

Common and uncommon lore  
*of the*  
**Evershroud Isles**



As told by

The Right Honourable Baron

*Eurydites H. Caldwell, 723 y.s.*

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

Edited by Hon. John Miles Caldwell, esq., 782<sup>th</sup> y.s.

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# Introduction by the author

*Esteemed explorers, scholars, and adventurers,*

*it is with great honor and a heart brimming with anticipation that I, Eurydites Caldwell, welcome you to the second, revised edition of our complete guide to the Evershroud Isles. This edition, enriched by further expeditions and scholarly endeavors, endeavors to illuminate even the most obscure corners of our cherished isles, including the recently confirmed existence of the Avernum and a few important insights beyond our misty shores.*

*In the time since our initial publication, the isles have whispered new secrets into the ears of those intrepid enough to listen. These revelations have prompted amendments and the inclusion of new chapters that delve into the previously uncharted depths of our understanding. Notably, the discovery of the Kalderaä Chronicle, confirming the existence of the Avernum – a sprawling, subterranean world beneath the isles – compels us to reconsider what we thought we knew about the geography and history of our land. Likewise, "Beyond the Isles" offers a glimpse into the wider world. Re-establishing the Evershroud Isles not as an isolated realm but as a pivotal node in a vast network of trade, culture, and arcane mysteries.*

*As we venture further into this second edition, let us acknowledge the fluid tapestry of history and lore that constitutes the Evershroud Isles. Our journey is akin to navigating the treacherous coasts that envelop our land: ever-changing, filled with both peril and wonder. It is my hope that this guide serves not only as a story but as a compass to lost wanderers, steering you through the myriad experiences our isles offer, from the sun-dappled groves of the Caldwell Dominion to the shadowy depths of the Avernum.*



*To those who are setting foot upon our shores for the first time, may this guide be your steadfast companion, illuminating the path less traveled and safeguarding you from the unseen dangers that lurk in the mist. To the returning voyager, may you find within these pages new mysteries to unravel and new territories to claim as your own.*

*A word of advice from a seasoned traveler: approach these isles with both wonder and caution. The beauty of the Evershroud Isles is matched only by its potential for danger. Every step into the unknown is a dance with destiny, and only those with keen wit and a brave heart can truly claim to master the secrets hidden within.*

*This edition, then, is not merely an update; it is a testament to the ever-evolving saga of the Evershroud Isles. It is an invitation to look beyond the mist, to challenge the unknown, and to discover not just the hidden corners of our world but the uncharted territories of your own courage and curiosity.*

*As we embark on this journey together, let us carry the spirit of discovery in our hearts and the light of knowledge in our hands. The Evershroud Isles are a canvas upon which your own stories of adventure, valor, and discovery will be painted. May this guide be the key that unlocks the door to legends yet untold and dreams yet to be realized.*

*With unwavering respect for the trials you are about to face and a steadfast belief in your capacity to conquer them,*

*Eurydites H. Caldwell, esq.*

# A Comprehensive Map of the Evershroud Isles





# Histogeographical Synopsis

Valleys, mountains, rocky coasts. Forests of oak and pine, palm trees, moors and barrens. All these things come to mind when one thinks about the Evershroud Isles. The Evershroud Isles is the colloquial name for what was once known as **Shani'quáh** – the name given to it by the wretched **Sea Elves** who ruled the Isles in the early Years of Mist. A great civilization they once were, but so vile was their cruelty that to this day, these semi-aquatic brethren to the noble elven houses are considered ill omens, to be treated with caution if not outright shunned by the Isles' inhabitants. For many of them are descended from the very servants who once overthrew them, and whose sheer faith ignited the Beacon of Rael, the light that keeps the dark at bay. It was by their faith, their courage against insurmountable odds, that the great **Cataclysm** truly ended.

The **Gods** had, in answer to the prayers of the suffering, churned the land beneath the waves and brought up mountains from the sea. From the very bones of Eren Fell they crafted prisons entrapping the **Aboloth** – the oozing horrors that had dominated the material plane for aeons beyond reckoning. Their once formidable allies, without the psionic guidance of their grotesque masters, fell into widespread societal collapse. In the war that followed between the Sea Elves and the other races, who had been bound to servitude for years beyond count, innumerable lives were lost on both sides.



Eventually, the nefarious sea elves were defeated, having pushed themselves to the precipice of extinction in their pursuit of power.

Few were those that survived, but the mountains the Gods had made were fertile, and so it came to be that men, dwarves, faefolk and monsters alike rose again to settle the newly formed islands and continents across the **Prime Material Plane**.

Today, a powerful **sea current** warms the southwestern coastline of the Evershroud Isles, creating a comfortable climate year round and an abundance of **fruit, spices and wine**. The natural presence of lush date palms and citrus fruits means birds too are plentiful there, and a whole industry in colorful **feathers** has developed, mainly for **export** purposes.

The great **mountain ranges** all over the central island, however, prevent heat from traveling all the way up to the **Horn**, and even the climate around Silt and the white jewel of the Brine Aleazar is temperate at best. **Moors** are abundant in the central highlands, as well as pine forests where the trees grow so high they block out the sun. There are plenty of rabbits, deer, and the predators that stalk them - as well as worse things after nightfall.

The westernmost part of the island, known as the **Withering Fields**, is a bog that is so difficult to penetrate it shouldn't be attempted by anyone but the hardiest of rangers, the most powerful druids or those who simply have no other choice. A select few traders who know the area well can navigate the vile swamps with their caravans using the natural system of hot springs and geysers as resting points and water sources. Germ-infested, brackish water from the **swampland** above seeps down into a **volcanic caldera** and spouts up to the surface there often enough that the locals build their hamlets around the most active sources, for palatable water is unlikely to be found anywhere else. Many **insects** - some of outright frightening size - also thrive here, though luckily they seem to resent lingering all too close to settlements. It seems fitting that Nergal worship is so common in these fetid lands.



A lack of true rivers means **inland trade** takes place via well-trodden **paths**, which form the main arteries of the infrastructural body of the main island; together with the many small **trade vessels** that circumnavigate it year round.

