

[Torata]

Fantasy Setting

for the [2d6] Roleplaying System

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*From the soft green fields of Tum Na Ri,
to the mountains of Mudil,
the wind blows high and far and wide,
and carries my words to the one I love.*

*Along the long and winding river,
sleeps the forest of Anu,
rustled by that whispering wind,
that carries my words to the one I love.*

*Across the sun-baked plains of Nara
the wind blows strong and free and hot
it rides the coast of Mil'Ashuna
carrying my words to the one I love.*

*And even to the southern islands,
and even to the eastern lakes,
and even to the western ocean,
to the northern crags that no wind shakes,*

*that wind still travels,
singing songs,
long after I am dead and gone,
my love is spent
asleep within me
carrying my words forever on.*

-old Gnomish traveling song

To whoever reads this: my name is Luna and I'm 16 winters old. My mother named me for the pale moon that rises each night above our lands in the south. I've dreamed for years of seeing those lands, and now I'm finally going to.

They freed all the slaves yesterday. A man on a potato crate was yelling all about it in the market. I'm so excited I couldn't sleep. I wonder if master Domra will let me go tomorrow or if he's going to wait the full week until the order becomes official.

=|=

It's not fair! Master Domra says he's going to appeal the decision in court, and not to get my hopes up, since it'll probably take years for his case to be heard, what with the courts all jammed up because of the new freedom laws! I don't care what he says! I'm running away tonight.

I've got a few tinnies that I've managed to save over the years, and I know how to work. I just wonder what the rest of Torata is like. I've never been outside the city, except when momma died and they let me go to her funeral outside the city gates. I hope I meet an elf. I've seen them in the market, but I've never talked to one...

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Can't write much. They're still chasing me. Haven't slept in two days. Out of food. I miss momma. Can't give up yet. Maybe I can hitch a ride with a Gnome trade caravan.

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No water left. They gave up chasing me yesterday. I watched them from the top of a pine tree as they turned around. I'm free. I'm really free, but I don't know how much longer I'll last out here.

=|=

You'd be proud of me momma. I'll see you soon.

- journal found in the forest of Anu

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Inhabitants

Before you can begin your adventure in the strange, mystical world of Torata, you must first meet its inhabitants. Each of the six races given here are meant for making player characters with the 2d6 roleplaying system, but feel free to adapt them to your own system to suit your own needs!

[gonna be big old picture right here]

Humans

For years humans have been in the slavery of the Dwarves. It all began three hundred years ago, when the first Dwarven expansion took place. The Dwarves swept across the southern continent like a plague, capturing what they could and destroying what they could not. The human armies, weakened by internal struggles and tribal feuding, couldn't hold up under the weight of the Dwarven onslaught and were eventually subdued. While the Elves and the Gnomes got off relatively easy by negotiating political treaties, the humans were enslaved.

For generations they had their culture and dignity stripped of them by their Dwarven masters. Their lands were absorbed into the Dwarven empire and they were forced to take up the tongue of their oppressors. Some humans managed to elude the empire, making their homes in the southern swamps where no Dwarf would dare tread for fear of sinking into the murky sludge.

Recently, however, the Dwarven empire released an imperial proclamation banning slavery in all forms. No official reason was given, and many Dwarven traditionalists suspect foul play by one of several human-led freedom movements. Regardless, there are now thousands of freed slaves with little money and no jobs. Some may seek to find a position within Dwarven society, while others journey back to the lands of their ancestors.

Racial Talent: Will to Live (once per day may reroll failed resolve check)

Racial Skill: Resolve

Sleep Cycle: Diurnal

Diet: Omnivorous

Reproductive Method: Sexual

Culture: Humans are a fractured race, spread across the continent. Many free humans in the south delight in music and crafts. Humans are fiercely competitive, and are notorious throughout Torata for the sports and games their culture has created over the millennia. Humans get along with most other races, though many hate the Dwarves for their years of imprisonment under Dwarven rule. Many humans dabble in magic, and some are quite successful. Many humans are devout worshipers of Munai.

Lands: The city of three rivers was once the human capital, though it has long since been absorbed into the Dwarven empire. The only true human lands lie in the southern swamps, a region no other race would even want, but the humans are stout of heart and will endure, waiting for their day to come again.

Life Span: Most humans live 60 – 80 years

Physical Description: Humans stand between four and six feet tall, with varying skin, hair, and eye color. Human males have facial hair.

Elves

The elves are mariners, first and foremost. Their long-standing treaties coupled with many Dwarves' innate fear of open water has enabled them to rule the seas and, in many cases, control the fastest trade routes. The Elves have had a long-standing trade relationship with the Orcs that reside in the forest of Anu, and many Elven cities are extremely cosmopolitan, featuring a broad mix of races and cultures.

Racial Talent: Extra Organ – wings (can use athletics for flying short distances)

Racial Skill: Trade (Mariner)

Sleep Cycle: Diurnal

Diet: Omnivores

Reproductive Method: Sexual

Culture: Elves delight in food and art. Many are fond of wearing bright colors and decorating their homes with rugs and tapestries. Ultimately, though, the sea calls to all elves. Few ever live far from the shore, and those that do often live by lakes or rivers. Those that have the money buy boats, and those that don't build them. Many elves are mariners or captains aboard the numerous vessels that flock to their harbors. Elves also like magic, though not as much as Gnomes.

Lands: The Elves hold land along the southern coast of Torata, as well as the southern shore of Big Water. Their Capital city is Mil'shanu, and they call their land Mil'Ashuna. They also have many colonies on the southern islands.

Life Span: most elves live 90 -110 years

Physical Description: Elves are tall and slender in comparison to humans. Their skin is a dark ochre color, and they are completely hairless. Their ears are pointed and they have two pairs of gossamer dragonfly-like wings protruding from their shoulder blades that run down the length of their back roughly to their knees.

Orcs

The Orcs of Torata are something of a mystery to many of the other races, though the elves know them better than most. Most do not venture far from their home, but those that do bring with them strange customs and stranger tales. Orcs are revered as some of the best hunters on Torata, and are the only race to successfully repel a major Dwarven assault.

This happened during the second Dwarven expansion, when the high king Murmoc ordered seven thousand Dwarves to take the forest of Anu. Two hundred and thirty-six returned over the next few years with stories that effectively ended any further attempts at “colonization” of the east.

Racial Talent: Extra Organ – Chloroplasts (Orcs can photosynthesize in times of hardship. Provided they have sun, water, and soil they do not need to eat.)

Racial Skill: Archery

Sleep Cycle: Diurnal

Diet: Carnivorous or photosynthesis.

Reproductive Method: sexual

Culture: Most Orcs don't live too far from their home. Rather they feel a strong tie to their lands. There are some Orc cities, but for the most part Orcs live in small towns or villages. Orcs, like humans, are fiercely competitive, and many fill this need with hunting. Some Orcs try to go without eating meat, but most find it too delicious. Orcs are, more often than not, relatively peaceful towards the other races. They are well known for having calm temperaments and keeping cool heads in situations where others would panic.

Lands: Most Orcs live in the forest of Anu, or on the eastern lakes. While there is an official Orc government, it has little power, and most Orcs typically see it as a weak imitation of the other races' political structures.

Life Span: Most Orcs live between 40 and 50 years.

Physical Description: Orcs are tall and muscular in comparison to humans. They have wiry, dark hair, and males have a thick mane of dark hair all around their face. Orcish skin color depends on their diet. Orcs that eat mostly meat have a more light brown skin tone, while those that photosynthesize more often have a dark green caste to their skin. Orcs have sharp teeth and both sexes have small antlers protruding from the top of their heads.

Gnomes

Gnomes are often referred to by the other races as the silent folk. They largely keep to themselves in social situations, though they are one of the most well-traveled races of Torata. You can find gnomes in any major city, and Gnomes head some of the largest trade guilds across the lower continent.

Gnomes are also innately magical. Every gnome, when they undergo puberty, forms a connection with the spirit world that will last the rest of their lives. For some gnomes this is strong and others it is weak. This connection enables any gnome to commune with their ancestors, who reside in a sort of mass consciousness that Gnomes refer to as “The Place.”

Gnomes make fearless warriors when they have to, largely because they have a knowledge of their own afterlives. It is this disposition that enabled them to eventually repel the Dwarves during the second Dwarven expansion despite being outnumbered.

Racial Talent: Spell – Speak with Dead (no cast check required)

Racial Skill: Cast

Sleep Cycle: Gnomes do not sleep.

