

Colm Peyton World Intro

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Valgrum Orphanage

Finding himself here at a young age, Colm did not remember much except the rage boiling within him. Haunted by nightmares the only piece he could find was by asserting dominance over the kids around him, being bigger, stronger and braver than most of them. Even the priests running the orphanage could not tame the beast inside him. In fact nobody could, until a girl named Beth was brought to the orphanage...

It was the priests at the orphanage that planted the idea of him joining the army when he comes of age. They saw the potential within him and aimed to direct his aggression towards something more noble, maintaining the peace on the Valgrum continent.

Army of Valgrum

Enlisting

Time passed and he and Beth settled down in a rental house in the Earth District. Beth provided by working in a general goods shop as a clerk and Colm, he decided to listen to the words of the priests at the orphanage and become a soldier, enlisting in the army. Their intentions were to save up a bit of money and move into the old [Peyton farm](#)¹, living a peaceful life outside the noisy streets of Valgrum.

Play: <https://youtu.be/wzla4fCVsto>

Colm passed the entrance exam with flying colors. His [athletic](#)² capabilities were indeed impressive. He was accepted and began his training. The training included physical exercises, but also classes on various topics such as [history](#), [religion](#), art of war, ethics etc. Colm, despite his violent past, proved to be quite capable of learning and this period only strengthened his resolve to become a better man, doing good for society and the people living on the Valgrum continent.

Training

As for the contents of the subjects...

History of Valgrum

This subject covered the demography, geography, economics and major events that transpired on the Valgrum continent.

The most notable points were:

- In the beginning, many different races lived on Valgrum in harmony.
- People worshiped pagan deities called [Eidolons](#).

1 Terms marked with the blue color represent key words that are probably important.

2 Terms marked with the green color represent possible backstory proficiencies and can serve as suggestions when determining the proficiencies of the character.

- Eventually, a remarkable human child, called [Eternis](#), appeared and formed the [religion](#) and [church](#) of the one true god – the [Eternal](#).
- Some of the pagans joined, while some rebelled against the new order.
- A [war](#) started, waged against the Church of the Eternal.
- The war's turning point was when the pagans that joined the order [betrayed](#) it and joined the ones that rebelled.
- Eternis condemned them all for this act, for eternity.
- The war culminated with a battle of epic proportions, [south](#) of the city of Valgrum, that even changed the geography of the Valgrum continent, making it inaccessible by sea, except for the eastern part, a city called Fadon, past the Zhaso desert.
- The colossal battle concluded with the victory of Eternis, who [sacrificed his life](#) to protect the people of Valgrum and their beliefs.
- The war itself is still ongoing and the people are in danger of the remnants of the pagans that challenged them long ago. It is the job of the [Army of Valgrum](#) to keep the city and people safe.
 - Colm is determined to not let what happened to his family happen to any other person in Valgrum.

Church of the Eternal

This subject was dedicated to the teaching of [Eternis](#) and covered topics such as the origin of the religion, tenets and goals. It was taught by priests of the church with the [Eternia](#) books that they always carried with them.

- The religion was formed by a human male named [Eternis](#), centuries ago.
- The purpose of it is to help and unify the people of the world by the means of one true, benevolent, just and eternal god.
- The Valgrum continent was united in the beginning, through the common belief.
- Killing and eating [kayans](#) was forbidden (this later became the first tenet of the religion), as they were a valuable resource for traveling and transporting goods across the Valgrum Continent.
- Anti-church factions began to rise and oppose the church, violently.
- That's when the [Eternal War](#) began.
- After the betrayal of the pagans, Eternis condemned all other races except for the humans which stayed loyal (this later became the second tenet of the religion).
- After the final battle, [Eternis](#) sacrificed himself for the survival of the people in the city of Valgrum.
- [Eternis](#) is expected to return in the future and continue his benevolent work in [Aetheria](#).

