

GIANT'S WAKE

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GLOSSARY

Aetherial Realm – Also known as the “Sea of Light.” The Realm in which magic was created and all other Realms originate from.

Dark Aether – Magical energy that emits from the core of the world. Upon their defeat, Dragons were initially lured to the depths of the Mountains by its presence.

Dragonkind – Refers to both Dragons and the lesser Drakes.

Drakespawn – Cult of Man settlement inhabited by Dragon Mages.

Dwarfmen – Broad and stone-like hulks who live in the Mountains at Foundation.

Foundation – Central Dwarfmen capital. At its center lies the still beating heart of an Ancient Dragon, which powers the city.

Northmen – Immensely tall and strong Men who hail from the Northern ancestral lands of the Giants.

Port City of Yon – The Trade capital of the Realm of Men and the home of the Southmen.

Southmen – Sea-faring Men who live past the Southern Desert, on the coast of the Bay of the Watcher. Natural traders.

Wyrm – Flightless Drakes that have degraded into their namesake, slithering worms that feed off the magical energy of Dragon corpses.

WORLDMAP



OVERVIEW

The world of Giant's Wake takes place in the realm of Men. The ancient Giants that once inhabited the world are now lost to time, save one, who resides in their ancestral homeland—dangerous, otherworldly, and magically powerful in nature. Only the hardened Northmen, closest of the progeny of Giants, continue to reside and survive at Giant's Peak. The last of the Giants is dying, and with his death comes the collapse of all spheres of magic. The Dragons that once ruled the skies in ancient times lay rotting deep in the mountains, lesser drakes feed off their corpses' essence like worms—remnants of a terrifying race, magic still permeating their remains. Races of Men are scattered throughout, many still dwelling within the mountains. Others sought refuge in faraway lands. Great cults and cities were born and the progeny of Giants thrived where so many others died. A great disturbance stirs off the Western shores of late. Wicked Elves from a distant continent threaten to overtake the ancient land of Giants and reclaim the domain that once harbored Draconic abominations. The Southern Seas have begun to swell, great serpents and denizens of the deep have risen and shown themselves after thousands of years in darkness. Magic is fleeing the world, where it once brought stability, now it leaves chaos in its shadow. An even greater threat looms in the air, as mysterious gateways materialize from nothing and lure the weak minded with whispers into madness.

HISTORY

Giants, ancient inhabitants of the world, were the first explorers of the harsh landscape. They carved out a home in the North and sought shelter in caves and the mountains. This is where the first diverging blood line began. Those who remained in the mountains came to be hulking and resolute, they took on characteristics of stone and adapted their way of life to the cold and dark of the underground. Those who set out to explore ended up nomads, hunting in the tundra plains of the North, becoming both hunter and prey to the wildlife. Migratory Giants started travelling and expanding into even more unknown territory, far away to the warmth of the South from the harsh cold of the North, while others took the journey East into immense forests and were never seen again. The farther and longer the Giants strayed from their ancestral homeland, magical attunements faded and the lesser their blood became. This degeneration of the bloodline eventually pathed the way to the races of Men.

The Giants were not alone in the primordial world. A race of Drakes, who migrated over in flying hordes from a distant continent, came to plague the lands. Few among the Drakes were known as Dragons, immense beings of terrible magical power—who are said to originate beyond the Aetherial Realm of the world. These Dragons controlled their swarms like a hivemind. The Giants hunted the Drakes for a multitude of purposes; food, sport, religious rights, forging of weapons and armor from their remains—but the main purpose was their complete eradication. The Dragons and their brood were a blight on the Giant's ancestral home, draining and tainting the magical power that emanated from the land. For if the land was destroyed, and the magic consumed, so too would the Giants perish from the world. Hundreds of years of battle between the Giants and the Dragons raged on. Eventually the

Dragons, unable to establish a permanent foothold in the Giant's realm, waned in magical power. Their flesh weakened and their numbers dwindled drastically. The Giant's drove the Dragons from their lands, forcing them to flee to the mountains, delving deep underground to the warmth of Dark Aether. There they slowly died out, hiding from the world. Massive corpses of skeletons, still with rotting flesh dripping from the bones, lay dormant at the deepest levels of the world. The Drakes still remain to the current day. They have devolved into flightless worms, trapped in the darkness, that devour and sustain themselves off the residual magic from the remains of their kin.

