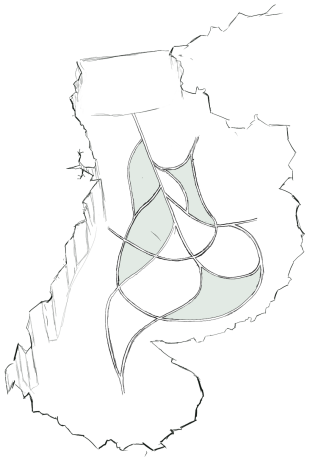


You
You are unwelcome. Condescended to by unorganized unprepared outsiders. Pariahs of your homeland for an unseemly desire for clarity and independence. You've allowed the newcomers to call you alchemists, but tannia is the word you call yourself, a name, given to you long ago by tanniaxs, the great mother, a name, not permitted to roll over unforked tongues. You are small and none with any sense would call you weak. Standing in a sheildwall, brothers and sisters locked together, you proudly wear draconic nobility on painted scales.

Orders
"As you know Aelon's subordinates negotiated a peace deal with signifier Senak, returning what we know as an experimental germ variant, stolen by their former general", *pausing for effect, your boss spits, holding to tasting the air with something like disdain*
"raynault" you say, stressing the T, interrupting before he is thoroughly done with his theatrics
"We mustn't be confident in this deal, all we need do is learn. . . You are to join the humans as an emissary to xylaan"

"learn what they know"
"restrict what they know of us"
"keep them alive as best you can."

Cultural Values and Concepts

Goals
Keep the forest from spreading
Maintain and Rehabilitate xylaani species
Survive

The Ever Present Enemy: Having freed themselves from a mind controlling god who ordered their extermination their commitment to oppose that god is a grudge that might as well be a religion itself. They have charged themselves with an unknown worlds protection from this being and they will stop at nothing to see it contained. The treeline, ever visible from the mouth of their cave, represents a seductive evil, and has worked its way into much of their art and writing. Their oral histories guide them to hate this forest and simultaneously miss an exquisite connection to the natural world that they have been unable to replicate outside of its borders.

Biology: Though biology is not an appropriate term for how tannian culture sees the study of the natural world, these people hold science in high regard seeing the pursuit of conservation and immersion in nature as morally righteous, this comes through in not just scientific practice but in their architecture, civic life, politics, and art. This makes their inability to rehabilitate a number of species they helped to create even more painful, after two centuries of failures all they have managed to populate the deadlands with is a wispy grass that sprouts in feeble patches over the ground.

Strategy and Tactics: The kobolds, compensating for limited strength and size and ever preparing for an apocalyptic battle with their former god, keep a formidably coordinated approach to combat. Working in remarkably flexible and dynamic shield formations, and with platted drangolin mounts capable of digging under most defensive infrastructure, tannians are incredibly difficult to defend against. Tinkerers and biologists at heart they are also very adept at laying devilish traps. Few things are as unwise as charging a kobold shield wall on a battlefield they have chosen.

Alchemist PC Handout

Mechanical Class and Social Architypes

Druids, Paladins, Fighters, and Rangers are by far the most likely of an archetype for making a PC in this society. This would be followed by Wizards, Artificers, and Bards which are prevalent. Rogues, Monks, and Sorcerers would follow as plausible but requiring a more complex explanation of what motivated them to fit this archetype. Finally Barbarians, Clerics, and Warlocks are highly uncommon and would represent a form of social deviance working in opposition to the dominant cultural norms and values.

The following are of course suggestions and represent the most common instance of where these archetypes fit into society
Druids, Wizards, Artificers, Sorcerers, Rangers: often performing some sort of science roll, or providing key community resources like food, construction, maintenance of the network etc.

