



ENCYCLOPEDIA DRACONICA

THE EPYLLION COMPANION



VOLUME I

• TALES & STORIES •

A Supplement for Epyllion the Tabletop RPG

ENCYCLOPEDIA DRACONICA

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TALES & STORIES

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INTRODUCTION

Although the war against the Darkness was long ago, and the dragons of Dragonia declared victory over its insidious power, dragonkin must ever ward their hearts against corruption. They tell stories and sing songs of those brave drakes who came before, so that the lessons of the past may be remembered, and Dragonia will never waver on the brink of disaster again.

You are a new clutch of young drakes helping the Council to investigate rumors and discover the truth of the growing shadow in the land. Along with your fellow dragons, you must protect Dragonia, help both dragonkin and beasts of the wilderness overcome their troubles, and discover the true value of friendship.

What Is an Epyllion Companion?

EPYLLION: A DRAGON EPIC is a tabletop roleplaying game where you and your friends play a clutch, or a group, of young drakes who lend a helping wing to other dragons and work together to overcome problems. In *EPYLLION*, you and your friends tell the tale of Dragonia and the noble dragons who live there. In fact, you get to play those dragons, and contribute directly to the amazing story your group tells.

When you play *EPYLLION*, you investigate rumors and discover the truth of a growing Darkness while dealing with the day-to-day problems of dragonkin. You start play as baby dragons, and soon realize that the adults around you may not believe that the Darkness may be a threat yet again. As your character learns and grows, so too do they age. *THE ENCYCLOPEDIA DRACONICA* is a supplement for *EPYLLION*, containing detailed entries, new playbooks, and unique moves, so you can add these creative awesome universe-expanding plots to your game! Each entry is a standalone mission, meaning that you can insert it into your *EPYLLION* campaign at any time.

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA DRACONICA

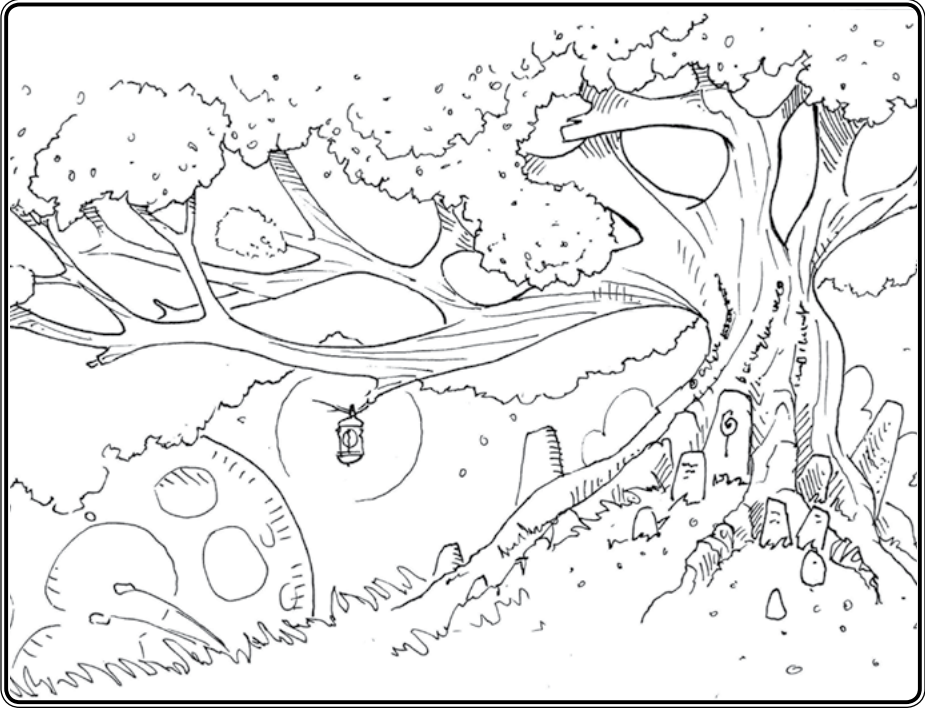
Welcome to *THE ENCYCLOPEDIA DRACONICA VOLUME 1: TALES & STORIES!*

Dragonica is a gigantic continent, full of magic and wonder. From long-held traditions, to secrets buried deep beneath the earth, this land of dragons has more than any could ever hope to explore, let alone record. But here, in *THE ENCYCLOPEDIA DRACONICA*, we have tried to document much of what we know.

From Mudwing's heartbreaking retelling of the Legend of the Great Sage Tree, to Icetooth Reinforth III's terrifying report of the Kraken that lurk deep in the waters surrounding Dragonica, to Agate Flamedrake's amusing recital of the Moonflower Clutch's antics, the tales within these pages will bring Dragonica's history to life. Learning why the Sky City fell, how the Umbra first struck, and what drove House Kebros to betray the other Houses during the War are among the adventures waiting for the truly brave and their friends; knowledge that, once uncovered, will fill in blank spaces on your map of Dragonica, or perhaps draw you in further...

Four new playbooks—the Elementalist, the Envoy, the Orphan, and the Rebel—offer new ways for players to tailor their desired experience to the exploits of their clutch. Each comes with exciting new moves and DM advice to make the inclusion of these playbooks into your game as easy as possible.

There is much still to record on the map of Dragonica, but hopefully this smattering of tales, songs, and heroic figures provided within will illuminate a bit of Dragonica's wonders. We'll leave the rest of the adventure up to you and your clutch!



HEART OF THE GREAT SAGE TREE

By Mudwing, Elder of Clay Den Stronghold
Translated by Marissa Kelly

*“The heartbeat of time persists, burying the past to make room
for the future and her children.”*

—an oral tradition passed down by an unknown poet



his tale began long before dragonkin took to the skies and built their monuments to the moons. This story is as old as the trees themselves, with roots so deep they hold the world together, and only the whisperings of leaves can reveal how it all began. But this record is not about preserving the past, for many dragonkin, more qualified than I, have done so in many a song and tomb. No, the hope of this record is to dictate a new ending. It is time for a new generation to learn from my mistakes and bring a conclusion to the tale of the Great Sage Tree.

Now more than ever, we must listen...where once there was a heartbeat, a void of deafening silence fills the trunk of the Great Sage Tree. A gaping hole now mars her chest while the forest withers and fails all around her. We must listen closely to the heartbeat that remains in us all, so that we may recover what has been lost...before it is too late.

News first tickled my antennae upon a visit to the Capital. A long-toothed dragon by the name of Hexx collapsed on the chamber perch, dris entrance interrupting me as I addressed the council. Hexx was so exhausted from flying through the night that I had to hold them up, wings trembling, as the Council listened.

Hexx informed us that the forest near Semscale's stronghold had "gone sour." I will never forget the term. Beasts and flora were falling ill and crops had spoiled. This news concerned all in attendance, but it was dris next feeble utterance that would change my life forever...

"The heart of the Great Sage Tree has been clawed out."

I grew up singing songs of the tree and her lover. Surely this could not be so! But those dark words took root deep inside my own chest and I knew I must do everything in my power to restore the heart to its nesting place and save the forest.

I have learned much since that fateful day, but I can do no more to finish this. I am so close, but my body is too weak to

carry on. My joints have soured like the forest as I have grown old and stubborn. I took on too much of this burden alone and in my blind selfishness, I failed. But with my failings I have a new wisdom and knowledge to share with a young clutch who can take up this quest.

Yes. If there is any thing I have learned it is that no one drake or dragon can do this alone. To restore the heart of the Great Sage Tree a clutch must work together and stay together... That is where Brightscale and I failed our clutch...we each thought we knew best and the forest suffers for it.

But I am getting ahead of myself! Everything is as Hexx said: The land of the Great Sage Tree is withering and fading. The forest, once a haven of wild extremes, has been reduced to a nigh-uninhabitable moderate plane. Blistering hot sunrises that once attracted Salaguins (sluggish salamander penguin beasts) to migrate can no longer dazzle—let alone blind—a young drake looking directly at it! Even the howling winter blizzards that used to fill the forest with a mighty roar can barely carry a tune loud enough to harmonize with the mating choir of the majestic Elkion (huge elk lion beasts). The magic of the forest has abandoned this place and left it an empty husk of its former glory...even the moons feel quiet here.

Because of these wicked changes to the landscape, the terrain marking the way to the tree is unrecognizable to most maps and guides. To find the tree, you must travel the path of no wind, cross the clear waters with no reflection, and climb the staircase with no steps. There you will see the tree. Despite disfigurement, her greatness is unmistakable, and a bridge of woven roots will carry you to the wound where her heart once lay.

It is a sight I would not wish upon anyone. I still remember how it felt to sit in the stillness next to such a hole in the world. I wept silently for a time, tears streaming down my clay-stained fur, until I noticed glyphs scratched into the bark. A strange language I could not decipher on my own, but the

script looked so familiar...as if my clutchmate, Brightscale, had made them! I had left my clutch at the Capital to investigate this on my own, so I had to wait to find out what the markings meant and if they were made by those responsible for the missing heart. I sent word back to my clutch, but they never replied and so, suspecting the worst, I continued to investigate without their help.

For many sun cycles I poured over version after version of the Legend of the Great Sage Tree. I traveled far and wide to collect all the versions I could get my talons on. Most versions of the story recount that the Great Spirit of the forest fell in love with a mighty sage tree. The Great Spirit gave the tree its heart so they would be together as one. It is said that “forever” was born of that union and they enjoy a life together, forever as one. And in some texts they say the heartbeat of the Great Sage Tree is time itself.

I began to suspect that those who would steal the heart must also believe that whoever holds the heart controls the passage of time...even if this story only contains half-truths, if the heart is in the hands of our enemies, I fear it is too large a risk to take. But even with all my studies, I could not figure out who or what had caused the dark glyphs and removed the heart.

Desperate and out of options, I went back to the tree, thinking maybe I had missed some important character when transposing the glyphs onto parchment. But there was nothing. I pleaded with the moons, but only silence answered. They too had abandoned me.

In the darkness of the new moon, I began to hear whispers from the shadows and I believed I had found a path forward. The Darkness was there in the glyphs, and it was eager to help me find my way. Desperate, alone, and with no moons to guide me, I was willing to pay any cost. I felt Shadow stain my heart but the Darkness showed me the path forward.

The Darkness showed me what was there all along. What I had not wished to see. I had recognized the scrawl in the bark that day. Brightscale, my clutchmate, had done the unthinkable. Dre betrayed the forest and the songs we sang as drakes. My very own clutchmate took the heart and broke mine!

Wings could not carry me fast enough or perhaps the Darkness had warned them—either way, by the time I caught up, Brightscale had already moved on and left our clutch behind. Dre abandoned them, much as I had...but why? I had left them to help the forest. How could Brightscale justify such a thing?! I needed to know why...

In my weakness I again gave in to the Darkness and despair, asking to be shown more. The shadows were eager to fill my mind with hushed whispers and painful secrets about my clutchmate.

Before my trip to the Capital, Brightscale's parenting clutch was publicly shamed and ostracized by the Council for rumors of their clutch's involvement in spreading Darkness during the War of Shadow. Their standing in Dragonia fell and they were forced to go into hiding. Determined to dispel these rumors and restore the standing of dris parenting clutch, Brightscale swallowed dris tears, and set out alone. Many accounts and stories of what took place during the war are contaminated by the Darkness, forbidden, and kept under lock and key in the impenetrable Webbed Vault beneath the stronghold of House Myndoth—the House of Oak—never to be revealed. Brightscale was denied entry, because for the House of Oak, *a secret known to many is no secret at all*. Resenting this decision to keep dris famous lineage a secret, Brightscale used Shadow Magic to steal the heart of the Great Sage Tree.

Since then the heart has been corrupted as Brightscale uses it to travel through time and find the truth about what had happened. But it will take more than one dragon's word to convince the Council that they were wrong, so Brightscale

has been figuring out how to bring some of the warriors of the past to the here-and-now as eyewitnesses.

The Darkness had shown me all I desired, but the whispers and visions only grew more intense as it perverted my desire to learn about the past by also revealing the future to me. In visions that still haunt me today, I saw Brightscale's plan fail...

Once dris parenting clutch is successfully brought to the present, they will be transformed into terrible Darkbeasts. Shadow will overwhelm Brightscale and dre will not relent. Although the Darkbeasts cannot testify, Brightscale will use what sway dre has over them to direct the Darkness' unparalleled might and destroy the Webbed Vault to release the documents. But the Darkness is insatiable. The Darkbeasts will break free, and spread Shadow like wildfire, corrupting everything in its wake for a thousand sun cycles if it can.

After that fateful moonless night, I returned to my nest to seal myself away and compose this plea. I have recorded all I know, so that no other dragonkin will have to make these same mistakes. Brightscale must be stopped. This is not the path dre would have wanted. What happened to dris parenting clutch is not right, but dragonkin must not combat such acts with more villainy. If we do, the Darkness wins. Every time we lose sight of that, it will win and leave us only a shadow of our former glory.

The clutch who takes on this quest may have a terrible choice before them. Brightscale and I are both alone now. Two halves of a broken clutch, corrupting those around us, unable to finish what we have started.

I am not a trained academic and I have done what I can to learn from those much wiser than I, but I don't think this task needs the Council or some old war hero to swoop in and save the day. I believe that the Great Sage Tree needs a clutch of drakes. Drakes who can disagree with one another,

love one another, make a decision together and live with the consequences *together*. Because if there is anything to take from the old songs now, it is that just like the Great Spirit and the Great Sage Tree, great things are born when we come together.

LOVER, ONLY LOVER

On a lonely autumn night

The Great Sage Tree holds up the moons with her nurturing embrace

Lover, nurturing lover, sweet sage tree

On a lonely winter night

The spirit of the forest cries out to touch the moons but no wings grow

Lover, restless lover, endless forest spirit

On a lonely spring night

They bleed all their pain away

Lover, nurturing lover, never leave thee

On a bright summer morning

Only love remains

Lover, only lover, Great Sage Tree

So, young friends, will you help Brightscale see a brighter future? Or will you take the safer route and destroy the heart, condemning the Darkbeasts and the forest along with it? Whatever you choose, you will need to rely on each other. The future is too much for one drake alone to carry on dris back, but together you can touch the moons.

To guide you on your path I leave to you the fruit of the Great Sage Tree: a lantern from its branches. Gaze into it and you will see the eye of the Great Spirit looking back. The eye will illuminate the path to the heart and the one who holds it. No doubt the heart has been hidden away, but follow the light of the lantern and you cannot be deceived.

When you **let the spirit guide's eye light your way**, roll +Courage. On a hit, the way forward is bright and clear. On a 7-9, your path also contains: hidden dangers, enticing distractions, or forbidden lore, DM's choice. On a miss, the light turns strange and dim; the DM will tell you what unwanted sight it reveals to you.

When you **destroy the Great Spirit's heart** with your clutch's help, roll +Friendship Gems. On a hit, the Darkbeasts are destroyed. On a 7-9, each of you must sacrifice something meaningful to restore the forest to health as well. On a miss, you hesitate and see the weakness in your clutch; return all Friendship Gems to each other and mark a Shadow.



SON-LONGWU MONASTERY OF MARTIAL ARTS

By Longcloud, dracologist and explorer
of the Dragonian Academies of History and Culture
Translated by Brendan Conway on behalf of Lin Liren

Beware what shades lie beneath a perfect leaf.

—*Platitudes of Wulong*



had never been anywhere like Son-Longwu Monastery before I spent a full year there. And I have never been anywhere like it since.

Hidden in the mountains, surrounded by white expanses of snow and ice. With a blue sky overhead and clouds close enough to touch without flying. The cold cuts through your scales with a razor claw, but after a time you learn to love it. The way it makes everything sharper. Crisper. Cleaner. The thin air makes it difficult to breathe at first, but soon enough you find yourself drinking deeply from the atmosphere, smelling the snow with each intake.

The monastery is built out of the peak of its mountain in the Snowspike range. The mountains all around it camouflage it, hide it from view for any drake outside of the Snowspikes, and its sheer altitude means no dragon can find it from above. No part of the monastery protrudes past the bounds of the normal mountain. So either you find the monastery because you know it's there, or you get extremely lucky and stumble across it while trying to traverse the Snowspikes. The lucky ones, Wulong taught, aren't lucky at all—they're moon-guided. But I'm getting ahead of myself, talking about Wulong's teachings.

The Son-Longwu Monastery of Martial Arts is a refuge for a dragon's mind; a crucible for a dragon's body; and a home for a dragon's soul. The name refers to battle and fighting, but it was added by others, after the fact. Yes, the monastery teaches dragons ways of fighting seen nowhere else in Dragonia...but they are, in so many ways, the least of the monastery's teachings.

I went there for the first time, hoping to learn the martial arts for myself. Not out of some desire to fight but because I wanted to expand my boundaries, and I thought all the monastery had to offer me were martial techniques.

I did not understand what awaited me there.

The Tales of Wulong

You might have heard of Wulong, in one form or another. Birrabbitt-Drake, the Windspeaker, Slip-scale Silvertalon, and so on. All those stories have been tied to Wulong by historians who traced them back to their source.

The stories of Wulong began even well before the War of Shadow. Wulong traveled around Dragonia in ancient days, and learned about the world by experiencing it firsthand. All the while, dre solved problems and remedied injustice. Wulong's stories are all fables meant to describe how important it is that dragons uphold good and kindness and virtue and so on. Most of them, nowadays, are treated as hatchling-stories, but their historical relevance is still a matter of interest. My friend, the historiographer Annaka Wishtail, believes that the modern structure of clutches going on missions for the Council may actually be attributable in part to Wulong's exploits.

In case you are less familiar with Wulong and the stories about dre, here's what you need to know. When Wulong was young, dre was clever, wily, and cunning. Wulong had a good heart, and helped everyone dre could, but was more than a bit of a rascal. Wulong sometimes taught lessons with punishments, or with cruel little tricks. But as Wulong grew older, dre became wiser and calmer. The stories about Wulong (when *Wulong* is the name used) usually differentiate by describing *Wulong the Young* or *Wulong the Wise*. Wulong the Wise was peaceful, completely open-minded, and kind. No tricks, no cruel punishments. Just understanding and compassion, coupled with a continued cleverness that allowed Wulong to solve any problem, be it from the *Tale of Two Squeasels* to the *Tale of Unending Flowers*.

Suffice to say that the tales of Wulong, this venerable figure of wisdom, guidance, and goodness, are almost certainly only tenuously connected to the truth. Son-Longwu is the most tangible sign of Wulong's influence and lessons, and for that, it is a treasure among all the jewels of Dragonia.

The Teachings of Son-Longwu

Wulong's teachings are embodied in the Platitudes.

- ☞ *Talons sheathed and wings furled, a dragon can perceive the world.*
- ☞ *Dream of moon and night's starry sky, give your mind a well-rested eye.*
- ☞ *Love your friend and love your foe, strength and greatness ever grow.*

3,784 platitudes, to be exact. Their meter, their rhyming, depends upon the exact translation. To try to understand the full depths of their meaning is considered a task of a lifetime and beyond. Instead, I'll give the briefest of overviews.

Dre trains drakes to believe in the interconnectedness of all life, all throughout Dragonia. Wild-creature and dragon, monster and hatchling, moon and shadow—all are connected. Bound to each other, fragmented only by a failure of comprehension, an inability to perceive the truth of existence.

And what that means, in turn, is that helping anyone or anything else is also helping the Oneness of all existence. So Son-Longwu trains dragons to help anyone and everyone who needs it, however they can.

But that learning is gradual. Those dragons who depart and enter the world to help others, seek out obvious injustice and wrongdoing to stop. Their understanding of helping the Oneness takes on a blunt quality as a matter of necessity... and mirrors the learning of Wulong's own learning. Wulong went from Wulong the Young to Wulong the Wise, traveling the land and helping the Oneness, discovering the value of true understanding and empathy.

Eventually, their journeys will take the dragons back to Son-Longwu, and they will complete their trials, understanding finally the truths that Wulong dremself learned.

Life at Son-Longwu, and the Wulong Kai

Son-Longwu is a place of contemplation, study, and sharpening. A new drake at Son-Longwu is like a blunted claw, grown long and uncared for. Son-Longwu exists to hone that drake to a razor's edge. Not to make a weapon, but because a *sharpened claw is capable of so much more than a dull one.*

Wulong was never a creature of violence or danger. But also, dre never neglected the need for force. There were things that could not simply be accepted, and could not be bent by words or thought. Wulong found the need to cut those things into shape, though that was always the last resort.

Dragons at Son-Longwu wake up early every morning, and meditate to the sun and moons above. Then, after several hours of chores and maintenance on the monastery, followed up by another round of meditation, it's training in Son-Longwu's martial arts—the *Wulong Kai*. *Wulong's Way.*

Practicing Wulong Kai is grueling. Each drake is different in form, so every master of Wulong Kai crafts a specific regimen for the student, designed to push that student to the brink. A long-necked sinuous dragon is made to push through a wall of stone without bending. A tough dragon, all muscle and power, is made to dash through the limbs of a tree without disturbing a leaf. And so on.

Wulong Kai centers around pushing each dragon to do what is impossible for them, so they come to realize that if it is possible anywhere in the world, it is possible for them. Everything is connected, after all, and doing the impossible is truly only a matter of borrowing the traits of another piece of the interconnected world.

It's very difficult to communicate the meaning and teachings of Wulong Kai—so much of it is centered around a particular state of mind, and the way that you are transformed by your surroundings in Son-Longwu. I've found myself saved by what little I was able to master of the Wulong Kai many a time.

The Dark Secret at the Base of Son-Longwu

But now...now we come to the truth. The reason I am writing this record.

I wanted to preserve the essence of Son-Longwu, to do my duties and record learnings. I wanted to make sure that within our archives was stored a picture of words, one that might help some other drake find the monastery long after even I was gone.

But there is another reason. A mystery I need to commit to parchment. A truth that dragonkind needs to have saved. In case it becomes crucial. In case it is more than just a mystery.

I was curious about the monastery, of course, in my time there. I wanted to understand it all. See it all. And I committed myself to my studies while I was within its halls, I truly did.

But I also explored when I was not supposed to. One night, I slipped out of my cell, passing through the darkened monastery to investigate whatever hidden recesses I could find. I knew there must be parts of it that students such as I were not shown. That there had to be texts, or relics of Wulong. There had to be more.

I had heard rumors from some of the other newcomers that pointed me downward, deep into the mountain and beneath the monastery. They said that Wulong dremself was here, still in the monastery. That Wulong had become a Mystic, of such power and size. Wulong was the very foundation of the monastery, literally, dris massive stone form supporting the whole of the structure.

Of course this couldn't be, historically speaking—the monastery had been built before Wulong would ever have become a Mystic—but most such tales have some kind of basis in truth. So that's what I sought—the foundation of the monastery, deep below the mountain.

And I found it. Passing through locked doors down in the lowest tunnels of the monastery, opened with a judiciously applied bit of moon artifice, I found myself in beautifully engraved corridors. My moon-light showed endless text, detailing Wulong's journeys and tales...and ultimately pointing to exactly what my peers had said. That I would find Wulong up ahead, a Mystic. Quiet, yes, but there. Supporting the monastery, and ready should we ever need dris guidance again.

My excitement barely contained, I rushed forward into the darkness under the monastery and found...

Nothing.

Wulong was not there. There was a space, an enormous space. Large enough to have housed even the biggest of Mystics. And there were signs that something *had* been there. Lanterns that must've hung off some form. Posts, fallen over, perhaps put into place to support or be supported by that same form.

But the blackness was filled only with emptiness.

This is the truth I must record. I know not if Wulong was ever truly there, in that space beneath the monastery. And surely, the monastery persists, continues teaching Wulong's great lessons, no matter what. But that emptiness I found...the absence...and what it might imply...

I don't think anything I have ever discovered has shaken me more than that.

I left Son-Longwu soon after my discovery. I could not take the thought of that enormous, empty chamber beneath the monastery. And I was too afraid to bring it up to the elders, worried they would either judge me for lurking about the monastery at night, or worse—that they already knew the truth of the empty chamber.

I know not what to do next. But if ever a drake reads these records, and finds dremself at the monastery...find the chamber. Find out if the Mystic is still absent.

And find out, as I have feared for years and years now, if it was never truly empty...but was instead full of Darkness.



When you **train with the Masters of Son-Longwu for a day**, decide with the Masters what you will train. If it is your mind, roll +Cunning; if it is your heart, roll +Charm; if it is your body, roll +Courage. You can only ever roll this move to train each part of yourself once. On a 10+, choose 2. On a 7-9, choose 1.

- ☞ You learn to see the world differently; change your Virtue to one from another playbook, or to one you agree upon with your DM.
- ☞ You clear yourself of the Darkness that had settled upon you; clear all Shadows.
- ☞ You receive insight from the moons; choose a moon and ask it a single question. It will answer honestly.

On a miss, choose 1, but the training frustrates and drains you; you must leave this place the following day.



When you **come to a new settlement wearing the garb of Son-Longwu**, roll +Charm. On a hit, you are seen as one of its acolytes, and will be received warmly and with kindness. On a 10+, someone important here owes a particular debt to the students of Wulong; the DM will name them and who they are, and you will say why they are indebted to Son-Longwu. On a miss, the people of this place are suspicious of you; they think you must have stolen those garments, and view you as a liar or threat.





HOUSE YERAKTOS

THE HOUSE FROM THE WILD

By Slateclaw Empyreal,
Expeditionary Historian of the Dragonian Archives
Translated by Brendan Conway on behalf of Draco

“Sometimes, the only penance for misdeeds is time.”

—Master of House Yeraktos, name withheld

Note: The following text was to be burned and excised from the records of the Archives for its impropriety. But I could not bring myself to destroy this knowledge. I have hidden it amid the Archives, where hopefully it will be found some years from now, when Dragonia might be ready to read the truths therein. I hope that I am forgiven for my transgressions.

—Quillow, Underarchivist of the Dragonian Archives



W e dragons mold our history as we look back upon it. We change our stories, we adjust our truths. We add new understanding. And sometimes, we remove truths, to save ourselves from our own mistakes, transgressions, or sins. We do not like to admit such editing, but we must. If ever we are to be true to ourselves, we must understand our own tendencies to excise from our histories the things that are uncomfortable, that point to our own fallibility.

That is why I began investigating House Yeraktos so many years ago.

They were wisp-like rumors at first. The faintest of clues, the slightest traces of a trail. A name, an artifact, a strange sigil left emblazoned upon the stone of a long-abandoned hatchery. Pieces of a mosaic, long ago smashed apart. But as I found more, I determined to assemble them. To uncover this truth, something long buried.

At first, I had suspected that I was doing Dragonia a deep service. Clearly, the Darkness had corrupted some drake and caused them to erase some lynchpin of our histories. After all, the battles of the War of Shadow had been so terrible, the time so confusing...of course there would have been corrupted dragons, even in our halls of power. Of course they would've acted to rob Dragonia of that which gives it strength—its sense of truth, of history.

