

Fractured Kingdom

A Dungeons & Dragons (5th Edition) Campaign Setting

by

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Fractured Kingdom

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Creating and playing a character in Fractured Kingdom

1

Welcome to the world of Tiermea! Or, to be more specific, to the Kingdom of Sabilia, the greatest and most ancient of civilisations ever to grace the land! Come, step forth and show yourself! From what House do you hail? Are you a Gilhall or a Lanstone; a Pearbrandt or a Lindwell? No matter, come, come! Step inside, and let me show you around...

Fractured Kingdom is a campaign setting for the Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition roleplaying game. It takes place in a world of high intrigue, where ancient dynasties fight for control of the Kingdom by whatever means necessary, where the fates of men are as likely to be decided by the contents of a letter as in the field of battle.

This booklet will tell you all you need to know in order to start playing a character in the world of Fractured Kingdom. The setting is, by and large, similar in style to the standard high fantasy worlds of *Dungeons & Dragons*, so this document will focus only on those areas which deviate from that, or where more detail would be helpful. For more information about the standard character creation process, please refer to the *Player's Handbook*.

Sabilia in Summary

Adventures take place in the Kingdom of Sabilia, a state which occupies the majority of the landmass of Ferroa, in the world of Tiermea. Sabilia is a large and somewhat inward-looking Kingdom composed of a number of dynasties, who after centuries of fighting have settled into a somewhat uneasy tolerance of one another. Chief among these dynasties are the Airnsim, from whom the Kings and Queens of the land have, for the most part, been drawn.

The Kingdom was founded, it is said, back in the First Days, when the gods walked amongst men. Each of the great dynasties traces a line back to one of these gods, and their power flows directly from this divine heritage.

However, the gods left Sabilia. First they departed the land, but remained in spirit, as gods do...but eventually they left completely, leaving the people of Sabilia to fend for themselves. Some believe they will

return, and the priesthood continues to practice their devotion while they wait. Others believe the gods have abandoned the land completely, and left the people in the hands of their offspring. The gods, absent, have remained silent.

To the East of Sabilia lie the Eastern Peaks, in which is nestled the Valley of the Crescent Twilight, a relatively small state which is independent of Sabilia and which is viewed by Sabilians with a kind of curious exoticism. Beyond the Eastern Peaks lie the Dark Lands, where it is always night and monsters roam. Few who have ventured there have ever returned.

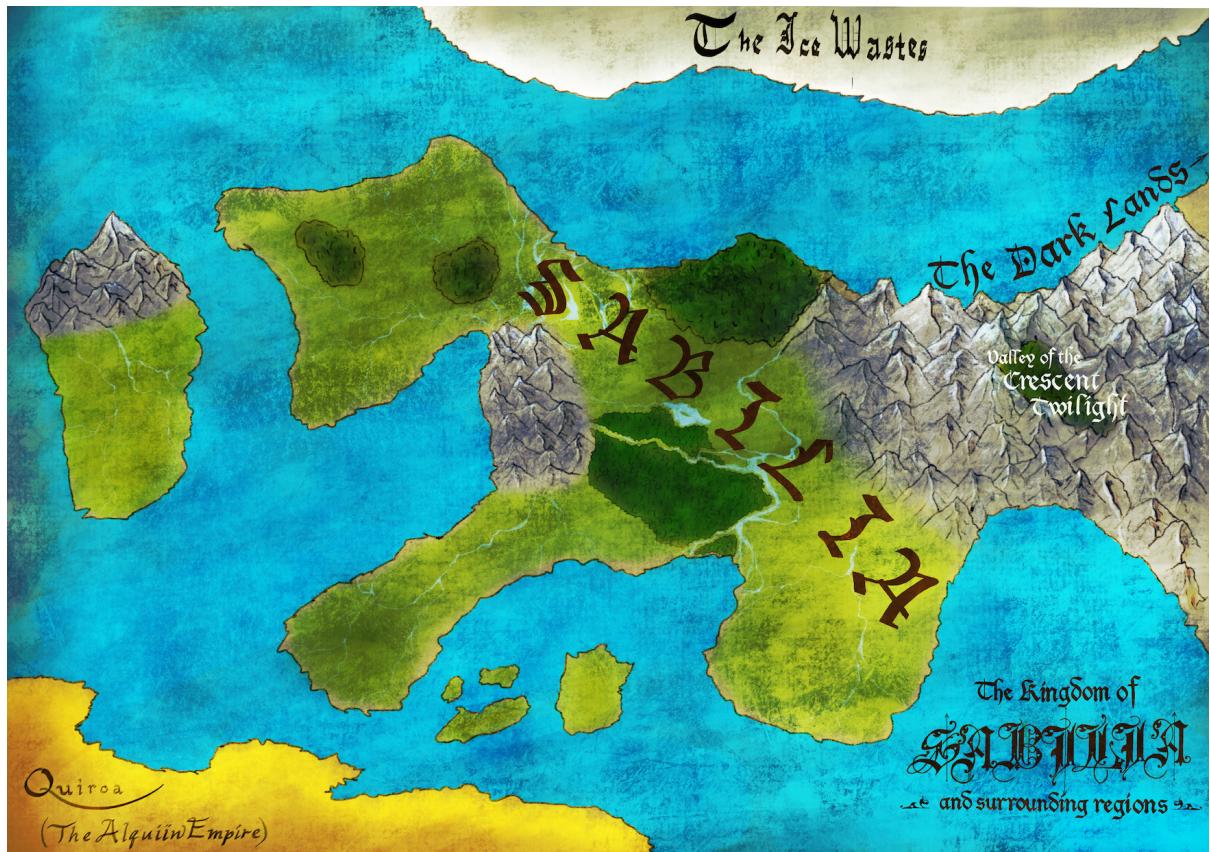
South of Sabilia and across the Middle Sea is the other major world power, the Alquïn Empire. The Empire is rumoured to hold sway over the whole of the vast continent of Quiroa, though few Sabilians travel beyond Quiroa's coastal trading towns and the general perception in Sabilia is that it is mostly desert anyway.

