

Play Packet

engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose.



Introduction

This document is designed to give players general information that all characters have access to. Some characters may have knowledge that conflicts with the general knowledge, and that is intentional. This information is meant to be a guide, but not to be accepted as absolute truth. Because the game is more important than the text, feel free to embellish and create within the game to enhance the story.

Basic Facts about the Setting

- ◆ Cascadon is a pre-industrialized, medieval setting, with limited magic. (Magic is very rare.)
- ◆ Royals must have heterosexual spousal arrangements to ensure continuity of the bloodline.
- ◆ Non-royal marriage can be between any genders and any number of partners.
- ◆ Adoption is recognized for non-royals for the purposes of inheritance.
- ◆ Noble people are addressed by their last name and/or title.

Current Events

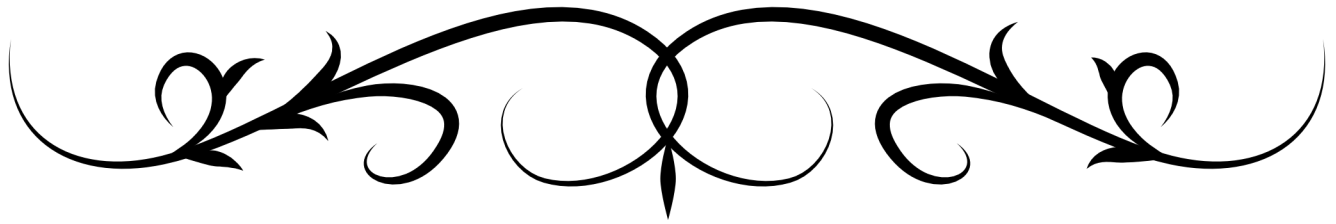
- ◆ The season has been unusually dry.
- ◆ The queen is secluded in her tower.
- ◆ The younger prince, Kier, is rumored to be a bastard.
- ◆ The king just died.

What you need to know for Baron's Gambit

Cascadon is a kingdom made up of 9 baronies. Each Barony sends a representative to sit on the Baron's Council. Traditionally this council is overseen by the Queen, who is in charge of domestic affairs (which includes international trade agreements and tariffs). The eldest prince, Maugen, is Heir Apparent, and is in charge of the military and oversees international affairs like treaties and boundary disputes. The role of the King is to resolve conflicts between the Queen and the Heir Apparent, as well as to give final judgment over any proceedings of the Baron's Council that can not be brought to a satisfactory conclusion by the council. With the king deceased and Heir Apparent Prince Maugen away, it is unsure how a conflict would be resolved....

