

Glossary

The following list is meant to be spoiler free. For that reason, it is non-exhaustive, but it should provide a reference for some of the terms and names that come up throughout the story.

Please feel free to provide feedback or suggested entries to digmanandroddy@gmail.com.



Absolution: a pathway to forgiveness for a crime or a pathway to citizenship through **Alidian** military service. It can take the place of any crime, with the duration and severity matching the original offense. For most, it involves heavy combat duty. Failure of absolution means facing the full penalty of the original crime with zero leniency or, on the other hand, a denial of citizenship.

Accord of Valen: an agreement between the nations of the **Fathom** to ban all military forces from entering the **Aeturnian Frontier** except in specific, extreme cases. It was named so because it was signed on the neutral world of **Valen** in the nation of **Valen**.

Advance probe: a self-sufficient device which can be launched from a spaceship in order to scout ahead or to relay scientific information back to the parent ship. They are **Rift** capable, but they have no defenses.

Aeturnian Frontier, the: the section of the **Pelagos** just outside the borders of the **Republic of Rune** and the **Principality of Alidia**. It is a wild area of space, littered with free worlds and independent organizations.

Aeturnian Ranger: an order of loosely associated individuals with diverse motives and allegiances who contract out their martial skills in the **Aeturnian Frontier**. All are held to a code of practice that guides their actions in negotiation and in execution of services. New members are inducted after a period of mentorship with an undefined duration. While most are honorable, there have been a few in the past who associated with more questionable employers. Expulsion from the **Aeturnian Rangers** is not voted upon but is usually enforced through violent means. Fortunately, this has only happened a handful of times. Motto: *Ab aeterno, ad infinitum*.

Arcanist: practitioners of an ancient art known as **the Code**. Their powers are greatly misunderstood but seem to involve manipulation of natural forces in order to perform something much like magic. They are generally mistrusted, or worse, hunted to the death by the more fanatical members of the **Elcosian** faith. They tend to remain solitary for safety, but one enclave remains on the hidden secret world of **Endi**.

Aridor: capitol world of the **Principality of Alidia**. A watery world covered in rocky archipelago-style island chains; it has been the home of the **Alidian** ruling houses since the end of the **Doanian Civil War**. The patriarch of the primary ruling house, House Eld, governs **Alidia** as steward in the name of the **Doanian** family line, a line that could be legally re-established if a blood heir could be found.

Artus: graceful, powerful animals often used as mounts or to pull carts or wagons.

Ban Morgan: an **Alidian** Royal Marine holding the rank of Bond-Sergeant and squad leader of **Wolf squad**, a **bondsman** unit stationed on the *Talon*. He became a bondsman after he was discharged from the military in disgrace following the events of the Massacre of Fugelaese. Prior to his discharge, he had been a promising up-and-comer with dreams of becoming a **Doanian Knight**. He now lives in disgrace, working his way through **absolution**.

Becks, Saira: an **Alidian** Royal Marine and member of **Wolf Squad** currently serving her time in **absolution**. She holds the rank of Bond-Corporal and is second in command to **Ban Morgan**. Before **absolution**, she worked as a mercenary in the **Aeturnian Frontier**. Facing execution under Alidian law, she opted for **absolution** instead.

Bondsman: an **Alidian** soldier currently serving in **absolution**.

Code, the: **The Code** refers to the “rules” inherent in the physical reality of the universe, which can be manipulated or outright broken in order to affect natural elemental conditions. Arcanists are limited in which types of manipulation they can perform, and natural affinities for each type are believed to be predestined through natural biology. Requires use of **viae**.

Commander Prime: elite **Elcosian** soldier under **Tieger’s** direct command. She is highly skilled as a warrior and fervently devoted to her duty.

Control: foreman of the **Maiden’s** mines and primary enforcer of her will beneath the surface.

Corva: a female inquisitor stationed on the *Forge*. She has a particularly nasty reputation, even among the inquisitors.

Craigholde: ancestral seat of House Holland.

Crossroads Station: a space station located at the junction of the borders of **Alidia**, **Rune**, and the **Aeturnian Frontier**. It is the last stop for travelers going to all these regions, and the best place within several sectors to find a job.

Doan: capitol world of the **Republic of Rune**, site of many historical ruins including some of the initial battlefields of the **Doanian Civil War**.

Doanian Civil War: a war that erupted nearly a millennium prior to the beginning of the story, giving rise to the regions that are now **Rune** and **Alidia** and the small nations between them.