House Allegiance

Perhaps the most important thing to consider when creating a character for Fractured Kingdom is the House with which you are aligned. You do not necessarily have to be a member of one of the great lineages: you may be a servant in their employ; a peasant on their lands; a trader in their ports; a knight in their army; or any manner of other things. But all children born into Sabilia are born within the borders of one of the Great Houses, and they know their heritage as surely as they know whether they are Human or Elf.

House alignment becomes more rigid as your position in society rises. A lowly peasant may slip across the border into a neighbouring region and escape notice; within two or three years they will be completely assimilated. A Lord's daughter, on the other hand, cannot escape the duty she bears her House except by marriage or war, which in the best case will lead to her owing that same duty to another House and in the worst, destitution.

More information about each of the Great Houses can be found in chapter 2.



Social Rank

Social rank plays a large role in Sabilia, both in terms of how you are treated and in what you can achieve. The Sabilian Kingdom is a highly structured, deeply divided society, where it is very unusual for the aristocracy to mix with the common folk, and there is very little scope for self-improvement or movement within the class hierarchy.

An ambitious few do manage it—usually through an accumulation of wealth and influence which allows them to rise above their usual status. Still, memories in Sabilia are old, and even after a few generations the Great Houses may still view them as “new money”. Of course, while an ambitious Lord may be granted land or titles his name will never be listed amongst the Great Houses, for the blood of the gods does not run in his veins.

Players can choose to play characters of any social rank, from the lowest peasant to the greatest lord. That said, some characters may be more suited to

a particular campaign than others; a game of high-level political intrigue, for example, would be harder to play as a village leatherworker. If you are in doubt as to how well your character would fit in, consult your Dungeon Master for advice.

Class

Class choice in Fractured Kingdom is much the same as that described in the *Player’s Handbook*, with the following caveats:

Cleric is not a valid choice of class. It is not that Sabilia has no clerics; it does, but since the gods have left the land they have no power and thus can cast no spells. If you want to play an adventurer priest, you should choose another class (such as Fighter or Rogue), and choose the Acolyte background.

Monk is only valid for characters coming from the Valley of the Crescent Twilight, or those who may

have trained there. Both are very rare occurrences in Sabilia, so whether to allow them is at the discretion of the Dungeon Master.

Paladins in Sabilia have the divine blood of one of the Great Houses flowing in their veins, from which they get their power. They must also have received martial training in order to reach their Paladin status. For this reason, they must be members of the nobility.

