faculties of the players. The characters should be given a handsome acknowledgement of their efforts; memorable scenes should be further rewarded (see the section on Character Rewards, p. XX), and the story should unfold into another story and another story and…

The Campaign – The campaign is the largest possible increment of game time. A campaign is what happens when a bunch of stories coalesce to form a saga, an epic, the grand legend of the characters and their entire catalog of deeds. The beginning of a campaign is the birth of the party's story, the middle of the campaign is filled with all the adventures they share while consciously or unconsciously being pushed toward the culmination of their Skyborn destinies, and the end is the fulfillment of their mythic purpose and the end of their tale.

Campaigns should change the characters. No character should remain unmarked by the events of a campaign, and no major plot thread should be left dangling. Could a particularly memorable villain give our characters the slip and never been seen again? Sure. But perhaps that very villain's escape and ascent to greater evil is the perfect spark that grows into the blazing inspiration needed for another campaign.

While these three classifications are largely to help with the design and pacing of your storytelling, it is important to remember that there are some specific rules that reference them as defined units of time. For example, characters with certain Gifts or Chroma may be restricted to using them only "once per story." These uses will have to be notated on the character sheet or elsewhere to keep track. It is ultimately the GM's decision when scenes, stories, and campaigns begin and end.

OTHER OVERLIGHT STRANGENESS

Overlight is an unusual setting, with some elements that are rather high concept. A few of these concepts require a bit of direct discussion, considering how odd they are.

Light and Dark – Overlight does not have daytime or nighttime, and no sun or moon either. What this means is that the general timekeeping conventions that we take for granted have no meaning in this setting. However, as mentioned in Chapter 1, it's probably best to continue using terms such as *hour*, *day*, and *week* — if only to keep your group's brains from doing somersaults.

The absence of a regular day and night provides other challenges. It does mean that, as GM, you can pretty much decide when it's light and when it's dark. The precise movements of the shards are left intentionally vague and are intended to be complicated patterns that require dedicated study to understand. To that end, you can really use light and dark as you see fit, to best suit the sorts of stories that you are trying to tell.

It should be mentioned that it is our intent for the cycles to be long, not remotely akin

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to Earth's day and night, being instead tied to the slow movements of continent-sized floating bodies. Indeed, even characters within the world might use the word "cycle" to mean any number of things, as only the Teryxian ostrakonomers really have a proper comprehension of the entire system.

We imagine that a single cycle represents one full rotation of all seven shards through their various routes and patterns, drifting through the sky at an immeasurably slow pace. (Remember, the shards' positions in the sky, relative to one another, never change — just their positions on the horizontal plane.) A full cycle is probably between two and three of our years, but the patterns are complex enough that the exact length of a cycle is always in flux. Not entirely unlike the reckoning of time by certain cultures on earth, the movements of the shards are patterns within patterns within patterns. It's best to leave it ambiguous.

As for actual light and dark? Generally speaking, periods of "day" last longer on the uppermost shards, while "night" is more common further down. So it is that Nova, having no other shard above it, is eternally bright, while Pyre is often shrouded in darkness, lit only by the glow of volcanoes. Zenith is often in the shadow of Nova — although when it is not, there is steady light, reflecting brightly off the snow, or sometimes shining through heavy cloud cover. Quill has the brilliant light and warm temperatures one might expect from a jungle environment, but clouds and winds from cold Zenith can produce unusual storms and weather patterns. Banyan and Haark are similar in that their relative periods of light and dark are almost equivalent. We like to think Veile is in a state of perpetual twilight.

It is worth mentioning again here that the Overlight itself is thought of as divine energy, a literal blessing. As such, when a shard is under the shadow, it is not uncommon for some communities — especially upon Quill and Haark — to believe that dreadful events and ill omens are more likely to occur.

