

# The Westland

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## Backgrounds

The following are roles you may choose from, with information on their place in the world and things that you might think about for a backstory if you want to play as one. This list is not fully comprehensive, you may select a role not in this list, but if so, you will need to come up with your own backstory and work with the DM to figure out the benefits.

### Sailor –

Sailors are the lifeblood of the Westland, they are almost always autonomous and free, but at the cost of needing to be self-sufficient. It is said that to be a sailor, one must have bones made of salt. Mostly they worship Osprem or Procan if they are traders or passenger ships, and Avandra if they are scallywags. They tend to be split into two categories, river traders and the oceanbound. River traders have boats made for shallow waters and trade between the Great Cities. Ocean craft have much broader hulls and trade with the western cities and the Tia'ight'eir, but have to contend with pirates. If you choose sailor you can either be a crewmate or a captain, you should definitely choose one of the 3 deities, because sailors in this world are a very superstitious lot and a sailor that does not hold to one of the 3 deities is likely to be tossed overboard by his mates.

### Nobility –

You'll not be a king or queen or in direct line of succession to any throne. However, there is a wide body of political intrigue suited to someone choosing to be a lesser lord or lady in a noble house. There are 6 major cities in which such titles exist, as the mid-sized and small cities just don't have enough room or people to support lands and titles. See the cities section for descriptions on how the lords/ladies of each city live. (The noble background cannot have Culend Tor as their home city)

### Trader/Merchant -

Although to most the two words are synonymous, to someone who provides goods to the masses ought never to mistake the two.

A trader is one who brings goods from major cities to their outlying areas, they are well versed in knowing what the provinces need and supplying them appropriately. They make friends with the locals, and are typically the ones that carry news from the surrounding world to farmers and villagers who live quiet lives and have no access to major cities or Talespinners. A village typically sees traders 2-3 times a year and it is usually the same traders each year, unless they get a one time trader passing through on their way to relocate.

A merchant, in contrast, is one who supplies trade between major cities. Some stick to constant supplies they know are always in need, large quantities of iron, stone, food, etc, but some trade in exotic goods, going far out of their way to procure them. Merchants tend to have their fingers in many things and typically have guards they trust to protect their caravan. A merchant might have between 5 and 20 carts they move supplies on at any time and always stick to main roads. Many merchants have a sailor or two they trust on their payroll to make use of rivers and coasts for trading when the need arises. While a trader relies on knowledge of the people to supply them, merchants are often able to afford some means of long distance communication, such as carrier pigeons or in rare cases a magical communication device.

### Farmer -

Near any town in the countryside, be it a town with a single inn or a bustling trade route stop, you will find the average farmer. Growing tabac, wheat, corn, or other crops, or raising livestock, they make their way in life by trading with the town or merchant caravans. Some farms in the plains of Estalon supply their local lords in exchange for the things they need to live. A farmer who survives more than 5

seasons in the trade knows how and when to rotate crops, knows how to store for the winter months, and tends to live a solitary life, only going into town every few days to a week. Farming requires a lot of upkeep, so farmers can't be gone long lest the farm fall into disrepair. Farming is typically a family trade, children doing the chores and then growing up to farm themselves and have little ones of their own. Most farmers outside Estalon do not have farmhands to work for them, preferring to rely on their own family and the occasional traveler who trades lodging in the barn for a half-day of hard work.

#### City Guard -

There is no shortage of men and women in the Westland claiming to protect its people and seek the public good; the most common among these are city guards. A guardsman is beholden to the local government's laws. They are very rarely found far outside the city proper outside a war. Most cities' guards double as the standing army.

See individual city for the name of its city guard.

#### Scholar -

There are some people who always have their nose in a book, and there are some people who are lucky enough to get paid for it. There are a great many lords who don't want to spend time learning things, but want to seem smart at parties. Local lords are willing to pay handsomely for knowledge, and the Towers of Culend Tor keep scholars on retainer to help them keep the libraries tidy. Some scholars are still actively creating new work for those scholars who stay in libraries. These scholars wander the world, documenting nature, cultures, or whatever strike their fancies. They sell their research to the great libraries but live off the kindness of strangers while on the road.

#### Wanderer -

The life of a wanderer, Fharlanghn would be proud. The road calls to you, and you heed its call. A wanderer always seeks adventure over the next rise. But it's not all forests and deserts, a wanderer needs a place to sleep and food to eat just like anyone. Wanderers can take odd jobs at farms in the countryside, they might work at an inn from time to time. Think about why you wander, where you are from, and what your skills are. This role has a lot of leeway, so just remember, RP is rewarded.

#### Militia -

While small local militias pop up from time to time, there are only two organizations in the Westland that can properly be called a militia. The Bringers of Light and the Red Wings.

