

Planeswalker's Guide to Ulgrotha

Scott Hungerford & Kyle Namvar

01. 06. 1995

Original text can be found at: <https://forum.nogoblinsallowed.com/viewtopic.php?p=127813> as was linked from MTG Wiki.

Amongst the multi-verse that encompasses the game of Magic, most of the worlds already mentioned in the previous expansions and sources have been written about the plane of Dominaria, or the worlds immediately around Dominaria that are convenient for the Planeswalkers to travel to and from. The Homelands set is based on a world somewhat distant from these familiar places, a world distant enough that it would even be a trying journey even for one experienced in walking through the worlds.

Far back in distant history, the world was known to the all-knowing World-Sages as Ulgrotha, a word that is comparable to “garden” or “sanctum”. Apart from being a world incredibly rich in mana and diverse life forms, it was not much different from any of the other worlds that connected to it, or made up the fabric of the multi-verse. On this world was a Citadel, a fortress belonging to a expansive group of planeswalkers known as the Tolgath. They were a powerful group of wizards directly opposed to an older group known as the Ancients. All the members of these rival groups were incredibly powerful sorcerers, and had a great deal of experience in artifice creation and wielding the forces of mana.

Making sure that this new threat did not grow strong enough to be dangerous, the repressive Ancients lay siege to the worlds the Tolgath held. Finally, the battle was joined at Ulgrotha, and all across this small world packs of wizards dueled each other, summoning creatures and casting spells of destruction and manipulation. The battle was so massive that at one point, by the coast of the Greater Sea, one of the Ancients’ War-Lords was forced to rent open a rift from Ulgrotha to a different world entirely, just to fuel its spells.

In the end, after weeks of fighting, the Ancients finally lay assault upon the Citadel itself. A Tolgath wizard named Ravi returned to the fortress too late, and found it surrounded by the armies of the Ancients. For three days she watched helplessly as the walls and spells were breached, and the mental connections to her compatriots vanished one by one as they were killed or captured. Knowing it would be a matter of time before the Ancients discovered her, Ravi went to a place where a great Spire of basalt rock rose out of the ground. There, she lifted a small chime from where she had wore it around a chain on her neck, and gently rang it on the pommel of her knife. Quickly, she walked down the stairs into a caverns beneath the Spire, closed and sealed the huge door behind her, and climbed into a magical sarcophagus (Tawnos’s Coffin type object), and closed the lid over her, just as the first effects of the chime were occurring.

The effects of the magical chime were monstrous, as the artifact caused a magical backlash that erupted across the entire world. The Chime, attuned to the mana patterns and streams of Ulgrotha, disrupted mana channels all over the planet. Any creature who required mana to survive perished, and all of the wizards who could not escape in time were burnt in the holocaust of colorless fire, as an entire world of energy surged against them. The land died, the energy channels were run dry, and most of

the summoned creatures died within days, their lifeforce drank by the very soil they walked upon. Where before the rich earth had produced mana, now it drank mana and life from any creature who walked across its surface. Even the flyers couldn't glide forever.

Ravi had been given the Apocalypse Chime by her master in case of such an occasion; she knew that it would be a terrible thing to ring it, and she came to know just how terrible the object was as she lay in the sarcophagus. Being a wizard based on life and nature, feeling her ties to the land ripped away drove her to madness, and she was left with a suffocating feeling of solitude. Even through the Coffin protected her against the magical backlash of the Chime, the very feel of all of her connections and relations fragment to nothingness caused her to regress into an unstable state.

After a week within stasis, the coffin was supposed to open, providing egress and thus escape from the battlefield. But her master had neglected to give Ravi the source of mana that would power the Coffin to open. Trapped, Ravi lay in stasis, awake, unable to dream, aware of every passing second for the centuries she was locked within the artifact. With all of her land-ties gone, and no means to generate the power to open the lock, her spirit was rapidly broken, and claustrophobia set in. Madness does not even begin to describe the state of her mentality.

But one location on Ulgrotha withstood the devastation. Where the Ancient War-Lord had rent open a mana-gate deep beneath the surface, mana still poured through. The summoned creatures in the vicinity of the Rift survived the effects of the Chime, as the steady flow of mana kept the area alive and not drinking; an oasis amidst a planet thirsty for energy. Most of the humans took to the plains to the North, while the Goblins and other humanoids found a home within the Mountains to the South, naming them the "Koskun Mountains". The Minotaurs that had already lived secluded within the vales of the mountain-range continued with their lives in much the same fashion, and were relatively unaffected by this dramatic turn of events. The swamps were for the most part unpopulated, and most of the sea creatures that survived along the shallow shores were destroyed by the devastation. The forest still contained many creatures and monsters, some indigenous to the area, others summoned and left behind by the Tolgath and Ancient duelists.

Most of the small planet was left desolate. The climate changed, and where the trees died and withered, grasses, brush and hardy plants survived, as did the smaller lizards, insects, reptiles and other creatures that did not depend on mana to survive. But where the rift still poured mana through from deep beneath the ground, the rich concentration of foreign mana made the oasis a paradise of health and vitality amongst the devastation. Not even a trace remained of the many Tolgath towers and structures that used to dot the landscape around the Citadel, let alone any sign of the individual battles or duels.

Feroz

A long time ago, there was a planeswalker by the name of Feroz. Feroz was a kind and gentle human whose special trait, apart from his ability to walk the planes and harness the energies of the plains and islands, was his uncanny knack for understanding and learning the languages of nearly any creature. With the aid of powerful spells, Feroz prevented his body from aging, and protected himself against predators and enemies with powerful artifacts he had acquired during his travels.

For lifetimes, Feroz did little but wander from plane to plane, seeing the sights and exploring the wonders of the multi-verse. As result, he gained a level of wisdom and understanding few planeswalkers achieve, for Feroz knew that the multi-verse was connected on every level, rather than just understanding it as most wizards claim. He had explored most of the hospitable worlds and had begun to suspect the relationships between them all.

Thus, after having conversed with so many creatures and beings, and studied so many cultures, the practice of summoning creatures by wizards had come to disgust Feroz. After traveling the worlds for so many decades and seeing so many cultures decimated by wizards summoning them for duels, Feroz had come to despise those planeswalkers that summoned creatures from their birth-planes, away from their families and homes. But what could one planeswalker do against the entire multi-verse?

To have so many creatures die on battlefields for empty causes, to have so many creatures helplessly slaughtering each other in meaningless duels infuriated him. Feroz was a wizard who summoned no creatures to fight his battles and duels, but instead defended himself with a collection of simple spells and potent artifacts. Because of his hatred for the summoners, Feroz rarely interacted with them, and rarely accepted any challenges from them. But when a cause was great enough, or there were lives of innocents in the balance, Feroz would duel until his opponent had no spells left to cast, then banish the wizard to a far away plane, preferably one which would take them years to travel back from.

Portal to the Homelands

One day, Feroz planeswalked from one little known world to another, and encountered a mountain-aboriginal tribe of Minotaurs. (He appeared in the Koskun Mountains, within reach of the Rift.) He was struck by the ritual-tattoos of one particular Minotaur. These tattoos bore an uncanny resemblance to the relationship of the five colors of mana. This proved to be more than a coincidence because Feroz was able to detect the spark of embryonic planewalking ability within the Minotaur.

The importance of this individual could not be overestimated to Feroz, who decided to settle with the Minotaurs until he could educate the novice planewalker. Feroz would only depart once the Minotaur could protect his clan and his home from the predations of other planewalkers.

The Minotaur, Sandruu, proved to be a natural. Within a few years Feroz felt ready to explore the Homelands with Sandruu in tow. Feroz was quickly drawn to the abundance of life in the city of Onella, on the Northern Plains. Upon entering the city he became aware of another planeswalker. Girding himself for possible conflict, he was relieved to discover a planeswalker named Serra, one whom shared his beliefs in the non-exploitation of fellow creatures. Where Feroz was wise, older and well-travelled, Serra was a headstrong woman who had settled in this world. Feroz was equally impressed with Serra's guardians, whom she called, "her Angels".

Serra's Angels were not living beings, but instead incarnations of white mana inhabited by war-spirits. The war-spirits that possessed the incarnations did so of free will, for if the physical body died, they would suffer no lasting damage, and would eventually come to Serra to be reformed, or journey to a place where white mana was prevalent and take physical form again.

Battle for the Homelands

Eventually Feroz's admiration for Serra turned to love, and their relationship bloomed. After but a short time, he proposed to her on one of the peaks within the Koskun Mountains, the site of his original entry into the world. With his residency cemented, he released Sandruu to explore the multi-verse, while he stayed behind to watch over the world he was beginning to be quite fond of.

Sandruu sought the wisdom of several planeswalkers, but his trusting nature was to lead to his downfall. He fell in love with a planeswalker named Kristina, who taught him much about life and magic. But he crossed paths with the ferocious Taysir, a user of all the colors of magic who also loved Kristina. He was caught off guard by the ferocity of Taysir's attack, and fled back to the safety of the Homelands. Unfortunately, his panic made him careless, and instead of reaching Feroz, Sandruu fell to

earth near the Minotaur caves. Taysir followed him, and in front of Sandruu's tribe, imprisoned him on a faraway plane of existence.

Sensing Sandruu's distress, Feroz appeared in time to witness the Minotaur's fate, but could do nothing to prevent it. Confronting Taysir, enraged at the banishment of his friend, Feroz engaged Taysir in battle. Taysir forced the Minotaurs to fight for him. Alarmed, Feroz attempted to end the battle without harming the Minotaurs but this only forced Taysir to desperately Earthquake the battleground resulting in the destruction of the Minotaur's ancestral pictoglyph caves, and the loss of centuries of history, tales and heroic saga. The aftershocks wreaked havoc with the Koskun Peaks as a whole.

From the rubble Feroz was able to grab one of a dead Minotaur's knives and embedded it into Taysir's skull - it was the first time he had ever actively taken a life, and it disturbed him greatly. The remaining Minotaurs disposed of the planeswalker's body, and then mourned for their tribe. Unknown to the tribe Taysir was not dead; his soul had been taken by the ancestral gods of the Minotaurs, where they held him for many decades, temporarily stripping him of his planeswalking abilities and showing him the error of his ways. Only when he was redeemed would they return Taysir to his body, now a shriveled husk lying on the graveyard pile deep within the Minotaur caves.

Shortly thereafter, Feroz and Serra were married in a Minotaur ceremony, and received wedding tattoos on their wrists, as well as giving each other the customary ring.

The World of the Homelands

Feroz and Serra began to dedicate their time to researching their home in more detail, and they found that most of the world had already been ravaged by a great calamity of some kind many centuries beforehand. Except for their small section of the planet, the entire world's mana channels had been drained or destroyed. The world was mostly desolate, with only shallow scrubs for plants and inhabited by a variety of poisonous insects. It was a world without any significant vegetation or habitation of any kind, or any marks of any kind of ancient civilization. To travel through these wastelands was a sure invitation to death, for the life drained from any traveler who ventured across the soil, as if the very earth were drinking the life from them to replace what it has lost. To travel by water or air was safe, but if you ventured too close to the hungry land, you would suffer the same fate. This world had once had been a beautiful place, but some terrible event had happened that turned the world into nothing better than a desolate nightmare.

They learned that only one section of the world had any life at all. A well-populated place on the edge of a vast ocean, with sprawling forests, high mountains and plains that reached from the Sea to the very edge of the desolation. Humans were prevalent on the plains, monsters and creatures in the forest and a variety of humanoids in the mountains. The only large structure in evidence was a huge stone castle, dwarven built, that was built overlooking the swamps. Feroz tried to enter into the castle, but an overwhelming sense of dread kept him from exploring the interior. He had an idea that there was something ancient and evil residing within, and though his curiosity was peaked, he had no wish to find out what it was.

After a few months of research, Serra and Feroz were able to discern few answers to the mystery, save that the mysterious and powerful source of mana that brought life to the land came from deep under the earth, and that it was what caused the small domain to grow amidst the total desolation of the world. The ocean floor near the inhabited part of the world still had many fish, sea monsters and even a small population of seafolk that herded sea-cows.

Serra's Isle, Feroz's Ban.

The couple set up their home on a small island far away from the coast, and then proceeded to build a paradise there. With Serra's magics, they infused the small island with mana from the faraway continent, making it into a beautiful and fertile island, and no longer a place where the very earth would sap their life. Using his own sorcery, Feroz brought great blocks of granite and marble from the mountains of faraway worlds, and used them to build a great villa that faced over the deep blue sea. Over the two years it took to construct the house, Serra traveled across a number of planes and collected a variety of creatures, ones that would live well on the isolated island. By the time she returned with her last trip's collection of pets and creatures, the house that Feroz built was done - great standing columns, shallow reflecting pools, and even a garden he had grown by linking with Serra's mana spell. Albatrosses as flying mounts and spellbattery-powered skiffs to sail the waves.

In the main tower overlooking the largest of the reflecting pools, Serra and Feroz then settled down to work. Studying the sole mana stream available to the world, ancient tomes on spell construction, and analyzing one of Serra's artifacts, a device that cast an incredibly strong barrier of force, they endeavored day and night for nearly a year. Then, on the night when the flow of mana was at its strongest, (when it was solstice on the world where the mana came from, they figured) Feroz cast a powerful spell, Feroz's Ban, that sealed his world off from the other planes. Proof against other planeswalkers either entering or stealing the creatures of the world, and invisible from scrying or even detection, the world became shrouded from the rest of the multi-verse like a ship in a bottle of volcanic glass.

To the point of view from the few other planeswalkers that even knew of the place, the world suddenly disappeared, and the gates vanished. But in a world with so few resources to use, it was of no loss to them. And in a multiverse where worlds and gates occasionally came and went with the cycles of the years, there was no great panic.

Illusion's End

Over the next ten generations, Feroz and Serra worked hard on maintaining their illusions, keeping their eternal middle-age/youth, and keeping up the Ban. But, on a stormy midsummers night, Feroz suffered a fatal accident in his laboratory - an elemental he had been studying had gotten free and committed grievous harm against him. By the time that Serra reached him, he was near death. With his last breaths, Feroz begged her to leave this world, that she should never tell anyone of what they had done, and to leave "their children" to live their own lives. But, before he could tell her why, Feroz died, beyond the reach of her magics.

She was very angry with him, and soon found herself within the City of Onella, capitol of the Citizenship of Aysen, wandering the streets in disguise. While observing, she witnessed an accident about to happen, and tried to use her powers to "change" the scene so the man would not be seriously hurt. But as fate has quirks, the man instead was killed, and she quickly learned why Feroz had asked her to leave the Homelands, and leave the inhabitants to their own destinies and fates. For years Feroz had guided Serra in her actions, and without him there as her partner, a lot of the responsibilities she had taken lightly now had a much more serious nature.

Serra buried Feroz in an unmarked grave near the spot where he had first come into this world, atop the Koskun Mountains. She also erected a huge stone wall, and burned the story of the world into the stones in wizard's runes - if any planeswalker were to breach the Ban, it is likely that this place would be the point where they would come through, and thus would hopefully read the story of Feroz's life on the wall, and his dreams, then leave the world unharmed.

When all was finished, she opened the one-way gate for a moment, and stepped through into the outside world. When the gate closed behind her, closing her out forever, she dropped to her knees and wept.

Serra was killed less than a month later by another planeswalker who coveted her wedding band. He believed it to be magical in nature, and thus challenged her to a duel over it. Trapped in a world she now hated, never to return to her paradise or to the arms of her husband, she accepted the duel, and fought the wizard for two days. Finally, as the opposing wizard was raising a final series of spells, she disenchanting her own protection circles, and let herself and the wedding ring be blasted with lightning and fire. One of the spectators, a young priest by the name of Angus, couldn't stand to watch the wizard blast Serra as she lay on the ground, helpless. With a strong blow from his walking staff he knocked the wizard unconscious, and watched as the man dissolved into a puff of smoke.

