Nation Descriptions

# Giants (A)

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.

### Interaction with Giants (B)

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.

# Giants (B)

The second of the two ideological camps turned out much better. Persuaded by <insert name of giant here> they favored a much more hands off approach to rule, allowing for their goliath subordinates to take much of the mantle of leadership. For the Defense of Order, <same name of giant> is a paternal figure and one that inspires patriotism.

# Firbolg

Some giants were disgusted by both the war and A and B. They retreated from ruling and politics to live in the simple nature of the last true forest on the continent. (denoted as dark green stripes on the map)

# The Silver Circle of the Immortals

Since time immemorial these immortal druids have held back the forces of the blight. At the center of their domain lies an impossibly tall spire said to be made of solid music, whatever that means. It is said that none can look upon its features and not cry out of sorrow. Ever year all of the princes (the title for both men and women) gather to preform the life giving ceremony.

Having stayed neutral during the horrible draconic-giant war, they were cursed by a forgotten mage of terrible power from one of the sides. Since that time, their immortality has come at a price, every time they preform their now polluted ritual, they lose a bit of their sanity.

Have been reduced to madness, they have become unspeakably horrifying masters or their own fractious towers of slavery, excess and ritual murder. An outsider forced to gaze upon the broken circle might find it hard to decide which the more pathetic, the avarice of the squabbling princes, the cries of their teams of slaves or the war-chants of their bodyguards as they launched themselves into meaningless bloody slaughter.

Although the lesser princes range far and wide when not needed at home, looking for more bodyguards and talented people to serve their masters, the platinum might not be worth it. Under their fickle gaze, a visitor might find it hard to leave, and the line between adviser or bodyguard and slave thinner every day.

# Cindercost

A force in its own right, this singular fortress is the last of the above ground strongholds of the dragons on the continent. Although their original tenants have since retreated under the surface, their proxies, the dragonborn, now hold the keep, although it is not clear whether they act under orders or for their own self interest.

Cindercost was never taken during the unimaginably horrible war between the giants and the dragons, but rather the inhabitants were held besieged for decades until they were forced to retreat under the surface. As a last signal of defiance, the retreating dragons tore the earth asunder beneath Cindercost, making its invincible ramparts and slopes a horrible maelstrom of ash and fire. The mountain has erupted constantly from that point, seeping toxic gas and burning the land around the fortress.

# Blue Plainsmen

These small people (mostly Kenku?) have been under the direct rule of Giants (A) for centuries. However, this rule has only created a festering hatred of their overlords. From their lower cities they constantly plot and scheme ways to depose their reviled betters.

They have turned to shamanistic rituals and worship an imagined lord of thunder. A mysterious and violent figure who they hope will one day depose the sky lords of Markarska in a flurry of violent power.

### Interaction with Red and Green Plainsmen

Since their megre military forces are also under direction of the giants, they clash sometimes with these other plainsmen. However, separate clan size conflicts are also very common, especially over land and water.

# Green Plainsmen

Theoretically the most civilized of the plainsmen, these are the only group to create any sort of permanent city. Directly opposed to the Giants, their braves are often employed as scouts in other military's forces.

### The northern watch

Because they share a border with the dead zone, there must be a constant watch for abomination, undead and the other creations of that land. The select few who are employed in this duty are referred to as deathwalkers, and are the elite of any scout on the continent.

# Southern Kingdom

The major human kingdom of the region, these men arose when their pastoral communities were taken by the giants centuries ago. Some of the giant's hierarchical structure seems to have wiped off on this kingdom but their hearts belong to themselves. Yearning for independence, they have separated from the Northern Despotism. Think Gondor.

### Interactions

They have been in an on and off state of war with the Northern Despotism. They have an alliance with their surrounding powers, the strongest of which are the dragon born to their south.

More recently they have attracted monetary aid from the merchant cities to the north.

# Telmasus

A small city tucked within a swamp, these proud people gained their independence because of the difficulty of administering their putrid homeland. Champion scouts, their light armored soldiers have come into contact many times with the militaristic Sverograd city-state from the north.

