

# HEROES III

OF MIGHT AND MAGIC®



## Refugee Town

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### Thanks to:

- VCMI Forum	for various helps, noticeably Fabrice Tierciel and Misiokles.
- The WoG Team	for creatures' visuals: Sorceress, Hell steed, Nightmare.
- Mythology Mod author(s)	for creatures' visuals: Spy, Vagabond.
- Ben Yan	for placeholder assets ( <i>I used Cathedral Town as a base mod</i> ).
- © Impact Soundworks LLC	for the faction town's theme.



## I) Main concept & inspirations

Refugee Town is a new faction that takes its inspiration from Heroes III's **refugee camp**, and In the Wake of Gods Script67 (Neutral Town) by Donald X. Vaccarino, Jonas Gusafsson, Timothy Pulver, Kerill Kennedy and Samot.



This script replaces Conflux's creatures with a selection of the game's neutral creatures:

- |     |                 |   |                |
|-----|-----------------|---|----------------|
| (1) | Halflings       | → | Rogues         |
| (2) | Boars           | → | Nomads         |
| (3) | Fire Messengers | → | Air Messengers |
| (4) | Werewolves      | → | Trolls         |
| (5) | Sorceress       | → | Enchanters     |
| (6) | Hell Steeds     | → | Nightmares     |
| (7) | Gorynyches      | → | Rust Dragons   |

This is the reason why Refugee town's creature's line-up is mainly composed of neutral creatures. Their common point being their non-belonging to the other factions. For balance purposes, their growth and costs have been adjusted.

To keep them similar to their neutral counterparts, I decided to keep the original statistics and make them upgraded or not by comparing them to vanilla's creatures of same tier. However, some abilities were removed and added as "Stack experience" in WoG compatibility submod (*optional, players can enable or disable it in VCMI Launcher*).

Thus, this castle sports concepts such as nomadism, motley armies and makeshift solutions. The town also takes elements from the Mesopotamian, Sumerian and Akkadian mythologies.



## I) Motley army & Neutral alignment

The idea of motley armies comes directly from Heroes III's **Vial of Life** scenario, where the player would have 3 refugee camps next to his castle, resulting in an army made of units that don't belong together.

The creatures don't seem to belong together, but their differences make them strong. Heroes of this faction can mix good and neutral-aligned creatures **without morale penalty**. Heroes Shayan has the specialty "Motley King", which prevents him from having negative morale. This allows the player to mix units in an original way without fearing bad morale.

## II) Middle Eastern influences

The town adds a brand-new creature as the faction's 7<sup>th</sup> tier unit called **Angra Mainyu / Ahriman**, which is basically the oriental Lucifer (Satan). Its dwelling "**Door to Hell**" is a direct reference to the natural gas field collapsed into a cavern located in Turkmenistan which is known as the "Door to Hell" or "Gates of Hell". Geologists intentionally set it on fire to prevent the spread of methane gas, and it is thought to have been burning continuously since 1971.

In the Zoroastrianism, Ahura Mazda, the highest deity, created two spirits that will oppose each other. The first one being **Spenta Mainyu**, the holy spirit, and the other being **Angra Mainyu**, the destructive spirit. Later on, Spenta Mainyu will be replaced by Ahura Mazda to face the evil Angra Mainyu. The Middle Persian equivalent is **Ahriman**, which name is frequently written upside-down "as a sign of contempt and disgust" in the Pahlavi texts.

The special building "**Secret Cave**", that grants 10% interests of gold each week, is a reference to "**Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves**" folk tale where there is a magic cave hidden inside a mountain, the mouth of which is sealed by a huge rock. Their treasure is stored inside the secret cave. – *This was inspired by the fact of having Rogues as tier 1 unit.*

Rogues and Nomads, which are both vanilla's creatures, also seems to have these kinds of influences (*since at least Heroes of Might & Magic II*). This reminded me of Heroes II's Genie which was one of my favorite units of the game, that inspired me to create Refugee's special unit "**Daeva**" that is summoned by the grail during a siege:

In the Gathas, the oldest texts of the Zoroastrian canon, the **Daevas** are "gods that are to be rejected". In the younger Avesta (*primary collection of religious texts of Zoroastrianism*), they are divinities that promote chaos and disorder. In later tradition, they are personifications of every imaginable evil. – In the mod, the creature is a powerful djinn that can casts a lot of negative effects on its targets and his stats is similar to Armageddon's Blade dragons.

The town adds new spells to the game, such as **Nambúrbi** that increases troops morale and luck, and **Šīgû** that is the opposite and reduces morale and luck of targeted enemies. Both spells are inspired by Mesopotamian mythology.

**Nambúrbi** was a Mesopotamian prayer performed to counter-act evil fates and witchcraft. In Mesopotamian mythology, **Šīgû** are lamentations which are either complaints or expression of grief or sorrow.

