

Appletun Unbound: The Making of a Metropolis

By Juniper Skye

Introduction

The city of Appletun, located on the southernmost tip of the land of Eventyr, stands as a testament to the rapid transformation that can occur when ambition, talent, and opportunity converge. What began as a modest merchant's haven has evolved into a dazzling metropolis that captivates the imagination and ignites the passions of all who call it home. Appletun's rise to prominence is a tale of both triumph and tribulation, a story woven from the threads of countless individual lives and shaped by the forces of art, commerce, politics, and fate.

At the heart of Appletun's identity lies a fierce dedication to the pursuit of excellence in all its forms. The city's skyline, a breathtaking amalgamation of architectural grandeur and arcane enchantments, serves as a physical manifestation of this ethos. Institutions such as the renowned Rinna University of the Bardic Arts (RUBA) and the awe-inspiring Apex Arena stand as pillars of the city's commitment to the elevation of the arts and athletics. These beacons of achievement not only showcase the prodigious talents of Appletun's citizens but also draw aspiring stars from across the realm, all eager to claim their place in the annals of history.

Yet for all its glitz and glamor, Appletun is a city that has also grappled with the shadows that accompany rapid growth and unbridled ambition. As the city has risen to become a mecca for entertainment, glitz, and glamor, it has also witnessed the emergence of societal challenges that threaten to tarnish its lustrous veneer. From the insidious spread of vice and criminality in its darkened alleys to the stark inequality embodied by the tent city of refugees huddled outside its walls, Appletun stands as a microcosm of the complexities and contradictions that define the human experience.

This book aims to trace the fascinating trajectory of Appletun's development, from its humble origins as a mercantile outpost to its current status as a cultural and economic powerhouse. By exploring the myriad forces that have shaped the city's character and the lives of its inhabitants, we hope to offer a nuanced and multifaceted portrait of a metropolis that has captured the hearts and minds of countless individuals across Eventyr and beyond. Through a meticulous examination of historical records, personal accounts, and cultural artifacts, this work seeks to illuminate the triumphs, the struggles, and the indomitable spirit that have forged Appletun into the extraordinary city it is today.

Early Settlement

The area that would eventually become the bustling city of Appletun was originally inhabited by an ancient colony of sea elves who had built a thriving underwater civilization. These sea elves, known as the Aquamarine Collective, also maintained a presence on the adjacent land, establishing a harmonious connection between their aquatic and terrestrial domains. The sea elves were drawn to this location due to its ideal fishing grounds and the opportunities for trade with nearby settlements.

As the sea elves flourished, they discovered that the mountains north of their colony were rich in precious gemstones. The elves began to mine these resources, using their magical abilities to extract the gems without causing significant damage to the environment. The influx of these valuable materials further enhanced the prosperity of the Aquamarine Collective and attracted the attention of others.

During the early stages of land colonization, a group of elven settlers arrived in the area. These elves, recognizing the wisdom and beauty of the sea elves' way of life, sought to establish a peaceful relationship with their aquatic cousins. Together, the land elves and sea elves built a city called Caeruluna, which served as an early prototype of what would later become Appletun. Caeruluna was a marvel of cooperation, blending the architectural styles and cultural traditions of both elven groups.

However, the harmonious existence of Caeruluna was not destined to last. Human settlers, primarily traders, began to arrive in the area, seeking to exploit its resources and strategic location. The humans, driven by their greedy desire for wealth and power, clashed with both the land and sea elves. Tensions escalated, and a devastating war known as the Crimson Tide erupted. The conflict was brutal, and despite the elves' valiant efforts to defend their home, they were eventually overwhelmed by the humans' superior numbers and advanced weaponry. In the aftermath of the war, most of the elves had perished, and their once-thriving civilization lay in ruins. Those who were not killed in the conflict were pressed into service in the mines.

Among the human settlers was a cunning and ambitious man named Alastair Nailamin. Recognizing the potential of the newly conquered city, Alastair quickly established himself as the master of trade. He created several highly profitable trade routes, leveraging the city's strategic location and the resources plundered from the elven civilization. Alastair's influence grew rapidly, and he eventually became the mayor of the settlement, which he named Appletun, after the name of one of Ondas the sea god's children. As a devout worshiper of Ondas, Alastair sought to honor his deity by ensuring that Appletun prospered as a center of maritime commerce.

One of the other notable early settlers of Appletun was Gwyllim Rinna, a talented bard who had traveled far and wide before finding a home in the newly established city. Gwyllim's enchanting melodies and captivating stories helped to shape the cultural identity of Appletun, providing a sense of unity and shared history for its diverse population. As the city grew and evolved,

Gwyllim's legacy would endure, with many of Appletun's most cherished traditions and festivals tracing their roots back to the bard's influence.

The Legacy of Gwyllim Rinna

In the early years of Appletun's history, the town faced an existential threat that nearly brought about its complete destruction. A colony of mind flayers, long dormant in an underground lair deep beneath the nearby mountains, suddenly awakened and emerged from their subterranean domain. These aberrant creatures, driven by an insatiable hunger for intellect and an innate desire to dominate, set their sights on the burgeoning settlement of Appletun.

The mind flayers launched a devastating assault on the town, employing their formidable psionic abilities to mentally enslave and manipulate the populace. The streets of Appletun became a nightmarish landscape as the mind flayers' thralls turned against their own friends and families, sowing chaos and despair. The town's defenses quickly crumbled under the relentless onslaught, and it seemed that Appletun was doomed to fall.

Amidst the chaos and desperation, Gwyllim Rinna, the renowned bard who had played a crucial role in shaping Appletun's cultural identity, emerged as an unlikely savior. Gwyllim had recently returned from a perilous journey to a distant and mysterious land, a realm whispered about in ancient legends. There, he had sought out a legendary artifact known as the Verseblade, a magical weapon said to possess the power to vanquish even the most formidable of foes.

The Verseblade was a unique and powerful artifact, an enchanted ax that doubled as a musical instrument. The ax's blade was forged from a rare, resonant metal that hummed with arcane energy, while the handle was crafted from the wood of an ancient, magical tree. When wielded by Gwyllim, the Verseblade thrummed with power, its musical tones blending with the bard's own voice to create a symphony of destruction and inspiration.

Armed with this extraordinary weapon, Gwyllim rallied the remaining defenders of Appletun and launched a daring counterattack against the mind flayer invasion. In a battle that would be remembered for generations, Gwyllim Rinna stood at the forefront, the Verseblade singing in his hands as he cleaved through the mind flayers' ranks. The bard's courage and skill inspired the townspeople, and they fought with renewed vigor, driven by the hope that Gwyllim's presence instilled.

The Verseblade's unique combination of martial and musical power proved to be the key to victory. As Gwyllim struck down the mind flayers, the ax's enchanted melodies disrupted their psionic control and freed the enslaved thralls from their mental bondage. The haunting notes of the Verseblade echoed through the streets of Appletun, bolstering the resolve of the defenders and striking fear into the hearts of their aberrant foes.

As the dust settled and the last of the mind flayers lay defeated, the people of Appletun hailed Gwyllim Rinna as their savior. The town had been ravaged, but thanks to Gwyllim's heroic actions and the power of the Verseblade, it had survived. In the aftermath of the battle, the grateful citizens unanimously agreed that Gwyllim should assume the role of the town's leader, recognizing his wisdom, bravery, and dedication to the well-being of Appletun.

Under Gwyllim's guidance, Appletun began to rebuild and flourish once more. The bard's fame spread far and wide, attracting talented minstrels, poets, and storytellers from across the land of Eventyr. They flocked to Appletun, eager to learn from the legendary Gwyllim Rinna and to witness the power of the Verseblade firsthand. Gwyllim founded a bardic collective, sharing his knowledge and expertise with aspiring performers, and Appletun soon became renowned as a center of artistic excellence and martial prowess.

As the years passed, Gwyllim's legacy and the legend of the Verseblade continued to shape Appletun's identity. The town became a beacon of creativity, culture, and strength, a place where the power of music and the art of combat were celebrated and nurtured. The Verseblade, now a symbol of Appletun's resilience and triumph over darkness, was proudly displayed in the town square, a constant reminder of Gwyllim Rinna's heroism and the indomitable spirit of the people of Appletun.

After Rinna's death, the Verseblade went missing from its traditional place in the center of town and little is known about its current whereabouts, though many have attempted to locate it over the years.

The Nailamin Family

As Appletun continued to grow and prosper under the guidance of Gwyllim Rinna, the Nailamin family's trade empire expanded alongside the town's development. Building upon the foundation laid by Alastair Nailamin, the family's patriarch and former mayor of Appletun, the Nailamins seized every opportunity to extend their influence and wealth.

