

Building Better Worlds: Atoria



World map as made by human Cartographer's on Ator during the end of the 2nd Age.

Beginnings

'Much is unknown about our creational history. How Atoria came to be, how it would form to the habitable plane it is today. The Elves hypothesised that we were all children of three great deities:

The Architect,
The Curator,
and The Desolation.

These cosmic beings would see over our being from beginning to end. Our formation and undoing. The sheer magical powers these creators must've possessed is unfathomable; for the magical powers of Atoria are already so. The envoy Elves of Thron'Hin speak about the intricate rituals their kin practice in order to appease their gods.

The Architect

According to the ancient Elven songs, the Architect is an entity filled only with the will of creation. Forming the very elements we stand upon, the magic which surrounds us, the bonds we form and even the emotions we withstand. The architect's vision seeps through all, their will; motivating, their creativity; a blessing. Despite this however, one must remember that the Architect is not all benevolent. For it also built spite, hatred and war in its ever-growing vision for our home. The Architect is not benevolence, nor malevolence. The Architect is merely the creation of all and shall be respected as such.

The Architect seems to be rather absent in direct contact with the folks of Atoria. Many have claimed to be visited by them but none have been confirmed if Tardeen is to be believed. Still, the architect is prayed to and appeased by the Elves. They build shrines which they then cover in the greenest of Cloverbaum, rye and Thornflower to symbolise the Architect's creations. Both praised and cursed.

The Curator

It is hard to find concrete sources on the Curator. Olden tales reference a fourth being; The Arbiter, an entity said to write the laws of the universe, the morals of our kin, and even the progression of the seasons. For ages past however, the Arbiter has not been mentioned in tale nor song. Their duties are now described as being taken over by another entity; The Curator. Outside of the previously mentioned duties, the Curator makes sure that we, the inhabitants of Atoria play the game by their rules. Some of the most important rules can be found spread out in caves around Talkir, leading many-a elf to pilgrimage across the continent. The major rules are as follows:

1. "The Curator acts as both judge and executioner. Their will is law."
2. "Atoria's nature must be preserved at all costs. The natural order shall rule when the Curator does not."
3. "The Magic of Atoria should not be used lightly, else the Desolation shall encumber us with countless years of sorrow."

4. “Should the previous laws be upheld; innovation is encouraged. Stagnation is sin.”

The Curator's laws are imprinted into Elven culture. Their respect for the natural world is admirable. Whenever a new shrine is built to the Curator, it is adorned with the latest fashion, technological advancements and literary works. These shrines serve both as capsules of times long past and to honour the great Curator. The great Curator has been seen wandering the continents of Atoria both by folklore and song. Oftentimes the being takes the visage of an old Elven woman in rugged robes with silken hair and fiery red eyes but there are accounts where the Curator has taken other forms also.

In Elven the Curator has a distinct name; *Fa'el*, or *Watcher*.

The Desolation

The final of the three deities, The Desolation. Its real name never to be uttered else it shall be called from the depths of Hel'Veth. Due to its malice, only a handful of legends speak of what the Elves *assume* is the third deity. The Desolation is the incarnation of all negative emotions, all the dark magic, all the destruction and woe the world can muster. It is said that the entity only shows itself to those who they deem worthy of being a herald of destruction, carnage itself. Certain dark cults worship this entity to ensure it does not try to escape its prison deep within the earth itself. Tardeen speaks of a legend only told in these cults; There is said to lay an entrance to this vault hidden deep beneath the waves, only summoned by a powerful practitioner of the arcane arts. Should this vault be breached, terrible consequences will follow and the end of the world will be heralded by the most bloodthirsty of warriors. There are no shrines for the Desolation, it is not taught in Elven society as much as it is stumbled upon. For its influence is within our hearts. Every evil thought, every bad deed. 'Tis all it's doing.

May we be spared from its vengeance.

The words in this section have been cyphered. Deciphering it causes a great toll upon the reader and embers will burn this book. Proceed with caution.

*Spawned from the great, Death
Born and reshaped, Raze and Ruin
Imprisoned by my kin, Vengeance
Great sorrow shall fade, the land shall be calm.*

Rise again from the depths of the sea, rise again Joh-Ur-Si'

- Excerpt from *Historiae Atorium, 1st Ed., Chapter 1. Beginnings*. Written by Doruk Giftbringer.

The Ages

'Our world, Atoria, is one in constant turmoil. Our history has been split into three ages by our ancestral historians.

The First Age - Primordium, Year: 0 - 196, 672 A1

Primordium is the age of creation and birth. During this age Atoria was formed by the Creator, everything from the earth we stand on to the *will* we use to practise magic. There were no humans of this age but the Elven Kingdoms stood tall even on Ator. Their wicked use of the will caused the very land to fold beneath them. Forests glowing with menacing lights, earth flowing like a raging river to cultivate their dreadful ideals into the very land itself. Defilement. Meanwhile the Dwarves to the east damned the land with their grand industries. Raped it of its resources and scoured its riches without end. It is said that the smog from these prisons of stone blackened the very sky itself, and caused rain of terrible hellfire to terrorise the world.