*The Bringers of Light* are an organization who stand in contrast to the Chantry. They abhor arcane magic users claiming it is of the realms of the demons. They are a military group who seek to root out those dubbed "Darkfiends," those they claim are thrall to demons or worse. It is very rare to find a woman among the Bringers, there is no rule among them that says women cannot serve, but men of the Bringers would see women protected rather than taking up sword.

Most countries of the Westlands would not be sad if the Bringers were wiped out to a man, usually dubbing them "The Inquisition" outside of their earshot or sometimes "The Boys Choir" or "The Cage." However, so fervent are their beliefs and with so many willing to follow that they are a force most try not to aggravate. However, most major cities have laws restricting the amount of Bringers allowed in the city at one time, so most of the Bringer's work is done in the lands between the great cities. The Bringers base themselves in Carance, and are of constant bother to both Culend Tor and Treheth. To a man the Bringers worship Heironeous, and claim he sets their path.

Their organization is strict, their members knowing exactly where they stand and trusting implicitly the orders of their superiors as if they came from the Lord Captian General himself, since it is believed among their ranks that all of its men are incorruptible.

*The Red Wings* are a relatively new militia, having only sprung up in the last 20-30 years. It is said that they have the luck of Olidammara. Among their numbers are many rogues, rangers, bards, and the occasional roguish sorcerer or fighter. Estimated at about 10,000 men and women, they are led by a man named Matthias. It is hard to estimate their numbers because they almost never fight toe to toe, their tactics as varied and successful as any of the greatest tacticians ever to live.

Self-proclaimed defenders of the common man, they are typically found in skirmishes around the countryside anywhere where a village is being attacked or oppressed.

#### Thief -

Some thieves make their way on their own, but those that do are either immensely skilled or soon get caught. Punishments range from forced guard duty to expulsion to loss of limb to death. Two cities, Trecheth and Bredon have active thieves guilds that help shelter thieves on the run. These guilds have deals with the local guard and policy makers to protect their brotherhood. Thievery is severely punished in Culend Tor and it is heavily discouraged, even by the guilds, to practice the craft there. The life of a thief is one of thrills, for the fledgling thief, stealing is a succeed or die venture. Even ones who belong to a guild must steal for their food and lodging, there is no such thing as a free lunch. For the more experienced thieves, the theft is a rush they have come to rely on, nothing else comes close. Many such thieves of advanced skills hire themselves out to lords just for the thrill of the heist.

#### Talespinner –

Talespinners are typically of 3 kinds, Court Bards, City Spinners, or Gleemen. A Talespinner is a rare treat outside of a major city. There are quite a few other types of entertainers, jugglers, acrobats, gymnasts, Pyrocants etc; however none are quite so sure they are the upper echelons of entertainment as a Talespinner. Talespinners make themselves intimately aware of the lore of the lands, and they study its telling through prose, song, and music.

While a Court Bard can typically get away with these being the Talespinner's only talents, City Spinners and Gleemen tend to also pick up some other skills such as juggling or performing, since they are typically the only performer at the establishment they choose to entertain.

Talespinners are welcome at any tavern or inn, and can typically get a warm meal, a free room, and tips for performing for a night, although they might not get the best inn in town if another Talespinner is present.

To be a Talespinner you must have at least half your current levels as Bard or one of it's variants.

#### Entertainer – tumbler juggler performer

Not all entertainers are Talespinners, and despite what Talespinners will tell you, there are art forms outside story telling. While a Talespinner might think themselves a juggler or tumbler, they can never match the skill that one who dedicates themselves to the art can reach. Many skillful entertainers can find themselves among the Traveling People, moving from town to town, bringing in money for the People in exchange for a home while on the road. Some acrobats find themselves hired exclusively by a city lord or at the very least can get themselves hired on a weekly basis for a lord's party.

#### Inkeeper –

Every town has at least one inn, some up to 10, and big cities might have as many as 50. Every inn needs a keeper, and that's what you can be if you pick this role. Innkeepers pride themselves on knowing all the locals, knowing how to keep people happy, and knowing the best local brewers. Small inns might have as few as 5 rooms, but some large inns can have up to 30. An innkeeper needs to provide good food, good service, good entertainment, and a few other services on the side. Decide in what country your inn is. If it is in a city, which city and what makes your inn special? Do you market

to to the common man, to nobles, to merchants? Remember to have a stable and a stableboy or girl on hand.

Grove Tender – Druid, Ranger, any natural magic user, or Bard (considered nature rather than arcane), must worship Sylvanus.

Tenders make their home in The Grove, although they may be called to tend to the Gardens in the Great Cities from time to time. The Grove sometimes spreads, is sometimes pushed back, but is always kept safe by the Tenders. It is their job to enforce the Pact, making Shahone a safe place for all who enter it. In the Grove, the Tenders have no fear of magics that might be turned against them, and the Grove protects the Tender as much as the Tender protects the Grove.