Angus then carried Serra back to his house, and tried to heal her as best he could, but she had been damaged too badly by her opponent. In the two days before she died, in confidence she told the story of her life to the priest, and the story of Feroz's life and dream. When she finally died from her injuries, he buried her in an unmarked grave in the hills overlooking Sursi. When his life dream, his Cathedral he had spent fifty years building and overseeing was finally finished and dedicated on his seventieth birthday, he dedicated it to Serra and her life - thus, the Cathedral of Serra in Legends.

Present Day

It was twenty years ago that Feroz died and Serra was killed in a sorcerer's duel. The Ban that Feroz created was still intact, but it was built without knowledge of the Gate in the Dwarven City deep beneath Castle Sengir. Over time, the mere presence of the Dwarven Gate has been unravelling the Ban, and now, without Serra or Feroz to tune and strengthen the spell, the Ban is beginning to unravel. The world of the Homelands is open to outsiders once again, and the planeswalkers have felt the pulse of the world re-joining Dominia once again, like sharks smelling blood in the water. If the Dwarven Gate can be closed or destroyed, the Ban will reinstate, and keep the world safe from harm, likely forever... And thus begins the game!

Rough Timeline [For the Homelands Setting]

(1 generation = 20 years. Humans have 20-25 year generations which this chart is based on. The Goblins of this world have a lifespan of about 8 years, Orcs about 15, and the Dwarves are somewhere in the range of well over two hundred years or more.)

After the Great Destruction

1st Generation (600 years before present)

- Those few creatures and beings who actually survived the final conflict between the Tolgath and the Ancients are the ones who were in the vicinity of the Rift, and thus did not get their life force drunk out of them. There are nomadic human cultures forming on the plains, formed from a mish-mash of the summoned people, warriors, healers, sorcerers, and the like. The humanoids have started to make their homes in the Koskun Mountains, and are starting to dig through the rich soil. The world is going through serious changes; violent storms are a constant, as are going to be unpredictable seasons and weather patterns.

3rd Generation (560 years)

- The creatures and people continue to adapt to their new homes and environments, and now consider the oasis to be their true home, surrounded by a deadly scrubland. Most have given up any hope of rescue, and the tales of the great war have become stories to teach to your grandchildren.

4th to the 10th Generations (540 to 420)

- The stories of the great war are now hundreds of years old, and have started to degenerate with every telling, as there is no one written language that is common. Occasionally a lone wizard will appear, steal a creature or group of creatures, then leave.

12th Generation (380)

- A colony of Dwarves dig through a natural gate from another world to this one in search of minerals and gems, deep beneath the mountains of the Homelands, within the vicinity of the Rift. A Dwarven city is established, and is called New Freedom in the Dwarven tongue. It is a beautiful place filled with Dwarven-constructed artifacts and power/air/light generating machines, and the mining there yields great wealth. The Dwarves dig to the surface, and start to build a great stone castle called Morning Light overlooking the saltmarsh. They are not discovered by any other culture, and are unaware of the history of the world.
- Two planeswalkers duel in the swamps near the uncompleted castle. When the duel is over, an ancient Vampire Lord by the name of Baron Sengir is left stranded when his wizard is banished.
- A number of the Dwarves build sailing ships to explore the local world they have found their way into, and leave the rest of their kin to finish the castle. They contact many cultures and have many adventures.
- When the Sea-Dwarves return six years later, they find that all of their kin who stayed behind have been slain by a Vampire that has taken over their castle. Even though they know many ways to get into their own castle, Baron Sengir proves too strong for them to destroy. In one of the raids, Baron Sengir captures the Dwarven King's daughter, Irini, and turns her into a vampire. Finally, the Dwarves accept the fact that they will never be able to get through the castle and down to their city and back through the gate without being caught and killed by Sengir, or all of their kinfolk who have been turned into vampires by Sengir. They leave the castle to the victor, and go to find their own home in this world, and wait to enact their revenge.
- Serra arrives in the Homelands. She encourages peace between the various plains nomads and the foundation of the state of Aysen. She takes on the godhood/protector role over the people of Aysen.

13th Generation (360)

- The Dwarves learn that many of the beings who live on this world have little idea that there are worlds beyond their own. These humans and humanoids who have such short lifespans have either forgotten or lost the reasons why they are here, or what has happened to the world in the past. The Dwarves then set out on a greater quest, to try to find out what has occurred in the past and put the pieces together.

14th Generation (340)

- Many of the Dwarven ships that sailed beyond the edge of the area saturated by the off-world mana don't come back - and never will. Approaching an alien shoreline when away from the rift has the same effect as walking over the hungry earth - there are a pair of Dwarven ships that anchored, and all the crew died when the tide lowered, placing them just within reach of the life-draining effect.

20th Generation (220)

- Feroz duels the evil wizard in the Koskun mountains.
- Baron Sengir stirred awake by magical activity and echoes of Feroz's presence, and the draw from the Earthquake spell. Soon after, he discovers the resting place of Ravi, and frees her from her prison. He turns her into a vampire, and she becomes "Grandmother Sengir", and begins to slowly teach him what she knows of green and black magic, wisdom, and lost knowledge. She is still completely insane, and has little idea who she is, or her history.

- Feroz and Serra build their home; Feroz's Ban is cast.
- Aysen Abbey is built in the city of Onella.
- Baron Sengir sends Vampires and monsters on raids against Aysen; the intent is fear and morale collapse, not domination.

21st Generation (200)

- Due to the side-effects of Feroz's Ban, the Autumn Willow gains sentience and a great deal of power over the Forest.
- Wizards' School founded on Floating Isle by Feroz in disguise, and the people begin to learn more of wizardry; Baron Sengir is suspicious, but does nothing - he has all the time in the world, and better to play his hand carefully.

22nd Generation (180)

- City of An-Havva Founded by people leaving Aysen's bureaucracy.
- Eron the Relentless is made into an immortal by a Wizard Savant on the Floating Isle, with one of the books given to him by Baron Sengir as a corruption tool/bribe - the Wizard disappears thereafter, as he severely displeased Baron Sengir.

29th Generation (40)

- Baron Sengir calls a halt to sporadic, "fear" attacks against Aysen, courtesy of a visit from Ihsan's Shade and the lesson it brought.

30th Generation (20)

- Feroz dies, Serra departs from the Homelands never to return.

31st Generation [The Current Day]

- The Ban begins to collapse. Planeswalkers enter into the fray.

Storyline for Homelands

White: The Citizenship of Aysen

History - After the Great War, the few humans that survived the destruction and managed to find their way to the Homelands adapted and became nomadic wanderers on the plains. As time went on, they divided into different "families" and came to forget where they came from, and why they were in this world. Skirmishes with the humanoids from the mountains were frequent, but they rarely ended with more than two or three deaths per conflict. Where the humanoids from the mountains had wolves and riding mounts but were lousy at fighting, the nomads didn't have warhorses of any kind but had a good idea of tactics and archery. The nomads' mounts included a stock of work horse and a breed of light pony that wasn't really any good for riding (at least for humans).

There came a time when the nomads were growing so numerous, they started to war amongst themselves. A god by the name of Serra came from the skies during one of their battles and acted as peacemaker amongst them, bringing them together as a people. They respected her, and followed her instructions and wisdom, and in a matter of time they were able to scare off most of the invasions from the mountains, and began to build their first city named after the first Abbot chosen by Serra - "Onella". They also named themselves the Aysen after a star constellation which Serra said stood for "harmony".

Philosophy - Firm believers in good and evil, right and wrong, most of the people of Aysen are generally pretty fierce and stern tempered - though it is more a philosophy than a faith. As a culture they regularly and loudly vocalize their concerns with everyday life, but also value their privacy and

homes. They've got serious hatred for Baron Sengir and any who serve him, as well as mixed feelings regarding the rogues and Goblins in the Koskun Mountains.

Government - The government of Aysen is run by a mostly democratic method. Bureaucrats from all over Aysen journey to Onella three times yearly to decide important issues of state. The daily affairs and bureaucracy are maintained by the Abbey Matrons, red robed women that tend to the sick, maintain justice, settle disputes and arguments, and act as a police force when necessary. There is one figurehead ruler in Aysen, the Abbot, who is responsible for the spiritual and moral wellbeing of his culture. The Abbot is chosen from the populous by Serra after the old Abbot dies, and is chosen for his potential and his open minded-ness. There is a lot of red tape, a lot of bureaucracy and quite a few complicated procedures involved with getting anything done in the Aysen government, and many of the citizens who live in Onella are starting to get fed up with all of the hassle.

Religion/Philosophy - though many of their beliefs may have religious overtones, the Aysen are much more philosophical by nature. They believe that there is life after death, but no reincarnation, and that there are many mysteries they have yet to solve about the world, and about life.

There are two major divisions in how people think in Aysen, that of the Serra and the Samite. The Serrans are those that think that good and evil are absolute, and (of course) those who are of Aysen are good, while just about everything and everybody else is evil, or at least on the way to being evil. The Samites are much more open, tolerant of the opinions of others and generally unbiased- they believe that every creature has potential for good and evil within them, but no being can be only good or only evil. When confronted with absolutism, or called evil for the way they think, Samites usually just ignore the name-caller, or tell them to look into their own heart if they really want to find the true meaning of evil. As result, the Samites are a bit more nieve and don't have the political power the Serrans do, and are a bit of an accepted abnormality in Aysen society.

Magic - There are some healing and protection magics practiced openly in Aysen, but they know little of the "chivalrous war magics" so prevalent in Dominia. Recently, divination and fortune telling has become popular in certain circles, as well as other forms of "white" magic. There is the recent phenomena of the Death Speakers in Aysen, those who supposedly practice evil spellcraft and dark sorcery. In reality these young men and women are mostly harmless, though a couple of them are actually being corrupted by agents of Baron Sengir.

Trade - As result of the Treaty between Eron the Relentless of Koskun Keep and the Citizenship of Aysen, the peoples of Aysen sell food (crops, dried meats, etc.) to the Goblins and thieves of Koskun, in exchange for ore, metal, nails, coal and the promise that Eron the Relentless ensures that his people will never invade the plains. (Also, since the Abbey Gargoyles will slay any Goblin or Orc they find in Aysen, most of the trading between Koskun and Aysen takes place at the Border Gates or in the town of An-Havva). There is also a great deal of trading of lumber between Aysen and the Pioneer town of Kerselin on the edge of the Great Wood.

Art Guidelines - The colors of just about everything in Aysen are White, Blue and Green, with very little red or black. Most of the homes and buildings are built of wood, and rarely exceed two stories in height. Glass is prevalent in the culture, as are metalworkings. A number of types of clockwork laborers are found in the Aysen culture, courtesy of the Wizard's Isle (and Feroz's teachings). Lots of natural colors can be found in the buildings and artwork, but wood is almost always painted or stained. People wear colored robes over their clothes in place of coats. Metal armor is minimal, and full plate is a luxury allowed only to the Serra Paladins. Sharply defined colors are a constant in the color scheme - there is any doubt whether something is blue or green. Onella is a place full of shops and homes,

businesses and small temples, and even a sort-of-functioning clocktower with ten divisions to the hour instead of twelve.

Major Plot Points for White

- Hatred

The spirit of the peoples of Aysen is fueled by hatred for Baron Sengir ("The best way to unite a divided people is to give them a common enemy"). For generations the Baron sent his vampires and foul creations to plague the fields and farms of the countryside. His vampires were usually driven away or destroyed, and were never numerous enough to actually take control of any part of Aysen - but the Baron's plan was not conquest, but instead to install fear in the peoples of Aysen. It worked for some time, until after an special incident with a Serra Paladin by the name of Ihsan, he noticed that the citizens were actually gaining strength through their righteousness, rather than becoming weakened by their fears of nightly attacks. Thus, the Baron slowed the rate of his "obvious" attacks on Aysen, to the point where it is a rare thing in the modern day to even see a vampire anywhere in Aysen. As per his plan, as his presence vanished, the citizens started looking elsewhere for an enemy to found their anger upon - and have started to divide and look amongst themselves for "evil". The Baron is an immortal, and thirty years to him passes as does a blink of an eye - waiting a few years isn't going to hurt him any, but it could lead to the downfall of Aysen without him

- Death Speakers

The main point of schism in the Aysen culture. As result of Baron Sengir's reduced presence, the peoples of Aysen have started looking for a new place to direct their anger. A number of disillusioned teenagers, and those dissatisfied with their regulated lives, have begun to take to the occult, to practicing minor divination and spirit-summoning. Primarily "white-magic" oriented, these people generally are doing no harm to anyone, including themselves, as they are only doing a little card reading or the like. However, the rumors of the fact that they have the ability to summon the spirits of the dead and make them answer questions about those still living really unnerves those bureaucrats in power who have secrets that need to be kept. With the Baron no longer being a constant threat, the combined hatred of the Citizenship of Aysen is starting to turn on the Death Speakers. Recently, the Serra Inquisitors have started to conduct armed raids on the homes of Death Speakers, and have conducted witch trials against those that they catch and convict. This form of Serra persecution has made the Death Speakers even more stern in resisting their persecutors, and when a number of books of actual black magic appeared in circulation, (courtesy of Baron Sengir) a number of the more desperate Death Speakers acquired them to use as weapons in their fight against oppression. The Samites are well aware of both sides of the argument and are doing their best to try to avoid getting involved, but a number of Samites are now harboring Death Speakers in their homes or are being dragged into the conflict in other ways. So far, no one has died or been seriously injured, (though the city rumors state that an entire den of them have mastered the art of fabricating skeletons, zombies and other undead) but it will be a matter of time before some event or accident causes the first explosion that could turn into a schism that could send the entire Citizenship of Aysen into a frothing witch hunt.

- Serra's Missing

Some twenty years ago was Serra's last known visit to Aysen, and the Serra Angels haven't been seen in ten. Many of the populous are starting to wane in their faith and believe that Serra has abandoned them. Aysen Abbey was built in her honor, and the Aviary was built as a temple to her and a place for her to visit. Without her annual visits, the culture is starting to lose their convictions, even their sense of purpose. The Abbey Gargoyles, her gift to the city of Onella so long ago, are still around and doing their duties, which means she has not forsaken them entirely. But her absence weighs heavily on those

peoples of Aysen, and the Abbey Matrons are starting to have their hands full quelching rumors that Serra has died, or believed the peoples of Aysen to be unworthy in her eyes. There have been times when she has been gone for five or ten years beforehand, but never twenty. Thus, the fervor for the witch-hunts against the Death Speakers is fueled by Serra's absence.

- **Abbot's Dying**

The Venerable Abbot is growing near death, and is likely in the last year of his life. In the past, it is tradition that when the Abbot dies, Serra will walk amongst the peoples of Onella and choose a new spiritual and cultural leader from the crowds. A number of people believe that Serra's long absence is permanent, and that when the Venerable Abbot dies, she will choose no new person to take his place. This will cause complete collapse in the Citizenship, and no one is looking forward to the day when the Abbot finally kicks the bucket. What will happen? Riots? Anarchy? The rise of the clans again? Who knows. But in the timeframe of Homelands, the Abbot will not die, but will linger on the edge. His knowledge and insight make him an invaluable ruler, but as his age incapacitates him, he is rapidly becoming a symbol of the spiritual and societal bankruptcy that is growing within Aysen.

Concept listings for white

Abbey Gargoyle

- Abbey Gargoyles were created by Serra to guard the city of Onella against Orc and Kobold raids. They also make an excellent police force in times of peace. They were created very similarly to the Serra Angels, in that they are not true beings but complicated mana constructs.
- If one of these creatures witnesses a crime, they will ceaselessly follow the perpetrator until the person turns himself in. They are also slightly empathic, and easily can discern individuals suffering mental instability, guilt, anger or sadness. If they see a Kobold, Goblin or Orc, they will usually attack on sight. Thus, most of the trading that happens between the peoples of Aysen and the denizens of the Koskun Mountains (as per the Treaty) happens at the Border Gates, as no Goblin in their sane mind would want to be within the walls of Onella.
- Abbey Gargoyles do not speak, eat, mate or drink. They have no fear of fire, and sword-blows will not penetrate their stony white hides. They live on the parapets of the older buildings in Onella, usually around Aysen Abbey. They are fearsome creatures with long, sharp claws, have non-vestigial wings, and have stony white hides.
- The Abbey Gargoyles are seen by the populous of Onella as one of the few signs that Serra still watches and protects them, even though she has been gone for nearly twenty years now. The creatures are watched almost religiously by the populous, and are thought of as walking miracles.

