

# ANIMARIUM



## TOME OF LORE

DIG

DARK ICE GAMES

LORE V 1.0 - ART IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE





## THE SEEKERS LIBRARY

Far deep into the greatest of all Cinerian ruins, lies the Living Repository, a trove of knowledge once accessed by its denizens to learn and spread information. It is now reduced to a mere sliver of its former glory due the “Cleansing” at the hand of the first Inquisition. By destroying the knowledge, and branding as heresy all scientific advancements unsanctioned by the Church, the Inquisition aims to protect humanity and prevent the same mistakes which caused the destruction of ancient Cineria.

Many scholars however have risked their lives to retrieve any remaining fragments buried deep within those ruins, to study and restore as much knowledge as possible, arguing that such information would on the contrary prevent humanity’s downfall by learning from past mistakes. Referring to themselves as the Seekers of Truth or Seekers, these scholars are now branded as heretics and operate in complete secrecy, working endlessly to transcribe what was once lost and publish these findings within underground Libraries, only known to other Seekers.

The following recounts are based on those partial findings, later reconstructed by years of studies and research. The retrieval of historic artefacts and the widely spread knowledge of local events, recorded by many converging sources from all over the world, helps fill in those gaps. As it is often retranslated, revised and debated by their many authors, it must be made clear for those with access to these forbidden resources that not all records can be verified as factual truth.

---

*“What defines reality is our conscious interpretation of its rules.  
We are not required to understand these rules to survive.  
What drives our survival and ultimately destroys it is fear.”*

---



## CONCEPTION

In the beginning, there was the word of the Goddess Ygo and her word was "I am". Known as the Great Mother of Creation, she sang her word through the vast emptiness of the Animarium while dancing upon the sea of the Primordial Myst from which Kos, the God of Shadow emerged, drawn to her radiance.

Chasing the ripples left by Ygo's steps who ran far from the emerging shadow of Kos and his malicious reach, she eventually succumbed to his relentless chase and suffered his cruel assault. He planted his essence in her womb causing it to swell to its limits, until it burst with Amber light, giving birth to their children.

This birth was known as the Primal Shatter and it caused the formation of two overlapping realms outside of the Animarium - The Physical and Hollow Realm, abstract mirrors of one another. Their children bore the traits of both parents:

**Kreaol the Smith** - embodies the essence of creation.

**Yamora the Lover** - embodies the essence to love and nurture life.

**Kodium the Warrior** - embodies the essence of hate.

**Yctoria the Wanderer** - embodies the essence to chase after dreams.

**Yshkra the Martyr** - embodies the essence of sacrifice.

**Kupidra the Voracious** - embodies the essence of greed and wealth.

**Yngael the Stillborn** - without the balance between light and shadow, it failed to form.

Driven by personal motives, each of the newly born Primordial Gods, poured part of their essence within Yngael the Stillborn, giving it new life. Doing so fractured its body into countless shards, each became a radiant Amber Angel.

The shards of Yngael fell into both the Physical and Hollow Realms and their unbalanced nature attracted them to one another into battle, which would result in deadly clashes and the birth of cosmos. From the Angels ashes, an unfathomable number of worlds were formed, among these Carcassia.

The Angels small enough to land upon the world of Carcassia continued battling one another and from the blood spilled over its ashen soil, the Bloodlings sprouted out of the amber seeds soaking the ground.

Deprived of Consciousness, the Bloodlings walked aimlessly toward any light sources like moths without thought or purpose, until trampled by the battling Angels for they alone produced any source of light - later this time became known as the dark times of Shadows and Ashes.

*"When the rain-tears of Ygo's pain will light up the skies of Carcassia, Dhalgum'var will awaken.*

*-The Awakening- from "The end of days".*

## BONFIRE OF SOULS

While the Bloodlings stumbled their way thoughtlessly all over Carcassia, they would occasionally cross paths with one another in the dark, causing something extraordinary to happen; they began wandering together as if they had a shared purpose.

Over the ages, these odd unions kept repeating and growing into mindless collectives composed by many individuals. Just like a bonfire ignited by the incandescent showering of countless sparks focused in a single spot, the hollow mind of each Bloodling resonated with one another and found reason, each birthing individual consciousness known as Anima.



