

The NERO® Dark Elven Race Package©

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PLEASE SEND ALL CORRECTIONS, ADDITIONS, AND COMMENTS TO:

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REFERENCE THE VERSION # YOU ARE COMMENTING ON

With special thanks to the following who contributed source material:

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Note to Players and Chapter Staff:

If your chapter has a Dark Elven culture package to add to these materials, or if you have questions, additions, corrections, and updates to the current document, please contact Rachel Morris at Draelonde@neromass.com. If you are the Race Marshal for your chapter, please contact Rachel to remain on a list for updates to the packet.

12/8/05

IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE EDITOR ABOUT THIS VERSION OF THE DARK ELVEN HANDBOOK:

Please note that this is the FIRST EDITION of the NERO® International Dark Elven Handbook to be published as a compendium of both a RACE PACKET (baseline data for all players of the race throughout NERO®) and a series of CULTURE PACKAGES (local material from area chapters/regions throughout the Tyrran Game World. It was a much larger undertaking than initially anticipated – there are many avid and enthusiastic players of Dark Elves who had reams of material that needed incorporating. This 200+ page document represents the streamlining of some 500+ pages of documentation that has been sent to me. I hope I have managed to remove the majority, if not all, of the contradictions from the various versions and materials, but if not, please let me know what needs correcting.

As such, it is certain to be an incomplete work, and future editions will be forthcoming as material is gathered (thus the version 0.9 instead of version 1.0). We especially hope to add additional material on the Cultures about which we have received very little information, and to add any new culture packages that were missed in this first publication. No insult or slight is intended if we missed your chapter's material – please just get in touch with us as soon as possible, so it can be included in the next publication.

Furthermore, in an effort to reorganize the material into the separate Race Packet versus Culture packages format, your chapter's material may have been shifted around a bit in an attempt to standardize the content a bit more. My apologies if this offends – I did my best to keep the intent, and in several cases, the material provided within a culture package was so universal that I needed to pull it out to put into the Race Packet section. If you feel your chapter's material has been misrepresented, please let me know what needs fixing and I'll do my best to rectify it in future versions.

Comments, diatribes, corrections, additions, et al, should be sent to me at Draelonde@neromass.com.

Thanks, and enjoy!
-Rachel Morris
Owner, NERO Mass/Ravenholt

Version Changes from v 0.9 to v0.9.1 (12/8/05):

- Changed NERO International Holding Company, Inc. to NERO® International Holding Co., Inc. per Joe Valenti
- Corrected ™ to be ® in all appropriate locations, per Joe Valenti

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OUT-OF-GAME INTRODUCTION – DARK ELVEN CORE RACE PACKET

Welcome to the wonderful world of LARPing (Live Action Role Playing) and NERO®. If you're reading this, it is assumed that you have at least skimmed the NERO® International Rulebook and have a basic understanding of the game system for which this Race Packet has been developed. Much of the material assumes you understand the terminology used in relation to the game, such as "in-game" and "out-of-game" and so on. If you have not yet read the NERO® International Rulebook, it can be purchased online via Amazon.com, or through your local game stores and NERO® chapters.



The purpose of this race packet is to allow players desiring a more in-depth study of the character race they have chosen to play, a look into the inner workings and expansive history of the Dark Elves, also known as the Vornae or the Drae, as pertains to the world of Tyrra and the NERO® International Game System. If, after reading this, you still have questions, it is recommended that you talk with your local chapter's race marshal or new player support staff for further details, or you contact the National race marshal via www.nerolarp.com.

Once you feel comfortable with the overall material, it is highly recommended that you develop a written history for your new character, and submit it to the chapters you play. Be sure to leave plenty of threads hanging, unresolved, so your local plot teams can have fun interweaving your character into plotlines over time.

OUT OF GAME RACIAL REQUIREMENTS

Makeup Requirements

- Jet Black Skin
- Pointed Elf Ears
- Silver or White Hair (including all facial hair)

Dark Elves have jet black skin, pointed ears and silver or white eyebrows and hair (including facial hair). Regardless of your natural skin color, you are required to wear black make-up. You are also required to wear pointed elf ears, such as can be found in costume shops and online. Even Dark Elves' fingernails and toenails are black (fingernail polish is a wonderful thing). Dark Elf skin pigmentation is opposite that of humans, which accounts for our skin color.

While most people who play Dark Elves are considered "hard core" players, due to the makeup requirements, for safety's sake, please be careful of makeup toxicity. Keeping in mind that many events run for 2-3 days or more, it is dangerous to keep a large portion of one's skin covered with makeup for so long. Be sure to try out your makeup for several hours before committing to play the race. Some people discover they are allergic to the makeup in general, and others discover they have a reaction over time. While it's rare and extreme, everyone is potentially susceptible to makeup poisoning if too much of their body is encompassed by heavy makeup for long periods of time. The makeup can get into the pores and clog them, making your body not get the oxygen it needs and putting an overload of chemicals into the skin. If you are ever playing and have a chalk-like taste in your mouth, you should immediately remove your makeup as thoroughly as possible, and drink a lot of water to cleanse your system. Whatever you do, do not cover your whole body, or even a majority of it, in the makeup. Theatrical makeup is harmless, unless used improperly.

Tips for Doing Your Makeup

Facial Makeup

The two most common and least toxic types of make-up are water based pancake and grease pancake. Slightly pricier, but very comfortable to apply, are the newer lines of water-based cream makeup and liquid makeup from Mehron. Grease pancake is extremely messy to clean up and smudges easily when you perspire (if the make-up doesn't nail you, the layers of dark costuming will). The water-based pancake is far more convenient.

To get the best coverage, clean your face before applying any makeup, using either unscented baby wipes or a light coat of Noxema. Some people prefer to put down a layer of Barrier Spray (available where theatrical makeup is sold), while others simply leave their faces clean or put down a very fine layer of the Noxema before beginning. Barrier spray and Noxema both make cleanup easier down the road. Let your face dry thoroughly before continuing. Some long-time Dark Elf players recommend doing your makeup in front of a fan if possible, so that you do not sweat at all during the application. Some folks prefer to put on their ears before they do the makeup job, while others prefer to wait until they've put on everything, so as to not get hair white and so on, on the ear tips.

Using a high quality makeup sponge, apply a careful, even coat of black to your face. Be sure to work the makeup into the hairline, to have a proper, seamless effect once your hair is done.

Use a black or charcoal setting powder (also available where you buy theatrical makeup) to make sure the coating stays on as long as possible.

Add black lipstick for good coverage (and keep it with you for touch-ups when eating and such).

Hair White (or Silver)

As a Dark Elf in NERO®, you are required to have white or silver hair (including all facial hair and eyebrows). The most common method is the use of Hair White concentrate in a bottle found, you guessed it, where theatrical makeup is sold. You may also want to consider using white hair spray (some people use a base of Hair White and touch up with white hairspray to ensure full coverage). However, spray alone is very costly in the quantities you'll need, and is guaranteed to make your hair a solid mass. A third alternative would be to use a wig and spare your hair the abuse in the first place.

The efficient application hair white concentrate is a bit tricky. First, you should wash and condition your hair, then towel it dry until it's just damp. Apply the Hair White concentrate to a comb and brush through your hair. Do not pour the hair white onto your head unless you like being referred to as the Dark Elf with the Amazing Technicolor Head (multiple tones of white hair looks rather foolish). Once you have an even coat applied, use a wire bristle brush or a detangle comb to work it through your hair for 2-3 minutes.

Check your hair for "fossil factor." If your hair is still stiff, then continue the brushing technique. Once your hair is manageable, use a hair dryer for a minute or so to speed up the setting process of the concentrate. Use a brush and hair dryer in tandem until your hair almost feels normal. You will greatly reduce "hair stress" by using this method. This process is **STRONGLY** recommended for anyone who has hair beyond shoulder length. If you are having trouble with an even coating, over-spray your brushed-out hair with a light coat of white hair spray.

The removal of hair white is simply to thoroughly wash and condition your hair. You can leave hair white in overnight without causing permanent damage, but as a Dark Elf, plan on washing your pillowcases after every event!

Pointed Ears

Dark Elves are required to have pointed ears. If you can find them, acquire black ear tips (this will eliminate the tedious process of blackening regular ear tips). If you can only find the flesh toned ones, buy a thick black Sharpie marker to color them in for use. When applying them, you should use spirit gum or liquid latex. It is relatively painless to remove latex by simply peeling it away from the skin. Spirit gum has a specialized remover - buy it, use it! You should also clean and moisturize your ear tips with baby oil. This prevents the drying and cracking of the latex. However, there is nothing more annoying than losing an ear in combat. When using either product: Apply a light coat to the inside line of the ear tip where it will sit on your ear, let it sit until slightly tacky, and then place it on your ear and hold it there firmly until it adheres. Try to keep the liquid latex or spirit gum away from your hair, as it's harder to clean up.

If, for some reason, you are unable to get ear tips or hair white, or if you lose your ears during an event, please make every effort to conceal your “human” qualities (buy a really big bandana to cover you hair and ears, or wear a coif). Keep in mind that this is a temporary solution, and you should be sure to have the right gear for the next event.

Makeup Touch-Ups

You should also consider touching up your makeup job, especially your face, at points during the event. Nothing looks sillier than a Dark Elf with flesh-toned spots! Covering of your hands (via gloves or make-up) and other exposed parts of your body is highly recommended to complete the effect properly. You should also try to completely clean up at least once per day during an adventure weekend to avoid the toxicity effects.

Cleaning Up

We would suggest using baby wipes or a small quantity of baby shampoo for the initial cleaning, followed by skin moisturizer around the eyes and nose. A hot shower should eliminate the random spots you have missed.



For more details on how to achieve a good, well made-up look, see the Appendix entitled “*Further Tips on Dark Elven Makeup*”

BUILD SKILLS AVAILABLE

- Dark Elves can buy Resist Charm for 3 Build per use
- Dark Elves can buy Resist Sleep for 2 Build per use
- Dark Elves can buy Archery for half the standard build cost for their class

Disallowed Skills/Disadvantages

Dark Elves cannot buy Two Handed Blunt or Two Handed Sword skills

It is up to the player to decide why his or her race is unable to use such skills (whether they are deemed to frail or whether two handed weapons lack the class and artistry of one handed weapons, and so on).

Dark Elven Body is reduced by 2 points during the daytime (6 am through 6 pm)

Dark Elves have -2 Body Points in the daytime (defined as 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.). At 6 a.m., a Dark Elf loses 2 points from their maximum Body Points (never below one Body Point), adjusting their current Body Points to match, if necessary. This means that a Dark Elf will never fall unconscious due to this penalty. At 6 p.m., the Dark Elf's maximum Body Points go up by exactly the same number of points that they went down the night before. This rule cannot be used to circumvent other effects where Body Points are lost. This is generally role-played as an aversion to the sun and by reacting as blinded by magical light. Dark Elves stay away from direct sunlight if possible. (Some players wear veils or carry parasols during daylight hours.) Dark Elves should not be lounging about trying to get a suntan.



GUIDELINES FOR ROLEPLAYING A DARK ELF

Personality Traits

Please note that these are a baseline for developing your own character's personality traits and, unlike the makeup aspects, are not a requirement for playing a Dark Elf. However, do be aware that many people try to play close to these "core" principals, and may rebuff your character in-game (not out-of-game, but through in-game means) should you choose to stray too far from them. This may be traumatic for your character, or it may cause hours of intense interaction and fun!

Honorable

The most critical part of construction your Dark Elf profile is your character's perception of honor (see the section on Honor for more details). To not encompass this aspect of your Dark Elven self is not an option, unless you have no honor (renegade). No matter whether you are aligned with other Dark Elves or not, be sure to develop a personal code of honor by which your character works.

Solitary

Dark Elves are fundamental isolationists. They are apprehensive about interaction with your "run of the mill" surface dweller. They have a tendency to remain with people they are familiar with, rather than to travel with strangers, especially non-Dark Elves. Dark Elves come from a world that had been isolated for many thousands of years. They were brought up to believe that all surface dwellers are strange and often evil. For this reason Dark Elves tend to stay with people they know and trust. Other races may see Dark Elves as unemotional, solitary, unfriendly and somewhat paranoid.

Clandestine

Dark Elves are inclined to engage in slightly clandestine activities. For example, a Dark Elf may find a shadowy area to sit and wait to pounce on some hapless adventurer or monster. This is referred to as "spider sitting," and can help you to approach problems and obstacles with subtlety and stealth. A Dark Elf will be the epitome of manners and grace to an adversary, and then strike when least expected. A key principle might be "Keep your friends close, but your enemies closer." Our race is suspicious of others, fearless in fulfilling purpose, and cunningly logical. Dark Elves are used to assassination and political intrigue among their own, adding to their covert behavior.

Superior

Dark Elves general consider themselves to be a superior species. Elven history suggests that we have lived on Tyrra considerably longer than other races. Dark Elven audacity goes beyond this conceit. We generally consider ourselves the superlative Elven Race, sometimes to the point of blatant racism. "The taint of the surface will not thin our bloodlines!" Taken to an extreme, this is basically how Dark Elves view other races. Yet, Dark Elves would not publicly announce this opinion, preferring to avoid persecution and death. How a character feels about other races is personal but most should appear to be slightly egotistical, if not completely egomaniacal.

Superstitious

Dark Elves tend to be superstitious. Foremost in their superstition is their fear of the creature known as the Panthergast (see *Creation Myths*). Some believe that prolonged exposure to the sun lightens their skin. Depending on which creation myth your character believes, black dragons and/or spiders may hold a position of respect and even awe, within your character's belief system.

Fearless Disregard for Death

Dark Elves have no fear of death, seeing it as a moment of great honor, much like humans view birth. An honorable death ceremony is one of the few moments of complete satisfaction and joy in the Dark Elf's life. A legacy of honor and respect to be carried on by one's family is one of the greatest honors a Dark Elf could desire. Committing seppuku (ritual suicide) to cleanse a dishonorable act is deemed a high art in support of one's honor.

Necromancers

Necromancy is, or has at times been, legal in many Dark Elven lands, though this does not mean it is not viewed with some suspicion. It is up to you to decide how your character feels about necromancy, although within most human lands, anyone caught casting it will be subject to human laws and will be beyond the assistance of their homeland and peoples.

Evil?

It is a human misconception that all Dark Elves are evil; they only seem that way! They're just misunderstood.



CORE DARK ELVEN BELIEF SYSTEM

Honor and the Honor Code

How your character deals with aspects of Honor will be integral to your character development. This is a trait that has been bred into ALL Dark Elves. This does not mean you give your word of Honor to just anyone you encounter. Actually, the contrary should occur. A Dark Elf will normally give their word to someone that Dark Elves emphatically trust or a superior. Keep in mind, that Dark Elves are an Honor bound species due to their upbringing. It was the most efficient way the race discovered to keep the masses in line. Note that each culture package may have variations on how the Honor Code is handled, but the general principals are the same.

Clan Honor

There are 3 levels to the Honor Code. The first and most important is Clan Honor. Swearing to the Clan Honor means that your entire clan is responsible for you keeping your Honor. Likewise you are responsible to the entire clan for keeping your Honor. If your Clan Honor is broken, any clan member can take what ever measures are ruled necessary to restore that Honor. Also when Honor is broken the clan name is disgraced until the wrong has been righted. Only the head of the clan or a clan member given the privileged by the clan leader, may swear Clan Honor. You cannot swear any oath that is contrary to the Clan Honor Code.

A sample of Clan Honor Codes reads as follows:

- I will not commit any act that will endanger the Empire.
- I will not commit any act that will endanger my Clan.
- I will protect the Honor of my race and my Clan.
- I will defend my Clan.

When swearing on the Clan Honor the person asking you to swear would ask you:

"Do you swear on the Honor of Clan and by the Code to <name action or duty>."

"Doto anata sweato demo Yakusoku dochi Shuzoku soshite tokoro Yakusoku a <name action or duty>."

You would then answer, while on your left knee:

"By the Code of Clan , I do swear its Honor."

"Tokoro Yakusoku dochi Shuzoku wa sweato hoka kansaeshm."

Clan leaders should have in their possession a written copy of the Clan Honor Code, signed in blood by the clan leader and the Emperor/Empress.

House Honor

The next level of the Honor Code is House Honor. Swearing to the House Honor carries the same responsibilities as the Clan Honor but at the House level. Only the head of the house or a house member given the privileged by the head of the house, may swear Clan Honor. You cannot swear any oath that is contrary to the Clan or House Honor Code.

A sample House Honor Codes is as follows:

I will not commit any act that endangers my House.

I will defend my House.
I will protect the Honor of my House.
To strengthen the House, I strengthen the Clan.

When swearing on the House Honor the person asking you to swear must ask you:

"Do you swear on the Honor of House <House Name> and by the Code to <name action or duty>?"

"Doto anata sweato demo Yakusoku dochi Yado <House Name> soshite tokoro Yakusoku a <name action or duty>."

You would then answer while on your left knee:

"By the Code of House <House Name>, I do swear its Honor."

"Tokoro Yakusoku dochi Yado <House Name>, Wa sweato hoka kansaeshin."

All House leaders should have in their possession a written copy of the House Honor Code, signed in blood by the House leader and the Clan leader.

Personal Honor

The third level of the Honor Code is Personal Honor. Swearing on Personal Honor means you give your word and are bound by it to the death (to the point of taking a resurrection). To remember the suicide is considered very lucky. If you break your Personal Honor, you must commit ritual suicide or take the proper measures to redeem that Honor. If you do not regain your honor, you will be considered a renegade under Imperial law.

Each Dark Elf must write his or her own Honor Code. It must include any actions one will or will not commit in the name of Honor. Any time a Dark Elf swears to his/her Personal Honor, that oath then becomes part of his/her Personal Honor Code and must be physically added to the Code.

Example: Grimmhawk's Personal Honor Code states that he will protect the Emperor at all times, he will defend the Honor of any female Drae, and he will destroy undead creatures. Lord Darkhart swears Grimmhawk on his Personal Honor not to cast necromancy and Grimmhawk swears the oath. It then becomes part of his Personal Honor Code not to cast necromancy.

When swearing on your Personal Honor, the person asking you to swear will ask you:

"Do you swear on your Honor and by the Code to <action or duty given>?"

"Doto anata sweato demo anato Yakusoku soshite tokoro Yakusoku a <name action or duty>?"

You would then answer while on your left knee:

"I do swear my Honor and Oath."

"Wa sweato wao kansaeshin soshite kotabe."

Swearing Honor and Rank Outside the Clan

Clan Honor can only be sworn to someone outside the clan of equal or higher rank. House honor can only be sworn to another clan member of equal or higher rank. Personal Honor can be sworn to anyone. Non-Dark Elf rank is only acceptable if the individual swearing the oath has sworn fealty to a non-Dark Elf of that hierarchy of equal or higher rank or if the Dark Elf is himself titled within the hierarchy.

Example: If Grimmhawk swears fealty to Lord Eric, a human, then he can be held to his Clan and House Honor by any of the Lord Eric's peers or superiors.

Redeeming Honor

If Honor is broken at any level of the Code, to redeem that Honor, the guilty party must ask the offended party to contact any titled Dark Elf of higher rank than the guilty party. The titled Dark Elf will then consider the severity of the offense and assign a task or punishment fitting of the offense. The guilty party must complete the task without hesitation. Refusing to accept the punishment means that the offended person can order whatever means they deem necessary to bring justice to their name.

Breaking an Oath

If a Dark Elf is sworn on their Honor to an oath that they cannot uphold or which was coerced under false pretenses or with magical influence, then that Dark Elf can petition anyone of higher rank to break the oath. The person of rank must take the responsibility of investigating the circumstances. After the person of rank feels they have made sufficient effort, they can make a decision as to whether the Dark Elf should be bound to that oath. The person of rank also takes the responsibility of notifying the person to whom the oath was sworn that the oath was suspect and they must also inform all parties involved of any final decisions. This is a rare occurrence and is not taken lightly. Seldom are Dark Elves released from an Oath.

Seppuku (Ritual Suicide To Redeem Honor)

The act of seppuku requires an individual to kneel before the offended party and other Dark Elves wielding his or her weapon of choice. At this point, any last words or a death poem (fukotoba) may be spoken by the disgraced Dark Elf. Then he/she must disembowel him- or herself with the blade. A Second must be chosen to ensure that one has "finished the job." the Second must also be a Dark Elf. The individual may not receive a Life spell, or the ritual suicide will be invalid in the eyes of other Dark Elves.

The dishonored creature must be field resurrected (outside of a Permanent Earth Circle). The process is exceptionally painful for the spirit, but it is the Dark Elven way. A field resurrection takes approximately five minutes. Once the spirit has resurrected safely, his or her Honor has been fully restored.

As a Dark Elf, if you are dishonored, are not pardoned, and do not make restitution by quest or seppuku, you will be labeled a renegade (ileketzu). Any renegade Dark Elf should expect to be killed on sight by other Dark Elves. The Head of Household has the sole authority to declare someone renegade.

Dark Elven Garb

There are numerous cultural clusters of Dark Elves, depending upon where your particular clans originated (see the Culture Packages included herein, or check with your local chapter for details of local Dark Elven cultures). Each cultural group has been influenced by various real-world cultures, but the majority are based (very roughly) in medieval Japanese culture. As such, many players choose to use Japanese-influenced garb.

Use of Language

You do not have to learn Japanese or Kuraianki (a simplified Japanese-influenced language designed for Dark Elves) in order to play one, but learning at least some of the key phrases may add to your role-play experience. If you're interested in more in-depth understanding of the language, study the Dark Elven Language section below. Note that while this is the first language developed for Dark Elves, other variants (and even full-on Japanese) are used by some players and chapters.

Male/Female Interactions

Different clans and cultural groups throughout the Tyrran Dark Elven population may be either patriarchal or matriarchal. Please look into your chosen culture package section for the basics of the group you'll be associated with.

Inter-Racial Interactions

For the most part, Dark Elves are anywhere from wary about “surface dweller” races, to thoroughly elitist and racist. How you play your Dark Elf is up to you, but be aware that if you are “consorting” with humans and other surface dwellers a great deal, other Dark Elves may think less of you in game.

Crafts and Fine Arts

Dark elves (and elves in general) are long-lived, and the race has had many years to develop their arts. While involvement via craftsman skills and arts is definitely a player choice, many Dark Elven groups put a strong emphasis on culture and the arts, so you may want to include some creative aspects in your character development.

Magicks

In some Dark Elven cultural groups, necromancy is considered legal. Be careful, though – if your character chooses to cast it in lands where it is not legal, you will be without protection from the law. Otherwise, your choice to be a caster or another class is completely up to you!

Political Involvement

Some Dark Elven groups discourage members of their race to get involved in “human” politics, while others feel that to insert themselves in the political structure gives them a leg up in dealing with surface dwellers. In many of the Dark Elven cultural groups, there is a strict internal political structure (see the Cultural Packages below), that can preclude taking other titles. Again, however, the choices you make for your character are up to you!

Drae, Vornae Or Dark Elf – Which Is Which?

The most commonly asked question about Dark Elves is what is the difference between a “Drae,” a “Vornae,” and a “Dark Elf.” For out-of-game purposes, all Dark Elf players are considered “Drae” when creating new characters. The role-playing differences are stated below. Some Dark Elven cultures put more emphasis on these differences than others, and some players choose to make their characters very elitist about the differences (to the point of killing another Dark Elf for misusing the terms), while others deem the terms interchangeable.

Note: These differences are an in-game issue and should not be openly discussed in out-of-game situations. If some one asks you the difference, make it an in-game question and answer it as your character. This will help perpetuate the mystery surrounding the race.

Vornae

Vornae are the “True” Dark Elves. Any Dark Elf born without Drae blood is Vornae. Since the arrival of the Drae it is nearly impossible to determine who is truly Vornae. Only those born before the arrival have any true claim to that heritage. Many “hard line” Vornae detest being called Drae.

Drae

Drae are any non-Dark Elf that has been transformed into one via Formal Magic or other magical means. They are considered by many Vornae to be half-breeds, although there is no difference once the transformation is complete.

Dark Elf

Because of the confusion created over children of mixed parentage, and unsubstantiated claims to being Vornae, added to the human misconceptions of all three types being Drae, many of the Vornae and even some Drae, prefer being called Dark Elves. Most Vornae will not explain the difference to non-Dark Elves because they feel that it is an issue that should not concern them.



GENERAL FACTS ABOUT DARK ELVES

Lifespan

As with all elves of Tyrra, Dark Elf's life span averages about 600 years. Although there are cases of longer life spans these are rare cases and anything past 800 is extremely rare.

AGE	STAGE	HUMAN EQUIVALENT
0-3	Infant	0-2
4-7	Toddler	3-5
8-20	Child	6-8
21-70	Youth	9-11
71-90	Adolescent	12-14
91-100	Puberty	15-20
101-200	Young Adult	21-30
201-300	Mature	31-40
301-400	Middle Age	41-60
401-500	Elderly	61-90
501+	Venerable	90+

Pregnancy and Childbirth

The gestation period for Dark Elven pregnancy is ten months. The male to Female birth ratio is approximately 3:5. There is a significant chance (22%) that the female will give birth to twins. If the child is born with any genetic imperfections he will most likely be executed. This does not necessarily hold true for Dark Elves of low station. However, it is a cardinal rule to Dark Elves of a high status or rank. "If our child is born imperfect the he is not a true product of the fruit of our labor. Therefore, he is not a true Dark Elf. It must be destroyed." Welcome to the wonderful world of Dark Elves.



THE DARK ELVEN LANGUAGE

Although there are several variants, the original Dark Elven language is generally based on a modified (and simplified) Japanese. Some players choose to learn Japanese in its entirety, or already know it, while others learn Kuraianki, the modified language set found here. Various Dark Elven cultures may recommend other languages, as well, as their “regional” dialect. Others simply learn a few key phrases and words. ***Remember, you do not need to feel obligated to learn the language in order to play a Dark Elf***, however, some plot teams choose to make use of it in certain aspects of their plotlines.

Kuraianki/Common - the Dark Elven Dictionary

Part I: Common to Kuraianki

Common/English	Kuraianki
A	y, eigo
Abdomen	onaka, hara
Above	mo
After	okuri
Afternoon	hiru
again, repeat	hihai
agreement	doi
alchemy, alchemist	kusuriya
alcove	tokonoma
Ale	biiru
All	hichuhai
Also	mata
Alter	mikoshi
amulet	omamori
ancient	kodaifu
and	soshite
animal	dobutsu
answer	henji
antidote	gedo no doko
apprentice	gakusha
April	Ninato
archery	kyudo
archetype	seigenki
area	sekki
arm	ude
arm-guards	kote
armor	kabuto
arrangement	doiseri
art gallery	bijutsukan
art of halberd	naginatado
artisan	bungakushushi
as	soshin

Common/English	Kuraianki
assassin	ansavaru
at	tanio
August	Sannata
aunt	chocho
avatar	keshina
baby	tajobum
Back	senaka
Bad	warven
Bane	tensaite
barbarian	yajujochu
bargain	seiri
baroness	
baron	Raidanshaku (F), Rodanshaku (M)
bastard (modern def.)	magai
Bat	kombri
battle	ram
Bay	mioban
Bear	kumahito
before	senu
Bell	tsurigane
bell tower	kanatsukido
beloved, fiancé	ketsuluvdo
between	aidan
Bird	tori
Birth (day)	tajo
Bit	seesuru
bitch (modern def.)	baimesu
black	kuroi
black leopard	hyokuroi
blade	hanu

Common/English	Kuraianki
bland	odakasu
blind	zulu
blood	ketzu
Blue	zora
boat	hiroka
body	karada
book	hon
boots	kutsu
border	kok-kyo
bottle	bin
bow	arasou
box	hako
bracelet	udekayu
bread	pan
breath	haido
bridge	hashi
bridle	umaomogai
bright	mikui
brother	kyodairo
building	teterukeu
bunny rabbit	usagi no aisho
business	yoken
but	toso
careful	teina
careless	tainona
castle	shiro
cat	neko
cave	shakubenin
cavern	shakukana
ceiling	tenjo
celebration	shuku-jitsu-no
celestial	Chukajii
century	seiki
chest	mune
chest (box)	hako
chest protector	dobo
child	tajodomo
circle	benin
citizen	shimin
city	maichei
clan	Shokan
clan head	Shokanichi
cloak, cape	misaki,piwafwi
coast	hapo
coat of arms	mon-sho

Common/English	Kuraianki
coffee	kohi
coffin	kan
cold	tsumetai
colour	shikisairo
commoner	kochu
complex	gossa
confusion	konzatsu
conspiracy	hangimbo
copper	dozdo
corpse	shitaisho
cost	ryokak
council	bengonin
courage	genyuki
crossbow	deshitesou
crown	naru
crown prince	Ronaruzun
crown princess	Rainaruzun
crystal	sho
curse	saruso, nokorou
cursed	nokoraise
custom	minzoku
dagger	hanuken
danger	aon
dark	bana
daughter	musumi
day	gozen
deal	dadoiki
dear (as in friendship)	takashii
dear (lover)	aijin
dear (used in letter)	nedanti
death	fuko
death	Shinanai
december	Ichikan
deep, strong (defines emotions)	deshimune
deer	shika
delirium	seinekkyo
denizen	koshimin
depressed	sanoni
desire	Shomo
despair	Setsu
destiny	Summei
destruction	Sukujo

Common/English	Kuraianki
difficult	konna
dirk	saitanu,tanten
disease	kazako
dog	inu
door	toikko
down	shi
Drac	Kuroigatsurei
dragon	ryu
dream	nisuyo
dream/morpheus	Sunachii
drink	sake
duchess	Shufuo
duke	Shujino
dwarf	shakujochu
dweller	ikitaya
dying	fukinra
ear	mimi
earth	kadatabe
east	Higashi
easy	yuttari
egg	tatsu
eight	ochi
elbow	hiji
elemental	genso no
elf (generic)	chiisai-tachi
elf, quentari	gatsu
elk	oshika
elven (Dark Elven) wine	chiisake
encampment	imayado
end	shuwari
endless	eienako
enemy	tekii
engaged	tomadamachiwa
engagement	tomadamachi
equal	chijunkorai
eternal	eienno
evening	asa
event	gatesono
ever	iietoki
evil	maro
evil spirit	maro no seishin
exit	deguchi
eye	me
face	kad

Common/English	Kuraianki
face mask	men
fade	hihakaride
fairy	shinsen no
Fall	akikaze
family	ketzuyado
farm	noen
farmer	noenite
father	otosan
february	Sankan
female	rai
fever	neta
fight	ram
fighter	rambo
final	shimau
fine	ohai
finger	yubi
fire	kaji
fish	sakana
five	go
flag	hata
flame	honoo
flavor	mukisu
flour	uka
flower	hanta
flute	tiki
fog	tsutsumu
folk art	mingeihan
folk craft	mingeihan
food	tabemono
fool	kariakhan
foot	ashiwa
for	notame
foreign (place)	gaiko kuge
foreigner	gaikujin
forest	shinrin
forever	iie no toki
fountain	senizumi
four	yo
freedom	jiyuna
friday	Kinyokon
friend	tomadachi
from	karani
fruit	kakin
full moon	kanzenna tsuki
funeral	soshiki

Common/English	Kuraianki
fur	dobso
gas	kitaiga
gas - dominate	kishihari
gas - forget it well	kiruriku
gas - forget me not	kiruriso
gas - paralysis	kimaha
gas - sleep	kinemu
gas (prefix)	ki-
gems - agate	menoyok
gems - amber	kohakuhone
gems - amethyst	murasayok
gems - aquamarine	aidamayok
gems - bloodstone	shoketzuyok
gems - carnelian	hitoyok
gems - citrine	shitoyok
gems - diamond	hishdaidoyok
gems - emerald	meradoyok
gems - garnet	ankoyok
gems - hematite	ginkuroiyok
gems - ivory	zoghone
gems - jade	yakuzaok
gems - jasper	heigyok
gems - lapis lazuli	ruriok
gems - lepidolite	shohyoyok
gems - malachite	shodairyok
gems - moonstone	shimayok
gems - mother of pearl	shinju no chihone
gems - obsidian	gamikuroiyok
gems - onyx	onyok
gems - opal	oparyok
gems - pearl	shinjuhone
gems - peridot	oriibuyok
gems - quartz	sekieiyok
gems - ruby	rubyoyak
gems - sapphire	safaiyayok
gems - shell	kaighone
gems - sodalite	akasodyok
gems - tiger's eye	jorumeyok
gems - topaz	yogyoyok
gems - tourmaline	mankebyok
gems - turquoise	torsoraiyok
generic curse 1	mochi no ana, (vaguely = up yours)
generic curse 2	iieak dieto, (= eat shit

Common/English	Kuraianki
	and die)
generic curse 3	deshoro, (= "f* you, f* off")
generic curse 4	chijokkan no, (generic slur on mother)
ghost	seijana
glass	jawai
glove	tebukuro
goat	yagihige
goblet	jawai
goblin	oni
gold	kane
good	iio
grave	haka
gravestone	doseki
graveyard	bochi
great	iiofuka
green	shoao
grey	kushi
grieve	shufuwake
ground	kodatabe
guard	shoei
guardian	shoeishin
guest	kukya
guilty	baiyuzai
guitar	kalingaku
gypsy	Ekishayoi, Jipushii
hair	atasu
half	han
hand	te
handicapped	butsuchosu
happy	kina
hat	boshi
haze	tsutsumu
he	sono
head	atama
healer	ishai
heart	shinzo
helm	herumetto
help	chijunte
her	sona
herald	byohosca
here	yayashu
hers	otoka
high lady	Raishukoto

Common/English	Kuraianki
high lady knight	Raishukotoban
high lord	Roshukoto
high lord knight	Roshukotoban
hill	osaka
him	sono
his	otoko
hobgoblin	onika
hobling	hanjochu
hole	toikko
holiday	shuku-jitsu
honor	kansaeshin
honor code	Kansaehoten
hooker	bajjunish
horse	umari
hot	atsugiru
house	yado
household	kateini
how	do
how many	doiku
how much	dochu
human	jinochu
humble	hikisu
hunt	tabear
hunter	tabe arasou, tabeite
i	Wa
if	moshi
ill omen	sarusou
immortal	shinfukno
impossible	fukano
in	de
incense	senko
innocent	shokina
intangible	tanawai
intended (in marriage)	tomadamachi
intestines	cho
it	hono
its	hotoko
jail	kangoku
january	Nikan
jewel	kikinzoku
jewelry	kikinzokudzu
joining mate	isshomatchi
joy	ren
july	Ninata

Common/English	Kuraianki
june	Ichinata
keep	motteiru
king	Roshya
king's consort	Roshyayuki
knee	hiza
knife	hocho
knight	ban
knowledge	chishiki
lady	Raishu
lady knight	Raishuban
lake	mizumi
lamp	dento
land	kodatabe
language	anki
large	iiifu
left	hidari
leg	ashi
legend	shiwa
leopard	hyo
less	hanyasono
let	mashya
letter	byoho
liche	tamashii no nai maro
life	ikita
life mate	ikitamachi
light	hihakari
lightning (bolt)	denkiwaru
lion	shishi
liver	kanzo
long	nidonote
lord	Roshu
lord knight	Roshuban
loss	iieyashu
lost	iieyashu no
love	aikoijin
low	iyaku
loyalty	jonzuru
lungs	haizo
lycanthrope	okamimaru
mage	benyoka
magic	benki
magic scroll	byobenki
male	ro
manor house	kokaido
many	takusan

Common/English	Kuraianki
march	Ichinato
marriage, married	kekkon
masochism	masodizu
masochist	masodizuyobi
mate	machi
mathmatics	ryogaesho
May	Sannato
maybe	tabun
me	wa
meat	niku
meddle	ijiru
memory	chishiwai
merchant	shonin
message	byoho
messenger	byohonero
metal	sozai
midnight	mayonaka toki
mined or "dead" stone	-yok
mist	kirino
monday	Tsukiget
money	hei
moon	tsukimi
more	motto
morning	shima
mortal	inoshin
moss	noke
mother	okasan
motherland	okakuzotabe
mountain	yama
mourn	shufuwake
mouse	okumono
mouth	kuchi
mug	jawai
murder	satsuji
mushroom	deshikohana
music	ongaku
my	wao
myself	waowa
myth	shiwa
name	namae
near	kinkai
neck	kubi
necromancer	fukabenyoka
necromancy	fukabenki

Common/English	Kuraianki
nest	so
never	ieejun
new	waka
next	tosoba
night	goa
nightmare	goakuyo
nine	kuko
no	iee
non-Drae (non-elf)	jochu
noon	juni tokin
north	kita
northwind	kitakaze
nose	hana
noun	nohen
november	Sanaki
now	ima
october	Niaki
of	dochi,ne
off	shideshi
offensive	mikui
ogre	uyoko
old	kodai
on	demo
one	ichi
orc	okiioni
our	domota
out	watash
outgoing	shupusu
oval	enchi
over	waki
pagoda	to
pain	hihakariwa
panthergast	nakomaromu
paper	kami
paralyzed	mahaichu
parchment	kami
parents	ryoshin
pawnshop	shichiya
pet	gando
piece	seesuru
pig	buta
place	sekki
please	kudasai
pleasure	tagora
poison	doko

Common/English	Kuraianki
poison - blindness	dozulu
poison - cause light	doimkizu
poison - cause serious	dofiumkizo
poison - cure light	donokizu
poison - death	dodofuko
poison - enslavement	dodorei
poison - feeblemind	dojochu
poison - halucoid	dogenso
poison - love	dokoi
poison - paralyze	domaha
poison - paranoia	dokyofu
poison - quick death	dohafuko
poison - sleep	donemu
poison - vorpal coat	dosempo
poison (prefix)	do-
poor	mazushii
possible	kano
potion	byoishai
potter	suboite
pretty	bana
prince	Rozun
princess	Raizun
prison	kangoku
prisoner	horyo
promise	yakusoku
promised (sworn to)	tomadamachi
prostitute	baishufu
proud	tokisu
provider	tabe no arasou
quarter	made
queen	Raishya
queen's consort	Raishyayuki
question	monji
rabbit	kai usagi
rain	iya
random	gunsho
ransom	hori no ryokak
rat	nezumi

Common/English	Kuraianki
reason (n)	surido
recognition	reizonjuru
rectangle	chohokei
red	adaise
reptile	haimawaru
rich	kanemochi
right	migi
ring	kayu
ritual	gishiki no
ritual scroll	byogishiki
river	kawa
road	bata
rock	ishi
rodent	kesshi
rogue	zoku
roof	yani
ruins	kaishita
sad	inkina
saddle	kura
sadism	sadizu
sadist	sadizuyobi
sage	seijin
salty	soyshiosu
sarcasm	hiniku
sarr	Nekoseishin
saturday	Dojindo
scholar	kyo
school	gakko
scroll	byo
sea	kairo
sea, animal or "live"stone"	-hone
season	tibaemman
self	wai
seneschal	Raikuchi (F), Rokuchi (M)
september	Ichiaki
serious	sanitima
serpant	hebi
servant	meshiya
set	neromizo
seven	hichi
sex, the act of	raissshoro
shade	bana
shadow	el

Common/English	Kuraianki
shield	tatedo
ship	hiroka
shit	tobak
shop	mise
short	hanyasonote
shoulder	kata
shy	okusu
sick	muka
sigil	chiihai
silent meditation	zazen
silver	ginka
simple	kantari
sister	kyodairei
situation	doibasho
six	roku
slander	warukuchi
slave	doreino
small	iiefu
snake	hebi
snow	yukka
so	sate
solumn	saniti
son	musukien
soon	suguya
sorrow	okinoama
sorry	okino
soul	seishin
sound	kenzoto
sour	iyantsu
south	minami
spider	kumi
spider sylph	yoka-kumi
spirit	seishin
spring	natshoka
square	hiroba
squire	Ojinushi
staff	shikibo
star	ninkomono
sting	shinhari
stomach	i
stone	shaku
stop	kroishu
store	choso
storm	denki
story	kai

Common/English	Kuraianki
strange	kyozu
strength	deshite
string	kali
strong	deshite
structure	tsukukozo
student	gakusei
summer	natsuka
sun	saruso
sunday	Asahibi
support	deshite
surface	demotabe
surface dweller w/ honor	kansaishinjo
sweet	lintsu
sword (Dark Elven)	katana
sword (surface dweller)	kentsurugi
sword, art of drawing	iaido
tabard	kireata
table	teiburu
tail	kipotsu
tall	chusonote
tart	sunopaisu
taste	ajisu
tavern	yadoya
tea	cha
teacher	shikommu
tears	namisho
than/then	soni
thank (you)	arigato
that	sore
the	gai
their	koko
theirs	kotoko
them	kare
then/than	soni
there	iieasoko
they	sorera
thief	nusubo
thing	gatesono
this	kono
three	san
throat	nudo

Common/English	Kuraianki
thunder	dair
thunderstorm	dairnerodenki
thursday	Mokudeiki
tiger	joru
time	toki
to	a
tongue	shita
too	mata
tooth	ha
torch	taimatsu
trap	wanato
tree	shin
triangle	sankakkei
troll	ugoku
true	kanshinso
trust	chijin
tuesday	Kajibi
tunic	hizashi
two	ni
typhoon	taifun
ugly	mikui
uncle	shosho
undead	wakemaro
under	deshi
up	mo
us	domo
value	ryokak
vampire	elikitamaro
verb	veishi
verb ending -ed	-ial
verb ending -en	-dei
verb ending -er	-sinto
verb ending -est	-(o)gon
verb ending -ing	-(t)ima
verb ending -ly	-(t)a
verb tense -future	-(s)uru
verb tense -negative	-(t)en
verb tense -past	-(m)aeni
verb tense -positive	-(t)o
virgin	shojowa
vision	shikazoto
voice	deiloto
wait	kroishu

Common/English	Kuraianki
wall	kabe
want	chishsho
war	ram
warrior	rambocho
waste	tobaii
water	mizo
we	domo
weapon, any	kyoki
weapon, family	ketzuhanu
weasel	itachi
weather	tenero
weaver	orite
wedding	kekkoynu
welcome	samairu
well	ohai
well-made	idota
west	nishi
what	nani
when	itsu
where	doko ni
which	dochira
white	shiroi
who	dare
whore	baifu
why	chirrit
wild	yaju
wind	kaze
wind chime	furin
window	maddo
wine	sakeni
wing	tsubasa
winter	kanchoi
with	witti
wolf	okami
wood	sakuru
word	kotoba
worth	ryokak
writer	choshaite
yellow	kiogon
yes	hai
you (individual)	anata
you (plural)	anatayobi
young	wakaiko
your	anato
zero	sho

Common/English	Kuraianki
zombie	wakemarojun

Part II: Kuraianki to Common

Kuraianki	Common/English
-(m)aeni	verb tense - past
-(o)gon	verb ending - est
-(s)uru	verb tense - future
-(t)a	verb ending - ly
-(t)en	verb tense - negative
-(t)ima	verb ending - ing
-(t)o	verb tense - positive
a	to
adaise	red
aidamayok	gems - aquamarine
aidan	between
aijin	dear (lover)
aikoijin	love
ajisu	taste
akasodyok	gems - sodalite
akikaze	fall
anata	you (individual)
anatayobi	you (plural)
anato	your
anki	language
ankoyok	gems - garnet
ansavaru	assassin
aon	danger
arasou	bow
arigato	thank (you)
asa	evening
Asahibi	Sunday
ashi	leg
ashiwa	foot
atama	head
atasu	hair
atsugiru	hot
baifu	whore
baijunish	hooker
baimesu	bitch (modern def.)
baishufu	prostitute
baiyuzai	guilty
ban	Knight
bana	dark
bana	pretty
bana	shade
bata	road

bengonin	council
benin	circle
benki	magic
benyoka	mage
biiru	ale
bijutsukan	art gallery
bin	bottle
bochi	graveyard
boshi	hat
bungakushushi	artisan
buta	pig
butsuchosu	handicapped
byo	scroll
byobenki	magic scroll
byogishiki	ritual scroll
byoho	letter
byoho	message
byohonero	messenger
byhosca	herald
byoishai	potion
cha	tea
chiihai	sigil
chiisai-tachi	elf (generic)
chiisake	elven (Drae) wine
chijin	trust
	generic curse 4
	generic slur on
chijokkan no	mother
chijunkorai	equal
chijunte	help
chirrit	why
chishiki	knowledge
chishiwai	memory
chishsho	want
cho	intestines
chocho	aunt
chohokei	rectangle
choshaito	writer
choso	store
Chukajii	Celestial
chusonote	tall
dadoiki	deal
dair	thunder
dairnerodenki	thunderstorm
dare	who

de	in
deguchi	exit
-dei	verb ending -en
deiloto	voice
demo	on
demotabe	surface
denki	storm
denkiwaru	lightning (bolt)
dento	lamp
deshi	under
deshikohana	mushroom
deshimune	deep, strong (defines emotions)
deshite	strength
deshite	strong
deshite	support
deshitesou	crossbow
deshoro	generic curse 3(f* you, f* off)
do	how
do-	poison (prefix)
dobo	chest protector
dobso	fur
dobutsu	animal
dochi,ne	of
dochira	which
dochu	how much
dodofuko	poison - death
dodorei	poison - enslavement
dofiumkizo	poison - cause serious
dogenso	poison - halucoid
dohafuko	poison - quick death
doi	agreement
doibasho	situation
doiku	how many
doimkizu	poison - cause light
doiseri	arrangement
Dojindo	Saturday
dojochu	poison - feblemind
doko	poison
doko ni	where

dokoi	poison - love
dokyofu	poison - paranoia
domaha	poison - paralyze
domo	us
domo	we
domota	our
donemu	poison - sleep
donokizu	poison - cure light
doreino	slave
doseki	gravestone
dosempo	poison - vorpal coat
dozdo	copper
dozulu	poison - blindness
eienako	endless
eienno	eternal
Ekishayoi, Jipushii	Gypsy
el	shadow
elikitamaro	vampire
enchi	oval
fukabenki	necromancy
fukabenyoka	necromancer
fukano	impossible
fukinra	dying
fuko	death
furin	wind chime
gai	the
gaiko kuge	foreign (place)
gaikujin	foreigner
gakko	school
gakusei	student
gakusha	apprentice
gamikuroiyok	gems - obsidian
gando	pet
gatesono	event
gatesono	thing
gatsu	elf, Quentari
gedo no doko	antidote
genso no	elemental
genyuki	courage
ginka	silver
ginkuroiyok	gems - hematite
gishiki no	ritual
go	five
goa	night
goakuyo	nightmare

gossa	complex
gozen	day
gunsho	random
ha	tooth
hai	yes
haido	breath
haimawaru	reptile
haizo	lungs
haka	grave
hako	box
hako	chest (box)
han	half
hana	nose
hangimbo	conspiracy
Hanjochu	Hobling
hanta	flower
hanu	blade
hanuken	dagger
hanyasono	less
hanyasonote	short
hapo	coast
hashi	bridge
hata	flag
hebi	serpant
hebi	snake
hei	money
heigyok	gems - jasper
henji	answer
herumetto	helm
hichi	seven
hichuhai	all
hidari	left
Higashi	East
hihai	again, repeat
hihakari	light
hihakaride	fade
hihakariwa	pain
hiji	elbow
hikisu	humble
hiniku	sarcasm
hiroba	square
hiroka	boat
hiroka	ship
hiru	afternoon
hishdaidoyok	gems - diamond
hitoyok	gems - carnelian

hiza	knee
hocho	knife
hon	book
-hone	suffix, "sea, animal or "live"stone"
hono	it
honoo	flame
hori no ryokak	ransom
horyo	prisoner
hotoko	its
hyo	leopard
hyokuroi	black leopard
i	stomach
iaido	sword, art of drawing
-ial	verb ending -ed
ichi	one
Ichiaki	September
Ichikan	December
Ichinata	June
Ichinato	March
idota	well-made
iie	no
iie no toki	forever
iieak dieto	generic curse 2, (eat shit and die)
iieasoko	there
iiefu	small
iiejun	never
iietoki	ever
iieyashu	loss
iieyashu no	lost
iio	good
iiofu	large
iiofuka	great
ijiru	meddle
ikita	life
ikitamachi	life mate
ikitaya	dweller
ima	now
imayado	encampment
inkina	sad
inoshin	mortal
inu	dog
ishai	healer
ishi	rock

isshomatchi	joining mate
itachi	weasel
itsu	when
iya	rain
iyaku	low
iyantsu	sour
jawai	glass
jawai	goblet
jawai	mug
jinochu	human
jiyuna	freedom
jochu	non-Drae (non-elf)
joru	tiger
jorumeyok	gems - tiger's eye
juni token	noon
junzuru	loyalty
kabe	wall
kabuto	armour
kad	face
kadatabe	earth
kai	story
kai usagi	rabbit
kaighone	gems - shell
kairo	sea
kaishita	ruins
kaji	fire
Kajibi	Tuesday
kakin	fruit
kali	string
kalingaku	guitar
kami	paper
kami	parchment
kan	coffin
kanatsukido	bell tower
kanchoi	winter
kane	gold
kanemochi	rich
kangoku	jail
kangoku	prison
kano	possible
Kansaehten	Honor Code
kansaeshin	honor
kansaishinjo	surface dweller w/ honor
kanshinso	true
kantari	simple

kanzenna tsuki	full moon
kanzo	liver
karada	body
karani	from
kare	them
kariakhan	fool
kata	shoulder
katana	sword (Dark Elf)
kateini	household
kawa	river
kayu	ring
kazako	disease
kaze	wind
kekkon	marriage, married
kekkoynu	wedding
kentsurugi	(surface dweller)
kenzoto	sound
keshina	avatar
kesshi	rodent
ketsuluvdo	beloved, fiance
ketzu	blood
ketzuhanu	weapon, family
ketzuyado	family
ki-	gas (prefix)
kikinzoku	jewel
kikinzokudzu	jewelry
kimaha	gas - paralysis
kina	happy
kinemgu	gas - sleep
kinkai	near
Kinyokon	Friday
kiogon	yellow
kipotsu	tail
kirino	mist
kiruriku	gas - forget it well
kiruriso	gas - forget me not
kishihari	gas - dominate
kita	north
kitaiga	gas
kitakaze	northwind
kochu	commoner
kodai	old
kodaifu	ancient
kodatabe	ground
kodatabe	land
kohakuhone	gems – amber

kohi	coffee
kokaido	manor house
kok-kyo	border
koko	their
kombri	bat
konna,	difficult
kono	this
konzatsu	confusion
koshimin	denizen
kote	arm guards
kotoba	word
kotoko	theirs
kroishu	stop
kroishu	wait
kubi	neck
kuchi	mouth
kudasai	please
kuko	nine
kukya	guest
kumahito	bear
kumi	spider
kura	saddle
kuroi	black
Kuroigatsurei	Dark Elf
kushi	grey
kusuriya	alchemy, alchemist
kutsu	boots
kyo	scholar
kyodairei	sister
kyodairo	brother
kyoki	weapon
kyozu	strange
kyudo	archery
lintsu	sweet
machi	mate
maddo	window
made	quarter
	bastard (modern def.)
magai	
mahaichu	paralyzed
maichei	city
mankebyok	gems - tourmaline
maro	evil
maro no seishin	evil spirit
mashya	let
masodizu	masochism

masodizuyobi	Masochist
mata	also
mata	too
mayonaka toki	Midnight
mazushii	poor
me	eye
men	face mask
menoyok	gems - agate
meradoyok	gems - emerald
meshiya	servant
migi	right
mikoshi	alter
mikui	bright
mikui	offensive
mikui	ugly
mimi	ear
minami	south
mingeihhan	folk art
mingeihhan	folk craft
minzoku	custom
mioban	bay
misaki,piwafwi	cloak, cape
mise	shop
mizo	water
mizumi	lake
mo	above
mo	up
	generic curse 1 (vaguely = up yours)
mochi no ana	
Mokudeiki	Thursday
monji	question
mon-sho	coat of arms
moshi	if
motteiru	keep
motto	more
muka	sick
mukisu	flavor
mune	chest
murasayok	gems - amethyst
musukien	son
musumi	daughter
naginatado	art of halberd
nakomaromu	Panthergast
namae	name
namisho	tears

nani	what
naru	crown
natshoka	spring
natsuka	summer
nedanti	dear (used in letter)
neko	cat
Nekoseishin	Sarr
neromizo	set
neta	fever
nezumi	rat
ni	two
Niaki	October
nidonote	long
Nikan	January
niku	meat
Ninata	July
Ninato	April
ninkomono	star
nishi	west
nisuyo	dream
noen	farm
noenite	farmer
nohen	noun
noke	moss
nokoraise	cursed
notame	for
nudo	throat
nusubo	thief
ochi	eight
odakasu	bland
ohai	fine
ohai	well
Ojinushi	Squire
okakuzotabe	Motherland
okami	wolf
okamimaru	lycanthrope
okasan	mother
okiioni	orc
okino	sorry
okinoama	sorrow
okumono	mouse
okuri	after
okusu	shy
omamori	amulet
onaka	hara abdomen

ongaku	music
oni	goblin
onika	hobgoblin
onyok	gems - onyx
oparyok	gems - opal
oriibuyok	gems - peridot
orite	weaver
osaka	hill
oshika	elk
otoka	hers
otoko	his
otosan	father
pan	bread
rai	female
Raidanshaku (F), Rodanshaku (M)	Baron
raissshoro	sex, the act of
Raikuchi (F), Rokuchi (M)	Seneschal
Rainaruzun	Crown Princess
Raishu	Lady
Raishuban	Lady Knight
Raishukoto	High Lady
Raishukotoban	High Lady Knight
Raishya	Queen
Raishyayuki	Queen's consort
Raizun	Princess
ram	battle
ram	fight
ram	war
rambo	fighter
rambocho	warrior
reizonjuru	recognition
ren	joy
ro	male
roku	six
Ronaruzun	Crown Prince
Roshu	Lord
Roshuban	Lord Knight
Roshukoto	High Lord
Roshukotoban	High Lord Kinght
Roshya	King
Roshyayuki	King's Consort
Rozun	Prince
rubyoyak	gems - ruby
ruriok	gems - lapis lazuli

ryogaesho	mathmatics
ryokak	cost
ryokak	value
ryokak	worth
ryoshin	parents
ryu	dragon
sadizu	sadism
sadizuyobi	sadist
saifaiyayok	gems - sapphire
saitanu, tanten	Dirk
sakana	fish
sake	drink
sakeni	wine
sakuru	wood
samairu	welcome
san	three
Sanaki	November
saniti	solemn
sanitima	serious
sankakkei	triangle
Sankan	February
Sannata	August
Sannato	May
sanoni	depressed
saruso	ill omen
saruso	nokorou curse
saruso	sun
sate	so
satsuji	murder
seesuru	bit
seesuru	piece
seigenki	archetype
seijana	ghost
seijin	sage
seiki	century
Seinekkyo	Delirium
seiri	bargain
seishin	soul
seishin	spirit
sekieiyok	gems - quartz
sekki	area
sekki	place
senaka	back
senizumi	fountain
senko	incense
senu	before