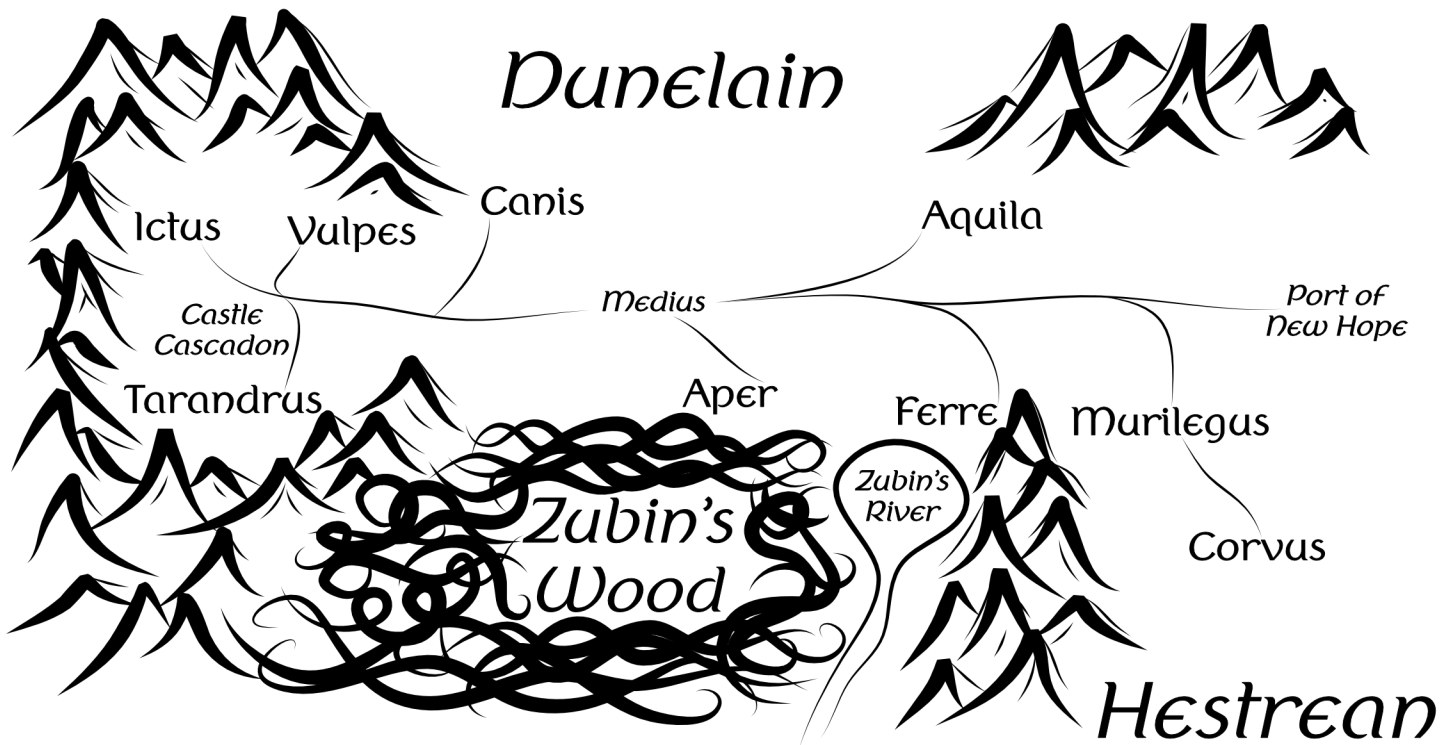
For the last few years the Queen has secluded herself in her tower and Prince Kier, the second son, has been sitting at the head of the council. It is suspected by many that Prince Kier is a bastard, though that may just be a nasty rumor. Prince Kier is often accompanied by Mister Jayson Mayford, who is not noble at all. Jayson Mayford is the son of Kier's wet nurse, and they grew up together. When Kier came of age he created the position of attaché, imbuing Mayford with political power previously reserved for the nobility.

Dunelain is the kingdom to the north of Cascadon, and they have been a long time enemy. Hestran is a barbarian nation with little presence on the international stage.

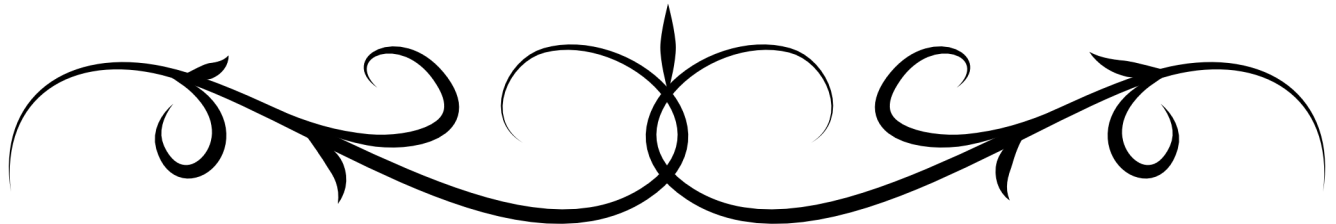


Cascadon

Cascadon is a relatively small country in the middle of the Eastern Territories, founded about 300 years ago by The Cascadon. The Cascadon was a slave in Mylar who led a slave rebellion that resulted in the escape of a few thousand people through the Impassable Mountains to the valley which now holds the Inner Baronies. Once established there, The Cascadon lead his army out of the valley to secure a piece of the coast for the landlocked nation. In doing so, the army cut a swath through southern Dunelain, initiating a 300 year border war. When the Cascadonian army reached the coast, they took the only viable port from the Hestrean people to the south and renamed it the Port of New Hope.



The kingdom is made up of 9 baronies and 3 King Cities. The King Cities are Castle Cascadon, Medius, and Port of New Hope, and they act independently from the baronies around them. The 9 baronies tend to consider themselves as little principalities. Within a few days ride of each barony center there is a King City to remind them they are not. Due to geographical features like the Impassable Mountains which encircle Ictus, Vulpes, and Tarandrus, those three baronies are referred to as the Inner baronies. The center tree, Canis, Aper, and Aquila are the Middle Baronies, and the less-tightly governed baronies of Ferre, Murilegus, and Corvus are the Outer Baronies. There are long standing rivalries between the factions, as the vast majority of resources are held by the Inner Baronies, the most conflict occurs in the Middle Baronies, and the Outer Baronies are typically left to sort themselves out.



