

Faiths and Organizations



Lore Supplement

Volume 1

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Note: Except where indicated otherwise (For Ashen Liege and for the last page of Exemplars) everything in this volume is common knowledge to any with an interest in the topic matter. Any character may start with the knowledge if they wish. It may be referenced in game and during backstory creation.

The Ashen Liege and Ashen (For Ashen Liege only)



You don't remember being born, you don't know exactly you are, one day you simply came into existence inside of a strange world of Ash and a barren desert. In the distance you felt a great city with towering spires, each of them made of red and black sand. The world you awoke into was desolate, but you could feel the raw power within it, and you craved it. This is Ashen, your home plane.

You are an Ashen, a creature of this plane. Your people have built Ashen Ward as a haven for your people. The Plane of Ashen is a dangerous place indeed, full of Giant Sand Snakes, Maws in the Sand, and disasters, but The Ashen have tamed the harsh lands, and commanded the world. You were a lowly Ashen, a servant of the status quo of society, with the **Ashen Lords**, ruling over the **Ward**. Power, raw power, was the currency of Ashen. The more you had, the better your standing. Thus, many seek to better themselves, they seek to draw power from a world that has not had the energy already harnessed.... The world of Ebonrock. A soul is one of the most powerful things in creation, and Ashen seek that power, but it must be given willingly. Thus, the first formation of "The Deal" came into play. **Ashen are bound by their words**, its a supernatural compulsion to follow through, and at one point in the history of the Ashen they founded the first deal. Ashen would enter Ebonrock through a place called "The Shadowlands", then travel to "The Sandstorm" in the Scorched Desert, and find humans to deal with. Many humans have learned certain incantations to summon and Ashen for service, binding them as an "**Ashen Liege**". In exchange for the Ashen Liege's undying service, the human would give up their soul at the end of their life or until a certain

condition has been met. (It is up to both parties to decide what the terms are, but the Ashen are always looking for quick ways to get souls).

The Ashen Liege gives up their freedom, and their power is locked behind their chains so that the mortal can do with them as they see fit. But, if a mortal wishes to access the full power of the Ashen, they must release the Ashen from the deal entirely, still forfeiting the soul of the mortal. No two Ashen Lieges deal the same way, no two make the same deals. (ooc note: it is up to the player to decide how your Ashen Liege works). Some Ashen have been tricked into bad deals in the past, and this results in great anger for the Ashen, It is the goal of the Ashen to become **Ashen Lords**, creatures of immense power, and the only way to do this is through souls. Many Ashen Lords stay in Ebonrock, their goals unknown, but many seem to want to conquer for their own power. Life as an Ashen is one of trickery and deceit. If they survive the trek into Ebonrock and can forge a deal then and only then can they truly obtain what they seek, power. So that they may return to Ashen with a higher status.

Church of the Eternal Flame

Overview:

The Church of the Eternal Flame is the largest religion in Ebonrock. They worship the entity known as The Eternal Flame, and preach the virtues of community, creation, and the interconnectedness of all things. The Priests of the Flame seek to create a world where creation can exist freely and wholly as intended. The Flame was responsible for giving light to Ebonrock and creation to all civilized races, and therefore is worshiped throughout the land. Every town you visit will likely have a Church of the Eternal Flame.



History:

People do not know what entity created the land of Ebonrock. What is known, is that in the times unknown Ebonrock was a dark land filled with darkness, horrors, and abominations. It was the Time of Darkness. People do not know how long that time lasted but sometime during the Time of Darkness, The Eternal Flame came to Ebonrock and brought the first light, The Sun and The Moon. In so doing it made the world habitable for the civilized races. Its first job complete, The Eternal Flame then brought the sentient races into the world: including not only the civilized races, but the uncivilized orcs, hobgoblins, and trolls as well. After years of chaos in the rough world still full of horrors, the sentient races established The Church of the Eternal Flame, a primitive yet the first ever form of government; both in terms of leadership and worship at the time.

Still the mix of the civilized races and the uncivilized races do not bode well for society. This changed with the joining of the Disciples of Truth in society. Together with the Church of the Eternal Flame, they passed laws that resulted in the uncivilized races being cast out of society. These acts by The Church of the Eternal Flame set into motion the first early attempts of the civilized races to form individualized cities and nations.

Throughout the Great Wars, the establishment of The Sovereign Assembly, The Golden Age of Technology, The Great Dragon Attacks, and to the modern era, the Church of the Eternal Flame has stood as the center of faith for the majority of the people of Ebonrock. It is a light in times of darkness; a refuge for the souls of the troubled and those doubting their purpose in the world; a warm fire in the hearth to transform a building into a home; and a uniting symbol of community that joins all of the communities of Ebonrock together to form the united effort which is The Sovereign Assembly. The Church is without a doubt, a bedrock of the world.

Paths in the Church (Each with its own prestige class):

Training to be a member of the Church of the Eternal Flame is different for each person. Many children spend their entire childhoods studying and working in one of the Cathedrals to learn the practice. Others learn quicker and find the Path of the Flame later in life. Still, about two-thirds through their training, each person chooses one of the three paths: purifier, keeper, or bishop to pursue. At this time, they gain the first rank in that path. Upon taking their vows and being bestowed with magic they are given the second rank. When they reach their prestige class they get the third rank, the class name. The fourth rank is only bestowed by **The High Council**, comprised of the Grand Purifier, Lord Protector, and Archbishop of the Eternal Flame. The fifth rank is bestowed for life. When there is a vacancy all of the fourth rank in that path take a pilgrimage to the Keep of Flames and a rite is done which reveals the successor.

Purifier: Purifiers are the cathedral guardians and militaristic arm of the church. When the Eternal Flame's martial might is needed to vanquish abominations or creatures of darkness itself, creatures made in defiance of creation, they lead the charge.

