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Magic and Machines

There have always been two ways for mortals to access magic. The first, and oldest, required study and time. Would be mages reached into the worlds beyond and called out for the beings that lived there. They made deals with the creatures for power, and paid terrible prices. As time passed, mages began to learn the ways of the worlds beyond and began making easier deals for less (but still useful) power, requiring less detrimental consequences. Inevitably, this enticed fewer creatures to even make deals, ultimately making mages scarce. The second, and more recent, were mages who decided to look inward, accessing the same rituals and incantations they learned from the creatures but drawing on their own life force, or soul. This magic was never nearly as powerful as what could be gained from the creatures and the worlds beyond, but for those with a strong constitution and force of will it could still be devastating when used correctly.

Then the Veins were discovered.

Deep under the earth, veins of bright blue metal crisscrossed the land. After some experimenting, it was discovered that they reacted to living human beings, becoming charged with energy while in proximity. In fact, even a small amount, when charged, could be harnessed to propel objects at incredible speeds. Gunpowder and combustible fuel quickly became unnecessary sources of energy. The Veins were numerous and due to how little of it was required to power even larger machines, there has yet to be a mine that has run dry.

The families quickly got to work making use of the Veins. Firearms, lighting, vehicles, ovens, anything that required a fuel source was quickly fitted with Veins instead. To this day the Kota Flying Cities are still widely considered to be the most impressive use of Veins, and even Maret will grumble admiration.

Minor Families and other Factions

While eight families generally take up most of the conversation, there are within Sovereign, those who claim independence from them. Generally small groups of no consequence, there are those who stand out among them.

Talon

The Talon were originally Mahiri who disagreed with the family's decision to go against the Maret. They separated during the Second Great war and fought with Maret until the end. However, in a surprise move, during the tribunals, Talon ultimately added their voice opposing Maret and agreeing that the war was their fault. As a result, after the tribunals were over, Talon found themselves unwelcome in both Mahiri and Maret and ended up having to settle in Lenui in order to maintain themselves.

When Veins were discovered, Talon, like many, jumped all over the new metal in an attempt to carve their own niche. Little did they know how flawlessly they would carve it, for the Talon discovered a method of manufacturing the metal more purely than the other families, allowing the metal to absorb more energy from the souls around it. The process was complicated, and kept extremely secret even to this day, and as such was inefficient for creating larger machines and constructs. Instead, Talon poured their energy into making Vein into handheld weapons like swords, spears and hammers. In battle, the energy filling the metal weapon would be so incredibly hot that it could cut through and damage even armoured vehicles. Those who wielded them needed to wear special suits of armour to avoid being burned themselves as even being in the presence of an unprotected blade could cause severe damage after long enough exposure.

The Talon, of course, became incredibly wealthy after this discovery and their weapons are sought after all over Sovereign.

The Royal Butterflies

One of the largest and most feared gangs that roam the Maret Territory wastes, The Royal Butterflies carve a path of destruction wherever they go, causing no end of trouble for Maret citizens.

The Royal Butterflies make heavy use out of motorcycles, assisted by a few ground cars, to terrorize and raid. Their headquarters (if they have one) is unknown, but they are often found living within factory settlements for weeks at a time before moving on. They have frequent clashes with Maret forces due to their size and willingness to venture into settled territory, but also have no issues fighting with other gangs and Maret citizens.

The Royal Butterflies maintain a strict uniform of black colours trimmed with blue, and each member sports a full face tattoo of a black and blue butterfly.

Gharial Coven

Often described as ghosts and specters, the Gharial Coven have earned a reputation of secrecy and subterfuge. While they operate within the Maret Wastes, the Coven is widely believed to be headquartered somewhere in the kilometers of tunnels beneath the surface. The size of the Coven is mostly unknown, but it is believed unlikely that they rival any of the other Gangs in prowess. Instead of brute force, the Coven focuses on stealth and hit and run tactics. Most raids by the Coven go unnoticed, or if they are noticed, it's not until the Coven is long gone along with the supplies and wealth they took with them.

