

APPENDIX 3: THE PANTHEON

Overseeing the world of Eras and all its inhabitants are five Gods. Although they make their home in the Eternal Realm, they have been known to appear in the Ephemeral Realm from time to time. The Gods are genderless and are able to take on any form—Human, animal, or otherwise—that they so choose. Many cultures believe that they walk amongst mortals and that any stranger could be a God in disguise.

The Gods shaped all things, and the common story tells that this occurred through multiple ‘collisions’. The Gold God pushed the White God and the Silver God into each other, and the result was the creation of the Allos. Other combinations yielded other creations:

Brown / Black Gods – Prytanis

Silver / White Gods - Allos

Brown / White Gods – Animals

Gold / Black Gods – Thymos

Silver / Black Gods – Skōti / Zidar

White / Black Gods - Psari

Humans result from the White, Black, and Silver Gods colliding. This is why their lives are measured as they are, with body and spirit bound together by magic. No other race is made up of 3 forces; it sets Humans apart. Little is known of the other beings besides humans and animals, with only more recent knowledge of the Prytanis after the Half-Century War.

There are no lesser Gods in Eras; there are simply mortals, who will one day perish, and the Gods, who live forever. Many mortals worship them, beseech them for fortune or gifts, or blame them for things gone wrong; sometimes the Gods intervene in mortal affairs, but far more often they are capricious and go where they will. It is believed in many cultures that the Gods may pose as mortal beings and move about the Ephemeral Realm, thus, it is common practice to exhibit kindness to strangers. It is generally agreed that it is better to avoid attracting their attention, for mortals caught up in the games of the Gods usually fare poorly in the end.



THE GODS

The Black God *is the force of Spirit. Its office is death, and it is responsible for shepherding, guiding, and dealing with the dead spirits of mortals.*

Of all its brethren, the Black God is by far the most frequently encountered. It has its own personal Realm Between, from which it fulfills its duties to mortal spirits. The realm is extremely small but features innumerable gates that lead to places throughout Eras. Remarkably stable and visible to the living and the dead alike, these gates are white in color and utterly unique in the fact that passing their thresholds instantly and irresistibly renders mortals dead. Within the Black God's realm, the Black God's word is the law. Spirits cannot affect anyone or anything they encounter there, nor may they remove anything from the realm. It is strongly believed that the Black God knows when a mortal passes and while it may allow them to linger for a time in the Ephemeral Realm, their destination is ultimately sealed.

The God itself is commonly described as "kindly but inexorable." Most mortals consider it a just and moderate being, and many report pleasant encounters with the Black upon their deaths, but some characterize it as dispassionate or even pitiless—it always replaces one white life stone with one black life stone upon a mortal's death, and it cannot be bargained with, bought, or otherwise swayed. It is cursed in times of great conflict, during wars, plagues, and so on, when scores of mortals are dying; it is blessed when mortals return to life unscathed. People commonly petition the Black God for pleasant dreams, restful spirits, protection from curses, and safe passage after dying.

Other names include the Kindly God, the Shepherd, the Inexorable God, the Keeper of Spirits, the Conductor of Spirits.

The White God *is the force of Body. Its office is life, and it is responsible for giving form and being to mortals.*

Beyond its control over the body, the White God is patron to many things: strength and the pursuit of excellence, healing arts, relationships between mortals, love, sex, overcoming obstacles, and ending conflicts. It is asked to mend friendships and spark or rekindle romances. Its most frequent petitioners are protectors, blacksmiths, midwives, warriors, and the ill, but to a lesser degree, it is also known for sympathy toward the poor and underprivileged, as well as those who seek that which they believe is out of reach. In Kordi, especially, it is known as the guardian of crossroads, both literal and metaphorical.

Of all the Gods, it is usually quickest to respond to offerings at shrines and is thought to commonly move amongst the mortals; thus earning its nickname, "the Walker." Stories across cultures reference a pale horse or white-furred fox appearing near shrines or at other meaningful locations, feeding the belief of the God's presence. It is also intrinsically linked to the Grim Hound, and the presence of such beasts is often taken as a good omen. Despite popular conceptions about its gentle or caring nature, however, the god is not entirely—or even usually—merciful, as is the way of life. Although known for its generosity, it seems to believe in the strength of self and grows displeased with those who would waste the gift of life or rest upon their laurels. It is known for encouraging mortals to better themselves—or fail trying. The White God has been blamed for releasing diseases into Eras, thereby creating a challenge that affects both the rich and the poor. Perhaps ironically, it is also the God most pleaded with for good health.

