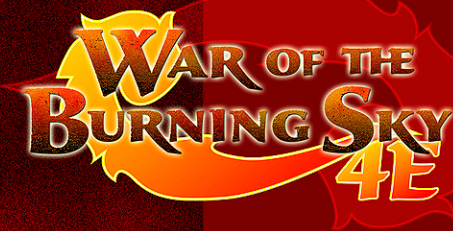


War of the Burning Sky Player's Guide



For All Character Levels

Original Design by **RYAN NOCK**

Updated and Edited by **STEVE MUCHOW**



INTRODUCTION

WAR BEGINS

While once news reached the Free City-State of Gate Pass by weekly teleporting courier, that channel has gone silent, and now what little news there is must travel by the old routes of rumor — travelers from the outside world. You might be one of those travelers, or a concerned native of the city, but you have heard the rumors.

Emperor Drakus Coal tongue, ruler of the mighty Ragesian Empire which lies to the west of Gate Pass, has been slain in a distant nation, or so the rumors say. Of course, the rumors once said that Coal tongue was immortal. However, no one doubts the tales of armies mustering in Ragesia, with orders to secure the borders of the empire at this time of weakness and uncertainty. And from Shahalesti, the eladrin nation east of Gate Pass, the rumors say its ruler seeks to claim the vulnerable Ragesia for his people.

And so Gate Pass sits, alone in its mountain pass, one of the few safe routes between these two belligerent and antagonistic nations. For weeks the people of Gate Pass have been saying war would inevitably come to the city, and now the rumors are coming true...

Welcome to the *War of the Burning Sky Player's Guide*. Where the *Campaign Guide* is intended for the Game Master (GM) and contains material players should not read, this document has nothing that will spoil the game. Of course, the new rules material in this *Player's Guide* is available only at the GM's discretion, and the details of the region and its politics may change based on the setting of your game, so think of everything here as optional.

In *War of the Burning Sky*, you will have the chance to fight in a war of mythic proportions, and determine the fate of many nations in its aftermath. Ever-escalating conflicts, powered by mighty magic and fervent faith, threaten your freedom and lives, and even the world itself.

Driven by the dogs of war, you will head for a distant safe haven, a mages' school named Lyceum, which has sent up a rallying cry for those who wish to resist the warmongers. You will have a chance to form alliances, to build an army, and to uncover the strange secrets that underlie the conflict. As the war reaches a climax, powerful magic will threaten to scorch nations, or sunder them into nothing but nightmares. It will be up to you to bring the war to an end before only embers and ruins remain.

ABOUT THE CONTENT

The *Player's Guide* presents rules and campaign information compatible with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® 4th Edition (D&D 4E) Core Rulebooks. As a group, you will need access to the primary game references: the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK®, the D&D 4E DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE®, and the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL®.

Additionally, the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK® 2, the D&D 4E MONSTER MANUAL® 2, and the D&D 4E ADVENTURER'S VAULT™ all provide useful additions, though these books are not required to play. However, using the classes and races detailed in the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2 will provide a richer, more natural play experience.

ORGANIZATION

The *Player's Guide* is divided into three main sections. Section One provides a number of details about the city of Gate Pass, where the campaign begins. Section Two includes game rules changes and additions usable by player characters. Section Three adds even more information about the region that will come to be known as the Lands of the Burning Sky.



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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, written by Rob Heinsoo, Andy Collins, and James Wyatt; DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, written by James Wyatt; and MONSTER MANUAL, written by Mike Mearls,

Stephen Schubert and James Wyatt; PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2, written by Jeremy Crawford, Mike Mearls, and James Wyatt; MONSTER MANUAL 2, written by Rob Heinsoo, and Chris Sims; ADVENTURER'S VAULT, written by Logan Bonner, Eytan Bernstein, and Chris Sims. © 2008, 2009 Wizards of the Coast. All rights reserved.



SECTION ONE: GATE PASS

The Free City-State of Gate Pass

A medium-sized city built within a rocky mountain pass, Gate Pass is the bridge of trade and travel between the Ragesian Empire and Shahalesti, the kingdom of the eladrin.

Population 17,000; another 2,000 or so live on the countryside and upper mountain slopes within a few miles of the main gates. The citizens of Gate Pass are mostly human. A sizeable orc and half-orc population represents about 20% of the city. A small elven refugee population is the only other significant group, with half-elves, dwarves, and gnomes filling out the rest.

Government A half-orc individual named Merrick Hurt is the city's governor. He presides over a city council represented by individuals from each ward and district in the city. The council is responsible for managing the military, commerce, and public projects. According to most of the populace, the council is largely ineffectual and is easily swayed by citizen groups, wealthy merchants, religious concerns, and military groups.

Defense Numbering in the hundreds, the guards also act as constables. Most guards are responsible for watching the gates and kill zones around the city. A small unit of twenty griffon riders patrols the farms in the outlying area and represents the only cavalry (see page 7)

Inns Inns are most often found at the outermost districts of the city with the exception of a few around the grand square. The quality of accommodations lessens the farther away the inn is from the Emelk Way. Famous locations: Dassen Arms (5 stars, the best); Griffon Suites (4 stars); Harrigan's Inn (1 star, the worst).

Taverns Some well-known taverns are Flaming Forest Alehouse (5 stars); Seaquen's Spirits (3 stars); One-to-Go tavern (1 star).

Supplies Two-Winds Trading; Menash's Provisions; Adventurer's Trove.

Temples The Saraswatin (knowledge); Aquiline Cross (healing); Stronghold (strength); The Bacchanal (revelry); Dessen Stone (dwarven); Fertile Fields (hearth and home) (see pages 6–7).

ALL SAGAS BEGIN SOMEWHERE, AND GATE PASS is the starting point of this story. What is contained herein is common knowledge. Anyone visiting the city and staying for about a week would either know these facts by experience or could easily learn by asking questions in local gathering places.

Gate Pass lies in a rocky mountain pass running east to west between Ragesia and Shahalesti. Sheer cliffs mark its northern and southern borders, and fortifications built over centuries have made the city highly defensible, making it difficult to be annexed by either nation that surrounds it. These same fortifications, likewise, make it equally difficult for anyone to leave without going through any of the numerous gates that give the city its name.

Though the city's borders to north and south are tightly limited — less than a mile wide at the widest point — the mountain pass is nearly twenty miles long, giving the city a lot of room to grow eastward and westward. The older districts of the city lie in the center of the pass, with different eras of development sprawling out gradually in both directions. Additionally, various small farms and ranches dot the mountains around the city proper, though these people are generally hostile to foreigners and relatively well-armed. Gate Pass has only been conquered once, and its citizens managed to drive out the invaders and regain their freedom, so many of the farmers and ranchers view themselves as the first line of defense for their city.

TRADITIONS AND CULTURE

The city's architecture tends to multistory buildings with bridges between roofs, creating thousands of "gateways" along roads and alleys. Even in poorer districts, buildings are usually at least two stories tall. Many merchants, made wealthy from the traffic that passes through the city, own vast ranges of adjacent buildings, all of them connected with high bridges. An expression of the city — "a coin for every gate" — both refers to the wealth of the city, and serves as a warning to visitors to avoid poorer areas where buildings lie unconnected.

A broad, twenty-foot wide thoroughfare called the Emelk Way runs the length of the

city, interrupted only by the district walls every half mile or so. The city's natural landscape rises in the center to a broad hill called Summer's Bluff. In addition to being home to dozens of gated estates for the city's politicians and rich merchants, Summer's Bluff is the site of the city's grand square, where various annual holidays are celebrated. The grand square can easily hold several thousand people, and it is dotted with dozens of small groves, statues, and ornamental gate arches, with staircases people can climb to get a better view. In the center of the grand square is a high stone dais, its surface carved in a massive relief that depicts several local legends.

The rest of the city consists of various districts of skilled workers, common housing, warehouses and businesses, and slums. Each district has representation in the city government. By city ordinance, every fourth district must contain a park at least a quarter mile to a side, though entrance to these typically requires payment of a few coppers.

The city grew outward from its central districts, with a new district and new outer wall springing up every decade or so. Because of this, it is possible to see the changing styles of construction and defense over the centuries of the city's existence, like reading the rings of a tree. In older districts, built before the development of the city's underground sewer system, countless reservoirs and aqueducts rise above the rooftops, designed to catch rainwater and direct sewage to dumps outside the city. The current sewers flow into an underground river before being swept into endless, uncharted caves.

In the past few decades, clerics have blessed the gates of new districts in expensive rituals, and a tradition has developed for respected citizens to be buried in the sanctified ground near the gate of their district. Most graveyards, however, lie outside the city, either fenced in atop hills, or in gated crypts.

ORCS, HALF-ORCS, AND HUMANS IN GATE PASS

Gate Pass freely accepts orcs as citizens, in stark contrast to most other human settlements, and many have adapted well to the civilized life that is so different from their tribal culture.

Gate Pass is also widely known as a haven for half-orcs, and many come to the city to find their identity. In the formative years of the city, the half-orcs' origins were hotly debated and both orcs and humans questioned their standing. For humans, half-orc signaled a lesser breed, and became a pejorative phrase. The orcs, however, saw an increase in their influence and power and elevated the odd race. The divisions between all three races were wide, but in the earlier battles for Gate Pass, the half-orcs fought and bled like the rest and the walls of prejudice fell quickly. Today, there is little prejudice and the half-orc population enjoys an equal stand amongst the humans and orcs.

WALLS, GATES, AND DISTRICTS

With all the jaw about Gate Pass, me's thought that it was somethin' mag. But it's same as other runvilles; all innocents and cool ladies and budes. Everyone's a pigeon, just like elsewhere; and now I'm here fighting a war...

... but I must say the districts impress me, each a half mile wide and walled all around — over a dozen of them. I could climb the walls easily enough; they're only about thirty feet tall and made of hewn stone, but those grates at the top stick out — I would have to be a far better acrobat. I wish there were some rooftops near the walls, but there's nothing within ten feet. This is probably by design. Maybe a massive ladder, like Rory suggested, would work, but finding the timber would be hard and the Ragesians would be quite suspicious.