---

*"Within the hollow dream it took shape  
The passing pearls of Consciousness floated  
Sweeping over the ashen cerebral landscape  
Until reason was given and Willpower ignited"*

---



Tribes of Bloddlings with their own identity and sense of individualism formed all over the world, each with their own culture and unique traits, however the conflicts between the enormous Angels raged on, giving the frightened and meek inhabitants of Carcassia a miserable existence.

Even though the Angels were deprived of any consciousness, the Bloodings began worshipping them, begging to be noticed in the hope that they would no longer be trampled during their conflicts. Their form of worship varied from tribe to tribe, some recited prayers, others left offerings and sacrifices.

It is yet unknown how it came to be, but their prayers gave sentience to these angels of destruction, stopping them from acting purely on instincts and imbuing their minds with their personal beliefs such as justice, protection, fertility or mercy, turning them into powerful deities known as Demiurges also known as Artisans.

They became the physical embodiments of those values, responsible for many great and terrible things, such as the gift of the sun by the Demiurge known as Sultair or the destruction of rivaling tribes by war-minded Demiurges such as Daephosangra.

With the aid of the Demiurges they learned of the Primal Gods, and prospered with a balanced growth all over Carcassia, its people began maturing and their bodies changing, sculpted by the wills of their divinities.

*“As with all things in creation we are made by the blood and ashes of Angels, therefore we beings of consciousness are proof that the universe itself has gained awareness”*

-Lessons of Creation

## THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

As one of the earliest civilizations to be ignited by consciousness, the ingenious Cinerians developed their life safely underground, away from the battling angels and pursued scientific knowledge to learn about the world and life. With strong resolve not only they developed medicines capable of curing most common ailments and greatly extended their life, but they also became aware of the truths behind the universe's mysteries and of the secrets of Primordial Myst.

They lived a prosperous, happy existence, ruled by a royal family known for being kind to their subjects, whose scientific foundations pursued the freedom of learning by establishing public, educational centres known as Living Repositories where anyone could access the tools needed to better themselves.

Unlike libraries filled with books or scrolls, these educational centres featured devices akin to talking statues known as Shinthral - Stones of Knowledge, directly linked to one another across the whole Cinerian society, allowing the flow of new information to be poured into them daily.

Another tool of learning commonly used by those in training, were Dreamstones - small pebbles that when held with focus would make the individual fall asleep and directly seed knowledge into their minds. This revolution began the Age of Enlightenment (A.E.).

One ruler above all others stood out, Queen Arthea which became a beloved symbol of knowledge, kindness and life. Her popularity grew to the point that the love of her people elevated her into something greater akin to an ageless divinity, sometimes referred to as a Devas. It is believed this ascension happened to many individuals around Carcassia who were the focus of extreme devotion.

Over the centuries, Queen Arthea was eventually betrayed by her closest advisors who desired power and to push Cinerian society away from their dependency on outdated beliefs but towards a path of utopian, scientific independence. Many sacrificed themselves to aid the successful escape of the queen into exile, this event marked the end of the monarchy and of the Age of Enlightenment.

In the years that followed, the greatest of Cinerian scholars expanded their cognition of reality by altering their own bodies, sometimes to such drastic levels they would no longer resemble their own people, and became known as the Apogeans; Marked with horrific marine traits protruding from their bodies, possibly due to their link to the Sea of Primordial Myst, causing many to refer to them as abominations, but all those who raised concerns mysteriously vanished.

The Apogeans became capable of imprisoning the Demiurges they once worshipped by impaling them on megalithic structures known as Evercrosses to syphon the powers generated by their primordial bodies, keeping them alive but slowly destroying their minds and erasing the link to their roots. Their promise was that all Cinerians would be able to live a utopian existence free of hard work, and full of time for personal growth.

Cinerian society however became anything but utopian as the Apogeans gradually ensnared those they were in charge of guiding, luring the population into using hive-mind devices in the shape of beautifully ornate sarcophagi to connect their entire society into a willing state of pure consciousness bliss.

Without death or disease, they lived in a false dream-reality which fuelled their deepest desires for eternal youth and happiness, creating

and sharing together pleasures beyond the unimaginable.