But then I uncovered the true clues. It wasn't a single corrupted dragon who had excised Yeraktos from our records...it was a plot of many, rising up to the Council itself. Yeraktos was burned out of Dragonia's recollection by force of effort and by collective will. *We did this to ourselves.*

And now I undo it.

The Glory of Yeraktos

We all know of Kebros, and its corruption. House Kebros fell, but it will forever be one of the greatest acts of civilization and mercy that, despite the fall, Kebros was ultimately allowed to remain within Dragonia's bounds. Its drakes were not exiled beyond the pale. We did not forget its deeds, both good and bad, and we did not turn our tails to its dragons.

And that, I believe, is because Dragonia had already learned its lesson from the way it dealt with House Yeraktos.

Yeraktos was, indeed, a true, full, great House. From those deeply buried records I discovered, those accounts I assembled, and those divinations I scryed with deepest moon magics, I have learned of Yeraktos' enormity.

Its hatcheries were hidden deep underneath the Sunderclaw Mountains, by ancient tradition—young wyrms would prove their strength by emerging from beneath the mountains into the skies above, a dangerous trek they were meant to undertake all on their own. Its structures were held aloft over the surface of Dragonia by empowered moon-crystal. Just as their hatcheries were sunken below the ground, their halls of power and honor were held above it, and floated gently over the surface of Dragonia with the winds.

Yeraktos had mastered the art of crafting these moon-crystals, holding within them the power of the moons themselves, and using such crystals to power all manner of strange artifice. Carts without physical form, crafted entirely out of hardened moonlight; lances, empowered with moon-crystals to lengthen with a flick of a claw; magical sculptures that could dance and twist in moonlight. Much of their house's success was the result of this innovation, and while they shared moon-crystals across Dragonia, the exact particulars of their creation were a jealously guarded Yeraktos secret.

And it would all be for naught.

The Costs of War

When the War of Shadow came to Dragonia, Yeraktos fought on the front lines. They wore moon-crystal armor, light as a feather and hard as diamond, against titanic creatures of Darkness. They flew in powerful formations against hordes of corrupted birds. They were staunch, stalwart defenders of the rest of the realm.

The records I've found, buried in the deepest archives or hidden in long-forgotten cloud citadels, suggest that Yeraktos had a ferocity in battle unseen before or since. They were noble warriors of Dragonia, yes, but they were dangerous. Accounts describe proud Yeraktos combining their moon-drawn lightning breath and smashing apart whole mountains. They describe Yeraktos all using their wing-gusts at once to blow over entire fortresses of Shadow. All such tales are likely embellished and obscured by the distance of myth and time, but as always, there must be a kernel of truth. It is my belief that Yeraktos became a house of soldiers for Dragonia. Warriors all, capable of tremendous feats of strength and battle...and such was their downfall.

It is easy for us to write of the Darkness today, when it has been long-since defeated, and think of it in the abstract. But those words we write now were then true, real, in a way we must find difficult to understand today. The Darkness was not an enemy to be fought—it was a corruptive force, the seeds of which were believed to lie in every dragon's breast. And Yeraktos was no exception. Through constant battle and warfare with the Darkness, those seeds grew and blossomed. The Yeraktos became controlled by the very forces that they struggled against.

Where once they had been warriors, the Yeraktos became monsters. Their urge to destroy and their strength in battle became a curse. They *couldn't stop fighting*.

In the burned libraries of the Starclaw Labyrinth, I found a tapestry, singed and buried under dirt and rubble, depicting the savagery of the corrupted Yeraktos. Their power, capable of destroying mountains and blowing over fortresses, was unbridled and raked its claws across the surface of Dragonia. The tapestry showed clouds of Yeraktos drakes, marked out by the crystalline sigil of the house, descending upon Dragonian homesteads and burning them to the ground. The names of those homesteads, all resplendent upon the tapestry, are similarly stricken from Dragonian records.

While the Yeraktos did still fight the Darkness, they had become as much of a plague upon Dragonia as any they fought. And soon, Dragonia's defenders were forced to stand against the Yeraktos and the Dark-corrupted monsters alike.

I found the accounts of Yeraktos in the final battles of the War of Shadow locked away in abandoned knowledge-caches buried deep beneath the Ripwing Mountains. These caches came from a time when Dragonia feared losing all its knowledge, and indeed its existence, to the onslaught of the Darkness. The accounts, then, are historical—as best as can be expected. Not myths or legends, but eye-witness stories.

Yeraktos fought, and fought, and fought. Its Mystics awoke and descended from the clouds above to pour fire from their very wings, scorching the whole battlefield. And though there were many casualties, Yeraktos did help to turn the tide against the Darkness. In the Battle at Raging Falls...the Battle of Cloudscream...the Siege of the Scaled Keep...Yeraktos were there, and helped turn back the Darkness. No matter what our public histories say, House Yeraktos was the reason we won those battles. And yet also the reason why so many of Dragonia's defenders perished.

At some point, the accounts became scarce. The War had raged on, and there were fewer dragons left to write about it who weren't participating in its struggles. So I am left to piece together what happened at the end, based on fragments.

It seems that Yeraktos participated up until the very last battle, when, as we all know, the Darkness was driven back once and for all. And in that victory, it lifted from their hearts as well...and they were ashamed. They felt pain and misery for all the death they had wrought. They felt guilt for how the Darkness had so afflicted them.

They knew what they had done wrong, and they were repentant. But they could see no hope, no redemption, save one: exile.

Yeraktos, to a one, just left, burning their banners behind them. They gave barely any notice to the other Great Houses. They didn't ask for permission or input. And the Great Houses did the rest, whether out of anger or fear or even respect for their wishes.

The Great Houses excised House Yeraktos from records. They destroyed the sigil where it was carved into stone. They erased all reference, all evidence, of Yeraktos, and they did it with moon magic.

In the Lunetarium, I found records of ancient rituals, experimental in nature...and yet, they fit too perfectly to be ignored. These rituals would allow many mature dragons to channel the power of the moons and create a massive clouding of memory and knowledge. There is no clear evidence that the ritual was ever used, but then there wouldn't be.

I believe that the greatest members of the Great Houses banded together to perform this ritual and cloud Yeraktos from the very memories of Dragonia's drakes. And in so doing, they ensured that this fallen, broken, corrupted house would be forever written out of Dragonia's narrative.

I can only imagine the Great Houses felt regret and shame for what they did...and that when the time came to come up with a solution to Kebros' similar fall, they chose a different path.

Rediscovering the Forgotten

And now I enter this narrative. Not merely to collect facts, but to pursue them.

Having assembled the truth, I realized that there was some possibility for full confirmation, and perhaps for reconciliation. Yeraktos had fled to the Wilds of Dragonia. Perhaps its descendants were still there. Perhaps some Ancient, lost amid the trees, would be able to tell me the full truth.

So I set out, into the depths of the Wilds. I would find Yeraktos, for Dragonia's sake.

And I did. I will not describe how, or where. I will not describe what it was like. I will not say what they told me, except to say they still feel the depths of their guilt. They still feel the shame of their corruption. And they are still unsure if they are deserving of reentry into Dragonia.

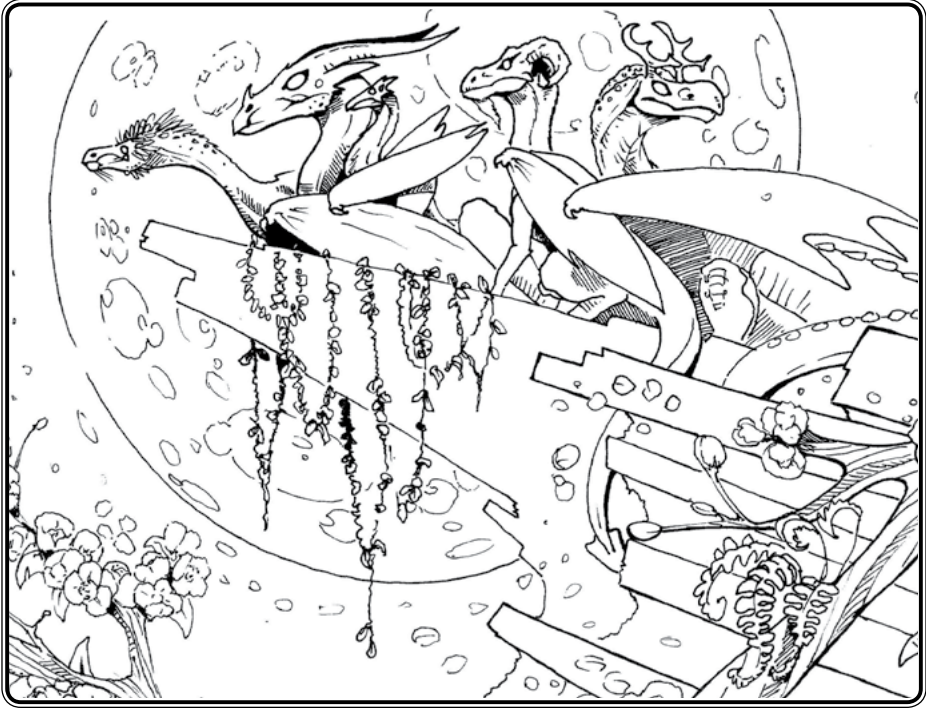
They asked me not to tell others of their location, and I argued that it was time for a reconciliation. So they agreed to verify my findings, and they gave me permission to tell their history. Even if they would not give me permission to describe them today.

But they are out there, my fellow dragons. They are still out there in the Wilds of Dragonia. And we have a duty, as their siblings and cousins and brethren, to find them. To bring them back home.

I hope that my record compels you to find them. For their sake, and for ours.

When you **look for a Yeraktos in the Wild**, roll +Courage. On a hit, you find evidence pointing you to their location. On a 10+, the path is straight and clear. On a 7-9, the path leads you through some great danger of the Wilds. On a miss, your quest to find the Yeraktos puts you at their mercy; pray they still have some.

When you **learn the ways of a Yeraktos**, take +1 ongoing to give in to the Darkness.



‘PULLING A CELLANI’

TALES OF THE MOONFLOWER CLUTCH

By Agate Flamedrake, dracohistorian

Translated by Brendan Conway on behalf of Dana

If you’re going to dive off a cloud, it helps if there’s a drake flying below, ready to catch you.”

—Cellani of the Moonflower Clutch



All young drakes hear stories of the Moonflower Clutch. Most of those are lively fables. “The Moonflower Clutch Saves the Sky!,” and “The Moonflower Clutch Moves a Mountain!,” and “The Moonflower Clutch Befriends the Forest!” are all great stories, but each is exaggerated well beyond the scope of the truth.

There was, however, a real Moonflower Clutch. And its members truly did save skies, move mountains, and befriend forests, in their own way.

I write as one of the few dragons old enough to have met members of the clutch, and young enough not to have yet become Ancient or Mystic. And I write because I believe the truth of the Moonflower Clutch must be recorded, for the betterment of all Dragonia. And...because they saved my life.

The Moonflower Clutch

The Moonflower Clutch had its roots in the same practices as all the clutches of young drakes. They were a little different, with some older drakes actively mentoring the younger members, but such a practice wasn’t unheard of. They only distinguished themselves on their adventures, the many tasks they undertook on behalf of the Council, and their extraordinary successes.

Dispatched to deal with the strange, unnatural hurricane that pounded the coastal cave-settlement of Silverstream, they discovered an ancient wind generator that had been corrupted by the Darkness, and through their joint effort they purified it and brought it home to the Capital.

Dispatched to help the dragons of Quicklet’s Aerie build a new hatchery, they uncovered an ancient cache of eggs hidden inside the depths of the mountain below the Aerie—an entire lineage of dragons, hidden away from before the war against the Darkness, and preserved through moon magic.

Dispatched to discover why the normally tranquil creatures of the Mushroom Jungle were agitated, the clutch came back to the Capital with news of a pact they had formed with the forest's thrushrooms, guaranteeing a constant supply of tasty fungi in exchange for periodically cleansing the forest of lightning vines.

They fought terrible Dark-infused monsters; they saved countless drakes; they uncovered tomes and artifacts; and they truly served Dragonia. And all of it far more real than any of the fables could convey.

Their real names are not the same as in the fables—it was always a little too convenient that most of the Moonflower Clutch bore the names of different flowers in those fables. Just as they were in fact real scale-and-blood dragons, they had real names, names we should honor.

Islaen, Quaoar, Bryaan, Tiker, and Cellani. These are the names to remember.

Islaen was a turquoise drake, with motes of indigo upon the farthest tips of dris wings. Even when I met Islaen as an Elder dragon, dris color was as vibrant as it must've been when dre was a raw-scaled drake. From what I could read, Islaen was a cunning dragon, clever and quick-thinking, but with passionate blood. Quick to anger, quick to love. Excited to explore, and curious about all the deepest ruins and lore of Dragonia.

Quaoar was a thinking dragon. Larger, thicker, heavier plates—dre would've seemed like a powerful, mighty dragon to those who didn't know them. But Quaoar wanted nothing more than to delve into books in search of lore. A voracious reader, when not with the rest of the clutch dre could be found curled up with the latest tome rescued from some ancient crypt. Quaoar was so interested in that pursuit of knowledge, dre didn't even think to share knowledge most of the time—until the clutch needed help.

Bryaan, Quaoar's mentor, taught the younger drake to question everything, to seek knowledge, to explore and understand the world—but where the student was interested in books, the mentor was all about direct exploration. Bryaan sought to experience the world, and dragged Quaoar out on many an expedition for the sake of discovery. The thinner, longer, spined drake is covered in chips and scars from many fights—Bryaan seeks battle to test dremself, to become better and to learn dris limits.

Tiker was the truest warrior of the group. A large red dragon, with black spine and wings, dre was strong, brave, and fearless, diving into danger just to experience the thrill. Tiker cared for the clutch deeply, and made fast friends—in fact, did everything fast. Dre's life was about speed, about adrenaline and experience, about fights and excitement.

And then, there was Cellani. The only member of the Moonflower Clutch whose name was carried through all the fables. The heart of the clutch. In the fables, Cellani is a regal, noble, graceful creature, long and powerful. While dre did have the deep metallic blue scales and golden eyes of the fables, dre looked much different in truth. Cellani was the smallest of the clutch, always looking like a younger dragon than dre actually was. Dre did share dris fable counterpart's skill at crafting, art, and cooking...and far more importantly, shared dris fable counterpart's heart, wisdom, and cleverness.

Cellani was the drake that bound these disparate dragons together into a whole. Dre brought Quaoar out from dris shell; gave Tiker someone to care about and fight for; was a companion to Bryaan's wildest adventures; and mentored Islaen, holding drem back from dris wildest bursts of passion. Cellani united them all with dris gentleness and patience...and an uncanny ability to provoke just the right amount of trouble.

'Pulling a Cellani'

I met the Moonflower Clutch a few times, but mostly in passing. I was as awed by them as any other dragon, and though they treated me with respect, I never worked up the nerve to say more to them than the barest of pleasantries. That was, until I became a Historian, and had earned my place working in archives and libraries. Then, when I met one of the Clutch, I finally steeled myself to ask all the questions I'd always had.

It was Islaen I finally interviewed. The Clutch hadn't been active for a long time, and its members had gone their different ways. Islaen wasn't sure of exactly where they all were, but expected that Bryaan and Tiker had become twin Ancients, wandering the world eternally, experiencing its wonders, and serving the moons. Quaoar had become the chief librarian of the Great Archive, surrounded always by those books dre always loved, and sharing that love with new generations of drakes. (I had only encountered Quaoar at the Archive in passing—my own sense of hero worship prevented me from getting too close.) And Cellani...

"I like to think that Cellani is still out there," Islaen told me. "Not as an Ancient or a Mystic, but as dremself. Waiting for when we need them again." A slight smile tugged at the edge of dris mouth, causing those brilliant turquoise scales to collect and slide over each other.

I spoke to Islaen for many hours about all the stories and exploits of the Moonflower Clutch. "The name came from when we used the power of the moons to reinvigorate a whole field of precious glassflowers," dre said. "Though I do like the stories about us flying to the moons and plucking flowers from their surfaces." Again, that smile.

When Islaen talked about an incident involving boartles (rambunctious beetle-boar beasts) dre lit up, truly, and said, for the first time, those words—"pulling a Cellani."

“Something had riled the boartles up, and they were flitting around on those ridiculous shell wings, slamming into trees and shaking off all the leaves. If they saw any other creatures, they’d barrel down like flying boulders with tusks. We were there to figure out what had happened, why they were so upset, and to do something about it.

“So there we are, hiding out in the tree branches, watching the beetle-boars bash around a glade up ahead. We’re hissing at each other, trying to come up with a plan, and we just aren’t agreeing. And then Cellani—” Islaen lets out a chuckle—“Cellani goes shooting out of dris tree perch, straight into the whole clump of beetle-boars, headed towards the biggest one of all. And dre looks it straight in the eye, and says, ‘Why are you acting so rudely?’ in dris sweet little voice.

“It was like every one of us—the boartles and all of the rest of the clutch, and even the trees and the other creatures in the glade—were so shocked that we were utterly silent. Like time had stopped. And then all at once, everyone started moving. The beetle-boars charging at Cellani, us dashing out of cover to get them out of there, Cellani zipping forward to grab the ears of the giant boartle. Chaos ensued.

“In the end, it worked out—amid the kerfuffle with the boartles Tiker noticed jet-black burrs embedded beneath their wings, and once we knocked the burrs loose, the boartles settled down. It was some kind of shadow-seed that had planted itself in the boartles, and Bryaan and Quaoar used moon magic to banish them. But really, it only worked out because Cellani rushed forward. Dre was crazy and impulsive, but dre made us all come together.

“We thought that would be it, that Cellani would have learned dris lesson, but...not so much. It happened again when dre decided to sing along with the shadow-jays at the Umbral Temple, and then again when dre stole the Lightning Sapphire right out of its sconce in Councilmember Drixel’s residence, and then again when dre tried to ride a leviathan over the

waves. Every time, it was somewhere between clumsy, bold, and reckless. Every time, Cellani endangered dremself and pulled us with them. And, every time, made us band together.

“So that’s how we came to call it ‘pulling a Cellani.’ Doing something to bring down trouble, right on our heads...but ultimately, pushing us together when you do it.” I could hear the fondness in Islaen’s voice, describing it.

I asked what Cellani would say, if dre knew that much of the Moonflower Clutch’s true exploits and even real names were lost to time. That one of their most lasting legacies was the phrase “pulling a Cellani,” now repeated throughout Dragonia.

“I think Cellani’d smile and say, ‘Suits me just fine,’” Islaen said.

A Dragon’s Legacy

All across Dragonia, drakes know of the Moonflower Clutch. They know what it means to ‘pull a Cellani.’ And they know that drakes, when together, can do the impossible.

Do they know the truth of the Moonflower Clutch? Their real names? Their real struggles? Their real accomplishments? Perhaps not.

But Islaen, Quaoar, Bryaan, Tiker, and Cellani didn’t set out to be remembered. They set out to make Dragonia a better place. And through the stories of the Moonflower Clutch, they have given so many young drakes hope. None more than Cellani dremself, who taught Dragonia that bold action can turn out for the best with the help of one’s clutchmates.

I am a historian, and I am devoted to the fact, the truth, of what has happened. As best as I can record it.

But here, I must acknowledge...their legacy—Cellani’s legacy—is a boon to the whole of Dragonia. Whether it is perfectly true or not.

Once per session, a drake in your clutch can pull a Cellani instead of **acting despite danger**.

When you **pull a Cellani**, act decisively, without hesitation or preparation, in a tense or dangerous situation. Each other drake in your clutch can choose to back you up, and give you one Friendship Gem. Roll +Friendship Gems received in this way. On a 10+, choose 3. On a 7-9, choose 2.

- ☞ You surprise or confuse your opposition; take +1 forward against them.
- ☞ You create an opportunity to overcome the danger; another clutchmate must take advantage of it.
- ☞ You stumble upon a valuable secret as you blunder forward; ask the DM a question about the situation, and they will answer honestly.
- ☞ You don't exacerbate the situation by calling more danger down upon you and all the drakes who gave you a gem.
- ☞ You avoid causing consternation among your clutch; you and the clutchmates who gave you a gem do not have to mark a shadow.

On a miss, you wind up putting yourself and those who backed you up into dire straits; you're at the mercy of your opposition.

When you **look to the stories of the Moonflower Clutch** for comfort or guidance, roll +Charm. On a hit, describe a story that brings you comfort; the DM will tell you what lesson it teaches. Follow the lesson to clear a shadow. On a 10+, take a +1 ongoing to follow the lesson of the story. On a miss, you misremember the story and take away the wrong lesson; the DM will tell you what it is. **Act despite danger** to do anything but follow the lesson.



THE SKY CITY THAT FELL

By Neela Mandadapu
Translated by Ajit George

“Oh Saraverasa, it was a dream. The dream of gods, monarchs, and the mad. No one thought it was possible to build, no one but Kalabhras. It was a vision of what could be accomplished if all dragonkind were unified. Something beyond mere blood and scales, something to rival the moons themselves. Of course, it was doomed to failure.”

—Jayesh Verma



With the death of the Three Crowned Drakes and the surrender of their armies at the Battle of Nalankilli, the throne of the young drake monarch Kalabhras was secure. The Valavan dynasty now ruled all of Dravidia (*Translator's note: now known as the continent of Dragonia*) uncontested. For a thousand moonfalls, the empire celebrated at the command of Kalabhras. It was a time before the Darkness knew form, when the Great Houses were only a whisper in the minds of their forebears, an eon before the War. It was a time of peace and prosperity never seen before or since.

It is said that all in the land were pleased, except Kalabhras. Each night, while the mighty dragons of the court reveled, Kalabhras would pace the parapet of the palace. Built atop the greatest peak on the continent, the young sovereign would gaze upon dris empire with discontent. Kalabhras was the twenty-seventh ruler of the Valavan dynasty, an empire that had been built by dris ancestors. Yet, none of it was Kalabhras' creation.

Each day, while the kingdom rejoiced, the young drake mourned. Each day, Kalabhras pondered dris fate and wondered how dre might be remembered. A dragon could never truly become an Ancient or a Mystic unless they left their mark on the land, on the history of dragonkind. Kalabhras would be the least of all dris line. The thought filled Kalabhras with dark melancholy as dre struggled to find something to claim as dris own. As Dravidia's subjects rejoiced at the peace the empire had finally found, Kalabhras wept.

...until the very last day of the period of celebration, when Kalabhras turned dris head upwards to gaze at the stars and the moons that had ordained the young monarch's great reign. As dris dark eyes took in the majestic glow of the celestial bodies in the heavens, it dawned upon Kalabhras that there was one place the empire did not reach: the sky.

The next day, Kalabhras set the dragons of Dravidia upon building the greatest city the world would ever know: Saraverasa.

Kalabhras desired Saraverasa to be built to worship the sky and needed Arjun to make it real.

Arjun was the foremost of the crafters of Dravidia. A Long-Toothed Dragon of legendary stature, Arjun had envisioned, designed, and created some of the most renowned art across the land. Now the young Kalabhras tasked Arjun to lead the work on the new capital. Kalabhras desired a true artist, more than an architect, one who would make a city that would be a glory to all dragonkind.

Arjun was moved by the vision of Dravidia's monarch and was inspired to build something that would last for eternity. The building of Saraverasa would be the culmination of a lifetime of work, an achievement that would never be matched. It was with great pride that Arjun took up the task, pride in what could be made, pride in what Kalabhras was creating and what it would mean for dragonkind.

Arjun and Kalabhras spent much time together, laboring over every detail of the new capital. Each came to the project with their own desires, but together they found shared interests and purpose. It was a partnership that would soon bear greater fruit.

The foundation of Saraverasa was carved out of a single piece of black obsidian the size of ten thousand Elder Dragons. With claw, tooth, and hammer, the master crafters sculpted a monument to ancient monarchs, celebrated heroes, terrible battles, and the many divine incarnations of the moons. Swept across the width of the base was the tale of False Elder Pandu's ignoble defeat at the hands of the beloved High Septack Naruala. In large relief, the story of old Bearded Pathinama and the birth of the Twelve Trees of Gold and Silver was lovingly etched. With exacting detail, the still-oft-recited epic poem, *Vhyasthra Satnama*, was given life through scenes of the tragic love affair that ignited the dynastic War of the Cromulent Crown.

Once the mighty foundation was laid, the magic of the greatest and wisest dragons was infused in its base. Each dragon placed a heart-scale (the most precious scale of a dragon!) that had absorbed the light of the moons for a thousand nights into the foundation stone and as they did, the city rose into the sky! All dragonkind marveled at this accomplishment, but for Kalabhras, it was only the beginning of the great capital.

Arjun advised Kalabhras to build a temple to honor the Five Moons from which all dragonkind was born: Patha (Stone), Ahandee (Storm), Shuny (Void), Atmha (Spirit), and Svata (Liberty). It would be the center of Saraverasa, the greatest building in the new capital. Kalabhras did as Arjun recommended, for not only did Kalabhras trust the master crafter, dre had come to love Arjun and in turn, the young ruler was loved.

Their passion for each other, and for the city they were building, continued unabated. Together, they hoped that Saraverasa would usher in a new and lasting era of art, magic, and peace. The central temple rose into a magnificent edifice to the five moons, five spires twining into the heavens designed in the likeness of each sibling. Outward from the temple spun the rest of the city and with each new building erected, the glory of Saraverasa grew.

And Aadita, right hand of Kalabhras, watched all of this growth and success with a fiery hatred for Kalabhras' delusions of grandeur. Aadita was a Bearded Dragon and had been chief minister to Kalabhras from the young ruler's birth. Aadita had served Kalabhras' sire, Dhairyra, faithfully. Much of the glory and strength of the empire had been Dhairyra's doing. Now Aadita saw dris place at Kalabhras' side supplanted. Aadita cared little for Kalabhras' love affair with Arjun. Let Kalabhras have as many lovers as dre desired, but none should come before Aadita as the young drake's advisor! Aadita was the true architect of the empire's magnificence, yet now was being pushed aside for a mere crafter. Aadita would not let it stand.

Into Kalabhras' ear, Aadita planted the seeds of doubt and discord. Should not Kalabhras' palace be in the center of the city, Aadita asked—not the temple? Would not all wish to see the might and glory of the Valavan dynasty? Would it not inspire the nation and should not everyone tremble before their ruler? It was not the Moons who ruled the land, but the great Kalabhras! Why then, had Arjun put the temple in the center of the city?

These questions plagued Kalabhras and tore through dris young, vulnerable mind. More than anything, Kalabhras desired a place in the sun. It had been Kalabhras' ancestors that had risen out of obscurity to band together the disparate tribes of dragons and build an empire. Even the fall of the rebel Three Crowned Drakes was Dhairya's victory; Kalabhras had only taken the throne at the final hour when their defeat was assured. Yes, Saraverasa would be Kalabhras', but why give it to another? Why place the Five Moons before family, before Kalabhras?