So, I think my focus must be on the gates. Steeleye is right; they're all similar in design. A pair of reinforced wooden doors 20 feet tall by 8 wide stay open in the day and closed at night. There is a small steel access door to allow passage for individuals after sunset, and I've never seen vehicles or beasts allowed through at night. There are the standard arrow slits and murder holes where the gate is, but they are easily avoided. The guards are so typical: they never think of guarding the gatehouse as heavily as the gate. Even with 8 guards inside, it should be easy to sneak around from the window and leave through the other side...

... the Rags are so heddypeaked. We'll get them feet wabblers hiking soon.

— Kerain, King of Rogues
Private journal, written during
the Ragesian occupation

Gate Pass is divided into districts. Each district is about a half mile square with natural stone walls to the north and south and inner walls to the east and west.

NORTH AND SOUTH WALLS

The northern and southern borders of the city have walls built from the natural cliffs, averaging 40 feet tall. A district usually has a small gate either to the north or south, and a wide swath of clear land (about 30 feet) on the wall's outer side which makes any approach by an individual easy to see. The walls are only a token defense, since a devoted military press could easily overwhelm them, but Gate Pass relies on the fact that reaching it through the mountains is slow and treacherous.

Only a handful of districts have gates that lead to actual roads, and most of these are used for deliveries by farmers and miners. Each day groups of Gate Pass soldiers patrol the northern and southern borders, looking for signs of illegal passage and occasionally apprehending criminals who try to hide in the craggy hills.

EAST AND WEST WALLS

The Gate Pass inter-district walls are 30 feet tall, 6 feet thick, and made of hewn stone. Scaling a wall requires a series of Athletics (DC 20) checks to reach the grate (at 30 feet). An Acrobatics (DC 25) check is needed to gain the top of the grate from underneath. Each side is symmetrical, so the same checks would be done on the other side. None of the buildings near the walls are more than two-stories, so a long leap towards a grate would require an Athletics (DC 30) check, then an Acrobatics (DC 25) check to grab and hold on to a grate. The jump might be noisy, so a Stealth –5 check against a nearby guard's Perception is needed to avoid being heard.

TYPICAL GATES

A small guardhouse, which extends outward over the gate, is large enough to comfortably hold eight soldiers. The floor has murder holes and there are arrow slits along the outside walls. Stairs on the inside wall (the center-most side) lead to the upper barracks and a window that can be squeezed through allows a guard to see the area around the gate. More guards typically watch the ground level by day.

Passing between districts is relatively easy if one takes the main thoroughfare during the

day, though the guards are known to perform random inspections. The High District, in the center of the city, is much more heavily guarded: typically twice the usual number of guards is on hand, and those guards have orders to randomly inspect someone every few minutes (especially those who look like outsiders).

THE PASS GATES

Most traffic passes through the easternmost and westernmost districts, which have major gates that lead out of the city to Shahalesti and Ragesia respectively. These gates are much more heavily guarded: the exits have two sets of doors with a wide kill zone between them, and city taxes pay for a variety of magical defenses on the gates.

GHETTOS

In a few districts are found smaller walled areas populated predominantly by a single race. Most common of these ghettos are those of the elves, who tend to shun outsiders. Elvish ghettos are renowned for having no visible entrances through their walls — all the doors are secret, which elves can intuitively notice.

CITY HISTORY AND MYTHS

We stand at a crossroad of destiny. Our future is defined by the lessons of the past and the course of our present. Two nations stand ready to take our hope from us and battle to this very minute with us — even though we are not at war.

Scoff if you will, but we are in a battle. It's not fought with sword and bow, but with ideas; the idea that we are only happy when we are equal; the idea that we must be neighborly to those in need at the expense of our own; the idea that the needs of the many outweigh the one.

What good is a collective destiny if yours is destroyed? What benefit does giving one penny to the poor give? What peace do we secure if we trade and barter with the Shahalesti and the Ragesians... None!

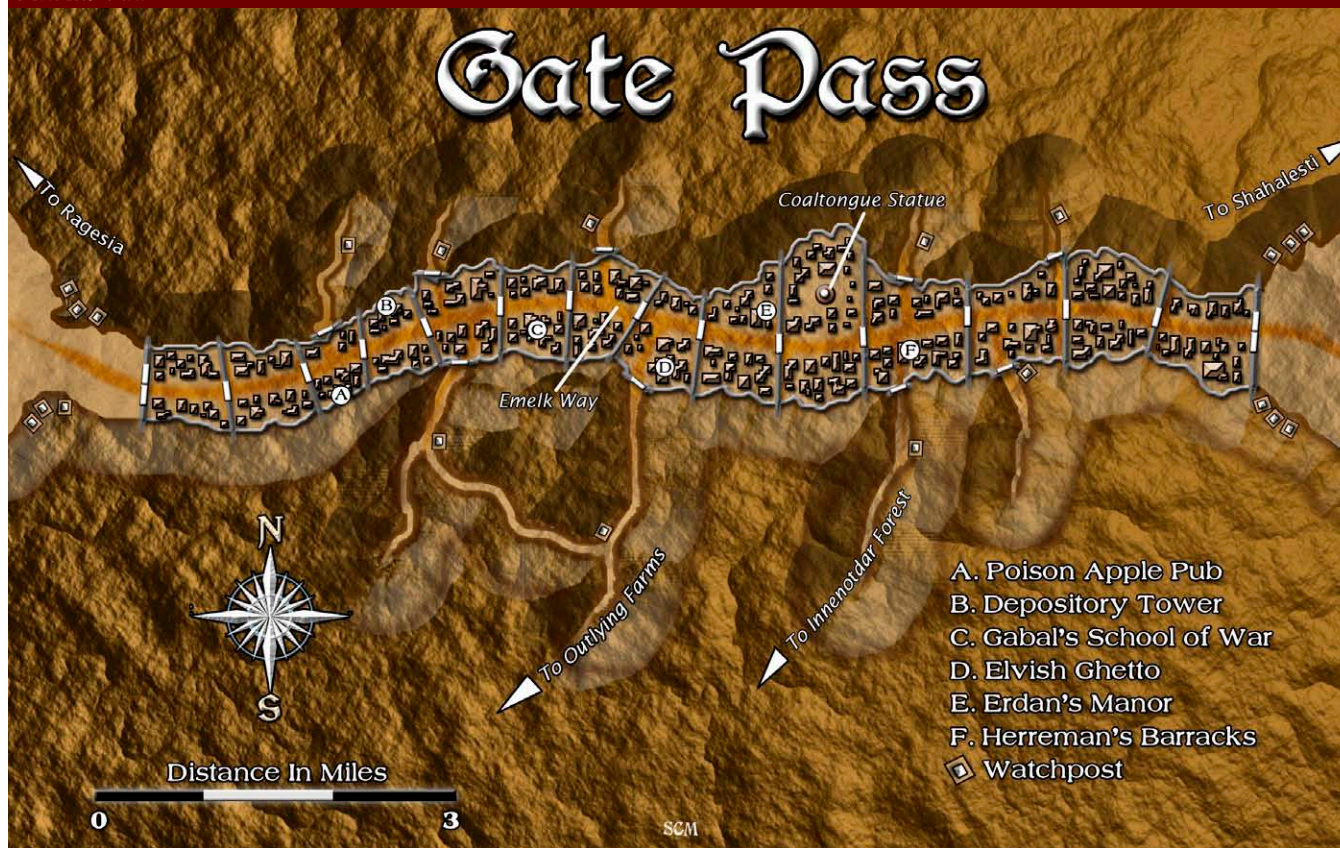
Remember! Remember the lessons of forty years ago. Strength is saintly! Resist and thrive!

— Helda Claeacall

Sermon to the faithful in Stronghold,
temple to the god of Strength

Gate Pass has the distinction of being the only city to successfully drive out occupation

PLAYERS' MAP



by the Ragesian Empire. Forty years ago, Emperor Coaltongue defeated the city's army, set up a military government, and erected a 90-foot-tall statue of himself in the grand square on Summer's Bluff before moving on to his next conquest. For two years, citizens waged an insurgency against the occupying army, until finally Coaltongue decided the city wasn't worth the loss of men.

Shahalesti and Ragesia, once allies, were approaching open war, and Coaltongue declared that he would withdraw from Gate Pass if the Lord of Shahalesti agreed to leave the city as a neutral buffer between their two nations. The elves agreed, the city celebrated its victory, and profit from trade between the two nations began to flow.

The city still sports numerous indications of the occupation, and many citizens purchase busts or paintings of the aged emperor, as if both to mock the Ragesians for their failure and to respect Coaltongue's wisdom in deciding to leave their city alone. Even the emperor's statue remains; it is decorated and painted gaudily on various holidays.

Because of his name, Drakus Coaltongue is often associated with a myth that is native to

Gate Pass and Ragesia, that of the Dragon and the Eagle. A series of myths tell of an ancient time when the lands that are now Ragesia and its neighbors were the domain of four elemental spirits — the Tidereaver Kraken, the Worldshaper Worm, the Flamebringer Dragon, and the Stormchaser Eagle, and these four beings are common motifs in the art and architecture of Gate Pass (as well as in Ragesia). Some famous myths are presented in the sidebar on the following page.

ORGANIZATIONS AND POWER GROUPS

CITY COUNCIL

The government of Gate Pass is a council of representatives from each of the districts and a few other locations, with a city governor chosen every ten years. Many different groups hold sway with the government, ranging from citizen groups to wealthy merchants to religious and military groups.

One of the more colorful characters in the council is Erdan Menash, a former merchant and tailor who used to sell well-crafted but ridiculous-looking gear to adventurers, with

the goal of making sure everyone knew he was the one sponsoring their heroism. His personal manor is painted vivid green, yellow, and purple.