Diet: Omnivores

Reproductive Method: sexual

Culture: Gnomes dress mostly in earth tones, and often seem somber to other races. Gnomes love to travel, and delight in magic, though this is largely treated as a spiritual connection to what Gnomes refer to as “The world beneath the world.” Many gnomes are either traders or herders, most preferring to keep at least a little bit of their wealth in the form of livestock. Sheep and goats are the most common, but some keep bison as well.

Lands: The Gnomish government holds lands all across the Westplains (which they call Tum Na Ri) and into the Northern mountains. The capital of the Gnomish lands is Pela at the southern foothills of the Northern mountains.

Life Span: Most gnomes live between 70 and 80 years

Physical Description: Gnomes are short in comparison to humans, with light skin and dark hair. Some are born with elaborate birthmarks on their faces. These gnomes can often see in the dark (take the extra sense talent if you wish to play a birthmarked gnome). It is not known how this happens, but it seems to be passed on in familial lines. Male Gnomes have facial hair.

Dwarves

The Dwarves are a unique race in comparison to the others. Their entire genetic line evolved separately from the races of the lower continent because of their isolation on the Upper Continent. Because of this they are silica-based life forms that cannot breed with any of the races from the lower continent.

In addition, this racial heritage seems to have some sort of effect on magic. Dwarves, for whatever reason, are poor conduits for magical energy. This is both a blessing and a curse, for while they have difficulty mastering the finer points of magic, they are also less affected by its power.

Racial Talent: Magical Grounding (all spells cast by or on Dwarves take a -3 penalty)

Racial Skill: Trade (Miner)

Sleep Cycle: Diurnal

Diet: Geovores (Rock Eaters, Dwarves must replenish the minerals that make up their bodies, though they must also consume high-energy compounds like tar or crude oil to fuel themselves). Common dwarven foods include shale, sand, iron, gems, and limestone.

Reproductive Method: Sexual, but no difference between sexes (i.e. hermaphroditism)

Culture: Dwarves are often stoic and somber. Many see themselves as better than the “lower races” (those found on the lower continent). Patriotism is strong in many Dwarves, and many take up the mining or engineering trades. Dwarves aren't fond of gambling, and most of Dwarven culture emphasizes working for your living, even if that means taking it from someone else by force.

Lands: The Glorious Dwarven empire stretches from the Mountains of Mudil in the north to the upper border of Mil'Ashuna in the south. Some mining ventures have been made to the southeastern jungles, but this area is much more lawless than the broad swathe of land that cuts through the center of Torata.

Life Span: Most Dwarves live 100-140 years

Physical Description: Dwarves are short compared to humans, though they are often much more stout. Their bodies are silica-based instead of carbon-based, like the rest of the races. This makes them extremely heavy. Their skin is a speckled grey color, and their eyes gleam like polished gems of red, blue, green, yellow, or purple. Many Dwarves have darkvision, and this trait is often passed down from generation to generation (Dwarves with darkvision should take the extra sense talent). Some Dwarves take to cultivating one of several species of moss on their faces the way other races have facial hair. Dwarves have no sexual dimorphism, meaning all dwarves are the same sex, and any Dwarf can mate with any other Dwarf. However, most of the other races refer to them in the masculine, since they bear resemblance to the males of many other species.

Shifters

There is a sixth race on the face of Torata, though many would argue that to call it a true race isn't technically correct. Sometimes, when a child is born to any of the “lower races,” it comes out as nothing more than a puddle of orange goo. This goo then quickly shapes itself into one of the people near it, often one of its parents or siblings. These children are referred to by many names, though most simply call them shifters.

The Dwarves, it seems, never have shifter children. Scholars theorize this is likely because they come from a different evolutionary line isolated on the upper continent for so long – the same reason they can't breed with the “lower races.”

Racial Talent: Spell – Shapeshift (no cast required, can only shapeshift to other sentient races with this ability)

Racial Skill: Cast

Sleep Cycle: Shifters do not sleep.

Diet: Omnivores

Reproductive Method: magical (shifters cannot reproduce, they are only created)

Culture: shifters have no unified culture, rather they take after the culture that they grow up in. Orcs revere shifters for their talents, while elves and gnomes are more distasteful of them. Humans are often wary of shifters, but generally treat them like anyone else. Dwarves often see shifters as an abomination, one more thing that separates them from the “lower races.”

Lands: Shifters have no lands of their own since they are not able to reproduce, and have never formed a nation.

Life Span: Shifters live between 30 and 40 years.

Half-Breeds

Characters wishing to play half-breeds have a number of options. Any time two different “lower races” breed they produce a half-breed. Half-breeds, however, are sterile, and cannot reproduce. The slang terms for different half-breeds are listed below. Use the normal 2d6 rules for making half-breed characters.

Orc x Human: **Hob:** Hobs are tall, green-grey skinned humans. They are strong and often take to hunting or hard labor.

Elf x Human: **Fairy:** Fairies are tall, lithe humans with no facial hair and small gossamer wings. Their skin is a golden tan color

Gnome x Human: **Halfling:** Halflings are like scaled-down humans with a propensity for magic. Some have darkvision.

Orc x Elf: **Troll:** Trolls look like shorter, more graceful Orcs with less hair and sharp teeth. They are often extremely athletic, though they rarely have the wings of their elven parents.

Gnome x Elf: **Pixie:** Small and graceful, pixies are among the most beautiful creatures on Torata. They have an almost intrinsic propensity for magic, and are often very charismatic.

Orc x Gnome: **Goblin:** Small and often curious, goblins are some of the most tenacious merchants and dedicated runewrights on Torata. What they lack in size, they more than make up for in intensity and attitude.

Many cultures regard parents of half-breeds as selfish and irresponsible. The Dwarves especially are often extremely racist towards half-breeds. This is possibly because they are a constant reminder of the isolation felt by many Dwarves because of their radical racial differences from the “lower races.”

The Land

Before you can adventure in Torata, you'll need to get a feel for the geography. In the following pages, each major part of the world will be described in more detail. There are three sections: Regions, Cities, and Terrain.

General Information:

Some large-scale things about Torata that may be of interest to you and your party:

- The average temperature in Torata goes from freezing cold in the northwest to scorching hot in the southwest. All regions undergo seasons, though the central portion of the continent (roughly from the Westplains to the Wide River) is more affected by these changes.
- There are two halves to Torata, the upper continent and the lower continent. These are connected by the Dwarven capital, the bridge-city of Thronsis.
- The inhabitants of Torata have never ventured too far out to sea. Even the Elves have never discovered more land than what you see on the map above.

Regions

There are seven regions in Torata, listed below:

Upper Continent:

The upper continent is the home of the Dwarves. For millennia they lived in, around, and under the Mountains of Mudil and on the frozen plain. Little else can be said for the upper continent, save that it is rich in mineral wealth and of great spiritual significance to many of the Dwarves.

The Central Swathe:

The central swathe is the large strip of land that runs the length of upper Torata between the Northern Mountains and the forest of Anu. It is bounded on the south by the Wide River. Originally this was mainly human land, but during the First Dwarven Expansion the Dwarven Empire claimed it as their own, laying waste to a number of small villages in the process. Today it is under the control of the Empire, though its inhabitants are largely a mix of Humans and Dwarves. Mostly it is pockmarked with small agricultural or mining villages that serve as waypoints for travelers on the Old Road to stop and rest.

The Westplains and The Steppes

The Westplains are the racial home of the gnomes, whose herds of livestock have grazed over the rolling hills for ages. The steppes are the arable land between the foothills of the Northern Mountains, and they are mostly inhabited by Gnomes as well, though some Humans and Dwarves live there as well.

The Eastern Lakes:

Long home to the Orcs of Torata, the Eastern Lakes region encompasses the forest of Anu, as well as the three large lakes that have provided fish and water for the Orcs for centuries. They are a source of lumber and wild game. This is also the only region that lantern willows grow naturally in. Lantern willow fruit is the main export of the orcish government.

Nara:

Nara is a land riddled with strife. Drought and famine are common here, and there are often small battles between pockets of Human Freedom groups and soldiers of the Dwarven Military. The Dwarves would have given up their hold on this land long ago had it not been for the huge emerald deposits under the eastern jungles of Nara. Central Nara is a sun-baked desert, where only the bravest or the most desperate make their home. The Swamps of Nara are also rumored to have an entire city of free Humans living in them, but this is mostly dismissed as a myth told from slave to slave to keep up the hope of reclaiming their lost land. The City of Three Rivers is also in Nara, further fueling the conflict in the region.