Sorcerors get their power from the same divine source, but in their case it has transformed somehow. They must be blood relations with one of the great dynasties, but as they require no martial training they don't have to be members of the aristocracy; they might be the illegitimate offspring of some part of the nobility, or have some other less well-understood link. They may well be unaware of their blood relation when their power begins to manifest. Either way, sorcery is viewed with great suspicion in Sabilia, so noble and common sorcerors alike will try and hide the fact.

The lack of a Cleric class will come as a shock to those used to having Cleric as the standard healing class of an adventuring party, and indeed it does change the balance of a group. Parties looking for a healer would do well to seek out a Paladin, Ranger, or Bard, all of which have access to healing magic.

Race

Sabilia is an overwhelmingly Human nation, with a couple of pockets of the Kingdom where Dwarves or Elves are more common. Half-Elves are unusual but do exist, mostly in the domain of House Gilhall. Similarly, Halflings are mostly found in the regions of House Lindwell, and since they rarely venture abroad they aren't often seen elsewhere. More information about which races are common in different areas of the Kingdom can be found in the descriptions of each of the Houses in chapter 2.

Gnomes, Dragonborn, and Tiefling do not exist in Sabilia and thus it is not possible to play them. Sabilia does have the odd infestation of goblins, orcs, and similar creatures, so it is not inconceivable that a Half-Orc could exist, but they would encounter such a huge amount of discrimination in life (if they weren't simply killed at birth) that it is highly recommended not to

play them, and whether it is even available as a choice is at the Dungeon Master's discretion.

Languages

The principle language used in Sabilia is Sabilian, which fills the role of the Common tongue referred to in the *Player's Handbook*. The race-specific languages such as Elvish, Dwarvish, Halfling and so on work exactly as standard. As well as those, the following languages are also spoken in some parts in and out of the Kingdom:

Old Sabilian is the ancient language from which Sabilian is derived, said to be the original language of the gods. In ancient times, Sabilia was host to a whole range of languages, but Old Sabilian was the standard for formal written language. It is not used at all in modern times except in certain religious rituals.

Fluminis is a somewhat obscure language spoken up and down the rivers of the Marshranc region. It has no written form, and has survived the centuries of Sabilian standardisation because it is the language in which the ancient tales of the Marshranc House are told in their lands, through stories handed down the generations, to songs performed by their bards. Most of those who grow up in Marshranc are bilingual, and switch easily between Fluminis and Sabilian in conversation.

Quiroan is the common tongue spoken on the continent of Quiroa. It is not widely spoken in Sabilia, just as Sabilian is not widely spoken in Quiroa, but traders living on the coast may have learned a little. The language has a delicate, flowing script, and a long history of literature and science—for those Sabilians sophisticated enough to study it.

Yūgreste is the language of the Valley of the Crescent Twilight. It is a tonal language which, like Elvish, has a musical ring to it. Other than that there is no relation between the two languages, or indeed between it and any other known language. The Valley's isolated location has no doubt encouraged this entirely independent linguistic evolution.

The Great Houses of Sabilia

2

Gorged by the gods, tempered by war; bound through marriage and ruptured by betrayal; the Great Houses form the spine on which hangs the Kingdom of Sabilia. Their heroes are legends, admired by peasants and nobles alike. In their histories, our future is written. They are both the foundation of tradition in these lands, and the spring from which flows all political power. They are the core that holds this Kingdom together; and the flaw that, one day, will rip it apart.

It is said that the Houses sprung forth from the gods themselves, in the First Days when gods and men roamed the earth together. Thus in the blood of the nobility runs the blood of the gods, and in their hands lies the fate of the Kingdom. It is not known why the gods left Tiermea, but when they did they left the Great Houses as heirs to their land and, ultimately, executors of their will.

The Majestic Houses

Since ancient times, the greatest of the Great Houses have been the noble House Airnsim, and its two lesser branches, Houses Gilhall and Pearbrandt. Whether it is their Elven ancestry or their quiet, fair-minded approach to rulership, these Houses are admired by their people and respected by their peers.

