

### **The Baker**

Olivia Mekor is a woman in her late thirties, of a very calm and careful disposition. Since the death of her only child and more recently, her husband, she has become more withdrawn personally. Publically, though, she has taken over the bakery entirely, and continues to keep the village of Astor in bread.

She was born after the Heroes arrived and the barrier came down, and thus has only ever known Astor, and the catastrophic world that Loria has become. Unlike her husband (who was of a more nervous and timid disposition), this atmosphere tempered her. Quiet she might be, but she has a spine of steel. While she's kind to those in need, she rarely haggles unless someone is willing to offer a service in exchange, and never just hands food away for free.

Unlike her husband, she appears to have no interest in getting involved in the politics of the village. However, judging by the respect other villagers give her, it may be that she doesn't have a choice in the matter.

## **The Blacksmith**

George Carwell is one of the rarer younger generation, a man in his mid-twenties or so. He caused quite the stir in Astor about three years ago when he tumbled out of the Glass Forest and asked if they had a blacksmith in residence. While he has a fairly genial personality most of the time, he can also be stern to the point of harshness if he feels someone is doing something stupid or dangerous. Villagers still speak either bitterly or in awe of the way he took a set of young Astorian adventurers to task for venturing into the forest on a dare. He went through that forest once, and once was enough for him – or anyone else.

He rose to prominence fairly quickly, and the fact that Astor isn't in even worse repair is largely thanks to him. He has some ingenious techniques for reusing old metal, and while his prices for material are always consistent and firm, he's been known to offer labour for free, or in exchange for a few home cooked meals (he is, notoriously, a terrible cook himself). Trade has picked up since his arrival, as it seems he has a rudimentary understanding of economics and didn't hesitate to spread this knowledge.

Little is known about his past. He ignores anyone who asks about how he got through the roses and the Forest to arrive in Astor, and most people who ask about his life before Astor in general. He deflects in a friendly way at first, but if pressed, will just shut down completely and refuse to take. If pressed further, that person will probably find that they're definitely getting charged for labour next time they need his services. What little has been gleaned is that he hails from Kerros, and that before the Witches brought down the barrier, his family was not native to Loria. Because he grew up away from Astor, he has no faith or lack thereof in the Heroes, and has thus far remained neutral in any and all squabbles that erupt around the subject.

## The Herbalist

In her late twenties, Therese Goodman is among the first generation of 'treasured children' – people who were born in Astor after the village realised just how few children were being born and how difficult it was to conceive. Consequently, she grew up honoured and pampered (by Astorian standards) by the whole village. While on the one hand this did have her grow into a somewhat spoiled woman, she also gained an understanding of how the village worked together as a whole, and how necessary it is for them to pull together – with how hard it's been for everyone to survive, she knows it's possible she wouldn't have if other villagers hadn't been willing to lend a hand throughout the years.

Being 'treasured', as it were, Therese was in the position to catch the eye of any number of men within the village. There was a certain amount of pressure to marry someone within her own age group (as there was and still is a pervasive belief that more children are likely to occur from parents born further away from the time of the magical calamity that rocked the land). However, she ultimately settled down with an older hunter, Charlie Goodman, who was well-respected amongst the villagers for his good opinion, skill at providing food, and knowledge of the forest. Having been well-educated as Astorian villagers went, Therese spent much of her marriage picking her husband's brain for his knowledge of the various plants surrounding Astor, and combined the two to become a passable healer – she's often aided in reversing some of the unfortunate side effects of Grandma's potions.

Her life has taken a sharp turn for the worst in recent months. Therese grew up on the Hero myths like many of the other children of Astor, but she ultimately held no strong opinion on them either way – she had carved out a comfortable position for herself within Astorian society, and had never known anything different. Her husband, however, held little stock in the idea of being saved by mythological heroes, and in his effort to prove how useless they were, [ended up getting torn apart by direwolves](#). Always a darling of the village before, Therese found large swathes of people turning away from her, disassociating themselves from her and the other families of the hunters who had so steadfastly spoken out against the Heroes. She has sought solidarity in those villagers who feel the Heroes have no place in Astor, and through a mix of charisma and sheer anger, has risen to become their de facto leader.

