

## Thomas Clement Writing Sample: *Tales of Esgar* - Location, Character, and Lore Entries

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### Overview

The Môrdaen, also known as the Sea Elves, live primarily in the south of Hitherion, upon the Hún Lomath peninsula. The main city is MÔrdros and is ruled over by elf King Faron Armentir.

The Môrdaen are well known for their mastery over the waves and construction of ships, having passed this knowledge on to the humans that live amongst them.

The Môrdaen are not a warlike people, better known for their music and art. They are a friendly people, living alongside those of other races and tribes in peace.

The land of Hún Lomath is one of steep inclines and valleys. To the north, the land is flat, with only a few low hills and gorges punctuating the horizon. As the land continues southward, the incline starts to gradually increase, with the city of MÔrdros being at the apotheosis of the cliff edge.

The soil is rich in minerals and resources, but is hard to build and thrive on. The white cliffs are their highest to the west with MÔrdros as the crown jewel. Just like the land to the north, the cliff edges to the east is lower, with many banks reaching sea level.

## Locations

### Môrdros

Môrdros is the largest settlement in Hún Lomath. It is led by the elf Faron Armentir and his wife Avarlin, Goddess of The Shore.

The design of Môrdros blends with the Hún Lomath cliffs, with the surrounding walls and settlements built from the chalk of the cliff edge. While the centre of Môrdros is protected by a keep, there are no official walls around the city. The closest to an official border would be the domed gate San-ef-Cyrif, which sits just before the incline of the cliffs.

Môrdros' districts are split by the natural incline of the cliffs, with Faron's palace and court are at the highest point of the city, and taverns and markets down at the nadir. The geography gives the buildings at the far end an imposing presence, as they seem to dominate the sky. There is also the benefit that they act as watchtowers, with the ability to have an unobstructed view of the entire peninsula.

The branching upwards also happened at the lower end of the city. Even when the first stones were laid, most buildings in Môrdros were terraced. With an influx of traders and refugees, Faron gave the order to extend the buildings skyward, adding five to ten floors to each building.

People can sometimes go for hours without natural sunlight, blocked in on all sides by stone. This problem was rectified both with moonsliver laced within the walls, but also by another Môrdaen design quirk.

Most buildings in Môrdros are open top and have balconies stretching out over the promenades or the cliff edges to maximise the amount of sunlight the city gets.

### **The Lighthouse Of Ciras**

The Lighthouse Of Ciras sits to the north of Môrdros. Designed and built by demi-elf Canis Lorma, the Lighthouse is a guide for those arriving by Halarkenna boat and need a guide through the rough waters.

Its walls are lined with moonsilver, powering the amber that produces the beam.

The lighthouse also has a secondary purpose. If the gem is given excess power, the beam's intensity can cause the area affects to become increasingly hot. The beam's intensity is enough to set the sails of Halarkennas aflame, as well as torch any living creature or plant nearby.

To keep this power and knowledge out of evil hands, the lighthouse is guarded by a team of warriors. The soldiers knows of the extreme power of the Lighthouse and have authorisation to use it if Môrdros is under attack.

### **St. Elthauren's Cathedral and Crypt**

To the north-east of Môrdros lies the estate of St. Elthauren.

Famed as a protector of the realm and an honorary Feyrmadden, the saint was given this land for services to the kingdom. The manor of the estate was only partially built when the saint fell ill and died, and so still lies incomplete.

The saint was sealed within a stone casket and placed in what would have been the Great Hall of the manor. The crypt below the casket is said to house St. Elthauren's treasure, with even the saint leaving cryptic clues around the estate.

Many glory-seekers have come to find the treasure, but all have left empty-handed. The only person who routinely walks the grounds is Cerin Lyronu, the former partner of St. Elthauren.

### **Tarris' Caves**

Due to the constant bombardment from both the wind and the waves against the Hún Lomath cliffs, the hard chalk has worn away in some areas, exposing the empty caverns that have been created by the shifting soil.