Setsu	Despair
shaku	stone
shakubenin	cave
Shakujochu	Dwarf
shakukana	cavern
shi	down
shichiya	pawnshop
shideshi	off
shika	deer
shikazoto	vision
shikibo	staff
shikisairo	colour
shikomu	teacher
shima	morning
shimau	final
shimayok	gems - moonstone
shimin	citizen
shin	tree
Shinanai	Death
shinfukno	immortal
shinhari	string
shinju no chihone	gems - mother of pearl
shinjuhone	gems - pearl
shinrin	forest
shinsen no	fairy
shinzo	heart
shiro	castle
shiroi	white
shishi	lion
shita	tongue
shitaisho	corpse
shitoyok	gems - citrine
shiwa	legend
shiwa	myth
sho	crystal
sho	zero
shoao	green
shodairyok	gems - malachite
shoei	guard
shoeishin	guardian
shohyoyok	gems - lepidolite
shojowa	virgin
Shokan	Clan
Shokanichi	Clan Head
shoketzuyok	gems – bloodstone

shokina	innocent
Shomo	Desire
shonin	merchant
shosho	uncle
Shufuo	Duchess
shufuwake	grieve
shufuwake	mourn
Shujino	Duke
shuku-jitsu	holiday
shuku-jitsu-no	Celebration
shupusu	outgoing
shuwari	end
-sinto	verb ending -er
so	nest
sona	her
soni	than/then
sono	he
sono	him
sore	that
sorera	they
soshiki	funeral
soshin	as
soshite	and
soyshiosu	salty
sozai	metal
suboite	potter
suguya	soon
Sukujo	Destruction
Summei	Destiny
Sunachii	Dream/Sandman/ Morpheus
sunopaisu	tart
surido	reason (n)
tabe arasou	tabeite hunter
tabe no arasou	Provider
tabear	hunt
tabemono	food
tabun	maybe
tagora	pleasure
taifun	typhoon
taimatsu	torch
tainona	careless
tajo	birth (day)
tajobum	baby
tajodomo	child
takashii	dear (familiar as in

	friendship)
takusan	many
tamashii no nai maro	Lich
tanawai	intangible
tanio	at
tanten,saitanu	Dirk
tatedo	shield
tatsu	egg
te	hand
tebukuro	glove
teiburu	table
teina	careful
tekii	enemy
tenero	weather
tenjo	ceiling
tensaite	bane
teteruken	building
tibaemman	season
tiki	flute
to	pagoda
tobaii	waste
tobak	shit
toikko	door
toikko	hole
toki	time
tokisu	proud
tokonoma	alcove
tomadachi	friend
tomadamachi	promised (sworn to)
tomadamachi	intended (in marriage)
tomadamachi	Engagement
tomadamachiwa	Engaged
tori	bird
torsoraiyok	gems - turquoise
toso	but
tosoba	next
tsubasa	wing/s
Tsukiget	Monday
tsukimi	moon
tsukukozo	structure
tsumetai	cold
tsurigane	bell
tsutsumu	fog

tsutsumu	haze
ude	arm
udekayu	bracelet
ugoku	troll
uka	flour
umaomogai	bridle
umari	horse
usagi no aisho	bunny rabbit
uyoko	ogre
veishi	verb
Wa	I
Wa	me
Wai	self
Waka	new
wakaiko	young
wakemaro	undead
wakemarojun	Zombie
Waki	over
wanato	trap
wao	my
waowa	myself
warukuchi	slander
warven	bad
watash	out
witti	with

y, eigo	a
yado	house
yadoya	tavern
yagihige	goat
yaju	wild
yajujochu	barbarian
yakusoku	promise
yakuzaok	gems - jade
yama	mountain
yani	roof
yayashu	here
yo	four
yogyoyok	gems - topaz
-yok	suffix, mined or "dead" stone
yoka-kumi	spider sylph
yoken	business
yubi	finger
yukka	snow
yuttari	easy
zazen	silent meditation
zogehone	gems - ivory
zoku	rogue
zora	blue
zulu	blind

Verbs, Conjugation, Verb Endings and Suffixes

Verb forms are simple. Firstly, you don't need to memorize another language - we're using English verbs. The Kuraianki conjugation is added after the first few letter, usually three. Enough of the original verb is kept so that the English is recognizable, if you know how the system works. This is a basic list, to be used as a guideline for forming further verbs as needed. The only irregular verb in Kuraianki is the verb "to be". All verbs here are listed in both the positive and the negative forms, however, suffixes can be "stacked", for such endings and tenses as:

-edly, -ening, -ingly, -ered

To Be - "mash"

Conjugation:

is/am/are // is/am/are not
masho // mashen

Common/English	Affirmative	Negative
to bite	bito	biten
to burn	burto	burten

Common/English	Affirmative	Negative
to bury	burito	buriten
to cast	casto	casten

Common/English	Affirmative	Negative
to destroy	desto	desten
to die	dieto	dieten
to dig	digto	digten
to do	doto	doten
to drink	drinto	drinten
to eat	eato	eaten
to fight	figto	figten
to find	finto	finten
to forget	forto	forten
to get	getto	getten
to give	givto	givten
to go	goto	goten
to hate	hato	haten
to heal	helto	helten
to imagine	imato	imaten
to kill	kilto	kilten
to like	liko	liken
to live	livto	livten
to look	lokto	lokten
to love	lovto	lovten
to make	makto	makten
to mourn	morto	morten

Common/English	Affirmative	Negative
to need	neto	neten
to play	plato	platen
to quiet	kwito	kwiten
to remember	remeto	remeten
to remove	remto	remten
to repair	repto	repten
to rest	resto	resten
to recognise	recoto	recoten
to rot	roto	roten
to run	runto	runten
to rush	rusto	rusten
to scare	scarto	scarten
to sing	sinto	sinten
to skulk	skulto	skulten
to speak	speato	speaten
to take	tako	taken
to tell	telto	telten
to think	thinto	thinten
to try	trito	triten
to wait	waito	waiten
to walk	wato	waten
to waylay	walto	walten

Use this guide for general conjugative rules. Usually, the (t) is not used after a k, as is evident, except in the case of "to look", as it was just too silly not to put it there. Some of this may seem too simplistic to sound like another language, but when combined into sentences with Kuraianki nouns, and so on, it is not recognizable as English-derivative unless you already know what to listen for.

Verb Endings and Word Suffixes

-(t)o	positive
-(t)en	negative
-(m)aeni	past
-(s)uru	future
-dei	-en
-sinto	-er
-ial	-ed
-(o)gon	-est
-(t)a	-ly
-(t)ima	-ing
-chu	denotes coinage when used as a suffix after the words "gold," "silver," "copper," or any other metal used for coins

The accent "/ " over a letter indicates a long vowel sound EXCEPT when used in the proper names of people and places, though not in proper titles, such as Baron. In the EXCEPTIONS, the

accent " / " is used as a syllabic stress mark, indicating the syllable to be stressed for pronunciation.

Optional Rule - normal verb endings can be used (this might be too bulky for conversation, though):

-di	used when a conjugated verb precedes another verb, -di becomes the second verb ending
-----	---

Examples:

I need to go	Wa neto godi
I would like	Wa wilaeni likdi
I don't want	Wa doten wandi

Pronunciation Guide

In Kuraianki, no stress is placed on any one syllable, except for proper names of people and places. The language is spoken with an even rhythm, and is fairly monotone in nature. Pronunciations of vowels are to be compared to English vowels as follows:

Vowel	As In
a	fat, apple
y	play, break
E	ten, enforce
E	eat, meet
I	he, sanity
I	high, sky
O	go, boat
U	law, horn
U	ooze, tool
Y	you, unique

Limited Kuraianki Phrase Book

Greetings

Common/English	Kuraianki	Phonetic Pronunciation
Good morning	Iio shima	[E-oh she-mah]
Good evening	Iio asa	[E-oh ass-ah]
Good day	Iio gozen	[E-oh go-zen]
Good night	Iio goa	[E-oh go-ah]
How are you?	Do masho anata?	[Doe mah-show an-ah-tah]
Fine, thank you, and you?	Ohai, arigato, soshite anata?	[Oh-high, are-e-got-to, so-she-tay an-ah-tah?]
So-so	Sate-sate	[Sah-tay sah-tay]

I am fine	Wa masho ohai	[Wah mah-show oh-high]
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Basic Conversation

Common	Kuraianki	Phonetic Pronunciation
Who is he?	Dare masho sono?	[Dah-ray mah-show sew-no?]
Who is she?	Dare masho sona?	[Dah-ray mah-show sew-nah?]
He is a friend.	Sono masho tomadachi.	[Sew-no mah-show toe-mah-dah-chee]
What is her name?	Nani masho sona namae?	[Nah-knee mah-show sew-nah nah-may-e?]
Her name is ____.	Sona namae masho ____.	[Sew-no nah-may-e mah-show ____]
Where are you going?	Doko ni masho anata gotima?	[Doe-kow nee mah-show an-ah-tah go-tea-mah?]
I'm going to our camp.	Wa gotima a domota imayado.	[Wah go-tea-mah ah doe-moe-tah imm-ah-yah-doe]
What is your name?	Nani masho anato namae?	
My name is ____.	Wa namae masho ____.	
Where are you from?	Doko ni masho anata karani?	[Doe-kow nee mah-show an-ah-tah kah-ran-ee]
I live in Ravenholt.	Wa livto de Ravenholt.	[Wah leave-toe day Ravenholt]
How much does it cost?	Dochu doto sono ryokak?	[Doe-chew doe-toe sew-no ree-yo-cack]
It costs 2 gold and 4 silver.	Sono ryokak ni kanечи soshite yo ginkachi.	[Sew-no ree-yoh-cack knee kahn-ee-chee sow-she-tea yoh (soft 'g')gin-ah-chee]
What time is it?	Nani toki masho?	[Nah-knee toe-key mah-show]
It is 4:30 PM.	Sono masho yo han token.	[Sew-no mah-show yo haan toe-kin]
5:00 PM.	Go toki.	
Look out!	Lukto watash!	[Luke-toe wah-tah-she]
My pencil is yellow.	Wao empitsu masho kiogan.	[Way-oh m-peat-sue mah-show key-oh-gan]
How is the weather?	Do masho tenero?	[Doe mah-show ten-ear-oh]
There is a storm.	Iieasoko masho y denki.	[ee-ee-ah-sew-koh mah-show ee den-key]
It is hot and humid.	Sono masho atsugiru neromizu.	[Sew-no mah-show aht-sue-gear-ee near-oh-me-zoo]
It is cold.	Sono masho tsumetai.	[Sew-no mah-show sue-mah-tie]
Come with me.	Comto witti wa.	[come-toe wit-tea wah]
We have to go.	Domo havto godi.	[Doe-moe have-toe go-dey]
Meet me at the tavern.	Meto wa tanio yadoya.	[Meh-toe wah tah-knee-oh yah-doe-yah]
How far are you going?	Do dake masho anata gotima?	[Doe dah-key mah-show ah-nah-

Common	Kuraianki	Phonetic Pronunciation
		tah go-team-ah]
Who are you?	Dare masho anata?	
Who goes there?	Dare goto iieasoko?	
Who asks?	Dare asko?	
Why are you here?	Dare masho anata yayashu?	
What do you want?	Chirrit masho anata chuissuho?	[Cheer-it mah-show an-ah-tah chew-ee-show]
Wait here.	Kroishu yayashu.	[Croy-ee-shoe yah-yah-show]
I hate humans.	Wa hato jochu.	[Wah hah-toe joe-chew] ((jochu is derogatory))
Where is your Lord?	Doko masho anato Roshu?	[Row-shoe]
Who is Baron here?	Dare masho Raidanshaku yayashu?	[Ray-dan-shock-koo]

Time

Common	Kuraianki	Phonetic Pronunciation
What time is it?	Nani toki masho (sono)?	(using “sono” at the end would indicate formal speech, as to a superior officer.)
Time	toki	[toe-key]

Numbers

Common	Kuraianki	Phonetic Pronunciation
1 - one	ichi	[ee-chee]
2 - two	ni	[knee]
3 - three	san	[sahn]
4 - four	yo	[yoh]
5 - five	go	[go]
6 - six	roku	[row-kuu]
7 - seven	hichi	[he-chee]
8 - eight	ochi	[oh-chee]
9 - nine	kuko	[kook-koe]
10 - ten	ju	[jew]
11 - eleven	juichi	[jew-ee-chee]
12 - twelve	juni	[jew-knee]
half	han	[hahn]
quarter	made	[mah-day]
midnight	mayonaka	[my-yone-ah-kah]

Telling Time

PM -n adding an 'n' to the end denotes PM as opposed to AM.
 Kuraianki does not use any form of “military” time.

Common/English	Kuraianki
1:00 AM	ichitoki
1:00 PM	ichi tokin <--- adding the -n to toki (making it tokin) denotes PM instead of AM
4:30 AM	yo han toki
4:30 PM	yo han tokin
9:15 AM	kuko made toki
9:15 PM	kuko made tokin (translates as 9 + one quarter)
10:45 PM	made juichi tokin (translates as 11 - one quarter)
10:45 AM	made juichi toki
12:00 noon	juni tokin
12:00 midnight	mayonaka toki (for midnight, juni toki is not used, the word for midnight is always used)

Times of Day

Common	Kuraianki
Morning	shima
Evening	asa
day	Gozen
night	Goa
afternoon	Hiru

Times Relating to Tense

Common	Kuraianki	Phonetic Pronunciation
today	agozen	[ah-goe-zen]
tomorrow	ayoku	[ah-yo-kuu]
yesterday	akino	[ah-key-no]
week	toshu	[toe-shoe]
month	totsuki	[toe-sue-key]
year	toshi	[toe-she]

Phrases of Parting Between Dark Elves

- “May you never see the sun again!”
- “I hope your life is filled with darkness.”
- “Dead men hold no honor.”
- “The friendliest shadows hold the deadliest foes.”
- “Even the blade of an ally can kill.”
- “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”
- “To live without honor is to die.”



APPENDIX A: A COSTUME AND CLOTHING COMPENDIUM FOR THE DISCERNING DARK ELF

“You *should* hate us... We *know* we’re beautiful!”— Let’s face it, we spend hours, often a large percentage of game time, to look good...DANG good! So if you are still settling for black sweat pants and old tennis shoes it’s time to upgrade.

Fabric and Color Choices—Or How to Avoid Dark Elf Cooties

If you can wash it, that’s a very good start!!! Cotton, raw silk (also known as silk noil), and washable wools are nice choices. It is very important to find breathable fabrics—anything natural will keep you cool in summer and warm in winter. Don’t settle for blend fabrics and polyesters—you will be very uncomfortable. Look for clothing you can layer and mix and match with basic essentials such as a pair of “poofy” pants, a nice shirt and a turtleneck or other undershirt.

A note on undergarments—A black turtleneck or bodysuit is a good base. This will help cover exposed areas and help keep the make up and charcoal powder from flaking all over. An under shirt will also protect your nice clothing from sweat and makeup. Some people have also tried the “Under Armor” style mock turtlenecks and have really liked them. Look in chain discount department stores for knock off brands. Walmart sells a nice Starter brand “sports compression shirt” for about half of the Under Armor price.

Obvious color choice is black. But don’t forget—you want to strut, so don’t forget the color! House and clan colors are good accent choices, but so are burgundy, red, purple, blue, navy, forest green and browns. Dark grays are also a good choice. When shopping for clothing or fabric to make your own, remember that the best colors are complimentary ones mixed with a neutral. For example, a pair of deep burgundy poofy pants, tucked into black boots, with a black shirt and possibly a wool hood in black with burgundy trim. Your accent colors could be gold, purple or silver. Be creative!

I’m Lost!! Where do I find Inspiration for Costume Ideas?

That’s easy—everywhere!! Look at book covers, magazines, fantasy artwork, historical paintings and prints. We play in a fantasy game world, with a medieval/renaissance theme. But the key word is *fantasy*—adapt and cultivate new clothing styles, by thinking beyond the ordinary.

Examples:

- Ordinary wizard robes could be made more exciting with the addition of a cowl, fancy belt and flashy pair of pants.
- The shirt, pants and tabard uniform could be changed by adding a doublet, vest or armor piece or by adding a funky or dramatic hat.
- Look for accessories, jewelry, hats, gloves, odd pieces of fabric, vests and ethnic bits and baubles to add flair to ordinary things.

- Think about using a double layer cloak (one with a detachable hood, also known as a cowl) or a poncho style wrap instead of a full-length cloak. Think of unusually materials to make it out of—such as an embroidered velvet or corduroy.

Say, What About That “Oriental” Style?

Japanese and other Asian elements can be added to give your costume a bit more flavor. However, you are playing one of the most highly developed races in all of NERO—be creative! Your character would likely have been exposed to a variety of influences from your neighbors to the book knowledge and stories of the surface. Your clothing tends to reflect all of your influences, especially if you’ve been on the surface for a while.

Pure traditionalists may prefer a formal kimono and obi, but that could be used only for ceremonies. Think of what you’ll be doing physically in game. If it’s fighting and running, the tight and restrictive movements allowed but such garb would impair your skills and possible cause you or your clothing harm.

Here are a couple of clothing ideas you may find helpful, along with ways to spice your garb up:

Kimono—A unisex formal Japanese robe, usually longer than knee length. Long droopy “butterfly” sleeve styles are usually found on the women’s style. It is wrapped across the body and secured with a long tie or scarf called an obe. An obe-jime is a smaller cord that is tied over the obe. The kimono is always lined, as it is called a yakuta when it is unlined.

How to spice it up: Think of the kimono in variety of colors and patterns. Cut it short, close it up the front with buttons or ties, or leave it open and wear it like a coat. This is versatile piece of clothing—you can adapt it to suit your style. For the ladies, why not try an bodice or corset over top of a kimono?

How to make it: Folkwear patterns has a Kimono/Yakuta pattern. Look for it on-line. Also on-line are a few places that show how it can be made using 45” wide material cut in half.

Hakama—A Japanese pair of wide leg trousers pleated at the waist and secured with a fabric belt that is permanently attached at the waist. The hakama usually have seven pleats at the front, and one in the back. They can be tricky to make and wear, but can be purchased from martial arts supply stores.



Other options: Poofy pants gathered below the knee and secured with lacing; a pair poofy pants pleated to the waistband, kept loose at the bottom; wrap pants that tie at the waist. Keep your eyes open for comfortable and quick pants patterns.

Don’t forget that you can add Japanese or other Asian themed fabric, trim or accessories to ordinary Western style clothing and get a fabulous look! Also, you can look to other national dress for

inspiration—Mongolia, Tibet, India, South Pacific—time to get thinking!

Still feel like you're in a dark tunnel? Look to these references:

- ***Oriental Costumes Their Designs and Colors*, by Max Tilke**
- <http://www.indiana.edu/~librcsd/etext/tilke/contents.html>

- **The Rebirth of the Tale of the Genji**—An online Costume Museum
- <http://www.iz2.or.jp/english/> --Click under “Costume History of Japan”

- **The Los Angeles County Museum**—Tons of artwork!
- <http://collectionsonline.lacma.org>

- **The Art of Stephanie Pui-Mun Law**
- <http://www.shadowscapes.com/main.shtml>

- **Clothing and Costume Links**—From the SCA Kingdom of Atlantia
- <http://moas.atlantia.sca.org/topics/clot.htm>



APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE TO HELP DEVELOP A DARK ELVEN CHARACTER HISTORY

(Based on the Original 100+ Questions Essay Test for Character Development by Rich Taylor)

These are things that, if someone were to ask you in real life, you probably could answer without giving it any thought whatsoever. Most player characters, however, can't answer this because players never think about it - it's unimportant. Well, these things are going to help you define you character more. Note that you do NOT need to provide answers to all these questions in a character history for the chapter(s) you play (and doing so may be too *much* material for most plot staff), but using them as a tool to help you think about what is most important in your character's life may aid you in putting together a solid history, which will give plot staff material with which to work.

When looking for a "type" of character to play, or to be a part of your character history, turn to literature and movies that have been written about Oriental or Dark Elf cultures (see the Appendix entitled "Character Concept Source Material Suggestions"). Clichés are clichés for a reason, embrace them! Classic clichés are: the Samurai, the Sage, the Monk, the Yakuza, the Ronan seeking to regain a place or honor....and on and on.

Some tips: Answer these in character, but only in a situation where your character would be 100% honest with themselves and with the person asking the question. Otherwise, answer as a player, and still be 100% honest.

Important Baseline Questions

1. What about you is heroic? Good? Evil?
2. What about you is social?
3. Why did you come to the surface in the first place? Why do you choose to remain?
4. Invent an adventure/plot that your character would actively undertake (as opposed to just tagging along)?

Personal Questions

1. What is your real, birth name? What name do you use?
2. Do you have a nickname? What is it, and where did you get it?
3. What do you look like?
4. How do you dress most of the time?
5. How do you "dress up?"
6. How do you "dress down?"
7. Do you wear any jewelry?
8. In your opinion, what is your best feature?
9. What's your birth date?
10. Where do you live? Describe it: Is it messy, neat, avant-garde, sparse, etc.?
11. What is your most prized possession? Why do you value it so much?
12. What one word best describes you?

Familial Questions

1. What was your family like?
2. Who was your Mother, and what was she like?
3. Who was your Father, and what was he like?
4. What was your parents' marriage like?
5. What is your Birth Rank?
6. What are your siblings' names? What are they like?
7. What's the worst thing one of your siblings ever did to you? What's the worst thing you've done to one of your siblings?
8. When's the last time you saw any member of your family? Where are they now?
- 9.

Childhood Questions

1. What is your first memory?
2. What was your favorite toy?
3. What was your favorite game?
4. Any non-family member adults stick out in your mind? Who were they, and how did you know them? Why do they stick out?
5. Who was your best friend when you were growing up?
6. What is your fondest, childhood memory?
7. What is your worst childhood memory?

Adolescent Questions

1. It is common for one's view of authority to develop in their adolescent years. What is your view of authority, and what event most affected it?
2. What is your education level? Where did you attend School?
3. What is your favorite memory from adolescence?
4. What is your worst memory from adolescence?

Occupational Questions

1. What do you do? Mage, Templar, Fighter, Rogue?
2. Why did you choose to learn your skills?
3. What is something you had to learn that you hated?
4. What do you enjoy the most about what you do?
5. Do you tend to save or spend your money? Why?

Questions for Mages

1. What school of Magic do you practice? Why?
2. Do you plan to ever learn any Earth magic if you are a Celestial Mage? Celestial Magic if you are an Earth Mage? Why or Why not?
3. Do you plan on learning Formal Magic? Why or Why not?
4. What is your opinion of Mages fighting with weapons?
5. What is your opinion of Mages fighting with Alchemy?

Questions for Fighters

1. What is your favorite weapon form? Why?

2. Can you read and write? Why or why not?

Questions for Rogues

1. Are you a "Battle Rogue" or a Thief?
2. How do you define the difference between the two?

Likes and Dislikes Questions

1. What hobbies do you have?
2. Who is your closest friend? Describe them and how you relate to them.
3. Who is your worst enemy? Describe them and why you don't get along.
4. When it comes to surface politics, do you care? If not, why don't you care? If yes, why do you care?
5. What annoys you more than anything else?
6. What would be the perfect gift for you?
7. What's the most beautiful thing you've ever seen?
8. What time of day is your favorite?
9. What kind of weather is your favorite?
10. What is your favorite food? What is your least favorite food?
11. What is your favorite drink?
12. What's your favorite animal? Why?
13. What do you find most relaxing? (Not as in stress relief, but as something that actually calms you down.)
14. What habit that others have annoys you most?
15. What kind of things embarrass you? Why?
16. What don't you like about yourself?
17. How do you like about yourself?
18. What is your opinion of Drae? of anyone who Race Changes?

Intimacy Questions

1. Do you ever want to get married and have children? When do you see this happening?
2. Will you be permitted to marry where you choose, or will your marriage be a political alliance?
3. Who will choose your marriage partner?
4. What was your most recent relationship like? Who was it with? (Does not need to be sexual, merely romantic.)
5. What's the worst thing you've done to someone you loved?
6. What is your opinion of mating with someone other than a Dark Elf? What is your opinion of someone who does?

Drug and Alcohol Questions

Remember that real-world alcohol at NERO® events is forbidden! This is for roleplay purposes only

1. How old were you when you first got intoxicated? What was the experience like?
2. Did anything good come out of it? Did anything bad come out of it?
3. Do you use intoxicants on any kind of regular basis?
4. What kind of alcohol do you prefer? (Gypsy hootch, Dark Elven Wine, Surface wines, etc)

5. What do you think of drugs and alcohol? Are there any people should not do? Why or why not?

Morality Questions

1. What one act in your past are you most ashamed of? What one act in your past are you most proud of?
2. What do you feel most strongly about?
3. What do you pretend to feel strongly about, just to impress people?
4. What trait do you find most admirable, and how often do you find it?
5. Do you have any feelings in general that you are disturbed by? What are they? Why do they disturb you?
6. Is an ounce of prevention really worth a pound of cure? Which is more valuable? Why do you feel this way?
7. What's the worst thing that can be done to another Dark Elf? Why?
8. What's the worst thing you could actually do to someone you hated?
9. Are you a better leader or follower? Why do you think that? If you think the whole leader-follower archetype is a crock, say so, and explain why?
10. What is your responsibility to the surface world, if any? Why do you think that?
11. What is your responsibility to your Homeland?
12. What is your responsibility to your Family? Your Clan? Other Dark Elves?
13. Do you think redemption is possible? If so, can anyone be redeemed, or are there only certain circumstances that can be? If not, why do you think nothing can redeem itself?
14. Is it okay for you to cry? When was the last time you cried?
15. What do you think is wrong with MOST people, overall?
16. What is your opinion of Necromancy? Necromancers?

Miscellaneous Questions

1. Do you have a mentor? Who are they? How did you become their student?
2. Do you have any magical items? Where did you get them?
3. What do you think of the other races on Tyrra? Why for each? (If you haven't met something, do you think it exists, and if it does, is that bad or good?)
4. What is the thing that has frightened you most? Do you think there is anything out there that's scarier than that? What do you think that would be?
5. Has anyone or anything you've ever cared about died? How did you feel about it? What happened?
6. What was the worst injury you've ever received? How did it happen?
7. What is your current long term goal?
8. What is your current short term goal?
9. Do you have any bad habits? If so, what are they, and do you plan to get rid of them?
10. How private of a person are you? Why?
11. What do you do when you are bored?
12. What is the most frightening potential handicap or disfigurement you can conceive of? What makes it so frightening?

APPENDIX C: FURTHER TIPS ON DARK ELVEN MAKEUP

What you will need:

- 1 Container of Dark Elf: (black) Mehron Star Blend™ Cake Makeup, Mehron Paradise™ or whichever makeup you have found easiest to use and/or find
- 1 Bottle of Ben Nye Hair Color in Snow White or Silver Grey (silver or white hairspray works just as well)
- 1 Mascara brush or hard bristled makeup brush (depending on whether or not you want to paint your facial hair)
- 1 pair Elf ear tips covered in black makeup (or blackened using a Sharpie Permanent Marker)
- 1 Bottle Spirit Gum or Liquid Latex, whichever you prefer, plus Spirit Gum Remover
- 1 Bottle Setting Spray
- 1 Container Charcoal Powder
- 1 fluffy Make-up Brush (often called a “blush brush”)
- 1 bag Make-up wedges
- 1 Sadistic person willing to do this to themselves
- ½ Pint of angst

FOR STAR BLEND™ USERS ONLY: Wet one makeup wedge and drag it across the makeup. Cover every area of skin that is showing. After fully covering yourself, take the other sponge; leave it dry and go over the entire area, using the dry powder residue that collects on top of the makeup. By this time you should resemble a piece of charcoal.

FOR PARADISE™ USERS ONLY: Dampen a makeup wedge and drag it across the makeup. Cover every area of skin that is showing. Let the makeup set and dry on your skin. If needed, reapply to areas that you did not cover well. If you tend to sweat off your makeup, use the set spray at this point. Let it dry completely, then using your fluffy make-up brush, dust charcoal powder over all makeup. If you are one of those lucky people who does not sweat off your makeup, you can skip the set spray and just use the powder. Because this make up is made of all sorts of healthy things that are really good for your skin, and it washes off easily, it is worth the added effort.

FOR REGULAR MAKEUP USERS: Use fingertips, sponges, spackling knives, whatever you can find, to coat all of your exposed flesh. A helpful hint: Ben Nye © makes a good charcoal black setting powder that you can apply over any makeup to see that it stays put, or you can use it by itself, although it is not recommended.

After successfully making yourself as black as you can, paint your hair. With the Ben Nye © hair paint you can use a paintbrush or makeup sponges to coat your hair. It is strongly suggested if you have long hair to put it in some kind of braid or cluster of braids, or put it up with hair sticks, although you don't have to. With the spray cans, put a towel around your clothing to protect it, point, spray, and pray you got it all. Someone will probably assist you if you bribe him or her, especially if you offer to return the favor!

Next, take your big bottle (or little bottle) of Ben Nye © hair-paint and dip your hard makeup brush into it. THIS IS ONLY IF YOU CHOSE TO PAINT YOUR EYEBROWS, BEARD OR MUSTACHE. Use the brush to color your facial hair and fashion it however you see fit. DO NOT use this on your eyelashes. It burns VERY badly and actually blurs your vision. Street Wear © (found in the girly makeup section of your choice of drugstore) makes a line of white mascara and eyeliner if you want to go all out. Occasionally, if you are very lucky, you can find white concealer for under the eyes in your local make-up department. As it comes in stick form, this is great for doing eyebrows!

Third, grab your bottle of spirit gum or liquid latex (I suggest spirit gum, but some people swear by liquid latex- choose your poison). Use the smallest amount you can for the best hold on your ear tips. Usually a dot on the part that touches the side of your face and the inside of the back of your ear is sufficient. IF YOU HAVE A CARTILAGE PIERCING: get a stud to put in your ear if you have a hoop. Hoops not only make your ear tip crooked, they get ripped out VERY easily with an ear tip clinging to them.

Add half-pint of angst (can be substituted by a severe superiority complex).



If you have done all of this correctly, you are now a Dark Elf.

Extras: Some good extras for Dark Elf-dom are black eyeliner to ring your eyes before painting to ensure a good even look and black lipstick for obvious purposes. Black Nail Polish adds a touch of verisimilitude also if you are doing your hands and not wearing gloves. It also looks kind of cool if you pierce your ear tips, although it's not a mandatory thing.

APPENDIX D: CHARACTER CONCEPT SOURCE MATERIAL SUGGESTIONS

Bushido Overview

<http://mcel.pacificu.edu/as/students/bushido/bindex.html>

***Go Rin No Sho: A Book of Five Rings* by Miyamoto Musashi**

<http://www.inisfail/~ancients/history/go-rin.html>

Bowing Techniques

<http://www.how-to-bow.com/>

NERO® Dark Elf Forums

<http://www.twilightarmory.com/phpBB2/index.php>

Japanese<-> English Dictionary Server

<http://dict.regex.info/cgi-bin/j-e/dict>

Japanese-English/English-Japanese Dictionary

http://www.trussel.com/f_nih.htm

Male, Female, and Family Japanese Names

http://business.baylor.edu/Phil_VanAuken/JapaneseNames.html

Sun Tzu *Art of War* Strategy Site

<http://www.sonshi.com/>

Sengoku Daimyo Homepage

<http://www.sengokudaimyo.com/>

Philosophies of Asia

<http://www.pratyeka.org/philosophies-of-asia/>

Japanese Fabric Stores

<http://www.fabrictales.com/>

<http://ichiroya.com/>

<http://www.equilter.com/>

Links to good Samurai sites

<http://www.angelfire.com/zine2/samuraiworld/samlinks.html>

Books:

- *Rising Sun* John Grisham
- *The Art of War* Sun Tzu
- *Go Rin No Sho: A Book of Five Rings* by Miyamoto Musashi
(<http://www.inisfail/~ancients/history/go-rin.html>)

- *Shogun*
- *Legend of the Five Rings*, both the Clan Books for the RPG and the Novels
- The *Dark Elf* Novels by R.A. Salvatore, and any other novel that in which the character “Drizzt” appears

Films:

- *Rising Sun*
- *Onmyoji*
- *Onmyoji II*
- *The Seven Samurai*
- *The Last Samurai* (multiple versions)
- *Shogun*
- Anything by Akira Kurasawa



APPENDIX E: HOW TO PLAY A MALE DARK ELF IN A MATRIARCHY

PLEASE NOTE: While much of Dark Elven culture has its roots in a Matriarchal society, not all cultures in existence today remain so. It behooves a traveler to take care to determine what may or may not create incident when traveling to unfamiliar realms.

*“If you are patient in a moment of anger,
you will escape a hundred days of sorrow”*

First things first: We do NOT bow and scrape and grovel at the mere presence of a female Dark Elf. Get this out of your head right now. And to the ladies out there, if this is what you’re expecting, you’re playing the wrong race. What we most certainly should do, and what you (ladies) should expect, is respect. (Actually, respect should go both ways, as this is part of what separates us from the jochu, but that’s another topic.)

Let me explain. For example, Ellentari culture centers on honor and respect. (See section on the Four Oaths.) Keep in mind the particular Oath concerning superiors: *Thou shalt show respect to your parents, elders and superiors.* Well guess what folks, in just about every situation you’re going to face as a male Dark Elf some female Dark Elf will outrank you, which effectively makes her your superior. So if you disrespect her you could be in violation of the Oaths, and that means dishonor. Do this often enough and a simple kow-tow will be insufficient. Even if your House outranks hers... Or your Clan...

This doesn’t mean that you cannot disagree with her actions, decisions, or behavior. If, at any time, a situation occurs where you feel the need to disagree and want to make it known, keep the following ideas in mind:

1. Never, ever do so in public.
2. Nor in private if there are jochu present.
3. Politely state that you disagree or that you feel something is wrong.
4. Wait to explain until she asks you to.
5. Keep a civil tone.
6. When finished, excuse yourself and, if given permission, leave.
7. If the situation doesn’t resolve itself, find a superior and repeat 1-6.
8. After this, you pretty much have to tough it out. Remember, that if a poor decision is made, she is ultimately responsible and it is her honor at stake. So let it resolve itself.

Also, keep in mind that everyone is different. What you may be able to get away doing with one female will land you in hot water with another. Your best bet is to play it safe – ALL the TIME. Remember, when in doubt, that too little respect might kill you. Too much, on the other hand, is never an issue.

Lastly, you are free to act as you wish, but keep in mind that your actions could prompt some serious consequences. If you anger a Dark Elf woman enough, be prepared to take your lumps...

And don't come complaining out-of-game...Chances are that she gave you more leeway than you deserved.

DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE:

DRAELONDE



DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE – DRAELONDE (IN NORTHERN EVENDARR, ALSO KNOWN AS ELFHEIM)

An Overview of Draelonde

Draelonde is divided into four counties, which are subdivided into Clan Territories, divisions being laid out by suburban property around highly settled areas. The Four Counties are: Miokok-kyo, Dokok-kyo, Ryukok-kyo, and Shokok-kyo. There are no formal divisions for Clan Territories, but it is a breach of etiquette and honor to enforce Law in the immediate area around a city or town where you are not a member of the ruling Clan, or are not a member of the Royal House

Draelonde is comprised of four major cities, six small cities or towns, and a number of small villages and farms. The total population of Draelonde is approximately 15,000.

DRAELONDE LIFE, CUSTOMS, AND TRADITIONS

Calendar

In the early years of Draelonde's history, years were counted much like other places, with no designation afterwards (i.e. R.E., E.R., Y.L.F.). Forel (the First) began the first accounting of years in Draelonde. The Court Scholars were entrusted with such records, as well as with recording important dates and events. Draelonde has since moved to the Evendarrian calendar.

The year begins with High Water, the rising of underground rivers.

Years are measured in seasons, not months and days:

April, May	High Water season	Raimizo Tibaemman
June, July	Bright Moss season	Mikuinoke Tibaemman
August, September	Warm Stone season	Atsugushaku Tibaemman
October, November	Low Water season	Iyakumizo Tibaemman
December, January	Cold Stone season	Tsumetaishaku Tibaemman
February, March	Dark Moss season	Bananoke Tibaemman

Names and Naming Traditions

Dark Elves carry two types of names, their formal name and their common name. For purposes of NERO®, a character's registered name is their common name. A name can be treated as a word or phrase from an ancient provincial dialect and given any translation you like.

A Dark Elven formal name generally consists of 5 parts, the personal name, secondary House name, primary House name, and Clan name.

1. Personal name – This is the first name of a character; it is the name given to them by their parents at birth.
2. Secondary House name – this is the house name of the secondary parent
3. Primary House name – This is the primary parent's House name
4. Personal House name – If the character is not part of their parent's house then they have a personal house name.
5. Clan Name – This is the name of the clan that the character belongs to. It is seldom that a Dark Elf is not affiliated with a clan. Unaffiliated characters are usually paupers or peasants, and always deemed renegades.

Example: If the character's full formal name is Lorac Niikuta Shoku-el Kumahito Banatori and his mother married into his father's Clan and House, but he is part of a different house than his parents, then Lorac is his personal name, Niikuta is his mother's House name, Shoku-el is his father's House name, Kumashito is his house name and Banatori is the Clan Name.

It is not mandatory to have a formal name, but it adds tremendously to the depth and fun of playing a Dark Elf.

As stated before, a Dark Elf's common name is his or her "in-game" name. A common name may be a variation on any part of the formal name, or may be human variation of any part of the formal name. In most cases the clan name is usually part of the common name.

The symbol of honor among each Clan or House is threefold. Each Clan and House's honor rests on their Name, their Coat of Arms, and on their Family Weapon.

All agreements, bargains, promises and Oaths are sworn on your name. Even commoners hold their family names sacred. A Drae or Vornae who has been banished from his or her family no longer has the right to bear the family name. It is a breach of honor to forgo anything given upon your name.

DRAELONDE SOCIETY AND ITS ORGANIZATION

The following information should be considered general knowledge for any character growing up in Draelonde. Even characters without formal education would have heard most of this information. It is up to you to decide what your character would and would not know or believe. The historical aspects should be treated as in-game material. In other words, everything you read here is not necessarily factual, but is instead how the Dark Elves of Draelonde perceive their history in relation to the world around them. Much like any historical text, it is not completely objective.

If your character would like to find out more specific facts about given events, it should be done in-game through other characters and whatever in-game texts exist. This history is intended to aid you in playing a Dark Elf Draelondian character successfully, not to give you an unfair advantage over any other race.

Draelonde Government and Laws

This section deals with the specifics of Dark Elf society, such as government structure, laws, clan structure and ranking, and titles and rank. This information is not necessary for role-playing a Dark Elf character, but is useful to give a character depth and player understanding of the culture.

Dark Elf Constitution

The First Vornae Constitution was drafted by Empress Forel I of Clan Kyotoka. Since its original drafting little has changed and it is still in use today. The Constitution outlined the government as follows:

The known Under Realm is divided into four provinces. The first city, Shyamachi, remains a sovereign city under the control of the Royal Clan. By a count of all citizens, taken by a census every 100 years, offices will be assigned according to clan rank. The clan with the largest number of members will rank First, with the rest following suit.

The First Clan, by rank, will be considered the Royal clan and the leader of that clan will hold the position of Empress or Emperor. (Until recently, the position would only have been held by a woman, and therefore would have been exclusively held by an Empress.)

Clans numbered 2-5 will be considered Noble Clans with the leaders holding the position of High Council members. Each Noble clan oversees one Province. The Dark Elf High Council consists of the Empress/Emperor, and the four High Lady Councilors (one from each noble clan), plus eight Lord/Lady Advisors (2 from each Noble Clan).

Clans 6-21 will be considered Estate clans, with leaders of these clans holding the position of Provincial Councilors. Provincial Council consists of one of the High Councilors, and four Provincial Councilors each with 1 Lord and Lady Advisors.

Clans 22 and below are considered the Common clans, and their leaders hold no position short of the land they own, but are responsible to the Provincial council in that area.

Clans and Families

Dark Elven families are very similar to human ones. Anyone related by blood within two generations is considered family. Anyone outside of that framework is deemed part of a separate family, but may be within the same House or Clan. Houses are substructures of Clans. They need not be related by blood, but usually are. A Clan consists of a minimum of four families (or Houses with many families), two of which must be related.

Lines of Succession

Succession is very important to the Vornae of Draelonde. For one, it determines the right to the Royal Throne, as well as that of Clans and Houses. Dark Elves of Draelonde follow a Matriarchal system as follows:

- 1st Born daughter
- Daughters in order of birth
- 1st Born daughter's daughters in order of birth
- 1st Born son's daughters in order of birth
- Daughters of closest sister in order of birth
- 1st Born son
- Sons in order of birth, etc.

Primary Titles in Draelonde

Titles are also important to Dark elves. In order of importance the list is as follows:

Title	Number in Draelonde
Empress or Emperor	1
High Lord or Lady Justices	7
High Lady Councilors	4
Provincial Councilors	16
High Lord or Lady Advisors	8
Provincial Lord or Lady Advisors	8
Grande Lady	All Clans – 1 each
Lady	All Houses – 1 each
Dame	All Families – 1 each

Military

The Empire will be protected by the Imperial Army. Any member of the Army will be considered unaffiliated and detached from any and all clans. All officers will earn their way up in rank and will be appointed to that rank by the Emperor/Empress.

Alternate Rulership in Times of Duress

The Emperor/Empress will appoint a Seneschal to serve in his or her stead should s/he become unavailable to serve, for a period of no more than 5 years. If the absence lasts longer than 5 years, the Emperor/Empress must abdicate the throne to the rightful heir. If a Clan is found to be leaderless for a similar time period, the Emperor/Empress may be petitioned to place a new Clan Leader in place.

House Titles and Rank

The attainment of rank within a House is designated through a series of titles. The titles are designed to reflect the maturity, skill and leadership qualities of individual Dark Elves. Some of the ranks that can be achieved are as follows:

ACOLYTE (Gakushei)	WANDERER (Wakaitabe)	HERO (Kansaeboco)
ADULT (Roshimin)	EXPLORER (Batawa)	SCHOLAR (Kyobenki)
ELDER (Kansashiki ca)	PIONEER (Imayanis)	ASSASSIN (Ans avarudo)

SYMBOLS OF THE FAMILY AND HOUSE

The Coat of Arms

Only a noble who had been granted or inherited the right, from their liege or from their Clan or House, has the right to bear a device representing the Coat of Arms. Such Device is your identification and symbol to all who meet you, regarding what house you represent, and whose honor you uphold. Should a Dark Elf be caught compromising the House Honor while wearing their Coat of Arms, they will be banished from the House, and counted as dead, unless they make an effort to make amends, and the effort is accepted by the Head of the House. If such an act is committed by the Head of the House, then the Household will be stricken from records in Draelonde and will cease to exist. Such a Household would be an open target for anyone who wished to try and overtake or replace it.

The Family Weapon

The Head of each Family House bears the Family Weapon. It is passed down from generation to generation, and the Head of the Family House is expected to bear and use it, but only when defending or upholding family honor. The Head of the Family should always have their weapon with or near them; however this does not mean they should take it into foolish situations. Many commoner families also follow this tradition, so it is not restricted to nobles.

LANDS OF DRAELONDE

Newest City

The newest city of Draelonde is the Free City of Kushakowa, which is found deep under the Barony of Westmarch in Ravenholt, accessible only via Draelonde proper.

