

Wonders of the World

271299

Matal's Crystal Bridge

The Crystal Bridge of Matal is supposedly made of a single piece of quartz or milky-white crystal in ages past.

Tarenne's Cathedral

Kinniver Castle

Kinniver Castle is named after Lord Kinniver, the renowned mage and general who had it built about 1200 years ago. This gigantic impregnable castle is built atop a basalt island in Lake Lurin, connected to the mainland only by a bridge, with massive walls which are rumoured to be resistant to magic because of lead-impregnated mortar and arcane enchantments. It is believed that there are many secret rooms and passages, and that there are caverns and tunnels at the water level, used by the Knights of Valorn for secret ceremonies. The king sits upon a throne built upon the Stone of Time, that same stone that Lord Kinniver, first king of a united Valorn, was crowned on, and every king since. It is said that a true king of Valorn, when sitting upon the Stone, can see through illusions and falsehoods, and smell the taint of evil.

Niflheim's Great Tree

In the depths of the forest of Darkwood in Nilfheim, near the Ardent River, is an enormous Blackwood tree. According to those who have seen it, the trunk is fully 40' wide at the base and the tree is some 200' high and 400' in diameter. A druid who has seen the tree estimates that it is at least 3000 years old, and possibly much older.

Ancient City

There are many tales of the Ancient City, supposedly a city deep within the Ancient Jungle, with golden domes and streets paved with marble. Sadly, no-one has ever been there and returned to tell of its treasures. All there is to tell the world of its glories are a few gilded manuscripts stored in the Frost Library.

Notable geographical features

The Spine

The Spine is the enormous range of mountains that runs down the entire length of the continent. It is generally very rugged, and there aren't many mountain passes. Within this range are number of notable mountains, such as Gallows Mt, and Dragonhome. To the east of the spine, encircling Mereth, is the Girdle, a range of mountains which is not very wide, but is particularly hostile to travellers.

Notable personalities

This extract is taken from a treatise entitled “Real and Mythical Personalities of the Civilised Realms of Lune” by Mabigorian Dorrowmere, Scholar Emeritus, of Tainrearg University’s Department of Politics in Istari.

Ereneth

Lord Ereneth was the last king of Tainrearg, and is now believed to be in hiding in the High Forest in the north of Tainrearg. Once an experienced woodsman, Ereneth was elected king by a council of nobles after the previous monarch, King Baruin the Just, had died without heir during the Arak war. In 4848, Ereneth abdicated after Devar Anguin claimed to be an heir of Baruin with the support of the major banking houses and merchants. Shortly thereafter Ereneth was declared a traitor, and a price laid on his head, but by that time he has wisely left the area. Ereneth’s Grand Marshall, Freehand, was imprisoned for a time, but escaped, and is believed to have joined Ereneth. Ereneth is a tall, ruggedly handsome man in his forties.

Valerian

Sir Valerian is currently the Knight Commander of the Order of Deepsnow, but his whereabouts are unknown, as the Order has been outlawed in Tainrearg, and its seat near Hewport ransacked. Valerian is known to be a formidable warrior, and is one of the companions who ended the Arak War by defeating the Arak leader. Valerian is usually described as tall, well-built, with shining golden hair and a saintly visage, but there are some scurrilous folk who claim he has elven blood.

Maldred “the Nine-fingered” Dhenland

Maldred is a famous bard whose works are known in most civilised countries. Of particular note is “Ballad of the Arak”, wherein he relates how a group of companions defeated the giant, slug-like leader of the Arak creatures that invaded Lune in the year 4832. He is known as “the Nine-fingered” because he lost most of the little finger on one hand in a battle in his youth. His whereabouts are unknown, and he has not been seen in several years. Those people who know him have described him as “ferrety”.