- Once he does, the **Eternal War** will continue, but this time, he will not be as forgiving and accepting as he was in the past. His **wrath** will be unleashed upon all who did not change their minds and atoned during the period he was gone (this later became the fourth tenet of the religion).
- Until then, it is the church's responsibility to save as many people as possible, by preaching and spreading their influence.
- To strengthen the people's resolve and faith, and to pay respect to **Eternis's sacrifice**, when the bells of the churches toll in Valgrum, the city is silent and the only thought in the people's heads is the **Eternal** (this is formulated in the fifth tenet of the religion).
- The history of the religion caused most, if not all of the tenets to be formulated and respected by the people of the city of Valgrum and beyond, where the religion is accepted. The tenets are the following:
 1. **Kayan** meat is forbidden for consumption. The birds are not to be harmed and should be treated with respect.
 2. All **racess other than humans** are indebted to humans due to their betrayal and taking away the people's peace and well-being by starting the **Eternal War**.
 3. **Smoking cigarettes** is not allowed due to the negative influence on **people's health**.
 4. All non-believers are to be saved, preached to and if ultimately they do not change their mind and atone, they will suffer the **Eternal's wrath** during his second coming.
 5. When the bells toll, all actions are to be stopped and the only thought in your head shall be the **Eternal**.
 6. When the **crystal rain** falls, you are not to touch it. It is the work of the pagans and may negatively influence your thoughts or hurt you.

Art of War

Not much is to be said about this subject. It was taught by the senior clerics and paladins of the order. The aasimar brothers (and sisters) in arms treated their juniors with respect and care, but still demanded and got the respect they deserved, distinguished as they were. The subject covered topics such as equipment, armor and weapon handling, battle strategies, **first aid**, **scavenging**, tactics and pretty much all things related to waging war, the battlefield and the "meta game" behind it.

On the written tests and simulations, Colm exceeded expectations and this is one of the reasons why early after the completion of his training, he advanced in the ranks very quickly.

Ethics

In this subject, guidelines and recommendations were taught and learned by the upcoming soldiers, so that no inhuman acts happen on the battlefield.

Resignation

Once he had advanced far enough into the ranks, gotten a lot of achievements and with them enough money to somewhat finish the rebuilding of the old Peyton farm, Colm and Beth moved into it. They bought a few farm animals and started living a peaceful life, much like his parents, long ago.

The Peyton Tragedy

Soon after starting to live in the farm, Beth shared the great news with Colm. She was pregnant and they were expecting a child. Time passed and they were as happy as a young couple can be. It was too good to be true and indeed, one day, it all went downhill.

Play: <https://youtu.be/N3L3RVBCAPk>

Beth experienced a numb pain during most of her pregnancy, something they thought was normal. Around 7 months into it, the pain became stronger and Beth gave an early birth. The poor thing was very small and weak, but the stranger part was that it was somewhat deformed. Its left arm and right leg looked more like tentacles than human extremities. Its face was somewhat distorted and one could swear it had more eyes or mouths than expected. Only on second glance, that always proved to not be the case. The baby died shortly after, leaving deep scars to both Colm and Beth, as well as their relationship.

Colm experienced something he hadn't in the longest time. A deep seething rage. Not wanting to hurt Beth with it, he changed the focus of the rage to drinking, gambling and whoring. The [Red Lotus](#) was a frequent destination of his, where he wasted away, not being able to get rid of the boiling rage within, distancing himself from Beth in the process. This in the end, lead to him returning late at night in their farm and finding out that Beth was missing. The next day, he realized there was a note on the table. A goodbye letter from his former beloved wife, Beth, who claimed she was gone for good.

Army of Valgrum #2

He had wasted away all of his money and sold everything that he, or they, once had. Not having anywhere else to go, or any means of suppressing the anger and pain within, he enlisted in the army again. Of course, given his former achievements, they welcomed him with open arms and restored his position.

The Monster he Feared

The nightmares were back. The sound of hoofs on soft, muddy ground, a warm embrace and a warm liquid running on his skin. Distant battle cries, a thumping heart and fast, heavy breathing. He would wake up in the middle of the night full of dread and despair.