Once their whole population was part of this shared bliss, each Apogean donned a crown-like device, connecting the thousands of clustered minds to their own, using them as psychic slaves. Not much else is currently known on the reasoning behind this, except for the fact that all Apogeans were deceived by Yamarin - the voice of order, who secretly crafted a crown of his own to control all Apogeans.

Pyramids and other megalithic constructions began sprouting everywhere within Cineria, each ruled by an Apogean thrall, where their mind would connect to the thousands of clustered sarcophagi devices containing the bodies of the ensnared citizens. It is speculated that the captive minds connected to the will of Yamarin, elevated him to a Devas of terrible powers whose cruelty and malice became legendary throughout the world.

Thus began the Age of Myst (A.M.).





## THE AGE OF MYST

Out of fear for what the Cinerians did to the Artisans, other less advanced civilizations formed an alliance to prevent their malicious spread and vanquish the Apogeans, but failed for the seemingly unlimited Mystic powers of Yamarin along his armies of constructs and abominations, was far too great of a threat to counter. Carcassia had previously never seen a force so terrifying-unaccounted testimonies go as far to mention helpless warriors vanishing out of existence simply because Yamarin willed it so.

While there is no explanation that can justify the lack of any documentation around this crucial period in history, it is known that humans proved to be the most resilient against the powers of Yamarin. As the religious text recounts, humans were led by Yman, supported by his battle brother known only as “The Swordsman”, guided by the wisdom of the once exiled Queen Arthea.

Yman became an icon of strength and determination, considered a divine warrior prophet powerful enough to defeat Yamarin, which he did at the cost of his own life. It is said that the crown of Yamarin was never recovered

and was lost in time, dooming the Cinerian people to eternal imprisonment with no possibility of redemption or peace and to this day, they lie entombed deep within the buried cities and lost pyramids.

A great number of Artisans escaped their shattering Evercrosses due to disrepair or because the violence of war which destroyed their megalithic chains, but as only madness and hatred now filled their once reasoning minds, they wander the lands and destroy anything which remotely resembled those who enslaved them - they are known as the Fallen Angels.

In countries where a great number of these Angels wander, the culture has adapted and shaped around them, like that of the nomadic jungle tribes of Kazaar, which travels in close proximity to their Angel, dragging one of its hands along to ward off Myst, or the heretics of the City State of Nesuferitia, who lives in isolation behind giant walls to keep them at bay.

*“Life is but the flame of a short candle struggling to burn against the winds of fate”*

-the apocryphal letters of Yman





## THE LEGACY OF YMAN

In the first years of the Age of Myst, the sisterhood first known as the Speakers, spread the story of Yamarin and of Yman across the lands, which later gave birth to several religious beliefs defined as Ymanism.

The largest number of followers belongs to the Church of Yman, symbolised by the Sword of his justice, which can sometimes feature unique, visual alterations based on the region it is worshipped. Ymanism promotes strength and valour in battle with the promise of an afterlife spent within the bountiful Stronghold of Gyrm, located over the Southern Star of Yman. The leader of the church is known as the "Gladius" and they stand for the living embodiment of the sword of Yman, therefore his will and justice.

The other major religious power is the Church of Arthea, a branch of Ymanism which follows the teachings of Queen Arthea and honours the Primordial Gods. Yman remains at the centre of this belief as the defender of the faith.



*"I am justice, I am the will which guides the sword of Yman"*

-Battle Prayer

The leaders of this church are nine Reverend Mothers Superior, one for each of the Primordial Gods presiding over a round table and together they form the Council of Unisca, a name which refers to the "Link" between man and divinity. Their symbol is a circular Link sometimes depicted as nine interconnected rings.

These two dominating branches can sometimes be found within the same region, however in many other places their doctrine is so strictly enforced that coexistence is impossible and blood is spilled over these fundamental ideologies.

It is said "A man may find himself between the Sword and the Link, but only within Yman they will find their humanity".

## ANIMARIUM

Very little is known about the reality of the Animarium, first and foremost it is where the Primordial Gods exist in one form or another. Thoughts and dreams may become nightmares, this is a realm where only the individual's Consciousness exists, haunted by the presence of the Shadow Self; a black sea which they must walk upon. The strong-willed may navigate through this sea and learn how to avoid being drowned by it, for the Shadow can cause them to become forever lost and deprived of humanity.

