

Age of Mists

??? Tz to -1200 Tz: The Age of Mists takes place.

This era marks the beginning of known history for the peoples of the Land—a time before castles, culture, and civilization. The Age of Mists is reputed to have been a time when powerful deities walked the earth and the monsters of the Underworld tunneled their way to the surface to hunt and eat the children of the gods. Many ancient artifacts are believed to date to this time, though modern scholars and wizards have no reliable way to determine the age of an object. While there are many tales and myths about the Age of Mists, every culture has legends of a Great War between the gods that ended in a cataclysm of fire and destruction. While the Rivvenheim Elves may know more about the Age of Mists, as many of the older High Elves were born during that era, they speak little of that “dark time.”

-1104 Tz: Freyhaven becomes the new High Elven capital.

Located deep in the Rivvenheim Mountains, Freyhaven is a miracle of palaces woven from living trees.

-1100 Tz: Grand-Magus Tezla’s ancestors, the Delphana, settle the fertile isle of Delphane.

Devoted to the study and perfection of the magical arts, in the centuries to come the Delphana will produce the Land’s finest wizards, mastering both Elementalism and Necromancy. Risking ocean travel across the dangerous Dhokonios Strait, these refugees found solace and peace on the massive offshore island.

Age of Battle

-1000 Tz to -200 Tz: The Age of Battle takes place.

At the beginning of the Age of Battle, humans are still primarily a tribal culture, suspicious of anyone not of their own clans. The Dwarves live secluded in their mountain holts, and the Trolls dominate much of the Wylden forest lands to the east. The High Elves guard their Rivvenheim mountain passes, and the Forest Elves live in an uneasy balance with their Trollish counterparts on the Wylden Plateau. While the High Elves understand all aspects of the twin magical arts, the lower races of the Land are still discovering their true powers. Those few people ~~human~~ or otherwise ~~who~~ can use magic are generally feared for their abilities. On the remote island of Delphane, Elementalists are learning to use magic to heal and Necromancers are learning to raise Zombies from the dead.

-500 Tz: The Orcs begin to make yearly raids on the Land.

A sizable horde of Orcs, led by one of the first major kzar commanders, conducts organized raids against human settlements along the edge of the northern grasslands. As result of the brutal attacks, humans in the northlands begin to band together, build rudimentary forts and organize clan alliances to fend off the attacks of these “Orc Raiders.”

-480 Tz: The Delphana begin their breeding program.

In an attempt to produce more wizards, the leaders of the Delphana require those born with magical talent to breed only with other mages. This practice eventually leads to the creation of a complex breeding program that refines the Delphana into masters of the Elemental and Necromantic arts over the next 500 years.

-455 Tz: The Kos tribe emerges in Prieska.

A strong human warrior tribe called the Kos dominates all of their Prieskan neighbors. Led by fearless

Warrior-Priests, thousands of conquest-driven Kos warriors enslave the other human tribes, believing it is their destiny to conquer all of humanity.

-450 Tz: The Delphana further explore immortality.

During this time, the Delphana unlock the mysteries of how to prolong a wizard's life span with Elemental and Necromantic magics. By the end of this century, some Delphana human wizards are 120 years of age or even older while they have the bodies and minds of men and women only fifty or sixty years old.

-238 Tz: Priest-King Ormanep is crowned in Luxor.

After more than a century and a half of warfare, the Kos establish total rule over the western half of the Land. The Warrior-Priests institute a complex system of tribute and fealty that promotes those who display great strength and courage in battle. The first Priest-King, Ormanep, rules from the city of Luxor. The only large population in the Land not under Kosian control is the Delphana, safe on their southern island.

-237 Tz: The Kosian civil war is fought.

A second Priest-King, Khomen-hotep, rises to power in the eastern city of Caero. Ormanep raises armies to crush his rival in Luxor. After a summer of bloody civil war, with tens of thousands of Kos warriors killed, the Oracles of Rokos ultimately prophesy that two Priest-Kings are to rule over the Kos together - Khomen-hotep from the sun-seat of Caero in the east, and Ormanep from the moon-seat of Luxor to the west. Knowing that the consequence of deviating from prophecy is to be struck down by the gods, both Priest-Kings agree and divide their lands into two roughly equal parts.

-223 Tz: The Ormanep Palace at Luxor is completed.

Ormanep's capital buildings are completed, with their great spires of black stone and unscalable, 100-foot-high walls. By the end of this year, Ormanep has sired more than 100 children through his expansive harem, all of whom are considered potential heirs of the Empire.

-221 Tz: The first of the pyramids at Caero are completed.

In a massive quarry along the Roa Vizorr, armies of human slaves spend their lives digging out blocks of stone for pyramid monuments, sun-throne temples and capital buildings for Khomen-hotep and his royal family. Relations between Ormanep and Khomen-hotep are strained but holding.

-212 Tz: The Needle at Rokos is completed.

A 300-foot-high tower of black stone is completed in the heart of Rokos, and the Priest-King's Oracles take up residence within. With the completion of the Needle, Oracles assume a predominant place in Kos society, becoming the advisors for Ormanep, Khomen-hotep and all of the Kosian Priest-Kings to come.

Age of Princes

-200 Tz to 0 Tz: The Age of Princes takes place.

By this time, human civilization is growing rapidly. Cities abound throughout the western half of the Land, and the Kos dominate everything from Scythria to the western banks of the Roa Galtor.

-175 Tz: Tezla's birth is predicted.

The Oracles of Rokos foresee the date and birthplace of a Delphane man who will one day conquer all of Kos with more powerful magic than has ever before been seen, who will master the twin arts of life and death, and who will ultimately attain the powers of a god. At the height of his power, the wizard will rule all humanity from a floating city in the sky. Upon hearing this prophecy, the aging Priest-King Temanor immediately begins to make plans to subjugate the Delphana, to ensure that the Oracles' prophecy will never come to pass.

-172 Tz: Kos invades Delphane.

Traversing the Dhokonios Strait on giant rafts, the Kos bring war to the peaceful people of Delphane. The Kos, who outnumber the human wizards by more than 500 to 1, force the wizards to complete surrender within a season. The Priest-King Temanor is eventually welcomed into the capital city, where he is openly stunned by the comforts the Delphanes enjoy: magically heated baths, enchanted kitchens and spirit servants.

-169 Tz: Priest-King Temanor returns to Rokos.

Changed by his three years on Delphane, Temanor introduces their comfortable way of life to the brutal Kosians. Tempted by these creature comforts, the Kos eagerly adopt Delphane innovations, magics and philosophies. The Kos soon become dependent on Delphane magic, and an elite merchant class emerges to provide the peoples of Rokos and Caero with magical goods and services. Within the next few years, Delphane influence on the Kos people begins to erode the warlike principles on which the barbarian empire was founded.

-163 Tz: The Oracles prophesy the arrival of the Solonavi.

The seven highest Oracles share a terrible vision of great winged creatures descending to the Land who offer great power, but at a terrible price. This prophecy is noted in the Oracles' archives, and it comes true in 433 Tz with the arrival of the winged Solonavi.

-162 Tz: Civil war erupts among the Kos.

In the early spring, after a series of Warlords decided they wanted their own chance to rule the world, the Kosian Empire is torn apart from within. Territories that will one day become Prieska, Khamsin and the northern territories secede. Temanor is beheaded by his rivals, and his royal line is ritually sacrificed one after the other in a day-long ceremony. Temanor's body is spirited out of the city by his faithful Draconum wizard, and interred in the depths of the Black Pyramid. By the end of the year, the western Kosian Empire has shattered into a hundred warring states.

-162 Tz: The Orcs sack Caero.

A huge Orc Raider horde led by Kzar Natan attacks Caero, breaks its defenses and puts the entire Kosian ruling family to the sword. In the middle of looting the city, an Orc eagle god appears in a vision to the kzar. Badly shaken by the omen from his god, Natan orders the Orcs to leave the city and never return. By the end of the year, the rest of the eastern Kosian Empire shatters into twenty warring states as well.

-161 Tz: Caero is rebuilt.

Delphana wizards, with the support of the few remaining members of the Kosian noble class, take control of the ruined city of Caero. Wanting to preserve the Caeronn culture, the nobles take Caeronn names, marry their children into the surviving Caeronn lines and ultimately reshape the city from within. Within a year, Caero declares itself a neutral merchant state, frees its slaves, and declares the era of the Kos at an end. Over the next three generations, the successful breeding of Delphane mages with Caeronn nobility results in a rash of Caeronn children able to wield powerful magics. The act of "freeing" Caero ultimately solidifies a pocket of Delphane control along the Roa Vizorr and guarantees the Delphanes an inland ally with substantial economic and military resources.

