Idrasia: The Blasted Reach

# The Markarskan Giants

## Description

The giants of this region separated into two ideological camps. One favored ruling over the lesser races more directly. From their perch in Markarska, they terrorize the whole of the plains. Besides demanding a large amount of food and consuming much of the groundwater, they also forced the plainsmen to work in their mines.

#### Tithe

Every month, the under races must provide the giants with ten working age individuals as well as a significant amount of food. These goods are left on the tall steps that are inside the massive mesa. Anyone other than the offering at the doors when they open is killed on sight.

## Affiliation

Giants obviously.

### Naming Conventions

Russian and eastern european.

## Interactions

#### With G:

The rift between the two sets of giants now goes back several decades and stems from their goals and way they seek to interact with the lesser races, one paternal, the other with a fist of iron. Communication has always been possible with magic. Occasionally, envoys visit one another. In this era of breaking barriers, perhaps the two sides will be forced into more cooperation.

## Cities

#### Markarska

*Description*

By far the most advanced city on the continent, high above the clouds, its marble spires and towers of magic cast dark shadows, both literal and metaphoric, over the center of the plain if not the whole continent. The giants of Markarska are the most powerful magic users in the continent and have used the intervening years since the war with the dragons to discover and explore many deep secrets. It would not be surprising if they have or *fabricated* a dragon sphere.

Some of the offered lesser races are used in the mines which lie deep below the mesa, accessible only through magic. Others are used in unspeakable experiments into life and death.

*Seat of Power*

Markarska is ruled by an uneasy council of mage-giants. It is something between a gerontocracy and a meritocracy.

*Trade*

Markarska does not trade usually with other cities or factions, except to consume massive amounts of natural resources. The most sought after resources are reagents for magical spells, rare gems, exotic minerals, and metals of all kinds. The magical items and information created by its labs stay in the city. On rare occasion, they might trade some of their items or artifacts with other giant factions both on the continent and off it.

*Races*

Markarska is almost completely made of giants. However, they do have a sizable slave population as noted below. Certain lesser race collaborators who are of great use to the gaints may be invited to live in the city as well, but it is rare.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A mix of cloud and storm giants | 70% |
| Assorted slaves (mix of lesser races) | 25% |
| Collaborator Goliaths | 4% |
| Dominated Earth Genasi and constructs (for mining) | 1% |

#### Koprivina

*Description*

Koprivina one of the larger cities on the continent and by far the largest in the plains. Its inhabitants are ruled over by the giants and their collaborators who stifle any rebellious intentions. It is built into the side of the mesa, as if constantly looking up at the splendor of Markarska which it can never hope to equal. The buildings are made of clay and are usually stacked on top of one another forming a twisted three dimensional maze of star-corridors.

There is an internal staircase up to Markarska, but none are allowed through the gates at the top. There are massive water pipes powered by magic which supply Markarska. This is not common knowledge.

It takes a good fourth of a day to climb the many stairs from the plains floor up to the city, and because of such, many inhabitants choose never to leave.

*Seat of power*

The city is ruled over by a Goliath Overseer and his guard of loyal goliaths. He also employs some spies to find dissenters. Overseers are chosen by the ruler of Markarska.

*Trade*

Koprivina's main trade resource is livestock which are used as food for Markarska, and the inhabitants themselves, who the giants above use as slaves. Mercenaries are easy to find here. A large amount of ore and ingots comes into Koprivina, some of which gets smelted. They are therefore better at metalworking than one might assume.

*Races*

Koprivina is a motley mix of lesser races, but mostly Aarakocra, who have the dubious honor of having lived in the area for centuries. Legend spoken in hushed tones says that they once lived at the top of the massive mesa.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Aarakocra | 70% |
| Humans | 10% |
| Minotaur | 10% |
| Goliath Collaborators | 7% |
| Dwarven metalworking experts | 3% |

# B) The Adisan Collective

## Description

If you want a clear sign of the giant's decaying hegemony you don't need to look father than the Collective. Once a fractured and subjected group of witless mountain and forest dwellers, mostly genasi, these tribes have consolidated in recent years and now a small but present challenge to giant power.