The family's trading company, Nailamin Enterprises, became a dominant force in the region, establishing a vast network of trade routes that connected Appletun with distant markets. The Nailamins' keen business acumen and strategic partnerships allowed them to secure exclusive contracts for the export of precious gemstones mined from the nearby Crystal Mine, which they had acquired through a series of shrewd negotiations.

To support the growing number of people who came to work for their trading company and the Crystal Mine, the Nailamins invested heavily in the development of Appletun's infrastructure. They constructed affordable housing for their employees, ensuring that their workforce had access to comfortable living quarters. Additionally, the family established a variety of businesses catering to the needs of the town's residents, including general stores, taverns, and even a

small theater, which provided entertainment and a sense of community for the hardworking people of Appletun.

As the Nailamins' wealth and influence grew, they became the de facto rulers of Appletun, despite no longer holding the official title of mayor. Their economic power and extensive connections allowed them to shape the town's policies and direction, often behind the scenes. The family's philanthropy and investments in the community further solidified their position, as many of Appletun's residents owed their livelihoods and well-being to the Nailamins' initiatives.

Recognizing the importance of leisure and friendly competition in fostering a strong sense of camaraderie among the townspeople, the Nailamins played a pivotal role in the establishment of Appletun's sports teams. They sponsored the creation of the town's first organized sports leagues, providing the necessary funds for equipment, uniforms, and the construction of training facilities. The Nailamin family also took great pride in nurturing local talent, offering scholarships and apprenticeships to promising young athletes who showed exceptional skill and dedication.

Besides supporting sports, Nailamins were passionate patrons of the arts. They founded the Appletun Theater Company, which quickly became a cultural cornerstone of the town. The family commissioned the construction of a grand theater hall, adorned with intricate frescoes and equipped with state-of-the-art staging technology. The theater hosted a diverse array of performances, from classic plays to innovative new works, attracting renowned artists from across the land of Eventyr.

As generations passed, the Nailamin family remained a powerful and influential presence in Appletun. However, despite their immense wealth and status, they never sought to elevate themselves to the ranks of nobility, as had become common practice in other parts of the world. The Nailamins remained true to their humble roots, emphasizing the values of hard work, community, and service that had driven Alastair Nailamin's success.

Instead of adopting grand titles or building ostentatious mansions, the Nailamins continued to live among the people of Appletun, residing in well-appointed but modest homes. They actively participated in town meetings, listened to the concerns of their fellow citizens, and worked tirelessly to ensure that Appletun remained a thriving and prosperous community.

The legacy of the Nailamin family became an integral part of Appletun's identity, a testament to the transformative power of commerce, culture, and commitment to the common good. The town's continued success and growth were a direct result of the Nailamins' vision and dedication, and their enduring influence could be felt in every aspect of life in Appletun, from the bustling markets to the lively sports arenas and the vibrant artistic scene.

Rinna University of the Bardic Arts

In the year 2397, the renowned actors Viggo and Vanya Ballois, who had taken up residence in Appletun after falling in love with the town's vibrant artistic scene, recognized the need for a dedicated institution to nurture and support the growing community of bards, poets, and performers. With the support of the Nailamin family and other prominent patrons of the arts, the Ballois couple founded the Rinna University of Bardic Arts (RUBA), named in honor of Gwyllim Rinna, the legendary bard who had saved Appletun from the mind flayer invasion centuries earlier.

RUBA quickly established itself as the premiere destination for aspiring bards and performers from across the land of Eventyr. The university's curriculum was designed to provide a comprehensive education in the bardic arts, encompassing music, poetry, storytelling, and performance. The Ballois couple, drawing upon their extensive experience in the theater, assembled a faculty of distinguished artists and scholars who were passionate about sharing their knowledge and expertise with the next generation of bards.

Enrollment at RUBA was highly competitive, with prospective students required to demonstrate exceptional talent and potential through rigorous auditions and interviews. The university sought to attract a diverse student body, welcoming individuals from all walks of life and backgrounds. Scholarships were provided to ensure that financial constraints would not prevent talented students from pursuing their dreams.