-155 Tz: The Order of Griffin and Cross and the Order of the Obelisk are founded by the defenders of Rokos.

Any warrior may join either of these two revered Orders, provided they follow two key rules: no fighting each other within the walls of Rokos, and if Rokos ever comes under attack, all of the diverse Knights of the twin orders will work together to rescue Rokos from its attackers.

-149 Tz: Khamsin founded by King Khamita.

While at first thought a lunatic for building his castle so close to the Blasted Lands, when the first balloons filled with ore from the Kuttar Depths descended onto his lands Khamita's neighbors realized he was crazy as a fox. By taking advantage of the summer trade winds blowing down from the mountains, Khamita was able to supply valuable gold and ore to the western half of the Land without needing to pay extortionate prices to the robbers and mercenaries that frequently ambushed caravans coming down from the Kuttar Depths. His new kingdom suddenly flourished with financial wealth, at the expense of its distant trade neighbor, Venetia.

-143 Tz: Creation of the Crown Jewels of Khamsin - the Blood of Khamsin.

In order to prevent discord and false claims in coming years, King Khamita has his finest Dwarven craftsman create the crown jewels of Khamsin—a beautiful necklace. Khamita's wizards enchant the object so the necklace glows when it is being worn or held by a true heir of Khamsin.

-140 Tz: Delphane rises to power.

Many leaders from the warring states now send their sons and daughters to Delphane or Caero so that their offspring can learn about the world from "civilized" teachers. Over the next 140 years, Delphane magic, law and philosophy spread like wildfire throughout the human-controlled lands, eradicating the last vestiges of barbaric Kosian society.

-91 Tz: King Khamita dies.

Dying peacefully after living a long and prosperous life, Khamita left heirs who took up the job of ensuring the financial and military security of Khamsin through the coming years. When King Khamita died in -91 Tz, Khamsin had grown into a country profiting on trade, craftsmanship, and a military determined to keep invaders and Mage Spawn at bay. The region to the southwest of Khamsin, the Principality of Three, thrived on Khamsin's rich trade and fair tax policies.

Age of Tezla

0 Tz to 432 Tz: The Age of Tezla takes place.

As predicted by the Oracles of the Needle, Tezla is born in a small sea town on Delphane.

12 Tz: Tezla becomes a Necromantic apprentice.

By his twelfth birthday Tezla has been apprenticed to a powerful Delphane Necromancer. Within a few weeks Tezla is bringing dead ferrets back to life and illegally digging up recently buried corpses for study. Tezla is a prodigy, and his teacher prepares greedily for the day when he will reveal his glorious pupil to the world.

25 Tz: Tezla becomes an Elemental apprentice.

On the day he turns twenty-five, Tezla passes his master's final test and becomes a master of Necromancy. However, before his teacher can announce his merit to the world, the old man dies in a horrible accident, and Tezla's accomplishment remains a secret. Tezla, motivated by the fact that, before his death, his teacher told him no wizard "has ever or will ever" master both the Necromantic and Elemental arts, masquerades as a rank novice and petitions to become the apprentice of an elderly, blind Elementalist. The old man can feel his incredible potential, so he gladly accepts the young man.

37 Tz: Tezla masters the twin arts of magic.

Tezla demonstrates both magic arts—a feat previously believed impossible—in front of a council of Delphane mages, revealing himself to be the one spoken of in the ancient Oracles' prophecy. The mages are astounded. However, Tezla's Elementalist teacher did not witness his student's accomplishment, as he died of old age the day before Tezla made his first public display.

37 Tz: Tezla develops his unified magical theory.

Tezla begins to work on some of his theories about the origins of magical energy, and experiments with a number of artifacts dating back to the Age of Mists. These artifacts, none of them functional, have small pieces of burned-out crystal in them. These crystals intrigue Tezla, and he decides that finding undamaged crystals is the key to creating a unified magical theory.

39 Tz: Tezla learns about human anatomy.

After conducting a number of examinations on living patients and autopsies on dead ones, Tezla performs his first successful exploratory surgery. His medical research eventually serves as the foundation for the design of his first Golems, and it provides the Atlanteans with primitive surgical techniques. Many of his Delphana colleagues are dismayed by Tezla's ghoulish studies and autopsies, but they can't disagree with the results of his research.

41 Tz: Tezla discovers Magestone.

After four years of searching, Tezla finds a deposit of Magestone high in the barbarian-filled Scythrian Mountains. Cracking open an egglike geode, he discovers the crystals he has been looking for. Two months later, in Napolis, the capitol city of Delphane, Tezla performs his first public display of Technomancy by telekinetically tossing a heavy table more than a hundred feet into the air.

43 Tz: The first Atlantean strip mine is opened.

Using a host of condemned criminals to perform the manual labor, Tezla oversees a giant strip mine dug into the earth just east of the city of Xandressa. The magical radiation released by the veins of raw crystal burns and mutates the laborers and causes horrible damage to the surrounding countryside. Because the criminals are expendable and Magestone is critical to Tezla's plans, he insists that every last piece be harvested, no matter how many laborers die in the process. Some Delphana leaders take exception to Tezla's "cruelty." Other mages, recognizing Tezla's genius, support him at every turn.

44 Tz: Tezla masters Technomancy.

The first proto-Golems with Magestone spines are built in the spring of this year, capable of acknowledging and carrying out simple commands. By the middle of this year, Tezla creates the prototype for the modern Lightning Pistol. At the end of the year, Tezla has five pieces of Magestone surgically implanted in his skull. When he awakens from the surgery, Tezla can channel an astonishing amount of magical energy. The one drawback to his implants is that the greater the magical feat he attempts, the more pain he must endure.

45 Tz: The Technomantic School of Magic is founded.

Humans flock to Delphane to learn Technomancy, and soon Tezla's home province is overrun with people wanting to learn the new magical art. He opens his own school, earning the enmity of most of the mages of Delphane. After being censured, sanctioned and insulted by them, Tezla decides that if he can't win over the existing hierarchy, it would be best if he conquered it. He devotes all his energies to taking complete control of the Delphane people—by any means necessary.

50 Tz: Tezla extends his lifespan.

By this point, Tezla is using the power of Magestone crystals to extend his life span. For the remainder of his magically prolonged life, he appears no older than thirty to forty years of age. Tezla has no idea how long he will live, but he believes it will be longer than any human wizard has lived before.

60 Tz: Tezla's works to fulfill his destiny.

Over the next two years, Tezla gains power and influence, placing his top mages as "advisors" to human rulers, kings and nobility throughout the Land. In time his Golems are in high demand by a variety of Warlords, and he can trade the services of his mechanical killing machines in return for military and political favors.

62 Tz: Grand-Magus Tezla rises to power.

By 62 Tz, Tezla is leading the Elemental, Necromantic and Technomantic schools of magic in Delphane. He begins calling in the favors he is owed by Warlords, and a number of powerful Delphana nobles and mages are harassed or abducted—or simply disappear.

63 Tz: Tezla founds the Atlantean Empire.

After a complex political coup, Tezla gains absolute power over the citizens of Delphane and establishes himself as their Mage-King. At the request of the Xandressans, the Kos and a number of other human nations, he founds the Atlantean Empire for their mutual defense and protection. He invites envoys from the other races to attend his coronation, including the High Elves, the Wylden Elves, the Forest Trolls, the Orcs and the Dwarves, but only the Wylden Elves attend in any great numbers. After the coronation ceremony, Tezla proposes a knowledge-sharing arrangement between the magic-proficient Wylden Elves and the Elemental, Necromantic and Technomantic schools. Many of the Wylden Elves agree to stay on with Tezla to share and increase their mutual knowledge of magic.

65 Tz: The city of Atlantis is founded.

The Empire's capital city is built on the edge of the Vizorr river delta; within five years the thriving city of Atlantis becomes the center of government, military training and magical schools in the Empire.

72 Tz: Tezla's armies foil the Orc Raiders.

A huge Orc raiding party comes down from the Fist to "smash the humans." Tezla and his forces, choosing to defend a city that the Orcs normally raid and easily conquer, engage and smash the Orcs at Enos-Joppa. Effectively demonstrating that his armies can win anywhere, Tezla defeats the Orc horde, guts the leaders, and sends the survivors packing back to the Fist. This firm lesson prevents further raids on the fledgling Empire and allows humans to live without fear of the Orcs for the first time in centuries.

77 Tz: Scythria is conquered.

To the west of Atlantis, the Scythrian Mountains are filled with a harsh and determined people called the Scythrians—and a number of sizable veins of raw Magestone. Wanting to test his new armies, and claim

these Magestone deposits as his own, Tezla conducts his first full-scale military exercise against the primitive Scythrians. The battle, however, does not go as planned. The Scythrians use cunning and guerrilla tactics to defeat or evade Tezla's forces. Tezla fights on, ordering his commanders to learn everything they can about the Scythrian warriors. The following year, Scythria is forced into the Empire, as Atlantean warlords mimicking Scythrian tactics systematically defeat the tribes.

85 Tz: Khamsin is conquered.

The kingdom of Khamsin seceded from the Kosian Empire in -149 Tz. After more than two hundred years of freedom, Tezla demands Khamsin join his Empire, but they refuse. Tezla lays siege to the capital city build around Khamita Castle. After more than a year, the starved city finally opens its gates to Tezla's troops. Tezla brings in food, establishes martial law and puts the entire royal line of Khamita to the sword.

91 Tz: Ravann discovers levitation.

A young Demi-Magus named Ravann binds a number of Magestone crystals to the base of a small wooden tower and magically levitates the structure into the air. Tezla, upon seeing Ravann hovering far overhead, realizes that with Ravann's discovery the entire city of Atlantis could be raised far out of the reach of any enemy army. Using a precise telekinetic burst, Tezla knocks Ravann off the floating platform and takes credit for the unfortunate young mage's discovery. Within the next decade, the ancient Oracles' vision of a flying city will become a solid reality.

100 Tz: The Empire reaches its height.

On his hundredth birthday, Tezla levitates the quarter-mile-wide building of Throne into place, completing the flying city of Atlantis. Floating five hundred feet above the ground, supported by the magics of seven stable ley lines and dozens of house-sized blocks of Magestone, the marble-and-crystal city is the marvel of the Empire. On this glorious day, Tezla marries the beautiful Marissa Greenlee, who soon becomes the darling of the Empire. One year later, Marissa gives birth to Tezla's first son, Orient.

100 Tz: The wind patterns shift.

While Khamsin lost part of its trade and wealth due to the change in weather patterns, the kingdom had more than enough armed mercenaries, miners and financial backing to pay for mining caravans to travel to the Kuttar Depths, mine for a summer and return unmolested with their goods before the first snows. Why the wind patterns shifted so abruptly is still a mystery to most sages and scholars.

142 Tz: Tezla fights the Battle of the Fist.

In the summer of 142 Tz, Tezla orders his troops to attack and dominate the northern steppes, and bring the Orcs under Atlantean control. While the Atlanteans win a series of critical battles due to their superior technology, they eventually have to pull out of the Fist due to a combination of Orc Clurch-tactics, a lack of supplies and the threat of attack by more than a hundred thousand Orc Raider warriors.

178 Tz: The Battle of South Pass takes place.

Tezla sends an army to conquer the High Elves of the Rivvenheim Mountains by force, but it is smashed and routed in their first battle. Word is sent back to the Empire that "young Tezla should not meddle with the Elves of Rivvenheim again." Tezla vows to make the High Elves eat their words and continues his research into ever-more-powerful Technomantic weapons.

180 Tz: Caero joins the Empire.

While retaining its rights to free trade and autonomous rule, the city of Caero becomes an Atlantean client-state. With the merchants of Caero, Venetia and the notoriously neutral Xandressan river traders under his

jurisdiction, Tezla is able to tax nearly every commodity sold or purchased by humans in the Land. The Northlanders, who depend on the Grange Valley for food, find themselves the hardest hit by this change in economy.

215 Tz: The Palteran Confederation forms.

Palterus the Pennywise, a wealthy merchant, sets up the Palteran Confederation. Instead of selling food, grain and trinkets like the rest of the merchants, Palterus contracts with inventors, blacksmiths and Tinkers to create small tools and time-saving gadgets—and as a result generates a new breed of merchant class. Caero welcomes his innovations, his trade concepts and, most important, his money.

218 Tz: Atlantis raises taxes on “special goods.”

When the Atlanteans try to tax Palterus out of existence and then, when that fails, take over his operations by force, Palterus uses a combination of ingenuity and martial force to keep his network alive. Tezla’s bullying shows that the Empire cannot be trusted, and Palterus demonstrates that even the mighty Empire can be defeated if one is smart enough.

264 Tz: Tezla’s beloved wife, Marissa, dies.

The death of the Empress, Magus Marissa, throws the Empire into mourning and instills in Tezla a sizable fear of his own mortality. He orders the three schools of magic to devote all their resources to finding a way to preserve his mind once his body finally fails.

Fall, 278 Tz: Tezla dies.

After fourteen years of decline, Tezla’s body finally gives out. The top mages from all three schools attempt to save Tezla’s soul, “transcarnating” his essence in Avatar Golems they have constructed specifically to preserve his life energy. The Technomancers construct a special Brass Golem, the Necromancers a Bone Golem and the Elementalists a Wood Golem. In the end, each school claims that they alone succeeded in preserving Tezla’s essence. As it is universally believed that a soul is indivisible, it appears that two of the three schools must be lying. Religious hysteria erupts, and a period of internal strife disrupts the Empire.

Early spring, 279 Tz: The Necromancers depart Atlantis and found the Necropolis Sect.

Recognizing the start of a new era in Atlantis, the Necromancers depart the city and head northeast, where they found the Necropolis Sect on an island in a cold northern lake. The Necromancers, no longer hindered by the interference of the other two schools, begin to contact dark spirits and experiment with vampirism. Soon, a complex meritocracy forms within the Sect in which skill on the battlefield, in the blood-pits and in the bedrooms of the Sect’s masters will eventually reap rewards of power and vampiric immortality.

Spring, 279 Tz: Tezla speaks to his people.

Speaking from his Brass Avatar, Tezla appoints Magus Karrudan as the Prophet-Magus before a crowd of nearly a million and states that Karrudan will act as an intermediary between Tezla and his beloved people. Tezla’s son, Orien, becomes the new Emperor of Atlantis, ultimately restoring order to the Empire. Behind the scenes, Karrudan and the mages of the Atlantis Guild quietly take control of the Empire for the “good of Atlantis.”

Summer, 279 Tz: The Orcs attack.

Knowing that the ruler of Atlantis is dead and that an untested child sits on the throne, the Orcs attack the Empire’s outskirts in a brutal series of summer raids. In the ensuing chaos, many smaller countries, such as

Prieska and the Principality of Three, secede, gambling that the Empire's armies are spread too thinly to respond. But, by the summer of 281 Tz, the Empire regains its strength, repels the Orc Raiders, destroys the Principality of Three and brutally crushes Prieska.

Winter, 281 Tz: Orien vanishes.

After Orien makes a public speech condemning the Atlantis Guild's recent treatment of Prieska, he disappears under mysterious circumstances. The Sect is publicly blamed. The Prophet-Magus appoints the accomplished Magus Bazlus as Emperor. The pro-Guild Bazlus soon restores Atlanteans morale with his fine speeches, reverence of Tezla and a host of trade-friendly laws.

286 Tz: The Cult of the Blood Goddess becomes widespread.

Sect deal-makers stalk the Land, tempting humans with promises of power and immortality and searching for priests worthy of their dark gifts. Idols to the Blood Goddess are erected throughout the borderlands of the Empire, as the offers of sated desires, dark magics and eternal life have great appeal to humans trapped by growing Atlantean tyranny. The Empire attempts to eradicate the "illegal religion" but has a hard time rooting out secret cells of Sect troublemakers.

288 Tz: The Vurgra Divide is settled.

In exchange for swearing allegiance to the Sect, humans receive sizable plots of land in the fertile valley to the northeast of the Black Lake. Thousands of humans travel to the Divide for the opportunity to own their own land out from under Atlantean authority. Many of these humans already have ties to the Cult of the Blood Goddess; these established worshippers receive the best lands in the Divide. The Knights Immortal to the east watch these newcomers suspiciously but do not move against them.

291 Tz: The Dwarves are enslaved by the Empire.

Thousands of Dwarves throughout the Empire are imprisoned in the space of a few short weeks and put to work in the Magestone strip mines in Scythria. Their unique resistance to magic makes them immune to the radiation emitted by veins of raw Magestone, making them ideal miners. Whole holt of Dwarves are captured and forced to mine for Magestone without adequate rest or food. Many Dwarves die from this ill treatment and from the poor conditions in the "Helltowns." Many are taken from their families and never seen again. Entire generations of Dwarves are born, live and die in the Scythrian strip mines without ever knowing freedom. This year also marks the first field test of Tezla's Brass Golems.

