

Into the Dragon's Maw

Campaign Notes

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Intro

Every 300 years, the Starfall crosses through the sky, bringing with it the portents of the apocalypse. Earthquakes, underground fires, and the awakening of the Dark Gods herald a rebirth of the world. The last such event occurred 330 years ago, and this time... it's late. The heroes of the world are all dressed up, with no gods to slay... But where will fortune take you, inexperienced travelers in a world expecting the worst?

General Notes

This is a D&D fourth edition campaign starting with level one characters.

We will use the most recent revision of the core books, errata dated 8/11/08, for the use of Skill Challenges and other errataed works.

I tend to tweak rules from time to time, though there are no specific home rules being added as of now other than changes for the setting. Any home rule proposed will be run by the current players openly before it's added. From my review, the most likely tweaks to rules will surround Skill Challenges (most analysis state that these don't work very well as written, so they will take some practice as they are in very few published adventures).

The campaign is likely to run once monthly during Home Campaign Sunday, or Saturdays depending on my work schedule and other possible conflicts.

Character Creation Guidelines

For stat generation, you may use either Method 1 in the PHB (Standard Array) or Method 2 (Point buy) if you want more variety.

Keep the guidelines described in the rest of this document in mind when choosing Class and Race.

Powers and Feats are standard. You have the standard 100 GP for starting equipment. Dragon's Maw is a mountainous region, so gear appropriately. It will not be necessary to buy a mount at first level.

Alignment: Good, Lawful Good, or Unaligned only.

Player-Character Races

Any base PHB race is acceptable for a player character. Traits are all as PHB, but some small additions for each race apply. This document also notes the general population of that race in our campaign. Use this section to help you tailor your background to “Dragon’s Maw”.

Dragonborn

Historically, the Dragon Empire existed on a series of islands that might be termed as the Far East. Volcanically active, the islands were destroyed by seismic activity. Some Dragonborn believe the destruction of their empire was caused by divine intervention. Any Dragonborn who are in the region are assumed to be descended from those who migrated to the mainland centuries ago. The Dragonborn currently are scattered across the world, but they tend to reside in harsher areas of the world as a matter of showcasing their durability.

Dwarf

Dwarves are common. Many dwarven settlements exist in the mountains immediately to the west. Further north they tend to have rivalries with the giants. Trade between human and dwarven settlements is common.

Eladrin

Eladrin are a rare race. Most Eladrin (or “High Elves” as they were known in those times) migrated from the primary continent some five hundred years ago heading for the Western Continent. Their current lands are a faraway region no one knows much about. This isn’t to say they are totally unheard of; those in this region are either those exiled from the Eladrin homes or grew bored of them. Eladrin are considered very exotic.

Elves

Most elves reside in the more forested areas to the south, but the occasional elven adventurer wanders in to these parts. Elves are not unheard of on the northern part of the continent either. Most elves have the tanner-skinned hues described in PHB, with ‘citified’ elves being a bit paler.

Half-Elf

Half-elves are mostly found in border areas between elf and human territories. As the “mixed” player character race they are generally less common than “pure” races. All half-elves are half elf, only (ie, no half-Eladrin).

Halfling

Halflings are moderately common in any city area. The Halfings have a capital city on the continent, called Gundimoore, but also dwell happily in areas that belong to the humans.

Human

Humans are the most common race. In this region, adventuring humans come of all varieties, but the native locals tend toward fairer skin tones and blonde to brown hair. Darker-skinned humans are more common in the deserts to the south.

Tiefling

Relatively uncommon in this region, Tieflings tend to hail from areas to the southeast, where they once warred with the dragonborn kingdoms. There is always one or two in any city, making them less rare than Eladrin, but Tieflings are not a common sight.

Other Races

Gnomes

Gnomes are not uncommon in the mountain areas, as they have a capital city somewhere in the mountains to the west. Slightly more civilized “tinker” gnomes are occasionally found in cities. Other gnomes have the fey touch that has come over from the faraway Eladrin territories.

