



ENsider Presents:

# The ZETGEIST Adventure Path Player's Guide Part 1

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**OUR HUMBLE AND SPECIAL THANKS TO** to the hundreds of gamers who backed the original release of Zeitgeist on Kickstarter, and to the over one thousand generous patrons of EN World ENsider whose support has made this Fifth Edition update possible.

# Introduction

**S**team and soot darken the skies above the city of Flint, and winds sweeping across its majestic harbor blow the choking products of industrial forges into the fey rainforests that dot its knife-toothed mountains. Since the earliest ages when the people of Risur founded this city, they feared the capricious beings that hid in those fog-shrouded peaks, but now, as the march of progress and the demands of national defense turn Flint into a garden for artifice and technology, the old faiths and rituals that kept the lurkers of the woods at bay are being abandoned.

The Unseen Court, the Great Hunt, and the many spirits of the land long ago conquered by Risur's kings no longer receive tribute, but they cannot enter these new cities of steam and steel to demand their tithes. The impoverished workers who huddle in factory slums fear monsters of a different breed, shadowy children of this new urban labyrinth. Even their modern religions have no defenses against these fiends.

Times are turning. The skyseers – Risur's folk prophets since their homeland's birth – witness omens in the starry wheels of heaven, and they warn that a new age is nigh. But what they cannot foresee, hidden beyond the steam and soot of the night sky, is the face of this coming era, the spirit of the next age. The *zeitgeist*.

## Zeitgeist Adventure Path.

Game Masters, you can use this setting guide as a jumping off point for your own steam & steel fantasy campaign, but we invite you to check out the free ZEITGEIST: The Gears of Revolution Campaign Guide, available separately. The Campaign Guide is effectively system-neutral, and can be used as-is with your Fifth Edition game.

The original thirteen ZEITGEIST adventures will be serialized through EN5IDER over the coming months, after the full EN5IDER release of this Player's Guide. Additionally, at DriveThruRPG you can order Premium Handouts and decks of cards with NPC portraits and other useful info to share with your players, as well as the PATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME and Fourth Edition versions of the adventures, if you want to read ahead.

## Contents

This Player's Guide, presented in six parts, contains materials for both players and the Game Master. The ZEITGEIST Campaign Guide has details of all the adventures and should only be read by the GM. This document includes a brief primer on the world of ZEITGEIST in addition to Part One of the Player's Guide.

**Part One: Characters** (this document) offers new backgrounds and equipment for PCs and guidelines for handling the campaign's industrial age technology with Fifth Edition rules.

**Part Two: Equipment and Prestige** gives the PCs industrial age options to handle the challenges they will face in this campaign.

**Part Three: Royal Homeland Constabulary** provides an overview of the local offices of the Royal Homeland Constabulary, to which the PCs all belong. It also presents guidelines for common investigative tasks, useful for both GMs and players.

**Part Four: Setting** describes the nations and history of the ZEITGEIST adventure path. You can read only the parts of this section that relate to your character, or you can skip over it entirely. This section will be released through EN5IDER in two installments.

**Part Five: Flint** explores the campaign's focal city in detail. All players should have at least a passing familiarity with the city before starting Adventure Two.

**Part Six: Prestige Classes** unveils unique specializations for PCs as they discover who they are in the world of ZEITGEIST.

## Pronunciation Guide.

- ♦ **Risur.** REES-ser (rhymes with “fleecer”). A native is a Risuri (rhymes with “Missouri”).
- ♦ **Crisillyir.** kris-SILL-lee-ur (rhymes with “the sillier”). A native is a Crisillyiri (rhymes with “this ill eerie”).
- ♦ **Danor.** DAN-nor (rhymes with “fan oar”). A native is a Danoran (rhymes with “can foreign”).
- ♦ **Drakr.** DRAHK-kur (rhymes with “locker”). A native is a Drakran.
- ♦ **Elfaivar.** el-FIE-vahr (rhymes with “bell five bar”). A native is an Elfaivaran.
- ♦ **Lanjyr.** LAN-jeer (rhymes with “fan jeer”).
- ♦ **Yerasol.** YAIR-uh-sahl (rhymes with “aerosol”).
- ♦ **Aodhan.** Traditionally, AID-un, like the name Aidan. Foreigners mispronounce it OWD-hahn (rhymes with “loud Ron”).
- ♦ **Srasama.** srah-SAH-muh (rhymes with “the llama”).

**Open Game Content** | The game rule information in this article is designated Open Game Content. All other material in this article, including maps and illustrations (including public domain illustrations), narrative and descriptive text, character and place names, trade dress, “EN Publishing,” “EN World,” “EN5IDER,” “ZEITGEIST,” all EN Publishing product and article titles, and EN World and EN Publishing logos, are designated Product Identity.



# Campaign Primer

## **A Step Away from Classic Fantasy.**

In the ZEITGEIST adventure path, your characters serve in the Royal Homeland Constabulary of the nation of Risur, protecting the country and its citizens from foreign threats lurking within its borders. During missions of investigation, espionage, and assassination, your duty will be to root out hostile spies and pursue international conspiracies. As you learn more of your homeland's own secrets, however, your loyalties may be tested, may even be turned, and you may find that it is you whose hand controls the gears of the turning age.

It is not necessary to read all parts of the Player's Guide in order to play. Anything that matters to your game will be introduced in the course of the adventures. We do suggest all players give pages 3 and 4 a quick read to get the gist of the setting. Then players who want to sink their teeth into the world can read the full guide to see how ZEITGEIST stands apart from the assumed world of traditional fantasy roleplaying games.

## ***Humans and the Great Nations.***

Humans rule three of the five great nations of the continent Lanjyr. Their ascendancy in the past two thousand years toppled a mighty eladrin empire and has provoked belief in doomsday prophecy and fatalism among many dwarves. The campaign begins in Risur, and every PC should have a strong loyalty to the nation, even if the character does not hail from there.

While Risur is predominately human, halflings are not unknown, and the nation's traditional druidic religion makes it a welcome home of elves and gnomes.

## ***Eladrin, Devas, and the Great Malice.***

Long ago a civilization of elves known as the eladrin built an empire of magical wonders. Then five hundred years ago the death of the eladrin goddess Srasama caused nearly every eladrin woman to perish. Those few who survived were often claimed as trophies by human conquerors, though a handful of free matriarchs head their own family lines in the ruins of the old empire. Those interested in the eladrin should read the section on Elfaivar.

Mortals present at the death of the eladrin goddess have continually reincarnated in the following centuries as devas, as if a sliver of Srasama's divine spark has granted them a semblance of immortality. Those interested in devas should read the section on Crisillyr.

## ***Tieflings and Dead Magic.***

When the eladrin goddess died, Danor became a dead magic zone, and some in that land were marked by a curse, turning them into tieflings. In the centuries since, however, the tieflings have come to rule that nation, and in the last few decades they have begun a revolution of industry and mighty science almost as powerful as the magic they lack. Those interested in tieflings should read the section on Danor.

## ***Technology.***

If you're interested in having your character use some of the new revolution's technology, particularly firearms and explosives, you should read the section on Equipment.

## ***Dwarves, Doomsday, and Nihilism.***

The major dwarven nation is bleakly resigned to an imminent doomsday, when ancient horrors will claw free from glaciers and engulf the world in a frigid death. Adherence to duty is so ingrained in their culture, however, that the dwarves continue to toil in their forges even as they prepare for the world's end. Those interested in dwarves should read the section on Drakr.

## ***Savages, Primitives, and Peace.***

Freed from the yoke of toppled dragon tyrants, the youngest of the great nations formed from an alliance of several monstrous races which now live in an uneasy peace as their rulers seek to force the disparate peoples into the modern age. Those interested in dragonborn, gnolls, goblins, kobolds, minotaurs, and orcs should read the section on Ber.

## ***Piety and the Planes.***

The heavens possess an undeniable hold on the world's religions, its people, and its very structure. In Risur, skyseers believe that the movements of the night stars foretell the future and direct the fate of the world. More enlightened scholars study distant planes of elemental and temporal power to understand how the flow of their energies affects the fundamental nature of reality. The eladrin people have begun to withdraw into the Dreaming (a shining reflection of this world, inhabited by fey), and to frighten sinners the bishops of the high church of the Clergy invoke condemned spirits from the Bleak Gate (a dark mirror of the real world, where dead linger before they find their eternal reward).

Other planes exist only as postulations, and there are countless theories on the nature of reality. No one in this world has ever traveled to the Astral Plane or Nine Hells, and even travel between the known worlds of the night sky is brief, with summoned beings never remaining more than a few minutes.

Those interested in the setting's metaphysics should read the section on The World.

## ***Heroic Themes and Deeds.***

The ZEITGEIST campaign setting presents nine character themes that reinforce the heroic archetypes of the world, such as eschatologists, gunsmiths, and technologists. Each player should choose one of these themes, which grant a bonus feat and suggest ways to hook the character into the setting.

Moreover, because constables of the RHC are only chosen from among those with talent and experience, player characters start the ZEITGEIST campaign at 3rd level.



## Exceedingly Brief Timeline.

- ✦ **-1200 B.O.V. (Before Our Victory):** King Kelland defeats the fey titans and founds Risur, the first mortal nation on the continent of Lanjyr. In the following centuries, other nations rise up throughout Lanjyr.
- ✦ **-1117 B.O.V.:** The democracy arises, its monstrous rulers enslaving the primitive nations of the north. Risur keeps it from expanding south, and Elfaivar blocks its eastward growth.
- ✦ **-500 B.O.V.:** Triegenes the fisherman founds the Clergy in what is modern-day Danor, overthrows the democracy, then dies and ascends to godhood.
- ✦ **-50 B.O.V.:** The First Victory, a holy war between humans and eladrin, ends with the eladrin losing much territory.
- ✦ **1 A.O.V. (After Our Victory):** The Second Victory begins as an eladrin effort to reclaim lost lands, but ends in their decisive defeat when the eladrin goddess Srasama manifests physically, and is slain. Danor collapses into chaos as the nation becomes a dead magic zone. The seat of the Clergy moves to Crisillyir, which begins to colonize the devastated lands of Elfaivar. Dwarves seize control of their own nation in Drakr.
- ✦ **300 A.O.V.:** King Boyle of Risur slays the last dragon tyrant of Ber. The nation of Danor, resurgent with industry and technology, begins to contest Risur for control of the lush Yerasol Archipelago.
- ✦ **460 A.O.V.:** King Aodhan is crowned in Risur. He encourages his people to pursue industry so they can fight back against Danor. Meanwhile in Ber, Bruse Le Roye unites tribes of monstrous races into a new nation.
- ✦ **493 A.O.V.:** The Fourth Yerasol War ends, with Risur having lost many islands.
- ✦ **500 A.O.V.:** Present day.



# Characters

## Setting Considerations

### Races.

By default, the full gamut of character creation options is available in the ZEITGEIST setting, though some choices might mark your character as exceedingly rare, even unique – like sentient golems, half-elementals, or mantis-men. Note that the nature of the world makes creatures from other planes effectively unknown; in addition, there's no drow race or underworld on the continent of Lanjyr ... but perhaps a dark-skinned race of elves lurks in the mountains of the Bleak Gate.

### Classes.

Every class has a place in the world, though the RHC is unlikely to admit a savage barbarian who hasn't at least learned Risuri manners. Due to its druidic traditions, clerics from Risur tend to have the Nature domain, paladins favor the Oath of the Ancients, and warlocks favor Archfey patrons. However, as long as a person is loyal to Risur, they can be a constable regardless of nation of origin.

**W**e assume as a baseline that your characters in the ZEITGEIST adventure path will work for the Royal Homeland Constabulary, a Risuri organization created by King Aodhan to monitor threats to his nation, both home-grown and from foreign lands.

Every constable must have passed a background check and magical inquisition to prove his or her loyalty to Risur. These precautions allow even foreign-born citizens to serve, giving the constabulary a valuable tool in pursuing investigations overseas. Groups of constables are often assigned to pool their talents to accomplish dangerous and complex tasks, such as rescue missions, surveillance to catch smugglers and traitors, and even espionage or assassination.

In the default version of the adventure path, every PC should have a strong devotion to Risur, though PCs can certainly have other affiliations and allegiances that may eventually draw them away. Additionally, over the course of the campaign the PCs will encounter other power groups with their own motivations. One of the themes of the campaign is deciding what one believes in and why, so feel free to nudge your fellow PCs toward one faction or another as the campaign progresses. Remember, though, that games can quickly turn unfun without party unity.

Of course, if your GM chooses, you may begin the campaign affiliated with a different organization, or perhaps as free agents hired by the RHC, much the same way Scotland Yard sought help from Sherlock Holmes.

If you're playing the ZEITGEIST adventure path, your character starts the first adventure at 3rd level.



### Religion.

Gods do not make themselves regularly known in this world, and it is impossible to visit the planes where they reside, so it's even possible to doubt whether they exist at all. Indeed, some strong-willed people have drawn divine power from the shared will of others who share their same philosophy. A few deities played a prominent role in history – like the dead eladrin goddess Srasama and the fisherman-turned-god Triegenes – but otherwise you and your GM are free to decide which gods your characters worship, if any.

### Magic.

Only two types of magic are wholly off-limits: long-duration flight, and long-duration planar travel.

The nature of the elemental planes that feed energy into the world makes it impossible for magic to create permanent flight. Powers that grant flight for never last more than five minutes, though flight with wings is fine, as long as the creature is Medium sized or smaller. There are no flying carpets or airships. Since the reported extinction of dragons, flying creatures do not grow any larger than an eagle or condor.

Likewise, despite theories that suggest it should be possible to travel to distant planets via mighty rituals, all attempts to visit any foreign world never last longer than a few rounds before the traveler is shunted back to this plane. It is possible to wander into the Dreaming or the Bleak Gate and return, but even these trips are usually only possible when the moon and stars align properly, and getting back can be even more difficult than going in the first place.

Mechanically, this means that no creature can ever leave its home plane for more than five minutes, barring unique circumstances that are beyond the control of player characters. Such options may become available to PCs later in the campaign, but traveling to another world in ZEITGEIST is never as simple as casting a single spell.

### Technology.

While the city of Flint sits under a haze of coal soot, its streets illuminated at night by gaslight lanterns and its ferries powered by steam boilers, the majority of Risur remains at roughly a Renaissance level of technology. Soldiers carry alchemical pistols as back-up weapons, and elite fusilier units carry muskets and carbines, but aside from the occasional new rail line splitting the countryside, most citizens of Risur never see any of the new technology that is changing the world around them.

To be clear, though, there are no automobiles, electric lights, or flying vehicles. Most firearms still are muzzle-loaders, and rifles and revolvers only exist as custom creations of innovative gunsmiths.



## Gold and Teleportation.

In ZEITGEIST, in addition to its value as a precious metal for jewelry and currency, gold can be fashioned into a barrier against teleportation. While characters can teleport freely while carrying gold, but they cannot teleport through an opening framed in gold. Certain buildings thus often have thin strips of gold inlaid around doors and windows; typically, this gold is concealed by additional masonry or some other artistry. Prison cells meant to hold eladrin and others thought to be capable of teleportation are often surrounded by rings of gold.

Similarly, a creature wearing a gold ring — or bracelet, or even a thin thread of gold wire — cannot teleport or be teleported, so those wary of abduction might wear hidden gold toe rings to stymie would-be kidnappers. Simply carrying or wearing gold is not a problem unless it forms a full loop. Even with full circles of gold, the protection can be bypassed by simply removing part of the ring. This, combined with the temptation for thieves, keeps gold warding circles from being in common use.

## Setting-Specific Races.

### Deva

Devas were those people — mostly human — who were present at the defeat of the goddess Srasama. The divine energy released by her death granted them a sliver of immortality, and now whenever they die they reincarnate into a fully-grown adult form, reappearing within a few days somewhere generally three miles from where they died.

A reincarnated deva has vague recollections of her previous life, and often will easily connect with the people and places of her former life if given the chance. But she might just as easily find herself adopting a new life and training in new skills. Even then, though, sometimes she will have flashes of one of her former lives.

Physically, devas resemble their original race, but with unearthly beauty and an uncanny stillness. Their skin is covered in geometric patterns of light and dark. Some of noteworthy power will occasionally manifest insubstantial and wholly decorative wings or extra pairs of arms, though they can conceal these with practice and concentration.

It is rumored that some deva sages have discovered the secret of maintaining their memories and personality upon reincarnation, but that they hide the knowledge since few are worthy of such immortality. Magic to raise the dead is rare, but if used on a deva within a few days of her death it can restore her and prevent reincarnation.

Devas gain the following traits.

**Ability Score Increase:** Your Wisdom score increases by 2. Additionally, devas are insightful, and when they reincarnate they usually discover some new knack. You gain a +1 bonus to your choice of Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, or Charisma.

**Age:** Devas do not appear to age, and you always reincarnate at the same apparent age.

**Size:** Devas are the same size as in life. Your size is Medium.

**Normal Speed:** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Deathless Calm:** You gain resistance to necrotic and radiant damage, and cannot be blinded by bright light.

**Memory of Past Lifetimes:** You gain proficiency in one skill of your choice. Once per day, you can roll 1d4 and add it to any one ability check, skill check, or saving throw you make. If you do this for a skill you are not proficient with, you gain proficiency for the next minute.

**Languages:** You know Common and Primordial, plus one extra language of your choice.

### Eladrin

The eladrin race branched off from common elves in the ancient past, developing an empire that straddled the real world and the Dreaming. For over a thousand years they had their own rises, falls, and petty squabbles while generally not interacting with the human nations of Lanjyr. Then came the holy wars known as the Victories, which ended with the death of Srasama, the eladrin goddess who represented the three stages of womanhood. Nearly every eladrin woman died in an event known as the Great Malice, which shaped the course of history ever since.

Today most eladrin live in enclaves in the ruins of Elfaivar, hidden in demiplanes that can only be accessed by those with their innate fey magic. These enclaves protect the precious few women left in their race, who are vastly outnumbered by the men even now, since eladrin live for centuries. But a few eladrin wander the world, either outcasts or adventurers who aren't interested in dwelling on the tragedies of the past.

Physically similar to normal elves, eladrin's fey origin becomes clear whenever they use magic, which causes their entire eyes to glow faintly with the color of their irises. Every eladrin possesses the inherent power to step briefly into the Dreaming, allowing them to bypass enemies and difficult terrain before reappearing in the real world. As such, almost every town guard in the world carries a gold ring in case he needs to apprehend an eladrin and keep him from teleporting away.

Eladrin are a subrace of elves, and have the following traits in addition to normal elven traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

**Eladrin Lore.** You gain proficiency in the History skill.

**Step through the Dreaming.** You can cast *misty step*. Doing so is colloquially called a "fey step." You can't use this feature again until you finish a short or long rest.



## Character Themes

Choose one of the nine themes below to provide a quick hook to link your character to the ZEITGEIST campaign setting. Your theme is in addition to your race, class, and background. It grants you a bonus feat. If later on you want to pursue a different theme, you can take the appropriate feat.

- ◆ **Docker.** Bohemian working-class artist or performer.
- ◆ **Eschatologist.** Philosopher devoted to the proper endings of things.
- ◆ **Gunsmith.** Designer and wielder of custom firearms.
- ◆ **Martial Scientist.** Educated and analytical warrior.
- ◆ **Skyseer.** Folk prophet who see the future in the stars.
- ◆ **Spirit Medium.** One who contacts and controls spirits of the dead.
- ◆ **Technologist.** Designer of contraptions and devices.
- ◆ **Vekeshi Mystic.** Devotee of the philosophy of slow, proper vengeance against those who oppress the weak.
- ◆ **Yerasol Veteran.** Highly regarded naval war hero.

### Docker

Flint's industrial docks – with their unusual conflux of peasant workers, educated engineers, and constantly-arriving refugees from the wars in the border states between Danor and Drakr – have in the past decade given birth to an unorthodox social movement. Graffiti artists brighten soot-cloaked warehouses with colorful murals and boastful self-portraits. Dancers and musicians bolster moods in breezy bars, while amateur philosophers giddy on fey pepper entertain drunken teamsters with humorous moral puzzles that often mock public figures.

Occasionally these popular artists, called dockers, get it in their heads to start a riot or get a tad too precise with their criticism. The dockers and the city police have each taken their hits in these confrontations, and tensions grow higher with every accidental death, but for now Roland Stanfield, the city governor of Flint, seems to have a soft spot for these tepid anarchists.

### Playing a Docker.

The docker spirit is not limited just to those who perform in public, but extends to anyone who suffers through hard work and low wages, yet can still appreciate intelligent art for its sublime beauty. The worse conditions get for the workers in Flint, though, the more they turn to dockers for relief from their fatigue. When things get heated, every good docker needs to be able to handle himself in a scrap.

Sometimes a docker gets in over his head, and with a little help from sympathetic bar owners or police officers he'll drop out of the scene and find a new safer career. In this way, the docker movement has spread to pockets of the city slums and even out to the surrounding farmlands. One popular song on the docks even tells of a graffiti artist who fled to Crisillyir and is now painting cathedrals with subversive interpretations of the Clergy's doctrines.

You gain the Docker's Jank feat.



### More Information.

At higher levels, you might take the Notorious Celebrity prestige class, having gained enough prestige or infamy to affect your foes by reputation alone. One such celebrity is musician and adventurer Rock Rackus, who claims to have explored fiery dungeons, traveled to the moon, and cuckolded a fey king.

### New Feat: Docker's Jank

In a band, every musician has to know his bandmates' parts in case they need to switch places or pick up the slack. Choose up to four allies; you may change your chosen allies if you spend a few hours training with them. You and those allies can each use Help as a bonus action, but only to aid you or one of your chosen allies. Once a character uses this ability, he or she must take a short or long rest before doing so again.

Additionally, once per day as a bonus action you can shout a line from an inspiring song to grant an ally a Bardic Inspiration die, a d6. The die becomes a d8 at 5th level, a d10 at 10th level, and a d12 at 15th level. Except for the limited use, this functions as the Bardic Inspiration feature.



## Eschatologist

The Heid Eschatol movement began among the dwarves of Drakr, after the scholar Vlendam Heid published a treatise on the myths of his nation and how they continued to influence modern perceptions. The book captured the culture's consciousness, particularly a section that used the legend of the Lost Riders to explain the Drakran tradition of defining civilizations and eras by how they end. In the three decades since its publication, Heid's "On the Proper Endings of Things" has given birth to a whole field of academic study devoted to finding the perfect way to end friendships and romances, business relationships, wars, serialized literature, and even one's own life.

Heid's disciples refer to themselves as eschatologists, from the term for the study of the end of the world. Their popularity has only strengthened Drakr's existing obsession with apocalyptic prophecies and doomsaying, and has raised awareness of their beliefs in other nations. The Clergy, however, denies that the dwarven end times are near, and its agents take a dim view of Heid's followers.

### Playing an Eschatologist.

Dwarves from any nation likely feel some sympathy toward Heid Eschatol, and soldiers who fought in the wars in the border kingdoms between Drakr and Danor often saw enough horrors that when they came home they were comforted by the thought of an orderly judgment day. A handful of apocalyptic cults have sprung up, and increasingly their members are seen less as fringe nuts and more as just another religious sect. Only a few outside of Drakr actually believe in a literal imminent end of the world, with most adherents simply appreciating the comfort they can find by confronting death with reason instead of fear.

Regardless of how a character was drawn to Heid's movement, he is likely to give regular thought to the future, especially to life's thresholds and endings. Every eschatologist regularly updates his will, and pays heed to his companions' desires in the event of their untimely yet unavoidable deaths. A few race toward death, but most are pragmatic and take exceptional precautions to forestall any accidental demise that might ruin their plans.

You gain the Proper Ending feat.

### More Information.

At higher levels, you might take the Logos prestige class, allowing your speech to alter reality. It is said the doomsday philosopher Grandis Komanov, who presides over a cult of frost-bitten, beardless dwarves in the far north, can be harmed by no living creature, since she exists partially at the end of time.



### New Feat: Proper Ending

With the dire knowledge that the world shall end in ice, you do what you can to prevent such fate from befalling your allies. As a bonus action, you can touch a dying creature or a creature that died in the past round. That creature is restored to life if dead, stabilizes, and is considered to have failed no death saving throws, but remains unconscious. The body must be relatively intact. This ability doesn't function on decapitated or disintegrated creatures, for example.

As an action, you can concentrate on your own mortality in order to manifest a zone of cold in a 10-foot radius around you. Once manifested, the zone is stationary, and it lasts until you dismiss it as a bonus action, or you fall unconscious.

At the start of your turn, creatures in the zone take 1d6 cold damage. This increases to 2d6 at 5th level, 3d6 at 11th level, and 4d6 at 17th level. Creatures in the zone cannot heal or gain temporary hit points. Since you manifested this fragment of the world's icy end, you are affected by the zone even if you are not inside it, and you cannot reduce the damage this power deals to you by any means. Other creatures' resistances and immunities can still protect them.

Once you manifest this zone, you cannot use it again until you complete a long rest.



## Gunsmith

Knowledge of fusils – the cylindrical weapons that use explosive alchemical reactions to propel bullets at deadly speeds – has existed for centuries, but these weapons were considered inferior to existing magical attacks, which were more accurate and had less risk of accidental death. Only after the Great Malice did the Danoran military begin to refine and improve fusils. The latest innovations in these weapons, now commonly called “guns,” have led to their spread into Risur and Drakr, where industrial production helps equip armies with firepower on par with a well-trained sorcerer.

Firearms fascinate gunsmiths, who are not content simply to purchase and practice with guns. They tweak and tinker with their own refinements, and whenever two such craftsmen cross paths they bargain and deal for each other’s secrets. Especially now that firearms have moved beyond the null magic lands of Danor, seemingly limitless possibilities have opened up for the development of weapons that mix spellcraft and chemistry. Flint’s city governor Roland Stanfield is already planning a technological exposition where gunsmiths and other inventors can showcase their creations.

### Playing a Gunsmith.

Not all gunsmiths devote their combat training to wielding firearms; some just like to have the weapons for their aesthetic appeal, or to take advantage of the common man’s fear of their power. More often, though, gunsmiths practice endlessly to improve their aim, and try to learn as many trick shots as possible to prove the superiority of their chosen killing device. Those with magical training often master rituals to enchant their pistols. One gunsmith, Lerema Kurtz, is said to be able to conjure a cannon from her petticoat pocket.

Many romanticize the deadly purity of guns, or decorate their weapons with baroque inlays and carvings. A few gunsmiths, however, take a bleaker view, rejecting any form of poetry. They just know guns are damned good at killing people, and that life’s as good as worthless when a bullet costs less than a mug of beer.