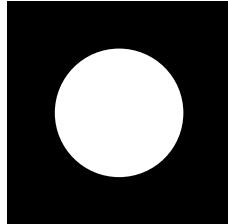
House Airnsim

Motto *Strength through purity*

Symbol An unadorned circle

Racial Makeup High Elf

The oldest and most revered of the Great Houses, House Airnsim has long been that from which the Kings and Queens of Sabilia were drawn. Members of House Airnsim consider all the other Houses to be equal and beneath them, which though a rather arrogant outlook allows them to rule with very little bias.



One of the reasons for this belief is the purity of their High Elf bloodline. House Airnsim believes High Elves to be fundamentally superior to the other races, and as the purest Elven line which can trace its origins back to the gods themselves, they are naturally superior amongst Elves.

For this reason, House Airnsim does not intermarry with other Houses, a fact which has caused more than a few raised eyebrows in some of the more tawdry areas of lower society. Inter-House or interracial romances are thus treated as a great scandal, and those members of the Airnsim nobility who indulge in them are summarily disowned and made unwelcome in their homeland.

House Pearbrandt

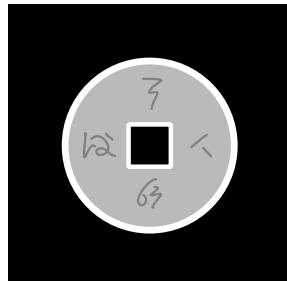
Motto *Carpe fortuna*

Symbol An ancient coin

Racial Makeup Human

House Pearbrandt hails from the coastal areas in Sabilia's Southern regions, where the land juts out toward Quiroa. Because of this enviable position they have a long history of trade with Quiroa, making them one of the richest families in the Kingdom.

The cities they control tend to be a little more cosmopolitan than the rest of Sabilia as people from all walks of life travel there to find their fortune.



The members of House Pearbrandt look on their haughty Elven neighbours with a sense of amused tolerance, believing that the fortune they've amassed over the generations far outweighs any notion of "bloodline purity". Although they find the Airnsim attitude to be a little condescending, they generally get along, and so long as the Elves don't start poking their noses into their business affairs House Pearbrandt pays them a grudging respect.

House Gilhall

Motto *Truth and Beauty*



Political map of the Sabilian Kingdom

Symbol A fallen leaf

Racial Makeup Wood Elf, Half-Elf, Human

House Gilhall traces its origins back to House Airnsim, from which it originated thousands of years ago. The tale of its progenitor, Lord Faellwyn, is often recounted in the Gilhall Court. He was a prince of the House Airnsim, the heir and first in line, when he committed the unforgivable crime: he fell in love with a Dryad called Sylwyr who inhabited the nearby Gilwood Forest. He ran away from the Estate and built Gilwood Hall in the centre of the Forest, where he married Sylwyr and founded House Gilhall.

From their loins sprang the race of Wood Elves, who went on to mix freely with the surrounding Humans as well as any further runaways from House Airnsim.



To this day the lands of House Gilhall are known as a place of tolerance and appreciation for the finer arts, and lovers often choose Gilwood Forest as their destination when they decide to elope.

For their part, House Airnsim denies the story, claiming that Lord Faellwyn was never a member of the Airnsim family, that he is mentioned nowhere in their records (which are generally long and detailed), and the history is likely a myth invented to improve the image of the mongrel Wood Elves in the eyes of the common folk. Relations between the two houses are polite but fragile – though they have counted each other as allies for many centuries now, Elven memories are long, and occasionally old wounds flare up and they find themselves bitter enemies once more.

Houses of the Crooked Isle

The Crooked Isle lies to the West of the Sabilian mainland, separated by the narrow and pirate-infested Channel of Daggers. There are two Houses that make

their home there, though they have little to do with one another – the honourable House Lanstone and the devious House of Calbrand.

House Lanstone

Motto *Order breeds honour*

Symbol An anvil and hammer

Racial Makeup Dwarf

Occupying the mountains to the North of the island is the stern House Lanstone. After Airnsim, Lanstone is said to be the oldest name in Sabilia. The Dwarves who make up its people, it is claimed, rose fully-formed from the ground, born of the very rocks themselves.

If the noble line is forged from rock, so too are the attitudes of its citizens. The Lanstones are a hard, traditionally-minded people, who believe there is a correct way to do things, and who strive to follow the correct path. That said, they are not an arrogant people. Unlike the Airnsim, they do not believe in the superiority of any one race or House. Tradition and order, they say, is at the root of all morality. That is the one true path to righteousness, and anybody may follow it who so choose.



