

## **Known History of the World**

### **The 1st age**

It is believed that this was the beginning of all existence when the gods themselves came together and formed the world, giving it shape and matter. In time they would leave this world and become the planes themselves, leaving behind the Titans and the Dragons to continue their work.

### **The 2nd age**

The time of the Dragons and Titans was marked with many magnificent creations. As beings almost as powerful as their creators they had the ability to sculpt the world and to breathe life into it almost as though they were painting on a blank canvas. But in time there would be nothing left to create, and the gods had not intended for their time here to be permanent. As a safeguard to ensure that once they had played their role they would leave this world they were created without the ability to create progeny. But they would become fond of their work and made no plan to leave; in short time the Titans formed clans and a brutal war of immortals broke out for control. Dragons on the other hand had become nothing more than violent beasts that if left unchecked would eventually overtake the world. The Old Gods summoned the ancient nightmare dragon and charged him to become the keeper of the brood; to lock them away so that mortals could have their time on this world. The Nightmare Dragon warned them that in time mortals would be their own unmaking being nothing more than beasts themselves. Reluctantly the Nightmare Dragon bent to the wishes of the Old Gods and trapped the dragons in the eternal sleep. In time even the titans would be forced to leave and in their wake their final act was to create the mortal races.

### **The 3rd age**

The Third Age began the age of Mortals. For millennia mortals and the like had ruled this world in relative peace, and while there were always battles for land or gold, it was nothing so catastrophic that would bring humanity to its knees. It is believed that near the end of the Season of Sowing of the Third Age that mortals began to learn of the past and their desire to tap into the ancient powers, like that of the dragons, grew. One human made that fateful step. A mortal found the well of the sleeper and awoke the Nightmare Dragon from his eternal slumber and, with this awakening, the age of dragons was unleashed once more. Almost overnight the world became plagued by the savage beasts awoken from millennia of imprisonment. They began to ravage the lushness of the world and the Old Gods took notice of the rage and destruction the Dragons caused; it could not be allowed to continue. The Nightmare Dragon plead with the Old Gods, asking that he be granted permission to invest mortals with the blood of dragons. His hope was to create the first warders to control and calm the dragons, and if that would not work then they would hunt the dragons into extinction. Though the Nightmare Dragon's motives were to save his brood, ultimately the efforts to calm the dragons failed. For centuries the warders purged the brood from this world, and the few that escaped hid

themselves away.

In their rage, the dragons of the Third Age saw the world torn asunder and left weakened. The barriers that separated the planes had been worn thin and because of this, the denizens of the planes made their move on the prime. The lords of Acheron brought the first blow by opening the Black Gates, soon after planar rifts spilt forth hordes of elementals and the lords of the Inner Plane. Thus the third age saw the beginning of the Reality War. Once isolated planes now bled over into the Prime, and the Prime was not ready or capable of bearing the fury of the invaders that now poured into it. Once again the Old Gods played their hand in the world of mortals. This time they did not act directly but found men and women of exceptional skill and devotion and gifted them with the divine spark. With this little push they would become the forces that would create the Orders that would, in time, defend this world from invasion. For over a century the war went on until the final days when the Black Gate slammed shut. The elemental rifts were sealed and the planar barrier was restored. By the end of the carnage the Orders stood as the champions of mankind who had pushed back the darkness, each taking the credit for the victory. It is believed that the events of this war forever changed the world as man knew it, these changes being etched upon the very soul of the Prime. Thus ends the third age.

### **Distant Travelers**

As the Reality War began this world was inhabited by little more than mortals. Few mortals knew of the Essence, the fey world that mirrors our own, and that the war that was raging through the prime was directly affecting the Essence. The rulers of the fey sent the Sidhe to the prime to be champions of the Essence, a force to safeguard their world and ours. The Sidhe, while pure fey, would not be such by the end of the war. During their time away from the Essence their link to the fey plane waned, and in time they became so attached to the prime they refused to return to their home. It has become a long held belief that the Sidhe were destined to be the Guardians of Essence, and keepers of the kingdoms.

### **The 4th Age**

Centuries would pass with the world being mostly at peace. Kingdoms rose and fell the age turned season by season. Humanity rebuilt and spread out across the world, building new civilizations and cultures. In time the war of the Third Age would become a thing of story and nothing more, an old lesson taught to the young. In truth, those that survived were no longer the same people they were when they were born; It was not just the world that had changed but the people as well.

### **Local History of Hallows Pass**

Hallow's Pass was once a booming city set in the foot of the Shield Mountains. The city thrived through most of the 3rd age, survived the Reality War, and prospered into the 4th age up until the time of the Runemaul war. Sometime during the war something horrible happened, and the city fell. Little more is known about it. Anyone that can remember or has a record of it will say the city has always been there, but no record exists of who ruled from its seat. Since that

time the keep and the city proper have all been abandoned; the farmlands closer to the river however, have become full of life again in the last 100 years or so. A new town of Hallow's Pass was founded; it is small but it is busy. The town itself is simple and the majority of the citizens are farmers and miners. Not far to the east of the town proper is a small port where the Grey River ends.

