Aseura – working title

Prequel (old):

Balin is born the prince of the kingdom of Somertine. When he is only 1 1/2 his family travels to the kingdom of Orwell to witness the marriage of the duke of Salisby, the most powerful noble in Somertine, to the daughter of the king of Orwell. While there the king carves a small statue of a roaring panther, the family crest, for Balin to play with out of wood. Everyone in the Orwell castle that summer remembers the king doing this and the statue. On the return trip the ship carrying the royal family is wrecked in a terrible storm the king and queen and most of the crew is killed. Balin survives because a sailor fashions a flotation device for him before the ship sinks. The other ship carrying the Duke and his family survives but are blown well past Somertine and take several weeks to repair and return. The duke is crowned king and four months later his wife dies giving birth to the princess Airwen.

Book 1 (old):

As a young boy Balin, brown hair and green eyes, works in the palace of the king; he is an orphan raised by foster parents, who found him washed up on a beach near their home his only real possession being the panther statue. They love him and take care of him very well they have told him that the statue is all he has from his former life and he treasure it dearly. He is beaten and abused by various lords and ladies, including the king. The king is very polite to him as long as he is well behaved otherwise a few lashes or a short stint in the dungeon will be forth coming. Every page at the castle receives weapons training from the captain of the guard. The princess Airwen who is very attractive with black hair and green eyes treats Balin well but without respect. After several years of hard work, at the age of 17, Balin rescues the princess from being murdered by the Duchess Wetherby. The duchess plans to usurp the throne by poisoning the king slowly, using his “illness” to get him to love and marry her at which point she will kill him. Airwen, who greatly dislikes the duchess, is the main obstacle to her plan. He escapes from the palace with the princess but his foster family is butchered by the agents of the Duchess while searching for Balin and Airwen.

Book 2 (old):

Forced to flee from the palace, hawks nest, by the Duchess Wetherby, Balin and Airwen begin a journey to Falltier a kingdom to the north of Somertine where they believe that they will have some measure of safety and support for their attempt to rescue Airwen’s father. The first part of their journey is spent with only each other for company but to cross the very dangerous Dragons Teeth Mountains they hire on to a caravan as guards. While crossing the Dragons Teeth they rescue or are rescued by a taciturn individual named Crond who they befriend. When they reach the palace at Argintor in Falltier they find that the Duchess has already spread a tale in which Balin and Airwen are fugitives for some crime. The king of Falltier has sided with the duchess and Balin, Airwen and Crond are forced to flee or be jailed and turned over to the duchess. In this book Balin, being a good man feels responsible for Airwen but believes she is a spoiled child, which she is. Airwen for her part stays with Balin as he is the only one she feels she can trust and because she finds him very attractive.

Book 3 (old):

Having fled Falltier the trio head for the small kingdom of Orwall, further to the north and east, because the king is Airwen’s grandfather on her mother’s side and will surely offer them safety and what little support he can. The road to Orwall is a very obvious one and therefore plagued with assassins. This drives the trio into a very dangerous forest. A nation of people with a very different culture live in the forest, they kill or terrify everyone who enters or comes near. The trio is captured but manages to fight their way free with the help of a sympathetic warrior named Zulon, who joins their party. Airwen and Balin’s relationship throughout this book is solidifying into a very good friendship.

Book 4 (old):

Reaching Orwall they find that the kingdom is in turmoil because the throne has been usurped and the king is missing. The four must find the king and rally support among the nobles while remaining hidden from the new king’s men. Once they have enough backing they overthrow the usurper and put the old king back on the throne. It is during this period that Balin’s lineage is discovered. Airwen and Balin’s relationship at this point has become very involved because they love each other but each believes that the other does not return the sentiment. The realization that Balin is the true heir to the crown drives a wedge into the budding relationship between Balin and Airwen, because Airwen who has grown up her whole life expecting to be the queen finds it hard to give that up. Balin for his part does not want to be the king but feels it is his duty and that he doesn’t have a choice.

