The background is a detailed illustration of a cavernous, fiery environment. A large, golden dragon's head with purple and red highlights dominates the center. To the right, a warrior with a green cape and a battle-axe stands on a rocky ledge. In the bottom left, a thief in a red cloak is seen from behind, looking towards the dragon. The overall color palette is dominated by warm, orange and red tones.

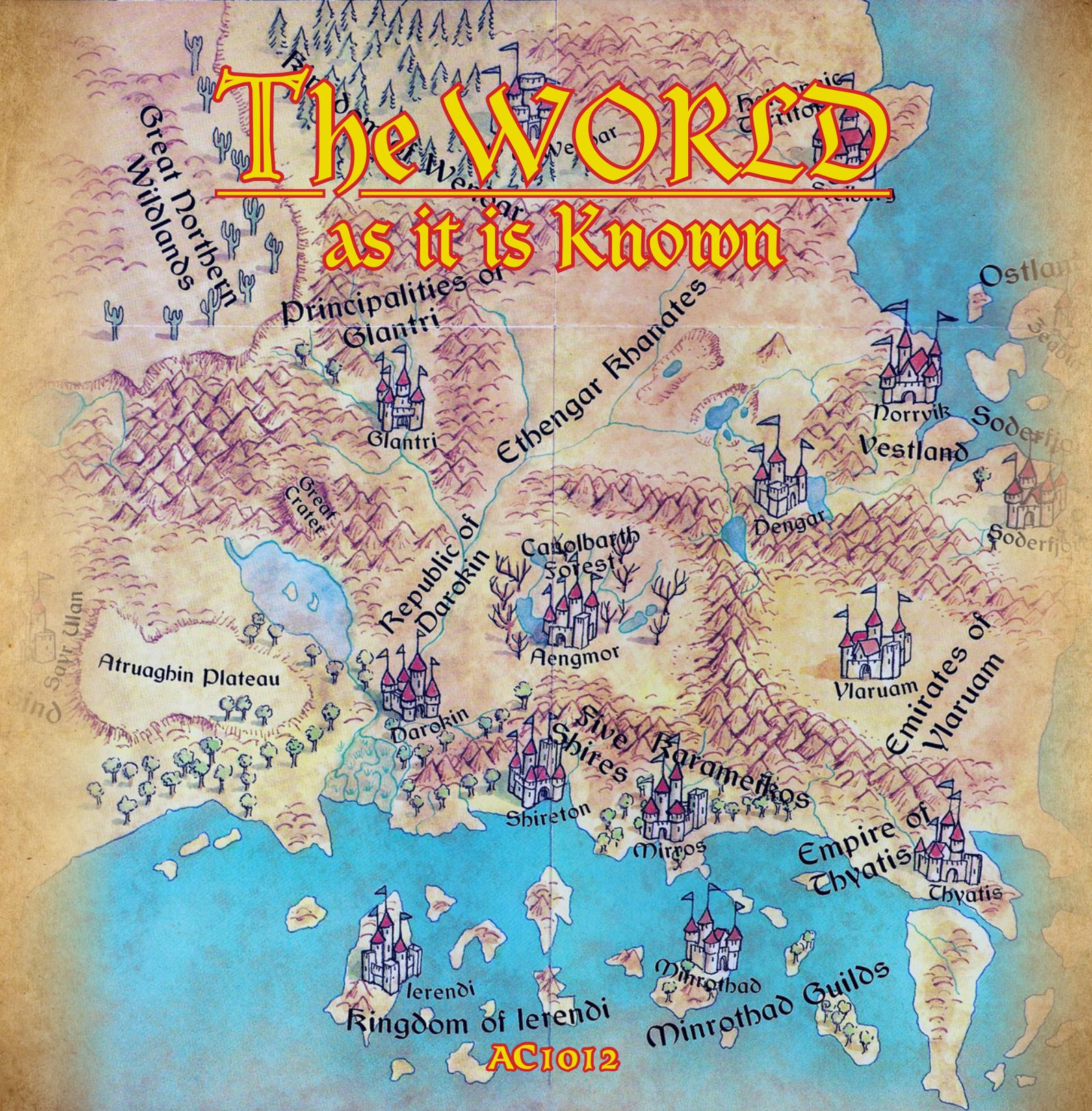
Adventures in **MYSTARA**

Scepter of Ages

Advanced
Dungeons & Dragons
2nd Edition

The World

as it is known



AC1012

The Known World is a land of manifest diversity. Occupying the Southeastern corner of the Continent of Brun, this relatively small region of the World of Mystara boasts sundry landscapes within its boundaries. Fenced by the Great Waste in the West, the towering Kurish Massif in the North, the Sea of Dawn in the East and the endless Sea of Dread in the South, one can find here vast deserts and steppe lands, deep forests and valleys, lofty mountains and perilous badlands alike.



But the Known World also holds a startling diversity of cultures and societies that call these diverse lands home. Here you will find seaborne raiders living aside desert nomads, horsemen of the plains and studious nations of sorcerers, mighty empires and mercantile societies as well. Indeed, while humanity predominates, many are the kingdoms of the demihumans in the Known World, from the Dwarves of Rockhome to the Elves of Alfheim, the Gnomes of Highforge, the Orcs of Thar, the Halflings of the Fire Shires and beyond.

The true history of the Known World is little understood by its inhabitants. Sages aver that multifarious civilizations came to settle these parts of Mystara after fleeing a great disaster that brought the entire planet to the verge of utter destruction. What could have caused a cataclysm of such proportions is unknown to any living mortal, and perhaps even to the Immortals themselves.

Since those times, two powers have emerged, surpassing all other nations in the Known World in their power and influence. The first and perhaps strongest of these is the Empire of Alphatia. From its seat of power on the island-continent of Alphatia, this mageocracy was the earliest to extend its domination over the Known World, conquering the Ylari tribesmen of the desert and establishing colonies across the seaboard.

One of these colonies rose to prominence and eventually challenged Alphatia's rule. Renowned on the battlefield for its tactical brilliance and stalwart soldiery, the Empire of Thyatis pushed Alphatia off the mainland and fought the nation of wizardry to a standstill. A stalemate emerged, with the Isle of Dawn becoming the effective boundary between these two great empires. For generations, this uneasy impasse defined the politics and intrigue of the Known World.