Mil'Ashuna

Mil'Ashuna literally translates from elven as “land of the people.” It is a catch-all term for any land that is predominantly controlled by elves, though most of this lies along the southern coast of Torata and encompasses the chain of islands that juts off the southern tip of the continent as well. Mil'Ashuna is famous across the continent for its schools. Education is important in elven culture, and those that want their children to have a leg up in the world often save up to send them to either Moka'milbir (a general scholarly university in Mil'shanu) or The tower of Moka'una (a mage school on the island of Mara'kura). The jungles of western Mil'Ashuna are also famous for the giant bamboo that grows there. Most elven structures are built from it, and it is exported all over the southern half of the continent.

The Unexplored Continent:

No one knows what lies on this massive island. Few have ever neared enough to truly see the shores, and those that do have never found a way past the jagged rocks and steep cliffs that line the northern face. Many a brave young explorer has set out in search of land, or mineral wealth, only to come back empty-handed, or not at all. Recently, however, an Elven sailor by the name of Vita'u Mele returned to the port of Mil'shanu with a strange beast he claims he captured on the island. He says that he navigated his boat around the southern portion, where he found a small beach of white sand on which to land his boat.

Cities

There are five capital cities in Torata, and a sixth that is a bit more secretive.

Thronsis:

Thronsis is the capital city of the Dwarven Empire. The city itself started as two small villages on either side of the straight of Thronsis, but after the First Dwarven Expansion a massive bridge was built between the two to celebrate the glory of the Empire and unite the upper and lower continents. Some 30,000 human slaves were “expended” in its construction, many of whom were mixed into the massive vats of mortar or simply dumped into the water without a proper burial. Thronsis is mainly made up of Dwarves and Human former slaves (though many are still kept in bondage as legal battles ensue, and those that are free are often shunned and forced into indentured servitude positions). There is also a minority Elf population and a small Gnomish neighborhood. Orcs are rarely seen in Thronsis.

The city makes most of its money by charging traders a toll to use the bridge, though it is also home to many rich merchants and Dwarven engineers. It is the only land bridge between the upper and lower continent and serves as a major trade route for mineral wealth and stone, as well as loacite mined in the mountains of Mudil.

Rather than import a large amount of food for the many human slaves (now former slaves) that reside in Thronsis, the Dwarves made the humans grow their own food in the barren, rocky soil of the upper continent. Many humans heren survive almost entirely off of dairy and grains.

Pela:

Pela wasn't so much built as collected. Over the centuries, caravans of Gnomes would often take refuge in the natural caves around the foothills of the Northern mountains. As time went on, many of these caravans stayed put as a haven for weary travelers. After a while the wagons and yurts became storefronts and houses. Once the treaties with the Dwarves had been signed, the Gnomes commissioned a vast cave to be carved out withing one particular mountain, and this still serves as the Capital of the gnomish government – a place of safety for the Gnomish people. Pela has a diverse mixture of races, though it is predominantly Gnomes that populate its walls. There are also large populations of Dwarves, Elves, and Humans. Orcs are a common sight, but few actually live there – most are simply hunters or trappers passing through.

Grunallow

Grunallow isn't much to look at. In fact, by most accounts, a stiff breeze could knock it over. The palisade wall that surrounds it is more of a formality than anything else. This is because it's more of an embassy than a city. Few Orcs actually live there year round. Most just use it as a trading post, or a place to hear the latest news from outside the forest of Anu. The truth is, most Orcs live on the shores of the Eastern Lakes, but few outsiders are ever allowed to visit the placid shores. Grunallow, however, serves as the face of the frail Orcish government, and is a major stop for those traveling down downriver across Torata. The main export of Grunallow is Lantern Willow fruit, and the city is famous for its groves of the trees.

Three Rivers:

For centuries before the Dwarves ever came to the lower continent, Three rivers was a human meeting place. Various tribes would bring the fruits of their harvests, the game they hunted or trapped, and the crafts they made to Three Rivers to trade and exchange stories. Then, during the second Dwarven Expansion, the Dwarves managed to breach the walls of the city. This was largely because the south gate had been left open for them by a group of human traitors who were promptly slaughtered when the Dwarves gained control of the southern third of the city. The southern third, once simply called Southtown, earned the nickname “Traitor's Bastion” by the humans who live there now under Dwarven rule. Traitor's Bastion is the richest part of town, and many of the buildings are owned by descendants of the Dwarven soldiers that were granted land for their part in the siege.

The population of Three rivers is a broad mix of every race on the continent. The City has been the focus of a number of attacks by human-led “freedom groups” attempting to retake the city from the Dwarves, but so far, none have been successful.

Mil'shanu:

Mil'shanu is the largest city in the southern half of the continent. For years it has been the hub of sea trade, as well as the jumping-off point for marine exploration expeditions, and the southern islands' link to the mainland. Many of the structures are built of the giant bamboo that grows wild in the jungles to the west, but some are made of stone – built by the Dwarves that live in the city.

Mil'shanu also houses the university of Moka'milbir. Moka'milbir draws people from all across the continent to learn about everything from sailing to engineering. While it does boast a meager magic program, most serious mages train at the tower of Moka'una on the island of Mara'kura to the southeast.

Swamp City: Swamp city is the home to a large band of free humans in the southern swamps of Nara. The Dwarven Empire is uncertain of its exact location, mainly because swampy terrain is dangerous and slow-going for Dwarven scouts, whose heavy bodies would quickly sink in the mire without careful footsteps and magical protection. Swamp city is largely self-sustaining, but they do often ship in weapons and armor from other parts of the continent, and many agents of Swamp City sell drugs in the Dwarven empire for a steep profit that can then be used to fund the agenda of the Human government in exile. Currently, the Priesthood of Munai is pulling the strings within Swamp city politics, mainly because there are a lot of vengeful humans looking for retribution against their Dwarven oppressors.

Terrain

Northern Mountains:

The northern mountains are the continuation of the Mountains of Mudil onto the lower continent. Most of the mountains are uninhabited, save by wild beasts and strange spirits. In the eastern portion, the Dwarves have dug some small villages into the hillsides, and in the southwest the gnomes grow rice and raise goats on the rocky steppes. The mountains have long been home to bandit groups, who run to the mountains to escape the law. However, even in summer the mountains are covered with snow and filled with a bitter wind that can chill to the bone in minutes without warm clothing. The Archae occasionally send expeditions up to the mountains to study the strange caves found in the north. These caves date back to a time long before the singing of the first memory songs, and there are often strange pictograms carved into their walls.

Forest of Anu:

The forest of Anu is rich with life. Thousands of animals populate the dense undergrowth, and the canopy houses thousands more birds, insects, and fungi. Many strange plants grow in the forest of Anu, and the Orcish Shamans use many of them for medicinal purposes. There are plenty of stories of spirits in the forest, ethereal beings both beautiful and cruel that hide in the trees and among the streams. These Dryads and Nyads have been known to do many a good turn to an adventurer who helps them and respects the land, and many a foul turn to those who don't.

Mountains of Mudil:

According to the Dwarves, the Mountains of Mudil were shaped long ago when Mudil first made the world. They've long been home to the Dwarven people, and more recently to the glorious Dwarven empire. Countless miles of tunnels have been carved into them, both for housing and in search of gems to feed the Dwarven people's lust for baubles. Grand palaces have been carved into the sides, left over from ages of kings and queens. Many of these, as well as other areas, and especially old mineshafts have been abandoned in favor of more profitable locales. In these old forsaken tunnels the deep spirits are said to roam. Dark things of coal and iron wait to take back what is theirs from any dwarf who strays too far into the depths. Most of the lighting is made by one of two species of bioluminescent fungi that grows naturally in the dark caves and glows a bright amber or blue-green.

Big Water:

Big water is the bay in the southwest of Torata. It separates the gnomish lands in the Westplains from the Elven land of Mil'Ashuna. The Gnomes claim there was once an island in the middle of it, but the spirit of the sea grew angry with its inhabitants and swallowed it whole many eons ago. Big Water is a major part of the Elven-Gnomish trade routes.

Wide River:

Wide River is the name given by the Dwarves to the river that divides the central swathe from Nara. The Wide river is a segment of any downriver journey, and splits into the long river and the east river at the City of Three Rivers. It comes from the North River in the forest of Anu.

