

World Figures

This chapter has a sampling of a variety of major figures in Tigmar and the surrounding lands.

We begin, of course, with the Holy Empire.

“Before we discuss the actual matters behind the setting of the Sun, let us sketch out the major figures which so carefully guide us to our extinction. First we have the Emperor himself, and then the High Priest. Their lapdog, the Grand Inquisitor, also plays a role worthy of the most repulsive of men...”

-Sir Istain III, *The Sun Also Sets*

Sir Istain III

Sir Istain III is a political writer currently living in the City of Light in exile from the Holy Empire where he writes prolifically.

He is one of the many reasons the Emperor has for attacking Orcheron and is often held up as an example of how Orcheron is ‘fostering rebellion and dissent in the Holy Empire.’

*His most inflammatory book, *The Sun Also Sets*, is widely quoted and read, but most scholars agree it is not his most insightful piece.*

List of Major World Personagers

Emperor Luminier IV

High Priest of Sun

Grand Inquisitor Thrax

Murdan of the Oak

The Crone

The Oot Sub-Mak

Sampson

Uruguik de Polit

Guruppa the Unnamed

Utta ou’Cazzir’ma (Deepclan)

Ottomar the Goat-Hooved

Madrius and Sallasha, Traders of the Tandus Wastes

Corovant

Po

La

Emperor Luminier IV

“No people, save perhaps the illustrious High Priest of Sun, can match the magnificence and absolute endearing charm of the most gracious God Lumineir, Ruler of Tigmar, Overseer of Farman, Sun incarnate, master of the winds, defyer of demons, and defiler of Lorac al Tur, itself. When we recollect the imperious deeds performed by this august personage, we can only

be struck to the earth with overwhelming emotion. Witness his high successes such as the war to the south, east, and west. The mighty Paladins of Aranity, his very own brainchild, have already plundered and sacks many villages in such dangerous places as the near west Wheatlands, and the villages bordering Sander to the east.

But never mind his deeds, well described elsewhere. Let us examine his faultless character. His etiquette, for example, matches so perfectly his nose—overbearing. ‘To be talked at by our God Emperor,’ said B्लाad a Dale, ‘is to stand under an avalanche of the waste of doves.’ No words can be more truly said. His physique too, is truly inspiring. His towering height makes for an excellent beginning for the portraiture of a true man, and the pounds of flabby tissue which cling to this frame only add to the overall impression; when he walks, cloaked in his robes of purple, one is reminded of the gentile fruit which clings to the vines in Farman.

His mind is by far his best feature. When we view his magnificence, we see the scars where he was branded, like a bull, by the High Priest. Those scars attract us to his shiny forehead haloed by tufts of luxuriously false hair. And this brings us to his mind. We fear that the heat of the brand proved too much for his delicate composition, and perhaps cooked, but only slightly, his most holy interior. Never mind the fact that in a royal banquet he had to ask the High Priest the names of four of the most trusted and powerful nobles in the land, and never mind the fact that he lacks the reasoning to figure that three wars is not easier than one, and never mind the fact that he claims that the metal of Lorac al Tur is the finest in the land while wearing Ootish plate, let us dwell upon his single riot-causing statement which he uttered to the angry crowds of Lorac al Tur after his latest upstanding tax law— ‘the nobility, my countrymen, have huge burdens of state upon them while you have none of these concerns. You pay taxes to the state so you don’t have to partake in the odious task of politics. The chosen nobility, to reward them for their suffering, are exempt from these taxes. This is fair and reasonable, and your complaints make you seem like selfish, insensitive children.’”

-Sir Istain III, *The Sun Also Sets*

High Priest of Sun

“I hesitate to speak of such a worthy man. His advice to the Emperor is only just second in value to the Emperor’s own advice to himself. The High Priest, his slight form, crooked demeanor, and aging years all point to one thing—senility. Crabs could learn new steps from this odious man.