Hollows Pass is located on the western edge of the Duchy of Vandir, inside the Kingdom of Sterif. While the town is small it has many travelers as the main road that runs from the nearby port goes through the mountains and into Tesh, this makes the little town a frequent stop of travelers since the pass is one of only 3 that cross through the Shield Mountains.

Hallows Pass is known for another reason as well though, albeit a far more infamous one. Unlike the lands in the Empire there is no Baron who rules this corner of the world, and the Countess takes very little interest due to the curse. It has been recorded that even in the times before the formation of the Malin Empire that all those who came to claim rulership over that land died within weeks of taking the seat. The curse does not seem to reach far, only a few miles from the pass; and those of the noble line outside those areas seem to be unaffected. As such, the King has declared the area to be the lost Barony. While some would think this precludes them from the law the truth is the law is still present. Enforced by the people and backed by a circuit judge who travels the kingdom, they act as the hand of the kingdom to ensure that the people are all treated as they should.

The people of the town know all about the banshee from stories that have been handed down through the centuries. Tales tell that he was a mighty warrior who fell fighting off the darkness of old and since then he has been cursed. The people know of the keep's curse and that the banshee will allow only the chosen to walk its halls and rule its throne. During the day the banshee stays in the graveyard and keep, and there are some that say he sings a song of lament over the graveyard. By night however, he patrols the countryside protecting the villagers from harm. All those born to the area have been raised to respect and honor their guardian.

#### **405 of the Season of Hopes**

As the year began a new problem was forming on the horizons in the continent of Preth. Deep within Tesh a new empire was growing lead by a powerful family line of Baravi (Fey Orge) that, for reasons unknown, had set their eye upon the eastern kingdoms of Preth. The Runemaul, as they would be called, would lead an army of Ogres, Trolls, and Gnolls against the kingdoms. While they are a deadly force and do control a large section of land they are far from a world ending power. Being a band of savage races they lack the order to become a real empire so they exist in a warlord state. They reach out to conquer, however when they retreat they don't occupy; so while they are feared they are not controlling the countryside on a whole. One faction of the Runemaul Empire are the gnolls, led by Warmaster Gax. These gnolls reside on the eastern side of Tesh near the Shield Mountains in the city of Bresh. Though their war against the kingdoms would go on for several hundred years until the four kingdoms still fought amongst themselves.

#### **623 of the Season of Hopes**

It is believed that had the events of this year not come to pass that the windfall of the Runemaul would have been so great that the kingdoms of the east would have been cleft asunder. It would be on the site of current day Kashir that a military force came from almost nowhere and broke the Runemaul advance. Some three thousand soldiers brought destruction and fear to the hordes forces that numbered in the tens of thousands. With the primary spearhead broken and the Runemaul in retreat, the leaders of this army called together the rulers of the four kingdoms, Sterif, Fenmir, Rightmore, and Duridin, and the Malin Empire was forged in the fires of war. This formed the largest empire in the known world, and would bring civil rest to the kingdoms for years to come.

### **2013 Season of Hopes**

In the early months of the year more and more travelers began heading through this portion of the land on their way to Tesh to make a name for themselves in the adventuring world. The lands across the mountains are dangerous, and there are many that made it as far as Hollow's Pass and have stayed in the area as it seems to be a hot-spot for action. In the last year, adventurers that have made the city their home and came together to bring an end to the "curse", for better or worse. Since that time the city has begun to flourish with new life bringing an increased presence of the empire as well as the added threat from beyond the mountains.

While for centuries the Runemaul had stayed a trivial threat, things began to change. War had come again and the forces of the Runemaul had brought destruction and chaos by raiding and killing. Though much like their last incursion, there was new cunning to the Runemaul leadership. They had begun using deceptive tactics and subterfuge to keep their foes off balance. Conveniently enough, just months before the Runemaul renewed their assault on the empire, the Kingdom of Rightmore fell under siege by Hoth, a race of serpent creatures from the inner plane of water. With much of the empire's forces deployed on the eastern shores, the Runemaul met little resistance other than the adventurers. All these events were compounded by the threat of civil war amongst the kingdoms.