292 Tz: The Elementalists are driven from Atlantis; the Elemental League is founded.

In a single, bloody night, the Elementalist mages, open opponents of Dwarven enslavement, are driven from Atlantis. This "Night of Fire," from which only a few mages escape, drives the final wedge between the three magical schools. The surviving Elemental mages journey back to their homeland, gather the leaders of the Wylden Elves, Centaurs, Forest Trolls and assorted fairy creatures of the Wylden and found the Elemental League. Under the guidance of Tezla's enlightened spirit, the League begins a campaign to protect the Land from those who would corrupt, harm or destroy it—which includes wiping out the easternmost Atlantean strip mines, threatening the Magestone-driven heart of the Atlantean Empire. At home on the Wylden Plateau, work begins on a sizable castle carved from living rock, which is named Roanne Valle.

292 Tz: The castle of South Pass is conquered by the Elemental League.

While the Wylden Elves and the High Elves had swapped ownership of this critical mountain fortress a dozen times throughout the history of the Land, the Wylden Elves, with Troll, Centaur and Faerie allies on their side, manage to sweep the High Elves out of Stonekeep by sheer force of numbers.

293 Tz: The Order of Vladd forms.

The many Vampires in the Sect begin to form an order of martial champions. Beautiful, strong, deadly and with a hearty taste for blood and sexual pleasure, these Vampires take on the role of Warlords for their Necromancer masters. The Order of Vladd soon begins to lead attacks against nearby cities, slowly expanding the Sect's influence over the northern wastelands.

Spring, 332 Tz: Some Orcs are driven from the Fist into the western caves.

A sizable Orc tribe, driven off the Fist by a rival tribe, takes shelter in a series of labyrinthine caves to the north of the Blasted Lands. Over the next hundred years, they adapt to their new subterranean surroundings, becoming Cave Orcs.

338 Tz: Emperor Bazlus dies.

Emperor Bazlus is killed in a hunting accident. The Prophet-Magus appoints Artemesia of Delphane as the new Empress of Atlantis.

Spring, 342 Tz: Artemesia steps down.

The Empress steps down after refusing to become a puppet of the Guild. Magus Tahmaset replaces her and rules until his assassination in 432 Tz by the Black Powder Rebels.

377 Tz: Rayjan the Inventor is born.

This Dwarf, who only lives to be twenty-two, is a natural genius when it comes to invention. From an early age, Rayjan spends his days designing gears, Golems, flying machines, submarines and all manner of steam-powered devices. Rayjan's Codex, a collection of cryptic notes and theoretical machines, will have a powerful influence on the modern world and provide a wealth of devices for the Black Powder Rebels to build.

400 Tz: The Troll Oracle Maren'kar leaves Rokos.

After learning that he will never be allowed to be a full Oracle due to his race and unusual red skin, Maren'kar leaves Rokos. Armed with information about the Mageprince prophecies, Maren'kar begins looking for the Mageprince himself, hoping to keep him out of the clutches of the scheming Oracles of Rokos.

414 Tz: Althoun conquers Prieska.

When the king of Prieska dies without leaving an heir, Althoun, the grandchild of Palterus the Pennywise, conquers Prieska with a mercenary army. Sarah Ythlim, one of Althoun's greatest supporters before his bid for tyranny, pulls away from the Confederation. Many other merchants follow her lead, causing the merchant organization to collapse.

415 Tz: Sarah Ythlim plants the seeds of the Rebellion.

Sarah organizes a secret experimental lab in the northern mountains near Rangraz and has her Tinkers, wizards and a few Dwarven inventors create new kinds of weapons, armor and machines to use against Althoun. Most of these technologies are adapted from ideas mentioned in Rayjan's notes. She becomes obsessed with Rayjan and goes to great lengths to learn everything she can about him.

415 Tz: Maren'kar takes Blackwyn under his wing.

As the Troll Wizard Maren'kar recognizes that young Blackwyn has Mageprince potential, he takes him into his protection and introduces the young warrior to Sarah Ythlim of the Rebellion.

416 Tz: Sarah Ythlim discovers black powder.

One of Sarah's contacts brings her a special substance from the Amazons who live a few hundred miles to the east. The strange "black powder" is highly explosive, and within a few months Sarah's Tinkers have invented the first crude pistols, fuser rifles and cannons. Soon after, Sarah establishes secret trade relations with the Amazons and gains the right to mine black powder from the slopes of Nepharus Mons.

417 Tz: Sarah Ythlim's forces liberate Prieska.

Sarah's conventional siege of the city is quick, and when Sarah corners Althoun and demands his surrender, she is forced to kill him in self-defense. Later, when she is going through Althoun's papers, she learns that his attack on Prieska was condoned by the Atlantis Guild, and that she was played as a patsy in the artfully arranged collapse of the Palteran Confederation. The furious Sarah becomes determined to overthrow the Empire and creates a plan to distribute black powder weapons to whoever will fight the tyrannical Guild.

418 Tz: Darset Frehr earns his scar.

After gambling with the Black Thorn and losing the bet, the Venthian merchant Darset is forced to give up the crown jewels' necklace to Nadia. After he presents her with the necklace, draped around an armful of poisoned roses, Nadia figures out the ruse, slashes Darset across the face with his own roses and escapes. While Darset has an antidote to counter the deadly poison, the hideous scars left behind have never been fully healed.

419 Tz: The Prophet-Magus is assassinated.

Snow, under Sarah's direction, assassinates the Prophet-Magus Karrudan with a prototype fuser rifle. His single shot marks the first time the black powder weapons have been used in public. Panic over these new "Black Powder Rebels" runs through the Empire like wildfire. While the Atlantis Guild has always had a hand in Empire affairs, Osiras reshapes affairs so the Guild has authority over almost every aspect of Atlantean life.

420 Tz: The Sect begins its Dark Crusade.

Realizing that the Atlanteans are being undermined from within by the Rebellion, the Sect begins concentrated attacks throughout the rest of the Land, launching their Dark Crusade. Vampires, Bloodsuckers and Sect troops become commonplace sights throughout the northeastern territories. The Elementalists, reacting to the Sect's Crusade and to the internal strife in the Empire, begin their own military action against the Necropolis. As result, the uneasy stalemate that had kept the three factions from open warfare for more than a hundred years is broken. War spreads quickly throughout the Land

420 Tz: The Empire begins to secure the Northlands.

Suspecting that Rebels are rooting amongst the northern cities of the Empire, Prophet-Magus Osiras begins oppressing the peoples of the Northlands with armies of troops, mages and Golems. He begins eliminating leaders throughout the region, slowly and quietly, and installing new leaders guaranteed to be under his control.

421 Tz: Khamsin is liberated.

At the request of the citizens of Khamsin, the Black Powder Rebels invade the Atlantean client-state and

liberate it from the Empire. Khamsin becomes an independent city-state and a center of Rebel activity, although the political environment within Khamsin is extremely unstable.

422 Tz: The Khamsin Civil War takes place.

Khamsin erupts into civil war as multiple groups back the various candidates who claim the right to rule. The Empire, the Sect and the League all send agents and assassins into Khamsin, trying to influence which candidate will come out on top.

Summer, 423 Tz: The Dwarves are freed.

Rebel forces attack many of the Scythrian strip mines shortly after Karrudan's assassination, freeing thousands of Dwarven slaves from their lifetimes of servitude. Many of these Dwarves, homeless and without purpose, join the Rebellion to avenge themselves against the cruel Atlanteans.

Winter, 423 Tz: Ellaine Steward wins the Civil War.

The Khamsin Civil War ends, with Ellaine Steward as the victor. Just before her coronation, an unknown intruder assassinates Ellaine. A fractious council of senators forms to rule Khamsin, and the throne remains unoccupied. Rumors abound that there may be survivors from the line of Khamita, and that one day the royal vacancy may be filled by a true heir of Khamsin.

424 Tz: Kzar Rabahn leads the Orc Raiders against the southlands.

The Orc Kzar Rabahn conducts a huge raid against the southlands. He rampages, burns and poisons everything in sight for almost a year before Kossak Mageslayer, sent by the Elemental League to put an end to the destruction, kills Rabahn in single combat at the gates of the Citadel of Luxor. A team of Galeshi warriors played a key part in Rabahn's death, by transporting Kossak Mageslayer around the enemy lines in a makeshift chariot.