The current governor is Merrick Hurt, a half-orc who has kept relationships with Ragesia warm in the past, though many worry he will be too agreeable to demands by the new ruler of Ragesia. Rumors say that he bitterly loathes elves and eladrin and that he has a vast lexicon of insults for them, a vice that relatively few in the city worry about.

THE TEMPLES

The religious community of Gate Pass is diverse, owing to the interaction of cultures flowing through the city. Eight major temples represent the religious core of the community, and though each religion has its own interests, they share common ground through the annual Festival of Dreams, during which the temples all briefly work to provide for the greater good.

Numerous temples of smaller religions dot the city, and though they lack the same sway as the major eight, they still put a lot of effort into New Year's festivities.



SELECTED REGIONAL MYTHS

The Wavering Maiden

This myth tells how the Tidereaver Kraken sought to explore the land by making a human body for itself out of the surface of the seas. In the form of a beautiful young woman with rolling black hair, the Kraken explored the world. However, because the tide is not constant, sometimes her fake form would pull away, and the Kraken would be forced to spend an evening in a lake or river in its true form. The myth is a series of comic events based around numerous suitors who fall in love with the Kraken in its woman form, and who often seek to destroy it in its Kraken form.

The Trilling Stone

"The Trilling Stone" tells of how the Worldshaper Worm sought to prove its superiority to the Stormchaser Eagle by

creating a song more powerful than the Eagle's thunder. The myth explains the various monsters that live in the depths of the world, saying that they were lured by the Worm's eerie, whistling song, only to be trapped when the arrogant Worm decided to sing even louder, causing an earthquake. This, it is said, is why the bodies of the dead are filled with worms when they are found in the ground.

The Aquiline Heart

This myth is a morality tale about the dangers of both pride and power. The Flamebringer Dragon had never, after many years of chase, been able to catch the Stormseeker Eagle, so it preyed instead on the Eagle's pride, bragging that the Eagle was too weak and cowardly to ever chase the Dragon. The angered Eagle pursued the

Dragon, and did not realize until too late that it had been tricked into flying down a tunnel into the depths of the world, where the Eagle did not have enough room to maneuver.

The Dragon bit the Eagle's throat and began to drink its blood for its power, when the Worldshaper Worm came upon the scene. The Worm was blind, but the Dragon knew that it could feel the beating hearts of both the Dragon and the Eagle. To avoid its treachery being discovered, the Dragon tore out the Eagle's still-beating heart and hid it in a place from where it would never be tempted to retrieve it.

The myth of the Aquiline Heart explains how dragons became the strongest creatures in the world and teaches that those with too much power risk being turned upon by those around them.



THE FESTIVAL OF DREAMS

Though Gate Pass has its share of holidays, the most prominent is the Festival of Dreams, a holy day observed by all of the city's major temples, taking place on New Year's Day. Parades march from either end of the city, stopping at the grand square on Summer's Bluff just before sunset for a ceremony in which the high priests of each of eight different temples "offer up the dreams of the people."

Every citizen is encouraged to write a prayer or hope on a slip of paper and place it in a small clay urn, which the city produces by the thousands every year. People deliver urns to Summer's Bluff in the days leading up to the festival, and on the holiday itself, each high priest chooses one from amid the thousands. Each breaks open his or

her urn and reads the prayer held within, then pledges to fulfill that dream if possible during the next year. Selfish requests are frowned upon, and often the city takes great glee in perverting the words of selfish prayers, fulfilling the adage "be careful what you wish for."

The rest of the urns are left in the center of the square, and citizens are encouraged to pick one up and try to fulfill someone else's wish. The morning after the festival, those left unopened are carted en masse to the countless small caves that dot the cliffs around the city, where they are buried. Many folk tales involve stories of these buried dreams coming to life and bringing good fortune, though most adults of the city just view these as merely superstition.

MAJOR TEMPLES

THE SARASWATIN

Library of the God of Knowledge

Located in Summer's Bluff, this four-story building is the central repository of knowledge for the city. Along with stacks and cubbyholes full of tomes and scrolls, the building has an art gallery and a five-hundred-seat theater.

Researchers using the library are expected to offer 1 gp to the god of knowledge, as well as give generous tips to the many librarians who keep things organized and easy to find.

MERCINEUM

Temple of the Healing God

This temple is a small, twenty-foot circular building of ancient design. Once there were multiple temples across the city, many quite large that served as hospitals and clinics for the citizens, but this simple building was considered the holiest of all those. Its veneration is related to the miracle of Tench Marber, an event that took place forty years ago during the Ragesian occupation.

Coaltongue declared the predominant Mercinea Church a heretical cult and attempted to replace the sect with the Ragesian Hospitalers. Within a month of the invasion, all the temples were converted to the Hospitalers, with the exception of the small Mercineum.

The head priest of the Mercineum, Tench Marber, was unwilling to relinquish control to the Ragesian clergy and simply sat on the center altar as the Hospitalers demanded he leave. Tench declared that he would not leave; instead, he would stay on as a reminder to all that the Hospitalers were not truly blessed by the gods.

The Ragesian healers, outraged at his insolence, tried to rush inside the building and attack, but they were mysteriously blocked at the door. No magic or any other power could gain entrance, so the invading priests decided to wait until Tench either left or died before they took possession of the temple. Seizing an opportunity, the besieged priest made a proposal: if, after a year and a day, Tench was still alive within the temple, the Ragesians would acknowledge the god's blessing on the Mercinea Church. They agreed, and the bargain was struck.

For a full year, Tench sat, neither eating nor sleeping, but he lived, and on the last day, the frantic Hospitalers waited until the sun set, which would mark the end of the agreed-upon time period. As the last rays of light slipped

beyond the horizon, Tench stood up and walked to the exit, the bargain won.

From that day on, the Ragesians grudgingly recognized the church, and acknowledged the god's blessing. It is suggested by historians that the downfall of Coaltongue's control of the city started with this miracle. A few living resistance fighters agree, noting that the Mercineum provided a safe haven for the resistance to gather and plan, free from the probing eyes of the Ragesian priests.

Today, there are no priests of the Mercinea Church in Gate Pass. A new order, the Aquiline Cross, has been around for a decade and uses all the facilities of the old religion. There are differences between the old church and the new order, but most folk don't notice.

STRONGHOLD

Temple of the Strength Goddess

This medium-sized temple is located one district in from the western gate. Helda Claeacall, the priestess, also serves on the City Council. She preaches that "Strength is Sainly" and that people must choose their own way in life. Once a rallying cry for the occupied city, the phrase is now sneered at, as Gate Pass's cultural attitude leans towards government direction of individual lives.

THE BACCHANAL

Inn of the God of Revelry

This is one of the fastest-growing cults within Gate Pass. The temple is styled like a huge beer hall and worship is a rowdy affair with dancing, drinking and song. Once a week, the building opens and for a few coppers tithe, adherents can enjoy limitless food and drink. Many tavern-keepers have seen their profits drop as a result and have voiced their opinions to the city council.

Shakur Biggs, the head priest, is currently the master of ceremonies for this year's festival. He was apparently planning to head a large musical performance, but his plans have been dampened by the threat of a hostile Ragesia.

DASSEN STONE

Temple to the Dwarf God of Ancestors and Temple to the God of Battle

Second only to the Saraswatin in size, this temple serves as two temples now that the dwarf population is almost completely gone from the city. The large edifice also houses the public works offices. Lessons in fighting and leadership

are regularly offered and the city guard is often seen training there. Rumors that the dwarves keep treasures mined from the deep during the construction of Gate Pass abound.

SHRINE TO THE GOD OF SORCERY

Located across the street from Gabal's School, this shrine is a holdover from the Ragesian occupation. Its existence is a sore point with Gabal, who hates the warlock and sorcerer philosophy, so it is frequently the target of "stray" spells. It is uncertain how many sorcerers live in Gate Pass, but they have considerable influence on the City Council, largely through the actions of the Shrine's President (no one is sure what that term means within the council), Gratanus Helicomb.

FERTILE FIELDS

Temple to the Goddess of Hearth and Home

Simply constructed, this building is a favorite meeting place of the farmers and ranchers of the outlying area. The city council almost always bows to the wisdom of the temple elders, especially after the food riots of twenty years ago, when a gate tax was imposed on all people and animals (even dead ones) entering the city. The farmers revolted and stopped delivering goods and supplies. A week later, the situation within Gate Pass was so desperate that the townsfolk rushed the council and deposed them. The tax was instantly repealed. Since then, a temple elder has always been assigned to the council to represent the population outside the walls.

THE MILITARY

While the Gate Pass military answers to the city council, their opinion carries great weight given how much attention the city pays to its defense. Gate Pass's military is trained in urban warfare and takes advantage of enclosed terrain. Commander Harmand Fletcher, a veteran of the rebellion against Ragesia, recently retired as leader of the armed forces; his replacement, Brant Sawman, is if anything even more gruff and brooding than his predecessor.

A small unit of twenty griffon riders patrols the far reaches of Gate Pass's domain, but otherwise the city has little in the way of a cavalry tradition.

GABAL'S SCHOOL

Gabal, a famed evoker who helped drive the Ragesians out forty years ago, maintains a school of war. This large cluster of squat towers

connected by covered bridges and surrounded by a moat and fence is jokingly known as The Castle. Gabal's students — identifiable by their red robes — are generally viewed as arrogant and hot-tempered, but their mentor forces them to sell their services for low prices, particularly in matters of defense and construction, and a handful of wizards serve in the city military.

Gabal is said to scorn magic-users who do not study spellbooks for their powers, and has a particular dislike for sorcerers and warlocks, commonly saying he doesn't trust people who have that much charisma. Charm is a personality flaw Gabal proudly lacks.

THIEVES' GUILD

Everyone knows that thieves operate in the city, often with the aid of bribed councilmen who turn blind eyes. The thieves tend to prey on wealthy merchants, especially foreigners, and so many commoners view them favorably.