Priest –

There are temples to the gods in the Great Cities, and a few in the minor cities, but none in the towns of the Westlands. Temple priests are as diverse as the gods they worship, but the common thread between them is dedication. A priest's life is dedicated to serving their god and tending to that god's followers. Priests also maintain the temples, as all but the most prominent temples do not have servants.

Temples by City:

*For major cities, see city section entry*

Minor cities:

Shahone - Lough

Wexside- Lolth, Bahamut, Sansiwal

Calefall- Fharlanghn, Kurtulmak, Ehlonna, Lathander

Carance- St. Cuthbert, Heironeous

Linmena- Yondalla, Obad-Hai, Fharlanghn (Small, for travelers going to the desert)

Ashmere- Kord

Car Dieb- Yondalla

Monastery student –

There are a handful of monasteries around the countryside of the Westlands where students train in mind and body. Here, monks hone their skills, and psionics, their wit. The monasteries are places of peace and solitude, away from the cities. All students, no matter their path, lead a disciplined and hard life. Up at dawn and not asleep until the moon is high. Not all their life is training however; students at the monasteries are expected to contribute to the public good. All students spend one day of every ten helping residents in nearby towns. One monastery, on the road between Estalon and Calefall, also has its students study the secrets of the ruins near which the monastery was built, searching for clues as to those who lived here before the lands were settled left behind.

Monastery servant –

Apart from students and masters in the monasteries, there are the servants who keep the monastery in order. Every monastery has at least a cook and a groundskeeper, as well as a few servants who help the masters with training. Those who choose this life are typically individuals who lost their loved ones in some way or left home as wanderers, finally choosing to settle down. Monastery servants are treated with respect by its inhabitants, and have free room and board for their services.

Town healers -

Wisdom, wise woman, healer, hedge doctor, witch, or what have you. Although typically women, in some towns men take on this role. These are people who pride themselves on knowing herbs and remedies, sicknesses and hysterias. Although often called on to deal with real sicknesses, many times

their skills go toward keeping people in line just as readily. Remedies, reading the weather, imparting wisdom, and being objective mediators are all roles that need filling, and this is the person that fills them more often than not. Town healers usually apprentice a young resident for a good decade before stepping aside. It is not always safe to be the town healer, however. When a cove of inquisitors stop by, they might just take you for a darkfiend if they think your cures smell of magic.

#### Pyrocants –

Pyrocants are part of a very prestigious and secret group of craftsmen. They create what could be called fireworks, but which are so much more. Imbued with magic and crafted with utmost care, the lightsticks, boom boxes, skylighters, etc are glorious and dangerous. The Pyrocants pride themselves in constantly pushing the bounds of what is possible. Only an Pyrocant can be trusted with the dangerous secrets of what they make, and as such most Pyrocants only know a piece of the puzzle, but even that they are sworn to keep secret from anyone outside the guild. Most Pyrocants stay with the guild their entire lives, but some rare cases leave the guild, and are still welcome to purchase supplies from the chapter houses, provided they promise not to let anyone else use them.

#### Traveling Person –

Perhaps the most obvious thing about the Traveling People is their strict adherence to peace, but if that is the only thing you see in them, you are missing the essence of who they are. To be one of the People is to always be part of a family, no matter where you roam, you are not alone, you are part of the community of the People who have lost their home. Lost in the generations of the People is the beginnings of the legend that they once used to live in a land of wonder and beauty. It is for this that the People search. They are aware that the entrance could be anywhere, and at times they search places they know they have already searched in case the way has opened since or in case they missed it before. During their travels, the People are accepting of any guests, they share their food and company. They will not turn away a person of violence, but they will not accept one who does violence among their people. However, anyone that adheres to a path of non-violence is free to join their family. They often times take in those orphaned by famine or war.

#### Mercenary –

Mercenaries tend to be lone wolves or small groups of no more than 5-10. They hire themselves out at cities or large towns to people who need guards (such as merchants) or assassins (such as is sometimes needed for the Great Game). A mercenary must strike a balance of being dangerous enough to be hired, but not so dangerous that they are hunted. It is important that an assassin, for example, be able to do their job, but not to be high profile enough that they catch the attention of a guard. Mercenaries that hire themselves as guards must be strong and confidence-inspiring, but be considered safe enough to trust as a guard.

A mercenary might base themselves out of one city, as a thief catcher or noble bodyguard, in which case they usually develop a rapport with the city guard, or they might move from town to town guarding caravans or merchant trains, or a noble going between cities, which requires them to be convincing salesmen and typically have someone willing to vouch for their skills in every city. Pure assassins, on the other hand, typically have a trusted point of contact through which they can procure contracts. Very confident assassins might meet in person, in a place they have many escapes from and traps to trip up any pursuers.

