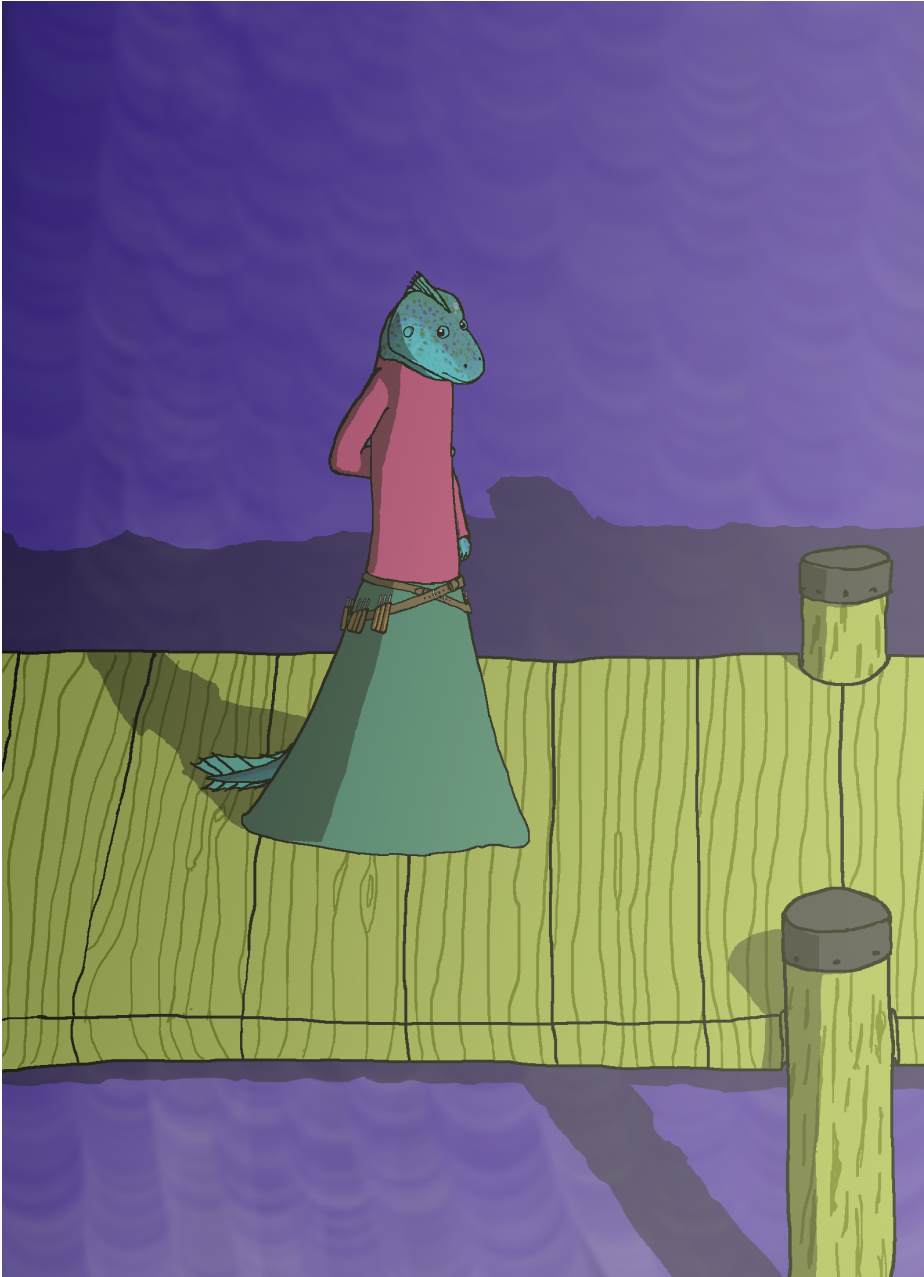


Beasts



Navarerda, A Tectonic great mage of the Inaer species

The world of Beasts is a fantasy/sci-fi world (depending on your definition) involving a large planet and its two planet-sized moons. There are 13 main intelligent species: Swinls, Humans, Torino, Inaer, Rit, Aereon, Tsla, Vrenn, Smashers, Smelters, Pickn, and Hutepni. There are three gods: Light, Darkness, and Kartogg, but none of them care about "mortals" and Light and Darkness have been powerless since the end of the Great War.

The history of Beasts is divided up into "ages." In order, the ages are: the First Golden Age*, the period of development*, the Second Golden Age, the Dark Ages, the Great War, the Turmoil, the Age of the Empire, the Technological Age. The "modern" era started with the Second Golden Age, the current species having evolved during the period of development. Most of the events I focus on are in the Great War and onward, since the Dark Ages were most similar to Earth's society (tons of warring nations), and the Golden Ages are not very well known about by historians in-world.