Book 5 (old):

Balin is determined to take the throne of Somertine back from the evil Duchess and bring justice to the kingdom. He does not have enough military support however so he must rely on stealth to defeat her. To this end he invades Somertine with the army he does have using it as a distraction under the command of Crond, a seasoned soldier and deserter from the duchesses rebellious corp., while he & Airwen with a small contingent infiltrate the castle through the secret tunnel that he discovered while he was a prisoner in the dungeon. After negotiating the maze and overpowering the dungeon guards they begin to work their way to the easiest wall to assault where they plan to overthrow the defenders and hold the position until there reinforcements can top the wall. The plan works but it is a very close thing and Balin is seriously injured. This is when Airwen realizes that Balin means more to her then the crown. Balin for his part finds the courage to tell Airwen how he really feels. This is when they decide that the coronation ceremony will also be a wedding ceremony. The duchess is captured and Balin sentences her to death for her crimes.

Glossary

People:

Balin Fortana: Brown haired and green eyed he is the lost heir to the throne of Somertine. He is raised by a General turned hermit when the woman he loves is forced to marry another man. Balin stands about 6’ 2” tall and weighs approx 200 lbs. He is incredibly strong and agile for his size due to the hard years of work and weapons practice. He is a quiet, intelligent and resourceful man who believes in peoples’ right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. He is dedicated to freedom and tolerance of the beliefs of other’s. Being a ranger he is able to communicate with many of the smaller animals in the world. He has skills in scouting, hunting, disguise and stealth along with being an excellent swords man and archer.

Airwen Perry: The princess of Somertine has black hair and green eyes, weighs ~190 and stands 5’ 11” tall. She has a strong jaw line and the distinctive nose of the Delgarie people. She has an athletic well proportioned figure.

Markile Fortana: The first king of Somertine. He carved the kingdom from the land of the horse lords and defended it successfully at the Gap of Markile in a stunning tactical victory.

Page: Princess Airwen’s handmaiden and friend.

Mistress Caroline: Head mistress of the royal castle she is stern and commanding but fair and understanding, a trait which surprises most people who do not know her well. 5’ 8” slim and well proportioned she dresses very conservatively. She is a great organizer and planner having served in the castle for nearly 40 years, she was only 8 when she first came to work at the castle.

Atalla: Also known as Aseura’s Mother she is the goddess of nature. Worshiped by the Druids their power is directly proportional to their faith in her.

Curate Mishel: The castle’s curator and healer.

General Morgan Shaw: Morgan became a hermit when his true love is forced to marry another man. Being a loyal and honorable man he chooses to leave rather than have to live with desires that he can never full fill so close to him. He is a great tactician and politically astute as any general must be. Faking his own death he takes up residence in the foothills of the Frontera Mountains near the Gap of Markile. Morgan is the on the cusp of being named Kings Champion, an honorary title given to men who show themselves to be of the highest quality soldiers, when the woman who holds his heart is promised to a nobleman by her father.

Rafe: Balin’s father and a rancher. He dies in a dragon attack when Balin is 5.

Avalon DeMarch: The daughter of a minor noble. She married the lord DeMarch and became head of that great house on her husband’s death. Her husband’s father died of a fall during their engagement. With her husband dying on the battlefield during an ambush during what was supposed to be a simple patrol. She is now working behind the scenes to seize control of the crown from Airwen’s father the same way she got to her current position, marriage and a convenient “accident” or two.

Culture:

1. Delgarie (Gallic culture): The main culture in the area of Somertine. The people are tall and strong tending to have dark hair and light eyes. They are a stoic and pragmatic people known for their endurance and fun loving spirit. Tall, dark haired, light eyed with strong jaws lines the Delgarie are a white skinned race. The men tend to cut their hair short and shave their faces clean or wear simple mustaches. The women wear their hair long but wear practical amounts of jewelry. A ring or two, earrings and perhaps a necklace is the common décor.
   1. Government
      1. A king with a council of elders that restrict his powers
   2. Organizations
      1. Druids – organization of clerics who worship Atalla
         1. *Acolyte* - Duties of this position are ceremonial in nature, including such jobs as lighting altar-candles, planting and tending gardens.
         2. *Cantor* – (Or chanter) Duties of this position are performing mior healings for the public, purifying food and water as well as other minor enchanting such as the blessing of private gardens.