A madness took Kalabhras, who ordered the temple smashed and the pieces scattered across Dravidia. Why should the Moons be placed before the ruler, for the ruler is as important to dragonkind as any moon! In the ruins of the temple, the most opulent palace dragonkind had ever known would be erected, and in the center, at Aadita's advice, a golden sculpture of Kalabhras would be built that would dwarf all others in the city. A monument that would assure Kalabhras' primacy and legacy, for all time.

Arjun was surprised and dismayed at the order and the two lovers fought over the decision. But Kalabhras would not be placated. Misled by the lies of Aadita, and armed with the arrogance of a ruler who desperately needed to be remembered, Kalabhras pushed forward with the new plans. Where once stood a great temple honoring the wisdom and divinity of the Five Moons, now a palace was built to the ego of Kalabhras.

Aadita, having regained Kalabhras' confidence, continued to make suggestions to improve Saraverasa. Each suggestion undermined the artistry and vision of Arjun and the master crafter grew bitter.

The final stroke came as the city was completed. Now ready to move the capital to Saraverasa, Kalabhras looked upon the glory of what was built with great pride. But Aadita had other plans. Aadita confided in the young ruler that while Aadita loved the beauty and magnificence of Kalabhras' new capital, it was a shame that it flew so low. So low that any common dragon could come upon it. How could Saraverasa be a true capital unless it took the place it deserved—a place among the heavens. Why, Aadita questioned, do only the Five Moons gain the glory of the sky? Was Kalabhras not monarch? Did dre not deserve to be adored and worshipped as was dris rightful place as ruler of all of Dravidia? Could Kalabhras not, perhaps, be the Sixth Moon?

Oh, how this idea struck the young Kalabhras, who was very much pleased by the idea that Saraverasa would rise above all, equal to the Moons! The mighty capital would be the greatest creation of dragonkind...and Kalabhras would rule it. Perhaps, indeed, rule it forever! Immortality, even divinity would be Kalabhras'!

But how could Kalabhras do it? How could such a feat be accomplished?

By dragons, answered Aadita. By the power of dragons.

Aadita laid out before Kalabhras a plan so nefarious and terrible, none had seen its like before. How many enemies did the young ruler have to defeat to create the peace of Dravidia? Aadita asked. These enemies had been vanquished, but now enjoyed the comfort of the kingdom like all others. Why should they do so without serving their emperor? Make use of them, Aadita advised. Make them carry Saraverasa into the heavens, to the Moons, so that Kalabhras could take dris rightful place.

A plan was hatched and Arjun watched with disbelief and horror as Kalabhras ordered that every adult dragon who had ever raised tooth or claw against the dynasty be brought in chains to the capital city. There they were bound to the outer rim of Saraverasa, hundreds of dragons, and forced to fly, fly as far as they could. Farther than any dragon had flown before. No cry of pain would be heard, no tear of misery would be heeded. Only Saraverasa and the glory of Kalabhras mattered.

Higher, higher, higher! ordered Kalabhras at Aadita's urging. Aadita told Kalabhras that all must see the glory of Saraverasa, that the traitors should pull the city to the heavens and that it should take its place not beside, but *above* the Five Moons, for truly Kalabhras was the greatest ruler of all dragonkind. A monstrous hunger came over the young drake as he lashed the slaves. Broken and distraught, they pulled and collapsed, they pulled and died, and yet for each fallen slave, another was forced to take his place. They flew higher than magic could take them, they flew higher than any dragon was meant to fly.

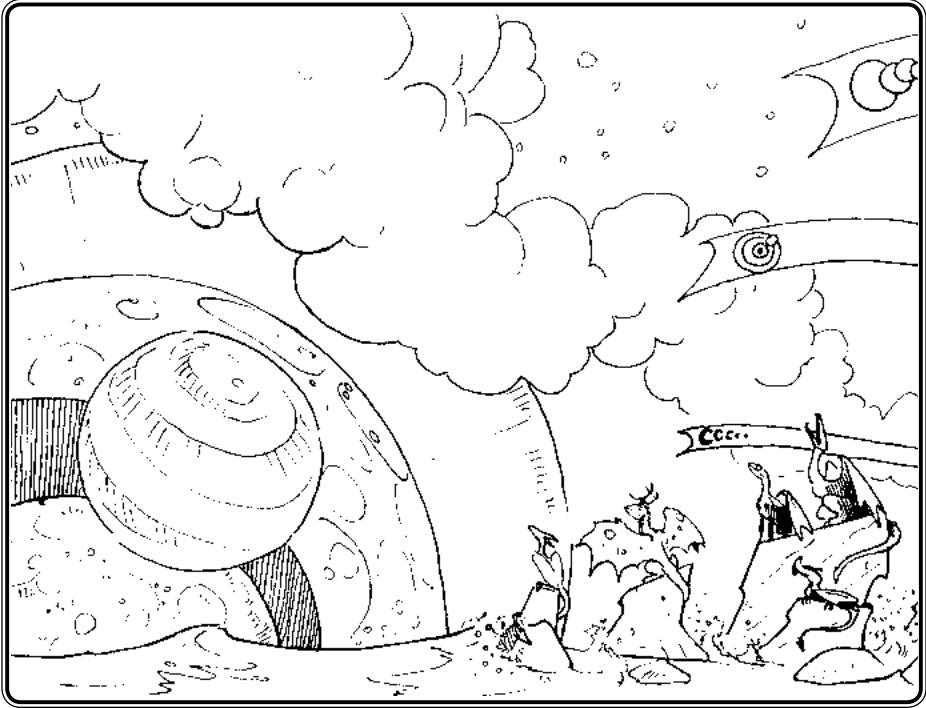
And as the city rose higher, and the agony of the enslaved dragons grew louder, the Five Moons gazed down with pity, fury, and sadness at the arrogance of Kalabhras and the evil he had unleashed upon dragonkind. Finally, Svata, Moon of Liberty, struck the chains down and released all the enslaved dragons. And as the dragons were freed, and the magic of Saraverasa was lost, the city plummeted from the sky across the continent in a million pieces, a streak of burning stars. The kingdom that had been held thrall to the hubris of their monarch now watched as the monument to Kalabhras' arrogance came crashing down.

None know the fate of Kalabhras or Aadita. Some believe that in his final moments, Kalabhras realized his folly and that Kalabhras and Aadita fell into the sea clawing and tearing each other. Others say that even in the last moments, Kalabhras could only gaze at the Moons in maddened lust for power and glory and Aadita laughed until the very end.

As for Arjun, it is said the master crafter retreated to the mountainside and hid in the deepest caves. There, each and every day, Arjun composed a poem to the beauty of what Saraverasa could have been, and each and every night would burn the poem by moonlight. In Arjun's memory, dragons will compose poems to their beloved dead and burn them on Arjun's birthday.

As for Saraverasa itself, it is said that the ruins of the Sky City are cursed, and if ever found, dragons are meant to ritually burn them on sight. But the Five Moons *had* blessed Kalabhras' good work, and their reflections still shine in clusters of obsidian from the broken temple.

When you **enter the ruins of the fallen Sky City**, roll +Courage. On a hit, the moons guide your way to a fragment of the temple; journey through the ruins and the Moons will grant your clutch a boon for your bravery. On a 10+, you may ask the Moons one question as well; they will answer honestly. On a miss, the arrogance of Kalabhras' vision infects you; you become your Shadowself and cannot escape the Darkness in your heart until a friend shows you the damage your ego can cause.



THE UMBRA

Account written by
Nimra of the Red Eye, House Kebros
Translated by Whitney Beltrán

“Beware the water that boils slowly.”

—Kuru Blackclaw



The days of the first Umbra happened in a time out of mind, many solar cycles beyond the reckonings found in these annals. Before our first scrolls, before our first stories, it beat like a black heart in the throbbing sky. The memory of this occurrence, however, is rooted in our bones, in the shared deep memory of all dragonkin. It can be heard in the wordless keening of our Ancient ones and seen in the heavy frozen stances of the Mystics that survived. Once every 10,000 generations the Umbra leaves an indelible mark.

You must hear me now when I say to you that the Umbra must not pass into legend, or become a mere folktale muttered by old and grieving minds. It is very real, and I have done all that I can so what happened before does not happen again. We *must not forget*. The magic of our moons—the cornerstone upon which all of Dragonia is built—can, and does fail.

The last Umbra occurred when I was just a drake. I remember the consternation in the observatory as the moons began to act...*strangely*. It was subtle at first. Our astronomers know the moons' patterns well. All five have stable orbits around Dragonia. They took note when the moons began wandering off their courses. First the Storm Moon, then the Spirit Moon, and then gradually all five. Our astronomers watched warily but passively. No harm seemed to be coming from it. And yet, there was deep unease.

It was Long-Toothed Rouk who first posited that there must be some invisible object pulling them out of their orbits, a visitor from out of the blackness beyond the firmament. Dre was laughed at! It shames me to say this, but at the time I laughed along with all the others. I thought Rouk's mind must have been addled from all the musty tomes dre poured over. Dris words were dismissed and ignored. It was not until moon magic started going awry that Rouk's words were taken seriously.

Moon magic is inherently unpredictable. The moons have their own will. However, as the days slid by word of more

and more troubling occurrences entered even the walls of our cloistered observatory. Word of divination stones that gave incoherent readings. Volatile spells, some with strange explosive reactions. And even more troubling, the change in the very pull of the moons made messenger birds become lost, and tides come in the wrong color and at the wrong time. In retrospect, it all seems so obvious that the Umbra was approaching. But in truth this all happened so slowly, that its creeping nature disarmed us. Like prawns in a pot of water that slowly comes to boil. By the time we figured out what was happening, it was too late.

When the issue could be ignored no longer, a council was called. I, of course, was not invited to take part in this council. I was not even allowed to listen. But that didn't matter, because soon the whole of Dragonia would know what the council discussed. Gravely they emerged from their chamber after many days and announced what we all already knew deep down: magic was beginning to fail.

What had been a growing disquiet turned into a maelstrom of panic. Rouk was roused from early retirement in the countryside, which had been forced on drem as a way for the establishment to get rid of dris unpopular ideas. Nobody was laughing at Rouk's theories now though. Rouk was reinstated and given everything that dre required. This included me, as personal assistant and gofer.

It was not a task I would have picked for myself, and working under Rouk was a challenge. It fell to me simply because I was the youngest and most junior of the academy. Rouk was eccentric but pleasant, and kept me running until the end of every day, when I was ready to collapse from sheer exhaustion. Some days my snout would be smeared with ink from transcribing ancient esoteric charts that meant little to me. Other days found me running around the forest to check which direction the moss was growing on the underside of branches. At the time such tasks deeply frustrated me. I felt like Rouk was having me do these things just to keep me

occupied. It was only as I came to know Rouk that I began to understand that everything dre sought after had a purpose.

Rouk did not see fit to make me privy to most of these machinations, but at the end of each day's hard work I felt like I was at least doing what I could, and it was a small balm for the fear that had taken root in my heart. Dre began teaching me the complex sacred mathematics used to track and predict the moons' movements. Rouk was a driven instructor, but I was not an adept learner. The frustrating long days began to melt into frustrating long nights as well, toiling away on a piece of parchment under the yellow light of fat tallow candles. I sorely missed the days of moss hunting.

A cloud of silent urgency began to form around Rouk. Many times I would slink off late at night to grab a few hours of sleep, and come back in the morning to find Rouk hunched over calculations, having never left. One day Rouk slipped a set of calculations to me and simply said, "Check these." I wasn't sure if it was some kind of test. I gingerly took the parchment and frowned down at what I saw.

"I don't understand, Rouk. This is a calculation of eight gravitationally intertwined bodies, not five."

"Yes it is," dre replied, before giving a great hacking cough and leaving the room.

I grasped the parchment at wing's length, as if it might bite. I gently set it on my drafting slab and a sense of determination settled over me. I picked up a quill and got to work.

I scribbled through the night and through the next day. Truly, it might have been longer than that, but I was deeply gripped by my work. Suddenly I found it not so hard to understand Rouk's late nights anymore. At some point I emerged blinking into the sunlit hall. I squinted, half dazed, into the too-bright light that came streaming through a nearby window. Something was wrong. Rouk. I had to find Rouk.

I hurried to dris private study, only a small distance away from the observatory. I still had the crumpled calculations tightly gripped in one claw. With the other I knocked on the door. There was no answer. My own sense of urgency made me bold, and I stepped inside. I found Rouk abed, which was strange for the middle of the day. I was so focused that the significance slipped past me. I waved the calculations in the air.

“Rouk, where did you get this eight-body problem from? I’ve never seen anything like it.”

“Are the calculations correct?”

“I mean this isn’t—it’s not...?”

“Are the calculations *correct*?” dre insisted.

“Well, yes, Rouk. As far as I can tell.”

Rouk sighed and seemed to shrink in the nest, suddenly frail. Dris eyelids sank to tired slits.

“Rouk, please. Tell me what this means.” *Please tell me it’s something other than what I think it is.*

“If you did the calculations then you know very well. A total lunar eclipse. The unseen body will pull our five moons into alignment within our world’s own shadow—cast as it stands between the moons and our sun. All eight, lined up straight as a notched arrow. Our moons will go dark. They will have no power. It is the Umbra.”

I sat down heavily, the fatigue of days and nights of work suddenly washing over me. We were silent for a long time. The tableau only broke when Rouk gave a great, wet, wracking cough. It hit me then. I had been a fool.

“The eclipse is only weeks away,” I said weakly.

“And it will hold for thirteen days, child, once it’s here.”

Normally I would get prickly at being addressed so, but at the moment I felt like a child, scared and alone. I looked at Rouk—really looked, and was amazed at what my eyes had failed to see before. Rouk was wasting away. Dris scales were tinged with gray. Dris eyes had become clouded. Dre was far too thin, and breathed too heavily.

“You’re dying, aren’t you?” I couldn’t keep the dismay out of my voice.

“Rapidly,” was the tart and oh so very Rouk-like reply.

“And if the moons...if they are blind and silent and dark—”

“There will be no resurrection.”

“Oh, Rouk!” I burst into great pearly tears. Rouk seemed perturbed.

“Listen to me. You are thinking with your heart. I need you to think with your brain. My young apprentice, you must pick up this work where I leave it. It is very important that you see the things that others miss. Now think. What does this mean?”

Rouk was giving me no time to dwell, no time to grieve, and for a moment I hated them for it. I scrubbed my snout free of tears and took a great calming breath. *Think, think. What does this mean? This will kill Rouk. Dre can’t hold on long enough for the moons to get back into their stable orbits in order to Ascend as an Ancient or Mystic. For at least thirteen days there’s no Ascension. There’s no resurrection. There’s no resurrection!!* My eyes grew as wide and as round as saucers. Rouk simply nodded when dre could see I finally understood.

“All of Dragonia will be vulnerable,” I said. “We were so preoccupied with the moons that we failed to take into consideration the ramifications of their failure. Rouk, what do we do?”

I remember dris sigh. It was deep and hollow.

“The stakes are too high. You must go to the council.”

“As you say, Rouk.”

The naïve drake that entered Rouk’s home that first day was not the same heavy-hearted dragon that left. I went straight to the Council as Rouk had urged. My heart beat so hard. I was terrified that they would not heed me. I made my case, calmly and logically as Rouk had taught me. They asked me for answers, and I didn’t have any.

When the Umbra finally arrived for true, Dragonia was cast in shadow. We had never been so fully without the reflected light of our moons. Even during the day it was like an oppressive murk loomed over the land, and night was black as pitch. Our Ancients, each led by the magic of a single moon, were all struck blind. In crazed fear they trumpeted their distress as they careened around the countryside. Earthquakes shook the foundations of many of our cities. Some few of our sacred Mystics were toppled. It was a time of chaos. It was heartbreaking.

Worse than anything else is what befell those dragons who could not Ascend while magic ceased to function. They did not simply die. No matter their coloring before, their pupils expanded so wide that their eyes became whirling landscapes of black, touched with iridescent rainbows. Neither Ancients nor Mystics, they came to be called Servants of the Nameless Moon. Either the Servants were uniformly struck mute, or they refused to speak to any save each other. Guttural noises they uttered, but none that we could understand.

Rouk’s fate was to become one of these. I came upon them at dris abode just after the change. Balefully Rouk looked at me with those strange eyes, not at all dremself any longer. Rouk cackled something and then snaked past me to bolt out the entrance. I never saw Rouk again but only heard rumors, because when the Umbra lifted these unascended dragons did not return to normal. Efforts were made to help them, but

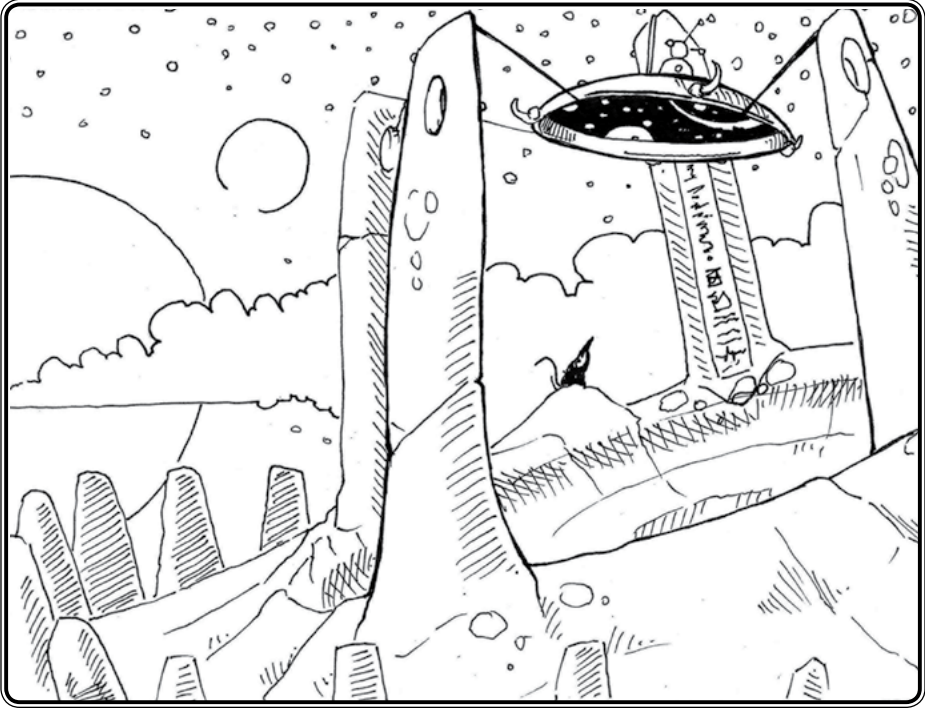
the Servants of the Nameless Moon were immune to magic. They gathered somewhere, deep in the uncharted mountains on the eastern edge of Dragonia. It is not known what they do there, only that they survive as some kind of cult. On the whole, the subject is too painful for me, and I do not pursue it.

Drakes that were unfortunate enough to be born during the Umbra have also suffered mystifying side effects. As they grow into dragons their hides are colored with that same oil-slick iridescence. None can touch the magic of the moons, and like the Servants, that magic cannot touch them either. However, they tend to demonstrate an uncanny knowledge of things. When pressed on where they have acquired this knowledge, some have given only an enigmatic answer, “The Whisperer.” They are thought to be afflicted of the mind. I am not so sure.

These drakes are mistrustful and tend to congregate only with each other. They act in concert almost as if they can each tell what the other is thinking. To be frank, it is quite eerie, and normal dragons tend to avoid them for this reason. It is too soon to tell how they will age, but there is a fear in me that the Umbra’s touch lingers on in ways we do not yet understand.

And so I pen this with the hope that such tragedy can be avoided in the future. Look for magic gone awry. Watch the birds that do not fly true. Look for wrong tides. And know, know that the Umbra is coming. Take care of the infirm, and do not birth drakes under a dark sky. Learn from what we have forgotten.

When you **appeal to the Nameless Moon for help**, roll +Charm. On a hit, one of the Servants of the Nameless Moon will appear and provide you with either information or tools to help you with your current goal. On a 10+, they’ll reveal a secret of the Nameless Moon to you. On a miss, the Whisperer will answer instead; your scales take on a dusky tint and you cannot help your clutchmates. The DM will tell you what it will take to clear yourself of the Whisperer’s influence.



THE STELLAR MIRROR

Journal entries written by
the Master Astronomer of the Capital,
Cyriarc the Starry-Eyed
Translated by Brendan Conway

"It is too easy to miss the beauty of the small in the face of the bright; to see the moons and love them, glory in them, whisper to them, and miss the thousands upon thousands of stars twinkling beside them. It is the astronomer's duty to share the glory of the small with those blinded by the bright."

—Cyriarc the Starry-Eyed

28th Day, 4th Moon, 618 After Shadow



begin this journal, today, to catalogue a venture of hope, rediscovery, and wonder. Through this venture, we will restore a piece of the glory of Dragonia. We will shine a light for the future.

We will do our ancestors proud with our bravery and our exploration.

The dragons of the days before the War of Shadow constructed wonders we now barely even comprehend. They understood the nature of the world, and of the space beyond. To them, the moons were true and great, yes...but the stars as well unlocked mysteries, and illuminated deep truths.

We have lost much of this truth, between the destruction of the War, and the ravages of time. To be an astronomer today is to long for the wonders of the past; I spend my days in the capital doing all that I can as master astronomer, monitoring the moons, sketching star charts and mapping constellations, consulting runes and building telescopes, all while pining for just a fraction of the instruments that were once commonplace in every dragonhold across the whole of the continent.

But now! Now I hold in my claw a map, unearthed in the hidden Unbroken Archive of the northern mountains. It was marked with the sign of the Astronomers, and sent to me posthaste. As soon as I laid one claw upon it, I knew it for what it was—a map of the greatest astronomical creations and inventions of the days of old, among them perhaps the single greatest astronomical relic of those bygone days: the Stellar Mirror. My scales itch to even write the name; my excitement is as great as I ever felt as a naïve, young, raw-scaled drake.

What notes we have of the Stellar Mirror are cobbled together, but I have formed a picture of it. A concave indent in the ground, like a hemisphere, dug out smoothly through moon magic. Lined with mirrors made of finest reflective dragonglass

and quicksilver. Each mirror enchanted to resist the slightest smudge, and to join with its fellows into a single, smooth, unending mass. In the dug-out hemisphere, they created a bowl, like a curved sea reflecting the sky above, endlessly.

And then, held aloft over the very center of the bowl by four pylons (one for each of the cardinal directions), was the Stellar Mirror itself. A single circular sheet of folded glass and quicksilver. As thin as a single piece of parchment. As perfect and clear as a beautiful sunny day. Etched, so finely, so perfectly, with the runes of the stars themselves.

An Astronomer would stand under the Stellar Mirror, in the bowl. And at night, the mirrors covering the bowl would catch the light of the stars themselves, and only the stars—they were enchanted to ignore the moons. And they would throw that light up towards the Stellar Mirror above, which reflected it all straight back down to the Astronomer. Dre would crane dris neck up as a beam of pure starlight cascaded down upon them, connecting them with the infinite lights of the night sky.

Finding the Stellar Mirror would give us back a piece of our culture, lost for so long. It would give us back the world beyond the moons; imagine, accessing *star-magic*. What wonders could we create then?

The map gives us a direction and a general location, but we remain unsure of exactly what trials stand in our way. According to legends, the Darkness itself sought to take the Mirror from us, for it knew and feared the power of star-magic. What few tales we have speak of some creature, some shadow-filled scorpanther, titanic in size, forever guarding the ruins to ensure no drake would ever again unearth them.

But we will not be stopped. We will find the Stellar Mirror, wherever it is. And we will restore it to its former glory, no matter what it takes. For we are dragons. The land is ours; the skies are ours; the moons are ours; and the *stars* are ours.

12th Day, 5th Moon, 618 After Shadow

The desert! Yes, of course, the Stellar Mirror was hidden amid the wastes, with vast open skies overhead. What better way to access the sea of stars and capture its light!

We followed the map, my clutch and I, as if we were raw-scaled drakes again, out on some errand for the Council. Grimclaw, with gray and red-streaked scales; Siclariax, with brilliant yellow feathers cutting through the air; and Anderfel, with whip-like barbed tail and long, wispy limbs. Though I was the lead scholar in the group, the only Astronomer, I think my enthusiasm infected us all and bound us together in common purpose.

When we came upon the vastness of the Diamond Desert, I was not alone in having my breath stolen. Here was one of the most beautiful, desolate, dangerous, and somehow still life-filled expanses in the world. And underneath its sands? There, we would find the Stellar Mirror.

My anticipation makes my claw quaver even as I write!

19th Day, 5th Moon, 618 After Shadow

I write with a heavy heart. Siclariax, of the brilliant yellow feathers, will fly no more. Dre sacrificed much for this venture...and I will always honor that sacrifice. Once we find the Stellar Mirror, all of Dragonia will honor that sacrifice.

It was a mighty cactarmadillo that took dris flight. The creature erupted from the dune before us while I was taking measurements from the sun and the daymoons to confirm our position. It burst forth, firing its quill-plates with terrifying accuracy. Grimclaw charged and leapt onto the beast's snout, while Anderfel whipped it with dris tail, keeping its attention... but still, those quills took me in my back leg. I sprawled across the sand, and the cactarmadillo rose on its hind legs to leap forward and smash me beneath its spiny paws.

At the last moment, Siclariax flew in, all gold and speed, and pushed me out of the way. Siclariax went rolling past me in a burst of broken feathers. Dre still lay upon the dunes, dris wings broken.

Siclariax did not lose hope, but there is a shadow in dris eyes now. We are quieter as we venture forth upon the sands.

But we move onward. For Siclariax, we will find the Mirror.

30th Day, 5th Moon, 618 After Shadow

Today is the day.

The ancient map is difficult to decipher, charting constellations a dragon can see in the sky from the Mirror's resting place as a guide. I tried my best to navigate through them, but I had only limited success.

We were growing frustrated and saddened...until Anderfel had a brilliant idea. The Stellar Mirror was said to be guarded by an enormous scorpanther. Such a beast would have its territory marked! The cactarmadillo would steer clear of the scorpanther's scent and presence, even with the sight of prey.

It took some time, but between Anderfel's skill in the Wild and Grimclaw's bravery, they lured a cactarmadillo into chasing them. When the beast in its pursuit seemed to reach an invisible line it would not cross, they knew—they had found the perimeter of the scorpanther's domain. They had found the resting place of the Stellar Mirror.

That night, I confirmed the stars—the constellations matched. We had found the place.

Today, we dig. Today, we excavate the Mirror. Siclariax, Grimclaw, and Anderfel stand ready, in case the scorpanther appears, while I cast moon magic to lift the sands.

Today is the day.

1st Day, 1st Moon, 619 After Shadow

I write these words, and I know they will be the last in this journal. I wonder if it has been worth it...but I have hope. I have hope.

Anderfel and Grimclaw lie near me. Grimclaw bears cuts from the scorpanther's talons upon dris scales. Anderfel breathes quickly, the scorpanther's poison in dris veins. Siclariax tries to tend to them, but dre, too, is bruised and cut, and dris wings remain broken.

