

Witness' knowledge...

[arcana +18]

There are five fundamental sources of magic in Cardriss, plus a sixth not of this world (divine spellcasters tap into an outerplanar energy, gifted by their gods, in order to power their spells). These sources are completely distinct from schools of magic which are systems for shaping and employing the power that comes from these sources; in fact, a single school of magic may draw from several different sources to power its spells, and many spells can be shaped from the power from more than one source. The five sources are: eldritch power (sort of a raw magical energy), entropy (an almost 'weave' like field connected with life and decay, good fortune and ill), inner strength (a power innate to sentient life), primal might (a power innate to the natural world), and the song (echoes of the music of creation).

[dungeoneering +12]

Not really much of anything to dump here... you have a bunch of knowledge of spelunking and of the creatures that dwell underground.

[engineering +22]

You know all the significant periods and movements of Cardriss' architecture. You can typically identify what region you're in quickly based on its buildings, and often you can tell when a settlement was established on that same basis. You also know that there are some clear anomalies in some places. Korryn has a number of buildings (besides the Tower) whose style is pretty consistent with each other but not with any known period/movement. Zeru, in Eastwatch, has a number of buildings that seem to be of dwarven make, and Lorea and Borroka both have buildings that seem elvish. The ruins you visited north of Tokelau were of a style similar to the Tower, though there is scholarly debate over whether they could possibly be that old or are of a style that seeks to mimic the tower. (any particularly interesting architecture or structures in Korryn besides the Tower)

[geography +14]

You know where all the major nations and their capitals are (as per the revised map). You also know the names and locations of many of the significant towns and settlements across Cardriss, especially in Eastmarch and down to the area around Korryn (if/when I draw a map of them I'll link it to you, otherwise just ask if you want/need to know where one is).

[history +22]

So... you know too much about history for me to write it all out, and for now a lot of it isn't important at all. I'm going to try to have a timeline of major events worked out by the time the Witness understands the mechanics of the Tower enough for it to have some bearing on the game, and I'll share it with you. In the meantime, here are some highlights. The current year is

1331, although the impending New Tran will mark the beginning of 1332. There is some debate over the actual basis of the current dating system: some hold it began with the formation of a stable government in Korryn, others claim it was the rise of the first human king in Westfall, and still others believe the founding of Izar, the oldest of the Atlaean city-states caused the change. All of these events seem to have happened at very nearly the same time, and what's clear from what early records survive is that there was some great cataclysm which drew to a close as civilization returned to Cardriss. Virtually nothing is known about the time of the cataclysm or before it (although, you know that there are buildings in some major cities that appear to be from before the current calendar). Already, in year 1, humans were the dominant species on Cardriss; elves, dwarves, and orcs established nations too in that period, but none were as expansive as the humans. Over the centuries, wars amongst the demi-humans and against their human neighbors caused their numbers and influence to continually diminish. There were also a number of wars between various human kingdoms and, although most regions are currently fairly stable thanks to treaties and inter-marriages, some of those ancient rivalries persist to this day. Swahli and Bantu, for example, have never really not been at war with each other. I'm not really sure what else to write... your check is high enough to merit pages just on history but, like I said, I haven't finished working it all out and most of it wouldn't even matter right now beyond interesting fluff... Is there anything you're curious about? I'll work on the timeline for you and you can feel free to ask about anything that seems interesting in the meanwhile.

[local +17]

You are familiar with the local laws and customs of just about every city and significant settlement in Eastwatch and around Korryn, as well as most of the laws and customs of Cardriss' other major cities and states. This entails too many things to list but includes where peacebonding is required, which countries regularly tax roads, and a variety of regional idiosyncrasies. In Vinland all wines legally have to be named with the region where their grapes were grown. In Northreach almost any crime or dispute can be settled by paying bloodgold- a set fine paid by the transgressor directly to the injured party to compensate them for the harm done. In Suderan almost any crime or dispute can be settled by a fight- often a brawl, but sometimes more deadly battles. In Korryn the bureaucracy has trouble keeping up with the criminal case load, so watchmen are often permitted to assign punishments for minor crimes on the scene and people being held for trial sometimes have to wait weeks or even months. You're also pretty adept at telling which region someone is from based on their appearance, and at spotting mims. The elven enclave (or [i]an[i] elven enclave, at least) is somewhere in the deep woods between Borroka and Villig. There's a dwarven enclave in the Ironspine mountains, and an orcish nation still exists somewhere in the deserts of Suderan. You know a lot of local legends, ranging from epic feats of eating/drinking to the rumored locations of various ruins or treasures. You and Gavin checked a number of the rumored ruins on your journey to Korryn, with mixed results. Korryn is something of a hotbed of wizarding activity. There are no wizarding guilds, but some