The world now is host to immeasurable remnants from the past—but most are fleeting. The ancient Giants are all but dead. Only a few remain at the hallowed Giant's Peak, while their direct descendants, the Northmen, populate their ancestral lands. The much lesser races of Men are scattered throughout the main continent, the largest congregation being in the desert lands of the South.

TIMELINE

ERA OF ORIGINATION

- *0 EO* – The spark, birthing forth the Sea of Light and the Aetherial Realm—and with it magic.
- *1000 EO* – The Adjoining Realms take form from the Sea of Light.
- *1100 EO* – The Dragon's Realm shapes from a swirling magic vortex, the Realm of Man follows shortly after. Dragonkind is born.
- *1500 EO* – The Void appears into existence, and thus the Dark God comes into being

ERA OF CORRUPTION

- *1800 EC* – Dragons start to be influenced by the Dark God, a tear in the Sea of Light gives way to the Void.
- *2000 EC* – Giants form from the Earth and take their first steps in the Realm of Men.
- *2150 EC* – Dragons spawn their lesser Drake kin, they are now fully corrupted by the Void. They begin their transference into the Realm of Men.

ERA OF PLAGUE

- *2300 EP* – First contact between Giants and Dragonkind.
- *2355 EP* – Dragons now plague the Realm of Men, Giant clans unify and begin large scale hunts of Drakes.
- *2500 EP* – The first Dragon is slain, but its magical potency permanently scars the landscape.
- *2757 EP* – The Dragons are being hunted down in larger numbers, they begin to retreat to the mountains, hiding in the depths of the world.
- *2800 EP* – The last Dragon is slain.

ERA OF MIGRATION

- *3000 EM* – Giants begin to break away from their homeland in order to explore the rest of their world.
- *3010 EM* – Giants inhabit the World's Spine mountains, and create the base of Foundation.

- *3017 EM* – Migrant Giants discover the Southern Desert, and happen upon The Watcher.
- *3030 EM* – A group of Giants discover a vast tundra forest that spans indefinitely towards the East, they are never seen again.
- *3500 EM* – Over time, the blood of Giants wanes and the lesser Men have been born over generations. Northmen, Dwarfmen, and Southmen now inhabit the world. Only a few surviving Giants remain at Giant's Peak.

ERA OF BLOOD

- *4000 EB* – The Last Giant reigns at Giant's Peak.
Present Day

CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE

SOUTHMEN

Capital: Port of Yon

Ruler: Guild Baron

Government: Mercantilist Trade Guilds

Resources: Sea Goods, Spice, Alchemical Stimulants

Language(s): Southern Tongue

Religion(s): The Watchers, Cult of Man

Southmen, hailing from the sprawling Port City of Yon, are the most populous of the races of Man. They have built a cultural empire of trade, language, and religion that dominates their region, and influences many other regions of the continent. Southmen host massive fleets of Guildships that they use for exploration and trade. Their prime influence is that of language, which coincides with their voracious will to trade and exchange with others. The Southern Tongue is as close to a universal language the world knows. It is a hodgepodge of the ancient language used by the Giants, mixed with a new language that was adapted through isolation in the Desert region. It's a language that is constantly evolving and adapting new words from far off lands, making it a necessity for trade between cultures. What was once pockets of Men, scattered throughout the continent, have been linked together through trade and language by the Southmen.

