

Liania: The Player's Guide

David Starner

May 22, 2020

A thousand years ago, at the end of a world-shaking war, the artifacts of Chaos were buried in an ancient dungeon. Above this dungeon, a city was built, and in its walls magic was bound to prevent any from leaving the city or the dungeon below. For all the disturbances of the last millennium, the forces of Chaos have been relatively quiet; will your explorations keep them from erupting or accidentally unchain them?

Chapter 1

Setting

Chapter 2

Ancestries

There are many ancestries open to players: dwarves, elves, gnomes, goblins, halflings, orcs and humans (from *Core Rulebook*); leshy and lizardfolk (from *Lost Omens Character Guide*); catfolk, kobolds, orcs, ratfolk and tengu (from *Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide*; shoony (from AP #153); steelheart (from *Ponyfinder: Second Edition Conversion Guide*); neddies (as nedjes sphinxes, from *Ponyfinder: Depths of Everglow*); felsines (from *Eldritch Ancestries: Felsine*); (High fey are works in progress.)

Humans, halflings, kobolds, goblins and ratfolk are most common in Liania. Dwarves, elves, felsines, leshy, lizardfolk, neddies, shoony, and steelheart are uncommon; everyone has seen them, but few know one personally. (The list of rare races have been removed, but they are still available upon discussion.)

The elves, dwarves, kobolds and orcs were around before the young races, or so they claim. It is true that they do not have gods and cannot gain power from the gods; there are no clerics or champions of these races. In contrast, the young races cannot cast primal or divine spells without connection to a god. Many of the old races blame the bringing of the gods for bringing Chaos and the destruction that came with.

High fey come directly from the fey lands. They cannot gain power from the gods, but like the young races, they need to worship to cast primal or divine spells, in their case the Eldest (from *Lost Omens: Gods and Magic*).

All races can interact with the Chaos lords, and this is an exception to the rule that old races can't become clerics or champions. This is not a PC option.

Aasimars, tieflings, duskwalkers and dhampirs are not available as heritages. Hobgoblins and gnomes are not available as ancestries.

All races in the city speak Common, even if not otherwise noted.

2.1 Common races

2.1.1 Humans

Humans come in a wide variety of forms, in a wide variety of cultures. The groups that came to Liania a thousand years ago have formed a genetically and culturally homogenous group, but newer additions are constantly arriving. They speak Common, though a dozen historical languages are still taught. They both have the majority of the lordships and make up the largest part of the slums.

For half-elves, see elves, and likewise for half-orcs. There is no crossbreeding of ancestries in the world of Liania.

2.1.2 Halflings

Halflings were nearly wiped out in the wars against Chaos, and it is not known if there are any living outside the city. They are a small, very tight community with their own walled subcity. They are somewhat notorious; those that live outside the halfling city and thus interact with others more often tend to be exiles and troublemakers. The city did compel the halfling subcity to report murderers and other unsavory characters, after an incident with a serial killer one hundred and fifty years ago, but it is still true that many who commit crimes are quietly exiled instead of the information being passed to the larger city.

Halflings speak Halfling and Pretorius, a religious language. They usually worship Decimus, a LN ascended halfling from long before Liania, though there is a heresy of Julia, a NG ascended halfling alleged to be his daughter, and the separate religion of Terious, a TN ascended halfling that claims to represent the world itself.

2.1.3 Kobolds

Kobolds make up a lot of the slums and poverty level labor, as well as much of the organized crime and revolutionary groups. They tend to make much of their being an old race, and claim to be older than the other old races. Elves and dwarves tend to ignore this, but it riles up certain orcs to the point of violence ... which possibly explains why many kobolds only bring this up in the presence of orcs.

Kobolds speak Kobold. They assert this to be Draconic; given that there are no full dragons in the city, and Draconic is not historically written, this is doubted but undisprovable.

2.1.4 Goblins

Many people ask themselves why the city still has to deal with goblins? There have been constant attempts at dealing with them, which twice have extended to open genocide. Currently the city makes sure that some goblin gets punished for any acts of arson, even if good people keep bleating about how inappropriate it is to just round up goblins without any real evidence of their personal guilt.