Drow

Drow, or Dark Elves, exist in the world but are rarely seen outside of their underdark homes. They are a confusing race to outsiders, with many tales and rumors involving their worship and rituals. The Drow were weakened during the most recent cataclysm, and are currently not considered a global threat.

Orc, Goblin, Hobgoblin, etc

Monstrous humanoid races are all fairly common in the wooded and mountain regions. The orcs have a longstanding feud with the mountain dwarves, and the elves have a longstanding feud with forest goblins and hobgoblins. Nobody likes kobolds.

Classes

General Notes

I am easygoing about spell thematics for magic using classes within reason. I'm all right with anything that is purely cosmetic to add color to your magic use (blue fireballs, magic missiles that look like razor-sharp butterflies, etc). I won't allow spell thematics that give you an in-game advantage such as free 'silenced' spells.

All classes and paths should be from the standard PHB. Alternate paths (such as something from the Internet or magazines) all need to be cleared with me first. If there are no specific class notes for a particular PHB class, assume it is all as-written and there's nothing additional for the setting.

Cleric

PC Clerics may worship any Lawful Good, Good or Unaligned god in the setting pantheon (see Pantheon writeup below). Spell effects and weapon choice tend to reflect the choices of that god.

Paladin

Paladins tend to worship the Good gods. Your alignment must match that of your god. Some orders of Paladins have special names - Raenelle: Lily Knights; Samien: Blazing Knights; Vorne: Eagle Knights. Lily Knights are the oldest and wealthiest order of Paladins. Eagle Knights typically take a flying mount such as a hippogriff or giant eagle. Paladins of other gods exist but do not have specialized orders. Paladins are required to complete a pilgrimage before attaining Paragon paths. There are evil (anti-) Paladins in this setting, but not for player characters.

Rogue

The city has a rogue's guild where rogues meet to gamble, cavort, and exchange information. You may choose whether or not you are a member, or are an independent rogue. The benefit is a greater wealth of information, but you must follow the guild's pact and certain local ordinances while in town. You can be ousted from the guild for breaking these rules in the city (if you get caught).

Warlock

Infernal Pact Warlocks are uncommon among non-evil characters; it's still possible to choose this pact, but clear it with me along with your background and reason for choosing the pact.

Pantheon

Because I am using a custom Pantheon, Clerical and Paladin divine feats are altered as per the PHB. Read the text for each god to determine which divine feat you may choose. Generally, divine feats are the same ones from the PHB with the same rules but names changed, to avoid upsetting game balance. One feat is different (due to having one extra god); special text is below.

Key:

God Name (alternate names)

Alignment

Portfolio

Sacred Colors: Symbol(s)

Description

Feat (No feats for evil gods)

GOOD

Samien (God of the Blazing Sun)

Lawful Good

Fire, Sunlight, Justice

Gold, White, Red: Blazing Sun, Blazing Flame

Paladins and warlords make up the majority of Samien's worshippers, as well as nobles, dignitaries, and good-aligned judges. Samien usually appears as a warrior with a blazing sword. There is some distrust in this sect for warlocks and mages, particularly warlocks who are believed to be demon-tainted. Worship centers in the city of White Hill, where Samien's largest temple currently exists.

Divine Feat: Kord's Favor (Samien's Favor)

Vorne (God of the Morning Sun)

Good

Sky, Air, Adventure, Freedom

Blue, White: Eagle, Sword

Vorne is worshipped by priests and good-aligned adventuring parties. Vorne also has a fair share of adventuresome paladins. Vorne's paladins are most likely to take personal risks in the name of a noble quest. Vorne appears as a knight riding an eagle. Devout worshippers pilgrimage to Eaglehome Temple in the mountains to the north.

Divine Feat: Pelor's Radiance (Vorne's Radiance)

Aladra (Goddess of the Evening Sun)

Good

Healing, Motherhood, Creation (mainly Human), Harvest

Green, Orange, Yellow: Autumn Leaves

Aladra is worshipped by healers and sometimes rangers. Aladra mainly attracts priestesses and midwives, and favors "homespun" healing techniques. Aladra is considered the wife to Samien., and usually appears as an auburn-haired woman in long robes, sometimes pregnant or with a baby. Aladra is said to have birthed all humankind.