Druids, Bards, occasionally Paladins: Keepers of oral history, designers, artists, healers, leaders and politicians

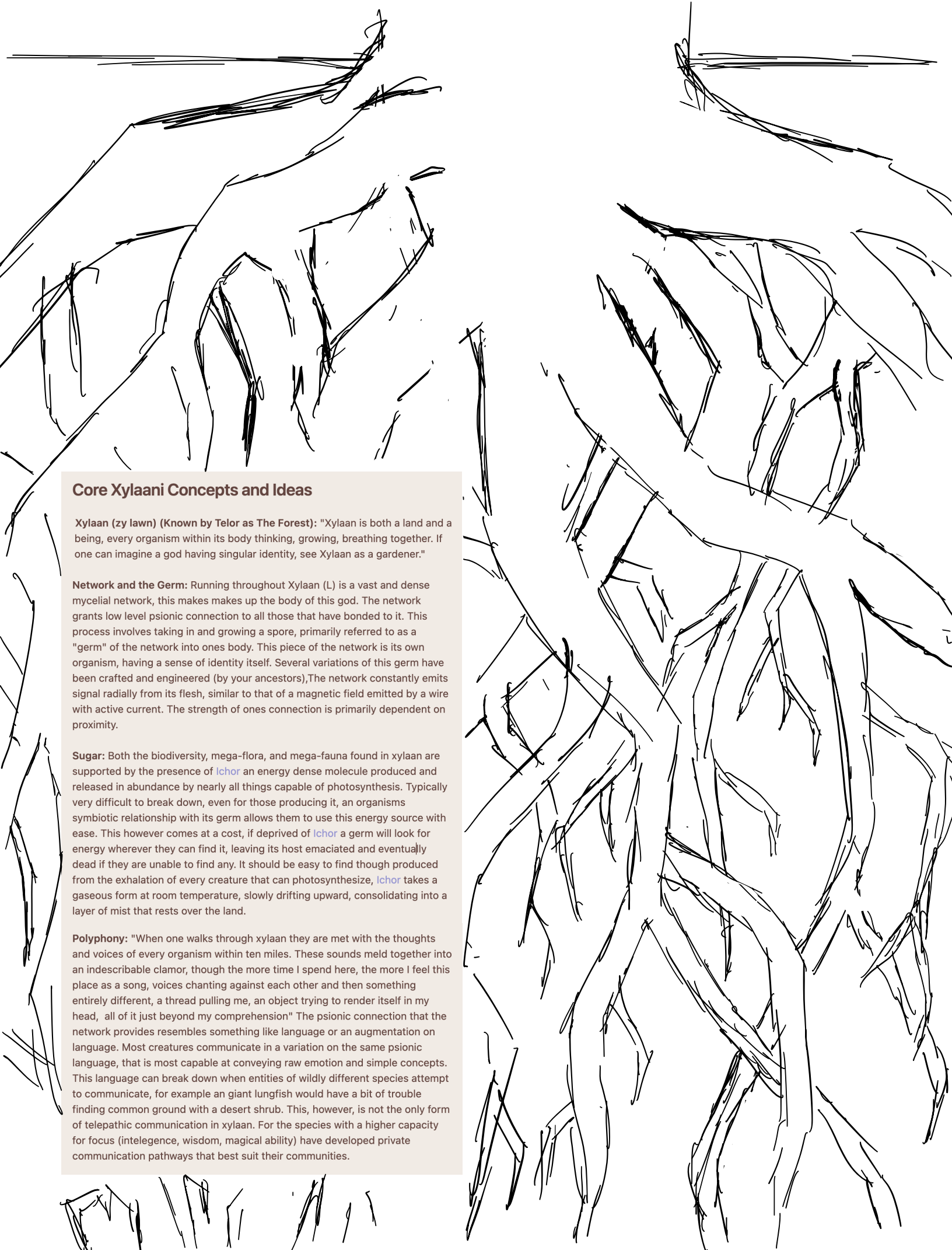
Paladins, Fighters, Rouges, Artificers again: Almost always immersed in the structure of the tannian military, paladins don't receive divine power perse but rather gain power through cultural commitment to containing xylaan

Barbarians, Clerics, Warlocks: If you want to play this please think of why you have chosen this path, and who chose you to accompany the party, why?

3rd party classes and Edgecasses: If you have an idea for your character that you are excited about I would love to talk! Let me know what you're thinking and generally speaking we can usually work something out. However I reserve the right to say no if it is incongruous with the setting.