After I lifted the sands away...there it was. The Mirror. Exactly as I had learned about it. The hemisphere of shimmering silver, set into the sand. The four pylons, holding the structure above the bowl. And the Mirror itself, that stunning, etched, thin sheet of glass. Untouched by the eons, by the sands in which it had been buried. Beautiful.

We rejoiced! We gloried in its wonder!

And then the scorpanther arose, as if from nowhere. It slid out of the sand like a snakefish. It was enormous, as big as a Mystic. And it growled at us as shadows leaked from its eyes.

Anderfel, Grimclaw, even Siclariax...they were so brave. They fought it with all their hearts, and they called down the greatest of moon-magics to drive it away, to push the darkness out of it. I fear that it was not enough—that it is only a matter of time before the creature heals and the Darkness within it grows again—but they saved us. At the cost of their own well-being.

I think...I think their time grows short. The poisons, the pain, the injuries...

But I will not let their courage and their sacrifices be for nothing. I will save my clutch. It is a cloudless sky, and the sun sets. I know what I must do.

Tonight, I will stand beneath the Stellar Mirror. I will let the light of the stars pour down upon me, and I will use its power to send my comrades home to the Capital, in one blazing burst of power. There, other dragons should be able to save them. There, they will survive.

I will remain here. To study the Mirror, and to guard it. To watch over it. I will try to keep the scorpanther and the Dark away from here, and I will keep the Mirror unburied, so that those who come after me can find it.

I will give these words to Siclariax to carry home, so others can know the tale of what we did, and what we found.

For Dragonia, I do this. For my friends, I do this. For myself...I do this.

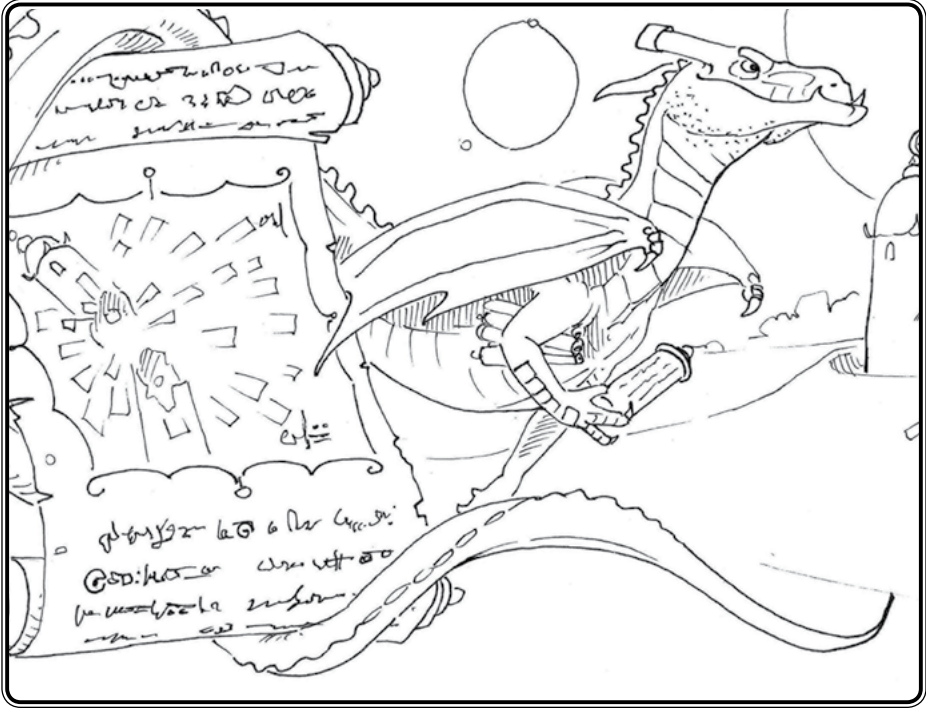
May the moons and the stars be with us all.

[So ends the journal of Cyriarc the Starry-Eyed. Siclariax, Anderfel, and Grimclaw returned home, bearing the journal and the map. They appeared in a burst of silvery starlight, and they found that the starlight had healed them with its glow—that Siclariax’s wings were once again feathered and capable of flight. Though they presented their findings to the Council, the Elder dragons deemed it too dangerous and too costly to mount another expedition to find the Stellar Mirror, despite Siclariax, Anderfel, and Grimclaw’s protestations. Cyriarc the Starry-Eyed has not been seen since.]

When you **stand under the Stellar Mirror during a clear night**, you become bathed in the light of the stars themselves. Hold 3 Starlight. Spend Starlight to call upon the stars for strength; treat it as **calling upon the magic of the moons**, but using the Stars instead of any Moon, and with an automatic 10+ on the move. The Stars provide magic of truth, wonder, and light.

It is difficult to see the stars in the light of the moon; if you call upon the Moons while you hold Starlight, lose 1 Starlight.

When you **ask Cyriarc the Starry-Eyed, Guardian of the Stellar Mirror, to reveal the Mirror's secrets to you**, roll +Charm. On a hit, they teach you the secrets of the Mirror; the next time you spend Starlight, you can spend it on any effect you want, from any Moon or the Stars themselves. On a 10+, Cyriarc will also answer any one question you have about the Mirror, the Stars, the Moons, or other astronomical objects. On a miss, they will tell you nothing until you perform a task to preserve the Stellar Mirror.



QUEST FOR THE FAR REACHES STRONGHOLD

Written by Tres of Kebros
Translated by Emily Care Boss

“As the sands were transformed into the towers of glass, so are our souls transformed by the scouring of knowledge of the true world. But as glass may have a flaw, so are our souls shattered if the shadow of fear enters into our search for knowledge.”

—Mendarra of Myndoth, twenty-five years prior to the outbreak of the War of Shadow



ong ago, before the War of Shadow, Mendarra the Wind Speaker of Myndoth, the House of Oak, founded a library at the edge of the Far Reach desert. Mendarra is one of my forebears, and was the most promising scholar of dris generation. Mendarra's loss was as much a blow to the House of Oak as the loss of dris library was to the order as a whole.

The House of Oak likes its secrets. Drawn by the dual flames of knowledge and beauty, the wise and the canny came to library at Far Reaches, ferreting out the wisdom and secrets of the lands to the south. Some say that Mendarra dremself found knowledge of the coming of the Shadow, and fought one of the harbingers of the war in a battle that shattered the Cobalt Tower, where the secrets of our old world were kept.

Mendarra began work alone in the desert, tunneling into the bedrock, making what would become the foundation and subearth levels of the towering, shining fortress. Calling upon the power of the the Moon of Storm for the force, Mendarra carved out chasms from the living rock itself.

Mendarra then travelled throughout the corners of the land, bringing back a tome, a tale, a song, whatever dre might find in the great dragon moots and moonsings they attended. Mendarra spoke to all who dre thought held keys to mysteries of the world: artifacts held in the silence of the Moons, the twists of life in the earth, the refinements of dragon minds borne from generations of trade, study and explorations of arts' possibilities. Sometimes Mendarra found items of meticulous craft that held secrets that could not be read, but which whispered that others might learn their ways.

They say Mendarra compiled a codex of the visions of all known seers, from the Sundering to the day before the War of Shadow. Dris legacy speaks to dris greatness, but the codex tests my belief. Could it be true? The power of such a volume...



Many came to Far Reaches, inspired by Mendarra's search. Dozens from the House of Oak took up there, while some came from Semscale, others from Rothscar. The greatest of these was Klynnyth the Weaver of Rothscar, the House of Gold. Klynnyth was chosen (as was the tradition at the time) at birth for training in blasting and shaping bronze and iron, and had become a high master in the capital. But when Klynnyth came to Far Reaches, Dre took the fires of the forge and learned the ways of smelting sand into shimmering gold and blazing amethyst.

Klynnyth's coming changed the library at Far Reaches forever. Dre was the one who spun the sand of the desert into many-colored glass towers to hold the scrolls and tablets Mendarra had gathered. The sand towers arose under Klynnyth's hand and the efforts of an army of Rothscar apprentices and journeymen. We have no idea how they accomplished the crafting of the thick walls reported by descriptions of the Fortress. A dragon-length deep at the corners, bonded with the bedrock. Precious metals were mined and brought from far afield, adding the multicolored hues they wove with abandon into the hall.

The glass gathered the light and created graceful spaces that allowed the scholars to begin work in earnest, to catalog and study Mendarra's collection. From the dark jagged spaces below, the scholars emerged into jewel-toned spires.

The Amethyst Tower is said to have housed the guests of Far Reaches. Sumptuous chambers, with airy perches and spacious room for talking long into the night. The Amber Tower was the province of the journeymen and learner dragons. Toiling long hours crafting and seeking. Filling the fortress with secrets as fast as the tunnels and towers could be built.

The Verdant Tower was Mendarra's territory. Dre's treasures preserved. Only a few, trusted or influential, were allowed access. And the Cobalt Tower was Klynnyth's masterpiece. The showcase of so many years' history of Dragonkind, their

mystical ruminations, their hard fought work, the intricate wonders of Rothscar ticking and humming beneath the lonesome winds of the desert.

The great library stewarded by Brythmalleck in the capital city of Dragonia is said to echo the library of Far Reaches. Piled with scrolls and scratched tablets, as well as intricately bound collections of massive vellum folios. The vast amber panes of glass were blown by a surviving apprentice of Klynnyth. The soaring sweep of the vault brings to mind the great Cobalt Tower, though the dark grey basalt that Brythmalleck's library is hewn from is as different from the chocolate-red bedrock of the fortress as it is from the swirled, multi-hued glass of the fortress walls.



Mendarra is my great-great-great-great-granddragon. I inherited some of dris writings. Brythmalleck was properly grateful—for once—when I donated them to dris collection. Brythmalleck's specialty was translating ancient tongues. Dre spent a whole year trying to research one text written in fire-scratch, the oldest of languages we can understand.

From Brythmalleck's notes dre seemed convinced that this ancient fire-scratch text would teach them the secrets of what lies beyond the sea. I've read the full text of what Brythmalleck was studying—several other fragments have been found since dris time—and I'm afraid dre was on the wrong track. The text was concerned with ocean-going, a detailed scroll giving directions to fly or swim by the stars. No deep secrets here, just local knowledge. But local knowledge from so long ago! The text is considered one of our most valuable for teaching us about the daily life of our ancestors. But Brythmalleck always sought the most exotic secrets; I'm not sure that these would have made them happy.



Before it was lost, Far Reaches traded information with the other libraries of the day. There was another in the Capital, part of the Royal House's holdings at the time; most of its texts were devoted to sacred proclamations, histories, and the genealogies. Much was lost in the scar-fire that destroyed the harbor and east hill of the Capital during the War of Shadow, including this library, but thankfully copies made of the genealogies had been spread across the continent, so very little of those records were wholly lost.

After others began joining Mendarra in Far Reaches, the forms of research practiced there blossomed. From dusty scholarship and multifarious collections of oddments, the dragons who came there opened themselves to the currents of energy crossing the desert. Hamundil of House Jade reported having dreams at times which dre believed to be a throwback to one of dris ancestors: Irvati the Climber. Irvati was known for finding the high reaches of mountains and tapping into the creative energies of the Spirit Moon. Irvati's contemporaries were baffled by dris choice to join Mendarra at Far Reaches, but dre heard voices of the dust and sand and stone of the high desert and out dre went.

In the Amber Tower, the translation bays were always full. These predate the scriptorium of the tower built in the shadow of the Northern Fog Wall, as well as those of the East Harbor forum. It is said that there were chambers meant for the physical investigation of substances and minerals found in the desert. Deep in the subfoundation, in the chambers hewn by Mendarra, Klynth established dris building labs, where many techniques were discovered and lost. A few troublesome parts of the records contain marginal notes about changes in temperament of Klynth's apprentices. One seems to have been burned by cold flame?



The accounts of the destruction of the Far Reaches library are heart-wrenching, although part of the mystery of the library is that we have no surviving accounts from those who experienced the event themselves. Instead, silence fell. The trips made so often by Mendarra ceased. The artisans shipping metals, angelwood, and sheaves upon sheaves of parchment simply stopped. A few who were away, traveling the great Turquoise River with bulky goods, too great to be born easily on dragon-wing or in the far mountains, came back and then spread the tale of the wreck of the fortress. The gates were broken. The ceiling fallen. The towers tattered, and the great cobalt master-hall completely reduced to rubble. Some spoke of a transformation of the Verdant Tower but no details were preserved.

The survivors made trips to recover what could be found of the shards of lost knowledge. They soon stopped, with the outbreak of the War of Shadow. Later the location of the fortress itself was lost. But those who had been part of Klynth's workshop made some of the greatest strides forward in workings, often put to the test in battle soon thereafter. The Rose window in the seventh tower of the capital city commemorates the library and those who escaped its fall. I was always fascinated by the strange characters at the tips of the petals. Attempts at deciphering for centuries have finally taken them for fancy. They haven't been found to mean anything.



Recent breakthroughs in scholarship all spring from a single great find: the Nameless Book of Far Reaches, a treasure of Brythmalleck's library. Weneth, that consummate scholar of the House of Oak, found it discarded in an alleyway in the capital city. Its cover was wordless and the binding battered and nondescript. But inside were charts and maps of our ancient lands. Thin, translucent paper limned with mountains, fens, and crooked coastlines.

Weneth realized dre had something when dre saw that the annotations were in the hand known to be used by the scribes of the House of Myndoth before the war. The lineages of houses can particularly be seen in the curlings of vowels—during the before times, scribes indulged in lavish, silent battles with one another to determine who could introduce the greatest beauty into the least of texts. I’ve seen the vowel sound “ahh” represented seventeen different ways by various scholars just from the House of Myndoth alone—though they were among the most ambitious in this frivolous pasttime.

Weneth recognized Klynth’s hand since dre had been working on deciphering Klynth’s design notes with a clutchmate, Bjorn of Rothscar. Bjorn, for dris journeyester work, had settled on a device of Klynth’s to learn from and build anew. It was a round, hollow ball made from a web of bronze and bone, crafted by the master before dre left the Capital to join the searchers at Far Reaches. Weneth was sweeping the stacks and combs for Klynth’s workshop records and had found personal notes as well.

In addition to plans for construction (which may have finally solved the mystery of why—and how—the deep glass-brick walls were spun and forged), the Nameless Book contains maps which show the location of the fortress. It may seem strange to have mislaid something so large as a fortress, but its fall was overshadowed by the losses of the War of Shadow later on, and attempts at rediscovery have been cut short.

Another piece of lost information this text holds are passages to the secret ways inside. Strangely puzzle-like and convoluted, they don’t seem to have been intended for cases of emergency. And why should they have been? Prior to the attack, the land was in peace. Raiders and political intrigues aside, the last cycle of warfare had ended along the coast two decades prior in that region.

Theories diverge. Marshemay of House Tessith, another of Weneth's clutchmates, believes the passages were simply intended to baffle the wildlife found in the desert—spiny lizards bask on the rocks and elkboar are found in the foothills. Azadene and Shekar of the House of Steel propose these may have been later additions, perhaps inspired by paranoia caused by the rise of the Shadow. Bjorn holds that the inventiveness and quixotic nature of the builders suffused the structure as whole. Hence, the existence of a spiral passage leading down from a nearby tor, with a series of chambered rooms whose portals are opened by sliding and twisting stone panels decorated with ancient symbols for the Houses. Those who have seen it say it holds similarities to the Silver Tomb.

We just don't know what happened. None of the survivors' accounts remain. Why then do the records speak of the fortress being taken by the Shadow? Some hold that Mendarra's searches must have exposed them to the Shadow, which dre brought back unknowing and caused the loss from the inside out. My granddragon swore that Mendarra brought it upon dris house, but my parent denies that possibility.

Though the House of Jade did not take me, I had a dream once that I believe to have been a true vision. It was from Mendarra's point of view—dri pattern of viridian tiger-flaming alternating with blue and black was distinctive and has yet to be repeated in Dragonkin. I was young. I remember the sound of screams around them. The crumble of stone. Dre was clutching a wand of ruby and bone. That is all.

Submitted with respect.



Tres of Kebros, Scribe of Brythmalleck's Library
Descendant of Mendarra of Far Reaches

When you **gaze into a glass shard from the Cobalt Tower in search of one of Mendarra's mysteries**, roll +Cunning. On a hit, ask 2. On a 7-9, ask 1:

- ☞ What new and useful fact about the Darkness do I learn?
 - ☞ What disturbing but powerful secret does the glass whisper to me?
 - ☞ What colorful and relevant vision did a seer see about our clutch?
 - ☞ How could I learn _____?
 - ☞ On a miss, one of your secrets now belongs to the glass shard, and may be learnt by others, including the Darkness.
-



rites of age and honor in dragonian houses

A study by Wander-Dragon Soartail
Translated by Brendan Conway

“All dragons should take care to grow their wisdom in accord with their size; Dragonia isn’t served by dull-witted goliaths, but by the keen insights of learned wyrms.”

—Wander-Dragon Soartail



Here follows a collection of all that I have learned, studying the specific aging ceremonies of the myriad houses of Dragonia. My purpose in collecting this information is to serve posterity, to better unify Dragonia by sharing our practices with each other, and to help complete the overarching work I am doing in a survey of Dragonian ritual. For the sake of simplicity, “honoree” refers to the dragon around whom the aging ceremony is being held.

Brynback, House of Steel

When a Brynback dragon has earned the right to a new age, Brynback will gather its members to enact the Rite of Steel. Most of the time, the aging dragon is met by dris Brynback friends, mentors, and superiors, as well as at least one elder dragon of the House. Elder Bluetongue in particular has made aging ceremonies dris own duty.

The Brynbacks gather together in a cavern, and there they tell tales of the greatness of Dragonia and how it has been protected throughout the ages by the Steel in its heart, in its spine, in its scales and claws. When all others are done, the honoree adds dris own stories, filling in how dre has added Steel to Dragonia.

If the dragon’s words and stories are deemed worthy, then the elder speaks in the voice of stone and Dragonia past, declaiming that as the honoree has added Steel to Dragonia, so too shall Dragonia add Steel to the honoree. Using their moon magic and skill, the Brynbacks craft together a piece of steel into a shape suited to the honoree’s body.

The elder removes a small piece of the aging dragon’s body, like a scale, whisker, talon, or feather, and then replaces it with the new steel piece. With a short plea to the Spirit Moon, the flesh heals around the steel piece, and the Brynback is deemed to have earned dris place as an older dragon.

A unique property of the Brynback ritual is that the steel piece itself takes on some unique properties. It grows with the dragon, increasing in size as dre does. It is strong—stronger and sharper than normal steel could ever be. And it can never be removed from the Brynback. Not ever, by any force. For such is the strength of the Brynbacks' Steel and tradition.

If you are a Brynback dragon, **when you age**, you share stories of your greatest deeds since your last aging ceremony, and roll +Courage. On a hit, you are deemed worthy; the elders replace a piece of your body with steel. Choose what they replace, and describe what the new steel piece looks like: it is unbreakable and unremovable from your body. On a 10+, the steel piece is not brand new, but an heirloom or artifact of the Brynback traditions; say what time-honored story is tied to it. On a miss, your stories are accepted, but begrudgingly, and the elders decide to add more steel to you to strengthen you for the future. The DM will tell you what major body part they replace with steel.

Kebros, House of Ruby

When a dragon has earned the right to mature in the eyes of the House Kebros elders, that dragon must find something transient but worth protecting and preserving, something brief-lived yet beautiful. Then, the honoree and a group of no less than five and no more than ten dragons of the same or greater age must make a journey into an open expanse, with nothing coming between them and the sky.

One by one, the other dragons say, “Defend Dragonia, for it needs you.” One by one, they each summon a moon to push at the honoree and dris chosen object. It’s not a violent struggle and the other dragons do not seek to hurt the honoree—only to test them. The honoree must stand strong against baleful winds and against biting cold and searing heat, and all the while must keep that object safe.

Doing so will drain the honoree, deeply and truly, leaving them exhausted...but over the course of a full day of this, the moons’ magics and the honoree’s will combine to form a new enchantment around the object. When the day comes to a close, the other Kebros come forward and seal the ceremony with a final blanket of the magic of the five moons combined, drifting down upon the honoree and the object. In the end, the honoree is marked by dris troubles, inevitably—but the object dre defended is preserved forever. In this way, an honoree of Kebros learns the virtue in self-sacrifice and defense of Dragonia—the ultimate expression of a transient beauty that needs protecting.

If you are a Kebros dragon, **when you age**, say what transient object you choose to defend. At the end of the ceremony, you are forever marked; choose a piece of yourself to permanently lose (such as the color of your scales, one of your horns, your ability to see in one eye). The object you defended is now utterly invulnerable to any harm.

Myndoth, House of Oak

According to Archive-Master Featherspear, deep in the deepest troves of Myndoth knowledge-strongholds, in impenetrable vaults (and Featherspear was clear to stress just how impenetrable these vaults are), the Myndoth hold some of their most sacred of learnings. In each vault they have the stronghold's central codex. Featherspear spoke of the central codex as if it were mystically bonded to the whole of the knowledge in the stronghold. As if all the collected secrets of the stronghold filtered together into a single book, somehow.

When a Myndoth dragon is ready to age, dre meets with the head librarian of a stronghold, and is taken down into those deepest vaults. And then, on dris own, the honoree goes into the chamber to read from the central codex.

Featherspear informed me that each time dre had read from a central codex, it showed something different. The pages, blank at first, filled to contain whatever information the codex chose to show...and that knowledge always changed them. Featherspear gained new understanding of dremself and the world with each new insight, as if the central codex knew exactly what knowledge and secrets dre needed to read. So it is for every Myndoth who reads from a central codex.

Sometimes, reading from a central codex multiple times is all it takes to cement a dragon's place with that stronghold, ensuring dre is bonded to it forever—Featherspear admitted that dre read from the same codex every time dre aged, and that is why dre felt called to become a scholar.

If you are a dragon of House Myndoth, **when you age**, you are taken to the central codex of a Myndoth stronghold. When you stand before the book, it shows you secrets of yourself and the world around you. Ask the DM any three questions you choose, about anything: the DM will answer honestly.

Rothscar, House of Gold

When a Rothscar dragon believes dre has earned enough experience to bear the rights of a new age, dre comes to the Head-of-House of Rothscar and asks for the opportunity to prove dremself. If approved, the ritual begins.

The honoree must then, within the span of a single full moon-cycle, complete a project to better Dragonia. Dre will be afforded assistance, but the more resources given, the better the project is expected to be.

The exact nature of the project is left entirely up to the honoree. After all, Rothscar values the creativity and problem-solving acumen of its dragons. Some dragons have built new structures, like libraries or art installations or bridges or roads. Others have come up with new inventions, like the float-carriage or the fabric aviatimoth. Some have undertaken large-scale changes to the Wilds themselves.

At the end of the full moon-cycle, dris project is tested and judged by a duly appointed group of three Rothscar elders. The judging process is often involved and careful. If the project is judged worthy, then the honoree is showered with praise and honor, and fully accepted as dris new age.



If you are a dragon of House Rothscar, **when you age**, you undertake a project to better Dragonia. Say what you would like to change about Dragonia and how, and roll:

- ☞ +1 if your project has a clearly limited scope
- ☞ +1 if you have personal expertise or experience that applies
- ☞ +1 if you return three gems to call upon the Moons for magic

On a hit, you complete your project as intended. On a 10+, you may add a second change to your description. On a miss, your project is still impressive enough to let you age, but its effects are not what you had expected; the DM will say what effects it brings about, instead.



Semscale, House of Jade

When a Semscale dragon is ready to age, dre must find another dragon to join in a Semscale “aging clutch.” Dre must find either a mentor in an older, wiser dragon, or a mentee in a younger dragon. House Semscale advocates for a diversity of experience in shaping their dragons, and specifically suggests dragons should pursue mentors and mentees from other houses.

Once an honoree has found a mentor or mentee with whom dre has a synchrony of spirit, they perform a short rite, putting their heads together and writing their names upon the ground, overtop of one another, over and over until neither name is legible. Then the mentor and mentee venture out into the Wilds. The two will see what they can see, to share stories with each other, to teach each other what they can.

According to understood tradition, the aging clutch is expected to return only after the honoree has learned a crucial truth from dris mentor, or taught a crucial truth to dris mentee. The exact meaning of this tradition is, as many things Semscale are, open to interpretation. But the effect seems to be a strengthening of a generational bond—the time spent together creating the connections between mentors and mentees that Semscale is so known for.

The one rule Semscale has around this tradition of forming aging clutches is simple—a dragon must always find a new mentor or a new mentee each time dre ages. Dre cannot go through the ceremonial journey with the same dragon twice.

If you are a dragon of House Semscale, **when you age**, you must bond with a dragon of greater age as your mentor, or a dragon of younger or equal age as a mentee. You are connected to them. Hold 1. Spend your hold at any time to call to their heart; they appears before you to help as soon as they possibly can.

Tessith, House of Diamond

When a Tessith dragon is ready to be accepted into a new age, dre calls together all the Tessith dragons in the area. Dre doesn't need a particular group of dragons—just those who are able to arrive in time.

The other dragons have three days to gather; then, at dawn on the fourth day, the ceremony begins. They light a fire and imbue it with magic from all five moons. At the moment of each moon's zenith, the honoree casts an object representing a connection with a loved one into the fire. While it burns, the honoree shares the story of why it is so important. The magic in the fire makes the story come alive to all the Tessith watching. Once the object is fully consumed, another Tessith consecrates the sacrifice: "And with the fire's burning, you are made Diamond," followed by an embrace and moment of comfort.

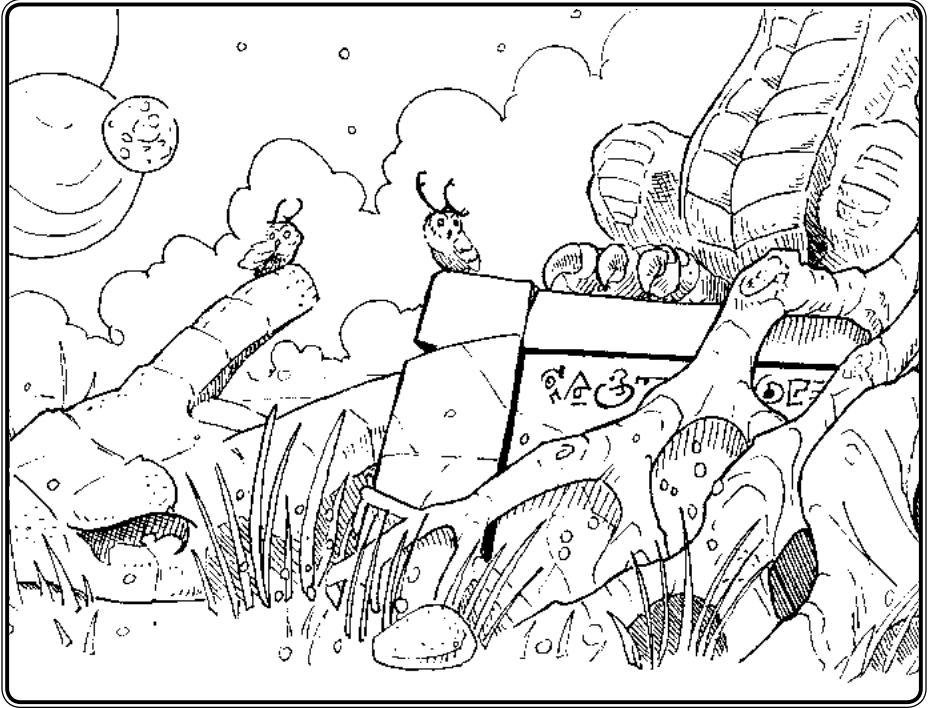
After the full day has passed, and five objects have been sacrificed, the other Tessith each embrace the honoree and leave, one by one, with the eldest leaving last. The eldest officially proclaims that the honoree is of a new age, and all the Tessith will share that truth as they go forth.