Divine Feat: Melora's Tide (Aladra's Heart)

Gildar

Lawful Good

Metal, Earth, Prosperity, Creation (Dwarves)

Gold, Silver, Brown: Forge, Hammer

Gildar is a god in the shape of a dwarf. Gildar is said to have created all dwarves, and is claimed to have hammered the planet out from bare rock using his Creation Forge. Gildar appears as a dwarf with a beard to his feet, who carries the hammer that created the world. Gildar's clerics favor hammers to honor this.

Divine Feat: Moradin's Resolve (Gildar's Resolve)

Raenelle

Good

Springtime, Youth, Love

Light Blue, Pink, Green: Flowers, Songbirds

Raenelle usually appears in the form of a young woman, or, occasionally, a little girl, in a gown of or decorated with flowers. Raenelle is the "maiden" of "mother, maiden and crone." Raenelle represents kindness and "courting" love, so worship ceremonies involve perfumes and flowers. Unfortunately for PCs looking for a certain type of good time, Raenelle's ceremonies are family-friendly.

Divine Feat: Corellon's Grace (Raenelle's Grace)

NEUTRAL

Sylvaran

Unaligned

Forests, Animals

Green, Sky Blue, Brown: Tree, any forest animal

Sylvaran is the god of animals and nature, and is naturally important to rangers. Sylvaran is worshipped at least in some part by most elves, save those that are integrated more with the human pantheons. Sylvaran can manifest as a human, half-elf, or elf. The sacred weapon of Sylvaran's followers is the bow and arrow.

Divine Feat: Harmony of Erathis (Harmony of Sylvaran)

Ilsara (Goddess of Veiled Stars)

Unaligned

Magic, Stars and the Moon, Secrets

Purple, Blue, Silver: Star and moon

Ilsara is the goddess of magic. Clerics of Ilsara's order are thought of as witches, though wizards and warlocks are also common worshippers. Ilsara is said to be the source of all magic. Warlocks who worship her prefer the Star Pact. Ilsara appears as a woman with raven black hair and robes covered in night sky.

Divine Feat: Isara's Initiate

Gain training in the Arcana skill, and the ability to use the Star Pact Warlock at-will power (Dire Radiance) as an encounter power. May use a rod, wand, or staff as an implement in conjunction with this power. This does not count against future multiclass feats as it is a divine power.

Eryssa (Lady of Rainbows)

Unaligned

Rainbows, Wishes, Chaos, Fairies

Chromatic Spectrum: Rainbow, Arrow

Eryssa is the goddess of chaos. Eryssa is worshipped by some chaotic wizards or Fey Pact Warlocks. She has a sacred site on each of the world's five continents, though legends say this is the only place Eryssa can safely dwell. Eryssa is loved by pixies, gnomes, and other mischief-makers. The goddess's greatest deed is answering the wishes of mortals, which Eryssa responds to based on her often capricious whims.

Divine Feat: Avandra's Rescue (Eryssa's Dance)

Marion

Unaligned

Stability, Bureaucracy, Knowledge

Brown, Grey, White: Book

Marion is the goddess of knowledge. Marion is said to have chronicled the entire history of the world in her eternal library. While Marion knows nothing of the future, she protects the past from being lost. When Marion appears, she shows herself as a very severe woman in drab clothes.

Divine Feat: Ioun's Poise (Marion's Stability)

Cherrick (Rik-rik [Some Halflings])

Unaligned

Thieves, the Poor, Mischief

Grey, Light Green: Raccoon

Cherrick is followed by rogues and vagabonds, known as a "Robin Hood" god that aids the poor and dislikes the rich. Cherrick's followers naturally brush up against Gildar's clerics, though some clerics on both sides make it into more of an all-out rivalry than others. Cherrick can appear as a halfling, a raccoon, or a halfling with a raccoon.