Major Cities/Towns - Population

NAME	TYPE	POP.	AREA	GARRISON	KNIGHTS	CLAN / RULING FAMILY
Shyamachi	City	1160	9.0	90	10	Kyotoka
Shoshaku	City	910	7.2	50	4	Ruinvorn
Miobanero	City	790	6.8	50	5	Bokenjen
Dokomizo	City	730	6.4	30	3	Morsuldur
Ryudenki	City	680	6.0	30	3	
Kushakowa	City	680	6.0	30	0	
Ryuporai	Castle	250	1.5	70	10	Eithmirn
Elmon	Town	560	5.9	10	1	
Kok-kyoto	Town	425	4.5	20	2	
Minamimade	Town	410	4.3	10	1	
Kodaifuhachi	Town	380	4.1	10	1	
Elyama	Town	370	3.7	10	0	
Banakodatabe	Town	310	3.2	10	0	Ryuhanta
Hapodenkimizu	Town	270	2.7	10	1	
Sankawa	Town	240	2.5	10	0	
Draewen	Village	115	1.8	10	0	
Kakinslunnn	Village	80	1.0	0	0	
Chanoma	Village	65	0.9	0	0	
Totals		7745		420	41	

Division of Cities and Towns by County and Ruling Clan

COUNTY	RULING CLAN	CAPITOL	CITIES/TOWNS
Dokkok-kyo	Morsuldur	Dokomizo	Draewen Elmon Minamimade Banakodatabe
Miokok-kyo	Tsumatzi	Miobanero	Chanoma Hapodenkimizu Kankinshinrin
Ryukok-kyo	Bokenjen	Ryudenki	Sankawa Kok-kyoto

Shokok-kyo	Ruinvorn	Shoshaku	Elyama Ryuporai Kodaifuhachi
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Translation of Names of Counties/Cities Known In Common

Dark Elf Name	Translation	Common Name
Banakodatabe	Dark ground	Grintsbury
Chanoma	Alcove of Tea	unknown
Dokomizo	Poison Waters	Chirotha
Draewen	Drae town	Crewin
Elmon	Arms of the Shadow Knight	Elmon
Elyama	Shadow Mountain	unknown
Hapodenkimizu	Coast of Storm Waters	Kragg
Kakinshinrin	Fruit Tree Forest	unknown
Kodaifuhachi	Ancient Bridges	unknown
Kok-kyoto	Bordertown	unknown
Minamimade	Southquarter	Southquarter
Miobanero	Bay of Bad Storms	Storm Bay
Ryudenki	Dragon Storm	unknown
Ryuporai	Dragon's Eye	Dragon's Eye
Sankawa	Three Rivers	Three Rivers
Shoshaku	Crystal Stone	unknown
Shyamachi	City of Royalty	Malderon
Kawadaise	River that runs Red	Red River
Kawaoshika	River of Elks	Elk River
Kawanidairo	River of the Twins	Twin River
Ryuyochu	Path of the Dragon	Dragon Pass
Kushakowa	Grey River	New City

Imports/Exports by Location

Location	Imports by County	Exports by City/Town Specialization
Shyamachi		silk, steel, crafted goods
DOKOK-KYO	[silk, mushrooms]	
Dokomizo		silk, seafood, magical goods
Draewen		mushrooms, darkwood
Elmon		mushrooms, skins and furs
Minamimade		silk, fruit, grains
Banakodatabe		mushrooms, crafted goods
MIOKOK-KYO	[seafood, tea, herbs]	
Miobanero		seafood, herbs, boats
Chanoma		tea, herbs

Hapodenkimizu		seafood, grains
Foikmshinrin		Fruits, vegetables, lightwoods
RYUKOK-KYO	[steel, coffee]	
Ryudenki		steel, minerals, coffee
Kok-kyoto		steel, iron, metal goods
Sankawa		coffee, cocoa, other beans, herbs
SHOKOK-KYO	[gems, alchemy, leather]	
Shoshaku		gems, minerals, leather, coffee
Elyama		musical instruments, gems, reptile skins
Kodaifuhachi		alchemy supplies, leather, crafted goods
Ryuporai		No natural products, collects taxes instead
Kushakowa	[Silks, Fur]	Hand-crafted jewelry, Ceremonial weapons

DRAELONDE POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Hierarchy

Titles which can be Heads of Clan Houses can have any nobles sworn under them, which fall beneath their title in the below list. Nobles that are not entitled to Clan leadership, but are entitled to land, may be Head of House, and may also be granted a Household Coat of Arms. All Clans are granted Arms.

Title In Dark Elven	Title In Common	Clan Head?	Landed?
Raishya	Queen/Empress	Yes	Yes
Roshya	King/Emperor	Yes	Yes
Raishyayuki	Queen's Consort	No	Sometimes
Roshyayuki	King's Consort	No	No
Rainaruzun	Crown Princess	Yes	Yes
Raizun	Princess	No	No
Ronamzun	Crown Prince	Yes	Yes
Rozun	Prince	No	No
Rai/Ro kuchi	Seneschal	No	Yes
Raishukotoban	High Lady Knight	Yes	Yes
Roshukotoban	High Lord Knight	Yes	Yes
Raishukoto	High Lady	Yes	Yes
Roshukoto	High Lord	Yes	Yes
Raishuban	Lady Knight	Yes	Yes
Roshuban	Lord Knight	Yes	Yes
Raishu	Lady	No	Yes
Roshu	Lord	No	Yes
Raiban	Knight (F)	No	Yes
Roban	Knight (M)	No	Yes

The Ruling Clans of Draelonde As of 605 E.R.

LOCATION	RULING CLAN	CLAN HOUSES IN LOCATION
Chanoma	Tsumatzi	Piwasmiyoso
Dokoraizo	Morsuldur	Morsuldur
Draewen	Morsuldur	Eiroyn
Elmon	Morsuldur	Ryukaji
Elyama	Ruinvorn	Furinonga
Hapodenkimizu	Tsumatzi	Somafuso
Kakinshinrin	Tsumatzi	Awaginka
Kodaifuhachi	Ruinvorn	Haimashiroi
Kok-kyoto	Bokenjen	Shimanin
Miobanero	Tsumatzi	Tsumatzi
Ryudenki	Bokenjen	Bokenjen

Ryuporai	Ruinvorn	Ryuisiel
Sankawa	Bokenjen	Tanagoze
Shoshaku	Ruinvorn	Ruinvorn
Shyamachi	Kyotaka	Kyotaka

Clan Ranking Structure - Ruling Houses

House Kyotaka	Shyamachi - Royal Clan
House Morsuldur	Dokkok-kyo County -Dokomizo
House Ruinvorn	Shokok-kyo County-Shoshaku
House Bokenjen	Ryukok-kyo County -Ryudenki
House Tsumazi	Miokok-kyo County-Miobanero
House Ryuisiel	Head Clan of Ryuporai
House Shimanin	Head Clan of Kok-kyoto
House Ryukaji	Head Clan of Elmon
House Taidesi	Head Clan of Minamimade

DRAELONDE SCHOOLS AND GUILDS

Education System

In Draelonde education is very important. There are six major centers of higher education located throughout the Empire. Although primary education is mandatory, higher education is not mandatory but is expected of the Royal, Noble and Estate clans. All centers of higher education are tuition free, but very often applications are judged on the "donations" of an applicant's house or clan. None of the schools have ever accepted a non-Dark Elf.

Citizens that become teachers receive a status of High Honor and their clans gain prestige for such honor. Instructors carry the title of Master.

Clans whose members attain teaching positions in any of the universities receive status and honor for such a contribution, usually represented by a reduction in taxes paid directly to Shyamachi. If the university is located in the same County, then the family's County taxes are reduced, as well. The added bonus to their personal wealth also contributes toward increasing their Clan's ranking.

Kyotoka University (Gakushi'in mata Zotoshosai)

Located in the capital of Shyamachi, Gakushi'in mata Zotoshosai is a general university and the home of Draelonde's Great Library. This center of learning encompasses the teaching of general knowledge, history, linguistics, farming, trade, politics, shipping, courtly etiquette, mathematics, and basic instruction in celestial and earth theory, and the basics of combat. Also taught here are riding, hunting, trapping, reading, writing and record keeping. A student who wishes to be a scholar in one of the magical arts, a warrior, or an artist, would be required to go elsewhere for specialized training. All of the records and major writings of Draelonde are stored in the Great Library, and are available for students studying at the University. Many of the higher ranking Clans are required to spend a term or more here before being sent to one of the specialization schools.

The time span of a term spent at Gakushi'in mata Zotoshosai is usually between 8 and 20 years. Most students spend at least 10, although 8 to 12 is the average for students who will be going on to study in a second school, with 15 to 20 being the average for those who will study only at Gakushi'in mata Zotoshosai.

Guntai

Also found in Shyamachi is Guntai, the Imperial military academy. It is also headquarters of the Imperial Army. On these grounds are found not only the student's housing and training centers, but also numerous practice arenas, and the barracks for the main force of Draelonde's army. Often, those of high rank who are serving extended periods in the military will be assigned to positions of instruction in Guntai. At least 65% of all graduates from Guntai later spend time in service to the military. It is very prestigious to graduate from Guntai, and graduation with honors brings much status to one's original Clan. In Guntai, all methods of combat are taught, including as individual, group, and military combat techniques and strategies. The student is trained to use his or her abilities to one's best possible potential.

The average term of study in Guntai is between 6 and 18 years. A student may leave after 6 years, but a minimum of 10 years is required for graduation. If a student leaves between their 6th and 10th year, their required time spent in study is considered fulfilled. No dishonor is reflected upon a Clan for a student who leaves before graduation, and this student will not be barred from military service, but may be barred from advancement in rank, regardless of their Clan's status in society.

Academy Arcana (Iiofuka-Kai Chusai)

In Miobanero, capital city of Miokok-kyo Province, is the school of Earth Magic called the Academy Arcana. All forms of Earth Magicks are studied here and graduates of the Academy are widely prized. As part of their training, students must spend time in a small village or settlement as a Healer and offer basic instruction into the Healing Arts. All revenues gathered through this duty are paid directly to the college, making it the most self-supporting school in all of Draelonde.

Iiofuka-Kai Chusai has the most rapid turnover and output of trained students in Draelonde, and is often hard put to meet the demands placed upon the school. Only a small percentage of their students have studied at Gakushi'in mata Zotoshosai, so Iiofuka-Kai Chusai offers a limited range of general study topics as part of its regular courses of study.

The Central Council of the Healer's Guild makes its home in Miobanero, with Guild Chapters in all of the major cities. The Central Council holds their meetings on a rotating schedule of all the Guild Chapter Houses, through the four Ruling Cities and the Capital of Shyamachi.

Graduate level training begins in the student's 8th year of study, and often continues for another 4 to 6 years. Students who study past their 14th year are uncommon, and usually are being trained for teaching positions. The Academy's terms vary from 8-13 years. Those staying into their 13th year are usually accepted immediately into the healer's guilds as a senior member or Lord/Lady Shaman. The academy is home to the Imperial Guildmaster, High Lord Shaman of Draelonde Healer's Guild.

Center for Celestial Studies (Kijutsu Shinsa)

Located in Dokkok-kyo Province, in the capital city of Dokomezio, is the famed Center for Celestial Studies. This is the magical center of Draelonde, and is the place where all studies into the Celestial Magicks are based. It is also the home to the Mages' Guild's central offices.

Often, study in Kijutsu Shinsa follows a term of study in Gakushi'in mata Zotoshosai, but this is not required. Kijutsu Shinsa also has a library, though not nearly as extensive as the Great Library in Shyamachi, but it is the main repository of celestial knowledge in Draelonde. Because Kijutsu Shinsa is located in Dokkok-kyo County, they boast the production of many fine magical goods. The Center Council of Draelonde's Mage's Guild is found here as well, although the Guildmaster's duties mostly in Shyamachi. Terms spent at Kijutsu Shinsa range anywhere from 10 to 30 years, with the average falling between 12 and 15. It is not uncommon for students who spend more than 20 years in the university to eventually graduate to teaching status.

Kimae Bijutsu

Kimae Bijutsu is the artisan's academy, teaching art, crafting, alchemy, astrology, architecture, music, literature, theater, dance, and other fine arts. It is located in Shoshaku, the capital of Shokok-kyo County. Like Iiofuka-Kai Chusai, Kimae Bijutsu also offers a limited general study course, with an emphasis on reading, writing, linguistics and history, but very few of the students here have spent study terms in Gakushi'in mata Zotoshosai.

It is not considered an institute of serious study, as much as an institute of creation and inspiration. The most passionate and expressionist of Dark Elven students find their way here, where their creativity can be channeled productively.

There is no set term of study at Kimae Bijutsu – students are graduated when they demonstrate an ability to excel in their most prominent artistic endeavors. Instructors at the academy are called Masters, and Master level is granted to anyone who suitably impresses a panel of Masters with work of superior originality. Students study at Kimae Bijutsu for anywhere from 3 to 30 years, with their study courses being interspersed with teaching duties throughout their tenure. Kimae Bijutsu is considered the least structured academy, while also being known as the most difficult to graduate from. Graduation is granted based upon personal excellence, and is often difficult to judge. In one or two rare instances, a former student has been granted Master status post-mortem, in recognition of work that gained glory for the artist after his or her passing. In such a case, all recognition and honor is granted to the artist's Clan, in memory.

Ansatsu

The last school of Draelonde is found in Ryudenki, the capitol city of Ryukok-kyo. Ansatsu is officially called the College of Political History, but is commonly referred to as the Assassin's Academy. Students at Ansatsu are drilled in political intrigue, history, courtly and common etiquette, economics, domestic and foreign laws and policies, treasury skills, military theory, and infiltrative combat. Almost every Clan House in Draelonde tries to send at least one student to Ansatsu, and those who do not, find themselves at a distinct disadvantage in the social ranking.

Instructor status at Ansatsu is one of the most prestigious positions a student in any of Draelonde's schools can hope for, and will insure the most honor to one's Clan.

Approximately 80% of all students who study at Ansatsu have spent a study term at Gakushi'in mata Zotoshosai. Terms of study at Ansatsu range from 15 to 35 years, with the common term averaging 25 years. Study at this academy is reputed to be the most strenuous and demanding education course in Draelonde, but graduate students are notably tight-lipped about the program. Ansatsu graduates command a high degree of respect, often edging on fear.

Graduate status is not granted until a minimum of 15 years of study have been spent at Ansatsu, and often students elect to withhold graduating for many years after they have met their requirements. This is the only college in Draelonde that allows students this privilege.

DRAELONDE MYTHS OF CREATION

Mythos

Among the Vornae there are three basic beliefs as to the origins of the race . One believes that the Dark Elves descended from Dragons. Another states that Dark Elven heritage is connected to the giant spiders and even spider sylphs. The third is that of the descending from the Elements. All of these share common themes, but as to the truth, scholars have never been able to agree. It should be noted that this difference has never been a cause of conflict between clans on any widespread level.

There is little written information on ancient Vornae history. The records that do exist are manuscripts written many centuries after the fact, based on legends and stories that have been passed from generation to generation. The accuracy of these records are suspect but from these a general outline of ancient history is possible.

Of Creation by the Dragons

PANTHERGAST

Set your head down to rest
But keep your sword upon your breast.
When sleep falls over little eyes
The formless terror comes to rise

It knows the deeds that you have done
It eats your hear, you cannot run.
Heed the words your mother speaks
The blood of children, It most seeks.

Bind your tongue and bind it fast
Or you will meet the Panthergast.

Ages ago, the lands of Tyrra were ruled by Lesser and Greater Dragons. Although the Lesser Dragons served the Greater Dragons well, from time to time they needed to be reminded of the strength of the sovereign Greater. For this purpose, Black Dragons served as warriors to the ruling Greater. The Black Dragons carried out their duties with loyal devotion and blood-thirsty passion. For this service, the Greater Dragons taught the Black Dragons their magic.

For many years, the Greater Dragons flourished upon Tyrra. But the Greater Dragons became fat and lazy, and most of all, dependent upon the Black Dragons for security. The Black Dragons saw the greed and sloth of their Overlords, and wished to free all the Lesser Dragons from their cruel reign. Forel, the Legendary Black Dragon Mistress, led the lesser Dragons in rebellion against the Greater Dragons.

The Black Dragons were swift and deadly, but the Greater Dragons had Magicks far beyond any of the Black or Lesser Dragons. They used these Magicks to create a being that would track and destroy the rebels when found. However, the Magicks that created this being, which became

known as a Panthergast, were flawed. Instead of destroying the Lessers, it transformed their bodies upon contact. The new shapes retained the natural color of the Dragons, and so, the Dark Elves were born. Many of these strange elves were too small and frail to survive in their new bodies, but others did and used the new form to their advantage and prosperity.

Seeing the failure of the Panthergast, the Greater Dragons banished it. After much debate and argument, it was summoned again. This time it was not flawed, and the Panthergast learned to obliterate the spirit of the Dark Elves and remaining Lessers by a mere touch. So great was the power of the Panthergast that even the strongest and bravest Dark Elves fled from its touch. They fled deep underground, into caverns that were dark and quiet. Here, they built cities and grew strong once more. Meanwhile, on the surface, the Greater Dragons grew fatter and lazier than ever. They grew so docile that eventually the Lessers and the Dark Elves easily slew them, until they were no more.

Of Creation and the Spiders

Long ago, in a much simpler time, the underworld was ruled by the giant Spiders. These great creatures were not like the giant spiders we now know. Indeed, they were as different as night and day. Back then the spiders stood higher than the tallest man, and they were intelligent enough to speak and cast magic. Their magic was powerful and deadly. But because of their size and awkward bodies, they feared the lands above. They knew there were many things on the surface that would want to destroy them because of the way they looked

So it was decided by the High Council of Spiders that they would create agents who could move amongst the surface world without being noticed. Several of the smaller spiders were sent to the surface to capture a specimen, so the Spiders could copy that being. After only a few hours the smaller spider returned with a strange creature. It was only 5 ½' feet tall, walked on two legs, had green skin and pointed ears. In their struggle to return to the underworld the Spiders had accidentally killed the creature. Because of this, the Spiders were unable to find out anything about the creature or its world.

They proceeded as planned and the Spiders used their powerful magic to create a spell that allowed them to transform at will into the new form. But when the transformations took place, they detested their new bodies' appearance. So, using great magic again, they changed the form so it was more appealing to them. The result is what has come to be known as the Vornae.

The Lost Art – Elemental Creation

Among the ancient myths of the Vornae, most know the Legend of the Black Dragons, or the tales of the ancient Giant Spiders. However, there lies deep in the recesses of Dark Elf lore, another version of their creation. It explains the existence of both the Quentari, and the Vornae.

The tale goes that when Tyrra was first formed, the Elements of the Domains of Time walked the earth, as did their minions and lesser elementals. As was their nature, these elements battled constantly for dominance over Tyrra. The beautiful land of Tyrra was soon reduced to a smoldering, chaotic wreck. Time realized that this was not the way things should be, and so It gathered the Elements together and bound them to follow the Ancient Law of Balance. Slowly,

Tyrra began to flourish under this balance. Living creatures, bound by the cycles of the 8 domains, lived, bred, and died on the surface, although no sentient humanoids walk the lands as of yet.

Many of the Elements were bitter about the Law of Balance, and their need to conflict with the other Elements festered in their own planes, seeking ways to circumvent it and spread their influence over Tyrra. Two such Elements were Life and Light. They abhorred the fact that things had to die, or live in darkness. and so they decided to break the treaty of balance and joined their wills together to bend the flow of the cycles of living creatures on Tyrra. and thus were formed the Elves – beautiful, filled with Light, and nearly undying, filled with Life.

The Elves flourished, and Time gave no notice to this infraction, as the Elves were not truly immortal and did not violate the natural cycles to a great degree. The Elves became the first sentient race on the face of Tyrra.

The Elves built great cities and became quite learned. They began to understand the workings of Time and Tyrra, and even found out about the Ancient Law of Balance. One particular Elven scholar and his followers were appalled by Life and Light breaking the Law of Balance. A great conflict ensued, known to the Vornae as the Great Schism, as the scholar and his followers began to search for a way to restore the balance that had been breached by their very creation. and so it was that these renegades began to research and communicate with the Elements of Death and Darkness. They became warped by these elements, just as the original elves were “bent” towards Life and Light.

In a great debate that resulted in much violence, the Dark Elves, *Vornaedhil*, left their brethren and descended into the Underworld. Wars were fought with the surface elves for many centuries, and the *Vornaedhil* were nearly extinguished. It was then that the last of them retreated into the darkness, and after many more millennia they forgot about the surface world. History became legend, legend became myth, and so on. Some of the Vornae developed close ties with the Spiders of the deep, and others created inflated tales of greatness, claiming the Vornae were descended from dragons. The Elements had all but abandoned the Vornae who had once taken up their banner in the name of balance.

Many Vornae generations passed. Cities and Clans came into being, Wars were fought, and the High Council was formed. The Vornae studied magic and formed great schools. But, as it is well known, the wars and instability continued.

One of the more knowledgeable mages of the Vornae was named Velryu. He became very powerful and well-versed in Formal Magicks. He grew to detest the selfish and immature fashion in which the Vornae fought amongst each other, be it in civil war or in the political arena. Velryu decided to separate himself as much as possible from their games.

And so he set out on a journey, into the wilds of the Underworld. For hundreds of years he wandered the dark tunnels, walking in shadow and purifying his mind each day in meditation.

During the final days of his journey, Velryu was meditating deeply when he felt a presence surround him in the chamber he was in. Three amorphous beings emerged from the shadowy depths of the cavern, and approached him. Velryu was unafraid, for he had become at peace with the shadows of the tunnels. Slowly they took a form more familiar to him, that of Vornae. The shadows of the cavern seemed to cling to them as they approached.

The beings seemed to speak with a deep, unearthly echo – this voice was strong in Velryu’s mind. No single Shadow would finish a complete phrase – they seemed to speak as one. They told him that they had been watching him for some time; and that they represented Shadow in its purest form – an aspect of Darkness, but independent in their own sense.

As they spoke, he felt their voices touch his mind – they explained that they wished to form a pact with him and his kind, those who also “danced with the shadows.” They said that in return for his service they would teach him the *Bacha ne Velkyn*, or “Road of the Hidden,” as long as he promised to pass on the teachings to other *Ru’Veldrin*, “Warriors of the Shadows,” and that he would know who was worthy by the way that they walked with the Shadows, and the way the Shadows walked with them. He accepted the pact and the Shadows marked him on his brow with the mark of the *Ru’Veldrin*.

When he returned to the Vornae, he saw that the bloody wars of his brethren still continued. However, Velryu, now at peace with himself, began to follow his destiny. In secret, he trained Vornae from all walks of life in the *Bacha ne Velkyn*. He took on many apprentices, whom he named Sha’Abbil, and over the course of centuries formed a council of Tu’Sye, the only ones trained enough to recognize and train other *Ru’Veldrin*. Each of these Tu’Sye took on Sha’Abbil of their own, and, still in complete secrecy, the *Ru’Veldrin*’s numbers grew.

When the Empire was finally formed, and the schools were created, many of the graduates of Ansatsu were watched carefully by the *Ru’Veldrin* as possible candidates. It became almost a legend among the students of the School of Assassins, though any who mentioned it to the outside world quickly met their demise.

And so it was, that the *Ru’Veldrin* had become a formidable, clandestine society. They spoke the Ancient tongue of the Vornae, thought to be a dead language, and used it as a secret language all their own. Each *Ru’Veldrin* took an Oath, an Oath of Honor that superseded all others, including that of Clan Honor. In return, they were trained in the Road of the Hidden, a rigorous physical and mental journey. They were taught the Ways of Shadows, and the Voice of Darkness, *Linath ne Oloth* (many became the first Dark Elven harmonicists). They recruited and trained powerful Mages and Wizards who each, while not becoming marked, developed a deep understanding of darkness and shadow.

This Oath above Oaths did indeed end up in conflict with many of the *Ru’Veldrin*’s former lives, particularly those of high birth. Soon, word got to the Empress Forel that those who were not entirely loyal to the throne existed in secret. Desperately, she tried to weed out these traitors, but her inquisition was to no avail. The closer she got to the *Ru’Veldrin*, the more hidden they

became. Finally, one night, three Tu'Sye approached her in her bedchambers. Though she tried to call for her guards, no sound escaped her room. They explained to her that her inquisition must stop, and that they held no ill will toward the throne or the Empire. They only asked for amnesty, and in return they assured her that they would not interfere with the politics of the Vornae, unless it moved to interfere with them. Feeling she was sufficiently convinced, the three Tu'Sye returned to the shadows from whence they appeared. Forel stopped the search shortly after.

The ebb and tide and tragedy of the Vornae's existence, as the centuries passed, took its toll on the Ru'Veldrin just as it did on the entire populace. The Tu'Sye were unwilling to send Ru'Veldrin to the surface, for fear they would be contaminated by the light-dwellers. The Ru'Veldrin's numbers began dwindling as the population of the Empire dwindled, and the Tu'Sye refused to train any who were considered "Drae." One young Tu'Sye, Rithannu, saw disaster in the future of the Ru'Veldrin, and urged them to change. He saw that the shadows did not just walk with Vornae, indeed, he had seen many Drae that possessed much skill and affinity with the shadows. He was met with much ridicule, and the Council refused to listen.

Then, disaster befell the Ru'Veldrin. During one of their deca-annual meetings, a terrible light burst forth in the meeting hall. Bizarre, whirling creatures of light and flame wielding blades of fire descended upon the Ru'Veldrin. Totally unprepared for such a thing, and having sent very few Ru to the surface, the entire population of Shadow Warriors were quickly and systematically killed by these beings. Desperately they tried to fight back, but were no match for these otherworldly foes.

A group of the creatures of flame began a terrible ritual. As the Ru'Veldrins' spirits left their bodies, they became trapped in the Circle of the ritual. The creatures sought to destroy their spirits, obliterating them for eternity, and draining their essence into that of the creatures'. As they did, the bodies reformed on the ground, nothing more than shriveled, empty husks.

Rithannu watched in terror as this happened, for the creatures had mistaken him for dead – with all his magical power at his command, he fought the ritual and sought to disrupt it. The effort was near fatal, and his life force was drained from his body. Failing, he collapsed to the ground. Soon the Ru'Veldrin's spirits were gone, and the creatures returned from whence they came. Rithannu was all that remained. Near death, he returned to his soul mate, Tayshia and her twin brother, Mythrannd, with whom he also shared a close bond of friendship.

For many years he rested in recovery, having lost contact with all of the other Ru'Veldrin, if indeed more survived. However, he vowed to rebuild the Ru'Veldrin to its former glory. He asked Tayshia and Mythrannd to help in this search, though for their own reasons they refused to walk the path of the Ru'Veldrin. Rithannu held no resentment for this, for neutrality and wisdom are the first and foremost precepts of the Ru'Veldrin's code, and the help was much needed and appreciated.

Over the years only a handful of Dark Elves have been considered, and only a select few have begun the road. Still, Rithannu recovers, and soon he will return to strength and begin the rebuilding.

The Seven Codes of the *Kansaehoten ne Ru’Veldrin*

Each member of the Ru’Veldrin must swear to this code.

One shall be respectful of thy Tu’Sye and Sha’bbil

One shall be respectful of thy Brothers and Sisters

One shall not speak of the Ru’Veldrin to those whom are not Ru’Veldrin

One shall not act unless acted upon. (One shall remain neutral in all aspects unless it involves the Ru’Veldrin)

One shall walk the *Bacha ne Velkyn* always. (e.g., they must undergo the training to be Ru’Veldrin, which is of course a never ending process of perfection with the Shadows)

One shall bear the mark of the Ru’Veldrin with humility and grace. (Each full-fledged member must take a mark (celestial or earth, by the formal) upon their spirits saying they are part of the Ru’Veldrin. This is done by a Tu’Sye.)

The *Bacha ne Velkyn*

The Road of the Hidden is a rigorous mental and physical journey to become closer and more in tune with the Shadows and the Balance. It involves training the body to be flexible, swift, and strong, and the mind to be sharp, alert, and wise. Wisdom, respect, and neutrality are the foremost precepts of the Road.

Ru’Veldrin Structure

Tu’Sye – A high master. The Tu’Sye can be of any persuasion, though many of them are schooled in magery.

Sha’bbil – A Tu’Sye in training. They are second in command of any group of Ru’Veldrin.

Brothers/Sisters – Any other Ru’Veldrin. They treat each other as equals and protect each other like family.

Dal’har – A Dark Elf who is being watched for candidacy. They rarely know they are being considered, and a Ru may watch someone completely in secret for many years before offering.

THE KNOWN HISTORIES OF DRAELONDE

Ancient History

Settlement

The first records of Vornae society tell of a settlement within a large cavern in central Draelonde. This cavern, which later grew into the capital city of Shyamachi, was home to three major clans, Takara, Kinobi, and Shubiata. These three clans flourished in their underground world, mining the precious gems and ore and learning to farm in the Underworld.

As the centuries passed, the Vornae grew in numbers. Several new clans were formed and the cavern became crowded. The heads of all the clans met and decided that scouts would be sent out to explore the underworld and see if they could locate other caverns capable of supporting settlements. When the scouts returned, it turned out that they had located several caverns that seemed adequate for settlement. Several of the clans packed up and moved into these caverns.

Clan War in the North

The journey of these first pioneers was difficult. Many Dark Elves lost their lives to the predators of the Underworld. But once the settlements were established and the new caverns were cleared of danger, once again the Vornae flourished. During this time, two major clans, the Takara and the newer Hoyosha clans, fought over the lands to the north. The clan war that ensued was long and brutal, but when all the fighting concluded, the Takara Clan was victorious and, in shame, the Hoyosha clan was banished to the surface.

Although the fate of the Hoyosha Clan is unknown with any certainty, it is believed that they settled to the north in the Barbarian lands, and that some or all of the members of the banished clan helped to found Nebulonde, now a Barony of the Kingdom of Avendale.

The New Rule

While conflicts between rival clans continued in the settlements, the Shubiata Clan left Shyamachi to settle the caverns to the west, and the Kinobi to the east. Both of these clans hoped that the stories of undiscovered wealth were true and that the new settlements would bring glory and power to their clans. This left the main cavern in the possession of several minor clans. One of these clans, Kyotoka, had a charismatic and shrewd Overlord by the name of Kaji-Iwa. She decided that it would be best if all of these minor clans were unified into a single clan, and with a little persuasion from the sword, soon all the minor clans were unified under the Kyotoka banner.

Word spread of Kaji-Iwa's conquest and rumors of an impending major clan war spread. Realizing the danger in widespread war, Detri, Overlord of the Shubiata Clan, called for all of the Overlords to meet in Shyamachi.

Tension ran high as the Overlords arrived in the city. Unsure of Detri's intentions, the Overlords assumed that this was a council of war. For several days the Overlords met in a large tent erected in the center of the city. When the meeting was over and the Overlords came out of the tent, a new pact had been signed. This pact stated that the four largest clans in the Underworld would send their

Overlord to sit on a council. This "High Council" would decide matters of inter-clan politics and map out plans for expansion. It was also decided that each settlement would remain under the rule of the largest clan, but would follow under the laws of the council for issues concerning national politics.

Council Rule

With the formation of the High Council, Detri's dream of Vornae peace fell to ruins. The reasons for this were twofold:

The first was the fact that of the four original council members, only Detri saw the importance of unification. The other members believed in a strong military rule and each of these Overlords sought to further their own power.

The other reason was the fact that in the Council pact, it was stated the four highest ranking clans would hold seats. This meant that every 100 years, a census of clan membership must be taken to determine the 4 largest (Council) clans. This established a clan ranking system but also encouraged clans to kill off or enslave other clan members in order to further their own clan status. A new era of assassinations and clan warfare arose.

Fearing for the welfare of their own status as Council members, the High Council officially published the First Vornae Honor Code. Based on the honor system used for clan loyalty, this first Honor Code was adopted as law and failure to obey meant death.

Vornae Renaissance

The Dark Elf Clans thrived under the new leadership of the council, and steadily their populations increased. Although clan hostility rose, there was a national push to increase population, driven by the clan leaders and their drive to strengthen clan ranking. During this time the Vornae turned their attentions toward academics and the pursuit of knowledge. Much research was done in the fields of mathematics, military technology, geology and the arcane sciences. It was at this time that Clan Kinobi sponsored the first Vornae expedition to the surface.

The expedition was the cause of much controversy. Throughout their history the surface had been considered evil, a place of taboo. Kinobi's decisions to explore the Upperlands opened the subject for new debate. While the scholars argued the point, and Council refused to officially recognize the expedition, the party departed for the surface. The only word ever returned from the party was a message sent back two weeks after the party had left. The message stated simply that the party had "reached a tunnel that surely lead above...for only the evil of the surface could cause us such pain."

The group was never heard from again. It is not known if they ever did reach the surface, or if they perished above. 346 years after the original journey to the surface, the council decided to send a second expedition. With the backing of the council, the nation's bravest warriors and wisest spell-casters were assembled. It was the Council's hope to discover new resources to strengthen the clans and perhaps find new lands for colonization.

Nearly two months after they departed, two of the original members returned with grim news. The following is an account that has been passed down from many generations: "As we

moved to the north, we were attacked by a horde of large hair covered elves with rounded ears. The light that burned in the sky was evil and made us weak. It had turned the skin of the beasts white. We battled until the evil light rose and when all was done, only the two of us were left to face too many of the “Wild Ones.”

With the disastrous outcome of the second expedition, the Council officially declared the surface off limits to all Dark Elves.

War in the West

Between the periods of the 1st and 2nd expedition, trouble arose in the west. Clan Shubiata which had held dominance over the clans to the west, slowly found rivals in several of the minor clans. These clans continually attacked Shubiata, until all-out war was declared. After the smoke of the war had settled Shubiata was in ruins. The power they had once wielded was now nothing but a reminder of the past. Two minor clans rose to prominence after Shubiata's defeat. They were Morsuldur and Ruinvorn. The two clan Overlords decided to divide the lands, so Ruinvorn moved to the north where the Takara Clan had weakened, and Morsuldur headed to the south. Although Shubiata still held its Council seat, its power was sufficiently lessened. Morsuldur and Ruinvorn awaited the next census with anticipation.

While turmoil reigned in the west, Clan Kinobi had problems of its own. Having disobeyed the wishes of the council and broken taboo with the surface expedition, Kinobi was losing its hold over the eastern lands. Though no clan had as of yet challenged them, the Kinobi leadership realized the eventuality of their fall from power. It was at this time that the Kinobi Overlord made a treaty with the Overlord of a powerful rival clan named Tsumatzi. Kinobi had wished to insure their power for generations to come.

Rise of Kyotoka-Wutaro

As Takara, Kinobi, and Shubiata dwindled in power, other clans took the opportunity to stabilize their positions of power. Kyotoka, which had remained unchallenged in Shyamachi, grew to a position of even greater power. In the southern region, the Wutaro Clan surfaced as a major military power as the result of a bloody war that had unified numerous minor clans. While each clan took measures to solidify a position within their respected region, they watched each other with caution. With the results of the next census, a new power structure arose. of the original Council clans, only Kyotoka and Kinobi remained. The other two seats were taken by Morsuldur and Wutaro.

No sooner was the new census complete than treachery rocked the Council. Clan Kinobi's alliance with Tsumatzi was dissolved and Tsumatzi signed a new pact with the Bokenjen Clan. The specifics of the pact are not known, but it is rumored that the pact was designed specifically to destroy Kinobi's position of power, because shortly after the pact was signed, Bokenjen attacked Kinobi. Due to the conditions of the pact, Tsumatzi was honor bound to help "defend" the Bokenjen Clan. After 18 years of battle, Kinobi surrender and, by order of the Council, were order disbanded for loss of honor.

With Kinobi broken, the Council seat remained open. Because of Vornae law, until the next census, the seat would remain unfilled. In an open act of defiance, the Wutaro Clan ordered the Council to fill the vacant seat. Wutaro had grown to the rank of number one clan, and hoped that this show of muscle would prove their dominance to the nation. Instead, Wutaro's Overlord was declared a renegade, and her younger sister frantically tried to stabilize the disoriented clan, but her efforts were futile. Wutaro was too large and Morsuldur assassins had infiltrated the ranks. With Wutaro thrown into chaos, Kyotoka, the number two clan, invaded the Wutaro settlement of Water's Edge.

For the next 200 years, war raged throughout the Underworld. Kyotoka made alliances with Morsuldur, Ruinvorn, and Bokenjen. Wutaro tried desperately to retain standing, but was unable to muster support from any of the major clans. During the Blood Wars, as they would come to be known, the Council was not convened. Instead all of the nation's resources went into warfare.

When the war was finally over, the entire Wutaro Clan had been eradicated to the last child. As a show of power and brutality, Kyotoka dumped the bodies of Wutaro into the under ground lake outside of the city (To dispose of a Dark Elf's body below the surface is considered a high insult to the deceased). To this day the city is still called Dokomczio - "Poisoned Waters."

Many lives were lost to the Blood Wars. As near as can be estimated, over 25% of the entire Vornae population died during the war, and many scholars feel that even more lives were lost due to disease, famine, and the other effects the war had on the land. The populace turned to the Council for help, but the Council was in ruins. During the war, no census had been taken and without Council to order one, the clans were in disarray. Several attempts were made at re-organizing a new High Council, but there was no way to be certain of the accuracy and legitimacy of the census. In addition, political assassinations were at an all time high. The Underworld had plunged into the Gozen dochi Hihakari ("The Days of Pain").

Small conflicts continued throughout the lands for the several generations. All efforts to re-establish the Council were abandoned. Instead, the Overlords battle for supremacy within their regions, each one claiming the right to call themselves Empress. It was not until some 1200 years after the end of the Blood Wars that one dominant leader arose, her name was Forel I, of the Clan Kyotoka. Throughout the period of chaos, Kyotoka had remain relatively stable and powerful. As the confrontations took a toll on lesser clans, Kyotoka used the opportunity to adopt others into its ranks. Then, gradually, Forel I forced the clans to swear loyalty to her clan, ensuring Kyotoka's safety from outside attack. At last, the age old dream of Vornae unification was realized.

The Birth of an Empire

Forel quickly assumed the position as Empress, but she was shrewd and knew that subtlety was needed to secure her new position. Her first official move as Empress was to order a census in order to reconvened the High Council. The only difference in her new order was that the Royal Clan would not have a seat on the Council. Instead, the next four largest clans would hold the seats.

The census was quickly completed and Bokenjen, Morsuldur, Ruinvorn and Tsumatzi were appointed to the council. With the High Council reinstated Forel wasted no time in drafting the First Vornae

Imperial Constitution. One of the major points of the new Constitution was its revisions of the Honor Code (the same honor code that is still used today). Forel also made Kuraianki the official and only legal language of the new Empire.

Under Forel and her military rule, the new Empire of Draelonde which, in the ancient Provincial Vornae means "Shadow Haven," saw a new period without any major clan wars. The occasional assassination or covert attack still occurred, but no one clan dared to challenge the power of Kyotoka and the Empire.

Trade between the cities grew and major re-construction of war-torn regions proceeded. Forel watched with pride as her Nation grew. Or so she thought. With the next four censuses, Forel and the Council noticed that the population was not increasing as expected.

It was at this time that the High Council decided that an expedition to the surface should be launched. They had hoped that they might discover another settlement of Dark Elves or other similar races. There were also allegations that the government sought new races so that the civil wars that had ravaged the Underworld since ancient times would end and the Vornae could find new enemies upon whom to vent their hostilities. The members of the expedition were primarily from Ruling Clans (Morsuldur, Bokenjen, Ruinvorn and Tsumatzi). The party was predominately male, as the Empress would not allow females of high station to be put at great risk. The expedition was sent to "the south."

The expedition party was gone for 70 years. During that time Forel I died and her daughter, Forel II, took the throne. When the expedition party returned, they had a wealth of information, including maps of the surface world, documentation of new races such as the Quentari Elves and the Sarr, and even strange and exotic items and devices they had found. The importance of the surface world could no longer be overlooked, and Forel II and the High Council realized this, but feared the public reaction. It was decided that most of the information gathered by the expedition would be suppressed for "reasons of the safety of the clans and all the citizenry of the Empire." It is also rumored that at that time Forel appointed an official Advisor to Surface Affairs.

It is rumored that the some members of the expedition split off, shortly after reaching the general area known as the Sutherlands, and that they found a small settlement of Dark Elves there. That group is reported to have spent over twenty years living in caves with their kin, refusing to continue their mission. They found the lifestyle pleasing in comparison to the rigid existence waiting for them within the Kingdom. It is quite plausible that refugees from the expedition have scattered all over the southeastern region of the continent of Avalon.

With the return of the expedition and a new Empress, the High Council and Forel looked to the future with optimism. Although the last few censuses showed no massive population increase, but the numbers were slowly increasing. They knew that without a steady population growth, that no large scale expansion could be successful. As plans were being made, a massive earthquake rocked the eastern coast of Draelonde.

Although it went almost completely unnoticed above ground, many Vornae lost their lives and once again, the Dark Elves of Draelonde were at the brink of extinction. To compound the problem further, cases of sterility were increasing in the south. This had been going on for some time, but until now had gone undetected. With all eyes focused on population statistics, the problem was magnified. No one is sure as to the reasons for lessening birthrates, but some theories point to inter-breeding within families and clans, sub-thermal toxins, or even over-use of celestial Magicks. Whatever the reason, a national crisis had arisen. All the top scholars from throughout the Empire were assembled and ordered to find a solution to the problem.

For hundreds of years, the scholars studied the problem and researched solutions. Many powerful Magicks were used and even some new ones were created. But no one could provide any consequential results.

Many whispered that Forel's power was weakening, and she knew that without an heir her Empire would crumble. Clan Kyotoka was itself suffering and Forel felt that if a solution could be found then perhaps the Empire could be saved. That was when word came to Forel of "Light Elves" (Quentari) living in caves above Draelonde. Immediately scouts were sent to find out if the stories were true. When they returned they reported that there were indeed Elves living in caves within Draelonde's border. Forel wasted no time. She assembled her most powerful mages and most trusted warriors and, in secret, headed to the cave where the Elves were living. She felt that if she could transform the Elves into Dark Elves then the problem would be solved.

Forel and Tarillin

The first meeting between Forel II and the Elf leader, Tarillin, was uneasy at best. Neither understood each other, and the documents from the expedition that Forel had counted on for information were out-dated and woefully inadequate. For thousands of years, the Vornae had feared the evil of the surface dwellers. Now, face-to-face, Forel was unsure what to do. Originally she had planned to take the Elves by force. But upon seeing them in the battered shape they were in, weakened her resolve. They were obviously refugees from some far off war.

For Tarillin, a Quentari princess, the first meeting was even more frightening. Here she was, leader of about 400 refugees who were inadequately armed and suffering from the effects of a long journey. When Forel arrived with her well-armed and powerful patrol, Tarillin feared the worse, for legends of the Dark Elves and their savagery had spread throughout the surface lands. But with the aid of her advisors and a member of the expedition party, an uneasy peace was made. It was also agreed that Tarillin would allow three children to be transformed. One of these was her very own brother.

The Drae

Forel returned from the meeting with the three newly transformed Dark Elves and quickly adopted them into her clan. When the council next convened, Forel proposed her plan to transform the

Quentari into Dark Elves. The Council was shocked. The initial arguments were heated and many of the Council advisors feared this would instigate clan warfare that would destroy the Empire.

For the next 31 years, Council debated the issue. Vast quantities of testimony were heard and debates raged behind closed doors. The Council remained divided until Forel decided that the Empire had wasted too much time, and that without a solution, Vornae survival was in jeopardy. She called an emergency High Council.

When the meeting was called to order, Forel introduced the three transformed children, now near the age of maturity, to the Council and explained that they had been part of Draelonde society for the past 31 years. She also admitted that several others had been transformed in the mean time, and that they had adjusted without incident. After many more hours of debate and argument, the Council decided to allow a massive transformation program to begin and to assimilate all the Quentari available, with children taking precedence over the adults.

When the transformations were complete, Forel decided to officially adopt Tarillin as her daughter. This decision, although backed by the High Council, met with widespread disapproval among the masses. Draelonde stood on the brink of revolution.

Meanwhile, in the year 96 E.R., Clan Nagakii attempted to garner power by launching an unauthorized expedition deep into the eastern caverns of Elfheim. They wished to establish a clandestine base of operations. When the scouting group was discovered, the leader of the clan, Rho-Tsu Nagakii, covered up her intentions by demanding a seat of the High Council. Nagakii was only rank seven (you must be at least rank five), Rho-Tsu claimed that the most recent census of the population was inaccurate. In an attempt to squelch the potential of revolution, Forel forged an alliance with Rho-Tsu. However, Rho-Tsu had greater ambitions. She felt Forel's plan of using the Quentari to strengthen the Draelonde bloodlines was radical, at best. Many clans were resistant to the thought of mingling their blood with that of surface elves. The hard-line Vornae who believed that the transformation and acceptance of outsiders was wrong, felt that those now referred to as Drae (meaning "shadows"), would taint the "true-bloods."

Rho-Tsu used Forel's "instability" to make a bid at deposing the Empress. They even went so far as to assemble the First Vornae Council. The Vornae Council stated: "If our race is truly in danger of extinction, is it not more honorable to die in glorious battle than to survive as a race of half-breeds and jochu!" the Council members were killed within minutes of this declaration, and the rebellion was quickly crushed. Meanwhile, Rho-Tsu murdered one of Forel's closest advisors and framed the Quentari for the dishonorable act. The plan backfired, as Clan Morsuldur conveniently supplied evidence to the contrary. In anger and protest over the treatment of these Vornae, the Nagakii Clan, then ranked 7th and known as public leaders of the revolution, renounced their citizenship and left Draelonde, leaving Elfheim prior to the public announcement of the deception regarding the assassination, and Rho-Tsu led her people westward, far beyond the reach of Draelonde justice. The current whereabouts of Clan Nagakii are unknown.

With the departure of Nagakii, Forel took extreme measures to settle any unrest. To this day the Vornae-Drae issue remains a point of contention between some clans, with the Vornae being hunted for their hatred of Drae.

Tarillin as Empress

Slowly the Vornae adjusted to the Drae, who found homes in many of the influential clans. The Drae customs were strange to the Vornae but the population began to increase, and no one could argue the success of the Drae assimilation. In time, Tarillin's popularity grew, and she was named Royal Seneschal and heir to Forel.

Shortly after the Quentari elves arrived for transformation, Tarillinae, Tarillin's daughter, refused the formal and left for Quentari. Several years later, Tarillin, at the recommendation of the High Council, gave birth to twins, Jehrill and Jared. The twins were later sent to Quentari as messengers, but only Jared returned. Jehrill was believed captured by the Quentari.

After a time, Forel tired of her duties as Empress and wished to spend more time pursuing the Earth Magicks she so loved. Forel abdicated to Tarillin and shortly thereafter, disappeared. Some say she left to pursue her dreams of immortality. Whatever the case, Forel was never seen or heard from again.

Under the rule of Tarillin, the Empire prospered and entered a new age of what can only be called peace. Although clans still battled for ranking and many prominent citizens found the end of an assassin's dagger, major conflicts were few. Trade increased and Tarillin even established above-ground outposts and trade routes. Many of the Drae preferred living above, and the die-hard Vornae were happy to see them go. Trade was even established with humans who had recently settled around Draelonde and, in 569 E.R., Tarillin was officially asked to bring Draelonde into the human kingdom of Evendarr.

The Barony of Elfheim

Tarillin accepted the offer and was officially granted a Barony in the newly established Duchy of Ravenholt that same year. The Barony was called Elfheim and Tarillin, known as Blackmere to the humans, was named Baroness.

With Tarillin serving as Baroness, her son Jared was named Emperor. This meant that Tarillin would serve as a sort of Prime Minister, and Jared, although still considered royalty, was little more than a figurehead. The High Council and Provincial Councils were also kept, but now served simply as advisors to the Baroness. The human system of feudalism was not very different from their own, so as a whole it was fairly well accepted, though some still resented the surface dwellers and their interference in Dark Elven affairs.

Several years later, Tarillin fell in love with the Duke, Basil Ravenhurst, and in order to win him over, Polymorphed herself into a human. In 571, Tarillin married Duke Ravenhurst, who knew her as Rowan Morgana Ravenstarr. For a short time, she was able to lead a double life, but it became increasingly difficult and eventually she left the responsibilities of managing

Elfheim to the High Council, and named Durchasi Ruinvorn as her Seneschal. Tarillin eventually abdicated all political power to Jared in 590.

The same year, the Duke appointed Durchasi as Baron-Designate, but before she was sworn to the office, she was charged, under suspicious circumstances, with treason against the Duke. She was sentenced to death but decided instead to commit Seppuku. In her death speech, she vowed revenge on those who had wronged her, and for that the Duke stripped her of all titles and ordered her banished.

Scafloc Bokenjen was appointed the new Baron. He quickly made attempts to unify all of the Dark Elves within the Duchy, but many saw his actions as excessive, as he even went to the point of removing the titles of any Dark Elf who would not swear loyalty to him. The High Council was shocked by his actions, and Emperor Jared saw it as a clear attempt by Scafloc toward gaining the throne of Draelonde/Elfheim.

In December of 591, due to petitions from Scafloc, King Richard of Evendarr granted Draelonde sovereignty from Evendarr. When word of Scafloc's actions reached the Imperial Court, Jared used his full powers as Emperor, reinstated the Vornae Constitution, and in a defensive move, ordered the borders of Draelonde/Elfheim closed to outsiders. At the end of 591, Scafloc was removed by Countess Cumberland and Isilome Arusorambo was named Baron. Isilome moved quickly to restore order to the Barony and to appease the High Council and Jared. One of his first acts was to restore all titles that had been stripped during Scafloc's term.

Until recently, after the sealing of the border no one, including Dark Elves were allowed in or out of Draelonde. Rumors abounded, including the purported return of Jehrill, Jared's brother. Other stories included rumors of trolls attacking the surface, and even foreign armies amassing above the underworld. No one could be sure of the true reason for Jared's action, and until the borders were unsealed only speculations could be made.

The Establishment of the Vornae Explorer Charter

In the year of 594 E.R., King (Emperor) Jared Kyotaka proclaimed that every effort would be made to locate Vornae kin who had been deprived of contact with the homeland. They would also be offered charter recognition by the Kingdom of Elfheim. Any family consisting of at least 6 members, could receive house status per order of King Jared. A loose affiliation was to be established and maintained.

Those who wished to return to the fold would be required to follow the Vornae Honor Code in order to be recognized by the Kingdom.

The requirements of participation in the Vornae Explorer Charter are simple. Those wishing to participate must send a letter to King Jared Kyotaka (via the chapter's Local Plot Committee). The letter should include the new clan's population (note that clan populations may not exceed current numbers for the top 10 clans without permission of National), a brief history of the clan's members (a listing of all PCs and NPCs in game, connected to the clan, with both in-

game and out-of-game names), the requestor's position in his or her current household, a description of the surrounding surface culture, and the ambitions of the clan. The letter should be sent by the prospective Head of Clan.

The clan will be required to update the Kingdom of Elfheim once per year. The update should include: Any changes in House rank, population growth or reduction, activities of the House, surface culture education and continuing goals of the clan. A response, in kind, will be forwarded to the clan by the Kingdom of Elfheim. An exchange of knowledge will be established and maintained by the Cultural Attaché (Ikitaminzcku Byohoscakami) of the Elfheim Royal High Council, toward a Certificate of Imperial Recognition. The clan will also receive special consideration if they wish to join the Kingdom at a later date. They will also receive annual updates on the activity within Elfheim. An open invitation to visit the Kingdom will be extended to any members of the clan bearing a writ signed by the Head of Household. A copy of the Kuraianki language (official language of the homeland) will also accompany the first package sent by Elfheim.

CURRENT EVENTS IN AND AROUND DRAELONDE

As of 605, Draelonde has been relatively stable and productive for a number of years. There are currently 18 Senators, and many of the smallest clans have been adopted into the larger clans (Houses 1-9) in an attempt to maintain the current ranking. There are few conflicts between the clans of note, although the occasional assassination is still known to occur.