Because they are in fact a collective, their purpose, goals, and actions are sporadic when viewed as an outsider. There are no less than twenty main tribes all with their own systems of internal government and place of origin. They are together only in their hatred of the giants and their underlings.

The Adisan are close to nature, but mostly to the type of surrounding the tribe is from. For instance, those that come from the forest are masters in camouflage and the bow. Those from the river are some of the best fisherman on the continent.

## Affiliation

Fey. The force behind the tribes cohesion is unknown. It might just be mutual interest. Or perhaps there might be someone or a group of someone pulling the strings?

## Naming Conventions

Native American, but with liberty as to the source tribe to reflect the fractured nature of the tribes themseves.

## Interactions

#### With A:

Historically staying on “their” side of the river, they have gotten brash as of late and will raid Markarskan cattle and dwelling located far from the city. The Markarskans will less frequently retaliate or undertake raids of their own, but these are unsupported by the ruling giants.

#### With L:

Although they don't nessesaril share a real border with the Circle, the death zone represents a constant threat to their northern lands. Heroic braves often put together adhoc groups of other warriors to battle the scourge.

Actual diplomatic interaction with the Circle is limited, although the Adisan will occasionally trade wood, ore and beasts of burden. Some more unscrupulous braves work as mercenaries or scouts for the Circle.

#### With P:

Although the mountains prohibit mass trade between the two peoples, the Adisan, especially the mountain tribes maintain good relations with their neighbors, and will trade for dried fish especially in harsh summers when the crops wilt.

## Cities

The majority of Adisan do not live in permanent cities and instead move around between seasonal hunting grounds.

#### Dulbovnin

If you thought this name didn't sound like a Adisan city, you would be right. Dulbovnin was either an outpost town taken through relentless raids or simply abandoned by the Markarskans, depending on who you believe.

The town is situated right on the edge of a canyon. Steep steps take one down to the red stone fracture, through which a mighty river flows. Often times rope bridges span the canyon at this point, but it is just as common for them to require a toll or be destroyed by the elements or angry towns people.

The town itself is a motley collection of mostly one to two story wooden houses. Most houses will have a basement used for living and a sub basement for storage. Some of the houses closer to the canyon edge have their own tunnels down to the river.

Dulbovnin is a chaotic place ruled by no one in particular. Law seems to be only enforced when killings happens and is an adhoc mob response.

*The Trees of Dulbovnin*

One of the most important features of Dulbovnin are its mighty trees which ring the town. It is not allowed to cut them down because they were planted with the express purpose of protecting the city from wind storms. Anyone who cuts down a tree must plant a thousand trees to replace it, and either pay a thousand gold or maintain these trees themselves for perpetuity. If they do no meet with this request, they are strung up on another of the trees until dead and all their possessions are used to pay the cost of replanting.

*Seat of Power*

Because the very existence of a centralized city is counter to the sensibilities of the Adisan, this is not in fact their capital. Instead, the tribes meet every month and a time picked in the previous meeting, but usually falling on natural days like solstices and harvest festivals. The actual process of discerning direction for the collection is an anarchic mash of yelling on all sides between the tribes. However, honor and respect for nature lore plays a large part in convincing course of action.

*Trade*

Dulbovnin exists solely for trade between the various tribes, since it is part of none of them. Therefore, a large amount of fish, crops, cattle, wood, and a small but valuable amount of finished goods and weapons crosses its storefronts.

Of special note is its large mercenary contingent. Merchants from many nations, even those far away know about Dulbovnin's prestige when it comes to these wild men. Mercenaries in this city are not usually part of any larger company and must be hired individually, usually as guards or scouts.