The Gharial Coven makes heavy use of magic, and most members are believed to be witches in some shape or form. Generally the witches of the Coven wear long robes, and head and face coverings to protect from the elements of the wastes. They also have no issues using regular weapons alongside their magic. While they occasionally make use of large land trawlers to transport goods for trade into friendly settlements, the Coven otherwise exclusively use the giant Thorn Bugs (Umbonia Crassicornis Collosus) native to the wastes to maneuver silently across the empty expanses both on the ground and through the air.

While it hasn't been conclusively proven, it is widely believed that the Coven actively influence the Waste Storms with magic to aid their various activities and keep them covered in darkness and ash until they finish their raids and move back into the wastes.

The Gresit

The term Gresit, is a blanket word used to describe any number of the human-adjacent species whose presence is widely considered to be the catalyst of the First Great War.

History

While the Gresit were first recorded as abnormal births, their frequency increased to the point that they could not be brushed aside as simple coincidence. Scholars now trace the genetic lines back to a single village in the south of the continent, and while some claim this place to be cursed, no such magical anomaly was discovered and any claims of such have been dismissed.

The Gresit, already deeply integrated with many societies, quickly became a normal (though infrequent) sight. Not all countries were as welcoming as others however and one day the shoe dropped and it became apparent that several countries had begun a systematic purge of all Gresit. Though it took some time, during which thousands upon thousands of Gresit lost their lives, the other countries eventually stood against this purge and the First Great War began.

Now, Gresit have the same rights within the Families as any "regular" human, though there will always be those who despise them simply for being different.

Oldaar

Among the most populous of the Gresit, Oldaar are literal giants among humanity. The smallest of them standing well over eight feet tall and weighing over four hundred pounds, Oldaar are frequently sought out for laborious and military jobs. Other than their size, Oldaar remain mostly human looking, though some boast horns, tusks, or even a rare second set of arms. Being the most populous, Oldaar are known to make their own small communities within or adjacent to other larger towns and cities, allowing for interaction with others while also giving them places to live, eat, and sleep that are tailored to their large size. Oldaar are compatible genetically with humans, but a Human/Oldaar couple will always produce an Oldaar child.

Gemeng

Less common than the Oldaar but still widely spread, Gemeng look like the average human but possess the rare ability to alter their physical form in sometimes dramatic ways. While most Gemeng's abilities are restricted to being able to adjust things like their height or eye and hair colour, a few rare Gemeng can transform their bodies entirely, even to mimic specific people down to the tiniest detail. Still others can mimic the physicality of animals to enhance their sight, hearing, or even allow them to breathe underwater. Despite their (usually) relatively minor differences from humans, some people still show extreme apprehension around Gemeng, which has caused some to simply ignore their abilities and live their lives as if they were human.

Isici

The most rare Gresit population are the Isici. While still relatively humanoid, but more visually distinct than the Gemeng, Isici are tied directly to elemental magic. This displays itself as hair made of fire or water, gemstones growing from their skin, inhuman weight (heavy or light), and may other variations. For some Isici this goes beyond physical appearance and can allow them to interact with the elements in ways humans normally cannot, such as holding burning coals, breathing underwater, moving through the earth, or even flight. Due to their rarity, Isici are often marveled at instead of resented (an aspect any Isici can tell you isn't much better).

Monsters

In the dark corners of the world, in the lands surrounding the old empire, in the deepest parts of the forest, unnatural creatures prowl.

Monsters

Werewolf

Long has myth told of demons who could change their shape into that of an animal to deceive humanity, the werewolf is not one of these demons. It is instead a person, cursed by some malicious instance of demonic magic. Tales of werewolves have existed since before the Sovereign, and even today there are sightings and rumors. Whole villages reduced to ash in a night, disappearance's on the edge of deep forests, merchants travelling to close to the northern mountains and never returning.