As RUBA's reputation grew, so did the caliber of its graduates. One of the university's most notable alumni was Lysander Goldenvoice, a prodigious bard who, in 2498, won the prestigious Golden Lute festival, a competition that showcased the most talented performers from across Eventyr. Lysander's hauntingly beautiful ballads and masterful lute playing captivated audiences and earned him international acclaim.

Another distinguished graduate of RUBA was Isadora Moonwhisper, a gifted storyteller whose enchanting tales and mesmerizing voice had the power to transport listeners to far-off lands and times. Isadora's performances were highly sought after, and she was often invited to perform at the courts of nobles and royalty throughout the realm.

The university also produced the renowned bard duo, Cassius Silvertongue and Lyra Nightingale, whose collaborative performances blended poetry, music, and dance in breathtaking displays of artistic synergy. Their sold-out shows at the Appletun Theater were the stuff of legend, leaving audiences spellbound and clamoring for more.

RUBA's influence extended beyond the realm of performance, as evidenced by the work of Orion Quillfeather, a graduate who specialized in the art of bardic magic. Orion's innovative techniques for weaving enchantments through music and poetry revolutionized the field, and his treatises on the subject became required reading for aspiring bardic mages across Eventyr.

As the years passed, RUBA continued to thrive under the guidance of the Ballois couple. The university expanded its facilities, adding state-of-the-art performance spaces, libraries, and workshops to accommodate the growing student body and evolving needs of the bardic arts.

RUBA's impact on Appletun was profound, as the university attracted talented artists and performers from far and wide, further cementing the town's reputation as a hub of creativity and culture. The university's graduates went on to achieve great things, spreading the renown of Appletun and RUBA wherever their paths led them.

Today, the Rinna University of Bardic Arts stands as a testament to the enduring power of the arts and the vision of its founders, Viggo and Vanya Ballois. It remains a beacon of inspiration, education, and artistic excellence, nurturing the next generation of bards who will shape the cultural landscape of Eventyr for years to come.

Contemporary Appletun

In recent years, Appletun has witnessed a series of remarkable events and developments that have shaped the town's character and cemented its status as a thriving hub of culture, commerce, and innovation.

One of the most significant additions to Appletun's landscape was the opening of the Apex Arena, a state-of-the-art sports facility funded by the renowned athlete Xander Evans. The arena quickly became the home of Appletun's beloved sports teams and hosted numerous high-profile competitions, drawing athletes and spectators from across Eventyr. The Apex Arena's opening ceremony, a dazzling display of athletic prowess and bardic performances, was an event that would be remembered for generations.

Alongside the Apex Arena, the town celebrated the opening of the Emperor's Folly Theater, a grand venue dedicated to showcasing the finest theatrical productions and bardic performances. The theater, named after a legendary tale of a foolish emperor who nearly lost his kingdom to his love of the arts, became a cultural landmark, attracting playwrights, actors, and audiences from far and wide.

To further celebrate the bardic arts, Appletun established the Golden Lute festival, which quickly gained renown as the premier bardic event in the world. Bards, poets, craftspeople, and musicians from across Eventyr gathered annually to compete, collaborate, and share their talents, making the festival a must-attend event for artists and enthusiasts alike.

As Appletun's reputation grew, so did its economic prospects. The town's leaders invested heavily in expanding the docks and modernizing shipbuilding practices, enabling Appletun to become a key player in maritime trade. The bustling port brought new opportunities and wealth to the town, further diversifying its economy.

Recognizing the importance of staying informed and connected, Appletun's citizens celebrated the creation of the town's first newspaper and the establishment of a printing press. The Bardic Buzz quickly became the go-to source for local news, opinion pieces, and creative works, fostering a sense of community and civic engagement among the town's residents.

As Appletun's population grew more diverse, the town welcomed the construction of several religious temples, including those dedicated to Aostre, the goddess of dawn and renewal, and Alidammara, the god of mirth and revelry. These temples provided spiritual guidance and a sense of belonging for Appletun's citizens, while also serving as centers for community gatherings and festivals.

Appletun also made strides in public health with the establishment of the Hearthstone Clinic, a state-of-the-art medical facility staffed by skilled healers and practitioners of both traditional medicine and magical healing arts. The clinic's services greatly improved the well-being of Appletun's citizens and solidified the town's commitment to the welfare of its people.

To foster a sense of unity and shared purpose among its diverse population, Appletun introduced the annual Founders' Day celebration, a week-long festival honoring the town's history and the contributions of its many inhabitants. The festival featured parades, performances, and cultural events that showcase the rich tapestry of Appletun's heritage.