One particularly well-known rogue, a dashing scoundrel named Rantle, came to fame because of an elaborate confidence game. One night, when his scam was near fruition, he was with his mark, a merchant, when she was attacked by a trio of common thugs who intended to have their way with her. Rantle fought them off, and then stayed around to protect her while the city guard arrived, even though he knew he would be recognized and arrested. Public support for his heroism got him pardoned, and many people have begun calling for him to join the city council.

It is said the clientele of One-to-Go, a tavern in one of Gate Pass's slums, is composed entirely of former thieves who have lost a hand as punishment for stealing.

THE RESISTANCE

Devoted to keeping the city of Gate Pass free from the rule of both Ragesia and Shahalesti, the resistance is composed of a huge variety of people from many of countries, since many nations have a vested interest in keeping the current balance of power. Mostly they work to bolster pride among the citizens of Gate Pass, though occasionally a spy is turned over to the authorities by unknown persons, and the resistance is credited with the capture.

Many farmers and ranchers who live in the mountains surrounding the city claim to have spoken to members of the resistance, who encouraged them to be prepared to fight to defend their lands.

SECTION TWO: NEW RULES

THE MAGIC-RICH LANDS OF THE BURNING Sky have a complex history that will unfold as you play in the saga. If you are making new characters native to the Lands, a number of new options and rules are available to help them fit well within this world.

The Lands are far more dangerous than the average D&D world. Spells can affect whole cities, monsters are rumored to be able to possess and charm for years, and ancient artifacts and devices frighten the gods. The Lands are harsh and unremitting and heroes are often blessed beyond normal character development. What follows in this section is a list of new options, powers, equipment, and physical differences from the standard D&D world. The rules do not reveal every mystery of the Lands, but new characters will have enough information to feel truly immersed in a unique campaign world. As you progress through the *War of the Burning Sky* campaign saga, many more new powers, feats, and items will become available to you. Your GM will inform you when this happens.

As you create new characters and increase in levels, use this section as a reference alongside the core books.



CHARACTER RACES AND BACKGROUNDS

Within the Lands, the great races have special histories and regional strongholds. If you create a new character, you may wonder where others of your race may be found. The following section identifies the areas where each race is concentrated and some likely motivations for adventuring. Those races not mentioned exist in the Lands, but are exceptional to see and require a more customized treatment by the GM and player. The GM may allow background benefits for each race as described in the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2. If you wish to play a gnome or half-orc, please refer to their descriptions in the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2.

- ♦ **Dragonborn:** A few small clans of dragonborn inhabit the mountains between the Ostalin and Ragesian border. Loosely in communication with each other, the predominant goal is to solidify the creation of a new republic of dragonborn within the mountains. Those who adventure often do so to lay foundations for future diplomacy, learn and improve on the latest technologies of war and combat, or seek riches and glory to advance the dragonborn legacy and become the future leaders of the new empire.
- ♦ **Dwarves:** Once plentiful and well represented across the lands, the mighty dwarf nation has become insular and isolated from the rest of the world. Those who venture beyond the tunnels and caverns of their mountain realm (near Gate Pass), do so in an effort to fight against the resignation that seems to be overtaking the older generations. Convinced that the isolationism is just as imprisoning as their ancient servitude to the giants, the adventurous dwarves venture out to build an inspiring legacy, rekindle the pride of the Dwarven nation, or restore faith in the ancient gods that seem to be forgotten in this modern day.
- ♦ **Eladrin:** Eladrin are found in Shahalesti lands. In the Lands of the Burning

Sky, "Shahalesti" is synonymous with "eladrin." Always vigilant, the Shahalesti remember well the conquests of Emperor Coaltongue. Sorcery, spying, and military/mercenary prowess are all reasons for a Shahalesti to adventure in the Lands.

- ♦ **Elves:** Of late, the elven tribes have come to fear Ragesian encroachment upon their forests. While the Shahalesti are more or less united in that they jealously guard their fey-touched land, the elves are divided: some seek isolation, others want to establish new alliances, and still others simply see a changing world and desire to be a part of it. All these reasons bring out many elves to the cities and towns where adventures often begin.
- ♦ **Gnomes:** If history is any indicator of the future, the gnomes continue to seek being ignored as a threat. Seeing the success of Coaltongue in using magic to secure his throne, the gnomes of the Lands strive to gather all manner of history and magic in order to avoid becoming slaves to the might and power of Ragesia ... or Shahalesti. To the gnomes, knowing how one could capture and enslave another allows the knowledgeable to avoid the possibility altogether. Their quick wit and seeming mockery of the Ragesians and the Shahalesti is vexing to orcs and eladrin alike. Most gnomes come from Shahalesti, but some small groups can be found in almost any land. If a gnome character encounters other gnomes, he will strive to spend at least a few hours with his brethren before continuing to adventure.
- ♦ **Half-Elves:** More fully integrated with their human side, most half-elves come from the great cities of the Lands: from Gate Pass and Seaquen to the many cities of Ostalin, Dassen, and Sindaire. The motivation for adventure is as varied in a half-elf as it is in a human. Some do see the latest bellicose attitude of the Ragesians troubling and seek to help fend them off in the impending conflict.

- ♦ **Half-Orcs:** No matter what their racial origin may be, the half-orcs of the Lands enjoy a unique position; fully realized citizens in Ragesia, Gate Pass and Dassen. The other kingdoms are less cordial, and so most half-orc adventurers are found from the middle part of the Lands. Always struggling with their heritage, the adventuring life is often a way to throw off subtle, lingering prejudices or find a place in a group of allies and equals.
- ♦ **Halflings:** Found mostly along the rivers and byways of Ostalin and Sindaire, the halflings of the Lands sometimes leave the west in search of adventure and treasure. Though once halflings were generally quite well traveled, the unrest in Ostalin has concentrated the population in that country because it presents the best hope for them to start a nation of their own. As the country continues in strife, the halflings work with some factions in Sindaire to destabilize the kingdom even further.
- ♦ **Humans:** As the greatest population in the lands, human characters can come from anywhere and their motivations for adventure are limitless. Those originating from the Gate Pass area have access to some ready-made regional benefits, and the city is diverse enough for almost any character type to be made.
- ♦ **Tieflings:** Ostalin is a haven for tieflings. The designs of Ostalin's ambitious ruler, Khagan Onamdammmin, have created a sort of demand for the skills of those who struggle with their darker nature, while the unstable government makes it hard for anyone to act against the tieflings as they strive to survive in a world that doesn't trust them. In recent decades, the gregarious nature of Gate Pass merchants traveling the Lands has impressed some tieflings, and a few have set up a small merchant house within the fifth district of the capital, the mountain city of Kistan. The small but cosmopolitan city offers charms and temptations that make it enticing to those who struggle between good and evil and, though small, the merchant house is growing, both in legitimate trade and in their less noble underworld dealings.

GATE PASS CHARACTER CREATION BENEFITS

The following rewards are available to characters invested in the campaign's conflict from the beginning. The first adventure, *The Scouring of Gate Pass*, introduces the player characters to a variety of organizations in the city of Gate Pass. At the GM's option, if you create a character with one of the affiliations listed below, you gain the associated feat as a bonus, in addition to your normal feats at 1st level. You may also select one of these feats normally. These affiliations are used *instead* of the Backgrounds rules found in the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2.

- ♦ **City Council:** While most of the politicians in Gate Pass wish to surrender to Ragesia, some want to take a stand. A character involved in the government and politics of Gate Pass gains **Civic Minded** as a bonus feat.
- ♦ **The Temples:** The religious community of Gate Pass fears the heretical zealotry of the Ragesian inquisitors. An associate of one of the temples gains **Blessed by Dreams** as a bonus feat.
- ♦ **The Military:** Elements of the Ragesian military are displeased with their orders and their new ruler Leska, while commanders of Gate Pass's military desire reinforcements. A member of either military gains **Mounted Combat** (see the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK) as a bonus feat.
- ♦ **Gabal's School:** Gabal, a famed evoker, maintains a school of war, and he intends to make a stand against Ragesia. An apprentice of Gabal gains **Student of War** as a bonus feat.
- ♦ **Thieves' Guild:** The guild in Gate Pass is nervous about the prospect of Ragesian martial law. One of their members or agents gains **Thieves' Guild Sympathizer** as a bonus feat.
- ♦ **The Resistance:** A small group of Gate Pass natives are taking up arms to defend their home against both Ragesia and Shahalesti. A member of this group gains **Blade of the Resistance** as a bonus feat.



BACKGROUND SKILLS

Characters are more than combat prowess or their ability to climb; they have interests, hobbies, and backgrounds. These things fill out the character, giving him more depth.

Every character in the *War of the Burning Sky* campaign saga gets one free bonus skill. This skill is a new skill created by the player with the GM's guidance. It should answer the question "What did your character do before he became an adventurer?" or "What does your character do for pleasure?" Examples include singing, carpentry, painting — even origami!

PLANNING YOUR CHARACTER

Later in the *War of the Burning Sky* campaign saga, you will gain access to advanced character options. These include paragon paths such as Disciple of the East Wind, Aspirant of the West Wind, Solei Palancis, and Spellduelist. Some of the feats in this chapter are prerequisites for these paragon paths: Initiate of the East Wind, Initiate of the West Wind, Shining Warrior, and Spellduelist, in particular.

You will see these, and more, in the upcoming player's supplement for paragon level characters.

These skills tend to be craft, profession, or performance related.

The GM and the player decide together which ability score is appropriate for that skill, and the character receives it as a Trained skill at creation.

SPELLDUELING

The students at Gabal's school in Gate Pass — as well as the mages of Lyceum — practice spelldueling as a way to better their art. The techniques of spelldueling are particularly useful in combat against inquisitors. Students of these schools may also select Primordial as a bonus language.

Spellduelists are introduced to the Spell-duelist and Spellduelist's Counterspell feats and may learn a unique spell. There are rumors that inquisitors have perverted versions of these feats and spells in their repertoire.