- Rank 1: Gallant (When choose your path during studies)
- Rank 2: Defender (When reach initiate class)
- Rank 3: Purifier (When reach prestige class)
- Rank 4: Deliverer (One in the region)
- Rank 5: Grand Purifier (One in the faith)

Keeper: Keepers walk among, preach to, and bless the people. They are the community outreach arm of the Church. They set up orphanages and other ways of helping people.

- Rank 1: Aspirant (When choose your path during studies)
- Rank 2: Kindled (When reach initiate class)
- Rank 3: Keeper (When reach prestige class)
- Rank 4: Protector (One in the region)
- Rank 5: Lord Protector (One in the faith)

Bishop: Bishops maintain, sanctify, and preserve the Cathedrals of the Eternal Flame. They are the administrators of the Church, responsible for diplomatic relations to the governing bodies and other organizations, the maintenance and regulation of flame gates, and preserving the tenants of the Church.

- Rank 1: Acolyte (When choose your path during studies)
- Rank 2: Priest (When reach initiate class)
- Rank 3: Bishop (When reach prestige class)
- Rank 4: Archbishop (One per region)
- Rank 5: Archbishop of the Eternal Flame (One in the faith)

Flame Festival in Skyfall: Followers of the Flame visit the Cathedral each year for the **Flame's Festival** on the Summer Solstice when the sun burns the brightest in the sky. It is said that it is the day that the meteor fell to Ebonrock bringing with it light and blessings from the Eternal Flame itself. For all recorded memory that day each year has always been a hot summer day. On that day, all are welcome to gather around pyres burning around the walls of the keep and sit to tell stories of the world, share complimentary food and drink, as well as much dancing and celebrating. The Flame Festival is one of the high points of the year for Ebonrock itself, and on that day the city finds an influx of fun and community. At the moment that the sun strikes the horizon, it is said that all participants in the Festival are blessed by the Eternal Flame itself. Fireworks traditionally mark the end of the ceremony.

Citadel of Fire, In the center of Oasis, The Citadel of Fire is one of the most sacred spots to the Church of the Eternal Flame. Many on the Purifier path learn their craft here to better battle the Abominations of the desert. More than just that however, the Scorched people, and some argue the land itself, are linked to unity, and purification by fire. It is maintained by Archbishop Shaadad (human).

Pyramid of the Eternal Flame: Built in Fena-exfe after contact was made with the Sovereign Assembly it is built in the style of the Fena-exfe heritage. It is the largest building built by the Assembly in Fena-exfe and is the center of almost all religion in the city (for those who choose to practice anyway, most naga there seem to scorn religion entirely). The pyramid is viewed by many, even the non-faithful, as an architectural wonder and receives tourism throughout the year. It is maintained and preserved by Archbishop Nemura (female Kazan).

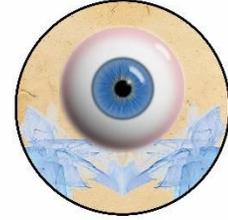
Flame Gates: A portal created by a Bishop of the Church of the Eternal Flame capable of allowing people to instantaneously travel from one location to another that has been previously marked by the Bishop. They are used by the government and Church for important missions. The creation and maintaining of flame gate markings must be reported to a superior. A flame gate symbol looks like a candle flame burned into the surface and surrounded by a circle. Once the bishop chooses to no longer maintain the symbol, it fades from the surface and disappears. There are rumors that Flame Gates can be made to other planes but texts warn that such symbols are highly taxing to maintain,

dangerously more complex to make, and fatal if done improperly. Any flame gate to another plane must be approved by the Archbishop of the Eternal Flame under penalty of excommunication and punishment by the Sovereign Assembly.

The Keep of Flames: All of the flame gates to and from the Capital City come from here. It is illegal to make a flame gate into the Capital that arrives anywhere else. It is monitored by the Archbishop of the Eternal Flame Giant Ferdand. This is also the home of the largest Flame Cathedral in the world. Archbishop of the Eternal Flame Ferdand personally maintains (and has attuned to him) the 12 primary flame gates. The Keep is divided into sections with the runes from each section corresponding to flame gates to different areas of Ebonrock. The High Council also sits here.

Disciples of Truth

“Only through Truth can we understand what is going on.”



Faithful of Truth

The calling to find the Disciples of Truth is a rare one indeed. It is said the Disciples of Truth worship the “Truth”, a concept of greater understanding. The Disciples of Truth gain members through recruiting those who have “seen something that has opened their eyes”. Many times when something unexplainable happens, the Disciples of Truth are there trying to deal with whatever that is. Many view the Disciples with odd looks and glances, especially with their ritualistic tattooing of eyeballs on their body, and covert secrecy within their **Temples**.

Collectors of the Unknown:

At their core, from what people understand the Disciples of Truth are about, in their words, “Protecting the World itself”. Many Disciples receive odd government sanctioned warrants to collect what they refer to as “Artifacts”, and take them to keep people safe. Very few know what this really means. Disciples made it part of their mission to preach a greater understanding of the world through philosophy, history, and other social arts. Many reject the use of Binding creatures, and reject the notion of planar travel. The Disciples of Truth are favored by select individuals for their remarkably keen insight on the issues that plague the world, many time when something new and great is invented it is rumored the Disciples have had their hand in it.

Regalia:

Many Disciples wear the symbol of an eyeball around their neck, more extreme members tend to Tattoo eyeballs upon their body to show their devotion, it is also a common practice when around a Temple of Truth to wear glasses of some sort to cover your eyes, as a show of faith.

Powers of Faith:

Very little is known about how the Disciples fuel their power. Their devotion to the tenets of Truth, give them abilities and their magic does not require a focus, causing odd speculation as to how they are achieving this feat.