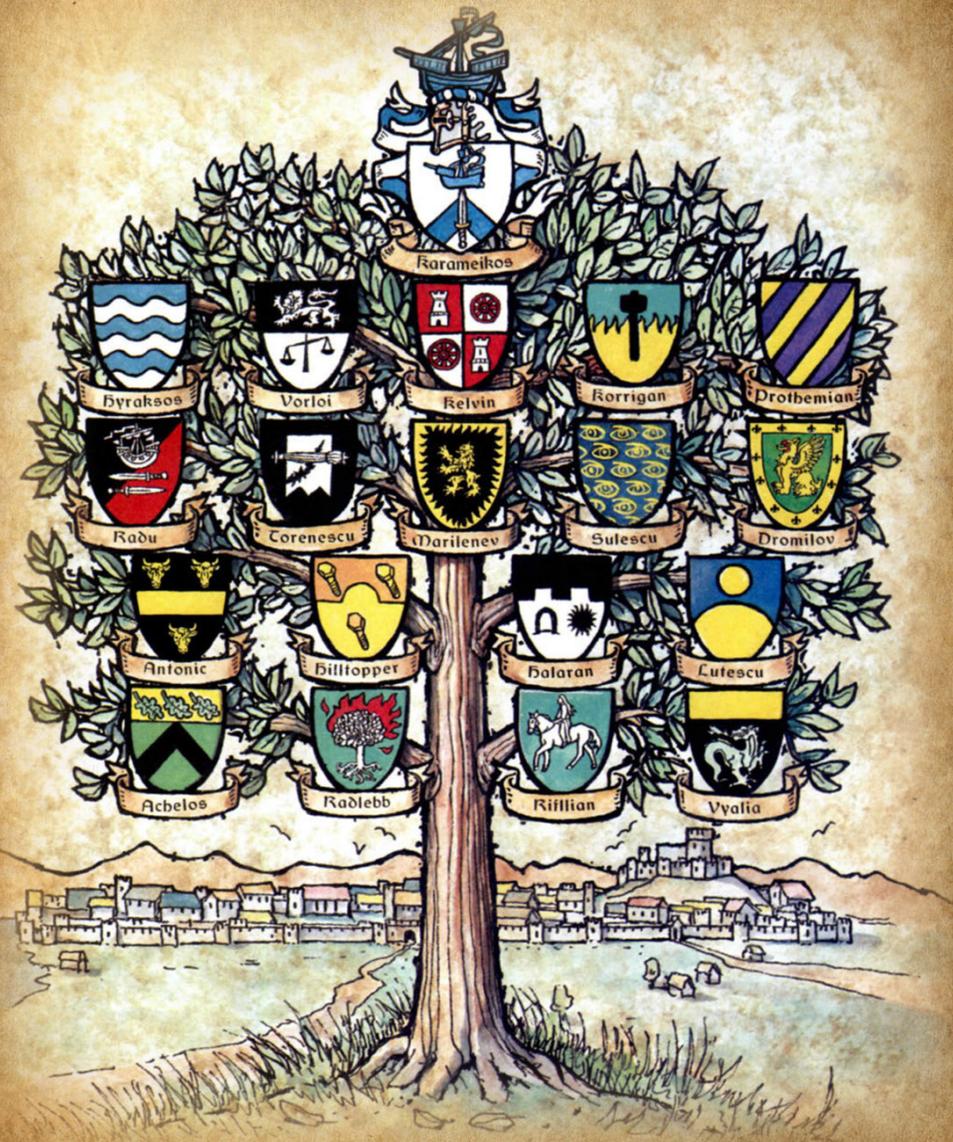


Karameikos was one of the many smaller realms that established itself in the shadow of Empires. Originally the homeland of the rustic Traldar people, descendants of the hero Halav who ended the menace of the Beast-Men King, this undeveloped wilderness slowly came under the influence of Thyatis. Eventually, a Thyatian lord by the name of Stefan Karameikos led an invasion of the densely-forested domain, conquering the native Traldar and installing his own family members as the heads of the different feudal estates in the new Duchy of Karameikos.

It has been one generation since that invasion and though the bitter memory of conquest remains amongst some of the deposed Traldaran nobles, Stefan the First has nevertheless made astonishing progress in this underdeveloped province. During this time, the Duchy of Karameikos depended in part upon the patronage of the Empire of Thyatis. Yet, with the War of the Radiance, Stefan has been able to shake even this vestige of the old order, declaring the full autonomy and independence of the new Kingdom of Karameikos. Although this was a risky gamble, the poor state of the Thyatis after the War with Alphatia has left the Empire unable to do anything but accept the newly sovereign Kingdom of Karameikos.

Thus the post-War era in the Known World is one defined by new powers. Smaller states rise up in the ruins of empires. At the same time, graven threats grow in the shadows as well. A void of power has emerged, and the forces of good and evil race to fill the gap left by the fall of the mighty.

The Landed Families & Estates of the Kingdom of Karameikos



THE WAR OF THE RADIANCE

AC1004 - AC1009

The Empire of Alphatia

The Principalities of Glantri

The Kingdom of Karamaikos

The Empire of Thyatis

The Isle of Dawn



To Tanegloth To Tanegloth

To Pearl Islands To Pearl Islands

To Aegopol To Aegopol

To Aeria To Aeria

The War of the Radiance is the single most important event in recent history. It began, some say, as most misfortunes do: in the heavens. These rumors claim that it is the Immortals who prompted the earthly conflict that engulfed the Known World for the past five years. Rad, who rose to immortality without the patronage of another Immortal, had discovered an artifact of surpassing power that proved to be a boundless source for a new magical energy known as the Radiance. By studying the Radiance, that patron of magical knowledge desired to lead other mortals down the same independent path.