The only notable political strife is due to the disappearance of Durchasi Ruinvorn, head of Clan Ruinvorn, more than five years ago. Several years ago, Emperor Jared put out a call to all clans to search for her, but thus far, there has been no response. It is expected that by early in 606 E.R., he will require the placement of a new Head of Household in Clan Ruinvorn. At present, a Regent from Clan Kyotaka has been put in charge to ensure the sanctity of the Clan. There have been some mutterings of takeovers, as Ruinvorn is believed to have discovered some new caverns in northern Draelonde which are reported to be rich with gems and gold.

Clan Morsuldur is growing strong, governing the southern half of Draelonde, having taken in numerous small houses in recent decades. They are emphasizing growth in merchanting and trade with the surface dwellers, and are sending more representatives above ground each year.

Rumors of an extensive underground gating system, possibly based on Sessuar technologies, abound, substantiated by the ease of travel that several key ambassadors of Morsuldur seem to have, lately.

The creation of a new “Free” City, Kushakowa, deep under Westmarch, in Ravenholt, has been creating a stir. Some feel that Draelonde should not stretch its resources to such a distance, while others feel that an expansionist approach is the only healthy choice for the clans. A number of the smallest houses have chosen to relocate to the region, rather than to join with a larger clan or household in Draelonde proper.

Of particular concern within Draelonde of late is the recurrence of numerous astrological portents indicating the coming of a great ancient evil being released upon the Vornae. Several incidents have pointed at such activities, including the freeing of what may have been the First Panthergast several years ago, and a further attack by a creature that attempted to use one of Draelonde’s most renowned citizens, Tyger Ty Darkwind (now believed put to rest permanently), to create more Panthergasts. There is further prophecy of a leader who will unite the lands and people.

APPENDIX F: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN DRAELONDE

A High Court of 7 High Lord or Lady Justices will sit for life terms, to judge all legal matters relevant to the Draelonde Empire. All members of the High Court are to be detached from all Clans and Houses and are deemed Clanned to Draelonde itself.

The High Court will exercise punishments on the following high crimes (and others as needed) for its citizens and those non-citizens caught performing such crimes in the Empire:

- Interfering with the military
- Impersonating a titled person
- Murder
- Slavery
- Theft
- Treason

Punishment for these crimes will be determined by the High Court, which may include but is not limited to death, banishment, loss of lands and titles, or heavy fines. In addition to these laws, each province has a Provincial Constitution stating specific crimes of offense and punishment for the crimes.

APPENDIX G: HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS OF DARK ELVES FROM DRAELONDE

There are nine major holidays celebrated in Draelonde.

April 1st	New Year's, Forel's Feast	Beginning High Water Season
May 1st	Hunter's Feast	Mid High Water Season
May 30th	Mining Celebration	End High Water Season
July 1st	Hyokombri's Feast	Mid Bright Moss Season
August 31st	Harvest Day	Mid Warm Stone Season
October 31st	Ancestor's Celebration	Mid Low Water Season
December 31st	Ice Festival	Mid Cold Stone Season
February 1st	Dark Moss Celebration	Beginning Dark Moss Season
March 1st	Bardic Circle Celebration	Mid Dark Moss Season

APPENDIX H: TIMELINE OF MAJOR HISTORICAL EVENTS IN DRAELONDE

200 years for blood wars

1200 years later the Birth of An Empire

- 70 E.R. A massive earthquake rocks the eastern coast of Draelonde
- 30 E.R. Light Elves" (Quentari) living in caves above Draelonde
- 31 E.R. Forel decides to officially adopt Tarillin
- 20 E.R. Tarillin gives birth to twins, Jehrill and Jared
- 96 E.R. Clan Nagakii attempts to garner power by launching an unauthorized expedition deep into the eastern caverns of Elfheim. Forel abdicated to Tarillin.
- 569 E.R. Elfheim become the duchy of Draelonde in Evendarr
- 571 E.R. Tarillin marries Duke Ravenhurst
- 590 E.R. Tarillin eventually abdicates all political power to Jared
- 591 E.R. Draelonde secedes from Evendarr
- 594 E.R. The Establishment of the Vornae Explorer Charter
- 600 E.R. Disappearance of Durchasei Ruinvorn
- 604 E.R. Panthergast released

APPENDIX I: DRAELONDIAN CEREMONY OF KEKKON (MARRIAGE)

The Pairing of Isshomatchi (joining mate) to Isshomatchi with Kansaeshin (honor)

Key issues:

- Neither member of the couple may bear weapons to their wedding, unless they are the possessor of their family weapon of honor by clan right. Even so, the weapon must be peace bonded to show that the pairing is done without threat of violence.
- Should either member of the couple engage in any violence during the ceremony, tradition dictates that the marriage should not happen or that an act of honor must be done towards the family of the one attacked to cleanse the couple suitably for a later service.
- Weddings must be performed by someone (their Deiloto dochi ne vornaē, or “voice of the Vornaē”) of higher rank than the highest ranked member of the couple, with the following priority as available:
 1. Someone from the highest ranked clan of the couple, if not of the same clan
 2. the highest ranked house member of the couple, if of the same clan
 3. the highest ranked member available of a higher ranked clan if no suitable representative is available from the couples' clan(s)
- Each member of the couple must have a representative (Kasaeshin-kote or honor arm guard) who stands for them to uphold their honor and take action in case of need for violence during the ceremony. He or she must be capable of defending his couple member should the need arise, and the Kasaeshin-kote are the only ones besides the Deiloto who should hold active aura or have a non-peace bonded weapon at the ceremony. It is recommended that that representative be of the same house, but is not necessary if the individual chosen is of personal importance to the couple.

The Ceremony:

The Deiloto stands with hands clasped around a ceremonial dagger at the altar or head of the room.

The bride comes forth first, led by her Kasaeshin-kote. She kneels humbly before her Kasaeshin-kote and asks for his/her personal honor oath to serve as Kasaeshin-kote for her wedding. S/he responds to the bride with the appropriate personal honor swearing, and gives a hand to the bride, helping her up, and kneeling him/herself before the Deiloto.

The groom comes forth in similar manner and does the same with his Kasaeshin-kote.

When both Kasaeshin-kote are kneeling silently before the Deiloto, s/he speaks to the bride's, saying “Who brings forth this woman?” to which the Kasaeshin-kote replies “I so do” and places a ring or amulet at the feet of the Deiloto. The Deiloto asks “Who brings forth this man?” to which the groom's Kasaeshin-kote replies “I so do” and also places a ring or amulet at the Deiloto's feet. The Kasaeshin-kote of whichever family's clan has higher rank also places a bottle of Dark Elven wine with the jewelry as well. The lesser clan's Kasaeshin-kote places a

goblet with his/her token. The Deiloto says “So is service given” and the Kasaeshin-kote stand beside their respective couple member.

The Deiloto asks the non-ranking couple member his or her true name, saying “Who are you who gives oneself to become one with another?” the member’s Kasaeshin-kote responds for him/her with his/her full name, clan, et al

The Deiloto then asks the ranking couple member his or true name, saying “Who are you who willingly takes another to become one with your self?” the member’s Kasaeshin-kote responds for him/her w/ full name, clan, et al

The Deiloto then asks the attendees “Do any bring forth a dishonor held upon the house of this man, that he should not be wed?”

<deals with answers if so given – rare, and if so, things may go badly>

When none speak, or after honor issues are resolved, if possible, the Deiloto asks “Do any bring forth a dishonor held upon the house of this woman, that she should not be wed?”

<deals with answers if so given – rare, and if so, things may go badly>

When none speak, the Deiloto says “A Marriage of Honor” <Kekkon dochi ne Kasaeshin> and the couple holds out their hands closest to one another (the person on the left gives the right hand, the person on the right gives the left hand) to the Deiloto. S/he takes the ceremonial dagger and with a single brush of the blade, cuts the palms of the couple. The Kasaeshin-kote of each person provides them with a scroll of pre-written personal honor code statement from bride to groom and groom to bride, along with a quill. The couple each use their own blood to sign their own honor code scroll, and give the scroll to the Deiloto. S/he says to the lesser ranked wedding member “So do you give yourself into the clan of <new clan> and the family of <family name being taken> and so therein lies your honor” and then hands the higher ranked member the lesser ranked’s honor code. S/he says to the higher ranked wedding member, “So do you take unto yourself another in honor, into the clan of <new clan> and the family of <family name> and so therein lies your honor,” and then hands the lesser ranked member the higher ranked member’s honor code.

The Deiloto then declares “So shall we all know the honor of these two.”

The lesser ranked member then speaks his/her honor code aloud to his/her mate. The higher ranked replies with his/her honor code.

The Deiloto states “So are you honor bound and wed, so are you Isshomatchi” and pours a goblet of the wine, handing it to the higher ranked isshomatchi. S/he tastes it symbolically, stating “May all my lives be forfeit should we ever be without honor together” then passes it to his/her mate and then places the ring or amulet s/he brought to the service on him/her, who drinks as well, responding with “May Death take me before I leave your side” and places his/her token on his/her mate. They then clasp the hands that were cut by the Deiloto, blending their blood together, and turn to their guests.

The higher ranked person states “We welcome you to celebrate our new life with us.” and the ceremony is complete.

DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE:

MIYDRANDA



DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE – MIYDRANDA (IN THE DYLLARIAN UNDER REALM)

AN OVERVIEW OF MIYDRANDA

The Vornae of Miydranda (my-id-ran-dah) live by the idea of obtaining whatever it is they seek through deception and treachery. The most important aspect of Miydrandan culture is slavery, and slaves can be assigned to virtually any task that involves even the slightest manual labor. Though beneath the ground, very few Vornae do mining of any kind, preferring to enslave Dark Races to do the work, such as Dwarves. They believe this leads them open to more noble aspects such as Warfare and Arcane Studies, which they believe other races incapable of. Due to these beliefs most Vornae excel at whatever pursuits they choose to follow.

Though age is an important factor in following their studies, early admittance into one of the training facilities, where every Vornae is expected to train, is allowable. After their training they are expected to either join a guild, the army, or if from the Noble Clans, expected to return and help in the running of the Clan. Each guild and training hall guards its various secrets and requirements for entrance and graduation.

MIYDRANDAN LIFE, CUSTOMS, AND TRADITIONS

Lifestyle

Treachery and deception is often the way of life for Vornae, and is often encouraged. Though there are Noble Clans in Vornae Society, there is a strict dictatorship ruled by the Divinitan. Noble Clans must tread carefully, for any dissent or treachery to the Divinitan class is immediately crushed. Since the beginning of the Vornae culture of Dyllaria, enforcement of a Caste System has been issued. The classes of the Caste System are as follows:

Borsin	Slaves, servants, and farmers
Garalant	Common workers
Shangus	Artisans (members of lesser guilds or those of no guild affiliation), and soldiers
Narilis	Sultanic servants
Galiden	Guildmembers
Valindak	Nobility (higher and lesser belong to the same caste)
Divinitan	Rulers

The Borsin are unmovable. They cannot escape their class regardless of what happens. Only a Divinitan can appoint the Narilis but the Garalant and Shangus allow free movement between them. The Valindak is accessible only through lifelong military service. The Divinitan is totally inaccessible except through birth.

Young Vornae are born into a class and their mobility within the Garalant, Shangus, and Narilis is both upward and downward. Membership into the Galiden class is through selection based on accomplishments while attending one of the various Vornae training facilities. The Borsin and Divinitan are closed with no access except through birth, or in the case of Borsin, banishment or punishment. The Valindak are those Noble Clans that follow the Divinitan. It has been known

that when one of the Valindak Clans is getting too powerful, the Divinitan crushes them. The Valindak do change, when lesser Clans exchange warfare and the upper Clan is destroyed, but only then. The Divinitan encourages this warfare, for it keeps the eyes of the Nobles Clans from the Divinitan seat.

The Vornae society is a patriarchal one in which females defer to the will of males in most instances. Inheritance follows the male line, from father to son, and females are not permitted to own property of their own. In most cases males hold all positions, although in rare cases females are permitted the honor through special appointment.

Commonly Used Terms

Dark Race	Any non-Vornae race, as in Dwarves, Trolls, Goblins, Elves, Biata, or Sarr.
Under Realm	The collective tunnels, caverns, and other underground regions of Tyrra.
Twilight’s End	A series of underground corridors and caverns that contain small Vornae settlements, usually beyond the boundaries of the cities.
Ever Dawn	The above ground Realm.
Vornae	The name that the Drae call themselves. These people are esteemed and proud of their heritage, and do not consider themselves to be of Elven ancestry.
Drae	Originally a term for those of Elven blood that were race-changed into Vornae in ages past to help support the waning populace of Draelonde, this word has taken on a broader meaning within the Dyllarian sub-culture. This word is for those that are outcasts from Vornae society, and Ever Dawn raids are always instructed to hunt down and exterminate any Drae that they find. Even when another goal is their primary focus, this will be the raiding party’s secondary aim. A Vornae that is called Drae will be very offended.
Dark Elves	The name given to the Vornae by people of other (mostly Ever Dawn) cultures. Most Vornae find this term distasteful, although not all of them will take offense to it.

Regional Sayings

Those who watch their backs meet death from the front. – Means worrying too much about what you can’t see will cause you to not see what is truly worrisome.

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. – Typically means not to put things off, to get them done, and to meet them head on with courage.

To live without honor is to live another day. – Do what you have to do to accomplish your goals.

May the dark welcome you to her embrace. – A typical greeting among Vornae, this particular saying is one of many among this mysterious race with a double meaning. The first is a pleasant greeting, wishing the person a long life in the Under Realm. The second is a warning that any traitorous behavior will result in combat.

Language

When the Vornae entered into the Dyllarian lands, most of their culture was abandoned, though many of the original traditions remained. The vernacular Vornae language eventually died out, but since the overthrow of Queen Mother Elnina VI many Vornae have begun to relearn their forgotten language (the Draelonde tongue). Every Vornae knows and understands common (English).

Names and Naming Traditions

A Vornae will usually go by their personal name in most instances, though a Vornae formal name generally consists of 4 parts, the personal name, secondary Clan name, primary Clan name, personal guild/trade name.

1. Personal name- This is the first name of a Vornae, it is the name given to them by their parents at their Name Day.
2. Secondary Clan name- This is the Clan name of the secondary parent.
3. Primary Clan name- This is the primary parent's Clan name.
4. Personal Guild/Trade name- If the Vornae has joined a guild or has a particular trade; they will usually have a name that associates them to that particular sector.

Male Names

The following are a sampling of common Vornae personal names.

Dinen	K'vin	Altonvyr	Val'imar
Bella	Reison	Drak	Miriawyr
Aldwyn	Nilscire	Aloran	Risliet
Cingas	Leriat	Eirath	Esain
Rhilaldon	Drie	Brilikin	Khienn
K'let	Mirialith	Qer'rard	Thien
Caeloth	Kededriwyn	Saredus	Leglawyn
Adaenn	Caleli	Kae'kath	Laroawyn
Miriawyr	Yoakith	S'vor	Urintir

Female Names

The following are a sampling of common Vornae personal names.

Aggripina	Tumeka	Nar'Jhana	Rhiannon
Nys'tye	L'yalet	Lisriel	Taneldaiel
Llyla	Preassi	Miraria	Naella
Ninoic	Aidana	Nyddiasa	Liswen
Ocoreve	Lea'lian	Ibilaeri	Kaerawien
Qilin	Paedia	J'raedia	Ceralia
Amiwyn	Zirelle	Olaenna	Peide

MIYDRANDA SOCIETY AND ITS ORGANIZATION

The following information should be considered general knowledge for any character growing up in Miydranda. Even characters without formal education would have heard most of this information. It is up to you to decide what your character would and would not know or believe. The historical aspects should be treated as in-game material. In other words, everything you read here is not necessarily factual, but is instead how the Dark Elves of Miydranda perceive their history in relation to the world around them. Much like any historical text, it is not completely objective.

If your character would like to find out more specific facts about given events, it should be done in-game through other characters and whatever in-game texts exist. This history is intended to aid you in playing a Dark Elf Miydrandan character successfully, not to give you an unfair advantage over any other race.

Ethos

Miydranda Vornae are not a lazy people; they see everything as a challenge. Due to their longevity, they usually tend to see things in a different light, literally, than other races. Vornae, though usually treacherous, will often have a few select friends, whom they remain loyal to. Still, betrayal is not uncommon, even among friends. Slavery is encouraged amongst the Vornae and many own at least one slave. Although Vornae are usually treacherous, they do have a system of honor, as they see it. Once their word is given, they will not break it, even until their permanent death. It is very difficult to obtain a Vornae's "word" and one must be careful when seeking it. The phrasing of the promise must be exact. For example, Jojo gives his word that he will not kill his enemy Rara. Jojo will not kill Rara no matter what the circumstances are, but Jojo will not see it as breaking his word if he hires an assassin to kill Rara. There is usually a time limit placed on a promise, though not always.

Vornae Combat is very organized and each individual will kill an enemy through any means. They have no sense of honor in battle as other races define it - it is kill or be killed. Vornae enjoy torturing their prey whenever possible.

Vornae will typically remain in the Under Realm unless running from the law, acting as part of an Ever Dawn raiding party, or they disagree with the Vornae beliefs. This last occurrence is extreme, and those that leave for this reason are generally hunted and slain or returned to work in the mines. In a few cases Vornae who wish to test their combat skills or follow scholarly pursuits that cannot be obtained in the Under Realm will also go above surface. In the case of disagreeing with Vornae beliefs or running from the law, the transgressor will become known as the "nokoraise" (noe•koe•rye•say), an ancient word meaning cursed. A band of soldiers known as a "motabear" (moe•tah•bee•are) will be sent after the nokoraise by the appropriate Narilis, Galiden, Valindak, or Divinitan. In addition, the family of the nokoraise will almost always be persecuted for his or her transgressions against the culture. This persecution generally results in imprisonment or death.

The common Vornae is quick to anger, although they will most often contain their feelings and remain calm at all times. When personal insult is claimed, however, a Vornae will remember and seek vengeance until the hour of their permanent death.

Marriage (Kekkon)

Vornae marriages are all arranged among the males of the society. The male chooses his wife from his class most commonly or (very rarely) from a lower class. A groom always receives a dowry from the bride's family. Many times marriage is arranged to align noble Clans or guilds, so a good marriage arrangement is seen as a sign of power and prestige. There is always a feast that lasts at least a week, even among the common classes, and among upper classes it is seen as a mark of esteem to hold spectacular feasts and celebrations, often lasting more than one month.

The ceremony itself is a treaty of sorts between the bride and the groom's family or guild. Usually the groom's family chooses someone of a different Clan to speak the words. Monogamy is the societal standard, but adultery is not unheard of.

Birth (Tajo)

Vornae births are a time of great celebration if it is a male child. Female births are usually quiet affairs. Vornae couples typically raise one child at a time, and subsequent births will only take place after the current child's Name Day. The Name Day occurs when the Vornae child reaches puberty, there is a naming feast held. During this feast the child is given its official name and is allowed to use the family's surname. Vornae females take great pride when they are with child as it is a mark of great desirability and high esteem to be pregnant. They do not hide themselves and continue with their various tasks as normal, and many of them wear more provocative clothing when with child than when they are not. It is said that a Vornae female in battle, while with child, is a ferocious and fearful enemy.

Life and Death (Shinanai)

When a Vornae dies a funeral is held at which his closest friends and family speak. A Vornae is not buried, which is seen as a great insult, but burned. Friends and family usually speak before the body is burned, no doubt due to the officious smell of the body. The reading of the deceased's will is then performed. This can be a competitive affair, and any family members who feel that they were wrongly overlooked will often issue duels to the more fortunate recipients. Female burials receive much less attention because they own no property.

Interracial Relations

The Vornae have enslaved their enemies from the beginning of their independence. Slaves are viewed as spoils of war and a necessity to the very existence of the race. Therefore Vornae have a tendency to view all races as potential slaves and work with another race only when it will benefit them. These alliances are readily broken when they become inconvenient. As a result of this common cultural practice, individual Vornae have little respect for other races. They outright dislike Dwarves and Elves, and when forced to deal with them will often provoke a fight.

When more slaves are needed for the various tasks of the Under Realm it is not uncommon to stage an Ever Dawn raiding party, which sometimes take months of planning. Vornae do not go to the surface unprepared or without forethought.

Family

Miydranda Vornae live in a patriarchal society. Power lines run from the oldest male down to the youngest. Extended families are common but nuclear family structure is not frowned upon. Diversity among Vornae Clan members is encouraged, so that no one family can rise above the others. The Divinitan also has those of various skills around them for protection and furthering of knowledge. For the rest of the Vornae, the family trade is usually followed, except for those children of exceptional talent who go on to the training facilities.

The following is a list of the notable Vornae Clans and a brief description of each. It is by no means complete, as there are other countless Lesser and Greater Noble Clans within the society as well.

Aaradoria (Air-a-doria) – Named for the Collective it oversees, Aaradoria, it controls the ordered chaos found in this Collective. Little occurs in the Under Realm that Clan Aaradoria does not know. Rumored to have connections with an Ever Dawn mercenary order comprised of humans.

Abalithiel (A-bah-lith-iel) – Presides over what was Cil-Gariand, once a small, seldom visited Collective. Through tactical enterprises, it has made Cil-Gariand what it is today: a city known for its fine craftsmen and bazaars.

Amadriela (Am-a-dree-lay) – the original ruling Noble Clan of the Miydrandan. Founded by the joining of the Noble Clans in the marriage of Eleviel Lagithranda and Elnina Miydeswer. They remain the ruling family until the assassination of Elnina VI. Quailen, who has formed an alliance with the treacherous creatures of Stonegate, rules what is left of the Northern Vornae.

Anithien (A-knee-the-en)– Greater Noble Clan in Tinadriethiel, this family is renowned for the ability of its Mages and Healers. The first Master of Magda Arcana, Tarang, was of this Clan.

Asirecia (A-sear-e-see-ah) – Governs over the Collective of Helten, it contains the greatest numbers of Healers in the Under Realm Collectives. Thought of as weak by some, for their non-combative ways; the love of the common people serves as their protection.

Eteinia (Et-enia) – Rules the Collective of Gloamwen, its known for its scholarly pursuits, the translations of Ancient texts, and the restoration of damaged books.

Gilmavie (Ga-lil-ma-vee) – Once a Greater Noble Clan, they betrayed Elnina I in the Wyrn War and were executed for their treasonous acts against the Crown. Amiwyn, a newborn child of the Clan, was allowed to live and was later adopted into the Greater Noble Clan Amadriela.

Gwindra (Ga-wind-ra) – When Kuroiude fell, it took many years to restore. During these years Gwindra seized the opportunity to make Delithranda a center for training and learning. Using its own coffers, many centers for this purpose were erected in Delithranda.

Harania (Ha-rah-knee-ah) – Reigns in the Collective of Gloamwen, it contains large numbers of Nature Mages. Graenim Trenison is of this Clan.

Jeraleni (Jhar-ah-lani) – Controls the Elirith Collective, once renowned for its mining of precious gems. Now Clan Jeranlani is comprised of the most experienced and creative of gem cutters and jewelry designers.

Kaani (Kay-on-ee) – Rules in Meradoyok, one of its members, Dinen Kaani was responsible for finding the veins of Emeralds Meradoyok is celebrated for.

Lómithrandra (Low-myth-ran-dra) – Greater Noble Clan in Tinadriethiel, fighter’s of great ability and prowess hale from this Clan. Despite the shame brought upon this Clan during the Wyrms War, this Clan still has many in Tisservale. Other Clans regularly seek the expertise offered by Lómithrandra.

Miemeth (My-meth) – Governs the Collective of Theliven, this Clan controls the vast amount of Iron and Copper mining and production. Also regulates the unusually large number of slaves in Theliven.

Nilmathien (Nil-may-thee-in) – Located in Tinadriethiel, it is known for its fine warriors and large standing army. Many of this Clans’ warriors valiantly fell in the Battle of Bones, defending Reisen Krackor to the last.

Olarellan (Oh-lar-el-an) – Not as prestigious as Gwindra, though donated the use of its many slaves for the building of the training and learning facilities in Delithrandra. Many Master’s of the learning facilities originate from Olarellan.

Olendang- Slow to recover after the sacking of Kuroiude, it is becoming once again a powerful entity in the Under Realm, known for its magical enchantments of weapons and armor.

Thrélia – Governs in Tinadriethiel, it is unique in the fact that its large standing army comprised entirely of females.

Unalicya (Yoon-ah-lick-el-ya) – Managed to survive the fall of Kuroiude relatively unscathed. A merchant Clan that deals in all oddities from both Ever Dawn and the Under Realm.

Vebridith (Veb-rih-dith) – Presides over the Collective of Kuroiude. Renowned for its mages Necromantic abilities, the winner of the Age of Wonder contest in 355 reigns from this Clan.

Zaobeth (Zow-beth) – Strongest Clan in Yimener, it produces some of the most creative Necromantic and Chaotic spells and formal rituals in the Under Realm.

Lines of Succession

Ruler	Reign	Notes
Elnina I	185 E.R. To 252 E.R.	Killed in the Wyrms Wars by Teriopsalaralkin
Elnina II	253 E.R. to 354 E.R.	Cause of death – unknown
Elnina III	393 E.R. to 501 E.R.	Sacrificed herself in the War of Shadows

Elnina IV	502 E.R. to 503 E.R.	Killed by a formal magic backlash
Elnina VI	503 E.R. to 517 E.R.	Executed in 517 for treasonous acts against the Vornae Nation
Quailen	517 E.R.	Banished after challenging the rightful rule of Alexi Krackor
Alexi Krackor	517 E.R. to 579 E.R.	Assassinated by Ves'piyook, a traitor who follows Quailen
Targan Krackor	580 E.R. to present	Present ruler of the Vornae Nation

Primary Titles in Miydranda

Noble Titles

Sultan	This is the highest title in the land. All Under Realm citizens and nobles pay homage to the Sultan. He wields the highest military, legislative, and judicial power. His authority wanes when he is not around, and the Greater Noble Clans often follow his will very loosely. He is seldom if ever challenged openly however, as his wrath is swift and unforgiving. His power is based upon the loyalty of the military. The Sultan does not make laws that apply to the entire kingdom, but instead reviews the laws and practices of each Made by periodically visiting them. Laws that he deems as good are often suggested to the leaders of other Makes by way of Sultanic Proclamations. Made leaders are not often required to follow these proclamations, but those that do have a much better chance to gain favor with the Sultan.
Greater Noble Clan	Each Made is run by a Greater Noble Clan. The entire clan will hold authority, and even the lowliest member can exact judgment upon the commoners. Each clan is run by a Clan Father or Patriarch that is typically the clan's eldest male, and this position of great power and authority is second only to the Sultan. Only the Sultan can grant a Clan the title of Greater Noble Clan. Each Greater Noble Clan is responsible for the defense and prosperity of his own Made. the clan also holds the ultimate military, judicial, and legislative power within his settlement, second only to that of the Sultan.
Greater Guild Master	These Masters oversee their own guild. A Greater Guild receives its' recognition from the Sultan and although not autonomous, a Greater Guild receives respect equal to that of a Greater Noble Clan. A Greater Guild Master receives the same respect as a Patriarch Greater Noble Clan. They are appointed from within the guild itself, not even the Sultan knowing the procedure.
High Secretary	Oversees the daily business of the Vornae Empire and is responsible for the List of Alinas.
High Advisor	Controls all military matters and coordinates troops in times of War. During this time only the Sultan is more powerful.

Common Titles

Lesser Noble Clan	A Greater Noble Clan rules each Made. Many Makes are extremely large, so the Lesser Noble Clans oversee the day-to-day operations of their particular Ward, and tend to matters such as repairing damaged infrastructure, waste disposal, water supplies, and other such tedious tasks. A Greater Noble Clansman appoints these Lesser Clans.
Dralar	A slaver who has achieved recognition for his or her ability to obtain the numbers and kinds of slaves needed is known as a Dralar. This is a position of respect that carries little to no real authority within the structure of the Made.

Military Titles

General	The highest rank attainable within the military structure. The Sultan appoints this position, the only military position the Sultan officially oversees. Men of this rank will lead forces of between 500 and 1,000 strong into battle. A general's greatest wish is to die in combat.
Commander	A leader of men in the field, this rank will command a force of 100 soldiers into battle.
Captain	The assistant to a Commander, each Captain will oversee a force of 50 soldiers.
Tre'lir	This rank will be in charge of ten soldiers. It is the lowest military rank possible, beside soldier.
Soldier	All other Vornae who do not command any particular position

MILITARY

Normal Units

Cavalry	Units mounted atop spiders and basilisks, usually are able to command some form of magic. Are experts with thrown weapons and spears.
Archers	Units in which half use crossbows and the other half use long bows.
Infantry	The rank and file units, these warriors are armed with swords or scimitars and shields.
Javelineers	Units armed with javelins and shields.
Slingers	Units armed with slings, shields, hatchets, and wear leather armor.

Special Units (all follow the normal ranking system)

Tre'kor	These Vornae are ferocious in battle and attack using two-edged weapons. Their style of fighting is renowned and all others in the army fear them. They are completely merciless in their tactics.
Marinot	Comprised entirely of Harmonics Mages, they are mainly found in Collectives, using their magic when they can if a Collective is attacked.
Creain	These units specialize in flanking maneuvers of all kinds and are prepared for any kind of strategic encounter. They will often act as scouts and messengers for the main force of the Sultanic Army, and on the battlefield they specialize in lightning-fast maneuvers and skirmish-style combat.
Ro'urs	A specialized fighting force, which attacks with a steel sort of cage, with spikes in front of it, they use it to impale the enemy's forces. Also trained in close Made

	combat after the cage is used.
Belors	The healers of the Vornae army. They will only heal and to not actually participate in battle.
Celeste	The Wizards, Necromancers, and Nature Mages of the army.
Galors	These are those who are skilled in tactical maneuvers from behind. They use their stealth and abilities to move among the enemy during a battle, slaying whomever they can, although their specialty is finding high-ranking enemy officers and eliminating them. Many do not see them coming until their blade slices through their throat.

THE LANDS OF MIYDRANDA

Settlement Types

Made (Quarter, pronounced MAH-day)	A Greater Noble Clan rules each Made, of which there can be several within each Collective. These areas can differ in size, and they are the primary judicial and legislative power within the Kingdom. The Lesser Noble Clans fall under the leadership of the Greater Noble Clan within each of these locations. Makes will contain marketplaces, shops, guildhalls, Clans, etc....
Collective	This is the name for Vornae cities, which contain several Makes. Usually the Greater Noble Clans are in the center of their separate Makes and the Lesser Noble Clans surround them at various points. Depending on the size of the Collective, there will usually be several marketplaces (selling everything from spices to weapons, but NOT slaves). Greater Guilds are usually near the Greater Noble Clans and the Lesser Guilds are spread out throughout the various Makes wherever there is room. There are usually no more than 4 ways out of the main Collective itself, though various smaller tunnels are not unusual. The Collective has no formal government, but occasionally each of the Greater Noble Clan Fathers will come together to make Collective-wide policies. This happens only rarely, and it is much more common to have Greater Noble Clans within the same Collective involved in trade wars that often turn bloody.
Twilight Hold	Areas set up outside of a Collective, usually for farms and moving goods between the various cities.
Gateways	Large iron gates at each main entrance into a Vornae Collective. Usually heavily guarded, especially since the sacking of Kuroiude, with several fighting complements of fighters, mages, and healers.
Tor'ara	Although not permanent areas, these caverns, always outside Collective walls are where Nobles, Commoners, and Guild members go to buy their slaves. Slavers keep their slaves throughout the cavern until the official day the auction begins. It takes great stealth and subterfuge to find the exact area of an auction. It is rumored that the largest slave auction contained well over 400 slaves and lasted more than a week.

Settlements

The Miydrandans are not a numerous people, but they are extremely motivated as compared to most of the other long-lived races of Tyrra. They reproduce at a limited rate due to strict practices of marriage and the harsh living conditions of the Under Realm. These factors combined with their overall “survival of the fittest” attitude means the unnatural death total is very high among the Miydrandans.

Major Cities/Towns - Population

Name	Established	Population (approx)
Aaradoria	392 E.R.	3, 400
Ansavaru	400 E.R.	350
Cil-Gariand	570 E.R.	1, 000
Delithrandra	344 E.R.	6, 600
Elirith	334 E.R.	850
Gloamwen	335 E.R.	3, 200
Helten	519 E.R.	600
Kuroiude	330 E.R.	7, 000
Meradoyok	555 E.R.	2, 950
Nimrath	405 E.R.	200
Parion	498 E.R.	1, 800
Remiet	352 E.R.	4, 000
Theleven	335 E.R.	2, 750
Tinadriethiel	215 E.R.	16,000
Uniraswen	334 E.R.	1, 900
Yimener	365 E.R.	1, 500

Details of the Communities

Aaradoria (Air-a-doria)	Primarily a Collective where a Vornae can go to find some privacy, this is the Collective to visit. The many taverns and hostels have overseen more than one shady deal, including assassinations of higher members of the political structure.
Cil-Gariand (Sil-Gar-iaand)	This Collective is mainly a craft city. Anything one could ever wish for is here and this is the one Vornae Collective where those from Ever Dawn can come to find certain things, though this is not a common practice since the reclaiming of the throne. Many markets line the streets and beautiful creations of raw materials abound.
Ansavaru (An-saw-va-roo)	This is not a true Collective, but should be mentioned as an area of note. This is an area where mercenaries, brigands, assassins, and those running from Vornae law will go, either for hire or anonymity.
Delithrandra (Del-ith-ran-dra)	The second largest Collective of the Vornae Under Realm, this area makes its money mostly off of the superb schools of training. Many Vornae come from the other Collectives to gain the elite education and training found here.

Elirith (El-i-rith)	Once a burgeoning Collective, it has fallen on hard times since its various mines of precious gems have stopped flowing.
Gloamwen (Glow-am-win)	Nicknamed the “Collective of Artifacts”, it has the largest library, one of the few open to any Vornae that wishes to study. Many ancient texts can be found among its shelves.
Meradoyok (Mer-a-do-yook)	This Collective found an unsuspected vein of emeralds, one of the rarest gems to be mined in this area of the Under Realm. Since then it has continued growing.
Kuroiude (Cure-i-ooode)	The second Collective founded, it was sacked by the Dwarves in 408. Since then it has slowly rebuilt to its former splendor and is once again a powerful seat of political power and learning.
Nimrath	The smallest of the Collectives, much of the populace was lost in the freeing of the throne. As a result of the rampant loyalty to the Queen Mother many of the local guilds have fallen into disgrace.
Parion	This Collective is renowned for its’ remarkable weapons and armor.
Remiet (Rem-i-et)	One of the largest Vornae settlements, it has grown by leaps and bounds since its establishment.
Helten (Hel-ten)	This Collective has a river running through it, which gained fame as having healing properties at certain times of the year.
Theliven (Thee-live-en)	Largest producing Collective of Iron and Copper in the Under Realm.
Tinadriethiel (Tin-a-dree-thee-el)	Primary Collective of the Under Realm. Has excellent training schools, closed libraries, and the strongest Greater Noble Clans in the Under Realm. The main political seat is found here.
Yimener (Yeem-i-nar)	A small Collective, although it’s Earth and Necromancy Guilds are celebrated for the number of new and creative spells they produce.

MIYDRANDA SCHOOLS AND GUILDS

Though age is an important factor in following their studies, early admittance into one of the training facilities, where every Vornae is expected to train, is allowable. After their training they are expected to either join a guild, the army, or if from the Noble Clans, expected to return and help in the running of the Clan. Each guild and training hall guards its various secrets and requirements for entrance and graduation.

Magda Arcana

In 222, the region’s first place of learning and study, known as the Magda Arcana, is build. The school’s expertise encompasses both Celestial and Earth Magic. The Master of Magda Arcana,

Tarang, is chosen from Clan Anithien. This day, June 2, becomes known as Freedom's Chosen, to express their accomplishments to this date

Tisservale

In 223, a school for warriors is created, lead by Aragon Nestreel, a clanless Vornae. The school lacks in prestige among the scholarly Vornae until called upon in the War of the Wyrms in 240.

Magda Earth

In 315, this training center is built with a show of great beauty, using the stalagmites and stalactites in the surrounding area. The building itself is comprised of white marble with a complete garden of unusual flowers from the Ever Dawn Realm.

Na'a'shabaern

Sister-school to Magda Earth, this is for students of Necromancy and Chaos. It is composed of black marble. No one who is not studying at Na'a'shabaern is permitted entrance past the courtyard, which is filled with swirling green mists to allow for privacy during meetings.

Twilight's Haven

In 317, the Celestial Hall is completed and is a large dome shaped building with a light spell of purple radiance imbued in the black marble itself. The ceiling of the dome is a magnificently carved and painted mural of the stars, done by Praleveth, who later becomes the founder of the new Artisans Guild, Quitlaron.

Spa'linarae

In 337 the first official Assassin's Training Hall is opened in Kuroiude. The entrance and promotion requirements for the guild are strict secrets that are kept from the public. No one knows who the Master of the Hall is and speculations abound.

THE KNOWN HISTORIES OF MIYDRANDA

180 E.R.

Disgusted with the rulership of the Noble Clans in Draelonde, a rebel group of 1,000 Vornae led by Eleviel Lagithranda and Elnina Miydeswer speak openly against several policies and are banished from their homeland. Swearing to never follow the paths their brethren have chosen, the two small clans make their way to the lands of Dyllaria. Vowing to leave past traditions and their heritage behind, the Vornae denounce their Draelonde roots by changing their language and ignoring all history of their former realm. Having been turned away by the hateful Forest Elves, Eleviel and Elnina settle their people temporarily within the Great Southern Forest. This land is not to their liking, and while there the Vornae continue to search desperately for a new Under Realm.

183 E.R.

After suffering the climates of Dyllarian weather and the inhospitality of the unmerciful Elves, Eleviel Lagithranda discovers a set of interconnecting tunnels underneath the Southern

Mountains and leads his people into the relative safety of the Under Realm. Settling in a large cavern, they slowly begin to rebuild. For the next five years they live a meager existence.

185 E.R.

Despite their seemingly common focus, the restless Vornae continue to separate themselves along clan lines under the leadership of Eleviel and Elnina. After years of discussion and careful deliberation on the topic, Eleviel Lagithranda weds Elnina Miydeswer in a bonding that unites the two Noble Clans. This union has been in the making since before the Vornae left Draelonde, and it is agreed that it is to the benefit of all. Elnina has one daughter from a previous marriage, whose husband died in the trek. Eleviel and Elnina quickly set about solidifying their positions as rulers. Their first order of business under the new noble rule is the Edict of Purification, which officially enters all Elves into the List of Alinas. This list is used to keep track of all people that are to be killed on site. Among these are the Drae as well as any great enemies of the Vornae. The Kingdom of Miydranda (my-id-ran-dah) is born.

192 E.R.

The Vornae Empire, as the settlement comes to be called, quickly grows in numbers. Elves, Orcs, Ogres, Goblins, and other Dark Races are captured from the surface or in the tunnels and are put into slavery for their own protection. Eleviel officially recognizes Elnina's daughter, 55 year old Amilolite as successor, on the Vornae feast day of October 31, the Ancestor's Celebration. It is seen as a good sign. For the occasion all the artisans of the Vornae gather and create a magnificent Hishdaidoyok Naru, a tiara of diamonds, and presents it to Elnina. The magnificent symbol of ruler ship and art intertwines both magic and force, quickly becoming the symbol for ultimate power among the Vornae.

215 E.R.

Eleviel and Elnina set up a government structure with their Clan, Amadriela, as the head. Three other noble Clans, Clan Anithien, Clan Lómithrandra, and Clan Glilmavie gain official Greater Noble Clan titles. Eleviel and Elnina claim the title of Sultan and Sultana. They officially proclaim the city as Tinadriethiel.

219 E.R.

Meetings with the Dark Dwarves, names unknown (never recorded for they were not considered particularly important), succeed in a sort of uneasy trade agreement for raw materials and goods, especially gems.

222 E.R.

The city, which has grown by leaps and bounds due to the dedication of the Vornae, opens its first magic school. This great place of learning and study is known as the Magda Arcana, and encompasses both Celestial and Earth Magic. The Master of Magda Arcana, Tarang, is chosen from Clan Anithien. This day, June 2, becomes known as Freedom's Chosen, to express their accomplishments to this date.

223 E.R.

Not to be outdone, the warriors open a school of their own, Tisservale, lead by Aragon Nestreel, of no proper noble Clan. The school lacks in prestige among the scholarly Vornae until called upon in the War of the Wyrms in 240.

230 E.R.

Eleviel is killed by Basilisks while scouting tunnels to the south of Tinadriethiel. Elnina takes full control of the new Vornae Nation.

240 E.R.

While scouting the same tunnels where Eleviel permanently died, the Vornae come upon a fearsome Subterranean Worm. The beast is a ferocious predator that attacks and kills many stout warriors before it is destroyed. Vornae scholars note the description of the worm in their learned tomes as a “great beast of gargantuan size with a crushing, beak-like maw, and barbed tentacles about its head.” These scholars give it the name Hakaorite, a term that means “grave weaver” in the ancient Vornae tongue.

242-245 E.R.

Vornae explorers recover a long sword of considerable power while exploring some ancient tombs within the Under Realm. This relic is offered as a gift from some members of one of the Greater Noble Clans for Amilolite’s birthing day. Amilolite names the sentient sword Silver Breath, or “Ginkahaido” in the ancient tongue. Under the guidance of Silver Breath, she quickly becomes one of the most fabled of the Vornae warriors, passing even Aragon Nestreel, and becomes head of Tisservale, to the infinite pleasure of her mother.

251 E.R.

Clan Gilmavie finds a small group of the Hakaorites living very near to the outer rim of the Vornae-settled realms. Elnina orders the clan to send a direct assault against the Worms, who seem to be nomadic and have no apparent permanent residence. During the attack, the Vornae war party finds and destroys the largest Worm found to this date. The worm is so large that its skin is grotesquely bulbous and pale. After slaying the creature at the cost of many lives, the carcass is inspected by Vornae scholars. Within the worm’s belly is found the remains of countless creatures and subterranean fungi, including many of its own kind. Horrified by this abomination, Elnina declares that any of these worms that are found are to be killed.

252 E.R.

Outraged by the betrayal of Clan Gilmavie, Elnina orders them killed. The orders are carried out and only a babe is allowed to live. The babe is brought to the home of Elnina, Palace Evenshrel, and given to the servants to raise. While visiting the far reaches of Twilight Hold in a year-end tour of her kingdom, Queen Elnina and her party are set upon by a pair of Hakaorites and totally annihilated.

253 E.R.

Amilolite resolutely takes control of the throne, accepting Silver Breath and the Hishdaidoyok Naru, in the wake of her mother’s death and Aragon retakes control of Tisservale. She takes the official title of Queen Elnina II. She declares what officially becomes the War of the Worms.

Tisservale, which has grown more quickly over the years than Magda Arcana, is suddenly called upon to protect against major assaults by the Wyrms. Magda Arcana is wholly unprepared in the arts of defensive and offensive magic, having been primarily for scholarly pursuits, and is slow to come to the call of Elnina II.

256 E.R.

Refusing the recommendations of both the Greater Noble Clans of Clan Anithien and Clan Lómithrandra, Elnina II grants the Lesser Noble Clans of Thrélia and Nilmathien Greater Noble Clan Titles, both of whom have sorely needed standing armies of decent proportions. Elnina II also appoints Aragon of Lómithrandra and Lómyng, of a common Clan, as Generals of the entire Vornae army.

257 E.R.

Elnina II, following the advice of Aragon and Lómyng, disregards the defensive position and allows them to lead a full on attack against the growing insurgence of the Hakaorites. The Worms have grown more cunning and have proven to be a worthy enemy. The Vornae meet the Worms in a fearful battle 20 miles from Tinadriethiel, in an underground area of ridges, which has come to be known as the Battle of Darkridge. In this battle, Vornae scholars identify different types of Worms, and the Hakaorites appear to use some semblance of battle tactics in fighting against the Sultanic Army. Aragon is killed in the assault and Lómyng proves not to have the battle prowess first thought. The Vornae are pushed back by the Worms' newly unleashed breath of darkness, which instantly kills anyone touched by it. After the battle Elnina II executes Lómyng and takes control of the army herself, refusing to appoint a male commander. Elnina II calls upon the resources of Magda Arcana to discover a way to repel the Worms' breath attacks.

265 E.R.

The Vornae face considerable setbacks and defeats against the Wyrms.

266 E.R.

Elnina II begins to face censure at the hands of the other Greater Noble Clans for the losses and her young age. At this time Tarang discovers a magical shield, which will prevent against the Worms' devastating breath attacks. Elnina II gives a moving speech calling upon the help of all Vornae, common and noble, to help in the oncoming battle. She regains support of the Common Noble Clans.

268 E.R.

Led by Elnina II and Silver Breath, the warriors meet the Worms in the Battle of Murky Depths. The magical shield created by Tarang holds true, and the Vornae warriors and casters fight ferociously. In a two-pronged tunnel attack, the Vornae use the cloudy waters of the caverns 24 miles from the main city to camouflage half of the main force. Elnina II herself defeats one of the largest Worms in battle, which captivated many. She emerges victorious. The Vornae kill all surviving Worms and return to the city amid great celebration.

275 E.R.

Regaining full support of all Noble Clans for her victory at the Battle of Murky Depths, Elnina II continues to lead decisive victories against the Wyrms.

277 E.R.

A young common fighter, Calendra, on her own, discovers the Wyrms hatching grounds. She immediately returns and reports her findings to Elnina II. With Calendra at her side, Elnina II leads the Vornae army against the Hatching Grounds, where they destroy what Wyrms are there and all of the eggs. In an unprecedented appointment, Elnina II promotes Calendra to head of Tisservale.

278 E.R.

After the destruction of their eggs and their leader, the Wyrms are easily defeated in the following skirmishes, until they are suspected to be extinct or to have fled the area. The War of the Wyrms comes to an official end and a statue of Elnina II is erected in the center of Tinadriethiel.

279 E.R. - 280 E.R.

Tarang dies of natural causes in his sleep and his secrets of the magical shield, to the sadness of many, die with him. Elnina II appoints Fylith of Clan Anithien as head of Magda Arcana. The Noble Clans begin to feel nervous at appointments of women in so many previously held male positions. For the centennial of the clans' leaving Draelonde, a feast and many contests of skill and wit are held. The day is officially named the Founding and the celebrations last over two months. It begins with a ceremonial Leaving in which all of the Vornae leave their homes to stay within temporary dwellings in the numerous Twilight Holds. The people do not return to their homes again until the end of the celebration. After the celebrations are completed, Elnina II makes an official decree that she will not wed and adopts the girl-child of Clan Gilmavie, who had been serving in the Palace since the disgrace of Clan Gilmavie. She also declares that the Founding will become a regular celebration to be held on every centennial of their trek from Draelonde.

281 E.R.

Elnina II officially recognizes the girl-child as Amiwyn Amadriela, amidst protests from the Noble Clans, Lesser and Greater alike.

285 E.R.

Uneasiness continues through the next decade at Elnina II's choice of a successor. Meanwhile Amiwyn follows in her new mother's footsteps, excelling at the art of weaponry, and enters Tisservale.

295 E.R.

Due to overcrowding of the continually growing Vornae Nation, Elnina II decrees that a new city be founded in the halls of the Wyrms, 24 miles away.

298 E.R.

After much scouting and reports, building finally begins on the new city. The city planners draw outlines of a magnificent city, complete with a fighting center and separate training facilities for the Celestial and Earth Magic.

301 E.R.

As building continues, well over 1,000 Vornae travel to the new city to help speed the work. A new class appears, who call themselves the Galiden, comprised of merchants who are able to get almost anything needed for the building of the city. More slaves are necessary to complete construction and the Galiden quickly become wealthy with Ever Dawn raids against the evil Surface Elves.

315 E.R.

The Earth Hall is completed, called Magda Earth, following the traditions of Magda Arcana. It is itself a show of great beauty, using the stalagmites and stalactites in the surrounding area, and the building itself comprised of white marble with a complete garden of unusual flowers from the Ever Dawn Realm. Its sister school for those students of Necromancy and Chaos, Na'a'shabaern is also completed. It is composed of black marble. No one who is not studying at Na'a'shabaern is permitted entrance past the courtyard, which is filled with swirling green mists to allow for privacy during meetings.

317 E.R.

Not to be outdone, the Celestial Hall is completed shortly after Magda Earth and Na'a'shabaern. The Hall is named Twilight's Haven and is a large dome shaped building with a light spell of purple radiance imbued in the black marble itself. The ceiling of the dome is a magnificently carved and painted mural of the stars, done by Praleveth, who later becomes the founder of the new Artisans Guild, Quitlaron.

322 E.R.

Although the fighter's hall is yet incomplete Elnina II decides to move Noble Clans into the new city. Amid much scandal and outright dissent she chooses three Lesser Noble Clans to take control of the city, seeing the need for new blood in the ruling Clans. She appoints three Greater Noble Clans for the new city: Clan Olendang, Clan Unaliclya, and Clan Vebridith, knowing that she can maintain full control of these Clans.

323 E.R.

The newly appointed Greater Noble Clans move to the yet unnamed city to oversee its completion. Elnina II creates the position of High Advisor and appoints Goldven Asilorenite to the post. It is the first male that she appoints to a position of any power within her reign, and does much to quiet the Noble Clans.

330 E.R.

The completion of the Fighter's Hall, called Hall of the Dark Sun, is finally completed. Queen Elnina II attends the naming of the new city, Kuroiude. While there Goldven Asilorenite, who had acted of his own accord, tries to assassinate Queen Elnina II. The Vornae Nation is thrown into turmoil as Elnina II executes Goldven and appoints Reisen Krackor as her new advisor, a

man known for his fighting prowess during the Wyrn Wars and a respected swordsman. This placates the Vornae Noble Clans for the time being.

337 E.R.

Many flock to the grand city of Kuroiude, and the first official Assassin's Training Hall is opened, Spa'linarae. The entrance and promotion requirements for the guild are strict secrets that are kept from the public. No one knows who the Master of the Hall is and speculations abound.

341 E.R.

Amiwyn gives births to triplets, naming them Celalil, Tiriili, and Kintrez. Refusing to name the father, though many suspect her advisor Reisen Krackor, dissent once again runs rampant among the Noble Clans. Queen Elnina II is furious and banishes her daughter to Tisservale along with her offspring.