426 Tz: Sand-plague wipes out Galeshi horses and oxen.

A hardy people called the Galeshi live in the desert wastes northwest of the Empire. Living in their eight Ringed Cities, built amongst the drifting dunes, the Galeshi are a fierce, nomadic, proud people. The Atlanteans have tried a number of times to force the Galeshi to join the Empire, but to no avail. In 426 Tz, when a strange, infectious plague kills off most of the Galeshi's horses and oxen, the Galeshi are nearly destroyed as a people. The Empire once again demands that the Galeshi join it in exchange for a new supply of horses and livestock. The Galeshi refuse, saying that it is better to die free than to live as slaves. Shortly thereafter, Rebel Tinkers bring the Galeshi gifts of Steam Horses and Steam Rams, along with offers of an alliance against Atlantis. The Galeshi enthusiastically agree, and soon their warriors number among the Rebellion's fiercest fighters.

427 Tz: Blackwyn makes gains in the north.

After breaking with Sarah Ythlim, but still maintaining his alliance with the cause of the Rebellion, a warlord named Blackwyn liberates a handful of small northern towns and cities from the Empire, bringing them under his banner of justice and freedom. Because the Atlanteans are now pressed on many fronts, they do not have the resources they need to pin down the elusive commander. The populous of Enos-Joppa, Nok and Rangraz all praise Blackwyn as a leader and make reference to him being the legendary "Mageprince."

432 Tz to 434 Tz - The Age of Chaos begins.

Spring, 432 Tz: The Warlord Wither attacks the Northlands .

Within the pages of the Rebellion Comic, Wither, hired by the Atlantis Guild to harass the Rebel provinces under Blackwyn's protection, conducts raids against villages. A team of warriors led by Snow, the secret assassin of Prophet-Magus Karrudan some thirteen years earlier, drives off Wither's forces.

Spring, 432 Tz: Emperor Tahmaset is assassinated.

Assassinated in his viewing box above the Coliseum, the corrupt Emperor Jeet Nujarek is chosen to replace the Rebel-slain Emperor Tahmaset. Tahmaset's son, Averett, disappears. Raydan Marz, an exemplary Warlord loyal to the Empire, is framed for the crime by Emperor Nujarek. Raydan is freed in a fantastic escape and devotes himself to destroying the corruption at the heart of the Empire. Young Demi-Magus Anunub knows that Raydan was innocent, and begins a campaign to usurp Emperor Nujarek and the leader of the Atlantis Guild, Prophet-Magus Osiras.

Spring, 432 Tz: Battle of Ashon Rye. Battling for possession of a Magestone mine.

Five rival warlords (Carmine Sura, Raydan Marz, Darq the Corrupt, Kho'Ta, and Kossak Mageslayer) battle for control of the Magestone resources at Ashon Rye. By the end of the bloody fight, Raydan Marz was the last man standing, and would ultimately keep control over the valuable site for more than a year. Carmine Sura vanished shortly after being routed from this battle, and is assumed to have been killed in the bloody fight.

Spring, 432 Tz: The Gathering within Fairhaven. Answering the call of the Sentinel.

In the sleepy country of Fairhaven, a mysterious artifact called the Sentinel began sounding a mystical siren's call. Heroes, adventurers, and Warlords from across the Land were summoned to Fairhaven to unlock the mystery of the Sentinel, and ultimately to fight over the sizable resource of Magestone that the artifact would reveal. In the end, Fairhaven was turned into a four-way battlefield between the Atlantis Guild, the Black Powder Rebellion, the Necropolis Sect and the Elemental League. The Atlantis Guild ultimately triumphed with its Technomantic war-Golems, maintaining control over the war-torn province.

Spring, 432 Tz: Four-Way Warlord Saga. Battle across the breadth of Fairhaven.

Incited to vengeance by Darq the Corrupt's act of resurrecting fallen Troll warriors as zombie-fodder, the Troll Chieftain Kossak Mageslayer begins to hunt down the Necropolis Sect's strongest warlord. Darq, having ventured into the lowlands in an attempt to remove the curse on an ancient artifact called the Vermillion Crown, tries to stay one step ahead of his determined pursuer as he heads for the ruined Dwarven castle where the Crown was originally created. Meanwhile, the Hero Raydan Marz begins a quest to find and acquire the fabled Sphere of Jorandal. His nemesis, the Black Thorn, learns of Raydan's plans to recover the artifact and does her best to win the Sphere for herself.

Summer, 432 Tz: Emergence of the Cave Orcs.

The Orc Raiders begin regular raids throughout the Land. Under the protection of the Black Grasses tribe, the Cave Orcs emerge from their underground lairs and join the Orc Raiders for the first time in a hundred years.

Summer, 432 Tz: The High Elven horns of war.

The first sizable Knights Immortal armies, sent out by the Elven Council to bring order to the lowlands, stream out of Rivvenheim and become entangled in wars throughout the Land.

Summer, 432 Tz: Awakening the ancient powers.

Dragons, awakened from their ancient slumber by Elementalist Warlords, begin to assist League warriors in battles throughout the Land.

Summer, 432 Tz: Fairhaven is overrun by Warlords.

Warlords hungry for battle and a newly discovered supply of Magestone beset the small kingdom of Fairhaven. Raydan Marz, the Black Thorn, Darq the Corrupt and Kossak Mageslayer fight across Fairhaven and into neighboring Duncastor. Raydan Marz outsmarts the Black Thorn after a long series of battles.

Fall, 432 Tz: Battle in Bydalia. Struggle for the Sphere of Jorandal.

While Warlords battle in the streets of Bydalia, deep within the ancient Dungeons below the war-torn city the Black Thorn and Raydan Marz search desperately for the Sphere of Jorandal. In the end, Raydan Marz manages to recover the artifact just ahead of the Black Thorn and her Draconum ally, Tyrsis. Raydan escapes the city alive, and heads back to the Vale of Dawn to begin constructing his Sky Fortress—a floating castle that will be kept aloft by the power of the Sphere of Jorandal.

Fall, 432 Tz: Battle of the Dwarven Forge. The unleashing of the Crown.

Kossak Mageslayer, in a final attempt to prevent Darq the Corrupt from breaking the curse on the Vermillion Crown, attacks the Sect forces at the Dwarven Forge. While, with the aid of reinforcements by Raydan Marz, Kossak is able to battle his way to the heart of the Sect's defenses, he arrives too late. Darq breaks the curse, dons the crown, and instantly gains mind-control over Kossak and spirits him from the field.

Fall, 432 Tz: Inthataar attempts to resurrect his long-dead love.

In the pages of the Scrye comic, Aurijia the Martyr and Khollis the Dwarf battle the evil Necromantic High Elf Inthataar, and prevent him from summoning back the evil Delicissia to the world of the living. Aurijia recovers her stolen Ikona, and returns to service in Blackwyn's armies.

Fall, 432 Tz: The Bloodsucker Plague.

The Sect releases Feral Bloodsuckers into the Land, each tainted with a dangerous plague that can devastate human populations. Much in the same way that the Sect secretly engineered the destruction of the Galeshi's mounts and oxen, they discover a magical means to spread plague across the Land—and to increase the number of corpses for their Necromancers to use in combat.

Winter, 432 Tz: The Shyft arise.

The devious Shyft arise in massive numbers from the ruins of ancient cities, with armies of Mage Spawn under their empathic command.

Winter, 432 Tz: Raydan Marz' Sky Castle.

Raydan Marz, safe with the Sphere of Jorandal in his well-guarded mountain base, begins construction of a Sky Castle. Using processed Magestone to fuel the artifact, Raydan hopes to create a floating citadel that he can use as his base of operations against the corrupt Emperor, Jeet Nujarek.

Spring, 433 Tz: Advancements in Science and Magic.

Throughout the Land the development of magic and technology runs at a frantic pace, and the different factions introduce a variety of living, magical and mechanical mounts for their warriors. Technomancers in the Atlantis Guild cast off perfectly working limbs in exchange for artificial Technomantic extensions.

Spring, 433 Tz: Pullback of Atlantean Troops.

Under order from Emperor Nujarek, troops along the borders of the Empire are ordered to march to the interior to protect the key cities and countries of the Empire, leaving the border client-states open to attack. While Lord Maakha, the defender of Darthion Castle, manages to win the right to have some troops put back on the eastern border, the Empire's defenses in the outlands are extremely weak. Golem production is at an all-time high, and Magestone is getting harder and harder to find.