You gain the following feat:

### More Information.

At higher level, you might take the Mad Shootist prestige class, experimenting with freeze rays, rocket launchers, shrink rays, and the like. Meanwhile, more mundane explosives and ballistics are on sale in the arms markets of Trekhom, the capital city of Drakr, which guards its harbor with cannons so massive they can crack the hull of even an ironclad ship. But not all the clever weapons are designed by dwarves; this autumn Flint will be hosting the Kaybeau Arms Fair, sure to bring in plenty of gun-happy inventors.



### New Feat: The Man with Two Guns Is God

You have discovered the coolest fighting style in the world. You can draw and stow two firearms when you would normally be able to draw or stow only one. You can use two weapon fighting with dual pistols (or target pistols) just as with light melee weapons. Any creature you attack with a firearm cannot make opportunity attacks until the start of your next turn.

You are proficient in gunsmithing tools. Crafting common firearms only requires time and money. Crafting a grenade takes 25 gp of materials. Doing it safely takes 10 days of work, or you can rush it in 1 day, but then must succeed on a DC 10 Intelligence check or else the grenade explodes and injures you.

Likewise, you can craft target pistols, rifled carbines, or rifled muskets by paying half their price for raw materials, then spending a day for every 5 gp of total price to craft the item from scratch. Or you can take a normal firearm, spend 25 gp on a rifling kit, and successfully make a DC 10 Intelligence check to upgrade the weapon in a single day. If you fail this check, the weapon is ruined.

Whenever you take a long rest, choose two firearms in your possession to maintain. Those weapons cannot misfire for 24 hours.





## Martial Scientist

In the war academies of Danor, students speak of combat like a science. Their curriculum involves not merely practicing forms and maneuvers, but writing theses about renowned warriors, or crafting and defending theorems regarding the mechanics of swordplay. The normally reserved Danorans honor the graduates of these battle colleges like other nations honor great poets and sculptors. As those warriors have proven the efficacy of their innovative techniques, the sentiment has spread throughout Lanjyr, and other nations have founded similar schools.

Any brute can hurl a spear or hack through a ribcage, but students of the war academies bring reason to the savagery of war. Often rising to high military ranks, these scholars of battle study anatomy and perform autopsies to learn vulnerabilities of the body, learn physical theorems that underlie the most effective angles of attack and defense, and take time to ponder the psychological and sociological considerations of mortal conflict – from the vast scope and human cost of an invasion, down to the emotional resonance and cultural significance of specific sword techniques through history.

### Playing a Martial Scientist.

Danor has the greatest concentration of war colleges, but the Bahaman Academy in Risur's capital Slate has a reputation for elite siege engineers and artilleryists, and the Battalion outside of Flint trains the best wilderness forces in Lanjyr. Smaller local schools mostly serve to provide pensions for retired soldiers turned tutors, but even they have led to noteworthy theses, such as *The Wounding Effectiveness of Stealthy Singular Rapier* contrasted with a *Twin Strike of Dual Long Swords*, which provoked a very spirited debate and even a few expulsions when things got heated.

In Drakr, emphasis is given to testing the physiological limits of endurance and surviving in battle with limited resources, as would be likely in a world-ending conflict. The Clergy in Crisillyir add a strong theological and monstrous anatomy component to the students in their military academies. The lone war college in Ber has a vast library of battle songs, which according to a disputed theory will inspire the courage and attack accuracy of soldiers, though most likely it is just meant to keep in check the often wild emotions of its bestial students.

You should work with your GM to determine what your graduate thesis was, unless you left before finishing your education.

You gain the Martial Studies feat.

### More Information.

At higher level, you might take the Polyhistor prestige class, using your deep well of martial knowledge to craft unique fighting techniques in the heat of battle. The legendary Henri Jierre who founded the Jierre Sciens d'Arms martial academy is said to have never needed more than three sword strokes to defeat any foe.



### New Feat: Martial Studies

Research is important for science and for combat. If you don't know just the right fighting technique, you're pretty sure someone else has published a thesis about it. You gain proficiency in one martial melee and one martial ranged weapon.

In addition, every martial scientist learns the Experimental Strike technique. During the campaign you will have the opportunity to learn new techniques. Keep track of which you know. At the end of a long rest, choose one technique you know. You have access to that technique for the day.

### Experimental Strike (Martial Scientist Technique)

Scientific breakthroughs are born of both careful study and wild experimentation. Whenever you use the Attack action and miss with every attack, you may make an improvised attack without spending an action, such as slicing a rope to pin an enemy with a chandelier, or smashing a pipe to spray blinding steam on an enemy. Make an Intelligence check and add your proficiency bonus; the GM determines the DC based on how difficult the task is. For example, dropping a chandelier straight down might very easy (DC 5), but slicing it, grabbing it to arrest its fall and make it jostle, then releasing it at the perfect moment so it swings laterally and flies at an enemy ten feet away might be hard (DC 20).

The GM should refer to the core rules for guidelines on the effects of improvised attacks. Circumstances will dictate how many foes are affected, how much damage is dealt, and whether any conditions can be applied (such as prone or blinded), but generally this should do at least "setback" damage.

After you use experimental strike you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.



## Skyseer

Truly ancient lore suggests that once the mortal races were able to travel to the stars with the aid of lost magic, much like demons and angels can be briefly summoned into this world. But for the full length of remembered history, the heavens have been nearly inscrutable. The druids, used to thinking in long terms of seasons, years, and the lifespan of trees, were the first to notice subtle connections between the movements of stars and the affairs of this world. They too were first to learn how to step through the veils that lead to the Dreaming or the Bleak Gate, and without their aid King Kelland could never have defeated the fey titans.

For over a thousand years, the druids would gaze into the sky night after night, awaiting dreams that would grant revelations of the future. These seers, by guiding journeyers and heroes with their visions, averted many catastrophes. When the Second Victory led to Srasama's fall, the skyseers read the signs and helped hundreds of eladrin women flee their homeland so they could avoid genocide.

In the past few centuries, however, the many orders and factions of skyseers in Risur have struggled to divine much of import from the stars. Their visions, never precise or clear to begin with, failed to foresee the rise of Danor's industry, failed to avert scores of natural disasters and man-made tragedies. The people of Risur still go through the motions of skyseer rituals, but the old druids' influence has faded. Few young people today aspire to join their once-prestigious ranks.

### Playing a Skyseer.

Those few who study to be skyseers today usually have a close mentor among the druids. Some may have spent countless nights as children staring up at the stars, before one night waking from a vivid, prophetic dream. Apprenticed to an elder skyseer, they learned the names of the stars and planets, their patterns and influence. Though precise visions are rare, it is still indisputable that magic of travel works better under the full moon, and that any ship that sets sail the night when Jiese enters retrograde within the constellation of the Mad Pirate will face great misfortune before it reaches its destination.

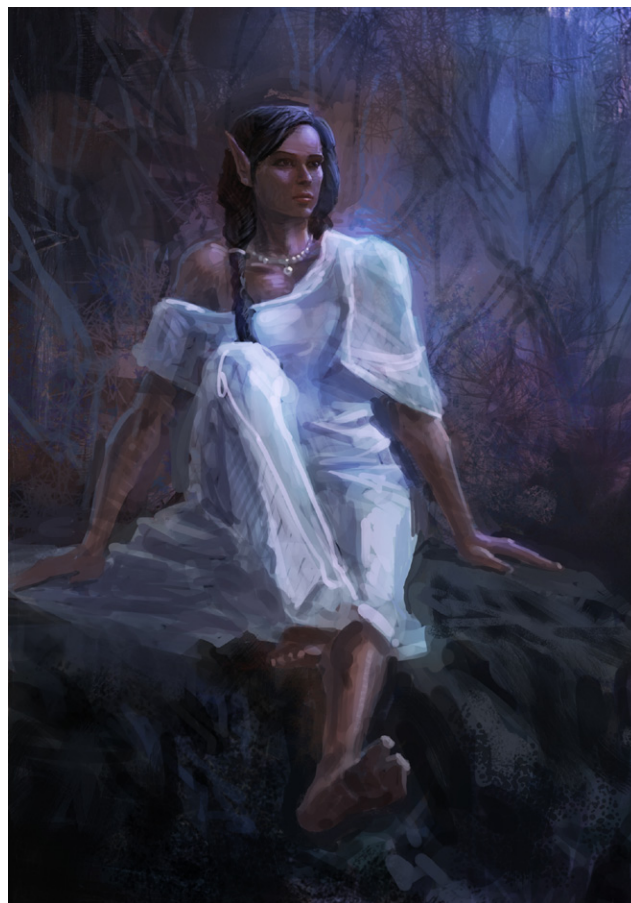
Skyseers favor the night, and with a glance at the starry sky can tell time as precisely as any clock. Even in this new age of technology, most Risuri ship's captains won't sail beyond sight of shore without a skyseer aboard. Though their influence has faded somewhat, they still have strong connections with many families, villages, and organizations, and they can easily find a welcome home – as long as they do not begin speaking of prophecies.

You should definitely read the sidebar on Planets and Planes.

You gain the Skyseer Vision feat:

### More Information.

At higher level, you might take the Applied Astronomist prestige class, letting you manifest the powers of the different planets in the night sky. Perhaps you might even discover why the visions of the skyseers have grown so vague these past few decades.



### New Feat: Skyseer Vision

As a bonus action you may touch an ally and give them insight into future actions. The touched ally chooses one of the following — attack roll, saving throw, ability check, or skill check — and then rolls a d20. The next time the ally would make the same type of roll before the end of the encounter, they may use the previously rolled result or opt to make a new roll. If the ally has advantage or disadvantage, only the first roll is replaced.

After using this ability you must take a short or long rest before you can use it again.

As part of a long rest during which the night sky is visible, you may focus your mind on the future and receive a prophetic dream regarding one question. Upon completion of your rest you awaken with insights into the future as though you had cast a divination spell regarding a task you plan to take the following day.





## Spirit Medium

The Danoran industrial revolution has changed the ways of war, giving even the poorest man weapons that can kill the wealthy and well-equipped. Why then should not matters of the soul also move from the purview of the enlightened into the grasp of the common people? So ask spirit mediums, who wish to explain the mysteries of spirits and the afterlife so that men no longer need priests to tell them what awaits beyond death.

Certainly, many mediums are charlatans who prey on the weakness of bereaved aristocrats. But a few have discovered how to contact the dead through a form of psionic meditation called a *séance*. Some will only use their talents to help those who have a sincere need to know the secrets of the dead, and will only train students who share the same worldview, but most mediums reject such insularity as smacking of organized religion, and will gladly wake the dead for a quick chat at the drop of a few coins.

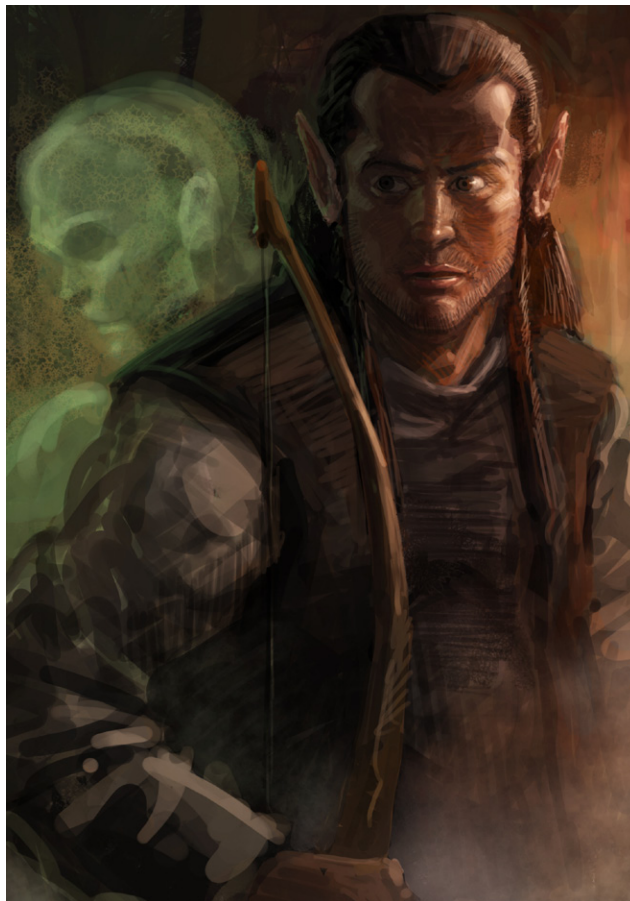
### Playing a Spirit Medium.

The ability to speak with the recently departed is of great value to the Royal Homeland Constabulary, which recruits enthusiastically people with useful talents. Compared with the normal life of a medium, criminal investigators seldom have to convey messages between the dead and their living friends and relatives, though such conversations can help elicit otherwise unyielding secrets.

You gain the Unfinished Business feat:

### More Information.

At higher level, you might take the Urban Empath prestige class, gaining the power to communicate with the genius loci of cities, learning their secrets and calling upon their unique powers. The most famous medium, the halfling Jared Smithee, had a prosperous career giving comfort to the bereaved, until he attended the state funeral of the last Sovereign of Danor. The Danorans tried to arrest him when he claimed to have a message from the deceased, and he remains on the run.



### New Feat: Unfinished Business

You possess a deep understanding of spirits and the ties that bind them to the mortal world. With the simplest of actions and words, you can stir the recently deceased into action.

With your urging, the spirit of a recently dead person will speak briefly with you. You can cast speak with dead. The body must be within three miles of where it died, and must not have died more than a day ago. You do not require a complete body as the ability speaks with the spirit and needs no corporeal connection. You can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

At the GM's discretion, you could also use this power to communicate with uneasy spirits who have not yet moved on, regardless of how long ago they died.

Using this power against undead, or in any combat situation for that matter, is possible but very difficult. By expending this power you can force an undead creature you can see to make a Wisdom saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier). If it fails, you may take control of it for one round, as the dominate monster spell. Alternately you can call up the spirit of a creature whose body you can see that died in the past five minutes. It does not receive a save to resist. Its spirit manifests in a space you choose within 25 feet of you, and performs a single action of your choice as if it were still alive, then disappears.



### Designer Notes: Martial Scientists

If you've ever played *Final Fantasy* games, you might be familiar with the concept of blue mages: characters who learn the techniques of their enemies. The martial scientist follows that conceit, while also promoting the idea that combat in the world of ZEITGEIST is more the work of refined thinkers than berserkers or savages.

The Martial Scientist theme (see page 10) offers players the opportunity to acquire numerous small and quirky talents. While not typically useful in a normal fight, they can come in handy in niche situations. If you're the kind of player who likes outwitting enemies or having a deep bag of tricks to draw from, Martial Scientist might well be the theme for you.

## Technologist

Some people cannot get enough of new technology. Those with talent tinker or create. Those without collect, study, or simply nag every engineer and inventor they meet. Whether dabblers or professionals, often these technology enthusiasts come up with ideas for devices that straddle the line between clever and impractical.

In Danor, academies train technologists in specialized fields, while in Drakr master dwarven craftsmen guide huge stables of apprentices in the massive engineering projects. Crisillyir punishes such tinkering with holy flagellation, and eladrin are as unsettled by technology as are the denizens of the Dreaming. A few enterprising technologists in Ber curry favor of the royal court, which responds eagerly to such intellectual pursuits.

### New Feat: Disposable Simulacrum.

By spending 10 gp to acquire the necessary parts, you can craft a contraption, which functions somewhat similarly to a familiar called by the *find familiar* spell. When deactivated it weighs 5 lbs. and can fit in a pouch or pocket, but you can infuse a bit of your life force into the contraption so that it becomes animate. As a bonus action, you can activate your contraption and place it in an unoccupied adjacent space, at which point it becomes a Tiny construct creature, with a form roughly similar to one of the animals available with *find familiar*. The contraption has that animal's stats, with the following adjustments. It uses your AC and save bonuses (if higher), and its hit point maximum is 2 times your character level.

Your contraption acts on your initiative; it moves where you direct it. To get it to take any other action, such as Dash, Disengage, Dodge, or Help, you must spend an action to control it.

Additionally, your contraption can be designed to perform one special task, such as attacking with a natural or light weapon you integrate into its body, casting a single spell you store in it, or using some other ability (like Lay on Hands or Deflect Missiles) you have access to. You still must spend the appropriate type of action to have your contraption perform this task, and spells or abilities used through the contraption count towards your daily limit. Since it is bonded to you, however, the contraption performs this one special task as if you were performing the action in its space. Changing this special task requires an hour of tinkering. Changing the contraption's shape requires eight hours at a properly furnished workshop.

You can only control one contraption at a time. Your contraption only functions while within 120 feet of you, beyond which it deactivates. While within that range, you can spend an action to see and hear from its space until the start of your next turn, during which time you are blind and deaf with regard to your own senses.

If reduced to 0 hit points, the contraption is automatically deactivated and you must spend an hour making repairs before you can activate it again. Replacing a lost contraption costs 10 gp and takes eight hours at a properly furnished workshop.

At 5th level you can spend 100 gp to craft a contraption in the shape of a Medium or smaller animal of up to CR ½. At 10th level you can spend 1,000 gp to craft a contraption in the shape of a Large or smaller animal of up to CR 1. The larger the animal, the larger a weapon that can be integrated into its body.



### Playing a Technologist.

After centuries of reliance upon swords, bows, plate armor, and the occasional arcane evocation, keeping up with the modern pace of developing technology is daunting to many power groups, especially law enforcement and the military. Such groups might enlist technologists as specialists to explain unfamiliar devices, or to craft specialty weapons or tools. While the Danoran industrial revolution has mass-produced many common tools and weapons, only a few have the knowledge and talent to create custom items.

Technologists tend to gather lots of disposable tools and weapons, so that they always have something handy in an unusual situation. Many make a point to learn a bit of magic or alchemy as well, though every technologist is inspired by a different vision of what technology can provide.

You gain the Disposable Simulacrum feat, and you can craft your first contraption for free:

### More Information.

At higher level, you might take the Steamsuit Pilot prestige class, designing a machine you can wear into battle. Not all technologists are solitary tinkers, however. The gregarious Risuri industrialist Benedict Pemberton who made his wealth in mundane factories is said to have developed an interest in more exotic creations, and is recruiting clever engineers and mages for a secret project.



## Vekeshi Mystic

If fatalism defines the traditional dwarven philosophy, then the cornerstone of eladrin ideology is that living well is the best revenge.

After the goddess Srasama died and nearly all eladrin women perished with her, there was a great drive in Elfaivar to fight until the last man in a short-sighted bid for vengeance. As the rest of the nation whipped itself into a frenzy, however, a composer named Vekesh wrote a song of mourning that contained a simple sentiment: defeat is only tragedy if we choose to let the story end.

While many eladrins could not be stopped from their self-destruction, Vekesh convinced some of his people that a tale that goes from defeat to revenge to death is a shameful tragedy. Revenge serves only to distract from one's grief, but is ultimately valueless. Instead, he said, a tale of defeat, resilience, and renewal is the best way to thwart their enemies' goals.

The proper form of retribution, then, is to endure, rebuild from weakness, and prosper into strength.

His guidance ensured that in at least a few isolated enclaves, the eladrin race pulled back from the brink of annihilation. In the following decades a loosely codified collection of vekeshi teachings spread throughout Lanjyr. The mantras of Vekesh have helped many cope with loss and find a new path for themselves.

To the general public, though, 'vekeshi' is synonymous with murderer and terrorist. While the majority of vekeshi avoid violence when possible, Vekesh believed that taking up arms is sometimes necessary to protect those at their most vulnerable. The deepest secrets of vekeshi mysticism are taught only to a rare few adherents who demonstrate a skill for battle, and the wisdom to know when to use their power.

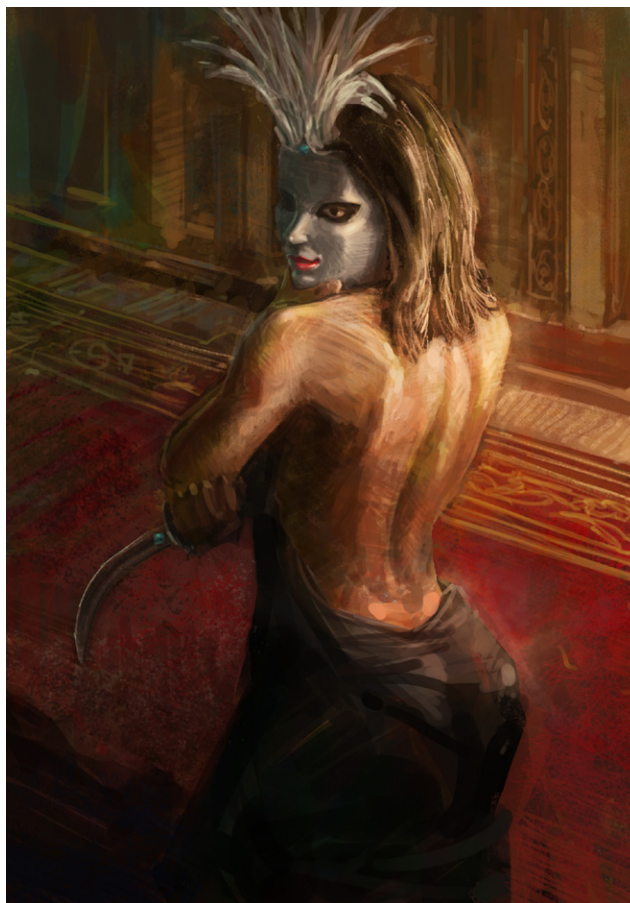
### Playing a Vekeshi Mystic.

Anyone might casually study Vekesh's teachings for a bit of personal guidance, but to be initiated into the mystical side of the philosophy requires painful rituals. Aspirants are taken in the night across the threshold of the Dreaming, where they experience the fall of Srasama through psychic illusions, making them keepers of the shared memory of the Great Malice. Thereafter they are held in a cage for days, along with poisoned food that they must resist, so that the starvation teaches them the importance of patience. Finally, they are burnt until their skin blackens, and then are magically healed to seal in the power of the flames.

If a vekeshi passes these trials, he rests and recovers in luxury as his teachers instruct him in the secrets of the philosophy, and drill into him the necessity of discretion. Upon leaving the Dreaming, vekeshi mystics return to their normal lives, but seek positions of power in military, law enforcement, or the underworld, where they use their authority to punish those who continually threaten people who are simply trying to make a better life for themselves.

Vekeshi mystics seldom gather in large groups, but on certain irregular lunar holidays they slip into the Dreaming for secretive festivals. Only on the rarest occasions will a mystic be called to act openly. Donning an iconic mantle of eladrin armor and a mask that conceals his face, the mystic acts as the surrogate hand of the fallen goddess Srasama, with the sole purpose of meting out punishment against one directly responsible for large-scale suffering.

You gain the Hand of Retribution feat.



### More Information

At higher level, you might take the Vekeshi Excoriant prestige class, to let you wield the power of the dead goddess Srasama. The secrets of your order are not to be shared with other players, but speak to your GM to learn the names and operations of mystics active in Flint and beyond.

#### New Feat: Hand of Retribution

You gain proficiency in the Intimidation skill, or another skill if you already have Intimidation.

In battle, a vestige of the power of Srasama waits to punish those who harm your allies. When an enemy you're aware of deals damage to one of your allies, as a reaction you can deal 1d4 radiant damage to the enemy who made the attack. That enemy sees a faint burning outline of a six-armed goddess hovering behind you, which then lashes out in retaliation with blades of fire. You cannot use this power twice against the same creature in the same encounter. After you use this power six times, you must take a long rest before you can use it again.

At 5th level, the damage increases to 1d4 radiant and 1d4 fire. At 11th level, the enemy also catches on fire and takes 1d4 fire damage each round until it spends an action to make a DC 10 Dexterity check to put the fire out. At 17th level, using this ability does not require spending your reaction.

## Yerasol Veteran

The islands of the Yerasol Archipelago were perhaps the most verdant, beautiful battleground in history. During two centuries of intermittent warfare, untold thousands of soldiers from Risur and Danor died among the windblown rainforests and flowered beaches of those isles, trying to protect their homelands' exceedingly prosperous plantations. Those who survived – the ones who didn't succumb to aberrant infections, crippling physical injuries, or unyielding mental trauma – often turned their war-time glory into profit or political clout.

Poets of the two nations have memorialized, and sometimes sensationalized, the greatest acts of heroism from the Four Yerasol Wars, the last of which ended seven years past. It's an open secret that history is written by the survivors, and many so-called war heroes were merely lucky enough to witness something brave and amazing, and not die in the process so they could take the credit for themselves. A rare few, however, demonstrated genuine heroism and lived to have their tales told by others.

### Playing a Yerasol Veteran.

Everyone knows the names of a few veterans who distinguished themselves in battle – not quite famous, but certainly memorable. Every veteran of the isles has a story that made him a celebrity, though many do not enjoy recounting their tales. The fact that everyone likes a war hero doesn't lessen the trauma of having seen friends die.

After two centuries of trial and error, though, Risur and Danor have learned to exploit these heroes of the moment, giving them cushy jobs and helping them reacclimatize to civilian life. It doesn't do to have a "hero" become a vagabond or a drunkard who will embarrass his nation, after all. The aid and adulation from their nation helps a great many Yerasol veterans become pillars of their communities. Such aid quickly dries up, though, should the hero ever decide to publicly criticize or cast aspersions upon his homeland.

You gain the Display of Heroism feat.

### More Information.

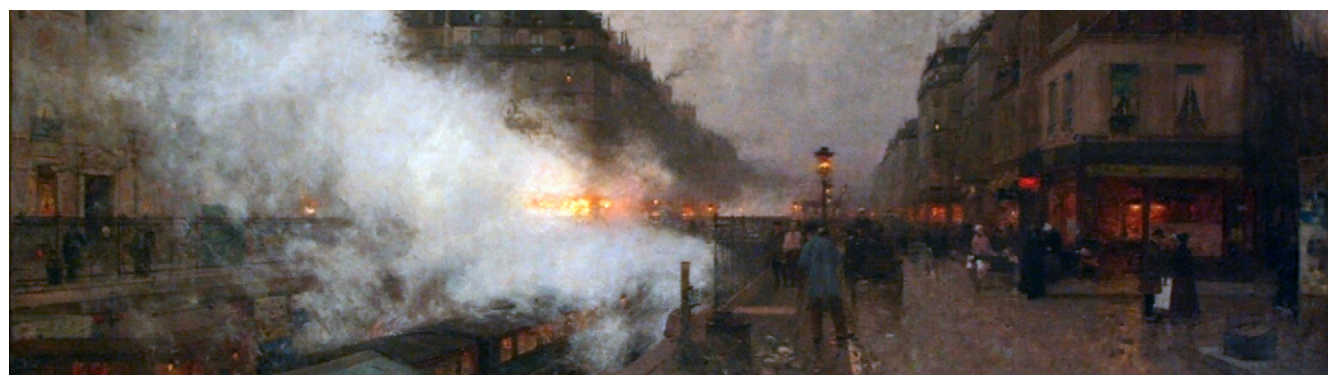
At higher level, you might take the Monument of War prestige class, which lets you give form to your memories of war, calling in gunfire and artillery. You'll also want to become familiar with the naval combat quick-play rules in the Seas of ZEITGEIST appendix. You too might one day achieve a feat as grand as King Aodhan, who sailed into the harbor of Danor's capital, seized its flagship, and sailed it back to Risur as his prize.