Finally, the town's cities names are mostly taken from Persian and Ancient Mesopotamian cities:

- **Persian cities:** Shahriar, Marvdasht, Kashan, Kermanshah, Gahvareh, Avland, Persepolia and Kerman.
- **Ancient Mesopotamian cities:** Nippur, Borsippa, Eridu and Nerebtum.
- There is also two **Persian's saint cities**, Mashhad and Qom, and Yazd's temple (*Persia*) called Atashkadeh.



### III) Other inspirations

**Alkephobos**, which is Keyvan's specialty that grants him with two spells that can control the morale and luck of every unit on the battlefield, is a combination of the names of the two ancient Greek gods:

- **Alke**, the spirit and personification of the abstract concept of courage and battle-strength.
- **Phobos**, the personification of fear in Greek mythology.

During the Middle Ages, passages from the *Sefer Yetzirah* (*Book of Creation*) were studied as a means to create and animate golem, although there's little in the writings of Jewish mysticism that supports this belief. In some tales, a golem could be activated by inscribing the word **Emét** (אמת, "truth") written on its forehead. Then, it could be deactivated by removing the aleph (א), thus changing the inscription with **Met** (מת, "to die").

This is where come the inspiration for the spells *Emet* (*summons golems*) and *Met* (*destroys golems*). Special building **Genizah** (גניזה) is also inspired by Jewish culture. It is a room in a synagogue which is used as a warehouse, mainly for works dealing with religious subjects written in Hebrew that had become unusable, while waiting to be buried in a cemetery. – *In the mod, the building grants additional spells to the Mage guild.*

## II) Scrapped ideas

Because of VCMi limitations, several ideas and mechanics were scrapped and replaced by placeholder features:

- 1) **Special building "Refugee Camp"**: Works the same way as *Refugee camp dwelling* (*adventure map*) and *Dungeon's Portal of Summoning*. It works as an 8<sup>th</sup> dwelling that allows player to recruit a random creature from the game each week. – *This was replaced by special building "Stable"*.
- 2) **Nomadism abilities for Vagabonds & Nomads**: At the start of each week, the stack unit number increases or decreases (*random*). That's because I imagine nomads might want to leave to pursue their quests on their own, and others could want to join the party.
- 3) **Genizah**: In replacement of the scrapped *Refugee camp* special building, the *Genizah* was meant to grant every visiting hero all *golem-related spells* (*Emét, Met and Amád*). It was a requirement to upgrade the Golem's factory and built another scrapped building "*special 4*". Also, it allowed to convert stone/iron golem into gold/diamond.
- 4) **Special 4**: This special building was meant to work the same way as *Necropolis's Skeleton's transformer*. Player would sacrifice units to convert them into flesh golems. – Instead, flesh golems became *Bhemnesh's* specialty.



### III) Changelogs

#### [09/02/2024] Version 1.0 – Refugee Revamped

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##### General:

- BRAND NEW VISUALS FOR TOWN-SCREEN, SIEGE-SCREEN, ADV.MAP VISUALS, ETC.!
- Updated town-related sprites to fit with the new townscreens (*Icons, portraits, etc.*).
- Reworked building tree and made few changes to buildings costs.
- Removed Dwelling 2 horde. Replaced unused building with special building “Genizah” (*works as Tower’s library*).
- Added adventure map visuals for dwellings and castle. Added sounds for adventure map dwellings.
- **Spell:** Increased spell points cost of ‘Met’. Fixed all spells description. New spell Amad (*resurrection for Golems*).
- Fixed ‘Holy Breaker’ ability not stacking. Fixed & improved WoG support submod (*Stack Experience*).
- Added 2 submods called “reversion” that allows to convert Refugee creatures into vanilla/WoG neutral counterpart.
- Reworked Stack Experience for all units. Fixed neutral to refugee conversion (*both vanilla & WoG*).
- Replaced Arrow creature with Enchanter (*previously ‘Roving Enchanter’*).
- **Grail:** Removed Daeva summoning. Grants +20% magical resistance to player armies instead.
- Daeva is now a creature reward for the new creature bank, guarded with Genies & Efreet. Daeva stats reworked.
- New submod that replaces the town’s theme with a remaster of the previously used theme from versions 0.1 → 0.7.

##### Heroes:

- Changed biography of Reza, Azar and Bhemnesh.
- Classes: Changed Enchanter & Wanderer primary & secondary skills gain chance. Brand new sprites visuals.
- Bhemnesh: Changed starting army. Replaced ‘Resurrection’ specialty with ‘Necrolem’ (*flesh golem necromancy*).
- Shayan: Replaced skill ‘Tactics’ with ‘Learning’. Specialty ‘Motley King’ prevent bad morale for his army.  
It also gives a bonus to wandering creatures joining the army.
- Aria: Changed secondary skill and specialty is now Estates.