342 E.R.

Both cities continue to grow and in the city of Kuroiude, the various schools (each of which is also a guild) vie for greater power. Word comes to Elnina II that spies and assassins abound within the Palace and puts Reisen Krackor in charge of routing out the villains. Using any means necessary, Reisen interrogates commoners and nobles alike. Uneasiness reigns supreme as tensions build in the mother city of Tinadiethiel at the treatment of Nobles. Despite his severe interrogations, no traitors to the throne are found.

343 E.R.

To try and quell the rumblings of the Noble Clans, Common and Noble alike, Elnina II begins to send groups of Vornae out to begin new settlements in all directions. Over 20, 000 Vornae spread out in all directions to begin the new settlements. Two Lesser Noble Clans are granted the title of Greater Noble Clan for each of the four new settlements: Clans Olarellan and Gwindra to the North, Adracien and Miemeth to the East, Aaradoria and Waerith to the South, and Jeranlani and Abalithiel to the West.

345 E.R.

Still fearing an overthrow of the throne, Elnina II institutes a distraction: a 10-year competition to all for the creation of new and wondrous magical items and works of art. The prize: her hand in marriage. Immediately the two cities burst into a creative frenzy, knowing the power that could arise from such a commitment.

346 E.R. - 347 E.R.

The contest inspires many new creations and works of art. This time of Vornae renaissance has been come to be known as the Age of Wonder. Elnina II sends Reisen Krackor to help oversee the building of the armies in the newly established cities of Elirith, Uniraswen, Theliven, and Gloamwen.

348 E.R.

Reisen sends word that the new cities are growing steadily and construction of the cities is going amazingly fast. Even more amazing is the number of pregnant females he has seen. Many smaller Dark Keeps spring along the tunnels and routes to the various Collectives.

350 E.R.

While expanding Kuroiude looking for silver veins, the Vornae encounter Dwarves roaming the tunnels. A Dwarf named Goldentongue, sent by the Dwarven King, arrives and speaks with Elnina II. She deems it appropriate to allow the Dwarves to remain in the tunnels, and a tentative trade agreement is reached.

351 E.R. - 353 E.R.

Protest arises from the Greater Noble Clans of all Collectives at the Elnina II's decision to allow Dwarves to roam the tunnels. Greater Clan Lómithrandra speaks most violently against the trade agreement.

354 E.R.

Despite protests from all corners, Elnina II graciously invites the Dwarven King, Balinor I, to visit the main Collective of the Vornae. Just before the visit, during a banquet at the festival of Yakimbra, Elnina II becomes very ill and dies during the night. The death is unexplained and many suspect poison, with the Greater Clan of Lómithrandra as responsible.

Tiriili, although only a child, is chosen through private means as the daughter to ascend the throne and accept the Hishdaidoyok Naru and Silver Breath. Reisen Krackor is recalled to Tinadriethiel as Tiriili's ward until she is of age to assume the throne. All trade with the Dwarves is suspended, to the pleasure of all Noble Clans.

355 E.R.

Reisen announces the winner of the contest is Greater Clan Vebridith, a surprise victory. This Clan, known for its Necromantic Arts, created a silver locket, the Locket of Wakemaro (Undead), that when dirt was placed inside and then opened; the dirt that hit the ground would form into a Greater Undead of the Locket's controllers' choice. Even more wondrous was the fact that any who controlled the locket, controlled the Undead. The only drawback was only one Greater Undead could exist at any one time. Since Elnina II was no longer alive to give her hand in marriage, Reisen promises Celalil, a promising Wizard, in her stead when she comes of age.

363 E.R.

Tiriili chooses to receive tutelage from the Necromancers at Magda Arcana. Unable to use Silver Breath, it is placed in the sacred chambers below Palace Evenshrel. During this year, Kintrez also enters Magda Arcana to study the Celestial Arts.

367 E.R.

Under the leadership of Reisen, the Vornae Nation rises to new heights. He encourages more Ever Dawn raids against the Dark Races of Biata, Sarr, and especially Elves. Efforts of trade expand between all the cities and even the lowest Vornae obtains a comfortable living.

369 E.R.

Reisen expands the Vornae cities even further and encourages entrance in the Vornae army, which grows considerably over the next 8 years.

371 E.R.

While the cities expand to the South, the Vornae encounter a portal of strange Dark Energies. Reisen goes to investigate, leaving Tiriili to run the Vornae Empire. Reisen takes a small army with him and several Tre'lor of Celeste to investigate. It is discovered that the Dark Energy Pool is actually an Emergence to the Plane of Death. Reisen orders it closed and the Celeste make the attempt and fail. Suddenly beings stream forth from the Emergence and attack. The battle between the Elementals and Reisen's command is fierce and Reisen orders a withdrawal to better regroup. He orders the cavern with the Emergence to be sealed and never disturbed again. The enclosure appears to succeed.

375 E.R.

Rumors spread throughout the realm of the possibility of more Emergences from the Elemental Plane of Death. Reisen sends several infantry units to investigate. The rumors prove later to be false.

379 E.R.

Reisen continues his careful rule and Tiriili excels at her Necromantic studies at Magda Arcana.

383 E.R.

Tiriili exits from Magda Arcana, and appears to be content with leaving Reisen to run the everyday affairs of the Vornae Empire, which allows her more time for her dark practices.

384 E.R.

After two years of Necromantic Rituals and other dark practices, Tiriili emerges from Palace Evenshrel with a gift for Reisen that she has created for his Name Day. The new creations appeared to be small ferret like creatures, with gray glowing eyes. The creatures, which Tiriili calls Lorkas, appear to be brother and sister, and although they cannot speak; when Reisen was presented with the male he could hear the Lorka inside his mind.

Tiriili presented Reisen with a valuable asset. Apparently, not only can the Lorka and he communicate, but his Lorka can telepathically communicate with Tiriili's Lorka. Reisen quickly realizes the tactical advantage of having such creatures and their ability of long distance communication.

385 E.R.

The Elven King, Pylarius III, is wounded in an assassination attempt. The Vornae assassin indicates that King Thorin III has had something to do with it, and the Erlunn demand an explanation. The King denies any knowledge of the Vornae or his attempt, and the matter is settled.

389 E.R.

For the past several years, Dwarves continually move farther and farther in the Vornae tunnels. Fearing a war, the Dwarves request for negotiations with the Vornae. The Homeland Pact, as the agreement comes to be called, allows the Dwarves to temporarily occupy the southwestern part of the mountains.

392 E.R. - 395 E.R.

Dwarves slowly begin to occupy the Vornae Under Realm, struggling in the unfamiliar territory. Tiriili is crowned Queen Elnina III and accepts the Hishdaidoyok Naru from Reisen Krackor.

398 E.R.

At the invitation of the Dwarves of Stonevale Deep, a small contingent of Vornae travel to the mine, to teach the Dwarves specialty mining techniques. Thanks to the newly acquired techniques, a Dwarf uncovers a vein of the purest silver in all the Under Realm. Since the small community of Dwarves is struggling, the Vornae graciously leave the miners to their vein.

401 E.R.

Vornae miners are falsely accused of mining silver mines past the boundary of the Homeland Pact. This information reaches Queen Elnina III slightly before the Dwarves declare what comes to be named the Dark Wars.

402 E.R.

Elnina III, wishing to settle the situation before an attack is unavoidable, travels with a large army to attempt to meet with the Dwarves. She leaves the most capable Reisen Krackor in charge of the Vornae Empire in her stead. While traveling, word reaches Elnina III through her Lorka that the Dwarves have ignored the request for a peace meeting, and have engaged Reisen and a small contingent of the Vornae Sultanic Army.

The Dwarves heavily outnumber the Vornae and force them back despite the superior fighting skills of the Sultanic Army. Even as Reisen strategically withdraws from the cavern, a Galor manages to extinguish the treacherous Dwarven King. This becomes known as the Battle of Cavern's End.

406 E.R.

Queen Elnina III, preferring her Necromantic practices to the tactics of battle, leaves Reisen Krackor in charge of the Vornae defense. Whispers begin among Vornae society about the complications that may arise. The Vornae continue small strategic skirmishes against the Dwarves.

408 E.R.

In a surprise attack the Dwarves manage to sack the Collective of Kuroiude. Many noble Vornae fall to the unrelenting slaughter of the Dwarven King. Severely outnumbered by the Dwarves, the Vornae hold their position, but alas, finally retreat.

411 E.R.

Reisen Krackor, along with his grandson, Alexi Krackor, rallies the Vornae nation. Through brilliant strategy and planning they begin to mount victories against the treacherous Dwarves.

414 E.R.

During the next several years, Reisen and Alexi achieve military victory in the Battles of Dark Plain and Lever's Jump. The Vornae Army manages to expunge the Dwarves from the Southern Mountains. Reisen directs the Collectives of Parion, Ansavaru, and Meradoyok.

417 E.R.

Elnina III, after reportedly receiving a group of humans in her court, directs Reisen and Alexi to press the offensive and take the battle to the Dwarves in an above ground attack. The Vornae catch the Dwarves in a gorge, in what has come to be known as the Battle of Twilight's End. Superior strategy and combative maneuvering succeeds in a slaughtering of the Dwarves. The Vornae army pushes through, and Reisen, dressed as a common soldier, meets the Dwarven King in battle and in a stunning display of combative superiority, hands the Dwarven King his final death. The Vornae mercifully kill the remaining Dwarves.

418 E.R.

Reisen and Alexi return to the Under Realm to cheering celebrations. They are much loved by the people. Elnina III insists the Dwarves will return again, and preparations begin. Elnina III uses her sisters to open a portal to the Plane of Water, and the Treaty of Aquanius is signed with the Water Elementals, who agree to help in the war. Rebuilding begins on the Collective of Kuroiude.

420 E.R.

The Dwarves, despite their lack of intelligence, prove worthy adversaries in the battles to come. Once again, after receiving a group of humans, Elnina III orders Reisen and Alexi, despite their warnings, to engage the Dwarves above ground. The Vornae and a contingent of Water Elementals attack the Dwarves in the Battle of Murky Waters, at the head of the Shadowgate River. Although heavily outnumbered by the Dwarves, the battle goes well. Suddenly Elves join the Dwarves in the battle. Knowing how the battle will go, Reisen insists Alexi returns to the Under Realm. Reisen himself tries to withdraw, but the bloodthirsty Dwarves continue to engage. Reisen and the remaining 200 Vornae stand against well over 1,000 Dwarves in the final battle, the Battle of Bones, which lasted for over two weeks. In the end, the valiant Vornae are over run and Reisen falls to Elven Archers; though he lives to see the death of the deceitful Elven prince. The area the Battle of Bones took place in becomes known as the Valley of Bones. No one knows what became of his Lorka.

421 E.R.

The Vornae homeland is thrown into chaos at the death of Reisen Krackor and the incompetence of Elnina III that caused the death of many honorable Vornae. Uprisings are seen throughout the Empire, and two factions are formed: the Visionaries and the Traditionalists, with the Traditionalists supporting Elnina III. The leaders of the Visionaries are as of yet unknown. Alexi steps forward at the urge of the various Greater Noble Clans and takes his grandfather's place at Elnina III's side as High Advisor. Many statues and monuments are erected in honor of Reisen.

426 E.R.

Alexi Krackor continues in his grandfather's footsteps, expanding trade between the Vornae Collectives and training up the Sultanic Vornae Army for any future attacks. The Visionaries and Traditionalists rage a silent, but deadly war in Twilight's End.

434 E.R.

Alexi's capabilities are put to the test soon after assuming control of the Army. The Emergence to the Plane of Death is opened once again, by a group of escaped slaves. The slaves are never recovered. Death Elementals pour forth from the Emergence and set about attacking Vornae Collectives. Elnina III declares war on the Death Elementals. The Visionaries are astounded at yet another potentially devastating war being declared so soon after the Dark Wars.

442 E.R.

The war goes surprisingly well for the Vornae until the Battle of Mossy Springs. At this point the Death Elementals use their most feared weapon: Panthergasts. The Panthergasts ravage the Vornae soldiers. A retreat is necessary, and the loss of life is staggering. More uprising against Elnina III's tyrannical rule are evident, and Elnina III orders the Visionaries hunted down.

452 E.R.

Battles continue to go badly for the Vornae. Many die in battle. The Panthergasts are unmerciful killing creatures. Vornae begin fleeing the Collectives and times are hard. The times become known as the Era of Despair.

466 E.R.

More Emergences begin to appear throughout the Under Realm, and the Vornae wizard and necromancers work day and night to find a way to close them. Word spreads of Elnina III's continued incompetence.

475 E.R.

The Era of Despair continues and worsens. The Vornae population and army, after the Dark War, are slowly dwindling. Knowing the Death Elementals are simply using the Under Realm as a hunting ground, Elnina III and Alexi desperately seek a solution fearing extinction of the Vornae race. The Visionaries see this as an opportunity to seize power from the Traditionalists; rumors spread of failed attempts at an overthrow.

482 E.R.

The answer to the Death Elementals comes from a surprising source: Gloamwen. The head librarian, Graenim Trenison, uncovers in an ancient text the rudimentary designs for a class of magic. The magic was once a part of Vornae heritage, but when the Vornae entered the Under Realm, it was eventually forgotten. The magic was known as Nature Magic, and was extremely powerful against Elementals. Knowing what to look for now, Graenim Trenison quickly uncovers various Nature Spells in other ancient texts, once thought of as incomprehensible ramblings. Graenim sends word to Elnina III of the possible solution. She immediately sends him several hundred young Vornae to take part in the training.

500 E.R.

After many more devastating defeats and near full out rebellion within the Vornae Empire, reportedly instigated by the Visionaries, Elnina III sends word to Graenim to prepare his mages for the next battle. Graenim replies that the new Nature Mages are not ready, that the learning process of a new magic is slow. Elnina III again sends word that the Nature Mages will participate in the upcoming battle and that Alexi Krackor will oversee the strategy. Graenim finally agrees.

501 E.R.

Alexi Krackor leads most of the Sultanic Vornae Army, along with all of the new Nature Mages, against the original Emergence, in the Battle of Forced Resolve. Although the Vornae Army is still a force to be feared, both Alexi and Elnina III know this is a last stand for the Vornae. The battle begins, a three-pronged assault on the cavern of the Emergence. Many fall, and the warriors of Greater Noble Clan Thrélia receive massive casualties. Elnina III directs the magical attacks against the Elementals. Alexi and Elnina III cannot retain communication in the ensuing chaos of battle, and the result is Elnina III breaking from the original strategy to the detriment of all. Despite all attempts to hold their ground, the Vornae defenders are forced back. It is at this crucial moment that Alexi suddenly charges into the midst of the Death Elementals screaming a cry of war that resounds through the cavern. His troops bravely rally and follow their leader once again into battle. The Vornae fight as never before, as if berserked, following their beloved general without hesitation. They finally begin to push the Death Elementals back. Elnina III finally maneuvers into position, near the Emergence, along with the Celeste. While the Nature Mages begin to use their Magic to close the Emergence, Elnina and the rest of the Celeste battle valiantly to hold the Death Elementals at bay. The Death Elementals, understanding the extent of Magic being cast on the Emergence, turn their full attention on Elnina III and her forces of Celeste. Taking a final stand with the Necromancers of Clan Lomyngas, Elnina III falls in battle protecting the Nature Mages. The time she and the Necromancers gave the Nature Mages was enough: the Emergence to the Plane of Death was closed. It takes the Vornae Army two days more to end the battle in the cavern with the Death Elementals. Amidst their victory, they return Elnina III to Tinadiethiel for proper burning.

502 E.R.

The Greater Noble Clans and Alexi Krackor, now a veteran hero, force their hand and Celalil is given the Hishdaidoyok Naru and crowned Queen Mother Elnina IV. Elnina IV orders the rest of the Planar Emergences closed, and though the job is difficult, Targan's battle prowess is more than successful.

503 E.R.

Elnina IV takes her permanent death in a freak Formal Magic backlash. The Vornae Nation is stunned. The Visionaries push for a male appointment, but the Traditionalist party is still too strong to openly oppose. Kintrez, the last remaining blood sister mysteriously disappears after the death of Elnina IV. Her daughter, Amiolyn, is crowned Queen Mother Elnina VI, in a quiet ceremony.

505 E.R.

Elnina VI decrees that Traders of all races shall be allowed to enter any Collective in a skewed attempt to boost the Vornae economy. At this news many of the Greater Noble Clans are rumored to have joined with the Visionaries, but a capable leader of the dissidents has yet to step forth. Small rebellions are put down in Tinadriethiel and Delithrandra.

507 E.R.

Elnina VI decrees an experiment to be performed on Iietoki Gozen Elves, despite the pleading of Alexi and Targan. One hundred Iietoki Gozen Elves are to be magically race changed in to Vornae at the centers in Delithrandra. She claims this will help replace the heavy loss of Vornae lives in the past 100 years. At this announcement many more Greater and Lesser Noble Clans join with the Visionaries. The Traditionalist support is dwindling.

508 E.R.

In Delithrandra a major rebellion of several thousand Vornae commoners occurs. They tear down the statues erected in honor of Elnina IV and execute the transformed Iietoki Gozen Elves.

Elnina VI orders the rebellion put down, and the mostly unarmed rebels are killed on sight. This day has come to be known as the Rebellion of Kanshinso Ketzu (True Blood).

512 E.R.

Elnina VI, despite public rebuke from Greater Noble Clans Nilmathien and Lómithrandra, raises the taxes on vendors for all the Collectives. Qer'rard, the High Secretary, urges Elnina IV to stay out of the public's view. Several other small rebellions instigated by the still unknown Visionaries, rocks Delithrandra and Tinadriethiel.

517 E.R.

Elnina VI, for a reason that no Vornae can fathom, declares all of the slaves in the Under Realm free. The Visionaries move into full rebellion against the Sultanic Clan Amadriela and House Lomithrandra and Nilmathien emerge as the leaders of the Visionaries. Greater Noble Clan Lomithrandra and Nilmathien rage a full out war against the Noble Clan Amadriela and the Traditionalist supporters. Many of the Greater Noble Clans, which once supported the Traditionalist view, become disenchanted with Elnina VI rulings and side with the Visionaries. Many of the Lesser Noble Clans side with Elnina VI, seeing the opportunity to seize power from the Greater Noble Clans. All over the various Collectives Lesser Noble Clans are extinguished. Elnina VI retreats to the fortified Palace Evenshrel, along with her most trusted General Alexi Krackor. In a turn about of events, Alexi Krackor emerges as the true leader of the Visionaries, and drags the treacherous Queen Mother from the protection of the Palace, where he executes her to the cheering of thousands of Vornae. After the execution of Queen Mother Elnina VI, the crowd tears her body limb from limb. Alexi Krackor, in a moving speech, convinces the Vornae nation that the time is ripe for a new rule and appoints himself to the position. The Vornae support him and those that do not are labeled traitors and executed on sight. Having the full support and love of the Vornae Sultanic Army, the fate of the coup is quickly sealed. Kintrez's other daughter, Quailen, makes a weak bid for the throne, and is driven Northward by the newly united Vornae Nation. Several hundred Drae opt to go with her and barely escape with their lives. The new Sultan of the Vornae Nation, Alexi Krackor, immediately revokes all decrees

initiated by Elnina VI. Sultan Alexi seizes Silver Breath, but the Hishdaidoyok Naru (diamond tiara) was lost in the Freeing of the Throne.

518 E.R. - 530 E.R.

Sultan Alexi Krackor instigates many new changes into Vornae Society. He declares that matriarchy that has ruled over the Vornae nation for hundreds of years is too corrupt to be allowed to continue and decree's that no female shall be permitted in a position of power. Although some protest results from this decision, it is quickly silenced, and a form of patriarchy slowly emerges. Along with the backing of the Vornae Sultanic Army, a dictatorship with Sultan Alexi at the head becomes obvious. With the economy once again flourishing and Alexi's encouragement of frequent Ever Dawn Raids, dissent and complaints are few and far between. No one dares to go against a ruler that the common people and guilds support. This time is known as the Resurgence.

540 E.R.

Sultan Alexi Krackor proclaims that the discarding of the true Vornae culture from the time of the Settling is ridiculous and puerile. He claims that the Vornae should be proud of their ancient heritage. He sets many of the Greater Noble Clans, especially Greater Noble Clan Eteinia and the Collective of Gloamwen, into researching the Vornae's forgotten culture. He decides to retain Qer'rard as High Secretary and appoints his son, Targan Krackor, as High Advisor.

545 E.R.

A re-education program is started in Gloamwen on ancient Vornae culture and traditions, including language, art, music, and magic. Their ancestors enthrall the Vornae Nation and suddenly the trend turns from leaving their heritage behind to an almost frenzied thirst for knowledge.

550 E.R. - 555 E.R.

The economy continues to grow and expand with the gentle guide of Sultan Alexi Krackor. Trade expands throughout the various Collectives and Ever Dawn races are permitted to trade once again in the Under Realm. Rumor has it that Sultan Alexi Krackor meets on numerous occasions with the leader of a mercenary band, although little more is known.

560 E.R.

Sultan Alexi Krackor sets an official trade agreement with the Dark Dwarves, called the Under Pact, in which tax free trade shall exist between the two races.

570 E.R.

In a decision to propagate his empire, at the advice of High Secretary Qer'rard, Sultan Alexi sends emissaries to the far reaches of his Empire to find a suitable bride, and yet none are to his liking.

575 E.R.

A young Vornae female and a large entourage enters Tinadriethiel under the name Ves'piyook, and claims to be of Noble Blood from Draelonde, visiting the almost unheard of brethren to the

South to gain permission to study ancient Arcane Arts in the great library in Gloamwen. Sultan Alexi Krackor becomes enthralled with the majestic deceiver and grants her permission. Sultan Alexi Krackor pursues the young Vornae to the point of obsession. Many now believe that the imposter used a powerful Alchemical Substance to enthrall the Sultan.

579 E.R.

To the sorrow of the entire Vornae Nation, Ves'piyook and her guard assassinate Sultan Alexi Krackor while visiting Palace Evenshrel. All of the traitors escape, save one – a young Vornae male named Trentay. After much persuasion Trentay reveals that the assassination was planned and instigated by none other than the traitorous Drae, Quailen, and her pitiful followers in the North.

580 E.R.

Targan Krackor valiantly steps forward to fill the void of ruler-ship left behind by his father. He orders many statues erected, by the request of the people, of his father throughout the Vornae realm. The burning of Sultan Alexi Krackor has the largest attendance of any Vornae burning in the history of the Miydranda. Sultan Targan Krackor officially enters Quailen and all of the Northern Drae into the List of Alinas. He keeps his father's High Secretary and promotes Drie of Greater Noble Clan Nilmathien, to High Advisor.

583 E.R.

During a routine trade settlement, the Dark Dwarves, led by Druagan Broadblade, attack the Vornae of Greater Noble Clan Unaliclya. The Noble Clan manages to hold off the surprise attack, actually using the magical items for sale in their defense. Sultan Targan Krackor declares war on the Dark Dwarves.

586 E.R.

The first major battle of Druagan's Folly occurs in the tunnels outside of Aaradoria. The Vornae, led by High Advisor Drie, are fleet of foot and comprised of deadly shadows that sweep through the meager Dark Dwarven army. It is rumored that High Advisor Drie killed 20 of the Dark Dwarves himself. When the Battle of Fallen Foe is over, only 20 Vornae are injured, none killed, and over 300 Dark Dwarves are slain.

587 E.R. - 591 E.R.

The battles continue to go well for the Vornae, who easily outwit the lesser intelligent Dark Dwarves time and time again in the Battles of Vespur's Ridge, Ebony Crest, and Dappled Gully.

592 E.R.

In a wretched scheme devised by the evil and sinister Druagan Broadblade, the Dark Dwarves manage to sneak into the outskirts of Aaradoria and kill several hundred young Vornae who were practicing battle maneuvers in the tunnels. Outraged by this injustice, High Advisor Drie leads a massive chase of the Dark Dwarves throughout the Under Realm, lasting several weeks. The Vornae and Dark Dwarves finally clash in the final battle of the War of Druagan's Folly, Amber Mists. Taking place in a large cavern, the Vornae, left with the low ground, take up a defensive position. The battle lasts for well over a week, with the Dark Dwarves taking heavy casualties,

despite their superior positioning, when the Nature Celeste counterattack with a new Nature Spell, which devastates the Dark Dwarves. Amber, the female Vornae of Greater Clan Harania, researches and masters the ability to create a Spittle of Acid and in turn teaches the rest of her fellow Nature Celeste. The effect of the Acid Spittle is devastating, and by the middle of the second week the Dark Dwarves flee. The Vornae pursue and finish the remains of the Dark Dwarves in the shadowy darkness of the Under Realm tunnels. High Advisor Drie easily overcomes Druagan Broadblade and slices his body into pieces – one for each of the young Vornae killed in the Aaradorian tunnels. The pieces of Druagan are displayed in the main Clan House of Aaradoria for all to see.

594 E.R.

High Sultan Targan is approached by a representative of a creature named Telicaf. He wearily receives the visitor. No one is sure of what occurs during the negotiations, but at the end of a three-day meeting the High Sultan Targan announces that the Vornae Nation will help Telicaf and his growing army, simply called the Horde. He says that in exchange for the Vornae providing slaves and bodies for creation, the Horde will take care of the Vornae's most hated enemies, the Green Mountain Drae. Unable to travel in the light for long periods of time to search out their enemies, Sultan Targan seizes the opportunity to be rid of Quailen and her people for good, especially when the Vornae will not have to directly participate in any actual fighting.

595 E.R. - 597 E.R.

Many Ever Dawn raids are organized and carried out by the Vornae of all Collectives, although stealthily enough not to draw over attention to themselves. Hundreds upon hundreds of slaves are filtered through the tunnels of the Under Realm for the Horde. All types of Dark Races, including Humans, Dark Dwarves, Elves, Biata, and Sarr are imprisoned and given to Telicaf for his purposes.

598 E.R. - 601 E.R.

Telicaf and the Horde prove true to their word, and in a stunning display of skill and determination easily crush the treacherous Northern Drae. The supposed "Queen Mother" Quailen's remains are not recovered from the massacre within the Ebon Vale, but nevertheless every Drae found is killed in a quick and brutal manner suitable to their vile ilk. Slaves are still captured from Ever Dawn, especially in the aftermath of key battles. Several Dark Races holding the title of Knight and with a Golden Lion as their emblem are taken, much to the pleasure of Telicaf. Meanwhile, study continues in the Ancient Traditions and language and many Vornae begin to strictly follow the old ways. Toward the end of the year 600 and into 601 the tides turn in the favor of the Dark Races, and Telicaf's Horde begins to dwindle to the point that he controls only key strategic points, such as the Ever Dawn city known as Mythamber.

602 E.R. - Present

Humans begin to appear infrequently at the Imperial Court. To the alarm of many, rumors abound that the Sultan has some dealings with members of this Dark Race.

APPENDIX J: TIMELINE OF MAJOR HISTORICAL EVENTS IN MIYDRANDA

The following is the history of the Miydranda Vornae from the time they left Draelonde and entered into the Southern Mountains.

- 180 E.R. to 345 E.R. The Settling – Time when the Vornae enter the Dyllarian Under Realm and undergo a major reorientation of their culture.
- 345 E.R. to 401 E.R. The Age of Wonder – During this time many great works of art, both magical and non, are created.
- 401 E.R. to 517 E.R. Era of Despair – Epic Wars and a failing government contributed to the depression of the economy which characterized this period in Vornae history
- 517 E.R. to Present The Resurgence – In which the Kingdom has made alliances and solidified its borders within Dyllaria.

Historical Wars and Battles:

Years	War	Enemy	Major Battles
253 E.R. to 278 E.R.	War of the Worms	Wyrm	Darkridge (257 E.R.) Murky Depths (268 E.R.) Destruction (277 E.R.)
401 E.R. to 420 E.R.	Dark Wars	Dwarves	Caverns End (402 E.R.) Fall of Kuroiude (408 E.R.) Dark Plain (412 E.R.) Leaver’s Jump (414 E.R.) Twilights End (417 E.R.) Faint Eve (420 E.R.) Bones (420 E.R.)
437 E.R. to 502 E.R.	War of Shadow	Death Elementals	Mossy Springs (442 E.R.) Forced Resolve (501 E.R.)
517 E.R.	Throne War	-	Freeing of the Throne (517 E.R.)
586 E.R. to 592 E.R.	Druagan’s Folly	Dark Dwarves	Fallen Foe (586 E.R.) Vespur’s Ridge (588 E.R.) Ebony Crest (590 E.R.) Dappled Gully (591 E.R.) Amber’s Mist (592 E.R.)

DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE:

NEBULONDE



DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE – NEBULONDE (WITHIN THE LANDS OF AVENDALE)

OUT OF GAME TIPS FOR PLAYING A NEBULONDE DARK ELF

Honor

Think of honor first and foremost, no matter which clan you plan on playing. The merchants of Nebulonde are crafty and play many word games to lock opponents into contracts, and while honorable in the base sense, can be quite tricky and devious.

Racial Relations

While Nebulonde Dark Elven citizens are fairly tolerant of other races, it is only compared to others of their kind, they still believe themselves superior to other races, but would never say such. They show their superiority through *being* superior.

Emotions

Outward displays of great emotion or affection are not looked upon as good things for a Dark Elf. Though not as stoic as Stone Elves, they have and show emotion and laugh at a good joke, but are likely to only be truly open in front of a group of close friends (probably all Dark Elves). Many mistake Dark Elves as having no emotions, but in truth, they are just more reserved in public, and strive to present a good image.

Japanese Influenced

When playing a Nebulonde Drae, think of a Feudal Japanese society, which is class-based, with three classes (high, middle, and peasant). Think of the high and middle classes as being more urban and artsy while still retaining those feudal Japanese qualities.

Barony and Empire

While Nebulonde is, in fact, a barony within the Kingdom of Avendale, its Dark Elven citizens view themselves as part of a great Empire, biding its time as it expands its luxurious trade contracts while remaining under the protection of Avendale's military. Nebulonde has been around for hundreds of years and will continue on, even if the Kingdom should fall. Nebulonde is very separationist – most of the population consists of Dark Elves, however, there is a small segment of other races that live within Nebulonde. Some of these races have even been adopted into clans.

Matriarchal Society

The Dark Elves of Nebulonde live in a generally matriarchal society, meaning women take precedence in birth order. The Empire has only been led by women save for Char, himself. However, a woman of a lower rank and clan does not bear power over a man of higher rank and clan.

Need More Help?

The best suggestion is to talk to some Dark Elf PCs or the plot person handling Dark Elf plot to get an idea for how to best play one, but this should give you a great start!

AN OVERVIEW OF NEBULONDE

Nebulonde shines the brightest of all the lands of Avendale. It has existed for over 700 years, and its art, architecture, and education are a beauty surpassing that of even Quentari's forest. Nebulonde has many of the finest tradesmen, scholars, and soldiers in the realm, recently expanding its influence upon the whole of Avendale through trade and, education. Many people, Dark Elven or otherwise, include some elements of Nebulonde fashion or its culture into their lives. Nebulonde silk garments are prized by the ladies of Avendale. Nebulonde-forged swords are very common amongst military officers and Nebulonde art and architecture has a predominant role in Avendale's growth, second only to that of the Dwarves of Stormbearer keep.

Nebulonde's cultural origins are obviously similar to Draelonde, from which the original settlers of the area came. Honor is, of course, prized above all else, however Nebulonde has a long tradition of etiquette and courtesy, referred to as "Miyabi." Those of middle or upper classes strive to act in a very diplomatic and polite manner even to those they dislike. In fact, the more difficult the situation, the more honor is earned in maintaining one's poise. In addition, due to their heavy trade and commerce, the people of Nebulonde have learned to develop a strict code of ethics and honor. One's word is one's honor, and it can be demonstrated by keeping agreements and following one's word when given, even to outsiders. Breaking one's word is considered dishonorable and, to quote a prominent merchant: "Do not give your word if you do not intend to keep it – It is easier to not give you word than restore your tarnished honor." Some view those from Nebulonde as being aloof; however it is simply acting with honor, reserve and dignity.

Through their great history, the people of Nebulonde have established a land of rich culture, art, and architecture. They have also established a flourishing trading and mercantile commerce. All of this has been achieved while still being a land of tradition, honor, and moderate acceptance.

People from Nebulonde rarely, if ever, use the derogatory slang word "jochu" towards surface dwellers, and many do not believe that being called a Drae is an insult. They do not use the word Drae in a derogatory manner. Nebulonde's military forces are fierce elite warriors and their Special Forces are legendary among the Shaidu Garrison soldiers of Avendale for their strength and perseverance. A point of interest and note is that many have recently adopted calling the race "Dark Elves," instead of Drae or Vornae, as there is much confusion to those outside of the race as to the distinction. (For many in Draelonde, Vornae is the name for the pureblood Drae, and Drae is the name for all non-pureblood Drae, such as those that intermingled with surface dwellers and non Dark Elves, including all those who have transformed to Drae.) To most Dark Elves, the term Dark Elf is a universally neutral statement. of note is that in some other lands the race is called simply "Drae," as they do not have race changed among them.

Geography

Nebulonde is presently a Barony of Ashbury, in the Kingdom of Evendarr, on the continent of Avalon. Nebulonde is made up of thirteen estates:

- Hachidou

- Hayabashiri
- Hourin
- Iceweb
- Jokaimon
- Kazaya
- Kosheitaka
- Moonguard
- Nando
- Nebulonde
- Oniyado
- Takami
- Yotsude

The Topaz Throne is the seat of the Empress' power. Secure within the audience chamber of the Imperial Compound, the throne itself is decorated in gemstones and is breathtakingly beautiful. Powerful enchantments are laid upon it and it is surrounded by a Circle of Power at all times. The Imperial Compound itself has a powerful magic upon it that limits entrance to only those of certain races and it is guarded by the most elite troops of Nebulonde.

The Domain of the Defiled is a shallow canyon in the shadows of Nebulonde's second largest cavern. This was where the undead armies of Nebulonde were once kept (see History, below). Each Clan kept anywhere from a few dozen to a hundred or more undead in a "stable" there. Since the destruction of the Vampire Empress and her undead armies, undead are no longer welcome in Nebulonde and this place no longer houses any undead; all within were destroyed.

Two major rivers flow through Nebulonde Kitaketzu and Minamiketzu, or Northblood and Southblood. They are named such as they are a vital form of underground transportation.

NEBULONDE SOCIETY AND ITS ORGANIZATION

Military

Nebulonde's military is made up of four legion of troops plus the Imperial Guard and several special forces units. The four main legions are the first legion, the second legion, the first reserve legion and the second reserve legion. The armies of Nebulonde are controlled by the Shogun.

Major Cities/Towns

1. Kairiki – Estate of Moonguard
2. Houjin – Estate of Oniyado
3. Ichiban – Estate of Iceweb
4. Ushirokage – Estate of Hayabashiri

Names and Naming Traditions

A Nebulonde Dark Elven formal name generally consists of four parts, the personal name, secondary House name, primary House name, personal House name, and Clan name. Sometimes

a person has a personal clan, and in such an instance that is inserted after the primary house name and before clan name.

1. Personal name - This is the first name of a character and it is the name given to them by their parents at birth.
2. Secondary House name - this is the House name of the secondary parent
3. Primary House name - this is the primary parent's House name.
4. Clan name - this is the name of the Clan to which the Dark Elf belongs. It is seldom that a Dark Elf is not affiliated with a Clan.

Well-Known Individuals

Warlord Char	The original leader of the Nebulondian people who took them forth from Draelonde.
Attelina	Char's barbarian wife who brought the barbarians and barbarian blood into the people.
Duke Ishidu	Deceased leader of Nebulonde before Kinieda, after his death the land became a barony instead of a duchy in a reformatting of Avendale's lands.
Sakura Hyoshin	Current in-line to the Imperial throne. The line is maintained even though there is no empress in this stage of Nebulonde's history.
Toshihiro Hyoshin	Deceased Shogun of Nebulonde, uncle to Sakura
Baron Kinieda Takezo Ishidu	Current Baron\leader of Nebulonde, fiancé to Sakura Hyoshin.
Sir Nobunaga Ealbodan	Deceased Samurai to Baron Kinieda and Hatamono of the province of Yotsude.

NEBULONDE POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Hierarchy

- Her Imperial Majestrix (Empress)
- The Mandarinate (Heads of each royal and ruling clan)
- The Shogun (Warlord of all Imperial Troops)
- Sessho (Equivalent of a Seneschal, personal advisor to Majestrix)
- Daimyo (Provincial Ruler, Head of a royal or ruling clan)
- Clan Shoguns (Warlord of a Clan)
- Samurai (Knight of a Clan or a Lord)
- Jito (Land steward in the service of a Daimyo)
- Hatamono (Lord or Lady)
- Bushi (common troop)

Other Titles of note:

- Ronin (Clanless Samurai, sometimes banded together to form Ita Clans)
- Jinyan (Honorless thugs, normally organized)

- Wako (Renegade or assassin)

The Ruling Clans of Nebulonde as of 604

The original structure of a Clan Council as was known in Draelonde was revised by those who left Draelonde for Nebulonde. The four original four ruling clans of Nebulonde still retain power, but now as many as 30 clans have been formed in the Barony. The first four by size and power are the royal clans (with Hoyosha remaining the most powerful and Imperial clan). Clans five through ten have been added to the Council as ruling clans (but do not hold anywhere near the power of the royal clans). All of the clans after the 10th are known as Common Clans, and hold no power. There also exists “Ita,” or unofficial Clans which try to gain status as official clans, although succeeding at this is extremely rare.

The Ruling Council of Clans is called the Mandarinate. At this time the power structure worked thusly:

The Clans of Nebulonde

Imperial Ruling Clan:

- Hoyosha (ruling clan)

Royal Clans:

- Ishidu
- Maladorn
- Moikai

Ruling Clans

- Shangtou
- Nightbane
- Teranko
- Tien Lung
- Zandros
- Wu-Qing

NEBULONDE SCHOOLS AND GUILDS

University of Knowledge and Redgate Citadel are the two major institutes of learning in Nebulonde. The first teaches scholarly subjects as well as magic (for studies of magic, one must be accepted by a Master teacher, and then will be taught via individualized lessons). The latter school teaches the Arts of War. Enlistment at the University lasts 4-12 years, while Redgate Citadel's standard program is generally two years, followed by a four year term in the Imperial Legions. Officers study for an additional 2 years before being given a command. Special Forces undergo further, specialized training.

THE KNOWN HISTORIES OF NEBULONDE

Taken from *A Concise History of Nebulonde* by Sir Nobunaga Ealbodan

Ancient History

The story of Nebulonde may actually begin in Draelonde, when a clan war between two clans in the northern caverns of the empire fought over the lands deep beneath the earth. Clan Takara and Clan Hoyosha fought a long and bitter battle, which ended with a victory for Takara, and the banishment of Hoyosha.

Many years after the Clan Hoyosha left Draelonde led by Warlord Char and his barbarian wife Attelina, they finally found a home when they came to the Frostpeak Mountains. They called these new lands "Sanctuary." the mountains were considered impassable by the surface people, but Clan Hoyosha found a vast, ancient system of underground tunnels, as well as a monstrous underground lake which was later named Mizumi Jawai (Glass Lake). It took years to make these lands home, but home it did become. The tunnels provided food to be hunted, and the lake produced fish aplenty.

This is also where something truly monumental happened, due to the marriage of Char and Attelina. The mixture of Barbarian and Vornae culture soon developed in Sanctuary and numerous Barbarians found they could bear life underground and moved to Nebulonde, though many others felt the call of the wild and instead ventured to the surface. Through the years, Sanctuary developed, Attelina grew old and passed away, and the Barbarians who left for the surface returned often and traded with the people of the realm, bringing stories of the wonders of the lands around them. The friendship between the Vornae and these particular Barbarians grew such that Char made them an honorary Vornae clan, the Frost Tiger Clan.

Years passed and the people prospered. New clans were born, and a clan council was formed. Soon thereafter, a mighty threat came in the form of Deep Troll invaders. A hard and long war was fought for Sanctuary, but the Dark Elves gradually lost due to the sheer numbers and ferocity of the Deep Trolls. They had to leave their new home of Sanctuary and venture to the surface in the hopes of discovering new caves to inhabit.

Founding Nebulonde

Warlord Char led his people in humiliation and defeat to the surface and through the hills and forests above ground. His people had been through enormous ordeals. Warlord Char was a great man and did not easily accept defeat, however, and so they pushed on hard, battling with the hostile wild and with the Wood Elves on the surface. Some histories tell of Char conquering several Wild and Wood Elven towns to use as a base operations for finding new caves, and that then led to the attacks by the Elves. Other histories read that the Dark Elves traveled through the Elven lands and were attacked out of fear. Given the recent defeat and small military forces left to his people, it is doubtful that Char would attack without provocation, but would instead try to save his forces. Also, given the vast hatred towards Wood and Wild Elves that developed from these events, it seems more likely that the attacks were instigated by the Wild and Wood Elves as the aggressors.

Finally, Char and his people found a series of secret caves and complex tunnels and caverns beneath a small range of the Frostpeaks. The Clans settled in this area and slowly rebuilt their strength. This area was named Nebulonde, which means “Lost Haven.”

Wars and the Return of the Frost Tiger Clan

After settling in Nebulonde, the Dark Elves fought many skirmishes with the Wood Elves, but soon a new formidable foe arrived. The Ice Nation of Barbarians savagely attacked Nebulonde, claiming it in their expanding territory. The Ice Nation was not so powerful as to threaten the great Vornae of Nebulonde, but they were powerful enough to keep them from venturing above ground. Soon salvation came in the form of Char’s descendants – the Frost Tiger Clan of Barbarians had been seeking their allies since they left Sanctuary, and finally found them. They had traveled for some time in search of Char’s people to reunite with them, and when they finally arrived, they decimated the Ice Nation forces in a fury and settled above-ground from Nebulonde. This was the last thing Warlord Char saw, for he soon died and has forever been remembered as the greatest hero of Nebulonde. Warlord Char’s daughter, Miyuki, became the new Daimyo (leader) of Clan Hoyosha.

Soon after the return of the Frost Tiger Clan, Dwarves were discovered mining in deepest tunnels of Nebulonde. These Dwarves were from the Nation of Banek’Tor, and claimed the same lands the Hoyosha had taken, which led to a series of wars that lasted for many years and sparked a fierce hatred of Dwarves that lasts to this day in some lesser form. One thing that escalated the wars was the practice of capturing slaves when a battle was won. Nebulonde took some 1,500 Dwarven slaves over time.

The Dwarves were fearsome foes, but more or less an equal match for Nebulonde in most skirmishes below ground. Things changed when the surface Elves of the Icewood Forest, who had been skirmishing with Nebulonde for years, offered aid to the Dwarves, creating a two-front war for the Dark Elves. It is said that Miyuki was a fierce warrior like her father and she led her people on many cunning and deadly strikes against these foes, but they were clearly outnumbered, yet again.

Accounts differ at this point. It is indicated that Miyuki’s daughter, the Princess, was leading scouting parties during this time and was known to be very skilled herself. Tamarantha returned from one such mission to find her mother dead in her chambers, having been impaled on an Elven spear. Seeing her dead mother, the Princess seized the bloody crown and declared herself the Imperial Majestrix, a title which had gone unused for a long time. The new Empress rallied the people and went on a bloody offensive, slaughtering the Elves of the Icewood Forest and defeating their leader in his own camp in a stunning strike. Even with this momentum, victory was not yet assured to the people of Nebulonde. Fortune favored the Vornae however, as the Wild and Wood Elven alliance split due to their losses against Nebulonde. Years later, it was learned that to help persuade Nebulonde to wipe out the “pesky” Elves, the Vampire Lord Karveki killed Miyuki with an Elven spear. As the Empress was reeling from the death of her mother, Karveki seized the opportunity to feast upon her noble Dark Elven blood. It was thus that Karveki cursed the Empress with the Malison of Karveki, known as vampirism.

Around this time, Niomi Avendale, Queen of Avendale, ordered the release of the Dwarven slaves Nebulonde had taken from Banek'Tor. The Empress complied with this request by setting out the 1,500 Dwarven slaves in the dead cold of winter with no clothes, food, or weapons, and left them to traverse the Frostpeak Mountains to return to their homeland. Around 500 of the Dwarves returned alive, of the 1,000 that resurrected, there are no records of how many permanently died. In a rage, Banek'Tor unleashed its full forces in a surprise attack against the Kingdom of Avendale at a weekend gathering (after sacking a city in Nebulonde on the way). These Dwarves led a mighty battle, by all accounts. Some Dwarves were only affected by females, others swung massive damage and still others were berserk over the loss of so many comrades. The Dwarven Nation was fierce in its attack, leading to at least half a dozen resurrections of adventurers as these mighty battles intensified over the weekend gathering. Avendale, with Nebulonde's help, stood firm, and finally repelled the Dwarven forces, though not without great loss and danger.

After these attacks concluded, the Dwarves needed time to recover their numbers. Given the Dwarven losses at the Avendale battle, plus the destruction of the Elven alliance and thusly that threat gone, Tamarantha was able to focus her attention on the Dwarven nation of Banek'Tor. Led by Clan Moikai and their Elite Warriors, Nebulonde defeated Banek'Tor in a tremendous battle that lasted months. The remaining Dwarves were incarcerated as slaves and remained as such during the Empress's rule. Through all of these wars, the population of Nebulonde dwindled to frighteningly low levels.

The Drae Infusion

In 591 ER, a caravan of Drae appeared from the southeast and told a tale of having been transformed from Quentari Elves into Drae through a powerful Formal Magic Spell in an effort to correct the population problem in Draelonde. These new Drae were discriminated against there, and disliked by the Vornae of Draelonde. The Draelonde clans decided that those of the pureblood, from Draelonde, would from then on be called Vornae, and all other Dark Elves would be called Drae. The Drae were welcomed into Nebulonde, whose people were far more tolerant of other races than their cousins in Draelonde. The Empress sent back a few of these Drae to inform all Drae who sought refuge from persecution to come to Nebulonde, the Lost Haven.

Vampire Empress Revealed

In 597 ER, Nebulonde made a treaty with then-Lady Niomi Avendale, which stated that Nebulonde would administer lands in Avendale above ground with favorable trade agreements, in return for the defense of the eastern border of Avendale. The agreement had Nebulonde maintaining sovereignty below ground as an independent nation and becoming a Duchy of Avendale above ground. All peoples above ground would obey the laws of Avendale, and all undead soldiers would be destroyed.

The Shogun of the Empress, the Daimyo of Clan Ishidu, became Duke of the aboveground settlement of Nebulonde (Duke Ishidu). Things took a turn for the worse when the Empress began acting erratically, and began raising an army not just of Drae but of undead, and arresting and executing any and all who spoke against her. Entire families and households were put to

death or imprisoned for what would seem trivial matters. She banished the head of the College Arcane, Toshihiro Hyoshin, for refusing to aid her Necromancers in “converting” the “traitors” to undead. Duke Ishidu, at this point, was also exiled out of the lands of Nebulonde for confronting the Empress regarding her actions.

Toshihiro and Ishidu eventually returned and, with wide popular support, entered into a civil war against the Empress. Nebulonde broke its treaty with Avendale and declared itself independent. Toshihiro entered negotiations with Avendale to return Nebulonde to the Kingdom for certain concessions, which were granted. Almost immediately, Avendale troops poured into Nebulonde but, at the insistence of Toshihiro, only engaged in combat with groups of undead, not wishing any blood spilled between Avendale and Nebulonde citizens. Eventually, the Empress was cornered and it was revealed she was in fact a Vampire under the control of the Vampire Karvecki, who was using her to cause strife in Avendale.

Duke Ishidu died his permanent death in a one on one (successful) battle against the Empress’ Shogun, and Sir Kinieda Ishidu killed the Vampire Empress with a Stake of Woe. Since these events, Sakura Hoyosha was crowned Empress of Nebulonde and Nebulonde has rejoined Avendale. The agreement provides wide trade concessions to Nebulonde and allows the leader of Nebulonde to create lands within its own borders where only Dark Elves can go, similar to some of the estates in the Silvermyst that shall remain inhabited only by Elves. The Imperial line is preserved by the Hyoshin Clan, which arrange marriages to continue the line of succession in the event that an Empress is needed once again.

Current Events In and Around Nebulonde (As of January, 604)

The Barony of Nebulonde is currently administered by Baron Kinieda Takezo Ishidu. Baron Kinieda became engaged to the Empress Sakura Hyoshin in 602 ER. The Shogun is currently Toshihiro Hyoshin, the uncle to Empress Sakura. After merging with the Kingdom of Avendale, Nebulonde adopted the Kingdom’s laws and, as such, there are no longer fearsome undead armies in Nebulonde, and the Necromancer’s Guild was disbanded. Due to the war with the Vampire Empress and her fearsome undead, the citizens of Nebulonde are more wary of necromancy than before and certainly do not wish to see undead unleashed to walk upon their streets again. In addition, the people of Nebulonde seem to retain a distrust of Dwarves, Wood Elves, and Wild Elves due to their centuries of conflict with the above ground inhabitants.

DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE:

ELLENTARI



DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE - EMPIRE OF ELLENTARI (UNDERNEATH THE DUCHY OF ELYSIA, IN THE ELFSTONE FOREST)

Introduction

Faint starlight drifted through the canopy of trees overhead, and vaguely illuminated the forest around the Dark Elf. Crickets formed a chorus in the background offering cover to Raliman and his patrol. Light from the jochu's campfire glared out across the woods, as shadows danced eerily among the leaves. Into those shadows Raliman peered, but found no sign of his comrades hidden there. They had first picked up the trail of this group of humans several days ago. On the first day the surface dwellers skirted the outside of the forest surrounding Ellentari Mountain; however, they then turned steadily inward. Now, they were getting closer to the heart of the woods, the homeland. Too close. They would have to be removed.

As the surface dwellers settled in for the night, the flames stabbing out at the darkness from the fire began to die off. Soon all but one of the humans had succumbed to unconsciousness.

The human left awake to guard over the others was a young boy of little under two decades. The facial hair worn by the older men in the group was absent from this one, and his eyes shifted nervously from tree to tree --one hand on his sword. Raliman gauged him: unpracticed, untrained, and callow.

This was Raliman's first duty on the surface world himself, but he had heard all of the stories from his elders. The world of the jochu was one with little concept of honor. Weakness, frivolity, and incompetence were all too well tolerated, but the surface world was vast. It intrigued Raliman.

