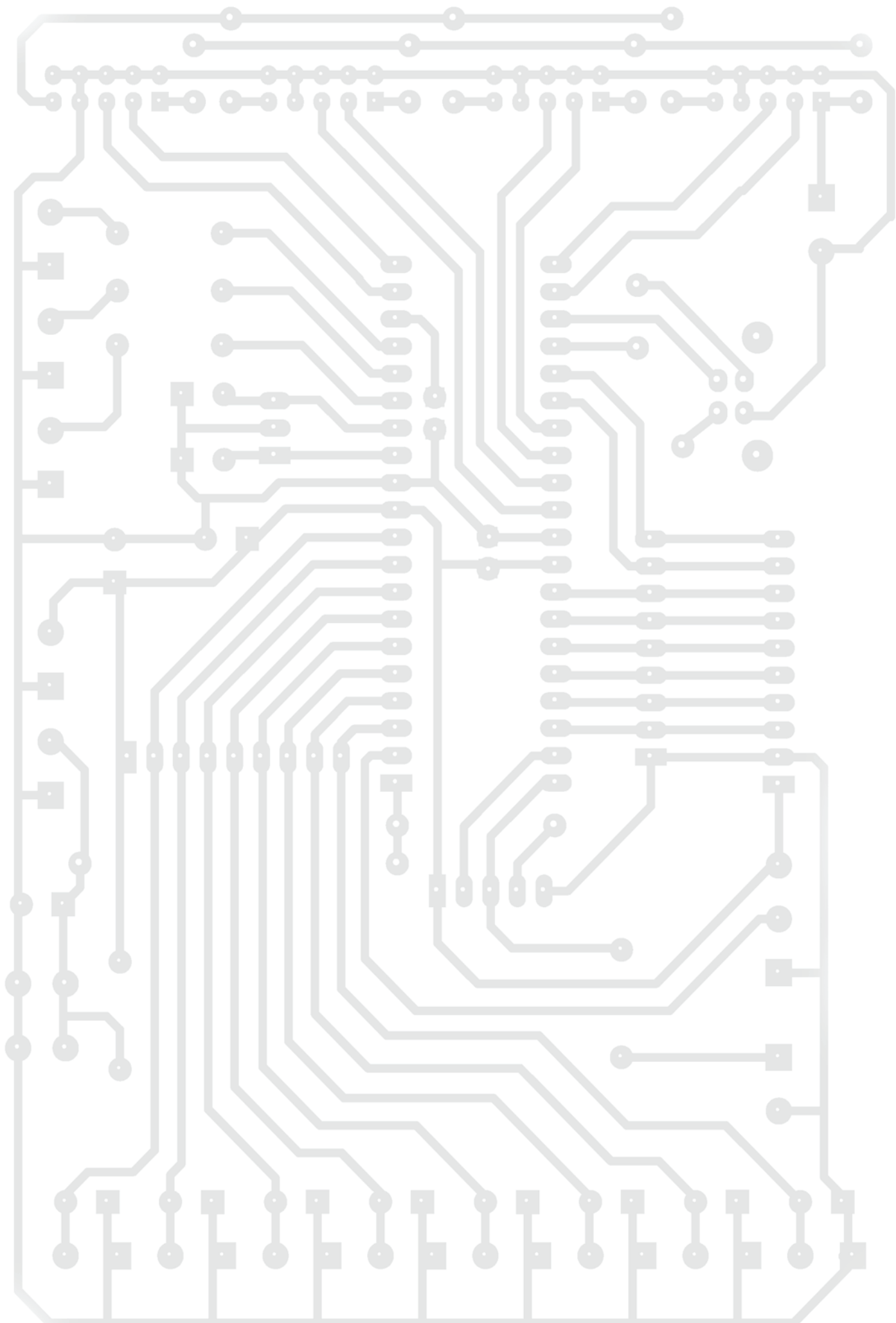


Streets of Bone & Skies of Ash



Camelot
COSMOS



Streets of Bone & Skies of Ash

The Cities of Morgan's Curse in the Camelot Cosmos

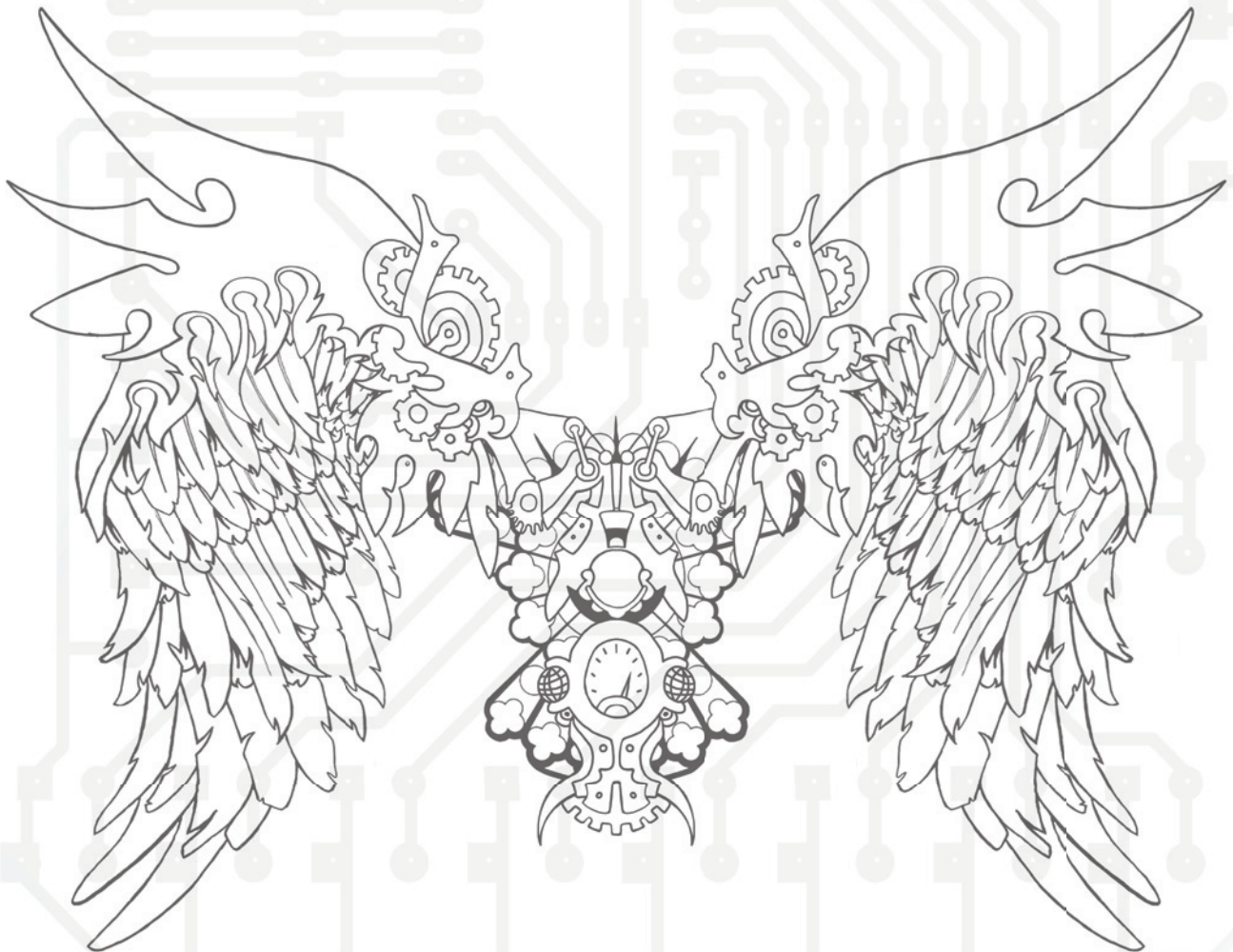
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This book is pure background material and as such is not open content.

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The Tide of Years is an Appendix to Camelot Cosmos. Mechanical content is designated open-source.



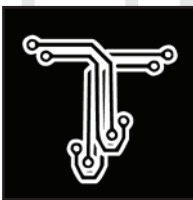
Introduction



The following general information is provided for GMs wishing to know a little more about the cities of the realm of Morgan's Curse within the Camelot Cosmos setting. Although they are few in number these cities are vast, averaging ten times larger than the greatest cities of the rival realm of Pendragon. For those unfamiliar with the setting Morgans Curse should be envisaged as the most 'steampunk' styled region throughout the Cameot Cosmos (which is generally more gritty medieval in tone). With a little adaptation, the information provided below can serve to describe general features of any fantasy roleplaying setting.

It should also be remembered that the Camelot Cosmos setting, whilst it presents two great rival nations locked in combat, does not distinguish between these sides as 'good' and 'evil'. The Queensland region ruled by Morgan le Fay, whilst it has many darker elements (the oppression of a serf class, the use of slavery, an industrial base geared towards war, a dictatorial ruler) does not consider itself 'evil'. Even the oppressed blame their sufferings primarily on their exile from the rival realm of Pendragon and see their Queen as a stern protectress rather than a crazed despot.

Background

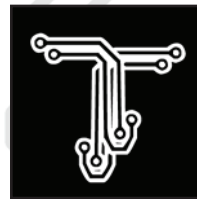


The realm of Morgan's Curse is the heart of Queensland, the homeland of the vast resources of men and material which sustain the Morganite war effort. It is an enormous realm consisting of a wide variety of landscapes, the majority of which are unsuitable for habitation or hostile to the establishment of human settlements. Harsh deserts and baking salt flats are commonplace, as are bleak interior plains of cracked badlands in which little moisture forms and rains are too infrequent to allow any form of agriculture. And yet the very size of the realm ensures that there are also a few highly fertile regions, and it was in these, usually at the coast or at the mouth of great rivers, that the mighty cities of the realm were founded. Through the course of its settled history, the population of the realm has massively increased, and this is the effect of a deliberate policy. When Queen Isabella arrived with her defeated band of followers, she feared pursuit and capture more than she feared the harsh conditions of the realm itself.