The conflicts between elves and dwarves were fiercer than their clash of ideals. It is said that the *Twin Lakes on Ator* are a direct consequence of this warfare. Unleashing terrible amounts of magic upon the continent upset it causing great turmoil both between the factions as well as the earth, which split in two leaving but a strip of land in between.

Fire and Lightning however, would appease all. Some of the monsters came to their senses and started building pacifist communities around Ator and *Farhuin*. Some of these communities welcomed all, regardless of race; and Porthaven is said to have been one of the largest which might explain their neutral disposition to dwarves to this day. These havens became breeding grounds for what would eventually become us. It is said that Atoria was graced with humankind in unholy union between elf and dwarf. Eventually the human population would outnumber the population of either elf and dwarf within those walls. Soon there were too many of us, so we migrated. But there was nowhere we could stay. For the elves in the west, saw us as degenerate and below them. The dwarves in the east were friendlier but their halls could hold no more and their fields were already almost barren from warfare so they could not take us in. Our ancestors kept roaming until they eventually returned to Porthaven. Having nowhere else to go they started cleaning the city from filth. The Porthaven Massacre is said to be the end of the 1st Age, and the dawn of a new era. The Age of Man.

The Second Age - Regula Humana, Year: 0 - 784 A2

The Second age marks a change in the world order. As the conflict between elves and dwarves reigned on, the human armies were establishing in the south. As the other two races were too obsessed with their own undoing, we went unnoticed. As our armies grew, theirs were reduced to nothing but rubble. In the middle of the 301st year started the final blow to what had been several thousands of years of conflict. As the humans swept across Ator they met with heavy resistance still. But bravely they pressed on. Securing more and more of the sacred continent until the elves committed a terrible sin which would plague the world forever. The elves communed with a Demon from Talkir, to aid them in the war for Ator. The demon, whose name was Kazzehk, had been promised the seat of Tar'Hin in exchange for a weapon capable of dealing with our ancestors.

This marked the birth of the worst vermin in all of Atoria. The Orcs.

The elves of Ator were all turned. A brutish horde of large, hairy brutes swept across the land. The humans sent their envoys to the dwarves in the east, to unite against the Orcen

threat. From the envoys only the Dwarves of Dun'Kazan answered. The two armies fought bravely together. For several hundred years the conflict roared. With the remaining elves realising their days were numbered they withdrew from Ator leaving the Orcs behind. As the elven army left the shores suddenly dwarves and humans gained an upper hand on the menacing horde. *The Slaughter of Tar'Hin* took place on the western shores and wiped out a majority of the Orcs from the continent. The survivors left scattered and weak.

For a time the dwarves worked in tandem with our ancestors and a great alliance was formed. Dwarves shared their greedily dug resources, stone, gem & ore. We shared the crops and wood harvested from the Ator landscape. Prosperity. Together the Kazan dwarves and some humans from the Midlands had a great discovery: *Mithril*. This new alloy would be imperative for military and magical research across the two continents. The golden age of human civilization would ensue and a large city was erected in the Midlands; *Mithrila*. In Mithrila stood the greatest walls, the grandest towers and the brightest flags. The new capital of the Empire.

Many peaceful years were had. The first of the kings sat upon the throne. Tarek I, Dannei II, Tanek the Tall, and many more. For 300 years this golden age would last. But alas, then came Otar.

Otar was always spoiled with fortune. As the sixth in line of succession with his siblings he never once imagined he'd be king. But as his family died, one by one, he quickly saw himself upon the silver seat. At 17 he was already anointed king. He was stubborn, selfish and close-minded. The relationship between Mithrila and the Kazan dwarves were soured by his decisions to keep mithril only for the human militias. Outraged, the dwarven Thane *Taar Willbender* demanded an audience with the king, who promptly shut down the demand and started to work in secret on rearmament of the armies.

As a child Otar had always been curious about the history of Ator. The elven artefacts scattered across the continents had fascinated him. Not much was said about them in the royal education more than appointing them as cursed and dangerous. Otar would not let the idea of them go however. As he rode to the west to the ruins of Tar'Hin. When he arrived at the gates he saw the sprawling forest, still glowing vibrantly from the elven desecration. He saw the skeletal sea from the slaughter 300 years prior. The death and decay enlightened him. He studied the ancient texts, artefacts and scrolls left behind and for several years he gathered the knowledge of the ancient religion, learned about the nature of will, and even how to manipulate it in ways no human ever had before. As the armies stood ready for war, Otar had them march towards Dun'Kazan but instead of leading the forces, he remained back in Mithrila to form the first *Council of the Willbound*.