Abbey Matrons

Female Humans

- In the City of Onella, the Abbey Matrons are second in power only to the Abbot. These women are responsible for the daily affairs of the City of Onella. While a central council delegates responsibilities, red-robed women of all ages settle disputes, attend to the sick and injured of Onella and all of the villages and towns of Aysen, and work out agreements with traders and merchants. They hold the deciding votes in the trice-yearly bureaucratic councils attended by representatives from every community of Aysen, decide peacetime military issues, and oversee the operation of the Aviary, in order to make sure that the young men and women who watch over the birds get strong doses of common sense and wisdom.
- Many of the Abbey Matrons hear a lot of the rumors in the city, and with Serra having been gone for so long, there are rumors spreading that she is never going to come back. These women are strong

of will and have been trying to maintain order, but even they are starting to have second thoughts on whether Serra is ever going to return.

- The Abbot grows older and older. When an old Abbot dies, it is known that Serra will walk amongst the Marketplace and choose a young man to be the new Abbot, one who will lead the peoples of Aysen morally and spiritually. But with Serra gone for so long, and her Avatars (the Serra Angels) also missing, there is serious doubt on when the Abbot dies that Serra will come back to pick a new leader for the peoples of Aysen - doubt even amongst certain Abbey Matrons.

Serra Aviary

Place

- The Aviary is a place of peace and tranquility. Open to the sky, tended to by the young men and women of Onella (especially by those Initiates who are seeking to become Matrons), and inhabited by many of the common small birds, pigeons and crows of Onella, the Aviary is a beautiful place. No cages, and watched over by the Falconer. The Mesa Falcons and other wild birds of the Homelands will occasionally visit, and the Falconer will speak with all of them if she gets a chance.

Beastwalkers

Sex : Male or Female, Humans

- These secretive men and women roam the roads and coasts of Aysen, watching for the Barons' minions or any signs of trouble or conflict. They are competent fighters and are devoted to the protection of the City of Onella and all those who travel to and from it. They are reputed to be able to turn into bears or crows, and while they are shapeshifters still to be proven, their ability to protect the region from beasts and the Baron's allies is rarely disputed.
- The Beastwalkers do have the ability to shape-shift into bears or crows, courtesy of a spell taught to them by a mysterious wanderer named Porrin (actually Feroz in disguise). In times of great danger one of their number will transform themselves into a crow and fly to the Aviary at Onella and report to Soraya, the Falconer.
- The Beastwalkers are a sort of secret order, one that has existed for nearly as long as Aysen has. They are from towns and villages all over Aysen, and they are devoted to protecting the many towns and villages from harm. While the Aysen Crusaders and Serra Paladins do all of the visible work, the Beastwalkers are much more covert - sort of guerrilla feudal superheroes, Robin Hood philosophy folk.
- They don't generally have much say or opinion on modern political issues, as they have their hands full monitoring the roads for Baron Sengir's spies, invading vampires, or bands of rogues. While the rest of the country is fueled by two sided issues (we are good, Baron Sengir is evil), the Beast Walkers have for the most part open minds - they follow the Samite way of thinking.

Bureaucrats

- Bureaucrats are the elected representatives of the different towns and villages of Aysen. Three times a year, the Bureaucrats travel to Onella where they debate and mull over issues of state, and are mediated by Abbey Matrons when differences in opinion threaten the order of business. While it is the Abbey Matrons who run the daily affairs of Aysen, the Bureaucrats are responsible for the future economic welfare of the myriad small villages and towns that dot the countryside of Aysen.
- Bureaucrats are marvelous at lengthy debates, and have the right to detain any citizen for any reason - especially on suspicion of dark sorcery, as the Serra Inquisitors have been hard at work convincing the many representatives that the Death Speakers are a menace and should be rounded up as soon as possible.

Citizen's Arrest

- Though the Bureaucrats have the special privilege of having just about anyone arrested, any citizen of Aysen can declare Citizen's Arrest against anyone that they believe of criminal activity. Of course, both the citizen being arrested and the one declaring Citizen's arrest are going to be detained by the officials or police for some time, and most citizens prefer to go to the authorities instead of trying to capture criminals themselves.

Crusaders

Sex : Male or Female, Humans

- Crusaders is a glorified name for the home-militia of Aysen. Comprised mostly of commoners and volunteers, they are best known for the wise commanders that lead them to victories against evil creatures and the treacherous minions of Baron Sengir. It takes a strong leader or Hero to make a rabble armed with hoes and spears into a fighting force good enough to defeat the occasional creature that rampages through the countryside.

Death-Speakers

Humans, Male and Female

- The Death Speakers are an oddity amongst the peoples of the City of Onella. This group is made up primarily of dissatisfied youth and those who have become bored with everyday life, or firm believers that Serra is really gone. They are said to toy with forces beyond their control, as it is believed they can summon forth and control the spirits of the dead and make them answer questions about those still living. It is also said that the Death Speakers boast that they can control the spirits of the dead and forces of darkness, and that more than a few of the Death Speakers have died under mysterious circumstances.
- The Serra Inquisitors believe that the Death Speakers are well versed in the occult and forbidden knowledge, and constantly persecute these citizens for practicing black magic. In reality, all the Death Speakers are doing are simplistic forms of divination and hedge magic, and none of them have actually died, or summoned anything more potent than local faeries. A few have fled to An-Havva to get away from the Inquisitors, but none have died yet as result of spell or spirit - but the terror is just beginning.
- It is a fact that a variety of texts have surfaced in the last few months, and that it is true that Baron Sengir is responsible for seeding these impressionable youth with Books of Dark Knowledge that just may eventually turn them into puppets of the Vampire Lord. The Serra Inquisitors have the best intentions in trying to save these youth from the forces of darkness, but conducting armed raids upon the homes of suspected Death Speakers is likely not the way to solve the problem or bring these youth out of hiding.
- The Samites are doing their best to protect the Death Speakers, and if things keep getting worse, a number of the more borderline Samites may start taking action against the Serra Inquisitors who are conducting the explosive witch-hunt. Complicating things, many of the Death Speakers do believe that Serra is gone, and have been talking with their friends a lot of subjects that the Abbey Matrons would consider blasphemy.

Soraya, the Falconer

Sex : Female Human

- To be a Falconer is to be respected and honored, for to have the respect of the great Mesa Falcons is to have the respect of Serra herself. More than a few of the caretakers at the Aviary have suffered nasty bites from the Mesa Falcons when they've gotten too close.
- It is a fact that the Falconers know the language of the birds, and that this knowledge has been taught from Falconer to Falconer throughout the history of the Aviary. In case of invasion or times

of trouble, the Falconers always seem to be the first to know of any calamity in Aysen or in Onella, for the birds would come and tell them. To take on the duties of being the Falconer is a life long duty with many hardships and responsibilities.

Imperial Highway

- In recent years, nearly every town and village in Aysen has been connected by cobbleroads, which has increased trade and travel times extensively. In times of invasion the road can be used to get troops quickly from one place to another, and in times of peace it will create economic possibilities. Built almost entirely by convicted criminals, it was created with very little expense overall. (See Truce, Aliban's Tower)
- Baron Sengir is well aware of the recent creation of the roads, and knows well that the roads will someday make fine and efficient pathways for his armies, as well as aid the spread of any diseases or sicknesses that may someday plague the countryside of Aysen.

Leeches

Human, Male or Female

- The Leeches that the Samite Alchemists use are an effective, non-magical means to drain toxins from people suffering from toxins. While the Serrans rely on magical means and drawn out ceremonies, the Leeches that the Samite Alchemists breed are completely natural, and are good for ridding the body of poisons, rather than just suppressing them while the body slowly heals.

Mesa Falcons

- These creatures have no qualms of visiting the Aviary for an occasional bite to eat or to have someone tend to their wounds. They have learned that this is a safe place, even to build a nest during a difficult year.
- There is always one amongst the tenders at the Aviary who is known as the Falconer, and is responsible for tending to the birds and ensuring their safety and comfort. The position is prestigious, for to have the respect of the great Mesa Falcons is to have the respect of Serra herself.

Serra Paladin

Sex : Male or Female, Humans

- The Serra Paladin are the living embodiments of the Serra point of view. They seek to destroy all evil in the world, and view all things as black and white scenarios - never grey. To them, there is good and evil, and it is obvious that those of Aysen are the good and just about everybody else is evil - a prejudiced bias, as well as a naive and closed-minded one.
- Common soldiers who excel in their duties and revel in faith are most often chosen to become the Serra Paladin, sworn enemies of Baron Sengir and the traitor Lord Ihsan. But instead of valiantly marching forth to death and honor, they are forced by their government to defend their borders from marauding creatures and wait for the day when their nemesis is foolish enough to venture from Castle Sengir and fight. The Paladins do not lead the commonfolk, but stand apart from them as examples. A number of these brave men and women have been sent to single-handedly assault Sengir Castle over the years, but they are rarely heard from again once they enter into the mists of Koskun Falls.

Prophecy

- Long ago, supposedly a young Paladin of Serra by the name of Lord Ihsan talked with a soothsayer in the Marketplace. There, she explained to him about the dreams he had been having of his dark future, perhaps of his doom at the hands of Baron Sengir. It shaped his very life, and in the end when

he confronted Sengir, he came to realize how correct she was shortly before Baron Sengir put him to death. (See Ihsan)

Samite Alchemist

Sex : Male Human

- The Samite Alchemist is a curious breed of healer and scientist. They are well known for their potent healing potions, and their casual attitudes and philosophies about the issues of the day. The healing potions these Alchemists concoct may well knock out the patient for days at a time, but the accelerated healing process is well worth the strange dreams and the eventual hangover.
- The Samites are strong believers that there is no such thing as good or evil, and that everything will likely turn out in the end just the way it was supposed to - thus, they are not too popular in the current society of Aysen. Neutrality and balance are their goals, and while the purity of the soul is important to them, they firmly believe that it is not their job to bend anyone's will to their peculiar philosophy.
- Samites believe that opposing viewpoints have always existed, and always will exist. The Dark Baron has a purpose in the world, and without his dark presence, it is likely that the people of Aysen would probably seek another common enemy - as witnessed by the current armed raids against the Death Speakers. When talking with militant Serrans, the Samites usually tell them to look for the evil within themselves before they blame all their problems on the distant Baron Sengir or upon the persecuted Death Speakers. Obviously, the Serra Inquisitors and the Samites have come to debate far more than just a few times, but there is never an obvious conclusion in any of the public arguments, as the Samites aren't really trying to change anyone who doesn't want to be changed.
- Amongst those few who survived the Great War millenia ago, there were a number of Healers who survived, and passed down both their trade and Samite philosophy to their children and students. The louder the Serran, the more pleasant the Samite.

Serra Bestiary

- The Bestiaries contain creatures from all across the Homelands. Whatever the Serrans qualify as beasts, they will generally have one on display. Since the Minotaurs are not within the "civilized qualities" of the Serrans, when a Aysen party had a chance to acquire a travelling Minotaur from the Koskun Mountains they did so and brought it back for display. Some people believe that the Minotaurs are the servants of Baron Sengir - and most Serrans, if they know the truth or not, aren't telling them otherwise.

Serra Inquisitors

Sex : Male or Female Humans

- Serra Inquisitors are the shepherds and caretakers, priests and judges of the people of Aysen. Though good at heart, sometimes their justice and undominable will can be a bit too excessive. They come from all walks of life, and their right to police the populous comes from their devotion to a cause greater than themselves - the salvation and protection of all those who live within the boundaries of Aysen. While the Serra Paladin tend to have more common-folk ideas, the Inquisitors are educated to the point where they can say the world is one way and do a pretty good job convincing those who are not quite as quick witted as themselves.
- The Serra Inquisitors have their place in society, and do a good job keeping the populous from harm, evil and vice. But in their recent persecution of the Death Speakers, a small faction amongst the populous who practice divination and spirit magic, they nearly go too far with their punishments and armed raids. The Dark Baron has taken notice of this, and has started to clandestinely equip the Death Speakers with actual books of spells and dark knowledge, in hopes that the schism will continue to grow into something he can use.

Truce/Treaty

Refers to the Treaty between Eron the Relentless and Aysen: as long as Aysen provides food and goods to Koskun Keep (which will be bartered or paid with an acceptable and fair amount), Eron the Relentless will do his damndest to make sure that the humanoids of Koskun don't raid Aysen for food, or turn the inhabitants of Aysen into food.

Venerable Abbot

Sex : Male Human

- The Venerable Abbot is the current figurehead-ruler of the civilized lands of Aysen. Where most of the city affairs are governed by Bureaucratic councils and the Abbey Matrons, the Abbot is in charge of the spiritual and cultural development of the people of Aysen. He is a very old man, and though his attention span is starting to lack, his knowledge and insight still make him an invaluable asset to the City.
- When an Abbot dies, a new Abbot is chosen within the next day by Serra herself. She will walk amongst the streets of Onella in disguise, until she sees the person she wishes to be the next Abbot, then reveal herself as Serra, and declare that the man she has chosen is to be the new Abbot. Now, with Serra apparently gone missing, the people of the City of Onella are starting to doubt whether Serra is going to appear and choose a new leader for the peoples of Aysen when the current figurehead finally dies from old age.
- It is said by some of the Abbey Matrons that Abbot's growing weakness is starting to make an impact on the country he rules over. The Abbot is still capable of acting and making decisions when needed, but he no longer has the initiative and energy of youth. His knowledge and insight make him an invaluable ruler, but he is rapidly becoming a symbol of the spiritual and societal bankruptcy that is growing within Aysen. Serra has not appeared in many years, the Serra Angels have ceased their visits to the Aviary, and the presence of the Abbey Gargoyles is questioned by those of lesser faith. Without any sign or visitation from Serra in many years, the culture is starting to bankrupt itself, and the Venerable Abbot is an excellent figurehead of that moral and spiritual decay.

Winter Sky

- Each year the weather-diviners turn to the clouds and search for some sign of the seasons to come, whether the winter will be warm or cold, wet or dry. Few have mastered the art of predicting the cycles of wind and weather, but any advance warning of a bad season is blessing to the farmers and herds-folk of Aysen, especially in recent year as the weather has started to grow more extreme.

Red: Koskun Keep & Anaba Minotaurs

History - After the Great War came to a close, the few surviving groups of humanoids settled into the mountain range of the Homelands. There were Goblins, Kobolds, Orcs and Minotaurs, enough numbers so they could continue their families and heritage lines. The Minotaurs settled into a remote part of the Koskun Mountains (named after the Goblin word for "Big Mountains") and lived their lives separate from the rest of the inhabitants of the Mountains. The Goblins and Kobolds thrived while the Orcs suffered, as the Goblins outnumbered the Orcs by more than ten to one.

The Koskun mountains began to be riddled with tunnels and family caves, and one site became the bartering center of the Goblin civilization, ruled by one of the largest and strongest families, all within the tunnel warrens of Koskun Keep. While the humans still had some memory of the Great War after a hundred years, for the Goblins more than eight generations had already passed for them, and their sense of oral and written tradition was almost non-existent. The Orcs, who had story, memory and lifespans similar to humans had, they kept to themselves for fear of being completely annihilated by

the Goblins and their wizards. The Goblins frequently rode to the plains and fought the humans there on a regular basis, for no real reason other than fighting them and gaining family status.

[Keeper's Note: this part of the document sort of trails off. I have no idea what should have gone here, or at what point in the process of passing the document around this section got lost.]

At about the same time, the plains cultures came together under the influence of a god-woman named Serra, and the Dwarves built their Castle overlooking the bog-swamps. By the time that the Goblins learned of the Dwarven Castle, it was already inhabited by Baron Sengir, and the Goblin tribes simply stayed away from the place, insisting that it was cursed. (In the Dwarven Tongue, it was called the "Castle of Morning Light", while the huge underground city was called "New Freedom".) When the Plains cultures came together under Serra, the Goblins also organized to confront the threat of the organized nomads. The first Goblin King was chosen from all the families, and Crank led his people until a desperate planeswalker summoned Crank and the rest of the "high court" of the Goblin society to fight in one of her duels. They never returned.

The Goblins, however dismayed at the elitehood of the Goblin race being disintegrated before their very eyes, quickly got over it and chose a new leader, a Goblin Wizard named Aliban, the only survivor of the "mass disintegration" that destroyed the elite core of their society.

There was little change until just over a hundred years ago, when a human by the name of Eron marched into Koskun Keep and proclaimed himself King of the Goblins. Eron was quickly put to death, but his miraculous recovery caused the Goblins to eventually put him on the throne. (He is an immortal of sorts, courtesy of a wizards spell some years beforehand. See Eron the Relentless.) Since then, Eron has managed to build a strong culture out of the clans, families and bickering, and has even negotiated a treaty with the Citizenship of Aysen - they supply the Goblins food and goods in return for fair prices and bartering, and he won't have his Goblins destroy all of the towns and cities of Aysen, and lay siege to the capitol city of Onella. To show his goodwill, Eron had one of his Goblin Wizards teach the Northerners a spell that would supply all the cobblestones they would ever need for building their infernal roads.

Philosophy - Order amongst Chaos. Eron the Relentless does a pretty good job at keeping the Goblins from murdering each other, and takes a generally blind eye to any machinations or intrigues between the rival families. Anything that touches on his life, interferes with his private business, or affects the caravans in any way whatsoever will find themselves earning his wrath.

Government - Eron the Relentless is the dictator over all of the Goblin Families, which number somewhere in the area of two dozen. Beneath Eron, the entire system is full of murder and simplistic intrigue, full of those creatures trying to make a fast deal, as well as those trying to gain prestige for themselves and their family. It is a true dictatorship, and his personal bodyguards are the Minotaurs that come from beyond the edge of his domain. His lieutenants are rogues and thieves from all over the Homelands, and he rules over them with an iron fist. There is still one minor family of Orcs left, and these are watched over very carefully by Eron, for they possess a level and cunning and intrigue that make them dangerous.

Religion - There are few who practice any kind of religion in the mountains, and they do one of two things - worship a mystic sungod that has many names and forms, or worship the dark occult and are in some way tied to Baron Sengir, but these are far and few between indeed, and have no power or influence in Goblin society.

Magic - There are a couple of Goblin families which have magic in the blood, and thus produce Goblin Sorcerers. Capable of destruction and mayhem, they have turned the tides of a number of power struggles amongst the families of Koskun Keep. Also, a number of the Goblin Sorcerers that had superior abilities actually schooled at the Wizards Isle generations ago, but the rivalries and hatreds there caused bitter conflicts, and a certain number of Goblin Sorcerers have sworn to someday destroy the Wizards School and all that traffic with it. The Orcs have little magic, and have no one even remotely capable of competing against the Goblins in terms of magical ability.

Trade - The Treaty between Eron the Relentless and Aysen ensures there is enough food to feed all of his people comfortably, but without allowing anyone to get too full or get lazy. The Goblins and Orcs mine and forge constantly, and whatever extra they create is traded either to the caravans from Aysen, or through Eron's contacts to the people trapped in the Sengirian Villages. It's a good position to be in, but Eron knows that it is tenuous. If for some reason the trade caravans stop coming, it will be a matter of days before the Goblins revolt and become uncontrollable. It will take some time for the Goblins to get up enough nerve to try to raid through the Great Wood to Aysen, but if there is no food, Eron knows the Goblins will do almost anything to eat.

Major Plot Points for Red

- Food

The denizens of Koskun Keep must eat. Eron has arranged for food to be delivered to his people as result of a stronghanded trade agreement with Aysen. If he doesn't feed his people, they will likely revolt and cause an untold amount of damage to both themselves, and to Aysen (if they can reach it through the Great Wood). Also, if Baron Sengir can somehow break the food chain between Koskun and Aysen, the same result will occur.

- Baron Sengir

Eron has been contacted by Baron Sengir a number of times, and he knows that the Baron wishes to meet him and see how "his stay of immortality" is going. So far, Eron has politely declined every invitation to Castle Sengir. Eron fears Baron Sengir the most, for he has the feeling that the Baron is just biding his time, waiting for the moment to strike. The narrow mountain pass that leads to Koskun Falls is manned by Eron's best guards day and night year round, and even though Eron's spies would tell him a week ahead of time if the Baron was going to try and lead an army through the pass, he is still worried. Eron tries to get supplies and food to the poor villagers the Baron has acquired over the years, but he is never really sure whether he is doing any good or not.

- Thieves and Rogues

Koskun Keep is a milling ground for the criminal minded element of the Homelands. Many of those who flee persecution from Aysen eventually end up in either An-Havva or Koskun, and Eron is wondering how long it is going to be before he gets his first Death Speaker on his doorstep, and what Aysen is going to do about him harboring their heretics. Most of the crime that happens in his realm he takes a blind eye to, but the tactics of two thieves, Joven and Chandler he takes special dispensation to, for the two of them tricked him out of one of the few possessions he really valued, an artifact that one of the Goblin families traded him for position, an Ebony Rhino, (left over from the Great War). If he ever catches either of them on his side of Strongrock, he's going to make sure they pay for a very, very long time.

- Anaba Minotaurs

The Anaba Minotaurs live in a hidden part of the Koskun Mountains. They live a simple, quiet life, though the young Minotaurs that have left the settlement in search of adventure elsewhere have

started to bring attention and exploration parties to their part of the mountains. It is a matter of time before Eron's search parties find them, and a matter of time before he brings them into his sphere of corrupting influence. There is a certain tension in the air, as every day brings the Goblin parties one step closer to discovering their ancestral home, and bringing an end to their peaceful, aboriginal culture.

- The Great Wood

At the western base of the Koskun Mountains lies a huge Wood that divides the mountains from the plains. In the distant past it was simple to traverse through the Wood and come out the far side. But now there is some force, some controlling entity that is ensuring that any war parties Eron sends are destroyed or vanish, while any unarmed trade caravans are let through unmolested. He doesn't know what it is in the Wood that he dislikes so much, but looking from one of the ridges overlooking the Wood gives him the chills. He knows that whatever is in the Wood is allied with him in some strange fashion, as it isn't eating his people on a regular basis, but he still doesn't trust whatever force is controlling the creatures of that haunted place.

Concepts for red

Aliban's Tower

- Aliban's Tower is a spell created by Aliban, a Goblin Wizard who lived during Crank's reign many hundreds of years ago, before Feroz had come to the Homelands. With a single gesture, a small tower of stone and earth will rise up from the ground, providing a defensible place to hold off enemies or a good site to camp for the night. The only flaws of this spell are that the tower has no doors, and it is prone to collapsing and killing any inhabitants inside. Remains of these towers are numerous throughout the Koskun Mountains, as it is still a common spell amongst the few Goblins who are capable of spellcasting. You can either summon it up so you are inside, or you are outside - your choice.
- Aliban was a legendary Goblin Wizard, personal attendant to the historic Goblin King Crank (the Goblin who discovered the usefulness of the lever as a tool). However, when Crank and his entire culture were summoned away by a planeswalker, Aliban was accidentally left behind. In the history of the Goblins that have lived in the Homelands, Aliban holds the level of a great hero as he was the sole survivor of the great apocalypse (summoning spell) that vaporized the entirety of his Goblin family without a moment's warning. Amongst the many families of Goblins in the Koskun Mountains, there is a line of Goblin Wizards who are descendants of Aliban's, and some have even studied at the Wizards School on the Floating Island. Aliban is also known for the spell he created, Aliban's Tower.
- This spell was used quite frequently during the building of the Cobbleroads in Aysen. The wizard would cast the spell, then workers would tear the structure down and use the stones for the roads.

Ambush Party

Sex : Male and Female, Humans, Dwarves, Humanoids, whatever...

- Ambush Parties are frequent on the roads to and from Koskun Keep. These bands faithfully serve Lord Eron, as they are well paid and well fed. When they descend out of hiding onto a passing caravan, they will subdue anyone stupid enough to offer resistance, inspect the goods, take their nominal percentage, then warmly escort the merchants to Strongrock, a small fortress at the base of Koskun Keep. A number of merchants will bring a keg or two of Goblin Ale just to ensure there are no "accidents".

- The few surviving groups of rogues and brigands that still assault the caravans near the Koskun Mountains are hard pressed to find an unguarded caravan. Their attacks have to be lightning quick and their retreats well planned to avoid being slaughtered by Eron's roadguard.
- Ambush Parties include sentient creatures and humanoids of many races, including humans. It is well known that the members of these groups are hired for their intelligence and fighting ability, not for their form or shape.
- Eron the Relentless knows well that the best way to protect against thieves is to hire better thieves. When the food caravans supplying Koskun Keep were being constantly raided, causing food riots amongst his unruly populous, he contacted the most powerful group of brigands and arranged to have them paid to protect the caravans rather than destroy them.

Chandler

Sex : Male, Human

- Chandler is a small time con-man who has plagued all the cities and villages of the Homelands ever since he was old enough to travel the roads. Born with a knack for scams, he has an obsession for liberating magical toys and mechanical devices from their owners, (usually from the Wizards' School on the Floating Island). Chandler is one of the best known rogues in the Homelands. The Wizard Savant of the Wizards School has placed a good sized bounty on Chandler's head, as the thief stole a ring of keys from her that are more than useful in altering and changing the mechanisms of clockwork creatures. While Chandler is at large, no artifact creature is safe.
- Chandler sells most of the toys and artifacts he collects to an anonymous buyer for high prices, but Chandler does not know that he is indirectly working for one of the agents of Baron Sengir, who is collecting many of these devices in preparation for his day of triumph.
- Chandler and Joven have worked together on occasion to raid the museums and homes of the Floating City for clockwork creatures and valuable artifacts. If they are caught there, it will surely mean their deaths or at the very least, life imprisonment.

Curse of the Ironclaw

- The Ironclaw Orcs were (are?) one of the greatest Orcish bands of legend in Dominia, as they were magically bound by their camp-wizards not to attack any force stronger than themselves. While this was viewed as a detriment by most other warring cultures, the Curse made the Ironclaw Clan one of the strongest Orcish clans in all of spoken history, for they would not fight battles they could not win, and they would not sacrifice themselves in hopeless causes. The difference between the Ironclaw and their Orcish brethren? While the other orcs were being slaughtered, the Ironclaw carefully retreated, took note of the strength of the opposing force, and made plans for another day.
- A spell-scroll with this Enchantment was recently discovered by a planeswalker on Dominia. It was found in the ruins of a Orcish camp that is believed to have been the location of the last stand of one of the Ironclaw Clans - over two hundred dead orc skeletons have been uncovered so far, each with the identifying ceremonial knife grooves carved into their skulls. The scars are a ritual of adulthood, and identify the Orcs of the Ironclaw Clan as warriors both in life and in death. The planeswalker also uncovered the remains of four Craw Wurms, the thigh-bone of an Elder Land Dragon, and the sword-hacked remains of a Craw Giant Chieftan.
- The Ironclaw Orcs were the only Orcs to survive the Great War that nearly destroyed the world of the Homelands, and they survived for generations in the Koskun Mountains. A passing planeswalker took them as fodder for his battles, and was pleasantly surprised when they turned out to be veteran soldiers. The Ironclaw are now mostly vanquished, but they earned quite a history for themselves as an exemplary Mercenary unit in Dominia before their final battle.

Dwarven Pony

- Dwarven Ponies are born and bred to traverse mountain paths and to carry heavy loads. They have a severe dislike of water, and have been known to stand and fight Grizzly Bears when annoyed. They frequently bite people, creatures, and buildings they don't like and are generally disagreeable to any sort of strenuous work. It is known that the Dwarvish Traders use these ponies in their travels, and that the Dwarvish Trader Renzel has taught her Pony to count as high as six.

Dwarvish Trader

- These Dwarves travel the roads of the Homelands, buying, trading and selling goods and services. With Dwarvish Ponies securely in tow, they have travelled throughout most of the traversable world. Long ago, when the Castle was being built (see Castle Sengir, black), a number of Dwarves built sailing ships to explore the local area. When they returned, they found that their castle had been taken over by an ancient Vampire. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to retake the castle, a dispute broke the Dwarves into two factions. One took to the sea, and the other stayed on land. The episode that drove the Clan apart has been for the most part forgotten (the Sea Dwarves wanted to give up the castle, and the Land Dwarves wanted to reclaim their castle when the time was right), but the attitude of adversity has been passed from generation to generation.
- The Dwarvish Traders would never raise a killing weapon against a fellow Dwarf without good provocation, but they have no qualms in trying to beat the pants off of the Sea Dwarves in business, or smacking them with a chair leg in a bar brawl.

[Keeper's Note: The "Renzel" above was probably renamed "Halena" on the cards for some reason. Dwarven Pony is widely understood to be the best card in Homelands.]

Dwarvish Sea Clans

- The few Dwarvish ships that are still being sailed along the coasts of the Homelands are relics of the time when the Dwarves were building the Castle that is now better known as Castle Sengir. Made of the strongest wooden beams and the best forged metal, these sailing marvels were built to protect the smaller trading ships from the dangerous creatures found in the Sea. Each Ship has a Dwarven Family that has crewed it for hundreds of years, and all are well versed in the wonders of astronomy, the sea, and the world they live in. Traders and wanderers by heart and blood, no one dock is ever home to these folk, and no storm is too great for them to weather.
- One of the members of the Clan of the Gentle Wave is Reveka, who is now the Wizard Savant over the Wizards' School on the Floating Island.

Eron the Relentless

- Eron the Relentless is a man of legend in the Homelands. He is a human enchanted by a spell that ensures that he will come back from almost any form of death. After performing a dangerous journey into the wastelands for a long-dead Wizard Savant, he was granted his wish - he chose eternal life, and has yet to regret it. On a side note, the spell that enchanted Eron was from a tome that Baron Sengir had given to the Wizard Savant as a bribe to "look the other way, once." Shortly after Eron was made into an immortal, the Wizard Savant disappeared - and thus another Wizard had to be found.
- A thief and a rogue, a man of low moral standing, Eron is the current ruler of Koskun Keep, and the twenty seven assassinations he has experienced as ruler over the underground city has given him a habit for severity and extremity. The simple fact that he cannot be killed by an assassins blade keeps him on the Goblin throne, and his recent contacts with the organized thieves that escort the Trade Caravans to and from Koskun Keep make him invaluable. If Lord Eron were to vanish, the caravans would cease and the bandits loyal to him would ensure that no trader would ever reach

Koskun Keep ever again - and thus many of the Goblins would likely starve. He is a cunning ruler, but an inexperienced immortal compared to the Dark Baron.

- Lord Eron has also formed a Treaty with the Citizenship of Aysen. As long as Aysen provides traders free access and will sell food to the denizens of Koskun Keep, Lord Eron will ensure that the inhabitants of his castle will not invade and lay waste to Aysen. Lord Eron regulates the prices and quantity of trade goods, and makes sure that those traders who come into Koskun Keep are treated fairly and get good prices. Eron knows that under his rule, the humanoid population of the Koskun Mountains has quadrupled in just a few years, and that if he does not keep a firm command on all of the issues, his subjects just may well throw him down a mineshaft and set themselves to the task of declaring war against everybody they can get their knives into. While Eron can be a total bastard, he is also concerned with the future of all of the cultures of the Homelands, and his own place of power amongst them.
- It is said that Baron Sengir would like to have Eron made loyal to him, but the ruler of Koskun Keep has “politely declined any invitations to Castle Sengir, and has no plans of visiting in the near future.” Though he isn’t comfortable doing trade from the Sengirian Villages, Eron knows that the villagers there would soon perish without the goods and necessities they get from the traders of Koskun Keep. Without Eron ruling Koskun Keep, it is likely that the Sengirian Villagers would die during the winter for lack of blankets, heating coal and food.
- Eron has a great deal of tolerance for thieves, but he has sworn to someday slay Joven by his own hand, for the troublesome rogue has wronged and embarrassed Eron on a number of occasions. Eron has sworn that if he ever catches Joven on the wrong side of Strongrock, the stories of Joven’s terrible death will far outweigh all the stories of Joven’s life.
- If Eron could get his hands on more Minotaurs, he believes he could do just about anything, including take over An-Havva for a season or two.

Heartwolf

- Heartwolves are the standard riding mounts of Goblin sub-chiefs, dignitaries and ambassadors, and Dwarven Traders as well. Heartwolves make fine riding beasts for the smaller folk, and are adept at travelling quickly across difficult ground.

[Keeper’s Note: Not to be confused with Throat Wolf, which is the best card in Magic.]

Joven

- Joven is a man of great reputation throughout the Homelands. A master thief, excellent cat-burglar, and well-versed in talking his way out of tight situations, Joven has earned a reputation of fear amongst merchants, and respect amongst the other rogues and thieves of the world. He is best known for stealing jewelry and other valuables, and fencing it off to others for little profit. He is hunted by a variety of public and private groups, though Joven has been very careful to not offend or steal from anyone who may have the money or resources to catch him. Lord Eron of Koskun Keep and Joven have had a number of disagreements in the past, and if Joven is ever caught on the wrong side of Strongrock, Eron has promised that the stories of Joven’s terrible death will be far more legendary than his deeds were in life. This of course does not keep Joven from sneaking into Koskun Keep, but it does keep him well aware the dangers he faces when he walks the twisting passages beneath the Koskun Mountains.

Minotaur Bodyguard

- The few of these Minotaurs that exist are an unfortunate lot. Originally from a remote tribe of Minotaurs free from the influence of any other society, a number of these young creatures have ventured to Koskun Keep to get a taste of the world beyond their ancestral home. They quickly get

indoctrinated into the vice and violence that is the social structure of the underground city, and generally become bodyguards or pit-fighting champions. Complete with battle scars rather than ceremonial tattoos, outfitted in leather armor and bearing heavy iron crossbows, these Minotaurs make up the core element of Eron the Relentless' personal security force.

- When one of the young Minotaurs leaves for Koskun Keep, they know well that they will never be allowed to return. They are considered dead by their parents and loved ones, and are mourned as if they had died in a tragic accident.

Minotaur Shaman

- Shamans amongst the Anaba tribe are usually female, those who are in tune with the mountains and the weather. Where the Minotaur Spiritcrafter works primarily with the world of spirits, the Shaman is much more involved with talking with storms, leading ceremonies, and helping tattoo those who have bravely endured peril and hardship. Shamans are sometimes tormented by wind spirits who taunt them and call them bad names, but if a Shaman can win their friendship, the wind-creatures have much to teach of the world and its secrets.
- The ability to call lightning down upon their enemies is one of their most powerful magics, and no Minotaur would ever consider call itself a true Shaman unless it could control the powers of the storm.

Minotaur Spiritcrafter

- The Spiritcrafter is usually a male Minotaur who is known to talk with spirits, read the ashes for divination, and occasionally hold long and complicated arguments with stones and other small objects. Even though these Minotaurs are more than a little strange, they are one of the focuses of the Tharoosan culture and its history in the Homelands. Though all the Minotaurs make music in one form or another, the Spiritcrafter is responsible for memorizing the few remaining songs the Anaba know, and to teach the stories that have been passed down through the generations. When the great earthquake destroyed the pictoglyph caverns, most of the history of the Minotaurs was lost.
- The Spiritcrafter is an offerer of strange and mystic advice, and can sometimes foretell the future by listening to the ancestral spirits that frequent their dreams. In case of an impending battle, they can allow themselves to be possessed by an ancestral Minotaur champion who will lead the group victory over any foe.

Orcish Mine

- Orcish Mines are common around Koskun Keep, but the efficiency and future planning abilities of the Orcs as a race do not even begin to compare to the subterranean abilities of the Dwarves. The Orcs are rather good at tunneling out living spaces and passages through the stone, but the careful art of mining, probing and extracting minerals from the earth is a long and tedious process for them. Orcish Mines are similar to labyrinths with no center and far too many dead ends. One can easily be lost within these nonsensical, three-dimensional mazes of tunnels for weeks if a person isn't careful. The Orcish Mines break the very structure of the land, and commonly disrupt the flow of mana to the surface world, as the Orcs have little feel for the natural conduits of power through the living stone.

Retribution

- Retribution is one of Lord Eron's favorite punishments. When one of his lieutenants gets out of hand, he has them brought forth before a court of their peers. There, he will accuse them of the crimes, present sufficient evidence, then condemn them to death by the axes of his Anaba Bodyguards. But just at the last moment, just when the axe is about to swing, Eron will bring forth a business partner or loved one of the criminal, and offer the doomed lieutenant a deal - if he lets the loved one die in his place, the lieutenant will be let off with only disfigurement and and torture. It is well known that

Eron will sometimes change the nature of the deal, and that if the lieutenant chooses the loved one to die instead of himself, Eron will have him killed anyway, after making the doomed man watch Eron's henchmen torture and disfigure the partner. A nasty, but effective means to keep subordinates under control, and to maintain his rule over Koskun Keep.

The Ruins of En-Sendra

Red Card, Enchantment Flavortext: None, Enchantment Artwork: artists discretion, but snowy and mountainous background. The ghost should be male.

- There is a small castle hidden within the Koskun Mountains, though it is now no more than a tumble of stones and snow haunted rooms. But there is indeed a ghost there, the spirit of a dead planeswalker slain by Tolgath trickery during the Great War. It is said that when the dead wizard walks through the night, all those creatures he finds are transformed into ice-sculptures and left for the morning sun. All of the creatures of the mountains fear this terrible creature, and will not comfortably leave the safety of their homes if they suspect the ghost is travelling the roads that night.

[Keeper's Note: It seems pretty obvious that En-Sendra became An-Zerrin. The concept seems to have shifted as well, from a single ghost to a whole race destroyed by Sengir. It is unclear how the An-Zerrin, or the nameless planeswalker ghost that appears in the picture, serve Baron Sengir.]

Trade Caravan

- Trade Caravans are a constant on the roads between the Sengirian Villages and the cities of Aysen. Merchants and traders of goods, foodstuffs, news, craft goods, tools, lumber, dried meats, grains, coal, precious metals, gems, jewelry and a hundred other things ride the roads ten months out of the year, before the winter storms make travel impossible. The caravans usually ride with an armed escort, and for a fee they will allow common travellers to ride safely with them from town to town. They are well used to dealing with common brigands, as well as having a special monetary gift or barrel of Goblin Ale set aside for the Ambush Parties that frequent the roads around Koskun Keep. There are a number of nomadic families who have lived on the road for decades, travelling back and forth from coast to coast all of their lives. One of the best known caravan leaders is a young dwarven woman by the name of Renzel. Renzel is the only trader who has actually been invited into Castle Sengir, and emerged with a caravan full of Dwarven artifacts in exchange for her precious gems, information and gossip. Even though the profit she gains from the trips are very good, she has only accepted the Baron's invitation once, and was so unnerved by the visit she will likely never do it again.

Green: The Great Wood, and the Pioneer Towns of An-Havva

History - The Wood has been pretty much as it always was, though now because of the mana rift, much richer and full of life energy. When the Great War happened that left the rest of the planet a barren wasteland, this section of the world grew and flowered due to the mana rift deep beneath the surface of the world. Creatures, insects and bacteria were created, lived and died in their same cycles as they always had - at least the ones that survived the first years after the War. Some of the creatures not native to the world that had actually survived the war, (such as the Mammoths), managed to survive in the alien environment, though they did not prosper as a species.

When Feroz's Ban was put into place, the normal flow of energy that flowed through this world was hindered somewhat. It still flowed in at the same rate, but left at a much slower rate - just as if you dam a stream with a rock, the pool will slowly build up behind the stream, even though water is still pouring around the rock on its seemingly normal course. The trees grew at an incredible rate, and the forest became healthy and incredibly fertile. The amount of creatures and monsters within the

Wood kept most of the other survivors of the Great War clear of the forest, and the place was mostly unmolested by outsiders.

In every forest there is an aura of sorts, a sense of presence between the trees. When the Ban started up, the aura in the Great Wood increased, to the point where it became a sentient, physical manifestation, an avatar of the Wood itself. It gained in power over the years, and when the first Pioneers arrived from Aysen to settle on the edge of her Wood, it/she went forth and met them, and found that they were good people. She opened up a Path for them between the Koskun Mountains and their main settlement, a city called An-Havva, and kept a keen guard over it with her creatures. Traders, a necessity to An-Havva, Koskun and Aysen were allowed to travel through, but any war parties from either Aysen or Koskun Keep were to be detained, or even destroyed.

A huge river courses through the middle of her wood, fast and full of rapids. Where the road intersects it, she had the Faeries construct a large bridge, then set them to guard it against any interlopers. Any being who tried to cross that bridge without her permission would be beset upon by a Host of Faeries who would drive them into the frothing water, and thus to their deaths.

Time continued, with the Autumn Willow acting as the balancing agent between all of the cultures and factions within her reach, and keeping a careful eye on all of the lands and peoples of the Homelands. But when Baron Sengir ceased his obvious machinations against the Citizenship of Aysen, she grew concerned. She consulted her divining pool and saw a terrible future, one where Baron Sengir marched all of the survivors of a terrible war down a long stairwell leading deep into the earth, and through a gate into a place far away from this one. Though only a possibility, a reflection of chance, the prophecy/lhsan still frightened her.

The Pioneers from Aysen, those escaping the bureaucratic red tape and tyranny of a close minded people, settled by the Wood. Houses were built, fields plowed, and select sections of the Forest were cut down for lumber. ("I swear to Serra, the place is so fertile that you've already got a twelve foot pine growing from where there was only a stump a year before.") An-Havva became the focus point between Koskun and Aysen, the breaking point where all the caravans stop for a meal, or even build a house and settle over for the winter. The Avatar watched as her "children" grew, and became quite fond of them.

Shortly thereafter, Feroz's Ban failed (following his death and Serra's exit from the Homelands), and she felt the energies that sustained her start to fade. She knew that with the strength she had now, she may have a chance at restarting the mana channels that had been broken and bring the planet back to life - but it would cost the lives of every creature on the planet, including herself. But if she didn't use her power, then the power will wane and fade until she even ceases to exist, and Baron Sengir may very well take over the Homelands. She is at a loss of what to do, and is trying to find some third option, because to destroy all of the ones that she loves brings a cruelty that even a being created from natural balance could not endure. So she waits, waiting for a champion, an event, or a miracle.

Philosophy - The Autumn Willow/Avatar is an avatar of nature and balance. It's not necessarily fair, it's not necessarily equal - but who said that the jungle was ever polite. The people who live in the Pioneer towns don't take kindly to people getting in their business or people pushing attitude at them - they had enough of that, and moved to An-Havva, risking their lives in order to live the lives they wanted.

Government - The Autumn Willow rules the Wood. The Guardians of An-Havva try to make sure that nobody does anything too rash or gets out of line.

Religion - You choose for yourself in the Wood or in An-Havva, and nobody should tell you different.

Magic - Healing and growth magic is natural in the wood, but the people of An-Havva have very few amongst them who can do any kind of spellwork. The life and glamour in An-Havva isn't good enough to attract the attentions of any good sorcerers, and few sorcerers would want to live in such a frontier town. In a world where the mana is good everywhere, it would take a special, personal reason for a sorcerer to move to the rough townships of An-Havva or Kerselin.

Trade - The lumber that is cut in Kerselin is then sailed to Aysen, or carted up the Lady's Path to Koskun Keep. While there is a lot of lumber available, few have the right to enter the wood unmolested and cut it down. The folks of the Wood trade wood and goods for what things they need from the plains and the mountains, but live a pretty independent life, one based on their own hard labor rather than just earning a wage. The Autumn Willow ensures that the Path between Koskun and An-Havva stays open and free of brigands.

Art Concepts - Frontier town, wooden boardwalks, lots of carvings and artwork. The trees of the Wood are huge, and everything is just full of life - but not overdoing it or melodramatically.

Major Plot Points for Green

- Autumn Willow's Dilemma

As described above, the Autumn Willow is facing a terrible choice - try to save the planet as a whole and knowingly kill everyone she loves, or take no action, let the Homelands continue to be the only patch of life on the planet and let the people she loves possibly be enslaved to a dark future, one in which she is powerless.

An-Havva is located halfway between Aysen and Koskun; between a rock and a hard place.

Economics and survival on the Frontier.

Though the city of An-Havva and the other Pioneer towns are still young, they hold an important place in the politics and lives of all of the Homelands, for they represent a place for the different cultures and peoples to come together. But the threat of war ever looms overhead, and if anything happens to the caravans or to Lord Eron, An-Havva will be the first place to burn.

Concepts for Green

Rashka the Slayer

- This lady has a serious vengeance against Baron Sengir, for her family was on the ship that Sengir hijacked many years ago, and now are slaves and prisoners within the Dark Barony. She knows the only way to free them is to slay Sengir, and has been in training for most of her life, fighting and killing the vampires in Aysen and An-Havva. Human.

[Keeper's Note: Weirdly, this got moved to white. It seems pretty clear to me that this is the champion hinted at in the discussion of Autumn Willow's dilemma.]

Faerie Noble

Faerie Noble is male.

- While most of the Faerie Folk spend their time playing pranks upon one another, the Faerie Noble broods over the safety of his subjects. In times of war they will lead the Faeries into battle, and in times of peace they will act as ambassadors and diplomats. Philosophy amongst madness is a hard thing to find, but the Faerie Nobles are wise in the ways of both the humans of An-Havva and of their own people.
- There is supposedly a Noble who has taken the River Bridge for his own, and will let anyone cross who does not bear the anger of the Autumn Willow. At a single command the faeries and sprites

will drive any invaders from the River Bridge into the rushing waters and thus to their deaths. The Noble is the spitting image of Veldrane, the Baron's Vassal, a joke created by the Autumn Willow. Nothing could be more disconcerting than being attacked by a host of faeries, led by a six inch high replica of yourself shouting orders..

[Keeper's Note: He really is the spitting image. Also compare this to David Bowie from The Labyrinth...]

Folk of An-Havva

- The people of An-Havva and the Pioneer Towns left Aysen because the atmosphere there was too restricting. They watched their children be shaped by tradition and custom, and watched their duties and jobs to state and society grow heavier and heavier with each passing year. They wanted a chance to raise their own families without having to follow the codes and laws of Onella, and to get away from the strict idea that if you aren't exactly in the right, you're completely wrong. Out here, amongst the trees, monsters, dangers and hardship, at least you are running your own life and live each day with a sense of value and self-respect. A tough people, hardened by experience, and growing used to an rough life, they are a strong force for change and new ways of thinking.

An-Havva Inn

- An-Havva Inn is one of the finest eating and drinking establishments on the road anywhere between the Dark Barony and the Border Gates of Aysen. Anyone is welcome there, as long as they behave themselves and pay in recognizable coinage or barter. Fine musical entertainment occurs nightly, while merchants and travellers whisper intrigues over candle-lit tables. An-Havva Inn is truly a wonderful place, is one of the hubs of story and song, and is remarkably free of brawls - namely, the Guardian of An-Havva is one of the owners of An-Havva Inn, and lives in one of the upstairs apartments.

Hungry Mist

- Hungry Mist is a term coined by the first Pioneers from the City of Onella to build homes close to the Wood. A silent, drifting predator that consumes livestock and dogs in but a few seconds, it is one of the most vicious beasts within the Wood. No one is really sure whether these life-forms serve the Autumn Willow, or whether it is just an especially dangerous creature. During the rainy season, the citizens of An-Havva don't let their children out at night, for that is when the Mist is best concealed. It hates sunlight and bonfires, but a torch or lantern will not deter it in the slightest from rendering its prey into a pile of bones and ropy tendons.

Joven's Ferrets

- Joven's Ferrets are a number of well-trained ferrets that are skilled at climbing the sides of buildings or providing suitable distraction while their master escapes in another direction. One of Joven's trademarks, these wily, mischevious creatures have years of training and understand basic hand signals (sit, beg, run, climb). They are loyal, but as the Guardian of An-Havva well knows, if he could learn the hand-signal code he could control them just as easily as Joven does.

