

Magic in Arterra

In modern Arterra there are two sources of magic, the arcane and the divine. The true origins of magic are lost to time. Suffice it to say that the gods learned to enforce their will on the energies in and around them to create magic. Some gods such as Mystyl or Odin had a higher affinity for the practice of magic. To them using magic was as breathing, as walking from one place to another. Others such as Torog or Primus struggled to learn, unsure or unaware of the process of magic. In time all the gods found some use for magic and today it is impossible to determine if their various abilities stem from their use of magic or their intrinsic godhood.

Before the creation of the Prime Material plane the only way for a mortal to gain access to magic was for a god to grant it to them. A lesser god or god's high servant would do as a magic-giving patron, but mortals had no way to grasp the secrets of magic themselves. This magic granted by the gods was called divine magic. This type of magic is still quite popular today and can be seen in many creatures, from lowly imps to the highest divine cleric.

When the Prime Material plane was created under the stewardship of Io, a pact of gods was formed. These gods decided that the denizens of this new plane (and indeed the denizens of all the planes) should no longer be required to plead with a god to receive their magic. The Gods of the Weave believed that the pursuit of the knowledge of magic was in itself a worthy cause. They thought that anything able to tap into magical energies through any means deserved magical abilities they gained. That belief was a position highly debated by the gods creating the Prime Material plane, but it had merit and there was much to be gained by allowing mortals to tamper with magic.

The Gods of the Weave used their power during creation to create the Weave. The Weave was a self-perpetuating categorizing of the magical energies present in all of reality. The Weave was not the source of magic itself, but rather a way to understand magic. Mortals attempting to channel magical energies could now tap into the limited powers they were able to understand. That understanding came in many forms. Some creatures such as dragons and elves were created so close in form to the essence of magic that using magic through the Weave was second nature. Others had no natural talent for the Weave but were able to apply their talents of inquisition and discovery to learn magic and channel it in a way that best fit their own being. This type of magic, magic not gained as a gift from the gods but rather through one's own abilities, was called arcane magic.

Since the creation of the Weave and the Prime Material plane magic has been all present throughout Arterra. Minor magical effects such as creating a campfire from nothing or levitating a plate of food are commonly done. Sometimes casters are so used to magic that even they can't really say where their magic comes from. A town of 250 people will probably have around 5 people who can cast a cantrip and maybe one or two people who know some higher form of magic. That being said, learning and controlling magic is a skill that must first be learned and then be honed. There are many cases where, say, a farmhand might have once lit a lantern through casting a spell, but as they age and are swept along in their daily life forget that flick of the wrist or phrase that they once used. Spell casters that are truly able to bend reality to their will are quite a bit rarer and highly prized. They will often be found at places of honor in high courts or traveling the world as an adventurer.

Monsters and Monstrosities

Through cataclysmic wars and arcane twisting many monstrosities of Arterra have been born. Sometimes the birth was purposeful. One such case is the owlbear; born from a twisted experiment of a long dead wizard. He fused and bred the creatures but came to a quick demise caring for them one day. Dangerous and surprisingly adept at hunting, the owlbear population survived. The creatures can still be found throughout Arterra today. Other times the birth was unintentional. Aboleths are ancient creatures from the elemental plane of water. They were spontaneously born there from dark thoughts that sunk to deep waters. In the time of primordial Arterra some of the aboleth's schemes turned to the Prime Material plane and they made the crossing over to Arterra's seas.

When the gods made the Prime Material they knew that combining the energies of the plane and themselves would create a stew pot of possibilities. While most gods assumed that some creatures would appear from the natural energies of Arterra none of them thought that those creatures would be able to rival their own creations. What chance could the random collisions of natural energy have against the divine plans of gods? Of course, they were all wrong. Today many creatures created from the pure energies of the Prime Material walk the land of Arterra. From firbolgs to gibbering mouthers, from elementals to human civilizations, multitudes of creatures that the gods did not originally intend to exist now preside over large portions of Arterra.

Now what truly makes a monster a monster is a matter of perspective. At the beginning of Arterra all creatures created by gods were said to be civilized and all creatures created by the land of Arterra itself were said to be monsters. Over time that has changed considerably. For example, the orcs were once thought to be a proud race of warriors. Now peasants hidden in their home pray that their village will not be the next to fall to those green and gray skinned monsters. Conversely gnomes were long ago thought to be akin to small mischievous fairies that stole your gold and sliced your throat if they thought it humorous. Now gnomes have a reputation of being intelligent, caring creatures. Gnomes are seen commonly in many large cities around Arterra. In modern Arterra where you grew up will most likely determine who you think is a monster and who you think is a person. It can be a dangerous supposition.

All that being said, it is well known that the lands of Arterra belong much more to the wild creatures of the world than they do to sentient people. The nations that do exist are spread thin on the surface of Arterra with only a few cities to their name. Between these bastions of civilization lie vast swaths of untamed land. Many try to make a living in the wilds or live in small villages along the roads between large towns. In such places, attacks by horrific creatures, plague, famine, and natural disasters are common. Arterra can be an unforgiving place. Worse still there are dark corners of the world where powerful beings work to bring down organized civilization. It is a testament to the ingenuity and fortitude of the races of Arterra that they can form cultures and shared histories, that they can pass down what they know to their children.