IF YOU WISH TO PLAY A DISCIPLE OF TRUTH: PLEASE REQUEST THE PACKET VIA Email.

Dragon Priest Faith

Worshippers who seek to join the priesthood must first choose a patron dragon. Usually, if draconian, their choice matches with the color of their scales. However, this is not always the case. Those who follow Hyperion tend towards arrogance, Glafia towards frigidity, Sarassus towards seclusion, Ignatius towards passion, Valkas towards determination, and Malfecas towards chaos. Those whose scales match with their choice of dragon tend towards the extremes of these personality characteristics. Grandmasters have often been draconians whose scales match their patron dragon, although this is not required.

Hyperion represents righteousness and the law. Priests and masters of Hyperion often take on administrative positions, and travel as political representatives for the temple. Glafia represents clear thinking and protection. Those that worship Glafia often act as advisors. Serassus represents intelligence and secrecy. The followers of Serrassus are often spies. 'Cloak and dagger' is their way. When the dragon priests need something 'dealt with', the Serrassus masters are usually the ones to 'deal with' it. Ignaceous represents pride and passion. Those that choose Ignaceous as their patron seek to be the best in their chosen field, and follow it single-mindedly. Valkas represents soul and individuality. The followers of Valkas have no place within the temple. and are shunned by the grand majority of the dragon priests. Maltheus represents opposition and chaos. The followers of Maltheus dislike fitting into a pattern, and as such are difficult to categorize.

Regardless of race, each dragon priest forsakes their name to take on the name of their dragon. Each priest refers to one another as a sibling. For example, a priest of Hyperion is called either Brother or Sister Hyperion, while a master is called Master Hyperion, while his Grand Master is referred to as Grand Master Hyperion. The dragons themselves are called either Grandfather or Grandmother by the priests. This is not a mere formality: the priests genuinely regard one another as a blood relation. Those who follow a dragon without becoming priests keep their names and titles. These titles reflect the importance of unity and brotherhood amongst the priests. Dragon priests value unity above all. Among the draconian priests, this mentality is incredibly efficient. However, this attitude often manifests towards non-draconian dragon priests in a xenophobic way. Currently, a Naga is the Grandmaster for Sarassus. Those who would publicly express their disdain for a non-draconian choice would be expressing their disdain for the choices of the dragons themselves.

Despite their differences, all dragon priests start their day with breathing exercises. To release their innate power by accident, or to be unable to release their power in a contained and deliberate manner, is considered a sign of thoughtlessness, one of the worst possible traits. To be a dragon priest is to commit oneself entirely to the dragons, body and mind. The needs of the community come first. This is especially true in the case of the drake cages. Any priest found to be shirking their duties will be punished severely. If a priest shuns their responsibility to care for the drakes, they are locked into a drake cage for a week and treated as one. Dragon priests are sent to capture drakes in the wild. They work in teams to collect drakes and provide them with humane care so that outside forces- such as the monster slayers- don't intervene. However, one of the drake cages has always remained mysteriously empty.

To become a dragon priest and join the Draconic Order, one must convince a priest of their chosen dragon to sponsor them as an initiate. Just as the grandmaster chooses his or her dragon's masters, the masters seek to discern true commitment, suitability and piety in their initiates. At first, an initiate shadows a priest. The initiate will perform the daily actions of that person with them: the chores, the breathing exercises, taking care of the drakes and so on. Once the sponsoring priest feels that the initiate is ready, they present the initiate to the master. The majority of the masters must accept the initiate. Then the grandmaster must approve, and then the dragon. There are two tests: one represents the characteristics of each dragon, and the other is proof of both a quest completed in service of the community and expert knowledge on all drakes. At the day of ascension, the newly-accepted priest and the master drink tea made from the waters of the Bubbling Well together. It's been hypothesized that the Well is sourced from the Flaming Sea: and yet, the surface of the well isn't aflame. It must be sourced from beneath the flames, then. These traditions are echoed when a priest becomes a master, and even when a master becomes a grand master: one must always secure approval from not only the rank above, but ultimately from the dragons themselves. The



superstitious believe that those who drink from the Bubbling Well without the blessing of a master is cursed never to become a priest.

Masters have a stronger connection to their dragon than priests. They are better able to harness their abilities, such as their breath powers and their armor, and have political power within the temple. Some masters are even able to grow in their wings. Grandmasters are even more connected, and even share the same rooms with their dragon. As each master devises a test for the priests, so do the dragons devise tests for the Grand Masters. The dragons choose only one Grand Master: if another master becomes a considerable option, the current Grand Master is tested against that master. Should the current master fail in the eyes of their dragon, they are replaced.

There is a formal alliance between the Dragon Slayers and the Draconic Order. Long ago, a treaty was struck between Kaden Maltheus and Lord Dragon Slayer Nulrund Thyndryel. These two united along with Grandmaster Hyperion against Valkas in the second Dragon Rebellion. Together they created a special ballista bolt made by the Grandmaster Blacksmith, forged in dragon fire, enchanted by four enchanters, and blessed by the exemplar's light. The group wounded Valkas severely, and drove him from the mainland. This alliance has stood despite the tension between the two groups. Due to this, any Dragon Slayer can enter into the sanctuary at leisure. Although tensions remain between the Dragon Slayers and the Draconic Order, or even within only the Draconic Order itself, unity remains the top priority for the priests.

Exemplar Order

Exemplars are an order founded years ago when the Light first arrived to the land of Ebonrock. **The Luminaries**, were the original council of six exemplars who first spoke to the Light and said their vows, becoming the first protectors of the world. The Light is not a god, or something to be worshiped, but rather a force that gives powers to those who swear the oath. Exemplars hold their meeting at the **Grand Hall of the Exemplars**, located in the Valley Region, there they train to become good protectors of the innocent, and moral pillars of the world. Exemplars are trained up until the day of their **Vigil**, where they finally accept the Oath of the Exemplar and the Light enters them or rejects them.

During the Void War, the Exemplar order was founded, when the six Luminaries first became defenders of the people, and with the Light on their side, they helped turn the tide of the Void War. Four of the six Luminaries perished during the war, along with those who were given the power of the Light to combat this threat. **Luminary Ven Sheran**, went on to found the Grand Hall of the Exemplars where he would train other exemplars with the power he uncovered. The leader of the Exemplars was forever given the title Grand Luminary, with a council of 5 others who would form the six Luminaries of the Exemplars. **Luminary Volks Ulvir**, became the first **Vigil Master**, the one responsible for letting the light into other Exemplars.

As the times would go on, the Exemplars and the Sovereign Assembly would become close allies, despite disagreements over the years. The Sovereign Assembly has been known to take the advice of the Luminaries and the Order in their time and the Grand Luminary has an ability to speak to the Counsel of Governors if he/she wishes. However, there are stories of a time generations ago when rogue exemplars broke away from the Assembly, and started a war. The war ended quickly with the loyal exemplars of the Light and the Sovereign Assembly coming together to end this conflict but the topic is still a matter of great shame for the Exemplar Order.

Life in the Exemplars:

The Exemplars are a militant order, known for their fervor of protecting those who need protecting, but not all are cut out for this line of work. Exemplars favor altruism above all. When one enters the Order they usually enter as a child and become a page, where you learn about the Exemplars, how to fight, and how to heal in a group setting. The page then pass trials to see if you are worthy to become a Squire. Only about half of pages become squires when they turn 15. Once a page is squired, they work with an exemplar for a period of time, usually 3 years; if they are already an adult when they are squired, it is usually a year. After their time is over, the exemplar usually recommends his or her squire to take the oath, at which time the squire attempts the vigil. (see Below)

An exemplar's life is hard. They are dedicated to making sure the innocent are protected and goodness is upheld. Commonly exemplars run charities, support local causes and, if they have a reason, patrol the world to make sure evil is kept at bay.

The Vigil-

When a squire is deemed ready they take upon the Vigil.

The Vigil consists of various stages. First the squire is given a bath in the Waters of Light where a knight exemplar comes to them and speaks. Then the squire is sent into a room, where they face a trial. All squires who go in come out pale and weak. The actual steps of this Vigil are secret and are kept within the confines of the order. If they pass, they go to the Great Hall.

The Master of the Vigil stands before the **Altar of Light**, within the Grand Hall. There the squire kneels down and says his or her oath. The occasion is a grand event and many exemplars attend to greet a new brother or sister of the order. After the oath is said the Light itself enters the Exemplar if he or she is accepted, the candidate's body glows with radiant light, and there is much rejoicing as the Light has chosen another to accept the burden of an exemplar.

On some occasions after the Oath is said the candidate is not selected for the cause. The Light does not come. Many believe this is due to the Light believing you are not worthy.

A candidate who fails the Vigil or is rejected by the Light usually returns to their exemplar and continues to train as a squire. If they fail a second time they are usually not given a third chance, but are still sworn to complete secrecy of the Vigils contents. Many who grew up within the Order take the role of a **Vassal** of the Order. These vassals are responsible for cleaning, cooking, book keeping, and serving the squires and exemplars in their halls along with the pages. Some who fail leave the order and forge their own destiny in the world.

Structure-

Ranks:

Grand Luminary of the Exemplars- The head of the Order and the Council. Currently held by, Mondrake Ilvaru

Luminary The six exemplars who form the Luminary Council and are responsible for leading the order together.

Vigil Master- The exemplar responsible for handling the Vigil. They are considered the voice of the Light.

Currently held by, **Luminary Cronin Darehearth**

Knight Exemplar- An exemplar who has been given distinction for their efforts in the world. They are the most respected of the Exemplars.

Exemplar- Individuals who have passed their Vigil, and serve the people and their oaths. They fall into one of three ideologies of Vindicator, Guardian and Champion.

Squire- A servant of an exemplar being trained to one day become a full exemplar

Page- A child in the order, they are considered students who would one day be taken an exemplar.

Vassal- A servant of the exemplar order. They usually have failed their Vigil or join the order as vassals.

Powers Afforded and Relationship with the Sovereign Assembly -

The Exemplar Order and the Sovereign Assembly are regarded as close allies, as such many Exemplars are given special authority by the Assembly to work with the Justicars. While Exemplars are not allowed to take the law into their own hands, as that is the job for the Justicars, they are allowed special privileges in regards to the Sovereign Assembly. NOTE: An Exemplar usually will use good actions and their voice before going to violence. Exemplars that can execute usually bring the individual in before other Exemplars and Justicars or Lawmasters before carrying out field sentencing. Arrest is always preferred.

1. An Exemplar may act in the wellbeing of individuals they deem to need it.
2. An Exemplar may execute known Vivimancers or Life Drainers, if the situation requires immediate action.
3. An Exemplar may execute a Witch that is proven to curse the innocent, or a Necromancer who is abusing their power. (This is a fine line the Exemplar must walk, as should the Necromancer or Witch be found to be innocent of not abusing their power then the Exemplar may be put up for Excommunication and sent to Justicars.)
4. An Exemplar may execute a known Oathbreaker
5. An Exemplar may bring in any criminal they deem fit for questioning to the Sovereign Assembly.
6. Exemplars are given special status with the Sovereign Assembly to work to speak for the wellbeing of citizens, and can be allowed in government meetings if the officials deem fit.
7. An Exemplar may access the Shadowlands at will
8. An Exemplar is NOT above the law

Oathbreakers and Excommunication-

When an exemplar breaks their oath or betrays the Exemplar order, they can be put up for Excommunication. This removes the exemplar for their place in the order, and strips them of any title, and can deal with special punishments.

If an exemplar embraces the breaking of their oath, and becoming a force against the tenets of the order and giving into evil, then the exemplar can become an oathbreaker. It is said the Light is forced out by their own darkness and

is replaced with pure self-desire. Oathbreakers are some of the most feared individuals to the order and are hunted with great prejudice.

DO NOT READ THE NEXT PAGE UNLESS YOU HAVE COMMITTED TO PLAYING AN EXEMPLAR

The Vigil

The Vigil is kept secret to prevent those from outside the order, as well as pages and squires who need to face their Vigil in the dark. During your bath, special waters are washed over you that have been sanctified by the Luminaries themselves. It allows the Light to enter your body. The bath is symbolic as it washes away the darkness you had in your past, and your squireship replaces your past. Then a Knight Exemplar speaks to you about, honor, service, and your duty going forward. He then explains that you must not make a sound during your next trial.

You are then led to a room with a bright door, and reminded you must face what is inside without making a sound. You are then confronted with your greatest fear, as this is the test to stare evil in the face and not flinch. Many fail their Vigil here, but if you pass you are moved to the Altar to swear your oath. If you are accepted the Light enters you and speaks a short sentence guiding you on your path.

To become a Knight Exemplar a separate Vigil is held to do so that is far more dangerous.

When you become Prestiged you swear your new oath to the Altar and can learn those new found powers.

Squireship

All prestige exemplars are required to take a squire at some point in their life. Many take more than one, and the squire is usually chosen from a page of the Exemplars although not always.

The Hunters of the Dawn

“Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee”

The City of the Dawn:

There is a legend, in the Shadowland there lies a city, one of ruins, one of secrets, and one of miracles. This is the City of the Dawn, an ancient spot reserved where it is said monsters dwell. In the old days the City lived up to its name, being the shining bastion surrounded by darkness and shadows. It was said they created the walled City to keep evil out, and because of this many strived to find their way inside. The City **Denizens**, found a rare power from deep within the catacombs of the City of the Dawn known as **The Cure**. This Cure could fix any ailment, any injury, any life threatening disease, or grant a benefit. Because of this The City prospered, causing many from all over to seek this Cure. But there was a problem, the City began to change and was under siege by the monsters that surrounded it. Thus, The City's defense force



founded The Hunters of the Dawn. The Hunters were tasked with hunting monsters that were a threat to the city. In exchange, the most potent use of the Cure would be bestowed on these Hunters to make them stronger and cure their ailments. Thus, Gustav Andrelli, founded the order of the Hunters and the cycle began; a **Threat** emerged and The Hunt was called to destroy it.

At some point in the City's life, a duality formed. A second City of the Dawn existed, in a shared reality, this alternate City of the Dawn became the primary hunting grounds of the Hunters when they were called. They are the cities protectors and earned their keep. If this place is lost, then, as the legend states, all is lost. The name given to this place is **The Dream**.

Nowadays, much of the City's history has been lost. It is a ruined pile of rubble in the middle of the Shadowlands. However, **The Contract** is still in place. The City was overrun, The Cure all but used up, but still some of it remains. People venture on pilgrimages to sign their contract and receive their boon of The Cure. Some are desperate, some wish to help by ridding the world of monsters, whatever the individual's reasons, once the Contract has been signed, the title of Hunter of the Dawn is granted.

Being a Hunter-

Once Hunters of the Dawn sign their contract and receive their supernatural boon they become servants of the City for a time. They go through the Change where their blood becomes acidic to better hunt monsters, their senses become heightened, and their abilities are greatly increased. In the real world they become expert killers of Aberrations, Outsiders, and other monsters. Some take it upon themselves to sell their services to get rid of monsters for citizens, while some take their boon and try to live their life. What is universally shared is when a Hunter hears **Bells** begin to ring in his head he is called back into the **Dream**. Do not let the name fool, their bodies vanish from the world and are put into a nightmarish landscape within the City with a Prey designated. There they take to the Hunt. There is no escaping the duty as a Hunter of the Dawn, life is owed until released.

The Hunt:

A Hunt is called when *something* needs to happen. Each time a Hunter is called into the City he is to fulfill the goals of the current Hunt. Once the Hunt has ended, the Hunters who showed valiance and skill are rewarded through their release of the Contract.

The Path-

When someone new wishes to become a Hunter of the Dawn they must walk their **Path**. During this time they need to find Hunters who would escort them through the Wall to the City itself. Hunters tend to let the individual know what they are getting themselves into, and warn them of the danger, but if someone still wishes to sign the Contract, Hunters gather wielding lanterns that are made for the Path, and lead the individual to The City. They walk the dark roads together fending off the monsters of the Shadowlands until they reach the ruins of the City and find a **Denizen** of the City to offer a contract. Usually 4 hunters accompany a new recruit; even for a Hunter the Path to The City can be a perilous one.

In the Dream

Inside of the Dream (also called The City), Hunters are given special weapons, information, and havens. It is part of the job of the Hunters of the Dawn to uncover the secrets of the City, delve deeper within, and find the targets of their current Hunt.

Known Hunters:

Gustav Andrelli- The First Hunter, leader of the Hunter order they are alive through their own contract they signed.

Anitonet De Rosa - The Smith, this hunter worked with Gustav and forged the first weapons that the hunters used within the city.

Maro Blacksight- The Marshall- the current head of training and coordination for the Hunters of the Dawn.

Alexi Vestat- The Delver - The head of finding new locations within The City.

SR-001- The Researcher - the head of research for the Hunters of the Dawn

We recommend as a player that you have not yet been called into the City, or have only been called once or twice.

Shamanistic Traditions

Ra'Leos Tradition

The Legend of the God-Pharaoh

Sometimes called the God Emperor, the God-Pharaoh's legend is the story of the greatest shaman to ever live. In a time long ago, probably in the Time of Darkness, a great cataclysm spread across the world threatening all of life. The God Pharaoh, under the guide of his patron, Ra'Leos, fused himself with the spirits of the area in order to save Ebonrock. He called upon the past and the energies of the spirits to give himself the power to control part of the world itself and move it to his will.

After, it was said he ruled Ebonrock for years. His disciples learned how to bind spirits to them and act as the worldly conduits for the spirit world. Their goal was to hopefully be able to bind The Spirit World itself if the need should ever arise.

When the God Pharaoh departed from the world his followers found that his power still permulated around the world. Thus, under the tutelage of the Spirit **Ra'Leos**, the patron Spirit of The God Pharaoh, the tradition of Ra'Leos was born; to harness the power of the past, follow the path of the God Pharaoh, and to be as great as you can be.

Tenets of Ra'Leos

- Discover your spiritual past, understand where it is you come from, and how that energy flows within you. Learn about the spirits of old, and seek to study from them.
- Be the best you can be, The God Pharaoh and Ra'Leos themselves were about becoming great. You have greatness destined within you, and the plane of spirits is your chance to do so.
- Obey your patron spirit just as the God Pharaoh did. He obeyed and tried to act upon the wishes of his patron, Ra'Leos, and it led him to greatness. A shaman is a conduit for their spirit, and should act as its representative.
- Do not incur the wrath of the spirits. Serve the Ra'Leos spirits, and work with them.
- Make your ambitions clear to the world. Ra'Leos shamen are powerful because of this.
- Respect the lineage of the Ra'Leos.
- Attempt to live by the God Pharaoh's example. Be the force for the spirit world to gain power. It is a two way street. Let no one stand in your way.

Spiritual Lineage:

Usually when one of the lineage of the God Pharaoh is born it is echoed among the spirit world itself. When a child is born of the lineage one of the Hands of Ra'Leos, potent spirits and their shamans, finds the child, and tattoos him appropriately. The lineage is not of descent or blood, rather it is a calling of the spirits to alert others that someone of the latent energy of the God Pharaoh is present.

It is not unheard of for regular shamen, those not of the God Pharaoh's lineage, to seek the tradition. If they do, they are tested by one of the Hands of Ra'Leos to determine if they are worthy. Unlike the other two traditions of Shamanism, the Ra'Leos are very selective about who they allow in; not everyone can be born great.

The Tattoos of the The God Pharaoh

When the original followers of the God Pharaoh unlocked their spiritual lineage, it began the tradition of tattooing. The closer an individual's spiritual lineage falls to the God Pharaoh the less tattoos the individual is given. Such an individual's body is more pure and thus less marked than those who are less pure. When one of the lineage is discovered through an echo The Hands of Ra'Leos examine him to learn how much additional spiritual help the

person needs to uncover their greatness. The tattoos serve not only to mark the less pure but also to assist them to compensate for their lack of pure energy. These tattoos are usually cryptic and depict odd symbols, scenes, and creatures. Each are chosen by one of the Hands only after great deliberation. The Hands' master plan is to help each Ra'Leos become great. The specificity of the tattoos are a personalized reminder not only of that goal but of the shaman's legacy and duty. The God Pharaoh saved the world, and brought great boons to the spirits; let that never be forgotten.

OOO Note: Please note in your backstory how many Tattoos you would like. If you have under 4 it may cost some quality points. Contact a GM. They may instruct you to take the Strange History quality and will tell you how many ranks will be necessary.

Choosing your Patron:

When a spirit comes to a Ra'Leos, he is in command. He may run the spirit through any tests he sees fit since, if the spirit is selected, it is going to be given the privilege of being bound to a Ra'Leos. When a Ra'Leos selects his patron, it is a gift to that spirit, as no other shaman will treat it as well. A Ra'Leos and his spirit work closely together, and while the shaman is in all essence a servant of the spirits will, it is the job of the spirit to work to that shaman's design. Should an issue arise on either side, the pair should seek one of the Hands of Ra'Leos to settle the dispute. A Hand of Ra'Leos is **identified by a Handprint Tattoo on his or her cheek.**

Family Line:

Sometimes in a Ra'Leos family a particular patron spirit is handed down through generations. It is considered a great insult if an individual does not accept a spirit of his or her family line. Furthermore, it is a slight to the individual and family if the spirit, who has bonded with them for generations, chooses a new line.

Seishin Sabi Tradition

“The spirits are a kind and cruel thing. They are in every part of our lives. We do not forget them, we honor them. Honor those who have contributed to your life, and honor those who you defeat. Or else the spirits will turn on you.”

The Sabi are the fraction of spiritualists who live and love the spirits that are around them. They are the healers, the tradesmen, the diplomats. They bond with spirits not as just tools, but as friends, and if spurned their enemies.

Spiritualist who follow this path are often acting like hermits, singular in person, but many in spirits. Some may gather in small groups, but the majority are solitary. Only on holidays honoring the spirits do many come into one space. And these holidays are often spent quiet with only the light of candles to aid them.

Major spirits are the guardians of higher aspects of life, weather, emotions, and elements. These are spirits you do not invoke lightly, as their power only grows with age.

Fighting between Sabi is rare, but in the cases where two Sabi have goals that counteract each other, it is the one with the greatest will that will succeed. Sabi honor those that they have battled and defeated, for even battles are a time to learn about one's inner self and strength of will.

The Sabi can come from anywhere, for even the most hostile places can contain people wishing for inner peace. And those that can find it and communicate with the spirits of the world, find themselves truly powerful.

The Tenets of Seishin Sabi

Honor Your Tools You Use In Daily Life

Spirits inhabit even the simplest of tools, from writing instruments, to the wind, and weapons. What you use in your trade and craft are your friends, your allies, and your enemies should you neglect them.

Show Respect to Those You Deal With

To those you trade with, to those you trade blows with. You show respect to those you meet. You never provoke violence if you can avoid it, especially in trade deals. Everyone you meet has their own lives, their own path ahead of them. It is never in your best interest to show disrespect.

Always Trade Equivalently

Life is a balance. Life to death. Love to grief. Hope to despair. When you trade one thing, you must trade something of equivalent value. Underpaying, will cause a debt that will be paid tenfold. Overpaying will cause a loss that can never be replenished.

If You Know the Spiritual Name of a Person/Object You Must Use It

Spirits, objects and people have what is called a “Spiritual Name” one that reflects the spiritual self. Sabi choose their spiritual name, and may choose to keep it secret from others.,

Seishin Sabi Basics

Seishin Sabi worship the spirits around them. They believe that the spirits and those that dwell in Ebonrock can be unified as one civilization. They do not take the spirits for granted, for they know the great danger that possesses. They are the artisans, the performers, and the solitary.

Younger Sabi learn from a patron or a matron of the spirits. This can be a family member or a member of the

community in which they live. Some adults and elderly take it upon themselves to teach the ways to the young. Young Sabi learn to commune with almost harmless spirits of emotion to learn how to act.

For those that join in their adolescence, or adulthood, they might find it harder to initiate a line of communication with the spirits. It can take many hours of meditation and self-reflection to achieve this. And a repayment of any debts that they may owe to others.

The spirits that Sabi attract are based on their emotions and natural balance.

 Kinder Sabi might attract spirits of healing and calming

 Bold Sabi might attract spirits of recklessness and bravery

 Artisan Sabi might attract spirits of their craft

Sabi celebrations often take place around natural events like eclipses and full moons. Many chose to celebrate on their own, but small groups can gather together and commune with each other's spirit to try to gain a greater understanding of the world around them.

Sabi may choose to take on a new name once they've communed with their first spirit, whatever they introduce themselves as to the spirit will forever be known as their name to the spirits. Some may choose to keep their spiritual name and birth name separate, which the spirits understand. The name you choose becomes the name you use with spirits, and is not limited by any mechanics of the physical world. As long as the name is honest to your spiritual name, the spirits will respect you, as you do their names.

Sabi can also take the time to meditate to try to change their emotional balance and to attempt to call upon a particular spirit. Their chances of a successful communication are based on their emotional state and how powerful the spirit is at the time of contact. Some spirits have specific times where they are at their strongest and weakest.

There is only a few dangers known to the Sabi, making an enemy of another, or making an enemy of a spirit. Both of these carry a great burden upon the soul and spirits that you call. Unless the matter is settled either by words or by combat, you never let a situation linger for long. Debts also incur this deep wound, as any debts should be paid as soon as you can, for who knows who will come to collect.

Well Known Sabi:

The Crone: She is an elderly woman who owns a tea shop, willing to teach anyone about the Ways of the Sabi over a hot cup of tea. She is considered an odd woman who has bonded with multiple spirits. It is rumored that she can see the future as it impacts her actions.

The Prized Chef: He is a cook who can stir up a stir fry that can heal the soul. His skills are unrivaled as he takes on any challenge that is brought to him. He has a knack for knowing exactly what a person desires to eat. His main spirit is a spirit of fire that provides warmth to those who are in his presence.

The Disgraced: They are a warrior who has deeply injured his soul, for they do not respect those who they kill in battle, as they destroy the tools of the people they kill. They is a mercenary who seeks the strongest fighter, and some say their goal is to fall in battle. Their real name is known to those they slay. Their sword is forever stained the color of blood, and their spirit is forever tainted with malice.

Volskungr Tradition

“No matter the path you walk, walk it proud. If you’re going to be a villain, be the most infamous villain you can be. If you choose the path of a hero; be a true paragon of heroism. The greatest deeds tell the grandest tales and Volskungr do not discriminate.”

Volskungr are a collection of spiritualists who seek to live and die a true legend of Ebonrock. They are warriors; scholars; thieves; the heroes and villains of stories and legend alike come alive. Based on the deeds that they perform, a Volskungr will attract a spirit patron that will grant them some powers. Both shaman and spirit grow together on their journey..

Spiritualists who follow this tradition tend to gather in large celebrations known as Revels. Revels are neutral grounds where fighting is set aside and people boast about their deeds. Spirits gather here as well to watch, listen and share their own stories that they’ve gathered from around the world.

Unlike the other shamanic traditions of Ebonrock Volskungr has no major spirits. Instead, minor spirits grow in power with the person who attracts them. As the shaman performs deeds of great renown and their story grows in either fame or infamy, their spirit will also gain power and be able to lend more aid to their shaman in the form of boons. A spirit will not care about the morality of their shaman’s actions unless an action goes against what the shaman has shown the spirit to be their calling or it goes against the spirit itself.

With the great differences between each Volskungr, infighting happens frequently. People following a more heroic path lead legends that intersect with those who follow a more villainous calling. When the two clash even greater stories arise from the ashes.

Thus Volskungr is home to some of the greatest villains and some of the most righteous heroes. Volskungr hail from any walk of life and any land; anyone with a yearning for adventure in their heart can hear the siren song of Volskungr and wish to leave behind a legacy for others to follow.

The Tenets of Volskungr

Journey before Destination

Volskungr tradition places great value on the hero’s journey. Whether you are a scholar seeking knowledge, a warrior seeking strength, or a thief seeking riches; all journeys tell a tale; and it is through the telling of these tales that the Volskungr leave their legacy, gaining a semblance of immortality with the stories they leave behind.

All Stories must End

The followers of Volskungr put little thought to throwing themselves at any and all challenges; all stories have an ending.