Members of the council would dedicate themselves to learning more about will and perform greater wonders than the minor magical practices humans previously were capable of. Their proficiency in the arcane arts proved to be immense and their skill grew exponentially over the course of only a year. As the human army reached Farhuin they could now be backed up by powerful willbenders from the council. Some would stay behind to teach new pupils the way of will. Otar however, became obsessed with power. Not only would he rule an eternal kingdom, he would be its eternal king.

*"In halls of Stone King Otar roam
The unyielding kingdom and its undying king
Long shall he reign, long shall he conquer*

Otar in aeternum, Otar omnium" - Otar Omnia, chant used by the Council of the Willbound.

The war between Dun'Kazan and Mithrilia started as Otar delved deeper, and deeper into the forgotten halls of Tar'Hin. Searching for the answer. Not to peace, not to harmony which the elves so craved. He sought the answer to life. Immortality.

The dwarves were overrun by the mithril-wielding humans and their powerful willbenders assisting them with bombardments of ice & fire. Barricading themselves in their great palace the humans began the *Siege of Dun'Kazan*.

Otar kept clinging to the dream of immortality. But it was nowhere to be found. Not even the elves would find such malice from the use of will. Otar, however, was persistent. Obsessed even. While warring with dwarves in the south he would travel to Farhuin disguised as a poultry medicine man. In Dun'Gkardun he found nothing but gold and gems. He tossed it aside. In Dun'Desal he would find only the cold wind awaiting him, and giants roaming the countryside. His journey to Dun'Val-Dhir however, would prove more fruitful. For the dwarves on the eastern shore had found a way to bend the dead to their will. *Necromancy*.

The great necromancers could cause the corpses of kin to keep delving deeper into the earth even past death. These *Draugr* would feel no pain, no exhaustion, and have no will of their own. This appeased Otar greatly who rather quickly found a mentor to teach him their ways.

Meanwhile in Mithrilia, their king was missing, the siege didn't go anywhere and the war had taken its toll on the resources available for the populous. Insurrections and rebellions would form all across the countryside. A handful led by Karbell Midman decided that enough was enough and tried to breach the Mithrilian palace. Their attempt was unsuccessful but sparked a revolution throughout the kingdom. Breaking free of this terrible unjust war and the delusional king. Karbell's incarceration would only fuel the fire even further and the population became a force to be reckoned with even for the highly armed guards remaining. A young man called Thron'd'll would rise against all odds from his occupation as a mithril smith. He would form the largest rebel group during this time and raze and ruin all the signs of the absent king they could. As they were caught by the guard more and more frequently they decided to migrate up north. To a little island they named Karbell's Coast, in honour of the locked up Midman. Here they formed a settlement to plan a larger attack on the capital.

During his studies, Otar had learnt about the terrible secrets of necromancy. Whereas conjuring takes a toll on the wielder's flesh and bones, necromancy takes a toll on the mind and soul. This did not bother Otar. What did bother him however, was the fact that he could not use this knowledge to achieve his goal. He needed more. Otar would rally some of the powerful willbenders in Val-Dhir and attempt to cross the ocean, to reach the elusive city of Thron'Hin, the elven capital. For during his research he had learnt that the most powerful of elven willbenders had discovered a way to infuse objects with a particular manifestation of will, enchanting objects like this could be the way to reach eternal life. The trek was dangerous and difficult. 12 dwarves lost their lives out at sea. Otar did not relent. Once they

reached the shore there were only 6 left. Their journey to Thron'Hin was almost over however. Greeted by curious elves they were led to the capital to have an audience with the elven leaders.

Although the humans had never been in good relations with the elves, they still took Otar in. Sensing his will to learn and to overcome the past. The elves taught Otar the secrets of enchantment. Otar was adamant with his research, even within the elven halls. *The terrible use of will changed him.*

In the east, the siege against Dun'Kazan had come to an abrupt end as the soldiers of the army could not breach into the sanctum of the dwarven people. The withdrawal was slow and unmotivated. A sad defeat for the warriors, a victory for the rest. When Otar heard of this; he was furious. He interrupted his studies and quickly journeyed back to Mithrila. During the two months he travelled from Thron'Hin to Mithrila the army barely managed to leave Farhuin.

Upon Otar's return he was greeted by the roaring flames of rebellion. As he made himself known to the public they would attempt to seize him. But they were no match for Otar's will. He stubbornly made his way to the castle where he was welcomed by more rebels. The deaths of the citizens was warranted. Within the week of his arrival the rebellion was suppressed by the sheer willpower of the returned king. The populus could not fight it. Their will as if drained from them. Otar however, did not know about the insurrection awaiting him from the north.

Karboll was slain in jail, king's order.

The Council of the Willbound was enlightened by Otar's newfound knowledge and decided that they would build a magical academy within the Highlands.