CHARACTER CLASSES

All classes described in the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK and the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2 are available in the Lands of the Burning Sky. Additional powers unique to the war-ravaged world are provided here for four character classes. As the campaign progresses, other powers may be revealed; your GM will inform you when they are available.

CLERIC

Reactive Counterspell

With a dismissive wave, your opponent's spell loses power and dissipates into nothingness.

Cleric Utility 6 ♦ Divine

Immediate Interrupt; Encounter

Trigger You are hit by an arcane spell

Personal

Effect Your attacker rolls his attack roll twice, using the lower of the two rolls as his actual attack roll. This effect only applies to attacks against you; if the attacker's spell includes additional targets, his attack rolls against them are unaffected.

Special You spend your next standard action doing nothing.

SORCERER

Ghost Phase Attack

A force missile phases in and out of reality, passing through the target's cover and protection.

Sorcerer Attack 7 ♦ Arcane, Implement

Standard Action; Encounter

Ranged 10

Target One creature

Attack CHA vs. Reflex; *ghost phase attack* ignores any penalty for cover or superior cover

Damage 1d10 + CHA modifier

Hit If the target is insubstantial, it loses the insubstantial quality until the end of your next turn. Otherwise, it is slowed.

WARLOCK

Curse of Flesh

With a shout, you force the glimmering creature to manifest itself.

Warlock (Star) Attack 9 ♦ Arcane, Implement,

Polymorph

Standard Action; Daily

Ranged 10

Target One insubstantial creature

Attack CHA vs. Fortitude

Hit The target loses the insubstantial quality until the end of your next turn.

Sustain Minor You sustain the effect until the end of your next turn.

WIZARD

Gabal's Superior Missile

With a wizard's sight, you become instantly aware of every foe around you and launch bolts of force their way.

Wizard Attack 1 ♦ Arcane, Force, Implement
Standard Action; Encounter

Close Blast 5

Target(s) Up to three creatures within blast

Attack INT vs. Reflex

Damage 2d4 + INT modifier force

Special The bolts of force can be cast as if the targets had no cover or concealment as long as a clear path within the blast can be traced to the target. A clear path is one where line of effect can be successively determined from one square to the next starting from you and ending at the target. You do not need to have line of sight. This means that the bolt can turn corners and go through windows.

This spell can only be learned at Gabal's School of War in Gate Pass (see page 9). Consult your GM for details.

Wayfarer's Step

You create a doorway before the target and he steps through, reappearing somewhere else nearby.

Wizard Utility 2 ♦ Arcane, Teleportation
Standard Action; Daily

Ranged 10

Target You or one ally

Effect Teleport the target creature 5 squares.

Special This spell can only be learned from the Wayfarers (see page 17). Consult your GM for details.

Enforced Flesh

You manipulate the planar energies surrounding a creature, making it painful to stay insubstantial.

Wizard Attack 13 ♦ Arcane, Implement,
Polymorph

Standard Action; Encounter

Ranged 10

Target One insubstantial creature

Attack INT vs. Fortitude

Damage 2d6 + INT modifier psychic

Hit The target loses the insubstantial quality until the end of your next turn.

FEATS

HEROIC TIER FEATS

BLADE OF THE RESISTANCE [GATE PASS]

Fed up with Ragesian and Shahalesti oppression, you wage a discreet war against them.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Insight checks. Once per encounter you can select an intelligent creature who has dealt damage to you or your allies as your preferred foe. Until the end of the encounter, you gain a +2 bonus to your damage rolls against your preferred foe.

The foe you select need not have dealt the damage during the current encounter; a previous encounter will suffice.

Special: You gain this feat as a bonus feat if your character begins at 1st level affiliated with the Gate Pass resistance.

BLESSED BY DREAMS [GATE PASS]

You have helped the Gate Pass temples to manage the annual Festival of Dreams holiday parade, and last year you were promised good fortune.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Religion checks. Once per day you may reroll a single saving throw made by you or any ally within 5 squares of you, taking the second result instead. This saving throw uses your own bonuses or penalties to the roll, even if you are making it for an ally. Using this feat does not trigger any effects normally triggered by making a saving throw.

Special: You gain this feat as a bonus feat if your character begins at 1st level affiliated with the Gate Pass temples.

CAVALRY ERRANT

You are (or were) a member of Ragesia's or Gate Pass's military where you trained as a cavalryman.

Prerequisite: Mounted Combat feat

Benefit: You gain the ability to help your mounted allies. As a minor action, you may apply your Mounted Combat feat to an ally within 5 squares of you, giving him the benefit until the end of your next turn.

Special: You gain Mounted Combat (see the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK) as a bonus feat if your character begins at 1st level affiliated with the Gate Pass military.

CIVIC MINDED [GATE PASS]

Involved in the politics of Gate Pass, you know your way around the city's laws and government.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks. Whenever an ally within 5 squares of you uses the Aid Another action, the bonus he provides increases by +1. Up to 3 allies with the Civic Minded feat can contribute for any one skill check.

Special: You gain this feat as a bonus feat if your character begins at 1st level affiliated with the Gate Pass City Council.

INITIATE OF THE EAST WIND

Your vicious, tempestuous fighting style makes you a storm upon your foes.

Prerequisites: Trained in Arcana, studied at the Monastery of Two Winds

Benefit: Your unarmed attacks deal an extra 1d6 lightning damage.

Special: This feat is a prerequisite for the Disciple of the East Wind paragon path, which will be introduced later in the saga.

INITIATE OF THE WEST WIND

Your graceful, windy fighting style makes you a breeze among your foes.

Prerequisites: Trained in Acrobatics, studied at the Monastery of Two Winds

Benefit: If you are adjacent to only one enemy at the start of your turn, you may shift 1 square as a free action, as the first action during your turn.

Special: This feat is a prerequisite for the Aspirant of the West Wind paragon path, which will be introduced later in the saga.

MORAL INSIGHT

You gain insight into the moral force of people and things.

Prerequisite: Trained in Religion

Benefit: You can use your Religion skill to identify the alignment of sentient creatures and detect the presence of good and evil things in an area. The Religion skill is used in a similar fashion to the way Arcana is used to Detect Magic. See the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK for more information.

Identify Alignment

One minute.

- ♦ **DC** 10 + Will defense of the creature. The creature must be able to speak a language.
- ♦ **Success** You correctly identify the alignment of the creature.
- ♦ **Failure** You identify the creature as being Unaligned and the creature detects the attempt to determine its alignment.

Detect Presence of Evil or Good

Standard action usable once per encounter (choose which alignment to detect).

- ♦ **Close** Burst ½ level
- ♦ **DC** 20 minus ½ the prominent power source's level.
- ♦ **Success** Evil or Good power is detected within the burst's area. The source is not defined.
- ♦ **Failure** No knowledge is gained.
- ♦ **Overwhelming Aura** If the level of the prominent power source is at least twice your level, you are stunned until the end of your next turn.

RAGESIAN WHIP PROFICIENCY [MARTIAL]

Prerequisite: DEX 13, martial power source

Benefit: You gain proficiency with the Ragesian whip (detailed on page 13). When using a Ragesian whip, you may choose to grab with it instead of inflicting damage. A grab attack with a Ragesian whip ignores its proficiency bonus and uses STR vs. Reflex; if you hit, the target is pulled into a space adjacent to you and is grabbed. You may not move, shift, or attack with the Ragesian whip while a target is grabbed.

SHINING WARRIOR [ELADRIN]

You possess the luminous power of the Solei Palancis, the elite warriors of the Shahalesti army.

Prerequisite: Eladrin, trained in Arcana

Benefit: If you wield a magical weapon that sheds light, you can choose to intensify that light, doubling its radius as a standard action once a day. The intensified light lasts until the end of the encounter. If you make a critical hit with your weapon while it is emitting intensified light, the creature struck is blinded until the end of your next turn.

In a brightly illuminated area, you gain a +2 bonus to saves against fear and negative energy. You cannot be dazed or blinded by bright light.

Special: This feat is a prerequisite for the Solei Palancis paragon path, which will be introduced later in the saga.

SPELLDUELIST [ARCANE]

You have studied the art of spell dueling, perhaps under the famed evoker Gabal in the small school he maintains in Gate Pass, or at the Lyceum academy in Seaquen.

Prerequisite: Arcane power source

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Bluff checks. You may negate an opportunity or immediate

action triggered by you, including a readied action. Make an opposed Bluff vs. passive Insight check before the action occurs. If you win, the action is negated — it is not expended and has no effect — otherwise, the action occurs normally. You may use this feat in an encounter a number of times equal to your INT bonus (minimum 1). This feat may be used only to negate actions by creatures; it cannot be used to negate actions by traps or hazards.

Special: This feat is a prerequisite for the Spellduelist paragon path, which will be introduced later in the saga.

SPELLDUELIST'S COUNTERSPELL [ARCANE]

Prerequisites: Arcane power source, DEX 15, trained in Insight

Benefit: You gain the *counterspell* feat power.

Counterspell

Feat Power ♦ No Keywords

Immediate Interrupt; Encounter

Trigger You are targeted by a spell

Personal

Effect If you choose, you may spend a healing surge to add $\frac{1}{2}$ your level + 1 to your defense against the spell. If you do this and the spell misses, it does no damage and has no effect on you, and it is expended as if it had been successfully cast. This failure includes powers with the Reliable keyword.

STUDENT OF WAR [GATE PASS]

You have studied the art of war at Gabal's wizard's school, and have practiced battling many foes at once.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to History checks. Additionally, you can strengthen your spells for use in large-scale battles. You gain a +1 bonus to your attack rolls with blast attacks.

Special: You gain this feat as a bonus feat if your character begins at 1st level affiliated with Gabal's School in Gate Pass.

THIEVES' GUILD SYMPATHIZER [GATE PASS]

You have had dealings with the Gate Pass thieves' guild, and you suspect they might owe you a favor, though it might not be safe to push your luck.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Bluff checks. Your experience as a lookout helps some of your allies stay more alert. Each ally within 3 squares of you gains a +2 bonus to their passive Perception check.