Divine Feat: Armor of Bahamut (Cherrick's Evasion)

Zerine (Zera, Dagger of Lightning)

Unaligned

Storms, Water

Blue, Green, Yellow: Lightning bolt, Hurricane, Bird of Paradise

Zerine is a goddess of storms and water. People in the south islands and the rain forests pay homage to Zerine so that her storms will pass them by. Zerine is very demanding of her followers, and requires gifts of jewels and precious metals on a regular basis. Once an evil goddess, Zerine's worship has mellowed since she started to prefer riches over blood sacrifice; Zerine is now considered unaligned. However, it is dangerous to risk the wrath of Zerine, for her mood can change swiftly from fair to foul. Zerine sometimes appears as a dark-skinned human woman, but other times she shows herself as a coatl or dragonborn.

Divine Feat: Raven Queen's Blessing (Zerine's Strike)

Chleo

Unaligned

Lust, Music, Wine, Pleasure

Red, Purple, Black: Purple Eye surrounded by kohl

Chleo is a young goddess, whose worship has only appeared within the last fifty years. Chleo is worshipped primarily by humans and halflings. Worship of Chleo is becoming popular because Chleo does not demand much of her followers save that they have a good time. Chleo champions free love and good music. Chleo's sect is seen as a cult by older, more "respectable" sects. Chleo appears as an exotic-looking woman with dark makeup around her eyes.

Divine Feat: Sehanine's Reversal (Chleo's Kiss)

EVIL

Threshtar (Dark Dragon Lord, Threshtorantar, Threshterratorantosar [and various other names up to two lines in length])

Evil

War, Conquest

Black, Silver: Sword, Dragon

Threshtar is the most common patron of evil paladins, warlords and fighters. Threshtar is sometimes depicted as a black dragon, though sometimes he manifests as a five-headed all-chromatic dragon or a black-skinned dragonborn warlord. Threshtar is said to favor worshippers with prowess in battle. The "true" name of Threshtar in draconic is said to fill a volume, though no one has claimed to know it.

Grogg (Brute God)

Evil

Strength, Bullies, Blasphemy

Gray-Green, Brown, Silver: An angular goblin rune

Scholars learned of the god Grogg when peaceful contact was made a few hundred years ago with some of the goblinoid races by humans. Grogg is worshipped by orcs, kobolds, ogres, and other monstrous humanoid races. Grogg is said to be perhaps the oldest of the evil gods, but little is known of the details of his worship. Grogg grows in power when other gods are denigrated or blasphemed.

Morynth (Lady of Plagues)

Chaotic Evil

Disease, Plague, Misfortune

Grey, Dull Blue, Maize Yellow: Mosquito, Withered Hand

Morynth is a goddess of plague and disease, the “crone” aspect of “mother, maiden and crone”. Morynth is sometimes depicted as an old woman dying of disease, though some worshippers depict her as a younger woman in tattered robes. Traditional clerics of Morynth still use the more respected symbol of an ancient and diseased hand. Morynth is worshipped by the ill and dying, those who demand respite from disease, and evil clerics who use undead minions.

Dim-Duhl

Evil

Death, Dark Predictions, the End of Time

Black, Bone-white: Skull, Hourglass

Dim-Duhl is a death god, called the “god of devils”. Dim-Duhl appears as a cloaked lich. He is not worshipped by many, but Dim-Duhl is highly feared. It is believed that Dim-Duhl dwells in a tomb in the desert. The rebirth of Dim-Duhl three hundred years ago brought about a cataclysmic event that changed the face of the world. The genocide Dim-Duhl would have brought about as a result of his resurrection was narrowly averted by the heroes of that time. Dim-Duhl is not expected to awaken again for another thousand years.

Hydron (Lord of Lies, Demonlord)

Chaotic Evil

Lies, Betrayal

Red, Grey: Bloody knife

Hydron is worshipped by dark sorcerers and those who make Infernal Warlock pacts. Hydron is a relatively “young” god, and is often seen as the god of dark ambition. Hydron demands both blood and combat rituals from his followers, and in return provides power for black magic. A shapeshifting god with no consistent depiction, Hydron has manifested as both sexes in the past.