Long River:

Long River is the river that flows from the end of the Wide River at Three Rivers. It bisects Mil'Ashuna, and is the final leg of any downriver trading journeys to the port of Mil'Shanu.

North River:

The North River is the beginning of the river trade route, and cuts the central swathe in half.

East River:

The East River is a filthy cesspit of muck and grime. For centuries the inhabitants of Three Rivers have dumped their trash, junk, and even excrement into this river, and over time it built up at the mouth of the river, effectively creating the southern swamps where there was once a glistening white sand delta. The east river is often used as an escape route for slaves seeking freedom in the southern swamps.

Bir'Ashuna:

Bir'Ashuna is the large body of water that separates Mil'Ashuna from the southern islands. The area is well mapped, and the floor of the bay is covered with shipwrecks from years past. Many a young adventurer has gotten their start diving for treasure in Bir'Ashuna using goat bladders to store air and rocks to weigh themselves down, or in some rare cases, magic.

Magic

Magic is an integral part of Torata. It lies at the heart of many curious natural phenomena. It has shaped the development of the races, the plants, the animals and the land. Magic is both powerful and unpredictable. Magic in Torata is subtle, and only a few spells can really be used offensively. Mages are common in the larger cities, but often don't stray too far from home, and are consequently seen rarely in small villages.

In keeping with the standard rules for magic in the 2d6 core rulebook, the skill used to perform magic is Cast, and different spells are taken as talents. The spells available for mages are listed below.

Armor

This spell lasts all day and take ten minutes to cast. It gives the target all the bonuses and penalties of light, medium or heavy armor. This does not require the armor proficiency talent to use.

Animate

This spell allows you to bring an object to life and give it a simple task like “guard,” “follow,” or “clean.” It's often used by mages to keep their workplaces clean or carry heavy things.

Call Wind

You channel the power of nature and call a wind to you. The stronger the wind, the higher the DC. This cannot be used as a focused blast, rather it can be used to change the direction and intensity of the wind. This is often used by mages who make their living calling the winds for ships on the open sea.

Charm

This allows a caster to use cast in place of the diplomacy skill. If the attempt fails, the GM may wish to make the target of the spell realize someone's been trying to charm them.

Create Flame

This allows the caster to create a small fire, roughly the size of a human hand. It can be cast on anything within line of sight, though faraway targets require higher DCs. Once created, the flame cannot be controlled any more than a normal flame could. Mages who learn this spell often learn Suppress Flame first.

Dream Sending

With this spell a caster can send a dream to anyone on Torata. The details of the dream are often hazily remembered, but usually a simple, but important message can be relayed. This can also be used to send nightmares to terrorize one's enemies.

Entangle

This spell functions like a Melee (Unarmed) used to grapple. You roll an opposed check with the target you're trying to grapple. The range on this spell is up to the GM. Depending on where you learned the spell it might take the form of vines, rope, or litter.

Heal

At low DCs, heal can be used the same way trade (healing) can to double the normal healing rate for a wounded character. At high DCs, however, it can heal wounds directly. The DCs for these tasks are up to the GM.

Illusion

This spell makes a target think they see, smell, taste, touch, or hear what isn't really there. Lower DC versions include small noises or static images, medium DC versions might incorporate two senses or move, high DC might make victims think they're on fire or falling. This is a powerful spell.

Lullaby

This spell puts creatures to sleep. Targets get to make resolve checks against the DC of the cast check used to generate the lullaby. If they fail, they become unconscious, if they succeed they remain awake.

Negate

You can use a full round action to negate the powers of another caster for a their next turn if you succeed on an opposed Cast check.

Plant Growth

You can heal sick plants and make healthy ones grow more quickly. At lower DCs, this can cause a small garden to grow at twice the normal rate, while at high DCs it could make an entire field grow this fast, or even make a single plant grow in seconds.

Protection

You can use magic the way other characters use melee defense skills. In addition, you can also use this to defend against ranged attacks like throwing, archery, and shooting. This could manifest as a shield or perhaps the attack simply bounces off you - whatever the case it's only able to be used in defense from another attack.

Rain Dance

This spell allows the caster to call a thunderstorm to themselves. It is most often used for agricultural purposes, but is also sometimes used during war by ships in an attempt to wreck a vessel that's pursuing them.

Ritual

Rituals are a way of enhancing spells. If a caster who knows a particular spell has the help of another caster who also knows the spell, they can reduce the DC of the spell. For each caster who participates in the ritual, lower the DC by 2. All casters participating in the ritual must have this spell talent, as well as the spell being performed. When making a ritual, each caster must make a cast check at the new, lowered DC for the spell. If any casters in the ritual fail, the entire ritual falls apart. Often this results in a wild release of magical energy, the results of which are up to the GM.

Runes

Runes are a way of storing spells. Scribing a rune on a surface can essentially store a spell so that when another character touches (low DC), passes by (medium DC), or looks at (high DC) the rune, they set off the spell. This doesn't actually count as it's own spell, but if a character wants to scribe other spells into runes, they must take this spell talent.

Sense Life

The caster of this spell can tell where living things are around them, even through walls or other physical barriers. They can sense the flow of life around them, and at high DCs can even determine what kind of life it is (Human, Dwarf, plant, animal, etc.).

Shapeshift

This spell takes ten minutes to perform, and allows the caster to transform themselves into another creature of roughly equal mass. Changing back takes ten minutes as well. Shifted casters do not return to their original form without recasting the spell unless they are killed, in which case their body returns to its natural state.

Speak with Dead

This spell allows a mage to commune with the dead. Perhaps they want advice from an ancestor, or they're trying to solve a murder and want to ask the deceased some questions. This is a difficult spell to learn, though Gnomes get it as a racial talent.

Spirit Walk

Spirit Walking is considered to be the oldest spell in recorded existence. It allows a caster to spiritually leave their body and walk, or sometimes fly around Torata without regard for physical objects. This allows them to move through walls or dense undergrowth, and is often used for scouting.

Suppress Flame

This allows the caster to instantly extinguish a fire. The amount of fire that can be extinguished with a single casting is determined by the cast check result.

Transmute

You change something into something else. Weak examples include changing the color, texture, flavor, or smell of an object. More powerful examples might be changing an object's chemical composition, size, or shape. The DC for this spell is high.

Ward

Warding is used to put a sort of alarm on an area or object. If a warded area is entered, or the object is interacted with by a creature other than the caster, any of several things might happen. Low DC wardings might make a loud noise or pungent smell. Medium DCs might mark the intruder or psychically warn the caster if they're not present. High DCs may even incapacitate or imprison the creature that set them off.

History

Things were not always as they are now. Here is a time line of major events on the Continent of Torata to give you a bit of background on how things got the way they are. Dates are given as years Before the Dwarven Empire (BDE), and year of the Dwarven Empire (DE):

??? - The first official trade pact was formed between the Elves and the Orcs

??? - City of Three Rivers burns to the ground in a great fire, the cause of which is unknown

??? - The Walkers in the Green are established by Gresh

231 BDE – First contact between Dwarves and confused Human fishermen across the straight of Thronsis, conflict ensues.

196 BDE – Loacite is discovered on the shores of the Upper continent.

157 BDE – the Loacite Wars begin over the control of the precious mineral. Dwarves on one side, Humans and Elves on the other.

124 BDE – Loacite wars end, trade agreements struck between Elves and Dwarves, humans left to pick up the pieces of a broken military in the north.

101 BDE – Mariner's Guild formed

86 BDE – Runewright's guild formed

75 BDE – Moka'milbir founded

72 BDE – Moka'una construction started

71 BDE – human civil war in Nara, government of Three Rivers splits

69 BDE – Moka'una opens its doors to students

51 BDE – human civil war ends, leaving southern Torata in shambles

36 BDE – Loacite prices drop as huge vein is found in mountains of Mudil

33 BDE – Dwarven government pays huge grants to Moka'una to develop the horseless carriage and the wind stone.

21 BDE – Alberno Marmin begins radical political campaign for reform of the Dwarven government

17 BDE – talk of civil war in the Dwarven government

12 BDE – schism in human church of Munai, Munain Theocracy of Nara declares war on decadent city of Three rivers

11BDE - Alek the Fist forms the Gurna in Pela

8 BDE – Negation stone developed by team of Runewrights led by Mermor Gup

5 BDE – Gurna begin operating in Three Rivers

2 BDE – Alberno Marmin and the glorious Dwarven militia assassinate the high king of the Dwarves, Mundo Arkor, plunging the Dwarven people into civil war

1 DE – Glorious Dwarven Empire, led by Alberno Marmin emerges out of the ashes of the Dwarven revolution, begins funding mass production of magic items by Moka'una for unknown reasons.