Yet, greater dangers lurk here such as the desperate echoes of their ancestral consciousness, which may resurface out of the depths of the black sea whenever the interloper shows any signs of their mind faltering. The echoes' intentions are to return to life by tricking, drowning or assaulting their descendants' psyche in order to inhabit their bodies.

The visual and auditory sensations experienced by those who return from the Animarium are known to be illusions created by their own

mind to shield it from madness, and to interpret their otherworldly experience. Conflicting descriptions and stories have been exchanged by those with the ability to travel to the Animarium, suggesting that the experience is deeply personal and unique to one's beliefs, for instance a renowned jungle shaman once spoke of the Animarium as a dark, icy forest with a talking man-sized spider which goes by the name of Arhansi, burrowing its way out of the murky ground.

Only the Death Speakers to this day are said to know the secrets for safely navigating the Animarium, but regardless it is a dangerous journey which can kill the mind of those insufficiently prepared, leaving behind an empty body. The journey requires humans to consume Amber Dust - the rare and refined essence of the blood of an Angel, which deepens the mind boundaries at the risk of breaking them.

Other means of journeying to the Animarium have been stumbled upon over the millennia, for instance coming into touch with certain objects, people or powerful emotional states, such as hate, desperation or deep sadness. Dreams have also been known to be another gateway into the Animarium which resulted in some never being able to reawaken.

## THE HOLLOW REALM

Very little is known about the reality of madness known as the Hollow Realm, since rarely has someone returned from it. One cannot simply follow the laws of logic as we understand them to journey through it, actions taken may cause all but the reactions which common sense dictates. Within this realm a single moment can be as long as a lifetime in its

Physical counterpart, an individual can crack their knees under the weight of their own body and air can quickly become unbreathable. Beings more beautiful than anything one could conjure from their wildest dreams have emerged from it, as well as visions so dreadful that a single glance could cause madness.

Whenever the heavy presence of Myst continues to grow denser in isolated pockets of the Physical Realm, it slashes through the very fabrics of reality creating gateways of swirling dark fog known as Myst Rifts. These Rifts link the Physical to the Hollow Realm for short periods of time, letting all kinds of aberrations spill from the chaotic dimension, such as the ever so hungry Phasmyr.





The Great Ambrian Empire was once a united country which encompassed the whole continent of Yrba. It was founded by the victories of Yman over its former rulers, but due to the lack of strong leadership, over the centuries the Empire was fractured into several kingdoms, city states and republics. The Kingdoms of Ambria, are all that remains of the once proud empire, located on the western side of the Yrba continent, where once stood the heart of the ancient Cinerian civilization.

A map of the North Ambria region. The map is framed by a decorative border. The landmasses are colored in shades of brown and tan, while the water bodies are a dark teal. The Ruigh Sea is at the top. To the west is Gyrwyrd. North Ambria is the central landmass. To its east is East Ambria, which is bordered by the Aglyan Sea and the Holy Aglyan Republic. Waellax is located south of North Ambria. Cineria is a small island in the Ruigh Sea, connected to North Ambria by the Red Channel.

The Blood Lions of Waellax suffered a devastating war declared by the southern Kingdom of Morterra when King Atheleon II of

The Emerald Vipers of Gyrwood have to guard their homes from the Selvarin who claim their entire kingdom is built upon their forests which have stood long before the Vipers arrived. The elusive Selvarin keeps the Vipers population in check.

The largest archives of Cinerian knowledge was found over Morterra once known as the Lands of the Dead, named so after the devastation left by the war between Yman and Yamarin. After the end of the war, nature reclaimed the lands covering its scars and restoring its beauty, nowadays it is known to be the land of Sirens, culture and buried secrets, where its citizens claim to be the direct descendants of Yman's bloodline, a fact which if disputed would push any of its proud people to violence.

The city of Ypoli - originally known as Ymapolis - is the kingdom's capital, said through legends to be founded by the undying love of the mermaid

Rumours speak of a terrible secret concealed within the heart of the kingdom, which has long been forgotten to preserve the peace and safety of all, a rumour said to have originated by the envy of rival countries to cause animosity and discord.