Death in Arterra

There are many myths and mysteries that surround passing into death in Arterra. Generally when a being with a soul dies in Arterra that soul is claimed by whatever deity that being worshipped. When a being dies its soul is judged by the gods who watched over them. Depending on the circumstance of the death and the personal tenants of the deceased many different gods may touch the soul before it comes to its final resting place. One such god is The Raven Queen. She presides over the moment of death, ensuring that the soul is not tampered with and the remains of the body are not defiled. She abhors the undead and wishes for each mortal to meet their just end. Another such god is Myrkul, Lord of Bones. He is the ever present threat of death, looming over all of creation as a reminder of their end. Many evil or corrupted souls that worship no god in particular end up serving Myrkul's dark whims in his Bone Castle for all eternity. To gods the souls of mortals are like sweet honey. Therefore there exists a complicated web of laws and power struggles amidst the gods to determine which of them will have the soul once a being dies. Most mortals know if they follow their god's tenants and serve them well, they will spend their afterlife in the realm of that god.

Most afterlives are determined by the individual, but the case is slightly different for elves, dwarves, and orcs. For these races there is a strong almost inevitable tug to follow one of the gods of the pantheon that formed them during creation. Even if a particular elf, dwarf, or orc does not grow up in their homeland, surrounded by the imagery of their gods and their followers, something inside themselves points them towards that pantheon. It is a connection forged at the beginning of their being, wedged deep in their blood.

The dwarves are drawn to the gods of stone and thunder. These are Odin and his family, often called the Northern gods. If a dwarf dies in glorious combat venerating the name of their god they will spend eternity in the hall of Vahalla in Ysgard, fighting and drinking to their heart's content. If a dwarf dies of sickness or old age they are bound to an eternity serving Hel in the Gray Waste, shuffling along that ending landscape unable to die. The elves are drawn to the gods of forests and philosophy. They are Zeus and his family, often called the Southern gods. If an elf is true to themselves and their god, and is able to reach some higher way of thinking before they die, they are able to lounge and philosophise along with their gods in Arborea. If an elf is selfish, deceitful and betrays their true nature they are sent to serve Hades in the Gray Wastes along the River Styx. Orcs are drawn singularly to Gruuumsh and the lesser gods of war and barbarism that surround him. Orcs that take what they want and show great strength in their lifetime are given eternal victory in the neverending war Gruuumsh wages in Acheron. Those that do not please Gruuumsh are sent to Acheron to die over and over in those same battles. This is the way it has been for these races since creation.

Many other races have similar afterlife. No matter a person's race they are judged at death by the gods and sent to their eternal reward. Even many beasts and other low baring monsters are judged and spend a second life hunting or being hunted in the Beastlands. Souls are not always claimed by the gods. For all those that have died too young, too feral, or too lost to know the gods lies an afterlife of aimless drifting, unclaimed by the gods. Rarely those souls end up inhabiting another creature at the moment of its birth. Most commonly they are sent back to the Astral plane and disperse in the swirl of energies present there. For all souls there exists

a time frame in which they can, through powerful magics, be pulled back to the Prime Material plane from whatever Outer Plane they were sent to, effectively bringing them back to life.

At the time of death, not all souls are able to pass freely. When the Dead Four ascended their mortal bodies into godhood they left their foul magic of necromancy. Necromancy is such a defilement because it uses the body of a person without consulting its soul. This creates a discord in the person, tethering the soul to the physical realm and making it difficult (but not impossible) for the soul to move into the afterlife. Not to mention the undead body can perform some pretty nefarious actions. There are many types of undead that can bind the soul. They range all the way from completely disregarding the soul when performing a mundane zombie to a lich's binding of their own soul to a phylactery. Often a necromancer is not even needed, such as when a ghost's unfinished business in life prevents it from moving to the afterlife or when the dark energies of a crypt animate the corpses entombed there. Souls can even be trapped into objects such as precious gems. This is sometimes done as a preventative measure by paranoid individuals. Other times it is done as a punishment or purely out of spite. A soul can end up in many, many places upon a creature's death.

Arterra's Calendar

Arterra's most accepted calendar has 24 hours days, 6 day weeks, 36 day months, and 9 month years. The days of the week are Unday, Dusday, Dreesday, Oresday, Isday, and Kisday in that order. The months are Iyodar, Trustar, Cretar, Watchan, Disdan, Struditan, Restance, Resigance, and Dececlance. Dececlance and Iyodar are the winter months, Trustar, Cretar and Watchan are the spring months, Watchan and Disdan are the summer months, Struditan, Restance, and Resignace are the fall months. The seasons in Arterra are relatively tame and the climate is fairly temperate even near the poles.

This calendar of Arterra is only a few hundred years old, being created when the most recent large trade agreement was struck between the people living on the coast of the Thithe Sea.