Doanian Knight: an order of noble warriors who served the **Kingdom of Doan** up until its collapse during the **Doanian Civil War**. A chivalric order, they followed their Knight's Creed, a set of guiding principles espousing truth, honor, and kindness. During the **Doanian Civil War**, most of these knights refused to take sides, but the growing strife eventually wormed its way into the order, leading to conflict within. As members died or returned to their houses to provide support, the order slowly faded away.

Drake: Runian naval marine.

Dropship: A small military vessel designed to carry personnel and equipment down from a starship in a planet's orbit to the surface of the world below, usually in battle situations. They are usually lightly armed and fast.

Elcos: male god of knowledge and protection. Patron deity of mankind.

Elcosian: of or referring to the predominate religious faith in the **Fathom**. While much knowledge of the last 2000 years has been lost or muddled by war and by time, one thing remains clear: without the Elcosian faith, mankind might still be huddled on isolated worlds, unaware of the galaxy at large. This religion is shepherded by mankind's supposed link to the divine, the **Harbinger of Elcos**.

Ember: an **Elcosian** shock trooper, the primary infantry unit of the Elcosian military. They are fanatical in their approach to duty, born and bred to master extremely rigorous training. As a fighting force, they are nearly unmatched in brutality.

EMP: Electromagnetic pulse. Sometimes used to interfere with susceptible electronic devices or systems.

Endi: secret world that supposedly holds the last surviving enclave of the **arcanists**. Little is known about it, including its geographical features or its location.

Endo Kumi (Kumi is given name): Lieutenant Commander and first officer on the *Morning Rain*. She has been described as abrasive and a little too focused on her career.

Erini: darting creatures of light found along the upper boundary of the **Never**, which follow alongside ships traversing the **Rift**. They are completely harmless, thought to bring luck on long voyages. There are ancient stories of fantastic encounters passed along among sailors, many of which involve romance or hidden treasures.

Fall Arden: an **Aeturnian Ranger** recently hired by **Vaughn-Heighas** as a guide for the *Morning Rain* expedition into the **Frontier**. His funds have dwindled, and this job represents a new chance at getting his finances back in order. Partnered up with his lifelong friend, a strange creature named **Hermes**.

FathCom: a corporate monopoly involved in relaying communications across civilization via clever use of probes and **T-Gate** technology.

Fathom, the: a general term referring to the area of the **Vagrant Sea Galaxy** settled and civilized by humanity, excluding frontier regions. What this region is and is not can be defined fluidly at any given time as frontiers are absorbed.

Fel Kno'a: the Temple of the Dead, previously the home of the worshipers of **Mortrythe**. It stands mostly abandoned on the jungle world of **Veridian**. Rumored to hold an ancient power.

Flowing Lands of Roshan: a vast matriarchal nation in the galactic west of the Fathom, far from the **Principality of Alidia** and the **Republic of Rune**. Its national philosophy revolves around a desire to remain reclusive from outside contact, rarely allowing travelers or diplomats to enter its borders. This philosophy is even stricter for its own citizens, who are almost never allowed to leave. Their forces are content to expand into the Western Frontier, though they do challenge other civilized militaries from time to time.

Forge, the: an **Elcosian** warship capable of supporting a full complement of troops, orbital drop equipment for invasion, starfighters, and bombers. It is equipped with hyper-advanced weaponry including laser-type weapons that no other known craft possesses.

Fugelaese: a bog world, site of a terrible massacre perpetuated by **Alidian** Naval Forces. Alidia claims this was a mistake, but the truth is unknown.

Gabin Rousseau: a pirate captain who has a romantic past with **Sidna**. He is captain of the *Red*.

Garland, Stephen: **Runian** major in charge of a secret installation. What he studies may be the key to unlocking a power from the ancient past.

Garret: Commanding Officer of **Wolf Squad**. While commanding a **bondsman** unit is usually a dishonor reserved for those who are only one step away from **absolution** themselves, Garrett considers his duty a privilege.

Gault: Captain of the *Forge*. He understands that his role is administrative, remaining submissive to **Tieger's** command as the *Malleus Maleficarum* of **Elcos**.

Ghidro: a vicious, giant dog owned by the **Maiden**.

Gillion: home to the habitable world **Valen**.

Glenn: basic currency unit used in the **Principality of Alidia**.

Griffin Squad: an **Alidian** Royal Navy Marine squad. Led by **Lieutenant Adam Holland**.