For this reason she encouraged the growth of a new morality, one very distinct from the morals of Pendragon. Sexual freedom was promoted even whilst political freedom was curtailed, and both male and female followers were encouraged to believe that it was their duty to procreate and thus build a newer, stronger and larger body of followers for their Queen. Only through this means was it thought possible to defend the Queen and return in triumph to Pendragon.

A similar attitude was developed with regard to the natural resources of the new Realm. Everything had to be exploited and used towards the war, as rapidly as possible. It was their duty to spread across the new realm, to seize all its minerals, wealth and buried treasures, and to bend the realm to their will. Both in personal affairs and in the development and custodianship of their chief realm, the followers of Isabella/Morgan le Fay and their descendents have been taught to pursue instant gratification. Their attitude to the realm is rapacious and industrial, the realm must be used, its resources plundered to feed the war effort. Successive avatars of Morgan le Fay have made it perfectly clear that a failure to do so, or even a lack of sufficient urgency in doing so, is an act of treason punishable however the Queen sees fit. Fear of the Queen's wrath if the pace of the war effort slackens, and an equal if less justified fear of the forces of Kingsland invading to 'finish the job', have created a culture of booming but highly polluted cities.

An Urban Culture



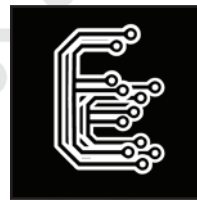
The inhabitants of Morgan's Curse are overwhelmingly city dwellers. Thousands of miles of the realm are uninhabited expanses of wilderness, with only a very few small settlements of the village level (these being primarily Atropan and Churl outposts). The majority of serfs have had no connection with the natural environment during the course of their lives, except for those kidnapped as slaves from Kingsland. Rumours abound regarding such strange phenomena as trees, woods and forests, and natural scenes are regarded with a mixture of fear and awe. Many serfs believe that it is simply impossible to survive outside of an urban environment, and no amount of abuse or mistreatment will persuade them that escape into the wilderness is a viable option.

In many cases this reaches the level of a form of agoraphobia, with wide open spaces and skies being considered threatening an unnatural (Fyrd soldiers who camp outside city walls are grudgingly admired for their absurd bravery in doing so). Those conscripted to fight in the realm of Castlekeep are actually more comfortable in the dark tunnels, bunkers and trenches than they could ever be in a sylvan glade or pleasant meadow.

The housing of the cities of Morgan's Curse consists primarily of wooden and stone tenements in which many serfs live cheek by jowl. The houses are three or four storey high but only those favoured by the Queen (consorts, generals, warlocks, leading slavers etc) possess an entire property to themselves. The subjects of the Queen most often live with twenty to forty others on the same floor, all sleeping in rows of simple bunks. Because of this they have very little concept of privacy or of being alone. The streets are narrow and crowded at all hours with factol workers departing or arriving from work. Smoke pumps from thousands of furnaces and factol chimneys and coats the buildings in soot and ash. The sweat and stench of humanity mingles with the clang and hiss of factol machinery. Perhaps a useful analogy for GMs is to think of these cities as dark and foreboding versions of nineteenth-century London, characterised by factories, fog, slums, crowds and the constant sounds of unceasing industry. These things are so much a part of a Morganite serf's life that they become deeply uncomfortable without them.

Port Sirenis as the home city of Morgan's navy and the base for her Unseelie Fleet is an exception to these general principles. It is a city constructed of marble and blessed with palatial buildings and broad avenues. Even the serfs of Sirenis consider themselves better than their counterparts in other cities, although the Queen herself does not seem to favour the city above others. Serfs in Sirenis are subject to the cruel and random pranks of the Unseelie with greater regularity than those elsewhere, but take a perverse pride in this as proof of their greater resilience and wisdom, assuring all who will listen that no other serfs could tolerate the abuses they endure. Behind the marble facades of the palaces of Sirenis, the interiors are divided into a rat's maze of tiny Spartan apartments in which the serfs are crowded between adhoc partitions of their own construction. These partitions often consist of art pieces which the Unseelie have grown bored of, many of which are rather disturbing in nature.

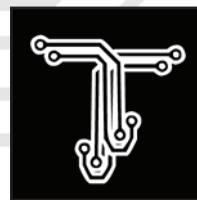
A War Economy



Each city of Morgan's Curse has quotas that it must meet in fulfilment of its obligations towards the great struggle to reclaim Pendragon and destroy the Gawainite monarchy. Queen Morgan sets an annual War Tithe which must be paid. The rulers of the city districts must decide between themselves what part of the cities Tithe is paid by each district. Naturally they can rarely do so without argument and disagreement as each district and its ruler attempt to make others bear the burden. Corruption, politicking and reciprocal favours are rife as the districts vie to get the best possible deal for themselves, but none may escape some contribution to the cause. A wise ruler will plan for the Tithe and set aside sufficient resources. Usually the Tithe is taken in food, armaments and slave labour, or a combination of all three. Again the percentages between these different forms of contribution are also subject to debate and a wise ruler ensures that the majority of the Tithe is taken from the area in which he has the most leeway or existing resources. It is expected that rival leaders will often try to sabotage a delivery of the Tithe in order to embarrass and humiliate their rivals.