Celestia

Celestia Culwen is supposedly a powerful mage or a powerful fighter (depending on which stories you listen to) of elven blood. Apparently she is a Countess in Faerieland, ruling Celowin County, and was once Queen of Faerieland, but most people dismiss this as pure fiction. She is described in Maldred’s “Ballad of the Arak” as a rather irritating but dangerous elf, leading scholars to believe that she is purely an invention of Maldred’s, used as a humorous counterpoint to the serious nature of the work. Certainly the exploits and abilities Maldred attributes to her in many of his works are too far-fetched to be real (he describes her as having awe-inspiring beauty, being able to juggle dozens of knives, being able to produce flaming swords from thin air, going to Hades and back, having arguments with Asmodeus, and more). It is most likely that “Celestia” is simply an alter-ego for Maldred, a character he uses to provide entertainment in his works and to express his own frustrations. The “Celestia” in Maldred’s ballads is usually described as elvish, with fine features, golden hair and gold eyes, usually wearing gold and/or red.

Anja Silvanei

Anja is the Queen of Allemaren, a small country to the east of the Spine. A peasant girl who married King Ferdinand, she is reported to be skilled with a sword. Rumour has it that she is actually crippled, but eyewitness reports have disproved that. Anja is a pretty young woman; it’s easy to see how she captured Ferdinand’s heart.

Ferdinand

King Ferdinand has ruled Allemaren for a number of years, and for some time before that, he was a respected and effective general in the Allemaren military forces. Recently there was a scandal in which his political opponents claimed that he was some form of undead (a vampire, if the reader can believe it), but this was soon disproved. It is known, though, that he isn’t very fond of being out in sunshine, possibly because of some weakness in his eyes. Ferdinand is a tall, dark man of unusual strength and sword-skill.

Fallon

Fallon is apparently some sort of assassin. It is rumoured that he has performed assassinations for King Ereneth during the White Empire war a couple of decades ago, and for King Ferdinand during the Aelin War in 4846. There are no confirmed descriptions of this man.

Ulworth

Ulworth is a respected mage and advisor to the throne of Valorn. He is believed to live in a grove somewhere outside Lomar, and is described as elderly, with flowing beard.

Salmsha

Salmsha is an elven warrior known to have been involved with Sir Valerian, Maldred Dhenland, and King Ferdinand and Queen Anja. Although quite shy and retiring, he is known to have a mechanical hand of dwarven manufacture (Maldred's "Ballad of the Arak" claims he lost his hand to magical fire), and is rumoured to be courting a dwarven princess.

Abu-Ska

Many people credit Abu-Ska, albeit indirectly, for Ereneth's fall from power. Abu-Ska, a mage who was once Court Mage to the Tainrearg throne (Cabissë knows why!), was exiled by royal decree, but returned to Tainrearg. King Ereneth considered this treason (rightfully, but rather harshly), and sentenced him to death. Abu-Ska died shortly thereafter in prison, apparently due to the sting of a Khosalan Red-backed scorpion, which liquefies the organs of its victim. It was rumoured that Ereneth had had him assassinated to stop him revealing something, and as a result, Ereneth lost the support of many people, something that cost him dearly when Devar Anguin laid claim to the throne. One story of Abu-Ska that has reached near legendary proportions tells that he accidentally cast a Fireball spell upon his own familiar creature, a raccoon by the name of Bandit, incinerating it (there is even a popular ballad based on the incident).

Count Blue

Count Blue was once reckoned as the most powerful mage in the world. He died in Faerieland during the Arak War. It is rumoured that he was once a woman named Lythan, but was reincarnated by a deity as a man after dying.

Glorfindel

King Glorfindel was Faerieland's last king. He was a handsome elf, and was known to have trained as an acrobat in his youth. He died in suspicious circumstances in 4848 (apparently in a fall from a first-story window).

Freehand

Freehand was Grand Marshall of Tainrearg during King Ereneth's rule. In fact, he ruled as regent in Ereneth's place for about ten years while Ereneth was mysteriously absent, and as a result, possibly has more popular support. Freehand is an excellent military advisor, and is also an expert bowman – he is reputed to have once hit a target at over 800 yards. He is believed to be hiding in the High Forest with Ereneth. He is a tall, lean man.

Nivrim Darion

Nivrim Darion is king of Valorn. A young man, he is considered fair and just, and has Ulworth as his advisor.