

Nex

Synopsis

Players have been enslaved by agents of a small hidden realm called Nex. They have been collared to prevent their escape, but those collars can be given powers - if the players choose to be citizens of Nex themselves.

Topography

Nex is a mostly a desert plane. At the very center of the plane is a massive black sphere, around which is built the city Centrum. The Church of Vermis controls the inner rings. Outside that the palaces, then the markets and on the outskirts are the slums. Beyond is the Wild, a desert with storms and hidden passages into other worlds.

Collars

A thick lamprey-like parasite that exists on the Ethereal Plane. They are invisible and can only be felt by the host they attach to (as a thick worm around their neck). All citizens of Nex have a collar. The collar must feed once a week. The Church of Vermis has strict control over the Feed supplied to citizens. If the collar is not fed it devours the host's soul and their corpse passes into the Ethereal Plane. Removing the collar without killing the host requires a Wish spell.

The collar can be magically upgraded. It can store a single uses of cantrips and spells as charges (like scrolls but with the same rules for casting as the Magic Initiate feat, PHB:p168). These are usually handed out on missions to Nex agents. Ascending to citizenship from slavery grants the ability to make one's collar visible and purchase charges (same price as spell scrolls, DMG:p130 & 200).

The collar also facilitates passage back to Nex from other realms.

Passages

In the Wild this realm occasionally bleeds into others. There is no visible portal, just a passage behind a wall or an underpass that suddenly will lead into the Plane of Air, Shadowfell, Faerun or any number of other worlds. The more stable of these are heavily garrisoned by Nex agents - the otherside may be hidden in the forest or in a city where they will have bought the buildings around the alleyway and protected it.

Some citizens of Nex have come from fleeting connections - they are perhaps the only person

enslaved from their world. The heavier the presence of collar wearing Nexans in a realm, the more stable the passages to it.

Entry Point

Raiders with collars loaded with Sleep charges roam the Wild picking up strays and adventuring out to other realms to bring in more slaves. This is where the players come in as kidnap'ees. Their fate as slaves is revealed and they are given to a handler to transport them. The handler supplies them with collar charges to defend themselves on the dangerous road to Centrum.

Goals

- Designed for open table games.
- Any player can turn up with Mousefolk Unearthed Arcana Rangers in a world that bleeds into others. (I reserve the right to House Rule nonsense into a playable shape.)
- Any class can turn up. The plot can give player's collars charges to allow them to fill other roles.
- Player's can create complex backgrounds for characters, visit their old worlds and try to save them from their own fate.
- Progressing towards Centrum opens up Downtime activities to liquidate the equipment of regular players and allow crafting, training, etc. (PHB:p187 & DMG:p127-131)