For thinking about team composition other party members are currently playing the following class

Pearl (sorcerer with healing)
Tal (Sorcerer)
Poe (Beastmaster)
Billiard (Barbarian)



Core Xylaani Concepts and Ideas

Xylaan (zy lawn) (Known by Telor as The Forest): "Xylaan is both a land and a being, every organism within its body thinking, growing, breathing together. If one can imagine a god having singular identity, see Xylaan as a gardener."

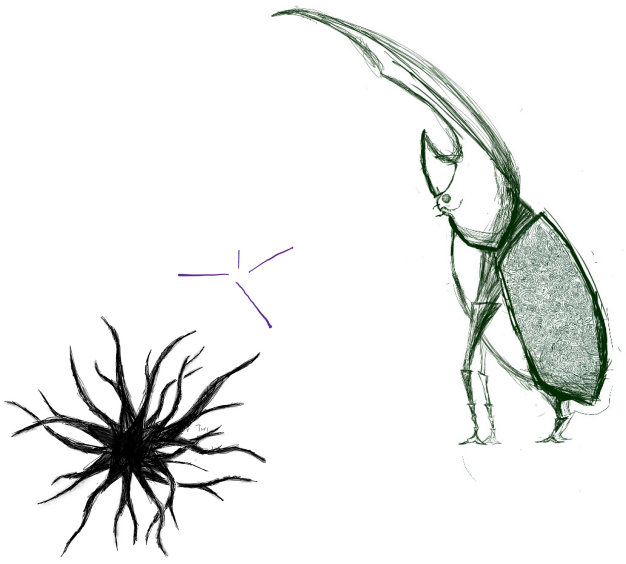
Network and the Germ: Running throughout Xylaan (L) is a vast and dense mycelial network, this makes makes up the body of this god. The network grants low level psionic connection to all those that have bonded to it. This process involves taking in and growing a spore, primarily referred to as a "germ" of the network into ones body. This piece of the network is its own organism, having a sense of identity itself. Several variations of this germ have been crafted and engineered (by your ancestors),The network constantly emits signal radially from its flesh, similar to that of a magnetic field emitted by a wire with active current. The strength of ones connection is primarily dependent on proximity.

Sugar: Both the biodiversity, mega-flora, and mega-fauna found in xylaan are supported by the presence of Ichor an energy dense molecule produced and released in abundance by nearly all things capable of photosynthesis. Typically very difficult to break down, even for those producing it, an organisms symbiotic relationship with its germ allows them to use this energy source with ease. This however comes at a cost, if deprived of Ichor a germ will look for energy wherever they can find it, leaving its host emaciated and eventually dead if they are unable to find any. It should be easy to find though produced from the exhalation of every creature that can photosynthesize, Ichor takes a gaseous form at room temperature, slowly drifting upward, consolidating into a layer of mist that rests over the land.

Polyphony: "When one walks through xylaan they are met with the thoughts and voices of every organism within ten miles. These sounds meld together into an indescribable clamor, though the more time I spend here, the more I feel this place as a song, voices chanting against each other and then something entirely different, a thread pulling me, an object trying to render itself in my head, all of it just beyond my comprehension" The psionic connection that the network provides resembles something like language or an augmentation on language. Most creatures communicate in a variation on the same psionic language, that is most capable at conveying raw emotion and simple concepts. This language can break down when entities of wildly different species attempt to communicate, for example an giant lungfish would have a bit of trouble finding common ground with a desert shrub. This, however, is not the only form of telepathic communication in xylaan. For the species with a higher capacity for focus (intelegence, wisdom, magical ability) have developed private communication pathways that best suit their communities.

An Abridged and Unnuanced History

Tannians were here before anyone else in this land. you, along with the Seers, the Arcadian Court, the Goblin Court and later the Seraphs built Xylaan,"the forest", together, a community and ecosystem absolutely brimming with life. But, as centuries passed and the entity that connects the whole of xylaan slowly and steadily grew, the forest became something with increasing presence and sentience. Tannians were at the forefront of this growth, with the seers tending the network, the arcadians ruling, and the goblins building, the kobold's worked in concert with xylaan to study this beautiful land, your culture cared for and even created what we understand now as xylaan's ecosystem and biology. Because of this your people were the first to let out a warning of xylaan's burdening godhood, ultimately unsuccessful at halting its growth the network became some like a hive mind, overtaking anything connected to it, strong enough now to override your decent, lulling you and everything else into complacency. That is until you developed a new technology, your people created something able to cut anyone off from the network, severing them completely. This naturally called for genocide, and in an event known as the disconnect, your people fled. You are the decedent's of those that made it out alive, a people who cut out space for themselves as far from xylaan's heart as they could, from that moment they wholly and utterly devoted themselves to containing this forest.



