



The Starfallen Sea

2022 Lore

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“It is said that there were once thousands of stars in the sky, one for every island in the sea. But that was long ago. Now, it is the end of the Eighth Age. Only a few hundred stars shine above, and more fall every year. And each time that one does, an island is lost forever.”

The Starfallen Sea was a worldbuilding project detailing a world facing what may be its end. All lore in this document was originally made available online, with each discrete update required to be under 280 characters, and located at twitter.com/starfallensea.

While this project is temporarily on hiatus, more lore is forthcoming. Stay tuned.

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People and Places

In this age, chaos-storms often beset formerly safe currents. Passage requires a compass blessed by your island's god, a good sorcerer to hold back the winds, and a bit of luck. Many ships invoke the Sailor, one of the ancient Incarnates, although they are not known to answer.

Kheiros, also known as Sailors' Cant, is the common language of the Starfallen Sea. A sign language that evolved over the course of the Third Age, it was originally used by sailors working in stormy weather before spreading to merchants, diplomats, and finally common travelers.

It is a Rathani tradition to give a newborn child's parents a golden poppy plant, to grow alongside the child. The Rathani believe that while the poppy lives, the child's dreams will be free of Grandfather's attention, allowing them to grow into the person they wish to become.

When Jankoli youth are ready to become adults, they gather feathers from local birds, declaring their genders with the feathers they choose and weaving them into headbands as part of their coming of age. Removing this headband with another is a sign of deepest trust or intimacy.

The Pious Gardens in Jankol hold the gods of thirty-two refugee groups that have settled on the island in the last 200 years. Here they recover, lending their strength to protect Jankol from storms. Some Jankoli officials worry that the Gardens will surpass the island's own god.

It is an insult in Barathan culture to look someone in the eyes, with the insult growing the longer the contact is made. To do so is to claim that your personhood is more than that of the one you are speaking to, to the point of denigrating your target as no more than an object.

The island of Zakynt is home to the Acanthos Ruins. Once the seat of modern sorcery, the Acanthos has become a shattered pit of broken time and nameless gods, which sometimes crawl out to assault the island's scavengers before rapidly ageing to whispers that vanish on the wind.

The great warships of the Korallium Empire still sail the seas, claiming tribute of food, lumber, and occasional volunteers from dozens of islands and fighting demons, pirates, and enemy nations, but their homeland has not been seen in decades, and no one knows where they dock.

Rylee Tallow is the unofficial leader of the dockworkers of Yoruth. Her growing frustration with tribute to Korallium has her considering denying the next warship to arrive docking rights, an action likely to lead to armed conflict with both the ship and the island's authorities.

Islands of the Adrannic Reach make use of rain-gutters to gather water and channel it to municipal water-towers. These towers each contain a few ocean pearls to purify the water against chaos-contagion; they must be changed out yearly, as the contagion blights and mutates them.

During the Festival of Joining on Ruthan, the island's population competes in physical and mental trials. The winner is brought to become one with the island's god forever. Once held every decade, it has grown more frequent; it is now seasonal, and challengers try to subtly fail.

It has been four years since the death of the Speaker of Tehfreh, with no clear successor. With the island's Voices divided between three rivals, governmental duties are gradually breaking down, and the island's god refuses to grant new blessings until a new Speaker is chosen.

A great pine tree in the capital of Taregard is said to hold the last governor of the Illuminated Empire. He slew the island's god, and a splinter lodged in his thumb; overnight, he erupted into a tree whose roots grew through the Imperial garrison, becoming the island's new god.

The people of Travertino have spent centuries digging caverns beneath their island, even as its surface has been ravaged by storms and worn to rock. The entire population now lives far beneath the sea-line, emerging only to meet with ships that make port within their tidal caves.

The entire population of Frennech has vanished five times since the island was found abandoned in the Fifth Age. Each time, they leave no clues or signs of violence. The most recent was sixty years ago, and the current population is made up of refugees with nowhere else to turn.

Rolanth was the seat of the Redfern Archipelago until it sank eight years ago. The archipelago's surviving islands are desperately trying to raise funds for a second expedition to save their gods, the first having ended with most of its members killed or lost in the labyrinth.

Every year, hunters gather on the island of Embrist to hunt the blazehawks that gather there after mating, in a week-long competition that absolutely infuriates the locals. Avoiding harassment and sabotage by local farmers and officials is considered to be just part of the hunt.

Ships that sail the Crested Sea paint a long green line along each side of their hull, just at the waterline. Sailors believe that this warns the Apkallu who dwell beneath those waves that the souls of those aboard have been claimed by their gods, and are not to be annexed.

The Curator of the Museum Fleet lives in a collection of broken ships that somehow still sails safely across the sea. They trade for ancient lore, and have taken in so many grimoires that their own past has been lost to them amidst the thousands of lives sharing their thoughts.