Baronies of Cascadon

Inner Baronies

Ictus - Ferret

Ictus was the first barony of Cascadon and is a peaceful region that supplies over half the grain the kingdom. Ictus is also well known for mead, honey, and a gentle pace of living. The barony exports far more than they import goods.

Vulpes - Fox

Center of culture, art, and blatant lies, Vulpes monopolizes shipping and transportation services. It has one of the two colleges of higher learning in Cascadon. Most of the traders in Vulpes import goods from other baronies or kingdoms and either sell them, or alter them to be sold at higher prices.

Tarandrus - Stag

Tarandrus protects Castle Cascadon by training military specialists. The barony is intensely loyal to the monarchy. Despite all their industry, Tarandrus exports very little, but takes quantities of materials in, supported by the crown's coffers. And Tarandrusians traditionally like their drink - ale in particular.

Middle Baronies

Canis - Hound

The majority of the kingdom's fighting force hails from Canis. The Canisian legions have defended the border between Cascadon and Dunelain for 300 years. Canis has raw exports of wool and ore to help finance themselves.

Aquila - Eagle

Aquila is the home of diplomats, accountants, and tax collectors. Aquila has long believed that all baronies must thrive equally to ensure that the kingdom prospers as a whole. Whenever one barony is reticent to aid another, an Aquilan will be quick to remind them that the kingdom is as strong as the weakest barony.

Aper - Boar

Guarding against Zubin's Wood, Aper attracts army irregulars, hunters, and those brave enough to dare the woods. The greatest exports from Aper are wood and furs. Subsistence farming is the norm for the citizens, and education often takes a back seat to survival. Likewise the leaders are more concerned with safety than politics.

Outer Baronies

Ferre - Bear

Safely tucked into the mountains, Ferre is a powerhouse of industry, searching for ore in their mines and for ideas in their famed university. New inventions are constantly being developed and sold in the kingdom.

Murilegus - Cat

In the plains of eastern Cascadon, Murilegus has an unsavory reputation for birthing and harboring thieves, swindlers, smugglers, and cutthroats- all for hire. Murilegus City is traditionally home to persons who have a flexible view on property ownership, and governance is often viewed as theater.

Corvus - Raven

The southernmost barony in Cascadon, Corvus is a loose group of free spirits, many of whom travel as performers and merchants during the fall and winter. The greatest opportunity in Corvus is the potential for the barony to grow and contribute even more to the kingdom. They want to work together to provide for the benefit of all.

Kingdom of Dunelain

Dunelain, the largest kingdom in the Eastern territories. There was a southern fife called Havand, but Cascadon took that over and it is now the Middle Baronies. Dunelain and Cascadon have been fighting over the Havand border kingdoms for 300 years. Dunelain and Cascadon have tenuous trade agreements despite being at war. Peace seems to be an unobtainable goal.

Hestrian Barbarians

Hestrian, the "kingdom" to the south of Cascadon, is a frozen wasteland. Hestrian used to be a thriving kingdom. However, Cascadon took their only port, and the Hestrian capital deep in the south vanished at the same time. The loss of the port left Hestrian landlocked, and with no rulers, chaos ensued. Little is known about the barbarian tribes that live there.

Dramatis Personae

(Latin: "persons of the drama") the main characters in a dramatic work written in a list.

Non-Player Characters

◆ **The Keeper** (NPC)

~ A neutral third party of mystic origins who oversees and enforces official contracts and the use of communication stones.

◆ **Prince Kier** (NPC)

~ Kier is the second prince, young for the role they have taken on, and generally doing a good job.

◆ **Jayson Mayford** (NPC)

~ Attache to the prince, unwed, of common birth, no title, no wealth, and somehow one of the most powerful people in Cascadon.

Representatives

Representatives are the voice of their people, but often have their own personal goals and connections. They are limited in some capacities, though, in that they are not permitted to officially generate or spend their own wealth. They do, however, have the ability to trade the resources of their baronies as provided to them by their baron (resource cards). They often will trade favors with assistants and audience members to generate finances which can be used to purchase resources that cannot be gained through traditional trade.

Characters with an * beside their name have a Communication Stone which can be used to contact anyone in the world, but it takes 15 minutes to get a response.