Why is the High Priest so repulsive? Let us limit

ourselves to the most recent of activities. Aside from the fact that he ordered executed, for no other public reason than, 'questioning the affairs of state,' Lord Borklan, Lord Sullsbury, and Lord Far-chowk, he has pushed daily the southern war with Orcheron. We, to remind the completely ignorant, have extensive trade with the south. The south protects us from Goblins, which the Priest denies the existence of. More importantly, the south supplies us with thought, craft, and art. The nobility of Lorac al Tur should at least recognize that the south is the supplier of the extensive jewelry which they all wear.

Our High Priest, in his malicious intelligence, has recognized the value of the South, and promises that it shall continue once we capture the lands for our own. But then let me remind you that Lorac al Tur too, had an extensive artistic culture until it was exterminated and ejected from the lands. Why did this tragedy happen? Perhaps we can recall the words of the High Priest given to the collected nobility at the so called Banquet of Ascension a decade ago.

'Art, my beloved, and free uncensored thought, give rise to the most hated of all plagues—wizards. Wizards thrive in such soil as art and many forms of thought lure unwary scholars into the seductive grasp of magic. We must strike this soil from our kingdom and replace it with the healthy rich soil of religion and faith.'

These words began the never-forgotten purge of the Marg. Three hundred craftsmen were burned in two days for being wizards after group trials. All three universities were found to foster wizards, and so were kicked out. Do you think that Orcheron's City of Light, with its five universities and a artistic community unsurpassed by any other in the world will remain under the puppet Emperor's hand when our High Priest is alive? Never."

-Sir Istain III, The Sun Also Sets

Grand Inquisitor Thrax

"Let me first describe his physical form. Thrax is a tall man with a large, prominent hawk-like nose which has an upper ridge as sharp as a knife. His sunken, black eyes are topped by his only facial hair—huge bushy eyebrows which one could imagine blocking his vision. His thin form always seems lost in his robes, and his hands tremble uncontrollably at all times. He does not write due to this, and always has a young, blond and blue eyed boy at his side to write all he desires. For the record, no one to my knowledge has seen one of these boys after they are retired. His left eye droops, and his right hand is missing the middle three digits. He is old in appearance, and his teeth are worn down so much that they look like the teeth of an elderly dog. To his credit, however, his voice is strong and powerful and he uses it like a scalpel. He can caress or destroy with only a few sentences.

There are allusions to his condition being a product of

wizard's fever which is a well known side effect of too much magic. This opinion is not held by the author, as we are not so pessimistic as to think the great trio is quite that hypocritical. We would like to believe they are sincere and deluded and despicably evil instead of the so maliciously evil as other believe them to be.

Grand Inquisitor Thrax has, it is said, never let a wizard out of his grasp. Upon some review of his records I am willing to support that claim, but I would like to add that no one questioned by Thrax, save one, has gone free, to my knowledge.

His ascension was rapid through the ranks of the Edge of the Sun. He enlisted at a fairly old age, around fifteen years ago, having left a monastery for reasons which have been unclear. In his first expedition as an apprentice witch hunter, he allegedly noticed his superior pilfering some books from the condemned subject. Thrax wrote a few letters and his superior was quickly found guilty of witchcraft and was condemned. For the record, his superior claims he had never seen the magical texts found in his personal trunk before in his life. After that, Thrax quickly turned his eye on the members of the Edge of the Sun themselves and purged them of five wizards in a period of eight months. He was highly recommended by the cowed remainder and so gained the title of Chief Inquisitor. Shortly after the old Grand Inquisitor died, and Thrax was benevolently elected by the Followers of the Sun to be the successor. This election was skewed, some critics claim, by Thrax's comment of, 'I feel the Followers should not be exempt from the eye of the Edge of the Sun. They are very pious and do father the Edge of the Sun but we all know an outside eye sees best.'

Despite their possible attempt to appease Thrax, he last year appealed successfully to the Emperor and the Emperor for the first and probably last time overruled the High Priest to enact the Complete Examination law which disallows any organization, religious or otherwise, from being exempt from the trials of the Edge of the Sun. After this law was passed Thrax ceremoniously tried the Emperor himself in front of the assembled nobility, and found him not guilty.

We feel Thrax's history speaks for his character."