Tamaka Marr, Grand Astrologer of Sukar, claims her ability to find sunken islands comes from using astrology to map the gaps between stars. She sends mercenaries to explore the labyrinths of such places, bringing the remains of their gods back to Sukar to empower its pantheon.

Yusuf Jarras is the Fifth Prophet of the Revivalist branch of the Ashen Church, and awakened to his destiny ten years ago at the age of 27. Jarras continues to search for the Axiom Vestige, lost with the Fourth Prophet 287 years ago, with which he plans to reunite the church.

The alchemist Zarrus Iljani burned through their fortune searching for immortality. They now believe the secret lies with star jelly, and chase falling stars from island to island to further their research, which they fund by selling poisons and tinctures to political patrons.

Dapifer Oleander Kent fancies himself the true leader of the Storm-Chasers, but is well aware that the order's other two leaders consider him a reckless figurehead. He is always racing against their machinations, seeking treasure and renown to shore up his status and win allies.

It is customary in the seas to distinguish empires, groups of islands ruled from a central island, and archipelagoes, islands that have banded together as one political force. The tributary gods of an empire serve one powerful deity, while archipelagos share a pantheon of equals.

The Adrannic Reach is the largest empire in the modern seas, with a full eighteen islands under its sway. A piece of each island's god has been taken to Khimerum, the capitol of the Reach, and integrated with the island's god, giving him the power to draw on his entire pantheon.

The blademasters of Tarith, as their final challenge before being named master, work with a Tarithian smith to forge their own blades. They provide five drops of their own blood to the metal, which it is said binds the blade to them and makes it an extension of their hand.

Johanna Rosine, a sorcerer of the Solarnic Creed, has recently become a trusted advisor to the priests of Orithea. Under her influence, the island is undergoing a traditionalist revival, becoming increasingly insular and obsessed with ritual purity as a defense against Chaos.

Each time the capitol of the Empire of Varaka fell to Chaos, its leaders fled with their wealth to a tributary, renaming it to Varaka. Now, every other island in the empire has sunk or dissolved, and the people of Varaka have nothing left to fight with when Chaos comes for them.

Antara Zell is a priestess who learned malefaction to protect her god and people from Chaos. She has single-handedly stopped 17 storms over forty years, but the people of Delreth believe her to be consumed by darkness and fear to approach her temple, leaving her to fight alone.

The first Grand Current was formed in 160 FS, midway through the Fifth Age. Immune to storms, it was a powerful ocean current that looped around more than 100 islands. It is the only Grand Current still existing, although fragments of others sometimes sweep ships off-course.

The people of Charlotta's Rise cut down their forests to grow ivory vines, selling them to their neighbours for a fortune. Now those islands have sunk, and Charlotta's Rise is facing food shortages, selling their luxuries to the few ships able to sail the vast distance to them.

The Palomic Temple believes that gods must be commanded, not venerated, and claim that Chaos storms are a result of gods taking power from humanity. They worship the Incarnates, who they claim still watch over the seas, ready to save the virtuous and clean the world of Chaos.

Mallan Reed has made a fortune writing lurid tales of magic and mystery, using the relatively-new invention of sorcerous printing to distribute them across the seas. They feature rugged Storm-Chasers fighting demons and necromancers, and have been translated into a dozen tongues.

The island of Gohanna vanished into the mists of the Fourth Age, to return only while its constellation was eclipsed by a new moon. Once, this happened only one night every twenty-six years, but as the stars of the constellation wink out, Gohanna appears more and more frequently.

It is customary on Tehfreh to give a small sacrifice from your year's labour to the island's Speaker, who carries it to their god. In the periods between Speakers, sacrifices are stored until the next Speaker is appointed, potentially creating a vulnerable stockpile of valuables.

Obryn Dohr, raised from birth to be High Priest of Hanadir, instead rebelled against their island's tyrannical god, Jhurr. They now lead a band of fellow revolutionaries in the hills, weakening Jhurr's power while seeking a replacement who could keep Hanadir safe if he is slain.

Sander's Wake worships duality. Its twin gods, Orim and Rell, are friendly rivals grown from a single seed. Their sway over the archipelago's four islands ebbs and flows through seasonal competitions; the archipelago's other gods are quiet, leaving the siblings to their games.

A rising star in the Pyrian Armada, Captain Shalla Vir has her sights set on the Admiral's seat. She has uncovered ancient Pyrian necromancy, and secretly combines it with her wind-shaping to inflict lethargy and fear on enemy ships, while spreading the energy across her crew.

For six years, the island of Uhaveth has ambushed and captured one in four of the seasonal ships sent by their Adrannic rulers to gather tribute. These ships are being secretly refitted into a pirate fleet to fight the Reach - if they can keep them secret until they are done.

