

“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic”

Arthur C. Clarke

Origins

WHAT FOLLOWS IS THE MOST COMMONLY ACCEPTED VERSION OF EVENTS SURROUNDING THE WAR OF THE ANCIENTS AND THE AFTERMATH...

In the middle of the 9th Century the history and the landscape of planet Earth was forever changed by the arrival of two new and powerful humanoid races: the Celestials and the Cor Elgon. Today, at the beginning of the 15th century, Earth hosts a variety of sentient creatures who call it ‘home’.

‘Celestials’ was the name given to the first race who visited from the stars. This majestic and reverent race existed in peace with humans maintaining a curiosity of human culture and a close connection to the natural world. Many humans, seeing the apparent ‘magical’ capabilities of the Celestials even started to worship some of them, hoping that devotion would unlock their own powers. Peace and harmony lasted for a century and a half - until the second of these impressive races arrived on Earth.

The ‘Cor Elgon’ were a race of tall, cunning and intelligent humanoids with advanced technology. They see themselves as the superior race, happily dominating other servitor races - such as the Hyrax - using them to power their war machine. According to some, the Celestials and Cor Elgon were once allies, seeing each other as equals. However, for reasons lost in time, they became bitter enemies and had been engaged in war in the centuries that followed.

Having searched the galaxy for the Celestials the Cor Elgon eventually tracked them to Earth. With the aim of destroying the Celestials for good, the final war of these two ancient civilisations began. **Earth was to be the final battlefield, and so began The War of the Ancients.**



THE WAR OF THE ANCIENTS

After nearly a century of fighting, the technological prowess of the Cor Elgon, combined with the industry of their servitor race, the Hyrax, started to turn the tide of battle in their favour. The Cor Elgon were able to use the Earth's resources to their advantage, using humans and other powerful beasts in their experiments leading to wild abominations, known to the humans as 'ferals', who would march on the front lines.

The number of Cor Elgon victories grew, and slowly many human civilisations joined them, hoping to finally bring peace. Some even volunteered to be subjects in their experiments for a new type of human weapon. Eventually, the Celestials and the remaining human armies were unable to withstand the onslaught. They began to retreat to distant, hidden sanctuaries, but the Cor Elgon were difficult to escape. One by one the Cor Elgon found and slaughtered the remaining Celestials until there were only a handful left.

Facing the annihilation of their race, the final few Celestials gathered together for a last meeting - what would become known as 'The Enclave'. During the Enclave, the remaining Celestials chose eight of their own heroes, each symbolising a different virtue, to save and attempt to rebuild their race. Through the last of their combined power, with the Cor Elgon literally at the door of the Enclave, the Celestials were able to open a portal to a different realm and send the chosen eight through.

Seeing the eight Celestials escape, the Cor Elgon slaughtered the remainder in the Enclave, left the charred battlefield of Earth, and returned to the stars, to continue their expansion across the universe and their determined pursuit of the final eight Celestials.