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Seasons and Weather – Other than the reoccurring rainy season on Banyan, we haven't really discussed many specifics about seasons or weather on the various shards. The changing of the seasons is best used as a GM tool, to help give shape and color to your adventures. As for weather patterns, who can really claim to understand the ebb and flow of cloud cover and air streams (or even the ocean currents in the Sea Below) in a place with such bizarre geography? For now, we leave it to you to define the various seasons and the intricacies of the shard rhythms that influence them. But here's a few ideas:

- There's a constant flow of lava in Pyre's magma rivers. Is the volume of molten rock consistent? Do the volcanoes erupt with any sort of pattern?
- Does the huge inland sea of Veile have tides? What would cause such a thing?
- Most of Haark's natural landscape, whatever it may have been, has been built over. What did it look like before? Did some environmental change in the ancient past contribute to the decision to build a city on such a scale?
- The Malachite Plains of Banyan have rainy seasons. What about the Great Forest? Does it experience something akin to spring? Winter? There's no axial tilt to cause seasons in this way. But if an autumn-like occurrence does happen, how does this affect the Hearthwood Trees?
- Rainstorms are not uncommon on Quill. How often does the shard see typhoon force tempests? If Quill's weather is so heavily influenced by Zenith, do the rituals of the Hamanu Stormchanters have any effect upon it?
- The entire continent of Zenith can't be all wind and snow and ice all the time, can it?

Flying Teryxians! – Teryxians as PCs can provide a unique puzzle for the GM. It's not often that role-playing games feature playable characters who are capable of full flight! You should be mindful of how this ability can influence your attempts to tell a story. Here are a few guidelines to help you navigate this potentially tricky situation.

Teryxians are not hummingbirds or helicopters. They cannot hover in the air, nor can they float like a seagull upon ocean breezes. In combat, they must swoop down to strike their opponents, so they should not be invulnerable to enemy melee attacks if they are engaging the fight in such a manner. Also, keep in mind that the manner in which the Teryxian body is built does not allow for the shooting or throwing of a projectile weapon while flying.

If you're not careful, you might find that having a PC who is capable of flight will lay waste to some of your best plots. Chasing a fleeing opponent through crowds or cover is much easier if you can fly. There's little need for rope or ladders to deal with a deep pit. Even something falling off the edge of a cliff

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might be saved if you've got wings! When designing your Overlight stories, keep in mind that some hurdles or challenges that would be perfectly fine in other games might not be so interesting when there's a Teryxian involved.

Windlore Tests are your friend. Teryxian players are likely to attempt all sorts of airborne acrobatics and other wild aerial feats. Be demanding with Windlore Tests when a player is trying some of their zanier ideas. These Windlore Tests should be required in most instances where a more terrestrial Folk would be using Athletics. In fact, for most flying stunts, Windlore (Vigor) or Windlore (Might) would probably be more appropriate than Windlore (Logic), which is really more about discerning angles and gravity when piloting airships or using projectile or thrown weapons.

Flying is a tiring affair, and the laws of physics from our world still apply, despite this being Overlight. Flying for long distances or while carrying large burdens is not a task to be shrugged off easily. Flight between shards should really only be possible between Quill and Banyan, or maybe between Banyan and Haark — and even then only for an extremely limited time during the cycle. Teryxian characters with the Tenacious Flight Chroma are capable of more heroic deeds while flying.

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Air Travel – For the rest of the Folk, travel between the shards — whether by Aurumel airship, flying steed, or other methods — should really be a narrative tool, and not necessarily one with need for special rules (at least for the purposes of this Core Book). Simply acquiring the means to travel from shard to shard can be an adventure in and of itself! Here's a handful of thoughts about air travel in your campaigns.

Travel between shards should not be *exceedingly* rare, because where's the fun in that? Having adventures on different shards is a huge part of the appeal of the Overlight setting. But when your campaign does hop from shard to shard, it should feel eventful, a moment of true wonder. It's a delicate balance to maintain: rare enough that air travel feels special, but not so rare that players aren't experiencing the fullness of the setting!

The great airships are all built and piloted by the Aurumel. The Verena dynasty is the most powerful of all the Aurumel lineages, being both a House and a Guild all in one. There is nary a bit of inter-shard trade that occurs without the involvement of the House Verena, save for only the smallest of endeavors. From small, sleek skiffs to gargantuan merchant vessels, these airships are the domain of the wealthy and prosperous. Portage upon one of these machines should be very expensive, requiring a Wealth Test at the very least — and only if you can get an audience with a suitable NPC. If nothing else, more Folk are always needed to energize the Overlight engines that power these monstrosities. The mortality rate among the slaves whose Spirit fuels the engines is quite high.