Gaider Dunn believes that the Incarnates still live, on a hidden island of ice. He is funding an expedition to the far southern seas, following the path that he believes the Sailor's ship took when it returned, to join the Incarnates and help them make war on Chaos once again.

The smelters of Krin's Forge make use of an ancient protective magic to direct the lava in their island's volcanic heart, forging extremely pure metals that cannot be found elsewhere in the seas. Their mastery is limited only by the handful of smithies the volcano can support.

Korallium warships sometimes take on volunteer sailors from tributaries. Their families are paid well, and their crews always seem content, but messages home gradually peter out, growing vaguer with each missive, and no one who signs up has ever left the navy and returned home.

Cerulean Shade is a traveling farmer on a mission to recover and cultivate edible plants and fungi from across the seas before they are lost to Chaos. They have created a divine greenhouse on their home of Radiso, enchanted to survive even if the island sinks beneath the waves.

In 970 FS, the Nurathic Dominion rose with the goal of uniting all islands descended from the Nurathic people under a single pantheon. The Dominion lasted only two generations before collapsing in the face of local uprisings, but its remnants still plot across dozens of islands.

The island of Akuhala declared independence from Korallium ten years ago. Korallium did not respond or even acknowledge this, but piracy in the region quickly and suspiciously exploded. Akuhala is now approaching starvation; its leaders debate begging for Korallium's rule again.

The Keldic Windriders craft massive kites out of their island's lightweight wood, and ride the winds around Keldis to watch for danger. They sometimes hire out to merchant vessels as lookouts, using a bit of sorcery to guide their movements while hooked to the mast by long lines.

Adannan the Shadow was a wealthy merchant until jealous rivals engineered his victory in the Festival of Joining. Fleeing into the island's depths to avoid his 'prize', Adannan now lurks along the approach to the god's cave, stripping other champions of their goods to stay alive.

The ogres of the half-frozen north seas are said to have been human until they merged their essence with polar bears to survive the isolation of the Fourth Age. Feared due to their need for raw meat and lurid tales of cannibalism, they are reclusive and suspicious of outsiders.

The tropical island of Nyukan sits in the centre of a massive, stable hurricane leashed by a powerful sorcerer six hundred years ago. The hurricane will part for a compass linked to Nyukan's god, but as long as the winds have enough divine energy, no Chaos storm can challenge it.

Sandhaven, capitol of the Horaltic League, is surrounded by a maze of reefs and sandbars littered with sorcerous mines that can launch flames hundreds of feet high. The island has successfully withstood four Chaos storms, harvesting the remains to strengthen their defenses.

The slopes of Mt. Dharmir are home to a collection of scholars, philosophers, and sorcerers who use the mountain's usual height to study the skies. Stretching kilometers high, Mt. Dharmir is visible over the horizon over 250 km away, and is used by regional ships to navigate.

The Archipelago of Thael, one of the largest in the seas, boasts eight islands spread over a hundred kilometers. Its eight priesthoods constantly bicker and scheme for prestige, and which god is ascendant is decided every solstice - but this disguises the depth of their alliance.

The people of Frennech say that their island's quiet god hates to be disturbed, and avoid the ruins of the people who came before them and vanished. Anyone caught investigating or treasure hunting in these ruins is staked out to be eaten by crabs, in hopes of sparing the island.

The people of Kural wear silver wristbands passed down through family lines. When two Kuralish meet, they clasp hands at the forearm to prove that they are real, and not homunculi that would be disrupted by silver's touch. No one has failed the test in almost eight years.

Pirates along the Rawlic Main give a token of passage to any ship that stands to and allows itself to be boarded. If the ship is stopped by another Rawlic pirate that season, they can show the token to avoid more losses. Pirates who violate this treaty are hunted by their peers.

Communion Day is celebrated in the region surrounding the Horaltic League. It commemorates Carth Varlance, who gave his life to craft a Grand Current in the region and bring its islands back to the seas. But some claim Varlance meant to sacrifice another, and was in turn killed.

The sorcerer Henrik Fraun invented the world's first airship four years ago. The Persistence launched from Fraun's home with a crew of 50 to great celebration, before promptly vanishing in the Swagelic Sea. If it can be found, it might be used to build a less fragile model...

Ferdinand Wintringham, Almoner of the Storm-Chasers, determines the direction and force of the fleet's campaigns. Patient and suspicious, he considers himself the true leader of the organization, wielding his influence to prevent his compatriots from leading the fleet to ruin.

Lannis Palatir is one of the three Council leaders of the Zhanan Empire. They plan to also become one of the nine Acolytes of the capitol's god, Jhur, and to thereby conscript the priesthood into Imperial affairs. They are unconcerned about Jhur's opinions on the matter.