### New Feat: Display of Heroism

You unfortunately have great experience rescuing allies on the battlefield. As an action you can assist an ally who is imperiled. You can lift the ally to their feet if they are prone, and if you have any movement left for the turn you can drag the ally with you. Until the start of your next turn, as long as the ally remains beside you, any attacks made against that ally have disadvantage. Your heroic example can rouse your ally's, even from the brink of consciousness, allowing the ally to spend a hit die to heal. Only 1 point is actual healing; the rest are temporary hit points.

At 5th level you can do this as a bonus action. At 10th level this no longer requires any action, though you can help no more than two allies this way per turn.





## Salary, Stipends, and Requisitions

As constables of Risur, your characters have a slightly different relationship with treasure than typical Fifth Edition adventurers.

Firstly, you're assumed to receive a reasonable salary that covers "comfortable" living expenses, but needs not be tracked in-game.

Additionally, the Constabulary's resources and connections let you requisition the tools you need for your missions. Particularly respectable constables can even make use of magic items from the royal vaults.

### Upgrades, Loot, and Skimming Off the Top.

When you recover magic items, treasure, or other valuables, RHC protocols allow you to make use of them for a limited period of time, if you need them. However once they are no longer required, you are expected to hand them over to higher authorities, who will make proper use of them. If desired, you can place a requisition to keep these items long-term, assuming you file the proper paperwork and your request is deemed warranted. (See Requisitions in Part Two.)


An alternative, of course, is to hold onto items and not report them to the RHC. This is illegal, and would likely be grounds for dismissal. Such pecuniary misdeeds are expected of common police, but the RHC is held to higher standards. Be careful, because prison is not kind to former law officers who turn to crime.

## Powers of Kings and Gods

As the campaign begins, it is well known that some rare people possess great personal powers, and heroic characters (in game terms, between level 3 and 10) are not unheard of. Students of metaphysics have determined that some supernatural limit exists on how much power a single individual can personally accrue, but those who serve as leaders or heralds of large groups can access much greater powers.

Kings, their might borne upward by the loyalty of their subjects, can achieve deeds no normal man could, but even they have limits. Though arcane theorists know spells that grant wishes, stop time, or call down meteors should be possible, no one in recorded history has been confirmed to have commanded such magic. It's as if there has been some seal placed by the gods to restrain the might of mortals.

Rumors hint that those officially charged with management of royal resources — such as the heads of the RHC — actually receive some sliver of the monarch's power.

If you should happen to receive a gift during the course of your duties, you can keep it, though the RHC keeps an eye on constables to ensure they are not being influenced by bribes. 







ENsider Presents:

# The ZEITGEIST Adventure Path Player's Guide Part 2

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# Equipment

**T**HE NEW TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION HAS produced new weapons, and some items are unique to the ZEITGEIST adventure path. More importantly to society at large, today is a civilized time, and fashion is important to showing one's class.

## CIVILIZED GEAR

Item	Price	Weight
Fey pepper, week's supply	10 gp	—
Gentleman's outfit	30 gp	6 lb.
Goggles	5 gp	1 lb.
Lady's outfit	30 gp	12 lb.
Leaf of Nicodemus, week's supply	1 gp	—
Pocket watch	25 gp	—
Surgeon's kit bone saw, debriding curette, ether, forceps, morphium, probes, retractors, scalpels, scissors, sutures, syringe	50 gp	2 lb.

**Fey Pepper.** This rare plant only grows near paths to the Dreaming, and since the fall of the Elfaivar Empire five hundred years ago it has been a black market item in most of Lanjyr. When chewed or smoked, the pepper makes the user giddy and upbeat. With a sufficient dosage, the user begins to hallucinate, though many claim these visions are actually glimpses into the Dreaming.

**Gentleman's Outfit.** This fine outfit includes coat, vest, cane, top hat, and more. Gentlemen do not wear goggles.

**Goggles.** Designed for working in factories or laboratories with searing chemicals or embers, these goggles are atrocious for peripheral vision. While wearing them, you gain advantage on saving throws to resist effects that would blind you, but have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

**Lady's Outfit.** This ornate dress has an excess of weight composed of frills, whalebone corseting, multiple layers of fabric, and possibly a small hat with a lace veil. Still no goggles. Definitely no cogs either.

**Leaf of Nicodemus.** Monks cultivate this herb, which grows best on the islands of the Yerasol Archipelago. When crumbled, rolled, and smoked as a cigarette, the monk's leaf soothes nerves and sharpens perception slightly. It can be addictive if used extensively, but has no social stigma, unlike fey pepper.

**Pocket Watch.** In addition to telling time, a pocket watch deters the attention of minor fey. Watches will occasionally stop, skip, or run backward in the presence of powerful fey creatures.

**Surgeon's Kit.** Whenever you treat an injured ally during a short or long rest, you may make a DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check. If you succeed, the first hit die that ally spends restores an additional 5 hit points. If you fail by 5 or more, that first hit die is wasted and restores no hit points. At the GM's discretion, this item might also aid the treatment of long-term afflictions.

## Explosive Alchemicals

Early firearms used smoky gunpowder as propellant for its ammunition, but recent alchemical advances have produced firedust. This powdered variant of alchemist's fire produces practically no smoke when used in firearms, has a lower risk of fouling or corroding the weapon's internals, and is hydrophobic, allowing it to burn even after immersion in water.

Many other firearm accelerants exist, including magmite (a granular black substance rendered in alchemical furnaces) and phlogistite (translucent red vapor slime that floats in globules if exposed to open air), but firedust is by far the most widely used. Steam engines use a variant, firegems, which burn slower but longer

While it is the source of a firearm's deadly power, firedust is relatively harmless as a weapon in its own right, since it burns too fast to cause serious wounds like traditional alchemist fire. If someone ignites a cask full of firedust, though, the resulting explosion could seriously hurt those nearby. The dwarves of Drakr field grenadiers who use hand-held explosives, but constables and even criminals find little use for such indiscriminate destruction in an urban environment.

### Example Explosion.

A twenty pound cask of firedust, roughly a foot across, explodes in a 10-foot radius. Creatures caught in the radius make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7d6 fire damage on a failure or half as much damage on a success. A one-ton pallet explodes in a 30-foot radius (again dealing 7d6 fire damage and requiring a DC 12 Dexterity save for half), but those within 10 feet of the explosion instead take an additional 7d6 bludgeoning damage from the expanding gases and flying debris. Any attack that deals at least 5 fire damage to a space containing the cask or pallet is sufficient to cause an explosion, though simply shooting firedust with a bullet won't cause it to explode.

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## Firearms

Firearms use explosive alchemicals to fire metal ammunition. Risur produces pistols, carbines, shotguns, and muskets from a variety of factories in Flint and elsewhere. Drakr possesses somewhat superior firearm technology, and it is possible to import (or custom-make) grenades and rifled versions of normal firearms. Additional innovations such as metal cartridge ammunition are known to exist, but they are the domain of specialized gunsmiths, and as yet cannot be mass-produced.

### Compatibility with the Core Rules.

For the specific period of firearm development of ZEITGEIST, firearms use rules similar—but not identical—to those presented in EN5IDER’s “Keep Your Powder Dry” series.\* These firearms are prone to occasional misfiring, and few people use them as a primary weapon. You can adjust the level of weapons technology in your ZEITGEIST campaign by using firearms rules from the different eras showcased in the “Keep Your Powder Dry” series.

For the sake of weapon proficiencies, grenades are considered simple weapons. Any character proficient with a hand crossbow is proficient with a pistol. Likewise, a light crossbow is equivalent to a carbine and shotgun, and a heavy crossbow is equivalent to a musket. Effects such as feats that specifically apply to crossbows also apply to firearms. (Note that every class except druids is proficient at least with light crossbows, so everyone but druids are able to use carbines and shotguns.)

### Muzzle-Loading Firearms.

Reloading involves drawing and tearing open a paper cartridge, which contains firedust and a bullet. The gunman pours firedust down the barrel, then packs in the bullet with a ramrod. The gunman aims and pulls a trigger, which releases the firing hammer.

#### COMMON FIREARMS

These weapons can be easily acquired in Risur.

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Pistol	75 gp	1d10 piercing	3 lb.	Ammunition (range 20/60), loud, misfire, muzzle-loading
Carbine	75 gp	1d12 piercing	5 lb.	Ammunition (range 50/150), loud, misfire, muzzle-loading, two-handed
Musket	90 gp	2d8 piercing	10 lb.	Ammunition (range 60/180), loud, misfire, muzzle-loading, two-handed
Shotgun	75 gp	1d10 piercing (see “Scatter”)	6 lb.	Ammunition (range 30/90), loud, misfire, muzzle-loading, two-handed, scatter

#### ADVANCED FIREARMS

These weapons must either be hand-crafted by gunsmiths, or imported from Drakr. Increase the Favor level to requisition one by 1 step. (See “Requisitioning Equipment.”) Gunsmiths can craft these items. (See “Gunsmith.”)

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Grenade	50 gp	special (see “Grenade”)	1 lb.	Thrown (range 20/60)
Target Pistol	300 gp	1d10 piercing	3 lb.	Ammunition (range 40/160), loud, muzzle-loading, rifled
Rifled Carbine	300 gp	1d12 piercing	5 lb.	Ammunition (range 80/320), loud, misfire, muzzle-loading, two-handed, rifled
Rifled Musket	315 gp	2d8 piercing	3 lb.	Ammunition (range 100/400), loud, misfire, muzzle-loading, two-handed, rifled

#### AMMUNITION AND EXPLOSIVES

Item	Cost	Weight
Ammunition, bullets and firedust (20 shots)	1 gp	2 lb.
Firedust, cask	20 gp	20 lb.

The hammer strikes a firegem set at the back of the barrel, which acts as a percussion cap, producing a spark inside the barrel. A typical firegem percussion cap must be replaced every few dozen shots or else there is a risk the gem will crack and misfire, but the cost is negligible.

Muzzle-loading firearms are very different from crossbows, and they have a longer loading times to boot. The intention is that a firearm is a great weapon to open up an engagement with, such as by shooting and then moving into melee, but in the heat of battle you might not always have time to reload it. Even gunsmiths, who tend to carry a pair of pistols, can’t normally fire two guns and reload them in the same round.

If the GM wishes to make firearms less cumbersome, consider replacing the Muzzle-Loading property with the Loading property found in the core rules.

### Weapon Descriptions.

The following items are or might become available to PCs in the ZEITGEIST Adventure Path. Check with your GM for availability.

**Pistol.** A muzzle-loaded one-handed firearm with a firegem percussion cap. They fire lead ball ammunition.

**Carbine.** Like a pistol, but with a stock and barrel, with a total length of three to four feet.

**Grenade.** This heavy metal hand-thrown explosive resembles a somewhat rounded dodecahedron. Small firegem percussion caps at its vertices ignite the firedust inside when they are struck with sufficient force, which sends shards of metal in all directions. Sometimes these caps do not ignite at first impact, so grenades hold the risk of bouncing and exploding somewhere other than their intended target.

When you throw a grenade, choose a creature or an unoccupied 5-foot space. (If the creature occupies a space greater than 5 feet,

\* Walt Ciechanowski, “Keep Your Powder Dry! Part 2: Early Modern Firearms,” EN WORLD EN5IDER, <https://www.patreon.com/posts/keep-your-power-7985372>



choose one of the squares it occupies.) Make ranged weapon attack against AC 10. If the attack misses, the grenade veers off course, missing by 5 feet in a random direction, or 10 feet if the target area was at long range. Each creature in a 5-foot radius of where the grenade lands must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3d6 damage on a failure. Half of this damage is bludgeoning, and half piercing.

If you targeted a creature and the attack roll is a critical hit, the grenade directly strikes that creature (or the creature of your choice, if there are multiple). The creature takes 6d6 damage split between bludgeoning and piercing and cannot attempt a saving throw for half damage. Other creatures in the area make saving throws and take damage as normal.

**Musket.** The extended barrel of this firearm, bringing it to a total length of over five and a half feet, is an attempt to grant long range accuracy.

**Rifled Carbine.** Effectively just a carbine which has had the last few inches of the barrel rifled. These weapons use different ammunition - the Latimer bullet, which is more conical. The bullet's hollow flared tail that expands from the force of the ignited fire-gems, forcing the edges of the bullet against the spiral grooves of the inside of the barrel, imparting a spin that stabilizes the bullet and enhances accuracy at range.

**Rifled Musket.** Effectively just a musket with a rifled barrel.

**Shotgun.** This smoothbore weapon fires pellets that spread out, striking a roughly 5-foot radius at a range of 90 feet. It is not particularly effective at distance, but can be devastating point-blank.

**Target Pistol.** Effectively just a pistol with a rifled barrel.

### New Weapon Traits.

The weapons listed above may have one or more of the following traits.

**Loud.** Firearms are noisy and expel a lot of powder when fired. After you make an attack with a firearm, you have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to remain hidden or move silently until the end of your next turn and other creatures have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks to discern your location.

**Misfire.** Occasionally a firearm fails to fire due to fouling or the round getting stuck. If the d20 roll is a 1 when making a ranged attack, then in addition to missing the target the firearm is considered to have misfired. You must clear the barrel using a gun kit as an action before it may be fired again (note that the cleared ammunition may be used again). If the d20 roll is a 1 and you had disadvantage on the roll, then you have cracked the barrel and the firearm is useless until repaired (requiring a day of work with a gun kit or a use of mending).

Magical guns never misfire or break from regular use.

**Muzzle-Loading.** Because of the extreme time required to reload this weapon, you must spend an action or bonus action to reload before you can shoot again.

**Rifled.** Rifling extends the range a firearm can accurately hit a target. You can spend an action to aim down the weapon's sight, and choose a creature you can see. Until you stop aiming, quadruple the weapon's short and long ranges for the purpose of attacking that target.

Each turn thereafter you can spend an action or bonus action to continue aiming at the same target or switch to another target you

can see. If you move or take damage, your aim is ruined and must start over again. Adding rifling to a weapon adds 50 gp to its cost.

**Scatter.** If you have advantage on an attack roll with a shotgun and both rolls hit the target, the weapon deals an additional 1d10 damage. If you have disadvantage, and one attack roll would have hit but the other misses, it still deals 1d4 damage.

### Combination Weapons and Bayonets.

Some firearms integrate a bladed weapon into their designs, such as a dagger with a pistol that fires along the crosspiece, or a carbine that fires down the length of a longsword. Such weapons are almost always custom-built. Other firearms have attachments that let the wielder affix a melee weapon to a gun barrel. Typically this is to attach a bayonet to a carbine or musket, allowing the weapon to be used as a spear.

Mechanically, these hybrid weapons function as two distinct weapons, and each would need to be enchanted separately. Their main benefit is to allow a wielder to switch between ranged and melee attacks without having to draw a new weapon.

The GM should use common sense to determine whether a combination is feasible. You might be fine with a rogue using a pistol with a bayonet as if it were a rapier in melee. Likewise, a carbine/axe could theoretically work, but a pistol/spear or flail/musket is ridiculous. (Of course, if ridiculous is your style, then go wild!)

### Firearm Enhancements.

Gunsmiths can craft the following items, or they can be requisitioned with a Favor level 2. Alchemical launchers, sniper scopes, and suppressors can be retrofitted onto existing weapons. Ammunition clips and reinforced barrels can only be added when a weapon is crafted, not retrofitted.

**Alchemical Launcher.** As an action, you can load one grenade or similar item such as alchemist's fire or holy water into this underslung launcher. You can use the item as if it were in your hand. If the item normally requires a ranged attack, it uses your gun's attack bonus and range.

### FIREARM ENHANCEMENTS

Item	Price	Weight
Alchemical launcher	1,000 gp	5 lb.
Ammunition clip	1,000 gp	1 lb.
Reinforced barrel	500 gp	1 lb.
Sniper scope	1,000 gp	2 lb.
Suppressor	500 gp	1 lb.

**Ammunition Clip.** For a pistol, an ammunition clip is revolver cylinder that lets you fire six shots before you need to reload. For a carbine, musket, or shotgun, an ammunition clip is a stripper clip that instead holds five rounds. Replacing a clip requires an action or bonus action.

**Reinforced Barrel.** You've modified your barrel to fire heavier rounds, such as cover-piercing ammunition. If your GM uses the alternate rules of attacks hitting cover, if you hit cover you deal half the weapon's damage to its target, unless the attack fails to damage the cover.

You can also attack a creature with total cover; you take a -5 penalty to your attack roll (in addition to disadvantage since you likely cannot see the target), and if you hit you deal half damage.

These rounds usually only work through less than a foot of wood or dirt, a few inches of stone, or a half-inch of metal.

Cover-piercing ammunition costs twice as much as normal ammunition.

**Sniper Scope.** This enhancement is only effective on rifled weapons. You can aim down this finely-tuned telescopic sight without needing to spend an action. However, you are considered blind except against creatures in a direct line from you to your target. The blindness lasts until your next turn.

**Suppressor.** Your shots are relatively quiet, and firearms with a suppressor lose the Loud trait. If you are hidden when you attack, you remain hidden from creatures more than 50 feet from you. A creature struck does, however, know the direction the shot came from.



# Ships of the RHC

**T**HE RISURI NAVY, ARMED WITH ENCHANTED cannons and guided by skyseers who can control the winds, are arguably the greatest seafaring military in the world. Though Risur is slowly integrating steam engines into its fleet, most of its vessels are still powered by sail.

Not every threat to Risur happens in the streets of Flint. The Flint branch has five vessels at its disposal, since sometimes the constabulary needs to deal with threats at sea or simply pursue investigations in other cities or countries. Usually, though, these ships stay docked, with only maintenance crews aboard.

Requisitioning a Risuri vessel requires the characters to ask for a favor, and can only be done by characters with a certain level of Prestige (see “Prestige,” below).

## ***Audacious*, Excise Cutter.**

This traditional fore-and-aft rig of a 30-foot long cutter has a single mast supporting a mainsail and two or more headsails attached to a bowsprit, plus an optional topsail for extra speed. Excise cutters often serve as harbor patrol and law enforcement. Units of constables have used this beloved ship for decades, and this affection manifests by granting all the crew a +1 bonus to saving throws while within sight of the ship if the vessel is undamaged.

Requesting the *Audacious* is a Rank 1 favor using Risur prestige, modified by the time the ship will be needed. It has no standing crew of its own, so constables must pilot it themselves.

## ***Inevitable*, Steam Cutter.**

Designed to fill the role of sailing excise cutters, steam cutters can more easily travel against the wind, but are louder and must rely on fuel, which somewhat limits their long-distance uses. *Inevitable* has only been in use by the RHC for five years, and its first crew died in a boiler explosion. The ship was salvaged and repaired, and now some unearthly force daunts those who would threaten the vessel. Hostile creatures stepping aboard treat the first square they enter as difficult terrain.

Requesting the *Inevitable* is a Rank 1 favor using Risur prestige, modified by the time the ship will be needed. It has no standing crew of its own, so constables must pilot it themselves.



## ***Roscommon*, Fey-Pact Schooner.**

The 90-foot *Roscommon* mounts a three-masted square-topsail rig. Laid down in 417 A.O.V., when it was nearing completion its designer had a druid deliver a replica to a fey circle near the logging town of Roscommon. The model ship delighted the local fey queen Medb, and the next morning when the designer returned to work, the ship’s figurehead had been replaced by a beautiful faerie woman carved from living wood. The rigging is somewhat petulant, but the vessel can teleport short distances, as the spell misty step once per day, an incredible power in ship-to-ship combat.

Requesting *Roscommon* and its crew of sixteen is a Rank 3 favor using Risur prestige, modified by the time the ship will be needed.

## ***Khalundurrin*, Bold Dwarven Steamship.**

Risuri forces captured the *Khalundurrin* from the Drakran navy when the ship strayed too close to an ongoing naval battle during the Fourth Yerasol War. Its captain claimed that he tried to avoid the fight, but his ship had changed course when he wasn’t looking, like it wanted to get into combat. Arcanists who examined the ship postulate that some manner of spirit might inhabit its steam engine. Crew who serve on it sleep easily and speak of dreams filled with bold imagery like something out of a dwarven opera.

Requesting *Khalundurrin* and its crew of eight is a Rank 3 favor using Risur prestige, modified by the time the ship will be needed.

## ***Impossible*, Extreme Clipper.**

The 250-foot *Impossible* is built wholly for speed, and is primarily used for missions of immense urgency. Due to the ship’s great expense, it is usually only deployed by the order of Lady Chief Inspectress Margaret Saxby or one of her superiors. Its captain, Rutger Smith, has never seen combat. He sees himself as a philosopher, not a warrior, and while his crew have great morale, they are the target of light mockery from other crews in the RHC and the navy.

Requesting the *Impossible* and its crew of sixty-four is a Rank 4 favor using Risur prestige, modified by the time the ship will be needed.

# Prestige

**M**OST FANTASY ADVENTURERS ARE “FREE agents” with no boss but themselves, usually out on the edge of civilization with few allies they can call on in a pinch. In ZEITGEIST, though, you and your fellow PCs may want to call in favors from the RHC, the local police, or other power groups. The Prestige mechanic provides a quick guideline of how much clout the party has, whether they’re calling in a mage to perform a ritual too high-level for them, or trying to get their hands on a rare battle wand before assaulting a criminal stronghold.

In ZEITGEIST, the GM will need to track the party’s Prestige with five groups:

- ♦ **Flint.** The citizens of the city of Flint.
- ♦ **Risur.** The RHC, the police, and the greater Risuri government and military.
- ♦ **The Unseen Court.** The lords of the fey who rule in the Dreaming
- ♦ **Criminal.** A criminal group, the identity of which is secret at the start of the campaign.
- ♦ **Philosophical.** An ideological group, the identity of which is secret at the start of the campaign.

As with any rules for social interaction, these are just guidelines, and the GM judgment is appropriate when adjudicating them.

## Using Prestige.

In addition to acting as a handy track of your notoriety, your Prestige lets you call in favors, usually to acquire special gear or to get help from allies. The higher your Prestige, the easier and faster you can get what you want.

Use the following guidelines to determine the Favor level of what you want. Then compare that rating to your Prestige to see how fast you can get what you want. You can make a Charisma (Persuasion) check (DC 8 + 2 per level of the favor) to increase the speed of your favor one step, from a week to a day for instance.

Calling in a favor represents the party expending its resources and good will to find people who are both able and willing to help, so there are limits to how often the party can take advantage of the Prestige system.

## Prestige Rating

The Prestige rating represents how prominent the party is, either as an ally or enemy. If the party thwarts several criminal plots but anger Flint politicians in the process, the criminals might view them as a significant threat (Prestige 3), even though they’re pariahs to the Risuri establishment (Prestige 0).

Your level of Prestige influences how easy it is for you to call in favors from your allies, and how much effort your enemies will put into defeating you.

- ♦ **Rating 0:** Viewed with disdain, as buffoons or pariahs. The group will not take the party seriously.
- ♦ **Rating 1:** The party is relatively unknown to the group.
- ♦ **Rating 2:** The party has done a few noteworthy things, but most in the group don’t know them or assume they won’t do anything else interesting.
- ♦ **Rating 3:** The party has distinguished itself, and most members of the group know about their actions and talents.
- ♦ **Rating 4:** The group pays close attention to the party, either viewing them as a powerful ally or a dangerous enemy.
- ♦ **Rating 5:** The party is one of the top priorities of the group. A lot of resources are devoted to either helping them out or taking them down.
- ♦ **Rating 6:** The party has the ear of the leader of the group (or actually is in charge), or they’re viewed as the face of the enemy.

## FAVOR WAIT TIMES.

If the Favor level is...	Then your favor gets fulfilled in...
Less Than your Prestige	As little time as humanly possible.
Equal to your Prestige	A few hours.
Your Prestige +1	A day.
Your Prestige +2	A week.
Your Prestige +3	A month.
Your Prestige +4	Never.

The party as a whole can call in one favor per day from a given allied group. For example, a party with Risur Prestige 2 might call on a soldier for back-up (Favor 1) and get someone to show up in a few minutes. The next day they might call for a 3rd-level druid to cast some healing spells for them (Favor 2), and he’d show up in a few hours. If the next day they wanted a 5th-level wizard capable of casting remove curse (Favor 3), he would arrive the next morning unless the party pulled some strings or yelled a lot (e.g., a successful Persuasion check).

If the party needs to call in more favors, one PC needs to make a Charisma (Persuasion) check (DC 8 + 2 per level of the favor + 2 per each previous favor beyond the limit in the same day). For instance, if on day two the party above also needed a squad of four



police to stake out a wharf for a night (Rating 3), they would need to make a check (DC 14) to even get the favor, plus also another check (DC 14) to round up the squad in time for that evening.

If they failed the first check they'd have to wait until the next day to call in that favor. If they failed the second check, the squad might be willing, but wouldn't be able to get their schedules together until the next day.

All the above favors would be based on the party's Prestige with Risur, and wouldn't count against the limit if the party wanted to call on favors from the people of Flint. If they wanted some street urchins to tail a suspect for a week (Level 3), and needed a group of technologists to spend a few hours testing the air in various districts for traces of a particular chemical (Level 4), it wouldn't make the police any less likely to help the party out.

The Favor Ratings below are just guidelines. The GM can impose modifiers at their discretion, or state that certain favors are impossible. For instance, if you call in back-up to a crime scene, and all the officers are killed because you screw up, the police force will be less inclined to send you back-up next time. If you just saved the police chief's life and need a dozen men to track down the assassin, you'll have an easier time of that.

### Time and Money.

As a default, favors can get people to help you for up to half an hour. If you want someone to help you for a few hours, increase the level by 1. If the favor requires working for a day or more, increase the level by 2; and if a week or more, by 3. Particularly with large groups, you'll usually need to factor at least a 1-level increase to give the group time to gather and travel to wherever the party needs them. Even the king needs a few weeks to march an army to war.

### Inconsequential Requests.

The party can request any number of favors that are of a level less than their Prestige without counting toward their daily limit. For

example, a party with Unseen Court Prestige 2 is respected enough by the fey that they could easily have sprites delivering messages around the city, as long as it doesn't put any of the fey into danger. Likewise, PCs with Risur Prestige 2 or more can pretty much always get a local police officer to provide backup or go look into something for them.