Around the central island, a plethora of small **atolls** exist - none of them habitable due to their size, but some provide interesting **mineral resources**, such as an abundance of amber. Exploitation, as far as I'm aware, to date has not been attempted due to the logistical challenges of any significant operation there. Due to this lack of interest from legitimate prospectors, however, the atolls are a haven for **smugglers and drifters** alike,



and no small number of ships have been lost navigating the shallow waters around the island. The remains of shipwrecks can be seen from the Isles' eastern coast, and at low tide it is at least theoretically possible to wade across the exposed sea floor to some of them.

Another one of the Islands' complicating features is the thick and heavy mist that encloses them from afar, for three quarters of the year. The exact reason for this natural phenomenon remains unknown, but it is rumored to have something to do with the Beacon located at the very top of the **Citadel** – the primary seat of the **Cult of Rael**. But then, more often than not, they themselves do not fully understand the nature of the rituals they practice.

Without further speculation, it's important to note that the unfortunate **atmospheric phenomenon** that surrounds the islands means the islands' overseas trade is focused into the remaining three months, when the **mist** withdraws and ships can pass unhindered. This is simply the **only time** they can effectively import anything the island itself cannot facilitate. This has caused the island to become self-reliant in many ways, since interaction with the mainland cannot be counted upon. Even rumors from terra firma are sparse at best, and often little more than embellished tales told by sailors on leave in seaside taverns.

An economic effect of this self-reliance can be seen in the usage of **brass and bronze** over iron where ever possible, since the island does not provide the latter in great quantities whereas copper and tin are readily available in its mountains. Similarly, all the **gears produce** must be exported in these short **three months**, and it is for this purpose that in the northern cities, around Godsorrow Bay, great warehouses have been built. The local authorities, as one might expect, **tax** a heavy sum to those who would make use of them.

**Fish** are remarkably plentiful in the Island's waters, and so, when not occupied otherwise, many an islander can be found fishing for their supper. A more serious fishing industry has developed in Silt, where a salt mine has also been discovered. **Shani'quáh silted** has become a true staple of the local diet – and due to its long shelf life, a profitable export product.

The cities of the **South**, due to their long standing rivalry with their northern neighbor, use the warehouses sparsely. Rather, they **export** their goods **collectively**, spearheaded by the city of **Azure** – a more lenient partner in trade. It was here that the **High Elves** first made landfall after the Cataclysm, and built themselves a home amidst the wilderness of Shani'quáh some 600 years ago. Since then, it has become a true **melting pot** for cultures from all over, and you'll be hard pressed to find a single elf of pure elven blood in the lower cantons. Only the **aristocracy** holds fast to their High Elven **identity** – but then, some of them were there when the city was first founded.

## A summary of Factions and Politics

There are four main political **powers** that hold sway over the surface of the Evershroud Isles. First and foremost among them is the city of **Silt**. This is not only due to its large



sphere of influence, including the entirety of the Godsorrow Bay area; it is also due to its geographical proximity to the **Brine Aleazar**, the mighty white rock that juts out of the sea a few miles out from its docks. Here, the **Sovereign**, political head of all four **Potentates**, resides in a palace made of white marble, covered in a thick layer of crystallized salt. Beautiful as it may be, nowadays the position of Sovereign is largely symbolic, and the Potentates do pretty much as they please.



The northern city-state of **Silt** is a mixed thalassocracy and theocracy, with on one hand the High Priest of our Lady Rael and the other hand the Chairman of Silt, usually a wealthy trader chosen from among his peers – the city’s aristocrats. The capital city is inhabited by as many monks and nuns as it is by layfolk, so division of power makes sense - until it doesn’t and pyres are built for the unbeliever, for their Lady of Justice demands it. The position of **Chairman** is traditionally held for five years, whereas the position of High Priest, or “**Pentarch**”, is held for life,

or until they are unanimously declared unfit by the council. Both of them have a veto right in the council, and their votes weigh in heavily upon any decision made in Silt and the towns and villages it controls.

### *Holds under the Hegemony of Silt*

Local	Est. Population	Brief description
Silt	9800	port capital, the Citadel, trade hub
Villegrom Estate	200	noble estate, notable sheep farming
Pegton	3100	rural town, wealthy upper class, manors
Wren	5800	port and fishing town, renowned shipyard
Gunnar’s Rest*	?	dwarven protectorate, underground city
Kelton	2400	mining and farming town, notable tin deposits
Vigden	500	fishing village, tidal amber deposits
Lamya	9100	large city, well defended, notable monastery
Fuleimer Lighthouse	5	solitary lighthouse at the tip of the Horn
Hermit Sanctum	?	forbidden to anyone outside the Cult of Rael
World’s End	350	small fishing village, decent inn

The **Azurean League** is a loose federation of cities in the southwestern part of the main island. This diverse alliance of elven, human and halfling settlements is the very exemplification of the proverb “diversity is strength”. Their culture a melting pot of high elven, halfling and human heritage, they possess every known luxury known to civilization – and the means to protect it. That does not, however, mean that the wealth is equally shared, and there is much civil unrest among the poorer classes. Crime and squalor are at an all-time high in the larger cities, and one would do well not to tread

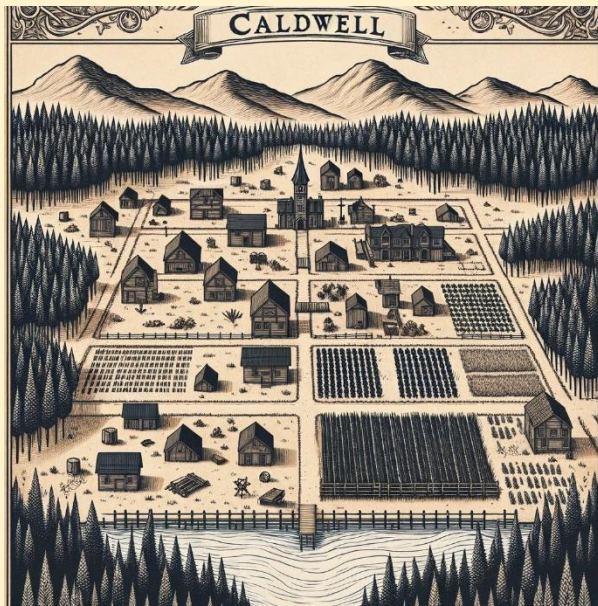


their streets at night without the reassuring weight of cold steel on one's belt. The League's somewhat convoluted leadership is in the hands of the individual towns and cities' earls, lords and burghermasters, who form a relatively egalitarian and democratic council, but are mostly too caught up in their own interests to push the League as a whole in one direction or other. Without the initiative shown by the Prince of Azure, the League would have never stayed together for the last 200 years or so, falling to its more aggressive neighbors.

#### *Holds under the Azurean League*

Locale	Est. Population	Brief description
Azure	12700	Azurean capital, cultural melting pot
Ald Traeus	800	western hill fort, Tower of Dusk
Ald Rundhal	600	central hill fort, partial ruin
Waglynn Lighthouse	5	offshore, semi-self-sufficient
Holgren	1800	sheltered bay, port town
Ald Crayden	500	coastal fortress, trade station
Jornath	4700	mining town, notable copper deposits
Sylfaene	1300	fishing village, retired veterans
Reffuge	350	fishing village, smuggler's den





A different approach is taken by the League's eastern neighbors: the **Caldwell Dominion** – named after my great-grandfather Ozymandias Caldwell, who founded its capital. Much can be said about the methods of the inhabitants of the main island's eastern coast, but they most certainly are effective.

Races other than human or elf will have a hard time living in these deeply xenophobic lands, where especially the smaller races are looked down upon, exploited and even kept as slaves by opulently wealthy overseers. The use of narcotics is largely overlooked by the

corrupt government of the Dominion, but its libertarian approach also means that anyone can work their way up to become a wealthy blackleaf dealer, rotroot farmer, or better yet, an overseer. And so, many a slave is now a slave owner in their own right – and the little folk of the Dominion are not to be trusted, completing the cycle of prejudice against their races.

#### *Holds under the Caldwell Dominion*

Locale	Est. Population	Brief description
Caldwell	5400	'halfprice' market, Caldwell Manor
Ald Nglath	450	eastern hill fort, Tower of Dawn
Lyndell Estate	150	large scale blackleaf plantation
Devvth	800	fishing village, renowned beaches
Providence	6200	agricultural hub, great palisade
Mong Vinaga	200	fishing village, partially afloat
Morgrin Lighthouse	10	island lighthouse, impressive botanical garden

Last but not least we have the **Archduchy of Margraeve-Duskhaven**. A foul place, ruled by the undead, that over the years has proven itself capable of an exceptionally reasonable approach to politics. The Archduke himself, though long deceased, continues to rule with an iron fist over the lands to the west of the Ungolid Mountains. His reanimated people are universally despised, yet surprisingly sentient, and harbor an unusually joyful approach to their gloomy existence.

#### *Holds under Margraeve-Duskhaven*

Locale	Population	Brief description
Dusk	11500	capital, preternatural darkness
Verdant Flergs	2300	utopian farming community
Ald Margraeve	2100	ancient seat of House Margraeve
Mong Harrad	250	sealing and whaling station
Tiegnne Lighthouse	50	remote lighthouse and hamlet

Apart from these potentates, exists another political entity dwelling in the uncharted caves of the **Avernum** – the perpetually nocturnal abyss where only luminous fungi provide a meagre and eerie glow. The **Dwarven Union** is a non-aggression and trade cooperation pact between the common dwarves and the duergar, their deep-dwelling counterparts – of which the mountain city of Gunnar's Rest is the only vestige on the surface. With their own focus dedicated only to mining and crafting, they gladly accepted the protection of the city of Silt in favor of the elven-ruled Azureans or the slavers of the Dominion. They do keep an exceptionally well equipped city guard, however, seemingly for the sole purpose of keeping anyone out of the deeper sections of their precious caves. What they are hiding one can only wonder.

An explicitly non-political presence is found in the **Ranger's Guild**. With outposts at Eleanor Thicket, Fagwood Glen and Sages Marsh, their sole purpose is to protect the island's inhabitants from the wilderness, and vice versa. Many a poacher has found himself at the wrong end of an arrow trespassing in a forest protected by the Guild.

The **Thieves Guild** at least superficially cares just as little about politics, though their interference wouldn't surprise anyone, since the skills they have are easily applied elsewhere for the right amount of coin. Their safehouses are always changing, and unknown to outsiders.

The **Order of the Dragon's Phallus**, in spite of their surface level appearance as a fertility cult, is an order dedicated to the preservation of knowledge and the exploration of all manner of magic and scientific phenomena. Its past shrouded in mystery, it is rumored its innocuous traditions, from the unusual wear of their priests and archivists to the suggestive gestures with which they greet one another are remnants of an ancient fraternity from one of the great academies that are whispered to have existed before the Cataclysm. In spite of their straying from the Five Paths, they fulfill an important societal role, and as such are exempt from the scrutiny of the Cult of Rael.



Aside from these more organized factions, there are many so-called **freeholds** across the Isles. These freeholds, usually no more than a few houses, a tavern and a shrine,



are autonomous holdings of notable persons, often of noble stock, who have been granted the right to settle the vast wilds of the Isles. This right usually comes in the form of a Writ of Freeholding, a document granted to them by the Sovereign based on their merit, or, in some cases, that of their noble ancestors. Usually this is done as a form of reward for services to the Sovereign or the Isles, but at times it has also been the only way to prevent all-out war between noble families, for instance in matters of succession.

## Religion in the Evershroud Isles

The most commonly held understanding of theology in the Evershroud Isles is the **Five Paths**, arguing all things are achieved by following one of five ways for one to reach a complete understanding of the world. Only five of the Gods are commonly known and worshipped, and their individual systems of rites and beliefs make up the Five Paths. These gods are Nergál, Origen, Talia, Beryn and Ragl.

To select initiates and scholars of ancient texts they are, in fact the children of the other two: **Elgitt**, who set the wheel of time in motion and weaves the threads of fate, and **Eren Fell**, the shattered god, whose bones and flesh make up the material realms and elemental planes.