The man cursed with the wolf may not initially know that he is cursed, and truly we have no knowledge of how long the curse may remain dormant. When it first begins to show itself, the cursed man will fall ill with fever this usually occurs a few days before a full moon. The day before the moon is fullest, he will be bedridden and unable to eat or drink, for his body will reject it. As the moon rises that night, the transformation occur. It is stars as a glow under the skin and behind the eyes, but within moments any flammable material around the man will ignite and be consumed as he immolates. The heat of this immolation is enough to set a house ablaze, should he still be inside.

From the fire emerges the wolf. Enormous, flames licking its fur, jaws filled with wicked teeth. Ravenous from the transformation the wolf will devour anything that it finds, unable to discern friends or family from its life. While it stands like a man, it can also run like a dog and no human alive can outrun it.

Despite the explosive transformation, werewolves often vanish shortly after, retreating to secluded and extreme locations. Generally werewolves are known to avoid each other and very rarely return to any location near dense populations (thank the sovereign) but there have been at least two past reports of a singular werewolf gathering others into a pack.

There is no known cure for the curse, and once someone has been transformed there remains very little of their former selves. Though reports on their intelligence vary it is widely believed they are still capable of complex thought and even speech occasionally. They are remarkably resilient creatures, shrugging off deadly blows and ignoring pain that would incapacitate even the strongest human; one report even detailing a werewolf killing twenty armed soldiers after having its head removed. The only surefire way of putting down one of these monsters is by piercing its heart with a blade of pure silver. This daunting task has caused some to attempt the same with a bullet of pure silver fired from a safe two hundred meters distance but the autopsy of these gunman confirmed this technique had little effectiveness.

While the curse remains rare, the superstition is alive and well in the general population and more than one person has lost their life the night before a full moon to the overactive imagination of a mob.

Monsters

Great Wyrms

Also known as True Dragons, great wyrms are believed to be extinct. Many fossils have been discovered of the beasts, and reconstructions place them near twice the size of a house. They are believed to have been apex predators in their time and, like all modern dragons, are believed to have been capable of breathing fire.

Of course, reports do occasionally come in from fringe towns of attacks by great wyrms, but these are understood to be simply misunderstandings and panic. It is unrealistic to consider these as credible.

Monsters

Dragons

All dragons fall under the Genus Draconis and as such are widely referred to as "dragons" the same way both humans and horses are referred to as "mammals". All dragons have a reptilian appearance, breathe fire, and have some form of mimicry and near-magic camouflage. Past this however, dragons can differ significantly and here we will discuss several of the more common varieties. It is significant to note that there are a large variety of dragons, the majority have been considered extinct due to lack of sightings for several decades before the second great war.

Wyvern - Common

A large and dangerous creature around the size of a wolf, these arial predators often hunt in packs of up to fifteen. Their habitat mostly consists of mountainous terrain though they are sometimes seen in the desert as well. Wyverns are extremely territorial and known to harass travelers passing through their perceived range which, taking into consideration their ability to fly, can be a significant area.

Wyverns are easy to identify from their front, batlike wings and short back legs. Their long neck and tail are incredibly dexterous and snake like, and both tail and teeth have the ability to deliver a venomous blow. A single strike from a wyvern is usually not lethal, but multiple strikes can cause paralysis and eventually death so it is advised to avoid confrontation with wyverns as much as possible.

Mock Wyvern - Common

Like their larger cousins, mock wyverns have four limbs: two wings and two legs. However, mock wyverns rarely get larger than two feet in length from tail to snout. In addition, mock wyverns carry no venom and are omnivorous, enjoying a diet of fruits and nuts, as well as insects and small animals.

While cute, mock wyverns can still deliver a powerful bite and are not recommended as pets to inexperienced pet owners.