### Flint Favors.

Here are some sample favors, provided by Flint's citizens.

- ◆ **Level 0.** Urchins to watch a street for you. A secretary to look through documents or handle your paperwork. A carriage-driver to provide you discreet passage around a district.
- ◆ **Level 1.** A ferry-man to give you discreet passage around the city. A craftsman to make a custom non-magic item for you (the PCs pay the normal price). A minor bureaucrat to bend the rules for your sake. A journalist to run a story.
- ◆ **Level 2.** A docker to create a distraction that will probably get them beaten up or arrested. A journalist to run a false story that could have serious consequences. A major public figure agreeing to talk with you for a few minutes.
- ◆ **Level 3.** A gang of thugs to commit some violent crimes for you. A small group of concerned citizens to rally and protest somewhere. A journalist to print an exposé on a powerful political figure.
- ◆ **Level 4.** A large crowd of protesters to block off a whole building or street. A class of university students to come out and use their skills for the common people. A ship captain to smuggle in something for you.
- ◆ **Level 5.** A politician to take a stand for something that might cost them their office. A city-wide search for a missing person. A local celebrity to put on a private show.
- ◆ **Level 6.** A city-wide protest. A call for all citizens to take arms against a threat.



## Risur Favors.

And here are some examples of help provided by the RHC, the police, or the military.

- ◆ **Level 1.** An officer to provide back-up or investigate a lead for you. One soldier to fight alongside you (see “Allied Stats,” below).
- ◆ **Level 2.** Four officers or soldiers. A spell cast by a 3rd-level spellcaster (the PCs pay for any expensive spell components).
- ◆ **Level 3.** A squad of twelve officers, or a unit of twelve soldiers. A spell cast by a 5th-level spellcaster.
- ◆ **Level 4.** A precinct-wide alert for all officers to assist. Four 12-soldier units. A spell cast by a 7th-level spellcaster.
- ◆ **Level 5.** A city-wide alert for all officers to assist. A company of one hundred soldiers. A spell cast by a 9th-level spellcaster.
- ◆ **Level 6.** Four companies of soldiers. A spell cast by Principal Minister Harkover Lee, the king’s court wizard.

## Unseen Court Favors.

It’s always dangerous to ask for help from the fey. Any favor must be repaid in kind, a bargain which can be magically compelled at any moment.

- ◆ **Level 1.** A tiny fey to deliver an item to a specific house without being seen. A dryad to hide someone on the run from the law.
- ◆ **Level 2.** A pixie to kill a person’s pet and eat everything but its head. A nymph to lure someone off into the Cloudwood.
- ◆ **Level 3.** A hag to provide an uncommon illegal magic item (the PCs pay for the cost). A young treant to sneak into the city and observe a target.
- ◆ **Level 4.** A vekeshi mystic to abduct a factory owner and threaten him.
- ◆ **Level 5.** A fey lord (though not one of the Unseen Court) to meet and provide information.
- ◆ **Level 6.** A member of the Great Hunt to chase down and kill a target in the wilderness.

## Tools of the Mission.

In addition to a constable’s salary, which supports a comfortable lifestyle, the RHC provides its agents three types of resources for their missions.

First, the RHC quartermaster might provide constables with technological devices or magic items from the royal coffers. Government technologists need a testbed for their inventions. Meanwhile, the fey of the Unseen Court would often trade enchanted items for favors, with the requirement that those items be used every so often or else returned.

Second, before each mission the constables will be granted a stipend for purchasing mundane weapons and tools, paying off contacts, travel expenses, and the like.

Third, each unit of constables can requisition equipment from the royal magic item vaults, though their Risur Prestige will determine how many items the government is willing to trust them with. These items should be returned when no longer needed (not counting things like potions that are consumed upon use). Losing items means the RHC might not provide any more.

## Requisitioning Equipment.

The party’s Risur Prestige determines how many enchanted items the RHC will trust them with. If there’s a few weeks’ downtime between missions, the constables can generally call upon the following sorts of items.

- ◆ **Party Risur Prestige 0.** No magic items granted.
- ◆ **Party Risur Prestige 1.** One Common item per constable.
- ◆ **Party Risur Prestige 2.** Two Common items per constable. Two Uncommon items for the unit.
- ◆ **Party Risur Prestige 3.** Three Common items and one Uncommon per constable. Two Rare items for the unit.
- ◆ **Party Risur Prestige 4.** Four Common items, one Uncommon, and one Rare item per constable. One Very Rare item for the unit.
- ◆ **Party Risur Prestige 5.** Five Common items, one Uncommon, one Rare, and one Very Rare item per constable.
- ◆ **Party Risur Prestige 6.** Six Common and two Uncommon items, one Rare, and one Very Rare item per constable. One Legendary item for the unit.

The GM is encouraged to take a moment for each item to use the creator, details, quirks, and minor properties tables in the core rules to demonstrate that the RHC’s items have a diversity of backgrounds, and that sometimes you won’t get exactly what you want.

If the party wants to request a magic item during an adventure, they need to call in a favor using their Risur Prestige. Use the Favor levels listed below as a guideline to determine how long it would take to receive the item.

- ◆ **Level 3.** Requisition a Common magic item.
- ◆ **Level 4.** Requisition an Uncommon magic item.
- ◆ **Level 5.** Requisition a Rare magic item.
- ◆ **Level 6.** Requisition a Very Rare magic item.
- ◆ **Level 7.** Requisition a Legendary magic item.

Regardless of the relative rarity, the RHC will rarely grant a group of constables more than one item apiece beyond the limits described above.

This abstraction represents what would realistically be a complex system involving paperwork and arranging collateral for whatever government agency previously had the item. If the level of the favor is too high, that might mean the party isn’t trusted enough, or simply that such an item doesn’t exist and would need to be crafted. The GM has discretion to be lax or strict with these guidelines. If a PC declines to get a rare item but wants a dozen *potions of healing*, the RHC will probably be fine with that.

# Allied Stats

**U**SE THESE STATS FOR ALLIES THE PARTY CAN request with favors via their Risur Prestige. Individual officers are useful for chasing down leads or keeping an eye on a person of interest, and they can fight in a pinch. Soldiers are really only useful if combat is expected. In large numbers, soldiers can operate as units, making use of combined attacks to threaten creatures much stronger than any individual soldiers. By contrast, though, police officers lack the training necessary for large-scale combat.

## Allied Police Officer

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 13 (studded leather)

**HP** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Intimidation +1, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Primordial

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

**Equipment** uniform, badge, billy club, pistol, whistle, hand-cuffs

### Traits

**Linked Ally** Some faint royal magic empowers RHC agents, and protects those who follow their orders. Each allied officer is linked to one PC, and acts on that PC's turn.

When an allied officer is reduced to 0 hit points he stabilizes as long as his linked PC is within 100 feet. Once per day as a bonus action, a PC who is adjacent to an allied officer linked to him can spend a hit die to have that officer heal hit points equal to the die roll.

**Flint Native** Due to familiarity with Flint's landscape, the allied officer can use his reaction when targeted by a ranged or area attack to move 5 feet or to drop prone, which might grant him cover against the attack.

### Actions

**Billy Club** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit; reach 5 ft., one target.

*Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Pistol** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit; range 20/60; one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage. *Special:* The weapon misfires on a natural 1. Reloading requires an action or bonus action.



See “Prestige” (above) for the Favor Ratings of requesting these allies. Generally we recommend the GM divide control of allies among the players.

## Allied Soldier

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 16 (chainmail)

**HP** 16 (3d8 + 3)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Intimidation +1, Perception +2, Survival +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Primordial

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Equipment** chainmail, pack, short sword, carbine, one flask of alchemist fire, leaf of Nicodemus

### Traits

**Linked Ally** Some faint royal magic empowers RHC agents, and protects those who follow their orders. Each allied soldier is linked to one PC, and acts on that PC's turn.

When an allied soldier is reduced to 0 hit points he stabilizes as long as his linked PC is within 100 feet. Once per day as a bonus action, a PC who is adjacent to an allied soldier linked to him can spend a hit die to have that soldier heal hit points equal to the die roll.

**Druidic Guidance** The allied soldier has advantage on the first saving throw it makes each day.

### Actions

**Multiaction** The allied soldier makes two attacks.

**Short Sword** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit; reach 5 ft., one target.

*Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

**Carbine** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit; range 50/150; one target.

*Hit:* 7 (1d12 + 1) piercing damage. *Special:* The weapon misfires on a natural 1. Reloading requires an action or bonus action, limited how often the soldier can fire.

**Alchemist Fire** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit; range 20/60; one target.

*Hit:* Target catches on fire, taking 2 (1d4) fire damage at the start of each turn until it spends an action and succeeds on a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames. *Special:* The soldier only has one flask.

**Allied Unit**

Large swarm of Medium humanoids (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 16 (chainmail)

**HP** 96 (18d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +7

**Senses** passive Perception 17

**Languages** Primordial

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Equipment** chainmail, pack, short sword, carbine, one flask of alchemist fire each, leaf of Nicodemus; units may also be equipped with pikes if they expect to battle large creatures

**Traits**

**Large Unit** The unit consists of eight soldiers working in tandem, filling the space of a Large creature. The unit needs only fill 4 contiguous spaces, and it can move through any opening an individual soldier could move through.

Attacks that affect an area deal double damage to the unit if they include 2 spaces of the unit, and triple damage if they include all 4 spaces. Non-damaging effects that target only a single creature (e.g., the poisoned effect of ray of sickness) have no effect on the unit.

Non-damaging effects with an area that only includes part of the unit (e.g., an *entangle* spell) might grant the unit advantage on its save. The GM should use their best judgment when adjudicating such effects.

Damage to the unit wounds individual soldiers and weakens unit cohesion. The unit only makes two attacks with its Multiattack action when reduced to half its hit points or fewer. When reduced to 0 hit points, replace the unit with two Allied Soldiers.

These stats represent the unit in combat for ease of play. Outside of combat it is best to treat the unit as individual soldiers.

**Linked Ally** Some faint royal magic empowers RHC agents, and protects those who follow their orders. Each allied unit is linked to one PC, and acts on that PC's turn.

When an allied unit is reduced to 0 hit points, the soldiers who made it up stabilize as long as their linked PC is within 100 feet. The two surviving Allied Soldiers link to the same PC.

**Druidic Guidance** The allied unit has advantage on the first saving throw it makes each day.

**Actions**

**Multiattack** The allied unit makes four attacks, or two attacks if it has half its hit points or fewer.

**Short Sword Swarm** The soldiers coordinate, some knocking aside your guard so others can score wounds. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit; reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

**Carbine Fusillade** Half the soldiers fire while the others load and ready the carbines. **Ranged Weapon Attack:** +7 to hit; range 50/150; one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d12 + 2) piercing damage.

**Alchemist Fire Volley** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit; range 20/60; one target. *Hit:* Target catches on fire, taking 5 (2d4) fire damage at the start of each turn until it spends an action and succeeds on a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames. *Special:* The unit can only make this attack four times.

**Allied Company**

Gargantuan swarm of Medium humanoids (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 16 (chainmail)

**HP** 384 (72d8 + 72)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +12

**Senses** passive Perception 22

**Languages** Primordial

**Challenge** 17 (18,000 XP)

**Traits**

**Gargantuan Company** The company consists of thirty-two soldiers working in tandem, filling the space of a Gargantuan creature. The company needs only fill 16 contiguous spaces, and it can move through any opening an individual soldier could move through.

Attacks that affect an area deal double damage to the unit if they include 2 spaces of the unit, triple if 4 spaces, and so on, up to octuple for all 16 spaces.

Non-damaging effects that target only a single creature (e.g., the poisoned effect of ray of sickness) have no effect on the unit. Non-damaging effects with an area that only includes part of the unit (e.g., an *entangle* spell) might grant the unit advantage on its save. The GM should use their best judgment when adjudicating such effects.

Damage to the company wounds individual soldiers and weakens unit cohesion. The company only makes four attacks with its Multiattack action reduced to half its hit points or fewer. When reduced to 0 hit points, replace the company with two Allied Units.

**Linked Ally** Some faint royal magic empowers RHC agents, and protects those who follow their orders. Each allied company is linked to one PC, and acts on that PC's turn.

When an allied company is reduced to 0 hit points, the soldiers who made it up stabilize as long as their linked PC is within 100 feet. The two surviving Allied Units link to the same PC.


**Druidic Guidance** The allied company has advantage on the first saving throw it makes each day.

**Actions**

**Multiattack** The allied company makes eight attacks, but no more than four can originate from the same "side" of the unit, making it impossible to swarm a single target unless the unit spreads out. When the company has half its hit points or fewer, it instead only makes four attacks.

**Short Sword Swarm** The mass of flashing metal is overwhelming, impossible to defend against. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit; reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) piercing damage.

**Carbine Fusillade** The retort of the guns is like thunder. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit; range 50/150; one target. *Hit:* 30 (4d12 + 4) piercing damage.

**Alchemist Fire Bombardment** The company bombards a 5-ft. radius area with alchemist fire. Each creature in the area must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target catches on fire, taking 5 (2d4) fire damage at the start of each turn until it spends an action and succeeds on a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames. The area becomes awash with flames for one round, and creatures that end their turn in the area take 5 (2d4) fire damage. *Special:* The company can only make this attack four times. 



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Ryan Nock and James J. Haec

**OUR HUMBLE AND SPECIAL THANKS TO** to the hundreds of gamers who backed the original release of ZEITGEIST on Kickstarter, and to the over one thousand generous patrons of EN WORLD EN5IDER whose support has made this Fifth Edition update possible.

# The City of Flint

**T**HE CITY OF FLINT IS THE HEART OF RISUR'S industrial revolution, and it is the base of operations for the PCs. You and your fellow players should have at least passing familiarity with this primer, for in the second ZEITGEIST adventure a murder mystery will take the constables from the heights of the city's majestic rainforest mountains to the depths of its criminal underbelly. Also described within is the Royal Homeland Constabulary, the organization the PCs belong to, and techniques used to apprehend and interrogate enemies of Risur.

## CITY OF FLINT VITAL STATISTICS

**Population:** 800,000

**Head of Government:** Governor Roland Stanfield.

**Key Districts:** The Ayres, Bosum Strand, Central District, the Cloudwood, the Nettles, North Shore, Parity Lake, Pine Island, Stray River.

**Prominent Landmarks:** Cauldron Hill, Parity Lake, Stanfield Canal.



1. Governor's Mansion
2. Pardwright University
3. RHC Headquarters
4. King's Station
5. Royal Shipyard
6. Cauldron Hill

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## City Districts

Each district has its own mayor who handles local affairs, all of whom are elected except the mayor of The Nettles, whose additional role as guardian of the cursed Cauldron Hill requires he be appointed by the governor and approved by the king.

Districts also elect representatives to the city council, whose authority is balanced against that of the city governor, **Roland Stanfield**. Technically the position of governor is elected, but aside from brief periods after the deaths of various incarnations, Stanfield has held the position for over four centuries.

## Bosum Strand

Depending on who you ask, the name Bosum Strand comes either from the boatswains who frequented its taverns, or from the harbor's more traditional name, which translated to bosom of the sea. In either case, the docks along the east shore of Flint Bay are the heart of the city's trade, culture, and crime.

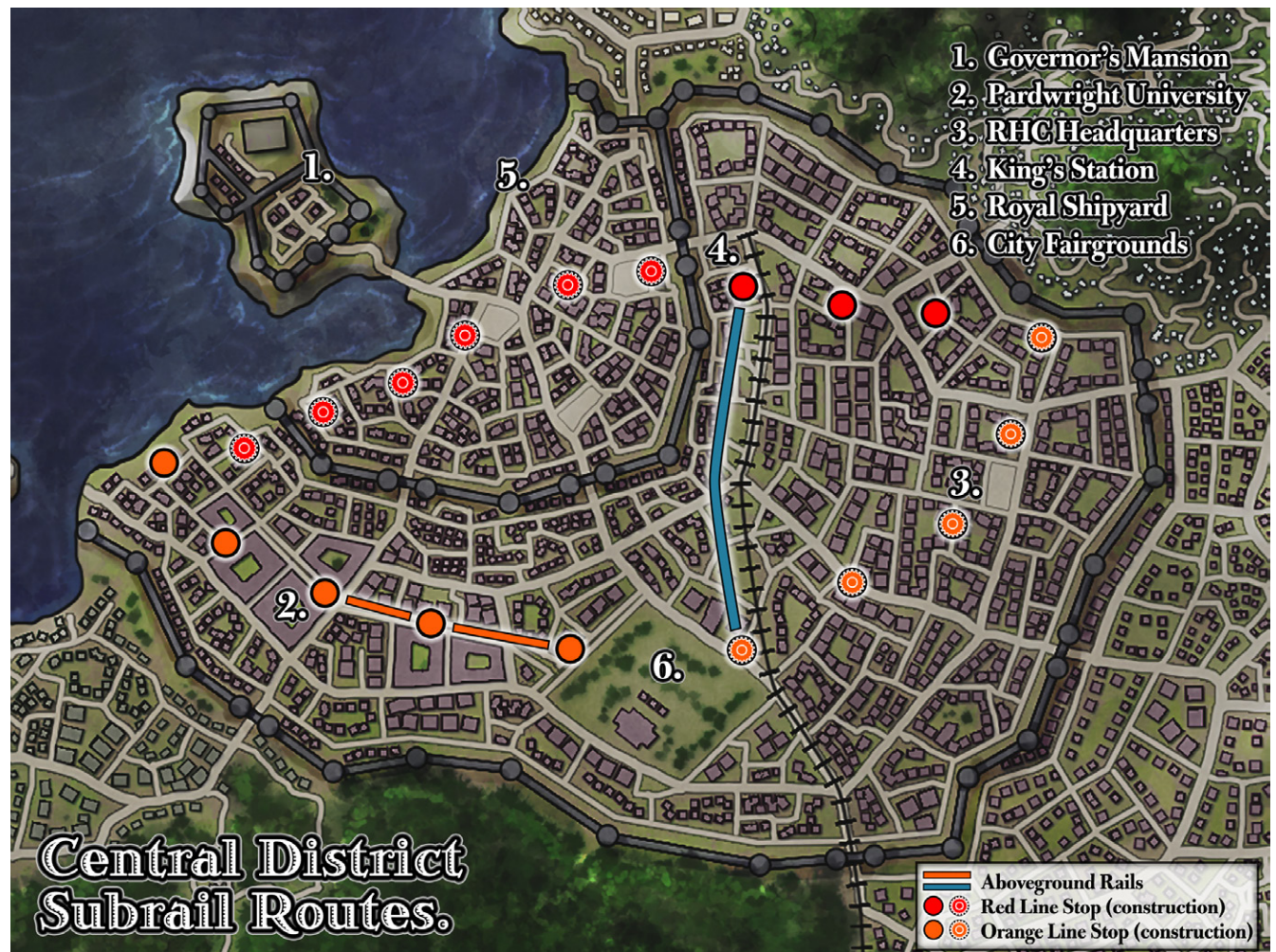
Hundreds of warehouses serve Flint's merchant fleet, and dozens of bars, taverns, gambling houses, and brothels serve its dock workers. Craftsmen, artists, and money changers own shops surrounding several scattered public squares throughout the district, and the district's mayor **Griffin Stowe** has strong-armed property

owners along major streets to ensure that when the wealthy and influential travel the strand they are not forced to see any of the district's uncouth underbelly.

This is why, of course, the dockers make a point to perform on as many street corners and squares as possible.

The district is currently clearing out tenants and demolishing buildings for a freight rail line. The station is already under construction, and once complete it will speed delivery of raw materials and natural exports. More importantly, it will let Flint share its industrial bounty with the rest of the nation. Unusually, many local druids have been recruited to speak with the spirits of the land and appease them so they will not disrupt the building process.

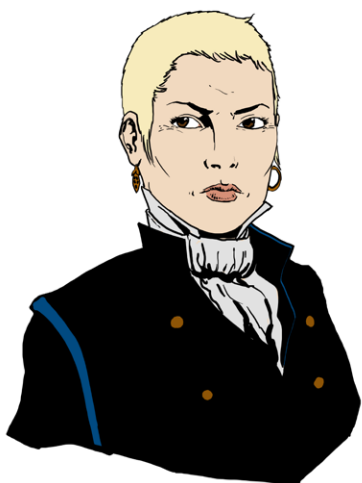
The Night of the Mirror Moon occurs when the High Winter moon is the fourth full moon of the season. From the moment the moon shines on Flint Harbor, anyone who enters the water while holding a mirror will emerge in the Dreaming analogue of Bosum Strand. There, it is said, the docks are replaced by a glorious beach where all the fey from miles around gather for the wildest party one could ever imagine. Sometimes people fail to get back before the moon sets, while others return with magical powers, a gift or bargain from the fey. The last such Mirror Moon happened seventeen years ago, in 483 A.O.V., and the next will be in two years.



Central District Subrail Routes.



CITY GOVERNOR  
ROLAND STANFIELD



LADY INSPECTRESS  
MARGARET SAXBY



HANA "GALE" SOLIOGN

## Central

The oldest and most developed district of Flint is home to its main government structures, including the city council, superior court, police headquarters, and the offices of various civil functionaries like tax collectors. Grand party halls, ornate druidic garden temples, and parks filled with monuments to old wars provide recreation and entertainment for the city's nobility and prospering middle class, while the Orange Street commodities market and the prestigious Pardwight University are the dual hearts of Flint's economic and academic cultures.

The district mayor **Oncala Putnam** recently approved construction of a grand subrail station to serve as the hub of a city-wide transportation network. Currently the Central district is often clogged with traffic from the surface rail station, since the proposed tunnel through Humble Hill in the Nettles, meant to provide an easier route to the factories of Parity Lake, has been dogged by sabotage from elements opposed to the industrialization of Risur.

Just off the coast in Flint Bay, the city governor's mansion occupies what was once an island fortress. For the past 400 years Roland Stanfield has, through various incarnations and with only rare disruption, served as city governor, earning near universal respect for his wisdom and leadership.

Perhaps most importantly for the PCs, Central district is home to the local headquarters of the Royal Homeland Constabulary, headed by **Lady Inspectress Margaret Saxby**. Extensive details of the local branch are presented below, in the Royal Homeland Constabulary section.

## Subrail Construction.

A major freight and passenger railroad line enters from the south and stops at King's Station, but local light rail routes are being constructed throughout Central District. Most of this route travels underground, thus earning the moniker subrail. One section parallel to the freight line travels aboveground in the same corridor, and a brief stretch of track near Pardwight University rises to the surface by necessity, due to some magical quirks of geography.

## Cloudwood

The eastern outskirts of Flint are dominated by towering mountains, their peaks constantly shrouded in clouds that feed lush rainforests and verdant streams. The steep highlands are sparsely populated, but numerous plantations and small farms fill the flatter terrain near the coast. Few city folk venture out to these lands, believing that here the veil between the real world and the Dreaming is

## Navras Opera House

Flint's oldest surviving building is the Navras Opera House in the central district. Navras, an eladrin who fled Elfoivar after the Great Malice, designed the opera house and laid the cornerstone with a brick he had brought from his homeland. He spent nearly two hundred years personally overseeing its construction, and was aided by no less than eight Risuri kings. When he completed the building, incongruously huge for what was at the time just a small river fort city, Navras gave the first performance by singing the dirge of Vekesh. As the audience cheered and wept at his performance, he walked off the stage and disappeared forever.

The acoustic design of the performance hall somehow captures magical power from song, or from the emotional reactions of the audience. Impresarios who coordinate performance almost always hire spellcasting bards to harness this energy and craft a magic item as a memento of the show. In the three hundred years since the Navras Opera House opened, most of these items have found their ways into private collections, but a rare few have become famous, such as the Hurricane Violin, which commemorated the Fable of Seaquen and later banished a sea monster that threatened Flint Harbor in 417 A.O.V.

thin. Local myths include countless tales of farmers, travelers, and juvenile miscreants who wander into the foggy woods and suffer wretched fates at the hands of capricious fey.

While most who live in Cloudwood consider it common courtesy to share a bowl of milk or plates of sliced fruit with unseen nightly visitors, the district's new mayor, **Doyle Idylls**, has forbidden district employees from engaging in the old tradition. Mayor Idylls shares his office with the local police branch, and he recently had salt baked into bricks around its base in order to keep away curious fey. Soon after, the building developed a gopher problem.

Though criminals in Flint tend to make the Nettles their first stop when on the run from the law, those who really need to lay low find the wild rainforests of Cloudwood ideal. The most rural areas of the district are practically independent thorps and hamlets, many of which are sympathetic to desperate outsiders. Until recently they reaped rewards from collaborating with at least three gangs which operated out of the forest, but a new player in the area has somehow managed to get the gangs to call off their attacks.



A VIEW FROM CAULDRON HILL.

Somewhere in the high misty mountains hides Hana “Gale” Soliogn, an eladrin who fled to Risur after she escaped the rich Danoran family who had kept her as a trophy for over a century. Upon leaving the dead magic zone of Danor, Soliogn discovered an exceedingly rare talent for innately controlling winds and weather, which earned her the name Gale.

She enjoyed a brief celebrity upon arriving in Flint a year ago, but almost immediately withdrew into the wilderness and began recruiting followers among those opposed to the influx of industry. Law enforcement officials believe she’s trying to punish Danor by proxy, and in the past several months hundreds of acts of sabotage on factories and steamships have been linked to her. In one incident, Gale was caught in the act of trying to assassinate a sleeping industrialist, but she managed to fly away and avoid capture.

### The Nettles

A small spur of the mountains of the Cloudwood cuts into the heart of Flint, and for most of the city’s history these hills were home to druidic rituals, or simply let romantics witness wondrous vistas of the beaches from on high. Their traditional name came from an old commander of the Flint fort, who saw them as a thorny barrier against attack from the north.

But then in 346 A.O.V. a coven of witches took residence upon a jagged mountain at the range’s edge, which ever since has been called Cauldron Hill. For decades they terrorized the city, sending goblins and specters to abduct people for sacrificial rites, then hiding in the veil between this world and the Bleak Gate whenever any tried to assault them.

Eventually the witches were defeated when King Lorcan allied with a Crisillyiri godhand and led an assault during a lunar eclipse. Ever since, the peak of Cauldron Hill has been rife with haunting and spirit activity, and one of the key tasks of the district mayor has been to keep daring fools from ascending the mountain and coming down possessed.