The Desert is a harsh and unforgiving landscape. Its very climate shaped the walls of Yon, the language of the Southmen, and the customs of its people. The Deep Desert breeds vortex storms and

great walls of sand. The side of Yon that faces towards the coast and the open sea is just that, open—goods and people travel freely in and out of the harbor. The side of Yon that faces inland, towards the desert, is completely different. It is a massive bulkhead, locked down and fortified, with a wall creating a shielded-bubble around the entirety of Yon and its lands. So violent are the storms, that only the bravest of Merchants and Men travel by caravan across the Desert to the northern Foundation of the mountains. These caravans are akin to ships that traverse sand, rather than water.

The religion of the Southmen is based around the Sea and the gift of life—Water. Unlike most other realms of Men, the Southmen turned away from the ancestor worship of the Giants, for they had found a new God in their stead. Known as the Watcher, Southmen worship a monstrous sea creature that lays dormant in the aptly named Bay of the Watcher. In ancient times, upon the first pilgrimage of the Giants to the desert region, they came across the vast ocean that lay on the coast. The Watcher was there, waiting. It whispered to them in the night, a siren song that called them to the sea. Many outside of Yon believe the Watcher to be a Dark God that corrupted the purity of the Southmen.

DWARFMEN

Capital: The Heart of the World

Ruler: Dwarfman King

Government: Monarchy guided by the Guild Council

Resources: Minerals, Alchemical powders, Underground Magic Trade, Draconic relics

Language(s): Giant's Tongue, Dwarf Tongue, Southern Tongue (Trade)

Religion(s): Cult of Man, Stone Carvers

Foundation is where the Dwarfmen call home, spanning across the World's Spine, a labyrinth of mountain ranges and tunnels that lead to dark depths. It is where the first migrant Giants laid roots and sought to make a new life within the mountains. Foundation's Capital is known as "The Heart of the World." It was given that name due to the cavernous cities central location, but also through Dwarfmen technology. For at the very center of the city lies the remnants of a decaying Dragon's heart. Its residual magical essence powers the city and gives an incredible amount of aetherical energy. Dwarfmen learned to harness and wield the Dragon heart's power and manipulate it to their own will.

The Dwarfman King's Monarchy rules over the Heart of the World and the rest of Foundation. The Kingship is determined by the one of pure blood and who traces back most closely to the ancestral Giants. Along with the King, there is a Guild Council, comprised of many different Dwarfmen Trading Guilds who have been established since the "foundation" of Foundation. The Guilds control the economy and the resource import and export to and from the city. Foundation's resources generally revolve around mineral wealth, rare stones, and precious jewels only found within the deepest caves of the World. However, there are many special and even illicit materials that are produced and excavated from the depths. Many of the minerals are ground and formed into Alchemical powders, a unique Dwarfmen craft. More unsavory resources come in the form of Magical artifacts found at the lowest levels of the earth. These relics of the ancient world are imbued with forgotten incantations and spells and are sought after by Mages for ritual tributes—all who will pay dearly to procure them. The most powerful of these relics are the flesh and bone of Dragons.

The languages spoken throughout Foundation are a mixture of the ancient Giant's Tongue and the Dwarfmen's own Tongue. Southern Tongue is reserved for trading purposes with other outside realms of Men.

The Major religion of Foundation, and uniquely Dwarfen in nature, is that of the Stone Carvers. The other major religion is known as the Cult of Man. The Cult of Man is an ancient religion first propagated and spread by the immediate progeny of migrant Giants. It is based in ancestor worship, fueled by blood magic, and is found throughout all realms of Men.

NORTHMEN

Capital: Giant's Peak

Ruler: The Last Giant

Government: Ancestral Autocracy

Resources: Blood of the North, Ancient Dragonscale

Language(s): Giant's Tongue

Religion(s): Cult of Man

Northmen are the purest bloodline and closest progeny of the ancient Giants. This gives them the most prominent Giant traits of all the races of Men—namely tall stature, and extended life. They occupy the ancestral land of the Giants, and make home at the Giant's Peak, built upon the ruination of the ancient world. The city is beyond massive in scale, even for Giants—it was built to invoke a sense of immortality, that it would forever stand the test of time. Ironically, Giant's Peak is the last bastion of Giant kind and shelters the Last Living Giant—the sole ruler over Giant's Peak and all Northmen. The

Last Giant comes from a long line of the most magically attuned of Giants, the ones who hunted the Ancient Dragons and Drakes, but who also in turn were corrupted by their magic. Over the thousands of years since the Dragons extinction, Giant kind decayed and rotted away—their blood tainted with foul magic. Thus, the Last Giant solely remains, weakened, but still revered as a living God by the Northmen.