It is unclear how this ritual started but as it stands, when the eldest son or daughter of the current monarch reaches maturity, their ruling parent's mental health begins to decline until they are completely taken by madness and when that happens their child has to be the one to slain them, saving the kingdom and take their place as the new ruler. An ancient prophecy states that Myst will engulf the world the day this rite of passage is ended, starting a new Age of Myst.







# MORTERRA

SOUTHERN KINGDOM OF YPOLI

AMBER SEA



BALARM





## PILLARS OF FOUNDATION

The Cinerians concluded that all of which constitutes “Reality” is made by six Foundation Pillars, the collapse of even a single one of them would destroy the balance of reality and cause it to end. Each pillar mirrors its counterpart but all borrow from one another to support the weight of existence like an interlinked chain, with three primary forces; Blood, Light, Myst, and three secondary ones; Life, Void and Ash. Those with the ability of manipulating Myst can briefly affect the natural laws of each pillar to their advantage with seemingly supernatural

results often referred to as Spells or Weaves, more specifically however Myst in its chaotic nature is the strongest catalyst capable of shaking all six pillars and those who study them categories each one into a distinctive “Lore”.

## LORE OF BLOOD

Contrary to what its name might imply, the Lore of Blood is not only part of all Bloodlings descendants but it is intrinsically intertwined to the Amber Angels, some of which were composed entirely by ice and contributed to the creation of seas and oceans. The effects of Blood

manipulation can regulate the flow of water or create ice, help healing or cause horrendous injuries and even affect the movements of living beings.

## LORE OF VOID

The Lore of Void is a force which balances the absence of all others and prevents complete chaos, granting the flow of time. Its counterpart is the Lore of Light and without Void, shadows could not be cast as light could not travel, rendering light and darkness meaningless concepts. Manipulating these forces can push or lift great physical mass, affect time, or even allow the passage of solid matter through one another.

## LORE OF MYST

The Lore of Myst is the most chaotic force of all, it is a residue which precludes the Shattering of Ygo and its presence is what governs the natural laws of the Hollow Realm. It directly opposes the Lore of Life, and yet chaos is found within all living beings as well as the natural forces of the Physical Realm, guiding the fate of all those within it. Its chaotic nature when manipulated has a destructive quality like no other on both body and on the mind of those it affects, acting as a catalyst to greatly expand the natural capabilities of a conscious mind.

## LORE OF ASH

The Lore of Ash constitutes everything tangible within the Physical Realm. It supports the soil needed to grow life, the metals and minerals deep within the ground, the growing trees and plants, the flesh of animals and of all living beings, capable of creating Life together with its counterpart the Lore of Blood. It can be used to manipulate rocks, earth, help the growth of nature or crush the bones and flesh of all beings within the Physical Realm.

## LORE OF LIGHT

The Lore of Light directly opposes the Lore of Void, it is not just the force which illuminates but it also gives clarity, grants purity, heat and fire. It is believed that together with the Lore of Ash it becomes capable of shaping continents and together they contribute to the existence of the Lore of Life. This Lore is favoured amongst those who wish to unleash fiery destruction, keep warm and bring light where there is none.

## LORE OF LIFE

The Lore of Life is perhaps the most richly diverse force of all, not only it makes possible for life to thrive but it is also a harbinger of many great diseases and of death. It has strong connections to the Anima of all conscious beings and it governs the natural laws of Causality in direct opposition to the chaotic forces of Myst. Manipulating these forces can grant prescience, bring pestilence and restore or conjure life.





## THE STORMWOLVES

North Ambrians are a proud people, committed to strict discipline and honourable values only matched by their large, vigorous bodies and ferocious strength, which further fuels their claim to be direct descendants of the Warrior Prophet Yman. While such claims are not uncommon amongst all other noble Houses, they are harder to dismiss in their case as they average a size of six feet, with mostly snow-pale skin, ice blue eyes and hair so brightly blonde it can be easily mistaken for white in certain lights.

North Ambria begins from the roots of the Bastion Mountains, and reaches down to the southern Arteria River. The brutal weather in these lands can be fatal to those unprepared, not only this has contributed in shaping their bodies, but it also repelled invasions which often fail to even get past the perilous borders of their defensive mountain range.

The man-beast tribes of Yngarth have been sailing for hundreds of years to the northern border of North Ambria, to raid the local villages and establish a foothold but it has been a fruitless endeavour which often ends before any real progress is made.