#### Ashanderi –

Ashanderi fill many roles, among them, diplomats, mediators, spies, bodyguards, and whores. They are selected and trained from a young age, many come from families who are too poor to afford to raise an unexpected child, although they can come from many diverse backgrounds, nobles who have a bastard

they want to rid themselves of, orphaned children, etc. However, the one thing all the children have in common is that they have no family anymore, and are raised by the Guild. They are very well taken care of, raised in luxury, and raised in the ways of politics, diplomacy, and swordplay when they are young, and the arts of seduction when they come of age. Ashanderi are both men and women. They are supplied contracts by the guild and all they make goes back to the Guild, in return they want for nothing.

Any time a delicate touch is needed, people look to the Ashanderi. An Ashanderi is known by a ring they wear on their middle right finger, a delicate woven ring that looks to be made of silver, but cannot be mared or bent. They do not always wear the ring, but it is known that anyone who has one is protected by the guild. Those few who have tried to pass themselves off as Ashanderi with a stolen ring quickly find themselves regretting it.

Ashanderi are required to never lie, this might seem to make them bad spies or negotiators, but the Ashanderi are masters of hiding what they do not want known. The truth you hear from an Ashanderi is not always the truth you think you hear.

# Calendar

A year in the Westland is 400 days long and is separated into two seasons, summer and winter. Each season is 20 weeks long, and each week is 10 days. A day on the calendar is written in the following format:

Season.Week.Day.Year

example:

S.1.1.2873 would be the first day of the first week of summer 2873.

The year starts on S.1.1 each year and there are four major holidays:

S.1.1 – Lathander's Day

S.10.1 – Sunday

W.1.1 – Selune's Day

W.10.1 – Wintersheart

Lathander's Day:

A day of celebration and new life, this marks the end of winter and the start of the new year.

Celebrations vary widely but all have in common the celebration of the triumph of surviving another year.

Sunday:

The feast of midsummer, typically a time for entire towns/cities to gather and celebrate the peak of life as a community.

Selune's Day:

The world is a dangerous place and fear can keep us alive. Selune's day is a day when people embrace fear and seek to conquer it, giving them hope that the coming winter is not an insurmountable obstacle.

Wintersheart:

In the dead of winter, people come together with loved ones and strangers alike to keep steadfast against the winter's bite. This is a time when we show compassion for those less fortunate and show the strength of community even in the darkest nights. It is said that even the dread goddess, the Raven Queen, is moved by the compassion shown by others on this day, and allows the winter to begin dissipating.



# Cities

## Estalon

Economy: Farming Exports

Politics: King, The 8, lesser lords

City Guard: The Silver Foxes

Navy: large

Standing Military: small

Temples: outskirts: Ehlonna, Moradin, Obad-Hai city: St. Cuthbert, Corellon Larethian, Bahamut

Nobility:

This city is an ocean city with large swaths of tillable land to produce goods that the others depend on. It is necessary to have minor lords that watch over and protect these lands and collect taxes to support these efforts, and to support their own political ambitions. Lords travel often between the city and their outlying lands, and are as such, often in need of spies and servants to carry out most of their work for them, since their duties take much of their time. A lord or lady of Estalon is likely to be throwing large parties at their own villa, or be attending to matters of consequence in the city. Likely they have one or two main servants to keep track of the needs of their farmers/villagers and if they are smart, a third man to keep track of the first two. The city has a standing army and a city guard, as well as a small fleet. The city has a king, who derives his power from the 8 lords who keep each other's power in check and who ally themselves with the lesser lords to control trade for political advantage. A new king is always chosen from the 8 when the old one dies, and the greatest of the lesser lords becomes a new member of the 8.

Culture:

Estalon is at heart a farming community, its pace far more relaxed than the other Great Cities. The city has stood for over 2000 years, however, and is not without its ability to defend itself. However, it has not seen a war in several hundred years, because it does its best to make itself more valuable as an ally than a prize. Estalon is the land from where most of the Westland's food and vices flow, wines, meats, grains, and dairy are their claim to fame. It is a welcoming atmosphere and the people broach no funny business. Ships travelling between Lantear and Trecheth along the ocean typically stop here for their rest along the way as well, trading as they go.

City:

(Think Arthurian architecture)

The city is all stonework and gently curving roads. The outer city is fully surrounded by a high wall (about 12 feet) wherever it is not lined by coast, and is full of tile-roofed houses. There are two main roads that move toward the inner city, gently sloping around its outside from nearly opposite sides, but never touching each other. They each end at a gate to the inner city. The city has parks woven in and

through it, all small and placed where there was space.

The inner city is filled with giant parks and noble's estates. It is surrounded by an inner wall about 8 feet high. Toward its center is a great castle that rises well over the walls of the inner city. It has no "front," on each of its sides it has a grand entry that meets one of the two main roads.