Legends and History

The Second Age, the Age of Gods, began roughly 1300 years before First Sailing. For 600 years after the fall of Chaos, the gods and Incarnates spread across the seas, founding new islands and cultures, but its true history was lost during the Imperial era and only myths remain.

Several islands lay claim to being the home of the First City, from which the Incarnates planned their war against Chaos. Some traditions believe that the First City will also be the Last, when everything else has sunken beneath the waves, and from there a new world will be born.

The Third Age, the Age of Light, began when the island of Rosanna fought against their neighbour, Lorimaud, and stole the god of Lorimaud as a hostage. Rosanna grew to become the seat of the first empire, the Illuminated Empire, which at its height ruled more than 10,000 islands.

Arich Shand and the Historians fought the Illuminated Empire by rescuing texts and relics from destruction on charges of heresy. Their legacy lives on via the Museum Fleet and the Archive of Pavell, but some caches were lost with their protectors, and are hidden to this day.

The metre, the standard unit of distance measurement across most of the Seas, was first instituted by His Illuminated Majesty Soren II and is named after the tones of a metronome. One metre is the exact distance covered by a dancer during one bar of a formal Imperial waltz.

The Fourth Age marked the return of Chaos and the fall of the Illuminated Empire. Over three hundred years, Chaos storms cut the seas off from each other, splitting them into hundreds of isolated archipelagoes. Many traditions blame the Empire's greed for the fall of the seas.

The common calendar used across the Starfallen Sea dates back 1344 years, to when Orithean priests first used their divine compasses to successfully sail through a chaos-storm to the Sheruvan Archipelago. This First Sailing was the dawn of the Fifth Age, the Age of Sails.

The Sixth Age, the Age of Wonders, lasted for 446 years. It began with the founding of the Acanthos by Osei Shu Taye, saw the growth of sorceries lost since the days of the Illuminated Empire, and ended with the failure of the Horizon Crusade and the devastating Tourmaline Storm.

The Seven-School War (617-628 FS) was fought between three alliances of sorcerous academies and archipelagos. Bitter and vicious, it resulted in the death and failed rebirth of Grandfather, the razing of Rathanos, and the end of the development of new magical forms and branches.

The Pyrian Academy fell to treachery early in the Seventh Age. In 823 FS, a political coup led to a third of the faculty being slain and the Academy coming under the sway of the Horaltic League. After fading for centuries, the Academy now solely trains the League's Pyrian Armada.

The Incarnates were the first humans; some say they were created by the gods, others that they sprang full-formed from Chaos. There were either six or seven of them, although the many traditions across the sea do not agree on their titles or whether they still exist in some form.

First of the Incarnates, the Gardener is the patron of tacticians, farmers, and animal breeders. She is recognized as an Incarnate almost universally across the seas, and it is agreed that she gave the other Incarnates their titles and directed them in the war against Chaos.

The Poet is an Incarnate whose stories are said to reshape the world. They are the patron of storytellers, priests, and craftsmen. In one aspect they tell truths that bring despair, and in another they tell lies that inspire great deeds, but it is impossible to tell them apart.

The Scavenger is the Incarnate patron of inventors, butchers, and the destitute. During the war against Chaos, it is said that he transformed the broken weapons of the Incarnates into tools for the next wave of battles, while reminding them not to be seduced by hubris and power.

The Nurse is the Incarnate patron of medicine, family, and death. It is said that she forged the divine spells that allow dead souls to become one with their gods. She is the only Incarnate known to have died, and pilgrims flocked to her grave until it was lost in the Fourth Age.

An old myth states that the Moon is home to a sorcerer, who flew there to escape the clutches of the Illuminated Empire, only to find that it was scoured and without magic. The stories state he is up there still, his powerful magic enough to keep him alive but not to return home.

Aber is a folk hero of the Nurathic tradition, a clever child or teen who is mistaken for a person of import, and who manipulates those misunderstandings to overthrow tyrants and shame the arrogant or cruel. Because of this, Aber is one of the most common names across the sea.

"The Vengeance of Kura", inspired by the historical fall of Harvoth, is a popular folktale across the western seas. It tells of an elderly priestess who, after her home is ravaged by war, insinuates herself in the court of her conquerors and drives them to destroy each other.

During the Purity War of 1312, extremists on the Lathik archipelago attempted to expel all residents of that did not worship its pantheon. Defeated by an alliance of moderates and refugees, the "True Lathik" fled. Their children continue to harry Lathik from their sunken hideout.

The Merchant, patron Incarnate of traders, thieves, and gluttons, is said to have bound the spawn of Chaos in unbreakable vows that resulted in their deaths, granting their power to the Incarnates. His stories often involve him going too far after winning a deal and being undone.