The locals have the reputation for being cold hearted and ruthless, but that's not how they see it, for they believe softness breeds weakness of the pack, which in turn delivers death for all. They dedicate their lives to physical and mental training, living by their creed "Hunt with purpose or die forgotten" and while tradition is important, religion does not dominate their lives.

They follow a unique branch of Ymanism known as the Blue Church of Yman, founded by Father Bluefingers Ceolwulf. Legend says he faced impossible odds at the hands of the man-beasts, but after invoking the name of Yman, he gained the features of a wolf and slaughtered the entire invasion force single handed. Some say they have witnessed his spirit during desperate battles return to life and fight alongside honourable warriors.

The Blue Church merges the ancient pagan traditions of wolf worshipping to Ymanism. The most iconic of these traditions is the Nine Steps Pilgrimage; a young man enters adulthood after reaching all of the nine wolf shrines scattered around North Ambria and offering a blood tribute to each.

The Stormwolves are the main military force of this House, composed of skilled and well trained knights, not born out of nobility, but selected through a ruthless process which starts when they are taken at a young age and put through a vigorous, deadly trial known as the Trials

of Ceolwulf. During this trial if the group of candidates does not stay together and behave as one, it is likely none will make it out alive, with the exception of the legendary Arlo Haark. It is said that Arlo completed the impossible task of coming back alone and with the pelt of an Alpha Bastion Wolf, a breed of wolves so large they are mistaken for large bears at times.

The ranking structure of the Stormwolves is categorised between leaders and supporters, respectively ranked as Alphas and Betas and split between 3 categories; Vanguard, Knights and Praetorians, led by King Aethelwulf. As to be expected by their harsh selective process, Stormwolves armies tend to be smaller in numbers than others, but no soldier in their right mind would ever face a Stormwolf alone.

The Vanguard are the front line of battle, often accompanied by domesticated Bastion Wolves, and are posted in times of peace as City Guards or Law Enforcers, the sight of a Vanguard prowling the streets escorted by his trusted Wolf chills the bones of any outlander who claims to have seen one.

Knights offer quick support on horses and while they are much slower and heavier than the average cavalry, they are never startled or easily killed due in part to being accustomed to the company of large wolves since birth. They are often employed to rapidly dispatch man-beasts invasions and patrol the borders.

Praetorians are the last line of defence for the royal house, they guard the king and queen and as to be expected, their mastery of combat knows no rivals with exception perhaps of very few Death Speakers.





## THE SELVARIN

To most humans the features of a Selvarin can come across as unsettling, starting with their avian shaped legs, the likes of a predatory bird which they use to effortlessly support a slender and tall body with barely noticeable feminine features. Their slender, long hands have only four fingers each and are used to traverse through trees with inhuman agility and speed. As if carved from wood, their angular faces have sharp edged features which neatly frame their large slanted eyes of blue within blue, like a pair of gleaming sapphires. Hair with the tint of autumn leaves cascades over their backs, blending with the moss-like adornments they fashion to mask their olive and birch skin, creating the illusion of a forest feature coming to life.

As well as their quick bodies and sharp reflexes, the Selvarin are known to be gifted with “Imminent Prescience” a quality which allows them to see a few seconds into the future, especially so after consuming the sweet sap of mother Yrbaerya, a poison lethal to anyone except to a Selvarin when consumed in small quantities. This ability often saves their life from incoming death-threatening situations like attacks or it helps them evaluate the most effective blows against their prey and foes.

It is believed the first attempt by the Cinerians to connect their whole civilization through a shared dream started with the Alberia tree, known today by the Selvarin as Mother Yrbaerya; A colossal tree disguised as several forests with cavernous roots reaching entire continents. Over the centuries part of the tree became infected by Myst, which gave birth to the parasitic Grollik creatures, born out of the corrupted fungus Rinshaak - Voice Feeder. The tree mutated to survive the corruption, however this also caused it to gain self awareness from the dreams of all Cinerians sleeping within it. Due to the loss of

control over it, the Cinerians abandoned this project and attempted to destroy it but to no avail, the tree had grown stronger and more resilient.