Guardian, the: a huge half-organic, half-mechanical monster who stalks the halls of **Fel Kno'a** in search of intruders. It has a mysterious fog that protects it as well as the ability to expel projectiles of highly charged plasma. A sad, eerie song emanates from within it.

Gyre: a storm-shrouded world in the **Frontier**. Underneath its oceans lie massive cavern complexes.

Hamar's End: A star system in the **Aeturnian Frontier** notable for its **T-gate** linking directly to **Crossroads station**. Before it was discovered that the Crossroads T-gate linked to this T-Gate, a **jumper** named Edvard Hamar disappeared after jumping blindly from this location. His final resting place is unknown, so it was declared his last jump location.

Harbinger of Elcos, the: humanity's liaison to the will of **Elcos**. He is the supreme leader of all **Elcosian** efforts and forces. Doctrine holds that he alone can communicate with Elcos from his volcano fortress in the **Never, Cor Vod**.

Hayden the Third, the Star-Born Prince: Steward of the Kingdom of Doan, ruler of the **Principality of Alidia**. He is the patriarch of House Eld, whose palace is located on the capitol world of **Aridor**.

Hermes: mischievous friend and partner with **Fall Arden**.

Hesfarde the Unyielding: female god of Strife and perseverance.

Horvis: a robust desert world, primarily of interest due to its habitable moon **Nix**. It does have minable resources, but its tectonic instability makes mining operations difficult.

Howe: Captain of the ***ARN Talon***.

HUD (Heads-up-display): a digital means of displaying virtual data to a user without them having to look away from their target of focus.

Hughes: Captain of the ***Morning Rain***, a **Vaughan-Heighas Expeditions Corporation** exploration ship. Before his current career as an explorer in the private sector, he was a **Runian** Navy captain.

Inos Drive: a poorly understood technology dating from pre-civilization records. The drive can be installed on starships, allowing access to the **Rift**. It was named for the scientist Jan Inos, who was able to accurately describe and replicate its workings and design. As the laws of physics relating to its use have not been rediscovered, the drive could not have been invented by the current civilizations of the **Fathom**.

Inquisitor: Elcosian agents trained in torture and interrogation. They frequently investigate matters of heresy, actual or otherwise. They carry significant clout and power within the Elcosian hierarchy, second only to the *Malleus Maleficarum* and the **Harbinger of Elcos**.

Ivo system: Referring to the star Ivo and its planetary bodies. A **T-gate** is located there.

Jumper: explorers who **Rift** jump blindly in search of new **T-gates** that have not yet been catalogued. Their life expectancy is quite short.

Kingdom of Doan: once an incredibly powerful nation in the **Fathom** ruled by the King of Doan, which fell apart nearly a millennium ago during the **Doanian Civil War**. It splintered into the **Republic of Rune** and the **Principality of Alidia** as well as several smaller nation states.

Ko: one of many **T-gate** systems in the **Frontier**.

Lieutenant Adam Holland: son of **Lord Sentius Holland**, the patriarch of House Holland. He is currently serving his mandatory military service as a Lieutenant in the **Alidian Royal Marines, Griffin Squad**. He is known as somewhat of a brat, willing to step on those he considers inferior to get ahead. He has a connection with **Ban Morgan**, though it is not clear what that link is. To any observing outsider, the two men hate each other passionately.

Lord Sentius Holland: father of **Lieutenant Adam Holland** and patriarch of House Holland. He has a contentious history with **Ban Morgan**.

Maiden, the: a person mentioned only in hushed whispers, she is rumored to abide in a solitary manor, high above the city she rules from the shadows.

Maw, the: a dangerous region in the **Aeturnian Frontier** containing the Maw-space nebula.

Mei of the Flowing Lands of Roshan: an experienced **Aeturnian Ranger**. She is an enigma in that she is far from home, part of a culture which heavily restricts both immigration and emigration. Her personal ship is the *Riluò*. At the beginning of the story, she has taken it upon herself to finish a job left incomplete by a fallen comrade.

Morning Rain, the: a newly commissioned science and exploration vessel brought into service by the **Vaughan-Heighas Expeditions Corporation**. On its maiden voyage, it has been tasked to survey uncatalogued worlds in the **Aeturnian Frontier**.

Mortrythe: male god of death.

Never, the: mysterious realm of violet ether which can be seen below starships during Rift passage.

Nix: a moon of **Horvis**. It is a habitable moon, but the temperature tends to be below freezing due to the distance from its star. Only the gravitational forces from Horvis keep it warm enough for life.