There is a large dock where most trade is done, inside the city walls on its southwest side. The northwest part of the coast is a giant cliff overlooking the ocean, with the temple to St. Cuthbert at its highest point.

The city boasts well over 100,000 citizens with another 50,000 or so living in the surrounding countryside (nobles and farmers and the like). The city itself is about 150 sq miles with the outlying countryside taking up about another 100 square miles.

## Lantear

Economy: Trading, Taxes

Politics: Patriarch and Matriarch

City Guard: The Matriarch's Guard

Navy: Small

Military: Large – The Patriarch's Army

Temples: Osprey, Procan, Garl Glittergold, Moradin, St. Cuthbert, Hextor

Nobility:

The politics of Lantear is based heavily around allying with either the Matriarch or the Patriarch. The Matriarch is elected for life, the Patriarch every 8 years, no one may be Patriarch twice in their life. A matriarch may be deposed by a 70% vote of the nobility. The Patriarch is decided by the nobility of the city, the Matriarch is elected by all citizens who have paid 15% of their income in taxes for the 10 years preceding the election. Nobles must be registered with the city for the full term of a Patriarch's term in order to vote for the next Patriarch. Nobility is bought and paid for, to maintain nobility, there is a price each year that must be paid. Being friends with a potential for the two offices is a great way to continue being wealthy enough to maintain nobility.

The Matriarch is in charge of the goings on of the city, tax collection, the city guard, and local law. The Patriarch is in charge of the standing military and of foreign diplomacy.

Nobles who ally themselves with the Patriarch tend to focus on trade and politics with other nations to maintain their wealth. Nobles who ally themselves with the Matriarch tend to focus on local business ownership and trying to foster good will with the public, especially for the person they would like to see succeed the current Matriarch should anything happen to her.

Culture:

Lantear is where ocean meets river. Technically the same could be said for Bredon, but the sailing being so much easier between the Great coastal Cities of the west and north, Bredon does not see much in the way of ocean traffic. Trade between the western cities and Culend Tor goes straight through the heart of Lantear, and Lantear is the largest supplier of Bredon and Mytettium as well. Although Culend Tor might be the greatest city around which the world turns, Lantear is its lifeblood and the two are fast friends. The city is the second oldest of the Great Cities, second only to Culend Tor itself, as such it has historical significance and its people are very proud of its many landmarks and historic buildings.

City:

Great cliffs face the ocean in Trecheth, sloping down on either side toward where the river has carved a divot and falls in a brilliant waterfall into the ocean. Not originally built as an ocean trade city, there

was a giant tunnel built into the ground that curves down to the ocean where the huge artificial harbor was created. Ships docking there are treated to a beautiful sight of a twisted conical tower rising up out of the ocean, surrounded by arms reaching out and offering places to dock. A land bridge leads from the docks to the tunnel entrance that takes traders up to where the river market lives. The architecture of Lantear is built on tiers, all vertical square buildings housing many families in each building. The rooftops boast vibrant gardens that let the runoff spill into the ocean via overhangs that shade the balconies when the sun shines in the summer.

## Trecheth

Economy: Tourism and Culture Exchange

Politics: 3 major houses, lesser houses Queen

City Guard: Warders of the Waves

Navy: Small

Standing Military: Medium

Temples: Olidammara, Procan, Erythnul, Osprem, Pelor

Nobility:

There are 3 great houses in Trecheth, with one of their number having the queenship for life. When a queen dies, the house that garners the support of the greatest number of lesser houses is able to install a queen upon the throne. In essence, one of the 3 great houses rules the kingdom at any time, but is kept in check by the other two. The three great houses are House Bartle, House Sandar, and House Trisan.

The current queen is Falie Sandar.

All lesser nobility are allied with one of the 3 houses publically, but may support more than one in private. In Trecheth, not being allied with a great house means you are likely to not be noble for much longer.

Culture:

Trecheth is the city of wonder and beauty, sweeping down a gentle cliff to meet the beaches and ocean inlets that make it what it is. It's people enjoy the finer things in life. The newest of the Great Cities, only having come into existence a mere 600 years or so ago. It settled upon the newly recovered land after the last traces of the Mistake cleared from the surrounding land. It is a hub for tourism and cultural exchange between the Valefor, Estalon, Bredon, and Culend Tor. Serene and sleek, it's people enjoy the taste of salt to the fresh air of the inlands.

Day to day life in Trecheth is bustling and geared toward hedonism and the enjoyment of life above all else.

City:

The city is cut through with inlets from the ocean, and hosting a huge harbor (like Venice). The architecture is mostly white stone with gently rounded corners, typically with spheres on the sides or corners for storage and indoor gardens. Getting around within the city is done on small boats or winding cobbled roads.