Goblins yet live. Some of them take good jobs, many of them live on the grain dole and amuse themselves in relatively undestructive ways and some of them go on wild rampages. They also tend to hide below ground, and frequently a group of goblins that have lived in the dungeons a few generations will return to the city. A few goblins are deep servitors of Chaos lords, a fact fortunately hidden by their less disciplined kin.

In addition to the Chaos lords, goblins worship a plethora of goblin gods. About a dozen actually correspond to ascended goblins, but all of these gods have enough alchemists, non-divine sorcerers, bards and/or stage magicians attributing power to them to make it unclear to anyone which 12 are actual gods.

Goblins speak a host of ever-mutating languages, which ratfolk scholars have labeled current dialects Goblin-1 through Goblin-6. If two goblins speaking different tongues meet, they will depend on the principle of speaking louder and slower, and hopefully cognates will get enough of the message through. Goblins also know Common and will fall back on it in emergencies, but are convinced they all speak the same language, the others just speaking it poorly.

2.1.5 Ratfolk

The ratfolk are newcomers to the city, having only been here about 100 years. They notably lack in political power due to this, but have a great deal of social power. They trade everything, and they are entrenched in the magical and academic hierarchies. Despite this, they get a lot of distrust, and are considered outsiders. Ratfolk are often the employers of goblins, given that they feel commonality for being outsiders, though the generally low wages goblins get paid are a cause for backlash in certain sectors of the goblin community.

Ratfolk speak Ratfolk. They worship a quadrumvirate of gods, Tskhovreba (NG god of life and growing things), Tsodna (LN god of education and knowledge), Misnoba (N god of power and magic), and Tavisupleba (CN god of anarchy and freedom).

2.2 Uncommon races

2.2.1 Dwarves

Dwarves are distinctly a different type of being than the other humanoids. They are creatures of stone-infused flesh. They will sometimes let themselves be categorized as male or female, but aren't really either. A dozen dwarves will engage in a group ritual to animate a large lump of stone into a large-sized baby dwarf, which will wear down to a normal sized dwarf over time. While growing up, the young dwarf will be the responsibility of a single "parent", who may or may not be one of the original animators, for five to ten years before being passed to another "parent".

Dwarves have skin the color of the stone used to make them; granite is common in Liania, but the dwarves will frequently import stone for forming children. As they grow up, they become more dwarven in form and start to develop humanoid hair, teeth, eyes and nails. Hair in particular grows in the color, style and length chosen by the dwarf, though they may have to shed to start growing a new style.

Dwarves speak Dwarvish. They have a very distinct religion that offers minor offerings of plant to water, air and fire, with prayers being centered around proper balance.

2.2.2 Elves

Half-elves are not descended from humans. Upon the coming of the young races, elves of the original lifespan and powers started becoming rarer; elvish children started more similar to humans and dying younger. Elves do throw around the phrase “half elf”, in Elvish, as an insult; there are technical terms in Elvish for it, but for most polite purposes, they are just elves. This is not discussed in mixed company, so while other races can tell the difference visually, they don’t have a clear understand of what’s going on.

Elves speak Common Elvish (or just Elvish), as well as either Quenya or Sindarin. While closely related to each other and more distantly to Common Elvish, the language signifies a deep split in the Elvish community, and relationships across the barrier are rare. Newcomers to Liania, particularly those of rare heritages like arctic elves, may speak a different Elvish tongue in addition to Common Elvish; they will be pressured to pick a side.

2.2.3 Felsines

From Eldritch Ancestries: Felsine); see the GM for more details

Felsines are a small, cute relative of catfolk. While not part of the original races of Liania, the first batch showed up less than a hundred years after the founding, with more groups following at regular intervals. They are frequently underestimated, and felsines sometimes lean into this, but people who get to know them know of their determination, patience and occasional viciousness.

Felsines speak Felsine and a language of their particular tribe, in addition to Common. They worship a plethora of gods, both from the seven ascended Felsines and those of other races.

2.2.4 Leshy

Leshy are one of the original races that founded Liania, and still hold notable political power. They occupy the park in the center of the city, along with the lizardfolk, and tend to be especially inactive in the depths of winter. Without their mediation, Liania politics can get especially dirty during the winter.

