

The Founding of Sarax

In the year 5135 the Human Confederation colonized the planet Sarax. The colonists soon created technologically advanced cities that were not just cities but beautiful works of art in themselves.

When compared with the rest of the Human Confederation there was nothing special about Sarax, situated as it was towards the edge of Confederation space it never suffered from outbreaks of war, famine or disease that plagued some colonies.

Time of Darkness

About fifty years after the founding of Sarax the colony suffered colossal earthquakes. The earthquakes were so severe that most of the population fled into emergency shelters for protection.

By the time the population emerged again it was night in many cities on Sarax, but looking up into the clear sky not a star was visible. The ruling council ordered that several probes be sent out to try to discover the cause.

The probes revealed that the Saraxian Solar System had been moved out of phase with the rest of the universe, which is why no stars could be seen.

As advanced as the Human Confederation's science was, the Saraxians had no way of getting back or even communicating with the rest of humanity.

While this shocked the Saraxian population the ruling council quickly put into place measures to deal with the isolation, reassuring the population, and ordering the Saraxian scientists to begin re-searching away to return back to Confederation space.

Unfortunately this was not all the Saraxians had to deal with, within days of Sarax's isolation the ruling council started to receive reports of encounters with malevolent creatures from Earth's mythology.

At first these isolated encounters were not believed, however the encounters quickly became organized attacks, by the time the Saraxian militia began to respond to the new threat the first city was almost overwhelmed by swarms of the creatures.

Saraxian scientists analyzing captured creatures soon realized that these were not natural creatures at all, but clever artificially created biological constructs.

Even more importantly each creature was receiving a signal from coordinates deep in unexplored jungle in the area that is now known as Lorus.

As refugees began to stream out of the cities towards the refugee centers at the mouth of the River Nord, several teams of volunteers left on a desperate expedition to save the colony. After fighting their way past ever more fearsome creatures they reached the coordinates.

What they found astonished them an automated device, producing not just more creatures but also more subtly it was slowly altering the atmosphere as well.

The expedition scientists soon came to realize that this was some sort of self-sustaining colonization device and concluded that it was probably the Device that was responsible for the phase shift of the Saraxian Solar System.

However numbering only a few they had little time to ponder this and quickly planted their fusion bombs around the Device, sacrificing themselves in the hope of saving their fellow colonists.

The resultant explosion drove Sarax into a nuclear winter that lasted three whole months, the jungle around the Device was quickly turned into a vast desert and the majority of the remaining refugees died not long after along with every biological construct.

However the expedition succeeded in at least saving some, as a few people did survive the horror of nuclear winter.

The few remaining scientists and engineers tried to pass their knowledge on. But they found that without their supporting technology the concepts they were trying to teach were too complex and abstract for most to understand.

With most of them dying from radiation sickness and not wanting the remaining colonists to lose their technology all together, they distilled the technical knowledge into rituals contained within Tech-Tomes. These rituals described exactly how to create and use items of technology without any regard for the theory behind it.

The Tech-Tomes were faithfully copied and passed down through the generations, and so the first practitioners of Tech-Magic the Tech-Mages came into existence after a few generations humanity began to spread and multiply again, with villages and towns appearing across the land, however human civilization was now at a medieval technological and social level.

The Second Awakening

Four hundred and fifty years after the nuclear destruction there was no evidence the creatures ever existed except from the ancient legends. Until a village was attacked and destroyed without warning by a Goblin tribe even though the Goblins tried to kill all the villagers a few managed to escape and fled to the next village.

The village elders sent out groups of armed men and soon discovered it was true the creatures of legend had returned. They sent riders out to the nearby towns and villages to spread the warning.

Soon the people of Sarax were under attack once more but while the creatures overwhelmed a few villages it seemed the creatures did not come in the numbers of old.

To battle this ongoing threat the towns and village send out groups of adventurers to disrupt their plans and to return lost Tech-Magic, some of these adventurers have even started their own remote villages, constantly fighting off attacks from the creatures, but most never return.

Kingdoms of Men

Modern-day Saraxians struggle to survive not just against attacks by the creatures but also against starvation as the best farm land available is almost infertile. The Saraxians have only three known Kingdoms Kalgor, Reik and Balruck, which are surrounded on all sides by hostile enemies bent on their destruction.

The northern kingdom of Kalgor stands east of the River Nord and the monsters of the Drevick Forest and south of the Rot Marshes and the horrors that seem to migrate out of the Blood Coast.