The myth of the Wind Maiden, which took root in the Fifth Age across the northern seas, tells of a young magician's apprentice who seeks freedom by binding the five winds to her service. In the end, she rides the winds into Chaos and becomes the Sixth Wind, a bittersweet victory.

At some time in the Second Age, the Sailor took the crew with which he had fought against Chaos and sailed away from the seas, looking for other worlds. No one knows what happened on his voyage; their empty ship was discovered in the Sixth Age, having drifted for centuries.

The Chronicler, patron Incarnate of scholars, alchemists and match-makers, is said to have worked alongside the other Incarnates to chart the details of Chaos and thereby force it into order. Sometimes equated with the Gardener or the Magus, their legends are few and far between.

There are only three living beings who remember the First Age, the terrible losses to the fiery eruptions of Chaos and the sacrifices needed to bind it into the winds of the world. Each of them has, in their own way, tried to prevent the cycle repeating. Each of them has failed.

The Champion is the patron Incarnate of generals, artists, and adventurers. It is said that during the First Age, he conjured up armies to do battle against Chaos, taking the lead in every fight. He is portrayed as genial, imaginative, and kind, but also stubborn and flighty.

The Auracyte, claiming to be the true inheritor of sorcery, was devoted to the policing of dark magic and malefaction. It fell in 480 FS, less than a century after its founding, when its captive malefactors were released by repentant rebels; the resulting battle razed the school.

Founded in 60 FS, the Storm-Chasers spent the Fifth Age charting the seas and finding lost islands. Their interest in the edges of the world led to a focus on Chaos winds, and after their decimation during the Tourmaline Storm, their mission became the destruction of Leviathans.

The Tailor is the patron Incarnate of guilds, families, and bondmages. It is said that she had the gift of stitching two fates together, binding the Incarnates into a single unit that surpassed their individual skills. In her tales, she often yields ground but never surrenders.

Invented by the Illuminated Empire to give their conquests an air of legitimacy, the King is the Incarnate patron of rulers, empires, and inheritance. Epics were written about his righteous command of the other Incarnates, but many tales later depicted him as a traitor and fool.

The Eighth Age began in 1057 FS, with the Fall of Gellaway. The island's sorcerers had been pressed into service in the Adrannic Reach when it was assaulted by a massive Chaos Storm and sank. Gellaway was the first island to sink, and its loss was met by shock across the seas.

Many practitioners of the Solarnic Creed believe their founder, the alchemist-sorcerer Solarnus, learned the secret magic of immortality and became an Incarnate. They whisper that he still appears to promising students to expand the Creed and bring new magic to the world.

The recently-founded Marthic Empire believes that sorcery weakens the world's fabric and causes Chaos to rise. They have expelled all sorcerers from their territory, and are threatening to attack any neighbors who do not do the same, relying entirely on divine arts to survive.

Shel Varros is a Nurathic scholar who seeks out the unifying threads of the many branches of Nurathic folklore. She believes that uncovering the truth behind such stories may hold valuable information, and is willing to risk her life delving into sunken islands in search of it.

Sailors in the western seas tell tales of turtles so vast that their backs are mistaken for islands, who linger just long enough for lost ships to resupply themselves before vanishing under the waves. If these beings do exist, they are wise enough to avoid scholarly confirmation.

To protect their souls from dissolution, Nurathic sailors tattoo the shape of weapons over their hearts. Should they die while at sea, they believe that their souls will wield spiritual representations of these weapons against Chaos as they begin their long journeys home to rest.

The Sailor, patron Incarnate of exploration, language, and dreaming, is said to have built a ship the size of a city, travelling through the currents to evade Chaos and gather the other Incarnates. They are spoken of as a steadfast ally, mediating disputes and cooling tempers.

The first war between humans, the Anniversary War, is said to have taken place five hundred years into the Second Age. It began as a celebration that went awry, pitting priests and storytellers against each other over the truth of the War of Chaos, and ended in an murky truce.

To prepare for isolation in the Fourth Age, the Lords of Kaleth forced their unwanted refugees and poor citizens to flee on crude ships. When the storms cleared two centuries later, the descendants of those emigrants returned to find the island barren, and returned it to health.

In 932 FS, the Korallium Empire assaulted the Museum Fleet and made off with a host of artifacts and tomes, which they combined with the spoils of the Acanthos to build their second generation of warships. The Museum Fleet refuses to sail near Korallium territory to this day.

During the Heron's Lament of 583 FS, the mysterious death of Lord Tomas Hatherson led to an eruption of accusations amongst his children, escalating into a civil war that killed thousands and ruined the island of Usleth. Decades later, scholars proved that Tomas died of gout.