There are almost two dozen leshy gods. The leshy are the only race to willfully deify individuals in an organized way; their skills in this matter are not

well known among non-leshy. There are currently two beatified leschy undergoing the process to be deified. Leschy speak Leschy.

(Unlike the core rulebooks, leschy do reproduce like other races. They are hermaphroditic and pair-bond usually for just the one season.)

2.2.5 Lizardfolk

The lizardfolk are a new arrival to Liania, arriving about 100 years ago, 5 years after the ratfolk. Lizardfolk don't talk much, but the rumor is that they were chasing after the ratfolk. This might have some relation to the fact that the lizardfolk almost universally shun the ratfolk, and probably wouldn't give one the time of day. The lizardfolk have quietly nestled into the park area with the leschy.

Lizardfolk speak Lizardfolk. As a society, they are monotheists; they worship Grathnor (that is, God in Lizardfolk). Many lizardfolk seem driven to evangelize at some point, but their general tacturn nature and the general lack of success blunt that pretty quickly.

2.2.6 Neddies

(As nedjes sphinxes, from Ponyfinder: Depths of Everglow; see the GM for more details.)

The neddies are a medium-sized race of sphinxes. They appeared in Liania hundreds of years ago, from parts unknown. (Some neddies know that they came from below, and most on the street would not be surprised to hear that.) While they have no hands, many have used their brilliant minds or sharp claws and teeth to make their way in the world quite successfully. They frequently pair with a felsine (or exiled halfling or a ratfolk) to make up for their lack of hands, with other races either being too tall or too untrustworthy. The presence of a neddie worries many, as they are unpredictable and undisciplined, and unlike a goblin, large enough to be hard to run physically.

Neddies speak Neddie. There is a neddie god, the All-Mother, but like as not, a religious neddie will find any god that amuses them.

(Mechanically, they can get flight and grow to large size by taking level 5 ancestry feats.)

2.2.7 Orcs

Half-orcs, like half-elves, are not descended from humans. The Orcish term for them would more literally be translated "adult cub"; as orcs do, it is less precisely used than Elvish "half-elf", being applied to full orcs that are less powerful, and not to any "half-orc" who could pound the speaker into the ground for such an insult.

Half-orcs and orcs are subject to quite a bit of suspicion in Liania, but their status as an old race does provide them a bit of protection from the extremes of the treatment of the goblins. When they do have jobs, they tend to be ones

where they can crack heads; the general reputation of orcs as unintelligent make few, even other orcs, willing to follow them.

Orcs speak Common; there was an Orcish language, but if there number any speakers of it remaining among the orcs, they number quite few.

2.2.8 Shoony

See <https://2e.aonprd.com/Ancestries.aspx?ID=16>.

Shoony are pugfolk, and followed the humans to the founding of the city. Shoony are not technically inclined; they do much of the farming that's done inside the city. They sometimes get treated as the non-violent version of orcs, just big, dumb muscle. This has sometimes backfired on the assumer.

Shoony that don't stay at home with other shoony often go as a protectors. They will adopt some creature they feel needs their protection, be it another shoony, a felsine, orc, or other ancestry. (It is interesting how often the shoony will consider some being larger and more dangerous than them their charge.) Felsine and shoony frequently get along quite well, though neddies and shoony don't tend to.

Shoony speak Shoony. They have a small array of their gods to worship, but tend to keep their religion pretty private.

2.2.9 Steelheart

From Ponyfinder: Second Edition Conversion Guide; *see the GM for more details*.

The steelheart are a race of mechanical intelligent ponies, numbering about 450. They were created in town 300 years ago, and the entire race lives here. They do not reproduce, instead continuously repairing older individuals. Out of the original 600, 100 have gone missing, and 50 are non-functional and awaiting repairs. Steelheart with sufficient damage often lack their original memories after being repaired, but are still considered the same person. (In theory, this functions as a free raise dead for steelheart; in practice, it will cost as much as a normal Raise Dead to move a PC to the top of the queue. Some of the non-functional steelheart have been waiting repairs for decades.)

Their creator ascended shortly after their creation, and Fekoro is now a god worshipped virtually exclusively by the steelheart. Nobody has managed to create more living constructs like the steelheart, and the steelheart have not been willing to share any information they have with anyone else.