As the will of Mithrilans diminished, Otar's grew. He had tried everything. Infusing items with necromantic will to let it stay active through death, animating a corpse before death, everything he could think of. Nothing worked. It is said that the only time the king would cry would be when he ran out of ideas. His life goal seemed to slip away from him. Until one day, a woman in rugged robes met with him outside in the castle gardens. Her eyes red as if on fire. The woman taught Otar of an island off the coast of Farhuin. An island which could only be reached by the will of the sons and daughters of Atoria. The dwarves of Val-Dhir had once gone there to learn the basics of necromancy, Otar told himself that he could learn the deep and intricate secrets of this manifestation of will. The king's advisor, Dedric, overheard this and sent word to one of the strongest willbenders within the council: Emilia of Porthaven.

Lady Emilia was a member of the Council of the Willbound. She had heard of Thron'dll's escape off the northern coast and sent envoys with a plan to overthrow Otar. Now with the words from Dedric that the king had gone completely mad, speaking of the Isle of Hel'Veth she had reason to believe that the time for insurrection was now. Within the same week rebels from two fronts marched upon Mithrila. The Mithrilan insurrection was a quick endeavour, the people were on the insurrection's side. The army still had not recovered from the siege of Dun'Kazan, and the nobles saw no way out. Only Otar and his most loyal within the Council fought. Otar for his dream of immortality. The rest, to cover the terrible deeds

they had done in the name of power. Eventually they were all defeated in a deadly dispute within the castle walls, razing the castle, and setting a stop to Otar's endless machinations. Thrond'll's leadership was indisputable, and as Otar never had bothered with an heir a king from a new family had to be chosen. Thrond'll was appointed king. Redeemer of Ator, King of Men.

Deep within the halls of Dun'Kazan however, the dwarves' collective will had gathered, their thirst for vengeance. The Thane Taar together with his most powerful willbenders had been working on a ritual which would change the world. Countless years into willbending showed that the potential was endless. The Kazan dwarves had long suffered throughout history and as such wished for a change, not in the future, nor present. The Thane wished to change the past. A ritual had long been planned, the siege of Kazan had been a good opportunity and motivation to finalise it. The dwarves greedily tapped into the will of their entire mountain. The ground shook. Sky darkened and time seemed to slow down before them. They would not stop until finally; the winds did no longer blow. The waves stilled, the fauna stopped right in their tracks, and even the dwarves themselves would not move anymore. This would mark the end of the 2nd Age. When we returned things were very, very different.'

An Excavator's Tale

'Log,

Day 27 of the Expedition:

Something curious has been discovered by the Empire's Respite. A tablet with unknown scripture on it. No one in the expeditionary group has been able to decipher its meaning, yet alone its origin. A language none of us know or can see an etymological ancestor to. Fascinating if you ask me. This area has always been populated by dwarves or humans, both of which we have extensive knowledge about since the middle of the first age. There is no solid hypothesis for how this has come to be but we will continue to excavate in the sandy beaches and hopefully find more artefacts like this.

[...] Log,

Day 41 of the Expedition:

Further excavation has revealed more tablets, the language seems to be similar but still unknown to us. No one has been able to crack the code so we sent the original tablet to Mithrila to see if there is anyone at the academy who could figure it out. Real bummer we might have to rely on those snobs but I digress.

We also found a weird looking ornate egg. Clad in a red metal we also haven't seen before and multiple gems which seem to hum. Professor Tarek says that its presence reminds him of how will used to feel when it was still abundant in the world. He does not want us to talk about it and keep it secret, but I cannot let this go unnoticed.

[...] Log,

Day 50 of the Expedition:

Today we got company from the Council of the Willbound. Magistre Hill herself. This is almost as curious as those tablets, I sincerely hope that her presence will not hinder our excavatory business. We struck something large and hard today and we suspect it may be a

building. But we could not uncover enough from the sand to deduct such a conclusion. Tarek was very quick about hiding the ornate egg however, I believe he has grown quite attached to it, should probably confront him about it so he does not steal it away from us in a fit of kleptomaniac greed.

[...] Log,

Day 52 of the Expedition:

During the 23 years I have been working for the Ator-Farhuin Explorer's Association I have never once encountered such a horrific fucking bad decision. "Close down the project"? After all the progress we have made here, uncovering ruins from a civilization who might have been lost to time and some eggheads from Mithrila wish to shut down our project and compensate us for our trouble? Something is definitely amiss, and I for one am not for it.

[...] Log,

Day 53 of the Expedition:

We have started to pack our belongings. A few of us have decided to go against the orders and return in a week's time. This discovery cannot go to waste, but we would be fools to directly go against the council when their representative is here. We could not live to see the day. Tarek has been rather absent in our discussions regarding the issue. He has locked himself in his corner and mostly studied the egg, whispering to himself. I am getting pretty worried about him.

[...] Log,

Day 1 of the New Expedition:

It was only me, Kaela and Tarek who returned to the site. Fewer than I'd hoped but we shall still strike into the earth and uncover the secrets of the past. We must know! Tarek has been acting more strange than before however, talking about evils beneath the surface, and wanting to *free the desolation*, I have no idea what he is talking about but as long as he is helping us with this project I won't question it, at least the egg is nowhere to be found around him anymore. We are going to write history.