House Calbrand

Motto *Respect. Blood. Power.*

Symbol A fish-hook

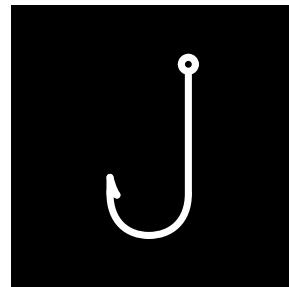
Racial Makeup Human

Scattered across the remainder of the island are the scions of House Calbrand. Rather than one large estate managing the whole of their territory, House Calbrand is made up of a number of smaller regions, each managed by one of Lord Calbrand's twelve children.

The Crooked Isle is known as a haven for criminal activity in Sabilia, and for generations it has been rumoured that House Calbrand is actively involved with this activity, though no direct link has ever been

proven. It is undeniable, though, that the criminal networks across Sabilia can all trace their roots to this one corner of the Kingdom. Calbrand must be either complicit or incompetent, say the other Houses—behind closed doors, of course, for fear of retribution.

Houses of the Westlands



The Westlands comprise the largest contiguous region in Sabilia in terms of landmass. They stretch from the coast of the Channel of Daggers, where House Balmour keeps a strict watch for pirate activity, around the top of the Western Alps, after which House Marchrance borders with Houses Gilhall and Valenguard. To the North, House Lindwell tend their relatively peaceful lands and do what they can to stay out of trouble.

House Balmour

Motto *Only total victory will suffice*

Symbol Crossed swords

Racial Makeup Human

The most competitive of the Great Houses is House Balmour. They boast some of the finest military prowess in the Kingdom; a result of the highly regimented culture and lifestyle within their lands. All boys learn the martial arts as part of their schooling, and many dream of becoming a Sabilian Champion.



Every year, House Balmour hosts the Sabilian Games, a tournament to find the most celebrated champions in all the land. There are contests of magic and cunning, but by far the most popular events are the physical bouts—fencing, jousting, and archery. The Games' finale takes place when the winners of

each of these three events are pitted against each other in a mounted three-way battle, the outright winner of which is dubbed that year's Sabilian Champion. Many of the champions returned by the contest have been from House Balmour itself or its lands, a fact in which they take much pride.

Unofficially, there is also a bareknuckle fisticuffs contest which, although strictly illegal, attracts a great number of spectators every year. This underground tournament, dubbed the Sabilian Fists, or just the Fists, is strictly the domain of the lower classes, and it would be a great scandal for the nobility to be caught watching it, much less competing! Nevertheless, it is an open secret that they often do watch, and the organisers do their best to accommodate their desire for anonymity since they bring so much money to the betting-houses.

House Lindwell

Motto *A simple life is a peaceful one*

Symbol A hoe and scythe

Racial Makeup Human, Halfling

The lands of House Lindwell sit snugly between those of Houses Balmour and Marshrance, sheltered from the treacherous seas to the West and the lawless mountains to the South. As a result its people are a quiet, unassuming folk, whose ambitions rarely extend beyond making a good living for their families and saving enough to enjoy a quiet retirement. They have a reputation throughout the Kingdom for honesty and openness, but also for naïveté and innocence.

Like the people, their leaders are not inclined to impose. None of the Kings in the history of Sabilia have been drawn from House Lindwell, and in general they prefer not to involve themselves in the diplomacy and intrigue of political life. They regard their primary concern to be to their people, and strive to raise taxes fairly and offer support where needed.

Despite their lack of ambition, the people of House Lindwell have courage where it counts. It is rarely

by choice that they venture beyond the Lindwell borders for a life of adventuring, but having done so they will defend their companions through the most dire circumstances.

House Marshrance

Motto *Never stay still*

Symbol A decorative rose

Racial Makeup Human

House Marshrance makes its home amongst the network of rivers and marshlands North-East of the Western Alps. The region operates as a loosely federated collection of clans, some of which trace a direct lineage to House Marshrance itself, while others are without noble blood—though outsiders would struggle to tell the difference. The distinction between nobleman and commoner is less marked here than elsewhere; no matter their status, most people of the Marshrance region live aboard narrowboats which travel the waterways, or, in the drier Eastern regions, as part of travelling caravans. Decisions which affect the region are decided at vast moots, where all have the right to speak. That said, the final decision on such matters does still lie with the Rivermaster, Lord Marshrance, who leads the moot and weighs the opinions of his people before casting judgment.