Some mercenaries are have no bounds and simply know the town as a good place to find work, but others have houses and lives in the lawless village that they return to when their contract is done.

*Races*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Genasi of all types | 50% |
| Humans (mostly farmers or mercenaries) | 20% |
| Aarakocra (some of the original inhabitants stayed, mostly ranchers and merchants) | 15% |
| Minotaurs | 10% |
| Other (Mercenaries) | 5% |

# C) The Everlasting Kingdom of Damacia

## Description

#### Early Years

Especially in recent years, it is fair to say Damacia is now the second most power on the continent, and by far the most active. The kingdom was born from three great city states who in eons past had safely been under giant hegemony. However, almost a hundred years ago, when the schism between the giants emerged, they gained defacto independence. They then engaged in almost a century of intense warfare where they bloodied the ground with dead between them. Then, with some help from the dragonborn to the south, the leaders of the the three cities signed into affect a peace agreement.

This agreement was not born of pragmatism, but of fear. The **G** had, shortly after the walls come down, engaged on a very militaristic and expansionist course of action, especially their southernmost city.

After a short but furious counter insurgency, again aided by the dragonborn and also by fellow cities D and E, managed to drive the northerners back to the river which marked a natural bottleneck in their expansion.

This situation lasted a few decades, but in the meantime, the elected king consolidated his power, declaring the south one nation. Not everyone in the cities was very happy about this, but because of the continuing threat of war, they viewed it as militarily expedient, at least for the time being. Most would regret their decision.

#### Recent War

Almost ten years ago peace was threatened once again. This time there was fear on both sides. The south had received a great deal of help from their dragonborn and very indirectly, dragon backed friends. Some of the giants in the north but especially their Goliath lieutenants suddenly felt quite worried about their state in local power.

Concerned that the weakening of the barriers had shifted the balance of power, and convinced that every moment they waited only increased the consolidation of the southern powerhouse, the north attacked.

Nor did they attack alone. For one of the first times in the history of Idrasia, there was close to a continent spanning war whose sides defined their current geopolitical status. One one side was the Heartfire Alliance, which included Damacia, D,E and nominally the dragonborn. They were backed financially by the Goldwater Assemblage, but they did not take place in the actual fighting. On the other was the Defense of Order comprising **G,** indirectly **M,** who violated the nominal neutrality of **J;** in addition, for the first time in recorded history, the ice paladins **T** cast off their own neutrality, and joined as well, mostly for reasons of preserving the status quo.

The attack was well planned but was ultimately a monumental failure. The first action was a first strike against the dragonborn in their citadel of cindernost through the use of Triton auxiliaries which attacked from the sea. The goal of this attack was to prevent their coming to the kingdom's aid.

The second attack came across the river which for years now had signified the uneasy border between the two kingdoms. In what would be recognized in hindsight as a disastrous military decision, this attack was split in two, one group attacking Crucible to the east, the other going southward, hoping to cut off Telmasus from the rest of the fighting and so directly engage the kingdom.

Unfortunately, due the efforts of the king and his group of well trained counselors, the north's plans were learned of partially in advance. Spies and saboteurs were slipped into the column heading east, who at the time of fighting, assassinated the head leader and later were able to bring down a landslide on the beleaguered forces.

The southern column didn't fare much better. Despite initial success, they were met at the river and the crossing was successfully contested. The help of the paladins was countered by a group of powerful mages from Crucible, and a sweeping Calvary charge snuck around through the swamps of Telmasus finished the fighting.

#### Outcomes

Two fate defining actions happened in addition to the victory. One was the near death of the elected king of damacia. The second was the success of the death clerics and their agents. Both would have long reaching effects in the years to come.

Near death, the king was due to pass away, even in victory. However, his closest counselors had discovered a very powerful artifact from unknown origins (The Circle). Using it, they returned him back to life, but not as a human. He was now the Immortal Sovereign, a powerful undead.