4 DE – watershoes invented by Mermor Gup

7 DE - wandermap invented by Mermor Gup

12 DE – Three Rivers burnt to ground by Munain Theocracy of Nara

32 DE – First Dwarven Expansion begins

37 DE – aided by stockpiles of horseless carriages, negation stones and watershoes, the Dwarven empire sweeps across Torata.

48 DE – Dwarves have control over northern half of the central swathe, many humans enslaved

50 DE – Siege of Pela begins, Mermor Gup killed trying to help Gnomish Government

52DE – Alek the Fist killed in skirmish over south gate of Pela

55 DE – Siege of Pela ends, Gnomes victorious due to culture of violence propagated by Alek the Fist and the Gurna, who are raised to the status of national heroes. Dwarves focus on southern Torata.

67 DE – Bridge of Thronsis begins construction

72 DE – Long River Wars in Mil'Ashuna, Elves lose significant amount of land to Dwarves

88 DE – Bridge of Thronsis completed, Dwarves hold borders, end of First Dwarven Expansion marks beginning of Dark Days

95 DE – eyebright first surfaces in small village by western jungles, spreads rapidly

113 DE – eyebright has spread over most of Mil'Ashuna and Nara, parts of Westplains

141 DE – Hammerson Company Founded

152 – Alberno Marmin still alive, declared an avatar of Mudil by Priesthood of Mudil

156 DE– with his dying breath, Alberno Marmin declares his child Mabid Marmin to be his successor

159 DE – Gurna begin operating in Thronsis

163 DE – led by Mabid Marmin, the Empire sets out on the Second Dwarven Expansion, mainly fueled by a need for more crude oil, which is common in the southern deserts.

169 DE – Siege of Three Rivers begins

170 DE – Siege of Three rivers broken by human traitors, Dwarves use Three Rivers as jumping off point for further expansion.

188 DE – Children of Munai founded out of Munain Theocracy of Nara, skirmishes with Dwarven army are commonplace

207 DE – Dwarves attempt to invade forest of Anu, Walker Wars begin

215 DE – Walker wars abruptly end when Mabid Marmin and sixteen Dwarven military generals die in their sleep on the same night. Second Dwarven Expansion ends, Dark Days end.

218 DE – Hand of Mudil forms in wake of Second Dwarven Expansion

234 DE – Deposits of loacite found in northern mountains by explorer Namka Burdo

265 DE – Cave paintings found in northern mountains by Namka Burdo

307 DE – Gurna Begin operating in Mil'Shanu

311 DE – Juki Malford emerges as promising new leader of Gurna

316 DE – Juki Malford turns up dead with a Dwarven axe buried in his skull, riots ensue in gnomish districts of major cities

322 DE – Kardor Ment assumes control of fractionated Gurna

329 DE – Vita'u Mele returns to Mil'Shanu with strange creature he claims to have found on the Unexplored island

330 DE – slavery officially declared illegal by Dwarven government

331 DE – present day

Organizations

There are a number of prominent organizations whose actions shape the face of Torata. To become a member of any of these, your character must have the Credentials talent.

Walkers in the Green:

The Walkers in the Green are an ancient druidic sect originally formed to protect the forest of Anu. Over time they have spread across Torata, and include members from every race. Little is known about them by outsiders, save that they are benevolent, helping travelers and people in need. Most consider it an honor to give shelter to a wandering Walker, though the Dwarven Empire has run a strong propaganda campaign against them.

Walkers often receive shamanistic magical training and can cast spells like heal, dream sending, spirit walk, and plant growth. Many also take the animal kinship talent. To be a walker a person must undergo the initiation ceremony in the forest of Anu, and kill a Domsha Boar by themselves to feed the guests at the initiation feast.

Mariner's Guild:

The Mariners Guild is a very old organization of seafarers. It originated within elvish society, but now encompasses many Dwarven, gnomish and human merchants as well. The mariner's guild sells insurance for merchants and explorers, and offers safe havens with food and beds in many ports around Torata.

Hand of Mudil:

The hand of Mudil is a mercenary group formed by former Dwarven soldiers in the wake of the Second Dwarven Expansion. They hire out muscle to various merchants and companies, and act as spies for the Dwarven government. They also fund research for military applications of magic at Moka'una. The Hand of Mudil is known around Torata for being especially brutal in their tactics, especially towards Humans. They are led by the former Dwarven military general Ragmoor Arneson.

Children of Munai:

A radical religious sect of free humans living in the southern swamps, the Children formed from the remnants of the Munain Theocracy of Nara that governed the southern portion of Torata in years past. Little is known about them, save that their main goal is to overthrow the Dwarven Empire and reinstate themselves as the dominant political power in Nara. They are thought to be led by a Human man identifying himself as "Kuru."

Gurna:

The Gurna started out as a small group of criminals living in the slums of Pela. These criminals, led by Alek the Fist, quickly took over local politics and began to insinuate themselves into every aspect of Gnomish government, effectively creating a criminal empire

within the framework of gnomish society. They have slowly spread to every major city on Torata. Their leader is currently a middle-aged Gnome named Kardor Ment.

Hammerson Company:

The hammerson company is a human-run, continent-wide crafting dynasty. They are renowned across Torata for producing quality goods, albeit at a high price. They often work closely with the Runewright's Guild to mass produce magic items.

Runewright's Guild:

A group of mages and artisans that work together to produce astounding new magical technology. The Runewright's guild began as a small group of mages who made their living warding houses, calling wind for ships, and enchanting weapons and armor before battles. However, with the discovery of the mineral Loacite, they have been able to produce seemingly permanent runes that never fade or require more magical energy to run. This has led to a high demand for the mineral, and has drawn many new acolytes to their workshops. The headquarters of the Runewright's guild is in the Tower of Moka'una.

Notable Items

While most of the objects found in Torata are similar to those of our world (albeit not very modern), a few bear special mention. The bulk of these are magic items, but others are plants or minerals that simply don't exist in our reality. It should be noted that to create any permanently magic item, some amount of loacite must be involved, though the amount varies from object to object.

Animated Object: This refers to a wide variety of inventions, all of which perform some sort of automatic function magically. Most are created by scribing an elaborate configuration of runes into the surface of the device and rubbing in a mixture of powdered loacite and juice from the fruit of a lantern willow. This gives the runes a tendency to glow a faint blue when the magic is activated. Notable Animated objects include:

Cleaning Broom (130T): This broom duplicates the effects of a Clean spell, tidying up the designated area and putting itself away when it's done. A cleaning broom can clean a small house in roughly one hour.

Horseless Carriage (3,000T): this carriage moves on its own at a speed of up to 15 miles per hour. No horse is needed to pull it, however it does still require a driver. The minimum drive DC to operate a horseless carriage is 7.

Self playing instrument: There are many variations of this, but the three most common are the self-playing fiddle (900T), the autoharp (1,250T), and the enchanted flute (550T). These instruments play themselves whenever commanded to, and can be taught new songs. To teach a self-playing instrument a new song, a character must make a successful perform check and play the song with that instrument.

Drugs: There are various drugs used across Torata, both recreationally and medicinally. While the elves, Orcs, and Humans have very relaxed drug laws, the Gnomes treat drug trafficking very seriously, and in the Dwarven empire it is considered a capital offense.

Cala (10T): Cala is a psychoactive cactus that grows in the central portion of Nara. It is often used by Orc and Human shamans to achieve states of “higher consciousness.”

Gnomespice (20T): This mixture of spices and opium paste is smoked to give the user a relaxed feeling of numbness. It is also associated with strange dreams. Many Mages claim that gnomespice “expands the borders of thought,” and use it to intensify their understanding of the magical world.

Marijuana (4T): A cousin of the hemp plants used to make rope and cloth, marijuana gives users a dreamlike high, and is very popular all across Torata. Orcs often use it to treat arthritis, and it grows well all over southern Torata.

Rock Salt (1T): This is literally just salt. When Dwarves eat salt, it has a strange effect on their metabolism, making them hyperactive and jittery. Many Dwarven merchants in foreign lands make use of this drug to keep up all night while filling out paperwork.