The rest of the pages in the journal are empty, however the tale of the excavator's does not end here.

'Incident Report

Incident: 779542.

Time: 02:46, 47th of Spring.

Location: The sands south of Empire's Respite.

Institution: *Ator-Farhuin Explorer's Association*.

Reported by: Magistre Hill, Council of the Willbound.

Ator-Farhuin Explorer's Association had stationed 6 archeologists to uncover secrets in the sands around Empire's Respite. After sending artefacts of unknown origin to Mithrila, Magistre Hill was dispatched to oversee the situation.

After sensing large quantities of *mana* in the area the Magistrate ordered the immediate termination of the project on the 36th of Spring. All the equipment was confirmed to have left the area by the 38th. A request was received for a group of willbenders.

On the 45th of Spring a large pillar of blue light could be seen in the area, all the way from Empire's Respite. The ground shook according to witnesses.

On further inspection the previous excavation site seems to have been disrupted which triggered a large manifestation in the mana pool. No sign of life near the manifestation, however a journal and a couple of excavator's tools were found onsite. Reason to believe the Ator-Farhuin Explorer's Association was non-compliant with Magistre Hill's orders.

Enchanters have been recalled to Mithrila.

The tablets sent to Mithrila before the project ended has been identified as scriptures from the first Jøtnar and their depiction of the Architect. While their language is not yet fully known to us we can determine that they saw this being as a god of sorts, similar to how elves do.

Report Concluded.

Signed by



,

The Magic that Surround Us, 4th Ed.

'Atoria has many mysteries; the Jøtnar, where the orcs came from, what lies beneath the sands of Varoi but more prominently: What is the source of magic?

Short answer is, we do not know. Researchers have since the 1st age tried to come up with plausible explanations for what magic is, what makes someone proficient in the magical arts, and what are the extents of its power.

Long answer is that these researchers have several sound hypotheses as to why magic is the way it is. The most well-developed is that all the magic around us is manifested through the sheer power of will alone. As such the so-dubbed *Willbenders* can cause manifestations of what they wish to happen in the world as a reality! This concept is quite hard to grasp for me, as it entails that anyone could be a strong willbender if they just *wish hard enough*. Maybe traumatic events can enhance someone's will or completely strip their powers from them depending on how they react. It's a strange thought. Especially now, after the events of the willsap where our magic is escaping us, almost as if the will is being drained out of this world. This also shows the biggest flaw in this hypothesis.

We do however know that will can be split into several different kinds of schools;

Manifestation,
Conjuration,
Enchantment,

Necromancy, and Divination

Manifestation

Manifestations are the most common and also broadest term. A manifestation of will can be anything from a puff of smoke to the great blue sky pillar recalled in Empire's Respite. By technicality all of the following schools are also manifestations, but they are more narrow and can as such be better defined. Manifestations take little toll on the user but a manifestation can be used to purposefully affect someone physically or mentally. Manifestations are the easiest but least predictable forms of willbending.

Conjuration

The art of forming resources or energies out of seemingly nowhere, with some form of permanence. Whereas normal manifestations evaporate into nothingness after a short duration of not being entertained, any item or object *conjured* will remain intact as if it had always existed. Sure, wood will rot, fires will die and winds dissipate, but they will do so as if they were simply natural. Conjuration takes a great toll on the body of the user, often leaving skilled conjurers scarred and deformed. The elves are seemingly proficient in conjuration as a form of willbending.

Enchantment

In current times, enchantment is probably the most prominent form of willbending. Encapsulating a manifestation of will into an object to grant it new, unique properties, and being able to save will for later use is an incredibly useful tool. One will often see willbenders running around with staves, or wands nowadays as their sole source of will. In olden days enchantment was used to manifest properties within tools and clothes to ensure their quality, and efficiency. Enchantment was brought back to Mithrila by king Otar the Foul, and might be the one thing we thank him for after all the atrocities he committed.

Necromancy

Necromancy is the defilement of the dead. The bones of those who have passed are willed back to life. Heavily used within the dwarven bastion of Dun'Val-Dhir to further scour the depths and to attempt their other experiments on those who "surely would not mind". Necromancy is said to take a huge toll on the user's mind, being showered with the memories of the deceased and their negative emotions as they breathe their final breath.

Stay away from Necromancy at all costs.

Divination

Used by the Varoi'el, divination can be used to predict the events of the future. Little is known about how it works, or why we have not been able to replicate it. The Elven researches I collaborated with for this text have suggested that the divination might be a direct connection to the Architect or Curator themselves. This sounds like religious bogus to me. I personally am more of the belief that the will which surrounds us somehow already knows the future and warns us from it..but I cannot prove this insane idea.'

Flora and Fauna

Flora

Cloverbaum

Cloverbaum is an enormous flower and features alternate compound leaves, usually with three toothed leaflets. The very large, fragrant flowers are crowded into dense, nearly spherical heads, or spikes and can be white, pink, red, or yellow. The dry fruits usually contain one or two seeds.