Olivia Hansen: Chief Medical Officer on the *Morning Rain*. She was selected by **Captain Hughes** to escort **Fall Arden** on **Crossroads Station**. A **Runian** citizen, she is non-military, but she is not afraid to fight when needed. She has a sister who disappeared a few years ago in the **Aeturnian Frontier**.

Orchard Run, the: a freighter manned by a small crew, lost in the **Aeturnian Frontier** near the Maw.

Pelagos, the: everything outside the **Fathom**.

Powered Armor: technologically advanced armor worn by soldiers that can augment abilities and provide protection.

Principality of Alidia: one of the two nations to form after the collapse of the **Kingdom of Doan** following the **Doanian Civil War**. It neighbors its primary rival, the **Republic of Rune**, and competes with that nation commercially in the nearest regions of the **Aeturnian Frontier**. A militaristic society with a feudal system of government where honor and sacrifice are the primary virtues of a good citizen. Ruled by the **Star-Born Prince, Hayden the Third** of House Eld from the capitol world of **Aridor**. Their symbol is a crown-within-a-crown and white stars above.

Pseudarus: a mechanical device designed to simulate realistic scenarios with near perfect fidelity. Most users cannot tell the difference between the simulations and reality except that memories from real life remain intact, so they know they are in a simulation. This is accomplished by the integration of multiple sensory inputs, usually by a wired immersion helmet.

Rab Cat: A fanged, tiger-like creature.

Rapasciant: a hyper-aggressive insectoid creature found on **Ro-Art III**. They act in swarms, violently seeking to consume living beings they encounter.

Red, the: a pirate ship, wanted in most of the **Aeturnian Frontier** for theft and mayhem.

Republic of Rune: a democratic society, arguably the richest in existence, which borders its primary economic and military rival, the **Principality of Alidia**. Its capitol world is **Doan**, the old seat of the royal family of the **Kingdom of Doan**. This country's technological and artistic advances are second to none, and its military is rivaled only by that of the **Principality of Alidia**. Their symbol is a gold and green dragon.

Repulsion field: force fields created through man-made means. There are nearly countless applications for this technology, including barriers that can be erected instantly or the lifting and suspension of heavy objects.

Resh Gal: male god of domination and conquest. A betrayer of those who trusted him.

Richards, Rowan: Bond-Private in **Wolf Squad** of the **Alidian** Royal Marines. Previously a smuggler with a significant unpaid debt. After multiple attempts on his life in prison, he opted to enter **bondsman** service for **absolution**. He has an interesting sense of humor, and his mouth tends to outpace his mind.

Rift, the: a potential space existing between the universe and its sublayers, such as the **Never**. This space does not usually exist in any meaningful way until it is accessed through use of an **Inos drive**. Accessing the **Rift** allows for travel velocities that far exceed what would be possible in normal space, including faster than light travel.

Rugian Ogre-Bear: a brown, four-armed bear creature.

Riluò, the: a small starship owned by the **Aeturnian Ranger Mei of the Flowing Lands of Roshan**.

Ro-Art: a system in the **Aeturnian Frontier** on the outskirts of the **Maw**. It is far enough away from the Maw that travel in the area is generally safe, but there has not been much traffic through the system to date. At least one of the planets in the system is habitable, most notably **Ro-Art III**.

Ro-Art III: a beautiful, habitable world in the **Ro-Art** system. It is home to at least one hyper-aggressive species of man-sized insect, the **Rapasciant**.

Ronin Deks: an **Aeturnian Ranger** who works in the remote regions of his home, the **Aeturnian Frontier**. He has been hired by a young woman named **Sidna Orin** to search an abandoned temple on the world of **Veridian** for an artifact.

Runian Base-Nix: An illegal science station involved in the retrieval of information obtained in the **Aeturnian Frontier**. Manned by engineers, scientists, and a detachment of soldiers.

Seph: The **Maiden's** head henchman. She carries a compact pistol.

Sidna Orin: an **arcanist** on an important quest for her people. She has taken it upon herself to search out an artifact on **Veridian** in the hopes that she might gain some new power or at least important knowledge from doing so. She has gone to the temple of **Fel Kno'a** with an **Aeturnian Ranger**, **Ronin Deks**, whom she has hired to help her in her search.

Skine system: referring to the star Skine and its planetary bodies, most notably **Horvis** and its moon **Nix**.

Sliver: Elcosian stunt fighter.

Solsynth: a precious type of steel no longer found anywhere in known space.