The traditional powers among the Immortals renounced Rad for tinkering with such a dangerous device and demanded its immediate destruction. By refusing to relinquish the device, the battle lines were set for the coming apocalyptic war.

While the ancient laws of the Immortals prevented outright interference with the mortal realms, it has always been profitable to weaken an immortal opponent by diminishing the position of his followers in the material world. Now, the various factions of Immortals took sides, rallied their earthly adherents and slowly bent the nations of the Known World



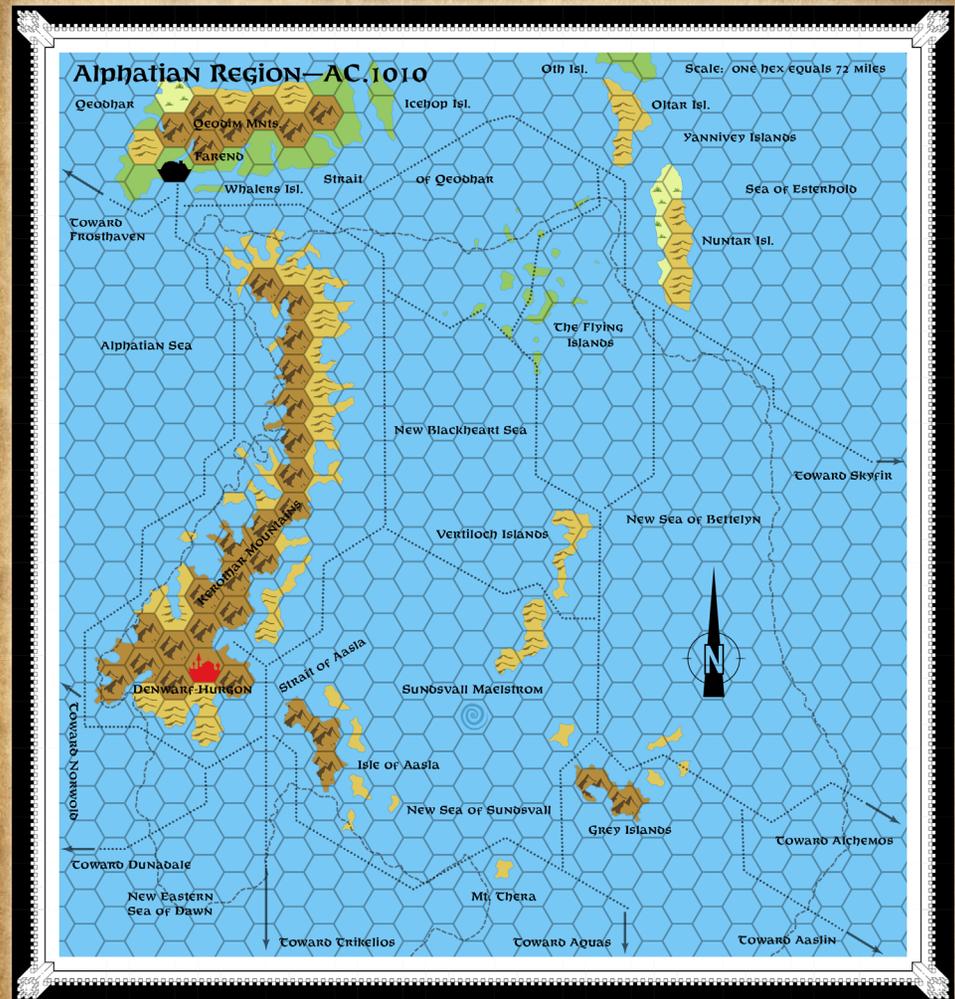
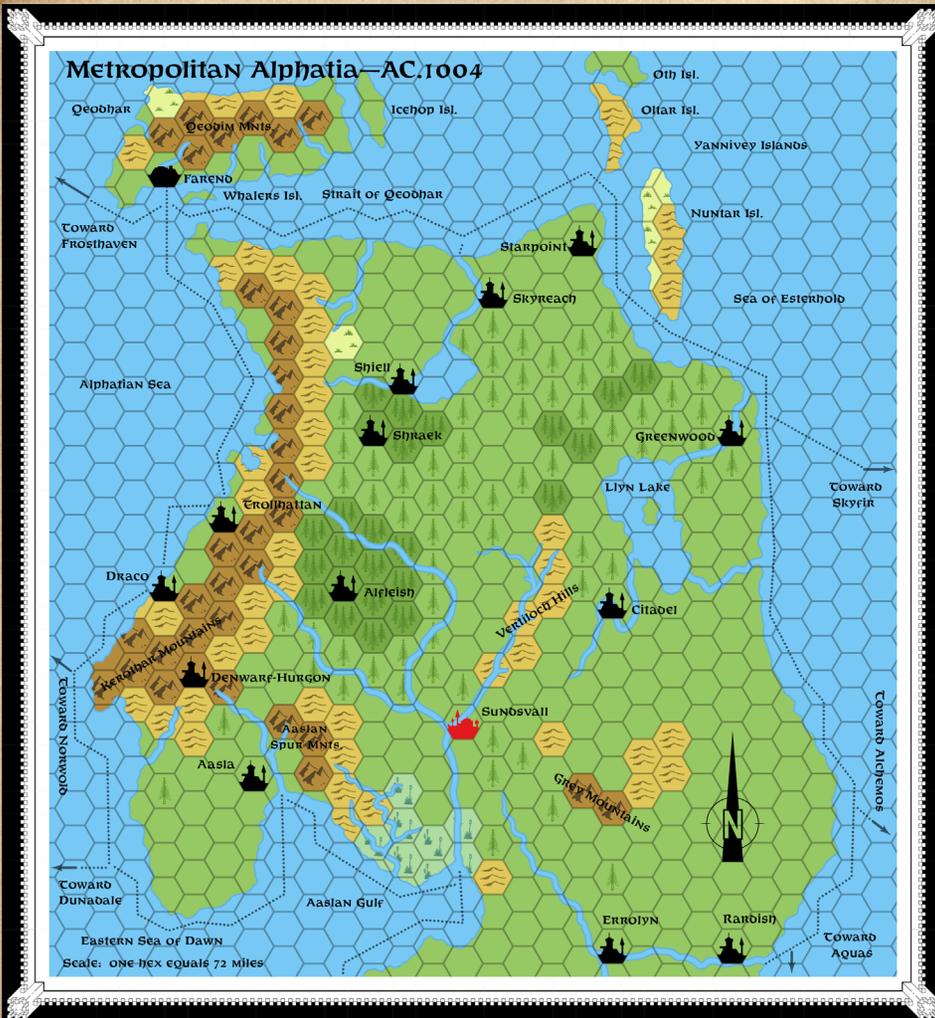
against one another. Ixion, Rad's main challenger, spurred his many devotees in the magical Empire of Alphatia to annihilate the Principalities of Glantri, where Rad conducted his research on the Radiance. Allies of Rad inspired Thyatis to take a stand against their traditional enemies across the Sea of Dawn.

During the ensuing conflict, many evil factions rose up to take advantage of the chaos and pursue their own ends. Across the Great Wastes of the West, an enigmatic tyrant known only as the Master pursued a war of annihilation against the nations of the Known World. When an allied army held the Master's legions at bay, the hateful despot sent a meteor to crash into the border between the Republic of Darokin and the Principalities of Glantri, killing many innocents in the process. In this time, a mysterious invader from the underworld breached the ground beneath the Elven Kingdom of Alshheim, taking the forested realm by surprise. Fleeing the destruction, the Elven refugees saw their lost homeland undergo a strange and monstrous corruption that turned the ancient trees ashen and ossified before their very eyes.