GMs should take care to emphasize the importance and impact of the Tithe and the way speculation on the amounts involved and the consequences of meeting those demands can impact on every subject of Morgan le Fay. Rulers (usually referred to as District Governors) can be tortured or executed if they fail to meet the demands of the Tithe. Usually a small amount of leeway is given regarding the time that the Tithe should be handed over, and a Governor acting near the limits or beyond this timeframe will be particularly difficult to deal with.

The Fyrd Presence

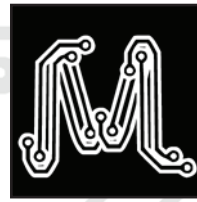


The Fyrd are everywhere in the cities of Morgan's Curse. Morgan insists on regular patrols to guard against the probably illusory threat of an invasion. Ostensibly this is the reason for all of the heavy-handed security measures in place throughout the realm, but Morgan and the senior leaders of the Fyrd are aware that such a threat is extremely unlikely and that the Gawainite monarchy does not have the resources needed to launch a major offensive.

The general populace however are through constant propaganda taught to believe that at any moment rampaging hordes of bloodthirsty Pendragon knights are ready to burst into the Morganite cities slaughtering everyone in their path. Posters expressing this view are plastered on every surface, together with maxims such as 'Vigilance is Virtue' and 'Beware the Enemy'. The real reason for both this propaganda and the constant patrols is of course to control the serfs and maintain the Queen's regime.

The Fyrd presence is felt in a number of different ways. As well as the obvious security patrols, in which groups of ten to twenty Fyrd soldiers follow regular circuits around their districts, every major street intersection has an open-sided waystation with a ballista emplacement and crude gas arclights which is always attended by at least four soldiers and has supplies and room available for twenty men to use the waystation as a permanent base. Each district also possesses a single large barracks capable of housing up to 1,000 soldiers (but normally only attended by a quarter of this amount). The Fyrd patrols will conduct stop and search procedures on anyone they deem suspicious, and it is common for them to demand and receive bribes in order to stop this low-level harassment. Any report of loud disturbances or unusual behaviour is likely to result in several serfs attempting to curry favour by reporting the activity immediately to the nearest waystation, which are the places used for public interaction with the security forces. Several safehouses will also be maintained and owned by Fyrd members within the district in which emergency stores are kept or detainees and prisoners are interrogated. Ordinary subjects of the Queen know not to investigate the goings on in buildings with boarded windows since some of these are undoubtedly Fyrd property. Districts will also contain several leisure facilities designed exclusively for the use of Fyrd members and their invited guests, these include brothels, casinos, and taverns (some of which are open to the public as well). A serf is just as likely to encounter groups of Fyrd in their off-duty hours travelling to or from one of these establishments as they are to encounter a security patrol.

The Wyrd



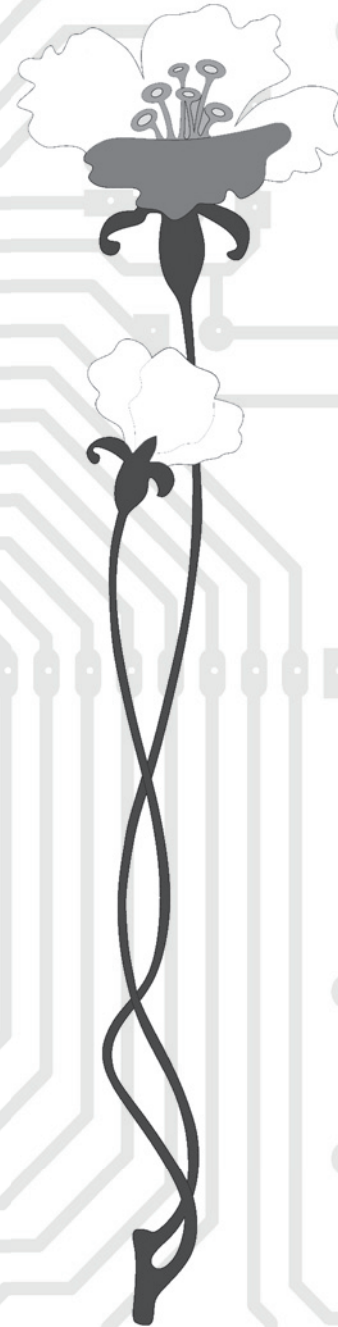
Morgan le Fay encourages magical experimentation of all kinds and grants increased social status to recognised witches and warlocks. These individuals are provided with better housing and the resources they need to set up private laboratories and libraries, it being understood that they will then share the results of any successful experiments with Morgan's government. Artefacts of the First Empire are constantly being experimented upon in these laboratories, and occult shrines and cults designed to garner increased knowledge from saints and other Nephilim are also allowed if the 'proceeds' of such sites are made available to the Queen. The Unseelie are also highly interested in every aspect of the occult, particularly in the more bizarre rituals and sacrifices. On a practical level the serfs of Morgan's Curse and even the Fyrd tend to know which houses belong to prominent magical practitioners and to avoid them whenever possible. At the same time the effects of all this occult practice are felt throughout the cities. Graffiti may take the form of complex magical formulas and strange sights and spells may spill out from behind closed doors or linger in deserted alleys. The Wyrd Effects table below provides some examples of the ways in which this occult spillover may manifest itself but GMs are encouraged to be imaginative in creating their own alternatives. Generally the effects will strike one particular sense with varying degrees of distortion and intensity, but multiple sensory distortions are also possible in the most serious cases. FATE system Aspects applied to a particular house or street can mimic the effects of these distortions but GMs should try to describe the weirdness rather than just assigning a game effect. A Wyrd effect should probably not be felt more than once per day, and many of those living in the cities will go months or even years between such incidents (a good idea to simulate this is to roll a d20 once per day and a result of 1 equals a Wyrd Effect occurring).