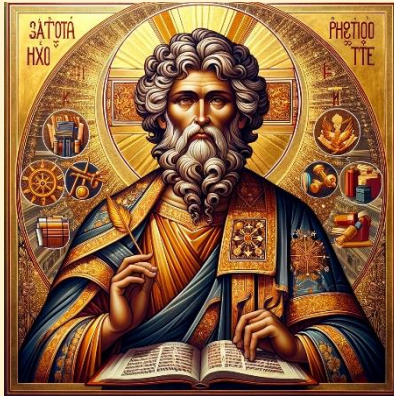
<i>Deity</i>	<i>Domain</i>	<i>Ephithets</i>
<i>Elder gods</i>		
Eren Fell Elgitt	Matter Time	the Allfather, Old Man Bones, the Shattered the Cronc, Gran-Gran, the Inevitable

It has been theorized that their parentage of the Younger Gods is not to be taken literally. Instead, based on the most ancient available sources, such as the clay tablets left by the Sea Elves, Eren Fell and Elgit have simply always existed, or at least for as long as there have been minds to conceptualize their domains of existence. For their domains offer the prerequisites for all their children to exist. From these tablets, it appears as though the younger gods truly are much younger, only having appeared in the very last era before the Cataclysm. However, few and far apart are the sources, and their reliability is questionable indeed. As such, it goes without saying that one does best not to dwell on such things.

Let us focus instead upon the Five Paths, for without their guidance we are truly lost beyond all hope.

<i>Deity</i>	<i>Domain</i>	<i>Ephithets</i>
<i>Younger Gods</i>		
Beryn Nergál Origen Talia Ragl	Nature, Tempest Death, Grave Forge, Knowledge, Life, light, peace Order, war	Lord of Vines, Wind-Through-The-Leaves, the Ranger the Stillborn, Lord of Entropy, the Anointed One the Architect, the Smith, the Master Craftsman the Mother, Queen-of-the-Willies, the Lover the Maiden, Lady of Justice, Our Lady

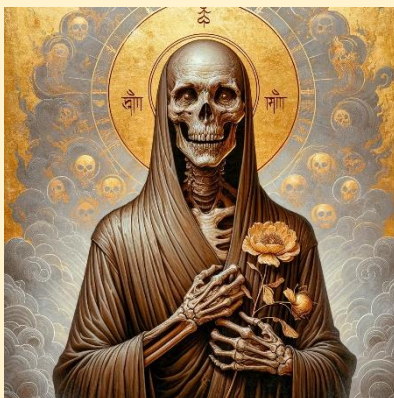
Farmers, Hunters, Fishermen and Sailors – all who rely upon the elements have whispered a prayer to **Beryn** in one way or another. For a good harvest, for that buck not to notice them, for plentiful fish or for it to finally stop raining. His rites are observed by all, from the common folk to the Potentates themselves, for their very subsistence is dependent on it.



**Origen** worship is commonly practiced among the more industrious members of society. From miners, to craftsmen, to engineers, jewelers and bakers, whoever makes something does so by the creative sparks shed from Origen's anvil. As patron of the dwarves, he is believed to be the architect of all natural caves. His Sigil, found on the doorway of many a smithy, is a revered symbol of good craftsmanship acknowledged all over the Isles.



The different paths do indeed bear very different fruit when followed to their extreme. Devout followers of **Nergál** believe that by offering up their bodies they can free their minds. Indeed, they shave their heads bald, and wear only a thin robe to retain their modesty, but providing little protection from the elements. In this state, they meditate



for months on end in remote places, refusing food or drink until they die from either malnutrition or exposure. Others simply find a house of plague, and do whatever they can to collect as many diseases as possible to further their physical demise. In any case, if their devotion runs deep enough they are resurrected, their minds intact, their bodies slowly decaying over time, their lifespan extended far beyond its natural course. Nergál worship has long taken root among the Margrave clan – a pragmatic choice given their surroundings, and their people have adjusted over time.

Servants of **Talia** range from druids to paladins to prostitutes. Life, fertility, light and all forms of love are her gift to sentient beings. She is a goddess of healing, empathy and kindness, and her priests attend to weddings and birthing ceremonies across the Isles.

Her twin sister, **Rael**, is quite the opposite. She is a goddess of justice and war, a righteous blade against the darkness. Uncompromising as she may be as judge, jury and executioner, it is also she who stands against the unfathomable horrors that lurk at the edge of our imagination, waiting to strike.

Religious proceedings in the Isles are overseen by the five **Pentarchs**: the High Priests of the younger gods' individual sects.





The **Cult of Rael**, most well-known among these five, is charged with upholding the faith and acting as arbiter in religious disputes. Its noble members follow a strict moral code of discipline, and are universally regarded as trusted advisors in matters of war. Their main seat is, as mentioned, the Citadel in Silt.



Most prevalent in the countryside, the **Berynian Scythes** are a devout society of freemen farmers, millers and other free commoners who work the land. They are as much a religious organization overseeing the harvest rituals as they are a farmers union. As powerful landowners, many a member of my family has born the mantle of High Priest of Beryn, and his main Temple is found in the city that bears the Caldwell name.

The **Children of Nergál** are a rare sight outside Margrave-Duskhaven, but they are well respected, and there is at least one in every hamlet, for it is the Children who are responsible for embalming, burial and any other ceremony related to honoring the dead. It is customary for a Child of Nergál to spend at least a decade traveling the realms, becoming acquainted with as many burial rites as possible. As such, the Children ensure that even those who do not walk the Path of Death, enter its domain with dignity. Only after this grim pilgrimage may they return to Duskhaven and enter the Black Pagoda, where their High Priest resides.

The **Origen Brotherhood** is a wealthy and secretive organization divided into loges, the greatest of which is found in Azure. In these loges, groups of initiated members, all proven to excel in their respective fields of work, gather behind closed doors to celebrate the genius of their patron deity – and by extension, their own genius. What really happens at their meetings is seldom disclosed to the public, but there have been stories ranging from ritual sacrifice, to extravagant dinners amidst clouds of blackleaf smoke, to full-on orgies involving midgets and centaurs. The truth of these matters, however, remains a mystery, for they are an organization of the most powerful members of society, and they have the means to procure anyone's discretion.

The **House of Talia** has plague houses and infirmaries all over the Isles. Their sisters mendicant willingly throw themselves into the fray of battle, healing the fallen regardless of allegiance. So strong is their commitment to neutrality that their High Apothecary resides with the Sovereign at the Brine Alcazar, where a chapel to Talia was built into the rock underneath the palace. As such, she avoids choosing sides between the potentates, whereas her proximity to the crown helps ensure a long life for the Sovereign, and thus, stability for the Isles.