-Sir Istain III, The Sun Also Sets

Murdan of the Oak

Murdan of the Oak is an elderly man who lives in the deep interior of Salit Wood. He came to public eye just after Salit fell to the Kingdom of the Fire God and the Paladins attempted to burn the forest. He, according to legend, came from the forest surrounded by a hoard of walking trees which proceeded to destroy the Paladins and assembled army. This colossal blow allowed the Queen to regain her foothold on her lands, and push the Kingdom of the Fire God back to its original borders.

After this incident, Murdan has done nothing of real note, although many people have traveled to Salit Wood to see him. He lives in an old oak grove which surrounds a vast green meadow with a small lake in it. His home is in one of the oaks which he has hollowed out. People bring him food and cloth and various herbs and things in trade for wisdom or healing. He is said to have trained one or two people in his way in the past, but no one has ever actually seen his apprentices.

Murdan looks like an old man with snow white hair and beard which descends to well below his navel. He is remarkably fit and sprightly, although he looks to be in his late eighties. People say he gets up in the morning, talks to the animals and plants, and then does a strenuous series of exercises which viewers are unable to mimic successfully.

The Crone

The title, "Crone" is an honorary one. Old wise woman are given this title by those who respect them. The word has since then been abused and turned into an insult, but those who are wise can see the true meaning and beauty of the word, "Crone."

The Crone is a title bestowed on the leader of the Followers of Dark. Currently the Crone is an old woman who few have seen and fewer still talked to. She is supposed to have a gaze which can transfix anyone, and it has been reported that one feels compelled to confess ones darkest sins and hopes to her when in her presence. Her ability to convince people to change their minds on some issue is supposed to be enormous.

She leads the Followers of Dark through her six henchmen, who are called her Shadows. The Shadows organize the few schools, run the few holy places, and preach to the occasional gathering of Followers of Dark. The Crone herself spends time talking to people and attempting to gain a more mild climate for the Followers of Dark. It has been said her main issue these days is to separate the Followers from the parasites and the magicians in the eyes of the land.

People think she lives in Lorac al Tur, possibly in the Imperial Palace itself, although it seems unlikely as few old woman are listened to there.

The Oot Sub-Mak

The Oot King, Murkoo-tan is a magnificently proportioned Oot who towers a full seven feet high. Many have commented on his perfect physical composition, which he displays in full when residing in his palace. It is Oot custom that their leader be displayed naked, save for a wreath of thorny flowers around his head as an example and as an idol for the masses. He is celebrated by the Oots as possibly being their last leader

as he fits into their most glorious armor, previously owned by a legendary hero..

His ability to sing has been commented on by Ootish bards as being sheer genius. Foreigners who have been lucky enough to hear his melodious voice have commented that truly his is a vocal genius.

The Sub-Mak also believes the claims that he is the final leader, although he has sired many sons, just in case. He constantly pushes for war and for his followers to gear up for the final war. He is a smart man, and knows the Holy Empire is beginning to fall. A exploratory expedition almost reached the capital in the previous year, and so the King has high hopes.

These high hopes have also made the Sub-Mak a bit arrogant. He is renown for being short tempered; he has been known to kill people in the throne room with his own sword for imagined insults. Bards only play in the palace when forced.

However his generosity is unsurpassed by any other Oot. When he is in a good mood he can give away vast amounts of wealth and land to show his appreciation of friendship, art, or military prowess. Many claim that working with him on the battlefield or in the diplomatic hall is a sheer pleasure due to his tactical and political genius. He plays many strategy games and is quite good at them; even foreigners comment on his mind which is possibly the finest in existence.

Luckily for the rest of the world, the Sub-Mak, to possibly offset his greatness, suffers in excess the standard Ootish failings. He is a fanatical believer in the Oot-Mak and this and accompanying religion so shapes his world view that he is sometimes prevented from seeing what is truly going on around him and overly careless in his planning. He is extremely allergic to cats. He needs to sleep ten hours a day, and if he does not get his full sleep he is rendered almost helpless with fatigue. He is easily insitable and looses all capacity for thought when enraged; he can also be in a full state of rage for days on end.

Sampson

Sampson is possibly the greatest general the world has ever known with the possible exception of Alexes the Zalpas who we can disregard as he was small. When Sampson was born, the planets were in conjunction, and his name was derived from the positions of the planets in their houses. It was certain that he was destined for greatness.

He was taken to the field by his father at the age of 14, and on the field, it was said, he noticed and corrected two subtle mistakes his father made and second guessed an ambush which had been set out. His father, not an overly arrogant man, recognized his son's greatness and

immediately trained him to be a general.

At the age of eighteen Sampson who was an incredibly beautiful man and a charismatic speaker, gathered an army and swept southward to the Sea of Tears. After that he marched across the Wheatlands and conquered all of Tigmar to the Ssall where he, after fighting for three years, grew sick and returned home to his capital.

When he reached home, he realized his sickness was Sun being born into him, and after extensive consultation with the Followers of Sun, branded his forehead to let the radiance of Sun out. People said that the brand made a third eye, with which he could look at someone and burn out all their darkness. Most could not live through such a process, but those who remained in his court had to, and this is why his court has been called to this day the Court of Saints, as no darkness existed within the walls of the Imperial Palace. Diplomats and foreigners would not see him directly, but would deal with the High Priest of Sun or other major figures instead, who would then communicate to Sampson whatever message or request had been stated.

He remained in the capital, sending his children out to fight wars so they could be tested. His favorite child died by his third eye upon returning and this grief shook Sampson deeply. After this incident people say he aged unnaturally quickly and shut himself in his rooms where he lived the remainder of his days.

Uruguik de Polit

Some say the three 'U's in the name of Uruguik forecasted the evil which he has sank to throughout his life. At the age of eighty he has possibly massacred more babies than any other person in recorded history. Mothers tell their children of how he drinks the blood of his victims for the pure fun of it, while they live. Fathers tell their daughters that they should be careful when they go out at night as Uruguik has his minions constantly seeking virgin female flesh which he can defile for his nightly pleasures.

Aside from his more human vices he consorts with demons and has marshaled more power than almost any modern magician. His levels of power rival even the historical greats, according to some Witchhunters. Sadly Uruguik has many estates and many faces, and this makes him hard to track down. He, for the fun of it, leaves a trail of bodies along with notes. Witchhunters claim that no victim of Uruguik has gone unpublished.

One Witchhunter had successfully tracked Uruguik down and was trying him in person. For some reason Uruguik remained to talk to the Witchhunter, and let the hunter live afterwards. In the hunter's own words,

"Uruguik was a medium sized man, unremarkable in

any way. He wore a long goatee and thick glasses. He constantly smiled, revealing teeth which were alarmingly white. I felt, in his presence, somehow inferior. He used large words and spoke in a slightly archaic and flowery style which I found confusing. He often would make statements which could be taken in diametrically opposed ways. He also had a tendency to repeat himself. He would say a sentence one way, and then immediately repeat the idea with slightly different words. He spoke of himself in the third person, and always made references to his 'confederates' and 'the grand plan of bloodshed'. When I asked him about it, he just smiled, made a caressing gesture with his hand, and said I was doing just fine and that I should not worry.

He freely admitted anything I cared to charge him with. As an experiment I charged him with things I made up on the spur of the moment, and he freely admitted to those things too while saying things like, "How did you know I did that, you must be a wizard yourself!"

He also talked about his life, and the fact that he masquerades as ten different noble figures throughout Tigmar. He said he had talked to me before, under a different guise, and that he liked me. He said I, along with most Witchhunters, "showed potential."

General Kardol and Tain Isop

General Kardol is perhaps the most feared man in the human lands of Tigmar. Charismatic, friendly, understanding, and brilliant as a leader, Kardol has become a ruthless megalomaniac with staggering goals.

Kardol was once the young crack general who assured that the Republic of Sampson would never face an enemy unprepared. Loved by his troops, the government dismissed him, worried that he was becoming a bit too popular to be safely controlled. Enraged by this action, Kardol offered to lead any who would follow him to conquer the world - starting of course with the Republic of Sampson and the surrounding territories. A large number of loyal followers backed Kardol, and these troops form the core of his own small army.