The land of the Giants teems with a magical aura that permeates the entire environment, even the very blood of the Northmen. This magical phenomenon is known as the “Blood of the North.” Magical attunements, first transmitted to the Giants by corrupted Dragon blood, flows in the veins of every Northman—gifting them with unnaturally long life and strength. The Northmen’s blood, having such magical qualities, is valued more than any Dwarfen jewel or Alchemical powder by the outside realms of Men. The other resource uniquely Northmen in nature is the Ancient Dragonscale their Giant ancestors hoarded and crafted into elaborate armaments and decorations. Only the most revered and respected Kings and leaders outside of the North are gifted and traded these sacred relics of the ancient world.

The language of the Northmen is the most pure form of Ancient Giant’s Tongue. The language itself advanced and evolved very little over the years, due to the harsh isolation of the Northmen—even what little contact they have with the Dwarfmen, Southmen and the Southern Tongue, outside influences are considered impure and sacrilege towards the ancestral Giants. The same sentiment is shared with the Northmen’s main and only religion, the Cult of Man—it’s figurehead being the Last Giant. There is a secret offshoot of the Cult, focusing on Dragon worship and the ritual consumption of scales and bones.

RELIGION

THE STONE CARVERS

In ancient times, at the Heart of the World, migrant Giants first made a home within the Mountains. They carved out massive halls and dug deep tunnels to dark and dangerous realms beneath the world. There they created layer upon layer of civilization, a foundation that still stands to the current day. Over time, being separated from their immortal ancestral land, the Giants adapted and transformed to their surroundings. They shrunk in stature, but their skin became as hard as the stone walls. Their affinity for Earth and Stone grew boundless. This love ushered in the Stone Carvers. The Dwarfmen, as they are named today, take great pride and dedication into carving their likeness into stone. Their kings are immortalized in colossal tombs filled with stone thrones. For context, the reign of a Dwarven King starts with a stone slab that is gifted to the new monarch, this will eventually become their death throne. Over time, the Stone Carvers slowly chisel away at the slab, creating scenes into the stone of the Kings deeds and accomplishments. Upon death, a Dwarven King must sit on their gifted throne and are then magically infused into the stone—they become one entity. It is then the religious duty of the Stone Carvers to shape and finish the King's throne. The Tomb of Kings runs deep, countless stone carved thrones line the walls and halls like a standing army. It is the Stone Carvers belief that the very essence and life force of a Dwarven King is carved into the throne, and they in turn will live forever within the halls. The Stone Carvers worship the stone and the thrones of past kings as living Gods.

In recent times, there has been a split between the faithful of the Stone Carvers. A new sect has appeared that, ironically, forbids the carving and transformation of Earth and Stone. They believe that

all natural stone is sacred and should not be defiled by Dwarfmen. These followers, who still insist on completing funeral duties of Kings and Noblemen, look for other skilled carvers, namely Northmen who work in the mines. These migrant Northmen workers carve in a Giant aesthetic that is looked down upon by certain groups of Dwarfmen. These competing sects of Stone Carvers influence present and future generations of Kings, and in turn the style and architecture of the stone thrones. It is very easy to distinguish what sect a Dwarven King belonged to just by looking at their entombed throne.

Those Stone Carvers who have stayed faithful to the traditions of carving have branched off into more magical elements. These Stone Carvers not only carve stone thrones and kings, but they also have started to carve magically attuned Golems. Their belief that the Earth gives life is manifested through these Dwarven Golems.