Thornflower

Thornflower is a small root-like weed with thorns all over it. These weeds are known to grow wherever there is magic present and take a lot of physical effort to remove as they are resistant to the magic of the world. Thornflower can be used in the creation of the alloy Mithril, adding their resistant properties to the metal.

Devil's Thorn

Devil's Thorn is a small red flower covered in incredibly small thorns. The thorns expand into whoever comes into contact with them, sapping them of some of their blood. Devil's thorn is used in many healing procedures as the fruit of the flower has some minor healing properties.

Cinderbloom

Around the Orcen scargrounds grow flowers that are seemingly ablaze. These white-stalked flowers have an orange/red glow to them. These flowers are very delicate, crumbling into ash if handled incorrectly. Cinderbloom is said to enhance the manipulation of will in its vicinity.

Elven Glisterbloom

The Elven Glisterbloom is a seemingly ordinary yellow flower, with a green stalk. However, in the moonlight the Glisterbloom will completely turn from a beautiful flower to a hideous looking mushroom, spreading mycelium like the wind to quickly consume all dead matter in its vicinity. Glisterbloom are used in Elven society to clean up their streets, temples and even battlefields.

Respite's Shade

By the sands of the Empire's Respite, a particular type of palm tree grows. This palm tree's sap is famously flammable which the locals have taken note of. They use the sap to create explosives such as smoke bombs, fireworks and larger explosives.

Fauna

Karbellian Crab

These crustaceans dwell on the shores around Karbell's Coast. They are translucent and grey-ish. Very feisty creatures who mainly eat what they can find on the ground. Unlike their aquatic counterparts these crabs have developed a dryer lifestyle on land. Often terrorising the children and elderly together with the Coastgulls. Karbellian crabs are often used for cooking.

The Prismatic Salmon

Prismatic salmon is a type of fish in the Endless Depth which has developed the ability to manipulate how its skin reflects colour. This results in a fish that is nearly invisible to the naked eye. They are often prized as highly rare, even though they are abundant in their native waters. It is said that one can use the scales of a prismatic salmon to create invisible clothing, but none have gathered enough to attempt it. Tastes like chicken.

Varoi Grasshopper

Despite there being no grass on Varoi, there are plenty of locusts and grasshoppers crawling in the sands. Being one of the only reliable sources of food for the Varoi'el they are hunted and caught in massive numbers. The population does not really wonder how these insects survive the harsh deserts. They are mostly happy that they do.

Atorian Firespitter

The Firespitter is a ruthless kind of draconic creature. With a snake-like body, large leathery wings and a terrible temper the Atorian Firespitter sits atop the food chain, pondering whom it shall devour next. These beasts have scales as hard as steel and a sticky flammable saliva which is very unpleasant to come into contact with. The Firespitters can vary in colour from indigo to deep red.

Characters

Tardeen - Elven Envoy in Dun'Kazan

Doruk Giftbringer - Author of *Historiae Atorium, 1st Ed.*

KingThrond'il, High Commander of the Mithrilan Militia, Redeemer of Ator, King of Men & Lord of Mithrila. - King of Mithrila during the events of *Willbound*.

King Otar, the Foul. - Betrayer King

Otar, the scholar king with a grand dream of immortality. He travelled the world for answers he could not find and in his darkest hour, being betrayed by his own people; he found the answer. His will for immortality has become so strong that he manifested it within himself without his knowledge. The damned king now lies beneath Mithrila pacified by a circle of pure will from his former colleagues in the Council of the Willbound.

Taar Willbender - Thane of Dun'Kazan during Otar's reign.

The prestigious Taar Willbender was the greatest Thane Dun'Kazan had ever seen. Providing the dwarves with great resources during their collaboration with Mithrila, and protecting them from annihilation during the subsequent siege. His hubris however, got to him as he performed the *Temporal Skip*, stopping time and draining the world of all its will.

Karboll Midman - Rebel leader during Otar's reign

Races

Humans

"It is said that Atoria was graced with humankind in unholy union between elf and dwarf."

Humans arose on the continents during the end of the 1st Age. Their sense of community, progress and sheer will to survive drives them forward to great deeds. Lead by a strict monarchy in the city of Mithrila the humans of Ator strive to make the world a better place for themselves and their coming generations. Since Otar the Foul the humans have been adept willbenders, both in elemental manipulation, but also Conjunction and Necromancy.

Culture: Human culture is probably the most varied. Humans have split Ator up in several counties which are ruled by lords and ladies who have influence in their areas but they all fall under the rule of the Mithrilan king. In Mithrila there's a heavy focus on studying and developing magic and the knowledge once bestowed upon the people by Otar, despite his betrayal the people still value his past skills. Whereas in Porthaven the people are more interested in developing the navy, and restoring public relations with the Kazan dwarves. As a general rule humans value kinship, honour and development

Since the 2nd age the Human civilization has started to develop a religion based upon the old Elven texts. However, due to the demonising of these elves it has been rebranded slightly; In the Church of Creation there are the twin gods Ran and Reil. Ran is deemed as the protector of Ator and the all-seeing Reil is seen as an inspiration to progress. The relationship between man and god is rather good and there are many claims by the populous of sightings.