Not everyone, however, is inclined to follow the Five Paths. Though frowned upon by the Pentarchy, wizards, scholars, thieves, artists and philosophers alike have, through the ages, followed other, more obscure ways to achieve a full understanding. A few examples:

## *Deity*

## *Domain*

## *Ephithets*

### *Minor deities*

Kar'el  
Mazd Gildan

Arcana, Luck  
Trickery, Twilight

The Elder Vermin, He-Who-Hungers, The Serpent  
The Unknown, The Faceless God, the Shadow

Acolytes of the Serpent, such as the Order of the Dragon's Phallus, believe that through the study of dragons one can gain a greater understanding of the natural order of things, the workings of magic, and what lies beyond. The **Apothecosis of Kar'el**, their most cherished tome, has been a boundless resource of knowledge of things past, present, and still to come, though it quickly ages all those who read it until only dust remains. Kar'el, once a **dragon**, is believed to have served Gran-Gran well during the Cataclysm, and she has taken him as a pet, granting him divinity. Now a **demigod** of unimaginable power, he mostly resigns himself to lay beside her chair and fuel the stove that warms her feet with his breath as she knits the weave of time, gathering ever more knowledge and recording all that passes. His acolytes emulate this behavior, and the Order is known to keep great archives and libraries in every major city around the Isles. In folk religion, small dragon statues are popular as a symbol of good luck, and **pseudodragons** are considered sacred animals. To bond with one is considered a blessing from Kar'el, as they are exceedingly rare, having once been hunted to near extinction for the virility-enhancing properties of the poison in their stingers.

All over the Isles, in distant forests, on high mountains and in the sewers of cities, are statues of various age and style. What they have in common is that the face has been removed ages ago, making it impossible to identify. It is even theorized that these faceless statues once represented another Path which has for reasons beyond memory fallen out of favor. Now, they stand as a symbol for all those forgotten by the greater whole of society. The poor and downtrodden, enslaved or forced to resort to crime, turn to **Mazd Gildan**, praying they won't be caught stealing what little they need. A bookkeeper faces an inspection and prays to the Shadow that his fraud will not be revealed, lest his family suffer. But as the saying goes: whisper not into the shadows, for the Unknown might answer.

Of the Fey and Beast races of the Isles much can be said, but this is not the case with their gods. They tend to keep to their own shamanistic faiths, and are wary of outsiders. Their gods remain enigmatic at best, and should the beast races' beliefs hold any merit, I have seen no proof of it. Instead, many of the more civilized among them seem to have adopted some – be it rudimentary – version of the Five Paths, and they are better for it.

# Shani'quáan Bestiary and Herbarium

## *White Goblins*

The white goblins are a peculiar and distinct subspecies, adapted uniquely to their environment. These goblins, unlike their more common green-skinned counterparts, exhibit a pale, almost translucent skin tone. This adaptation allows them to blend seamlessly into the mist-laden landscapes of the Isles. Their ears are elongated and pointed, capable of detecting even the slightest rustle in the dense underbrush. This



heightened sense of hearing is crucial for their survival, both in evading larger predators and in hunting their prey.

Socially, white goblins are known for their hierarchical tribes, led by the strongest and often the most cunning among them. They communicate in a series of high-pitched chatters and guttural tones, a language that is difficult for outsiders to comprehend. These tribes are notorious for their stealth and guile, setting up elaborate traps throughout their territory to capture food or deter intruders.

In terms of culture, they are shrouded in mystery. The white goblins are skilled in the use of poisons and herbal concoctions, utilizing the diverse flora of the Isles for both hunting and ritualistic purposes. They are particularly known for their enigmatic night dances, performed under the light of the moon, which are said to be both a communal bonding activity and a way to appease the spirits they believe in.

### ***Shaniquáan Kuo-Toa***

The Kuo-Toa of the Evershroud Isles are a fish-like humanoid species, primarily dwelling in the warm southern coastal waters and occasionally venturing onto land. They are fiercely loyal to the Aboloth, ancient and malevolent sea creatures, serving them in a manner that blends reverence with fear.

These Kuo-Toa are characterized by their slimy, scaled skin, typically in shades of green and brown, with large, bulbous eyes that give them excellent underwater vision. They have webbed hands and feet, making them adept swimmers, capable of navigating the treacherous currents around the Isles. They are rumored to be the degenerate offspring of the Sea Elves, twisted by their aons of servitude to their now imprisoned Aboloth overlord.



Their society is still structured around the worship of the Aboloth, whom they view as diving beings. This worship includes elaborate underwater rituals and sacrifices, often involving unlucky sailors or captured land-dwellers. The Kuo-Toa are known for their ability to create potent magical illusions, a skill they employ both in their worship and in defending their territory.

### ***Demikrakens***

The Demikrakens of the Isles are a unique and enigmatic marine species, distinct from their larger kin in several notable ways. These creatures, though smaller than the legendary Krakens, pose a considerable presence in the maritime ecosystem and the folklore of the Isles.

Demikrakens typically range from 20 to 30 feet in length, including their tentacles. Their bodies are streamlined, built for agility and speed in the underwater realms. One of the most distinctive features of Demikrakens is their pale skin, covered in a thin

layer of mucus. This mucus gives their skin a slippery texture and is capable of displaying a kaleidoscope of shifting colors, an adaptation believed to be used for communication, camouflage, or perhaps attracting prey.

The tentacles of a Demikraken are lined with suction cups, equipped with tiny, sharp barbs. These appendages are incredibly strong and flexible, capable of ensnaring prey or fending off predators. Their heads are slightly elongated with a beak-like mouth situated underneath, ideal for tearing apart their catch.

Demikrakens are solitary and territorial creatures, usually found in the deeper, darker waters around the Isles. They prefer regions with underwater caverns or rocky outcroppings, using these areas as hiding spots to ambush prey or as safe havens to rest. These creatures are mostly nocturnal, hunting under the cover of darkness. Their diet consists of various marine life, including large fish and cephalopods, and they have been known to attack smaller sea vessels. The shifting colors of their skin allow them to blend into the dark waters seamlessly, making them formidable ambush predators.