There is magic in Beasts, but it is not superior to the other two main forms of combat: melee and ranged. All "mundane" magic is elemental, and mundane magic is all that most people know exists. The ten "elements" are, in no particular order, water, shadow, air, fire, rock, ice, electricity, mecha, plant, and sonic. A person can become a mage in two ways, learning an element (the more common way), or having inborn magic in an element. To learn an element requires an almost complete knowledge of its mechanics, and requires intense training. Because of this, very few people learn more than one element, and to master more than two is almost impossible in a regular lifetime. Inborn mages can perform the mechanics of their element reflexively, but they still have to train with it to be at all effective. Apart from mundane magic there is great magic, which is almost wholly unknown by common people, and the Gods' magic, which mostly just can enhance the qualities of mortals and has not had any impact on the world since the Great War. In Beasts, the plural of mage is mages.

The timescale in Beasts is huge, with ages lasting millions of years. There has been almost no tectonic activity or climate change since the end of the First Golden Age, for reasons I will not go into now.

Most nations/factions are multi-species**, and no species have any sort of "grudge" against any others. Sometimes, a particular group will have an "a certain species is supreme" view, but it is not common, and it is usually shunned. Because some of the species are nocturnal, the nighttime is usually just as active as the day, with the quietest times being the periods of dawn and dusk.

The planet and its two moons are all usually called planets because they are only slightly smaller than Earth, and all three bodies have essentially the same climates and ecosystems. Before the end of the Great War, each god held dominion over one of the three planets. The moon Darkness held is called Eztro, the moon Light had is called Delat, and the main planet (Kartogg's) is called Veralda. Until the beginning of the Great War, there was no practical way of transporting large amounts of people between the planets.

*before modern recorded history, very few individuals know anything about these

**during the Dark Ages, there were nations which were predominantly one or two species, and these nations often fought each other.



Jand (a Tsla), Damvo (a Swinl), and a sketch of a male Aeron

Intelligent Species in Beasts

Second Golden Age – Modern Era (Technological Age)

Humans: mammal

Physically: hardy, tough, Human (same as us)

Psychologically: stubborn, persistent

Tsla: mammal

Physically: cat-like heads, five-fingered hands with retractable claws, good night vision (reflective eyes), tails, light fur (dark-colored), agile/stealthy

Psychologically: logical, charismatic

Torino: mammal

Physically: large, bovine-like snouts, horns, hoofs, light fur, tufted tails, 4-fingered hands

Psychologically: stubborn, persistent, quiet

Inaer: amphibian

Physically: amphibious, webbed hands/feet (four digits) with small claws, salamander-like heads, extendable dorsal ridge, long vertically flat tails, can breath through skin in water

Psychologically: friendly, open-minded

Swinl: mammal

Physically: teardrop-shaped heads, very short white fur, long tufted tail, two-digit hands/feet, gecko-like digit tips, hollow bones

Psychologically: insightful, thoughtful, quiet

Rit: mammal

Physically: bat-like wings coming from backs, hairy, hollow bones, five-fingered, somewhat human-like

Psychologically: righteous, protective

Vrenn: mammal

Physically: lycanthropic (have a human-like form and a wolf-like humanoid form described here), long claws, short fur, wolf snouts, five fingers

Psychologically: loyal, untrusting

Aereon: Bird

Physically: feathered, risible feather crest behind head (three feathers for females, five feathers for males), primaries extend from wrists (all feathers on wings lie flat against the arms when not flying), three fingered hands, four-toed feet able to act as hands in flight

Psychologically: aloof, aristocratic

Smasher Family: invertebrates

Physically: bodies made mostly of muscle, exoskeleton covered in skin, tiny, but very strong for their size, pliable arm tips instead of hands

Smasher

Physically: largest and strongest of the Smasher family

Psychologically: loners, gruff, straightforward, culturally use giant rock hammers

Pickn

Physically: second largest/strongest, good climbers/travelers

Psychologically: blissful, carefree, good guides, culturally use picks

Smelter

Physically: second smallest/weakest, dexterous/good with crafting (especially metal)

Psychologically: creative, literal-minded, honest, often smiths or engineers

Hutepni

Physically: smallest and weakest of the Smasher family, very good with their voices, dexterous

Psychologically: carefree, often singers or musicians

All of the psychological descriptions of these species are stereotypes; they have basis in reality, but do not at all represent every individual in the species.

There is very little tension between species (exception: during the Dark Ages), especially in the later periods. Most countries/factions are multiracial, so there are almost no inter-species wars with one species pitted against another.

All species have about the same chance of having inborn magic powers of any element, and can learn an element about as easily as any other species.