Rock Drake - Uncommon

Rock drakes are wingless dragons around the same size as a bear that generally reside in forests that border mountains. They can be identified by their heavier than usual armoured scales along their back and shoulders, as well as impressive horns that can form "crowns" on their heads and are highly sought after as a trophy. Reclusive and timid, rock drakes tend to avoid contact with humans at all costs but will viciously defend their dens and young if approached.

There were attempts in the past to domesticate rock drakes, but the cost of maintaining such an animal, along with its general timid behaviour and "short fuse" anger made it too much effort to do widespread, though some individual animals have been trained on occasion.

Wyrm - Rare

Wyrms are the closest living relatives to the Great Wyrms of the past. These animals have six limbs, four legs and two powerful wings, and can grow as tall as thirteen feet at the shoulder, reaching an average length of twenty feet (thirty to forty including their tail).

Sightings of wyrms are mostly unheard of, as a predator of their size requires an extreme territory for hunting. Considered to be asexual creatures, able to reproduce on their own, the meeting of two wyrms is a terrifying sight and if one does not back down from the confrontation it nearly always ends with the death of one of the animals. Since the end of the second great war, only three wyrms have been sighted and their territory roughly mapped out.

Monsters

Sovereign's Ghosts

In recent years (around fifty years before the incursion to anyone's best guess) a peculiar occurrence began being reported throughout the world. People in dire circumstances, usually moments from death through violence or accident, would suddenly be surrounded by one to three warriors. These warriors would then follow the individual for some time, protecting them from various horrors and terrible circumstances, before leaving just before the person met their demise. The most famous and well documented occurrence travelled with their individual (a fisherman by the name of Marcus Finn) for nearly seven years, vanishing a mere three hours before Marcus was dragged to the bottom of the sea and ripped to pieces by a shark.

It is unclear if the warriors have specific reasons for choosing their individual, and an answer to this question has yet to present itself.

The warriors have always been described the same. Ambiguous in their gender, standing roughly six feet in height. Clad in a shining silver breastplate, gauntlets, and greaves. They wear no helmet, only a raised hood with their face always obscured no matter what angle it is viewed from. Their hood and robes are bright blue and, paired with the silver armour, many began relating them to the Sovereign. Sovereign's Ghosts, His Angels, Guardians of the Sovereign. They have been called many names.

Any attempt to speak to them has gone without answer, and any who raise weapons against them are quickly struck down by their silver spears.

As of yet, only four confirmed accounts have been recorded, with others being outright lies or given by unreliable narrators due to significant head trauma or inebriation.

Characters

Characters

Alex Ferminder

Alex Ferminder was an Isici mage, currently believed to be the cause of the full fledge invasion of the Sovereign Lands by Hell.

Alex was an "Earth" based Isici, their hair as green as grass and their eyes a deep brown like freshly watered soil. It is believed that Alex was born somewhere in Maret territory. Their upbringing was simple, but since they showed an aptitude for magic from a young age, they were sent to a private school to learn to master the skill. Alex's mentors described them as inquisitive and insatiably curious. There are a hundred stories of various trouble they got into during their time at the school.

After receiving their accolades of completion in the private school, Alex stayed on as a teacher and mentor themselves, though they spent just as much time away from the school researching in the field as they did actually teaching. Still they were well liked at the school by both teachers and students.

In the last years before Alex vanished, people remember them beginning to get more closed off, and more eccentric. One professor at the schools remembers them coming to him with a chaotic research paper that made no sense at all. He described it as "a jumbled mess of words with occasional strings of what could be considered language". Seemingly, Alex had found something in the southern mountains and was getting excited about it.

The last time Alex was seen, they had packed a large expeditionary bag into their small motor vehicle and were travelling south once again. This was less than a month before the incursion and Alex is believed to have been among the first casualties.