##### Units:

- New creature ‘Flesh Golem’, a special unit which is the specialty of Bhemnesh. Similar mechanics to WoG’s Ghost.
- Streamlined commander’s data with “vanilla” commanders. Now casts ‘Amad’ instead of ‘Namburbi’ and ‘Sigu’.
- Nerfed neutral creature Shapeshifters a little bit.
- Reworked graphics for Hell Steeds, Nightmare. Subtle improvement to Angra Mainyu & Ahriman portraits.
- Tier 6: Hell Steeds & Nightmares now hates (War)Unicorns and vice-versa. Nerfed Death stare 10 → 6.  
Removed ability to casts Curse as it will now be part of Stack Experience (*WoG feature*).
- Tier 7: Rebalanced a little statistics and costs (*mainly Angra Mainyu*). Reworked adv. Map sprites.
  - o **Removed abilities:** Self-morale +1, Self-luck +1, Reduces enemy’s luck & morale by 1.
  - o **Removed abilities:** Mind spell immunity. Casts Sorrow. Casts Misfortune.
  - o **Added abilities:** Non-living, Vulnerable to Slayer (KING2), Magic resistance (+25% / +40%).

#### [17/08/2023 – 16/01/2024] Version 0.8.1 ~ 0.8.5 – Made by VCMi community

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- Added Chinese translation (*by Rindlit*).
- Added the creatures’ Stack Experience and fixed the commander stats (*by LeoAllenHan*).
- Updated to VCMi 1.4 format & several improvements made by Fabrice (*adv. map dwellings incl. SFX, etc.*)
- Adjusted Commanders’ stats and removed ‘Can shoot’ ability (*meant to be gained through leveling*).



## [01/10/2023] Version 0.8 – Global improvement & fixes

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### General:

- Miscellaneous fixes, tweaks and upgrades. Updated changelog / readme files and optimized files & workflow.
- Removed Wake of Gods dependencies and added optional file for WoG support as a submod.
- Reverted audio .OGG files back to .MP3 to preserve audio quality that was lost during the previous conversion.
- Switched v0.1-v0.7 town's theme with the previously alternate theme (*can be manually reversed*).
- Fixed several unknown and deprecated identifiers. Fixed Hell steeds & Nightmares idle animations.
- Added several visual upgrades.
- Grail now increases all primary skills by 5, and summons a Daeva during a siege.
- Fixed resource silo not producing the additional +1 sulfur per week.
- SPECIAL1 building now produces 10% gold interest per week (*same as Rampart's treasury*).
- SPECIAL2 building now increases movement rate of any visiting hero (*same as Castle's stables*).
- SPECIAL3 building description updated to prepare for the upcoming changes.

### Heroes:

- Upgraded Heroes portraits and specialty visuals.
- Removed Areman spellbook.
- Reworked Shayan's specialty mechanics (*generate a console error but it works*).
- Fixed female/male sprites being switched for some heroes (*adv. Map & combat*).

### Spells:

- Emét: Reduced spell power.
- Met: Reduced spell power and fixed target conditions.
- New abilities: Holy Breaker (*given to Refugee's tier 7 unit*) and Dominion (*unused*).
- Reworked gain chances for Refugee's spells and Refugee's Mage Guild spells.
- Added/Updated visuals for all new spells (*even unplayable*).

### Units:

- Upgraded portraits visuals for all units and rebalanced their statistics, growth and costs.
- Hell steed: Replaced non-working "casts Firewall" ability with "casts Curse".
- Removed unit "Veteran Sharpshooter" (*ex-lvl4U*). Sharpshooter are now lvl4U and statistics are now based on the original creature. Added new creature "Sagitarrii" (*lvl4*) that can be upgraded into Sharpshooter.
- Reworked level 7 unit: Rebalanced statistics and abilities. Added brand new visuals for the creature!
- Commander now casts Sigu on enemies and Namburbi on allies instead of resurrection. Added healer ability.
- Added Stack Experience for each unit (*when WoG submod is enabled*).
- New special unit "Daeva", a powerful Djinn that is summoned by the grail during a siege.

## [17/08/2023] Version 0.5 ~ 0.7 – Made by VCMi Community

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- Updated to VCMi 1.2, and then VCMi 1.3.
- Added Tower icon, Moat spell, French/German translations, and some tweaks.
- Updated Sorceress, Dwelling4 (*adv. Map*) and siege sprites.
- Updated few townscreen buildings (*blacksmith, dwellings 1 / 1U / 6U / Grail*).
- Converted themes .MP3 to .OGG format.