THE CULT OF MAN

The last surviving remnant of the Giant faith, the Cult of Man is the Northmen's religion of ancestral Giant worship. From the time of the migrant Giants, who spread throughout the soon-to-be outside realms of Men, the beginnings of the Cult of Man went with them—in essence becoming the universal faith of all Men. Followers of the cult participate in ritual veneration of blood, which is an important symbol not only of life but of the Giant's magical spark of immortality. Even though in actuality, the tainted blood of the Giants led to their ultimate demise and the subsequent mutation and lesser traits of their progeny. Northmen Cultists believe that their blood must be as close to pure as possible, pure being the Giant standard from before the Dragon's degradation, in order to join their

ancestors in the Aetherial realm—the afterlife and realm of Origination.

In the recent era, the Cult of Man can still be found throughout the land, with a heavy presence in the Southman city of Yon and the new Eastern temple of Sanctum. The settlement of Drakespawn, found in the Western realm, is a sect of the Cult of Man based around Dragon worship. The Dragon worshipers, being mages of the Aetherial arts, believe that the herald of the Dragon's return will come with the death of the Last Giant. They are strictly forbidden from Foundation and the Heart of the World, which are rife with the decaying corpses of Dragons—it is believed that a Dragon Mage can transfer their soul into the corpse and control their residual magical energy, as well as the surviving Drake wyrms.

THE WATCHERS

The Watchers are the Sea-faring zealots, who worship the Dark God, of the Southmen's native religion. They get their namesake from The Watcher, a monstrous, tentacled, cycloptic sea creature that is the manifestation of what is known as the Dark God—an evil being from beyond the realm of Men. The Dark God is also known to the Southmen as the "Eye of Madness" and the "Denizen of a Thousand Tongues." It is believed that The Watcher derives its spiritual and magical affinity from the Dark Gods eye and its many tongue-like tentacles that form the illusion of a mouth. Another name for The Watcher is the "Slumbering God," for it is believed that the current manifestation of the Dark God lies dormant in the abyss of the bay.

The zealots of The Watcher are obsessed with the Sea. They are the main pilots and crew of the Southmen Guildship fleets. It is fairly easy to spot a Guildship that is controlled and blessed by The Watchers—the ships main mass, towards the top, is carved in the form of splayed tentacles with the Eye of Madness adorned on a flag. It has been said in ancient times that the Southmen Watchers were able to summon the Dark God while out at Sea—they used the manifestation of The Watcher in times of war and trade disputes, and in order to dissuade any dissent. The Watchers are the true lords of the Sea. In recent times they have both lost and forgotten the summoning ritual of the Dark God. In its stead, as a ritual of tribute, Southmen construct a Colosseum flotilla out at Sea where they hold ship based reenactments and battle scenes—the biggest species of sea monsters are hunted and captured alive to be used as representations of The Watcher during the religious event.

MAGIC

In the time before the realms of Men and the ancient world, outside the boundaries of physical planes, there lies the Aetherial Realm—where all magic originates. The Aetherial Realm, in truth, is an infinitely vast Sea of Light that envelops the entirety of the Realm of Men and the other adjoining Realms. Magic first found its way to the Realm of Men through the Dragons breaching the adjoining Realms and traversing across the Sea of Light to the Realm of Men. Dragons were in a sense magical manifestations of Higher beings that are one with the Aetherial Realm and the Sea of Light. These Higher beings are in direct opposition to the Dark God, who encompasses a space far outside the Sea of Light, being named the Void. Over time the Void and the Dark God's influence corrupted the Realm of Dragons, twisting once beautiful creatures of light into monstrous wyrms of horns and scales and potent magical deviancy. These newly corrupted Dragons were the ones that invaded the Realm of Men, by will of the Dark God, and hosted their brood on a faraway continent north of the ancestral home of the Giants. The introduction of this Draconic magic to the Realm of Men would prove to be both a blessing and a curse to Giants and later Men alike.