Lantern Willow Fruit (50T): These egg-shaped crystalline fruits of the lantern willow are prized all over Torata for their magical properties. The shell is a clear, rough crystalline material roughly the size of a human head. To crack one open requires a DC 9 Athletics check. Inside there is a viscous blue juice that is used for numerous magical applications (drinking this juice grants a +1 on cast rolls for one week, but stains the lips and tongue a fluorescent blue and is mildly addictive).

Loacite (price varies): Loacite is the foundation of magical technology on Torata. Without it, runes can only hold a magic item together for a short time. Raw loacite is a pale pink crystal found deep in the northern mountains and the mountains of Mudil. It was originally ignored by the Dwarves, who found no use for it, and was thrown with the rest of the waste rock onto the beaches of the upper continent. Over time, ocean currents carried the mineral south. This led to deposits of loacite-rich silt throughout the eastern lakes. The Orcs refer to this substance as magic mud, and it is used in many shamanistic rituals.

Longfinger Gloves (100T): Longfinger gloves are something of an oddity created by Mermor Gup in his later years. These gloves are dipped in a mixture of crushed loacite and juice from the fruit of a lantern willow while the magic is being imbued into them. At will, the wearer can extend the fingers of these gloves. Each finger has the strength of a hickory switch, and can extend up to three feet. This is often the first magical item new Runewrights are taught to make.

Slavecatcher cuffs (300T): These manacles take the form of a small steel ball engraved with runes and studded with loacite. When thrown at a creature, that creature must make a defensive combat roll against the users throw skill. If the target fails, they are bound hand and foot by the cuffs, which explode outward from the ball, snaking their way towards the target's wrists and ankles and then constricting to effectively hogtie them.

Stones: Stones are the simplest kind of magic item. Most are just a chunk of loacite imbued with a particular spell, though some are set in special fixtures designed to amplify their power. Some examples are:

Food Stone (350T): This small, spherical piece of loacite, if swallowed, will sustain the user for 24 hours without food or drink. There is no limit to the number of times a single stone can be used. However, if the user wishes to make use of the stone again, it must be “collected” and (hopefully) cleaned off first. This is one of the magic items that allowed Dwarven soldiers to survive in foreign lands where nutrient-rich minerals were scarce, contributing to the success of the First Dwarven Expansion.

Farsight Stone (25,000T): These stones are extremely rare. Once built, they cannot be dismantled or moved, lest the magic binding the powerful magic to them should fade. Farsight stones are a large mass of crystal-shaped loacite that has been driven into the ground at a particular location. These are then treated with a special blend of ointments and minerals that activate the latent spells stored within the runes engraved across the surface of the four-foot-high crystals. These crystals are made in pairs, and when one is touched, the user sees, hears, smells, tastes and feels as though they were standing at the other end of the connection, touching the other farsight stone. Two stones, once linked, cannot be reprogrammed. These are mostly used by governments

and major organizations to communicate with one another across the continent.

Healing Stone (4,000T): This rectangular bar of loacite duplicates the effects of a successful heal spell when worn on the body. It constantly emits a pale blue light, and smells of cinnamon. If crushed and ingested it will fully heal any diseases, and even grow back lost limbs, as well as restore any lost wounds to the user. This destroys it.

Negation Stone(3,500T): Negation Stones are easy to produce, but extremely rare. This is because they can only be made out of a loacite geode, a very rare natural occurrence that is limited by supply. The mages of the Runewright's guild has only ever produced 5 or so of these powerful stones, but it is suspected that there is something of a black market trade for them as well, since they are highly regulated by the Dwarven Empire. Negations stones function like Sanctuary Stones, but for magic. Anyone attempting to cast a spell within 100 feet of a negation stone must make a DC 13 Resolve check or spend one round vomiting. If they fail they must also make a DC 7 Resolve check or pass out. These stones are often used during peace negotiations.

Revelation Stone(1000T): This stone is a thin sliver of loacite ground into a small round lens. While looking through the lens, the user of a Revelation stone can see through any illusion, no matter how powerful. They are popular among customs officers and important gate guards across Torata.

Sanctuary Stone (10,000T): This six-inch, squat hexagonal pillar of loacite is engraved with intricate runes and glided with silver. Any persons within 100 feet of a sanctuary stone must succeed on a DC 13 Resolve check to make any sort of attack (this includes magical attacks that would physically harm anyone). Creatures that fail spend one full round vomiting uncontrollably, and must make a DC 7 resolve check or pass out. Creatures that succeed have one round in which to attack before they must make another DC 13 Resolve check. These stones are often used during peace negotiations.

Water Breathing Stone (600T): As the name implies, this small, rough disk of loacite, when places in the mouth, allows the user to breathe freely underwater. They are often used by exploration teams and treasure divers off the coast of Mil'Ashuna.

Wind Stone (4,500T): Wind stones are small ovals of loacite with a brass band around the center and a small slider, also made of brass, that can be adjusted around the circumference as necessary. They were pioneered by Elven sailors, and are most frequently used to propel ships against a prevailing wind.

Wandermap (150T): This relatively simple magic item is a square of animal hide that, when activated, begins to cover itself with a map of the area . It extends in a radius of 100 feet, and covers itself more as the user moves around. These maps were invaluable to the Dwarven Empire during the first expansion for scouting purposes.

Watershoes (700T): Watershoes have special soles studded with chunks of loacite that allow the wearer to walk on water as though it were ice (this means it's slippery!). These were another one of the major inventions that drove the First Dwarven Expansion, allowing the Dwarves to cross the straight of Thronsis without a boat.

Strange Creatures

Most of the flora and fauna of Torata is the same as our own world. However, there are some odd exceptions that roam the lands, seas and skies. Below is a list of strange creatures you may encounter during your adventures:

Amphisbaena: An amphisbaena is a snake roughly on to three feet long with a head at both ends of its body. They are most well known for their curious method of movement; one head hold the other's neck in its mouth and the whole beast rolls like a wheel. They can be seen rolling all over the Westplains and parts of the central swathe. Amphisbaena skin can be ground up into a powder that, when eaten, acts as aphrodisiac. Amphisbaena are also venomous. Those bitten by an amphisbaena must make a DC 8 resolve check or become ill for one week, taking a -1 penalty on all rolls.

Barnacle Goose: The barnacle goose is a strange creature. While it is, for all intents and purposes, a regular goose, its origins are something of an oddity; after these geese mate, they sit on the edges of ponds, rocky beaches or even docks, and cover the surface they sit on with barnacles. These barnacles eventually open to reveal tiny goslings. Barnacle goose is prized among the chefs of the lower continent for its flavorful blend of fishiness and gamey fowl.

Bunyip: Bunyips are a species of large, ox-like creatures with faces like pigs and large, serrated tusks. They are usually solitary, and can hold their breath for a long time. Often, they are found lying in wait around the shore of small watering holes or ponds in parts of Nara and Mil'Ashuna, and will viciously gore anything they perceive to be a threat. Human hunters have long prized their pelts as a mark of status, and bunyips are often roasted on feast holidays, when they can be found.

Eyebright: This bacteria causes a horrific end for anyone infected, and at one point killed off more than a quarter of the population of southern Torata. Victims first notice an itching around the eyes that slowly becomes an unbearable pain. Some of the less fortunate patients have been known to gouge out their own eyes to relieve the pressure that builds up behind them. Eventually, the tissue of the eyes liquifies and the disease spreads into the victim's brains, killing them in roughly two weeks, give or take a few days. There is no known cure for eyebright, though the juice of the lantern willow, if rubbed into the eyes, will ease the suffering of the patient. Magical healing has no effect on eyebright.

Facial Moss: This stringy green moss is often cultivated on the faces of Dwarves to mimic the facial hair of other races. There is also a red variety and an orange variety.

Lantern Willow: These tall willow trees grow best in the northern section of the Forest of Anu. They bear a strange kind of fruit that has numerous magical applications, and their wood, roots, bark, and branches are often used in magical rituals. The fruit, when ripe, glow a vibrant blue color at night.

Remora: The remora is a small fish a foot or so long with an extraordinary ability: it can stop ships dead in the water. Many a sailor has come to an abrupt halt for no reason, only to find one of these little fish attached to the bottom of their boat.

Spirits: Spirits are all around. They are raw embodiments of magic and nature that roam Torata in various forms. There are many different kinds of spirits, but some of the more common ones are listed below.

Coal Mote: These small black spirits sprites are little more than puffballs of condensed coal smoke. They are often found in mines, caves, or old buildings, and will flee at the first sign of movement. Tossing one extinguishes it, leaving nothing behind but a sooty residue and a puff of black smoke.