It was in these caves that the minor spirit Tarris and his followers, the Fendor, made home. Starting with the original cave systems, they began to dig their own tunnels, becoming maze-like in their intricacy.

Laced throughout the caves were traps, such as cesspit holes, gas-mains, and unstable caverns. After Tarris angered the rulers of Môrdros, the Goddess of The Shore unleashed her nautical rage on the cave system. If Tarris or any of the Fendor were to try and escape, they would surely be pulled into the swirling sea and never seen again.

## **Characters**

### **St. Elthauren**

Born as Alindar Cryralan, St. Elthauren is one of the most famous tori-affeaid (non-binary) demi-elves in Hitherion.

Conceived, born, and raised on a trading Halarkenna, Alindar was taught all about Elven and Môrdaen culture by their elven mother and human father.

Seeing that their child was exhibiting the traits known in tori-affeaid, Alindar's parents taught their child all about the fabled double-spirited gender neutral elves.

They raised their offspring to work twice as hard, knowing that the world would not take kindly to someone who did not fall within the gender binary.

Alindar interned on trading Halarkennas, being taught about all aspects of ship control and travel, visiting several ports along the north west coast, learning local dialects and maintaining connections for later contracts.

After several months upon the sea, Alindar was called back due to mandatory conscription for all Môrdaen citizens. Alindar pushed themselves to be the best of their class, majoring in several aspects of warfare.

After a chance encounter with a giant sea monster, Alindar lost the sight in one eye, which led to their distinctive eye patch. They became St. Elathuren after fending off a pyrote invasion, successfully sinking several barques by using the speed of their Halarkenna.

Anointed by the Temple of Môrdaen, the saint soon passed away, contracting an illness after hiking through the Three Rivers of Omarth. They are buried in the ruins of their estate.

## **Governess Syrus**

Growing up in the northern woodland in the houses of nobility, Galthir Syrus was brought up to share the authoritarian attitude of her Sylvanë ancestors.

The Sylvanë are protective over their sacred woodlands, killing any who would dare to set foot amongst the trees. This was their response to the first Sea Elves that made contact.

But as the two clans came more into contact, diplomatic ties needed to be established, and one of the Sylvanë chosen to represent was Galthir Syrus.

Life was tough for Galthir upon moving. The Môrdaen were far too forthcoming and kind to her liking, and the fact that they shared their city with so many humans and refugees did not enamour her to the city.

Learning of her fierce character, Faron the elven king offered Galthir a job. The recent fortress on Nalfey Island, secretly a prison for those treasonous to Faron, was in need of a Governor...or Governess.

Governess Syrus' upbringing made her a great fit at Nalfey. Now armed with her walking cane adorned with green sap from her home forest, she holds total dominion over the island. The sap has a hypnotic quality, and many prisoners have said to reveal their greatest secrets under its influence.

## **Tarris**

Every few months or so, Avarlin, The Goddess of The Shore, would return to the sea where she had sprang, enthralling the spirits with her tales of the land walkers.

Most spirits had been wary of these new people that lived so close to their plain, worried that they would attack one day. But Avarlin's negotiation seemed to have worked, she was even married to their king!

One spirit who attended all of Avarlin's reports was a minor spirit called Tarris. He too wanted to see these beautiful creatures and marvellous cities himself, so came ashore, fashioning himself into the male form.

While he was welcomed into Faron's Court as another representative from the shore, Avarlin could sense that he was a lesser spirit and informed her husband of his low ranking. So while the higher class of Môrdros saw that he was a nobody, the human citizens of the city could not see any distinction.

Tarris loved to wander the lower parts of the city, watching these citizens and seeing them be drawn to his aura. He began to talk to these people, saying how Faron was betraying them and that as a spirit he could talk on their behalf. The human citizens began to champion him as their leader and Tarris returned to the court, lobbying on their behalf.

Some of his followers became true believers that he was the rightful heir to Môrdros, which only stroked Tarris' ego more. He began his own cult, renaming his followers the Fendor. He took many lovers of both genders, fathering several children.

When humans were banished from Môrdros, Tarris took his Fendor to the east and began a protracted war of terror, bombing and ambushing citizens of Môrdros in an attempt for Faron to secede his power to him.

## **Classes**

### **1. Quartermaster**

The Halarkenna boat is the defining image that the people across the land still associate with the Môrdaen. Indeed, one of the greatest honours upon reaching adulthood is to have a Halarkenna bestowed upon you.

Many of the high class will gift captainship to their offspring, but those of the lower class can make their way through the ranks to helmsperson. St. Elethahren is a notable example of someone who rose from cabin setter to captain.

The last rank before captain is the quartermaster, but it is no job for a slouch. The quartermaster is in charge of discipline upon the ship, needing to be iron-willed and steady in their conviction.

While ostensibly a support role, the quartermaster handles many tasks when the captain is indisposed. They command the craft when the captain is not at the helm, and would lead a raiding party into battle.

During disputes, the captain may turn to the quartermaster for advice, and the quartermaster even has veto power over the captain during non-emergency decisions. These qualities are highlighted in their abilities.

**Abilities:** Rally/Enforce

As a disciplinarian and de-facto leader of a party, a quartermaster knows the value of morale.

Using their booming voice to silence the voices of doubt, the quartermaster's conviction can turn the tide in a battle. When activated, this ability grants a health/defence bonus to the player and other characters (either split between a few or centered on one other character).

**Special Equipment:** Spyglass

An essential piece of equipment for any budding seaborne adventurer, the Môrdaen Spyglass is gilded with moonsilver, allowing use even at nighttime.

## 2. Feyrmadden

As a seafaring nation, the Môrdaen made a name for themselves by creating one of the largest trade routes upon the continent, stretching from Erestel to the Sea of Agardos.

Upon securing a new trading partner and route, they would send emissaries versed in the language of the new settlement, to spread knowledge of the Môrdaen and to have a presence within the court, hopefully to secure more trading routes with visiting dignitaries.

The Feyrmadden are chosen from the top schools of philosophy for the role of emissary and court standee. While they are well versed in politics, languages, theatre, and martial arts (the latter due to Môrdaen conscription, a Feyrmadden is most commonly known for their charm and beauty, bewitching many in the court in their favour.

One of the famous Feyrmadden is simply known as 'Emlyn', and during their tenure managed to convince a neighbouring rival feudal lord to secede all land to Faron for a meagre title. Where the elven armies use force, the Feyrmadden use guile and words.

**Abilities:** Silvertongue/Bewitch.

The beauty of the Môrdaen is well-known throughout the land. Many human settlers once believed they were simply water nymphs, existing to make weak-willed humans stray from their partners.

Using both their beauty and their language for diplomacy, when the Feyrmadden activates Silvertongue, their Charisma score increases dramatically.

**Special Equipment:** Letter of Introduction.

Useful in hostile areas or to forge uneasy alliances, the Letter of Introduction can be traded for safe passage or bartered with for access to new equipment.

## **Culture Bonus**

### **1. Silvertongue/Bewitch**

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### **2. Cosmolingua**

With the influx of traders from the Môrdaen nautical expansion, as well as the refugees from the Cargans, the Môrdaen language began to adapt.

New words and vernacular emerged, with new generations becoming adept at switching between different languages and communicating with their kin.

### **3. Cold-Blooded**

Living upon the high cliffs, the Môrdaen live on the edge with the biting wind and crashing surf.

Surrounded by perilous locations and dangerous enemies, the Môrdaen have mastered the Elven ability to suppress all emotional fear to make them a harder target.

### **4. Elven Air**

Being born from the sea and living their life on the swash, the Môrdaen have perfected their diving and swimming abilities, not even needing the use of a diving bell to scout the sea bed.

Their lungs have adapted to the ocean, allowing them to remain for several minutes without the need to resupply.

This adaptation still evident when the Môrdaen are upon land, allowing them to exert themselves further and able to breathe through airborne hazards that would be detrimental to other races.