Upon attaining the third rank of the Druidic organization druids must choose between two paths the church administrative path or the wandering adventurer path.

* + - 1. *Curate* – The administrative path. Duties of the curate are to administer to a church or temple, usually a wooded grove, of Atalla or parks and gardens on church property. Some private and public parks and gardens are also tended by Curates. These clerics learn organization and planning skills.
      2. *Priest* – The wandering adventurer’s path, they are the messengers of Atalla spreading her faith wherever they go. These clerics learn combat tactics and weapons use.
      3. *Archpriest* - Archpriest is the title for a priest who has supervisory duties over a community where he has established a following of Atalla that is not yet large enough to require administrative personnel.
      4. *High Priest* - This title applies to a priest that has established 5 temples for Atalla
      5. *Primate* - A primate oversees all the temples in a city, town or parish. Primates are the second rank of the administrative branch.
      6. *Prelate* - The highest ranking cleric of a nation, on the administrative branch. The prelate advises the king or ruler of a nation that has a significant following of Atalla, such as Somertine.
      7. *Pontiff* - The highest ranking cleric he is the overseer of the entire religious order. A pontiff may be of either the administrative or adventuring branches.
    1. Druids – organization of wizards who wear robes and carry staffs that may be used as weapons
       1. White Robe (Acolyte) - The lack of color signifies purity and innocence. The novice has no knowledge of magic.
       2. Yellow Robe (Practicianor)- The color of the rising sun. Seeds in the ground begin to germinate and grow. Basic magic techniques begin to be learned.
       3. Orange Robe (Neophyte) - The color of the rising sun. Seeds in the ground begin to germinate and grow. Basic magic techniques begin to be learned.
       4. Green Robe (Adept) - The color of growing things that all can see. Power begins to develop.
       5. Blue / Purple Robe (Druid) - The color of the sky which growing things reach for. Physical and mental power starts to stabilize.
       6. Brown Robe (Instructor) - The color of the ground where growing things are rooted firmly. Stability of physical and mental power is apparent.
       7. Red / Bodan Robe (Master) - The color of blood, the essential life force. Maturity, honor and respect are exhibited as character begins to perfect.
       8. Black Robe (Grand Master) - Black is the combination of all color. The final stage where technique is mastered within the humble and serene beauty of the plant.

1. Roman
2. Viking
3. Muslim
4. Mongol
5. Zulu
6. Japan
7. Dwarves are a long lived but dying race; for the last 1000 years their numbers have been declining due to a tunnel in their main complex that passes very close to a radiation source. This is causing the population to slowly dwindle because although they have other mines they rotate people through them so the connection to the problem with the main site has not been detected.

Economy: $0.01 US = 1gp = 10sp = 10cp

Magic: Through concentration and visualization the magician taps into the “energy” that connects all things and manipulates it to do his or her bidding. There are two dangers when casting spells:

1. Loss of concentration – can lead to death, maiming or other bad effects because the critical visualization portion may be lost – whatever is visualized in its place will occur
2. The feeling of connection is very addicting a strong will is required to let it go – a person who cannot let go will enter a coma like state – their eyes are open and they breath but no one is home – they will die in a very short time < month unless they can be brought back

Places:

Aseura: The world in which Balin lives

Sann Mon Mountains (Ash Mountains): Stretching from the Mar de llagrimes across the northern border of the Kingdom of Somertine. A wild and dangerous place, largely unexplored due to its rugged terrain, the Sann Mon are home to the most dangerous creatures known.

Ashlean: A small community in the foothills of the Sann Mon Mountains

Smoking Dragon Inn: the only inn in the small community of Ashlean.

Fort Ashlean: a small stone barracks, a tall tower and wall this fort was once an outpost used to monitor the border of Somertine. It has fallen into disrepair in the last 100 years because the foothills have been largely tamed by the men of Somertine.

Kingdom of Somertine: The kingdom of the Delgarie is bordered by the coast of the Mar del llagrimes to the north, the Mar de l’est to the east, the Frontera Mountains and Lake Voltor to the south and the Sann Mon Mountains to the west.

The dukedom of March: