

Natural History

Natural history is a section both on how people of Tigmar view their world, and how their world would be perceived by modern Earthlings such as ourselves.

Natural History for Tigmar is the knowledge possessed by learned academics and magicians. Religious people often have far different conceptions as to why things are the way they are, and of course academics always differ on their opinions of only partially explained events. Note that more information pertinent to natural history can be found in the Demonology and Alchemy sections that follow.

The Two Realms

The two realms are the basis of the world. The two realms are the physical realm and the spiritual realm.

Life is a manifestation of the spirit on the physical realm. All living things are not purely physical and not purely spiritual but are instead the connection, or mixing of these two elements.

The most basic form of life is a naturally living being. A naturally living being draws essence, or power, from the spiritual realm and combines it with physical matter usually centered at the brain. Naturally living beings also have auras which radiate spiritual energy out to other beings for communication and protection purposes. In addition some energy is used in maintaining the physical form. This is why living creatures use spiritual energy and need their link to the spiritual plane.

Personality and intelligence together are called simply Complexity, which is a function of how the link between the spiritual and physical realms is maintained. Some links have more delicate structure to them, some links are solidly built, and the power which a link allows through varies depending on the spirit.

Loosely speaking, one can view a self or individual or single life form as the complex weave of spirit energy threads maintained by a physical form so the entire thing does not dissolve into chaos or nothingness.

Complexity

Complexity is a measure of the sophistication of a self. It is a measure of stability and personality and intelligence. A machine which is unshakable no matter what spiritual event happens to it but which is also fairly simple might have the same complexity as a thinking being which is susceptible to surrounding spiritual forces but which is self aware and sentient.

In fact the steadfast fanatic and the highly accommodating genius might have the same spiritual complexity, but the first due to stability and the second due only to a more complex personality.

Another way to think of Complexity is as the sum of the number of parts a machine has and the quality of the parts the machine has. The number of parts is a measure

of the personality and intelligence of the spirit. The quality of the parts reflects the unshakable nature, or immunity and resistance to other spirits and ambient events. So a unbreakable single part machine might be the same Complexity as a many part machine with inferior quality parts.

Old Trees

Sometimes spirits can grow or shrink over time due to pure randomness. An excellent example of this is a tree spirit, over the course of many years, may accidentally end up as a highly complex entity. However, due to the lack of organization of this complexity, the tree usually is no more resistant to magic than any other less complex tree, and it is virtually impossible to communicate with due to its disorganization and alien nature.

There are sects which seek such trees out to worship them. They are commonly called Druids, and they have allegedly learned different, if not great, wisdom from the strange spirits of the forest.

Beings with No Link

Some beings have lost their link to the spirit realm. Natural beings have most of their self on the more physical side of the link, and so remain when the link is broken.

These beings often inverse their auras and take energy from life forms around them to maintain their self.

These beings are commonly called ghosts, vampires, and liches. They are discussed further in the Demonology section.

Demons

Demons, discussed further under Demonology, can be conceived of as an individual *self* which has been stuck in the spirit realm and has to maintain its complex weave of spiritual energy threads with no physical anchor.

Demons can be then summoned in all or in part to the physical realm where they anchor to a physical form and can grow and evolve. When they are in the spirit realm they have to spend all their time maintaining themselves and so they can not evolve and change too much. This is why Demons want to be in the physical realm.

A demon in the physical realm is basically like a natural life form except the link to the spiritual realm is much less secure and is more susceptible to breakage. In addition much of the personality is more on the spirit side of the link, so when the link is broken most of the demon returns to the spirit realm instead of being stranded on the physical realm.

Instant Magic

Magic is spiritual power channelled through some link to the physical world where it is formed and then released to have some kind of an effect.

This process brings excessive levels of spirit through a link, and that extra energy burns away at the physical component of the link which causes a loss of stability, personality, or Complexity in the spirit in question.

Spell Machines

Spell machines are composed of an artificially created spirit link which pulls power from the spirit realm, forms it, and releases it to have some effect.

The spell machine, if it does not have a physical anchor, is quite unstable and easily disrupted by any spiritual influence be it a spell or a being in the area. Because of this most spell machines are anchored to some physical object to gain stability much like a living creature does naturally.

Automatons

Automatons are artificially created spirit links which are connected to some physical body. However instead of dedicating Complexity to maintaining stability with little physical form and to casting spells continuously like spell machines do, the Complexity is dedicated to creating a limited mind or simple list of instructions which constitute the Automaton's self.

In essence the Automaton is life with a weak spirit link, and a physical form which is most likely not complex enough to truly maintain an active and changing personality.

Natural Advantage

Naturally living beings have an advantage of evolution and perfection in their spirit link. Naturally living beings have the ability to change their physical structure which is maintaining the spirit or self, and this allows for an easy way to change personality, namely to grow and change as new experiences are processed.

Unnatural things are hack jobs by wizards and do not have the ability to change like this, and so most automatons remain the same, which makes them in essence complex machines.

This natural advantage is another thing demons seek when they attempt to gain access to the physical realm. It allows them to learn quickly and evolve themselves to their conception of perfection. In essence it is the only way to get older and wiser for them.

Lightning

Electricity does not exist as we know it on Earth in Tigmar. Lightning is the spirit world breaking into our own world up where the emptiness and void of the sky and clouds make it possible. The spirits use the milling cloud structure as a physical form to latch onto and then they leap from the clouds to the earth as invaders.

These spirits are, everyone agrees, extremely evil. Whatever they hit becomes their new physical structure where they live. Due to this, any living object which has

been hit by lightning is considered possessed, and immediately killed.

Trees hit by lightning are also often destroyed although the Lant religion has a different view of this.

They study these trees extensively and have come up with the knowledge that lightning which has hit a tree has to fight for possession of the tree. If the tree is still living the benevolent tree spirit has taken the power of the lightning invader and is made into a very powerful and benevolent tree spirit.

However if the tree dies, the invader has won, and the tree is then a very powerful and evil force which has a large number of connections to the surrounding land. Destroying such a tree is considered a good thing, except the spirit often jumps from the tree to the destroyer, possessing him. The usual solution is to just leave the tree far alone until a powerful enough Lantist priest banishes and purifies the burned tree.

Other forms of electricity are basically pure spirit energy arching from one physical place to another. This spirit force is usually so chaotic it can not help but be harmful on any spirit it encounters.

Because of these two things, all electricity in any form is considered to be pure unadulterated evil by almost all residents of Tigmar.

Some Letters

The issue of magic being from the Gods or from Nature is one which has plagued the wizards and priests for eons innumerable.

To give you a taste of the issues involved and the ideas involved, we have included the following manuscript which is a record of a debate between Tyrus the Black and Sampson, Follower of Sun. Tyrus was a mage of some renown who was killed a few years ago, and Sampson was a Follower who was tried and killed as a Follower of Dark only two years ago in the province of Fardan.

Presented in its original form Tyrus and Sampson have previously acknowledged magic as a power capable of controlling the world, and now struggle to come to grips with the repercussions of that fact.

The final letter to Sampson describes the charges against Tyrus made by the Shards of the Sun which led to his execution, as reported by the Shards.

To Sampson, Follower of Sun

Magic, my good fellow, is none other than the force of the spirit. Having called the demons and questioned them thoroughly, I have determined to demonstrate to you the truth of my claims. I have found as follows:

1) There must be a spiritual realm, in which reside all spirits, sentient or not. Here the spirits wander aimlessly, in limbo, without fear or desire, and perhaps not fully aware of their condition.

2) These spirits, when called into our earthy world, possess the most curious powers. They may alter our world as they see fit, not restrained by our natural laws, due to their discrepant form. One may prefer to see these forces perhaps not as formed spirits, but rather as pure power.

Hence, I think it evident that religion hath no say in the matter of whence the magical powers derive; the spirits themselves have revealed the above to me after diligent questioning. Please, correspond with me and see if I cannot convince you that what I say is truth, for without your assistance, I fear the accursed Shards will be my end.

Tyrus the Black

To Tyrus

Although you may perceive the truth of what the spirits have told you, know that they do not tell everything. Time immemorial has shown, proven, that the gods, especially the four great Actors, are the origin of magics. They may cloak their powers in the guise of "spirit," but they are its ultimate source, and I do not see how you can escape this conclusion for all your nebulous reasonings.

The Church of Aranity is correct in its contention that

true magical power is a product of spiritual faith, while blackened forces flow from those determined to gain power without the aid of the gods. Hence, think of the insanity of many who reject the Truth, their ravings, the terrible need for the Shards of the Sun, without whom sickness and death through tainted force would become unleashed.

Think of the true members of the Church! Do any of the true become as ruined by magics as the Wizard? Do not the true perform magics as well? It is because of the gods, and their will, that our works are pure miracles, your works but despicable parodies.

Follower Sampson

To Sampson, Follower of Sun

Reading your response, I see that you will not succumb to the evidence easily. Well, first I shall account for some of your "counter-examples" before yet again attempting to sway you.

The brain is the key to magic. This curious, pulpy organ situated within the cranium serves as the link between the spiritual realm and our universe. This connection, thin but resilient, is the avenue of the soul. Hereby our bodies are connected to a sentient spirit. Know that all life has such connections.

When the Wizard pulls the force from the other kingdom, the soul must be the primary connection. As the soul is linked directly to the brain, channeled spiritual essence flows here firstly. As this power must needs be formed, as to facilitate its use in the world, the brain organizes the randomness.

The power enters the brain everywhere, however. The brain must have some delay before it can safely move the power, and during this interval the power will act randomly upon the tissues. Hence, the raw powers have various effects upon the soggy gray organ, scorching the seat of the mind. Thus, the holes found by Shards are the areas damaged by the magics, and the insanities of the Wizard the outcome of using overmuch power.

Next, you have no proof that the rites of the Church work any differently than those of the Wizard. Mere contention based upon piteous faith shall not convince me of the error of my theories, as they lead to a workable solution to the problem of the origin of magic.

Tyrus the Black

To Tyrus,

Your heresy saddens me; for you mean no real harm. Obviously, your mind must suffer from the affliction of the gods, the touch of the Dark, upon the soul. No man of well mind could expound such a frivolous and useless

system as that you have presented.

For the gods have made known to us through our Holy Rituals the ways of power that accord with the good will. Power unbeknownst to the Wizard may be summoned by our knowledge, another sign of the gift of the gods. Dark tempts those with false and shadowy glimpses of the truth, while Sun illuminates all that is meant to be seen. As my eyes cannot perceive this spirit place, I have little reason to accept your profane notions. I can, however, in the light rest my eyes upon our rites, and magics given us by Sun. I can see that they work.

I am sorry to report that the Shards of the Sun have made known to me that you have become suspect. I did not report you, but you must be very far gone indeed, my friend, for the news of your insanity is known even here. They will arrive soon, and I pray to the Sun that my letter reaches you first, that you might either peaceably give yourself over or hide, banished for evermore.

Follower Sampson

To Follower Sampson

Re: Finding of the Tribunal of the Sun

The charges brought against Tyrus the Black are as follows: resisting righteous questioning, atheism, blasphemy, treasonous activities, sorcery, and association with Dark. Tyrus was found guilty of all counts.

He has been executed in the usual way. We performed the confirming test upon his brain. Therein we found many abnormalities and burned areas, consistent with the charges of sorcery. We have cleansed his body and have burned him, exposing his Darkness to the Sun. Sun pity the Dark!

We will soon arrive to question you, Follower Sampson. We are much interested in your correspondence with the Wizard, and have found several notes from you in his belongings. We hope that you will cooperate with our righteous questioning.

May Sun Illuminate,
Inquisitor Thrax

Astronomy

Tigmarian astrologers have located at least 7 “wanderers,” or planets, in the heavens. These planets have various names and portents depending upon which religious system upon which one bases the astrology.

Modern science dictates that Tigmar lies at the center of the universe, and the stars and planets rotate around her magnificence.

In exception to the above, there are many groups of people, such as the Wise Men of Sampson City, who have theorized that the world is round and roughly thirty thousand miles in circumference, and that human civilization does not compose most of it, who suspect the planets are not bound to endlessly circle Earth, but are other bodies on their own agendas. These people are strongly disliked and often burned as heretics.

In addition to the planets, two moons orbit Earth. The smaller of the moons, known as Gaar's Eye, has a vaguely reddish hue and is thought to represent the bloodshot eye of the greatest of the demons. The larger of the moons, called Talliton, is a slightly yellow white color and very bright. The period of Gaar's Eye is roughly 45 days, and the period of Talliton is 16 days.

Gaar's eye has a complex, roughly elliptical orbit heavily influenced by the heavy Talliton in conjunction with Earth. Due to this, many complicated mathematics are dedicated to its period. For general usage, however, no time is kept by Gaar's eye as it is considered to be treacherous and deceiving, and people count on it roughly being full every 45 days. In addition Gaar's eye grows and shrinks in visible size due to its elliptical orbit.

Talliton suffers none of these problems as it is so heavy the perturbations due to Gaar's eye are negligible. The orbits of the two moons are by no means stable, and many an Astronomer calculates the date of the Apocalypse, when the heavens come crashing to Earth to forever silence her.

The two moons gives rise to a highly complicated and chaotic tidal structure. This is so much of a problem that people only roughly know the link between tides and the moons. Only the most learned and the pirates of the Granite Flats can compute true high tide and true low tide.

Luckily the larger moon, Talliton, has much more of an impact on the tides than Gaar's Eye, so the average sailor can take rough guesses as to the situation.

An interesting aspect of the tides of the planet is roughly every six months there is a very high tide, called the Wash, which allows a much easier passage through the Granite Flats. In addition, anyone born in these times is often taken in or at least watched by the Silver Waters sect, which a highly pagan group of healers much appreciated by the poor and the peasantry and much hated by the higher orders of Aranity.

Moon Calendar



Gaar's eye has 45 day (rough) cycle
 Talliton has a 16 day cycle
 Given this a full cycle is usually something like the following:

Table 72: Lunar Calendar (Full Moons)

Gaar's Eye	Talliton
day 0	day 0
	16
	32
45	new at 40
	48
new at 67	64
	80
90	new at 88
	96
new at 112	112 (<i>Great Wash</i>)
	128
135	new at 136 (<i>Wash</i>)
	144
new at 157	160
180	new at 168
	176
	192
new at 202	208
225	224 (Wash)

The Silver Waters Sect

The Silver Waters Sect is a group of pacifistic priests who bless crops unbidden and keep dark spirits and demons at bay. They are not spoken of by the peasantry as the influence of Aranity dictates the Silver Waters sect is of Dark, but nevertheless they are renown as excellent healers and good people.

All Silver Waters Sect members are born on the day of the Wash, or the very high tide.

Dating Systems

Many dating systems exist throughout Tigmar. The most common one used is the Sampsonist system which dates from the birth of Sampson. In this dating system, now is 387 years old. Before Sampson is denoted Pre Sampson or PS. After Sampson is AS. This dating system is widely used by the general populace throughout the Holy Empire, Farman, Orcheron, much of the Confederacy of Sampson, and the Kingdom of Sampson.

Another dating system used before Sampson and by scholars even today as their protest against the idol of Sampson in general, is the Turian system which dates from the founding of Lorac al Tur. In this system, now is 1243 post Tur, or PT. Previous years are referred to as being BT or before Tur. Some theorize that this system actually dates to the second building of Lorac al Tur as there are some vague legends as to its having been sacked by invaders from the Sander plains. These people point primarily to a document called the Turian scroll written shortly after the colonization of the southwestern Tigmarian coastline. This scroll describes the colonization as being a result of escaping from persecution from a kingdom to the north. A famous bout of northern persecution called Extermination is commonly described in most history texts as being at least 1400 years ago, and if this in fact was the cause of the settlement of Lorac al Tur, then the city must have been founded far before 0 PT. A historical text on the Extermination written around 120 BT does describe a large settlement escaping to the sea after attacking and taking over a military port of some sort, so these two events do seem connected.

The Oots, of course, have their own dating system from their appearance on the planet. According to the Oots, they are in the year 466 After Oot-Mak, or AOM. Before this great event is Before Oot-Mak or BOM.

Throughout the rules and world information, all dates are in Sampsonist terms. The conversions are as follows: to get from Turian to Oot, subtract 777 from the year. To go the other way, add 777.

Table 73: The Three Dating Systems

Sampsonist	Turian	Oot
856 PS	0 PT	777 BOM
79 PS	777 PT	0 AOM
0 AS	856 PT	79 AOM
387 AS	1243 PT	466 AOM

An even more obscure dating system used in some old documents and used by some secret societies of Mogs and sometimes even humans is the dating system centered around the Calamity which allegedly created

the Mogs. This dating system puts now at 2012 AC and the end of the Calamity at 0 AC. Before the Calamity is denoted BC.

Prophecy

Humanity uses fortune telling to aid decision making processes. The main forms of fortune telling are Astrology, Kaine, Coal Reading of the Kingdom of the Fire God, and Entrails Readings of various animals in some parts of the Farman.

Astrology

Astrology is a science very unlike the horoscopes of modern day Earth's tabloids. Astrology can divine character qualities and veiled potential. Many a commoner has, through a passing accomplished Gypsy or stargazer, been enlightened as to secret talent and ability, be it in workmanship or the dance of combat.

Astrology is also useful for divining the most likely outcomes of a task or quest. The wary traveler will travel only when the planets are placed in proper conjunction, and only the foolish merchant ignores an Astrologers warning.

Astrology can be religiously or scientifically based. Religiously based astrology devotes more time to the divination of the gods' will through the stars while less religious astrology studies the flow of fate and time. The largest sect follows an astrology sharing the same roots as Aranity. The four brightest planets are called the primary house, and their conjugation plays the largest role in Astrology with the exception of the moons and the sun.

The other three planets have a more slight role, and are heavily connected to the Watchers who regard humanity, and especially technology, with malice and distrust. The Watchers portend doom and strife during their ascension; during these periods, if the four other planets are not in proper conjugation, the darkest times of Tigmar are at hand. Happily, such a time is predicted to occur over the course of the next several years, with one of the worst possible arrangements due in a mere three years.

Thus, a battle over the fates of humanity is enacted in the night sky. Astrology plays a very real role in the belief systems of Tigmarians, both peasant and nobles alike. Horoscopes are generally much more specific than modern-day newspaper castings. Direct and unambiguous answers are given, and unpleasant and incorrect answers have caused the deaths of many renowned astrologers.

The moons play a larger and also in a way a smaller role in Astrology. Gaar's eye is associated with the flux of death and pestilence, in specific the Red Eye Plague, and Talliton is associated with growth. Talliton, sometimes thought of as a father by peasants, in specific the Tallanic religion which used to be in northern Orcheron, is revered as the one who creates rain and causes the crops to grow. Most planting occur when Talliton is full.

When Gaar's Eye is open and Talliton is dark most peasants do not go out in the eerie red light because then



Gaar commands his demon hordes to arise and ravage the lands of Tigmar. This event, called the Bleeding, occurs roughly every 720 days.

Kaine

Kaine is a fortune telling process where ten small pieces of ivory shaped in various slender, bent, stick-like shapes, each uniquely formed, are put in a small soft leather cup, shaken, and dumped on the table after a question or general thought is enunciated. Then the person receiving the reading pulls one stick out of the pile while trying to not disturb the remaining sticks. Kaine seems to be slightly magical in the sense that good Kaine readers can pull sticks to give themselves better fortunes. However if the person intentionally disturbs the sticks, the casting is negated.

After the stick is removed, the reader examines the remaining sticks and considers their configuration. The reading mostly relies on which sticks are touching which sticks. This gives a huge number of possibilities in itself, as each stick can be touching up to 8 other sticks, and thus there are literally millions of combinations. Needless to say, many junctures are ignored, many are deemed of little importance, and only a few are 'primary.'

The number of Kaine combinations

$10 * [\text{Stick \#1} * 28 \text{ possibilities for that stick} * \text{Stick\#2} * 27 \text{ possibilities} * \text{Stick\#8} * 2 \text{ possibilities}] = \text{millions.}$

Coal Reading

"Did you see anything? Do you know the answer?"

"No... I did burn my back, though."

The Fire Priests burn a sacrifice stuffed with a green resinous wood, take the embers from the body, scatter them along with the bones, and read prophecies from the remains. Small animals can be used for smaller proclamations, though they are deemed to be less reliable. Human beings are thought to be the best sacrifice.

The patterns that the ashes take upon falling upon a granite slab determine the nature of the information imparted. A scroll or parchment containing the question is placed inside the sacrifice along with the wood, and this is the question that will be addressed in the subsequent "reading of the coals."

Generally ashes that spread evenly and thinly are considered good signs, while ashes that remain adhered to coal portend evil. Questions that have as answers "Good" and "Bad" are usually posed to coal readers, although other questions may be asked. In this case, a specialized ritual must first be performed. One of the priests enters an ecstatic state and then rolls in the ashes and coals, to get their "feel." Burns may ensue. After the ecstatic state has passed, the priest will give an answer to

the question based upon visions brought to him or her by the magical power of the coals.

Intestine Reading

The Farman farmers sometimes sacrifice a cow and pull the intestines out and count the number of a special kind of bump on the large intestine and the length of the small intestine. This gives good or bad omens for the future of the village. It is sometimes used to get warnings about forthcoming wars. Note that the rest of the animal, especially if a cow, is cooked and eaten afterwards in a festival.

General Qualities of Tigmar

The lands of Tigmar are primarily wheat fields and scattered small groves of trees. It used to be a gigantic prairie, or rather a savanna, until it was settled and turned into agricultural lands. Minerals deposits of metals such as iron, silver, and gold are very scarce in the lands, as trade with the Goblins is virtually nonexistent, and the foothills provide only poor mineral resources.

Iron is mined in the foothills surrounding Tigmar, and some silver and gold are found in the eastern mountain train. The majority of the minerals are imported from other lands through such places as Sampson and Lorac al Tur.

The Dark Ruins

Throughout Tigmar there are a large number of ruins which have been abandoned for hundreds of years. They are said to be the keeps and fortresses of the previous empire which was destroyed by the Watchers of Aranity, or Demon Watchers, due to misuse of power during what is commonly called the First Judgement. The people who believe this theory claim that the lands are in the second epoch, called the Gracious Boon, as the beings graciously allowed humans to start from scratch and try again.

The dark ruins are usually inhabited by various low life and despised elements of Tigmar's cultures. Due to this and rumors of evil and monsters, they are avoided. Not only are they avoided, but the lands surrounding them are left to grow untended for fifty miles or more and so normally turn into thick forest. This is why forests are generally considered evil, as they house dens of evil. In many cases the ruins themselves are long forgotten by the peasant mind, and woods themselves keep the peasant at bay with transferred superstitions.

The Keep of Bagtul

An example of a ruin in one of the Dark Woods is the Keep of Bagtul.

The Keep of Bagtul is a rundown keep of moderate proportions situated in the middle of a low range of hills in the Gorun forest of the Wheatlands.

The keep, according to legend, not only possesses a twisted group of Mogs who tinker with the foul arts of Demonology, but it possesses the Gem of Bagtul, which is one of the largest emeralds known to Tigmar.

Many have tried to breach the wood and keep to capture this prize, and to this day, none are known to have succeeded.

Many peasants have many stories of many adventurers last seen entering the wood, however.

Sparse Population

The wheat fields and most of Tigmar are not completely cultivated. Much of the land is used to raise

livestock, and the shepherding is a common profession in much of Tigmar. Only around twenty-five percent of the actual wheat fields have the mark of humanity on them at all. The rest is for the most part savanna grazed by sheep and cattle.

Weather of Tigmar

There are all types of weather in the land of Tigmar. In general, due to the land being in the southern hemisphere, the further south one goes, the colder it gets.

Roughly speaking, the Holy Empire and Confederacy of Sampson are fairly temperate, with the Confederacy being a lot warmer and muggier than its counterpart.

The Wheatlands gets enough rain to often produce fair amounts of grain, but not so much that a farmer can rely on it.

The southern part of the Holy Empire is a bit cold, and gets occasional snow and a fair bit of rain.

Orcheron and Farman suffer the brunt of cold and snow in the winter. Farman in particular can get a lot of snow, especially in the low hills and mountains.