The greatest achievement of the previous district mayor was constructing a highway across Humble Hill to make travel across the city easier, but in the past few decades the district, even the base of Cauldron Hill itself, have grown thick with slum housing, as more and more people flock to Flint hoping to find work in the factories. The broad switchbacks of the highway are cluttered with shacks, often with two or three families sharing the same building. Poorly crafted houses cling to the sides of slopes, and they have become a nightmare for local police to patrol, giving a whole new connotation to the name “The Nettles.”



MAYOR REED MACBANNIN



LORCAN KELL





## Traversing Flint

Flint is a sprawling city, and often the party's investigations will take them across it and back in the course of a single day. If you use carriages, as the genteel almost always do, it takes roughly half an hour to move from the heart of one district to the heart of an adjacent one. Walking doubles this time.

Crossing Flint's harbor or reaching one of The Ayres is usually an hour-long affair by sailboat, or half an hour if you know a friendly steamboat captain. Moving through the maze of rookeries in the Nettles can take hours, and it's always faster to just go around than go over. Few paved roads lead to the Cloudwood, which makes carriages unsuitable, and one could spend hours or days roaming the mountains to the east or bayous to the west.

The few completed subrail stations in Central District do provide fairly swift transport, on par with a carriage while being cheaper and able to carry more people. Once the full subrail network is completed, it should be possible to move between Central district and either Bosum Strand or Stray River in as few as ten minutes. And if ever the route under the Nettles can overcome sabotage, it could shave nearly an hour off the time it takes to go around the troublesome hills.

Current district mayor **Reed Macbannin** has been unable to halt the new arrivals, and he hasn't been helped by the common prejudice that the factory workers are prone to crime, laziness, and general mayhem. Despite this, he has managed to earn passing respect from the people of his district; few are trusted with the stewardship of Cauldron Hill, and he has leveraged his office to get city tax money for the poorest of the poor.

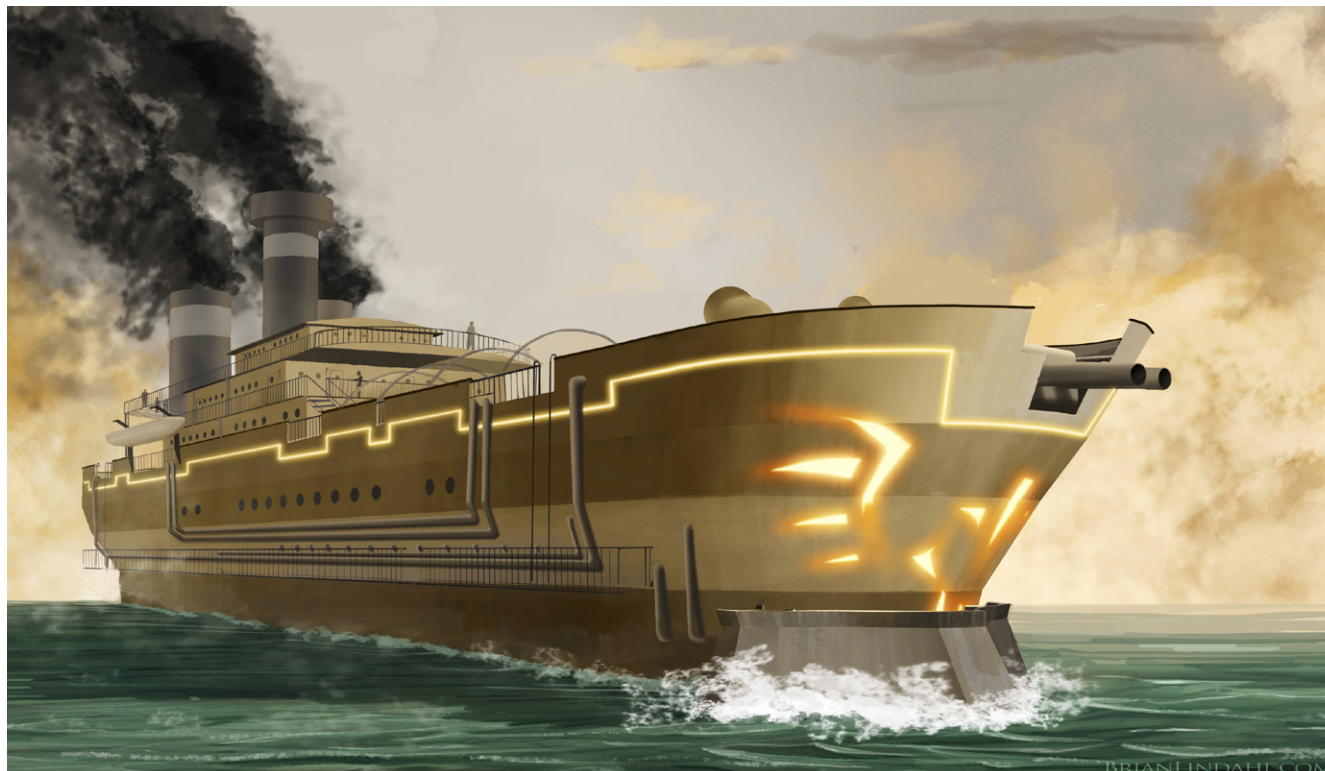
## North Shore

The sun rises through the mists of Cloudwood, banishing the night with pale purple clouds dashed by the golden gleam of dawn. Fresh sea breezes sweep the gloomy haze of soot away from pristine beaches, letting clear daylight fall upon gently crashing waves. The day wanes, and the sky explodes with crimson and vermilion as the sun sets behind the twin peaks of Great Horned Mountain. Night drapes a starry curtain across the world, and still the waves gently lap upon the North Shore.

Home to the most beautiful urban beaches in all of Lanjyr, Flint's North Shore district prides itself on its appearance, despite being so close to the polluted Parity Lake. Demand for beachside property has pushed out all but the wealthiest land-owners, those who can afford to hire druids to pray for favorable winds to keep the smoke at bay, and armies of cleaning crews to scrub their walls and streets when the druids fail.

Of course with wealth comes corruption and temptation. Young girls end up dead in alleys. Criminals stage daring robberies of villas protected by curses. Destitute nobles, dragged down from their towers by the machinations of rivals, stumble from nighttime streets into strangely-scented shops they'd never seen before and find offers they cannot refuse.

The district mayor, **Aaron Choir**, unabashedly serves the interests of the wealthy, and he is currently petitioning to build a wall between North Shore and Parity Lake to keep out "undesirables." Likewise, police violently deter the occasional protest that crops up outside the Danoran consulate, which sits a few blocks inland from the shore. Mayor Choir is careful, of course, not to appear too friendly with the unpopular Danorans, no matter how much they pay him in kick-backs.



THE R.N.S. COALTONGUE UNDER STEAM.



## Parity Lake

When Flint first began building factories, this inland lake, fed by run-off from the Nettles, was chosen by Governor Stanfield. A massive construction project widened and deepened a natural river that ran from the lake to the Bosum Strand harbor, providing easy transit of manufactured goods out of – and coal or heating oil into – the district. Homes of fishermen on the lake were demolished, while new flophouses and stacked tenements were erected for the waves of people who came from around the country seeking work in the new factories. Wealth poured into the city's coffers, and into the pockets of those canny enough to lease their land here, rather than sell it.

During the Fourth Yerasol War seven years ago, factories in Parity Lake mass-produced firearms, cannons, and other weapons, and a lumber mill transformed logs from the Cloudwood into components for shipyards in Bosum Strand. New factories sprang up to create armor for men and ships, and soon even steam engines were being churned out to retrofit Risur's fleet.

The war effort transformed Parity Lake from a booming collective of new businesses to a crowded, foul-smelling, soot-choked warren, over-crowded with the children of now second-generation factory workers, surrounding a pool that every day more resembles sludge than water. The police manage to keep crime down through heavy-handed measures; the district's mayor Rosa Gohins has publicly stated that the safety and stability of the factories are more important than the moral of the factory workers.

In the past few months a spate of fires have struck around the district, which authorities suspect to be arson, possibly tied to the fey terrorist known as Gale (see The Cloudwood, above). The fires have precisely targeted individual homes and businesses related to local industrialists, but despite their minimal collateral damage, people in the district fear an inferno if one goes out of control.

More dreaded, however, is a killer known as the **Ragman**, who is said to stalk dark alleys near the canals and drag young men into the sewers. He has been tied to at least six disappearances in the past year, but so far law enforcement have taken few steps to catch him. Strange occult symbols scrawled on the undersides of bridges that cross the canal have provoked suspicions that the Ragman might be retribution from the long dead witches of Cauldron Hill.

Those with more level heads tend to see the Ragman story as a cover for the murders committed by the local guild of thieves, led by strongman **Lorcan Kell**. Kell's guild is best known for high-profile abductions and ransoms, while their more mundane crimes often go unreported since three journalists were found decapitated and holding their heads on the bridges over the Stanfield Canal. Many locals allege that the police know perfectly well where to find Kell himself, but are either too corrupt or too scared to go after him.

## Pine Island

Though the ground of most of Flint's coast is rocky and hilly, the western coast of the bay has a strange sprawling bayou surrounding dozens of short granite hill-islands. Pine Island takes its name from the aquatic pine trees that anchor the bits of dry land throughout the bayou, though the hills are mostly grassy rangeland. Not as well known or developed as the bustling east coast, this district nevertheless plays a significant role in the city's business.

While Bosum Strand handles industrial and textile trade, Pine Island services hundreds of plantations in its soggy lowlands and small ranches in its western hills. The main docks on Flint Bay are practically a floating city of wooden bridges and stone anchors, which has slowly grown away from the silt of the bayou to better serve deep-water merchant ships. Further inland, complicated streets, connected by ferries and bridges, weave between islands ranging from the size of a single house to a small neighborhood.

Criminals ply the waters of the bayous in shallow boats, often parking ships of smuggled drugs, magic, or women just off shore, then taking circuitous routes through the flooded forests in order to bypass dock authorities. While most dock-side businesses are legitimate, deeper in the bayou you can find gambling houses, brothels, and fey pepper dens. Pacts with local fey who are angry with the spinning gears on the other side of the bay help these criminal establishments hide from law enforcement, all for the low price of just a few newborns a year.

Farther west, where there are no longer even occasional hills, the Battalion academy trains elite soldiers and martial scientists in the ways of war, with an emphasis on wilderness survival and the best techniques of intimidation against an occupying force. The district's mayor, **Roger Pepper**, is a graduate. Many of the Battalion's teachers served in the Yerasol Wars and various skirmishes, and the common fishermen of Pine Island say some of them brought back strange spirits from those distant islands. Recent folk tales tell of pale fish-scaled men who steal fowl and livestock each month during the neap tide.

## Stray River

The cluster of businesses and homes where Stray River empties into the bay is the closest thing to a typical Risuri city one can find in Flint. The Stray River district has well-tended streets, quaint two-story brick houses, and enjoys easy prosperity as the place most visitors to the city stay. The district is also home of some of the oldest mills in Risur, powered by small canals that loop off the main river to avoid disrupting water traffic.

One strange attraction of the district is the Penny Pyre. Originally it was a small blackened pit, where a mage's accident caused copper to burn as easily as wood, but last far longer. When the effect persisted, it became a fixture of the district's festivals. Various copper sculptures are designed by the districts artisans and placed atop the pit to burn over the course of hours or days. On normal occasions, people will occasionally toss a spare copper coin into the pyre for good luck. The royal mint has tried to end the practice, but the district's mayor, **Christine Robinson**, defends the tradition, saying more coins are simply lost in the dirt than tossed in the pyre.

## The Ayres

North of the city lie a clear island chain and several satellite islands. Many of these are merely rocky sandbars with a few trees, but a few larger islands serve as remote villas for the city's wealthiest. Nobles hold many family estates here, though one island is owned by a man new to his money: **Guy Goodson**, who swindled his initial wealth from a dozen naïve villages, and invested early in Flint's



industrial boom. Today he owns dozens of factories in Parity Lake, and regularly dines with his noble neighbors, who delight in the small steamboat he uses to visit them.

Since technically The Ayres is considered part of North Shore, it does not have its own district mayor. In practice, law and government officials never bothers the nobles on their islands unless an equally wealthy or powerful individual lodges a complaint.

## The Military

The Battalion school of war in the bayous of Pine Island trains hundreds of future officers every year, and works in connection with various district forts throughout the city, as well as naval bases on an island near the mouth of Flint Harbor. Flint still remembers

a few naval skirmishes that threatened shipping eight years ago, and so the military maintains a constant watch for possible threats. Normally, though, they will not respond unless a district mayor or the city governor himself calls on them.

While few individual soldiers have magical training, the military has acquired over the years a wide variety of enchanted weapons and defenses. Perhaps foremost among these, every soldier stationed in The Nettles district fort is given an amulet to ward them against supernatural influence, should they be called upon to face a reawakening of the eldritch horrors that reigned over Cauldron Hill during the time of the witches.

The local commander of Flint land forces is **Colonel Greg Masterson**, while the naval defenses are overseen by **Rear Admiral Morris Dawkins**.



A RISURI STEAMSHIP CONFRONTS A DANORAN FRIGATE DURING THE FOURTH YERASOL WAR.

# Royal Homeland Constabulary

**T**HE ZEITGEIST ADVENTURE PATH ASSUMES THE PCs will begin as agents of the Royal Homeland Constabulary. RHC constables are law enforcement officers tasked with protecting Risur from serious threats, usually in the form of foreign plots, magically-equipped criminals, and various supernatural foes everyday police are not capable of handling.

The directorate in Flint generally keeps busy thwarting arms smuggling, industrial espionage, and the sorts of magical and monstrous threats once handled by plucky self-motivated “adventurers.”

## Authority and the Law

Constables are invested with the authority of the king, and so are granted great leeway in their pursuit of justice and safety. While normal police must acquire warrants before they can search a building, RHC constables are trusted to not abuse their authority, and so can act as swiftly as needed. However, they are required to fill out proper paperwork and give testimony justifying their actions. A constable who uses his power for personal gain – or to harass anyone of political clout without good reason – will find himself penalized, demoted, and possibly even in prison.

Constables are expected to take suspects alive whenever possible. Do note that the Fifth Edition rules allow characters to choose to subdue an enemy rather than kill it when it’s reduced to 0 hit points, so long as they use a melee weapon and are within 5 feet of the target. Execution is a likely punishment if a trial deems a suspect to be an enduring threat, though some criminals with political value might be kept under special house arrest, as long as they do not actively pursue plots against Risur.

Every constable has access to binding ropes as well as handcuffs (albeit not quite as advanced as the modern variety). Most handcuffs include gold wire or thread, which can be tied off after the cuffs are closed to prevent creatures from teleporting while wearing them. In special cases, *mage-cuffs* can be requisitioned.

Constables can usually hand over arrested suspects to the police, though the RHC headquarters in Flint does have specially prepared cells to handle more dangerous criminals. These cells are all lined with enchantments similar to those of *mage-cuffs*, and are

## New Magic Item

### Mage-Cuffs

Uncommon Item

Price: 250 gp.

**Property:** When a person wearing *mage-cuffs* casts a spell or activates a magical power, the cuffs glow, make a warning whistle sound, and deal 10 force damage to the wearer. A creature reduced to 0 hit points this way is knocked unconscious but stabilized.

*Mage-cuffs* can only be applied to willing or restrained creatures of Small or Medium size.

surrounded by rings of gold and bricks baked with salt and other warding agents. When needed, even more specialized items can be used, such as chains that can hold incorporeal entities or prevent shapechanging, hoods that block gaze attacks, and sigils to nullify innate energy threats like flaming elementals.

When it comes to interrogations, this is not a modern police force. Characters who choose to be enlightened and use less-violent approaches can often get what they need with less hassle, but threats and actual violence are common tools when trying to make suspects talk, and most superiors won’t bat an eye as long as no one is seriously injured or dies.

## Loyalty to Risur

The RHC recruits from police, military, universities, and many other sources of talent, occasionally even accepting foreign applicants. In addition to requiring extensive background checks, recruits must undergo a magical inquisition. The king grants each branch’s local director the ability to test the loyalty of all who would apply to join the constabulary.

A candidate who agrees to undertake the test opens their mind so the director may sense their true intentions. If they have any ill will to Risur, its people, or its leaders, it will be revealed. More importantly, the candidate must show a devotion to protecting Risur. Risur need not be the primary concern of the applicant – people are expected, after all, to value their family, friends, even careers – but this precaution has kept the RHC from ever having produced a traitor in the thirty years it has been active.



ASSISTANT CHIEF INSPECTOR  
STOVER DELFT



## Hierarchy and Teams

Approximately twenty constables are active in the Royal Homeland Constabulary's Flint directorate, supported by almost a hundred researchers, office assistants, laboratory technicians, security guards, carriage drivers, and the like.

### Leadership.

The Flint branch is run by **Lady Inspectress Margaret Saxby**, a former superstar investigator who cracked many famous cases, became the darling of the public, and earned herself a knighthood. During the Fourth Yerasol War she married a young nobleman, acquiring clout among aristocratic circles. When the then-director of Flint's branch of the RHC lost favor in a scandal, she easily won the appointment to take his place.

Lady Saxby leads her branch with incisive intelligence and an experienced intuition for determining which of her constables should pursue which threats. On the other hand, some complain that her confidence borders on megalomania. On several occasions underlings who have become a bit too popular for her liking have received transfers to less prestigious postings.

At nearly fifty, Lady Saxby remains quite fit and retains youthful beauty. She demands authority wherever she goes, and uses many subtle reminders to let people know who is boss. For example, there is only one (expensive, comfortable) chair in her office: hers.

### Units and Oversight.

Saxby's role as director often has her dealing with bureaucrats and nobles, and while she officially is also the Chief Inspector, she leaves most affairs of investigations to **Assistant Chief Inspector Stover Delft**, who oversees four units of constables and coordinates their activities.

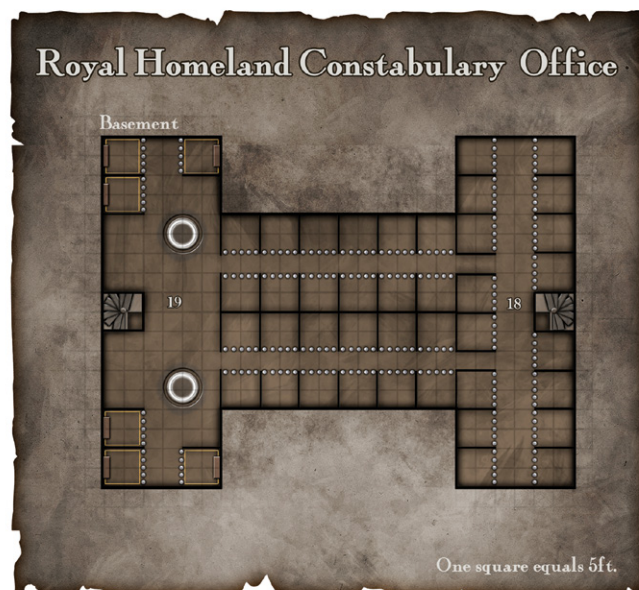
A local Flinter in his early 40s, Delft gets squinty and condescending when his authority is questioned, but he recognizes talent and good work. Since his own days as a constable, Delft has served a vital role handling logistics; in the past few years he's even acquired a modicum of leadership skill. He often expresses pride for three of his old underlings who went on to head spy cells overseas.

Delft chews leaf of Nicodemus, and thinks he looks charming if he grins while sucking the juices. He walks with a cane because a mimic tore a chunk out of his leg fifteen years ago. He has a habit of poking inanimate objects with his cane before he gets too close to them, and spitting on them when he wants to be extra sure.

### Other Prominent NPCs.

Some other constables in the Flint branch include.

- ◆ **Carlao**, a human veteran of the Fourth Yerasol War who proudly wears his plate armor even in the city. He's something of a director's pet, and acts as Saxby's trusted aide.
- ◆ **Serena**, a human tinkerer who often crafts gadgets useful for spying and "wet works," but is surprisingly cheery, seeing all female constables as her sisters.
- ◆ **Kaea**, an eladrin evoker widely distrusted by the local fey and druids after she went undercover among the skyseers to expose a vekeshi murderer.
- ◆ **Dima**, a dwarf priest with an unhealthy fondness for filing paperwork.
- ◆ **Josiah**, a human sniper constantly fiddling with his rifle when he's not on mission seducing people of interest.
- ◆ **Gaethan**, a half-elf ranger whose ability to speak with the dead has made him a bit addled and unreliable, having to carry a notebook to remind himself of his daily affairs.





## Headquarters

Located in Central District, the Flint branch of the RHC has one primary headquarters building, plus three satellite buildings containing libraries, laboratories, and more supplies and offices. The main headquarters has two floors, plus a basement for captured suspects. The jail has only twice reached capacity in the past thirty years.

Most rooms have gas-lit lamps either along the walls or in recesses in the ceiling.

### First Floor.

1. **Entrance.** At least two guards are on duty at all times.
2. **Lower Hallway.**
3. **Western Stairwell.**
4. **Eastern Stairwell.**
5. **Interrogation Rooms.**
6. **Quartermaster Office.**
7. **General Supplies.** Door locked. Quartermaster can access.
8. **Evidence.** Door locked. Requires paperwork to access.
9. **Secretary Pool.**
10. **Guard Room.** Each room typically has another two guards.
11. **Morgue.**

### Second Floor.

12. **Inspector's Desks.**
13. **Delft's Office.**
14. **Support Offices.**
15. **Break Room.**
16. **Upper Hallway.**
17. **Saxby's Office.**

### Basement.

18. **Holding Cells.** At least two guards are on duty at all times.
19. **Magic Cells.** Spellcasters are kept here. The cells are enchanted to function like *mage-cuffs*; any attempt to use magical powers sounds an alarm and deals 10 force damage to the prisoner. A *golden ward* also blocks teleportation and summoning. Two columns glow with pale white light, which grants everyone within 5 squares resistance against all energy types.

## Before Adventure Two

The second ZEITGEIST adventure, *The Dying Skyseer*, takes place within Flint, as do parts of other adventures. To help players learn about the city, after the end of Adventure One and before the start of Adventure Two, the GM should ask each player to pick two districts and come up with a contact his or her character has in each district.

This contact could be a friend or family member, a criminal informant, an ex-boyfriend, a merchant whose shop the PC frequents, a minor noble who owes the PC a favor, a religious figure, the PC's fey pepper dealer, or many other options. These NPCs help connect the PCs to the city, and they will come in handy as the heroes investigate a murder mystery and other threats.

## Investigation and Interrogation

Two common challenges during the ZEITGEIST adventure path will be following suspects to see where they go, and interrogating suspects. While you and your GM can always handle these situations narratively or with ad hoc dice rolls, those who want more structure can use the following mechanics as a baseline. In these checks, as in ZEITGEIST in general, you can use skill proficiencies with abilities that don't typically represent them, like using a Strength (Intimidation) check instead of a traditional Charisma (Intimidation) check, or Intelligence (Stealth) instead of Dexterity (Stealth).

### Tailing a Suspect

**Key Skills:** *Athletics, Deception, Perception, Stealth*

Sometimes following a suspect is easy, and only one check is required to avoid being spotted. But if a target is trying to avoid being followed, the tailing challenge will include at least three "stages." Each stage represents one attempt by the target to get somewhere or do something without being spotted.

For instance, a target might take a carriage to a merchant district (stage one), shop innocuously for a bit (stage two), then slip into a shop that sells contraband (stage three). Or a particularly cautious target might travel the streets in random routes (stage one), switch clothes (stage two), hop onto a ferry (stage three), wait for everyone else to get off the ferry first before leaving (stage four), then spend an hour in a busy dockside bar (stage five), before heading a few blocks away to an illicit meeting (stage six).

For each stage, the GM narrates what the target is doing, then you must make two checks: one to keep up, and the other to stay hidden. The skill checks required will depend on the circumstances and your ingenuity. Based on the result of your checks and the target's plans, the GM can narrate the next stage of the pursuit.

- ♦ "Keep up" DC = 5 + the target's INT (Deception) or DEX (Stealth) bonus
- ♦ "Stay hidden" DC = 10 + the target's WIS (Insight) or WIS (Perception) bonus

You can choose to hang back (you suffer disadvantage on the "keep up" check to gain advantage on the "stay hidden" check) or press the pursuit (gaining advantage on the "keep up" check but suffering disadvantage on the "stay hidden" check).

If you fail a "keep up" check, the GM should increase the DC of further "keep up" checks by 5, regardless of what skill is used. This represents you falling behind and having trouble seeing where the target is going. A second failed "keep up" check means that you have lost the target.

Likewise, if you fail a "stay hidden" check, the GM should increase the DC of further "stay hidden" checks by 5. The target has become suspicious and is more on guard. A second failed "stay hidden" check means the target has become aware of you. The target's reaction will vary based on situation and personality – flight, confrontation, attack, calling for help – but your target almost certainly won't let you see anything incriminating.

Of course direct observation is not the only tool in your deductive arsenal. In some situations, it can be more prudent to try another way to learn about the target, instead of risking tipping them off.



### Keeping Up.

Each stage requires you to make a skill check, typically Perception. If the target runs it might be Athletics. If the target goes through a crowded district, perhaps an Acrobatics check would let the constable weave through crowds, or even follow along on rooftops. If the target is a corrupt police officer and has other officers block anyone from taking the same route as him, Persuasion might allay the guards' suspicions. Feel free to come up with your own solutions to these challenges, and the GM might grant advantage to a check for a clever plan.

### Stay Hidden.

Each stage requires you to make a check, typically Stealth. Deception might let you blend in with the patrons at a coffee shop. Perhaps you might even hold your breath and hide underwater with a Constitution check when following a target near the docks.

### Multiple PCs.

There are benefits and drawbacks to sending multiple constables to follow a target. It's easier to keep up because you have more eyes watching the target, but it's easier for the suspect to notice a group that keeps following him.

If multiple PCs trail the same target, each PC makes the checks. If anyone succeeds the "keep up" check, it counts as a success for the whole team. However, if anyone fails the "stay hidden" check, it counts as a failure for the whole team and increases the DC for future checks of that sort. If the team gets a second failure to stay hidden, only those who failed their checks are spotted by the target.

### Other Complications.

This just presents a fairly simple situation of tailing a single target. In practice, the enemies of the RHC often are clever in avoiding detection and pursuit. Avoiding an ambush by the minions of a potential suspect might be more important to the mission's success than simply following blithely, and cracking enough skulls won't necessarily crack the case.

## Interrogating a Suspect

*Key Skills: Deception, Insight, Intimidation, Persuasion*

An interrogation might involve subtly getting a suspect to talk about himself, verbally intimidating or manipulating a prisoner into confessing a secret, or physically punishing a target until he breaks. To get useful information, you must establish and maintain a rapport, and then extract information out of the target.

When running an interrogation as a sequence of skill checks, the GM should first have the players explain or roleplay how the characters attempt to establish rapport and only then make a check.