It held many resources and great potential for gain if those resources were harvested right. The day would come when his name would be glorified among his ancestors. He would prove himself in the world of the gaikujin. But now only one surface dweller mattered. Smoldering embers was all that was left of the fire when the signal came. The boy-guard's head slouched to one side and his hand fell from the grip of his blade. He wandered into the depths of sleep. Pathetic.

A wall of magical energy poured out of the tree line. It crashed about the humans. Popping flashes echoed around the dead fire circle, as
The protective Magicks of the humans deflected the first wave. Raliman began the incantation for his next conjuration.

Four murky figures emerged into the human encampment from the pervasive shadows, and the cry of the boy-guard rang out. The rest of the party rose to defend themselves. Swords were met.

However, before the human's steel had the chance to ring out against the blades of their Dark Elven attackers, a second pounding of spells erupted from the darkness. The shimmering weave of magic rose above the backs of the dark elves, and sailed into the chests of the waking humans. Bodies dropped.

Only two of the jochu escaped this fate. One was the boy-guard, who now fumbled his sword to a raised position. The other was a woman still dressed in protective, green leathers.

Two of the Elven footmen turned to meet the boy's sword as it moved toward them, yet, as they did the woman let loose with a fervor of magical castings. Sheets of ice followed by streaks of fire flowed out of her hands, and two of the Elven fighters went down.

Raliman appeared out the woods behind the girl, and prepared to finish her attempt at salvation. He manipulated the energy for his next spell, and sent it sailing toward the female mage. The bolt seared clear of her head.

Startled, the woman turned to face this new threat, but as she did Raliman ignited his last spell into the air. This time the magical energy met full force with its target. The woman crashed toward the ground.

Seeing himself alone, the boy glanced nervously between his fallen companions and the blade tips of his closing attackers. He turned, and rushed for the safety of the trees.

As he approached the end of the clearing, the substance of the shadows took the shape of another elf. A soft incantation was heard, and the ground rose up to meet the unconscious human.

This last elf to emerge from the sanctity of the darkness crossed quickly over to the fallen elves, and began to cast healing Magicks to restore his fallen companions. He then moved between the jochu. They were all still alive, only sleeping.

Raliman moved quickly to help bind the fallen humans, and remove them of their equipment. He studied the curves of their alien clothing patterns and swords. He would indeed prove himself one day in their world...

...Two dawns later; the humans woke up outside the borders of the Elfstone Forest. They remembered nothing

AN OVERVIEW OF ELLENTARI

Ellentari, the home of most PRO Dark Elves, is a network of underground cities located in what humans refer to as the "Elfstone" Mountain. Compared to the surface world, the Dark Elven Empire is one of tranquil darkness and quietude, except for the more densely populated cities. Above ground, the Elfstone Forest protects Ellentari, and guardsmen patrol its borders for meddlesome adventurers and vainglorious crusaders. This practice is known as "Kumi tabearima" (spider hunting).

A people of passion, a land of chaos. The only path of survival is civilization—to impose a strict code of conduct, a strong veneer of politeness to contain the raging passions ever boiling beneath the surface. Welcome to Ellentari.

Emotions run deep in a Dark Elf. Strong passion is the blood that runs through their veins. The Philosophy of the Way, the societal strictures of personal, family and clan honor, the understanding that every personal action has repercussions reaching far beyond the individual, binds those passions, but never believe that they are eliminated.

The Drae race in NERO® is defined by its code of honor...most often based strongly on real world oriental cultures and the ancient code of Bushido, the samurai of feudal Japan. This does not mean that we are a Japanese culture in black make-up and elf ears. We are a fantasy culture with cultural roots on the real world. Do not ever feel that you must have an oriental name, wear oriental clothing, or spout oriental philosophy at the drop of a hat. Some do, some do not. What *is* necessary is that you follow the rules in the NERO® rulebook. Wear the make-up, wear the ears, paint your hair, and live by your code of honor. You can be “good” and “honorable,” you can also be the most evil slaver to ever hit the lands of Evendarr, and still be honorable. Herein lies the challenge of playing the race. Where human culture is hung-up on the concepts of “good” and “evil” and have written their Code of Chivalry to define those concepts, to a Dark Elf, they are irrelevant. Honor and Dishonor are all that matters. The Four Oaths of the Way, the oaths of family and clan, the personal oaths of the Dark Elf, these are what define the world for us.

This culture package is an attempt to explain the social veneer that allows a Dark Elf to function in society and to survive in the world of intrigue, backstabbing and avarice that is the true base nature of a Dark Elf.

ELLENTARI LIFE, CUSTOMS, AND TRADITIONS

Nighttime Travel

The majority of Dark Elves on the surface world are active late at night, and if they are forced to cope with the sun, they stick to the shadows. In the caverns, tunnels and cities of Ellentari, Thoraе learn at an early age to recognize and remember the landscape of the lightless Underdark. The lights that are used in Ellentari come in the form of well-hooded lanterns that allow only the bleakest of light to escape.

Superstition

Superstition runs rampant through Thoraе society, especially concerning ghosts and banshees. Death is seen as an honorable rest to a life spent striving for perfection, and a spirit returning to walk amongst the living represents a ghastly fate. The Thoraе are also tremulously afraid of the “Nakomaromu” or Panthergast, as it is known amongst the humans, which exists solely for the destruction of all Dark Elves.

Necromancy

Necromancy is legal in all parts of Ellentari except for the capital city of Tyrin-Raithe and within the halls of most healing guilds. Its use, however, is not looked favorably upon by most. The primary duty of an earth mage is to heal the wounded; not to engage in combat. That is the work of the celestial battle mages. Yet, what must be done must be done. Dark elves realize that the

humans consider the use of earth magic in its battle form to be despicable, and tend to conceal the fact that it is accepted.

Death

Death does not frighten Dark Elves as it does humans. The Thoraes believe that after death their spirits are elevated amongst their great ancestors and that they shall live on in the honor of their family. This is why it is better to perform Seppuku and permanently die than to live to disgrace yourself and your entire clan.

Cultural Bias

Ellentari Dark Elves tend to be reclusive and chauvinistic. This approaches levels of fanaticism in many, although a majority of the younger generations are more open to the lighted world. This is a point of great worry among many elders. Trade has been opened since the founding of Elysia, but it is heavily restricted, and few humans have been allowed in the halls underground. The majority of Dark Elves interested in the surface world see it as a resource of which to be taken advantage or something that they will eventually have to deal with as Evendarr, the human kingdom, expands.

Chauvinistic: the strong and unreasonable belief that your own country or race is the best or most important. (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary) Prejudiced belief in the superiority of one's gender, group, or kind. (Dictionary.com)

This definition pretty much sums up the surface world to the Thoraes. As a Dark Elf, you ARE the superior race; you don't just think you are. This idea is a good core idea to build off of when figuring out how your character is going to act on the surface, but keep in mind that this is a generalization- do not be afraid to deviate from it. Just remember that it is a rare Dark Elf who would be caught singing and laughing with the gypsies drinking the "swill" that they call hooch! As for the surface world, there are many things that you have to adjust to as a Thoraes fresh from Ellentari. First, the jochu (or surface dweller/worm) means of greeting one another respectfully. They thrust out a filthy hand tainted with surface "cooties" that for all you know could have an alchemical globe, weapon, or a spell in it, grasping for your FAR superior Dark Elven skin coated hand. Where you come from, a thrust out hand means malice or battle. Bowing deeply to another Thoraes or a slight bow to surface dwellers is the commonly accepted Thoraes form of greeting. You may want to role play this by jumping back with your weapons drawn when a hand is offered, then after realizing what they want, bowing slightly and curtly correcting their mistake.

Speech habits of a surface dweller are also quite bestial compared to those of the Thoraes. Surface dwellers use a lazy tongue, often slurring words beyond Thoraes recognition and using "slang." Have they no respect for their language as it was made? Thoraes often announce and are very particular in their speech patterns. Thoraes remember their ancient tongue (a modified version of Japanese), and even though it has fallen out of popular use the grammar and formality of that language is still present in the way that a Thoraes speaks common. Some terms from the ancient tongue have been retained in the Thoraes version of common, and are often used in formal situations, but as it is mostly a dead language, no one is expected to speak it fluently. Language

Packets are available, and with a lot of work, can be used to construct in-game messages to other Thorae that few surface dwellers will be able to understand. Plot, however, will not be using the language at all—they have enough work to do without expecting them to fulfill our every fantasy! It is always a Thorae rule of thumb to surpass all jochu in their ways of life to rub it in their face without saying a word. The Thorae are SO superior that they can learn and carry out the ways of the jochu better than the jochu. In order to do this, speak softly, do not raise your voice or laugh out loud as this, to a Dark Elf, connotes loss of control. Speak in ambiguities, use silence to allow the other person to figure out what you mean. This also keeps you from making commitments or creating misunderstandings—what someone else assumes you mean is not your problem. Listening is considered more polite than speaking, especially around those of higher rank, so let them do the speaking.

As for interaction with the jochu, upon first entering the surface Thorae often stick to their own in clusters. Usually they interact only when necessary at first. After a while Thorae usually deem which of the jochu are worthy of their presence and trust them with as little information about the Thorae as possible. While they are known to join surface courts, a Thorae's loyalty is to their family first and foremost, and unless renegades, a Thorae will always help a fellow Thorae before a surface dweller, even if it is their Liege.

The most important thing to remember is one word- ATTITUDE! A lot about being a Dark Elf is attitude and looking good. You could be a first level scholar, but as long as you carry yourself with arrogance and act intimidating, people will play along, not knowing for sure if you are high level or not. There is an old saying that Clothing Makes the Man, and this is true of your character also. If you come into game dressing well, and dressing the part, people will assume you are an experienced character. See appendix 2 for costuming for ideas. The way this is in game, Thorae see themselves as the highest race (because we ARE!) and feel that anyone, no matter how old or how experienced should be reminded of that once in a while. A crude comment here, a mean put down there, maybe playing mean tricks on the jochu for kicks. Just remember; whatever trouble you get yourself into you have to get yourself out of- conflict makes for good role-play. Also, be careful when putting jochu down in the Thorae tongue, because while their minds can't comprehend our entire language, a few pieces might have sunken in. So if you were to sputter off a few insulting comments to a noble, and the noble or someone close by can translate what you said, be prepared to take the consequences.

The Surface

“Entering the village, obey the village (at least in public)”

Thorae Dark Elven society has been isolated from the surface world for centuries, and to say that most Dark Elves are often xenophobic and always chauvinistic would be correct. At the same time, the Elfstone forest that surrounds the Ellentari Mountain must be constantly patrolled to ensure that outsiders do not learn too much of the Thorae empire. In addition, the forest provides an amount of sustenance that could not be grown in the caverns hidden from the sun. As such, the Thorae have adapted to coping with the pains of the surface world in order to survive, but the majority keeps a good distance when dealing with surface races.

The Thoraë relationship with surface world is a keen one to grasp for the Dark Elf player. Until someone opens up a Dark Elf chapter, your entire NERO® experience will be spent dealing with and living in, what to a Dark Elf character is alien lands. In addition to the questions of the “Character Profile” section of the rulebook, (page 108. see also appendix 1) you must also consider why your character is on the surface world. To seek revenge for some offence a gaikujin committed? To strengthen ties between other Dark Elf empires? Perhaps to prove yourself in the most rancorous environment imaginable? To escape what you believe to be an intolerable situation at home? To prove, or perhaps redeem, your honor or that of your family? Maybe to come to a better understanding of Ellentari’s gaikugin neighbors and the expanding Evendarr kingdom? It is up to you to decide. Do not worry about writing a full character history right away, but you will want to write up something after the first few times you play in order to give plot the information they need to help you fulfill your goals.

While on the surface world, Dark Elves fight to maintain their social customs and values when confronted with the ignorant surface dwellers. The Thoraë honor code is what distinguishes them from the atavistic mongrels of the lighted world. However, some rituals and traditions cannot be carried out as they would if performed in Ellentari --the barbarism of the surface simply does not allow it. In these instances the traditions are performed as closely as they can be to what is proper. If there is a ritual you wish to perform, such as a wedding or a funeral, let plot know when you want to do this in order to get their cooperation and possibly their assistance.

Other races with Elven blood are considered to be far distant cousins, but Mystic Woods elves are considered less so. This does not mean that other Elven races are readily accepted as equals or even trusted by the Thoraë --they just acknowledge that a relationship exists. The majority of Dark Elves believe that they could exist just fine without any of the surface races. A common belief among the Thoraë is that the entire Sarr race was once created to hunt down and destroy Dark Elves; however, any overt animosity has long since faded. All other surface-world races are referred to as “gaikugin” or “jochu.”

Rarely, a surface dweller will exhibit enough personal honor and respect in how they act to be designated “kansashinjo,” or a surface dweller with honor.

The Passage of Time

“Constant dropping wears away the stone”

The Thoraë perception of time and of recorded history is quite different from humans. The effects of time are a constantly seen phenomenon in every Dark Elf’s lifetime. Buildings decay, caverns expand and collapse, surface world tree lines alter, the jochu die off at rapid rates, and governments fall as quickly as they are established. To a large extent, this is why the stable Underdark of Ellentari is preferred to the chaotic, inconstant and forever-unstable surface world.

Within what would be the equivalent of decades for humans, the home in which an Elf is born will crumble and fall apart. Thus, change related to the passage of time is an accepted occurrence. The School of the Way, the foremost college on teaching philosophy at the Ronowen

Zohoshai, is completely torn down every 100 years and rebuilt to the exact specifications it was originally made to eons ago –down to the carvings on the door handles. Where humans value old artifacts for their sacredness and abhor forgeries, the Thoraes appreciate an expertly crafted replica as much as an original.

Life is impermanent. Everything that is now will fade to be replaced by something new. This is the natural course of things. Thus, it is important to remember one's past and to keep sacred family ancestry. These bring a sense of stability to a constantly fluctuating world.

Commonly Used Thoraes Terminology

yoi-asa	hello; generic greeting
dewa	goodbye
hai	yes; understood
ii-e	no; don't mention it
arigato	thank you
nani	what
Jokai/Joukai	surface world
Gekai	underworld
Jochu	“surface worm”; surface dweller
Gechu	“underground worm”; unfriendly underground race; dwarf
Anjin	Dark Elf (generic)

Sayings and Proverbs

- He who watches his back is stabbed in the gut.
- It is better to die with honor, than to live without!
- May your sword prevail!
- Honor to you and your ancestors.
- May you find the comfort of the shadow. (Spoken on the surface world.)
- Gain from your opponents without sacrificing your own strength.
- Piled-up specks of dust become a mountain
- Vision without action is a dream, action without vision is a nightmare.
- One cannot say family talk in the bazaar.
- If the character of a Thoraes is not clear to you, look to her friends.
- If mind is clean, fate is good
- A word and a stone let go cannot be called back.
- One stone, two birds
- The Reverse side also has a reverse side
- Kill one to warn a hundred.
- There are always ears on the other side of the wall.
- Take revenge in an unexpected place.
- It is easy to dodge a spear that comes from in front of you but hard to keep harm away from an arrow shot from behind.
- The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor the elf perfected without trials.

Names and Naming Traditions

The Dark Elves who live in Ellentari refer to themselves as the Thorae (pronounced Tôr-ã), which translates in Thorae to “Protected One.” Some ancient text state that these Elves once called themselves the Vornae, but an event in history saw the named transformed to what it is now. Vornae translates as either “Shadowed Spirit” or “Dark Spirit.”

Thorae find the term Drae, which surface dwellers often refer to them as, very odd and equally offensive. In the same old tongue from which Vornae originates, Drae translates into “Changed” or “Transformed One,” which as best can be determined, refers to both a physical and a psychological metamorphosis. Most often the Thorae pass the use of this word off as mere ignominy, and consider the person who uses it incompetent and unwilling to learn. In some cases, however, great offense will be taken at “Drae’s” usage, and may be considered a deep insult. This is usually the case with Ellentari nobles.

There are a number of other Dark Elven settlements known to Ellentari, and rumors of even more in far distant lands: Draelonde, which lies to the northeast, and Nebulonde, which exists to the north, Koreket, found within the surface borders of Therendry, Kirishai, located in Therendry, and the newly contacted Kingdom of Hidawari in the lands known to the surface dwellers as Aeron’ or among others. It is believed that an occurrence in Draelonde’s history gave birth to the term Drae, where surface elves were transformed into dark elves and given the name.

Typically, the term Drae refers to a non-Dark Elf that was transformed into one, or a descendant from an impure bloodline (mixed with surface elf or even human blood). Some Thorae and Vornae hold great prejudice against the Drae, believing them to be an abomination, others do not. Vornae are the ancestors of Ellentari Elves or Dark Elves from other settlements. Thorae are pureblooded Dark Elves born in Ellentari.

Personal Names

“Tigers die and leave their skin, Thorae die and leave their names”

A single Dark Elf will take a multitude of names throughout their lifetime. These are meant to mark the great passings of life, such as graduating from an academy, marriage, fighting in a great battle and death. Often a Dark Elf will take a name to honor a great teacher, to remember a significant event or to honor a memory. It is rare that anyone but the closest family or friends will know a Dark Elf’s full name, because these additions are often personal and for her own reflection.

Upon death a Dark Elf’s family will give the deceased a new name at the time of “soshiki” (known as their "kaimyô"), and it is that name to which they will be referred to from then on. It is also not unusual for a Dark Elf to honor the memory of a teacher or mentor by taking their last name as a middle name. Thus, depending on the point that they are at in their lives, a Dark Elf may be known by several different names.

While names may change throughout a Thorae's life, all Thorae have a complete formal name that they are given at birth to recognize their status in the clan structure. The formal names are rarely given to common jochu, unless on diplomatic matters, and take the following form:

1. Personal Name – This is the first and most commonly used name at formal gatherings; it is given to a Dark Elf at birth by their parents.
2. Father's House Name – This is the name of a Dark Elf's Father's house name, if it is different from the mother's house.
3. Mother's House Name – This is the house name of a Dark Elf's mother.
4. Personal House Name – This is the name of the Dark Elf's House if it is different from their mother's through marriage, adoption or creation.
5. Clan Name – the shokan name represents the highest level of respectability for a Dark Elf. Thorae with the same Personal House and Clan name would be of the highest echelon of Ellentari society. Example: Taki (personal name) Jimbo (Father's house) Tanaka (Mother's house) Iktome (Personal house) of Kirian-tir (Clan name).

Commonly, Dark Elves go by less formal names, but they most often include at least their Personal and Clan names. Since Dark Elven names are often too complex for mere humans to understand, Dark Elves usually go by only their common names, or even their translations, while amongst any jochu.

ELLENTARI SOCIETY AND ITS ORGANIZATION

Overview

Playing a Dark Elf requires dedication and commitment from the player. Not only are you expected to coat your skin with black make-up, string out your lofty curls with white hair spray and wear a cloak to shield yourself from the sun in the middle of July, but you must come to master one of the most highly developed races in the NERO® system.

The rest of this culture package is designed to give you a basic idea of that society, but this section is steered at giving the new Dark Elf player a notion of how to act. Certainly, you have free reign when constructing your character's concept and history, but there are certain generalities that should be followed. The material is here for creating a great character concept; however, do not let any of it hinder what you envision your character to be. Instead, use the material contained within as building blocks to form, shape, and adapt your character. Go ahead and play the total aberrant from Ellentari society if you want, but just be aware of the consequences.

The NERO® rulebook states, "When playing a Drae, the bottom line to remember is honor," and it can't really be said any better than that. A Dark Elf's personal honor is their driving force, and a Dark Elf without honor must either regain it or be shunned from the rest of society. Honor is the one common denominator in Dark Elven life.

Similarly, all Dark Elf characters are solemnly bound by their word, and unless a renegade, they will do everything within their power to keep an oath –even if it means their death. Some Dark Elves have argued that a word given to a “jochu” (non-Dark Elf) holds no value, but most do not see it this way. The Dark Elven sense of honor, and the tradition of keeping their word, distinguish them from and elevate them above, all other races.

Thorae (Elysian Dark Elves) believe that, through a series of magical metamorphoses in ancient history, they are the descendants of dragons. As such they believe that all elves, especially Dark Elves, are a superior race. A touch of pride and arrogance is most definitely called for, if not sheer egoism.

Thorae Social Classes

Ellentari society is divided into four distinct social classes, which are determined by family status, birth order and profession. These are the Tennō (Empress), the Kuge (hereditary nobility), the Buke (warriors) and the Bonge (commoners).

A) Tennō - the Empress sits at the summit of Ellentari society, but the majority of Thorae have little interaction with her --indeed, the lower classes (Bonge) are not even allowed to lay eyes on her. All imperial policy is dictated through her, although to some degree she remains a figurehead, where the imperial council makes the majority of decisions. Tyrin-Raithe has been molded around the imperial palace that sits at the geographical and societal axis of all Ellentari, and despite her power the Empress is forbidden from traveling outside the city limits.

B) Kuge - Just below the Empress, sits this class of hereditary nobility that controls the most powerful, government positions. All pureblooded members of the three imperial families occupy this class, and typically these aristocrats will not be found outside of the major cities they control. Imperial family members who do not hold official titles often serve as warriors, mages and generals under the title of Shimpan, equivalent to the daimyō (although they do not control a province). There has always been a great dissimilitude between the regality and opulence of the Thorae aristocracy and the harrowing actuality of the outlying provinces.

C) Buke - Warriors occupy a special position in Ellentari society. This wide encompassing caste includes the mighty daimyō governors down through the lowest ashigaru (mercenary foot soldiers, literally "fleet of foot"). The general span of the class begins with the 18 daimyō ("great name") who control the imperial provinces and are vassals under the Roshya soshite Iiofuka Roshukotoban. The daimyō are roughly 50% female clan heads, while the other half are males appointed by their shokanichi. Among these governor-generals there is even a distinction: the fudai ("inner ladies/lords") and the tozama ("outer ladies/lords"). The fudai are generally responsible for the provinces closer to the major cities and, therefore, the Kuge. They are considered more trusted by the aristocracy. The tozama are a series of clans in the outlying regions of the Underdark, away from the watchful eye of the Kuge. These powerful warlords are either indifferent to the political manipulations of the nobles or are openly hostile.

Beneath and subservient to the daimyō are the raishuban/roshuban (lady/lord knights), vassals that must provide taxes and warriors based on the amount of land they control. The raishu and roshu (ladies and lords) are typically warrior mages and healers in service to a daimyō or raishuban, and while not exactly fighters, they are honored for the wielding of magical power.

The ban (dames/knights) is the honored class of professional warriors. These intrepid servants swear written oaths (kishōmon) to their lords sealed with a fingerprint in blood (keppan), and enforce provincial law, collect taxes and otherwise serve their master. Occasionally a daimyō shall dispatch one of his ban on a decade-long wandering quest to learn and grow spiritually, as well as master new fighting techniques (during this time, the ban would be considered ronin). The ojinushi (squires) are youths in training or still in school to become ban.

The ronin ("masterless") are professional warriors, perhaps former ban or a ban on quest that hold no direct loyalty to any master. While this is extremely uncommon in Ellentari, the ronin are not necessarily dishonorable (only in the ranks of employed soldiers are they considered social outcasts due to their personal autonomy). Ronin may be seen as renaissance warrior-poets and philosophers who enjoy their freedom outside the rigid caste structure. If there were an equivalent to the human "adventurer" class in Ellentari, this would be it. Most ronin travel extensively throughout the empire and even spend lengthy amounts of time on the surface world.

Aside from these great powerful generals, knights and leaders are the zusa (foot soldiers), who aren't really professional warriors, but more often farmers and other commoners who fill the ranks of an army in times of need. Below these are the ashigaru, a type of professional foot soldiers or mercenaries who hire their services out to whomever they please. They are somewhat despised, due to their lack of allegiance, and are typically farmers that have been forced off their land due to changing political boundaries, war or famine.

D) Bonge - the commoners of Ellentari, generically called kochu, are the backbone of society. They are broken up into the ryoke (landowners and independent farmers), gesakunin (renters and tenant farmers), and nuhi (craftsmen and laborers). Merchants, shonin, are situated below farmers because of their making money off of the efforts of others; however, they are a much feared and important group as in recent years their power and capital has grown throughout Ellentari.

E) Shadowwalkers – the Shadowwalkers are an elite group of mages within Ellentari who stand outside of the normal structure. Only one is permitted to each clan.

ELLENTARI GOVERNMENT AND LAWS

This section deals with the specifics of Dark Elf society, such as government structure, laws, clan structure and ranking, and titles and rank. This information is not necessary for role-playing a Dark Elf character, but is useful to give a character depth and player understanding of the culture.

The government structure of Ellentari is a council advised Matriarchy. The Noble Council is currently composed of three major houses/ clans --Toshori, Mal-atep, and Kirian-tir. Recently,

Tashara Kirian-tir declared the realm of Ellentari an empire, named herself as "Tennō" (empress) and divided the empire into a series of 21 "han" (fiefs or provinces) under the supervision of the "daimyō" (governor generals, literally "great name").

House Kirian-tir currently occupies the "seki-el" (the empress' throne, literally "seat of the shadow") under Tennō Tashara, who ascended to the throne only 83 years ago and is only 237 years old. The "Roshya" (king) and "Iiofuka Roshukotoban" (great warlord) is Tashara's husband, Moshori ta'dar Mal-atep Kirian-tir of Clan Kirian-tir. The Queen is supported by a separate and elite group of Thorae, known as the "Meradoyok Shoei" (emerald guard), who direct the Imperial forces and protect the seki-el.

The shokanichi (clan head) of Shokan Kirian-tir is Rainaruzun (crown princess) Sharentell Kirian-tir the Second of Clan Kirian-tir. Despite being of the same clan, Tashara and her sister are often at odds with each other. She is the current successor to the throne and thus not allowed to claim a husband, because if Tashara should die, she is expected to take Moshori as her husband. Roshukotoban Talrowyn Kainen Kirian-tir, who is rather young and temperamental, is the Warlord of Kirian-tir. Clan Kirian-tir controls the capital city of Tyrin-Raithe.

Raizun Kalaendrai Toshori of Clan Toshori is closely allied with Sharentell of Clan Kirian-tir. The two studied together at both the Ronowen Zohoshai and the Reiwendar Ansatsu and often support each other while presiding on the Noble Council. Toshori maintains control over the city of Reiwendar.

Raizun Malendria Mal-atep of Clan Mal-atep is by far the oldest matriarch on the Noble council. She is well over 700 years old, and is the primary opponent of clans Toshori and Kirian-tir due to the sheer brutality of her house's members. In an almost typical twist of Dark Elven politics, Clan Mal-atep is also the primary supporter of Tennō Tashara, and holds the strongest military backing of all the houses. Mal-atep holds city Yrentri-dar.

The Noble clans are essentially large families, although adoptions become more frequent on the noble scale, and each has their own process that must be followed for adoption. There are 18 clans that control the remaining han of the empire and competition between them is often fierce as they vie for favor of the three royal families. Each daimyō is responsible for the lands which they govern, and have the right to set laws in each of them. Nobles within their own lands have free reign, including the right to cut and walk, except in some cases where the Tennō dictates a ruling.

CLANS, FAMILIES, AND HONOR

Code of Honor - "Kansaehoten"

"Life is for one generation, honor is forever"

First and foremost among all Thorae social customs is adherence to a strict code of honor, which all elves must live and die by. This is known as the "Kansaehoten," the Dark Elven perception of

honor is not an easy one to grasp for the jochu. It can best be summed up as a reflection on a Dark Elf's past actions, the way in which they are looked upon, their status in society, and the respect given to their family name. This code of honor determines a Dark Elf's worth in society, dependability, trustworthiness, decency, and much more. A Dark Elf with no honor is entirely worthless, and the Thoraë see the human's lack of an honor code as their greatest fault. One's personal honor is their own set of beliefs, ideals, mores, and oaths. These stand just as valid when compared to one's family honor, and the Thoraë must balance the two or they would always be in a state of contention.

A Dark Elf who has been dishonored must do everything to regain that honor through a set of rituals (explained later). One who violates their honor code, breaks their word and does not perform the task set by his or her superior or commit the ritual of "seppuku" was, in earlier times, considered a renegade, to be slain on sight by any Ellentari Elf. Over the last few years, with the increase of population in Elysia, and with contact with other peoples and nations ranging far and wide, this concept was found to be causing a great deal of friction with the other races. This has been modified and now those who break honor and refuse to make it right are declared "dochi fuku" or "of death." They are considered dead at the level at which they broke their honor. If one were to break a personal vow, he would be dochi foku to all who were affected by the breaking of that vow. If she broke a house vow, she could be declared dochi foku to the entire house, if a Clan vow, to the entire clan. Those who break vows to the Empire or the Empress are dochi foku to the entire empire, and possibly to the entire race.

Generally, the Kansahoten of Ellentari involves three separable levels: Shokan (Clan), Ketzuyado (Family) and that held on a personal level. The Shokan level represents the greater alliances within a clan and the various obligations that clan holds, where the Ketzuyado level concentrates on the immediate relatives and ancestors of a Dark Elf. These greater obligations of honor to one's clan, family and even the empire are rooted in each Elf's personal honor and the way in which they conduct themselves.

Shokan:

Oaths sworn on the Clan's honor are sworn only by the Raizun or her designated representative. All members of a clan must however, swear to uphold the honor of the clan. If any oaths are sworn on the Clan's Honor that will affect your character, Plot will let you know about it since Plot will have done it. ANY adoption or marriage into a clan automatically carries this oath whether spoken or implied.

Example: I will not commit any act that will endanger the Empire.

I will not commit any act that will endanger my Clan.

I will protect the honor of my race and my Clan.

To strengthen the Clan, I strengthen the Empire.

Ketzuyado:

Oaths sworn on the Families Honor are sworn only by the Matron or her designated representative. All members of a house must swear to uphold the honor of the House. If the Matron of the House is in Ellentari and not a PC, Plot will notify you of any oaths made that will

affect your character. ANY adoption or marriage into a family automatically carries this oath whether spoken or implied.

Added to the Above Oath is (example):

I will not commit any act that endangers my House.

I will defend my House.

I will protect my House.

To strengthen the House, I strengthen the Clan.

Personal Honor:

Any Thoraë may swear to anything on their personal honor that does not violate their higher oaths to House and Clan. This is done rarely and carefully, as violations of the oath can only end in seppuku. Remember there is a difference between saying “I will try...” and “I will...” Jochu will try to use your code of honor against you. Be careful that you do not allow them to do it. Remember also, when you swear to a jochu noble, that he or she is also sworn to someone of higher rank. Make sure you are clear on exactly what you are swearing, and be sure you trust the person enough to place your honor in their hands. Otherwise things can become.....messy.

Remember that at no point can you expect a jochu to follow your honor code. They were not brought up with it; they do not understand it in their bones as you do. Seppuku from them is worthless, even though they will try to tell you different.

Some oaths of honor are to the self rather than another person, family, or clan. These are the ones that you must be honest enough to judge yourself on, and if you feel you have violated it, take matters of restitution into your own hands.

All in the Family

“A Single Arrow is easily broken, but not ten in a bundle”

The entire sociological structure of Ellentari culture is based around the family. The Dark Elven concept of the family involves not only an Elf’s immediate family, but also the entire extended bloodline. The Dark Elven family considers it’s dead ancestors to be almost a living entity watching over the family. Thus, it is considered a great insult to diminish a Dark Elf’s ancestor, and many blood feuds have broken out between families over this. Each individual Elf carries with him the memory and honor of each of their family members --both living and dead. Thus, an Elf without an ancestral history is considered a very poor soul indeed, and they must rest on the merits of their personal honor. This idea of family is often used to keep youthful Dark Elf warriors from killing themselves recklessly the hands of their enemies. If they die, who shall succeed them? Who will reap the rewards of honor then?

Within every family there is a ruling matriarch, who serves as the head of the household. She is the only person who can make oaths in the family name. Without exception, all family heads are female, and should there be no daughters within the direct bloodline of the family founder, the

title is passed on to the closest related grand-daughter or cousin. All members of a family will listen to this elder woman explicitly and carry out her wishes to the letter.

A tradition carried out by all noble and commoner families is the naming of a Master of Arms. This is the eldest and strongest of all the males within the family, who becomes responsible for the protection of the family and the training of its warriors. It is these men who are also given the right to carry the family weapon. In the imperial families, this position is known as Warlord, and in the reigning, royal family as Grand Warlord. These royal men also carry the title of Prince and King, respectively.

This family tradition is the basis for the rest of Ellentari culture, and even provides the foundation for the Dark Elven system of government.

Relations between Families – the Clan Structure

The hub of Dark Elven politics and society revolves around a ranking of clans under the Imperial Houses (in theory the Imperial Houses are supposed to compose one Clan, but they are more like separate entities more often than not). Those clans “closer” to or given precedence towards the Empress’ house are held in higher esteem –they are typically the older and more venerable clans. Each clan presides over one of the empire’s provinces, while the Imperial Houses control the major cities.

The clans are composed of several houses, which are in turn composed of multiple families. It is based upon their clan affiliation that individual families rank themselves in the social strata of society –the families that head the clans are the upper echelon and nobility. Only the lowest of “kochu” (commoner) families are not related in any manner to a higher house or clan. The heads of a clan (all female and typically 4 to 8 elves) are often related through marriage or direct family blood ties, although this is not required. Currently there are 21 clans composing Ellentari, including the Imperial Clans, each clan composed of many houses. The Imperial clans are: Kirian-Tir, the ruling Imperial House in Ellentari and most focused on political structure, Toshori, the Imperial House made up of malicious sorcerers and brutal fighters and Mal-Atep, the most vicious and ruthless Imperial House of the three.

When a family gets it into their head that another family has insulted them, the resulting feud often lasts for centuries. This may stem from a multitude of sources, which include a member of one family breaking the rules of politeness, one house trying to beat out a family in the social, political, or trade arena, or just by plain misinterpretation of what somebody said. Thus, knowing who belongs to what family, and where they rank in it, becomes of extreme importance.

Marriage and Adoption

Marriages and adoptions between families quite often become very confusing; however, they also form the strongest pacts and alliances between families. The majority of marriages occur within an individual clan (remember, they are composed of many families), but there are quite a few inter-clan marriages as well while families maneuver for greater esteem. Marriages among the Imperial Families and the Higher Ranking families are almost exclusively arranged by the Matrons of the clans in order to confirm alliances.

Generally in Dark Elven marriages, the male takes the female's last name as his own, and the female typically honors the male's family by accepting his last name as a middle one. These two are then considered members of both families; being accepted as both child to the parents and sibling to any brothers or sisters.

Marriages between feuding families are very infrequent, but when they are done, a six-month period of peace is declared between the two families. During this time the two families often work to form a truce. If at the end of this period there can be no compromise, the male is accepted as a part of the female's family and is dismissed from his original family. As this break-up is very severe, the male is not forced to commit any act against his natural family, and no member of the female's family may speak ill of the male's family while in his presence. Should the male attempt to return to his natural family, a Blood Feud is usually called on him.

Adoptions occur when a Dark Elf has done some great deed for a particular family, such as saved the life of the family Elder. This is a great way to show respect for another Dark Elf, and to solidify relations between families. For an adoption to occur, a member of the host family must first petition the Elder of the family of the Dark Elf to be adopted. The Elder of the host family then petitions the Elder of the adoptee's family, and the decision is made. Generally, the adoptee has little to say on the matter. In the potential case of taking in a "ronin" (the masterless, a warrior without a liege) who has served a family, the Elder of the host family will ask the "ronin" if they wish to accept the offer. If the "ronin" agrees, they fully become a member of that house and adopt the entire family's lineage.

Blood Feuds and Debts – “Ketzuram”

“A murder may be forgiven, an offense never”

Should a Dark Elf greatly offend another Dark Elf (especially slight their family, house or clan honor) or perhaps try to murder them, the most drastic result is the declaration of a blood feud, or “ketzuram”. Most disputes between Thoraë are settled through “kansairamo” (the honor duel); however, when this cannot be agreed upon or an exorbitant affront against a Dark Elf's ancestors is thrown, ketzuram is declared. Under Ellentari law, ketzuram murders are perfectly legal if a magistrate or a member of the ruling household in whatever province it occurs sanctions them. This may be done after the fact.

A blood feud entails a Dark Elf making it their personal goal to slay the offender. In some cases ketzuram is called against a Dark Elf's entire immediate family. The Dark Elf naming the blood feud will not rest from hunting until their target is killed. Theoretically, there is the possibility of this spreading between two entire families; however this has never occurred. The Empress of Ellentari will most likely swear an honorary blood feud against all enemies of Ellentari during times of war.

Almost the opposite of this is blood debt. This cultural ritual places the Dark Elf naming the blood debt into service as the protector of the person they name the debt to, and is often given in

the case of one Dark Elf saving another one's life, when not obligated to do so by oaths or duty. The indebted Dark Elf will then do anything to save the life of the other, and in some cases this is extended to their entire family.

Both of these rites are not completed until the Elf naming them feels that they are satisfied, be this one resurrection or permanent death.

The Family Weapon

The Master of Arms of each family will either bear the family weapon himself, or appoint another Dark Elf in the family to do so. The family weapon is said to be the embodiment of the family's honor. The weapon, known as the "ketzuanu," is always kept near the bearer, but it is not taken into foolish situations where the weapon may be lost. Nor is it used for the bearer to defend his personal honor in single combat. It is, however, explicitly used to defend the honor of the family. The Family Weapons of the three Imperial Clans have been handed down from the founding of Ellentari, although they are said to have had to be re-forged at different times through history. If this is true, all records have been destroyed.

LANDS OF ELLENTARI

The only known concentration of Dark Elves within the duchy of Elysia is located in Ellentari. The jochu refer to this area as the Elfstone Forest or Elfstone Mountain, which is located in the southwestern barony of Ebonmarr near the human city of Triam. Ellentari Elves tend to be reclusive. Previously they allowed only the smallest amount of trade, and only recently has some contact with the "gakujin" (foreigners) been developed.

There are four major cities comprising Ellentari: Tyrin-Raithe (the capital city), Reiwendar, Yrentri-dar, and Arwens'aver. They are all located in the caverns beneath Ellentari Mountain, or the Elfstone Mountain.

ELLENTARI CULTURE AND PHILOSOPHY

The Four Oaths of the Way

"Catch not at the shadow and lose the substance"

The philosophy followed by nearly all Thoraes is the Way. In general, the Way basically states that a Dark Elf will strive for perfection in all aspects. Good or evil, peaceful or militant all Dark Elves seek to be the best at what they desire.

An unknown scholar wrote the Way during a period of Ellentari history known as the "Weeping Sojourn." This time had the Ellentari Elves crossing the surface world in search of a new haven. Facing the unaccustomed dangers of the surface world, one can easily see how the Way became a need for survival.

It has been the quest of the Imperial Library and Archives of House Kirian-Tir to find an original copy of the Way from this time period; however, none has yet been found. Any copy of this book is highly revered by all Dark Elves, and some of what has been recorded follows:

“The Way is the belief that a person should exercise their full intentions, and continuously strive for perfection, although they will never be able to attain it. It is in this way that all should be like the warrior, and fight honorably for one’s goals. It is in this way that we shall find a new homeland and the Vornae shall come to prosper again. The Way of the Warrior is death, and when one must choose between life and death, they shall always choose death. This does not mean to want death, but rather to accept it. If you keep yourself true, correct and honorable from night until daybreak, accustomed to the idea of death, you will become one with the Way. You will then be able to pass through life with no possibility of failure and perform your office and duties properly. So when you embark upon some task, before you start, fix your intentions upon the Four Oaths and put selfishness behind you. Then you cannot fail.

- Thou shalt never be late with respect to the Way, and continuously strive for perfection
- Thou shalt be useful and remain loyal to your family and liege
- Thou shalt go beyond love and grief, and exist for the good of all elves.
- Thou shalt show respect to your parents, elders, and superiors

This philosophy is taught in all schools of training in Ellentari, and by maturity all Dark Elves swear these oaths to their family elders. Duty and Loyalty are the basis of the code: to the Empire, to the Clan, and to the Family above the self. It is a code of self-sacrifice in the service of a greater cause.

The third oath has caused debate with the terminology “love and grief.” the strictest of teachers in the Way contend that this means an almost total loss of emotion to the point of absolute stoicism. This point of view is, however, generally not taken, and most Elves interpret this as a statement against excess amounts of these emotions --in order that one does not become totally consumed by one emotion. It is a point open for debate.

The Warrior’s Code

No matter whether an elf belongs to the upper or lower ranks, if she has not put her life on the line at least once she has cause for shame.

- Nabeshima Naoshige

In addition to the Four Oaths, the warriors of the Imperial Clans swear to this code of conduct, although differences in wording and intention will be found between the different clans, and those changes are closely guarded secrets. The original, lost in time, is said to have been written by the great Sage, Chingis:

I am Thoraë. My father was fear and anger at the corruption of the world in which I lived. My mother was the Dragon, who walked the paths of strange freedom before me. I

cannot hold up the mirror of honor without the reflection of being born mortal, and the self-knowledge of being subject to the errors of my kind.

I am Thoraë. Proud, but able to cry tears for that which has gone by or which will never be except that I make it come to pass. I remember the stories of my people and take glory in that which has brought honor to my ancestors and take shame in that which ravished the spirits of my brothers and sisters. I will partake of bread and salt with my brothers and sisters and I will give service to the honorable path that I seek which is simple, clean and straight.

I am Thoraë. I know that no path is as it seems. Therefore, I will accept from the Earth the balm of the cleansing coolness of water, clean air, the freedom that responsibility gives and - finally - the two edged gift of fire as my right. But I will remember that these are gifts.

I am Thoraë. I will not take by right or force or by dark pathways that which I would not give.

I am Thoraë. I will bend knee to no crown but my Empress; no liege but my Raizun, but in turn, will not seek to cast down that which has been won in honor, nor - except in wholehearted jest - will I make light of that in which others believe.

I am Thoraë. I will remember that those who walk paths other than the Way - so named Jochu - are to be respected as well as their facings and beliefs. Nor will I trample their hallowed ground.

I am Thoraë. I will defend the Ellentari Empire by word and deed without fear or anger, for they are the death of thought.

I am Thoraë. I keep my word.

Interpretations of the Way for the Working Class

“The nail that sticks up will be hammered down”

Because Ellentari is such a structured environment and all members of the society follow the same philosophy of the Way, there are various interpretations and adherence to its tenets based on a Dark Elf's position in society. A member of the Bonge has neither the time, nor the desire, to engage in endless debate over the nuances of the code. They have the work of feeding, clothing, and sheltering their families, as well as providing for the maintenance of those above their station. They are the farmers, the skilled and unskilled craftsmen, the Merchants and the refuse collectors—the backbone of the Empire. They know and understand the importance of their position to the good of the Empire as a whole. As such, their interpretations are, for the most part, simple: Perfection in the self and occupation, Loyalty to those who rule, and respect for all who fate has placed above them. In this way, the peasant honors herself, and brings honor

to her children so that when she becomes an ancestor, she may influence her family to a better position in life.

Bowing and Weapons Protocols

“If you must bow, bow low”

There are a variety of bows used in different contexts and situations depending on the rank of the person you are addressing, and it is always best to assume that they hold a higher rank than you do until you know for sure. Bowing is the most important way to show your respect to someone. All greetings and goodbyes are expressed by bows. There are 4 degrees of bowing: Formal, ordinary, light, and informal nod. The Formal bow is made very slowly and deeply, expressing profound obedience. This is used in greeting or leave-taking of a Noble, especially one of your own clan. Greeting of the Empress or Emperor is an even more formal form, requiring the bow to be made from the knees and holding that position until permission is given to rise. An Ordinary bow is done by standing upright, feet together, facing forward, and then bending (from the waist not the hips) to a 30 to 40 degree angle while lowering your hands palms down, to the knees, then raising the head and standing quietly. This is done with superiors, or someone who is of the same rank. A Light bow is done in passing, such as on the street and is about a 15-degree angle. This is probably the form that you will use the most often as you greet other Dark Elves that you know while passing each other on the streets or in the tavern. The Informal bow is used mostly between friends or from someone of a very high rank to a much lower one. Those Dark Elves who adventure together on a regular basis, being friends regardless of their rank, will most likely use this form. It is, however inappropriate to use to your liege. If you have offended someone, or have caused them embarrassment in some way, use a more formal form of bow than you would normally with them to show your sorrow and contrition. When you apologize because you have made a mistake, do not offer excuses. Admit your mistake, and accept responsibility for your actions, even if you believe the only thing you did wrong was getting caught. It is rare that a Jochu will deserve or require more than an informal bow, but on occasion an ordinary may be used. Unless the Jochu is your liege, or you have been caught breaking the law, a formal bow should never be used to any but another Dark Elf.

Just as the level of bow you use recognizes the rank of the person you are bowing to, so should your speech and mode of address reflect rank. As much as status and position matter, proper etiquette in all things is what allows the society to function. The lower-ranked an elf is, the more fawning her manners and mannerisms will appear, as higher and higher ranks are being addressed and interacted with. For example, the elf of lower rank always introduces herself to the higher-ranking elf first, and the lowest ranking in the room will always sit closest to the door, the highest ranking furthest from the door and facing it. There are three clear division of this: manners toward ones superiors, towards those of equal rank, and towards those of lower rank. It is best never to forget your position, because it is a surety that the elf you are addressing will not forget hers! Within an adventuring group, these lines may become blurred at times as those of lower rank, but more skill give orders in a battle situation, but the order of rank is still recognized and respected. Just remember, an armed society is a polite society, and Ellentari is very well armed!

Speaking of weapons—just what do you do with those swords hanging on your hips or the magic glowing in your hand when you are in a social situation? Obviously, if you are in a dangerous place, a tavern or in another unsecured area, you will keep your weapons at hand, but what about when you are sitting in a conversation behind a locked door with other Dark Elves, or in a formal situation with a noble? If you are a mage, place a few packets on the floor on the side of your off hand, but hold none in your hand. If you use weapons, place them on your right if you are right-handed, signaling that they are more difficult to draw and therefore you are not a threat, and that you do not see the person you are speaking with as a threat either.

The Death Ritual (soshiki)

“Life is not separate from Death”

The permanent death of a Dark Elf is actually a celebrated occasion for the deceased Elf's family. Thoraes view the death of a family member as a credit to the family's honor, and believe that the deceased's acts have joined their dead ancestor's to form a stronger tie between the living family members. A spirit who has died is believed to travel to the "Yomi-nokuni" (country of the dead) where they join their ancestors as "kami" to protect the living family members. The Thoraes are quite accustomed to the notion of death and, in adherence with their perception of the impermanence of all things, death is accepted as a natural and inevitable fate. It is, of course, an often-somber time immediately following the death, and the slightest insult against the deceased often results in blood feuds being called.

Funeral ceremonies ("soshiki") include a washing of the body, covering the deceased with a white cotton shroud, entombing them in a gilded coffin, coating the casket with perfumes and herbs, and finally cremating and burying the remains. Buried with the body are some coins to pay for the spirit's passage into "Yomi-nokuni" across the mythical Sanzu River, along with straw sandals and a walking cane for the long journey. Following this, the deceased is given a "kaimyô" (posthumous name) that they will forever be referred to by living family members.

Once it is learned that a Dark Elf has died, a family council is called, and all eligible warriors of the family are sent out into the subterranean wilderness stretching out from the Ellentari Cities. There, for several hours, the male and female warriors move as a pack along the borders of the city, and hunt and kill any monster that crosses their path. They tend to stay close to the city and the healers, so that the family does not spend weeks recovering from the celebration of continuing deaths. Once they return a great feast and vigil ensues, known as the "otsuya," and those who participate bring coin, rice and sometimes even surface world flowers as presents to the family. A dinner absent of meat and fish is then served, while amounts of "chiisake" (Dark Elven wine) are passed around.

After the remains of the Thoraes are buried, the family warriors guard the tomb (in the outlying provinces wild animals may unearth the corpse) until a memorial can be erected. This equivalent of a head stone is known as a "gorintô," and takes the form of either a pile of stones (in the case of commoners) or a simple pagoda that incorporates symbols for the elements and the spirit.

Furthermore, it is required that bowls of food be left out in the cemetery so that the "gaki" (hungry spirits or ghosts) do not return to haunt the living. A typical food gift for the dead is a bowl of rice with chopsticks sticking straight up out of it to mark it as belonging to the Kami.

During this time it is considered a great breach of custom for any Dark Elf to attack a member of the mourning family. In the case of Imperial Deaths, all noble families, and a number of commoner families will take the riding of the warriors. It has not been uncustomary for this great sight to take itself onto the surface world in the woods surrounding the Ellentari Mountains.

On the 13th of Ninata (July), the "urabon-e" (feast of the kami) is celebrated every year and continues for three days. Offerings of chisake and rice are made every morning to the kami (protective spirits), and on the evening of the 15th day the "Bon-odori" is danced to beguile and express gratitude for the spirit's protection of family honor. The following day, great pyres (the sight of which causes great discomfort to Thorae) are lit and set afloat on the Gashen, a huge underground river that cuts through Ellentari and the imperial city, so that the spirits may find their way back to Yomi-nokuni.

Since families are less likely to be accessible when the death of a Dark Elf occurs on the surface, all Thorae in the vicinity usually observe the death ritual. Notice is sent to the family at home in Ellentari as quickly as possible, (Whispering Wind if scroll, caster, and components are available) and the family may require that the ashes are returned home for further ritual, observance, and interment.

The Marriage Ritual (kekkon)

Thorae marriages are rather similar to the Death Ritual (What does that say?). Parents arrange the majority of marriages, although the couple themselves, who might manage it so as not to be prevented, arranges some. After a couple is chosen (or has decided) to marry, a preliminary "trial" marriage (known as "nenki-muko") is arranged. Here, the male goes every day to the female's family so that he might learn of their ways and become accustomed to daily chores and expectations; the proposed husband may go to the home of his future parents-in-law and spend the night with her. This "trial" remains tentative until affirmed by both the potential wife and husband and their families.

In "kekkon," the male privately travels to the edges of the town, often near the provincial cemetery, and sets out a bowl of food and a sheet of paper with his name and the name of the female for the family kami to endorse the marriage. The male Dark Elf and the Master of Arms of the female's family (or another Elf appointed by the bride) then set off into the borders of the city to hunt down the largest beast they can manage. Once this is done, the beasts are carried back and the larger of the two kills is allowed to be eaten first at the ensuing banquet.