The death clerics, seeing their winning hand, encouraged him to destroy the rest of the north. Even as he did so, they attempted to sink their agents into ever part of the fledgling bureaucracy.

However, the king would not be so easy a target. He did take a vast amount of northern land, and one of its cities (Sverograd, the most responsible for the war). However, he stopped well short of the capital, and did not besiege the monastery of the Ice Paladins as was expected. He met the defeated parties by himself and came to terms, much to the dismay of the death clerics. It is thought he feared that if he pressed to hard, the giants themselves would come to the aid of the northerners.

Furthermore, he announced that the gift of unlife would not be one solely for the king. With his announcement, he raised two recently killed ministers, the start of what would become a strange tradition. He also declared the bureaucracy a meritocracy, effectively sidelining the entire former political elite...

#### Current Day

As one could be expected, many of the parties who had once been allies of the kingdom were repulsed by this announcement. In particular, the dragonborn were particularly put off. They felt like the change was a hard turn towards neutrality in the dragon/giant conflict, and felt like the years of help they had given the kingdom had been in vain.

A cult like religion that worships the eternal king has grown up despite his efforts to squash it. Perhaps to got give them any political ammo, he has been seen only rarely outside his closest circles.

#### Ok, sure, history is a thing, but what about the actual description?

Fine, Gosh!

Damacia is a kingdom focused on rule of law. The treaty between the three cities was very important to the inhabitants and laid the foundation for modern culture. In that sense its pretty much a typical lawful good kingdom. There are guards, laws are enacted usually fairly. The fact that undead are a structural part of the kingdom doesn't really have too much of an effect, except that necromancy is state-sanctioned only. Performing unlawful necromancy is similarly to forgery only much more severe.

Despite having a knowledge of machinery and an entrepreneurial drive, most commoners are still farmers. Getting a job in the bureaucracy is seen as a patriotic action, but one that is hard to achieve.

## Affiliation

Formerly with the dragons. Now still anti-giant, but less so than prior. Think pragmatically neutralish.

## Naming Conventions

Byzantine.

## Interactions

There are few state level groups that Damacia *doesn't* have interactions with.

#### With H:

The dragonborn of Cindernost have a long history with the kingdom even from before it was a kingdom. They always viewed themselves as mentors and advisers to what they consider lesser races. They have in the past helped Damacia both economically, in providing smelting and mining techniques and in military affairs.

Now that the kingdom of Damacia is truly everlasting, the dragonborn feel like their investment in the humans was unrequited. They are on neutral terms now.

#### With D:

Telmasus's history is intertwined with Damacia. Racially and ethnically the inhabitants are the same. If not for the cloying swamps which the Temasians took refuse in during the giant occupation, they might be one whole today.

Telmasus sent forth an even larger contingent of men percentage wise than the kingdom in the last war, and were rewarded with everlasting safety, as they are now surrounded by the kingdom. However, the undeath and tendency towards rule of law is contrary to the more chaotic and libertarian sensibilities of the swamp people. They are on neutral terms now, but Telmasus is somewhat afraid of being forcibly integrated with the kingdom.

#### With E:

Crucible's beginning was also simmilar to Damacia's establishing their own city state. Like Telmasus, the artists and musicians of Crucible are fundamentally incompatible with the strict yet parental attitude of both the northerners and the kingdom.

Unlike Telmasus, Crucible as a whole very rarely acts as a whole, being a very anarchic place. Therefore, it has no formal embassaries, but its mages, musicians and artists are well known in Damacian cities. There is much trade with the city.

#### With G:

For the first time in centuries, it looks like the Damacians and the Northerners see eye to eye. Although many still are ashamed from their defeat. That being said, they understand that Damacia's advantage could have been pressed much stronger than they did.

The Goliaths are somewhere between passively hostile and neutral now towards the kingdom.

#### With F:

#### With I:

#### With J:

#### With L: