
THE HISTORY

In the year 414 of the Second Age, the archmage Lelisef II-Nealisurial opened a Gate to the prison-realm of the dark being Kalma, releasing him from uncounted ages of imprisonment to wash over the continent of Ilia with his armies of the dead. Kalma called into the darkness, and from it emerged his eight vile generals.

The old kingdoms of the living were snuffed out like candles in a wind, but for a few bastions of light. From these strongholds climbed great heroes, figures of power and hope. They rallied the forces of the living and fought against the unending dead. As the years of battle and darkness found no end, many lost hope and turned from the light of the heroes. It came to be that Kalma knew not only undead as his tools, but a violent corruptive force as well. He bent many to his will, twisting them into vile demons or macabre worshipers. These servants of Kalma took the Charred King as their master, once a great leader of men.

The war drove the engine of invention, and technology developed at a startling pace: magical crystals discovered in massive veins below the continent were used to power new machines, enhanced weapons and armors, and artificial bodies. The technology grew into the conglomerate AreTech. Shipments of weaponry and food were shipped to the few remaining cities, and the war transformed. Swordsmen fell to gunshots, airships rained fire from above, and industry consumed the cities of the living.

Even with the continuing advancements, the armies of Kalma continued to emerge from the Gate. Mountains spewed fire and ash, and the defenders were slaughtered and raised again to fight against those who they once protected. Technological developments began to merge with forgotten magics, and the defenders became more and more desperate. The crystals weren't enough, so scientists found another source of power: souls. In the words of the scientists of AreTech,

"Now the sick and wounded, the mothers and children...they can fight too."

Innocents were shuffled into the rank, dark brass chambers of city-sized super cannons, their very souls used to power the horrible blasts. From the labs came a chemical weapon to battle the dead: M-class Moross. The black liquid-gas reacted with the calcium of bones, turning them to sludge. Hosts of dead and many of the living fell to the gas as it was dropped from airships. Bystanders unable to evacuate felt first their hair burn, then their finger nails and toe nails sloughed off. When they breathed the chemical in, it quickly reached their bloodstream and their bones. M-class Moross melted them from the inside. Those soldiers that died on the battlefield never knew salvation, for their souls were pulled into mechanical bodies and forced to fight again. The atrocities of the war were forgotten—the leaders of the living turning a blind eye to the innocent dead.

As the last city of the living fell in 428, the heroes of the battle fought till their last breath. Such power was released that the continent was sundered, shattered like a glass plate. Much of the undead that came from the gate were destroyed, Kalma and his eight generals were destroyed or subdued, and the Gate was finally closed.

It was found that when the necromantic masters of the dead were they themselves destroyed, some of their undead servants blinked away the corruption of Kalma. These undead learned to live alongside survivors, both living and machine. The few that still stood were led into exile for years, until the time came that they returned to the ash-covered land they lost. Some split off from the others and formed kingdoms, echoes of a time passed. Some moved forward, scavenging the technologies left by the defenders of the war. In the centuries to follow, the splinter nations all fell to the winds of history.

Organized by forgotten hero, many of the people came together. The fires of industry were relit in the ruins of the Grey City and Arear, and a new city was founded midst the mountain valleys: Ordeto. The cities were grown and nurtured by their leader, but in time a new regime rose: a government that promised absolute unity and protection. It was called simply the State. The State developed and grew under a modern system, one of departments and offices and bureaus. It was new, and that's what the people wanted. Before long, the State ruled the Grey City, Arear, and Ordeto entirely. This is the state of things. The war is not over, though. The Charred King and his demons still linger in the north, and the dead still lurk through the countryside.