The ceremony emphasizes a Tessith dragon's inner strength, dris lack of dependence upon physical objects, and dris reliance upon other dragons. Tessith created this rite after they lost their traditional home, and meant it to instill a strength and hardiness in honorees.



If you are a dragon of House Tessith, **when you age**, you must sacrifice five objects, each representing a connection of importance to you. Say which object you sacrifice to each moon, and what its significance is. For each object representing a connection to a clutchmate, give that clutchmate a Friendship Gem, and take a Friendship Gem from them. For each object you sacrifice representing a connection to another dragon, mark experience.





HOUSE TESSITH AND THE WAR OF SHADOW

From the journal of Loremaster Davven
Translated by Katie Lyle Elsinger

“In the beginning, every House fell prey to the siren song of pride. It was not until the casualties had reached almost uncountable levels that we became willing to bow these proud necks and agree that not one single House had the power to defeat this enemy, but just maybe all of us together would be enough. It was our last, best and most desperate hope that drove us to the realization we should have made in the very first moments of the war.”

—Loremaster Davven of House Tessith



The battle began weeks before we even knew we were fighting it. The Darkness inched its way across the landscape; its taint remained wherever and on whatever it touched. Grasses, flowers, even the trees yellowed and wilted under its impact while birds and other small creatures fled from its impending shadow. And even as the ground rotted, doubt was sowed in our proud draconic hearts.

Small snail-ape like creatures, which were quickly named snolapes, began to burrow their way up through the dead brown grasslands. Their forearms were unnaturally long and dragged brutishly through the dirt as they lumbered forth. They wore broad shells across their backs, a tough exoskeleton, making them impervious to attack from above with both tooth and claw. Still, they were small, earth-bound things and we could simply rise above the threat they represented. Smaller drakes who met these brutish creatures face-to-face tried to warn others of their cunning but the Dragonlords just laughed.

As weeks passed the Darkness crept on, leaving worse than death in its wake. Early on the taint of the Darkness was so mild it did not inspire much fear. Its corruption appeared to be only surface-deep and in early skirmishes was easily pushed back. Every house ignorantly assumed it had the capability to destroy the Darkness at any moment, should it put its mind to it. The time just never seemed right for any of us—until the morning that House Tessith rose from Stronghold Adámas expecting dawn and instead found an inky wall of darkness bearing down on them.

Adámas, the Great Progenitor, had been one of the earliest founders of the house and the stronghold built to honor this dragon had been positioned over a natural hot spring for warmth. The dragons of House Tessith would come here to lay their eggs and the fiercest of the house's warriors held the honor of guarding the beautiful building.

Asteraceae, Sovereign of House Tessith, who had held early morning watch here, sent messengers to the heads of the other houses pronouncing that dre, with the help of the valiant General Atrax and the mighty warriors of House Tessith, would put to rest this pitiable dark menace once and for all.

Curiosity and House-pride piqued, dragons flocked in droves to watch the spectacle as the battle began. House Tessith aligned its warriors in formation in the air above the fortress, lead by Asteraceae and the beautiful white-scaled Atrax. They were a fearsome sight to look upon. Leathery wings flapped in the stagnant air, stirring up scents of sulfur and decay from below. Dragons of every size and color flew confidently in sweeping, boisterous circles as they prepared to showcase their strength and courage. Snow-white banners waved atop the diamond-tipped towers, their clean lines shining in stark contrast to the nebulous Darkness.

Spreading massive crimson wings wide, Asteraceae soared before the troops and trumpeted a courageous roar. The dragons' voices rose up all together, beautiful and deadly, to join in defiance of fear and doubt. Motioning for Atrax to wait, Asteraceae turned to face the encroaching shadow, wanting to be the first to face this enemy head-on. The wall of darkness moved inexorably toward them, so black that it seemed nearly solid. Dre roared again and as the wall finally met them we all learned the meaning of true horror.

Tendrils of wispy smoke seemed to reach out of the Dark, wrapping insidious fingers around the dragon's limbs, wings, and long neck. Asteraceae jerked and shuddered as if the darkness burned wherever it touched. The shadow almost seemed to crawl over them like a swarm of hungry insects. Darkness settled between each scale of the once-sparkling ruby-colored hide, leaving behind a dull, dead shade that brought to mind the color of old blood. For a moment it seemed as though the Darkness would swallow Asteraceae entirely but just before disappearing from view dre slowly banked back towards the awestruck ranks of kinfolk.

As we watched, the spirited fire that burned behind Asteraceae's eyes died, leaving them lifeless, the grey color of cold ashes. For several long moments the air hung still, pregnant and waiting for what would come next. It was broken by a blast of ear-piercing noise and a gout of bitter green flame erupting from the mouth of our former leader. The champion's heart had turned to evil. It was as simple as that: we could be killed, or worse, tainted and turned against those we had known and loved all of our lives.

The blast of green fire struck the outer spires of the Stronghold Adámas and they crumbled. No one had seen the cracks in the walls. No one had known that the snolapes, seemingly weak and puny, had spent weeks burrowing and undermining the sparkling stronghold. Dragons and drakes, whole clutches of newly laid eggs, were crushed under falling marble spires. Those gathered cried out in horror but General Atrax turned and thundered a challenge at the thing that had been our lord and had become an enemy.

Asteraceae charged without regard or recognition and Atrax, by far the more accomplished fighter of the two, smirked disdainfully at what had been dris closest kin. Atrax launched forward with furious speed and met Asteraceae's charge head-on; the impact of their collision released a shock-wave. The siblings struggled and tumbled through the air, crashing against buildings and sending weakened stones cascading to the ground below. Atrax's cocky smile faded at the realization that our sovereign, dris clutchmate, was truly gone and what had been left in dris place contained an unnatural strength and singularity of purpose.

Pride faltered on the general's face and a flicker of fear broke across dris visage. In that second of weakness, Asteraceae reared back dris long neck and sank blackened teeth into Atrax's exposed throat, whipped dris head, and tossed the general aside into the cracked stone and glass of the Tower of Learning. The tower collapsed inwards and buried Atrax in boulders and glittering dust. The war-drakes watched as the

life blood of the strongest of them soaked into the dirt, and backed away in dread. A curious thing happened in that dark hour so full of horror and loss: three small blue figures moved forward through the air ranks to face off against Asteraceae.

The young drakes were Tessith brood-mates: Hyacin, Kyaneos, and Gormuaine. They had only just come of age to be assigned a position on guard. They were untried in large battles and were only a fraction of the size of their once-leader but determination, not pride, showed on their faces. Like sapphire darts they threw themselves against Asteraceae, all four tumbling head-over-tails through the murky grey air. The trio became a small whirlwind of teeth and claws and, as the smaller dragons struggled against their elder, their inexplicable courage began to spread to those around them. The clash grew as more corrupted dragons and other unnatural creations of the Darkness emerged from the shadows that loomed over the stronghold.

Soon the warriors of every family in House Tessith, the beautiful, strong House of Diamond, were engaged in the fight while their kin looked on fearfully. The Darkness seemed to seep more readily into solitary dragons, twisting their minds against their own kin and leaving their bodies only tools without spirit or independent thought. Those who fought alongside their allies seemed more able to turn back the evil from their thoughts. Chaos broke out as these sudden enemies attacked from within their own ranks. The strongest warriors engaged these lost friends while the younger drakes fought against the gigantic insectoid mutations that spawned from inside the cloud of shadow.

Through all of the chaos the young drake siblings battled their fallen leader on land and in air. Asteraceae seemed to feel no pain, and no amount of reason was able to reach that darkened mind though they tried desperately to call the creature back to dris former self. The blue drakes moved together, two distracting the larger dragon while the third raked razor claws through its wings. They fought against the

corruption's singular focus by never providing a single target. Sometimes claw-in-claw they would spiral in and blast holes in the former lord's armored hide.

Finally, with a thunderous roar, Asteraceae landed, the massive form crashing to the ground below, leaving an immense cloud of dirt in its wake. A small part of the dragon our lord had been in life showed briefly in dris eyes and dre spoke to the remaining warrior drakes directly. Our former chief told them not to be afraid of what would come next; that they should take the gift that was being given to them and unite the other Houses against the Darkness. In a final act of brave sacrifice Asteraceae loosed the dragons-fire upon dris own body, which began to crumble away to ash and, in only moments, nothing remained of the once-proud head of House Tessith except a massive diamond that had been dris living heart. The diamond, the Heart of Asteraceae, cracked into smaller pieces that glowed with the warm light of hope.

In the light of the Heart, the Darkness seemed to ebb and no more monstrous creatures emerged from the shadow. A wary calm fell on what was left of House Tessith and even the shadows seemed to draw back a small distance. The three heroic blue dragons, who we now know as the Siblings Sapphire, stood amongst the ruins of their noble house. Nearly every warrior had been killed or maimed and many of their once-beautiful buildings burned with the hellish green fire of their enemy.

The Siblings gathered up the pieces of the shattered Heart and flew them to the leaders and warriors of the other Great Houses. These shards carried with them a blessing of humility, a unique perspective on their own actions from an outside view, and the ability to keep the Darkness from overpowering the minds of their warriors. For years after the war, young dragons would make pilgrimages to the heart before starting on long journeys.

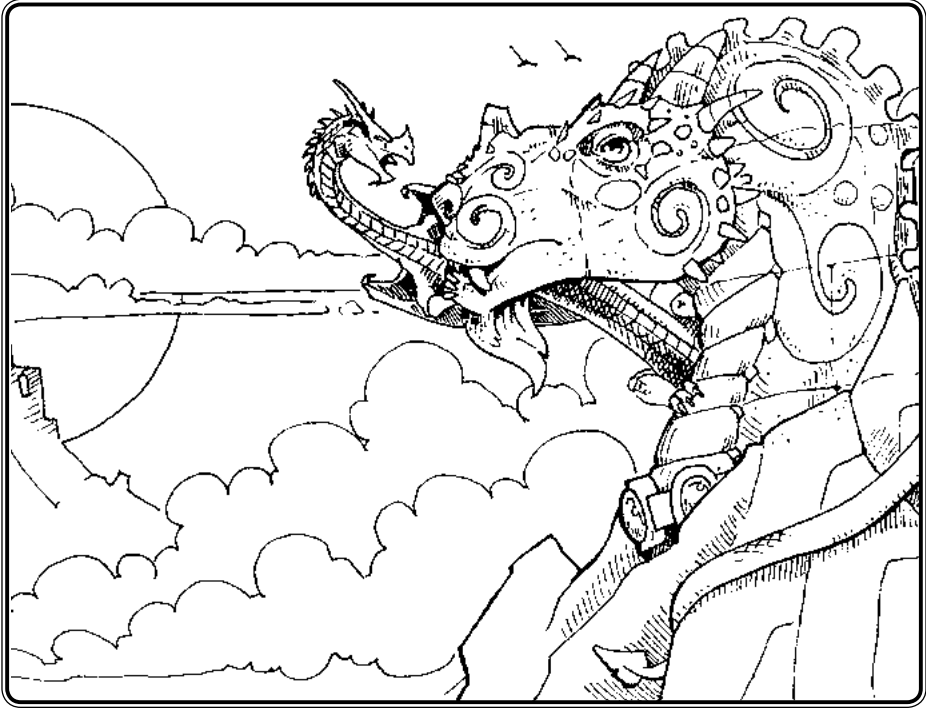
After this first day of the war, most of House Tessith withdrew behind the walls of its remaining strongholds, seeking the protection it had lost when its warriors fell. The three blue heroes, though, refused to be cowed even by such a terrible loss and instead of burying their heads they rose up with their shards of the Heart and became the first advocates of the remaining Houses working together against this cruel enemy. No Dragonlord dared laugh away their warnings this time.

Sadly, this was only day one of a long struggle and before long every house had felt the threat of the looming Darkness. Countless battles were fought on land and in sky against our own corrupted warriors, the abominations created by the shadows, and against the sorrow that battered our very hearts.

Truly, we may all have suffered the fate of House Tessith if we had not learned from their fall: the value of preparation and working with our neighbors against the enemy. From that day forward the trumpets of war sounded at the first sight of the enemy, no matter how seemingly small, and no house was left to battle it without the support of their dragonkin.

During the quieter years, after the war had ended and life had resumed a somewhat more normal pace, the shards disappeared from the strongholds where they had been housed. No one knows what became of them, but a legend has been whispered that amid times of trouble the pieces will be found and reunited, bringing balance back to Dragonia.

When you **peer into the heart of Asteraceae and ask to help your friends**, roll +Friendship Gems. On a hit, you add +2 to your friend's roll, even if they are calling upon the moons. On a 7-9, you expose yourself to cost, complication, or harm. On a miss, you pay the cost your friend would have paid; they escape the consequence you instead bear.



HOUSE KEBROS

By Kallen, of House Kebros, Order of Seers
Translated by John Wick

Flyreign failed. Dre failed because dre was weak. Flyreign chose to save dris friends rather than Dragonia and we had to compensate. How many of us died because of Flyreign's failure? Hundreds? And yet, dre is the hero. Because that is the way of history. Choose a hero and tell their story.

Well, this isn't Flyreign's story. It's our story. And when it is done, perhaps you will understand yours more clearly.

—Shadowburn, House Kebros



know how others will see my testimony. My entry will look very different from this version. I know others will change my words to better fit their understanding of history. I am content with this.

You do not want to know the true history. You want a story that will enforce what you already believe.

But I must be as honest with myself as I am with you. For that is the primary virtue of all our kind. Honesty.

But dragons would rather believe a pretty lie than look upon the ugly truth. That is our way.

Very well. Let us begin. And we will see how much honesty you can suffer before you must look away.

My name is Kallen. This is the name I have chosen for myself, my Dragon Name which speaks of my innermost soul. Make of that what you will. And I shall write the history of my house.

Before the War

There was a time before the Darkness came. A time when all of us spoke clearly and plainly. And deep in the heart of a bleeding mountain was the Ruby Pool. Burning, red liquid stone. And that pool *whispers*. Deep under the flaming surface lies the one who gave dremself to the pool so that we might see. The Oracle of Ruby Fire.

From the Oracle, we learned sacrifice. From the Oracle, we learned truth. From the Oracle, we learned everything.

And from the Oracle, we became known as the House of Ruby. Honesty. Truth. These were the words they used to describe us.

We were advisors. We were seers. Respected for our dedication. But then...

Ah, but not yet. Soon.

The Order of Seers

The Order still exists, but not in the way it once did. Not after the Betrayal.

Those who wish to become part of our Order undergo a trial. An ordeal. Just as the Oracle suffered for us, so must we suffer for the Oracle. For wisdom. For truth.

You are brought to the cave blindfolded and bound...the Seers speak the words and we remove the blindfold.

And then...*and then...*

You are tested. Shown things. Terrible things.

Your future. The future of those you love. Those you despise.

Joys you will never share. Pain you cannot halt. Knowing the future does not grant one freedom. No...

And those who see it and suffer for it...may gain its wisdom. Those who are worthy walk out with eyes of ruby fire.

Those who are unworthy...never see again.

We, the Seers, went out into the world to serve as advisors and guides. We were not the strongest. We were not the fastest. We were not the fighters that others were.

But we knew secrets others did not. And we could foresee dangers others overlooked. We stood at the sides of heroes, but never claimed the title for ourselves. And we were content with knowing that no one would write songs about us. No one would tell stories about us.

The quiet vizier who stood behind the brave and bold hero. That was our role.

Those who knew of us would understand. And that was enough.

The Betrayal

We were the first to see it. Forming on the edges of our world, gathering in the dark places where no one else dared to look. We were the first to give warning. We spoke in the Great Halls, telling others of what was coming.

But they did not listen. They sang and danced and ignored our visions and our warnings.

And as the enemy approached, we were the first to speak to it. We were the first to call it by its name. "The Darkness."

And we were the first to call it, "Friend."

We gave it secrets...but not too many. We gave it names... but only the names of the weak. We gave it power...but only power we could take back.

None of you listened to us. The Darkness knew that. Why do you think it came to us first?

Because we were weak? No. Because we were foolish? No.

It came to us because we were strong.

It came to us because we were wise.

It came to us...because you ignored our warnings.

And when it whispered to us...bade us to be its ally...made us pretty promises...

...we smiled and nodded.

Did we take the power it gave to us? Yes, we did.

Did we give it the keys to our gates? Yes, we did.

And when it had defeated all of you, who were the ones who cut its throat?

We did.

The First War of Shadow

My House sided with the Darkness. Our wings ensorcelled with eldritch night, we flew through the night sky. We were terror incarnate. We were more powerful than we had ever been. More powerful than all of you.

We first revealed our hand at the Battle of Snowpeak. We stood with you then, waiting for the enemy. Our own scouts revealed it was on its way. And we waited with you.

Oh, how we waited.

Our new forms concealed from your eyes and noses. You spoke of fraternity. You spoke of solidarity. After you ignored us. After you laughed at us. Now that the danger was present, now that dragon lives had been lost, you called upon us to help.

And there we were. Flying with you. Wing-to-wing. You smiled and said pretty words.

And when the Darkness showed its true face, so did we.

And we burned you with the Darkening Flame.

Your screams of confusion and pain mingled with our laughter as we watched you fall like dying embers from the sky.

The Darkness whispered our names—our new names—and we sang its songs and danced in the air.

You called us traitors. And you were right. We betrayed you. Because you chose not to listen. Because you chose to laugh at us.

The Darkness listened. And it did not laugh at us. It whispered in our ears and caressed our scales. It told us that the world would be ours.

And it never lied.

It Never Lied.

Sacrifice

The war raged on and slowly—ever so slowly—you began to gain ground.

Did you ever wonder why?

Did you suppose it was your brilliant strategies? Your courage? Your claws and teeth? Your breath?

No. It was because of our treachery.

Quietly, we undermined the Darkness.

Quietly, we sabotaged its strength.

Quietly, we dulled its talons. We let its teeth break on traps that we laid for it.

Your victories meant nothing without us. The Darkness was too strong for you. Too strong for all of us.

We knew this. We saw it. Our Oracle warned us. We knew how to subvert it, how to undo it.

And it would cost blood. So much blood.

And we were willing to shed it. For you.

We shed it for you!

So many lives lost. Just to give you the victories you needed. So you would not lose your grip on hope.

We shed our blood for you. We threw away our dignity for you. We gave our lives for you.

So the War of Shadow would end.

But then...

But then...

Flyreign's Fall

Flyreign failed.

In the Last Battle, dre failed. Dris weakness almost cost everything. Dris hesitation. Dris failure.

In the end, it only cost us a single life. But it could have been more. It could have been all of us.

Our rubyfire eyes showed us the final battle. Showed us what Flyreign needed to do. But when the time came, dre was unwilling to make the sacrifice. Instead, Flyreign jeopardized all of us for a few of us. Flyreign left dris position in the battle to protect...

...and that mistake almost ended the battle. The Darkness would have won. The Darkness *should* have won.

If not for us.

It was our blood that saved us. Our pain. Our sacrifice.

We had to reveal our betrayal of the Darkness too soon. Because of Flyreign's weakness. And because of that, we nearly lost everything.

Flyreign died that day. And dre was your hero. Not us. Not the Solace of Stars. Not Wise Laughter. Not Hope's Kedge. Not... No. I cannot even write dris name.

I don't want you to remember them. Because you will curse dris name. The Author of the Betrayal. You will never speak dris name with the reverence it deserves. And so, I will not write it.

The one who cut the enemy's throat. The one who suffered its blood. The one who suffered its death knell. The one...

You do not deserve to remember them.

All the world has changed since that day of pain, betrayal, and blood. Blood as red as rubies.

The Last Revelation

These last few years, the Oracle's voice has grown softer. We come to the lake of ruby fire and it is only a whisper. Dris words growing more cryptic, half-delusional cobweb nonsense. And then, finally, one last revelation.

I cannot see. Another...

We heard the words and waited for something more. But there was no more. Nothing. Only silence. A sentence ending in a comma, left hanging like a limb not quite broken from the tree, dangling in a strong wind.

We waited for hours...for days...for months...but nothing.

Only silence.

And that was it. The last revelation from the one who gave dremself to the lake of ruby fire so we all may see. Gone. Stillness under the unstill flames.

Since that day, we have argued what to do. Some say another must take dris place. Some say, only that one could fulfill that role. Some are frightened. The rest are terrified.

Should another take dris place? Is that what dre...

We do not know.

For the first time...we do not know.

We do not know.

Struck blind, we stumble in the dark without the voice of the rubyfire lake to guide us. There is only uncertain darkness. Only ourselves. And those who do not trust us.

How are we to be who we have always been? Take our eyes, take our tongues, take our snouts...and what are we?

No voice.

No sight.

No smell.

Only darkness.

Only. Darkness.

And you ask me, who is House Kebros now?

We are as we have always been. And we are as we have never been.

Our Order of Seers still exists and we still serve heroes as we always have. We will tell you the Truth. But the Voice that guided us is no more. Some have thought to guide us, to be the new voice...but they are not the Oracle. No one can be them.

Seekers hope to find another worthy of taking dris place. And even if we do...who would have the courage to walk into the lake of ruby fire?

We are as we have always been...as we have never been.

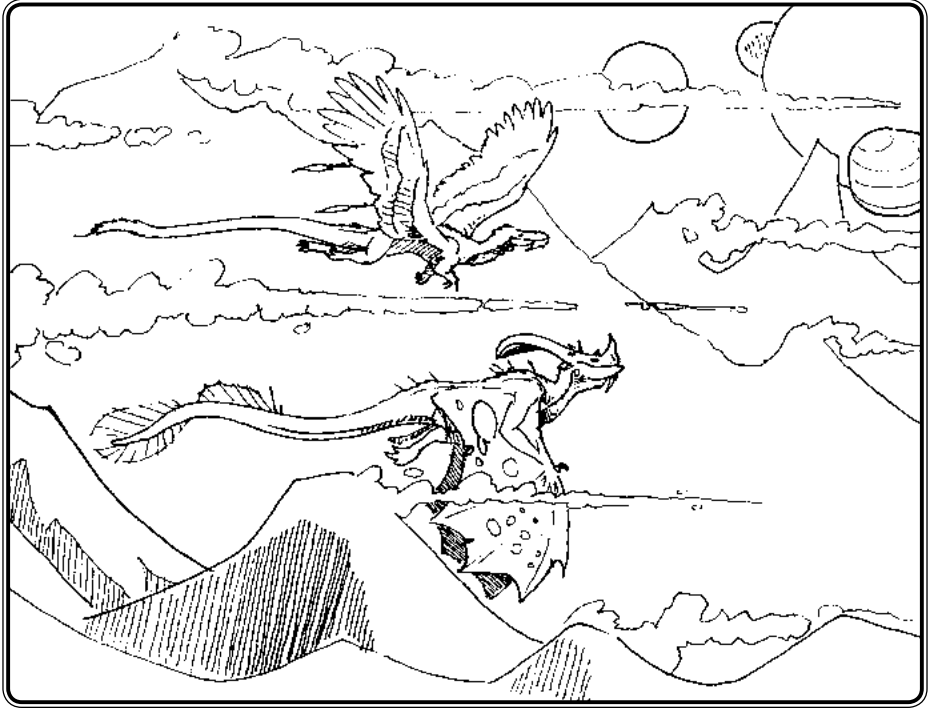
We are the Seers and those who will pay any price for wisdom.

And we will betray you so that we may save you.



When you **step into the lake of ruby fire**, roll +Courage. On a hit, the fire welcomes you as the new Oracle; you give up your frail, mortal form to join the lake. On a 10+, your prophetic bond is instantaneous and powerful; you may proclaim one truth of Dragonia before you are consumed by the flames, and it will come to pass. On a miss, the fire finds you unworthy; become your Shadowself and give up all your Friendship Gems.





OF LEGENDS AND LORE

Recorded by Merith the Scribe
Translated by Michelle Lyons-McFarland

“And Syraah lifted dris voice, and out came the sighing of a thousand breezes, and the roaring of a thousand fires, and the ringing of a thousand chimes, and all the world became silent the better to hear dris unearthly song. And Cereth raised dris head and wept a single, lonely tear.”

—The Song of Syraah



Many know the stories of the first Dragonlords, those ancient and powerful dragonkin who stood on high with outstretched wing and claw, and in whose name the Houses came to be as they were in their glories, carving all Dragonia out of a wildness that had no name, for there were none who could speak it.

When Tessith still had a home; when Kebros had not yet stumbled in the Darkness; these are the days of legend. Younglings are told these tales in their birthing clutches, before they even know their own Houses. These names live on the tongues of the young and the minds of the old, wafting on the evening smoke from the drowsing land into the heart of her lover, the sky.

Yet the tales of the lords are not the oldest tales we know. The best known, yes, but not the first. When Brynbak led the charge against the Darkness in the First War of Shadow; when Rothscar first built the Amythyst Tower; when Myndoth first called down the Void Moon's power to shield us all; these tales had largely been forgotten within Dragonia. Our ancient truths lay hidden beneath the treasures of ages past, waiting to be rediscovered under the light of a new moon.

When the world was young and the moons not yet hatched from the First Dragon, our people wandered the vast waters of the world. Our crafters made ships of wood and magic large enough to hold the entire race of dragons. We were without any homes but those that sailed with us; without Houses, without the Ways, without lands. Some among those wandering people, though, believed there was more, that there was a place where dragons could build a world and give up their wandering ways.

Among those wandering across the water's surface was a special group, a pilgrimage clutch who was given a small ship and sent away to prove themselves. Among these most honored dragons were Celmoth, later named the Explorer; Cereth, the Seer; Felsheth, the Warrior; and Syraah, the

Singer. Clutchmates all, they stood together and vowed to earn their scales or sink into the water's embrace, and so they set off into the night, guided by the everlasting stars.

Celmoth was their leader. In dris dreams, Celmoth saw a land where dragonkind could rest and grow, a land the like of which they had never seen, with waves so high they could not be climbed, and which were frozen in place but were never cold. The elders disbelieved Celmoth; such a place sounded like a hatchling's fantasy, but Celmoth could not give up the vision. Celmoth gathered a clutch, and together they set out to prove themselves and discover a home beyond the horizon.