Strahg: a six-legged, dark-green creature most often seen as a beast of burden. They are docile and slow yet incredibly strong.

Spy, the: an agent employed by the **Harbinger of Elcos**. He is currently active in the **Aeturnian Frontier**, though the nature of his activities is unknown.

SX4765: a resource-rich system just on the edge of the **Maw**. There are an unusually high number of distress calls and lost ships reported in this region of space, so travel there is usually avoided by all but the most intrepid of captains. It has yet to be fully explored or named.

T-Gate: objects in space without any identifiable origin, which connect extremely distant locations. By use of electromagnetic communication in the form of a “query,” a starship can prompt a T-gate to activate and link with one of its networked partner T-gates. Travel between linked gates is instantaneous, causing no loss of time in transit, regardless of any local gravitational effects.

Talon, the: an **Alidian** warship sent on a mission to expose illegal **Runian** activity in the **Aeturnian Frontier**, recover any valuable information or technology involved, and to destroy any Runian military presence in the region.

Tears: artifacts of legend, believed by **arcanists** to hold significant knowledge or power. Arcanists and treasure hunters have sought these objects for centuries, though few have ever been found.

Teranak: a huge, solitary beast that lies in a semi-buried burrow waiting for unsuspecting prey to wander too near.

Thane: an **Aeturnian Ranger** and **Fall Arden's** mentor during training. He has a reputation for skill, bravery, and a strict moral code. Fall does not know his current whereabouts.

Thenander: male god of healing and nourishment.

Tieger of Westmarch: the *Maleus Maleficarum*, chosen and groomed by the **Harbinger of Elcos** to be Elcos's **champion**. He wears heavy powered armor and wields his powerful, bladed hammer, *Janus*. He fervently hunts **arcanists** across the **Fathom** and beyond, killing them to fulfill his faith's primary directive.

Tirono: a sun-blasted world closely orbiting the star **Gillion**.

Truth and Fire: Elcosian sacred text containing the central tenets of the faith.

Tyk: small, furry, rodent-like creatures found on almost all settled worlds. Legend holds that the first human explorers must have had them aboard as pets or as an infestation. They are harmless, never carrying transmissible disease, and they always flee at the sign of approach.

Tyr: a Bond-Private in **Wolf Squad** of the **Alidian** Royal Marines. Due to an unknown event in his past, he cannot speak. He was never convicted of a crime unlike most people who enter **absolution**, but instead, he seeks to earn citizenship in the **Principality of Alidia** through military service.

Union: a recently freed denizen of the **Maiden's** mines. His knowledge would be valuable to anyone who could secure his loyalty.

Vagrant Sea Galaxy: the galaxy containing the **Fathom** and the **Pelagos**.

Valen (planet): homeworld of **Fall Arden** and the capitol of the small nation of **Valen**. It boasts diverse ecosystems with varied forms of life. It was on this world that the **Accord of Valen** was signed by the nations of the **Fathom**.

Valen (nation): One of the small nations that rest between the **Republic of Rune** and the **Principality of Alidia**. Originally a part of the **Kingdom of Doan**, it gained independence after the **Doanian Civil War**, managing to survive and flourish through diplomacy and shrewd military action.

Vaughan-Heighas Expeditions Corporation (VHEC): a private **Runian** exploration corporation operating primarily in the **Aeturnian Frontier**.

Veridian: a jungle planet lost to history. It is here that the Temple of the Dead, **Fel Kno'a**, rests in the center of a lake in a formation of spired landmasses.

Viae: implanted advanced microcellular technology. On the surface of the skin, this is present as metallic markings like tattoos. Together with a natural affinity for manipulation of **the Code**, **arcanists** can use their *viae* to affect the rules of reality in both useful and devastating ways.

Virtua: in the **Frontier**, most transactions are completed using a digital credit known as the *virtua*. There are many worlds, and even more organizations, who deal only in hard currency, whether it be bank notes or precious metals or gems.

Vogi: a three-dimensional boardgame commonly played in the **Fathom**.

Void, the: a feared realm of storied myth, thought to contain nothing but darkness and pure evil.

Westmarch: a war-ravaged world located to the galactic west of Alidia across the **Sanian Divide**.

Wetria system: An uncatalogued system in the **Aeturnian Frontier**. A prior long-distance survey showed it to have four planets, one a gas giant. Radiation from the star Wetria is considered high inside the planetary zones.

Wolf Squad: an **Alidian** Royal Navy Marine squad. Led by Lieutenant **Garret**.