◆ **Vulpesian**, Representative of Vulpes

~ Generally genial, it is unwise to cross Vulpesian. They seem to a stake in every game.

◆ **Sachi**, Representative of Ictus

~ Sachi is polite, but has no time for useless people, and makes no bones about letting one know.

◆ **Basilius**, Representative of Tarandrus *

~ Some might call Basilius a hidebound traditionalist. Others might call them a well-meaning mother hen. None can doubt their loyalty to the monarchy.

◆ **Victor**, Representative of Aper

~ Only a few weeks ago, Victor arrived to replace the retired representative of Aper. They are unwed, and very inexperienced.

◆ **Ismene**, Representative of Canis *

~ Sometimes impatient with the rigors of diplomacy, Ismene is a person of action, and devoted to the welfare of the kingdom.

◆ **Nicephorus**, Representative of Aquila

~ Nicey, as no one calls them to their face, is generally neutral a vote unless required to break a tie.

◆ **Pia**, Representative of Ferre

~ As the newest representative, only just arrived a few days ago, Pia is an unknown quantity. They are the Baron of Ferre's brother, and unwed.

◆ **Ajax**, Representative of Murilegus

~ Everyone knows Ajax is a philanderer and can't keep their eyes to themselves, though they have their charming moments.

◆ **Fidelus**, Representative of Corvus

~ Pleasant and less stuffy than some of their peers, Fidelus is ready to listen to all sides of an issue, and has patience with inexperience.

The Assistants

Assistants are not servants, but high ranking officials in the government who are likely candidates to either marry well, or one day take the council seat themselves. Many advisers to the ruling family began their careers as council assistants. Perhaps most importantly, they often have wealth.

◆ **Darian**, Vulpesian's Assistant

~ Smooth and practiced, Darian is a prime example of what Vulpes has to offer, for better or worse.

◆ **Thelia**, Sachi's Assistant

~ Helpful and flirtatious, general consensus is that Thelia is looking for connections, and possibly more.

◆ **Kipp**, Basilius' Assistant

~ A person haunted by something in their past, Kipp is trying to move forward in their life and leave the darkness behind.

◆ **Woodkin**, Victor's Assistant

~ A veteran of the council, Woodkin assisted Victor's father in their time on the council, and now assists Victor with the same fatherly disposition.

◆ **Eudias**, Ismene's Assistant

~ Eudias would have been Aperian had they not been adopted out to a Canisian couple. Though they do their duty, it is clear they are still biased toward their barony of birth.

◆ **Milja**, Nicephorus' Assistant

~ A motherly figure, especially to the younger, less experienced assistants, Milja is also handy to have on side to convince their husband, Nicephorus, of a need to act.

◆ **Gregson**, Pia's Assistant

~ Gregson is sweet, and competent, but is either a perfect airhead or doing a credible imitation of one, depending on who you ask.

◆ **Orin**, Ajax's Assistant *

~ Sharper than their representative, people have observed Orin may well be the real power in Murilegus, though whether Ajax knows is doubtful.

◆ **Cicero**, Fidelus' Assistant

~ Fidelus would be lost without Cicero's companionship, in the absence of their actual wife, but it's clear Cicero is wilting somewhat in the confines of the castle.

The Audience

The Baron's Council meetings are open to the public, however most of the public choose not to attend. Sometimes guilds or nobles take interest, and a few unwed nobles use the council as a way to meet other high ranking folks. A few of the observers have become a staple to the council audience. The audience can only participate if invited by a council member, and may be removed at any time at the leisure of the Queen (or in this case, Prince Kier).

◆ **Shanice**, wife of Fidelus

~ Shanice serves as messenger between Fidelus and the far away barony of Corvus. They are generally well liked, though hold no particular power.

◆ **Blyth**, Priest of Hanaleo

~ No one is exactly sure who Blyth is or where they are from, but they showed up a few years ago and began sitting in on meetings. They are wise in the ways of war, but dark and unnerving.

◆ **Seneca** of Ictus

~ Seneca is a former lady in waiting to the Queen. When the Queen sequestered themselves to their tower, Seneca stayed on as an audience member in the Baron's Council, as well as attending nearly every social function in the castle.

◆ **Hargrave**, of the Tax Collectors Guild

~ The Tax Collectors sometimes send someone to the audience of the council to stay abreast of tax reform.

Rules & Safety

the condition of being protected from or unlikely to cause danger, risk, or injury.