There are inns galore, as this is a tourist destination. Every inn boasts a view or a landmark or something to draw in guests that they claim no other inn has. It is here that the Valefor primarily trade their exotic goods with the Westlands (although some ships trade with Estalon and Bredon, and sometimes even Lantear).

Two buildings of note are the temples to Osprem and Procan. The temple to Osprem is built on an

overhang that juts over the ocean, two viewing rooms to each side hang off the ledge with open floors looking down on the crashing waves to meditate on the ocean. The temple to Procan is in the harbor, partially on the shore, but it dives down into the waters where it has a large room with a magical barrier that allows visitors to experience the sea life unobstructed by even glass.

## Culend Tor

Economy: Magic and trade

Politics: The Great Game, The Two Towers, The Chantry, The Triad, The Sovereign, The Hand

City Guard: Defenders of the Wall

Navy: Small

Standing Military: 4 Large armies - The Templars, The Hand, The Circle, and The Hawkeye Army

Temples: Lough, Kord, Bahamut, Boccob, Tiamat, Vecna, Pelor, St. Cuthbert, Corellon Larethian, Avandra, Lathender, Obad-Hai, Hextor, Deneir

Nobility:

Perhaps the most dangerous and complicated dance you will ever see, Culend Tor's politics are called "The Great Game," on its nuances the world turns. Ostensibly, the Sovereign is the seat of power in Culend Tor, but his role is mostly to be the push and tug that makes sure that the Chantry, the Circle, the Hand, and the Triad do not gain enough power to overcome their opponents. The Chantry is the divine political power of the land, the Hand is the council of wizards, the Circle is the council of sorcerers, and the Triad is made up of the 3 of the 5 Prefect Generals (2 being the king of Mytetium and his second). Each has their own army, and each would like nothing more than to take complete power over the Westland. There have been other factions that have come and gone over the centuries, but none were able to stand toe to toe with these 4.

Culture:

Considered the safest place in all the Westlands, it is in fact the most dangerous. Every citizen of the Westlands, no matter how rich or poor, meek or strong, is part of the Great Game, whether they know they are playing or not. And the major players are the factions and nobles of Culend Tor. It is widely known among serious players that acknowledging that they play the Great Game is the surest way to lose it. Because of this, on its surface, Culend Tor seems to be a safe haven for all people, regardless of race or nationality. But the undercurrent of Culend Tor is the politics that drive everything in the Westlands. Any noble of Culend Tor is constantly reading into the actions of everyone, noble and peasant alike, since even a peasant might be a spy or an unwitting pawn. It is known among the nobles that any word spoken aloud can be heard by at least 5 others, and that every action, even in the privacy of one's room, is subject to scrutiny, even by their allies.

This is not to say that everyone in Culend Tor is actively playing the Great Game, or even that most are even aware of it. A majority of the citizens of Culend Tor are simply living their lives like any other city of the Westland, albeit in a beautiful, central, and powerful city. Crime is nearly non-existent in Culend Tor. Thieves suffer serious consequences, and most nobles find it base to resort to assassination in the city, since there are much more delicate and effective ways to handle problems.

City:

Culend Tor is magnificence incarnate, its architecture more varied, beautiful, and awe inspiring than any of the Great Cities. It sits entirely on an island where 4 rivers meet, and has 5 delicate bridges arching high across the rivers to 5 towns on the opposite banks. The city's streets are wide enough for anywhere from 4 to 12 to walk abreast. Towers reach into the sky with bridges curving between them.

Many of the buildings seem to have been designed exclusively for aesthetics, mimicing crashing waves or a drop of water hitting the surface of a pond. Giant city parks are interspersed with buildings that seem to grow out of the ground. In the center of the city are 3 remarkable buildings. One a sleek white tower over 50 stories high with smaller towers built into it's sides, it is the Tower of the Circle. Another is also a tower, seemingly made entirely of silver, slightly shorter, that holds a giant silver sphere at its top, this is the Tower of the Hand. The last building is the Chantry, a massive complex spanning 20 city blocks with the temple to Pelor standing 10 stories high across 4 blocks.

## Bredon

Economy: Oil, Taxes, Heroes

Politics: Rods of Dominion (High Lords), King

City Guard: The Blackguard

Navy: Medium

Standing Military: Small

Temples: Avandra, Garl Glittergold, Vecna , Heironeous (Largest by far), Lathender

Nobility:

The 23 Rods of Dominion speak with one voice and impose the law of Bredon, the law's executor is the king, who's job is to see that Hironeous' will, spoken through the rods, is imposed. They are the High Lords and Ladies and their edict is considered divine from Heironeous. It is only with the consent of the current Rods that a new Rod may be instated to the position. The Rods employ lesser lords to see to the day to day tasks of the city, and they in turn call on the minor lords and the guard to carry out the requirements set forth. The Rods of Dominion meet in the council hall on the temple grounds. They maintain their estates on the high city, with the lesser nobles residing below in midtown.