Leaping Lizard

- The Leaper is a large beast with skin the color of thick mud. It is a rather stupid creature, but has rudimentary intelligence enough to eat vermin and dig itself a nest when the weather grows cold. The Leaper has remarkably sticky feet, can jump many times its own height, and have been known to avidly bound after crows through the trees.
- It is believed by most of the residents of An-Havva that these creatures are transformed humanoids, changed into giant lizards by the Autumn Willow. One of these creatures was killed recently near

the small pioneer town of Kerselin, and was found wearing a shredded tunic over its shoulders, and had a wedding band crimped onto one of its crinkly toes.

Mammoth Harness

- A Mammoth Harness is an exceptionally large harness used to keep Mammoths from getting loose and causing too much havoc. Though most of the Mammoths found in the An-Havva area have been raised and bred in captivity, the harnesses are a necessity, especially during the mating season.
- The Mammoths are trained to pull heavy wagons for short distances, as well as towing plowshares through the rocky fields native to the area. There were more Mammoths many years beforehand, but now they have all nearly died off as result of bad breeding practices.

Natural Habitat

- The Natural Habitat is very important to the Autumn Willow, and ensuring that the natural order of her Wood and the rest of the Homelands is not disrupted is one of the most important tasks of her existence. Even though the changes are not very noticable to the rest of the inhabitants of the Homelands, for one in tune with nature such as the Autumn Willow, the abrupt change in the energy patterns caused by the collapse of the Ban is already causing an incredible amount of damage - though she does not know its source, or why the energy that powers her existence is starting to fade. With the world slowly starting to change, the Autumn Willow is faced with the choice of watching her world die, or using the last of her fading magics to try to restore balance to an otherwise unbalanced world, even if it means the destruction of herself and every other creature, structure and civilized culture on the plane

Daughter of Autumn

- The tale of the Daughter of Autumn is a common one throughout the Homelands, and most people seem dream of her from time to time. There have been stories of a beautiful woman appearing out of thin air and rescuing children from danger, as well as the occasional wandering woodsman getting led safely out of the forest by a misty apparition. She has become an important part of the myths and tales of the lands, and represents the power of nature over the land.
- Ever since Feroz's Ban was created, some of the natural energies that come from the rift to the Homelands have been trapped within this domain. As a result, the natural avatar of the woods, normally no more than a mere presence or aura has manifested into a being with physical form, one complete with intelligence and ideals - thus, the Autumn Willow. She has appeared from time to time across the Homelands, usually to aid someone in need, and has been instrumental in keeping the stories of the Autumn Queen alive. This being is merely her Avatar, one who will fight for the innocent and nature. Her very presence is so strong that it will cause beings to dream of her and of the Great Wood where she lives.

This being may also be her child depending on Continuity Needs

Root Spiders

- Whereas most trapdoor spiders consume only insects and small forest vermin, the huge arachnids that the Autumn Willow calls her own have the appetite and capability to chase down and eat a small horse. They will sometimes bury themselves beneath the surface of a path or trail, and wait patiently for their lunch to come by. Those who have slain Root Spiders have found that their brains are quite large, and it is surmised that these terrible creatures may actually be as intelligent as a young child. More than once have caravans travelling along the Lady's Path have been led into danger by the mournful cries of a young boy or girl calling for help from the trees...

Rysorian Badgers

- Rhisorian Badgers are a strange breed of creature. They build their homes deep within the forest soil, then decorate their living quarters with the bones of dead animals and any shiny objects they find along their travels. Just as soon as a creature is hunted down and eaten in the Wood, these Badgers are usually amongst the first scavengers on the scene, scouring through the corpse for whole bones, and occasionally nibbling at whatever the predators have left behind.

Guardian of An-Havva

- The Guardians of An-Havva are the self-appointed protectors of the people who live by the edge of the Great Wood. They are one of the core forces that hold the frontier towns together, and their influence keeps the towns talking and negotiating instead of breaking down into armed feuds. Where the City of Onella has Abbey Matrons and government councils to take care of business, the Guardians are the only people capable of stopping total anarchy from erupting any time a major crisis occurs, to organize fire brigades and monster hunting parties. The frontier towns are still young by comparison to the lands of Aysen, and most of the men and women that moved to the towns of An-Havva are generally strong spirited to the point of being stubborn and pig-headed.
- To be a Guardian means having an excellent grasp of public speaking and frontier morality. All of the Guardians recognize the importance of the Treaty between Lord Eron and Aysen, and all grimly know that if the trade between the countries ceases, the people of An-Havva will be the first to die if the army from Koskun Keep successfully marches through the Great Wood. With that grim knowledge in mind, they do the best they can to ensure their people the best protection and guidance possible, without infringing on their rights or privacy.

Spectral Bears

- Spectral Bears are believed to be the personal guardians of the Autumn Willow, and are often seen escorting caravans from the River Bridge to An-Havva. Huge creatures with pelts of the softest, most beautiful fur, they ramble through the Wood at all times of the year, even when their counterparts are hibernating. The simple sight of one of these beasts makes most Orcs and Goblins flee, for there is a tale in their past of a great Spectral Bear that consumed an entire Goblin village, shacks and all, in a single night of feasting.

Willow Priestess

- A Willow Priestess is a servant of the Autumn Willow. Often seen wearing gowns of luminescence and gossamer, these beings seem no more tangible than a shaft of soft moonlight in the trees. There are a few stories about an old trapper who witnessed a Willow Priestess lift an injured creature from a metal vise and vanish into the forest mists. The Willow Priestesses are said to tend to the injured creatures of the Wood, and sometimes even pets or livestock if a farm is built close to the border of the Wood. They do not accept payment for their work, and have never been known to talk aloud, though there is a story of a trader named Renzel who heard strange languages in her mind when she was walking the Lady's Path.

Autumn Willow

- The Autumn Willow is believed by most of those who live in the Pioneer Towns to be a creature of Faerie, and has been seen very few times outside her precious Wood, apart from her Avatar form/ Queen of the Autumn guise which is only a manifestation of her will. She controls the very nature of the Great Wood, and decides whether a caravan is to be set upon by Root Spiders or given safe escort by her pet Spectral Bears. Little is known of the Autumn Willow, though it is known she finds the town of An-Havva fascinating, and that her hatred for the Dark Baron is well established.

- It is said that she once took Lord Ihsan as her lover, though that is likely more of a bawdy tavern tale than one of a scholarly nature. Her neutrality is well known, but so is her spontaneous wrath for those that displease her or travel in her forest without her permission.
- The Autumn Willow is an incarnation of nature and Faerie, a representation of the forces of the Great Wood and the creatures that live amongst the trees. While all groves and forests have their own special spirits, Feroz's Ban magnified the energies of the Wood, so that their Avatar became an intelligent, living, breathing creature rather than just a spiritual apparition. As the years continued, she has gained incredible power, and now has feeling for the entire area of the Homelands, though she has no sensation for the dead wastelands beyond.
- The Autumn Willow has existed as long as the plane has existed, but only gained true sentience as result of the Ban. Now, faced with a world on the brink of domination by the Vampire Lord, with Koskun Keep and Aysen kept from war only by the stream of traders and merchants she allows through her Wood, the Autumn Willow holds a very tenuous position in the Homelands. For all the years since the Ban was installed, she maintained balance as best she could. But now in the present day, the Ban has begun to fail and her magics are waning quickly. She is starting to lose corporeality and sentience, and knows that her time is limited to just a few decades. The Autumn Willow is faced with the impossible decision of either using the last of her powers to try and reinstate the ecosystem of the world, or whether to simply continue to play the balancing agent through the last days of hope and chaos. If she reinstates the ecosystem, she will likely destroy every sentient creature in the world, including herself and the people of An-Havva that she loves so dearly. If she does nothing, then her divinations have showed that Baron Sengir will eventually rule over the entirety of the Homelands, and with her inaction all that she cares for may be destroyed. But her divinations and future castings are imperfect, and she has yet to gamble upon which course to take. She has tried to cast small spells to natural balance across the world, but it seems only to hurt everything and not do any good.
- The Autumn Willow is faced with a very serious choice. Does she pull the trigger and destroy all of the peoples she has come to love in an attempt to reset the natural mana systems of the world with one huge burst of energy, or will she simply be inactive and let her powers drain to nothingness and gamble that her people will be stronger than the Dark Baron. She does not want to just sit and watch as the Dark Baron takes control over the world and uses her people for his dark purposes, but she has not made up her mind, and desperately looks for other alternatives.

Blue: The Floating Island, and the Wizards' School

History - The Floating Island is not actually a Floating Island. When the first Dwarven Ships approached the isle, they saw that it was as barren as the rest of the wastelands, with only a few low grasses and no animal life. But when they set foot on the beach, they found that the draining effect found elsewhere in the world was not present here. It became a Dwarven port for the Sea Clans, though the lack of fresh water made it unfeasable for anything more than a place to store goods or to harbor during the winter seasons.

As Feroz watched the nomads build the Abbey at Onella, he also noticed the same escalation in population and activity in the Koskun Mountains. Feroz realized that there must be a balancing agent in this world, a referee of sorts to ensure that total destruction is not realized. Feroz knew that whomever controlled the Sea would end up controlling the Homelands, and it would be matter of a few decades before one side or the other took control. Though the Sea Clans sailed the seas, they were few in number, and weren't interested in playing watchdog.

Feroz went to the Floating Island, and with the aid of his magics he built a great school there, and created wells of fresh water. When the Sea Dwarves returned that winter, they were astonished to find

a huge, castle-like structure built on their island. They were even more astonished when a black-clad stranger approached them and said he would teach them how to wield magic in exchange for services.

The island was called the Floating Isle because of the lack of shallows around the place. Ships could be brought within a few lengths of the “shore”, and anchored safely, even when the Winter Storms brought the huge waves that pounded the cliffs of the Floating Island.

Within a few years, the Wizards’ School was thriving, and had more than twenty Apprentices serving under the mysterious First Master. Though Feroz did not teach them anything of the worlds beyond their own, or anything of summoning or binding, he taught them enough so they could learn and discover for themselves. Even to this day, the libraries of the Wizards’ School are filled with preserved journals which detail the spell research and history of all those who had worked in the sanctums and laboratories of the School.

After a short time, the First Master vanished, leaving behind a number of his own magical texts detailing white and blue magic, and the construction of certain clockwork artifacts. There was chaos for a short time, but in the end a Council of Wizards was created, led by a Wizard Savant. Their role was to ensure that the seas stayed open and clear for trading and shipping, and to control and maintain their own neutrality, and the peace between the other rising nations.

As time went on, the Wizard’s Council grew more self serving and more prone to trying to control the world around them. Maintaining the balance between the countries became their lifework, and maintaining fragile (and sometimes near-illusionary) alliances with Aysen and Sengir, the Wizard’s Council became masters of manipulation and subterfuge, along with having some control over the wind and the waters of the Homelands.

In the modern day, they are in a precarious situation. The Serrans in Aysen think that they are all evil and should be put in irons, and the general populous still holds a deep grudge against the Wizards for once miring the harbor at Onella with kelp, keeping the forces of Aysen from invading the Dark Barony once and for all. Baron Sengir has become more reclusive, but the Wizard’s Council is well aware that his agents are at work in their midst, and that a number of their students are being corrupted to the darker magics. Lord Eron of Koskun doesn’t like them much, for one of their unwiser members took up a contract to try to assassinate the Goblin King and failed. None of their members have been able to walk the Lady’s Path or anywhere near the Wood for decades. But, their ability to teach, and their neutral position on trading with any ship who navigates the Reef keeps them alive and comfortable, however precarious.

Philosophy - Control. While the previous Wizard Savant was a spineless little bastard with no real morals or compunction to maintain balance, the current Master is a Sea Dwarf named Reveka, a very determined female. She desires control more than anything, and has a strong temper and a cunning mind. She wants to re-establish a good position for the Floating Island amongst all of the cultures of the Homelands at nearly any cost, but trusts no one but her own council. Reveka makes a strong and good leader, though she is edgy by nature, and easily riled. She really does have the best intentions, but her methods are manipulative and she will do nearly anything to maintain the careful political alliances. She has spent time in the Bureaucratic chambers in Onella, as well as sipped wine with Baron Sengir. She has met with ambassadors from Koskun Keep in the foothills of the mountains to try to stop the feud between the Goblin Wizards and her own people, and personally sailed a loaded frigate through the winter storms to ensure that the peoples of the port town of Kerselin had food to last until spring. It’s all for show, all just a game, but one that Reveka has to win.

Government - The Wizard’s Council is an advisory board made of the eight most powerful mages on the Island, usually the teachers and residing masters. The ninth member of the council is the Wizard

Savant, who maintains absolute final say on any matter, though they are obligated to listen to any argument from the Council. To become the Wizard Savant means challenging the existing Master to a duel of some form or nature - the strongest wins, the loser is either exiled from the Island or asked to take a seat on the Wizard's Council as a valued advisor.

The rest of the island around the school is a thriving port town by the name of Port, one with a highly organized underground black market and barter system beneath the hustle and bustle of the hundreds of families that live on the hills around the School. Though the Council oversees all of the bureaucratic functions of the town, the subculture living there pretty much does as they please, unless they are clumsy and make waves, in which case the Wizards Council and their apprentices will remove the offenders by whatever means necessary. The town could not exist with the school and vice versa.

Religion - As you wish, as per your beliefs, nothing is enforced, though any open displays are generally not tolerated.

Magic - Lots of control magic and defensive spells. However, Baron Sengir has corrupted a number of the Apprentices with books of black magic in an attempt to have one of them to grow strong enough to duel Reveka for the position of Wizard Savant. It is a place where white, blue and black magic all overlap, though white and black are usually kept hidden from view.

Trade - If you want something, you can likely find it here. Ships frequent the coasts of Aysen and the Pioneer towns, but rarely go to the Barony due to the number of terrible things that has befallen visiting crews in the years beforehand. Transportation is a simple matter, and the Sea Clans weather the winter storms on the Floating Island. A lot of goods and barter happens here, and you could consider the entire city around the School to be one huge marketplace.

Art Concepts - Wooden buildings surrounding the stone School. Tarps and bright sunlight, boats in need of a paint. Sea colors, though the frequent rains, sunlight and winds cause most things to never look quite new. It is a place where folk from all cultures can mingle and do the social games so required in such a social hub. Many inns, taverns and gambling establishments. The School is kept separate, an ideally peaceful place from the chaos of Port.

Plot Devices for Blue

- Control

Reveka is the current Wizard Savant over the Wizards' School, and is in a very precarious position. She knows that the only way that the School will survive is by taking control over the rest of the world piece by piece. It doesn't mean domination or playing dictatorial games, but it does mean trying have spies and contacts everywhere - thus the intrigue game and trying to save the world from war all in one. If the School does not soon become a world power, it is in danger of being politically usurped by either of it's "allies" or at the worst being economically destroyed by Eron's influence. Also, Reveka is constantly in a position where she knows the Apprentices in the school have the right to challenge her for position, just as she challenged the old Master, and if she lets one of them win, it could mean her exile, the fall of the School, and open war will erupt across the waters between Aysen and Baron Sengir.

- Mystery

The Wizards of the Floating Isle are the closest to solving the great mystery that there is more worlds than just the one they live on. Now that the Ban has fallen and the mysterious force that prevents the Wizards from exploring the AEther has vanished, it will be a matter of time before the AEther starts being explored, and the word will get out that they are just a small world amongst many, which could have severe repercussions on all of the societies and cultures, as well as speed up Baron Sengir's plans

to get off this forsaken world. There is also the mystery of what lays beneath the surface of the waters of the great Sea, and what the oceans of the Homelands hold.

- Magic

The limits of the empirical knowledge and theories of magic in the Homelands are constantly being tested by those in the School. As the Goblin Wizards gain in strength, vengeance and egotistical duels are becoming a constant on the beaches and low hills of the Koskun mountains. Reveka is aware that her students are leaving on week long trips to Aysen, but she is not aware that they have actually been sailing to the beaches of Koskun to have conflicts with the Goblins there and worsening the overall situation. No serious battles have happened yet, but that is going to be a matter of time.