Special: You gain this feat as a bonus feat if your character begins at 1st level affiliated with the Gate Pass thieves' guild.

VOW OF HEALING

You have pledged yourself to heal all those in need, friend or foe.

Prerequisites: Trained in Heal, must be a member of the Aquiline Cross

Benefit: When you make a Heal check to administer first aid, add your CHA modifier to the hit points the character you aid regains from a second wind. You also gain a +2 feat bonus to Heal checks.

Special: You cannot refuse to heal any

injured living creature who asks you for healing, though you are not obligated to provide more than Vow of Healing, and you are not required to heal enemies unless they surrender and you are reasonably sure they cannot betray you. You cannot perform a *coup de grace* on a living creature, nor can you target damage against a dying living foe (you may deal damage to them with area attacks, though you must make a best effort to avoid doing so).

If you violate this oath, you lose the benefit of this feat for 24 hours. Repeated or flagrant transgressions can result in permanent loss of this benefit until you receive atonement.



EQUIPMENT

WEAPONS

RAGESIAN WHIP

One-handed superior melee weapon

Prof. +3

Damage 1d4

Price 1 gp

Weight 2 lb.

Group Flail

Properties Off-hand, reach

Special If you are proficient with the Ragesian whip, you may use it to make a grab attack. See the Ragesian Whip Proficiency feat on page 11.

ALCHEMICAL EQUIPMENT

SHATTERSPELL

Level 5

Category Volatile

Time 1 hour

Component Cost See below

Market Price 840 gp (difficult to find outside of Ragesia)

Key Skill Arcana (no check)

Shatterspell is a black compound infused with antimagic when extremely chilled. As it warms, it turns gaseous, so that when the vial is opened or shattered, it fills a burst with wispy black gas. If a vial of shatterspell takes any cold damage, the contents turn liquid again and remain so for one minute.

Shatterspell		Level 5+
Lvl 5	840 gp	Lvl 15 21,000 gp
Lvl 10	4,700 gp	Lvl 20 105,000 gp

Alchemical Item

Power (Consumable) Standard Action. As a gas, shatterspell creates a burst of magical disruption (Area Burst 1 within 10). A magical zone or area within the burst must make an unmodified saving throw or end immediately. The shatterspell burst lasts until the end of your next turn. If the magical zone or area overlaps the shatterspell burst, only the portion of the magical zone or area which intersects with the shatterspell burst is affected; outside the shatterspell burst, the magical zone or area continues normally.

Lvl 10: Saving throw penalty –2.

Lvl 15: Saving throw penalty –4.

Lvl 20: Saving throw penalty –6.

Power (Consumable, Potion) Standard Action. Made liquid and swallowed as a potion (see

above), shatterspell grants you resist 5 against damage from spells, lasting for 5 minutes or until the end of the encounter.

Lvl 10: Resist 10 against damage from spells.

Lvl 15: Resist 15 against damage from spells.

Lvl 20: Resist 20 against damage from spells.

MAGIC ITEMS

ARMS SLOT ITEMS

Potion Bracer Level 6

Item Slot Arms 1,800 gp

Property This bracer stores up to 10 potions or similarly sized items in an extradimensional space. You can retrieve any stored item from the *potion bracer* as a free action. You can only wear one *potion bracer* at a time; wearing a second causes both to cease functioning. (Most *potion bracers* are worn on the user's weapon arm so the user does not have to drop a weapon to retrieve a potion.) You may drink directly from the *potion bracer* as a minor action that provokes an opportunity attack.

WONDROUS ITEMS

Feather Token Level 4+

A small feather or scale of magical power that aids you in your quest.

Lvl 4 Anchor	40 gp	Lvl 10 Whip	200 gp
Lvl 6 Fan	75 gp	Lvl 12 Boat	500 gp
Lvl 8 Bird	125 gp	Lvl 16 Tree	1,800 gp

Wondrous Item

Power (Consumable) Minor Action. Hold the token and spend a healing surge. The token disintegrates, and releases its power, conjuring an object that performs a function based on its type.

Anchor Moors a craft in water so as to render it immobile for up to one day.

Bird Conjures a small flying creature (appropriate to the token source) that delivers a small written message unerringly to a designated target as would a carrier pigeon. The power lasts as long as it takes to carry the message.

Fan Forms a huge flapping fan, causing a breeze of sufficient strength to propel one ship (about 25 mph). This wind is not cumulative with existing wind speed. The token can, however, be used to lessen existing winds, creating an area of relative calm or lighter winds (wave size in a storm is

not affected). The fan can be used for up to 8 hours. It does not function on land.

Boat Conjures a boat capable of moving on water at a speed of 60 feet. It can carry eight horses and gear or thirty-two Medium characters or any equivalent combination. The boat lasts for one day.

Tree Conjures a great oak (5-foot diameter trunk, 60-foot height, 40-foot top diameter). This is an instantaneous effect.

Whip Forms a huge whip and wields itself against an opponent of your choosing within 5 squares of you. The whip remains for one encounter or 5 minutes.

✗ Dancing Whip (free, at-will) ◆ Weapon

+11 vs. AC, 1d6+1 damage or +5 vs. Reflex, grab (Medium-sized or smaller creature). The whip has a Reflex 16 and Fortitude 18 defense for the purposes of escaping a grab. It cannot be attacked or damaged and cannot damage or move an opponent while grabbing.

RITUALS

ARCANE SERVANT

Level 1

Component Cost 10 gp, plus a focus worth at least 30 gp

Market Price 50 gp

Category Creation

Key Skill Arcana (no check)

Time 10 minutes

Duration Through the next extended rest or until dismissed

A Medium-sized, invisible force performs small tasks at your command. It can fetch objects, open unstuck doors, move furniture (up to 100 pounds), make camp and perform basic functions like mending and cleaning. It may perform the same task repeatedly, but can only perform one task at a time. It is limited to tasks that require a skill check of DC 10 or less.

The arcane servant has a speed equal to the caster's native speed. It occupies no space and cannot attack or be attacked. It cannot move more than 20 spaces from the focus.

Focus: A small mannequin held in hand or otherwise in possession of a creature. The arcane servant will disappear if it fails an unmodified saving throw when its focus is abandoned or dropped. The saving throw is made each round that the focus is not in a creature's possession. If the mannequin is destroyed, any arcane servants bound to it will immediately disappear.

CONTINUAL LIGHT

Level 2

Component Cost 10 gp

Market Price 100 gp

Category Creation

Key Skill Arcana (no check)

Time 10 minutes

Duration 24 hours (special)

You imbue an object no larger than a fist with a torchlike glow that illuminates a 5 square radius with bright light.

Special: The ritual can be extended indefinitely by spending two healing surges during the casting.

DUELIST'S ETIQUETTE

Level 1

Component Cost 5 gp, plus 2 healing surges

Market Price 100 gp

Category Warding

Key Skill Arcana (no check)

Time 10 minutes

Duration 1 hour

The ritual's area (6 × 6 squares) is traced with a faintly glowing line of energy. The ritual

creates a subtle defensive barrier against magical attacks, magically muting all damage from spells and summoned creatures in the area of effect. Any creature reduced to 0 hit points within the spell's area is automatically knocked out.

Whenever a creature enters the warded area, it must consciously choose to accept this restriction, or else the spell ends. If at any time a creature inside the area wishes to no longer abide by the duelist's etiquette, he can spend a standard action to concentrate and end the ritual. All creatures in the area of effect are immediately aware the ritual has ended.

This ritual is primarily used to ensure that spell duels are not fatal, without forcing mages to hold back their strongest powers.

HALLOWED GROUND

Level 20

Component Cost 5,000 gp plus 5 healing surges

Market Price 25,000 gp

Category Warding

Key Skill Religion

Time 30 minutes

Duration 24 hours (special)

Hallowed Ground is mechanically identical to the Forbiddance ritual (see D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK), excepting its effects, which are as follows:

1. Good-aligned creatures gain a +2 bonus to all defenses.
2. Evil creatures cannot teleport in the burst area.
3. Charm attacks by evil creatures automatically fail.
4. Divine casters gain a +4 ritual bonus to Channel Divinity: Turn Undead rolls.
5. Creatures inside the burst cannot be turned into undead.

MAGICSENSE

The area shimmers and ripples as a magical item enters its covering area.