Magic and Monsters

Gods are embodied through a star that connects them to the universe, and a natural object that connects them to their island. This object is usually a massive tree or stone, although some gods are embodied in crystal caves, fungal networks, or in one case, an immortal lobster.

Sinking is the last defense of an island besieged by Chaos. As its god's star flares and falls from the sky, they may use the last of their power to pull their land beneath the waves. Chaos surrounds such islands with labyrinths of broken spacetime, struggling to dissolve them.

Sorcery is the most common magic practiced across the seas; it draws on the energy of the world, through ritual and reagent, to enact specific effects. Most villages have a few rituals passed down to make life easier, but only a few sorcerers study or create more powerful spells.

The lost art of grimorie allowed spellcasters to implant stories, memories, or even skills in tomes that would press them into the minds of readers. With each reading, the quality of the grimoire fades, and it is now very rare to find one that is more than fragments of thoughts.

Malefaction is the power of Chaos. It summons and binds demons, commands the Storm, and cuts paths through the Borders. So distrusted that the word itself has become a synonym for ill-intent, malefaction is not evil, merely very dangerous to the caster and everyone around them.

Commonly believed to be divine magic, storm towers are in fact a work of malefaction. Malefactors craft these ritual towers of ivory and brass on isolated peaks to ensure that demons emerging from a Chaos storm will be drawn to them first, buying time for nearby towns to prepare.

When summoning demons, precision is a virtue. In particular, having a name greatly improves your chance of reaching them. However, few demons live long enough for their names to be recorded, and those that do are usually so powerful that summoning them would be a deadly mistake.

The sorcerers of the Acanthos spent centuries suppressing the art of necromancy, and spreading tales of its evils. They claimed it was malefaction that allowed the wielder to sacrifice souls, using other lives to heal, animate the dead, and turn suffering into raw magical force.

The art of theurgy allows priests to channel their god, reshaping the land, providing blessings and inflicting curses. Most believe that gods will remove theurgy from sinful priests, but in fact the magic is sustained by similarities between priest and god, not by a god's will.

Catharites learn sacred rituals undertaken with willing supplicants, permanently sacrificing a part of them in exchange for empowering another facet of their being. Catharsis can purge personality traits, skills, or even physical traits, but its effects can never be reversed.

Water is the element most balanced between stasis and chaos; fire can be corrupted, and stone broken, but water flows around Chaos, sealing its power in ocean pearls. These pearls can be used as magical reagents, but doing so risks the blight within mutating the spell's effects.

Omen shrikes make their nests within the boiling clouds of chaos storms, assembled from the shattered remains of dissolved reality. Their feathers are coated in blue dust that protects them from dissolution, and they appear ahead of the storm, hunting terrified fish and insects.

The shells of salt-turtles are in high demand for their powers of filtration, but acquiring them is a dangerous task. The turtles are eight feet across and hunt by breathing out chlorine gas, turning the water around them to acid and killing anything foolish enough to come close.

Baleen whales are sacred to sailors. As they swim through the waters, the whales' bristles draw in the souls of those who have died at sea, keeping them safe from being corrupted by the Chaos-winds and carrying them back to their homes to become one with their gods once again.

Siphon pitchers are large pitcher plants which use imitation souls to lure and trap magic beings, extracting their power for sustenance. They are often kept by sorcerers who feed them captured demons and spirits, harvesting their juices for sorcerous reagents and binding rituals.

Starshot beasts form from those creatures who survive star-jelly exposure, marked with bioluminescent patches of scales or fur in constellation-patterns. Colonized by bacterial gods, they seek to remake islands in bizarre and frightening ways, commanding stone and plants alike.

The mudshell toad, as large as a horse, can loosen the long flaps of skin on its back and legs to glide down from trees before dropping on prey and lashing the flaps around them; pressure and force causes the flaps to harden, tighten, and crush their victims into easily-eaten paste.

Dern Baltharus, greatest of the Exorcists, consumed so many demons during the Tourmaline Storm that he was transformed into a demonic form himself. He has survived for centuries by roaming the edges of the world and devouring demons, malefactors, and the victims of Chaos alike.

Vampires are made of black smoke; they inhabit corpses, and then drain others of blood to keep their puppeted bodies intact, while using the memories of their victims to go unnoticed. Fire and sunlight can drive them out, but they can only be destroyed by the full winds of Chaos.

In the heart of each Great Storm lies a Leviathan, a demon of terrible power and calculating hate. Driving it away will cause the storm to dissipate. Some scholars claim there is only one Leviathan, who crafts all such storms, but surely no demon could be so ancient or focused.

Foglings are small, slimy moles that live in the upper levels of sunken islands. They hunt in packs by chewing on an island's stasis and then breathing it out as a cloud of mist that confuses and distorts space. Within the mist, each fogling can appear in several places at once.