Bonus Cultural Values and Concepts

The Secondary Network: Kobolds have developed a contained and limited variant of xylaan's mycelial network bellow ground, It has been around for about 50 years and is still a contentious issue, some believe it's existence is antithetical to the goal of keeping the forest from spreading, some believe it's the only tool that will allow them to help the people of xylaan, some feel a deep longing for the connection and meaning that xylaan was able to provide in the best of times. These contradictions define them as a people.

Nationalism: These people are deeply committed to their heritage and their peoples collective work, they may disagree on how best to achieve their cultural goals but they are inextricably bound by pride in both their ethnic and national identity.

Split: some time after settling in the Talons, the mountain range sitting between xylaan and the rest of the continent, tannians decided to send a group north through the tallons to create a settlement on the eastern coast. In doing this they hopped to both ensure the survival of their culture in the event that xylaan moved to destroy their new home, and to flank xylaan creating a force of tannian seafarers, capable of sealing xylaan in on the ocean. The two groups are aligned in their goals but in the century since the northeastern settlements founding, contact has been minimal. The seafaring kobolds see betrayal in the southern kobolds acceptance of a secondary network.

Xylaani Peoples:

Goblin Court: An offshoot from the feywild's goblin court, settled in chapparal region, the goblin court has a long history as xylaan's cunning crafters, creating a great deal of its built infrastructure. On one hand these are fickle, violent, and spiteful creatures with a pension for authoritarian power have started hundreds of huge projects leaving nearly all of them unfinished and canibalised for other works, on the other, they are responsible for incredible feats of design and have built entire systems for how xylaan processes its transportation, waste, network pathways, etc. They played a significant roll in the disconnect, massacring a hoard of tannia newly cut off from a beautiful world they had helped build, scared, angry, disadvantaged. Your people, decedents of the few they were unable to kill, see them with contempt, pity, and self righteous hope that they will one day free themselves of xylaans chains

Seers: These creatures are highly tuned to psionic power and have remarkable capacity for focus. Living appendages to the network they are worshiped by some as emissaries of xylaan and feared by others for unearthly ability to weird define power through the network. A seers life cycle operates in three phases, a sapling like fetus sprouting from the network, a four legged ambulatory creature whose shape is often determined by subspecies, and a tree that plants itself at the will of xylaan.

Arcadian Court: A court of archfey, settled in the Arcadian sea, these fey take the physical form of insects, flys, and other critters and hold the seat of power in xylann, storing and distributing its wealth of its ichor.

Seraphs: A form of filter feeding sentient lichen, these creatures originate in a mist like layer of gaseous sugar that hovers above the forest. They are standoffish and prefer to make their home in large treetop settlements and ports. Adept scientists and beyond skilled with arcane magic and these creatures develop advanced technology in their cloud cites.

Xylaani Geography and Regions

In terms of the earths surface, Xylaan can be split into a couple regions, the deadlands, chaparral, alpine, deciduous forest / substrate, the Arcadian sea, and the rainforest. Xylaan, however is differentiated vertically as much as it is horizontally, beneath the earth and water the mycelium ebbs and flows in strength, lending strength to people and areas that it relies on for its function as an organism. Above there is a thick cloud of mist, swirling lethargically with the wind, colloquially known as the "sugar layer". This layer is home to an unimaginable amount of biodiversity, supporting billions of microbes and creatures able to drift through it including a consistent presence of the germ.

Deadlands: A somewhat pessimistic term coined by tannian's frustrated with a lack of progress at repopulating this biome. You and yours have managed to get a wispy grass to take root here but a commitment to waning your biology off of Ichor has left you with wildly fertile soil, but no species capable of processing its nutrients. For the two centuries you have been here you have dug a vast network of tunnels bellow ground, in which you have hid the machines keeping the xylaan at bay. Anti-psionic fields project from the earth and cancel out any growth xylaan would try to muster.