Many of the Folk have creatures, domesticated or otherwise, that they utilize to fly to neighboring shards, though some of these beasts are the exclusive domain of the societal elite. The Teryxians have the Jeweled Dragonflies, still maintained by Brood Masters in large numbers. The Pyroi Leatherwing Cult has its Fire Bats. And Haark has the formidable Iron Wasp Navy, in addition to the many Aurumel merchants (and their purses) who are now most loyal to the greatest of cities. As for Zenith, it has long been told that the Zenith Order Monks began their migrations thanks to the hospitality of a rogue Aurumel merchant vessel, and there are indications that such relationships persist in secret. The Banyari are isolated enough that they have not traditionally traveled to other shards.

The Outlawed and the Profane – Despite having many and disparate cultures and customs, the populace of the Seven have some beliefs in common. It is accepted that the Overlight is divine in nature, not only providing heat, light, and warmth such as our sun does on Earth, but also literally filling and fueling the spiritual lives of every living thing and every inanimate part of the natural world.

One does *not* contemplate flying directly up into the Overlight. To do so would be an affront to the purity of the sky's light. Similarly, one does not touch, or even

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come close to touching, the surface of the Underfathom. No light penetrates its dark waters, so the atmosphere there must be truly abhorrent indeed.

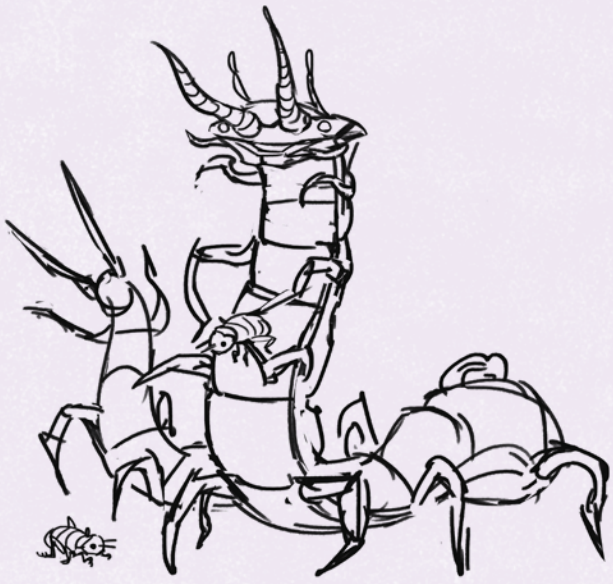
It is accepted that the seven Virtues are guiding principles by which to craft one's life journey. Of course, every being is fallible, and each of the Folk revere one Virtue above all others, but collectively the Virtues are ideals that one should aspire to and also tangible representations of those values, in their purest manifestation. It is not uncommon to find the Virtue sigils inscribed upon talismans, relics, idols, and other religious objects.

CAMPAIGN SETTINGS

Overlight presents opportunities for a wide range of story ideas. In fact, Overlight presents so many of these opportunities that it may be difficult to decide what sort of tale you would like to tell. In this section we will discuss the shape of your campaign, insofar as what each shard has to offer by way of description and tone.

Campaign Setting: Nova – Nova is the purest expression of both the Overlight's unfettered, undiminished nature and also the desolation and isolation of religious ideals when separated from the world we live in. It is a bleak and terrifying wasteland, at the center of which lies a temple manned by the alien, sometimes flesh-eating, Novapendra. To brave Nova for any length of time is a heroic feat in and of itself. Here there are ancient secrets and traces of the pre-broken world that cannot be found anywhere else. Although it would be difficult to set an entire campaign on Nova, it is the perfect place to bring a campaign to a memorable finale or to serve as a dangerous chapter where characters must prove that the path they walk surpasses regard for one's own life and safety.

- Themes: Pilgrimage. Faith. Selfless devotion. Revelations of the unknown. The food chain (i.e., you're not at the top).
- Sources of Wonder: Stark white and beige bands of endless desert. Novapendra shepherds tending their cricket colonies. Torch-lit grottos painted with fragmented scenes from the world's unmaking. The Temple of Nova projecting a laser-like column of pure Spirit into the infinity above.



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