# Crucible

The city of discovery and artistry. The place is a veritable anarchy. Every soul in the city on the lake values their own independence to an almost fanatical degree. Some foreigners speak in whispers that their ingenuity comes not from the inhabitants, but from some other worldly wrongness from the lake that pollutes their minds. (fey) \*cough cough\*

# Northern Despotism

A collection of human and goliaths, this nation believes itself to be the proper kingdom in the West and regards their southern neighbors to be rebels. These humans and goliaths look to the giants above them with admiration, and believe them fair lawgivers rather than brutal dictators.

# The Prefecture of Palinteos

Ice and sleet covers this mountain almost all year round, and storms commonly come down from its heights even in the summer. The Ice paladins of the prefecture worship a strange frozen god, and love stasis in all things, and would like nothing better than to ponder the secrets of the universe slowly in their frozen citadel. However, with recent events heating up, they have sided with the north, clinging to the concept of a united human kingdom.

They prefer to keep to themselves, although they allow passage for counsel even to their enemies. They are ruled by a cabal of wise templars called the high cognates.

# Counsel of the Grey Mages

The leading arcane magic user on the continent, this mysterious and reclusive order has made itself indispensable with its mastery of teleportation. They mostly refuse to get involved with politics directly and are incredibly conservative. Perhaps their exclusiveness was born of the knowledge that the giants could grow to fear their power if they expanded. Although their society is not quite a gerontocracy, it might as well be, as the power of these mages increases with age.

They hate the coming of the skyships since it encroaches on their fantastic logistics skills which they used to be able to charge absurd amounts for.

### Interactions

They are well known to hire themselves to the highest bidder and one of these is found in most courts of nations in the region.

They are at odds with the Silver Circle, but restrict their actions to assassination and other shadowy political actions rather than outright war.

Every race is welcome to study at the Counsel's city of Tempus, but the trials are long and hard. Furthermore, when the initiates leave they are not quite the same as when they entered, they are always Grey Mages, as opposed to whatever culture or identity they had going in.

# The Goldwater Assemblage

This fractious democracy of wealthy merchants is the main facilitator of trade in the region. Although their actual holdings are quite limited, it is not rare to see their ships all the way in the southern kingdoms.

With the opening of the borders, a mad rush has started to get their hands on as many airships as possible. It is common to see theives guild members here, although the assemblage tries to discourage outright stealing: they would prefer dishonest business.

### Interactions

Since they fulfill the same role as the Grey Mages, these two often are at odds, although its not too rare to see them working together as well. There is a shortage of mages in the area and they are needed for the airships after all!

They currently are bankrolling the war to the south as a way of sticking it to the Giants.

They hate both factions of tritons, not only because they support the giants but also because Golwater ships have a tendency to fish in the same spots as the tritons. This has recently escalated into a full on trade war, with piracy, destroyed tritons villages and thousands of punds of cargo sinking into the ocean from destroyed ships.

# The Tritons

After being subjugated long ago by the giants, these seemingly loyal subjects are the hand of the giants in acquatic domains. Not much is known of their organization or rationale. The ones to the west live quite deep, under pressures that would kill a human.

# The Khanate

Skilled horse masters and users of alchemy, these wise and ambitious people have been steadily expanding their lands to the bounds of their peninsula. One of the most warlike of all the nations on the continent, they are ruled by a Khan chosen as the most able of the children of the great houses, man or woman. The Khan is almost always a shrewd and inscrutable master of war and alchemy.

### Interactions

Among the Khanate's myth is the fact that they are descendents of escaped slaves of the eternal circle. Whether or not this is true, they maintain a hatred of the circle almost as undying as the silver princes themselves. Although merely a nuisance until now, there is word that the most skilled masters among the Khanate have found a way to reverse the blight that surrounds their territory.

Another development is the loss of one of their cities to the tritons, in a not too surprising but still troublesome development. Furious, the Khan is expected to ride to war any week now.