



## COMPLETE LORE COMPILATION

Up-to-date for game version 3.25.0

Compiled by POE Loremaster

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# PATH OF EXILE

# Wraekclast



Pharyl

Maraketh

Vastiri Plains

Lava Vaal

Ab. Vastiri

Mulhaan

Ab. Sarn

Sturdevole

Sles of Shann

Argr flats

Che. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Phrean Falls

Ab. Sarn

Eden Hill

Sarn's Keer

Cronur

Ab. Sarn

Sarna

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Marathus

Carb

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Ab. Sarn

Cheopolis

Ab. Sarn







Arayr Hatz

Baggax

Aras Vhal

Wahin Plains

Pyral Towers

Mt. Vastiri

Foobun

Strucvolf

Sary

The Pacific

Ufexai

Pinecan Forest

Fellsbrine

Rind Fell

Di Chomach

Kingsmarch

Dgarani Isladd

Subanvillan Range

Mecos Hills

Eni Ineri Dgaranadu

Aras Vhal

Fridh Hill

Loxvus Vncl

Theopolis

Oriath Harbour

Kater Archipelago

K Oth

Dgaranadu

Approximate scale (km)



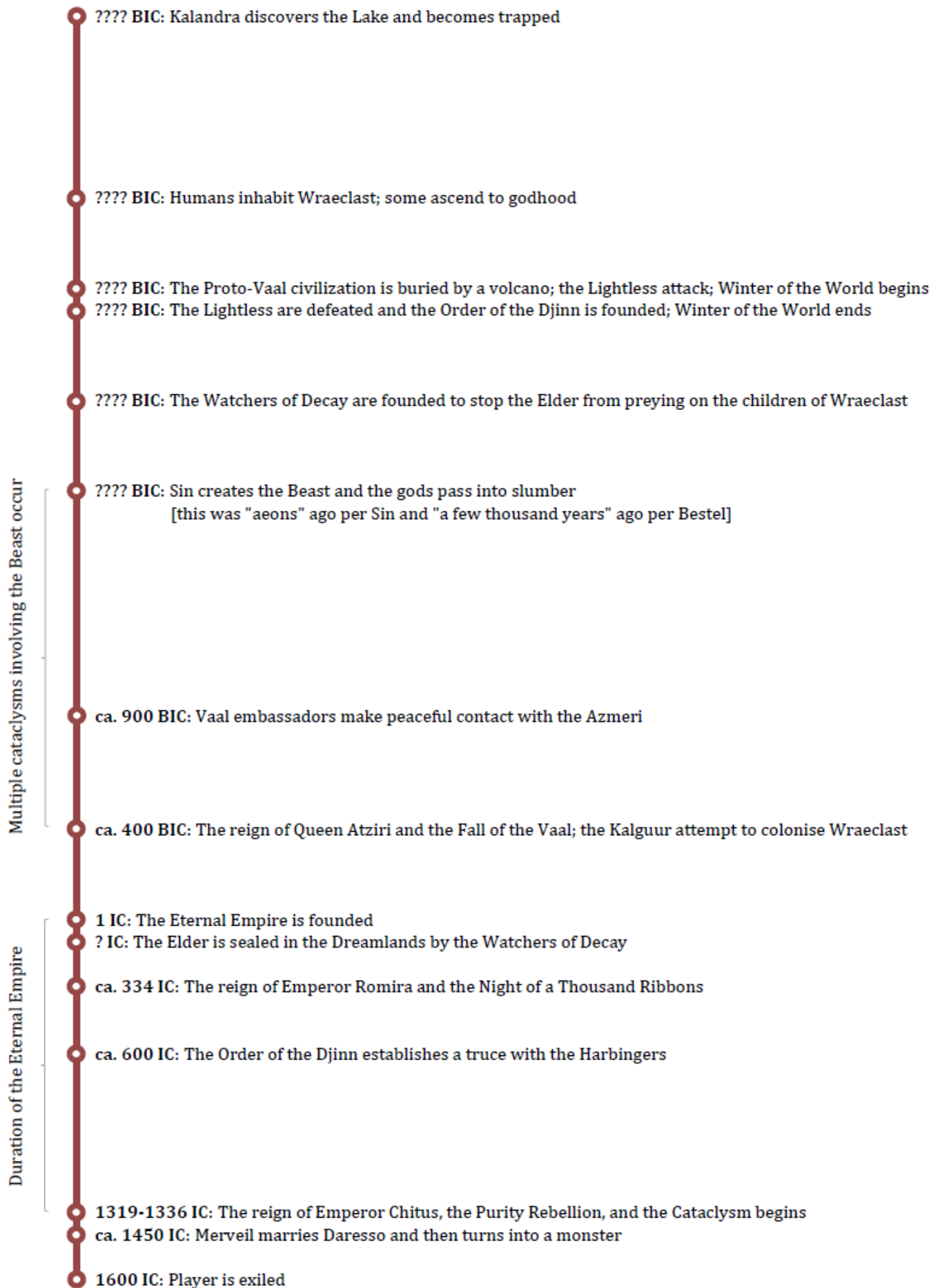






# Timeline of the History of Wraeclast

(Points with unknown dates may not be to scale)



# PRIMEVAL WRAECLAST

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## KALANDRA & THE LAKE

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Rumour has it that Kalandra is an ancient being, eternally trapped in a lake that exists outside Wraeclast, possessing the body of an owl and the head of a human. Sounds a bit ridiculous to me.

--Cadiro, on a Mirror of Kalandra (POE I)

... If you want to know more about the Beginning of Time, you'll have to ask the Titans. Well, *Titan*. Or that insufferably cryptic owl... if you don't mind paying such a horrible price...

--The Trialmaster, "The Beginning of Time" (POE I)

When I first came to this land, there was nothing but the Lake. It was a barren, hot, and lifeless realm, bubbling with magma and primordial ooze. How then, was there a Lake? Curiosity was my undoing.

--Kalandra, Ancient Etchings I (POE I)

I do not understand my prison. Every time I attempt to leave the Lake, I find myself instantly returning, as if I am making the choice to turn around and come back. In some cases, if I build up enough speed, I can make the transition take several minutes. Yet, I remember nothing of my time outside. Is this a real prison, or one whose walls reside only in my mind? What happens to me in those moments I cannot recall?

--Kalandra, Ancient Etchings II (POE I)

I am the One Who Watches. I observe from afar as flowers blossom and fade, as trees shoot skyward and then fall, and as whole animal breeds populate and change. They are growing smarter, in small ways, and watching their antics keeps me sane. One day, they will understand what it is to be alive, and they will wonder why they are. I will give them guidance. More than that, I will not say. I will spare them the pain of knowing.

--Kalandra, Ancient Etchings III (POE I)

There was a time when all of Wraeclast was pure and untainted.

--Kalandra, at the end of an Untainted Paradise encounter (POE I)

I look away from Wraeclast for but a moment, and the scampering little ones have invented religion. What is a god, but a thief of virtue? The prey have no idea they are creating their very own predators.

--Kalandra, Ancient Etchings IV (POE I)

They have started finding their way to me - some that imagine themselves grand heroes, some that are simply peasants to a lord, all in their time of greatest despair and need. I cannot help them, yet we talk, and they leave here with a new direction, ignorant of the cost they will pay. My latest conversation has given me much to think about. The problem is one of image; of a likeness cast by faith, of a reflection drawn by belief.

What you need, my little thief, is a shattered mirror.

--Kalandra, Ancient Etchings V (POE I)

For a time, I truly had hope. For a time, I actually believed I was going to escape this place. Ones that scampered more furtively than most promised they would dedicate themselves to freeing me. They promised they would do whatever it took, no matter how many generations had to devote their lives to the effort.

But once they understood the truth of this place, they took steps to make it harder to find, and moved to erase me from recorded history. Then they burned themselves alive. Am I truly so forsaken? So untouchable, that none must be allowed to even know of me? In your fear, you consign me to oblivion! All I had to hold back the loneliness were my rare visitors...

--Kalandra, Ancient Etchings VI (POE I)

I have a plan... I will escape this place, no matter the cost... for now, I must simply bide my Time... sooner or later, one will come, even despite the barriers. One will find their way to me, setting the proper events in motion...

--Kalandra, Ancient Etchings VII (POE I)

Fools seek to make the power of this Lake their own. They will crack the world.

--Kalandra, at the start of a Heist encounter (POE I)



# THE RACES & GODS OF WRAECLAST

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## THE RISE OF THE GODS

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Though I am a god, I have not forgotten my humanity. I care for that which I once was. ...

--Sin, "Kitava" (POE I)

There was a time before the Beast, bathed in the shadows of lost memory, when men and women like you could ascend. Through rareness of quality and the adoration of their people, these few could reach out into the quickening mists of immortality and grasp the power of godhood.

Mind you, transcendence is never easy. Like the pains of childbirth, it reeks of agony, tragedy and sacrifice. The sacrifice most often being of one's humanity. That is simply the way of it. Those of us who seek the immortal throne live long enough to see ourselves become truly monstrous.

--Sin, "The Origins of the Gods" (POE I)

Ambition is the bane of mortality. It was through ambition that we gods transcended the thick mud and thin blood of our mundane birthrights. Ambition that drove us to sustain our divine selves through the subjugation of others. ...

--Sin, "Shavronne's Soul" (POE I)

Faith given under false pretenses still carries the same power.

--That Which Was Taken Crimson Jewel (POE I)

The gods seem to reshape the world around them wherever they go.

--Scion, on The Brine King's Reef (POE I)

So, Divinity doesn't just reshape the self. It changes the world around you, too...

--Witch, on The Brine King's Reef (POE I)

... Vanja: I learned all about the old gods. They were supposed to be our idols, beings of divinity that guided us through our mortal lives.

Petarus: But they aren't like that at all, are they love?

Vanja: Hardly. The gods're no better than we are! And nobody that is as bad as us should ever wield that much power! ...

--Petarus and Vanja, "The Old Gods" (POE I)

Innocence derives power from Divinity, which comes from the power of believers and faith. There was a time long ago when anyone with enough followers could ascend to godhood, and that was when most of the gods we know, including Innocence, were created. Unfortunately, there seems to be a feedback cycle involved with Divinity, in which the image the leader projects informs what beliefs the followers imprint upon the leader, perpetuating an ongoing exaggeration of traits and desires. Sin retained his humanity, likely because Innocence had him vilified in the Templar religion rather than worshipped...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2996851>

## THE PROTO-VAAL

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### THE FIRST KING

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The narrow path turned to rough rocks that led towards the sky. One last obstacle in a life-long journey to find a land they could call home.

--Uzaza's Mountain Sapphire Ring (POE I)

Cold winds blasted what little grew on the icy surface. The gifts of the land lay hidden deeper, and only patience and persistence would free them.

--Uzaza's Meadow Sapphire Ring (POE I)

Sheltered beneath thick ice, the river ferried fat fish towards the sea. But the First King knew the river's secret, and the fish were not the only ones who grew fat.

--Uzaza's Valley Sapphire Ring (POE I)

### AUL, THE LAST KING

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He surveyed his lands, green and vital, watched with pride as his slaves quarried fine stone for his fortress, and thanked the heavens for his many blessings.

--Putembo's Mountain Topaz Ring (POE I)

The fields were silent but for the plucking of fruits, the rustling of leaves, and the breaking of stone. No slave dared to speak or look the passing king in the eye. No one... except Aul.

--Putembo's Meadow Topaz Ring (POE I)

With no stone for rebuilding, each storm took its toll on the village. Huts eventually collapsed, their occupants injured or dead. Bodies were left by the river, to appease the gods. But the dead would not remain there.

--Putembo's Valley Topaz Ring (POE I)

It was not his fearlessness or ferocity, nor his tactical genius, it was his leadership that earned Aul, the Last King, his crown.

--Aul's Uprising Onyx Amulet (POE I)

The strange voice showed Aul a future where his legacy was forgotten, where new cultures broke themselves upon Aul's ruined world.

--The Price of Prescience (POE I)

They built a temple... around the mirror...

Under the earth... to hide from the night sky...

--Medved, on his death (POE I)

There exists a vast mirror in the ground. To gaze into those perfectly polished waters is to see a mortal soul, with all its flaws and pains laid bare. There is wisdom and counsel to be had, but some do not survive the truth.

--Tawhanuku, "Ikiaho" (POE I)

## THE MARAKETH

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... The Maraketh are a matriarchy! ...

--Petarus and Vanja, "Oyun" (POE I)

No matter where you come from, or who you might be, we were all birthed by a mother. Our mothers protected us and gave us nourishment. It is our duty in life to honour that great task. Without a mother, none would tread this dirt today.

The most important commandment in our people's tradition is this: Honour the Mother, Honour the Life.

--Irasha, "Maraketh Tradition" (POE I)

And how shall we know a sekhema worthy of rule? By the anointing of the Great Roc, under whose wings we grow and soar.

- Maraketh Coronation Ritual

--Sekhema Feather (POE I)

Pride is a common flaw in men. We Maraketh beat such sickness out of our boys. Do you know why...? If left unchecked, pride becomes a plague.

There is a cure, of course. It's called 'devotion'.

--Kira, introduction to Duelist (POE I)

When I was twelve, three men came out of the Vastiri plains and set their eyes upon me. They asked me for water, but took much more.

When the women of Highgate finally caught them, I was given an opportunity to enact the execution myself, an offer I gladly took. Even at twelve, I knew the price for betraying the *akhara*. ...

--Irasha, "Maraketh Justice" (POE I)

When I received my first flower of blood, I was given to the ritual of womanhood. All young Maraketh women have to dance with the scorpion, to prove themselves worthy of carrying the *dekhara's* spear.

It is no easy task, to catch a black Maraketh Scorpion. Their tails are swift, their stingers sharp, their poison lethal. I made my way through the trial unscathed, but my sister... We shared a womb, came into this world together. She left it, thrashing and foaming at the mouth. ...

--Irasha, "Shakari" (POE I)

... I am from the northern reaches of the Plains of Vastiri. My home caravan has ninety-two carts, all of which are beautifully set with colourful tapestries and shaped metal. It is a life and land unlike this one. Difficult, duty-bound, but rewarding. ...

--Adiyah, "Home" (POE I)

... I do not have tattoos...because they are marks of shame or criminality. ...

--Whakano & Adiyah, "Banter" (POE I)

It is an elegant lie, that name: the 'Plains' of Vastiri. I know it only as a harsh desert, a blasted wasteland of broken rock, crimson sands, and salted earth. Those who call it the 'Plains' see it as it was thousands of years ago. They are deluded. ...

--Nenet, "The Plains of Vastiri" (POE I)

They believed themselves the most ordered, but that tradition turned their forests to salt.

--Brutal Restraint Timeless Jewel (POE I)

The Maraketh are an ancient race, bound by ascetic tradition. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/theawakening/items>

## PROVERBS & LEGENDS

One should not entice the storm; one cannot invite the storm, or give warrant to its tyrant-soul. We survive only by appeasing the storm, with gifts and offerings of adoration. We hope that, in its mercy, it shall pass us by.

- Tempestology of the Maraketh, Repudion IV

--Bottled Storm (POE I)

The Maraketh fear very little, but they dare not whisper the name of the demon that flies on Winter's gales.

--White Wind Imperial Slean (POE I)

The swallow flew fast and took many turns, spilling a seed where no plant had grown before. This seed grew and grew until the desert became fertile and abundant. Your mind is like this seed.

- Maraketh Proverb

--Fertile Mind Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

The mastodons of yore were each born with two weapons greater than any sword. So, too, were you.

- Maraketh Proverb

--Hollow Palm Technique (POE I)

Kings fall, empires crumble, mortals perish. All turn to earth and sand.

- Maraketh proverb

--Primordial Eminence Viridian Jewel (POE I)

When the hyena howls thrice death is sure to follow.

-Maraketh Wisdom

--Al Dhih Timeworn Claw (POE I)

We Maraketh have a saying... "Only the night can understand the darkness. Only the sun can bring about the dawn."

--Kira, introduction to Scion (POE I)

To the Maraketh, death is as intimate as love.

--Ornament of the East Gut Ripper (POE I)

The King looked upon images swirling atop the ancient stone dial. "You look peaceful" he told his bride-to-be, "So peaceful, asleep in our wedding bed." But in phantasm, she did not slumber, and what he saw was not a place for dreams, rather, a wooden box... about to be closed and lowered into earthy depths.

- Maraketh Legend

--Calendar of Fortune (POE I)

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## KETH

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... What I wouldn't give to relive the halcyon days of ancient Keth, when we kept mortals in their rightful place.

--Tangmazu, The Quarry (POE I)

A simple ornament from the days when Keth's trade empire was the glory of the world. Protectors at the massive toll gates wore these.

--Dekhara's Resolve (POE I)

Sap of the Aturi tree, known only to grow at the meeting point of the seven waters. Nothing since its disappearance has smelled as wondrous.

--Incense of Keth (POE I)

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## THE FARIDUN

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Nenet is from a people that currently call themselves the Faridun. They are our rejects. Those we Maraketh left to die in the desert as children for being unworthy or flawed. I do not think ill of Nenet. I do not think of her at all.

I am not cruel... It is simply that scattered groups of pariahs wandering in the desert have no effect on the world. ...

--Adiyah, "Nenet" (POE I)

[Note: The following lore items were written for 3.12, but have never been available in-game.]

... Where I am from, the Plains of Vastiri, the Maraketh hold no pity for the weak or the supposedly useless. The other outcasts found me and raised me, and though our lives are harsh, we have a meager culture of our own. We call ourselves the Faridun. The Maraketh believe we are worthless and flawed, but I am convinced I can prove that is not true.

There is a legend among my people of a bold warrior who tried to unite the scattered Faridun camps thousands of years ago. His name was Jamanra, and he wished only to unify us so that we might come into our own as a people. If I can prove that he existed by finding the Book of Jamanra,



then I may be able to initiate a ritual challenge with the Maraketh to test Faridun warriors for worthiness. If we pass, they will have to accept us back into the lives we should have had! ...

--Nenet, "The Book of Jamanra" (POE I)

If we can prove Jamanra existed, then the Faridun may have a chance to rejoin the Maraketh. I, for one, would like to meet my parents. I have many questions...

--The Book of Jamanra (POE I)

Jamanra did exist... and they killed him. The Sekhemas agreed to meet with him to discuss recognizing the Faridun nation, but it was a trick. They poisoned him. The supposedly honourable high-and-mighty Maraketh poisoned our greatest leader. ...

--Nenet, "The Book of Jamanra" (POE I)

The Faridun cannot earn burial in the sky. They have other ways of keeping the dead.

--Urn of Farud (POE I)

Niles: Out of curiosity, pariah, do the Faridun worship any gods?

Nenet: What's a god?

--Niles & Nenet, "Banter" (POE I)

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## MARAKETH GODS

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Petarus: Have you ever heard much of the Maraketh legends?

Vanja: A truly unique cosmology of strange creatures, pagan gods and powerful treasures. ...

--Petarus and Vanja, "The Maraketh Calendar" (POE I)

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## GARUKHAN, QUEEN OF THE WIND

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Garukhan sought madness and knowledge amongst the billowing clouds of a blackened sky. A vulture of pride, she would not be refused, and so the stratosphere divulged unto her eldritch secrets of its tumultuous past.

--Storm Blade (POE I)

A traveler on the winds, Garukhan pridefully plundered the sky for its secrets. To her mind, wisdom could be found in the eye of a hurricane.

Please understand that Garukhan is not an evil being. She was once my friend and companion. Her beauty astonished me as her aspirations inspired me. Yet I must forgo my sentiments for the sake of humankind.

Like winds erode the sandstone, Garukhan has been warped by the same powers she enslaved. This is not my goddess that you shall slay. And if I continue to say it, I might very well come to believe it.

--Sin, "Garukhan" (POE I)

I would offer prayers up to the goddess of the breeze as a child, and listen to her voice sing and whisper as she danced through my family's windchimes. She was my favourite, but in light of recent time, I can only believe that some immortal madness has laid waste to her mind.

--Irasha, "Garukhan" (POE I)

... Garukhan was... complicated, but she was also stubborn and never would have thought to change her ways.

...she was vain beyond comparison. It was her ambition that corrupted her, despite all my warning words. ...

--Sin, "Garukhan" (POE I)

I weep for my poor Garukhan. Together we experienced the loftiest moments that this world could offer.

Alas, it was my heavy heart that she could no longer bear. I knew her pride would one day be the storm that would ravage my precious humanity. In truth, it was for Garukhan that I sowed the Dark Ember within the depths of Highgate.

When love cannot be slain, it must be laid down to sleep.

--Sin, "Queen of the Winds" (POE I)

Petarus: You must've encountered men and women like us before...

Vanja: Relic hunters! ... And we need your help locating a particularly rare item. ... It's an ancient sword, belonging to the Maraketh goddess Garukhan!

Petarus: The Storm Blade some call it. A weapon carved from crystal, capable of capturing even the most powerful of storms within its rigid edge.

Vanja: The goddess lost it, somewhere in the eastern desert during her ancient battle against the necromancer Saresh and his undead horde. ...

--Petarus and Vanja, "The Storm Blade" (POE I)

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## SHAKARI, QUEEN OF THE SANDS

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It is not something I deign to speak of often, but this goddess, this creature, she was once the flesh of my flesh, blood of my blood. I rose into the clouds and fell into the arms of their queen, the beautiful Garukhan.

Now if you think that mortal marriages are difficult to navigate, try an immortal one. We parted ways, yet not before my young Queen of the Sands was born into this world of filth and horror. ...

--Sin, "Queen of the Sands" (POE I)

A mother's keen heart shall bleed into the dreams of her daughter. Once a beauty who held captive the hearts of men and women alike, Shakari's splendour decayed into lust... for the power possessed by her skyborn mother.

My daughter once sought out such power within the great sands of this desert. Ever determined, she found it, and it made of her the twisted creature...

Driven by agony and shame, she built an army out here in these sweltering lands and would have conquered the very sky had not the Beast soothed her into peaceful oblivion. A babe once more sleeping in her cradle.

--Sin, "Shakari" (POE I)

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## THE GODDESS OF WATER

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The relief depicts some sort of forgotten Maraketh goddess. I have no idea what the context is. ...

--The Goddess of Water (POE I)

## THE EZOMYTES

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Passed from king to king for centuries, this Ezomyte symbol of state could split heads and sunder city gates with equal aplomb.

--Helepolis, Steam trading card description (POE I)

... 'Ezomytes.' They use a system of runes that is... oddly similar to our own.

--Johan, on runes (POE I)

Like lightning, the Ezomyte cavalry need never strike twice.

--Stormcharger Plated Greaves (POE I)

### PROVERBS & SAYINGS

A stone is not a stone, it is but one part of a fortress.

- Ezomyte proverb

--Primordial Harmony Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

Masters of wit, strength and cunning. To survive the harsh winters, you must be like the fox.

- Ezomyte Proverb

--The Fox (POE I)

You've no reason for fear when you're a root in a fen

- Old Ezomyte saying.

--Fencoil Gnarled Branch (POE I)

Cut down the tallest tree, and another becomes the tallest.

- Old Ezomyte saying.

--Mirebough Gnarled Branch (POE I)

The Ezomytes have a saying: Take everything and waste nothing.

--Coated Shrapnel Crimson Jewel (POE I)

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## THE FIRST ONES

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The First Ones are the forever ones. There is no dust of the hourglass in their blood. No fissures of weariness in their faces. To drink of their blood is to drink of time itself.

- The Wolven King

--Fangjaw Talisman (POE I)

The First Ones thundered over Ezomyr upon hooves of grey and black. The people felt their stamping rage and cowered as the fury rained down.

- The Wolven King

--Lone Antler Talisman (POE I)

Just as the rat cowers before the dog and the dog cowers before Man, so too should we cower before the First Ones and pray we never learn of what comes next.

--Natural Hierarchy Rotfeather Talisman (POE I)

For too long we have crawled in darkness, scavenging through rotten scraps. The First Ones teach us to scavenge until we can hunt, and then never crawl again.

- The Wolven King

--Writhing Talisman (POE I)

The First Ones stalk with us upon this lifelong hunt, and cast their contempt upon those that would make us their prey.

- The Wolven King

--Black Maw Talisman (POE I)

The First Ones hold us between two sharpened blades. That should we stray too far from the path, we find ourselves severed.

- The Wolven King

--Mandible Talisman (POE I)

The world of the First Ones is harsh;  
We struggle on our bellies to survive.  
But that which imprisons us also changes us  
And soon we will emerge anew.

- The Wolven King

--Chrysalis Talisman (POE I)

The first ones [sic] live where they can, where they must. They embrace the frost, the storm, the drought. Waxing and waning, breaking and mending, living with time and happenstance, as must we.

- The Wolven King

--Avian Twins Talisman (POE I)

It's said to be noble to stand one's ground. To soak the earth in stalwart blood. While the First Ones chose to laugh and run and caper with untamed glee.

- The Wolven King

--Wereclaw Talisman (POE I)

The fire of the hearth is a docile dog, leashed and tamed. The fire of the First Ones is a ravaging wolf, wild and free.

- The Wolven King

--Ashscale Talisman (POE I)

We breed thoughts of single mind, fashion tools of single purpose. While the First Ones bring to bear anything that the wildlands provide.

- The Wolven King

--Three Hands Talisman (POE I)

From flesh and ferocity, the First Ones roamed through the realm of Spirit, and into the darkness beyond.

- The Wolven King

--Splitnewt Talisman (POE I)

They were the first survivors. The First Ones showed my people that to win, you must outlast. They left this world long ago to seek other survivors, but they will return. And when they do, I will join them in the Great Grove. ...

--Einhar Frey, "The First Ones" (POE I)

... When the end arrives, we must be ready. The First Ones will return. They will bring the survivors with them to the Great Grove. We must prove we are worthy. We must sacrifice the beasts we find at the Blood Altar.

Feed the altar the blood of these beasts, and the First Ones will bless us. And, perhaps, reveal to us their secrets.

--Einhar Frey, "The Blood Altar" (POE I)

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## CRAICEANN, FIRST OF THE DEEP

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The First of the Deep was the First of All. It was He who conquered the waves, who stood guard as land rose from sea.

--Craiceann's Carapace Golden Plate (POE I)

When the land rose above the sea, The First of the Deep did not move. When the sky turned to fire, The First of the Deep did not perish. We must remember our place, and play to our strengths.

--Craiceann's Tracks Goliath Greaves (POE I)

When the rains come, we cower beneath shelter. The First of the Deep teaches us that we should seek no shelter but ourselves.

--Craiceann's Chitin Magistrate Crown (POE I)

The stone that stays in the waves soon crumbles to sand. The First of the Deep teaches us to watch the tides and choose our moments to move wisely.

--Craiceann's Pincers Titan Gauntlets (POE I)

## FARRUL, FIRST OF THE PLAINS

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The First of the Plains was the First of the Hunt. It was she who showed us that there is honour in waiting in the shadows and picking your moment.

--Farrul's Fur Triumphant Lamellar (POE I)

A secret is a weapon your enemies do not have. When the First of the Plains hunted, she moved in silence and acted quickly. To do otherwise is to arm your foes.

--Farrul's Chase Slink Boots (POE I)

Upon silent paws and masked by the reeds,  
Farrul's hunt begins as the light recedes.

--Pride of the First Ones (POE I)

It is a fool who strikes the turtle's shell. The First of the Plains teaches us to exploit weaknesses, and where no weakness can be found, to create one.

--Farrul's Bite Harlequin Mask (POE I)

A hungry beast wastes no energy. Every strike, no matter how small, must work towards victory. The First of the Plains teaches us that the largest prey can still be whittled away.

--Farrul's Pounce Hydrascale Gauntlets (POE I)

## THE GREATWOLF

---

The largest beasts cannot be overpowered. The Greatwolf teaches us to use guile, not strength, to probe for the soft flesh and strike deep.

--The Wolf (POE I)

Ancient worshippers of the Greatwolf were overtaken by a ravenous hunger for all things mystical.

--Elevore Wolf Pelt (POE I)



## FENUMUS, FIRST OF THE NIGHT

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The First of the Night was the first explorer. It was she who first braved night's terrors and found comfort in silence and solace.

--Fenumus' Shroud Widowsilk Robe (POE I)

When the fires spilled out of the mountain, The First of the Night wove a net and was carried into the night on its hot winds. Though we cannot live without danger, we can learn to live with it.

--Fenumus' Spinnerets Assassin's Boots (POE I)

A hunter uses everything at their disposal. The First of the Night did not hold back her venom. She used it to weaken her enemies, and used her enemies to strengthen her many children.

--Fenumus' Toxins Necromancer Circlet (POE I)

A burden shared is a burden made lighter. The First of the Night teaches us that our burdens are not just ours to bear, but ours to use against oppressors.

--Fenumus' Weave Carnal Mitts (POE I)

## SAQAWAL, FIRST OF THE SKY

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The First of the Sky was the Last of the First. It was he who showed us that our limits are self-imposed, that what we take for law may just be an illusion.

--Saqawal's Nest Blood Raiment (POE I)

When the inferno spread across the land, it was the First of the Sky who singed his feathers as he brought the flames to a standstill.

--Saqawal's Winds Soldier Gloves (POE I)

Though we are individual, we share the same plight. The First of the Sky teaches us that unity and selflessness, not division and greed, is what will carry us upwards.

--Saqawal's Flock Silken Hood (POE I)

A bird, too heavily laden, cannot take flight. The First of the Sky teaches us to put aside our possessions so that we may live more freely.

--Saqawal's Talons Hydrascale Boots (POE I)

## THE KARUI

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That word, 'Karui,' is an informal name for anyone of the blood, whether a chieftain, a child, or a *kaivana*. The Ngakuramakoi, however, are those who truly comprise our culture. They must be followers of the Way, and they must have passed their test of adulthood, at the Isle of Shrikes or elsewhere. A great warrior does not have to be Karui by blood to become Ngakuramakoi. It is rare, but it does happen. ...

--Akoya, "Ngakuramakoi" (POE I)

Ngamakanui isn't a place, not really. *Makanui* is our Way, and *Nga* means 'from' or 'of.' So anywhere that our people go—mostly islands, we like to roam—that is Ngamakanui, because we have brought our Way to it. Outsiders that don't understand us often mark Ngamakanui in a particular place on a map, but that is a mistake we don't care to correct. It is better that the Vaal don't know where we are. ...

--Kahuturoa, "Ngamakanui" (POE I)

The King's Feast is an ancient ritual born of less enlightened times. Long before the Karui followed the Way, one tribe would conquer another and a feast would be prepared for the triumphant King. The main dishes of this feast were selected carefully, for the sweetness of their nature and the tenderness of their flesh.

You see, when the conquered fills the belly of the conqueror, two tribes become one. ...

--Lani, "The King's Feast" (POE I)

... I've heard that the Karui have this philosophy... *makanui*, the Way of the Warrior. ...

--Clarissa, "Maramoa" (POE I)

It is the Karui way to give leadership to the victor. ...

--Haku, on offering to betray (POE I)

It is the Karui Way to observe nature in nature. The fish without the sea is no longer a fish. It is dinner. ...

--Siosa, "Archives" (POE I)

...In Ngamakanui, our treaties mandated that an offering of peace be witnessed by a third. ...

--Haku, on offering to bargain (POE I)

It is the Gull that delivers Man unto Ancestor. The consumer of our flesh. The seeder of our souls unto the earth. We give the Gull his life. The Gull gives us our Way.

- Lavianga, Advisor to Kaom

--The Gull Raven Mask (POE I)

... Karui culture can often be excessively focused on having certain traits, such as strength or bravado. Certain duties are expected of each of us, whether or not we want to fulfill them. ...

--Ikiaho, "Rakiata" (POE I)

A Karui woman's place was not the battlefield, but the hearth. Hyrri changed all of that.

--Hyrri's Demise Sharktooth Arrow Quiver (POE I)

## PROVERBS

"If one is an annoyance then a hundred is a threat."

- Ancient Karui Proverb

--Rain of Splinters Crimson Jewel (POE I)

"All are welcome in Hinekora's eternal home."

- Karui Proverb

--Death's Hand Karui Sceptre (POE I)

"Shoot first, ask no questions."

- Karui wisdom

--Karui Ward Jade Amulet (POE I)

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## THE TRIBES & THEIR GODS

Hinekora, my Mother of Death, is not the only god, exile. The Karui are watched over by many. ...

--Navali, "Karui Gods" (POE I)

... There are so many Karui tribes, and so many gods. We don't all share the same ones, either. There are tribes in Western Ngamakanui, beyond Ezomyr, with gods most of us are barely aware of. Those tribes are strange, and we don't go there.

--Kahuturoa, "Kitava's Defeat" (POE I)

We all seem neatly divided into our tribes here, but it isn't so. Warriors switch tribes all the time due to marriage, chieftain successions, or simple wanderlust. We Karui are a nomadic people, in the physical and spiritual sense. When I call my tribe the Valako tribe, yes, we are, but at one time we followed Tukohama, and at another Tasalio, and then Valako again before that. Essentially, each god must prove themselves to us the same way we prove ourselves to each other. If a tribe falls on hard times, clearly, their god has failed them, and it may be time for another. We can also call upon any god we wish at any time, so long as we are in good standing as a warrior. Basically, it's like children running amok around the campfire.

--Kiloava, "Tribes" (POE I)

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## TUKOHAMA, FATHER OF WAR

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The Karui were a peaceful culture of farmers and fishermen, before fate thrust the great Tukohama upon them. It was he who put the stone axes in their hands and the hunger for conquest in their bellies.

Farmers quenched their dry fields in blood. Fishermen emptied their holds of fish and filled them with land-greedy hordes.

Battle by battle, war by war, Tukohama carved the steps that would carry him up a mountain of severed heads, and into immortality. Tukohama's axe is called Anger, his spear is called Greed, and their victims are the minds and hearts of all Karui.

--Sin, "Tukohama" (POE I)

Our Father of War was the first to put axes in Karui hands. We learned that we could take from this world rather than accept what was given. Many of the other gods are generous, but why should we subsist in harmony with the land when we have the strength to be its masters?

--Akoya, "Tukohama" (pre-defeat) (POE I)

... Tukohama provides us with weapons and knowledge of war, which lets us walk the path safely. ...

--Navali, "Karui Gods" (POE I)

Weakness must be purged lest it poison the blood of all Karui.

- Prayer to Tukohama

--Eye of Conquest (POE I)

Tukohama stood in the door, blocking the sunlight from Hikatomanga and his family. The Father of War's retribution was inevitable, for it is known - man cannot cheat the gods without consequence...

--Captured Soul of Tahsin, Warmaker (POE I)

...the Tukohama Tribe and the Ngamahu Tribe were in continual conflict. A cycle of vengeance kept the two groups raiding each other, and they were beginning to lose their superior positions. There was a danger of the other tribes becoming dominant. To put an end to it, Ngamahu and Tukohama went through the traditions together. Tukohama aided her in the forging of a legendary axe, while her ring, a sign of fire and fertility, was given to us. ...

--Akoya, "Ngamahu" (POE I)

... Each tribe has its own belief about how the world will end, but you must understand, these tales do not conflict. They are all correct. Our traditional expectations are not literal.

Our *hatungo* speaks of a time when all Ngakuramakoi will become so strong, and so skilled at warfare, that every man and woman will seek to become their own chieftain. Blood lust will take over the people, and war will continue until only one warrior remains. That warrior will be the strongest that ever lived in all of history, and he will die soon after from his wounds. His fallen body will become the new world, and his blood, the rivers. His dying warcry will become the sky, and his fierce eyes will become the new Sun and Moon. Of course, this is not a literal tale. It is meant to give us a sense of place in a chaotic existence. There is immense value in this. Our traditions give us meaning and purpose...

--Akoya, "The End of Time" (POE I)

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## NGAMAHU, MOTHER OF FIRE

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Fire was a gift to mortals.

--Tawhanuku, on purchasing a Kaom item (POE I)

... Ngamahu lends us fire, which illuminates the path. ...

--Navali, "Karui Gods" (POE I)

We do not command fire. Ngamahu lends it, and Hinekora returns it.

- Lavianga, Advisor to Kaom

--Ashcaller Quartz Wand (POE I)

The Hinekora Tribe thinks Time will simply stop one day. No. The Ngamahu Tribe believes the world will end, not with some pathetic unraveling of the seasons, but with a tremendous eruption. Wraeclast will stab itself and pour forth its lifeblood to burn away all life, both the mighty and the diseased, as it has done before. Then, the first of a new line of Karui will emerge from the molten caldera, as we did before. They will be different. Maybe better, in some sense, having learned from the wisdom our souls will carry forward. Theirs will be a savage new world to conquer all over again. I wish I could be there to see it... a glorious new challenge unlike any other... but my soul will be returned to the volcano with all the others here in the Halls of the Dead, to be melted and reforged into that entirely new Karui essence, that new line. I could wish for no better end.

--Kaom, "The End of Time" (POE I)

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### VALAKO, FATHER OF THE STORM

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Have you ever had the feeling, during a rising storm, that the winds and rain might just keep getting stronger and never ebb? That's how the world will end. A great storm will cover the land, and it will just keep raging harder and harder until everything is swept away. Then, as always happens after a big storm, life will burgeon anew. We see it all the time around us. Why would it be any other way?

--Kiloava, "The End of Time" (POE I)

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### TASALIO, FATHER OF WATER

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A gift from Tasalio, God of Water, to the chieftain Rakiata. Kaom took Rakiata's head and hand so that his warriors' axes might rise and fall like the waves.

--Tasalio's Sign Sapphire Ring (POE I)

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### SIONE, MOTHER OF THE SUN & LANI HUA, MOTHER OF THE MOON

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Many believe that the Mother of the Moon has been off fighting a war against the Mother of the Sun for thousands of years. While Lani Hua is indeed absent, it is not to fight against her sister. The wounded souls from that war are sent to the silver palace, where Arohongui tends to them until they may rejoin the fight. Those warrior souls cry out in fear and torment as they lay in hospice. They speak not of war with Sione, but of a war with the stars themselves. They have been sworn to

silence by both Sione and Lani Hua, but the feverish ones cannot help but rant. Apparently, the two sisters did go out into the night sky to wage war upon one another, but when they got there, they encountered something horrible, something that drives even the strongest warrior to madness and panic. We have not been abandoned by our two strongest gods. They are out there protecting us every single minute of every single day, and they cannot rest for even a moment.

That's what the tales say, in any case. I don't know how much of that I actually believe.

--Ikiaho, "Lani Hua" (POE I)

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## RAMAKO, FATHER OF LIGHT AND FATHER OF THE SUN

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Ramako is both the Father of Light, and Father of the Sun. These are not the same duty. In the early days, he was just the Father of Light, and he brought beauty and warmth everywhere he went. The Mother of the Sun, Sione, lived alone in a jade palace in the sky. At that time, the Sun was no brighter than any other star, and it was verdant green. Sione, however, was the most ambitious of the gods. She traded away all of her tribe's possessions to foreign cultures in exchange for gold, and she plated her entire palace with that useless but shiny material. Her tribe was on the verge of starvation, but she asked them to trust her. They put on a festival with what little they had left, and to this, Ramako was invited.

In awe of the supposed wealth of Sione, Ramako accepted her invitation to go through the traditions together. Once he entered her golden palace, his light reflected countless times, blazing warmth and life all over the world. Sione's palace cyclically rose above the world, then back into it, and while it was in the sky, that time became known as Day. To her credit, this shining beacon drew food, wealth, and respect to her tribe. Her gambit paid off. Ramako became the Father of the Sun ever after.

--Ahuana, "Ramako" (POE I)

The Ramako Tribe, like us, often uses ice and cold in their warmaking. That is because Ramako has long loved Lani Hua, Arohongui's mother, in secret. He fights not for himself, but for her. His people do the same. I don't understand it at all, but it is what it is.

--Ikiaho, "Ramako" (POE I)

Ah... yes... Ramako was impersonated by someone who visited Lani Hua, the Mother of the Moon, in his guise. My ancestors suspected the truth of this immediately. Arohongui had a very strange inheritance, with abilities prone to darkness and illusions, quite unlike Ramako's golden strength and honesty. There is a tale, very rarely told, of a deceiver being caught and locked away for this crime. Supposedly, it was the ancient elders of my tribe that enacted this justice. We consider the matter settled, but Sione and Lani Hua continue to battle for eternity in distant realms... they do not listen to us. They do not listen to anyone. All they care about is vengeance. It might be controversial in Western Ngamakanui, but I say that the gods who forget their people are not owed our loyalty.



--Ahuana, "Lani Hua" (POE I)

The ancient *tavukai* against the use of projectile weapons is not a rule that applies to us. It was a matter of pride for those tribes that lauded brutish men with large axes. The Ramako Tribe prefers to fell warriors like that with well-placed arrows, long before their axes ever come close.

--Ahuana, "Tavukai" (POE I)

The other tribes tell all sorts of stories about the end of time. Those are just fables. You see, the Sun sets somewhere inside the world each night, but it also changes course from season to season. Eventually, it will stray too near, and Wraeclast will be burned away by its heat. However, the Sun brings life as well, so once it returns to the sky, as it always does, there will be a burst of verdancy unlike we have never ever seen. If you think about it, it's the only end that makes sense.

--Ahuana, "The End of Time" (POE I)

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## RONGOKURAI, FATHER OF NIGHT

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Rongokurai is the Father of Night. Many associate that with evil. Not so. The night shrouds the innocent, hiding them from those who would do harm. The night gives cover to warriors on their raids. More importantly, the night is cool, bringing relief from a hot day. My armour is heavy, and gets quite hot, so I look forward to the sunset. It's the little things.

--Kahuturoa, "Rongokurai" (POE I)

Rongokurai gifts his strength to protect the weak.

--Nightguard (POE I)

Ah, Ramako's brother! During the traditions, when Ramako first joined with Sione, Rongokurai came to the feasts at her palace. This confused the people and the animals, as the sky became dark at strange times when Rongokurai's darkness dimmed the reflecting light of her golden walls. This greatly irritated Sione, but there was nothing she could do. He was family! Her own sister often caused such disruptions already when that silver palace neared hers, and now Ramako's brother would interfere as well. She resolved to hold family gatherings as little as possible. That is why eclipses only happen every few years. The two sisters put aside their eternal war for a brief time to satisfy their traditional familial obligations. Even the gods must follow the Way.

--Ahuana, "Rongokurai" (POE I)

Oh, oh, let me tell you this tale of this ancient drama. Sione is the harsh and ambitious Mother of the Sun, yes? Ramako is her, what is your word? Husband. Ramako can't stand her, and secretly longs for Lani Hua, the Mother of the Moon, who is kind and caring to all, and very beautiful as well. Ramako goes to our Father of Night, Rongokurai, and asks for the cover of darkness to secretly visit Lani Hua without his wife knowing. Poor Rongo, being a good brother, obliges. Ramako visits Lani Hua many times, until... as happens with such things... Arohongui is born. Sione becomes *furios*, as you can imagine. The Sun becomes so bright, fire scorches the world...

My tribe survives that fire easily because we tend to live in caves, but Lani Hua, being a natural healer, steps in to preserve the rest of the Karui. Sione goes to war against her, and she and Lani Hua have been fighting *ever since*. Now, Ramako lives alone in his golden palace, and Arohongui tends wounded souls in the silver palace of the Moon, taking care of it in her mother's absence. The most absurd part? Ramako claims it wasn't him! He calls his brother a liar, and now Ramako and Rongo don't speak. The Day and the Night are forever avoiding each other because the Father of the Sun couldn't keep his belt tied on... fortunately, we Karui are much more mature and responsible in modern times.

--Kahuturoa, "Ramako" (POE I)

...the Hinekora Tribe... They're very dramatic with the end of time fable. The Rongokurai Tribe has a much more dignified end in mind. When the world gets tired, it will be a quiet and calm slip into twilight, a night that goes on so long it blends into death itself. No more sunlight, no more plants, no more animals... no more people. Then, just as it always has, the sun will rise again on a new world. With sunlight comes plants, then animals... then people. It's obvious!

--Kahuturoa, "The End of Time" (POE I)

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## AROHONGUI, DAUGHTER OF THE MOON

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The lunar plains are cold, but the silver palace is always warm and welcoming.

--Lunar Grace (POE I)

Arohongui looks after all those in need.

--Silver Ward (POE I)

The Daughter of the Moon has my tribe's eternal loyalty. Alone among the gods, she has no agenda of her own. The rest all seek something endlessly—whatever it was that gave each of them a divine spark—but Arohongui was born divine, and chose to aid the Karui people as much as she could. She did not ask us for loyalty, and that is why she has it.

--Ikiaho, "Arohongui" (POE I)

Ramako's claim that someone impersonated him and visited with Lani Hua in his guise... may be true. We follow Arohongui with utmost loyalty, but my tribe certainly noticed that she never expressed any divine abilities having to do with light or warmth. When tending wounded warriors, she would often give them visions of beautiful landscapes and shining waters to help calm them. When tending the dying, she gave them visions of their family, until the spirits of their Ancestors truly greeted them here in the Halls of the Dead. These are acts of mercy and kindness, but they are not powers of the Sun or the Moon.

I have long suspected that there is something within each of us, some pattern or essence of who we are, that each parent passes down to a child. If my suspicion is correct, then it is not possible that Ramako is Arohongui's father. There is only one sensible conclusion, and that, we keep to ourselves, so as not to disrupt the balance of the skies.

--Ikiaho, "The Deceiver" (POE I)

There are many fables about the end of the world, but those are just metaphors. My tribe knows how it will really happen. The Moon, in the sky above, follows a roughly oval path around us. Did you know that our world is actually shaped like the Moon? Most believe that Wraeclast is flat, because that is the obvious interpretation of what we see. However, in studying the Moon, my tribe has discovered the truth. Also, we realised that the Moon's path is not exact. Over many, *many* thousands of years, it is changing slightly... toward us. We have come to understand that the world will end when the Moon comes too close and falls upon us. This is not myth. This is knowledge. What else could possibly happen when two such titanic spheres of stone crash into each other?

--Ikiaho, "The End of Time" (POE I)

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## TAWHOA, FATHER AND SON OF THE FOREST

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Tawhoa gifted humanity the ability to dream, so that they may aspire to greater things.

--Dream Catcher (POE I)

... Tawhoa gives us the trees and birds that line the path, so that we may enjoy beauty and peace. ...

--Navali, "Karui Gods" (POE I)

Tawhoa is the Son of the Forest, and its Father. His alone is the perspective of the ages, of centuries of life, growth, death, and decay. We exist within a grand cycle, one that extends far beyond the outcomes of petty battles or even great wars. Tawhoa stands apart from all this, aiming not for any grand goal, but simply to teach. That is why he gifted us with the ability to dream, so that we may see beyond ourselves. Inner peace can only be attained by accepting that life and death are inevitable. ...

--Maata, "Tawhoa" (POE I)

The Tawhoa tribe found its unique perspective in the ancient days. The forest depends upon the light given by Ramako. It also depends upon the rains brought by Valako, and the coolness brought by Rongokurai. At night, we hunted by the light given by Lani Hua, and then Arohongui, her daughter. As you can see, right from the start, we realised that our existence is inextricably linked with all life... and theirs is linked with ours. Some tribes are too blind or arrogant to see this connection, and we try to pull them back from their excesses, so that we may all thrive.

--Maata, "Interconnectedness" (POE I)

The other tribes have it all wrong. We exist in a grand cycle, yes, but there will be no singular moment or event that marks some sort of disastrous end. You were a seedling. You grew into an infant, then a child, then an adult, and one day you will be old... And then, you will die. But in every stage of your life, there were others just beginning theirs. When you die, there will be others just starting their lives. A tree falls, but that only clears the way for new seedlings. Trees die every season, but the forest remains. So it is with the Karui, and, indeed, all peoples. So it is with the world itself. Nothing ever ends, the perspective of existence just... shifts.

--Maata, "The End of Time" (POE I)

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## KITAVA, FATHER OF CHAOS

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Kitava is a primal deity, forged from the most fundamental of human desires. Hunger. The simple act of craving that which we cannot yet consume.

To defeat Kitava is to squeeze the very heart of human nature into stillness. ...

--Vilenta, "Kitava" (POE I)

Tukohama, Tawhoa and Kitava went to the lake to fish. Tawhoa weaved a net to catch the fish, Tukohama built a fire to cook the fish, and Kitava swallowed the entire lake, fish and all, with a single gulp.

--Kitava's Thirst Zealot Helmet (POE I)

Arohongui, Daughter of the Moon, was preparing for a feast to celebrate Tukohama's return from his war on the First Ones of the Ezomytes. Tawhoa, Son of the Forest, asked each of the birds to sacrifice one of their kind for the feast. He gave these offerings to Arohongui who cooked them in a great fire-stone pit.

Seeing all of those plump, cooking birds made Kitava very hungry, and he offered to watch them, to make sure they didn't burn while Arohongui rested during the heat of the day. Arohongui thanked Kitava for his kindness, but while she slept, Kitava ate the cooking birds, flesh, bones, gizzards and all.

Upon waking, Arohongui was furious that Kitava had lied to her, for saying that he would watch the birds when he actually intended to eat them all up. When Tukohama arrived home in his mighty canoe, Arohongui asked him to punish Kitava for his selfish gluttony.

Tukohama, our Father of War, agreed and pulled his sharpest tooth from his own mouth. He then asked Arohongui and Tawhoa to hold Kitava fast while he cut Kitava's face with the tooth. Two diagonal slashes that blinded Kitava and formed a bleeding X on his face.

From that day forth, Kitava would never be able to promise to watch that which he truly intended to consume.

Narrated by Slave Utula

Transcribed by Irwen of Theopolis

--Kitava's Hunger I (POE I)

To replace the feast of birds that Kitava had greedily consumed, Tukohama, our Father of War, and Valako, Father of Storm, went fishing.

Although Kitava was blind, he could still cast his line and feel when a fish took his bait. So Tukohama and Valako took him with them on Tukohama's mighty canoe.

But while they fished, Kitava grew hungry and secretly ate all of their bait of grubs and worms. Disgusted and angry, Tukohama and Valako decided to use Kitava as bait instead. Valako used his own jawbone as a hook, impaled Kitava on it, and cast both into the sea.

Kitava sank to the bottom of the sea, but instead of the fish eating Kitava, it was Kitava who ate all of the fish that nibbled at him, flesh, scales, guts and all.

When Tukohama and Valako hauled a fat-bellied Kitava back up from the sea, they were even more furious, and knew that Kitava must be punished one final time.

Narrated by Slave Utula

Transcribed by Irwen of Theopolis

--Kitava's Hunger II (POE I)

Tukohama, our Father of War, and Valako, Father of Storm, took Kitava to Hinekora, Mother of Death.

They asked her to kill the greedy Kitava, for surely their tribe would starve if Kitava continued to live among them. But Hinekora refused, for death would not teach Kitava the lesson he needed to learn.

Instead, Hinekora beat Kitava with a whip woven of her own hair. To Kitava, each strand was a searing lash, and so he wore thousands and thousands of blistering lashes across his back as

Hinekora drove him relentlessly into the darkest corner of the underworld. There she left him to suffer, without water or food, for the rest of eternity.

And there Kitava remained, in the darkness of Hinekora's night-clad island for time beyond measure. There he suffered, waiting for the day that he could return to the world of light to slake his scorching thirst and satiate his ravening hunger.

Narrated by Slave Utula

Transcribed by Irwen of Theopolis

--Kitava's Hunger III (POE I)

Hinekora bound Kitava to a rock that Kitava could not lift with all his might. Kitava vowed that when he broke free, he would devour every soul in Hinekora's domain.

--Kitava's Feast Void Axe (POE I)

The world will end in a divine stomach once Kitava has eaten all that lives.

--Utula's Hunger Majestic Plate (POE I)

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## HINEKORA, MOTHER OF DEATH

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A traveler was walking through a sparse grove. He encountered Tawhoa, who was sitting and meditating. The traveler quietly joined him for a time, watching a seed fall from above and grow into a mighty oak over the course of a century. That oak dropped its own seed, and another titan grew. Eventually, a vast forest emerged around them. Tawhoa opened his eyes and asked if the traveler understood. He replied that he did, save for one thing: some seeds fell, but never grew at all. At this, Tawhoa looked past him. Hinekora was walking the same path. She picked up each seed that never became more, and carried them, with love, in a bowl formed from her dress. The traveler shed a single tear, for he finally understood.

--Tawhanuku, "Death" (POE I)

Hinekora? The Mother of Death is the steward of our souls, but she has no great desire to destroy us. ...

--Faustus & Whakano, "Banter A" (POE I)

The Mother of Death is all that stands between us and oblivion. Before she embraced us, those that died simply ceased to be. Now, the souls of the Karui people continue on, lending their wisdom and strength to those that follow...

--Navali, "Hinekora" (POE I)

Hinekora does not see the future. That is the domain of Chaos. The Mother of Death is gifted with the ability to see into the past, not very clearly, but far deeper into the murk than mortals can comprehend. Before Wraeclast, before the Lake, before the primordial molten world, before the stars themselves, Time circled upon itself into infinity. She sees not what you *will* do, only what you *did*, and what you shall do again... probably.

--Navali, "The Future-Past" (POE I)

...Chaos sees what Hinekora cannot, the myriad span of all that has yet to happen. Chaos takes selfish amusement in unlikelihoods and surprising events. Hinekora serves Order, ensuring that what must happen, happens. Two Impulses, as unlike each other as any twins could ever be, locked in eternal conflict by their very nature...

--Navali, "Chaos" (POE I)

I don't know what to make of the Hinekora tribe. They have always lived halfway in death and halfway in life. Their eyes are elsewhere, and their words are meaningless. They have some kind of strength, but I don't know what to make of it, and I certainly don't feel they are passing down any wisdom to their descendants when they speak in riddles. Maybe it's just the particular warriors here? I can't imagine their children talking in prophecies and enigmas.

--Akoya, "Tawhanuku" (POE I)

One day, Time will end. Then, Time will begin again. All the pains of a long and weary existence will fall away from us, and we shall see the world with innocent eyes once more. You do not remember our previous meetings... but I do, by the grace of Hinekora's sight. She bears the burden of knowledge so that you may live unencumbered by the inevitable despairs of age and wisdom.

--Navali, "The End of Time" (POE I)

No matter how long it truly ends up being, existence always feels too short a season. Lucky are those who get to do it all over again, once Time begins anew. Fresh-faced, a weapon in hand, facing a savage and untamed land with limitless potential... youth, or something like it, granted to the bold. That is what it means to be alive. The dead will always be here, forever unchanging, locked in a dance we cannot change.

--Tawhanuku, "The End of Time" (POE I)

## THE HALLS OF THE DEAD

Hinekora...I imagine she had good intentions when she made this place. Preserve the souls of the Karui so that they may guide their descendants, sure. Sounds lovely...

--Utula, "Hinekora" (POE I)

While I greatly enjoy advising generations of Karui that come to us for wisdom, I do wonder if the Halls of the Dead are a good idea in and of themselves. Hinekora brings our souls here after we die, but where do the souls of other peoples go? Where would we have gone? We assume the alternative is oblivion, but nobody knows for certain. These unanswerable questions plague me at night, when I am trying to sleep.

--Maata, "The Halls of the Dead" (POE I)

... Can you picture my delight when I awoke here in my prime? ...I'm just overcome with joy at being young and strong again... Oh, and I'm one of the lucky ones. Here, our souls appear as we truly see ourselves. Some of us had some pretty big surprises when they woke up in the Halls of the Dead! Ha ha!

--Kiloava, "Souls" (POE I)

The afterlife is long... Think of the longest time you can remember. A winter that went on for many extra months, or back to your childhood. That long. Then it's even longer than *that*. We might be dead here, but we're all still alive. Everyone here has gone through the traditions with everyone else. Some were even married for centuries. Eventually, though, time has a way of wearing everything away. You think you've found your partner for eternity, then a hundred years later, you find the same thing with someone else...

--Kahuturoa, "Ikiaho" (POE I)

They tell me I am here until the end of Time itself. When I ask how long that is, they all give me a different answer. I don't think any of them actually know. They console themselves with tales of endings and rebirths, but I think they're terrified of the most likely possibility. What if Time never ends at all? What if we are here *forever*? That Rongokurai chieftain has been here thousands of years already, and he's gone a bit off. What happens when we've all been here for ten thousand years? A *million* years? We'll be stark raving mad, and we'll *never get out*, unless we unite and assault the walls of this prison directly!

--Utula, "The End of Time" (POE I)

Here in the Halls of the Dead, we wile away our days by holding grand competitions of skill and daring. ...



--Navali, "The Halls of the Dead" (POE I)

... This has always been a place for Karui warriors to hone their mettle against the best that ever lived. ...

--Akoya, objecting to player (POE I)

The souls of our people were on the verge of madness from isolation and ennui until the Trials were devised. ...Hinekora devised this mock warfare to engage us, and she succeeded. The Halls of the Dead have never been so full of life... so to speak. We know the games will eventually lose their amusement, but eternity is not forever. We need only entertain ourselves until Time ends.

--Navali, "The Trials" (POE I)

There is a forgotten passage, a narrow but lengthy crack in the earth that leads to the main well, though the dead just find themselves back here after a few minutes. Still, that few minutes on the ocean, seeing the living world again... glorious. ...

--Rakiata, "Sneak Out" (POE I)

...there are parts of the Halls of the Dead I wish I could see. Supposedly, there is a place for the souls of warriors that weren't very skilled, and there they laze around in 'dishonour' eating, drinking, and doing whatever they want. ...

--Kahuturoa, "The Halls of the Dead" (POE I)

How do I get to the Chambers of the Dishonoured! I should be there, not here!

--Utula, Random 3 (POE I)

### HINEKORA'S PROPHECIES

Two hungry children frolic in fire and blood, one small, one enormous. A feast ends at swordpoint. An ivory grin silently faces the oncoming storm.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 1 (POE I)

Five brothers vie for kingship in a distant land, yet yearn to be a family once again. Two peoples, seemingly unlike, meet on common ground. The seasons are harsh, and the fruit grows purple and rotted, but a single healthy seed sprouts in a dark place.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 2 (POE I)

Beware the gaze of the pale one. A colony of ants burrows through a wall, seeking the treasures beyond. Truth and hope are enemies.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 3 (POE I)

Lumbering stomachs with vast mouths consume all that grows. Ignorance is a weapon sharper than any other, though it may cut its wielder just as cleanly.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 4 (POE I)

Two enemies, born opposed, clasped hands only once. The silent wall and the raging storm oppose the endless swarm.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 5 (POE I)

The cheerful cat is destined, not lucky. The grumpy dog is her guardian, not unlucky. The Queen always was, and always shall—*Alva Valai, stop mucking about in time!*

--Hinekora, Prophecy 6 (POE I)

A liar convinces a good man to flee. A lord ravages his own land in a desperate search for legitimacy. A noblewoman from a distant land is not who she claims to be.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 7 (POE I)

A warrior seeks to become a goddess. The rivers flow only with sand. The sins of the parents return in search of blood.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 8 (POE I)

A bright future lies in a dark past. The erudite thaumaturge is missing. A grand palace begins to collapse for want of a single brick.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 9 (POE I)

A childless Mother sits beneath the sea in a palace filled with the dead. She gives endlessly of herself so that others may live, for she never truly does.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 10 (POE I)

Warriors of many different tribes gather to save the world. Warriors of many different tribes gather to doom it. Each thinks the other is the true threat.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 11 (POE I)

Great leaders sink into quicksand of the mind. Only a shadow can save the blind.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 12 (POE I)

A simple sword against the weight of Time itself. The encircled princes laugh as their blood drains into the soil. The salvation of humanity will be its undoing.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 13 (POE I)

Of fear and faith, none can know. One and the same. A new soul arrives. Pain becomes hope becomes apprehension. The hungry child would rather burn it all down.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 14 (POE I)

The volcano is mighty and towering, but it consumes all that live in its shadow. The nightmare ends when the dreamer is awakened.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 15 (POE I)

The harried mother seeks to pass the entire farm through a pinhole. Though it is the smallest of the animals, the tuatara protests. A river runs between a mountain and a molehill.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 16 (POE I)

She will know you by three different faces. You will know her by three different faces. A great silence falls over a vast crowd.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 17 (POE I)

The meddlers seek to reflect the world as it was. A court jester leads the nobles through the forest with wild tales and promises of plenty, not knowing the trail ends in a cliff.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 18 (POE I)

A spider sits atop a throne of artifice, spinning a web across the world. Corruption begins to ooze like blood across the sea, tainting unspoiled loam.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 19 (POE I)

A mask hides grief beyond measure. A man carrying a mountain threatens to rupture the sky.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 20 (POE I)

A key passes hands many times, but must be recovered before the Awakener can imprison the King of Dreams. The King of Dreams will be released by the removal of a key from a lock.

--Hinekora, Prophecy 21 (POE I)

## THE VAAL

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From the flesh of the gods, Xibaqua was born. From the carnage of Xibaqua, we were born. It is our duty to return to the gods what was once theirs.

--Mask of the Stitched Demon Magistrate Crown (POE I)

Xibaqua's treachery was met with divine fury. One by one, the gods reclaimed their flesh, until all that remained was a droplet of pure light: The first Vaal.

--Demon Stitcher Satin Gloves (POE I)

They took pride in all that they built, considering each new temple a testament to the gods... and then, to themselves.

Delving into the mysteries of existence, they deciphered the secret laws of nature... and then, harnessed them.

Not content to live in harmony with the world, they strove to understand it, to improve it... and then, to master it.

They collaborated with each other and with nearby peoples, at first sharing, teaching... and then, dominating.

--Beauty, Curiosity, Ambition, & Cooperation Vaal Aspects (POE I)

The Vaal used human sacrifice to power their empire. They, too, eventually sought means to make their machines run more efficiently.

--Sacrificial Harvest Viridian Jewel (POE I)

Vaal bloodpriests were among the earliest intellectuals on record. It was they who found that a newly freed soul would desperately cling to any other source of life.

--Soul Tether Cloth Belt (POE I)

So great was the thaumaturgy of a bloodpriest's mark, that sacrifices soon welcomed their death.

--Mark of Submission Unset Ring (POE I)

For the Vaal, the relationship between slave and master was as intimate and volatile as that of lovers.

--String of Servitude Heavy Belt (POE I)

Though the Vaal revered peace, it would have been suicide for any culture to rouse them to war.

- Icius Perandus, Scholar to the Empire

--Rebuke of the Vaal Vaal Blade (POE I)

For a relatively peaceful empire they sure made a lot of weapons.

--Alva Valai, on the Hall of Champions (POE I)

Through war we found peace. Through death we found advancement. Our ancestors did not know where their actions would take them. Are we any better?

--Story of the Vaal Variscite Blade (POE I)

We pack up our camp just before sunrise and journey towards the capital, Azala Vaal. We hear the crowd before we see them. Word of our victory spread quickly, and even the Queen has come to meet us.

My family has come to watch the ceremony. As I lay on the stone altar, I hear them chanting my name. It's the last thing I hear before the Queen's dagger is plunged into my chest.

--Unknown, River Crossing Memory (POE I)

## THE REIGN OF QUEEN TETZLAPOKAL

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While they were highly advanced in their technology, the Vaal were rather brutish in their social practices. I find it rather baffling to think of the Vaal as a people who believed in science and progress and yet constructed elaborate sacrificial altars in the centers of their cities.

Judging by the construction of this particular ruin, I would say that the city rose to prominence during the reign of Queen Tetzlapokal who some scholars refer to as a 'waif of disturbing proclivities'. She was a devotee of Arakaali and according to the literature, had a deep fascination with mortality and the inert human form.

The histories tell how the queen would request her subjects to deposit the bodies of their deceased loved ones upon the steps of her palace. The corpses would be promptly taken inside to be used

for... unfortunately most scholars fell into hysterical conjecture at that point. At least I hope it was conjecture.

--Eramir, "The Vaal City" (POE I)

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## VAAL GODS

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### RALAKESH, MASTER OF A MILLION FACES

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Yes, Ralakesh, the god of many faces. I read about this god when I looked after the museum in Theopolis. It's said he was obsessed with governance, in particular, the control of humanity through our base, animal instincts. He ruled over the citizens of one unfortunate Vaal city. Alas, the name escapes me.

Yet I do recall that his experiments brought his subjects to the brink of extinction and that he was forced to enslave many a primitive Azmerian of the time so as to repopulate his domain. ...

--Eramir, "Ralakesh" (POE I)

... Ralakesh was renowned for his penchant for subjugation and control. ...

--Eramir, "Greust" (POE I)

The Master of a Million Faces lived by one simple ethos: why make the effort, when you can simply mimic what others have?

--Ralakesh's Impatience Riveted Boots (POE I)

... Hmm...Ralakesh. He's ruthless and cruel, with cunning unfathomable. Yet he bears one defining weakness. A fear he forged into chains of his own keeping. His is the terror of grasping too much and having it all slip through his fingers. It makes him irrational, and therefore vulnerable.

--Sin, "Ralakesh" (POE I)

Ralakesh, the illustrious "Master of a Million Faces". I call him the God of Hide and Seek.

While other deities waged wars, spread their seed, and laid waste to whole empires, Ralakesh perched on his throne in a dark palace of ebony, choked with incense, blinded by obedience and deafened by a senseless cacophony of brass gongs.

Thankfully, he never had the courage to peek over the high walls he'd built, else the world might have been in trouble.

--Sin, "The Master of a Million Faces" (POE I)

When you try to control everything, you ultimately control nothing. Ralakesh has never quite been able to grasp that concept.

--Sin, on Ralakesh's death (POE I)

Lock the gates and build the walls! came [sic] the rallying cry, "Let those of Ralakesh take care of those of Ralakesh!"

- The God Behind The Wall

--Captured Soul of DreK, Apex Hunter (POE I)

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## YUGUL, REFLECTION OF TERROR

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Vaal scholars seemed compelled to answer all manner of strange and troubling questions. Yugul was one such scholar. Whilst plumbing the depths of humanity, he came to believe that there was no truer expression of humanity than pure terror.

He would induce terror in children and then capture their reactions within eldritch mirrors, devices of his own creation that could petrify fear for extended study.

Through his gallery of reflected terror, Yugul came to understand human nature so well that he was able to manipulate his way into the Vaal halls of leadership, and eventually grew so feared and renowned that he ascended into godhood.

--Sin, "Yugul" (POE I)

I heard tell of an ancient Vaal scholar who bore the name 'Yugul'. He'd conduct these grisly experiments in pursuit of some piece of nasty wisdom tucked into the nether regions of human terror. Practiced on young kiddies no less, scaring the living shite out of Vaal toddlers and then nabbing their fear within a hall of thaumaturgical mirrors.

Could be the whole story's a crock, and here's where it gets even hazier. Seems old Yugul found something in that fear, enough to scare a whole swag of Vaal into worshipping him.

Honestly, some people will worship anything for a bit of spiritual peace of mind.

--Hargan, "Yugul" (POE I)



In nature, there are many feelings exclusive only to man. But terror is not one. Terror flourishes in our world, transcending all things. It is the bedrock on which our great cosmos is formed. I am Yugul and I deign to understand this mystery, to explore its depths and unlock its secrets...

--Captured Soul of Varhesh, Shimmering Aberration (POE I)

[Note: The following lore item was written for 3.0, but has never been available in-game.]

So many have scrutinised the inner workings of the heart, written entire books on sadness, love and hate. Yet terror is the truest, purest of all human emotions. Terror is what we have once our earthly facades are stripped away, once we are naked, vulnerable savages in a vast and uncaring wilderness.

Civilisation is a costume, worn to conceal our truest natures. Oh, that we could all become terrified children once again! That we could understand in an instant that everything is hopeless, everything is death. There is no next step, no reprieve. Life is terror and terror is life.

- Forbidden Texts of Yugul

--Primitive Carving II (POE I)

Yugul was a cautionary tale. The only way to truly understand fear is to become it.

--Sin, on Yugul's death (POE I)

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## ARAKAALI, SPINNER OF SHADOWS

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A temptress and a predator. Vaal legends say she crawled up from the blackest of pits during the creation of the world.

No, her beginnings were far more mundane, a mortal harlot whose endless lust for loin and lecherous delight saw her transformed into the very image of her dark desires.

'The Spinner of Shadows' they once called her. She sees herself as a regular goddess of love, and has the romantically forged temple to prove it.

That's where you'll find her. Yet there's little romance to the lady herself. At least, I doubt the corpses that now embrace her carapace would think so.

--Sin, "Arakaali" (POE I)

Answering the call of a royal invitation, I visited the Spinner of Shadows as an emissary for a small and fragile alliance of gods. Mostly weak deities huddling together in terror of being consumed by their greater. At this time, Queen Arakaali ruled an empire, and so invited me to gaze upon her mighty works with appropriate wonder.

If I'd looked past this pretense, I may have chanced to see her hidden desire to have me share her bed. For years I lay trapped in her webbed sheets. Some days she enjoyed my prowess, other days we enjoyed each other.

Yet, this illusion of love and leisure simply veiled the morbid reality that I was not free to leave. I languished under her bewitching spell until the day the spider was betrayed by her own flies, and sealed within that temple of her own fevered making.

--Sin, "The Spinner of Shadows" (POE I)

From what I can recall, Arakaali was a Vaal fertility goddess, a rather unsettling union of sexuality and mortality. Whilst usually presenting herself as a large arachnid, Arakaali would often assume human form, a ruse intended to lure mortals into the act of copulation. The entries were vague about the gender of her prey.

After satiating her carnal desires, she would then quench her divine thirst, draining her erstwhile lover of all bodily fluid. Her acolytes would then collect the dessicated [sic] husk and give it a decorative placement in Arakaali's unholy temple. ...

--Eramir, "Arakaali" (POE I)

There is a story held by the ancient Vaal, in which the beautiful seductress Arakaali strode through towns, stealing the hearts of men, and turning to ash their lovers' desires.

- "Legends of the Vaal" by Eramir, Scholar at Theopolis

--Captured Soul of Arachnoxia (POE I)

When the cold was at its strongest, Arakaali came, and like a farmer leading cattle to the slaughter, she drove her victims into the outer darkness.

- "Legends of the Vaal" by Eramir, Scholar at Theopolis

--Captured Soul of Shock and Horror (POE I)

Records of Arakaali's violent reign suggest she kept her citizens sedated with 'juices of lust' and venoms of the spider. Perhaps her guise of seductress was in fact her way of farming those 'juices'.

- "Legends of the Vaal" by Eramir, Scholar at Theopolis

--Captured Soul of Armala, the Widow (POE I)

Many an artist of Azmerian descent has engaged in the sad worship of that sultry arachnid...

--Sin, "Arakaali" (POE I)

Make no mistake, my Azmeri ancestors worshipped Arakaali long before the Vaal did, although I'm not entirely sure why. She was hardly a goddess of love or fertility; no, she was naught but a predator, ensnaring her victims in silk and sedating them with venom.

--Cadiro, on Arakaali's Fang (POE I)

Our great goddess, we worship her, and in so doing, we may become her. Healer of Hearts, Arakaali, with the juices of lust and venoms of the spider, she brought many back from the brink of death. Only she was worthy to rule. The Porcelain Queen, Gruthkul, disgraced my ancestors, drained them with drought, starved them with famine, blighted them with plague. It was with justice and truth that my ancestors shattered the Porcelain Queen's reign, and brought our Messiah to power.

### The Widow

--Shrine to Arakaali I (POE I)

Our Temple of Decay was built so that we, her chosen, might sustain our great goddess in her pursuit of the secrets that lust and life would keep from us. We, her followers, brought all assortments of venomous creatures and laid them at her feet, yet it was the spider she most coveted, and as the divine energies wove their destinies about her body, our Queen, Arakaali, was reborn. Arakaali the Miracle, Arakaali the mighty Arachnophage, a beauteous creature of immortal power and unfathomable wisdom.

### The Widow

--Shrine to Arakaali II (POE I)

As our Queen's body was reborn, so too was her mind. Awash with visions of future and past, she burst from the deluge, gasping with terror. She had seen her empire in ruins, her people ground into the dust. And atop her throne sat the children of Gruthkul, their long white hair fluttering in the winds of victory, their laughter as saw-blades in Arakaali's heart.

Yet as the vision poisoned her dreams, Arakaali poisoned the vision. Once, twice, thrice, the children of Gruthkul fell, crying their crimson tears. And how their mother grieved.

### The Widow

--Shrine to Arakaali III (POE I)

As her fury grew to blot out the sun, the mother's grief grew to eclipse the land. Gruthkul and her horde stampeded across the realms of Arakaali, crushing her subjects, blood and bone, into the trembling earth. With her empire on the brink of ruination, our Queen, our Spinner of Shadows, hatched a desperate plan. Feigning injury and defeat, Arakaali lured Gruthkul into the heart of a great cavern. There she entwined her enemy in unyielding silk and then, with prodigious bravery and strength, brought the very stones tumbling down upon Gruthkul's antlered head.

## The Widow

--Shrine to Arakaali IV (POE I)

Even as our courageous Arakaali forged the foundations of a new empire within the ruination of the old, a fresh threat was born in the shadow of the mountains. A creature so devoid of divinity, so beyond humanity, that it drew the very essence from Arakaali as the spider imbibes the life of the trapped moth. Our Queen's medicines had once sustained us. Now famine and plague ravaged what little remained of our lands.

As the Beast of the Mountains grew, our Arakaali waned until, helpless as a child, she lost even the faith of her most devoted, the Temple of Decay. I feel the shame for my ancestors as the spider's venom burns in my belly. When our Queen needed them most, her people betrayed her, bound her in silk and left her to languish in the bowels of a pyramid, just as Arakaali had done to Gruthkul so many years before. ...

## The Widow

--Shrine to Arakaali V (POE I)

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## YAOMAC

...the god Yaomac – the shepherd of Vaal souls, and the arbiter of the balance of the seasons. Three unique blessings are conferred by each of Yaomac's three serpentine heads.

--Cadiro, on Triumvirate Authority (POE I)

The priest that carried Yaomac's sigil was granted one boon by each serpentine head.

--Triumvirate Authority Unset Ring (POE I)

Their three serpentine heads found unity in balance.

--Yaomac's Accord Vaal Sceptre (POE I)

You covet the strength of your peers, mortal? Perhaps it can be yours, if you are willing to make an offering of their blood...

- Vaal Myth of the Third Snake

--Offering to the Serpent Legion Gloves (POE I)

## THE AZMERI

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The Azmeri were the first culture known in history to use the trials of strength, wisdom, and spirit to select its chieftains.

The first Lord's Trial was a rough-hewn maze festooned with wild animals and brutal traps, crafted to test aspiring Azmerian leaders' body, mind, and soul. [sic]

In conquering the adversities of the maze, a champion proved they were capable of bearing the crushing burden of chieftainship.

The first trials were simple contraptions reflecting simple times. As the Azmerian civilisation grew in number and complexity, so did the trials, from treacherous mazes to bewildering labyrinths. ...

- Emperor Izaro Phrecius

--Bronze Inscription II (POE I)

The Azmeri were consummate survivors. They had to be, having been sired in the most inhospitable range of mountains in all of Wraeclast.

Unfortunate, some might say. I do not. I believe it was the making of them. And of us, their descendants.

So it is no wonder that they developed the Lord's Trial. With survival being a moment-by-moment concern, that harried people grew to understand power quite intimately.

Strong leadership is able to bridge the chasm between existence and extinction. Poor leadership might see an entire tribe vanish into that same chasm. ...

- Emperor Izaro Phrecius

--Bronze Inscription III (POE I)

The Azmeri ascetics learnt the power of going without the body's ordinary cravings.

--Energy From Within Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

There's an Azmeri shrine, tucked away in the Northern Forest. Greust took me there, told me it was a memorial to those who had gone before him, a place where their spirits could rest. When he passed, he wanted his remains to be laid to rest with the bones of his people. ...

--Helena, "Greust's Necklace" (POE I)

## PROVERBS & LEGENDS

Do not cause the land to stir, it holds secrets better unknown.

- Azmerian proverb

--Primordial Might Crimson Jewel (POE I)

A boy becomes a man when he has faced the animal in his heart and wet the forest floor with its blood.

- Azmeri Proverb

--Greust's Necklace (POE I)

Sirrius flew on wings of light, faster than wind, faster than thought. But try as he might to outrun the darkness, it was there, at every turn, waiting for him.

- Azmerian legend

--Darkray Vectors Dragonscale Boots (POE I)

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## THE DRAÍOCHT & THE FOUR HUMORS

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The Draíocht connects everything that lives.

--Scarab of Wisps (POE I)

There are many names for the Draíocht, and for the spirits and beings that comprise it. Just like nature itself, it's difficult to distinguish the parts from the whole.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Goddess" (POE I)

You might call her a goddess. I might call them Sisters Three. Others might call them the collective will of nature itself. We may all be right. They exist within this Wildwood, or perhaps they *are* the Wildwood. To create this realm, the Draíocht gave so many pieces of themselves so widely and so deeply, that little remained. Fragments in every tree, every rock, and every animal. A voice, sometimes, to a chosen few... or so I've been told, by travelers through these lands.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Draíocht" (POE I)

The Draíocht was once a goddess that protected our people in your realm. There were three aspects of her, what we call the Three Sisters: the Mhacha, the Catha, and the Mórrigan. The Mhacha represented nature itself; the land, the trees, the animals, and the men and women, too. You are surrounded by her compassion at this very moment. Persuaded by the Mhacha, the Sisters Three gave of themselves, imbuing every part of nature—living or not—with some of their essence. The Draíocht is the result of that ultimate gift. They gave so much that nothing remained of themselves. They gave *so much*, they are all around us. Inside me, and inside you, too. I can feel their will even now, and I know that I am exactly where I need to be.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Draíocht" (POE I)

The second aspect of the original Goddess, the aspect known as the Catha, was the eternal battlefield betwixt good and evil. It represented the juxtaposition of summer and winter, and light and darkness. Where there is evil, there shall be good. This balance means that there is always hope.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Catha" (POE I)

The third aspect of the original Goddess, the aspect known as the Mórrigan, was the guiding crow, the call to battle, and the bravery in the hearts of the Maji. She flew high above our people, showing us the way. Where her wings beat, the mists parted, opening new paths toward the future.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Mórrigan" (POE I)

We honour the Goddess, [...*illegible*.....] the Sisters Three, [........] the most humble. All that we are, we owe to her. [........] Viridian Wildwood [........] apart from [...], cold, and sorrow.

--The Goddess (POE I)

[...*illegible*.....] sister [........] you will never be forgotten.

--Beloved Sister (POE I)

[...*illegible*.....] two of the Three Sisters [........] the battlefield [........] the warrior [........] the sign of the black bird [........]!

--The Warring Sisters (POE I)

The original goddess, the one comprised by the Sisters Three, is fairly unknown now. Her name has been lost to time. I've always wondered what it was. Who she was. Her sacrifice is the only reason I exist at all. It's a sacrifice I intend to honour.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Goddess" (POE I)



The original Goddess is still worshiped by our ancestors in the old world. ...

--The Warden of Eaves, "Statue of the Goddess" (POE I)

I've seen those ancient statues of the two sisters fighting each other. I don't know who they were, but being near them makes me feel... haunted...

--The Primal Huntress, "The Warring Sisters Statue" (POE I)

Those statues of the two sisters are somewhat misleading. They are not fighting each other. They are merely representations of battle and bravery. The Catha and the Mórrigan were two aspects of the original Goddess. It's an easy mistake to make, now that time has worn away all context.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Warring Sisters" (POE I)

The Raven Trickster has few worshippers in the Wildwood. Give them no heed. He was long ago... taken care of.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Raven Trickster" (POE I)

The Draíocht once gave the people of your world a special kind of wood, one which grows at the dark borders of this realm and the next... an Unnamed heartwood, of a kind that even the Trickster had no power over...

--The Primal Huntress, "The Raven Trickster" (POE I)

There exists a sliver of power in all living things, by definition. We walk upon a web of meaning spun with the silk of perception. That web shivers with every little shift in thought or idea. Beings like the King in the Mists and the Porcelain Queen are spiders that crawl the strands, seeking to ensnare us and drain us. The Draíocht, however, mystify me. The Sisters Three, or the original Goddess, whatever one might believe her to have been... she was selfless. Humble. She gave her essence back to the living beings from whence it came, and then some. This act may have come with profound consequences that we still do not yet understand. There is a reason I study corpses—especially ancient ones. The oldest bones are fundamentally different, and I am determined to decipher their mysteries.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "The Draíocht" (POE I)

Primal, Vivid, Wild... Sacred. There are four humors that underlie the web of life. Each comprises a precious substance our natural world requires to function. Each is also produced by the natural world, and by living beings. The cycle is self-sustaining, so long as balance is maintained.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "The Four Humors" (POE I)

A Warlock such as myself primarily works with that which we call Wild, for it is unpredictable, but strong. A keen mind can harness Wild humors, either despite their volatility, or because of it. The most difficult lesson for an apprentice is usually the most basic: life and death ooze from the same sap. A corpse becomes a haven for budding life, which grows, then is eaten, nurturing more life, which dies... a cycle beautiful in its simplicity, unpredictability, and reliability. You might equate Wild humors with the blood of the body of nature.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Wild Humors" (POE I)

Primal humors flow from life's struggle for supremacy and change. When a creature's continuing line of progeny grows more suited to its habitat, or when the strong battle for dominance, you will find Primal energies present.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Primal Humors" (POE I)

Vivid humors flow from the cooperation of living beings. Whereas Primal humors are derived from competition and change, Vivid humors arise when disparate creatures achieve harmony. Consider the argoleth, a small reptilian creature that rides the fur of an ape. It feeds from castoffs and enjoys greater mobility, and in return, picks off parasites and cleans the ape's fur. There it is. Vivid humors arise. Civilisation itself is a rather heavy source of Vivid energies... but we don't have much of *that* around here.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Vivid Humors" (POE I)

I have yet to understand the full import of Sacred humors. They are intimately connected, somehow, with the mind and the heart. What you think, what you believe, what you long for... at some level, it is a fluid, and it flows from you in measure equal to your passions. I have come to believe that, in some sense, the Draíocht is the flow of Sacred secretions, or contains its will. The King in the Mists harvests it with his deceitful altars. I dare say the secrets of the Wildwood itself are synonymous with the true nature of Sacred humors. We will uncover all in due time.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Sacred Humors" (POE I)

... Sacred Wisps have chosen to light your way. Who am I to disagree with the Draíocht?

--The Primal Huntress, "Teaching" (POE I)

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## THE MAJI

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We are merely the vanguard for the rest of our people, who still reside in the old world, waiting for the Wildwood to be purged of evil. We are the strongest and the brightest, chosen by the Draíocht

long ago for this righteous purpose. There are many Maji deeper in this realm, though less than there were. I am the only one that ventures this close to the border 'twixt our realms.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Maji" (POE I)

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## AZMERI GODS

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A raging Solaris seared and contorted the orb's surface. A despairing Lunar is filled the scars with her tears. Yet Viridi remained, trapped within, forever more.

- Azmerian Creation Myth

--Prismatic Eclipse Twilight Blade (POE I)

Her sisters eternally fought for that shining apex in the skies, but Viridi instead found strength in humility.

- Azmerian Creation Myth

--Viridi's Veil Praetor Crown (POE I)

... I have learned the location of a renowned Azmeri artefact known as Viridi's Finger. It supposedly causes enormous plants to grow from almost any soil. ...

--Niles, "A Mundane Sample" (POE I)

When Solaris closes her burning eye at the end of time, the world will perish in ice.

--Icetomb Latticed Ringmail (POE I)

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## SOLARIS, ETERNAL SUN & LUNARIS, ETERNAL MOON

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The sun is a devoted mother. She casts her golden blessings on the crops of the pious and makes barren the fields of heresy. Sunlight is belief. Sunlight is life.

- The Solar Verses

--Sun Orb (POE I)

Moonlight is a wise mother. The moon which bathes us in soft, cooling light, does so with the intent of illuminating our paths. Moonlight is wisdom. Moonlight is life.

- The Lunar Verses

--Moon Orb (POE I)

Powerful baubles them orbs are. As old as the Azmerians themselves, maybe even older. I've read all there is on them little beauties. The Sun Orb's said to contain all that has been, while its sister, the Moon Orb, holds all that will be. Past and future, packed up neat behind glass and thaumaturgy. Shudder to think what might happen if all that got out one day.

--Hargan, "The Orbs of Sun and Moon" (POE I)

Once beneath a moonlit sky, Lunaris bathed her child in the ocean's tide. Though the waters were frigid with icy death, the boy was sick and couldn't be healthy until he was silent, clean and still...

--Captured Soul of Thraxia (POE I)

And so it was, that Lunaris, in her compulsion to nurture and protect, killed her son beneath the light of a waning moon. She stood silent, in trial before her tribe, as her fiery sister fought in vain to defend her...

--Captured Soul of Sebbert, Crescent's Point (POE I)

But Lunaris refused to admit any wrongdoing. She'd saved her child, had she not? He was safe now, buried beneath the dirt. Conviction gnarled around her fragile mind, and in her pride she rose to seat a deathless throne.

--Captured Soul of Lycius, Midnight's Howl (POE I)

...two sisters who ruled the most populous and powerful of the ancient Azmerian tribes. Solaris, [sic] was thought to guide the sun across the sky with threads of shimmering gold, whilst Lunaris saw to the wax and wane of moon [sic] with a sickle of purest silver.

It was a peaceful partnership, until the trickster, Tangmazu, happened upon their domain. In turning sister against sister he saw to the massacre of thousands whilst concealing the source of their futile feud beyond all reckoning.

Feel no pity for the moon. She is a cold and distant fool, far less radiant than she would suppose.

--Sin, "Lunaris" (POE I)

They used to be so close, you know... The Celestial Sisters.

--Tangmazu, The Solaris Temple Level 2 (Act 8) (POE I)

It wasn't hard to turn them against each other. A little nudge here and there. That's all it took.

--Tangmazu, The Lunaris Temple Level 2 (Act 8) (POE I)

Self-loving Solaris. All the light in the world, yet blinded by her own pride.

Not once did she pause to question the truth of her sister's betrayal. Instead, she gloated over her sister's transgressions, proclaiming herself greater and more honourable than Lunaris could ever be.

I suppose one shouldn't be surprised when a sun deity takes the higher ground.

--Sin, "Solaris" (POE I)

[Note: The following lore items were written for 3.0, but have never been available in-game.]

The sister gods of sun and moon, hand in hand did rule.  
A guide for day and one for night, their people blessed in full.  
Then sister sun, as daylight broke, awakened bound in cord.  
Her flames were quenched, her life laid bare, her passion ripped and gored.  
Who?" [sic] she cried, "Who torments me so? And tears me from the day?"  
Her captor smiled, behind a mask they wore of bloodless grey.

- The Azmeri Verses, 1:20-23

--Solaris Statue I (POE I)

For many days, the sun did hide, no hand to guide it home  
And icy moon hung in the sky, a queen perched on her throne.  
Beneath the earth, Solaris cried, her pain too great to bare.  
As instruments of sharpened steel caused skin and flesh to tear.  
In the rarest slice of rest and respite, faithful Kulric came.  
He cut her bonds and dressed her wounds and freed her from her pain.  
Rising from beneath the hills, Solaris sprang a trap.  
Her sister snared in flaming nets, Solaris brought her back.  
A vow she made, a promise struck, to repay her kin in kind.  
A sharpened blade, and broken luck, she'd rend her sister blind.

- The Azmeri Verses, 2:10-14

--Solaris Statue II (POE I)

In chains of flame and glowing ore.  
A silver moon did strike the floor.  
And a sister's eyes now forged in rage.

Silenced her cries with lock and cage.  
Lunaris wept with betrayal's lash strike.  
As her followers were slaughtered by sword and pike  
Forever a prisoner, a moon buried in the earth.  
Burned by a sun and a love felt since birth.

- The Azmeri Verses 3:1-4

--Lunaris Statue I (POE I)

Her heart did languish and her mind did fray.  
As she bore the pain of each terrible day.  
Solaris sharpened tools for sure and true caress.  
As she drew her confessions from her sister's pallid fairness.  
Lunaris spoke not a word to her sister insane.  
While her blood did flow and her hope did wane.  
Until the stranger she came to set the moon free.  
Kulina, the last follower, and the last faithful deed." [sic]

- The Azmeri Verses 3:9-13

--Lunaris Statue II (POE I)

Hid 'neath the ice and shimmering snow.  
Lunaris healed from her wounds and pondered her woe.  
Solaris was mad, it was frighteningly clear.  
Yet what had so filled her heart with such fear?  
At the urgings of Kulina, the moon rose for war.  
She world [sic] might fear their Sun no more.  
Lunaris would crest the star-filled night.  
And the Sun, rightly chained, would temper her light.  
To war she marched, with her creatures of the moon.  
With a hunger for justice and her bright sister's doom.

- The Azmeri Verses 3:20-25

--Lunaris Statue III (POE I)

Solaris upon the horizon stood and gazed upon the moon.  
Any army of swords and shields and bows, a war to begin at noon.  
Frustration of her sister's escape was killed and eaten up.  
Replaced by the wrath and fear and grief that poured to fill her cup.  
As Moon and rays marched on the Sun, Solaris eyed her prey.  
"Sweet sister," she vowed with love and hate, "You shall never rule this day."

- The Azmeri Verses 5:19-21

--Solaris Statue III (POE I)

Every decade, Lunar is devours Solaris  
Each time, Solaris emerges from Lunar is, born anew.

--Eclipse Solaris Crystal Wand (POE I)

Legend tells of a time when Solaris will burst forth from Lunar is, and night will be eternally banished.

--Corona Solaris Crystal Wand (POE I)

The mud is cracked and dry. The fields now burn beneath the blistering sun. Even our children are dying in the streets! We've angered Solaris and so we pay tribute to appease her fiery heart...

--Captured Soul of Shadow of the Vaal (POE I)

When Solaris is angered, there must always be sacrifice. Our women have taken to mourning, they drag themselves through ash and glass, not wanting to give up our youth to the all-consuming flame.

--Captured Soul of Jorus, Sky's Edge (POE I)

To take from the sun is to invite her wrath, and we've more than warranted her curse. The granaries were vacant, so we lessened our tribute to the sun thinking it would save our children, but they will die now regardless.

--Captured Soul of Suncaller Asha (POE I)

The Eternals revered Sun and Moon as the two eyes of their God. The right eye, Judging Solaris. The left eye, Merciful Lunar is. ...

--Grigor, "The Lunar is Temple" (POE I)

... Solaris and Lunar is got front and center stage among them folks of the Eternal Empire.

Solaris was thought to be the light of leadership, guiding and enlightening each emperor that sat the throne. In practice, most of them emperors turned out to be a bit dim, but then history and theology have never quite seen eye to eye.

As for Lunaris, a goddess of the moon and earth, the mother of dreams and inspiration. Doesn't sound like a bad lady until you consider that dreams harbour nightmares and that inspiration is just one notion shy of insanity.

--Hargan, "Solaris and Lunaris" (POE I)

Those statues of the two sisters are somewhat misleading. They are not fighting each other. They are merely representations of battle and bravery. The Catha and the Mórrigan were two aspects of the original Goddess. It's an easy mistake to make, now that time has worn away all context.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Warring Sisters" (POE I)

### SOLERAI & LUNDARA

It is my belief that Solerai, from the Maraketh legend, is Solaris herself in another system of myths. If I can prove that, I can begin piecing together a true history of the Winter of the World.

--Seal of Solaris (POE I)

I have a suspicion that the Maraketh Sekhema of legend, Lundara, is the same historical figure as the Azmeri and Eternal goddess Lunaris. The Seal may prove that.

--Seal of Lunaris (POE I)

When hope was but a memory, the twin sister Sekhemas Solerai and Lundara arose to unite the Maraketh. They wielded the essence of gold and silver. The Spear is one of the two weapons that forged us.

--Solerai's Spear (POE I)

### PROSPERO, LORD OF THE UNDERWORLD

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... Prospero was a god of our ancestors, the Azmerians. As we Eternals descended from those mountains, our gods descended with us. ...

--Cadiro, "Prospero" (POE I)

The god of lost souls and found treasures. Lord of the underworld and all its material bounty. Gems, precious metals, coal...a myriad of subterranean substances, exotic and volatile. If it has value and it can be unearthed with pick and shovel, it falls within Prospero's divine concerns. As do all those who trade in them.



Prospero was a god of our ancestors, the Azmerians. As we Eternals descended from those mountains, our gods descended with us.

To the mundane mind they are myths, nothing but stories. To those with a little more imagination, they can be so much more.

--Cadiro, "Prospero" (POE I)

... Any miner worth his rocksalt knows Prospero. Might've even tried to make a deal with him for riches or life. Prospero's followers think the two are more or less interchangeable. If you believe in that stuff, I've got a flying rhoa to sell you.

--Niko the Mad, "Prospero" (POE I)

... He was supposedly in charge of all things that came out of the earth. Miners left him tributes. Guess they were hoping Prospero would protect them from a cave-in. Or an explosion. Or toxic gases. ...

--Niko the Mad, "Prospero" (POE I)

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## RYSLATHA, THE PUPPET MISTRESS

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I'm beginning to understand. She was the Azmeri Goddess of Motherhood, but over time, she grew toward the extreme...

--Scion, on Ryslatha (POE I)

The Puppet Mistress was a revered matriarch who nurtured her tribe into greatness through love, peace and fecundity. That is, until her children were slaughtered by Tukohama's brave warriors.

Dissolution and desperation, they do troubling things to the spirit. And given enough time, what one believes, one becomes.

--Sin, "The Puppet Mistress" (POE I)

A maggot that festers and writhes in the fetid mud of the wettest lands. Ryslatha, the white worm that corrupts the very earth while her heart yearns to replenish her slaughtered brood.

Hers was a prolific tribe once, fat with peace and fecund with love. Then Tukohama's fire swept across her sacred land and her children were butchered by the madness of war.

Now the immortal mother has one waking thought. She will also ensure that her children are never harmed again. How? By making everyone's children, her children.

--Sin, "Ryslatha" (POE I)

Ryslatha was flushed with pride as she watched her mindless spawn mature. Sharpening their mandibles, her children slithered from the hive, eager to devour all the creatures that frequented the ancient woods.

--Captured Soul of Gorulis, Will-Thief (POE I)

The Azmeri believed that, one day, this world of ours would collapse under the weight of Ryslatha's offspring. A frightening thought, and thankfully, a mistaken one.

--Sin, on Ryslatha's death (POE I)

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## TSOAGOTH, THE BRINE KING

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Old, salty Tsoagoth, pickled in a thick brine of ignominious carnality. Vanity was Tsoagoth's downfall, and I think he grew his shell just to shield himself from the shame of it all. ...

--Sin, "The Brine King" (POE I)

When I first met Tsoagoth, he was a seafaring chieftain, the beloved leader of a prosperous and sprawling fisher tribe. It was the curse of legacy that made him into the blasphemous Brine King. An endless madness of propagation and disappointment. All in the vain hope of recreating himself.

Fishwife after fishwife he took, and every one of them spawned a monster. A truly noble king would have surrendered his kingdom to cleaner blood. Alas, although Tsoagoth had many fine qualities, generosity was not one of them.

--Sin, "Tsoagoth" (POE I)

Though his mind decayed with each passing wave, the Brine King stood steadfast in his hatred, and wore it like a shell, protecting himself from his failure to sire a worthy heir.

--Captured Soul of The Forgotten Soldier (POE I)

You won't find a sailor that doesn't whisper a quiet prayer to the Brine King before casting off. In fact, under the maddening radiance of a full moon, the more superstitious captains would drown some poor slave or failed mutineer... just to keep old Tsoagoth happy.

No, that wasn't a sneeze. That's the fish god's old Azmerian name. It's considered foul luck to speak it on board a ship. A keel-hauling offense.

--Bestel, "The Brine King" (POE I)

Every sell-dwelling lad or lass knows of Tsoatha. They call it a city, but it were more of a slaughterhouse than anything else.

Old Salty himself ruled over the place, treating its citizens as morsels from his own personal pantry. Those who weren't devoured outright were picked to try continue his family line - they became fish wives...

Well, the Brine King, as you know was forced into a slumber 'neath the ocean, and the city was said to have joined him there as well. A few folk managed to flee from the collapsing coral shards, start new lives for themselves, but I'll be reckoning they left all their valuables behind.

--Lilly Roth, "Tsoatha" (POE I)

The fish-wives of Tsoatha rejoiced loudly as the Brine King descended into the great abyss, making merry while his blasphemous offspring slithered 'neath the icy waters...

--Captured Soul of Puruna, the Challenger (POE I)

Slumbering in the breach between worlds, the Brine King dreamt of a day he would rise, in [sic] triumph from the shivering depths and take back the Kingdom he once so ruthlessly culled.

--Captured Soul of Nassar, Lion of the Seas (POE I)

T'gnagn iia y r'ngusla ph'tu Tsoatha nga mekghul'an.

- Indecipherable verse

--The Teardrop (POE I)

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## THRULDANA

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May the Ferocity of Thruldana free you of your anguish...

--Undertaker Arimor, chant generic 12 (POE I)

## THE TEMPLARS

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### ORIGIN MYTH

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On that day two were born of their mother's womb. Innocence, with eyes of burning red. Sin, with eyes of clearest blue.

--Stained Glass Window I (POE I)

Innocence lived with an honest and pure heart, never straying from his mother's word. Sin filled his heart with lies and indulgence, and deafened his ears to his mother's pleas.

--Stained Glass Window II (POE I)

When the Mother of Two broke bread, she allowed Innocence to eat his fill, as reward for his virtuous nature. Sin was cast the scraps to remind him of his worthless ways.

--Stained Glass Window III (POE I)

Yet the punishment only served to feed Sin's lusts. Before his brother's eyes, Sin stole a fish from the market and lied to the watchmen who caught him. Sin then beat his brother until a promise of silence was extracted.

--Stained Glass Window IV (POE I)

Innocence could not keep a promise made in fear. He bore witness and testimony to the Mother of Two, and it was decided, between mother and son, that Sin was beyond rule and redemption. That only purification could cleanse his burgeoning corruption.

--Stained Glass Window V (POE I)

The village gathered to watch Sin become ash, and breathed deeply of the smoke that poured from his screaming mouth. Sin filled their lungs, their minds and their hearts.

--Stained Glass Window VI (POE I)

Innocence watched Sin take root in the bodies of men and women and children. He witnessed them turn on each other, first with words, then with fists. Friends and kin embraced in mortal struggles,

their skin weaving with skin, flesh bonding with flesh, bone entwining with bone, until the village had become one writhing giant, forged of strife and hatred.

--Stained Glass Window VII (POE I)

As this titan of Sin rose to its many feet, Innocence knew that the village was lost. With an anguished cry he committed it to flame. As town and titan burned, the sky turned dark with the ash of Sin. There, amongst the raging ruins of his home, Innocence swore an oath. No matter where the ashes of Sin fell, his purifying flames would rise to meet them.

--Stained Glass Window VIII (POE I)

His brother would not atone, so he took his brother's life, and with it, his sins.

--The Innocent (POE I)

...and so He said: 'Let only the good meet my gaze' and no eye met His. So He called down the cleansing flames and let black smoke sweep the Sinners away.

- Book of Innocence

--Eye of Innocence Citrine Amulet (POE I)

The Sign of Purity... Apparently it was a gift from Innocence to the first High Templar, Maxarius. ...

--Vilenta, "The Sign of Purity" (POE I)

Deep in the Templar's Ossuary, in the company of the dead, there lies the Sign of Purity.

Innocence bled himself for the creation of that cruel and desperate weapon. Tempered in his own ruby ichor, it was forged to be a transcendent tool of punishment and purification. The Sign is a living agent of righteousness, or at least, the dubious kind of righteousness that my brother subscribes to.

Innocence found, in the first High Templar, a most faithful servant and gifted the Sign to him, so that it might be used in times of great need. The great need of Innocence believers, that is. Humanity's general well-being has never been of particular concern to my brother.

--Sin, "The Sign of Purity" (POE I)

The Sign of Purity? Let's see... a staff, bathed in innocent blood. No, sorry, bathed in the blood of Innocence. Yes, Innocence gave a part of his divine self to the thing and gifted it to the Templar.

Now that I recall, I read a tome about it when I was a cadet. Bloody long time ago. I skipped most of the boring pages, so only remember the bit where High Templar Maxarius 'smote with flame the army of the faithless with one ray of its hallowing light'. The book's words, not mine. ...

--Bannon, "The Sign of Purity" (POE I)

The Mother of Two, once the Mother of Three, weeps eternal.

--Devotional Statue (POE I)

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## MAXARIUS, INNOCENCE, & THE BIRTH OF THE TEMPLAR

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"It's all here. The lie at the core of my faith. Maxarius was not the first chosen of Innocence. Maxarius was Innocence himself. A charlatan, a liar, and a power-seeker." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The Original Scripture Papyrus Relic (POE I)

"In pursuit of divinity, he tried many times to found a religion. Few followed his initial symbols and proverbs. He needed something greater. A symbol none could deny." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The First Crest Coffin Relic (POE I)

"He took many of his people's traditions and gilded them, hollowed them. They rejected his new religion, and he and his followers were forced to depart the mountains for lands unknown." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The Second Sacrament Candlestick Relic (POE I)

...that golden cult [the Azmeri] banished to Oriath...

--Kahuturoa, "The Eternal Empire" (POE I)

That winter, scorched refugees emerged from the shrine, speaking only in strange tongues. They prayed to a new symbol of power, not out of love, but out of fear.

--Crystallised Omniscience Onyx Amulet (POE I)

"The newcomers were terrified of fire. He used their fear to control them, to lay the seeds of unquestioning faith. He claimed only his god could protect them." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The Night Lamp Urn Relic (POE I)

"The newcomers warn of doom and death beyond mortal ken. I ask, why should we fear the fire when we serve the Lord of Light?"

- Maxarius, the first High Templar

--Dawnbreaker Colossal Tower Shield (POE I)

"He took the newcomers' symbol and made it his own. Finally, they flocked to him. Finally, he had the power and wealth he so desired." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The Gilded Chalice Processional Relic (POE I)

In all my research—and believe me, I've done more than most—I've still never been able to figure out who the newcomers truly were. They learned our language, but theirs has been mostly lost over thousands of years. It has a completely different grammatical structure, too, so translating it is a slow and difficult task. If only I could find that elusive shrine...

--Divinia, "The Newcomers" (POE I)

"His followers were too small in number to spark divinity, so he turned to a greater power: hatred. He vilified his brother, sparking zealotry, and the change finally began." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The Broken Censer Tome Relic (POE I)

Innocence rose to godhood not on inspired faith, but on the vilification and hatred of another.

--Original Sin Amethyst Ring (POE I)

"They ascended together, one unwillingly. The vilified became black as coal, and the lauded, golden. After a lifetime of ambition, he finally had his heart's desire. It only cost him his brother." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The Hour of Divinity Censer Relic (POE I)

"Building on the fear and hatred that deified him, Innocence threatened an eternity of flames for nonbelievers. The newcomers wailed and threw themselves at his feet in the thousands." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The Power and the Promise Tome Relic (POE I)

"The mysterious traveller saw the vilified brother chained to a cliff, where all could point and shout and deride him. In one fell swing, she cracked the mountainside, freeing him." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The Chains of Castigation Processional Relic (POE I)

"After weeks of being pursued, the veiled traveller made her stand in a sandstorm. Somehow, she wounded a god. Innocence relented; his brother and the traveller made good their escape." - Lycia, the Heretic

--The Blood of Innocence Censer Relic (POE I)

In the early days of his religion, Innocence told his followers to drink of his blood and enjoy eternal life. ...

--Blood of Innocence (POE I)

Put your faith in me. Our god demands it.

- High Templar Maxarius

--Ceinture of Benevolence Cloth Belt (POE I)

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## SYMBOLS & FAITH

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... That sigil...? It's a Descry, from when the Templar truly stood for something. To the ancestors of Oriath, the Descry was a flickering torch in the night. A source of inspiration and comfort.

Sad thing about torches... they go out.

--Eramir, "Fellshrine Ruins" (POE I)

They believed themselves the utmost faithful, but that conviction became oppression.

--Militant Faith Timeless Jewel (POE I)

The laws of the faith do not apply to its leader.

--Hands of the High Templar Crusader Gloves (POE I)

You forget that your Templar leaders wear masks...



--Riker Maloney, on being betrayed by Elreon (POE I)

A secret few among the Templars grant absolution by bearing the guilt of others.

--Sign of the Sin Eater Tyrant's Sekhem (POE I)

The history of the order of Sin Eaters is shrouded in secrecy and shame. Nevertheless, history demands truth, even if it takes centuries to be revealed.

--Staff of the first Sin Eater (POE I)

## THE CAALTU

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...the Caaltu? They had the absolute best wines, feasts that went on for days, and the women... by Rongo, the women! ...

--Kahuturoa, "The Ezomytes" (POE I)

The Caaltu? I vaguely recall hearing about them once as a child, but they were long before my time.

--Maata, "The Caaltu" (POE I)

## OTHER GODS

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### GRUTHKUL, MOTHER OF DESPAIR, THE PORCELAIN QUEEN

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The Nameless were brought here long ago, when a traveler accidentally named the Porcelain Queen, causing her to become real. ...

--The Primal Huntress, "The Nameless" (POE I)

The King in the Mists was not the first to escape the realm of nameless nothingness. A great many seasons ago, a curious young man walked the Wildwood on his journey elsewhere. He stopped at a waterfall, and engaged in a flight of fancy, naming creatures that he imagined might exist unseen among the trees. He just so happened to picture a powerful mother from the shadow realm, and he foolishly gave her a name—it is not 'The Porcelain Queen,' mind you. That's just a title, a few safe words to refer to her in a roundabout manner.

The traveler moved on, but *she* emerged, and brought her countless children with her. That young man was nobody important, and he surely died long ago, but his idle imaginings and his casual Naming led to a tale of untold tragedy and pain that is still playing out even now. When the denizens of the Wildwood tell you not to use True Names, they mean it.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Porcelain Queen" (POE I)

... Gruthkul the Despairing sulks and schemes.

The Vaal laid waste to her kingdom and placed her slaughtered children at her feet. Grief enveloped Gruthkul, transformed her, flooded her mind with a singular thought. To share her suffering with those who had murdered her daughters.

... There is no fury like a mother bereaved.

--Sin, "Gruthkul" (POE I)

... Her kingdom in your world is gone now—I know not how or why—but a few of her shadow children escaped back into the Wildwood, and then multiplied in number through the march of seasons. They lament eternal, sorrow without end, a pain they carried from their existence before, now made all the sharper by the loss of their mother. ...

--The Primal Huntress, "The Nameless" (POE I)

... After the deaths of her children, Queen Gruthkul fled north, eventually finding respite amongst the refugee [sic] of her own shattered realm. Yet these loyalists saw their own queen as a weapon, a tool for vengeance. They nurtured her pain, transfiguring sorrow into hatred, hatred into violence. Like a grizzled bear, Gruthkul descended into animalism and ferocity. Yet her caretakers foolishly underestimated the agony their bereaved queen harboured in her heart. Like a bear caught in a trap, Gruthkul wrenched free of her human loyalties and slew her followers to the last woman and child. It was through devastation Gruthkul ascended to divinity. ...

--Eramir, "Gruthkul" (POE I)

I wonder if Gruthkul would still grieve for her children if she knew the truth.

The Spinner of Shadows had no aspirations until Gruthkul's daughters plotted against her. They saw her power over the people, her miraculous potions, her intoxicating lusts.

They feared Arakaali, thought she might threaten their legacy. Yet that's the curious thing about spiders. They only leave their web when you force them to.

--Sin, "The Mother of Despair" (POE I)

The earth shakes, moon eclipses black. Graveyards quake, crops turn to ash, as the grieving mother weeps. Oceans boil and wind ravages home. We feel famine inside our bones, as the grieving mother, Gruthkul weeps.

--Captured Soul of Erebox, Light's Bane (POE I)

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## ABBERATH, THE CLOVEN ONE

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... Abberath, a deranged old goat with a thirst for human souls ...

--Sin, "The Cloven One" (POE I)

A renowned alchemist, eroded by his lust for distilled spirits - and not the alcoholic kind. Abberath the Scholar King, dancing upon a stage of chemicals and fire.

He used his knowledge to burn away the flesh so as to liquidate the life force within, a libation he consumed with both frequency and alacrity.

It started with animals, goats specifically, and thus his own cruelty became his curse. The Scholar King became the Cloven One, Quaffer of Souls. Some say he turned to the dram of Man in order to cure himself. I believe his thirst simply grew with his burgeoning immortality.

And perhaps he still retained some of his scholarly nature, for he seemed fair determined to share his hard won wisdom. He took himself a princess, a lovely thing from a local tribe, and nine months later she gave birth to something rather unlovely.

The Faun, as wild and wicked as the shaggy god himself. Schooled in his father's ways, the Faun would carry off many more virgins in his time, and thus, the race of goatmen found their footing.

--Sin, "Abberath" (POE I)

It is said that no matter how ugly a child is, its mother will always love it. That wasn't true of the boy they called "The Fawn". He was born on a cold, moonless night, his birth bed illuminated only by flickering torches. The midwife who pulled him free caught one glimpse of his hairy face and stubby horns, and ran screaming from the tent. His poor mother sheltered and fed him after that, but she was shunned and reviled. Whispers spread that she had consorted with a foul beast to spawn him.

Eventually, The Fawn's mother grew weary of her pariah status, and she took the hideous boy far away, to the cliff side. She meant to cast them both into the ocean, but at the last moment changed her mind. Seizing a large rock, she struck her son on the head, and left him inert and bleeding. However, The Fawn's thick, bony skull took the brunt of the blow without cracking, and he didn't die. The wounded boy attempted to follow his mother back to their encampment, but he got lost on the way, and that was the last anyone heard of him.

But years later, a new menace appeared near the encampment, a terror waiting to waylay anyone attempting to traverse Wraeclast's soaring cliffs. Somehow The Fawn had produced offspring, creatures as twisted and vile as their father. These "men" have a goat's ability to eat anything they encounter, driving them in relentless pursuit of anything edible. They attack from above, smashing their prey underfoot with cloven hooves. Any who survive that assault are pummeled to death by a barrage of savage headbutts. If you hear the bleating of The Fawn, run away.

--<https://web.archive.org/web/20160526123708/https://www.pathofexile.com/monsters/goat-men>

The goat king knew not of war, of the lands and laws he trampled. The goat king knew only joy at turning life into ash.

--Abberath's Hooves Goathide Boots (POE I)

[Note: The following lore item was written for 3.0, but has never been available in-game.]

Soul prepared, Soul be mine. O' Abberath, goat lord of the fallen race, rise up and take this, my offering of delectable essence.

As it is known, with the consumption of souls, comes the ecstasy of true enlightenment. For the cloven ones shall subjugate every creature on this earth, and as such, all creatures need be consumed.

--Primitive Carving I (POE I)

When the demon Goat plays his flute,  
And cloven hooves clip-clop your path,  
Pray the gods will hold you mute,  
And bless the fire on your hearth.

--Captured Soul of Mephod, the Earth Scorcher (POE I)

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## TANGMAZU, THE TRICKSTER

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...I hear whispers. Even though I have the best ears among all these thieves, I cannot make out the words... but they sound like my constant companions - my depression, paranoia, and hatred - when I am at my worst. ...

--Nenet, "Strange Voice" (POE I)

What will you find in the darkest reaches of your mind? Come! Step into my world of twisted illusions. Witness the birth of fear...

--Tangmazu, <https://www.pathofexile.com/delirium> (trailer)

The more the warrior understood Tangmazu's gift, the less the mask aided him. His dreams were filled with divine laughter.

- Tenth Song of the Islands

--Fractal Thoughts Vaal Mask (POE I)

The Trickster God turned the very Day and Night against each other. What hope have you?

--Perfidy Glorious Plate (POE I)

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## THE GODDESS OF JUSTICE

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The Just Goddess presides over us all. ...

--Bronze Plaque (POE I)

In the court of the Goddess, every man and woman is deemed worthy of redemption. ...

--Bronze Monograph I (POE I)

... Within these walls, the Lady of Justice doth preside. She shall weigh your Mind in one hand, your Heart in the other. Should she find you wanting, death shall be your sentence. Should she find you worthy, you will be given the loyalty and love of an empire. ...

--Izaro, on The Aspirants' Plaza (POE I)

Before the Goddess, nothing remains hidden. Adversity reveals old flaws and new strengths.

--Dedication to the Goddess (POE I)

You may appeal to the Goddess for another verdict, but justice favours only the truly worthy.

--Tribute to the Goddess (POE I)

The Goddess abides a kingdom beyond compare, should you meet her challenge.

--Gift to the Goddess (POE I)

# THE WINTER OF THE WORLD

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## THE GREAT FIRE

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Our forefathers danced and drank and ate their fill and did not honour the First Ones for their gifts.  
So the First Ones filled the sky with fire.

--Feastbind Rustic Sash (POE I)

When the fires spilled out of the mountain, The First of the Night wove a net and was carried into  
the night on its hot winds. Though we cannot live without danger, we can learn to live with it.

--Fenumus' Spinnerets Assassin's Boots (POE I)

Long ago, the ocean was a puddle where a golden fish dwelt, who lit the ocean from within and kept  
the water fresh. When the sky burned, the fish dived deep, never to return, and the waters turned  
sour.

--Blightwell Clutching Talisman (POE I)

From north to south the sea of fire swept,  
Rolling waves of gorging flame,  
Growing taller and hungrier,  
With every land they consumed.

--Rolling Flames Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

When the inferno spread across the land, it was the First of the Sky who singed his feathers as he  
brought the flames to a standstill.

--Saqawal's Winds Soldier Gloves (POE I)

After the fires swept down from the sky and swallowed the city, all that lingered, as if locked in  
time, was a memory of that which was gone, a whisper of deeds undone.

--Balefire Opal Sceptre (POE I)



A great fire once swept the land, and our leaders were turned to ash where they stood. The urn contains exactly what you think it does, and serves as proof of our long lineage.

--Urn of the Original Ashes (POE I)

Few living things survived the cleansing flames.  
Those that did thrived...  
And changed...

--Mutated Growth Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

After the Great Fire, the land lay barren and our forefathers grew weak. Mother Gull took pity on them and gave them grain and water.

--Faminebind Rustic Sash (POE I)

But the grain grew twisted and the water turned dark and those who partook of Mother Gull's gift birthed monsters that fed on the flesh of one another.

--The Retch Rustic Sash (POE I)

The sky, the land, the people burned. What little still stood soon faced wild, battering storms. Winter arrived suddenly and stayed for a generation. Civilisation was not simply halted, but reversed, erased.

--Endless Misery Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

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## THE WINTER & THE LIGHTLESS

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### AHKELI, THE CLAYSHAPER

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There is nothing, flesh, spirit, or stone  
Free from our hunger for dominion.

--Clayshaper Rock Breaker (POE I)

Fleeing the destruction set upon her home, the Clayshaper sought safety in the clouds of ash above.

--Ahkeli's Mountain Ruby Ring (POE I)

Where once had stood a village, lay naught but splinters. Some had once been her home. Some had once been her creations. Some had once been her family.

--Ahkeli's Meadow Ruby Ring (POE I)

The river, once fertile and fresh, and flowing briskly to the sea, now stood, stained, at a standstill. Dammed by the coagulating dead.

--Ahkeli's Valley Ruby Ring (POE I)

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## THE LIGHTLESS

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Often, it is our own creations that destroy us in the end.

--Kalandra, at the end of an Abyss encounter (POE I)

Before Solaris graced Wraeclast, a race of repulsive beings, fearful of light, populated the gloomy wastes. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2032331>

They ceaselessly sprout from the murderous earth.

--Abyss Scarab of Multitudes (POE I)

They stare back, with hollow hypnotising eyes.

--Abyss Scarab of Emptiness (POE I)

They search forever for more souls to drag to the dark.

--Abyss Scarab (POE I)

We serve only the Night.

--Command of the Pit Riveted Gloves (POE I)

Even the dead serve the Lightless.

--Bubonic Trail Murder Boots (POE I)

Their empires ghastly and gaunt glitter with gold.

--Abyss Scarab of Edifice (POE I)

## THE BEAST & THE FALL OF THE GODS

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I shall put this simply, for in truth, everything comes down to the simple act of planting a seed in the ground. The gods are rising because you slew the one creature that prevented them from doing so. Your name for it is "The Beast."

It was I who planted the seed in the rich soil beneath Highgate, who nurtured it, who watched it bloom into maturity, even as I succumbed to its mollifying powers. We gods, we were driven into slumbering darkness, to dream away eternity whilst the gentle Beast watched over us. ...

--Sin, "The Rise of the Gods" (POE I)

The Ember is a seed... the black core of the Beast's heart. It is the pure, undiluted essence of corruption. ... all of [the Beast's] power, the stupefying effect it had on us gods, it all dwells within this Dark Ember. ...

--Sin, "The Dark Ember" (POE I)

... Twisting tunnels of flesh. A blinking cathedral of a thousand eyes. History itself pierced and remade by corruption.

The outpourings of the Beast's consciousness brings [sic] life to nightmares beyond imagination. ... Within its belly there is no 'real'. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/theawakening/actfour>

... A dark God of ancient sacrifice, a muse to the twisted and vile...the Beast, the Nightmare, the Darkness...names given to it by mortals that think with slugs bound in shells of bone.

Yet, one man knew the Beast's true name, understood its impenetrable nature.

Malachai.

--Tasuni, "The Beast" (POE I)

...The Beast is not Death...

--Tasuni, "Malachai" (POE I)

... If the Beast were in any way human, we could think of the Black Core as the Beast's heart. I'm not even going to try to explain to you what it really is. ...

--Piety, on Malachai's organs (POE I)

... Spirals can often be found on the land and creatures the Beast influences. ...

--<http://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1981149>

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## CATACLYSMS THROUGH THE AGES

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... Unfortunately for everyone, the Beast didn't just consume divine energies - the process of digesting it leaked its inverse, Corruption, as a form of waste. While divine energies are extremely ordered and focused, Corruption is inherently chaotic and maddening. Corruption bathed Wraeclast over the ages, irradiating the land with sinister energies. Eventually, some realized that this could offer an alternate route to power. ...

The best a person can hope for on Wraeclast is to remain neutral, unaffected by either. For example, one can be spared corrupted mutations if they inspire faith in those around them. That might be why the Exile remains human when so many others become abominations in proximity to Corruption. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2996851>

The Beast was never a cruel master. It didn't want to destroy, to corrupt, to terrorise. It simply existed to exist. I made it that way.

Unfortunately, in neglecting to provide it with ambition, I made it vulnerable to the ambitions of others. Queen Atziri and Doryani. Emperor Chitus and Malachai. Others even before them.

I created a Beast that would free humanity from the tyranny of the gods. Yet all I really did was provide the perfect tool with which humanity could tyrannise itself.

--Sin, "The Beast" (POE I)

... My Beast was born to be a thing of beauty. A crowning jewel to rest upon humanity's head. I... I wanted to give your kind a chance for peace, a chance to play atop the great stage. No longer pawns to a pantheon of petty, slaving gods...

It was only ever defending itself, the fault lies within the twisted hearts of those who would betray their own humanity.

Not even I could anticipate the cataclysms my pet wrought on Wraeclast. Both Vaal and Eternal. Ruins in the pages of history. And the others... trailing back across the aeons.

There is blood on my hands, exile, the innocent blood of millions, and try as I might, the stains just won't wash off.

--Sin, "Cataclysm" (POE I)

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## THE ORIGIN OF VIRTUE GEMS

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... The Beast is the source of all thaumaturgy, the one power in this world that transforms 'what is real' into 'what is imagined.' ...

--Piety, "Malachai" (POE I)

Thaumaturgy comes from virtue gems. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2996851>

The Virtue Gems are all sourced from mines on Mount Veruso, under Highgate. It is impossible to be completely certain with the limited tomes I have available on the subject, but the Beast's presence under that mountain and the fact that Virtue Gems cannot be found anywhere else in the world does indeed suggest a connection. The number of Virtue Gems in existence cannot be ascertained, any more than one might count the grains of sand on a beach.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2991402>

Rumour has it that skill gems are essentially crystallised corruption – fragments of the Beast's skin that broke off as it grew. It's also said they are fuelled by the willpower of the user.

--Cadiro, on skill gems (POE I)

I believe that *you* believe that these coloured gems give you power, Exile. I've handled one of them, even tried to 'activate it' the way that local Tarkleigh described, but it didn't do a damn thing. Call me a skeptic, but to me, it seems like the power was inside you all along.

--Dannig, "Gems" (POE I)

## THE DECLINE & FALL OF THE VAAL

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... The Vaal were the first known users of the gems, and their ruins are scattered across the land. ...

--Help Panel glossary, "Vaal" (POE I)

...Vaal...a culture I've seen mentioned here and there in some of the most antique of texts.

It is the Vaal who began the use of Virtue Gems, well before our imperial ancestors. Little else is known about them. ...

--Eramir, "Ancient Gateway" (POE I)

The Vaal were even more steeped in gem culture than our Emperor and his 'Gemlings.' It's an obsession as old as civilization itself.

- Icius Perandus

--Golden Page I (POE I)

### Vaal Skill Gems

The Vaal civilization may have existed thousands of years ago, but it had its own form of Skill Gems. Brutally powerful and fueled by the sacrifice of foes...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/807869>

My fellow Karui never wanted to face the hard truth: if the Vaal wanted to wipe us out, they could have. They wouldn't even have needed to invade us, and our lauded might would have been useless. Their Empire rose to power on the back of Corruption, and those gems the Azmeri called the Tears of Maji. Corruption has a tendency to make Karui sick with a kind of... blood fever. That is the true reason our Way forbids the use of Tears of Maji.

During my life, a handful of Karui tried to implant them in their flesh. They became filled with rage and unnatural strength, and we had to put them down... then burn their bodies. Their mere proximity made others sick, too, so for every warrior that transgressed, five others gave their lives to protect the rest of us. To wipe us out, the Vaal could have simply spread the blood fever. My peacemaking, concessions, and treaties were born of that vulnerability, and I am glad I forged such a path. The Vaal Empire eventually succumbed to its own disease, and we remained.

--Maata, "The Vaal" (POE I)

## CONTACTING THE AZMERI (CA. 900 BIC)

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### Book 4: Raising the Azmeri

Drain a cup of Azmerian tea and then try to read your future in the leaves. You'll find that your Vaalish will come in mighty handy. Our literature was conceived and born within the Azmeri's cultural marriage with the Vaal.

Prior to Vaal contact some 2500 years ago, the Azmerian culture had a purely oral tradition of story and record keeping. Afterwards, their literary culture blossomed, along with just about every other aspect of their fledgling civilisation. From the moment the first Vaalish ambassadors set foot upon the rugged slopes of the Azmerian Ranges, the Vaal civilisation held the hand of the Azmeri as they grew from a primitive tribal existence into a cohesive culture of settlement and agriculture.

Yet while the Vaal were generous with their knowledge and guidance in many areas, there is one subject upon which they were notably silent: the Tears of Maji, now known as Virtue Gems. Despite an exhaustive search, neither account nor passing reference can be found regarding gem usage amongst the early Azmeri. Though they described the Vaal as having flesh adorned with glittering crystals, our Azmerian ancestors were never privy to the gems' potentials or powers.

At least, not until the first Vaal refugees came knocking five hundred years later.

- *Trinian - Intellectus Prime*

--The Ancients (POE I)

## THE MAJI & GEOMANCY

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The Azmeri must never touch the Tears of Maji, lest Viridi weep.

--Forbidden Shako Great Crown (POE I)

The Draíocht forbid us from touching 'virtue gems'... though, it is still possible to employ them, if one is willing to blur the lines of right and wrong in the battle against evil. So long as a Maji does not touch a virtue gem, but merely places it in a geomantic socket on their armour, the pain can be endured for the sake of victory. I did see a young man directly touch a gem with his bare hand, once... I will never make that mistake myself.

--The Warden of Eaves, "Tears of the Maji" (POE I)

The Maji were forbidden from touching virtue gems... so their practical warriors employed geomancy instead.



--Pragmatism Colosseum Plate (POE I)

Geomancy offered a safer way to use the Tears... but most Maji rejected that temptation as well.

--The Untouched Soul Gold Amulet (POE I)

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## THE VAAL IN ORIATH

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... I have seen signs of blood and ancient sacrifice in the ghostings of our precious city! Such as what the Vaal would commit in their homelands. Could it be that these echoes point to Vaal culture having extended all the way to the shores of Oriath? ...

- Templar Davaro of Theopolis

--Research Journal I (POE I)

... My theory that the Vaal once dwelt in this land has proven fruitful, one of their ancient sites lies not far from here. There is great power dormant in the ruins, one that I am yet to tap fully, but it will come soon enough.

Through my thaumaturgy, I was granted special sight, I saw the ancient Vaal city that once stood in this place. All around me were signs of the legendary Queen Atziri ruling from afar. I saw, as I stood at the base of a great pyramid, the sacrifice of new harvest unfold. The steps ran red with a river of blood, a crimson tide, cascading towards me and washing over my skin. In it, I felt my being shake, as if lightning was reverberating through my body. I felt the strength of that blood ritual, and then returning to my senses, I found myself once more standing in ancient ruins. I thought it to be all a dream, only, when I reached up to touch my face, I found it both horrifyingly and marvelously, pelted with that same salted vermillion.

- Templar Davaro of Theopolis, Key to Ancient Wonder

--Research Journal II (POE I)

... During me time on the sea, I heard tale of Queen Atziri and her penchant fer using this land as a kinda vault for all her special shinies.

One such shiny be her famed love potion - s'posed to attract the drinker's ideal mate to their loins, even if that mate be far across the sea. Ol' Queen Atziri kept the liquid in the skull of her favourite lover. ...

--Weylam Roth, "Elixir of Allure" (POE I)

## THE REIGN OF QUEEN ATZIRI (CA. 400 BIC)

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### **Book 1: Last of the Vaal Queens**

It has been written of Queen Atziri that her throne room was lined with mirrors and that she held court naked, demanding the same of those wishing her audience. The theory was that a naked man had nothing to hide, but one might easily venture that Atziri utilised her striking physical presence to influence courtly engagements in her favour.

A woman like Atziri, beautiful and naked, would be very difficult to refuse. The few statuettes and reliefs that remain depict her as a rare beauty, a young woman with exquisitely delicate features, large, mesmerizing eyes, and a full figure of intoxicating sensuality. Whether the depictions are realist or interpretive is unfortunately impossible to corroborate.

But who was the woman behind the title? The few surviving accounts on this matter contain two schools of thought on the matter. Some speak of Atziri with adoration, touting her as a visionary, the woman who would lead the Vaal into a brighter future. Others are less kind, suggesting that Atziri's love for herself overshadowed any love for her people. If her court of mirrors truly existed, however, then the latter seems more likely. Vanity, after all, is the most insidious of all Sins.

Only one thing can be said for certain of Atziri: she was the last Queen of the Vaal. The trail of history ends during her reign, some four hundred years preceding the Imperialus Conceptus.

*-Trinian - Intellectus Prime*

--The Ancients (POE I)

Famous for her many lovers, those that did not come willing to Atziri, came by liquid persuasion.

--Elixir of Allure (POE I)

### **Book 2: Zerphi the Murderer**

It is said the Vaalish noble, Zerphi, lived for 168 years. That is more than three times the current imperial average. Were this the only unusual attribute of an otherwise uneventful life, Zerphi might have been cast into the back corner of history to gather dust with the other inexplicable anomalies. But his life was anything but uneventful.

Zerphi was the Vaal civilisation's most infamous serial killer. Over a period of 128 years, Zerphi abducted, tortured and murdered thirteen victims. All in their twentieth year of life. All of noble descent. All Gemlings. But this feat alone did not catapult Zerphi into the annals of history. Rather, it was the quality of his heinous acts that set him apart, not the quantity.

Evidently, Zerphi was a master at inflicting the most prolonged and agonising demise. His victims' bodies were found in a state of horrific mutilation, yet post-mortem analysis revealed that all of the physical trauma inflicted [sic] had occurred while the victim was still alive. Some sources claim that

the techniques of torture were so refined that he was able to inflict the most intense and lasting pain the human body is capable of sustaining.

Then we come to the curious matter of Zerphi's death which, as so often occurs with historical investigation, brings us back to where we started. Zerphi was finally found at the side of his thirteenth and final victim, who was unmolested and unmutilated. Simply dead. When the centenarian's body was committed to autopsy, the recorded results are mystifying in the extreme. It is claimed that Zerphi did not possess the body of a 168-year-old, rather that his corpse had the physiognomy of a man of twenty years, no more.

Life and Death have walked hand in hand since the beginning of Time. Could Zephri [sic] have persuaded them to kiss?

- *Trinian - Intellectus Prime*

--The Ancients (POE I)

The process of eternal youth is a give and take. You give them death and take their youth.

- Zerphi of the Vaal

--The Life Thief (POE I)

Proof that if you devote yourself to a god of death, you may be spared from its wrath.

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Item 408

--Zerphi's Last Breath Grand Mana Flask (POE I)

### **Book 3: The Queen's Thaumaturgist**

In a culture festooned with gems and steeped in thaumaturgy, Doryani must have had quite the exceptional mind to rise to such preeminence as he did. Or perhaps he was simply more ruthless than his counterparts. Such is the impression one tends to garner from the accounts written of events following Zerphi's death.

Atziri's orders are quoted in a number of different texts. Doryani was "to make any effort within the realms of possibility, and to act without fear of question or consequence". And to what was Doryani expected to apply this supreme effort? The investigation of Zerphi's longevity and youthful vitality.

There is a particularly chilling manifest, containing endless lists of names, page upon page. The names of young men and women, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty-six, sent to Doryani for "processing". Only those of "full and recent maturity" were deemed capable of accommodating the "necessary procedures" required without succumbing to "premature expiration".

Yes, Queen Atziri was prepared to slaughter her own people in the desperate pursuit of perpetual youth and beauty. Vanity, indeed, is the most insidious of all Sins.

- *Trinian - Intellectus Prime*

--The Ancients (POE I)

Atziri went to great lengths to ensure her immortality, but nothing is eternal.

--Atziri's Reign Crimson Jewel (POE I)

... It was said of the beautiful Atziri that she "wished to see her likeness reflected in the still waters of history." ...

--Siosa, "Malachai" (POE I)

Atziri is my love and my life. I give one so that I might have the other for all eternity.

I was to wither away in darkness. My queen has brought me into the light. I would have lived in ugliness. Now I may die in Beauty.

I am but a crude reflection of our Queen of Endless Beauty. I die today so that all of Vaal may bask in her Radiance tomorrow.

I had nothing. I was nothing. I sold my flesh to survive. Today, my flesh belongs to my Queen.

What did I say? What did I do? I flattered, I promised, I bared my skin and soul to my beloved Atziri. I did everything but offer to die for her. Is that where I went wrong?

Our Queen has demanded we look into the gems for our salvation. We see ourselves reflected in those facets, twisted beyond recognition.

A ring. Plated, not even solid silver. That's all I took. Now I'm stuffed full of gems and destined for the block. For palming a wretched, half-crown ring.

There was no escape for me. Should our Queen and her thaumaturge succeed, there will be no escape for anyone.

I should have drawn the last breath from him. Yet all I did was draw his blood. Doryani will take my head in the morning and I have my shaking hands to thank for it.

For seven years I advised. For seven years she listened. Today, she would not. Now my blood will be but another drop in an ocean that will drown this land.

Atziri promises us eternal life. The only eternity we shall have is in the memories of the barbarians that shall plant their crops on our graves.

Queen Atziri forfeited her sovereignty the day that she chose to murder her people.

--Vaal Letters (POE I)

Destined for sacrifice, they were dressed in garments that blurred the lines between this world and the next.

--Shadowstitch Sacrificial Garb (POE I)

The Vaal emptied their slaves of beating hearts, and left a mountain of twitching dead.

--Rathpith Globe Titanium Spirit Shield (POE I)

In their final days, every crime was punishable by death. Atziri's empire ran on blood, but the blood was running dry.

--Vaal Sentencing Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

Take comfort knowing that, even in death, we may serve our Queen and fuel her empire.

--Transcendent Spirit Viridian Jewel (POE I)

Sacrifice: it is the most noble, most beautiful act a mortal may perform. It is an act of divinity. To sacrifice is to give yourself to something greater. To sacrifice is to transform the world.

--Atziri, <https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/807869> (trailer)

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## KISHARA & THE STAR

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...Kishara, a tough-as-nails Vaal lassie said to have explored every coast, cove and bay of this blasted continent with the help of her Star, some nifty artefact she nabbed from somewhere on her first voyage. ... Said to be fair humming with thaumaturgy, able to guide its mistress wherever she be fixing to journey. ...

--Weylam Roth, "Kishara's Star" (POE I)

Legend has it, Kishara got herself in some hot water with a certain Queen Atziri. Details are vague as to exactly how, but by all accounts, Atziri weren't the most understanding of lasses. Kishara, being the free spirited sort probably just pricked the royal arse with some spiky facts from the outside world. Almost lost her head for her trouble, Kishara. Atziri took her ship and made sacrifices of her crew. Forced the poor girlie into hiding.

Still, Kishara being of a wily inclination like meself, she slipped through Atziri's talons and right out of the empire. But before she left, Kishara hid the Star somewhere near the Causeway that leads

into the old Vaal city up north, just in case she got caught, I suppose. Something like that in the hands of a tyrant like Atziri... who knows what trouble she might've found with it.

--Weylam Roth, "Kishara" (POE I)

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## THE TEMPLE OF ATZOATL

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The lost Temple of Atzoatl; Halls lined with finery, boxes stuffed with glimmering riches and relics touched by insurmountable power! ...

--Alva Valai, "Introduction" (POE I)

Grand plans were laid for a place called Atzoatl, though fierce bickering between its Architects is said to have stifled its development.

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Research Report

--Chronicle of Atzoatl, default (POE I)

The lost Temple of Atzoatl is said to be the most famed in all Vaal history and myth. Best I can tell, the Temple began its construction in the final years of the Vaal Empire. The exact date of its completion has been hard to ascertain as it occurred shortly before the events which brought about the civilisation's extinction.

Perhaps it is this fragility of the timeline that has made Atzoatl such a staple of Vaal mythology. Some say it was a place of darkness, home to the most vile of sacrifices. But there are others who claim the temple to be the birthplace of technology - even our own is said to pale in comparison to what was being forged within those walls.

Scholars today have even suggested that it was the treasure house for Queen Atziri herself. Whichever is true, it was bound to have been fiercely protected by fanatics and royalty alike. And if something's worth protecting, well, then it's worth bloody taking!

--Alva Valai, "Atzoatl" (POE I)

Trade with lesser cultures, such as the Maraketh and the early Karui, resulted in overflowing vaults full of golden trinkets and elegant jewels.

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, 'Dekhara's Resolve'

--Chronicle of Atzoatl with Glittering Halls (POE I)

Their engineering knowledge may have rivaled that of the modern world. The fall of the Vaal no doubt set humanity back a thousand years.

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Ancient Gear Interlock

--Chronicle of Atzoatl with Factory (POE I)

A great many warriors were stationed at Atzoatl, ostensibly due to repeated invasion by something referred to as 'a haunting death.'

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Carved Interment Records

--Chronicle of Atzoatl with Hall of War (POE I)

A great many creatures were bred at Atzoatl, ostensibly due to repeated invasion by some kind of horrifying murderous entity.

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Fossilized Egg Sac

--Chronicle of Atzoatl with Hybridisation Chamber (POE I)

Atzoatl was a locus of Corruption, a temple dedicated to the worship of the unspeakable.

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Eroded Vaal Orb

--Chronicle of Atzoatl with Locus of Corruption (POE I)

When the Vaal discovered power could be gained from sacrificing the living, Atzoatl became a death march for the lower classes.

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Obsidian Sacrificial Knife

--Chronicle of Atzoatl with Apex of Ascension (POE I)

Doryani himself conducted gem research at Atzoatl in its final days. What brilliant discoveries were lost with that temple?

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Third Ciphered Tablet

--Chronicle of Atzoatl with Doryani's Institute (POE I)

Evidence suggests that Atzoatl's influence grew great enough that Atziri herself moved her seat of power to within its walls.

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Royal Decree cast in Bronze

--Chronicle of Atzoatl with Throne of Atziri (POE I)

The Architects sought immortality... perhaps they reside within Atzoatl still...

- Icius Perandus, Antiquities Collection, Vial of Emerald Water

--Chronicle of Atzoatl with Sanctum of Immortality (POE I)

They met in secret to plan aspirations beyond all others. Their grand dreams slowly turned into endless nightmares.

--Grand Dreams Vaal Side Area (POE I)

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## THE FALL (CA. 400 BIC)

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Doryani's ingenuity raised the Vaal Empire to unprecedented heights. His curiosity reduced it to ruins and bones.

--Doryani's Fist Vaal Gauntlets (POE I)

In my dream, a voice spoke to me. It said: 'My reach knows no bounds. All that is pure is destined to rot. All that lives is destined to serve.'

- Doryani, Queen's Thaumaturgist

--Blood of Corruption Amber Amulet (POE I)

"Long ago, people looked to the stars, believing they influenced us. Soon, it will be us who influence the stars."

- Doryani, Queen's Thaumaturge

--The Ethereal (POE I)

Doryani promises immortality, yet we build great structures, carve magnificent works into stone, so a part of us lives onward. A sign of faithlessness through action.

--Fate of the Vaal Gemstone Sword (POE I)



My word. Vaalish contextualized syntax is a slippery eel indeed. Let me see if I can grab it by the gills...

They carried their virtue gems to..."Doryani's bed"...no, that's not quite right. Ah yes, Doryani's *cradle*. The historian finishes that it was a price they needed to pay to ensure a Vaalish future.

A cradle of virtue gems? What sort of 'Vaalish future' did Doryani hope to ensure?

--Siosa, "Page One Translation" (POE I)

The result of the catalytic reaction would be either immortality for all, or death for all. It was a risk Doryani was willing to take.

--Doryani's Catalyst Vaal Sceptre (POE I)

Splendid. Let's see what this page has to offer us... It talks of Queen Atziri. Now here's a portentous line:

*She drenches her alters with the blood of those deranged enough to question her vision.*

The next piece is a real eye-crosser, but I believe it refers to a 'communion,' something to do with the harvest moon? Again, Doryani seems at the heart of it.

Good, this line I can read without issue:

*This will be our final night of fear, our final night of suffering.*

Sacrifice, communion, the harvest moon...an unsettling combination.

--Siosa, "Page Two Translation" (POE I)

"A communion...but with what? By all accounts, it wasn't God that the Vaal were trying to reach."

- Icius Perandus

--Golden Page II (POE I)

Doryani stumbled into a realm of madness and awoke its Master.

--Dream Fragments Sapphire Ring (POE I)

... I have divined one weak point in the Beast's flank, an ancient wound wrought by that Vaalish overreacher, Doryani. ...

--Sin, "The Dark Ember" (POE I)

Oh my, this first line is frighteningly clear:

*Our Queen is dead. Doryani is dead. So many have fallen. So many have changed.*

The latter text is almost indecipherable. It practically hums with agitation. Let me see...I can make out the words "sleep," "nightmare," and..."the Beast," whatever that may be. Our historian finishes with:

*We have succeeded where our forebears did not. We have failed ourselves.*

I need not imagine the fall of the Vaal. I saw the nightmare with my own eyes.

--Siosa, "Page Three Translation" (POE I)

## **Book 5: The Fall**

The Vaal. Thousands of years in the making. Gone in a blink of Solaris' burning eyes. The Azmeri tell of the Vaalish immigration with equal measures of pity and horror. Small bands of tattered, shambling survivors, bereft of their families, their wealth, and in many cases, their sanity. They were welcomed, and cared for, but none could give the Azmeri the one thing they sought in return. None could tell them how the Vaal realm came to such a sudden and catastrophic end. An apocalypse that came to be known as The Fall.

The number 3126 is forever burned into Azmerian history. Three thousand one hundred and twenty-six: the number of Vaal refugees who came to live with and eventually become absorbed into the Azmerian people.

Three thousand one hundred and twenty-six survivors from a civilisation counting in its millions.

*- Trinian - Intellectus Prime*

--The Ancients (POE I)

At their height, the Vaal glittered under the sun. A decade, a century, an aeon of prosperity... now nothing more than a passing wonder.

--The Adorned Crimson Jewel (POE I)

... We—and I shudder to use that word, *we*—already sacrificed all we had to buy this world one stay of execution. It only cost the lives of my entire people, and everything they ever built. The decaying temples and cities of the Vaal Empire are not rotting monuments to hubris. They are a legacy, a silent reminder of what was given so that the other peoples of Wraeclast might survive. What will *you* sacrifice when the moment comes?

--The Trialmaster, "Exception" (POE I)

## THE FATES OF DORYANI & ATZIRI

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Those citizens of the Vaal Empire that thought they survived the Cataclysm soon realised that they had, in fact, done no such thing.

--Endless Nightmare Vaal Side Area (POE I)

... Doryani is missing...

--Hinekora, 7 (POE I)

... Doryani... where is Doryani? ...

--Hinekora, 9 (POE I)

Even a millennium later, Atziri's presence casts a shroud over Wraeclast.

--Chill of Corruption Viridian Jewel (POE I)

The narcissistic Queen Atziri plunged the Vaal civilisation into a dark age of sacrifice and terror almost two thousand years ago. Millions died due to her obsessive pursuit of eternal youth, a pursuit that brought about a cataclysm that ended the Vaal civilisation overnight. But Atziri herself still lingers in a nightmare realm that is starting to leak back into the land of Wraeclast. Now, as the queen rises again, her corruption spreads throughout Wraeclast. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/807869>

In every possibility, in every world that might have been, Queen Atziri's mark on history was the one thing that never changed.

--Bane of Chaos Vaal Side Area (POE I)

# THE KALGUUR

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I am from Kalguur, on the continent of Middengard. We have reached Wraeclast by ship. The journey was quite long, and quite dangerous...

--Johan, "Home" (POE I)

It's a beautiful continent. A harsh, beautiful continent. Mountainous... well, volcanic. The most verdant valleys and sparkling waterfalls you'll ever see. It's the people... the people are amazing, for the most part. Heroes. Scholars. Determined. Not in the grand sense you might hear in songs. Real people, doing their best. We tried. We really did...

--Gwennen, "Middengard" (POE I)

So this is Wraeclast, eh? Strangely warm and humid here, at least compared to back home...

--Sonja, "Introduction" (POE I)

... Middengard is mostly comprised of volcanoes...

--Sonja, "The Soil" (POE I)

We are of the Kalguur. Ours is an existence spent scrabbling in the muck and mire of mortal life in search of scraps of renown. Some find it on the battlefield. Some find it in service. Others volunteer to sail to the edge of the known world on an impossible quest. The choices we make determine what we are, and what we become echoes into legend.

--Dannig, "Home" (POE I)

We are a proud people, but aren't they all? Difference is, we labour against the grim realities of life through the judicious application of bravery and courage. One's lineage carries an ongoing tally of renown and accomplishment. We do this not for ourselves, but for our children, should we one day have 'em. Here's hopin'!

--Tujen, "The Kalguur" (POE I)

The runes on our armour essentially capture and shape starlight. Sounds poetic, but don't be fooled. The smiths of the Kalguur turned these runes towards killing work long ago, as soon as they discovered that they could compel arrows to find their mark and blades to bite deeper. The greatest

smiths became known as artificers, and produced work of singular genius. There weren't many such relics, but there didn't need to be.

--Dannig, "Runes" (POE I)

I don't know how it's seen on Wraeclast, but smithing is something of a fine art back home. We smiths aren't priests—not by a long-shot—but we do study the science of runes, and the philosophies of meaning and will. That education allowed me to forge *myself* much the same way I would a sword. A man makes his own destiny. Runes are just another tool in that glorious struggle...

--Dannig, "Smithing" (POE I)

Runes are a complex science, and a delicate art. If a smith doesn't understand their nuance, they'll only produce equipment one might call... *curse*d. For that reason, novice runesmiths are rather dangerous. There is an energy in runelight, and power in Verisium - and other metals. Runes channel those forces, like signposts... or diversions altering a river's flow. The final meaning is the sum of what you've engraved. It means exactly what you told it to mean, for better... or for worse.

--Dannig, "Runes" (POE I)

...Verisium... It's the most effective of all runesmithing metals. It doesn't occur naturally in the ground. It only falls from the sky. The how and the why of such events, I'll leave up to the priests and their calculations.

--Dannig, "Verisium" (POE I)

Hmm... the runes are fickle here...

--Dannig, to himself 1 (POE I)

The most powerful artifact in our known tales was brought to this continent by the first expedition thousands of years ago. The songs tell of it incinerating evil, purifying tainted fields, and warding off those of ill intent. We could certainly use a relic like that now, in these troubled times... but to find it, we'll have to retrace the steps of those long ago souls. Only they can tell us the Triskelion Flame's unknown fate.

--Dannig, "The Triskelion Flame" (POE I)

The priests of the Kalguur worshipped knowledge, not gods.

--Faithguard Runic Helm (POE I)

I've never heard of this 'gods' thing before setting foot here, but I know of at least one... *man*... who would fancy himself a god. Best we not mention Divinity to those back home.

--Dannig, "Gods" (POE I)

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## COLONISATION OF WRAECLAST (CA. 400 BIC)

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It was impossible to decipher the true meaning of the omen, but none could deny that it had happened. The land shook, the night-clouds fled, the people quavered and hid, startrails arced across the sky to set fire to our forests where they fell, and a crimson sun rose on the horizon. Such was the power of the glow, the half moon became full and ruddy.

--Dannig, "The Omen I" (POE I)

Something wondrous and terrible had happened, so King Cadigan the Third commissioned an expedition toward that horizon, led by our greatest warriors and carrying the Triskelion Flame for protection. Bound to the Flame by duty, I signed on as Prime Remembrancer. We departed within the month.

--Dannig, "The Journey I" (POE I)

Under clouds of black beset by crimson lightning, we sailed stormy seas of poison and disease. Only one light shone in that darkness; only one Flame to keep hope alive.

--The Ancient Angler (POE I)

The lost journey across unruly and angry seas took nearly two seasons, during which we rarely saw the sky through the clouds of black beset by crimson lightning. We could not drink the rain, nor eat the fish, until the Flame cleansed the water and purified the meat. Even then, the sustenance was hollow. Our supplies were depleted and our men hungry by the time land emerged in the distance.

--Dannig, "The Journey II" (POE I)

The first foot set upon this land was crushed by unseen jaws beneath the sand. Omens are rarely so clear. We carved a grisly path across the dunes, driving back creatures of the water, only to find ghastly horrors shambling between the trees. Every step came with a cost in blood.

--Dannig, "The Arrival I" (POE I)

On the seventh night, the grim clouds finally parted for a time, and our blessed stars emerged. Olroth staked the Triskelion Flame in the center of our fortifications. The barrier rites complete, we gained some small measure of safety. From there, everything stemmed, like a bloom under the embrace of a tree.

--Dannig, "The Arrival II" (POE I)

As the Knights of the Sun moved further inland, we found the remnants of a tremendous empire to rival that of our homeland. Countless bodies lay charred, but countless others refused to rest. Many were adorned in glittering gems that drew the eye and called to us. Those abominations that still walked often bore the gems within their very limbs. Seeing this, Uhtred declared such crystals unclean. None among us wished to argue.

--Dannig, "The Arrival III" (POE I)

...Uhtred and the Order of the Chalice. ... They were the primary priesthood and religious order that went with the initial ships to Wraeclast. They interpreted the stars and the workings of mysterious forces, such as alchemy, machinery, and runes. ...

--Rog, "The Order of the Chalice" (POE I)

It was the Knights of the Sun that first explored the cursed cities of the Vaal. This logbook was from those early days, right after they arrived on Wraeclast and found that empire glorious, shining... and filled with shamblers. I can't imagine what horrific event might have caused the death of an entire civilisation all at once. Not sure I want to know. ...

--Dannig, on a Knights of the Sun Vaal logbook (POE I)

Vast mountains of gold lay throughout the dead empire, often guarded by the most dangerous and most opulently dressed of the undying. Even in their monstrous state, these nobles and priests lurked near the treasures, unwilling to give up that which had meant more to them than their own lives. They had not died in the streets like those attempting to flee. They had locked and barricaded their temples, sealing themselves in their own tombs.

--Dannig, "The Arrival IV" (POE I)

The nobles of Utzaal had opened their own waterways and purposely drowned themselves, not as a mercy, but to spite would-be looters. This had been an empire ruled by madmen. They were successful in their spite, for we could not drain the deadly waters. Their treasures would remain lost for all time. The other cities, however, proved a slow and steady source of wealth beyond imagination.

--Dannig, "The Arrival V" (POE I)

King Cadigan the Third considered this new land and its treasures an open bounty. The craftsmen arrived first, soon followed by ships brimming with merchants and freemen. The women and children naturally followed, and, by the third year, the first village charter was established. All was prosperous so long as the Triskelion Flame burned bright, but there were soon too many of us to remain fully within the grace of its protection.

--Dannig, "The Colonisation I" (POE I)

The mercenaries of the Black Scythe, under Vorana, developed strategies for defense and culling that expanded what territory we could protect. Distance was key. Wielding crossbows and remaining behind sturdy walls, her men could savage horrors one at a time, ripping them to shreds until they no longer moved. We had the audacity to believe we could master this forsaken continent through such simple and mundane means. Ten more villages were established that year.

--Dannig, "The Colonisation II" (POE I)

[Vorana] was a fearsome and irrepressible warrior. King Cadigan the Third tried to mandate her service to the Crown, but she laid flat every man sent to bring her in. Eventually, he realised that she couldn't *be* controlled, and he gave her a Mercenary Charter instead. Given the freedom to operate the way she wanted, she won many great victories for the Kalguur. ...

--Tujen, "Vorana" (POE I)

Trade began with island-men and mountain-men along distant routes, although we shared no language and could not understand one another. I recorded some of the island-men's songs for future deciphering, and I met survivors of the fallen empire among the mountain-men.

--Dannig, "The Colonisation III" (POE I)

To the last, the scant survivors of the fallen empire bore none of the gems we had seen on the shambling dead. When I drew the shape of a gem in the dirt, a great panic arose, and we were banished from the mountains. Upon hearing of this, King Cadigan the Third officially banned the crystals, and none were procured nor shipped to the homeland.

--Dannig, "The Colonisation IV" (POE I)

By the time King Cadigan the Fourth came to power in the homeland, we numbered too many villages to fully count. Dissidents, pariahs, religious factions, and lost-men had all come to build new lives in a new land, and had no wish to report to the Knights. It was these outlying enclaves that suffered the first of the new horrors, often in silence, unwilling to admit to outsiders they were facing dangers they could not defeat on their own.

--Dannig, "Darkness Descends I" (POE I)



Each man or woman that fell on the fringes became another shambling creature lurking in the night. The curse of the land had not been lifted by the Triskelion Flame, merely held at bay. The deaths of our people strengthened the curse.

--Dannig, "Darkness Descends II" (POE I)

Medved's nature-mystics announced that they had found a breath or a vapor that left a man upon his death, visible only when that man died near one of the forbidden gems, and only as the vapor was drawn to it. Medved declared that all men must possess some essence as yet not understood. For this, Uhtred declared him a blasphemer, and was set to banish his order to the fringes. Medved paid a great sum to avert this exile, and the matter was settled.

--Dannig, "Darkness Descends III" (POE I)

Of the four great heroes, Medved was the most mysterious. His nature-mystics maintained many guarded sanctuaries in the wild. ...

--Dannig, on a Medved logbook (POE I)

...Medved and the Druids of the Broken Circle...believed they could see into the future by peering into the past. ... If Medved and his nature-mystics were right and Time truly is a circle, aren't we all doomed to repeat our lives over and over for eternity? If that is the truth, then there is no luck. No chance, no human will. All life is just a stageplay repeating over and over. I don't think I like that notion.

--Gwennen, "Druids of the Broken Circle" (POE I)

In the winter of that year, caravans and runners sent to the fringes no longer returned. Olroth took the Knights of the Sun through the cold forests and hills to seek them. It was found that the men of the fringes had lost a great many of their number, and were beset by horrors never before seen.

--Dannig, "Darkness Descends IV" (POE I)

Olroth and his Knights evacuated the fringes and set fire to the forests there. From the southern rivers to the northern sands, a vast line of flame burned. None would speak of the reason for this drastic action. Upon his return, Olroth expanded the influence of the Triskelion Flame, although the starlight barrier would be far weaker over such a vast territory. It was necessary to protect the villages. Olroth the Gallant retreated into seclusion often, and became known as Olroth the Grim.

--Dannig, "Darkness Descends V" (POE I)

What fell spring this is! Upon the dark of the moon, the Empty-Eyed Fiend has taken another of our number. This one was a young woman slated to begin warrior training upon her Second Passage. Many fell to the horrors of this accursed land in the early days, but I believed we had mastered the darkness with our purification rituals.

I was mistaken. Growing unpoisoned food is not the same as securing safety from the nightbreeds. It is as if the very land itself is learning from our victories, twisting creatures in new ways that subvert our defences.

--Dannig, "Olroth's Journal I" (POE I)

A new war tactic has been crafted by Medved and his nature-mystics, a strategy formerly forbidden by their beliefs. He observed the capability of the horrors here to rapidly grow and change, and he suggested that our mistake lay in the incompleteness of our task.

When we culled all but the hardest of the twisted Vorniculia, the ones that remained spawned more of their ilk with inherited lethality. To ensure a true victory and protect our burgeoning towns, we must eliminate whole breeds from existence. We must amputate a piece of nature entirely. Anything less only serves to draw ever tighter the vise of doom.

--Dannig, "Olroth's Journal II" (POE I)

The Vorniculia are slain to the last, and will stain this land with their noxious poisons no more. There are countless other nightbreeds lurking in the shadows of this accursed land, but a small victory is still a victory. The skill of my knights and of Vorana's men was great enough that no lives were lost in the burning of forest and heath. There is no cause for mourning this rare day.

My thoughts turn to my unfinished duty. The Empty-Eyed Fiend is the only one of its kind I have seen. I must ensure it, too, vanishes from this world at the behest of torch and blade.

--Dannig, "Olroth's Journal III" (POE I)

Half of the Knights of the Sun lie strewn across the hills and trails of the hunt for the Empty-Eyed Fiend. I scored a direct blow with my sword against its neck, but the wound did not bleed. It is not a living thing. It feasts with its countless arm-teeth not to survive by eating, but to enjoy the screams of its victims. I saw this in the twin voids set in its rotting face. It... smiled at me... as it bit my squire in half.

Mortal flame found no purchase. Mortal weaponry drew no blood. I am driven to consider the forbidden. Medved and his nature-mystics cast aside their primary virtue to make survival here possible, and now I must do the same. The mountain-men warned us against the gems of power, but now I believe there is no choice...

--Dannig, "Olroth's Journal IV" (POE I)

Exhilarating! Enthralling! I journeyed into the night alone, a forbidden gem embedded in the pommel of my formerly useless sword. This time, I returned with the head of the Fiend, still grinning in final death, but now conquered. The gem blazed with the light of my fury, casting forth a beam of starlight that turned a missed slice into a cutting lethal blow.

We have been fools to deny this power. Too many of our people have suffered for this mistake. When the morning glow hits the treetops, I will command the surviving Knights of the Sun to search for more of the forbidden gems. It is time to conquer this land and make it safe for all time.

--Dannig, "Olroth's Journal V" (POE I)

The summer that the Knights of the Sun began affixing the forbidden gems to their weapons and armour, Medved of the Druids of the Circle went among the people. "The future-past has become clouded. Scrying pools in this land often remain tainted with crimson fog, but this is something new. The night that Olroth departed alone, I could no longer see the past. Thus, the future is unknown." Thereafter, his order became known as the Druids of the Broken Circle.

--Dannig, "The Broken Circle I" (POE I)

A hooded woman spoke to Medved in the square, under the pike that held the head of the Empty-Eyed Fiend. "Have you lost your faith, then, High Druid?"

Medved replied, "A man that does not study the past cannot escape repeating it, but a man that cannot study the past has no future at all. The Circle has been Broken."

The woman then lifted her hood and revealed herself as Vorana, leader of the Black Scythe. She replied, "Take up arms, then, and we shall fight our way across the gap between past and future."

Medved accepted her gift of two axes, and began training his order for battle. The two axes had gems fixed along the handles which offered tremendous power.

--Dannig, "The Broken Circle II" (POE I)

The Druids of the Broken Circle and the mercenaries of the Black Scythe marshalled their forces near the fringes, aiding the Knights of the Sun, who had lost half of their number in the hunt for the Empty-Eyed Fiend. The starlight barrier was extended and weak, but the newly empowered warriors used the might of the gems to hold the night-stalking horrors at bay. A stalemate held for a number of seasons, during which many great heroes rose to prominence for their deeds. Annest, daughter of Medved and Vorana, was sent back to the homeland to be raised in safety. Olroth's son, nearing his First Passage, went with her as her guardian.

--Dannig, "The Broken Circle III" (POE I)

Dread swept through the ranks when the unthinkable happened: a leader arose among the twisted horrors, capable of intelligent deeds and direction. Creatures began striking where the starlight

barrier was weakest, or where the patrols did not cross. Possessed by some horrible notion he would not share, Medved sent a messenger into the dark. The messenger was allowed to return alive with a parchment. The words written on it seemed to confirm Medved's fears, and he traveled into the night to challenge the new leader of the enemy. He did not return.

--Dannig, "The Broken Circle IV" (POE I)

The priests had eyes and ears everywhere by the season of Medved's disappearance. High Priest Uhtred suspected treachery, and kept initiates silently observing the comings and goings of other leaders. They found that, after each day spent tirelessly fighting to utter exhaustion, Olroth the Grim would return to his seclusion. Then, after some time, he would leave through another door, stealing into the night without being observed. In these excursions, his eyes were closed, as if he were asleep.

--Dannig, "The Priesthood I" (POE I)

I have become the darkness...

--Olroth, during fight (POE I)

Uhtred and his priests had their own secret agendas. ...

--Dannig, on an Order of the Chalice logbook (POE I)

Uhtred made many devious plans, during which he sent his son Owen to the homeland to avoid retribution. A week after the harvest, in the cold of evening, a dozen priests awaited Olroth outside his keep. They used daggers of the sacrament to stab Olroth in his sleepwalking state. He was wounded seventy-one times, and fell. Vorana entered like a black wind and removed the heads of the twelve in one stroke.

--Dannig, "The Priesthood II" (POE I)

Olroth was laid upon a bier and attended with medicines, bandages, and herbs. The people roared for the blood of the priesthood, but Uhtred claimed no knowledge of these twelve traitors. The greatest leader of the people lay at the edge of death. They encased him in glass to keep his breath from escaping.

--Dannig, "The Priesthood III" (POE I)

A hooded woman spoke to Uhtred in the square, under the pike that held the head of the Empty-Eyed Fiend. "Why do you suppose your priests assaulted Olroth?"

Uhtred replied, "Why do you suppose Olroth was stealing into the darkness? He is the new leader of the twisted horrors. By day, he fights for us, and by night, for them."

The woman then lifted her hood and revealed herself as Vorana, leader of the Black Scythe. She replied, "For these words, I should kill you where you stand."

A scythe to his throat, Uhtred replied, "Kill me in one week if you wish it. If the enemy becomes disorganized and listless while Olroth lies in glass, then you will know the truth of my words."

Vorana promised, "I will feed you to the head of the Empty-Eyed Fiend, here, if you are wrong."

Then she departed. The enemy did not become disorganized or listless that week, and Uhtred went into hiding at an ancient site of power.

--Dannig, "The Priesthood IV" (POE I)

The week Vorana made her oath, a new leader among the horrors arose. It wielded two axes, and sought the heroes that had made names for themselves, challenging them to personal combat. It slew forty-two, one each night. When Vorana faced this abomination, she understood it was her beloved Medved, but could not believe it. She ordered a full retreat, and refused to answer the challenge. Two villages were destroyed.

--Dannig, "The Last to Fall I" (POE I)

Understanding that Uhtred had been right in speaking ill of great men, she sent a runner to speak with him. A plan was devised to entreat the Triskelion Flame and draw back the starlight barrier. It could safely protect a few villages completely, rather than the entire region weakly. All the surviving people were evacuated to the core lands, and Vorana found the proper rites in Olroth's journal to adjust the Flame. This, she sent to Uhtred by messenger.

--Dannig, "The Last to Fall II" (POE I)

The core villages were crowded to full, and the beleaguered warriors of the Knights of the Sun, the Black Scythe, and the Broken Circle had all drawn back. The starlight barrier did not retreat. Instead, it vanished. In haste, Vorana went to the Triskelion Flame's altar, but found it missing. The ships in the harbour had all been burned and sunk as well, save one, which had departed.

To the people, she shouted, "Uhtred the Traitor has taken the Flame!"

The people wailed in despair as the horrors closed in from all sides. Without the starlight barrier, there was no protection. The core villages became a fortress tomb, defended by wall and by iron, but inescapable. Many of us retreated to Olroth's resting place, only to find his glass case shattered. He has arisen, and we must believe he is out in the dark fighting to save us, no matter what Uhtred the Traitor claimed.

--Dannig, "The Last to Fall III" (POE I)

Vorana sent messengers to the island-men and the mountain-men for aid, but their fate was unknown. The defenders were valiant, but new food could not be purified without the Flame. Famine set in, and the seasons refused to slow their passing. Thin and wasting away, Vorana realized that waiting meant death. She knew there was a way to increase her power, so she performed the forbidden rite and placed gems inside her own flesh.

--Dannig, "The Last to Fall IV" (POE I)

She arose, then, and went out from the walls, reaping death among the night-horrors with each vast swing of her scythes. They could not stand against her might. She called to us, "I will not rest until every single abomination lies dead!"

Some among us believe she can personally slay every monster in this forsaken land herself. Others are not so idealistic. If Vorana should not return, there is still one way out, one we dared not risk before, hidden under the earth and older than the oldest men... We must keep hope alive. This is not the end of our people in this land. Night falls, but there will be a dawn.

--Dannig, "The Last to Fall V" (POE I)

In the final days of our people's history here, the Prime Remembrancer fled with the remaining survivors in a desperate bid to escape the coming doom. ... Apparently, the Order of the Chalice found something... some unknown artifact... all he knew was that even the oldest men recognised its power and built a shrine around it.

It was to that shrine that Uhtred fled to escape Vorana's wrath. The survivors expected to meet him there, but the writing stops just short of the destination. ...

--Dannig, on an Uhtred logbook (POE I)

...while Vorana fought a last stand, the rest of our people here on Wraeclast attempted to escape through some ancient site of power. Uhtred was there waiting for them... and now we know what happened. He, too, fell to the corrupting madness. He must have slain them all at the threshold, though I do hope some got past him and escaped.

The question that lingers with me though: Uhtred was the one who first declared the gems unclean. He never used them, by the accounts we found. How, then, did he go mad? What did he witness that broke his mind?

--Tujen, "Uhtred's Defeat" (POE I)

They built a temple... around the mirror...

Under the earth... to hide from the night sky...

--Medved, on his death (POE I)

## THE PALE COUNCIL

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Dark minds hide in dark places, but it was not always so.

The wise Red rulers were long-dead, and the strong seized power. But an unwise leader pulls the people towards ruin. So it came to pass that milk fresh from the nipple was soured, grass grew hard and sharp, and flesh walked the earth without a soul. Hinekora cast her net towards the new kings and queens, but four slipped through the holes and fled into darkness. There they remain. Beyond the reach of the Mother of Death. But not beyond her sight.

--Navali, regarding the Pale Council (POE I)

## YRIEL, THE FERAL LORD

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When the rains stopped, the Lord fed his farms with the blood of the beasts. But blood carries corruption with it, and the crops soon towered, monstrous and thorned. In the thick jungle of his own making, it was not only he who turned feral.

--Navali, regarding Yriel (POE I)

Lord of the Wild, of the feral and frenzied, of the uncivilized, the untamed, the untouched.

--Yriel's Key (POE I)

Six moons have passed since the earth supped the rain. The riverbed is dry, and the lake is but a puddle. The beasts here have become desperate and dangerous.

There are rumours that Lord Yriel's blood-fed crops have swelled, but the fruit they bear can send a man mad. We look to our children for the answer. A child cannot hunt, but it can still provide. The taste is hard to forget.

--Unknown, Salted Earth Memory (POE I)

## EBER, THE PLAGUEMAW

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The old red ones left this land barren. Crops grew stunted and disease filled the air. If you don't feed an animal it will soon cast a hungry eye upon its brothers and sisters, and man is no different. The

Plaguemaw and his people soon feasted on their own, devouring the very life essence of the young and innocent.

--Navali, regarding Eber (POE I)

Mouth of the Masses, whose greatness spreads by our breath and touch, who feeds the starving with the starved, the strong with the weak.

--Eber's Key (POE I)

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## VOLKUUR, THE UNBREATHING QUEEN

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Sometimes death is a thief, quick on its feet and quicker with a blade. Sometimes it is a vine, slowly growing tighter and tighter around your neck. But death is not a toy. The unbreathing queen has raised an army of soulless corpses. Her actions mock death, turning it into little more than an obstacle for her puppetry of the flesh.

--Navali, regarding Volkuur (POE I)

She of Many Bodies, whose very flesh unites all, whose dark whispers draw forth our souls, unfettered.

--Volkuur's Key (POE I)

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## INYA, THE UNBEARABLE WHISPERS

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Wisdom and knowledge are not one and the same. The queen's thirst for learning was unending. As she tore through the pages of countless tomes, her knowledge grew and her wisdom slipped away, buckling beneath the weight of insanity.

--Navali, regarding Inya (POE I)

The Infinite Mind, unbound by the tethers of sanity, whose thirst for knowledge is all-consuming, whose every word stands our hair on end.

--Inya's Key (POE I)

My Council,



The sky turns black as ink.

We must gather at once, for I fear the end draws close.

I have uncovered a tome that illustrates certain forbidden techniques used to prolong life far beyond ordinary means. We shall fracture our very souls, and keep safe a piece of one another's very being. With this, none of us may perish unless all of us perish at once.

It is not without a cost, for life granted requires life be paid, but it need not be any of ours. Bring your most loyal and healthy retainers, and bid the rest farewell, for we shall not see them again.

Make haste and do not speak of where you are going. Immortality is within our grasp, but there are countless who would risk death--who would kill--for a chance at eternal life.

- Inya

--Dark Tome (POE I)

# THE ETERNAL EMPIRE

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## IMPERIALUS CONCEPTUS (1 IC)

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Follow me if you desire better for yourself, and for your families. Follow me if you hunger for more than this!

--Veruso's Ambition Shackled Boots (POE I)

### **Book 6: Imperialus Conceptus**

Tarcus Veruso descended from the mountains and led his eighty thousand tribesmen and women through the doomlands to Azala Vaal. There he planted his banner upon Atziri's grave and with these words founded our great and eternal empire.

"The Vaal closed their eyes to flesh and stone, to blood and bronze. We are not Vaal. We are Azmeri. For now and forever, our eyes are open."

Veruso built his capital upon the bones of Azala Vaal and baptized it Sarn. From there, Veruso formed the first Legions and proceeded to conquer the lands beneath the Mantle, clearing it of the mindless constructs and fierce abominations left in the wake of The Fall.

True to his word, Veruso ensured that his people lived "with eyes open". The ancient Vaalish centres of learning and power were sealed and quarantined. Thaumaturgy was outlawed and those who stained themselves with Vaalish folly were burned for their sin. The Tears of the Maji, too dangerous to be destroyed, were gathered up, taken to Highgate, and buried within the bowels of the mountains. The caverns there were sealed and forgotten.

A supreme effort to erase the past. A primitive reaction born of primitive times, in the opinion of this humble historian.

*-Trinian - Intellectus Prime*

--The Ancients (POE I)

The Azmeri must never touch the Tears of Maji, lest Viridi weep.

--Forbidden Shako Great Crown (POE I)

**Did the ancient Azmeri descend from the mountains alongside Tarcus Veruso?**

The bulk of them did, and they founded the Eternal Empire. The Azmeri of the Forest Encampment did not do so, and are descendants of their original culture.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2991402>

Beneath the summer sun we follow Tarcus in search of the promised land. Before long, hunger grips our stomachs. The doomlands take their toll. Our numbers dwindle, and discord spreads amongst the tribesmen.

Veruso's words quell our hearts, but not our stomachs. In the dead of night, a woman goes missing, and our hunger is abated. We reach the ruins of Azala Vaal alive, but dark deeds hide in our bellies.

--Unknown, Distant Mud Pit Memory (POE I)

By all accounts, Tarcus Veruso was a ruthless despot, a man to rival even the likes of Dominus. Yet his heart of stone contained one precious seam, his love for his wife, Chiara.

So when the poor young woman died giving birth to Veruso's son, the grieving emperor threw aside his great convictions and placed his last hope in thaumaturgy, in the Ankh of Eternity.

Perhaps it was shame that drove Tarcus to lock the ankh away, to steal such hopes from his descendents. It was he who had asked his people to turn their backs on the ancient arts, so what right had he to enjoy that which he forbade? Love gave him that right.

--Clarissa, "Emperor Veruso" (POE I)

... My hope waits for me to the east, tucked away in a shrine in the Quay.

The Ankh of Eternity. Veruso, Prima Imperialus, placed it there himself at the dawn of the Empire. If the legends are correct, the Ankh has powers over life and death... when paired with the correct Azmerian ritual. ...

--Clarissa, "Reviving Tolman" (POE I)

... Suffering will besiege us and yet love will prevail.  
Pain will imprison us and yet love will prevail.  
Grief will engulf us and yet love will prevail.  
Death will surely take us and love... will...

--Clarissa, "The Ankh of Eternity" (POE I)

As I understand it, the Ankh of Eternity was somehow able to return the dead to the full bloom of life. There was nothing necromantic about it, rather it was a source of true resurrection.

How it came to exist, I honestly don't know. A couple of inscriptions I read treated the ankh as some sort of gift to Veruso from the Vaal. But surely the Vaal were long gone by Veruso's time... weren't they?

No matter. Despite the vagaries of the Ankh's origins, Veruso used the Ankh to return his young wife from the death bed to the wedding bed. The accounts are unanimous on that point. ...

--Clarissa, "The Ankh of Eternity" (POE I)

How could I have been so stupid? Veruso didn't hide the ankh out of shame. He hid it out of fear, out of... oh my, what did the ankh really do to his wife? Everything I saw, that I read... lies to cover the truth of what Chiara had really become. ...

--Clarissa, on Tolman's second death (POE I)

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## BEGINNING OF THE PHRECIAN LINEAGE (35 IC)

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The custom of the Lord's Trial was upheld throughout the founding years of the Empire. Veruso's successor, Caspiro, was a low-born legionnaire, the lone survivor of a labyrinth that claimed the lives of every high-born contender, including Veruso's only son.

Caspiro proved to be every bit the emperor that Veruso was...

- Emperor Izaro Phrecius

--Bronze Inscription IV (POE I)

Caspiro was a master of presentation. He maintained peace in Wraeclast through displays of strength that, sadly, had no meaning to the dark presence that dismembered him...

--Bust of Emperor Caspiro (POE I)

### **Book 7: The Light of Phrecia**

Five years after Veruso's death, Emperor Caspiro, too, was dead. Although accounts of the exact details differ, one clear fact is agreed upon. Caspiro was dismembered by something referred to simply as a dark being.

It was General Alano Phrecia who avenged the Emperor's death and who triumphed in driving away the pervasive darkness enveloping what would become the imperial heartlands. Though it seems fanciful to contemplate a portion of our Empire cast in perpetual night, Azmerian writers of the time are unified in their depiction. Perhaps it was caused by peculiar weather patterns or some

thaumaturgical residue of The Fall. On this matter, this humble historian is left in the uncomfortable state of pure conjecture.

On the first Sacrato of Lurici, 35 I.C., Alano himself wrote that "our legions drove the dark being deep into the recesses of its lair and sealed it away for eternity". Having returned the gaze of Solaris to those lands stretching from the foot of the Mantle to the Axiom Ranges, Alano Phrecia returned to Sarn. In the absence of a clear hereditary succession, Alano was crowned emperor and the Imperial heartlands were named in his honour.

With the former realm of the Vaal thus tamed and settled by our Azmerian ancestors, the Eternal Empire saw a long period of peace and prosperity under an unbroken line of Phrecia emperors.

"To care for this Empire with eyes open." - A traditional vow made by the High Templar upon the coronation of an Eternal Emperor.

*-Trinian, Intellectus Prime*

--The Ancients (POE I)

## EMPEROR ROMIRA & THE NIGHT OF A THOUSAND RIBBONS (CA. 334 IC)

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On the Night of a Thousand Ribbons, our finest city burned. It burned with fires lit by cruelty and neglect. It burned with shame for giving the title of 'Emperor' to a man who did not deserve it.

--Bronze Monograph, Trial of Burning Rage (POE I)

... Selfish blood breeds selfish times, and the Empire paid for it with its own blood. With the Night of a Thousand Ribbons. With that most regal of cannibals, Emperor Romira...

- Emperor Izaro Phrecius

--Bronze Inscription IV (POE I)

The night of a thousand ribbons  
To remember the day of a thousand flames  
When Sarn burned  
And was born again

--Thousand Ribbons Simple Robe (POE I)

The Empress gave Romira two sons  
Born of his brother's seed

Romira threw her a banquet  
A perfidious meal indeed.

--Romira's Banquet Diamond Ring (POE I)

... Romira Phrecian, the absolute savage, fed his wife's two sons to her during that famed banquet. It was an act of vengeance, since her sons were sired by his brother.

--Cadiro, on Romira's Banquet (POE I)

Shame what happened to my husband. He had such good taste.

--The Feast (POE I)

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## THE ASCENDANCY OF CHITUS (1316-1319 IC)

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### EMPEROR IZARO & THE LABYRINTH

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In the impressionable youth of my reign, I was encouraged to believe in the precious nature of my imperial blood. The 'divine claret', as one fool of a courtier would repeat with tiresome regularity.

Unfortunately, my divine claret refused to pour from one cup to another. Try as I might, with a lovely procession of young and ever dutiful wives, my noble seed simply would not sprout.

Who, then, to choose as my worthy successor? With the candidates on hand either mediocre at best, or maniacal at worst, I found myself in quite the quandary.

That's when Fortune took me by the hand and led me to a forgotten tome on a forgotten shelf in the quietest corner of Sarn Library. A tome entitled, 'Ancient Traditions of Azmerian Ascendancy'.

The rest, one might say, is history.

- Emperor Izaro Phrecius

--Bronze Inscription I (POE I)

The Azmeri were the first culture known in history to use the trials of strength, wisdom, and spirit to select its chieftains.

The first Lord's Trial was a rough-hewn maze festooned with wild animals and brutal traps, crafted to test aspiring Azmerian leaders' body, mind, and soul. [sic]

In conquering the adversities of the maze, a champion proved they were capable of bearing the crushing burden of chieftainship.

The first trials were simple contraptions reflecting simple times. As the Azmerian civilisation grew in number and complexity, so did the trials, from treacherous mazes to bewildering labyrinths.

Alas, there are no surviving descriptions of the labyrinth that tested and proved the worth of Veruso, Prima Imperialus. I would imagine it was quite something to behold.

- Emperor Izaro Phrecius

--Bronze Inscription II (POE I)

The Azmeri were consummate survivors. They had to be, having been sired in the most inhospitable range of mountains in all of Wraeclast.

Unfortunate, some might say. I do not. I believe it was the making of them. And of us, their descendants.

So it is no wonder that they developed the Lord's Trial. With survival being a moment-by-moment concern, that harried people grew to understand power quite intimately.

Strong leadership is able to bridge the chasm between existence and extinction. Poor leadership might see an entire tribe vanish into that same chasm.

When the Azmeri descended from their mountains to conquer the fecund lands of central Wraeclast, they thrived and multiplied with utmost alacrity in those more forgiving climes.

For is it not poverty that teaches us how we might excel in times of plenty?

- Emperor Izaro Phrecius

--Bronze Inscription III (POE I)

The custom of the Lord's Trial was upheld throughout the founding years of the Empire. Veruso's successor, Caspiro, was a low-born legionnaire, the lone survivor of a labyrinth that claimed the lives of every high-born contender, including Veruso's only son.

Caspiro proved to be every bit the emperor that Veruso was.

Alas, the Lord's Labyrinth was corrupted by those with the vanity to consider their blood more precious than their Empire. Selfish blood breeds selfish times, and the Empire paid for it with its own blood. With the Night of a Thousand Ribbons. With that most regal of cannibals, Emperor Romira.

Not any more. I, Izaro Phrecius, shall return us to Justice. I shall build the greatest Lord's Labyrinth in Azmerian history, and my successor shall be chosen by the Goddess herself.

Only when the Lord's Labyrinth is drenched in selfish blood can a true leader ascend the throne.

- Emperor Izaro Phrecius

--Bronze Inscription IV (POE I)

If you're going to be in the antiquities business, it pays to take note of whatever history you can. High Gardens and the great Emperor Izaro, for instance. Have you heard of the Lord's Labyrinth? The High Gardens were designed by Izaro as a test run for his great work.

He turned his personal garden into a maze and filled it with all sorts of traps and nasty beasties. Convicted criminals were then given a choice. Death or the Garden. If they got through, an imperial pardon was theirs.

Weren't no pardons on record as far as I could see. That's what happens when people have too much time and gold on their hands.

--Hargan, "The High Gardens" (POE I)

Izaro saw himself not as a man, but as a divine saviour trapped in a man's body.

--Izaro's Dilemma Imperial Claw (POE I)

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## THE PERANDUS FAMILY

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Now there's a shield I recognise, emblazoned with my family crest. "With piety and justice"...

--Cadiro, on Crest of Perandus (POE I)

Before the Cataclysm, and before the Purity Rebellion, the Perandus family ruled over Sarn. Chitus Perandus was the first to navigate the Lord's Labyrinth, the first to show that it could be beaten. He was aided immeasurably in this endeavour by his uncle, Cadiro Perandus.

Cadiro Perandus was a master of coin, the minister of finance in the kingdom both before and after his family's ascension. His greed was legendary, for he was a devotee of Prospero, the ancient Azmerian god of the underworld, the earth, and all its boundless treasures.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1595088>

The Perandus were an esteemed, wealthy family long before they realized their imperial ambitions. As they gained riches and renown, they steadily acquired ancient and powerful artefacts from Wraeclast's past. Cadiro had these relics stashed in nondescript boxes, crates and vaults to throw off potential thieves. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1595088>



The same day that Veruso planted his banner in the soil of Sarn, the Perandus family built the first market stall. That one stall spawned so many others that the people came to call our venture *Perandus Markets*.

We were never vain enough to make the name official. Until Chitus took the throne, we were a most unassuming consortium.

Yes, we did occasionally employ the Silent Brotherhood to remove the more stubborn obstacles to our commercial endeavours, but for the most part we tended to solve our issues with coin and contract rather than bow and blade.

In hindsight, we should have taken the reins of power much earlier. If we had done so then perhaps I could now be speaking of Perandus in the plural rather than the singular.

--Cadiro, "The Perandus Family" (POE I)

...Chitus did have his sights set on the throne from a very early age. And, dare I say it myself, he could not have ascended to power without my assistance.

--Cadiro, "The Perandus Family" (POE I)

I nurtured that little tyke from cradle to the grave. I was closer to him even than his parents were. When he took the throne, I couldn't have been prouder... except, perhaps, for the day when he successfully navigated the Lord's Labyrinth. He was the first person to ever do it, too. And I was indispensable to his success.

--Cadiro, "Chitus" (POE I)

Cadiro watched young Chitus play in the frostbitten grass, care-free, happy, and unburdened by the responsibility the Perandus scion would soon endure.

--First Snow Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

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## TREACHERY

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Izaro was slow to see the treachery growing in his own court and powerless to stop it once he had; a captain sailing his own ship into rocks.

--Winds of Change Ancient Gauntlets (POE I)

Izaro Phrecius? Despite my personal feelings surrounding that man, he did provide we Perandus folk with an unprecedented opportunity.

Over the centuries, the Phrecius family had blocked our every attempt to gain the throne on the scandalous basis that our blood was not of imperial quality.

So when Izaro called that whole blood fiasco into question with his Lord's Labyrinth, it gave us the only clear shot we would ever have at sovereignty.

Without Izaro, the Perandus name may never have come to be associated with the throne. So in a somewhat qualified fashion, he has my gratitude.

--Cadiro, "Izaro" (POE I)

3rd Kaso of Vitali, 1316 I.C.

Uncle Cadiro,

While my father remains determined to play the role of Izaro's lapdog, I trust that you and I are of like mind regarding our 'glorious' Emperor's ridiculous Labyrinth. He would have us entrust our imperial leadership to the primitive diversions of some cave-dwelling ancestors. It is beyond reasoning. In fact, it can only be surmised that Izaro himself is also beyond reasoning.

On that matter, I suppose it should come as no surprise. Phrecius blood has become polluted by decadence and incest. It is no secret. So perhaps it is a matter of good fortune that Izaro has not been able to sire an heir. For such a whelp would be undoubtedly dim or demented. Yes, such emperors are easy to control, but they can also be extremely dangerous, as the Empire learned all too well with Romira.

So in his own deluded way, Izaro is right to look to fresh sources of blood to serve our Eternal Empire. Yet he looks in the wrong places. Perandus blood has served the throne proudly since Veruso first set his foot upon the soil of Sarn. Perandus gold has filled the imperial coffers. Perandus minds have crafted this Empire into the marvel it is today.

And has a single Perandus ever sat upon the imperial throne? No.

Izaro's plans are an insult to the Empire and an insult to us, its most devoted servants. Izaro spits upon our very blood and then offers up everything we have worked for to the first fortunate fool who stumbles through his little maze.

I will not stand by and allow Izaro to deliver us all unto damnation. I trust, dear uncle, that I can rely on your support.

Chitus

--Chitus Letter I (<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1538608>)

1st Lunaro of Verusi, 1317 I.C.

Uncle Cadiro,

Our Eternal Emperor Izaro might be insane but he's clearly not stupid. Or at the very least, he has had the presence of mind to surround himself with clever people. Three meticulously planned attempts on Izaro's life. Three astutely thwarted failures.

Of course, none of them can be traced back to us, Uncle. You can rest assured that I have been most discrete in my arrangements. As for Cousin Elano, he will be dead by sunrise. We need not fear [sic] any inconvenient disclosure on his part, and he is not a Perandus by name. His familial connection is known only to us. It's a simple matter to keep a bastard or two in the shadows for occasions such as this. Legitimacy is a useful carrot to dangle.

I assume you've been keeping abreast of the Labyrinth's progress? I have purchased several of Izaro's overseers and they keep me informed. I'm told it's to house quite the menagerie of monstrosities. And the mechanisms that are currently being installed, many of which Izaro designed himself, are utterly nefarious in their invention. While one might easily question the man's rationality, one cannot so easily discount his imagination. If only Izaro had contented himself with an artistic pursuit some kind [sic], such as painting or sculpture. Instead he now drains the imperial coffers dry, building a delirious promise to the peasants and peons of Wraeclast.

"Come one and all! Enjoy the largest playground ever created. And should you win the games that I have laid out for you, why, you shall be crowned emperor!"

Izaro would place our fortunes in the calloused hands of ignorance. He would have us forget the centuries of leadership, diplomacy, prosperity and security that we, the ruling families of Sarn, have amassed.

Izaro's folly will be the end of our beloved empire.

I, for one, will not let that happen, Uncle.

Chitus

--Chitus Letter II (<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1538608>)

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## DEFEATING THE LABYRINTH

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The Just Goddess presides over us all. The future of the Empire rests in her even hands.

The Lord's Labyrinth, opened by Emperor Izaro Phrecius on the second Galvano of Azmeri, 1317 IC.

--Bronze Plaque (POE I)

Thousands gazed upon the doors of the great labyrinth, at an Eternal Champion in steel and gold, the first to challenge its treacherous traps. To mark the occasion, Izaro had the Champion's remains gilded.

--Spine of the First Claimant Iron Sceptre (POE I)

3rd Solaro of Divini, 1318 I.C.

Uncle Cadiro,

I am as ready for this Labyrinth as I will ever be. Each day I have trained with the duelist, Kre Faarblood. There is no better swordsman in all of Sarn and I have been a most attentive pupil. So attentive that he made the mistake of admitting, after his twelfth cup of wine, that he is not of the noble blood he claims to be. His 'disinherited dandy' act is just that: an act. People have a tendency to entrust me with their secrets. I know, it's a valuable gift.

Please have Faarblood tried and hanged, discreetly, away from the crowds. We simply can't have commoners impersonating their betters.

Yes, I have familiarised myself with the architectural plans you so kindly obtained for me, and I have paid certain overseers handsomely for further details regarding Izaro's various hazards and living horrors. The man is obsessed with spikes. They pop out of the floor, spin on treacherously shifting wheels and even roam about like predators in search of prey. Izaro's mechanisms are truly of the most devious design. And the creatures! If it bites, claws or stings, in [sic] now lives in that Labyrinth.

Fear not, uncle [sic]. I have designs of my own. My hirelings shall place discreet caches of supplies here and there, in the eventuality that I should need restoration or assistance. I shall enclose a list of their names. It would be our interests [sic] if those named men and women were to, upon the Labyrinth's completion, suffer accidents of a mortal nature. One word spoken carelessly could end any hope of a Perandus ever ascending the imperial throne. A few common lives are nothing compared to the slaughter that would occur if, God help us, one of the Ezomyte contenders survived this Labyrinth in my stead.

So there it is. Our noble endeavour to save our Empire from a madman. I do this for our family. I do this for our Empire.

We are Eternal.

Chitus

--Chitus Letter III (<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1538608>)

Since one with knowledge of machines might be able to bring the labyrinth to a standstill, Izaro had us place many boobytrapped decoys. But I know which switch brings the monster down.

- Xirgil, Trapbuilder's final words

--Xirgil's Crank Coiled Staff (POE I)

You stand before the gates of the Lord's Labyrinth. Within these walls, the Lady of Justice doth preside. She shall weigh your Mind in one hand, your Heart in the other. Should she find you wanting, death shall be your sentence. Should she find you worthy, you will be given the loyalty and

love of an empire. The Lord's Labyrinth awaits you. Choose wisely. Strike quickly. Trust completely.  
And may you find the ending that you deserve.

--Izaro, on the Aspirant's Plaza (POE I)

The Son of Ezomyr met the Son of Sarn  
Upon the road to the Imperial throne.  
The Eternal offered his cunning,  
His eyes and ears, bought and paid for.  
The Ezomyte offered his strength,  
His sword, earned in the arena.  
A pact was forged,  
With the Labyrinth as witness.  
Two men separated by blood.  
Two men bound by hope.  
Two men, and only one emperor.

--Weylin, Poem I (POE I)

The Ezomyte and the Eternal took their rest  
In the lee of strife's gale,  
And remembered the travelled road.  
Beast and fiend had fallen and bled,  
To the Ezomyte's sword, swift and true.  
Trap and trial had risen and succumbed,  
To the Eternal's wits, quick and shrewd.  
Two men had cried their triumph,  
A Warrior and his Guide,  
Whilst other ascendants echoed their pride,  
With anguish and agony.

--Weylin, Poem II (POE I)

The Warrior bled upon Izaro's stones,  
And cursed Izaro's ilk.  
He looked upon the walls of his tomb,  
Built by his masters, his enemies,  
And called for the First Ones to carry him,  
To the forest and fields of his Ezomyr.  
Yet while the First Ones remained silent,  
The Guide did speak  
Of secrets planted by clever hands  
Enslaved by gold.  
And with one such secret,  
Plucked the life of the Warrior  
From the First Ones' jaws.

--Weylin, Poem III (POE I)

A Guide, cornered and quailing,  
A Warrior, watching,  
The moment bathed in the shadow  
Of doubt,  
Of ambition,  
Of an imperial throne.  
And a people made free  
By an Emperor of Ezomyr.  
The Warrior threw off that cold and cloying shadow,  
And struck down the slaving beasts.  
The Guide looked to the Warrior  
With gratitude in his eyes.  
And spoke of doubt,  
Of ambition,  
Of an imperial throne,  
And a people made free  
By an Emperor of Sarn.

--Weylin, Poem IV (POE I)

The Guide led the Warrior down a path  
That wound and twisted  
Through fields of blossoming promises.  
Green-bladed hopes.  
The Warrior closed his eyes.  
A mere moment  
To feel the warmth of the sun on his back,  
And to drink from the Guide's proffered flask.  
Now the Warrior staggers and crawls  
Down the wounded, tortured causeway.  
The bitterness stings his weeping eyes.  
The fire roars in his belly,  
Consuming him.  
The Warrior will not ascend.  
Instead he hunts.  
Guided by his love for Ezomyr.

--Weylin, Poem V (POE I)

Before your emperor, you are worthy. Before the Goddess of Justice, you are worthy. Receive our blessings. Embrace our gifts. And rise, ascendant, for this is the ending that we all deserve.

--Izaro, on his defeat (POE I)

## THE FATE OF IZARO

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When an aging Izaro retired and gave the throne to Chitus on the First Kaso of Verusi, 1319 IC, the new emperor immediately cast Izaro into the Lord's Labyrinth and sealed the gates behind him. Twinned with the Goddess he worshipped, Emperor Izaro lives on in the Labyrinth.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/ascendancy/izaro>

The once-glorious emperor spent his final days imprisoned in his greatest creation; a tool to filter out the unworthy that pushed a monster to power.

--Izaro's Turmoil Crimson Jewel (POE I)

So the mad emperor continues to stomp around in his Labyrinth, a speaking dead man inside a grand machine. ...

--Tane Octavius, "Izaro" (POE I)

## THE REIGN OF CHITUS: ESTABLISHING A THAUMATOCRACY (1319-1334 IC)

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... It was said of the beautiful Atziri that she "wished to see her likeness reflected in the still waters of history." Chitus was no less self-impressed.

Of all the Sins, Vanity is the most hideous.

--Siosa, "Malachai" (POE I)

Emperor Chitus could offer you a gift with one hand, and drive a blade into your back with the other. His blend of brutality and charisma cultured a potent mixture of fear and admiration among the masses.

--Might and Influence Viridian Jewel (POE I)

Chitus began to aggressively expand his empire into neighbouring nations at great human cost. But for absolute power, there is no price that a Perandus won't pay.

--Rapid Expansion Crimson Jewel (POE I)

## MALACHAI

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### *Malachai*

Laureate Thaumaturge to the Eternal Empire  
The Father of Dreams

--Plaque (POE I)

I suppose every civilisation has its Doryani...its Malachai. Men of divine talent and demented ambition. Without them, history would be a far less 'interesting' place.

--Siosa, "Doryani" (POE I)

### **Volume 2: The Blackest Monkey**

The Monkey King was enjoying an afternoon amble along the riverbank when, upon looking over his hairy shoulder, he noticed the Blackest Monkey he'd ever seen ambling along behind him.

"Why do you follow me?" the Monkey King demanded of the Blackest Monkey, for he did not appreciate uninvited followings, especially on his riverbank amblings.

"So that I might go where you go, be where you be, my King," answered the Blackest Monkey.

"And what if I do not want you to go where I go, be where I be?" clamored the irritated Monkey King with a spit and a gibber.

"Wanting and having are not the same, my King," answered the Blackest Monkey in a voice as smooth as banana juice.

"I am the Monkey King! I do as I wish!" cried the now furious Monkey King with much shrieking and frothing.

"Wishing and doing are not the same, my King," answered the Blackest Monkey in a voice as silken as butterfly wings.

Too wild to even spit or gibber, to shriek or froth, the Monkey King took to his heels and ran. Along the riverbank he raced, faster than the water, faster than the wind, faster than thought, for he was the Monkey King, and all know that the Monkey King has the fleetest feet in all the land.

He ran to the end of the river, and then to the end of the mountains, and then to the end of the clouds, and then to the End of the World.

And who should be there, waiting at his King's feet at the End of the World, but the Blackest Monkey the King had ever seen.

"Why do you follow me?" the Monkey King begged of him.



"Have you ever been to the End of the World before, my King?" asked the Blackest Monkey.

"No, I have not." realised [sic] the Monkey King.

"There is my reason to go where you go, be where you be, my King," concluded the Blackest Monkey in a voice as warm and welcoming as death.

- *Victario of Sarn*

--Victario's Writings (POE I)

My dear Chitus,

The Empire has lived in fear and ignorance since its inception. Our Azmeri ancestors, in their arrogance, turned their backs on the lessons of the Vaal.

The emperors before you lacked courage, lacked vision, paying lip service to 'Eternity' while scrabbling for approval and comfort within the prison of their meagre, mortal lives.

You are not one of those emperors. You are Chitus the Great, the man who will make this Empire truly understand the meaning of the word 'Eternal.'

We shall build this Thaumatrocracy together, my emperor, gem by gem, immortal by immortal.

Your devoted servant,

Malachai

--Letter to Chitus (POE I)

Malachai ran roughshod over every ethical boundary in pursuit of creating the ideal gemling. For him, there was no doubt that the end would justify the means.

--Collateral Damage Viridian Jewel (POE I)

There is no cost too great to pay for power. Merely men who lack the conviction to pay it.

--Malachai's Awakening Iron Mask (POE I)

I am so very late. This is deeply embarrassing. I fear the wait will be too long now. But this is the one chance I get to meet the great Laureate and I will not let it go to waste!

Malachai says he has perfected new techniques that will unlock the raw power hidden within the Virtue Gems. I have volunteered my body to the cause. I feel no fear, no hunger, no pleasure... nothing. I only hear his voice. I must obey...

--Unknown, Eternal Residence Memory (POE I)

Strange. I was put in charge of dating the most antiquated of texts. This parchment, it's a remarkable copy, but it's no original. Much younger.

Oh my...listen to this!

*My dearest Icius,*

*I have been enlightened beyond expectation. Your work in translating these artefacts is worthy of the highest recompense, and thus I am delighted to offer you a position in my personal laboratory. Please do not give your escorts any consternation. I would be most pained to see such a precious asset damaged in any way.*

*I very much look forward to working with you, Icius Perandus.*

*Your friend and admirer,*

*Malachai*

Poor, poor Icius. Wherever you went, my pity goes with you.

--Siosa, "Page Four Translation" (POE I)

... Lazhwar was an unmistakably great mind of our time. Indeed, many of his ideas were stolen by Malachai and used to construct the Eternal Laboratory. It's a shame that Malachai had a hand in his downfall.

--Cadiro, on Stone of Lazhwar (POE I)

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## VIRTUE GEMS

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A Virtue Gem is a raging thunderstorm imprisoned within a single raindrop. Infernal Talc simply lets the storm out.

-Malachai the Soulless

--Infernal Talc (POE I)

... Calibric Extantia being the corrupt energies locked within virtue gems. ...

--Helena, "Maligaro's Spike" (POE I)

... Remember, these gems are phantasms in crystalline form, alive, with volitions inscrutable. ...

--Ancient Reverie Device (POE I)

The gems are strangely human at times. They simply love to be held.

- Doryani, First Seer to the Queen

--Vaal Caress Bronzescala Gauntlets (POE I)

... You will be able to directly manipulate the intelligence that dwells within Virtue Gems.

--Malachai, Path of Exile: Origins #2

I'm sure you've heard of Malachai by now? Ever the heterodox, he often sought otherworldly inspiration by imbibing a substance called 'Ghost Wine'. For the purpose, he created the Decanter Spiritus. I found it on my last visit here. Liquid placed in this crystal decanter becomes quasi-apparitional in nature. ...

--Captain Fairgraves, "Decanter Spiritus" (POE I)

Tear down the walls that imprison the mind...that is what the gems do. That is their true 'virtue.'

The moment my fingertips brushed the cool, silken planes of that first gem, I felt it. My skull ached, as if its contents were growing, pressing against the bone, searching for a way to break free.

That night, once the wine had dulled the pain enough to allow the onset of sleep, the dreams began. I have not been without them since. Nor would I be. Every spark of thaumaturgy that I wield, every device that I forge, every creature that I transfigure, I owe to these lessons cloaked in Nightmare.

From whence do these precepts hail? Certainly not the mundane grey between my ears. I possess only one reference that bears faith. Translated with unquestionable clarity by that idiot savant, Icius Perandus. "The Beast." Doryani of the Vaal knew the truth. Soon now, so shall I.

Malachai

--Malachai's Journal (POE I)

... A dark God of ancient sacrifice, a muse to the twisted and vile...the Beast, the Nightmare, the Darkness...names given to it by mortals that think with slugs bound in shells of bone.

Yet, one man knew the Beast's true name, understood its impenetrable nature.

Malachai.

--Tasuni, "The Beast" (POE I)

## GEMLING LEGIONNAIRES

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The Eternals commanded an army that need not eat, sleep, or breathe without the usual depravities of necromancy.

--Iron Commander Death Bow (POE I)

... Gem-studded warriors pounding the earth, lead [sic] by their strongest... a Captain. I've known of these gemling legionnaires, how they were once the personal swords of Emperor Chitus. ...

--Maramoa, "The Gemling Legion" (POE I)

They walked our earth in the times of great strife, cruel and hideous shadows, cast against the clay wall of ruined abode. [sic] Thaumaturge Malachai grew them out of the vain ambitions of his dark imaginings.

Emperor Chitus believed the legionnaires belonged to him, that gemling men would beat to the drum of his own crystalline heart. ...

--Maramoa, "Gemling Legionnaires" (POE I)

... Malachai has given me supreme command of his creations. The heart of each soldier beats in time with the heart of his emperor. If the emperor wishes that beat to stop, it stops. And should my own heart cease, so does the life-blood rhythm of all my loyal soldiers.

--Chitus, Path of Exile: Origins #4

## MAPS

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A fool steps into the unknown. An explorer finds his way back again.

- Malachai, Thaumaturge Laureate

--Empyrean Apparatus Cartographer's Strongbox (POE I)

I awoke, feverish, and barely conscious I set to drawing these maps through the sable hours. By morning my fingers ached, my eyes burned, yet still I found no rest. The Reverie commanded its rendering.

The Reverie Device now stands completed. I have placed the first of my maps within its receptacle. I have taken my maiden voyage into Nightmare.

I know now that which sent me this precious gift. It knows me, expects my return. It would be foolish to disappoint.

- Malachai

--Reverie Device (POE I)

"There are worlds that lie beyond the edge of my page, the edge of my understanding. Worlds of wonder. Worlds of terror."

Aramil - Cartographer to Emperor Chitus

--Lost Worlds (POE I)

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## THE GODLESS THREE

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Malachai's apprentices. Shavronne of Umbra, Doedre Darktongue and Inquisitor Maligaro. You'll find no more devoted servants in all of Nightmare. In life, they were the three finest forgers of corruption in the Empire.

... Ingenious, they are. True artists. ...

--Tasuni, "Malachai's Apprentices" (POE I)

... You taught me far more than I ever taught you, my students...my friends. ...

Malachai

--Malachai's Dedication (POE I)

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## SHAVRONNE OF UMBRA

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This world is dull and ugly, an imperfect feast of sights, feelings and smells that repulse and depress. Yet amongst this deformity I have found my sublime calling. This world may be abominable, but to an extent, I can be its savior.

I have been gifted with a special sight. Before me lies a blueprint of perfection, a kind of hidden beauty within skin, muscles, tendons and organs. With a tempered hand and a sharpened blade, I will refashion, reshape and rebirth this world.

My obligation is immense, something that will, in all likelihood, consume my life. I cannot rest! My calling energises me. Such is an artist's curse and compulsion.

--Shavronne's Manifesto (POE I)

...Shavronne of Umbra, a witch who devoted herself to the study of transfiguration during the latter days of the Eternal Empire. ...

--Helena, "Prisoner's Gate" (POE I)

Some see our mortal flesh as a limitation. I see it as an opportunity for vast miraculous improvements.

- Shavronne of Umbra

--The Aesthete (POE I)

"Mastery of thaumaturgy is like any other pursuit; it requires dedication and sacrifice. Sometimes several sacrifices."

- Shavronne of Umbra

--The Thaumaturgist (POE I)

Eternal beauty has a cost, one which Shavronne was happy to pay with the lives of others.

--The Offering (POE I)

Dear Shavronne,

You have certainly had your work cut out for you with Lioneye's Legion. Do not concern yourself with Marceus' complaints. Our Emperor is fully aware of the General's fickle nature.

As to your need to accelerate the implantation process, I can recommend a quite simple alteration. Dip the gem in a boiling solution of six parts blood and one part thaumetic sulphite for no more than thirteen seconds. Any longer and you invite the crystal's wrath.

Once the gem is withdrawn from the solution, you have but a few seconds to install the gem in the prepared flesh and close the wound. Should the gem cool too much prior to implantation, it will become inert and your patient with it.

Trust in that bountiful talent of yours, Shavronne. My thoughts are with you.

Malachai

--Letter of Instruction (POE I)

## INQUISITOR MALIGARO

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My interest in this world is dwindling. Most children begin their lives wide-eyed, amazed at what this world has to offer. I have always been different. Since the day I was born I've been searching for the new, the surprising, that which disturbs both senses and mind.

Oh to be an artist! What a lamentable task. Not seeing the world as it is, but as it should be.

Peace is the worst of it! A disgusting state of stagnation, fit only for the weak and vapid. War, confusion, terror. Love and passion, these things are closest the world gets to being interesting and alas, I have felt them all. Yet all these pale in comparison to the delightful chaos I have envisioned for this poor, dull world.

--Maligaro's Manifesto (POE I)

The Chamber of Sins? Apparently the late Archbishop Geofri of Phrecia gave it that title. It was built by Emperor Chitus for one Inquisitor Maligaro. ...

--Eramir, "The Chamber of Sins" (POE I)

He does not love. He does not feel regret or remorse. He does not think about consequences, only possibilities. If that does not describe a monster, tell me: what does?

- Archbishop Geofri

--Maligaro's Cruelty Turquoise Amulet (POE I)

...The discomfort shown by the others is amusing, but none can deny that my work has made quite the splash...

- Maligaro's Journal

--Carcass Jack Varnished Coat (POE I)

Inquisitor,

If you were to attempt to transmogrify a virtue gem without the proper mental preparation, you will be a puppet master working strings made of vipers. Remember, these gems are phantasms in crystalline form, alive, with volitions inscrutable. Master conscious dreaming, as I instructed you. Your death means little to me, Maligaro. It's what your demise will unleash that concerns me.

Malachai, Thaumaturge Laureate to the Empire

--Ancient Reverie Device (POE I)

He might be lacking in vision, but his virtuosity is undeniable.

- Malachai, on Maligaro

--The Surgeon (POE I)

Maligaro understood that devotion to science, means devotion to trial and error. For Maligaro's errors, death was slow, and very painful.

--Growing Agony Viridian Jewel (POE I)

Experiment 22A: Rhoas, when deprived of water, secrete a most delightfully potent toxin.

- Maligaro

--The Rabid Rhoa (POE I)

Our genius will pave the way forward. May all who are worthy be improved!

- Inquisitor Maligaro

--Maligaro's Restraint Chain Belt (POE I)

## DOEDRE "DARKTONGUE" STAMATIS

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Peel back the skin, for there are secrets in sinew. Mysteries in muscle. Plunder the intestinal fortress, reach deep into bowels of power. The esoterica of kings lies [sic] not in the mind, but in the beating walls of a bloodied heart!

The wonders of the universe are screamed from the ramparts of our fleshly fortresses. Shall the meat show us holiness? Oh, how I feel the tingling of our sacred bodies pressed together, tight and fluid.

Let the meat show us the way. Hail the meat, praise the meat. The meat is both debasement and divinity alike. The meat shall lead us down the path to true enlightenment.

--Doedre's Manifesto (POE I)

...Doedre Darktongue, an idol of fervor and dedication...

Malachai

--Malachai's Dedication (POE I)



After losing her tongue to Maligaro, Doedre embraced her new name with even more innovative means of spellcasting.

--Doedre Darktongue, Steam trading card description (POE I)

Maligaro did the cutting... at her request. In the new void, a malevolent power emerged.

--Doedre's Tongue Lapis Amulet (POE I)

While Doedre lacked Maligaro's sense of style, she surpassed her master in pure malevolence.

--Doedre's Tenure Velvet Gloves (POE I)

Doedre Darktongue knew the Way of the Thaumaturge. In order to receive, one must give... without hesitation.

--Doedre's Elixir Greater Mana Flask (POE I)

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## LADY DIALLA, THE GEMLING QUEEN

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I was the emperor's favourite, for a time. But Chitus had many favourites. He filled the Sceptre of God with favourites. Every now and then, he cleared away the clutter. Those who pleased him, they were given to his lords and generals. Those who did not...were given to his thaumaturgists.

I talked too much, asked too many difficult questions. I was gifted to Malachai. My dear, troubled Malachai.

--Lady Dialla, "Chitus" (POE I)

I loved Malachai. He gave me gems, divine jewels for his Gemling Queen...

--Lady Dialla, "Malachai" (POE I)

1st Caso of Divini, 1333 IC.

"Pretty as porcelain, but her mouth spins like the potter's wheel." That's how I once described Dialla. Yet on this day, my lady is as ravishing as a nightmare, radiant as the fullest moon.

Dialla is my Gemling Queen and we shall rule, side by side, over the world that will soon come to be.

- Malachai

--Journal Entry (POE I)

He took me by my hand, promised me power beyond compare. But I did not do it for power. I did it for love. And I'd do it again in an instant.

--Dialla's Malefaction Sage's Robe (POE I)

I walked halfway across this forsaken continent because of an ode. *Of Jewels and Eternity*, it's called.

*For twinkled promises  
Of jewels and eternity,  
The Gemling Queen gave her heart  
And body  
To the King of Shades  
For one more day in the sun,  
The last day in the sun.*

That's but a portion of the full epic. "The Gemling Queen" lived, and she's the enigma behind the fall of the Ezomytes and the eternalists both. ...

--Grigor, "The Gemling Queen" (POE I)

Dialla has the *form* of a woman, yet the substance is one part corruption and nine parts death.

One day soon, you will see how lifeless she truly is.

--Tasuni, "Dialla" (POE I)

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## ORIATH & THE KARUI SLAVE TRADE

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... The Karui haven't had an easy history. Colonised, enslaved, used as pawns in many a war...

--Tarkleigh, "Karui Revenants" (POE I)

Take a deep breath. Inhale the twin stink of exploitation and oppression. Yes, these pens and cells have been our home away from home since the first Karui were brought here by Marceus Lioneye. Their great 'Hero of the Empire', one of the best slavers they ever had.

Not that he was the only one. Captain Sigmund Fairgraves funded many an expedition off the whipped backs of Karui children. High Templar Dominus was only the latest in a long line of men to grow rich by trading in misery.

Oriathan wealth was built on Karui poverty. Oriathan gold will forever be stained red by Karui blood.

--Utula, "Slave Pens" (POE I)

Founded by Marceus Lioneye as a supply station for his campaigns against the Karui. In its day, Lioneye's Watch could be defended by just a small garrison of well-armed legionnaires. ...

--Tarkleigh, "Lioneye's Watch" (POE I)

The Karui remember you, Fairgraves. Your death will be much celebrated.

--Marauder, on killing Fairgraves (POE I)

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## SEEDS OF DISCONTENT

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### Volume 1: Kalisa Maas

I never really understood Brektov's work. Just a mess of trills and squeaky highs to my commoner ears. But that was before Kalisa Maas. From the very first note, her voice reached into my chest and plucked my beating heart from its cage. By the wide, glistening eyes of my fellow punters, I knew that they felt it too.

I've previously stolen a quick nap during the aria that precedes Antonio's disembowelling. Not tonight. The gem at Kalisa's throat sparkled with starlight brilliance as her C sharp shattered every pane of glass in the auditorium. An emergency intermission was called while the stage crew repaired the floods and cans, and a pair of physicians saw to those audience members lacerated by falling splinters.

Now, my suspicion of the Virtue Gems is well-documented. Though general and courtier might fall over each other to have Malachai embed them with these miraculous crystals, it is a travesty of justice that the legionnaires and workers of this Empire should have such mutilations foisted upon them.

Yet, in Kalisa Maas I've seen how these gems may rend apart our mortal bonds and permit our imaginations and souls to truly shine.

I'm adrift in the quandary, no oar in sight. Is Kalisa the Artist or the Art? Is she the same woman I knew before, the young bundle of talent and timidity I had no choice but to adore?

Is she still, in fact, a woman at all?

- *Victario of Sarn*

--Victario's Writings (POE I)

### Volume 3: Slaves of Virtue

Another shipment of human picks and shovels, bound for Highgate. Ezomytes mostly, care of Gaius Sentari's "civilisation camps". A few dark skins here and there, Karui and Maraketh. Malachai has had his wicked way with them all.

Limbs are stretched, contorted, double and triple jointed. All the better to pluck gems from the cracks and fissures of their home and tomb to be. They squint and cower in the sun, their eyeballs injected with gloom so that they might see in the subterranean night as they would in their warm, homeland day.

The shackled slaves shuffle north as the gems they mine tumble south, a glittering landslide of power and privilege for the fairest of our Eternal citizens. Civilisation is bought and paid for with the flesh and blood of the primitive. It is a debt that will one day need to be repaid.

- *Victario of Sarn*

--Victario's Writings (POE I)

Blow it all down! The emperor must have his gems, no matter the cost!

--Trarthan Powder (POE I)

Sarn's slavers knew all too well that comfort leads to laziness, and nothing spreads faster than laziness.

--Lethargy Crimson Jewel (POE I)

These shiny baubles we pull out of the rock are worth more than their weight in gold, yet we hardly get paid at all! We should stop work and demand our fair share.

Don't worry! They're just sealing the entrance as a way to intimidate us! They wouldn't dare leave a thousand men down here to die.

--Unknown, Abandoned Shaft Memory (POE I)

... Vanja: Petarus and I did our research on Adus. ...

Petarus: The General was an eternal commander of the Highgate Legion...

Vanja: He ran a mining camp up here in the mountains. The bastard was the one responsible for controlling Karui, Maraketh and Ezomyte slaves, forcing them into the black bowels of rock fissures in search of gems...

Petarus: ...At least he treated them fairly and as human beings.

Vanja: A slave is still a slave my sweets.

Petarus: For all his faults, the general appears to have been a good man for his time. It's a shame what happened to him...

--Petarus and Vanja, "General Adus" (POE I)

#### **Volume 4: A Friend in Need**

It's one of those summer days in Sarn, when the sweat dries on your skin the moment it dares slither from your pores. Lorenzi and I are sipping coffees, iced with cubes from the North. There's a tremor in his voice as he announces that he is going to see Malachai tonight, to have a gem implanted in his hand. The palm of his left hand to be exact. Once I have run out of expletives and paused for breath while the waiter wipes spilled coffee from our table, I manage to ask him why. "So that I might have the fastest fingers in the Empire," is his reply. Lorenzi, first violinist of the Sarn Symphonic, and my dear friend, is going to become a Gemling.

Ten days pass and Lorenzi's hand is healed. He plays for me, a piece that he has written during his convalescence, something he will debut this evening in God's Theatre. The gem casts a bloody hue over his violin as his fingers fly across the strings. They are an ephemeral blur, too quick for eye or mind to follow. And the music... there's only one experience in my life that compares. The night I had with Marylene before she died.

It has been a month now, and once again Lorenzi and I sip iced coffees together in the Perandus Markets. Though we sit only a narrow table apart, Lorenzi is a world away. The nightmares began a couple of weeks back. He toys absently with the vial that I have bought for him from the apothecary, yet I know he won't drink from it. The soothing of his wits will mean the slowing of his fingers. The music is Lorenzi's life, and to Lorenzi, the music and the gem are one and the same.

A year has gone, and the day is once again hot enough to dry the sweat on my skin the moment it dares slither from my pores. I sip an iced coffee and think of Lorenzi. He played last night, in God's Theatre. Fleet, furious, and wondrous, he was. We passed in the foyer, and I looked into his grey face, his pale blue eyes. I don't know what he saw, but it wasn't me. I don't know what I saw either, but it wasn't Lorenzi.

- *Victario of Sarn*

--Victario's Writings (POE I)

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## THE PURITY REBELLION (1332-1334 IC)

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Chitus thought that the Gemling was the pinnacle of human progress. "These glorious gems have brought us within spitting distance of godhood", he once said. The High Templar at the time, Voll of Thebrus, thought they were a perversion. He wanted the Empire made pure, "cleansed of the stain of thaumaturgy". ...

--Clarissa, "The Purity Rebellion" (POE I)

## **Book 1: Embers of Insurrection**

"He soared to power on the smoke of burning witches". So the surviving Gemlings whispered of Voll of Thebrus, as he donned the Imperial crown on the 2nd Sacrato of Phreci, 1334 IC. But in truth, he was never the sort of man to set a girl alight for merely reading a palm or remedying a bout of the clap.

Righteous and devoted to both faith and country, High Templar Voll struck little hardship in gathering others to his godly cause: Sarn's own Lord Mayor Ondar and Victario, the People's Poet; Archbishop Geofri of Phrecia; Governor Kastov of Stridevolf; and Commander Adus of Highgate. Together, these Warriors of Purity forged an uprising against the Gemling thaumatocracy that Voll hoped would "snatch this empire from the claws of devilry and return it to humanity".

- *Garivaldi, Chronicler to the Empire*

--The Purity Chronicles (POE I)

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## KAOM, HYRRI, & THE UNIFICATION OF THE KARUI

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...Marcus Lioneye. Their great 'Hero of the Empire', one of the best slavers they ever had. ...

--Utula, "Slave Pens" (POE I)

Karui slaves were once bought and sold like pigs here.

--Marauder, on The Marketplace (POE I)

Marcus commanded the southernmost of the Eternal Legions, here at Lioneye's Watch. Why was he called Lioneye? Crazy fool had his left eye taken out and a golden-hued gem put in its place.

His head must have made quite the pretty adornment for King Kaom's belt.

--Bestel, "Marcus Lioneye" (POE I)

It's an often-told story among the Karui. How Voll of Thebrus bent his knee to my ancestor, King Kaom, and promised freedom in return for war. While Voll raised his Purity Rebellion in the heart of the Empire, Kaom took Lord Lioneye's head and the southern coast all the way to the Siren's Cove. It was the greatest conquest the Karui had ever seen.

--Maramoa, "The Purity Rebellion" (POE I)

One by one, Kaom slaughtered the weakest tribe leaders until the others leapt to join his cause.

--Kaom's Primacy Karui Chopper (POE I)

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## KILOAVA & THE VALAKO TRIBE

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I have a complex relationship with Valako. I speak to him, and he remains silent. It's just like my last wife! I joke, but... we're alone. The Karui must forge their own path in this world. Valako is more like our tribe mascot than an actual figure of leadership or aid.

--Kiloava, "Valako" (POE I)

They call me the first Herald of War, and indeed I was, but they don't understand. Valako gave a Sign to my people thousands of years ago, a ring with his graven pattern. It passed down from chieftain to chieftain in my tribe. When I put it on, it did something it never had before: it surged with the power of the storm. Valako didn't know me. How could he? The gods were asleep. So, I appointed *myself* the Herald of War, and I used the power of Valako's Sign to win many great battles. I laid the foundations for Karui unification before Kaom was even an urge in some bastard's loins.

--Kiloava, "Herald of War" (POE I)

A gift from Valako, appointing Kiloava as the Herald of War. A title Kaom claimed when he ended Kiloava's bloodline.

--Valako's Sign Topaz Ring (POE I)

Many think I was 'defeated' by Kaom in some grand battle, but I was seventy-four when he took my head. He essentially bullied an old man. Can you picture my delight when I awoke [in the Halls of the Dead] in my prime? ...I'm just overcome with joy at being young and strong again. ...

--Kiloava, "Souls" (POE I)

Certain arrogant warlords claim my bloodline was ended, but they don't know just how many children I really had... I was something of a madman in my prime! Half the warriors serving under them might be descended from me at this point! Ha ha! Ah... they come to the Halls of the Dead for advice. I tell them to drink, fight, and enjoy life while they have it!

--Kiloava, "Bloodline" (POE I)

## AKOYA & THE NGAMAHU TRIBE

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No man may enslave you, for you have a secret: you're always angry.

--Chainbreaker (POE I)

My battle with Kaom began at sunrise. Our warriors were assembled on either side, ready to slaughter each other, but neither of us gave the sign. By dawn's light, we fought on the sand, axe against axe. Kaom was strong, but arrogant, which showed through in his fighting style. When he overextended himself, I made him pay for it in blood. However, his greater strength kept me on the defensive. Every hour, the *hatungo* called a truce, and we drank, ate, and were tended to. By nightfall, Kaom and I were moving like turtles, guarding ourselves behind our axes and taking only the most calculated movements. Eventually, he overextended again, and I dealt him a heavy wound to his chest—but this was an acceptable sacrifice he had made on purpose. He broke my knee with the end of his axe handle, and that was it. He gave me a warrior's death, rather than leave me broken on the sands. I would not have had it any other way.

--Akoya, "Death" (POE I)

A gift from Ngamahu, a sign to the Karui to spread like fire. Given to Akoya, but inherited by Kaom with the swing of his axe.

--Ngamahu's Sign Ruby Ring (POE I)

## RAKIATA & THE TASALIO TRIBE

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Even in my earliest memories, I was training for battle. I do enjoy fighting, but not the way others around me did. To them, it was a savage contest of dominance and manhood. To me, there was an elegance to warfare. It had an ebb and flow, like the tide. It was a kind of dance. When they say I have an unconventional fighting style, it is because they do not realize that I am not fighting. I am dancing. I may feel the bite of an axe at any moment, so why not enjoy each sweep, and each slash? They have their Way. What I have, I call the Flow.

--Rakiata, "The Way" (POE I)

Stuffy traditions make for poor warriors.

--Rakiata, on Akoya (POE I)

I was thirteen when an Eternal army attacked my tribe. They were in search of an ancient and powerful weapon from our myths, but we only had a single piece of it. Our chieftain was felled in his



sleep. My father was as well. So, I took up his weapons, and I went about the work that needed to be done. Once they were dead, knowing that more would come if we had what they wanted, I entrusted Tasalio with our piece of that fabled spear. My tribe tried to put me in charge after that, but I refused the mantle. I just did what I thought was right, and they followed.

Although... there was something to the myth of that spear's power. In the few moments I held just a piece of it, my hand was permanently scarred, as if I'd been burned by unseen and unfelt heat.

--Rakiata, "First Battle" (POE I)

Tasalio has never spoken to me directly. I think I hear his influence in the waves, and the wind over the ocean. I found a ring on the shore one day, bearing his graven pattern. It had washed up from the ocean, and I still believe it was a gift from him. It had a great power within it, but I never used it. I didn't need to. There were no problems I could not face with my own strength and cunning.

--Rakiata, "Tasalio" (POE I)

A gift from Tasalio, God of Water, to the chieftain Rakiata. Kaom took Rakiata's head and hand so that his warriors' axes might rise and fall like the waves.

--Tasalio's Sign Sapphire Ring (POE I)

[Ikiaho]'s stronger than she knows. She doesn't need me to fight battles on her behalf, nor would she want me to. When I first arrived [in the Halls of the Dead], many of the other chieftains were hostile, and the most traditional among them outright rejected me. It was she who vouched for me. The opportunity to fight allowed me to prove myself, as I knew I could, and I have led Tasalio's warriors ever since. In Ikiaho, I could not have asked for a better friend. Sometimes, we even sneak out of here, for a glimpse at the Moon and the sea.

--Rakiata, "Ikiaho" (POE I)

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## INVADING THE SOUTHERN COAST

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I have already proven that the Karui Way is the one true path. I united the otherwise squabbling tribes into one mighty horde, the greatest the world has ever known, and I did that with the sheer force of my axe. ...

--Kaom, "The Karui Way" (POE I)

Kaom's canoe struck this sand with the force of destiny. At his back, the greatest war host in Karui history tamed the wild sea, their canoes coupling with the land, one by one.

Lioneye's Gemlings met us with shining metal and bold words. Hyrri's arrows withered their pride. Kaom's axes silenced their despair. Marceus Lioneye fought bravely, to the last. Kaom honoured him with a place on his belt.

Kaom has shown Wraeclast our Karui strength. Kaom will teach Wraeclast the Karui Way.

--Lavianga, Weathered Carving I (POE I)

Kaom watched the torches patrol the top of the Watch. He observed the lay of the beach, its barricades and rocks, and his men in their canoes, ready to lay their lives down for him. But when his foot hit the sand, he thought only of the fight.

--Combat Focus Viridian Jewel (POE I)

Lioneye's men stood at the walls, eyeing the savages that walked the beach below. With a single word, a thousand bodies, and ten thousand arrows, would litter the sands.

--Volley Fire Viridian Jewel (POE I)

With a fire burning brash in his golden eye, Marceus fired his arrow into the pitch-dark sky, and seared the hope of surprise, from Kaom's skulking horde.

--Pitch Darkness Viridian Jewel (POE I)

Seeing only foot soldiers, the Sarn Knights cast aside their heavy shields... and paid dearly for their mistake.

--Broadstroke Heavy Quiver (POE I)

Hyrri loosed a barrage of arrows, tipped with a poisoned hatred only oppression can ferment.

--Hyrri's Ire Zodiac Leather (POE I)

"Hyrri and her arrows broke the sacred code, damning herself. Kaom seized her sacrifice, and in doing so, seized victory."

- Lavianga, Advisor to Kaom

--Tavukai Coral Amulet (POE I)

Even as the tide turned, and victory swiftly became impossible, the legionnaires of Lioneye's Watch stood their ground and fought on, every last man dying a brutal but honourable death.

--Overwhelming Odds Crimson Jewel (POE I)

### **Book 3: Fall of a Jade Axe**

In a man-to-man fight on open ground, a Gemling Legion would have slaughtered Kaom's Karui warriors like so many pigs in a pen. But Kaom had no intention of engaging Lioneye in a fair fight. By absorbing some heavy losses and feigning a chaotic retreat, Kaom drew Marceus into ordering his Gemlings to abandon their tower shields so that they might pursue and rout the fleeing Karui.

It was not out of recklessness that Lioneye plucked such a decision, but from the experience-born confidence that the Karui did not have archers. Traditionally, Karui warriors are forbidden from using projectile weapons of any kind. What Lioneye understandably overlooked was that this *tavukai* (sacred prohibition) did not extend to women. At her uncle's behest, Hyrri had traveled to Thebrus and studied archery with Voll's finest military tutors. When the legionnaires shed protection in favour of mobility, Hyrri and her bow-women broke cover and rained death upon the Gemlings from the cliffs above.

A valiant Marceus Lioneye gathered his surviving legionnaires for a final stand within the walls of Lioneye's Watch. Kaom honoured his bravery by wearing Marceus' bejeweled head upon his belt from that day on.

Having secured a safe harbour for landing reinforcements, Kaom continued his conquest of the coast, slaughtering the Eternal citizens and clearing the way for the first ever settlement of Karui upon the Wraeclastian mainland.

*- Garivaldi, Chronicler to the Empire*

--The Purity Chronicles (POE I)

*There is no Honour without Sacrifice.*

--Lioneye's Standard (POE I)

Everyone is dead and I am alone. The Karui swept through the watch so quickly, we didn't have a chance to flee. Men, women, even children, slaughtered. I'm lucky to be alive. But I cannot return home now. No.

I'd be branded a coward, imprisoned, and hung for desertion. I have no choice. I must make do out in the wilds. Perhaps a farmer will take pity on me. And if not, I have my blade. I will take what I need by force.

--Unknown, Distant Lush Crater Memory (POE I)

News of Kaom's victory in the south spread quickly. Those in support of the coming rebellion bided their time. The rest fled like rats from a fire.

--Wildfire Crimson Jewel (POE I)

Still the Karui barbarians advance upon us. Lioneye is dead, his legion slaughtered, along with every Eternal man, woman and child from Lioneye's Watch to the foot of our Axiom. Should the need arise we shall retreat through Prisoners Gate, raising my barricade behind us.

Yet our salvation is at hand. Foul times demand heroic deeds, and through my arts our Lord Brutus will arise anew to defend us. May the dry sands quench their thirst with Karui blood when our mighty Warden delivers his judgement upon them.

--Shavronne's Journal (POE I)

Shavronne raced to Brutus' side, her last hope against the Karui tide.

--Shavronne's Pace Scholar Boots (POE I)

Ha! Lioneye's failure against Kaom comes as no surprise. He was always more arrogant than skilled. It is time a real man showed the Karui the might of the Eternal Empire.

Shavronne assures me that my process will be relatively painless, and that my duties as warden can continue unhindered, but as my flesh swells and ruptures, I realise I am just another test subject. At least I can fulfill my duties to the Empire before my mind--

--Brutus, Synthesis memory (POE I)

High above the crashing surf of Wraeclast, shrouded in the fog and ceaseless driving rain, stands an imposing structure. No one remembers who built it, and it is known among the island's inhabitants simply as "The Prison". Throughout the ages, as various tribes and societies have risen to power on Wraeclast, they have always locked their criminals deep inside The Prison's formidable stone walls. The ancient fortress keeps its prisoners and countless secrets locked far away. Sometimes, on cold, still nights, you can hear the tortured wailing of the doomed souls still trapped within its confines.

Every jail needs a warden, and The Prison is no exception. Though the job has been held by countless men over the ages, anyone living today can only recall one name: Brutus. He was the overseer of The Prison when Wraeclast's old men were just children, and he is the overseer to this day. Mothers get their children to behave by telling them that Brutus will come to see them. He is Wraeclast's Boogeyman.

Brutus ran The Prison with a legendary cruel streak. Under his stewardship, not a single soul escaped its soaring walls, and men were terrified at the prospect of a term inside. Alas, even great, terrible men cannot conquer the ravages of time, and as Brutus' years drew to a close, he became steadily more deranged and dangerous. He began to invite practitioners of dark, fel arts to The Prison to experiment on his captives, and eventually, in a desperate bid to extend his own waning life, he allowed them to experiment on him.

For days the halls of The Prison echoed with Brutus' awful shrieking, and when it was over, he was transformed into a hideous, hulking mutant. As the Necromancers crowded around to witness the results of their twisted endeavor, Brutus burst free from his bonds and descended on them with savagery. Their aged, frail bodies offered little resistance to his assault, and within moments the chamber was drenched in Necromancer blood. Brutus then tore through the entire level of the prison, leaving none alive in his merciless rampage.

When word of the slaughter reached the lower levels, the remaining guards made the only choice left to them. They barred the gates, locking the monster in the topmost level of The Prison. It did not take long for Brutus to realize he was trapped, and in his mad rage to escape, he pounded his mighty fists into a raw meaty pulp on the jail walls. So far, the gates have held, and Brutus remains sealed away, unable to inflict further carnage. Time has not diminished his anguish, and woe be unto anyone foolish enough to engage him in combat.

--<https://web.archive.org/web/20140622192652/http://www.pathofexile.com/monsters/brutus>

... Brutus was Warden of Axiom Prison and one of the most feared men in the Eternal Empire. But there the histories end... and the myth begins, with Brutus commissioning a witch to transform him, in a mad attempt at immortality. A moment of hubris that didn't end well... for anyone. ...

--Nessa, "Brutus" (POE I)

"Shavronne held Sanity in her right hand and Revelation in her left. Brutus chose the left hand."

- Kadavrus, Surgeon to the Umbra

--Shavronne's Revelation Moonstone Ring (POE I)

Old axe for brains. Kaom had Eternals dragged from their homes all over the south coast.

Like sheep, he butchered them, no matter how desperately they bleated. He adorned his doorways with the heads of women and children.

What makes a hero or a villain? It depends who you ask.

--Dialla, "Kaom" (POE I)

Kaom ordered the desecration of the Empire's dead. There would be no rest or honours for the wicked.

--Kaom's Command Siege Helmet (POE I)

Kaom has removed the Eternal stain from this coast. The Empire's citizens decorate our meeting houses with their heads. Our warriors build homes for our families. Our families till the earth, fish the waters, fill the air with song.

The Karui Way is yet a seedling here, but it grows, gains in pride and power every day. Kaom has kept his promise. The time of the Karui has come.

--Lavianga, Weathered Carving II (POE I)

[These events are also covered in Path of Exile: Origins #1, "The Karui Way."]

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## DESHRET & THE MARAKETH

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This isn't widely known, but Hector Titucius was an Ezomyte by birth.

--Leo, "Hector Titucius" (POE I)

What little humanity General Titucius was born with, he traded in for strength. Went as far as to have Malachai replace his joints with virtue gems... mad bastard. Afterwards, Emperor Chitus charged Titucius with subduing the Maraketh, a job he took a little too much pleasure in, if you ask me.

--Hargan, "Hector Titucius" (POE I)

Asenath loosed arrows with almost musical rhythm, a rhythm matched by her nearly inaudible whispers, and the crunch of the dead hitting the dust.

--Asenath's Chant Iron Circlet (POE I)

... You ever heard of the Wings of Vastiri? Not just another damned artefact. This one was the highest symbol of office for the Maraketh, held by the "Sekhema of Sekhemas". History books say the Wings were last worn by Sekhema Asenath, the Golden Sekhema... the one who went and got herself murdered by Hector Titucius. ...

--Hargan, "The Wings of Vastiri" (POE I)

... The wings are a treasured piece of the Maraketh heritage. Back when the tribes quit their squabblings and joined hands to battle the Eternal Empire, the wings were seen as a symbol of their unity. The Golden Sekhema wore them as she led the whole bloody Maraketh horde against Sarn. She was the single greatest hope for the Maraketh, was that Asenath.

Hector Titucius crushed both their hopes and their precious sekhema.

--Hargan, "The Wings of Vastiri" (POE I)

#### **Book 4: The Red Sekhema's Saddle**

In return for her military support in the rebellion, Voll promised Sekhema Deshret the return of the Maraketh grazing lands stolen during the imperial conquest of the Vastiri Plains. The Red Sekhema agreed on one condition, that she might have Hector Titucius' skin with which to fashion a rhoa saddle.

To this end, Voll and Deshret engineered a trap for General Titucius and his Vastiri Legion. The Maraketh had long been able to predict the comings and goings of the vast and vicious dust storms that constantly plague the plains. Deshret located one such fledgling maelstrom within a day's march of Titucius' camp. For his part, Voll identified a number of imperial spies amongst the Maraketh and fed them false information regarding a potential tribal uprising. Taking the bait, Titucius had his Gemling legion surround the supplied location, thus placing himself squarely in the path of Deshret's dust storm.

On the third Galvano of Vitali 1333 IC, the tempest descended upon Titucius' legion with blinding, deafening ferocity. Deshret's *akhara*, born and raised in dust and wind, swept through the legion, harvesting it like a field of ripe corn. Once storm and Maraketh fury had abated, the Vastiri Legion existed only as a multitude of dust-cloaked mounds. The Red Sekhema claimed her prize and it is said that there is no more comfortable saddle in all of Vastiri than Deshret's.

- *Garivaldi, Chronicler to the Empire*

--The Purity Chronicles (POE I)

"Greatly outnumbered, Deshret dressed her personal guard in identical garb. When the Empire rode north, Deshret and her guard took turns revealing themselves, creating the illusion of speed beyond the capabilities of even the Virtue Gems."

- History of the Maraketh

--Careful Planning Viridian Jewel (POE I)

The Maraketh knew that a mountain path free of vegetation was cut by regular avalanches, and so the advancing Eternals were unwittingly drawn into a deathtrap.

--Frozen Trail Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

When a woman forgets how to die, a woman forgets how to live.

Deshret said that to her *dekhara* on the day she killed Titucius, Scourge of the Maraketh. ...

--Kira, "Dialla" (POE I)

## ARCHBISHOP GEOFRI

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The Chamber of Sins? Apparently the late Archbishop Geofri of Phrecia gave it that title. It was built by Emperor Chitus for one Inquisitor Maligaro. ...

--Eramir, "The Chamber of Sins" (POE I)

I bequeath this Transmutia Device to you, Inquisitor Maligaro, in recognition of your devotion to our sublime Art. May it be the chariot that conveys your dreams into reality.

Malachai, Thaumaturge Laureate to the Empire

--Transmutia Device (POE I)

... 'The Spike'. Fashioned by Inquisitor Maligaro, it was said to enable the injection of 'Calibric Extantia' into living flesh. Calibric Extantia being the corrupt energies locked within virtue gems. ...

--Helena, "Maligaro's Spike" (POE I)

Maligaro had an assistant, a man named Raulo. If Maligaro's records spoke truly, Raulo offered himself freely as a test subject. With the Spike, Maligaro injected Raulo with a high dose of calibric extantia, thus gifting the poor man with both endless life and horrific deformity.

In honour of his sacrifice to Maligaro's work, the Inquisitor gave Raulo a new name. Fidelitas.

--Helena, "Fidelitas" (POE I)

Maligaro was transformed by Raulo's love. Thaumaturgy allowed Maligaro to return the favour.

--Fidelitas' Spike Jagged Foil (POE I)

Perverse loyalty, blind love, the abuser and the abused reunited in sin.

--Echoes of Mutation (POE I)

According to his notes, the Baleful Gem was a byproduct of Maligaro's attempts to enhance the already formidable qualities of virtue gems. It was an abject failure yet Maligaro wasn't one to waste his atrocities.



By combining the Baleful Gem with the venom extracted from one of his arachnid subjects, he brewed something called 'Black Elixir'. He proudly proclaimed it to be 'the most potent poison in existence' until it was stolen by a man named Victario.

It was rather entertaining to read Maligaro's intentions for Victario once he caught the man. Twisted... yet I can't fault the Inquisitor's creativity.

--Helena, "The Baleful Gem" (POE I)

Upon learning of Maligaro's horrific experiments, Archbishop Geofri initiated a massive movement to purge the miscreations and their master.

--Archbishop Geofri, Steam trading card description (POE I)

### Archbishop Geofri the Abashed

Templar and theologian, Geofri was a stoic of the Eternal Faith. He deplored anything thaumaturgical, and was therefore disgusted when Chitus installed Maligaro's laboratory into the Phrecian Forest, not a stone's throw from Geofri's Phrecia Cathedral (now the Fellshrine ruins). It was Geofri who coined the title, "Chamber of Sins" for Maligaro's lab.

Geofri plotted with High Templar Voll to destroy Maligaro and his work, but Maligaro got wind of the building threat. Maligaro's pre-emptive strike put an end to the plot, and to Geofri who was slain with Maligaro's Etcher at the foot of Saint Corutino the Golden Hand's Shrine.

Archbishop Geofri remains in Fellshrine to this day, animated by The Twist into a Brittle Templar of some power.

--Eternal and Diamond Supporter Newsletter #20 (POE I)

Fellshrine stood as a holy bastion opposite the Chamber of Sins, and all that it represented. For one to rise, the other must fall.

--The Balance of Terror Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

[These events are also covered in Path of Exile: Origins #2, "Sons of Virtue."]

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## RIGWALD & THE EZOMYTES

The Empire poisons our blood with sweet wine.  
Poisons our flesh with silk.  
Poisons our minds with civil lies.

Poisons our children with servitude.

- The Wolven King

--Deadhand Talisman (POE I)

We Ezomytes are beasts of burden bearing wealth of an empire on our backs, growing lean and strong while our masters grow fat and weak.

- The Wolven King

--Spinefuse Talisman (POE I)

You can take a wolf from the forest. You can collar him, chain him. You can starve him, beat him until he whimpers and bows down. Yet, is that wolf a dog?

Never.

A man is only a slave when he allows his heart and his mind to be conquered. When he comes to believe that his life is no longer his own. When he chooses to cast his eyes forever to the ground.

Like a king that chooses to press his lips to the feet of an emperor. A king that looks to his goblet and his plate, feasting and fattening while his people starve in their own streets.

Some might say that I should bear the guilt of regicide. That I killed the King of the Ezomytes. Yes, I served King Skothe his last meal, for I saw no king at that table.

I saw a dog.

- Rigwald, the Wolven King

--Inscription I (POE I)

I once believed that a boy's eyes were born pure, clear of cruelty and malice. That it is life that teaches one to hate, to strike out at others through anger and fear.

Yet when I looked into the eyes of Gaius Sentari, I found no anger. I found no hatred. I read no tales of injustice inflicted upon youthful innocence. Saw no walls built by suffering and sorrow.

Instead, I was regarded as a merchant might regard beasts of burden at a market. By Governor Sentari, my countrymen and I were counted, weighed, and allocated. This man to the mines. This woman to the mills. This child to the streets of Sarn to be worked and flogged until the day his blood would drain into the sewers of that wretched city.

And those that resisted, those that asked to be treated as anything other than animals, were skinned and butchered, with an even dozen of their kin.

Fear not the man who lusts. Fear not the man who hates. Fear the man who feels nothing at all.

- Rigwald, the Wolven King

--Inscription II (POE I)

Victario, a fellow warrior of words. He wrote many entreaties to the Ezomytes, begging our assistance in helping High Templar Voll depose Emperor Chitus.

That was centuries ago. Victario's words held much power then. I imagine they still do.

--Grigor, "Victario" (POE I)

## **Book 2: Bloody Flowers**

High Templar Voll had Victario entreat Thane Rigwald of Ezomyr, knowing that a poet would fare far better than any politician in rousing the romantic Ezomytes to rebellion. Stirred by Victario's impassioned words, Rigwald mustered his blood-bound clans, and on the 3rd Fiero of Dirivi 1333 IC, took to the fields of Glarryn in open rebellion against Governor Gaius Sentari.

Such was the colourful splendour of a thousand tartans and banners that the Ezomyte uprising became known as "The Bloody Flowers' Rebellion". Though Sentari's Gemling legionnaires slew three Ezomytes for every one of their own fallen, the Bloody Flowers won the day through sheer fury-driven courage.

Governor Sentari fled to Sarn, only to return in Astrali with reinforcements drawn from the capital, Vastiri and southern garrisons. Little did Sentari know that, by so weakening those forces, he was playing right into Voll's hands.

- *Garivaldi, Chronicler to the Empire*

--The Purity Chronicles (POE I)

"Today, clansmen, my sword is my voice!"

- Rigwald, at the Battle of Glarryn

--Rigwald's Charge Highland Blade (POE I)

The colours and banners of a hundred clans, scattered like the wildflowers of spring across the meadows of Glargarryn. Thousands of men and women, starving, poor, armed with rusted hatchets and hunting bows, looking across that field, with the courage of desperation, at the imperial legion arrayed against them.

Soldiers gleaming in bronze and steel. Trained and hardened men. Their polished shields forming a wall of discipline and determination against the advances of my motley rabble.

"I sing, I rant, I rave," I said to them, "but today, clansmen, my sword is my voice!"

We crashed against that legion like waves upon a cliff. Time and time again they repelled us. The green meadows became brown and red with the mud of toil and the blood of war. Yet what is a slave to do? Suffer the lingering death of mine and mill, or offer the gift of your life to your people in one bright and glorious moment?

For the men and women who followed me into battle, the choice was a simple one.

Three Ezomytes fell for every Eternal and still the courage of my people tore down that polished wall, severed the strong arm of the Empire with a rusted, woodsman's hatchet.

Gaius Sentari ran for his wretched life.

I called to the Greatwolf to aid me, to give me the scent of that fleeing fox. Though the hunt was swift, I took the time to ensure that Gaius felt some small measure of the suffering he had inflicted before I answered his plea for mercy.

- Rigwald, the Wolven King

--Inscription III (POE I)

The enslaved Ezomyte clans were not permitted to own weapons. For years, they trained in secret, watching and waiting for the perfect moment to reveal the true depth of the Empire's folly.

--Divide and Conquer Viridian Jewel (POE I)

Those Eternal bastards looted everything that wasn't bolted to the floor when we finally drove them from our island! That candelabra belongs with us!

--Ogham Candelabra (POE I)

## THE SIEGE OF SARN

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We are the soldiers of Faith, armoured in devotion. Let the sinners come, for we - the Pure - shall endure!

- Voll of Thebrus, at the Battle of the Bridge

--Voll's Devotion Agate Amulet (POE I)

...Inquisitor Maligaro, Shavronne of Umbra, and Doedre Darktongue.

If the history books are accurate, High Templar Voll burned Maligaro and Doedre at the stake on his way to lay siege to Sarn. He didn't have to worry himself with Shavronne. Brutus had already sorted her out. ...

--Piety, "The Godless Three" (POE I)

We, the Court of Reckoning find you, Doedre Stamatis, guilty of the following transgressions against God:

*Perversion of God's Creation*

*Promotion of Heretical Beliefs*

*Unlawful Enslavement of Eternal Citizens*

*Torture of the Innocent*

*Murder of the Servants of Purity*

For these most severe crimes, I do sentence Doedre Darktongue to burn at the stake till naught is left but ash. May her life serve as penance for the lives she has taken, and let Purity sweep away the dust of her deeds from our firmament.

- High Templar Voll, Commander of the Army of Purity

--Proclamation (POE I)

As she was sentenced to death, Doedre was silent. As she was tied to the stake, Doedre was silent. As the flames licked away her life, Doedre was silent. But Wraeclast had not heard the last of her.

--Doedre's Skin Widowsilk Robe (POE I)

... Whilst investigating the Fellshrine, I learned of the existence of a map, forged by Maligaro from his own viscera. This map allowed him to transfer his spirit into another form of existence, an existential safe house to which he could retreat should death ever attempt to take him. Understanding the map's purpose, Voll tried to destroy it, to no avail, so he locked it away deep within the ruins of Phrecia Cathedral. ...

--Helena, "Maligaro" (POE I)

... On the last day of Divini 1333 IC, High Templar Voll laid siege to Sarn, his ranks swelled by Ezomyte, Karui and Maraketh rebels under the respective leaderships of Thane Rigwald, Hyrri of Ngamakanui and Sekhema Deshret. ...

- *Garivaldi, Chronicler to the Empire*

--The Purity Chronicles (POE I)

## INCITING THE PEOPLE TO REVOLT

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Victario was a poet what ended up leading a rebellion, right under the nose of Emperor Chitus. But here's what really interests me. Our wordsmith was quite the talented larcenist as well. Pulled off the heist of the century, in the name of the people, of course. Three finely-crafted platinum busts commissioned by Chitus for his favourite trio of generals.

Victario and his cobbers holed up in the sewers. ...

--Hargan, "Victario" (POE I)

"I come from a long line of scholars, poets, and artists. You can imagine how little we leave our children... My father only gifted me one thing: for good or ill, I don't know when to quit."

- Victario Nevalius, the People's Poet

--Nevalius Inheritance Cloth Belt (POE I)

After years of subterfuge, sabotage, and sacrifice, Sarn had become a powder keg just waiting to explode. Finally, Victario lit the match.

--Sudden Ignition Viridian Jewel (POE I)

Mortality is the mother of life. We have turned our backs on her.

--Victario, Ancient Graffiti I (POE I)

The Monkey King has built his throne on your back. A throne of gold and gem, polished with blood and tear. Throw off the Monkey King and his shining privy, before your back is broken.

--Victario, Ancient Graffiti II (POE I)

The gemmed genteel are an infestation. They are the Monkey King's fleas that drink of your lifeblood. Crush them in your work-forged hands!

--Victario, Ancient Graffiti III (POE I)

The Shadow whispers and simpers at the Monkey King's feet, but when the Monkey King puts his back to the Sun, it's the Shadow that leads the way.

--Victario, Ancient Graffiti IV (POE I)

If Chitus was the Monkey King, then who was this 'shadow'? Malachai perhaps?

--Scion, on Ancient Graffiti IV (POE I)

The Monkey King names you 'slave'. No. You are the gems of Wraeclast, not the treacherous stones you dig and die for. It's time to bend the Monkey King's ear. Tell him your true name.

--Victario, Ancient Graffiti V (POE I)

There is nothing 'eternal' in this empire of ours but the names of our day that shall be revered or reviled in the centuries to come.

--Victario, Ancient Graffiti VI (POE I)

Eternals would travel from far and wide to see the spectacles of Sarn arena. The gemling diva Kalisa gave her final performance in there for Emperor Chitus himself.

Legend has it, on that same day, the first gemling legionnaire cut through four Ezomyte warriors in less time than it would've taken Kalisa to sing a single bar. ...

--Leo, "Sarn Arena" (POE I)

Victario: The plan is simple. According to Ondar, Emperor Chitus has been hoarding food in secret storehouses across the city, ensuring that his elite remain well fed and loyal... We're going to tell our starving people where those stores are.

Marylene: There'll be riots! Innocent people will die!

Victario: I know, Marylene, but it has to be this way.

Marylene: Why?

Victario: Chitus will dispatch troops into the city, to restore order and recover the food.

Deshret: Meaning more legionnaires in the streets than on the gates.

Hyrri: Victario certainly knows how to be a distraction.

Victario: The grain gate garrison will be closest to the riots. It will be weakened the most.

--Path of Exile: Origins #3

## DEFEAT AT THE GRAIN GATE

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Voll stood at the gates of Sarn, and a nation stood behind him. He thought of the righteousness of his cause, and of the glory he would bring to the empire he would soon lead. But as Chitus and his gemlings advanced, he thought only of the fight.

--Combat Focus Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

Alive but not unscathed, Victario fled as slaughter blossomed at the gates.

--Victario's Flight Goathide Boots (POE I)

I stood with the Army of Purity and looked upon the mighty walls of Sarn. I fought against Chitus and his Gemling aberrations. I watched the strongest of our army, Ezomyte, Maraketh, Karui and Templar, struck down by creatures of thaumaturgy.

It will take more than strong men and women to defeat Chitus, for this is no longer a war of mud and blood. We face monsters, and to defeat them, we need some monsters of our own. ...

- Rigwald, the Wolven King

--Inscription IV (POE I)

## THE ASSASSINATION OF CHITUS & THE FALL OF SARN

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... Malachai has given me supreme command of his creations. The heart of each soldier beats in time with the heart of his emperor. If the emperor wishes that beat to stop, it stops. And should my own heart cease, so does the life-blood rhythm of all my loyal soldiers.

--Chitus, Path of Exile: Origins #4

Captain Alsarus,

Remain in the warehouse until I personally send for you. In the unlikely event that Chitus should fall, you and your fellow legionnaires will be safely beyond the perimeter of his heart gem's influence.

You men and women are my finest work yet. I would not lose you all to some aberration of chance.

Malachai, Thaumaturge Laureate

--Official Orders (POE I)



## **Book 5: The Emperor is dead. Long live the Emperor!**

... Emperor Chitus rallied his freshly minted Gemling Legionnaires and, for a time, looked set to execute an effective defence of the capital. But his efforts were cut short by his closest advisor and friend, Lord Mayor Ondar.

During the celebration of the Night of a Thousand Ribbons, Ondar struck Chitus down with blades tainted with the most virulent of poisons. Yet the emperor's inhuman constitution served him to the very last. Taking up his axe, Chitus cleaved Ondar in twain before expiring himself, in a visceral and calamitous display of thaumaturgy.

Malachai, Thaumaturge Laureate, and his gemling consort, Lady Dialla, were captured by Victario Nevalius' citizen revolutionaries shortly thereafter. With their leadership either dead or detained, the gemling aristocracy of Sarn had no choice but to offer the city's surrender.

Voll and his Army of Purity marched through the gates of the capital and the following day, the High Templar was crowned Emperor Voll the First.

*- Garivaldi, Chronicler to the Empire*

--The Purity Chronicles (POE I)

Tonight is a celebration. On this, the night of a Thousand Ribbons, we honour Emperor Chitus for his heroic defense of our beloved capital. Long may he reign!

I feel fear... and hatred. The Emperor stands before me, and I know this is my chance. I strike at him. I pierce his belly, but it is not immediately lethal. I lock eyes with the man. I watch him raise his axe...

--Ondar, Pristine Palace Memory (POE I)

Ondar not only betrayed his emperor, he betrayed his friend. And in his dying moments, Chitus ensured that Ondar felt the full weight of his guilt.

--Weight of the Empire Crimson Jewel (POE I)

Emperor Chitus was stabbed in the posterior by his own Lord Mayor on the eve of the Purity Rebellion. Chitus' grieving gemlings buried him in The Imperial Gardens and a plum tree was planted upon his resting place, so that his mourners might taste his glory for years to come. I found that tree, and one of my men tasted its fruit. I've never seen so much agony crammed into such a brief moment. ...

--Captain Fairgraves, "Chitus' Plum" (POE I)

[These events are also covered in Path of Exile: Origins #3, "Death to Sin," and #4, "The Black Heart."]

## AFTERMATH

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True to his title, Voll, newly crowned, had many of the Eternal Empire signature extravagances destroyed.

--Emperor of Purity (POE I)

... When the Emperor Voll took power, Malachai freely gave Lazhwar over to the Purity Courts. Lazhwar was burned at the stake for 'fraternizing with unholy forces'.

--Eternal and Diamond Supporter Newsletter #4 (POE I)

On this day, the 2nd Sacrato of Verusi, 1334 IC, the Army of Purity remembers its most devout and beloved servant, Archbishop Geofri of Phrecia.

As spoken by Geofri:

*Only will and truth can prevail  
over the evil of our own kin.*

- High Templar Voll, commander of the Army of Purity

--Plaque (POE I)

## THE REIGN OF VOLL (1334-1336 IC)

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Although a great leader during the war, Voll proved disastrous in times of peace.

--Voll's Protector Holy Chainmail (POE I)

When Voll took the throne, he swore to care for the empire with eyes open. And so he looked to the salvation of his people, blind to the damnation in his hands.

--The Vigil Crimson Jewel (POE I)

I'm no history scholar, but I know that Emperor Chitus was overthrown by Voll of Thebrus in the so-called 'Purity Rebellion'. But Voll had the shortest reign of any Eternal Emperor. The cataclysm saw to that.

--Hargan, "The Purity Rebellion" (POE I)

Chitus was shaping up to be the greatest leader since Veruso. My nephew's gemling thaumatocracy would have made the Empire truly eternal, would have raised mankind up from the fragile muck of flesh and blood. And the wealth... oh the riches that could have flowed through the Empire's capitalist capillaries.

Then that idiot of a High Templar had to come along and ruin it all. Him and his 'God of Purity' and his army of fanatics and barbarians. A veritable horde of ignorance.

If Chitus had lived, the Empire would have lived, and oh what a wondrous and eternal life it would have had!

--Cadiro, "Chitus Perandus" (POE I)

On the fall of the Empire, the historians are deathly silent. After the Purity Rebellion, the Kingdom of Kaom blockaded Oriath, preventing any trade or correspondence with the mainland. It's said that Kaom planned to invade. Only when the Karui retreated did Oriath get any news from Wraeclast, but by that time there wasn't really anyone left to tell the tale.

--Clarissa, "Cataclysm" (POE I)

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## MALACHAI & THE RAPTURE DEVICE

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How Malachai survived the Purity Rebellion, I don't know. He was at Emperor Voll's side before Chitus' corpse was even cold.

I suppose Voll found him as difficult to refuse as Icius did.

Malachai would never have risen so far without the patronage of an emperor like Chitus. ...

--Siosa, "Malachai" (POE I)

### **Book 6: The Rapture Device**

Voll condemned Malachai to the Crematorium for 'living conflagration', but it seems that Malachai's promises have saved him from the pyre. "An end to thaumaturgy," he claims. A fancy that our Emperor is willing to humour.

For over a year now, Malachai has been consigned to the Solaris Temple, forging a mechanism that will purge Wraeclast of its otherworldly vices. Today, the first Fiero of Eterni 1336 IC, Malachai and his Gemling Queen gripped each one corner of a silken mantle and unveiled his Rapture Device. Like a pit of copper snakes it writhes before the eyes. Whether it is a miracle or a monstrosity, none but Malachai can say. Yet tomorrow Voll shall lead the Highgate Legion home, conveying Malachai, Lady Dialla, and this bewildering apparatus north.

North, from whence the first Gems came. From whence the nightmare of Chitus' thaumatocracy was born.

It is in Highgate that our Emperor Voll will finish what he started. He will burn Chitus' empire from history and raise up a fresh and pure theocracy from the ashes of arrogance and corruption.

God be with you, Voll of Thebrus, and with us all.

- *Garivaldi, Chronicler to the Empire*

--The Purity Chronicles (POE I)

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## MALACHAI'S BETRAYAL

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When Voll spared Malachai, accepting his aid in pursuit of Purity, the strongest faith was infected by Corruption and made brittle as glass.

- Victario, the People's Poet

--The Brittle Emperor (POE I)

As Malachai stepped into the Highgate mines, cold winds billowed from the mountain above. One final, feeble attempt to save what was meant to be eternal.

--Omen on the Winds Viridian Jewel (POE I)

The Rapture Device has absorbed its fill of harvested life from Fury and Desire. It is ready.

So am I.

I know now that I was born to be the end and the beginning of the Empire. The Beast has made this clear to me. As clear and undeniable as the sacrifice I must now make.

My Lady Dially, my love, my life's greatest achievement. She must leave me now, for she cannot follow and she will perish if she remains.

And so I will ask of her more than she would ever give. I will betray her. I will break her heart, so that I do not break her soul.

--Malachai's Notebook (POE I)

The Rapture is our hope. Our desperation. It will set the Nightmare to boil, cook that nice big fishy in its own whining brine.

... The Rapture was Malachai's most wondrous creation, the only fire hot enough to burn the Beast from existence.

And its fuel? A gemling queen, blood and flesh and gem. Yet my selfish self did not want to burn away, and so the fire was but a tiny spark. The spark of a cataclysm. ...

--Lady Dially, "Malachai" (POE I)

Malachai knew exactly what he was doing when he created the Rapture.

His primary concern...get inside the Beast and take up the reins of true power. And his second objective...incite a Cataclysm that would wipe the very thought of resistance from this land.

The Beast is the source of all thaumaturgy, the one power in this world that transforms 'what is real' into 'what is imagined.'

The entire world is now at the mercy of one man's vision. It won't be the future I imagined, and it won't be the future you imagined, either. While he remains within the Black Core, the only imagination that matters...is Malachai's.

--Piety, "Malachai" (POE I)

I take no pleasure in this. It simply must be done. Humanity's purpose has been fulfilled... in me. Within this sanctum of flesh lay the tools I shall use to reshape the world.

With this act, I sweep away the trappings of mortality, and bring about a new age. A world of Thaumaturgy, and I, its ruler. Farewell, my Gemling Queen...

--Malachai, Distant Nightmare Memory (POE I)

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## RESURRECTING THE GODLESS THREE

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On this day, the eve of this Rapture's completion, I honour those who have passed and whose passion and knowledge have brought us to the brink of salvation.

Inquisitor Maligaro, a creative force without equal.

Shavronne of Umbra, an aesthete of transcendent sensibility.

Doedre Darktongue, an idol of fervor and dedication.

You taught me far more than I ever taught you, my students...my friends. We strove to make a greater world together and, in your memory, I shall make that world a reality.

Malachai

--Malachai's Dedication (POE I)

I gave my life. Nightmare gave me so much more.

--Malachai, on opening the first Heart of the Beast (POE I)

... Malachai gave up much of himself when he became the Beast's prime servant. Both in spirit and in flesh. Yet, in a moment of rare sentimentality, he kept a few pieces. Three vital organs, placed in the safe-keeping of his godless three; Inquisitor Maligaro, Shavronne of Umbra and Doedre Darktongue.

...

--Piety (POE I)

My heart forces blood through my veins. But one who may bleed may die, and death is no fitting end to genius.

--Malachai's Heart (POE I)

My lungs breathe the same air as the foolish and the weak. May I be yet another step removed from them.

--Malachai's Lungs (POE I)

My organs tether me to mortality like a chain. This chain holds me from my true potential.

--Malachai's Entrails (POE I)

Malachai chose his three most loyal servants to guard those precious innards. His Godless Three. Inquisitor Maligaro, Shavronne of Umbra, and Doedre Darktongue.

If the history books are accurate, High Templar Voll burned Maligaro and Doedre at the stake on his way to lay siege to Sarn. He didn't have to worry himself with Shavronne. Brutus had already sorted her out.

Yet slaves of nightmare seem to be shackled just as tightly to life as they are to the Beast...

--Piety, "The Godless Three" (POE I)

Malachai's apprentices. Shavronne of Umbra, Doedre Darktongue and Inquisitor Maligaro. You'll find no more devoted servants in all of Nightmare. In life, they were the three finest forgers of corruption in the Empire.

I'm inclined to agree with Malachai on this one. It would have been such a waste to let them languish in death. ...

--Tasuni, "Malachai's Apprentices" (POE I)

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## THE CATACLYSM (1336 IC)

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The Cataclysm was but the first act in a play of horrors. The dead lingered, and the living began to rot.

--Spreading Rot Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

Beneath your feet, Creation shivers and writhes. It yearns for transformation like a worm in a cocoon that dreams of wings and freedom. A transformation that only the Beast can excite.

A dark God of ancient sacrifice, a muse to the twisted and vile...the Beast, the Nightmare, the Darkness...names given to it by mortals that think with slugs bound in shells of bone.

Yet, one man knew the Beast's true name, understood its impenetrable nature.

Malachai.

--Tasuni, "The Beast" (POE I)

Ghosts have no use for words. To speak in nightmare is to speak in emotion and image...in thought.

I see and feel the darkness, and that is how I know that the cataclysm was no accident. Its images are far too rich with intention, far too steeped in satisfaction.

Malachai's satisfaction. Malachai devastated my people, destroyed the Eternal Empire, for one reason. To put himself right where he is now, within the Black Heart of the Beast.

--Tasuni, "Cataclysm" (POE I)

Malachai is what every Ghast aspires to be. The hands and eyes, the voice and mind of the Beast itself.

I see him in my dreams, forming his designs, crafting his tools, refining the chaos of nightmare into a vision. A future that you and I would not recognise.

That neither you or I belong to unless, of course, we choose to accept the dark embrace.

This is Malachai's greatest work. An act of invention like none other. Should he succeed, he will awaken the Beast.

What then? The Beast is not Death. Life will go on. A life like nothing we have seen before.

--Tasuni, "Malachai" (POE I)

Nothing is immune to the Nightmare's twisted influence.

--Corrupted Energy Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

... Malachai is in the Beast's black core right now, harnessing all that the Beast is, and will be. He will destroy this world and forge it anew in the divine image of Nightmare. ...

--Piety, "Malachai" (POE I)

... Universal transmogrification. ... The power to change the world into anything you like. ...

--Petarus and Vanja, "The Beast" (POE I)

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## THE FATE OF ADUS

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... Highgate Refinery ... General Adus and his elite legionnaires sought refuge there during the first moments of Malachai's Cataclysm. If they remain, they will be creatures of darkest discipline. Strong men in health and life made even stronger in corruption and death.

--Sin, "Trarthan Powder" (POE I)

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## THE FATE OF VOLL

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Voll the Pure, they called him. Voll the Murderer, I call him. In his name, an Emperor was murdered. In his name, an Empire was murdered.

Yes, it was Malachai's lips that kissed me. Yes, it was Malachai's hand that led me to the Rapture. No, no and no again. It was Voll's words that put me there.

--Lady Dialla, "Voll" (POE I)

I vowed to "care for this empire with my eyes open". I lied to my people. I lied to myself. Blinded by my lust for 'purity', I placed my faith in the most corrupt of men.

I watch now as my legion dies, their flesh melting from their twisted bones. They fall... and rise. A tide of mortal death and eternal damnation.



I feel it now in my own flesh. The heat. The corruption.

I have failed you, my Empire of Purity. Do not forgive me but please, I beg of you, survive me.

-Voll

--Voll's Confession (POE I)

The Maraketh speak of his betrayal, but Voll did what he thought was necessary to destroy the Beast.

Now he wanders the desiccation, tortured as much by his failure as by Nightmare.

--Tasuni, "Voll" (POE I)

Voll and his 'unmen' have dipped their fleshless claws into the lifeblood of the Maraketh since the day this *akhara* tethered its rhoa here.

Such is the way with men of war. Remove their tongues, yet still they thirst for blood. Remove their bellies, yet still they hunger for battle. Remove their manhood, yet still they lust for conquest.

--Oyun, "Voll" (POE I)

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## THE FATE OF SARN

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I see you. You are seeking answers, because you can find them only in the stories we will leave behind when Malachai and Voll cause our destruction. In this final hour, I entertain the notion that the words I write exist in some form beyond me. Do they go on as dreams? As memories?

I have the wildest notion that perhaps you will find a way to pick up scraps of memory, and you, whoever you are, will come across this one someday. If you do, I ask only this: slay Malachai. Slay him for yourself, or slay him for all the lost citizens of the Empire, but, most of all, slay him for Marylene.

--Victario, Distant Exchange Memory (POE I)

I write this now in hope that someone will remain. Someone may remember.

The sun is an orb of blood. Twisted twilight shrouds my eyes. The air reeks of anguish. Sarn has plunged into nightmare.

The man who served me coffee now writhes on the floor. He rants of visions he alone can see, as writhing red tentacles grow from his face, as if his eyes had been seeds waiting to sprout. He is quiet, now, my waiter. No more cackling and screaming. Dead.

Of my fellow patrons, only two live. The others have fallen. Their blood is everywhere. The survivors, Gemlings both... their skin shrivels and greys to the hue of necrosis. Their gems flare with unholy lustre. Their eyes... black as... hatred.

A gemling ghoul... it twisted off a corpse's head... gnaws at skull like dog. My head now... visions clawing at me... Thinking burns! I see... horror, envy the mute corpses at my... feet. Words flay me... flee me. All is madness!

--Victario, Ancient Notebook (POE I)

Sarn fell in the course of an hour, no more. A tempest raged down from the mountains and engulfed the city, throwing it into midday darkness. I saw madness in my colleagues' eyes. Watched as the most rational men in the Empire jabbered and slavered and slaughtered each other.

I witnessed Trinian, our Gemling Intellectus Prime, engulfed by the radiance of his flaming cranial gem and wither, like a grape in the sun, into a thing of desiccation and famishment.

I've seen mountains spew fire in Ngamakanui. I've seen waves as tall as trees and winds that leveled warriors and walls alike. Nature is what nature is.

There was nothing natural about the cataclysm.

--Siosa, "Cataclysm" (POE I)

... Chitus' Gemlings still rule Sarn. We call them the Undying now.

--Grigor, "Gemlings" (POE I)

... Emperor Chitus believed the legionnaires belonged to him, that gemling men would beat to the drum of his own crystalline heart. But as the silhouette of the emperor faltered and fell, burned out by the light of true men, some of the legion remained.

The cataclysm turned legionnaire into monster, another mindless man of undeath. ...

--Maramoa, "Gemling Legionnaires" (POE I)

I visited Sarn some thirty odd years ago. Those ghosts, the Undying you call them, scurried up from the sewers near the river and slaughtered all but a few of my most stalwart lads. Oh they're a foul parody of humanity, those Undying. Nothing in common with a fine, upstanding revenant like myself.

--Captain Fairgraves, "The Undying" (POE I)

Citizens of Sarn that was...the Undying have been around for hundreds of years. Left to their own devices, they're likely to survive for hundreds more. Still, they're not immune to mortality's touch. They can be killed...with some difficulty.

--Maramoa, "The Undying" (POE I)

I know, so strange that stone and metal should move and live as you and I. Still, I read that Chitus' sculptors used to soften their materials with 'thaumetic sulphite', a by-product of gem refining. It's the only connection that I can fathom between the cataclysm and the living sculptures of Sarn.

--Clarissa, "Statues" (POE I)

The winter that followed the Cataclysm was especially harsh. Wraeclast's few survivors fought to the death for the last scraps of bread.

--Fight for Survival Viridian Jewel (POE I)

In the years that followed the twisted sky, cold winds cloaked Wraeclast in snow. The pure-white blanket masked a black heart that lay dormant deep beneath the earth.

--The Long Winter Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

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## THE FATE OF DIALLA, THE GEMLING QUEEN

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The Gemling Queen, she's... impossible. How did she survive? Why is she not one of the Undying? ...

--Grigor, "The Gemling Queen" (POE I)

Something Eternal remains in this Empire. The question is, how?

--Templar, on the Solaris Temple (POE I)

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## THE FATES OF KAOM, HYRRI, & THE KARUI

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... After the Purity Rebellion, the Kingdom of Kaom blockaded Oriath, preventing any trade or correspondence with the mainland. It's said that Kaom planned to invade. Only when the Karui retreated did Oriath get any news from Wraeclast, but by that time there wasn't really anyone left to tell the tale.

--Clarissa, "Cataclysm" (POE I)

Black storms descend on us from the North. Unnatural tempests of rage and hatred, lashing our backs, tearing at our houses. The rain is shot with shadow. It withers our crops, sickens our livestock.

And the wind... the wind carries with it a restless spirit that breeds melancholy and madness. A spirit that creeps through our dreams, weaves tales of misdeed around our resting minds. We try not to listen. We try to remember ourselves. Some of us forget.

Brothers fight. Brothers die. Kaom punishes those that quarrel, that steal, that murder. Yet still the nightmares goad us into malefaction.

We Karui are banished from sleep.

--Lavianga, Weathered Carving III (POE I)

The earth of Wraeclast rejects the dead. The black spirit of storm and dream now reaches into the ground and raises up our slain imperial foes. It leads the fallen from their graves and drives them to fight us beyond the end, rotted tooth and jagged nail.

Our own Remembered have joined their cursed ranks. No longer may we give our beloved to the birds, messengers of spirit to the sky, conveyors of flesh to the earth. Kaom has commanded us to destroy our Remembered with axe and fire. Kaom is the bravest of us, willing to bear the ire of the Ancestors for the survival of his people.

--Lavianga, Weathered Carving IV (POE I)

The black spirit infects living flesh and bone. The animals suffered first. Their bodies changed. Their eyes filled with a hatred of mankind that is beyond instinct.

Now it is we who must bend and bow like saplings before the seaborne gale. The firstborn of the Kingdom of Kaom greeted us this day. The firstborn of the Kingdom of Kaom was buried this day. Even our children are not spared the black spirit's touch.

What have we done to enrage Wraeclast? We look to Kaom. Our King will lay the spirit of this land at peace.

--Lavianga, Weathered Carving V (POE I)

Kaom stands before us and looks out to the raging sea. He sings, calls, screams to our Ancestors to come to our aid. He offers them the Gifts of Old, a feast of heart and mind, muscle and marrow, cooked in the fire and rock of this angry land.

We have not practiced these ways in so many years. Only in the darkest of times, most desperate of times, do we perform these oldest of rituals. Only here and now may we sacrifice and consume our own. Only in our King can we trust this return to our ancient selves.

--Lavianga, Weathered Carving VI (POE I)

Kaom took his 500 mightiest warriors inland to find the source of the crippling nightmares plaguing his people.

--King Kaom, Steam trading card description (POE I)

I dreamed of my Ancestors' halls. They were empty.

I dreamed of the north, of an offering left to us by Tukohama, an offering that will save the Karui. I needed only to take it.

I gathered my finest five hundred. I brought them here. I claimed what Tukohama had promised me.

--Kaom, Weathered Carving VIII (POE I)

We read the land, learn its stories. Kaom and his warriors entered those Mines some twenty years before Deshret sealed them and bound our *akhara* to this mountain.

Neither soil nor stone speak of Kaom's return. Now we know why. He became a monarch of Nightmare, like Voll before him. It seems the Beast has uses for those with a talent for conquest.

--Oyun, "Kaom" (POE I)

We crushed the servants of Kitava beneath our heels as we marched across the land. I allowed not one of my five hundred to fall. The blood of the Ancestors surged in our veins and each and every one of my warriors earned Tukohama's mark upon their skin.

We descended into the heart of Wraeclast, and there He came to me. Tukohama. He asked of me a sacrifice. I gave it willingly. My axe fell five hundred times, the jade drinking its fill of Karui blood.

Tukohama was pleased.

--Kaom, Weathered Carving IX (POE I)

500 times Kaom's axe fell, 500 times Kaom's heart splintered. Finally, all that remained was a terrible, heartless fury.

--The King's Heart (POE I)

The Eternals opened the gate and invited Kitava into this land. The Karui paid the price.

Kitava cut us off from the Ancestors, raised the Remembered as His children, tortured our dreams.

Kitava murdered the Karui Way. I will found a new Way, for I have been chosen. I gather my forces so that I might wage war on Kitava. I am the son of Tukohama, and I will lead the Karui back to glory.

--Kaom, Weathered Carving X (POE I)

The moment your skin touched the corrupted soil of Wraeclast, you were infected. Kitava has soaked this land in his filth. I will crush the corruption from your bones, drain your black blood upon this sacred ground.

Brothers and sisters, I honour you with a warrior's death. Your spirits will fight by my side when we march against Kitava. You will be given in service to Tukohama.

You will be remembered with glory.

--Kaom, Weathered Carving XI (POE I)

The Beast eats the souls of its prey, devouring their very life force. Those consumed become a part of the creature, existing forevermore as a thrall of twisted nightmare. This fate befell many of Wraeclast's most legendary figures. ...

King Kaom of the Karui - Proud and strong in life, tireless in his hope to bring honor and justice to his people. Kaom was deceived by the call of the creature, lulled by its sweet whispers to complete destruction. His unrequited dreams of conquest live on though, manifested in a physical nightmare of molten rage.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/theawakening/actfour>

Kaom is gone. Our King has taken our finest five hundred warriors and descended into the depths of Wraeclast. He spoke to us of a vision, a gift from the ancestors. Kaom has been deceived. The vision was a gift from the black spirit. It has conquered Kaom. The black spirit has conquered the Karui Way.

Hyrri has made ready her canoes. We will take those that are left, five hundred forgotten families, and carry them back to their true homes. Back to Ngamakanui.

Kaom's promises have led us into nightmare. Hyrri will lead us back to the dawn.

--Lavianga, Weathered Carving VII (POE I)

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## HYRRI'S DESCENDENTS

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I was quite young when the world ruptured. The moon turned crimson, fire rained from the sky, warriors went mad with blood fever, and the seas boiled. None of us knew what caused it, but the

destruction came from the direction of Sarn, and the mountains near it. The madmen must have gone too far... I had nightmares about that time for over a decade, until I finally traveled to the Isle of the Shrikes and passed my test of adulthood. After that, I felt like I could handle anything.

--Ahuana, "Cataclysm" (POE I)

My mother was a great woman, and continues to be my role model, despite her inexplicable absence here. The other chieftains often talk about her wartime acts when she fought alongside Kaom, but by the time I was old enough to know her, she had long been Queen of the still-united tribes. I grew up in a time of turmoil and nightmare in the wake of the Cataclysm that destroyed the Eternals. Because she once helped put the men in power who likely caused it, my mother taught me that war is not the glorious endeavour our Way makes it out to be. All she wanted, by the end, was peace. She was begrudgingly taking an army raised from multiple tribes to deal with a strange threat on the edge of Ngamakanui... when she and her legion vanished without a trace. I did my best in the chaos that followed, but it wasn't enough...

--Ahuana, "Hyrrri" (POE I)

After my mother's disappearance, the tribes began to fracture. I tried to take on the role of Queen, but inheriting such a title felt a bit too much like monarchy and empire, and the other tribes weren't receptive. Not after their experiences battling the Eternals. So, I used what meager power I had to suggest a new form of united government, a council of chieftains. From the trickle of news we get through living Karui that come to us for guidance, I hear that some form of that is still going on. I'm rather proud of that.

--Ahuana, "Being Queen" (POE I)

The last Queen of the Karui gave up power willingly.

--Ahuana's Bite Sharktooth Arrow Quiver (POE I)

Oh, you've heard of my father? I've never met him. My mother only rolled her eyes whenever I asked about him. She told me of him once, the night before she left on her final campaign. She said he spoke with a poet's grace and made myriad boastful promises, but his heart truly belonged to a dead woman. He remained in Sarn when she took our people home, so he must have died in the Cataclysm. I would very much like to know more about him.

--Ahuana, "Victario" (POE I)

I loosed a volley of arrows into the heart of the man who slew my beloved. There was no satisfaction, no healing, no revenge. There was only... emptiness.

- Chieftainess Ahuana of the Ramako Tribe

--Widowhail Crude Bow (POE I)

I died in childbirth, which is considered a warrior's death. I died knowing my daughter would live on. Then, because I was here [in the Halls of the Dead], I was able to see her grow and thrive. She visited me for advice often, and I treasure those memories. Now, she fights as one of my own in these Halls. Among others, *her* daughter, and her daughter's daughter, also joined us. We now have dozens of descendants coming to us for wisdom. Life and death are strange partners. I have been here for far longer than I was alive, and my extended family only knows me as an ancestral spirit.

--Ahuana, "Death" (POE I)

Like Ramako in stories, Ahuana is a ray of light in this dark place. The Halls of the Dead are a good thing, but the years keep passing, and weigh heavily on all of us. Kahuturoa was one of the first souls here, and I fear becoming like him. Right now, after only three centuries or so, I can still take the Way seriously and uphold all of our traditions with pride. What will I be like in thousands of years? With good friends like Ahuana remaining positive, perhaps I can make it to the end with my dignity.

--Akoya, "Ahuana" (POE I)

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## HYRRI'S FATE

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Hyrri is not here... I hoped to greet her in the afterlife, but her soul has not found its way to the Halls of the Dead. My tribe's *hatungo*, Lavianga, believed that Hyrri damned herself by breaking the *tavukai*, but that is not a rule the Ramako Tribe follows. I was certain there would be no dishonour in the eyes of the gods, yet Navali remains cryptic on her absence. She should be here. I am... incensed.

--Kaom, "Hyrri" (POE I)

...Queen Hyrri...her soul lives on! When she did not arrive in the Halls of the Dead at the end of her life, we thought she might have chosen to wander. When we realised she was beyond even Hinekora's sight, we feared the worst. Now, we know where she is. This... Domain of Timeless Conflict... we Karui will find a way to invade it and rescue her. Then, we will lay waste to the entity that controls it, for daring to disrespect our people so grievously!

--Navali, "Hyrri's Soul" (POE I)

...Hyrri's soul! Our *hatungo* knows nothing of this Domain of Timeless Conflict, but it seems that we have a new realm to make war upon. We will find it and rescue Hyrri and her army, no matter the cost. Not a single Karui soul will be left behind. This is the promise I make to our Ancestors! We will have our vengeance!



--Kaom, "Hyrris's Soul" (POE I)

... I knew she was still out there somewhere! Though I do not believe she needs our aid. If you knew my mother like I did, you would know that nothing could keep her trapped against her will, especially not with an army at her back. If she is still fighting there, then she must believe that the battle is necessary. We have no idea what the stakes are, so we should leave her to it. If she required our aid, she would have requested it long ago.

--Ahuana, "Hyrris's Soul" (POE I)

Their ancestors await their souls. They will wait forever.

--Kalandra, at the start of a Legion encounter (POE I)

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## THE FATE OF DESHRET & THE MARAKETH

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The Sekhema rode to the mountain, with her tribe, devoted and strong. And sewed shut the mouth of nightmare, so that it would not consume her world.

--Steel Spirit Viridian Jewel (POE I)

The Maraketh once stood united under Deshret's Banner. That was before the plagues, the tempests...the corruption.

Deshret rode here with this *akhara*, the Kiyato, to put an end to the Beast's curse. And upon the very threshold of the darkness she faltered.

Perhaps she saw that King Kaom had gone there before her and not returned. Or perhaps the nightmare simply overcame Deshret's seemingly indomitable courage.

Either way, she chose not to ride into the mountain, to slay the Beast. She closed and sealed the Mines and committed this *akhara* to Highgate's guardianship.

The tempests, the plagues...they passed. Of their own accord, or because of Deshret's seal, we do not know.

But what I do know is this. When Deshret vowed to watch over these Mines, she simply traded one curse for another.

--Oyun, "Deshret" (POE I)

We're trapped down here. Though we strike it again and again, the Sekhema's seal remains unharmed. No one down here can sleep. My throat is parched, yet I feel no thirst.

The foreman is beginning to show signs of madness. He claims the walls, earth, and even his pick have become sticky as honey. I pray death comes for us soon, but I fear we will receive something far worse.

--Unknown, Deep Dig Memory (POE I)

It seems the mines of Highgate were sealed before everyone could be evacuated... what a terrible fate...

--Zana, on Deep Dig Memory (POE I)

... Our Red Sekhema sealed that gate for a reason. Not simply to prevent the Beast from reaching out, but to hinder those fools who would disturb its slumber. ...

--Kira, "The Mines" (POE I)

Sekhema Deshret sealed the Mines, trapped the Nightmare within its black den.

The Beast should never have been imprisoned. The Beast should have been destroyed, yet, for all her ferocity, it seemed that Deshret lacked the courage to do so. ...

Deshret's Banner...was taken from her when she fell to Voll, the Brittle Emperor. ...

--Oyun, "Introduction" (POE I)

The Red Sekhema was the woman who forged what it meant to be 'Maraketh', a people united, strong. Deshret lit fires in the hearts of women and loins of men. When she fell, so did the Maraketh. We've been falling ever since.

--Tasuni, "Deshret" (POE I)

Yes, Tasuni has informed me of Deshret's existence within the Mines, but has been unable to tell me how she comes to be there. Another troubling hole in our knowledge of Nightmare...

--Oyun, "Deshret" (POE I)

Malachai's apprentices. Shavronne of Umbra, Doedre Darktongue and Inquisitor Maligaro. ...

Poor Deshret. Each had their wicked way with her, you see, their turn at trying to subsume Deshret into the collective corruption. Ingenious, they are. True artists. Had Deshret been in possession of an imagination, they might well have succeeded in creating a Ghast of her. Fortunately for us, Deshret never had such a faculty.

--Tasuni, "Malachai's Apprentices" (POE I)

...I hear her voice as clearly as if she were sitting right here with me.

Words of a dead woman, reverberating up from the depths of Highgate. A spirit chained, yet not enslaved. Tortured, yet unbroken.

That dead woman is Deshret, and our Red Sekhema longs to return to the dust of her Vastiri...

--Tasuni, "Deshret" (POE I)

The Maraketh are an ancient race, bound by ascetic tradition. They have been tasked by their deceased leader, the Sekhema Deshret, with the duty of guarding the entrance to the mines of Highgate. Deshret aided her people in their vigil, helping to craft a new breed of weaponry. ... They are known simply as the Maraketh Weapons.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/theawakening/items>

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## THE FATE OF RIGWALD & THE EZOMYTES

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*Death came to town.  
The roaring Ezomytes wore red.  
The red of blood,  
The red of the fray.*

*Death came to town.  
The crying Ezomytes wore black.  
The black of disease,  
The black of dismay.*

*Death came to town.  
The silent Ezomytes wore grey.  
The grey of twilight.  
The grey of decay.*

Only the Isles of Skothe were spared. Once, a backwater of my proud civilisation, now... all that remains of the Ezomytes.

--Grigor, "Ezomytes" (POE I)

... A plague wiped out Ezomyr...

--Kahuturoa, "The Ezomytes" (POE I)

I stood with the Army of Purity and looked upon the mighty walls of Sarn. I fought against Chitus and his Gemling aberrations. I watched the strongest of our army, Ezomyte, Maraketh, Karui and Templar, struck down by creatures of thaumaturgy.

It will take more than strong men and women to defeat Chitus, for this is no longer a war of mud and blood. We face monsters, and to defeat them, we need some monsters of our own.

Here I stand, amongst these stones. Here I lay my gifts of blood and song, of flesh and fire. Here I call out to the First Ones, beasts of legend, terrors of our dreams. Here I howl to the Greatwolf himself.

Should he answer, I am ready to pay the price that I know he will ask. It is no more than a man should do for his family. It is no more than a king should do for his people.

- Rigwald, the Wolven King

--Inscription IV (POE I)

### Ancient Ezomyte Talismans

Talismans are infused with the power of the First Ones, the primeval gods of the ancient Ezomytes. The creatures of Wraeclast are instinctively drawn to these relics and the feral vigour they impart.

...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1478438>

### Thane Rigwald, The Wolven King

Rigwald the Wolven King led the Ezomytes during the Purity Rebellion. To ensure the ongoing freedom of his people, he recovered the Talismans of the First Ones and called upon those ancient Ezomyte gods to help him. It was a First One called the Greatwolf who answered, and it soon became apparent that the Wolven King had bitten off more than he could chew.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1478438>

The wolf greeted the king,  
In the light of the harvest moon.  
The wolf offered the strength of the wild,  
And the king paid for it in blood.

--Greatwolf Talisman (POE I)

Look not upon me with fear, my men. Though I seem strange, even monstrous, were you to see with the eyes of your forebears, your hearts would be filled with wonder.

- The Wolven King

--Monkey Paw Talisman (POE I)

The Greatwolf has come for me. His heart beats within my chest. His tongue lolls within my mouth. His fangs crown my jaw. His eyes rest within my sockets.

I do not see Ezomyte and Eternal, king and commoner, master and slave. I see only prey.

In the world of street and field, the emperor has fallen. Those who were slaves are now free.

In the world of forest and mountain, the First Ones hunt and feed as they have done since the first dawn.

No longer will I walk among my people. I will not have their blood on my lips. I will not be their king.

I am the King of Wolves now.

- Rigwald

--Inscription V (POE I)

The Greatwolf has forced me to forget who I was... and has taught me to be so much more.

A man becomes a king so that he may protect the people of the day. A man becomes a god so that he may protect the people of all the days to come.

And so the endless hunt begins.

The fervour of the First Ones remains, bound by the druids into fetishes of tooth and bone, skin and claw. I know where these potent talismans have been strewn. I have their scent.

And so the endless hunt begins.

I shall pursue the thieves of our ancient heritage. I shall wrest our First Ones from the clutching and the corrupted lest they feel and grow fecund on power not their own. Power I must have, must wield, in the name of all that is Ezomyr to come.

And so the endless hunt beings.

- Rigwald

--Inscription VI (POE I)

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## THE FATE OF CADIRO

### **The Perandus Fall**

The Perandus reign was brief, cut short by the Purity Rebellion and the death of Emperor Chitus. However, in the months before the revolt, a steady stream of unremarkable carts and wagons flowed from the capital, bearing a secret cargo to the far reaches of Wraeclast. By the time House Perandus fell, Cadiro had managed to steal the entirety of the kingdom's treasury.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1595088>

### **Indebted Guardians**

Like many wealthy families of their day, the Perandus family were quick to lend and quicker still to charge interest. They had many debtors. Normally death forgives a debt, but not when a sum is owed to an adherent of Prospero. After the Cataclysm, the deity bound the slain Perandus debtors in eternal servitude, bidding them to forever guard the family's wealth. You will find them near Cadiro's caches, waiting tirelessly for their master's return.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1595088>

### **Stolen Treasures**

In the wake of the Cataclysm, the locations of the kingdom's stolen treasures, secreted away in caches throughout the land, were lost to record and tale. Of the Perandus family, only Cadiro remains alive, forever sustained by his devotion to Prospero. He wanders the countryside in search of his lost caches, eager to reclaim them and their riches.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1595088>

Now you have the look of a connoisseur, an educated appreciator of all things exquisite and dangerous.

And I, Cadiro, am one who provides such delights. Once a lord of influence and opulence, I am now but a humble peddler seeking to recover his lost fortunes. Gold coins of Perandus mintage, secreted away in gilded chests so as to escape the grasping digits of that puritanical usurper, Voll of Thebrus. Perhaps you have seen such chests on your travels?

If so, I could offer you antiquities of remarkable potency, paraphernalia of pernicious craftsmanship. All I would ask in return is the conveyance of the contents of said chests to my person.

As fortune would have it, I have such a wonder in stock even now. A relic of such formidable agency that I shudder to think what it could do in the hands of one predisposed to use it.

For a little coin, those hands could be yours.

--Cadiro, "Introduction" (POE I)

Yes, you are quite right to query my curious penchant for obsolete currency.

Once there was a time when my personal symphony was composed, quite completely, of the delightful tinklings of coinage. Nowadays, I'm dancing to someone else's tune.

I have a backer, you see, who generously supports my ongoing liquidity. Naturally, he expects a good return on his investment, and it transpires that only coinage of the golden variety will satiate that expectation.

--Cadiro, "Perandus Coins" (POE I)

When you're a *fat purse* such as I, you are wise to insure yourself against being slit and emptied. In the face of Voll's ridiculous crusade to Highgate, I thought it only prudent to bolster my insurance policies.

It was in our household god, Prospero, that I found my ideal underwriter. While my relations paid tithe and lip service to Prospero the symbol, Prospero the myth, I chose to dig a little deeper than that.

To my delight, it transpired that our god was not only real, but of a similar opinion regarding the near, uncertain future of the Empire.

We signed a contract, Prospero and I, and more than two centuries have borne witness to our successful partnership.

The best deal I ever made.

--Cadiro, "Cataclysm" (POE I)

It was more than luck that allowed the Perandus line to turn even great misfortunes into golden opportunities.

--The Perandus Pact Prismatic Jewel (POE I)

You know... I thought about making a deal with Chaos, but the price was too high. Prospero is a much better master.

It's been well over a century since I've bargained with the entity known as Chaos.

--Cadiro, on a Chaos Orb (POE I)

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## THE DEAD RISE

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Upon death, our bodies return to the ground. Those that are marked with darkness nourish the corruption. Those that were mighty in life are stolen away.

They are carved and crafted, manipulated with malevolent creativity into becoming Malachai's servants. Forged into Ghosts of pure Nightmare.

--Tasuni, "Ghosts" (POE I)

I haven't slept. No one has slept. Not for three days, not since the black storm in the northern ranges. Not since the nightmares began.

Violent and twisted night terrors. They whisper to us, tempt us, threaten us, beguile us. They promise terrible things in return for even more terrible acts.

My husband, Denirus, went to Alliston to find a doctor who might help. He should have been back yesterday. I fear for him. I fear for all of us.

*-Tani*

--Etchings on Wood I (POE I)

It has been a little over a week since the black storm.

My husband has not returned and sickness now sweeps through our village. Many have died and those that lived have... changed.

These were folk we once called neighbour and friend. Now they limp and stagger through the night, their deformities as grotesque as the madness in their eyes.

*-Tani*

--Etchings on Wood II (POE I)

The moon was full the night of the black storm. It is full again.

They have come for me. They have come for my daughters. Bravalo called out while the others skulked and muttered in the darkness. Corin went to them, arms open, welcoming. The nightmares told her to.

My uncle tried to stop her. Bravalo crushed his skull with his smith's hammer. I barred the doors and windows but they screamed like monkeys and beat themselves bloody trying to get in.

I had no choice. I took my two youngest and fled through the cellar, following the tunnel to the mill.

All we can do is hide and hope. God help us.

*-Tani*

--Etchings on Wood III (POE I)



Three lunari gone now, since it all began. Perhaps I am the only one who still looks upon Lunaris, who remembers her name. Soon, I will be gone and the moon will go on, alone.

My husband has returned and he hunts for me. My dead husband hunts me. Corin too, and my uncle. Corpses rise and walk and feed. My girls, they walk now... and feed.

God has forsaken us. Lunaris is my witness. Tonight, I return to my family.

*-Tani*

--Etchings on Wood IV (POE I)

Arrol, the Merry Gull's cook, washed up on the rocks over yonder. Dead as a doornail he was. Buried him myself.

Then a few days later I see him on the beach... a little worse for wear, but upright, shuffling about. A land full of disturbing surprises, this Wraeclast.

--Bestel, "Drowned Dead" (POE I)

The Eternal Empire has some right nasty leftovers. Whether it's something in the air or in the water, no one stays dead long in Wraeclast... not the first time. Can take a little while, but sooner or later corpses wake up and go looking for breakfast.

--Tarkleigh, "Drowned Dead" (POE I)

## THE CORRUPTION OF NATURE

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Every time I took a stroll in the wilderness, I encountered vicious, mutated animals. It seems that the effects of the Cataclysm aren't solely limited to people.

--Divinia, "Wildlife " (POE I)

There is land that has forgotten the Spirit. Some man told the rocks and water a different dream. Now, the rocks and water think they are Man.

--Yeena, "Elementals" (POE I)

The forest children are ill. Once they drank from fruit, ate nuts and berries. Now they drink blood, eat brain and heart. This land is in a nightmare from which it cannot wake.

--Yeena, "Blood Apes" (POE I)

I miss the bittersweet tang of oranges. We can't grow them anymore, for even the soil is corrupted.

--Divinia, "The Bridge Encampment" (POE I)

## THE RISE OF ORIATH

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The small, sole-surviving city of the now defunct Sarn Empire. ...

--Help Panel glossary, "Oriath" (POE I)

... Oriathan wealth was built on Karui poverty. Oriathan gold will forever be stained red by Karui blood.

--Utula, "Slave Pens" (POE I)

The Oriathans built their empire on naval mobility, which allowed them to wage war wherever their enemy was weakest.

--The Admiral Varnished Coat (POE I)

## THE CATACLYSM (1336 IC)

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This could've been Oriath, yet The Cataclysm didn't reach across the sea. Why not?

--Scion, on the Slums (POE I)

## DARESSO & MERVEIL (CA. 1450 IC)

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At age thirteen, carving knife in hand, I killed beasts for the amusement of the filthy. At fifteen, they thought me worthy to fight a fellow man.

A butcher he was, twice as big and twice as stupid as I. I butchered the butcher and many like him, earned my way, kill by kill, out of the offal pit and into the Grand Arena.

I thought I would find wealth and glory in the arena. I was wrong. I found something far more precious. My Lady Merveil.

--Daresso, Plaque I (POE I)

With one motion, I cleave a man in twain. A kick sends another flying, and the roar of the crowd swells. I am their idol!

I was always meant to be at the top of the pile. Nobody else can compare. And this tiny man, this new challenger, Daresso, will fall like the rest to the might of Barkhul.

--Barkhul, Bloodsoaked Arena Memory (POE I)

Welcome to the Grand Arena of Theopolis. It is here that I first laid eyes upon my true purpose, my lady Merveil. It is our inspiration that defines us. What do you fight for, Gladiator? Hundreds of warriors tried to lay claim to the same title as I, but I defeated them all. Victory goes not to the able, but to the ambitious.

--Daresso, on The Grand Arena (POE I)

I knelt in the sand of the Grand Arena, awaiting the killing blow. I raised my eyes to look upon my death.

Instead, I saw her. Merveil. Her beautiful eyes met mine, and I knew that she saw me too. I turned my opponent's strike and killed the man with his own dagger.

Fighting had always been about survival. The primal instinct to kill or be killed. Now the fight became about something else. Love.

--Daresso, Plaque II (POE I)

"To know for what you fight. To get up again when you've been stuck down. To outmaneuver someone faster, trick someone smarter, crush someone stronger. That's what it takes to claim the crown."

- Daresso, the King of Swords

--The King's Blade (POE I)

The previous King of Swords was a giant of a man, both faster and stronger than I. Yet I needed only look up at my Lady Merveil to know that I had no choice. I could not die this day.

I made him shiver under ever parry, striking with all my might, so that my arms felt they might snap with every impact. All the while, I studied his face, watching for that moment when he began to doubt. It took an hour, but finally it was there.

Burning with pain, empty with exhaustion, I stepped inside his faltering swing and I slit the giant's throat.

I did not take my victory bow. I knelt in the sand, looked to Merveil, and cried out for my Lady's hand in marriage.

From that day forth, I wore the Crown of Swords upon my head and a ring of eternal love upon my finger.

--Daresso, Plaque III (POE I)

I offer to you an eternal oath that binds your heart to mine; a bond that not even death will break.  
Will you accept?

- Daresso, to his beloved

--Star of Wraeclast Ruby Amulet (POE I)

... When Merveil and Daresso wed, they held a most elaborate ceremony. Merveil was said to be the most beautiful visage ever to walk down the Basilica aisle. It took six people to carry the train on her dress. ...

--Tullina, "The Wedding Dress" (POE I)

Standing behind iron bars, Daresso thought of his adoring fans cheering his name, his wife's warm embrace waiting for him, and of the celebrations that would soon be thrown in his name. But when the arena gate lifted, he thought only of the fight.

--Combat Focus Crimson Jewel (POE I)

If the history books are to be believed, Daresso the Daring presented the necklace to Merveil on bended knee. And from the moment he placed that little chunk of Wraeclast at her throat, Merveil began to sing. It's told her sweet voice grew to fill even the largest concert halls of Oriath, and brought warmth to even the coldest of hearts.

But then she began to change. Her mind and body twisted, as did her songs. The sweetness remained while the sanity fled. Knowing what little I do about the powers that lie dormant here in Wraeclast, I'd surmise that if you have Merveil's necklace, you have the Siren's voice.

--Captain Fairgraves, "Merveil's Necklace" (POE I)

Exquisitely beautiful, slim, graceful and kind, fair Merveil was the envy of all the court maidens. As the most desired, it was only fitting she attracted the affections of Daresso, a famed swordsman, notorious flirt, and renowned treasure hunter. Their courtship was a whirlwind, the stuff of gossip and whispers among the courtesans. Daresso proposed to Merveil a mere fortnight after their first meeting, bending down upon one knee in the city garden at sunrise, as was the custom. For their engagement, he presented his lady with his most prized possession, the Star of Wraeclast. It was a dazzling ruby necklace, the gemstone nearly the size of a child's fist, hung from a braid of pure spun gold and inlaid with a twining ribbon of milky pearl. Rumor had it that Daresso had found the gemstone on a recent campaign deep into Wraeclast's wild jungle interior, a journey that claimed the lives of several men. Regardless of its origin, Merveil accepted the gift with joy, clasping it about her silky neck. The brilliant stone seemed to glow at her bosom with its own light. This was to be her happiest moment, for things did not unfold so well thereafter.

In the days that followed the grand wedding, Merveil was seen about the city, appearing to float on a cloud of joy, so difficult to read was her expression of blank contentment. She went from home to the market to the theater, always with the precious necklace at her throat, the better for all to see. One would think that someone so proud of an object would willingly allow others to handle it, but not so with Merveil. The first sign of warning came at a party, when one of the lady's friends decided to reach out to caress the beguiling stone. The woman's fingers had only brushed the gem, when Merveil screeched and clawed violently at her friend's face. Some who attended the party swore that the sound was more of a hiss than a scream, but all could agree on the horror of the injuries inflicted. The girl lost an eye but was lucky to keep any sight at all.

Naturally, Daresso was aghast at his bride's actions, yet Merveil's rage at the party was only a sign of things to come. She began to leave their bed at night, wandering the black streets aimlessly and returning home disheveled and smelling foul. On one night, her husband awoke to find her naked in bed with him, as freezing cold as death itself, her skin covered in some sort of vile slime. It was even said that she had seaweed tangled in her hair, but of course that was false, wasn't it? After all, the sea was a long walk from the city, down at the bottom of jagged cliffs.

As Merveil's behavior grew increasingly alarming and strange, her obsession with the necklace grew. She never removed it, and took to clutching the gemstone tightly in her hand, polishing it and staring evilly at anyone casting a glance her way. Whatever had corrupted her mind began to take hold of her body as well, for the once graceful girl now shuffled about like an aged crone. She abandoned the tasteful wardrobe that had once brought her so much attention, choosing instead to dress in stinking, tattered rags. People began to whisper that her body appeared to be changing beneath the garments, becoming lumpy, with odd bulges at her back and shoulders. Merveil took to hiding her face from view beneath a grimy cowl, but a few who saw her in good light said that her visage had changed as well. It was all stretched with blotched skin, her lips pulled back in an agonizing grimace, her exposed teeth long and sharp. Through all of this, Daresso remained a dedicated stalwart beside his wife, and few could fault him. Merveil now carried his child within her.

Yet the bonds of marriage were soon not strong enough. On a moonless night, with his wife fitfully asleep, Daresso gathered a few light possessions, slipped out into the night, and sailed off [for] Wraeclast on the midnight tide. Finding him gone in the morning, the last of Merveil's waning sanity appeared to slip away. She ran the entire distance to the cliffs barefoot, bloodying her feet on the hard cobbles of the road. Then she climbed down the rocks like a thing possessed and stood on the sandy beach, clutching the necklace to her chest while she screamed at the top of her lungs. Efforts to bring the girl back to the city were futile. She would attack anyone who got close.

For many days, Merveil remained at the water's edge, filthy and forlorn. She sustained herself on fish she pulled from the waters, devouring them alive, bones and all. She huddled in a nearby cave during the day, and spent the cold night hours standing knee-deep in the waves, singing out to the ocean for her lost husband. Her countenance grew haggard and shriveled, but her belly continued to grow, and when the child was finally born it was a freakish nightmare of scales, slime and tentacles. It was also female. With the birth of her spawn, Merveil retreated deep into the labyrinth of tidal tunnels beneath Wraeclast's cliff walls, where she grew ever more twisted and corrupt. Still the Star remained about her throat, pulsing with some dark energy.

It seems that in the years since these tragic events, the fair lady has been busy producing more children, though by what mechanism none can say. Her daughters, now of untold number, haunt the

island's shoreline. With lilting sweet voices, they call out at night to passing sailors, bidding their father to return to them. Their mother dwells deep in the bowels of the mountain, now fully possessed by the jewel around her neck, imbued by it with powerful, deadly magics. It is unlikely she will welcome anyone who blunders into her lair.

--<https://web.archive.org/web/20170903104755/http://www.pathofexile.com/monsters/merveil>

Daresso gave me the gem, kissed me, promised that he would be by my side forever. I sang for him. I sang for Oriath with his gem at my throat. Kalisa's gem. Kalisa's voice.

I sang in her echo, performing arias that had once made the Empire weep. I listened to Kalisa's lullabies in my dreams. I gave myself to her music. Mind... and body.

Daresso left me, for Sarn, with a promise to free me from Kalisa. I begged him not to go. Tried to show him the wonder of my transformation, the beautiful daughters he would soon meet. He couldn't see. None of them could see. I fled from their hatred.

When Daresso returns I will cast his cure away. I will teach him what true love is.

--Merveil, Damp Diary (POE I)

It's him! He sails back to me, my Daresso! I shall sing for him. I shall show him the way. Come, my love. Come to me. We shall be together at last.

No, turn away! Don't listen to my singing, you'll die upon the rocks! Turn away...! Turn away... Turn away...

--Merveil, Eroded Chamber Memory (POE I)

If you have to quench your curiosity about Merveil, go look at the corsairs that haunt the grave of ships. Like any mother, Merveil's got hungry mouths to feed.

--Tarkleigh, "Merveil" (POE I)

In my dreams, I still hear them. It was late Autumn, nearing Winter, and we were going on three months at sea. Our food stores had long been exhausted from damp, rot and thievery, our meager crew reduced to eating whatever moldy scraps we could rummage from the hold. Already half had died, and those who remained shuffled about the decks with vacant eyes and hollow chests. We had given up completely, resigned to die lost among the waves.

And then, out of the rising morning mist we spied them, the jagged, towering cliffs of cursed Wraeclast. A cheer went up among the men, some rubbing their eyes with disbelief. As we drew closer, the pounding roar of the surf drowned out our anxious chatter, and the forbidding, rocky wall drew ever larger. To our dismay, we found no port at water's edge, no cove to shelter our

beleaguered vessel. "We head North, around the peninsula" the captain ordered, so we came about and set course.

Many hours of sailing brought only more misery and hunger, and by nightfall we were gripped with despair. Wraeclast was a fortress, as impenetrable as a stone prison. As night fell, we dropped anchor, and sought whatever comfort remained. The air grew quiet and still, the only sound the lapping of the waves against the hull. But then another sound joined in, soft, enticing, and insistent. At first we could not believe our hearing. How could there be women's voices out here, in this awful, desolate place? The men staggered to the railing, first peering out into the blackness and then calling to it. The voices returned our hail, rising as a chorus, beckoning us to them.

Within minutes, we had dropped rowboats into the water, and all who could summon the strength clambered aboard. Then we rowed like men possessed, towards the gentle, sweet voices ahead, their song drifting up from a yawning cave in the cliff side. We arrived at the entrance shivering and exhausted, yet nearly frenzied with need and desire. Oh the voices, the things they promised us! Disdaining caution, the whole of us dashed forward into the cave, the dark swallowing us up as readily as a serpent engulfing its prey. And the voices ceased.

There was a pause, a singular moment of clarity when we all knew our great folly. Then, a new voice pierced the air, this one sharp and strident, dripping with malevolence. It was all around us, hissing with delight, and hunger. Then the men began to shriek, their choking wails abruptly silenced by whatever beset us. I felt something cold, slimy and terribly strong coil itself around my throat, and I reacted on instinct. I pulled my dagger free, cutting wildly at the thing that grasped me, and somehow I was released! Abandoning all thought, I groped for the cavern's exit, and when I found it, I plunged headfirst into the surf, my own screams barely audible among those of my doomed crew mates. I was the only one who made it out of that hellish place.

Let my words be a warning to any who dare travel the shores of Wraeclast. The Siren's Daughters lie in wait there, ready to lure and devour whoever happens by. If you hear their sweet song on the ocean air, cover your ears and flee.

--<https://web.archive.org/web/20121101071227/http://www.pathofexile.com/monsters/siren>

What follows are the last words of Eirik Hoskuld, captain of a wrecked merchant vessel, found in his waterlogged journal on the beach.

"I'm awoken by thunder. It booms suddenly overhead, shaking the glass of my portal, a deafening echo in the tight confines of my quarters. All is pitch dark for a moment and then a brilliant flash fills the cabin, nearly blinding me. I'm soaking, perhaps from a dream sweat, but likely from the icy seawater trickling down through the cracks in the deck. This cursed storm has tossed us for more than a week now and sleep is rare.

I open my cabin door, and am immediately struck with the full fury of the gale roaring outside. Lightning forks and flickers overhead, for a moment casting our tattered main sail in stark relief against the iron sky. A sickening crackle of thunder follows immediately behind, boring into my aching bones. I make my way carefully across the pitching deck, past my crew who huddle drenched in the freezing darkness. Each of them has long since withdrawn into his own world. We've not spoken in days. Cold and fear will break the strongest of men.



I climb to the helm and grip the first mate's shoulder, alerting him to my arrival. He shuffles past me like a ghost as I seize the wheel, checking my compass in the gloom to determine if we're still on the right heading. But what is this? The needle, normally pointing reliably North, jerks around suddenly as the lightning flashes. I tap the glass on the device, even knocking it against the wooden railing, but it changes nothing. Without navigation, I can only hold the wheel steady, and try to keep the craft upright in the tossing surf. I throw myself into this task, as the wind tears into me anew. We plunge ahead into the night.

Strangely, despite the damp and the din, I find myself drifting off to sleep. My dreams take me to kinder shores, to warmth and comfort. But it's all too brief, for I'm startled awake, swearing that I've heard something. Unless I'm mistaken, that's the soft, sweet voice of a girl, out here in the wind and waves. I first think that it can only be the delusions of my exhausted mind, for we've been months without the sight of a woman. Yet now, I hear it again, and I'm fully awake. The song reaches my ears louder now, caressing them with a silky, delicate, invisible hand. It is beyond exquisite, the most beautiful thing I've ever heard. I stand transfixed, peering out into the darkness, blinking back a mixture of tears and seawater. I must find her, I must know this maiden, the storm be damned!

I turn the ship to port and yell a command to sheet out the main sail. Our battered craft accelerates, plowing through the waves like a thing possessed. The sea rises and falls, beating a rhythm on the ship's hull as we speed along. All the while, the singing grows in volume, drawing us forward. Finally, I see dim light ahead, a faint blue glow, and shimmering lithe figures arrayed on a beach, not far ahead. I've reached them, this heavenly choir, who offers salvation to me and my men. Alas, I should have known how great my folly before it was too late. As we close on the beach, the trap is suddenly apparent. I see a ragged spine of sharp rocks dead ahead, just above the waterline, waiting hungrily to crunch our hull to splinters.

With a cry, I heave the wheel to starboard, and we begin to turn. Our bow crosses the wind, and the ship's boom whips across the deck like a scythe, cutting down anyone in its path. The violence of the jibe is far too much for the soaked and rotted stays that bind the mast to the hull. With a horrible splintering crack, the mast breaks sideways, and comes down on the deck in a torrent of canvas and rope. Completely out of control now, we slide sideways towards the rocks and when the impact comes, I am struck inert.

I awake some time later, lying among a heap of bodies on the deck and somehow, barely alive. The blue glow I saw from afar is all around me now, it appears to have crept on board like a living thing. It surrounds me, pulsing, slithering, suffusing the very corpses of my crew mates. As I watch with unbelieving eyes, a blue, shimmering specter rises from the body of the nearest man. It just stands there for a time, and then slowly turns towards me, clutching some sort of ethereal weapon. A moment later, more shapes arise, until I am surrounded by a host of iridescent ghosts. I know not what these things are, but I am certain they afford me no good will. Without another thought, I gain my feet, and scramble across the deck to my captain's quarters, barring myself inside.

They're all at the door now, they've been there for hours. I can see their evil blue glow through the gaps in the boards. As I write this, their blows fall heavily on the failing wood, thudding with the steady beat of some hellish metronome. How long the barrier will last I cannot say, but they will surely breach it. Pray for me."

--<https://web.archive.org/web/20130705094954/http://www.pathofexile.com/monsters/ghost>

It's a bit of an embarrassing affair, truth be told.

Thought I could return to the golden days, you know? Be a terror of the high seas like in me youth. Problem was, they'd all forgotten me. Those young blighters sailing about, they had no clue who I even were! Figured if I could complete another great feat, like slaying that sea-bitch Merveil, maybe that'd earn me my respect back.

Arr, suppose I don't need to tell you; that girlie's stronger than she looks. All it took were one slip of the old hands and next I knew, the Black Crest were wrecked against the coast and I'm getting meself eaten alive by that hag.

Peeled each separate muscle from my bones, she did. I'll tell you, it weren't pretty.

--Weylam Roth, "Merveil" (POE I)

Welcome, husband. We knew in our hearts that you would find us. Come, Daresso, Ambrosia and Amarissa must meet their father. Come, my love. Return to your family.

--Merveil, Sailor's Skin (POE I)

Daresso? Yes, Petarus has spoken of him. The disturbing question is this:

How does a man who, by all accounts, has been dead for over a hundred years end up as a Nightmare monarch in the bowels of Highgate?

Unlike Kaom, there is utterly no trace of his passing, and we have scouted every footstep of this mountain and its surrounds. There is no other entrance. No physical entrance. ...

--Oyun, "Daresso" (POE I)

Petarus: Daresso? He's down there, inside the mountain?

Vanja: Are we talking about *the* Daresso? The Sword King?

Petarus: Seems like it. But... how did he get in there? He left Oriath about a century and a half ago, hoping to find a cure for his lady, Merveil. He would have had to fight his way through the Maraketh, but... Oyun's never mentioned anything of the sort.

Vanja: Maybe he didn't go in alive.

Petarus: What do you mean?

Vanja: We live in a land where the dead walk and *things* like Dialla live for centuries.

Petarus: You think he died somewhere else and then the Beast got hold of him?

Vanja: Could be.

Petarus: Well, if the Beast can do that, then... what bloody good was Deshret's Seal?

Vanja: Exactly.

--Petarus and Vanja, "Daresso" (POE I)

The Beast eats the souls of its prey, devouring their very life force. Those consumed become a part of the creature, existing forevermore as a thrall of twisted nightmare. This fate befell many of Wraeclast's most legendary figures.

Daresso the Sword King - A peerless gladiator, the best the world has ever seen. Daresso ascended from humble orphaned slave beginnings to the pinnacle of gladiatorial glory. Driven by a mad hope to purify his lost love Merveil, he abandoned reason and caution. Daresso's living nightmare chronicles the arc of his pitiable legacy, a story of loss, desire and reckless ambition. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/theawakening/actfour>

... Daresso, King of Swords. Damned by Desire. Oh, aren't we all? He's down here too, and Desire's curse remains his to bear. ...

--Lady Dialla, "The Eternal Nightmare" (POE I)

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## LYCIA, THE SANCTUM, & THE SCOURGE

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Centuries of my predecessors line these walls. It is supposedly the ultimate honor to rest with them, but I have my doubts.

How would anyone know which bones are mine? How would anyone know that I am even here? Because I recognise none of these remains myself...

--Unknown, Grim Sepulchre Memory (POE I)

When I was young, I never questioned our faith. We pile the bones of former Templars in massive ossuaries that fill the spaces under the earth. Each one is hallowed, we are told. Each one is sacred. Yet as I stood there on that broken day, gazing at the bones I was supposed to join, I realised that I had no idea who any of these people were. Lip service. Meaningless. So many have been forgotten, but I will be remembered.

--Lycia, Remembrance (POE I)

Their hypocrisy knows no bounds. I will see their destruction. All I must do is outlive them...

--Lycia, The Templars (POE I)

Knowledge is a far greater power than gold, for money cannot buy eternity.

--Lycia, Immortality (POE I)

I learned a forbidden Templar secret: there are no records of the deceased. They are not 'hallowed, forever, together', like the priests told us as children. They are simply discarded, thrust away into crypts and buried haphazardly in the earth. The dead are simply... forgotten.

I wanted to be remembered, so I sought to become what they feared. I sought to live forever. I chased heresy and the unholy power of the demons... I raised the dead, and eventually, cheated death itself. It came at an inexorable cost – and, as fate would have it, I paid with my life. Perhaps there is an irony in this.

--Lycia, Forbidden Knowledge (POE I)

... There's a certain forbidden Sanctum...hidden under the ruins of Fellshrine for untold centuries. ...

--Divinia, "Aiding an Archivist" (POE I)

I bargained with an entity far greater than the Templars, far greater than myself, far greater than any of the civilisations that have risen and fallen throughout Wraeclast. It blessed me immeasurably and cursed me insufferably. And, in a sense, it was a companion... almost a comfort. The adventurers will never understand the true price of having dominion over the Sanctum, nor of immortality. It is isolation. This is where the true torture lies.

--Lycia, Isolation (POE I)

Beidat made false promises to many denizens, converting only one into a conduit through which Wraeclast might be consumed.

--Tainted Pact Coral Amulet (POE I)

Beidat is a cruel master. He calls himself the Archangel of Death, but there is nothing angelic about him. He is a demon-lord, and bargaining with him was like parting with my very soul. If only he had taken my emotions... It would have made eternity pass unnoticed.

--Lycia, Beidat (POE I)

Time passes at an infuriatingly slow pace. There were no changes to demarcate it, so I began to create my own.

I built stone forms, animated them and made them talk. I raised a legion of undead – partly out of ennui, partly to see if I could. My creations are painfully dim, but to have them is better than enduring the passage of time without change.

I've lost count of the number of skeletons I've prised apart. I've even bottled fresh blood, harvested from curious adventurers...

--Lycia, Creations (POE I)

My eternity passed unnoticed within the Sanctum. I knew I needed to amass great power in order to harvest the will of my prey. I commanded nascent energy, raw and shapeless, and over centuries, I gave it form. I opened gateways in the wilderness of Wraeclast – and even better, I managed to lure my quarry through them. Like rodents to rhoas, they were drawn into my domain... and not one has survived.

--Lycia, Capture (POE I)

Leaving the Sanctum is a tempting prospect, but where better to ensnare hapless adventurers? There is ample treasure here, and glory for those who seek it. Better still, the glory-seekers provide entertainment. The more tenacity they have, the more fun it is... and the more sustenance they provide.

--Lycia, Sustenance (POE I)

From what I've been able to determine, Lycia made a pact with some dark benefactor from beyond this world. She's been here for centuries, drawing people in and gathering a particular type of energy from unsuspecting explorers. Once she has enough, she'll attempt to bring her benefactor into Wraeclast. I have my suspicions about who, or what, it might be...

--Divinia, "Lycia's Deal" (POE I)

The moment is nigh. The ritual is nearly complete. Give me your all!

Yes! The blood moon rises! Beidat, give me your power!

--Lycia, on her transformation (POE I)

Lycia transforming and calling out the name Beidat confirms my worst fears. In my research of her occult activities, I found mention of a ravenous horde of horrific demons that exist in some other form of reality, constantly trying to reach us to consume us. It's a secret known only to the line of High Templars and their keepers of the forbidden. They sought means of power to resist them, should the day come that they find a way into our world... but she must have reached out to the Scourge and made a deal...

--Divinia, "Lycia's Deal" (POE I)

I have only seen mention of the Scourge in the most forbidden texts of my order. The High Templars kept the secret to themselves. There are demons all around us, eternally trying to enter our world. If they manage to manifest themselves here more than temporarily, they will ravage Wraeclast and consume every living thing. Needless to say, we cannot let that happen.

--Divinia, "The Scourge" (POE I)

### ATTEMPTING TO STOP LYCIA

... Most of the Templars' secret archives have probably been looted or burned by now, but there's one trove only the Master Archivist and I knew about. It's hidden within my order's Ossuary. Now if you can, please go there and search for a particular tome. It's called the Mortinomicon, and supposedly contains everything the Templars know about immortality. ...

--Divinia, "Aiding an Archivist" (POE I)

The Mortinomicon Exitio Immortalis, as its lengthy name implies, is quite the difficult read. As a layer of extra security, it was written in the ancient language of the newcomers that were instrumental in the founding of our religion. Very few people can speak it, let alone read it. I'm deciphering the language at the same time that I'm translating and researching. It's mentally taxing to the extreme, but I have no choice but to soldier on!

--Divinia, "The Mortinomicon" (POE I)

Hoc sciendo scribo ut verba mea perdant animam meam eternam. Mihi credendum est quod novus deus meus non sit tam divinus quam ipse petit..

[I write this knowing that my words may damn my eternal soul. I must believe that my new god isn't as divine as he claims...]

--The Mortinomicon Exitio Immortalis (POE I)

Mundus noster cecidit. Daemones ubique sunt. Librum hunc in sacrarium conicio, ut forte alius viam inveniat..

[Our world has fallen. Demons are everywhere. I cast this book into the sanctum, so that perhaps someone else will find a way...]

--Forbidden Tome (POE I)

... I can't believe I'm holding, in my very own hands—wait, what is this? It *looks* like the Mortinomicon, but the text is different... the historical references are all wrong... I might sound like a madwoman, but I think you've somehow found a tome from a different possible Wraeclast! This contains vital new information...

--Divinia, "The Forbidden Sanctum" (POE I)

... I'll prepare my incantations and rituals. If you manage to reach her, I'll be attacking the energies of the black pact directly while you fight her. We don't need to find a permanent solution... if I can manage to disable the Sanctum's immortality even for just a few moments, then Lycia's death will be permanent. That's assuming you can actually defeat her, of course.

--Divinia, "Facing Lycia" (POE I)

...my latest iteration of rituals didn't work. The Sanctum seems unaffected, and Lycia's presence is still endemic. She'll be back. I'll keep researching. We'll figure this out before she manages to open Wraeclast to invasion... hopefully.

--Divinia, "Lycia's Return" (POE I)

In a sense, what happened to Lycia is sad. She chose an unholy path out of spite, knowing the Templar preachings to be riddled with fallacies. And she chose immortality out of a desire to not be forgotten, enduring centuries of isolation as a result. She is not blameless, but Beidat was the true culprit. That self-proclaimed 'archangel,' that *fiend*, enticed Lycia into the deal that prolonged her life, and used her to gain a foothold in Wraeclast. I shudder to think of what will happen if he garners more power.

These ever-changing halls are still permeated with Lycia's magic. She is not gone. She still has dominion over this place... We will never know the specifics of her deal with Beidat, but if she manages to open the door to this world, the Scourge will bring horror to every living person on Wraeclast. She is truly immortal, so all we can do is delay her...

--Divinia, "Lycia's Defeat" (POE I)

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## HIGH TEMPLAR VENARIUS

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The winters of my youth were cold and harsh. We had nothing, yet to my mother's credit, I wanted for so little.

--Altered Distant Memory (POE I)

I was a happy child, before the cruel truth was revealed to me. I fight so that the children may remain ignorant.

--Circle of Nostalgia Amethyst Ring (POE I)

A man in uniform visits. He is from the Courts. He says the Templar have alms for widows like my mother, but she must collect it in person. We go to the church together, and I wait outside in the gardens. The sun is setting. I don't know how long I've been sitting here.

Mother comes from around the rear. She looks pale. Her eyes are red, and her clothes are torn. She doesn't look at me but she grabs my hand. We walk home in silence. I lay awake in bed. I hear her crying. The man comes over often after that, with toys and food, but I don't like him...

--Venarius, Palace Grounds Memory (POE I)

People stream down the street towards Oriath Square. I hear their shouts and cheers, and when Mother isn't looking, sneak out to join the merry crowd. Just outside the pens, a Karui boy, no older than I, stands atop the gallows.

I see by the sign around his neck he has been caught stealing. I swear I will not look away, but fear overtakes me. I hear the rope snap taut and the crowd cheer, but I fight back the tears...

--Venarius, City Park Memory (POE I)

The stench convenes around me thicker than the press of the vagabonds themselves. Though starving, their strength while holding on to one another is surprising. I'm trapped in a knot of ragged bodies, and the men of the Church clap me in irons despite my cries.

I'm not one of them! Can't you hear me? I'm not Maraketh, nor homeless, and have committed no sins. That ship is not for me! Why won't you listen?

... I feel it: at eight years old, I was almost exiled by mere happenstance. If my mother had not found me and gotten the Templars to release me, I would have been lost...

--Venarius, Distant Landing Memory (POE I)

I sacrificed a life of love for one of responsibility, so that she, and others like her, might be kept safe.

--Circle of Regret Topaz Ring (POE I)

... Yes, I remember watching their mighty parades through Oriath Square as a child, and I can still feel that sense of satisfaction the day I truly donned the mantle. All of the pain and sacrifice was worth it, to do good, to protect mankind... to protect the children...

--Cavas, "Cavas' Past" (POE I)



It was in my oath that I found peace. In echoing marble halls I found my voice. Before the congregation I found purpose.

--Rewritten Distant Memory (POE I)

The Courts are burning. Accusations fly. Sinner! Heretic! I am but an initiate, and my patron urges silence. We will keep our heads down while one High Templar supplants another. It's all about power, my patron whispers, and we have none.

Should an accusation fall our way, we shall be doomed to die with the other accused. Be unseen and unheard, he whispers. This is what happens when men who seek power refuse to wait. I learned a valuable lesson that day: Trust without leverage is vulnerability.

--Venarius, Distant Courthouse Memory (POE I)

... That was the moment Venarius decided to seize life and vie for power. That was the moment doom for men like my father was assured.

--Zana, on Distant Courthouse Memory (POE I)

The judge determines worthiness by comparison to the paragon: himself.

--Mask of the Tribunal Magistrate Crown (POE I)

I condemned an innocent man to the pyres, but to admit this mistake is to condemn myself. My only choice is to strive harder.

--Circle of Anguish Ruby Ring (POE I)

Without our strict rule, man's destructive side would take hold. Our beautiful public spaces, our services for the ill and the needy, all of it would crumble.

--Twisted Distant Memory (POE I)

What had seemed sacred and infallible so quickly became flawed out of necessity. Created from compromises. Vulnerable to mortal whims.

--Augmented Distant Memory (POE I)

My subordinates circled me eternally, attuned to the slightest weakness, ready to tear me apart for their own gains.

--Circle of Fear Sapphire Ring (POE I)

When I finally rejected my faith entirely, my stagnant belief became thick white blood, as choking as it was nourishing.

--The Apostate Cabalist Regalia (POE I)

I was a Templar, yes, but now I remember that I secretly despised them. I understood that they were a diseased organization prone to brutal oppression. ... I cannot imagine my resentment would have gone over well with my superiors. Maybe I kept my thoughts to myself and lived a life of quiet desperation, but I feel like I was the kind of man to act.

So what did I do?

--Cavas, "Cavas' Past" (POE I)

Out of sight, out of mind. No one speaks of the cursed land anymore. That has made it quite simple to send our smugglers out in search of powerful Eternal artefacts.

We knew of the gems, but we did not know of what Malachai called his 'muse.' The smugglers have returned with rubbings of the device they found. They call it 'miraculous.' I know a thing or two about miracles, so I will be the judge of that.

--Venarius, Distant Landing Memory (POE I)

What is it? You know I am not to be disturbed during my communion with God-- it's here? Well get it to the lab immediately, and do not disturb me again, lest I take your head!

I feel a rush of excitement as I review the contents of the crate. The pieces, aged as they are, still hum with energy. I can feel its potential, and it fills me with hope and terror. I cannot assemble it, but I know who can. I need only apply a little pressure...

--Venarius, Ritual Memory (POE I)

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## VALDO CAESERIUS & THE ELDER

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...the Templar kept many artefacts hidden deep beneath the city streets...they hoped to hide forever.

I think it's time to pull back the veil. There's an entrance to the Templar Laboratory not far from here. My father used to sneak me inside as a child. He never could stand the long work days apart...

--Zana, "The Templar Laboratory" (POE I)

I am Valdo Caeserius, chief Arkhon of the Oriath academy in Theopolis. Servant of the High Templar Venarius.

I begin these writings as a record of events transpired, in hopes that the penning of such horrors will help bring sense to the matters at present. Some time ago, I was commissioned in the repairing of a strange device delivered into my hands. A golden machine found broken in the ruins of Wraeclast. Believing it to contain some dark infernal secret, the High Templar asked that I restore it and weaponize whatever powers it might contain.

Though I saw it as mostly inconsequential at the time, it is worth noting, my daughter, a quiet young thing of five, suffered nightmares and tantrums unlike any I'd seen, during those former weeks I spent working on the device. I'd assumed that she missed her mother and was going through a rough patch grieving. Now, however, I can't help but wonder if perhaps it was a sign.

I'd considered refusing Venarius, though not in any serious nature. Though my personal politics remain my own, I've often struggled to follow his instructions and rule – filled with such malice and hunger. Regretfully, I accepted his orders, for I know of many families who have refused the High Templar before. They have all vanished now.

--Book of Memories, Page 1 (POE I)

It's all a blur... My father was the chief Arkhon for High Templar Venarius – a cruel and pernicious ruler. Venarius wished to hold the world ransom with his occult relics from the rubble of Wraeclast, he believed they could venerate him even higher in his status.

My father was forced to experiment on the map device for him, in hopes that he would uncover some kind of weapon. I don't need to tell you that my father found something worthy of attention. And instead of handing it over, he made sure its power could not be misused, a surety that cost him his freedom and me... my childhood.

--Zana, "The Shaper" (POE I)

The device lay on my work table, shattered and in pieces. I'm ashamed to admit now that not once did I ask of what design it belonged to. Rather, I busied myself on all the little pieces, ignoring the sum of its parts. I pondered on how it had been structured for days on end, until at last, a creeping dread submerged me.

I was unable to rebuild this relic – whatever it was. Though it seemed to be mostly functioning, something... important appeared to be missing. Worse still, it seemed as if the part required, well... it didn't exist. Not in our reality anyhow. The thing that made it tick, the thing that was mysteriously vacant, I could only conceive of in the half-baked imaginings of my own mind.

My thoughts felt like a fleeting dream during the first few minutes of waking. I worked tirelessly in search of answers, exhausting myself beyond what I'd ever done before, until finally, at the base of that cruel device, I fell into a deep, deep sleep.

--Book of Memories, Page 2 (POE I)

I awoke in the most beautiful of places. The skies were blue, unlike the greyness of Oriath. Birds fluttered through the air, singing pleasantly. Around me, a warm wind brushed my face, and tall grass tickled playfully against my skin. I couldn't know where I was, though even then I suspected the place was somehow connected to the infernal mechanism lying dormant on my workbench.

As I wandered this strange new land, I felt a growing sense of realization that I was not alone. Exploring the fields of tall grass, I sought a peace within the brush. It was in that moment that I met a fellow wanderer. It was a Shade – a whisper of embodied smoke, barely heard or seen amongst the vegetation. It rose and spoke to me not through language, but through thoughts and pictures, colours and emotions, bursting into my mind like water, billowing up through cracks in the earth.

The Shade welcomed me to its land and asked how it was that I arrived. Eager for answers, I found myself enthusiastically volunteering information in detail of Oriath, of my daughter and of course, the strange and mysterious device I suspected had lead [sic] me to this place.

--Book of Memories, Page 3 (POE I)

...like a temptress, the dreamlands seduced him...

--Zana, on receiving Memory Fragment 3 (POE I)

With the patience of a prowling lion, the Shade watched the Scholar.

--Cyclopean Coil Leather Belt (POE I)

The Shade nodded thoughtfully. It knew of the device. The machine was a doorway between my world and the dreamlands, I was told. The device had been lost. Broken and torn apart by villains and thieves. The Shade was overjoyed to hear it found, and offered to help me rebuild that final missing part.

It seemed too good to be true. We would open the gateway between worlds, and then, all the goodness of these lands would flow out into Oriath leading us into a new age of prosperity. I agreed wholeheartedly – for I feared, and I still do fear, what will become of my daughter under High Templar Venarius' reign. All that the Shade asked of me was to return the favour, when the time came.

And as I lay down in the cool grass bathing myself in the soothing sun, I found that sleep once more took my body, only this time, when I closed my eyes there, I also opened them in the cold, empty darkness of my study...

--Book of Memories, Page 4 (POE I)

Weeks passed. The sun set and the moon rose countless times. And every night, I found myself asleep at the foot of the strange device, awoken to the reality of another world inside my own. I would transition into the dreamlands.

In my sleep, I would apprentice myself to the Shade, allowing it to teach me the ways of this strange place. I learnt how to shape and build things from my imagination, forming them in thin air as if by some great, thaumaturgical marvel. It was through this tempering of the mind that I, under its instructions began rebuilding the missing component of the device. And most exciting of all, how to transport such phantasmagorical treasures back into the world of man.

When High Templar Venarius visited during Oriath hours, I'd lie to him and make excuses. Arrogantly, I didn't want him to know of the power I'd uncovered. I wanted these dreamlands to be my secret, to belong to me and me alone. Not even my daughter could know...

--Book of Memories, Page 5 (POE I)

The day came when the missing part of the great device had finally been formed. A bizarre segment meant to hold mystical images of ancient maps. It was on this day that the Shade requested its one favour.

I was shown suddenly images of the past, of the Shade's once proud rule as King of all the dreamlands. I saw his good and noble kingdom, and the shadow that fell upon his domain. A sect of hateful men and women – The Watchers of Decay rose up to destroy the Shade. Questing to control the land, these terrorists fashioned a powerful blade meant to divorce the King's spirit from his body and curse it to wander his former kingdom while his body blistered in stone.

I was mortified! How could people do such cruel things to this humble creature? And where were these villains now? Had they been the same ones whom had made off with the device? Had they been the ones who severed the connection between worlds and ruined its function?

The Shade led me deep into a dark forest and revealed to me in the depths of a forgotten cave, a statue, cast from black marble, pierced by what I assumed to be the very same sword from my visions. The effigy was frightening. Utterly terrifying to behold. The creature it depicted – a violent and abhorrent thing, stood amidst an altar of ancient wood and bone. I felt a chill go up my spine as in that moment, the Shade closed in behind...

--Book of Memories, Page 6 (POE I)

Pull the blade from my chest. [sic] the Shade imposed upon my mind in both image and thought, "remove [sic] the sword. Free me." But as I found myself reaching out to do as asked, a great horror came upon me and for the first time, doubt entered my mind. I wondered if this creature was who it had told me. I resolved to hold off for a moment, to ask more questions and discover a greater understanding of the Shade, and so in trepidation, I refused.

At merely the suggestion of rebellion, the Shade flew into a fury! It flamed red, full of rage! And though it could not speak, it made its intentions very clear. I felt my mind torn asunder as images of murder and mutilation were forced upon me. I was... doing things. Terrible things to the ones I loved... to my daughter.

I fled in a panic, running from the cave, through the dark forest, cursing myself for ever trusting such a strange creature so blindly. At last, in desperation, I found a small, abandoned fox-hole and

burrowed inside. The Shade passed by, still flaming in anger, searching desperately for me. It was in that dark damp hole that I trembled with revulsion and terror, weeping in silence until at last I fell into sleep returning once more to my laboratory.

Once back, I fled into the streets, arriving home in the dead of night. Bursting through my daughter's bedroom, I woke her and hugged her tight, shaking and crying as I did so. Promising that I would never, ever, let her go again.

--Book of Memories, Page 7 (POE I)

Months have now passed since my horrifying descent into that fox-hole, since the Shade revealed its true nature. Every day, the slimed and poisoned tendrils of fear grip ever tighter into my flesh, and each morning, I lock myself inside my study, delving into the darkest tomes one can find, searching for some infernal, occult knowledge that might save us from the thing I fled.

I'd almost given up hope, so little did I really know about the Shade and its "dreamlands". That is, until this morning when a shipment arrived for me from Eramir, a scholar whom I greatly admire. Sifting through the countless fragments of parchments and books he has sent me, I have found at last, some information which could be of some use.

These Watchers of Decay did indeed exist at one time in our world's distant past, and now, I've some of their work! The truth of their history... it's... it is so unutterable that I hesitate even now, to write it down, to put the words to my own journal. Yet I am an Arkhon and us Arkhons record all...

--Book of Memories, Page 8 (POE I)

They called it the Elder. A creature of malignant madness, born of that oblivion from before time itself began. Once only an abstract expression, the Elder was given physical form. It entered our realm. It fashioned for itself a bauble of chaos and secret worlds to use as a kind of... hunting ground. This "bauble" is undoubtedly the dreamlands I've uncovered.

The Elder came here out of hunger. Preferring victims of a younger flesh, it became the bogeyman, dragging our children off into the night, casting them into its realm of shadow and feasting upon their nightmares undisturbed, for it was imagination that truly satiated it.

With such sustenance, the Elder deigned to cultivate something. To... sustain and birth forth its true goal. Its true self. The Oblivion from outside time and space. The Decay.

By the gods... Even now as I write this, I feel my hand trembling, and I struggle to keep my mind on the task ahead... The Elder. It cannot be killed. The Watchers, they built the device, so as to travel to and lock tight its kingdom of torment, bringing with them the blade I saw – Starforge – it [sic] was called. A weapon capable of divorcing agency from form, to give the Elder a kind of eternal rest... There in its den, amongst the gibbering nightmares of child victims, the Elder became trapped. Starved. Unable to hunt. Held in ungodly chains.

The Elder's form may be trapped in stone. But its agency roams free. I have met it. What if someone else were to enter the dreamlands and encounter the Shade? What if Venarius...? My meeting with

the Elder, must have invigorated and refreshed its fervour. I must find a way to put a stop to it, before it finds a path to freedom. If not for my own sake, then for that of my daughter...

--Book of Memories, Page 9 (POE I)

They hoped that, trapped in its prison, the creature would age and perish. But time would not touch the fiend.

--Nebuloch Nightmare Mace (POE I)

Though its body was locked in stone, its essence wandered the infinite, learning, and preparing.

--Impresence Onyx Amulet (POE I)

Time has passed since my last entry, of that I am aware. I've spent every waking hour since, trying to find a way to end this unholy Elder, though nothing has, yet, fit.

Within my secret study, I've begun work on a device of my own. Whereas the Watcher's [sic] map device was designed to enter and lock tight the Elder's pocket dimension, my machine is of a different nature, though not entirely dissimilar.

Day and night, I have toiled away, tinkering and shaping this invention. When I'm finished, this Elder will never bother our world again. The creature cannot be killed, and divorcing its spirit from its body has not kept it silent, but maybe... just maybe... It can be exiled...

--Book of Memories, Page 10 (POE I)

How could I have been so stupid? So caught up in this whole nightmare that I forgot my work as an Arkhon! My "supposed" lack of progress on the Map Device has given the High Templar cause for suspicion.

At noon, as I neared the completion of my work, he and his guards interrupted my tinkering with a furious rage! Tossing my machine to the ground, he destroyed much of my research, demanding to know why I no longer focused on the task given to me. Clapped in irons I was led off to the Theopolis prisons for my insubordination.

I write this now, due only to the kindness of a friend in the Templar guard, he [sic] knows of my partiality to journaling and so as soon as he heard of my capture, managed to sneak in a diary for me scribble [sic] upon.

I don't know what Venarius plans to do with me. I've heard whispers of public shaming and lashes, but none of that is certain. What is certain, is that the Elder is coming for us. It's coming for us all. No matter whether you are High Templar or the lowest of the Karui slaves, the Elder knocks at the threshold. Bringing Decay... I must find my way from these chains at all costs. Only I can save us from this blasphemy that has fallen upon Oriath...

--Book of Memories, Page 11 (POE I)

My daughter... My darling daughter... By the gods. So much has transpired since last I wrote. So much horror... I've not a moment to lose, but I need to... I have to... I must write down what has occurred. It's the only way I shall keep my sanity. I believe I'm safe for the moment, so I shall rest and reflect, in the hope that it will give me new insight on how to proceed in this current disaster.

Venarius, that bastard... Enraged by my lack of progress on his occult weaponry, he marched me through the streets. "This man has betrayed me!" he shouted as his men stripped me of my robes and beat me with sticks. When I was but an inch from death, he took me aside once more, demanding to know why I'd failed him. In my... in my foolishness, I... I told him everything.

I'd hoped to appeal to his better nature, to his higher self, that he might rally the Templar army behind me. Together we could defeat the Elder once and for all! But you should never appeal to a man's better nature. He may not have one. Venarius... he... he took Zana! Held her at knife point. Demanded... demanded that I take all of us through, into the dreamlands - to meet with the Elder!

Please, whoever you are, reading this - do not think wrong of me. If it were your daughter's life at risk, would you have done this any differently? I... I did as I was asked. Using the Map Device, we stepped through a gateway and I found myself once more setting foot in this atlas of worlds...

--Book of Memories, Page 12 (POE I)

The land was as beautiful as it'd been when last I'd visited. The breeze rippled across the meadows and the sun beat affectionately down on our necks. The High Templar and his men marvelled at such wonders. My daughter cried in fear. I felt sick to my bones.

As we trampled through the wilderness, it wasn't long before we were met by the overwhelming presence of the Shade itself. The very essence of the Elder stood silently before us. I felt its eyes bore deep into my skin. Demanding of me in visions to tell it why I had returned. But before I could answer, Venarius stepped forward and greeted the phantom, offering his words up into the air:

"He tells me you are King of this land," he said, "My [sic] poor, poor scholar says that you are imprisoned, that you need a key."

As he spoke, the shade stayed quiet, listening and smouldering smugly.

"I can be that key for you." The [sic] High Templar announced.

For a moment more, the Shade did not respond. A perverse, pensive, pregnant pause lay heavily upon us all. Then finally, casting an image at once upon all of our minds, we felt it ask of Venarius:

"What dost thou want?"

The High Templar smiled. "Why, power, of course." He [sic] replied.

--Book of Memories, Page 13 (POE I)



The shade spluttered into a great shimmering blaze, moving rapidly forward into trees up ahead. The High Templar gave chase, his soldiers dragging my daughter and I along behind. I recognized where we were headed. The forest was as dark as I remembered, and the cave, just as terrible. Before we knew it, we stood at the base of that blasphemous effigy seated atop its crude pagan altar.

"Pull the sword from my chest."

The Elder imposed and the man, in all his vanity, didn't hesitate for a second. He took the sword and yanked it forward. A great earthquake shook the land! It was as if the very ground itself was cowering in the face of the Elder's reunion with its frigid body.

Bursting forth from cold stone, the Elder approached us all. The blade dropped from Venarius' quivering hand and clattered to the ground, a white light in the hilt flickered and shrank until it at last was put out by the great darkness of a tentacular void.

Realizing what it meant to look upon its face, I turned and shielded my daughter's eyes, and [sic] as the true scope of the Elder befell the High Templar and his men. I could hear screaming and mad gibbering! The Elder did not speak. Visions no longer left its mind. It was free. It had no need to communicate with mankind any longer.

As the richness of life fled from the quickly shrivelling bodies of the High Templar and his men, I readied myself and my daughter to flee. While the Elder began to feed, starved from millennium upon millennium of constraint, I took up the Map Device Venarius had dropped and together, we ran...

--Book of Memories, Page 14 (POE I)

I fear this to be the end. Not just the end for me, but the end of all things. The Elder has been freed. Soon it will feast on me and then, my daughter. Once it has finished with us, it will turn its sights on the rest of the world.

Times will become as they were in the days of old, when the Watchers of Decay were formed. Children will go missing from their beds. Parents will mourn, darkness will descend, and then birthed from that carnage, the Decay will arrive, finding its physical form in our dimension - for that is the Elder's true master! The fungal monstrosity will manifest and spread forth its mighty tendrils. The mould from before time and space began, will seek out the destruction of all things...

As we fled through the forest, I focused my resolve. It was too late for me. I knew of the shaping powers. Only I could have a hope at defeating the Elder. Preoccupied with its feast, the eldritch abomination had somehow forgotten us, and as we made our way back, retracing our steps, I found myself standing once more before the portal home. Not even stopping to look behind, I dove through the shimmering window, and together, we collapsed into Oriath.

With not a minute to waste, I took a nearby tool and jammed it into the infernal device, where it hummed, ominously entrenched in my laboratory floor. The Elder had to be stopped, and so... I left her there, bidding her to hide in a closet or beneath a work table. Then, with the portal flickering and shrinking steadily, I turned back and stepped forward into the dreamlands, one final time.

--Book of Memories, Page 15 (POE I)

My last waking moments looked very much like this place... I miss it. I miss her.

--The Shaper, on Laboratory Map (POE I)

### ISLA AND THE MAP DEVICE

Twenty years ago, when I was in my first year, a certain High Templar picked me out of a crowd of Academy engineers. I was taken to the Chief Arkhon's laboratory, among other staff and guards. That building held a functioning map device, and it was my job to repair and maintain it. Several terrible things happened there... but I learned more high science on that single job than I would have in years at the university! Good thing, too...

--Isla, "Previous Experience" (POE I)

... It was twenty years ago, now, that I had the opportunity to work on a map device. I wasn't the one that put it together, but I learned quite a bit by taking it apart...

--Isla, on the start of mapping (POE I)

### THE FATE OF VENARIUS

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My father was dragged into the Atlas by the High Templar Venarius. Surely you remember just how cruel and conniving he was before he "disappeared". Well, I discovered he didn't simply disappear... He was trapped and slain in the Atlas, and now his soul haunts the fragmented memories that are scattered across the Atlas. ...

--Zana, on a Synthesis map (POE I)

"It was as though my very thoughts were breaking... fracturing into tiny motes to be lost on the wind."

--A Fate Worse Than Death (POE I)

... I-... I don't know where I am or how I got here. I don't remember my name... I don't-... I don't remember anything. I suppose for now you can call me... Cavas...

--Cavas, "Introduction" (POE I)

...

Venarius: Was I... Am I...? I am the High Templar... Venarius? It's starting to make sense now. I sought power to wield against evil...

Zana, Master Cartographer: Stop! Can't you see what you're doing?

Venarius: ...And I found it. Yes, this is a start. This is more than I possibly could have hoped for when I drew the blade and awoke -- yes, of course! Now I can protect Wraeclast properly.

Zana, Master Cartographer: ... protect Wraeclast...?

Venarius: What am I, a monster? No, the real monsters surround us.

Zana, Master Cartographer: And what does that mean?

Venarius: Demons, child. Countless. They watch us from the darkness. They claw at the thin veil that keeps our world separated from theirs. A great tide of evil that wishes only to crash down upon us and sweep our civilisation into oblivion. But I will stand against it.

Zana, Master Cartographer: Then we're on the same side. The entity that fed on your memories is doing the same thing to my father. Help us stop it!

Venarius: Oh, little one, it is you who will help me... Your memories will show what I need them to show, for the cause. Every thinking man and woman of Wraeclast will come to simply know that they must unite... under me. It is the only way to guarantee a unified defence. ...

--Synthesis cutscene (POE I)

Though my life is gone, my purpose is not. My will remains, emboldened and empowered by the righteousness of my cause.

--Cortex (POE I)

I will build the wall that stands against the tide. The day is coming... I have seen it.

--Circle of Ambition Prismatic Ring (POE I)

I feel the moral weight of what I must do to protect Wraeclast. I accept my guilt without shame. It is my gift to humanity.

--Circle of Guilt Iron Ring (POE I)

Everything I have done has been for Wraeclast. You would pledge your life to me if you saw things my way... and soon, you will.

- High Templar Venarius

--Justified Ambition (POE I)

Wraeclast will unite. This shall be my great work - the minds of the people made one.

--Magnum Opus (POE I)

When memories become twisted by a corrupted mind, history is rewritten, time after time.

--Synthesising Fragment (POE I)

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## HIGH TEMPLAR DOMINUS (CA. 1581-1600 IC)

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The last three weeks feel like they've passed in an instant. The atmosphere here since the High Templar's disappearance has been so relaxed, but, while enjoying the sun on my roof this morning, I saw the black smoke billowing from the Chamber of Innocence turn red.

The Seneschals have at last elected a new High Templar. Rumour has it they've sought young blood. Someone who can revitalise the Templar. Someone who can bring them into the modern age. Whoever it is, he can't be worse than the last one. The bastard set us back fifty years!

--Unknown, Rooftops Memory (POE I)

... Dominus was the next High Templar, and thus the one who declared his predecessor's pursuits heretical and had them sealed as blasphemous. A load of manure to secure the secrets for himself, no doubt. ...

--Kirac, "The Vault of Venarius" (POE I)

...I caught the High Templar's eye several years ago. I showed an interest in the mechanical arts, and he had need for someone like myself for some highly secret projects he had started. He sought ways to tap into the power contained within the virtue gems in ways that I'm not sure were in line with God's plan. I did not openly refuse his orders; I simply... interpreted them differently. The mechanisms I built were brilliant and powerful, and totally useless for his desires. I may have kept some of them.

Unfortunately, as you know, little slips past Dominus. I was exiled as a matter of secrecy. Rapidly replaced by some little whore.

What? She *is* a whore.

--Kirac, "The Vault of Venarius" (POE I)

## GRANTING PATRONAGE TO PIETY

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Halfway across the world and yet the tie between Vinia and I endures. That was Piety's real name back in Theopolis, before her rise to greatness.

Vinia sold her thaumaturgy in the day, her body at night. Sought after, she was. Enough so to become one of my best buyers.

But money never meant much to Vinia. No, she was striving for something better...nobler. Used to tell me that "Life needn't be this hard. It's time you all realized that." ...

--Clarissa, "Piety" (POE I)

Vinia was arrested for 'Consorting with the Unholy' and condemned to the pyre. This was before the banishments. Dominus shared a last supper with her, heard her confession. Most think Vinia earned Dominus' patronage on her back. I don't. Vinia gave Dominus her 'better life' and got a new name in return. You can count on one thing: Piety's grand future won't include the likes of you, me, or Tolman.

--Clarissa, "Vinia" (POE I)

You can change your name, but you cannot change your history.

--Vinia's Token (POE I)

## STUDYING THE THAUMATURGICAL

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### PIETY & VILENTA

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"We shall peer at these cosmic wonderments as they wake and writhe within that deep and nameless dark."

- Vileta, 'Miasmeter: A Thesis'

--Miasmeter (POE I)

Piety and I have devoted ourselves to the betterment of the human condition. As for our methods, Piety had a saying that summed it up nicely. "Would you consider the feelings of the stones when constructing a glorious cathedral in the name of God?"

Casticus supplied us with slaves, mostly Karui, and I put them to good use. In fact, I believe their participation in my experiments elevated them from squalor to splendor. Our subjects were able to give their otherwise meaningless lives to something greater than themselves.

Isn't that what we all want in the end?

--Vilenta, "Research" (POE I)

To be perfectly honest with you, I don't trust her. Yeah, I've got my reasons. Piety kept her work pretty quiet but her results were brutally clear. The people she took, the people she... changed. Slaves mostly, and a few 'enemies of God'. Enemies of bloody Dominus more like it. I don't go in for black and white definitions of good and evil, but with Piety and her ilk, I make an exception.

Whatever's lurking inside Vilenta, it ain't 'good', not by a long shot.

--Bannon, "Vilenta" (POE I)

The Sign of Purity, yes... a descry staff that Piety sent me to study at one point. Apparently it was a gift from Innocence to the first High Templar, Maxarius. Dominus couldn't even bear to touch the thing so he had it locked up in the Ossuary. Quite reactive behaviour for a man of such formidable intellect, yet now it's making a little more sense.

The staff was certainly able to conduct and store energy, yet remained inert when I applied corruption to it. It must only respond to divine energy, and with corruption and divinity being diametrically opposed, it's no wonder that my experiments failed to excite the thing!

Meaning, if the Sign of Purity is a repository for the power of Innocence, Dominus could never have wielded it, being steeped as he was in the opposing power of the Beast. ...

--Vilenta, "The Sign of Purity" (POE I)

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## DOMINUS

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Dominus adopted Chitus Cathedral as his personal laboratory. He decked it out with everything his miraculous mind could conceive of. His great work in Sarn, that which you destroyed, it all began there.

--Vilenta, "Chitus Cathedral" (POE I)

I embraced the patronage that High Templar Dominus offered my struggling museum. I took his favour and conducted his research into the thaumaturgical arts practiced within the Eternal Empire.

I wish I'd known then what I know now. That I was pandering to the warped dreams of a madman.

--Eramir, "Dominus" (POE I)

... To my shame, I did Dominus' dirty work in the selfish hopes of scholarly advancement. I scoured fragments of documents brought back by Fairgraves - and Daresso, before his disgrace. I unearthed all I could on the Eternal Empire's masters and mistresses of thaumaturgy, a subject of keen interest to our supposedly devout High Templar. ...

--Eramir, "The Chamber of Sins" (POE I)

I used to pride myself on taking care of these tomes, but the ancient treatises concerning the Vaal... should be burned. He's making me research for him, and the things I'm reading about concern the destruction of all mankind.

I would think my fears of the end of the world ridiculous... except... it's happened before. I must run... I must flee... and take my secrets with me.

--Eramir, Distant Repository Memory (POE I)

I thought Dominus was a leader of vision, of purpose. The man who would resurrect the Eternal Empire. In truth, Dominus is only after power... the black, thaumaturgical power locked within the Virtue Gems. He wishes to create a new empire, one in his own image. I drank every night to try and wipe that image from my mind. It's still there.

--Helena, "Dominus" (POE I)

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## DAVARO & THE ARTEFACTS OF THE VAAL

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The artefacts which High Templar Dominus returned to our city have finally offered up to me one of their secrets. Though, I am certain there is much to be found within the relics, I'm exhilarated and brought to awe by what I have discovered as of yesterday's studies. I have uncovered a hidden frequency of corruption within the relics - oh, how they now sing to me! They are as mirrors, dimly reflecting shadows and echoings of the past.

I have seen signs of blood and ancient sacrifice in the ghostings of our precious city! Such as what the Vaal would commit in their homelands. Could it be that these echoes point to Vaal culture having extended all the way to the shores of Oriath? Perhaps we are not the first empire to pull itself up from the mire of this land?

I must listen to the relics further, I need to understand, but the singing, it pains me to listen for very long. My work must progress slowly, but it shall progress. Much is at stake here. I can feel it!

- Templar Davaro of Theopolis

--Research Journal I (POE I)

I am Templar Thaumaturgist Davaro, the ecstatic, the knower of hidden things, the key to ancient wonder!

In such a short time, everything has changed. The singing of the relics to me no longer pains my ears, in fact, I hear music in them, songs revealing great truths to me. My theory that the Vaal once dwelt in this land has proven fruitful, one of their ancient sites lies not far from here. There is great power dormant in the ruins, one that I am yet to tap fully, but it will come soon enough.

Through my thaumaturgy, I was granted special sight, I saw the ancient Vaal city that once stood in this place. All around me were signs of the legendary Queen Atziri ruling from afar. I saw, as I stood at the base of a great pyramid, the sacrifice of new harvest unfold. The steps ran red with a river of blood, a crimson tide, cascading towards me and washing over my skin. In it, I felt my being shake, as if lightning was reverberating through my body. I felt the strength of that blood ritual, and then returning to my senses, I found myself once more standing in ancient ruins. I thought it to be all a dream, only, when I reached up to touch my face, I found it both horrifyingly and marvelously, pelted with that same salted vermillion.

- Templar Davaro of Theopolis, Key to Ancient Wonder

--Research Journal II (POE I)

I have been plagued by a sickness as of late. A kind of blood marking. This curse stalks me in both waking life and the world of dream. The relics no longer sing to me of power, they scream to me of hunger and the ruins call out like needy children for blood, oh, so much more blood! Now that I am aware of their ancient existence, they will not remain silent!

What was - at first - revitalising, is now a torment. I can't, no matter how hard I try, clean the blood from my face and hands. Nobody ever sees the red, but for me, yet this does not mean it doesn't exist!

I purchased three Karui slaves from the marketplace the other morning. Strapping young lads of seventeen. At the blood site in the ancient ruins, they pleaded with me. Something about the place, the corruption engrained in the stonework... it spoke to them, and they knew. The powers demand blood, so I gave it to them. I opened the throats of those Karui lads and poured out their essence onto Atziri's altar. As the sanguine liquid was sucked up by the stone, my mind frayed and I saw the Queen herself, naked and aroused, bathing in a pool of blood while her hand reached between her thighs.

I... I can't shake her image from my mind, even now as I lay on my bed, I shiver with fear and anticipation. I have never felt lust for a woman in this magnitude. I fear the Queen shall be the death of me. When I close my eyes I see her, reaching out to embrace me.

- Templar Davaro

--Research Journal III (POE I)

My beautiful Queen is all I see. She dwells in another world, I know this now. Our worlds are separate realities, but not entirely ones without doors and bridges to offer transport. In our dreams



we make love amidst the coagulation of our victims' blood. The red is our passion and the gore has become our wedding bed.

Soon, I will be with my love, she will be closer to me than my own flesh. I have learnt a spell. Blood Thaumaturgy - forbidden by the Templars, but they have no idea as to the power they have ignored...

In the streets outside, Theopolis is in a panic. Two children belonging to noble families have gone missing in the night. As I look out my window, I see the guards questioning beggars and citizens alike. They will not find the boy or the girl. Such precious beings, they were. The young girl passed from consciousness before I took her. The boy, so brave, never screamed once, not even as my blade cut into the soft of his belly.

They are both silent now. Unmoving. And shortly I will join them, and together we shall unite with my queen - a happy family. Husband, Wife, Daughter, Son. My knife still drips beside me. I leave this final account in hopes that those who may find us will yearn for the same pleasures I have found, and join us in eternity.

- Templar Thaumaturgist, Davaro

--Research Journal IV (POE I)

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## DOMINUS' EXILES

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... Worked a spell in the Chitus Theatre, back when you could leave your house without being followed by Templar secret police. ...

--Gianna, "Introduction" (POE I)

Some say that Dominus exiled the dregs of Oriath to the shores of Wraeclast. No, he exiled anyone who was going to give him trouble, who was going to cause ripples in his progressive theocracy. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/985043>

### **Hillock of Slaugh**

You have transgressed against your God and your fellow Man. You have been a willing vessel for the following Sins.

#### **Mortal Wrath**

*Six counts of Common Homicide*

*One count of Infanticide*

*Two counts of Homicide with post-mortem Desecration*

## **Unlawful Avarice**

*Twelve counts of Extortion through Threat of Mortal Harm*

*Seven counts of Armed Larceny*

*Two counts of Armed Larceny resulting in Mortal Harm*

## **Unsolicited Lust**

*Four counts of Rape*

*Two counts of Attempted Rape*

## **Mortal Wrath**

*One count of Rape resulting in Mortality*

God has charged me with your redemption. You are hereby Exiled to Wraeclast where, it is hoped, you shall come to repent your Sins, and make your peace with your beloved Father.

- High Templar Dominus

--Letter of Exile (POE I)

[Note: The remaining Letters of Exile would go here; there's no real need to reproduce them all.]

The storm is bad now. The ship rocks to and fro. The other exiles exchange glances as a guard struggles to regain his footing. Then, we hit the rocks.

When I come to, I'm alone on a tiny island. Little more than a rock, really. I can't see any other land. Even Wraeclast would've been better than this.

--Unknown, Rockpools Memory (POE I)

...the corruption of Wraeclast has spread to the minds of many exiles, turning them against one another...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/400347>

Among exiles, alliances shift and change constantly.

--Anarchy Scarab of Partnership (POE I)

# THE PATH OF EXILE

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## EXILE FROM ORIATH (1600 IC)

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### MARAUDER

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Do you think you are savage enough to face the land of the damned, Marauder?

We offered you truth yet still you clasped your superstitious lies. We offered you service, yet you wasted your strength in defiance.

Wraeclast offers you something else: an education in true savagery.

--Dominus, Marauder intro (POE I)

I am a warrior, raised to honour my Ancestors, to die with a weapon in my hand and the Karui Way in my blood.

Oriath chained me, made me its slave. For three years I have lived without my family, my pride, my Way.

I welcome Exile. I welcome Wraeclast. Hear me, Ancestors! A slave stands behind you. A warrior stands before you.

And Death walks at our side.

--Marauder, intro (POE I)

### WITCH

---

Why do the keen of mind seek to satiate their curiosity in darkness and depravity?

Innocence is our Father, Oriath is our Mother. When a daughter strays from the light, she makes herself an orphan.

Learn well the lessons that Wraeclast will teach you, Witch. It is your only hope of finding your way home.

--Dominus, Witch intro (POE I)

They were right to fear me. If only they had listened to their cowardice. Had they not taken my home with fire, I would not have taken their children.

Now I am banished to Wraeclast. I've heard the dark rumours... seen the terror in the other exiles' eyes. But to me, one land is like any other. The elements are my allies. The dead are my servants. And fear... will be my closest friend.

--Witch, intro (POE I)

... Your black art is the reason you're here, in exile. It may also be the only thing that allows you to see another dawn. ...

--Nessa, "Introduction" (Witch version) (POE I)

A Witch, banished from her coven for her ambitions, seeks to prove herself.

--Navali, announcing Witch (POE I)

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## SCION

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A Scion is perfection in mind, body, and grace. The crowning glory of our civilization, offering us hope, offering us light.

But you gave us only murder and darkness.

May Wraeclast embrace you as we cannot, for your very presence has become too painful to bear.

--Dominus, Scion intro (POE I)

The youngest daughter of a respected family. Dresses, dances, suitors... a fortunate life for one fortunately born. My life... had I not been different. Had I not thought more clearly, learned more quickly, dreamed more deeply and darkly than any child should.

There seems to be no limit to what I can do, no walls containing my talents. To my parents, I was a raw nugget to be battered and moulded into a prize for admiration, for envy... for sale. That life died on a wedding bed in Theopolis.

Today, Wraeclast offers me a new life, written not by birth, nor family, nor society. This life will be written to answer but one question: Who am I?

--Scion, intro (POE I)

The wonder child? I saw you perform for Dominus, girl. You were very good. Good enough to survive Wraeclast? We'll see.

--Piety, prison intro (Scion version) (POE I)

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## RANGER

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Swift and silent you stole the bounty of others.

A crow that plunders our crops. A stray dog that slaughters our sheep.

Oriath is a land of men, not animals. Think on that, Ranger, when Wraeclast shows you how to truly live like an animal.

--Dominus, Ranger intro (POE I)

No life can be owned. Not a deer's. Not a rabbit's. And not mine. Every creature has a birth-given right to live however it will. However it can.

My right is to hunt. To feed off the wilderness in the understanding that, one day, the wilderness will feed off me.

The fat lords of Oriath have no such understanding. They call me 'poacher' and 'thief'. Clap me in irons and haul me like cargo into exile. No matter. I'll make the forests and mountains of Wraeclast my new home. My freedom and my bow...that's all I need.

--Ranger, intro (POE I)

I've seen you before, back in Oriath! Running like a frightened rabbit from my father and his gameskeepers. Fleet as a fox you were, even with that leg of prize venison over your shoulder. ...

--Nessa, "Introduction" (Ranger version) (POE I)

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## DUELIST

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You were born to be swift and strong. What did you do with your gifts, Duelist? You squandered them on self-indulgence.

Sin has led you here, your path inked in the blood of gratuitous murder.

You have betrayed the Grand Arena. Now Wraeclast shall be your audience... and your foe.

--Dominus, Duelist intro (POE I)

He had it coming. Was I supposed to bear such insults with inaction, simply because of his high birth? That lord sang a different tune with six inches of steel in his guts. Now they call me a criminal for defending my honour. I'd do the same again to anyone who crossed me.

I care naught for riches, little for friendship. The duel is all I need. I may be an exile, but I will carve a road back to Oriath, one foe, one victory at a time. Ill fortune may have banished me to Wraeclast, but I will live to hear them scream my name in the great arenas again.

--Duelist, intro (POE I)

Now there's a face I never expected to see in exile. The maidens of Oriath must be wailing in their beds now that their mighty Duelist has left them. Or is that why you're here? Did you perhaps choose the wrong bed in which to celebrate your conquests? ...

--Nessa, "Introduction" (Duelist version) (POE I)

I recognise that pretty face. Grand Arena, Theopolis. ...

--Piety, prison intro (Duelist version) (POE I)

...a Duelist...the best of the best, Oriath's greatest showman! I made a fortune dealing in bets on you. Not on your fights, mind you, but on which noblewoman you would bed next, and when you might finally get yourself exiled. Consider me your biggest fan.

--Cadiro, "Introduction" (Duelist version) (POE I)

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## SHADOW

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You were born with quickness of body and sharpness of mind. How have you paid for these gifts? With innocent blood.

Yours is a predatory profession. The business of butchery. You have stolen many a life to fill your purse.

Now you will earn your redemption in Wraeclast.

--Dominus, Shadow intro (POE I)

A simple job, I was told. Silence a big mouth. Get a big payout. And no one was going to be the wiser. Tidy. Except for one loose end. Me.

I would have kept my mouth shut. Professional integrity, it's called. Unfortunately not something my employers believed in.

They raised a toast to a job well done. I drank and next thing I know I'm on this stinking crate bound for exile. It's not a complete loss, I suppose. The way I hear it, there'll be plenty of work for a man of my talents in Wraeclast.

--Shadow, intro (POE I)

... Your murderous art is the reason you're here, in exile... and it'll be the one thing that sees you through to another dawn. ...

--Nessa, "Introduction" (Shadow version) (POE I)

...a member of the Brotherhood of Silence. Oh, sore spot? ...I assume you have had a falling out with your fellows. ...

--Cadiro, "Introduction" (Shadow version) (POE I)

## TEMPLAR

---

You swore, sinew and soul, to serve God and the Order of the Templar. For years you built a life upon Faith, only to smite it asunder with one sinful blow.

And is that not the greatest folly of all? To lose Faith when it's all you have left?

You were once the chosen of God. A Templar. You are now the chosen of Wraeclast. An exile.

--Dominus, Templar intro (POE I)

I fought, wept and bled for God and the Order. I would have died for my Templar brothers, every single one. And how do they reward my piety, my devotion? They exile me to the land of the damned. To Wraeclast.

I know now that my brethren are merely God's tools. He has given me this path to walk, so I shall muster my strength and my power... and my faith. It is my shield against the darkness to come.

--Templar, intro (POE I)

They exiled me. A Templar of the Order of Oriath. One of their own. My only crime: seeking the truth. They think themselves better than the criminals and savages of this God-forsaken continent.

Our forefathers--they did this to Wraeclast. They caused the Cataclysm. My dreams tell me this. Visions of the past that no one in Oriath wishes to know.

If no other will answer this question, then it falls to me, a man of faith, a man of purpose. ...

My misguided Templar brothers have placed me at the heart of the mystery. I will pierce that heart, bleed the truth out of it.

My God is with me. My light, my courage, my power. He will remain at my side as I walk this path through this nightmare.

--The Templar - Path of Exile (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZycHZmvy2n0>)

I know you. The blasphemer. That's what my father called you. ...

--Nessa, "Introduction" (Templar version) (POE I)

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## ARRIVAL AT THE CURSED CONTINENT

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[The events of Path of Exile begin here.]

You and I, we're the only ones that made it to shore... Alive, anyway.

Looks like you found something you can defend yourself with. Good, this place is crawling with criminals. There's smoke rising just east of here. Could be worth checking if there's-

--Wounded Exile, when you have a weapon (POE I)

---

## TEMPLAR EXPEDITIONS TO WRAECLAST

---

... The people being exiled were sent to Wraeclast to be observed and experimented on in many different ways. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2996851>

Captain Tevarus,

Altitude is imperative to forging a stable connection with the Prime Resonator in Theopolis. Power source is equally vital. Locate a fissure in the mountainside and lower a conductive cable into it, the deeper the better. It will take an immense amount of thaumaturgical energy to execute the successful disintegration and transmission of objects, both inanimate and animate, between Highgate and Theopolis. For that kind of power, we must tap the origin.

I needn't remind you of the consequences should either of those elements prove deficient. That is why I would like you, Tevarus, to be the first to test the Resonator once it is operational.



Accountability is the perfect counterweight to ambition.

High Templar Dominus

--Resonator Instructions (POE I)

I gave Piety everything, devoted my life to her work. What did that thankless bitch do for me in return? Left me here to polish her beakers while she pursued glory in Wraeclast. ...

--Vilenta, "Piety" (POE I)

My loyal Declan,

Give our Lady Piety your absolute support and watch her with absolute scrutiny. There is much to learn from the likes of the Inquisitor, the Umbra and the Soulless One. I would hate for Piety to feel that she need shoulder such perilous wisdom alone.

- Dominus

--Order of Protection (POE I)

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## STUDYING THE WORKS OF SHAVRONNE

---

Our expedition made camp in the western forest while Piety took a few men through the pass to Axiom Prison. She was after the research notes of one Shavronne of Umbra, a witch who devoted herself to the study of transfiguration during the latter days of the Eternal Empire.

Piety returned alone and disturbingly happy with her findings. I've learned that when Piety is happy, misery is soon to follow for everyone else.

--Helena, "Prisoner's Gate" (POE I)

I can think of only one reason why Piety would be here. She's interested in the sickness that pervades this place, the corruption that raises the dead and twists the wildlife into aberrations.

--Nessa, "Piety" (POE I)

[In-game events up to Piety closing Shavronne's barricade (Act 1).]

Piety has become a true mistress of thaumaturgy. I wonder what else she has learned in her time here. ...

--Scion, on Piety at Prisoner's Gate (POE I)

## STUDYING THE WORKS OF MALIGARO

---

Arteri, my beautiful captain.

I wish it were not you, but I cannot bring myself to trust any other with this most vital of tasks.

This is the only pass between the inner and outer Empire. No further exiles are to enter the inner Empire. We have material enough for our work.

Ensure that the barricade remains in place, and if any exile should somehow pass through, kill them.

I will send for you when my work is complete in Sarn.

Until we share our next night together,

Piety

--Arteri's Letter (POE I)

The High Templar's Blackguards? They're here, rubbing shoulders with us mere exiles? A mystery indeed, and so near the Chamber of Sins. Whatever they want with that foul place, it won't be for the betterment of humanity.

--Eramir, "Blackguards" (POE I)

Piety led us into that wretched place in the hopes of finding a device named simply 'The Spike'. Fashioned by Inquisitor Maligaro, it was said to enable the injection of 'Calibric Extantia' into living flesh. Calibric Extantia being the corrupt energies locked within virtue gems.

We couldn't find the Spike, yet we met its most successful application.

--Helena, "Maligaro's Spike" (POE I)

Piety was after a creation of Maligaro's called the 'Baleful Gem'. It's nearby, and it's something that heartless bitch must never get her hands on. ...

--Helena, on being rescued (POE I)

... The Vaal were a powerful civilization predating even the Eternal Empire and Piety very much wanted to see what toys the Vaal might have left for her to play with behind those stone doors. Yet we couldn't budge them, not with that giant of a tree holding them fast in her roots.

--Helena, "Lorrata" (POE I)

[In-game events up to rescuing Helena from the Chamber of Sins (Act 2).]

---

## STUDYING THE WORKS OF MALACHAI

---

Dominus and his Ebony Legion arrived some time ago. Now the Blackguards scour Sarn like hungry maggots on a carcass. What're they looking for? Only that which is best left unfound.

--Maramoa, "Ebony Legion" (POE I)

You find a high enough spot and you can see the Lunaris Temple over the river, at the western edge of the city.

Since the Blackguards arrived, the clouds above that temple have been stained with the blackest of smoke. You can see it sometimes, when the westerly blows. It stinks worse than death.

--Clarissa, "The Lunaris Temple" (POE I)

I don't know much longer I can do this. Every day, we cart in the poor folk the General has rounded up for the Witch's experiments. I used to count, but I stopped at two thousand.

This is not the career the Blackguards promised me. We're worse than monsters. Look at this place! Rivers of blood! Piles of corpses! We were just following orders...

--Unknown, Bloodbath Memory (POE I)

Gravicius is the mailed and bloodied right hand of Dominus. ...

--Hargan, "General Gravicius" (POE I)

The cockroaches will come again. They want the Twist. That cockroach emperor...the other bugs shout his name. Gravicius. ...

--Dialla, "The Sewers" (POE I)

I tried to penetrate the Solaris Temple in the north-east. Almost got myself killed by the bloody Ribbons that guard the place. Bizarre floating tapestries they are, creatures of cloth and thaumaturgy. Fortunately, a few legionnaires got in the way. While the Ribbons eviscerated them, I ran... straight into Gravicus.

He dragged me over the bridge, to the Lunar Temple in the west, and put me in Piety's "tender care". Didn't say a single word to me the whole time. I was nothing but a spoil of war to him.

--Grigor, "General Gravicus" (POE I)

I no longer dream when I sleep. I have a nightmare, the same nightmare, over and over. The Mirror. It's never my reflection looking back.

The first time that mirror appeared to me, it was Kole I saw. A rapist from Oriath I had the displeasure of sharing a pen with in Gravicus' stockade. Piety took him for her experiments and that night, I saw her handiwork while I slept.

This time, it was Tolman. Flesh dried to leather. Organs shrunk to husks. Blood trickling through his skeleton like red dust in an hourglass. It's Piety's gift to me, that mirror. ...

--Grigor, "Tolman" (POE I)

Piety's a genius sculpting mere human clay into "divine" Gemlings. At least, that's what she told me when she opened me up and buried a Virtue Gem in my entrails. ...

--Grigor, "Gemlings" (POE I)

When Piety was...experimenting on me, my consciousness was mercifully fleeting. In those moments of numbing darkness, I met a presence.

Intelligence, power, immensity beyond the limits of my pitiable mortal senses. To this creature, I was but a rain drop falling into the sea.

I heard Piety speak to her lackeys of 'the Beast.' It is the source of her thaumaturgy, and the object of her ambitions. I believe Piety's 'Beast' and that dark entity are one and the same.

Wherever it is, whatever it is, The Beast is the cause of my malformation. It would not be a stretch of reason to consider The Beast the source of all malformation in Wraeclast.

--Grigor, "The Beast" (POE I)

Vanja: I'd heard of the Beast before coming here. Piety talked about it. I suppose she saw no point in keeping secrets from the people she was planning to murder.

Petarus: I'm so sorry, Vanja.

Vanja: God, it's not your fault, Petarus! Piety used to say that the Beast was the source of her power, how she managed to turn poor men and women into those...things. She kept using a phrase...what was it?

Petarus: Universal transmogrification. I heard her assistants talk about it, too.

Vanja: The power to change the world into anything you like.

Petarus: Bloody scary power in the hands of someone like Piety.

Vanja: Bloody scary power, full stop!

--Petarus and Vanja, "The Beast" (POE I)

Captain Vincenti,

The Highgate holds the secret to the true origin of the gems. Cleanse the mountain of those Maraketh parasites and secure the entrance to those Mines.

Do not disappoint me, Vincenti. As you well know, my displeasure can change a man.

-Piety

--Note (POE I)

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## THE DEATHS OF PIETY & DOMINUS

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Despite everything else you've done, to let Piety live is to threaten the existence of every living thing on this continent.

Look to the west of Gravicius' camp. You'll find Piety in the Lunaris Temple, cowering behind her desecrations.

--Grigor, "Piety" (POE I)

Thaumaturgy comes from virtue gems. Piety had a Ball Lightning gem, an Ice Shot gem linked to a Multiple Projectiles support, and a fire melee gem of some sort. Her blood minion summoning and her transformations, on the other hand, were proto-Corruption abilities learned from her horrible experiments on the victims in the Lunaris Temple. Steeped in Corruption as she was, she could not have employed any divine abilities.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2996851>

[In-game events up to killing Piety in the Lunaris Temple (Act 3).]

Piety dies amongst her abominations, her warped dream taunting her, maddeningly out of reach. ...

--Grigor, "Piety" (POE I)

Unfortunately, Piety was simply a puppet of a greater force. You've cut the strings but the master remains: Dominus. ...

Dominus accessed his laboratory at the summit of the tower via a pulley system rigged to the outside wall. That way will be barred to you, and I heard of no one, not even Piety, going in or coming out of the lower levels.

Go with care, exile. I can't imagine what's inside that tower if even Piety and Dominus feared to tread its steps.

--Grigor, "Sceptre of God" (POE I)

[In-game events up to killing Dominus atop the Sceptre of God (Act 3).]

Dominus is dead, but the source of his fearsome power remains. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/theawakening>

You have mounted the summit of the Empire, Not-a-Cockroach. You have crushed the bug emperor and wiped his maggot dreams from the skin of Wraeclast.

Dominus exiled you, naked and alone, unto the palm of Death. But you would not die, would you?

No, no... you cuddled Death, promised it the world, made it your conquest and so generously shared it with all your fleeting friends here in Wraeclast.

Not once did you forget what you were. Not a cockroach feeding on the corpse of a dead empire, like the pests you crushed as you walked.

A man. The sort of man that planted the seed of this Empire right here in Sarn, so long ago.

What teetering and twisted life it still holds dear, this land owes to you...

--Dialla, "Dominus" (Marauder version) (POE I)

Of course, there will be more. You know that, don't you? Emperors. Avaricious little pests scabbling to steal the legacy of their betters. Unless we burn that legacy, sear its infection from the flesh of existence.

Go north, my lovely Unbug. Go to Highgate, to the beginning of the end.

Dive headlong into the nightmare sea. Catch and roast yourself a nice, big fishy.

--Dialla, "Highgate" (POE I)

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## THE BEAST'S AWAKENING

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...within, at the heart of the mountain, lies a terrible, slumbering evil.

Generations of Maraketh guarded the Deshret Seal, but their vigil has ended. The creature under Highgate, nightmare incarnate, has stirred from its sleep. It threatens to unleash a second cataclysm that will extinguish life on Wraeclast.

The Beast's Awakening is not gentle. The very core of Wraeclast trembles with the violence of its stirring. Its raw malevolence sends ripples of corruption coursing through the world. The creature grows stronger by the day. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/theawakening/actfour>

*The betrayer strives to awaken an ancient and terrible being. Should he succeed, the Cataclysm will see the whole world remade... in the image of Nightmare. The time has finally come to venture into the kingdom of Corruption itself and drive a blade through its black heart.*

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1304441>

The Rapture is our hope. Our desperation. It will set the Nightmare to boil, cook that nice big fishy in its own whining brine.

Listen with all of your ears, Not-a-Cockroach. The Rapture was Malachai's most wondrous creation, the only fire hot enough to burn the Beast from existence.

And its fuel? A gemling queen, blood and flesh and gem. Yet my selfish self did not want to burn away, and so the fire was but a tiny spark. The spark of a cataclysm.

I am sorry, my love, my Malachai.

Go to it, Not-a-Cockroach. Find the Rapture. Make me sorry no more.

--Lady Dialla, "Malachai" (POE I)

You know, Not-a-Cockroach, had I accepted my place, my rapturous role, the Beast would be no more, no less, no anything at all. My selfishness tickled the Beast's fancy and it laughed the world I knew away.

Yet I have had much time to think on my lonesome. Much time to wonder. Wonder if the Rapture really needs to eat a Gemling Queen.

Maybe, something else will get its catastrophic juices slavering. Something like... eyeball soup!

The Eye of Fury. The Eye of Desire. Pretty gems for our pretty designs. But where could they be? Don't fret now. I have my suspicions.

Kaom, the Sovereign of Slaughter. He remains, and suffers his delusions right here in the halls of nightmare. Fury is all he knows, so Fury Kaom will have.

Daresso, King of Swords. Damned by Desire. Oh, aren't we all? He's down here too, and Desire's curse remains his to bear.

Go on, Not-a-Cockroach. Bring me the crown jewels so that we might wake the Rapture and finally put an end to this pestering Beast!

--Lady Dialla, "The Eternal Nightmare" (POE I)

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## THE DEATH OF DARESSO

---

Sing for me, Merveil. Sing of glory and love...

--Daresso, on his death (POE I)

Pried the Desire from Daresso's dead hand, did you? Or is it 'dead again' hand? Or 'redead' hand? Or is 'undeath' really just death with benefits?

In which case, you didn't kill Daresso because he was already dead. It's all a bit of a grey area, really. And completely beside the point.

--Dialla, "The Eye of Desire" (POE I)

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## THE DEATH OF KAOM

---

For centuries, he burned in an unending nightmare of lava and flame... but he endured.

--Kaom's Binding Heavy Belt (POE I)

My dream, my Nightmare, seemed without end. I couldn't think, couldn't hope, couldn't fight to escape. There was only madness and pain. I believed I had built a home and an empire for my people, but in truth, it was all a lie. You shattered my nightmare...



--Kaom, "Trapped in a Dream" (POE I)

Uniting the tribes was a worthy endeavour. Invading the mainland, however, was a fool's errand. Wraeclast has only ever been an accursed place that no true Karui should ever step foot on. I wish I had known how tainted it truly was. I would have set fire to it rather than try to claim it. Every empire that has ever arisen there eventually collapsed under the weight of its own disease.

--Kaom, "Invasion of Wraeclast" (POE I)

Let Wraeclast fester in darkness. It is a diseased land not fit for life. My advice to future generations of Karui shall always be so: keep to the islands and their abundance. Let the ruins of the Eternal and the Vaal Empires rot like the corpses they are. If Wraeclast needs anything, it is fire, to burn away that which can never be pure again.

--Kaom, "Wraeclast" (POE I)

When you slew Kaom and freed him from his unending nightmare, you sent his purified soul to join us here in the Halls of the Dead. Some challenged his place here because he slaughtered his own men in life, but such is the right of a Chieftain. His might, and his victories, speak for themselves. Thus, he has earned a place here in competition with the greatest of our warriors.

--Navali, "Kaom" (POE I)

Even before I ventured to the Isle of the Shrikes, I knew I would earn my place here. Now, I will prove my might in each new Trial. I will never be deposed. This honour is mine forever... or until Time ends, as Navali claims it will one day. How absurd.

--Kaom, "The Halls of the Dead" (POE I)

He is a legendary warrior, but still new to the Halls of the Dead. One of the first things he did when he got here was show interest in Ikiaho, because he had heard she refuses all suitors. Surely, the great Kaom could thaw this frozen heart! No. She turned him down in front of everyone during meal time. Ha ha! That Kaom, what an ego!

--Kahuturoa, "Kaom" (POE I)

Kaom mocks my peacemaking ways, but what did his warmongering earn him? Centuries of torture in a corrupted nightmare. I see no reason to quarrel with him. He already knows the truth.

--Maata, "Kaom" (POE I)

## PIETY'S RESURRECTION

---

It was Malachai who reached out to me, who wrapped me in Nightmare...made me his slave.

He has shown me greatness beyond imagining, so much that I thought my mind would shatter under its weight. And although my mind remains intact, my dreams were not so fortunate.

Malachai is in the Beast's black core right now, harnessing all that the Beast is, and will be. He will destroy this world and forge it anew in the divine image of Nightmare. ...

--Piety, "Malachai" (POE I)

... You know, it is no mere 'freak of nightmare' that fashioned that monstrous version of myself..

The Godless Three took great pains in getting me looking... 'just so'. They were none too gentle about it either. ...

--Piety, on receiving one organ (POE I)

... You know, prior to meeting Maligaro, Shavronne and Doedre, I rather admired them. Their work, their accomplishments... sheer genius! As it turns out, genius is something better appreciated from afar. ...

--Piety, on receiving two organs (POE I)

[In-game events up to defeating Piety in The Belly of the Beast (Act 4).]

Listen carefully...as this is something you will never hear from me again: I was wrong and you were right.

Part of me wishes I'd died at your feet as was intended. The little girl within me that shies from darkness, from greatness.

--Piety, "Nightmare" (Ranger version) (POE I)

...as powerful as Malachai has become, he's neither unreachable nor invulnerable. He sacrificed much to become the Beast's prime servant, both in spirit and in flesh, yet three vital organs remain.

His heart, lungs and entrails, keepsakes of humanity lost. They will be our tickets into Malachai's private, little show.

Venture deeper, deep into nightmare's abattoir. I'll follow when I'm able. You find me those organs and I'll get us into the Black Core.

--Piety, "Malachai" (POE I)

Before we walk this path together, it's important that you understand one thing about me.

I don't regret a single thing that I've done. I set out to raise humanity up from the cloying mud of its fleshly ignorance. My mistake was not in the aspiration, but in the execution.

Now I intend to correct that mistake. ...

--Piety, "Malachai's Organs" (POE I)

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## THE DEATHS OF MALACHAI & THE BEAST

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Why... are you so in love with Death?

--Malachai, on heart 3 destroyed (POE I)

[In-game events up to killing Malachai and the Beast (Act 4)]

You have fought a long war. A war to end a world, and begin a new one. And you've learned the most important thing about war.

There is no winning. There is only remaining. ...

--Dialla, "Malachai" (Marauder version) (POE I)

It was said that Malachai was the greatest mind of our age. Our age is gone. This new age, it belongs to you. It was also said that 'great minds think alike'. Let's hope not. ...

--Dialla, "Malachai" (Scion version) (POE I)

Malachai certainly left his mark upon Wraeclast. There are still remnants of his evil plaguing the continent. We may never truly know a land untouched by the Cataclysm.

--Cadiro, on Malachai's Mark (POE I)

## THE RETURN OF THE GODS

---

People have talked about the 'return of the gods' since the birth of Oriath. It's a gambit, employed by charlatans to fleece the weak minded and morally desperate.

Or so it seemed.

Avarius and his Templar drones now greet the dawn filled with power and glorious purpose. Kitava has risen from whatever ethereal cesspit he's been hiding in for the last few millennia.

So what let the cats out of their proverbial bags? I'm a scholar, not a prophet, yet there's one occurrence that absolutely reeks with evidential causality.

You killed the Beast.

--Vilenta, "Gods" (POE I)

In the twisting, shifting black smoke of my dreaming, I saw the Beast, lying slain at your feet. I saw the rise of the old gods, their rigid, dusty remains, springing in sudden haste to life. I saw the growing of their power as the corruption began to fade. ....

--Tasuni, "The Beast" (POE I)

... We gods, we were driven into slumbering darkness, to dream away eternity whilst the gentle Beast watched over us.

I would desire that we return to that blissful state, but my brothers and sisters of deism shall never submit to banishment. They have tasted freedom once more and they shall not let go of this world until it is prised from their cold, dead hands.

--Sin, "The Rise of the Gods" (POE I)

... Wraeclast also has thousands of years of imbued Corruption that will continue to radiate for an unknown length of time, so the gods the Exile encountered in Acts 5 through 10 were much weaker than they were in the past.

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2996851>

## THE FALL OF ORIATH

---

With Dominus away in Wraeclast, someone had to keep the wheels of oppression turning. Avarius was only too happy to take the job. He'd had plenty of practice already, of course.

It was Avarius who led some of the largest and most crippling raids upon the Ngamakanui and the Ngakuramakoi. It was on his orders that men, women and children were shackled and shipped like cattle to Theopolis.

And it was Avarius who spent five thousand Karui lives building his Templar Courts and his Chamber of Innocence. Who had wives and daughters scrub their husbands' and fathers' blood from the stones so as to preserve their 'purity' ...

--Utula, "High Templar Avarius" (POE I)

Avarius, Innocence... I'm not sure there's a great deal of difference. Around the time I heard the Beast's mortal scream, the newly appointed High Templar Avarius went through something of a... revelation.

The manner in which he speaks and acts now would indicate that he believes, without doubt, that he is some earthly embodiment of God. That's Faith for you. It'll reduce grown men to the madness of infancy.

--Vilenta, "High Templar Avarius" (POE I)

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## INNOCENCE, GOD-EMPEROR OF ETERNITY, & SIN, THIEF OF VIRTUE

---

For a long time now, I thought my God's intentions were being twisted by his supposed servants. Did I speak up? No. The pyre would have been my only answer. I did what I was told and drew the lines of morality where I could.

Now I understand the truth. It wasn't Innocence's intention being twisted. It was Innocence himself, perverted by the selfish convictions of the men and women who worshipped Him.

A god answers to the believer as the believer answers to their god.

--Bannon, "Innocence" (POE I)

Old red eyes. He's been quiet for a long time. Just like Kitava... and Tukohama. All of the old gods. Now Innocence has woken up, and with him, power like I've never seen the Templar wield before. ...

I don't rightly know where the gods have been or what's brought them crawling back. Nor do I really care. All I need to know, my friend, is that we're not alone anymore.

--Utula, "Innocence" (POE I)

## INNOCENCE'S DEFEAT AND RESCUE BY SIN

The Innocence you slew was not the God I know. My God is selfless. Humble. Yes, he is prone to burning sinners, but who among us isn't?

You just wait, Exile. Eternity will prove me right.

--Cassia, "Innocence" (POE I)

Innocence! You and only you, I shall save.

--Sin, on Innocence's defeat (POE I)

You can see him, too? I thought I was hallucinating. Wait, you're *working with him*? Do you know who that is? He's the Original Evil! I won't have anything to do with a monster like him!

--Divinia, "Sin" (POE I)

Do you see that?! God is here! That's him, incarnate! What's he doing with his brother? Has he somehow reconciled with the Original Evil? I'm so very confused right now...

--Divinia, "Innocence" (POE I)

After what I've learned...I should probably re-evaluate my beliefs. ... If I've been lied to by the Templars about the foundations of our religion, what else am I wrong about? Perhaps Sin is not the Original Evil that he was claimed to be. I feel strange even considering such a heretical idea!

--Divinia, "Sin" (POE I)

---

## KITAVA, FATHER OF CHAOS

---

Waves crashed upon the shores of Oriath.  
Waves of Hunger.  
Waves of Desire.  
The Ravenous God and His starving multitude,  
Rising with the tide,  
Flooding our streets with death and depravity.  
Until Innocence cried out, "No more!"  
Bathing our city in fire,  
Scorching the wicked to ash and bone.  
The Ravenous God fled,  
Into the embrace of our glorious Saviour.  
Driven down He was, into soil, stone and beyond,  
Into damnation,  
By the Will and Light of our Innocence.

- High Templar Avarius

--Triumph of Innocence (POE I)

Well... I know his other names. The Black Spirit. The Cannibal King. The Ravenous One. He was all of those things, before Tukohama slashed out his eyes, before Valako drowned him in the sea, before Hinekora whipped him and condemned him to immortal darkness.

Kitava has learned from the suffering inflicted upon him. Learned what cruelty is from his own flesh and blood. Learned what it means to be a slave.

Now he hungers for freedom. Not merely for himself. For all of us who have suffered under whip and shackle.

Kitava is the Tormented One, destined to rise up from the darkness and banish cruelty from this world. And we, his children, rise with him.

--Utula, "Kitava" (POE I)

I wear the armor of a Templar, and I walk among the guards, but I am not one of them. My soul is Kitava's to consume.

The time nears. At the appointed hour, I will open the gates... all the gates.

--Unknown, Slave Blocks Memory (POE I)

I can't yet begin to unpick the lies that Utula has told us, but this piece of truth I do have. Utula sensed that very moment when you struck your final blow, when you broke the Templar's power. He turned to me and told me this.

"Now our King comes to us. He'll be hungry, so very hungry. I shall prepare him a feast!"

Then he gathered his followers and left.

Where's he gone? Oriath Square. You won't need directions. Just follow the screams.

--Lani, "Utula" (POE I)

Utula has used the fall of Innocence to summon Kitava, the Ravenous God. ...

--Quest "The King's Feast" (POE I)

... Things replace other things, it's the most fundamental of laws. The larger the thing you remove, the bigger the rush to fill the space it's left behind.

Innocence was the nexus of power in Oriath. Remove him and something of equal or greater power was always going to take his spot. Any idiot could have predicted that Kitava was going to be that something...unless, of course, you thought it was going to be you.

--Vilenta, "Innocence" (POE I)

... I don't profess to understand the mind of a god, but I know the stories. Kitava is patient. He waited in the darkest pit of Hinekora's realm. He will bide his time while his hunger spreads like the plague it is, and when his tribe is replenished, a hundred times over, Kitava will rise one final time to finish the feast that he has started. Oriath is merely the appetiser. There's a whole world out there for Kitava to taste. ...

--Lani, "Utula" (POE I)

Relish hunger, dear faithful. For hunger is the one true state of spiritual abundance. When one is hungry, they desire more, and therefore align themselves with the will of the mighty Kitava. Beware, my followers, of the satisfied man, for he is the very pattern and image of blasphemy.

- The Holy Book of Hunger by High Priest Utula

--Cultist Tract I (POE I)

And our father, the great Kitava, will split asunder the rocks of the earth, pulling himself out of the miry clay. He shall lay a banquet table before us and we shall feast on his divine bounty.

- The Holy Book of Hunger by High Priest Utula

--Cultist Tract II (POE I)

This is how it shall end. Kitava will rise, and a great cloud of black smoke will cover the sky. The glorious smell of cooking flesh shall entice even the most ardent of unbelievers to the faith, and together we will celebrate and eat at Kitava's table.

- The Holy Book of Hunger by High Priest Utula

--Cultist Tract III (POE I)

... Kitava remembers nothing and cares for nothing but his own hunger and greed. He is an endless pit of gnashing teeth and churning guts.

While other gods rise on the mainland and fight for the meagre scraps of what was, Kitava has the most fecund and formidable civilisation of this age at his disposal. He can feed when he likes and he grows ever stronger with each morsel. All of Oriath shall soon belong to Kitava, and if that happens, he will rise beyond even our reach.



--Sin, "Kitava" (POE I)

I'd not believe you if I had not witnessed the boats lurching onto the shores of Wraeclast myself. So... The gods have returned, and Oriath has fallen. ...

--Jun Ortoi, "Oriath" (POE I)

Many of the Blackguard are still alive and scattered across Wraeclast, but the organisation has had its back broken after what happened in Oriath. I wouldn't want to run into a random knot of them, especially as they start to get hungry and desperate...

--Helena, "Oriath" (POE I)

Troubling news coming out of Oriath. I know you weren't just involved, but smack-dab in the middle of things. I also know you aren't to blame. Not directly, anyway.

Still, you might imagine that I feel some... animosity about the whole situation. Not least of all because the presence of Kitava is quite literally a doomsday scenario for my people.

I trust you'll sort it out, 'cause if you don't, we're through. And I don't just mean no more business.

--Whakano, "Kitava" (POE I)

Faustus: What do your people think about what happened in Oriath?

Whakano: Barbers, sir?

Faustus: Karui! Are they dancing round their totems singing the praises of the return of their saviour?

Whakano: Kitava is no saviour. Far from it. Kitava is symbolic of death, of the end of all things.

Faustus: Eh? I thought that was, uh, hinny--something.

Whakano: Hinekora? The Mother of Death is the steward of our souls, but she has no great desire to destroy us. It's a common misunderstanding among your people.

Faustus: Eternals?

Whakano: Captains. I cannot speak for all Karui, but personally, I feel a great sadness for Oriath. Many people lost their lives, their homes, their families. Good people. Bad people too, but even bad people should have the opportunity to reflect on their misdeeds and change. Kitava took that opportunity away.

Faustus: Quite right. Quite right.

--Faustus & Whakano, "Banter A" (POE I)

## UTULA'S DEFEAT

You've sent the traitor to meet his Ancestors, have you? That'll be an interesting conversation. I'm no *hatungo*, but I can foresee Utula walking a long road of trial and suffering before he earns himself a place at the Ancestors' table. ...

--Lani, "Utula" (POE I)

When you slew Utula's body, you separated his spirit from his altered flesh. This freed him to join us as a purified soul in these Halls of the Dead. We are very grateful to you for this, as he is a true hero in our eyes. He brought Karui vengeance against the Templars, and helmed a rebellion that freed our people held in bondage in Oriath. He has earned a place here in competition with the greatest of our warriors.

--Navali, "Utula" (POE I)

Imagine my surprise when you killed me and I found myself in this dank and dour dungeon. I didn't even know about this place. I grew up in the slave pens, and my knowledge of my own culture was fragmented at best. When the blood spilled out of me and my heart stilled, I thought I was finally free. No. I still exist, because Hinekora scooped up my soul, and they even 'honoured' me with a position here. You know what I'll be doing? Fighting. Bleeding. Dying. *Forever*. I died! I'm dead! But I'm still imprisoned! This is a load of horse dung the size of Wraeclast! This place will burn!

--Utula, "The Halls of the Dead" (POE I)

You know what's strange? I always thought Rakiata was a man. I suppose I don't know much about my own people, beyond the remnants of knowledge the slaves passed on in Oriath's pens. Coming here, I'm furious at how much of my own history was denied me. I'm basically locked in a permanent family reunion with relatives I've never met.

--Utula, "Rakiata" (POE I)

The Father of Hunger may be dead, but his essence lives on in his people. I challenge my fellow Karui. How dare we accept this fate? How dare we accept these Halls of the Dead? We should be free, to roam the world, or enter oblivion if we wish! Kitava once promised to devour all the souls in this domain, and it seems I must fulfill that promise!

--Utula, "Kitava's Defeat" (POE I)

The Way means nothing to me. Where were my fellow Karui tribes when we prisoners were rotting in slave pens since the time of Lioneye? I guess nobody was very interested in rescuing us. What does all that strength matter if it only benefits the strong? I was born into slavery. I never had a choice. I refuse to continue being a prisoner in my own afterlife!

--Utula, "The Karui Way" (POE I)

Now Utula has been accepted here, and his fiery words make me wary. I believe in the traditional and unchanging Way, but Utula wants to tear it all down. I fear he is seeking to fulfill Kitava's vow. We must show him how wrong he is.

--Akoya, "Utula" (POE I)

He's an odd tuatara, that one. Seems to think this incredible place is some sort of prison. I for one relish being in my prime again. Maybe he's just angry he's got those crazy bug eyes.

--Kiloava, "Utula" (POE I)

Utula believes in everything I have fought against my entire life... and my entire death. His is an ethos of violence, depravity, and anarchy. I believe the Karui deserve order, harmony, and peace. You can't live in a beautiful forest if you burn it down. I understand why Utula was given a place here, but I still think it is a step in the wrong direction.

--Maata, "Utula" (POE I)

Utula has the right idea. Why should we Karui listen to anyone who tells us what to do and how to live? We have such strength, yet we remain subservient. If I want to leave the Halls of the Dead and go to the Chambers of the Dishonoured, where they drink and carouse for eternity, why shouldn't I? Down with tyranny!

--Kahuturoa, "Utula" (POE I)

## KITAVA'S DEFEAT

Well, at least you followed through eh? I'd have preferred if my gods stayed tucked away neatly in their tales, but if we're going to have the Ravenous One up and about, at least we have you to put him back to bed for good.

--Whakano, "Kitava" (POE I)

I did hear that you 'defeated' Kitava. You should be aware that he was nothing more than a hungry blind child, propped up and fed by Utula's tribe. How exactly did you fear he would consume the whole world when he could hardly move from his cathedral cradle? Your great victory, 'Godslayer,' is nothing to brag about. We have not needed our gods to be personally present for thousands of years, and we will not be diminished by their loss. We have our own strength.

--Kaom, "Kitava's Defeat" (POE I)

We did not despise Kitava. He was a blind child, cursed with endless hunger, and he knew no better. Hinekora foresaw his fall, and we mourned his passing long ago. Hinekora made no move to prevent these events, for they had to happen so that the future could be guided down a certain path. As she spoke while in a painful trance, for Wraeclast to survive, Kitava's grin must be bared to the bone...

--Navali, "Kitava" (POE I)

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## TANGMAZU, THE TRICKSTER

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Farewell Innocence, and hello, my agent of anarchy. It appears I've returned just in time for the party...

--Tangmazu, The Torched Courts (Act 5) (POE I)

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## THE COAST

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### TUKOHAMA, FATHER OF WAR

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With Kitava now stomping around Oriath, it seems mythology is fast turning into reality.

Then again, the gods didn't just spring out of some poet's head. I certainly couldn't pen an ode to the God of Eternally Flowing Ale and then just stick me mug out to catch the free brew.

No, I imagine the gods once dined, danced and defecated just like you or I. Now they seem ready to take another stab at it... at life, I mean.

Take the Karui Father of War, for instance. Old Tukohama. All comfily tucked up in Kaom's holdfast and playing war like a few thousand years was only a quiet weekend for him.

Come to think of it...perhaps it was!

--Bestel, "Tukohama" (POE I)

The God of War has reshaped this region. He's always been... unimaginative.

--Tangmazu, The Mud Flats (Act 6) (POE I)

Seems Tukohama's raised up a host out of whatever afterlife the Karui believe in. I feel for those poor bastards, if I'm to be honest. The Karui haven't had an easy history. Colonised, enslaved, used as pawns in many a war, and now abused in death by their own bloody god.

This is why I don't follow any deity. They're all as bad as each other.

--Tarkleigh, "Karui Revenants" (non-Marauder version) (POE I)

[Note: The following lore item was written for 3.0, but has never been available in-game.]

By command of fallen blood, leave your habitat and fill the cup of Tukohama. Cleave the heads of our enemies from shoulders unworthy, and adorn the belt of Tukohama.

And to the Lord of War, I kneel, with boldness at your feet and demand to be drowned in your Valour. Let me look upon my foes without fear, drive me to kill without hesitation, and sear that sinful voice of conscience so I will not feel remorse. For this is war and you, my lord, are its father.

--Karui Carving (POE I)

### TUKOHAMA'S DEFEAT

Listen, I don't want to be a nay-sayer, but before you started coming around here, we didn't have none of this god nonsense. They were just characters in stories. Ways to get the kiddos to eat their greens. And that was fine! In fact, I preferred it that way!

Now? We've got characters coming to life! And then you're killing 'em! You're killing our heroes! Tukohama was one of the good guys! You better finish what you started.

--Whakano, "Tukohama" (POE I)

You have wounded us, outsider. Though he has slept for thousands of years, Tukohama plays a very real role in our cultural and spiritual lives. He helped create the Way, and he set the Ngakuramakoi on the proper path. With the defeat of our god, my tribe will suffer a mark of shame and a spiritual restlessness that I cannot overstate. I understand why you did what you did, and I will try to remain fair to you, but I am not certain I can ever forgive what you've done.

--Akoya, "Tukohama" (post-defeat) (POE I)

*You* defeated Tukohama in battle? No, you defeated a shadow of the Father of War. He was weakened by his long sleep, or by the pervasive Corruption of Wraeclast. You struck when he was feeble and confused. Keep your ego small. ...

--Kaom, "Tukohama's Defeat" (POE I)

How is it that a mortal defeated our Father of War in his domain? No, it was not solely you. Your alliance with the Thief of Virtue is a ghastly one. However, your prowess in combat cannot be denied. You have earned our respect, not our ire, for this victory. Such is our Way.

--Navali, "Tukohama's Defeat" (POE I)

Though I know little of my natural heritage, I know enough to understand the implications of your victory against the Karui God of War. Did his long slumber weaken him, or have the gods been greatly exaggerated through the evolution of myths? In either case, this undoubtedly means we will find no divine help against the intrinsic darkness. They are not the keepers of mankind many believed them to be.

--Tane Octavius, "Tukohama" (POE I)

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## ABBERATH, THE CLOVEN ONE

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There's many a way to die in Wraeclast. Most of them are mercifully quick. But you get caught alive by the goatmen, you'll wish by any god you believe in that you hadn't.

I've heard some of the more superstitious exiles say there's a deity these goatmen worship. Abberath, Eater of Agony. Sounds like a right bastard, if you ask me. So if the goatmen hand you an invitation to go have dinner with the Cloven God, tell them where to stick it.

--Tarkleigh, "Goatmen" (POE I)

... Abberath, a deranged old goat with a thirst for human souls whose cloven hooves now stand astride the old prisoners road. ...

--Sin, "The Cloven One" (POE I)

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## RYSLATHA, THE PUPPET MISTRESS

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With the road to the Phrecian Forest clear again, I trekked through to the forests beyond, to see if the strangeness we're seeing on the coast is also happening inland. What I saw nearly froze my heart solid.

The animals there, poor wretches... overtaken by some sort of parasite. As close as I can reckon they're like termites, burrowing into flesh and mind instead of wood. If I'm right, there'll be a nest somewhere, and a queen. ...

--Tarkleigh, "The Puppet Mistress" (POE I)

... A primitive deity from a primitive time, crawling up out of the dirt with a view to enslaving us all with its creepy bloody offspring. ...

--Tarkleigh, "The Puppet Mistress" (POE I)

[Note: The following lore item was written for 3.0, but has never been available in-game.]

Mother Matriarch, Ryslatha, white worm that corrupts the earth, long may I rest in the sweetness of your breast, and suckle deep from the teat of your nurturing juices.

O' Mighty mother, for yours is an unstoppable fecundity, it is power and fertility. I would straddle the walls of your fruitful womb and watch as our children disciple [sic] this decaying world. That I should lie sleeping amongst the folds of your flesh, replete, as the loving consort of your queendom come.

--Worn Carving (POE I)

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## TSOAGOTH, THE BRINE KING

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Yeah, I know the Brine King. What pirate doesn't? Drowned me fair share of mutineers under the full moon... to keep the old king's slumber when storms threaten, you see.

If he's been roused from the depths, it be nothing but ill tidings for those of us with air in our lungs.

He'll be getting back to raping and eating us ocean-going folk soon enough. Stealing wombs in which to spawn his slithering offspring. ...

--Lilly Roth, "The Brine King" (POE I)

Lord of Salt and Scale's what we used to call him. They say when the gods got the boot from our lands, that monstrosity went to sleep down in the deep. Dreamed the kinda dreams that cause all sorts of gilled abominations to rise up, to plague and hunt us for what he thinks we must've done to him.

Was a time we got ordered to hunt them things near extinction. Free the trade routes from Old Briny's tyranny. Even so, not a sailor worth his salt who won't sacrifice a lousy deckhand or two by light of the full moon, just to keep that overgrown crab slumbering in the Oriathan trench.

If he's risen again, you bet your bloody arse we're all buggered.

--Weylam Roth, "The Brine King" (POE I)

Salt on the wind... The river sours. The King has returned.

--Tangmazu, The Southern Forest (Act 6) (POE I)

If God wills it, the final account of First Mate Piken, castaway on the rock somewhere off the Twilight Strand.

Near as I can tell, the rest of the crew, along with Captain Caruso, be dead... or worse. What happened? I'd not have believed it myself had I not seen it with me own two eyes.

At dawn, a light, green and dark, rose from 'neath the waves and into the sky. While most of us stood back in awe, I heard a cry rise up from the lower deck. Casting me eyes in that direction, I saw the waves upchuck, and a swarm of ocean crabs cover the vessel. Ravenous and of countless numbers they were, making quick work of the sailors about them. Nothing but bones and tatters of cloth!

We fled to the longboats as fast we could, hoping to leave them ungodly crustaceans behind us, but lo, from within that green pillar of light, I saw him! The Brine King, like a bloated whale he breached the familiar waters and turned the ship beneath our feet to match-wood. I was flung into the sea, yet managed to cling to some flotsam and make my way to rest on this damnable rock.

Seems that ancient Tsoagoth has a mind to take dominion of these seas once more. Captain Caruso was right to drown those mutineers in the old king's name. A shame we'd not found more. For now, beneath the waves, I hear the whispers of me own passing in a thousand clicking pincers. May God have mercy on me, and may someone benefit from this warning.

--Message in a Bottle (POE I)

My motley crew, neither fit to lick my boots nor curl my moustache, have bloody well betrayed me. And I was only trying to save them, those that remained true. Even now, floating prostrate upon a plank of wood, bathed in the dying embers of the evening sun, I hear the clitter-clatter of a million tiny claws. If I close my eyes, I see those tentacles reaching up to me out of the deep.

I don't know why the Brine King chose me. For weeks I've heard the voices, whispering of his return, gurgling of doom and slavery to us all. I tried to warn the simple men of my ship, made examples of those more violent disbelievers. Yet my prophecies only served to drive the rest into obstinate ignorance. They cast me overboard, perhaps in the vain hope that in my death, none of my utterances would come true.

Alas, as the morning sun peeked over the horizon, a pillar of green light rose up from the waves, vindicating my darkest fears. The old god ascended from the depths and laid waste to my ship and all aboard her. Now, without food nor water, I shan't last the night. My bones shall be plucked clean by the pincerred multitude that haunts me even now.

May this message find land, and by the unholy revelation that Tsoagoth has risen, may my reputation be restored.

- Captain Caruso of the Lady in Waiting

--Leatherbound Logbook (POE I)

...I beg of you, Mercutio, if you have any care for the friendship we once had, grant me this one favour. It is true I have my own boat, but that is for hauling in fish! It is not fit to travel the waters I must navigate. My wife needs me, my friend. I know it reeks of madness, but Abi has been taken, kidnapped by the King of Brine himself. I fear too that he intends to make her one of his fishwives, just as the old stories warned us!



Please, Mercurio, I've heard tell of your success as a merchant in recent years. Surely you can spare one ship? Let me voyage out and rescue her, or at least, bring her body back to rest on dry land. Help me silence the insanity in my own mind.

Every night, I dream of pale, slime-slick creatures that pursue my boat through the thick, dark waters. I try not to look at them, but I also do. And they look back, their eyes wide with sadness and longing. They are not eyes born of the sea, Mercurio. God help me... they are Abi's eyes.

- Benric of Gulton

--Letter Fragment (POE I)

General Marcovius,  
Commander of the Templar Fleet  
Operation Ocean Blades

An urgent Report on:  
The Massacre of Pondium Strait.

"We were sent here to crush the Brinerot pirates, but something far more troubling has occupied our attentions. Of the surviving men, a few of the older, more superstitious types call it the Brine King. Apparently some false deity of the sea we've long since scoured from our holy scriptures.

Whatever the damned thing is, it's big. I've seen it myself, though as little more than a vast shadow far below us, veritably dwarfing the hulls of our fleet.

Most of our ships are gone, dragged beneath the waves by this malevolent leviathan. We could do little but watch in horror as the waters about us blossomed red. We are nearing the Beacon, what's left of us, and the wind blows strongly towards home.

High Templar Avarius, please understand that I am not a man cut from the coward's cloth, but this situation... this game of cat and mouse has gone on too long. There is nothing to be gained in continuing on to Pondium. We shall turn our sails and catch the trade wind back to Oriath. I only pray we can outrun this thalassic fiend.

May Innocence guide and protect us.

General Marcovius [sic: no closing quotes]

--Templar Report (POE I)

O' Lord of Salt and Scale, your servants attend to thee.  
Praise thee Tsoagoth!  
Without life yet living, the Brine King sleeps.  
We send our prayers to thee, so that you might eternally slumber.  
O' great one, we offer up this human soul as slave for you in your drowned city.  
Take this life and bid the seas be calm and plentiful.  
Woe to the Sailor who does not offer tribute to thee!

Such a man is cast off from our ocean kingdom!  
He shall be made pariah, with neither captain nor commission.  
Judge us not by unworthy sails,  
Look to us as your servants.  
Your kin of salt and scale.  
O' praise thee Tsoagoth, praise thee!

--Shrine to the Brine King (POE I)

## TSOAGOTH'S DEFEAT

...with the Brine King gone, you've done a fine thing for us seafarers. The waters won't no longer pander to the whim of an overgrown bloody crustacean, and damn me if I don't feel a stirring in me loins. It's the ocean, calling... like a lust-starved lover. ...

--Lilly, "The Brine King" (POE I)

How did you...? You still breathing? Bloody barnacles on me arse! You, my new friend, are a legend of the high seas to behold! Tell you what, I've already done my bit getting you here, but if you're looking to sail on to Phrecia, me and the Black Crest would be honoured to take you.

--Weylam Roth, "The Brine King" (POE I)

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## PHRECIA

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### RALAKESH, MASTER OF A MILLION FACES

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Ralakesh... My brother has been busy, hasn't he...

--Tangmazu, The Ashen Fields (POE I)

High Lord Ralakesh, I am but lowly outlaw scum, yet you, a god of a thousand faces, have looked at me and deemed me worthy of your cause!

I've offered willingly my flesh and blood. You shall now have my thoughts to use as you see fit. I only ask that you let me serve forever as one of your Holy Claws. Allow me to bring the light of your belonging to this whole bloody continent. My greatest desire is to see your ancient kingdom remade and your enemies cower at your feet.

--Ode to Ralakesh (POE I)

## GRUTHKUL, MOTHER OF DESPAIR, THE PORCELAIN QUEEN

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... Gruthkul's pain has transcended ages and she will vent that pain upon any and all she encounters until her grief is finally laid to rest.

--Eramir, "Gruthkul" (POE I)

My mother called you the Porcelain Queen. I never thought you were real!

--Ranger, on Gruthkul's death (POE I)

You alone, I forgive, Gruthkul. You're like Sin. You never wanted this, and it cost you everything.

--Scion, on Gruthkul's death (POE I)

## ARAKAALI, SPINNER OF SHADOWS

---

... Now she has returned, but it is not vengeance she wants. She is no mindless Gruthkul. Arakaali, Goddess of Love, wishes only to embrace the world as she wishes she had been embraced.

The Widow

--Shrine to Arakaali V (POE I)

... Arakaali will suck all life from this land, leave only empty husks and dusty bones. There will be no Spirit, no us, no thing left to love and laugh.

Only husks and dust... and Arakaali.

--Yeena, "Arakaali" (POE I)

Your soft whispers beneath earth tingle my skin, like breath of lover against my loins. I sleep not. I hear your name inside my skull. Arakaali. No name tasted so sweet on my tongue.

Stories I have heard, tales of cursed beauty. Visage of woman, jewel that walks the streets in final days of a great empire. Heard tell you sought victims, but I know truth. You sought man to love you, to break spell. You hoped true love might allow you to shed eight-leg body, to become goddess of love once more.

I pledge myself to you, my lady of Vaal. I promise love, for I am that man you have waited on. Corrupt corpse-lovers claim to worship you, call you Spinner of Shadows, but you have spun only shadows of desire about my heart.

Sweet Arakaali, I have found your altar. I will speak the call. I will return you to beauty. I will raise you from black pits of despair and together we shall rule Wraeclast in glory... forever.

--Love Letter (POE I)

She's part machine... which means she can be dismantled!

--Scion, on Arakaali (POE I)

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## SARN

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### YUGUL, REFLECTION OF TERROR

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In Izaro's grotesque little garden, you'll find an old friend of mine.

The yawning maw that is Yugul... but a self-portrait of what that pathetic creature has come to believe about the nature of fear. Those who look upon him see their own fears reflected in his horrifying visage.

--Sin, "Reflection of Terror" (POE I)

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### SOLARIS, ETERNAL SUN & LUNARIS, ETERNAL MOON

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... Lunaris, Eternal goddess of the Moon and her sister, Solaris of the Sun, have risen to reclaim what was once their own. Siblings equal in strength, mighty twin rivers converging, sweeping all before them.

We are cornered animals, awaiting the deluge that will surely drown us. Yet there exists a pair of ancient treasures, the Sun Orb and the Moon Orb. They are our hope... our desperation.

--Maramoa, "Solaris and Lunaris" (POE I)

These owl eyes of mine have been watching the sun goddess from afar. The Sun Orb lies within her temple, guarded by her most ardent devotee. An exile who, in his insanity, has taken to calling himself 'The Dawn'. ...

--Maramoa, "The Sun Orb" (POE I)

I've been keeping a close eye on that exile-turned-sycophant who calls himself, 'The Dusk'. Dusk carried the Moon Orb into the Lunaris and has not returned with it, not as far as I have seen.

No doubt he clings to that orb like it's his adopted mother's own nurturing breast. ...

--Maramoa, "The Moon Orb" (POE I)

If we are to see the dawn of a new era for humankind, the sun must be taught to behave herself.

Upon that mighty span between Sarn's left hand and its right, Solaris burns to consume every single moment of existence. Sparing no thought for life and its needs, she would see the world parched barren before she yields to reason.

The sun must be allowed to set so that it may rise again as a blessing, not a curse.

--Sin, "The Eternal Sun" (POE I)

... Lunaris, in her cold fury, has forgotten that the warming sun of morning is as life-giving as the cooling damp of evening.

The empire Lunaris dreams of shall be lit by moon and twinkling stars, and life itself shall wither away in the perpetual night.

--Sin, "The Eternal Moon" (POE I)

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## VASTIRI

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### GARUKHAN, QUEEN OF THE WIND

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Garukhan wished once more for the skies. If she were to die, she wanted it to be up there in the clouds. This world had never been her home. She required greater things. She required adventure.

But die she would, here in the dirt...

--Captured Soul of Stalker of the Endless Dunes (POE I)

### GARUKHAN'S DEFEAT

As a child, my mother told me stories of the old gods, that they were to be feared and venerated, that they embodied the everlasting spirit of the Maraketh people. But this false queen, Garukhan, she was nothing but a goddess of lies.

By accepting Kira's slaughter of Oyun as a sacrifice of worth, the goddess has played her part in forsaking our most sacred tenet. Honour the Mother, Honour the Life. The bones of our tribe-mother, have been ground into the dust by this divine insanity.

If the old gods can't follow the very traditions they themselves set forth, then how can we? Perhaps the time has come to forge our customs anew, in our image, not those of false and selfish gods.

--Irasha, "Garukhan" (POE I)

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## SHAKARI, QUEEN OF THE SANDS

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...now Shakari, the mother of all black bugs rises from the sands! ...

--Irasha, "Shakari" (POE I)

In the Maraketh desert, an Oasis lies to the east, its waters shielded from prying eyes by a preternatural storm. The sand will rip the very flesh from your bones, should you be so foolish as to enter into its dark shroud. Yet, enter you must.

The goddess Shakari hides within that golden blizzard, festering with revenge as she resurrects and rebuilds her ancient army - an army that once threatened to shake the very balance of these lands.

Should she be allowed to revitalise her troops, the whole of Maraketh will finally fall under the cruelty of her selfish reign. ...

--Sin, "Shakari" (POE I)

## SHAKARI'S DEFEAT

So it's true. Shakari [sic] thought, as she took her final breath. "My father, Sin, wishes me dead. And he has sent his rabid dog to do it..."

--Captured Soul of Terror of the Infinite Drifts (POE I)

You killed Shakari? My sister's death has finally been avenged. Shakari was supposed to be our divine teacher, said to guide us into womanhood. All she ever gave was death.

I suppose it's fitting that the teacher has learned that mortal lesson for herself. Our whole lives, we have lived for the blessings of our goddesses, yet here they are, in the flesh, proving to us that they are only monsters. ...

--Irasha, "Shakari" (POE I)

## ELSEWHERE

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Like many others, the Karui gods have awakened, but aside from Tukohama and Kitava, we have heard nothing of their activities. They walk Wraeclast like in times of old, so—where are they? Our descendants come to us and ask us when the gods will return home. For this, we have no answer. Even Hinekora seems unwilling to speak on what she sees.

--Akoya, "The Return of the Gods" (POE I)

## NGAMAHU, MOTHER OF FIRE

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For centuries, they stood vigil in secret over their sleeping goddess, even as contamination oozed out of the decadent Vaal empire.

--From Bone to Ashes (POE I)

For countless generations, a small number of my tribe secretly watched over Ngamahu as she slept. She must have awoken by now, but I have heard nothing of her whereabouts or intent. It is frustrating having to remain here in the Halls of the Dead while the Mother of Fire walks the world in the flesh. I would very much like to meet her. Before I was of age, my father's father allowed me to look upon her sleeping face. It was only then that I understood that there are types of fire unknown to a mere boy.

--Kaom, "Ngamahu" (POE I)

## SIONE, MOTHER OF THE SUN & LANI HUA, MOTHER OF THE MOON

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Many believe that the Mother of the Moon has been off fighting a war against the Mother of the Sun for thousands of years. While Lani Hua is indeed absent, it is not to fight against her sister. The wounded souls from that war are sent to the silver palace, where Arohongui tends to them until they may rejoin the fight. Those warrior souls cry out in fear and torment as they lay in hospice. They speak not of war with Sione, but of a war with the stars themselves. They have been sworn to silence by both Sione and Lani Hua, but the feverish ones cannot help but rant. Apparently, the two sisters did go out into the night sky to wage war upon one another, but when they got there, they encountered something horrible, something that drives even the strongest warrior to madness and panic. We have not been abandoned by our two strongest gods. They are out there protecting us every single minute of every single day, and they cannot rest for even a moment.

That's what the tales say, in any case. I don't know how much of that I actually believe.

--Ikiaho, "Lani Hua" (POE I)

## HINEKORA, MOTHER OF DEATH

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When you slew the Beast, you ended the Slumber of the Gods. Hinekora is finally awake, and the Halls of the Dead clamour with the joyous songs of our people. You cannot possibly understand the import of this change. The greater sum of our people, countless generations of Karui warriors, have never known their goddess. I myself have only ever spoken to her in her dreams. To hear her voice is to know that every sacrifice I made for my people was justified. This is the gift that you have given us... that you have given me.

--Navali, "The Awakening of the Gods" (POE I)

Thousands of years ago, Hinekora foresaw the coming time of emptiness, the Slumber of the Gods, and built her domain to function while she lay dreaming. Had she not done this, any Karui who died during that emptiness would have been lost forever. Her foresight guarded our people for generations.

--Navali, "The Slumber of the Gods" (POE I)

The Mother of Death has pledged herself to a higher Impulse. She seeks to perpetuate Order, by ensuring her foreseen prophecies come to pass. There are only twelve futures in which Wraeclast survives the coming darkness. All twelve involve the arrival of someone like yourself to this place. She foretold it, and you have found your way to us. That is a good sign that we are on one of the right paths... for now.

--Navali, "Order" (POE I)

Hinekora shall always be honoured as the Mother of Death and the creator of this place, but she rarely speaks. I believe she is lost in her visions. It is unclear how much Navali communicates with her, and how much the *hatungo* is saying on her own...

--Kaom, "Hinekora" (POE I)

Hinekora is our jailer. I imagine she had good intentions when she made this place. Preserve the souls of the Karui so that they may guide their descendants, sure. Sounds lovely. Then, she went to sleep for thousands of years. All the souls of my people have been collecting here unattended ever since. That seems like a massive blunder. I don't care that she's awake now. She's hardly present. There's no way she's the same as she was, not after a sleep like that. We're stuck in a prison without a warden, and there is *no way out*.

--Utula, "Hinekora" (POE I)



Where am I? This cannot be real... but it is. Wraeclast... I long believed this life a dream, but it seems what I just escaped was the true illusion. My family... my boys... my daughter... they weren't real? Oh, the Halls of the Dead. In this life, I could never... ah... so I gathered up the lost souls of my people, and cherished them as my own. I have so much to tell them, but the dream calls me back! I must... not go...

--Hinekora, 1 (POE I)

...back again... reality and dream mix together like waves in a tide pool. They called me Mother, but I was forced to abandon them... I remember now, the Imbalance... I foresaw all of this, and the plan is still in motion. We teeter on the edge of oblivion, flailing, waiting to be saved or doomed by the slightest push. The future-past calls to me... I must gaze into the abyss. Heed my words. My children, I will return to you... when the time is right...

--Hinekora, 2 (POE I)

Waking is such exquisite pain... memory and prophecy are one and the same. I have so much to tell you, but I cannot remember when we are. You're not even you yet. You come to these Halls of the Dead decades early, wearing a different face, but I'm asleep. You're here now, as I awaken... and you're here decades from now, someone else all over again... all these things are true. Time is a hall of mirrors. I... see...

--Hinekora, 3 (POE I)

... it is a gift for you, my daughter... oh. That was just a dream... what does it mean for something to be real? If you loved, and were loved, would it matter if your world was an illusion? He knew the truth. Dominus must catch you. The Arkhon's plan to rescue his daughter will fail, but you must try anyway. They must all be present at the fulcrum of destiny, if Wraeclast... is to...

--Hinekora, 4 (POE I)

... back again... I must fight for every moment of lucidity. Time is shorter than you know. Cataclysms await down most paths, and those paths then turn on and *eat* each other. These things *must happen*. You must make them happen. It begins with the fulcrum of destiny, the moment on which all of existence is balanced. The King of Dreams must be allowed to escape, and though there can be only one, *two* High Templars must witness... this...

--Hinekora, 5 (POE I)

... for once, Chaos is not the enemy... imagine that... they see you for what you truly are, like I do... seek his servant... before that, or after that, I cannot tell... the Maraketh will test you. You will undergo three challenges, and we will be the third... you must prove yourself, or else you... won't...

--Hinekora, 6 (POE I)

... listen, quickly... the messenger from the stars was once a man, but before that, he was a father. A sliver of his heart still remains, somewhere deep inside... he knows something vital, but he doesn't know that he knows... I cannot see it, for I was... never a Mother... Doryani is missing...

--Hinekora, 7 (POE I)

... the Thief... I will suggest he seek counsel in the one place I can never see... upon his return, he will create the Beast... then I am sorry, my children, but I must sleep for time beyond time. The plan is in place. Make no traffic with the Vaal. The horrors of Queen Atziri must happen. On this, we agree, even with our mortal enemy...

--Hinekora, 8 (POE I)

...the Vaal Empire will fall. Doryani... where is Doryani? Malachai must construct his Grand Design, a crucible in which you will be forged, and thus he will be the architect of his own doom. You must... slay the Beast... when the time is right...

--Hinekora, 9 (POE I)

... the King of the Godless must not be allowed to find what he seeks... the Masked One must save his family before crimson touches the mountain peak... the Forger must fail in her reckless mission... just one of these three does not mean the end, but two will spell certain doom...

--Hinekora, 10 (POE I)

...corruption clouds my sight once more... faithful heroes are trying to save humanity... but they don't understand... you gathered the peoples of Wraeclast, and stood united... but you failed...

--Hinekora, 11 (POE I)

...she will know you by three different faces, as will you, her. You must find her. In her mind... lies... the key...

--Hinekora, 12 (POE I)

... how... are... you... here?...

--Hinekora, 13 (POE I)

... so... that's... how it ends... this time...

--Hinekora, 14 (POE I)

## THE SILENCE OF THE GODS

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Aside from my own presence, I no longer feel the vibrations of other gods. Though there may yet be more out there, for now, Wraeclast can breathe a sigh of relief. ...

--Sin, "The Gods" (POE I)

...the Karui... They're different after the death of their gods... and we are, too, after the departure of ours. I wasn't a believer, but I can feel it. We're on our own now.

We're going to have to work together to face what comes next...

--Kirac, "Oriath" (POE I)

# ATTEMPTS TO REBUILD CIVILISATION

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## THE IMMORTAL SYNDICATE

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The ancient code of life and death is broken. A devious plan of necromancy, unrelenting and frighteningly efficient. They call themselves the Immortal Syndicate...

--Jun Ortoi, <https://www.pathofexile.com/betrayal> (trailer)

The Syndicate is not just a cluster of like-minded individuals. We have a very wealthy benefactor...

--Vorici, on bargaining for items (POE I)

Some of the members we have come across... well... they have come back from the dead. I don't have any better way of putting it.

They are no mindless zombies. Somehow they are returning... whole. This must be why they call themselves the Immortal Syndicate. Immortality is dangerous, even in the hands of those with good intentions.

--Jun Ortoi, "Syndicate Members" (POE I)

At last, we have a name; Catarina. I know of her. She was a powerful necromancer whose talents were... misdirected. I do not know for certain how she learned to raise the dead back to true life, but... I have my suspicions. And I have reason to believe that such power does not come without a great price.

It is likely she is paying that price in very inhumane ways. ...

--Jun Ortoi, "Catarina" (POE I)

The picture is at last clear. Catarina has obtained the Horns of Kulemak, an artefact capable of shifting the very energies of life freely. She sought power, not just magical, but political power. To be able to grant immortality is a powerful bargaining tool indeed.

Wraeclast is fractured. Many little societies separated by vast tracts of land. But it will not always be so, and Catarina knows this. She is playing the long game. She sees herself as an immortal Queen just biding her time.

Her subordinates dare not cross her, for she has the power to gift them immortality, but also to take it away.

There is a reason my Order hid the Horns for so long, and we are seeing it play out before our very eyes.

--Jun Ortoi, "The Syndicate Leader" (POE I)

... She is a tyrant in the making, and the longer we let her accumulate power, the harder it will be to depose her.

--Jun Ortoi, "The Syndicate Leader" (POE I)

We were only taught what was passed down for generations. We believed the Horns to be the ultimate tool of life and death; capable of siphoning the very breath of life from any living thing. We do not know where it came from. Perhaps the remains of a powerful, long-dead animal. Perhaps a creation of the gods themselves.

Regardless of its provenance, I believe the Horns are what have given the Immortal Syndicate their miraculous ability to return from the dead unscathed.

--Jun Ortoi, "Horns of Kulemak" (POE I)

... I believe the Syndicate has been planning to form a new government. The Templar were cruel, but at least they were mortal. If the Syndicate's power continues to grow, they will be able to rule Wraeclast and beyond without fear of reprisal, and we mere mortals will have no choice but to serve, or fuel their cycle of death and rebirth.

--Jun Ortoi, "Oriath" (POE I)

The world is an ancient stone, rigid and immovable, and we are but water, rolling across its surface, leaving an ephemeral trail before we sink beneath its skin. So short are our lives that the stone seemingly remains unchanged.

Given enough time, the rain can shape a stone. Each drop's minute contribution, adding up over time, hews the stone's rough edges. But there is no grand design here. There is no individual guiding the stone into a useful form, only natural forces. Chaos.

But what if that weren't the case? What if there was someone guiding the rain? Someone able to plan far past the fleeting lives that limit us?

What new potential would we unlock?

--Lifegiver's Manifesto 1 (POE I)

What new thing have you learned today? Or this week? How far have you come in your lifetime? If you died today, how much of what you have learned would be lost for all time?

We advance as a society by building upon previous knowledge. Bricks stacked atop bricks. Too often are key advances lost due to an unforeseen death, leaving a gap in the wall. How long until someone climbs high enough once more to continue to build?

We cannot all live forever. Sacrifices must be made. But with sufficient time to build our knowledge, what we fuel with the blood of our brothers and sisters today may come freely tomorrow.

--Lifegiver's Manifesto 2 (POE I)

Each great movement has detractors - the powers that be naturally fight against any threat to their dominance. But steel is not forged in cool air, it is forged in vicious heat.

The heat is coming, brothers and sisters. They will try to destroy us, pit us against each other, and put us in impossible situations, but, throughout, we must stand united.

Though we crawl through the mud, acting in secrecy and silence, we are destined to become Wraeclast's saviours. Each sacrifice we must make is but a twig in the flames of our forge, and the day will come when our blade has been tempered into a mighty weapon and we may slice through the spectre of death once and for all.

--Lifegiver's Manifesto 3 (POE I)

We bury the dead. Insects feed on the flesh and bone... Rot takes hold... An entire lifetime reduced to feed for the grass above. A waste. But the soul, oh, the soul... The soul does not even feed the earth. It drifts invisibly into the ether, never harnessed, never used. Gone.

What greater waste of life is there than to let the soul flutter away into nothingness? We hope and wish for something more, but here and now we have tools that will guarantee no afterlife be necessary. We have the tools to build a utopian life here, in Wraeclast, through thaumaturgy. The only thing we lacked was time, but the gift of the Horns has given us that too.

Brothers and sisters, there's a new empire in the making, and we are its founders. Those that die for our cause will live on within us, and their names will be etched into the foundations of our utopia.

--Lifegiver's Manifesto 4 (POE I)

People need a strong leader. As Oriath bubbles over and spills into Wraeclast, the ragged and the hungry will look to someone to keep them safe from harm. For now, it is merely a matter of survival, but in time, a true society will form, and someone must step in to rule.

A city is not built in a day, nor even a lifetime. Sarn was being cobbled together up to the day it burned. With so many hands involved in its construction, fractures and slips were inevitable. People would fall through the cracks. Factions would form.

Oriath didn't learn from Sarn's mistakes, but they cannot be blamed. The death of a ruler always has and always will throw an empire's direction into the wind.

With an Eternal Queen, this is a problem we will never have to face.

--Lifegiver's Manifesto 5 (POE I)

### CATARINA'S DEFEAT

Catarina, Master of Undeath: Death will never come for an immortal.

Jun, Veiled Master: You're no immortal. You're a thief. Nothing more.

--Catarina & Jun, during fight (POE I)

Catarina, Master of Undeath: Stop... I can bring them back. I can bring Jun's entire order back! Just give me-

Jun, Veiled Master: Shut up.

--Catarina & Jun, after fight (POE I)

Then... it is done. Catarina is dead. The Syndicate is fractured. My *akhara* can at last find peace. ...

--Jun, "Catarina" (POE I)

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## THE ARIMOR LINE

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...Undertaker Arimor, a man collecting the scattered spirits of the Eternal Empire for a mysterious purpose. These spirits have begun to Haunt the monsters of Wraeclast, unleashing their ancient fury and sorrow onto the world.

...the Lantern of Arimor, a powerful family heirloom which can illuminate the wrathful spirits haunting monsters throughout Wraeclast. With it, the Undertaker hopes to...rid Wraeclast of this menace--and further his cryptic cause.

--Path of Exile: Necropolis Content Reveal (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLFeErq1vEI>)

You might call me the last true citizen of the Eternal Empire. Or you can call me Arimor, my actual name...

--Undertaker Arimor, "The Life of an Undertaker" (POE I)

This corpse'll do. Full of anguish, just how we need. ... When we've got enough, we can perform certain rites at the Necropolis...

--Undertaker Arimor, "Burial Patterns" (POE I)

When we bury our anguished friends, the pattern matters. Exorcisms are all about patterns, you see? Patterns of angst, patterns of pain... patterns of Corruption. ...

--Undertaker Arimor, "Burial Patterns" (POE I)

There's a white *goo* that comes off properly exorcised souls. I've got a colleague I correspond with, he calls them humors, but I don't see anything funny about it. He's got plots, too, though I don't know what it is he's scheming. He's a strange one, that. Never quite makes sense. Loves his plants, hates warlocks. Now, what were we talking about? I can't quite remember. Back to work, I suppose.

--Undertaker Arimor, "Plasm" (POE I)

I've long had my fingers in quite a few... pies. I've learned to be discreet in my dealings, however. Few exiles can be truly trusted. There was a time when Torr Olgosso simply would not leave me alone. Everywhere I turned, there he was! He and I had to have a talk about boundaries... yes, boundaries... and I certainly did not appreciate Igna Phoenix accidentally setting my work on fire... but the greatest betrayal, of course... my former apprentice and I did not part on good terms, to put it mildly...

--Undertaker Arimor, "Other Exiles" (POE I)

Fancies herself a Master of Undeath these days... or would the term be Mistress of Undeath? No, that doesn't sound right... but she's meddling with forces beyond mortal control, and it will not end well for any of us. I won't betray her, though, no matter what she did to me. ...

--Undertaker Arimor, "Former Apprentice" (POE I)

... My former apprentice forged her own path, and her own doom. ... I did find and retrieve her body, but I'll not allow it to be part of this sordid business. ...

--Undertaker Arimor, "Catarina" (POE I)

... love this old Wraeclast, I do... Damned fool he was, that Voll...

--Undertaker Arimor, "Exorcisms" (POE I)

Chitus could have led the Empire to greatness, had he not been viciously betrayed. He was a visionary! My line has worked tirelessly for three centuries to enact this—ah, you clever fox! You



almost had me spilling my secrets! The solitude really must be getting to me. This old man'll never talk!

--Undertaker Arimor, "Emperor Chitus" (POE I)

Balabus Arimor was a little-known preacher during the days of Emperor Chitus, who believed eternal life could be achieved through ritual sacrifice. We shall see whether he was a prophet - or a charlatan.

--Hand of Arimor (POE I)

May the Prosperity granted to the Eternal Empire remain forevermore, ensuring our descendants have the means to return to greatness!

--Undertaker Arimor, chant Perandus random (POE I)

May the great Emperor Chitus free you of your anguish and aid this soldier, so that you may sweep away the filth that threatens the Empire's return!

--Undertaker Arimor, chant generic 1, chant staff random (POE I)

May the Shine of Solaris the Grand Phrecia returned to the Eternal Empire blaze ever-brightly; lighting the way for generations to come!

--Undertaker Arimor, chant Phrecia random (POE I)

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## KINGSMARCH & THE SECOND KALGUURAN COLONISATION

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... My name is Johan, and I am from the far east. My people, the Kalguurans, are attempting to build a settlement near here...

--Johan, "Introduction" (POE I)

Several of our people were already here in Wraeclast, undertaking expeditions of their own. When their outpost reached a certain size, the King, in his great wisdom, gifted them an official charter—and a name. I was sent to aid in the execution and management of that charter. I serve as the King's Hand.

--Johan, "Kingsmarch" (POE I)

A name and a charter might have been stamped on it from afar, but this is *our* home. When we first arrived on Wraeclast, we picked this spot out as a good place to stash some supplies... and now it's going to be a city...

--Tujen, "Kingsmarch" (POE I)

We're still on our grand quest, as Dannig would put it. This is just basecamp. Of course, the longer I'm here drinkin' a good beer and relaxing in a bed, the harder it is to get back out there.

--Tujen, "Expeditions" (POE I)

Things operate rather loosely here, but back home, almost all official business is done through one or more guilds. Eh, for example, you cannot simply open up a shop and start selling goods. All designated locations for shops have a process that must be undertaken. There are a set number, and they are all currently licensed to major merchants. Every few years, a new license is created, and bid upon by interested parties. Those without the familial wealth to get 'in on the game,' so to speak, may consider moving across the world to new lands, where regulations are not so strict. It's the best argument in favour of a move to Kingsmarch. Bring your family, start a new life!

--Raulf, "The Guilds" (POE I)

Oh, what to say about my people? Many of us here on Wraeclast are in various guilds. I'm in the Meridian Free Traders, the trade guild that executes the King's charter for Kingsmarch. You can't beat our logistics! Heh heh. Dannig is in the Artificers' Guild these days, and, Tujen's a freelance harbourmaster, but he stays close. Gotta keep the family together, you know?

--Rog, on the Kalguurans (POE I)

When we first arrived, we didn't intend for this to be anything permanent. It was more of a supply dump so we wouldn't have to keep going back to our ship. That was *my* idea. Heh heh! In the course of our expeditions, we built it up bit by bit. Eventually, it felt something like home. People back in Kalguur became interested in joining us, for adventure, opportunity, or freedom. Word must have gotten out, because that's when Johan arrived with the King's charter.

--Rog, "Kingsmarch" (POE I)

The charter for Kingsmarch brings many Kalguuran laws to Wraeclast, including our guild associations and criminal penalties. There is very little enforcement for most of it right now... there are only two things on Wraeclast the King seems to truly care about. One of those things is *taxes*. Ugh.

--Rog, "The Charter" (POE I)

I make no secret that I am a man of two loyalties. I must serve the King's wishes, and I must also serve this Charter to the letter of the law. I am aware that Kingsmarch is a destination for many that would be considered... less than upstanding citizens. So long as I directly see no evidence of crime, sedition, or another rebellion, there is no conflict of interest. Kindly do not discuss your thoughts in my presence.

--Johan, "Loyalties" (POE I)

It seems the recent Royal Order of Criminal Hanging was damaged by seawater on its long journey over the ocean. Unfortunately, the pages listing the individuals to be tried were, in my opinion, unreadable. I would be remiss in my duties if I were to hang the wrong man based on my own interpretation of salt-bleed letters. As it takes many months to make the voyage—both there, for you to receive this reply, and back, for us to receive the proper text—the punishment in question will exceed the Charter statute of limitations. With regret, I am unable to enforce the Order as the situation currently stands.

My Deepest Apologies,

Johan, your Hand on Wraeclast

--Johan, Legal Response (POE I)

We have contracted Captain Faustus, of the *Fair Marylene*, for ties to the markets of Wraeclast...

--Johan, "Speak to Faustus" (POE I)

Well, as I understand it, the Kalguurans we see here are not... hmm, how to put this delicately... not the, heh, finest wines in the cellar. Some of them are part of official guilds back on Middengard, but most are dissidents, criminals, and suspected rebels. You are an exile from Oriath, just as they are exiles from Kalguur. If not in name, then in circumstance.

--Faustus, "Kingsmarch" (POE I)

With Oriath evacuated, I suppose Kingsmarch is the last bit of civilisation left on Wraeclast. Oh, I *could* go live with the Karui like the rest, but that's just not the way the winds are taking me.

--Faustus, "Oriath" (POE I)

With Darnaw dead, I've promoted myself to Admiral. Of course, the Oriathan Navy no longer officially exists... damn that Kirac!... so I'll have to make my own. The *Faustian Flotilla!* Admiral Faustus commands boldly from the helm! Oh, yes, it's quite magnificent, I know.

--Faustus, "Admiralty" (POE I)

## THE KING AND THE FAILED REBELLION

I've never heard of this 'gods' thing before setting foot here, but I know of at least one... *man...* who would fancy himself a god. Best we not mention Divinity to those back home.

--Dannig, "Gods" (POE I)

You-know-who is *very* interested in the science of Corruption... which means I should look into it, too. You know, just in case.

--Rog, on a corrupted implicit (POE I)

It's all about *marketing*...

'March with us in Kingsmarch!' No no...

'At the edge of the world, where even the King might not hear you'... hmm, no, too risky...

--Raulf, to himself 1, 4, & 7 (POE I)

It's a long and dangerous journey back home. I do miss it, but the home I remember ain't there anymore. Well, not the way it was.

--Tujen, "Kalguur" (POE I)

There's been a brawl in the tavern. Royalists stirring trouble. One of our men aided them, so I had to let 'em go. You just can't trust someone like that.

--Tujen, on a crew brawl 3 (POE I)

Tujen: Damn it all. Damn the war. Damn the King!

Dannig: Tujen, you've had too much to drink.

Tujen: You know why. You were there.

Dannig: Just *watch what you say*.

Tujen: Yeah, yeah, yeah...

--Tujen & Dannig, settlers conversation (POE I)

Tolis. Oskar. Naja. Thea. Sven.

I won't forget. And someday, I'll make sure those bastards remember.

--Tujen, Drunken Scrawl (POE I)

During the failed rebellion, I once called out with all my heart. An arrow was arcing through the air. My arm was pinned, and I knew I couldn't get out of the way in time. I was a dead woman. But Luck answered my earnest request. Another arrow, also on a murderous path, hit the first *in midair*, and both were diverted, landing on either side of me instead! That was the first time I knew that Chance itself was a real force in this world.

--Gwennen, "Luck" (POE I)

Johan mentioned he's keeping an eye out for 'another' rebellion, did he? It's a sign of our sheer distance from home, that he would dare mention one happened in the first place. The bards do not dare sing of the good folk that gave everything... gave their *lives*...

I'm sorry, I shouldn't drag you into this. It's dangerous for you to even know about it.

--Gwennen, "'Another' Rebellion" (POE I)

Of course I'll make it to game night. I'm not avoiding Kingsmarch per se, it's just better for everybody if Johan doesn't see me. He might recognise me. The rest of you escaped when it all fell apart, but he saw my face. I gave him that scar. He's the one man in this world that would know me if he saw me—and then he could certainly guess who my surviving allies were. The King's paranoid suspicions have been bad enough, but a confirmation would bring doom down on us.

--Gwennen, Dear Rog (POE I)

A reckoning is coming, have no doubt about that. The King has his eye on Wraeclast, and he lays far-reaching plans. Only time will tell...

--Johan, "The King" (POE I)

... Something's afoot, and I feel a sinister shadow over my shoulder that only grows longer with each passing day.

--Faustus, "The King" (POE I)

I want you to know that I share the same concerns. For now, let's play along. We are perfectly positioned to wait and watch. The dark underbelly of civilisation carries with it truths that cannot be obscured by the might of authority. They're all terrified, whether they admit it or not. We'll speak more on this in person. I don't dare put pen to paper on the topic.

--Faustus, Ominous Correspondence (POE I)

I will not be your secret ear in Kingsmarch, nor would I aid those you call enemies. I will uphold the integrity of my profession over all other causes. Thank you for your inquiry, and good day.

Kindly, Raulf of the Meridian Free Traders

--Raulf, Cryptic Refusal (POE I)

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## ORIATH'S CITIZEN GOVERNMENT

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Kirac's my name, tracker and officer in Oriath's new Citizen Vanguard. We're the front line, ensuring the likes of Kitava and Innocence never blindsides us again. The Templar kept the true nature of the world hidden from the populace, but now the rhoa's out of the sack, and we'll keep both eyes open. Or the one eye open, in my case.

--Kirac, "Introduction" (POE I)

Families. These courageous men and women have families. That's the difference between them and a traditional military. No disrespect to my old comrades in arms, but this organisation is not comprised of solitary violent-minded young men. The Citizen Vanguard is a volunteer effort filled with the ranks of ordinary people who are tired of the endless parade of doom and nightmare we call Wraeclast. I said we'd all have to work together to face what's coming, and that's exactly what we're doing.

--Kirac, "The Citizen Vanguard" (POE I)

... It's not for me to decide whether skulking around Oriath with mystical technologies...is a crime worthy of prison. The new citizen Magistrates will handle that.

--Kirac, "Zana Caeserius" (POE I)

... My younger brother, Baran, fell in with a radical by the name of Zana Caeserius some time ago. She's a bit of a famous one in certain parts. Many who have worked with her have ended up two pews short of a congregation, ranting and raving on street corners or accosting random citizens... you can see the cause for my concern. I've reason to believe she was working out of an old Templar Laboratory off the Square. ...

--Kirac, "Invite to Hideout" (POE I)

[For the full story of Zana, Kirac, and the fate of Oriath, see the Atlas of Worlds supplement.]

# MISCELLANEOUS LORE

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## TITANS

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... If you want to know more about the Beginning of Time, you'll have to ask the Titans. Well, *Titan*. ...

--The Trialmaster, "The Beginning of Time" (POE I)

Our mountain was once overrun by various human tribes vying amongst themselves for dominance. Little did the Redblades know that they encroached upon our territory and we were largely indifferent to their plights. It wasn't until the mountain erupted that their petty disputes were quelled.

--The Redblade Caldera (POE I)

As the fiery remnants of our outpost were subsumed into the caldera, a thunderous voice echoed across the barren landscape, "Your fragility is your folly. May others rise where you have fallen."

- El'Abin, Bloodeater

--El'Abin's Visage Fencer Helm (POE I)

Our home was swallowed beneath the great mountain for our complacency. Now we must prove our value to the Molten One by sating his hunger for life.

--Redblade Trampers Ancient Greaves (POE I)

How many did you fruitlessly feed to your molten god, Redblade? ...

--Catarina, to Korell Goya on his death (POE I)

We were largely indifferent to the struggles of humanity for millennia. Their suffering has become our own, now that we have a common goal to unite us. The hostile entities that threatened to overwhelm us still lurk deep beneath the surface of our world. We must ally with mankind in order to keep them at bay.

--An Unlikely Alliance (POE I)

Together, we will achieve an alliance in the face of ancient evil!

--The Molten One, on crafting an item 12 (POE I)

Welcome, surface-dweller... to a place created by the titans. Your kind have stood upon our shoulders since time immemorial.

--The Molten One, on entering the Forge of the Titans 2 (POE I)

This is our centre of power – our forge, where the heartblood of the world flows forth as magma.

--The Molten One, on approaching the anvil 4 (POE I)

For their mortal allies, the last Titans forged a mighty staff, one that could safely hold the first unearthed virtue gem.

--The Geomantic Gyre Highborn Staff (POE I)

Its forging marked the melding of man and Titan against the rising darkness.

--The Redblade Gladius (POE I)

To forge weapons from the heat of the Crucible is to bend the very essence of the world to your will.

--The Molten One, on crafting an item 1 (POE I)

...the Redblades failed...

--The Molten One, on crafting an item 6 (POE I)

Kalandra watched as the almighty titans fell, relegated to the innermost depths of the world, where horrific abominations awaited them.

--Primeval and Primordial Remnants (POE I)

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## THE VIRIDIAN WILDWOOD

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Welcome, traveler. You are safe here. The Viridian Wildwood is a gift to all those with peace in their hearts.



--Wildwood Greeting (POE I)

We, the Maji, mark this land as the future home of the Azmeri. Our people will prosper in safety.

--Maji Proclamation (POE I)

The Wildwood was a gift, meant as a haven against the Winter of the World.

--The Flawed Refuge Maple Round Shield (POE I)

There are many names for the Draíocht, and for the spirits and beings that comprise it. Just like nature itself, it's difficult to distinguish the parts from the whole.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Goddess" (POE I)

You might call her a goddess. I might call them Sisters Three. Others might call them the collective will of nature itself. We may all be right. They exist within this Wildwood, or perhaps they *are* the Wildwood. To create this realm, the Draíocht gave so many pieces of themselves so widely and so deeply, that little remained. Fragments in every tree, every rock, and every animal. A voice, sometimes, to a chosen few... or so I've been told, by travelers through these lands.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Draíocht" (POE I)

This was supposed to be a sacred realm of peace and prosperity for the Maji, and then, too, for the rest of their people from your world. The Wildwood was meant to be a gift. A subtle sorrow creeps upon my heart when I think about what this place was supposed to be, but never achieved. Perhaps the Draíocht gave too much of themselves... or perhaps nature simply has a way of growing and changing beyond anyone's control. It is still possible that the Maji recover in numbers and strength and reclaim the forest, but if they don't, such is the cycle of life and death. ...

--The Primal Huntress, "The Maji" (POE I)

... In some ways, this realm was lovingly crafted for them by the Draíocht. In some ways, the Maji built this realm for the Draíocht out of loving devotion. It might be that devotion that drew the King in the Mists here... belief is the only power in all of creation that can make real that which is not.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Wildwood's Origin" (POE I)

We are merely the vanguard for the rest of our people, who still reside in the old world, waiting for the Wildwood to be purged of evil. We are the strongest and the brightest, chosen by the Draíocht

long ago for this righteous purpose. There are many Maji deeper in this realm, though less than there were. I am the only one that ventures this close to the border 'twixt our realms.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Maji" (POE I)

I patrol the border of the Wildwood. That is my role, to be the Warden of Eaves. I was not the first, and I will hopefully not be the last. I do my best to protect travelers who wander through, and I slay any Nameless or afflicted beasts that try to enter your realm.

--The Warden of Eaves, "Duty" (POE I)

There were many who walked these paths in the early seasons. The mists were once far more welcoming, and brought warmth and light that both your realm and ours would otherwise lack. That was a very long time ago, more seasons than I can number. Travelers, they were, for this was never their destination, merely a route on the path to somewhere else, the same as a dream lies betwixt sleep and waking.

--The Primal Huntress, "Travelers" (POE I)

Your realm has an enormous sphere of fire hanging overhead? I've been told this tale before, except that travelers in the early seasons spoke of that fire being absent behind some... impenetrable veil of ash and mist obscuring your 'sky'... another fantastical absurdity that features prominently in your folklore. This place was a refuge for them in a time of cold and bitter struggle, they said. They ate of the fruit and washed themselves in the rivers, joyous to be alive for what little time they could stay.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Sun" (POE I)

I just can't picture it! Sometimes your people claim this 'sky' is a vast dome of blue, but sometimes your people claim it's dark, and other times it's a riot of colours caused by the 'Sun?' And there's a silver sphere up there, too, that contrasts the fiery one. The Sun and the Moon... for some reason, I get the feeling that they despise each other... so opposite, yet sharing the same heights, the same light and adoration... brings a sad tear to my eye, though I know not why. That closeness should bring love and cooperation, not hatred and jealousy...

Here I go, making up my own tall tales. You'll have to forgive me for my flight of fancy. Such imaginings are dangerous in the Wildwood.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Sky" (POE I)

I have learned much from travelers 'twixt our worlds. My people originally came from your realm, you know. Sometimes, my battles took me to the border of the other side, and I continue to marvel at the absurdities and wonders I saw. The 'sky' made me dizzy, inspired, and fearful all at once. The 'Sun' was beautiful, and I have never felt another warmth quite like it. I could do without your

'mosquitoes,' though. The Raven Trickster must have created those. The Draíocht would never have been so cruel.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Old World" (POE I)

I know enough of my people's past to know that Time used to work differently for us. Here in the Wildwood, we do not have your 'days' and 'nights.' We have only the seasons, a cycle that loops back on itself without marching forward. We do age, but here, what is believed and pictured has more sway than any other force. I have never known anyone who died of old age, for it is not possible to properly imagine being dead. We have nothing to fear but injury and illness... which is why the King in the Mist's affliction of disease and darkness has troubled us so. Even if he was not trying to bring through more of his kind, we would be enemies.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Seasons" (POE I)

Consider this realm my laboratory. Here, I am able to investigate deeper mysteries, from within. I am aware of the Old World, and have undertaken two journeys there. I find your people strange and literal, and your land cold, exhausting, and miserable. I quite liked snow, however. We have frost and rime during our winter, but the Wildwood hardly transforms the way your realm does under a heavy snow. Perhaps, when I replace the King in the Mists, I will bring the first real snow to this forest. That beauty may sway my people to see the pragmatism of my path.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "The Wildwood" (POE I)

This realm is not what it seems, but I imagine you have already guessed that. Here, what is real and what is meant may blur together. That is why names have power here, not from the words themselves, but from the concepts evoked. To define a thing is to influence that thing... though I suspect you have a similar danger in your world, since you carry upon you the faintest of scents—one among many—that reminds me of the Draíocht.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Wildwood" (POE I)

If you have a name, do not speak it aloud. Names have power in this place. Not even I can protect you, if you foolishly give out your name here. Call things by what they are, and people by what they do. ...

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Introduction" (POE I)

Names carry meaning. Meaning carries power.

--Ritual Scarab of Recognition (POE I)

To name a thing is to give it power.

--The Light of Meaning (POE I)

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## THE KING IN THE MISTS

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Deep in the mists of history, the Draíocht created this forest for us, in an act fueled by our devotion. We Maji were the chosen strongest, and we were to prepare this place for the rest of our people. The Wildwood was meant to provide refuge from a winter without end, and from a land full of dangers. Unfortunately, something else came here, too—from the *other* side, the unseen reflection opposite the mortal world. Shadowy creatures slipped in through a dark crack... and there is one, above all, who aggressively pursues the spread of his dark and malevolent religion.

The Maji have waged a cold and bitter war against the King in the Mists for countless generations. ...

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Wildwood" (POE I)

I've no quarrel with him. He gives me a very wide berth, and I don't hunt him down, purely because it's not my place to interfere. He and the Maji have fought over this realm for countless seasons. I think neither side knows the pain of the other. The Maji are fighting to protect their home, but the King in the Mists comes from a far worse place than this. He is a breed of creature the Maji cannot comprehend... his actions appear to be hostile and evil, but it is merely the way of life from whence he comes. Would you hate a mouse for eating fallen seeds? You might, if you were the bush that considers those seeds your children.

--The Primal Huntress, "The King in the Mists" (POE I)

I do not know where I am. I do not understand how I came to be. I heard a single word spoken in darkness, a Name, ripping me from nothingness into the exquisite light of meaning. This is my first moment without pain, without endless agony. This place... this span of partial realness... it resists my being, but I refuse to go back.

I must help my people... let this be my declaration. I exist, and I *will* save them.

--The King in the Mists, The Exquisite Light of Meaning (POE I)

I am beginning to understand more of this Wildwood, as a traveler called it. There is a consciousness in all things. This place dances with motes of meaning, of thought, of belief. The dust of reality, bright and many-coloured. They are beautiful, but they will impede my efforts. I must become darkness if I am to save my kind from eternal torment. I have no choice.

--The King in the Mists, Determination (POE I)

The King in the Mists seeks dominion. In service of that goal, he has employed a deceitful religion. Travelers along the border are in danger, yes, but not necessarily at risk of death. Worse. He seeks their devotion. He seeks their belief. I know not what he says to them, or how he convinces them, but his ranks swell with each passing season. They are fools, all of them. Can they not feel the Draíocht all around them? Why worship a false idol?

--The Warden of Eaves, "Cultists" (POE I)

... The King in the Mists has created a religion to ensnare travelers through the Wildwood. These unwitting travelers have become his fanatical followers, and their faith fuels his plans. ...

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Culling the Cultists" (POE I)

The King in the Mists has brought a creeping darkness to this place, making it unsafe for travelers and denizens alike. ...those who find themselves here are in grave danger. ...

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Affliction" (POE I)

The King in the Mists has not brought darkness to the Wildwood. The forest still grows, so the light is still there, we just can't see it. It's something else entirely, something new. It is... *unlight*. He seeks to change the nature of this place so that more like him may escape their state of dreamlike nothingness. My hunts have sometimes taken me to the border between here and there. His world is in the opposite direction of yours, with the Wildwood betwixt...

The realm from whence he hails is one of silhouettes, the barely seen rear of the stage upon which the play of life conducts itself, with nary a thought for the shadows cast. It is the realm of the Nameless, those things which not only have no name, but which cannot be. There is a perspective of endless agony and sorrow. They cannot have children in the violet unlight of that realm, and thus their progeny are consigned to the same fate of nameless nonexistence. Their numbers grow without end, comprising all the things that can never be, and the quiet roar of silence becomes more and more deafening as they clamour in fear and pain for release. My heart goes out to them, but there is nothing anyone can do. If I could name them, I would... but how do I name something I can't think of?

--The Primal Huntress, "The Affliction" (POE I)

For generations, the Maji have fought against the King in the Mists. My own mother and father were slain in battle against him. We are meant to be impartial and fight selflessly against evil, but how can I possibly feel nothing? He has wounded my family in ways that can never be forgiven. One day, I *will* find a way to take his head.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The King in the Mists" (POE I)

My order spent untold centuries doing battle with the King in the Mists. Whole generations of Maji dedicated their entire lives to eroding his mysterious power. It was an impressive effort for otherwise unremarkable mortal men and women, but I have no desire to join them in futile toil. There must always be evil opposite goodness. That is inherent in the balance of this Wildwood, and perhaps of the world itself. That balance means we can never truly rid ourselves of evil. Thus, I know what I must do. I will not destroy the King in the Mists... I will replace him.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Oathbreaker" (POE I)

When *I* am the dark power at the heart of this forest, I will impose my own ethics on the evil within. Travelers will be granted safe passage, so long as they do not tarry. Children, especially, will have nothing to fear. The dark affliction that plagues us will remain within the borders of the Wildwood. I believe I can enforce those rules, at least. The best answer, all along, was not to aspire to heroism... but to become more ethical masters of darkness ourselves.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Replacing the King" (POE I)

## RITUAL ALTARS

He is clever. I'll give him that. He's very motivated, too, and quite ruthless. I find fault with his ethics, however. He has visited general misery upon the entire Wildwood, and thus made unnecessary enemies. I do not know his ultimate goal, only how he goes about it... and I intend to subvert his altars to my own ends.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "The King in the Mists" (POE I)

... Key to his plans are countless ritualistic altars that he has built throughout the forest. These altars are nails hammered through three layers of meaning: your world, the Wildwood, and the void of the Nameless. It is time we bent one of those nails.

... A ritual disrupted may cause far more damage than meets the eye...

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Become the Darkness" (POE I)

Allow me to describe the situation thus: a man comes upon an altar in the wild. He knows not who the altar serves, but he pays tribute to it nonetheless. It grants him a paltry gift, a trinket, nothing more. He imagines all the possibilities. He imagines wealth. Ever after, he seeks out more of these altars, and continually pays tribute to his unknown benefactor, in the vain hope that his life will change. Thus it is with all religions. The man is a devout follower, though he knows it not. His faith fuels his own gradual doom.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Ritual Altars" (POE I)

Faith given under false pretenses still carries the same power.

--That Which Was Taken Crimson Jewel (POE I)

Quiet thy troubled soul. Think not. Just pray... to me.

--The Queller of Minds Nameless Ring (POE I)

And when you are no longer useful, you will discover how much you truly mean.

--The Selfish Shepherd Nameless Ring (POE I)

He draws ever closer...

--Ritual Scarab of Abundance (POE I)

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## THE NAMELESS

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The Nameless begin to slip their bonds of nonexistence...

--Bestiary Scarab of the Shadowed Crow (POE I)

The border between the Wildwood and the realm of the Nameless does not exist. That is not to say, however, that it cannot be reached. It is *there*, if you stretch the definition of the word *there*. You cannot walk a path to find it. To enter it, is to cease to be. Even gazing upon it scalds mortal eyes, for we do not have the faculties to perceive that which is not. Everything you can possibly experience, be it good, evil, light, dark, birth, death, or anything else in the Draíocht—all of it is part of our web of meaning.

The realm of the Nameless is not the web. It cannot be, yet it is. This all sounds like nonsense, I'm sure, but it's the only way we can refer to things we cannot comprehend. In fact, the moment you do comprehend something from the realm of the Nameless—the moment you imagine it, understand it, Name it—it takes on meaning and becomes part of life's web. It ceases to *not be*. Quite literally, we can never truly understand nothingness, for if we did, it would no longer be nothing.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "The Realm of the Nameless" (POE I)

The King in the Mists was not the first to escape the realm of nameless nothingness. A great many seasons ago, a curious young man walked the Wildwood on his journey elsewhere. He stopped at a waterfall, and engaged in a flight of fancy, naming creatures that he imagined might exist unseen among the trees. He just so happened to picture a powerful mother from the shadow realm, and he foolishly gave her a name—it is not 'The Porcelain Queen,' mind you. That's just a title, a few safe words to refer to her in a roundabout manner.

The traveler moved on, but *she* emerged, and brought her countless children with her. That young man was nobody important, and he surely died long ago, but his idle imaginings and his casual Naming led to a tale of untold tragedy and pain that is still playing out even now. When the denizens of the Wildwood tell you not to use True Names, they mean it.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Porcelain Queen" (POE I)

The Nameless were brought here long ago, when a traveler accidentally named the Porcelain Queen, causing her to become real. Her kingdom in your world is gone now—I know not how or why—but a few of her shadow children escaped back into the Wildwood, and then multiplied in number through the march of seasons. They lament eternal, sorrow without end, a pain they carried from their existence before, now made all the sharper by the loss of their mother. ...

--The Primal Huntress, "The Nameless" (POE I)

Our mother's queendom has been destroyed. Our brethren [.....*illegible*.....] scattered to the winds, [.....] of the Spider continue to hunt us. We fled here [.....], seeking the aid of the Maji [.....] our Porcelain Queen has not followed. Woe be our companion, until [.....].

--The Porcelain Queen (POE I)

The Nameless prowl about in the curse of darkness brought by the King in the Mists. They crawled out of the endless void of nothingness from whence he came, though not necessarily alongside him. There have been others, like the Porcelain Queen, who I gather was no ally to the King in the Mists. I was raised with the fable that the Nameless served *her*, but she is gone, and now they seem quite mad with eternal grief.

--The Breaker of Oaths, "The Nameless" (POE I)

... They are shadows that plague the Wildwood with disease, pain, and suffering. They must be destroyed, lest the rot spread. The Maji have fought them back since the very beginning, and we will continue to do so as long as we draw breath.

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Nameless" (POE I)

... A great many Nameless creatures crawl the Wildwood, existing in perpetual agony and sorrow. They are dangerous, and they deserve mercy...

--The Primal Huntress, "A Merciful Hunt" (POE I)

Remember this, if you ever have children: name them. Bless them with that peace. It is the first thing that parents do for their children for a reason. Without a name, they are vulnerable to the



changelings, at risk of being snatched away to that realm of shadows, out of jealousy and hate for those beings that are gifted with True Names... a child snatched before their naming is an opportunity for one of the Nameless to escape into being.

--The Warden of Eaves, "Naming" (POE I)

Nothingness is loathe to relinquish its grip. Every moment is a struggle to exist.

--The Burden of Shadows Primordial Staff (POE I)

### THE INCARNATION OF AGONY

If you see her, *run*. Her wail is an omen, and her touch means certain death. She is the most evil of the Nameless, but, fortunately for us, she is quite mindless in her rage. If she were cold and calculating like the King in the Mists, we would all be doomed...

--The Warden of Eaves, "The Incarnation of Agony" (POE I)

I have long wondered where that being fits into the natural order. I have come to believe that she is the manifestation of the pain of the Nameless, those countless multitudes forever silently screaming in their realm of shadowed nonexistence. Someone must have Named her long ago, but we may never know what she was called... and until we do, she can never truly be banished.

--The Primal Huntress, "The Incarnation of Agony" (POE I)

Where are we? This forest doesn't appear on our maps. I can't judge our course by the sky, either, for the canopy blocks it out. It does seem to be getting dark, though...

--Lost Etching (POE I)

I didn't trust him at first, but he aided us. Took us to the edge of the wood, but then offered to let us camp with his folk. The night is pitch black. We will take him up on his kindness.

--Aided Etching (POE I)

His words are compelling. In this place, it is difficult to remember our former lives. Time and pain slip away in this endless Wildwood. Why go back to toil and strife? We should stay here, with him, and live free.

--Compelling Etching (POE I)

Always whispering, always muttering... the Wisps are a cacophony that I cannot drown out. How can you not hear them?

--Whispering Etching (POE I)

I will never sleep again. My fellow journeymen lie twisted on the path, their faces forever locked in pale silent screams. She screamed... she screamed! I felt it, in my soul! My fellows... they died in agony... but I had a small dagger, and I... I did the only thing I could, to stop myself from hearing that death knell... I left them there. I cannot go back. Forgive me, my brothers. Forgive me...

--Deafened Etching (POE I)

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## THE SACRED GROVE

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So, you have seen someone's attempt to harvest the four Humors directly. I have seen plots of strange and twisted plants myself. We could achieve mastery over nature *if* we learned proper control, but my science is in its infancy. We would need vast and complex machines, and the risk would be great, but the ambition is a worthy one...

--The Breaker of Oaths, "Strange Harvests" (POE I)

The four humors flow close to the surface in this Wildwood, lifeblood just beneath the skin. Pierce it lightly, and the Draíocht does not react harshly. A properly maintained flow, subtle and gradual, may allow me to accumulate that which I seek.

--Experimental Harvest (POE I)

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## OSHABI & THE LIFEFORCE

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I am Oshabi. I was born on this land. I have lived my whole life on this land. I will die on this land. And when that day comes, with its blessing, I hope I will stay dead.

We Azmeri are few, but when the land's whispers grew silent, my brothers and sisters turned their backs on me. ...

--Oshabi, "Introduction" (POE I)

This is the Sacred Grove. I am its warden, and you are its guest. Within its soils lay great secrets. Powerful secrets. You have seen the animating forces of Wraeclast, yes? The dead do not stay dead. The living are shaped and twisted by unseen forces. Here, in this garden, we may peer into the

patterns of life. We may separate the monster from its creator, and, if the garden allows, we may wield its creative energies. ...

--Oshabi, "The Sacred Grove" (POE I)

It is beautiful, yes? I believe it to be older than the Eternal Empire. Older than the Vaal? I am not so sure. But it does not look like their work. I like to believe it is a work of my ancestral Azmeri. Carved from the land to serve the land, equal parts monument and penance.

I was once blessed with a deep connection to the land. It would speak to me, and nourish me. But that connection was severed. And in turn, my tribe severed their connection to me. I was alone. Lost. The land spoke no more... until I found this place.

The garden restored my connection. Strengthened it. I do not hear whispers, but singing.

I wish to honour this place by utilising it to its fullest. ...

--Oshabi, "The Grove" (POE I)

They could not hear the whispers. The Azmeri were deaf to the land, but for me. They did not understand why I took the child, why I offered her to the earth. I felt the land demand a sacrifice. And when they stopped it, that is when the land withdrew. They did not believe that it was necessary. The child's blood would feed countless others with the blessing of fertility.

The Azmeri exiled me. My name to be spoken no more. And with that, I was alone. No tribe, no whispers.

But it was all to lead me to the Grove.

--Oshabi, "Exile from the Azmeri" (POE I)

Something within this Grove has changed. ... It beckons me.

The Lifeforce reshapes that which it touches. Adapts. Improves them. We have seen it. Wielded it. Now I must experience it for myself. I must feel the Lifeforce flow over and through me.

The Grove wills that I act as the next seed... I am to be the ultimate expression of what life can and should be. To be born anew, in Wraeclast's image. The first of my kind. ...

--Oshabi, "Exile from the Azmeri" (POE I)

I am born anew!

Behold, the first daughter of Wraeclast.

--Oshabi, on start of fight (POE I)

... I was wrong. It cannot be controlled.

It must be destroyed. I must be destroyed!

Lifeforce... corruption... it is all the same.

--Oshabi, on start of fight again (POE I)

It isn't the twisted transformative power of corruption that makes it so dangerous. It is its ability to hide in plain sight.

--Sacred Blossom (POE I)

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## THE ORDER OF THE DJINN

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... This dusty pit was once the Forbidden Vault, and I its guardian. That you have not heard of it is not surprising; it was kept in absolute secrecy for countless generations, known only to my *akhara*, the-... the Order of the Djinn.

It feels so strange to tell someone. To speak so plainly would have been a sin of the highest order, punishable by death. It seems harsh to an outsider like yourself, but you do not know the importance of what we did...

--Jun Ortoi, "Jun's Secret" (POE I)

My *akhara*, my people, were long ago tasked with protecting the people of Wraeclast from themselves. Many artefacts of great power exist - you have come across some such in your travels. But there are some artefacts whose power is so great that to use them would put the world in jeopardy. Artefacts like the Horns of Kulemak. We, the Order of the Djinn, existed to keep such power sealed away and secret. Better that the world forget that it, and we, exist, than fight for control of a power they have no hope of controlling.

--Jun Ortoi, "The Forbidden Vault" (POE I)

The rules of my *akhara* forbid women ever feeling the touch of a man. No families, no loose lips, no loose ends. But it makes no mention of two women...

--Jun Ortoi, "Zana" (POE I)

You have not heard of us because you were never meant to hear of us. I say us... in truth, it is just me left. We came from all walks of life, but we were all orphans, taken in and raised by the Order, and

taught never to speak of it under punishment of death. It sounds harsh, I understand, but such was the importance of our duty that a life of solitude and secrecy was necessary.

For hundreds, maybe thousands of years, we remained secret, until Janus Perandus... that... that imbecile... He sold us out. Reaching for the last vestiges of his ancestral glory. Just like his great grandfather Chitus, he may have doomed us all.

--Jun Ortoi, "Order of the Djinn" (POE I)

You have heard of the famed Perandus family, I have no doubt. Wealthy and powerful and responsible for putting Malachai in position to bring Wraeclast to ruin all those centuries ago. Though Emperor Chitus is the most famous of the Perandus family, some remnants of his vile bloodline linger even still.

Janus was one such remnant. He too was orphaned, but with the Perandus coffers dry and the Perandus name worth its weight in gold, no one took him in. No one except my *akhara*.

That he is the only other survivor, and is now a powerful member of the Immortal Syndicate leaves no doubt in my mind that it was he who sold us out.

If there is but one silver lining in all of this, it is that I may get to sink my blades into his flesh over, and over, and over again.

--Jun Ortoi, "Janus Perandus" (POE I)

I knew those of the Djinn well, when I was mortal. Despite that accursed word in their name, *Order*, they did not knowingly answer to a higher Impulse. I found it curious that the vagaries of Fate kept bringing such exceptional individuals together, and for a time, I believed that *I* was exceptional. My hubris was my own undoing, just as it was theirs... several times, in fact. Yet, they always reform. There is always a new gathering. Or hadn't you noticed your increasingly eclectic collection of allies in that increasingly crowded hole you call a hideout? The chaotic Impulse in a Perandus heart recently struck a great blow for us, but here you are, a mere heartbeat later, stitching the threads back together all over again...

--The Trialmaster, "The Order of the Djinn" (POE I)

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## MEMBERS & RESEARCH

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[Note: The following scarabs and their flavour text were removed in 3.23. They've been kept here, for now, as they're still of interest and haven't been contradicted or replaced with other lore.]

Rejected even by the Faridun outcasts, young Saresh, you were cursed to walk the white sands until we found you. The Order shall command your penance now.

As you explore the vast well of human darkness, Saresh, our Surgeon of the Dead, remember that the price can sometimes exceed the value of knowledge.

There was a man of bone, rotting flesh, and weeping black, but his name, his ill-gotten knowledge, and his role in the Order shall be stricken from memory.

Though the Necromancer of Weeping Black fell in the desert by the hand of Garukhan, his mindless legions remain scattered throughout Wraeclast, with no master to curb their hunger.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Metamorph Scarabs (POE I)

**[Note: The following scarabs and their flavour text were removed in 3.24. They've been kept here, for now, as they're still of interest and haven't been contradicted or replaced with other lore.]**

As the hordes of bone and blood and foul magic surge across the Vastiri Plains, the scant survivors of our akhara agree to your alliance, ash-scarred Ahkeli. Disorder means death. Order may mean life.

Your golems and your leadership have slowed the tide of death, Clayshaper. The relics of power you bid us find have kept the Vastiri Plains from the brink of oblivion. The defences of the Maraketh will hold.

The Winter of the World has ended at the hands of the Three Sisters. We lay this scarab upon your ancient grave in thanks for your efforts, Honoured Founder. As you hoped, the fate of your people will never befall another.

--Rusted, Polished & Gilded Abyss Scarabs (POE I)

We pulled you from the piled dead, young Ixchel, while your people were going mad with fear. The gods may have vanished, but the Order will watch over you now.

For infiltrating the Priesthood of Yaomac and returning with their sleeping form, Ixchel, we honour you. Your next task must be to infiltrate the Temple of Chaos.

It was our error, Ixchel Godstealer, that led to your fate. Chaos is not asleep, thus not a god, and for your eternal suffering, you have our eternal remorse.

The silent war of shadows and struggle must be set aside. Order and Chaos must ally against the coming tide.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Ultimatum Scarabs (POE I)

Your visions led the Azmeri down into a world left abandoned by the Vaal. They cast you out, young Egrin, but the Order of the Djinn accepts you.

Speaker of unclean truths, Egrin of the Dark Between Stars. We curse you whose soul echoes the madness of the void!

Egrin of the Dark Between Stars, Forger of the Sealing Blade, let your name be redeemed by your unexpected sacrifice.

--Rusted, Polished & Gilded Elder Scarabs (POE I)

Consider yourself an orphaned Eternal no longer, young Betucia. The Order of the Djinn is your family now.

For your loyalty and valour, honoured Betucia, we are proud to put the requisition of dream-artefacts in your capable hands.

Betucia, Bearer of the Sealing Blade, the Order of the Djinn survives because of your sacrifice, but will be forever wounded by your loss.

--Rusted, Polished & Gilded Cartography Scarabs (POE I)

The Peak-dwellers saw you as impure, young Qianga, but the Order of the Djinn sees you as all the stronger for your uniqueness.

Bold dreamer, Qianga of the Stars, she of the Celestial Cold! These titles we bestow upon the one among us whose soul speaks to the ineffable.

Qianga of the Stars, Deliverer of the Sealing Blade to the Watchers, go now, and let your half-dreamt life be troubled by nightmares of achromic hunger no more.

--Rusted, Polished & Gilded Shaper Scarabs (POE I)

The Maraketh left you to die alone in the desert, young Sumei, but we saw the potential in you. The Order of the Djinn is your akhara now.

As the best of our lorekeepers, honoured Sumei, it is now your task to investigate the mysterious duplication of artefacts of power.

Go to your rest now, Sumei, Master Lorekeeper. The Order shall keep contained the terrible secret that burdened your final years.

The books were burned, and the scribes set themselves aflame. What secret so terrible could they have discovered? Though centuries have passed, we must investigate this for ourselves.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Reliquary Scarabs (POE I)

Your people no longer walk this continent, young Revna, but the Order of the Djinn will give you a new home.

As you delve into the mysteries of this world, apprentice Revna, remember to learn from the past, not be consumed by it.

We lay you to rest in the forest deep, Runesmith Revna, so that you may be forever hidden from the stars which so terrified you in your final days. May the secret you took to your grave be lifted from your burdens.

Darkness surges in the shadows of the past. Ancient evils stir. The stars watch, forever aloof, forever menacing. None remain who know the secret, so we are defenseless in the face of the unknown.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Expedition Scarabs (POE I)

You were a casualty of callous Karui warfare, ageless Narumoa, but the Order mended your wounds. You are bound to us now by your own code.

Though your peers fear you, Narumoa, the elders have decided that your second sight is ideal for handling all artefacts that seek to subvert Fate.

Your centuries of service have been invaluable to us, Narumoa. Go now, return to Hinekora, and join your ancient kin in the halls of the dead.

Hinekora has sent the world another herald, but this hatungo walks another path. We are left blinded, and subject to the vagaries of Fate.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Divination Scarabs (POE I)

The Ember-dwellers sought to throw you to their volcanic god, young Omid, but we caught you instead. The Order of the Djinn is your tribe now.

We task you, honoured Omid, with the investigation of this mysterious 'Xoph' and artefacts related to rifts in the boundaries of our world.

Omid, Master Researcher, has left a final commandment upon his death: the world must never know.

The Master Researcher's final commandment has failed. The High Templar has seen the truth of our situation, and the world will be undone by his fear.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Breach Scarabs (POE I)

As the first Brinerot to join the Order, you have much to prove, young Raethan. We are confident you will succeed.

For harnessing and controlling the power of lightning, you, Raethan, are now charged with researching this new energy.

Let him not be called Raethan the Betrayer. His discovery was too important to keep locked away. Now, for good or ill, it is in civilisation's hands.



Madness marches in machine form. Harnessed lightning, grim faces, and cold ambition abounds. Civilisation will be its own undoing.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Sulphite Scarabs (POE I)

Your outlaw camp abandoned you when their surprise attack failed, young Rindwik. Now that you know we exist, we cannot let you go. You have two choices.

Your people were renegades, Rindwik, but you have proven your loyalty. You will lead the martial defence of our expeditions.

Master Warrior Rindwik fell to one opponent alone: old age. Only the greatest soldiers can say as much.

In the absence of a strong martial presence, the renegades rise once more. Their poisons threaten to cloud the land.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Ambush Scarabs (POE I)

Young Tsarsk, you were a broken and forgotten child lying glassy-eyed in a flesh-pit in Trarthus, but the Order found and cleansed you.

Your tortured soul long kept you isolated from your peers, Tsarsk, but has attracted new kindred in kind. You are tasked with appeasing these anguished spirits.

Though you were swallowed by your own darkness, you saved countless others from eternal misery, young Tsarsk. You were not nothing, as you feared.

--Rusted, Polished & Gilded Torment Scarabs (POE I)

Feuding Ezomytes slaughtered your kin, young Agnar, but we pulled you from the flames. The Order of the Djinn is your clan now.

None among us understand the beasts of this world better than you, honoured Agnar. You will root out the mysteries of wild-artefacts.

The Order was your clan in life, Agnar, Beastmaster, but the First Ones call back their favoured son. The gift of their Visions will pass to another.

Without an experienced Beastmaster to find them new realms, the First Ones' ravaging hunt brings them ever closer to Wraeclast.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Bestiary Scarabs (POE I)

Your ancestry has been much maligned by history, young Sarina Titucius, but to the Order of the Djinn, you are born anew.

For deciphering the language of the inscrutable ones, honoured Sarina, we charge you with investigating their intent in our land.

For your valour beyond the Gate, Sarina Titucius, we honour you with the first Gilded Scarab awarded while its recipient still lives. Remain vigilant.

--Rusted, Polished & Gilded Harbinger Scarabs (POE I)

Your faith and our Order are not in opposition, young Eutyclus. Let this be the start of a new era of cooperation.

As our hand in the Chamber, we grant you, Deacon Eutyclus, access to a domain we lack the resources to explore.

Given the fate of Deacon Eutyclus and the men under Cardinal Sanctus Vox, let none dare the Domain, lest they too feed that vile hunger eternal.

As the passage between Wraeclast and the land beyond time's reach is torn open, we stand on the precipice of eternal war. And no one remains to hold us back.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Legion Scarabs (POE I)

We pulled you from the raging ocean, young Dhunan, but we cannot return you to your home. The Order of the Djinn offers you a place on Wraeclast.

For using the techniques of your homeland to contain the fungal plague, honoured Dhunan, you shall lead the war to eliminate it and end the century-cycle of infestation.

Be at rest, Blightmaster Dhunan, on the distant shores of your home. A dangerous expedition, but one worthy for he who gave his life to cleanse Wraeclast.

The fungal plague returns, and its roots have adapted. The undiscovered Blightheart that Dhunan theorised must still exist somewhere, yet none remain with the skill to see to its destruction.

--Rusted, Polished, Gilded & Winged Blight Scarabs (POE I)

## CHAOS & THE TRIALMASTER

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On the outskirts of Utzaal, at the Temple of Chaos, the Trialmaster awaits your challenge.

--The Tower of Ordeals Engraved Ultimatum (POE I)

Long have I walked this world in search of suitable challengers. My master, Chaos, has charged me with this task. Many have attempted my trials in search of greatness. Scholars, criminals, heroes,

and the meek. All have stepped forward, and most have fallen. The rules never changed for them, and the rules will not change for you. Bring only that which you can afford to lose—including your life.

--The Trialmaster, "The Trials" (POE I)

My master is the essence of all that might be. He is the flip of the coin, and he is the roll of the die. Whether you win or lose, his purpose is still served. And yet—your chances can be influenced by your skill, by your intellect, and by your might. That is what fascinates Chaos. Skilled mortals can bend their chances in their own favour, for in the headwinds of the unknown, the arrow of a master falls more assuredly than the arrow of a novice. Show him your mastery, and he will smile upon you. Surprise him with utmost talent, and he may even laugh. Fortune will rain upon those who bring humour to Chaos.

--The Trialmaster, "Chaos" (POE I)

... Chaos disdains predictability.

--The Trialmaster, on choosing deadly monsters #5 (POE I)

Victory is meaningless, failure will be mocked.

--Ultimatum Scarab of Dueling (POE I)

I was once mortal, and I know how the mortal I once was would have felt about certain things. That man would have hated Doryani with a passion for bringing about the fall of the greatest civilisation this world has ever known. Fortunately, I am no longer troubled by such attachments. Through the grace of Chaos, I now understand that all things that can happen, do. Even now I am testing the might of another survivor who washed up on Wraeclast instead of you, and to her, you are dead. All that you accomplish is meaningless. All that Doryani ruined was equally meaningless.

--The Trialmaster, "Doryani" (POE I)

...I'm only a couple of thousand years old. ...

--The Trialmaster, "The Beginning of Time" (POE I)

I knew those of the Djinn well, when I was mortal. Despite that accursed word in their name, *Order*, they did not knowingly answer to a higher Impulse. I found it curious that the vagaries of Fate kept bringing such exceptional individuals together, and for a time, I believed that *I* was exceptional. My hubris was my own undoing, just as it was theirs... several times, in fact. Yet, they always reform. There is always a new gathering. Or hadn't you noticed your increasingly eclectic collection of allies

in that increasingly crowded hole you call a hideout? The chaotic Impulse in a Perandus heart recently struck a great blow for us, but here you are, a mere heartbeat later, stitching the threads back together all over again...

--The Trialmaster, "The Order of the Djinn" (POE I)

I should have become a priest of Yaomac instead...

--The Trialmaster, on five or more player wins #9 (POE I)

How do you know that name? You mock me with remnants of a life long since turned to dust, with freedom and hope that can never be more than scraps of memory. Do not dare to insult me again!

--The Trialmaster, "Ixchel" (POE I)

The Queen represents an odd island of stability that Chaos cannot comprehend. Almost all events come laden with possibility, but the history of her existence is a single unbroken course. There is no world, real or imagined, where Atziri did not lead our people to ruin.

She gazes into a mirror still, somewhere beyond the reach of my master, in a place of crimson madness and nightmare... my master adores the uncertainty of chance outcomes, but he abhors cosmic enigmas with no clear answer, especially when such enigmas seem to possess the power to impress determinism upon the fabric of existence.

--The Trialmaster, "Atziri" (POE I)

My lord Chaos has often felt there is a sinister force lurking in the unknown mists of raw Creation that seeks to oppose him. It does not show itself. No, it is a cowardly Impulse, one that subtly tangles the threads of Fate to bring together mortals in each era for the purpose of Order, a cold conflict that has raged eternal - with only one exception.

--The Trialmaster, "The Anathema" (POE I)

Fear that which remains awake when even the gods slumber. Chaos sees what Hinekora cannot, the myriad span of all that has yet to happen. Chaos takes selfish amusement in unlikelihoods and surprising events. Hinekora serves Order, ensuring that what must happen, happens. Two Impulses, as unlike each other as any twins could ever be, locked in eternal conflict by their very nature...

--Navali, "Chaos" (POE I)

You stink of the meddling Witch of Prophecy. You *must* know that she is a liar. She has no power of prophecy. Her power is only that of memories. She *remembers* what happened, and *only* what happened. She does not see the possibilities—what could be, or could have been, the way my lord

Chaos does. Worse still, like all memories—even mine—hers fade with time. Would you entrust your Fate to a senile old woman that can hardly keep herself awake? The very fact that she tells you certain paths lead to doom means *they happened*. Those paths *did* lead to doom. Her prophecies are nothing more than painful memories of all the times she failed. What makes this go around the mad wheel any different? Chaos promises nothing, only the truth: today is not special. *You* are not special, unless you make yourself so. In that truth, there is utmost freedom.

--The Trialmaster, "Hinekora" (POE I)

It is not so simple a thing to determine whether a being serves Order or Chaos. These two Impulses suffuse all who possess a will of their own—some more than others. This perverse opposition has fueled the inner struggle of living beings since the Beginning of Time, and will continue to do so until its End. However, there is one thing upon which both inclinations agree. In the eyes of Chaos, there can be no amusement or unlikelihoods in a dead world. And, while such a realm *would* be perfectly Ordered, there would be no one left to enjoy the... supposed fruits of such a domain. I am not certain that Order exists as a thinking being like Chaos does, but the forces that serve both have agreed to a narrow alliance against a rather existential crisis.

We—and I shudder to use that word, *we*—already sacrificed all we had to buy this world one stay of execution. It only cost the lives of my entire people, and everything they ever built. The decaying temples and cities of the Vaal Empire are not rotting monuments to hubris. They are a legacy, a silent reminder of what was given so that the other peoples of Wraeclast might survive. What will *you* sacrifice when the moment comes?

--The Trialmaster, "Exception" (POE I)

Ah... best you don't know. You'll fight on to the bitter end, so long as you never realise the truth. Who knows? You might even win. Out of all the countless possibilities, it *has* happened... once. All it took was the death of Truth itself; the creation of a world of perfect Order, with no free will, and no Chaos. Needless to say, that route to survival is... unacceptable, both to my master, and to mortals such as yourself. It will not be repeated... hopefully.

--The Trialmaster, "Existential Crisis" (POE I)

All your tomorrows lie ahead of you, unknown and snarled to the very last.

--Gamblesprint Hydrascale Boots (POE I)

You are not the only one whose path diverges during moments of chance. My lord Chaos sees all. You experienced victory... as did I. From my perspective, I slew you, then Chaos bid me attend the other possibility. This one.

I continue to serve...

--The Trialmaster, "Defeat" (POE I)

I eagerly await the End in any form, if it exists. It is my only chance of escape... until then, not even death can save me from servitude. I have escaped a thousand different ways, and every time, Chaos just brings me back from the paths in which my escape failed. I need *all* paths to end, if I am ever to rest.

--The Trialmaster, "The End of Time" (POE I)

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## THE SCOURGE

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Enraged by the incompetence of mortals  
The demon-lord opens a gateway  
Unleashing a litany of pain upon the world.

--Anathema Moonstone Ring (POE I)

The day the demons found our world, the innocent were first to die. They approach your world, your Wraeclast... They are ravenous. They are endless. They are the Scourge.

--The Last to Die, <https://www.pathofexile.com/scourge> (trailer)

They're out there... The demons. They're ravaging and pillaging and consuming all around us, even as we speak. You can't see them yet... but you will. The Blood Crucible will take you to them...

--The Last to Die, "The Blood Crucible" (POE I)

It likes the taste of you. The wound around it will never fully heal, because the Crucible is hungry. You've got to feed it with what you do best: spilling blood. If you don't, it'll thirst for yours.

We are out of time. Go, activate the Blood Crucible. Shift into the Nightmare. Discover the horrible truth for yourself.

--The Last to Die, when the Crucible is installed (POE I)

You see now, don't you? The Scourge are countless in number and infinite in hunger. I've fought them for most of my life, and accomplished nothing except outliving... everyone else. The Crucible is yours now. You must carry on the war...

--The Last to Die, "The Nightmare" (POE I)

The Blood Crucible represents a pact between the entity known as Chaos and the bloodlines of the High Priests of the Vaal, forged long ago in the height of the empire's madness. I am the last of the

sole remaining bloodline, so if I die, the Crucible will cease to function. That is why you must continue on in my place.

--The Last to Die, "Chaos" (POE I)

Ah, the Viscera Cauldron. Hold still. I can implant it inside you. Never mind the pain, it's only... making room. Unrelated fact, a person can live a normal life with just one kidney. Or just one lung. You never know what Vaal technology will cost you...

--The Last to Die, "Viscera Cauldron" (POE I)

Countless times, I have seen the works of man reduced to nothing under a colossal tide of horror. Through countless Shifts, I only saw one Wraeclast survive. It was a world dominated by the shade of High Templar Venarius. You don't want to go there, believe me.

We're on our own.

--The Last to Die, "Other Wraeclasts" (POE I)

You would lose all hope if you truly understood.

--Kalandra, at the start of a Beyond encounter (POE I)

She wanders still, forever fleeing, forever burdened by guilt.

--Kalandra, at the end of a Beyond encounter (POE I)

## PALE FACTION

The pale demons are blind, but that just makes them more dangerous. They have other ways of finding their victims... they are especially drawn to the smell of fear. They'll still sense you, though, no matter what.

--The Last to Die, "Pale Scourge" (POE I)

Beidat is one of three Demon Lords of the Scourge. The forbidden texts contain very little information about him outside the collected writings of heretics and the visions of blind seers throughout history, but I do know that he and his ilk are the most 'like us,' in that they think, speak, and can communicate. K'tash and Ghorr, the other two Demon Lords, are far too unlike us to ever be capable of making a deal with someone like Lycia... or us. If it was only Beidat, we might possibly save ourselves by offering Wraeclast as a continent of slaves to serve him, but the other two can never be reasoned with.

--Divinia, "Beidat" (POE I)

## DEMON FACTION

Those horrific creatures... I look at them and I wonder... what part of them thinks? Some don't have heads. Some are just monstrous claws or mouths... what if they don't think at all? What if something else does the thinking, and they're just drones? Stomping a few ants on the surface does nothing to harm the underground hive...

--The Last to Die, "Demonic Scourge" (POE I)

Very little is known about K'tash and its ilk. All I have is a written record from a madwoman who mysteriously disappeared from a Templar jail cell a few years ago. She said the name K'tash, and she ranted about the demons not thinking, because many don't even have heads, and that something else does the thinking for them. I shudder at the prospect of such impossible beings.

--Divinia, "K'Tash, The Hate Shepherd" (POE I)

## FLESH FACTION

They hunger for flesh. That's their primary drive. They do seem capable of thought, but I've never been able to communicate with them. I suppose I wouldn't have much to say to a rabbit if I was starving...

--The Last to Die, "Flesh Scourge" (POE I)

They eat. They consume. That is all that they do. They will not show mercy, and they will never relent.

--Divinia, "Ghorr, The Grasping Maw" (POE I)

## TORMENTED SPIRITS

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An era so ingrained with decadence, greed and cruelty that even the graves of murderers were gilded.

--Ashes of the Condemned Strongbox (POE I)

A sprinkle of liquid encouragement is often required to garnish the perfect confession.

- Brutus, Warden of Axiom

--Brutus' Lead Sprinkler Ritual Sceptre (POE I)



The truth lies inside every man, if you dig around. Many a confession was found in the bowels of Axiom.

--The Rat Cage Sharkskin Tunic (POE I)

...the spirits of tormented criminals that yield their ill-gotten gains when slain. Eager to protect their trove, these spirits flee when encountered and imbue nearby monsters with dangerous powers... It's also possible for spirits to possess rare and unique enemies, greatly increasing their threat (and value!) to treasure-seeking exiles. ...

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1111831>

Their spirits are imprisoned, forever harrowed by their own misdeeds.

--Kalandra, at the end of a Torment encounter (POE I)

For nine hundred years, they have had no voice, no hope. Finally, they have found a kindred soul... in you.

--Speaker of the Dead (POE I)

Wraeclast is home to many dangers, but the most invasive has got to be those damned wandering spirits. I've actually been possessed by them, more than once. Oh, it's a strange experience, I'll give you that, but they can be resisted. If it happens to you, ah, I'm sure you'll shake it off... eventually.

--Kirac, "Memory of Self-Possession" (POE I)

## THE BROTHERHOOD OF SILENCE

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... Yes, we did occasionally employ the Silent Brotherhood to remove the more stubborn obstacles to our commercial endeavours, but for the most part we tended to solve our issues with coin and contract rather than bow and blade. ...

--Cadiro, "The Perandus Family" (POE I)

The Brotherhood of Silence has always served my family well.

--Janus Perandus, to Vorici (POE I)

I'm a painter, and crimson is my chosen hue.

- Coralito, Brotherhood of Silence

--Bloodplay Stiletto (POE I)

A master artist takes his time when he's painting. Unfortunately, my kind doesn't often have that luxury.

- Coralito, Brotherhood of Silence

--Haemophilia Serpentscale Gauntlets (POE I)

What cruelty it is, that to be judged a success, such great work must go uncredited.

- Coralito, Brotherhood of Silence

--Coralito's Signature Diamond Flask (POE I)

We have methods of interrogation the Inquisitors only dream of.

- Marcus, Brotherhood Liaison

--Abhorrent Interrogation Ambush Mitts (POE I)

Those members of the Brotherhood who employ the venom of Trarthan ice snakes must take great care with the volatile substance.

--Icefang Orbit Iron Ring (POE I)

Sometimes, we in the Brotherhood don't need to harm anyone at all. We surround Drusus in the Baths. He has a family, and that means he is vulnerable.

He doesn't even protest. He knows what this is. Wordlessly, he backs into the baths and sinks to the bottom. All that remains are the bubbles of his last breath.

--Unknown, State Palace Memory (POE I)

## WARBANDS

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They have struggled for generations, but have forgotten why.

--Kalandra, at the start of a Warbands encounter (POE I)

I designed the Mutewind so I can offer a few of my behind-the-scenes intentions for them:

I always imagine the reason they're hostile to you is that to them you're no different from the Rogue Exiles - a dangerous criminal made even more so by embracing the dark powers of a corrupted land.

I also intended them to have a very merit-based heirarchy [sic]. Their headgear is made from beasts they've hunted, and if we had the 3D art to show it would probably be personalized for each member. This philosophy is reflected in their succession rite [Mutewind Seal Unset Ring].

The three highest ranking Mutewind members have the most distinctive headgear - each is the result of a legendary hunt.

They also talk about their "bloodline" [Mutewind Whispersteps Serpentscale Boots] being free of corruption, but they aren't all blood relatives. I see it as meaning they consider each other family, in the "once you're in, you're one of us and you've forsaken all of your previous ties" sense.

Disclaimer: The fact this stuff isn't explicitly said in the game means it could be contradicted at a later date, but hopefully it's interesting on its own.

--Dan\_GGG, <https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1659337>

For Warbands, the flavour texts for each unique item told you something about the band. The shield was the motto, and the boots spoke of their motivation. The Ring told of their succession method. The Warband Cache's [sic] each talk about the homeland of the respective Warband.

--Qarl, <https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/1659337>

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## REDBLADE

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Blood shed is blood shared.

--Redblade Banner Painted Tower Shield (POE I)

The caustic fumes that rise from the caldera kill nearly everything downwind eventually. The Redblade, however, just go mad.

--Redblade Cache Strongbox (POE I)

To ascend to leadership, the child of a Redblade warlord must pull the band from the still-hot ashes of their father.

--Redblade Band Unset Ring (POE I)

Our home was swallowed beneath the great mountain for our complacency. Now we must prove our value to the Molten One by sating his hunger for life.

--Redblade Trampers Ancient Greaves (POE I)

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## MUTEWIND

---

Embrace the snow or be buried.

--Mutewind Pennant Enameled Buckler (POE I)

Little makes it across the dry plains to the foot of the mountain alive. The mountain dwellers ensure nothing reaches the top.

--Mutewind Cache Strongbox (POE I)

When a fallen leader's body is taken to the funeral peak, those who seek power must ascend together. One returns with the seal. The rest do not return at all.

--Mutewind Seal Unset Ring (POE I)

Corruption sweeps across this land, but our bloodline is clear. It is our duty to keep it so.

--Mutewind Whispersteps Serpentscale Boots (POE I)

Rami waits at the cavern entrance for the passing aspirants. One at a time he pulls them in from the snowstorm and covers their mouth as I slice their throats. Blood stains the cavern floor.

Rami pulls in the last straggler and we make quick work of her. Just we two remain. Before Rami makes this realisation I plunge my blade into his eye. I alone will lead the Mutewind.

--Unknown, Glacial Cavern Memory (POE I)

Nineteen more days in the mountains... I'll never survive, never earn my Mutewind name... I'm already starving and dying after ten... and is that... a wolf?!

Kindest friend, kindred wolf. You kept me warm for nineteen days. I will return one day, when I am old, and let your descendants feast upon my remains.

--Unknown, Distant Frozen Drift Memory (POE I)

## BRINEROT

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The lords of the sea bow to no one.

--Brinerot Flag Tarnished Spirit Shield (POE I)

For generations, the gentle Pondium tides sheltered the smugglers, murderers and thieves, and let their resentments and population flourish.

--Brinerot Cache Strongbox (POE I)

Each time, it is granted to the most senior captain of the fleet, and each time, the ring soon washes ashore once more, still wrapped around a severed finger.

--Brinerot Mark Unset Ring (POE I)

Those Theopolis fatcats put a price on our heads. Let's see what they'll pay for their own.

--Brinerot Whalers Trapper Boots (POE I)

Exiled to the sea; what a joke. I'm more free than I've ever been.

- Captain Weylam "Rot-tooth" Roth of the Black Crest

--Roth's Reach Recurve Bow (POE I)

Think of the worst place ye can imagine. That's Pondium. Now think of the gods-be-damned best whore house you've ever had the pleasure of. That's Pondium. A 'pirate paradise' full of bodies to stab, holes to fill, and devious liquor to imbibe.

Brinerots control the whole island, and make sure it lives up to the lowest of expectations.

Can't imagine much has changed since I was there last. Still, it's a good place to swash your buckle and make love to a bawdy buxom bunter out back of a boozy bar!

--Weylam Roth, "Pondium" (POE I)

May the lubbers feel fear in their nethers, and may our blades follow.

- Rot-tooth's Rallying Cry

--The Black Flag (POE I)

Aye, them Brinerots be a nasty bunch. Led by me very own flesh and blood. Me baby sister, Lussi! The "Rotmother" they call her now. Used to be that I were their leader, back when the Brinerots were about one thing and one thing only - raiding, pillaging and plundering their scrawny black guts out!

Old Lussi were me first mate for years, but she got a whiff of the power that being Captain could gain her, and mutineered me! Me own sister! Dropped me on some deserted island off the coast of somewhere, the bitch. Took months to make it back to the mainland.

That Brinerot clan's been trouble ever since. Used to have some good old fashioned pirate honour, and now they're raving mad lunatics out for their next fix of fear and fortune.

--Weylam Roth, "The Brinerot Clan" (POE I)

You'll not find a more renowned pirate as Weylam 'Rot Tooth' Roth. In times when Fairgraves was still a whelp earning his sea legs, Rot-tooth was prowling the Strait of Oriath in his ship, the 'Black Crest'.

It's said he build it hisself, lining its hull with the bones of some great sea beast he slew with nothing but a harpoon and a bottle o' rum. Never was there a more nimble, more ferocious vessel. Like that leviathan's spirit still lived and breathed in its timbers. ...

--Bestel, "Weylam Roth" (POE I)

Weylam Roth... here, let me share something I remember from me granddaddy's stories.

No sooner had the others turned in fear from the great, white Leviathan, did Weylam load the ballista with his final harpoon. And right then he vowed, to sea and sky, that he and he alone would be the one to finally kill this bastard son of the Brine King.

The ballista fired and the harpoon smote that creature right between the ribs as it made to dive back under the angry sea. Thick clouds of blood bloomed beneath the waves, roses flowering in the black water, and impossible though it seemed, the already shadowed ocean grew darker still...

He used the bones of the great beast to reinforce the hull of his ship, the Black Crest. Old Rot-tooth, he's a true legend. A real pirate hero. I can only hope, one day, me own stories will reach his ears and make him proud of the granddaughter he had to leave behind.

--Lilly Roth, "Weylam Roth" (POE I)

Lilly Roth? Granddaughter of the legendary Rot-tooth Roth? Oh, apologies if I seem a little... giddy. It's not any old day you get to meet marine royalty. I mean, you know how I feel about pirates and all, but the Roths have as much in common with those scurvy sea rats as a... as a shark does with a goldfish.

Lilly has her granddaddy's blood in her veins; it's plain for all to see. Look at the lustre in her eyes, the ruddy blush of her skin. That there's a pirate princess, and no mistake.

--Bestel, "Lilly" (POE I)

## RENEGADES

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Be not blinded by the light.

--Broken Faith Archon Kite Shield (POE I)

As if pulled by divine strings, the powerful are drawn to the powerful, breaking any morals and laws that might stand in the way.

--Renegades Cache Strongbox (POE I)

A man who changes his loyalties often, soon finds he has none.

--The Pariah Unset Ring (POE I)

To fight an enemy on their lands is a tactical mistake. Make those lands your own, and the mistake becomes theirs.

--Steppan Eard Sorcerer Boots (POE I)

## BREACHES & THE BREACHLORDS

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There's a place where up is down, where right is wrong, where pleasure is agony, and where the living wish only for death.

--Burning Blood (POE I)

The hive buzzes with voices...

--It That Fled, on offering a bargain 1 (POE I)

They unite only in dreams... for now.

--Kalandra, at the start of a Breach encounter (POE I)

Their kingdoms always seek expansion.

--Breach Scarab of Lordship (POE I)

The Lords have unknowing followers among your kind.

--Kalandra, at the end of a Breach encounter (POE I)

### XOPH, DARK EMBERS

Upon the red pyre we are born.

--Xoph's Inception Bone Bow (POE I)

Upon the grey winds his love spreads.

--Xoph's Nurture Citadel Bow (POE I)

Our skin turns to ash and we are swallowed by his brilliant red light.

--The Formless Flame Siege Helmet (POE I)

He burns us to keep us from harm.

--The Formless Inferno Royal Burgonet (POE I)

His is our heart. To its beat we all are driven.

--Xoph's Heart Amber Amulet (POE I)

We are his blood. Through us he carries his burning message.

--Xoph's Blood Amber Amulet (POE I)

### TUL, CREEPING AVALANCHE

We dance in the white, like water, colliding as many and emerging as one.

--The Snowblind Grace Coronal Leather (POE I)

We share one space, speak one voice, act through one body. A flawless crystal. Brittle.



--The Perfect Form Zodiac Leather (POE I)

We wait, still as the dead, to join the great avalanche.

--The Halcyon Jade Amulet (POE I)

A single moment sets in motion an eternal fall, beneath which all are buried.

--The Pandemonius Jade Amulet (POE I)

We remember the stillness. Then the great fall. The pain of separation. We return once more.

--Tulborn Spiraled Wand (POE I)

We fracture and splinter. We pierce our sides. But in the great freeze we are forged anew.

--Tulfall Tornado Wand (POE I)

### ESH, FORKED THOUGHT

She looked upon her reflection and trembled, and shook, until she was not what she saw.

--Esh's Mirror Thorium Spirit Shield (POE I)

She could see what she was not; a silhouette wreathed in light. And she was still.

--Esh's Visage Vaal Spirit Shield (POE I)

When she of many mouths spoke, we bowed in awe and were crushed.

--Voice of the Storm Lapis Amulet (POE I)

But the fool did not bow. The fool stood and questioned. And the fool was unwritten.

--Choir of the Storm Lapis Amulet (POE I)

She carries us and nurtures us until we must feed upon each other.

--Hand of Thought and Motion Blinder (POE I)

She thinks and we act. She acts and we think. Fragments of the whole that washes clean the skies.

--Hand of Wisdom and Action Imperial Claw (POE I)

### UUL-NETOL, UNBURDENED FLESH

We move to be closer to her, but the distance yet grows.

--The Infinite Pursuit Goliath Greaves (POE I)

We leave a trail, that we may know where never we will return.

--The Red Trail Titan Greaves (POE I)

We are within her reach, and when the time is right, she will reach into us.