Wyrd Effects Table 1d20

1. An unusually coloured fog (green, blue, violet etc) seeps from the ground and coils in sinister tendrils around people's legs
2. The sound of distant haunting music drifts from below ground
3. A sharp and sudden drop in temperature coats every surface with black ice
4. The clanking of mighty chains is accompanied by directionless laughter
5. A red haze obscures the edges of objects
6. A sudden inexplicable and unpleasant odour fills the air (of sulphur, burning flesh, urine etc)
7. A swarm of rats rush in blind panic through the streets
8. A swarm of insects fill the air making patterns that look like writing
9. Pools of water and reflective surfaces take on a mirror-like gloss
10. A grinding noise of stones rubbing together gradually builds in intensity
11. A cloud of butterflies erupts from an opened doorway
12. Skittering noises are heard coming from shadowed areas
13. Shadows move independently of their sources
14. Rippling and quivering motions pulse through solid objects
15. Ghostly voices are heard whispering obscene blasphemies
16. Powerful positive emotions (love, desire, wonder, humility etc) radiate from a particular random object, growing stronger the closer a person is to that object
17. Powerful negative emotions (hate, lust, jealousy, greed, sorrow etc) radiate from a particular random object, growing stronger the closer a person is to that object
18. An invisible gas imparts feelings of dizziness and nausea
19. Touched surfaces impart a random taste sensation (oil, blood, cloves, cinnamon etc)
20. Colours take on a swirling, burning intensity and movements seem linked by threads of light

In most cases none of these effects will be permanent, instead lasting 10d10 rounds per occurrence. Really the GM should decide how long he wishes the effect to remain in place at the beginning of any encounter with it, and any time frame decided in this manner is acceptable. These are after all random eruptions of the unnatural, and should be startling and inexplicable to those experiencing them. It adds descriptive verisimilitude however if signs of fading or dissipation occur before the effect completely ceases.



The Factols



The Factols are, other than the barracks of the Fyrd, the largest buildings in any given district. They dominate the cities, and all private dwellings are crowded in narrow streets between them, deep in their shadow. Most follow a standard design, being four storeys high brick buildings with thin barred windows and a look halfway between that of a cathedral and a place of commerce. Three or four giant chimney stacks reach several storeys above the rooflines of the factol, and continually belch out smoke which leaves a fine ashen grit on every surrounding surface. Each factol is an entirely self contained factory with its own power supplies and loading bays. The broadest roads found within the cities lead directly to the black iron gates of each factol, and every factol is known primarily by its number and district designation (the initials of the district and city followed by a number). This code is painted on the sloping tiled roof of the factol and also features on the work smocks worn by the workers within it. The code is further displayed in the iron fretwork of the entrance gates. The factols are generally fronted by a cleared walled space within which wagons and vehicles delivering raw materials or collecting finished products can park. Alarms placed around the high walls sound the beginning and end of shifts. Each floor is filled with rows of machinery, usually an assembly line for the production of crude weaponry as munitions and armaments factols predominate. There are however also abattoir factols in which dead bodies and animals are reprocessed into a bland paste and items and furniture are made from material such as bone, teeth and hair. Textile factols also produce crude cloths for the banners and clothing of the city dwellers, whilst a few esoteric factols produce more exotic goods required by the witches and warlocks of the realm.

The Hags



Hags are a grotesque race of crones whom the Queen trusts to control the important work undertaken within the factols. Every factol building includes a large room which overlooks the rest of the building. This raised level is known as the Office or, more prosaically, as the Haghouse. It is the base from which the Hag who runs the factol oversees the administration and, more importantly, the discipline which keeps the factol running efficiently.

The hundreds of serfs working within the building are always terrified of being called to the Office as the punishments that the Hags inflict for even minor transgressions are notorious for their brutality. The Hags all seem to live in their Office, sometimes constructing what are effectively nests of bedding in one corner. They rarely venture out of their respective factols except when called to attend the Queen or another senior figure at one of her palaces.