Encounters with a Demikraken, while rare, are typically alarming and potentially dangerous. Mariners navigating the deeper waters of the Isles are always wary of these creatures, especially at night when they are most active. Hunting them is an endeavor only the bravest or most foolhardy attempt. Their skin, however, along with the color-shifting mucus, is highly valued by certain alchemists and magicians, believed to contain potent magical properties. The risk involved in such a hunt is immense, often leading to tragic outcomes.

### *Bulettes*

The infamously ferocious Bulettes of the Evershroud Isles are formidable creatures indeed. They are often referred to as land sharks due to their streamlined appearance, their predatory nature, and their acute senses that allow them to detect prey at great distances. These massive, burrowing beasts are characterized by their heavily armored bodies and powerful limbs, enabling them to move through soil and rock with surprising ease. Their heads, somewhat resembling those of sharks, are equipped with sharp, powerful jaws capable of crushing metal and stone.

Bulettes are solitary creatures, known for their territorial behavior and aggressive disposition. They can grow to an immense size, with some reports indicating specimens as large as a small house. The most distinctive feature of a Bulette is its armored carapace, which acts as a natural shield against most forms of attack. This armor is not only a defense mechanism but also a byproduct of their unique diet.

The diet of a Bulette is predominantly mineral-based, with a particular preference for iron-rich ores. This unusual dietary habit is what makes them a geological force in the Evershroud Isles. Their consumption of iron ore not only sustains them but also strengthens their armor, making them even more formidable.

The presence of Bulettes in the mountainous regions of the Evershroud Isles has a direct link to the notable scarcity of iron ore in these areas. Their relentless



consumption and burrowing in search of iron-rich minerals have led to a significant depletion of these resources over the centuries. The Bulettes' natural behavior of tunneling and feeding on the iron ore has effectively 'mined' the mountains, extracting large quantities of this valuable resource and leaving behind a scarcity that impacts the local inhabitants and their economies.

Moreover, the Bulettes' extensive burrowing activities have contributed to the unique geological structure of the mountains. Their tunnels and dens have created intricate networks of subterranean passages in the western Ungolid mountains.

The challenges posed by the Bulettes are multifaceted. For local miners and communities, the scarcity of iron ore due to Bulette activity presents a significant economic challenge, forcing a greater reliance on other metals like copper and tin. Additionally, the Bulettes themselves pose a considerable threat due to their aggressive nature and territorial instincts, making them dangerous to anyone who ventures too near their domain.

Efforts to manage the Bulette population are of course in place. Balancing the need to protect local communities and preserve the natural ecosystem is a task that is as challenging as it is crucial.

### ***Blackleaf***

The coveted Blackleaf is a herb indigenous to the Evershroud Isles, particularly thriving in the moist, rich soils of the Caldwell Dominion. In appearance, blackleaf plants have dark, almost black leaves with a velvety texture and a distinctive, pungent aroma.



The herb is primarily used for its psychoactive properties. When dried and smoked, blackleaf induces a state of relaxation and mild euphoria. It's commonly used among various social strata in the Isles, from the laboring classes seeking respite from their daily toils to the artistic communities as a source of inspiration.

In addition to its recreational use, blackleaf is also known for its medicinal properties. It's used in the treatment of pain and as a sedative in larger doses. However, the cultivation and trade of blackleaf are tightly controlled in some parts of the Isles, leading to a lucrative black market. The plant's iconic dark leaves are a symbol associated with leisure, relaxation, and, in some circles, resistance against authority.

### *Rotroot*

Rotroot is a distinctive plant native to the Evershroud Isles, most notably found in the damp and murky environs of the Withering Fields. This plant, with its gnarled, dark brown roots and deceptively unassuming flowers, harbors a range of properties that have made it a subject of both medicinal interest and cautionary tales. The habitat of rotroot is as unique as the plant itself. Thriving in the nutrient-rich yet toxic soils of swamps and bogs, it has become a symbol of the dangerous beauty of the Withering Fields. The plant's affinity for these treacherous terrains contributes to its potent chemical makeup.

Medicinally, rotroot is known for its pain-relieving and sedative qualities. In small, expertly administered doses, it has been used in traditional healing practices for pain management and as a sleep aid. However, the line between therapeutic and harmful is exceptionally thin with rotroot, demanding a deep understanding of its properties for safe use. Beyond its medicinal applications, rotroot is infamous for its strong hallucinogenic effects in high doses. When consumed in larger amounts or processed into extracts, it induces vivid and often intense hallucinations. This has made it a sought-after yet dangerous ingredient in various mystical practices and recreational uses within the Isles.

The inherent toxicity of rotroot is a significant concern. Misuse or incorrect preparation can lead to severe health complications, including organ damage or fatal poisoning, reinforcing the need for caution and respect in its handling.

### *Shadow Powder*

A clandestine industry all its own is the production of shadow powder from blackleaf and rotroot. The process of creating Shadow Powder involves a careful chemical alteration of blackleaf's natural compounds, catalyzed by the addition of lyx. The rotroot extract, known for its hallucinogenic and mildly toxic qualities, adds a unique dimension to the experience, making it much more intense and profound than blackleaf alone.

The use of Shadow Powder leads to vivid and intense hallucinations, deeply altering the user's perception of reality. It's much more potent than its base ingredient, leading to stronger and often overwhelming sensory and psychological experiences. However, this increased potency comes with greater risks, including the potential for



psychological distress, physical side effects like nausea and increased heart rate, and a higher risk of addiction and dependency.

In the Evershroud Isles, Shadow Powder is seen with a mix of awe and apprehension. While some use it for spiritual or introspective purposes, others view it as a dangerous substance, leading to debates over its legality and ethical use. Its presence in various social and cultural practices makes it a complex and controversial component of life in the Isles.

## Addendum: The Evershroud Avernus

It has come to my attention that, in spite of my extensive exploration of the Isles in a wide variety of aspects, there are a remarkable number of readers voicing concern regarding the absence of any mention of the supposed “Evershroud Avernus”. It has long been hypothesized that deep beneath the tumultuous overworld of our beloved Isles, there lays an extensive natural cave system with a society all of its own. In spite of my protests that the very existence of this vast underworld is highly unlikely due to the inherent geological instability of the Isles, as well as that caused by its resident fauna, these opinions have continued to vex me until recently.