Play (with timestamp) <https://youtu.be/qpWgalUZsTM?t=54>

This pressure which was building up inside culminated one fateful day, when, while being drunk, he was leading a scouting patrol group north of the city of Valgrum. They spotted a small group, or tribe of

orcs. This is when he short-circuited and ordered a frontal attack on the unsuspecting orcs. Nobody carrying or wielding a weapon was spared, a full-blown massacre happened by his order. As he was delivering the final blow to their chieftain, he heard a female orc's crying scream in the distance. As he turned to look, he saw a mother holding a child fall to the ground in tears.

On the ride back, weapons and armor bloodied by the deed, he started sobering up. The rage, the nightmares, the event that just transpired, it was all boiling inside of him. This time it was too much to bear. He was getting lightheaded, a pain growing inside his chest, breathing was getting harder and harder. He had become the same monster that had fueled his nightmares for all his life. It took one small frame of lost consciousness for him to slip from his horse and fall, injuring his neck...

Existence

Play: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxKSooOeaJ4>

Being no longer fit to be a soldier due to his injury, Colm was now a broken man who had nothing. The little hope he saw was his old friend [Arthur](#) who was in the same orphanage many years ago. Arthur offered him a job at the tavern he was running and Colm was pushing through each day losing himself more and more.

This deteriorating situation was interrupted by an old man who as a tip gave Colm a pouch he claimed he found in his basement and had no need of. Colm did not object, thinking there were coins in it, or at least something valuable. With the old man gone, Colm opened the pouch only to find a worthless coin and something that resembled a poorly drawn map. Angry, he threw the map away immediately, finding no value in it.

He was going to search for a person to sell the coin to, but it was too late in the day so he thought better to wait for the next one. Tired, he went into his room and holding the coin, dozed off. Surprisingly, after a long time without one, he had a dream. He saw a golden shining symbol, a grid of hexagons much like the ones displayed on the coin. The radiance emanating from it screamed [order](#). He felt connected to the symbol, but [the light of the hexagons was dimming](#), much like his own existence in the past few years. After a long time, he felt like he wasn't alone anymore. He related to this strange symbol, but was ashamed of himself and how low he had gotten. It was not just the symbol whose light was getting dimmer, it was his life as well, his former [honor](#) stained with his deeds and behavior, the [truth](#) of the tragic newborn which triggered the falling apart of his former and peaceful life still unknown to him. He was intrigued to say the least.

Journey

Play: <https://youtu.be/YmqfwA7OXcc>

With the supplies that Arthur shared with him, he began his journey towards the Valgrum mountains. Having lost the map, he only had hope and nothing to lose. Hesitant at first, the connection he had made with the symbol made him push through and continue his journey.

Slowly running out of supplies and going insane, he collapsed after a week of traveling. He was thoroughly broken and had given up. Fate, however, had other things in store for him. That's when he heard the voice of an older man, asking if he was alive. The man, who Colm could now see was an elf and a very old one at that, shared some food and water with him, revitalizing him. The man introduced himself as **Farnan Kelde** and offered Colm to come to his shed, a bit higher in the mountains.

Clergymen of Old

Farnan's Wisdom

Colm started living with the old man, isolated in the mountains of Valgrum. They often had conversations about Colm's life and Farnan offered quite a lot of **insight** into some events, though parts of his wisdom looked a bit cryptic.

- The church you speak of is not as benevolent as you may think, although not intentionally. There is already an order in this world and the church's order, even though it seems attractive and good for the people is interfering with the bigger picture. This will bring more harm than good on the long run.
- Do you really think that two healthy and happy people can produce such an abomination? I sense a foreign influence at the root of the desolation of your former life.
- Your inner rage cannot be quenched from without. It is you who needs to face it and topple it, finding order within yourself.
- Honor is not a given. It is earned. You cannot recover your former honor, nor should you. However, you can build up and keep your current, new one.
- Atonement is not pursued or done for someone else. The only atonement you need is for yourself.
- You have a predisposition for one of the entities you deem as pagan gods. You can restore yourself and seek to restore that entity with you.

Rehabilitation

Play <https://youtu.be/o3ARM35oYAY>

The old man advised Colm to perform daily rituals to advance his health and restore his physical condition, even enhance it.

- He would meditate naked in the freezing cold of the mountains, attempting to warm himself up by thinking of the symbol he once saw in a dream. This was an opportunity of self reflection and a training of self control.
- The old man massaged and cast healing spells on his neck injury daily.
- He started being responsible for woodcutting and carrying the wood back to the shed and inside of it once it was cut.