The Unseelie Influence

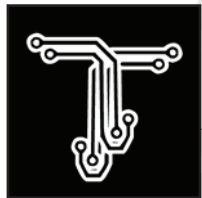


A subtle but constant presence throughout the cities can be found in the public presentation of Unseelie art. The Unseelie, regardless of their actual role within the government, all consider themselves creative and artistic individuals. Being essentially mentally unbalanced automatons, their artwork takes disturbing forms, though some are capable of a surprising gentleness and beauty in the artistic scenes they present, even if they are often incapable of such positive emotions in person. The placement of these objects throughout the city seem entirely random. At times they decorate official buildings, at other times they can be found at street corners or on the roofs of private homes. None dare deny the Unseelie artist the right to place these pieces where they will, and the Queen seems amused by their effect. The form of these pieces is equally varied. Some are poems daubed on the sides of buildings, other are ceramic figurines or installations of glass and precious metals. Others are constructed from skeletal remains or carved from ice, some are crude constructions of clay while more still are made of copper and brass. Quite frequently they create optical illusions, particularly those which are painted onto floors, walls and ceilings, and often they display the bizarre sense of humour that characterises the Unseelie. Some of the Unseelie have signature styles of art which can be recognised and discussed, and even acquire fans of their work (though they pretend to be disinterested in such responses, many are vain enough to enjoy the attention).

Physical encounters with the Unseelie themselves are rarer, except in Port Sirenis. Most of the Unseelie are tall, thin, and aristocratic in demeanour and appearance, wearing black frock coats and jewelled waistcoats. The Unseelie move with superhuman swiftness and can quickly appear and disappear in the most disconcerting ways. Most of the time the ordinary populace are beneath their notice, and that is how the ordinary populace likes it.

They do interact when prompted to do so by Fyrd commanders (who themselves are reluctant to deal more than necessary with them) or by Palace officials acting on behalf of the Queen. In these instances they are a remarkably effective secret police force, snatching the few brave foes of the regime from their homes, factols and streets. They tend not to involve themselves in the private battles which take place between various nobles, consorts, generals and favourites of the Queen, though they are amused by whatever chaos results from these. They leave such matters to the gentlemen assassins, unless directly ordered to intervene in order to stop some particular feud (this they do very effectively by wiping out the leaders of both sides).

The Serfs



The vast majority of the population of the cities of Morgan's Curse are serfs, with little or no legal rights. All serfs are considered the property of someone or something else, although they are not considered the same as slaves, who can be sold and traded between owners. The owner of a serf can only relinquish control of them to the Queen. The relationship between the slave and the owner requires no care or responsibility on the part of the owner, whereas the serfs are entitled to a modicum of care. They must be fed and clothed and provided with lodgings or housing of some kind. They have the right to join the Fyrd, and many do so to escape the working conditions imposed on them in the factols. Nobles and other owners of serfs 'rent' the serfs services to the factols, receiving the greater portion of their already small pay.

The serfs work at least fourteen hour shifts, regardless of their occupation, and so have little leisure time of their own. They can however frequent the many squalid taverns in which what little pay they have is spent, and many also supplement their incomes through prostitution or various forms of crime and thuggery. Despite the constant oppression, both serious and minor, which they experience the majority of serfs are actually loyal. Centuries of propaganda have ensured that they genuinely fear worse treatment from the rival Gawainites who oppose them, and equally feel a misguided sense of grievance over the causes of the war. They both fear and admire their actual oppressors, with a jealous, complex mix of feelings, particularly with regard to the Fyrd, which provides a means of escape for some of them but also commonly bullies and abuses them.

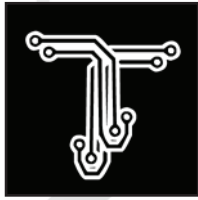
These feelings reach their greatest extreme with regard to the Unseelie, whose random acts of generosity as well as brutality are the stuff of serf legends.

The Gangs



Serfs work very long hours and are encouraged to have very large families (sexual relations provide a free form of entertainment even before the habit of selling such services is also considered) in order to provide more troops and workers for the war effort. Because of this there are large numbers of serf children who are either working in factols themselves or roaming the streets in an utterly unsupervised manner. Every street in the cities of Morgan's Curse is crowded with these children, who loiter and congregate in groups looking for amusement and mimicking the soldiers and Unseelie they see around them. Inevitably this has led to a gang culture developing in which the Elders (children of twelve-sixteen years of age who should be working in factols but who absent themselves) control followers aged between eight and twelve. Individually none of these children would be much of a threat, collectively their power has to be acknowledged. The Fyrd largely ignore them if they engage in petty crime and intimidation against other serfs, but will crack down if they attack 'respectable' citizens. Mostly the gangs fight each other in petty brawls, ambushes and sometimes pitched battles. Many adults consider these fights a form of entertainment whilst the Fyrd and other similar organisations see them as recruiting opportunities. Children who rise to head a gang or be a noted enforcer for a gang see it as a route into the military or even into the ranks of the gentlemen assassins or slaver merchants (though these latter two demand the ability to acquire a gloss of culture as well as mere ruthless strength).

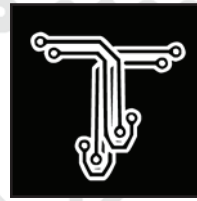
Gang Names Table



The following table can be used to generate gang names for any of the cities of Morgan's Curse. The smallest gangs will have between 40-100 members, but the very largest may span more than one city district and include several thousand members. The leaders of these largest gangs must be taken seriously even by Fyrd captains or other respected adults, though any who cause disruption to the war effort or attack the Queen's plans or property in any way are swiftly, brutally and easily crushed. Roll 1d20

1. The Butcher's Boys
2. The Sewer Kings
3. The Black Hand Gang
4. The Dusters
5. The Rakes
6. The Frenzies
7. The Bloodletters
8. The Blades
9. The Chivs
10. The Alley Kings
11. The Tile Runners
12. The Bookburners
13. The Evil Eye Gang
14. The Cross Street Runners
15. The Thin Men
16. The Lords
17. The Saints
18. The Heretics
19. The Fiends
20. The Hagdodgers

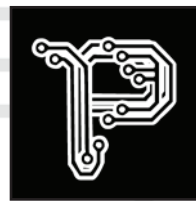
The Gentlemen Assassins



The Assassins Guild has a recognised place in Morganite society as Queen Morgan often has need of their services when a more discreet attack is needed than that provided by the Fyrd or even the Unseelie, both of whom tend towards the spectacular hen told to eliminate people. Every city has a single branch of the Guild known simply as the Club. These branches do in fact function very like a nineteenth century gentlemen's club. They are full of book-lined studies, quiet marble hallways and leather chairs in shadowed corners where 'professionals' may meet their clients and arrange contracts. Small luxuries unavailable to others, such as Gawainite goods and foodstuffs served by discreet and fawning servants, are also present. The assassins always meet their contacts at the Club rather than at their private homes.

Many of the assassins are impoverished nobles and they insist upon an air of civility, courtesy and 'good standards'. Serf accents and manners are not tolerated, and anyone aspiring to be an assassin must learn how to be a gentleman and conduct himself in a polite manner. This applies even during a job, as extraneous casualties and messy hits are considered 'bad form' and not in keeping with the moral and 'artistic' standards of the Guild. Exceptional individuals from other backgrounds will be accepted as apprentices and it is indeed something dreamed of by gang members, but the assassins will teach these waifs to at least pretend to be of noble origin. The assassins are most frequently employed in the power struggles within the government and particularly between Morgan's ministers and Consorts. External threats are dealt with by the Fyrd and the Unseelie.

The Slaver Merchants



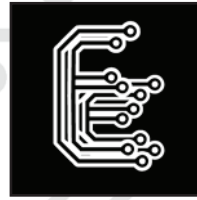
Perhaps the richest individuals in the cities of Morgan's Curse to retain some level of independence from the government and Queen Morgan are the slaver merchants, without whom much of the economy of the realm would falter. The merchants obtain slaves from other realms, primarily by having them captured from King'sland and transported to Morgan's Curse via the Gates.

This serves the double purpose of simultaneously terrifying and weakening Kingsland whilst strengthening Queen Morgan's own economic resources. For this reason the slavers are valued as good contributors to the war effort, and are supported and flattered by the government provided that they keep supplying the quantities of slaves that the Queen demands. They also have a good relationship with the serfs who are always pleased to see the importation of a group of workers more likely to be abused and mistreated than themselves, believing that this deflects attention from their own class. Even the officers of the Fyrd are careful to maintain friendly relations with the slavers since they will then be invited to the exclusive screenings in which quality slaves (those intended as pleasure slaves or with specialist skills) are offered for sale. The more intelligent slaver merchants will further ingratiate themselves to the regime by paying the Fyrd to capture slaves for them in the first place rather than just using their own men or members of the Iron Band.

Slaves provided by the slaver merchants fall into two broad categories, work slaves and pleasure slaves. The lot of work slaves is notoriously difficult, since even the serfs tend to despise and abuse them. These unfortunates are often worked to death in mines of various kinds in the wild regions of Morgan's Curse. The more fortunate work slaves last a few more years if sent to the factols, but many of these fall victim to the anger of the Hags or the more surreptitious attacks of the factol serfs (some of whom will pretend to befriend these 'enemies' imply for the chance to attack them). Pleasure slaves is a term used both for slaves intended for sexual pleasure and for slaves with leisure oriented skills of a level admired by more cultured buyers (singers, bards, entertainers, even historians or artists). The worst fate of all for a slave is perhaps to be purchased by an Unseelie or a witch or warlock, who might have inscrutable or occult intentions for their purchase of a gruesome nature. Slaver merchants are aware of this however and adjust their prices accordingly, feeling any guilt assuaged by a better deal. Pleasure slaves are sold at private events known as salons, which occur in the slaver merchants own home.

The only group in the realm of Morgan's Curse which dislikes the slaver merchants (other than the slaves, of course) is the noble class, for reasons outlined below.

