challenge:** 5 (1,800 xp)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Regeneration:** A revenant regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes radiant damage this trait doesn't function at the start of the revenant's next turn.

**Spider Climb:** Revenants can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Spellcasting:** A revenant can cast locate creature at will using Charisma as its spellcasting ability score. This ability can only be used to track the revenant's murderer.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack:** The revenant makes two attacks with its claws.

**Claws:** Melee weapon attack +6 to hit, reach 5 feet, one target  
Hit: 8 (2d4 +3) slashing damage

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **NATIONALITY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CLASS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CHURCH:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**BACKGROUND:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DEITY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**RACE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **LEVEL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ABILITY SCORES**

	SCORE	BONUS	SAVING THROWS
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<b>DEXTERITY:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CONSTITUTION:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>INTELLIGENCE:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>WISDOM:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CHARISMA:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>BLOODRANK</b>	<input type="text"/>		

**PROFICIENCY BONUS**  **SPEED**  
**SPEED:**   
**PASSIVE PERCEPTION**  **SPECIAL:**

**SKILLS & PROFICIENCIES LANGUAGES**

SKILL (PRIMARY ABILITY)	TOTAL BONUS
Acrobatics (Dex)	
Animal Handling (Wis)	
Arcana (Int)	
Athletics (Str)	
Deception (Cha)	
History (Int)	
Insight (Wis)	
Intimidation (Cha)	
Investigation (Int)	
Medicine (Wis)	
Nature (Int)	
Perception (Wis)	
Performance (Cha)	
Persuasion (Cha)	
Religion (Int)	
Sleight of Hand (Dex)	
Stealth (Dex)	
Survival (Wis)	
* Trained skill	
<b>OTHER PROFICIENCIES</b>	

**LITERATE?**

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

\_\_\_\_\_

**IDEAS**

\_\_\_\_\_

**BONDS**

\_\_\_\_\_

**FLAWS**

\_\_\_\_\_

**DEFENSES & HEALTH**

**ARMOR CLASS**  **TEMP HP**  **CURRENT HP**   
**HIT POINTS**   
**HIT DICE**  **DEATH SAVES**  
 MADE  FAILED

**ATTACKS & SPELL CASTING**

ATTACK	TO HIT	DAMAGE	SPECIAL/RANGE
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**NOTES**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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E Q U I P M E N T M A G I C I T E M S

Lined area for equipment entries.

Lined area for magic items entries.

C L A S S A B I L I T I E S R A C I A L T R A I T S

Lined area for class abilities entries.

Lined area for racial traits entries.

T R E A S U R E

COPPER

Small box for copper value.

SILVER

Small box for silver value.

GOLD

Small box for gold value.

PLATINUM

Small box for platinum value.

Lined area for treasure entries.

FEATS / SPELLS / BLOODLINE POWERS

Lined area for feats, spells, and bloodline powers entries.

E X P E R I E N C E P O I N T S

Lined area for experience points entries.

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Arcanis: The World of Shattered Empires

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