## **The Innkeeper**

Sylvia Prentice, in her early fifties, is one of the very few people in Astor who was born before everything fell to pieces. Only a toddler at the time, she has no memory of what it was like, but that doesn't stop her from spreading tales. Harmless fun, really, most of her stories extrapolated from things her own parents told her about the way things used to be. While Christine Mekor gave the village hope by spreading the Hero Myth, Sylvia has done her part by ensuring the villagers have faith that a world still exists outside of Astor, that not everything has turned to ash and dust.

Historically, her family held title to much of the land that is used for farming around Astor these days. While technically she's 'renting' it out to the farmers, all she asks in payment is for the farmers to keep her inn (and the tavern within it) stocked with what she needs. Over the years, Sylvia has been instrumental in keeping the spirit of Astor alive, providing a gathering place for the villagers and occasionally entertainment.

With her focus on what lies outside of Astor, Sylvia has never hung all of her hopes on Heroes arising from the glass coffins and saving them all. It would be nice, certainly, but Sylvia has seen enough of the awful results of magic (and deals gone bad with Fox) to not expect the coffins to hold the magical answer to Astor's woes. However, this has made her something of an ally to Heroes who have awoken – she's realistic enough to understand that whatever else they are, they're only people, and can only do so much. She treats them accordingly, and scolds anyone she overhears getting too excited or too bitter about the situation. Whether they're the Heroes of Myth or not, Sylvia knows that Astor needs the extra people to help hold it together, especially with the trouble all the extra magic is sure to bring.

## **The Piper**

The traveling musician doesn't go by any other name than "Piper", so it's unknown by anyone but herself whether or not that's her real name. Her age is impossible to pin down, but most believe she's in her mid-to-late 20s. Piper is a stranger to the area of Astor, having come down from the mountains with the traders when the path opened up. A flirty new addition to the village, she is a little miffed that some people would have really believed that she'd steal their children and for said reasons, she'll refuse to play if any of her accusers are in the vicinity.

According to her she has come from all over and has never stayed in one place. Then again, she also claims to have subdued an army of ogres with only her reed pipe and a dance that she says she can't recreate without a little bit of privacy.

It's hard to tell whether everything she says is a lie or if most of it is the truth, but plenty of people in Astor seem to enjoy whatever she has to say, or whatever she has to play. Having been cut off from the outside for so long, people will take any kind of stories that they can get. If nothing else, her music is a thing of beauty, the likes of which have rarely been heard in Astor before. However, she claims she won't be around for long, and as soon as the snows melt, she'll be off on her next adventure. But Astor will always be on her list of places to visit.

## **The Trader**

Gailene Marquette is one of the first traders to come to Astor after the path opened up. A woman in her early 40s, she's been traveling the countryside where she can to bring her wares from Lekk. After having noticed this new path, she came upon the hidden village of Astor with the glee that comes from knowing she can make better sales. Because, after all, money makes the world go 'round.

She's a quiet, if persuasive, individual who is happy to strike up deals with anyone interested in her wares. Other than the typical food fanfare that comes with two different places - and boy, does she love being able to bring apples and oranges to sale back in the mountains - Gailene can often be found selling more exotic items, such as dragon bone weapons and gryphon talons. No word on how she comes across them, but she has a sly smile whenever anyone asks.

Should anyone ask her about Lekk, she will be hesitant at first to talk of the underground city, which has lasted for as long as it has because of its secrecy. But she'll warm up and give a few details of her homeland. She likes to talk about the rest of Loria more than anything though and even claims that she has had dealings with Kerros once or twice before.

As of recently, Gailene participated with her fellow Lekkites in the battle between the dragons and the Astorians. Whether she will return - and whether the Astorians can forgive the Lekkites - will remain to be seen.

## **The Farmer**

Arnolf “Arnie” Gardner is what they’d call a peacock in Astor. Ask any lady about him, and they’ll roll their eyes and cluck their tongues. Ask anyone else, and they’ll talk about his exemplary farming skills. He’s one of the few born not much longer after the barrier had gone down, before the birth rate in Astor took a nose dive. Sitting closer to 40 than he is to 35, he’s still got a lot in him ready to help any young lady in need.

As of this time, no offspring have been sired by Arnie.

Still, his farming techniques are widely admired by the community as a whole, and while his personality might put some off, they rely on him to help teach others how to farm. These were skills he learned from his parents who were gifted farmers. He oversees most of the farming done during the planting season as well as organizes the harvest and the gathering done from the orchards the roses protect.

As much of a jerk as he is, he still knows when to pull through for the rest of the village.