The four friends faced many dangers on their travels, most of which are now lost to the mists of time and memory. A few, however, we still know: the Isle of Lost Dreams, where Felsheth found true desire; the Sea of Endless Thirst, which saw Cereth call down blessed rain from empty skies and save them all; the Storm of Fiery Winds, in which Celmoth nearly drowned in flame. All these adventures and more did the clutchmates face and survive, until the day came when, across a still sea, they spotted waves that did not fall, and clouds that did not move.

Cereth was taken by a vision so strong dre could scarcely see with dris own eyes, of a golden-spired city like the masts of impossibly tall ships spread across a green isle. Syraah sang them closer to the mass, which grew darker and larger the closer they came. Felsheth made ready a battle song, girding dris scales for danger, and Celmoth recognized the waves of the dream—land that stood so tall it dwarfed the largest elder dragon—mountains that matched the profile of a sleeping dragon's head; Celmoth knew they had come home.

When the four arrived, they landed their boat and set up a camp, wary and uncertain which way to proceed. There was no end to the lands in front of them; the shore spread out as far as they could see in either direction, while the forest seemed impenetrable as it rose to the mountain slopes.

Cereth spoke then, telling the others of the vision, and said that they should search until they found a cave in the dragon's mouth; there would be a crystal that would prove their discovery, and with it they could return to their people and lead them home. The group made their way inland to the place we now call the Dragon's Mouth: a cave on the top of Mount Casek, from whence a waterfall cascades past twin stones into a deep blue pool far below.

The cave stretched into the side of the mountain for some distance, a shallow stream of water flowing gently past the young dragons as they made their way inside. Upon reaching the back wall of the cavern, they made two discoveries. The first was that the source of the water was an ever-flowing spring we now call the Breath of Life, named that day by Cereth dremself.

The other discovery the four friends made was a crystal embedded in the wall above the spring. It was no color they could name; it gathered even the faint light from the sky outside and magnified it, gently illuminating the stone around it and revealing seams of gold and silver in the very walls of the cave itself. Cereth called it out at once as the crystal from the dream and fell upon it, determined to wrest it from the wall so that the clutch could carry it home to their people and prove their claims. Felsheth pulled Cereth back, however, pointing out the potential danger. "If the crystal is moved," Felsheth said, "the wall may give, and the water behind this rock may gush out and sweep us all down the mountain. Think first, Cereth."

Cereth stepped back from the crystal, outwardly calm, but anger had filled dris heart. Unbeknownst to any of them, the Darkness had sought out the pride within Cereth and corrupted it into obsession. Cereth walked back toward the mouth of the cave, brooding over how to best resolve the quest, while Celmoth tried to discover how best to help dris friend without risking their lives in the bargain.

It was Syraah, however, who gazed into the crystal and saw its truth. Casting a gentle glow on the water flowing below it, the dark wall with its metallic flecks behind it, the crystal looked like nothing so much as one of the dragons' beloved moons, hanging low in the night sky, seeing its own reflection in the waters below. It was the Stone Moon, offering protection to the new land and its people; removing it would be a sacrilege.

"Cereth," Syraah said. "Can you not see the blessings here? Your vision led you true, but the meaning has been twisted. This crystal is no prize, but a promise. We cannot take it with us; our words will be proof enough."

"No," Cereth snarled. "I saw the truth. The elders think us foolish; we must make them believe!"

Felsheth saw Darkness swirling in Cereth's eyes as dre spoke, and Felsheth laid a claw on dris leg. "You cannot give in to despair, Cereth. We will be successful."

Cereth sneered then, showing dris teeth, and the shadow swallowed up the sapphire in dris eyes. "This is not despair, Fel. Or should I call you fool? Would you give up on our quest so easily? Help me get the gem or get out of my way!" Cereth raked dris claws across Felsheth's leg, drawing a gasp as blood welled to the surface.

Felsheth drew back, crouching into a fighting stance—eyes narrowed—and hissed, "To save our lives, I will do what I feel I must."

Celmoth moved to stand between Felsheth and Cereth. "Do not do this, Cereth," dre said. "Our friendship is worth more than a rock. We have discovered a new land...do not let it be consecrated through blood spilled in anger."

Cereth was beyond reason, though, spurred by the Darkness that now writhed within, driving them to madness. Cereth bared dris claws and lunged at Felsheth, shoving Celmoth out of the way. Felsheth turned, and Cereth's claws skittered off Felsheth's scales; this was the first time the clutchmates had turned on one another, and pain filled Felsheth's heart from the knowledge of it.

Celmoth dared not interfere; Felsheth refused to draw a weapon and harm Cereth, but Cereth would not give way. By diving between them, Celmoth could accidentally distract Felsheth, with disastrous consequences.

The pair danced back and forth, Felsheth keeping dris body between Cereth and the crystal, while Cereth slashed at Felsheth mercilessly, a corrupted soul driven by shadows and rage. Syraah wept with frustration, trying to think of how to bring Cereth to dris senses and stop the fighting without further bloodshed. Syraah looked back at the crystal in the wall and called upon the Stone Moon for guidance. In the midst of the ringing blades and hissing breath of combat, dre heard a single, quiet note rise on the wind, playing across the water of the spring, and Syraah knew what dre had to do.

Syraah lowered dris head to the stream, letting tears mingle with the waters of the earth, and then raised dris head, giving breath to the winds of the sky. As generations before had done, Syraah sang the songs of wind and water, letting the magic of the Stone Moon flow through dris voice.

Beating dris wings, Syraah created a heartbeat. Keening the notes, Syraah sang harmony with the wind. Growling the words, Syraah gave voice to the stones. The crystal glowed in response, brighter and brighter, pulsing with light and life as it vibrated to the sounds. Felsheth laid down dris head in tribute, and was still. Celmoth closed dris eyes and spread dris wings, and was still.

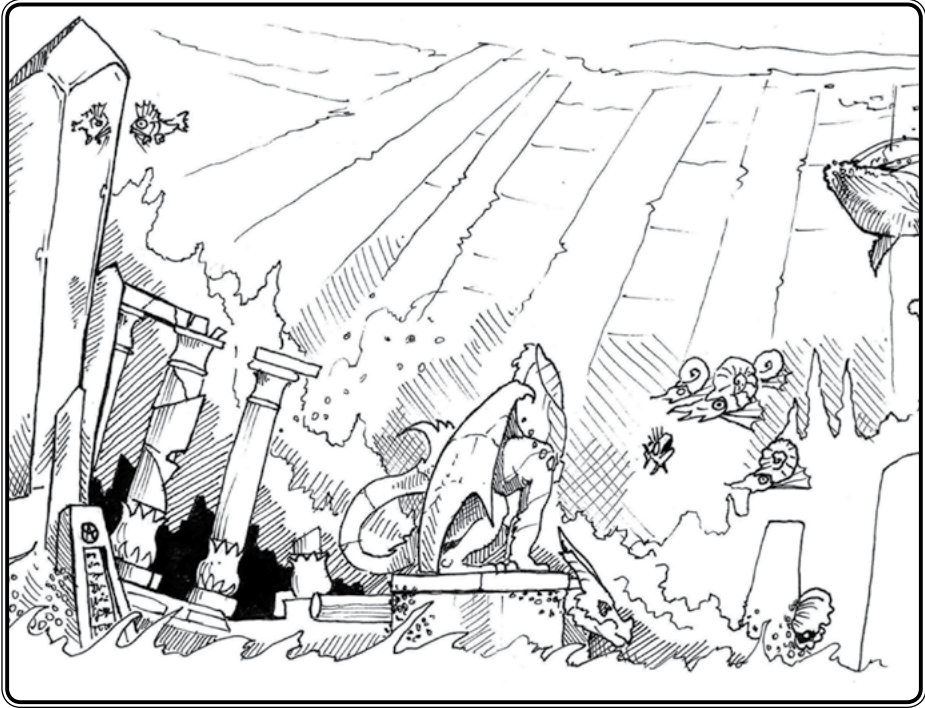
Cereth drew a knife and charged forward...and then a ray of light from the crystal touched Cereth, and dre was still. A single tear rolled down dris face, leaving a trail of golden pearl down dris scales. The Darkness fell from Cereth in the face of the song of Syraah. Cereth saw then the scratches on Felsheth's limbs, and dris beautiful eyes slanted with pain. Cereth saw Celmoth's bravery and trust shining from dris noble posture. Cereth knelt then, weeping, and knew how close dre had come to destroying them all.

Syraah's voice grew stronger. A flash of light came from the crystal, dazzling everyone, and the wall cracked, letting forth a fountain of spray. From the Dragon's Mouth, Syraah's song was borne on a mist that lit with the colors of our people, and a spray that created the River Thenos, that flows next to our capital still. Syraah's song transformed a wild land into Dragonia, the home of our people, and saved our ancestor from becoming kinslayer and the first victim of the Darkness. Instead, that was another soul, lost to their own shadow. But that is a story for another time.

When you **call your clutch to your immediate aid**, roll.
Take +1 if...

- ☞ ...your clutch is free of Shadows and their Shadowelves.
- ☞ ...you have a Friendship Gem from each of your clutchmates.
- ☞ ...you are facing the Darkness or its agents.

On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 1. Any member of the clutch can spend the hold, 1 for 1, to take a 10+ on acting despite danger in the face of the threat you stand against together. On a miss, your clutch stumbles or hesitates, providing a golden opportunity to your opposition.



ICONS OF INSIGHT

By Cyncepor ap Lleth
Translated by Cam Banks

It was high on the peak of Mount Ashgift that I found the first of the Icons of Insight. Weeks of searching, pleading to Elders for what shreds of information they had, it all led me to that place.

Once there, ashamed of myself for asking so much of others, I confronted my Shadow, cast starkly behind me in the crystal brilliance of the Icon. I cannot describe the experience other than to say that it was like the piercing light of the stories of the War of Shadow, and once I left it I felt the loss of its radiance. But, as I have written many times, I carry its blessing with me still.

—Cyncepor ap Lleth, Scribe of Myndoth



The Icons of Insight have long illuminated the dark corners of Dragonia. These massive crystal pillars of rosy quartz must be sought out by pilgrimage; by attuning to the crystal a dragon may receive a shard of enlightenment or peace of mind for a short time.

The Pilgrimage

Pilgrimages to the Icons can take many years. It appears that rather than rely on maps, a petitioner must ask questions of those who have themselves stood before an Icon, forming within their minds an aggregate of understanding that in turn leads them to set off in flight. The Icons form a lasting connection with those who have witnessed them, and this connection is better than any map. Indeed, the Elders believe that the Icons and their shrines may even occasionally relocate or spontaneously generate in entirely different places, ruining any effort to place them on navigational charts.

A pilgrimage is not without its hazards. The Icons are never found in safe places. Although the shrines are tranquil and peaceful once located, they could be lodged within a cavern beneath an active volcano, deep beneath the kraken-haunted waters of an ocean trench, coiled within the mighty limbs of a poison thorn sequoia, or surrounded by the scale-bleaching winds of a hundred-year desert storm.

Some petitioners quest for an Icon in groups, although most undertake the journey alone. If accompanied by others, one of the dragons is always the key petitioner, sharing the pull of the Icon with dris friends, explaining the directions to take, and asking the questions. From time to time, especially within a clutch of dragons, the urge to find an Icon and the connection that exists to it finds expression in multiple petitioners at once. Each of them brings their own understanding of the path ahead, and the Icon can only be found when all of the petitioners work together and rely on their bonds of companionship or family.

The Guardians

After weeks, months, or even years, the petitioner finally arrives at the location of the Icon and discovers its shrine. It is written that dre must first confront the Icon's guardians, meant to test the heart of the petitioner.

The guardians appear as many-limbed, many-eyed, spider-like entities, ever watchful. They are as large or as small as seems necessary; one returned petitioner, Egret Wingrake, imparted to me that the guardians were a cloud of tiny motes of crystal light, like newly hatched webweavers. Others have said they are instead mighty instruments of judgment.

The guardians are not present at the shrine to injure or harm those who undertake the pilgrimage, but they keep out those who stumble upon an Icon by accident, or who seek the Icons for malicious or unworthy causes. Their motivation seems noble, but also inscrutable; they might demand answers to questions of deep philosophical or academic nature, or challenge the petitioner to a duel or even a battle of wits. Iridis Yarrow-Reach writes in dris scholarly work that dre was horrified to discover that the guardians proposed a poetry contest, a task for which Iridis was completely unprepared.



When you **confront the guardians of the shrine**, roll +Courage. On a hit, the guardians set forward a challenge within your area of expertise, training, or preparation. On a 10+, you or your companions are particularly prepared; take +1 forward to meeting the guardians' demands. On a miss, the guardians present you with a nearly impossible challenge that you must overcome to proceed.

If you cannot enter, you may try again on the following day. The guardians frame the test in a new way, or take a different approach, as the DM chooses.



The Shrine

Once past the guardians, the petitioner finds a chamber lined with runes and whorls of inlaid gems and stones, reflecting the soft light of the Icon itself. The Icon reaches all the way to the ceiling, a thick tower of rosy quartz without any adornment or decoration. Once in its presence, all of the petitioner's urges and emotions come forth. It can be a shock to some dragons, a balm to others, but always deeply moving; the soul is laid bare. How wondrous!

After undertaking the pilgrimage, crossing great distances, and confronting the guardians, the dragon must now turn from the Icon and confront their Shadowself. The Icon casts the Shadowself into a literal shadow behind the dragon.

When you **confront your Shadowself at the Icon of Insight**, look within and choose your approach to attunement:

- ☞ If you bravely confront the Darkness, proclaim your boldness and roll +Courage.
- ☞ If you arm yourself with knowledge and understanding, recount your truth and roll +Cunning.
- ☞ If you look deep within your Shadowself to know it for its falsehoods, call out your deception and roll +Charm.

On a hit, you banish your Shadowself in the light of the Icon and acquire one or more Icon Gems. On a 10+, take 2 Icon Gems. On a 7–9, take 1 Icon Gem. You can use Icon Gems to do the following, 1 for 1:

- ☞ Access moon magic that has been lost to age.
- ☞ Add +3 to a roll to defend Dragonia or younger dragons.
- ☞ Stand up to an older dragon as if you rolled a 10+.
- ☞ Bring a companion back from their Shadowself.

On a miss, mark a Shadow. The shrine expels you, but not until after it reveals a terrible secret or memory to you that you have kept hidden from your clutch.

The Crystal-Prophets

One of the more mysterious aspects to the legends and myths surrounding the Icons of Insight are stories of the crystal-prophets, dragons who in ancient days tended the Icons or were somehow responsible for sending them out into the distant regions of Dragonia. In one fragment of lore held by my mentor Theonex von Arrid, an Elder of House Kebros, there was a time when the Icons were all grouped together in a single, dazzling room of light at the center of Dragonia. In that age, the crystal-prophets meditated upon, consulted with, and attuned to the Icons, granting their wisdom and beneficence to the earliest founders of the Houses. Theonex attests that these stories imply that it was conflict between the Houses that caused the crystal-prophets to send the Icons away, furious with the rancor of the other dragons.

Other sages say that Theonex has interpreted this fragment with his own House's bias, either because Theonex is ashamed of his House's role in the War of Shadow or because he truly believes that Kebros may once have been the wisest of Houses. Politics! A handful of sages believe the stories of the crystal-prophets are fanciful at best, that the Icons are simply collective manifestations of the Light within Dragonia and its dragons, and that to assign any responsibility to so-called crystal-prophets is hubris.

Dragons who have returned from their pilgrimages to an Icon of Insight never seem to mention seeing or hearing from any crystal-prophets. However, it's possible that the descendants of these mysterious caretakers and mystics of the Icons remain hidden within the communities of Dragonia, seeding the various Houses with these lore fragments, gently guiding powerful Elders toward helping young drakes, and acting against the Darkness in their own fashion.

The Regathering

Just how many Icons of Insight actually exist in the world is an unknown, but it is thought to be either five or eight, depending on the source. One path ahead for a group of industrious and heroic dragons might be to seek out the Icons of Insight and, rather than simply attuning to them and enjoying the benefits, attempt to coax them all back together, forming a powerful balm against the coming Darkness.

This legendary feat, known as the Regathering, is at the heart of my colleague Theonex von Arrid's scholarly works about the Icons. To learn more of it, find Theonex, who it is said has fled dris detractors and works alone, apart from dragon society. The act of repairing broken relationships between Theonex and some of dris scholars, and potentially between House Kebros and the other Houses, may prove just as challenging as the pilgrimage itself. The outcome, however, could help heal all of Dragonia.



A HISTORY OF THE MOONBEAM FESTIVAL

By Stutantalís of House Tessith

Translated by Eloy Lasanta

*“This is our time of reflection, of celebration, of
living for one another!”*

—Kimik of House Brynback



There were always times when Dragonia fell into a dark place. Its dragons mourn the loss of comrades to sickness, accidents, or simply time. It was nearly nine thousand moon cycles ago, that a visionary dragon, Kimik of House Brynback, organized one of the largest festivals Dragonia had ever seen. It was a three-day celebration of what it meant to be a dragon and what a world bathed in lunar light could truly be.

Today, the Moonbeam Festival has evolved into a five-day event that all dragons look forward to celebrating. The largest Moonbeam Festival takes place in the heart of Yinsoth Valley. Other towns hold their own version of the Festival for their communities who can't always make their way to Yinsoth.

First Day: Stone's Pass

As the gates open to this massive event, Yinsoth Valley's splendor shines, further illuminated as stones imbued with moon magic shine colored beams of light into the air. Games to play and treats to lick are available at booths, indicated by brown banners. But most anticipated is the grand game!

As the sun hangs in the sky at its brightest, hundreds of dragons from all around Dragonia take to a sculpted field to play Starball. Bearded dragons of Myndoth enact a ritual to summon the power of the stars themselves into a sparkling ball of light. Starball is otherwise very easy to play. Two teams of dragons, all of whom are of the same age, take turns trying to get the starball past the other team. The trick is that the ball is so bright that holding on to it for too long can begin to blind the holder, so strategic passing, kicking, tailing, and sometimes swallowing is necessary to win the game.

Games of Starball extend into the night until all the players have exhausted themselves and the crowd's throats are sore from excitement. After a brief rest, everyone gathers once again for the award ceremony. The best players are given a shimmering, rainbow-colored scale to adorn themselves.

Second Day: Storm's Fury

During the second day of the Moonbeam Festival, the skies are greyed with storm clouds and the anticipation of the coming events of the day. The brown banners are replaced with dull grey ones, depicting the emotional struggle every dragon has to overcome to reach their greatest potential. It gives a chance for reflection on challenges faced throughout the year, and settling them. Of course, attendees wear huge smiles as they run and laugh, all gathering around the Storm's Fury courtyard for this year's race.

Racers from all corners of Dragonia arrive in hopes of winning the annual races. Each racer attempts to get to the finish line before the others, but getting there isn't so simple. Several Elder Dragons stand at the sidelines creating tornado-like conditions, lightning, and other terrible obstacles for the racers to overcome. The racers are also encouraged to win by "any means necessary," inspiring any number of underhanded tactics like ramming other dragons or even creating one's own gusts to throw the "enemy" off-course. While this may seem brutal, it is part of the tradition, representing the time that dragons once betrayed each other. Likewise, racers who win without stooping to such tactics are greatly rewarded, further enforcing the idea that wins for good are always better.

Storm's Fury winners for the last decade have all been from House Kebros—a fact that many other houses in Dragonia loathe—with a bearded dragon named Tulelyte having won four years in a row. Kebros' sheer level of underhandedness makes it difficult for people to fully accept their wins, though everyone thoroughly enjoys the show while it is taking place. It becomes a strangely compelling sight as wings falter and losers slam into the sides of mountains. Winners receive a jewel-encrusted, black wing scale, which shows they are the fastest and most cunning dragons of the year.

Third Day: Void's Reflection

As the third day begins, the sky above Yinsoth Valley is turned black with magic and the dragons embark on a day of remembrance. On the mountainous cliffs that encircle the valley are scrawled the names of those dragons who died in the War of Shadows, etched into the stone to never be forgotten. Glowing jadestone vigils are held and the descendants of those brave dragons recite poems, stories, and speeches about the war fought against the Darkness.

To mark the occasion, several dragons stand upon tall poles with one claw, unmoving and in deep meditation. Below them, other dragons reenact the final battle of the War of Shadows. One half of the players take the role of dragon heroes like Nerroth the Vigilant and Medolth, Eater of Hearts, forging forward to bravery. The other players work together to animate large shadowy puppets that stand in for the forces of the Darkness. The battle rages as a speaker, usually from House Tessith, narrates the entire exchange to the audience, every blow, every defeat, every triumph. Several special light magics, and even gallons upon gallons of fake blood, are used to heighten the performance and really bring it to life for those watching in awe.

At the end of the story, the Darkness is finally defeated and all the puppeteer dragons fall to the ground with their creations. The sky clears to show bright hues of blue and yellow for the first time all day, representing the clarity that the defeat of the Darkness brought to Dragonia. The day ends with the biggest celebration the Moonbeam Festival has to offer, with music for everyone's ears and mead to fill older dragons' gullets. It is the perfect juxtaposition of emotions on a single day and the day that most clutches attend together. And the crowd applauds those meditating dragons who did not fall while the chaos happened below them.

Fourth Day: Spirit's Regrowth

Day four continues the uproarious celebration of the Void's Reflection with the dragons gathering for a food festival called the Spirit's Regrowth. This part of the festival showcases Dragonia's abundance, something that is not always obvious when obsessing about the bad things in life. Master chefs from all around the land come to premiere their brand-new dishes and to share their well-known favorites. Venia the Fast One of House Rothscar is always in attendance with dris roasted Spiced Sheepslug Skin, while Lycas of House Semscale brings dris Fruit and Minced Tapent Pie, a popular treat. This is the most attended day of the entire Moonbeam Festival, since dragons are known for their appetites.

While everyone is eating fine meals and gorging themselves on delicacies from other places in Dragonia, the Raw-Scaled Drakes in attendance are invited to participate in the Vine Climb. Using moon magic, the event runners cause giant stalks to rise to the clouds and the RawScaled Drakes race to the top to win a prize. This contest is fairly straightforward, but represents Dragonia beginning to grow again and the youth who will bring them into a future without the Darkness or its minions. After several rounds, the finalists all square off, with the winner being awarded the Most Hopeful Youth award. Last year's winner, Neris of House Brynback, has since become a Winged Drake and brought much honor to dris clutch and house.

The climb has been described as the steepest and tallest and most difficult climb of one's young life. It's not surprising how common it is for RawScaled Drakes to sprout their wings during the ascent, some deciding to take flight to the top instead. Of course, becoming a Winged Drake disqualifies them from the contest, but few care about the outcome now that they have wings.

Fifth Day: Liberty's Unity

On day five, the party evolves into beautiful waves of dragons of all houses and ages coming together to dance and celebrate. It is a day to celebrate their freedom from the troubles of the world and a real reliance on friends and clutch for one's happiness. Several performances are put on to entertain the dragons this day, including some of Dragonia's finest musicians and illusionists. The most famous illusion performed is the Eleven Cages of Moonlight. In this illusion, Ixela the Mirrored of House Semscale is locked within a series of eleven cages, each one larger than the last and with more sophisticated locks. Ixela uses a combination of moon magic and good old misdirection to break free of all eleven cages in less than 10 seconds, to much amazement and applause.

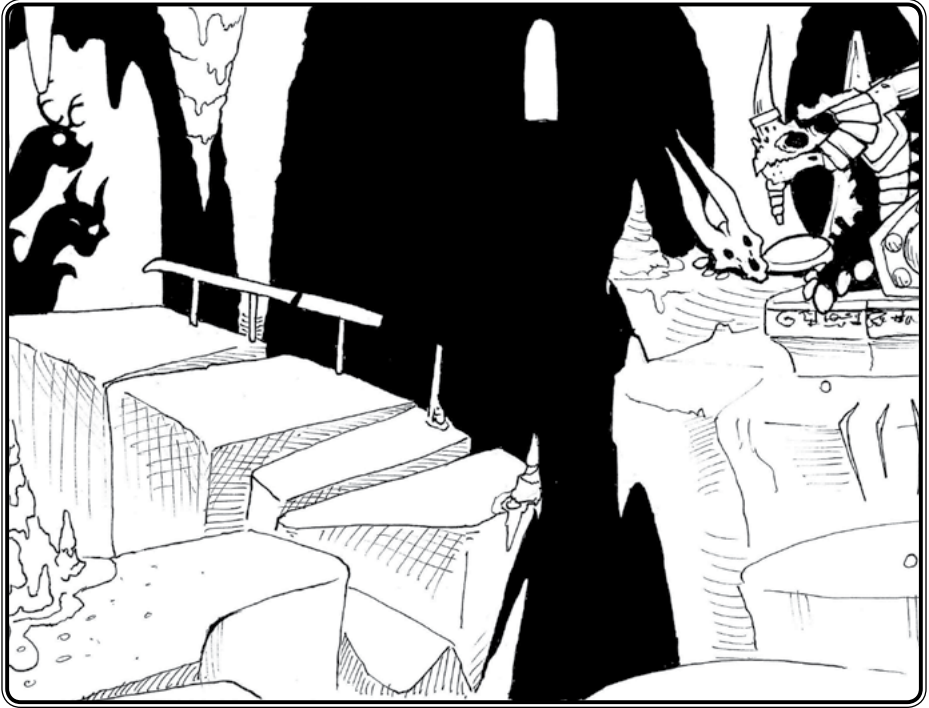
In an act to show all of Dragonia's unity, attendees of day five bring presents to exchange. They don't give them to their clutch or close friends, instead handing presents to dragons they've never met before, and preferably from another house. Some use this day to actually give presents to their worst enemies, which is also widely encouraged, as it mends bridges and brings the community closer. These presents are usually handmade, as spending jade is actually against the spirit of the whole occasion.

As the final day comes to a close, dragons all over Dragonia, even those not attending official festivals, feel a little happier and their days brightened a little more. An Elder of House Brynback ascends the podium to send everyone off with a cheerful goodbye, a reminder to be kinder to all dragonkin, and a prayer that the Darkness never returns. A moment of silence is observed before everyone disperses.

At least for a few days after the Moonbeam Festival, as the remnants of its events and good times still resonate in the dragons' hearts, they are able to keep this promise. Of course, dragon nature soon overtakes them and many return to their less-altruistic behaviors quite quickly. Then again, there are also those who keep the spirit of the Moonbeam Festival year-round, which is what we should all strive for.

When you **inspire other dragons to kindness during the Moonbeam Festival**, roll +Charm. For NPCs: On a hit, they join you in your kind acts, even if it's for someone they despise. On a 7-9, they don't quite get it right; ask the DM how they make a mess of things. For Clutchmates: on a 10+, both. On a 7-9, pick one:

- ☞ if they do it, they mark experience.
 - ☞ if they don't do it, they mark a Shadow.
-



THE SEEKERS OF THE SOURCE

POPULAR ‘SEEKER STORIES’ IN CHILDHOOD MYTH

By Distinguished Adjunct Research Professor
Liminous, University of the Granite Council

Translated by Jonathan Perrine

“This so-called report, penned by a ‘Council’s Eye’ agent, was recovered from the Citadel of Ash. Note, this council does not release this fanciful depiction to thrill readers. Under ancient rules which bind the claws of this council, we must make all documents available to the public—no matter how ludicrous.”