Dryad: These tree spirits are bound to the forest of their origin. While they aren't fully sentient, they have an animal sort of intelligence, and often help lost travelers find their way home. If their forest is damaged, they often grow angry and exact retribution on whoever did harm to their beloved home.

Ferrum: The ferrum are iron spirits, found deep in some of the Dwarven mines. Ferrum are roughly the size of a Gnome, and made entirely of iron. Most ferrum are curious creatures, though many don't understand how much more fragile the rest of Torata's inhabitants can be. Seeing a ferrum is good luck in a Dwarf mine, since it usually means there is a vein of valuable minerals nearby.

Ghost: Ghosts are the spirits of creatures left behind after death. They're not the actual creature themselves, rather they are a sort of emotional imprint left on the world by the creature's passing. Some ghosts are benevolent, some malignant, others neutral. Ghosts are unable to physically disrupt the material world, but their presence often interferes with magic.

Harvest Folk: Harvest folk are mischievous spirits that flit around, inhabiting various vegetables in the fields. Sometimes farmers will see turnips climb out of the ground with little arms and legs, other times fruit trees will harass workers by swatting them with branches. The harvest folk take many forms, but can usually be placated by leaving a saucer of cream at the edge of the field that they're bothering.

Nyad: Nyads are primarily river spirits, though they inhabit lakes, swamps, and even the ocean as well. The disposition of a Nyad depends on where they live. Nyads in the North River, for example, are carefree and happy, while those in the polluted East River are often irritable, smelly, and mean. Ocean Nyads are well-known among mariners for gathering around the prow of a ship as it cuts through the water and singing sweet songs to the sailors.

Olmem: Olmem are boulders of varying sizes with faces carved into them that roll about the Westplains, seemingly unaware of their surroundings. Many a disgruntled wagon owner has returned to town on foot with a story about a six foot wide boulder that came rolling into their cart and scattering their cargo, sometimes even killing whatever poor beast of burden that was pulling it.

Vegetable Lamb: This species of sheep do not give birth to live young. Rather, after mating, they plant a small seed into the ground. This seed grows into an enormous orange flower bud that, when opened, reveals a lamb. These flowers can be seen growing all over the northern steppes during the summer.

Wrinkle Dog: Wrinkle dogs are small, hairless dogs with loose skin. They wander the northern parts of Nara and the southern portions of the Forest of Anu. Because of their jaw structure, they always seem to be smiling. In fact, most Wrinkle Dogs are very good-tempered, though they have a fondness for roughhousing that gets them into trouble. When a wrinkle dog bites another creature they must make a DC 13 Resolve check. If they succeed, nothing happens. If they fail, however, all the hair on their body falls out, and their skin gets loose and wrinkly for one week. Scholars are still unsure whether this is venomous or magical, but either way, there seems to be no cure for it.

Religion

There are many different religions across Torata. The gods do not walk in physical form, but many who follow them are able to perform miracles in their names. Many scholars theorize this is a sort of emotional magic, but true believers “know” that it is the strength of their faith that allows them to tap into their religion's reservoir of power. Not all of the religions incorporate an actual deity however. The main beliefs are outlined below:

Mudil: Called the stoneshaper, Mudil crafted the world using his diamond fingers, carving out rivers and shaping the mountains. Then he created the Dwarves, his chosen people. To them he gave the gift of the upper continent and the mountains that bear his name. However, the other gods were jealous of Mudil's craftsmanship. They populated the lower continent with all manner of strange heathen creatures. Mudil had to leave Torata to fight them in the cosmos, where his people would not be harmed by the epic clash. He promised he would return someday and left behind his laws.

Munai: The predominant human god, Munai is a god of retributive justice and favor for His people, as well as being a sun god. Many free humans in the southern swamps worship Him, and the former government of Nara was a theocracy based around the principles laid out in the Munain holy book, the Buksha. Many enslaved humans worship Munai, hoping He will exact vengeance upon their captors.

Kalam and Suri: The father and mother gods of the main Elven religion. Kalam is the father, his gaze is the sky and he watches over all his children. Suri is the mother, whose embrace is the salt sea. To her children she gives the gift of life and bounty. Kalam is stern, while Suri is gentle. Their union produced the land of Torata.

Gormruk: Gormruk is the spirit of the earth to many Orcs. It is the well from which all life springs, and the grave to which all life flows. It gives and takes, and it can be tapped into by powerful shaman. It is the source of magic, and the force that maintains the balance of nature.

The Trickster: Many shifters believe in this deific being. They claim that Mudil, Munai, and Kalam are all the same god, whom they call the trickster, in different forms, causing the people of the continents to fight and squabble. They believe that only by going against the established religions can they ever hope to find happiness. This sort of anti-worship often causes them to be persecuted by the more zealous members of other races.

Bresh: The gnomish word for “The Place.” Bresh is more a state of being than a deity. It is the fused consciousnesses of every gnome who has ever lived. When a gnome dies, their soul melds with Besh. All gnomes have the racial ability to tap into the Besh for advice, guidance, and protection. Very few gnomes turn away from Bresh, and those that do are often ostracized or thrown out of their societies.

Notable Figures

Throughout Torata's history there have been a number of important figures that have shaped world events or gained continent-wide fame. Some of them are historical, others appear as folklore. Below are listed some of the more noteworthy:

Alberno Marmin: The Dwarf who was single-handedly responsible for the creation of the Dwarven Empire. Born to a family of carpenters, he saw that the ruling elite of Dwarven aristocracy had become soft and fat off the taxes they gouged from the lower classes. He led a large group of workers in a revolt that would shape the face of Torata for centuries to come. After killing the current high king, Mundo Arkor, he and his band of rebels assumed power and began radical changes to the Dwarven government that included a massive budget for science and military development. The first dwarven expansion was his largest contribution to the Empire, and by the end of his life he had been recognized by the priesthood of Mudil as a living avatar of their god because of his extraordinarily long life. He had many children, though he chose Mabid Marmin as his successor. Alberno Marmin lived from 41 BDE until 156 DE, when he died from an advanced case of eyebright.

Alek the Fist: Alek the fist, born Aleksir Morovin, is the architect of the Gurna crime dynasty. Alek was the third in a family of six gnomes that grew up in the slums of Pela. Their father was a day laborer and a drunk, and their mother was a housekeeper. Alek had a rough life growing up, and often landed himself in trouble with the city watch. His ambitions were too great to be contained though, and he formed a small group called the Gurna, made up of close friends. The Gurna began their forays into the world of organized crime with small gambling dens in the back rooms of several restaurants. Over time, they began to spread out and deal in other activities like prostitution and drug-running. Alek died at the ripe old age of 83, defending his old neighborhood during the siege of Pela in the First Dwarven Expansion. At the time of his death, he and the Gurna were treated by most of the gnomish people as national heroes for their stalwart defense of the gnomish people, both in war and in business.

Gresh: Gresh is something of a folk hero in Orcish culture. He was the founding member of the Walkers in the Green in eons past. According to the legend passed down from shaman to shaman, Gresh was so powerful he could cause entire fields to bear fruit at a wave of his hand, or call down lightning from a clear sky. Many of these tales are likely exaggerations, and the details have been lost to history, but many a Walker initiate looks to Gresh as a model of what to strive for.

Kardor Ment: The current leader of the Gurna, Kardor Ment rose to his office because of the power vacuum left behind after the untimely death of his predecessor, Juki Malford. Ment is a ruthless but efficient leader, and wise to boot. Many in the Gurna suspect that he was behind the death of Juki Malford, but none dare confront him about it. After all, what's done is done, and during the nine years of Ment's leadership, the Gurna have waxed prosperous.

Kuru: Little is known about the Human calling himself Kuru, but many suspect he is the one behind many of the recent uprisings in the southeast. Kuru is said to lead a particularly devout sect of Munains called the Children of Munai.

Mabid Marmin: Born in 136 DE, Mabid was one of Alberno's youngest sons. The decision to nominate him as successor shocked much of the Dwarven Empire, and some even believed foul play to have been involved. Mabid drove the Second Dwarven Expansion to conquer the Human capital of Three Rivers, but died suddenly in 215 DE during his sleep on the same night as sixteen Dwarven generals. No one knows for sure, but the Orcs whisper tales of a powerful shaman who sent them all true-dreams of death that night to end the violence that was being committed against the Orcs during the Walker Wars at the time.