For it is in recent months that I have come across a tome of Duerger lore which, I must honestly admit has been more than a little challenging to translate. However, the *Kaldraan Chronicle*, as its title appears to be, has all the bearings of a historically accurate account. If one were to believe it as written, one might conclude that the Avernus’s history and demography is an echo, a reflection of sorts of that of the overworld, with periods of great upheaval in the Isles as we know them leading to an influx of refugees, exodites and outlaws into the caverns below.

Unfortunately I have not been able to consult a Dwarf on the matter, as my family name by sheer virtue of honesty precedes such matters and often leads to a string of insults in return to my appeal. As such I can only offer you my limited understanding of what the *Chronicle* appears to divulge:

First of all, the book suggests a few locations that may – in one manner or another – form a connection to the overworld. Again I must stress the existence of such connections with the overworld has not been confirmed by myself nor any other that I’m aware of, and may have even been subject to major changes given the ongoing collapses and formation of new tunnels due to the presence of bullettes in the arca.

The Lamyan cenote is of course the most well known of these, as the city has long been known to dispose of its unwanted prisoners by throwing them into the mouth of a cavern that has been integrated into the white marble of the city’s well. A lever opens the bottom of the well, flushing the sentenced down into the cave. If this cave were linked to the general system of the Avernus – depending on the survivability of the fall – there may be those in the underworld that harbor a deep hatred against those who left them to rot in the dark.

The secluded town of Netherwick is one such place where exiled outlaws and undesirables might gather. Long thought to be a story to scare children, in the Kaldraan Chronicle the town is referred to as a place where, in spite of the gloom of the caves, people live a relatively normal life. Its proximity to the Lamyan Cenote allows a trickle of overworld goods – mostly in the form of items discarded by the overworld city – to flow into the underground hamlet.

Other entries into the Avernum may have been of a more clandestine nature. The Jornath Caverns have long been known as a place to avoid for travelers, for they are infested with bandits, human and beastman alike. The connection to the Avernum suggests that their choice of habitation may have had other motives than was previously assumed.

Unsurprisingly, Gunnar's Rest is mentioned as well, supporting long-standing rumors that the Dwarven lords hold a much larger dominion than they commonly reveal to their allies. Their secrecy regarding the Duergar Canton of their great city has led me to speculate that the entrance to the Avernum may be located in this area, but again I lack the means to confirm this idea. The Kaldraan Chronicle refers to a few other locations in conjunction with Gunnar's Rest, such as Felham and Origen's Forge, supporting the theory of an underground fiefdom.

Last of the familiar locations is the Forbidden Cove. What vile secrets the connection between these two dark realms implies, I dare not expand upon. All I will say is that, overworld or cave system, the Forbidden Cove is best avoided.

Regarding the other locations it refers to, the Chronicle becomes ever more esoteric – hence my need for Dwarven scrutiny. The included map is a direct print from the bronze-cast plates of the original Tome, with my best attempts at including the other locations mentioned, though my transliteration of Duergar into Common may be quite flawed. Though undoubtedly subject to continuous shifts in exact geography, the general structure of the Avernum, should remain largely unchanged. My rudimentary deductions are as follows:

Qallath Fen: possibly an elven enclave in the Avernum, at least the name would suggest such heritage. What breed of elves one can only guess at.

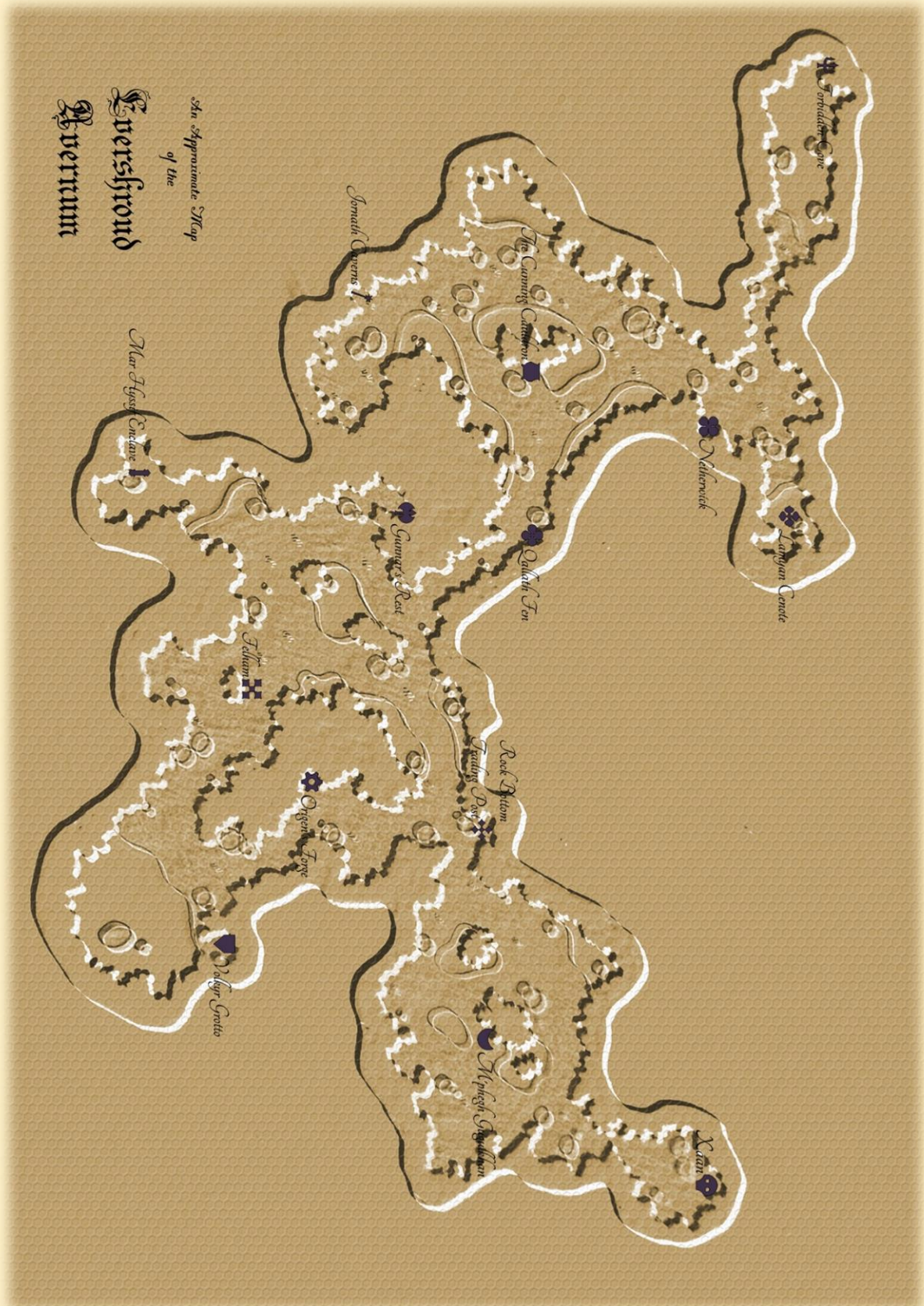
The Cunning Cauldron: a small hamlet home to quite a few unethical alchemists, exiled wizards and banished warlocks. Magic is tolerated here in all its most hideous forms.