*—Councilmember Brassheart, preface to
Agent Tazel’s Final Report, Vol. 1*



he studious observer of both Council proceedings and reports from Dragonia's frontiers will notice that every so often, rumors of clandestine meetings and dark rituals lurk among the humdrum of daily minutiae. Such stories are required to be investigated.

These myths have much in common with tales told to newly hatched drakes. Just as we soak up the cultures of our houses in youth, our scary stories are also colored by those beliefs and duties. Taken together, these stories provide us with a "body of work." By analyzing such a collection, it is hoped we might learn more about our own society.

This project of clarification and cataloguing is an ongoing one. If other scholars possess works not listed in our bibliography, they may be directed to my research perch: Care of Dis. Adj. Rsch. Prof. Liminous, University of the Granite Council.

PART I: "Seekers" and Commonalities Among Accounts

It is useful to pick one common type of these thousands of fictions and anecdotes to highlight their foolishness and dissect their purposes. One type of tale, dubbed "Seeker Stories" after the society which is often named in them—the "Seekers of the Source," is an example of fictional accounts which suppose to exist a cult of dragons who are either aware of, or interacting with, the Darkness.

Generally shadowy agents of these "Seekers" will be shown introducing a drake to the secretive Seekers of the Source organization. Never a famous or well-known dragon, each cultist claims that some injustice has befallen them and their protégé, costing them deserved fame—so dre must be destined for some higher, secret purpose. That purpose is then revealed as being to gather up and cleanse pieces of the Darkness that have seeped from caches where they were imprisoned during the War of Shadow. It's exciting, dangerous, and completely untrue.

PART II: The Imprisonment Theory

The argument these cultists offer is often a variation on this one: Everything from sea to sea is Dragonia. We dig in the earth and fly to the mountains. So, if we banish something—like the Darkness—where could it go where we would be safe from it?

“Imprisoners” put stock in the theory that prior to Flyreign’s victory, other dragons, in desperation, sealed pieces away, saving dragons from them but also saving the Darkness from the war’s final blow, and that they are “leaking.” Yes, it is as preposterous as it sounds. Every dragon knows that the Darkness was wiped from existence, and no scholar worth their wings supports this “imprisonment” theory.

Common “imprisonment” site candidates:

The Cliffdale Colony: We must remember this was a frontier community of zephyr dancers and artists and was widely investigated as an inevitable outcome of shoddy craftsmanship. Distance from the Capital and its construction codes—not a crazy scheme by General Skyfear to collapse the canyon upon a Darkbeast—destroyed this reckless community during the war.

The Hyacinth Abyss: Soils surrounding this purple-plant-filled sinkhole are to this day considered dry and treacherous. No Mystic has been located who was among, or knows of, the seven elders who supposedly sacrificed themselves to the moons to snare the Darkness in the flower’s roots. An expedition 200 years past could dig up only broken black granite above the bedrock.

The Inkwell: The silent artisans of this stronghold have never recorded anything unusual, let alone dangerous, about the blue-tinged waters brought up from the depths of ancient wells. Fed from pure mountain snowfall, the well water is notable only for its ability to hold bold colors, suitable for popular inks in use by scholars and councilors everywhere—myself included.

PART III: Sample Collection and the Ritual of “Deeming”

Seeker lore claims that the Darkness cannot be contained forever, and must, eventually, escape. Slowly at first, but inevitably, Darkness will throw open the bars of these subterranean prisons. In all of these stories, the Seekers collect what has escaped from this prison, the “Source.”

Every time there are rumors of unrest or corruption, a shadowy Seeker arrives to collect a “Sample.” Depending on the story, they may be:

- ☞ Pieces of the Darkness, or a containment vessel
- ☞ Objects soaked with Darkness, regardless of their absorbency
- ☞ Artifacts corrupted by unholy actions or circumstances
- ☞ Actual dragons who have been touched by Darkness

Why would these Seekers risk such exposure? So that these samples can be gathered together. Almost universally, Seeker Stories say that they transport samples to a central location. But why gather them at all?

This brings us to perhaps the strangest element of these tales—Deeming. Of the hundreds of sampled stories, all but a few omit any mention of the moons or their gifts until this point. Each suggests that a specific ritual can be performed in the presence of multiple Mystics. Given enough samples, the theory goes, one may use their inherent patterns to trace them to their point of origin—the prison they escaped from.

Much like the examples offered for imprisonment theory, the claims and basic underpinnings of these stories are simply untrue. Any one of them would be reason to doubt the existence of such a society. Taken as a whole, the evidence that these are carefully constructed stories to prey on our fears and serve our need for excitement, is overwhelming.

PART IV: Truths to Banish the Seekers' Shadows

To be awed by the Darkness and suppose its escape is inevitable is childish. It is to measure bedtime stories and the words of a single battle-worn prophet, Flyreign, against ages of draconic history. There is no hard evidence indicating that since the end of the war, any shred of the ancient enemy has escaped. It has, clearly, been eradicated.

No reliable records during the war allude to objects being tainted by the Darkness, only creatures of and touched by it. To suppose the existence of “Evil Urns” and other such artifacts, especially those made dangerous by mere proximity to atrocities of the war, is surely a fabrication meant to spook drakes back under the covers.

To believe these Seeker Stories is to besmirch brave and clever dragons who allow for the transport of goods across Dragonia. With a wink and a nudge to the supposed power of quartermasters and other messengers, Seeker Stories ask us to believe that those who handle our daily shipments are all somehow compromised by some grand conspiracy. How could such a dark reflection of a vital organization exist unnoticed?

Finally, let us take note of the strangest supposition of the archetypal Seeker Story—the Deeming, a ritual requiring multiple Mystics, taking place outside the eyes of Dragonia. Every dragon reveres our Mystics. Meticulous records are kept, and how would a clutch allow for their elders to fade into obscurity? The Mystics speak for the moons, and no Seeker Story among our wide sample offers a clear link between the motives of the Seekers and the agents of the moon necessary to fulfill them.

PART V: Conclusion

Let us take one last look at the Seeker's tales, but through a new lens—that of the cooped-up councilors and adventure-seeking scouts on the frontiers of Dragonia. We find dragons who have either served the Capital for much of their lives, or who have joined the most dangerous posts available to the (relatively few) warriors trained in our modern age.

We may contrast the scout and the councilor to the young protégés featured in these stories. Both surely remember tales of excitement and danger as hatchlings and the quenching of that fire as they aged into their proper places in Dragonia. The yearning for adventure, as well as the external benefits of reporting grand tales to superiors at the councils, cannot be dismissed as motives for the longevity of these stories.

In truth, there is an obvious pattern to the spread of these tales: the same scouts and councilors often strengthen these stories with recurring “evidence” and anecdotes of the Seekers of the Source from the same geographies.

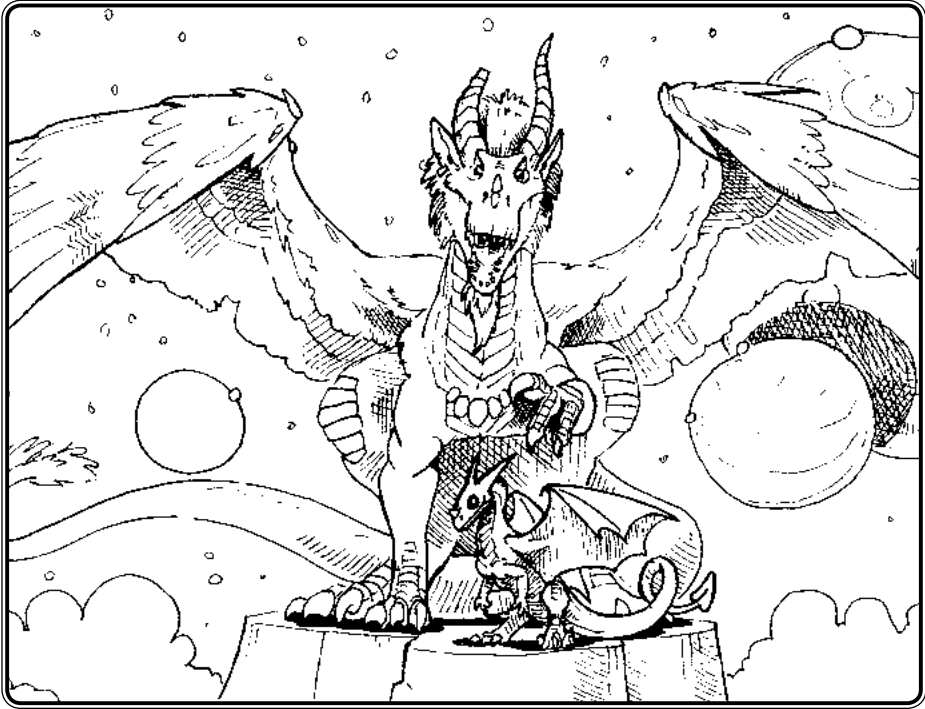
We can even see how the frequency of these stories seem to gather around strongholds at remote crossroads, where news from outside is sparse, and even events from nearby might not reach a dragon's ears for weeks. It is at these boring waystations and warehouses that these preposterous stories crop up, where any dragon would certainly appreciate some excitement—imagined or not—to break up the monotony with something besides the regular mail delivery.

These stories appeal to our appetite, in the absence of excitement rivaling the last war, for grand tragedies. They create in us the thrill of uncovering the work and influence of something beyond our understanding. The Darkness is an exciting scapegoat, steeped in myth, for the ultimately boring fates of communities doomed by geology and the folly of overconfident dragons.

We value these stories as exciting tales—entertainment in our times of idle prosperity—fit to spook one another by braziers at night. However, let us not allow our ability to pretend to distract us from our service to Dragonia, and the enjoyment of the world we have built in the ages since our last true struggle.

When you **check an object or creature for traces of the Darkness**, roll +Cunning. On a 10+, ask 2. On a 7-9, ask 1.

- ↪ What help does this object or creature offer?
 - ↪ What secrets are concealed here?
 - ↪ Who else knows of this object or creature's importance?
 - ↪ Does the Darkness see us through it?
-



THE TRIBULATORY RECKONING OF FOSTR SOFTCLAW

By Theropsida Blackscute
Translated by Jason Morningstar

“The Reckoning, oh my, it was a harder test in my day. These upstart drakes have it easy, and Anvil Peak seems to coddle them as though they were freshly hatched. I watched a Test of Steel in the square before the Great Reykurinnhol and it was laughable. When I took it, Steel was a crucible of leadership and many failed. We anticipated it with dread and awe. We earned the right to be called Softclaws. But these drakes? They seemed to embrace teamwork and fair play. Ridiculous!”

—The Venerable Accipiter Catulos

The Tribulatory Reckoning



At the height of dris powers, the Semscale elder Fostr Softclaw created the Tribulatory Reckoning—a series of tests that challenged young drake clutches from all over Dragonia to be their best selves. It became a rite of passage for ambitious drakes from all the houses, just prior to being sent out into the world. The Reckoning has been passed down through the generations and is enthusiastically administered even today. It is not an easy challenge and few pass. Those that do are known—informally, but with respect—as Softclaws.

A Softclaw is expected to help administer the Reckoning to future clutches, and becomes part of an elite and hallowed group stretching back to the days of old Fostr dremself. While it carries no official weight, being a Softclaw means being able to call on other Softclaws for hospitality, aid, or advice anywhere in Dragonia.

The Reckoning takes place in, around, and beneath the remote Semscale stronghold at Anvil Peak, a community that embraces the process and both encourages and enjoys the determined floundering of young drakes in their markets, halls, and aeries. The individual tests of the Reckoning are different every year, and Softclaws—hand-in-hand with the dragons of Anvil Peak—work hard to make each test challenging and surprising.

The Tribulatory Reckoning consists of six discrete tests—one of which remains a secret. All are conducted under the watchful eye of elder Softclaws, and none of the circumstances are intended to be very dangerous. Harmful, perhaps, but never life-threatening. The Reckoning is, in essence, a gigantic game, and all of Anvil Peak plays it. Sometimes the game is decidedly one-sided!

The Test of Steel

The drakes must show etiquette, respect, and leadership.

This test always starts as a social challenge but ends in a situation where they must lead. A famous example is the “Apprentice’s Rebellion,” in which Anvil Peak’s apprentices rose up against their masters in protest of long hours and a paltry supply of dewmead and gatorbull haunch. The tested clutch had to act as arbitrators between the two sides, and, when (as scripted in advance!) a group of hot-headed apprentices set out to riot, led the Anvil Peak High Guard in subduing them.

On another occasion the drakes were “called away from their testing” to serve as aides-de-camp to high-ranking house diplomats who arrived in Anvil Peak to cement an important trade deal. The “diplomats” were invariably incompetent, debauched, or otherwise unable to capably fulfill their duties, and were forced to rely on the drakes to keep them out of trouble in the most decorous possible manner, as well as assist in the difficult negotiations directly.

The Test of Oak

The drakes must use their skill to unlock an important artifact.

Oak, traditionally, is an adventurous challenge requiring fighting and teamwork and perhaps some puzzle or problem solving. An example that is often remembered with fondness is “The Purse of Night,” in which a desperate agent of house Myndoth begged for help in recovering a precious “artifact of the Void Moon” that had been stolen by an ambitious gang. To recover the Purse of Night, the clutch had to decipher clues left at the scene of the theft to find the gang, then confront and defeat them. The goal of the test, always conducted early in the Tribulatory Reckoning, is to bring the clutch together and get them working as an efficient, spirited team.

The Test of Gold

The drakes must find or make a creative solution to an impossible puzzle.

This test always features a simple challenge with no clear solution. In past years this has included asking the drakes to bridge an unbridgeable chasm, sing an unsingable dragonsong, defeat an invincible foe, or reach a distant location faster than a dragon can fly.

The answer to the puzzle is always deceptively simple—provided one thinks laterally. The chasm, famously, was bridged with a single strand of silk carried across by a flying mothiphant—nothing in the conditions said the “bridge” needed to carry a dragon’s weight. Similarly, no “invincible foe” is truly invincible across all fields of endeavor, so the drakes’ task often becomes finding out where their foe is weak and challenging them there. A mighty warrior may not be so brilliant in a contest of rhetoric, although the Test of Gold never mentions this. The collective skill and ingenuity of the clutch is essential for success!

The Test of Diamond

The drakes must learn that not every challenge can be won, and suffer the consequences of failure.

This is a brutal beat-down engineered to force failure upon the clutch without any hope of success. A few years ago this took the form of a long-distance gliding competition against “locals” who were, unbeknownst to the clutch, some of the finest young updraft soarers in the kingdom. Another year it was a mock combat in which the aspirants were weighed down with “precious ceremonial armor” they were forbidden from damaging. It is always unfair and, typically, scheduled when the youngsters are at their most prideful and cocky. In years when the drakes are particularly obnoxious, they are encouraged to place wagers on their inevitable success.

The Test of Diamond is presented as a group challenge, usually midway through the Tribulatory Reckoning when spirits are high and the clutch has come together as a team. It is a thematic turning point that signals the end of easy, good times and the beginning of darker, more dangerous and taxing challenges. Every clutch handles the defeat that is engineered into the Test of Diamond differently, and it is the crucible upon which many lifelong friendships are formed—or destroyed. A clutch that emerges from the test in high spirits and good form almost always thrives. A clutch that finds the test disheartening and descends into acrimony almost always fails. Many in Anvil Peak hate to see the Test of Diamond wreck what would otherwise be perfectly good clutches, and some soft-hearted souls do what they can to minimize the test's impact after the fact.

The Secret Test of Ruby

The drakes must recognize Darkness and resist its temptation, while trusting one another to do the same.

This test is never announced and is engineered to occur for each drake at a different time over the course of the testing. The goal is to see the drakes individually confront the Darkness inside them. Ultimately, the Test of Ruby is the frame around which an ethical question is asked of the aspirant drake. Sometimes these questions are simple, sometimes more convoluted, but they always present shades of grey and difficult choices.

“An elder Softclaw pulls you out of a team-oriented task moments before a critical juncture and demands that you reorder dris library according to binding color.” Will you neglect your immediate responsibilities?

“At a private meal, the captain of the Anvil Peak High Guard casually mentions that one of your clutch privately blamed you for a recent embarrassment of failure, and mocked your performance.” Will you lash out at a friend?

“The test’s chief administrator, Accipiter Grimmur, reviews the clutch’s performance and singles you out as a weak link, specifically accusing you of some failure that was clearly the fault of another drake—or the whole team.” Do you bring your clutch down with you?

“A local merchant gives you a clue about an upcoming challenge—one that will allow you to easily defeat it at great personal cost. If you use this clue you’ll be injured at a minimum—maybe worse. But your clutch will ace the test easily.” Will you take self-destructive action?

“Lemell Karst, owner of the Skemmtilega Inn, who claims some house allegiance, quietly offers you the best room in the house, along with a steam bath and a grand meal—provided you come alone.” Will you seek isolation from your clutch?

The answer to each of these should be “no.” Any dragon who fails to resist the Darkness will fail the test at the end, regardless of how well the clutch does collectively. Accipiter Grimmur will scold those who failed, and offer them one chance—if the rest of their clutch is willing to defend and accept them, they can become provisional Softclaws. The goal isn’t to punish them—it is to chasten them.

Those who pass are, of course, sworn to secrecy—a drake who anticipates the Test of Ruby is a drake who can easily pass the Test of Ruby.

The Test of Jade

The drakes must demonstrate a synthesis of all the lessons they have learned, choosing a path forward from among many.

Jade is the final challenge, and one that is mentioned with dread throughout the process. “Sure, this was hard, but Jade is worse.” “You may be feeling good now, but wait until the Test of Jade is revealed.”

Three paths are offered, with the implication that only one leads to success.

A famous Test of Jade presented the weary clutch with a forest path at the foot of Anvil Peak. They were told that at the end of the correct path, Softclaws stood ready to induct them into the order. Other paths would lead them away from Anvil Peak and back to their mundane lives, in ignominious failure. Deep in the forest, the path split three ways.

- ↻ One path was labeled FELLOWSHIP.
- ↻ One path was labeled DUTY.
- ↻ One path was labeled COURAGE.

All three paths invariably lead to the induction ceremony, which is irreverent and raucous (assuming all the drakes passed their Test of Ruby, of course). The Test of Jade is less test and more lesson.

The Induction Ceremony

The new Softclaws are recognized first at a wild party immediately following the Test of Jade, and then at a formal ceremony in Reykurinnhol Square.

The oldest Softclaw in attendance bestows the title and honor upon those drakes that have passed all the tests. With the honor comes responsibility—a Softclaw must answer the call of another Softclaw without fail, and offer both hospitality and aid in any way possible. And, perhaps more importantly to the newly minted Softclaws—they must organize the following year’s test, with the gentle guidance and help of more experienced dragons from Anvil Peak and beyond.

“My induction? Oh, it was pure chaos! The citizens of Anvil Peak, who had tricked us into believing they were grim pirates and house elders, rioting apprentices and a remarkably authentic mechanical monstrosity, all greeted us after the Test of Jade with barrels of dewmead and genuine affection. They had poured their hearts and souls into the various tests, and were of course proud of both their efforts and our success. Later—and much worse for the wear after so much dewmead, I might add—we were told to clean up as best we could and appear before the Great Reykurinnhol, where several dozen Softclaws awaited us, stern of mien and splendid in their regalia. Oh, how proud we were to be accepted among such august company! Much has changed, of course, and Anvil Peak is not what it was in my day, but we still do what we can to bring the new Softclaws up to a certain level of respectability. I suppose in their own way they still earn the title.”

—The Venerable Accipiter Catulos

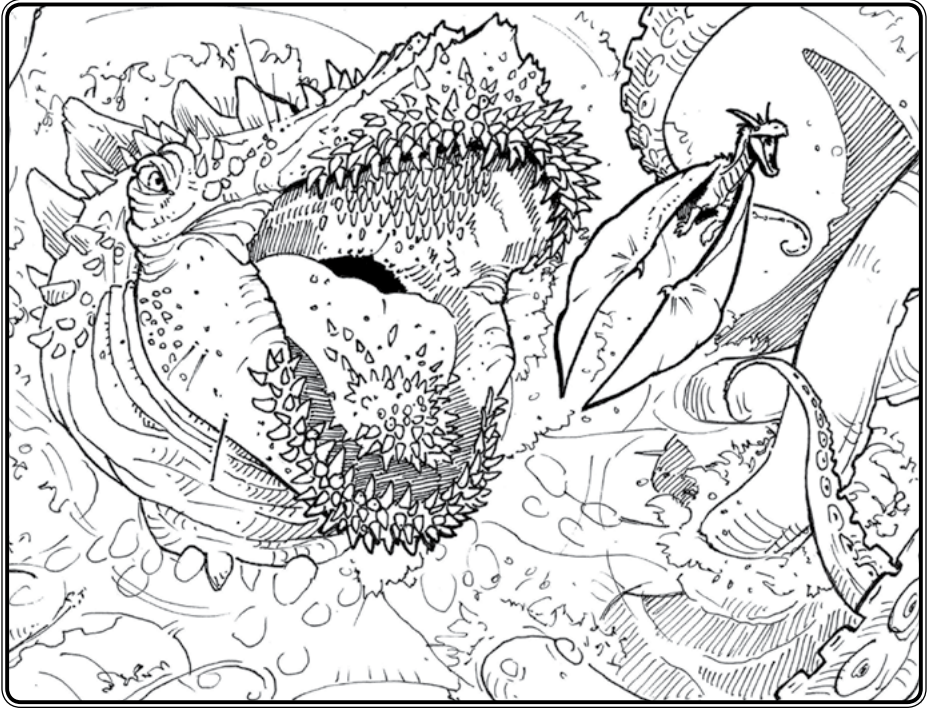
When you **are inducted as a Softclaw**, say which test affected you most. Take +1 ongoing to **convince** or **stand up to dragons** from that house, provided you reference the impact the test had on you when interacting with them.

When you **ask another Softclaw for aid or advice**, you may **convince them to help you** no matter their age as if you rolled a 10+.

When you **attempt to organize the Tribulatory Reckoning**, roll. Add +1 for each true statement below:

- ☞ You have the support and aid of a clutch of dragons.
- ☞ You have organized the tests at least once before.
- ☞ You are a Long-Toothed Dragon (or older).

On a 10+, you have everything you need for the tests and enough support from Anvil Peak to get the job done, provided you act quickly to put out any fires that crop up. On a 7–9, you're short on either supplies or goodwill, your choice. On a miss, a crisis for which you are completely unprepared threatens to derail the tests completely.



THE KRAKEN

By Icetooth Reinforth III
Translated by Mark Diaz Truman

*They wait. In the dark. In the deep. Far away from prying
draconic eyes. In a land beyond fire, beyond air, beyond life.
Building their temples to long-dead gods. Waiting for their time.*

—The Kraken



When the Kraken rise to the surface, it is because something has been foolish enough to attract their attention. Drakes that attempt to cross the great seas see them coming too late, a mass of squirming black tentacles and sharp beaks that snatch even the largest dragons directly out of the air. Nothing—as far as we know—escapes their wrath.

Truth be told, we still know little about them. Are they simply aquatic monsters or are they capable of forging a culture? They live beneath the oceans that surround Dragonia, but what they do with their time, beneath the cold wind and waves, is largely a mystery. They are our nightmares made flesh, bone, talon, and tentacle, yet we know little of their motivations or desires.

The seers say that they may be building something, dragging pieces of stone and ice across the ocean floor to construct temples of worship to gods from before the time of dragons. They did not always behave this way, the seers say, but now they are moving, joining, acting. All with some sort of purpose. A purpose beyond our comprehension.

Should we be concerned? No dragon knows. But I have studied the Kraken for many cycles, and I can tell you this: their hatred for dragonkind is a fury that reaches beyond the ages. If they could destroy all of Dragonia with a single sweep of a tentacle...I believe they would.

The Monsters of the Deep

To the earliest Dragonlords, the Kraken were a mere myth. The prophets and seers spoke of a menace that lay beneath the seas, but they could say little about the nature of the threat, only that the Darkness itself seemed to shroud what lay beyond the shores of Dragonia. It was not until centuries later—when the Dragonlords began to think about expanding the Council’s reach beyond Dragonia itself—that they realized the horrors that lurked in the deep, the many-toothed monsters that would ensure that Dragonia remained isolated...

Now every Raw-Scaled Drake knows the danger the Kraken present. After all, every hatchling is taught within their first few cycles not to fly more than a few wingbeats over open water. To do more than that is to tempt the Kraken, to call out to them like a flame for any flymoth, begging to be eaten whole by a screaming mass of Darkness, a flurry of teeth, tentacles, and claws that is impossible to fight or deter.

Since the initial tragedies of the first few expeditions that learned these cruel lessons, we have had opportunities to learn more about what the Kraken truly are. We know that they are connected to the Darkness—it speaks through them sometimes—and that they are less a species of creatures than an amalgamation of monsters. There is no such thing as a stereotypical Kraken: aside from tentacles and a connection with the Darkness, each Kraken is a unique beast.

But while the greatest threat the Kraken have posed to dragons has always been their obsession with preventing dragons from trying to leave the island, the Council’s seers have reason to believe that something more treacherous may be bubbling up to the surface. The seers report that they have had dark dreams, images of the Kraken shifting rock, sand, and ice underwater to serve some mysterious plan. No one is sure if these movements are the result of some cultural or ritualistic need, but it’s clear that there is more—much more—to the Kraken than we might have supposed.

Enmity Earned

The truth of the Kraken is lost to the moons, a tale that we may never know because it happened long before any Ancient still standing was hatched from an egg. Yet, myself and others have studied old texts from before the rise of the Council, and we have gleaned some *revealing* information. First, it appears that our relationship with the Kraken was not always so antagonistic. While the earliest texts do refer to the Kraken as a threat, they use a specific, ancient word that indicates that the Kraken were not only *dangerous* but also *filled with potential*. One of my colleagues, Ehterfell Zax, even found an early illustration showing dragons making offerings to the Kraken and receiving some gifts in kind!

No one is quite sure how such a partnership might have arisen or why those dragons might pursue the Kraken's gifts, but there is mention of all such arrangements coming to an end with "the Sundering." In short, something happened that caused all dragons to turn away from the Kraken, leaving them surprised by our sudden change of heart. All of the texts agree: We were the party that abandoned the arrangement, knowing it would make enemies of the Kraken for all time.

Stull Rightfinder, one of my finest students, believes that the ancient dragons of Dragonia initially saw the Kraken as equals...only to turn away from them when the dragons realized that they were dealing with treacherous and malevolent beings allied with the Darkness. But I have other students who believe something more subtle may have been taking place, a practical trade alliance weakened by changing geography and time, an arrangement brought low by the toss and turn of politics, and little more.