Before the ceremony, however, the groom and the Master of Arms face off in an honor duel. The outcome of this honor duel determines where a male will sit among the warriors of the bride's family. Defeat does not necessarily mean that the groom will not be considered, but rather his performance is calculated during this time, and he is ranked accordingly among the bride's family.

Following this, the elders of both families arrange for the actual ceremony. Essentially the rite itself is rather simple; the couple exchanges three cups of chiisaki, which are to be drunk in three sips. Oaths are also taken at this time when the marriage is between members of two different clans. Typically, this takes place in the female's house, and is then followed by a great feast. As with soshiki, it is very dishonorable to attack a member of either family during the wedding celebration.

With permission from the families, Thoraes who live on the surface may choose to marry there involving all the Dark Elves in the vicinity. Although jochu may be invited to the celebratory feast, the marriage ceremony itself will be a private affair open only to members of the race.

Dark Elves marry for life, but are free to take another life-mate if their husband or wife dies permanently or is cast out of Ellentari. Also, it is not uncommon, nor unexpected, for the wife or husband to take outside lovers. Although taking a lover of a jochu is not unknown, it is not considered honorable, and the elf doing so is considered to be lacking in more than honor (What's wrong with him that no Thoraes woman would have him?) If a marriage is desired with a jochu, the Dark Elf would choose to change to the prospective spouses race rather than mark him or her as a Drae and force them both to live without Honor.

The Honor Duel (Kansairamo)

“To know and act are one and the same”

Similar in fashion to the human custom of honor dueling, “Kansairamo” is often used to settle disputes between Dark Elves. When oaths come into contention between two Thoraes or insults are thrown, the result is often the honor duel. It is primarily a way of defending your honor when questioned. The opponent's first name the terms of the duel (i.e. to the death, first blow, first blood, etc.), then bow to each other, and then engage in combat. This is considered a perfectly legal way of handling matters and there need be no noble witness present. It is expected that both elves will perform honestly and honorably. If it is found that one elf violated the terms of the duel, the result is dishonor and seppuku. On rare occasion, when the matter of honor has grown beyond the elves involved and may affect the entire House, Clan, or the Empire, an Honor Duel will be ordered, and the terms set by superior(s) who demand it.

Forgiveness (Kowtow)

When a Dark Elf breaks an oath or feels that they have corrupted their own ideals, they are considered to be devoid of all honor. To regain their honor the elf must perform the rite of “kowtow.” In the case of breaking an oath the elf must go to the person to whom the oath was sworn, and in the case of the elf feeling that he has dishonored himself, he must present himself before the head of his family, or on the surface, the highest ranking member of the same family or clan that can be found. If there are no Dark Elves from the same family or clan, any higher-ranking Thoraes is acceptable.

This ritual is performed by kneeling before the offended, placing your weapons on the ground at their feet, and holding your right fist clenched over your heart. You must then recite your name, titles, your clan name, and the name of your mother and father, ask for forgiveness in this disgrace, and finally bow your head to the ground. You must then perform any act that they require for forgiveness. Upon completion of the task set, honor is restored.

This rite represents the debasement and total surrender of one elf to another. It should be noted that Clan heads will never perform this ritual themselves, but should it be deemed appropriate that the family or its head has dishonored themselves in some way, the Master of Arms will perform the ceremony in her stead.

Ritual Suicide (seppuku)

“The reputation of a thousand years may be determined by the conduct of one hour”

If a dishonored elf is unable to find a person they offended or broke their word to, or if that person requires it, the rite of “seppuku” must be performed. Dark Elves who feel that they have violated their personal honor in some way, or have committed an act that disgraces their family or society shall also perform seppuku. It is also used as the ultimate protest when one’s personal honor stands in the way of executing an order given by a superior. Remember that your honor affects your entire family, including your ancestors. Seppuku is not suicide, and does not bear any of the overtones of cowardice that accompany that act. It is a visible and passionate acceptance of the burden of your own failure and your willingness to shoulder the responsibility in order to spare those close to you. This act is the one universally accepted method of atoning for one’s aggressions, impurities and broken oaths.

A Thora performs seppuku by kneeling with their weapons before them and clenching their right fist over the heart. The Dark Elf, or their second, then recites their name, titles, clan name, and the name of their mother and father. This is followed by some last words (one never knows if this death will be the last) that often include a poem.

For example, Prince Yoshitsune, having been overtaken during the early years of the "Kinsman War," uttered the following before thrusting a dagger into his abdomen:

“I am Son-un prince of the blood of the first rank, Minister of Military Affairs and second son of Go-Daigô Toshori, fifth empress since Jimmu Toshori, August descendant of Amaterasu Omikami. Defeated by the Mal-aver rebels, I am taking my own life to avenge my wrongs in the Beyond. Learn from my example how a true warrior dies by his own hand when fate plays false with him!”

Following this speech, the Thora then disembowels (killing blows) themselves with a weapon of choice (most typically a dagger or a warrior's katana). The second will then act to finish the job should the dishonored Dark Elf show reluctance, and protect the body from receiving a Life spell. Neither healing nor Life spells may be administered following this –to do so would be a

worse disgrace. The second has a very important responsibility in a seppuku. It must be someone that the Dark Elf committing seppuku trusts implicitly, as it is in this person's hands they place their fate and their ability to restore their honor.

Whenever possible a full ritual should be preformed, especially when done as a form of protest, or as an honorable punishment. Cleanse the area you have chosen with incense and bells. If you have, or can get, white clothing, wear it. Kneel on a blanket or sheet, preferably white, the edges of which can be used to phys-rep a circle if your second can cast one. On a tray in front of you, have paper, ink, a cup of Dark Elven Wine, and a dagger. Drink the wine in two gulps. Take the paper and ink and write your Death Poem. When finished, read it loudly and clearly, and if the seppuku is for protest, make sure your reason is included in the poem: (example)

*Forbidden Duty,
Hands tied by Ruling Noble,
I embrace my Death.*

(If you have a blood capsule to bite, put it in your mouth now. A blood bag made of Karo syrup and food coloring hidden under your clothing where you intend to call the killing blow is even better. This is the most dramatic thing you will ever do playing a Dark Elf—make it memorable!) Wrap the hilt of the dagger in paper, and thrust it against your belly, pulling it across and then up as you count the killing blow.

A Dark Elf who has performed seppuku shall be considered to have regained their personal honor. Generally, it is not polite to bring up a past act for which a Dark Elf has already committed seppuku to cleanse herself, and to do so is often considered an insult.

It is conceivable that an entire family would be forced to commit this rite in acts of family shame or defeat, an act known as junshi. The head of a clan will often take hundreds of her warriors, retainers, and vassals along with her family.

In warfare, warriors will result to seppuku before being taken prisoner. Among archers the last arrow is placed in their sash before killing themselves on their daggers, as it is believed this arrow will wield magical power to clear the way to Yomi-nokuni. Seppuku is greatly honored and respected among Thoraе warriors, it is an act to be venerated and upheld for many generations, and as such it is considered disgraceful to Life an enemy for torture or interrogation after they performed the act.

ELLENTARI POLITICAL STRUCTURE

The sound of metal sliding across metal invades your ear through the noise of the dimly lit marketplace. As you spin around, an enraged voice hushes the mob surrounding you, “You coward! How dare you draw the very blood of my ancestors in these veins, spill it upon the ground, and not expect me to embrace you!”

Draped in the colors of a wealthy, merchant family connected, the dark skin of the woman is layered in a thin blanket of sweat. The frail, Dark Elf at the other end of her sword, dressed in a crimson cloak, glances over the faces in the crowd. A small circle forms around the two.

Drawing a small, ebon curved dagger, the cloaked man retorts, “House Zaneth earned its power by dealing with the gaikugin. It is commonly known, ignorant knave.”

“And those words will mark your time. For this insult I name the Blood Feud upon your mantel!”

The woman’s sword rises in a high arc, as the man backs up and begins the incant of a spell. However, the woman’s sword carves faster than the mage’s tongue. Within moments the battle is over, and the mage’s body slumps to the ground. Almost as fast, the woman is enveloped by the crowd. Exchanging a few quick looks, the buyers and sellers of the marketplace return to their business.

A troop of the Royal Guard arrives shortly. Yet, they seem more concerned with disposing of the body, rather than finding out what happened. Apparently they have already been told that Clan Zaneth was involved.

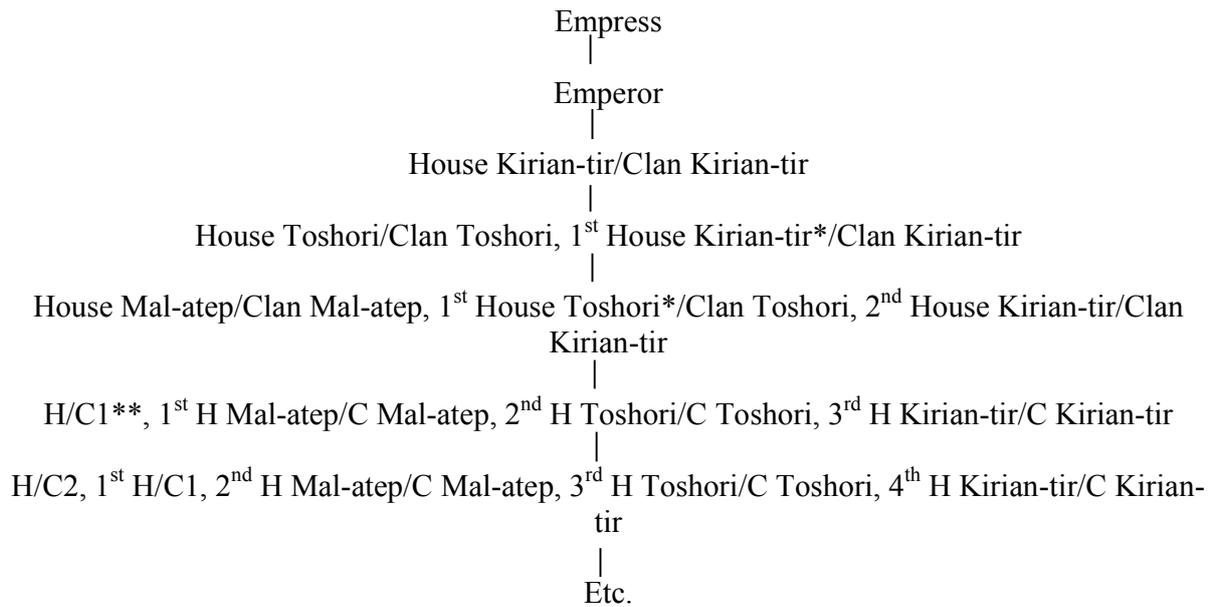
Turning about, you bump into an elf towering above you. His gaze is fixed upon the body of the fallen mage. You hear whispered faintly, “By the next Sun Chasing will Zaneth pay tenfold the blood of my brother. This I swear!

“If you choose to hold a burning ember in your hand, hold fast until it turns to ashes”

The world of the Dark Elf is one of the most intense role-playing concepts in the NERO® system. The life of a Dark Elf is spent striving for perfection, trying to get ahead in the tricky world of Ellentari Politics, destroying the enemies of one’s family, maintaining a sense of great honor, staying alive, and hopefully great fun for the players. The streets of Ellentari are boiling over with merchants selling goods from the surface world, intrigue, and the bodies left from feuding families.

Political Ranking within Ellentari

The political structure of the Empire is fluid, with a constant ebb and flow in the ranking of the Houses. A minor House, for example, may stop an assassination attempt on a higher-ranking matron, and thus for a time, rise in influence, rank and power. On the other hand, great dishonor can lower a House’s standing... The following represents the typical layout of the political ranking system (which can be drawn out as far as you care to take it) with each tier holding roughly the same power. Beyond the three royal Clans, the abbreviation of H (for House) and C (for Clan) will be used. Plot will determine at any given time, exactly where each House falls within the political structure.



Note that, although this chart approximates the relative power wielded by the various Houses within the political structure Empire, the Empire itself is governed by a separate structure with the Empress at the top and a council of Clan Matrons and the Emperor with a council of Clan Warlords.

* 1st House indicates the first House of a Clan in which the House name and Clan name are different. For example, the 1st House of Clan Toshori, at the moment, is House Kel’jara, which is outranked by the Royal House Toshori of Clan Toshori.

** C1 is the first non-royal Clan, C2 is next, etc.

Titles of the Empress, Kuge and Buke Classes

- Tennō - "Empress"
- Roshya soshite Iiofuka Roshukotoban - "King & Great Warlord"
- Rainaruzun - "Crown Princess"
- Raizun - "Princess"
- Rozun - "Prince"
- Raishukotoban/Roshukotoban - "High Lady/Lord Knight"
- Shimpan - Hereditary title equivalent to Daimyō, a member of an Imperial Family
- Daimyō - "Governor General" (18 provincial families)
- Raishuban/Roshuban - "Lady/Lord Knight"
- Raishu/Roshu - "Lady/Lord"
- Ban - "Knight"
- Ojinushi - "Squire"

The Imperial Clans



Clan Kirian-Tir

Colors: Bright Green, Black and Silver (silver for the Empress's house)

Motto:

City: Tyrin-Raithe

Raizun: Rainaruzun Sharentell II of Clan Kirian-Tir

Rozun: N/A

Raishukotoban: Mariko Kirian-Tir of Clan Kirian-Tir

Roshukotoban: Echyguyi Kirian-Tir of Clan Kirian-Tir

Warlord: Satsuki Kirian-Tir of clan Kirian-Tir

Kirian-Tir is the largest Clan in Ellentari. Their primary holding is the capital city of Tyrin-Raithe where the Empress holds her headquarters.



Clan Toshori

Colors: Sanguine, Black and Gold

Motto: Better the foot slip than the tongue

City: Reiwán-dar

Raizun: Kalaendrai Toshori of Clan Toshori

Rozun: Deshite Kirian-tir Toshori of Clan Toshori

Raishukotoban: Tenuviel Toshori of Clan Toshori

Roshukotoban: Shaku Toshori of Clan Toshori

Warlord: Kintari Marchant Toshori of Clan Toshori

Toshori, second Clan of Ellentari, holds the city of Reiwén-dar, famous for the Crystal Caverns, a national park, and the Reiwén-dar Ansatsu, the major university of Political Studies.



House Mal-Atep

Colors: Royal Purple and Black (no shining colors to reduce reflections)

Motto:

City: Yrentri-Dar

Raizun: Melendria Mal-Atep

Rozun: N/A

Raishukotoban: Fekya-Minka Mal-Atep of Clan Mal-Atep

Roshukotoban: Ichitsu Mal-Atep of Clan Mal-Atep

Warlord: Orikuru Mal-Atep of Clan Mal-Atep

Clan Mal-Atep holds the city of Yrentri-dar, home of the Tojotsu-Rikaja, the school of war and tactics.

The Provincial Clans

Tranor—Merchant Clan

Matsu—Clan of warriors who are House guards to the Imperial Families and Clans

Tenshihane

ELLENTARI SCHOOLS AND GUILDS – THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

“A jade stone is useless before it is processed; a Thorae is good for nothing until she is educated.”

Ellentari is a very erudite culture, and has a very high literacy rate when compared to human settlements. The vast majority of Thorae peasants are still illiterate, but among the ruling provincial clans a formal education is mandatory. The leader who cannot read is a slave and quickly replaced. This is largely a result from all education being tuition free in Ellentari; although family prestige and honor dictates what university or academy a given Dark Elf would be accepted into.

There is at least one major school that teaches literacy, basic etiquette and philosophy of the Way in all the 21 provinces.

Members of Royal and other noble families, and even some prominent commoner families, attend the Ronowen Zohoshai. This is a school that teaches philosophy of the Way, battle strategy, combat, celestial and earth Magicks, diplomacy, and a host of other topics. A Thoraë often prepares for their acceptance of the Four Oaths here. It is located in the capital city, Tyrin-Raithe, and is Ellentari's oldest university. It is during this period of a Dark Elf's education that many alliances and friendships are forged that will aid her family and clan in the future.

The Gakko Doshune Benki, simply "School of Magic," lies in the city of Arwensh'aver, and teaches the advanced practices of celestial and earth magic for use in individual combat, in large-scale battles and the working of Formal Magic. It is rumored, only in hushed tones, that a section of the school is devoted to "tukabenki" (necromancy) for the "greater defense of the Empire," but such is certainly not formally recognized. Those Dark Elves who speak too loud of this do not find themselves convicted of treason --they merely disappear.

The school of War, Tojotsu- Rikaja, is in the city of Yrentri-Dar. The school teaches weaponscraft, strategy, and the arts of the shadows. Those who survive the rigorous training have mastered the use of their chosen weapons and techniques. They either go back to their family and clan to train others, or become leaders in the ranks of Ellentari's guards and army.

The Reiwēn-dar province holds the Reiwēn-dar Ansatsu or the major Ellentari university of political studies. Here the clan's send some of their most adept members for study on etiquette, foreign lands, guerilla training, and espionage. To enroll at this academy, an Elf must have completed studies from the Ronowen Zohoshai, and a typical term will take up to 30 years of study.

The Importance of Poetry

The poetic arts are highly prized within Ellentari and courses are offered at all levels of secondary education. In fact, one's ability to produce poetry is considered indicative of one's education amongst the courtiers.

Of the myriad forms of poetry that exist within the writings of the Empire, the two forms that figure prominently amongst the nobility are waka and haiku. Haiku, or an unrhymed three-line verse with syllable counts of 5-7-5, is a sub-form of waka, which is an unrhymed 5-line verse with syllable counts of 5-7-5-7-7. For example:

Haiku:

*Honor blooms within
As roses tended with care,
Beauty amidst thorns.*

Waka:

*Pebbles underfoot
Ancient sentinels of earth
Watching all who tread
Scribes, immortal, unfailing*

History hidden in silence

During social gatherings, there are oft formal and informal poetry contests. These contests can consist of pre-written or extemporaneous works. A game, of sorts, enjoyed by the upper levels of society is to have an impromptu, or ensho-awase, contest where the host gives the subject (or theme) and the guests entertain the host and each other with their verbal skills. Those involved separate into two teams and “battle” back and forth, responding to each other in verse.

The formal contests, or uta-awase, are of much greater consequence. The topics for these contests are given in advance and each participant is to come prepared with their best work. This is a display of their talent as a poet (and as a person of taste and culture). These works are then read aloud by official readers and the verse recorded for posterity. The results could make or break one's status as courtier.

Additionally, poems are used in ceremonies, particularly those involving death. It is customary, for example, to have a death poem prepared for use during seppuku.

Poetry is an inseparable part of Ellentari culture. From a young age when children are read classical verse before bedtime to the grave in the form of eulogies, poetry surrounds our lives.

ELLENTARI MYTHS OF CREATION

Origin Myth-Dragons

Before the rise of the humans, great winged dragons soared among palaces in the clouds to rule over the land. The dragons fought with one another, much as any civilization does today, over various petty concerns, and each tried usurping the power of each other. It was during this time that a select group of these giant dragons attempted to reach the sun. They believed that by doing so they would hold access to all of the magic within the world, and would have control over the other creatures and dragons in the world. However, their attempt failed.

As they flew higher and higher, the dragons encountered a mysterious layer of mist. Soon all the dragons became lost in the swirling miasma of white, and before long they were felled unconscious.

When they awoke, they were upon the ground; however, they were not themselves. Magnificent claws and great wings were replaced with the legs and hands of the elf. All that was left of their great powers were the minor abilities to resist sleep and charm attacks. It would appear that the other dragons had laid a trap for these who wished to gain the sun, and once they were fast asleep, they transformed the renegade dragons by a series of long forgotten magical castings.

But the dragons were not satisfied with the punishment they had handed their brothers. They looked upon these tiny creatures with scorn, and bid to hunt them down. Creatures such as the Panthergast and even the Sarr race were created to track down and kill the elves. Across Tyrra, they fled.

Soon sanctuary was found in the breast of the great mountains, away from the horrible reminder of their shameful goal, the sun. The elves took the name Vornae. There they learned to survive in their new forms. It would appear that not all of the elves gained the advantage of the underworld, and that some actually chose to remain in the presence of that constant reminder of their failure. These elves took to the forest, and became the surface elves of today.

This is the accepted myth by almost all Ellentari elves.

Origin Myth-Spiders

The members of Clan Mal-aver, a former Royal Council member, have passed down this myth. There are only a few Dark Elves who know any specifics regarding this myth outside of that clan. What is known is that a race of great spiders once ruled the Underdark, and that they created the Vornae in their image. In order to serve them better, the Spiders endowed their new creations with certain powers to go without sleep and remain loyal, which have developed into the present day abilities to resist sleep and charm spells. Other than this, not much is known save that a great tome held by the head of House Mal-aver recounts the full tale.

Most Ellentari elves do not put much belief in this story although it is common among the Dark Elves of other kingdoms.

Horror of the Nakomaromu (Panthergast)

After the Vornae had fled away from the shame of the sun, their former dragon brothers set out to destroy them. From the very mists they had summoned to put the renegade dragons to sleep, emerged a creature of darkness to hunt down the Vornae. Thus the Nakomaromu was born.

The Nakomaromu covered Tyrra searching for the Vornae and their Elven cousins on the surface world. For many years the Vornae remained hidden from the beast, but then it came. Scores of elves died, and the Vornae were forced to fight for their lives. Only after many years were the Vornae able to develop the magical abilities needed to return the Nakomaromu back from where it came.

This tale is often told as a ghost story to the children of Ellentari, but there have been some reports of a creature resembling the Nakomaromu on the surface world in recent years. This creature has come to be known to humans as the Panthergast. It is unknown whether or not this was the same creature, and some Thorae still pass the existence of this creature off as mere fabrication.

THE KNOWN HISTORIES OF ELLENTARI

Ancient History

Please note that, as with any histories, this one is subject to a Dark Elf's perspective, and certain events may be open to different interpretations. Remember: "It is the victor who writes history." Also, this history is quite brief, and not at all inclusive. It represents what an average Dark Elf from Ellentari would know. Each clan packet contains their own interpretation of these historical events, and may contain more information than can be found here, or in the other clan packets.

The earliest parts of Ellentari's history remain sketchy at best, as a lot of information was either destroyed by surviving Dark Elves or lost. It is known that long ago the Ellentari Dark Elves coexisted with another group of Vornae; however, for some unknown reason the society erupted into civil war and eventually a group of elves seceded from the others. The leader of these Vornae (the ancestors of the Thoraë) has become known as Omara-Seijani, or "Walking Ghost." At one point his true name was known, but as time passed it was erased from all sources in Ellentari. It has been speculated that this original group of Dark Elves existed in the Dragonsteeth Mountains, and their descendants may now be the Dark Elves living in Draelonde. Nothing has been found to verify this.

New Beginnings

Omara-Seijani and his clan left the other Vornae, and took to the surface world in search of a new homeland. The months spent under the burning rays of the light world were long, and many elves died due to the perils faced there. This period on the surface world became known as Kainen Rau --"The Weeping Sojourn." It was during this time that an unknown scholar developed the philosophy of the Way.

Eventually Omara-Seijani led his people to what is today known by the humans as the Elfstone Mountain. There the Vornae began to forge their new homeland, but not without opposition. The forest surrounding them was plagued with numerous tribes of ogres and Orcs, and soon the Dark Elves were engulfed in years of fighting with these monsters.

As time passed, eventually the wars with the surface monsters began to fade and a ruling council formed from several prominent families among the Vornae population. Omara-Seijani was, of course, the ruler of this council and developed a strict patriarchal control over his subjects. For decades the Vornae prospered and learned to cultivate the wealth in their newfound home.

The Burning Plague

Omara-Seijani had led his people to a new life; however, his rule oppressed the Vornae and led them down a path of dishonor. He began to throw away many of the old customs. Deceit arose amongst his people. It was at this time that the Kanju Kazako, or "Burning Plague," spread among the elves of Omara-Seijani's rule. The disease proved ghastly fatal to thousands of Dark Elves.

It was due to Omara-Seijani's unjust rule that the Kanju Kazako descended upon his people. Having followed the road of shame, he led the elves into the land of despair. With time, Omara-Seijani began to lose his iron grip over his people, and factions began plotting against him. Amidst rumors of assassination attempts, Omara-Seijani disappeared.

The Great Breaking

With this conflict arose a debate as to who would now take the throne. The members of Clan Omara-Seijani supported the Prince (Omara-Seijani's only son) and were joined by Clan Mal-aver. Clans Toshori, Mal-atep, and Kirian-tir supported the eldest of Omara-Seijani's children, a female by the name of Cherellen.

Full-scale war broke out between the two factions, and decades later the tide turned against the two patriarchal houses. Teshwaiben committed seppuku, as Clan Toshori broke through his fortress' defenses, and his most trusted servant honorably slew the prince's wife and children before burning down the house with hundreds of servants and retainers in it. The rest of clan Omara-Seijani fled from Tyrin-Raithe.

Prince Malden-kai, the head of Clan Mal-aver, saw only defeat if his house remained with the rest of the houses, but in a daring last move he performed the obliteration of Cherellen himself. Following this, Malden-kai fled with his people across the surface world and came to settle in the Eldorin Mountains, or what is today known as the Lonestance range in Woodhaven. There they created a society based around their personal beliefs with Malden-kai as their king.

While in Ellentari, Clan Mal-aver held some of the more malevolent beliefs of the houses. They were firm users of slavery, extortion, and necromancy in the homeland. They taught a school of fighting based around the movements of the spider, began to pursue the spider origin myth, and became fanatical about their superiority. Once free to do as they pleased, the Mal-aver adopted the spider as their house emblem. It became a device to dominate and inspire fear.

With Omara-Seijani and Mal-aver gone, the remaining noble houses on the council raised the head of Clan Kirian-tir as Queen. At once, she adopted the name of Cherellen II for herself and renamed the kingdom Ellentari in honor of Omara-Seijani's slain daughter. She ordered all record of Omara-Seijani's true name, his Clan, and the original name of the Dark Elven homeland erased. This was a great dishonor and insult upon Omara-Seijani's legacy.

The Kinsmen War

Following a period of relative peace and prosperity as Cherellen II increased her grasp of the reigns of her people, House Mal-aver returned once more. Led by the power crazy Malden-kai, House Mal-aver intended to reclaim the homeland. Thus began the Kinsmen War, named after a speech by Cherellen II.

For two hundred years war raged throughout Ellentari, until the final death of Malden-kai. Following this, Mal-aver was eventually forced back to the Eldorin Mountains. A troop of Ellentari warriors was sent to ensure that the Mal-aver did not attempt to return, but when they finally reached the Eldorins, they were witnesses to an awesome spectacle.

Apparently used by Malden-kai to kill Cherellen I, the Mal-aver had developed a powerful level of magic to transport themselves through the planes of existence and onto distant parts of Tyrra. As the Ellentari warriors arrived in the Mal-aver homeland, the court mages of Malden-kai removed their entire people onto a plane of existence mirroring Tyrra.

House Mal-aver once again began to wage war with Ellentari, and soon began crossing the planes to appear en masse in the very heart of Tyrin-Raithe. Cherellen II demanded that her Shadowwalkers produce a method to seal this vulnerability. It seemed as if Mal-aver could appear at any time and in any place that they wished.

Finally a plan was devised to set up a series of crystal wards between Ellentari and the Eldorins. When the final rituals were cast, the Mal-aver were banished from Tyrra and unable to return home. However, these wards had a drastic affect on the, then black-skinned, Vornae. Once the planar barrier was completed, all dark elves within the barrier changed from being black skinned to that of a dark rich purple. Those crossing into the barrier also had their skin turned to purple while in the borders, but it would revert back to black when they left. The skin color of those born within the barrier sometimes changed to black when they left and sometimes not. There seemed to be no steadfast rule for predicting the outcome.

To honor this great task, Cherellen II ordered the name of her people's race changed to that of Thorae, or "Protected One." Shortly after this, she died.

There have been some reports of dark elves bearing the Mal-aver spider emblem, and these have been confirmed by contact with the humans. The humans know them as the "Spider-sect," but the Thorae still refer to them as the Mal-aver.

The Mal-Aver Today

In recent years, the Mal-Aver's existence on Tyrra has been solidly confirmed in the surface region of Elysia, and even in the province of Greyhorn. When the Mal-Aver's return became confirmed, the current reigning Empress of Ellentari, Tashara of house Kirian-Tir, called a Empire wide Blood Feud on the renegade sect. All houses, regardless of personal differences, were to take part in this feud to prevent the Mal-Aver from attempting a similar course of action to that which earned them banishment in the first place. The three ruling Imperial Houses agreed unanimously to participate in the Blood Feud. In the last few years, the Ellentari council has enlisted a number of Thorae who wish to see the surface to track the movements of the Mal-Aver. This process is slow going, however, since the Mal-Aver have taken on a rather nomadic way of living; never staying in one place for any great period of time, and making alliances with human nobles for their protection when they are spotted. Up to today, the conflict rages on.

Contact with the Humans

For centuries Ellentari grew and prospered, but became very reclusive and travel and all but ceased outside of the mountain. About 900 years ago, the Thorae received a group of new neighbors. They were humans that had built a town in the forest surrounding Ellentari. First contacts were touchy, but eventually the two sides grew to exchange diplomats. Years passed and relations between Sharentell, the reigning queen, and Danare, the human leader, opened. A trade agreement was formed, but the humans only wanted to take advantage of the ores, gems, potent wines, and tobaccos of the Thorae. Their want for these materialistic things drew Danare into a plan to usurp Sharentell and control Ellentari.

Sharentell received word of Danare's pathetic plans, and ordered a full-scale invasion of their town. The humans were terrified as dark elves poured into their homes from the depths of the forest night, and even from beneath them by way of underground tunnels. Those spared fled the Ellentari forest.

Since then, the Thorae have kept people away from the homeland by waylaying them and transplanting them outside of the forest's border. The surface world forest is employed as a buffer zone. The human settlement now lies in ruins, and has turned into a legend to help serve in keeping trespassers out.

Current Events In and Around Ellentari - The Modern Era

With the founding of Elysia, the Ellentari Council has been forced to deal with increased traffic around their homeland. The elders of Ellentari still remember the tales of Danare and his form of kindness, and want nothing to do with the humans. Yet there is another faction which is realizing the Ellentari cannot ignore this group of expanding humans. There has, however, been no formal action as the Imperial council is still deliberating the matter, and the Imperial council is not known for its haste.

Some years ago the Thorae skin color transformed from purple to the original black, and the most avid debate in memorable history consumed the imperial council and all of Ellentari. At first, alarms went up and the empire fringed on a state of war as provincial borders were closed and rumors tore through the countryside. Some believed the Nakomaromu would appear at any time, while others warned of a Mal-aver return en force. As the months passed, the tension receded, but it remains the most debated topic throughout the empire.

Generally, it is assumed that the Magicks perpetuated by the crystal wards have either altered or are failing, and a special committee has been appointed by the Imperial council to investigate the barrier and determine what must be done.

Recently, a faction of intellectuals from the Ronowen Zohoshai has petitioned the empress to declare the race "Vornae," again, in light of this new development. No word has descended from the seki-el, but there are some citizens of the empire who have taken to calling themselves Vornae.

New reports from the surface world have confirmed the presence of Clan Mal-aver in escalating numbers. This is generally linked to some failure in the crystal wards, as well, and the entire empire has been placed on alert. Any sign of the banished clan should be reported immediately, and Iiofuka Roshukotoban Moshori has stated that any encounters with the clan should result in their death. The Kinsmen War lingers to this day.

During the urabon-e (feast of the kami, in the Evendarr year 598), Tashara Kirian-tir announced that she was declaring Ellentari an empire, autonomous from Evendarr and any other realm, and crowned herself Tennō. This has been scene as a drastic step over the powers of the Imperial Council, but nearly all the powerful clans and houses have accepted it. In tandem with this, Tashara began instituting a return to old customs that had fallen out of practice in Ellentari, redefined the provinces, divided holdings up into han and proclaimed that she wishes to solidify Thorae identity and ancestry.

In March of 605, Tennō Tashara opened her Throne room for the first time to accept representatives from Jochu governments. Where this great change will lead is a matter of many whispers and much speculation.

APPENDIX K: HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS OF DARK ELVES FROM ELLENTARI

The Thorae calendar has numerous holidays, especially when one takes Clan and Province specific dates into account. For the purposes of this list, however, only the Imperial Holidays will be listed.

- Second Monday of January
 - Coming of Age Day (seiji no hi)
This day is a celebration of the coming of age (adulthood) of Thorae children. It usually consists of a feast in the young adult's honor and a naming ceremony.
- February 14
 - Weeping Day (naki no hi)
This is one of, if not the most, solemn days in the Thorae year. This is the day that the empire remembers the Weeping Sojourn and the sacrifice that their ancestors made in discovering Ellentari (although it wasn't called such then). It is a day of ritual fasting to honor those that perished during the journey.
- March 11
 - Empress Tashara Kirian-tir's Birthday (midori no hi)
The date of this holiday changes with each Empress. It is a three-day celebration in honor of the Empress and the continued success of her reign. There is an empire wide parade in which the Provinces compete for the best entry.
- March 21
 - Rivers Day (kasen no hi)
This festival celebrates the rising of the rivers. Underground there are no seasons, but that does not negate seasonal changes of a sort. The thawing of the surface snows, and spring rains cause a swell in the groundwater levels which in turn bring the river levels within the Empire to record highs. Many Thorae take this day to visit the crystal caverns or one of the various lakes and float burning candles on the water in remembrance of those that have died within the past year. It is not, however, a festival of the dead.
- May 10-17
 - Foundation Week (kuninomotoshuu)
This weeklong celebration culminates on the 17th, which is the date of the founding of Ellentari after the Kinsmen War. The week consists of many activities. There are a series of competitions between Thorae in both martial and magical arts with the winners crowned such on the final day of the week by the Emperor himself. It is a celebration of the military might of the Empire overseen by its greatest warrior.

- June 21
 - The Day of the Way (masamichi no hi)
Although the Sojourn, and by association, the Four Oaths of the Way are celebrated in February, this day is set aside to honor the Way specifically. A fast day, it is a day a personal reflection and renewal, which includes a re-swearing of the Way.
- July 13-15
 - Feast of the Kami (urabon-e)
This is a festival to commemorate all of the deceased ancestors of a family.
- Last Thursday in August
 - Respect for the Aged Day (keiro no hi)
This holiday celebrates the elders of society and their contributions to the Empire. It is also a celebration of longevity and wisdom.
- September 23
 - Academy Day (gakuin no hi)
The codification of the educational system and the founding of the Ansatsu occurred on this day. It is a day to honor those engaged in the noble profession of teaching the younger generations.
- November 3
 - Labour Thanksgiving Day (kinro kansha no hi)
This day of the year is set aside to honor those that serve in any capacity. As such, servants of any sort are given the day off and are catered to, usually by the children of the family.
- December 21-23
 - The Days of Ending (sanganichi)
This three-day celebration marks the end of the Thorae year and the beginning of the next. It is a celebration of the past years accomplishments and difficulties. The final day of feasting involves generous amounts of sake where goals for the next year are made.

APPENDIX L: PLAYING A FEMALE ELLENTARI

Playing a female Dark Elf living on the surface is a challenging but fun role-playing experience. First of all, you must play the packet. It is a Matriarchal culture, and therefore, your character is accustomed to being listened to and obeyed by any male that does not outrank you. Welcome to the surface. Life is very different than what you have learned at home. Be prepared to have your decisions challenged, your knowledge questioned, and your opinion be proven wrong, especially as one who has just recently come to the surface. and that is just from the Dark Elven men—the Jochu are worse! the following is the result of about ten years experience playing a Dark Elf female, and is presented to allow you to learn from my experience. I will therefore be noting some of the things that I had to do as my character to survive and learn to live on the surface. This is ALL Out of Game information.

If you are lucky, your character will come to the surface with others that you already know, even people from the same house. That will make things easier because you can prepare your in game relationships with each other before you ever play the characters. If you do not, things will be quite a bit tougher, especially as a low-level character. Dark Elves are not generally trusted or accepted by the other races—for some reason, they consider us pompous, arrogant, and evil. Yes, they are just as racist as your character was probably brought up to be—only there are a LOT more of them than there are of you! Hopefully, you will find other Dark Elves soon who can show you the ropes, if you can't; life is going to be stressful for you. You will need to find non-Dark Elves to adventure with, and earn their trust even as they earn yours—and believe it or not, they can—at least to a certain extent.

When I first came to the surface as Tenuviel there were only 4 other Dark Elves in Game—Lord Ryldamar Cryptinth, Galadon, Myron Sunbane, and Maguire. I was the only female. Also, at that time, we did not get the race packet until we had played the race once. Bob Wilson (Ryldamar/Race Marshal at the time) gave me a quick run-down over the phone as I created the Character History but that was it. The group that I started playing with was all new players—we had a Sarr, a Mystic Wood Elf, a half-orc, and me. Needless to say, we had to come up with a reason we were together. It worked, but we had to work at it. I met Maguire at my first event, so that gave me some interaction with my own race, but because Ryldamar was a Surface Noble, I could not, as a new, 1st level player, get near him let alone ask him to take me in. We ended up meeting a group of PCs at that event who were mostly human, but were willing to take in a bunch of 1st level players of various races and teach us how things worked in Elysia. It helped a lot, but had I tried to use the attitude that Tenuviel would have naturally used at home with the more experienced characters, it would not have got me very far—and my survivability would have been very low. I spent the next year or so in game making myself visible to Ryldamar without directly approaching him, and then went to a woman in his court before I ever approached him – 2 reasons for this: 1. She was a woman, and obviously (to Tenuviel) would have final say whether he was a Noble or not and 2. He was a Noble and, on the surface, no matter what my birth and title was at home, I was a COMMONER. I did not have a noble to speak for me. At home, a member of the lower classes, even a Ronan, which is the closest Ellementari has to an adventuring class, would not consider approaching a noble directly –proper channels must be followed. After a period of time I became a member of his Court and swore an oath to him. At

that point, Tenuviel never expected to go home again, and found the closest thing she could find to home—but it was serving a man. He held rank here—I did not, therefore, male or not, he outranked me. Some of the most fun I ever had in NERO® came while I was playing with Cryptinth. Reconciling the differences between, “I am a woman and you are a man and therefore should listen to me” with “You are a noble and I am sworn to you and have to listen to you” brought about some great role-playing experiences.

Interacting with other DE players—Male and Female

Hopefully, your character will be much luckier than mine was, and you will meet up with a bunch of Dark Elves soon after you start your character, if you do not come in game with a few. If you do, no matter what your rank and place is at home, you have to realize that it is not recognized here. Other Dark Elves may or may not acknowledge it. Males may well have come to the surface to escape what they perceived to be an intolerable or stifling existence at home. They may resent you, as someone who does not know the ways of the surface, trying to order them into an action which they know, through their greater experience, will result in less than desirable results—among which can be the perceptions of our race as a whole. You will need to learn to listen to their advice, but how you play it is wide open. They may flat out refuse to follow you, they may humor you and pretend to go along while doing things their own way, they may try to reason with you, they may even follow your orders and hope it all works out for the best—it is going to vary depending on the situation and the persons involved. Use it, enjoy it, and have fun with it. They guys playing Dark Elves are having as much fun with it as you are.

Also remember that there are Dark Elves on the surface who hold Surface Title, or have their Ellentari Titles recognized on the surface. Male or female, no matter whether they are of a higher or lower ranked house at home, they outrank you here, and, although it would be very unlikely that another Dark Elf would bring you up on charges simply because you are a woman, especially if you outrank them at home, they would, according to the laws of the surface, have every right to do so, and would probably be expected to by the Surface Nobility. Examples of laws we can break by simply acting as would be proper at home with a man (who does not outrank us), when he holds a title on the surface and we do not, or do not have our title recognized are as follows.

- Assault of a Noble: Assault of a Noble is any attack, through word or deed, upon any Noble, which does not constitute Treason.
- Mockery of a Noble Title: Mockery of a Noble Title is the insulting, degrading, or otherwise showing disrespect for one of noble title. It is also the failure to obey the command of a Noble, when such an action does not constitute Treason
- Murder: Murder is the causing of Death through direct action, intentional inaction, failure to provide healing, or hindering others from providing healing.
- Murder of a Noble: Murder of a Noble is Treason.

Also the Jochu do not understand the reasons and the importance of Seppuku. If you order it, and he does it, and he has a recognized title and you do not, it can be mistaken for Murder by the Jochu. It is unlikely that you would be prosecuted, but if the Noble committing Seppuku fails to

resurrect, he will not be there to use his recognized title to protect you. Do not let this stop you if it needs to be ordered however. If he is wrong, he is wrong, and cannot hide behind his noble status. When it is explained that it is a Dark Elven matter, most of the Elysian Nobility have known some of us long enough to know that they should drop the matter right there. If you were justified in your order, the rest of the race will most likely support you against the Jochu unless they have reasons of their own to leave you to the mercy of the Surface Nobility.

If your character does hold rank at home in Ellentari, you cannot assume that it will be recognized automatically on the surface, even if it is something as simple as Matron of a lesser house. Plot will provide a writ of Nobility to those that Plot, for reasons known only to plot, wants to have recognized on the surface. Usually this will take a number of years of playing the same character and a plot driven reason for it to “suddenly” come up. Because any title is not recognized without plot approval, you may find another female character that you outrank at home outranking you on the surface. Working out how to manage things playing with characters that depending on circumstances outrank each other makes for a LOT of fun role-playing—and it is nice to just throw your hands up in the air once in a while and say “Your problem, not mine” and walk away and giggle in the corner.

Interacting with the Jochu

Our characters know, as Darken Elven women, that the natural order of things is obviously matriarchal. Well, your character is in for a surprise living on the surface. Most races don't recognize this simple law of nature. They seem to think that men are the more natural leaders and therefore you will most often be playing where the Noble in charge is a man. Although your character will believe it to be unnatural, this is the way of things on the surface, and she will have to learn to live with the system and work within it while maintaining her dignity and honor. It can be done, although it can be difficult at times when you know they are being idiots and you have no way, without bruising their fragile egos (see Mockery) of telling them.

Choosing to play a female Dark Elf is probably one of the most difficult and challenging role-playing experiences you will ever have, but the rewards are worth it. The satisfaction of accomplishing your goals within *their* laws, and in *their* lands while still remaining true to the Dark Elven history and heritage can't be beat, and on those occasions that you can actually get a surface dweller to act in what would be their appropriate role were they a Dark Elf themselves is the stuff of stories to last for years.

APPENDIX M: IN GAME DOCUMENTS OF NOTE FROM ELLENTARI

A Discussion of the Various Races found on the Surface: Recognition and Overall Traits
Based on a series of lectures delivered by Shimpan Tenuviel Marchant Toshori of Toshori at the Reiwien-Dar Ansatsu

Note: These observations are based on personal experience and you may find, in your own experiences, matters in which you disagree.

Barbarian: This primitive race bears a resemblance to humans, but should not be mistaken for the same creature. Their speech, what there is of it, is rough and uncultured; their clothing often made of furs rather than woven fabrics, and many of them have never been introduced to the concepts of personal hygiene. They can often be recognized by tattoos on their faces representing the totem animal they worship, each tribe being dedicated to a different animal. Physically, due to the barbaric conditions in which they live, those who manage to grow to adulthood seem to have a strong constitution and it takes significant damage to kill one. They are very superstitious, and their personal superstitions, once known, can be used to manipulate them when necessary. Those of you who are Celestial Mages or Templars will want to avoid contact as much as possible, as they have an distrust of Celestial Magicks that borders on fanaticism, and most seem to be able to sniff it out whether it is an ability or an item. Many claim to be able to go into “berserker” rages, although in many years of fighting them in Northumberland, the only proof that I saw of this was that as they became more enraged, they also became more dim-witted and therefore allowed easy ranged attacks.

Biata: These bird-like creatures are recognizable by the feathers growing in their eyebrows and hair, and are said to be descended from Barbarians, probably because of their distrust of Celestial Magicks. I have little personal experience with the race, having only seen them at a distance, even when traveling outside of Elysia. Whether this is because there are few of them that choose to mingle with the other races, or my occupation as a Celestial mage, I cannot tell. It is said that they have extraordinary powers of the mind and can cure insanity as well as break charms that have been cast on people.

Dwarf: In Elysia there are two few distinct settlements: Ironfist and Stonewood. Ironfist Forge is located in the Barony of Meddlar, and the Stonewood Forge is found in the Stonewood forest in the Barony of Woodhaven. Most dwarves are relatively easy to work with, and if you need to buy a weapon or armor, these are the people you need to seek. Their work is well crafted, and they take great pride in their ability to produce fine weapons and armor. Many dwarves are short, although this is not a universal truism, but all of them have beards, both male and female, and they take great pride in the appearance of their facial hair. If you choose to bargain with one, bring alcohol and/or food to offer and be prepared for a long session—given a chance they will tell you stories and some of them can last for hours. Stonewood Dwarves have an interesting practice of honoring their dead that I have not seen anywhere else. When someone dies, his or her possessions are sold at an auction with the stipulation that the purchaser remembers the deceased owners name and tells tales of their life. If you happen to have a chance to bid at one of these auctions, you may pick up valuable magic items for little gold and a small commitment to

honor someone's ancestor. One last point, if you do share a drink or food with a Dwarf, let them partake first, as they seem to have an ability to resist poisons that would endanger you.

Elf: A variety of Elven Races can be found on the surface. All are long lived, and all have pointed ears. All resemble on the surface, to one extent or another, our own people except for the color of their hair and skin. I do not have personal experience with all the varieties of elves, so I will speak only about those I know.

Oakenwood: Oakenwood Elves are found only in the Oakenwood forest, the entrance to which, on this plain, is in the Elysian Barony of Woodhaven. The forest does share space with the realm of the Fae, so attempting to enter it without an escort is certain death as you will wander lost until starvation takes you. In spite of this unnatural connection to the Fae, it is among the Oakenwood Elves that I found a people most like our own. Their sense of honor and duty, although not the same as the path of the Way that we follow, is similar enough that misunderstandings can be avoided, and we can trust them to act in an honorable manner in most situations.

Quentari: Quentari Elves believe themselves to be the most civilized of all civilized races, and therefore have a superiority complex. They believe they are better than all the Elven races as well as the inferior races, and can therefore be a bit difficult to tolerate. They do have, among their people, a society of scholarship, and will often allow access to their knowledge when asked. Many of them are foolish enough to believe that peaceful negotiation is a better solution to conflict than battle, but when they finally decide it is necessary, they can be valuable warriors.

Stone: A Stone elf's skin is as white as ours is black. They are considered to be humorless and stoic, and it is very unlikely you will ever see one make a joke or laugh at one. Like the Biata, they are able to cure people of insanity, and I once saw this done. With only a short period of concentration, the fears that were making a formerly brave woman cower in a corner were laid to rest, and she was able to enter battle once again.

Wild: If you see what looks like a Barbarian, and acts like a Barbarian, but has pointed ears, it is probably a Wild Elf. Although they are technically elves, your best option is to avoid them unless you have need of their abilities.

Gypsy: On the surface, and from a distance, Gypsies may appear to be human, but their speech, flamboyant clothing, and even more flamboyant manner can distinguish them. They seem to value their family and race above all else (except treasure) and are usually found in family groups called "tribes" the most prominent Tribes of Gypsies in Elysia are the Kaneristis and the Blackbirds. They are both loud and boisterous, but it is difficult to tell who belongs to which tribe unless you get to know them. Gypsies have an ability to curse anyone who insults, angers, or otherwise gives them a reason to do so. Do not be the one this curse falls upon. It will be designed to embarrass you as much as possible, and no gypsy will remove a curse another has cast. It is said that killing the gypsy that has cast the curse will remove it, if the gypsy cannot be persuaded to do so, but this is an unwise course of action. There are many more of them than

there are of us on the surface, and they will support each other in coming after you and cursing you even more. Do not even think of casting a necromantic spell in the vicinity of a Gypsy. They believe that to do so harms the earth, and they will kill you, turn you into the authorities, curse you, and anything else they can think of doing to you.

Half-Ogre: These yellow skinned creatures are considered a sentient rather than a monster race by most cultures on the surface, and they do make good fighters for armies and guards as long as the enemy is not Undead, in which case they will often hide at the back of the battle instead of rushing blindly into it. They are not very intelligent, and believe that all problems end quickly with a thrust of a sword. Thankfully, when they are fighting on your side, they have a strong constitution, so their tactics of strike first, don't bother with the questions, tends to give them a decent chance of surviving that fight. I have only known one of this race, and his simplistic views were often refreshing and did cut through the endless discussions and negotiations that many feel are more important to solving a problem than action—even when the opposition is clearly an enemy.

Half-Orc: These green-skinned creatures, like the Half-ogres, are considered sentient by most surface nations. They, like the Half-Ogres, are not very intelligent, and tend to be formidable fighters. Their culture stresses Family before Self, Clan before Family, and honor in battle. The one Half-Orc I have known, Xross, proved the value of his people and their teachings and died a hero in defense of Elysia. As he was someone who guarded my back on numerous occasions, I will honor his memory in spite of his race.

Hobling: I have encountered two types of Hobblings in my travels, and the ones from outside Elysia are much easier to cope with than the ones found within the Duchy. Those from outside the duchy can be identified by their furry hands and feet, and by bushy eyebrows and sideburns. They are fond of the comforts of civilization, and can often be found either sitting in or managing a tavern where they can eat, sing songs, and tell tales. Most are quite deft with their fingers, and if you are somewhere that a lock needs picked or a trap disarmed, they are often the race you want along for the adventure. Be sure to keep a close eye on them however, or their “fee” will disappear out of the treasure, and they will still expect their cut later. The second type of Hobling is found most often in the Duchy of Elysia. They can be identified by the topknot in their hair, and the gem-like growth found in the center of their forehead. They are also notable for their shrill piercing voices, their rapid-fire speech patterns, and their quick and dexterous hands. They also have no concept of personal property. If you aren't using it at the moment, they will take it. This is not intended on their part as theft, and they will accept you taking anything in their possession that they are not using at the moment without question. If there is more than one of them, the danger increases exponentially. I have seen them come on someone in a swarm and leave with the Armor he was wearing when they got there.