Spring, 433 Tz: Jason is educated by Kerraii and Maren'kar.

Within the chronicles of the Stolen Destiny comic series, young Jason, a potential Mageprince, is taught some important lessons about the world by Maren'kar's chosen tutor, the dangerous and beautiful Kerraii. By the end of the comic, Magus Medaan of the Atlantis Guild lies dead, a sizable Dwarven slave mine has been liberated, and Jason understands more about his potential as a leader and a warrior.

Spring, 433 Tz: Chasing Darq: Huhn's Folly. A failed quest to save Kossak's life.

When the Necropolis Sect Warlord, Darq the Corrupt, captured the Elemental League Warlord Kossak Mageslayer, he had no idea of the number of League warriors who would begin to hunt him down. With the powers of the newly activated Vermillion Crown, Darq was able to control Kossak's mind and body. But the return to the Necropolis Sect was a slow endeavor, especially with Kossak's nephew, Huhn, and the Mending Priestess Jerriana hot on his tail. By the time Darq reached the borders of the Necropolis territories, and began the steady climb up the southern slopes of the Serpine mountains, a sizable Elemental League army was right behind him. The ongoing series of battles as Huhn attempted to catch up to Darq long enough to free Kossak were brutal and bloody; both the Elemental armies and the standing Sect army charged with the defense of the Serpines took hideous casualties. But when Huhn finally caught up to Darq, Darq was ready for them, and threw every soldier, skeleton, and zombie he had at the Elementals in order to put an end to the feud. By the time the sun set, Huhn's army was defeated, Huhn was severely wounded, and Darq had begun his final flight to the Necropolis with his prisoner. By the next morning, Darq had managed to transform Kossak into a kind of powerful Vampire, one devoted to death, the Sect, and Darq, rather than to the League and the Land.

Spring, 433 Tz: Riverdam. Battling for control of the River Khamita.

Over the churning waters of the Lower Khamita, two Heroes fought for control of an old, abandoned riverdam. Kimble Garn, a Dwarf and a champion of the Rebel cause, fought to prevent the Atlanteans from possessing the ancient structure and closing the massive rivergates—and endangering the valley above with a flood of unthinkable proportions. But the Atlanteans, deeming the mission too risky for their own warriors, hired the Orc champion Chaotic Grimm to crush the defenders and to flood Khamsin. In the end, after a ferocious battle across dangerous walkways and through dark, dripping chambers, Chaotic Grimm managed to beat back Kimble Garn and take control of the dam. Within hours the sluice gates were closed tight, and water began to back up, disrupting Rebel control over the entire Lower Khamita region.

Spring, 433 Tz: The Tomb of Khamita. A contest to recover King Khamita's bones.

An Atlantean strike team led by Apprentice Koranub attempted to steal the revered bones of King Khamita from Khamsin. But Jarl Frostriven, the Dwarven defender of Khamita's remains, managed to fight Koranub

off and move the bones to safety within Khamita Castle.

Spring, 433 Tz: Arena of Atlantis. Competing for the favor of the Emperor.

In an epic event, two of the greatest living Warlords of the Atlantean Empire fought in the Arena of Atlantis for the Seal of Tezla. Through a day-long clash of arms, Golems, and Technomantic wonders, Gatekeeper Bassan defeated Mage-King Alment Lan in honorable combat. Bassan won the Seal of Tezla, and earned the right to have the Atlantean troops that were recalled from the eastern front by Emperor Jeet Nujarek returned to their posts to defend against the menace of the Elemental League.

Spring, 433 Tz: The Riders of Khamsin. A tournament for mercenary contracts.

After competing in a Khamsin tournament to determine the best mounted warriors in the Land—and thus to win lucrative year-long contracts with the new Council of Merchants in Khamsin—brave Kahlan, a Galeshi warrior, managed to beat out all competitors and win an honored place in Khamsin's armies.

Summer, 433 Tz: The Solonavi make their appearance.

The wars between the Factions continue to escalate, drawing nearly every country, kingdom and city-state in the Land into the growing conflict. Strange alliances begin to form as rival Factions work together to defeat tougher foes. The appearance of the angel-like Solonavi, whose coming was foretold in the Oracles' ancient prophecies, leads to many startling revelations. These winged warriors are asked to fight by kings, wizards and Warlords alike—but they always demand a heavy or unusual price for their services.

Summer, 433 Tz: Battle for the River Khamita. Empire fails to capture Wolfsgate.

When Emperor Jeet Nujarek commanded Lord Andreus to lead the Emperor's army against the potent Rebel fortress of Wolfsgate, Andreus was pleased with the promotion—but concerned that the Rebels might have too much of an advantage in their well-fortified river castle. But when Jeet raised the stakes by abducting Andreus' only son, and promising that his son would die if he failed in his attack, the Warlord stepped forward to do his best to defeat the Red Duchess of Khamsin and her Rebel horde. While the Atlanteans won a number of battles during the conflict, in the end the combination of Magus interference and Rebel treachery destroyed all hopes for victory, and the Emperor's army was defeated and routed from the field. Andreus was saved from the bloody melee by a pair of strange individuals. Once his terrible wounds were bandaged, they offered to arrange a meeting with a formidable man who might help Andreus avenge his doomed son—the renegade warlord Raydan Marz. Lord Andreus accepted the offer.

Summer, 433 Tz: Black Powder warehouse. An Atlantean foray into Khamsin.

A mercenary strike force attacks a black powder warehouse on the banks of the Upper River Khamita. Tor Thundercloud, a heroic Dwarf known for his wisdom and battle prowess, managed to beat back the Atlantean mercenaries and preserve both the warehouse and military control over the headwaters of the River Khamita.

Summer, 433 Tz: Vampire Civil War. Order of Vladd destroys Order of Uhlrik.

Throughout the existence of the Necropolis Sect, the Order of Vladd has reigned supreme over the other vampiric martial orders. Led by such notable individuals as Darq the Corrupt and the Death Merchant, Ribhan Crag, the Order of Vladd found itself challenged by the upstart Order of Uhlrik. In a series of brutal

battles, the dominant Vampire caste managed to hold its own, and ultimately confronted and defeated the Uhlrik dogs and their master, Rax Coldstone, in the Death Pits of the Necropolis. The Necromancer master of the Order of Vladd celebrated his warriors' victory over the enemy with blood and wine, while the master of the Order of Uhlrik, the doomed Deathspeaker Spider, was burned alive atop a bonfire made up of his fallen warriors. Now the Order of Uhlrik has disbanded and fled from the Necropolis, vowing vengeance against Vladd and all who side with them!

Fall, 433 Tz: The stage is set for war throughout the Land.

With the formation of the Council of Merchants in Khamsin, the Rebels finally have a stable stronghold in the Land. The neutral Xandressans join the war with a vengeance when Rebel warriors shell a small fleet of ships carrying nonmilitary supplies to a besieged Atlantean fortress. In the north, emissaries from the Galeshi desert-peoples are making deals with the new Orc leader, Kzar Nabar. In exchange for Nabar never ordering attacks into the Galeshi homeland, the Galeshi will show the Orcs a secret way into Prieska, the soft underbelly of the Empire.

Fall, 433 Tz: Battle for Stonekeep. The High Elves are defeated for the first time in over 100 years.

For centuries, the Knights Immortal and the Wylden Elves have fought for possession of Stonekeep Castle. While the Elemental League has held Stonekeep for the last few decades, with the recent rise of Necropolis Sect incursions toward the Wylden Plateau, the members of the High Elven Council deemed that it is time that Rivvenheim warriors took back the ancient fortress. By capturing Stonekeep, it will guarantee that the armies of the Necropolis Sect will have absolutely no chance to conquer the castle and threaten any High Elven cities. Sir Mishler, a brave and ancient warrior stemming from a long line of Knights Immortal warriors, was assigned by Council Lord Jamus to conquer the castle. While the opening days of the campaign went well, with High Elven forces steadily making their way down the length of the League-guarded pass, the morning that Sir Mishler was to begin his attack to reclaim the castle, disaster struck. A Necropolis Sect army was sighted in the area, possibly heading to capture Stonekeep for that Faction. Lord Jamus gave the order that Stonekeep be captured in a single day. Sir Mishler tried to achieve the impossible, but in the end the Elemental forces, led by the brave Commander Searle, repelled the High Elves and maintained control over Stonekeep. Shortly after the attack, Sir Mishler vanished, leaving behind his helm, cloak, and his family's battle standard—and no one has heard from him since.

Fall, 433 Tz: Burning Sails. The Rebels gain control over the Grange Valley.