As Appletun continued to evolve, its leaders recognized the need for a more democratic system of governance. The town established an election process by which the mayor would now be chosen by the people, marking a significant shift from the days when the Nailamin family held sway over Appletun's affairs. Eirlys Bowen, wife to Vestelle Nailamin, a charismatic and visionary leader, became the first person elected as Mayor under this new system, ushering in an era of increased transparency and accountability in town politics.

Tragically, Appletun's prosperity was tempered by the devastating loss of the nearby town of Caley, which was destroyed by a cataclysmic event. The survivors of Caley sought refuge in Appletun, and the town, under the leadership of Mayor Bowen, opened its doors to the displaced, providing shelter, sustenance, and support. The influx of refugees strained Appletun's resources, but the town's citizens rose to the challenge, demonstrating the compassion and resilience that had become the hallmarks of their community.

In the wake of Mayor Bowen's term, Mordai Sorrowfell, a member of the prominent Sorrowfell family, was elected as Appletun's new Mayor. Mayor Sorrowfell, known for his shrewd political acumen and ambitious vision for the town's future, has pledged to guide Appletun through the challenges posed by the refugee crisis and to build upon the successes of his predecessor.

As Appletun stands at the precipice of a new era, its citizens remain committed to the ideals of community, creativity, and progress that have shaped the town's identity. With its vibrant culture, thriving economy, and resilient spirit, Appletun is poised to face whatever challenges and opportunities the future may bring.

Timeline

Era of Justice (0-500 A.E.):

- c. 100 A.E.: The area that would become Appletun is inhabited by the Aquamarine Collective, a colony of sea elves living in an underwater civilization and on the adjacent land.
- c. 200 A.E.: Elven settlers arrive and establish a peaceful relationship with the sea elves. Together, they build the city of Caeruluna.

Era of Disorder (501-1000 A.E.):

- c. 600 A.E.: Human settlers, primarily traders, arrive in the area and clash with the elves. The Crimson Tide war erupts, resulting in the destruction of the elven civilization.
- c. 620 A.E.: Alastair Nailamin, a human settler and worshiper of Ondas, becomes the master of trade and eventually the mayor of the newly established settlement, which he names Appletun.
- c. 650 A.E.: Gwyllim Rinna, a bard, arrives in Appletun and becomes one of the town's early settlers.
- c. 700 A.E.: A colony of mind flayers awakens and attacks Appletun. Gwyllim Rinna wields the legendary Verseblade, an enchanted ax and musical instrument, to defeat the mind flayers and save the town. Gwyllim becomes head of the city.
- c. 750-1000 A.E.: The Nailamin trade empire expands, and the family becomes wealthy and influential in Appletun. They establish various businesses and institutions, including sports teams and a theater.

Era of Fairness (1001-1500 A.E.):

- 1001-1500 A.E.: Appletun continues to grow and prosper under the guidance of the Nailamin family and other influential figures.

Era of the Absent God (1501-2000 A.E.):

- 1501-2000 A.E.: Appletun experiences a period of religious and political upheaval, mirroring the events in the rest of Eventyr.

Era of Hope (2000-2500 A.E.):

- 2390 A.E.: Viggo and Vanya Ballois found the Rinna University of Bardic Arts (RUBA) to support the growing artistic community.
- 2430 A.E.: The Emperor's Folly Theater opens, becoming a cultural landmark in Appletun.
- 2435 A.E.: The Golden Lute festival, the world's premier bardic event, is established.
- 2440 A.E.: Appletun's docks and shipbuilding practices are expanded, boosting maritime trade.
- 2445 A.E.: The Bardic Buzz, the town's first newspaper, is created, and a printing press is established.
- 2450 A.E.: Several religious temples, including those dedicated to Aostre and Alidammara, are constructed.
- 2473 A.E.: The Apex Arena, funded and managed by famous athlete Xander Evans, opens its doors.

2475 A.E.: Appletun establishes an election process for choosing the mayor. Eirlys Bowen becomes the first elected mayor.

2495 A.E.: The nearby town of Caley is destroyed, and Appletun becomes a camping ground for the displaced refugees

2497 A.E. Mordai Sorrowfell is elected new Mayor of Appletun, succeeding Eirlys Bowen.