Culture:

Heroes are not born, they are made, and the place they are made is Bredon. This Great City is proud of the many heroes that they claim got their start here: Valentius Magnificus, Katherine the Crusher, Ryan the Unmoving, Schroeder Silvertongue, Julia Shadowrunner. This is the city of the legend-wait for it-dary. Day to day life might be a bit more mundane than a Talespinner's story, but you will never hear any citizen of Bredon admit to that. With festivals once a month sending off new adventurers to glory, the city never stays boring for long.

City:

The city is laid out in a giant spoked wheel of broad paved streets perfect for festivals. At its center is the grand temple to Heironeous, and surrounding it is the high city. It is not any higher than the rest by elevation, but it's great manors are none of them less than 5 stories high, but still unable to block out the top of the temple. Spreading out from there is the midtown and the outer city. The architecture of the midtown is mostly low circular houses and shops. At every intersection where spoke meets outer circle there is a market selling wares to help adventurers on their journey with "genuine" magic items or souvenirs of great heroes. The outer city is mostly built in the last circle against walls and with small alleyways. It is segmented by the broad spokes where walls have been built to hide it from the processions of people coming into the city. There are 8 gates into the city, one at the end of each spoke.

## Mytetium

Economy: Protection Payment from Great Cities

Politics: King, succession line by rank

City Guard: None

Navy: None

Standing Military: Every citizen

Temples: Kord, Yondalla

Nobility:

A lord of the edge is an officer in the military. The seven great lords and the king are the heads of each city's army, with the 7 ranked in order of succession by military skill at any given time. Minor lords are also lieutenants and colonels. They don't typically own large lands, but they are likely to have a nicer home with servants (all the servants know how to fight and are typically city defenders if the city gets attacked as well). Lords do not vie for power in the Edge, power means responsibility pure and simple, and is only taken on by those who show the skill and put their lives on the line. As it is said along the edge, "Duty is heavier than a mountain, death, light as a feather."

Culture:

Mytetium is never without a king, so the saying goes. Every man and woman of the edge knows when they would pick up that mantle. They are bred hard by the constant war between themselves and the Icy king of the north, as well as with the savages of the waste. Seven cities with seven lords comprise the defense against the waste, and the main city, the defense against the north. Every man, woman, and child is taught in the ways of the sword, and most taught in the ways of at least 3 other weapons beside. If even one Mytetian still lives, they will fight on, and even if they are alone, they still command themselves. Blacksmiths, armorers, magic users, and women are protected above all else, each fulfilling a very real and needed function. However, no woman is denied a sword and a fight if she so desires, and any woman or tradesman would fight to the last to protect their people if the battle comes to their door. Mytetian weapons are of the finest quality, and rare to see outside the edge. But those that manage to convince a smith to sell pay handsomely. (All weapons produced here are at least masterwork, Blademaster blades are +1 and can only be wielded by their owner, ownership is taken by killing the current owner)

City:

Defensive and utilitarian are good ways to describe this Great City. Even when it is breached, it is prepared for battle, with some streets forming chokepoints, high walls on each side, spilling into large open areas that can be used as killing fields. The buildings would be difficult to scale from outside. There are hundreds of hidden doors, hiding places, and escape routes known to citizens to help them lure enemies that are inside the city walls. The stone that makes up the architecture of the city is perfectly smooth and of the finest quality stone, crafted by the nearby Stone Shapers clan. The city spans the distance between the two passes into the high mountains to the north of the city. There are 3 forts in the city where the king works as general and overseer of the city, changing randomly from one to the other so that enemies and spies can never be sure of where he is.

Edge Cities:

There are 7 minor cities of the Edge, all of whom consider themselves citizens of Mytetium and of the Edge.

## **Guilds and Associations**

### **Desert People -**

Called the savages by most, the people from the desert are fierce warriors who seem fiercely territorial. The Westland is protected from the savages by the 7 great cities of the Edge. Little is known about them or why they seem to attack so violently and targeted at what seem to be arbitrary lines in the sand. Were their numbers greater, they would surely overrun the Westlands, as they are more dangerous than any man of the Westlands by far, even a Blademaster would not seek to fight them one on one.

### **Blademasters -**

Blademasters are the elite swordsmen of the Edge. A blademasters blade is made imbued with magic and are given to those who have made the blade their life. A blademasters blade is only achieved by killing a blademaster in one on one combat, or by being bestowed one by a blademaster to their apprentice. Across the land, one bearing the mark of the crane is known to be a most dangerous foe. The blade is magically enchanted such that only the person who kills a blademaster bonded to it can wield it. It is known that the savages of the waste will not touch a sword, but it is sometimes the custom that when fighting the men of the north, if a blademaster knows he will die, he passes the bond to his second before taking an enemy's sword and throwing himself to the oncoming army while his people retreat.