Paste this text in [this website](#) to see a calender of the modern year, 546:

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{"year_len":324,"events":0,"n_months":9,"months":["Iyodar","Trustar","Cretar","Watchan","Disdan","Struditan","Restance","Resigance","Dececlance"],"month_len":{"Iyodar":36,"Trustar":36,"Cretar":36,"Watchan":36,"Disdan":36,"Struditan":36,"Restance":36,"Resigance":36,"Dececlance":36},"week_len":6,"weekdays":["Unday","Dusday","Dreesday","Oresday","Isday","Kisday"],"n_moons":2,"moons":["Rurus","Thiria"],"lunar_cyc":{"Rurus":14,"Thiria":25},"lunar_shf":{"Rurus":0,"Thiria":0},"year":546,"first_day":0,"notes":{"546-1-36":"New Moons","546-1-28":"Large Comet","546-2-36":"Full Moons","546-3-27":"Full Moons","546-4-27":"New Moons","546-5-18":"New Moons","546-6-18":"Harvest Festival, Full Moons","546-8-9":"New Moons","546-9-36":"Winter Festival, Full Moons","546-1-1":"New Year Festival","546-9-31":"Winter Festival, Winter Solstice","546-9-32":"Winter Festival","546-9-33":"Winter Festival","546-9-34":"Winter Festival","546-9-35":"Winter Festival","546-5-17":"Summer Solstice, Fire Festival","546-3-14":"Festival of Love","546-4-3":"Wilds Festival","546-8-13":"Ascension of Youth Festival","546-4-34":"Challenger Festival","546-2-20":"Star Fall Festival","546-9-10":"The Passing Festival","546-3-5":"Strong Northern Aurora","546-4-9":"Strong Southern
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Aurora", "546-6-26": "Shower of Shooting Stars", "546-7-21": "The Dead's Festival", "546-8-23": "Lunar Eclipse"]}]}

Cosmology of Arterra

There is only one sun above Arterra. For that reason Arterra's sun does not have an established name. Most people in Arterra simply call it "sun" or "the sun" though some do call it Pelor, Lathander, or Apollo when trying to connect the sun to their god. The sun features prominently in many myths as it is a great energy source for many magics in Arterra.

Arterra has two moons, Rurus and Thiria. Rurus is much larger than Thiria and orbits Arterra at a much faster rate. This means Rurus sheds more light but seems more fickle than Thiria. Rurus was made during the creation of Arterra while Thiria is a product of the conflicts of Strife and was created before the Divine Gate. Rurus is generally thought of as male and Thiria as female. These are the most common interpretations of the moon in Arterra, though how the moon is thought of changes from place to place.

Arterra's night sky is full of constellations named and given life to by both gods and men. Because of the mystical nature of the stars the people of Arterra are not exactly certain what they are. When powerful mages can literally remove stars from the sky or a god can cause a constellation to become flesh it can be difficult to create a unified theory as to what the stars are. Beyond the sun and moon not much is known of Arterra's skies. Only the most studious and particular scholars are aware of Arterra's cosmology.

Nationstates

Arterra is lorded over by a series of nationstates. These powers usually consist of a couple large cities and/or keeps and their surrounding vassals. During the modern era of Arterra there have been around 30 of these large cities throughout the entire world. With some of the cities joining together, around 15 nationstates exist on Arterra. The structure of these nationstates can vary but in general they follow a feudal system with the government of the city at the center of the state holding most of the power and the smaller surrounding settlements paying taxes and services for protection and governance.

The majority of Arterra's population lives under one of these many nationstates. If you live in Arterra there is a good chance you've spent most of your life indirectly answering to or vaguely aware of some king, emperor, council, parliament, or other governing body. However because communication outside of magical means is difficult, many outer settlements still technically inside a nation state's borders are left to rule themselves. In general, local governments retain a lot of power over local populations.

Even though much of Arterra's population resides inside the borders of nations, those nations are not the most powerful entities on Arterra. In fact, most of the landmass of Arterra is still untamed wilds. As those wilds are the homes of monstrosities, beasts, and wild tribes of savages it is an inhospitable place to live for many. Nationstates may think of themselves as proud accomplishments of society, but a single enraged dragon or group of stalwart giants could very well overthrow any of those nation's capitals.

Geological Makeup of Arterra

Arterra is a stagnant lid planet, a planet without plate tectonics. This means that the geography of Arterra has stayed relatively constant over long periods of time. Additionally the remnants of old civilizations are often left undisturbed and become harder to date. This also means there are fewer naturally occurring mountains and volcanoes on Arterra than might be expected and those mountains are not extraordinarily high.

Arterra is covered mostly in water with one central land mass. Mountain ranges in Arterra are almost all inland with most of its coastline at sea level. Traveling across the entire length of Arterra at its equator (walking across water and such) at a reasonable speed with breaks for sleeping and eating would take around 400 days. Vegetation and animal life covers all of Arterra's surface. Everywhere you go on Arterra you'll find something living there.

Overall, Arterra has a temperate climate with four seasons happening in most places around the world. Even near the poles the weather is warm and calm enough for most sentient races to get by. Most areas of extreme weather are caused by non-natural magical phenomena. All around Arterra are remnants of its days connected to the primordial energies of the elemental inner planes. Around these remnants the weather can vary wildly.