Elves

"Elves of yore bless these lands, follow the great Curator, follow their rules, and prosperity shall follow, for us, and for all."

The Elves were on Atoria before all others, they saw what barren wasteland it was before the cultivation of the lands. At first the elves built meagre huts in the woods, but it soon became sprawling cities, following the rules of the Curator. Their skills in conjunction and enchantment are unparalleled even in the Third Age. The Elves bend will like it's second nature to them, meaning they will never run out of resources as long as they are motivated by the words of the great creators.

Culture:

The elves value the preservation of nature, the restraint in magical manipulation and innovation. The rules set by the Curator, and to a lesser extent the influence of the Architect, makes the elves constantly strive for progress deeming personal or societal stagnation as sin. The elves generally stand united under the will of the Fae Council, but who is part of that council or how it is chosen is generally unknown to everyone involved. Elves tend to have a pretty open view on sexuality, often living in harems of lovers from mixed genders and ages.

Dwarves

“Nobody can be as stubborn as a dwarf. Even the world itself budges only to the presence of a headstrong dwarf.”

The dwarves arose from the elements, once being made out of earth itself, but over time, they became more and more distant with their earthen past. Through their will they developed skin and bones. However, their connection to the land never diminished further than their physical forms. Their excellent manipulation of the land around them both through physical force and sheer will made them great city builders and a race to be reckoned with. Their stubborn nature can be seen throughout all of dwarven history.

Culture: Dwarves value hard work, craftsmanship and strongly encourage self-improvement. Their sense of community is unparalleled, and while most of their lives are dedicated to whatever craft they decide on, the little time that they spend outside of it is spent with family and friends. Despite many conflicts, the dwarves still stand strong and their use of will to manipulate the land is respected by all.

Orcs

The orcs are a troubled race. Born from a terrible deal in a dark time with the demon Kazzehk; these hairy brutes are led by an inherent bloodlust, but outside of their natural aggression they have a great sense of community within the tribes they form. The amount of resources they require to stay alive is harming the land and turning it to ash around them. This is referred to as Orcen scargrounds. Ever since the *slaughter of Tar’Hin* the orcs have been few in numbers but still reign strong in the homecamp of Fan Gralak on Talkir.

Culture: Orcish culture values strength of individual and family, stability and expansion. As an extreme twist on the elven culture, Kazzehk intentionally made the orcs stride against the cultural values of its masters. After the *Slaughter of Tar’Hin* the orcs have been split into several clans around Ator and Talkir. The clan societies differ slightly in their way of life and their system of governance.

Varoi’el

The anthropomorphic humanoids of Varoi, the Varoi’el live simple lives in the northern deserts. Holding the key to the Vaults of Hel’Veth hidden from the outside world is their only goal. Although they revere it as a holy figment of the great Sun God. The Varoi’el cannot manipulate will, and upon their death are turned into a pile of golden sand.

Culture: As Varoi is such a terribly boring climate to inhabit, the Varoi value ingenuity, literature and wisdom. Taking as much knowledge from their land as possible. As such the

Varoi'el are creative and cunning. Leaning themselves into the creative arts rather than those of combat.

Demons

On the isle of Hel'Veth they roam. Demons. While being more of an umbrella term for some of the most devious creatures on Atoria, the demons work rather well in tandem with each other. Acting as guardians of the Hel'Veth Vault, and the Prison of Desolation. They are keen on tricking mortals with their powerful abilities and treacherous deals. Demons however, are not evil by nature, merely tricksters..with a wicked sense of morality.

Culture: The demonic culture depends greatly on the demon, and on where they are. The few demons who roam in Thron'Hin live a luxurious life with lust, wine and entertainment. The demons hanging out in Fan Gralak instead partake in a more simple and nomadic lifestyle. All demons have in common is that they enjoy using their willbending abilities to mess with the other races around them.

Jøtnar

The Jøtnar are the protectors of the Farhuin Archives. The large labyrinth where the Architect hid all the secret knowledge of the world's creation. The gargantuan humanoids have no will of their own but rather try to keep close to the archives and not interfere with the affairs of others. When the dwarves of Dun'Desal dug too close to the archives the Jøtnar struck with all their might and turned the once sprawling dwarven city into a razed tomb. And a symbol for what delving into the secrets of Atoria might lead to.

Culture: The Jøtnar culture is mostly unknown, they roam around the Archives and have familial bonds with each other but they do not seem to celebrate any particular holidays nor ideals. They exist to protect and survive.