Mermor Gup: Mermor Gup was a brilliant gnomish Runewright who lived from 28 BDE to 52 DE. He is well known across the continent for his many breakthroughs in the creation of permanent magic items using loacite. These include the watershoes, the negation stone, and the wandermap. Before the first Dwarven Expansion, he was contracted to create his inventions for the Dwarven government, and spent most of his time with a team of researchers at the Runewright laboratories in Moka'una. After he saw what they were doing with them, he returned to his home in Pela to aid his people in the defense of their city. During the Siege of Pela, his death was a rallying cry for the gnomish people, and his death at the hands of Dwarven soldiers fueled the tenacious gnomish defense that eventually led to the Dwarves being repelled from the city.

Namka Burdo: A Gnomish explorer. Namka Burdo explored many uncharted regions of the Northern mountains and even found massive surface deposits of Loacite. This information led the Dwarven government to begin construction of a path through the Northern Mountains that has yet to be completed. Burdo also found evidence of a pre-modern race of creatures with a language that predates any of the five currently on Torata. Little is known about them, but constant research in the Northern mountains is turning up more about their culture with each passing year. Burdo is retired now, living out his last years in a veritable mansion in the city of Pela.

Ragmoor Arneson: One of the most well-known generals during the second Dwarven expansion, Ragmoor is renowned for both his ferocity in battle and his unbridled cruelty. He leads the Hand of Mudil, a powerful mercenary army that is often employed by the Dwarven Empire. His services are also frequented by rich merchants looking to keep their cargo safe.

Vita'u Mele: Formerly an elven cartographer, now Torata's most famous living explorer. Her voyage to the unexplored island in the Southwestern Sea and the strange creature she brought back with her have earned her significant fame in the last few years. The strange creature, which refers to itself alternatively as Muma or Rudikai, seems to be sentient, though all attempts at translating its language have so far been unsuccessful. Vita'u is currently doing a tour around Mil'Ashuna, talking with Mages and Scholars, drumming up funding for a larger expedition to the island in order to map it in several years.

Money

Most of the inhabitants of Torata favor barter, but in the lands of the Dwarven Empire, the tinny can be used as legal currency for any transaction. A tinny is a small coin made of tin. Dwarves find tin to be disgusting, and rather than waste good ore, put it to use as a method of recording and transferring wealth. There is also a Ha'tinny (worth half a tinny), and a Marmin (a copper piece worth on tenth of a tinny). In addition, the government of Mil'Ashuna has tried on numerous occasions to issue currency in the form of painted shells, glass beads, and even thin bamboo wafers, but each time it was too easily counterfeited or broken (there is currently talk of using printed bits of paper for money, but this has yet to be instituted). Prices for some common items are listed below. These prices are for the Market in Three Rivers, which is the trade hub of Torata. Prices are given in Tinnys (T), Ha'tinnys (hT), and Marmins (m), and are subject to market fluctuations. This is obviously not a list of all the products available in Torata, but you should use these values to estimate the cost for other objects. For example, tools or other worked objects are expensive, while food is generally cheap.

FOOD

Item	Price
Bread, Loaf	2m
Boar, Roasted (one steak)	2T
Cheese, Pela Cheddar (one wheel)	4T
Fish, Candied Eel	1T
Fish, Roast Cod	1hT
Fish, Roast Salmon	1T
Fish, Roast Trout	1hT
Meal, Cheap	1hT
Meal, Moderately Priced	2T
Meal, Expensive	5T
Milk, Bison (bottle)	1T
Milk, Goat (bottle)	1hT
Milk, Sheep (bottle)	3m
Oil, Hemp (bottle)	2T
Spice Kit (+1 cooking)	11T
Waterskin (full)	1T
Wine, Rowan (skin)	3T
Wine, Grape (bottle)	10T - 20T

ANIMALS

Item	Price
Bison	90T
Cat	30T
Chicken	25T
Dog	30T
Donkey	50T
Goat	60T
Horse	100T
Mule	60T
Pig	40T
Sheep	50T

ADVENTURING GEAR

Item	Price
Backpack	12T
Bedroll	9T
Blanket, Wool	7T
Cooking Kit	12T
Knife, Hunting	13T
Porridge mix, hempseed (1 meal)	1m
Rope, Hemp (50 ft)	3T
Tent, 2-person	11 T
Tent, 4 person	30T
Tent, 6 person	75T
Toolbox (hammer, saw, pliers, 100 nails)	45T
Trap, Animal	7T
Venison, dried (1 day's worth)	1T

TRADE GOODS

Item	Price
Animal Skin, Cow Hide	3T/hide
Animal Skin, Deer Pelt	5T/pelt
Betel Nuts	7T/lb.
Cloth, Cotton	14T/sq. foot
Cloth, Hemp	8T/sq. foot
Cloth, Wool	11T/sq. foot
Hemp, Fibers	3T /lb.
Hemp, Seeds	2T/lb.
Iron, Ingots	4T/lb.
Lumber, Bamboo (8 ft. stalk)	3T/stalk
Lumber, Pine (8 ft. board)	5T/board
Rice	1hT/lb.
Salt	3m/lb.
Stone, Granite	2T/lb.
Stone, Marble	4T/lb.
Tobacco	4T/lb
Wheat	1T/lb.

WEAPONS

Item	Price
Armor	Varies wildly based on race and type
Axe, Dwarven	35T
Bow, Orcish Hunting	55T
Club, Iron-shod	4T
Crossbow	65T
Dagger	17T
Knife, Switchblade	12T
Machete	11T
Sword, Elven Long	45T
Sword, Elven Short	35T

Language

There are five languages spoken throughout Torata, though there are regional dialects as well. The base languages are listed below. Each character begins play with one language as a free Talent to represent their native tongue.

Dwarven: Dwarven is a harsh-sounding, guttural language with its own alphabet. It is in no way similar to any of the other languages, and many people have a hard time learning it if they didn't grow up speaking it. Conversely, many Dwarves find the “lower languages” difficult to pick up. Dwarven is divided into two main branches, high Dwarven and low Dwarven. High Dwarven is spoken by politicians, wealthy merchants and artisans, and high-ranking military officers. Low Dwarven is predominantly spoken by “former” human slaves, street vendors, laborers, sailors, and low-ranking military officers. Low Dwarven is to high Dwarven as Cockney is to British English, the two can still communicate, but low Dwarven annoys speakers of high Dwarven.

Elvish: Elvish is a sort of twangy, accented language spoken throughout the southern part of Torata. It is often spoken by sailors and merchants in the south, as well as by Mages (Elvish is the predominant language of the Runewrights. Elvish uses the same alphabet as Human, which is similar to Orcish.

Gnome: Gnome is the language of the gnomish peoples, and is spoken all throughout the Westplains and the central swathe. It is common for animal herders and farmers to speak gnomish. Gnome is a hard and cutting language. Gnome uses an alphabet similar to Orcish.

Human: While most humans no longer know how to speak their own language (it is outlawed under punishment of severe beating under the laws of the Dwarven Empire), some of the free humans in the southern swamps keep the practice alive for the day when the Humans rise up and retake their land. Human is vowel-heavy, and favors the consonants M, L, and K. Human uses the same alphabet as Elvish, which is similar to Orcish.

Orcish: Orcish, or Orcspeak as it is sometimes called, is a rough, but beautiful language with its own alphabet. Many linguists believe that the other “lower languages” derive both their structural base and alphabet from Orcish, and that Orcish may be the oldest language on Torata. Orcish is often spoken by hunters and farmers who live near the forest of Anu.

A note: the word for “world” in every language is Torata. Scholars have yet to figure out why.

Credits!

Head Contentmasher – Josh Gager

Psion-at-Arms – Micah Brandt
Baron of Bushido – Josh Brandt
Political Fabricator – Mark Ishman
Arbiter of Justice – Dave Gager
Thrower of Pottery – Linda Gager

Major Inspirations:

The Hobbit / The Lord of the Rings – J.R.R.Tolkein
Discworld Series – Terry Pratchett
Eberron – Keith Baker
Spirited Away – Hayao Miyazaki
Various European, Middle-Eastern, African, Mediterranean, Asian, Indian, Slavic, Celtic,
Norse, Native American, Aboriginal, and South American Myths.
Lucifer – Mike Carey
Hellblazer – Various Authors (Notably Alan Moore, Warren Ellis, and Mike Carey)
Snadman – Neil Gaiman