Timeline

AS = Ante Supremus (Before the Sovereign), PS = Post Supremus (After the Sovereign)

~3000 AS to ~500 AS: Widely called "The Great Devastation" by scholars, during this time period whole swaths of human and human adjacent species were wiped from the face of the earth due to some unknown and sudden societal collapse. While certain pieces of evidence hint at a world of at least mild technological mastery and magic, all of that was lost at some point and this time period is filled with rudimentary civilizations doing their best to survive in a wild world of monsters. Small kingdoms would form and fall every other century and the lands were covered with roving barbarians and tribes of savage peoples. It was a dark time, and what little historical evidence remains of that time is fragmented at best and unreadable at most.

- It was during these days that it is believed the worlds third moon was struck by a large celestial object, or ruptured in some other way, the debris of which forms the stunning rings we now see in the sky.

470 AS - 462 AS: Self declared Emperor Lamaar Ortigal leads his kingdom across the lands, uniting provinces and previously unaligned communities under one banner. The Ortigalli Empire is created and last for several centuries while various emperors take the mantle and continue to expand.

381 AS - The leaders of the two prominent religious groups at the time (Chosen Marcus Divitius and Great Mother Elita Tidal) both share a vision they claim was given to them by their deity, each designating a different person to become the next emperor. The empire erupts into disagreements as up till then, the emperor was always chosen via a collective vote by representatives of the different provinces. After nearly a year of messy deliberation, riots, and several political assassinations, the empire fragments into three, each new empire forming around a different figurehead. While each called themselves The Ortigalli Empire, scholars refer to the elected emperor at the time (Curran Lin), and his territory as the Ortigalli Empire, emperor Cassius Durado and his territory as the Western Empire, and emperor Ignati Fero and his territory as the Central Empire.

- It is around this time as well that Magic began to become a less taboo subject and various political and religious groups saw the potential of having mages within their ranks.

299 AS - Only fragmentary evidence remains of the event, but it is documented that on a calm winter day, a blindingly bright light appeared within the borders of the Central Empire. The light lasted for one hour before stopping abruptly. Reports of investigations revealed that the Central Empire was gone. Buildings, roads, people, all man made objects save for a lead chest sealed with magic. When mages finally managed to open it, they found the ramblings of Emperor Fero who claimed to have discovered a spell that would place him and his people "above all others". References to teleportation magics as well as demonic contracts and surplus descriptions of the Bris-Moon. The scholars were baffled, but before anyone could take the time to investigate further,

the Western Empire and the Ortigalli Empire entered the bloodiest war the world had yet seen, fighting over the now vacant territory.

296 AS - A peace treaty is signed as the two empires realized the losses they were taking would, if not stopped, leave them vulnerable to the numerous independent tribes around them. Small skirmishes still occurred of course, but the official war was ended.

227 AS - The Master Court Mages from the Western Empire and Ortigalli Empire, in an effort to strengthen bonds between the two nations, begin a joint research project on the teleportation magic that may have been used by Ignati Fero. Less than a week into their experiments the two are dragged into a portal to Hell by a demon, which was witnessed by eight apprentice mages (four from each empire) and were never seen again. Joint research projects never happened again between the two empires.

100 AS - On the day after the winter solstice, a man appears in the streets of the Western Empire and a woman appears in the streets of the Ortigalli Empire. They declare themselves to be prophets of the Sovereign who would come to cleanse the world of strife and conflict. Independent attempts to capture the prophets resulted in the deaths of a cumulative thirteen people before they were left alone and allowed to wander the city, under watchful eye. No official record of the deaths remain, but some independent journals and writings by eyewitnesses describe fire consuming any who approached the prophets with ill intent.

"*Though they speak to none directly, shouting their verse into the sky, the "prophets" have gathered a small following of people who have begun to take their words to heart. I fear that the people will be tempted from the truth, but there is nothing any mortal can do but pray they will leave soon.*" ~ *Unnamed Priest*

99 AS - On the day of the winter solstice, the man and the woman immolate in front of the crowds of people who followed them daily. Panic ensues briefly before people among the crowds begin speaking on behalf of the prophets, speaking aloud the words they had written down over the course of their year listening. It is now widely known that there was a prophet both in the Western and Ortigalli Empires and small groups of Sovereignites (as they were called at the time) began to form and send letters back and forth.

