

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

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

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

## Skyseers Today.

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

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

## The Skyseer Character Theme.

**Role:** Leader.

**Benefit:** If you choose Skyseer as your character's theme, you gain the following powers at 1st level.

### Skyseer Vision

*You find a clear view of the night sky, focus your mind on the future, and await a prophetic dream.*

Skyseer Feature + Primal

Special Action; Daily

#### Personal

**Prerequisite:** You can only use this power during an extended rest, and only if you can watch the night sky for an hour and then sleep.

**Effect:** Ask up to three questions about possible courses of action in the near future.

At the end of your extended rest, you awaken from sleep having received a vision regarding your questions. This functions similarly to the ritual Hand of Fate, with you receiving vague images that provide guidance.

### Look Skyward

*You share with your allies a glimpse of the motions of the heavens, revealing fortuitous and unfortuitous paths.*

Skyseer Feature + Primal

Minor Action; Encounter

#### Close Burst 5

**Target:** One ally in burst

**Effect:** The ally chooses an attack power he knows, rolls a d20, and marks the result.

The next time the ally would make an attack roll for that power during this encounter, he must instead use the rolled result. If the power has multiple targets or attack rolls, only the first roll is replaced.

## Planes

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

The Clergy states that the Dreaming, which they call the Green Temptress or Hell's Garden, is where people's minds go when they sleep, and that the beings called the fey are dreams given flesh by evil magic. Folk religion in Ber proclaims that the

moon is a looking glass, and the Dreaming is what we look like reflected in it, while many Drakrans believe it's a trap between this world and the afterlife, meant to trick people from their just ends.

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

In Risur, folk tales say that once the Dreaming was easy to reach, and that the beings there would often come to our world to trade, steal, or play tricks. The Bleak Gate was thought to be a darker, more malevolent part of the Dreaming, a belief reinforced of late. As industry has narrowed the streets of Flint and darkened its alleys with soot, more and more people have begun to speak of disappearances, and of strange black beings that walk in the shadows.



## THE DISTANT PLANES.

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

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

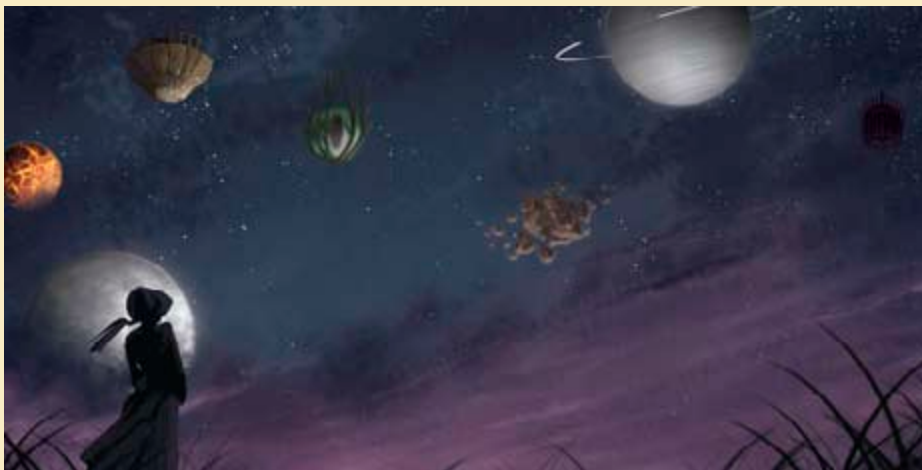
The Clergy, by contrast, believe that the heavens are a black sea, and that every star and planet is a physical world, each with its own people and gods. Danoran astronomers, though usually loathe to agree with the Clergy on anything, claim that they have seen the surfaces of the planets through their finely-crafted telescopes, though they cannot confirm any civilizations. Meanwhile, a few modern adventurers tell wild tales of using magic to visit these worlds, meet the strange locals, and return with treasure as proof. Skyseers dismiss such claims as stories by fools being tricked by fey.

Appearing at right is a list the most prominent objects in the sky, along with the myths and theories associated with each. These myths aren't necessarily consistent with each other.

- **VONA.** The sun, source of pure arcane force and magical radiance; its surface is too bright to observe directly. It influences revelations and discoveries.
- **JIESE.** The plane of fire, home to serpent men whose skin glow like coal. Ancient myths claimed this was a dragon, which chased Avilona. Influences war and strife, as well as notable births.
- **AVILONA.** The plane of air, where desolate islands of rock float amid the clouds, covered in long-abandoned ruins. Ancient myths claimed this world was a titanic eagle, constantly fleeing the ravenous Jiese. Influences weather, notable deaths, and animals.
- **AV.** This ancient name for the moon comes from a legend about a sleeping queen of the fey, cursed to slumber after her soul was captured in her reflection on a bottomless pool. Influences nothing, but reflects subtle clues of people's desires.
- **MAVISHA.** The plane of water, home to krakens lurking beneath the waters and leviathans swimming rippling liquid columns that writhe above the sea like the tentacles of a living world. Legend states that a drowned bride long ago cursed sailors to join her in the lightless depths of this endless ocean. Influences the seas, great movements of people, and conflicts within families.
- **URIM.** The plane of earth, or rather a scattered, shattered belt of

relatively tiny shards of metal, which sometimes fall from the sky bearing precious ores and accursed worms. Influences the earth, the rise and fall of fortunes, and random meetings of strangers.

- **APET.** The distant plane, said to be a permanent storm of sand and dust on a featureless plane, with the only point of reference being an arc of silver an unknowable distance above. Influences subtle nuances of distance and time, as well as the grand cycle of ages.
- **NEM.** The plane of ruin, this planet is a myth among the skyseers, who say it sheds no light, and can only be seen as it glides silently through the heavens, devouring stars and leaving nothing but a hole in the night. Influences secrets and the dead.



*The planets of the heavens, greatly enlarged to show detail.*

*From left to right: Jiese (plane of fire), Av (the moon, plane of dreams), Avilona (plane of air), Mavisha (plane of water), Urim (plane of earth), Apet (the distant plane), Nem (plane of ruins).*