After the ships of the Malia clan were sunk by Rebel cannon fire, sending the panicked river-traders swimming for the shore, Captain Sarjhet beached her ship behind enemy lines and began a campaign to punish the Rebels responsible for the despicable act. For centuries, the Xandressans had traded peacefully with the merchants of Khamsin, guaranteeing their neutrality by refusing to ferry Atlantean troops or weapons. But when the Rebels fired upon Sarjhet's fleet of riverboats, believing that the Tezlacore Golem that the river-traders ferried violated the centuries-old agreement, they set off a chain reaction of violence that would bring the Xandressans fully into the Atlantean war against the Black Powder Rebellion. In the end, Duke Skala of the Black Powder Rebellion defeated Captain Sarjhet, largely due to the deal he entered into with a mysterious Solonavi, guaranteeing the victory for a price to be named at a later time. . . .

Fall 433 Tz: Khan's Road. The Orcs keep the High Elves from learning their plans.

In an attempt to learn why the Orc Raiders hadn't raided the southlands yet, the Knights Immortal warrior Shadowbane ventured up to the border of the Raiders homeland—only to encounter fierce resistance from skirmish forces set to guard the southern border of the Fist. While Shadowbane fought valiantly, and his Knights Immortal companions battled in unfamiliar and hostile territory, the Knights Immortal were cut down and the Orcs' secret was preserved. Now Kzar Nabar, the leader of the Orc forces, is able to sneak through the Blasted Lands into the underbelly of the Empire, all with the aid of the Galeshi Rebel scouts who'd sworn to show him the way. Now, Shadowbane is imprisoned in an unknown location by a mysterious adversary,

and doesn't know whether he is going to survive the coming days.

Winter, 433 Tz: Dark Omens. The Black Pyramid rises within the Blasted Lands.

After future-seers and Oracles from across the Land are disturbed by a series of haunting visions and premonitions of evil, Warlords are dispatched by the varying factions to discover the source of the dark dreams. After a long journey to the Blasted Lands, Torg Boneknitter of the Elemental League and the Wolfwitch of the Necropolis Sect struggle to reach the ill-boded site first. While the Elementalists managed to cut all of the Wolfwitch's forces down, they were not able to prevent her from entering the Black Pyramid first, and now wait outside the structure to ensure that whatever evil she awakens within cannot escape.

Spring, 434 Tz: The Empire attacks Khamsin; the Orcs attack Prieska.

Having established a secret alliance with the Knights Immortal, the combined human and High Elven forces march to destroy Khamsin, to rid the Land of Rebel forces forever! Warriors from the Elemental League join with the Rebel defenders just before the city of Khamsin is besieged, and a bloody four-way battle shakes the Land. To the southwest, Orcs raid and plunder through Prieska, burn the Prieskan capital of Alrisar, and make deals with the Sect warlord Darq the Corrupt to attack the formidable defensive citadel at Luxor. Details of the attack on Khamsin are noted in the first book of the Khamsin trilogy.

Spring, 434 Tz: Technomancer Venthu fails to take Wolfsgate.

As the Atlantean armies marched to attack the Rebel city of Wolfsgate and to capture the critical river bridge over the River Khamita, the Technomancer Venthu led a team of elite Atlantean warriors to smash the gates of Wolfsgate from within. At a critical point in the battle between the Atlantean and Rebel warriors, Venthu attempted to breach the gates with a series of magical blasts – but had his head chopped off from his shoulders for his troubles. The Amazon Whitehawk, for her valor in battle against the Technomancer, was promoted to the Protector of Wolfsgate by the Red Duchess. While the Atlanteans were able to make their way across the river downstream at the Riverdam, it made for a much slower and dangerous crossing for the soldiers of the Empire.

Summer 434 Tz: The lost city of Dragon's Gate is revealed, and the inhabitants awaken.

After a band of Heroes unwarily awaken the ancient slumbering Drakona, ancient monsters and powerful Draconum warriors awaken from millennia-long sleep. Heroes venture to the Kuttar Depths to plunder the city, and to battle the ancient horrors within.

Of Gods, Elves, Draconum and Men A Treatise on Religion and Believe across the Land

Religion throughout the Land is a very potent force, as the personal beliefs of every individual commoner, noble, warrior, wizard or king dictates their decisions and moral structure. While the life and transarnation of Tezla brought a reverence and worship of the Grand-Magus in a variety of incarnations, whether as the Avatar of Tezla, the Spirit of Tezla, Dark Tezla, or the Solonavi's Tezla, the Old Gods are still known throughout the Land and are even feared or honored by superstitious, devout, and fanatical worshippers alike.

Atlantis

For the humans of the Atlantean Empire, descending from the once-mighty warriors of the Kosian Priest-Kings, Tezla has become the driving force in their lives. Temples to a variety of gods and goddesses throughout the Land are continually torn down, or remodeled into mage halls or bureaucratic towers. While

places of great or aesthetic beauty are allowed to stand, such as the grand old cathedrals that dominate the skyline of Rokos, some of the most revered holy sites in the Land - such as the Trade Temples that once stood in Enos Joppa - have been torn down in recent decades to make way for Golem Factories. For the citizens of the Empire, the Old Gods no longer hold sway, and only Technomancy, the pursuit of power, and revered Tezla hold any true spiritual meaning for them. United by their love and fervor for the greatest wizard that ever lived, for the one man who brought humanity from being a beaten people up to an enlightened, powerful state, the citizens of the Empire will always worship Tezla, and will hold the rare appearances of Tezla's Avatar Golem or his mouthpiece, the Prophet-Magus, as once-in-a-lifetime miraculous events.

Revolution

The warriors of the Revolution are also united by Tezla - but to stand against the power-madness, tyranny, and attitude of manifest destiny that drives his followers to cause death and woe wherever they go. While the Old Gods make some difference to the "outcasts of the Empire", only one goddess has maintained any real followers amongst the beleaguered warriors of Khamsin and the Northlands. As a goddess whose sole purpose is to guide dead warriors to the Underworld, sighting this beautiful, veiled goddess dressed in black silks and lace is a sure sign that a warrior is soon doomed to die. During the Khamsin Civil War, she was seen constantly by members of the varied armies fighting for the Throne of Khamsin, and those members that saw her died shortly thereafter like fail. While Sharise is not seen as a bringer of death, but only as a messenger who guides the dead on the long and treacherous journey to the Underworld, the peoples of Khamsin and the Northlands often call upon her, or swear by her name when the need is great.

Dwarves

The Dwarves have their own pantheon of gods, and you will have a hard time finding a Dwarf that doesn't swear by one deity or another. But since each of the Dwarven underground communities - called holts in their own odd tongue - were very xenophobic of outsiders, and each bore their own hand-tailored sets of rules, customs, gods and goddesses that bore little resemblance to that of their neighbors. After the Atlanteans began raiding holts and enslaving the Dwarves in the Magestone Mines, much of the Dwarven culture was lost in that catastrophic series of events. While many of the Dwarves of the modern age have benefited from having one culture born of attrition and a hundred years of slavery, much of their heritage has been lost, as well as the unique worship of many of the Dwarven Gods that flavored and shaped their individual society of warriors, crafters, healers, and Forgemasters.

Amazons

The Amazons worship a number of totemistic gods, and each of the seven or eight dozen tribes that live upon the slopes of Nepharus Mons each have their own particular spirit animal that they emulate and honor. As temples and altars dot the forested area surrounding the Amazon's homeland, each devoted to a specific animal power (wolf, hawk, rabbit, etc.), the most powerful and sacred spot in Amazon culture lies in the Valley of the Mists to the northeast of their famous homeland. The Valley of the Mists is supposedly where their distant ancestors were saved from destruction by the totem spirits, and ultimately learned from their spirit guides about combat, totemistic magic, and their role in the larger scheme of the Land. While the warriors the Amazons capture in their raids have a variety of faiths, once they arrive on the slopes of Nepharus Mons, their personal beliefs are void, and speaking of alien gods on the holy ground of the Amazon's mountain is a sure path towards punishment and bloody education. While many of the uneducated peoples of the Land compare the Amazons and the Elementals as being alike, in truth they are very different. While the Elementals certainly believe in working with the primal forces of the Land to defeat their enemies, none would ever let a totem spirit actually possess them and use them in battle like they do with the Amazons. The very principle goes against the teachings of the Spirit of Tezla, where it is written that possession of a sentient being (and the revocation of free will) by any force whatsoever is a blasphemous, and terrible act.