Concepts for Blue

Aether Cage

- One of the Wizards on the Floating Isle discovered the existence of the Aether by accident, and since then, an entire branch of the School has been working for years trying to learn more about this mysterious phenomenon, and how they can use or control it. But with Feroz's Ban, they could not truly explore the depths of the Aether, as they were stopped by a wall of force they could not breach.

Aether Storm

- By channeling mana into the parts of the Aether they could access, the Wizards of the Floating Island have learned to cause violent storms in the Aether around the Homelands. Though this generally does not affect the Wizards much, as they have no knowledge of summoning spells and the violent storms happen outside their sphere of reality, the spell is not frequently cast as many strange things begin to happen around the tower and compound during one of the Storms. Ghosts and apparitions manifest, food goes bad, masonry loosens and eerie sounds emanate from dark places.

Albatross

- Feroz loved riding and flying, and magically altered normal albatrosses into riding steeds for himself and his wife. Far bigger than a horse, these birds were capable of flying great distances across the open sea.
- There are stories of sailors who witnessed one of these huge Albatrosses drifting in the skies above their ships, complete with saddle, stirrups and harness, but no rider. The true owners of these strange birds are unknown, and has left the Wizard's Council on the Floating Island searching fruitlessly for answers to this riddle for years.
- Now that Feroz is gone, there are few of these beasts left alive, and have moved from the island to the shore-coast of the Homelands.

Chain Stasis

- This spell was developed by the Wizards of the Floating Island to protect their travelling parties from harm from brigands or other adversaries. While killing their attackers may damage their carefully maintained political balances, incapacitating them without hurting them was a really good idea. Unfortunately, the spell was not well constructed, and can sometimes be a detriment if there is a wizard in the opposing party to throw the spell back at the casters.

Coral Reef

- Feroz first discovered this coral growing in the shallow waters near his island. After some experimentation, he learned that it could easily adapt to nearly any environment, especially one as rich with energy as the Wizards Island. It took him a number of years to keep the coral from getting completely out of hand, but now it makes an impressive bastion against hostile forces, (there is only

one, albeit wide, channel that leads from the open sea to the bays and docks) as well as great material for framing houses once it was properly dried and enchanted.

Dark Maze

- The Dark Maze is an odd phenomenon, its origin and habits unknown to any scholar, as it is a place that thinks and hunts like a creature. It is a misty maze of simple twists and turns that any creature can discover and follow. The true danger lies not in finding your way to the center of this labyrinth, but the horrible truth that lays at its center. After cold foggy nights, Sengirian Villagers will sometimes find the corpse of a loved one in the marsh-fields, torn into pieces, bones broken into splinters.
- A number of these creatures were created years ago on the Floating Island by an apprentice who had been given “special books” by a mysterious stranger. The stranger was Baron Sengir, and the apprentice who was destroyed by the very creatures he summoned was none other than the son of an important Bureaucrat in Aysen, one who was heavily advocating a full scale assault against the Dark Barony. The maze-elementals have since been at large, though they seem to frequent the area around Castle Sengir.

Delusions

- This spell was developed by the Wizards of the Floating Isle, after their allies suffered a number of defeats from Goblin Sorcerers who were using enchantments to turn the tides of a combat.

Forget

- To Forget is one of the harsher punishments of the Wizard’s Council of the Wizards’ School on the Floating Island. In the event that an Apprentice commits a crime of great magnitude, there is a certain spell that will strip them of the knowledge of how to cast magical spells. Once repentant and when the lesson is learned, the enchantment is usually removed, though there have been a few cases in the history of the Wizards’ School where the recipient of the spell was cursed for life.

Giant Oyster

- These undersea creatures have little notoriety, save that on the rare occasion when one of the Seafolk discovers a pearl within one pure enough to be sold to Reveka, or when one of these giant creatures is washed up on the shores of the surface world by storms. While living, if anything is thrust between their shells, the Oysters clamp down on it until either they are killed or the object is crushed into powder.

Labyrinth Minotaur

- Labyrinth Minotaurs may be distantly related to the Anaba, but are definately fewer in number. The only known lair of a Labyrinth Minotaur is within the Dark Barony, where a Minotaur named Sergius the Axe has dug out an ever-increasing labyrinth over the course of the last few centuries, covering the halls with traps and filling the vaults at its center with treasure and valuables.
- Labyrinth Minotaurs are excellent miners and fierce fighters, as they are magically enchanted to never need food nor rest. They enjoy food and copulation, but the few remaining Labyrinth Minotaurs are sterile. They generally do not get along with their Minotaur cousins, but also have not encountered one in centuries. Occasionally a Labyrinth Minotaur will be seen travelling the roads near Koskun Keep searching for treasure, and may even stop to frequent the An-Havva Inn for cooked food and spirits. The Labryinth Minotaurs of the Homelands are survivors of the Great War, sheltered from the final days of devastation, and their lairs contain a number of potent artifacts and wealth that they have watched over for centuries.

Wizard Savant

- The Wizard Savant of the Floating City is currently a Dwarven woman by the name of Reveka. As result of her skills of sorcery, wizardry, artifact creation, research, astronomy, alchemy and the other magical arts, she managed to usurp the position from the previous Wizard Savant in a most unusual challenge - a riddle contest based on astronomical knowledge. Having grown up on one of the ships of the Dwarvish Sea Clans, and having three hundred years of astronomy and sailing experience under her belt, the young Dwarvish woman won the contest in less than an hour.
- Reveka is a wise woman, and an excellent teacher and guide of all the students of the Wizards' School. She maintains a careful balance amongst the Council of Wizards that rules the Floating City, and has final say on any issues that the members of the Council disagrees on. She is in charge of maintaining the spells that keep the waters free of warships from Aysen, Koskun or the Dark Barony, and of maintaining relations between the surface folk and the undersea dwellers, the Seafolk.
- Reveka is also rumored to have an ancient text on how to turn an ordinary pearl into an artifact of incredible power, and that she has been creating and hording these devices for well over forty years in anticipation of the time when she will need to defend or take control of Aysen.

Monstrous Serpent

- Monstrous Serpents are only creatures of legend, and have been told of in tall tales for as long as stories about the Sea have been told. The idea that a creature large enough to consume whole ships in a single bite even exists is ridiculous. There's the story of the Leviathan that the First Master taught us, about a sorcerous experiment gone awry, but no natural creature could ever grow that large without the Wizard's Council knowing about it. Bedtime stories for children. Nonsense. Humph. (polish eyeglasses, wait for the listeners to be impressed)
- These Serpents do exist, and have existed for centuries in the deep waters between the continents. Feeding on schools of fish twice a year in the waters off of the coast of the Homelands, these huge beasts avoid the ill effects of the world by swimming in water far from the influence of the hungry land.

Mystic Decree

- One of the few spells that Feroz actually taught the first Wizard Savant, one that would guarantee that no warship or flying vampire could cross the waters between the Dark Barony and Aysen without the permission of the Wizards Council. It has been used very little, but the threat of it is enough to generally keep the Citizenship of Aysen from building warfleets, and to make the Dark Baron's vampires sticks to the roads and coasts instead of flying across the open sea.

Narwhal

- Narwhals are the great migrating whales of this world, growing up to twenty feet in length, and known best for their spiraling tusk. Traveling in schools consisting of dozens of Narwhals, these travelers are a welcome sight for any sailor, for if they swim near the surface, there will be good weather on the 'morrow.

Sea Trolls

- Sea Trolls are vicious, cruel, and extremely crafty undersea hunters. They can walk on land for a few hours at a time, but are best off in the deep water away from sunlight and bright illumination. Whole tribes of Sea Trolls exist within deep subterranean caves, and live by stealing from Seafolk fish-herds, attacking passing surface ships, or even ambushing Seafolk towns and dragging their prisoners back to the caves for a quick, predatory meal. Sea Trolls have been the bane of the Seafolk for years, as they swim faster, fight harder, and are well versed in camouflaging themselves by painting the color of their skins with scum from the ocean floor.

Wall of Kelp

- Walls of Kelp are one of the best deterrents of a sea-borne invasion from any port in the Homelands. These magical walls were developed by the Wizard's Council of the Floating Island decades ago, in any effort to stop the futile siege of Castle Sengir by the forces from Aysen. The Wizard's Council knew it was senseless, and didn't want to see either the loss of so much life, or any sway in the careful balance of power between Aysen and Sengir that they had spent so much time trying to maintain.
- When seeded, these fast growing plants will replicate themselves until they seal off an entire harbor, or until the Wizard's Council casts a spell to destroy them all. If there is any sign for preparation of a war fleet from any quarter, the Wizard's Council would mire the harbors in Kelp until the ships were dismantled.

Black: Baron Sengir, Castle Sengir and the plots to rule the Homelands.

History - An ancient and powerful vampire by the name of Baron Sengir was summoned and abandoned on this world long ago by a Planeswalker. The Baron discovered a number of Dwarves building a huge castle nearby - in proper fashion, he slaughtered most of the Dwarves, and settled into his new home, accompanied by the few Dwarves he turned into undead or vampires under his control. No matter what the distressed Dwarves did to try to retake their castle, the Baron was simple too strong for them to defeat. In one of the raids, the Baron took the Dwarven King's daughter for his own, and spelled her mind so that she would love him rather than her father. Irini has since been his own loyal vampiric daughter, kept beautiful and young through the years by dark magics.

The Baron discovered two things of importance in the years following his arrival in the Homelands - that a hidden stairwell led from the throneroom to a huge Dwarven City deep beneath the ground, and that within the underground city lay a Gate that led to another world. Though the Baron knew little of true magic, he knew that Gates were dangerous things, and that if one should be prepared to go through as if you would never return through it again. Realizing this, he decided that he would go through the Gate completely prepared, and started trying to devise a way to take control over a sizable number of the inhabitants of this world as his private army to lead through the Gate. Any of the vampires or undead servants he pushed through the Gate never returned, and none of his magics were able to discern where the gate led to. While he was somewhat sure that the Gate led back to some Dwarven Place, there was no guarantees. He searched through the city for clues for hundreds of years, interrogated Dwarves his servants captured for him and consulted divination devices from all over the Homelands - but to no avail, as he was still confronted with a one way gate to a place he knew nothing about.

So he slaughtered all of his captives and servants, to ensure that they would not get out of hand while he was asleep, then he and Irini slept the sleep of the dead for many years. While they slept, Feroz arrived and set up his Ban, Serra began to work with the nomad cultures, and the humanoids in the nearby mountains began to organize themselves in response. Shortly after Aysen Abbey was completed, a band of thieves from the Koskun Mountains crept into the Castle, intent on searching it for Dwarven treasure. They knew it to be haunted, and had been warned away by the Dwarven Trader they encountered on the road, but they never expected to encounter the likes of the Dark Baron. Angry at being awakened by such rabble, the Baron either killed or transformed the thieves into blood-thirsty vampires. All who were made into undead were sent off by the Baron to ravage the Homelands in their Master's name, much to his enjoyment.

In the first years after his awakening, the Baron had his servants kidnap a variety of humans from Aysen, as well as a vessel carrying thirty one families from Onella that was en route to the Pioneer town of Kerselin. He had them set up a small village in the marshlands beneath his Castle, and they

lived under his influence. Though he does not need the short lived humans for any given purpose, dominating them kept him entertained through the long years, and turning their dead into handservants and vampire warriors made them useful. He instigated firm rules - that if one person tried to flee the Barony, he would murder ten people in their place. But since the only ways out of the Barony are through the wastelands (guaranteed death), up through the windy road leading to Koskun Keep (guaranteed to be captured by his servants, as the path is barely wide enough for one person) or by sea (his vampires watch the coast), few have ever made it, and the repercussions on their families and friends were serious. Serious feeding ground, as he needs mortal blood to survive. Over the years, the people of the Sengirian Villages became broken and without will, and since have grown as a population to a number of villages throughout the Barony. The Baron continued his vampires' raids of terror throughout the Homelands, still seeking a way to gather an army for himself. Eron the Relentless claimed himself the Goblin King, and though Baron Sengir tried to tempt the rogue, it was to no avail. When the caravans and traders started going between Aysen and Koskun as result of the Treaty, the Baron and Lord Eron worked out a secret deal, that Eron would ensure that the Sengirian Villagers were getting food and necessities that the growing population could not create themselves, and Baron Sengir would take no more hostile actions against the denizens of the Koskun Mountains. But he kept up his constant raids by his vampires everywhere else, to install fear and hopelessness amongst all those he could reach.

Shortly after the treaty was signed, another Paladin of Serra came to Castle Sengir to confront the Baron in personal combat. Lord Ihsan was different from all the rest of the Paladins that had come before, as he offered his own existence for dark power, unconsciously he offered his own life as sacrifice for the safety of Aysen. After the Baron dealt with Ihsan, he learned a major lesson - that his raids of terror were giving the peoples of Aysen strength and purpose, and that their culture was hinged on their hatred of Sengir. Thus, he came upon a plan to stop his obvious attacks, and wait and see if the culture, without a common enemy, would collapse and turn on itself. In a few short years it began with the persecution of the Death Speakers by the Serrans, a minor incident that the Baron's agents could easily turn into a full scale schism if they were cautious.

Thus his plan was created in full. He would wait until the population of Aysen was firmly divided over the Death Speakers, then commit the final assassination of Lord Eron personally, throwing Koskun Keep into chaos. Eventually, the thousands of Goblins in Koskun Keep would begin to starve, and would go to the only place where they knew there was food - Aysen. Many would die when they charged through the Wood, but enough would live to destroy many of the villages and farms of Aysen, if not the capitol of Onella itself. The Baron knows well that the Goblins are great at taking land, they are terrible at farming or tending to it. After a few more years of complete misery, the Baron would reappear, turn the weak leaders of the Homelands to his control, and offer them a choice - follow him to a new world where they can do as they wish, or die here in misery. Faced with impending death, either by their own ineptitude or at the hands of the enemy, it is doubtful that the Baron would get any less than a few hundred loyal followers to take with him through the Gate, and start his regime in a new world. Without the schism to divide Aysen, the disappearance of Lord Eron would only cause minor chaos, and his Villagers would likely die off from lack of supplies. Courtesy of Lord Ihsan's sacrifice, victory was in his hands, and being an immortal, he had no problems with waiting for the world to destroy itself.

The Homelands were in danger, all because of the selfless act of Lord Ihsan, who threw his life away for his people, and gave the Baron the idea that could eventually collapse the Homelands into armageddon.

Government - Baron Sengir runs the show, absolute dictator, final say in everything. Even his most loyal servants are nothing more than pawns to him, save Irini, who has earned his favor through

centuries of corruption. There are those in the villages who are the Sengir Autocrats, those chosen to transfer information and keep an eye on the villagers, but they have no real power in the Barony whatsoever.

Religion - For a people that have no hope, they nearly worship the Serra Paladin that come through from time to time to challenge Sengir, for if Sengir was to die, they would be free of his dark influence. Thus, the Paladins are revered as demi-gods, and the traders who bring them supplies and the like are sacrosanct.

Magic - None is allowed. The Baron knows well that knowledge is power, and if the Villagers were to learn even the basics of spellcraft, it would eventually be used against him. The villagers do know some healing and divination magic, but in the swamps there is little use for it.

Trade - They grow a variety of medicinal herbs and plants which can be traded to the merchants for goods, but the poor Villagers of the Dark Barony have little to offer.

Art - The sun can shine here, it is not always cloudy and grey, and there really is blue sky just beyond the mists. It should be a place of oppression by the Dark Baron, but he does not control the weather by any means. The Manor Houses should be gloomy, and the Dwarven Castle is covered with Gargoyles and other statuary which is designed after creatures the original Dwarves had encountered in their world-spanning travels; to the Dwarves of old friends and allies, but to those who have never met such creatures, they are horrors and abominations. Think Roman, then Gothic, then combine them to make large halls and bathing pools, luxury for hundreds, metal shutters over the window slots, hallways where no being has walked in hundreds of years. The Baron lives on one place in the Castle, and has no fear of fire whatsoever - candles and fire are good things, as long as they are under control.