Terminology

Will

Will, or willpower, is the natural energy that flows through everything. Everything is touched by the will. A strong enough concentration of Will can cause manifestations of mystical nature. Some believe that only sentient beings can manipulate the will but such is not the case. Thornflower is a flower with strong resistance to magic due to its manipulation of the will. Willpower is used to manipulate the elements around it, or to conjure entirely new elements; this however, takes a large toll on the conjurer and can leave them scarred and deformed if done in excess. To manipulate will take practice, focus and years of introspective.

The Twin Lakes

The Twin Lakes, Ygaard and Tolm were formed during the long conflict between elves and dwarves on Ator. The use of powerful and violent magic made the land itself sunder freeing

large quantities of water. The lakes are used as the main food source of Mithrila as it is sprawling with large fish.

Ator

The central continent of most Atorian maps (due to them being made by humans), Ator is a continent which has withstood a lot of conflict between elves, dwarves and mankind.

The Slaughter of Tar'Hin

The eradication of a majority of the Orcen horde at the hands of Mithrilans and Dun'Kazan dwarves, the Slaughter of Tar'Hin because a celebrated event in human history and a great victory against the elven menace on the continent.

Mithril

Mithril is an alloy of Iron and Thornflower. The metal shares some of the thornflower's inherent magical resistance. Mithril is also much lighter than iron, some hypothesise this is related to the alloy's magical properties.

Council of the Willbound

A council of the most powerful willbenders across Atoria. During Otar's reign they were only made up of humans, later on they would start accepting dwarves, elves and even an Orc into the ranks of this council.

The Siege on Dun'Kazan

A long-drawn and rather uneventful siege on the Dwarven capital. The siege was used as an excuse by Thane Taar to perform the Temporal Skip

Draugr

The undead corpses of Dun'Val-Dhir dwarves rose by the necromantic will of their peers. They are often used to continue dangerous mining operations far down in the depths, or to perform experiments where no living would want to participate.

Temporal Skip

The ritual used by Thane Taar to stop time. It was dispelled by the Curator, restarting the passage of time. As a consequence the *Willsap* began, draining the world of its will over time.

Willsap

The phenomena used to describe the drainage of will all across Atoria as a direct result of the Curator's interference with the Temporal Skip.

Mana

A dangerous manifestation of will created after the willsap began. Contact with mana causes burning and scarring which will shine with a bright blue light and slowly devour the body of the contactee.

Game Mechanics

Race War - The factions of Atoria are always in conflict, the Humans, Dwarves and Elves are constantly on the cusp of war, and the Varo'el and Jøtnar are quick to battle should their ideals be challenged.

Enchantment - As will becomes harder to come by, enchantment becomes more prominent. Enchantment can be an entire system based around imbuing the magical energies into an item for later use. Either by carving in will-absorbing runes or with powerful cant.

Expansive lore - In Atoria there are years of history between the different civilizations, this can be discovered by the player reading old texts, excavating the earth or just talking to the elders of the world. By learning past secrets the player can discover old loot stashes, magical techniques or just learn to appreciate the world slightly more.

Map Making - An entire continent lay uncharted by human cartographers. It lends itself to being drawn by such an adventurous type like you!

Mana-Cleanup - After the Temporal Skip several reservoirs of dangerous mana start showing up in different parts of Atoria. Touching this mana can have devastating consequences and sometimes the mana will cause manifestations all on their own, it is your job to clean them up.

City-Building - In RTS-like fashion you build cities and develop the civilization of either elves, dwarves or humans.

The Mighty Quest for Epic Loot - The coastal town of Karbell's Coast harbours multiple syndicates of pirates and other dastardly seafarers who terrorise the coastal cities on occasion. You join them in order to acquire the fattest of loot.

Monster Hunting - Despite not being covered extensively in this document, Atoria has many strange creatures roaming around, some are wanted for their hardened scales, venom, fins or otherwise. You become a monster hunter to hunt these creatures down and earn currency while keeping the countryside free from harm.

Dungeon Crawling - Within the Halls of Hel'Veth lies an endless dungeon protected by demons. You can delve deeper into the crust of Atoria and seek the secrets beneath, learning more about the terrible desolation that lies hidden under the surface.

Curate the Curator - As the mortals don't respect your laws anymore you grow tired of their shit and traverse the land with the intent to raze and ruin. You play as the Curator themselves to crush, kill and destroy.

Visual References

Karbell's Coast

Wooden building.
Coastal environment.
"Wobbly" construction.
Ship-inspired buildings.
Much rope.



Mithrila

Stonebuilt medieval City.
Large walls, towering spires.
Cobbled streets.
Old European Architecture.
Desaturated earthy colors.
Blue-tile or wood roofs



Dun'Kazan

Large, craggy stone rock.
Surrounded by small tents and log huts.
Grey-brown colors. Lit up by fire and lanterns,
inside warm lights and many shadows.
Houses carved into the mountain.



Thron'Hin

High fantasy.
Lighter, more vibrant colors.
Buildings incorporated with trees.
Tall spires and natural inspired architecture.
Surrounding incredible feats of nature.
Bright glowing forests.