Other names include The Sustainer of Life, the Walker, the Aegis, and the Pale Guardian.

The Silver God *is the force of Magic. It is responsible for imbuing mortals with innate magical force.*

When the Gods collided to create Humans, the part of the Silver God that transferred was magic. In general, it is the easiest God to provoke, whether positively or negatively, and everyone knows that the Silver God favors those who, like it, experiment with magic, magical application, and magical theory. The Silver God also wields control of a wide range of raw emotions; it is common for mortals to make pleas for positive feelings towards themselves or for others.

The God has earned the nickname "the Snatcher " for being the only one suspected of taking mortals from the Ephemeral Realm. The exact nature and use of these mortals is a subject of great debate, as no incident of Godly kidnapping has thus far been confirmed in the Known World. Some people claim that the Silver God uses humans in experiments, and others that it values the magically gifted; regardless, the God is typically cursed or petitioned whenever a person goes missing. Most notably, it is viewed as a patron God of the Kordi Nation, for it is widely believed that the nation's founder, Archos Sihala, was one of its favored humans, and that it whispered the secrets of ritualism in her ears. In terms of offerings, the Silver God favors anything that deals with magic—items, runes, magic components, and so on. Most shrines also have a large, square tile of pure magepith, which will absorb any magic or spells that are cast into it by petitioners.

Other names include The Source of Magic, the Great Mage, the Master of Runes, the Snatcher, and the Inventor.

The Gold God *is the force of Fate. It is the two-faced God, the trickster, that which controls the forces that lie outside of the ken or control of mortals.*

The capricious warden of fate, the Gold God was believed to be originally responsible for the collisions that resulted in the creation of the many races that exist in Eras. Although this first bit of mischief was brought to a rather abrupt halt, the Gold God has since undertaken many different tricks of varying scope and magnitude. Those who offer it their petitions are as diverse as its ever-shifting nature: gamblers, risk-takers, and pranksters, of course; but also those dreaming of fame or fortune; and, finally, performers. The Gold God has been a well-known patron of the arts. It's suspected that many a prolific songster or poet has heard the whispers of the Gold God, disguised as the voice of their own inspiration, and such pieces are those that stand the test of time.

No mortals yet have been known to earn the Gold God's particular favor, but every performer hopes to be the first. Along these lines, the God seems to favor offerings of creative endeavors or accomplishments, including song, dance, and art, as well as anything that might be considered a gamble whose value is beyond what the petitioner can rightfully afford to spare.

Other names include the God of Fate, the Trickster, the Shifting God, and the Laird of Chance.

The Brown God *is the source of the Elements. It oversees the weather, flora, fauna, non-sentient mortals, and the five elements of fire, water, metal, wood, and earth.*

The Brown God is credited with the creation of the Ephemeral Realm. Using the five elements of fire, water, metal, wood, and earth, it fashioned the fabric of the realm as well as the weather and tides, the days and seasons. Because the Brown God is so strongly connected to the Ephemeral Realm, many mortals believe that it is encountered relatively often, even if the mortals involved do not recognize the God. The Brown God is unique in that it, and it alone, parcels out the ability to use thaumaturgy to mortals; the magic is not innate, and cannot be learned except with the God's "permission." An abrupt spike in the occurrence of thaumaturgy since the opening of The Flaming Gate has made people wary of the God's intentions, or suspicious that its control of who possesses the magic has been lost.

On the whole, people tend to view the Brown God as cold, uncaring, and callous; it clearly delights in setting difficult and usually fatal challenges, but then ignores anyone or anything that fails. The Brown God is blamed for the materialization of the Flaming Gate, which allowed for the invasion of the elemental beings from Prytania. It is cursed for natural disasters, famines, and most illnesses; it is praised during times of good weather and abundant harvest. Petitioners of the Brown God often plead for fair weather, successful hunts, safe travels, or protection in the wild; and seemingly favored offerings include trophies from a hunt, the offer to undertake or complete a quest or challenge, or a story highlighting the petitioner's triumph over misfortune or competitors.

Other names include the Source of the Elements, Nature, the Keeper of the Wardens, and the Ephemeral God.