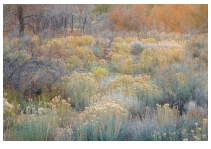
Chaparral: The chaparral region is defined by a dry climate and distance from xylaan's heart, a valley between the foothills of xylaan's Northern mountain range and the tallons, this region receives a proportionally small amount of connection to the network or the sugar layer.

Alpine: The alpine defined as a region by its elevation more than is physical space, it is highlighted by a crust of colorful lichen making rings around everything at this elevation, organisms pack into the stony crags, soaking in the sugar layer, calcifying on the mountains surface, and giving way to its descendants building even further out, for moss to find purchase in its nooks and crannys, for critters to build nests in, for small birds to hunt said critters, and so on and so on

Decisuous/Substrate: Your former home, shared with the Entangled also known as Seers, this place has heavy presence of large fungi, underneath a large deciduous forest, essentially creating a crown cover underneath an already existing one made by the trees. The network is at its most dense here

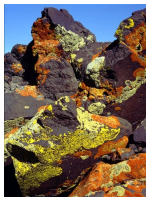
Arcadian sea: the Arcadian sea is an enormous lake nestled against a finger of the tallons that curves around xylaan's southern edge. Home to the arcadian court it holds the wealth of xylaan

Rain forest and Abyssal dark: closer to the planet's equator this place is humid and below the crown cover, dark. Even for your people, thrilled by the prospect of cool dark spaces fear this place! little is known about this region

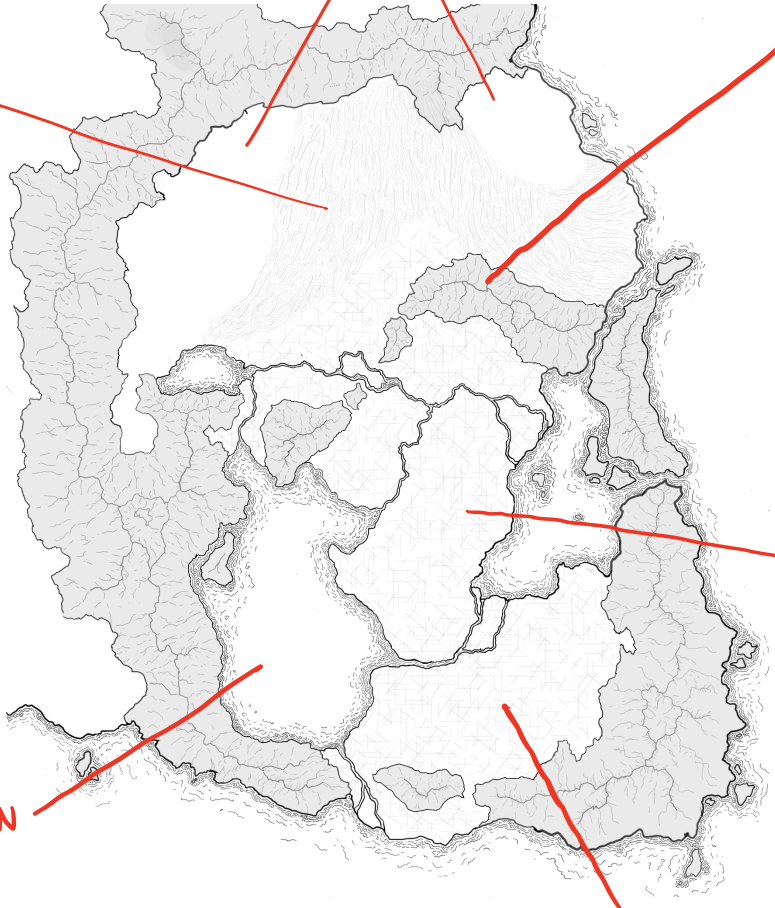


Deadlands

Alpine

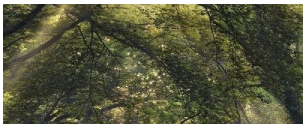


Chaparral



Deciduous & Substrate

Arcadian Sea



Rainforest and Abysal Dark