Realizing that Kardol would likely be unstoppable if given a foothold in the Republic, a direct campaign was mounted against Kardol with the remnants of the army. Several fierce battles ensued, but Kardol was eventually expelled with a small contingent of elite soldiers by huge numbers of loyalists. Not wishing the conflict and bloodshed to continue, the loyalists retreated to within the Republic of Sampson.

His army nearly destroyed, Kardol became increasingly vengeful. Ordering his men to raid the frontier of the Republic of Sampson, Kardol is responsible for the death of many innocents and the razing of many small villages. Kardol is now rebuilding

his army, with hopes of amassing a large enough force to be unstoppable.

Tain Isop is Kardol's advisor and co-conspirator. The two were united during the succession of battles fought within the Republic's territories. Tain, who had fled to the north, wanted by the Shards of the Sun for several barbaric acts connected to sorcery, attached himself to Kardol's army and disguised himself as a soldier. Seizing his chance to impress Kardol during one battle, Tain worked magics to mortally wound the commander of the loyalist army. The success of this action ensured a minor victory for Kardol, who decided that the friendship of one like Tain could be useful indeed during the coming trials.

Kardol and Tain are rarely separated, neither man particularly trusting the other. In any case, viciousness and insidious intelligence of these two allies should not be underestimated; Kardol's army grows every day, displaced peasants, escaped slaves, greedy nobles, and profiteering mercenaries filling his ever-growing ranks with each passing month.

Guruppa the Unnamed

The most able, renowned, and revered of Ssall diplomats, Guruppa is the diplomat currently placed in the City of Sampson. The Border Keeps gain most of their funds from the Republic of Sampson, and Guruppa's present mission is to secure peace by convincing the Republic to withdraw its financial support. So far unsuccessful, Guruppa still works to complete her mission. Generally liked and trusted by human beings, Guruppa has reason for confidence.

Guruppa the Unnamed works almost completely unsupported by other Ssall. Entrusted with complete authority in diplomatic issues, Guruppa has engineered several minor treaties in the past and has proved a consummate artist at her trade. She is extremely intelligent and skilled in the arts of rhetoric and political philosophy, and is a diplomat both to be feared and trusted.

Personally, Guruppa is obsessed with the plight of the Unnamed caste. As she feels ashamed of her position in Ssall society despite her achievement, she works to alleviate similar sufferings among other Unnamed. At present, she is negotiating with a rich merchant in the City of Sampson with the hopes of creating an enclave within human territory where Ssall Unnamed can come to live free of their social stigma.

The Grukku, aware of her task, have already attempted one assassination, for Guruppa's success means certain annihilation for the Grukku's civilization. Driven by knowledge of impending doom, the Grukku will likely stop at nothing to either sabotage negotiations

or kill the Ssall's prize diplomat.

Utta ou'Cazzir'ma (Deepclan), Master of Technological Exchange and Expert in Facilitation of Military Endeavors

A small encampment of Zalpas engineers, led by Utta, makes its home within the Republic of Sampson. The engineers teach the scientists of the Republic how to make various devices in return for protection from their enemies, of whom they have many.

Utta lives in the Republic due to his clan's violent past. The ou'Cazzir'ma have instigated war with at least three major Zalpas cities in the last thirty years. The rouge Zalpas attacked cities with the technologically advanced firearms developed by their leader, Uttat - the father of Utta. Known for their bloodthirsty aggression, several cities formed a united army to finish the clan of Cazzir. Deepclan fought ferociously, but in the end succumbed to superior numbers and new war machines created by other Zalpas. A few ou'Cazzir'ma escaped, however, and now make their home within the Republic.

Utta himself is sadistic, not very wise, small even for a Zalpas, and experiences breathing difficulties. He is, however, a master engineer and clever beyond expectation. Knowing that his actions may determine the survival of Deepclan, he is ruthless in every manner.

Utta has made the decision to arm the Republic of Sampson to ensure his own invulnerability. Delusions of impending attack cause him to suspect traps and traitors everywhere. Although the Zalpas will certainly never attack a strong human nation, Utta believes the contrary and hence prepares for the worst. The people of the Republic, on the other hand, do not mind the high weapon technologies delivered by Utta into their hands, and some think that the Republic may be massing troops with effective guns already.