The first spell learned by most sorcerers is Binding. Worked on an object with which the sorcerer is familiar, it guarantees that it cannot be lost; even if it is stolen or misplaced, fortune will ensure that it finds its way back to its owner as quickly as reasonably possible.

Flickerwights manifest from the souls of dead children. They appear only during full moons, and age one year for each month that passes. They have the power to trade places with a willing victim, gaining the life that person had left and leaving them to flicker in their place.

Bondmages use their power to bind souls together, allowing them to share their life force, skills, and memories. Unscrupulous bondmages sometimes use drugged victims to power themselves, but this is very risky; if a victim wakes, they could take over and drain the mage to death.

Crafted from captive sorcerers by the Illuminated Empire to hunt their fellow rogues, a handful of Jekeli escaped during the empire's fall. The presence of magic fills them with rage and pain, and their saliva infects other sorcerers, who transform gradually with each spell cast.

Barnacle rats cling to the sides of boats with tentacle-toes, drinking in sea water to sustain them on long journeys, then slip into caves and basements to breed. Their ability to filter salt is prized at sea, but they can quickly overrun an island's native animals if let loose.

Curing disease is one of the most common theurgical blessings granted by the gods. Rituals must be developed uniquely for each disease, often requiring special ingredients to be brewed, but if properly formulated they will always be successful, with little strain to the patient.

First developed in the mid-800s, the clock has only recently become a standard for telling time. While pocket-sized clocks, crafted from sorcery, are extremely rare and expensive, new pendulum clocks have made accurate timekeeping available to communities across the seas.

Centuries ago, an enterprising sorcerer was tired of his chickens being eaten by local wild foxes, and so magically bred them to have armored scales, poisonous breath, and razor-sharp beaks. After devouring him, his cockatrices spread to become a blight on farms across the seas.

Many forms of sorcery can influence the mind, but none command it. Instead, these terrible workings confuse thoughts and manipulate perceptions, drawing people to see actions as reasonable or ignore their own misgivings. Sensing such influence is simple, but repairing it is not.

Long ago, the art of astrology claimed to be able to discern a person's true nature from the gods whose stars were in alignment at their birth, and predict the future by tracking their motions. But with few stars left in the skies, even if this art once worked, it does no longer.

The Apkallu were a pantheon of seven coral gods. In fear of Chaos, they took the souls of their worshippers into themselves and slipped underwater. They lurk there still, seeking to annex new souls with unique personalities and experiences, hoping this will let them live forever.

Fleshcrafting is a powerful and dangerous form of malefaction which channels raw Chaos to shape flesh and bone. Fleshcrafters alleviate these risks through slow, careful rituals that work permanent changes on patients; temporary changes risk chimerism, dissolution, and corrosion.

Banxards are quiet and reclusive arboreal mammals who use their sharp claws to dig sap out of trees, but human blood affects them as a potent drug, causing euphoria and manic energy. They have been known to stalk humans in search of this treat, sometimes swarming their victims.

Printing presses use enchanted mirrors to hold the reflection of a handwritten page, and then press them onto new pages to create perfect copies. Over the last century they have allowed the proliferation of books and written news, as one press can make hundreds of copies per day.

Burrowlings occur when a Chaos wind imbues a knot of wood on a ship with soulstuff, transforming it into a wooden pillbug. They replicate by chewing salt-encrusted wood; affected ships then make port and spread the infestation. They are hard to crush or burn unless dried out.

Exorcism was once an effective magic for combating demons. But late in the Seventh Age, previously safe spells mysteriously began to transform exorcists into monstrous forms. Now all exorcists know that they are dooming their souls; the few who remain feel it is worth the cost.

To be named a Luminary of the Delthic Order, sorcerers must bind a piece of their soul into a grand working to benefit their home island. These range from simple but valuable workings such as water-purifying wells to elaborate works of art to awe onlookers for generations.

Oracles use the power of divine perception to look into the mists of the future, laying out cryptic prophecies from these half-glimpsed visions. Experienced oracles do not rely on these visions, and combine their magic with mundane insight to deliver advice to their community.

The lost art of gilding allowed a mage to tear knowledge or skills from one person and graft them onto another. Stories claim that the Gilded also took on fragments of the personalities of those they stole from, gradually losing themselves to their victims.