The stories Volskungr will tell of you when you pass are a better way to gain immortality; for when one’s journey comes to an end, it is time to rest in the afterlife. A Volskungr desires to gain entry to the Grand Lodge in the Great Beyond to sit with other legendary heroes and feast for eternity.

Good or Evil; be Bold and stick by your Deeds

Actions speak louder than words; if you will be a hero and fight for truth and justice then become as truth or justice. If you seek to only enrich and empower yourself; then become a scourge unto the world. Tales of infamy are just as powerful as tales of fame and all deeds are weighed in the afterlife; good or evil, all legends of sufficient

glory may enter the Great Lodge at the end of their days.

By your Deeds will your Name be known

Volskungr naming tradition is simple. People have a given name and his or her surname is based on that of his or her father or mother, whomever is more renown. Once a Volskungr has performed deeds that draw the attention of the spirits, the xpirits will decide on a new surname or title and bestow it upon the individual. Deeds are always be worn as a flag and by them the common folk know who the Volskungr.

Volskungr Basics

Volskungr shaman worship the idea that the tale you tell is the legacy you leave when you die. Heroes live forever in the hearts and minds of the people, who sing their song so it will echo for eternity in the cosmos.

A young Volskungr will seek to challenge herself; going after the most difficult bounties, trying her might against the most dangerous foes, seeking to top the tallest mountain, or build the best... thing. To a Volskungr the journey is just as important as the destination; and it is the journey that tells the tale.

Volskungr tradition is mostly oral. Stories are passed down from shaman to shaman. Volskungr shaman tend to attract spirits that will push them towards greater deeds; spirits like:

- The Wolf who seeks out the most dangerous hunt.
- The Bear who seeks to protect those they love
- The Owl who knows all.
- The Badger whose courage can lead to troublesome but grand tales.

-The storyteller is honored and just as important as the hero. Without the hero these stories wouldn't exist, but without the storyteller everyone would forget the hero's name.

The Legends Among You

The Laughing Man- The Laughing Man is a title bestowed upon a hitherto unknown assassin. The spirit who bestowed the title was drawn by the assassin's daring and their penchant for warning their targets before striking. This has lead to many legendary tales; and though many killings are attributed to the Laughing Man, no one can even really confirm whether this masked murder exists. But the spirits whisper their name, and thus by their deeds they are known.

Maeve Titanborn- Maeve is a very large, very imposing human woman hailing from the Titan's Jaws. Born Maeve Eriksdottir she was the daughter of a coward; Erik the Craven who had abandoned his post during an attack on his home village, and thus was branded a coward by his spirit. The spirits of Volksungr do not forget such things and in order to remove the brand cast by her fathers name Maeve journeyed into the heart of the mountain and slew a mighty drake that had been plaguing the area; choking the foul creature with her massive hands and crushing its skull. Now she travels Ebonrock, seeking fame, fortune, and a challenge to bring her story to a glorious conclusion. Meera, the Bear Mother, follows Maeve on her journey.

Rathe Venomhiss- Not many remember where Rathe comes from, as they actively work to erase their past. Rumor has it that this elf hails from Ithil but ambition lead to her exile and her taking up the mantle of an adventurer in the Twisted Forest and unpopulated highlands of Ebonrock. Rathe earned the name Venomhiss but attracting the attention of As'Shar'a the Spiderqueen, a spider spirit of some cunning whose venom is said to put down any but the strongest of men. Rathe wanders the world alone, seeking challenges as she arrives and taking no side but that of the

highest bidder.

Urog Ironjaw- Urog is a simple orc of the old ways; he likes to punch things, and get punched back. Urog earned both his title and the iron plates covering his massive lower jaw in The Grand Arena. He is a bare knuckle brawler and tends to be a great showman as well. Not super smart; his spirit is rumored to be a Fire Ferret named Li who pushes him to fight everything that crosses his path.

Garn Hearthpride- Garn is a collector of stories himself; and a frequent observer in the legends and deeds of many adventurers. A Dwarf hailing from the Titans Jaws, Garn owns many of the inns across Ebonrock; bringing the blessings of Volskungr with him wherever he goes. He is jovial, larger than life, and a lover of both good drink and good song. The spirit he attracted was that of Wander; who rumor says is a Volskungr bard who died a long time ago and came back to help Garn entertain his fellows during their travels. Some scholars dispute this saying that living souls never become spirits, but still, the rumor persists.

The Way of the Fourteen

A faith dedicated to the worship of 14 gods as a pantheon. They are the smallest religion sect that do not receive any powers. (Their class is the initiate class Faithful.) Historians are unsure when people began the worship of The Fourteen. The names of some of these gods is usually only learned by followers of the Way, however, there is some debate on whether or not some or all of these gods even exist. The Way of the 14's symbol is the purple numeral XIV over/within a green laurel wreath. Shrines to the Way of the Fourteen are scattered across Ebonrock. Some are upkept by other faithful where others have become overgrown or forgotten. Many view those who worship The Way as crazy, fanciful, or at the very least, odd.

Alestra: Goddess of Healing and Charity

Bora-Te: God of Knowledge and Magic

Camyn: God of Joy and Love

Delmer: God of Law and Civilization

Ezekiel: God of Death

Halgra: Goddess of Forging and Technology

Kor: God of Competition and Strategy

Necrosis: Goddess of Rebirth and Hope

Omni: God of Curiosity and Entertainment

Ras'Gal: God of Ambition and Prosperity

Shalam: Goddess of Luck and Karma

Trekal: Goddess of the Elements and Nature

Umbral: Goddess of Silence and the Night

Zanthir: God of Righteousness and Justice

Coming Volume II

(May not be before Event 1)

Alchemist's Guild

Bounty Hunter's Guild

The Chain Wizards

Guild of Technology

Merchant's Guild

Order of the Dragon Slayers

Order of Flowers

Order of the Iron First

Order of Waves

The Witch Coven