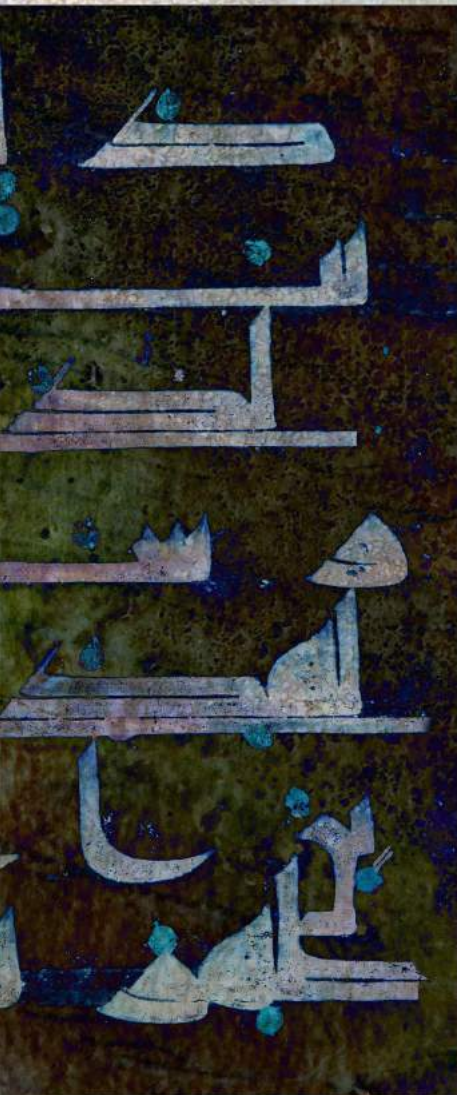


THE AFTERMATH

In the years that followed the War of the Ancients, various races, organisations and rulers have fought for supremacy of the planet. Earth has been left scarred and devastated, the human population dropped to the thousands. The alien races had also left their mark in the form of new species of half-humans; the Elgon and Demi-Celestials in the form of Sylvans and Rus. These, along with the Hyrax, now share the land with humans, each bringing different qualities and cultures. There is still tension between many of the sentient races that now inhabit Earth, however, in the most recent generation there have been strides made towards diplomacy and peace. This tentatively peaceful period has enabled the rebuilding of cities, organisations and social hierarchies. Much of the conflict now concerns land, resources or beliefs, rather than races – although this tension still exists, to a certain degree, on a day-to-day scale.

Relics and remains of both alien races linger, leaving the world a dangerous, hostile and wild place - but one that promises great knowledge, mysteries and power to those who dare explore.

Much of the technology, items and weapons wielded by the Celestials and Cor Elgon were too different to be understood by the majority of today's population. People excavate and study the marvels of these chronicled races just enough to help them to survive in the new world they have been given. They know that reshaped cities and temples hold vast treasures and knowledge and that energies are suspended invisibly in the air. There are even rumours of secret doorways to stars and other realms where power resides, secrets can be unlocked and death is always close/possible.



THE NEW RACES

The sentient population of Earth now consists of Humans, Half-Humans and the main slave-race of the Cor Elgon known as the Hyrax.

The Human population comprises 'Pure Humans' whose ancestors survived the War of the Ancients; and 'Refined Humans' (or 'Sleepers') who were used in the Cor Elgon's experimentation. Pure Humans are the most numerous on the planet and hold no magical powers, preferring instead to rely on their inventiveness and general ingenuity to rebuild their place within this new era.





Many Sleepers, on the other hand, have access to magical powers as a result of Cor Elgon experimentation. Apart from this, and the marks and scars left from the Cor Elgon scientists, Sleepers are indistinct from pure humans and many are presumed to be hiding in plain sight amongst the other races. Many Pure Humans consider Sleepers to be abominations, and in some communities they are executed if discovered, and there are even certain human groups who seek out the remaining Sleeper Pods to disable them before their contents regain consciousness.

Half-Humans are descendants of humans and the two 'alien' races. They have distinct physical and psychological characteristics, but all share the potential to access a lesser version of the 'magical' powers that their alien ancestors had access to.

The Elgon (the result of Human and Cor Egon breeding) are taller and thinner than their pure human counterparts, but are highly intelligent and usually see themselves as superior to other races. They mainly prefer life in cities where they can study and rise to high social standing.

The Rus (the result of Celestial and Human breeding, mainly from Northern Europe) are also taller than their human counterparts, but are generally a lot more muscular. Adapted to the harshness of the cold North and normally relishing a good fight, they are powerful, strong and ready for battle.

The Sylvan (the result of Celestial and Human breeding, mainly from Africa and South America) standing at around 3-4ft tall are smaller than the average human, and usually have a slight green/brown hue to their skin - adapted to hunting in the forests and jungles of the new world. They are usually stealthy, nimble and agile.

The Hyrax are the most distinctive of the sentient races, slightly smaller than humans most continue to be kept as slaves to work the mines of earth. Although there are some free Hyrax, these are in the vast minority. Hyrax are miners, smiths and artisans. Producing some of the finest craft in the world, they are hardy, dedicated and at home in the caves and caverns of Earth. The Hyrax also have no access to magic, but their natural hardiness makes them resistant to many of its effects.





TODAY

It is now the beginning of the 15th Century, and the War of the Ancients is hundreds years in the past although its repercussions and effects continue to be felt and to play a significant role in modern society and mythology. The centre of civilisation in the world of 'A New Dawn' is located in what would have been the Persian Empire. The events of The War of the Ancients left Earth devastated - many of the old cities have been abandoned and left to nature. Many communities still choose a nomadic life, or to live in smaller villages and towns. Only in the past generation have people begun the rebuilding of the cities. These ruined cities hold vast untapped resources for the brave scavenger; and the promise of terror from the feral creatures that may lurk within the ancient boundaries of decay.

Expect to travel in harsh and dangerous deserts, bustling and multicultural cities and the difficult terrain of overgrown woodlands; to meet resourceful creatures from all kinds of homes or none.

Welcome to the realm of mystery, sword and magic that is A New Dawn.