## Torture and the Rule of Law

This is a topic the group should probably discuss before starting this campaign. Maybe everyone is alright with violent interrogations, but not with outright sadism. Perhaps they'd prefer to have a more heroic tone, where all the "good guys" have to do is feign that they'd hurt a prisoner to get him to open up. Or the group might desire a grimmer take, recognizing the fact that throughout most of history and even today, many in law enforcement believe that hurting someone will get them to talk.

Just make sure to go no farther than any player is willing to deal with. It becomes everyone's responsibility to make sure a social and supposedly "fun" game doesn't cause friends to be uncomfortable around each other. Personally, we suggest that King Aodhan won't allow his representatives to subject prisoners to torture, and that prolonged violence has been thoroughly discredited as an interrogation tactic by modern society.

If they succeed, they can explain what information they're trying to extract, and they can then make a check for that (see "Extraction").

### Rapport.

Rapport reflects the target's trust of its interrogator, or at least willingness to talk to you. In a casual conversation, a target might think you are just a normal person and have no reason to look for ulterior motives, and after establishing a rapport with you, the target might be willing to share things they wouldn't with a total stranger. During a harsher interrogation, you must make sure that the target's anger or loathing of his captor does not overwhelm whatever other emotion the interrogator is trying to evoke.

To establish rapport, you must make a skill check, typically against DC 10 + the target's Wisdom (Insight) bonus. If you have a genuine connection to the target, they might make a Persuasion check to keep the target happy. Deception works if the target is faking a connection, particularly for seduction. If the target is a mage or scholar, you might even use Arcana, History, Nature, or Religion to make the target think you have common interests. Intimidation also works, but will usually leave the target unfriendly or even openly hostile after the interrogation.

The GM should consider granting advantage or imposing disadvantage depending on the circumstances of the interaction.

If you succeed on this check, rapport is established, and you can move on to "extraction." If you fail this check, the target cannot be convinced to open up. You can try again, but the DC increases by 5. If you fail a second time, the target won't respond to further attempts unless something changes in his or her relation with you (such as if you save the target's life).





### Extraction.

Once you have established rapport, you can make a skill check to extract information from the target. This is almost always an Insight check against DC 10 + the target's Charisma (Deception) bonus. On a success, you coax the target to reveal something useful, or discern a key clue from how the target phrases their statements. The target might even tell a total lie, but you are able to see through it and figure out what's really true.

If you fail this check, the target gives up nothing and becomes a little wary. If you fail a second time, you lose your rapport with the target (this counts as one failure on a "rapport" check).

### Good Cop, Bad Cop.

When two or more characters coordinate in an interrogation, each PC can make a check to establish rapport. As long as at least one PC succeeds his check, the whole team establishes rapport. Only if everyone fails does the DC for further attempts increase.

Once the team has established rapport, anyone can actually ask the questions, but they just make one Insight check to extract information, using whoever skill modifier is highest.

In the classic "good cop, bad cop" situation, the pair coordinate to get the target to open up, and then the character with a stronger insight asks the questions. A variant is to have one person physically break a target, and then afterward a different interrogator asks the questions. Or the same mechanics could handle five PCs carousing at a bar, getting a suspect drunk and then encouraging him to brag about his secret mission.

## First Mission: Launch Party

It is spring of the year 500 A.O.V. (After Our Victory).

Seven years after the end of the Fourth Yerasol War, the shipyards in Flint have completed the first Risuri warship powered solely by steam engine. King Aodhan has come himself to Flint to witness the launch of this mighty vessel. Wooden-hulled but with a heart and skin of iron, the Royal Naval Ship *Coaltongue* will deter future aggression from Risur's enemy across the sea, the nation of Danor.

The Royal Homeland Constabulary has been called upon to provide security, and you have spent the past several weeks working to make sure this event goes off without a hitch: canvassing the docks, performing background checks on the guest list, coordinating with the local police to set up a perimeter around the royal docks, and following various directives of your superiors. Now, as a warm breeze off the sea mingles the scents of elaborate floral decorations with the pervasive coal soot that always hovers over Flint, the king's carriage approaches, and you spy disgruntled faces amid the cheering crowd.

Start your mission in ZEITGEIST Adventure One, *Island at the Axis of the World*, coming soon in EN5IDER!



A DANORAN OFFICIAL ARRIVES IN UPPER FLINT BAY.





EN5ider Presents:

# The ZEITGEIST Adventure Path Player's Guide Part 4

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# Setting Overview

**M**ost of the action of the ZEITGEIST adventure path occurs in Risur, a subtropical nation with ancient ties to the magic of its land, struggling to adapt to a recent revolution of technology and industry. While the nation's historic capital lies in Slate with its antique castle manors and elite gated villas, the fulcrum of its power is slowly shifting to Flint, an industrial powerhouse benefiting greatly from the nation's need these past few decades for more and more advanced weapons and warships.

It was Risur's traditional enemy Danor—bereft of magic after a cataclysm five centuries past—which began the industrial revolution. Their steam-powered ships and deadly cannon fusillades won them many battles, but the artificers of Flint are combining magic and industry in ways impossible for their enemies, and the tiefling oligarchy of Danor seems content with the land it has acquired.

Many of the other great nations, however, fear what Risur can achieve with the marriage of magic and technology, and King Aodhan of Risur worries they might try to disrupt his nation's safety and prosperity.

Elsewhere, the dwarven homeland Drakr preaches of a nihilist doomsday and sells technomantic arms and war machines to warlords and mercenaries across the land. The clergy of theocratic Crisillyir loathe Danor and its tiefling leaders, and they wield piety as a lash to inflame distrust of what they claim is a godless abomination. Just across a mountain border to Risur's south, the warlike clans of Ber have formed an alliance, which might signal a coming invasion. Even in distant Elfaivar, where the small Risuri colony named Kellandia struggles against settlers from other nations to claim the broken empire's bounty, the natives lash out at these interlopers, unable to forgive a centuries-old grievance still fresh in their long-lived hearts.

## Languages and Accents.

If you're interested in giving characters from different nations distinctive accents, here are some guidelines. These suggestions are intended for Anglophones, so if English isn't your native language, other assumed dialects may work better for you.

Risur speaks Primordial, derived from the ancient speech of the original fey titans who ruled the land. Educated people of Risur often speak Common as well. Risuri speakers have English accents (or whatever local variant of English you speak: American, Australian, Canadian, etc.). All PCs gain Primordial as a bonus language.

Risur has a diverse culture, with local elves, gnomes, and halflings who all have their own traditional languages, but even they almost always also speak Primordial. The skyseers and other druidic sects are rumored to have their own secret language.

The language Common, which served a role in Lanjyr similar to Latin in Europe, is spoken in Ber, Crisillyir, and Danor, albeit with some local variations.

Ber mixes Draconic, Giant, Goblin, Orc, and Common, with most state business conducted in Common. Berans have a Spanish accent (or Mexican, if that's easier for you).

Crisillyir speaks Common as well as Dwarvish, with strong Drakran influences. Crisillyiri sound like Eastern Europeans (or perhaps Italians, if that's easier for you).

Danor speaks Common, but its schools and academies are strict in maintaining the language's purity. Danorans sound like the French.

Drakr speaks Dwarvish. Drakrans sound Russian.

Elfaivar speaks Elvish, plus the Common of their conquerors. Elfaivarans should have a non-European accent: perhaps Iraqi, Indian, or Japanese.

The fey of the Dreaming speak Sylvan or Elvish amongst themselves, though most of them also speak Common. They tend to have a sing-song cadence and earthy pronunciation, a bit like someone reciting *Beowulf* in Old English, though smaller fey like pixies just tend to sound high-pitched.

The seldom seen races that live under the sea have a language of their own known as Deep Speech, but their affairs almost never interact with people of the surface.

The languages known as Abyssal and Celestial has only been found in fragments on truly ancient artifacts, decipherable only by magic. No one can be said to truly understand these languages.

Infernal, the language of the fallen Demonocracy, is practically extinct except for curious scholars, a handful of demented cultists, and the warriors of the Clergy who strive to stamp out the last lingering traces of that unholy empire.

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## Risur

Every Risuri child knows that before King Kelland, no human nation had ever endured more than a few years in Lanjyr. The mighty nature spirits known today as the fey titans only allowed the elves to walk their domain, and they terrorized all others with beasts and storms and blight. But in 1200 B.O.V. (Before Our Victory), Kelland subdued the lord spirits of field and forest, of marsh and mountain. With their grudging blessings, he established Risur.

The people of Risur offered the spirits tithing and tribute, and eventually lulled them to sleep. What were once uncharted wilds of fierce beasts and tiny enclaves of elves became a prosperous bastion of humanity. In the seventeen centuries since, Risur's rites of rulership have ensured that Kelland's crown only passes to those mighty enough to cow the land's primal spirits should they ever seek to reclaim their domain.

### Land and Culture.

Risur is a subtropical country, possessed of vast forests and fertile fields fed by hundreds of rivers and streams which flow from the southern Anthras Mountains to the northern shore of the Avery Sea. Temperatures are warm but comfortable year-round, though a rainy season strikes near the end of what the northern nations consider summer.

Even the poorest Risuri can enjoy fresh fruit all year round. Wealthy foreigners cherish Risur's pineapples, limes, bananas, and massive jackfruit, but most prized are its cocoa and sugarcane, and alcohols made of each. A typical Risuri meal consists mostly of fruit, beans, bread, and fish, with the occasional beef or pork. Factory workers in Flint seldom can afford quality meat, and instead make savory stews by soaking bones and sausages in dark beans. Holiday celebrations often include steaming milk flavored with either chocolate or honey.

### Terrain.

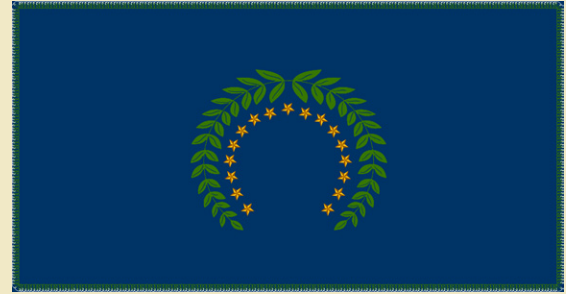
Four main landscapes make up Risur. The northern Avery Coast is dominated by a mix of wooded beaches – where mountainous granite domes rise out of the sea and anchor dry lands – and forested swamps, often referred to by the native Elven word *bayou* – where the country's many rivers sweep soil out into broad floodlands.

The Westlands of Risur are low plains covering most of the western two-thirds of the country, which draw their name from the countless rivers that weave toward the sea like yarn in a cloth. Most towns and farms lie here, though pockets of wild forests and rocky hills create uninhabitable divides between provinces.

The land rises to the south, and in the mid-altitude hills an unusual swamp wriggles across the landscape, known as the High Bayou. Though the hills are uneven, huge numbers of nesting beasts and giant insects have dammed swaths of the land, slowing the rivers that flow out of the mountains and ensuring a steady source for rivers year-round. Few Risuri live here aside from villages of elves who never integrated with the rest of the nation.

Beyond the High Bayou, the rain-carved Anthras Mountains forms a broad border with Ber. Forests cover most of these mountains, though mining in the east has stripped many peaks. Centuries of attacks from Ber have kept many towns from flourishing here,

## Kingdom of Risur.



- + **Capital:** Slate
- + **Government:** Constitutional monarchy and parliamentary federal republic
- + **Head of State:** King Aodhan
- + **Official Language:** Primordial
- + **Common Races:** Human 86%, elf 6%, halfling 5%, other 3%.

but numerous old forts dot the King's Road, which runs from the richest mining lands, all the way north to the capital.

### Flint, City of Industry.

The industrial powerhouse of Flint sits nestled among dozens of granite peaks along the eastern stretch of Avery Coast. With a rapidly-growing population of over half a million, slums for factory workers have begun to clump along these steep hills, while builders work to clear large sections of rainforest from within the city limits. Small satellite towns cling to the islands outside Flint's harbor, and many foreign nations and businesses have flocked to the city to gain influence in the past forty years.

The ZEITGEIST campaign assumes that the PC party is based out of the Royal Homeland Constabulary branch in Flint.

### Slate, the Historic Capital.

Risur's capital of Slate lies on the banks of the Great Delve River, in verdant plains fifty miles from the Avery Sea. It is by far the largest city in the country, with a population of nearly a million people. A half-dozen major highways converge on Slate, including the King's Road. Slate is still the heart of Risur's internal trade and business, though more and more international trade goes through Flint.

For people used to living in the bustle of Flint, the city of Slate appears stately, calm, and perhaps a bit doddering. The Great Delve River, with its steep banks turning it almost into a man-made channel, generally separates the city into the noble west bank and the common east bank.

Six antique castles sit along the inside of a wide bend on the river's west bank, arranged in a pattern originally designed to defend against invasion. Each castle acts as a nexus of a community of elite gated villas, and here live the nobles descended from the many kings and queens Risur has had throughout history. Today the district resembles an overly-manicured flower garden, more pretty than practical.

Across the shore lie dozens of less affluent neighborhoods surrounding the Grand Weft, a massive square where three highways



intersect. Wealthy businesses clump along the Lowland Highway, which leads from the square to docks along the river. The king's residence, Torfield Palace, sits atop a broad grassy hill a mile south of the weft. It is symbolic of the government of Risur that the king lives with the people, and only once he steps down or dies does his family move to the west bank.

### Other Cities.

Other prominent Risuri cities include the beleaguered **Shale** on the western coast near the war-wracked Yerasol Archipelago, where druids keep wary watch from sandy barrier islands and shipyards assemble the mightiest sailing vessels in the world; and lumber-rich **Bole** in the Antwalk Thicket southeast of Slate, source of some of the finest food and theater, and host to finely cultivated forest gardens.

Both cities were once capitals of their own smaller nations in ancient times, before joining with Risur, yet they were always connected by water routes. The Great Delve's tributaries start near Bole, and the river only widens and deepens as it passes Slate and eventually pours into the sea near Shale.

A dozen other cities with a hundred thousand or more people dot the coastlines, and a few more flourish along the most traversable rivers, but much of the country's interior is rural.

### Transportation.

The numerous rivers across the country hold great potential for trade inland that has not yet been realized. Most trade occurs along the coast, with rivers primarily used to carry lumber downstream to shipyards. Every new king or queen expresses an interest in expanding settlements into the more rural regions, but vast swaths still remain uninhabited.

One development that might change that is the introduction of railroads. Though rail travel is far more prevalent in Danor and Drakr, a few lines have been constructed across Risur, usually traveling perpendicular to the flow of rivers. The most developed line runs from mines in the Anthras Mountains to Flint, helping to feed its hunger for raw industrial materials. Many traditionalists, however, oppose the expansion of the railroad and warn that its churning wheels will anger the native fey.

### Race and Religion.

The humans of early Risur outfought or outgrew the native elves, though many elves and half-elves call the land home today. The sub-men races from what is today Ber – dragonborn, gnolls, goblins, kobolds, minotaurs, and orcs – survive in pockets, often as the descendants of slaves taken in old wars, now freed but not accepted. Dragonborn in particular are viewed with suspicion, out of paranoia that they hold a grudge for a Risuri king slaying the last dragon.

Some families of halflings mingle with humans in farming communities, and dwarves similarly in mining towns. Tieflings receive an odd mixture of fear and respect, though common folk tend to believe their influence on the nation is dangerous. Other races are too rare for most people to recognize them, and are generally lumped together with eladrin as being distrusted “fey.”

Risur's main religion is a mix of old human pantheism, elven druidic rites, and reverence for local fey titans who slumber in the earth. Centuries ago many gave worship to the eladrin gods or even archfey who claim to be emissaries of the fey titans, but after the fall of Elfaivar in the Second Victory a cultural shift has taken hold across the whole continent away from fey icons.

For most of Risur's history, their most respected religious leaders were the skyseers, druids who devoted themselves to understanding patterns in the stars. The skyseers offer guidance and occasionally proclaim prophecies to guide kings, lords, and common folks alike. But the skyseers have many sects, and in the past century their prophecies have grown more and more vague. Many still respect them, but they no longer hold the same political power they once did.

Some elements of the millennium-old Clergy faith have taken root in Risur, in particular the Great Man doctrine, which sits well with a people whose first king personally changed the course of history. However, Risuri reject the Clergy's elaborate celestial hierarchy of planar domains and stars, which states the dots in the night sky are actual worlds of their own. To the Risuri, such belief reduces the prominence of the mortal races, instead placing great import on beings from realms no human has ever visited.





## Fey and Mortal Realms.

The folk of Risur know that the Dreaming exists, though they might call it the Feywild, the Green Land, the Unseen House, the World Beyond the Looking Glass, or the Happy Hunting Grounds. Most Risuri treat it like an unpredictable neighbor. While human kings rule in the material plane and there are clear cities, nations, hierarchies, and borders, the Dreaming follows rules mortals can only struggle to understand.

Once every few years the Unseen Court sends emissaries to collect the tribute that King Kelland promised the fey titans at Risur's founding, typically made in the form of magic items, prize hounds and horses, or more exotic gifts. In one notable event, a cadre of archfey arrived on the summer solstice and demanded one thousand engraved silver moons before sunrise.

The ultimate desires or motives of the Unseen Court are unknown, but so far their requests have never been onerous. When they are not appeased, however, they retaliate by sending agents to seize infants from cribs, drive wild animals into cities, or call forth impossible weather like flashdroughts and hailstorms of frozen toads.

The most famous manifestation of the Dreaming in Risur is the Great Hunt. Every seventeen days a mass of mounted fey warriors tromp across the entire length of the nation, avoiding cities and sticking to the uncertain borders of civilization and the wilds. The wind carries the stamping of their steeds' hooves, the melodies of their riding sounds, and the baying of their hounds, but they are only ever seen by the light of the full moon.

Many folk charms are said to ward off the unwanted attentions of the fickle fey. Lines of salt block their crossing, iron and the sound of iron bells drives them away, and red liquid – blood, paint, or muddy clay – distracts their attention. They are unsettled by anything with spinning parts, from wagon wheels to the gears of a clocktower, and often try to break such devices as fervently as a man might chase a mosquito. On the other hand, milk or cheese left outside a home will win a fey's favor. Of course, as a fickle lot, fey do not always follow their own rules.

## Fey Titans, Archfey, and the Unseen Court.

The fey titans are five creatures of colossal scale and near god-like power, which in their heyday could reshape terrain or alter weather with their will. All the creatures in their domain, from the lowliest bug to the primitive elves who had just learned to craft stone, honored them and catered to their will. When Kelland became the first king of Risur, he challenged the five titans and bested them. Rather than slay them, he made a pact that his people would honor them, but in turn the titans would never attack his nation.

Today, the five fey titans slumber, and on the rare occasion they do awaken, lesser fey quickly seek to appease them to prevent whatever devastation their discontent could cause. For this service, these fey are able to draw upon the power of the titans.

The five titans, known to every child in Risur, are:

- ◆ **She Who Writhes**, a kraken that slumbers on the ocean floor. There are whole societies of merfey and far more alien aquatic life that tap her power to control the water ways. The archfey Beshela, for instance, ensures Risuri ships can travel safely in exchange for regular gifts of appeasement.

## Sword of the Black Needles.

Five centuries ago, as Lanjyr was reeling from the fall-out from the Great Malice, the Voice of Rot rose up against Risur and cast a smoky pall across the sun. The king at the time, Dukain, was a mighty but aged wizard who wielded magic through his sword. He traveled to a mountain ridge overlooking the High Bayou, known as the Black Needles, and there he battled the fey titan, which had taken the form of a towering anaconda of smoke and peat.

The king battled the titan high into the Black Needles, and after three days neither side could force the other to surrender. Realizing he could not defeat the titan and thus was unworthy of his crown, Dukain cast aside his sword and abandoned the battle. The titan, in its fey logic, saw that it and the king were equally matched, so when Dukain ceased to fight, so did the titan. Dukain yielded his crown to his chosen successor, the titan returned to its slumber, and Risur was saved.

Scholars fear that should the lost Sword of the Black Needles ever be recovered, it would signal a resumption of battle for the fey titan, and once again threaten the existence of Risur.

- ◆ **Father of Thunder**, a many-horned gazelle-like herd beast that fell asleep and has been coated in a grassy plain. Farmers make offerings to him for good weather, which are gathered by grigs and other field fey, who then herd the various wild animals that the Great Hunt will chase every 17 days.
- ◆ **The Voice of Rot**, a white serpent who controls swamps and dead animals. He is roused from his slumber most often, since there are few mortals who live in his domain and think to leave him offerings.
- ◆ **Ash Wolf**, a white-furred hunter who rests in a forest cave with her pack. She's said to awaken during great forest fires, so woodsmen are encouraged to gather brush and burn it before they go hunting.
- ◆ **Granny Allswell**, a corpulent gremlin snoozing somewhere in the mountains. Her gremlin offspring harass miners because they don't want the noise of digging to wake her. They likewise hate loud machinery and tend to break it if they can.

Archfey, meanwhile, are simply fey of substantial power, all of them long-lived, most of them humanoid. Some are servants of the fey titans, other simply mighty warriors or mages who have a domain of their own in the Dreaming analogue of Risur.

Then there is the Unseen Court. The Court represents feykind in negotiations with Risur, but their internal politics are nearly impossible for outsiders to fathom, having as much to do with style and emotion as with any tangible effect. The actual members of the Court are, true to their name, never seen except in truly exceptional circumstances, but they have many agents. Some vekeshi mystics claim to speak for the Court, but there is practically no way to confirm or deny this.

Sometimes the archfey serve the Court, but their interests do not always align. The common metaphor Risuri use to understand the affairs of the fey is that the Court are the nobility, and the archfey are wealthy land-owners. It's much like politics in the real world, except with more giving men donkey heads and tricking people into falling in love by sniffing poison flowers.



KING AODHAN OF RISUR



DUCHESS ETHELYN OF SHALE



CATHERINE ROMANA

GOVERNOR ROLAND STANFIELD  
OF FLINT

## Monarchy and Government.

Risur's current monarch, **King Aodhan**, rules from Torfield Palace in Slate. Now in his seventies, Aodhan was only thirty when the previous king chose him as his successor. Aodhan had distinguished himself in the Third Yerasol War against Danor, performing feats of strength and heroism most today assume are just tall tales.

Aodhan has always been fascinated by Danor's technology, ever since he lured its first steam-powered warship into a kraken's reef lair, waited for the crew to abandon ship, then beat back the kraken and single-handedly piloted the vessel—still bearing scars of the kraken's tendrils—to the harbor of Flint. (Or at least, that's one story of how it happened.) Once he took the crown, Aodhan pushed for industrial investment to keep up with Danor, but regional governors forced him to keep foreign technologies out of Slate. Flint became the next most obvious choice.

King Aodhan's aged wife died four years ago. Though heredity and marriage has little impact on national succession, many wonder whether the king will seek a new bride so late in life. Despite his great strength in his youth, the king grows weaker each year.

Many suspect he will name his younger sister **Duchess Ethelyn of Shale** as his replacement, and indeed she has distinguished herself as a leader in the Fourth Yerasol War that ended seven years ago, even though her city nearly fell to Danor. She is rumored to have close ties to the Unseen Court, and acts as Risur's ambassador to its nearest neighboring nation. However, her coronation would be the first in Risur's history that transferred the crown between two blood relatives.

## Politics.

Twenty-three governors direct the affairs of Risur's various provinces. Most of these are of noble lineage, descended from one of the nation's previous kings. Noble governance tends to follow family lines, unlike the crown. Each governor sends several representatives to the national Parliament, which handles the details of implementing the king's decrees and can with a supermajority overrule them. Various officers of the court and of Parliament direct specific sub-bureaucracies and agencies to handle affairs involving the nation's commerce, culture, defense, and so on.

Perhaps the most prominent noble these days is the headline-catching **Catherine Romana**, a descendant of a previous queen and ally of Duchess Ethelyn. She stridently opposes Danoran-inspired industries, and prefers to counter that new technology with

arcane innovations. She is rumored to be planning a major announcement later this year, and has been seen in the company of brilliant researchers from Pardwight and Mitchell University.

One famous exception to the power of the nobility is **Roland Stanfield**, the deva governor of Flint. Five hundred years ago he witnessed the fall of the eladrin goddess Srasama, and in various reincarnations he has called Risur his home ever since. Forbidden by the rites of rulership from pursuing the crown because he is no longer precisely 'mortal,' Stanfield was long content to govern Flint and its relatively insignificant province of farmers, miners, and fishermen. When King Aodhan decreed Flint would become the seat of Risur's industry, however, the old deva eagerly took to the challenge, claiming he was excited to try something new after so long.

## Royal Homeland Constabulary.

With the recent influx of foreign technologies and therefore foreign influence, thirty years ago King Aodhan ordered the formation of a new government agency to protect the traditional identity of the Risuri homeland. Within a decade this mission had morphed into investigating significant threats to the nation, particularly those involving technology. Today the Royal Homeland Constabulary uses a combination of investigators, spies, and warriors to root out, undermine, capture, and if necessary kill any groups who endanger Risur.

Though most activity occurs in Flint, officially the Constabulary's central chamber is based out of Slate and headed by **Viscount Inspector Nigel Price-Hill**, who was a commander in the Fourth Yerasol War. His Lordship's greatest success as director was presiding over the apprehension of a group of Drakran necromancers attempting to animate undead dragons in the Anthras Mountains.

Regardless of where they are based, agents of the Royal Homeland Constabulary have broad jurisdiction throughout the nation, and enjoy mild immunity while overseas when acting in an official, acknowledged capacity.

## History and Place in the World.

Risur paved the way to nationhood, and many others followed the same path. By placating the dominant fey titans of Lanjyr they turned the continent into a land for mortals. The Risuri people have always respected the spirits and the fey they share the land with, but they believe the era of those beings has rightfully passed.

While the northern nations waged holy wars between the Clergy and the Seedism faith of Elfaivar,

Risur was preoccupied defending its borders from the sub-men of what is modern Ber. The dragons who terrorized the lands south of the Anthras Mountains feared the progress of civilization, and would often gather armies of savages to raid or assault Risur. It is believed that two centuries ago King Boyle slew the last great dragon of Ber, after which attacks from the south finally faded.

No sooner had Risur found safety to its south than did Danor arise in power to the north. Risur and Danor have warred for nearly two hundred years, mostly using the islands of the Yerasol Archipelago as a proxy battle ground, in a series of four Yerasol Wars. Occasional waves of conquest have lapped over each nation's shores, and today the two countries have more in common than either likes to acknowledge. The current king assumed the throne at the end of the Third Yerasol War, four decades ago, and he presided over the fourth, in which Risur lost much land against the threat of Danor's superior technology.