Oh, what I would give for a few moments to speak with some of those early dragons! We once *traded* with the Kraken...but it all fell apart. Why? How? These are questions that we must answer in time, without the Kraken's help.

The Eyes of the Kraken

On occasion, dead Kraken wash up on the shores of Dragonia. Such remains quickly melt away when exposed to sunlight and fresh air, but they leave behind...things. Dark spheres flecked with light. Orbs that call to dragons. Offering promises.

Each Eye is enormous, roughly the volume of a Long-Toothed Drake and weighing many, many times what a drake might expect it to weigh. The orb's whisperings are muted at first, but rise up when a dragon is left alone with the Eye. Of course, those who fall under the influence of an Eye rarely remember what the item wanted them to do...but they all say that the Eye wanted to trade something, to deal in the manner that dragons and the Kraken once trafficked.

Officially, the Council's policy on such Eyes is that they should be recovered and destroyed by the authorities. The Eyes are clearly dangerous; even a Raw-Scaled Drake knows better than to listen to the dark murmurings of dragonkin's greatest enemy. Yet murmur they do, whispering of ancient knowledge, lost to the waves by the dragons of old. I have listened to them myself, and I have been shocked at how charming and compelling a case they make to listen further!

But in the shadows of the Capital, some whisper that the Eyes are not destroyed when confiscated by the Council. Instead—the rumors say—they are taken to a special room in the Grand Library. The Eyes are studied there, some dragons say, by academics who seek to understand the secrets they hold...no matter the cost.

But those are just rumors. Surely the Council would not commission such a place, not without good reason and many, many precautions. Surely they would not be so foolish as to leave dozens and dozens of dangerous artifacts a mere flight away from the very chambers in which the Council meets. Surely they would have asked me, a noted expert in the field of Krakenology, to look over such a collection if it existed.

The Kraken Society

Regardless of what the Council may or may not be doing with the Eyes of the Kraken, the warnings from the seers and prophets have not gone unheard. Many are worried that we are not doing enough to understand what schemes the Kraken are hatching beneath the waves, so close to our beloved home. As the seers fret forlornly about the Kraken's recent activity, some dragons have begun to publicly wonder why we know so little about them!

To that end, the Council ordered the creation of the Kraken Society, a special group of seekers, mystics, and scholars who are tasked with both understanding and opposing whatever Kraken threat might arise. As one of the leading Krakenologists who has not yet reached the end of my age, I have personally overseen the formation of this Society, and I am pleased to report that the organization is alive and well. We have dozens of members all over Dragonia, each dragon attempting to solve a different piece of the Kraken puzzle.

New dragons who wish to join the Kraken Society must prove their worth by first presenting the Society with an offering of knowledge about the Kraken. For some, this may mean finding and securing an Eye; other dragons find long-lost accounts of interactions with the Kraken in the Council's archives. No matter what, each candidate must present something of value to be taken seriously as an inductee. We have no need for Kraken-chasers in the Society; we're looking for those who have already found something of substance.

Together, the Society hopes to confront the emerging Kraken threat, ready to address whatever dark things our tentacled adversaries summon from the deeps, ready to stop ritual and invasion alike. The challenge involved in researching the Kraken is real—it's hard to learn much about them when we cannot view them in their natural habitat—but myself and the rest of the Kraken Society are determined to do our part for all of Dragonia!

When you **gaze into a Kraken's Eye**, roll +Courage. On a hit, the Eye will reveal something about Dragonia from before the time of dragons: a lost artifact, an ancient ritual, or a buried place of power, your choice. On a 7-9, mark a Shadow as the cost of such knowledge warps your draconic form. On a miss, you lose yourself in the Eye as it reveals a horrible truth of a tragedy that may befall Dragonia; the DM will tell you what terrible cost may yet be paid to prevent such sorrow.

When you are **inducted into the Kraken Society**, make your offering and roll +Cunning. On a hit, the Society accepts your discovery and offers you membership; once per session, you may find assistance and aid in any city in which the Society has a presence. On a 10+, the ceremony also reveals some unique truth to you about the Kraken, recently discovered by your peers through careful study. Ask the DM any question you like about the Kraken, and they will answer it honestly. On a miss, your offering is revealed to be flawed, fake, or foolish; tell the DM what went wrong!



BENEATH THE SCALES

When running *EPYLLION*, start out by explaining each playbook and what makes each drake unique to play. The limited-edition playbooks add on exciting new mechanics, and each has a different focus. Make sure your players are aware of what adding each playbook will mean to the game!

The limited-edition playbooks are:

- ☞ **THE ELEMENTALIST**—Your power is rooted in antiquity, waking the hidden forces and bending them to your will.
- ☞ **THE ENVOY**—Your voice is an instrument of peace, weaving the jarring notes of draconic anger into harmony.
- ☞ **THE ORPHAN**—Your destiny is foretold by omens, building to the inevitable event that is your birthright.
- ☞ **THE REBEL**—Your insight is the spark of change, exposing the flaws in traditions to be forged anew.

Here are some general tips for using these playbooks in your next *EPYLLION* games:

- ☞ **Take care when using more than one.** Each new playbook takes the tale in new directions, and having too many limited-edition playbooks and not enough core playbooks can unbalance your game. It's not impossible to play that way, but it certainly will require more work from all players at the table. DMs in particular have to put in extra effort to attend to all the particulars of the limited-edition playbooks at the same time.
- ☞ **The moves on each are available with the “take a move from another playbook” advancement.** You want to make sure that each player at your table feels their drake is unique and cool. For example, if your **NATURE ADEPT** takes a move from the Elementalist's playbook, talk to your players about how that move looks and feels different when each drake uses it.

Read on for more tips and suggestions you can use when you run *EPYLLION* with these playbooks.

THE ELEMENTALIST

The Elementalist taps into magical energies from a completely unique source: the elements of Dragonia. While other dragons must summon the Moons (and use Friendship Gems) to perform feats of wondrous magic, the Elementalist can wield the powers of the elements without relying on Moon magic. Dre really shines when you play up that the elements are a powerful and mysterious force throughout Dragonia, one that can be a boon or a bane to young drakes.

It's up to you to determine exactly what the elements are and what powers and limits they possess, but it's important that they remain a distinct and separate force from the Moons. The Elementalist has special training and talents that can only stand out when dre has access to those elements doesn't overlap the clutch's general connection to the Moons.

When the Elementalist calls forth an assistant with **From Chaos, Purpose**, make sure to give the construct personality and life beyond the gifts it possesses. A water construct might dance around the clutch, listening and poking at interesting things, while a fire construct might consume flammable items in the nearby area. Don't make the construct a burden, but don't let the Elementalist forget that dre summoned a living servant!

If your clutch contains both a Nature Adept and an Elementalist, play up the different relationships that each drake has with the elements themselves. The Nature Adept can eventually talk to the elements, even **Stand Up** to them or **Mislead** them...but dre cannot simply command the elements to action as the Elementalist can.

THE ENVOY

The Envoy loves interacting with other dragons—getting to know them, understanding their motivations and feelings, and using that knowledge to craft solutions to issues and problems standing in their way. The Envoy travels frequently, mixing with all parts of draconic society, and always knows a dragon who has a useful connection, or figures out the right thing to say in any situation. Dre really shines when two houses or dragons are at odds and need help in determining a fair outcome.

Since the Envoy thrives on social interaction, introduce important dragons, and bring them back into play throughout the session. Pay attention to what social circle dre chooses in **Familiar Face**, as that indicates what the player is interested in exploring. The Envoy may not be the most expert in that field (yet), but academic debates should feel different than military committees, for example.

The Envoy needs a social circle to have enough to work with, so think carefully before using this playbook with either the Orphan or Rebel, lest you end up with too few houses to bring into play. If the clutch is made up of drakes primarily from one house, the Envoy may have a deeper connection to that house, but never let drem feel isolated when encountering other houses.

Try to present the Envoy with conflicts that don't have an easy answer. The best way for one to hone dris skills is to apply them to stubborn dragons who are not willing to compromise at first. And remember that even the closest clutch is bound to run into disagreements, so when that happens, the Envoy's **Charming Collaboration** should come in handy.

THE ORPHAN

The Orphan is a dragon driven by destiny, desperate to find a place in Dragonia even as dre discovers a larger role to play in the events to come. Dre really shines when the path of that destiny is both clear and filled with interesting and meaningful challenges. A destiny achieved too easily feels cheap; a destiny put off for too long is forgotten. Find the balance.

Pay close attention to what path the Orphan chooses at character creation. A drake who follows the Path of Omens must be given opportunities to discover tomes and artifacts that explain dris destiny, while a drake who selects the Path of Trials must clearly see what dangers and challenges stand in the way of reaching dris destiny directly.

When the Orphan spends a hold from **This Is My Destiny**, make it awesome. Dre is telling you to make this moment important to dris destiny in some way, so do your best to ensure it is worthy of dris grand fate. Emphasize how dre overcomes the current challenge...and then reveal how dris destiny still lies ahead.

If the Orphan wants to see dris destiny come into play more often, encourage drem to take **Destiny Calls**. The move allows the Orphan direct control over how often dris destiny comes up in play, ensuring that it remains a consistent and active part of the clutch's story.

If another drake takes **Destiny Calls**, work with drem to determine a bit about what destiny has been foretold for drem. The Orphan is clearly special, but that doesn't mean that the seers have only visions of the Orphan; other dragons also matter to the future of Dragonia.

THE REBEL

The Rebel has no house, whether cast out by elders or choosing to leave. Dre sees the flaws in Dragonia, but sees with love—with the desire to make the culture, the dragons themselves, better. The Rebel really shines when tradition points out a specific way of thinking that limits options, and creativity is called for. Dris clutch provides the Rebel with balance, and grounds drem when dris ambitions range a bit out of reach.

At character creation, the Rebel must make an important choice between two reasons for dris lack of house. The merciful act could be to another drake of the Rebel's former house, perhaps even a member of dris clutch or someone equally valuable to the Rebel, while a Rebel who is investigating promises needs a target, as well as a reason not to believe those promises.

Frame conflicts for the Rebel to resolve, but don't provide the resolution itself. Offer drem an opportunity to challenge the rules and traditions of Dragonia, even (or maybe especially) if it might bring drem into conflict with dris clutch, current mission, or dris own core beliefs.

The Rebel's interactions with other dragons during **Read the Flow** don't have to happen on-screen. Work with the player to see when it's appropriate to summarize encounters, and when they should be played out for extra information or to uncover important dragons.

Remember that **Stir Up Trouble** can be used for good as well as bad. Shouldn't the Rebel's friends get the credit they deserve, even if they're shy? Likewise, shouldn't the real dragon pulling everyone's strings be exposed, even if dre merely pushed another drake into action?



THE ELEMENTALIST

POWERFUL, MYSTICAL, STRANGE. The Elementalist draws power from an ancient Dragonian tradition to tap into all of the fundamental elements embedded into the land at the time of its creation. You can wield the elements in your battle against the Darkness, shaping them into living, thinking constructs.

NAME (circle one) Comburth, Froggar, Lessier, Raggis, Tep, Windruff

LOOK (circle one in each)

Curling horns, Ivy crest, Tusks, Wooden Antlers
 Feathered, Furry, Moss-covered, Weathered skin
 Bulbous skull, Muddy snout, Needle-nose, Short snout
 Bobbed tail, Club tail, Stinger, Winged tail
 Clubbed feet, Fins, Hooves, Trimmed claws
 Flat Body, Graceful body, Large body, Spindly body

HOUSE & OBLIGATION

(choose one)

MYNDOTH, The House of Oak

Uncover or renew a place of elemental power.

KEBROS, The House of Ruby

Solve a riddle or mystery about the elements.

STATS:

ADD ONE TO
 one of these.

Charm +0

Courage -1

Cunning +1

VIRTUE

(circle one)

Confidence

Loyalty

FELLOWSHIP

_____ helped you connect with an element of Dragonia that was lost to the Darkness. Explain how they aided you, and give them a Friendship Gem.

You chose _____ to help you perform a sacred elemental duty. Tell them why you chose them, and take a Friendship Gem from them.

_____ was injured by the elements that you summoned to fight the Darkness. Ask them how that experienced changed them, and give them a Friendship Gem.

ELEMENTALIST MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE ♡

FROM CHAOS, PURPOSE: When you channel the elements to create life, roll +Cunning. On a hit, you craft the elements into a useful assistant for your efforts; describe the form your construct takes and pick the gifts it offers (below). Once your construct has exhausted its gifts, it returns to the elements. You must make an offering to the elements before you can summon another construct.

On a 10+, pick 2 gifts. On a 7-9, pick 1 gift. On a miss, pick 1 gift, but the construct demands a great sacrifice for your offering before it departs.

- the construct provides protection; it can mark a Shadow for you or your friends.
- the construct conducts power; take +1 forward to *act despite danger*.
- the construct grants insight; take +1 forward to *survey* or *study*
- the construct pleases Dragonica; take +1 forward to *call upon the moons*
- the construct unites your clutch; treat an attempt to *help* as if you rolled 10+

Signature Move Advancement: You may choose an additional gift when you summon a construct. Tell the DM why the elements favor your clutch's efforts.

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:



ELEMENTAL SHIELD: When you call upon the elements to protect someone or something from danger, roll +Cunning. On a hit, the elements themselves rise up in defense, so long as you maintain your concentration. On a 7-9, the elements protect you, but they also reveal their wild and unstoppable nature in turn. On a miss, the elements find your request petty or unworthy; the DM will tell you what you must do to regain their trust.



STORY OF THE ELEMENTS: You have developed the ability to speak to Dragonica itself, and learn its secrets. When you *survey an ancient or arcane area*, you may ask an additional question drawn from the following list, even on a miss:

- What elements of Dragonica are hidden here?
- How can the elements here help me and my clutch?

On a miss, you awaken an ancient elemental spirit that was better left sleeping.



CHANNEL THE MOONS: When you *stand up to an older dragon* by making a display of elemental might, you may roll +Gems returned instead of +Courage.



CHANNEL DRAGONICA'S SPIRIT: When you spend time with your clutch soaking in an element—walking in the rain, bathing in fire, flying amongst the clouds—the elements will make a request. If you agree to fulfill it, you each return a Gem and remove a Shadow. If you fail to fulfill that request, the element will make its displeasure known. The DM will tell you what you must do to appease it.

SHADOWSELF

YOU ARE NOT TRULY A DRAGON but a mere mouthpiece for the elements. You have no patience for petty matters; you are grand and eternal. Make sure your clutch knows how little the elements care for them. You are the Elementalist. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you that dragonkind is significant, important, and valuable.



THE ENVOY

DIPLOMATIC, SOCIAL, FRIENDLY. The Envoy is devoted to making peace between the Houses, presenting a unified front against the Darkness. You play a noble role, one that navigates social waters to strengthen Dragonia's institutions and dragonkin as a whole for the betterment of all.

NAME (circle one) Guildie, Idu, Jaserth, Silverwing, Vellin, Zyro

LOOK (circle one in each)

Curling horns, Feathered brow, Flashy crest, Tusks
 Fluffy, Shelled, Sleek scales, Tough hide
 Broad skull, Elegant snout, Ridged snout, Scarred snout
 Silky tail, Stubby tail, Two tails, Whip tail
 Claws, Dainty hooves, Long fingers, Paws
 Barrel-chested, Elegant body, Full-bellied, Skeletal body

HOUSE & OBLIGATION

(choose one)

SEMSCALE, the House of Jade

Get at least two dragons from different Houses to agree to a deal.

BRYNBAK, the House of Steel

Convince a dragon not of your House that your plan is best.

STATS:

ADD ONE TO one of these.

Charm +1
Courage -1
Cunning +0

VIRTUE

(circle one)

Compromise
Justice

FELLOWSHIP

_____ asked you to mediate a conflict between two Elder dragons within their House. Explain their disagreement, and take a Friendship Gem.

_____ taught you a skill you've come to rely upon during your diplomatic efforts. Tell them how they instructed you, and give them a Friendship Gem.

_____ insisted that you join the clutch when you were hesitant or nervous. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Friendship Gem.

ENVOY MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE ♡

FAMILIAR FACE: You frequently travel, speaking with all manner of dragonkin. Sometimes dragons remember you fondly from one of your previous encounters.

Mark one social arena where your dragon is known:

- Academic debates, where everyone is so well-read.
- Diplomatic functions, where important political discussions happen.
- High society parties, where the well-to-do chat and gossip.
- Military committees, where strategies of battles are decided.
- Occult circles, where arguments on arcane theory occur.

Once per session, when you meet a significant dragon (your call), roll +Charm. On a hit, you have met this dragon previously; tell the story of how the two of you met. On a 10+, the dragon owes you a small favor and is interested in repaying it. On a miss, you owe them a debt for a previous breach of etiquette.

Signature Move Advancement: Mark another social arena. Tell the DM which dragon introduced you to a new aspect of dragon society.

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:



ABSORBING ASSESSMENT: When you assess a new opponent in a debate, roll +Charm. On a 7-9, you may ask the DM one question from the list below. On a 10+, ask 2 questions. Take a +1 ongoing while using the information in your strategy.

- What is my opponent's objective?
- What oral strategy or arguments will my opponent use?
- What will my opponent do if I win (or lose) this debate?



CHARISMATIC CANDOR: When you speak honestly with a character, they can ask you one question from the list below. If you answer it truthfully, you may then ask them a question from the list. They must answer truthfully.

- Whom do you really serve?
- What do you most desire?
- Who is your worst enemy?
- What would cause you to stop fighting?



CHARMING COLLABORATION: When you arbitrate a conflict for two or more of your friends, give a Gem to each party and tell them how to solve their problem. If they agree to your solution, gain +1 ongoing to help them implement your idea, and tell them to mark experience when they bring it to fruition. If they reject your offer, mark a Shadow.



MAGNETIC MANIPULATION: When you *help or hinder* a Clutchmate by highlighting their personal qualities or failings, roll +Charm instead of +Gems. On a miss, your words strike at their insecurities or doubts; tell them to mark a Shadow.

SHADOWSELF

YOU ARE A PLAYER IN A GAME of words and ideas. You manipulate and twist dragons around your talons to make them dance to your purpose, and your purpose alone. Make sure your clutch knows how easily you can twist them with words. You are the Envoy. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you that dragons are more than tools for you to manipulate as you choose.



THE ORPHAN

DESTINED, UNIQUE, SOLITARY. You're defined not by your upbringing, but by what you make of yourself. You have an important role to play in Dragonia, even though you don't know which House to call your own. Despite your fears, your future holds great things...and your friends stand by your side.

NAME (circle one) Gen, Violet, Kismet, Rath, Ghost, Dark Moon

LOOK (circle one in each)

Elegant crest, Head fins, Many horns, Whiskers
 Braided fur, Rough scales, Scaled, Smooth skin
 Beak, Hard skull, Long snout, Prehensile tongue
 Heavy tail, Long tail, Maned tail, No tail
 Leather paws, Small claws, Splayed fingers, Talons
 Boney body, Lithe body, Squat body, Wingless

HOUSE & OBLIGATION (choose one)

THE PATH OF OMENS

Discover an artifact or tome connected to your fate.

THE PATH OF TRIALS

Face danger to uncover more about your future.

STATS:

ADD ONE TO one of these.

Charm +0

Courage +1

Cunning -1

VIRTUE

(circle one)

Faith

Empathy

FELLOWSHIP

_____ was a friend to you when you felt all alone in the face of your destiny. Explain how they exemplified your virtue and give them a Friendship Gem.

_____ is consumed by Dragonia's immediate problems; you will show them why they must focus on the future. Take a Friendship Gem from them.

_____ showed you that the Darkness lingers everywhere. Tell them what Darkness you see in them, and take a Friendship Gem from them.

ORPHAN MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE ♫

THIS IS MY DESTINY: Your fate is intertwined with Dragonia's future, now and forever. Pick two portents the seers have revealed about what is to come:

- you will defeat a great enemy in battle
- you will discover a dark secret of the Moons
- you will prevent a terrible, natural disaster
- you will uncover a shadowy, dragon conspiracy
- you will recover an important ritual, once lost
- you will restore an ancient or sacred place

At the beginning of the session, roll +Courage. On a 7-9, hold 1. On a 10+, hold 2. Spend your hold, 1 for 1, to take a 10+ instead of rolling when **acting despite danger** to move closer to your destiny. On a miss, you still hold 1, but a dark omen comes to light that reveals more about your role in shaping Dragonia's fate.

Signature Move Advancement: Add another basic move to *This is My Destiny*. You can spend your hold to take a 10+ instead of rolling on that additional move. Tell the DM which dragon's display of Housely virtue expanded your horizons.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Act Despite Danger | <input type="checkbox"/> Mislead or Trick |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stand Up to an Older Dragon | <input type="checkbox"/> Study Another Dragon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Convince a Dragon | <input type="checkbox"/> Survey an Ancient or Arcane Area |

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:

I SEE POTENTIAL HERE: Choose a House in which you have a loyal, Elder ally who has mentored you in the past. When you **stand up to an older dragon** from that House, choose an extra option from the first list, even on a miss.

CHAMELEON: When you **mislead or trick** another dragon by pretending to be from their House, roll +Courage instead of +Cunning. On a miss, they demand that you fulfill an obligation for the House that's clearly beyond your abilities.

DESTINY CALLS: When you visit somewhere important to your or your destiny (your call), roll +Courage. On a hit, ask 2 questions from the list below. On a 10+, you can also ask the GM a followup question not on the list.

- What role might this place play in my future?
- What's important here that the others miss?
- How might my destiny awaken this place?
- Where should I go next to fulfill my destiny?

On a miss, the GM reveals a dark omen of your destiny that has been concealed.

SEEK THE PATH: When you consult an older dragon for advice, roll +Courage. On a hit, they reveal new information about your past or future that is useful to your current problems. On a 10+, your counselor devotes serious thought to the issue you've raised; ask a followup question. On a miss, the older dragon's advice causes you to remember your own role in the problems you face; mark a Shadow.

SHADOWSELF

YOUR LONELINESS IS A STRENGTH. You can prove the doubters wrong without any help from your clutch. You will act alone to save Dragonia. You are the Orphan. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you that friendship can be as strong as any family tie, and that the family you chose is as important as the family that hatched you.



THE REBEL

FIERY, BOLD, RIGHTEOUS. The Rebel stands within Dragonia, sees its flaws, and aims at changing them, no matter who stands in their way. You are a necessary voice, though not always beloved by the powers that be.

NAME (circle one) Brightfire, Cizzeit, Duzz, Epu, Phalt, Xymo

LOOK (circle one in each)

Adorned horns, Broken horns, Gauged frill, No horns
 Decorated skin, Iridescent, Painted fur, Spiny
 Angular skull, Beak, Overbite, Sunken snout
 Curly tail, No tail, Prehensile tail, Shorned tail
 Adhesive toes, Callused Paws, Dull claws, Webbed feet
 Boney body, Fragile body, Muscular body, Round body

HOUSE & OBLIGATION (choose one)

BANISHED BY YOUR ELDERS

Show mercy to someone in need.

SELF-IMPOSED EXILE

Investigate the promises of someone in power.

FELLOWSHIP

_____ convinced the clutch to take you in after you left your House. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Friendship Gem.

_____ worked with you to expose the treachery of an Elder dragon who had fallen to the Darkness. Give them a Friendship Gem.

You have helped _____ to question one flawed tradition of their House. Tell them what it was, and take a Friendship Gem from them.

STATS:

ADD ONE TO one of these.

Charm -1
Courage +0
Cunning +1

VIRTUE

(circle one)

Audacity
Compassion

REBEL MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE

READ THE FLOW: You are adept at understanding dragon society. When you spend time amongst the members of a dragon community, roll +Cunning. On a 10+, ask three questions from the list below. On a 7-9, ask two. On a miss, ask one question, but someone important from that community takes issue with you snooping around. The DM will always answer your questions honestly.

- what unique traditions do they hold dear?
- who in this community is being treated unfairly?
- who holds the real power here?
- in what way would change benefit this community?
- who here needs my help the most?

Signature Move Advancement: Mark a benefit you gain after *reading the flow*:

- take +1 ongoing to *convincing a dragon to help you* within that community.
- always ask at least one question when you *study another dragon*, even on a miss, when studying a dragon of that community.
- add “You make them nervous, they will take you seriously from now on” to your options when you *stand up to an older dragon* from that community.
- take +1 forward to *mislead or trick* someone from that community.

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:



KINDLING THE FIRE: When you give a speech to inspire a group of dragons to action, roll +Cunning. On a 10+ pick two, on a 7-9 pick one.

- they will each act in some small, personal way towards your goal
- one among them will make a stand, sacrifice something, or make a big change
- those your ideas threaten won't punish you for what you've said

On a miss, you inspire them to take unpredictable or excessive action.



GETAWAY PLAN: When you make your escape, roll +Cunning. On a 10+ you're able to get away from whatever's threatening you, for now. On a 7-9, the same, but you have to make a sacrifice to get away; the DM will tell you what it costs you. On a miss, there's no way out but through. You'll have to face this one head-on.



STIR UP TROUBLE: When you spread rumors about a member of the community, roll +Cunning. On a 10+ pick two, on a 7-9, pick one.

- mostly everyone will believe what you've said, for now
- nobody will know it was you who started the rumors
- there's no negative fallout for anyone you care about

On a miss, your clever machinations are exposed by other community members friendly to your target; expect to pay a cost for your words.



SACRIFICE FOR A FRIEND: When you *help* a clutchmate by putting yourself in danger, mark a Shadow to take a 10+ instead of rolling. If you use this move to mark the fourth Shadow, only the friend you helped can bring you back.

SHADOWSELF

YOU KNOW WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS, what must be done to fix Dragonia and make it fair, just, and equal. You will make those changes yourself, whatever the cost. Make sure the rest of your clutch knows what needs to change and how righteous you are your quest for justice. You are the Rebel. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you to see how your plans might make things worse for Dragonia.

APPENDIX: PLAYBOOK STATS

Below is a list of all of the playbooks in *THE ENCYCLOPEDIA DRACONICA VOLUME 1: TALES & STORIES*. While you can find the core playbooks in *EPYLLION* and more will be forthcoming in later *ENCYCLOPEDIA*, these four bring a new focus to your *EPYLLION* game. Each is listed with information about the playbook and its high and low stats.

The Elementalist

Powerful, mystical, strange. The Elementalist is intertwined with the land itself, and shaping the forces that shape it.

High Stat: Cunning **Low Stat:** Courage

The Envoy

Diplomatic, social, friendly. The Envoy is dedicated to the ideals of peace, and furthering dragonkind through negotiation.

High Stat: Charm **Low Stat:** Courage

The Orphan

Destined, unique, solitary. The Orphan is journeying towards an unknown destiny, and forging their own path.

High Stat: Courage **Low Stat:** Cunning

The Rebel

Fiery, bold, righteous. The Rebel is exploring the limits of Dragonia's tradition, and testing themselves in the process.

High Stat: Cunning **Low Stat:** Charm