Apart from their obvious affinity with water and horses, House Marshrance has a reputation for sorcery and trickery. Many of those who travel out of the region make their living telling fortunes or entertaining with music and magic tricks. It is said that there are some who can commune with the dead, though most Marshrance folk would be quick to tell you that that is an old, outdated prejudice.

The Border Houses

To the East of Sabilia lie the Border Houses, pressed up against the Eastern Peaks. These two valiant Houses have protected Sabilia over the centuries from

raids led by creatures from the Dark Lands. Their service to the Kingdom is appreciated by those who do not have to worry about such things, though their proximity to the Dark Lands has left them with a somewhat sinister mien, which sometimes leads the Western folk to view them with suspicion.

House Raventomb

Motto *Wisdom and grace*

Symbol A single tear

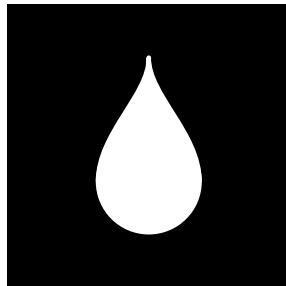
Racial Makeup Human

House Raventomb is unique among the Great Houses in that the title is passed down not through a direct blood lineage, but through adoption. Centuries ago, the Lady Raventomb swore that she would take no husband, and instead adopted a daughter from the priesthood to take her place when she was gone. This tradition has continued, so that since that day there has never been a Lord Raventomb.

For this reason the priesthood remains strong despite the gods having left Sabilia. Families send their firstborn daughters to study there, in the hope that they might be selected to rule the Raventomb domains in the future. Even if they are not selected, they are given the best education and often leave the priesthood well prepared to take on important roles in local governance or diplomacy abroad.

Raventomb is a very agricultural area, so the remaining sons and daughters of a household will generally be put to work raising livestock or plowing fields.

The reason for Lady Raventomb's oath remains shrouded in mystery. Some say she was once married, and that her husband betrayed or spurned her, leading her to abandon men altogether. Others say he died, and call her the Raventomb Widow. Yet others say she never took any man, but that her devotion to her people was so strong that she surrendered herself to their service. Whatever the reason, Raventomb certainly reaps the benefits of its unusual system. The generally high quality of education means that many of the most powerful figures in history have originated



from the area, while the strong agricultural base grows enough food to feed half of Sabilia.

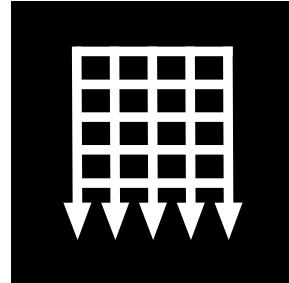
House Valenguard

Motto *Constant vigilance*

Symbol A portcullis

Racial Makeup Human

For centuries, House Valenguard has acted as the last line of defence between the Kingdom of Sabilia and the horrors in and beyond the mountains; the creatures of the Dark Lands. They are brought up on a strict military regimen, and their first priority is protection of the Kingdom.



While they take their rôle as protectors very seriously, those from other regions vary in how they view the people of House Valenguard. Some of them see them as overly cautious, or stuck reliving former glories. Most of them have never had to face the creatures which sometimes emerge from the Dark Lands. Some even intimate that they don't exist; that they are simply figments of the Valenguard's imaginations. Those of House Valenguard, of course, would respond that the reason they have never seen these creatures is that they were stopped at the frontier.

The reality is probably a mix of the two. The old tales speak of fierce monsters; of demons and dragons emerging from the mountains and raining fire down on the lands of Sabilia. The truth is that most of the forces House Valenguard have had to drive away recently are a lot more petty than that. There are those that believe that the demons are simply lying in wait, biding their time until they can come in full force and overrun the kingdom. Most dismiss this as paranoid rambling, but those of House Valenguard do not. Even if they don't think it is likely to happen in the near future, they remain vigilant—just in case.