--The Anticipation Ezomyte Tower Shield (POE I)

Our hearts cry out but are silenced by our flesh and so we give up our flesh.

--The Surrender Ezomyte Tower Shield (POE I)

We feel the Mother's love and beg to return to her womb.

--Uul-Netol's Kiss Labrys (POE I)

At last she holds us, and so we turn to dust.

--Uul-Netol's Embrace Vaal Axe (POE I)

The time is nigh. War has come. We dream as one.

--Uul-Netol's Vow Unset Amulet (POE I)

### CHAYULA, WHO DREAMT

The Lord of Chaos dreams as his Eye gazes, unblinking, at his prize. And soon, all shall tremble before his waking form.

--The Eye of Terror (POE I)

His lucky thralls dream eternal, but we must crawl on our own.

--Severed in Sleep Cutlass (POE I)

They grow fat and ripe in slumber. To be fed upon when he wakes.

--United in Dream Cutlass (POE I)

We happily give our limbs. A net woven to keep safe the bones of the Lords.

--Skin of the Loyal Simple Robe (POE I)

The Lords are chosen so carefully. Only they may grace His flesh.

--Skin of the Lords Simple Robe (POE I)

We crash against Chayula's body, and fall like rain into the place we cannot go.

--The Blue Dream Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

We swell and flood and drown the undeserving beneath our might.

--The Blue Nightmare Cobalt Jewel (POE I)

We climb like vines up Chayula's arms, reaching into the world that should be ours.

--The Green Dream Viridian Jewel (POE I)

We take root in the dirt and strangle those who tread upon it.

--The Green Nightmare Viridian Jewel (POE I)

We flow like blood into Chayula's open mouth, and spill into the land we have watched forever.

--The Red Dream Crimson Jewel (POE I)

We coagulate; a crimson shell that suffocates the unworthy.

--The Red Nightmare Crimson Jewel (POE I)

A dark note drips  
from the dreamer's lips,  
A honeyed melody.  
We stand, we fall  
on his beck and call,  
for in his dream we're free.

--The Dreamer (POE I)

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## HARBINGERS

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Warriors of a distant land, you embark on a journey from which you may not return, but which we will be all the better for.

--The Landing (POE I)

Their troops came in numbers uncountable and from lands unknown.

--Harbinger Scarab (POE I)

They have journeyed farther than you know.

--Kalandra, at the end of a Harbinger encounter (POE I)

This map contains certain inexplicable entities... They appear to be the advance scouts of an invasion from some unknown realm. ...

--Zana, on a Harbinger mission (POE I)

Ah, the Battle of Phaaryl. My brigade was ordered to attack what our commanders believed to be a minor Harbinger outpost. To put it lightly, they were wrong. It was actually the primary staging ground for the entire invasion. Four thousand men marched onto that battlefield. A week later, when the Oriathan navy arrived to cover our escape, only two hundred of us were still alive. We did our share of damage - you can count on it - but the eager young man that went into that battle emerged disillusioned and weary.

--Kirac, "Memory of Phaaryl" (POE I)

Those bloody blue bastards are trying to gain a foothold on the Atlas. ...

--Kirac, on a Harbinger mission (POE I)

## METAMORPHS & THE INTRINSIC DARKNESS

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... I am Tane, a freedman, and I plan to stay that way. ...

--Tane Octavius, "Introduction" (POE I)

In Oriath I served a man named Lucan Octavius; a wealthy alchemist of high-status. I call him my master, for I was both his apprentice and his slave. Lucan's work required handling extremely dangerous, often very hot, materials. Not the sort of thing becoming of a man of stature. So it came to be that a slave like myself learned the nuances of the alchemical arts firsthand.

As for Lucan, he was... not the man he portrayed himself to be. He was more dangerous, more explosive, and more unstable than any material I had to handle. In public, he was fatherly and genial. In his home, he was violent and lustful.

I do not regret what happened to him; only the part I played.

--Tane Octavius, "Tane's Master" (POE I)

What makes you, you, or me, me? Some say it is the soul, an intangible something that exists before we are born and carries on after death. But I have seen souls that walk the land here and show nothing that distinguishes them from the rats and the rhoas.

It is something else. Something no man has discovered. A whisper. A flickering flame that burns through every inch of our being until it is extinguished. But what if we can capture it before it burns away? Bottle it up? Save it, and perhaps, even give it a new wick through which to burn once more?

...

--Tane Octavius, "Pound of Flesh" (POE I)

... Flesh and blood and bone and sinew, all but a veil, a mask that hides what truly drives us. I speak of the Intrinsic Darkness. The base desires and instincts that we all fight, yet rarely defeat. This Darkness hides within us, waiting for a moment of weakness -- a moment when it can take control. A cruel and invisible slave driver.

But we can coax it out...

My master called it Sinner's Water. A concoction he spent much of his life perfecting. He would give it to his children and scribble notes as they beat me. In truth, I do not believe his concoction worked any more than his elixir of immortality, but that did not soften their blows.

His formula was wrong, but his idea was sound. ...

--Tane Octavius, "Pound of Flesh" (POE I)

## Further Improvements to the Preserving Fluid

4 Parts pure and fine powder of Virtue Gem  
4 Parts Trarthan Acid, superfluous humidity removed  
2 Parts Aqueous Umbra, distilled  
2 Parts Thaumetic Sulphite in its most crystalline form  
1 Part Voltaxic Sulphite, kept in an ice water bath overnight  
1 Part Blood (uncoagulated)  
1 Part Blessed Water of Innocence

Mix the thaumetic sulphite with the virtue dust slowly and carefully, adding the trarthan acid one part at a time until the acid takes on a foul green hue. Wait for the dust to dissolve completely.

Add the aqueous umbra and blood at the same time. Ensure the blood is fresh. Coagulants were the cause of error last time, and the boy has paid for it in kind. Mix quickly to prevent separation of blood and umbra. The ichor will foam with dizzying fumes.

Slowly add the voltaxic sulphite, avoiding contact with the skin. Stir out the impure bodies and skim the top.

Add the blessed water and immediately imbibe.

*There are some separately scribbled notes*

The subject refuses to open his mouth. I have sent him to fetch the chains. I pray this delay does not spoil the mixture, for it is very time sensitive.

Results:

*This part of the page was never completed*

--Crumpled Note (POE I)

... One horrible night, my master flew into a great wrath and beat me to the precipice of death itself. For a moment, I envisioned myself walking through strange grey halls.

[Navali] was there, watching me, unblinking, a herald for something far greater...

She was there. She spoke. She said that joining the Halls of the Dead was not my fate that night, but that we would meet again. These are the faded memories of a terrified and traumatized child, perhaps no more than a foolish nightmare, but I cannot stop myself from shivering when she turns her purple eyes my way... because I can tell that she recognises me.

--Tane Octavius, "Navali" (POE I)

... I killed my master. I do not regret that he is dead, only that it was by my hand. My master was a sick man, with dark proclivities. A sickness of the mind that no alchemy could hope to cure. And he passed that sickness onto me.

I was never violent until that day. Until that day, I could not fathom how one man could take the life of another. But Lucan drew out of me an anger I did not know I was capable of experiencing. It overcame me. Forced me out of my own body. And by the time I was in control again, my master was dead.

That anger, that darkness is still in me...

--Tane Octavius, "Exile" (POE I)

To conjure a creature of darkness we use the flesh of the dead. We destroy that flesh, and draw out the ill-will that inhabits it, giving it form. My hope is that, one day, we may do the reverse -- destroy the darkness while leaving the flesh unharmed.

To that end, I've acquired a rare ichor -- there's no other like it in this world. The very essence of a human; for all intents and purposes, its soul. This individual was cruel beyond measure, or so I've heard, though not incapable of kindness. This ichor is robust enough that it might be injected into an entity of equally cruel temperament, and may be given new life.

Now, imagine if we could then destroy the darkness. Could this cruel soul be purified? Could it be brought back, not only from the dead, but from the precipice of damnation?

That is my true goal.

--Tane Octavius, "Vision" (POE I)

...and that's just the beginning. I'll never tire of watching them slaughter you. I hope you can feel every cut. Every burn. I hope it haunts every moment of your pathetic existence.

...it kills you to see me free, doesn't it? It kills you to know you have no power over me any more. I'm in control of both of our destinies.

...and what's left of your legacy? Nothing but a few stains on the floor. All your work was for nothing, and I couldn't be happier about it.

...you hear me old man? I'm never going to let you rest. Never.

--Tane Octavius, when alone (POE I)

Intrinsic Darkness is merely a shadow cast by the light of the soul.

--Kalandra, at the start of a Metamorph encounter (POE I)

## OTHER LORE

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### GIANTS

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Through droughts, fires, floods and frost, the ancient giants stand resolute, while deep in the rich, dark earth, their grasp stretches ever farther.

--Arborix Assassin Bow (POE I)

The monstrous men of yore used bows too, theirs were just bigger.

--Giantsbane Bronze Gauntlets (POE I)

Legend tells of bows so powerful that only giants could draw them back.

--Iron Grip (POE I)

Of ancient giants, none remain,  
Their only trace is timeless pain.

--Hrimsorrow Goathide Gloves (POE I)

Giant's blood you cannot tame,  
as wild as an unwatched flame.

--Hrimburn Goathide Gloves (POE I)

### BASILISKS

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Basilisk Acid drips from the hearts of those venomous monsters, though I cannot blame them for their disposition.

They are tragic creatures. Theirs is a sorry tale more closely tied to my own than I care to dwell upon. Alas, the forging of my Dark Ember produced some rather unfortunate byproducts.

But we shall not see any success if I am to dwell on those past errors.

--Sin, "Chimeric Acid" (POE I)



Nobility once thought to capture the Basilisks and keep them as exotic pets. This only served to fatten the vileness of their hearts, and with a hateful acid that festered inside, the creatures became soured to their very bones.

--Basilisk Acid (POE I)

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## BEREK & THE UNTAMED

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"She begged the Earth to spare her Son;  
Out of love the Earth agreed.  
To the other Elements she did not speak  
And out of spite They plotted."

- Berek and the Untamed

--Immortal Flesh Leather Belt (POE I)

"Berek hid from Storm's lightning wrath  
In the embrace of oblivious Frost  
Repelled by ice, blinded by blizzards  
Storm raged in vain  
While Berek slept."

- Berek and the Untamed

--Berek's Grip Two-Stone Ring (POE I)

"From Frost's ice-bound pass  
Berek taunted and jeered  
Until furious Flame scaled the mountain  
Berek escaped through the thaw  
And Frost's tortured moans."

- Berek and the Untamed

--Berek's Pass Two-Stone Ring (POE I)

"With Flame licking at his heels  
Berek berated the clouds  
Until vengeful Storm spewed forth his rains  
And Berek held on tight  
As Fire screamed and steamed  
And fled."

- Berek and the Untamed

--Berek's Respite Two-Stone Ring (POE I)

"Moon after moon did Berek make fools  
Of the great and Untamed Three  
Until malice for a Brother  
Slew the hatred of the Other  
And Berek did hunt  
Alone and free."

- Berek and the Untamed

--The Taming Prismatic Ring (POE I)

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## THE QUEEN OF THE FOREST

---

The nobles wanted to take her throne.  
She let the peasants take their wealth.  
The peasants wanted to take her wealth.  
She let the soldiers take their heads.  
The soldiers wanted to take her head.  
She sat on her throne and wept.

--Queen's Decree Ornate Sword (POE I)

The soldiers stormed her throne room.  
The guards held them at bay.  
The peasants overwhelmed the guards.  
The nobles paid for their lives.  
The nobles took her throne,  
and so she fled to the woods.

--Queen's Escape Ornate Sword (POE I)

Shedding away her regal past,  
she forged a new destiny.  
Sacrificing the ephemeral joys of man,  
she embraced the eternal grasp of nature.  
Seizing her one true wish,  
she found peace at last.

--Queen of the Forest Destiny Leather (POE I)

## APPENDIX A: SYNOPSIS

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In the ancient history of the continent of Wraeclast, it was possible for a human to ascend to godhood through sufficient ambition, rareness of quality, and the adoration of his or her people. However, many of these gods abused their power, plaguing Wraeclast with war and strife. One god, named Sin, wanted to free humanity from the influence of the petty and destructive gods and give it a chance to choose its own fate. He therefore created an entity that came to be known as Nightmare or the Beast within a mountain. The Beast's influence suppressed the power of the gods and caused them to pass into slumbering darkness.

However, some men and women throughout history became aware of the tremendous power of the Beast that slept within the mountain and sought to take control of it for their own ends. This happened several times across a period of aeons, resulting in a series of cataclysms, the deaths of millions, and the fall of entire civilizations.

Another apparent byproduct of the Beast was the creation of gems within the mountain which, when socketed into weapons or armour--and even moreso when directly implanted in the flesh--bestowed humans with extraordinary abilities referred to as *thaumaturgy*. These gems became known as Tears of the Maji and later Virtue Gems.

### THE VAAL

The Vaal were the earliest known civilisation to become deeply involved in the use of Virtue Gems, and were described as having their flesh adorned with them. While apparently fearsome warriors (their gems were powered by the sacrifice of their foes), the Vaal revered peace and sent ambassadors to other lands. In doing so they contacted the comparatively primitive Azmeri.

The Vaal shared all their knowledge with the Azmeri, save for their knowledge of the Virtue Gems, and helped raise their civilization.

About 500 years later the Vaal queen Atziri came to power. Some accounts depicted her quite positively, though she was said to be obsessed with youth and longevity. She instructed her thaumaturgist, Doryani, to help her achieve these--at any cost.

Doryani learned of the existence of the Beast and believed its power could be used to achieve immortality for the Vaal people. He attempted a communion with it in which the Vaal gathered their Virtue Gems together in a cradle on the night of the harvest moon. His actions wounded the Beast, and in the Beast's effort to defend itself the Vaal civilization was wiped out in an event later known as the Fall. Out of millions, only about 3,000 Vaal survived. These survivors traveled to the home of the Azmeri and integrated into their civilization.

### THE ETERNAL EMPIRE

About 400 years after the Fall, an Azmerian named Tarcus Veruso led his people down from the mountains and into the ruins of the Vaal civilization. There he established a new nation known as the Eternal Empire. He outlawed the use of thaumaturgy and Virtue Gems, believing them to be responsible for the Fall.

The reigns of Tarcus and his successor were fraught with trouble caused by a dark being (probably the Vaal Oversoul) as well as mindless constructs and abominations left over in the wake of the Fall. A general named Alano Phrecia managed to subdue the dark being and seal it away, and as a result was proclaimed emperor. Thus began a long and unbroken line of Phrecian emperors for over a thousand years.

The last Phrecian emperor was a man named Izaro. Unable to conceive an heir, he decided to choose a successor using the ancient Azmerian custom of selecting a ruler by choosing the first person to successfully navigate a labyrinth filled with beasts and vicious traps. The man who managed to successfully navigate Izaro's labyrinth was named Chitus. A member of the wealthy and influential Perandus family, Chitus bribed and deceived his way through many of the labyrinth's obstacles in order to become emperor.

As emperor, Chitus began aggressively expanding the empire into neighboring nations, making slaves of many of the conquered.

A thaumaturgist named Malachai earned Chitus' favour and convinced the emperor that he could make the citizens of the empire more "eternal" through the use of Virtue Gems, as the Vaal had. He successfully began implanting gems in many imperial citizens, who became known as Gemlings. His finest work, a woman named Dialla, became known as the Gemling Queen.

Three other thaumaturgists apprenticed under Malachai, studying his work and attempting to take it in new directions. The result was the creation of some powerful abominations. These three students were Shavronne, Maligaro, and Doedre.

While becoming a Gemling was popular among the nobility, discontent grew among many of the common imperial citizens who were often mistreated and underfed. The slaves also clamored for freedom, and the conquered nations sought a return of their lands. Some, including a poet named Victario Nevalius, saw the Gemlings as unnatural or perversions. As a result of these factors, a rebellion arose to overthrow Chitus and once again abolish the use of Virtue Gems.

The leader of this Purity Rebellion was High Templar Voll. With Vicatio's help he recruited other groups to his cause, and war broke out. First the Karui, led by Kaom, invaded the southern coast of Wraeclast and overthrew General Marceus Lioneye, who had previously led slave raids against the Karui. Then the Maraketh, led by Deshret, fought and conquered General Hector Titucius and reclaimed their lands that Chitus had stolen. Next the Ezomytes, led by Rigwald, overthrew the slavemaster General Gaius Sentari.

Led by Voll, they together began a siege of Sarn, the imperial capital. After about a year, Emperor Chitus was assassinated and the city fell. Voll was crowned emperor.

Voll condemned Malachai to death for his creation of the Gemlings and the ethical abuses involved. However, Malachai, aware of the existence of the Beast, claimed he could help Voll destroy it and thus cleanse Wraeclast of the source of all thaumaturgy. Voll spared him, and Malachai created the Rapture Device.

Voll led Malachai, Dialla and the device north to the mountain where the Beast resided. There, Malachai betrayed the others by using the Rapture Device to enter the black core of the Beast and take control of it instead of destroying it. He then used the Beast's power of Nightmare to incite the Cataclysm, an event similar to the Fall, which wiped out the Eternal Empire and most of its citizens.

He also resurrected his three students--Shavronne, Maligaro and Doedre--who had been killed during the Purity Rebellion, to act as his servants.

As a result of the Cataclysm, the Gemlings were warped into creatures known as the Undying, the dead began to rise and hunt the living, and animals that were formerly docile herbivores became violent carnivores.

This is the condition of Wraeclast at the start of the events of the game.

### ORIATH

After the Cataclysm, all that remained of the Eternal Empire was the island of Oriath, populated by the Templars. Some of them began collecting and studying documents and relics from the ruins of Wraeclast, despite officially outlawing the use of such thaumaturgy as heretical.

One such person was High Templar Dominus, along with his thaumaturgist Piety. They began traveling to Wraeclast to dredge up the secrets of thaumaturgy. At the same time, on Oriath, Dominus began punishing crimes with exile to Wraeclast. Piety intercepted many of the exiles who survived there and used them in her horrific experiments, attempting to recreate the works of Malachai and his apprentices.

### EVENTS OF THE GAME

The player character is from Oriath and is exiled by Dominus to Wraeclast (for reasons mostly unknown), where he/she is thrown from a ship and washes ashore.

Acts 1 and 2 primarily concern the player trying to survive and find a better existence in Wraeclast than the meagre conditions of the southern coast. This includes killing several monsters and villains that are making life miserable for the exiles.

The player also learns that Dominus and Piety are themselves in Wraeclast, secretly experimenting on and murdering masses of people, and decides to stop them. This is Act 3.

Act 4 concerns the player traveling to Highgate where the Beast resides, in order to stop Malachai and his Cataclysm that is continuing to corrupt all of Wraeclast. In killing Malachai the player also kills the Beast.

In Act 5 the player returns to Oriath, only to learn that the gods, formerly asleep, are now rising again due to the death of the Beast. Some of them appear to once more be gathering followers and abusing their power to enslave and murder humanity, so the exile begins a quest to destroy them.

Acts 6 - 10 continue this story of the player traveling throughout Wraeclast and Oriath, killing gods (and the once-again-resurrected Shavronne, Maligaro, and Doedre) to free humanity from their oppression, while at the same time gaining some of their powers in order to defeat the strongest of them, Kitava.

## APPENDIX B: CHARACTERS

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### GODS

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The main document above contains a list of known gods.

### TITANS

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**The Molten One:** a titan revered by the Redblade warband.

### PROTO-VAAL

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**Uzaza, the First King:** a man who helped his people find a place to settle after a life-long journey, and helped them get fish out of a frozen river to live on.

**Putembo:** a Proto-Vaal king who used slaves to quarry stone for his fortress.

**Aul, the Last King:** a slave who was made to quarry stone for the king's fortress. He eventually rose to be king himself and was renowned for his leadership, as well as being fearless, ferocious and a tactical genius. Aul resided in a citadel that was later buried deep underground, deeper even than the domains of the Lightless. He became known as the Crystal King due to his association with the mineral azurite.

### VAAL

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**Xibaqua:** the precursor to the Vaal. Xibaqua was said to have been born from the flesh of the gods, but later betrayed them. The gods reclaimed their flesh, leaving nothing left of Xibaqua save for a droplet of pure light, which was the first Vaal.

**Ahuatotli, the Blind:** the Grand Architect of the Vaal Outpost, a city which was eventually buried beneath the Eternal Empire.

**Tetzlapokal:** a Vaal queen sometimes referred to as a "waif of disturbing proclivities." She was a devotee of Arakaali and supposedly had a deep fascination with mortality and the inert human form. It was said she would request that her subjects deposit the bodies of their deceased loved ones upon the steps of her palace, to be taken inside and used for disturbing purposes.

**Kishara:** a Vaal sailor said to have explored every coast, cove and bay of Wraeclast. She was aided by the Star, an artefact she obtained on her first voyage. Said to be humming with thaumaturgy, it was able to guide Kishara wherever she wanted to go. She somehow drew the ire of Queen Atziri, who took her ship and made sacrifices of her crew. Kishara is said to have hidden her Star before escaping the Vaal empire and going into hiding.

**Zerphi:** a Vaalish noble and infamous serial killer who tortured and murdered thirteen people. He lived to be 168, but at the time of his death had the body of a 20-year-old. This inspired Atziri in her pursuit of youth and longevity.

**Atziri:** the last queen of the Vaal. Inspired by Zerphi, she sought out youth and longevity at the cost of sacrificing her own people. While believed to have died in the Fall, she somehow remained behind in a nightmare realm that is beginning to leak back into Wraeclast.

**Doryani, First Seer to the Queen:** a Vaal thaumaturgist who served under Queen Atziri. He assisted her in her pursuit of youth and longevity at the cost of human sacrifice and experimentation. He orchestrated some sort of communion with the Beast involving Virtue Gems and the harvest moon, hoping to achieve immortality for his people. He wounded the Beast, and the result was the Fall and the destruction of Vaal civilization.

**Viper Napuatzi:** a woman who was taken as an unwilling sacrifice, but her blood was refused. She later rose to become a Vaal general. In battle she used poison-based spells and had the ability to summon spectral snakes.

**Ixtolatl, Artisan of Sacrifice:** guardian of the Gifts of the Sacrificed Vaal Reliquary.

**Mahuatzi, Artisan of Desire:** guardian of the Gifts of the Red Queen Vaal Reliquary.

**Jaetai:** a Vaal Queen's Advisor, including advisor to Queen Atziri (per Cadiro).

**Atalui:** a Vaal priestess.

**Zeel:** a Vaal tinkerer in search of the secret of Matter Metamorphosis.

**Mahuxotl:** a banished Vaal architect.

**Kiravi:** a Vaal archer.

**Rumi:** a Vaal person.

## ARCHITECTS OF THE TEMPLE OF ATZOATL

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**Ahuana, Architect of Ceremonies:** a male Vaal architect who led countless human sacrifices. He designed the Sacrificial Chamber, Hall of Offerings, and Apex of Ascension. (Note that there was also a Karui queen named Ahuana, who lived well over a thousand years later.)

**Atmohua, Architect of Iron:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Armourer's Workshop, Armoury, and Chamber of Iron.

**Azcapa, Architect of the Guild:** a male Vaal architect and notoriously talented jeweler. He designed the Jeweller's Workshop, Jewellery Forge, and Glittering Halls.

**Cholotl, Architect of the War:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Guardhouse, Barracks, and Hall of War.

**Citaqualotl, Architect of the Swarm:** a male Vaal architect and crazed scientist who created moving devices of strange metals and later combined metal and insects. He designed the Hatchery, Automaton Lab, and Hybridisation Chamber.

**Estazunti, Architect of the Vault:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Vault, Treasury, and Wealth of the Vaal.

**Guatelitzi, Architect of Flesh:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Pools of Restoration, Sanctum of Vitality, and Sanctum of Immortality.

**Hayoxi, Architect of Destruction:** a Vaal architect who designed the Explosives Room, Demolition Lab, and Shrine of Unmaking.

**Jiquani, Architect of Industry:** a male Vaal architect obsessed with finding new and creative ways to get things done. He designed the Workshop, Engineering Department, and Factory.

**Juatalotli, Architect of the Hoard:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Storage Room, Warehouses, and Museum of Artefacts.

**Matatl, Architect of Fortifications:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Trap Workshop, Temple Defense Workshop, and Defense Research Lab.

**Opiloti, Architect of Strife:** a Vaal architect and brutally violent warlord. He used to spill the blood of his greatest warriors, believing it would grant them immortality. He designed the Hall of Champions, Hall of Heroes, and Hall of Legends.

**Paquate, Architect of Corruption:** a male Vaal architect who performed nefarious experiments. He designed the Corruption Chamber, Catalyst of Corruption, and Locus of Corruption.

**Puahuarte, Architect of the Forge:** a Vaal architect who designed the Flame Workshop, Omnitect Forge, and Crucible of Flame.

**Quipolatl, Architect of the Nexus:** a Vaal architect who designed the Shrine of Empowerment, Sanctum of Unity, and Temple Nexus.



**Tacati, Architect of Toxins:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Poison Garden, Cultivar Chamber, and Toxic Grove.

**Ticaba, Architect of the Arena:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Sparring Room, Arena of Valour, and Hall of Champions.

**Topotante, Architect of Storms:** a Vaal architect who designed the Tempest Generator, Hurricane Engine, and Storm of Corruption.

**Tzamoto, Architect of Torment:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Torment Cells, Torture Cages, and Sadist's Den.

**Uromoti, Architect of Expansion:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Surveyor's Study, Office of Cartography, and Atlas of Worlds.

**Xipocado, Royal Architect:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Royal Meeting Room, Hall of Lords, and Throne of Atziri.

**Xopec, Architect of Power:** a Vaal architect who experimented into electrical lifebloods. Xopec designed the Lightning Workshop, Omnitect Reactor Plant, and Conduit of Lightning.

**Zalatl, Architect of Thaumaturgy:** a Vaal architect who designed the Gemcutter's Workshop, Department of Thaumaturgy, and Doryani's Institute.

**Zantipi, Architect of Concealment:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Strongbox Chamber, Hall of Locks, and Court of Sealed Death.

**Zilquapa, Architect of the Breach:** a male Vaal architect who designed the Splinter Research Lab, Breach Containment Chamber, and House of the Others.

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## KALGUUR

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**King Cadagan the Third:** a king of the Kalguur who commissioned an expedition to Wraeclast after witnessing the Fall of the Vaal. He banned the use of Virtue Gems by his people.

**Kind Cadagan the Fourth:** a king of the Kalguur who ruled in their homeland after Cadagan the Third and his expedition left.

**Olroth:** leader of the Knights of the Sun in the Kalguur colonies in Wraeclast. When new monsters arose to attack the fringes of the colonies, he evacuated them and then burned the forests. After returning home he began retreating into seclusion each night. He led his knights against a monster he called the Empty-Eyed Fiend and found he couldn't kill it, so they resorted to using Virtue Gems, despite them being banned. Uhtred discovered that Olroth was sneaking out at night in a sleep-like state and believed he'd become the leader of the monsters, so had him attacked and nearly killed. Olroth was encased in glass to keep him alive, though later the glass

was found shattered and Olroth missing. It was eventually discovered that he had escaped and stolen the Triskelion Flame that defended the colonies, causing them to fall.

**Medved:** leader of the Druids of the Circle, who were "nature-mystics" with the power to see the future by looking into the past. He was declared a blasphemer by Uhtred for studying the Virtue Gems, and paid Uhtred to not exile him and his order. Once Olroth began using the Virtue Gems, Medved's Order could no longer see the past or future, and so became known as the Druids of the Broken Circle. Vorana then convinced him to start using the gems as well. When a leader arose among the monsters that beset the colonies, Medved went out to challenge it but didn't return. After the leader of the creatures was discovered to be Olroth and was defeated, Medved became their new leader, having turned into a monster himself. He was still alive two thousand years later.

**Vorana:** founder and leader of the mercenaries of the Black Scythe in the Kalguur colonies in Wraeclast. She helped defend the colonies against the monsters of Wraeclast, and convinced Medved to use Virtue Gems for this purpose even though they'd been outlawed by King Cadagan. They later had a daughter together. When the Triskelion Flame that defended the colonies was stolen, she placed Virtue Gems in her own flesh and went out to kill the creatures. Her fate was unknown until it was discovered she'd become a monster herself and was still alive two thousand years later.

**Uhtred:** High Priest of the Order of the Chalice in the Kalguur colonies in Wraeclast. He declared the use of the Virtue Gems unclean. When a leader arose among the monsters that beset the colonies, Uhtred believed it was actually Olroth and had his priests attack him. Vorana threatened to kill Uhtred for this, so he went into hiding at an "ancient site of power" built around an unknown artifact, which appears to be a Proto-Vaal shrine. The Triskelion Flame that defended the colonies later disappeared, and Vorana believed Uhtred had stolen it and branded him a traitor. However, it was actually Olroth who had taken it. Uhtred somehow became a monster himself, and was still alive two thousand years later.

**Prime Remembrancer:** an unnamed person who recorded the events that transpired when the Kalguur attempted to colonise Wraeclast.

**Annest:** the daughter of Medved and Vorana. She was born in the Kalguur colonies in Wraeclast and sent back to the homeland to be raised in safety. Olroth's son went with her as her guardian.

**Owen:** Uhtred's son. He was sent to the homeland to avoid retribution for Uhtred's actions.

**Dannig:** a runesmith who had a forge in Kalguur. He led an expedition to Wraeclast (following the failed rebellion and possibly as an excuse to leave) to discover the fates of the Kalguur who had tried to colonise the continent. His quest is to investigate the Knights of the Sun. The others describe him as a dreamer and an intrepid and charismatic leader. As a skald, he composes and recites poems honouring heroes and their deeds. When the king got wind of the expedition and decreed that their camp be built up into a city and trading port, Dannig once again took up runesmithing as a member of the Artificers' Guild. He's interested in Isla and she reciprocates. He has been to Te Onui.

**Gwennen:** a descendent of Annest, Medved's daughter, and therefore honor-bound to discover the fate of Medved and the Druids of the Broken Circle. She traveled to Wraeclast for this purpose. In Kalguur, she fought in a war involving a failed rebellion and gave Johan a scar. Leaving for Wraeclast may at least partly have been to escape in the aftermath. When Johan arrived to Wraeclast with a charter from the King, she avoided him out of fear he'd recognise her and be able to deduce who her allies were. The others describe her as honest and one who thinks belief can shape events, and she believes in Chance as a force. She is a distant cousin of Tujen.

**Tujen:** a descendent of Annest, Vorana's daughter. He traveled to Wraeclast to find out what happened to Vorana and the Black Scythe mercenaries. After Kingsmarch was established, he became the harbourmaster. The others describe him as a loyal friend who protects the others, who manages to remain cheery despite all his scars and injuries. He is a distant cousin of Gwennen. He drinks a lot and is likely in an amorous relationship with Sonja.

**Rog, the Dealer, the Disenchanter:** a descendent of Owen, Uhtred's son. He traveled to Wraeclast to discover the fate of Uhtred, and whether or not he was a traitor. After Kingsmarch was founded, he established his own shop/apothecary as a member of the Meridian Free Traders guild. As a pastime, he set up a game night with the others, where they play a game involving figurine, lots of dice, and roleplaying. The others describe him as a sweetheart with excellent logistical skills.

**Johan:** the King's Hand, who was sent to Wraeclast to oversee the execution of the charter. He serves as Treasurer in Kingsmarch and handles the finances, resources, and administration of the charter. He admits that his loyalties are divided: he serves the King's wishes but also the best interests of Kingsmarch and its settlers. Johan is aware that many of the colonists aren't exactly upstanding citizens, but as long as there's no open sedition he seems happy to look the other way, even finding excuses to fail to carry out punishments directed by the King. Per Gwennen, she gave him a scar, presumably during the failed rebellion.

**Raulf, the Recruiter:** a man sent by his guild, the Meridian Free Traders, to recruit labourers and specialists for those who have jobs available. He's been trying unsuccessfully to recruit Sasan and The Black Knight. He's missing an eye and doesn't drink.

**Sonja, the Farmer:** a woman probably living under an assumed name. She chose to leave her past behind in Kalguur and move to Wraeclast, feeling that her family name was forced on her, not given. She also implies that someone hurt her, who might be able to hear what she says (directly or via others) even on a different continent. She seems to be in an amorous relationship with Tujen.

**Sasan, the Bandit Lord:** male bandit; Raulf sends him letters trying to recruit him, which he unsuccessfully tries to avoid; believes the Kalguuran colonisation must be stopped and that those helping them are ignorant?

**The Black Knight:** a mysterious person or being who has supposedly been around for centuries and knows the runic arts. Raulf heard stories of him growing up, and sends letters trying to recruit him as a guard for the Kingsmarch shipping lanes.

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## ETERNALS

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### EMPERORS

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**Tarcus Veruso, Prima Imperialus:** an Azmerian who led his people down from the mountains and established the Eternal Empire, becoming its first emperor. Per Clarissa he was a ruthless despot. He outlawed the use of thaumaturgy and Virtue Gems in the empire, referring to them as "Vaalish folly," and burned those who used them at the stake. However, when his wife Chiara died in childbirth, he himself resorted to thaumaturgy, using an artefact supposedly gifted to him from the Vaal known as the Ankh of Eternity in an attempt to revive her. He had one son, who died attempting to complete the labyrinth. Mount Veruso, where Highgate is located, was named after him.

**Caspiro:** a low-born legionnaire who became the second Eternal Emperor after surviving the labyrinth. He was dismembered by a dark being (probably the Vaal Oversoul).

**Alano Phrecia:** an Azmerian general who managed to defeat the dark being that had killed Emperor Caspiro. For this achievement he was named the third Eternal Emperor. His descendants ruled for over a thousand years, abandoning succession by labyrinth for succession by inheritance, until Chitus Perandus took the throne. Phrecia, the area of Wraeclast surrounding Sarn, was named after him.

**Romira Phrecian:** the Eternal Emperor who ruled during the Night of a Thousand Ribbons, when Sarn burned. He was known for being a cannibal. His wife had two sons that were fathered by his brother. He got revenge by holding a banquet in his wife's honor at which he served her her two sons.

**Izaro Phrecius:** the last Phrecian Eternal Emperor. He was unable to conceive an heir, so built a new labyrinth based on the ones used in Azmerian tradition in order to choose a successor. He was betrayed by the Perandus family, who pushed Chitus Perandus to power. Chitus locked Izaro in his own labyrinth, where he remains trapped along with the goddess he worshipped.

**Chitus Perandus:** the Eternal Emperor who succeeded Izaro by successfully navigating Izaro's labyrinth. A member of the wealthy Perandus family, he tricked his way into becoming emperor by stealing detailed plans of the labyrinth's construction, bribing others to place caches of supplies within the labyrinth itself, and deceiving an Ezomyte warrior named Weylin into helping him fight his way through it. (Per Path of Exile: Origins, Chitus is not only a Perandus but also a descendant of Tarcus Veruso.) After his coronation he immediately began expanding the empire and making slaves of the conquered. With the help of Malachai, he began the use of thaumaturgy and Virtue Gems in the empire, which had been forbidden since its founding. During the Purity Rebellion he was stabbed and killed with a poisoned blade by his friend, Lord Mayor Ondar of Sarn. Since he'd had a Virtue Gem implanted above his heart that was linked to all of the Gemling legionnaires, his death also resulted in the death of all but a few of the Gemling legionnaires. This event thus brought the Purity Rebellion to a successful

conclusion. Chitus was buried in the Imperial Gardens and a plum tree was planted upon his grave.

**Voll of Thebrus, the Brittle Emperor:** the leader of the Purity Rebellion and last Eternal Emperor. Voll was the High Templar during the reign of Chitus. He disapproved of the emperor's use of thaumaturgy and Virtue Gems and vowed to cleanse them from the empire. He started the Purity Rebellion and recruited others to his cause. After inciting uprisings by the Karui, Maraketh and Ezomytes, he himself laid siege to Sarn. After the death of Chitus, Voll was crowned emperor. He had Malachai's thaumaturgists put to death, but spared Malachai and took him to Highgate based on his promise to destroy the Beast, the source of all thaumaturgy. However, Malachai betrayed Voll and instead harnessed the power of the Beast to incite a Cataclysm that destroyed the empire and corrupted or killed its citizens. Voll himself was corrupted into an undead creature that began to attack the living, including the Maraketh who guarded Highgate. Voll himself killed Deshret, the Red Sekhema.

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## NOTABLE FIGURES DURING THE PURITY REBELLION

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**Cadiro Perandus:** Lord of the Coin and minister of finance who assisted Chitus in becoming emperor. Despite being a strong supporter of Chitus, he seemed to not like Malachai or the Godless Three. Prior to the fall of the Eternal Empire he managed to empty the kingdom's treasury and hide its riches in secret caches throughout Wraeclast. Cadiro himself remains alive, sustained by his devotion to his household god, Prospero, continuing to search out these caches. He believes the Immortal Syndicate is a noble organization.

**Lazhwar:** an old archbishop of the Eternal Faith who secretly conducted dark experiments, using thaumaturgy to create his own miniature worlds (maps) in which he could rule as a god. Malachai studied his work with interest, using Lazhwar's designs as the foundation for his Eternal Laboratory. When Emperor Voll took power, Malachai freely gave Lazhwar over to the Purity Courts. Lazhwar was burned at the stake for "fraternizing with unholy forces."

**Malachai, the Soulless:** a thaumaturgist who received the favor of Chitus. After studying the works of the Vaal with the unwilling help of Icius Perandus, he rediscovered the art of implanting Virtue Gems into people. He used this to turn imperial citizens into Gemlings, to create the powerful Gemling legionnaires, and to turn the empire's slaves into creatures more fit for their assigned labor. He was given Diallya, a former concubine of Chitus', who he fell in love with and turned into the Gemling Queen. He also experimented with maps, inspired by Lazhwar's designs as well as visions from the Beast. Following the Purity Rebellion and the death of Chitus, he convinced Voll to spare him by claiming he could destroy the Beast and thus wipe out the source of all thaumaturgy. However, he betrayed Voll and abandoned Diallya, and instead used the Rapture Device to enter and take control of the Beast. He used the Beast's power of Nightmare to incite a Cataclysm that destroyed the Eternal Empire and wiped out any resistance to his plan of shaping the world into his own vision. He also resurrected Shavronne, Maligaro, Doedre and Piety to act as his servants.

**Icius Perandus:** a Scholar to the Empire who was coerced by Malachai into helping him translate and study Vaal artefacts. In 3.5 it was revealed he was connected to the Order of the Djinn, though this lore was removed in 3.16. Per this lore, the Order of the Djinn later rescued him from Malachai's grasp. Icius planned against the theft and plundering of artefacts by Cadiro and also helped the Order enact a plan to prevent the Cataclysm, which had been foreseen. Though the plan failed to save the Eternal Empire, Icius did manage to save some people's lives.

**Shavronne of Umbra:** a student under Malachai who became one of the Godless Three. She experimented with transfiguration and the implantation of Virtue Gems into people. During the Purity Rebellion she created a thaumaturgical barrier to prevent the Karui invaders from reaching the inner empire. She also turned Brutus, the Warden of Axiom Prison, into a monster to stop the Karui from advancing beyond the prison. Brutus turned on her and killed her. She was later resurrected by Malachai after the Cataclysm and resided in the Harvest guarding Malachai's entrails.

**Brutus:** the Warden of Axiom Prison. During the Purity Rebellion Brutus chose to have Shavronne of Umbra transform him into a powerful creature, who Shavronne intended to use to stop the Karui from entering the inner empire after they had defeated Marceus Lioneye. Brutus himself turned on and killed Shavronne.

**Maligaro:** a student under Malachai who became one of the Godless Three. He used thaumaturgy and the extracted essence of Virtue Gems to create a number of monsters, including the Great White Beast. He turned his own assistant, Raulo, into a creature named Fidelitas. During the Purity Rebellion Maligaro was burned at the stake by High Templar Voll on his way to lay siege to Sarn. He was later resurrected by Malachai after the Cataclysm and resided in the Harvest guarding Malachai's heart.

**Fidelitas, the Mourning:** formerly a man named Raulo, who was Maligaro's assistant. Maligaro injected the extracted essence of a Virtue Gem into Raulo, turning him into a creature who he named *Fidelitas* (Latin for "faithfulness" or "loyalty") in honor of his sacrifice. Fidelitas remained alive in the Chamber of Sins until discovered by Piety more than 250 years later.

**Doedre "Darktongue" Stamatis:** a student under Malachai who became one of the Godless Three. Maligaro was her master and was responsible for removing her tongue, earning her her nickname. During the Purity Rebellion she was burned at the stake by High Templar Voll on his way to lay siege to Sarn. She was later resurrected by Malachai after the Cataclysm and resided in the Harvest guarding Malachai's lungs.

**Lady Dialla, the Gemling Queen:** a former concubine of Chitus' who was given to Malachai for talking too much and asking too many questions. During the Purity Rebellion she met and befriended Victario Nevalius. Malachai turned her into a Gemling that he considered to be his finest work, and she became known as the Gemling Queen. As a Gemling, she betrayed Victario and killed his lover, Marylene. She loved Malachai and after the Rebellion wished to remain with him. However, he secretly planned to take control of the Beast and harness its power, and knew (despite loving her) that he couldn't take her with him. He therefore told her she'd have to die in order for him to kill the Beast, knowing she'd refuse and that it would break her heart, but also knowing it would cause her to leave and thus spare her from his Cataclysm. Not having been aware of his plans, Dialla was left believing she was to blame for the Rapture Device failing to kill the Beast, when in actuality Malachai had never built it for that purpose.

**Victario Nevalius, the People's Poet:** a man who says he came from a long line of scholars, poets, and artists. A key figure in the Purity Rebellion, he helped High Templar Voll recruit others, including the Karui and Ezoytes, to the cause. Initially he convinced Emperor Chitus to allow him to visit the front lines of the rebellion to act as a chronicler, until he was discovered as a spy for the rebellion by Malachai. Afterwards he went underground and promoted the rebellion among the common people of Sarn, operating from the sewers. He was a friend of Dialla's before she became a Gemling, and was briefly the lover of Marylene before she was killed protecting him. One of his works was called "O' Eternal." He stole a powerful toxin capable of killing Gemlings from Maligaro, which Lord Mayor Ondar later used to kill Emperor Chitus. Victario died in the Cataclysm.

**"Fair" Marylene:** a skilled fighter in Sarn arena and one of the leaders of the Purity Rebellion. She was raised in the slums by her maidservant mother. The identity of her father remains a mystery but was possibly Kre Faarblood. She was called "Fair" due to her dance-like style of fighting. She was a leader of the Purity Rebellion among the common people of Sarn, operating from the sewers. Victario Nevalius was briefly her lover. She was killed while protecting Victario early in the siege of Sarn by Dialla, who'd been newly turned into a Gemling.

**Kalisa Maas:** an opera singer and the Prima Donna of Sarn, who became a Gemling when she had a Virtue Gem implanted in her throat. She gave her final performance in Sarn arena before Malachai unveiled his Gemling legionnaires. Her gem was later set into a necklace known as the Star of Wraeclast and given by Daresso, King of Swords in Oriath, to his beloved Lady Merveil. The gem twisted Merveil into a monster.

**Captain Alsarus:** captain of what Malachai considered to be his finest group of Gemling legionnaires. During the siege of Sarn, Malachai ordered him and his legionnaires to remain at the warehouse, far enough from Emperor Chitus that they would not be affected by his heart gem if he were killed. His men and women are likely the only Gemling legionnaires to have survived following the Purity Rebellion and Cataclysm.

**Marceus Lioneye:** a lord and general for the Eternal Empire. He led campaigns against the Karui and imprisoned them on Oriath, using Lioneye's Watch as a supply station. He was called "Lioneye" due to having his left eye taken out and replaced with a Virtue Gem. During the Purity Rebellion, the Karui, led by Kaom, invaded the coast and defeated Lioneye and his legion. It is said that after killing him, Kaom wore Lioneye's head on his belt. He somehow now resides in the Domain of Timless Conflict, where he seems to believe he is still fighting against the Purity Rebellion.

**Hector Titucius:** a general who served under Emperor Chitus. He was an Ezomyte by birth. During Chitus' reign he had Malachai replace his joints with Virtue Gems. He was general of the Vastiri legion and charged by Chitus with subduing the Maraketh and holding their conquered lands, earning himself the nickname "Scourage of the Maraketh." Sekhema Asenath united the Maraketh tribes against the empire and attacked Sarn, but was defeated and killed by Hector. During the Purity Rebellion, Sekhema Deshret led her *akhara* to war against him in order to win back their conquered lands. They were successful, and Hector was killed. Deshret is said to have fashioned a rhoa saddle from his skin. Despite this, Hector was reanimated by the Cataclysm and remained in the Bath House, where his tomb was located.

**Gaius Sentari:** a governor and general who served under Emperor Chitus and ran the "civilisation camps" that held the enslaved Ezomytes. During the Purity Rebellion the Ezomyte slaves rebelled, led by Thane Rigwald. Gaius fought back, but was ultimately defeated and killed by Rigwald in what became known as the Bloody Flowers' Rebellion.

**Commander Adus:** the legionnaire responsible for controlling the Karui, Maraketh and Ezomyte slaves who mined Highgate in search of Virtue Gems. He is said to have treated the slaves fairly and as human beings. During the Purity Rebellion he sided with High Templar Voll. He had a secret penchant for archaeology and discovered a Maraketh artefact, the Calendar, in the foothills outside of Highgate. After the fall of the empire he was reanimated by the Cataclysm.

**Archbishop Geofri of Phrecia, the Abashed:** a Templar and theologian who deplored anything thaumaturgical and therefore sided with Voll during the Purity Rebellion. It was Geofri who coined the title "Chamber of Sins" for Maligaro's lab, located near Geofri's Phrecia Cathedral (now the Fellshrine ruins). He sent his men to destroy Maligaro and his work, but Maligaro stopped them and struck back, attacking Phrecia Cathedral. Geofri was slain with Maligaro's Etcher at the foot of Saint Corutino the Golden Hand's Shrine. Geofri was reanimated by the Cataclysm into a Brittle Templar of some power.

**Ondar:** the Lord Mayor of Sarn during the Purity Rebellion. While he was a friend of Emperor Chitus, he secretly sided with the rebels. During the celebration of the Night of a Thousand Ribbons, Ondar stabbed and killed Chitus with blades tainted with a virulent poison (which Vicatario Nevalius had stolen from Maligaro). Before dying, Chitus managed to cleave Ondar in twain, and both died on the steps of the Sceptre of God. It was this event that brought the Purity Rebellion to a successful end and resulted in the coronation of High Templar Voll as emperor. After the Cataclysm Ondar's ghost remained behind, roaming the Grand Promenade.

**Grattus:** an unknown member of the Grattus family associated with the Eternal Empire, who was spoken about by Undertaker Arimor. Not much is known about him/her other than they are referred to as tactful and unseen, suggesting they had an important but behind-the-scenes role. Grattus wielded a dagger.

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## MINOR FIGURES

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**Chiara:** the wife of Tarcus Veruso. She died giving birth to his son, causing him to resort to thaumaturgy in an attempt to fully revive her. He used the Ankh of Eternity combined with an Azmerian ritual. While reports say he was successful, this is highly suspect.

**Medici Perandus:** Prefect to the Treasury and an advisor who worked with Cadiro. They "devised many clever plots together to bolster the wealth of the Treasury."

**Julius Perandus:** the father of Chitus Perandus.

**Trinian:** Intellectus Prime who wrote about the history of the Vaal and the founding of the Eternal Empire. He was a Gemling who had a Virtue Gem implanted in his cranium. When the



Cataclysm began and Sarn fell, he became one of the Undying and remained in the Archives within Sarn's Library.

**Garivaldi:** Chronicler to the Empire who recorded the events of the Purity Rebellion and its aftermath leading up to the Cataclysm.

**Kre Faarblood:** the duelist and swordsman who trained Chitus for the labyrinth. He was possibly Fair Marylene's father. Chitus discovered he was a commoner and only pretending to be of noble blood, and had Cadiro quietly try and execute him.

**Elano:** a cousin of Chitus who was a secret bastard and not a Perandus by name. He was used by Chitus in an unsuccessful plot to assassinate Izaro prior to the labyrinth's completion.

**Xirgil:** a trapbuilder in Izaro's labyrinth, implied to have been killed by one of his own traps.

**Lorenzi:** first violinist of the Sarn Symphonic and friend of Victario Nevalius. He became a Gemling by having Malachai embed a Virtue Gem in his left palm so that he could have the fastest fingers in the empire. Victario disapproved of this as he felt it perverted Lorenzi into something other than a person, and he wrote about it to promote the Purity Rebellion.

**Governor Kastov:** Governor of Stridevolf and an ally of High Templar Voll's during the Purity Rebellion.

**Aramil:** Cartographer to Emperor Chitus.

**Caliga, Imperatrix:** a Gemling aristocrat who became one of the Undying following the Cataclysm. She remains in the Sceptre of God.

**Perpetus:** one of the Undying who remains in the Slums.

**Tani:** a woman who lived in a village between Phrecia Cathedral and the Chamber of Sins during the fall of the Eternal Empire. She recorded some of the events of the Cataclysm in the form of wood etchings, before likely falling victim to the reanimated dead.

**Denirus:** Tani's husband. After the Cataclysm began to cause people to have violent and twisted night terrors, he went to Alliston in search of a doctor who could help. He did not return for three lunari, and when he did it was in the form of an undead creature who hunted Tani.

**Corin:** one of Tani's daughters, who had nightmares as a result of the Cataclysm. When the corrupted villagers came for her, she went to them with open arms. She was killed and reanimated, and began to hunt Tani.

**Bravalo:** a smith in Tani's village who was twisted by the Cataclysm. He hunted Tani and killed her uncle. He remains to this day in the Crossroads, animated by the Cataclysm.

**Erasmus:** Imperial Gemcutter.

**Kadavrus the Defiler:** Surgeon to the Umbra and a necromancer.

**Saint Corutino:** a Templar known as "the Golden Hand" who lived in Phrecia Cathedral.

**Brektov:** a composer who wrote an opera sung by Kalisa Maas.

## PERANDUS GUARDIANS

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**Junith Perandus, Keeper of Vaults:** a member of the Perandus family sustained by Prospero to guard the family's caches of wealth.

**Tantalo Perandus, Seller of Secrets:** a member of the Perandus family sustained by Prospero to guard the family's caches of wealth.

**Actaeo Perandus, Master of Beasts:** a member of the Perandus family sustained by Prospero to guard the family's caches of wealth.

**Vitorica Perandus, Maker of Marvels:** a member of the Perandus family sustained by Prospero to guard the family's caches of wealth.

**Stasius Perandus, Merchant of Corpses:** a member of the Perandus family sustained by Prospero to guard the family's caches of wealth.

**Darsia Perandus, Collector of Debts:** a member of the Perandus family sustained by Prospero to guard the family's caches of wealth.

**Milo Perandus, Handler of Swords:** a member of the Perandus family sustained by Prospero to guard the family's caches of wealth.

**Celona, Vault Sentry:** a Perandus associate bound by Prospero to guard the family's wealth.

**Hortus, Knee Breaker:** a Perandus associate bound by Prospero to guard the family's wealth.

**Kuto, Hired Muscle:** a Perandus associate bound by Prospero to guard the family's wealth.

**Luthis, Bounty Hunter:** a Perandus associate bound by Prospero to guard the family's wealth.

**Belatra, Hired Assassin:** a Perandus associate bound by Prospero to guard the family's wealth.

**Liana, Indebted Peasant:** a slain Perandus debtor bound by Prospero in eternal servitude to guard the family's wealth.

**Marius, Indebted Smuggler:** a slain Perandus debtor bound by Prospero in eternal servitude to guard the family's wealth.

**Vera, Indebted Aristocrat:** a slain Perandus debtor bound by Prospero in eternal servitude to guard the family's wealth.

**Percia, Indebted Poacher:** a slain Perandus debtor bound by Prospero in eternal servitude to guard the family's wealth.

## KARUI

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**Kahuturoa:** a man who lived thousands of years ago, when the Vaal were a massive empire and the Karui and Azmeri were friends. Currently he is the oldest soul in the Halls of the Dead, and doesn't enjoy fighting but is good at it. He's grown lethargic and forlorn due to the length of his existence there, and wishes he could see the Chambers of the Dishonoured. It's implied he was in a relationship with Rakiata. He is currently a member of the Rongokurai Tribe.

**Tawhanuku:** a woman who's been in the Halls of the Dead for an unknown length of time. Not much is known about her life, as she is cryptic and speaks in fables. She's currently a member of the Hinekora Tribe.

**Maata:** a man who lived some time after Kahuturoa. He was a peacemaker and diplomat who maintained relations with the Vaal to protect the Karui from the blood fever caused by the gems. He now resides in the Halls of the Dead, where he looks old, apparently because that's how he sees himself. Currently he's a member of the Tawhoa Tribe.

**Ikiaho:** a woman who's been in the Halls of the Dead for an unknown length of time. She enjoys fighting but refuses to participate in other traditions, saying they aren't her culture. She's fascinated by the pursuit of knowledge, and says that in life this pursuit led her to "a vast lake" (possibly the Lake where Kalandra is trapped) but that she doesn't remember what she found there. She says that she doesn't know what love is and has spent her time in the Halls alone, declining to start a relationship with anyone. She is friends with Rakiata and feels understood by her. Currently she's a member of the Arohongui Tribe.

**Kiloava:** a man who became chieftain of the Valako Tribe. When he inherited the tribe's signet, "it surged with the power of the storm," which it had never done before. He therefore appointed himself as "the Herald of War," and claims to have laid the foundation for Karui unification, before Kaom killed him at the age of 74 as part of said unification. Some claim his bloodline ended with him, but he actually had many children. He was delighted to awake in the Halls of the Dead in his prime, and is energetic and virile. He attempted to court Ikiaho but was turned down, though says he's "gone through the traditions" with everyone else there and that "if it moves, I'll chase it!" He remains a member of the Valako Tribe.

**Akoya:** a Karui woman who was killed by Kaom after a day-long fight with him, as part of his campaign to unite the Karui tribes. The passing of the years in the Halls of the Dead weighs heavily on her, and she hopes for the end of Time. She takes traditions and the Karui Way seriously. She was apparently a member of the Ngamahu Tribe when she was alive, as she'd received the goddess' sign, but is currently a member of the Tukohama Tribe. She is sometimes referred to as the Chainbreaker.

**Akayo:** a male Karui who was decapitated by Kaom during his campaign to unite the Karui tribes.

**Rakiata:** a chieftain whose tribe was attacked by Eternals looking for a fabled spear when she was 13. Her chieftain and father were killed, and she hid the spear piece they had with Tasalio (who was presumably asleep). She found a ring that washed up on the shore and believed to be a gift from Tasalio. Per her, it had great power but she never used it. She was killed when Kaom cut

off her head and hand during his campaign to unite the Karui tribes. She doesn't follow the Way, but has her own style, which she calls the Flow. Because of this, many other chieftains were hostile to her when she arrived in the Halls of the Dead, but Ikiaho defended her. It's implied she was in relationships with Kahuturoa and Kiloava. Currently she's a member of the Tasalio Tribe.

**Kaom:** the leader of the Karui during the Purity Rebellion. Voll recruited him into the rebellion, promising him Karui freedom in return for war. He united the Karui tribes by killing the weakest tribe leaders one by one until the others joined his cause. He led them in a successful invasion of Wareclast, defeating Marceus Lioneye and his legion on the southern coast. Kaom cleansed the area of all Eternal citizens, including killing the women and children, and declared himself king of a new Karui kingdom in Wraeclast. He also intended to invade and conquer Oriath, as had been agreed upon with Voll. However, Kaom's new kingdom was devastated by the Cataclysm, causing the dead to rise and the animals to attack the living. He had a vision leading him to take his bravest 500 warriors north to Highgate and descend into the mountain to put an end to the Cataclysm. However, he became corrupted by Malachai's influence and went mad, killing his own 500 men. From then on he remained trapped in his own dream within the mountain. When he was finally killed, he was honoured with a place in the Halls of the Dead. When he arrived there he pursued Ikiaho because he'd heard she'd refused all the others, but she refused him too. He is currently a member of the Ngamahu Tribe, though was possibly a member of the Tukohama Tribe in life.

**Lavianga Ngamako:** a hatungo and Guardian of the Karui Way, who acted as Kaom's advisor. He was present for the Karui invasion of Wraeclast, though remained behind when Kaom took his 500 warriors north to Highgate. When Kaom did not return, Hyrri led the Karui, including Lavianga, back to their native Ngamakanui. Lavianga is the author of the carvings along the coast chronicling the invasion and its aftermath.

**Hyrri Ngamaku:** Kaom's niece. Prior to the Karui invasion of Wraeclast, she traveled to Thebrus and studied archery with Voll's finest military tutors. Sources disagree on whether this was at Kaom's behest or whether he was unaware and furious when he found out. Marceus Lioneye believed the Karui laws forbade the use of archers, not knowing this prohibition did not extend to women or to Hyrri's tribe, the Ramako Tribe. Thus he was unprepared for the attack by Hyrri's archers, and his legionnaires were defeated. She later joined Voll for the siege of Sarn, where she commanded the Karui forces. She had a relationship with Victario Nevalius, and they had a daughter together named Ahuana, who was born before the Cataclysm. Victario gifted her a signed copy of "O' Eternal" with the inscription, "To my Karui Queen, The Ngamakanui rose has never been so beautiful nor its thorns so deadly. Let your aim never waver, and your story ever be told." After the Cataclysm devastated her people and Kaom left for Highgate without returning, Hyrri led her remaining people back to Ngamakanui. There she held the title of queen of the still-united Karui tribes, until leaving to take an army to deal with a strange threat on the edge of Ngamakanui. She never returned, and was later discovered in the Domain of Timeless Conflict (thus never making it to the Karui Halls of the Dead), where she seems to think she's fighting against slavers. Despite the prohibition of archers by the Karui not technically applying to her, she is still sometimes referred to as the Dishonoured Queen.

**Ahuana:** the daughter of Hyrri Ngamaku and Victario Nevalius, who was born shortly before the Cataclysm. She became queen of the still-united Karui tribes after Hyrri left to deal with a

strange threat and never returned, but the tribes fractured. Ahuana suggested they switch to a council of chieftains, which remains to this day. She died in childbirth and now resides cheerfully in the Halls of the Dead with her descendents. Currently she's a member of the Ramako Tribe. (Note that one of the Vaal architects of Atzoatl was also named Ahuana, but was a man who lived well over a thousand years earlier.)

**Siosa Foaga:** a Karui slave of the Eternal Empire during the Purity Rebellion who apparently survived the Cataclysm due to being bound to a painting by a Karui *motiata*. He still resides in the Sarn library.

**Oba:** the Conqueror of Corruption.

**Hapihapi:** a man who helped the formerly-enslaved Karui refugees who'd escaped from Oriath after Kitava's rebirth settle into new lives in Wraeclast. He was captured and killed by slave traders, who were furious about the fall of the slave trading business and sought revenge by hunting down, torturing and murdering as many Karui as they could find.

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## MARAKETH

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**Asenath, the Golden Sekhema:** the Maraketh *sekhema* and archer who united the Maraketh tribes against the Eternal Empire. She was the last person to bear the Wings of Vastiri, which bestowed her with the title of "Sekhema of Sekhemas." She led the united Maraketh against Sarn, but was defeated and killed by General Hector Titucius.

**Deshret, the Red Sekhema:** the commander who led the Maraketh during the Purity Rebellion. Voll promised her the return of the Maraketh grazing lands stolen during the imperial conquest of the Vastiri Plains in return for her military support in the rebellion. She agreed, and led her *akhara* in an attack against General Hector Titucius' legionnaires. They were successful, and Deshret is said to have fashioned a rhoa saddle from his skin. She later joined Voll for the siege of Sarn. Following the Cataclysm, she led her *akhara* to Highgate to stop the Beast. However, she instead chose to seal off the mines and order her *akhara* to guard them. She was later killed by Emperor Voll after he'd been corrupted into a monster by the Cataclysm. After death her spirit fell into the hands of Malachai's Godless Three, who each had their wicked way with her, attempting to subsume her into the collective corruption. They failed, leaving her spirit trapped within the mines.

**Aukuna, the Black Sekhema:** a Maraketh general who was skilled at both archery and hand-to-hand combat. She rode a mount named Shiyo. Currently she resides in the Domain of Timeless Conflict. Some of what she says may be hints that she fought against the Lightless in life, and still believes she is fighting them, even when facing other factions.

**Nasima:** a sekhema.

## FARIDUN

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**Jamanra, The Great:** a warrior who tried to unite the scattered Faridun camps into a single people thousands of years ago. He got a group of Maraketh sekhemas to agree to meet with him to discuss recognizing the Faridun as its own nation, but he was betrayed and poisoned.

## EZOMYTES

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**Skothe:** the king of the Ezomytes prior to the Purity Rebellion. He was apparently loyal to Chitus despite his people being enslaved and left to starve, so he was killed by Thane Rigwald.

**Rigwald:** a Thane and leader of the Ezomytes after killing King Skothe. He was recruited into the Purity Rebellion by Victario Nevalius and led his people in revolt against Governor Gaius Sentari in what became known as the Bloody Flowers' Rebellion. The Ezomytes were successful, and Rigwald himself chased down and killed Gaius Sentari. He later joined Voll for the siege of Sarn. Seeing that a single Gemling legionnaire could defeat three Ezomytes, he realized that the Purity Rebellion needed monsters of its own to combat the Gemlings. He therefore called upon the Greatwolf, one of the First Ones, to aid him. His call was answered and he gave himself over to the Greatwolf. After the rebellion, he left his people so that his new instincts to hunt would not cause him to hunt his own people. He remains in Wraeclast, endlessly hunting for the ancient talismans of the First Ones.

**Weylin:** an Ezomyte warrior who attempted to defeat Izaro's labyrinth in order to become emperor and help his people. In the labyrinth he allied himself with Chitus, and together they managed to reach its end. However, Chitus then betrayed and poisoned him, resulting in Chitus becoming emperor. Weylin chronicled his journey through the labyrinth with Chitus in a five-part poem.

**Hrimnor:** an Ezomyte.

## AZMERI

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**Greeneyes Ryann, the Warden of Eaves:** a Maji assigned to patrol the border between the Wildwood and the old world. She protects travelers who wander through and slays any Nameless or other beasts who try to enter the old world. Her mother and father were slain in the battle against The King in the Mists, and she has vowed one day to defeat him. On occasion she has seen the edge of the old world.

**Dromion Ley, the Breaker of Oaths:** a man who was raised a Maji but broke his oath to them by embracing forbidden and evil magics. He believes evil is necessary as a counterpoint to good to maintain the balance of the Wildwood. Therefore he doesn't wish to destroy The King in the Mists, but to replace him, believing that he could impose his own ethics on the darkness and that they would be an improvement to those of The King. He has been to the old world twice.

**Flavia, The Primal Huntress:** an Azmeri woman who resides in the Wildwood. She considers herself the apex, the only thing in the Wildwood that isn't hunted by something else. She feels it isn't her place to interfere with the The King in the Mists, and is sympathetic towards him, understanding that while the Maji fight for their home, he came from a far worse place. She has never been to the old world, and has trouble understanding concepts like the sky and the Sun. Her earliest memory is being on hunt in the Wildwood with Einhar, who told her he loved her.

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## OTHER WRAECLASTIANS

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**Kulric:** a faithful follower of Solaris. When the goddess was imprisoned beneath the earth and tortured, he set her free and tended to her wounds.

**Kulina:** the last faithful follower of Lunaris. After the goddess was imprisoned and tortured by her sister, Kulina set her free and later urged her to go to war against Solaris.

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## THE PALE COUNCIL

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**Eber, the Plaguemaw, Mouth of the Masses:** a man whose people began to starve after their land went barren, driving him and his people to turn cannibalistic and feast on their own.

**Yriel, the Feral Lord, Lord of the Wild:** a lord who fed his crops with blood during a drought, resulting in the flora becoming corrupted and turning into a jungle of thorny and monstrous plants.

**Volkuur, the Unbreathing Queen, She of Many Bodies:** a woman who raised an army of soulless corpses to act as her puppets, in mockery of death.

**Inya, the Unbearable Whispers, the Infinite Mind:** a queen with an unending thirst for knowledge, which she fed by reading countless tomes. As her knowledge grew her wisdom slipped away, driving her insane. It was Inya who arranged for the Pale Council to become immortal, unable to be killed unless all four were killed. She had the others bring their most loyal and healthy retainers as sacrifices.

## WARBANDS

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**Uruk Baleh:** a Redblade warband leader.

**El'Abin, Blood eater:** a Redblade warband leader.

**Leli Goya, Daughter of Ash:** a Redblade warband leader.

**Bin'aia, Crimson Rain:** a Redblade warband leader.

**Yorishi, Aurora-sage:** a Mutewind warband leader.

**Jeinei Yuushu:** a Mutewind warband leader.

**Otesha, the Giantslayer:** a Mutewind warband leader.

**Musky "Two-Eyes" Grenn:** a Brinerot warband leader.

**Susara, Siren of Pondium:** a Brinerot warband leader.

**Lussi "Rotmother" Roth:** a Brinerot warband leader and the younger sister of Weylam Roth. She was Weylam's first mate for years until she mutinied and marooned him on an island off the coast of Wraeclast. Per Weylam, she is responsible for transforming the Brinerot from a clan of honourable pirates into raving lunatics.

**Rama, The Kinslayer:** a Renegades warband leader.

**Kalria, The Fallen:** a Renegades warband leader.

**Invari, The Bloodshaper:** a Renegades warband leader.

**Lokan, The Deceiver:** a Renegades warband leader.

**Marchak, The Betrayer:** a Renegades warband leader.

**Berrots, The Breaker:** a Renegades warband leader.

**Vessider, The Unrivaled:** a Renegades warband leader.

**Morghants, The Defeaning:** a Renegades warband leader.

## EXILES

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**Fire Fury:** a woman exiled from Oriath who became a cannibal living on the southern coast of Wraeclast.

**Hailrake:** a man exiled from Oriath who became a cannibal that scavenged on the Tidal Island.



**Calaf, Headstaver:** a man exiled from Oriath who became a bandit in the crossroads north of the Fellshrine ruins.

**Targa, Beast Poacher:** a man exiled from Oriath who became a bandit in the riverways of the Phrecian Forest.

**Kole:** a rapist exiled from Oriath. Piety experimented on him, turning him into a monster similar to Shavronne's Brutus, after which he guarded the Lunaris Temple.

**Dawn, Harbinger of Solaris:** a man exiled from Oriath who became Solaris' most ardent devotee after her return. He guarded the Sun Orb within the Solaris Temple.

**Dusk, Harbinger of Lunaris:** a man exiled from Oriath who became a sycophant of Lunaris after her return. He took the Moon Orb into the Lunaris Temple and remained there, guarding it.

**Barden of Inkley:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for petty larceny and being unable to hold down a job.

**Brylla of Cinderford:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for promoting heretical beliefs and practicing medicine with the proper qualifications.

**Cafar of Beecham:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for possessing stolen goods and resisting Templar authority.

**Carling of Mirfield:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for defaming a church official.

**Ender of Romsey:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for petty and grand larceny.

**Hadrey of Dayton:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for public heresy and challenging the authority of a church official.

**Joy of Kimbey:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for harbouring a sentenced exile.

**Lothar of Wetherdale:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for undermining Templar authority and defaming a Templar of "highest reverence."

**Maitlin of Theopolis:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for negligence leading to bodily and financial harm.

**Missy of Nashe:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for operating a "house of ill repute" without a license.

**Ollin of Theopolis:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for petty theft, resisting an officer of the Ebony Legion and accidental homicide.

**Salem of Theopolis:** a person exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for unauthorized political satire, blasphemy, inciting public unrest and performing in public without a license.

## LORDS OF LARCENY

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**Kraityn, Scarbearer:** a criminal from Theopolis who was caught while attempting to help Lilly Roth steal back the Teardrop from the Theopolis Reliquary. He was exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for a long list of crimes. Together with Oak and Alira he survived some "ordeals" along the Siren Coast and made his way to the Forest Encampment. Shortly thereafter the three of them discovered a Vaal artefact (the Apex) that had the power to enhance one's innate strengths. They fought over it and broke it in trine, each taking a piece. Kraityn fled and established his own camp atop the Broken Bridge, where he struggled against Oak and Alira for control of the Phrecian Forest. He has a scar on his face given to him by Oak.

**Oak, Skullbreaker:** a criminal from Oriath who was caught while attempting to help Lilly Roth steal back the Teardrop from the Theopolis Reliquary. He was exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus. Together with Kraityn and Alira he survived some "ordeals" along the Siren Coast and made his way to the Forest Encampment. Shortly thereafter the three of them discovered a Vaal artefact (the Apex) that had the power to enhance one's innate strengths. They fought over it and broke it in trine, each taking a piece. Oak fled and established his own camp in the Wetlands, where he struggled against Kraityn and Alira for control of the Phrecian Forest.

**Alira Darktongue:** a witch from Oriath who was caught while attempting to help Lilly Roth steal back the Teardrop from the Theopolis Reliquary. She was exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus. Together with Kraityn and Oak she survived some "ordeals" along the Siren Coast and made her way to the Forest Encampment. Shortly thereafter the three of them discovered a Vaal artefact (the Apex) that had the power to enhance one's innate strengths. They fought over it and broke it in trine, each taking a piece. Alira fled and established her own camp to the west, where she struggled against Kraityn and Oak for control of the Phrecian Forest.

## ROGUE EXILES

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**Ailentia Rac:** a Ranger rogue exile who wields a bow.

**Ainsley Varrich:** a Duelist rogue exile who wields a bow.

**Antalie Napora:** a Ranger rogue exile who wields a bow.

**Antonio Bravadi:** a Duelist rogue exile who wields a bow.

**Aria Vindicia:** a Witch rogue exile who wields two wands.

**Armios Bell:** a Duelist rogue exile who wields two swords.

**Ash Lessard:** a Shadow rogue exile who wields a claw and a shield.

**Augustina Solaria:** a Scion rogue exile who wields a two-handed sword.

**Aurelio Voidsinger:** a Templar rogue exile who wields a staff.

**Baracus Phraxisanct:** a Templar rogue exile who wields a dagger and a shield.

**Bolt Brownfur, Earth Churner:** a Marauder rogue exile who wields a two-handed sword.

**Damoi Tui:** a Marauder rogue exile who wields a two-handed mace.

**Darbel LePage:** a Scion rogue exile who wields a two-handed sword.

**Dena Lorenni:** a Witch rogue exile who wields a wand and a shield.

**Doven Falsetongue:** a Templar rogue exile who wields a sword and shield.

**Eoin Greyfur:** a Templar rogue exile who wields a sword and shield.

**Haki Karukaru:** a Marauder rogue exile who wields a shield.

**Igna Phoenix:** a Witch rogue exile who wields a staff.

**Ion Darkshroud, the Hungering Blade:** a Shadow rogue exile who wields two claws.

**Jade:** a Scion rogue exile who wields a two-handed sword.

**Jarek Irontrap:** a Shadow rogue exile who wields two daggers.

**Jonah Unchained:** a Marauder rogue exile who wields a sword and shield.

**Kirmes Olli:** a Witch rogue exile who wields two daggers.

**Lael Furia:** a Scion rogue exile who wields a sword and shield.

**Magnus Stonethorn:** a Templar rogue exile who wields a wand and a shield.

**Minara Anemina:** a Witch rogue exile who wields a wand and a shield.

**Ohne Trix:** a Marauder rogue exile.

**Orra Greengate:** a Ranger rogue exile who wields a bow.

**Oyra Ona:** a Duelist rogue exile who wields a bow.

**Sevet Tetherein:** a Marauder rogue exile who wields a two-handed sword.

**Silva Fearsting:** a Ranger rogue exile who wields a bow.

**Thena Moga, the Crimson Storm:** a Ranger rogue exile who wields a sword and shield.

**Thom Imperial:** a Shadow rogue exile who wields a wand and shield.

**Tinevin Highdove:** a Templar rogue exile who wields a two-handed mace.

**Torr Olgosso:** a Duelist rogue exile who wields a two-handed sword.

**Ultima Thule:** a Witch rogue exile who wields a staff.

**Ulysses Morvant:** a Shadow rogue exile who wields a wand and a shield.

**Vanth Agiel:** a Scion rogue exile who wields a two-handed mace.

**Vickas Giantbone:** a Marauder rogue exile who wields a staff.

**Wilorin Demontamer:** a Shadow rogue exile who wields a wand and a shield.

**Xandro Bloodrinker:** a Marauder rogue exile who wields a two-handed mace.

**Zacharie Desmarais:** a Duelist rogue exile who wields two swords.

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## TEMPLARS

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**Maxarius:** the first High Templar. Per legend, he was gifted the Sign of Purity by the god Innocence, with which he "smote with flame the army of the faithless with one ray of its hallowing light." According to Lycia, this is a lie, and Maxarius was actually Innocence himself. Per her, he sought the power and wealth of divinity by taking advantage of a group of newcomers (who had likely encountered The Cleansing Fire or its champions) and their fear of fire, as well as vilifying his brother, eventually amassing enough followers to ascend to godhood.

**Lycia:** a Templar who discovered that the Templars were lying about hallowing and preserving records of the dead, and that the dead were being discarded and forgotten. Wanting to be remembered and not forgotten herself, she studied necromancy and demons. Eventually she made a pact with Beidat, one of the demon-lords of the Scourge, in exchange for eternal life. Since then she has inhabited the Sanctum, an abandoned Templar enclave beneath the Fellshrine ruins, which she has populated with creatures created by lithomancy and the undead. There, she lures in adventurers with the promise of treasure and glory.

**Voll:** (see Eternals.)

**Daresso:** a man who came from nothing and rose to become the King of Swords in the Grand Arena of Theopolis. He was trained as a fighter from a young age, eventually beginning to fight in the Grand Arena. There he met and fell in love with Lady Merveil. Inspired by her, he defeated the previous King of Swords and then asked her to marry him. He presented her with the Star of Wraeclast, a necklace set with a Virtue Gem that had previously been implanted in Kalisa Maas' throat. Merveil was twisted by the gem into a monster, causing Daresso to travel to Sarn in search of a way to reverse the transformation. He brought documents on the subject of thaumaturgy back to Oriath. After traveling to Wraeclast a final time he never returned, but instead somehow became trapped in his own dream inside the Highgate Mines.

**Barkhul:** a man whom Daresso challenged and defeated in the fighting pits in Theopolis, possibly his first kill.

**Merveil:** a lady who attended fights at the Grand Arena of Theopolis. There she was seen by Daresso, who fell in love with her and was inspired to win the Crown of Swords. He asked her

to marry him and presented her with the Star of Wraeclast, a necklace set with a Virtue Gem that had previously been implanted in Kalisa Maas' throat. The gem gave her a beautiful voice, enabling her to sing opera in the largest concert halls of Oriath. However, the gem also began to twist her into a monster. Daresso left and promised to travel to Sarn in search of a cure. However, he never succeeded. She fled from Oriath and took up residence on the southern coast of Wraeclast. There, she lured sailors to their deaths to feed her children.

**Sigmund Fairgraves:** a sailor, pirate, whaler and explorer who opened the door to new lands (often at the expense of the natives). Fairgraves funded a number of expeditions using Karui slaves. He recovered documents about thaumaturgy from Wraeclast and brought them back to Oriath for Dominus. After setting sail on another mission to Wraeclast, he disappeared for over thirty years. It was later found that based on a myth, he had searched the inner empire and discovered the Allflame, which bestowed him with a "unique gift" and also provided the wind for his ship's sails. After rescuing a slave girl from the flesh pits of Trarthus, she turned his first mate against him and stole the Allflame, leaving him marooned in Merveil's ship graveyard.

**Venarius:** a High Templar of Oriath. As a child he witnessed the brutal oppression of the Templars and grew to secretly despise them while rising through their ranks. He was determined to become powerful, and to this end sent smugglers to Wraeclast in search of powerful artefacts such as Malachai's map device, which he had Valdo Caeserius repair and attempt to weaponize. The device allowed him entry to the dreamlands (maps) created by the Elder. Venarius met with the Elder and restored its shade to its body, after which it fed on him and his memories.

**Dominus:** the High Templar of Oriath who succeeded Venarius. He had a last supper with a condemned criminal named Vinia and heard her confession. She told him of things that were possible through the use of thaumaturgy, and he decided to spare her. He created a laboratory for himself within Chitus Cathedral to study thaumaturgy. After renaming Vinia to Piety, he gave her charge of an expedition to Wraeclast to uncover its secrets. He began sentencing criminals to be banished to Wraeclast instead of put to death (likely to serve as test subjects for Piety's experiments). Through the use of thaumaturgy he became powerful and took up residence atop the Sceptre of God in Sarn.

**Cassia:** a Templar skilled in the mechanical arts. She was tasked by High Templar Dominus with building devices to tap into the power of Virtue Gems. She felt this was not in line with God's plan, so only built him mechanisms that were useless for this purpose. In response, Dominus exiled her to Wraeclast and replaced her with Piety. Once in Wraeclast she discovered fungal growths beginning to appear, and built devices to extract their toxic fluid and kill them. She enjoys singing Templar hymns.

**Piety (Vinia):** a poor Oriathan witch who took to prostitution and selling her skills as a thaumaturgist to survive. She was arrested and condemned to death for "consorting with the unholy." Before her execution she had a last supper with High Templar Dominus, who heard her confession. She told him of things that were possible through the use of thaumaturgy, and he spared her. Renamed Piety, she was given charge of an expedition to Wraeclast to uncover its secrets. There she studied the works of the Godless Three and finally of Malachai himself. She experimented on numerous people, including those exiled from Oriath by Dominus, becoming quite proficient as a thaumaturgist. After being killed by an exile, she was revived by Malachai in the Belly of the Beast to be his servant.

**Vilenta:** a woman versed in medicine who devoted her life to Piety's work, experimenting on Karui slaves provided by Justicar Casticus. She created a device known as the miasmeter to sense and amplify the corruption in Wraeclast. When Piety began her expedition to Wraeclast Vilenta was left behind in Theopolis, leaving the latter furious. After the death of the Beast and the return of the gods, Vilenta got caught up in the Karui slave rebellion, but was spared by the rebels in return for saving Lani's life.

**Davaro:** a Templar who studied Vaal relics brought back to Theopolis from Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus. He discovered signs that the Vaal had dwelt on the island of Oriath. He became corrupted by the relics and began performing human sacrifice at one of their ancient sites. After doing so he began having visions of Queen Atziri. Falling in love with her, he kidnapped and sacrificed two children before killing himself, believing that in doing so they would join Atziri and become a family.

**Casticus:** a Templar justicar who supplied Karui slaves to Vilenta to experiment on for her research. When the slaves revolted, he was involved in attempting to quell the uprising.

**Overseer Krow:** a slave driver who worked in Theopolis' Slave Pens.

**The Matriarch:** a Flame Mother in Oriath Square.

**Cato, Scholar of Light:** a priest in the Templar Courts. He was killed following the rise of Kitava's cultists and the burning of the Courts, and was reborn as Cato, Defiler of Light.

**Gravicius:** (see The Immortal Syndicate.)

**Declan:** a person loyal to Dominus who was sent by him to protect and watch Piety as she studied the works of Shavronne, Maligaro and Malachai. A body probably belonging to Declan is found outside the Warden's chambers in Axiom Prison.

**Arteri:** a Blackguard captain and Piety's lover who she stationed in the western Phrecian Forest to prevent more exiles from entering the inner empire.

**Aurelianus:** a Blackguard captain stationed in the Solaris Concourse (which became known as the Battlefield) outside of the Solaris Temple to guard the Ribbon Spool and attempt to subdue the ribbons.

**Vincenti:** a Blackguard captain sent by Piety to Highgate to kill the remaining Maraketh and secure the entrance to the mines. He failed, and he and most of his men were killed.

**Avarius:** the man who succeeded Dominus as High Templar. With Dominus away in Wraeclast, Avarius led some of the largest and most crippling raids against the Karui, bringing them back to Theopolis as slaves. He spent five thousand Karui lives building the Templar Courts and Chamber of Innocence. After the death of the Beast and return of the gods, Innocence took up residence inside him.

**Marcovius:** a general and commander of the Templar Fleet under High Templar Avarius. As part of Operation Ocean Blades he was sent to Pondium Strait to massacre the Brinerot warband, but on the voyage there his fleet was attacked and mostly destroyed by the Brine King. He turned the survivors around and headed back for Oriath.

**Caruso:** captain of the ship *Lady in Waiting*. After the death of the Beast, he began to hear voices speaking of the Brine King's return. He tried to warn his crew, and sacrificed mutineers in the Brine King's name in the hope of appeasing him. However, his own men threw him overboard. The next morning the Brine King destroyed his ship. Caruso was stranded on a plank in the sea without food or water, and hunted by the Brine King's crabs. The Templar player character says he met Caruso's son.

**Piken:** first mate of the ship *Lady in Waiting*. The Brine King destroyed the ship and he was thrown into the sea. He washed up on a rock off the coast of the Twilight Strand and was hunted by the Brine King's crabs.

**Benric:** a man from Gulton who sought help from his friend Mercutio in rescuing a girl named Abi-- who may have been Benric's daughter--from the Brine King.

**Abi:** a girl (possibly Benric's daughter) who Benric sought to rescue from the Brine King.

**Mercutio:** a merchant and friend of Benric.

**Rhys of Abram:** a noble who fled Oriath following the rise of Kitava on the island. The refugee ship he was on was plundered by cultists. His body washed ashore on the Twilight Strand and was reanimated.

**Cardinal Sanctus Vox:** a Templar general who ended up in the Domain of Timless conflict. He refers to Voll, so would've lived during or after Voll's time.

**Admiral Darnaw:** the Admiral of the Oriathan Navy. He changed the recruitment policy to allow boys to join the navy regardless of birth. He was corrupt and personally funded the Brinerot pirates.

**Admiral Valerius:** an admiral and possibly an Oriathan noble. Following the fall of Oriath he attacks shipping lanes and takes sailors prisoner, holding them for ransome. Faustus knows him (or of him) and insists Raulf not recruit him to work for the Kalguuran colonists.

**Captain Fidium:** a captain in the Oriathan Navy serving under Admiral Darnaw and alongside Captain Faustus. Per Faustus he is honest and clean, and suspects that Faustus is corrupt.

**Captain Faustus:** (see The Ring)

**Victario "Vic" Vox:** a member of the Vox family, who have been Oriathan nobles for several generations and are possibly related to Cardinal Sanctus Vox (the timeframes are inexact, but there are at least a few generations separating them; [ref](#)). Recently, he and his twin brother have resorted to consorting with the criminal underworld and using coercion, blackmail, and violence to ensure their family retains its status. The Vox crime family are often in competition with the Ring for the same jobs. Vic's parents liked Victario Nevalius' work so much they named him after the poet.