Geography – Nearby Areas

Tristia

Tristia is the name of the continent where the adventure begins. The northwestern region of Tristia is a land dotted by farming communities, small cities, and trading caravans. Mountains called the Illustrious Range frame it on the west. Beyond the Illustrious Range is the wide ocean; beyond the ocean, the uncharted feylands of the Eladrin. Mountains called the Dragon's Maw pen this area in from the north, leading to colder climes the further north one goes.

Dragon's Maw

The campaign start setting is in the mountains of the Dragon's Maw, in the area surrounding the settlement of **Wanderlust Pass**.

The mountains themselves are known as a place of high adventure. The Dragon's Maw is populated by humans, dwarves, dragonborn, orcs, ogres, gryphons, giants, and many other unsavory things. There have been rumors of dragons in the mountains as well...

Because of this, and the 'apocalypse fever' that has been common all over the continent, the town has begun to make a killing in trade for adventurers and monster-slayers.

South of Wanderlust Pass is an area of farmland and rolling hills.

The climate of the area is temperate, with warm summers and colder winters as air blows down from the mountains.

The campaign begins in the late summer/early fall. The local year is 931.

Hiemdall

Hiemdall is the dwarven capital city. Hiemdall is considered an independent nation by the stewards of Essex and Wanderlust, as the dwarves have their own local laws and customs. Dwarven settlements and fortresses exist throughout the region between the pass and the capital city.

Lost Forges

The Lost Forges are deep dwarven territory. These "Lost Forges" are a large series of caverns largely uncharted for hundreds of years. The Lost Forges were the home of dwarven ancestors, and are a both a very popular and dangerous place to search for lost treasures.

Eaglehome

Eaglehome is the region of the mountains considered sacred to the god Vorne – Paladins of Vorne make a pilgrimage to this region to earn winged creatures as mounts.

Illustrious

The Illustrious Range are a mountain range inhabited by fey, gnomes, and small settlements of exiled Eladrin. The Illustrious Range make travel to the west difficult.

Essex

Essex is the nearest large city area in this region. It is the capital of the nation by the same name. Essex has large libraries and temples to most major gods. Great crafting comes from Essex. Many trends are started in Essex that eventually spread to the smaller areas on caravans.

White Hill

Further to the south and east is the city of White Hill. This is Samien's holy city and the location of his largest temple. White Hill is the site of great happenings and rumored birthplace of heroes. Many superstitious people live in White Hill; magic-users and especially warlocks are frowned upon, as well as worshippers of 'less respectful' or dark gods. White Hill is much less tolerant than Essex, being extremely Lawful. However, White Hill is renowned throughout the region for its beauty.

Brimwell

En Route between White Hill and Essex is the town of Brimwell, a farming town and trading hub. Brimwell is a good place to get drunk and trade stories with old timers.

Oakendale

Oakendale is an elven settlement within the trees. Oakendale is home to rangers and nature-worshippers.

The surrounding woodland is often called the Wretched Woods by humans because of the number of demihuman races that live in this region. The Wretched Woods are known to be inhabited by large tribes of orcs, owlbears, goblins, and possibly kobolds. However, "Oakendale" has finally 'stuck' on the official maps made in this century, though the "unofficial" name can be found on older maps. If you do happen to be a demi-human, it's a nice place to live. Travel between Wanderlust Pass and White Hill has become dangerous in recent years, but Oakendale serves as a safe haven in this region.

Character Backgrounds

A simple character background is required. A character background should at the least discuss your character's life to this point, current occupation and age. Keeping it simple is good, allowing for some expansion in play. It's OK to begin knowing another player character, but not required.

Specifically, I would like to know these things within your background:

1. Where are you from? You can be born and raised in Wanderlust or the surrounding areas, or from one of the nearest cities, traveling here in search of excitement. This may depend somewhat on your race; for example, a dwarf might be from the dwarven capital, or elves from the forests. Any race may have been born within the city.
2. How old are you?
3. What makes you decide to adventure?
4. How did you choose your class?
5. Do you have family or any friends in town? How do you feel about them?

If you have setting questions, please let me know! We can work together to hammer out small details.