General Rules

- ⌘ Players are more important than the game.
- ⌘ Character names are surnames.
- ⌘ Homosexuality is okay if you're not royal.
- ⌘ Monogamy is the norm, but polyamory is not considered immoral.
- ⌘ "They" is the default pronoun.

Consent

LARP is a safe space built on trust and communication. Certain actions always require consent. In the interest of keeping the game moving, we have a marker system. A person wearing the proper marker on their name badge consents to the action. Markers can be removed or added at any point by visiting The Keeper. If a marker is not visible, consent is not given.

- ⌘ Physical Touch = Green marker
 - ~ Applies only to the following: hand to hand, hand to arm, and hand to shoulder.
 - ~ Does NOT apply to physical violence or sexual intimacy.
- ⌘ Romantic Play = Pink marker
 - ~ A player opting into romantic play is consenting to flirting with the possibility of **in character** romance.
 - ~ Romantic play is NOT sexual play.
- ⌘ Killing a Character = Black marker
 - ~ Killing is done through poison, or "off screen" through negotiation.
 - ~ Deceased characters are welcome to join The Keeper or become a passive observer. (Please stay!)

The Keeper

The Keeper is an impartial observer of events (the GM). They have knowledge of many things and will always tell the truth so far as they can. This NPC is a useful tool to confirm information and gain knowledge. They are also useful as a witness to the events you want an honest account of. The Keeper oversees contracts and announces important information. Conversations with The Keeper are private - i.e. player B can't come ask what player A was asking about. Eavesdropping on The Keeper is bad form: it can be done, but it's frowned upon.

The Keeper is also your out-of-character support person. If you need to have an out of character conversation, come to The Keeper and they will do their best to help you. This can help with finding plots, dealing with emotions, adding/removing markers, etc.

Contracts

Contracts are used to make formal, unbreakable declarations and the occasional secret pact. Agreements can be made without The Keeper, but the Keeper cannot enforce agreements without contracts.

- ✦ All contracts must be witnessed by The Keeper.
- ✦ Promises made in contracts must be agreed upon by all parties out-of-character.
- ✦ In character you can be as devious as you so desire.
- ✦ Upon signing a contract, you have the option of having the contract announced, or kept secret.
- ✦ Be aware that everyone will see you writing the contract with any involved parties regardless.
- ✦ Secret contracts are only hidden from the view of anyone other than the parties involved. This means if character A & B contract to kill C, characters A, B, & C would all be able to read that contract.
- ✦ Anyone can go to The Keeper and check to see if there are any contracts involving them.

Resources

A key component of the game is trying to gather resources to ensure the well being of your barony in the coming season. Each representative will be given a set number of resource cards. These can be traded without a contract, and much like bearer bonds, they belong to whomever has them. Resources are vague by design and can represent any number of things. For example, Finished Goods could be anything from war machines to furniture, or left vague.

- ✦ The goal of each barony is to end the game with two of each resource.
- ✦ By design it is almost impossible for all baronies to end with two of each resource.
- ✦ Players will receive resource cards at the beginning of the game.
- ✦ Non-council members will have wild card resources (money) which can be used as any standard resource.
- ✦ Some characters have powers which give them the ability to do nifty things.

Characters may have other resources that they may trade or give away for roleplay and story. For example, if someone would like to enter into marriage with a representative, these resource cards may be used as part of a marriage contract negotiation.

Magic Communication Stones

Some Characters will have magic communication stones which allow them to communicate through The Keeper directly with military and spies under their control. Communication stones have a 15 minute cool down between when a message can be sent and received, so use them wisely!

If someone wishes to send a message but does not have a communication stone, they will need to speak with one of the stone holders. (They will be announced at the beginning of the game.)

If your character has a communication stone you will receive it at the start of the game with your resources.

Poison

About 45 minutes before the end of the game, some poisons will be entered into play. If your drink is suddenly a different color, you have been poisoned, however, your Character can't see the poison, so they will drink and then you get to die dramatically. The poison is food coloring, so it is safe to consume. If you do not want to drink the poison, that is also fine: if you see the color, then die dramatically.

****You must set your drink down before dying dramatically so that you do not spill the drink!****

The poison will take whatever effects you want to play out so long as they do not endanger you or others. Please do die promptly, however, since folks need to discuss your assassination to wrap up the game. ^_^

After dying your character's body will be removed from the game, but you are welcome to hang out with The Keeper as their Assistant. Shrouds will be available for ghosts to wander and observe, but not interact with the other characters or setting. Please stay for the post game debrief!