Galeshi

The Galeshi desert peoples, having long lived in the deserts of the Land, came to worship the Sun as a bringer of both life and death. In their harsh, nomadic culture, where a single mistake or stroke of bad luck can easily leave one to die of thirst in the desert wastes, making worship and sacrifice for the Sun Gods is an unchangeable way of life. While the Galeshi are not united by the Sun as other cultures are united behind the worship or reverence of their own gods, all of them do acknowledge that worship of the Sun Gods is a common way of life, and that only a non-Galeshi would be foolish enough to stand against the wrath of one who both gives and takes life with equal ease. While the tales of the Galeshi have many parables of immoral warriors finding a due end at the hands of their dangerous deities, there are no recorded tales of actual sightings of the Sun Gods - only the words and whisperings that the most blessed of Priests receive at the end of a long desert walk, or a fast within one of the sacred, hidden oases secreted throughout the western deserts and the Blasted Lands.

Crusade

While reverence of Dark Tezla is an accepted and required model amongst all of the citizens of the Dark

Crusade, and the word of the Dark Prophet and the Deathspeakers holds absolute sway, there is a powerful cult that holds an odd place amongst Crusader society. The Blood Goddess, a cruel, hateful being capable of giving the gift of immortality, has sizable temples scattered throughout the capitol and the Vurgra Divide. However, out beyond the Necropolis, in the lands of Men, Dwarves and Elves, the agents of the Blood Goddess have worked long and hard to establish secret churches in all the major (non High Elven) cities in the Land, and to tempt, bait, and coerce gullible people into joining the Dark Crusade in exchange for favors, satisfaction of secret or terrible vices, or even the potential of the gift of eternal life as a blood-drinking Vampire. While the Atlanteans outright banned the Blood Goddess cults early on, and getting caught with ties to one of these secret orders is a guaranteed death sentence, the agents of the Blood Goddess continue to work diligently to harvest souls and put them to use in the quest to flood the Land with darkness and death.

Elementals

For the Centaurs, Forest Elves, Mountain Trolls, Sprites, Forest Trolls, and the myriad other creatures that live in the Wylden, love and reverence for the Land itself is the key to their religion. Every tree, rock, flower and stream has their own animistic spirit, and can even be called upon by priests and priestesses trained in the Elemental arts to fight against those who would corrupt or destroy the Land in any way. Even the great Dragons, called from their sleep by the Priests of the Dragon Grove to fight for the Land, have their own part to play in the cycle of life that every creature great or small shares in. While the Forest Elves once flocked to Atlantis to learn alongside Tezla, when they returned from their banishing on the Night of Fire, they brought back with them the Spirit of Tezla, which they revere as a powerful elder amongst their wise culture. While the other races of the Wylden have some amount of faith in the Spirit, the recent recall to Roanne Valle by the Forest Elves - and thus the abandonment of the Wylden to the forces of the Dark Crusade - has caused a sizable division in what was before a very solid and structured League. While most Forest Elves believe that the Spirit of Tezla had them build the mountain fortress of Roanne Valle for this specific purpose more than 150 years ago, the Centaurs, Trolls and Faeries who are watching the Wylden be destroyed, burned, and corrupted by the evils of the Dark Crusade may never forgive them for their cowardice or fanatical worship of something other than the primal force of the Land. While the appearance of the Nature Avatar, the Horned Hunter, is not viewed as a god by the non-Elven races, many of the members of the Wylden Host hold a dedicated reverence for this supernatural, unstoppable force.

High Elves

Faith, piety and holy works are just as important in High Elven society as sword-work, the pursuit of art, and the mastery of magery. The omnipotent father-god Rythael leads the Heiramman pantheon, accompanied by Geiddi, his wife and mother to the High Elven race. Of a variety of names and titles, the other five gods—the Warrior, the Mage, the Priest, Prophecy and Fortune—are worshipped by High Elves following similar life-paths in Rivvenheim society. Serving these seven gods are the Heiramman Host, legions of Elven souls ascended from corporeal existence to be of service to their gods as warriors and servants. After a great disaster millennia ago, only seven of the noble High Elven families survived with any real numbers intact. In the modern day, these seven families make up the backbone of leadership of the High Elven people, and the commoners of High Elven society revere these nobility as if they were the chosen of the gods. Whether from the Wyndfenner, Lightfoot, Fairhame, Ivydown, Starsdawn, Longblade or Stormbringer line, members of these family lines are guaranteed a position of leadership within High Elven society by their station at birth, and a role at the side of the Heiramman gods after their deaths.

Orcs

The Orcs of all clans and castes worship the Eagle Gods, and are very superstitious and reverent when it comes to encounters with eagles of any kind - and especially the Shamans and Priests that work with these potent gods to bring about victory or destruction for the tribes of the Fist. For example, when the Orcs sacked Caero many hundreds of years ago, the only reason they didn't finish their sack of the merchant city is because their leader had a vision from the Eagle Gods to leave the metropolis, and to never return. As result of that tales, Orcs have not attacked Caero ever since, though they have regularly attacked communities just up and downriver from the "sacred" Atlantean port. Going to extremes, even the appearance of a lone Eagle may change the course of a battle or a journey, to the point of whole tribes of Orcs may wander into the deep deserts of the Blasted Lands in order to see where a lone eagle is leading them - whether to gold, combat, or certain death.

Xandressans

The Xandressans, a people bound by their love for ships and the open sea, are similar to the Galeshi in many ways. In the same way that the Galeshi view the Sun as the bringer of life and death, the Xandressans view the water and wind to be primal forces that drive their lives, their luck, and their longevity. As a largely superstitious people, the sighting of certain birds or fish during a journey is believed to have certain divinatorial omens. A ship's courses may be changed, or voyages might be abandoned if a particularly dark sign appears above or within the wave. Additionally whole foretellings of a newly born Xandressan's future life can be supposedly determined by the colors and patterns of the sunset on the day they are born. While there are no named gods within their religion, many Xandressan captains seem to

choose one animal or weather phenomenon to rever, and will take great offense if any drylander mocks or demeans their stated choice.

Draconum, Drakona

To the point of view of the Draconum, the Dragon Gods are a unifying part of their culture, and a driving force behind the moral and ethical structure of these potent warriors and wizards. From the time a Draconum is hatched from the egg, and begins the long process of becoming first Whelp, then Neophant, and then evolving into their first form, the fact that their entire life, their entire destiny is all under the control of their deities is a fact that is never forgotten. After all, as the Dragon Gods shaped the first eggs, and set the Draconum to their task of evolution and self-mastery, they also watch over their children as they progress through each Chrysalis and seek to ascertain a kind of perfection, or purity, that only aggressive and continued evolution can provide. While the Drakona also worship the same set of Dragon Gods, they tend to shy away from self-mastery, and devote their attentions to the survival of the fittest. While the Draconum must undergo personal rituals near Magestone nodes every few decades, and believe the Draconum created them to be forever free, the Drakona call upon the Dragon Gods to forcefully evolve their warriors, even to the point of shattering their best and brightest in effort to gain Drakona avatars of truly god-like power.

- On a side note, the Dark Dwarves of the Kuttar Depths that attend to the needs of the Dragon City worship the Drakona as gods themselves, and cannot ever think of wronging a creature of such great power.

- Additionally, the Dragon Gods have nothing to do with the Dragons that the Forest Elves use in their battles to protect the Land. While the Draconum recognize the Dragons as a deadly and respected creature, they have no reverence for the bestial creatures save for their great power, age, and strength.

The Afterlife and the Underworld

Amongst many of the races and cultures of the Land, the belief in an Underworld, or a kind of afterlife where gods and monsters dwell, is a constant and undoubtable fact. The stories about the majority of the old, powerful Gods that once walked the Land lie buried, slumbering, deep beneath the northern mountains, is something that any Atlantean schoolchild can recite with absolute surety. Legends of the Troll hero Paragon fighting great monsters awakened from their slumber in the Dark Deeps beneath the earth have long been told around the fires of the Forest Trolls. Heroes occasionally bring stories of encountering gates or passages in the deepest Dungeons, leading down into unknowable blackness, and no Hero that has ever begun this dangerous journey has ever returned to tell of it. While many cultures believe in a kind of afterlife, whether the endless warrior's banquet of the Prieskan peoples, or the dark, tormenting hell of the Elves of the Dark Crusade, there is no true answer to whether an afterlife exists, or which culture is correct. As the saying goes in Khamsin, only Sharise knows the dark path and what lies beyond the light, and Sharise only shows her secrets to those who will never again return to tell them.