- Once his injury was completely healed, the old man instructed him to go to a nearby cave and start mining minerals.
- This and the woodcutting, especially in the freezing temperatures, strengthened his body once again.
- The old man instructed Colm on how to build a simple, yet functional forge.
- The conversations became less frequent and Colm was instructed to use the time spent on physical tasks to think about his past actions and events. Screams could be heard on top of the mountain as he recalled painful memories and dreadful deeds. However, this helped him accept the past and move on.

The Ways of Old

Play (with timestamp): <https://youtu.be/hpCgnNbFGKc?t=178>

In time, the forge was completed and Colm's body was back in shape, one could say combat ready. He could feel the connection with the strange entity becoming stronger. His next task was to work on the connection and the forge and smith himself an armor and a weapon with the guidance of the entity named *Sanctus*.

Colm spent a lot of time learning how to work the forge. Melting, casting, hammering, he worked day and night. His resolve never stronger, his spirit healed and lifted and his goal set. Plate after plate, he worked tirelessly until finally, he had completed it. His own armor, made by his own hands. However, something was missing. The armor looked dull, the work was far from perfect. Scratches, dents, asymmetry... One could only wonder if it would offer any protection or hinder the person wearing it. The process continued. He would mine ores, work the forge, eat, go to sleep. The old man was no longer a factor and they had little contact. It was just him, his will and the forge.

He had forgotten how many armors he had made and melted down. He was getting nowhere. And then it hit him. He was nurturing the relationship for so long, yet had not made the final step. He had not asked for cooperation. Discarding his latest work (which was far better than the first one) he set the stage for hammering the first piece of a new set. He calmed down and meditated for some time. Late in the night, he felt the connection was established. He gently grabbed the hammer and went on to strike the heated metal on the anvil.

As he swung, hexagonal runes started appearing on the hammer and the moment it hit the heated piece of metal, a strong flash nearly blinded him. Or so he thought. He could see everything perfectly, the light didn't bother him. He could see even more than he expected. He saw the runes on the hammer. He saw the golden wave of energy spreading through the metal he had just hit. He saw the exact next place he needed to hit to continue the process... And a bit further in the shed, the old man could see the progress Colm had made and could only smile and be proud...

Flash after flash, cling after cling, Colm spent the whole night smithing.

- I will restore order.
- I will build and keep my honor.
- I will find the truth.

In the morning, he greeted the old man wearing the armor he had smithed during the night. It was flawless. In his hand, he had the same hammer whose purpose he never questioned. The hammer was far from one meant for smithing. It was an old war hammer. Farnan could only tear up at the site of the proud Holy Cleric in front of him. Golden runes shining on his weapon and armor, a shield of pure radiant energy surging from his gauntlet...

Goodbye

The next day, early in the morning, Colm found the old man outside, standing and staring at the vastness of the Valgrum continent, all of its glory visible from the mountaintop. In front of him, a sigil drawn on top of the snow.

“It is time for you to go. I have taught you all I know and you are at your full potential. Achieve your goals. Restore order. Come here when you are ready. You will meet and entangle your fate with a peculiar person, just ask the parchment for a cooperation group.”

The latter part did not make much sense, but Colm donned his armor, took the war hammer and approached the old man. The old man requested a handshake and after a firm and respectful one, the old man starts reciting an incantation and the sigil on the snow lights up. Space bends and the snowy ground is transformed into a bubble of warped space, showing a room with a dragonborn person standing near its exit.

Colm steps into the portal and arrives in Anburora Maton.

“Aah, a new adventurer... Welcome to Anburora Maton, the cradle of knowledge on Aetheria! This will serve as your guide (hands over a visitor’s card) and we wish you a pleasant stay and fruitful endeavors.”

He understood now. He exited the room and found himself in the area bathed in rays of white magical energy. He asks the card: “Find me a cooperation group!”

The contents of the card change shape and he sees a compass like drawing which moves on its own, guiding him towards someone. At the top of the drawing there is a label: “Towards Finn”.