Rock Bottom Trading Post: apparently a neutral trade center where exchange between the Duergar and the other underground realms can take place. Relatively common overworld goods such as wood are considered scarce in the Avernum, allowing for lucrative trade on behalf of the Dwarves. The benefit is mutual, however, since without it, many communities would simply not survive.

Xaal also is an elven name, but the iconography suggests something much more sinister. Lastly, and unconclusively, the Mar Hissif Enclave and M'phegh Gugulkan remain a complete mystery to me. *Any knowledgeable dwarf willing to assist in further*



*translation of the tome is welcome to contact me for further information via my postage  
adrrss at Caldwell Manor, Calwell, The Caldwell Dominion. I'd be most obliged.*



## Addendum II: Beyond the Isles

Given the unfortunate limitations of trade and other forms of exchange with foreign nations, it seems prudent to include a few words on the world beyond the Isles, some general advice on where to purchase goods, and a much needed bit of advice on dealing with foreigners.

First and foremost among the Eversrhoud Isles' trade partners is the southern continent of Xondara. Dry and scarcely populated, the Xondaran nations subsist on cattle rearing and coastal trade, the local diet a mix of dried horsemeat and root vegetables. Lacking metals and mineral resources, their main exports are ivory and spices, for which the Azuran traders pay a fair price. An even more lucrative resource, though always in scarce supply, is Xondaran wine, a strong fermented drink brewed from a variety of bitterberry native to the continent's inland mountain ranges. Some of the Isles' Freeholds are said to have been granted in gratitude for a case of this exceptional beverage.

To the North, the Hegemony of Silt finds its main trade partner in the Killian Jarls who rule the frozen wastes of Gaar Vallon. They are not to be trifled with, and it is through the sheer military and organizational might of the northern city-state's navy that they have been able to enforce favorable terms in their otherwise unamicable exchange.

To the far east lays the land of tall mountains and lush valleys known as Zhi-La. It is rumored the first prophets of Nergál came from this exotic land of serpentine dragons and ascetic philosophers. It is a largely untamed land, interspersed by small hamlets of elegant wooden huts and communal pagodas. And it is indeed this elegant architecture, built in harmony with the lay of the land that seems to inspire many of the Cult of Nergál's most prized sanctuaries. Apart from esoteric philosophies, the nation exports a tarlike substance known colloquially as "fyrniz". It is first and foremost a sought after kitchen spice, adding a pleasant burning sensation to any food. High grade fyrniz is believed to have many beneficial properties, ranging from stomach ache relief to counteracting eretile dysfunction. Few are aware that it is a crushed up and dried amalgam of Zhilangian Firebeetles they are using to spice up their food as well as their love life -- but as a manner of courtesy, let's not rouse the blissfully ignorant.

To the west, the ocean seems to stretch out beyond end. Though rumors exist, as with anything that could exist, of lands beyond the extent of the known world, these are just that. Rumors. There is no evidence to date to support them, and thus I shall not include them here. But should you, brave adventurer, ever pass beyond the veil of what is known and discover indisputable evidence of the existence of worlds beyond the scope of our current understanding, please contact me at your earliest convenience and I shall amend this work to the best of my ability.



# Reflections and Conclusions

My Esteemed Readers,

As we adjourn our present exploration of the Evershroud Isles, our hearts and minds are richer for the voyage. This chronicle, borne of countless journeys and the shared tales of our kith and kin, stands as a testament to the myriad facets of our beloved isles. Within these pages, the past dialogues with the present, weaving a narrative resplendent with the triumphs and tribulations that have sculpted the character of our lands and peoples.

Yet, as any true student of the Evershroud knows, our isles are not merely a repository of what has been. They are a canvas upon which the future is ceaselessly painted, with each dawn heralding new mysteries to unravel and fresh horizons to pursue. It is this perpetual interplay of discovery and legacy that imbues our home with its indomitable spirit.

In the spirit of onward journeying and the boundless curiosity that has long been our compass, we turn our gaze to the path ahead, emboldened by the knowledge that the Evershroud Isles will continue to unfold in wonder and majesty.

## Postscriptum:

In an unexpected coda to our endeavors, the sands of time have shifted to unveil a secret long buried in the annals of our history—the rediscovery of the Evershroud Ælvernum. This revelation, emerging from the shadows of legend to the light of our present day, invites us to expand the boundaries of our understanding and to tread anew the corridors of our collective heritage.

The Evershroud Ælvernum, a realm right beneath our feet yet beyond our wildest imaginings, beckons with the allure of the unexplored. Its unveiling serves not merely as a milestone in our ceaseless quest for knowledge but as a bridge to the epochs and stories that have preceded us.

Let this serendipitous discovery serve as a clarion call to all who hold the Evershroud Isles dear—that our journey is far from complete. With each step into the depths of the Ælvernum, we weave ourselves further into the fabric of our isles' storied tapestry, contributing to a legacy that transcends the bounds of time.

May this guide be but the first chapter in your own saga of exploration and wonder within the Evershroud Isles. The path forward is charted by the courage to seek, the will to discover, and the joy of unearthing the mysteries that await us, both above and beneath the earth.

I dedicate this work to Zephyr, who has been a constant source of inspiration and support on my journeys. And thank you, Khathgrimpth the multitalented, for enriching this guide with your remarkable illustrations. Your art has brought these pages to life.

With a gratitude bordering on madness,

*Caldwell*