### **2014 Season of Hopes**

With war raging on multiple fronts the Empire had been pushed to its limits. On the eastern coast the Kingdom of Rightmore was under siege by the ocean itself and the armies of the Hoth. To the west the Runemaul Empire had brought a new kind of war. While it was still not fully clear how the Runemaul achieved it, they had turned from a savage force to one that used deceptive magics and bombs of unexplainable force to push the war further than ever before. The war turned worse after an assault on the capital of Sterif which leveled a mile of the city and claimed countless lives. But these battles raging on in Preth were not the most dire. A long forgotten threat was lurking in the shadows making ready to strike against the prime again. From Acheron the Deathlords had made ready to bring their wrath to the prime. Sixteen thousand years had passed since they last combined their efforts to take the prime, and this time they meant to simply convert it to their liking. As adventurers made plans of their own the Deathlords took the initiative and made their first move upon Trice. Using a weapon of

unknown design, a massive chunk of land was destroyed and in the wake of this devastation the souls caught in the blast were transformed into deathless under the sway of the Will of Acheron. Forces of the Seven Shields and the Guardians of the Essence descended upon the area, but there were no survivors, simply a mindless army of creatures of Death. Forces gathered to try and control the border of the destroyed lands and keep the creatures at bay, but the border was too vast and the vile creatures would soon slip through.

Enough was enough. A group of a few dozen heroes along with aid from the Orders did the unthinkable; they somehow crossed the barrier and entered into Acheron, an act that has only happened once before in an effort to close the Black Gates, to strike a decisive blow against the Deathlords. With heavy casualties they returned victorious, thus saving the prime from an unspeakable fate. However, the growing problem in Trice would in time overwhelm the forces there if something did not change. The orders slew hundreds upon thousands, and as the creatures died they seemed to be replaced faster and faster. Hope was bleak. Near the closing of the year something miraculous happened, there was a flash from the center of the wasted area and a sound like thunder rolled outward. The creatures suddenly just stopped and stood there while the defending forces stuck them down; and when new foes rose they too just stood immobile. After a few minutes of calm, the deathless army began to move; only this time they walked to the edges of the destroyed lands stop and begin and grab hold of each other. By the thousands and as far as could be seen the creatures ran headlong to the border and forced themselves into an ever growing wall. Within an hour a wall of bodies and bone, nearly twenty feet in height and several feet thick, had formed. Since then the area has gone silent, no creatures have left and mortals have moved away.

As if a war at home was not enough, civil war and rebellion has brewed within the kingdom of Duridin. The king had set his eye on breaking free of the Empire for some time and saw an alliance with the Runemaul to be his chance. It is unclear how long their allegiance had been in place, but it is quite clear the Dark Dwarves of Duridin have not had the best interests of the Empire in mind for a long time.

## **2015 Season of Hopes**

With the dawn of a new year comes change and this year is no different. Around the world the third day of the new year was one that will not be forgotten anytime soon. On that day sleeping or awake all suddenly opened their eyes as though from a deep sleep to the sound of thunder, it was brief, there was no sign of clouds; and then it was gone.

## The Town

The game is centered in Hollows Pass, which is located in the Kingdom of Sterif along the Eastern side of the Shield Mountains. Until very recently the area was known as the Lost Barony due to the curse, which has since been lifted in recent days by adventures. Hollows Pass is located in the Dutchy of Vandir under Countess Dastin Sevrin. Vandir along with the County of Millhall and Redburrow, make up the Kingdom of Sterif, which is led by King Lucious Stoval.

The city of Hollows Pass is roughly 45 square miles, with a population around 2000 people. Since the turn of the New Year the city has seen some growth as more people are moving into the area due to the abundance of open land.

The city is growing and has a handful of Imperial guilds; namely the Mages Guild, Miners Guild, Healers Guild, and the Merchants Guild. The guilds have played their part in supporting the adventures in retaking the city from its past as well as defending the people. A military barracks has been constructed just outside of the city proper, and is manned by a division of soldiers from the Seven Shield.

## Town Figures

**Mages Guildmaster Aldan Undoviel** (High Elf, played by Kevin Barrett)- In the wake of the sudden disappearance of the Guild master Teiris Foon, Aldan has been trying to restructure and bring new life to the guild.

**Justicar Anne Fowler** (Human, played by Sunny Wetzel) - A traveling circuit judge that has become a staple in the township. She is a servant of the kingdom and carries the authority to pass judgment on the people of the land for crimes committed.

**Merchants Guildmaster Mycroft** (Human, played by Jax Saunders) - The head of the merchants guild located in Hollow's Pass. He drives a hard bargain and holds to his busy schedule. It's best to set an appointment or you're likely to wait quite a while.

**Baron Sir Sigmund Whitefield** (Human, NPC) – Sigmund is an example of what the Empire aspires to bring to its people. As an adventurer and noted scholar he spent years bettering the kingdom and Empire and in time his efforts were noticed and rewarded. As he moved through the ranks of nobility on his way to his current position he helped restore Barony of Bristar to its former glory.

**Magistrate Sadi** (High Elf, played by Joel Velasquez) - His flare goes without saying, as a member of the social upper crust he sees it almost as his born duty to bring the rest of society up to a better standard.