Ottomar the Goat-Hooved

The cult of Dilgorethe, while not exactly mainstream, has many followers in Farman, and the head of this organization is Ottomar. Essentially an agrarian religion, the cult of Dilgorethe works to protect nature and restore lands to fecundity, something that peasants greatly appreciate. SEE PAGE FOR MORE DETAILS.

Ottomar himself is a very average fellow. Not exceptionally bright, handsome, strong, or even generous, Ottomar was 'selected' as the head of Dilgorethe when he grew goat hooves during a ritual, the sign of ascension within the cult. Many have puzzled over Ottomar's good fortune.

Ottomar has proved a good leader during the ten years of his reign. He has settled many disputes, and is even quite often called as a judge in Farman by the

populace. His popularity among peasants, perhaps due to his open frankness, honesty, and lack of exceptional characteristics, is such that the cult of Dilgorethe has gained in popularity in Farman to such an extent that some in the Holy Empire have become terrified that the supremacy of Aranity may even be challenged, although this fear is unfounded.

Madrius and Sallasha, Traders of the Tandus Wastes

Madrius is one of several merchants who has gained a vast fortune as a caravaner of the Tandus Wastes. So widespread have his goods become that many common items found as far away as Orcheron bear the stamp of his trading company, a symbol of a sun rising over a flat plain. Hence, Madrius is a man of some importance.

Sallasha, the wife of Madrius, may be the more important of the two traders. It is she that remains in the primary city WHAT IS IT of the Wastes throughout the year and coordinates all shipping; Madrius' job is comparatively simple. All he must do is haul goods across the Wastes with his team of workers. Sallasha sets the prices of various spices, and has been accused of controlling some markets to such an extent that the Madrius Company is a monopoly. Her competitors, surprisingly, disagree, and they feel that Sallasha is an honest trader, or rather as honest as they come.

Sallasha and Madrius occasionally have domestic quarrels, but they usually have become friendly again by the time that Madrius must set out across the desert. They own a large palatial estate in CITY, but do not tend towards opulence in their habits. Instead, they live well, and enjoy their lives as best they can with their families and five children.

Corovant

Corovant is perhaps one of the more bizarre 'good' wizards known in Tigmar. Physically he is a tall, lean man with a longish white beard and a fringe of puffy hair resembling soft clouds surrounding the mountain of his bald plate. He is always seen with his stout walking stick and smoking pipe, and many accuse him of intentionally undertaking the garb of wizard in the most classical of styles. His robes are invariably a light desert blue-gray, and are usually worn and stained. His demeanor is mild and pleasant, and he has a soft voice which he uses only occasionally. He undertakes an appearance of absentmindedness which few are fooled by.

He is one of the older figures known. Reports of his activities go back one hundred and sixty eight years to the legendary combat with Farafal the Black, which still does much to arm the proponents of increased tolerance of the magical arts.

He was trained by two wizards who went by the

names of Aquarial and Vapox, which translate in Flambatin (Dragon) to water and air. They each gave him a gift, Aquarial a staff and Vapox a knife, which he still carries with him. These artifacts are renowned for possessing the vast powers of these two old guard mages.

He, however, was attracted to the spirits and the demons. He consorted with both extensively, and it was rumored that he had actually gone to the Spirit Realm itself at one point. This, of course, gave him a bad reputation, but this reputation was dispelled somewhat by his fight with Farafal the Black.

Today he wanders the land in search of wizards of any sort. He is rumored to be the most influential member of the Council, and it is certain that he serves as one of their chief means of determining what is transpiring in the world. Corovant is renowned for sniffing out new mages which have great potential, and making sure they stay on a path which is closer to good than evil. He delights in appearing in the most bizarre of places to meet these novice mages, as it, he believes, adds to his mysticism.

Po

Po is perhaps one of the more malicious of the parasitic cult. Po has mastered the hostile takeover of almost all large animals, and can assume any form with ease. He is good enough that only those most familiar with him can perceive him in any new form if he desires to hide himself.

His agenda is the destruction of metalurgy by any means necessary. He goes about this by seeking out and killing blacksmiths whenever possible, terrorizing miners, and creating environments where people are too afraid to lay hands on metallic goods. He has a fairly large following who assist him in these endeavors.