Feeling a profound sense of loneliness and driven by its own survival, the tree began giving birth to the Selvarin, a word rooted in ancient Cindar for Shael’rin - Voice of the Wilderness. Selvarin are born with the accumulated knowledge of those who have previously dreamt within Yrbaerya, or at least fragments of each individual, however they would all carry the same imprint which compels each one of them to go on meat hunts.

On these hunts they would be eating great quantities of raw meat, as their bodies cannot digest plant life, once full they return deep into their own alcoves to sleep, where they would symbiotically exchange the fruits of the hunt for the vital rejuvenating lymph of Yrbaerya, in a practice known as Naer’va - the Murky Dream.

Failing to participate in Naer’va for too long can cause the individual to lose their mind to the countless dormant consciousnesses of past lives within themselves, and become what is known as a Feral Selvarin. Unless starving, feral Selvarin seldom attack others of their kind, but they are kept at a distance from Selvarin societies where possible due to their unpredictability.

Yrbaerya gives life to a Selvarin, however they are all born female for she requires their bodies to become vessels for her seeds to gestate. After the first few months the foetus is taken and nestled within large grape-like pods where they are cared for and protected by all Selvarin as a singular family. Once the child is nearing the end of their development, the pod’s translucent membrane becomes red like furled petals and when ready to bloom the child is born.

Though Selvarin tends to have remnants of

physical desires from their ancient Cinerian ancestry, they seldom partake in physical mating of any kind, considerably so with any of the other races, however there are legends of human children born with the distinctive Selvarin trait of all-blue eyes without any white in them, which are suspected to carry Selvarin blood, but regardless of origins these individuals are considered cursed by either sides.

When not busy with the hunt, a Selvarin enjoys wordless singing more than anything, the sounds produced are said to resonate within Yrbaerya and to one another, creating a unified melody which cannot be matched by any bird or wild animal. Some can be particularly mischievous with their spellbinding singing, by taking pleasure in disorienting and causing forest wanderers to lose their way, which is why they are also referred to as “Land Sirens”. They do not understand nor see the harm in such “games” but these peculiar customs are what prompts humans to fear the Selvarin and give chase whenever spotted, as well as the superstitious village rumours of them feasting on lonely or misbehaving children.





## THE DEATH SPEAKERS

Very few societies are as cunning and as secretive as the Death Speakers, a name given to them by outsiders due to their ability of communicating to the dead, however amongst themselves they refer to their society as the “Guild” and to one another as “Sisters”. They are the direct descendants of a nomadic guild once known as Speakers, who were tasked to record and spread history throughout the lands. Death Speakers are an all woman society of spies, warriors, mothers, advisors, seductresses, religious figures and more, with Ymanism roots of no specific affiliation. It is widely rumoured they are the true architects behind the religions and politics of human societies, which makes many suspicious or afraid of their presence, but the secret of their seemingly unlimited knowledge and wise counsel is what keeps them employed at the royal courts or by major religious institutions. It is considered very unwise and a great disadvantage to go to battle against an enemy benefiting from the counsel of a Death Speaker while their own leaders do not.

Most Death Speakers wear masks in public to lessen the chances of making themselves a target of threats and bribes, but also to further conceal the full scope of their organisation. Because of their trained ability to alter their voices and body mimicry, one Speaker could easily take the place of another without giving the shadow of doubt.

One cannot choose to become a Death Speaker but must be chosen by other Death Speakers, or by those who are secretly employed as such. The process is kept secret but one consistent rumour is that all Death Speakers are either born or related to one, this is to further develop and preserve certain physical or mental traits for future generations until the “Sui Generis” is conceived. The Sui Generis will be an individual capable of overcoming any physical or mental challenge in order to become the perfect leader for humanity,

capable of safeguarding and protecting humanity’s inevitable grim future and avoiding extinction.

Their long and arduous training begins at an early age completely unaware of it. Secret conditioning is implanted through mental manipulations deeply within their psyche, which gives them allegiance above all others to the Death Speakers society.

Emotions such as love or hate are trained out of their behaviour as it is believed it can cause one to lose focus over a given situation and more easily succumb to weakness through manipulation. They are however trained to feign such emotions for strategic advantage and can even lead an unsuspecting lifelong spouse to never doubt or question their affections.

While the reasons are not fully known outside of their guild, an important step to become a Death Speaker is to undergo the trials of pregnancy and early motherhood. Their doctrine states that with proper training this journey can unlock previously obscured pathways through their psyche, granting them their full potential and understanding the true value of life and the sacrifices required to protect it.