## [10/06/2020] Version 0.4 – Town's rebalance and assets conversion

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### General

- Created Puzzle map and siege visuals for the faction. Replaced “Sorceresses” towers garrison by Roving Enchanters.
- Optimized files (*buildings areas & borders*). Edited Dwelling5 (*ex-dwelling4*) borders & areas.
- Added an alternate music for the town (*need to be manually set*).
- Old spell “Gottesbriefe” renamed “Šigû”, and old spell “Namburbi” (*summons golem*) renamed “Emet”.
- New offensive spell against all-type of golems called “Met”. New spell “Namburbi” increases morale and luck.

### Heroes:

- Given all heroes the ability to convert true neutral creatures into Refugee's faction (*ex: neutral gold golem can be upgraded into Refugee's gold golem*). It shouldn't cost anything to convert creatures.
- Rebalanced every Heroes starting army to make them stronger, and added description to all Heroes.
- Replaced Heroes Battle & Adv. Map visuals with new original ones.
- Changed Keyvan's specialty and added Šigû as starting spell (*in addition to the new version of Namburbi*).
- Replaced Kiana's Ballista specialty with “Resistance” and changed her starting skills.
- Replaced Shayan's specialty with a new one and his starting skills. Added a surrender discount bonus per level.

### Units:

- Replaced creature “Peasant” (*ex-lvl1*) with Rogues (*ex-lvl1U*) and added new creature “Spy” as lvl1U.
- Replaced creature “Boar” (*ex-lvl2*) with new creature Vagabond (*lvl2*).
- Reduced power multiplier of Rogue's spying ability from 3 to 2. Spies spying ability power multiplier is set to 3.
- Updated adventure map amounts of every unit based on HotA's map editor values (*for same tier creatures*).
- Rebalanced units' statistics (*Tier 1, 2, 4 & 5*) to make them more coherent with their vanilla counter parts. Units are stronger but their growths are under-average.
- Edited visuals of both lvl7 (A.M. & Ahriman) and lvl3U (*Vet. Sharpshooter*) units, and sounds of level 7 units.
- Updated creatures adventure map visuals, portraits and icons.
- Hell steeds now has the ability to cast “Fire Wall” (*12% chance*) as in WoG. **[DOESN'T WORK]**
- Fixed sorceress (*lvl5*) missing “shot” sounds.
- Added brand-new neutral creature “Shapeshifter”.

## [20/05/2020] Version 0.2 – New townscreens & spells

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- NEW TOWNSCREEN! Successfully replaced Cathedral's townscreens with an original one.
- New buildings: Grail, Special1 (Secret Cave).
- Animated buildings: Grail, dwelling 6 Upg., dwelling 7 and 7 Upg.
- Renamed buildings and edited resources costs and unlocking tree.
- Edited various game icons to fit the new townscreens, including creatures' portraits and background, and Mage Guild.
- Remastered town's theme.
- New spell “Namburbi”: Summon Gold golems (*expert level = Diamond golems*).
- New spell “Gottesbriefe”: Reduces LUCK & MORALE of targeted enemy (*expert = all enemy's troops*).
- Replaced Keyvan's specialty with “Namburbi” and Shayan's specialty with “Resistance”.
- LVL7 units will no longer have the ability to cast Sorrow & Misfortune after attack (*50% chance each*). Instead, they will now have the ability to cast Gottesbriefe after attack (*30% chance*). Also, it will now have the ability to cast Curse before attack (*10% chance*). Nerfed attack (-5), buffed defense (+4/+3), changed DMG 30-40 to 25-45.
- LVL3 units: Removed “ranged retaliation” and “no wall” abilities. The ability “No melee penalty” will no longer apply to un-upgraded units. Reduced speed from 7 to 5.



## IV) Miscellaneous

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### To-do list:

- Rework siege screen structures.
- Add the 2 missing sprites for hero (adv. Map & battle).

### Ideas that are impossible to implement right now and might need ERM scripting:

- Makes grail always summons only 1 Daeva.
- Replaces special building “stables” with unique building “refugee camp” (*see scrapped ideas*).
- Replaces special building “genizah” with unique building SPECIAL4 (*see scrapped ideas*).
- Ability “Nomadism” for Vagabonds & Nomads: At the start of each week, the stack unit number increases or decreases randomly. That would simulate nomads wanting to leave, while others could want to join the party.

### Things that could be done but I'm not sure if I want to:

- Replaces faction's units with the real neutral units. Meaning there won't be anymore true neutral version of these units. Never tried, but this could be interesting to test.

### Other:

- Alternative name for Refugee town was “Leftover”.
- I have another town's project that, this time, will be more personal and conceptual. Shapeshifters and Flesh golems will be part of this new faction and shall be removed from Refugee's submod. Alignment of this new town is Evil.