Great magic and great mages

The five great magics are: Star, Tectonic, Time/Space, Mind, and Soul. Great magics are almost impossible to learn, especially since there are so few precedents to follow or to be taught from. Therefore, almost all Great mages are born with their powers, and are much rarer by far than any other type of mage, with hundreds of generations passing between the births of Great mages. They are effectively immortal, though, so they constantly remain a driving force in the world.

Great mages have effective immortality because their aging slows exponentially until it is negligible. No great mages to date have died of old age. One of the defining characteristics of the great magics is that practitioners can draw energy from their power source, which gives them immense power, a lower need for food, and their aging patterns.

Star great mages draw energy directly from the light and heat that the stars give off, including the one that the planets orbit around. One of the central aspects of Star great magic is fusion. A Star great mage can use their energy to cause fusion to occur, then can control the energy released to attack. Star great magic is the simplest, most offensive, and hardest to control great magic. It is arguably the most damaging over time because its use can leave residual radiation.

Tectonic great mages draw energy from movements in the planet's mantle. They can channel that kinetic energy directly to their bodies to "reinforce" their muscles and give themselves almost unlimited strength, or transfer it into the ground around them for shockwave-like attacks. With Tectonic great magic comes nearly complete self-control, both physically and mentally, and amazing reflexes. Nevertheless, Tectonic great magic is one of the most obviously powerful great magics, with practitioners able to punch holes through walls and armor, able to catch arrows and boulders, and able to decimate armies with massive earthquakes.

Time/Space great mages draw energy from fluctuations in the time/space "grid." The time/space grid is key to Time/Space great mages' powers. The time/space grid that encompasses our universe has ripples and eddies all the time, but they are unnoticeable because everything, including light, follows it as if it were straight. Time/Space great mages can detach from that grid to a special, infinitely uniform grid of their own. This allows them to be affected by the fluctuations of the normal grid, which they can control, and which they subconsciously suppress (tied to them drawing energy from them, but I won't go into that here). Time/Space great mages can stretch or squeeze the normal distances around them, making them longer or shorter for them, and can do the same thing with time (and no, they can't go back in time). From the rest of the world's point of view, they can move extraordinarily fast, reach ridiculously far, dodge things that were headed straight for them, and almost "skip" short distances to get somewhere. They cannot, however, teleport. This means that they cannot get through a wall with no cracks, for instance, though they can squeeze through very small spaces by making them wider for themselves.

Mind great mages draw energy from the brain patterns of the beings around them. They can read those brain patterns, and, with testing, actually understand vaguely what people are thinking. They can also influence people's brain patterns, but it is extraordinarily difficult and almost impossible to control with good accuracy. The most damaging thing they can do is put a person into a vegetative state by absorbing all of the energy their brain is using. Doing this to someone is always exceedingly disturbing, so practitioners generally stick to reading and predicting actions to give themselves an advantage.

Soul great mages draw energy from the bodies and subconscious of the beings around them. It has the widest range of powers, but few extremely powerful combat-oriented ones. They can read, absorb, and manipulate to some extent the "soul" of people (the body and subconscious energy). They can find people by their soul patterns, boost and maintain the energy of their allies (so they don't get tired), and sap the energy of their enemies (making them more tired and weak). The most devastating thing they can do to a person is to totally absorb their body and subconscious energy, effectively killing them. When they do this, however, they experience that person's terror of death, which is extremely traumatic. The technique that is most often used in combat, then, is their ability to manifest a semi-gaseous particulate out of soul energy. This material can be used to form pseudo-materials, such as cold fire, which vary depending on the mage's interpretation of the soul pattern they are manifesting.

There are only a handful of great mages in the world, but because of their near-immortality, almost all of them are at least acquainted with the others. Often times, a young Great mage will achieve some massive thing before "retiring" and affecting the world less. In their retirement, most great mages continue to be active in some activity or another, often things that are only possible with many lifetimes worth of life.

The great mages so far are, in order of birth:

Untok – androgynous Taegil Time/Space great mage (born during the First Golden Age, before modern recorded history)

Levia – male Swamp Dagenris Tectonic great mage (born at the end of the First Golden Age, before modern recorded history)

Eoin – male Human Time/Space great mage (born during the Great War)

Navarerda – female Inaer Tectonic great mage (born during the Great War)

Lao-danzin – male Pickn Soul great mage (born during the Turmoil)

Damarona – female Torino Mind great mage (born during the Turmoil)

Jocast – female Human Star great mage (born at the end of the Turmoil, but learned her powers)

Endro – male Human Soul great mage (born at the end of the Age of the Empire)

Kai – female Hutezni Star great mage (born during the Technological Age)