guilds do have wizards for members, or employ the services of a wizard or two. There are three significant academies in Korryn: one in the Atlaeon style with a high purely Atlaeon faculty; one loosely in the Atlaeon style with a rather eclectic faculty; and one in the style of the schools in Vinland, which also has a fairly eclectic faculty. There are numerous independent wizards researching the tower, or just taking advantage of the breadth of knowledge that converges in Korryn, and many of them have disciples and/or research assistants.

[nature +15]

Uhh... this is all pretty standard... the forests in Northreach are mostly coniferous and those in Westfall, Eastwatch, and around Korryn are mostly deciduous. There's a jungle south of the Ironspine Mountains. The Mulberries in Vinland are the sweetest in the world. The gardens in Lorea contain at least a dozen distinct flowers believed to be extinct in the rest of Cardriss. There are a significant number of unusual, but natural, animal species in the Southern Isles, like amphibious cats and gorillas that change colors like chameleons. You also know that there is an astrological calendar which is rarely used (typical only by astrologers and navigators in the open ocean). It has 3 months, called courts, which each have 117 days, and it tracks which of three stars is in the dominant position in the sky. Once every 13 tran the astrological New Year corresponds with New Tran (both solar and lunar New Year), marking the beginning of a new Era; New Era is a virtually unknown holiday celebrated by scholars and fortune-tellers lucky enough to be alive when it happens.

[nobility +12]

You know the names of all the ruling families in Westfall and Suderan, and the hereditary monarchies of Vinland, as well as a few of the biggest settlements in Northreach (I'm not going to list them all for you to try to remember, just ask if you want to know one and I'll point out if one comes up). Eastwatch is unique in not really having any aristocracy; they are principally a meritocracy in which the ruling class is composed of accomplished arcane spellcasters. Their sages, teachers, and magic users take the place of the nobility. You know a handful of names of such people but their position is so much less established than the old families' lines that it's hard to keep them straight.

[planes +18]

You're familiar with planar geometry, which is pretty much standard (astral and ethereal planes; elemental & positive/negative inner planes; alignment-based outer planes). There is a certain instability or movement to this geometry though. There's some debate over whether Cardriss moves or the inner planes do, but the months of the lunar calendar each have an affinity for one of the inner planes and it is believed Cardriss and that plane are closer during that month (this has no discernable effect on individual spells or phenomenon, but there is evidence of some macro effects- the weather is warmer than typical if fire is close, harvests are better if the

positive plane is close, etc). There is no month with an affinity for the negative plane and it is generally believed that Cardriss' position in the multiverse is not central but offset towards the positive plane. Cardriss also seems to be somehow closer to the Neutral Good outer plane than the other eight; this has been the case for at least a century, but a heated debate continues within the scholarly community as to whether this is due to an offset position or to a much slower movement.

[religion +15]

You are well-versed in the tenets of your faith, and the principle teachings of the major gods/churches. Across Cardriss hundreds of gods are worshipped, but it's generally accepted that many of these are simply using other names for the same gods (for instance, anyone worshipping a sun god is really worshipping Sarenrae). The fey-god, Ng, who Wulfric secretly worships would, then, be a (somewhat misguided) expression of the Throneless King. In Westfall churches are full of earnest believers seeking to follow their gods' teachings. In Vinland churches are largely cultural institutions and most people see the gods sort of like patrons to whom they offer occasional prayers or sacrifices in order to curry favor. In Northreach worship of the gods is wildly inconsistent; with some fervently seeking the gods' blessings, others scorning them as the crutches of weak southerners, and still others embracing the old ways of nature magic and spirit worship. Although the Atlaeans heavily prefer arcane magic to divine, they still hope for a safe passage to the outer planes after death and Pharasma is the only god with an established temple in most of the Atlaean city-states. In Sunderan the gods are seen as the patrons of foreigners and there are virtually no temples or shrines to them (instead, nature and animal spirits are revered).