**Vincent "Vinny" Vox:** a member of the Vox family, who have been Oriathan nobles for several generations and are possibly related to Cardinal Sanctus Vox (the timeframes are inexact, but there are at least a few generations separating them; [ref](#)). Recently, he and his twin brother have resorted to consorting with the criminal underworld and using coercion, blackmail, and

violence to ensure their family retains its status. The Vox crime family are often in competition with the Ring for the same jobs.

**Lucan Octavius:** a wealthy Oriathan alchemist of high status. Tane described him as fatherly and genial in public, but violent and lustful at home. He kept a safe distance from many of his experiments while having Tane handle the dangerous materials. Lucan created a concoction he called Sinner's Water, which he believed would draw out a person's or creature's Intrinsic Darkness, or base and violent instincts. He experimented with it by testing it on his own children and taking notes of their violent reactions. Due to Lucan's dark proclivities, Tane killed him in a fit of violence. The rest of Lucan's family were killed following Kitava's rise in Oriath.

**Tane Octavius:** a freedman from Oriath. He was formerly a Karui slave and became the apprentice to Lucan Octavius, who also gave him his name. He helped Lucan with his alchemical experiments, handling the more dangerous materials while his master watched from a safe distance. Tane was sometimes beaten by Lucan's children, after they were given a concoction to bring out their baser instincts as part of a series of experiments. Tane believed his master was a sick man with dark proclivities, and that Lucan passed the sickness on to him. In an uncharacteristic fit of violence, Tane killed his master. Since then he's continued his master's search for what Tane calls the Intrinsic Darkness, a person's base and violent instincts. His ultimate goal is to isolate the Intrinsic Darkness from a person and destroy it, thereby purifying them of their cruel impulses. Zana refers to him as a friend.

**Divinia:** an Adjunct Archivist of the Templar Order, academic, and relic enthusiast, who discovered an abandoned Templar enclave beneath the ruins of Fellshrine and seeks to explore it in order to learn more about Templar history. She met Helena while studying, as they pursued similar fields of research, and Divinia thinks fondly of her.

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## THE SHAPER & THE GUARDIANS OF THE VOID

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**The Shaper:** a man named Valdo Caeserius who was the chief Arkhon of the Oriath academy in Theopolis. High Templar Venarius brought him a device recovered from Wraeclast and ordered him to repair and attempt to weaponize it. Valdo discovered that it opened the way to the dreamlands (maps) wherein dwelt the Elder, who taught him the ability of shaping things out of thin air. He attempted to hide this from Venarius, but the High Templar eventually learned the truth and forced Valdo to lead him to the Elder. Venarius restored the Elder to its physical body before being fed on by it. Valdo damaged the map device to close the portal between Theopolis and the dreamlands, and exiled himself there with the intention of stopping the Elder and protecting his daughter Zana and the rest of Oriath.

**Chimera:** a male creature who guards the entrance to the Shaper's Realm. He was possibly a Templar soldier who Venarius took into the Atlas with him.

**Hydra:** a female creature who guards the entrance to the Shaper's Realm. She was possibly a Templar soldier who Venarius took into the Atlas with him.



**Minotaur:** a male creature who guards the entrance to the Shaper's Realm. He was possibly a Templar soldier who Venarius took into the Atlas with him.

**Phoenix:** a male creature who guards the entrance to the Shaper's Realm. He was possibly a Templar soldier who Venarius took into the Atlas with him.

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## NPCS AND RELATED CHARACTERS

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### LIONEYE'S WATCH

**Nessa:** a woman from Theopolis who used to live on an estate. The Ranger once stole a leg of venison from its grounds and was chased by her father's gamekeepers. She seems to have known the Duelist and Templar before they were exiled as well. Nessa's father was involved in trying to "save" the Karui from "ignorance and damnation," which ended up costing him his life. It is implied that he (along with everyone else she ever loved) died in a shipwreck. Nessa survived and made it to Wraeclast, where she resided in Lioneye's Watch caring for the exiles and other survivors who came through.

**Bestel:** the only survivor from the ship *Merry Gull*, which ran aground on the Tidal Island while fleeing from pirates. The other survivors were killed by cannibals. Tarkleigh found him hiding in the wreckage and brought him to Lioneye's Watch. He claimed to be the captain, though Tarkleigh says he saw Bestel steal the hat from the real captain's head.

**Arrol:** the *Merry Gull's* cook. He was found dead and was buried by Bestel, though was reanimated by the Cataclysm within a few days.

**Doctor "Shaky hands" Opden:** the *Merry Gull's* doctor. He was said to have been a poor surgeon but well versed with medicines and in possession of a large supply of opiates. He was spit-roasted and eaten by cannibals.

**Tarkleigh:** an exile from Oriath. He was the partner and lover of Lilly Roth for a time, and together they smuggled booze to make money. She began to fear that he planned to settle down and have children with her, so she betrayed him. She tied him up and abandoned him on Penance Quay, where he was captured by Blackguards and exiled to Wraeclast for his crimes. He remained at Lioneye's Watch, helping the other exiles survive.

### PHRECIA

**Eramir:** an exile from Oriath. Prior to his exile, he was a scholar who worked at a museum. In return for Dominus' patronage, he conducted research into the thaumaturgical arts practiced within the Eternal Empire. He knew Valdo Caeserius and assisted him in uncovering information about the Elder and the Watchers of Decay. He also knew Valdo's daughter Zana, who referred to him as "Uncle Eramir." After his exile he was taken in by the Azmerians in the Forest Encampment.

**Greust:** an Azmerian who resided in the Forest Encapment atop the dam in the Phrecian Forest.

**Silk:** an Azmerian warrior who resided in the Forest Encapment atop the dam in the Phrecian Forest.

**Yeena:** an Azmerian who resided in the Forest Encapment atop the dam in the Phrecian Forest. She served a god or entity she called the Spirit, which gave her knowledge of events beyond what she and others saw themselves as well as the ability to shapeshift into a fox.

## SARN

**Clarissa:** a criminal who was exiled from Oriath. Her father lost the family fortune gambling, forcing them to move from the country to Theopolis. Vinia used to buy from her before she became Piety. After being exiled Clarissa took up residence in the ruins of Sarn.

**Tolman:** Clarissa's boyfriend (and probably an exile from Oriath). He was captured by Piety while foraging in Sarn with Clarissa.

**Hargan:** an exile from Theopolis. He acted as Clarissa's guardian in Theopolis before their exile, giving her work in exchange for food. After his exile he took up residence in the ruins of Sarn.

**Maramoa Patua:** a Karui woman originally from Ngamakanui. She was exiled from Oriath by High Templar Dominus for insubordination, inciting insurrection, assaulting an officer of the Ebony Legion and hericide. After her exile she took up residence in the ruins of Sarn.

**Grigor:** an Ezomyte who was caught by General Gravicius while trying to get into the Solaris Temple to find the remains of the Gemling Queen. Gravicius gave him to Piety, who experimented on him. He was either let go or escaped back to the ruins of Sarn.

## HIGHGATE

**Oyun:** the *sekhema* of the Kiyato *akhara*, which was charged by Deshret with guarding the Highgate mines. She successfully defended Highgate against the Ebony Legion attack led by Captain Vincenti, which had been ordered by Piety.

**Kira:** a *dekhara* of the Kiyato *akhara*, which was charged by Deshret with guarding the Highgate mines. She is a descendant of Deshret.

**Tasuni:** Kira's brother. He was born blind so was left out on the plain overnight as per Maraketh tradition. However, he survived, which had never happened before. He claims to be an augur with the ability to see things others cannot.

**Petarus:** a captain in the Ebony Legion, like his father and grandfather. He met Vanja while she was a prisoner in Sarn, waiting to be experimented on by Piety. After falling in love with her, he deserted his post and freed her. Together they escaped to Highgate, and Vanja convinced the Kiyato to take them in.

**Vanja:** an Oriathan who trained as a witch before being exiled to Wraeclast. There she was imprisoned in Sarn and awaiting experimentation by Piety when Petarus freed her. Together they escaped to Highgate, and Vanja convinced the Kiyato to take them in.

**Irasha:** a warrior of the Kiyato *akhara* and possible successor to Oyun.

## THEOPOLIS

**Utula Makora:** a Karui slave in Oriath and adherent of Kitava, who led a slave uprising against the Templars. He was killed during Kitava's reign in Oriath and was welcomed in the Halls of the Dead as a hero for helping free the Karui slaves. However, he resents his presence there and feels it is an eternal prison, and wishes he could escape to the Chambers of the Dishonoured instead. He's a member of the Kitava Tribe.

**Irwen of Theopolis:** the person who transcribed Utula's oral recounting of Kitava's history.

**Lani:** a woman born from the union of an Oriathan lord and a Karui woman. She was educated in Oriath but sided with the Karui slaves in their uprising. She helped pass information to the rebels that she obtained from the nobility of Theopolis. She was also a fighter, and when the slaves rebelled she killed two overseers before being wounded herself. Vilenta tended to her injuries and Lani credited her with saving her life.

**Bannon:** a Blackguard soldier who participated in a slave raid to Ngamakanui under High Templar Dominus. After the death of High Templar Avarius, the wounded god Innocence took up residence inside Bannon.

## THE CONQUERORS OF THE ATLAS & RELATED CHARACTERS

**Zana Caeserius, Master Cartographer:** a woman who was exiled to Wraeclast. She was the daughter of Valdo Caeserius and an unnamed woman who died when she was young. Her father exiled himself to the Atlas of Worlds in an attempt to protect her and the rest of Oriath from the Elder. Orphaned, Zana lived in a series of well-off foster homes as an indentured servant. She studied the research left behind by father and managed to rebuild his map device. Her curiosity and tendency to question everything drew the ire of High Templar Dominus, and she moved to Wraeclast before her impending exile. After the defeat of Kitava she returned to Theopolis and began exploring the Atlas, recruiting exiles to assist her.

**Sirus:** a smuggler who was exiled from Oriath. He was recruited by Zana to help her explore the Atlas of Worlds, and was the group's leader. He and Zana became close. After the group discovered the Elder, Sirus sacrificed himself to stop the Elder, forcing both of them out of reality. He eventually got free, but was trapped in the Atlas and unable to feel anything.

**Al-Hezmin:** a member of the Redblade warband who was exiled from Oriath. He was good at tracking and navigating land, and was recruited by Zana to help her explore the Atlas of Worlds. The group discovered the Elder and sealed it away. However, the Atlas' influence caused him to become obsessed with being better than the others, and he threatened to clash with Drox. The

others slipped away in the night and left him. Frightened of what the exiles were becoming, Zana sealed the group in the Atlas. Al-Hezmin became more and more delusional, uncertain of what was real or not or how much time had passed. He discovered the Watchstones' ability to reveal new paths in the Atlas, and sought to use them to escape.

**Drox:** an exile from Oriath. He was recruited by Zana to help her explore the Atlas of Worlds, and was their commander in battle. The group discovered the Elder and sealed it away. However, the Atlas' influence caused him to become obsessed with creating a kingdom in the Atlas and establishing law, and he became distant towards the rest of the group. Zana pulled the rest of the group away from him. Frightened of what the exiles were becoming, Zana sealed them in the Atlas. Drox became more and more obsessed with violence and death. He discovered the Watchstones' ability to reveal new paths in the Atlas, and sought to use them to escape.

**Veritania:** a woman who was exiled from Oriath for excessive charity. She was reserved and believed people were responsible for their own actions, and was recruited by Zana to help explore the Atlas of Worlds. The group discovered the Elder and sealed it away. However, the Atlas' influence caused her to become contemptuous of the others except for Drox, and she broke away from the group not long after they left him. Frightened of what the exiles were becoming, Zana sealed the group in the Atlas. Veritania became more and more delusional, uncertain of what was real or not or how much time had passed. She discovered the Watchstones' ability to reveal new paths in the Atlas, and sought to use them to escape.

**Baran:** a Templar who was exiled from Oriath. He was Kirac's younger brother and was friends with Cassia. He disdained Dominus but had a strong faith in God, and was recruited by Zana to help her explore the Atlas of Worlds. The group discovered the Elder and sealed it away. However, the Atlas' influence caused him to lose his sanity as the group dwindled, until only he and Zana were left, and then they parted ways. Frightened of what the exiles were becoming, Zana sealed the group in the Atlas. Baran became more and more delusional, eventually believing he himself was God. He discovered the Watchstones' ability to reveal new paths in the Atlas, and sought to use them to escape.

**Kirac:** Baran's older brother. He was a tracker and career military man. At one point he was assigned to a company tasked with hunting down groups of problematic rogue exiles. He also fought the Harbingers at the Battle of Phaaryl, after which he had nightmares for months. Following Kitava's demise, he returned to Oriath from a distant deployment and became an officer in the Citizen Vanguard, which was formed to protect the island from similar threats in the future. He became concerned by his brother's absence, and began searching for Baran and Zana, intending to arrest the latter and bring her to justice for her radical activities. After Baran's death, Sirius' defeat, and the second fall of Oriath, he became the Commander of the Citizen Vanguard. He says he worked "tangentially" with Cassia in the past, though she probably doesn't remember him.

**Galhad:** Baran's father.

**Landren:** a former Templar who served in the Courts along with Baran before being exiled. He is implied to have been Baran's lover.

**Herules:** a former Templar and friend of Baran who was exiled.

**Gomin:** a former Templar and friend of Baran who was exiled.

## MASTERS & OTHER

**Navali:** a Karui *hatungo* from "long ago." In the Halls of the Dead, she fought for the Hinekora Tribe before apparently being replaced by Tawhanuku. Currently she remains there and serves Hinekora as "an interpreter of death and servant of prophecy." (In Prophecy League, Navali said she was greeted in the afterlife by her furry companion, Yama the White, holding a Seeing Stone. Yama and the Seeing Stone were both imbued with a hair of Hinekora's dark knowledge, allowing them to guide Navali through visions of the future. She then came back to life in Wraeclast, where she was captured by the Faun in what she believed was a trick by Hinekora to remind her of her place. In Trial of the Ancestors League, Yama is gone and this storyline seems to have been retconned away.)

**Helena:** an apprentice archaeologist from Oriath who claimed she could tell if a Vaal artefact was genuine simply by running her hand along it. She became convinced there was a pattern behind the absence of mythological artefacts and suspected a secret organization was at work, though her colleagues wouldn't listen. She accepted a position in the Ebony Legion to go on an expedition to Wraeclast, but defected after witnessing the horrors of Piety's work. She was taken in by the Azmerians in the Forest Encampment, though remained paranoid that the scattered Blackguards remaining in Wraeclast were still hunting her for being a traitor. After the Fall of Oriath, she joined the Citizen Vanguard and served under Kirac.

**Einhar Frey, Beastmaster:** an Ezomyte who sailed to Wraeclast alone. According to Jun Ortoi, he claims to be from Oriath. He hunts and studies beasts in the hope of learning the secrets of the First Ones. Einhar believes the world will end soon (within the next three years), and that when it does the First Ones will return and take those who have proven themselves to be "survivors" to the Great Grove. Per Kalandra, he once encountered her lake on a hunt. He has also been to the Viridian Wildwood, where he knew Flavia and told her he loved her.

**Niko the Mad, Master of the Depths:** an Oriathan who grew up selling Voltaxic Sulphite to the Templars for use in powering their strange experiments. Exposure to the substance eventually caused him to start hearing voices that told him secrets, and he began to think he was a prophet. He reported this to the Templars, thinking they would help him, but was instead committed to a mental asylum. He dug his way out and escaped through the square, but soldiers tracked him down using the trail left by his bleeding hands. He was caught and exiled to Wraeclast. There, he began exploring the mines below the ruins of the Eternal Empire using the Crawler, a machine he built out of an old Eternal torture device. Per Cavas, Niko is the only master able to see him in his ghostly form.

**Alva Valai, Master Explorer:** an Oriathan woman with some Vaal ancestry, who became a Reliquarian and treasure hunter. When she was young her father enlisted her in High Templar Dominus' navy. After some unknown events she returned to Theopolis where she joined the Reliquarians, a secret society of treasure hunters funded by the upper class of Oriath. She had a few run-ins with Helena while hawking forged heirlooms, as the latter has a knack for spotting fakes. On one of her temple and tomb raids she discovered a manual of Vaal blood thaumaturgy. Not wanting it to fall into the wrong hands, she hid it from the High Templar. As

a result, she was no longer welcome among the upper class of Oriath and instead continued hunting treasure on her own. She learned to perform a fickle spell using ancient waystones and her own Vaal blood that opened a portal to the Temple of Atzoatl in the past and helped her locate it in the present.

**Jun Ortoi, Veiled Master:** a Maraketh woman who was orphaned and taken in by a secretive organization known as the Order of the Djinn. As part of the Order she was tasked with guarding the Forbidden Vault, within which resided artefacts deemed dangerous enough to put the world in jeopardy. Janus Perandus sold out the Order, resulting in the death of all its members save for himself and Jun and the theft of a number of powerful artefacts. Following this Jun began investigating the rise of the Immortal Syndicate and the disappearance of several prominent exiles. As part of the Order she was forbidden from having relationships with men or having children, but is interested in a relationship with Zana and adopting orphans with her.

**Weylam "Rot-Tooth" Roth:** a Brinerot warband leader until he was betrayed and marooned by his younger sister, Lussi (see Warbands section). He was the captain of the Black Crest, a ship whose hull was said to have been reinforced by the bones of the Leviathan that he'd killed. In an attempt to regain his notoriety, he tried to kill the sea-witch Merveil. However, his ship ran aground and she ate him alive. He was later reanimated somehow, retaining his full mental faculties.

**Meredith:** the deceased wife of Weylam Roth.

**Lilly Roth:** a pirate captain, smuggler and the granddaughter of Weylam Roth. She was Tarkleigh's lover and partner for a time, smuggling booze with him to make money. However, she began to fear that he planned to settle down and have children with her. She betrayed him and left him on Penance Quay, where he was captured by Blackguards and exiled for his crimes. At one point she managed to acquire the Teardrop, a map to the sunken city of Tsoatha, but it was taken by Oriathan privateers and she was thrown in the slave pens. She escaped and broke into the Theopolis Reliquary in an attempt to retrieve it but failed, and her three accomplices (Kraityn, Alira and Oak) were captured and exiled. After the second fall of Oriath, Kirac convinced her to become a naval officer for the Citizen Vanguard, in exchange for her pirating crimes being forgiven.

**Oshabi:** an Azmeri woman from the same tribe as Yeena, before they were driven out of their home and forced to settle in the Forest Encampment. Oshabi had a deep connection to the land and believed it spoke to her. She felt that the land wanted a sacrifice, so she kidnapped a child but was stopped from sacrificing it by her tribe. As a result, she felt her connection to the land was severed. Her tribe exiled her for her actions. This led her to discover the Sacred Grove, which she thought to be older than the Eternal Empire. She believed the secret behind the dead rising in Wraeclast lay in something she called the Lifeforce, "the desire for survival in its purest form," which she sought to use to be reborn as Wraeclast intended (becoming the Avatar of the Grove). However, she discovered the Lifeforce was actually corruption.

**The Trialmaster:** a being who was once a mortal man named Ixchel. His people went mad with fear after the gods went to sleep, and he was taken in by the Order of the Djinn. He infiltrated the Priesthood of Yaomac and kidnapped the sleeping god. The Order then sent him to do the same to Chaos, though Chaos was discovered awake (and thus not a god). Following this, Ixchel served Chaos and became known as the Trialmaster. He has been tasked with searching for

suitable challengers for trials of skill and chance. Through Chaos, the Trialmaster experiences many different outcomes or versions of the same events. (Note that most of the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**The Last to Die:** the last survivor of the bloodlines of the High Priests of the Vaal. During the height of the Vaal empire's madness, the Blood Crucible was forged as part of a pact between the High Priests and the entity known as Chaos. For most of her life, The Last to Die has used the Blood Crucible to shift into Nightmare and fight the Scourge, three factions of horrific creatures, though says she's accomplished nothing but outliving everyone else. She implies she's seen countless different versions of Wraeclast, and that all were destroyed by the Scourge except one, which was dominated by High Templar Venarius. Per Divinia, she mysteriously disappeared from a Templar jail cell a few years before encountering the exile. It is very likely that The Last to Die is actually Alva Valai from an alternate Wraeclast.

**Chaos:** an unknown Vaal entity. Per the Trialmaster, moments of chance lead to multiple diverging paths of reality, and Chaos sees all of them. Chaos is fascinated by the ability of the skilled to bend chance in their favour, and has tasked the Trialmaster with finding challengers and putting them through trials of skill and chance. Per the Trialmaster, Atziri is an enigma because her life is the one event that never changes in any version of reality.

**Undertaker Arimor:** a man who considers himself the last true citizen of the Eternal Empire. He employs exiles (including Torr Olgosso and Igna Phoenix) in collecting the scattered spirits of the Eternal Empire, which are haunting the monsters of Wraeclast. He refuses to disclose his purpose, though it's hinted that his line has been working to bring about the return of the Eternal Empire. Catarina was formerly his apprentice, though they didn't end on good terms. He also corresponds with the Breaker of Oaths.

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## OTHER

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**Kalandra:** a birdlike being of unknown origin. In the primordial days of Wraeclast she encountered a lake and thereafter found she couldn't leave it. From there she watched as life and eventually humans and gods arose. Sometimes people would come to her in need and she would give them direction, though said she otherwise couldn't help them; she mentions there is an unknown cost to her guidance. It is hinted that she may have spoken and given advice to Sin. Kalandra also says she has met the Clayshaper, Einhar, and the Master Fisherman (Krillson) when they visited her lake. At one point, some (possibly the Order of the Djinn) promised to free her. However, once they learned the truth of the lake, they instead took steps to make it harder to find and to erase Kalandra from history, then burned themselves alive. She later devised a plan to escape, which depended on someone finding her and setting the proper events in motion.

## ENTITIES FROM THE VOID

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**The Elder:** a creature born of the oblivion from before time began. Once only an abstract expression, it was given physical form and entered the human realm out of hunger. It fashioned a bauble of chaos and secret worlds (maps) to use as a hunting ground. The Elder would drag children off into the night and feast on their imagination and nightmares. In such a way it cultivated and spread the oblivion from outside time and space, also known as the Decay. To stop it, a group of parents known as the Watchers of Decay entered its realm and used the sword Starforge to trap its body in stone, though its spirit was left free to roam the worlds it had created. Eventually it was discovered by Valdo Caeserius, who led High Templar Venarius into its realm. Venarius freed its body, after which it began to prey upon the children of Oriath.

**The Constrictor:** a guardian who protects the Elder's realm.

**The Enslaver:** a guardian who protects the Elder's realm.

**The Eradicator:** a guardian who protects the Elder's realm.

**The Purifier:** a guardian who protects the Elder's realm.

**The Envoy:** a being created and given a duty to "protect and limit and never leave" the Maven. He refers to this as a punishment.

**The Maven:** a childlike being who struggles to understand the concept of life and the difference between things that live and things that don't. In her boredom she sought out struggle and conflict, and in doing so created such agony "that it seeped deep into the fabric of the void." After the Elder was banished from the Atlas, she claimed it for herself, defending this claim against the champions of The Cleansing Fire and The Tangle.

**The Searing Exarch:** the primary mortal champion of The Cleansing Fire, who challenged The Maven's claim on the Atlas.

**The Black Star:** a mortal champion of The Cleansing Fire, who challenged The Maven's claim on the Atlas.

**The Eater of Worlds:** the primary mortal champion of The Tangle, who challenged The Maven's claim on the Atlas.

**The Infinite Hunger:** a mortal champion of The Tangle, who challenged The Maven's claim on the Atlas.

## LIGHTLESS

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**Ulaman, Sovereign of the Well:** a creature from the abyss.



**Amanamu, Liege of the Lightless:** a creature from the abyss.

**Kurgal, the Blackblooded:** a creature from the abyss who can be found in the Lich's Tomb within the Abyssal City, which is buried deep underground.

**Tecrod, the Hated Slave:** a creature from the abyss.

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## BEYOND (SCOURGE) DEMONS

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[Note: In 3.19 the former Beyond bosses were permanently retired. They were replaced by the Scourge bosses, who are now referred to as Beyond bosses.]

**Beidat, Archangel of Death:** a Scourge demon from the pale faction.

**Ghorr, the Grasping Maw:** a Scourge demon from the flesh faction.

**K'tash, the Hate Shepherd:** a Scourge demon from the demon faction.

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## BREACHLORDS

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**Xoph, Dark Embers:** a male Breachlord associated with fire, who commands an army of loyal followers.

**Esh, Forked Thought:** a female Breachlord associated with lightning, who commands an army of loyal followers. She is sometimes referred to as "she of many mouths."

**Tul, Creeping Avalanche:** a female Breachlord associated with cold, who commands an army of loyal followers.


**Uul-Netol, Unburdened Flesh:** a female Breachlord associated with physical damage, who commands an army of loyal followers.

**Chayula, Who Dreamt:** a male Breachlord associated with chaos, who commands an army of loyal followers.

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## HARBINGERS

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: a Harbinger who can be found in the Beachhead at the gateway leading from the Harbinger realm. He bears a crown and therefore may be a king.

## NAMELESS

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**The King in the Mists:** a being from “the unseen reflection opposite the mortal world” who came into existence in the Viridian Wildwood when he was Named. As the realm he came from was a place of eternal torment, he vowed to save his people by becoming darkness against the Wisps, which he saw as opposed to him. He’s described as cold and calculating.

**The Incarnation of Agony:** a banshee from the realm of the Nameless, who came into being in the Viridian Wildwood when she was Named. She is said to be the most evil of the Nameless in the Wildwood and full of mindless rage.

**Nameless Seer:** a being from the realm of the Nameless. He believes in listening to the Wisps, but also praises The King in the Mists, and feels the Wildwood can be shared between the Maji and the Nameless.

## THE RING & THEIR ASSOCIATES

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**The Boss:** leader of the Ring. Many stories are told about him, but few knew the truth. He is rumoured to have gotten his start when he took a bribe as a stable boy in the Grand Arena of Theopolis and double-crossed his client in order to get rich himself. He's also said to have walked into the First Bank of Theopolis in the middle of the day, moved all the money around, and destroyed all records of who it belonged to. Personally, the Boss has been rumoured to be completely hairless, private to the point of paranoia, and requires all quests to wear nothing but a sleeveless robe he provides. He's also been said to be a man of style who attends the theatre.

**Kurai, the Administrator:** a Karui woman who acts as an administrator for The Boss. She was exiled from Oriath, and prefers not to talk about her past other than to say that she did what she had to in order to survive, and that Oriath still fills her nights with terror. Vic Vox, an Oriathan nobleman, had a signed copy of a book by Victario Nevalius that had belonged to Hyrri Ngamaku. Kurai took out a contract to have the book retrieved and returned to Ngamakanui. She seems to get along with all the other rogues, and has a cat named Hana.

**Adiyah, the Wayfinder:** a Maraketh woman from the northern reaches of Vastiri, who is a veteran dekhara. Her sister Nashta was rebellious and refused to follow their akhara's rules and traditions, and eventually left with many others to become a bandit. Adiyah considers the members of the Ring to be thieves and scoundrels, but associates with them in order to keep track of Nashta's activities. She doesn't get along with Niles.

**Nashta, The Usurper:** a Maraketh woman and the sister of Adiyah. She was rebellious and grew up refusing to follow her akhara's rules and traditions, earning many tattoos of shame. She

eventually left Vastiri altogether, and scores of other delinquents went with her, forming a group of bandits that terrorized others.

**Captain/Admiral Faustus, the Fence:** an Oriathan sailor, who in his youth was rowdy and liked to drink, and later became captain of the ship *Fair Marylene* in the Oriathan Navy. Sometimes he confiscates stolen goods on the job and returns them to nobles for a reward or certain privileges, and uses this to fence items procured by the Ring as well. He feels only those of noble birth should be allowed into the navy, and hates Admiral Darnaw for letting those of low birth serve. Faustus has a rivalry with Captain Fidium, who is honest and suspects Faustus of being corrupt. He enjoys doling out punishments to his crew and likes wordplay. When the Kalguurans arrived to build Kingsmarch, they contracted Faustus for his access to the trade markets of Wraeclast. After the fall of Oriath, given that the Oriathan Navy no longer existed, he declared himself an admiral and sought establish his own flotilla.

**Captain Fidium:** (see Templars)

**Admiral Darnaw:** (see Templars)

**Gianna, the Master of Disguise:** an Oriathan actress associated with the Theopolis Thespian Society who worked in Chitus Theatre, and has played Shavronne, Dialla and Merveil. She met Vinderi when he was hired to do pyrotechnics for a play at a basement theatre called the Wilted Quill. She was later exiled to Wraeclast for pecuniary lust, after which the Boss--who'd seen her perform--recruited her into the Ring. She flirts with the other rogues, and wants to be friends with Tullina, who isn't too friendly in return.

**Huck, the Soldier:** a former Blackguard who served in the Oriath 3rd for five years before being dishonourably discharged. Dark days followed until the Boss arranged a place for him in the Ring, though Huck's never met the boss personally. In the Ebony Legion he was friends with a man named Enoch, who was transferred to a special unit under Piety shortly before Huck was discharged, and Huck wishes to track him down. He also served with Captain Arturo, and mentions his unit didn't have many victories. Huck has a temper and once hurt another member of the Ring, but was given a second chance by the Boss. He doesn't really like Niles.

**Enoch:** a Blackguard soldier who served and became friends with Huck. According to Huck, he was a good and honourable man. He was recruited to be part of an elite strike force under the direction of Piety, and was later used as a research subject. He died when Piety tried to make him into a gemling. Enoch was cremated and his remains placed in the tunnels beneath the city, along with other Blackguards who died on duty.

**Isla, the Engineer:** an Oriathan inventor and engineer. In her first year at the Academy she was picked by the High Templar and taken to the Chief Arkhon's laboratory to repair and maintain the map device, and ended up taking it apart. She feels she wasn't treated well in Oriath, and her own inventions were declared heretical. She was exiled to Wraeclast for the damage she caused in the course of her work. Later Isla discovered that the Templars actually wanted her designs for themselves, as they included plans for a superweapon. When the Kalguurans arrived to establish Kingsmarch, she worked for them as an engineer. At the same time, she moonlighted as a member of the Ring to fund her work, and has created dangerous inventions including a rogue mechanical spider and potentially hazardous spores. She also built a working recombinator and map device. She seems interested in Niles, but he's wary as the torture

devices she's designed are too much even for him. She's also interested in Dannig, and he returns her interest. During her time in Oriath she knew Valdo and it's hinted that she still corresponds with Zana.

**Karst, the Lockpick:** an Oriathan who ran with criminals and spent his youth learning to pick locks. He thought they were loyal, but they beat him half to death and stole his bestlockpicks, which had belonged to his grandfather. Shortly thereafter the Templars came for him, and without his lockpicks he wasn't able to escape. He was exiled to Wraeclast and joined the Ring. He enjoys learning new words and flirts with Nenet and Gianna. He doesn't like Niles and owes Huck money.

**Nenet, the Scout:** a Faridun outcast, rejected by her Maraketh mother due to her unsightly face. She joined the Ring because everyone was welcome, as long as they were willing to work. She hopes to force the Maraketh to recognize the worthiness of the Faridun warriors and accept them back. At one point Nenet asked Isla to build her a humanoid golem, though doesn't want the other rogues to know. Her general outlook is bleak.

**Niles, the Interrogator:** an interrogator and torturer for the Templars, who has a mild ability to read minds. When young, he served next to some very powerful men, including High Templar Venarius. He seeks to prove that gods, divinity, and even medicine aren't real. Most of the other rogues dislike him. He has a creepy crush on Tullina, and asks Gianna on a date but she laughs at him.

**Tibbs, the Giant:** a man from Oriath named Gil, though is called Tibbs by the Ring. He joined the circus as a strongman at age fourteen, where he met Tullina. He helped take care of an abandoned girl named Opal, until he was exiled to Wraeclast and joined the Ring. Since then his circus troupe has disbanded and he's sought to track down Opal and ensure her safety.

**Opal:** a girl with bright red eyes but very pale skin and white hair, who was abandoned and left with a circus troupe leader as a baby. The troupe took care of her, and Tibbs in particular looked after her. After the troupe disbanded, the Templars took an interest in her because she was "unique," but she hid from them and continued living with some members of the former troupe.

**Tullina, the Catburglar:** a woman from Oriath who fell in love with a nobleman named Julius Farrow. He proposed to her, but less than a week later she was exiled to Wraeclast. She fell in with the Ring, where she prefers not to make friends but to keep things strictly professional. She already knew Tibbs, who she'd met in the circus.

**Julius Farrow:** an Oriathan nobleman and Tullina's fiance.

**Vinderi, the Dismantler:** a man who got caught trying to set off a bomb below the high templar's office, and was exiled to Wraeclast. He mentions that he has "loads of children," had a twin who is long dead, and knows Niko. Exposure to explosive fumes and voltaxic sulphite have left him addled, and he may also be hard of hearing. He doesn't like Niles.

**Whakano, the Barber:** a Karui man who uses his profession as a barber to pick up information and sell it to others. After the fall of Oriath, he became concerned about slave traders kidnapping, torturing, and murdering Karui men, women and children as revenge for the fall of the slave trade.

**Hapihapi:** (see Karui)

**Freidrich Tarollo, Slave Merchant:** a small-time slave trader who loved the thrill of the chase of capturing slaves. He became furious when the Karui slaves in Oriath rebelled against the Templars, causing the slave trade to collapse. He declared himself ruler of the slavers, and began coordinating them to hunt down, torture, and murder as many Karui as they could get their hands on as an act of revenge.

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## CLIENTS OF THE RING

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**Administrator Qotra:** (see Replica Unique Item Researchers)

**Aline Koltz:** a client of the Ring, who seeks the Abberathine Horns and the Celestial Stone for her "collection of oddities."

**Anton Laffrey:** a client of the Ring, who seeks the Golden Napuatzi Idol as a gift for a woman he is courting. Selwyn Eddard is apparently a rival suitor. He is possibly related to Aisling Laffrey.

**Bazira:** a client of the Ring who seeks relics from ancient Keth, including the Urn of Farud, Incense of Keth, the Flask of Welakath, the Forbidden Lamp, and Dekhara's Resolve. Bazira apparently has some kind of rivalry with Kondor Larcus.

**Cardinal Uthelius:** a client of the Ring, who seeks the Golden Slave Idol.

**Castor Pollinius III:** a client of the Ring who seeks the Golden Xoplotli Idol, possibly hoping to learn the secrets of immortality.

**Count Geonor:** an Ezomyte client of the Ring, who seeks Ezomyte artefacts including the Crest of Ezomyr, the Ogham Candelabra, and the Urn of the Original Ashes, which were looted from Ezomyr by the Eternals. He hopes to use them to return his family to its former status.

**Grond Ironeye:** a client of the Ring who seeks the Golden Hetzapal Idol.

**Kondor Larcus:** a client of the Ring, who seeks the Bust of Emperor Caspiro, The Goddess of Water, the Ancient Seal, and Orbala's Fifth Adventure. He seems uninterested in the pieces themselves, and mostly wants them to keep them out of Bazira's hands.

**Marcine Clavus:** a client of the Ring, who seeks the Heart Coil as well as pieces of a device known as the Enigmatic Assembly.

**Nishem:** a client of the Ring from a race many consider not to be human, possibly an offspring of Tsoagoth. He/She seeks The Sea Pearl Heirloom and the Tusked Hominid Skull in order to prove "human" has a broader definition and his/her people are not inhuman abominations.

**Remus Hestor:** a client of the Ring who seeks the Golden Matatl Idol.

**Selwyn Eddard:** a client of the Ring, who seeks the Mirror of Teklatipitzi as a gift for a woman he is courting. Anton Laffrey is apparently a rival suitor.

**The Crimson Scribe:** a client of the Ring, who seeks the Ez Myrae Tome, The Golden Ibis, the Seal of Lunaris, the Seal of Solaris, and the Staff of the first Sin Eater. He/She is interested in revealing the truth of the past and piecing together a history of the Winter of the World.

**The Midnight Tinkerer (Riker Maloney):** (see The Immortal Syndicate.)

**Tsvet Matvei:** a drug smuggler and client of the Ring who seeks the Box of Tripyxis, Admiral Proclar's Pipe, and the Essence Burner.

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## REPLICA UNIQUE ITEM RESEARCHERS

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**Administrator Qotra:** the administrator overseeing the research into duplicating unique items, who believes that "science and thaumaturgy are one and the same." Qotra is also a client of the Ring, and seeks the Alchemical Chalice, the Impossible Crystal, and the Sword of the Inverse Relic in order to study their properties, as well as Living Ice in order to learn to control it and protect Wraeclast from its spread.

**Lead Researcher Ksaret:** the lead researcher involved in duplicating unique items.

**Researcher Graven:** a researcher involved in duplicating unique items. At one point he was electrocuted for eleven hours, but was kept alive by Replica Winterheart.

**Researcher Arn:** a researcher involved in duplicating unique items, who was disturbed to find he/she was affected by an item that affects minions (Replica Grip of the Council).

**Researcher Olesya:** a researcher involved in duplicating unique items, who found killing the test subjects delightful and satisfying.

**Doctor Bircus:** a doctor who may have attended the test subjects used in the research into duplicating unique items.

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## THE ORDER OF THE DJINN

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**Ahkeli:** a woman (likely a Proto-Vaal) known as the Clayshaper due to her command of golems. She fled the destruction of her home, probably due to a volcanic eruption, which left her scarred. It's implied that the rest of her people were then wiped out by the Lightless, who may have emerged after the eruption choked the sky. Ahkeli made an alliance with the survivors of a Maraketh *akhara*, directing them to seek out relics of power, and thus saved the Vastiri Plains from destruction. These actions led to the establishment of the Order of the Djinn, with Ahkeli

as its founder. (Note that most of the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Saresh, Surgeon of the Dead, Necromancer of Weeping Black:** an orphan who was rejected even by the Faridun outcasts and later taken in by the Order of the Djinn. He studied the dead in search of the secrets of human darkness, and became a necromancer. The goddess Garukhan went to battle against him and defeated him, leaving his undead horde scattered throughout Wraeclast. (Note that most of the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Egrin of the Dark Between Stars, Forger of the Sealing Blade:** an orphan who had visions that led the Azmeri down into the ruins of the Vaal civilization. Cast out by the Azmeri, Egrin was taken in by the Order of the Djinn and later forged the sword Starforge that was used to trap the Elder. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Betucia, Bearer of the Sealing Blade:** an orphan from the Eternal Empire who was welcomed into the Order of the Djinn and eventually tasked with investigating maps. Betucia assisted in using the sword Starforge against the Elder. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Qianga of the Stars, Deliverer of the Sealing Blade to the Watchers:** an orphan disdained by the Mutewind for being different, but accepted by the Order of the Djinn. She delivered the sword Starforge to the Watchers of Decay so that they could imprison the Elder. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Sumei, Master Lorekeeper:** a Maraketh orphan left to die in desert by her akhara but rescued by the Order of the Djinn. She was later charged with investigating the duplication of unique items, and her final years were burdened by a terrible secret. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Revna:** a person implied to be Kalguuran who was taken in by the Order of the Djinn after his/her people departed Wraeclast. Revna studied the past to the point of being consumed by it, and became a runesmith. He/She spent their final days terrified of the stars, and took the secret of what they'd learned to their grave. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Narumoa:** a Karui who died in war and implied to have been revived by the Order of the Djinn. This seems to have endowed Narumoa with the gift of second sight, and he/she used it to serve the Order for centuries before dying again. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Omid, Master Researcher:** an orphan rescued from the Redblade by the Order of the Djinn. He was tasked with investigating Xoph and artefacts related to Breaches. Upon his death, his final commandment was "the world must never know." (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Raethan the Betrayer:** an orphan and the first Brinerot to join the Order of the Djinn. He researched Voltaxic Sulphite as a new form of energy. It is implied that he betrayed the Order by making his discoveries public, resulting in "madness...in machine form," though later seems to have been forgiven. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Master Warrior Rindwik:** an orphan, possibly from a Renegades warband, abandoned and accepted into the Order of the Djinn. Charged with leading the martial defense of the Order's expeditions, Rindwik fell only to old age. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Tsarsk:** a young orphan discovered and taken in by the Order of the Djinn in a flesh-pit in Trarthus. Tsarsk helped save other tormented spirits from eternal misery. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Agnar, Beastmaster:** an Ezomyte orphaned by feuding clans and rescued by the Order of the Djinn. He received Visions from the First Ones about the beasts of the world, and so was tasked by the Order with investigating them. When he died, his Visions passed to another. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Sarina Titucius:** a member of the Order of the Djinn who managed to translate the Harbinger language and thus was directed to study them. Sarina made it through the Gate to the Harbinger and realm and returned. She was the first member of the Order to be awarded with a Gilded Scarab while still alive. Jun considered her to be family. Sarina was killed after Janus Perandus sold out the Order to Catarina. (Note that most of the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Eutyclus:** a Templar orphan and member of the Order of the Djinn who became a deacon and served as the Order's hand within "the Chamber" (possibly the Chamber of Innocence). For this Eutyclus was gifted by the Order the opportunity to explore the Domain of Timeless Conflict, whose eternal vile hunger is implied to have taken his life. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Dhunan:** a person from "distant shores" who was rescued from the ocean by the Order of the Djinn and became a member. He used techniques from his homeland to contain the blight, and then led a war to destroy it, though failed to locate and destroy the Blightheart. He was returned to his homeland to be buried. (Note that the above lore came from scarabs that have now been removed from the game.)

**Arin Kent:** a member of the Order of the Djinn whom Jun considered to be family. Arin was killed after Janus Perandus sold out the Order to Catarina.

**Brin Barius:** a member of the Order of the Djinn whom Jun considered to be family. Brin was killed after Janus Perandus sold out the Order to Catarina.

**Killam Creary:** a member of the Order of the Djinn whom Jun considered to be family. Killam was killed after Janus Perandus sold out the Order to Catarina.



**Lynn Grey:** a member of the Order of the Djinn whom Jun considered to be family. Lynn was killed after Janus Perandus sold out the Order to Catarina.

**Ngahari Atui:** a member of the Order of the Djinn whom Jun considered to be family. Ngahari was killed after Janus Perandus sold out the Order to Catarina.

**Tej Alhamba:** a member of the Order of the Djinn whom Jun considered to be family. Tej was killed after Janus Perandus sold out the Order to Catarina.

**Xian Song:** a member of the Order of the Djinn whom Jun considered to be family. Xian was killed after Janus Perandus sold out the Order to Catarina.

**Jun Ortoi, Veiled Master:** (see NPCs and Related Characters.)

**Janus Perandus:** (see the Immortal Syndicate.)

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## THE IMMORTAL SYNDICATE

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**Catarina, Master of Undeath:** a witch and powerful necromancer from Oriath who was exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus. After Janus Perandus sold out the Order of the Djinn, likely at her behest, she was able to obtain the Horns of Kulemak from the Forbidden Vault. Using the Horns, she could fully revive others from the dead without them turning into mindless zombies. Thus she established the Immortal Syndicate, becoming known as the the Lifegiver or Eternal One. She believed the lifespan of humans was too short to direct the course of the world, thus leaving it in the hands of Chaos. She intended to use immortality to build up the knowledge of humanity by preventing advances from being lost due to death, and to establish herself as the queen of a new utopian empire in Wraeclast that would never be destabilized due to the death of its ruler.

**Janus Perandus:** the great grandson of Chitus Perandus and an avowed gambler. He was orphaned, but as the Perandus line had lost its fortune no one would take him in save for the Order of the Djinn. However, likely in an attempt to bring some glory back to the Perandus name, he sold them out. His actions resulted in the deaths of the entire Order save for himself and Jun Ortoi, and the theft of the Horns of Kulemak, which enabled the formation of the Immortal Syndicate.

**Cameria the Coldblooded:** a murderer who, as a boy, used to get close to "the rich and proper" and then kill them. He would steal from his victims and make it look like a robbery to cover up the fact that he was killing for pleasure. Cameria has a reputation for being violent and "getting his jollies" with the dead bodies of his victims. He's been locked up in the past, and may also have been a soldier. Kirac refers to him as a "psychotic disciple" of General Gravicius. Eventually he became a member of the Immortal Syndicate.

**Korell Goya, Son of Stone:** a member of the Redblade warband originating from a caldera, who joined the Immortal Syndicate. As with other Redblades he worships fire and a god named the Molten One, and is said to be unharmed by flames. He is recognisable by his spiky red armour.

**Rin Yuushu:** a member of the Mutewind warband originating from the mountains, who joined the Immortal Syndicate. She is an archer and like other Mutewinds believes strongly in the purity of her blood, referring to non-Mutewinds "muckbloods."

**Guff "Tiny" Grenn:** a member of the Brinerot warband who was a ship captain and merchant/pirate before joining the Immortal Syndicate.

**Riker Maloney, Midnight Tinkerer:** a trapper skilled with gadgets and machines, who is searching for the secret to eternal life and resurrection. He was a client of the Ring on contracts to find the Hand of Arimor and the Blood of Innocence, which he thought may have had the answer. He also had a brief alliance with the researchers attempting to recreate unique items, but left when they failed to produce results on resurrection. Finally, he joined the Immortal Syndicate. He's an eloquent speaker with an affinity for alliteration and he wears a mask, leaving his true identity a mystery.

**Thane Jorgin the Banished:** an Ezomyte Thane from the green hills of Ogham, which was located on an island (possibly the Isles of Skothe). His brother was murdered and he was found guilty of the crime, which was likely the reason for his banishment. In Ogham there are wanted posters of him on display, and if he returned he'd be hung. Instead, he joined the Immortal Syndicate. Jorgin claims he is innocent and was framed, and that his brother was murdered by a member of the Brotherhood of Silence. However, none of the other Syndicate members appear to believe him. In particular he suspects it was Vorici, though the latter denies it was him. Jorgin wears a bear pelt and is able to call upon the power of the First Ones to gain ursine abilities. He believes in a philosophy of "might makes right" and that the strongest should absorb the might of the meek and make it his own.

**It That Fled:** a creature from the Breach realm. It was born on the Red Pyre like the others of its hive but felt flawed, not rejoicing in the prospect of serving and dying for the Breachlords like its siblings. Instead It fled and joined the Immortal Syndicate, though still draws upon the power of the Breachlords. It speaks of itself in the third person and per Cameria doesn't sleep.

**Aisling Laffrey, The Slient Butcher:** an assassin and sadist who joined the Immortal Syndicate. She disassembles and reassembles the corpses of her victims into "art."

**Vorici, Silent Brother:** an Oriathan assassin and member of the Brotherhood of Silence who was exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus. Jun Ortoi feels he was a good person and a capable fighter doing what he could to bring light to the darkness of Wraeclast. He later joined the Immortal Syndicate. Thane Jorgin suspects that Vorici killed Jorgin's brother, but Vorici denies this.

**Haku, Warmaster:** a Karui originally from Ngamakanui who somehow ended up in Oriath, and then was exiled by High Templar Dominus to Wraeclast. Jun Ortoi feels he was a good person and a capable fighter doing what he could to bring light to the darkness of Wraeclast. He later joined the Immortal Syndicate.

**Elreon, Light's Judge:** a Templar from Oriath. He was exiled by High Templar Dominus, who felt Elreon was too soft for Templar leadership and that his radical ideas might turn others against him. While Elreon claims to retain his faith in God and feels he is on a "crusade," he says he has left the Templars due to his distaste for bloodshed. Jun Ortoi feels he was a good person and a capable fighter doing what he could to bring light to the darkness of Wraeclast. He later joined the Immortal Syndicate.

**Tora, the Culler:** an exile from Oriath who is an archer and huntress. She's in tune with nature and doesn't care for material things. Jun Ortoi feels she was a good person and a capable fighter doing what she could to bring light to the darkness of Wraeclast. She later joined the Immortal Syndicate.

**Leo Redmane, Wolf of the Pits:** an arena gladiator from Oriath who was exiled to Wraeclast. In Theopolis he preferred being the Pitmaster to a fighter. Leo lost his left hand and has a hook in its place. He considers Vagan an old friend. Jun Ortoi feels Leo was a good person and a capable fighter doing what he could to bring light to the darkness of Wraeclast. He later joined the Immortal Syndicate.

**Vagan, Victory's Herald:** a duelist from Oriath who exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus. Jun Ortoi feels he was a good person and a capable fighter doing what he could to bring light to the darkness of Wraeclast. He later joined the Immortal Syndicate. He's attracted to Tora.

**Hillock of Slaugh, the Blacksmith:** a blacksmith who used to make swords until he was exiled to Wraeclast by High Templar Dominus for a long list of crimes, including murder, murder of a child, extortion, armed larceny, rape and rape resulting in death. After his exile he remained outside of Lioneys Watch, attacking other exiles. He was slain but later revived as a member of the Immortal Syndicate.

**General Gravicus Reborn:** the right hand of High Templar Dominus and general of the Ebony Legion. He stationed himself outside of the Lunaris Temple while working to defeat the thaumaturgical creatures defending the Solaris Temple. After being slain by an exile from Oriath he was revived as a member of the Immortal Syndicate. He then claimed to serve a new God, who is implied to be Catarina, the Eternal One.

**Arzaak:** a Syndicate researcher.

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## CHARACTERS FROM SYNTHESIS MEMORIES

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**Anaris:** a man who pursued the Elder after it stole a child, and dropped dead as a result.

**Bryn:** a male (Eternal/Templar) who died of a fever but then came back to life as a creature. His mother believed his soul was with Innocence, so she leapt to her death to meet him.

**Drusus:** a man with a family who committed suicide in the baths when he saw a member of the Brotherhood of Silence coming for him.

**Micah:** a sailor, possibly from Weylam Roth's crew.

**Rami:** a male Mutewind who helped murder aspirants (for leader of the clan) before being murdered himself.

**Sapinti:** a female who went fishing and washed ashore mummified/drained of blood. After she was buried the land soured and had to be abandoned.

## APPENDIX C: HUMAN RACES & CULTURES

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### PROTO-VAAL

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Not much is known about the Proto-Vaal other than they were apparently a humanoid race living in Wraeclast prior to the Vaal and contemporary with the Maraketh. There is a mention of gods on one of their artefacts, though no Proto-Vaal gods are known. (Tangmazu apparently interacted with Aul, though as Aul is apparently immortal this may have occurred after the fall of their civilization.) Their ruins can be found buried beneath the remains of the Eternal Empire and lie deeper even than the cities of the Lightless.

Mosaics found in their ruins depict some events from their history, including the building of a pyramid and a volcanic eruption that filled the sky with ash. Three people are also depicted, including a woman called the Clayshaper (who wielded the Clayshaper mace and created golems from clay), a figure wearing Ahn's Contempt and wielding Ahn's Might and Ahn's Heritage, and a third with a lightning bolt on its forehead who may have been Aul (though Aul has only been seen wearing a helmet so far).

Mosaics:







### LANGUAGE

The only thing known about the language of the Proto-Vaal are some phrases said by Aul when fighting him, for which there are no translations:

<b>Word/Phrase</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Source</b>
<i>uor al-Nahm</i>	?	Aul, at start of fight
<i>habra Ahn</i>	? (something about Ahn)	Aul, at start of fight

<i>utem Zazul</i>	?	Aul, at start of fight
<i>hatem ahk Aul</i>	? (something about Aul)	Aul, at start of fight
<i>hur-nak</i>	?	Aul, during fight
<i>zem Zamarr</i>	?	Aul, during fight
<i>otemba</i>	?	Aul, during fight
<i>azu Azar</i>	?	Aul, during fight

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## VAAL

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The Vaal, often referred to as the "red ones," were once said to be the oldest known culture in Wraeclast (save for the Proto-Vaal, who may or may not have been a different race), though some evidence now suggests the Maraketh may be older. The Vaal existed in central Wraeclast and on the island of Oriath. Three of their cities were Azala Vaal, Lira Vaal, and Utzaal (just north of the Chamber of Sins), and they also had a temple in the jungle named Atzoatl. The Vaal worshipped multiple gods, and the followers of Ralakesh enslaved many primitive Azmerians long before the Vaal established peaceful contact with them. They traded with the Maraketh and early Karui, and also seem to have had contact with the Templars as the Descry symbol used by the Templars can be found on some of their artefacts, such as Zeel's Amplifier and Vaal totems.

The Vaal were strong advocates of science and the use of Virtue Gems. Their technology was more advanced than that of any other known civilization, including those that came much later. Vaal ruins are populated in part by creatures referred to as "constructs," said by Alva Valai to have been created by combining metal and insects. The Vaal conducted research into such areas as explosives, "electrical lifebloods," bioengineering, weather manipulation, and even time travel, and they studied other realms, including breaches and maps. They also experimented extensively with human sacrifice and torture--which may have stemmed from the myth that they were created from the flesh of the gods and that it was their duty to return this flesh to them--as well as the Beast's power of corruption.

All of what is known about the Vaal is contained in the corresponding section above. The Vaal were supposedly wiped out in the Fall except for a few thousand refugees. However, there are a couple of hints that indicate this may not be completely true.

## LANGUAGE

The Vaal have their own language, which according to Trinian is called Vaalish. Their written language may have been logographic, as seen in images in their ruins:

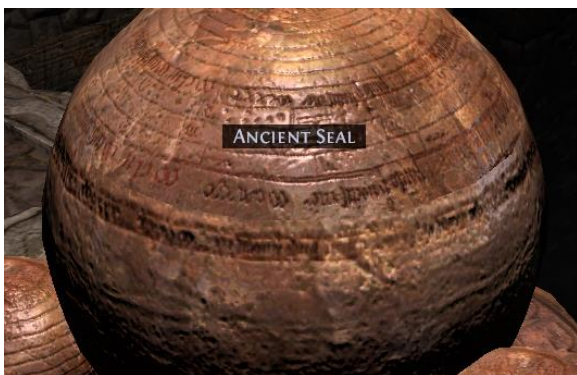




Some examples of Vaal glyphs:



However, examples of alphabetic writing also exist:



The only known Vaalish words and phrases are things said by Ahuatotli, and there are currently no translations:

Word/Phrase	Meaning	Source
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<i>xictep cutlotl</i>	?	Ahuatotli, at start of fight
<i>tatlat Atziri</i>	? (something about Atziri)	Ahuatotli, at start of fight
<i>Vaal a xomaplal</i>	?	Ahuatotli, at start of fight
<i>zahua moti</i>	?	Ahuatotli, during fight
<i>azcado</i>	?	Ahuatotli, during fight
<i>quiquate</i>	?	Ahuatotli, during fight
<i>huatat</i>	?	Ahuatotli, during fight

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## MARAKETH

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The Maraketh are native to the Vastiri Plains in eastern Wraeclast, as far as is known. Their capital rests near a lake at the northern edge of the desert. In ancient times they had a prosperous civilization called Keth, whose "trade empire was the glory of the world." During that time the Vastiri Plains were more fertile, unlike the dry and salted desert they have become.

Maraketh culture consists of a tribal matriarchy, and according to Vanja they have their own "unique cosmology of strange creatures, pagan gods and powerful treasures." They seem to be primarily desert-dwelling and practice pastoralism. The Maraketh often ride rhoas and may or may not ride rocs (Garukhan was said to have ridden one). They are referred to as dark-skinned by Victario.

The Maraketh use tattoos as marks of shame or criminality (in contrast to the Karui, who earn tattoos in battle). Maraketh who are born "flawed" (such as Nenet and Tasuni) are seen as worthless and left out in the desert to die. A group of such outcasts who have survived have banded together and formed their own culture, calling themselves the Faridun. Unlike the Maraketh, the Faridun apparently do not believe in any gods.

The Maraketh apparently bury their dead "in the sky," possibly having similar practices to the Karui, who feed their dead to birds; though the Karui view this as a way of having their souls seeded back to the earth and delivered to their Ancestors. This could also refer to burying their dead in high places, though they mainly live in the desert.

## LANGUAGE

The Maraketh have their own language, which according to Voll is called Marak. Their writing uses a flowing script:



Known Marak words and phrases:

Word/Phrase	Meaning	Source
<i>akh'salla</i>	greeting	Jun Ortoi (when you approach)
<i>salla</i>	greeting	Nenet (when you approach)
<i>mik karkin*</i>	greeting?	Nenet (when you approach)
<i>selarim</i>	goodbye / good luck?	Jun Ortoi (when you leave), Nenet (before a heist)
<i>akhara</i>	"tribe"	Kira, "Oyun"
<i>sekhema</i>	"commander"	Kira, "Oyun"
<i>dekhara</i>	"warrior(s)"	Kira, "Oyun"
<i>jingakh</i>	outsider / non-Maraketh?	Adiyah, "Bad Blood"
<i>darakatha</i>	battle cry	Path of Exile: Origins #3

\*The spelling is a guess since the phrase is heard but not seen in writing.

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## KARUI

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The Karui are a race apparently native to a number of islands that lie to the south of Wraeclast, and possibly elsewhere. The archipelago is called Ngamakanui by outsiders. However, the word

*Ngamakanui* roughly means "anywhere we bring the Way." They don't see it as a specific location on a map, as they are nomadic, but rather anywhere they've established their culture. Currently they're known to inhabit two main areas: the Karui archipelago to the southwest of Wraeclast ("Ngamakanui"), which includes Te Onui, and a second group of islands ("Northern Ngamakanui") to the north of Oriath, which includes Ngakanu.

They are divided into tribes, each devoted to following a specific god, and each is led by a chieftain. Karui may switch from one tribe to another, and often do. There are so many tribes and gods they don't all know of each other. The Karui are referred to as dark-skinned by Victario.

"Ngakuramakoi" is a name for those who have passed their test of adulthood. The Karui seem to refer to marriage and/or having a family as "going through the traditions."

The Karui are a tribal society with a culture that heavily emphasizes the honour of warriors and battle, and the "Karui Way." It is common for them to be seen with tattoos, which are earned in battle (contrary to the Maraketh, who use tattoos as marks of shame or criminality). The Karui apparently leave their dead to be eaten by gulls (represented by Mother Gull), who seed their souls to the earth and deliver them to their Ancestors. The Maraketh and Ezomytes may both have similar practices, as the Maraketh bury their dead "in the sky," and the Ezomytes also make reference to Mother Gull. There are some mentions of the Karui burying their dead, though it's possible this refers to any remains after the birds are finished.

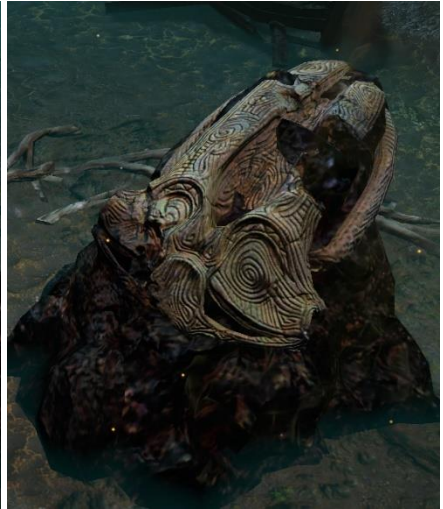
When implanting Virtue Gems in their flesh, the Karui fall ill with a "blood fever" and become filled with rage and unnatural strength, which also infects others nearby. Other races, such as the Vaal and Azmeri, are apparently not susceptible to this.

## LANGUAGE

The Karui have their own language, which according to Voll is simply called Karui. Their writing and symbols seem to resemble long flowing or swirling lines:







Known Karui words and phrases:

<b>Word/Phrase</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Source</b>
<i>tala moana</i>	"I greet you as the waves greet the shore"	<a href="#">Erik Olofsson</a>
<i>tala kura*</i>	goodbye?	Maramoa, Utula, & other Karui (when you leave)
<i>Karui</i>	informal name for anyone of the blood	Akoya, "Ngakuramakoi"
<i>Ngakuramakoi</i>	adults who truly comprise the culture	Akoya, "Ngakuramakoi"
<i>makanui</i>	"the Way of the Warrior"	Clarissa, "Maramoa"
<i>nga</i>	"from" or "of"	Kahuturoa, "Ngamakanui"
<i>Ngamakanui</i>	"anywhere that the Karui bring the Way"	Kahuturoa, "Ngamakanui"

<i>makanga</i>	"honoured warrior"	Maramoa, "Dominus"
<i>hatungo</i>	"wise woman/man"	Navali, "Introduction"
<i>makoru</i>	"shark"	Maramoa, "General Gravicius"
<i>waikoama</i>	"canoe"	Maramoa, "General Gravicius"
<i>motiata</i>	possibly "song/ritual" or "holy man"?	Siosa, "The Painting"
<i>tavukai</i>	"sacred prohibition"	The Purity Chronicles Book 3
<i>korangi</i>	"he who wins wars with false promises"	Maramoa, "Hargan"
<i>ti siwila arako talah wasalo ai garango</i>	"the honeyed tongue speaks greedy words"	Path of Exile: Origins #3
<i>vala Ngamahu</i>	battle cry ("for Ngamahu"?)	Path of Exile: Origins #3
<i>vala Tukohama</i>	battle cry ("for Tukohama"?)	Akoya (used in battle)
<i>pakarui</i>	outsider / non-Karui?	Hyrri (used in a taunt)
<i>kaivana</i>	outsider / non-Karui?	Akoya, "Ngakuramakoi"

\*The spelling is a guess since the phrase is heard but not seen in writing.

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## EZOMYTES

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Little is known about the Ezomytes other than they are apparently native to Ezomyr and the Isles of Skothe in westernmost Wraeclast. They worship a group of animalistic gods known as the First Ones, who teach them how to fight and survive and who bestow gifts in exchange for animal sacrifices. Per Einhar Frey, the First Ones will return at the end of the world to collect those who've proven themselves to be "survivors" and take them to a place called the Great Grove.

Garivaldi describes the Ezomytes as being "romantic," and some examples of Ezomyte poetry are known.

At an unknown point in the past, the Ezomytes were mostly wiped out by a plague, save for those on the Isles of Skothe.

## LANGUAGE

The Ezomytes have their own language, which according to Voll is called Ezo. Weylin's poem is written in script and might be an example of Ezo, though it also may have been written in the language used by the Eternals. Rigwald's inscriptions, probably written about twenty-five years

later, are written in runes. These may be examples of Ezo writing, or they may have been written in an ancient language due to his association with the First Ones.



Pages from Weylin's poem

Rigwald's inscriptions

No Ezo words or phrases are known other than for Einhar's name:

Word/Phrase	Meaning	Source
<i>einhar</i>	"lone fighter"	Einhar Frey, "Introduction"

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## AZMERI

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The Azmeri resided in a chain of mountains in western Wraeclast known as the Azmerian Ranges, which per Izaro was "the most inhospitable range of mountains in all of Wraeclast." They had a primitive culture based on oral tradition. Their chieftains were selected by putting aspiring leaders through a labyrinth of beasts and traps to test their strength, wisdom, and spirit. The Azmeri worshipped their own gods, though many also worshipped the Vaal goddess Arakaali, and some (such as Tarcus Veruso) may have followed the Templar faith. Many of the Azmeri were enslaved by followers of the Vaal god Ralakesh long before the two civilizations established peaceful relations.

Around 900 BIC a Vaalish ambassador made peaceful contact with the Azmeri, and for the next five hundred years the Vaal helped elevate their civilization into a cohesive culture of settlement, agriculture and literature. Following the Fall, the Azmeri took in the few thousand Vaal survivors and integrated them into their civilization.

Four hundred years later, Tarcus Veruso led most of the Azmeri down from the mountains and into the ruins of the Vaal civilization, where he established the Eternal Empire. Some of the Azmeri,

however, didn't follow Tarcus. Greust, Silk, Yeena, and Oshabi are descendants of the original Azmerian culture.

## LANGUAGE

The Azmeri have their own language, though what it is called is not known. As it apparently did not have a written form prior to their contact with the Vaal, any written form may be based on Vaalish. The descendants of the original Azmeri speak a different language (or at least a different dialect) than that spoken in the Eternal Empire.

The only known words and phrases in the Azmeri language are those spoken by The King in the Mists. While he is not Azmeri, he seems to have learned their language and to speak it in the Wildwood. There are currently no translations.

<b>Word/Phrase</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Source</b>
<i>mharú an koriak</i>	?	The King in the Mists, when you approach
<i>keéd un eé</i>	?	The King in the Mists, on a loss
<i>amadán thú</i>	?	The King in the Mists, on a win
<i>ko leor</i>	?	The King in the Mists
<i>loamsa tú</i>	?	The King in the Mists
<i>tobair devoid</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>tobair ómós</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>doradas ert, thek thuram</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>leth-creag</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>agrik armach</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>slaogarn</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>rith</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>básaich</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>thosai</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>stodd</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>marbod</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>fàs</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight
<i>lonnsaigh</i>	?	The King in the Mists, during fight



*atá... oré Wisps maah ?*

The King in the Mists, during fight

*an dire ed ?*

The King in the Mists, during fight

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## ETERNALS

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The Eternal Empire was first established in central Wraeclast, and at its height seems to have covered much of the continent including the Vastiri Plains, the Mantle, Phrecia, and all the way to the southern coast. It also included the island of Oriath, and following the Cataclysm Oriath was the only part of the empire to survive.

The empire was founded by the Azmeri and therefore may have kept much of the Azmerian culture and traditions. In its first years it continued the Azmerian practice of succession by labyrinth.

The Eternals are said to have revered the Azmerian goddesses Solaris and Lunaris "as the two eyes of their God," and their capital (Sarn) contained temples to both. However, the Eternals are also shown to have been associated with the Templars and their faith, with the High Templar vowing "to care for this Empire with eyes open" upon the coronation of each emperor.

## LANGUAGE

As the empire was founded by the Azmeri, the Eternals may have used the Azmerian language. However, there may have been multiple languages used throughout the empire. Per Maramoa, Oriath had its own language, called Oriathan, which is not understood by descendants of the original Azmeri. Some examples of their writing:



No words or phrases from the language of the Eternals are known.



## TEMPLARS

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The Templars are a religious group that has its own culture. It was founded by an Azmeri man named Maxarius, who actively sought to start a new religion in order to gain enough followers to become a god. He tried many times, but failed to gain sufficient support among his own people. At some point he encountered a group referred to only as "the newcomers." He found that they were terrified of fire and responded to a specific symbol (the symbol used by The Searing Exarch, suggesting they had encountered the Cleansing Fire or one of its agents). He adopted this symbol (the Descry) as his own and claimed that his god could protect them. This resulted in them following him. He still didn't have enough adoration to become a god, so he vilified his brother. By "sparking zealotry" against his brother and threatening nonbelievers with fire, he finally ascended to godhood, becoming known as Innocence. His brother Sin was chained to a cliff, but later rescued by an unknown woman (possibly Garukhan). The origin myth for the Templars states that Maxarius was the first High Templar chosen by Innocence, and hides the fact that Innocence was Maxarius.

The Azmeri apparently saw the Templars as a cult and banished them to the island of Oriath. As the Vaal also had a presence on Oriath, the two likely coexisted on the island for a time. The Vaal have been known to use the Descry, such as on artefacts like Zeel's Amplifier and on Vaal totems. At some point the Azmeri and Templars seem to have reconciled, as Oriath became part of the Eternal Empire founded by the Azmeri, and the High Templar would make the vow "to care for this Empire with eyes open" upon the coronation of each Eternal Emperor. In Sarn, the empire's capital, the Sceptre of God was built apparently as a monument to Innocence, along with temples for the goddesses Solaris and Lunaris. The Templar seat of power may also have moved from Oriath to Sarn, evidenced by the fact that High Templar Voll urged Kaom to invade and conquer Oriath during the Purity Rebellion.

Following the Cataclysm and the empire's collapse, the survivors on Oriath established their own civilization, which was apparently a theocracy.

Upon death, the bones of Templars are placed in massive ossuaries, where they are said to be hallowed and remembered. Templar beliefs may also describe an afterlife, as on his death Cardinal Sanctus Vox claims he will be going to paradise.

## LANGUAGE

Per Maramoa, the Templars on Oriath have their own language, called Oriathan. This language is not natively understood by the Azmeri remaining in Wraeclast, such as those in the Forest Encampment, and therefore may be different than the language used by the Eternal Empire. However, their writing appears similar to that of the Eternals, and they may have used the same alphabet:



No Oriathan words or phrases are known, though the above images contain possible examples. Oriathan seems to be the language in which most of the characters in the present communicate.

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## KALGUUR

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The Kalguur are a race from a place also named Kalguur, which resides on the continent of Middengard about 2,300 km southeast of Wraeclast. Per Gwennen and Sonja, Middengard is mostly covered with volcanoes but still has “verdant valleys and sparkling waterfalls.”

Lineage is important to the Kalguur, and is seen as "an ongoing tally of renown and accomplishment." These accomplishments are often recorded as songs. They also have remembrancers, who are responsible for recording their history. The Kalguur have priests and religious orders, though are unfamiliar with the concept of gods and instead worship knowledge.

Their architecture and equipment have a distinct style, often made of metal with sharp curving blades or spikes. They have smiths known as artificers or runesmiths, who inscribe runes on their artifacts. These runes can "capture and shape starlight" and imbue an object with magic-like properties. Based on a comment by Raulf, it's possible that runes may also be earned or awarded for accomplishments. In the past there were four other known groups, which apparently no longer exist. The Druids of the Circle, later known as the Druids of the Broken Circle, believed they could see the future by looking at the past. The Black Scythe Mercenaries were a group of warriors founded by Vorana. The Order of the Chalice were a priesthood and religious order who "interpreted the stars and the workings of mysterious forces, such as alchemy, machinery, and runes." The Knights of the Sun are described as poetic fighters. Currently the Kalguur have guilds, such as the Artificers' Guild or the Meridian Free Traders.

Little is known of their origins, homeland, or history. The Fall of the Vaal was visible to them even in Middengard, and they interpreted it as an omen. The king at the time (Cadigan the Third) commissioned an expedition to investigate it. The Kalguur then began a colonisation of Wraeclast, which ultimately resulted in failure and the survivors returning home. Their history for the next two thousand years is unknown.

Currently the Kalguur are led by a king whose nature is mysterious. It's hinted that he may not be just a man, and might consider himself a god if the Kalguur had such a concept. He's unpopular with some of the Kalguur, and there was a rebellion against him that failed. Dannig, Gwennen,

Tujen, and Rog apparently sided with the rebellion and fled when it collapsed; this may be part of the reason they came to Wraeclast. The rebellion appears to be a taboo subject that most Kalguur don't dare speak about openly. Those who support the king are referred to as royalists.

After Dannig, Gwennen, Tujen, and Rog established an outpost in Wraeclast, it became popular enough with other Kalguur that the king issued a charter to build it into a city named Kingsmarch, under Kalguuran law and customs, thus beginning their second attempt at colonisation.










In Kingsmarch the currency used is gold coins called Dinar, which may be the currency used in Kalguur as well.

### LANGUAGE & RUNES

Being from a distant land, the Kalguur presumably have their own language. What it's called isn't known. No words in their language are known, though this is possibly an example of their writing:



The runes used by the Kalguur appear to have special meanings, though as far as is known aren't part of their language per se. The following are the ones that have been encountered so far:

Rune	Meaning	Source
	bound: the connections between things	Rune
	bounty: cryptic; plenty is a matter of perspective	Rune, Dannig
	journey: a determinant, used if there's a question or doubt	Dannig
	life: living things move and change in patterns	Rune
	mountain: an expert rune, can mean many things	Dannig
	power: naught else matters; only for use by true artificers	Rune, Dannig
	river: all things flow, stillness is an illusion; helps direct energies	Rune, Dannig
	sun: magnanimous, gifts heat and light	Rune
	time: onwards; time has one direction and we can only follow	Rune, Dannig



war: opposite energies; represents conflict, often in surprising ways

Rune, Danni

## APPENDIX D: NON-HUMAN RACES

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### LIGHTLESS

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The Lightless are a race (or group of races) of various dark grey or black creatures that come in many forms, including some resembling bats, squid, worms, and skeletons, as well as more humanoid forms. Many of these creatures may actually be undead servants instead of Lightless themselves, as it's been said that the dead serve the Lightless. The Lightless are intelligent and can communicate. Their leaders are known as Liches.

Not much is known about their origins and history. At one point in the distant past, Wraeclast was a gloomy waste shrouded in darkness. There is some evidence that this came about after a volcanic eruption filled the sky with fire and ash, possibly choking out the sun for a long period of time that became known as the Winter of the World. During this time the Lightless flooded across the Vastiri Plains and possibly other parts of Wraeclast. The Maraketh fought back against them, but apparently were losing until forming an alliance with Ahkeli, the Clayshaper. Eventually the Winter of the World came to an end and the Lightless were driven underground. One reference suggests the Winter lasted a generation, while another suggests it lasted much longer. Those on the surface seemed to think that the Lightless were extinct, but in reality they thrived and multiplied below ground, where they built cities of stone and bone. Recently, a few thousand years later, they've begun erupting through the ground and attacking the surface once more.

### LANGUAGE

Lightless can communicate, though nothing is known about their language and no example speech or words have been revealed to date.

### SCOURGE

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The Scourge are a group of related creatures of many differing forms, at least some of whom are intelligent. They have skin that is primarily grey and/or red in varying shades. What they call themselves is not known.

There are three known factions of Scourge. Creatures in the Pale Faction are blind but can sense others and can smell fear. They are described as being the most like humans, in that they think, speak, and can be communicated with. Currently they are led by a demon-lord named Beidat. The Demon Faction are currently led by a demon-lord named K'tash. Some of them don't have heads, and it's been theorized that they may not think at all, or if they do they may simply be "drones" (a hivemind) in which something else thinks for them. The Flesh Faction seem capable of thought, though no one has succeeded in communicating with them as far as is known. Their primary drive is a hunger for flesh, and all they seem to do is pursue it. Currently they're led by a demon-lord named Ghorr.

Nothing is known about their origins, history, or where they come from. Per The Last to Die, there are countless alternate versions of reality, and one by one these have been invaded and taken over by the Scourge. She has only ever seen one version of Wraeclast survive them, though implies that reality may be just as bad or worse.

## LANGUAGE

Nothing is known about the language or languages of the Scourge, and so far there are no examples of their writing or speech.

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## ITS & THE BREACHLORDS

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Breach creatures come from another domain and enter Wraeclast through Breaches, which are "tears in the fabric of reality." These beings are humanoid and red-skinned, and often surrounded by a purple aura or glow. They are intelligent and can speak. Little is known about their origins or the domains in which they reside.

Breach creatures refer to themselves individually as "It," refer to others as "It" or "It That (description)," and refer to their kind as "Its." Animals, insects, and other twisted creatures also reside in the Breach domains and are also referred to as "It," such as "It of Sharp Claws" or "It of Many Legs." The Breach creatures are a hivemind and experience pain when being separated from others. There are references to them being born on the Red Pyre, which teaches them things at birth (though it's possible this is only true for followers of Xoph). They seem to delight in pain, violence, and even death, both giving and receiving it, and refer to these things as "play."

Its follow the Breachlords. The Lords are referred to either as "he" or "she," or by name. Its "rejoice" in being "pulp and bone for the Lords," and seem to heavily emphasize sacrificing themselves to or for the Lords, only to be replaced by new Its. Each It seems to primarily serve one Breachlord, though It That Fled refers to being accompanied or empowered by different Lords at different times, so the domains and followers of each Lord may not be entirely separate. Chayula is implied to be the chief Lord, with the other Lords possibly being chosen by and sacrificed to him.

The following things are known about It That Fled, and may or may not apply to others of its kind as well. It likes to collect things such as bone splinters, skins, and claws. It doesn't seem to understand human shape, and thinks that a human must be in pain because of the way it "wears its skin." It also doesn't understand blood or why humans "leak from their skin," and thinks that it might be "liquid fear." It might not understand death, as it questions why a dead person has stopped moving and won't play anymore. Later, after dying and being revived by Catarina, it refers to death as "the Dark Place, where the Lords whisper and laugh at It, mocking It, hurting It." It says that Elreon, a former Templar, has a "hideous glowing," and refers to the First Ones as "the hated enemies from Before All" and "diseased animals."

The domains of the Lords are similar to areas of Wraeclast, including outdoor volcanic areas, indoor and outdoor temples, and mines. Each Lord resides in an organic area with walls and a floor made of flesh. The outdoor areas are relatively dark; It That Fled mentions "the Broken Sun," which may explain why.

## LANGUAGE

Its can speak, though nothing is known about their language. Being a hivemind that can apparently communicate through non-physical means, it's possible they don't use language per se to communicate among themselves.

## HARBINGERS

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Harbingers are humanoid beings ("spirits," per the Help panel glossary) from an unknown place. Their skin is a very dark blue and purple that is almost black, and they're usually surrounded by a bright blue aura or glow. They're intelligent and have their own language, though what they call themselves isn't known. They are referred to as Harbingers because they're often encountered alone or in small groups as advance scouts for a larger invasion. It's not known if Harbingers have individual names or not. When encountered in Wraeclast, they are referred to only by the abilities they possess or skills they use. They have leaders who wear crowns. They have a god, who they call the God of Domination.

















A unique aspect of Harbingers is that they are immune to direct harm by any known means. They fight by summoning and empowering minions from the local area and casting supportive spells. When their minions are slain, the Harbinger that summoned them is harmed. A Harbinger dies if too many of its minions are killed. Gear with certain properties can allow others to summon Harbingers themselves, in which case the Harbinger will cast supportive spells but will not summon any minions.

Not much is known of their origins or history. They have invaded Wraeclast multiple times. The Order of the Djinn was aware of their existence and referred to them as "the inscrutable ones." A thousand-year truce was established with them that ended when they imprisoned their god. A member of the Order, Sarina Titucius, deciphered their language and was directed to study their intent. She made it "beyond the Gate," possibly to the place where they come from, and returned alive. The Harbingers began invading Wraeclast again, and Oriath fought back. One major engagement was the Battle of Phaaryl in northern Wraeclast, which lasted a week and resulted in 3,800 Oriathan casualties. In addition to Wraeclast, the Harbingers have taken an interest in the Atlas and attempted to gain a foothold there.



Nothing is known about the place from which the Harbingers come. Per Kalandra, they "have journeyed farther than you know." They apparently establish beachheads in map realms that act as staging grounds from which they can spread elsewhere. These beachheads contain gateways that presumably lead back to where they come from.




















## LANGUAGE

The Harbingers are notable due to the fact that more examples of their language are known than any other culture in Wraeclast or Oriath. Their language consists of glyphs, each representing a being, thing, action, concept, etc., as well as simpler symbols that apparently act as prepositions or conjunctions. To date, only two glyphs have verified translations, with the remaining being guesses based on context.

<b>Glyph</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Source</b>
	connects compound words/of?	Harbinger items
	to/intention/purpose?	Harbinger items
	empower, around, 's (possession)?	Harbinger items
	produce/create, result in, have?	Harbinger items
	go to, toward, for?	Harbinger items
	not/negation?	Harbinger items
	"God of Domination"	<u>GGG</u>
	gateway?	Harbinger items
	minion(s)?	Harbinger items
	map(s)?	Harbinger items
	time?	Harbinger items
	righteous?	Harbinger items
	buff (weak)?	Harbinger items
	"The Beast"	<u>GGG</u>
	ball/projectile, emerge/creation?	Harbinger items
	enfeeble/powerless?	Harbinger items
	move/travel?	Harbinger items
	prison?	Harbinger items



	desire?	Harbinger items
	arcane/secret, knowledge?	Harbinger items
	ground/land?	Harbinger items
	weak/vulnerable?	Harbinger items
	brutality?	Harbinger items
	attack?	Harbinger items
	will?	Harbinger items
	break?	Harbinger items
	type of being or state of being?	Harbinger items
	blast, area?	Harbinger items
	focus?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	Wraecclast?	Harbinger items
	return?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	fire?	Harbinger items
	weaken, defend against, lose?	Harbinger items

	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	?	Harbinger items
	lightning?	Harbinger items
	ice?	Harbinger items
	harbinger?	Harbinger items
	type of being or state of being?	Harbinger items
	travel?	Harbinger items
	strike, target?	Harbinger items
	empty, nothing, space?	Harbinger gateway



leader?

Harbinger items



buff (strong)?

Harbinger items



reward(s)?

Harbinger items



direction?

Harbinger items



obelisk?

Harbinger obelisks

## APPENDIX E: DATES & PLACES

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### DATES

The only known dating system used in Wraeclast and Oriath is that of the Eternal Empire, which based their years on the founding of the empire.

IC	=	Imperialus Conceptus, the founding of the Eternal Empire
[year] BIC	=	Number of years prior to the Imperialus Conceptus
[year] IC	=	Number of years following 1 BIC
lunari	=	(probably) one cycle of the moon (from Etchings on Wood IV)

"The calendar used by the Eternal Empire does not completely match what players know from their own lives. It has seven days of the week, but there are thirteen longer time spans known as moons.

"The days of the week were generally named after the primary components of existence as the Eternals believed them to be: Solaro, Lunaro, Fiero, Glacio, Galvano, Kaso, Sacrato.

"The thirteen moons of the year were generally created in honour of certain renowned figures, or naturally arose as part of the harvest cycle: Verusi, Divini, Derivi, Phreci, Caspiri, Astrali, Eterni, Atziri, Vivici, Lurici, Sagari, Vitali, Azmeri.

"Both of these categories were subject to significant drift in meaning and spelling over the centuries."

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2991402>

"Wraeclast does indeed experience seasons. Derivi emerged from a celebration of the harvests of the cooler season when the leaves turned vibrant colours and fell. Astrali was marked by the arrival of snow and the Aurora Astralis. Vivici brings a celebration of life returning to the land for the year, and Vitali was a time of heat and sun."

--<https://www.pathofexile.com/forum/view-thread/2991402>

Based on the above, if the moons are listed in order, we get the following:

Verusi	
Divini	
Derivi	autumn
Phreci	
Caspiri	
Astrali	winter

Eterni  
Atziri  
Vivici     spring  
Lurici  
Sagari  
Vitali     summer  
Azmeri

## PLACES

Middengard: The continent of Middengard, from which the Kalguur hail, lies about 2,300 km to the southeast of Wraeclast, and so would lie beyond the edges of any current world map.

Aesclast: In 3.14 a reference was added to a place named Aesclast, which was possibly another continent (and could be the "east" to Wraeclast's "west"). However, this reference was changed in 3.15 to refer to an unnamed place. So currently there are no references to Aesclast in the game.

List of place names not found on the map:

Abram (from Rhys of Abram, might not be a place)  
Alliston (from Etchings on Wood I)  
Carian (from obsolete Water Elemental lore)  
Glarryn  
Glargarryn  
Gulton (from Benric of Gulton, might not be a place)  
Ogham (on an island, possibly the Isles of Skothe)  
Penance Quay  
Thebrus  
Umbra? (might not be a place, since umbra means "darkness" or "shadow")

List of places from the Letters of Exile not found on the map, possibly cities in Oriath:

Beecham  
Cinderford  
Dayton  
Inkley  
Kimbey  
Mirfield  
Nashe  
Romsey  
Slaugh  
Wetherdale