They are often seen carrying the symbol of their society around their neck, the “Animaris” as they refer to it. It represents their unique link to the Animarium, which allows them to tap through their blood heritage to reach the consciousness of their ancestors, and converse with them when needed. This practice is known as the “Vox Aeterna” and it requires the Death Speaker to enter a state of trance by consuming the refined blood of an angel known as Amber Dust which renders their body almost lifeless in appearance. If done incorrectly it can actually be fatal for them, as well as cause the complete obliteration of their consciousness from reality.

The journey into the Animarium can last a few moments or days, depending on the task and ability of the Death Speaker, some seek a simple advice or word of wisdom, others use the opportunity to learn a new skill which cannot be easily obtained by other means.





## THE MAJAVAN ACADEMY

Within the ancient city of Nabek located deep in the Pharsyian desert lies the Majavan Academy, the only known place across the human lands where Myst is studied and manipulated to the benefits of its Empire instead of being feared and scorned. Those who seek knowledge are free of persecution within the walls of the academy and their abilities are not only welcomed but nurtured.

The academy founders believed that Myst without control is far more dangerous than individuals attempting to wield such power through pure instincts and fear, therefore the academy exists to guide and teach anyone willing to learn, even the Ashkin; These shunned individuals with charred-like skin are said to be born cursed or soulless, but have greater capabilities to manipulate Myst due to their bodies acting like receptive vessels and being more enduring to the corrupting effects of Myst.

Due to the old traditions of the Empire, women are not allowed into the academy unless they are from foreign lands and supported by the generous donations of noble families backing their studies. While many consider such restrictions unfair and against the basic principles of the academy founded during a more tolerant era, none dares to speak their minds against Pharsyan law, except for a secret conclave of rebels which aims to undermine these laws through acts of political machinations as well as more unsavoury ones.

The true meaning of the word 'Majavan' (or 'Majavi' for plural) given to those who completed their studies at the academy, has been lost in time. Some believe that the title comes from the words maj and vaani - Myst Scholar, while others speculate that it derives from the word vahn - blood, referring to the Myst which runs through the blood of those born with it.

The less educated are commonly misguided by its name, mistaking Myst for the natural phenomenon of fog or mist, however what the eye sees when Myst is present is the natural reaction of Myst entering the realm, similarly as when water is turned to steam by heat. Actual Myst is formless and has no visible quality of its own, and even though it creates subtle distinguishable, labyrinthine patterns over fog and mist, only those who can sense Myst can truly see the difference between the natural phenomena and that which is caused by the insidious presence of Myst.

Myst is not the only subject of study within the academy, maths, astronomy, geography and philosophy amongst other subjects are also to be learned, for the principles of the academy states that a balanced and learned mind can create a better anchor point to their reality which is of great help when losing control of the chaotic energies. Many from all over the world travel to Nabek to study, making it a true jewel of diversity and commerce, this knowledge is often cause for great displeasure amongst the more traditionally driven countries practising Ymanism which have in the past waged war against the Pharsyan Empire to stop and eradicate such heretic practices.

Based on the abilities of the scholar, the time required to study at the academy to become a Majavan changes depending on their level of control and ability to learn. Most travels in the early years of their adulthood seeking the academy - a perilous and desperate journey which often ends before reaching Nabek, while the more fortunate are brought in by their parents as children, which tends to bare the greatest results thanks to their minds not yet being set in the strict confines of their reality. Many choose to stay by the end of their apprenticeship in order to teach others or to further improve and study the academic methods, while some are employed as servants and fighters of the Empire. Not all however have the will to endure the reality-shattering truths of which they are exposed to, some lose themselves in the process and their minds become broken and beyond repair.





# CREDITS

## ALL CONTENTS CREATED BY

Mauro Pane

## SPECIAL THANKS

To my family and friends for their patience and support during the making of this project and above all, the wonderful fans of **Dark Ice Games** who made the creation of these ideas possible with their inspiring support.

*The world of Animarium and all of its names, art and designs are property of Dark Ice Games Ltd. Redistribution is not allowed without permission.*





# ANIMARIUM

DIG  
DARK ICE GAMES