Plot Devices for Black

- Domination of the Homelands

Plain and simple, Baron Sengir has a plan to get out of this world, courtesy of an idea given to him by the meaningless death of Lord Ihsan some years before. Now he lays low and bides his time until he can resurface and claim himself an army to take through the Dwarven Gate into a world beyond. This goal overshadows most every other plot in the world, for if the Baron's plans go through, he is going to win "everything".

Concepts for Black

Baron Sengir

- He is an immortal, has seen a dozen worlds, and though he has dark tendencies, he is not evil - just practical and rather direct. No stereotypes, make him as real as you or I.
- Baron Sengir is a Vampire Lord, and is the ultimate progenitor of all of the Sengirian Vampires that wizards use in their battles and duels all across Dominaria. He is ancient and wise, and is used to creating lots of vampires to serve his will. While he spent time being summoned from world to world by a number of planeswalkers, he created a large number of Sengirian Vampires which still exist in the modern day, and torment those who live on Dominaria. (See the History section of this document to get the full story.)
- In the current day, Baron Sengir rules over all of the land from the edge of the Koskun Mountains to the Sea. His presence is well known to the other cultures of the Homelands, for the Baron's minions occasionally walk amongst them searching for information, and the bitter hatred the Serra Paladins have for the Dark Baron is the core philosophy of their order and purpose in this world.
- Baron Sengir has a small family he likes to call his own; his Dwarven daughter Irini (once the daughter of a Dwarven King long ago), caster of spells and disrupter of enchantments. His teacher

and guide, Grandmother Sengir (once Ravi), is a planeswalker who has survived the centuries with black magic, but is hopelessly insane and has little memory of who or what she is. His faithful Huntsman who walk the lands of the living in his stead, and his carnivorous steeds who pull his infamous Black Carriage along the muddy roads of the Dark Barony.

- Of all the inhabitants of the Homelands, the Dark Baron and his extended family are of the few who is truly aware of the fact that there are worlds beyond the reality they exist in - he still avidly remembers being pulled to this plane from his own world by wizards, then was stranded here when his wizard lost the duel and was forced off world by the opponent. He keeps the knowledge to himself, for he knows that someday it will be to his advantage that the inhabitants of this world know little of the other worlds beyond this one. He suspects that there are other planeswalkers on this world, but he has been able to find little more than circumstantial evidence of them. The only other group that has any idea of the other worlds are the Anaba Minotaurs who live in the Koskun Mountains,
- The Baron has discovered the hidden passage beneath the parapets of Castle Sengir, and has followed it down into the Dwarven City. There, amongst the tunnels and great halls he discovered the remnants of an advanced Dwarven civilization, as well as an active Gate that led directly from this world to somewhere else. (It is the solitary place where one can enter or leave the Homelands through the Ban.) Ever since discovering the Gate, the Baron has always known that he can leave this world through this gate and travel to another reality, but he is very sure that he would never be able to return. Thus, he wishes to take through an army, and has devoted much of his time to the challenge of collecting people who will willingly follow him and be loyal to him, without being made into undead or vampires.
- Even though the Baron is not aware of the existence of the Ban, the Dwarven Gate that he found is far more powerful and stable than Feroz's spell. Recently, the Ban began to collapse because of the mere presence of the Dwarven Gate, and the lack of keepers to watch over and maintain the spell (Feroz and Serra are both dead). If the Gate were to be closed or destroyed, then the Ban would reinstate itself and the Baron would be trapped in the Homelands, and the world would be saved!

Veldrane of Sengir

- Veldrane is a poacher, scout and messengers for his master. He has been known to walk to roads and paths from Onella to Castle Sengir, to bring victims back for his master, or to deliver information to the Baron's allies and agents. He is often disguised as a simple traveller or trader, and is not easily recognized as a foreigner to the sunlit lands. The only means of constantly identifying him is a Dwarven-made, emerald studded scabbard (sword inside, of course) he carries on his person at all times. Some say that this person is only a puppet of the Dark Baron's, and that he is nothing more than a necromantic automaton of some sort.

Black Carriage

- The Black Carriage is Baron Sengir's favorite way to tour through the Sengirian countryside. When Baron Sengir wishes to ride, he chooses a villager to act as Coachman. When the tour of his lands and properties is complete, the Baron personally unbridles his steeds and lets them consume the terrified peasant as reward for their labor. Careening along the cobbleroads at breakneck speeds, the Baron's chargers have been seen to sweat fire and blood, and that when they gallop their horseshoes throw fiery sparks.

Irini

Female, Dwarf, ancient but still quite young and attractive looking. Regality, as she was the Dwarven King's daughter. Diminutive body frame, but looks something between Dwarf and a teenage human

girl. Remember that she IS a vampire, and it should show in her appearance somehow without being too obvious. She is actually Reveka's Great-Grandmother.

- Irini is the beautiful "daughter" of the Dark Baron, and a skilled enchantress. She was once the daughter of a Dwarven King long ago, back before Sengir came amongst them and destroyed most of them. Her heart is dark, she takes pleasure in the pain of others, and loves corrupting that which is pure. She has learned to unweave the magics of others and has become adept in unravelling the spells of her father's enemies. She is obsessed with Ihsan's Shade, and covets the Ring that controls him. She has seriously considered stealing the Ring, but she fears her father's wrath. She now hates Dwarves after many hundreds of years of being with Sengir, and believes her reflection to be hideous, even though she is quite attractive.

Cemetery Gate

- Cemetery Gates are more than necessary in most Sengirian Villages, as the dead are much more likely to get up from their graves rather than stay in them, due to the high amount of swamp mana available. Since Baron Sengir has made the incineration or dismemberment of a corpse a crime punishable by a hundred years of torture, the villagers have little choice but to bury their loved ones in the city graveyards, and hope the small magics placed on the gates will keep the undead from getting out until the Baron comes to collect them, to use as servants in Castle Sengir.

Feast of the Unicorn

Black Card, Instant

- Pearled Unicorns lived in the Homelands during the times when the nomads still stalked the plains. They are usually found in the sanctum of the Autumn Willow deep within the Wood.

Ghost Hounds

- Ghost Hounds are packs of canines that frequent the countryside around Castle Sengir. These loping dogs have been known to torment and chase travellers for days before they close in for the kill. Some say these creatures feed only off of mortal fear, and thought they are ravenous eaters, they gain no sustenance from meat or blood - hunting their prey provides all the nourishment they need to survive. Melting from shadow to shadow, usually the only time they are seen is when their jade-green eyes reflect in the darkness, as when they are just on the edge of the light cast by a midnight campfire.

Grandmother Sengir

- Grandmother Sengir is a planeswalker of nearly the same age as Baron Sengir, as result of her spells and exploration into the dark magics. She refers affectionately to the Dark Baron as her grandson, and has been his tutor and guide ever since he rescued her from a magical prison deep within the Wastelands (this is Ravi). She has a singing voice that causes eggs to spoil and grain withers into dust at her touch. A formidable woman, she is the ultimate personification of the crone. She is a master at casting hexes and curses upon those she scryes through her magical crystal pendant, and has been known to boil the flesh off of beautiful young women and drink the juices in order to keep herself alive throughout the years.
- It is from her collection of spells and hexes that the Baron has been learning magic, and from them has been writing the Books that have had so much corrupting influence on the apprentices of the Wizard's Isle and in Aysen amongst the Death Speakers. She is looking forward to the day when a Death Speaker from Aysen or one of the Apprentices from the Floating Isle will become her next student.

Greater Werewolf

- Though the exact origin of Werewolves is uncertain within the Homelands, it is a common fire-tale that anyone who survives being bitten by a Werewolf will eventually become a Werewolf in the service of the one that bit him. A number of these ferocious creatures serve as messengers and lieutenants for the Dark Baron, while many more simply roam the lands in the form of wolves looking to feast on the flesh of any creature they find. Most who are bitten by Werewolves simply die of the wounds after a time, because they usually don't heal.
- There is one Werewolf that serves the Baron, and all the others serve it. The Wizard Savant that gave Eron the Relentless immortality over a hundred years ago did so with one of the Baron's spellbooks, and without the Baron's permission. When the Baron was experimenting with Lycanthropy, courtesy of Grandmother Sengir's spellbooks, the imprisoned Sorcerer became the first volunteer to test the serum. Since then, it has proved to be a loyal servant and has been an important player in keeping the Sengirian Villagers under control.

Ihsan's Shade

- Lord Ihsan was one of the greatest paladins of Aysen, a champion for the Serra faith and point of view - but ultimately, Ihsan fell to the wiles of the Dark Baron, and has become one of the Vampire Lord's most powerful servants, and ultimately, responsible for the eventual destruction of the Homelands.
- Lord Ihsan grew up in one of the small towns common through the plains of Aysen. When he was just coming of age, he had a dreams and visions of confronting the Dark Baron in Castle Sengir. Ihsan devoted his life to becoming a Paladin of Serra, an order of knights devoted to the protection of the towns of Aysen, and of the ultimate destruction of Baron Sengir. After serving for many years, Ihsan bravely journeyed to the Castle of the Vampire Lord, and confronted the immortal. Lord Ihsan kneeled before the Baron and begged that the Baron make him into creature of eternity, that the Baron share his power and show Ihsan the true meaning of eternal life.

The Baron agreed.

The Baron was an experienced immortal, and knew that Ihsan wanted the power of eternal life only to use it to destroy Sengir, and that Ihsan was martyring himself to darkness only for the good of the world he had left behind. (The typical heroes journey, to become one with darkness and then use the power to destroy the darkness whole. "Maybe if I was younger," the Baron thought to himself, "maybe I would have died by his trickery. But today, I shall not.") The Baron smiled, arched over Ihsan, and with fangs extended sunk his teeth into Ihsan's neck and proceeded to drink the lifeblood from the man. As Ihsan died, he whispered, begged to become just like Sengir. The Dark Baron smiled, pulled free of the Paladin, then spoke the words and incantations of a powerful spell he had learned from his Grandmother, calling upon the magics of the swamps and bogs to fill Ihsan's body. When Sengir stood up and wiped his mouth clean of the red stain, Ihsan was dead.

But not undead.

The Baron had turned Ihsan into a ghost rather than a vampire, a impotent, helpless spirit, a puppet under the Vampire Lord's control rather than a being that could fight back and eventually usurp its maker. Binding the Paladins' soul to his own signet ring, the Baron then placed the ring on his index finger, and ordered Ihsan to stand by his side, to act as his guardian and ally, friend and companion for all of the days to come. As all black magics are complete only with a flaw, the Baron also told Ihsan that he shall never be his own creature again, that he would always be the thrall of whomever owned the ring.

And so Ihsan begged and wept for a hundred days, but the Baron paid no heed, as what is but a hundred days to an immortal? Now, Ihsan is one of the Baron's most treasured possessions, and the

Serra Paladins have vowed to destroy the traitor of their order - Ihsan the weak, Ihsan the fallen, Ihsan the betrayer.

- Irini, Baron Sengir's daughter, wants to own the Ring for herself, for she wishes to control, torment and drive Ihsan completely mad. Even after many years, Ihsan is still sane, which at the very least provides Irini with nightly entertainment.

Koskun Falls

- Koskun Falls lays on the last leg of the journey between Koskun Keep and the Sengirian Villages. After the Koskun River negotiates a channel clogged with stones and rapids, it pours over the lip and falls more than a thousand feet. Though the view is magnificent, the frequent clouds of mist often impede sight, and the treacherous journey down the slick mountain path have caused the deaths of more than just a few travellers.
- Koskun Falls is the border between the Dark Barony and the holdings of Koskun Keep, and is the only place to cross from the swamps to the mountains without flying. Many truces between the Goblins and the agents of Baron Sengir have been negotiated within sight of the majestic falls. An army could be easily ambushed and defeated here, which effectively protects both the Baron and the denizens of Koskun Mountains from invasion by any significant military force.

Manor Lord

- Manor Lords are the Dark Baron's administrators over the many small Sengirian Villages within his domain. It has been years since the last Serf uprising, and the terrible stories of that time are still strong in the minds of the surviving residents of the Barony. The Manor Lords are given special rights and are a social class all to themselves. They are free from doing any of the backbreaking labor that their peers are forced to do. The Manor Lords take care of most of the non-essential negotiations with the caravans from Koskun Keep, and do their best to ensure their people have what they need to survive within this harsh and dangerous land. All of the Manor Lords must walk a careful line between keeping the people of their Villages from uprising, and maintaining good relations with Baron Sengir, for if they fail or anger their master, they are usually disposed of quickly and a new Manor Lord installed in their place. It is generally uncertain whether to be a Manor Lord is beneficial or a death sentence.

Sengir Bats

- The beat of their wings against wooden shutters is enough to unnerve the sternest traveller, and their piercing cries are enough to cause children to wake from the deepest sleep. Though they are not controlled or used by the Baron for any purpose, these winged bloodsuckers have become the seal and symbol of the Dark Barony. Even though they are a blessing for they eat a good portion of the insects from the swamps around the Sengir Villages, their presence and number is still unnerving.

Timmerian Fiends

- Timmerian Fiends are strange creatures that travel the Aether between the planes, searching for magical artifacts and devices to take back to their Master. When these creatures discover a site where the magic radiates exceptionally strong, they will open themselves a doorway into the world, take everything they can carry, then retreat back through their doorway and seal it behind them. These creatures have plagued the rest of Dominia for centuries, and most spellcrafters will destroy the Fiends without a moment of hesitation, for these plunderers have been the downfall of many wizards on many different worlds.
- It is believed by a number of planeswalkers that the Fiends serve a wizard named Timmothus - but the mercenary Timmothus was reportedly slain during the final days of the Brother's War, and perished with the destruction of Argoth. A planeswalker has offered a high reward for anyone who

can bring him a Fiend alive, so that he can interrogate it and unravel the secret of its existence, and who it currently serves.

- With the recent failing of the Ban, the Fiends are finally able to journey to the Homelands. They have been well aware of the magic that kept them from raiding the rich mana sources of the world, and are now more aware that the spell has finally failed. The many artifacts, the Labyrinth Minotaur's Den, the Wizards' School, and even the heart of the Great Wood itself attracts them. If the Ban is not reinstated soon, it is likely that many of the artifacts and mana devices of the Homelands will be whisked away by these creatures. The true danger is whether or not the rift that fuels the Homelands with mana can be affected in any way by the Fiends, but only time will tell.

Artifacts for the Homelands set

Apocalypse Chime

- This is the device that ruined the world, the device that ended the Great War by destroying the mana systems of the very planet the war had been fought on for so long. The planeswalker that survived the blast is none other than Grandmother Sengir, and she was wearing the potent device around her neck when the Baron found her. Since then, she has traded away the cloth-wrapped chime to a Dwarven Trader for a few trinkets, and warned the Trader never to ever let it be rung.

Clockwork Gnomes

- Created by the Wizards of the Floating Island, courtesy of the "First Master's" teachings. They walk, talk, teach and communicate with those who speak with them, but they don't have a lot of personality or manners.

Clockwork Racehorse

- Created by the Wizards of the Floating Island, courtesy of the "First Master's" teachings. Built originally for entertainment, these beasts have become a common sight on the cobbleroads of Aysen.

Clockwork Swarm

- Created by the Wizards of the Floating Island, courtesy of the "First Master's" teachings. Built to drive vermin out of homes and buildings, but they frequently went awry, and most of these "collections" of devices were destroyed because they were too dangerous.

Ebony Rhino

- This is the artifact that a certain Goblin family recently traded to Lord Eron in exchange for a trial to go "their way." They unearthed it from deep within the Koskun Mountains, have no idea what it is or how it works, but decided it would be better to trade it to Eron as it looks damn impressive.

Joven's Tools

- For the most part, it is a utility belt of rope, picks and other thieves tools, but all extremely high quality, and some are of a magical origin. It is mostly made up of things Joven has acquired along his travels in the Homelands.

Roterohopter

- Created by the Wizards of the Floating Island, courtesy of the "First Master's" teachings. Meant for a variety of uses, including assault in certain cases - the edges of the rotors are very sharp.

Sawtooth Arrows

- Developed by Feroz for use in emergencies, these bolts cause such grievous wounds that healing is very difficult, even by magical means.