86 AS - The Sovereignites at this point have grown to such popularity that both empires, and religious leaders are worried that they may begin to move away from the teachings and laws of their fathers and begin anew. Emperor Titus Origo of the Western Empire and Emperor Ithilion Archalon of the Ortigalli Empire quietly decide with the church leaders that they would all be better off should they become one nation. They make a joint announcement a few days before the winter solstice that "for the sake of the people" the empires will be dissolved and reformed into a democratic republic.

85 AS - The last two emperors are hanged side by side a week after the winter solstice. The nation shatters.

85 AS - 0 AS - People once again gather into small communities, declaring themselves as kingdoms and duchies. Warlords and Barons rise and fall every other decade and it is widely considered by

modern scholars to be "a very bad time to be alive".

Dies Supremus (Day of the Sovereign) - A man clad in silver armour, gleaming with its own light as bright as the sun, appears in the center of a battle. After some confusion both sides begin attacking the man as he attempts to speak to them. Seventy men are consumed by fire before their commanders call for them to stop. This man in silver was who we all know as The Sovereign, saviour of humanity and the world.

0 PS - 10 PS - The Sovereign, and his loyal followers, sweep across the world gathering all beneath their banner. Those who stand in opposition are destroyed swiftly or allowed to flee other lands, but those who kneel receive accolades and a place in the new empire. Though it takes nearly a decade to cover all the land, The Sovereign completely unites the peoples, forming an empire that would stand for centuries.

1010 PS - The Sovereign's Empire is a glorious place to live. Life is good and war nonexistent as the Sovereign rules from his throne in the capital, built in the vast empty space left by the old Central Empire. People live long and fulfilling lives learning to do the things they love instead of things they have to do to survive. It is a paradise on earth, thanks to the Sovereign.

1013 PS - The Sovereign goes silent. Occasionally he is seen standing on the balconies of the towers of the capital, but never again does he step foot into the streets. Then on the night of the winter solstice, just before the year turns over, a thick miasma spreads from the capital city. It rolls over the land like billowing fog and blots out the sun.

1014 PS - It takes a while for people to panic. But when no word, or person, has come from the capital, unrest once again begins to filter into the population. The fog is thickest in the lands surrounding the capital and any parties that venture into it are never heard from again.

1398 PS - As different kingdoms once again rise and fall in power, slowly several of them begin to really gain a foothold. In the summer months of the year The First Great War begins among these powerful "families" which marks the beginnings of modern day borders and territories being marked out.

1405 PS - An armistice is declared which allows the families to come together and have serious discussion. Lines are drawn and borders are agreed on. A treaty is signed by all sides and the next few years see proper collaboration between the families for the first time in decades.

1426 PS - What is later determined to be a Maret led invasion of Laguerre territory sparks The Second Great War. The families take sides and bloody conflict ensues that sees all sorts of horrifying technological marvels used against all sides.

1449 PS - All sides stubbornly refuse to sign anything or approach any sort of peace talks, each side blaming the other for the war. Finally after over two decades of fighting, Maret loses its greatest allies. Kota backs out of its promises declaring they've been stretched too thin, Magrina declares nutrality and flees into the desert, and Kontolis begins to collapse as a new plague spreads like wildfire among its citizens. As if to add insult to injury, Kota returns to the fighting, but on the side of Laguerre. Maret is dealt a swift and devastating blow and surrenders. During the

tribunal that follows Maret is declared at fault for the war and is forced to pay reparations to all those devastated by its effect.

1526 PS - An, up to that point, unknown mage vanishes in the southern regions and a demonic army of Hell covers the land in horrifying monsters and hellish servants. They begin their march north and the families brace for another war.