Level 5

Component Cost 100 gp

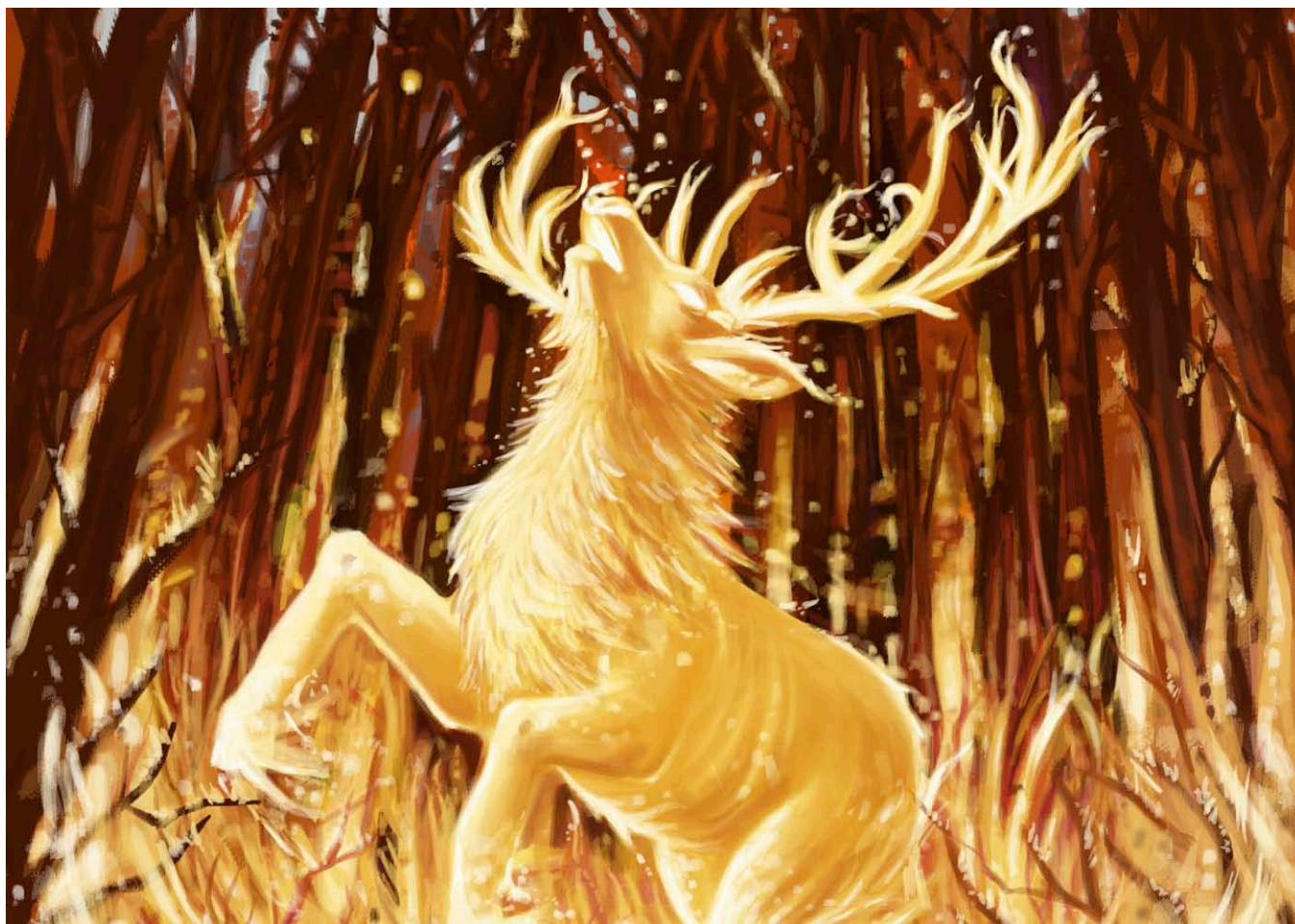
Market Price 250 gp

Category Divination

Key Skill Arcana

Time 1 hour

Duration 24 hours (special)



Any magical item entering the area begins to glow and sparkle.

Your Arcana check determines the size of the warded area, which is a burst. Use the same procedures as the Forbiddance ritual in the D&D 4E PLAYER'S HANDBOOK.

If the ritual's effect is sustained without interruption for a year and a day, the effect becomes permanent.

STAND THE HEAT

Level 8

Component Cost 135 gp

Market Price 3,400 gp

Category Warding

Key Skill Arcana or Nature

Time 10 minutes

Duration Special

When you perform this ritual, you can select up to eight recipients to receive the spell's benefits. Each recipient creature and all the equipment it carries suffers no harm from even extreme heat. Each can exist comfortably in temperatures as high as 500 degrees Fahrenheit. This protection is sufficient to endure the oven-like heat of a forest fire, but damage from actual fire, whether natural or magical, is treated normally.

A ritually affected creature that has ongoing fire damage (save ends) may use a move action to automatically save at the end of its turn.

Arcana Check	Effect Duration
14 or lower	2 hours
15–19	4 hours
20–24	8 hours
25–29	24 hours
30 or higher	72 hours

TRUE FORM

Level 6

Component Cost 140 gp

Market Price 600 gp

Category Divination

Key Skill Arcana or Religion

Time 1 minute

Duration 10 minutes

Within 20 squares of the ritual's casting, you see creatures' and objects' true forms and precise locations. Mundane concealment and cover remains effective and may hide creatures and items as normal. Illusions, transmutations, and invisibility are ignored and the actual shapes, sizes, and locations of magically modified things are revealed.

TELEPORTING TROUBLES

Since Coaltongue's rumored assassination, something has gone wrong with teleportation: teleporting couriers appear ablaze and die fiery deaths. Spellcasters at the Lyceum Academy in Seaquen and at Gabal's School of War are assiduously researching the mysterious cause of this problem, which they have dubbed the "Burning Sky." The effects of the Burning Sky (see below) have become common knowledge for all characters who can teleport.

The researchers believe that the Burning Sky is related to the unusual weather, which has taken a sudden and worrisome chill turn. Divinations regarding the weather seem to indicate that no spring is in sight for the Lands of the Burning Sky. Even without divinations, druids and others connected to the natural world sense something amiss with the coming winter, and the sky is filled with flocks of confused birds trying to flee a cold snap that is more severe than usual.

THE BURNING SKY

All powers with the Teleportation keyword deal 1 point of fire damage to the creature teleported for each square teleported, and the creature arrives ablaze. Arcane scholars suggest various methods for avoiding this damage, including transforming into a creature immune to fire or using a spell to grant fire resistance. After you teleport, and until the start of your next turn, your melee weapon gains a +5 fire damage bonus.

Teleporting 100 feet or more increases the fire damage, but not the accompanying damage bonus for melee weapons.

Distance	Damage
100–1,000 ft.	50 fire damage
1,000 ft.–1 mile	100 fire damage
1–10 miles	150 fire damage
10–100 miles	200 fire damage
100–1,000 miles	300 fire damage
1,000 miles or more	500 fire damage

THE HISTORY OF EMPEROR DRAKUS COALTONGUE AND THE TORCH OF THE BURNING SKY

The Old Dragon, some called him, since he seemed immortal and he only grew more cunning and powerful with age.

Decades ago, a warlord arose among the orc tribes of what is now Ragesia. Drakus Coaltongue, half-orc son of a human noblewoman, brought a level of patience and political cunning rarely seen among the savage orcs. He united many tribes, slew a gold dragon and took its child as a prize, and prepared his people for glory.

And then, to everyone's surprise, he did not sweep into human lands for a bloody but ultimately short-lived rampage. Instead, Coaltongue allied with various poor human nations, helping them drive back the predations of the strongest country in the region, Morrus. Coaltongue even gained the aid of the insular elves of Shahalesti, until finally he was ready to lead a coalition army against Morrus. For this great assault, Coaltongue revealed a devastatingly powerful artifact that would lead him to victory, the Torch of the Burning Sky.

The power of the Torch was to call down fire from the sky, and to carry Coaltongue's army hundreds of miles in an instant, plucking them up with one pillar of flame, and depositing them with another. Coaltongue and his allies easily defeated Morrus, and from the nation's burning remains, Coaltongue created a new kingdom for himself and his orcrish followers: Ragesia.

For a time, Emperor Coaltongue and his allies coexisted in relative peace. Coaltongue was content with his new homeland, and did not want to jeopardize it by reaching too far and falling before the might of many nations, as Morrus had fallen before him.

But slowly, almost surreptitiously, Ragesia expanded its borders. It took years for events to play out, and always in a way that made Ragesia's imperialism seem justified: either as a response to enemy attacks, or in the name of providing aid to another nation that was being threatened. With the benefit of hindsight, many suspect that somehow Coaltongue provoked these conflicts. Finally, when Coaltongue was far older than any half-orc had right to be, all the lands that had once belonged to his allies were his.

Recently, after nearly a decade of relative inactivity, Coaltongue offered to help the Exarchate of Sindaire put down a rebellion within its borders, and the nation nervously accepted, fearful of being swallowed up by another trick. What Coaltongue was planning may never be known, because a few weeks into his military campaign, something went wrong. Ragesia has not heard from its emperor in over two months, or if they have, they have hidden the news.

Some dread it, and some cautiously hope for it, but it seems the Old Dragon has been slain.

SECTION THREE: LANDS OF THE BURNING SKY

RAGESIA IS THE LARGEST NATION IN THE region, and four other nations commonly interact with it. The politics and history of the region are relatively simple, though the recent power vacuum in Ragesia threatens to make things much more complicated.

OVERVIEW

The Ragesian Empire lies in the northwest of the region, spanning several hundred miles north to south and east to west. To the east of Ragesia is the Shining Land of Shahalesti, a tenuous ally with whom relations have frayed of late. To the south lie the Exarchate of Sindaire, the Kingdom of Dassen, and the Khaganhold of Ostalin, three nations which so far have managed to avoid being conquered by Ragesia.

RAGESIA

The Ragesian Empire (capital city Ragos) is located on central lowlands dominated by many lakes. While the core of the empire is populated heavily by orcs and half-orcs, the outer regions have wildly diverse cultures and populations, the result of having once been many separate nations, conquered by sword and torch.

Every region has a large component of orcs in the population, along with heavy military presence to ensure loyalty and peace. Though the people of Ragesia have been conquered, most are content that they live today in relative safety. Given the power of the empire, rebellion just doesn't seem worth it. The majority of the population is still human however, or half-orc, and different ethnic groups remain mostly concentrated in their old homelands, which are often separated by low, long mountain ranges.

Ragesia is conventional in its political organization; mayors and town councils are found in nearly every community. The focus of their governance though, is power and subjugation. Evil hearts are encouraged to define and execute the letter of the law with scant regard for compassion or quarter, though it is occasionally given, if only to underscore the power of the empire. Like the tribal beginnings of the orcs who now rule, strength and position is gained through depravity and guile. The populace has grown used to the occasional suspicious death or mysterious fire or robbery.

The northern reaches are home to people known as the Kelaquois, who live in frigid lands that are frozen for most of the year, where they coexist with frost giants, mastodons, and vast herds of bison.



The western plains were once the nation of Latia, its renowned ship-building now benefiting Ragesia and its navy.

The southern lands are craggy, with cold rocky deserts dominating what was once Chathus, a land of nomads and traders who nevertheless defended their lands with great vigour, using cavalry and mobility to wage a protracted war, allowing their home to be the last conquered by Ragesia.

The central heartlands once belonged to the powerful nation of Morrus, and numerous old castles, forts, and walls dot the landscape, defenses which were easily bypassed with Emperor Coaltongue's Torch.