Human: Humans are the most varied race found on Tyrra. Their skin ranges from a pasty white complexion through all ranges of beiges, olives, browns and blacks. Their hair can be anything from a pale, almost white blonde through browns to a deep midnight black with an occasional startling shade of red in the mix. Although I do not believe that the blues and greens I have seen some sport is a natural color, some humans feel it is necessary to make themselves stand out

from the rest in a flamboyant manner. Humans can wield any weapon, cast Magicks and otherwise use almost any skill except the special abilities of resisting charms, sleeps, and poisons that most races have developed. In most towns on the surface, this will be the race that you encounter most often. They consider Tyrra to belong to them, the other races to be almost interlopers in their world. It is their laws, their nobles, and their prejudices that you will need to learn and live with on a daily basis if you choose to explore the surface world.

Mystic Wood Elf: Mystic Wood Elves appear to be elves with horns growing out of their heads, but no one really seems to be sure what they actually are. It is unlikely you will ever know the true name of one, unless she owes you a serious debt and decides to swear an oath to you on her true name. Mystic Wood Elves are known by their “Road Names,” a nickname that refers to a story from their past or a personality trait or other notable feature. Sometimes their names will change at various points in their lives as their focus changes. There are a couple of things that all Mystic wood elves have in common, and that is their veneration of Children and their hatred of any Charm Spells. It is advisable to never cast a charm of any type in the presence of a Mystic Wood elf—some will ridicule you for your “lack of creativity” but others will go into a “Blood Rage” and do their best to kill you and anyone else that gets in their way while they are coming after you. If you need to use a charm spell, do it quietly, and make sure that someone is distracting any Mystic Wood Elves that may notice. The month of May is a mating season for those of this race, and it is best to just avoid them as much as possible at this time as their tempers are very short and their interests inappropriate. Mystic Wood Elves, in addition to their ability to resist charms as all the Elven Races can, also have developed the ability to Break Charms cast by others. This skill is valuable, and it is useful to have a Mystic Wood Elf friend for this purpose, especially if you face creatures that have innate charm abilities that last longer than your ability to resist. It is said that a Mystic Wood Elf cannot tell a lie, but do not believe that this means they will always tell you the truth. They will tell you as much of the truth as they want you to know, leaving out the parts that they don’t want you to know...and I have yet to meet one who can be convinced that a lie of omission is still a lie.

Sarr: As you should know from your history classes, the Sarr are a felinoid race, exhibiting a number of different breeds and skills. Most of them who cast Magic are Earth mages, although Celestial Mages will be found in the Lion Clan. They prefer sharp to blunt weapons or ranged ones, and, as it was put to me by one Sarr acquaintance, like to “play” with their food. They are often unpredictable, and never forget a slight, although they will never forget a favor either. Sarr do have their own code of honor, but never make the mistake of thinking that it is even similar to ours. With the amount of time I have spent with the three I have known well, I was never able to understand even the basis of the code they follow. The fact that the ones I have known were of three different breeds may have something to do with that. Be careful of the ingredients in any food or drink you offer to a Sarr. They have a reaction to some herbs and spices, most notably Mint and Cinnamon, and they will act similar to an intoxicant. Some get very friendly, some playful, and some bitter and angry. However they react, it is best not to be the object of their interest. Sarr do not seem to have a problem with what they refer to as “Earth Battle Magic,” so don’t be surprised if you see one cast necromancy. As it is illegal in the Kingdom, if you have seen them do it and speak of it to no one, they will most likely cover for you in the reversed circumstances. Don’t count on it though.

Scavenger: These beings, appearing to be the crossbreed between an animal and a human, often exhibit characteristics common in the animal they resemble. Very few of Scavengers will have magic abilities, although most do not seem to object to their presence or usage as the Barbarians do. The race has developed a seeming resistance to poisons that is probably a survival skill brought about by their long time existence on the fringes of society. Those who would die from spoiled foods would not live to breed.

Surface Relations

The following are excerpts from a lecture given at the Reiwán-dar Ansatsu by High Lord Ambassador Onwa Kel'jara of Toshori

“When on the surface, there are three keys to successfully interacting with the jochu while retaining your honor. There are many differences that may not be noticeable at first glance...”

“The first key is to maintain your composure in public. Particularly when observing rank and protocol with both Thorae and the jochu. In private, obviously, relax as you see fit, but in public...”

“...those on the surface, have in recent years, lost the proper attitude and respect when dealing with those of our kind. In part, this is due to the behavior of some Thorae while out in public on the surface of treating everyone they meet as equals. Granted there are a select few who have been deemed with honor, but even when dealing with them...”

“The second thing that you, should you find yourself on the surface, need to keep in mind is that the motives behind the actions and words of the jochu are alien and suspect. Too many times a kinsman has been brought down by trusting the word of a jochu. It is often difficult to determine which, if any, will keep their word once they no longer have a need. This however, is no excuse for you to go back on *your* word. It is one of the things which separates us from them. And speaking of giving your word, unless there is no other option, *don't*. To do so is to ensnare yourself in their web of politics, deceit and treachery...”

“...their ideas of honor, propriety, and conduct are mere shadows compared to what you would consider acceptable from a small child, yet for them this is normal adult behavior. They do not see themselves as barbaric, and in fact believe themselves to be quite civilized. Do not, and I simply cannot stress this enough, do not argue this point with them in public. It will most likely arouse anger and could run you afoul of their laws depending on whom you decide to correct.”

“...with these two ideas in mind you have already won half the battle in maintaining your honor and the honor of the Empire.”

“The third, and possibly most crucial, element *is* your mind, your *education*. Know them better than they know themselves. Knowledge of their customs, their nobility, their laws and their

idiosyncrasies is the greatest weapon you have in avoiding potential conflict and dishonor. Stay one step ahead of them. Remember that slavery, earthen battle magic and certain alchemical substances are illegal there. Remember that the masses, and the nobles in particular, hate to be corrected regardless of how wrong they may be. And remember, that as with everything in life, there are exceptions to these generalities. Keep your head on your shoulders, act with integrity, and adhere to the Way and you'll return home with your honor intact.”

“...if a situation would happen to arise, seek out the nearest Ellentari Noble of Consulate. If no one is available, request politely, remember—composure, that someone send word to a superior as you are a foreigner and there are procedural matters to dealing with situations.”

Understanding the Code of Chivalry from the Prospective of the Code of Honor

Excerpts from a series of lectures given at the Reiwan-dar Ansatsu by Shimpan Tenuviel Marchant Toshori of Toshori

“Those of you who choose, or are chosen, to live for a time on the surface after you have finished your education here will need to become familiar with the Code of Chivalry as it is followed, and not followed, on the surface. Many of the laws of the surface are based on this code.

“Most jochu nobles believe that they follow this code in their creating and enforcing of laws, but as a Mystic Wood Elf acquaintance once put it, the laws are there simply to keep control of wealth and power in a few select hands.”

“Written and enforced law is very important in Jochu culture, because they do not hold to a personal code of honor, and therefore do not take responsibility for their acts unless it is forced on them from the outside...this is one of the things that seems to keep the humans from maturing as a race.”

“Another problem arises in the definition of the terms of the code, and the fact that those definitions vary from place to place, time to time, and circumstance to circumstance. Because there is no conscience involved, no personal responsibility, and the noble in charge is the only one who gets to interpret the rules for that situation, you may find that you have done what is right and proper and follows the code you have been taught since birth to be in conflict with the Code of Chivalry and the laws of the land.”

“Thou shalt respect the weak, thou shalt constitute thyself the defender of them. Define Weak. When the enemy is weak, is that not the time to attack? the Jochu will attack, but will not see the contradiction. A peasant who has stolen bread to feed a family is weak, but will be executed, fined, or disfigured for the crime of theft. She or he will not be “defended,” not taught a better way of survival, not taken in as a servant or slave to avoid the need for future thefts...”

“Thou shalt love the country in which thou hast sworn fealty. They will often not understand that although you are living on the surface and making your way there, your fealty is to Ellentari. This will especially become a problem if you join with a surface adventuring group or a Noble Court. Be very careful that any vows you make do not contradict each other....”

“Thou shalt not recoil before thine enemy. Some nobles are intelligent enough to realize that a strategic retreat is not recoiling, for those who don't.... Also, it is unwise to point out that the people in the town are dying while the Nobles sit in their house and debate....”

“Thou shalt make war against evil without cessation. The biggest problem with understanding and living in lands that follow the Code of Chivalry is the word evil. Evil is a fluid term to the

Jochu, and can be used to define almost anything to suit their purpose. Most of the “monstrous” races are considered evil, but there are times that they will work with them to further some end and see that as a good thing. The Mal-atep are not considered evil in the lands of Elysia, and are under protection of the Duke. Undead are considered evil, but there have been nobles of Evendarr who were Liches. To speak with the undead is against the law and the code even when the undead may be the only person that has the information needed to stop an invasion and protect the town (Thou shalt respect the weak and constitute thyself the defender of them.). Yes, it can be contradictory. Yes, it will be enforced in whatever manner the noble in charge chooses to enforce it. You will, by many, be considered evil if only because of your race ...”

“Thou shalt scrupulously perform thy noble duties be they not contrary to the laws of the land. ... often used as an excuse for the failure of a Noble to protect those under his or her care. “...but I would have had to talk to a Lich to find out what was going on...” Also often used to convict an effective noble who threatens another’s power base.”

“Thou shalt never lie and thou shalt remain faithful to thy word.. It is here that you would think that the Code of Chivalry comes closest to the Code of Honor, but do not believe it. As long as it is convenient for them, they will keep their word, but the moment that they see it as an inconvenience, or their goals change, they will break it and will not even perceive most of the time that they have done so. They will remember things another way, or state that they were misunderstood and that what they actually meant was something entirely different. You must always remember that they do not have honor as you know it, and can not be expected to keep their word.”

“Thou shalt be generous and thou shalt give freely to everyone. As said before, the laws are about the concentration of wealth and power. Unless the generosity will serve those ends...

“Thou shalt everywhere and always be the champions of the good and the right against injustice and evil. Because of the fluidity of the terms good and evil as opposed to our more concrete concepts of honorable and dishonorable, this can be used to justify many actions by Jochu nobles... what is called evil and against the law in one duchy will be thought good and legal in another...”

“Because all nobles of Evendarr swear to this code, and the code is so mutable, you will often see them using it against each other in their plays for power. Stay as far away from these power plays as possible, unless you can use their own code and oaths to your benefit and the benefit of the Empire.

“Notably, the Way and its emphasis on duty and personal responsibility makes the Code of chivalry look decidedly wishy-washy.”

Wisdom of the Ancients

The Lessons of Abai-san

Make offerings to the ancestors,
Treat Mother and Father with the proper respect,
Follow the Law,
Honor your Teachers,
Honor older and younger siblings with genuine respect.
Be faithful and trustworthy with your friends,
Be thoughtful in dealing with relatives,
Treat woman and man with the honor they deserve,
Teach your daughters and sons to be helpful to all Thoraes,
Do what is necessary,
Do good things without making them public,
Ease suffering,
Make strait what has been bent,
Adopt the orphaned,
Help the poor,
Build places of reflection and help to improve them,
Pardon those who have restored their Honor,
Care for the widowed,
Ensure honesty,
Increase virtue,
Prevent difficulties.

To cleanse yourself give away your things,
Do good to others
Learn the teachings and teach them to others,
Comfort those who have been hurt or exploited,
Be kind and friendly to the wise,
Avoid and drive away the disorderly,
Be useful
Protect those under you and oppose hostility to the government,
But rather correct their mistakes and promote justice,
Do not harbor evil thoughts.

If one does these virtuous things thoughtfully and faithfully without making it known to other people, one will prosper and receive the profit of virtue. Daughters and granddaughters will increase, epidemics will disappear, illness will be driven away, burdens and suffering will not appear.

Hagakuri of Yamamoto Tsumetomo

If one were to say in a word what the condition of being a Follower of the Way is, its basis lies first in seriously devoting one's body and soul to his master. And if one is asked what to do beyond this, it would be to fit oneself inwardly with intelligence, compassion and courage. The combining of these three virtues may seem unobtainable to the ordinary Thoraе, but it is easy. Intelligence is noting more than discussing things with others. Limitless wisdom comes from this. Compassion is something done for the sake of others, simply comparing oneself with them and putting them in the fore. Courage is gritting one's teeth; it is simply doing that and pushing ahead, paying no attention to the circumstances,. Anything that seems above these three is not necessary to be known.

As for outward aspects there are personal appearance, one's way of speaking, and one's art. All as all of these are daily matters, they improve by constant practice. Basically, one should perceive their nature to be one of quiet strength. If one has accomplished all these things, then he should have a knowledge of our history. After that he may study the various arts as recreation. If you think it over, being a retainer is simple. And these days, if you observe people who are even a bit useful, you will see that they have accomplished the three outward aspects.

Uesugi Kenshin

Go to the battlefield firmly confident of victory, and you will come home with no wounds whatever. Engage in combat fully determined to die and you will be alive; wish to survive in the battle and you will surely meet death. When you leave the house determined not to see it again you will come home safely; when you have any thought of returning you will not return. You may not be in the wrong to think that the world is always subject to change, but the warrior must not entertain this way of thinking, for his fate is always determined.

Extant quotes attributed to the Sage Chingus,

"If the great, the military leaders and the leaders of the many descendants of the ruler who will be born in the future, should not adhere strictly to the Way, then the power of the state will be shattered and come to an end."

"One must magnify and pay honor to the pure, and the innocent, and the righteous, and to the learned, to whatsoever people they may belong; and condemn the wicked and the men of iniquity."

Sun-Tzu

Be extremely subtle, even to the point of formlessness. Be extremely mysterious, even to the point of soundlessness. Thereby you can be the director of the opponents' fate

Opportunities multiply as they are seized

APPENDIX N: FAVORED POETRY OF ELLENTARI

Haiku *By Kobayashi Issa*

not knowing the bell
rings away life...
evening cool

the empty purse
floats away...
evening cool

Ryogoku bridge--
on a boat, too, a party
drinks away the year

the death bell
tolls at the temple...
winter seclusion

in hazy night
stepping into water...
losing my way

year's end--
the bell of my death place
tolls too

driftwood floating
this way, that way...
ends the year

autumn wind--
death draws closer
with every year

about halfway
burned out...
lanterns for the dead

in a place
where no light flickers
the perfect lotus

My lowly hut is
Southeast from the capital.
Thus I choose to live.
And the world in which I live
Has been named a "Mount of Doom"

By Lady Ukon

Though he forsook me,
For myself I do not care:
He made a promise,
And his life, who is forsworn,
Oh how pitiful that is.

Fujiwara no Asatada
If it should happen
That we never met again,
I would not complain;
And I doubt that she or I
Would feel that we were left alone.

Mibu no Tadami
It is true I love,
But the rumor of my love
Had gone far and wide,
When people should not have known
That I had begun to love.

Fujiwara no Koremasa
Surely there is none
Who will speak a pitying word
About my lost love.
Now my folly's fitting end
Is my own nothingness.

Anonymous

"Behind the cat
catching a mouse
stands a dog:
the hunter becomes the hunted."

"Nezumi toru
neko no ushiro ni
inu no ite
Nerau mono koso nerawarenikeri"

APPENDIX O: FOLK TALES OF ELLENTARI

Neko no sōshi ("The Cat's Tale"): a folk story

All Thoraes know that peace and prosperity are the fruit of adept governance. So was passed the edict that all cats within Tyrian-Raithe would be released of their captivity and allowed to roam unfettered. This was an attempt to suppress the rat population. Thus did the cats rejoice and gallivant throughout the city, as the rats fled in terror for their lives.

It was then that one courageous rat went to speak with a wise philosopher of the Way and plead their case. The rat told this philosopher of how all the rodents are hunted through the streets, captured, played with and finally butchered for the cat's amusement. The philosopher told the rodent, "But if you did not make such pests of yourselves --chewing through rice sacks, stealing Thoraes food-- the cats would not be unleashed upon you." To this the rat lamented how he had told the younger mice to change their ways, but to no avail; he feared all the rats would have to kill themselves.

"But might you not yet live for awhile in the outlying provinces?" replied the philosopher. "Yes, but then we are dishonored at having been chased from our homes," cried the rat. "Look, my friend," explained the philosopher, "do you not see how the cats' enemies hunt them? Along the river, there lie the mud-soaked bodies of the cats, defeated by the dogs. They have received their just desserts for hunting the rat." Thus, the wiser rat took heart that his predator would be so afflicted and led his fellow rodents out of the city. The philosopher sat back grateful for this degree of lawfulness and governance in the great order of life.

We Are All One

Long ago there was a Shimpan with a disease in her eyes. For many years, the pain was so great that she could not sleep. She saw every healer that she could, but none of them could help her. "What good is all my money?" she groaned. Finally, she became so desperate that she sent criers through the city offering a reward to anyone that could cure her.

Now in that city lived an old candy peddler. He would walk around with his baskets of candy, but he was so kind-hearted that he gave away as much as he sold, so he was always poor. When the old peddler heard the announcement, he remembered something his Mother had said. She had once told him of a magical lichen that was good for the eyes, so he packed up his baskets and went back to the single tiny room in which his family lived. When he told his plan to his wife, she scolded him, "If you go off on this crazy hunt, how are we supposed to eat?" Usually the peddler obeyed his wife, but this time he was stubborn. "There are two baskets of candy," he said. "I promise to be back before they are gone."

The next night, as soon as the guards opened the gates, he was the first to leave the city. He did not stop until he was deep in the Underdark. As he examined the floor of the cavern, he noticed

ants scurrying about. On their backs were larvae like white grains of rice. A rock had fallen into a stream, so the water now spilled into the ants' home.

"We're all one," the kind hearted peddler said, so he waded into the shallow stream and put the rock on the bank, sending the water back into the stream. Without another thought about his good deed, he began to search through the caverns. He looked everywhere, but as time went on, he grew sleepy. He lay down in a shallow crack in the cavern wall and fell right asleep.

In his dreams, the old peddler found himself standing in the middle of a great city. Tall buildings rose high overhead. An escort of soldiers marched up to him with a loud clatter of their black lacquer armor. "Our Queen wishes to see you," the captain said. The frightened peddler could only obey and let the fierce soldiers lead him into a shining palace. There, a regal woman sat upon a tall throne. Trembling, the old peddler fell to his knees and touched his forehead against the floor.

But the Queen ordered him to stand. "Like the Great Empress of long ago, you tamed the great flood. We are all one now. You have only to ask, and I or any of my people will come to your aid."

The old peddler cleared his throat. "I am looking for a certain lichen. It will cure any disease of the eyes."

The Queen shook her head regretfully. "I have never heard of it, but you will surely find it if you keep looking for it."

And then the old peddler woke. Sitting up, he saw that in his wanderings he had come back to the ants' nest. It was there that he had taken his nap. His dream city had been the ant's nest itself.

This is a good omen," he said to himself, and he began searching even harder. He was so determined to find the lichen that he did not notice how time had passed. He found himself in strange caverns and realized that he had searched so far he had gotten lost.

He stumbled along until he reached a ruined outpost. Moss grew through cracks in the stones, and most of the walls had fallen in. Still, the ruins would provide some protection. As he started inside he saw a centipede with bright orange skin and red tufts of fur along its back. Yellow dots covered its sides like a dozen tiny eyes. It was also rushing into the ruins as fast as it could, but there was a bat swooping down towards it. The old peddler waved his arms and shouted, scaring the bat away. Then he put down his palm in front of the insect. "We are all one, you and I." the many feet tickled his skin as the centipede climbed onto his hand.

Inside the ruins he picked some clean moss for the centipede. "I may have to go hungry, but you don't have to, friend."

Stretching out, the old peddler pillowed his head on his arms. He was so tired that he soon fell asleep, but even in his sleep he dreamed he was still searching. Suddenly he thought he heard footsteps near his head. He woke instantly and looked about, but he only saw the brightly colored centipede. "Was it you, friend?" he asked. "I must be getting nervous."

We are one, you and I,” a voice said faintly – as if from a long distance. “If you go south, you will find a stalagmite split in two. By its base you will find a magic bead. A cousin of mine spat on it years ago. Dissolve that bead in wine and tell the Shimpan to drink it if she wants to heal her eyes.”

The old peddler trembled when he heard the voice, because he realized that the centipede was magical. When he sat up and looked around, the magical centipede was gone.

He followed the centipede’s instructions when he left the ruin. Traveling south, he kept a sharp eye out for the stalagmite that had been split in two. He walked and walked but all he saw was normal stone. Wearily he sat down and sighed. Even if he found the place, he couldn’t be sure that he would find the bead. Someone else might even have discovered it a long time ago. But something made him look a bit longer. Just when he was thinking of turning back, he saw the odd stalagmite. Somehow, his tired legs managed to carry him over to it, and he got down on his knees, but the ground was covered with stone dust and his old eyes were too weak. The old peddler could have wept with frustration, and then he remembered the ants.

He began to call, “Ants, ants, we are all one.”

Almost immediately, thousands of ants came boiling out of nowhere. Delighted, the old man held up his fingers. “I am looking for a bead. It might be very tiny.”

Then, careful not to crush any of his little helpers, the old man sat down to wait. In no time, the ants reappeared with a tiny bead. With trembling fingers, the old man took the bead from them and examined it. It was colored orange and looked as if it had yellow eyes on the sides. There was nothing very special about the bead, but the old peddler treated it like a fine jewel. Putting the bead into his pouch, the old peddler bowed his head. “I thank you and your queen.” After the ants disappeared, he made his way home.

Eventually, he reached the house of the Shimpan, however he was so poor and ragged that the gatekeeper only laughed at him, “How could a beggar like you help my Mistress?”

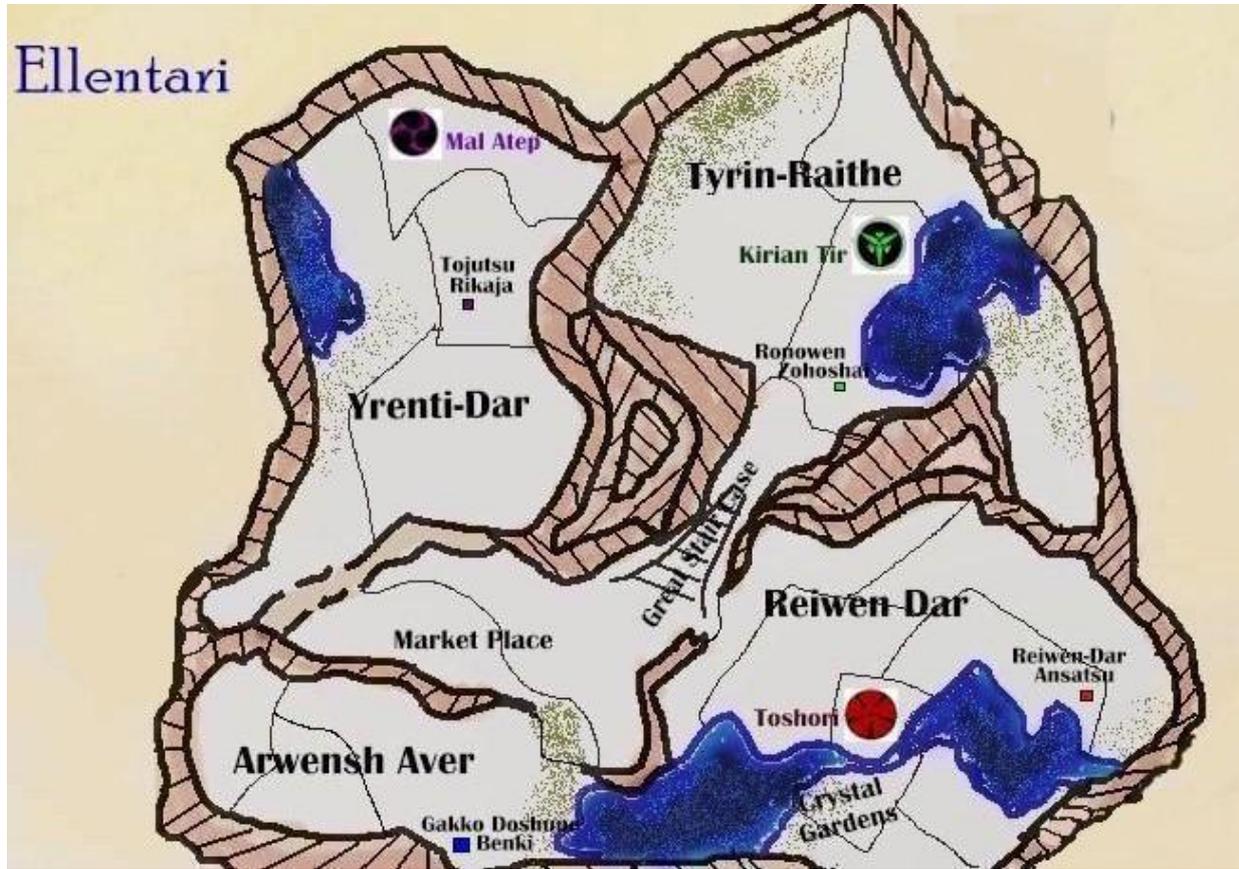
The old peddler tried to argue: “Beggar or titled, we are all one.”

It so happened that the Shimpan was passing by the gates. She went over to the old peddler. “I said anyone could see me, but it will mean a stick across your back if you are wasting my time.”

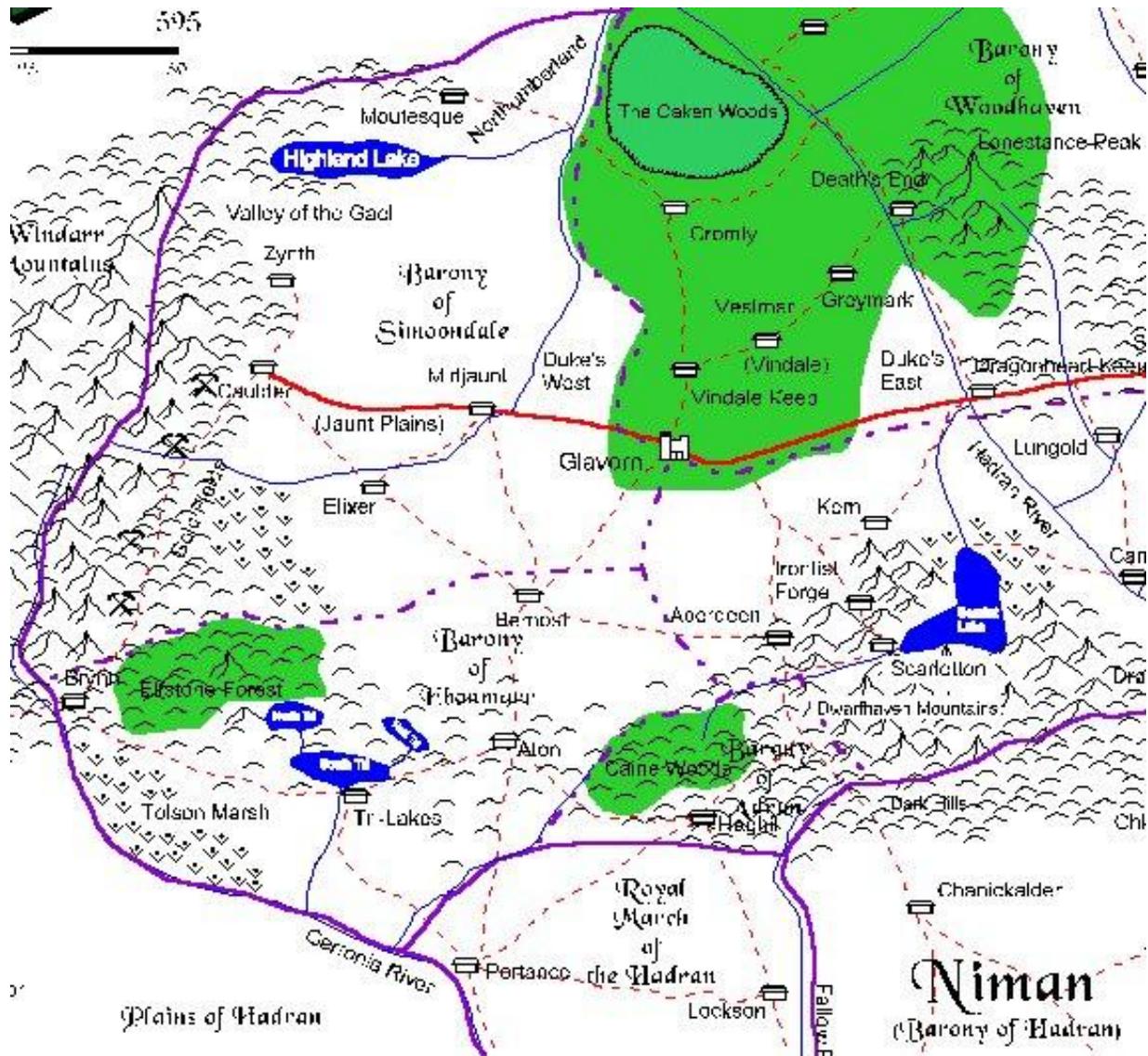
The old peddler took out his pouch. “Dissolve this bead in some wine and drink it down.” Then, turning the pouch upside down, he shook the tiny bead into his palm and handed it to her. The Shimpan immediately called for a cup of wine. Dropping the bead into the wine, she waited a moment and then drank it down. Instantly the pain vanished. Shortly after that, her eyes were healed. The Shimpan was so happy and grateful that she doubled the reward and the kindly old peddler and his family lived comfortably for the rest of their lives.

APPENDIX P: MAPS OF ELLENTARI

Map of Ellentari



Map of the relevant portion of Elysia
From a map done by the Order of the Raven in 595



DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE:

KUMOKAMI



DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE – KUMOKAMI

An Overview of Kumokami

In Times long past, the Kenobi sponsored the first expedition to the surface. The expedition was lost to the Vornae, but they did not entirely disappear: they fell upon bad times, harried by creatures and unaccustomed to the blinding sun. They made their way as best they could, but in retreat came under continued attack by the necromancer's forces they had unwittingly stumbled upon. This fellow, Remar Quelarra had been expanding his sphere, and reaped the Vornae like wheat, taking many prisoners.

With many of the expedition taken and the others dead they were hard put to survive. For many years members of the expedition were lost, and in deep peril. Subjected to cruel experiments, their lot was a horrid one, but one successfully escaped: Hanako Darkhelde. Hanako made her way through much travail, and encountered a clan of barbarians, who knew not what to make of her. Her use of celestials they considered suspicious at best, but she was fortunate that the Shaman saw in her a fellow ally, and she took oath on her honor to never cast celestial on the tribe, and to support them always. That oath, to the Raven clan, holds to this day. By means of cajoling and assistance in battle, they grew to trust her, and she joined forces against Remar, with the intent of freeing her people.

After an epic struggle, she and the Barbarians came to victory, and she regained her people's freedom, but they had greatly suffered, being reduced to a mere 20 Vornae. In times to come the Kumokami prospered, and though they were never numerous, they became a force to be reckoned with... and remained to themselves in the deep places all Vornae love. They engaged in trade and grew, for a Kumokami always breeds true. They always fought in defense of the land as their oath demanded, and retained their ties with the Ravens although when the Raven clan moved north, they remained in the temperate climes of the south. They have lost all contact to the Vornae, and avoided the Drae as dishonorable persons.

In the battle, she had done well enough that the Shaman granted her ties to the land, and the Spirit of the Land sought to reward her for removing the curse of corruption, granting her ties to the beast within to use in defense of her people: the spider. Thus were born the Kumokami- the Spider People.

KUMOKAMI LIFE, CUSTOMS, AND TRADITIONS

Kumokami culture greatly reflects the culture of their Vornae ancestors; at least in the general aspects- it is the divergences that make all the difference.

To begin, the Kumokami are utterly shaped by their racial transforms...the Kumokami in their early history received their ties to the spider, and began to instill in all their kind a coming of age ceremony-when a Kumokami reaches adulthood, she must go off and perform deed, and upon the acceptance is given her transform to spider, as they grow older or gain rank, they gain greater transforms. These are definite progressions in their lives, and are always matter of great ceremony, and ritual. A specific ritual, in fact and one that only the Kumokami know-they will not share this deepest knowledge with any outsider.

They are affected as any Vornae and may have the usual Dark Elf racial abilities and disadvantages. They may resist sleeps and

The Kumokami culture reflects the old Vornae culture and honor in many ways, but there are differences as well. They also will not harm spiders, and consider them friends and pets in all ways.

Kumokami will not tolerate chaos or necromancy. They will use earth Magicks and celestials freely, however.

Honor is as all Vornae, but their loyalty is to their own queen- so long isolated, they do not recognize Draelonde or Kirishai, and they neither trade with nor contact the surface dwellers, who they consider as no more than a bastard breed of Quentari. (They will recognize houses and clans for the purposes of courtesy; they simply do not recognize their authority over the Kumokami)

Moreover, honor is the binding element of their society; they draw no real distinctions between right and wrong as most Evendarrians do. Quite simply, right are wrong are of no concern, only *honorable* behavior- and their laws are based on the same principle. Lying, treachery, double dealing are all acceptable as long as they are done in an honorable venue.

Unlike their Vornae cousins, Kumokami are much less concerned about face, a byproduct of the societal evolution regarding their insanities. However, they are adamant regarding their honor; and will take umbrage as quickly as any Vornae.

Kumokami are a very bloodthirsty and Darwinist people: unlike the Vornae, who engage in exhaustive diplomacy before warring houses meet, with Kumokami a house war is underway in the time it takes to deliver a notice of intent: about an hour. As a result, Kumokami houses engage in a continuous dance of parry and thrust and political machinations in an effort to jockey themselves into a position of advantage. The politics are of a deadly and subtle nature- poisoning is approved of heartily, and assassination is a common practice. The only real rule is, simply, one of results. The Spider People respect strength, guile and intellect, anything less is merely prey.

The Kumokami are divided by clans, all which are based on families from the original surviving twenty Vornae. The clans are Onizuko, Rasashi, Kagemushe, Tononkimo, Shigetakima, Mitozaki, Hideyao, and Zidekushi. The eight clans overshadow all else in the Kumokami's lives, their identities are made up and revolve around the clans and their loyalties, if they have them, are entirely based on the family, and the clans loyalties are to the Ohime.

The Kumokami, being that they are all descended from the original twenty, are very deeply inbred between that and their racial transforms (of which more later) they all suffer from congenital infirmities- and where in some races this might be physical or gross deformities, in the Kumokami it takes another form- they are all congenitally insane. These insanities are usually unique to the individual and can range in form from obsessive-compulsive behaviors to outright paranoia, from phobias to psychosis, and the Kumokami culture reflects this. Insanity is not only the norm in their society, but is completely acceptable. This leads to the surreal feel of their

culture and associations, and to their behaviors. They are well known for this sort of thing and it is only one reason why most in the Dark give them a wide berth.

The society has evolved to allow these insanities a place, and a Kumokami's place in that society is guided by their insanity- killers gravitate to the warrior arts, casters are frequently the obsessive, and so on. While this is a gross oversimplification, it goes without saying that their career is as shaped by their insanity as their nature.

The Kumokami have a reputation among those in the Dark for odd actions and unpredictability- even among the monsters and creatures of the deep they are considered strange and dangerous, for the Kumokami don't apparently draw great distinctions among their behaviors and others perceptions of normal, they seem to assume that outsiders are at least as weird. But don't underestimate them, for although they might be crazed they are anything but stupid. The line between brilliance and insanity is frequently a narrow one, and they often skate the edge.

On the Surface

The Spider People have a guardedly neutral relationship in the local area. They are well known, in a general sort of way, but much of their culture remains hidden to the casual person. They inhabit the Dark, the vast deep caverns underneath Tyrangel. They generally appear as merchants or the occasional visitors, and have treaties with the guilds and town. They and the Elhirra are the only peoples to retain knowledge of the ley stones and their uses, and the Kumokami will not share this information.

The Dark

The Dark is the general term used by the locals for the vast array of caverns beneath Tyrangel, and it is a term used with care. The Dark harbors many creatures-monsters, Kumokami, trolls and goblins. At least one tribe of Ogres makes it home there, as does a tribe of Orcs. The Dark is seldom explored and much is unknown there, for the inhabitants do not often welcome visitors, and most who go there never return.

The denizens of the Dark always refer to the surface as the Above, and there are two levels of the Dark, that being the Dark, and the Deep. The Deep is just that, sometimes miles below the surface, and few know what lives there. Rumor has it there are civilizations that have never seen light of day.

There are governments and kingdoms in the Dark, tribes at war and peace, and three major ruling powers, all with their own agendas and goals.

The Kumokami are the most neutral, and have a merchant empire in the Dark, they display little military presence. They are generally respected, and they routinely patrol the passages and highways of the Dark, but almost never interfere unless they must- their patrols are known to stand by and watch Orcs and goblins fight it out, unless they are directly attacked they will do nothing. Their only real interest seems to be their free commerce and protecting their caravans.

They are at war with all the troll tribes, who are currently giving them a wide berth, as they are also engaged with the dwarves; but the trolls are still responsible for the major raids, both above and below and are a major threat to any in the Dark.

The Kumokami are known to the Elhirria, though not well, as they keep a respectable distance from one another. The Elhirria do not venture Below, and when the Kumokami come to the surface, they meet as cautious equals. There has thus far been no cause for conflict, and if the Kumokami respect the Elhirria circles, so do the Elhirria respect the Kumokami right to travel in their forests. The Kumokami have uneasy neutrality with the Elhirra, and while the Kumokami respect the woods and land, the Elhirra do not dispute their use of the ley stones and passage in the woods. The Elhirra recognize that the Spider People have an agenda of their own, but as it does not harm the land or conflict with the Elhirra, they are inclined to let it go. This is not to say they are unwary, far from it. They do not entirely trust the Kumokami, but have no great reason to interfere with them, either.

The Barbarian Clans are both respectful and a bit trepidations, but on friendly terms with the Kumokami, and the Kumokami have always observed the barbarians customs with care.

The goblins and Orcs have learned from long experience to give the Kumokami a wide berth, and fear them greatly, for the Kumokami have preyed on them for centuries. The Kumokami are the things of nightmare to them, and young ghiba are frightened to obedience by the stories of Kumokami in the night, who stealthily and silently web and carry off unwary ghiba and Orcs. They are a favored food, and the ghiba and Orcs are well aware of it.

The Kumokami know full well the role the trolls played in imprisoning and capturing their Ohime, who they thought long dead. They are bitter enemies and show trolls no quarter.

CUSTOMS

Kumokami have, as any culture, unique customs, and being Kumokami they are often disturbing.

The “Greens”

Goblinoids throughout the Dark fear the Kumokami, and often flee them on sight unless they have overwhelming numbers, and for the best of reasons: the Kumokami hunt them for food. Orcs, Gnollls, all are acceptable, but young goblin is the choicest delicacy, and the goblins have an especial terror of them. Their terror is well justified, for Kumokami hunting parties roam widely, and nearly every week goblin tribes may find a hut in the village filled with webs and the inhabitants gone, having never heard the hunters that came in the night. They are known to trade with certain of the tribes of Goblinoids, but as a rule they don't much concern themselves with the food.

Death Rites

When a Kumokami permanently dies, they are given an elaborate funeral; the greater their standing, the more ostentatious. All the guests are expected to bring gifts and expensive wines, for the meal is provided- the deceased will be eaten with all ceremony, and it is considered a great honor to partake of the feast. An invitation to a Deathfeast is a considerable honor and it is a grave insult to refuse on. (There are acceptable circumstances to do so, but they are rare)

Food

Kumokami cooking is about what one might anticipate, and the unwary guest may find the menu disturbing, for the Kumokami have strange tastes. Toothworm, mushrooms, blindfish and goblin; darkrice and deerpat all are only some of the things one might find on their plate...but beware, if the entrée isn't to one's taste, the spices they use are less so- the Kumokami routinely spice their foods with herbs that are quite poisonous to other races.

Hospitality and Honor

Hospitality is a very important custom, and a Kumokami host will graciously afford the guest all courtesies. The host is honor bound to protect the guest, and insure his safety, and provide his need. Although it might be poor form to appear ungracious, neither is he obligated to do more. The guest's responsibilities are clearer cut- it is a grave insult to go armed in the host's home, implying that the host cannot provide for the guests safety. The guest must be courteous, and should they offer insult or discourtesy the host is within his honorable rights to kill the offending guest-and it is a common intrigue to maneuver a "guest" into a position that allows him to do so.

Courtesy is paramount. House affiliations are a subject of tense discussion, as all the houses are constantly at one another's throats- and they are very polite about it.

The Kumokami's collective insanities are one element of courtesy and honor guaranteed to stump newcomers as these are acceptable...and a person from the Above may well find himself speaking to a kleptomaniac stealing anything she can reach, to a quiet mass murderer of Above creatures, to a hyperactive sport caster. These are both part and parcel of their honor system as these are all acceptable.

The Transforms

Kumokami, as they grow older, are progressively tattooed with webs of silver, and in due course these tattoos will be full body in coverage. As they come of age, they will generally receive a quest, or task...and this right of passage will result in their first transform...the ability to tap into the Spider. These are provided by a very specific ritual, guarded by the ruling house of the Ohime, and is available to all houses equally as a matter of form. As the Kumokami grows older, the transforms may grow progressively more powerful.

KUMOKAMI SOCIETY AND ITS ORGANIZATION

Clans and Families

All of the clans maintain a position and rank, and all of the clans are seeking mastery over the others. In the anarchistic world of the Kumokami, only the strong or the wise survive. All pay homage to the Ohime, and scramble to be the next to provide the next ruling house from which the future Ohime may spring.

The Ruling Ohime is guided and aided by a chancellor, who acts as a prime minister as well as regent. The Council of Houses, which has one representative of every clan, in turn guides him and he provided the veto and tie-breaking vote. While the Ohime is all-powerful, the council serves as advisors, but they are not always effective, and frequently are little more than a sounding board. The Chancellor wields great power when the Ohime is weak or indecisive, and is impotent when the Ohime is resolute.

Shigetakima

The most powerful clan, and surprisingly the least militarily capable, the Shigetakima clan deals in knowledge, information...and above all, treachery. They have spies in every house, in every roadside in. The odds are that when one lies with a kamigiesha that while one whispers their secrets into her ears the House Shigetakima knows it mere hours later. Their weapon is the secret, the preferred method, blackmail. They have a vast library, and are impressive scholars...they have the widest array of Knowledge among the Kumokami and they guard it jealously, for as any Shigetakima will tell you, knowledge is indeed power.

Onizuko

Of the Merchant houses, the Onizuko are consummate dealers and they maintain a vast network of suppliers and merchants, and this clan will be the one seen most frequently Above, as they have contracts with many for items, foodstuffs, and all manner of goods. They are the second most powerful house and by far the wealthiest. They buy and sell to the other clans, and often provide items manufactured by Rasashi, and swords and armor from Clan Zidekushi.

Rasashi

Best known for their casters, Rasashi is the only clan providing celestial training, and they never do so outside the clan. As a result any Kumokami is by default of Rasashi Clan. They consider this deeply held knowledge, and the Rasashi do a brisk business in manufacture of magic items. They also field the only Templars among the Kumokami they wield celestial Magicks, making them militarily strong as well.

Kagemushe

Clan Kagemushe is the House of Assassins, hunters, and stealthy warriors. They retain their power and rank through treachery, guile and deceit. They are extremely effective, and secretive, and most in this house display the psychotic behavior so well suited to their profession. They will kill for sport. They are more effective that one might think, for the truly unstable among them they will kill off themselves. The typical quest for the coming of age is a targeted hunt or kill, and they must distinguish them selves in the killing. Style is everything, death an art form, and no Kagemushe *ever* kills in a sloppy manner.

Tononkimo

A warrior clan, Tononkimo is a militarily oriented house, providing some of the best fighters. They follow the warrior's creed, and are aggressively honorable, and cannot wait to kill to prove it. They are usually seen on the patrols and they are most commonly encountered in the Dark. They are an insular house, and poor, more so than most, and they are deeply embittered at being supplanted by Onizuko some two centuries ago. They despise merchants and being beaten by mere wealth has never sat well with them.

Mitozaki

Mitozaki is the primary clan of oddballs, thieves, spies and trappers...its no surprise they are mostly rogues. They serve as scouts and freelance to the other clans. They have a very close arrangement with Tononkimo, who they serve as scouts and also with Kagemushe, with whom they sometimes compete. Kagemushe detests the Mitozaki for amateurs, not least for the reason being that Mitozaki is the most eclectic and unstable in the insanities.

Hideyao

The Hideyao are the healers, and as the earth casters they command a unique position. Not only are they the healers, doctors and so forth, they also are the primary defense against the necromantic menaces that also inhabit the Dark. As a result, their Templars specialize in the destruction of the undead. They are in constant competition and are currently in a clan war with Tononkimo.

Zidekushi

The Clan of Artisans, Zidekushi is the smallest and least powerful of the clans yet is enormously respected for the quality of their work. Weapons and armor is their major product, but they also provide builders, architects, artists and dancers. Their weapons and armor are frequently magical, and they are the only clan to ever perfect the making of the spider silk armor and shields of their people. Master crafted weapons are their mainstay.

DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE:

H A V E R S T A A D



**DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE – HAVERSTAAD
(CITY OF HAVERSTAAD, PROVINCE OF VALORIA, HADRAN EMPIRE)**

A small enclave of Dark Elves live in the remains of Haverstaad, a once an impressive city that lies across a plateau, as well as in tunnels beneath. With the aftermath of Lytheria's campaign, Haverstaad has been all but razed above ground, and only a fraction remains below. This has apparently not fazed the Drae greatly, as they have already begun to clear out the rubble and repair the damage wrought. Some worry after this, however, since the Drae have a propensity for grudges, and undoubtedly hold Emperor Amalric to blame for Lytheria's scourge. Lower Haverstaad came to be not because the Drae are a reclusive people (although this certainly tends to hold true) but due to their physical aversion to light, especially sunlight. The very rays of the sun maul their body, leaving them weakened and lethargic. Either way, it goes without saying that the Drae are a late night crowd.

Haverstaad is a matriarchal society, each household maintained and administered usually by the eldest female, although in some circumstances a younger female will take up the duty if the eldest is for some reason incapable. The present Queen, Dades Hiroesse, is lauded as one of the most stunning creatures to ever grace the Drae lineage, and is revered amongst her people, despite being a lackluster bureaucrat and exhibiting a predilection to being easily sidetracked by her somewhat impulsive whims, usually a suitor of some sort. It is thought that Dades entertains a fancy for the Emperor, although their meetings have been scant and short, and Drae honor would never allow her to marry or even court outside of her heritage. So entranced with their Queen are her subjects however, it is likely that they would pretend not to notice if she broke a few minor rules. Given the millennial history of the Queen as the epitome of Honor, and their seemingly harsh reaction to breaches of social etiquette, that Dades is afforded such leniency among her own people shines a peculiar light on her rule, as well as her as an individual. Nonetheless, prior to Lytheria's invasion Haverstaad prospered under her, if for no other reason than the dedication and efficiency of the present generation. She is young, and promises to walk among legend before she passes the crown to her heir, and as such, voicing disapproval of her in any way would bring the wrath of the entirety of Haverstaad on such a foolish tongue.

The Drae of Haverstaad are well known for their code of Honor, deemed excessive and even bizarre to most. They can be ruthless in the most trivial of confrontations, their Honor held first and foremost above all, and even seemingly harmless infractions can impose terrible consequences, not the most uncommon of which is ritual suicide. Family honor is even worse yet to trifle with, as a single perturbed Drae is difficult enough to quell, let alone twenty or thirty. But to the Drae, Honor is everything held dear, and despite the popular misconceptions that the Dark Elves are strange or barbaric, it is the definitive terminology of social etiquette and conduct, and has guided them through generations of prosperity. Though difficult to grasp for other cultures, its codices are ingrained into the blood of every one of them, and is practiced without variation, and without room for error.

DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE:

KIRISHAI



DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE - KIRISHAI (UNDER TYRANGEL)

The underground city of Kirishai, home of the Dark Elven Clan Bokenjen, is below the Duchy of Tyrangel. Early in its history, there were two wars that stretched for decades each, once with an undead horde, and again with strange surface creatures, both conflicts that embroiled the entire city. Furthermore, there was brutal inter-house fighting through the centuries.

Schooling

The *Uchi Shinda* is the Kirishai academy of Earth Magicks. At the end of their training, students must spend at least a year away from their respective Houses, learning and practicing to better themselves. Some give themselves up to ceaselessly patrolling the *Suramu*, the unchecked section of the city. Many are employed by the other academies, mostly as healers. Through much effort, one can obtain permission for the time of training to consist of wandering the surface lands.

Honor Combats

In Dark Elven society, especially in Kirishai, honor is a very serious matter and our dueling system reflects this. Insult is rarely given, even under provocation, for House politics will sometimes set someone up to challenge another, only to have this challenge met by the Weaponsmaster of their House. Since few Dark Elves are true civilians, everyone is expected to defend their House, including its Honor, either upon the field or in a circle but House or Clan members that are ranked higher may offer to champion lower ranked members, and this request is never refused.

In Kirishai, a duel is announced by one of two methods. Usually, a time and place will be arranged and the individuals return to their Houses to gather witnesses and seconds. Occasionally, a Dark Elf that is extremely angry might simply begin drawing the circle. At this point, the other party may request that the duel be delayed, or has the option of picking up the duel on the spot.

Terms are always the same. Any weapon, any style, spells and alchemy included, to resurrection. Apologies are neither asked for nor given, but assumed at the end of the duel. Politeness is maintained throughout the entire process, lest another duel be sparked immediately following the resurrection of the loser.

Once both parties have met for a duel, one of the participants draws a circle on the ground that is twenty steps in diameter bisected by a simple line drawn through the middle. Each opponent begins anywhere within their half of the circle. The opponents bow to each other, and the duel is under way. From this point further, no one may enter the circle, and no one may leave lest they be slain by both seconds. Judges are not necessary.

Duels in Kirishai are always fatal. Because of this, courtesy is paramount and duels are actually fairly rare.

DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE:

KOREKET



**DARK ELVEN CULTURE PACKAGE - KOREKET
(BELOW THE DUCHY OF THERENDRY)**

The Dark Elves of this region are very private and rarely speak of their homelands. Some ambassadors of the region come to the surface, primarily in Blackstone and Therendry.