Kalgor used to extend much further north to the borders of the Rot Marshes. But now it is just a shadow of its former self with most of its citizens hiding within the walled city of Arec. However out of all the human kingdoms the Kalgorians are the masters of iron and stonework, their capital city; Arec is made out of gleaming white stone walls, topped with strong towers, it is nigh impregnable with many redoubts and festooned with Trebuchets and arrow slits. However there is one weakness the underground cave system which supplies the cities water, once thought to be impregnable, it is now known to Queen Basheeba to contain dark creatures.

There are settlements that exists outside Arec in the Kingdom of Kalgor however these settlements usually struggle to survive and are often in a state of siege.

The Kingdom of Reik supplies most of the Kalgorians food, as it is in their best interests that the Kingdom of Kalgor continues to endure to act as a buffer for the Reik.

Unfortunately before the Time of Darkness the Kingdoms of Reik and Kalgor fought many border wars as the Reik tried to expand out of its peninsular, it is due to this and the fact the Kingdom of Reik has never been properly attacked by the creatures that continues to breed distrust between the two nations.

The Reik is situated in its own peninsular and rules everything west of the River Nord and its tributaries. It is the largest and most fertile kingdom however it is sparsely populated, mainly by farms, and has no standing military instead relying on local militia. The Reik is also unusual in that it has no real capital; however its elder council meets in the town of Valock on the northern shore of the Reik peninsula.

Ah lad, what's going on in Balruk is not all that it seems, when I was about your age we returned from a quest and came under attack whilst traveling through Balruk.

As you know Balruk is made up of many petty Kingdoms, this one though was full of shape-shifters we returned with a horde of Tech-Magic artifacts and started looking through our finds in the local inn when the inn keeper told several of the patrons turned into beasts with long sharp blades for arms, we fought them off but lost several good adventurers that night.

We made haste to the local noble to warn him of the threat but once we told him of what we had discovered he too turned into one of those creatures.

Most of us managed to escape that night, but only me and one other managed to get out of that Kingdom alive from a party of twenty.

Mark my words lad, dark things are happening in Balruk the creatures are finding ways to keep the Kingdom divided and I wouldn't be surprised if they were trying it here as well...

Also unlike the rest of the human kingdoms, the Reik is a republic with no nobles. It is instead ruled by an elder council which, while it does give constant leadership lacks decisive action on newly emerged threats.

The third kingdom is the Kingdom of Balruk this lies to the west of the River Nord and east of Drevick Forest, its southern border is supposed to reach down to the borders of the Jungles of Eldrigh, but in reality its borders are much further north due to constant attacks by the creatures.

Balruck is a ruined kingdom after the sacking of its capital Nordfell and the death of king Torig who left no legitimate heirs. Balruck has now broken down into many petty kingdoms, some ruling little more than a single village, but each with a dubious claim to the throne.

The situation in Balruck is made even more dire as it is not only being attacked on the inside but also on the outside, as the southern border of the kingdom rests against Eldrigh a dark jungle which is home to the majority of the Elvish creatures on Sarax.

They constantly harry border villages and drag off screaming captives to their hidden kingdoms.

Creatures

The creatures while artificial biological constructs still have their own idiosyncrasies, the Device made the creatures closely based on human myths, this has caused, for example Goblins to group together in tribes of their own.

Also unless the Device has taken direct control there can also be inter-cine warfare between creatures. This kind of behavior is more common the further away from the Device the creatures are or if the creatures are in a sheltered location.

There are rumors spread by some adventurers that creatures in the depths of Eldrigh act in their own self-interest; such as running away when the situation is helpless, or even occasionally fighting against other creatures on the side of adventurers of course most folk think that this is nothing more than mutterings of madmen.

This view, is not surprising as the priesthood teaches that it is a sin to allow creatures, the worst possible abomination against God to live, so creatures that could, possibly be in any way not evil is a heresy.

The commoners of Sarax know little about their history. Many know there is more to the world than what the Tech-Mages tell them, as their legends are inconsistent and there are stories from adventurers describing beautiful ruined cities that no one can explain. Although many common folk dismiss these stories as pure fantasy concocted for free ale in the local tavern. However what is sure is that the common collective knowledge of what is in the sands of Sarax outside the Kingdoms of Men is very sparse as well as probably highly inaccurate.



Map of the Known World