1570 PS - With no end to the demon incursion in sight, the families begin to focus inwards, despite initial efforts to work together against Hell. Conflicts break out along previously peaceful borders and both the frontline against the demons and the backline against previous allies becomes a chaotic mess.

1572 PS - Tired of the chaos, Kota begins its "collection" of the rest of the world, declaring that all lands now belong to the Kotan Empire and all those who live on them, citizens. While met with some initial push back, ultimately all the families bowed the knee when Kotan barges entered their skies.

The Incursion

Hell

Hell exist beyond the human comprehension of existence; a space squeezed into the cracks and crevices of the world. If one is to look hard enough, one might find one of these "windows" into the other space or, if one is unlucky enough, even a door. Hell is a chaotic place where the laws of reality hold no sway. Few have ever traveled through the doors, and even less have found their way back.

The true nature of Hell is unclear. Certainly it is known to be the home of multitudes of demons, and while it is traversable it is a near death sentence to enter. Those who have made it back with their sanity mostly intact are often silent, refusing to discuss the events inside. Those whose minds are broken spew nonsense words and phrases and almost always turn up dead within a month.

What little information has made it onto pages and history books describes landscapes that writhe like living flesh, mountains that walk, rivers of black water that peels flesh from bone. We know of the demons as well which roam these lands, but among them names have arisen:

Psellus. Whose horde is destruction. Who controls the elements. Who rules the skies and subterranean realms of Hell.

Lanterne. Who is temptation. Who calls demons of every seduction to them.

Occulta. Who is Tyranny. Who relishes in the ruler and hates the servant.

These "demon lords" seem unable, or unwilling, to enter the world and prefer to send their demonic servants to deal with mortals directly.

What We Know

"*It all seems to trace back to Alex Ferminder. Since they vanished, we've seen nothing but black clouds and lightning to the south. I swear to the Sovereign they had something to do with this.*" ~ *Orien Alexander, Headmaster of Alabaster Academy*

When the southern regions were covered in thick black clouds, everyone thought the Miasma was back, that thick cloud that surrounded the ancient capital. Soon, however, it became clear that this was something entirely different. A few ambitious Outriders struck out into the darkness, never to be seen again. Then the first wave began.

Marching like the dead come back to life, demonic creatures emerged from the darkness. They swept over the first towns and cities with very little resistance as people were caught completely unaware. The death toll is yet unknown but the land was not given time to recover. Swiftly, the families banded together, presenting a united front against this incursion. Resistance pushed the demons back into the storm, but this victory was short lived.

From this point, the Incursion became a full fledged war. The frontlines have turned into great muddy plains of barbed wire and corpses. The forces of Hell, as it became known this was in fact an invasion by Hell, have had no end to their supply of monstrosities, possessed war machines, and mortal servants (both alive and undead).

The Incursion dragged on for years and eventually the strain of war began to weigh too heavy on the families. Tensions flared and skirmishes began again on the territorial borders as every side began to struggle for supplies.

In recent years a new, and wholly terrifying, tactic has emerged from the demonic front. While the fighting continues in the trenches and ruins on the frontline, troops of soldiers have been appearing in various settled areas via demonic transportation magics, ransacking towns, killing everyone in their path, and then returning to their masters after some unknown goal is finally accomplished. These smaller attacks have set the families into true disarray as panic has flooded the populace, knowing that at any moment, demons might appear in the town square.

The Forces of Hell

Possessed

The possessed are the grunts of Hell. Mortal creatures (human or otherwise) who have had their autonomy taken from them. A demon has infested their body and puppets them to murder their friends and allies. From the rare cases that a Possessed has been captured, the demon will flee the body, allowing brief conversation with the victim before their untimely demise.

Demonic War Machines

A mockery of the vehicles of Maret and Laguerre, these terrifying machines have no pilot, and instead are controlled by a demonic being living within the metal of the machine itself. To an unprepared force, even one of these is more than a match for a hundred men.