Leaders of Risur's merchant guilds, its military, and its noble families are grateful for the stability, but fear a resumption of hostilities. They have taken advantage of the new international cordiality in order to catch up with Danor's technological revolution. Whether the next threat comes from Danor or another foe, Risur is arming.

## Ber

Ber's history is tied to dragons. Until just a few centuries ago, the land was in constant flux, with different dragons battling for supremacy while the mortal races served as their slaves. Tribes of dragonborn, gnolls, goblins, kobolds, minotaurs, and orcs ascended to tiny nation states under the banners of their draconic overlords, built cities and strip-mined mountains to gather wealth for these kings, and eventually collapsed into chaos when their rulers fell. Newborn nations conquered each other like a ring of serpents devouring their tails, and whenever a dragon had willpower enough to unite all of Ber, it would inevitably make the mistake of pressing into Risur or Elfaivar, and be slain in retaliation.

Despite the endless turnover of rulers, Ber did manage to establish a few long-lasting cities—Ursaliña, Reo Pedrecoso, and the capital Seobriga, among others—and develop a shared culture, often thanks to wandering minotaur bards who were seen as neutral. After the death of the last dragon king Inatch the Hex-Eater two hundred years ago, Ber splintered into racial and tribal factions. Only in the past forty years has a semblance of unity returned to the land.

## Kingdom of Ber.



- + **Capital:** Seobriga
- + **Government:** Absolute monarchy
- + **Head of State:** Bruse Shantus
- + **Official Language:** Common, Draconic, Giant, Goblin
- + **Common Races:** Orc 26%, gnoll 18%, goblin 16%, minotaur 10%, kobold 8%, dragonborn 5%, other 17%.

## Le Roye Bruse.

Four decades ago, an orc warlord, Vairday Bruse, declared himself king of Ber after he managed to conquer the three largest cities in the land. Risur expected an imminent invasion, but instead the new king opened diplomatic channels with Danor, asked for help writing a constitution, and arranged for the construction of factories. The wealth from this new industry helped keep tribal warlords cooperative, and the work gave would-be soldiers something to do with their energy.

Dubbed “Le Roye,” a Danor diminutive for “the king,” Bruse managed to keep peace until his death five years ago, and had the foresight to arrange a peaceful transition of power. He took his cue from Risur, and passed the crown to a respected ally who was not a blood relative; indeed he was a minotaur, not even an orc. The new king kept his predecessor's name in place of the typical “king,” and so was crowned **Bruse Shantus**.

Though there are still factions in the Anthras Mountains who refuse to bow to the new monarchy, many old enemies are now clamoring for a share of this new prosperity. Against nearly everyone's predictions, it appears that Ber will endure as a unified nation.

## Executores dola Liberta.

One of Vairday Bruses's more contentious programs was to aggressively end the practice of slavery except as a punishment for criminals. He enlisted bureaucrats from Crisillyir to reform the country's legal system and track convicts, and then created a law enforcement group of warriors and priests, the Enforcers of Freedom.



VISCOUNT INSPECTOR  
NIGEL PRICE-HILL



BRUSE SHANTUS



## The Tyrant's Eye

In 700 B.O.V., the dragon Yerev controlled a small empire, cowing his enemies with the power of his unblinking third eye. It was said this pale, scarred orb could slay any creature it could see. On a moonless night, an army of thousands rose up against the dragon tyrant and managed to slay the beast, but when he collapsed, his eye remained open, killing any who crossed its path.

Nearby townsfolk carefully surrounded Yerev with all his treasure to appease his spirit, then carted the soil from the nearby hills to bury his corpse, finally blinding his eye. Supposedly the only sign of Yerev's cairn today is a field of lush potato flowers. Only the most foolish or desperate seek the treasure, lest they inadvertently unearth the deadly eye.

Comprised primarily of women, the *executores dola liberta* are officers of the king, tasked with wandering the country and finding rich or powerful people who abuse their station by forcing others into slavery or slave-like conditions. Such wrongdoers they thrash brutally, dragging them into public locations and pummeling them with royally-empowered fists or staves while proclaiming the person's crimes.

They inflict similar punishments on those who try to quash protests, silence vocal complaints, forbid undesired religious practice, or hoard wealth from those they tax rather than providing value for their money. Membership in the Enforcers is strictly monitored, and those few who hypocritically abuse their own authority suffer excruciating public torture, then are executed.

## Remnants of the Dragon Kings.

Ber cities tend toward stout, vertical buildings with prominent rooftop perches. Dragons no longer alight these roofs, but they have become part of Ber's romantic conception of its own identity. Many festivals are celebrated on these old draconic perches, and many inventors from Crisillyir come to Ber to study winged flight and test glider designs. Window cleaners can commonly be seen swinging from colorful ropes tethered to high rooftops, singing of lovers meeting to watch the sunset from the top of the city.



BRAKKEN OF HEFFANITA

In the countryside, the dragon kings left an even more obvious mark: megafauna. Beasts of great hunger and great size, dragons protected herds of elephants, massive cattle, and deer as large as houses, forbidding their enslaved mortals from hunting the creatures. Huge swaths of Ber are still relatively uninhabited because these megafauna and the giant bears and tigers that hunt them pose too great a threat for cities to endure. Even more deadly are the pets that were bred for the dragon tyrants: giant bipedal reptiles known as tyrannosaurs.

Some ranches have managed to domesticate megafauna, which can feed a whole village for days. Wealthy foreigners pay huge amounts for the privilege of serving such a beast at their banquets.

## Scars and Loyalists

The nation bears the scars of many mines. Sadly, the wealth from these mines is mostly lost, hidden away in the lairs of paranoid dragon kings, and booby trapped even after the tyrants' deaths to prevent their recovery.

Along the southern coasts, unincorporated tribes composed primarily of gnolls refuse to join the nation. Bruse Shantus has cheerfully appointed one gnoll as his Minister of Rebellion, and claims this shows his graciousness to his enemies. In truth, the gnolls are simply too numerous to ignore, and they have a violent and messianic faith in the eventual return of their slain dragon tyrant Gradiax, the Steel Lord.

By contrast, the citizens of Ber's cities love to keep trophies of long-dead dragons. In the capital Seobriga, the courthouse has integrated the skeleton of the dead tyrant Widoreva into its décor.

## The Panoply.

This young movement consists of a few educated Berans who have proclaimed themselves scholars. Inspired by the new - and comparably peaceful - cooperation among the many races of Ber, they have begun to found schools throughout their nation. There they educate students in matters of art and culture from around the world, pursuits normally mocked by those who follow the old tribal ways.

A few traveling professors from the Panoply schools have made a splash among the dockers in Flint, and every year more foreign artists and poets attend the parties of wealthy Beran nobles who are eager to appear cultured.

## The Ursaliña Bear Games.

The mountain city of Ursaliña hosts a strange tradition, wherein those who wish to act as ambassadors of Ber hold proxy battles using trained short-haired bears, each standing a dozen feet high at the shoulder. A great coliseum, once used for entertaining blood-thirsty dragon tyrants, now hosts these vicious battles, which occur every few months; different days determine the positions of different ambassadorships.

Thousands turn out to watch the games, which are surrounded with grand pomp and much feasting. The fights between the bears are seldom to the death, because each beast is worth a small fortune. One game five years ago, however, witnessed an event so unbelievable that word of it spread throughout Lanjyr.



Minotaur merchant **Brakken of Heffanita** was competing to be named Ber's ambassador to Orithea, a tiny war-torn nation between Danor and Drakr, when his dire bear's throat was mangled in the arena. Brakken leapt into the arena and stepped between his bear and its opponent, staring into the other bear's eyes. To the shock of the crowd, the other bear hesitated in its attack, then fled, as if intimidated by a person half its size. Bruse Shantus gladly named Brakken an ambassador.

Perhaps even more unexpected, two years after Brakken began his ambassadorship in Orithea, the country's civil war ended, and it came under the protection of Danor. Today Orithea is part of the rail route along the north Avery Coast, and it is enjoying unprecedented prosperity.

This past year, Brakken competed to become ambassador to Risur, and won without any challengers.

### **Fear of the Clergy.**

Ber has never had any close ties to Clergy religion, for it was insulated by its neighbors. Some eladrin sought refuge in Ber after the Second Victory, and brought with them great distrust of the Clergy. Ber's religions are a disjointed mish-mash of different

tribal beliefs, involving hundreds of gods and spirits without any unifying doctrine.

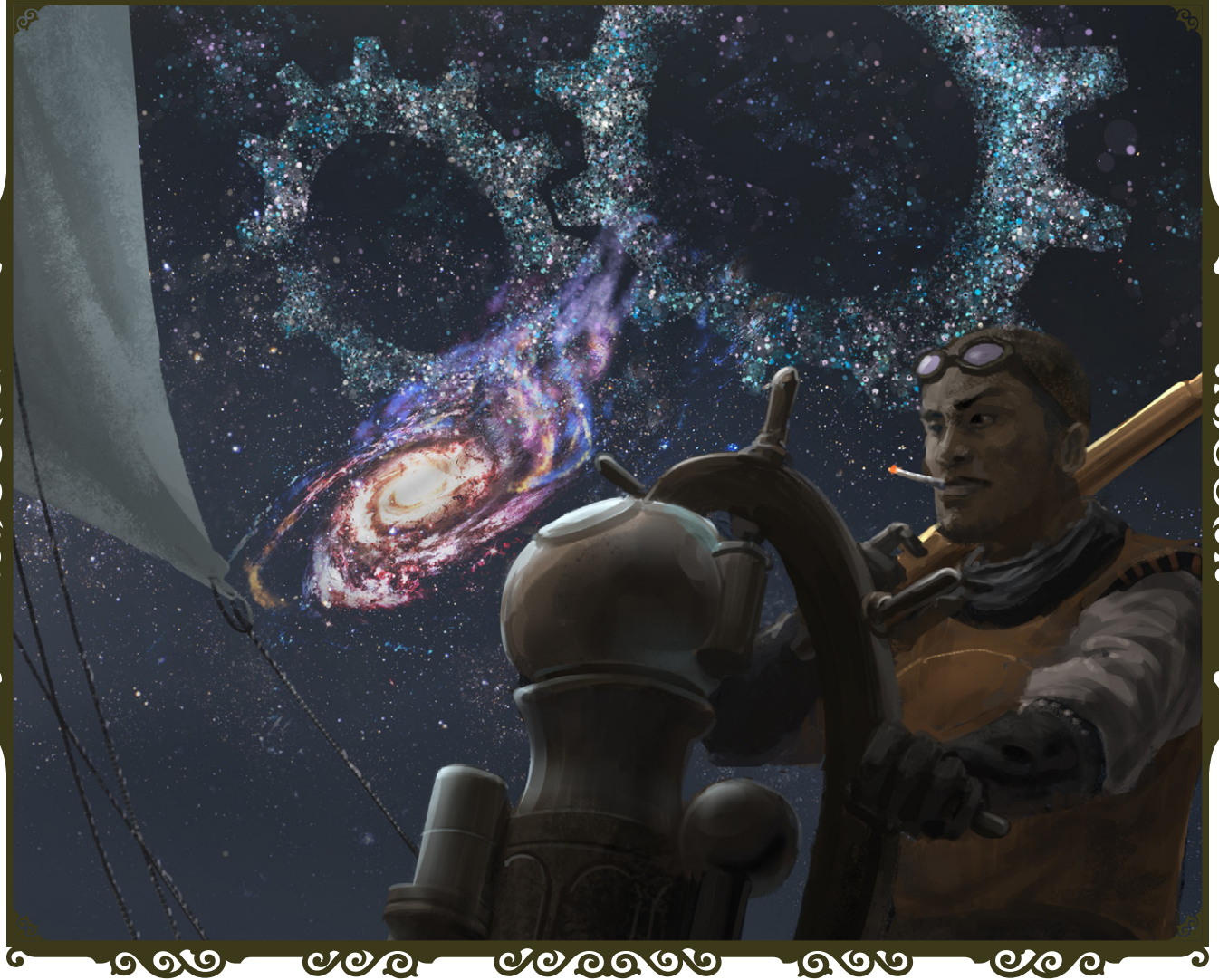
Recently, however, preachers from Crisillyir have begun to visit Ber, and a few have set up missions to spread their faith. Some of these have been met by violence retaliation, including one incident where an Enforcer of Freedom tossed a battered priest into a rowboat and told him to return home after the man's church abducted several children from a nearby village under the auspices of teaching them.

Ber has seen what the Clergy can do to a nation when they disagree with its faith. Especially since the Bruse became so friendly with Danor – itself deemed heretical by the church – many in Ber fear that Crisillyir might someday invade in a bid to forcibly convert them.

### **Other Nations**

Risur and Ber are but two of the national powers at play in the world of ZEITGEIST. The remaining realms – Crisillyir, Danor, Drakr, Elfaivar, and the planes – will appear in Part 5 of the ZEITGEIST Player's Guide.





EN5ider Presents:

# The ZEITGEIST Adventure Path Player's Guide Part 5

**FROM THE PEN OF** Ryan Nock  
**STUNNING CARTOGRAPHIC DISPLAYS BY** Jonathan Roberts  
**MASTERFUL ILLUSTRATIONS BY** Brian Lindahl  
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**OUR HUMBLE AND SPECIAL THANKS TO** to the hundreds of gamers who backed the original release of ZEITGEIST on Kickstarter, and to the over one thousand generous patrons of EN WORLD EN5IDER whose support has made this Fifth Edition update possible.

# Setting Overview (cont'd)

**W**HILE MOST OF THE ZEITGEIST ADVENTURE path occurs in the nation of Risur, there is a great deal of world beyond its borders. Part 4 of this Player's Guide includes languages and accents of the nations of ZEITGEIST as a roleplaying aid; it has been reprinted here for your convenience.

## Crisillyir

Crisillyir is ruled by the hierarchs of the Clergy, the religion that freed the nation from demonic rule a millennium ago. Today, Crisillyir is a rich land, its fields bountiful, its coffers full of colonial gold. Centuries of divine rituals have turned its great cities into beacons of enlightenment and magical research, though this prosperity seems to attract attention from supernatural threats. Elaborate aqueducts feed water from the snowcapped Enfantes Mountains throughout the nation; it is said that each column in the aqueduct system is engraved with one chapter from the Clergy's holy book, acting as a massive ward against the ancient evil that still lurks in the land.

In Crisillyir, the power of the church is supreme, but not unquestioned. While the grand summoners conjure forth tortured specters from the Bleak Gate to cow their flocks into piety, collegial arcanists debate conceptions of the cosmos that do not match church dogma. Fat merchant lords pay lip service to the faith, sell weapons and ritual components to eladrin assassins, then purchase indulgences to absolve themselves. And though the inquisitive halo-bearing *geneu credetos* ('spirits of belief,' or more commonly 'godhands') are tasked with guarding the nation from unholy, fey, and undead influences, criminal organizations nevertheless manage to smuggle in contraband and use resurrections to extort even the dead.

## The Clergy.

According to the church's holy text, one thousand years ago a human fisherman named Triegenes from what today is Danor discovered the secret of divinity while lost in a storm at sea. He returned and preached about the divine spark within all mortals, and how by constantly challenging oneself, a person can become

## Languages and Accents.

If you're interested in giving characters from different nations distinctive accents, here are some guidelines. These suggestions are intended for Anglophones, so if English isn't your native language, other assumed dialects may work better for you.

Risur speaks Primordial, derived from the ancient speech of the original fey titans who ruled the land. Educated people of Risur often speak Common as well. Risuri speakers have English accents (or whatever local variant of English you speak: American, Australian, Canadian, etc.). All PCs gain Primordial as a bonus language.

Risur has a diverse culture, with local elves, gnomes, and halflings who all have their own traditional languages, but even they almost always also speak Primordial. The skyseers and other druidic sects are rumored to have their own secret language.

The language Common, which served a role in Lanjyr similar to Latin in Europe, is spoken in Ber, Crisillyir, and Danor, albeit with some local variations.

Ber mixes Draconic, Giant, Goblin, Orc, and Common, with most state business conducted in Common. Berans have a Spanish accent (or Mexican, if that's easier for you).

Crisillyir speaks Common as well as Dwarvish, with strong Drakran influences. Crisillyiri sound like Eastern Europeans (or perhaps Italians, if that's easier for you).

Danor speaks Common, but its schools and academies are strict in maintaining the language's purity. Danorans sound like the French.

Drakr speaks Dwarvish. Drakrans sound Russian.

Elfaivar speaks Elvish, plus the Common of their conquerors. Elfaivarans should have a non-European accent: perhaps Iraqi, Indian, or Japanese.

The fey of the Dreaming speak Sylvan or Elvish amongst themselves, though most of them also speak Common. They tend to have a sing-song cadence and earthy pronunciation, a bit like someone reciting *Beowulf* in Old English, though smaller fey like pixies just tend to sound high-pitched.

The seldom seen races that live under the sea have a language of their own known as Deep Speech, but their affairs almost never interact with people of the surface.

The languages known as Abyssal and Celestial has only been found in fragments on truly ancient artifacts, decipherable only by magic. No one can be said to truly understand these languages.

Infernal, the language of the fallen Demonocracy, is practically extinct except for curious scholars, a handful of demented cultists, and the warriors of the Clergy who strive to stamp out the last lingering traces of that unholy empire.

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like a god. He inspired followers to fight beside him, and together they toppled tyrants, slew legendary monsters, and eventually established a new nation, based upon a hierarchy of divinity, where rank and reward were based solely on merit.

After his kingdom was established, Triegenes undertook the greatest challenge left in the mortal world: to defeat the Demonocracy that oppressed the lands to the east. He confronted the abyssal lords who had taken residence on this world, sacrificed himself to banish them forever, and then left his mortal shell and ascended to godhood.

The Clergy believe in many gods, with no pinnacle godhead, but they preach foremost the teachings of Triegenes, that every man has greatness within him, and he merely needs to be challenged to awaken his potential. And while a thousand years have burdened this original message with a complex celestial bureaucracy, vaguely-interpreted visions of a multiverse of planes, and a strong emphasis on the superior potential of humans above all other races, the simple dogma that anyone can improve their life, and that indeed this is the main purpose of life, holds strong appeal. The Clergy is now the most widespread faith in Lanjyr.

### Cities.

The capital city Alais Primos is dominated by massive temples, sepulchers, and libraries, some so large they straddle the canals that run through the city. Massive and enchanted walls once surrounded it, holding back the eladrin armies, and while the city has long since expanded beyond their boundaries, their magic still defends the heart of the city. Since the Clergy views the godless tieflings of Danor as apostates, industry and technology are forbidden in Alais Primos. Confiscated items are ritually disposed of in a fiery rift of Enzyo Mons in the nearby mountains, symbolically casting back the tools of evil.

The island city of Sid Minos is site of the nation's greatest naval yards and its military academies, which train paladins and warpriests to hunt unnatural beasts, as well as fight foreign armies. Tunnels and dungeons riddle the rocky island beneath the city, and undead horrors occasionally emerge from these dark lands, but their source is unknown. Because the hierarchs view Sid Minos as already somewhat tainted, they allow technology onto the island. Off the shore lies the Isle of Odiem, home to the Crypta Hereticarum, where the Clergy stores the most vile cursed beasts and objects that they cannot simply destroy.

An isthmus connects Crisillyir and Elfaivar, and the city of Vendricce has grown fat from taxing trade through its gates, including the Avery Coast Railroad that terminates here. A grand arched bridge that once spanned the channel between the two nations was destroyed during the Second Victory, but Danor is funding its repair, hoping to extend the railroad so it can feed through the city and into Elfaivar.

### Colonies to the East.

After the eladrin empire fell in the Second Victory, Crisillyir and the other conquering nations established garrisons within the collapsing eladrin nation, and divided the land into several colonies. Despite the great wealth these colonies provide, they are a thorn in Crisillyir's side; intermittent rebellions and acts of terrorism target

## Sacred Kingdom of Crisillyir.

- **Capital:** Alais Primos
- **Government:** Ecclesiastical elective monarchy
- **Heads of State:** Prime Cardinal Tito Banderesso, Arch Secula Natalia Degaspere
- **Official Language:** Common
- **Common Races:** Human 85%, gnome 7%, dwarf 4%, other 4%.



### The Humble Hook.

When Triegenes passed on from his mortal shell, the prelates of the Clergy cremated his remains in a grand state funeral. As they gathered his ashes to spread across the nation's soil, they found a small harpoon hook—the kind used by some fishers—which somehow had been caught in the living god's body since before he achieved divinity.

The priests crafted the hook into a pendant, and for over a thousand years it has been worn by the hierarchs of the faith, as a reminder that we all have humble origins. Doctrine claimed that it let its wearer learn the history and background of anyone he met, allowing the leader of the faith to deal with overly prideful enemies and heads of state.

In 260 A.O.V., however, it was lost when an eladrin assassin slew that era's hierarch and stole the pendant. Critics of the faith claim that its loss was part of a plan to steer the Clergy away from its original humble core, so that high priests could better profit from their stations.



the colonial governors and their allies in the homeland. At least once a decade, a spree of assassinations strikes, shaking the complacency of the nobility, and frightening the common folk.

The largest colonial city is Santi Simone, over the ruins of Elfaivar's original capital Bharata. In an uncharacteristically sympathetic move, the Clergy built a giant memorial to the countless dead eladrin women, interring their bodies in tombs carved into a massive rock that sits along the city's river.

## Devas, Angels, and the Dead.

The Second Victory ended with a legendary battle just outside the walls of Alais Primos, where legions of Clergy-blessed warriors faced an army led by the goddess Srasama herself. After hours of battle, Srasama was felled by a thousand cuts, and fire exploded from her body. The warriors nearest to her were annihilated, but those who survived and were close enough to see the death of a god were marked by the experience.

Many of these veterans settled in the lands liberated by the eladrin army's retreat. In the years that followed, whenever one of them died, open flames would flicker for miles around, and somewhere within three days' travel the man or woman would be reborn in the wilderness. No longer quite human, these reincarnated souls took the name deva, from an eladrin word for deity.

When a deva reincarnates, he recalls language, culture, and enough knowledge to make his way in the world, but usually possesses only vague recollections of his previous life. Acquaintances are unfamiliar, and expert skills like magic, craftsmanship, or swordplay fade, but usually the deva quickly slips into the same basic role he held before death.

Where devas are rare, one that dies is usually found quickly after reincarnation, and after a period of acclimation he will manage to continue as if nothing had happened at all. In Crisillyir, though, devas are common enough that they seldom manage to return to their previous lives. In either case, devas still fear death because it means an end to all they are. While a reincarnated deva might be able to continue the same mission, he'll never recreate the emotions and memories that made him unique.

Many devas find a place in the Clergy, where through special training they can act as vessels for invoked celestial beings. Such angelic visitations never last long, and occasionally result in the death of the vessel, so they are only used in situations where the priesthood feels inadequate to answer questions of guilt or opine on matters of morality.

In a similar way, on certain bleak holy days the priests of the Clergy will reach through the veil into the Bleak Gate and capture uneasy spirits, which they parade in front of crowds of worshippers. Compelled by magic, these undead specters wail about the sins they committed in life that left their souls trapped in 'Purgatory.' The priests then offer absolution, and destroy the unholy beings.

## The Family.

One of the few chinks in the strong face the Clergy presents is a criminal organization known as the Family. Most people only know of them in rumors and hearsay, but it is said that they are behind most of the crime on both sides of the Avery Sea.

Where they have taken root, crime becomes civilized. The Family seems to respect loyalty and avoids doing violence to innocents, though when they move into a new city they viciously cut out the current criminal element and institute a more refined form of corruption and lawlessness.

## Danor

Guided by a congress of businessmen and scholars, Danor is devoted to endless progress. Old beliefs, especially religion, are cast aside in the face of newer and more profitable ideas. After surviving an apocalyptic collapse five hundred years ago, reason and hard work have created armies more powerful than any in the world, where a common man can wield weapons as mighty as the magic of legendary heroes. After centuries of complacency, the other great nations eye Danor with envy, and with fear.

Following the Second Victory, the social order in old Danor was upended. The Great Malice left the capital of the Clergy bereft of magic. Horrible monsters that spawned in the border regions of wild magic wrought havoc as quavering holy warriors struggled to destroy them without their divine aid. The whole country was cut off from its usual channels of communication, and in a matter of weeks, thousands of priests killed themselves, believing their gods had died, and many more fled in every direction. A once-mighty nation fractured into desperate enclaves, and the old capitol was abandoned as an accursed place.

A major contributor to the region's downfall was that its previous leaders—the hierarchs of the Clergy – had been transformed by the Great Malice into seemingly demonic creatures with horns and barbed tails. People in what today are the Malice Lands refused to let these people reach the new capital in Crisillyir, believing the old rulers were “from the deep pit of hell,” and thus dubbed them “deepplings” or “tieflings.”

After decades of chaos, a tiefling named Jierre who had once been a priest near the top of the sacred hierarchy gathered the fractious leaders and managed to convince them in the span of a mere five years to reunite under a new vision. If the hands of the gods could no longer reach into Danor, then it would be the hands of mortals that would give them power and safety.

## Republic of Danor.



- + **Capital:** Cherage
- + **Government:** Constitutional republic
- + **Head of State:** Sovereign Han Jierre
- + **Official Language:** Common
- + **Common Races:** Human 81%, tiefling 17%, other 2%.

## Wild and Dead Magic.

Within Danor's borders, magic quickly seeps away, a consequence of the Great Malice, wherein the eladrin goddess Srasama died five hundred years ago. A creature's own innate magical powers still function, such as a tiefling's hellish rebuke or an eladrin's fey step.

Creatures cannot cast spells or use magical class abilities unless they have some sort of permanent magic item as a focus. These items carry enough innate magic with them to power spells and prayers, but over a period of weeks or months, their power fades entirely. (As a guideline, common or uncommon items are disenchanting within a week; rare and very rare items within a few weeks; and legendary items might last a month or more, subject to GM adjudication.)

Until such time as they lose their enchantments, magic items brought to Danor function normally. In addition, rituals cannot be

cast within Danor, though spells with the ritual tag can still be cast with spell slots.

It is believed impossible to create magic items in Danor, so almost no Danorans study magic. The few Danoran mages there are either traveled to other nations to study, or purchased magic implements and paid exorbitant amounts to import tutors.

Just beyond Danor's borders, in a broad swath hundreds of miles wide, the fabric of magic is damaged but not destroyed. In these places, known as the Malice Lands, whenever a character casts a spell (either from a class or an item) or activates some sort of magical class power, roll an unmodified 1d20. On a 1, a mishap occurs. This usually takes the form of the magic backfiring, manifesting as a free-willed monster, or otherwise going dangerously awry.