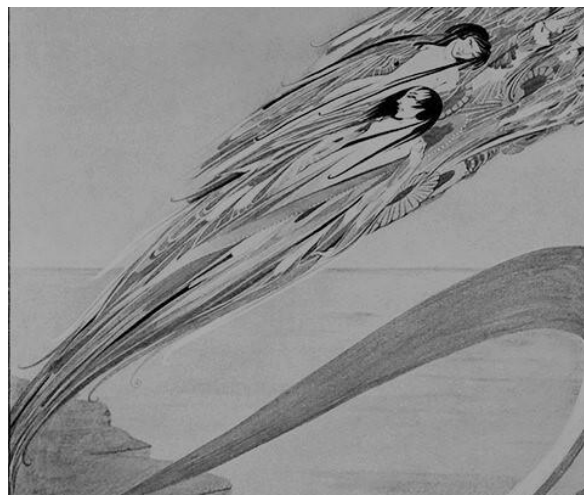
The sorcerous art of alienism allows you to invite spirits, ghosts, or alternate possibilities that you might have become into your body, becoming a twin-souled being capable of independent simultaneous thought and action. Skill alienists can manifest several selves at once.

The first of the twin principles of sorcery, emanation draws on reagents, incantations, and circumstance to enact a specific effect upon the world. It is generally more reliable but less powerful than invocation, and individual workings can be practiced even by unskilled people.

Every Storm-Chaser ship carries a Sawbeak albatross, bred to be sensitive to the flows of Chaos on the wind. Sawbeaks act as guides and mascots for their ships, and are beloved by their crews. A few eggs have been stolen by merchants, but owning one earns the Storm-Chasers' ire.

Serfrix, the Leviathan's Talon, has been fought in a half-dozen storms in the eastern seas. Ten feet tall, scaled, with five spindly arms rising from its back, it is unusually tactical, determined to bring ruin to the gods of the islands it strikes even if eventually forced back.

Crafted by the Museum Fleet, Elegaic are small wind-sprites that venture into labyrinths to sniff out sunken relics. Most are swallowed, dissolved, or trapped within, and the Fleet pays well to any labyrinth-delver who finds an elegaic and its bounty and returns with both.



A Timeline of the Starfallen Seas

The First Age, the Age of Chaos

- ???: The Time Before; the fires of Chaos
- ???: The War Against Chaos; Time Is Unraveled

The Second Age, the Age of Gods (~1300 BFS - 690 BFS)

- ~1300 BFS:** End of the Chaos War; the first islands are founded
- ~1000 BFS:** The Sailor departs to explore new worlds
- ~800 BFS:** The Anniversary War, the first war between humans

The Third Age, the Age of Light (690 BFS - ~300 BFS)

- 690 BFS:** War breaks out between Rosanna and Lorimaud
- 678 BFS:** Official declaration of the Illuminated Empire

The Fourth Age, the Age of Storms (~300 BFS - 0 FS)

- ~300 BFS:** The first Chaos Storm returns
- ~200 BFS:** Kaleth expels its unwanted citizens

The Fifth Age, the Age of Sails (0 FS - 357 FS)

- 0 FS:** The First Sailing from Orithea
- 60 FS:** Founding of the Storm-Chasers
- 160 BFS:** The first Grand Current is formed

The Sixth Age, the Age of Wonders (357 FS - 804 FS)

- 357 FS:** Osei Shu Taye founds the Acanthos
- 398 FS:** Death of Osei Shu Taye
- 399 FS:** Founding of the Auracyte and the Pyrian Academy
- 480 FS:** Destruction of the Auracyte
- 617 FS:** Start of the Seven-School War
- 628 FS:** Razing of Rathanos; the death of Grandfather. End of the war.
- ~650 FS:** The Nyukan Hurricane is formed.
- 748 FS:** The first Horizon Crusade

The Seventh Age, the Age of Fire (804 FS – 1057 FS)

- 804 FS:** The Tourmaline Storm; end of the Horizon Crusades
- 823 FS:** The Pyrian Academy falls to the Horaltic League
- ~850 FS:** The first mechanical clocks replace sorcerous timekeeping
- 932 FS:** The Korallium Empire assaults the Museum Fleet
- 970 FS:** Founding of the Nurathic Dominion
- 1012 FS:** Fall of the Nurathic Dominion

The Eighth Age, the Age of Darkness (1057 FS – Present)

- 1057 FS:** The sinking of Gellaway
Loss of the Axiom Vestige; death of the Fourth Prophet
- 1132 FS:** Refugees begin to settle on Jankol
- 1283 FS:** Fifth vanishing of the people of Frennech
- 1303 FS:** Antara Zell begins defending Delreth
- 1312 FS:** Purity War of the Lathik Archipelago
- 1334 FS:** Akuhala declares independence from Korallium
The Fifth Prophet of the Revivalist Branch awakens
- 1336 FS:** Sinking of Rolanth
- 1337 FS:** Tales of the Viridian begin to spread
- 1338 FS:** Uhaveth begins to ambush Adrannic ships
- 1340 FS:** Death of the Speaker of Tehfreh
Henrik Fraun launches the Persistence, and vanishes
- 1344 FS:** The nebulous ‘present day’