The northern coast is in the tropics for the most part, but in the high mountains it is cold and hostile. The Ssall live in a very jungle-like swampy area, also very tropical and hot.

Of course the Tandus wastes is hot and dry, being a desert. The Granite Flats are temperate, and very windy. The Flats gets a fair amount of rain, which runs off into the many canyons and lakes very quickly.

The Sea of Akka is usually a fairly friendly one, but it has been known to lay a heavy hand on the occasional ship. As one nears the Granite Flats this is much more true, and most sailors steer well away from it.

The coast of Sander has a heavy surf and is very harsh. The coast in the Mire and the Tandus areas is a fairly tame one, the former having mostly mud and salt plants, the latter having sandy beaches which stretch for miles.

It is rumored that the ocean outside of Akka is a harsh mistress. The few who have seen the coast bordering the Steps say it is a terrifying sight indeed.

Major Landmarks

The world of Tigmar has many strange and unusual features. These features stem from a variety of reasons and natural forces, but all of them, we feel, are both plausible and interesting. They are listed by name and described on the following pages.

Sea of Tears

The Sea of Tears was possibly formed by a change in the climate that caused more water to be diverted into the low basin area which currently houses the sea. Over time the sea has slowly risen and the northern retaining wall of hills has eroded until, not long ago, the water finally reached the level of a low pass and poured through. Over time the pass has eroded even further, and the sea has been slowly loosing area. It has remained a salty body of water, however, due to its amazing depth. In addition, some theorize the sea is somehow connected to a subterranean salt sea. This, people claim, explains the legendary sudden drop in the level of the sea. It suffices to say that the true reason for sea's saltiness is unknown, considering the constant influx of fresh water and outpouring of salt water. Perhaps it is as the City of Light claims, and the salt is a sign of the residence of the Tear.

Granite Flats

The Granite Flats are sparsely populated arid canyon lands which cover a huge area in the northwestern area of the known world.

Much of the flats are wide expanses of barren granite. Occasionally the expanse will be broken by granite pillars or "walls" that can stretch for hundreds of miles. Huge canyons also cut across this landscape and house rivers of fair size. There are many basins on the flats themselves which hold almost crystal-clear water. These lakes can be miles across.

A lake in the granite flats can freeze during the night and thaw again during the day. This horrid change in temperature keeps the granite fractured and difficult to cross in many places.

The surface of the granite flats is very windy, which keeps the topsoil to a minimum. Above the gorges and canyons the winds are sometimes strong enough to knock people over.

The flats might have been created by a huge amount of arsenic which killed off the vegetation of the area, causing the topsoil to blow away. Once the topsoil was gone, the arsenic-tainted water prevented widespread recovery, and the harsh weather and high winds have kept the granite flats primarily granite. However some hardy trees and grasses are slowly taking root, clinging to sheltered piles of rock, and slowly reclaiming the murdered land.

People theorize that this catastrophe was one of many side effects of the Calamity of the northern coast

some 2000 years ago.

The granite still flats has a high level of arsenic in the soil, which keeps many of the large lakes clear and beautiful, but kills off most vegetation.

The canyon are usually large and treacherous to the traveler. Most, however, grow more tranquil as they approach the sea. These river canyons house small Edens of growth as the arsenic is constantly cleaned out by rainwater. In addition, the lack of wind in the canyons allows more topsoil to settle, which again increases the amount of life found in the canyons.

The animals of the flats' surfaces are limited. Aside from a large variety of insects and lichen, one may find a few animals and plants.

Birds of various sorts are the most common inhabitant of the flats. They eat the various small insects and build nests in gorge cliff faces where they are protected from the winds.

A large denizen of the flats are the Rock Lizards. These are large six foot lizards which roam throughout the flats in search of fungus and lichen to eat. They have thick, durable hides and can retain a large amount of heat due to their insulated skin and size.

The main tree is the Tanglepine, which is a kind of low, grasping evergreen that does not need much water. It holds onto the rocks by a large root base which lays like a giant net over the rocks. It, aided by the extreme temperature fluctuations, breaks apart the granite and burrows deep inside with roots. This tree has slowly been eroding the upper elevation granite flats away, as the arsenic has for the most part washed down to lower levels over the years.