Magic within the world of Giant's Wake is closely linked to religion and spirituality, especially in regards to the North and Southmen. Dwarfmen are much more inclined to worry about their stone carvings and the material sense of magic rather than a religious aetherial plane of magic. This is directly shown in the types of magic each race of Men uses and creates. Northmen use the power of ancestral magic and blood magic, namely the Blood of the North. Southmen rely on the powers of their Dark God. Dwarfmen take a more technological and item based approach—the residual magic of the Dragons deep

within their stone carved halls permeates throughout the rock and minerals, meaning the very material they mine and harvest is magical. In turn, the Dwarfmen's metal, weapons, and armors, are imbued with this magical essence. It is even said that the Ancient Dwarfmen, upon preparation of war, would assemble an elite hunting party. This group was tasked with delving deep into the caverns to seek out lesser Drake Wyrms. These Wyrms nested nearby the deceased and decayed corpses of Ancient Dragons—they sustained off of what little magical power emitted from their remains. Even though the lesser Drakes were but a shadow of the might of a Dragon, their blood still possessed magical affinity which augmented their noxious firebreath. Wyrms were baited into unleashing a blast of fire onto selected weapons and armor, and bestowing upon them magic attunements and unparalleled durability. These armaments were then gifted to the King to use in battle. Weapons bathed in Wyrmfire shone with white-hot fire, armor tempered in the flames shimmered and emitted a visible magical aura.

Perhaps the most ardent and prolific of magic users would be the Dragon Mages. These Mages are an ancient order that trace lineage back to the founding of the Cult of Man. They are Dragon worshipers that attempt to unlock the secrets of magic and the Aetherial Realm through forbidden acts and rituals. The most dangerous being the transference of a mages soul and magical essence to the hulking remains of a Dragon, in hopes to revive and control their powerful residual magic that still exists. The Mages not only want to gain more magical potency, they strive to *become* one with the flesh of a Dragon.

FLORA AND FAUNA

- **Mountain Ogre**

- Thought to be distant kin of Giants, Mountain Ogres are neither Giant nor Man. They live mainly around the World's Spine Mountains in tribal clans and are a favored worker of the Dwarfmen, using them as mine labor—Ogres are also easily manipulated and not very bright.

- **Drake Wyrms**

- The brood spawn of Ancient Dragons, Drake Wyrms are all that is left of the mighty magical flying beasts that once terrorized the skies. They live at the lowest depths of Foundation and feed off of the magical energy given by the decaying corpses of their extinct kin. Their noxious flamebreath still hold magical properties.

- **Sand Striders**

- Hulking creatures found in the Southern Desert. Their four pairs of massive legs help them sift and balance atop the sand dunes. Southmen have learned to domesticate certain breeds and use them as conveyances for their trade caravans.

- **The Watcher**

- The manifestation of the Dark God, worshiped by the Southmen. It is a massive, squid like creature with tentacles disguised as a mouth and one giant eye. It lays dormant at the bottom of the Bay of the Watcher.

- **The Serpent**

- A Sea Serpent from Giant mythology. It is said to circle around the Giant's ancestral island, feeding off the magical aura that permeates the land.

- **Giant's Needle**

- A type of Pine tree found near Giant's Peak. Its needles are as sharp and as massive as a Giant's sword. The trees tower over all others in the Realm of Men, and lend the image of an imposing, impenetrable fortress.

- **Dragonroot**

- A type of rooted plant that only grows near the decaying corpses of Dragons. Over time the roots themselves soak of the magical energy and are gathered and used as curatives.

- **Dwarfen Cap**

- Massive fungal mushrooms found in the caverns of Foundation. They are a staple of the Dwarfmen diet and are used for many different purposes—such as an additive for Alchemical powders.

- **Spine Tendril**

- A thorny, vine-like plant found in and atop the crags of the World's Spine. Their barbs have been found to be somewhat toxic.

- **Forest of the Giants**

- A sentient forest, spanning miles and miles, encompassing the mountains at Giant's Peak. In Giant Mythology, the trees in the forest are said to give off a magical aura—and even move.