The Nobles



Every city in the realm of Morgan's Curse possesses a nobles quarter which is noticeably distinct from the surrounding districts. The nobles district is always the closest one to the palaces inhabited by the Queen when she visits the cities and the nobles guard this privilege jealously. Even the Consorts who wield greater political power than any group of nobles have not been able to change this sign of the Queen's favour, granted to them by the first Queen to lead their rebellious forces, Isabella. The nobles district is also graced with larger and more impressive boulevards than appear elsewhere, primarily because none of the factols are cited within this district and the available space is therefore less restricted. The oldest buildings are constructed of stone in the style of Pendragon castles, and the noble families who still possess one of these familial seats are inordinately proud of the fact. Any cursory examination of the region, and of the proud nobles themselves, might suppose that they remained the most powerful and trusted of the Queen's followers. This is not, for the majority of nobles, anything other than a vain desire.

The military support which the nobles offered as knights has largely been surpassed by the growth of the Fyrd and the policy of encouraging high birth rates. Whilst theoretically the nobles still own the serfs that join the Fyrd, they cannot ever disapprove of their conscription and have no effective means of retaining their control over these conscripts unless they happen to serve under the nobleman himself (who must also therefore join the Fyrd). Another source of discontent for the remaining nobles is the presence of the slaver merchants, who undermine the nobles traditional power base by supplying slaves who can do the work of serfs. The 'cut' of the income given to serfs is therefore removed from the nobility every time a slave does the work of a serf. Since the nobility has been too proud to engage in other commercial ventures their power has gradually declined as their usefulness to the war effort lessens. Queen Morgan still publicly acknowledges their status, but increasingly her ministers and advisors are drawn from amongst the slavers or even from serfs who have risen through the ranks of the Fyrd. The glories of their past contributions, particularly their decision to support Isabella and accept exile from Pendragon, remains a source of pride, but it is a pride which now often finds itself impoverished and marginalised.

Only those nobles who have taken work as gentlemen assassins have been able to maintain some of their wealth and, more important to them all, their respect.

City Districts

The different city districts of the various cities of Morgan's Curse are often not that dissimilar in terms of architecture and appearance, with the exception of the noble district and sometimes the dock and port areas. They do however insist on differences which are not immediately apparent. In a microcosmic version of the propaganda Queen Morgan's central government releases, each of the District Governors attempt to build a following or cult based of their own personality. Over many generations however they have found that the most effective means of doing this lies in insisting on the unique qualities and worth of their own district and its populace (even whilst exploiting them). Through this and perhaps because there is little else to attract their attention the serfs in particular have developed a strong sense of local pride. Each is convinced that their factols are more productive than other factols, and their subjects more loyal to the Queen than those found elsewhere. The exploits of those who succeed from a given district are thought to reflect honour and achievement on all the people who live in that district. Gang culture has exacerbated this sense of district loyalty, whilst popular songs, dances and even phrases are considered to possess more worth if they are more exclusive to a particular district. Only outsiders fail to see the many glaring and obvious differences that the serfs themselves discern between their district and their neighbours.

District Names Table

The table below can be used to quickly generate names for individual districts of the cities on Morgan's Curse. Each district averages a population of 50,000 serfs, and the cities often have in excess of one million inhabitants (therefore ensuring at least 20 districts per city). Districts have no elected representatives but are instead assigned to rulers directly picked by the Queen or sometimes by a favoured Consort or General. Some districts have a strong connection with particular units of the Fyrd, powerful witches or warlocks, politically motivated Hags or even old noble families.

Morgan does not really care who rules a given district, so long as the district keeps generating tax revenue and maintaining the nonstop activities of the factols. It is understood that District Governors will see their districts as a personal fief and will corruptly profit from every activity that goes on within them. The rulers will also parcel out official posts, sinecures and resources within the district to their own supporters. This is perfectly acceptable so long as the Tithe Quotas are met and the Queen gets her share.

The influence of the Unseelie is felt in many of these district names. Although the Unseelie despise the natural world because they are apart from it, they also have a fascination with replicating it in artificial forms. Area names often reflect this mixture of artificial materials with natural forms, and Unseelie sculptures linked to the name of a given area may also feature throughout its public spaces.



Table One: 1d20

1. Copper
2. Bronze
3. Tin
4. Coal
5. Silver
6. Gold
7. Lead
8. Quicksilver
9. New
10. Old
11. North
12. South
13. East
14. West
15. Queens
16. Morgan's
17. Slaver's
18. Hag's
19. Martyr's
20. Iron

Table Two: 4d10

4. Gate
5. Market
6. Castle
7. Keep
8. Tower
9. Wall
10. Glade
11. Hollow
12. Hill
13. Creek
14. Trees
15. Wood
16. Vale
17. Ford
18. Bridge
19. Garden
20. Glen
21. Home
22. Forge
23. Hearth
24. Heart
25. Isle
26. Helm
27. Shield
28. Lodge
29. Mark
30. Reach
31. Mouth
32. Hall
33. Stream
34. Bell
35. Hedge
36. Dell
37. Walk
38. Arbor
39. Way
40. Meadow