### **Pyrocants -**

The Pyrocants are a very secretive and tight-knit community. They take fireworks to an art form, most Pyrocants committing their entire lives to it. There are 3 chapter houses in the Westlands, in Lantear, Estalon, and Bredon. But by far the most prominent location for the Pyrocants is the guild hall in Culend Tor. Every 10 years they produce a spectacular show in Culend Tor that brings people from across the Westlands. Beyond this, there is nearly nothing known of them.

### **Grove Tenders -**

Revered and respected by all the people of the Westlands, the Grove Tenders make their home in the Great Grove, called Shahone. Shahone is known to be a place of rest and solace for any man, but in it's borders the Pact stands. According to the Pact, no being may bring harm to another while in the Grove. How they enforce the Pact is a well kept secret, but it is rumored that the goddess Lough protects the Grove. Tenders are dispatched regularly to the major cities to maintain the Gardens there. Rarely a Tender will travel the lands visiting farms and small villages to help them with their crops.

### **Traveling People (The People) -**

The Traveling people are those who follow the Way of Peace. They believe that to harm another is to bring harm to yourself, and as such do not eat meat nor harm others. Among the Traveling People anyone can find welcome. They live out of wagons and have no land to call home. There is a legend among their people that if they continue to have faith they will find the way back to the promised land.

Any Traveling Person who takes up a weapon or does violence to another is considered lost and is no longer considered one of the People, those few typically leave soon after, as they are still welcome as a guest, but have no family.

#### The Valefor -

The people who live on the islands off the coast of Trecheth are perhaps the most openly mysterious people of the Westlands. They are traders and fantastic sailors, kind, outgoing, and welcoming. They never turn down the request to be a passenger aboard their ship, no one is sure what they get out of this. They trade with all peoples, even the savages of the desert and the people of the Icy North. They have the best shipmakers in the Westlands, the only ones capable of travelling along the coast north of Wexside to get to the coastal cities of the Icy North. It is said that once a Valefor steps on to a boat to become a sailor, they vow never to step off again, and will die with their ship if it goes down.

#### Tia'ight'eir -

The Talespinners tell of a land over the ocean far to the east with but one way in. The entire coast of the land spreading north and south further than anyone has ever seen is covered by an impossibly tall black wall, all of one piece. There is one trade port where people are allowed to land. The port is a city with beautiful crystal towers, thousands of spans high, in all the colors, some that seem to catch your eye as colors you didn't know existed. Delicate bridges seem tossed from one tower to another with no support, but they hold any weight. The people there are black as night, most with heads shaven bare. They command giant constructs to do their work for them.

Of the wall little is known, any man found trying to research it is given one warning, if he tried again he was never heard from again. Those who have gotten close enough to touch it claim it has no seam, no place where one stone would meet another. It seems at once to be made of metal and stone and is as solid as anything, taking no chip or dent from any force.

#### Vi Kings -

They call themselves "Vi Kings," although how they can all be kings and what a Vi is, no one knows. They seem to love nothing more than fighting. They never seem to wear armor beyond the furs that protect them from the cold. They raid Mytetium constantly, but are always pushed back into the mountains. Women fight among them just as fiercely as men. They are all human and dwarves, it is unknown if there are any other races living north of the mountains.

#### Stoneshapers -

A small group of dwarves that live near Mytetium, stoneshapers are a very cautious, very artistic people. They produce the most beautiful stonework, and all the major cities have some of their work. They are not adventurers and are not warriors. They are protected by the people of the Edge, so that they may continue their long tradition of maintaining the great cities and producing great projects of architecture and art.

#### The Guild -

This title is shorthand for the Guild of Ashanderi. It is well known that anyone who belongs to the Guild is protected and should not be harmed lest you bring the entire Guild upon your head. The Guild is located in Culend Tor, but has a guildhall in every major city. It is known that anyone who has an unwanted child can leave them with the Ashanderi and know they will be well cared for, but that doing so means you can never see them again.

Ashendari are bound to an oath of truth, they cannot lie, ever. You can always trust that an Ashendari is telling you the truth, but you cannot always trust that it is the truth you think you hear. For this reason they can be trusted more than most as diplomats and mediators to be fair. The Guild also frowns on



assassination, and will put out any Ashendari that kills unless it is justified in vengeance for the killing of another Guild member or killing in defense of their own life.

All hiring of Ashanderi is done through a guildhall, a specific Ashendari can be requested, but any Ashanderi is free to turn down a contract at their own discretion.

Prefect Generals -

Considered the finest military minds of their lifetimes, the Prefects are a title, and there are always 5.

When one dies, another steps up, being agreed upon by the other 4. 2 of the Prefects are the heads of the Mytentium army, the other 3 head the Triad, the seat of military political power in the Westlands (In opposition to the magical and religious elements of the Westland politics).