The war ended as most wars do for mortal men: in utter tragedy. Having gained the upper hand, Alphatia teleported one thousand mages to float over Glantri City, where Rad was undertaking his dangerous research. In a moment, this magical legion rained total destruction down on every man, woman and child in the city. In retaliation, Rad activated his mysterious device, causing the distant island-continent of Alphatia to suddenly crack and sink beneath the waves. Innumerable lives were lost that day. As the dust settled on the wounded Known World, the old empires had collapsed and the heavens were silent.

The Empire before and

of Alphatia after the War.



“Metropolitan Alphatia—AC.1004”

Replica of poster map from Wrath of the Immortals, 1992

Cartography by Thorfinn Tait, October 2020

www.thorf.co.uk



“Alphatian Region—AC.1010”

Replica of poster map from Wrath of the Immortals, 1992

Cartography by Thorfinn Tait, October 2020

www.thorf.co.uk



The Immortals are not gods in the traditional sense.

Though they are beings of enormous power, every Immortal was once a mortal themselves, an exceptional individual who by luck or fate walked the path of immortality and became something more. Yet, each Immortal retains the petty, self-interested mark of their previous mortal existence. Immortals

are not above the concerns and quarrels of mortal kind, but rather carry this mortal tendency to feud and scheme into their new lives as well.

While some Immortals encourage mortal worship, none actually requires it. Nor can they control mortal access to the same divine magic that empowers the Immortals themselves. This is open for all, with or without devotion to an Immortal.

Priestly orders may study the wisdoms and teaching of an Immortal, hoping to

inspire imitation of their consequential lives. In turn, these priesthoods often become a tool of the Immortals to influence the mortal world. Sometimes, Immortals will take more direct, albeit covert, action, breaking the most fundamental rules of their kind to steal into the material world and influence mortals behind the guise of an assumed identity.



Draggos

The Black Prince of the Isle of Dawn

Embittered by the destruction of his homeland at the end of the War of the Radiance, Draggos, the Black Prince of the Isle of Dawn, has vowed revenge on all those who failed to bend the knee before the might of Alphatia.

Draggos has formed a band of powerful and evil servitors to seek out an ancient scepter of immense power and exact a monstrous punishment on the Known World.



Malaghôl the Wretch

Courtier to the Thousand Golden Princes of Sindrastan

This evil sorcerer has traveled far across the Known World to serve Draggos. His purpose in this is yet unknown.

Perhaps the Wretch was dismissed from the Golden Courts of Sind for his characteristic treachery, or perhaps he yet serves the mighty Rajah of that distant land. Worse still are the rumors that Sind has fallen under the control of

the Master. Yet surely this must be impossible, for the Master was said to be slain during the War by a group of adventurers.



Saeris of House Sinistrel

The newest member of Draggos' group, Saeris serves the Black Prince for reasons unknown, much like her bitter rival Malaghôl. She is a fanatic priestess of Atzanteotl, although what interest that Immortal of Entropy would have in Draggos is even less clear. Rumors persist that the corruption of the Canolbarth Forest and the loss of the Elven Kingdom of Alfheim is due to the machinations of Atzanteotl. If true, Saeris' presence in Karamaikos is cause for great concern.



Squeeker

Once a small time thug in the streets of Mirros, Squeeker has quickly climbed the ladder of power in the capital of Karameikos, rising to a fence for the Veiled Society and eventually their don overseeing the expansion into the walled town of Kelvin. Despite this accomplishment, Squeeker's ambition is insatiable and he has now allied himself with a rising power in the region: Draggos, the Black Prince of the Isle of Dawn. What profit he hopes to derive from this relationship is unknown, but one thing is certain: Squeeker is out for himself before any others.