An ocean borders Ragesia to the west, with rocky mountains marking Ragesia's borders with the nations to the south — Sindaire and Dassen. The northern border is a high, frigid mountain range, separating Ragesia from most of the rest of the world. The same mountains curve down to form the eastern border, rising high enough that Ragesia never saw much value in trying to conquer beyond them.

The capital city of Ragos stretches along a vast lake, and the imperial palace lies safely offshore on a fantastically-defended island. At night its walls burn with thousands of torches, making the lake look like it is on fire. Ragos seethes with intrigue and unrestrained evil. Plots and counter-plots are the norm and any kind of vice can be had for a few coppers. The city is intimidating and no-one, not even the guards can be trusted to keep one safe.

THE INQUISITORS

Dressed in bear skins, their faces concealed by bear-skull masks, inquisitors are the feared blade of Ragesia, expert in cutting out those who resist its rule. They fervently serve Ragesia's supreme inquisitor, an aged witch named Leska, who until recently was a loyal servant of the emperor. Now Leska desires to rule, and her inquisitors are her greatest weapon.

Stories tell of inquisitors sent to hunt down disloyal mages who completely ignore powerful spells, or even turn spells against their casters. The few who have been captured by inquisitors and have lived to tell the tale recount being tortured, their wrists slashed by an inquisitor's clawed gauntlets, then being left to a slow, cold death unless they betrayed their allies. Other rumors warn that inquisitors can devour souls, stealing a mage's power before raising the slain mage as an undead follower.



Inquisitors possess alternate class abilities. If you are interested in playing an inquisitor or a character who has managed to learn their secret techniques, talk to your GM.

Inquisitors are rumored to be adept at cancelling and countering spells.

SHAHALESTI

On the far side of the mountains that mark Ragesia's eastern border spreads the Shining Land of Shahalesti, ruled by Lord Shaaladel, a middle-aged eladrin who rose from being a military commander to the nation's ruler during the ascension of the Ragesian Empire. Shahalesti was in danger of being conquered like Ragesia's other neighbors, and Shaaladel's aggressive displays of force — including the conquest and destruction of two nearby elven lands that were hostile to him — are credited as major reasons why Ragesia has so far not looked east for conquest.

During Ragesia's annexation of its neighbors, Lord Shaaladel even lent his aid, he and his trusted aides participating personally in battles by Coaltongue's side. A canny and charismatic commander, he is respected even by the Ragesian army, and many expected him to succeed after Coaltongue's death. Rumors say that the eladrin lord had been quite displeased that the old half-orc was refusing to die of old age.

Shahalesti is not an entirely eladrin nation. The majority of its population is human, but they live as commoners with little real power. The aristocracy is almost exclusively eladrin, as well as the higher ranks among the military. Despite a grudging alliance with Ragesia, however, orcs and half-orcs are despised and persecuted, unable to hold any public positions, often horribly exploited as nearly slave labor. A few outposts of wealthy orcs with ties to Ragesia have tried to start their own communities, and this is a steady source of strife.



The capital of Shahalesti, Calanis, is built over a crescent rift carved by a waterfall. The city is forbidden to non-eladrin except by invitation from one of the royal family which, as of now, consists only of Shaaladel and his daughter Shaloshia. The population of Calanis is mixed (45% eladrin, 35% human, 10% elf or half-elf, 5% halfling, 2% orc, 2% half-orc, 1% other).

Shahalesti is viewed by most politically-minded sages as an opportunistic country. It will ally and war according to advantages it sees through the weaknesses and strengths of its neighbors. In general, Shahalesti is a good and peace-loving country that respects its borders, but as the winds of war blow, it is perceived that the Shahalesti people will seize opportunities to advance itself, even to the detriment of its allies.

THE SOLEI PALANCIS

The Shahalesti military, including its navy, focuses on quality rather than quantity. Most soldiers are equipped with at least minor magic items, and arcane magic in general is key to most of the nation's tactics. Their most famed soldiers are the Solei Palancis, the shining legion, whose swords shed light as bright as the sun.

DASSEN

The Kingdom of Dassen lies to the south of Ragesia, and the southwest of Shahalesti, its

borders defined by craggy mountains defended by hundreds of small dwarven strongholds. Dassen's people, a swarthy assortment of humans and dwarves, cherish their land, to the point that superstitious cavalrymen even put dirt in their boots so never have to stop touching the soil of their homeland.

King Steppengard rules a patchwork of eight feudal holdings, many of them controlled by distant relatives with claims to the throne of numbing complexity. To assure that he never has to worry about untangling these claims, Steppengard has had a huge family with eighteen children, all legitimate on the word of his oath.

There are no mighty cities in Dassen, only thousands of farms and towns growing out from the nine castles of the king and his dukes. The largest city, Bresk, lies on a major river beside Steppengard's castle, and is a hilly community built both above and below ground. Its population is a mix of humans and dwarves with a small number of orcs (65% human, 28% dwarf, 5% orc, 1% half-orc, 1% other).

LYCEUM ACADEMY

At the end of a swampy isthmus on Dassen's southern tip, the town of Seaquen is home to a school called Lyceum, devoted to teaching magic of all kinds. Students of Lyceum are encouraged to learn a variety of magical styles, and are trained in spell-dueling techniques similar to Gabal's in

Gate Pass. They were relatively unknown in the region until recently, when Simeon, headmaster of the school, sent out a call to all the people in and around Ragesia, asking for them to stand up against the threat posed by the Ragesians and their new leader Leska.

THE WAYFARERS

Every port in the region has at one time or another been host to the Wayfarer Theater, a beautifully-decorated ship that is both home and base of operations for the Wayfarers. The Wayfarers are both master acrobats and skilled mages, prone to dress in elaborate and eclectic costumes with elements cobbled together from dozens of lands.

Wayfarers can teach a wizard a limited teleportation spell at second level (*wayfarer's step*, *q.v.*). The Wayfarers will only teach this spell to a friend; friendship may be gained through adventuring or a skill challenge.

SINDAIRE

The national government of the Exarchate of Sindaire is officially run by a representative from Ragesia, but in practice the Exarch has limited power. The people of Sindaire — mostly humans with some caravans of nomadic gnomes — pay some taxes to Ragesia, but maintain their own armies and laws. They take mild comfort in

knowing that, should Ostalin, their neighbors to the south, ever attempt to claim more land, Ragesia will come to their defense.

Recently a vocal group of city mayors in the center of the nation began to protest the taxes to Ragesia, and refused to pay. Unlike the coastal cities, they little benefited from trade with Ragesian ships, and they called for the removal of the Exarch, a half-orc woman named Horstea. Despite protests from the government ministers, the Exarch sent a plea to Ragesia, and Coaltongue's army repounded, traveling by Torch to the central prairies to put down the rebellion.

Sindaire has a long-established druidic tradition, coming from a time when a group of refugees fleeing a catastrophe in what is now Shahalesti settled in Sindaire's warm forests, converting many of the locals through their generosity and their disciplined devotion to nobler ideals. The refugees revered lions, and lions now fill the role of pets to the aristocracy and guard dogs for the common folk.

The large capital city of Turinn lies on two sides of a long rock spur. The western side has ports on the sea, while the bulk of the city lies safe on the east.

KNIGHTS OF THE AQUILINE CROSS

The Order of the Aquiline Cross originally emerged in Sindaire a decade ago. Since then, small chapels that teach the order's doctrine of mercy, sacrifice, and a fierce defense of life have sprung up throughout the lands of Ragesia and its neighbors. Knights of this order dress in white and red tabards marked with a cross surrounded by a halo of feathers.

OSTALIN

For many years, the small island people of Ostalin battled among themselves, before finally a warlord conquered his foes and proclaimed himself Khagan. He then led his people to the mainland, conquering lands from Sindaire with the aid of hippogriff aerial archers until he reached a mountain range and met resistance from a clan of dragonborn. Impressed with the honor the dragonborn exhibited on the battlefield, the Khagan decided to learn from this strange race and sued for peace. The dragonborn accepted and the Khagan became a disciple of the dragonborn culture, even changing his name to Barazar.

During this time, Barazar had many children



with many wives, but ultimately he left his nation to his half-elf son Onamdammín, in whom he saw the same fire of obsession that led him to conquer. The Khagan hoped his son would be the one to topple Coaltongue and rule Ragesia, but he did not see that the young ruler had no honor underneath his veneer of respectability. With deep regret, he denounced Onamdammín and fled along with his family to the mountains, vowing to correct his mistake. He died from an assassin's arrow before he could carry out his coup. His remaining sons are now seeking help from other nations to depose their half-brother.

The Khaganhold of Ostalin is a violent state, ruled poorly by Khagan Onamdammín, whose passions and desires far outstrip his talents. He has broken relations with the dragonborn because they refuse to relinquish his siblings. In response, he has become sympathetic to the many tieflings chased out of other countries. The

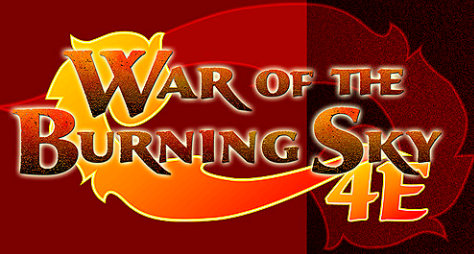
Khagan is also intent on finding his remaining three half-brothers; he is obsessed with securing his throne through a program of elimination.

The capital city of Kistan is relatively small, since the city that used to occupy the land was burned down only a few decades ago by the original Khagan. The nation's diverse landscape is renowned for its beauty, and Sindaire still seeks to reclaim it.

THE MONASTERY OF TWO WINDS

The Monastery of Two Winds lies in the mountains that form the main border between Ostalin and Dassen, near to the large town of Eresh. The monastery teaches two different approaches to harnessing the power of air magic, the gentle west wind style, and the fierce east wind style. Some monks of the two winds feel compelled to travel the world, letting the wind guide their journeys. 🌬️





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