It was magic, after all, and the superstitions and archaic beliefs that were its trappings, that had held back the people of Danor from their potential. Jierre understood that they had a unique opportunity. No foreign nations would bother a land without magic, so the new Danor needed not to worry about invasion. It would decide its own fate, and as long as all were devoted to the ideal of progress, Danor would one day be the strongest nation in the world. Finally, after centuries of insular work and struggle to build a new society, Danor has begun to claim its place in the world.

## The House of Jierre.

Common belief attests that Srasama cursed the leaders of the Clergy with infernal horns and jagged tails, sacrificing half her mortal followers in a Great Malice when she realized she could not defeat the armies arrayed against her. When Jierre united Danor's factions, almost all those so accursed joined him, adopting the moniker "tiefling" as a badge of rebellion. Some became decisive merchant leaders, while others took a role in government.

Jierre, for his part, refused to be crowned king, and for his remaining years he served as part of a congress of peers. In the centuries since his death, though, his family – tieflings all – has proven a source of many great statesmen, scholars, and inventors. Though officially Danor has only a Congress and a Sovereign who is elected every decade, the House of Jierre is effectively Danor's royal family. Where they point, most follow.

The Sovereign today is **Han Jierre**, former president of the nation's oldest and most prestigious academy of war, the Jierre Sciens d'Arms. Various relatives and in-laws hold many positions in the government and military. A few have even traveled abroad to study magic and apply Danoran principles of science to explain how it works, rather than

relying on traditional beliefs. So far, detailed theories have eluded them, as if magic itself refuses to let itself be understood.

Without a doubt, the House of Jierre rules Danor, but their prominence has not gone uncontested. Periods of riots and protests have plagued the nation, especially in the early days of its industrial revolution, though it certainly helped that, in a realm where few have ever even seen magic, any tiefling can still rebuke a person who attacks him by engulfing him in infernal flame.

## Cities and Industry.

Danor's historical capital of Methia lies abandoned. Though Danorans reject superstition, even they cannot help but feel uneasy in these ruins. Nothing grows there, wild animals stay out, and even in the height of summer a chill breeze blows under overcast skies.

The modern capital of Cherage, though, is a bustling center of business and trade. Two centuries of practice at industry has moved the pollution-coughing factories and poverty-riddled worker villages outside the city, where deep canals provide the water for mills. After the city was attacked in the Third Yerasol War, the Danoran navy constructed landfill islands off the shore to place massive artillery batteries and look-out stations.

Trains powered by steam crisscross the nation, and the great Avery Coast Railroad runs from mountainous Beaumont on the west coast, through Cherage, and on eastward to Drakr, passing through Crisillyir, before finally ending three thousand miles away just across a channel from Elfaivar. Warships armored with iron churn along the nation's coast and among the islands it holds in the Yerasol Archipelago, protecting shipments of food that feed Danor's burgeoning population of industrial workers.



SOVEREIGN HAN JIERRE



VLENDARM HEID



## Drakr

Before the rise of the kingdom of Triegenes, dwarven warlords in Drakr subdued the undead titans of the land, encased them in crystal, and buried them deep beneath the earth. The dwarven warlords allied with the Demonocracy in the east, trading the lives and souls of their mostly-human subjects for infernal power. Each warlord erected a tower as a symbol of his power, and from these bases they marched unnatural armies to battle for territory and supremacy.

Later Triegenes assailed those towers, toppling each as a stepping stone toward the Demonocracy itself. The tyrants fell, and dwarves became an oppressed minority in what had once been their homeland. When the Great Malice shattered the kingdom of Triegenes, several clans of dwarves overthrew the priests who had ruled over them. They prepared for war, intending to recreate new dwarven kingdoms, but the deadly threat from the Malice Lands forced them to band together, even unite with humans to keep newly-birthed abominations at bay.

The dwarven clans and fractured human provinces that survived the collapse of the kingdom of Triegenes created a loose federation that has grown ever more united. Regional governors, mostly human, handle normal farming and trade, while dwarven lords direct grand mining operations and command the nation's army and navy.

Once again the nation has grown fond of towers, not just as symbols of power but as strongholds against intermittent waves of monstrous incursions from the Malice Lands. Dark magic is not precisely endorsed, but it is tolerated as a necessary evil for the nation's defense. Criminals convicted of any great crime vanish into mountain prisons to serve in hellish mines, until the day they are sacrificed to empower a magical ward or weapon.

## Metal and Magic.

Unsurprisingly, Drakr has taken easily to alliances with Danor, both military and economic. In particular they helped build and still today defend the Avery Coast railroad, and are in the process of building their own rail lines. Their trains, however, are powered by arcane furnaces that burn blood red yet whose metal skin feels eerily cool to the touch.

Similarly, the Drakran military has embraced firearms, and several companies have become famous for slaying implacable

## The Lost Riders.

After most of the dwarven tyrants had fallen to Triegenes, the last five warlords gathered at a fiery tower in the Shawl Mountains to discuss a plan for war. As they camped and planned, one of their archmage servants warned that a winter storm stronger than any in history was approaching. Afraid of being stranded from their battle, the five warlords mounted their various dread steeds and rode forth. But when the storm fell upon them, they lost their direction.

Too cruel and convinced of their invincibility to die, the five continued riding until they vanished forever into the blizzard. For over a millennium the dwarves of Drakr have told tales of the lost riders, continuing to search for the battle that they should have fought and won. Folk tales warn never to offer aid to lost travelers, lest you anger their pride and earn their wrath.

malice beasts which previously would have taken an army to defeat. The finest guns come from Drakr, and many of those are enchanted. Unlike Risur, however, Drakr has not rushed to develop steam warships. They have limited interest in naval matters, and prefer to defend their coasts with forts and cannons, though a few Drakran shipyards do construct ironclad vessels for Danor.

The capital city of Trekhom is a major hub of industrial trade, as well as a nexus for several rail lines. Every day countless tons of refined steel arrives by train from the northern forge city of Mirsk, high in the snowy Shawl Mountains. It is said that giants work some of the mines in those frigid mountains, lending their physical might in exchange for enchanted weapons and armor.

Where the Avery Coast railroad crosses the border into the Malice Lands, a steel spire rises five hundred feet above the desolate landscape, guarded by a battalion of soldiers and mages. Its purpose is unclear, but some suspect it is enchanted to drive away malice beasts, or to help mend the tear in the fabric of magic.

## The Philosophy of Governance.

Though intellectuals of the rest of the world are quick to disassociate themselves with some of the darker trends in Drakran philosophy – those grounded in the power of the old warlords – many heap great praise on the wise and open deliberations in the nation's parliament.

The old ecumenical tradition of the Clergy survived the Great Malice in the form of schools of philosophy. Often each clan or township would have its own line of local philosophers. Their ideas would influence local leaders and businessmen, who would in turn spread them through the rest of the nation, with the most successful and intriguing philosophers earning their home prestige and profit.

Today the most visible philosophy is Heid Eschatol, which focuses on proper endings to all of life's affairs. Its founder, **Vlendam Heid**, makes a living speaking to audiences around the world, engaging them with philosophy rather than letting them be passive consumers of ideas from books. But other ideologies still battle in the marketplaces and academies of Drakr, and any successful federal representative has to be a studied philosopher, or else espouse wild teachings that will get him noticed.

## Federated Drakran States.



- + **Capital:** Trekhom
- + **Government:** Federal parliamentary republic
- + **Head of State:** Chancellor Dmitra Takhenov
- + **Official Language:** Dwarven
- + **Common Races:** Human 67%, dwarf 30%, other 3%.

## Elfaivar

Before the Great Malice, the kings of Elfaivar held power to rival all the other nations of Lanjyr. Commanding legions of slave armies from the far east and fielding battalions of fey mages and monsters, the long-lived eladrin monarchs were able to ensure the security and prosperity of the mightiest nation in the world.

Today, only ruins survive.

The Great Malice slew every eladrin woman in the empire and beyond, with only the rarest and most unlikely survivors: women currently polymorphed, on other planes, or who had forsaken the Elfaivaran faith entirely. Within weeks the once-glorious empire, which had been poised to crush the impudent Clergy who had twice launched a holy war against it, descended into chaos. Within decades the population had collapsed to the tiniest sliver of its original number.

A stirring eulogy of the poet Vekesh convinced a few eladrin to seek harmony, to endure, and to prosper – and above all else, to find and free eladrin women from bondage so the race could heal. But for millions of grief-stricken eladrin men, the aftermath of the Great Malice was a time of constant battle.

Those few women who had survived were quickly claimed as property, and anyone who could keep ownership of a wife against a hundred thousand other suitors could command enclaves of desperate followers. Whole cities of despairing men would fight to the death for the chance of winning their lord another wife. Mages laid curses upon swaths of cropland, but some enclaves chose to starve rather than hand over their “queen.” Slavers brought ships of human and elf women magically transmuted to pass as eladrin and then sold into servitude, only to be slain when the truth was discovered.

Many eladrin men fled to other lands, seeking wives of other races, but they could sire no children. As attrition whittled down survivors, and too few children were born to keep society alive, ever more wealth and magical relics pooled in the hands of fewer and fewer men. When foreigners from Crisillyir or the distant east tried to claim Elfaivaran land they were driven back by fearsome eladrin warriors. Trained by constant battles for survival, and possessed of the finest arms and armor of entire cities, each man was match for a hundred normal soldiers.

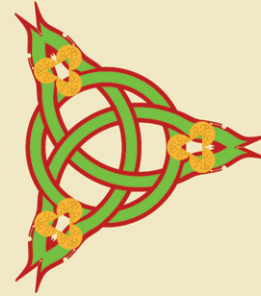
Eladrin are long-lived, but old age eventually claims even them. Some made pacts with the powers of the Dreaming or other planes, but after two centuries, Elfaivar was practically a ghost nation. It took nearly a century more for Crisillyir and other nations to defeat the few vengeful hold-outs and begin to colonize the empty landscape.

Jungle had reclaimed cities. Mighty magical effects had lost their cohesion, spilling strange enchantments into the land. In some places the material world had blended and merged with the Dreaming. It was in these confusing borderlands that a handful of Vekesh-inspired enclaves survived.

### Modern Enclaves.

Early on, the freed women of Vekesh enclaves gained great power, both politically and magically, for they came to embody the hopes of thousands of survivors. New daughters were fiercely guarded and

## Empire of Elfaivar.



- + **Capital:** Bharata (now Santi Simone)
- + **Government:** Feudal monarchy
- + **Official Language:** Elf



ASRABEY VARAL,  
ELADRIN CHAMPION

## The Arsenal of Dhebisu.

Eladrin tell a tale of a god who turned against their pantheon and was transformed into a tiger that walked like a man: a rakshasa. As a god, no weapon in the world could harm him, and he ravaged the lands of Elfaivar, drowning villages and tearing entire cities free from the earth with a swipe of his clawed hands.

A warrior named Dhebisu, infamous for her incongruous brilliance as a poet and lewd sense of humor, was called upon to defeat the rakshasa. She befriended the cats of the jungle to learn of the monster's weakness, and consulted with sages to learn when the next meteor shower would occur. That night she sang a mocking tune to lure out the rakshasa.

The beast attacked her, but she pulled a falling star from the sky and wove it into her hair. Thenceforth any weapon she touched became infused with the powers of the heavens. They battled through the night, until finally, the rakshasa tried to slay her with a poisoned arrow. But Dhebisu snatched the bolt and plunged it into the fiend's loins, destroying it so that it could never reincarnate.





intensely trained so they could defend themselves and someday lead their own enclaves. Despite this, sometimes foreign mercenaries would manage to abduct an eladrin woman, for they became prized status symbols in the rest of Lanjyr.

These abductions led to the first Vekeshi retributions, as mystics undertook daring missions to rescue lost women or at least punish those who would steal them. In general, though, the enclaves stay hidden. They'll deploy spies to keep eyes on human activity in nearby lands, and will make bargains with fey to scare off those who get too close, but they realize that they cannot risk antagonizing the human nations.

A rare few eladrin seek to integrate with human society. They wear as much gold as they can, which prevents them from using their fey step, in an effort to cut themselves off from their fey heritage. By contrast, some Vekeshi mystics also adorn themselves in gold, but only as rituals of self-flagellation, to meditate on their distance from their people's history so they can ponder how best to reclaim their birthright.

## The Fallen Goddess.

Srasama was just one of dozens of prominent gods in the Elfaivar pantheon. Traditionally she was the six-armed sculptor who gave form to the raw creation discovered by her husband. She had dominion over the lives of women, and she particularly oversaw rituals of womanhood, marriage, and grief. For these, she would take three different forms of maiden, mother, and crone, but in all she was a fierce defender of the Elfaivar empire.

The famous adventurer Hamyd of the East claimed in the year 72 A.O.V. to have witnessed a conclave of eladrin matriarchs, wherein they performed the ancient rituals of Srasama. According to him, though, they cut short the rituals of the crone, and his guide alleged that this was because the matriarchs had forsworn grief, and so can never age.

## The World

All of the events of the campaign occur on the continent of Lanjyr, aside from a few forays into the coterminous planes of the Dreaming and the Bleak Gate, so we leave it to the GM and players to decide the nature of the world beyond the edges of the map.

## Border States and the Malice Lands.

Risur, Ber, Crisillyir, Danor, Drakr, and Elfaivar are the largest and most prominent nations in Lanjyr, but by no means are they the only ones. Some regions on the continental map are marked as "border states." These lands play no noteworthy role in the ZEITGEIST campaign, but you should feel free to use them for whatever purpose the GM needs.

Other areas surrounding Danor are called the Malice Lands. When Danor had its magic stripped away during the Great Malice, these lands were at the edge of the effect's radius. The magic there was left fractured and unstable. While Danor was able to restore itself in the relative stability of its dead magic zone, the wild magic of the Malice Lands has led to irregular catastrophes and small

cataclysms that tend to wipe out any nation that tries to establish itself there.

Most people in the Malice Lands live in small villages or as nomads in order to avoid the more deadly manifestations of wild magic. These war-torn lands are also havens for criminals who cross into neighboring countries to pillage and plunder. One noteworthy exception is the city-state of Orithea, which has managed to prosper in a small pocket of stable, albeit weakened magic.

In general, the border states between Risur and Ber are little more than mountainous tribal lands that refuse to join either larger nation. The border states between Crisillyir and Drakr are fairly autonomous and stable, while the border between Drakr and Danor is near anarchy. North of Drakr, a few minor nations stay out of the politics of greater Lanjyr, while beyond Elfaivar lie powerful protectorates of a distant empire, still recovering from the fall-out of the collapse of Elfaivar centuries ago.

These lands are generally outside the scope of this campaign, which gives the GM an excuse to add strange and exciting personal touches to the world.

## Calendar.

The region generally uses a simple calendar devised over a millennium ago by the skyseers of Risur. This calendar divides the year into four 91-day seasons, each starting on an equinox or solstice. After the 91st of Winter, one extra day is used to celebrate the new year.

The most common celestial rhythm is the cycle of the moon over 29 and a half days. People might say something happened "a month ago," but individual months are not named. Instead dates are referenced in the format "17 Spring 473 A.O.V."

In the year 500 A.O.V., the first first-quarter moon of each season occur on 12 Spring, 10 Summer, 9 Autumn, and 7 Winter. Festivals of the Old Faith typically fall on these nights. More colloquially, there are names for each prominent moon phase throughout the year. These terms have fallen out of favor except in poetry, academia, and mysticism.

## Lunar Myth.

Some say the moon is made of glass, and they claim they can see stars through it, or perhaps within it. Poets have long noted that the "right side" of the moon (the edge that crests the horizon first) seems to have the shape of a man with his arms extended, while the left side has the image of a woman facing away from the man. This gave rise to a shared myth of the moon.

In this tale, an orphan boy meets a girl whose mother is dying beneath a cypress tree. The girl is taken away to be trained as a mage (or an artist, a princess, or a scholar depending on the version), and the orphan boy joins a band of hunters (or rogues, brigands, or rebels). They cross paths, fall in love through their trials, wed, and become heroes. But he dies, and she lives on to raise their child.

Though different seasons can have more specific names, generally the first quarter moon – when only the "man" is visible – is called Hunter's moon. The full moon is Lovers' moon – when both man and woman are present. The third quarter is Maiden's moon – with the woman alone. And the new moon is Dreamer's moon.

Much of the nuance of Skyseer prophecy depends on which moon rises first in a season, and which stars if any are in conjunction with it. The specialized names typically start with the first Hunter's moon each season; phases before those are just called by the generic terms early Lovers, early Maiden, or early Dreamer moon.

The more flavorful names, in order, are below:

- ◆ **Spring.** Hart moon, Plow moon, Thunder moon, Dreamer's moon. Stranger's moon, Forest moon, Mage's moon, Dancer's moon. Hero's moon, High Spring moon, Legend's moon, Dreamer's moon.
- ◆ **Summer.** Husband's moon, Marriage moon, Bride's moon, Dreamer's moon. Dragon moon, Honey moon, Kraken moon, Sleeper's moon. Hero's moon, High Summer moon, Legend's moon, Dreamer's moon.
- ◆ **Autumn.** Serpent moon, Harvest moon, Mother moon, Dreamer's moon. Martyr's moon, Pyre moon, Widow moon, Black moon. Hero's moon, High Autumn moon, Legend's moon, Dreamer's moon.
- ◆ **Winter.** Hunger moon, Snow moon, Wolf moon, Dreamer's moon. Orphan's moon, Cypress moon, Daughter's moon, Hope moon. Hunter's moon, High Winter moon. Maiden's moon. Dreamer's moon.

## Planets.

Everyone knows that the fey live in the Dreaming, and that spirits of the dead can linger in the Bleak Gate, but most people are unclear on just what they are. They disagree on whether you can physically go to these realms by walking, or if you would need magic, and if you went there just what you'd see.

The Clergy states that the Dreaming, which they call the Green Temptress or Hell's Garden, is where people's minds go when they sleep, and that the beings called the fey are dreams given flesh by evil magic. Folk religion in Ber proclaims that the moon is a looking glass, and the Dreaming is what we look like reflected in it, while many Drakrans believe it's a trap between this world and the afterlife, meant to trick people from their just ends.

As for the Bleak Gate, common lore of the Clergy calls it Purgatory, and envisions it as a hollow copy of this world lying just underground, a place where the dead pass through on their way to their reward or punishment in the afterlife. The dwarves of Drakr know better, and believe that it is a vision of the distant future, of what the world will look like when everyone has died. Berans believe it lies on the dark side of the moon.

In Risur, folk tales say that once the beings of the Dreaming lived here in our world, and then King Kelland defeated the fey titans

## Planets and Planes.

Common lore in Risur claim the heavens are a massive distant dome, and that the planets of the night sky move in reaction to the unseen hand of fate. According to the skyseers, each star is a source of magic, and the planets in particular are the source of key elemental powers.

Each planet and star is conceived of as an empty garden that only comes alive when an outsider enters, and which has no permanent existence. Skyseer myths say ancient men once traveled freely to these worlds, where they could tap directly into powerful magic, but that the stars grew distant. Even today, though, wise men can look skyward and see clues to the course of fate.

The Clergy, by contrast, believe that the heavens are a black sea, and that every star and planet is a physical world, each with its own people and gods. Danoran astronomers, though usually loathe to agree with the Clergy on anything, claim that they have seen the surfaces of the planets through their finely-crafted telescopes, though they cannot confirm any civilizations.

Meanwhile, a modern celebrity named Rock Rackus tells wild tales of using magic to visit these worlds, meet the strange locals, and return with treasure as proof. Skyseers dismiss his claims as a fool being tricked by fey, but Rackus's shows sell out as audiences delight at his bawdry and bold adventures.

Below we list the most prominent objects in the sky, along with the myths and theories associated with each. These myths aren't necessarily consistent with each other.

- ◆ **Vona.** The sun, source of pure arcane force and magical radiance, but too bright to observe the surface. It influences revelations and discoveries.
- ◆ **Jiese.** The plane of fire, home to serpent men whose skin glow like coal. Ancient myths claimed this was a dragon, which chased the eagle Avilona. Jiese influences war and strife, as well as notable births.
- ◆ **Avilona.** The plane of air, where desolate islands of rock float amid the clouds, covered in long-abandoned ruins. Ancient myths claimed this world was a titanic eagle, fleeing ravenous Jiese. Influences weather, notable deaths, and animals.
- ◆ **Av.** This ancient name for the moon comes from a legend about a sleeping queen of the fey, cursed to slumber after her soul was captured in her reflection on a bottomless pool. Influences nothing, but reflects subtle clues of people's desires.
- ◆ **Mavisha.** The plane of water, home to krakens lurking beneath the waters and leviathans swimming rippling liquid columns that writhe above the sea like the tentacles of a living world. Legend states that a drowned bride long ago cursed sailors to join her in the lightless depths of this endless ocean. Influences the seas, great movements of people, and conflicts within families.
- ◆ **Urim.** The plane of earth, or rather a scattered, shattered belt of relatively tiny shards of metal, which sometimes fall from the sky bearing precious ores and accursed worms. Influences the earth, the rise and fall of fortunes, and random meetings of strangers.
- ◆ **Apet.** The distant plane, said to be a permanent storm of sand and dust on a featureless plane, with the only point of reference being an arc of silver an unknowable distance above. Influences subtle nuances of distance and time, as well as the grand cycle of ages.
- ◆ **Nem.** The plane of ruin, this planet is a myth among the skyseers, who say it sheds no light, and can only be seen as it glides silently through the heavens, devouring stars and leaving nothing but a hole in the night. Influences secrets and the dead.



ROCK RACKUS



and split the world in two, giving the fey and humanity each their own homes, though the titans would exist in each. The Bleak Gate was thought to be a darker, more malevolent part of the Dreaming, a belief reinforced of late. As industry has narrowed the streets of Flint and darkened its alleys with soot, more and more people have begun to speak of disappearances, and of strange black beings that walk in the shadows.

### Key Religions.

Four religions dominate in the ZEITGEIST campaign setting. Unlike in a typical Fifth Edition campaign, there is no planar travel, and magic to summon extraplanar creatures is exceedingly rare and brief; only once in recorded history has a god actually physically appeared in the world – and then she was killed. While it is undeniable that powers and forces exist beyond this world, their shapes cannot be proven, and must be taken on faith.

### The Clergy.

Organized religion based in Crisillyir. Mortals can empower themselves, even reach godhood, by confronting the challenges of the world. Beyond this world exist many planes, each a perfect manifestation of some aspect of reality, and they are presided over by powerful gods, angels, and spirits that can be entreated for power.

### Guerro.

Folk religion of Ber. Every tribe has its own gods, conquered from the tribes who were not strong enough to stand alone. As the tribes battle, so do the gods. For now, it seems, the gods are at peace, and so we make peace, but all good things die in battle. A syncretic combination of Clergy and Guerro is enjoying a popular surge in Drakr.

### The Old Faith.

Folk religion of Risur. Honor the spirits of the land, and draw power from nature. The stars above trace patterns that predict events on our world, but the only other worlds are the ones we can visit: the Dreaming and the Bleak Gate.

### Seedism.

Folk religion of Elfaivar. Our actions seed change in the world, though it may take ages. Elves and eladrin have long memories. Before the rise of humans, the gods spoke, and we still remember their names and teachings. Srasama, the three-faced mother-warrior-queen, was slain by human treachery, but it is our duty to endure and outgrow this injury. The archfey of the Dreaming were once vassals of the gods, and so we revere and respect them.



## The Philosophy of William Miller.

While Drakran philosophy is in ascendance today, many older works are still read and discussed throughout Lanjyr. Most popular are the writings of a clerical monk, William Miller, who in the run up to the Great Malice composed a treatise on hypocrisy, suggesting that it is better to admit you are uncertain of your beliefs than to act in contradiction with your stated values. The book, widely recognized as an attack on the Clergy, allegedly drove the monk to flee persecution.

Miller reappeared several years after the Great Malice with a new work of political philosophy that coincided with his effort to found a small nation, Pala, amid the chaos of the Malice Lands. In his multi-chapter book he examined possible social structures, comparing robustness and stability with various moral values. Early chapters

allude to a conclusion that would detail a handful of ideal nations, but today there are no complete copies of the book.

In 18 A.O.V., the reconstituted Clergy branded Miller a heretic, invaded Pala, and sacked its capital. He was brought to Alais Primos, the new seat of the Clergy, where he was tortured in an effort to compel a confession. After he refused to recant, his captors made a pyre of his heretical writings and burned him alive upon it.

Today, Miller's incomplete writings are popular among the bohemian dockers in Flint and philosophically minded followers of the Panoply in Ber. Rumors say that copies of Miller's final chapters are kept in a library vault in Alais Primos, where it shares shelf space with other "heretical" texts.

## Dominant Philosophies.

Certain groups promote secular ideologies independent from the metaphysics of religion.

### Heid Eschatol.

Developed in Drakr, popular in Risur. It is important to plan for good endings, whether that's for a business venture, a story, a love affair, or your own life.

### Panoply.

Nascent philosophy from Ber, concerned with examining how and why cultures differ. Followers often feel dissatisfied with the traditions of their homeland, and defend the value of foreign ideas.

### Pragati.

Official position of the Jierre ruling party in Danor. Gods are the creation of men who were unable to comprehend the real structure of the world. Those who hold false beliefs, be they in gods, in disproven economic theories, or anything else, are a threat to progress.

### Vekesh.

Guiding principle that helped the eladrin survive after the fall of Elfaivar. After a tragedy, the best revenge is to heal and grow stronger than you were before.

## The Story Begins

An incredible tale is about to unfold, and you are at the center of it. The circumstances of your First Mission are detailed in Part 3 of this *Player's Guide*, and have been reprinted here for your convenience.

### First Mission: Launch Party.

It is spring of the year 500 A.O.V. (After Our Victory).

Seven years after the end of the Fourth Yerasol War, the shipyards in Flint have completed the first Risuri warship powered solely by steam engine, not sail. Your monarch, King Aodhan, has come to Flint to witness the official launch of this mighty vessel. Wooden-hulled but with a heart and skin of iron, the Royal Naval Ship *Coaltongue* will act as a deterrent against future aggression from Risur's enemy across the sea, the nation of Danor.

The Royal Homeland Constabulary has been called upon to provide security, and you have spent the past several weeks working to make sure this event goes off without a hitch: canvassing the docks, performing background checks on the guest list, coordinating with the local police to set up a perimeter around the royal docks, and following various directives of your superiors. Now, as a warm breeze off the sea mingles the scents of elaborate floral decorations with the pervasive coal soot that always hovers over Flint, the king's carriage approaches, and you spy disgruntled faces amid the cheering crowd.

Start your mission in ZEITGEIST Adventure One, *Island at the Axis of the World*.