La

La's child was killed by Po for resisting Po's efforts. La since then has vowed to kill Po by, of course, any means necessary. La has so centered on this task that it is virtually irrational in all respects except for its desire to find and kill Po.

La, in efforts to lure Po out into the open, has become a protector of blacksmiths, and often creates large gatherings of metalurgists to allegedly exchange information. At these conventions, La lurks in the shadows waiting for Po to strike, which he invariably does. The result of these conflicts usually is the death of many blacksmiths and many of Po's followers.

Ashurpal-Nasir-Darani, High Priest of the Temple of Death at Carcemesh, By Nisorn-Varana, the Royal Historian of Carcemesh:

Ashurpal-Nasir-Darani was born to the Great House

of Darani in Year of the Asp in the 6th year of the reign of King Tigrak-Durnval the Shining, may he live forever. His mother Lraah-Darani was a poet in the service of the king, may he live forever, and his father Atlal-Darani was a priest of death. From the age of two, Nasir was taught by a string of tutors in all of a noble's talents; rhetoric, speculative philosophy, natural philosophy, poetry, literature, hunting, theoretical magic, and practical sorcery. All these he mastered with astonishing quickness much to the happiness of his parents and his whole house. By the age of fifteen he was deemed ready to choose a calling.

Attracted by his fathers awesome responsibility, he chose to enter the priesthood of death. For three years he served as an initiate in the temple, sweeping, cleaning, and tending to the experimental subjects. His nights were spent in physical education at the temple of life where he formed an attachment to a girl Ilia-Mihani and made her his official first mistress. At the age of 18 he was made a Priest-Initiate, adopted the priestly name Ashurpal, and was given the job tending the archives.

When Ashurpal was 21 Carcemesh was swept by the confusions following the temporary death of Tigrak-Durnval the Shining, may he live forever. His mother and father died the true death during the bombardment of their manor by the machineries of General Caradash-Mihani. Ashurpal wisely choose to use his mistress' influence to make peace with the victor, and in the process became her husband. When Caradash Mihani became king, May he live forever, Ashurpal was well rewarded for his support. He was made a Priest-Adept and placed in Research.

The King, may he live forever, was eager to push the career of such a close relative of such a distinguished house along as quickly as possible. Ashurpal in turned showed great promise both in theoretical work and in loyalty and friendship to the King, M.H.L.F.. As time went on he spent less time at the temple of life and more time emersed in his studies. In these he progressed until he won a debate with the then Master of Inquiry, Nurash-Silan-Cathlani, on the proper function of the meglatonic pump. After this stinging defeat, Nurash resigned from his position, a move suggested by the king, M.H.L.F., and was replaced by Ashurpal, now 26. There was some protest at so young a man being named Master of Inquiry, but these doubts were soon suppressed.

For the next 5 years Ashurpal served as an excellent master of Inquiry, directing many researches into the nature of an eye disease possessed by the King, M.H.L.F. After five years the high priest died a temporary death after supposedly naming Sargon-Marlash-Varanz his sucesor. This nomination was shortly proved to be a blatant forgery and Ashurpal took his deserved place as a remarkably young High Priest of Death. Sargon went

into exile, taking a disreputable band of tinker priests with him.

Ashurpal is now serving out his fourth year as High Priest of Death. He is proving an excellent high priest; as a researcher, he finally discovered a cure for the King's, M.H.L.F., eye disease; as a philosopher, synthesizing the works of Asharan and Coldamant, both pre-cataclysm philosopers; and as a loyal subject to the King, M.H.L.F. It is hoped that he will continue his sucesses.

Scribbled note attached to Ashurpal biography:

This farcical biography is a pack of miserable lies. Ashurpal's only talent is groveling before the King, may his soul be racked with pain, and the harlot he calls his wife. Ashurpal is a fine example of the King's new policy to surround himself with utter cretins to secure his own personal power vis a vis the priesthood. He has forgotten that it is the priesthood and not the King upon which our great mission rests, a fact of which he will unpleasantly reminded in due time.

